

A Short History of St. Philip's Church,
SYDNEY.

1856—JUBILEE—1906

STATE LIBRARY OF N.S.W.
MITCHELL LIBRARY

DSM/
283.91/
H

To David Mitchell Esq.

With the Author's Compliments

April 1906.

A Short History of St. Philip's Church,

SYDNEY.

JUBILEE

1856 — 1906




A Short History of St. Philip's Church,

SYDNEY.

1856 — JUBILEE — 1906.

“ Much with hoary men
He walked conversing, and sedately glad
Heard stories which escaped historic pen.”

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.



PUBLISHED WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE RECTOR AND PAROCHIAL COUNCIL.

ST. PHILIP'S VESTRY,
27TH MARCH, 1906.



It has long seemed to me that many old events connected with the history of St. Philip's Church, to which can be added fresh incidents, should be re-told, and that others which have never been told, or that have long passed into the limbo of oblivion, should be recorded. To this congenial task I have set myself in this small volume, and in a larger one, which it is proposed to issue, at the Centenary in 1910.

At present, I propose merely to glance at the early history of the Church, dealing more fully with the period embraced in the Jubilee, which we are about to celebrate.

The earliest mention of St. Philip's Church is contained in a letter from a resident in Sydney to a friend in England, which was published in the *London Chronicle*, of June 4th, 1789. It is dated "Port Jackson, 14th November, 1788," and the writer, after referring to various other matters, goes on to state, "We hear, as soon as a sufficient quantity of bricks can be made, a church is to be built, and named St. Phillip, after the Governor." The Rev. Richard Johnson's "wattle and daub" Church was commenced on June 10th, 1793, and the first service was held in it on Sunday, August 25th, 1793. It was destroyed by fire on October 1st, 1798. Without delay, Governor Hunter prepared a piece of ground near the Lieutenant-Governor's house, leading from High Street to the brow of the hill, now known as Church Hill, and here he "laid the foundation of a large and substantial stone church." This was about the middle of October, 1798. The erection of the Church proceeded but slowly, but it was so far completed by February 8th, 1808, as to permit of a public meeting being held in it by the deponents of Governor Bligh. On August 18th, 1809, the Rev. William Cowper arrived in Sydney.

He found that the Church had been used by Mr. William Crook, and Major Abbott. He conducted services in the Church, and continued to do so until Christmas Day, 1810, when it was consecrated by the Rev. Samuel Marsden.

Space will not permit me to do more than mention one or two details in connection with the old Church that are necessary to explain some matters pertaining to the new.

On September 18th, 1840, the St. Philip's Parochial Association was formed with a view to provide, by voluntary contributions, some assistance towards the maintenance of education and religion, especially in the Parish.

In 1841, Mr. Cowper's eyesight became so defective that he was obliged to go to England to have an operation performed. He sailed for England on February 19th, 1842. It is stated in Dean Cowper's "Autobiography and Reminiscences" that the Rev. R. L. King was his curate at this time, but this was not so, for Mr. King only took his degree at Cambridge in 1845, was ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Australia in 1847, and entered upon his duties as Curate of St. Philip's in the same year. Before Mr. Cowper's visit to England, the Rev. John Elder was his Curate, and during his absence in England the Rev. J. C. Grylls, M.A., acted as his locum tenens. Mr. Grylls continued to act as Evening Lecturer until September, 1847.

Prior to the return of Mr. Cowper, the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred upon him the honorary degree of D.D., as a mark of appreciation of the long and faithful services which Mr. Cowper had rendered to the Church in Australia. In January, 1845, the Archdeaconry of Cumberland was created, and Dr. Cowper was collated by the Bishop to be the first Archdeacon.

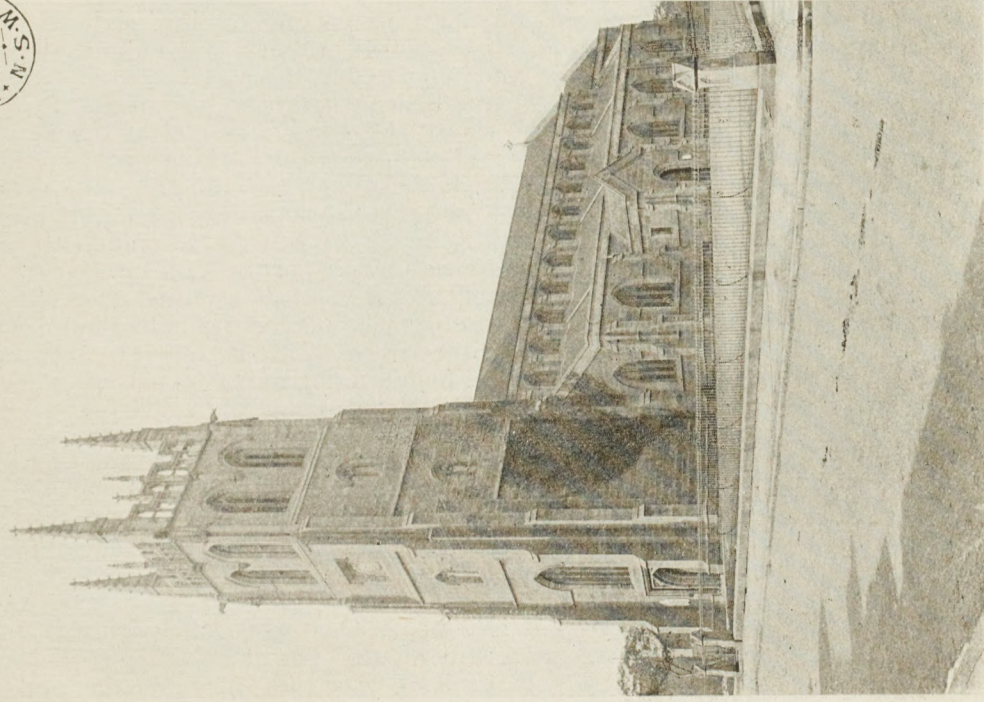
In 1845, at the suggestion of the Rev. Dr. Cowper, several members of the Parochial Association undertook the task of visiting the dwellings of the parishioners attached to the Church of England, with a view, amongst other things, to ascertain the



Old St. Phillip's Church. Consecrated 1810.

number of persons who might require Church accommodation. They reported "That notwithstanding there are three services in the Church on each Lord's Day, and one every Thursday evening, still, several hundreds of the parishioners, if disposed to attend, must unavoidably be without any accommodation in their own Parish Church;—whence, there appears to be a necessity for some arrangement to be made, as early as practicable, for the erection of a new and more commodious Church. This, indeed, would be a work of years, and, as in the meantime the population may considerably increase, there seems to be an urgent cause for some plan to be adopted without delay."

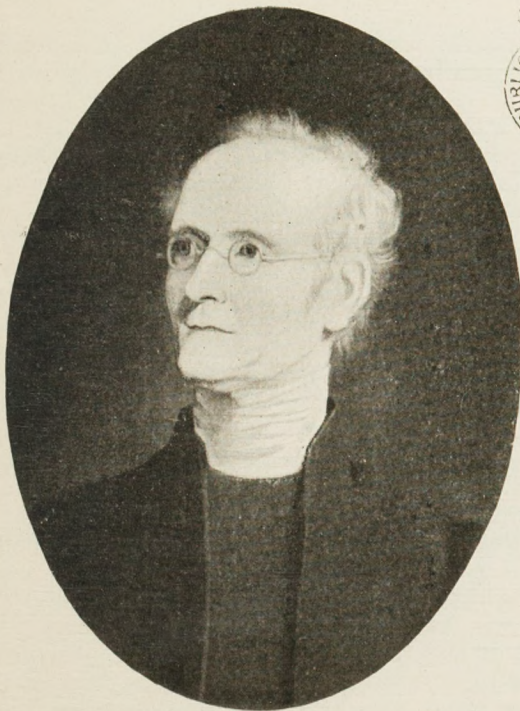
On January 2nd, 1846, the Rev. Dr. Cowper placed the sum of £500 in the hands of Trustees, towards the cost of the erection of a new Church in the Parish. At a meeting held on November 5th, 1846, the following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That the site and state of the present Church in St. Philip's, and the very inadequate accommodation which it affords for the members of the Church of England in this Parish, render it necessary to adopt measures whereby a new and more commodious Church may be erected as speedily as circumstances will permit." In November, 1847, it was announced that, after much correspondence and communication respecting the site, it had been finally arranged and ordered by His Excellency the Governor and the Executive Council to be upon the most desirable part of the Church Hill, the boundaries being much the same as at present. The site had been previously occupied by the house in which Captain Rossi lived when he first arrived in the Colony, and in clearing away the rubbish, the door-stone of his house was found at some depth below the surface. The old well still exists to the north of the tower, and supplied the builders of the Church with abundance of water. The first contract was entered into in the month of December, 1847, for the fencing of the ground. The second, commenced in March, 1848, was for the excavation of the site. By the third contract, commenced in April, 1848, and completed



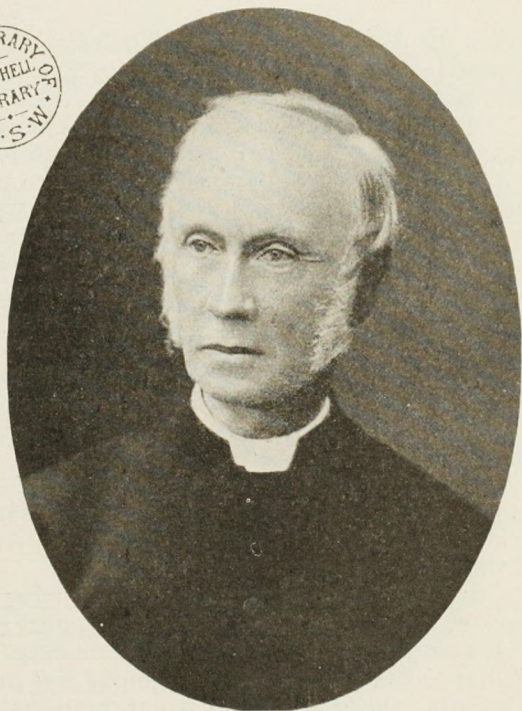
Present Church, Consecrated 27th March, 1856.

in May, 1849, the foundation was laid and the walls carried to the height of twelve feet above the ground. It was on Monday, May 1st, 1848, that the foundation stone was laid by the Venerable Archdeacon Cowper (who officiated at the particular request and in the presence of the Lord Bishop). After Divine Service had been held in the old Church the congregation proceeded to the ground, where the stone was laid at the north-eastern corner of the chancel. The other contracts completed the whole of the stone work of the Church. In consequence of the strong temptation which the gold diggings exhibited to the masons, the work was discontinued for a time in 1851. By the end of 1854 the roof was completed and strenuous efforts were made to provide the funds to enable the Building Committee to arrange for the internal fittings of the Church. By the end of 1855, all that was needed for the completion of the Church was the glass for the large Eastern window and for the small Clerestory windows, and this had not arrived from England. In spite of the many difficulties the Churchwardens and Trustees had to contend with, they succeeded in completing the building to a sufficient extent that it could be used; the only part remaining to be added was the tower. Up to this time the cost of the building had been upwards of £12,000. The total cost was about £16,000, and the whole of that sum was raised by voluntary contributions from the congregation and their friends. On March 27th, 1856, the Church was consecrated by the Lord Bishop, assisted by the Venerable the Archdeacon; and a large number of Clergy were present on the occasion. The organ was completed in October, 1856. It then occupied a place in the western gallery and was enclosed in a handsome cedar case.

In 1850, the new School, which now forms the central portion of the School buildings, was completed, and brought into use. The old Schools, at the back of the Church, and in Harrington Street, were still in use, but this one was designated St. Philip's Grammar School. The Rev. R. L. King was the Head Master, and Mr. J. J.



The Ven. Archdeacon Colver, D.D.



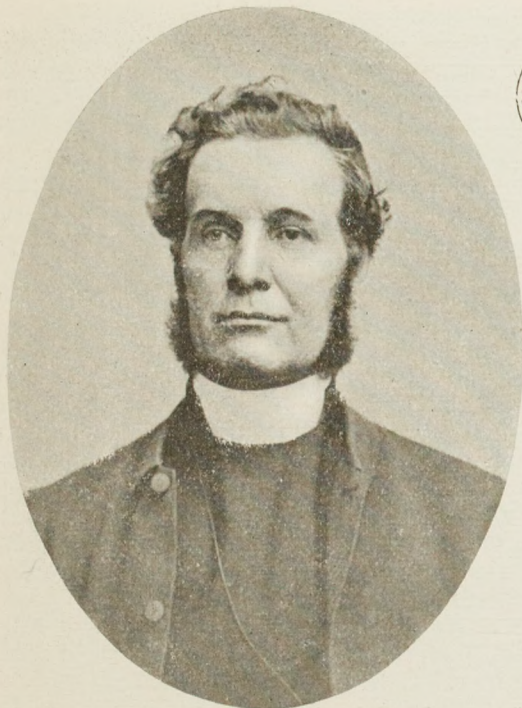
The Very Rev. Deau Colver, M.A.

Davies, the Assistant Master. The number of pupils was 46. In 1856, the Rev. John Allman Burke, B.A., and Mr. Horace Sendall arrived from England, and took up the work of the School.

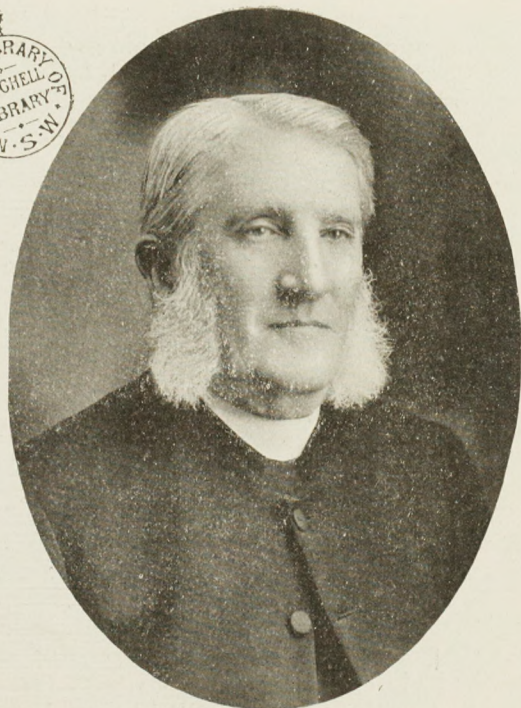
In July, 1855, the Rev. G. W. Richardson was appointed to succeed the Rev. R. L. King, as Curate, on Mr. King's promotion to the Incumbency of St. John's Parramatta, and continued to hold that office until the end of July, 1858. At the time of the opening of the new Church there was a Parochial Library of 1200 volumes. On June 8th, 1857, a meeting was held, presided over by the Bishop, at which instructions were given to Mr. Dean to sell the materials of the old Church, and certain of the fixtures, within a week. The pulpit, reading desk, and font were given to St. Luke's Church, a site for which had been selected in Sussex Street. The body of Captain Putland, of H.M.S. Porpoise, which had been interred in the vault, was removed to Camperdown Cemetery. The Bible and Prayer Book, which were brought out in the First Fleet, and the Communion Service, which was presented to the Church by His Majesty King George III., were, of course, removed to the new Church, where they are still occasionally used, and very carefully preserved.

Archdeacon Cowper was permitted to realise his long cherished desire of proclaiming the Gospel in the new Church. His first sermon was preached in it on Sunday, March 30th, 1856, and his last on Sunday, April 25th, 1858. He died on July 6th, 1858, and was accorded a public funeral.

Dr. Cowper's character was one which would bear the most careful and scrutinizing examination. Its greatest beauty, perhaps, was its remarkable consistency, throughout so long a period. A high sense of duty, a clear and resolute purpose to do that which he believed to be right, cool judgment and justice in weighing the consequences of actions and events; these and other great qualities gave great weight to his observations and



The Rev. Canon O'Reilly.



The Ven. Archdeacon Langley.

decisions, and made him a valuable counsellor to those who had to seek advice at his hands. As a preacher he was bold, faithful and uncompromising in rebuking the vices and errors of the day ; and in setting forth that Gospel which he had found to be the means of salvation to himself, and in the light of which he had walked for more than 50 years. As a pastor he was affectionate, sympathizing and tender. Often a sufferer, he knew how to feel for others, and to apply the consolations of the Gospel to their hearts. A few weeks before his death the last stone was placed on the Tower, and on the day of his funeral the bells, which had been presented by the Hon. John Campbell, for the first time, gave forth, in measured and solemn tones, the Knell of Death.

The new Parsonage was completed in 1858 at a cost of about £3200, including the amount paid for the land. The old Parsonage and land were sold on March 10th, 1859.

The Bishop now offered the vacant position to the Rev. William MacQuarie Cowper. He preached in the Church for the first time, as Incumbent, on August 1st, 1858. The Bishop also conferred upon him the office of Dean and Archdeacon of Sydney, the duties of the former to commence as soon as the Cathedral was completed, those of the latter at once. His first sermon in the Colony was preached in St. Philip's Church on February 21st, 1836. The Rev. John Steele was Curate from November 28th, 1858, to October 6th, 1859. In 1862 Bishop Barker went to England and deputed Mr. Cowper to take charge of the Diocese during his absence. The Rev. Thomas O'Reilly had entered upon his duties as Curate on January 6th, 1861, and, in order to enable Mr. Cowper to give more time to the work of the Diocese, the Bishop appointed the Rev. E. M. Salinière as an additional Curate. These two gentlemen remained at St. Philip's until Easter, 1864. After Easter the Rev. G. A. C. Innes was appointed Curate, and continued to hold office until the end of the year. In January, 1866, the Rev. W. J. Günther, M.A., entered on his duties as Curate, and continued to hold office until January, 1868, when he became In-



Interior St. Philip's Church before renovation (1885), Christmas.



cumbent of St. John's, Parramatta. He was succeeded in March, 1868, by the Rev. Joseph Dark, who only remained until the end of February, 1869.

On July 1st, 1869, the Rev. Mr. Cowper, resigned the Incumbency of St. Philip's. We all know how faithfully he walked in the footsteps of his father, and how consistently he followed the noble example set before him. He was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas O'Reilly on July 1st, 1869.

On January 1st, 1870, the large new Schoolroom for Infants was completed, and it was used on that day as a Sunday School for the first time; the Master's residence was occupied a few weeks earlier. The old buildings in Harrington Street were then sold.

In June, 1872, an order was sent to Walker and Sons for a new organ for the Church. On August 17, 1872, the beautiful little School organ was played for the first time, the Children of the School having collected the amount required for its purchase.

In July, 1873, the block of land adjoining the Parsonage was purchased for the purpose of erecting an addition to the Parsonage. The new organ for the Church arrived in January, 1874. Its cost was £885. It was played at Evening Service on Thursday, 26th February, 1874, for the first time. The old organ was sold to Mr. Betts, of Goulburn, for £100.

In 1875 the addition to the Parsonage was completed at a cost of about £1850.

In February, 1879, Canon O'Reilly's health broke down and he was granted leave of absence for 12 months for the purpose of taking a trip to England. His locum tenens was the Rev. W. J. K. Piddington. The Canon returned, a mere shadow of his former self. In June, 1880, the Rev. R. Nelson Howard was appointed Curate, and he filled that position until June, 1881, when the Rev. Thomas Harrison succeeded him. The Rev. J. D. Langley relieved Canon O'Reilly from December 18th, 1880, until February 3rd, 1881.

Canon O'Reilly died at Parramatta on Sunday, 18th December, 1881. His last



Present Interior, St. Philip's Church.

sermon was preached in the Church on the evening of Thursday, September 29th, from the text, "He hath done all things well." During his last illness, the Rev. W. Bryan-Brown occupied the pulpit, and during the vacancy in the parish the duties were performed by the Rev. Thomas Holme.

Canon O'Reilly was a large hearted man ; earnest in whatever he undertook, and communicating the earnestness to others by force of language and example. In St. Philip's Parish his influence was felt not only in the workshops of the men, but of the women also, and there are many still alive who can testify how much brighter and happier the working hours became when they learned that everything was to be done "as unto the Lord." His preaching was very powerful ; he had a good delivery, a clear voice, and a heart full of love for souls. There was no sparing of sin, no glossing of it over ; it was presented by him in all its deformity, but never without pointing to the way of escape, the refuge from it in Jesus. He was a bold preacher, fearlessly declaring the truth, without respect of person. To some he gave offence by his outspoken denunciations against the Liquor traffic, and those engaged in it. He was truly in style a Boanerges, neither fearing the frown, nor courting the favour of any ; a brave champion for Gospel truth, and a powerful advocate in the cause of temperance—a man, moreover, highly esteemed by all who really knew him, whose great and sympathizing heart went out to others in the fullness of Christian love. It was in the sick chamber, however, where his character, as a Minister of Christ, was most appreciated. He led the poor sufferer straight to Jesus ; direct communication to the Saviour was not hindered by those aids to devotion some at the present time think necessary ; his whole soul would have revolted against these new ideas which are creeping into the Church of England.

The Rev. J. D. Langley was nominated and appointed Incumbent on February 1st and entered upon his duties on March 11th, 1882. On May 1st, 1882, the Rev. Robert McKeown accepted the office of Curate.

1856 - JUBILEE - 1906.



F. Cunningham



Alfred Whitten



Andrew Hudson



Robert Dennis



H. Gairwright



C.F. Almond



E. A. Bennett



A. P. Tier



F. K. Orange



The Most Rev. Archbishop of Sydney



Edward Dixon



A. E. Newson



H. P. Conolly



MacLennan



George Smith



A. A. Conolly



Rev. H. H. Laneley



J. Blake



J. Kings



A. H. Bayly

CLERGY & OFFICERS OF
St Philip's Church, Church Hill, Sydney, at the time of the Jubilee Celebrations,
27th March, 1906.

In 1882 there was an overdraft of over £1000 at the Bank of New South Wales, caused by the erection of the addition to the Parsonage. By Easter, 1884, this debt had been liquidated; the Trustees of St. Philip's Glebe granting the sum of £829 14s 6d towards the debt on the Parsonage, a Sale of Work realizing over £200, and from collections and donations further sums were forthcoming, which enabled the Churchwardens to bring forward a balance sheet showing a credit balance of over £50.

Mr. McKeown resigned at the end of September, 1883. The following is a list of the Curates who have held office in the Church since that time:—The Revs. J. M. MacMillan, John O'Connor, J. Howell Price, W. A. Charlton, W. E. H. Percival, J. Olley, P. Needham Hunter, George Moore, C. Swatridge, E. W. Doyle, J. W. Gillett, F. Kellett, P. Presswell, J. G. Fenton, Godfrey H. Smith, R. B. Hammond, H. R. Holmes, H. Woodger and H. T. Langley.

In 1869 the land fronting Clarence Street, at the rear of the Parsonage, was purchased at a cost of £761. In 1884 a Bill was passed through Parliament, giving the Trustees power to lease the land on a building lease. In 1885 the land was leased for the sum of £150 per annum.

In February, 1887, Mr. William Scoles resigned the office of Verger, which he had held for over thirty years.

In 1888 a new bell was added to the peal in commemoration of the Centenary of the Colony. Another bell was added at a later period in memory of the Hon. Charles Moore.

In 1890 great alterations were made in the interior of the Church. A new reredos was erected, the seats were modernized, the chancel and aisles were tiled, the gallery at the western end of the Church was abolished and replaced with a dwarfed screen, and a

new reading desk and pulpit were erected. The Church was re-opened, after the alterations, on June 8th, 1890. In 1893 the Trustees restored the tower, making it correspond as nearly as practicable with the original design. Unfortunately, on August 19th, one of the workmen, George Kinder, was killed by a fall from the tower. On April 9th, 1895, Mr. Langley was appointed Archdeacon of Cumberland.

In 1900, the Trustees determined to build a new Rectory in the grounds of the Church, and to lease the old one. On October 5th, 1901, the Archdeacon and his family took possession of the new residence. On January 3rd, 1902, Dean Cowper paid a visit to the new Rectory: "He gave the greeting of 'Peace' to the household there, and before leaving gathered them around him in prayer for a blessing upon the 'home and on the Diocese.' He greatly enjoyed the revival of old memories; it was the last time he went beyond his own doors."

It only remains for me to add that in commemoration of the Jubilee of the Church, the Trustees and the Parochial Council provided a beautifully-carved oak Communion Table. They also carried out other much needed improvements in the Church.

Founded as St. Philip's Church literally is, upon a rock, and "*set apart for the preaching of the right Catholic Faith,*" may the doctrines preached in it continue to be instrumental in leading many to become lively stones in the Spiritual House of God: "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone." That the present Rector may be spared, in God's providence, to continue the preaching of the doctrines, which have now been proclaimed faithfully, in the present Church for 50 years, and, in the old Church for over 46 years, is a prayer, in which I am certain, all will readily unite who wish well to St. Philip's.

A.H.

March, 1906.

JUBILEE OF ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, 1856—1906.

Rector—The Venerable ARCHDEACON LANGLEY. Assistant Minister—REV. H. T. LANGLEY, M.A.
Deaconess—Miss S. SCHLEICHER.

OFFICE BEARERS, 1906.

Trustees—Messrs. Andrew Houison, F. R. Strange, E. Dixon.

Churchwardens—Messrs. F. R. Strange, E. Dixon, R. Dennis.

Parochial Council—Messrs. E. A. Amphlett, Price Almond, T. Blake, Arnold Conolly, H. Cartwright, H. P. Conolly, F. Cunningham, A. T. Maguire, A. R. Sherwood, P. Shier, A. Whetton, S. P. King.

Treasurer to Parochial Council—Mr. E. Dixon.

Secretary to Parochial Council—Mr. A. T. Maguire.

Organist—Mr. H. Bavin.

Poor Relief Society—Treasurer, Miss Sharp.

Church Society—Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. F. R. Strange.

Auditors—Messrs. Geo. Gibson and T. Terry.

St. Philip's Day School—Head Teacher, Miss Street.

Verger—Mr. F. Robertson.



10

AN

3223022

DSM

283.91

H

DSM/ 283.91/ H
A short history of St.
Philip's Church, Sydney :
jubilee 1856-1906

STATE LIBRARY
OF N.S.W.



N2135721

