



# A SHORT HISTORY OF ST ANDREW'S ENGLISH CHURCH KYRENIA, CYPRUS

by  
P.C. COLLINS, B.D.  
Canon Emeritus of Rochester, England

---

This is a digital recreation of a small booklet originally produced in 1988. A copy of the booklet has been scanned and the text corrected in order to make this more “user friendly” version available through the church website and also in printed form. A number of footnotes, providing internet links to references that may be of interest to the reader, have also been added during the editing process.

It has been noted that George Houstoun's name had been misspelt in the original booklet as “Houston”.

St Andrew's Kyrenia  
**Centenary**  
1913-2013

[www.standrewskyrenia.org](http://www.standrewskyrenia.org)

## FOREWORD

This short history of St Andrew's Church, Kyrenia is based on an account written by J.K. Luard, a former churchwarden of St Andrew's, in 1973 to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the church.

After the retirement of the Rev. Arthur Rider, I had the privilege of acting as temporary Chaplain at Kyrenia for nearly a year, and during this time I took upon myself the task of updating the history in readiness for the 75th anniversary of the church in 1988. I am also indebted to many kind friends who have assisted me in gathering information for this purpose.

**Peter Collins**

April 1988

## ST ANDREW'S CHURCH KYRENIA

From a plaque in the church:

**THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED BY  
Mr & Mrs Ernest McDonald  
and the site was presented by  
Mr George Houstoun  
1913**

Ernest Eldred McDonald was a lay reader of St Andrew's Church from 1913 to 1927, and was District Commissioner in Kyrenia at the time when George Houstoun presented the land to the Colonial & Continental Church Society in London (later to become the Intercontinental Church Society<sup>1</sup>) to be held in trust for the Anglican Church in Kyrenia. However, a sentence in the letter of gift, dated 2nd November 1913, lays down that "*in the event of the Island of Cyprus ceasing to be connected with the British Empire, the Colonial & Continental Church Society may sell the property and the proceeds of such sale may be used as decided upon by the said Society*".

George Ludovic Houstoun was a wealthy Scottish mine owner, who had come to live in Kyrenia some years previously. He not only gave the land for the church, but was also involved in the founding of the hospital, and many other works of a philanthropic nature. He organized an Agricultural Show, with the object of improving the standard of farming, which seemingly was deplorably low at that time. The original church erected by Mr & Mrs McDonald was a two-roomed building and in a letter dated 15th December 1913 Mr McDonald wrote:

*"I think you will be interested to hear that we had our opening of the Church Room last Sunday and it was a very good start. The Congregation consisted of 33 persons, 9 of which were Communicants-offertory 2 pounds sterling. The 33 congregation is quite unusual and they were chiefly Greeks of the Greek Church. Our present regular members will be 9."*

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ics-uk.org/>

## BRITISH INFLUENCE

In 1878 the British and Turkish governments had entered into an agreement to the effect that the British government would undertake the administration of the Island, in return for the annual tribute of 92,000 piastres (511 pounds sterling) to be paid to the Sultan. The Suez Canal had been opened in 1869, and it suited Britain to have a strategic base in the Eastern Mediterranean.

When the Turks entered World War 1 on the side of Germany in 1914, Britain immediately annexed the Island, and ceased paying the tribute. The annexation was eventually recognised by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, and Cyprus became a Crown Colony in 1925. This brought about a considerable influx of British, which is reflected in the life of St Andrew's, by the fact that by 1933 the church was too small to accommodate the congregation.

Various suggestions were made to solve the difficulty, including a proposal to restore St George's Chapel in Kyrenia Castle<sup>2</sup>, and hold services there. Apparently the Department of Antiquities of the Cyprus Government were willing to approve the scheme, but it was later abandoned. To meet the cost of restoration, a large sum of money would have had to have been raised by the Church, and it was argued that it would have been imprudent to spend such a sum on a building which was not the actual property of the Church, and never could be. Then came World War II, and the question of enlarging the church had to be deferred.

However, in 1949 it was found possible to carry out the desired extension. It was largely financed through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. B.C. Petrides, whose son had been killed in 1944, while serving with the Royal Air Force. He is commemorated by a plaque in the church-porch.

## CHURCH PORCH

It can be assumed that during two world wars and through the political tensions and upheavals that have taken place in Cyprus during the past seventy-five years, St Andrew's Church has had its "ups and downs". This phrase, unfortunately, could be applied also to the foundations upon which the church is built which, being supported on loose filling, were gradually subsiding, causing serious cracks in the walls to the north and east in 1967, the condition of the church became dangerous and a major restoration and strengthening of the foundations was necessary. The cost (nearly one thousand pounds sterling) was met by Miss Hilda Ridler, with a generous donation of five hundred pounds sterling and by other donations from Kyrenia residents.

Unfortunately these remedial measures did not really solve the problem, and again in 1977 it was decided that more drastic action was necessary. This involved pulling down the east end of the church and the two transepts and building a smaller sanctuary. At the same time a new doorway into the vestry was made. All this had the effect of reducing the seating capacity of the church, but at least the building was rendered reasonably safe.

Despite the unsure foundations, the site of St Andrew's Church was well chosen. A few yards from Kyrenia Castle and the Harbour, it is near to the centre of the town and the hotels from which British visitors find it an easy walk to the Church. Indeed, much of the congregation of St Andrew's is composed of holiday visitors.

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyrenia\\_Castle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyrenia_Castle)

In 1973 St Andrew's celebrated its Diamond Jubilee, and at a special service on 6th May, the Archbishop in Jerusalem, the Rt. Rev. George Appleton<sup>3</sup> preached.

In 1974 came the War. Fortunately the church was only superficially damaged, and a party from the United Nations contingent, stationed in Kyrenia, helped to clear up the debris, and it was possible after two weeks to resume the services. In the meanwhile the services were held in the home of the Rev. E.H. and Mrs. Chavasse.

## DIOCESE AND PROVINCE

Until 1974, Cyprus, including Kyrenia, came under the direct jurisdiction of the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, but in that year the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf<sup>4</sup> was formed. The Diocese not only includes Cyprus, but also all the Gulf States, Iraq, and North and South Yemen. The first bishop was the Rt. Rev. Leonard James Ashton<sup>5</sup>, formerly Chaplain-in Chief of the Royal Air Force. He was consecrated Bishop by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev. A.M. Ramsey<sup>6</sup> at St Clement Dane's Church in London on 22nd January 1974. He paid his first official visit to St Andrew's on 12th May 1974, when he preached at Matins, and afterwards celebrated Holy Communion.

Then in 1976 the Anglican Province of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East<sup>7</sup> came into being, as an autonomous Province in the Anglican Communion<sup>8</sup>. The Archbishop of Canterbury relinquished his jurisdiction over the Province, and vested it in the Central Synod of the new Province. The Province has no Archbishop as such, but the Central Synod elects one of its bishops to be President-Bishop for a period of five years. The province has four constituent dioceses, Jerusalem, Egypt, Iran and Cyprus and the Gulf.

## CHAPLAINS

Little is known of the Chaplains who have served St Andrew's Church, and for the most part the services must have been taken by lay readers, of whom Ernest McDonald and C.K. Seaman are commemorated in the Church. In 1962 the Rev. John E. Grinstead was appointed Chaplain in Kyrenia, but served only a few months till his death in May 1963. He, too, is commemorated by a plaque in the Church. From 1963 to 1971 St Andrew's depended on occasional visits from the Chaplain at St Paul's, Nicosia<sup>9</sup>, and also from Chaplains attached to the Canadian contingent serving with the United Nations forces in Cyprus.

In 1971 the Rev. W.P. Basil Pitt was appointed Chaplain of Kyrenia. In 1977 he resigned from the Chaplaincy, owing to ill-health, and for the next few years the work was carried on by the Rev. E.H. Chavasse and the Rev. Sir Patrick Ferguson- Davie, retired priests residing in the area.

In 1980 the Rev. Arthur W. Rider was appointed Chaplain. He retired in 1987.

---

<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Appleton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Appleton)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.cypgulf.org>

<sup>5</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonard\\_Ashton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leonard_Ashton)

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Ramsey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Ramsey)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/tour/province.cfm?ID=J2>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.st-pauls-nicosia.com>

On 4th March 1979 the Rt. Rev. Robert Runcie<sup>10</sup>, then Bishop of St Alban's visited St Andrew's and preached. It was not known at the time that he was to become the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Runcie was in the course of making official visits to the Orthodox Churches, including Moscow.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST IN THE CHURCH

The FONT has as its bowl a domestic marble mortar found in March 1949 at Lambousa by Margaret Saffery, while on a picnic with her husband. Her husband, incidentally, found himself in prison, because the authorities believed that there may have been gold in the bowl. The bowl is assigned to the 6th century A.D. A smaller bowl, found at the same time, is now in the Cyprus museum<sup>11</sup>. The pedestal is a fragment of an ancient pillar.

The ALTAR-RAILS are in memory of Ann Allard Lucens, who died in 1950.

The COMMUNION-KNEELERS were designed by Jean Burgess and Theodora Humphries, both visitors to Kyrenia in 1970-71. The centre kneeler depicts the cross of St Andrew, patron saint of the church, the cross of St John of Jerusalem, in whose archbishopric Cyprus lies; and the arms of the ancient Kingdom of Cyprus. The two long side kneelers show the village of Bellapais with its 12th century abbey, and Kyrenia harbour with its Crusader castle.

The UNION JACK hanging over the west door was presented by Hilda Ridler, to whom it was given by Canon Christopher Perowne, C.F., at the time of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The flag was used to cover the bodies of British servicemen killed in Malaya and Burma in World War II, including General Wingate<sup>12</sup>.

The BLACK WATCH MEMORIAL was first placed in the British Cemetery, and later transferred to the church. Details are below. Further information about Sergeant McGaw, V.C. is contained in the book, "General Wauchope" by William Baird.

The WILTSHIRE REGIMENT MEMORIAL commemorates soldiers of the 1st Battalion (Duke of Edinburgh's) who were killed in Cyprus during the Eoka troubles. Also see below.

The CHRISTENING BOWL in silver was donated by Mrs. Tull, a resident of Kyrenia.

The SILVER WAFER-BOX is a memorial to the Dowager Lady Loch, who lived at Loch Manor, Catalkoy (1973).

The MEMORIAL in the CHURCH-PORCH is to the four Britishers killed in the 1974 War. The fifth, Leigh Matthews, was evacuated from Kyrenia by the Royal Navy in H.M.S. Hermes and died subsequently in England a few weeks later.

The SILVER-PLATED CANDLESTICKS were designed by Robert Welch of Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire, and are in memory of F. Maxse, churchwarden for many years. (1976).

The LECTERN BIBLE was the gift of the Rev. E.H. and Mrs Chavasse, as a thanksgiving for their preservation in the events of 1974.

---

<sup>10</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Runcie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Runcie)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/DA/DA.nsf/0/67084F17382CF201C2257199001FE4AD?OpenDocument>

<sup>12</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orde\\_Wingate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orde_Wingate)

The CREDENCE and WOODEN CANDLESTICKS are a memorial to a former Chaplain, the Rev. Basil Pitt (1979).

The MISSAL-STAND is in memory of Col. B.E. Ffrench, a former churchwarden (1979).

The ALTAR BOOK containing the Liturgy of the Alternative Service Book (1980) was presented by the Rev. Sir Patrick Ferguson-Davie.

## THE HERMITAGE

The Hermitage was built by a Father Ambrose Williams in 1945. Father Williams had an unusual ecclesiastical background. Having been educated at Peterhouse, Cambridge he went to South America and was ordained there. After a brief spell in the Roman Catholic Church, he was reconciled with the Anglican Church in Turkey, and then settled in Kyrenia. He was a recluse, and never attended St Andrew's, though Archdeacon Goldie regularly visited him to hear his confession.

In 1957 Father Williams died, having bequeathed the Hermitage to the Jerusalem and East Mission<sup>13</sup> to be held in trust "*for the benefit and use of the Anglican Church in Cyprus*". Apart from the occasional use of the house by the local Chaplains as a residence, it has been leased to various tenants over the years. It was requisitioned by the Turkish Army at the time of the War, and finally released in 1985. It is now the official residence of the Chaplain.

Father Williams was buried in the grounds of the Hermitage, but in 1965 his body was exhumed and re-interred in the Houston cemetery, as at that time there was a plan to dispose of the Hermitage.

## THE BRITISH CEMETERIES

The old cemetery is situated about one mile from the centre of Kyrenia off to the right of the Kyrenia-Nicosia road. It was established by the Colonial Government of Cyprus in 1910 and was administered by the Commissioner of Kyrenia and the Anglican Archdeacon of Cyprus, and was maintained by the Public Works Department. In 1960, when Cyprus became an independent Republic, the responsibility for the administration and maintenance of the cemetery was passed from the Central Government to a local committee, consisting of British residents appointed by the British High Commission.

Buried in this cemetery is not only Sgt. McGaw, V.C. referred to below, but also the Rev. Frank Darvall Newham, Canon of St George's Collegiate Church, Jerusalem<sup>14</sup>, and Director of Education in Cyprus from 1901 to 1930. He founded the English School in Nicosia<sup>15</sup>, and frequently conducted services at St Andrew's.

There is also the Houston cemetery situated about three quarters of a mile west of Kyrenia, off to the right of the Kyrenia to Karaoglanoglu road. This cemetery was the gift to the British community in Kyrenia by the Houston family, for the burial of British residents in Kyrenia. The title is held by the Jerusalem and East Mission Trust in London. The land was consecrated on 27th May 1963. It contains a small burial plot for the Houston family, and there are three other interments. In 1968, in view of residential and tourist development taking place in the vicinity, it was decided to discontinue use of this cemetery.

---

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.jmecca.org.uk/about-us/history-jmecca-and-jemt>

<sup>14</sup> <http://sgcjjerusalem.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.englishschool.ac.cy/>

With the number of ageing British in Kyrenia and its environs, it became obvious by the late seventies that the old cemetery in south Kyrenia would soon be full. It was not possible to acquire any land for the extension of the existing cemetery, so permission was sought from the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Kyrenia, who was in exile due to the Turkish occupation, to have the use of a section of the Greek Orthodox cemetery on the Kyrenia to Karakum road. This permission was granted, and the first interment in the new burial ground took place on 22nd April 1979.

The cemeteries have always been available for the burial of British and foreign nationals of any denomination.

## **THE BLACK WATCH**

In the old cemetery referred to above, in the centre under a tree is the grave of Sergeant McGaw, V.C.<sup>16</sup>, covered by a fine Byzantine sarcophagus, bearing crosses on the four faces, and on the top of one side, a Victoria Cross in relief, and on the other side is an inscription which reads:

**No. 141 Sergeant Samuel McGaw, V.C.  
42nd Royal Highlanders (Black Watch),  
died on the line of march to Camp Chiftlik Pasha of the heat apoplexy,  
22nd July 1878. Aged 40 years.**

Sergeant McGaw had been awarded the Victoria Cross for an act of gallantry in the Ashanti campaign. On the wall of the cemetery there is a plaque with the following inscription:

**In memory of  
Sgt. Samuel McGaw, V.C.  
Privates  
James McDonald  
George Mair  
James Barrie  
of  
The Royal Highlanders  
and  
Steven Tronbridge, Army Hospital Corps  
who died in Kyrenia  
A.D. 1878**

The names are also commemorated on brass plates in St Andrew's Church.

When in 1878 Cyprus came under British rule, a regiment of the Scottish Highlanders, the Black Watch<sup>17</sup>, was sent from Malta, and landed in Cyprus in the July of that year. Shortly afterwards some of the men, including Sergeant McGaw were taken ill and died, probably of malaria.

Some time afterwards, it was found that the ground on which they were buried had been ploughed up, and all trace of the graves destroyed. Certain members of the regiment, we are told, went one moonlight night, and after taking measurements from a certain tree, discovered the remains, and re-interred them in the English Cemetery in Upper Kyrenia.

---

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk/index/lance-sergeant-samuel-mcgaw>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.theblackwatch.co.uk/>

## WILTSHIRE REGIMENT MEMORIAL

The following information has been supplied by Major J.B. Peters MBE, curator of the Museum of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire)<sup>18</sup>.

The Wiltshire Regiment<sup>19</sup> was the resident battalion in Kyrenia from 1956-1959, and so St Andrew's played a significant part in its day to day life. The tablet was erected to the memory of those who died just prior to the battalion's departure for home, and the amalgamation with the Royal Berkshire Regiment (in Nicosia at that time) to form the present Regiment.

The details concerning the deaths of those listed are as follows:

2nd Lt. A.K. Stevens, killed in a climbing accident (17/11/57)

Pte. C.Y. Read, killed in action (28/9/56)

Pte. K. Reynolds, accidental death {16/2/56}

Pte. R. Gould, died of wounds received in action (18/3/56)

Pte. E.F. Godsell, Traffic accident (13/3/57)

Mary Wallace Holton WVS, killed, Pte. C.V. Head was her driver on this occasion (28/9/56)

William Jamieson (Church of Scotland) - Ambushed and killed whilst driving his little van, which he used to deliver papers and books to troops in outlying districts.



Photograph by Andrew Carnan (Warden)



Photograph by Ian Bell (Warden)

---

<sup>18</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duke\\_of\\_Edinburgh%27s\\_Royal\\_Regiment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duke_of_Edinburgh%27s_Royal_Regiment)

<sup>19</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Wiltshire\\_Regiment\\_%28Duke\\_of\\_Edinburgh%27s%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wiltshire_Regiment_%28Duke_of_Edinburgh%27s%29)



## CHURCHWARDENS

The first churchwardens at St Andrew's were not appointed until 1956

1956	Brigadier J.H. Antice, C.K. Seaman
1957	--
1958	--
1959	F.H.J. Maxse
1960	F.H.J. Maxse, P. Nason
1961	--
1962	--
1963	J.D. Shepherd
1964	--
1965	P. Nason
1966	--
1967	--
1968	E. Langham
1969	K.H. Hartley
1970	K.H. Hartley, J.K. Luard
1971	K.H. Hartley, J.K. Luard
1972	E. Langham, J.K. Luard, M. Drake
1973	E. Langham, J.K. Luard, M. Drake
1974	E. Langham, M. Drake
1975	E. Langham
1976	Col. B.E. Ffrench
1977	Col. B.E. Ffrench, H.J. Ffrench
1978	Miss D.L. Robinson
1979	--
1980	Miss D.L. Robinson, J.B.M. Horner
1981	--
1982	J.B.M. Horner, Lt.Col. G.E. Brierley
1983	Lt.Col. G .E. Brierley, A.G. Carnan
1984	--
1985	--
1986	A.G. Carnan, Major I.E. Bell
1987	--