

# It all began with generosity!

BY JACKIE LAST

The original gift of land for the building at Alder Road was made on 2 December 1925 by Edward William Fisher. He lived at Westlands, Branksome Park, and owned Alder Farm. Edward Fisher was a wealthy woollen merchant from Huddersfield whose family had import links with Montreal and a company over there too. Fisher initially gave an acre of land with 75 feet footage along Alder Road 'for the erection of a church and Sunday School'. Bournemouth Baptist Council (the Secretary or President) wrote, "I am sure they (the Council) would want me to write to you accepting on their behalf your most generous gift of an acre of land...I cannot say how much I appreciate this generous act on your part, and I can assure you that the appreciation of the Council will be as deep and sincere as my own." But then the newly appointed body of trustees wrote again on 10 December, asking that Fisher would be even more generous. "The report of your generous gift was received by the Council with the greatest enthusiasm and appreciation, and the whole membership was moved to deep gratitude for your great kindness." On 15 December Fisher agreed to increase his gift to a 100 feet frontage. It just struck me that the foundations of our church buildings are based on the generosity of one individual. But also the impact on the recipients. It's also an interesting historical fact. Big oaks from small (although not so small in those days) acorns grow. At the end October 1929, on the second anniversary of the building, the builders wanted the rest of their money - £355. In a report in the Daily Echo the Rev Bishop from Westcliff Baptist Church said "Never in my experience have I found a cause which has evoked such spontaneous generosity".

