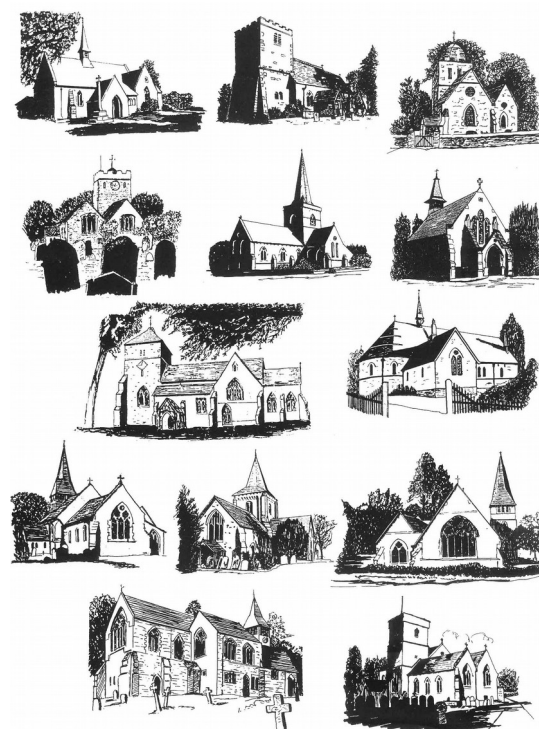
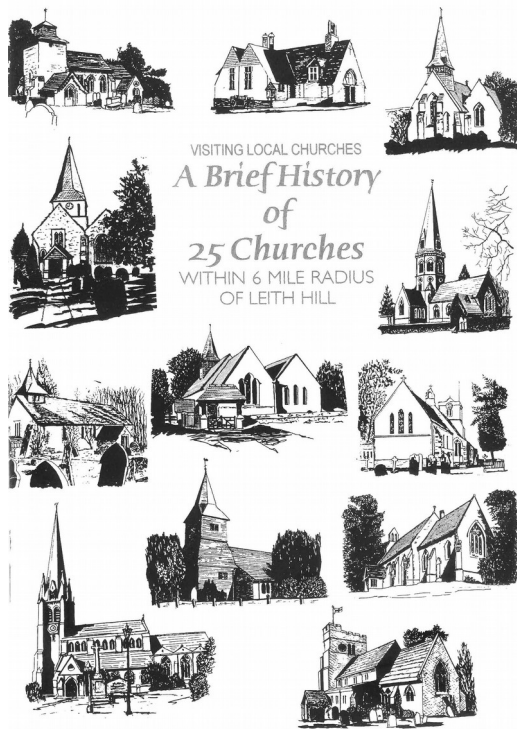


Visiting Local Churches
A Brief History of 25 Churches
Within 6-mile Radius of Leith Hill



Introduction & Acknowledgements

This booklet is one of a pair; both feature a series of articles on the brief history of local churches that appeared in Abinger & Coldharbour Parish News from October 2001 to September 2006. The other booklet like this one features 25 churches; this one covers those churches within a 6 miles radius of Leith Hill, Surrey's highest point, whereas its companion booklet cover those situated more than 6 miles (up to a 9 mile radius) of the same point. National Grid References are given for all churches.

I am indebted to numerous kind people who helped me when I visited their churches, and to those unknown authors of numerous church guides; without such help the work of searching for information would have been an enormous task and quite beyond my capability. Local literature, published books and other material on Surrey have proved invaluable cross-references in compiling these brief histories; I also acknowledge with gratitude the additional help from the following books: *The Buildings of England - Surrey*. Nairn & Pevsner (Penguin Books 1962; "A Picture of Surrey" (Robert Hale Ltd 1980); "Surrey Villages" Derek Pitt & Michael Shaw (Robert Hale Ltd 1971).

The line drawings of the churches are my own based on the photographs I took on my visits. These booklets could not have been printed and published without a sponsor; Abinger PCC and I wish to record our sincere thanks to Mr. Brian King, a resident of the parish, for his most generous support which has made it possible to put this booklet in your hands. Visiting churches is worth while, you will find peace and beauty amidst the whirl of life today.

Most churches are open on days other than Sundays, but should you find one closed the notice board usually gives the address of a nearby key holder. I am sure your visits will be as rewarding and interesting as mine were and that you will be encouraged to buy the other booklet (same price); in that one are: Alfold, Bromley, Gt. Bookham, Little Bookham, Buckland, Chilworth (St.Martha's), East Clandon, West Clandon, Dunsfold, Effingham, Fetcham, Hascombe, East Horsley, West Horsley, Itchingfield, Leatherhead, Merrow, Mickleham, Reigate, Rudgwick, Shalford, Slinfold, Walton-on-the Hill, Warnham, and Wondersh.

ERIC BURLETON Editor, Abinger & Coldharbour Parish News. [2007]

St. James', Abinger



A church, perhaps of wood, may have stood on the present site before the Conquest but nothing of it remains. The site, around 551 feet above sea level, is the third highest of the ancient churches of Surrey.

The Norman church built here in 1080 is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Some experts are convinced that the nave was Saxon and others that it was 12th century.

The present chancel is the third. The second was built in the C 13th and the third in 1857. The small round-headed windows in the north and south walls reproduce the early Norman shape. The two large tie beams in the chancel are original 13th century timbers. In the North aisle, lying alongside the chancel is the Lady chapel originally built c.1200.

The north chapel doorway, although heavily restored, incorporates stonework probably of the late 12th century, reset.

During its many centuries only one rector and one vergers have served for more than 50 years. Three hundred years separate them; The Rev Robert Offley was rector from 1690 -1743 and Michael Bowler vergers from 1941-1999. An illustrated chart displayed near the font shows Rectors of Abinger from 1286 .

The oldest bells inscribed "Wm. Eldridge made me 1674" mark perhaps the final recovery from the spoliation of the Church in Edward VI's time when St. James' three bells and possessions other than communion plate were removed.

During the 19th century three major restorations took place. The original gallery was removed and the chancel rebuilt. A new vestry, a porch and lychgate were built and in 1879 a third bell joined the two 17th century bells in the belfry.

Between 1934 and 1938 further restoration of the church took place with electric lighting replacing the oil lamps.

All these restorations and additions were overshadowed by two disasters that befell the church later in 20th century, destroying much of the work of restoration.

The first disaster was in World War 2 when a flying-bomb exploded near the church just before 8am on the 3rd August 1944. The blast brought down the belfry, the roof of the nave and parts of the wall.

The organ and almost all the furnishings were destroyed. Only the 13th century chapel remained more or less intact. St. James' was the only church in the Guildford diocese that suffered serious bomb damage.

The careful restoration of the church was lovingly and imaginatively directed by Frederic Etchells using old etchings and photographs to reconstruct it.

The second 20th century disaster was in June 1964. This time a natural force was the cause of the destruction. During an exceptionally heavy thunderstorm, the tower was struck

by lightning and fire caused extensive damage to the tower, roof and some furnishings.

Once again the church was restored to its previous state except that the work included the introduction of concealed lighting.

The two oldest bells, damaged in the two disasters were repaired, re-tuned and re-hung in time to be rung again in their tercentenary year (1974).



The east window structure was built in the 19th C, the other windows are newer but follow the patterns of the originals, except the west one. The three-eight window near the pulpit is a copy of a 15th C window previously there. The triple-lancet east window is filled with colours of modern stained glass. The glass was given in memory of John Coe in 1967. The highly-praised contemporary design by Mr. Laurence Lee ARCA creates a striking effect with its elemental

shapes and gorgeous colours.

At the beginning of the last decade of the 20th century, a new custom-built Nicholson organ was installed.

Further improvements to the church continued. In Spring 1994 a complete re-decoration of the interior was completed and two years later a much needed extension to the Vestry was completed.

To greet the new millennium three further bells were added to the mature trio in the belfry. These new bells were cast at the same foundry (now called Whitechapel Foundry) as the 1880 bell.

There are three beautiful 15th alabaster reliefs set in the walls of the church; by the altar, the font and in the porch.

The bronze relief of The Crucifixion on the west wall of the Lady chapel is signed Justin, believed to be the French artist Justin Matthieu who died in 1864.

Monuments in the Lady chapel include The Scarlett Family (1st Lord Abinger), The Lugards, Baron Campion and Victorian artist and Surveyor of the Crown's Pictures, Richard Redgrave, RA.

St. Peter and St Paul, Albury

Set in Albury Park, where the gardens were originally designed by John Evelyn, this ancient church is half a mile from the village of Albury. Another church with the same name, built in red brick, lies at the southern end of the village, known as Western Street.

The ancient church was closed in 1842 for regular services as the other one opened but the move created a lot of dissension especially between Martin Tupper, a writer, who was called to the Bar, but never practised as a barrister, and Henry Drummond, owner of Albury Park.

For many years the villagers tried to maintain the ancient church but major

restorations and repair had to wait until 1974 when the Churches Preservation Trust took over the preservation of the building because of its outstanding historic appeal and architectural merit.

The ancient church was built around Saxon remains and had a tower added over the original chancel in 1140 AD, some of the Saxon windows remain in the tower to this day. The Cupola is C 17th .

The north porch is a very precious relic with its delicately carved barge-boards created in the C 15th and still in good condition . it is one of the finest examples of its kind in Surrey.



The north entrance door dates from 1240 AD, it has long strap hinges and a huge lockcase which takes a key over 12" long.

On the north wall (to your left as you enter) can be seen the remains of the typical Saxon herring-bone rubble construction; further along the same side, on the walls of the tower, there is a faded red indication of the consecration cross dating from the early 12th century or even earlier.

In the uncluttered area of the C13th south chapel and aisle there are several points of interest. The piscina in the far left corner is late C 13th. and its presence indicates that at some time there was an altar at that point, this is confirmed by the oblong patch of tiles (circa 1300) immediately to the east of the piscina.

For those interested in old floor brasses there is one in the aisle with Latin inscription to Sir John Weston who died 23rd November 1440. The font base too is a real antiquity, thought to have come from the Roman buildings on Farley Heath. The bowl however was removed and is in the "new"(1842) parish church of St. Peter & St. Paul.

The arches, the walls of the transept and the east window are also late C 13th. The interior decoration of the transept and the tracery on the south window and its glass is all C 19th. - part of the work carried out under the direction of Augustus Pugin, the Victorian architect who a few years later became well-known for his interior design of the Houses of Parliament. Pugin was commissioned by Henry Drummond, to re-design the transept as a family mortuary. The vivid stained glass was designed by W. Wailes.

On the wall, above the south door, is a wall-painting which dates from 1480; it is of St. Christopher, the patron saint of travellers. For more than 200 years from the time of Oliver Cromwell this painting remained hidden behind a plaster covering. It was discovered by chance in 1884 when work of re-positioning a family monument was taking place. It was treated with a preservative five years later, and in 1978 was restored to its present condition by the Churches Preservation Trust. Some other major works carried out by the Trust during the last three decades include the restoration of the then roofless chancel and preservation, rather than a full restoration of the old walls.

Fortunately the church is open during most of the daylight hours throughout the year and occasional services are held in it.

A third church in Albury, just a short distance from the ancient one, has even stronger

connections with Henry Drummond, the wealthy 19th century banker who owned Albury Park. Drummond was described by Carlyle as "a singular mixture of the saint, the wit, and the philosopher". He had been brought up in the Church of England and around 1823 attached himself to a small Caledonian chapel in Hatton Garden, London. Edward Irving was the priest and he had a group of fervent believers in the imminent Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Their belief was stimulated by a conference at Albury Park in 1826. Similar conferences and study groups were held annually at Advent at Albury. Groups and congregations came in being to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Eventually twelve men, including Henry Drummond, were called to be Apostles and thus was formed the community which became known as the Catholic Apostolic Church (sometimes called Irvingite) The title was intended to express their unity with all Christians in One Church of Christ.

By 1835 Albury had become its spiritual centre and in 1840 Henry Drummond, built the Gothic style church, as an Apostles' Chapel and the spiritual and administrative centre for the new sect entirely at his own expense. The last service was held there in August 1950.

St. Michael's, Betchworth

Reference to a church here is made in the Domesday Book, but details of that church are unknown except for a fragment of a stone shaft found during alterations in 1837, this fragment is now incorporated in the west side window under the tower. It has been dated as before The Conquest, suggesting that the old church was probably of stone construction.



In 1089, the Manor of East Betchworth and the advowson (the right to appoint vicars) was granted to William de Warrene; 110 years later the right was given to the Priory of St. Overie (now Southwark Cathedral), it was confiscated during the Reformation, and finally passed to the Dean and Chapter of Windsor, guardians and trustees of the Order of the Garter, who still hold the advowson to this day.

St. Michael's is an unusually large rural church formerly it served two large parishes - Betchworth and Brockham; the latter was created a separate parish and built its own church holding the first service in January 1847. Less space was now needed at Betchworth church and its balconies were removed during the 1851 alterations.

The church at Brockham was built as a memorial to Henry Goulburn (who died at 30yrs) the elder son of Rt. Hon. Henry Goulburn. The Gouldron Chapel in the north transept of Betchworth church was added in 1879 and dedicated as a memorial to the other son, Frederick Goulburn . Henry Goulburn MP acquired the Manor in 1816. He was at various times Chancellor of The Exchequer and Secretary of State for Ireland. The present Lord of the Manor, Lord Hamilton of Dalzell is a direct descendant.

The oldest part of the church can be seen in the Norman lancet windows in the north wall of the chancel. Their Victorian glass shows the Royal Coat of Arms and the Arms of

the Archbishop of Canterbury (right) and the Bishop of Winchester. In the mid-Victorian times Archbishop Sumner and the Bishop were brothers, hence the right hand side of the Arms are the same. Betchworth was part of Winchester Diocese at the time.

A Norman arch moulding and cushion capitals support the arch between the south aisle and the south transept came from the early 12th century tower when it was taken down in 1851.

Parts of the chancel and the lancet windows in the north wall are early C 13th. and the nave windows on the north side also date from that century. A south aisle was added in C 13th and lengthened in the C15th into a south chancel with arcades and pillars.

Major repair work carried out in 1851 found the Norman tower unsafe, it was taken down and rebuilt in the present position centrally between the nave and the chancel, that is south of its original position.

All this work meant new crossing arches to the chancel and to the space under the new tower. In the rebuilt tower new east and west windows replaced the 15th. century Perpendicular ones.

The brass on the chancel north wall, near the communion rails, is to William Wardysworth, the last vicar of Betchworth before the Reformation. He died in 1533. Of special interest is the engraver's treatment of the hands in the brass.

The slightly unusual pulpit (a gift in 1885 by Joseph Maynard of Hartsfield) uses five kinds of marble and inset mosaic panels.

In the late Victorian period most of the north wall windows were repaired, they are noticeably different in a yellow limestone.

A little later the roof too needed attention and in 1882 it was completely re-roofed using the original type of Horsham stone; in another 100 years the whole process had to be done again as wear and weather conditions made replacement a matter of urgency.

This fine church has been featured in several major film sets for major box-office productions. It contains many interesting memorials; on the pillar at the east end of the nave is one to the Surgeon to Queen Victoria and President of the Royal Society, this is sited on the south side. In the south chancel another surgeon from a much earlier generation is mentioned on the brasses of his parents, Thomas & Alianora Morsted . Thomas Morsted, the son, was surgeon to Henry V at the Battle of Agincourt in October 1415.

The banner in the south transept is that of General Sir Charles Richardson GCB, CBE, DSO who in 1942 was Head of SOE in the Middle East, a team whose deception work aided victory at El Alamein. In 1944 he assisted in the Normandy landings with more deceptive devices and schemes to confuse the German Forces. He died in 1994.

The font is modern (1951) by Eric Kennington and was given by Mrs Cunning of Broome Park in memory of her husband and their only son Pilot Officer Cunning, killed in action in 1941.

The massive oak chest under the tower in the south transept is of unknown age, the wood however is of a very early century AD.

Christ Church, Brockham

There was a chapel at the house of John FitzAdrian in Brockham, licensed by the Bishop of Winchester in 1254, but the Norman church at Betchworth, about 2 miles away became the main centre of worship for Brockham villagers until the late 18th century when their attendances dropped severely, encouraged perhaps by the regular visits of a Mr Bigsby, a Minister of the Gospel from Epsom, who preached in various parts of Brockham. By 1783 a Baptist Chapel had been built to meet the demand of the villagers and enlarged three times in the 1830's. By 1844 the chapel had its own minister and had built a house for him in Brockham.



This situation no doubt helped The Rt. Hon Henry Gouldbum MP, one time Chancellor of The Exchequer, who owned the manor of East Betchworth to achieve a long-held ambition to build a new Anglican church as a memorial to his eldest son. Money was collected, the site on the Green was given by Henry Hope of Betchworth Park and Benjamin Ferrey, the architect who a few years earlier had designed Christ Church, Coldharbour, was appointed.

The new church was consecrated in January 1847 and the first "perpetual" curate was appointed. The church became a daughter church of St. Michael's, Betchworth and remained so until 1868 when it became a freehold parish with its own vicar.

Within ten years the congregation had increased to such an extent that extra seating had to be created by moving the organ chamber and the vestry to another part of the building.

Brockham's schools were supported by local benefactors and the Vicar, the Rev. Alan Cheales was Secretary to both the Infant and the Parochial School.

The School's Rules of Conduct were very stern; Rule 8 for instance said " No talking allowed in school hours" and Rule 9 " All children to come cleanly in their person and neat in their dress. No curl papers, flowers or necklaces allowed".

In 1870 after major increases in their salaries due to the Education Act of that year, the Master of the Parochial School received £70 a year and the Mistress of the Infant School, £38 a year for work. Equal pay and equal opportunities had to wait another 100 plus years!

The first restoration work of the church began in 1883. It was a major task as much of the local stone used on the exterior was showing signs of decay. Much of the work involved replacing the quoin stones with Bath stone and repairing the tower and the buttresses. When the work was finished a triangular tablet of white marble was positioned in the front of the north porch in memory of Henry Gouldron the principal benefactor of Christ Church.

A few years before the restoration work in 1877, Brockham and Betchworth moved from the Diocese of Winchester to Rochester, only to be moved yet again in 1905 to the new Diocese of Southwark .

In 1948 a move to link Brockham and Betchworth to Guildford Diocese because of the proximity of the churches to Dorking failed as Southwark did not wish to lose two of its few

country parishes.

There are numerous tablets, windows and furnishings dedicated to the memory of members of local families. Notably, the reredos of English oak, carved in Munich dedicated to Sophia, the eldest daughter of the Vicar the Rev. Alan Cheales, who died in 1885 four months after her marriage. The Cheales second daughter died in 1881, aged 22, her memorial is the west window and its mosaic inscription.

Miss Gouldbron, sister to the benefactor gave the Communion Table in 1860 and the five daughters of Sir Benjamin Brodie of Brockham Warren presented the kneelers at the altar for Communion.

Many of these memorial gifts and tablets record the love and affection that the Brockham villagers of the late 19th and early 20th century felt for their "new" church.

Most of the stained glass serves as a memorial to a loved one. The window opposite the north entrance featuring St. George and St. Michael is in memory of Leopold Seymour of Brockham Park, together with two others either side of the nave. A further two in the north transept commemorate the parents of the Seymours.

The east window was designed by a local artist, Constant Gardner of Beare Green; she also designed "children's" corner" window at the end of the church. These were part of Sidney Poland's bequest.

The oak choir stalls were a gift in memory of a churchwarden who served 42 years in the post and who also became Chairman of the Parish Council, a Mr. H R Kempe.

The octave of bells in the key of B and the lychgate. were also the bequest of Sidney Poland

St. John the Baptist, Capel

As you enter by the lychgate (1865) pause a moment and look to the left of the path. A yew tree. Yes, but no ordinary tree; an examination by the expert Conservation Foundation said it was planted over 1,700 years ago - that is before Christianity came to Britain. It is believed that it was one of a grove of yews which formed a place of pagan worship and that when a church was built in this area in the 12th century this site was chosen. First it was a chapel or "capella" used for ordinary occasions by people who lived a long way from the "ecclesia" or parish church in Dorking. It was then known as Capella de la Wachna.

In those days the area was heavily forested, but gradually the land was cleared and farms were developed growing mostly wheat and oats. Many of those early farms still exist, Ewekene (1180) and Temple Elfold (1235), the latter became home of the Knights Templar. Both farms have long associations with the church.



Capel, originally in the Diocese of Winchester, is first mentioned in the mid 1100's when the right to grant a benefice was transferred to the Priory of St. Pancras at Lewes in Sussex. In 1270 it is referred to as the church of Ewekene - probably after a grant of land by Maurice de Ewekene.

The first recorded priest at Capel was Henry de Ewekene in 1282. In

1334 Dorking cum Capella was transferred to the Priory of the Holy Cross at Reigate. At about this time it seems that the church was upgraded to a parish church and it became known as the church of St. Lawrence. It was not until the middle of the 16th century that the name was changed to St. John the Baptist.

After the dissolution of the Priory at Reigate, in the reign of Henry VIII, the patronage of the Living passed into private hands: Lord Howard of Effingham, father of Charles Howard of Armada fame, was the first and then to the Cowper family and finally the right of appointing a priest to Charles Webb of Clapham who died 1869.

The chief part of the present building was erected in the C13th (about 1240) and although there have been alterations and additions it still retains much of the original work; this includes the west and south walls of the nave, the east and south walls (and its windows) of the chancel, including the piscina and the roof. The west porch and the west and south doors are also part of the original building as is the fine buttress outside the south east angle of the nave.

Additions were made in 1838 when a small south porch was added and a small north transept with a gallery for children built by Scudi Broadwood family of Lyne.

In 1851 the chancel was restored and 13 years later a major restoration took place when a north aisle, an organ chamber, a vestry and an arcade of four arches (replacing the north wall) giving access to the north aisle were added.

The wooden tower at the west end of the nave roof has a spire of oak shingles, a very common feature of Weald churches, which was renewed in the 1950's; the peal of bells (earliest is 1593) were recast and rehung in 1951. Again in 1968 there was further restoration work.

There are many interesting monuments in the church, probably the one of greatest historical interest is in the chancel. It shows two small figures in Elizabethan dress kneeling at prayer. The figures represent John Cowper and his wife. John Cowper, who died in 1599 was a patron of the church and a Serjeant-at-Law (a superior order of barristers which preceded Queen's Counsel).

Major benefactors to the church in the 19th and 20th centuries are commemorated; the Scudi (Tschudi) Broadwood family, in a stone tablet in the north aisle and in the three large windows in the east wall of the chancel. These windows were restored in 1994 due to efforts of members of the congregation and support from Friends of St. John.

The Mortimers of Wigmore are remembered on large brass on ebony memorial in the north aisle and a stone tablet in the chancel. Through their generosity the organ was rebuilt and enlarged in 1896.

Near the south door is a colourful marble mosaic monument to Rawson William Rawson, KCMG, Governor of the Bahamas and Windward Isles. He died in 1899, aged 87, and is buried in the churchyard.

One of the longest serving vicars was Rev. J. R. O'Flahertie who served for 46 years, originally as Rector from 1848 to 1868 and then as the first Vicar of Capel until 1894. He has a memorial at the east end of the nave. His successor, Rev. A.J.W. Howell (1895-1917) also has a memorial in the chancel.

Legend has it that if you walk round the old yew tree a hundred times at midnight a ghost will appear. After such a tour I suppose that one could say that that was the least he or she could do!

St, Nicholas, Charlwood



"The wood of the peasants" is considered the meaning of Charlwood. In Saxon times open cast mining went on here and continued right up to the early 18th century. It was part of the Wealdon iron industry which flourished in the South until deep mining of coal and iron ore started in the Midlands.

Nowadays, when the wind is in the "wrong" direction for villagers, low-flying aircraft landing at nearby Gatwick blight the area.

St Nicholas' Church is well worth a visit, even if you pick a day of ill wind. The church has two nationally important features; a set of unusual wall paintings and some rare medieval woodwork.

The original Norman church, a simple three-cell structure was started in 1080, that is very early for a Norman church in England. It was aisle-less with a squat tower and a semi-circular apse at the east end. The tower base and nave still remain today.

From the rear of the north aisle, opposite the entrance door, you stand in the oldest part of the building. Its two Norman arches eastwards and the Norman north wall alongside. The window on the north wall of the nave dates from 1320 and has very old glass.

In 1280 the church was made bigger. The new structure created an aisle on the south side but the enlargement stopped at the western edge of the tower, creating an area for a chapel. The location of this chapel's altar is indicated by the well-preserved piscina in the south wall alongside the pulpit's east side.

The enlargement meant that entrance to the church was now by a door in the new south side. The porch was added the 15th century. The door is old but of the 13th century, however the top hinge of it is a genuine charcoal forged one of early date.

The present pulpit built in 1480 has some fine woodwork -Tudor linen fold panelling and it is surrounded by the important wall paintings. All except one of these have been dated 1320-1350 among the first medieval paintings in Britain, they pre-date the earliest English paintings in the National Gallery.

A unique feature of the oldest ones was revealed during the 1993 restoration work. Traces of the artist's one foot square rulings became visible; it is thought that this happened because a pigmented string was used and held taut over fresh lime plaster leaving its mark forever in the plaster. The squares aided the artist when enlarging his smaller original drawing onto the wall. He then sketched in the outlines of his drawing in red ochre and then filled these in with a simple palette of red, yellow ochre, amber, charcoal black and lime white.

The wall paintings feature four separate stories, (complete details of which are given in a helpful leaflet available in the church). The first, portrayed in three tiers, is about St Margaret of Antioch, one of the most venerated saints of the early church.

To the right of the pulpit is the story of St. Nicholas (the Patron Saint of Charlwood's church) and the Butcher.

The third painting is set lower down and is probably the most famous. The story's subject was much in use in various parts of England at the time of the Black Death.

The three youths, two with hawks on their wrist, are out for a day of hunting in the forest when they meet three hideous spectres; these images of death give the youths a lecture on the vanity of human happiness and grandeur and conclude with the daunting words "As you are, we were; as we are, you will be".

The last painting, now called "The Archer", was painted in the late 15th century, originally it covered the whole wall and featured the martyrdom of St. Edmund, King of the Angles, who met his death after losing a battle against the Danish invasion in 870. The story goes that he refused to give up his Christian faith and was tied to a tree and shot by the pagan Danish archers. Sadly, today the King and a lot more of the painting has disappeared but one archer remains.

The other nationally-important feature of Charlwood's church is its screen. The colours of the beautiful frieze atop the screen were repainted in 1973 to represent the original form. The screen is the only sizeable piece of medieval woodwork in Surrey. Originally it was part of the tomb of Richard Saunder and set in a chantry chapel erected by his son Nicholas for Masses to be said for, his father. Nicholas himself died in 1553 and a memorial brass is on the south wall of the chancel.

Richard's other son, (Sir)Thomas, served three monarchs as Solicitor & Remembrancer , Henry VIII, Mary I and Elizabeth I. St Nicholas is one of the few old churches that escaped the Victorian craze for restoration, often eliminating much of the history of old churches. Charlwood escaped because the villagers were poor and could not afford to commission an architect for such work. How lucky!

Christ Church, Coldharbour

Until the 19th century Coldharbour was nothing more than a scattering of houses in the woods. In 1817 Saxon coins were found nearby at Broome Hall, suggesting some settlement took place in the 9th century.



The Roman road, Stane Street, which passes near the village, may have brought trade but no significant settlement took place in Roman times.

However, the nineteenth century saw development of three large estates surrounding the village. These large estates shaped the village as it is today. Houses were built for estate workers, two village schools created and through the generosity of one of these wealthy families, a church.

The year that the church was designed (to be built on land donated by the Duke of Norfolk) Queen Victoria gave birth to her second child, Alice (Princess Alice married Louis IV of Hesse and their grandson was Louis, later Lord Mountbatten of Burma).

It was the generosity of John Labouchere of Broome Hall, who in 1841 when Coldharbour became a separate parish (previously part of Holmwood) that Christ Church was built.

The building is a fine example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture designed by Benjamin Ferrey, a friend and disciple of August Pugin, the man who crusaded to re-establish substance as well as form in the Gothic Revival and provided foundation to the later Arts and Crafts Movement.

Ferrey was influenced in his choice of design (between Early English and the Decorated period) by a religious movement called the Ecclesiologists and probably drew inspiration from his time at Wells Cathedral where there is much Decorated work including the magnificent West Front.

The Ecclesiologists was a society dedicated to the study and reform of ecclesiastical architecture, strongly stressing the importance of ritual and a belief that the Church could strengthen itself through return to old rituals, which in turn demanded a return to true Gothic architecture. This emphasis extended to an enthusiasm for symbolism and mathematical significance of design. In practice this theory meant, for example, that churches should have a triple horizontal division, with steps separating the nave, chancel and sanctuary (as shown in the design at Christ Church). Correspondingly, fonts were designed with eight sides (The Regeneration).

A late C19 water-colour of the interior of Christ Church, looking towards the altar, shows a different roof from the present structure. Further there were no reredos behind the altar and the organ is shown projecting into the chancel.

This form of structure stood until 1904 when restorations and alterations were carried out by W D Caroe for Sir Alexander Hargreaves-Brown. The major changes were reconstruction of the roof and the new organ chamber, projecting to the north of the chancel. The new roof design was a more robust structure departing from the purity of Ferrey's late 13th century design.

The new organ chamber provided for a larger organ, a gift from Alexander Hargreaves-Brown of Broome Hall, as well as providing a new vestry. The design of the new pulpit and reredos was a free form of Gothic Revival, reflecting the influence of the Arts & Crafts Movement on Gothic style.

Repairs and improvements to the church were carried out in 1932 principally provided by a legacy of Miss Margaret Vaughan-Williams, daughter of the eminent composer, who lived at Leith Hill Place. In 1995 the cost of extensive organ and organ loft repairs were met by the George John Livanos Trust.

Until the recent renovation and construction work, the design of Christ Church remained little altered from that of 1904, excepting memorials and commemorative windows.

Annabel Constantine who died in 1997 left a legacy for the purpose of a room for

children, behind the screen at the west end of the church. The initial structural survey for this revealed that the whole of the nave was suffering from Dry Rot. Major repair and renovation was urgently needed. Additional money was raised and generous donations were received from within the parish to meet these extra costs and for provision of a vestry at the back of the church.

The newly installed weight-bearing timbers are of Greenheart specially imported from Guyana to mark Christ Church's link with that country.

Four delightful chandeliers designed by Jonathan Masefield, the architect responsible for the repairs and renovations, and crafted in the Forrest Forge were given by an anonymous donor.

St. Nicolas, Cranleigh



You can just about see the pyramid-shaped tower of this old church through the branches of the magnificent Lebanon cedar planted by the Rector after return from his honeymoon in the Holy Land in 1850.

The first St. Nicolas' church was built c.1170. The building has seen many changes since then; the first church occupied the area of the present nave and was enlarged during the 12th century by the addition of side aisles and the tower. About 1340 the chancel was built.

In those days Cranleigh was a tiny hamlet in a clearing of the great forest of the Weald - an area popular with early Plantagenet Kings, with several local families playing a part in the affairs of state.

Like Abinger's church, Cranleigh's was a casualty in World War 2, a flying bomb exploded very nearby destroying the Church Room and the Infant School as well as creating severe damage to the church. One noticeable effect of the war-damage repairs was the replacement of all but three of the windows with plain glass. This has been particularly effective in the fine East window revealing the natural beauty of the surrounding trees.

St. Nicolas church is full of interest; the font dates from the 12th century, but the stone carving is a later copy and the window behind it is a reminder of various patrons and benefactors of the living including Kings Edward IV and Henry VII.

The Tower has an impressive pattern of beams and rafters and now houses a complete peal of eight bells. The lower window is dated 1350.

As you walk up the centre of the church you will see two pillars, the left-hand one surmounted with a statue of St. John and the other, on the right, a statue of the patron saint of the church at Cranleigh - St. Nicolas. Now glance up at the trussed-rafter roof with its massive tie-beams and then as you reach the end of the nave you "will see the unusual lectern with its heavily strapped pediment and the supporting column carved in the shape of a twisted stem. It is thought to be Dutch or German in origin and dates from the 16th century.

The chancel underwent extensive restoration work during 1840 and 1868, a time when

other major alterations also took place. The old screen and rood loft were removed, only the vertical grooves in the columns where the woodwork use to be now remain. The windows were enlarged and a magnificent double-hammer beamed roof built to complete the transformation. Behind the altar _ are some noteworthy Flemish brass panels (c.1565) and to the left some English brass which bear an unusual depiction of The Resurrection.

The various armorial shields, behind the altar, are those of families associated with Baynards, Vachery and Knowle, the great feudal estate owners of the 12th century.

The Piscina and Sedilia date from the 14th century but it is thought that some redesigning of them may have occurred in the 19th century.

The altar rails, although dating from 1937, were modelled on the Old English iron-wrought rails, formerly in Uxbridge Church, and now in the South Kensington Museum.

Finally, in this part of the church, the pulpit - the panels are 14th century, made from the screen formerly elsewhere in the church.

A 12th century stone carving known as "The Cheshire Cat", said to have been the inspiration for a character in Lewis Carrol's "Alice in Wonderland", can be seen on a pillar on the north side of the North Transept.

The chapel in the South Transept, known as Baynards', holds many memorials to the Waller Family, one of whom was killed in action with the Royal Naval Division at Gallipoli in May 1915, a few weeks after the troops landed on that disastrous peninsula.

As you leave by the West Door, believed older than the carved date of 1702 on its woodwork, turn right for a moment and spare a thought, especially if you garden on heavy soil, for the 17th century yeoman whose well-worn memorial tablet set in the South Wall, recalls his discovery of the value of using lime to lighten heavy clay soil.

In the churchyard is a reputed "smugglers' tomb"; kegs of brandy used to be concealed within the sepulchral space. The story goes that one night a group of locals thought to catch the smugglers in their illegal act by hiding in the church porch. However, when the smugglers came their fearsome appearance evaporated the courage of the locals and no one would venture forth to apprehend the rascals.

Now there is a different Porch to that in early 19th century, this one was designed by Henry Woodyer, the Victorian architect of St. Martins', Church, Dorking; it was built in memory of a local doctor, Jacob Ellery, who set up the obelisk at the corner of the Ewhurst road.

St. Martin's, Dorking.

As with the sites at Abinger, Wotton and Shere, the Domesday Survey records that there was a church here at Dorking in 1086. That church was rebuilt in the mid-12th century in cruciform shape with a central tower. In the C 14th side aisles were added and the east window, in particular, was made larger to beautify the church.

Over time the building became very dilapidated, and by the beginning of the 19th century it became too small for the expanding community it served. The inside of the medieval church changed almost beyond recognition. By 1837 the Nave had been replaced

by a large rectangular building with extensive galleries supported by cast iron columns - this "Intermediate Church" was not attractive and soon fell out of favour.

In the next rebuilding programme, 1866-68, the Chancel came first. It was beautifully rebuilt in C 14th style to the designs of Henry Woodyear and became his most important church work. The work was entirely paid for by Mr. W H. Forman of Pippbrook together with his widowed sister-in-law. The rest of the present church, Woodyear's design, followed 4 years later and completed with the spire (210ft to the weathervane) in 1877. The foundation stone for the tower and spire was laid on 29th May 1873 by Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, whose death from a riding accident only a few months later on Abinger Roughs is recorded by the memorial cross at the spot.



Since those days little has changed in the building except that the Lady Chapel was created between 1905 and 1913. This has a fine altarpiece designed by G F Bodley. Lady Laura Ashcombe who was a daughter of a former vicar and mother of the wife of Canon Chichester are both commemorated in this chapel, the latter when an extension was added in 1913 to mark his 25 years incumbency at St. Martin's.

Also in the chapel are two wall tablets erected by fellow officers to honour William George Cubitt Chichester, the son of the Canon; Captain in The London Regiment, he died in action at High Wood in the Battle of the Somme on 15th September 1916.

The kneelers in the Lady Chapel were made to mark the centenary of the birth of Dorking's eminent composer citizen, Dr. Ralph Vaughan Williams and a bronze monument to his memory, by David McFall, can be seen in the porch.

On the north aisle there is a memorial to Arthur Powell (died 1894) whose firm, James Powell of Whitefriars, made the huge Crucifixion design by G W Rhead over the chancel arch and many other wall panels and stained glass throughout the church. Powell, who lived in Dorking for thirty-six years, was a churchwarden. He greatly influenced the murals and stained glass in St. Martins.

Apart from stained glass his firm specialised in a form of mural decoration known as *opus sectile* - a bit like mosaic but really a halfway point between painting on tile and stained glass. The commemorative panel for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the the memorial to Lily, Duchess of Marlborough, a much loved parishioner who died in 1909, and several other panels are further examples of *opus sectile* work by James Powell of Whitefriars.

The east window of the Chancel creates a dramatic centre piece to the church. The stained glass design by Hudson, depicting the Resurrection and Passion, was created by William Wailes. Other windows in the north east and south east of the chancel showing the life of St. Martin of Tours are also William Wailes work.

The reredos has a central panel of English alabaster into which are set a gilt brass crucifix and stone symbols of the Evangelists. Each side are stone panels with angels and

other saints.

The octagonal pulpit was originally in the 'intermediate' church and was bought in 1837. It appears to have been assembled from various wooden pieces including 16th century Netherlandish carvings.

Since 1998 has had a ring of ten bells; seven of the old bells, one of which goes back to 1626, were recast and three new ones added to commemorate the millennium. The remaining old bell of the original eight was retained as a service bell.

For those interested in ecclesiastical history, there is a wall tablet on the west wall near the tower, recording the Bishops of Winchester since 636 - Dorking like all these parts of Surrey was in Winchester Diocese until May 1927 when Winchester was divided into the Sees of Guildford and Portsmouth.

On the south wall, near the main door, is an even larger wall tablet recording all the Archbishops of Canterbury from Augustine in 597 to George Carey and now Dr. Rowan Williams.

St. Martin's church is shared by Anglicans and Methodists and is open every week day, including Saturdays from 9am till 1pm.

St. Peter & St. Paul, Ewhurst



The church was founded circa 1140 but the original structure, probably rectangular, has been so altered over the ensuing years that little of the Norman work is now visible. The Nave walls are original C12th, but 15th and 16th century alterations and those of 1838/9 make the old structure less obvious.

The present West entry door (C15th) was closed and covered up on the inside by the organ console from 1838 until 1902, when the original entrance was regained. The South doorway to the Nave is Norman and this was the main entrance to the church during the West door closure.

A major catastrophe occurred during Rector Stewart's time; under-pinning work on the central tower appears to have been miscalculated by the builders, resulting in the fall of the tower and with it severe damage to the chancel and north transept. However, the building was satisfactorily restored in 1838/9. The four arches holding the original tower and the shape of the tower were altered during the reconstruction.

The interior gives a spacious appearance - the massive, rough-hewn stonework of the crossing catches the eye adding to this impression. The font is 13th or 14th century and the crude workmanship and design suggests that it would be of local origin. The base is modern.

The large perpendicular window in the west wall replaced a 15th century version in restoration work in 1838/9.

Approaching the chancel there are many interesting features. In the nave, the oldest part of the church, 17th century tablets, in handsome frames, inscribed with the Ten

Commandments and The Beatitudes can be seen on the walls; the pulpit is a good example of post-Reformation Jacobean woodwork; the carved lectern is in memory of Major Philpott, a churchwarden who died in 1964 and the altar rails (C18th) with their twisted supports are a good example of their period. The rails are arranged, as in a college chapel, on three sides of the altar. They came from Baynards in 1879 as a gift of Revd. Thomas Thurlow.

The altar table is late 17th century, the carved chair is of the same period. The altar kneelers and those in the body of the church, created in the mid 1980's by the ladies of the church's Needlework Guild, have received high praise in national magazines. It is believed that the crucifix formation of the building dates from the 13th century alterations. The transepts are 13th century. The south transept has survived well; of particular interest here are the arches around the three lancet windows.

In the south window the arms of the Onslow family and those of the Thurlows (of Baynards) and the Stewarts, Rector from 1811-44 are portrayed. The small panes of tinted glass in the 15th. century window in the east wall have been attributed to early glass-making works at Chiddingfold, West Sussex.

A screen recording all the known rectors of the church since 1242 divides the north transept from the body of the church.

Unlike many church clocks Ewhurst's was not installed to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, but much earlier in 1841. It shares the belfry with a ring of eight bells – a "full peal" - a rarity in country churches. Four of the bells survived the collapse of the tower; two are of medieval origin and two from 1671. Of the remaining four, two were cast in 1839 and two in 1939.

The original founding of the church in 1140 was by the Priory of Merton (near Wimbledon). Merton Priory was an important priory which held hundreds of estates like Ewhurst, given to them by the pious in various parts of the country. Those estates that could provide things the Priory needed were leased on a variety of terms ranging from an annual supply of wax candles to a pound of cinnamon. The Priory had an outstanding contribution to higher education through its close connections with Walter de Merton, Bishop of Rochester(1274) when he founded Merton College, Oxford about 1264.

Ewhurst's 1140 AD building was probably a chapel, under the chapelry of Shere. The first record of the creation of a parish was in 1291, however, the patronage of the benefice continued to be held by Merton Priory until 1538 when, under the Dissolution of the Monasteries, it and Merton Priory passed to the Crown. The current patron of St. Paul and St. Peter, Ewhurst is HM The Queen.

In the Muniment Room of Guildford Museum can be seen the church registers of births, deaths and marriages since 1612. Ewhurst entered more modern records when BBC TV decided to feature village ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday interspersed with the major Whitehall event. One observant and generous TV viewer from Rochester noticed that Ewhurst church did not own a processional cross and kindly donated one, of the village's preference, for future use. Strangely, another connection for Ewhurst with Rochester, but this one much more direct and very helpful!

Holy Trinity, Forest Green

This is probably one of the smallest churches in the locality; it has a charming simplicity about it and sits well in its surroundings just off the road to Ewhurst, on the west side of the Green.

Like so many of our village churches it was built through the generosity of wealthy local families. Charles and Christina Hensley of Pratsham Grange gave it in memory of their eldest son, Everard, who was fatally shot by his cousin while they were hunting rabbits in a nearby wood. He was just 18 years of age.

Holy Trinity, so designated because young Hensley was born on Trinity Sunday, was dedicated by the Bishop of Southampton on 30th January 1897. It was the first real C of E church Forest Green had; prior to it the vicar of Okewood journeyed on horseback to hold Evensong once a month in the jack-of-all-trades hall, called The Institute.



The Congregationalists fared better. They had built a Chapel in 1877 on a parcel of waste land nearly opposite the pond. This chapel was in use for worship until the 1950's when it was closed. Not being a consecrated building and having no burial ground around it was, after a few years, able to be converted to an artist's studio.

Later in 1887 an Anglican Mission Room, a corrugated iron structure, dedicated to St. Barnabas, was erected on the corner of Tillies Farm and this was used until the new "church" was built.

Although to all intents and purposes the new "church" of Holy Trinity was a "church", technically it was a private chapel until its consecration at a confirmation service on 13th May 1934. Even then it had to wait a further two years before being licensed for weddings.

Holy Trinity is built of local Surrey brick. It has a warm look about it; its small belfry tower adds to the impression that this is a small, and perhaps rather ordinary building. However, on entering the church the semicircular chancel and sanctuary with its wooden-domed roof and five lancet windows in bright stained glass are a pleasant surprise and add great character to the building.

The windows are dedicated to the Hensleys and their cousins the Burneys. The one on the far right depicts the youthful face of the young Hensley who died so tragically in 1892. The only other stained glass window faces the chancel and is therefore rarely observed other than by the priest during the service; it was presented by Lady Harrison in memory of her husband, Sir Charles. Harrison, Vice Chairman of London County Council and one time M.P. for Plymouth, who died on Christmas Eve 1897.

The organ built by Samuel Letts in 1806 was originally in a private house in Reigate. It was donated by two local lady residents.

The belfry tower houses two manually-operated bells of no particular distinction other than their calling the faithful to worship. The churchyard, which was consecrated in 1896, includes the family grave of the Hensleys. Everard Hensley was first buried at Holmbury St.

Mary, the parish of the Hensleys home, Pratsham Grange, but when Holy Trinity's churchyard was dedicated his body was exhumed and re-interred at Forest Green, the first in the family grave.

The village of Forest Green was first mentioned in records of 1580, at that time it was also spelt Folles Green and during the intervening centuries spelling swung from one to the other until in about the late Victorian period the present name stuck.

Many of the villagers in those early times were engaged in brick-making in local kilns. Few however could afford to have a brick-built home, but one such still exists to this day in the village. It dates from the Fifteenth century and is a genuine timber and brick construction with the famous Horsham stone slabs as a roof.

In Victorian times, and up to 1897, Wotton, Abinger and Okewood (in which parish Forest Green lay) had a joint venture in the publishing of a monthly News Sheet, priced one penny. Then Okewood Parish created its own parish magazine which embraced Forest Green. Okewood together with Forest Green was a dual parish for many years, but in 1981, following the death of a fairly newly-appointed incumbent, the old dual parish was joined with Ockley to form a combined benefice of three churches. The churches of St. Margaret, Ockley and St. John the Baptist, Okewood were both ancient buildings over 600 years old, whereas Holy Trinity, Forest Green was less than 100 years old at that time.

It was not until 1992 that the final stage in the joining together of the three churches took place. An Order in Council dated 4th June 1992 was signed by HM The Queen giving formal consent to the United Benefice from 1st July 1992.

St Mary the Virgin, Holmbury St. Mary

The church at Holmbury, built 1879, shares common ground with Coldharbour (built 1841); both came about through the generosity of wealthy local residents and both were designed as Gothic Revival buildings. Holmbury's donor was eminent ecclesiastical architect George Edmund Street RA. George Street lived at Holmdale in the village, a house he designed and had built for his first wife who sadly died before the house was completed. His second wife died within eight months of their wedding and it was to her memory that he built the church, her tomb is on an outside wall of the chancel facing south.



George Street, born in 1824 was an assistant to Sir George Gilbert Scott, architect of many Victorian buildings including the Albert Memorial, before setting up his own architectural practice. From his influence on design emerged major Victorian craftsmen and architects like William Morris and Philip Webb.

A new parish was formed by amalgamating three hamlets, Sutton, Felde (Felday) and Pitland Street, its name came partly from the nearby hill

and the dedication of the church to the Virgin Mary.

The typical Gothic Revival design of the building is clear from the moment one enters at the western end. The narthex (or ante chamber) has a glazed screen leading into the nave. In the narthex is a bas-relief of Virgin and Child by Luca della Robbia (1400-1481). The work has an unusual depth to it and portrays the Virgin with a tender expression.

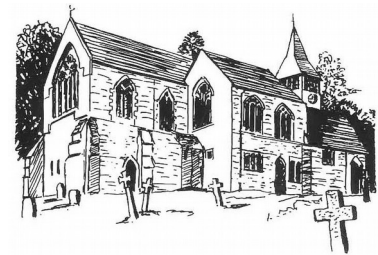
Also in the narthex is a marble tablet erected by George Street to insure that all seats in the church remain free. There were no exceptions. Prime Minister, William Gladstone and his cabinet who came to Holmbury House in 1880 attended the church during their stay and had to share the pews with the villagers.

The roof is a splendid example of Street's work and his use of Early English style is particularly noticeable in the pillars of blue Pennant stone with their marble shafts. Most of the stained glass in St. Mary's, including the East window is from Street's own designs. The central theme of the east window is the Virgin and St. John at the Cross with St. George and St. Edmund kneeling either side - the two name-saints of the architect.

There is a 14th century triptych below the east window and a painting of interest which has been attributed, with some uncertainty, to Spinello Aretino a Florentine artist who died in 1410.

The church also possesses a remarkable 12th century crucifix of Limoges enamel; it is a fine example of Medieval craftsmanship and not only depicts Christ crucified but also the head of Adam rising from the dead and St. Peter, the porter, at the gates of Heaven.

Both these splendid works were placed in the church by Street himself to exemplify his own teaching, which he expressed in an 1881 lecture, viz. "The perfect building is that in which not only the architectural lines, proportions and features are all good and beautiful in themselves, but the one in which provision is thoughtfully and wisely made by the architect for the best display in harmony of the arts of painting and sculpture."



In the sanctuary there is a richly carved stone seat and a basin (piscina) and above the sanctuary and choir are suspended two pairs of brass candelabra of 18th century Flemish design.

The Chapel of the Holy Spirit is reached via small flight of steps from the north side of the nave, its altar having the east window as its reredos. A painting of the Virgin and Child with St. John the Baptist and St. Francis of Assisi, thought to be by Jacopo del Sellaio (1442-93), hangs on the north wall in a twelve-sided frame. Also in the chapel hangs a reproduction of the Annunciation by Lorenzo di Credi.

The carillon of bells, originally five, were made up to an octave in 1927. These are rung from a gallery set above the porch.

A familiar sound in the valley around Holmbury is the chime, every quarter, of the church tower clock; this was installed as a gift from parishioners to mark Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887.

George Street was an active churchman; he was sympathetic to the Oxford Movement, a

high church revival movement dissatisfied with the decline of Church standards which the Movement felt arose from the increase of liberal theology. The Movement had a lasting influence on the standards and ceremonial of the Church.

When George Street died in 1881, at the age of 57, he was buried in Westminster Abbey; He was churchwarden at the church he built and his duties at Holmbury church were filled by Edwin Waterhouse (co-founder of the well-known accountancy firm).

In the churchyard near the porch of St Mary's church stands a cross designed by Street's craftsman son in memory of his father.

[Material extracted from "The story of the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Holmbury St. Mary"]

St. John The Evangelist, North Holmwood

Probably the best preserved record of Roman influence in Surrey lies in a road - one in particular - Stane Street. The church of St. John The Evangelist lies close to this famous road to Chichester, but no Roman encampments have been found nearby.

In medieval times the area was "in bosco de la Hornwode juxta Dorkyng" - in the woodlands of Homewood, close to Dorking. There were but a few farmhouses and homes scattered around the district at that time.

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries Holmwood Common became increasingly inhabited by squatters who built small cottages and enclosed plots of land. Their main source of livelihood was the cultivation of these plots of poor soil, making brooms, sheep stealing and smuggling. The prohibitive tariffs on trade between England and France in the C18th and early C19th made lawful commerce unprofitable, hence the growth of the smuggling business to meet the demands of London for French wines, silks, satin and brandy. Many smugglers passed over Holmwood Common and found friendly reception from locals.



The Victorian era brought increased population and more house building such that by the middle of the 19th century the outlying areas of Dorking parish began to be sub-divided. North Holmwood, in 1874, was one of the last areas to be separated. Later that year work began on building the church on land donated by the 15th Duke of Norfolk, (the Norfolk family held Holmwood Common from 1652 until 1956). Two sisters, Mary and Anne Legge were the principal benefactors and the architect was Rhode Hawkins of South Holmwood. Somewhat unusually in church architecture, Major Hawkins was a churchwarden of nearby St. Mary Magdalene, The Holmwood. He died in 1884 and is buried in the churchyard there.

The style of the church is Early English, with a tower topped by a spire reaching to 75ft above the porch step to the top of the weather cock. The clock in the tower came from St. Martin's Church, Dorking.

The interior is simple; the nave with a single aisle, leads to the chancel with its choir stalls and organ. The sanctuary is small but in keeping with the overall size of the building.

A later addition to the church is a series of elegant carvings, probably in boxwood, set around the walls, featuring the fourteen Stations of the Cross. The artist is unknown.

The East window contains original 1874 glass and includes scenes of the Annunciation; Nativity; Crucifixion and Resurrection and of St. John, the Evangelist, to whom the church was dedicated by The Bishop of Winchester on Easter Day 1875. The glass work is by James Powell of Whitefriars, the same firm who created many stained glass windows and wall tablets in St. Martin's Church, Dorking.

The West window (1891) is by C. E. Kempe and depicts the four fathers of the Western Church. The stained glass windows on the north side recall some of the sayings of Christ, including "I am the light of the world ..." and "I am the good shepherd...".

A previous incumbent, The Rev. Somerset Lowry (1891-1900) was a hymn writer of some note and also, living in the parish from 1895 was Prebendary Wilson Carlile, who in 1882 founded the Church Army to attract the working classes to the Church of England. Although modelled on the Salvation Army, it was different because it based its organisation on the parish unit. In 1906 he became an honorary prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral and in 1926 he was made a Companion of Honour.

Among other well-known residents and parishioners in North Holmwood was George Rennie, eldest son of the famous bridge builder John Rennie, and like his father a great civil engineer. His genius lay in mechanical engineering; he designed the first screw-propelled vessel for the Royal Navy.

Sir Joseph Boehm, an Austrian-born British sculptor who had a virtual monopoly in the production of stone statues of royalty and leading figures of the Victorian era, built a large residence in 1880 at North Holmwood and converted two cottages near the church into his studio. He worked in bronze as well, and one of his more important commissions can be seen in the Wellington group at Hyde Park Corner.

Howard Martineau, the benefactor of Dorking Halls and donor of land in 1937 for playing fields, also lived in North Holmwood.

St. John's is closely linked to The Redlands, a Church of England Primary School in the parish, and takes great interest in the children there and the school's activities. The current vicar is Revd. Caroline Corry - and she shares with all the congregation the vision that St. John's should be a welcoming place of worship for anyone and everyone within the community.

St. Mary Magdalene, The Holmwood.

In a 40 year period of the 19th century, no less than five new churches were built around Dorking, mainly south of the town, to provide worship locally for the growing population of the outlying areas. St. Mary Magdalene church was the first of these built in 1838 at South Holmwood, (the postal name) but correctly, The Holmwood.



As with so many of these new churches, The Holmwood's new church was the result of inspiration and benefaction of wealthy residents, in this case Mr & Mrs Larpent, who lived at Holmwood House - a 120 acre site (later called Holmwood Park). Mrs Larpent with her mother (Mrs. Arnold) and Mr. Heath of Kitlands met the building costs of £1,118.

The design was by John Burgess Watson. Stone quarried from Coldharbour and Leith Hill was used in the construction of the original building which is now represented by most of the present chancel up to the west end wall with its bell turret. This wall was opened up in 1842 and the nave added. Eight years later the north tower and aisle were built the vestry came a little later in 1844. In 1862 the south aisle was formed and the porch built.

St. Mary Magdalene gives the appearance of being older than its 164 years, it was consecrated on 25th June 1838. For a village church it is surprisingly large, seating over 200 people.

Additions to the structure continued. In 1887, the almost national vogue of installing a clock on local churches to mark the Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was, in the case of St. Mary Magdalene's, met by fitting one to the tower.

The windows are of interest. On the north side of the chancel is a memorial window to Mrs Larpent, the one to her mother, Mrs Arnold can be seen in the left hand window of the tower. There is window dedicated to Laura, Marchioness of Normanby on the north side of the sanctuary. Test your skills of observation to spot the one with an apostle with two right feet! As a clue look for the window commemorating Robert Henry Wilson who died in 1907.

The West window is a fine example of Victorian craft, but you can really do with a small pair of binoculars to pick out all the Old Testament heroes featured in it.

The 1850 tower wall carries some memorial tablets. Three are to members of the Rennie family. Sir John the father, and his two sons John (also knighted) and George. They were a very famous family of architects who seemed to specialise in bridge design and building. The old London Bridge was designed by the father and completed by the two sons in 1831.

In 1914 there was an extension to the chancel and the building of a new east window. At the same time the old reredos was replaced by a fine carved and gilded design which is a splendid central feature of the church. Part of the old reredos now surrounds the sacristy situated in the south aisle.

The latest additions to the church are the brightly embroidered kneelers - a millennium project by the ladies of the church; dedicated to the memory of various local folk they depict the fauna and flora of the countryside around Holmwood; butterflies, birds, foxes, wild flowers, mushrooms - a real harvest of embroidery. The designs were by Mary Lindon.

The first vicar was the Rev. J. Utterton, obviously a cleric destined for higher office; who thirteen years later became Bishop of Winchester.

More fame, but not so direct, surrounded the vicar of St. Mary's in 1911, when his

brother William Inge was appointed Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral where he reigned for 24 years and soon became known as "the gloomy Dean", because of his pessimistic sermons and articles in the newspapers mostly predicting the inevitability of war.

After World War II, another little bit of fame, but of a more secular kind, arrived with the new vicar, the Rev F. E. Spurway, who in his younger days had kept wicket for Somerset County Cricket Club; Holmwood's village cricketers must have been overjoyed at his arrival.

Bill Smith, a Holmwood man with a gift for poetry, published a book in 1984, "Allegiance to church" is one of the collection.

"To the Church when a babe I was taken
And with blessings of God my names I was given,
My God Parents did vow to the vicar right there
To teach me the Commandments and Lord's Prayer
With the promises kept, to the Bishop I did turn,
To ask his blessing and me to confirm
Then later in life to the Church I again moved
To be married to the girl I had always wooed."

St.Peter's, Newdigate.

There was a church here in the late 12th. century, it was founded by the Warennes, Earls of Surrey, whose seat at Newdigate Place (now Home Farm).

The earliest datable features of the present church are the triplet of lancets in the east window of the chancel and the two single windows to north and south of it, all are from c.1200.

The 60 ft. tower, St. Peter's most distinctive feature, is late 14th or early 15th century. It is of particular interest to historians of vernacular architecture. Only one other Surrey church (Burstow) has a similar plan and is wholly built of timber. Basically it has three square storeys surmounted by an octagonal spire, the main weight being carried by four huge oak timbers standing on a massive slab of wood.

The bells in the tower were increased from five to six in 1805 and for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 a large clock was installed adding to the tower's weight. Despite these additions and the general wear and tear the basic plan of the tower has remained unaltered for 600 years.



The exterior oak shingles were replaced in 1985, and much to Newdigate's pride, were cut by local craftsmen, using local timber and paid for by local people.

Entry via the south door leads into the south aisle and reveals a massive circular pillar - a clear reminder of the medieval structure of the church. This pillar, with its later addition of an octagonal capital, has a flattened surface in one part of it, perhaps to hold the Holy water stoup or basin (mentioned in the 1547-53 inventories). The deep holes in the surface indicate where the chained Bible was attached and a collection of incised crosses perhaps pilgrim's marks.

To the right is the Cudworth chapel with two light window and piscina dating from 14th-15th century.

St. Peter's, like so many livings in Tudor times, was affected by the transfer of the patronage to the Crown and by the injunctions in 1547 condemning pictures and most lights in churches. In 1550 all stone altars were destroyed by decree and replaced by wooden communion tables. Fortunately the old oak chest, hollowed out of a log, was not destroyed during Tudor times. Although chests of this type have been dated to the 13th century when the art of joinery was being developed, it is thought that this chest is

probably later and may have been of the same period as the tower - perhaps made from the surplus wood at the time of the tower's construction in late 14th or early 15th century. It now occupies a traditional medieval position in the north of the chancel and holds the records of the 800th anniversary.

There are several memorials of interest. The reconstruction in 1876-77 was carried out by architect TEC Streatfield, a memorial window to him can be seen in the tower and on the south wall of the chancel there is a brass plate commemorating Joane, first wife of the Rev. George Steere, the rector during the period of the Civil War who founded and endowed the village school, which still flourishes today.

Another memorial is in the west window of the north aisle, it shows Jesus in the carpenter's shop - an apt reminder of a major benefactor of the church, Mrs Ellen Jansen, who, together with school master, Henry Hackwood, started the wood-carving classes for local youths. Among works resulting are the wood carvings of angels on the choir stalls, the poppy heads on the front pews and the symbolic designs on the bench ends. These carvings were dedicated to Henry Hackwood, the school teacher who shared the teaching of the youths with Mrs Jansen.

Of the many gravestones which formerly were situated in the nave that of William de Newdigate who died in 1377 is the oldest. This is now under the tower on the south side. The Coat of Arms of Newdigate, three lion's paws, are evident on the gravestone. However, the observant visitor studying the oldest glass in the church (north east window of the north aisle) will see the Arms again but back-to-front! During 1877 restorations the window glass was reset wrong way round.

The present altar was made from a single piece of 4" thick oak by local craftsman, David Cramp, who also constructed the lych gates. A candlestick and cross were added in 1975 to commemorate 800 years of worship in St. Peter's. As part of these special celebrations a specially bound lectern edition of the New English Bible was commissioned (in a special Bible box), it contains the signatures of most residents of Newdigate in that year. Also 120 kneelers were made by a team of parishioners, they were based on eight different designs; the signatures of all the embroiderers were inscribed in the lectern bible.

With a pair of binoculars directed at the roof of the nave you can see all the names of the sixty people who redecorated the church interior in 1977.

The Church is open every weekday morning.

St. John the Baptist, Okewood



Built about 1220, originally it was a chapel of ease to Wotton church and for inhabitants of outborders of the parishes of Wotton, Ockley, Abinger, Rudgwick, Warnham and Ewhurst. The founder is unknown but the earliest records show that Sir Walter de Fancourt presented a priest in 1290 - a private advowson.

Legend has it that an endowment of £200, a very large sum in 1431, by Edward de la Hale was a thanksgiving for the miracle that

saved his son's life. The story goes that he and his son were out hunting in the neighbourhood of the chapel when his son fell from his horse in the path of a crazed and wounded wild boar. The boar rushed at him. Nothing it appeared could save him from being gored to death, suddenly an arrow flashed through the air, piercing the boar and killing it outright. The father fell to his knees and vowed to devote to God a portion of his wealth. The nearby chapel being in need of repair offered a worthy object for fulfilment of de la Hale's vow. A brass plate in excellent condition, situated beneath the present floor of the present church, records his death in September 1431.

In 1547 an Act of Parliament dissolving colleges, chantries and free chapels dealt Okewood a mortal blow; through a misapprehension it was thought that the Chapel was a chantry chapel (one used for saying masses for the repose of a soul); without any enquiry being made as to the actual use, the whole property and its lands were seized by the Crown and sold privately. No services were held, nor a priest appointed with the result that all who had been attending Okewood had to travel much further to worship.

After five years of a closed church and no priest a group of local yeomen successfully petitioned the Court of Augmentation and on May 28th 1553 an order was granted for the chapel, churchyard and house and garden adjacent it to be restored and a priest appointed.

Unfortunately the decree was not confirmed before the then monarch Edward VI died. Nothing happened in Queen Mary's short reign and it was not until 1560, when Elizabeth was on the throne, that a further approach to the Crown by one of the original group of local yeomen succeeded in obtaining the restoration of the chapel, churchyard and house. The valuable lands were not returned.

In 1853, after many years of funding difficulties and a reliance on gifts from wealthy locals to make ends meet, the chapel entered a new and less hazardous period of existence - Okewood was formed into a consolidated chapelry from parts of the parishes of Wotton, Abinger and Ockley. To all extents and purposes Okewood chapel became a parish church. The patronage was vested in William John Evelyn. The 1220 building remained virtually unchanged until the middle of the 15th century when Edward de la Hale's endowment enabled restoration and alterations.

During the period following the chapel's confiscation in 1547 and for many years later the structure suffered from lack of funds to maintain it with the result that it became seriously dilapidated. In the early 18th century the Evelyn family met the costs of urgent repair work and again in 1735.

Later, more money came from the late rector of Abinger, Rev. Robert Offley and the Evelyn family and this helped with further repairs to the structure and towards costs of the living.

Two 13th century wall paintings were discovered on the south wall and the two lancet windows on this side hold fragments of 13th-15thC glass. However, by 1879 it became clear that drastic rebuilding was necessary; the old part of the church was thoroughly restored and refurnished. A short spire was erected in place of the turret, buttresses erected nearly 200 years earlier were removed - they were dragging the walls more than supporting them; the north wall was pulled down and rebuilt, the porch widened and a vestry built. Much

refurnishing took place with a new pulpit and altar. All this new work, under the direction of Basil Champneys, kept the character of the old building, for example the roof of the new aisle was constructed of Horsham slabs, the same material as original roof. The whole cost of the work, £2,000 was met by Mr. W. J. Evelyn.

On Sunday 20th January 1880 the formal reopening by the Bishop of Winchester took place. Subsequently, an organ was installed in 1910, the Rood Screen in 1932 in memory of the vicar from 1924-28, the Rev. Leonard Wooley. The latest restoration took place in 1997 when there was a complete renewal of the floor, under-floor heating, a sound-proof creche/lobby, the formation of a kitchen, repositioning the organ, installing new lighting and a sound enhancement system. To find the church, turn right off Stane Street (going south) at the end of Ockley (Catlip Lane) and follow for one and a half miles.

St. Margaret's, Ockley



19 years after The Pilgrim Fathers set sail from Plymouth, the rector of this C 13th church lead 25 families from his parish and nearby parts to a life in America. The Rev. Henry Whitfield, rector from 1618 until his departure for America in 1639, bought land from the Menunketuck Indians and built the first stone house in the New England at a place he named Guilford (no "d"); this building, on the south coast of Connecticut, looks over Long Island Sound, about 70 miles from New York City. It is now The Henry Whitfield State Museum having been carefully restored and decorated with seventeenth century furnishings.

A wall board presented to the church in 1977 by John B. Threlfall, a descendant of the Rev. Henry Whitfield, hangs on the south wall and lists the names of the heads of the 25 families.

The first known reference to St. Margaret's church is 1291. The oldest parts of the present church are the South wall, built from local sandstone, and the nave which still retains its original oak moulded tie beams and plates which date from the early 13th century.

Two windows to the east of the porch are medieval, the square-headed one near the altar and next to it a window with fragments of glass dated about 1320. The picturesque porch was added around the C 16th; the tower despite its Norman appearance was not built until 1700 and about the same time the peal of six bells were hung. An overhaul in 1981 has ensured that they still ring true and "a happy noise to hear". They are the oldest complete peal in Surrey, cast by Robert Phelps at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry in London.

When the church underwent a major restoration and enlargement in 1872, the old box pews were removed, a gallery at the west end was added, the north aisle created, the chancel extended and a vestry and organ chamber built.

Further restoration work in 1995 uncovered an unpainted royal Coat-of-Arms (George III); now painted in correct heraldic colours it hangs over the entrance to the vestry. No one

knows why the coat-of-arms was in the church or why it was never painted. Here's another mystery! Whose heads are the king and the queen, facing south and north respectively, which can be seen on the two central pillars dating from 1872/3? Maybe they are Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who died 1861! But why a king's crown on a Prince? Who are they and why are they there? No one seems to know.

The marble and mosaic in the chancel and sanctuary were added as a memorial to John Lee-Steere, only son of the squire, who at the age of 19, was killed in action near Ypres in November 1914 while serving in the Grenadier Guards; Charles Lee-Steere, an RAF fighter-pilot was killed in action over Belgium in May 1940.

A wall board, erected in 1977, records the names of all the rectors of St. Margaret's from 1308 when Richard De Carisbrook was appointed. John Cook who became rector in 1817 died while still in office after 47 years service at 83 years of age! There is a memorial tablet inside the church to him and to Thomas Woodroffe, rector from 1784, the year he built a new rectory, now Stane House.

The registers date from 1539 and a silver chalice and paten bear London hallmarks of 1607. There is also a silver paten dated 1716.

By 1872 the centre of village population had moved to the south along Stane Street and the rector at that time, Francis Du Sautoy, built a new church (St. John's) for the convenience of parishioners at the south end of the Green. He built it on his own land and out of his own pocket.

The consecration of St. John's was performed by Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester who eight months later died in a riding accident at Abinger Roughts. (The incident recorded by the stone cross which stands there today). Now St John's is no more. It was made redundant in 1983 and converted into two houses.

By the gate of the old church of St. Margaret's is an unusual brick version of a mounting block. Its size too is unusual, a base of approx 6ft. x 3ft. with four steps leading to a large platform. Each step has a flagstone tread. Facilitating the act of mounting your horse must have been much appreciated by the older gentry who rode to church. Further flagstones at the churchyard gate are all that remains of a footpath that ran westwards to what is now the A29 road. Notice also the very old (200 years plus) ornamental bricks which flank the flagstone path.

The village name of Ockley is of Saxon origin - "Occa's lea", or Occa's clearing in the wood. In the Domesday Book it is "Hoclei".

St. Mark's, Peaslake.

The church at Peaslake was built in 1889 as a daughter church of St. James', Shere.

For about 20 years before the church was built - Sunday afternoon services were held in the School Room at the foot of Ridge Hill in the centre of the village, but in 1888 the Misses Spottiswoode (of Drydown, Hook Lane, Shere) persuaded the lord of the manor of Shere and the Hon. George Cubitt (later Lord Ashcombe) that a new church should be built.



The original idea of a wooden building was felt inadequate and Mr Cubitt offered £1,000 towards the cost of a stone-built church. The site - at the foot of Ridge Hill again. Other donors rallied to the cause including the Misses Spottiswoode and the final cost of £1,800 was met. The architect chosen was Ewan Christian (1814-95) and the builder Goddard & Son; the foundation stone laid by the Spottiswoodes in September 1888.

The consecration, by the Bishop of Winchester, took place on St. Mark's Day, 25th April 1889. The church was filled well beyond its seating capacity of 200. The Association for Free Seating in Churches' donation ensured "free" seats for all but a hundred who had to stand.

Much of the early wood-carving in St. Mark's was done by a class of wood-carvers led by Gertrude Edlmann. The choir-stall panels were carved at a later date by Doris Downing and the cupboards by Denis Sherlock.

The colourful kneelers featuring motifs of St Mark's Lion and a wide range of village interests and glimpses of Peaslake's history were created for the 100th anniversary in 1989.

As with so many churches the stained-glass windows were gifts from many local residents in memory of their loved ones. However, the most recent north wall window, installed in the Spring of 2000, marked the Millennium; it was designed by local artist Rhianon Morgan and the cost was met from many private donations.

A Millennium Year Pageant staged to a packed church in May 2000 has encouraged a group of writers, social historians and artists to produce a complete history of the village. The publication is due for launch in late 2003.

St. Mark's is usually open on weekdays. The Key holder is Mrs Plaw at Old School Cottage, Peaslake.

One of the main changes in the 15th century was the removal of most of the Early English lancet windows, replacing them with larger ones. There are clues to other events through two brasses in the chancel which recall Robert Scarclif, Rector of Shere from 1409-12: his will is still preserved at Lambeth Palace and he left many gifts to the parish.

The second brass commemorates Lord Audley, who died in 1490. Granted the Manor of Shere in 1466, he became Lord Treasurer in 1484 and three years later passed the manor to Sir Reginald Bray, The Bray family crest figures in various windows and ornaments of St. James'. Apart from a break for 200 years (from 1676), the living has remained with the Bray family to this day.

After the profound effects of the Reformation on the church and its interior layout, there was comparative stability in the next century, but with the arrival of the Georgian period, three main structural developments took place. The West Gallery was erected in 1748 at a total cost of £27-18s-6d raised by public subscription from 137 parishioners and friends. It was built for the poor of the parish and access was obtained via an outside staircase, still the only way the gallery today, the door from which is still visible. At about the same time a musicians' gallery was built along the north wall of the aisle. The gallery only lasted 100 years and it too had an outside stairway.

In the early 1800's, the ringing floor of the tower became unsafe and until 1895 when the floor was replaced and two new bells were added, the bells were rung from the church floor. The programme of changes at this time included a dramatic re-furbishing of the chancel -the altar was raised on two steps, a new organ was installed, and the spire repaired. A robed choir was introduced which at the time was considered very High Church and quite revolutionary! The final touch of the century was the building of choir and clergy vestries and a new heating system being installed.

The 20th century saw more regeneration with the replacement of timbers and ceilings in 1937. After World War 2 the spire was re-shingled and in 1967 the organ console and choir stalls moved from the chancel to the south aisle, where the pulpit had stood for hundreds of years. The organ was rebuilt in the gallery.

A tiny statuette, of Madonna and child, in the south aisle dates from around 1300 and is thought to have come from a pilgrim's staff .

A window commemorating the end of the Wars of the Roses can be seen in the chapel; three red roses and one white.

Christ Church, Shamley Green

In 1861, Queen Victoria and the nation mourned the death of Consort Prince Albert, that same year Land on which Christ Church was eventually built was purchased by Womersley parish as their new graveyard. Two years later more land was obtained on the same site and a Chapel of Ease was built here in 1864. The architect, C.H. Howell, who a year earlier had designed County Hall at Kingston-upon-Thames.



This new small chapel eventually became the parish church of Shamley Green in 1881.

In the next 20 years various improvements were made, the principal one in 1897 was the westward extension of the nave, built to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

The east window depicting the birth, death and resurrection of Christ was part of the original building (1862) but the striking picture behind the altar was not in place until the new chancel was built in 1892; it shows the Lamb of God with angels swinging censers, a sign of worship, below the conception and birth of Christ is depicted. At each side are panels portraying the Apostles, Matthias replacing Judas. The centre panel shows Christ with John and Peter.

The chancel's "angel" windows illustrate Hope, Love, Faith and Fortitude. Other angel windows in the sanctuary were installed in memory of Ann Rose Hemming.

During the 20th century three major structural changes in the church took place; at the opening of the century a church room was added, in 1921 further additions were made to church room and in 1950 part of the south aisle was enclosed to make a vestry and Lady Chapel.

In the Lady Chapel, on the south side, there is a fine carving of the Madonna and

Child by Douglas Stephens. The windows in the chapel show the St Anne, mother of Lady Mary, Mary with the Virgin Child and the Archangels Michael and Raphael.

On the north wall of the nave are some less usual subjects for stain glass art, nearest to the pulpit, Justice with sword, Mercy with crowstaff (1910), and the next window erected in 1936 shows Purity and Peace with olive sprigs and white doves adorning the scene.

The last window on the north wall features Christ as the Sower.

Just above the font (C 19) at the west end the stained glass in the window portrays Moses with Elijah and Nehemiah with Amos. The former an administrator and leader who helped organise the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, and Amos a political leader with a passion for social justice and the earliest prophet to have a book named after him in the Bible.

The 21st century had hardly started before a further addition to the church was built - a new octagonal building containing several rooms was built in commemoration of the Queens Golden Jubilee. It was dedicated by the Bishop of Guildford in 2002.

In the churchyard is the tomb of Ernest H. Shepard, the famous artist and cartoonist who died in 1976 and who reached the great age of 97. Shepard became famous for his illustrations for children's books especially AA Milne's Winnie The Pooh (1926) and other Milne books and also Kenneth Grahame's Wind in The Willows (1931). For many years he drew for Punch, the satirical humorous weekly magazine.

Vespers

Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed
Droops on his little hand little gold head.
Hush! Hush! whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.

God Bless Mummy . I know that's right.
Wasn't it fun in the bath tonight?
The cold's so cold and the hot's so hot
Oh! God bless Daddy - I quite forgot.

If I open my fingers a little bit more,
I see Nanny's dressing gown on the door.
It's a beautiful blue, but it hasn't a hood.
Oh! God bless Nanny and make her good

Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed.
Et cetera ,Et cetera

Mine has a hood as I lie in bed
And I pull the hood right over my head,
And I shut my eyes, and curl up small,
And nobody knows that I'm there at all.

Oh! Thank you God for a lovely day.
And what was the other I had to say?
I said 'Bless Daddy', so what could it be
Oh! Now I remember it's God bless Me.

One of Shepard's drawings can be seen in St Martha-on-the Hill Church, above Chilworth, a church that he also attended. Another drawing by him from "When We Were Very Young" by AA Milne is shown below.

Holy Trinity, Westcott.



A growing population in the mid 19th century and the establishment of a non-conformist chapel prompted the building of a church in the village of Westcott as an alternative to worship in Dorking or Wotton. The Evelyn family gave a piece of land on Westcott Heath and Sir George Gilbert Scott prepared the design and specification.

The cost of the building the church was raised by public subscription and the patronage of the living was vested in Mr.Barclay of Bury Hill, who was the principal benefactor.

Sir Gilbert chose a 14th century Gothic or Decorative style, mainly in dressed flint with a shingled spire. Consecration by the Bishop of Winchester was in June 1852; 150 years ago this year.

Originally built to seat 250 it was soon increased to 400 by the addition of a south aisle in 1855. A vestry was added later in the south-east corner, this was further extended with an upper room to it in 1985.

On the north side of the nave is the organ, installed in 1872, and now refurbished for

the 150th anniversary. Entering the chancel, the unusual arched reredos of marble with a central section of mosaic work makes a striking feature. It was erected in 1882. The mosaic features Christ and several figures set against a gold background.

The east window is a beautiful example of the work of James Powell & Son (Whitefriars). It depicts the Ascension and was donated by Miss Barclay of Rokefield in 1893.

The window on the north side of the sanctuary showing scenes of the life of St. Timothy is a memorial to Frederick Salzmann, Vicar of Westcott 1910-1944, and that on the south side commemorates Charles Maine who died in 1888 aged 88.

The side chapel originally faced north but in 1936 the north-facing pews were removed and the Lady chapel created. The colourful dossal and altar facings were embroidered in 1995. On the south wall of the chapel hangs a photographic reproduction of the work of 17th C Italian master, Giovanni Sassoferato. The original painting of Madonna and Child, a gift from the Barclay family, can be seen in The Treasury at Guildford Cathedral. Another Madonna by Sassoferato hangs, among what is regarded as one of the great and unspoilt art collections in Britain's country houses, in Wilton House, Wiltshire.

The windows on the north side of the nave are of interest. The one beside the pulpit depicts St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music - the music lover was Mary Ellen Druce of Rokefield, who died in 1930. The window to her memory was erected by her singing class, her husband and her friends. The other window of interest is in the middle of the north wall and commemorates Emily Mary, Marchioness of Hertford who died in June 1902.

A common commemoration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1877 was the installation a clock in a prominent village location. Holy Trinity was the chosen place in Westcott.

The lych gate was erected three years later.

Two war memorials line the wall of the south aisle; the more colourful, with 20 different badges representing the regiments of those who were killed in action, relates to the 1914-18 World War; the second, in carved wood, more sombrely records the 40 servicemen and women who were killed in the 1939-45 War as well as 10 civilians who died as a result of enemy action. An attractive carved relief of a "Happy Warrior", from the studio of G F Watts, in memory of a young army officer killed on the Somme in 1916 adorns the north wall of the chancel.

In a simpler way, a young Pilot Officer RAF, who was killed in action in 1943 is recorded on a memorial plaque on the north wall. Two standards of the Royal British Legion are laid up in the church providing a reminder that until 1986 Westcott had its own branch of the Legion, now incorporated in the Dorking branch.

Various extensions have occurred to the churchyard and a Garden of Remembrance was established in 1988. The names of those whose ashes are interred there are recorded in a Remembrance Book kept in the Lady chapel.

Westcott has remained a "single" parish over its 150 years. It held an extensive programme of events to celebrate its anniversary in 2003; a Flower Festival on 18th and 19th May, concerts in the church on the 18th and 25th, organ recitals and special services

and a talk about Gilbert Scott, the architect of Holy Trinity and the early history of the church as revealed in the record books. The anniversary concluded with a Celebration Eucharist on the last Sunday of May conducted by the Bishop of Dorking.

Holy Trinity is open daily during daylight hours.

St John the Evangelist, Wotton

Although situated on a knoll rising from the valley at the foot of the North Downs, St. John's church was barely noticeable from the main road for many decades; it was screened from view by a number of magnificent elms. Around 1980 all that changed when all but two of the trees were felled, now this picturesque ancient church stands out for all to see.



Its attraction to visitors can lead to disappointment when they discover that its doors are only open on Sundays in spring and summer, however key holders are usually nearby to help interested strangers.

Twenty five years ago excavation around the church revealed traces of a pair of walls which date back to 1050. That building was destroyed by fire but immediately following the loss a small church with rubble walls was built on the site.

Previously thought to be Norman, St. John's since that excavation can claim Saxon origin and is now seen as one of the oldest churches in south-east England.

In the 11th century the tower was increased in height, the nave re-floored and a new extension added to the east end.

Further changes in the building occurred in the 13th century when a lady chapel (The Evelyn chapel in later years) was added and the old chancel adapted to form the nave. The arch through to the oldest part of the building was blocked up and a single arched window inserted. The old nave was demolished and the walls levelled to the ground.

Not only the building makes a claim to antiquity, but the two 14th century bells, one is 30" across, are thought to be among the oldest surviving in Surrey, only Chaldon and Bisley have older bells.

If John Evelyn, the celebrated 17thC philosopher and diarist were to enter St. John's today he would see a church very similar to the one he and his forbears knew so well.

St. John's association with the Evelyn family started in the late 16th century when George Evelyn became its Patron. The most well-known descendant, John, the diarist, horticulturist and friend of Kings James II and Charles II, was born at Wotton House in October 1620. It is believed he was baptised in a font (no longer in use) which is still to be seen in the Church today. He was taught to read at 4 years of age by the village schoolmaster in a small room over the porch of the church.

Evelyn's famous Diary includes many references to St. John's; on the 2nd January 1641 he attended his father's funeral there; during the Great Plague of London his family came to live in Wotton House with his elder brother and regularly attended the church. In 1694 he left his Deptford estate and came to live at Wotton House. He died there at 86 years of

age in February 1706. His brother died in 1699.

Since that generation of the Evelyn family the present chancel arch and walls were formed and a new east window replaced the old three lancet one. In 1856-8 a vestry was added as well as a door and two large windows in the south wall of the nave. The porch was rebuilt during the same period.

In the 20th century restoration work, as a memorial to those who died in World War II, was carried out. The tower and nave roof were restored in 1957/8 and a new reredos installed over the altar. The ancient oak screen beneath the Evelyn Chapel arch has an engraving "Ano Dmi 1632 MA5 G-H" probably signifying May 5 and George Higham, the rector at that time.

Some of the Elizabethan and Jacobean monuments in the chapel are worthy of study; these include that of George Evelyn (1603), John's grandfather and the first owner of the Wotton estates; he was married twice and had 25 children. The monument shows him with his two wives kneeling either side and the family below.

John Evelyn's father, Richard, has a monument featuring him with his wife and family of three sons and two daughters. Both these monuments are rare survivors of the desecration by Cromwell's forces. The two coffin-shaped floor monuments are of John Evelyn's wife Mary who survived her husband by just over two years and of the Diarist

"... he learnt (as himself asserted) this truth, which pursuant to his intention is here declared -That all is vanity which is not honest, and there is no solid wisdom but in real piety."

himself whose epitaph includes:

There is one further Evelyn monument - John's sister Elizabeth who died in 1634 - and some floor slabs of other family members. The church plate too, bears the stamp of the Evelyns, among the 17th and 18th century pieces is a silver platen, the earliest of all the plate, it bears the Crest Arms of John Evelyn and is dated 1685.

Visitors to the church often fail to notice the south doorway, it is worth special attention, it features on the inner ring of stones eight small, delicate carvings. It has been suggested that the heads are of a Queen Lobelia, King John, the Rector of Wotton, a pilgrim, the Patron, a Papal Legate, Pope Innocent III and Archbishop Stephen Langton.

This booklet transcribed, reformatted and photographs added by Philip Rawlings, 2104