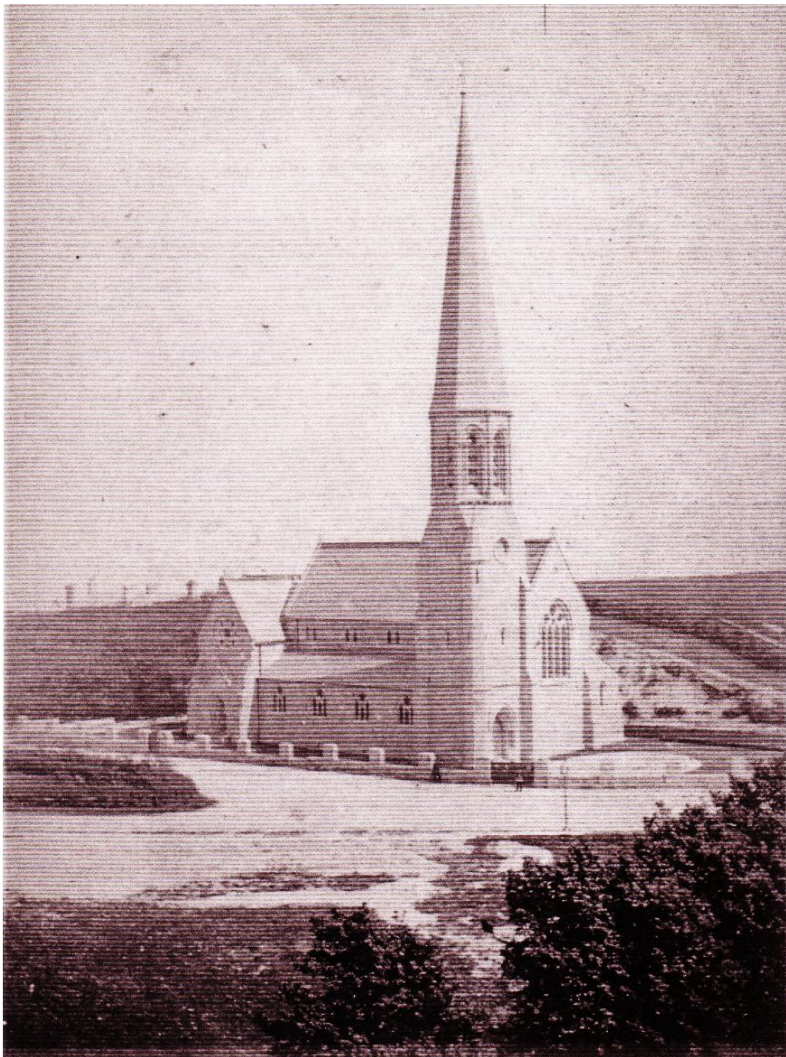




Holy Trinity Church, Ventnor



The picture shows Holy Trinity Church shortly after completion in 1862, its stonework pristine. The fact that there are few buildings around it adds to that appearance, as well as to the verticality of its unusually narrow tower and steeple. For those with a disposition towards vertigo, just glancing at it is sometimes enough to set them off. The site had earlier been considered for the terminus of the planned railway line to Ventnor. This was when the intended route approached the town via Luccombe and the area now commonly known as the Landslip. Ultimately, of course, the line was brought in via Wroxall and a long tunnel under the Downs.

The building was paid for by three sisters: the Misses Agnes and Louisa Percy and Mrs Ellen Thomson, the cost being £9,356. They added a further £2,000 for endowment. The church organ was constructed under the eye of Edwin Lemare, a local musician and music dealer. He played there for many years, teaching his son, also called Edwin Lemare, to play as well. The son subsequently became one of the most highly paid and highly regarded organists of his generation, eventually settling in the USA.

In June 1962, the *Isle of Wight Mercury* reported on the centenary celebrations for Holy Trinity. A special concert and supper was organised in the Parish Hall

one evening, while Francis Jackson, then organist of York Minster, visited the Island to give a special recital on the church's organ which had just recently been overhauled after a fund-raising campaign.

Among the intriguing stories about Holy Trinity, recounted in the *Mercury*, was how one of the workman involved in building the church, Henry Milligan, had his name inscribed at the top of the steeple. In 1922, Henry's grandson, Harry, then climbed the steeple in order to see the name. Another story recalled how, during the Second World War, the Town Surveyor, Geoffrey Poole, also climbed the steeple for the purpose of attaching savings and other banners.

The Centenary service at the church was conducted by the Venerable Geoffrey Tiarks, then Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, assisted by the Vicar, the Revd. A.L. Burrell.

Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, the picture courtesy of Sharon Champion.



Ventnor & District Local History Society is a registered charity, working to preserve and record the history of our area and make it available to the public in the Ventnor Heritage Centre.

The Society and Heritage Centre are run and managed by volunteers.

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