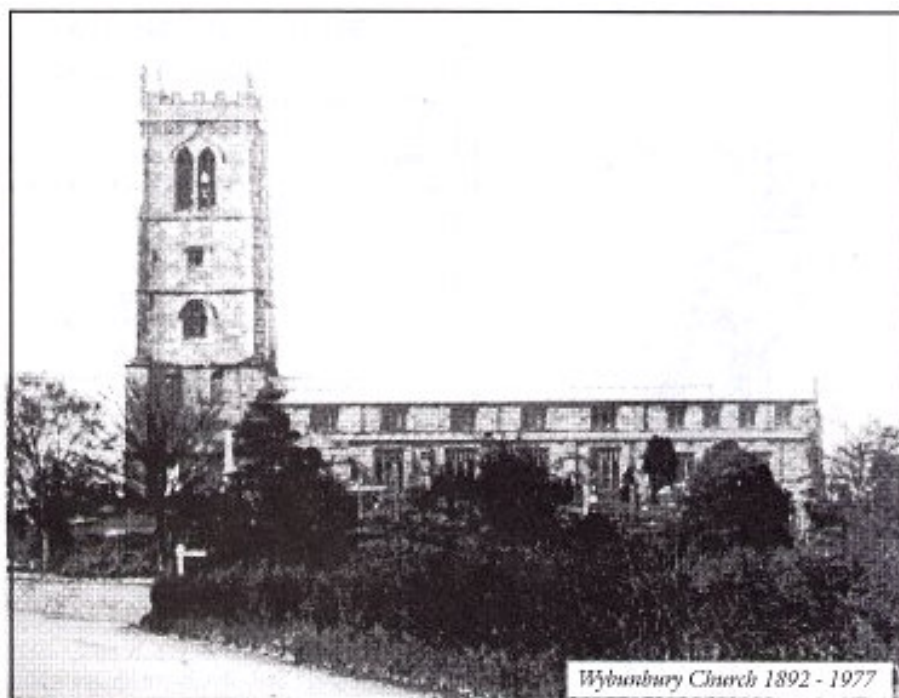


A Large Parish

At some time the church was dedicated to St. Chad who was Bishop of Mercians in 669 AD and fixed his See at Lichfield. Fragments of a 12th century arch stone of Norman design, with typical zig-zag motif, were unearthed during excavations near the tower in 1893. The advowson of the church had passed at some time to William Praer of Barthomley who gave the manors and churches of both Wybunbury and Barthomley to the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1326. By this time the parish of Wybunbury was very extensive. John Delves in his will of 1420 bequeathed 20/- to the fabric of Wybunbury church together with a silver chalice and a vestment of tunics worth £10. A chapel-of-ease at Coppenhall was endowed in 1373 by Robert Stretton Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (Ormerod) ; the chapel would be to accommodate those living a distance from the parish church. From the 17th until the early 19th century the parish included eighteen townships, extending to the borders of Nantwich and Audlem. It included Doddington and Weston and most of what is now Crewe. Even today it ranks as one of the largest parishes in England.

The Leaning Tower

There have been many churches on this elevated site but only the tower remains. Its tendency to lean has earned it the title the 'Leaning Tower of South Cheshire' or in earlier days the 'Hanging Steeple of Wimberie'. However, it has survived for over five hundred years. During this time, due to unstable ground beneath it, five churches have become unsafe and have been rebuilt. The last church was closed after the services for Christmas 1972 and was demolished in 1977. The tower itself was also declared dangerous and unsafe, due to its increasing lean, and was closed to the public.



Wybunbury Church 1892 - 1977