

ARTHUR JOSEPH SACRE

Arthur Sacre was born on 27 August 1862, the son of Charles Sacre and his wife Matilda. He was baptised on 27 September of that year at Ardwick, Manchester, so that is probably where he was born.

Charles Sacre was a civil engineer.

Arthur married Eleanor Birtill in the parish church at Didsbury, Manchester on 20 July 1886.

UK CLERGY LIST 1897

Sacre, Arthur Joseph, Durh.,: **d** 1886, **p** 1888 (Man.); cur, of Saddleworth, Oldham, Lancs, 1886-8; St. Matthew, Ardwick, Manchester 1888-91; St. Anne, Manchester 1891-2; rect., from 1892, of E. Hanningfield, Chelmsford.

HAMPSHIRE TELEGRAPH – FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 1931

DEATH OF CANON SACRE

Former Chairman of Bognor Council

The death occurred in the early hours of Sunday morning of Canon Arthur J. Sacre, of 1, Ellasdale Road, Bognor Regis, ex-Chairman of the Bognor Regis Urban District Council. Canon Sacre, who recently underwent a very serious operation, had been ill for many months.

One of the best known public men in Bognor Regis, Canon Sacre had served on the Council from 1918 until April last, when illness necessitated his retirement. As Chairman of the Council in 1929, the Canon welcomed the King when he convalesced at Bognor Regis.

Prior to coming to Bognor Regis in 1917 he resided at Chelmsford, where, besides acting as Hon. Canon of the Chelmsford Diocese, he fulfilled many important public positions. During the War he served with East Anglian forces as chaplain and was invalided home from Gallipoli in 1915.

The funeral took place on Wednesday, the interment in Bognor Regis Cemetery being preceded by a service in St. John's Church, at which the Vicar, the Rev. Canon Kenneth Clarke, M.A. officiated, assisted by the Rev. S.W.A. Collins, the Rev. A. Hall and the Rev. M. Ramsay. Canon Sacre's favourite hymns were sung by the choir, Mr. Norman Demuth officiating at the organ. The chief mourners present were Mr. and Mrs. G. Sacre (son and daughter-in-law), Mr. Alex Sacre and Mr. A. R. Sacre (sons), Mr. and Mrs Ross (son-in-law

and daughter), Mr. C. Hall (nephew), and Mr. and Mrs. R. Sacre (nephew and niece). The widow was too ill to attend. Among those present at the church were the Chairman of the Council (Mr. O.A. Bridges), together with the members and officials of the Council, the Rev. C. Hall, representing the Bishop and Diocese of Chelmsford, the Rev. H.E. McLeod, Rector of Shepperton, the Rev. Herbert M. Lee (Wesleyan), Capt. H.C. Pocock, Messrs. W.H. Watson, T. W. Cutts, F. Redford, A. Seymour, J.P., and W. Palmer, Col. L.A. Watson, Supt. W.H. Brett and Inspector A. Cozens, Miss Marriott and Miss Gray, representing Eastergate Branch (Women's Section) of the British Legion, and Mr. H.J. Perry, Secretary of the National Citizens Union (Hove Branch).

Some more notes on Canon Arthur Joseph Sacre, Rector of All Saints, East Hanningfield by Pat Ost.

As recorded in his obituary, Canon Arthur Sacre was Rector of All Saints, East Hanningfield, from 1892, when he was aged 30, to 1917, when he resigned from his living and moved to Bognor Regis. Although it notes that his father was a civil engineer, he was in fact Locomotive Superintendent of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway up to his retirement in the late 1880's. He died by his own hand in 1889, not long before Arthur Sacre took over the living at East Hanningfield.

The new rector was an innovator, familiar, one assumes through his family, with developments in late Victorian engineering. He introduced significant improvements to his new rectory, extending his office to include a new fireplace and a large bay window to look over the gardens.

Improvements to the rectory included installing 50V electricity, powered by an oil engine-powered dynamo and battery in the Coach House. He built an extension to the back of the Coach House to house the dynamo and the oil engine, mounted on a massive concrete base, and repurposed the sleeping quarters above the entrance to the coach house and stables as a lead acid battery farm, to be charged by the dynamo. (These 'Country House Lighting sets' were a mixed blessing, as the installation standards for electrical wiring were far from perfect, and these early lighting systems were in fact the cause of many fires in late Victorian/ Early Edwardian grand houses).

The 50 V DC cables at Hanningfield were simply bare copper wires, laid in grooves in wooden boards fixed to the wall, because I remember these early circuit boards were still fixed to the walls of the coach house during my time there, but thankfully no longer in use.

From this change, I suspect, (but don't know for sure) that he no longer kept horses, because he also acquired an early electric car (described as an 'electric brougham') to get him in and out of Chelmsford, where it seems he was a 'mover and shaker' in the

administration of the diocese. From descriptions of these early electric cars, they were powered by the only battery technology then available, the lead acid battery, and as a consequence, they were, by modern standards, heavy, slow, and fairly limited in their range, very like the traditional milk float. However, the range was more than sufficient to reach Chelmsford for work or onwards travel (and return), or the other nearest railway station, Battlesbridge, and they were faster, and more reliable, than horsepower. Until the petrol engined cars became more reliable, electric cars were popular.

I think it must have been around this time that an electric bell system was installed in the rectory, with buttons in all the principal rooms downstairs, and in the main upstairs bedrooms as well. This system gave us much amusement as children, as pushing on of the many bellpushes or hanging switches caused a bell to ring in our kitchen, and a little indicator flag to wave in a window above the bell, to show which room had 'rung for service'. This possibly helped to run a large house, with a smaller number of servants than must have been required to run the 1863 rebuild (allegedly 20 servants together, indoors and outside).

He seems to have employed a chauffeur, who may have been based in the coach house, as the rector also installed what can best be described as a 'Fire Station bell, on the end wall of the rectory closest to the stables. This was operated by a switch in the rector's office, or in the front hall, to call round the car and driver when required. The chauffeur almost certainly was also responsible for running the oil engine when the batteries had to be recharged. (My father had inherited that happy task in the early 1930's and kept the 1890's lighting set running until the rectory was converted to 230V AC mains electricity in around 1936}. The Essex Records Office still has the hire purchase agreement to do the conversion, signed by my grandfather, for the princely sum of £5 and 12 shillings.

I have not researched details of Canon Sacre's war service as chaplain to the Anglican Regiment, but he was over 53 when he served, and was wounded, at Gallipoli. Luckily he survived his wound, and was repatriated to recover, but by 1917, the effect of his war service, and running a large, cold and expensive living at Hanningfield was taking its toll, and he was writing for advice about resigning the beneficed living, on the grounds of ill health, (there was a complex legal process to go through, if a beneficed clergyman wished to resign, rather than hang on to die in office). Again, the letters concerning this are preserved in the Essex Records Office, as I discovered when researching my family history.

Canon Sacre was born in the same year as my grandfather, who took over the living, via the 'Right of Presentment' in 1924, after two livings, having survived interesting times during the Civil War, in Ireland. They both died in 1939, although grandad died in office in East Hanningfield, and Canon Sacre died in Bognor Regis, after a long and well-respected retirement from 'holy office'.