

**CHAPTER 22.**  
**FORMER VICARS OF ESSINGTON**

The Reverend R.P. Cavendish was Vicar of Essington from 1934 to 1938 when he moved to Devon. During these years two of his children, Richard and Alison, were very young children in Essington and although their father is no longer with us, they send us greetings on our 60th Anniversary.

From Mr. Richard Cavendish:-

I was 4 years old when we moved to Essington and 8 when we went to Devon. My sister Alison was born in Essington. Unfortunately, I have only a few scattered memories of Essington; of going to Wolverhampton on an electric trolley bus; of playing in the back garden and once unintentionally treading on a frog and squashing it flat; of my father coming back one day saying he had bought a pie, to my mother's surprise as the larder was full, but it turned out to be a Pye wireless set; of being fitted with a horrible smelly claustrophobic gas mask (which I think happened at Essington in 1938); of a big grand house which I think must have been Hilton Hall. Our house stood on a dangerous corner and there were traffic accidents every now and again and people were brought in bruised and bleeding. A gypsy woman came to the house one day and I was scared stiff!

Essington was a mining village then and my father retained all his life a strong admiration and liking for people who earned a living by hard toil and in the face of danger.

From Miss Alison Cavendish:-

My memories of Essington are very few since I was only four when we went to Clovelly. I can, however, remember a good deal about being in hospital in Wolverhampton for an operation to correct a squint in one eye when I was 3 years old. I did not behave well!

Betty Roberts came to help look after me as a baby, and moved with us to North Devon. There she also looked after my younger brother Patrick, before being acquired to help in the convalescent home for wounded troops which occupied Clovelly Court for most of the war. Betty has been a valued family friend for all our lives, and I know that my father enjoyed his regular correspondence over the years with Mrs. Roberts who was an excellent letter writer.

The Rev. Cavendish was:-

Curate at Bushbury with Essington

1924 - 27

Curate at High Wycombe

1927 - 29

Curate at Henley on Thames

1929 - 34

Vicar of Essington

1934 - 38

Rector of Clovelly

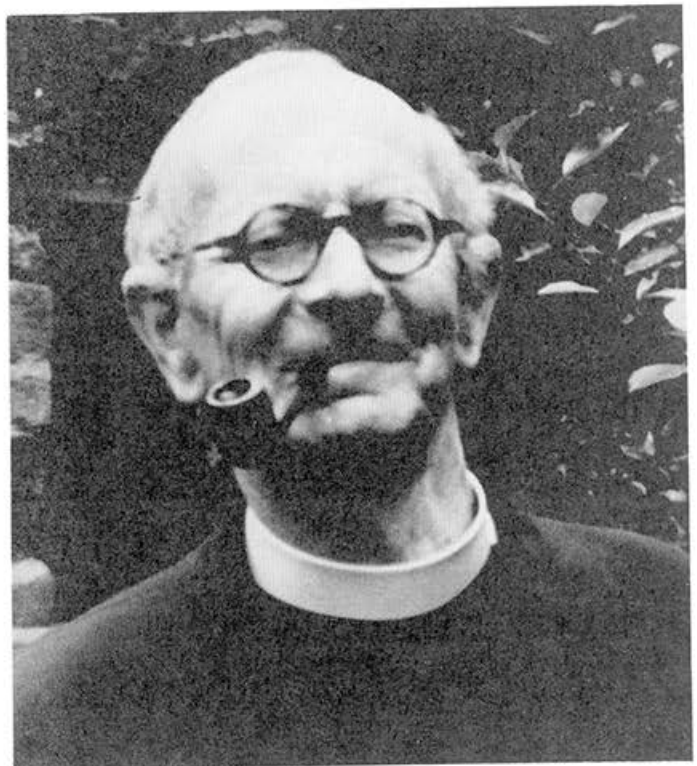
1938 - 44

Rector of Mells (Somerset)

1944 - 59

Vicar of Medmenham (Bucks)

1959 - 66



The Rev. R.P. Cavendish  
on his retirement in 1966



55 Church Walk  
Euxton,  
Chorley, Lancs.  
PR7 6HL

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to greet you all on this 60th Anniversary of the laying of the Foundation Stone of your Church, and to wish you well.

Nostalgia must inevitably play a great part in my thinking as I recall the nine years I spent as your Vicar. Many people who helped to make my stay so pleasant have now gone on to serve God on a higher plane: among them, Charles and Gladys Tudor, Sybil Pemberton, Wesley Hinks, Lizzie Richards, Sheila Asbury, Nancy Littler, Dorothy Sadler, Bill Barber, Percy Griffiths, Mrs. Roberts (Brownshore Lane) to name but a few. I remember them all with great affection.

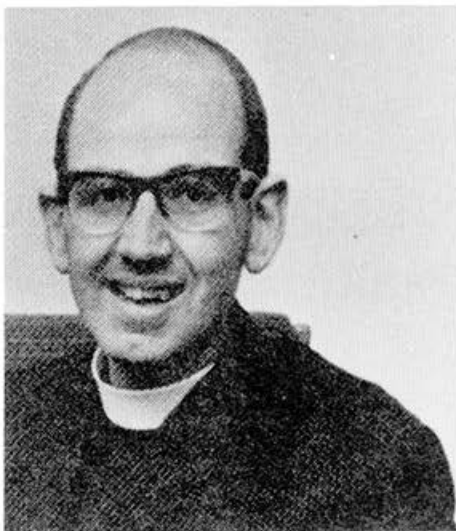
What eventful years they were! It was the time when the old Church at the junction of Hobnock and Bognop Roads gave place to new houses; it saw the introduction of Christian Stewardship, with the commitment that that involved; the inauguration of a magazine to serve the whole community; the making of tapestry kneelers for the Church which underwent a transformation with a new floor and lighting system as well as a massive overhaul of the magnificent organ. There was also the building of a new hall and a new school. Many adults were presented for Confirmation. Vestments were introduced for use at the Holy Communion and the Parish Communion was established as the main service of each Sunday.

Oh! the people of Essington have never been afraid of change and to embrace new ideas. May they long continue to do so.

Above all, there was the warmth of your friendship and the privilege of sharing in so many public and private occasions of your joys and sorrows, for which I am greatly indebted.

I thank God for your past and pray for your future. Freda joins me in sending greetings on this happy occasion, as do my two Essingtonian daughters, Helen and Sarah.

Affectionately,  
Cyril Jenkins.



It was James Barrie, author of Peter Pan, who said, "God gave us memory that we might have roses in December." After nearly a quarter of a century, how subjective and selective one's memories are.

There's the abiding memory of the part the Church in Essington played in uniting a parish that was really a series of hamlets. Then there's the closure of the Mission Church at Newtown. Then again, there's the opening of the Church Hall extension, the tennis court and the new classrooms at the School. Then there were the summer carnival processions of floats and the Christmas Fayre with a remarkable array of stalls and I must mention the memorable visit we paid to Worcester Cathedral.

Images of services crowd in - Stewardship Renewal, District Council Chairman's Sunday, Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and the dedication of the new cross above the altar.

Essington for me is a village at the grey edge of the Black Country, where the Church, Anglican and Methodist, is at the heart of community life. It is a village of commuters and farmers, of hard working, generous and friendly people.

As many people know, just over ten years ago I left the active ministry and obtained a M.B.A. at Manchester Business School. For the last five years I've been a Senior Officer at the University of Warwick. As Director of Residences, Catering and Conferences, I'm responsible for 4,000 student rooms, for 26 restaurants, snack bars and bars and for the vacation conferences which include 85,000 overnight stays a year.

Living just outside Stratford-on-Avon, we have probably the best view in Warwickshire, with a panorama stretching from Edgehill, site of the largest land battle fought on British soil, to the Welcome Hills, once admired by William Shakespeare.

If we have old memories, we must also have young hopes. May I send you my fond and warmest greetings on the occasion of St. John's 60th Anniversary.

Andrew Paine.



The Vicarage,  
Eaton Constantine,  
Shrewsbury.

Dear friends,

Congratulations to the people of St. John's, Essington on your 60th Anniversary!

Edith and I have happy memories of Essington, with our children Susan and Jonathan doing some of their growing up there - Jonathan blowing his own trumpet (needing no tuition for that!) and Susan playing the clarinet with the Lent family. We enjoyed the worship and the music at Church, especially the Sunday School Anniversary and other special occasions.

Does anyone remember 'Sailor Jack'? We had him in Church for Sea Sunday one year, lent for the occasion by Freda Jones. Your first Flower Festival was held when we were with you, on the theme of your patron, St. John the Evangelist. That I remember was a very happy week.

For some years we flew the flag of St. George from the church tower and people said they didn't need to listen to the weather forecast! What a marvellous view up there! And talking of weather, I remember walking with George (the Vicarage dog, not the Archbishop!) quite safely across one of the frozen ponds off Brownshore Lane.

Other enjoyable memories include working with the Middle School with Headteachers Stan Fletcher and David Brown. I noticed on my last visit that you still have in the Church the Stations of the Cross made by the children. I well remember sharing with Methodists the housegroups, services and visiting new people in Sneyd Park. In my time with you Jack Taylor, the First Division referee came to talk to the Men's Society, with whom we also spent a pleasant summer evening on the Severn Valley Railway. Also coming to mind are my visits to Mrs. Whitehouse of Broad Lane whose geraniums ran wild all over the conservatory. In my time too the open cast mining on the Holly Bank site was in full swing - I used to watch the machines digging out the great hole.

One of the features of Essington was the variety of things happening there; this is what made living and working there so enjoyable.

I know we should not make comparisons between vicars, but you could say that my time with you was a quiet lull between Andrew and Trevor - but it did not seem quiet to us!

I send my very good wishes.

Timothy Fox.

(Rev. Fox has now moved to Church Eaton, Stafford)

FROM REV. TREVOR GREEN (VICAR FROM 1982 - 90)



The Vicarage,  
Sandy Lane,  
Brewood,  
Stafford.  
ST19 9ET.

Dear friends of Essington.

What a joy to be invited to share with you in your 60th Anniversary. I do hope you will find it a time of great joy and celebration. I am delighted that I have had the privilege of sharing some eight years of my ministry with you from 1982 - 1990.

As many of you recall the Bishop thought my stay might be five years. Instead it turned out to be a little longer. They were eight wonderful years of ministry with a congregation who were prepared to grow and change in response to the message of the Gospel.

It really is quite remarkable when looking back to observe just how much change and growth actually took place, not only in the commitment and response of the congregation but also in the development of the village and the changes at our local school.

Those fleeting eight years were so important to us. We made many lifelong friendships with people who cared about one another.

I learned much from the friendliness and generosity of the people I was called to serve and I hope many of you found my ministry helpful in encouraging your response to God and His love.

May God continue to bless you and stir you all to new endeavours in His service. There is still so much to be done, so much to hand on to the next generation.

I am sure you will enjoy celebrating the Church's 60th Birthday.

With fondest Christian love,  
Trevor Green.