

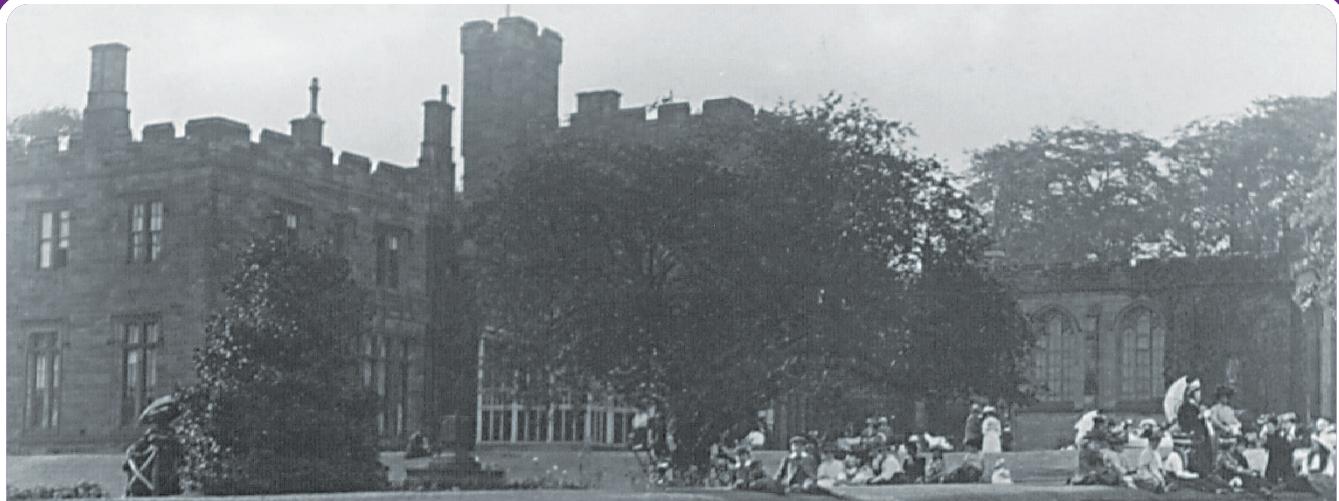
Bishop Arthur Thomas Lloyd

The third bishop of Newcastle

*Arthur Thomas Lloyd, Bishop of Newcastle,
10th June 1903 – 29th May 1907*

Bishop Arthur Thomas Lloyd was a resident of Benwell at the time of his death in 1907. He lived in Benwell Towers, a large house to the north of Benwell Lane. This had been the home of the bishops of Newcastle since the arrival in 1882 of the first Bishop, Ernest Wilberforce, grandson of the anti-slavery campaigner William Wilberforce. Prior to that, the area had been part of the Diocese of Durham. Benwell Towers was home to a further four bishops before it was sold to the mines fire and rescue service in 1943.



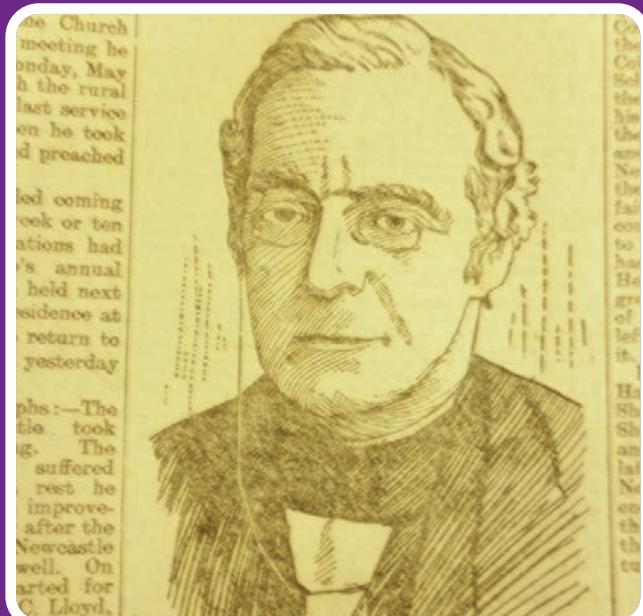


Benwell Towers was more than a residence; it was also a venue for all sorts of activities. The invitations for the Bishop's annual garden party in the grounds of the Towers had already been issued when Bishop Lloyd died unexpectedly on a trip to London to visit his sister. His very last service was in Benwell on the previous Sunday when he preached at St Aidan's Church next to St John's Road.

Bishop Lloyd loved Newcastle. Although he had only been Bishop for four years, he had lived in the city for many years previously while working as Vicar at St Nicholas'. In his first sermon as Bishop, he said that returning to Newcastle was a joy: it was like coming home.

During his tenure at St Nicholas', Lloyd was responsible for changing what the Newcastle Daily Chronicle called "a somewhat dilapidated and shabby structure, internally", leaving it "restored and beautified, and the centre of all that is progressive and stimulating in the religious life of Newcastle". He returned as Bishop at a period when Tyneside was experiencing a dramatic population explosion. The city of Newcastle was expanding outwards, with large-scale housing developments shooting up to serve the area's booming industries and commercial activities. Concerned that the Church was not reaching these new urban communities, Lloyd launched the "Bishop's Church Extension Scheme" which was successful in encouraging the establishment of new churches and missions. He was also involved in charitable and philanthropic activities in the city, serving on the Board of Guardians, for example, and having an especial concern for the welfare of children. He listed his main recreation in "Who's Who" as "gardening".

Arthur Thomas Lloyd was born in Berkshire in 1844, the son of Henry and Georgiana. His father was a



vicar, and, for the first five years after ordination, the young Arthur served as his father's curate. His later posts included Vicar of Aylesbury, Vicar of Newcastle, and Suffragan (Assistant) Bishop in Norwich. Arthur Thomas Lloyd was reportedly a modest man who had no expectations of high office. His obituary in *The Times* mentioned his "personal goodness and sincerity", and the many thousands of mourners who turned out for his funeral seem to attest to his popularity in Newcastle. His funeral produced "a demonstration of affection seldom equalled for a cleric", in the words of Pickering's *Social History of the Diocese of Newcastle*.

Bishop Lloyd's Funeral

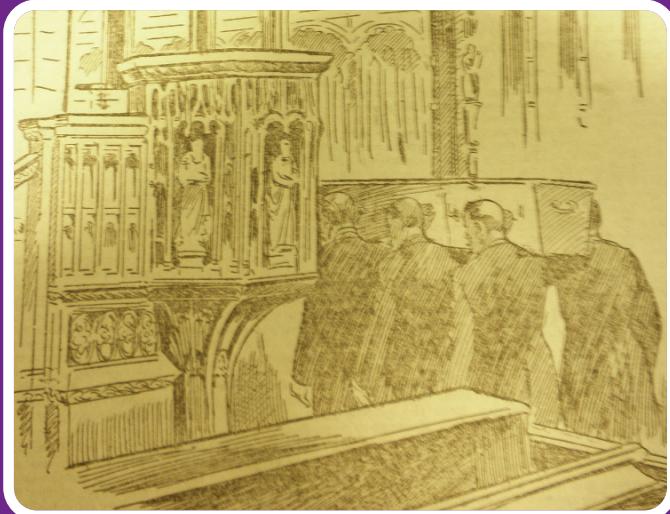
"The late Bishop had expressed a wish that he might be interred in an ordinary grave, and his wish was complied with. The sides of the grave were completely hidden by moss, the green being relieved by a few blooms of narcissus."

(Newcastle Daily Chronicle, Tuesday 4th June 1907)

Bishop Lloyd died on 29th May 1907 in London. His body was brought back to Newcastle on June 1st by train. The carriage containing the coffin was detached from the rest of the train and taken to the west platform where it was met by a large group of clergy and others, including Rev Heelas the Vicar of Benwell. Word had



spread, and a huge crowd had gathered around the station and in nearby streets. Flowers were heaped on the coffin and it was taken in procession to the Cathedral where the "dead bell" was tolling. After a brief service, the coffin remained in the Cathedral, accompanied by a constant vigil, until the funeral service on June 3rd.



The funeral service began at 3pm at the Cathedral. A simultaneous service was held at Hexham Abbey. Following the service, the funeral procession then travelled along Collingwood Street, Neville Street, Westmorland Road, Rye Hill and Elswick Road, finally reaching Benwell churchyard at about 5pm. Thousands of people lined the route. Every shop was shut and all the church bells tolled.

Meanwhile another large crowd was waiting uncomfortably at Benwell, buffeted by a cold wind and rain. As the procession approached, the official group, including the Vicar of Benwell and the church choir, moved along Benwell Lane to meet it. The bells of St James', which had been ringing muffled peals all afternoon, fell silent, and the choir sang "Now the Labourer's task is o'er." The committal service was read by the Bishop of Chichester, Ernest Wilberforce, himself a former Bishop of Newcastle. After the service, the coffin was left uncovered until late in the evening so that members of the public could view it.

A large number of wreaths and other floral tributes were sent from all over the country. A special place was given to a wreath of lilies, lilies-of-the-valley, and maiden-hair fern from the maids at Benwell Towers. This was the only floral tribute allowed at the grave before the burial service.



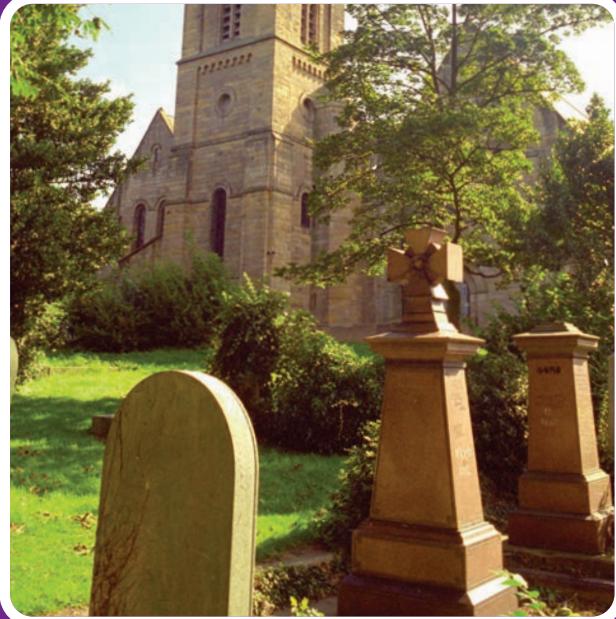
THE GRAVE OF THE LATE BISHOP OF NEWCASTLE.

The grave of Bishop Lloyd is a monument type with a cross, with incised lead-filled lettering on both the granite head stones and the granite cross. It is located near to the south west corner of the church, on the north side of the former carriageway that led to a gate in the stone wall adjoining Bishops Road. The gate was removed many years ago, and the carriageway has been grassed over. The graveyard was closed for burials in the 1960s and, over the years, many of the graves fell into disrepair and became overgrown with ivy, brambles and other plants. Three years ago a group of volunteers from

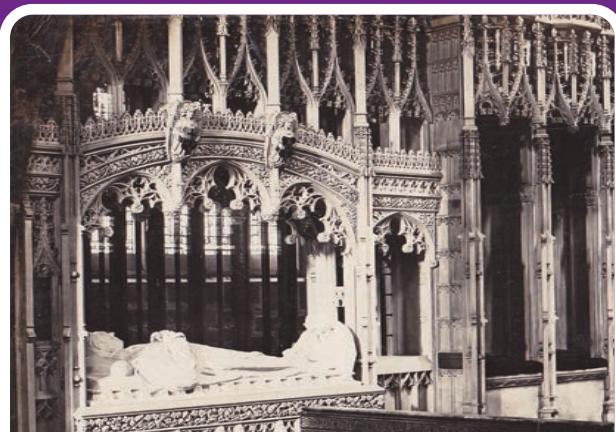


the local community started to tidy and improve the graveyard and investigate who was buried there. The almost forgotten grave of Bishop Lloyd was one of those uncovered by the group's efforts. The cross had been detached from its head stones and lay some distance from the grave, lead had been lost from the letters and the granite was chipped.

The monument has now been completely restored by pinning the cross to the head stones, repairing the chipped granite and running lead into the



lettering, all as the original. The restoration was carried out by Glendon Services, Architectural Conservators under the direction of Cyril Winskill, Architect accredited in building conservation.



There is also a memorial to Bishop Lloyd in St. Nicholas Cathedral, with an alabaster effigy by F.W. Pomeroy

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