

Who was Fred Walmesley?

Asks Gwynne Morris

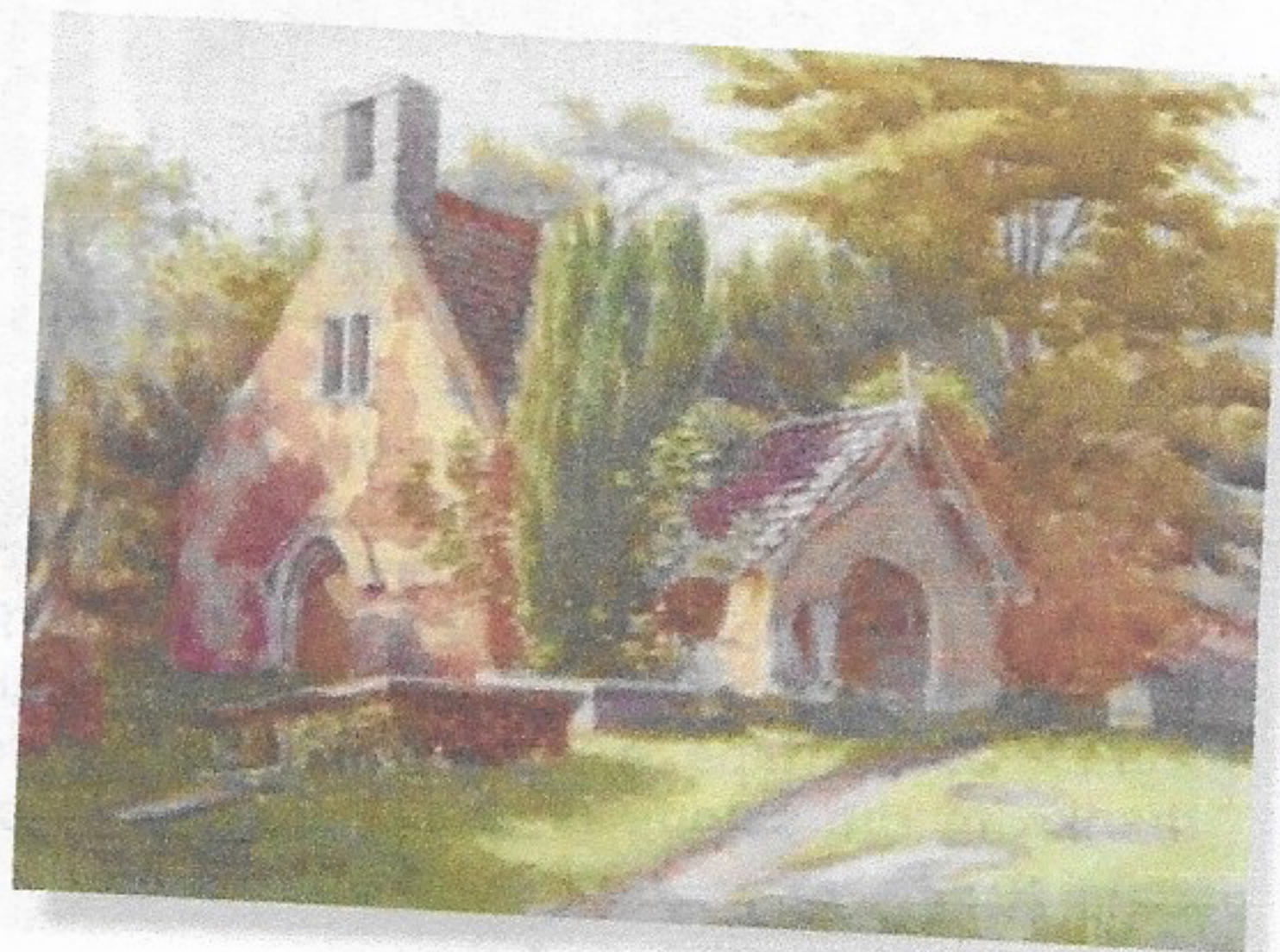
Much good work has recently been carried out by the enthusiastic group 'Friends of Old St. Peter's' of Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd in renovating the church and its surroundings. The church which stands on the hillside opposite the old Rectory dates back from as long ago as the 13th century. It was abandoned, however, in 1864, when the parish constructed the present church, built at the expense of John Jesse, who lived at Llanbedr Hall. The reason for its closure was that its cemetery was becoming full.

There exists a very interesting painting of the old church signed on the lower left side by a Fred Walmesley and dated

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1894. The question which arises is who was Fred Walmesley and what connection did he have with the area? It turns out that thirteen years earlier the 1881 census shows a fifteen year old boy of this name lived at H.M.Prison, Ruthin, being the son of James and Hannah Walmesley. James was the prison Governor, while his mother Hannah was registered as being the Matron. By the 1891 census, Fred was registered as being a Landscape Artist who lived as a boarder (lodger?) at 'Freezeland' Cilcen (sic) Road, Mold, Holywell, Flintshire. The transcripts of old censuses often have spelling mistakes. The name of the house turns out to be 'Friesland'. By 1901, he had moved to Portsmouth and was still at 35 years a bachelor. By

1906, however, he was married to a 34 year old local spinster, a Kate Anne Thornley. By profession he remained as a Scenic Artist and C&C. What did the C&C stand for?



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