

St Agnes' Anglican Church – Perry's Line, Kiwitea



Architect:	Frederick de Jersey Clere
Construction date:	1890
Visible materials:	Timber weatherboards and joinery, leadlight windows, corrugated steel roofing
Architectural style:	Carpenter Gothic
Use/building type:	Religious
Date and Compiler:	Ian Bowman, 2020
Proposed category:	B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Introduction

The first 66 years of the history of this church were recorded in the substantial book *From One Generation to Another: the story of the church in Kiwitea since the early eighties*. Its author, John Frederick Mayo, was a former vicar with the Parochial District of Kiwitea, whose connection with the district dated from 1905. He died just before it was published in 1956. This then leaves the last 55 years of the church's life (to date) to be discovered in order to present its full story.

Mayo wrote that in 1876, the government offered for sale the land (24,000 acres) that includes the church site. The 'Township of Kiwitea' (750 acres) was offered for sale in 1877 – however the 'Township' was never laid out. In 1884, Kiwitea School was opened on Perry's Line, two miles from the 'Township site. This new location was known as Kiwitea Corner. A community hall and a post office store were established there at an early time.¹

St. Agnes' Church – built in 1890 on Perry's Line, next to the school, to the design of well-known church architect, Frederick de Jersey Clere – was to become the 'Mother Church' of the Kiwitea

¹ Mayo, John Frederick, *From One Generation to Another: the story of the church in Kiwitea since the early eighties* (Kiwitea, 1956) p. 135

Parochial District, which in turn had been formed in 1901. It retained this status until 1998, when the parishes of Feilding, Kiwitea and Stanway were combined to form the present Anglican Parish of the Oroua. Services are held three times a year for Palm Sunday, a September service, and a December Christmas carol service. The body under which these parishes operate or operated, is the Anglican Diocesan of Wellington², and this organisation remains the owner of this church.

History of the Building

The gradual splintering off of Anglican parishes from the original Wellington Diocese, saw the establishment of the Feilding Parochial District in 1879. At that time, the Kiwitea Block had just been opened up, and the Feilding vicar, the Rev. Joshua Jones, found himself establishing fifteen 'visiting districts' in his large parish, in order to meet the needs of his widely scattered flock. His visiting list included at least 15 to 20 families in the Cheltenham-Kiwitea-Beaconsfield area in 1883-84, although he did not hold any services there until a hall was erected at Kiwitea in 1884. From 10 June 1884, the Rev. Jones held a service there every Tuesday. Presbyterian services had been held in the district from time to time well before 1884 however. The Methodists were also holding regular services in the area by the latter 1880s.

Rev. Joshua Jones left Feilding in November 1886 and was replaced in June 1887 by the Rev. A. Hermon, however, he too was very overstretched by the demands of his growing parish. By the early 1890s, Rev. Hermon believed that Anglicanism was losing ground to other denominations – the Methodists, for example, had been holding regular services in the Kiwitea area and beyond, while Hermon said he could not cope with more distances and duties than the many he already had. Hermon's wife died in 1889 and he was then granted twelve months leave of absence to visit England, and it was during his time away that St. Agnes' was built.³

Construction

The Rev. Alan Innes-Jones acted as locum tenens of the Feilding Parish in Jones' absence, starting in late September 1889, and two months later a meeting was called at Kiwitea to discuss the question of building a church in the town. Innes-Jones duly opened the new church on 23 July 1890, before becoming Vicar of Bulls following Rev. Hermon's return to Feilding on 15 October 1890, accompanied by a new wife.⁴

The local newspapers reported the beginnings of the St. Agnes story in more detail. For example, the Feilding Star of 10 October 1889 (p. 2) reported that:

The initial steps have been taken for the erection of a building for the Church of England at Kiwitea.

These steps took the form of a general meeting held in the Kiwitea Hall to discuss the advisability of erecting an Anglican Church in the town. Present were Messrs. W.D.M. Banks, G.P. Church, J. Corry, W. Hedges, W.F. Jacob, A. Johnston, C.A.J. Levett, W. Line, O. Tyerman and T. Varley. Mr Banks, who was elected chairman, then read a letter from the Diocesan architect, Frederick de Jersey Clere, offering to supply a church plan free of charge. This offer was accepted and it was decided that the church should be built as near as possible to the centre of Kiwitea. Messrs. Banks and Levett (both Kiwitea residents since 1886) both offered sections, and at a later meeting Levett's offer of one acre was accepted as his land was most central.⁵

The Feilding Star's Kiwitea correspondent reported on 26 October 1889 that:

² <http://wn.anglican.org.nz/>

³ Mayo, p. 10

⁴ Mayo, pp. 9-10. *Feilding Star*, 16 October 1890, p.2

⁵ Mayo pp. 136-7

On Wednesday night, a meeting was held of settlers interested in the erection of a building for the Church of England in the Kiwitea district. An influential committee was formed. As soon as the plans for the proposed building come to hand from the architect, a general meeting of the subscribers will be called to agree upon a site for it. It is proposed to raise funds for the necessary church furniture by holding a concert on or about the last Friday in November. The subscription list now shows in cash £82.18s and 1100 feet of timber. Any donations whether in the shape of a reading desk, organ or alter cloth will be gladly received.⁶

At the above meeting, the decision was made to ask the architect to design a building that could seat 40 people. This was received and approved a few weeks later.⁷

The newspaper's Birmingham correspondent gave a hint at developments in the nearby Kiwitea district a few weeks later, stating that over 400 men were working on roadmaking, bushfelling and other works in the Birmingham area, while:

The Kiwitea is busy now too; nearly every settler is a sheep farmer, and this is their busiest time. In a few years the district, say for 40 miles north of Feilding will be one of the most important and, I hope, the most thriving sheep-raising and wool producing districts in the colony.⁸

The Birmingham (now Kimbolton) correspondent added that the Kiwitea people were "about to build a church (Episcopalian) in their district somewhere not far from the old Kiwitea store." Previously their services had been held in the "very small" local hall, which did not really suit this purpose. The Birmingham correspondent, who appears by his/her somewhat cutting remarks not to have been Anglican, thought that:

In a scattered country district, building a church for just one sect was a mistake. However, as (apparently) some people are prejudiced against using a building that is not consecrated...Then perhaps it is better that they should build a church for themselves. However, it is easier to put up a building than to keep a church filled or maintain it.

The Birmingham correspondent then followed with a description of the upcoming concert in the hall, the proceeds of which were to go toward the church fund. A dance was to be held afterwards. The correspondent then pointed out that the dance was not in aid of the church fund – its admission charge being merely to cover its own costs:

(Rather) the concert is to draw money for the church and the dance is to draw people to the concert. 'The end justifies the means.' I suppose nothing about the church will be consecrated until after the building is up.⁹

A few days later, W.D.M. Banks, Honorary Secretary of the Kiwitea Church of England Committee, wrote to the Feilding Star thanking those involved with running the Kiwitea Church concert, for the various things they had done.¹⁰

During December 1889, the tender notice (see below) regularly appeared in the Feilding Star. The work involved the contractor erecting the church and supplying everything except the timber and shingles. Tenders closed at noon on Saturday, December 21st, 1889, the tender of Mr W. Batchelar, of Wanganui, of £64.4s (for labour only) being accepted. Additional timber, costing £39 9s, was then purchased direct from the sawmilling firm, Messrs Corpe & Co.¹¹

⁶ *Feilding Star* 26 October 1889, p. 2

⁷ Mayo, p. 137

⁸ *Feilding Star* 21 November 1889, p. 3

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 21 November 1889, p. 3

¹⁰ *Feilding Star*, 5 December 1889, p. 2

¹¹ *Feilding Star*, for example: 12 December 1889, p.3; Mayo, p. 137

TENDERS.

TENDERS are called for the erection of a Church in the Kiwitea. Contractor to find everything except Timber and Shingles.

Tenders to be sent in to W. D. M. BANKS, Church's Store, Kiwitea, marked "Tender for erection of Church of England, Kiwitea." All Tenders to be sent in before noon on SATURDAY, December 21st, 1889.

Plans and Specifications may be seen at Mr. E. Goodbehere's Office, Feilding

The lowest, or any tender, not necessarily accepted.

W. D. M. BANKS,

Hon. Sec. Kiwitea Church Building Committee.

Figure 1 Tender notice for St Agnes'

Rev. Innes-Jones and the church committee met at the church section on 4th January 1890 and again on 14th February 1890, to clear the site and mark out the intended location of the new church. Construction started immediately thereafter. In May, a fence costing 14s per chain, was built around the section and by July the church was completed and ready to use.¹²

Susan Maclean, in *Architect of the Angels*, writes that when first built, St. Agnes' "was a mere rectangular box with a minute vestry beside the west end porch and a tiny gabled bell-tower perched on the roof above."¹³ However, the bell-tower was not to contain a bell until 1946.¹⁴

The Feilding Star of Tuesday, 29 July 1890 (p. 2) described the opening service at the church on the preceding Sunday (which will have been 27 July 1890, and not the date Mayo gives). It was conducted by Rev. Innes-Jones, and the audience was described as being "large and appreciative" of his sermon. The church had been "tastefully decorated the day before, by several ladies of the Kiwitea, with flowers and evergreens." The building was described as reflecting great credit upon both its architect (Clere) and builder (Batchelar):

The walls are lined throughout, and the upper part of the lining being diagonal, adds greatly to the effect. The seats and other fixtures are neatly finished. When sufficient funds have been raised the interior of the church will be oiled and the outside painted.

Ornamental trees were also shortly to be planted on the church grounds.¹⁵

The church was eventually painted in the summer of 1891 using a "substantial contribution for this purpose" from Rev. Hermon, and the proceeds from a concert held on 31st January 1891, just in time for the church's consecration.¹⁶

The church was duly consecrated on Wednesday, 25th February 1891, and the Feilding Star of 28 February 1891 (p.2) reported the event:

Consecration at Kiwitea

The consecration of the new church at Kiwitea naturally excited considerable interest amongst the settlers in that neighbourhood and in Feilding. The ceremony had been arranged for an earlier date, and postponed owing to the Primate's late sudden illness. Last Wednesday, however, His Lordship and Mrs Hadfield, accompanied by the Rev. A. and Mrs Hermon, drove up to the Kiwitea, (where) the Primate and Mrs Hadfield were entertained by Mrs Levett, at Ratanui. The Bishop inspected and expressed himself well satisfied with the external appearance of the Church, in the afternoon. At 7 p.m. the Consecration Service began by the reception of the Bishop by the Rev. A. Hermon and the members of the

¹² Mayo, p. 137

¹³ Susan Maclean, *Architect of the Angels: The Churches of Frederick de Jersey Clere*, (Wellington, 2003), p. 47

¹⁴ Mayo, p. 163

¹⁵ *Feilding Star* 29 July 1890, p. 2. Mayo (p. 10) states that this first service was held on 23 July 1890, which was a Wednesday. The Church Notices published weekly on Saturdays in the *Feilding Star* do not record the church in their list published 19 July 1890 (p. 2). The Kiwitea church' service – starting at 11:00am and conducted by Innes-Jones - is present in the list published on 26 July 1890 (p. 2).

¹⁶ Mayo, p. 139

Committee, Messrs Banks, Church, Corry, Jacob, Templer and Varley, at the entrance of the Church, where a petition was presented by the Rev. A. Hermon and two members of the Committee on behalf of the members of the Church resident in Kiwitea, praying His Lordship to dedicate and consecrate the Church for the sole purpose of Divine worship, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of the Province of New Zealand commonly called the Church of England, and to set it apart from all common and profane uses under the name of 'St. Agnes' at Kiwitea. The name was given in accordance with the expressed wish of A.R. Levett, Esq. (sic), the donor of the site (one acre in all), upon part of which the Church has been erected. A procession was then formed, the Bishop leading the van, and reading the 24th Psalm. At the close of the Consecration Service the Bishop seated at the communion table, read the sentence of consecration, after which a hymn having been sung, the Rev. A. Hermon read the ordinary evening prayers with proper Psalms and special lessons, to the end of the 3rd collect. After another hymn, the Bishop preached an earnest and impressive sermon from Genesis 12, verses 6-10, towards the close of which he took occasion to express his complete satisfaction with the building itself, and his gratification that the settlers should have erected so suitable a Church where they might meet together for united worship.

The offertory, amounting to £3 4s 10d was on behalf of the Church Furnishing Fund. The congregation was large, and the service throughout was marked by a hearty congregational and reverential spirit.

The Primate and Mrs Hadfield left for Wanganui by the express train on Thursday.

The first wedding held in the church - which was attended by many prominent people from Feilding and the surrounding district - was that of Albert Bennett of Manaia, and Glorvina Diana Moore, the eldest daughter of Major and Mrs Moore of 'Moorfield', Kiwitea. It took place on Thursday, 5th January 1893.¹⁷

The Church's Name – St. Agnes'

In his book on the church's history, Rev. Mayo states that people often asked how the church came by its name. Mayo notes that out of over 40,000 Churches of England around the world at the time (mid-1950s), only ten had the name "St. Agnes", and none of these appeared to be in any way connected with Mr and Mrs Levett or their relations.

The name had been chosen by Mr Charles A.J Levett, donor of the land on which the church was built, and Captain W.R.E. Dalrymple, an invalid friend who had been living at the Levett farm, 'Ratanui', at the time the matter was being planned. Dalrymple had taken a great deal of interest in the building of the church.

Although it is not known which date had originally been selected for consecrating the church (before the choice was disrupted by Bishop Hadfield's illness), it is believed to have most likely been on or about 21st January 1891, which is St. Agnes' Day. This date alone, then, might have been the reason the name was selected.

However, before the consecration took place, Captain Dalrymple died suddenly on 7th December 1890, aged 36, (and his became the first burial in the church's cemetery). Furthermore, Charles Levett (then aged 30) had departed at short notice for England, due to his father's illness and subsequent death. Due to the last minute consecration date change, the church committee met on 16th February and decided that the church should instead be dedicated in the name of St. Matthias – whose 'day' is 24th February.

¹⁷ *Feilding Star*, 14 January 1893, p. 2; online Marriage Registrations, No. 1893/843. Births Deaths & Marriages, New Zealand - <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

However, when Mrs Levett heard of the new decision, she expressed a strong wish that the original name remain – and this was eventually agreed to by the committee. Mrs Levett’s initials were H.R. (for Helen Rokeby) and these are noticeably similar to the “A.R. Levett” the Feilding Star attributed the name to in its article on 28 February 1891 (see above). We can only speculate as to why using this name might have been so important to the Levetts and Captain Dalrymple.

The website Wikipedia identifies Saint Agnes as follows:

Agnes of Rome (c. 291 – c. 304) is a virgin–martyr, venerated as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Anglican Communion. She is one of seven women, excluding the Blessed Virgin, commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass. She is the patron saint of chastity, gardeners, girls, engaged couples, rape victims, and virgins. She is also known as Saint Agnes and Saint Ines. Her memorial, which commemorates her martyrdom, is 21 January in both the Roman Catholic calendar of saints and in the General Roman Calendar of 1962. The 1962 calendar includes a second feast on 28 January, which commemorates her birthday. Agnes is depicted in art with a lamb, as her name resembles the Latin word for "lamb", agnus. The name "Agnes" is actually derived from the feminine Greek adjective "hagnē" meaning "chaste, pure, sacred".¹⁸

Saint Agnes, who was murdered aged 12 or 13 because she refused to marry the son of a Roman Prefect, is also the patron saint of the Girl Guides.¹⁹ There are English towns named St. Agnes in Cornwall and on the Isles of Scilly in the English Channel. There is no information available to indicate which of these sources (the saint or the towns) or any other, that caused the church to receive this name.²⁰

Property Ownership

The first relevant Certificate of Title for this property, CT 55/51 (then one acre), was issued in June 1889 in the name of “The Right Reverend Octavius Hadfield, Bishop of Wellington; The Venerable Thomas Fancourt, Archdeacon of Wellington; Edward Pearce, of the city of Wellington, merchant; William Henry Buick, of the city of Wellington, solicitor; and Charles Plummer Powles, of the city of Wellington, accountant.” In August 1894, the property was transferred from them (being a partnership on behalf of the Church of England), into the name of the ‘Wellington Diocesan Board of Trustees’ – a body that is still the property’s owner.

In 1958, part of the Board’s land was transferred into the name of Lucy Eliza Annie Ross, wife of Frederick Cyril Ross, farmer of Kiwitea, who had owned the surrounding farmland since 1920 (this was, presumably, part of the former Levett property that was sold about that time – See No: 6.3). On the same date (25th June 1958), part of Mrs Ross’ land was also transferred to the Board. The result of this trading of land was that the Board’s property, which remained at one acre (4047 square metres more or less), gained a longer road frontage, but also had a strip of land trimmed from its back boundary. The present certificate of title was also issued at this time.

Additions and Alterations

In 1890, the church was a small rectangular building that seated forty people – who entered through a door at the west end. There was no chancel or bell. The windows were of plain glass, the tiny vestry was about five feet square, and the building had a shingle roof.²¹

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_of_Rome

¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_of_Rome

²⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Agnes,_Cornwall and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Agnes%27_Church,_St._Agnes

²¹ Mayo, p. 140

By 1896, the church was proving too small for its congregation, and so a Clere-designed chancel was added, thereby increasing the seating capacity from forty to fifty-six. The work cost £41 5s. A metal path was laid from the gate to the church at the same time. The new chancel was consecrated on 24th November 1896.²²

In 1913, the building's first stained glass window was installed in the east-end window, in memory of Helen R. Levett and Henrietta Marie Jacob. Made by Messrs Jones & Willis, of England, it was dedicated on 6th April 1913. New tinted glass windows were installed in all the other windows at the same time – donated by the husbands of these two women, Charles A.J Levett and William Frederick Jacob. In addition, red carpet for the Sanctuary and cork linoleum for the aisle were donated by Mrs Jacob's sister-in-law in her memory. Six kerosene lamps with side brackets also replaced three former central ones.²³

Susan Maclean, in *Architect of the Angels*, refers to this window:

*Like the windows in the nave the east window was designed within the pointed frame that Clere was to employ widely. The double lancet with its quatrefoil pane above is a departure from the triple light in Clere's plan which may have been altered for the memorial stained glass, a tribute to two parishioners, Henrietta Jacob and Helen Lovett. In contrast to St. Martin's (at Greatford), whose interior is bright and cheerful thanks to its exposed position, the interior of St. Agnes is subdued. Earlier generations seem to have favoured a dim religious light, for the clear glass which was fitted when the church was built was later replaced with coloured 'cathedral' glass. St. Agnes's also has a remarkable number of stained glass memorial windows which create atmosphere rather than good visibility. The west end porch is the kind that Clere gave to many of his timber churches right from the early days.*²⁴

The next stained glass window, in memory of former vicar, Archdeacon James Robert Cassell (who died in 1915), was installed on the north side of the Sanctuary, overlooking his grave. It was dedicated on 9th September 1917.²⁵



Figure 2 Reredos

An entrance door was also made on the north side of the building. At the end of the nave, the vestry now stretched the full width of the church – more than three times its original length. In addition to all these things, the Levett family also erected a memorial plaque to C.E. Levett at the back of the church, by the vestry door. This was dedicated on 15th December 1918 – along with a range of other items donated by others in memory of C.E. Levett. The funds that the church had

In 1918, a significant amount of development was undertaken at the church. Fundraising had already started to enlarge the church's vestry. However, after Charles Edward Levett was killed in action in Palestine on 30 March 1918, his family said that they would like to erect the vestry themselves in memory of their dead loved one.

In enlarging the vestry, the nave was further extended, increasing the seating accommodation from fifty-six to seventy-two

²² Mayo, p. 143

²³ Mayo, p. 148. It is noteworthy that Mrs Jacob left an estate of £1,780, and perhaps some of this went toward the stained glass window – (*Poverty Bay Herald*, 3 November 1911, p. 5).

²⁴ Maclean, p. 48

²⁵ Mayo, p. 149

raised prior to the Levett donation, were then used to paint the church.²⁶

In 1919, an oak reredos (a wall decoration behind the altar), which had been carved by C.E. Levett's stepmother, was also dedicated in his memory. The church's War Memorial and War Memorial Brass were dedicated at the same time.²⁷

The carved reredos (above) appears to form a link to the other building covered in this report, namely the Cloverlea Homestead (q.v.) on the outskirts of Palmerston North. The wood carving in that house was done by Carrie Buick, later wife of architect Ernst West. A "Mr Levett" was the groomsman at the couple's wedding in 1914.²⁸ Carrie Buick trained at the Feilding Technical School, under the Wanganui Education Board's Instructor of Woodcarving, William Andrews snr., whose classes (around the period 1906-1913 at least) were a popular pastime with local women. It seems likely that Mrs Levett was another of his pupils – with grapes also being a feature in the work of both William Andrews and Carrie Buick.

In 1925-1926, electric lights were installed in the vicarage and churches in the Kiwitea Parish - the new light being used for the first time in St. Agnes' on Christmas Day, 1925.²⁹ In about 1929, a light was installed outside the church to illuminate the doorway and the church path.³⁰

In early 1928, another stained glass window was installed and dedicated in the church, in memory of William Hubert Jacob, eldest son of William Frederick Jacob and his late wife Henrietta. It was donated by William junior's wife Maud and overlooks the pew where he regularly sat.³¹

The next stained glass window was installed on the south side of the Sanctuary in memory of William Frederick Jacob, who had died in 1937. It was dedicated on 21st October 1941. Thus three stained glass windows in the church are in memory of the Jacob family.³²

By the latter 1930s, the church was in need of extensive repairs, and Mayo (p, 161) records that:

After thoroughly examining the Church, Mr R.G. Roberts, of Kimbolton, recommended replacing the piles and rotten boards, reconstructing the belfry, re-roofing the Church, creosoting the interior and beneath the floor, and painting the exterior and the roof, all at an estimated cost of £175 or £185; quite a big sum in those days. But, thanks to the foresight and generosity of the late Mr W.F. Jacob, who left a sum of money for such a contingency, the work could be taken in hand without having to call upon the congregation. It was unfortunate, however, that it was impracticable to re-shingle the roof owing to the extreme difficulty in obtaining suitable timber and the excessive cost involved; so galvanised iron replaced the old shingles, which were sold for £1 9s., the proceeds being given to the St. Barnabas' Babies Home.

The Evening Post of 25 May 1937 (p. 11) had previously recorded Mr Jacob's contribution – by which time he had left the district:

CHARITABLE BEQUESTS, (Auckland, this day): The estate of William Frederick Jacob, farmer, of Auckland, who died on May 5, has been sworn for probate at under £70,000. The bequests include £600 to the Wellington Diocesan Board of Trustees, half to be used for rebuilding or restoring the Church of St. Agnes, at Kiwitea; £1000 to the same board for the Wellington cathedral building fund; £1000 to the New Zealand Anglican Board of Missions for work in

²⁶ Mayo, p. 150-1

²⁷ Mayo, p. 150-1

²⁸ *Manawatu Times*, 8 July 1914, 5(5)

²⁹ Mayo, p. 154, 388

³⁰ Mayo, p. 156

³¹ Mayo, p. 155

³² Mayo, p. 159

Melanesia.

The Second World War broke out before the repairs on the church were complete. The church's Golden Jubilee celebrations were then held on Sunday, 13th October 1940. A Jubilee history of the church had also been written by Mr G. Fitzpatrick. Charles Arthur John Levett was by then the only surviving member of the original church committee, and he also attended the jubilee.³³

In 1946, Barbara Alice Warburton (1899-1986) donated a church bell to St. Agnes' – the church's first - in memory of her husband, Edward Darian Warburton, who had died in 1943.³⁴

In 1947, a memorial Lych Gate at the entrance to the churchyard, was built in memory of John Dillon Hocking (died 1938), his wife Annie Hocking (died 1942) and their son, Hugh Dennis Hocking, who was killed in action in Greece, in 1941. The Lych Gate was built by Mr R.G. Roberts of Kimbolton, to the design of the Diocesan architects, Messrs. Clere & Clere. It is made of heart totara, with a base of tinted concrete, and it is roofed with mellowed red tiles.³⁵

Mrs Annie Helen Hocking (nee Fry) had lived all her life within ten or twelve miles of Kiwitea, having previously lived at Makino, while the last thirty-five years of her life were at her home, 'Nga Tawa', Kiwitea. John Dillon Hocking was the son of an English vicar and J.D. Hocking had been living in Halcombe at the time of his 1900 marriage (at Stanway) to Annie Fry.³⁶

In 1948, consideration was given to improvements and repairs for the church. One proposal was to rough-cast the exterior of the church. However, a pine tree was offered to the church, and the decision was made to mill this and use what was required to repair the church and vicarage, and to sell the rest of the timber. The work was undertaken in 1949, following which the church was repainted.³⁷

Charles A.J. Levett had died in 1942, and the work undertaken in 1949 included a porch on the church was erected to his memory by his relatives and friends. This linked his memorial with additions to the church, including the door, that he had erected in memory of his son. A marble plaque was also donated by his widow in 1943, and after the porch was built, the plaque was relocated there.³⁸

In 1949 also, florescent lighting was installed, and a new red Sanctuary carpet replaced the carpet installed there 36 years previously. Various other items and improvements also appeared at this time.³⁹

Following his death in 1956, a leadlight window was also installed in the church opposite the main door to the building, in memory of John Frederick Mayo, who had been the second Vicar of Kiwitea, between 1907 and 1928. He had also compiled the church's history, *From One Generation to Another*, which was published later in 1956.

The Manawatu District Council's property file on this building contains a building consent dated 26 September 1956 for repairs and extensions to the church, but the details are unclear.

Other Features

In 1901, it was decided to erect a church hall in Kiwitea, in which to hold Sunday-school meetings and other functions. Instead, in early 1902, the trustees of the Kiwitea Public Hall offered to hand over that building to the church (on the understanding that it would be available for free use by the

³³ Mayo, pp. 161-2

³⁴ Mayo, p. 163

³⁵ Mayo, p. 164-5

³⁶ Mayo, pp. 164-5, *Feilding Star*, 2 March 1900, p. 2

³⁷ Mayo, pp. 169

³⁸ Mayo, pp. 162-3

³⁹ Mayo, p. 169

community, school etc.) and the building was duly moved to the church grounds – where it was well-used by the community in general for thirty years until a new Kiwitea Hall was built nearby in 1924. The decision was made to dispose of the old hall in 1929, as Sunday school was no longer being held and it was seldom used. Justifying maintenance was also a problem. The proceeds were used to paint and undertake repairs on the church.⁴⁰

KEY PEOPLE AND COMPANIES WHO CREATED THIS BUILDING

Frederick de Jersey Clere - Architect

Susan Maclean's book, *Architect of the Angels: The Churches of Fredereick de Jersey Clere*, states that the Manawatu-Rangitikei area has New Zealand's greatest concentration of Clere churches, and that the Oroua parish had (in 2003) eight of them in regular use. As well as the original St. Agnes building in 1890, Clere also designed the chancel in 1896. This was the first church Clere designed that had horizontal weatherboards on its exterior.⁴¹ The same firm, as Clere & Clere, also designed St. Agnes' Lych Gate that was built in 1947.

Frederick de Jersey Clere was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, the son of an Anglican clergyman the Rev. Henry Clere, and spent his early youth in Tickenham, Somersetshire. He was educated at St John's School, Clapton, London. He was taught drawing by M.R. Haggren, head architectural drawing master at South Kensington. Clere was articled to Edmund Scott, an ecclesiastical architect of Brighton. While with Scott he would almost certainly have observed at close hand the architect's early use of concrete in the construction of two Brighton churches, St Bartholomew's and St James'. Once articled he joined Robert Jewell Withers, a London architect and a follower of the Ecclesiologists. Clere became his chief assistant and joined the Architectural Association in London.

Clere arrived in New Zealand in 1877 and spent a short period in private offices and in the Government. He commenced private practice, firstly in Fielding where firm was established as F de J Clere in 1881 and then in Wanganui, where he formed the firm Atkins and Clere in 1883. By 1886 Clere had dissolved the firm and moved to Wellington. He practised there for the next 58 years. In 1891 Clere joined E.T. Richmond in practice and this partnership lasted until 1895 when Gerald Fitzgerald joined Clere in partnership, although the Richmond name continued to be associated with the firm. Fitzgerald had just retired from the government where he had been an engineer with the Public Works department. In 1900 the firm became Clere and Swan, and from 1905 Clere and Clere after Swan left the partnership to form his own firm.

Clere was elected an associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1882 and a Fellow in 1886. He held office for 50 years as one of five honorary secretaries in the Empire. In 1883 he was appointed Diocesan Architect of the Anglican Church, a position he held for most of his professional life.

Clere was also a member of the Concrete Institute of London and an enthusiastic advocate of its building properties. He was a pioneer in reinforced concrete construction in New Zealand but it took him some time after his arrival in the country to put his ideas into practice. His first ferro-concrete ecclesiastical design was the Anglican Church of St Mary of the Virgin, Karori (1911). He followed this with St Matthew's Anglican Church, Hastings (1913), the first Gothic church built in concrete. St Mary of the Angels (1922) is the most outstanding example of this oeuvre and certainly his best-known church. Another fine design is the brick All Saints Church, Palmerston North (1911).

While several of his outstanding churches were constructed in concrete and brick, Clere is known for his timber churches extending throughout the lower North Island and Motueka in Nelson.

⁴⁰ Mayo, pp. 145, 156

⁴¹ Maclean, pp. 47-48

As well as being pre-eminent in church design, Clere was responsible for many domestic and commercial buildings among the best known of which are the Harbour Board and Bond Store, Wellington (1891), a number of other Wellington Harbour Board Buildings and, in association with his son, the Renaissance-styled AMP head office (1928). Clere was also involved in the design of large wool sheds in Hawkes Bay and Wairarapa. According to Clere historian, Susan Maclean, Clere designed over 370 buildings in total.

Clere was active in the formation of the New Zealand Institute of Architects and served on their council for many years. He was a member of the Wellington Anglican Diocesan Synod and the General Synod. He was also a life member of the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts.

Clere was a Councillor for a short period in 1895 in Wellington, and in the early part of the twentieth century was a Councillor in the Lower Hutt City Council. Clere was a foundation and life member of the Waiwhetu Lodge.

William Batchelar (c1854-1940) - Builder

Some references to the builder of St. Agnes' Church refer to him as "Mr W. Batchelor" of Wanganui, however, his surname was correctly spelt "Batchelar". Little is known of his carpentry skills, although he was considered at time of construction to have done a very good job.⁴² The Wanganui Education Board also accepted his tenders to build at three new schools in 1892, suggesting at the very least his ability at least to put in the lowest tenders – although this proved to be a serious mistake on his part.

The Feilding Star of Tuesday, 13 May 1890 (p. 2) records an accident that had occurred the previous day involving "Mr Batchelor, builder, of Wanganui." The church would have been under construction at this time. Mr Batchelar and his wife were driving on Kimbolton Road, Feilding, when their horse bolted. Mrs Batchelar became alarmed at this, and jumped out of their speeding vehicle. However, as she landed she sustained a "comminuted" fracture of her left leg. The resulting skilled operation to attempt to repair the damage, was performed at the Empire Hotel, Feilding.

There were two carpenters named "W. Batchelar" listed on the 1890 Wanganui Electoral Roll. These were William Batchelar and William Batchelar junior, both of No. 1 Line, Kaitoke Riding. Thereafter, it is not clear which William is referred to in the Electoral Rolls or Wisers' Directories. However, by the 1894 Electoral Roll, William Batchelar (senior or junior?) is described as a farmer, rather than a carpenter.

Almost certainly, the builder of St. Agnes' was William Henry Batchelar (i.e. the 'junior' referred to above), son of William Batchelar (20 August 1828-22 October 1907, aged 79). As both were carpenters by trade, perhaps the father also had some role in the construction of St. Agnes'. William senior and his wife Sarah Amelia had two children, William Henry and Amelia Louisa (later Mrs F. Hewitt of Marton).

The Wanganui Herald records that on 27 November 1888, William Henry Batchelar married Mary Ellen Gilday. The couple's first (of four) registered children was Mary Amelia, born in late 1890 – the same year St. Agnes' was built and about five or six months after Mary badly fractured her leg leaping from the aforementioned horse-drawn vehicle then being pulled along Kimbolton Road by their bolting horse. The birth was registered in Waverley in the last quarter of 1890. Despite her mother's terrible injury and the painful impact advancing pregnancy would have had upon it, baby Mary Amelia grew to adulthood and married in 1921⁴⁴.

Other published references to William Henry Batchelar reveal that he struggled financially in the period immediately after St. Agnes' was built. By October 1892, he was bankrupt - his large home

⁴² *Feilding Star*, 29 July 1890, p. 2

and quarter acre section in Church Place, Wanganui, being lost to a mortgagee sale.⁴³ A report on a meeting of his creditors was published in the Wanganui Herald of 15 October 1892. At this, Batchelar attributed his bankruptcy to the heavy expenses incurred due to his wife's illness resulting from an accident – doubtless the accident referred to above, and probably the resulting complications caused by Mary's pregnancy.

The creditor's meeting was given a list of his building contracts throughout 1891 – most of which he lost money on. Starting with a contract in March 1891, these included contracts for: Mrs Miller for £209 (on which he lost £30 12s); Mr Parker's house £239 (£41 18s loss); Spriggens' house £256 (£34 loss); 10 weeks work at convent (made £27); and Mr Black's shop £385 10s (£150 loss). In the beginning of 1892 he built Castlecliff School for £170 10s (£14 profit); cottage on the Heads Railway line (lost £1); Apiti School for £185 (£80 loss due to bad weather and distance to the job); and Spur Road (Pukeroa) School £180 (similar loss due to similar causes as the Apiti School); while Mrs Quinn's shop £75 and Mr Anderson's (Okehu) contract £98 10s just cleared themselves. The final contract was Mr Palmer's house at £2050, on which Batchelar believed he lost £900. This latter house was a bridge too far for Batchelar's complicated finances and much of the creditor's meeting – which revealed that Batchelar had been using the money given for each new contract, to pay the liabilities of the previous job – focused on the financial and bad weather problems experienced with the Palmer house. The meeting elected to submit the case for "public examination," the result of which is unknown.

Ivan George's book, "Apiti! Where's That?" records that a 509 sq ft classroom was built at a cost of £185 on a Bryce Street education reserve, by a Mr W.H. Butcher (sic). This classroom was officially opened as Apiti School on 21 November 1892. It formed part of the old school block that was demolished in 1963.⁴⁴

William Henry Batchelar died in Auckland on 21 November 1940, aged 86 years. Mary Ellen Batchelar died on 3 November 1953, aged 91 years. They are buried together in the Catholic section of Waikumete Cemetery, Auckland.⁴⁵

Charles Arthur John & Helen Rokeby Levett - Site Donors/Co-sources of the Church's Name

Charles Arthur John Levett (born 5 July 1860), who had arrived in Kiwitea in 1886, was involved with the church from its inception, and also donated the one-acre section upon which it was built.⁴⁶ The Levett family was very well connected in terms of the Emigrants & Colonists' Aid Corporation, which developed the Manchester Block (i.e. the Feilding area). Charles A.J. Levett was the son of Captain Charles Richard Levett, at one time of the 1st King's Dragoon Guards. Captain Levett, in turn, was brother to Theophilus John Levett (a British MP 1880-1885)⁴⁷ who was married to Lady Jane Lissey Harriet Feilding⁴⁸, the sister of Rudolph Feilding (the 8th Earl of Denbigh)⁴⁹ and Colonel William Henry Adelbert Feilding – after whom Feilding is named.⁵⁰

Charles A.J. Levett was from a strong military background. For example, in addition to his father,

⁴³ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 14 October 1892 3(8)

⁴⁴ Ivan George, "Apiti! Where's That?" *Centennial Edition 1886-1986* (Apiti Centennial Committee, 1986), pp. 117, 129. Additional information: *Wanganui Herald*, 23 December 1891 (tender accepted), p.3; *Feilding Star*, 18 February 1892, p.3 & 10 March 1892, p.2 (preparing to start building).

⁴⁵ Entry No. 7210, Catholic section "C 2", Waikumete Cemetery, Auckland, on NZ Genealogical Society Cemetery Records microfiche, PN City Library.

⁴⁶ Mayo, p. 137

⁴⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophilus_John_Levett See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Packington_Hall_\(Staffordshire\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Packington_Hall_(Staffordshire)) and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wychnor_Hall which were the Levett family homes.

⁴⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Feilding,_7th_Earl_of_Denbigh

⁴⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolph_Feilding,_8th_Earl_of_Denbigh

⁵⁰ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Feilding_\(soldier\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Feilding_(soldier))

Captain C.R. Levett (who perhaps served with the 1st King's Dragoon Guards at Crimea), C.R. Levett's maternal uncle, General Alexander Macomb, was commander-in-chief of the Armies of the United States of America.⁵¹ Furthermore, Charles A.J. Levett's maternal grandfather, Captain Williams, served in the Royal Navy. The tradition continued in New Zealand, where Charles A.J. Levett's younger brother, Edward Harry, in 1888 married the daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Gorton (of Greatford, near Marton), of the NZ Militia and formerly Captain of the British 29th and 57th Regiments.⁵²

Charles A.J. Levett was educated at Rugby, and started farming as soon as he arrived in New Zealand. The Levett farm at Kiwitea was called 'Ratanui', and there he became a successful breeder of Hereford cattle and Romney sheep. He was also president of the Feilding A. & P. Association, along with terms as president of the Feilding Jockey Club and the Feilding Horticultural Society.

Charles' first wife, Helen Rokeby (nee Buchanan - noted in British 'landed gentry' books as a descendant of the Lady Anne Plantagenet)⁵³, died in 1906 aged 49 years. Charles was subsequently remarried in 1908 to Ellen Mary Colpitts Gill.⁵⁴ His only son (with Helen), Sergeant Charles Edward Levett, was killed in action in Palestine in 1918, and the following year – due to advancing years and his son's death, the family moved to Feilding. Charles died in 1942 aged 81 years.⁵⁵

When Charles Levett returned from England after his father's death, he "had obtained considerable help, both in gifts and in money (over £50) from his relatives in England, for which he was thanked by the Committee on his return." An array of other items were also contributed by various relatives of the family. After the death of Sgt. C.E. Levett in 1918, the Levett family paid for the enlargement of the church's vestry in his memory.⁵⁶

William Robert Elphinstone Dalrymple - Co-source of the Church's Name/First Burial

Captain William Robert Elphinstone Dalrymple⁵⁷ was an invalid friend to the Levett family of 'Ratanui', Kiwitea, who donated the site for the church. The Levetts and Captain Dalrymple took a great interest in the building of the church, and between them they selected the name St. Agnes for this church.

However, Captain Dalrymple died suddenly at 'Ratanui', aged 36 years, on 7th December 1890, a few weeks before the church was due to be consecrated and its name bestowed. His death notice states that he was the only son of Charles Dalrymple, Esq., of Kinellar Lodge, Kinaldie, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Captain Dalrymple's Death Certificate⁵⁸ states that he died of cancer of the tongue, an affliction he had suffered from for 2½ years. He had by that time lived in New Zealand for about two years. The names of his parents, his place of burial, and details of the minister of religion or the names of witnesses to the burial, were omitted from the document. It is, however, noteworthy that the two

⁵¹ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Macomb_\(American_general\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Macomb_(American_general))

⁵² *Feilding Star*, 26 July 1888, p.2

⁵³ *Plantagenet Roll of the Royal Blood: The Isabel of Essex Volume* (p. 339) and *A Genealogical & Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry, Vol. 2*, by Sir Bernard Burke (p. 869). Both from online facsimile sources via Google

⁵⁴ *Feilding Star*, 2 December 1908, p. 2

⁵⁵ *Feilding Star*, 5 March 1942, p.8. *The Great War, 1914-1918: New Zealand Expeditionary Force Roll of Honour* (Wellington, 1924), p. 168. Mayo, p. 151; <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

⁵⁶ Mayo, pp. 140, 150

⁵⁷ <http://histfam.familysearch.org/getperson.php?personID=I97715&tree=Nixon> : Family record of William Robert Dalrymple-Horn-Elphinstone, died 7 December 1890, son of Charles Elphinstone-Dalrymple (1817-1891) and his wife Harriet Albinia Louisa Gordon (d 1854). [http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Alumni_Oxoniensis_\(1715-1886\)_volume_1.djvu/356](http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Alumni_Oxoniensis_(1715-1886)_volume_1.djvu/356) : Dalrymple, William Robert Elphinstone, 1st son of Charles Elphinstone, army, ChristChurch, matric 11 October 1872, aged 18 [*Alumi Oxoniensis* (1715-1886), Vol. 1, djvu/356 p. 334]

⁵⁸ W.R.E. Dalrymple Death Registration No. 1890/4968, Ref. No 2011-Z6623.

people who are named on the Death Certificate, Philip Mussen⁵⁹ (the “last medical attendant”) and Reg C. Templer⁶⁰ of Cheltenham (who witnessed the death), are also named amongst the people who signed the paperwork requesting that St. Agnes’ cemetery be permitted (shown elsewhere in this report). Captain Dalrymple’s relatively simple headstone is somewhat more detailed, citing the name of his father, and also his grandfather, “the late Sir Robert Dalrymple Horn Elphinstone, Bart of Horn and Logie- Elphinstone, Aberdeenshire.”

Genealogical websites that cover Captain Dalrymple’s family give his full name as William Robert Dalrymple-Horn-Elphintone, born 1 February 1854. His father was Charles Elphinstone-Horn-Dalrymple and his mother was Harriet Albinia Louisa (nee Gordon) and both their families appear in British peerage records. His paternal grandfather, Sir Robert Dalrymple-Horn-Elphinstone, was a Baronet, a title inherited by William’s uncle, Sir James Dalrymple-Horn-Elphinstone – in turn a member of the British Parliament. The family line was as the Earls of Stair, Ayrshire, Scotland.



Figure 3 The Dalrymple grave in the foreground, near the back of the cemetery

Dalrymple matriculated at Christ Church, England, on 11 October 1872, aged 18, before joining the army. He then served in the 4th Battalion Royal Scot’s Fusiliers and in due course became Captain of the Cape Mounted Rifles. He was also at some point aide-de-camp to Sir Bartle Frere - the High Commissioner for South Africa during the time of the Zulu War, the first Boer War and the Basotho Gun War. Frere was removed on matters relating to his conduct in 1880 and died in 1884. During Dalrymple’s probable time in South Africa, the Cape Mounted Riflemen fought in the Moorosi campaign in 1879, the Basutoland Gun War (1880-1881).⁶¹

Captain Dalrymple became the first burial in the church grounds, two months before the church committee even decided to apply for permission to have a church burial-ground. It is possible to wonder why he came to be in Kiwitea and if his personal history or his family’s ‘highborn’ status played any role in decision-making relating to the church’s name and/or the decision to bury him there prior to permission being given to start a cemetery. There is no evidence to suggest the he was related to prominent early settler, John Taylor Dalrymple of Te Matai, Palmerston North, and later Bulls, however, that is a possibility.⁶²

Rev. Alan Stanley Innes-Jones – First Vicar

Rev. Alan Innes-Jones was closely involved with the earliest days of St. Agnes’ Church. He was born in Derbyshire in 1859, and was the son of the Rev. Francis Innes-Jones – who also spent time in New Zealand. He was educated at Felstead School in Essex, Pembroke College (University of Cambridge), and the Gloucester Theological College, before coming to New Zealand with Bishop Suter in 1883.

⁵⁹ Philip Mussen was formerly the Honorary Surgeon to the Kai Iwi Cavalry and also the First Wanganui Cavalry. Referred to as “Dr. Philip Mussen”, he was also the subject of a Prohibition Order preventing hotels from selling liquor to him, in 1883, at the request of (it appears) his son. (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 5 October 1882, p. 2, 16 August 1883, p. 2, 12 January 1916, p. 7, 7 February 1916, p. 3)

⁶⁰ Reg. C. Templer was the secretary of the Cheltenham Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd. (*Feilding Star*, 7 July 1894, p. 3)

⁶¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Bartle_Frere ; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Mounted_Riflemen

⁶² *Feilding Star*, 8 December 1890, p.2, & 11 December 1890, p.2.; Mayo p. 139-141; Online death registration: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

He settled in Nelson and in 1884 was ordained deacon and three years later a priest by the Bishop – serving the Nelson diocese for five years. He married Annie Martha Moss in Greymouth in 1887 (the marriage conducted by his father) and birth notices show that the couple were in Reefton in 1888 and Richmond in July 1889.⁶³

Innes-Jones transferred to the Wellington diocese in 1889, coming to Feilding that year to serve as locum tenens at Feilding. He arrived in September 1889 to replace the Rev. A. Hermon, whose wife had just died and Hermon had been granted a year's leave to visit England. Two months later the first meeting with regard to building St. Agnes' was held at Kiwitea, and in January and February 1890, he helped clear the site and mark the intended site of the church. Then on 27 July 1890 he conducted its first service.⁶⁴

When the Rev. Hermon returned from England in October 1890, Rev. Innes-Jones became vicar of Bulls, Rongotea and Foxton for three years. He was then appointed vicar of Feilding, where he served for 28 years. Between 1915 and 1934, he was also archdeacon of Rangitikei. In 1921, he transferred to Roseneath, where his wife Annie died at the Roseneath vicarage on 30 September 1921, aged 57. Archdeacon Innes-Jones retired from Roseneath after fifty years in active ministry in 1934.

Also noteworthy are Rev. Innes-Jones' other activities, in part indicated above by his work helping clear the future site of St. Agnes' (when aged about 30), and possibly how he might have fitted in with the other prominent Kiwitea residents covered here.

He had a great love of sport and had been captain of his college cricket eleven, and also hunted with the Earl of Portsmouth's hounds in central Devon. While living in Bulls, he was made an honorary member of the Rangitikei Hunt and rode to hounds whenever he could borrow a horse. "He was also appointed captain of the Feilding Mounted Rifles, and on resigning the captaincy he became chaplain to the regiment, the Sixth Mounted Rifles." He was also a keen bowler, including serving as president of the Feilding Bowling Club.

In 1934, he retired to Blenheim, where he died on 25 April 1940, aged 81. A memorial to him in the form of a large oak and kauri crucifix is at St. Barnabas' Church, Roseneath.⁶⁶

The Jacob Family – Three stained glass windows

William Frederick Jacob purchased land at Kiwitea in 1882 and took an active interest in all matters connected with the district, including serving as chairman of the Kiwitea County Council for a time.⁶⁷ The family were involved with the church from the start – and in 1909 theirs was the first motorcar in the St. Agnes community, although for several years he, his wife Henrietta and their two sons (William Hubert [b. 1886] and Arthur Cecil [b. 1890]) still walked the mile distance from their home (called 'Te Marama') to the church.

W.F. Jacob's farming pursuits and family ties took him (and presumably family) to England and Ireland in 1902, where at the former place he purchased four pedigree Romney Marsh rams, which were apparently his favoured sheep breed. He also raised pedigree shorthorn cattle. At a special Kiwitea County Council dinner in 1892, former chairman W.F. Jacob was described as "a first class man and almost the ideal chairman. He never shirked any trouble and whomever complained about

⁶³ *Evening Post* 27 April 1940, p. 10; *Grey River Argus*, 29 March 1887, p. 2 & 13 February 1888, p. 2; *Nelson Evening Mail* 3 July 1889, p. 2. The couple had at least eight, if not more, children according to the Births, Deaths & Marriages website (there are spelling errors in the online record). Of these, at least three did not reach adulthood and they are buried together at Feilding cemetery.

⁶⁴ Mayo, p. 137

⁶⁵ *Feilding Star*, 16 October 1890, p.2

⁶⁶ *Evening Post*, 1 October 1921, p. 1, 17 October 1934, p. 5, 26 April 1940, p. 1, 27 April 1940, p. 10, 5 November 1941, p. 9

⁶⁷ *Feilding Star*, 21 January 1896, p. 2

anything was always listened to.”⁶⁸

Henrietta Jacob was also very highly regarded and her death in 1911 was marked with the installation of the church’s first stained glass window in 1913. The window served as a memorial to Henrietta and to Mrs Helen Levett, and was paid for by their husbands.⁶⁹

William Frederick Jacob retired to Auckland in around the mid 1930s and died there in 1937, aged 85 - his son, Arthur, who had been wounded during WWI, was a solicitor in Auckland.⁷⁰ In William’s Will, he left £300 to be spent rebuilding or restoring St. Agnes’. This permitted a significant amount of upgrading to be done to the church in the late 1930s. In appreciation of his contribution to the church, a stained glass window was installed on the south side of the Sanctuary in his memory, by relatives, parishioners and friends, and this was dedicated in 1941.⁷¹

The couple’s older son, William Hubert Jacob, served as a Lay Reader at the church until his death in 1926 after a long illness.⁷² In 1924, he had married (at All Saints Church, Palmerston North) Maud Eliot Warburton, daughter of G.H. Eliot Warburton, a prominent early Palmerston North solicitor (died 1915), and his wife Sophia Isabella (died 1928), in what would very much have been a ‘society’ wedding. Following his death, Maud donated in his memory a stained glass window to be installed in the window above the pew where he had always sat. This was dedicated in early 1928.⁷³ Maud was remarried in 1932, to Charles Frederick Dalgety, again at All Saints Church, Palmerston North. She died in Palmerston North aged 95, in 1991, her husband having died the previous year, aged 92.⁷⁴

Maud’s brother was Edward Darian Warburton, a Kiwitea farmer by the time of Maud’s second marriage, who was also a St. Agnes’ Church member. He died in 1943, and in 1946, his wife, the former Barbara Alice Hartgill (married 1927) donated the church’s first bell in his memory. He had spent a long period as a prisoner of war during World War One, and this was thought to have contributed to the illness that took his life – by which time he had lived at Kiwitea about twenty years. He had taken over the Jacob family’s Te Marama Romney sheep stud some years earlier.⁷⁵

Associated Buildings and Places

Church Cemetery

The public notice below was published in the Feilding Star of 20 June 1891, pg. 3.

⁶⁸ *Feilding Star*, 18 July 1892, p. 2; *Evening Post*, 27 August 1902, p. 5, 4 November 1914, p. 8, 4 November 1920, p. 6

⁶⁹ Mayo, p. 148

⁷⁰ *NZ Truth*, 12 April 1928, p. 4, Mayo, p. 149

⁷¹ Mayo, p. 159, 161; *Evening Post*, 25 May 1937, p. 11

⁷² Mayo, p. 153

⁷³ Mayo, p. 154-5

⁷⁴ *Evening Post*, 5 May 1924, p. 9, 4 March 1932, p. 13; PNCC online cemetery records www.pncc.govt.nz re Warburton & Dalgety deaths; also noted is an interview with Maud in *The Tribune* of 20 October 1985, p. 4.

⁷⁵ Mayo, p. 163; *Evening Post*, 1 February 1939, p. 15, 10 May 1939, p. 5; Warburton-Hartgill marriage on <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>. Note that the *Evening Post* of 11 July 1939, p. 12, includes the shareholders in the new Palmerston North firm Abraham Seed and Produce Ltd. Shareholders include Maud Dalgety, Edward D. Warburton and their brother-in-law Ronald C. Abraham. The establishment of this firm appears on pg. 90-91 of David Abraham’s *Abraham and his Seed Forever* (PN, 2007)

NOTIFICATION UNDER THE
"CEMETERIES ACT, 1882."

THE undersigned Members of the Church of the Province of New Zealand commonly called "The Church of England" being desirous that the land described in the schedule hereto should be set apart as a Burial Ground, to be used for the exclusive interment of the Members of the said Church, and having obtained the sanction of the Colonial Secretary for this purpose, do hereby in pursuance of section No. 48 of "The Cemeteries Act, 1882," declare the said land to be dedicated and open as a Burial Ground, to be used exclusively as aforesaid.

SCHEDULE.

All that piece or parcel of Land being part of section numbered 230, on the plan of the Township of Sandon, comprising one acre or thereabouts, on which the Church of St. Agnes, Kiwitea, is erected excepting thereout that portion of the land upon which the said Church stands
Kiwitea, 20th June, 1891.

W. D. M. Banks	A. H. M. Banks
E. A. Knyvett	A. Bosher
K. Lockyer	G. P. Church
C. M. Church	R. Otway French
James Corry	Henry H. Pitcher
J. E. R. Varley	Robt. Kidd
J. R. Johnston	D. E. Johnston
Helen R. Levett	Maud Harvey
Reg. C. Templar	Walter Johnston
Arthur Johnston	A. A. N. A. Temple
W. H. Bailey	B. S. Carver
Philip Mussen	Virginia Hayman
Henrietta M. Jacob	Earnest E. Wells
Arthur Hermon	

(Church of England, Minister of Feilding, Halcombe, and Kiwitea)

Figure 4 Feilding Star of 20 June 1891, p 3

St. Agnes' Church is surrounded by the graves of many of the church's former members. J.F. Mayo, in his book *From One Generation To Another*, commented in 1956 that:

There are not very many Churches in New Zealand which are privileged to stand within their own Burial Ground, but, being many miles from Feilding Cemetery and near the border of a large area of country being newly settled, permission was granted to open a small cemetery at Kiwitea for the use of the Church. An application, signed by the Vicar and twenty-six parishioners, was made in February 1891, and the cemetery registered at the end of June. The ground was then stumped and dug over at a cost of £6, harrowed by Mr Levett, and sown down in grass given by Col. Gorton⁷⁶, three sides of the Churchyard being fenced at a cost of 35/- for labour and 4/6 for battens. All this took time, and it was not until September 1893, that the Churchyard had been surveyed and plotted; trees to the value of £3 being planted about the same time, and sixteen cypresses a year later. Meanwhile, at least five interments had taken place, the first of which was that of Captain K.E. Dalrymple (sic), who died in December 1890, two months before it was even decided to apply for permission to have a Church Burial-ground.⁷⁷

The new burial ground was consecrated on 24 November 1896, at the same time as the church's new chancel was consecrated. By the 1930s, the trees planted in the early days were crowding and overshadowing the burial plots, and this resulted in a significant tidy-up around 1937. By the 1940s, the cemetery was studded with headstones and there were few plots left that were neither occupied nor reserved. Remaining areas of the cemetery were then marked out for further plots, while permission was sought to enlarge the burial area.⁷⁸

Susan Maclean, in her book on architect Frederick de Jersey Clere (pg. 48), complimented St. Agnes' with the comment:

The appeal of a well-proportioned building, large or small, is enhanced by an attractive setting. St. Agnes's and its churchyard testify that successive generations have loved their place of worship.

The description of a funeral in March 1890 - that of 16-month-old George Campbell Kidd - demonstrates the alternative to establishing this cemetery. The Presbyterian service took place at the Kidd family's home in Kiwitea, before the funeral cortege formed up on the road in front of the house. It then journeyed to the local cemetery which was "about three miles beyond (present day Kimbolton)" By the time the cemetery was reached, the procession had increased to six carriages

⁷⁶ Colonel Gorton's daughter was married to Mr Levett's brother - covered elsewhere in this report. Gorton was a member of St. Martin's Church, Greatford (built 1882), near Marton. That church also has its own cemetery. Susan McLean, in *Architect of the Angels* (p. 48) comments that externally the two churches have a "family resemblance." Colonel Gorton's former home at Greatford, is the substantial C.T. Natusch homestead 'Rangiatea'. (R.G.R. Saunders, *Manawatu's Old Buildings* [PN, 1987], p. 50)

⁷⁷ Mayo, p. 141

⁷⁸ Mayo, pp. 143, 160, 171

and about 70 horsemen and women.⁷⁹

IMAGES

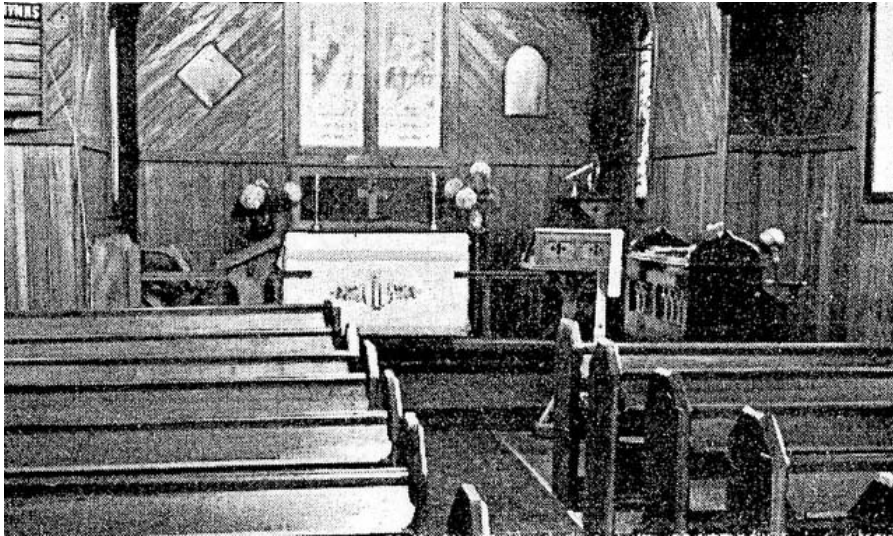


Figure 5 Mayo's caption for this photo reads "St Agnes' showing memorial altar frontals (Mayo p170)

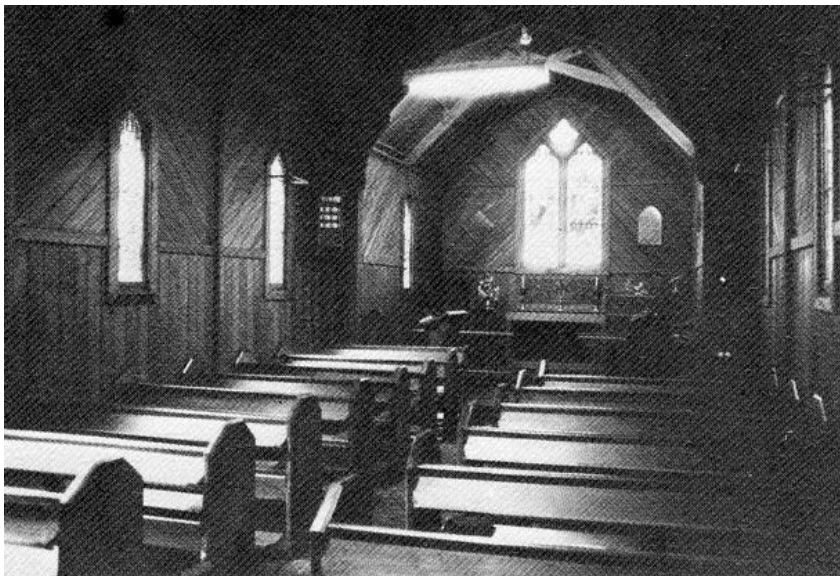


Figure 6 R.G.R. Saunders' photo taken in the 1970s - from his book *Manawatu's Old Buildings*, p. 72

⁷⁹ *Feilding Star*, 18 March, 1890, p. 2 (x2)

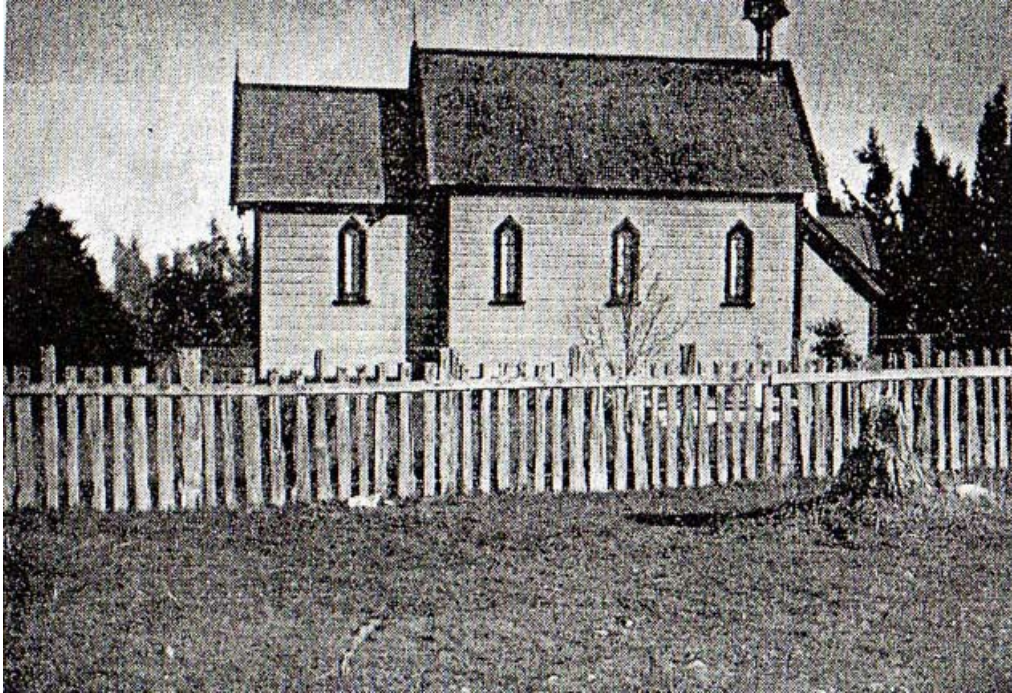


Figure 7 The above photo, described by Mayo (p, 143) as having been taken in the early 1900s, shows the church as it was between 1896 and 1918 (based on its alteration history). The church has subsequently been extended at both ends. Note the original bell shelter, which appears to be the same as those at St. Michael & All Angels Church, Stanway, and on the Church of the Venerable Bede, Shannon. The present belfry was built in the late 1930s after the building was lengthened, using money from a bequest from the Estate of W.F. Jacob, who died in 1937. (Mayo, p. 161) The present bell tower, which has “louvred sides and a roof with four gables ornamented by bargeboards decorated with a bold cusped design,” is identical to the one built onto St. Paul’s Church, Cheltenham, in 1939. (See Maclean, pp. 58, 150, 152)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Style

The church is designed in the Carpenter Gothic style. This was a vernacular ‘builders’ adaptation of Gothic architecture using the forms but few of the details of academic Gothic. The style was most commonly used for churches of modest scale and were popular with the Ecclesiological Society. These buildings used timber framing and cladding, with the framing often exposed on the exterior. Roof framing was usually exposed on the interior. Consistent with Gothic architecture, buildings designed in the style had steeply pitched gabled roofs of shingles, slate or corrugated steel, with wide, although usually not decorated, bargeboards. Porches were common as were belfries.

Description

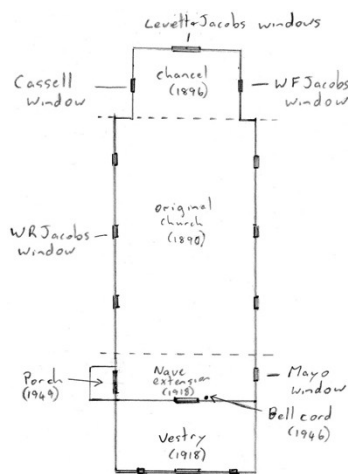
The church is composed of four main building elements: the vestry on the north with a lean-to roof and gablet over a centrally located external door; the nave with a simple gabled roof joining the vestry; the chancel with a lower gabled roof in line with and joining the nave; and the open gabled porch to the north east corner of the nave. Consistent with the Carpenter Gothic style, the gabled roofs are steeply pitched and clad with corrugated steel. The eaves project beyond the nave and are supported by simple braces and bargeboards are plain. There are small finial bases on each of the gables, supporting metal crosses. Door heads are shallow triangular arches while windows have

steeper triangular arched heads. All windows are long and narrow with the nave north window above the vestry particularly elongated. The south chancel window is the widest and comprises a pair of windows with trefoil heads with a quatrefoil between at the apex of the triangular headed frame.

The porch walls have a solid base with open frame and tre-foil frames inset above.

The original open bell cote at the northern end of the nave roof has been enclosed with louvred openings with added gablets to the north and south.

Planning and construction



Church of St. Agnes, Kiwitea
Leadlight window layout +
alteration history (not to scale)

Figure 8 Val Burr's sketch of the church

The plan of the church is composed of three main, symmetrically aligned, interior spaces. The entry to the church is from the east, through the porch leading into the nave and the narrower chancel to the south. The vestry is access through a central door on the north wall of the nave.

Apart from the discreet Gothic detailing in the porch and south window, the exterior of the church has little decoration so that the contrast with the interior is extreme. Consistent with the Carpenter Gothic style, the timber framing is expressed. The tall open ceiling is supported by scissor trusses on elegantly shaped knee braces with exposed purlins above the arches. The ceiling has vertical match lining.

Side walls have a horizontal dado with vertical match lining below it and diagonal match lining above it, with the boards meeting above each window. The junction between the nave and chancel is denoted by an triangular arch supported by knee-braces matching those under the scissor trusses. The chancel south wall continues the theme of the diagonal match lining of the nave with the direction of the lining reversed on the upper wall. The north wall of the nave

has three bays of panelling with shallow triangular arches and tre- foils carved into each corner.

The doors are and panelled with the external doors have beads over the vertical joints. The door hardware and furniture is original with cast iron latches and rim locks. There is an ornately carved reredos below the south window. Most of the windows are of stained glass with designs by Jones and Willis and Grant.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

This building has **high local** significance for **architectural, representativeness, authenticity, context and group**, and **moderate local people, pattern, commemorative public esteem** and **education** values.

The church has **high architectural** and **representativeness** values as an excellent example of the Victorian Carpenter Gothic style.

St Agnes' has **high authenticity** with little having changed in the building since the 1940s and these comprising a new porch, new memorial windows, lighting and general repairs and maintenance.

The church has **high context** values having been retained largely unchanged with its graveyard a key landscape and historical element while also being one of a **group** of churches designed by F de J Clere throughout the lower half of the North Island.

The building has **moderate people** values being associated with:

- Charles Levett donor of the land
- Frederick de Jersey Clere, the most significant church architect of the early 20th century in New Zealand who designed the church without charge
- William Batchelar, builder of the church
- William Dalrymple who was the first to be buried at the church
- Rev Alan Innes-Jones, the first vicar of the church
- the Jacob family, well regarded members of the community who had a close association with the church and who are remembered in stained glass windows

The church has **moderate pattern** values as it demonstrates the Anglican component of Kiwitea's early settler community, and of this community's progress and trends over some twelve decades. Many of its former congregation and some of its former vicars are buried in the cemetery that surrounds the church.

The church has **moderate commemorative** values in the number of plaques and stained glass windows present in the building. Their number led Rev. Mayo to comment in his 1956 book *From One Generation to Another*, that "more and more, St. Agnes' was becoming a memorial shrine, commemorating those who had lived and died within the district, and those of her sons who had been called to lay down their lives in two world wars." It is noteworthy that many of these memorials (to 1956) represent three families, and all three lost a son to war.

St Agnes' **moderate public esteem** values to the local Anglican community who worship in the church.

Given the range of and level of heritage values, the church has **moderate education** values to the community.

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