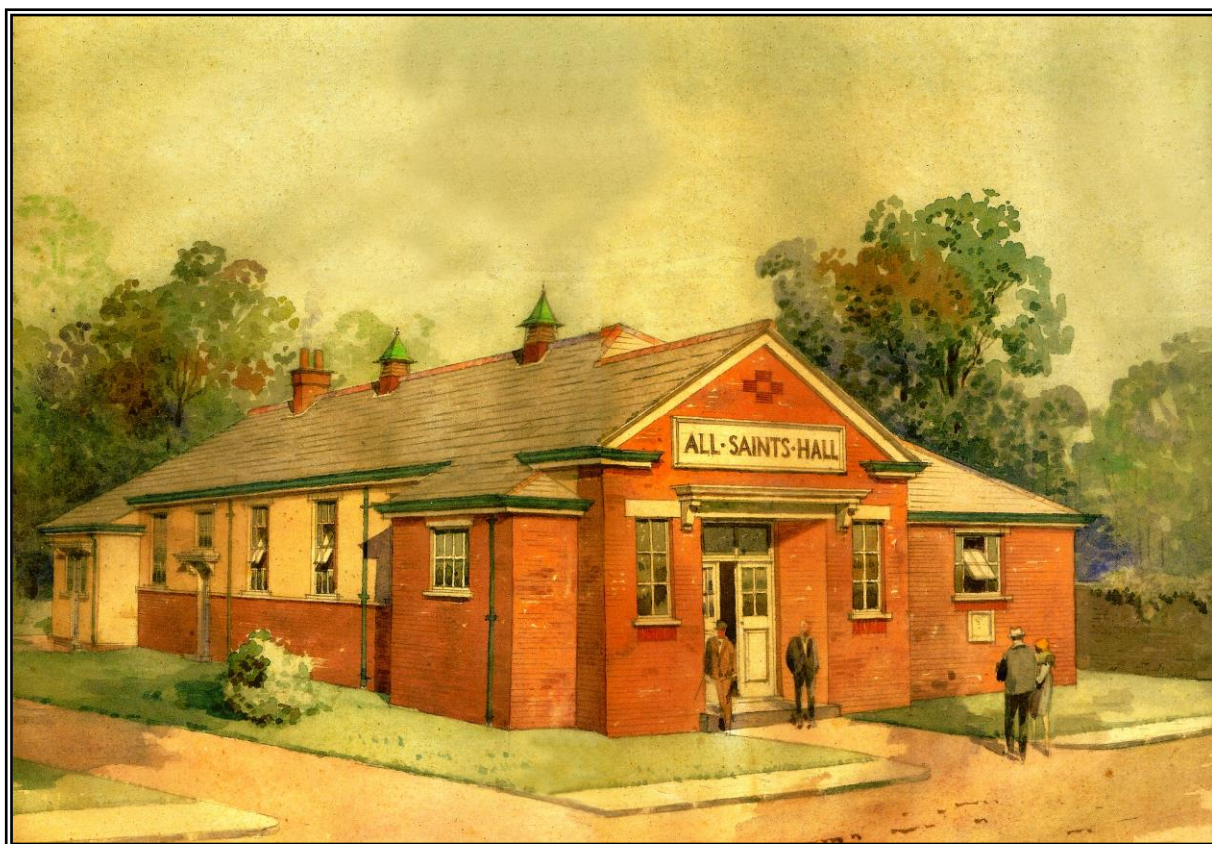


CHURCH HOUSE

All Saints Parish Magazine – Sept. 1948
Cyril A G Coles



Architect Frederick Cornford's original drawing of Church House in 1926

When the newly-elected Church House Committee first met, it faced a state of affairs which was certainly discouraging and might indeed have aroused a feeling of despair. The exterior was disfigured by election posters months old which clung with leechlike tenacity to the brickwork, drains were blocked, window frames broken, the cloak rooms cluttered up with chairs, scenery and junk, tattered fragments of fabric hung at the Hall windows, there was a piano which looked as though it had been through a blitz,

The chairs would have delighted a practical joker, so unreliable were they as firm supports for those who ventured to sit on them. The proscenium was dilapidated and the distempered walls seemed to become dirtier every time we looked at them. I confess I felt very depressed. We decided, however, to devote our attention at first to little matters – minor repairs which if neglected would lead to considerable expense.

This gave us time to recover our breath and we then discussed the provision of new curtains for the Hall, but it was all rather unreal, because we realised that new curtains would go with the dirty walls about as well as a diamond tiara would with dungarees.

Then the Nissen hut arrived and when we peered through the windows and revelled in its virgin splendour and cleanliness we gained courage. Hitherto there had been timidity in the requests we proposed to put before the Finance Committee. Now there was a boldness and a feeling of hope at last.

We saw a vision of a Church House clean and attractive and we resolved to demand permission to redecorate completely the building, to put up a new proscenium and new curtains and to make other improvements at a total cost of about £250. The Finance Committee readily agreed and the Council has now given its approval.

At one of our meetings we had before us a list of the regular users of the Church House and we found that it is used on Sunday afternoons by the Sunday School and on every week night and three afternoons by Church organisations. The Church House Committee which met in 1945 under the chairmanship of Mr. Walker recommended that the Church House should be used mainly for Church functions and activities and the Council adopted this recommendation. We were gratified to find that this policy was being observed, but hot on the heels of the feeling of gratification came the sobering thought of the responsibility for the present condition of the building. We could not attribute it to ill-behaved people to whom the Hall had been let and we had perforce to admit that Church people themselves were largely responsible.



The building has not been decorated for some time and much of the condition is due to the ordinary wear and tear which is inevitable in a building used regularly by a large number of young people, but we could not shut our eyes to the fact that carelessness and even wilful damage were contributory causes. Some may question the wisdom of the Council in sanctioning an expenditure of £250 since this sum must be provided by the Parishioners, but to have acted otherwise would have been a policy of despair and would have resulted in the building becoming a reproach to the Church, which should surely be avoided. I feel that every organisation and every person using the Church House should take a pride in keeping it clean and in good order. There is no encouragement to do so at present, but when the repairs and improvements about to be commenced have been completed, I am hopeful that we shall see a friendly rivalry between organisations and between individuals in caring for the property as though it were our own - as indeed it is.

We are fortunate in possessing a Church House which many parishes would view with envy. And the name – Church House – ought surely to make us keen to keep it worthy of such a name. It will be sad if we are so careless in our treatment of the building as to spoil its good name.

Chairman, Church House Committee.

Charges for Hire of Church House for Receptions, Parties, etc.

HALL AND KITCHEN

2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. – 1 guinea
 2.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. – 3 guineas
 6 pm to 10.30 pm – 2 guineas

COMMITTEE ROOM AND KITCHEN

2.30p.m. to 6 p.m. – 10/6
 2.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. – 1½ guineas
 6pm to 10.30pm – 1 guinea