SEDBERGH SCHOOL
RELIGION & THEOLOGY TIMELINE

Sedbergh was founded as a Chantry School, meaning Christian worship and faith were there from the beginning. The School has produced a steady stream of ministers serving in a wide range of areas including academia and as bishops. The subject of RS continues to flourish at the School with current Upper Sixth pupils intending to pursue study at degree level.

Rev. Paul Sweeting, Chaplain

1500's
1600's
1700's
1800's
1900-1950
1950-1960
1960-1990
1990- present

1525
Sedbergh School founded as Chantry School. A few scholars studied under a Chaplain, initially Henry Blomeyr. Roger Lupton founded the chantry "for maintaining and increase of learning in Christ's Church".

Lupton among the Canons

1527
Seats for Sedbergh School scholars were allocated in the St. Andrew's Parish Church.

Henry Blomeyr
Chaplain and Headmaster 1527-1543
Blomeyr was the Chaplain under whom a few scholars were gathered from 1525 when Roger Lupton, Provost of Eton College, bought 1/10 to provide for a Chantry School in Sedbergh.

St. John's College, Cambridge

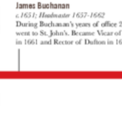
Robert Hebblethwaite
c.1544-1585
Oft and Headmaster
Believed to have been one of the first pupils at Sedbergh.In 1527 the School was bound to St. John's College, Cambridge through the foundation deed which decreed that St. John's was to appoint the School's Headmasters. Hebblethwaite was the first Headmaster to be chosen by St. John's. The School was re-established and re-endowed in 1552 as a Grammar School with St. John's retaining the right to appoint the Headmasters who were always clergymen and often pluralists.

"Duckett's Cross

Blessed John Duckett
c.1612-13 OS
His father was one of the first School Governors and he was believed to be one of the first pupils at the School. Ordained a priest in 1639. During the Civil War he was seized in 1644, near Wokingham. On the road between Tow Law and Wokingham there now stands a cross which marks the place where he was arrested by the Roundhead soldiers. He was imprisoned at Newgate, London, brought to trial and given the sentence of hanging, drawing and quartering. It was carried out at Tyburn on September 7, 1644. He was declared Blessed by Pope Pius XI on 15 December 1929.

Bishop Thomas Otway
1616-1639
Otway was Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory, he became Chaplain to Sir Ralph Hopton and was an active civil war royalist. He was Rector of St. Botolph, Billingsgate (1663-64) and of Etchingham, Sussex (1664-70). He left money in his will to fund three scholarships at St. John's College Cambridge for Sedbergh School pupils.

John Barwick
c.1639
1631 entered St. John's College and took holy orders in 1635. Later undertook royalist correspondence and intelligence work, and tried to convert some parliamentarians. He was charged with high treason, and was committed in 1650 to the Gatehouse prison at Westminster and then to the Tower of London. Released in 1652. In 1659 he was sent by bishops to report the state of church affairs to Charles II. There he preached before the king, and was appointed one of the royal chaplains. Made Dean of Durham in 1660. In 1661 he became Dean of St. Paul's. Died in 1662 and buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.



James Buchanan
c.1631-Headmaster 1657-1662
During Buchanan's years of office 29 boys went to St. John's. Became Vicar of Appleby in 1661 and Rector of Dalton in 1675.

Sir George Fleming, 2nd Baronet
c.1688
Became Canon of Carlisle Cathedral in 1700, Archdeacon of Carlisle in 1705, Dean in 1727 and finally Bishop of Carlisle in 1734. He succeeded as 2nd Baronet in 1736.

Lady Betty Hastings
1682-1739
At the age of 23 she inherited a fortune from the estate of her grandfather and adopted a lifestyle of deep Christianity and enlightened philanthropy. She strongly supported education as a tool for social change. She established several schools and set up a trust to fund educational charities including her tied Exhibitions to Queen's College, Oxford which benefitted Sedbergh School and 11 other northern schools.

Francis Blackburne
c.1713
Ordained as deacon in 1728. Ordained as priest to take the rectory of Richmond Yorkshire where he resided until his death in 1787. He was collated to the archdeaconry of Cleveland in 1750; but his principles prevented any further preferment, and he made up his mind never again to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. The controversy led to his best-known work 'The Confessional, or a full and free inquiry into the right, utility, and success of establishing confessions of faith and doctrine in protestant churches.'

John Fothergill
1724
Son of devout Quakers he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh and later became a highly successful London practitioner. Other enterprises supported by fothergill were a new translation of the Bible by Anthony Purver, a Quaker schoolmaster, in 1764, and the founding of a Quaker school at Ackworth in 1779.

Rochester Cathedral

Walker King
c.1768
Scholar and fellow of Corpus Christi College. He was prebendary of Peterborough 1794, Canon of Wells 1796, prebendary of Canterbury 1803 and prebendary of Westminster 1827. He was Bishop of Rochester from 1809 until his death in 1827.

Thomas Kipling
c.1766
Received a Bachelor of Divinity in 1779, and a Doctorate of Divinity in 1784 from St. John's College. He was Boyle Lecturer in 1792 and Master of the Temple in 1797. He was a Deputy Regius Professor of Divinity from 1787-1802 and Dean of Peterborough from 1798-1822. Active as a prosecutor against William Frend for the latter's Unitarian views. Kipling's major work was 'Codex Theodori Bene Cantabrigiensis, Evangelia et Apostolorum Acta complectens, quadratis literis, Graeco-Latinus'.

Geoffrey Philip Henry Pawson
Evans House 1917-23
Read Classics and Divinity at Jesus College. Awarded the Hulsean Prize in 1927. Priest-in-charge of Little St. Mary's, Cambridge 1940-44, from where he joined the Community of the Resurrection, in Mirfield, as a novitiate. Professed into the Community in 1946. He became Vice-Principal of the College of the Resurrection in 1952, teaching doctrine and the Sacramental life of the Church. He became the Principal St. Peter's College, Rosettenville, South Africa where Lawrence Zulu and Desmond Tutu were among his students.

Reginald Richard Rosevear (OBE CBE)
School House 1916-20
Ordained in 1930 and began his career with a Curacy at St. George, Nottingham. He was a Tutor at Kelham Theological College 1934-37 then Priest in charge of the Mission District of Parson Cross, Sheffield. After this he was a Canon Residentiary at Sheffield Cathedral until his appointment to the episcopate as Bishop of Accra in Ghana. He resigned in 1967 and died in 1973.

Trinity Cathedral, Accra

The Very Reverend William Macpherson
School House 1913-20
Ordained in 1922 he began his career with a curacy at Richmond, Yorkshire after which he was a Minor Canon at Ripon Cathedral. When World War II came he was a chaplain in the RNVR. Later he was Rector then Archdeacon of Richmond. In 1954 he was appointed Dean of Lichfield, a post he held for 15 years.

Memorial at Lichfield Cathedral

Ernest Inman
1901-06
Was the Wilson Run in 1905 and 1906. Ordained in 1911. A gunner in WWII then became Chaplain at Lichfield Theological College 1920-1929.

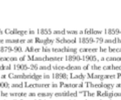
1900
Henry George Hart published a book of sermons.

1897
Stone chapel built. Master Bernard Wilson (1876-1913) was instrumental in raising money for the stone chapel and 1200 subscribers donated funds. A design was created by Paley and Austin architects. The foundation stone was laid in June 1895 by Bishop Boyd Carpenter of Ripon. The service of dedication was conducted on 9th October 1897 by the Bishop of Ripon.

1898
Wooden chapel built. The structure which was close to the current Boer War memorial was formally opened by the Bishop of Richmond. In November 1893 a storm damaged the building and worship returned to St. Andrews Parish church.

1883
Headmaster Henry George Hart moved worship to a chapel he established in the ground floor of the Old School, now the library.

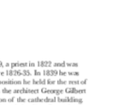
James Wilson
1833-1855
Entered St. John's College in 1855 and was a fellow 1859-68. He was maths and science master at Rugby 1859-79 and headmaster of Clifton College 1879-90. After his teaching career he became Vicar of Rochdale, Archdeacon of Manchester 1890-1905, a canon of Worcester Cathedral 1905-26 and vice-dean of the cathedral. He was Hulsean lecturer at Cambridge in 1898; Lady Margaret Preacher at Cambridge in 1900; and Lecturer in Pastoral Theology at Cambridge in 1902. In 1925 he wrote an essay entitled "The Religious Effect of the Idea of Evolution". In addition to spiritual works, he co-wrote an astronomy book on double stars and mathematical books on geometry and conic sections.



George Peacock
C.1800-#2
He was ordained as a deacon in 1819, a priest in 1822 and was Vicar of Wymeswold in Leicestershire 1836-35. In 1839 he was appointed Dean of Ely cathedral, a position he held for the rest of his life, some 20 years. Together with the architect George Gilbert Scott he undertook a major restoration of the cathedral building. This included the installation of the beautiful ceiling. Peacock was also the founder of what has been called the British algebra of logic and was a tutor and lecturer at Trinity College, Cambridge a fellow of the Royal Society.

Canon Richard Parkinson
c.1810
Received Bachelor of Divinity in 1838 and Doctorate of Divinity 1851 from St. John's College. Ordained in 1823 and became curate of St. Michael's-on-Wyre, Lancashire. Three years later he was appointed theological lecturer at St. Bees College; twenty years later he became principal. In 1830 he was appointed perpetual curate of Whitworth. In 1837 and 1838, he was Hulsean lecturer at Cambridge. He gave towards the cost of rebuilding the vicarage-house and the old conventual abbey of St. Bees. He is buried at St. Bees Priory.

W. Stevens
Master 1799-1819
A former Chaplain in the Royal Navy.



Arnold Mathew
c.1788
In 1808 he converted to Islam and published a translation of the *Mishkat-ul-Masadikh* in two volumes.

Rev. Neville Gorton
1922-24
Winder Housemaster and Chaplain and subsequently Headmaster of Blundells School. Became Bishop of Coventry in 1943.

The Very Reverend Michael Peck
School House 1928-32
Ordained in 1937. He was a Curate at Holy Cross, Greenford until 1946 and then Vice-Principal of St. Chad's College, Durham until 1969. Later he was Vicar of St. Mark's, Mansfield and then Archdeacon of Portsmouth before becoming Dean of Lincoln in 1965. He died in post on 22 April 1968.

The Very Reverend Ingram Cleasby
Lupton House 1934-38
Ordained in 1954. Initially a Curate at Huddersfield Parish Church he became Chaplain to the Archbishop of York in 1952. Following this he was Anglican Chaplain to the University of Nottingham and then Archdeacon of Chesterfield 1963-78 before his elevation to the Deanery. Dean of Chester 1978-86. He was also the last surviving clergyman to have been involved in the Queen's Coronation in 1953, when he carried before the Archbishop the Primatial Cross of York.

The Right Reverend Christopher Luxmoore
Powell House 1940-44
Ordained in 1953. His first post was as a curate at St. John the Baptist, Newcastle upon Tyne after which he was Priest in Charge of St. Bede's, Newsham, County Durham. He was Rector of Sangre Grande, Trinidad for 8 years and after that Vicar of Headingley. He was Precentor and Canon Residentiary of Chichester Cathedral 1981-84, then became Bishop of Bermuda until 1989. On his return to England in 1989 he became Archdeacon of Lewes & Hastings until retirement in 1991.

Reverend Dr E.P.E. (Bill) Long
Master 1944-72
Bill started teaching French, German, English Lit. and religious studies at Sedbergh in 1944. Among his pupils were Lord Bingham and playwright John Arden who used examples of their books to him. In 1947 he obtained a lectureship at Newcastle University but after a year he came back to Sedbergh. In 1957 Bill entered Lincoln Theological College. Ordained at St Andrew's Parish Church Sedbergh in 1923. He gave his final sermon aged 97 and passed away in 2018 aged 103. He left a gift in his will forming the basis of the 2019 Chapel Appeal.

The Right Reverend Christopher John Mayfield
Sedgwick House 1949-54
After four years teaching engineering in the Royal Air Force he was ordained in 1963 and became a curate at St. Martin's in the Bull Ring, Birmingham. He was then a lecturer at the same church before becoming the Vicar of Luton. He was appointed the Rural Dean of Luton in 1974 and then the Archdeacon of Bedford 1978-85 before his ordination to the episcopate as the Bishop of Wolverhampton in 1985. He was translated in 1993 to be Bishop of Manchester and retired in 2002. He currently ministers as an honorary assistant bishop in the Diocese of Worcester.

Reverend Jock Stein
Sedgwick House 1934-39
Went to Emmanuel College Cambridge then studied theology at Edinburgh and was ordained in Kenya by the Presbyterian Church of East Africa then led a city centre church in Dundee. In retirement he chairs the Scottish Church Theology Society.

1939
Chapel extended to accommodate growing number of pupils, paid for by Thomas (P 34-28) and Gilbert (P 23-28) Hudson. The pews for the extension were given by Sir Wasel Wakefield (SH 12-16).

The Venerable Nick Barker
Evans House 1963-68
After taking a theology degree at Oxford, and studying for ordination at Trinity College, Bristol, Nick was curate at St. Mary, Watford from 1977 to 1980, Team Vicar of St. James & Emmanuel, Didsbury 1980-86, then Team Rector, St. George, Kidderminster 1986-2007. He was the Archdeacon of Auckland and Priest in Charge of Holy Trinity, Darlington, Diocese of Durham from 2007 until retirement in 2017. When he was School Governor, he was the representative for the Lord Archbishop of York on the School Board. He is currently the OS Club President.

The Right Reverend Professor N Thomas Wright
Powell House 1962-67
In 1973 he received a BA in theology. 1975-81 fellow and chaplain at Merton College, Oxford and at Downing College, Cambridge. Assistant professor of New Testament studies at McGill University, Montreal 1981-86, then chaplain, fellow and tutor at Worcester College and lecturer at the University of Oxford 1986-93. Dean of Lichfield Cathedral 1994-99, Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey in 2000. In 2003, he became the Bishop of Durham. Retired in 2010 and became Research Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews. Awarded a Doctor of Divinity by the University of Oxford.
The author of over 70 books, he is highly regarded in academic and theological circles. School Governor 2000-11.

1963
Christian Study Group established. Now known as TGI Thursday, the group meets weekly with the Chaplain and visiting speakers to discuss current affairs such as the Parable of the Good Samaritan, religious art, Amnesty International and 'Grill the Chaplain'.

Archdeacon Richard Harlow
Hart House 1977-81
Richard went to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He was ordained in Southwell & Nottingham in 1989. In 2001 he was appointed Hospital Chaplain for Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, then as Lead Chaplain & Multi Faith Team Leader at Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. During this period, he was trained as a counsellor and psychotherapist, becoming qualified in 2007. He was appointed in 2013 as Rector of Hastings and Westwich in 2022.

Reverd. Canon Richard Suffern
Powell House 1971-76
After training in rural land management, Richard spent five years in East Africa with Tear Fund, a Christian charity, working with shepherds, sheep, cattle, goats and camels. Upon returning to the UK, he trained for Parish Ministry and has been the Priest in Charge of Holy Trinity and St Egaie, Marton, in the Parish of Long Itchington near Coventry since 2022. In 2024 he published a children's book called *The Story of Blue*.

Henry Clarke
c.1800
Governor 'History of Sedbergh School 1525-1925' with Headmaster W. N. Wrench. Dedicated the Chasters in equality in Archbishop. 1903 emigrated to Australia. 1905 became first Archbishop of Melbourne and Metropolitan of Victoria.

1991
The most recent stained glass window is at the west end of the extension and was given by Michael Adams (W 46-50) and his family. It depicts School House set in the surrounding fells with local flora and fauna with the inscription *"Benedicite Omnia Opera...All ye works of the Lord, praise ye the Lord"*.

Chris Griffin
Staff 1990-2017
Chaplain 1998-2003
Chris was Chaplain for 7 years and was also a soccer coach (2nd XI) and played an essential part in the formative years of girls at Sedbergh.

Rev Olivia Haines (nee Ashton)
Robertson House 2004-06
Olivia studied Theology/Theological Studies at Durham University. She undertook her theological training at St Mellitus in Liverpool, and was based at St John's Church, Eliel. In 2021 Olivia became the first female Old Sedberghian to be Ordained in the Church of England. She has been a Team Vicar based in Wrockwardine since 2023. She also works as a teacher in schools in the Lancaster area.

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Reverend Paul Sweeting
2006-present
Chaplain
Paul began his teaching career at Lancaster Grammar then trained for priesthood at St. John's College, Durham. After beginning his ministry in Blackburn he moved to the Falkland Islands where he spent 3½ years in charge of the largest parish in the world including South Georgia and the British Antarctic Territory. Paul became School Chaplain in 2006. He is a reservist RAF Chaplain and spends time in the holidays assisting with chaplaincy at RAF stations as far afield as Lossiemouth (NE Scotland) and Honington (Suffolk).

2020
Chapel Appeal raised £55k and new lighting was installed

Tristram Cooke
Sedgwick House 2008-09
Tristram has been a Lay Vicar at Westminster Abbey since 2016. A counter-tenor with a Masters in Performance from the Royal Academy of Music, he is also a member of the Abbey choir, singing for daily services, live broadcasts and recordings and for special and Royal occasions.

2018
The Lord Archbishop of York Dr John Sentamu visited the School to participate in a Q&A session with pupils as part of the Moving Mountains Mission organised by the Diocese of Carlisle.

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School Chaplains

J. H. Mackie 1882 – 1902
S. C. Shatford 1902 – 1924
A. J. K. Martyn 1924 – 1931
E. F. L. Hewson 1926
N. V. Gurton 1927 – 1934
H. Poole 1927 – 1935
E. W. S. Packard 1931 – 1938
E. J. Sumner 1938 – 1944
A. T. I. Burgis 1938 – 1974
J. P. Newell 1943 – 1953
G. P. Wedgwood 1954 – 1956
D. W. Fox 1957
T. A. Herman 1957 – 1987
A. L. Martin 1975 – 1984
R. N. Myercough 1984 – 1985
P. J. D. Allen 1988 – 1993
R. J. O. Harston 1989 – 1991
R. G. Laird 1993 – 1998
C. D. Griffin 1998 – 2005
F. L. Sweeting 2006 – present

Dates may overlap because more than one person may have held the post of chaplain at one time or the dates on record are for the full span of the individual's career at Sedbergh however they were chaplain for a shorter period.

Published in 2025