

Obituaries of Buildings

Compiled by J. W. LINDUS FORGE

Introduction

The idea that there should be obituaries of buildings, just as there are obituaries of people, probably originated in *The Architect and Building News*, c. 1935. It is, however, a new feature to the *Collections*. Eventually it will only cover historic buildings in the County demolished since the last volume but there is a lot of lee-way to make up and initially articles are being accepted on any building that has disappeared since the Society was founded and has not already been covered in the *Collections*.

The writer will be pleased to receive short articles, accompanied by prints and/or photographs for inclusion in the next volume. They should be typed, preferably double-spaced, and be accompanied by a national grid reference (8 figure).

DORKING: THE DEEPDENE (TQ 17234925)

Named after the deep valley which crosses the site, 'Dependen' was held in the early fifteenth century by Richard Palmer at 12d per annum.

The first house was built by Charles Howard who came into possession of part of the manor of Dorking in 1652 and died in 1713. Visits were recorded by John Evelyn (1655) and John Aubrey (1673) who both admired the gardens. Aubrey observed that 'the house is not made for grandeur but retirement, neat and elegant... In short it is an epitome of paradise and the Garden of Eden seems well imitated here'.

Edward, the second son of Charles, succeeded to the estate and became the Ninth Duke of Norfolk in 1777. In the same year he was succeeded by his second cousin, another Charles who rebuilt the house in red brick. The Eleventh Duke inherited the estate in 1786 but sold it in the following year to Sir William Burrell who lived there till 1796, collecting material for a history of Sussex. His son, Sir Charles Burrell sold the estate to Thomas Hope in 1807.

Between 1818 and 1831 Thomas Hope made extensive alterations to the house with the help of the Walton architect, William Atkinson. The result was probably one of the earliest examples of the Italianate villa. Within, the Hall was of two storeys surrounded by arcades which housed statues by Flaxman, Thorwaldsen, Bertolini and Pisani together with busts of Roman emperors. In the gallery were paintings by Rubens, Lawrence and others while the collections included the famous Hope blue diamond. Much of the decoration and furniture was designed by Hope in a blend of Roman and



Fig. 1. The Deepdene

Egyptian styles and is extremely important in the history of English neo-classicism. After their accession, William IV and Queen Adelaide visited Deepdene, as on another occasion did Sir Walter Scott.

Thomas died in 1831 and his son Henry enlarged the house, adding wings and altering the south-east front in 1840. His architect was W. H. Ashpitel. Writing to his sister after a visit in 1840, Disraeli termed the house a 'perfect Italian palace' and three years later, after completing part of 'Coningsby' there, he dedicated the work to Henry Hope 'the friend whose talents I have always appreciated and whose virtues I have ever admired'. After Henry's death in 1861, his widow lived on there until c. 1893. Both Thomas and Henry are buried in the mausoleum.

From 1895 until 1909, Lilian, Dowager Duchess of Marlborough had a tenancy of Deepdene and made still further additions, chiefly at the northern end of the mansion where a large service wing with a tower was constructed. Internally her device, a motif of golden lilies was introduced. With her third husband, Lord William Beresford, V.C., she entertained on a lavish scale, among the guests being the Prince of Wales, who paid frequent visits, and her nephew, the young Winston Churchill.

The next tenant was Sir Almeric Paget, the future Lord Queenborough. In 1914 Lord Francis Hope sold the glass houses and this was followed by the

contents of the house three years later, a dispersal which was a major loss to English art. The house was bought by a syndicate, Landsdowne Ltd, in 1920 and turned into a hotel, while much of the estate was sold for housing development in 1921-2. In 1931 J. Maundy Gregory leased the hotel but it soon went into liquidation. During the Second World War the house became the headquarters of the Southern Railway and it remained Railway offices until 1966. Three years later the house was demolished by Federated Homes Ltd.

Lionel Green

Notes

1. The eighteenth-century building is shown in a general view of Dorking belonging to M.C.C. at Lord's Cricket Ground. (Reproduced in *Sy. A.C.*, 54 (1955), pl. 22.)
2. Thomas Hope's building was the subject of water-colours made by William Bartlett and Penry Williams for John Britton's projected *Historical descriptive account of the Deepdene*, now in the Minet Library, Camberwell. There are many illustrations and two plans in D. Watkin's *Thomas Hope*, 1968.
3. Photographs of the interior under the Duchess of Marlborough appeared in *The Tatler*, May, 1907.
4. An article appeared in *Country Life*, Vol. 5, p. 624

EGHAM: DENHAM ALMSHOUSES (TQ 006713)

These almshouses were built by Sir John Denham, Judge, in 1624 for 'five poor widows of Egham'. The houses were built during the judge's life-time—a fairly unusual event, it being more normal for such charitable institutions to be built following instructions in a will or in memory of a local worthy. The Almshouses stood on the west side of the road at the foot of Egham Hill.

They originally consisted of five one-roomed dwellings but in August 1960 a kitchen and bathroom were added at the rear of each one. Frederick Turner, in his book on Egham¹ says that Richard Wyatt of Milton Place took great interest in the charity and, from some of his letters it appears that the almshouses were rebuilt in 1767, but no other writer appears to have this information.

Judge Denham directed that each of the occupants should receive 12 pence a piece every Sabbath Day throughout the year, a cloth gown at Michaelmas, a smock, a pair of stockings and a pair of shoes at Whitsuntide—but to receive these benefits the five ladies had to fulfil a set of conditions. They must be widows and poor, well reported of both for religion and conversation. No cursers, no blasphemers nor drunkards, no idle persons no gadders abroad, no wanderers abroad from house to house, no talebearers or busy-



Fig. 3. Denham Almshouses. Photo: C. Asprey

bodies, but such as have lived both peaceably and lovingly with their neighbours, being the fruit of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. They were to attend church unless absence was caused by sickness or other good cause, otherwise they were to lose their dole. Finally Sir John laid down that they were to be known as the poor widows of Egham, 'and as they are placed under one roof, so it is expected that they shall dwell in love with one another, each helping the other in sickness or other infirmities; and it is ordered that non shall lodge in their chambers but such of them which shall attend the other in their sickness, and which of them shall refuse to perform the office of love for the other, shall, upon good proff thereof, be removed'.

Each house had a patch of garden but eventually the old Police Station and the Technical Institute were built on part of the grounds, the rents being of greater advantage to the charity. Both these buildings have now been demolished.

Sir John Denham, the founder of the charity, was born in London in 1559. He was called to the bar in 1587, appointed Lord Chief-Baron of the Irish Exchequer and knighted in 1609. He became Lord Chief-Justice of the Kings' Bench in Ireland in 1612 and was created Baron of the English Exchequer in 1617. He died at Egham 6 January 1638/39. Sir John married twice; his son by his second wife was Sir John Denham the poet.²

The almshouses were demolished in October 1973 for road widening on the A 30.

Notes

¹Turner, F. *Egham, Surrey: a history of the parish under church & crown*. 1926.

²D. N.B.

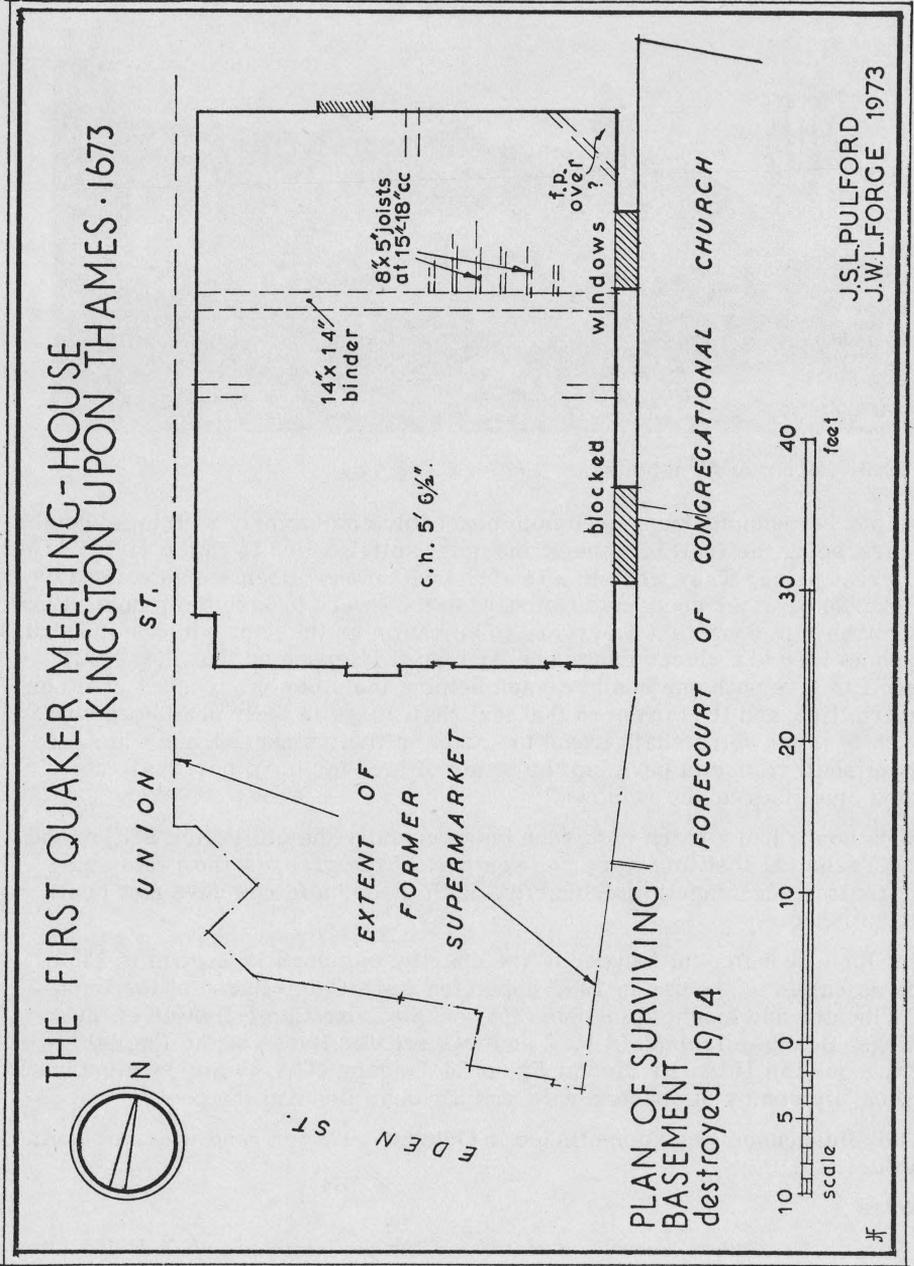


Fig. 4. Kingston Quaker Meeting House. Plan.

KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES: THE CELLAR OF THE FIRST QUAKER MEETING HOUSE (TQ 17986914)

One of the humbler casualties of redevelopment in Kingston in 1974 was a cellar believed to have formed part of the first Quaker meeting house which was built during 1673-74 and occupied by the Quakers until 1773 when they moved to their present meeting house in Eden Street. There is now considerable evidence to support the traditional belief that this first meeting house stood at the south-east corner of Union Street and Eden Street on part of the site occupied in recent years by a grocery business. The existence of a cellar has been a vital part of this evidence, as the minutes of the Monthly Meeting contain several references to the 'cellar' or 'lower rooms' of the meeting house being used not only for meetings but also as permanent accommodation for needy Quakers. An inspection of the cellar made in December 1973, after the building above had been vacated in readiness for demolition, revealed an area of about forty feet by thirty feet (roughly the dimensions of the meeting house). One ancient oak beam, fourteen inches square, ran the width of the cellar above five feet five inches above a modern cement floor which probably overlay the original paving. In the east wall two bricked-up apertures confirmed the belief that the room had originally been a basement with two windows rather than a true cellar. Immediately above there still stands above ground level, forming the boundary with the United Reformed Church, a wall which other evidence indicates was also part of the original meeting house.

J. S. L. Pulford

REIGATE: CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (TQ 25155022)

The earliest part of the Reigate Congregational Church dated from 1831, and formed the central section of the recently demolished building. The original structure was rectangular, and raised above a crypt supported on three parallel brick arcades. A schoolroom was attached to the western side and this communicated with the church through two large arches. The exterior was stuccoed, the design representing a free translation of the Romanesque style. It is clear from comparison with the almost contemporary Richmond Calvinistic Chapel, designed by Lewis Vulliamy and still largely as originally built, that both buildings were by the same architect.

In 1858 further accommodation was required and transepts, a shallow apse and new vestry were added to the south side of the church, at the same time an additional crypt was formed over part of the graveyard. The roof design was also modified. A projected northern extension with a twin towered facade was postponed through lack of funds. This part of the scheme was finally carried out in 1869, providing additional pews and a new vestibule with a small gallery over it, but only the north eastern tower, containing the gallery stair was built. The design was again free Romanesque, Reigate stone being used as a facing with Bath stone dressings. The architect for

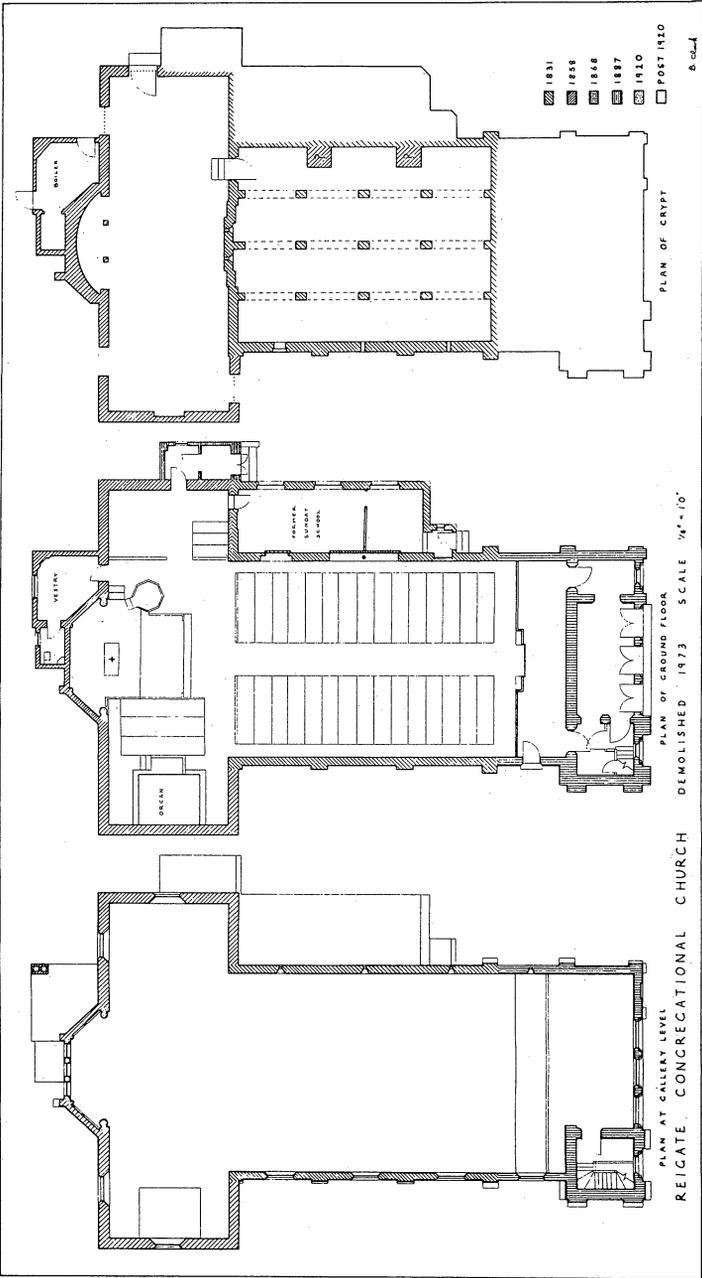


Fig. 5. Reigate Congregational Church. Plans.

these extensions was R E Larmer. The church was renovated in 1887, and a small porch added to the western transept.

In 1920 the organ, which had stood in the apse since 1858 was resited in the eastern transept, to make way for a war memorial. The central pulpit was moved to one side and three stained glass windows were inserted in the apse, the lower half of which was panelled in oak. At the same time the pews were altered to form a central aisle. The architect was Edward Penfold.

Three additional stained glass windows were inserted into existing openings between 1925 and 1935. The last alterations were made in 1962, when a new oak screen was placed across the back of the church to form an inner lobby, and new panelling was applied to the lower walls, concealing an earlier dado.

The church was demolished in October 1973.

Davies, F. G. *The Reigate Congregational Church 1662-1932* (Typescript in the possession of Reigate United Reformed Church).

A. B. E. Clark

WALTON-ON-THAMES: APPS COURT (TQ 12216820)

The name, which is said to mean 'at the aspen tree' is the first mentioned in the seventh century when five 'mansas' here were granted by Frithwald, the sub-regulus of Surrey, to the newly founded Benedictine Abbey of Chertsey. In Domesday there are four references to Appes and the subsequent manorial history of the separate parts becomes somewhat involved. By the fourteenth century the estate appears to have been consolidated by the Hever family and contained a capital messuage. For a time it was part of the chase of Hampton Court and in 1602 it was sold to Francis Leigh, an eminent antiquarian and an intimate friend of Camden.

Sir Francis died in 1625 and was succeeded by his son, another Francis who in 1639 obtained a licence from the Crown to run together several pieces of land, to divert the road from West Molesey to Walton and to enclose by a wall his park of 140-150 acres, lying between the present B369 and B370 roads. Created successively a baronet, Baron Dunsmore and Earl of Chichester, his estates were sequestrated during the Commonwealth and he had to pay a fine of £2, 854 to recover them. At the same time he was placed under house arrest, a mandamus to secure compliance with this decree being sent to the constable and entered by the minister in the parish register.

After Chichester's death, the house passed through the hands of several of his descendants and by 1664 must have been quite sizeable, being assessed at 39 hearths. In 1673 Evelyn after a visit describes it as 'an old house in a pretty park'



Fig. 6. Apps Court, c.1890. *Photo: R. Baker*

At the end of the seventeenth century, the estate was carried by Chichester's grand-daughter to the Montagues, who owned it until 1749. Edward Wortley Montague, the husband of Lady Mary, was at one time a tenant and his habit of selling off the game from Apps in the London markets was satirised by Pope in 'Imitations of Horace'.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the then owner, a Mr John Hamborough, pulled down the old mansion and built a much smaller house. It was constructed of white brick, was double-fronted with three storeys of bows flanking a fashionable neo-classical semicircular porch of Greek Doric columns. It contained 'hot and cold baths, a wine cellar "with catacombs" and numerous outbuildings. Surrounding it were a lawn with "fine oaks & elms", a walled garden, an ornamental pond and a dove-cote'.

In 1898 the property was acquired by the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Co. under the terms of an Act of Parliament and the estate is now buried under the Knight's and Bessborough Reservoirs.

One portion of the estate was leased direct from the Crown by an unusual tenure. From at least King John's reign the lessee had to distribute to the poor on All Souls' Day each year one barrel of ale and a quarter of corn made into bread. After the change in the calendar in 1752, the ceremony was altered to November 13th. The beer was doled out from an outhouse, the loaves scrambled for from the back of a baker's wagon. The number of

applicants greatly exceeded the supply and as early as three o'clock in the morning a procession of several hundred people could be heard going down the road to App's Court, banging their jugs and pails. In 1898 an effort was made to extinguish the charity but following a petition, the rite was commuted for a money payment and the interest on a sum of £200, lodged with the Official Trustees of the Charitable Funds is still annually paid out to the poor of Walton and East Molesey.

Rowland G. M. Baker

WALTON-ON-THAMES: MOUNT FELIX (WALTON HOUSE) (TQ 09616647)

The core of this mansion was a house erected by Harry Rodney, the father of the great admiral, which later came into the hands of Samuel Dicker, the wealthy Jamaican planter who was to build the first Walton Bridge. He was followed by Samuel Holwell, one of the few survivors of the Black Hole of Calcutta, and the Fourth Earl of Tankerville, a keen early cricketer whose gardener, the famous 'Lumpy' Stevens was indirectly responsible for the adoption of a third stump.

It was the fifth Earl of Tankerville, however, who employed Sir Charles Barry between 1835 & 1839 to transform a relatively modest Palladian house into a vast Italianate villa with buff stuccoed walls and a Roman tiled roof whose lower courses concealed a secret gutter. The river end had a great Palladian window lighting a state staircase with an intricate cast-iron balustrade but the principal feature was a lofty tower which, framed in splendid cedars which still survive, formed a focal point in the landscape, whether one approached Walton over the bridge or by the high road from Weybridge. (Barry used a very similar feature as part of the still extant Golden Gate at Bowood).

The interior contained some very large rooms to span which Barry used some extraordinarily massive cast-iron binders complete with integral pockets to take the ends of subsidiary beams. Fortunately the working drawings survive in the collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Another unusual feature was that in many of the smaller rooms the fire-place was situated directly beneath the window. This arrangement was paralleled at the contemporary Mulberry House, Weybridge (also a recent victim of 'development'), where at night a sliding mirror could be drawn across to replace the window.

In 1906 the mansion was offered to the Council as offices but unfortunately rejected following a public poll. During the first World War it became a New Zealand hospital, a fact commemorated in Walton by 'New Zealand Way' and the 'Kiwi' public house, while those who died are remembered by a tablet in the church.

The gardens were sold off piece-meal in the 20s and 30s but the building lingered on in commercial use until 1973 when the land was allegedly



Fig. 7. Mount Felix. *Photo: J. W. L. Forge*

required for an approach road to the much overdue new Walton Bridge. A very attractive stable block, incorporating an eighteenth-century clock in its turret still survives—just—and it is to be hoped that it will be spared the fate of its parent house.

A sale catalogue with a plan of the house can be consulted in Weybridge Museum.

J. W. Lindus Forge

WEYBRIDGE: THE CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL (TQ 08336422)

The Chapel-of-Ease of St. Michael, Weybridge, was built in 1873 and lasted only a month or two short of its century. The commission was given to the well-known ecclesiastical architect William Butterfield, a rather surprising choice as J. L. Pearson might be considered the parish architect, having rebuilt St. James's in 1848 and enlarged it only four years before.

The parishoners got an eminently practical and well-proportioned building to seat 544 persons. The aisled nave was of three bays, with a short chancel and shallow transepts. The material, as was to be expected of this architect, was polychrome brickwork of which Thompson says that 'the tones are rather sharper, [than St. Mary, Brookfield], though effectively held by the cream and brown stonework', while Pevsner (or Nairn) complains that it was 'clearly over the border from genuine protest to careless harshness'. In the writer's opinion Butterfield was at his least successful when compelled to be economical and the building was frankly rather a dull one. The best features were the crisply detailed bell turret and the striking geometrical font which was ultimately destroyed by vandals. It was rather a gaunt church in which to worship, as one small boy



Fig. 8. St. Michael, Weybridge. Photo: J. W. L. Forge.

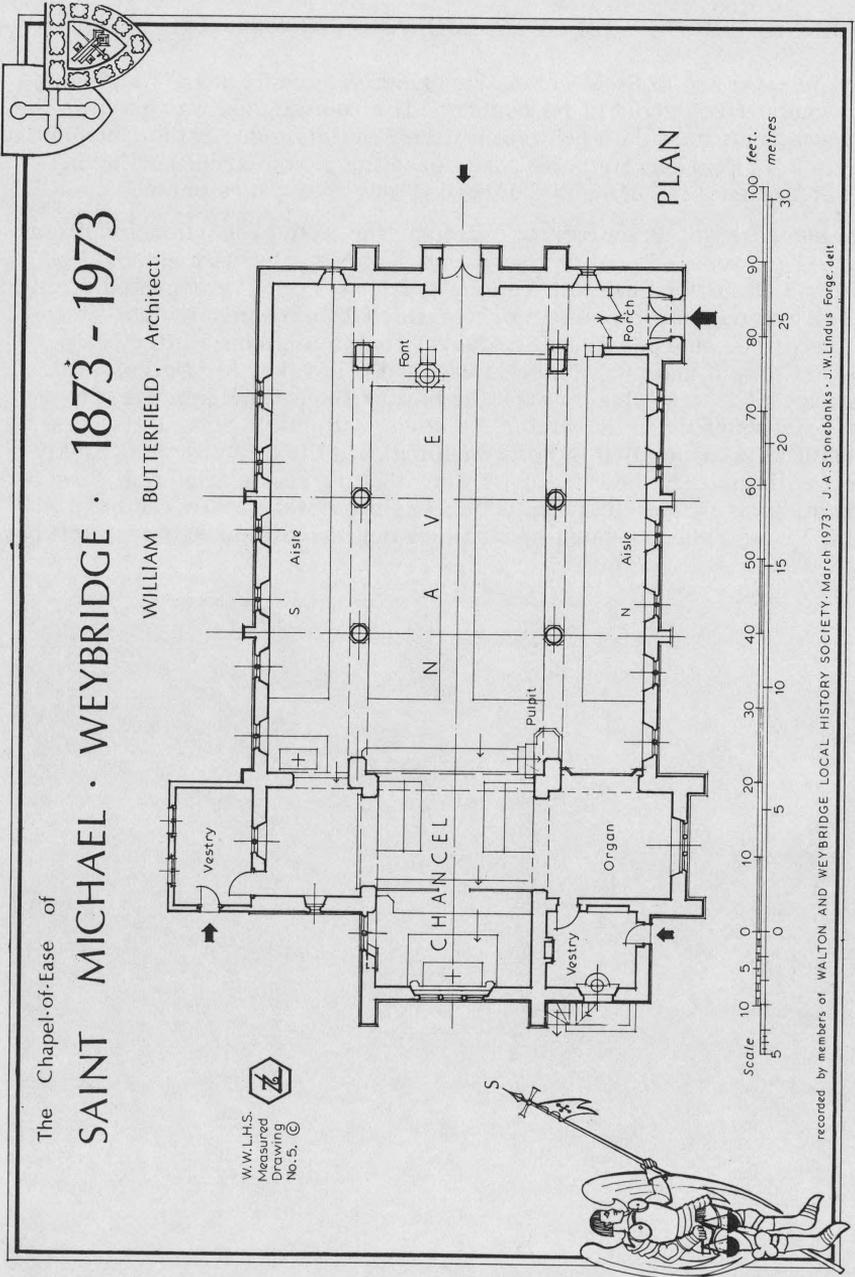


Fig. 9. St. Michael, Weybridge. Plan.

who shivered there Sunday after Sunday through the dreariest of services can bear witness.

The pleasant reredos (1894), went to Brookwood Hospital Chapel, the Altar Cross to the Church of the Ascension, Ayling Hill, Aldershot and much of the undistinguished glass is lodged with Weybridge Museum.

The architects's original drawings are in the Victoria & Albert Museum and a measured survey of the building before its destruction was made by members of Walton & Weybridge Local History Society.

J. W. Lindus Forge