

THE LIFE & TIMES OF REVD JOHN REDDAWAY LUXMOORE (1829-1917)

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS RENOVATION OF
HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, ASHFORD-IN-THE-WATER

IAN PYKETT



INCLUDING AN APPENDIX ON
THE HISTORY OF THE DISSENTING CHAPELS IN ASHFORD

DAVID WINDLE

REVD JOHN REDDAWAY LUXMOORE

In Victorian Devon, the Luxmoore name was synonymous with great wealth and ecclesiastical influence. But John Reddaway Luxmoore – born into a less privileged branch of the family tree – had to forge his path into the priesthood from a working-class agricultural heritage.

For more than half a century he was pastor to a small village, and to an even smaller hamlet, in rural Derbyshire, winning the hearts and minds of his flock during the whirlwind of social, economic and religious change that transformed 19th-century England.

He rebuilt his village church, which was near to collapse. Its remodelled architectural features are physical metaphors for the religious tensions of the time, and echo his controversies with people who chose not to ally themselves with his Anglican establishment theology.

His life and times are further illuminated by his relationships with some of the villagers, notably three members of the Brushfield family (an iconoclast, a polymath, and a philanthropic Nonconformist); and Samuel Birley, a master inlayer of Ashford marble, whose astonishingly beautiful work is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum.

To this day, descendants of Revd Luxmoore's parishioners remember him being spoken of as 'the best vicar we ever had'.



Ian Pykett's career has centred on the development and commercialisation of high technology imaging innovations. His 18-year residence in the Old Vicarage of Ashford-in-the-Water kindled his love of local history, an interest he now pursues in parallel with his long-time avocations of choral singing and organ playing.

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