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STATEMENT

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CORRESPONDENCE

WITH THE

ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

AND THE

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS

CONCERNING A

PROPOSED NEW CHURCH

AT

TONBRIDGE

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N.B.—The footnotes in inverted commas are a copy of the pencil-marks referred to in the letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated December 1, 1875.

Vide infra, p. 35.

STATEMENT AND CORRESPONDENCE

CONCERNING A PROPOSED NEW

CHURCH AT TONBRIDGE.

THE Committee formed in 1873 for the purpose of establishing a New Church at Tonbridge deem it their duty to circulate the following Statement and Correspondence for the information of Subscribers to the undertaking.

The Committee was constituted by mutual agreement in the Summer of 1873, in consequence of general complaints respecting the want of accommodation in the Parish Church, and the mode of conducting the Services. In the month of October following, a memorial, signed by eighty-two highly respectable householders of Tonbridge, was presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in whose Diocese the town is situated. The memorial set forth the necessity of an additional Church, and prayed his Grace to sanction the endeavour to supply that want. In a reply, dated October 14, 1873, the Archbishop was pleased to advise the memorialists minutely and at considerable length as to the course they should pursue,¹ *Vide infra, p.9.*

(1) if the concurrence of the Vicar were obtained; p. 12.
(2) if the promoters did 'not expect to obtain the co-operation of the Vicar to their scheme.'

The Committee acted and relied upon the advice given

¹ 'This is a mis-statement.'

in this letter, submitted a copy of it to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and represented to them, as the letter warranted them in doing, that the proceedings of the Committee had the sanction of his Grace.² They then, by letter, fully informed the Vicar of their undertaking; and as he, in reply, expressed strongly his determination of opposing them, they adopted the suggestion of the Archbishop, and elected to proceed under what are commonly called the Peel-Blandford Acts, or the New Parishes Acts. These statutes dispense with the consent of the Incumbent and Patron of the Church of a Parish out of which a separate District is formed, and enable the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to constitute such a District with the consent of the Diocesan alone.

In the Autumn of 1873 the Committee issued a circular,³ in which they referred to the preliminary correspondence with the Commissioners and the Archbishop, and announced that, with the sanction of his Grace, the Commissioners were disposed to assign a District under the New Parishes Acts, and that if an endowment fund of £100 per annum were raised, the Commissioners would augment it by a grant of £50 per annum from their Common Fund.

The Committee laboured indefatigably for a year and a half to collect subscriptions, and at length were enabled, in the latter part of the year 1874, to inform the Ecclesiastical Commissioners that they were prepared to pay over the required sum. They thereupon received from the Commissioners a formal authority to pay the money

² 'Mis-statement.'

³ 'Was this ever shown to the Archbishop for his approval?'

into the Bank of England, and were informed of the decision of the Commissioners to augment the endowment by a permanent grant of £50 per annum.

Prior to this all the legal steps had been taken for conveying to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners an admirable site for the Church, given gratuitously by Mr. Stenning, one of the Committee. The title was investigated by the solicitors to the Commission, the conveyance was executed by Mr. Stenning, sealed with the seal of the Commission, and duly registered in the Registry of the Diocese of Canterbury. p. 18.

On Friday the 9th of April 1875, two members of the Committee called at the Office of the Commission to arrange certain details respecting the payment and transfer of the endowment fund. To their utter amazement they were informed that the Archbishop did not intend to grant a new District, but instead thereof had sanctioned a proposal of the Vicar and Patron to establish a Chapel of Ease.

It was evident from this announcement that representations had been made in secret to his Grace, to which it was desirable that a reply should be given. They therefore wrote to the Archbishop, asking him to give them an opportunity of explaining anything in their proceedings to which he objected. p. 21.

On the 28th of April 1875, his Grace's Chaplain wrote to the secretaries of the Committee, asking them to call upon his Grace at Lambeth Palace on the 4th of May, and stating that 'his Grace would ask the Vicar to see him the same day, that he might have the opportunity of hearing his side of the question.' *

* It will be seen, by a letter in the subjoined Correspondence, that the Archbishop had officially informed the Commissioners, before the previous 12th of April, that he had preferred the scheme of the Patron. See also p. 35. p. 20.

The mode in which the Archbishop now heard both sides was as follows: first, the Vicar and the Patron's solicitor had a long consultation with the Archbishop, from which the deputation of the Committee was excluded. The deputation was then admitted to his presence, and he informed them that he had decided in favour of the scheme of the Patron, as he wished to avoid dividing the Parish; after some further discussion he suggested that the Committee should confer with the Patron, and that the two parties should again come before him. The conference was declined by the Patron, and the second interview took place on the 10th of May. As on the former occasion, first the Vicar, Patron, and his solicitor were allowed to make statements in private, and without any opportunity of reply. Next the deputation from the Committee was admitted, and the Archbishop at once said that he thought it a pity to divide the Parish, and had resolved to accept the offer of the Patron. A member of the Committee protested, 'Surely your Grace will not decide on an *ex parte* statement?' After some contest the deputation was allowed to proceed with the forlorn labour of making an explanation, and endeavouring to meet such objections to their scheme as they surmised ⁴ to have been made by the Patron. The Archbishop said he had a discretion to refuse the grant of a District. The members of the Committee replied, that when the Legislature gave a discretionary power, it was surely intended that it should be exercised, not from caprice or favour to an interested party, such as was the Patron in this case. The Archbishop replied that the ground on which he based his

⁴ 'Totally untrue.'

decision was that the Committee proposed to form a district containing a population of less than four thousand persons. The Committee replied that the same objection would be applicable to the scheme of the Patron: that if the population were not large enough to justify the planting of a new Church, neither did it justify the erection of a Chapel of Ease.⁵

The members of Committee urged the approval and aid which had been accorded to them up to the last step by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The Archbishop replied that they were a very respectable body, but he was not bound by the proceedings of their Committees.

It was now evident that no argument would move his Grace from the decision which he had thought fit to communicate in the first instance through that very body; the deputation therefore withdrew.

The gist and sum then of their complaint is, *that not only did the Archbishop not warn them that he would require the consent of the Vicar, but he distinctly encouraged⁶ them to proceed on the assumption that such consent would be refused, and then put his veto on their scheme without hearing a word on their side.*⁷ p. 12.

The subscriptions have been returned, the site given for a new Church has been re-conveyed to the donor; and this Statement is circulated by the Committee to show the manner in which their well-grounded hopes have been frustrated, and as serving to illustrate the difficulties which attend the application of the Statutes for promoting Church Extension in the Diocese of Canterbury.

⁵ 'Nonsense.'

⁶ 'Not true.'

⁷ 'Totally false.'

CORRESPONDENCE.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.

July 22, 1873.

SIR,—I have the honor, on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 17th instant, upon the subject of the proposed formation of a new Ecclesiastical District at Tonbridge, and in reply I beg to explain that, under the provisions of the 'New Parishes Acts' (6 & 7 Vict. c. 37, and 19 & 20 Vict. c. 104), it is competent to the Commissioners, if they should see fit, with the concurrence of the Bishop of the Diocese, to recommend to Her Majesty in Council that a separate District for spiritual purposes should be constituted *prior* to the provision of a consecrated Church for the District.

It is, however, essential to proceedings under these Statutes, either that a permanent endowment of at least £150 per annum should be secured to the new District at the time of its formation, or that an adequate (*i. e.* an equivalent) maintenance for the Minister should be available from other sources.

The patronage of a District thus constituted might be assigned to the promoters or to their nominees, in consideration of their contributing either towards the endowment or towards the erection of a permanent Church for the District.

On the other hand, the Church Building Acts enable the Commissioners, with the consent of the Diocesan and of the patrons of the Cures affected, when the new District is to be taken out of two or more existing Cures, to recommend to Her Majesty in Council the formation of a separate District, containing within its limits a consecrated Church, to which in fact the District would be assigned.

The amount of endowment required at starting, in cases dealt with under the Church Building Acts, rests in the discretion of the Commissioners, who are guided in this respect by the views of the Bishop, and by the circumstances of the particular case.

If the District were thus formed, the patronage of the Church might

be conveniently settled, *before* its consecration, by a Deed of Agreement under the Acts of the 8 & 9 Vict. C. 70, S. 23, and the 11 & 12 Vict. C. 37, S. 4, irrespective of any action on the part of this Board.

The Common Fund under the control of the Commissioners is not available for grants towards the erection of Churches, and paragraph 4 of Part III. of the enclosed copy of the Commissioners' Augmentation rules indicate the only terms upon which the Board could, under existing circumstances, consider an application for aid towards the endowment of the contemplated Cure.

The site for the proposed Church will have to be conveyed to the Commissioners, and upon hearing that the promoters are ready to proceed with this portion of the matter, I shall be happy to furnish the usual preliminary papers.

The Plans and Specification for the edifice should be forwarded to this Office, for the Commissioners' inspection, prior to the commencement of the works.

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

GEORGE PRINGLE.

George Stenning, Esq., Solicitor,
Tonbridge.

October 9, 1873.

*To the Right Reverend Father in God, Archibald Campbell,
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

The undersigned Clergymen and Lay members of the Church of England resident at Tonbridge beg leave to call your Grace's attention to the need of additional Church accommodation in Tonbridge, and respectfully to solicit your Grace's sanction of their endeavour to meet the want.

The ancient Parish Church of SS. Peter and Paul is inconveniently crowded, and it is a matter of notoriety that for some years back many families desirous of obtaining sittings in that Church have been unable to do so.

During the last few years numerous new dwellings have been erected in the vicinity of the Grammar School, and these houses are for the most part occupied or owned by the parents of boys who are being educated at the School.

Being newcomers, they have been, and are, unable to obtain assigned sittings in the Church of the old Parish in which they are domiciled, and being compelled to attend Divine worship elsewhere, have very good reason to complain of the inconvenience and disability to which their families are subjected.

Besides this, there is a large population of poor persons in a part of the town called Cage Green, who are also deterred from attending the above-mentioned Parish Church by its overcrowded state. We have reason to apprehend that many of these people habitually neglect Divine worship entirely.

The number of Dissenting Chapels in Tonbridge is seven, of which several have been newly erected or enlarged within the last few years : an additional Chapel is also in contemplation in the above-named district of Cage Green. On the other hand, notwithstanding the rapid growth of population in Tonbridge, there has been no corresponding increase of Church accommodation.

On the 2nd of June last several of your memorialists met together and adopted the following resolution:—

‘That, having regard to the deficiency of accommodation in the Parish Church of Tonbridge, it is desirable that a new Church should be built and endowed in the said Parish.’

They also constituted themselves a Committee to promote this object, and that Committee has since been considerably augmented.

After much consideration this Committee has resolved to memorialise your Grace to give your sanction to the following scheme, with such modification as your Grace may deem fit.

One of your memorialists, the owner of freehold land, has offered to give it gratuitously for the site of a new Church, and that offer has been accepted conditionally by the Committee. The site is exceedingly well adapted for the purpose: it is close to Dry Hill Park, which comprises a large part of the new neighbourhood above described, and also contiguous to the poor population of the aforesaid district of Cage Green.

Your Grace’s memorialists are ready to undertake the collection of funds for the erection upon this site of a part of the new Church to be used temporarily for Divine Service, and to provide the stipend of a Clergyman temporarily, until funds can be raised for completing and permanently endowing the Church.

There is not among your Grace’s memorialists a sufficient number of wealthy persons to enable them to undertake to build a complete Church and permanently endow it forthwith; but your Grace’s memorialists confidently believe, that if they obtain your sanction to some such provi-

sional scheme as that which they have indicated, the congregation established in the new Church would heartily and strenuously co-operate with them in raising the funds requisite for carrying out the design in its integrity.

It is the earnest desire of your Grace's memorialists that all peculiarities of ornament and ritual may be avoided, and that the rules of the Book of Common Prayer may be faithfully and loyally observed in the services of the proposed Church.

In conclusion, your memorialists believe that the influence of your Grace's exalted position is such that they doubt not that by Divine help they will be enabled ere long to complete and endow a Church in which many of the inhabitants of Tonbridge, who are now almost debarred from the enjoyment of the ordinances of Religion, may join in public worship according to the use of the Church of England.⁸

[*Here follow Eighty-two Signatures.*]

⁸ 'There is no allusion in this letter to the division of the parish. Was any more definite scheme submitted to the Archbishop for his approval before 1875?'

FRIDAY, *October 10, 1873.*

DEAR MR. LANGHORNE,—I feel very much obliged to you for the courteous note which you, as Secretary to the self-constituted new Church Committee, were good enough to send me last night.

I beg also to acknowledge the copy of the said Committee's Memorial to the Archbishop which accompanied your letter. I do not think I need trouble you with my remarks, either upon the document itself, or the singular list of names appended thereto, inasmuch as I shall probably hear from his Grace in the course of a few days on the subject. My opinions are well known to you, nor are they in the least modified since last I had the pleasure of discussing the matter with you. They are shared, I believe, by the Archdeacon and Rural Dean alike, nor have I any doubt at all as to what the issue will be with reference to this craze of Mr. Wadmore.*

I believe a more mischievous attempt has never been made in Tonbridge than this one, for promoting strife and illwill and theological rancour among the people.

* *This alludes to Mr. Wadmore's efforts in 1867 to provide a Chapel and School at Cage Green, towards which an old and respected parishioner had offered a site and £50; also to a presentment of grievances made by him in the name of the parishioners to the Archbishop at his visitation in November 1875, by his Grace's authority.*

How much better, how much more pleasing to God, were we to be seen with one mind and one heart striving together to raise the funds necessary for restoring and enlarging our fine old Parish Church. This latter is a work which must be done without further delay; and I put it to you whether, supposing Mr. Wadmore's scheme to succeed—which it certainly cannot—you would not prefer to give your aid to the grander and eventually-to-be-accomplished object of helping to restore the Parish Church.

I hope Mrs. Langhorne and your children are well, and with kind regards,

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

The Rev. John Langhorne.

JOHN T. MANLEY.

ADDINGTON PARK, CROYDON:

October 14, 1873.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th inst., enclosing a memorial signed by householders and heads of families in Tonbridge on the subject of the want of Church accommodation in that town.

As the promoters of the scheme which you have laid before me are not in a position, as you state, to raise sufficient sums to build and endow a new permanent Church, there are two courses only open to them—

(1) One course is, without seeking for a legal division of the Parish, to induce the Vicar of Tonbridge to allow the erection of a temporary Church in his Parish, while they undertake to provide the stipend of the Curate who is to officiate therein; which Curate would be under the direction of the Vicar, like any other duly licensed Curate, except so far as there may be an agreement to the contrary.

If (2) the promoters do not expect to obtain the co-operation of the Vicar to their scheme, on their offering to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners £3,000 for endowment, and proposing to include in a new District a population of 4,000 persons, they may get assigned a District under the Peel-Blandford Acts, with a view of ultimately erecting a permanent Church, when the money for such a purpose, in addition to the £3,000 for endowment, is forthcoming. Under these circumstances the Commissioners would probably make a grant of such an amount, to meet the £3,000, that the joint interest would be £150 per annum, to be paid as a stipend to the Clergyman undertaking the charge of the Peel

District; and he would be quite independent of the Vicar of the Parish.

Believe me to be,
Yours faithfully

The Revd. J. Langhorne.

A. C. CANTUAR.

Supposing a Peel District to be formed, I know nothing to prevent the income of the Incumbent from being increased by a supplement from the pew-rents in the temporary Church.

TONBRIDGE:

October 31, 1873.

SIR,—Referring to a communication addressed to you in July last by G. Stenning, Esq., of Tonbridge, and answered from your office in a letter dated July 22, 1873, concerning a project for building and endowing a new Church in a part of this town now forming a part of the ancient Parish of St. Peter and Paul, I have been requested, by the Committee formed for the purpose of carrying out that project, to beg that you will be so good as to lay before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—(i) copies of the memorial addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury upon the subject by the Committee, and signed by all the most influential inhabitants of Tonbridge, and (ii) a copy of the reply which we had the honour of receiving from his Grace. In reference to that reply, the Committee have requested me, as their Secretary, to ask the farther favour of an elucidation of certain points, raised by a consideration of the *second* alternative mentioned in his Grace's letter:—

The population of Tonbridge consisting of upwards of 9,000 souls—*i.e.*, upwards of 4,000 in the ancient parish, and about 5,000 in that of St. Stephen's—

1. Whether, having regard to the Act of Parliament 14 & 15 Vict. c. 97, it would be necessary that any new District should, under the circumstances, necessarily contain 4,000 persons, as stated in the Archbishop's letter?

2. Whether, in order to provide an Endowment, it is requisite to raise £3,000, as stated in the Archbishop's reply, or such a sum as, invested at adequate interest, should provide an income of £100 per annum?

3. Whether, having regard to the 2nd and 5th paragraphs of your reply, the sum must be raised at once, or whether a certain number of

years could be allowed for raising the sum requisite for permanent endowment, provided that the Committee guarantee an adequate stipend for the maintenance of a Minister in the interim ?

The Committee desire me to assure you that they would highly appreciate the favour of an explanation from you on the above points. They further desire me to ask you on what day, and at what hour, it would be convenient for you to see one or more members of the Committee, acting as a deputation, who would, on behalf of the Committee, be glad to have the advantage of a personal conference with you on certain details connected with the project which they are anxious to carry out.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

JOHN LANGHORNE,
Secretary.

To the Secretary, Ecclesiastical Commission.

TONBRIDGE NEW CHURCH COMMITTEE :

November 7, 1873.

Tonbridge New Church Committee.

SIR,—With reference to the above project, I have been requested, by the Committee constituted for the purpose, to ask you to do them the favour to send down the necessary Forms for the conveyance of the land offered by Mr. Stenning for the building of the New Church.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN LANGHORNE,
Secretary.

The Secretary, Ecclesiastical Commission.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.:
November 11, 1873.

SIR,—Your communication⁹ of the 31st ultimo was duly received; and since then two members of your Committee have called at this Office, and have stated that their visit would render unnecessary the interview which your letter proposed, but would not supersede the necessity for a written answer to that letter.

I beg therefore to add the following explanations to those which are given in my letter of the 22nd of July¹⁰ last to Mr. George Stenning, as to the proposed New Church and Cure at Tonbridge:—

1. If you (*i.e.* the promoters) desire to proceed under the New Parishes Acts, and so obtain a legal Cure *before* you have a permanent and consecrated Church, you will have to provide beforehand, and secure, either (*a*) a sum sufficient to produce £150 per annum, or (*b*) a sum sufficient to produce £100 per annum, the Commissioners being asked to grant the remaining £50 per annum.

If you adopt this latter method, and supposing that you wished the case to take its chance of obtaining a grant in 1874, your application should be delivered here by the 30th instant, but your benefaction (£100 per annum) would not be payable unless and until the Commissioners had made the grant.

Tithe Rentcharge and Debenture Stock of first-class Railways are eligible as a benefaction, and the Commissioners might be asked to assign the patronage of the new Cure to the donors of the £100 or £150 per annum, or to their nominees.

2. It is not necessary that a new Cure should contain a population of 4,000 or of any given number, except, with any view there may be of deriving some degree of advantage at a future period from the possible applicability to the case of some regulation which the Board, might perhaps make in the nature of that indicated under Part II. of the enclosed Rules for 1873.

3. Instead of going under the New Parishes Acts, you might proceed under the Private Patronage Acts, one of which (14 & 15 Vict. c. 97) is quoted in your letter. If so, you would have to provide—(*a*) a permanent Church to be approved by this Board, (*b*) an endowment of £100 at least, and (*c*) a small repair fund of £150 or £200; and in

⁹ 'What communication, and where is it?'

¹⁰ 'Where is this letter of July 22?'

consideration of these things, the Commissioners, if they saw fit, might, with no other consent than that of the Diocesan, vest the Church in the promoters or their nominees, and ultimately, *i.e.* after consecration, assign a legal District to the Church.

4. I may repeat that, under whatever Statutes you proceed, the site for your *permanent* Church will have to be conveyed to this Board, and the Plans &c. for the building will have to be approved by this Board. Of course, even under the New Parishes Acts, it is expected that a permanent Church will be provided at some time or other for the new Cure.

I am, Sir,
Your very obedient Servant

GEORGE PRINGLE.

P.S.—Since the foregoing was written I have received your letter of the 7th instant,¹¹ and in reply to it I beg to send you the accompanying papers. Before you return the undertaking for costs, you will do well to let the Commissioners know whether the promoters of this case intend to proceed under the New Parishes Acts or under the Private Patronage Acts.

G. P.

Revd. John Langhorne, Tonbridge.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W. :
November 24, 1873.

Proposed New Church and District in Tonbridge V.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 17th instant, and to acquaint you that Messrs. White, Borrett, & Co., of No. 6 Whitehall Place, have been instructed to take the necessary steps, on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, for completing the proposed conveyance of the site for the intended new Church at Tonbridge.

In proceedings for the constitution of an Ecclesiastical District under the 'New Parishes Acts,' the Patrons and Incumbents of the several Cures affected are (as has already been explained orally to

¹¹ 'Where is this letter?'

some of the promoters of the present case) entitled to receive notice of the contemplated arrangements, and to have any observations or objections which they may see fit to offer upon or to the scheme duly considered, but no one has a right of veto except the Bishop of the Diocese and (of course) the Commissioners.

Under the circumstances, I have recorded an offer of a benefaction of £100 per annum in aid of the endowment of the intended District, with a view to the consideration of such offer at the next distribution of the Common Fund, which will take place probably in February next.

I shall be glad, however, to know in what way it is proposed to provide this endowment, if met by the Commissioners.

enclose herewith two copies of the form in which application should be made to the Commissioners for the constitution of a District under the New Parishes Acts, one of which I will thank you to fill up and return to this Office.

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

GEORGE PRINGLE.

Rev. John Langhorne, Tonbridge.

April 1874.

Proposed New Church.

WE, the undersigned members of the Committee for erecting a New Church at Tonbridge, undertake, in the event of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners seeing fit to assign a District to the said Church, that a sum producing an endowment of £100 per annum shall be paid to the Commissioners on or before the 1st day of May 1874.

JAMES FOSTER WADMORE.
 HOMERSHAM COX.
 GEORGE STENNING.
 GEO. A. ANGIER.
 HERBERT N. EVANS.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W. :

December 29, 1874.

SIR,—

Tonbridge St. Augustine Proposed Church in Tonbridge V.

Conveyance of Site.

I have the honour to acquaint you that the Deed conveying a piece of Land as a site for the above proposed Church has been sealed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, and has been transmitted to Mr. W. H. Cullen, of Canterbury, in order to its being registered in the Registry of the Diocese of Canterbury.¹²

I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

DIGBY GREEN,
for the Secretary.

Revd. John Langhorne, Tonbridge.

DRYHILL, TONBRIDGE :

January 9, 1875.

Tonbridge St. Augustine's Proposed Church.

SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge, with my thanks, the receipt of your letter acquainting me that the Deed conveying a piece of land as site for the proposed Church here has been sealed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and transmitted to the Registry of the Diocese.

Allow me to submit to you a Form of Circular with the names of five Trustees, in whose hands the Committee propose to place the Patronage of the Church, if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Archbishop think fit to approve of them; and to request you to be so kind as to inform me whether any further steps should be taken on our part towards obtaining this approval, or in any other way towards the object which we have in view.

I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

HERBERT N. EVANS.

To the Secretary,
Ecclesiastical Commission for England.

¹² ' Did the Committee ever consult the Archbishop as to any of these steps ? '

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.
January 14, 1875.

SIR,—

Tonbridge St. Augustine's Proposed District.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 9th instant¹³ relative to the above proposed District, and in answer I write to say that I am inclined to think that, in the event of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England making a grant to meet the benefaction which has been offered to them in this case, they will be prepared to approve any arrangement respecting the patronage of the District which may be desired by the Donors of the Endowment Fund.

I may add that no further steps in the matter need, so far as I am aware, be taken by the promoters until after the Commissioners shall have decided upon the offer of a benefaction.

I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

GEORGE PRINGLE.

Herbert N. Evans, Esq., Dry Hill, Tonbridge.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,
10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.:
February 23, 1875.

SIR,—

Tonbridge St. Augustine.

Proposed District out of Tonbridge V.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England have considered the circumstances of the several cases in which a benefaction has been offered to them with a view to obtaining a grant from the 'Common Fund' during the present year; and I am directed to inform you that they are prepared to charge upon such Fund a perpetual annuity of £50 in aid of the endowment of the above proposed District, to meet the benefaction of £3,000 sterling offered in favour of such District, upon condition that the benefaction be paid to the Commissioners' credit at the Bank of England on or before the 1st May next, and that the constitution of the proposed District under the 'New Parishes Acts' be

¹³ 'Where is this?'

duly effected—the patronage to be vested in five Trustees, as desired by the promoters.¹⁴

I enclose a letter to the Cashiers of the Bank of England, which must be presented with the benefaction moneys.

The Grant will take effect as from the day upon which an Instrument for securing it may be published in the *London Gazette*, as required by the Act 29 & 30 Vic. c. iii.; but the Commissioners will of course not be in a position to seal and publish such an Instrument until after the benefaction shall have been paid over to them, and the constitution of the District duly completed.

I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

GEORGE PRINGLE.

Herbert N. Evans, Esq., M.D.,
Dry Hill Park, Tonbridge.

[Enclosed in the above letter.]

10 WHITEHALL PLACE, S.W.:

1875.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England.

GENTLEMEN,—I hereby request you to receive the sum of £3,000 to be placed to the credit of the account of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, in the matter of Tonbridge St. Augustine Endowment.

GEORGE PRINGLE,

Secretary.

To the Cashiers of the Bank of England.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION,

10 WHITEHALL PLACE, LONDON, S.W.:

April 12, 1875.

SIR,—Since the receipt of your letter of the 26th of February last, with reference to the proposed District of St. Augustine, Tonbridge, the Patron, Vicar, and Churchwardens of the Mother Parish of Tonbridge have addressed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England a memorial setting forth their objections to the separating any further territory from the Mother Church, and furnishing statistics with a view to demonstrating that any further accommodation which may be needed

¹⁴ 'Was the Archbishop's consent to this proposal ever asked?'

in the Parish would be more conveniently met by a Chapel of Ease to the Mother Church than by a separate Church and District.

The matter having been referred to the Archbishop of Canterbury, his Grace has informed the Commissioners that he prefers the Scheme for the erection of a Chapel of Ease.

Under these circumstances I am directed by the Board to acquaint you, as the representative of the Promoters of the St. Augustine's proposed District, that this being the view taken by the Diocesan, the Commissioners are unable to take further steps for effecting the constitution of the intended Cure.

I am, Sir, your very obedient Servant,

Herbert N. Evans, Esq., M.D.

GEORGE PRINGLE.

Dry Hill Park, Tonbridge.

TONBRIDGE :

April 12, 1875.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

It has been the sincere wish and intention of the promoters of the Scheme for procuring more Church accommodation and Pastoral care in Tonbridge, not only to acknowledge the authority, but also to submit with dutiful obedience to the wishes, of their Diocesan. In that spirit, the first step which they took was to apply to your Grace for your sanction; and, possessed with the same feelings still, they respectfully solicit the attention of your Grace to the enclosed printed copy of correspondence, including a letter from yourself of the 14th of October 1873. It was a reply to a Memorial signed by eighty-two of the householders of Tonbridge, praying for your sanction of their endeavours to establish a new Church in this town.

In reply, your Grace was pleased to advise the memorialists, minutely and at considerable length, as to the course they should pursue: (1) if they obtained the concurrence of the Vicar; (2) if the promoters 'did not expect to obtain the co-operation of the Vicar to their Scheme.'

In an autograph postscript your Grace added that, 'supposing a Peel district to be formed,' the income of the Incumbent might be increased from pew-rents.

The Committee for establishing the new Church, ever since that

reply was given, have acted and relied on the advice which it contained. They adopted the suggestion of your Grace that a Peel District should be formed, submitted a copy of your letter to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and represented to them, as your letter warranted them in doing, that they had your Grace's sanction of their proceedings.¹⁵ It is clear, from the long correspondence with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners which has since ensued, that the Commissioners also acted on that assumption.¹⁶

For the last year and a half the Committee have been patiently and indefatigably labouring to get the Church established. They have at length succeeded in obtaining the requisite funds for the endowment, and have, under the direction of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, taken all the legal steps necessary for the constitution of a new District.

A site admirably adapted for a new Church was given gratuitously by a member of our Committee. The site and the title to it were approved of by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The conveyance, in December last, was sealed by them, and transmitted by them to Mr. W. H. Cullen, of Canterbury, and is deposited in the Diocesan Registry. We enclose a copy of the receipt for the costs paid to the solicitors of the Commissioners. We enclose also a copy of a letter of the 14th of January 1875, in which the Secretary (Mr. Pringle) informs us that in the event of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners making a grant to meet the benefaction offered to them, they would probably be prepared to approve of any arrangement respecting the Patronage of the district which might be desired by the donors of the endowment fund.

In February last the Commission, of which your Grace is the Head, informed us that 'the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have considered the circumstances of the several cases in which a benefaction has been offered to them, and that the fund offered by us would be accepted, and that, upon the constitution of a new District, they would grant an additional sum of fifty pounds per annum to the stipend of the Incumbent.'

On Friday last two members of our Committee called upon the Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commission to arrange certain details respecting the payment and transfer of the endowment fund. To their utter amazement and consternation they were informed that the Archbishop did not intend to grant a new District, but instead thereof

¹⁵ 'A mis-statement.'

¹⁶ 'Who told the Commissioners that they had Archbishop's sanction? Why was he not personally communicated with?'

would sanction a proposal of the Vicar and Patron of the living of Tonbridge to establish a Chapel of Ease near the town.

We cannot believe that this announcement represented a final decision. The exalted position which your Grace occupies renders it simply impossible to suppose that you would allow us¹⁷ to act for a period of eighteen months upon the sanction clearly and unmistakeably given by your letter of the 14th of October 1873, and then withdraw that sanction without one word of explanation on the part of your Grace, or any opportunity of explanation on our part.

Moreover, our proceedings have been sanctioned, step by step, by the Commission over which your Grace presides. The conveyance of a site was formally accepted and sealed by them, and they decided to make a Grant in aid of the funds of the new Church. We assumed that the Ecclesiastical Commission does not take serious steps of this kind without due deliberation, and we therefore [looked upon them as final.

The announcement made to us on Friday last was not preceded by any intimation, direct or indirect, of any change of intention on the part of your Grace. It seems to us certain that you have been influenced by some misinformation; but as to its nature, we are driven to conjecture. Possibly it may have been represented to you that we have taken proceedings under the 'Private Patronage Acts,' which give the Incumbent and Patron of an existing Church a prior option of building a new Church themselves. But we did not proceed under those Acts. Adopting the suggestions of your Grace, we applied for the formation of a 'Peel District' under the New Parishes Acts, which give no such option to the Incumbents and Patrons.

We confidently assume that your Grace will not come to an adverse decision without giving us an opportunity of explanation, if there has been anything in our proceedings to which you object.

We have no apprehension that your Grace will refuse us that opportunity, as it is so utterly contrary to the fundamental principles of justice to decide on *ex parte* statements. We have taxed ourselves to the utmost of our means, we have laboured indefatigably to procure subscriptions from a very large number of persons and from important public bodies; our sole object has been to promote the honour and glory of God by the erection of a Church free alike to rich and poor, and providing Pastoral care where its want is grievously felt. Your Grace, to whose care as Primate the interests of the Church are

¹⁷ 'Was the Archbishop ever consulted during these eighteen months?'

committed, will not, we trust, without assigned cause, render fruitless our long-continued and faithful exertions.

We have the honour to remain,
Your Grace's most humble and obedient Servants,

JOHN LANGHORNE,
HERBERT N. EVANS.

To the most Reverend
The Archbishop of Canterbury.

DRYHILL, TONBRIDGE:
April 13, 1875.

SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April 12th, informing me, as representing the promoters of the St. Augustine's proposed District, that in consequence of a Memorial addressed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners by the Patron, Vicar, and Churchwardens of the Mother Church in opposition to the formation of a new District, the matter has been referred to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that his Grace prefers another Scheme; also that, under these circumstances, the Commissioners are unable to take further steps towards constituting the intended Cure.

I am instructed by the Committee to request you to have the goodness to lay before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners a copy of a letter which they have sent to the Archbishop, stating their grounds for begging his Grace to afford them an opportunity of giving an answer to or explanation of the above-mentioned Memorial, of which they heard for the first time at the Office of the Commission on Friday last. I am instructed also to send you a copy of a letter which we received from his Grace in answer to our original Memorial, a year and a half ago, in which his Grace gives his sanction to our Scheme,¹⁸ and his advice how to proceed if we did not expect to have the co-operation of the Vicar.

We venture to hope with confidence, that his Grace will not refuse us this favour; and therefore we respectfully but earnestly entreat the Commissioners to leave our case open until we have had an interview with the Archbishop, and stated our side of the case.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

To the Secretary,

HERBERT N. EVANS.

Ecclesiastical Commission.

[A copy of the preceding letter was enclosed.]

¹⁸ 'Mis-statement.'

TONBRIDGE :

April 16th, 1875.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—The enclosed Petition has just been brought to us with a request that we would forward it to your Grace, with an assurance of respectful and dutiful submission, and state at the same time that it is in numerous instances the spontaneous expression of feeling on the part of those who have signed it, that it includes the signatures of inhabitants of all ranks and conditions of life, and that the number of signatures might have been greatly increased had there been a longer time than twenty-four hours to enrol the names.

We are,
Your Grace's very obedient Servants,

JOHN LANGHORNE.
HERBERT N. EVANS.

The most Reverend
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

MEMORIAL.

April 1875.

To the most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

WE, the undersigned inhabitants of Tonbridge, humbly pray your Grace *not* to withdraw your sanction of the Scheme for establishing a new Church in this town, in accordance with the Memorial of householders of Tonbridge, to which your Grace gave a favourable reply in the year 1873.

[133 Signatures.]

LAMBETH PALACE :

April 20, 1875.

DEAR SIRs,—I am desired by the Archbishop of Canterbury to acknowledge your letter of the 12th instant, in reference to the proposed new Church of St. Augustine's, Tonbridge.

His Grace observes that you state that you had 'his sanction clearly and unmistakeably given in the year 1873' for your present scheme. You then refer, in proof of the above statement, to a letter from him, of which you enclose a printed copy, dated 14th October 1873. His

Grace, in that letter, informed you of two modes in which you might proceed, not intending to intimate his sanction either of one or the other, until a definite scheme had been distinctly laid before him; and in reference to that alternative, which related to a Peel District, he mentioned that, according to his view of the matter, a population of 4,000 should be included in such new District, supposing one to be sanctioned.

His Grace thinks there must be some mistake in your reference to his letter of October 14th, 1873, as understood to sanction your present scheme.

If you have any further letters of his Grace on which you ground your allegation, he would be glad to receive copies of them.

With regard to your communications with the Ecclesiastical Commission, these have, I presume, been conducted, as in all such cases, through Committees of which his Grace is not a member; and I should feel much obliged if you would forward, with a view of their being submitted to his Grace, any documents which may show that he was consulted as to the desirableness of the formation of such a District between the date of October 14th, 1873, and the present time.

You are probably aware that the first of the alternative schemes, mentioned in his Grace's letter of October 14th, 1873, has now received his sanction, and that the Patron of Tonbridge has engaged to provide for the spiritual wants of the District in question by engaging to contribute £2,000 towards the erection of a Chapel of Ease, which will give all the accommodation requisite for the more sparsely populated part of the Parish, and further by adding another £1,000 by way of Endowment.

The Patron is also prepared to guarantee a payment of £100 a year for a resident Curate until the Chapel is built and paid for, and a similar income is provided either by additional Endowment or pew-rents.

Believe me to be, yours faithfully,

H. MAXWELL SPOONER,

Chaplain.

The Rev. J. Langhorne and H. N. Evans, Esq.

COUNTY COURT, LLANIDLOES:

April 24, 1875.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—I am informed that a Memorial, extensively signed by the most influential inhabitants of Tonbridge, has been presented to your Grace, praying that your sanction, given in

1873, to a scheme for a new Church at Tonbridge, may not be withdrawn.

Absence from home on my County Court duties prevented me from signing the Memorial, and I now respectfully ask that my name may be considered as added to it.

The Committee for establishing a new Church at Tonbridge received from your Grace, in 1873, a letter advising them how they might get a new district under the Peel-Blandford Acts, if (in the language of the letter) 'the promoters do not expect to obtain the co-operation of the Vicar to the scheme.'

It would not be respectful to criticise your Grace's language. The tenor of the letter was unmistakeable. If I solicit the advice of some one high in authority—if he advises me to pursue a particular course, and I scrupulously pursue it, it would be idle sophistry to say afterwards he never sanctioned that course.

Beyond all question the letter directly sanctioned the efforts of the Committee. So it was understood by the inhabitants of Tonbridge. So it was understood by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who also offered a grant of £50 a year towards the endowment of the new Church, and accepted the conveyance of a site for it.

It would be difficult to imagine a more fatal discouragement of Church Extension than the sudden rejection by your Grace, without one word of notice or explanation, of the scheme of the Tonbridge Committee. They have to my knowledge been hard at work for two years, and after great difficulties succeeded in getting the preliminaries arranged, and at the last moment—the very eleventh hour—the Vicar and Patron, forced to involuntary activity, propose with the utmost secrecy to your Grace a scheme of their own.

If it is now to be said that the scheme of the Tonbridge Committee never had the sanction of your Grace, they are in effect told that they obtained money from the subscribers under false pretences. Is it just to inflict such an indignity on these gentlemen? By education, character, and position, they are gentlemen. They belong to no extreme party in the Church. To my knowledge, ultra-Ritualism and its opposite are equally repugnant to them. They are simply loyal Churchmen, striving to extend the benefits of the Church at Tonbridge. If your Grace needs to know why they, in common with the great majority of Churchmen at Tonbridge, cannot be satisfied with any scheme proposed by the Vicar and Patron, you have only to make inquiries, as to the spiritual condition of the Parish, of the Archdeacon within whose jurisdiction it is situated.

The issue distinctly raised is this—Is a Parish the special property of the Patron and Incumbent of the Church? Is any independent attempt to establish another Church a species of poaching on their preserves?

If your Grace decides these questions in the affirmative, the recent statutes for Church Extension have been passed in vain so far as the Diocese of Canterbury is concerned, and as soon as the facts are known to the public, all voluntary efforts at Church Extension must be abandoned as hopeless.

I have the honour to be,
Your Grace's most humble servant,

The most Reverend

HOMERSHAM COX.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

LAMBETH PALACE :

May 10th, 1875.

Proposed New Church at Tonbridge.

MY DEAR SIR,—Since acknowledging your Memorial of the 16th April, I have had two interviews with gentlemen interested in the two schemes for providing for the Spiritual wants of Tonbridge.

You are aware that when I wrote to the Rev. J. Langhorne on October 14th, 1873, respecting the proposal to build a new Church at Tonbridge, I pointed out the two courses which the law suggests in such cases—one of which avoids the necessity for a legal division of the Parish, and the other necessitates such a division under the Peel-Blandford Acts.

I pointed out, under the second head, that the promoters ought to be prepared to include in any new district a population of 4,000 persons.

In consequence of some misunderstanding, it appears that the gentlemen who wrote to me have thought, because the Peel-Blandford Acts do not require 4,000 inhabitants as a condition of a new District being formed, that they were entitled to have a new District, though the population proposed to be included in it does not, so far as I have been able to ascertain, consist of above 1,000 persons, and they have, without reasonable ground, taken for granted that they had my consent to such a division of the Parish.

So far as I can gather, no one is of opinion that the District retained for the Mother Parish Church of Tonbridge ought, on the score of the numbers of the population, to be divided. When, therefore, the Patron has come forward with a very liberal offer to erect a Chapel of Ease and pay an additional Curate to minister in it, I have felt that it would not be right to refuse to give precedence to his plan.

I regret that the gentlemen who are the promoters of the original plan have, apparently through some want of cordial communication between the various parties concerned, been led to suppose there were no difficulties in the way of their proceeding to divide the Parish, and that some unpleasant feeling has been caused by difficulties occurring, when their scheme was matured, which they had not expected.

In order to remove any such not unnatural irritation, I have thought it best to have conferences between the parties to the two schemes.

The result of these meetings has been that the nomination of a Curate to serve the Chapel of Ease to be erected by the Patron has been placed by the Incumbent in my hands as Diocesan, on the understanding that I shall appoint a gentleman who, while he will be acceptable to the Patron, will afford such pastoral ministrations and services as will meet the wants of the Parishioners of the upper portion of the town of Tonbridge, where the Chapel of Ease will be built.

I have every reason to hope that a Clergyman may thus be found who will be acceptable to the great majority of those who are anxious for a new place of worship, and that henceforward all those who are desirous of promoting the spiritual welfare of Tonbridge will be able heartily to co-operate together.

It shall be my endeavour to see that the Clergyman thus appointed shall, in carrying into effect the provisions of the Book of Common Prayer, so conduct the services in the Chapel of Ease as to meet the reasonable wishes of those who have sought to erect a new Church.

I remain, my dear sir,
Your faithful servant,

A. C. CANTUAR.

Dr. Evans, Dry Hill, Tonbridge, Kent.

TONBRIDGE :
 May 24, 1875,

Proposed New Church at Tonbridge.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—The Committee have desired me to convey to your Grace their thanks for your courteous letter of the 10th inst., and they fully appreciate your Grace's desire to satisfy all parties.

They attach the utmost importance to the last paragraph of your Grace's letter, and assume that it refers to a permanent and binding arrangement, and not one which is merely temporary; but as the Curate of the Chapel of Ease will legally be under the control of the Vicar, who has at all times shown himself exacting and tenacious of power, they cannot feel confident that he will abstain from interference. The position of a stipendiary Curate, whether of a Parish Church or of a Chapel of Ease, is regulated by an Act of Parliament (1 & 2 Vic. cap. 106), under which the Incumbent may dismiss him upon six months' notice, with the consent of the Diocesan, and a succeeding Incumbent may dismiss him upon six weeks' notice without such consent. It is obvious that any arrangement in accordance with your Grace's letter would be valueless if it were liable to be terminated after a period of six months, or at the next avoidance of the living of Tonbridge. The Committee therefore earnestly hope that your Grace will be pleased to explain the precise nature of the arrangement contemplated. They cannot view the placing of the appointment of the Curate in your Grace's hands as a concession of his rights by the Vicar, but simply as a solution of his difficulties; since, notwithstanding his own long-continued absences from the services of the Parish Church, from the visitation of the sick, and from the National Schools (the religious instruction in which is entirely under his control), he has for so long a time been unsuccessful in providing a licensed Curate for the regular discharge of these duties.

Your Grace adverts to the 'very liberal offer' of the Patron: the Committee have been long aware that it would be made rather than that their scheme should be carried out, but they worked on confidently under the guidance of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, with the impression that the gift of land could not have been conveyed to that body without your Grace's approval; and this impression became certain conviction when the Commissioners made a distinct offer of an annual grant for the proposed new District.

The Memorial lately presented to your Grace by a large number of the inhabitants undoubtedly expressed the earnest conviction of the vast majority of Churchmen in this Parish.

The Committee beg leave to thank your Grace for kindly and patiently listening to their representatives at the two interviews; they are convinced that nothing short of a distinct and independent ministration will satisfy the 'reasonable wishes' of the people of Tonbridge, and regret they cannot join in the furtherance of the scheme submitted to your Grace by the Patron and Vicar.

I have the honour to be,
Your Grace's obedient and humble Servant,

HERBERT N. EVANS,
Joint Secretary.

To the most Reverend
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

May 29, 1875.

Proposed New Church at Tonbridge.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 24th instant on the subject of additional Church accommodation at Tonbridge.

I do not know that I have anything to add in explanation of the position of the Curate whom I propose to appoint to Tonbridge: for you are aware, as your letter states, that he cannot be removed without my consent, except on the avoidance of the living; and in the event of a vacancy occurring, I should have no power to insist on his remaining.

I trust that the contemplated arrangement will prove satisfactory to the Parishioners.

Believe me to be, my dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,

A. C. CANTUAR.

Dr. Evans.

HANOVER HOUSE, TONBRIDGE:
July 21, 1875.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—Some of my fellow-Parishioners have asked me to forward to your Grace the enclosed Memorial. I earnestly entreat you in their name to give it a favourable consideration, and

use the powers vested in your Grace for their relief in their spiritual destitution, and not exclusively in the interest of the Patron and Vicar.

I have the honour to remain, my Lord Archbishop,
Your Grace's most humble and obedient Servant,

GEO. A. ANGIER.

His Grace

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

MEMORIAL.

To the most Reverend the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—We, the undersigned inhabitants of Tonbridge, learn with great regret and disappointment that your Grace declines to sanction the establishment of a new Church District in this place.

The substituted scheme for a Chapel of Ease dependent on the Parish Church has been proposed without any consultation with the inhabitants of Tonbridge, and is highly unsatisfactory to your memorialists.

We therefore respectfully but earnestly pray that your Grace will, in selecting a clergyman for the Chapel of Ease, provide that he shall in no way be subject to the control of the Vicar of Tonbridge.

[144 Signatures.]

¹⁹ [2 BROAD SANCTUARY, WESTMINSTER, S.W. :

November 11, 1875.

SIR,—I am desired by the Archbishop of Canterbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of November 8.

His Grace agrees with you that no good purpose would be subserved by your further continuing the correspondence; and would only remark, in conclusion, that he understands your repeated statement that you decline to render yourself liable for any law expenses in connection with the Commission of Enquiry, to be tantamount to your stating that you decline his offer to issue such a commission as alone would enter on an investigation of the complaints you have

¹⁹ 'This letter ought not to be omitted, being most important to the case.'—
[See p. 36.]

made with any hope of arriving at a just decision. You are aware, as you have yourself stated, that his Grace has long since received full reports from the Churchwardens, and any further investigation could only be satisfactorily conducted by a Commission under the Act, which he understands you to decline.

Believe me to be, Sir, yours truly,

Herbert N. Evans, Esq., JOHN B. LEE.
 Dry Hill, Tonbridge.]

DRYHILL, TONBRIDGE:

July 30, 1875.

Proposed New Church at Tonbridge.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—

In order to explain and justify their proceedings, the Committee for establishing a new Church at Tonbridge propose to publish their correspondence with your Grace and with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. I am instructed by the Committee to ask your Grace's permission to publish your letters, and also a note of the interviews between your Grace and deputations from the Committee.

I am

Your Grace's humble and obedient Servant,
 HERBERT N. EVANS,
 Joint Secretary.

The most Reverend
 The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

LAMBETH PALACE, S.E.:

August 4, 1875.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 30th ultimo,²⁰ I beg leave to say that, as far as I personally am concerned, you are quite at liberty to publish, as soon as you think fit to do so, the Correspondence on the subject of the Proposed New Church at Tonbridge.

With regard to your publishing also a note of the various interviews with me, and the deputations from the Committee, I should be glad first to see it before it goes to print, in order that no difficulties may arise as to its accuracy.

Believe me to be, yours truly,

Dr. Evans, A. C. CANTUAR.
 &c. &c. &c.

²⁰ 'Where is the letter of the 30th ultimo?'

DRYHILL, TONBRIDGE :

December 14, 1875.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,—In obedience to your Grace's desire to see, before it goes to print, the note of the various interviews with which the deputations from the Tonbridge Committee were favoured by your Grace, I beg leave to send a printer's proof of it, which has been submitted to the strict and careful scrutiny of the four members who formed the deputations.

I beg the favour of your Grace to return it to me as soon as may be convenient.

I am

Your Grace's obedient and humble Servant,

The most Reverend

HERBERT N. EVANS.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

December 18, 1875.

DEAR SIR,—I am desired by the Archbishop of Canterbury to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 14th instant, and its enclosure. His Grace has been much engaged, or you would have received an earlier answer.

I am instructed to inform you that his Grace by no means considers the statement which precedes the Correspondence to contain an accurate account of the facts.

You mention in your letter of December 14th that the notes of the various interviews alluded to 'have been submitted to the strict and careful scrutiny of the four members who formed the deputations.' I presume you mean the four gentlemen who represented your side of the case, and that you have not tested the accuracy of their impressions by reference to the deputations which represented the other side at these interviews. It seems not improbable that, as each party naturally viewed the whole subject in a different aspect, such a comparison of notes might have led to considerable alterations in the statement which you propose to print.

It is obvious also to remark that the correspondence annexed is not complete. It seems scarcely right that the letter of Mr. Lee, dated November 11, 1875, which alludes to the steps taken by his Grace to investigate complaints as to the condition of the Parish of Tonbridge, should not be seen side by side with the other letters. The omission (*sic*) also of several letters in the correspondence with the Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners makes it impossible to trace how far the

Committee of that body was or was not misinformed as to any sanction having been given by the Archbishop to your scheme, and indeed, as to the fact whether or not your scheme in any definite form was ever submitted for the approval of the Archbishop before April 1875.

In addressing his Grace in the year 1873, it would appear that you made no distinct proposal for subdividing the parish; and the Correspondence does not show when that proposal was first made, still less that such proposal was ever laid before his Grace till April 1875.

I have taken the liberty of making several pencil-marks on the paper you have sent to the Archbishop, which will draw your attention to many points which I consider to be inaccurate.

Believe me to be,

My dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

CRAUFURD TAIT,

Chaplain.

Herbert N. Evans, Esq.

&c., &c.

TONBRIDGE :

January 5, 1876.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

I am desired by the Committee to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 18th of December last, and its enclosure of the printer's proof of the Correspondence and prefixed Statement, with your Grace's remarks thereon.

That your Grace considers that it contains by no means an accurate account of the facts, is a censure too general to admit of any attempt at justification beyond an appeal to the Correspondence.

On the account of the interviews, which is the only matter now in question, your Grace, by the hand of your Chaplain, has made two remarks: on one sentence that it is 'totally untrue,' on another that a reply made by the Deputation was 'nonsense.' The sentence marked 'totally untrue' has been again submitted to the gentlemen who formed the Deputation, and they unanimously assert that it is true.

When the Committee considered the character of the opposition to their scheme which they had experienced, they did not think it either necessary or desirable to communicate with those who were deeply interested in thwarting them, and who had already declined a conference suggested by your Grace.

Besides the notes on the account of the interviews, your Grace has been pleased to make others on various parts of the Statement and the letters. On the paragraph commencing 'The gist and sum, then,

of their complaint' (p. 7), there are two notes—'not true,' and totally false.' The Committee are content to refer, in support of their statements, to your Grace's letter of October 14, 1873 (p. 12); the letter from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of April 12, 1875 (p. 20); and an announcement in the *Kent and Sussex Courier* of April 9, 1875 (a copy of which I subjoin *), that your Grace had refused to sanction their scheme. It was not until your decision had been thus announced that they had a hearing from your Grace.

With respect to Mr. Lee's letter of November 11, 1875, I beg leave to remind your Grace that it forms part of another Correspondence on the state of the Parish. It has nothing to do with the attempt to build a Church, was included here by error of the printer and marked out; but as your Grace thinks that it ought not to be omitted, it is inserted, as are also the other letters for which your Grace enquires, and all your Grace's notes on the proof-copy of the Statement and Correspondence.

The Correspondence shows plainly that the distinct proposal for subdividing the Parish was first made by your Grace in the letter of October 14, 1873, the first which we received from your Grace (p. 12), and it is referred to in that of May 10, 1875 (p. 28).

In concluding this Correspondence, the Committee desire me to express their regret that your Grace has thought it right to charge them with such a serious offence as that of making false statements. The tone of your Grace's remarks leaves them no hope of a withdrawal of this accusation, but from all impartial and uninterested persons who will read with attention the whole Correspondence, they venture to trust that they will receive a sentence of acquittal.

I am,

Your Grace's most obedient and humble servant,

HERBERT N. EVANS.

Joint Secretary.

The Most Reverend

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

* 'ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH, TONBRIDGE.—We are authorised to announce that the Archbishop of Canterbury has definitively REFUSED THIS SCHEME, and sanctioned the alternative one proposed by the Patron and Vicar.' (*The Kent and Sussex Courier*, April 9, 1875.)



