

## **St Martin's Church, Talke**

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### **Extracts from Audley "An out of the way, quiet place"**

Edited by Robert Speake MLitt. Published by Department of Adult Education, University of Keele, 1972:

The Chapel at Talke was founded in 1552 and it remained a Chapel of Ease of Audley parish until 1859 when a separate parish was created based in Talke. For centuries the charities, the services and registration were organised from Audley and even the rebuilding of the Chapel in 1746 was planned by the Vestry Meetings at Audley.

#### **TALKE CHURCH**

Although the maintenance of Talke chapel was the concern of the Audley vestry meetings, and in 1746 considerable attention was paid to the state of the fabric, the church, as it is known to villagers today, goes back to 1794. It is a neat brick building reflecting many of the 18th century innovations in church architecture. By 1832 it was necessary to enlarge the building but the most revealing account of the state of the church affairs in Talke is to be found in the returns made to the bishop in 1830. The chapel was described as "a small brick building erected above 60 years ago; single body and very plain. The roof is of timber, covered with tile but not in a good state of repair.

*Walls:* brick want pointing externally.  
*Floor:* brick, damp.  
*Windows:* Not in good repair.  
*Outer door:* wants painting.  
*Books :* want repair.  
*Seats :* neat and uniform.  
*Galleries:* Two.  
*Organ:* None.  
*Surplices:* One, new. Linen provided.  
*Cleanliness:* pretty well.

There is no chancel distinct from vestry or chapel. There is a small bell tower.

State of Steeple not good : Weather board bad. One good bell.

*Churchyard :* fence not properly kept.

*Gates :* Bad. No burials.

"The chapel yard appears to have been encroached; upon the South side is a garden almost against the chapel wall."

The report continues, "It seems very desirable that a burial ground should be attached to the chapel. It is three miles distant from the mother church along very bad roads.

"There is one service on Sunday. Sacraments held four times every year. The number of communicants is uncertain."

The incumbent, the Rev. Robert Hill lived at Hough about ten miles away. He performed no duties. The acting curate was his grandson who was living with him at Hough until lodgings could be found for him at Talke.

Progress was made however, and by 1851 the building had been greatly improved, at a cost of £300, and the curacy was valued at £138 per annum. A small parsonage house was built in 1850.

Frequently, it was suggested at Audley, that the living at Talke should be made a substantial one and offered as a bait to attract a suitable schoolmaster to Audley grammar school. He would fill the roles of curate and schoolmaster, but this never seems to have taken place. When the parish was established in 1859 the patronage was placed in the hands of the vicar of Audley and the incumbents were established as rectors, the first two spanning 84 years.

1859/1906 Rev. Mark Wilks Mac Hutchin.

1906/1943 Rev. John Henry Lilwall Edwards, B.A.

## **Extract from Collections for a History of Staffordshire 1915**

### Talk Chapel

In 1563 a chapel of ease with cure.

Church Ornaments from inventory of 14 May 1553: 1 bell in the steeple. 1 suite of vestments had been given up to Rich Forsett, surveyor.

Churchwardens: John Rylley & Rich Taylor

### Curates

1533-50	Hugh Smith
1604	Thomas Beech
before 1652	Gabriel Smith
1655	Ralph Murhall
1659	Thomas Pool
c1665	George Reeve

## **Extract from former Talke website page**

### Talke Church

Talke church has a long history, yet a relatively modern building. Earliest records show a worshipping community in Talke during the twelfth century. However, the name of the church suggests earlier origins. Martin, Bishop of Tours died in 397 A.D. A popular book about his life was written by his friend Sulpicus Severus soon after and, as a result, early churches were named after him. Churches with the name 'St. Martin' usually date from around the fifth century, so Talke Church could well have ancient origins. Especially when you consider that Chesterton was a Roman settlement, and Talke would have been on the road North from there.

The oak figures of John the Baptist and Paul, either side of the chancel arch are said to have come from Little Moreton Hall. The church was a 'chapel of ease' to Audley from 1552 until 1859.

In 1553 it was visited by Thomas Cromwell's Commissioners who removed some of the church property and vestments.

The Chalice still used today was given to 'Talk Chappel' by John Bourne in 1728. He lived at the Harecastle Farm.

In 1749 part of the current Church was built. The 1818 Staffordshire Directory describes the Church as ' a small brick structure with a low tower containing a clock and one bell. It is situated in the middle of the village. There was a chapel of ease standing there in 1553 made of wattle and doro.' Further work was carried out in 1794.

In 1830, in a report to the Bishop the church was described as "a small brick building erected above 60 years ago; single body and very plain. The roof is timber, covered with tile but not in a good state of repair." In 1833 the church was considerably enlarged and the tower rebuilt.



St. Martin's 1841

On 27th September 1859 it was constituted a separate Parish comprising of Talke and Butt Lane.