

# SOME FORMER PARISHES IN CHICHESTER.

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THREE parishes within the walls of Chichester, which are no longer in existence, are mentioned in records; chance has enabled me to locate at least one of them.

In 1229, leave was given to pull down the church of St. Peter in the Market and annex the only two parishioners to St. Mary's Hospital.<sup>1</sup> This church lay between East and South Streets,<sup>2</sup> and this is clearly the original location of the Hospital; I must confess that I find it hard to take literally the statement that a church in the middle of Chichester had two parishioners only. Was this a legal fiction?

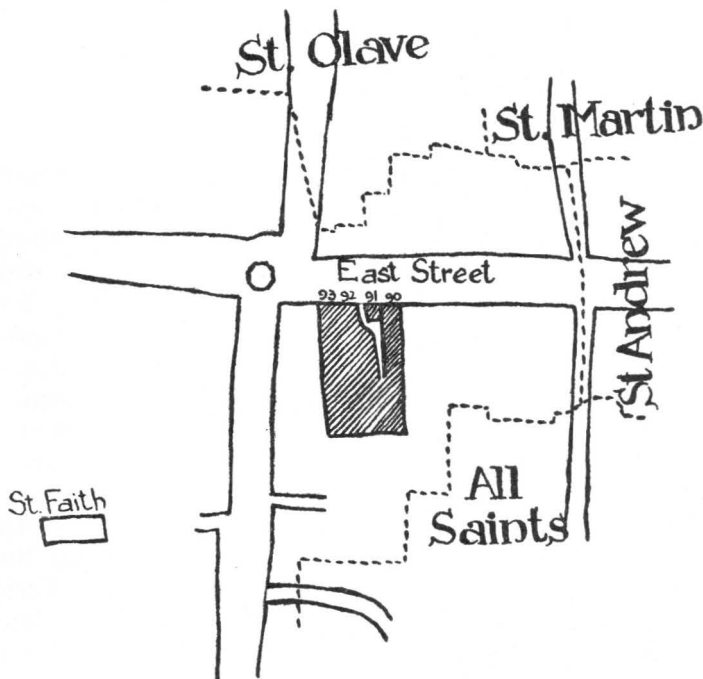
I know of no later references to St. Peter in the Market, but two parishes now no longer existing had incumbents as late as the time of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, St. Mary in the Market and St. Peter next Guildhall. Changes of dedication in medieval times not being unknown, it seems possible that there was but one Church "in the Market", originally dedicated to St. Peter and subsequently to St. Mary. The fact that the Hospital had leave to pull down the church does not prove that they did so, they may have repaired it<sup>3</sup> and used it as a chapel, and when, towards the end of the thirteenth century, they migrated to their present site, the former chapel of St. Mary's Hospital may have become the parish Church of St.

<sup>1</sup> *V.C.H. Sussex*, II., 100.

<sup>2</sup> *S.A.C.*, LI., 50, 51, but I contest the inference (*ibid.* 39) that it was at the corner of the two (i.e. on the site of the present 75, South Street). As will be seen, there is another hypothesis which will fit the facts.

<sup>3</sup> There are plenty of instances in modern times of a proposal to pull down a building provoking opposition locally and ultimately resulting in its restoration.

Mary in the Market.<sup>4</sup> If the identity of the two is not conceded we are faced with the existence of two churches in closer contiguity than was usual even in a medieval town.<sup>5</sup>



For I have been able to identify within very narrow limits the site of the Church of St. Mary in the Market. A Deed poll of 1759<sup>6</sup> recites a former lease of property which can certainly, in the light of subsequent leases, be identified with Nos. 90, 91, 92 and 93, East Street.<sup>7</sup> Part of the property so let, but apparently not the

<sup>4</sup> In 1402-3 the Hospital were responsible for the repair of the chancel of St. Mary in the Market, while the incumbent, who is always denominated Rector, had certain duties in the Hospital. *S.R.S.*, VIII., 126, 127.

<sup>5</sup> It should be remembered that All Saints' was an Archiepiscopal peculiar; alterations of its boundaries may therefore be taken to be out of the question.

<sup>6</sup> For permission to examine this and other documents I am indebted to the kind permission of Col. Serocold.

<sup>7</sup> The East, South and West boundaries marked on the sketch map are not absolutely certain, but must be approximately correct.

principal part (i.e., the buildings on the street) is described as "all those messuages or tenements heretofore a ruinous edifice called the Church of St. Mary in Foro." It is, therefore, pretty clear that the church, like St. Andrew's, stood back from the street behind houses and was reached by a passage; there is a passage still existing between 91 and 92, it is described in the leases as the Horse Entry, and is still, I believe, a right of way, although it leads nowhere.

The same leases make it certain that No. 91 was the Parsonage house.

The present line of the parochial boundary makes it pretty clear that the parish was not divided up, but united with the Subdeanery, of which it now forms part.

In 1759 the land south of that then leased was a tenement in South Street, the property of the hospital. Is it not possible that this is identical with the "messuage . . . formerly of Richard the Robbur . . . in the South Street . . . adjoining the church of St. Peter in the Market . . . on its south side" given to the Hospital in the thirteenth century,<sup>8</sup> the conveyancer having defined it, not by the frontage neighbours, who might change, but by the position of the church, which it touched further back, and which he expected to be perpetual.

<sup>8</sup> *S.A.C.*, LI., 50, 51.