



FARLEY CHURCH. S.E.



Ground Plan

Scale of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch = 1 foot

FARLEY CHURCH, from South-East, as in 1823.

From Cracklow's "Churches of Surrey."

NOTES ON THE HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE OF FARLEY CHURCH.¹

BY

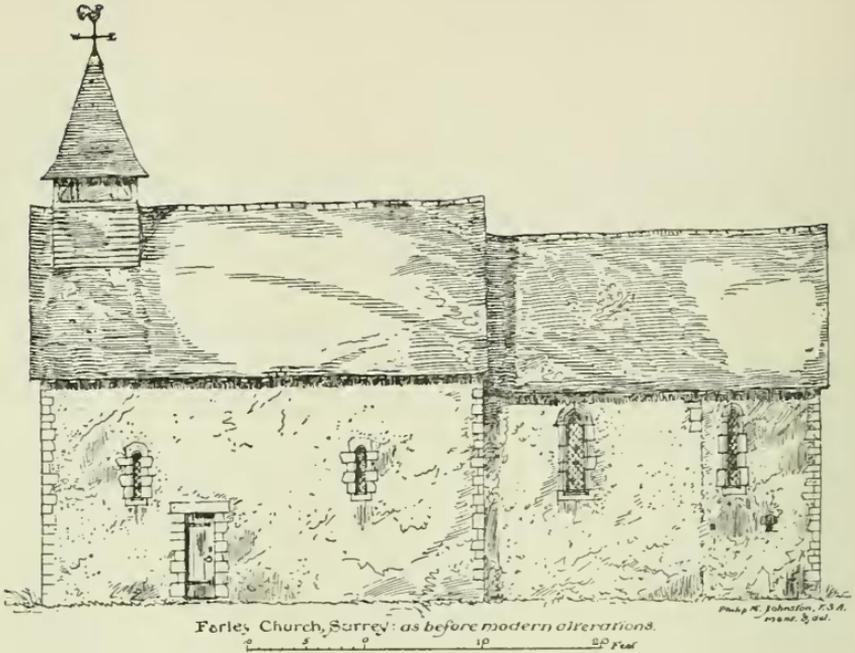
PHILIP MAINWARING JOHNSTON, F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A.

THERE must have been a church at Farley (dedicated to St. Mary) as early as the close of the 11th century, judging by the style of the western doorway, which belongs to the Early-Norman period; probably this church was built by the first Norman lord after the Conquest: for *Domesday Book* (1086), which records the existence of churches that can be identified with those still remaining at Warlingham and Chelsham, makes no mention of a church at Farley (Ferlega, as it was then called²); an omission which is the more significant as Robert de Watevile held all three places under Richard de Tonbridge, lord of Clare.

Probably Robert de Watevile, who may well have lived in the moated house occupying the site of Farley Court, built the little church to serve the needs of himself and his tenants, and in its main lines it has come down to us almost unaltered. So remote and rural is the neighbourhood that it might be sixty, instead of only sixteen, miles from London. The church stands upon

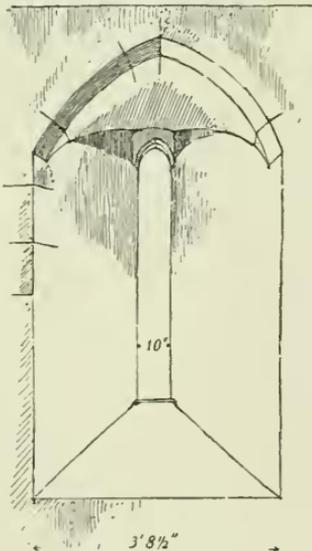
¹ The following notes formed part of a report by the writer, in connection with a proposed scheme of repair and improvement, which has since been partly carried out under the supervision of our member, Mr. J. C. King, of 41, Easteheap, E.C., and the writer. It has so far proved disappointing, in that no ancient features have been brought to light.

² In the Charter of Duke Alfred, 871—889, the name appears as FEARNLEGE, meaning probably the Fearn-lea, or Ferny-lea. "Ferny Field" is the name of a field in the parish. *S. A. C.*, VI, 209.



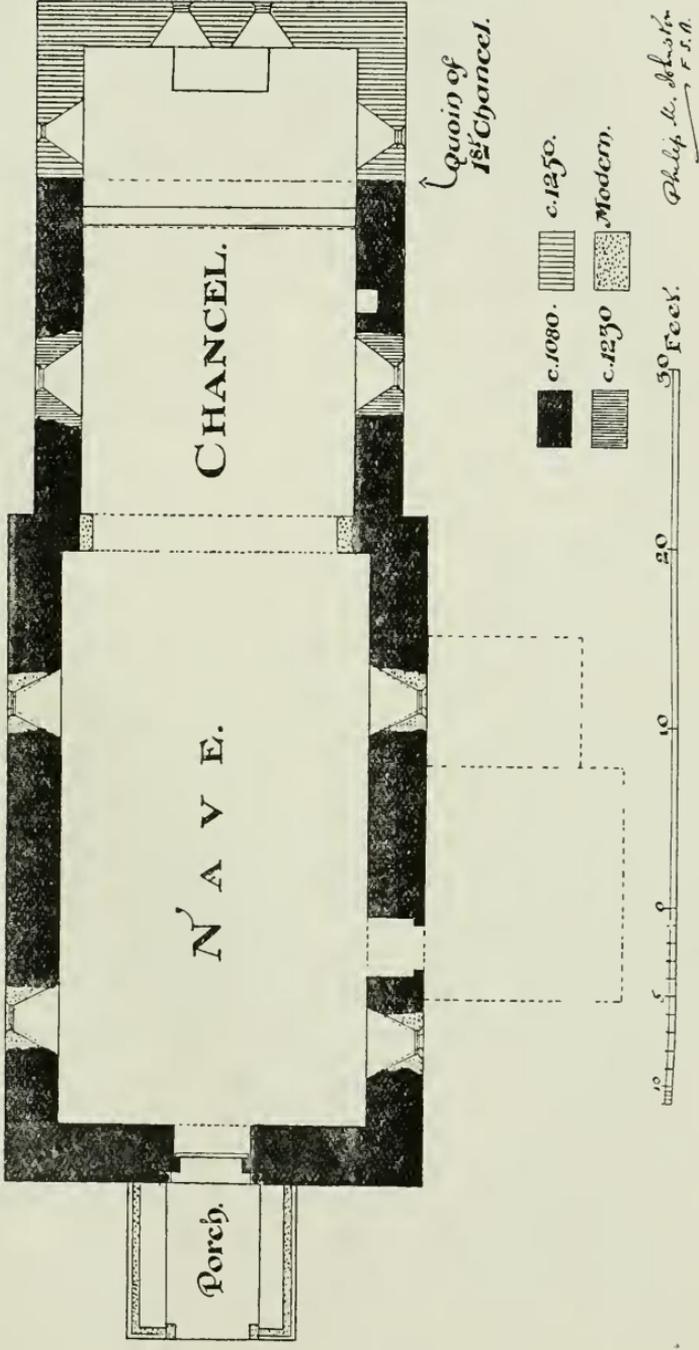
an elevated plateau, in a pleasantly shady churchyard,

with an ancient yew close to its western end. It consists simply of a nave 32 ft. long by 17 ft. 1 in. wide, and chancel, originally 16 ft. by 15 ft. 2 in., but lengthened to 26 ft. internally in the 13th century. The western porch of timber, the wooden bell-turret, and the vestry on the south side of the nave are of modern date. The walls, which are unusually thick for so small a building—3 ft. in the nave, and 2 ft. 8 in. in the chancel—are built of field flints, plastered inside and out with dressings of local firestone. The quoins of the first east wall still remain behind the 13th-century plaster, as evidence of this



Forley Ch:
Eastern lancet
on N. side of
Chancel.

Church of St Mary FARLEY.



extension, which must have taken place about 1250.¹ Both the nave and chancel roofs are modern, and of poor, flimsy design and construction; they are covered with tiles, as is also the spire of the modern bell-turret.

Slightly before 1250 wide lancets had been pierced in the Norman north and south walls of the chancel, replacing the smaller round-headed openings of the first work. The alteration in the external plastering still shows, after nearly seven hundred years, where these lancets were inserted, the first, or Norman, plastering being finished with a coat of a pale brown colour, while that of the 13th century is of a strong yellow shade. The walls of both dates were originally coated beneath the plaster with white lime-putty, traces of which appear in parts. The difference in the width of the western lancet windows of the chancel (about 14 in.) and those in the extension (about 10½ in.) is curious, and is in itself suggestive of two dates. There is variety also in the treatment of the openings, the western lancets being chamfered and rebated for the glazing, while all four eastern windows are grooved. The treatment of the east wall is somewhat unusual, there being two lancet windows, separately splayed on the inside, instead of the usual three, or triplet of lights within an enclosing arch.² There is a small oblong, rectangular stone recess in about the centre of the south wall of the chancel, answering to the probable position of the piscina of the Norman church, before its eastward extension. If the modern internal plaster were removed from the eastern part of this wall and of the north wall of the chancel, the 13th-century piscina and aumbry would almost certainly be found in the wall.³ Some of the original "putlogs," or scaffold-

¹ At about which date the manor of Farley seems to have been conveyed to Walter de Merton, the founder of Merton College, Oxford. The advowson is still in the hands of Merton College. Tortington Priory, Sussex, which, by a curious coincidence, is now being excavated under the writer's supervision, appears to have held property in Farley in the 13th century.

² *Cf.* the east wall of Elsted Church, Sussex, where an exactly similar arrangement obtains.

³ This has been done, but without finding these features.

pole holes, are to be seen in the walls of the eastern extension on the outside. The external stonework of the six lancet windows and the quoins in the chancel—the calcareous sandstone called “Godstone,” or firestone—is nearly all original and in very fair preservation. In both the 11th- and 13th-century work the quoins are built of exceptionally small stones, yet they have stood very well, though somewhat decayed on the surface. It is well known that this firestone is not obtainable in very large blocks or is of too unequal a texture to be used except in small pieces. Parts of the two lancets in the east wall have been renewed in Bath stone. Strange to say, the heads of these two windows are nearly, if not quite, round, although those in the side walls of this eastern extension are pointed—a peculiarity to be found in one of the windows of the east triplet at Clymping and Upmarden, Sussex. Some of the internal stonework of these windows appears to be Caen. They are simply chamfered externally, and the internal arches, which are of pointed segmental form, are also chamfered with a square soffit dying into the splayed jambs.¹

The chancel arch, acutely pointed, and of extremely ugly design, is an entirely modern feature. As in the sister churches of Warlingham and Chelsham, there was originally no structural division between nave and chancel, but only a beam, with above it a tympanum of timber and plaster, forming a background for the rood and its attendant images, and a screen below, against which were placed one or more side or chantry altars. Small and aisle-less though the church has always been, yet besides the high altar there must have been at least one, perhaps two, of these chantry altars until 1549, for in the second of the Edwardian inventories made in that year, we have the entry:—

“Item iij awter clothes y^t engys beffo^r the awters.”²

¹ It is interesting to compare this treatment with the much richer moulded rear-arches of the lancets in Warlingham Church hard by. *Vide S. A. C.*, XIV, 109–10.

² *I. e.*, “Three altar cloths that hang before the altars”—*viz.*, before the high altar and the two lesser altars. When the neighbouring church

It is practically certain that a piscina exists in the south wall of nave, behind the modern pulpit, for the use of one of these rood-loft altars.

It is also certain that there was a chancel screen beneath the great rood, and that it was crowned with a beam or loft, on which were placed the "ix candlesticks of tynne," or, perhaps, the "iij candlesticks bolles [bowls] of latten," mentioned in the inventory. In the same inventory "a Lent clothe of canvas steyned with blew and red spottes" is set down among the church goods. This was a curtain or veil hung before the altar during Lent. Another item is "a sepulcar cloth of red and grene sylke," which was used in connection with the Easter sepulchre, a feature which took the form of a wall recess or a movable wooden structure in connection with the ceremonies of Maundy Thursday and Easter. This recess, where it existed, was usually in the north wall of a chancel or chapel.

Mention is made of "iij belles in the steple" and "a sacryng belle"—a small bell, perhaps hung at the east gable of the nave, or a handbell, to be used at the elevation of the Host. At present there is only one bell in the timber turret at the west end. It is somewhat large—29 inches in diameter—and bears the inscription—

JOHN HODSON MADE ME 1663. IM ID CW.

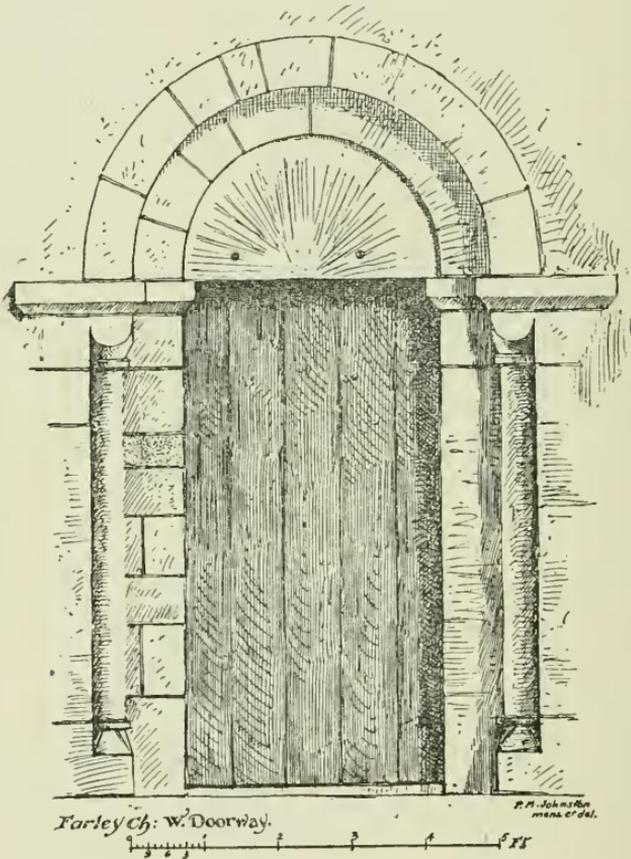
—the initials being probably those of the then vicar and churchwardens.

The turret in which this bell hangs is quite modern, dating from a "restoration" of some 50 years ago. No turret is shown in Cracklow's view of the church published in 1823; but the "steple" mentioned in the inventory of Edward VI, must in all probability have been a timber structure, capped with a spirelet, covered with oak shingles. There was a brisk trade in cleaving

of Warlingham was restored by the writer, conclusive evidence of three altars were found in the shape of piscinas, one for the high altar and one in either wall of the nave where the altars stood against the rood screen,—this also in an aisle-less church.

these oak shingles and the making of iron nails at Farley, in the Middle Ages.

The nave has, unhappily, suffered even more than the chancel in the so-called "restoration" of half-a-century ago. The narrow Norman windows, two on either side of the nave, seem to have been both widened and heightened, and their stone work re-tooled at this



time. Originally the splays probably ran out to a feather-edge, and then the narrow loop was finished with a chamfer, the openings being unglazed and merely stopped by a shutter on the weather side. The outer openings appear to be of entirely new

stones. On the other hand, the wide round-headed window high up in the west gable appears to be in its original state, as does the small square-headed doorway in the south wall, now opening into the modern vestry;¹ and the west doorway, a particularly interesting feature, save for some unfortunate re-tooling of the stonework, is apparently in an unaltered state. It has square-edged arches of two orders, enclosing a plain tympanum. The outer order has a shaft in the jamb, with a cushion capital having a chamfered abacus, which continues as an impost across the square inner order of the jamb. The base is of a characteristic form. Western doorways seem to have been more common in the Early-Norman period than in the later phases of the style. In Surrey, at any rate, we have examples in the west wall at Mickleham, Ewhurst, and Woking, both dating from about 1100.²

The font, pulpit, seating and other furniture are all modern, as is also the glazing of the windows. The chest mentioned in one of the Edwardian inventories is no longer to be found.

In the chancel are two monuments of some interest, both now mural, but originally slabs in the chancel floor. That on the south wall is a long stone, bearing the small brass effigies of John Brock, citizen and poulterer of London, who died the first day of May, 1495, and of his wife; below them being a group of four sons under the father and one daughter under the mother. The man's figure, which is $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches high, is dressed in the long gown worn by merchants, with a string of beads depending from his girdle. The wife's effigy is one inch shorter, and she wears the gabled head-dress then coming into fashion. The inscription reads:—

¹ Square-headed doorways of this period are not very usual. Burpham and Hardham Churches, Sussex, are other examples. The internal opening has a round arch. Cracklow's view seems to show a pointed arch externally.

² There are south doorways of about this date at Ewhurst and Witley, and a north doorway of *c.* 1121, at Merton.

“Hic jacent Joh̄s Brock Civis dum vixit et Pult'cr
london et Ann vxor eius qui q'dm̄ Joh̄s obiit primo die
mensis Maii A° domini Millmo CCCCLxxxv° quorum
āiab's p̄piciet' deus amē.”¹

On a marble ledger, against the north wall, but formerly, according to the county historians, “under the altar,” is the inscription to Dr. Samuel Bernard, who died in 1657, his widow surviving nearly half-a-century. From the expression, “*vir nullo fœdere fœdatus*”—“a man stained by no covenant”—it has been conjectured that he was exposed to persecution for refusing to sign the Solemn League and Covenant in the Great Rebellion, *c.* 1644. The arms of Bernard on the stone are:—[*Argent*] on a bend [*azure*] three escallops [*of the field*].

SAMVEL BERNARDVS
SACRÆ THEOLOGIE DOCTOR
PASTOR FIDVS, VIR NVLLO FÆDERE FÆDATVS
HIC RESVRRECTIONEM EXPECTAT

CVRVM PEREGIT AVGVST: V 1657
Æ: 67

HEIC ETIAM
ELIZABETHÆ
UXORIS EJUS DESIDERATISSIMÆ
CONQUIESCUNT RELIQUÆ
QUE POSTQUAM VIDUATAM VITAM ANNOS 48
RELIGIOSISSIMÆ EGISSET
TANDEM OBDORMIVIT IN CHRISTO
SEPT: 8. 1705,
ANNOS NATA
96.

The other monuments in the church and churchyard are of no great antiquity or interest.

¹ The wife's name, owing to a rivet in the plate, is somewhat uncertain. It may be Ann, Anne, or Amie.



FARLEY CHURCH: Brass to John and Ann Brock.