

ABINGER PARISH MAGAZINE.



Abinger Church in 1848

Rector: The Rev. Lionel G. Meade, B.A., The Rectory, Abinger Common (Tel.: Abinger 46).

Churchwardens: Mr. J. Wilson, Orchard Cottage, Holmbury St. Mary.
Mr. John A. Gibbs, Goddards, Abinger Common.

Church Council: *Ex-officio*, the Rector and Churchwardens; *Vice-Chairman*, Mr. John A. Gibbs; *Diocesan Representative*, Mrs. Carr; *Ruri-Decanal Representatives*, Mr. J. A. Gibbs and Mrs. Lugard. *Hon. Secretary*, Mrs. Lugard; *Hon. Treasurer*, Major E. J. Lugard, D.S.O., O.B.E.; The Dowager Lady Farrer, Major C. J. Gibbs, Mr. A. Randall, Mr. S. Smith, Miss Swanston, Mrs. Whiteley, Miss Bulman, Mr. Mills, Miss Townshend, The Honourable Mrs. Vaughan Williams, Mrs. Thomson.

Sidesmen: Mr. J. Bone, Major C. J. Gibbs, Major E. J. Lugard, D.S.O., Major C. E. Lugard, Mr. Michael Meade, and Mr. A. Abbott.

Organist: Parish Church, Mr. F. White; Hammer Church, Mr. F. White.

Duplex Free-will Offering Scheme: *Hon. Secretary*, Mrs. Carpenter, The School House, Abinger Common. *Hon. Treasurer*, Mr. J. A. Gibbs.

Mothers' Union: Enrolling Member, Mrs. Meade, The Rectory, Abinger Common.

Verger and Sexton: Michael Bowler.

MY DEAR PEOPLE.

Most of you probably already know the good news that, at last we have been granted a licence for the restoration of the North Chapel, and I hope before long this work will be commenced. I cannot tell you how glad I am that this scheme will enable us to be back again in our dear old Church, and I sincerely trust that we shall take this opportunity of rededicating ourselves afresh to His Service, and it may even be that we shall be able to hold our Victory Thanksgiving Service in this restored North Chapel. No doubt it will take some time to complete, but once we are actually there I feel sure it will make all the difference to our Church life, and I know we shall particularly welcome it for our Communion Services. I am glad that so many came to hear Mr. Etchells explain his plans for the rebuilding of the whole Church and that there was such unanimous approval of those plans, and once more I should like everyone in the parish to realise how great a debt we owe to Mr. Gibbs for his book on Abinger Church, without which Mr. Etchells himself said that he could not have made his plans to restore the Church on the lines of the old Church. I should like to express our deepest thanks to Major Lugard who has made such an excellent start with the raising of money for the Church Restoration Fund. I sincerely hope that before the work on the whole Church is commenced that we shall have in hand all the money we require.

Wishing you all a happy Easter.

Yours affectionately,

LIONEL G. MEADE.

The Restoration of Abinger Parish Church.

A Public meeting was held at 3 p.m. at the Schools, on Saturday, March 3rd, when Mr. Frederick Etchells, the architect, submitted his plans for the rebuilding of the Church. There was a good attendance and everyone seemed to take a great interest in all that Mr. Etchells said, and all his suggestions met with the general approval of those present. Mr. Etchells explained that, in the main, he was going to follow the general lines of the Church prior to its destruction, with a few alterations and improvements.

The exterior of the Church would look the same as the old one, except that he proposed removing the flat roofed old Vestry and Organ chamber and making the Chancel roof lower than that of the Nave, making the appearance

similar to the Church before the restoration, viz. as the photograph of the Church on the magazine cover.

The New Church would also be extended about another ten feet at the West end.

The main interior alteration would be the placing of the Organ at the West end, together with the Choir Stalls, which would be on a raised platform about three feet from the ground. Mr. Etchells' notes are as follows.

Abinger Church, Surrey.

Rough Notes on Repairs, Rebuilding, etc.

1. Considerable amount of rebuilding inevitable. Take advantage of this to improve the Church in various minor ways, but always bearing in mind the need for preserving the general character and appearance of the building, avoiding any interference with mediaeval or other good work, and making no changes merely for the sake of doing so.

2. *Plans generally.*

(a) West end destroyed and must be rebuilt; take opportunity to form small extension to Nave here, thus increasing seating in Nave where everybody can see and hear. Removal of Choir and Organ to West end brings congregation nearer to Minister and Chancel, and would give a more congregational atmosphere to services.

(b) Modern organ chamber and "old vestry" badly damaged and not worth repairing, so remove these and build up wall as shown, thus recovering the old arrangement and providing additional light in Chancel from three windows in S. wall . . . removal of Choir seats will give better space and dignity, and greater convenience for communicants.

(c) *Porches.* North wall of North porch damaged, rebuild in more solid way and include small window. *South Porch.* Rebuild in a simpler form, more as in the old pictures, but keeping to the more ample size of the destroyed porch.

(d) *Vestries.* No change, except necessary repairs and any fittings needed, except that it is suggested to make a new doorway from the Choir Vestry into the Nave, a great convenience. It is possible that there may have been an old North door, and if this were discovered, then naturally this would be re-used and seats arranged accordingly.

(e) *Font.* Suggested placed in traditional place by South door, with ample space round it and seats convenient for Christening party. The new Font would be of stone with lead basin and drain, of simple design and with an oak Font cover.

(f) *Choir.* Choir of 20 seated on Raised Choir Platform at West end (not a West Gallery, as this would obscure light) with new Organ built in recesses at either side projecting over on each side, but not interfering with light from new West window. Organ would have two manuals and pedals, with electrical Blower placed under Vestry if possible. Organist would have full view of Pulpit, etc.

(g) *North Chapel.* Arrange this as a simple side chapel for small or weekday services, a great convenience and would also improve appearance of interior of Church

(h) *Seating.* In addition to Choir, there would be 112 seats in the Nave all with an unobstructed view, and 52 seats in North Chapel, using chairs for extra seating when required. Pews to be of oak, re-using and adapting the existing pews to the fullest extent.

(i) *Belfry.* Rebuild Belfry and Spire, with Weathercock, exactly as before, with frame and bells; provide chiming apparatus on West wall of Nave. Question of pealing the bells, and number of these, to be investigated.

3. Roofs.

(a) *Chancel.* Repair roof and form panelled ceiling to harmonize with Nave and North chapel. Insert one tiebeam across chancel in line with new buttress on South side. Remove coping to East Gable.

(b) *Nave.* Remake the roof, with tiebeams and ceiling exactly as before, using all old timber possible, but raise this roof to the same pitch as that of the Chancel, but naturally at a higher level, this being determined by upper Nave windows. This would bring the arrangement back to that shown in old pictures of the Church, which was undoubtedly the earlier one.

(c) *North Chapel.* Repair and form ceiling to this roof to harmonize with the others. N.B.—All panels to the ceilings should be whitened and formed of insulating boards, to give greater warmth in winter and coolness in summer, and a considerable degree of reflected light in the Church. The old stone slates would be re-used to cover the roofs to fullest possible extent; remaining portions to be covered with hand-made English roofing tiles.

4. *Walls (External).* Treatment to follow the old work throughout, including the modern Vestry walls; thin lime-wash might with advantage be applied to the main surfaces. *Internal walls.* Plaster to be retained and repaired as needed.

5. *Windows.* The destroyed West window was a modern insertion, rather ugly and with heavy stonework obscuring the daylight. It is probable that there was an early 18th century window here, and in any case it is suggested that a simple non-imitative round-headed window of reasonable size, and with plain clear leaded glazing, would be suitable, and would give a badly needed flood of light into the Nave. The two additional windows on the South side of the Chancel would be the existing ones in the Organ chamber, etc. repaired and re-fixed. All new glazing to windows could be of clear leaded quarries of crown glass, at least to begin with, and owing to the darkness of the Church coloured glass should be introduced very sparingly indeed.

6. *Floors.* There should be oak beading under all pews, and to the Choir Platform. The existing stone flags should be repaired as required, and all other solid flooring (other than beading) should be cut in plain stone flags to match.

7. *Fittings.* The existing fittings, where reasonably possible and desirable, should be retained in use and repaired as necessary. Any new fittings should be of oak.

8. *Monuments.* All old monuments and Tablets should be repaired and refixed if possible and necessary. The modern Monument on the North wall of the North Chapel might well be refixed in a new position at "A" as shown on the Plan, owing to the rearrangement of the seating; it would show to great advantage in this position. Probably the carved panel in the Vestry might be placed in the Church.

9. *Electric Lighting.* This should be repaired, modified and extended as necessary.

10. *Heating.* If a new Heating System proved necessary (with a rebuilt chimney) the choice would lie between:—

(a) the normal system with Boiler and low pressure radiator system;

(b) some form of "pipeless" Heater; and

(c) a non-luminous electrical system;

careful consideration would have to be given to these varying systems; in any case it is desirable to provide some electrical fires or radiators for occasional use (e.g. in the Vestry, Chancel, North Chapel, etc.), and to "boost" the ordinary system in very cold weather.

FREDERICK ETCHells.

25th February, 1945.

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