

## HISTORY OF FETCHAM CHURCH

Draft 23.3.97 J Mettam

### INTRODUCTION

The oldest parts of Fetcham Church were built about 1,000 years ago. At that time The Street extended southward between the church and the manor house (where Fetcham Park House now stands) to join the path over the Downs to West Humble. The Street also continued north, bearing right past where Barracks Farm now is, to ford the Mole on the way to Kingston. The Street was crossed by the Harroway, an ancient route which came into existence in BC600-300 from North Kent to the tin mining areas of Cornwall. The Harroway followed the spring line of the Lower Road in the summer and a drier route near the Leatherhead Guildford road in the winter. The Harroway became an important link between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Kent and Wessex.

Fetcham must have been one of the earliest areas of Anglo-Saxon settlement with 6<sup>th</sup> Century burial grounds on Hawks Hill and at Watersmeet. The village was clustered in the nearest part of The Street just north of the church and manor house, which is thought to have developed around the site of a Roman villa or farmhouse. The present parish boundaries probably represent the ghost of the Roman estate. The varied soil types were well suited to the mixed communal farming methods of the Anglo Saxons. The main open fields were on calcareous loam on the slopes SE and SW from the Church, which could still be described in 1809 as some of the best soil in Surrey.

By the time-of the Domesday book the population of about 200 was above the average density in this part of Surrey and Fetcham contained three manors, the Kings manor based by the church, Oswalds manor where Canons Court now stands and the Bishops manor somewhere in the Northern part of the parish.

In the time of Edward the Confessor what was to become the Kings Manor belonged to Queen Edith. This had a profound effect on later development as, like King Edward, she favoured the Normans and she was allowed to retain all her estates until her death in 1074 when they passed to King William. So Fetcham never became the seat of one of the great Norman landowners.

Queen Edith was the daughter of the powerful and ambitious Earl Godwin. He probably hoped that the marriage would put one of his grandchildren on the English throne, but Edward had already taken a monk's vows of chastity so that aim failed. Her brothers however, with their father ruled the land under King Edward, except for a period when Earl Godwin overstepped his authority. He was banished and Queen Edith was sent to a nunnery for a time. In the absence of an heir her brother Harold became King after Edward the Confessor died but, as every school boy knows, not for long.

Queen Edith probably acquired her Fetcham manor on her marriage in 1045, together with the much larger manors of Shere, Dorking and Reigate, and many others outside Surrey. Most of these probably came from the King but it is possible that Fetcham came from the Godwins estates. Before the Conquest the Godwins collectively were the largest lay landholders in Surrey, and a will made between 973 and 987 mentions a Godwin of Fetcham.

The Will of King Alfred (871-900) mentions the Royal Manor of Ledrede, a Royal Vill in the northern part of what became Leatherhead parish. This Vill was the secondary centre (after Kingston) of government in a large area centred on Leatherhead which by, or soon after the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> Century was to be divided into six Hundreds. Linked with the Royal Vill a Minster Church was built to serve the surrounding area before the parish churches were built. Changes in land ownership in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century led to pressure from landowners to build their own proprietary churches. A law of King Edgar (957-975) allowed thegns owning a church with a graveyard to endow it with  $\frac{1}{3}$  of their demesne tithes, the other  $\frac{2}{3}$  going to the old Minster. This and the transfer of burial fees started a decline in revenues which reduced the importance of the old Ministers. A proprietary church was one of the signs of status, around 1000, by which a ceorl could expect to rise to thegns hood. If one of Earl Godwin's ancestors held Fetcham at that period this might have been the impetus for construction of Fetcham Church. However no record has been found to support this and architectural considerations leave the date of

construction as 950 to 1100. There is also no record to explain the addition of two more manors within the area of Fetcham.

### **THE LATE ANGLO SAXON CHURCH**

The church which was built in Late Anglo Saxon style was a two celled structure, a rectangular nave with a slightly narrower square chancel linked by a chancel arch no more than 5- 6 feet wide. A small window of this period can still be seen above the Norman South Arcade, and no doubt other similar small windows were provided. As can be seen from the surviving opening no rebate was provided for glazing. Some Roman bricks (or later bricks of similar style) can be seen forming the SW Quoin on the West Wall but the main construction was of field flints in lime mortar. This would have been rendered inside and out and painted, probably white. The main door, as now, would have been on the north side to give easy access from the manor house and village. Recent surveys have drawn attention to the errors in setting out of this church. It has been shown that a single error in measuring the width at the chancel arch could have caused the present crookedness.

### **NORMAN PERIOD**

Soon after the Domesday survey Fetcham is mentioned in the Chertsey Cartularies when Robert Albus of Fetcham gave  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the demesne tithes to Chertsey Abbey. This resulted from what was in a sense a reversal of King Edgar's law so that for a Norman lord the  $\frac{1}{3}$  of demesne tithes was now his church's due and he was free to give  $\frac{2}{3}$  to any religious object which pleased him without regard to the interests of any ancient minster. Robert Albus may not have held Fetcham manor for very long because the King's Manor was given to William of Warenne when he became Earl of Surrey in 1088/9. However, the consequences of Robert Albus' endowment of Chertsey seem to have lasted 450 years. Master Peter, Rector of Fetcham two centuries later was in dispute with Chertsey Abbey for depriving him and his church of tithes. After initial success for the Rector in 1279 the Abbot appealed successfully to the Pope. In 1401 percptions, or portions of tithe, from Fetcham were noted by the Archbishop of Canterbury's commission on muniments and Fetcham Church still appeared in the records of Chertsey in the reign of Henry VIII at the Dissolution. A long consequence of one man's piety!

In 1147, before going to Crusade, William of Warenne granted tithes to Lewes Priory (founded by his ancestor in 1077 close to his main residence) and these included one tithe of Fetcham.

The first extension of the Church occurred in about 1150 - the S Wall was undercut to insert the Norman S Arcade providing access to a narrow S Aisle. In circa 1180 the Norman Tower was added, unusually placed on the side of the early Chancel; there appears to have been a fashion in this area at the time to build towers at the side of the church rather than in the more normal central positions at the West end or over the crossing. The tower may also have had a spire which was also fashionable at the time; an Inventory in the reign of Edward VI mentions a steeple. Only the base of the Norman tower remains and nothing remains of the Norman S Aisle.

### **FROM 13<sup>th</sup> CENTURY TO REFORMATION**

By the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, or soon after, the King's Manor had come into possession of the D'Abernons of Stoke D'Abernon and it remained in the family for nearly 500 years. The manor house may have been occupied occasionally by members of the family but most of the time it was probably rented out. Its position between London and Guildford at a time when Guildford Castle was an important Royal Palace would have made it an attractive residence for a courtier. In 1246 a Charter granting free borough status to Newcastle under Lyme was executed in Fetcham so someone important lived here at that time.

There is also evidence of D'Abernons as Rectors. The first known mention is of Peter, Rector of Fetcham in 1234, but there are further mentions of Peter son of Peter Parson in 1250 as well as the Peter who was in dispute with Chertsey in 1281. Probably two Peters were Rectors during this period and one of them or another relation may be the Pierre of Fetcham who wrote a Life of Sir Richard of Chichester and La Lune de Lais (Bodleian library). Robert de Abernon became Rector in 1284. He was a minor and Henry of Guildford had custody.

During this period great changes took place in Fetcham Church as a result of important Church Councils held in the Lateran Church in Rome. The 4<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council in 1216 particularly, introduced a more elaborate ritual for the Mass requiring more space to separate the priests from the congregation. At the same time burial fees were granted to Rectors (if not already transferred) and it became the responsibility of the Rector to maintain the Chancel while the congregation maintained the Nave. A Glebe of some 31 acres was also established in Fetcham by this period

In about 1220 the Chancel was extended, to greater length than is usual in such a small church, with a three seat sedilia for Priest, Deacon and Sub-deacon, the Piscina which is still used and the old Aumbry which was used until recently. Two original lancets on the N of the Chancel have also survived. At about the same time the N Transept was built with the dog-toothed altar recess and twin lancets and another Piscina which can still be seen. Whether at this time, or soon after, the interior was decorated. The paintings have not survived having been painted over at the Reformation, or during the Commonwealth, but some in the Lady Chapel recess were exposed during the refurbishment of 1857 and before they were destroyed a full size copy made which is still kept at Castle Arch Guildford. A major part of the painting in the altar recess represents the Coronation of the Virgin and it is likely that the N Transept was built to accommodate the growing cult of the Virgin Mary in this period. The extensive works of around 1220 may indicate that a D'Abernon, with the family wealth behind him, was already Rector at that time.

Later by about 1250 the N Aisle had been built although the very elegant Decorated style N Arcade is not thought to have been constructed before about 1300 which is probably also about the date of the fine early tracery of the N window of the Lady Chapel.

Construction of the N Arcade cut into one of two altar recesses previously built in the NE corner of the Nave. Part of the recess on the wall to the left of the Chancel Arch can still be seen as the Niche which is used to good effect by our flower arrangers but a connected recess on the N wall had to be destroyed to build the N Arcade. There was almost certainly at this period another altar recess to the right of the Chancel Arch to match the one of the left.

By about 1300 then, the main spaces within the church building differed little from what we see today. The S Aisle was only 5 or 6 feet wide, the Chancel Arch about the same and the Tower was probably topped by a spire, but the layout has not changed. The interior arrangements and form of worship were however very different.

The High Altar had been moved, as a result of the 4<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council's reforms, away from the Chancel Arch where the celebration of Mass had been clearly visible from the Nave, to the newly extended Chancel as part of a policy to make the Priests a separate caste increasing the mystery of the Mass. On weekdays less formal celebration of Mass would have been at the altars in the Nave. Varied use of the altars would have been required at a time when every priest said Mass daily but each altar could only be used once. In the Nave there would have been no seating and the congregation would have stood or knelt praying on the floor.

A Rood above the Chancel Arch, a crucifix with St Mary and St John, would have been reached from the Rood Stairs, parts of which can still be seen, allowing black drapery to be hung in Lent and candles lit on the Rood Beam at other times.

All or most of the walls would have been painted probably mainly with traditional themes rather than illustrations of biblical stories, and a depiction of the Last Judgement might have been above the Rood with graphic illustration of the fate of the damned.

In 1348 the Black Death (bubonic plague) killed one third of the population of England in a single year. Recurrences probably brought the loss to half the population. We do not know the exact effect of this in Fetcham but the absence of any further expansion of the church is probably an indication of a severely reduced population. Until after the Reformation the only structural changes were the enlarged Perpendicular East

Window, which has survived to the present, and perhaps a similar West Window. But the West Window has been replaced at least twice since then.

The terrible experience of the Black Death brought a much greater consciousness of the dangers of Purgatory. This resulted in the increasing importance of the cults of the Virgin Mary and other saints, and of prayers for the dead. For the wealthy this led to the establishment of chantries endowed with priests to say Masses in perpetuity. For lesser people there might be provision in a Will for a limited number of Masses or paid attendance at the funerals, or the gift of candles or other goods to provide a memorial, however brief, in the church. With no wealthy Lord to build a Chantry or other permanent memorial nothing of this remains in our Church but John Lewarne in preparing the 1956 Church Guide found an interesting will at Somerset House:

The Will of Agnes Padycke of Fetcham dated 27th March 1535 bequeathed "to the High Altar of my Parish Church 2d., to our Lady Light therein a sheep, to St. Blaise Light a sheep, to St. Katheryne Light a sheep". This will provides the only evidence of the identity of these altars as well as showing how someone of modest station would have secured a period of remembrance in the main services of the Church.

At this period the laity would only have received the Eucharist at Easter after Confession and individual instruction during Lent. At other times they would have remained at prayer while the Priest performed Mass, but looking up to see the Host being raised after Consecration. Each sight of the Host would have earned an indulgence, a reduction in the period of Purgatory. As literacy increased books of prayers were available with Indulgences listed for each time each prayer was said.

To some extent the Reformation was a reaction against these practices. As good Greek texts of the New Testament became available Colet, from 1497, and Erasmus later drew attention to the teaching, particularly in the Epistle to the Romans, on the importance of faith rather than works. These texts were also used by William Tyndale to produce the first English translations of the New Testament from the Greek He also prepared the first English translations from the Hebrew of a large part of the Old Testament. Many of the best loved passages in the Authorised Version of 1611 were taken from Tyndale's translations. Before the Reformation making these translations was illegal and William Tyndale was being hunted down as he prepared his translations in Hamburg and elsewhere. In May 1535 he was betrayed in Antwerp and strangled and burnt at Brussels in October 1536 when the Reformation was already starting in England.

## **THE REFORMATION**

After the Act of Supremacy in 1534 changes followed rapidly, more rapidly than Henry VIII or probably most of his subjects wished. English Bibles were ordered to be placed in all churches in 1536. In 1538 religious shrines were dismantled and relics destroyed; scarcely a Rood remained in the country after 1538. Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538 will have severed the link with Chertsey Abbey, and Canon Court ceased to belong to Merton Priory.

Canon Court Manor passed to Uriah Brereton and became part of the marriage portion of Jane Lyfield (heiress of the D'Abernon estates) when she married Thomas Vincent in 1541, after which the three manors were referred to as the Manors of Fetcham and Canon Court.

Parish Registers commenced in 1538 but Fetcham Registers are only available from 1559.

After young King Edward VI succeeded on Henry's death in 1547, the pace of change increased. The first English Prayer Book appeared in 1549. The Communion service would then have been held in the Nave until the Offertory when the Priest and Communicants would have moved through the narrow Chancel Arch to the table in the Chancel which had replaced the stone altar.

An inventory of the possessions of the Church was made in 1549. It reads as follows:

“This inventory indented made the XVTH daie of March in the III de yere of the reigne of our soveraigne Lord Edward the Sixt by the grace of God Kyng of Englonde Fraunce and Irelande (Defensor of the Fayth and in Erthe of the Church of Englonde and Irelande) the supreme hed witnesseth that we Sir Thorns Denys clerk parson of Fetcham, John Rykman and John a Dene churchwardens ther, Humfry Cholmeley, William Roger and Thorns Blundell, parishoners ther, do make our Inventory of all the ornamentes, plate and juelles belonging to the said church as hereafter foloweth, viz:

First. ij vestements of silk with sutes to the same wherof the one is full of branches and birdes.  
Item. An old vestment of thred without any sute.  
Item. A cope of blewe saten of Bruges with branches and ij other old copes.  
Item. iij corporas cases wherof the one is of blewe velvet.  
Item. vj Banners clothes and crosse clothes of paynted lynen clothe.  
Item. An old curten of red saye and an old coverlet.  
Item. v altare clothes of lynen clothe and ij towelles of the same.  
Item. ij curtens that was wont to hang cros the chauncell.  
Item. iij curtens of paynted clothes to hang afore the aultars.  
Item. A crosse of copper not gilted.  
Item. ij chalices with ij patentes of silver parcell gilt.  
Item. ij cruettes of lead with a sacryng bell.  
Item. a holy water stok of latten.  
Item. iij surplices of lynen clothe with ij stoles.  
Item, j pair of candelstikes of latten.  
Item. ij font clothes of lynen clothe.  
Item. iij belles in the steple and a little bell besides.  
Item. A Bible boke, the paraphrase of Erasmus, ij masse bokes, an antiphon and a manuell

Nicholas Leigh  
Willelmus Saunder."

A second Prayer Book in 1552 abolished vestments and most of the remaining ceremonies.

Another Inventory was made in 1553 which tells us that:

"To the fourte article we say that there wasse nor ys no parte nor parcell of our church goodes neyther sold nor putt away since the first yere of the reiiign of our soverign the Kyng that nowe ys. Md the seid church being brokenn in the nyght at towe sundrye tymes and there was stolne and takeen awaye ij lat cantylsteckes iij alter-clothes a lynnen cloth to cover the funte ij corporas casys wyth the clothes j coverlett ij long towelles.

To the Vth article we say that the seid Thomas Edfall and Thomas Blundell churchwardens in the first yere of the reign of our soveraign lord the kyng that now ys whych left in the church box vj s. viij d. to use of the church. John Rychman and John Deyne churchwardens the seconde thyrde fourth fyfte and sixte yere and John Ryckman havying the church box in his kepyng was robed in hys howse by nyght and there the church box was broken and the said .,j s. viij d. taken awaye and so there remayneth in the box nil...."

Most of the remaining Church goods were confiscated in 1553, the churchwardens John Kirkham and John a Dene being allowed to keep only:

“Item (i) chalice viii oz  
Item (ii) vestments for the communion table cloth

Also remaining in their charge, to the King's use iii bells in the steeple and one sacring bell."

Other ornaments etc were sold making a total of 15 shillings and 4 pence.

In 1553 Edward VI died and from 1553-8 Mary tried to restore traditional practices but from 1558 Elizabeth continued reforms but less drastically. In 1561 a Royal order allowed existing screens between Nave and Chancel to be kept, adding that a suitable finish might be the Royal Coat of Arms. Roods and parapets to Rood lofts were to be removed. The Creeds, Lords Prayer and Ten Commandments were to be displayed.

Congregational singing was restored led by the Parish Clerk in the Nave. The Priest read the services from a seat in the Nave; practically all churches now had pews and eventually reading desk, clerk's desk, and pulpit were combined into a three decker and the pews became box pews to exclude draughts. A wooden altar table, kept against the E wall, was moved into the centre of the Chancel for Communion. Full Communion was rare, once a month or quarter, and the normal service was Matins-Litany and Ante communion with sermon.

Brookland Church in Rutland was largely rebuilt in 1581 and it looks with its original pews as if the church was equipped for two entirely different purposes; the Nave for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Litany and the Chancel for Communion. Fetcham Church with its narrow Chancel Arch and long narrow chancel would have been well suited to this arrangement which may have endured until the present enlarged Chancel Arch was built.

Publication of the Thirty Nine Articles in 1563 ended the major upheavals of the Reformation although changes continued and it will be convenient to continue this discussion of changes up to the outbreak of the Civil War.

The oldest bell now in the Church was made in 1588, the year of the Spanish Armada, inscribed "Robertus Mott me fecit 1588". Robert Mott's foundry was just east of the City, outside Aldgate, and the business still continues as Whitechapel Foundry on a different site but still using a mark similar to the one used by Robert Mott on our bell in 1588 and using skills which he would recognise. Mott's bell presumably replaced one of the three bells noted in the 1553 Inventory.

Other changes during the reign of James I were the requirement of 1604 that the Ten Commandments be installed at the east end of every church (as continued in Fetcham until 1872) and the issue in 1611, to all parishes, of the Authorised Version of the Bible.

Another bell inscribed "William Land 1613" also survives. William Land worked near Robert Mott outside Aldgate.

Charles I became King in 1625. Two very interesting monuments, the oldest in the church, remain from 1631. Henry Vincent, the younger brother of Sir Thomas Vincent who had married the heiress to the D'Abernon estates in 1541, died aged 85 in May. We know from his will that he had built a new house in Fetcham, probably a new brick manor house but perhaps the Salt Box. His memorial to the right of the altar shows him at prayer with his book. Opposite him is another memorial to Anthony Rous Esq who died in February 1631 (1632 by our calendar as the year then ended on 25 March). He had acquired Polesden in 1630 and rebuilt the house before he died. His memorial which records that he was Clerk of the Pipe of the Exchequer includes a skeleton and hour glass (intended no doubt to remind others that death comes unexpectedly). Anthony Rous and his wife Anne may have been living in Fetcham before buying Polesden as two of their children were baptised in the Church in 1626 and 1627.

There are two other important items from this period in our Church, and it is tempting to think that they may have been given in memory of Henry Vincent and Anthony Rous.

A simple stone font was installed in 1632 when the Registers record that "Thomas the son of Thomas Downe and Ursula his wife was baptised ye 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, ye first child to be baptised in ye new font". This font was given to St Mary's House Alton in 1868 but returned by the Wantage Sisters in 1983 when the Home was closed. In 1636 a handsome matching Communion Cup and Paten were made which can now be seen in the Treasury at Guildford Cathedral. They were used in the church until new plate was given by Mrs Hankey in 1863. In recent years they have been used at Christmas and Easter.

The chalice which the church wardens had been allowed to keep in 1553 may not have been retained for long as it became fashionable to use simple domestic beakers rather than pre-Reformation silver with its association with the old Mass. By 1636 it would have been felt that something more dignified was needed but the new Communion Cup was still domestic in character.

Henry Smith, a silversmith in the City of London, was one of the richest men in the country when he died aged 79 in 1628. A childless widow he established trusts before he died from which lump sums and/or annual payments were paid to parishes all over the country. All except three of the parishes of Surrey were included. Fetcham received a lump sum of £20, used to purchase land, which financed charitable payments until 1917 when it was combined with a number of other parish charities to form Fetcham United Charities whose main contribution is the Almshouses and Reading Room. Smith's Charity is still active, with large properties in Kensington, and some other local parishes which received annual payments, still receive thousands of pounds annually. On the wall of the Tower under the ladder can be seen on a board painted in 1772 a record of the fields purchased with the donation from Smith's Charity.

In 1638 Archbishop Laud's visitation articles instructed church wardens to place the altar at the east end of the chancel and place a decent rail before it. The purpose was "to keep out boys and girls or irreverent men and women and dogs from coming to besoil or profane the Lord's Table". The rails can be seen in paintings made by the Hassels around 1820-1830 and were probably replaced in 1857.

Introduction of the Laudian rail provides a clue to the timing of construction of the South Chancel window which replaced one or two earlier lancet windows. The rectangular label mould over a 3 light window in Gothic Survival style could have been built at any time in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but the extra light provided would have been more necessary after the congregation had been kept away from the East end of the chancel, with its important texts, by the new rail. Whether the window was built before the Civil War or after the Restoration is not known.

## **THE CIVIL WAR AND COMMONWEALTH**

There is no record of any damage to the church during the Civil War although many churches did lose any ornaments or stained glass which had survived the Reformation. Our two oldest memorials to Henry Vincent and Anthony Rouse date from 1631 and show no signs of disrespect.

Dr Turner, Rector from 1634, was also chaplain to the King and remained loyal. In 1643, during the 1<sup>st</sup> Civil War he was seized by a party of horse (probably at the time of a service), the Book of Common Prayer was trodden in the dust and Dr Turner imprisoned. On trial for having sent £120 to the King he was also charged with malignancy for having attended the King and praying for him. He replied that his duty as chaplain obliged him to do the one and he never did the other without praying for Parliament also, and that by his Majesty's express order. He was replaced by Fisher.

It is said that when Fisher came with Sheriff's Bailiffs to dispossess Dr Turner the Doctors lady was expecting hourly the time of her confinement but was not allowed to stay in the house.

No doubt Fisher accepted the Puritan "Directory of Worship" which replaced the Book of Common Prayer in January 1645, and the abolition of Christmas and other feast days.

During the Civil War parish registers suffered in the general confusion and were for the first time regulated by Act of Parliament on 3 January 1644/5 a few days after the execution of Archbishop Laud. The system of parochial registration by clergy broke down during the Commonwealth and an Act was passed on 24 August 1653 whereby the clergy were obliged to give their registers to laymen who were called "Parish Registrars". At the end of the first volume of the Fetcham registers is the memorandum "That this register is very defective especially during the unnatural rebellion begun in 1641 till the happy restoration of our Sacred Liberties in the year 1660." Further, on a page loosely inserted is this remark:

"On this note I ought in justice to remark that the memory of the Restoration was so powerful in the Revd Ministers' mind that he forgot to enter in this register any marriages from 1660 to June 1683 many of these regularly inserted and he omitted also any entry of burials from 1660 to Feby 1684/5."

To this note John Bollard (Rector 1818 to 1834) added:

"I believe above remark was written by Dr Sherson father of the late Rector Abraham Sherson" (Rector 1794-1818).

## **THE RESTORATION**

In 1660 Fisher was ejected and Turner restored. It is said that Fisher's wife, in her turn, was also expecting and that Dr Turner allowed her to remain for her confinement. Be that as it may, Dr Turner was also restored as Dean of Canterbury to which he had been appointed in 1643/4. He had also been appointed Dean of Rochester in 1641/2 but would not have been able to officiate in either post as Kent was already in the hands of Parliament. The omissions from the registers until Turner died at Canterbury in 1672 were perhaps the responsibility of his curates, continued by his successor Nicholas More and corrected only by Dr Shortridge.

In 1660 it became compulsory for the first time to display the Royal Coat of Arms in every church, although it had been a custom followed in many churches from the time of Queen Elizabeth. The Arms of King Charles II, painted in 1660 on a wooden board, can still be seen in the S Aisle. Originally this would have been placed above the Chancel Arch, where the Rood had been before the Reformation, and where it could still be seen until 1872; it was then, removed to the Church School, where it remained until the 1930's when it was put in its present position.

In 1662 the Act of Uniformity re-established the use of the Book of Common Prayer which is still used today although partly superseded by the Alternative Services Book

Under the choir stalls we have grave slabs for two burials which ought to have been recorded in the Parish Registers:

Dame Jane Glover Purefoy (wife of Sir Thomas Glover and widow of George Purefoy). She died on 8 Jan 1664 and bequeathed her estate to her daughter Elizabeth Rous who had recently married Samuel Rous, eldest son of Anthony Rous. Samuel was living in Fetcham while his mother continued to live in the house at Polesden which Anthony Rous had built just before his death.

Peter Warburton of Hefferson Grange in Chester born 27th March 1588 died 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1665. A lawyer, he had been a Judge during the Commonwealth, and in 1657 sat on the Upper Bench in the trial of Miles Sindercombe for attempted murder of the Protector. His connection with Fetcham is not known.

Both of these slabs were originally placed near the altar rail where presumably they were buried.

In 1665 a third bell (treble) inscribed "William Eldridge made me 1665" was installed The Eldridges' foundry was in Gilford Street Chertsey. We do not know how the bells were hung and whether they could be rung, rather than being fixed and merely chimed as is now the case. The full wheel arrangement for ringing which can still be seen in the Tower, although not now usable, probably dates from the rebuilding of the upper part of the Tower in 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Deeds of 1680 make it clear that The Street still extended southward between the church and the manor house, which was separated from The Street by a small courtyard and a thin strip of manor waste. The barns, stables etc lay to the east with desmesne to east and south. Opposite the manor house, west of The Street, was the rectory conveniently close to the church door.

In 1685 the church acquired a pewter font basin and two pewter plates which are now displayed in the Guildford Cathedral Treasury. The basin, made to fit the 1632 stone font, is inscribed 'Fetcham 1685 Font' and 'John Kidwell'. We know nothing about John Kidwell but the registers show that Joane daughter of John Kidwell and Joane his wife were baptised May 12<sup>th</sup> 1685, so the font basin must have been presented to mark the occasion.

Also in 1685 Sir George Shiers Bt of Slyfield died aged only 25 giving a bequest. The details of the bequest are set out in full on a marble slab in the Porch dated 1717. Its main purposes were:

- 1) In putting out poor children of these parishes Apprentices and setting them up
- 2) In preferring in Marriage such Maids, born in this parish, as have lived and behaved themselves well for seven years in any one services, whose friends are not able to do it.
- 3) To dispose of the surplus to the Poor, who by sickness, age, a great family of children or otherwise shall be in danger of coming under the common relief of this parish.

This bequest may have been made partly because his grandfather had made a similar bequest to Great Bookham, in which parish Slyfield lies. However there must also have been a close relationship with Dr Hugh Shortridge (Rector 1683-1720) as his mother settled Slyfield on Dr Shortridge in 1693. When he died he made bequests to the incumbents of Effingham, Great Bookham, Leatherhead and Shalford, the conditions of which included preaching a sermon in the parish church on 30<sup>th</sup> January, the anniversary of execution of Charles I. Presumably a similar bequest was not made to Fetcham because of Dr Turner's great loyalty to the King.

## **18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

Important changes started early in 18<sup>th</sup> Century after Arthur Moore purchased the manor house from the Vincents, breaking the 500 year link with the D'Abernons and their heirs at Stoke D'Abernon.

Moore was a wealthy man, a director of the South Sea Company, who used his wealth to rebuild the manor house and create very extensive gardens with elaborate water works.

While rebuilding the manor house Moore lived in Ballands Hall, built by one of the Vincents. In 1721, when the new manor house was complete Ballands Hall was given to the Rector in exchange for the old rectory beside the church to allow construction of a stable block This gave subsequent Rectors "the finest parsonage house in Surrey" but many of them let the house and lived elsewhere. A 20 ft by 130 ft strip was added to the west of the church yard, probably to compensate for land lost nearer the manor house. From this period until 1931 access to the church was by the driveway which led past the stables to the manor house.

Arthur Moore was so extravagant that when he died in 1730 it was said that 'his profusion consumed all' and he was 'broken in all respects but in his parts and spirits'. He was buried in the church.

In 1703 there had been a great storm, one of the worst recorded, during which Leatherhead and many other churches lost their spires. Fetcham church probably also lost its spire at this time since we know that the upper part of the Tower was re built in the early part of this century. The Norman S Aisle also collapsed during this period.

Whether Arthur Moore was concerned in anything beyond emergency repairs to the Tower and blocking of the S Arcade is not known; he may already have been over-committed. More likely major repairs had to wait until after Thomas Revell, who had made a great fortune as Victualler in Lisbon and Gibraltar, bought the estate in 1737. He presented Rowland Johnson as Rector in that year but Johnson resigned in June 1748 to enable Revell to present his nephew Henry Warner (Rector 1748-1772) who was then aged only 23 and still at Merton College Oxford.

When Revell died in 1752, his 3<sup>rd</sup> wife Jane Egerton (niece of the Duke of Bridgewater) whom he had married in 1738 had already died and their young daughter Jane was heiress. A codicil to Revell's will instructed Henry Warner to take young Jane immediately in Revell's coach to his brother in Hammersmith who was to be joint guardian with Samuel Egerton of Tatton Park, Cheshire. The same codicil instructed the guardians:

"to keep my daughter for at least 3 or 4 years close to her grammar and other necessary learning and working without interruption by any unnecessary pleasure because I look upon pleasure and learning as incompatible things".

Young Jane was 12 years old or younger and sums specified for her maintenance and education start with £300 p.a. until age 13 and increase annually.

It seems likely, in view of the relationship with the Rector, that much of the expenditure on the church at this period would have been from Revell's wealth either before his death in 1752 or after Jane's marriage in 1758 to George Warren (later Sir George) when she inherited the estate and they lived in Fetcham. The Cheshire branch of the Warrens were descendants of the Warrens who held the Manor of Fetcham in late 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Century.

Probably, by 1752, the top of the Tower had been rebuilt with a new weathervane, and the three bells re-hung, the fallen S Aisle removed and the S Arcade blocked. After that the Chancel Arch, built about 5'6" wide in the initial Anglo-Saxon building, would have been opened up to its present width enabling the erection of box pews to be extended into the Chancel.

Whatever the exact timing we can be sure that the Tower was complete by 1760 as this date was painted on the clock face in 1897 when a new clock mechanism was provided as part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The clock must have been first installed in 1760. A note in the Parish Register (made by Sherson in 1800) tells us that the church was new slated in 1759. He added that a new three decker pulpit was provided in the Chancel in 1761, where it would not have served its purpose before the Chancel Arch had been opened, and new purple cloth, silk fringed, was provided for the Communion Table in 1763; these items were at the charge of the parish.

The new position of the pulpit, with the Chancel Arch enlarged, commanded the whole of the Nave, N Aisle and Chancel as well as most of the N Transept and part of the base of the Tower. This enabled many more pews to be provided as needed. Before the Chancel Arch had been opened up the best position for the pulpit would have been in NE corner of the Nave, near the Niche, where it would have commanded the Nave and both aisles, before the S Aisle collapsed, and only part of the N Transept.

Jane Warren (nee Revell) had died in 1761, leaving one daughter, shortly after her husband had become Sir George Warren KB. He continued to live in what was then known as Fetcham Great House for some years although it was let for part of the period. He also acted as church warden. The daughter married an Irish peer Lord Buckley and they were joint owners of the house with Sir George Warren.

The churchyard still has a number of grave stones from the 18th Century. Two particularly interesting monuments which are now Grade II listed commemorated:

- William Coster, buried 6 February 1716 - near the N.W corner of N Aisle, carvings of cherubs
- John Jerome son of William Smith Esquire, buried 19 November 1752, age 6 weeks, - near the NE corner of N Transept, carving of hourglass.

On Warren's death in 1772 Jonathon Knowles became Rector. Visitation returns of 1788 show that he was also Vicar of Effingham and that he had no assistance in either parish. He lived at Effingham letting the Fetcham Rectory (Ballands Hall). The completion under an Act of 1758 of the turnpike from Leatherhead to Guildford may have made his journey between the two parishes easier than it would have been earlier. Jane Revell had

contributed to the costs of passing the Act and both George Warren and Henry Warner had subscribed to the trust.

Knowles left a record of his fees in a note in the Parish Register:

"As the Churchyard is ye Rectors Freehold no extra-parochial person can be buried therein without his consent; for which consent he had a right to demand what he pleases. In my predecessors time & mine ye Fee was a Guinean.

For ye liberty of erecting an head stone in ye Churchyard whether for a parishoner or a stranger

£2. 2s. 0d

For erecting a Rail	£2. 2s. 0d
For two stumps at Head and Foot	£1. 1s. 0d
For erecting a Tomb	£3. 3s. 0d
For marrying by Lycense	£0. 10s.0d
For marrying by Banns	£0. 5s. 0d
For burying a parishoner I had	£2. 2s. 0d

K Sherson, Rector 1794 - 1818, added a note

"I also receive the same".

Another undated note by J C Knowles listed all the areas of Glebe land, totalling 31 acres 1 rood, belonging to the Rectory of Fetcham "in 1772 before ye park therein was enlarged to its present dimensions on ye south and west sides by Sir Geo Warren."

A map of 1771 shows the park extending west to the line of the present Ridgeway and southward to a line about midway between Park Farm and the Guildford Road. The ancient southward line of the Street can be traced as an avenue of trees leading south from between the Great House and the Church towards Park Farm. The northerly extension, fording the river and continuing towards Kingston had been lost in 1764 when the river had flooded into a sunken part of Bickneys lane forming a second channel which is still there.

The Tithe Map of 1791 shows that the park had been extended south to the Guildford road enclosing most of what had been the best arable land during the Anglo-Saxon period. Both maps show the Church entirely enclosed by the park with access by the driveway from the Lower Road between the house and its stables and kitchen garden. This access remained until 1931.

In 1791 Sir George Warren sold the Advowson and Glebe lands to Robert Sherson MD, a prosperous London Doctor, acting as Trustee of the Will of Ann Kirkpatrick (aunt of Sherson's second wife). In 1789 he had already purchased the Parsonage house as Trustee, and Fetcham Grove / Bridge House near the Leatherhead bridge on his own account.

Knowles died in 1793, being buried at Effingham, and in 1794 Robert Sherson presented his son by his second wife, Abraham Kirkpatrick Sherson as Rector (1794 - 1818).

In 1800 Abraham Sherson noted in the Parish Register

"In the year of our Lord 1799 was done and set up in this Church Tablets over the Communion Table in letters of gold The Creed, The Lords' Prayer and the Ten Commandments being at the sole expense of my Father Robert Sherson MD Fellow of the Antiquarian, Medical and Linnean Societies of London".

These were in rather an elaborate style which can be seen in paintings by the Hassels in the 1820's. They were replaced in 1857 by a simpler display of the Ten Commandments.

Sir George Warren had in the meantime sold Fetcham Great House and estates to Thomas Hankey, a wealthy banker. The transfer was not complete until 1792 but Hankey had been overhauling the house since 1790. In 1793, not long after acquiring the property Thomas Hankey died leaving his widow to manage the estate until his infant son John Barnard Hankey, who was to be squire until his death in 1868, came of age.

## 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Mrs Hankey was involved in the proceedings under the 1801 Enclosures Act which led in 1813 to the enclosure of the remainder of the great common fields. This included changes to the glebe, in which Abraham Sherson was concerned, and formalisation of the road on the line of the Ridgeway which had replaced the old Street south of the church.

Dr Sherson, the Rector's father, married his fifth wife Anne in Fetcham in 1816 after the death of his fourth wife Mary in the previous year. When he died in 1821 Dr Sherson and Mary were buried in a vault under the altar. Their memorial is now in the Lady Chapel.

In the meantime Abraham Sherson had sold out of the living and retired to Hertfordshire. The new Rector John Gipps Bolland (1818 - 1833) was the only son of a wealthy father; they both have memorials in the church on opposite sides of the West Window. Their grave slab is now in the path outside the vestry.

Little if any change appears to have been made to the church during this early part of the century but a number of pictures survive to show the church at this stage. An engraving of 1809 viewed from the west shows a gate where the Lych Gate now stands. There is no S Aisle and two square windows can be seen in the walls blocking the S Arcade. A slightly obscure detail of the window at the west end of the N Aisle is consistent with an architect's drawing of 1857 which shows a square window with the outline above of the top of a medieval lancet.

A print published in 1823 shows a view from the north. There are no windows on N side of the N Aisle and the wall itself is only about 6 ft high. There is a porch (not the present one but of similar size). This may be medieval; with such a low N Wall the construction of a porch (or at least a gable) would have been needed to allow sufficient head room for the door.

A number of water colours by the Hassels, father and son, in the 1820's and early 1830's show the interior, with box pews in the Nave, N Transept and Chancel and the 3-decker pulpit just inside the enlarged Chancel Arch. Laudian rails protect the Altar which was sited so that the Priest at Communion had his back to the Congregation. Dr Sherson's Tablets can be seen below the East Window. A view through the Porch shows the 1632 Font tucked in close behind the central pier of the N Arcade, the base of which was cut back for this purpose. A view into the N Transept shows box pews and the dog-tooth altar recess with one hatchment in the recess and one above.

A note dated 1829 in the Registers of the Rural Dean of Stoke reported:

"The tower much covered with ivy but no material damage done. Parts of some of the windows in the church stopped with plaster: they should be opened as the church is dark.

Mullions of windows in the Chancel want repair.

Plate - a silver cup, a small silver paten no vessel for unconsecrated wine, two pewter plates for offerings.

Pigs and cattle admitted to churchyard"

Many of these features were to be changed later in the century under the influence of the Oxford Movement, but even as late as Rev John Craig (Rector 1836 - 1839) the box pews were being extended "rendering uniform the pewing". Craig was also allowed to place an organ in the church "at his own expense including alterations to

pews"; it was probably under the West Window. He also provided a new font in white marble but in 1843 the Archdeacon ordered its removal and the old font replaced. At this period the square windows in S Arcade walls were replaced with twin "Norman" style windows under each arch.

In 1852, John Webb, a black smith, for many years Parish Clerk presented a Chalice.

The Rev Robert Downes (1839 - 1859) came as Curate-in-Charge. Edward Moon, later Sir Edward Moon Bt, was to make enormous changes in the church and in many other aspects of the parish.

His father-in-law Alderman Thomas Sidney whose only child, Ellen, had married Moon in 1851, acquired the advowson from Robert Downes to enable him to present Moon as Rector when Downes died. The advowson was then included in a trust for his daughter to enable her, nearly 50 years later, to choose his successor. Moon was an energetic man; at Magdalen College Oxford, where he graduated in 1848, he had rowed in the University Eight, won the University Sculls in 1846 and been in the crew which won the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley in 1847. He had been ordained Deacon in 1849 and Priest in 1851 and held two curacies in Worcestershire before coming to Fetcham. One of his first priorities was the village school opened in 1854.

He was concerned until his death in all the parish charities, being a large subscriber to the opening of the Reading Room and he also built one of the three Alms Houses. In addition he worked actively for a number of national charities. His main memorial however is in the improvement of the church.

In 1857 the church was repaired and re-seated; old box pews were removed (fortunately after a drawing had been prepared to record their arrangement which included benches for children in the part of the N Transept hidden from the pulpit by the large pier) and replaced with pews many of which are still used. When the new pews were installed the S Arcade was blocked, by walls half the width of the arcade and the positioning of pews on the south side of the Nave still reflects this. The Incorporated Society for Building Etc. Churches granted £20 upon condition that 108 seats were reserved for the poor inhabitants of the parish. The walls were cleaned, replastered where necessary and redecorated. During this work the remains of a number of medieval paintings were exposed. Before they were destroyed in 1958 full scale records on large rolls of linen were made which are still available in Guildford at Castle Arch. The best preserved were in the altar recess in the North Transept showing three themes:

- Coronation of the Virgin
- The legend of three living and three dead
- Extreme Unction - unusual in that the recipient is seated.

The inclusion of Coronation of the Virgin leaves no doubt that the North Transept was originally built as a Lady Chapel, a function which was restored in 1955.

The Vestry Book records some details of the work done in 1857, for example the provision of new Tables of Commandment replacing those put in by Dr Sherson, but no details are given of the make up of the main repair contract which probably covered a wide range of repairs and improvements. One likely item is the reconstruction of the medieval Paucet at W end of the N Aisle, eliminating the last of the square windows seen in pictures of the church early in the century. A drawing in 1872 shows a stone pulpit in place of the old 3-decker with a Lectern in the middle of the present choir which is otherwise an open space. This change may well have been completed in 1857. A gift of tiles may have been for use in this area. In addition to merely repairing dilapidations the changes to this date had changed the interior of the church back towards the medieval style but the central position of the Lectern still emphasised the importance of reading of the Bible resulting from the Reformation.

Hankey also paid about half the cost of roof repairs, possibly another £30. A surplus of £8/10/4d was given to the Churchwardens towards the cost of a stained glass East Window. No record of this work remains; it would have been removed when the present glass was installed in 1904 in memory of Sir Edward Moon.

The total cost including repairs to the roof was £600-700 largely raised by subscription. The two largest subscriptions were from the Squire John Barnard Hankey and the curate Edward Moon both of whom gave £60.

On completion of the redecoration in 1858 one of the first of a number of Moon memorials was the glass in the N Chancel E Lancet "Suffer little children". This was in memory of the Moon's first two children who died in infancy just before and soon after they came to Fetcham. (See Appendix for details of all the stained glass in the church.)

Until the end of 1862, apart from a period in 1859 which may be related to the need for repairs in the Tower and reinforcement of the arch between Tower and Choir, meetings of the Vestry (responsible for all parish and church matters) were held in the base of the tower. Vestry meetings were then held in the School Room until 1880 when the new Vestry had been built so the reason for the move was almost certainly to enable our beautiful Father Willis organ to be installed under the tower. Willis' records were destroyed during the 1939-45 War but a date of 1863 is consistent with the style of the organ when Father Henry Willis was the leading organ builder in the country.

In 1863 (?4) Mrs Hankey gave a chalice and paten and a plated flagon.

In 1864 Mr Hankey gave a strip of land on south side of the churchyard to enable it to be extended. A substantial brick wall now much deteriorated was built to enclose it.

A description of the church, said to be before 1866, describes the interior as "lately restored looks to be too fresh to be altogether pleasing". Mention is made of the Piscina and Aumbry in the Chancel and the Sedilia restored, as well as the Piscina in the Transept so these, which had probably been filled in after the Reformation may have been exposed in the 1857 restorations. The report mentions the font as 'modern and also poor'. This reference probably dates the report as 1868 or 1869 after the Victorian font had been given in memory of Thomas Bridges. It was originally sited in the Nave, not in the centre of the Nave but in the centre of the church midway between the N. Wall of the N Aisle and the S Arcade which was then the S Wall of the Church.

In 1868 John Barnard Hankey died aged 84 and his wife Elizabeth died in 1870 also 84. The stained glass in the lancet windows in the Lady Chapel are in their memory, the subjects Isaac and Rebecca and Abram and Sarai are well chosen for a couple who had their 60th Wedding Anniversary in 1867.

The other deaths at this period, with more immediate significance to the church were Ann Lady Moor, the Rector's mother who died in 1870, and is remembered in the W window. Her husband Sir Francis Moon Bt (Lord Mayor of London 1854-5) died in 1871; the chancel was restored in his memory in 1872. The full details are not recorded so it is not always clear what was done then and what earlier but we still have a set of drawings made in 1872 showing the church before the restoration. Major work in 1872 included complete reconstruction of the chancel roof and both external and internal repairs to the walls. A small vestry (the E half of the present one) was built; the door into the chancel was entered from a small porch which also gave access to the vestry. The floor of the chancel was rebuilt and retiled with higher steps to raise the altar. The Reredos by Peter Cook showing the Four Evangelists replaced the Ten Commandments and floor tiles by Godwin were laid in the sanctuary. Five grave slabs were removed from the sanctuary and chancel. The Bolland's slab is now outside the vestry door. Foster (Rector 1833-36) is in the centre of the choir, with Jane Glover and Peter Warburton under the choir stalls on each side. The choir stalls were probably installed about 1880 and then, or earlier the Lectern was moved closer to the pulpit. A wooden screen was erected between the choir and the Chancel, echoing the Rood screen which had stood between congregation and chancel in the Middle Ages.

The next big changes in the church followed quickly. On the death of John Barnard Hankey in 1868 his eldest son George James Barnard Hankey inherited but died in January 1875 aged 65, and his inheritance passed to his son John Barnard Hankey aged 30 who immediately set about having the house altered from an attractive Queen Anne/early Georgian mansion to a very inappropriate simulation of a French chateau. He was probably also

responsible for the alteration of the area west of the house which required a retaining wall to be built to support the north side of the church yard. Steps gave access to the church yard but hearses would have been taken through the stable yard to the entrance on the west side of the churchyard.

At the same time the new squire and his siblings had the S Aisle rebuilt in memory of their father George James Barnard Hankey and his wife Andalusia. The new S Aisle was wider than the Norman one with the result that part of the SW buttress of the Tower can be seen inside the new aisle providing a corner for the war memorials.

Not long after that work the vestry was extended to its present size and choir stalls were provided. In April 1881 the Vestry decided to have a quarterly collection for the Organ and Choir.

The next development was the re-roofing of the N Aisle. When this was done the N wall was raised to enable larger windows to be provided to improve the light and provide more headroom. It is still possible to see on the W wall of this aisle the old line of the roof with extra newer flint work above. The increased height available after the roof was raised may have provided the occasion for re-siting the Victorian font near the door, its normal position in the Middle Ages, and given the altar more emphasis by moving the font from a more central position and allowing the central passage to be extended the full length of the Nave.

A wedding on 28th April 1888 is of interest in two ways. Firstly the newspaper report included the first known reference to the dedication to St Mary (researchers earlier in the century had found no dedication). Secondly this was the second wedding of the young squire John Barnard Hankey and his bride was the Rector's daughter Ellen Gertrude Moon. The close relationship between their families was further demonstrated ten years later when the Rev. Cecil Graham Moon, youngest son of the Rector, who had also been his curate, married Mary Andalusia Hankey who was a daughter of John Hankey's first marriage. A Mr Ginger who had joined the choir as a boy in 1889 writing many years later recalled a rumour that the squire did not approve the match but perhaps his objections (if not just idle village gossip) were withdrawn after the young man obtained a living elsewhere. Ginger also recalled Admiral Sir George Richards, whose memorial is just inside the N Aisle beside the door, as 'the sort of hero boys loved to read about in books by Marryat and Ballantyne', a judgement fully justified by the details of his life.

On practice nights the boys, like Ginger, who walked from Leatherhead were given tea, (large mugs of tea, plentiful supplies of beautiful bread and butter and plum cake) in the Rectory kitchen. On reaching the church there was time for some mischief before choir practice; this included climbing to the top of the Tower when he recalls seeing six bells in the belfry. This must be mistaken as drawings in 1872 and 1928 both show only three bells hung exactly as they now are and the Victorian County History published in 1911 also records only three bells.

To end the history of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it remains only to add that Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 was marked both by a pageant in the grounds of Fetcham Park House and by provision of a new mechanism for the church clock.

## **20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY**

The first quarter of the new century saw a rapid decline in the influence of the Moon and Hankey families.

The Rector, Sir Edward Moon, died aged 78 in 1904. Lady Moon used the Advowson which she had received from her father to present John Henderson (Rector 1904-17) who had previously served as curate. Lady Moon and her eldest son, now Sir Francis, a militia officer who had served in South Africa as a major in the East Surrey Regiment, continued to live in the old rectory which was renamed Ballands Hall. The old Rectory Cottage was pulled down and a new Rectory built on glebe land further down The Street.

In 1905 the southward extension of the churchyard towards the old chalkpit, which Sir Edward had been negotiating with John Hankey before his death, was completed and consecrated.

Two memorials were provided to Sir Edward Moon: earlier stained glass in the East Window was replaced, by his widow; and the Lych Gate was built. Access to the Lych Gate was from the Fetcham Park House drive, through the stable yard and up an old farm track on the west side of the church yard.

Photographs of this period show the N side of the church covered in ivy viewed from the drive with its avenue of trees many of which can still be seen now.

In 1906 Ellen Lady Moon died; she is remembered in the twin lancet windows in the N Aisle.

The organ in the church was in poor condition at this period and a report was obtained in 1907 from Willis's who dealt with the reconditioning.

In 1909 one of the Moon's sons, Major Wilfred Moon, a regular army officer died to be remembered in the W lancet of the N Aisle, and in 1911 the eldest son Sir Frederick Moon died.

The title has continued but not in Fetcham. Ballands Hall, house and contents, were sold including a dinner service and other relics of his grandfather's stint as Lord Mayor of London.

In 1914 John Barnard Hankey died. The choir pews in front of the screen were installed in his memory that year enabling a larger choir to be accommodated, the lectern being moved close beside the pulpit. He had been Rector's Church Warden since becoming squire in 1876. His widow continued as Rector's Church Warden until 1933 and People's Warden after that. The war delayed the big changes which resulted from his death and it was not until after the War that the estate was sold to developers.

By 1924 the developers were offering Fetcham Park House with some 20 acres as a single unit with the rest of the park being divided into plots varying from  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres to 2 acres for high class housing. Electrification of the railway through Leatherhead in 1925 made the housing attractive and the old park was quickly transformed. Development of parts of the farms also started in this period.

Fetcham Park House and some 30 acres was acquired by the Rev JG Wilkie for his school, Badingham College, which moved from his old parish of Badingham, Suffolk, in 1927.

It was clear that access to the church through the school drive would not be practical. The first proposal by the developers was to build a single narrow road to the Lych Gate from Sandy Lane (shortly to be renamed The Ridgeway). This proposal, which was linked to provision of land on south side of the churchyard for an extension, was rejected as inadequate. This took some time to resolve; the closure of a church way (right of access to a church) is even more complicated than changing a public right of way. However in 1930 an offer by Mr Willde to build the two drives which we now use for access from the Lych Gate to Lower Road and to The Ridgeway, and to transfer to the church both of these and the area of the new church yard and the Memorial Garden, was accepted. The old access through the school drive to the church was then abandoned; the steps leading up to the church yard from in front of the house were closed in 1930.

In the meantime electric light had been installed in the church in 1926/7 using a way-leave through the church grounds and converting the Victorian gas-lamp at the top of the steps to electric.

In 1928 the first of a series of reports by the architect William Harvey showed serious cracking and extensive rotten timber requiring urgent major repairs. These were put in hand very quickly and carried out between September 1928 and April 1930 under the supervision of the Diocesan Architect A J Steadman. His completion report has survived but unfortunately no drawings.

The Tower and many of the walls were dangerously cracked; all fractures and fissures with pointed and grouted with cement. Parts of the wall at the E end of Chancel and Vestry had to be under pinned and much loose flint

work and worn stone replaced. The roofs of N and S Aisles which had been built in pine were badly rotted; they were completely stripped, defective rafters and boarding replaced, covered with Ruberoid felt and re-tiled. All other roofs were overhauled and repaired with new slates and tiles as necessary. All guttering was re-fixed and new brick gutters were built at the base of the Tower, Chancel, Vestry and N Aisle walls to carry water to soakaways.

In the Tower the bell frame was supported on steel joists and a good deal of the timber replaced. The whole of the timber floor under the organ was removed and replaced by a concrete floor. This was done without moving the organ, apart from the blower, which must have required great care.

The interior of the church was completely cleaned, redecorated and refurbished; the Reredos was cleaned and repaired where necessary; iron work was painted and oak doors oiled.

The main work, carried out by Messrs Goddard and Sons of Farnham cost nearly £2,000 raised by subscription, fairs etc., during the course of the work. Other items such as repainting and gilding the clock face and relacquering of the two large Standard Candelabra, which then stood in the Sanctuary, were also carried out and a new pair of brass Altar Candlesticks was presented.

The Bishop of Guildford came in June 1930 for a Thanksgiving for Restoration of St Mary's.

With the changed access to the church the Rectory which had been built in The Street in 1905 was no longer convenient. Mr Collings (Rector 1936-39) moved into a new Rectory in The Ridgeway, next to the Memorial Garden, in May 1932.

In 1934 some improvements were made to the old gardener's bothy, backing on to the old garden wall, to enable it to be used for Sunday School.

In 1935 two front pews, under the Chancel Arch were removed to allow the lectern to be re-sited with more space than had been possible beside the pulpit.

Services were held for the Coronation in 1937 and in 1938 our organist, Charles Spink, deputised for the organist at the Chapel Royal for the Christmas morning broadcast by George VI.

1939 brought collections in February for Jewish Refugees turned adrift from Germany, and the first of a number of National Days of Prayer on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

As can be seen from the War Memorials in the S Aisle Fetcham was unusual in having more losses in 1939-45 than 1914-18; this reflects the enormous growth in population between the two wars as the Hankey estates were re-developed.

During the war records were made of all historic buildings to assist in repair in case of bomb damage. The plan of the church in 1857, before removal of the box pews, and a set of architectural drawings made in 1872 before restoration of the Chancel and construction of the S Aisle were traced for the National Buildings Register (now part of the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments of England). The original drawings have been deposited in the Muniments Room in Guildford.

In 1948 a visit by Austin Niland, an authority on British Organs, resulted in a glowing article on the exceptional quality of our Father Willis organ.

After the death of Mr Newton (Rector 1939-47) the N Transept was re-ordered as a Lady Chapel in his memory. By 1950 the church had also been re-wired and a new boiler provided, and the Churchyard Extension and Garden of Remembrance were dedicated by the Bishop of Guildford.

After the pews in the N Transept had been removed to create the Lady Chapel the stone pulpit inside the Chancel Arch was no longer in the best position. It was replaced by the oak pulpit inside the Nave against the wall on the S side of the chancel arch. This required removal of one of the pews on this side of the Nave, to provide circulation space, and the transfer of the War Memorials from all now occupied by the pulpit to the SE corner of the S Aisle.

In 1965 Badingham College returned to East Anglia and the house and grounds sold to developers. Completion of the first group of houses, St Mary's Close, allowed the old church yard steps to be re-opened in 1967 and used again while Fetcham Park House remained empty.

1967 also saw the first moves towards obtaining a faculty for construction in the new church yard of the new Hall, much needed by then for Sunday School and church functions. This ran into considerable opposition, largely due to a failure to explain the project adequately to non-churchgoers who did not appreciate the extent to which increased use of cremation had reduced the need for burial space, and could not envisage how well the Hall was to fit into the site. After a contested hearing the Faculty was granted in 1969. The construction was completed in 1973 and the Hall was dedicated by the Bishop of Dorking.

Further changes were made after the arrival of Canon Douglas Bryant (1974-1984). The increased emphasis on ritual, started by Edward Moon in 1857, was continued with the introduction of a procession to the Nave, with Crucifer, Acolytes and Server, for the Gospel reading; but the appearance of the interior was modernised by removing some of the Victorian features. A new altar fall in 1976 was accompanied by the provision of side curtains to the Reredos. The altar table was moved away from the Reredos to allow the celebrant at Communion to face the congregation. The two Standard Candelabra were moved from the Sanctuary to provide more space. One was moved to the W End of the Nave, the other to the Lady Chapel to provide a light by the new Aumbry there.

In 1977 three wooden sedilia were presented and the Chancel Screen was removed and the church redecorated. Gas fired heating replaced oil in 1980. An oak clergy stall and desk, in memory of the Rev. Chris Brinkwell, was installed in 1981. In 1982 a new altar frontal was provided in the Lady Chapel and the carved wooden statue of St Mary was placed in the altar recess in memory of May Percy.

In 1982/3 a number of window repairs were carried out by a stone conservator using a porous rendering which allows the escape of moisture which can otherwise cause internal damage, such as has been experienced with the harder impervious facings of 1929.

After David Baker became Rector (1984-1996) it was decided to re-install the old 1632 Font. This had been returned by the Wantage Sisters in the previous year after closure of St Mary's Home, Alton, where it had been in use since it had been removed in 1868 on installation of the Victorian font. Unusually the Victorian font was left in position in the N Aisle when the old font was placed under the Chancel Arch. St Mary's may be unique in having two consecrated fonts (Note: the Victorian font has now been removed – see later). We still had the pewter font basin made to fit the old font in 1685, but it was no longer water-tight. The old basin was put in the Treasury at Guildford Cathedral in 1995 and a new pewter font basin provided in 1996. An oak lid for the old font was made by John Impey who also made the Easter Candle Stick, in memory of Bill Drake, an oak hymn board and the oak reading desk in 1986.

In the following year he also made the display case for the very valuable church yard record prepared by the W.I. An earlier, 1953, survey by John Lewarne has since come to light. This includes details lost by the time of the W.I. survey but the plan is in a poor state and considerable work will be required to bring the two records together.

The great storm of 1987 damaged the new weather vane, which had been provided to mark the Silver Jubilee of 1977, and probably also initiated the damage to the roof of the Tower which made re-roofing necessary in 1992.

The Rectory in the Ridgeway was by this time in need of modernisation. As a better alternative David Baker arranged the construction in 1991 of a new Rectory allowing the Parsonages Board to sell the one in the Ridgeway. The new Rectory, like the Hall, was built in the consecrated area of the New Churchyard. There was some opposition but the continuing trend towards cremation had further reduced the expected demand for burials; the many advantages of the new building close to the Hall and the Church were accepted and enjoyed by the Bakers to their retirement and by Paul Boughton (1996-) and his young family.

The final historical point of note is the very successful Flower Festival of 1993, in celebration of Ten Centuries of Worship in Fetcham Church. As will be clear from the opening section of this booklet the exact age of the late Anglo-Saxon church, of which much still remains is not known; but even if it falls short of 1,000 years the probability of an earlier timber church on the same site, itself likely to have been preceded by a Cross at which open-air services would have been held, leave little doubt that worship has indeed continued on this spot for at least ten centuries.

### **SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

Since the late John Mettam wrote the above a few notable events have occurred.

In 1998 the Chancel South window was completely rebuilt and rotten Reigate stone replaced by Chris Anstey, a respected stone conservator who has executed all the stonework repairs to St Mary's in recent times. The glass was restored by Goddard and Gibbs. The two tower ground level south windows were also replaced. Other Reigate stonework was lime shelter coated to minimise further decay.

The whole church was re-roofed in 2000 as it was found it was in danger of slipping off, the Horsham slate in particular. The cost of about £100,000 was raised by a gift day in particular by the church family and friends. A sponsor a tile campaign means that a large number of the tiles have been marked with the names of the sponsors. It would be intriguing to know what future generations will make of this, assuming the marker pen survives!

## APPENDIX

<b>Rectors</b>		<b>Dates of records in Deeds</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Patrons</b>
Alexander		(ca 1177 -80)	(1)	) Dates of Institution
Peter D'Abernon		(1234)	(2)	) )
Peter parson		(1250)	(3)	)
Master Peter		(1279)	(4)	)
Robert D'Abernon		1284	(5)	Sir John D'Abernon
Thomas Barscote	(resigned 1386)	1380		
Reginald de Circestre		1386	(5)	Sir Wm Croyser
William Mayon	(died 1400)	1395	(5)	Sir Nicholas Slyfield
Henry Hyde		1400	(5)	William Croyser
John Bremmesgrave		1416		
Roger de Bulkley		1419		
John Manky		1420		
Henry Rymore	(resigned 1462)	1460	(5)	Sir Henry Norburg
John Halsall	(died 1471)	1462	(5)	William Warbleton
Thomas Trott		1471	(5)	Sir Thomas Montgomery etc
John Clark	(resigned 1543)	1523		
Thomas Denys		1543	(5)	John Aycliffe
William Tubman		1564	(5)	Thomas Lyfield & Frances
William Williams		1574		
Leonard Fetherston		1596		
Ephraim Udall		1625		
Thomas Turner DD	(ejected 1643)	1634	(5)	Sir Frances Vincent
Fisher	(ejected 1660)	1643		The Parliament
Thomas Turner DD Dean of Canterbury	restored died 1672	1660		
Nicholas More	(died 1684)	1672		
Hugh Shortridge DD		1684	(5)	Thomas Vincent
Thomas Croft BA	(resigned 1724)	1720	(5)	Arthur Moore
Ezekiel Mills	(resigned 1726)	1724	(5)	Arthur Moore
Samuel L'Isle later Bishop of St		1726	(5)	Arthur Moore

Asaph & then Norwich				
Rowland Johnson	(resigned 1748)	1737	(5)	Thomas Revell
Henry Warner	(died 1772)	1748	(5)	Thomas Revell
Jno. C. Knowles	(died 1793)	1772	(5)	Sir George Warren KB
Richard Kilsha		1793		
Abraham Kirkpatrick Sherson	(sold out 1818)	1794	(5)	Dr Robert Sherson
John Gipps Bolland	(died 1833)	1818	(6)	John Bolland Esq
Thomas Foster	(died 1836)	1833	(6)	Robert Downes
John Craig		1836	(6)	Robert Downes
Robert Downes	(died 1859)	1839	(6)	Robert Downes
Edward Graham Moon	(died 1904)	1859	(6)	Alderman Thomas Sidney
John D Henderson		1904	(6)	Ellen Lady Moon
W.H.McK Caldwell		1917	(6)	Sir Wilfred Graham Moon Bt
Webster W Whistler		1926	(6)	Bishop of Guildford
Herbert Charles Ellings		1932		Bishop of Guildford
George Herbert Newton		1939		Bishop of Guildford
Harry Grant Maby (Anthony)	(retired 1974)	1947		Bishop of Guildford
Canon Douglas Bryant	(retired 1984)	1975		Bishop of Guildford
David J Baker	(retired 1996)	1984		Bishop of Guildford
Paul Henry Boughton	1996			Bishop of Guildford

#### NOTES

Dates in brackets indicate dates when the incumbent ceased being Rector.

1. L & DLHS Proc, Vo14 p87 item 59. Deed confirming grant of land to Alexander clerk of Fetcham [ca 1177-1180]
2. Correspondence Ruby/Benger Fetcham Records FX 150n
3. L&DLHS Proc Vo1 4 Pt 2 p36 Item 15, Deed by Peter son of Peter parson of Fetcham.
4. Wheeler Chertsey Abbey pp96 & 181 / SRS PublN No 5 p84 Item 89, Chertsey Cartulary

NB Vo14 Pt 2 p 36 Item 16 Robert D'Abernon parson, witness to deed seal lost? Date of 1250-1260 clashes with 3.

3. L&DLHS Proc Vo14 Pt 3 p61 Item 47 Peter parson of Fetcham witness [c1230-1250] L&DLHS Proc Vo14 Pt 3 p61 Item 43 Peter parson of Fetcham witness [c1230-1250]
3. SAC Vo15 p59 gift by Ingleram D'Abernon to Peter Parson of Fetcham, Ingleram died 1235. FX 150 (f).
5. Manning & Bray pp486-7.
6. Lewarne 1956 Guide.

**Note:** John wrote the above draft after expending what must have been a considerable amount of time in research. John also wrote his Three Essays on the architectural aspects of the church and tracing its development to the current day. Our current church guide is also his work.

We have no permanent memorial to a man who expended so much time on a building he loved and served so well. I am sure that the best way we can express our appreciation of his efforts is to ensure that his research is made accessible to all. To that end I have turned the paper copies of his work into electronic files that can make his work accessible via the web and is, I feel, long overdue in this information age.

I am not in a position to check the accuracy of the history in this document and as a draft there may well be errors. If any are found please let me know so they can be corrected. I have added the subsequent events section to try and keep it current.

The church is at the beginning of implementing the proposals of its five year planning group and this is likely to result in further changes to the building thus continuing the story of a building that has developed to meet the needs of God's people for over 1000 years. Having access to John's work is important as it enable us to appreciate that which has gone before and hopefully make changes that will maintain the character of our building yet enable it to fulfil the needs of today.

Nigel Hunt  
July 2008