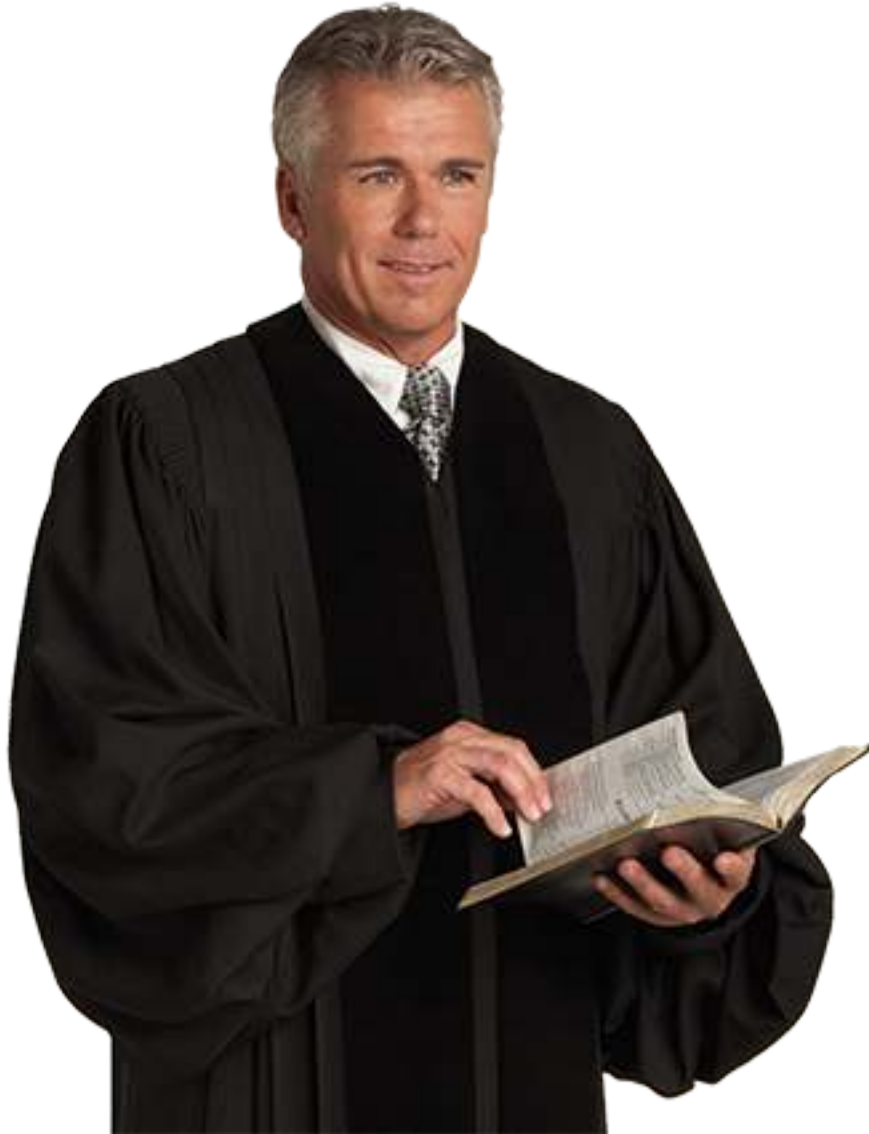


The LIFE & TIMES of Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK
(1829-1915)



(Facsimile)

Researched by: John Graham Ward

Published: May 2022



WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK (1829 - 1915)

(Curate, St. Barnabas, Homerton, Hackney, Middlesex)

(Rector, St. Petrock, Clannaborough, Crediton, Devon.)

- **WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK** was my Great-Great-Maternal Grandfather, born in 1829 in Stepney, Middlesex, England. He was the son of **WILLIAM ARTHUR BECK** (1806-1881) and **MARY ANN BECK** (1806-1877) (born **COWLING**).
- His Father, **WILLIAM ARTHUR BECK** was a Warehouse Keeper at the expanding and profitable East & West India Docks in the Port of London on the River Thames. William Stephen's two bachelor brothers, Thomas and Joseph were both employed as Clerks in the Dock Company.

It would seem that the Beck Family was in a good financial position. Therefore, young **WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK** was able to attend Oxford University, obtain a Master of Arts degree, and become a **CURATE** of the **CHURCH OF ST. BARNABAS** in Homerton, Hackney and pursue a Clerical career that would take him eventually to Devon where he was appointed as **RECTOR** of the Church of St. Petrock in Clannaborough, Crediton.

- **St. BARNABAS** is the Church of England Parish Church of Homerton, centrally situated on **HOMERTON HIGH STREET, HACKNEY** in London, England. The building dates from 1847.

In the Tudor period, the lands of religious orders were seized by the English Crown and put up for sale. HACKNEY then became a retreat for the nobility around the areas of Hackney Central and Homerton. Henry VIII's Palace was by the bridge over the River Lea, where SIXTH FORM COLLEGE stands today.

SUTTON HOUSE, on Homerton High Street, is the oldest surviving dwelling in Hackney, originally built in 1535 as *Bryck Place* for Sir Ralph Sadleir, P.C. a diplomat. Ralph Sadleir (or Sadler), adviser to Henry VIII and protégé of Thomas Cromwell, was the first occupant of Sutton House. The Village of HACKNEY flourished from the Tudor to late Georgian periods as a rural retreat.



From the ST. BARNABAS CHURCH Website

“St. BARNABAS has a multi-ethnic congregation, reflecting the rich diversity of the Borough of Hackney. People come from many different backgrounds and cultures. Some have been Christians for many years; others are just starting their journey of faith - or even just cautiously 'having a look'.

Being part of a Church should be like being part of a family; a safe place of love and support, a place where we share joys and sorrows together, where everyone has a part to play; a place of fun and friendship across the generations; a place where everyone can put down roots and grow. Like any family, this is not always easy - but when it works well, there's nothing quite like it!

At the very centre of everything is Jesus Christ. That is our conviction. He is 'the Way and the Truth and the Life' (John 14:6) He alone is the rock on which we should build our lives. We want to help each other to do that, and to help others discover him for themselves.

We are in the EVANGELICAL tradition. We take the Bible seriously, and want to understand it and live by it. We use 'Common Worship' in our services, in a structured but relaxed style. Our music is led by keyboard, occasionally drums and organ. Our services are personal and interactive, and we aim to make them accessible to all.

On Sunday mornings there are age-related groups for our young people (aged 3 – 18). Home groups meet during the week, and for those wanting an introduction to the Christian faith, a Christianity Explored course is run each autumn.”

History of St. Barnabas Church (1847-2013)

JOHN WATSON, the Rector of Hackney Parish Church, saw the need for more Churches in Hackney with its quickly growing population. He and his brother Joshua determined to erect a Church in **HOMERTON**, which had been their family home (they had had a house on the High Street, on the west of Mackintosh Lane). John died before this could be accomplished, so it was due to Joshua Watson's energy, initiative and financial help that the Church was finally built.

The Church cost just under £5,000 to build. Grants were obtained that amounted to £3,000. Joshua Watson provided the endowment towards the maintenance of a Resident Clergyman, and he also gave £500, half the cost of the Clergy House.

Building and Consecration of the Church

The site of the Church had been a horse farm. The Church was consecrated on St Barnabas Day 1847. The North Aisle was added in 1852. The architect was Arthur Ashpitel. It is built in the perpendicular style, constructed of Kentish ragstone with Bath stone dressings.

Expansion Of The Parish – St Paul's

ST PAUL'S, GLYN ROAD was established in 1885, as the district became rapidly populated. A permanent Church was later built and endowed by The Grocers' Company.

World War II

On August 8, 1944 a "flying bomb" exploded near the Church, leaving it a roofless ruin. For the next 14 years the Congregation met in the Church Hall. St Barnabas was finally repaired, altered and re-consecrated in 1958.

Re-Designation of St. Barnabas as a Grade II Listed Building in 2007/2008.

The Church of St Barnabas, Hackney, is designated at Grade II, for the following reasons:

- It is a good example of early Victorian Gothic Church reflecting the newly-developed desire to create Churches faithful to their Medieval predecessors.
- The post-war changes have had no significant effect upon the exterior of the building.
- Its association with a key figure in the 19th. Century Evangelical Movement.
- It has Group Value with the Vicarage and School.



The VICARAGE at St. BARNABUS, Homerton, Hackney, Middlesex.

■ **Duties of a CURATE in St. Barnabas Evangelical Church, Hackney**

In Anglican Parishes with a charismatic or EVANGELICAL (low church) tradition, the role of a CURATE is usually seen as being an Assistant Leader to the overall Leader, often in a larger team of Pastoral Leaders. Many of the larger charismatic and Evangelical Parishes have larger Ministry Teams with a number of Pastoral Leaders, some ordained and others not.

■ **The APPRENTICESHIP of a CURATE requires the novice to:**

- Earn a Bachelor's Degree.
Ministers are required to have a deep understanding of Biblical doctrine, the role of the Church, and the philosophy and history of religion;
- Complete a Master's Degree at a recognized University;
- Become ordained by the Bishop;
- Get certified by the Anglican Church and obtain a license from the Bishop.
- Novice CURATES are taught by an INCUMBENT; you learn from the PRIEST who is in the position for which you are training.

EAST & WEST INDIA DOCKS, LONDON, ENGLAND

Following the successful creation of the **West India Docks** which opened in 1802, an Act of Parliament in 1803 set up the **East India Dock Company**, promoted by the Honourable East India Company. Joseph Cotton was chairman of the **Dock Company** from 1803. The foundation stone was laid on **March 11, 1805** and the sluices of its floating gate were opened on **July 26, 1806**, and ready to receive ships five days later.

The docks, designed by Engineer Ralph Walker, were located to the north-east of the West India Docks. They were based on the existing Brunswick Dock, which had been used for fitting out and repairing ships as part of Blackwall Yard. The **Brunswick Dock**, which had originally been connected directly to the Thames to the South, became the **Export Dock**. To the North the company built a larger 18-acre **Import Dock**. Both were connected to the Thames via an eastern entrance basin.



The company rapidly became profitable through its trade in commodities such as tea, spices, indigo, silk and Persian carpets. The tea trade alone was worth £30 million a year.

The docks spawned further local industry, with spice merchants and pepper grinders setting up around the dock to process goods.

In 1838 the two companies merged to form the EAST & WEST INDIA DOCKS COMPANY. In 1886, in the last act of a ruinous game of leapfrog with the London & St Katharine Dock Company, they built the Tilbury Docks. The East and West India Docks Company operated in cooperation with the London & St Katharine Dock Company from 1888, and the two companies merged as the London and India Docks Company on 1 January 1901.

On 31 March 1909 the docks were taken over by the PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY, along with the other enclosed docks.

LAYOUT: The original docks consisted of an IMPORT DOCK of 18-acres of water, to the north of the site, and an EXPORT DOCK of 15-acres, to the south of the site. There was also an ENTRANCE DOCK of 2.75-acres of water on the east of the site.

While much smaller than the **West India Docks** or the later **Royal Docks**, the **East India Docks** could still handle **East Indiamen** of **1,000 tons** and up to **250 ships at one time**. However the advent of steam power and larger ships reduced the importance of this dock.



The docks played a key role in the SECOND WORLD WAR as a location for constructing the floating Mulberry Harbours used by the Allies to support the D-Day landings in France.

After the war, during which all the docks were badly damaged, the East India Docks were confined to occasional Channel Islands traffic and to the maintenance of equipment including dredgers.

Brunswick Wharf Power Station, a monumental brick structure with fluted concrete chimneys, was built on the site of the Export Dock in stages between 1946 and 1956; it has since been decommissioned and demolished.

From the 1960s onwards, the East India Docks experienced a steady decline, as did all of London's other docks, as the shipping industry adopted containerization, which effectively moved traffic downstream to Tilbury.

In 1967 the EAST INDIA DOCKS were the first of the London docks to close.

The COMPETITION was (and is) SUPER-CONTAINER SHIPS from China, Japan & USA.



MARRIAGE in Style at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster:

- In April 1855, 26-year old Curate of St. Barnabas' Church, WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK married 28-year old LOUISA TABITHA GODFREY (1827-1892) in ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, WESTMINSTER.

William's bride was a daughter of musician CHARLES GODFREY (1790-1863) and his wife, CHARLOTTE GODFREY (born PRYKE) of 42, Vincent Square, Westminster, Middlesex.

The CHURCH OF ST MARGARET, WESTMINSTER, is in the grounds of WESTMINSTER ABBEY on Parliament Square, London, England. It is dedicated to Margaret of Antioch, and forms part of a single World Heritage Site with the PALACE OF WESTMINSTER and WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

The church was founded in the 12th. Century by Benedictine monks, so that local people who lived in the area around the Abbey could worship separately at their own simpler parish church, and historically it was within the hundred of Ossulstone in the County of Middlesex.



St. MARGARET'S CHURCH, WESTMINSTER



R ELOCATION to a New Life in CLANNABOROUGH

WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK served as RECTOR at St. PETROCK, Clannaborough, Devon from 1867-1906.

In 1867, Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK and his Family moved from Hackney, Middlesex to Clannaborough, Devon and took up his appointment at St. PETROCK'S CHURCH. It must have been a great adjustment to leave the bustling Thames-side community of Hackney and join the rural community of Clannaborough in mid-Devon.

His wife, LOUISA TABITHA BECK was just turned 40-years old and his 4-children were with him at the Rectory:

1. William Charles Rawlinson (11),
2. Edith Louisa (8),
3. Annie Maude (7),
4. Theodore Godfrey (4),

LOUISA TABITHA BECK was pregnant and expecting her fifth child (to be named "Charlotte Alice in a few months! All the children would be needing schooling at the local school...

LIFE was looking very different for the BECK Family and there was much "change" awaiting them!

■ **Duties of a RECTOR in St. Petrock's Anglican Church in Clannaborough, Devon.** Historically, Parish Priests in the Church of England consisted of RECTORS as well as Vicars, and Perpetual Curates. Parish Churches and their incumbent Clergy were supported by tithes levied on the personal as well as agricultural output of the Parish. A Rector received direct payment of both the greater and lesser tithes of his Parish, whilst a Vicar received only the lesser tithes (the greater tithes going to the lay holder, or impropriator, of the living).

A Perpetual Curate held the Cure of souls in an area which had not yet been formally or legally constituted as a Parish, and received no tithes but only a small stipend in return for his duties. Perpetual Curates tended to have a lower social status, and were often quite poorly remunerated.

Commonly, Parishes that had a RECTOR as Priest also had "*glebe lands*" attached to the Parish. The Rector was then responsible for the repair of the chancel of his church—the part dedicated to the sacred offices—while the rest of the building was the responsibility of the Parish.

St. Petrock Church, Clannaborough, Crediton, Devon, England.



CLANNABOROUGH is a Parish in the County of Devon, England, situated about 5-miles north-west of the Town of Crediton and 11 miles north-east of Okehampton. No village exists, only scattered farmhouses, including Clannaborough Barton and the bartons of Appledore and Walson, all three estates listed in the Domesday Book of 1066. Walson was the birthplace of Christopher Lethbridge (d.1670), Mayor of Exeter in 1660, who was Lord of the Manor of nearby Bow (alias Nymet Tracy). The Parish Church is dedicated to St. PETROCK.

Rectors of the Parish of St Petrock, Clannaborough, Devon

Provided by **John Williams**

The information is from a board within the church. Clannaborough is a small parish church, of Ear medieval origins and plan, rebuilt in the late 15th or early 16th century. Extensive renovation wii new South Porch 1858-9 was paid for by Selina Ward-Wreford of Clannaborough Barton.

1272 Nicholas Blundel	1624 Robert Spencer M.A.
1310 Richard de Sydewyne	1625 Ambrose Frere M.A.
1314 Robert de Moltone	1663 Richard Richards B.A.
1324 John de Sidemouthe	1688 Joseph Pridham M.A.
1329 Peter de Grenhulle	1707 Robert Shortridge M.A. B.D.
1330 William Trendelove de Grutelyngtone	1733 John Freke M.A.
1332 Thomas de Cardyngtone	1754 Richard Freke M.A.
1333 John de Camera de Broghetone	1783 Freeman Freke B.A.
1351 Roger Lleyn	1811 John Palmer M.A. (Prebendary of Lincoln)
1373 Robert Doget	1827 Peter Glubb M.A.
1417 John Thomma	1853 Charles Bransby Auber B.A.
1425 Richard Leche	1867 William Beck M.A.
1429 Henry Thomas	1906 Herbert St John Edmonson Wrenford
1431 Thomas Deymane	1938 John Milford
1450 Henry Blower	1940 Claude Blakeley Armstrong Canon of Worcester M.A. B.D.
1471 John Davy	1943 William Arthur Molyneux
1476 Hugh Ryse	1946 David Morley Sale M.A.
1491 Thomas Chymmaw	1956 John Reginald Jackson M.A.
1498 John Coke	1968 Ernest Victor Garlick
1541 John Bear	1973 Robert Chancellor P.in C.
1562 Henry Redinge	1975 Richard Michael Reynolds Dip. L.A., P.in C.
1563 Andrew Bycklegh	
1602 Arthur Snell M.A.	
1612 Benjamin Newberye	
1617 Philip Reyndl	

Note: 1867 - 1906 WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK M.A. was the RECTOR at Clannaborough.

The RECTOR'S FAMILY

■ Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK and LOUISA TABITHA BECK (born GODFREY) had 6-Children (1-Sons & 5-Daughters):

1. WILLIAM CHARLES RAWLINSON BECK (1856-1931) born in Pimlico, Westminster, Middlesex. [Died in 1931 @ 75-years old in Newton Abbot, Devon, England.](#)
2. EDITH LOUISA BALES (born BECK) (1858-xxxx) born in Dalston, Middlesex. [Married Keith Charles Bales \(Marine Engineer\) in 1895. Had 1-Child, a Daughter Edith Maude Winifred Bales in 1898;](#)
3. ANNIE MAUD BECK (1860-1899) born in Dalston, Middlesex. [Died in Camberwell @ 39-years old. No record of marriage,](#)
4. THEODORE GODFREY BECK (1862-1890) born in Homerton, Hackney, Middlesex. [Died in Hackney, Middlesex @ 28-years old. Buried in Kensington, London.](#)
5. CHARLOTTE ALICE BECK (1868-xxxx) born in Clannaborough, Crediton , Devon. [No record of Marriage.](#)
6. CAROLINE AGNES MARGARET BECK (1868-xxxx) born in Clannaborough, Crediton , Devon. [Married Francis Wood Coombe \(1863-xxxx\). They had 3-Children \(all Sons\);](#)

EPILOGUE: The END of the ERA of Saint PETROCK in Devon

- From 1867-1906 Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK & LOUISA TABITHA BECK (born GODFREY) were living at The Rectory, Clannaborough, Crediton, Devon where STEPHEN was the RECTOR of the ANGLICAN CHURCH OF St. PETROC.
- On February 1892, LOUISA TABITHA BECK (born GODFREY) died in Camberwell, London, England at the age of 65-years. She was probably buried in Kingston-upon-Thames, South West London, England.
- In circa 1893, following the death of his first wife, LOUISA TABITHA BECK (born GODFREY), the 64-year old Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK married his second wife, 50-year old EDITH (Unknown maiden name) of Abingdon, Berkshire, England. *We have no further information on the date or place of the marriage; we would not expect them to have more children, given their ages.*
- In 1906, WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK retired from the position of RECTOR of St. PETROCK CHURCH, Clannaborough after 39-years loyal Pastoral service to the farming Community of mid-Devon.
- In 1915, Rector WILLIAM STEPHEN BECK died in HACKNEY, London at the age of 79-years.
- The CHURCH of St. Petrock in Clannaborough today (Year 2022) lies dormant among a number of sombre headstones arrayed amongst grassy lawns and hidden mostly by overgrown hedgerows and large trees as old as the stone Church building itself. There is no sign of life, except the enveloping commercial activity, sprawling buildings and the debris of a BREWING COMPANY, FARMING activity and other miscellany.
- The photos below are from Google Earth Pro surveys in 2019 and show the present state of intrusion by commercial and farming activity into the former space around the Church itself and the obvious lack of human activity in the Church and the Graveyard.
- It would seem that ST. PETROCK is no longer a hub of religious activity.





BISHOPS LEAD CREDITON PILGRIMAGE TO CELEBRATE DEVON'S NEW PATRON SAINT

Posted: 6th June, 2019

An Ecumenical Pilgrimage to CREDITON in celebration of St. BONIFACE, the new Patron Saint of Devon, will take place this Sunday 9 June at the ANGLICAN PARISH CHURCH OF HOLY CROSS, Church Lane, and the Roman Catholic St Boniface Church, on Park Road.

The day will be presided over by THE RIGHT REVEREND MARK O'TOOLE, CATHOLIC BISHOP OF PLYMOUTH and the ANGLICAN BISHOP OF CREDITON, THE RIGHT REVEREND JACKIE SEARLE.

The pilgrimage will begin at 3.00pm with Sung Evensong and sermon by Bishop Jackie at Holy Cross Church.

At 3.45pm there will be a procession to the statue of St Boniface in Newcombes Meadow with prayers led by The Rev. Matthew Tregenza and Fr Michael Wheaton.

This will be followed by a procession to the NATIONAL SHRINE OF ST BONIFACE and Solemn Benediction at St Boniface Church (4.30pm) led by Mgr. Mark O'Toole followed by refreshments.

The Right Rev Jackie Searle, said: "I am greatly looking forward to the special service at Crediton to celebrate our new patron saint. I hope as many people as possible will come to mark this occasion and be inspired by the courage and compassion of St Boniface." The Rev Matthew Tregenza, Rector of Crediton Parish Church, said: "St Boniface, a native of Crediton, was a great missionary in the 8th century and his message continues to inspire us today. All of us at Crediton Parish Church are absolutely delighted that Devon has chosen to honour him in this way and we are very pleased to welcome everyone to Crediton on this special day."

Devon County Council voted in favour of an amendment to adopt St Boniface as the Patron Saint of Devon last month. ST BONIFACE WAS BORN IN CREDITON and the Boniface Link Association has been campaigning to have him officially made the County's Patron Saint.

The campaign was backed by the Bishop of Exeter, The Rt Rev Robert Atwell, and the Catholic Bishop of Plymouth, The Rt Rev Mark O'Toole as well as the Crediton Congregational Church, Crediton Methodist Church and the Rector of the Orthodox Parish of the Holy Prophet Elias.