



All Saints Church Rothbury

The Armstrong Connection

Sir W. G. Armstrong (created Baron in 1887) bought 20 acres of land at Rothbury in 1863. The first Cragside House with 10 rooms was completed in 1866. He was elected Church Warden from Easter 1867 and held this position until his death in 1900.

The first part of the larger Cragside mansion was finished in 1872 and from 1874 he mainly lived in Rothbury. Sir William's great nephew, William Watson-Armstrong, his heir, was born in 1863. He joined him as one of the four Church Wardens for All Saints, Rothbury, from Easter 1895.

RECTORS BRASS

On entry through the Church porch, just after a door and a pillar, there is a brass plate on the left wall erected in 1893 and listing the Rectors of Rothbury from Lucas in 1247 to George Ainger in 1886. It was manufactured in Newcastle by Andrew Reid, Sons and Co., Engineers. It names the Church Wardens as Armstrong, The Right Honorable Lord, Frederick Barrow, John Wake and Lionel Crawford Davy, with Arthur Octavius Medd, M. A. as Rector.

After the brass, is the wooden Baptistry screen erected in 1913 by the first Lord Armstrong's great nephew William Watson-Armstrong in memory of his daughter Winifred. She died in France in 1912 aged 17. He was by then the second Lord Armstrong, created Baron in 1903.

COAT OF ARMS

A large diamond shaped panel on the left wall of the Baptistry shows the coat of arms (funeral hatchment) of the first and only Baron Armstrong of Cragside. The pendant is the Order of the Companionship of the Bath.

The wooden font cover was given by the 2nd Lord Armstrong (Baron of Bamburgh and Cragside) in memory of his first wife Lady Winifreda, who died at 54 in 1914.

CHANCEL SCREEN

The screen was erected in 1901 by William and Winifreda Watson-Armstrong in memory of William George, Baron Armstrong of Crag-side, born November 26th 1810 and died December 29th 1900. Facing the nave, it bears the coats of arms of Clavering, Percy, Cartington, Hepple, Armstrong, Ogle, Wharton, Smart, and Dawson and on the other side, Mowbray, Henry I, Tynemouth Priory, the Sees of Carlisle, Newcastle and Durham, Duke of Lancaster, Riddell and Watson-Armstrong.

PULPIT

Made of oak and erected in 1901 by the same benefactors, in memory of Margaret, wife of Baron Armstrong of Cragside, who died in 1893 aged 86. It has fine carvings by Ralph Hedley, of Bernard Gilpin and Saints Columba, Paulinus, Hilda and Aidan. It was originally on the right side of the nave as in but moved in 1947 when the Memorial Chapel was installed.

ORGAN

The organ, built by Hill and Sons of London in 1866, was paid for by Rector G. Vernon Harcourt and Sir W. G. Armstrong. Originally at the West end & relocated in the 1890s.

CHANTRY BRASS

On the left of the Chancel wall, just past the choir stalls, is another brass plate. It marks the refurbishment of the Cartington Chantry as vestries by public subscription in 1886 and lists the Churchwardens as W. G. Armstrong, D. D. Dixon, F. Barrow, and I. Wake with Rector A. O. Medd.

ARMSTRONG GRAVE PLOT

The Churchyard was full by 1869 so a new graveyard was provided on land where Rothbury Castle once stood across from the Church. The end of the lower plot by the river was used for burials by the Armstrong family. The first was for Lady Margaret Armstrong in 1893. In 1901, Lord W. G. Armstrong was buried beside her. There are six other family related graves and two memorial plaques.

OTHER FAMILY

The two windows above the great West door in the tower are in memory of General, Sir John Adye, R.A., father of Winifreda Watson-Armstrong, who died at Cragside in 1900. He had worked with Lord Raglan.

A wooden screen on what is now the (war) Memorial Chapel was built onto the South Chapel as a memorial to the Second Lord Armstrong who died in 1941 aged 78.

LORD ARMSTRONG'S LAST YEAR

In April of the year of his death, he pleaded great age for refusing to be nominated as Warden but the Rector asked him to stay on in name only as a special favour.



This leaflet was prepared to commemorate Lord Armstrong of Cragston and his many links to All Saints Parish Church.

Words and music by Jeff Reynolds from his original leaflet