



*A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.*

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**This is a bonus edition following two pieces of research.**

## FAITH UNDER FIRE

I was surprised how little there was in the Chapter Minutes of the First World War. A good example would be: *Occupation of Arundells to be delayed as materials for alterations and repairs were delayed by dislocation of the traffic on the railways caused by the war.*

Luckily, Emily introduced me to the **Salisbury Diocesan Gazette** and **official record of the Synod**. *Issued monthly with Bishop's pastoral letters, diocesan notices, verbatim record of the Diocesan Synod with agenda papers, letters from correspondents and annual and other reports of Diocesan societies, bodies and institutions, lists of ordinations and appointments, bishop's engagements, literary reviews and articles on ecclesiastical issues, lists of teachers trained (indexed) and some local advertisements.* More importantly it is full of social history.

These are some of the notes I made on the 1916 edition.

The Gazette was *very largely supported by donations of half-crowns*. In new money that is 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> p - the British Pound has lost 99% of its value since 1916!

The Church was much more

**YOU MUST HELP  
SERBIA**

Our Serbian Allies — homeless, robbed of every possession, thousands of them orphaned, all of them destitute—are dependent upon the generosity of the British Public for the very necessities of life. You will not shirk your share of British responsibility for unfortunate Serbia!  
Give what you can to the

**SERBIAN RELIEF FUND**

Address Donations to the Earl of Plymouth, and Parcels to  
Mrs. Carrington Wilde, at the Serbian Relief Fund,  
5, Cromwell Road, London, S.W. 7.

integrated into society in that period but was of course conflicted, wishing to be both patriotic and supporters of peace. The Bishop forbade incumbents from joining the forces but the Cathedral minutes show: *Rev. W C Wand's application to sub-let while on active service as an Army Chaplain, agreed and Mr Sands of the Vicars Choral to have his allowance raised from £20 to £30 whilst serving in the army during the war.*



A number of organisations were set up to help the forces. There was a *Call of the War Effort* aimed first at the towns in the diocese and later at its 400 villages. A *War Mission*. A *Welfare of Soldiers Board*. *Welfare of the Imperial Forces* (who erected a recreation hut at Larkhill). *Circle of Hope* for invalids. There was even a Convocation report on *The Church's preparation for the return of the men from the War* and many helpful publications were advertised such as *The Soldier's Psalter*.

Charity was in much demand. The gazette has adverts for subscriptions to the *Serbian Relief Fund* (page 1) and the *East London Fund for the Jews - to carry on and extend the work of the fund amongst the teeming Jewish population of our East London Ghetto*. Incidentally, there was a very useful *Queen Victoria Clergy Fund* (still going) that gave money to a diocese to be apportioned as the bishop saw fit. There was also a letter published from Lord Shaftesbury to the Bishop suggesting the updating and erecting of new village war memorials which the Bishop fully supported. The Theological College is 75 years old but has to report that four of its students have died so far in the war.

The annual *Anniversary of the Declaration of War* event, promoted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, included parades which no doubt involved the *Church Lads Brigade* (left) and the *Church Army* (based on the Salvation Army). There is also a massive memorial service on Whitsunday to commemorate the untimely death of Earl Kitchener who drowned when his ship went down off Orkney.

Meanwhile normal life had to carry on. On the Church front the Archbishop is pushing a national scheme to promote Christian values. The Ministry of Munitions asks the Bishop if church bells could be muffled as they kept awake their night shift. There is a committee set up to help incumbents with Glebe lands that really should be sold off. Thomas Beckett's ghost must have been happy as the Church was debating *Self-Governance* (published by SPCK). The Commissioners have granted Dorset a second Archdeaconry (originally requested by Bishop Wordsworth).

The vicar of Wimborne Minster finds rolls of churchwarden's accounts dating back to 1403. The *Church of England Temperance Society* has started a Young People's Pledge Roll. Eldridge & Young, clerical tailors and robe-makers, are advertising Oxford and Cambridge hoods and gowns with alternate *Sarum hoods*. Finally, the family of the late Archdeacon Francis Lear (1823 - 1914), a stalwart member of the Chapter, have presented to the Lady Chapel a *Sedilia* and *Credence table*, two prayer desks for *Gospeller* and *Epistoller*, a bishop's chair and book desk. These are all required for the Eucharist. In this case wooden, but a *Sedilia* is usually the set of three built-in stone seats at right-angles to the altar for the use of the celebrant, Deacon and Sub-Deacon. The



Gospeller and Epistoller read the appropriate passages from the Bible.

Left, WW1 practice tunnels found on Salisbury Plain.

## THE ENGLISH VENICE

I have looked into Salisbury's street 'canals', more

properly a network of open watercourses. These were originally quite wide and in the centre of the streets. Apart from wells, they were the main source of drinking water. They drew river water from the Bishop's mill leat, returning it to the Avon at Bugmore, near the present Wiltshire College. In 1612 the city received a new charter which at last freed it from the Bishop's control.

By 1737 however, things were so insanitary that the city fathers campaigned for an act of parliament to allow them to take over responsibility from the poorly funded Director of Highways. In a fit of enthusiasm (hardly believable today) they cleaned up the operation, confining the water in brick channels and placing them to the side of the streets so as to allow wagons and carriages to pass. The workhouse inmates were even employed to clear the weeds. Unfortunately, this affected the flow especially when the Avon was low resulting in the hatches having to be closed twice a day. The new channels also leaked and carriages caused mud to drop into the channels. Worse still the cess-pits leaked into the water, bearing in mind the high water

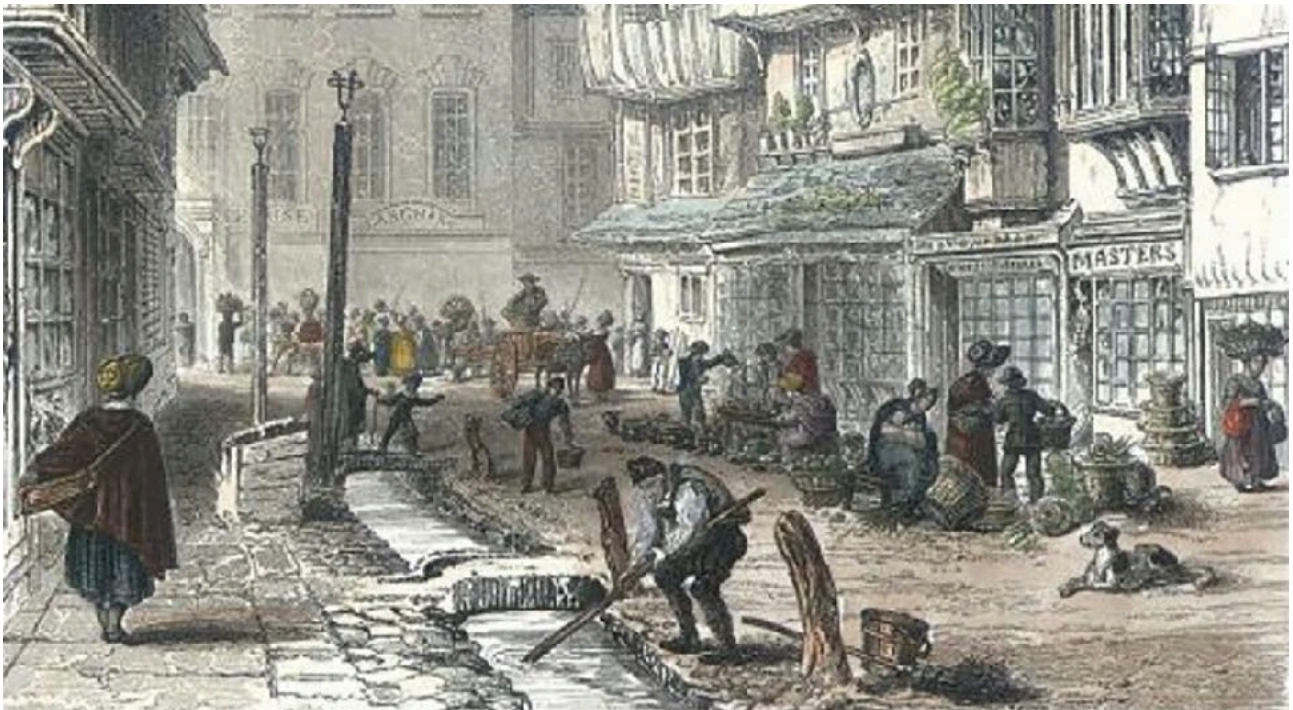


table in Salisbury. One well being dug produced a flow of brown water which, in ignorance, was actually hailed as a *mineral spring*!!!

Plague hit the city in 1477, 1579, 1604, 1627, 1643, 1665, 1666 and 1627 and as we discussed before, Mayor Ivie did much to try and relieve the situation, including building an isolation hospital at Bugmore. In the worst year some 1,400 died out of a population of around 4,500. Cholera struck in 1849 and the worse spot was the isolation hospital where the sewage ridden watercourses had their outfall.

In the nineteenth century Dr Middleton was of course the hero of the hour campaigning to have the watercourses covered over. However, the council comprised landlords who realised they would have to pay for any improvements and so actively blocked the funding. The Clerk of the Council even threw away the medical evidence. In desperation, Middleton went to the General Board of Health. An inspector was sent down from London but the Mayor and Corporation wouldn't co-operate and the clerk tried to scupper his report. The Public Health Act of 1848 forced a local Board of Health on Salisbury with powers to get things done. The waterworks was built in 1854, the isolation hospital was moved to Old Sarum in 1912 and a TB sanatorium set up at Harnwood in 1919.



**And we worry about COVID!** I am indebted to John Chandler (*Endless Street and Salisbury, history around us*), British History On-line and the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre. The pics are Silver Street in 1829 and the 'dig' by Wessex Archaeology in Brown Street showing the upper courses of the Town Ditch, part of the watercourse network.