

Part II  
Parishes H to R

BEDFORDSHIRE  
CHURCHES IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY



THE BEDFORDSHIRE  
Historical Record Society

volume 77  
Edited by Chris Pickford

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*Cover illustration:* St. Mary's Luton, from the south east showing the battlements of the south transept and east end as they appeared before the C19th restoration.

(Engraving: Robert Todd c. 1855)

*G. Thomas* 1998 1114

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*Frontispiece:* The interior of All Saints, Leighton Buzzard, showing the mediaeval stalls in the chancel, and the nave as reseatd in 1842 with new pulpit, pews and west gallery.  
(Watercolour: Anonymous, c. 1880)



THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE  
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VOLUME 77

# BEDFORDSHIRE CHURCHES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Part II:  
Parishes Harlington to Roxton

Edited by  
Chris Pickford



©  
THE BEDFORDSHIRE  
HISTORICAL RECORD  
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## Map

Fig. 1 Map of Bedfordshire showing the churches (H–R) included  
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## Sources of illustrations:

All the pictures are reproduced from originals or copies held by the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service apart from illustrations specially loaned for use in this volume (nos. 41 and 46). Owners who have kindly allowed the reproduction of their material include the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Trustees of Lambeth Palace Library 9; Messrs. N.T. and R.W. Bagshawe (Fisher collection) 56 and 63; Bedford Borough Council (Town Hall Collection) 1, 10, 20, 23, 36, 40, 43, 50 and 55; the late Rev. Patrick J.M. Bright 52; the British Library 4, 5 and 35; Mrs. H.J. Casebourne's collection 14, 25 and 27; the late Mr. W.N. Henman 18 and 64; Hitchin Museum 15; the Inner Temple Library 11; Keith Lazenby 24; Luton Museum Service 2, 12, 37, 59, 60; the Page-Turner collection 54; Ridgmont Baptist Church (the Jack Sharpe collection) 62; the Shuttleworth collection 19, 22, 26, 30, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45, 61 and 65; and the Woburn Abbey collection 7. The frontispiece and items 13, 28, 41, 46, 49, 58 are copied from original illustrations either in the churches to which they relate or among the deposited parish records at BCRO. The remaining illustrations are from published books, engravings and postcards or from originals owned by the Archives and Records Service. The map (Fig.1) was prepared specially by Nicola Mills of the County Hall Graphics Unit.

## Preface and acknowledgments

First, I must apologise to subscribers who expected this volume to appear in 1997. Owing to pressure of work I was unable to produce the text in time, but thanks to the backing of the County Council I was given time to complete the project. I am especially grateful for this privilege, and for the support of my colleagues who ably looked after the Record Office and considerately protected me from interruptions while I was working on this book.

Thanks are due to the authorities and owners who have allowed the publication of their material. The 1822 glebe terriers are published here by kind permission of Lincoln Diocesan Record Office. Archdeacon Bonney's church notes were among the manuscripts transferred to the County Record Office from the old Bedford Library, while Bonney's visitation notes appear by kind permission of the present Archdeacon of Bedford, the Ven. Malcolm Lesiter. Sir Stephen Glynne's Bedfordshire church notes are published by kind permission of Sir William Gladstone. Thanks are also due to Geoffrey Veysey for providing information on the notes and for allowing me to quote from his article about Sir Stephen Glynne. The sources of illustrations are acknowledged separately.

Material for this volume has been gathered from several record repositories and institutions. My first debt of gratitude is to my colleagues in the Bedfordshire Record Office, but I must also thank the staff at the British Library, the British Newspaper Library, the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Bedfordshire County Library Service, Lambeth Palace Library, Cambridge University Library, Lincolnshire Archives, and the Hertfordshire County Record Office for their help and advice.

Although acknowledged in the first part, special thanks are due to Pauline Newbery who typed most of the text of the original sources and to Neil Alston who prepared the initial selection of illustrations. To these names must be added that of Jackie Croot who has worked carefully through the newspaper files extracting useful references to churches and chapels. Her work has added enormously to the available information, making it possible to solve many problems of interpretation for which answers would otherwise have been impossible to find.

I owe a great deal to the support and contributions of people who have accompanied me on my visits and to the many local experts who have made their knowledge of individual churches available to me and commented on the draft text. The Archdeacon of Bedford, who has been immensely supportive of this project, has done me the kindness of contributing a foreword. Thanks are also due to the clergy and keyholders through whose cooperation I have been able to visit all the churches covered in this volume. Gordon Vowles, the General Editor, and my colleagues on the Editorial Group have again provided constructive comments and suggestions throughout its gestation period.

Finally, I must thank my partner Heather who has supported me through the final stages of completing this book. Visiting churches and finding out about them can be fun, but the concentrated effort required for writing leaves little room for normal social and domestic activities. She has not only endured this with great patience but she has also helped in a number of ways, and it is in no small measure thanks to her support that the task has been accomplished.

Bedford  
April 1998

CHRIS PICKFORD

## THE DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS



The Venerable Malcolm Lesiter  
Archdeacon of Bedford



## Foreword by the Archdeacon of Bedford

I am one of those who was so delighted with the first volume of *Bedfordshire Churches in the Nineteenth Century* that I have been eagerly awaiting the publication of the second (of three).

The first part (Parishes A–G) was a masterly survey of Bedfordshire churches using primary and historical sources. Not only is the book a mine of accurate information, easily accessible to people whose interest is focused on a particular parish, but it also gives a very powerful comment on the state of the churches in the first half of the nineteenth century in terms of their condition, liturgical challenge, patterns of worship, architectural emphasis and many other aspects. It also sheds light on the work and responsibilities of some of my predecessors as Archdeacon of Bedford. The book details a different world from that described in the *Barchester Chronicles*.

Chris Pickford is to be congratulated on such a thorough and lively document which will stand as a work of reference for everybody interested in Bedfordshire churches until well into the next century. He stands in an impressive line of County Archivists who have served Bedfordshire with such distinction, and gained a national reputation for the work of the Archives and Records Service at County Hall. The production of this second volume is all the more remarkable in the light of the pressures brought about by the financial squeeze being experienced in so many areas of public provision.

With best wishes for the gestation of Volume three!

Malcolm Lesiter

# INTRODUCTION TO THE VOLUME

## **The Bedfordshire Churches series**

This is the second in a series of three volumes covering Bedfordshire churches in the nineteenth century. It contains descriptions of churches “on the eve of restoration” together with contemporary illustrations. It deals with parishes from Harlington to Roxton.

In addition to the analytical index to all three parts, the third volume (due for publication as Vol.79 in 2000) will also contain:

1. Information on new churches and churches in the present county otherwise excluded from the survey
2. An appendix summarising the main stages of C19th restoration for each church
3. Addenda and Corrigenda for Parts I and II (none will be given in part II)

## **The sources**

For each church, there are extracts from original records amplified by a commentary and explanatory footnotes. The main source material consists of:

1. Extracts from church inventories – mainly 1822
2. Antiquarian notes on churches by Archdeacon Bonney, c.1840
3. Archdeacon Bonney’s visitation notebooks 1823–1839
4. Articles on churches by W.A. (John Martin, the librarian at Woburn Abbey) 1845–1854
5. Church descriptions by Sir Stephen Glynne 1830–1870

These sources are described in greater detail in the first volume in the series, BHRS Vol.73 (1994) pp.1–25

The text of the contemporary sources is presented in its original form, to convey a feeling for the times as well as to provide information. Most of the sources could have been condensed by editing but the Society’s Editorial Group felt that they should nevertheless be published *in extenso*.

## **The commentary and footnotes**

The introductory commentary for each church includes a brief history of the building, with special reference to eighteenth and nineteenth century restoration and alterations. Detailed footnotes explain and amplify features mentioned in the text.

The illustrations are drawn chiefly from the Record Office collection. They include early watercolours and photographs of the churches as they appeared – sometimes in advanced stages of neglect and decay – before the arrival of the Victorian restorers. Where they exist, pre-restoration interior views have been used.

The background research for the commentaries and footnotes has involved investigation of a wide range of sources. These include parish records (espe-

cially churchwardens' accounts, vestry minutes, and papers relating to church fabric and furnishings), Diocesan records at Lincoln, Cambridge and Hertford (including the Ely material), the Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS) files at Lambeth Palace Library, the archives of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and searches in local newspapers and contemporary periodicals. Every church has also been visited.

### Using the material

Some readers will be happy just to read and browse, but those who wish to use this volume as a quarry for information may find it helpful to have some guidance on how to search it thoroughly.

The aim has been to provide a simple chronological account of each church, giving the key facts and emphasising special points of interest. While the introduction provides a summary, the detail is to be found in the footnotes. The footnotes also point the way to sources of further information. For example, at St. Mary's, Luton, the text reads:

... This [the removal of the baptistery to the south transept] was in preparation for the reseating of the church which took place between 1823 and 1829.<sup>32</sup> A west gallery was erected in 1823, with a new organ by Lincoln of London.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, repairs to the church and steeple were being undertaken under Archdeacon Bonney's orders.<sup>34</sup> In 1827-9 the interior was refitted with new galleries and pews,<sup>35</sup> and on the north face of the north transept there is a rainwater head dated 1829.

The footnotes have three main purposes, 1) to justify statements made in the introduction, 2) to offer the reader guidance on where to find further information, and 3) to link the references in the contemporary sources. The supporting notes thus provide quite a lot more detail, (e.g. on the organ) as the following examples show:

*Notes:* **32.** The west gallery of 1823 and other work of this period is described by Davis (p.39) Cobbe (p.635) and Austin (Vol.II pp.115-7) and documented in the charity accounts (P 85/25/1/1). Costs are summarised in a letter in the ICBS correspondence (LPL ref: ICBS file 851); **33.** The organ by Lincoln was "built by subscription" at a cost of three hundred guineas in 1823 (Davis p.39). At the restoration in 1864-6 it was moved from the west gallery into the Wenlock chapel. In addition to the keyboards for manual playing, it seems to have been fitted with barrels for automatic operation. Boston and Langwill *Church and Chamber Barrel-Organs*" (1967) p.73 mention two barrels from the organ "preserved in the parvise museum"; **34.** The ICBS application dated 20 July 1827 mentions that "repairs to the church and steeple within the last year cost £250" (LPL ref: ICBS 851); **35.** The sources include a faculty for new free seats 1827 (ABF 1 p.149 and ABF 3/136-7), correspondence supporting the ICBS application for a grant (£200) 1827-9 (LPL ref: ICBS 851) including plans, a plan of seats and galleries by John Williams 1829 (P 85/2/5/3), and the painted board in the tower recording the reseating in 1829.

The same footnote number may be used for several references to a particular topic, and to be sure of extracting all the available information the reader should trace all occurrences of the footnote from the beginning to the end of the material for the church concerned.

# ABBREVIATIONS

AASRP	Reports and papers of the Associated Archaeological Societies
b.	Born (e.g. b.1765)
BAAS	Bedfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society (established 1847)
BAJ	<i>Beds. Archaeological Journal</i> (continued from Vol.16 (1983) as <i>Bedfordshire Archaeology</i> )
BC	<i>Biggleswade Chronicle</i> (1891–date)
BCRO	Bedfordshire County Record Office – re-named the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service in 1997, but for consistency the abbreviation BCRO will be retained throughout this series
BHRS	Bedfordshire Historical Record Society
BL	British Library
BPRS	<i>Bedfordshire Parish Registers Series</i>
BM	<i>Bedford Mercury</i> (1837–1857) or <i>Bedfordshire Mercury</i> (1857–1912)
BNQ	<i>Bedfordshire Notes and Queries</i> (3 vols. 1886–1893)
BS	<i>Bedfordshire Standard</i> (1883–1939)
BT	<i>Bedford Times</i> (1845–1859), <i>Bedford Times and Bedfordshire Independent</i> (1859–1872), or <i>Bedfordshire Times and Independent</i> (1872–1939) etc.
B.Mag	<i>Bedfordshire Magazine</i> (1947–date)
C...th	Century (e.g. C13th for thirteenth century)
c.	circa (e.g. c.1700)
CUL	Cambridge University Library
d.	Died
DBG	<i>Dunstable Borough Gazette</i> (1865–date)
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
fl.	Flourished (e.g. Fl.1810–26)
GM	<i>Gentleman's Magazine</i>
HCRO	Hertfordshire County Record Office
ICBS	Incorporated Church Building Society
Kelly	<i>Kelly's Directory</i> [date given]
LAO	Lincolnshire Archives Office
LBO	<i>Leighton Buzzard Observer</i> (1863–1954)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
NM	<i>Northampton Mercury</i>
PRO	Public Record Office
RC	“Round the County” articles by Arthur Ransom in <i>BT</i> 1899–1909 [date given]

RCF	Redundant Churches Fund (renamed The Churches Conservation Trust in 1994)
SPAB	Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (established 1877)
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum
VCH	<i>Victoria County History</i>
W.A.	W.A. – John Martin – the writer of the articles on Bedfordshire churches

## REFERENCES

All references are to documents in the Bedfordshire County Record Office (BCRO) unless otherwise stated.

Principal publications listed in the Bibliography are normally cited only by the author's surname (plus initials if applicable) e.g. Pevsner. Where more than one work by a given author is listed the date of publication is also given, e.g. Clarke (1938).

The citation of illustrations causes some difficulty as many well-known engravings and prints were originally incorporated in printed books. The Record Office collection includes multiple copies of many such views, but full publication details are not always included in BCRO catalogues. Even where publication details are known, it cannot be guaranteed that a copy of a particular book will still contain a specific illustration. Views are therefore generally identified by their BCRO reference rather than by other means. BCRO slide numbers are also used to refer to 35mm colour transparencies of original watercolours in the collection or in private ownership. This system should ensure that people wishing to check details can be sure of identifying and locating copies of a particular view.

## SYMBOLS USED IN TRANSCRIPTION

Cancellation or deletion	( ° )
Insertion	( ° )
Marginal note	( <sup>m</sup> )
Additions by the transcriber	[ ]
Omissions by the transcriber	...
Illegible or torn parts of the manuscript	---
Line breaks (in line-by-line transcripts)	/

# SUPPLEMENTARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography supplements that in Part I (BHRS Vol.73) pp.xiv–xv. It only lists additional works along with further information on some of the publications listed in the original bibliography.

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- The Church Builder* (1862–1904)
- The Ecclesiologist* (1843–68)



Fig. 1 Map of Bedfordshire showing the churches (H-R) included in this volume

## HARLINGTON

The present church is essentially of the early to mid C14th,<sup>1</sup> with the nave and aisles apparently earlier than the chancel. Both are in the Decorated style. Documentary evidence indicates that there was a chapel or church here in the period 1174–1181.<sup>2</sup>

Recent excavations have disclosed the foundations of a buttress at the east end of the chancel which may have belonged to the earlier church. Later additions to the fabric include the C15th west tower and south porch and the vestry of c.1500 on the north side of the chancel. In the early C16th, the walls of the aisles were heightened and the body of the church re-roofed in its present form.<sup>3</sup> The Edwardian inventory of 1552 noted “the church and porche leaded and the chauncell tyled and the stepull tyled”.<sup>4</sup>

Early stained glass in the easternmost window of the north wall of the north aisle in memory of members of the Wingate family was recorded in a drawing of 1634.<sup>5</sup> Chancel repairs for Lady Wentworth are recorded in accounts of 1696–7.<sup>6</sup> Repairs by the parish are documented in the churchwardens’ accounts which survive in a single volume from 1677 to 1918.<sup>7</sup> Dated lead of 1774 recorded at the time of its removal<sup>8</sup> related to roof repairs by John Carte of Amphill in that year. Extensive repairs costing over £150 were undertaken in 1825–6.<sup>9</sup> The organ – an early instance in a country church – is first men-



Plate 1. Harlington: South view showing the sundial on the porch (mentioned as early as 1686) and the windows in the chancel and belfry partially blocked up with masonry. The high level window in the south wall was blocked up in a C19th restoration of the church.

(Watercolour: George Shepherd 1814)

tioned in 1825.<sup>10</sup> The church interior was described by Boissier in 1827 as "snug and comfortable".<sup>11</sup> He also noted "the east window filled with Modern stained glass".

The church is said to have undergone a thorough restoration in 1867.<sup>12</sup> The tower was repaired in 1869 by George Muckleston at a cost of £35.<sup>13</sup> Two new stained glass windows by Powell of Whitefriars were installed, the east window in 1876 and the east window of the north aisle in 1885.<sup>14</sup> The chancel roof, of crown-post type, was repaired in 1886 and the open rafters decorated in light blue studded with stars.<sup>15</sup> Archdeacon Bathurst commented on the state of the church and recorded repairs to the nave roof and re-roofing of the vestry in 1888.<sup>16</sup> In 1892 the south porch was restored at the expense of the patron, Major Cooper Cooper, who also had the ancient sundial repaired.<sup>17</sup>

The Archdeacon noted in 1894 that the new incumbent, the Rev. William Spencer, hoped "to thoroughly restore the church". No architect was employed, and the Vicar seems to have supervised the repairs himself with occasional advice from his son, C.T. Spencer, who was a civil engineer. The work was done in 1894–9 by James Ayre of Hockliffe at a total cost of over £627.<sup>18</sup>

Later work included new pews in the nave made by Joseph Butt in 1907–9,<sup>7, 19</sup> restoration of the tower in 1926–7 under Professor A.E. Richardson,<sup>20</sup> and the window and Lady Chapel altar in the north aisle of 1928. The chancel was denuded of fittings in a re-ordering of 1974, and accidental damage to the carved head over the piscina occurred at the same time.<sup>21</sup> A modern altar incorporating wood from the remains of Bunyan's oak – where John Bunyan is said to have preached – was installed in 1988.

### *1. Extract from glebe terrier, 30 June 1822*

#### **HARLINGTON**

**Church yard.** Item the Church-yard containing two roods and nineteen perches. Adjoining to the grounds of George Pearse Esquire on the South and East, to a workhouse on the South-east and to the public road or Street on the west and North. The fences and Gates thereof round about made by the parish.

**Church.** Belonging to said Parish are first the parish Church an antient building containing in length (with the Chancel) ninety feet, in breadth thirty-six feet ten Inches. The Chancel is in breadth sixteen feet six Inches. The Steeple eleven feet square within the walls, in height Sixty five feet.

**Furniture and ornaments.** Within and belonging to which are One Communion Table with a linen Cloth for the same.<sup>22</sup> Chalice. One Paten.<sup>23</sup> One Chest with three locks. One Pulpit and reading desk. One pulpit Cushion covered with crimson Velvet.<sup>24</sup> One large Bible. Two large common prayer books.<sup>25</sup> One Church Clock.<sup>26</sup> Five Bells with their frames,<sup>27</sup> the first or least bell being two feet five inches in Diameter, the second two feet Eight inches with this inscription (John Tapster 1715), the third two feet nine inches and an

half, the fourth three feet two inches and an half with this inscription (Thomas Russel made me),<sup>28</sup> the fifth three feet five inches. Bier. Hearse-cloth. Surplice. And Register Books.

**Parish Clerk.** There is also due to the Parish Clerk ... [remainder blank]

2. *Archdeacon Bonney's historical notices of churches, c.1820–1840*

**HARLINGTON.** This Church consists of a Nave, Aisles separated therefrom by lofty clustered Piers, and Arches with plain mouldings. A Tower at the West End, and a Chancel. On each side the East window is a rich decorated Niche. The chief Parts are decorated, but the Window perpendicular. The Font is octagonal on short clustered Piers. The sides are ornamented with shields bearing St. George's Cross, a Cheveron, three Bars, & three Bends. There is a double Piscina in the Chancel under a Niche, upon the label Moulding of which, is a Youthful head with a circular Cap, His Curling hair resting on his Ears, and his robe clasped in front of his neck.<sup>29</sup> The Countenance is pleasant and well executed. [*Sketch of carving of head*]. There is a South Porch, Five Bells & an Organ.<sup>10,33</sup>

3. *Archdeacon Bonney's visitation notebook, 1823–1839*

**HARLINGTON.** This Church consists of a Nave, North & South Aisles, a Tower at the West End of the Nave & chancel at the East End thereof. Porch on the South.

At the Visitation of 1823 the following Order was given, that the Communion Table be cleansed and oiled; the Rails before the Communion Table be repaired, Cleansed & oiled; a Table of the Degrees of Marriage be hung up in the Church; the Chancel Windows be glazed down to the Sills, and also the Upper parts of them; the Bible be rebound;<sup>30</sup> the Earth be moved from all sides of the Church & Chancel; the windows North & South of the Chancel have casements placed in them; the chancel walls be washed, the Floor thereof be repaired, and also the outer part of the Walls; the Pews be made to range and be painted oak Colour.<sup>31</sup>

At the Visitation of 1826 the following order only was thought necessary, that the Earth be moved from the Exterior of the Church, and proper drainage be made; the west window in the Tower be glazed; the Bell Chamber windows be restored with cement; and the drip stones (or labels) over the Windows the same.

At the Visitation of 1833, The following order was given, That the window in the Tower toward the West be thoroughly glazed, the walls of the north & south aisles & Chancel be cleansed. The floors frequently be brushed and kept free from green moss; the mat in the Chancel be removed; the Casements be kept open daily during fair weather; the arch at the entrance into the Chancel be thrown open.

At the Visitation of 1837, Ordered that the ridge Tree of the Roof of the

Nave be examined and secured, if necessary.

At the Visitation 1839, Ordered a new Linen Cloth & a Flagon for the Communion.<sup>32</sup>

*Order of Archdeacon Bonney, 12 August 1842 [P 75/7/1]*

At the Visitation of the Church of Harlington holden on the 12th day of August 1842

I Henry Kaye Bonney D.D. Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of Bedford do hereby admonish the Wardens of the said Church to have the Beams and Plates of the Roof of the Aisles thereof examined and repaired and the green on the Walls of the interior of their Church scraped, and when scraped I recommend that they be washed with Corosive Sublimate to prevent the growth of the green moss.

To have the Register Box painted

To procure a proper Font Bason

And a proper Metal Flagon

To glaze the West window of the Tower, or have the part now stopped up painted to represent glazing

Given under my hand the Day & year above written

H. K. Bonney

*4. Article on the Church by W.A. (no.20), NM 20 December 1845*

**HARLINGTON.** The interior of this church is nearly all fitted up with pews. There are a few open seats at the western end. The western window is closed up for the purpose, it is supposed, of finding a place for a poor looking organ and its gallery.<sup>10, 33</sup> The roof is of wood, but all the columns are whitewashed. The font is in its appropriate position, but covered with paint. An odd recess in the northern aisle defying all orders of architecture has been erected, we suppose, not long ago; its intention was not pointed out.

The top of the chancel arch is boarded up, the chancel itself is in very good order, the niches and piscina have escaped the usual bedaubing. The communion table and rails are very good. The window, not a bad one in itself, is disfigured by some tasteless painted glass. We should be happy to be able to record more frequently the introduction of stained glass in the decoration of our sacred edifices, but it should be of a character suitable to the architecture of the building; such as that which by the skilful hand of Willement<sup>34</sup> adorns the Temple Church, London, the Round Church, Cambridge, and various others, too numerous to mention here.

The church was very clean. The porch has its roof left, but the windows are blocked up. The chancel roof is tiled. The churchyard is in good order, and not locked up.

15 December 1845

W.A.

*Notes* 1. Pevsner p.94, *VCH* III pp.381–2, and Russell Preston *The Parish of St.Mary the Virgin, Harlington: Church Guide* (1988); 2. The documentary evidence of the C12th church noted in *VCH* III p.382 is amplified in Preston p.5; 3. This summary is based on information kindly provided by Stephen A. Castle and the Rev. Stephen Williams, incorporating observations on the structure contributed by David Baker and Hugh Richmond; 4. Eeles and Brown p.4; 5. Mentioned in a manuscript annotation in the BCRO copy of *The Visitations of Bedfordshire* by F.A. Blaydes (1884) p.200 where the source is cited as the Vipan manuscripts. This material cannot now be identified but there is a copy of the painting of the window in the vestry. The window commemorated Robert Wingate who made his will in 1486 and his wife Margery, daughter of Thomas Blundell; 6. Chancery Masters' exhibits (PRO ref: C 107/16) of which there are transcripts at BCRO (CRT 100/36); 7. Churchwardens' accounts 1677–1918 (P 75/5/1). The accounts for 1679 were removed from the volume and sold in 1906 to an American collector – J.Pierpont Morgan of New York – who gave money for new seats in the church *see* *B.Mag* Vol.14 no.107 (Winter 1973) p.127; 8. Mentioned in 1895 (P 75/8/1 p.36); 9. Payments are recorded in 1825–6 to Mr. Stevens, plasterer (£12 5s 6d), Mr. Stanbridge (£37 0s 4½d), Mr.Travel for painting the church (£103 5s 11½d) and “To Mr. Elgar bedford surveying Mr. Travel’s work at the Church” (£2 11s 6d); 10. Notes on the organ 1825–1864 (CRT 130 HAR 5). The organ was also mentioned in 1827 by Boissier (f.411d); 11. Boissier (f.411d). The “modern glass” was replaced by the present east window in 1876; 12. Kelly’s *Directory* 1885 p.61. Later Directories – from 1906 to 1920 – state that “the church was partially destroyed in 1867”. No further information on this restoration has been found; 13. Churchwardens’ accounts for 1869 (P 75/5/1); 14. The Powell archives show that the east window of 1876 was designed by H.E. Woodridge (V&A ref: AAD 1/4 p.151) while the 1885 window was based on designs by Henry Holiday (V&A ref: AAD 1/7 p.60 and AAD 1/59 p.260 and p.384). The background to these windows was explained by Dr. Denis Hadley in the lecture in the village in 1993; 15. Reported in *LBO* 30 Nov.1886 and *BM* 4 Dec.1886; 16. ABV 3. There is a plan of 1895 which shows the work done on the nave roof in 1888–9 (P 75/2/2/26); 17. *LBO* 15 Nov.1892 and *BS* 19 Nov. 1892. The sundial is mentioned in 1686 in the churchwardens’ accounts which also record occasional repairs in the eighteenth century; 18. The work is very well documented. There are accounts 1894–1904 (P 75/2/2/1) and receipted bills (P 75/2/2/2), information in the vestry and restoration minute book 1894–1904 (P 75/8/1), a statement of expenditure on sections 1–3 of church restoration 1895–1899 (P 75/2/2/3), appeal leaflets of 1894 and 1895 (in P 75/0/10 and P 75/2/2/24), a service register containing cuttings from the parish magazine (P 75/0/10), report in the *Ely Diocesan Remembrancer* June/July 1900 p.113, and (from 1895) in the parish magazines (P 75/30/1 etc); 19. Preston p.7; 20. Original drawings by Richardson and Gill for tower repairs, 1923 (P 75/2/2/35) also published in *The Builder* 1923 (P 75/2/2/30). The Contractors were Dove Brothers of Islington, whose work is noted in *Building in the Blood: the story of Dove Brothers of Islington 1781–1981* by D. Braithwaite; 21. The carved head is illustrated by Bonney, *q.v.*; 22. The churchwardens’ accounts for 1677 mention a “Scarlet and purple Cloth a Flagon and Linnen cloth about the Comunion table” bought for £5 8s 0d (P 75/5/1). It is described in the 1708 terrier as “A cloth to hang up before ye Communion table Purple & Scarlett” (ABE 2 Vol.II p.510); 23. The chalice – replacing one without inscription mentioned in the 1708 terrier – was given by Mrs. Susanna Astry in 1743. The paten dated from 1802; 24. The pulpit cloth was obtained in 1681. The churchwardens’ accounts record payments to William Markham “for thred & silke & making the Pulpitt cloth” (2s 6d), for the purple cloth for the pulpitt (£2 9s 0d), 32 oz. of fringe (£4), and four tassels (14s) 1681 (P 75/5/1); 25. A new bible and prayer book were bought from Mr.Barker for £3 1s 6d in 1750–1 (P 75/5/1); 26. The clock is mentioned in the churchwardens’ accounts from 1677, but it was replaced or rebuilt by John Adams of Toddington in 1719–20 for £12 19s 4d (P 75/5/1). It was restored at the expense of C.T.Spencer in 1896 (P 75/0/10); 27. The frames were removed and the bells rehung “dead” from girders in 1899 by James Ayre on the advice of C.T. Spencer; 28. The fourth bell is mediaeval, and the inscription given here belongs to the second bell of 1715 which was recast in 1900. The recasting of bells in 1697 and 1715 is documented in the churchwardens’ accounts; 29. The carving was accidentally damaged during work on the chancel in 1979 and the fragments were apparently discarded (*ex.inf.* Stephen Castle); 30. Mr. Frankling paid £1 7s 6d for binding the Bible, June 1824 (P 75/5/1); 31. Bonney’s order was complied with, and over £150 was spent on repairs and improvements to the church in 1825–6; 32. Payments to Mrs. Godfrey for table Cloth (£1 3s 6d) Dec.1839, and to Mr. Handscomb for a Communion Flagon (£1) June 1844; 33. W.A.’s

comment on the organ brought a rebuff from the Rev. J.D. Parry, published in *BT* 14 February 1846. Parry considered it "the best in the county after St. Paul's", stating that it had "three turrets, and carved work, besides gilt pipes, and was given by the Lord of the Manor, Mr. Cooper, at a cost of about £350". It was replaced by a new organ in 1879 (*BM* 14 June 1879). The old instrument is said to have gone to Toddington (the account in *LBO* 20 Sept. 1898 infers that the organ had been at Eversholt and Harlington before it found a home at Toddington), but the dates don't match. Cooper provided the organ there in 1856 (*BT* 26 Jan. 1856); 34. Thomas Willement (1786–1871).

## HARROLD

A priory was founded at Harrold between 1140 and 1150.<sup>1</sup> The parish church formed part of the original endowment of the priory and the relationship between the two institutions is crucial to the interpretation of the fabric. Earlier historians mistook the great hall of the mediaeval manor house for the conventual remains,<sup>2</sup> and accordingly failed to realise that the Priory was adjacent to the church which was shared with the village. The evidence is discussed briefly in John Weaver's edition of "the building accounts of Harrold Hall".<sup>3</sup>

The oldest part of the church is the north wall of the nave which may include portions of Anglo-Saxon work.<sup>4</sup> The building was extensively remodelled in the C13th, with the construction of a north aisle, chancel and south aisle during the course of the century. The tower and spire were built in the Decorated style in the C14th, and in the C15th a clerestory was added to the nave.<sup>5</sup>

Shortly after the Dissolution the site of the Priory was acquired by the Farrar family. It was reported to the Archdeacon in 1578 that "the cancell wyndowes are in decaye by the defaute of Mr. Farrar",<sup>6</sup> and it may have been soon after this that the mediaeval chancel was shortened. Until altered in about 1890, there was a late C16th square-headed window in the lower part of the east wall of the chancel. Harrold Hall was built immediately to the south east of the church for Francis Farrar in 1608–1610,<sup>7</sup> and the discovery of stone coffins in the grounds of the Hall in 1890<sup>8</sup> provides evidence of the former use of the site. Church and chancel repair liabilities are mentioned in documents of c.1630 and 1653.<sup>9</sup> The ancient screen, although much altered, includes some Jacobean work from alterations to the furnishings in the early C17th. The church was noted in 1674 as "not fully repaired".<sup>10</sup>

A faculty was granted in 1717 for a pew for John Bletsoe "where the reading desk lately stood".<sup>11</sup> There is a volume of churchwardens' accounts from 1759,<sup>12</sup> but few major repairs to the fabric are mentioned – apart from cleaning the church after floods in 1795 and 1798 – until 1822 when the nave roof "next the steeple" was repaired for £70. In the same year, the porch to the west door was removed and in 1826 the steeple was repaired.<sup>13</sup>

The seating in the body of the church dates from about 1845. The exact date is not known, but in 1848 the Architectural and Archaeological Society (established in 1847) commented favourably on "great restorations and improvements already admirably affected at ... Harrold".<sup>14</sup> In 1869 a new organ by

Hill & Son of London was installed in the north chapel.<sup>15</sup> By 1873 Archdeacon Bathurst was concerned about the state of the roof.<sup>16</sup> Restoration was contemplated in 1888, and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings became involved after being informed of the proposals by Rouse Orlebar of Hinwick.<sup>17</sup> Some repairs were done to the spire in 1888 and a new heating apparatus was provided in the same year.<sup>18</sup> The chancel may have been restored in about 1890 and "some repairs ... [were] effected".<sup>19</sup> A new clock was installed for the Jubilee in 1887 and the bells were rehung in 1896, but proper attention to the rest of the church had to wait until 1904 when the building was restored by Mallows and Grocock of Bedford. Their work included the re-roofing of the south aisle, new oak choir stalls in chancel, the removal of galleries, and extensive alterations to the screen, pulpit, prayer desk and lectern.<sup>20</sup>

Later work included a new altar in 1912,<sup>21</sup> repairs to the roof under A. Gilbert Scott in 1927, and the restoration of the tower and spire under William Weir in 1930–31.<sup>22</sup>

*1. Extract from glebe terrier, 4 July 1825*

**HARROLD.**

**Church yard.** The Church yard containing two roods and twenty four perches or thereabouts, adjoining to the grounds of Thomas Alston Esquire on the north and east, to the garden of Thomas Alston Esquire and the church on the south, and to the stables of Thomas Alston Esquire on the west.<sup>23</sup> The Walls and Gates round about made by the parish.

**Church.** Belonging to the said parish are, first, the parish church, an ancient building, containing (sic) in length (with the chancels) seventy feet, in breadth forty-nine feet. Two chancels, one belonging to the lay Rector, in length twenty one feet, in breadth fifteen feet; the other, belonging to the Patroness, the same size. The steeple fourteen and a half feet square within the walls, in height (including the spire) one hundred and forty feet.

**Furniture and ornaments of the church.** within and belonging to which, are one communion table with a covering for the same of green cloth. Also one linen cloth for the same with one napkin. One silver flagon, inscribed (Harrold Plate. The Gift of the Hon<sup>ble</sup>. Tem. Wolstenholme 1726.<sup>24</sup>) One silver chalice, inscribed (Harrolde, 1699.) One silver paten, inscribed (The Gift of the Hon<sup>ble</sup>. Ann Jolliffe of Harrold, 1728.) One table of degrees. Two chests with three locks each, together with an iron chest for the registers, and a smaller one used by the Overseers of the Poor for official papers. In the vestry room is also a cupboard used to contain the surplices and the parochial library lately established in the church. One pulpit and reading desk with the clerk's desk. One pulpit cushion and drapery inscribed (I.H.S. 1728) in letters of silver lace considerably worn out. One large bible of the last translation, imperfect. One large common prayer book, in good condition. One other common prayer book, crown quarto, for the communion table. One old church clock. Five bells with

their frames; the first or least bell, being two feet and six and a half inches in diameter, with this inscription (Thomas Knight and W<sup>m</sup>. Wootton C.W. Jos. Eayre S<sup>t</sup>. Neots, 1756.) The second two feet and eight and a quarter inches in diameter inscribed (1603) the other part of the inscription is not legible. The third two feet and ten inches in diameter, with this inscription (Prayse the Lorde 1603.) The fourth three feet and one inch in diameter, with this inscription (John Hodson of Landon made mee 1613.)<sup>25</sup> The fifth, or largest, three feet four inches in diameter, with this inscription (Chandler made me 1652.) One bier, two surplices. [Item a Chandelier<sup>26</sup> & 18 Candlesticks, and a Stove & Pipes<sup>1</sup>]

**Parish Registers.** Four parchment register books; one beginning in 1598 and ending in 1647; the second beginning in 1653 and ending in 1692; the third beginning in 1693 and ending in 1749; the fourth beginning in 1750 and ending in 1785; one marriage register book of paper, beginning in 1754 and ending in 1812; one other of births and burials beginning in 1786 and ending in 1812; three others of paper for births (sic), marriages and burials respectively, from 1813 up to the present time.

**Parish Clerk.** There is also due to the parish clerk; for every wedding by publication of banns, two shillings and six pence; by license, five shillings. For the publication of banns, six pence. For every funeral two shillings.



Plate 2. Harrold: View from the north showing Harrold Hall built in 1608–10 on the site of the old priory. Note the shortened chancel, and the north porch removed in about 1850.

(Watercolour: Thomas Fisher c.1815)