

## CHAPTER 10.

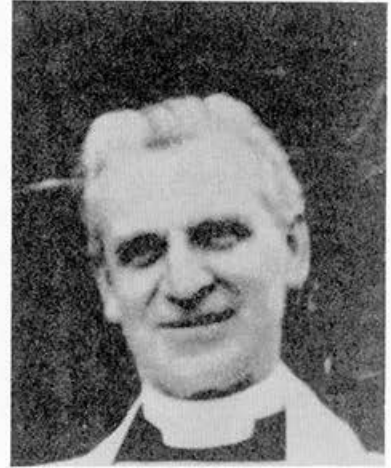
### THE REV. JOSIAH THOMAS CRATHORNE.

Essington owes a tremendous debt to the Rev. Crathorne who was Vicar of Bushbury-with-Essington from 1919 to 1933 and after that Vicar of Bushbury until 1955.

There is an old saying that it needs the right man in the right place at the right time for maximum impact to be made, and this was certainly proved to be true in the case of Mr. Crathorne and Essington.

Soon after his arrival at Bushbury in 1919, he realised that his parish was already so large as to be virtually unmanageable, and with growth and movement of population north of Wolverhampton planned for the 1920's and 1930's, the position could only get worse. He had two alternatives. He could either concentrate on Bushbury and leave Essington 'to get on with it' as best they could; or he could build up Essington to stand on its own feet and possibly, in the short term, take the risk of neglecting Bushbury whilst he did so. With great courage and foresight he chose the latter, and more difficult course.

His efforts came to fruition in 1933, after which he could concentrate solely on Bushbury.



Rev. Crathorne

From the correspondence in the records, it is unbelievable the amount of work he got through in the 1920's. There are innumerable letters to the Bishop, to the Diocesan Registrar, to solicitors, to the Building Committee, to the Church Commissioners - and not least to the solicitors and agent of Squire A.L. Vernon, regarding the acquisition of a site on which to build. Relations with the squire, by now a very old man, became strained to put it mildly and it was not until after seven years of negotiation (some of it acrimonious) that a site was finally secured.

In a report concerning the new church, the Walsall Observer in 1933 comments that "the existence of the new Church and Parish will owe much to the inspiration of the late Mr. J.C. Forrest and to the persistence and courageous leadership of the present vicar (Rev. J.T. Crathorne) and the support consistently given by the Essington people themselves. Self sacrifice and hard work have characterised both the Vicar and the people....." "The Vicar has been pressing forward this scheme for many years and no-one will be more content than he when the work is consummated."

One can imagine the Rev. Crathorne reading that last comment and uttering a heartfelt, "You can say that again!"

A most beautiful stained glass window in Bushbury Church perpetuates his memory. Essington people would enjoy seeing it.

*Augustus.*

~~██████████~~, by Divine permission LORD BISHOP of LICHFIELD,

To all Christian people to whom these presents shall come,

Greeting.

WHEREAS It hath been represented unto Us by the Reverend Fredericke Aston, Vicar of Bushbury with Essington in the County of Stafford and Vicar of Lichfield, and James Boulton and John Stess, Churchwardens there that there is a Mission Room situate at Newtown on the Parish of Essington aforesaid about three miles distant from the Church there, or thereabouts, that upwards of three hundred persons reside in the immediate vicinity of the said Mission Room who have no Church accommodations, and that it would be a great convenience to such persons if your Lordships would be pleased to grant your Licence for the performance of Divine Service and the Administration of Holy Baptism in the said Mission Room and that it is a fit and proper place in which Divine Service may be performed.

*Augustus.*

NOW KNOW YE that we, the said ~~██████████~~ Lord Bishop of Lichfield, taking the premises into our serious consideration, Have thought fit to grant, and by these Presents, by virtue of our power Ordinary and Episcopal, as far as by Law we may or can, Do hereby give and grant our Leave, Licence, and Authority unto *the*

*Reverend Fredericke Aston* \_\_\_\_\_ and to his Curate or

Curates lawfully appointed and licensed, to administer the Sacraments of Baptism ~~and Holy Communion~~, and to perform the several offices of Divine Service in the said *Mission Room* \_\_\_\_\_, according to the Rubrick of the Church of England, and not otherwise or in any other manner, Saving always to ourselves and our Successors our Episcopal rights, and also saving and reserving to the *Vicar* \_\_\_\_\_ of *Bushbury with Essington* aforesaid and his successors, all rights, profits, and perquisites heretofore due and belonging to him and them.

IN TESTIMONY whereof we have caused our Seal (which in this behalf We use) to be hereunto affixed.

DATED this *Twenty fifth* day of *July* \_\_\_\_\_ in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and ~~Eighty~~ *Twenty* Eight and of our Consecration, the *seventh*



*Augustus Lichfield*

*Registered at Lichfield  
 this 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1898*

*Hubert C. Hodson:*

*Registrar:*