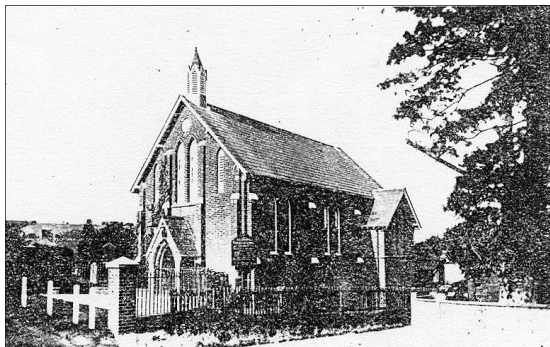




*intimately acquainted with the destitute case of Westcott, and most cheerfully and earnestly recommend the cause to the Christian public.' Mr. C. T. Smith, of Bletchingly, wrote: 'Having known Westcott for upwards of forty years, I can truly say that no place stands in need of the Gospel more.'*<sup>1</sup>

The necessary money was raised and the names of some of the villagers who contributed are inscribed on bricks on the outside wall of the church close to the entrance to the churchyard.



St John's c1918

The Foundation Stone was laid on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1840 by Mr. John Worsfold and the church was opened for worship later in the same year. Henry Lambert was appointed the first Minister at the age of twenty-seven and held the living until his death on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1874.

The new church proved to be very popular. In addition to village people worshippers came in their carriages from stately homes in the surrounding countryside.

John Worsfold died in 1852 and is buried within the church, under the altar, and a memorial tablet was erected in his memory

*'Sacred to the memory of  
JOHN WORSFOLD, ESQ., of Westcott,  
Who departed this life the 17th April 1852  
Aged 84 years.  
He founded this Chapel, which was opened for Divine  
worship the 27th day of December 1840  
CHARLOTTE, wife of the above,  
Died 14th December, 1859  
Aged 89 years.'*

A second tablet in the church records the bequests he made in his will

*John Worsfold, of Westcott, gentleman, deceased, by his will, dated 30th July, 1850, bequeathed to the trustees for the time being for ever of the chapel the following annuities:*

- *Forty pounds, payable half-yearly, as a stipend for the minister of this chapel, duly performing Divine worship, as then established here.*
- *Three pounds for keeping this chapel and his monumental tomb and this tablet in good repair and condition; any surplus to be applied for the benefit of this chapel.*
- *Thirteen pounds for the purchase of good wholesome bread, to be distributed every Sunday for ever among the poor persons who, for the time being, shall be constant attendants at the services for the performance of Divine worship in this chapel; the bread, on each Sunday, to be of the value of five shillings, or as near to such value as this annuity will allow.*
- *And also three pounds in aid of the Sunday-school of this chapel, payable half-yearly.*

*In pursuance of the directions in the said will, the sum of £1,966 13s. 4d. has been invested in Government stock, in the names of a competent number of the trustees of this chapel, to answer the due payment of the foregoing annuities.*

*The testator also bequeathed to the trustees of this chapel his silver tankard for the sacramental service in the same forever.*

*The said John Worsfold, in his lifetime, conveyed the house, land, and premises, now know as St. John's Villa, in Westcott aforesaid, to trustees, for the residence of the Minister for the time being of this chapel; and also presented to the trustees of this chapel the silver trowel and other Masonic implements used at the laying of the foundation stone thereof on the 28th day of July, 1840.*

Mr. Worsfold's zeal in religious work did not stop at church-building. He became charitable to the poor and frequently had soup distributed among them, and gave them dinners on his birthday (June 21) and at his rent-feast (December 21). At Christmas he would have a fat bullock killed and

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<sup>1</sup> These extracts and much of the content of this article comes from the History of St John's Westcott written by Rev G W L Maeers in 1896/7 and reprinted with an updated introduction in 1995.



