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THE STORY OF ST MARY'S

It is generally believed that Christianity came to Britain in 597 when Augustine, prior of a monastery in Rome, was despatched by Pope Gregory with a small team of monks to evangelize the 'Angles'. But there had been a Christian church in Britain for more than two hundred years before St Augustine landed at Richborough - and even earlier, if the tradition of Joseph of Arimathea's staff sprouting as the Glastonbury Thorn and the story enshrined in Blake's 'Jerusalem' are to be believed. With the gradual conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, the new faith had inevitably spread to Britain. Indeed, the first recorded martyrdom was in 304 when a Roman legionary named Albanus perished at Verulanum (renamed St Albans) during the persecution of the Emperor Diocletian.

However, darkness came upon Britain with the invasions of the Saxons and Jutes. They hated everything Roman and Christian. By the year 410, Roman domination of Britain had ceased and the Saxons reigned supreme. St Patrick, who converted Ireland to Christianity from 433 onwards, was originally a third generation Christian, a young Englishman named Patricius who was carried off as a slave to Ireland.

Meanwhile, the Bishops (or Popes) of Rome established a certain uniformity of observance in the Christian church on the continent and this was what St Augustine brought when he led the new missionary movement to Britain. Such parts of the Celtic Christian church as had survived the Jute and Saxon invasions refused to submit to the Pope's authority and entrenched themselves in the North and West. The church owing allegiance to Rome gradually established itself in the remainder of the country. There were new pagan invasions by Danes and Norsemen during the eighth and ninth centuries, ultimately defeated by King Alfred of Wessex who made it a condition of his peace treaty in 878 that the Danes convert to Christianity. Alfred's grandson, Edgar (959-975), was really the first king of a united country and under his firm government England enjoyed a time of peace. Churches and monasteries were founded but the English at this time were not great builders. Most of the early churches were built of wood and have consequently disappeared. Thus, when William the Conqueror's 'Domesday Book' of 1086, that amazingly detailed inventory of land, buildings and population in England, states that Pulborough (or 'Poleberge' as it was then called) had two churches, it is not surprising that no trace of them survives today. One of these two churches (probably known as St Heien's) is believed to have been situated on the boundary with Wisborough Green and Billingshurst at Newbridge Farm. There is a reference to this church as still standing in 1526 but there is no trace of it today. The

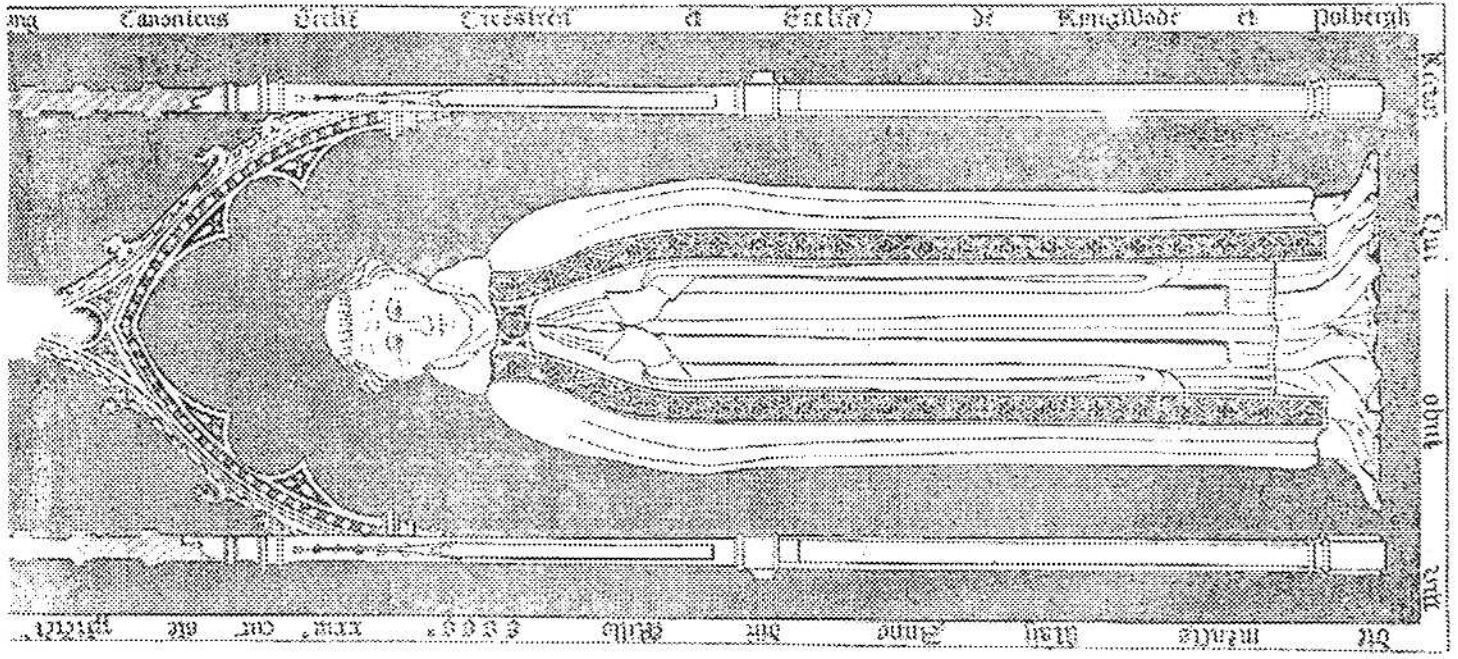
remnants of the other church almost certainly lie beneath the present church of St Mary. There is no evidence that a Roman Christian place of worship ever existed in Pulborough although numerous Roman artefacts have been found in the churchyard. It was quite common to use a high Roman site of whatever nature as the position for building a church. In view of its prominence on a hilltop overlooking the regular Roman ford across the River Arun, the Saxon church may even have been of stone. Probably, in the style of the times, the church would have been a simple rectangular nave and a small sanctuary. The present font, of Purbeck marble on a sandstone base, dates from the twelfth century. It is the oldest item in St Mary's and may have survived from the original church.

The oldest part of the present building dates from about 1220 (according to Francis Steer, a former County Archivist) or 1180 (according to an article in the 'Sussex Express' for 3 May 1859). Perhaps a compromise could be made at the year 1200 during the reign of King John. This is the present chancel and the chapel adjoining it in the north-east corner of the north aisle. This chapel was reconstructed in the 1950s but the chancel still contains the groups of lancet windows (that is, pointed arches with no ornament) in the 'Early English' or thirteenth century style of architecture. An exception is the elaborate fifteenth century window in the south wall of the chancel. That would have been a later addition, probably to let in more light.

No evidence has been discovered as to who founded the church or when it was consecrated and this is why the church anniversary (or Dedication Festival) is celebrated, according to custom, on the first Sunday in October. Indeed, the first name definitely associated with the church is that of Thomas Harlyng, a Rector of Pulborough in 1402 who died in 1423. His memorial brass, formerly on the floor of the chancel, now hangs on the wall of the north aisle. The brass depicts him as a saintly, youngish man (he was probably in his forties when he died), mittened hands at prayer and wearing fur-trimmed ecclesiastical garments.

He must have been Rector when most of the building of the remainder of the church took place. The nave, north and south aisles, the north porch and the tower were all built between about 1400 and 1435, during the reigns of Kings Henry IV, V and VI. Indeed, part of the money for the building of the new church was provided for in Thomas Harlyng's will dated 1422; and a further will, dated 30 June 1404 by John Tregoz of Goring left 20 shillings 'ad opus campanilis de Pulbergh' which suggests that the bell tower was either already under construction or had been planned.

These were stormy times. There were constant rebellions against King Henry IV led by the Percies of Northumberland; wars with the French culminating in the Battle of Agincourt and later resumed under the



inspiration of Joan of Arc; and unrest at the spread of Lollardy - an early manifestation of the Reformation in that its followers looked to the Bible for authority rather than the Pope in Rome.

In his will, dated 18 January 1422, Thomas Harlyng decreed that his body should be buried in the chancel of the church of Pulborough *if I should happen to die in the County of Sussex* or at Ringwood should he die in the County of Southampton. This illustrates the custom of 'pluralism' which is now illegal. Pluralism was when one person held two or more ecclesiastical benefices at the same time. Thomas Harlyng was at one time or another (and often simultaneously) a Canon and Archdeacon of Chichester; a Canon of St. Asaph's, Wales; Rector of Pulborough; Rector of Ringwood; Rector of Compton; Rector of Yeovil; Warden of Shrawardine Chapel, Shropshire; Parson of Rodington, Shropshire; Prebendary of Fittleworth; Prebendary of Ferring; Patron of the livings of Rudgwick and Ferring; etc, etc. The income in tithes and glebe from these various incumbencies must have made him a very rich man. He would no doubt have employed curates to look after his various churches. Indeed, there are numerous bequests in wills during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to curates of the church. For example: Aug 5, 1521 - I bequeath to Sir Henry Bullock (curate) ... 4 yards of black cloth. ('Sir' was a courtesy title often given to priests); Aug 22 1549 - I bequeath to Sir John Full, my curate ... my best gown.

In his will, Canon Harlyng made the following bequests to Pulborough Church:

'Item: I leave towards building a new church at Pulborough, fifty one pounds, thirteen shillings and fourpence.' (Probably several thousand pounds in today's money).

'Item: I leave to the Church of the Blessed Mary at Pulborough one complete set of vestments with a cope of damask and one chalice of silver well gilded, one manual and one processional for the service there of God, the Blessed Mary and all the Saints in perpetuity.'

'Item: I leave one hundred golden marks for one good and honest Chaplain to be hired by my Executors to pray for my soul and also to celebrate in the Church where my body shall happen to be buried for the next ten years after my death the said Chaplain to have each year for his salary ten marks and no less, even though one may be found to take it for a smaller price.'

The will is a long one and full of generous bequests to various churches. A large sum of money and all his residual estate was left for the building of the new Stopham Bridge which he no doubt used frequently on his journeys to and from Pulborough. In addition, he must have been a kind and generous man for there are numerous bequests to his friends and his

servants and, touchingly, one hundred shillings left to his niece, Joan, 'to help her to a husband'.

It is interesting that Canon Harlyng speaks of 'The Church of the Blessed Mary in Pulborough'. Various later wills give it a slightly different name: 1520 - 'Our Lady of Pity'; 1531 - 'Our Lady of the Assumption'; 1540 - 'The Chapel of Our Lady at Pulborough'.

All the corporate life of the people at this time centred on the village church. Hundreds of wills and testaments survive to show that Catholic piety was the binding force of society. Wills provide for the maintenance of church fabric; money for an altar; a vestment or loans to the poor; provision for various items of church furniture. There are directions for the conduct of services; references to memorials in side chapels.

But between the erection of the small chapel in the Early English style in the thirteenth century and the major works on the present nave in the fifteenth century, some building work was taking place. In the chancel, on the south side, are three fourteenth century 'sedilia' (seats for the clergy). These are obviously additions as they overlap the windows. Also, a 'piscina' is still in existence, whether from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries is not known (a 'piscina' is a stone bowl with a drain used for carrying away the water used in ceremonial ablutions, as at the end of the Communion Service). The piscina in Pulborough church is now blocked up. At the east end of the south aisle of the nave, the window is obviously of the 'Decorated' (fourteenth century) period. Were extensions to the church started during the fourteenth century but held up through lack of money?

In October 1494, one 'Thomas Cvembe of Pulborough' directed that his body be buried 'in the church of Pulborough'. This tomb was possibly the one described by Sir William Burrell in 1775 as 'standing on the South wall of the chancel, let into the wall'. The subsequent whereabouts of this tomb will be discussed later. He also bequeathed to the church 20 shillings for the buying of a 'new Portuous' (breviary) and explains that 10 shillings are for Richard Mylle and 10 shillings for himself. There was originally in the south-west corner of the churchyard a 'sepulchral chapel' (was it a mausoleum?) belonging to the family of Mille. Nothing remains of it today except for its memorial brasses on the south wall of the nave which were removed to the church when the memorial chapel was taken down in 1765. They commemorate Edmund Mille, Gentilman 1452' and 'Matilda his wife' and there is a plate for Richard Mille, their son and heir, 1478. The Mille family were prominent in the area, first established at Mill Place, the site of which is unknown, although a will of 1534 is made by William Mill of Greatham and in 1540 by Thomas Myll, also of Greatham.

The chapel in the north-east corner of the north aisle of the church is named after the Onley family. One John Onley (otherwise called John Coton) of Pulbergh in the county of Sussex' made a will on 13 March 1510. He died shortly afterwards. The will still exists in the West Sussex County Council Record Office. Under its terms, John Onley asks that his body be buried 'in my chapel within the Church of Pulbergh between 2 pillars of the quireside and there to have a tomb of marble a yard in height'. Why he called it 'my chapel' is unclear. Miss A J Macdonell in an article in St Mary's Parish Magazine in March 1961 suggests that, as he used the adjective 'my', he was patron of the living as was indeed his son, Thomas, and Mary Thomas's wife in 1549. Another source suggests that John Onley lived at Old Place manor. Whoever originally bestowed the name it is known as the 'Onley Chapel' to this day. There are still two pillars between the chapel and the chancel where the choir was originally seated but there is no longer a yard-high marble tomb. It was evidently still in place in the early years of the nineteenth century for James Dallaway in his 'A History of the Western Division of the County of Sussex' (Vol 2) (published 1819) records 'A defaced tomb commemorated the family of Oneley'. The theory of how the tomb was eventually removed is recorded later in this story, at the appropriate date. Although it is not known precisely where John Onley lived, it has been established that his son Thomas married Mary Dawtreay, widow of Nicholas Apsley of New Place, Pulborough.

The next will of interest is dated 5 August 1521 made by Richard Sutton who leaves a sum of money for the 'Rep'acion' of the bells of Pulborough which presumably by then had been in use for at least a hundred years.

There were frequent bequests such as 'a cow to the church of Pulborough for a treatalle of masses' (ie prayers for the donor's soul for thirty days). Cattle and goods were part of the parish funds. It was part of the Churchwarden's duties to see that they were properly kept and, where appropriate, traded in at the best time for the profit of the church. '1530 Sep 14 - To the High Altar of Pulborough, a sheep.' '1538 June 8. I bequeath 4 sheep for a stock.'

What did the church look like at this time, before the Reformation? Across the arch between the chancel and the nave there would have been a 'rood screen', probably with brightly coloured pictures of the saints in the panels. The screen would have supported a rood loft which was a gallery giving access to the 'Great Rood' or crucifix which would be richly carved in wood and painted, probably flanked by statues of St John and Mary, the Mother of Christ. A light would always have been kept burning before the rood - which would account for the many bequests in wills of money for 'rood lights'.

There would have been no seats in the nave save possibly a few benches for the old and infirm, and a low projection from the walls (which still exists in places today) could also have been used for seating. Probably rushes would have been strewn on the floor. The clergy would have had their seats (the sedilia) in the chancel and the small door (now blocked up) in the south-east corner of the chancel probably led into a sacristy used by the clergy for robing. The walls of the church were probably painted (as at Hardham and West Chilington churches) with Bible stories or, as the church was dedicated to Our Lady, with scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary. It must be realised that very few people could read at this time nor owned any books and, as the services were in Latin, the congregation might not have been able to understand much either. The wall paintings would act as a sort of 'comic strip' method of teaching the Bible.

When did the break with the Church of Rome take place that created a specifically 'Anglican' church?

There is a somewhat simplistic view that when King Henry VIII quarrelled with the Pope over his proposed divorce from Catherine of Aragon, he passed an Act of Supremacy in 1534 repudiating the authority of the Pope as head of the Church and immediately the Church of England came into being. The truth is not so simple. Except that the King had assumed the position of 'head' of the Church, worship went on in exactly the same way. However, the church throughout the whole of Europe was changing. The invention of printing, the revival of letters, new translations of the Bible, coupled with the spread of the teaching of reformers such as Luther, were bringing changes into forms of worship and beliefs. Moreover, there were weaknesses in the church that demanded change. There was much corruption. Priests lived too much in the world and there was endless jostling after money. For example, the sale of 'Indulgences' was a notable abuse. The Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 and 1539 was partly to remedy this (and partly to secure the wealth of the monasteries for the King). Gradually, changes came into effect that began to establish the church as we know it today. In 1538, it was ordered that a copy of the Bible in *English* be placed in every church. Under King Edward VI, the Prayer Book in English was introduced and many of the images and pictures were removed. In order that the congregation could more easily follow the services in English and see and hear what was going on, the rood screen and loft were taken away. By the same token, the Royal Arms were displayed in every church to indicate the King's authority. However, when Queen Mary (Catherine of Aragon's daughter) ascended to the throne in 1553, full Catholicism and the authority of the Pope were restored; the Royal Arms were removed and the rood would have been put back in place.

Mary died in 1558 and Queen Elizabeth I inherited a very unsettled church. The Roman Catholic church was seeking to cleanse itself from its irreligious and materialistic behaviour through what was known as the Counter-Reformation. However the Pope held that no heretic could reign. As Queen Elizabeth was the daughter of Anne Boleyn (whose marriage to Henry VIII was not recognised by the Pope) she felt herself unable to accept the Pope's authority and had herself declared 'governor' of the Church in England by the Act of Supremacy in 1559. Despite Mary's persecutions (or, perhaps, because of them) there was still strong support for protestantism in the country so Elizabeth sought to establish a national church in which Catholic and Protestant alike could worship. The 39 Articles of the Church of England were drawn up later. And in Pulborough, the names 'Our lady' or 'St Mary of the Assumption' seem to have been dropped as being too Roman and the Church became known simply as 'St Mary's'.

The Royal Arms were replaced but were later destroyed during the Commonwealth (1649 - 1660) when so much decoration in English churches was damaged or destroyed under the fanatical zeal of the Puritans. Any remaining wall paintings would have been wiped away at this time as well and the walls replastered. It is possible that the elaborate fifteenth century window in the chancel (revealed in 1879) was bricked up at this time and the wall plastered over. Would this have been to preserve beautiful glass from Puritan depredations? If so, there is no record of any glass being recovered when the window was uncovered in the last quarter of the nineteenth century - though perhaps at that time medieval glass was not treasured as it is today.

During the Civil War which preceded the Commonwealth, it would appear that the Parliamentary side was in the ascendant in this part of Sussex. Many clergy who did not subscribe to Puritan ideas were turned out of their livings on the flimsiest evidence. In 1646, the Rector of St Mary's, Randolph Apsley, was accused as a 'common drinker and scandalous liver, having been seen in a public house at Stopham'. But it must be remembered that the Pulborough living was even then worth £400 per annum - a handsome income in those days - and the Puritan rector of Petworth, Dr Cheynell, was keen to bestow it on one of his own protégés. He and '4 more elders of the church' were given authority to try the case with the result that Mr Apsley was replaced by John Goldsmith, reputedly a 'phanaticke' Puritan. Goldsmith conveniently died just before the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660 and Mr Apsley was happily reinstated, having meantime 'lived very meanly at another small living of his, his children being kept by the charity of his relations'.

1660 brought in a law that the Royal Arms were to be displayed in all churches and a photograph of 1874 shows the arms still in position over the

chancel arch. The arms of King George III still exist in the church but have been relegated to the south wall of the tower. As religious differences ceased to hold first place in the concerns of government, the law seems to have lapsed.

In 1676, John Mille, Rector, bequeathed £5 'for and towards the repairing, fitting and making that chapel ... formerly belonging to Mr Onley, a vestry' and such it remained until the middle of the twentieth century.

In 1737 and 1738 faculties were granted to build galleries in the church. (A faculty had (and still has) to be obtained from the Chancellor of the Diocese before the fabric of the church could be altered in any way, except in the course of necessary repairs. Such alterations included the demolition and removal of, and substitutions to, the fabric of the church, most commonly its windows, galleries, screens, pews, vaults and memorials.) There is no record of these galleries being built or where but it was a feature of the period to provide such accommodation for musicians who accompanied the singing with a variety of string and wind instruments. Galleries were also added to accommodate larger congregations due to the increasing population though this may not have applied in an agricultural area such as Pulborough.

A South Porch (now the Vestry) was constructed during the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It is thought that the stones may have come from the sepulchral chapel of the Mille family.

Heating during the early nineteenth century was by stove. The Churchwarden's Accounts for this period imply that the stoves needed constant attention. A bundle of chips for kindling cost threepence (just over 1p today) while a hundred weight of coal cost one shilling and sixpence (7½p).

A great deal of power was vested in the Rector during these times. For 500 years he was Lord of the Manor of St Mary's, Pulborough and his word would carry weight in the parish. Until the reforms of the late nineteenth century, his Vestry (that is, the assembly of parishioners) was responsible for such matters as poor relief, highways, and law and order, as well as the maintenance of the church. 'A pen and ink drawing of the church (executed between 1825 and 1850) shows the position of the parish stocks when they were in use. They were placed near to the church for the convenience of the wardens, whose duty it was to make an example of absentees whom, during the service-time, they might find in the village alehouse.' (This is an extract from an article by F J in the Parish Magazine for September 1924). The Rector's influence was felt everywhere: in the provision of schools and roads, soup-kitchens, relief for the poor and so forth. There were a number of outstanding Rectors during the nineteenth century, the first of whom

was the Revd John Austin, Rector from 1822 to his death in 1856 at the age of 86. He made great changes in the structure of the church.

According to Mr Jesse Greenfield, Parish Clerk for 46 years during the middle of the nineteenth century, Rector Austin received permission to open up the north or Onley chapel so that it would become part of the church. This meant removing the tomb of John Onley, and, according to Mr Greenfield's account (recorded in a paper by Mr Garraway Rice) 'so desirous was the Rector to see the tomb demolished that he worked at it himself with a pick-axe ... The portions of the tomb not re-erected, were used to form steps to the path from the cutting in the hill to the churchyard, which steps are now covered with earth.' It is further suggested that Rector Austin also appropriated part of the fifteenth century tomb of Thomas Cvmbes originally against the south wall of the chancel and put the flat stone on edge in the north wall of the chapel. It was later re-inscribed 'To the memory of Mary wife of John Austin AM Rector of this parish, who died on 12 March 1851, aged 81 years'. At a later date the following was added: 'Also of John Austin who died Dec 4th, 1856, aged 86 years'. It would appear that their bodies are buried in the chancel for there is a memorial slab in the floor incised with 'Mary and John Austin (Rector)'. The Onley Chapel was at this time used as a vestry. It possibly also housed the Barrell organ referred to in an 1842 inventory of church property. The organ had 4 barrells and, as each barrell had 10 or 12 tunes on it, this would imply that the church had a fair repertoire of hymn-tunes at this time.

In 1852 an additional burial ground was conveyed to the church and consecrated, the expenses in this matter being £24.1.2d.

However, despite his somewhat cavalier handling of a pick-axe, Rector Austin was a great benefactor. In his will he left £3,367 'to promote the education of the poor in this parish'. The Austin Charity continues to this day to support the work of St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School in the village. The glass in the big, three-lancet east window of the church commemorates Rector Austin's munificence.

The Rector who succeeded John Austin was the Revd William Sinclair. He was a younger son of a distinguished family and, during a dashing career as an Indian Army officer (from the age of 16) in the Madras Cavalry, he saved enough of his pay to study theology. In 1857, after twenty years' distinguished service in Leeds (during which time he built eight new churches with schools and parsonages) he brought his dynamic personality to bear on the living of Pulborough.

His first task was to carry out his predecessor's wishes regarding education in the village. He built the schools in Pulborough, North Heath and Nutbourne, replacing in the first case the old school towards the bottom

of Rectory Lane built earlier in the century. All this was quickly achieved - in a mere two years - after which he turned his attention to the church.

'The Sussex Express' for 3 May 1859 records the 're-opening' of the church in Pulborough 'which has been closed for some months for restoration and repair. Unwisely galleries' (presumably built after the faculties of 1737 and 1738) 'in most of which it was impossible to see or hear, were taken down; high square pews, in the old churchwardens' style, were removed, and a monster pulpit which, with a curious revolving reading desk, completely shut out the spacious chancel, was replaced by a handsome pulpit and desk of oak. The whole chancel, nave and aisles, are now fitted up with neat, open seats, affording more accommodation than was provided by the former comfortable arrangement, and a stained glass window has been put up at the east end of the chancel, in memory of the late Rev J Austin, rector of Pulborough ...'

The newspaper account also records 'The glass for another painted window was presented by the Rev W Gore of Rusper.' Presumably this is the single light window between the south door of the chancel and the chancel arch, as all other windows in the church have known attributions. The same newspaper article goes on to say 'The south side of the chancel has a double lancet window' (the one with plain glass at the south-east corner of the chancel) 'and one of a single light; the last is of the kind which has given subject for so much debate as to its use; being at the western part, brought down quite low, it has been supposed, in order to afford lepers, and such proscribed persons, the opportunity of seeing from the outside the altar services.' There is no window 'brought down low' today although an article by FJ in the September 1924 Parish Magazine states 'I have been told that the window between the chancel door and the chancel arch at one time extended down almost to the floor, and that Rector Austin had the lower part walled up because the glass in that part was so frequently broken.' So perhaps the Revd Gore's gift afforded the opportunity to embellish the upper portion of the original 'window brought down low.' There is no evidence from outside to show any new work as the whole of the south wall of the chancel is rendered.

The nineteenth century romantically ascribed all low windows as being 'leper squints' but it seems unlikely that there were so many lepers in the community to need the hundreds of 'squints' throughout the land. Nor would it seem likely that they would be permitted to be so close to centres of population. Another suggestion has been made that these long narrow windows were in part hinged and could be opened during the services. In a largely agricultural community, with none of the modern aids for gathering in the harvest quickly, farmers and their hands would need to work in the fields even during the times of service. The priest, therefore,

would ring a bell (eg for the Angelus three times a day) through the open window so that the workers could pause in their labours to make the necessary prayers. Millet's famous painting 'The Angelus' illustrates this.

On 18 April 1859, a resolution was passed at a church meeting 'that the sittings in the church should be free and unappropriated' which suggests that pew-rents went out with the 'high square pews' in the refurbishment of the church.

An item in the church accounts for 1863 covers expenses in connection with a court of enquiry into the immoral conduct of the parish clerk. He appeared before the Archdeacon and was sentenced to two years' suspension from duty. However, on the intervention of Rector Sinclair who pleaded that his conduct was now 'discrete and respectable' the parish clerk was reinstated after only one year's suspension. (The parish clerk was a church official and the church itself was still responsible for much of the village administration.)

At some time, a more modern instrument than the barrell organ may have been installed in the church because 'The Sussex Express' of 18 January 1868 records a testimonial presented to a Miss Byam 'in acknowledgement of her services at the organ of St Mary's Church during a period of eight years.' On the other hand, FJ records 'On my first entrance into the church in 1868, I soon observed the small organ, which occupied the south-west corner of the south aisle. It had been converted from a barrell-organ into a single manual. Mr Clement Herbert tells me that when, in 1874, the present organ was erected in the chancel, the old organ was removed to Stopham Church.'

As above-mentioned, in 1874, a splendid new organ was installed at a cost of £270. It was situated in the Onley Chapel where it opened into the chancel. It was built by Forster and Andrews of Hull. 'The want of an effective instrument has been keenly felt by all who attend the church,' wrote 'The West Sussex Gazette' on 7 May 1874. 'Latterly a subscription has been raised for the purchase of one worthy of the size and importance of the building.'

At the same time, the new glass in the north-east window of the chancel was dedicated to Mrs Helen Ann Burrell, formerly of West Grinstead Park, who in 1862 had founded Almshouses for widows in the parish. These were the cottages below the lychgate, above the War Memorial, altered in 1958 and renamed 'Bishop's Cottage' in honour of Bishop George Bell of Chichester.

In July 1878, Rector Sinclair died, greatly loved and respected for the 'eloquence, judgement and wide liberality which had made him respected throughout West Sussex.' His work and that of his wives is commemorated

in the Sinclair Window which, according to the inscription, was 'long covered up and was accurately rebuilt and filled with stained glass in loving gratitude by their surviving children' in 1879 or 1880. The old mullions and tracery of the original fifteenth century window were carefully restored.

Rector Sinclair was succeeded for the next 26 years by the Hon the Revd George Winfield Bourke who became the first Parish Council Chairman when Parish Councils as we know them came into being in 1894. He also was responsible for the reredos of five pointed arches behind the altar. This was replaced in the late nineteen-fifties.

On Christmas Day 1880 there were used for the first time four blocks of carved oak stalls by the choir and two prayer desks by the officiating clergy. These were given by Rector Bourke and were designed by James Fowler of Louth, Lincolnshire. They were made by Mr Housman of Norwich. Are the prayer-desks the two still in use today?

At the same time, the lighting of the church was improved by using Duplex lamps instead of candles. There were 14 lamps in the nave. 'The effect in the Church of all these lamps when lighted' runs the Parish Almanack for 1880 'is all that could be desired. While sufficiently lighting up the whole building, causing the pillars and arches to stand out distinctly to view, and affording means to the whole congregation to read with facility.'

At some time, perhaps during Rector Sinclair's renovations, a new gallery must have been erected in the church, possibly across the west end under the tower, because in 1881 Rector Bourke recorded in the Service Book 'in consequence of misconduct among certain young men in the gallery, the afternoon service was stopped after the first lesson.' What misconduct, one wonders?

The Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897 was marked by the installation in the church tower of three new bells given by the Rector. These would complete a peal of eight. The other five bells are dated 1636, 1665, two of 1754 and one recast but originally of a date between 1487 and 1500. The framework had been found to be dangerous so the complete peal was hung in a new framework.

Another memorial to Queen Victoria was a beautiful white altar frontal which was used for the first time on Christmas Day 1904, together with a new altar and crimson velvet super-frontal. This was purchased with money raised to commemorate the Queen's long reign which ended with her death in 1903. This information comes from the second copy of the St. Mary's Parish Magazine which was instituted in January 1905 by the new Rector, the Revd Frederick Baggallay. It has continued to this day (though under the name of 'the Messenger' between January 1953 and August 1971).

Who appointed all these rectors who served St Mary's over the centuries? In feudal times, the Lord of the Manor would provide a free-holding to support a priest for the peoples of his domain. The land provided for the priest, and its produce, was known as 'glebe'. The users of the land within the manor paid a 'tithe' (or tenth part) of their income or produce to the support of the 'living'. This was the source of the income which would go with a church appointment. Thus, when a priest had many livings (as in Canon Harlyng's time) he soon became a wealthy man. 'Patronage' is a relic of feudal society and would be passed on by descent or by purchase. The patron of the living is the person who has the right to choose a priest for appointment by the bishop. The present patron is Lord Egremont of Petworth House. The third Earl of Egremont bought the advowson (ie the right to nominate a successor to a vacant benefice) of Pulborough in 1775 so it has belonged to the family for over 200 years. An advowson was a property which could be bought and sold like any other. The aristocracy would buy them to extend their powers of patronage - they would give a living to a member of their own family; or to friends or protégés of influential people as a favour; or to persons whom they wished to reward or support. They could also use the power of nominating an incumbent to promote whichever brand of Anglicanism they themselves favoured, whether High Church or Low Church. Nowadays, the appointments are agreed by consultation between the Bishop, the Patron and representatives of the church, so the process is more democratic.

With the introduction of a Parish magazine by Rector Baggallay in 1905, it becomes much easier to follow the developments in the church, though there is little building of interest save for repairs to the North Porch in 1912. A faculty was applied for in June 1914 to provide oak seating, worthy of the building, to replace the stained deal pews but it would appear that the First World War precluded this change from being carried out. All the efforts during the war years seem to have been directed towards good works and keeping up the morale of the village.

After the Armistice, plans were laid for a War Memorial (unveiled and dedicated on Easter Day 1920) and an Honours Tablet in alabaster to commemorate the 68 men of the village killed in action. This was dedicated on 4 August 1921, seven years exactly from the outbreak of hostilities, but the magazine reports sadly '... the Church was by no means full as might have been expected. However, it was raining, it was the 'pictures' night, and we have short memories nowadays.' A further memorial to those who fell in the Second World War was dedicated in November 1952.

Meantime, what of the church building? A report in March 1921 states 'It appears as though the time will soon come when a considerable sum of money will have to be spent on the Church. The main roof is in very bad

condition ... the buttresses on the north side are only held together by ivy and there are signs that the walls are perishing ...'

Rector Baggallay had by now retired, full of years, and had been succeeded by the Revd Ernest Isaac Frost. He put in hand various urgent repairs to the roof and lighting and, in 1923, restored the South Porch. It had been used as a lumber room but was now cleared for use as the Choir Vestry. Two small windows that had been bricked up were re-opened and new oak doors were provided.

During the same year, two handsome Jacobean chairs for the sanctuary were given by Mr Harry Price in memory of his parents. These were for the use of visitors of distinction such as the Bishop.

In April 1926 Archdeacon Hoskyns of Chichester made an official visit to St Mary's. In his report he stated: 'It is to be hoped that the ancient Chapel in the north aisle may some day be restored.' Alas, this was not to take place for over 30 years. In fact, emphasis during the nineteen-twenties and early thirties seemed to be more on the ornamentation and embellishment of the church.

In 1927 a wrought iron screen was placed across the chancel. This, the gift of Mr Basil Gray, was designed by Col Godman, the Diocesan Architect. It was in black, with silver crosses running the length of each gate.

In 1929, a further screen was given by the Revd F Wilson Baggallay in memory of his parents (the late Rector and his wife). This screen closes off the tower from the nave. It is of oak, 'mock Gothic' in style, but does not seem to serve any particular purpose. It was designed by Mr (later Sir) J Ninian Comper.

John Ninian Comper, who was born in 1864, was an artist of great distinction whose main claim to fame is that in 1927 he designed the window in the Warriors' Chapel of Westminster Abbey and in 1952 designed the War Memorial Window in Westminster Hall. He died in 1960 and is buried in Westminster Abbey. He created two windows in St Mary's, Pulborough, details of which are given in the special chapter of this book devoted to 'Windows.' He designed the West window, given by Mr W G Burnett in memory of his wife. He also designed the 'Baptismal Window' at the west end of the south aisle. Everyone in the village who had been baptised in the church was invited to contribute to the cost of the work. The inscription reads 'Dedicated to our Lord by the Children of the Parish, 1929.'

Meanwhile, in 1927, another stained glass window (also described later) had been placed in the south aisle (in the fourteenth century window) to the memory of Jane Elizabeth Cole.

The reglazing of the window was followed on by the restoration of the 'Blessed Sacrament' Chapel at the east end of the south aisle, beneath the

Cole window. This was another suggestion made by Archdeacon Hoskyns of Chichester in his 1926 report. The chapel was rededicated in January 1931. Although there does not appear to have been any record of the chapel's use at any earlier time, the Archdeacon at the rededication service spoke of it as 'an ancient Chapel which had been in use for some centuries.'

In 1933 a subscription list was opened for cleaning and regilding the church clock though the £14.10.0 required to meet the cost took nine months to collect! Times were hard.

In October 1934, the church was lit by electricity for the first time.

But war clouds were gathering over Europe and no development apart from repairs took place until after the Second World War. A stark note in the Magazine for August 1940 states that 'Between four and five tons of iron railings were obtained from the Churchyard and given in response to the National appeal.' When at last hostilities ceased, the church found itself in a changed world. No longer was the Rector the powerful and wealthy figure he had been in the community for centuries, able to finance much church refurbishment out of his own pocket. 'The kind of glory', wrote Rector G H W Royle who had been appointed to the living in 1944 'which once belonged to the Rectory of Pulborough - its rich endowments - has gone forever.' Henceforward, it would fall largely upon the congregation to meet the cost of improvements. It is amazing that, over the past fifty years, so much has been achieved.

The most immediate need was to replace the organ which had been installed as long ago as 1874. In 1947 an 1895 organ was moved from Holmwood, near Dorking, and sited next to the tower. This, with the old organ removed, opened up the possibility of restoring the east end of the north aisle to its original use as a chapel. The new organ was dedicated on 15 May 1947.

After the refurbishment of the church tower in 1955, attention was turned to the interior of the church and, as 'The Messenger' of May 1956 reports: 'The PCC will take early steps to secure the finest available advice on the important matter'. It was decided to consult Mr J Sebastian Comper FRIBA (son of Sir J Ninian Comper, designer of the west and children's windows and the tower screen). He put forward suggestions for improvements in walls, seating, lighting, heating and paving but his main preoccupation was for the arrangements of the chancel which, he felt, had suffered too much from 'improvements' during the nineteenth century; also for the treatment of the space left in the north aisle following the removal of the organ to the west end of the church.

Work began in 1957 with the colour-washing of the nave, aisles and tower and the removal of the font from under the tower to its present

position within view of the principal door of the church. The next stage was the restoration of the Onley Chapel in the north aisle of the church - a work suggested so many years before in the Archdeacon's report of 1926. The north wall of this chapel was rebuilt where, in 1921, it was reported to be perishing and a new four-light window designed by Mr Comper was created to admit more light. The three square-headed windows in the east wall (shown on SH Grimm's drawing of 1791) were blocked up and replaced by a single pointed arch in the Early English style. The wooden ceiling was painted strikingly in black, white and red (in the style of the hall of Trinity College, Cambridge) and the whole area was repaved, replacing the wooden floor.

The final stage of the restoration work was to lower the floor of the sanctuary, establishing its original level and repaving it with Hopton Wood stone. The communion rail was moved westwards so that the sedilia would be included in their proper place within the sanctuary. There is no evidence as to whether this was the original seventeenth century communion rail or a later one. Finally, the five-arched Victorian reredos was removed so as to show the full length of the east window. In its place, riddell posts surmounted by angels, and richly coloured hangings provided a new backing for the new high altar. Although a magnificent set of hangings in blue, white and gold was later given by Mrs Gladys Keeling, the main set of hangings are in 'Comper rose', a subtle deep pink which was obtained by spreading out the damask in the sun in Spain until it bleached to the required shade. Alas, some of Mr Comper's hangings in other churches are now rotting owing to this treatment. The old choir-stalls were moved to the back of the church for use by the choir and the whole of the chancel was repaved. (New chandeliers designed by Mr Comper provided the lighting in the chancel and Onley chapel and in 1966 further chandeliers to the same design were provided in the nave.) All the new work was completed by December 21 1958 when the new altar was consecrated. The silver processional cross, also designed by Sebastian Comper and made by the ecclesiastical goldsmith W F Knight, was not completed and dedicated until 1962.

In 1968, the new lancet window over the altar in the Onley Chapel was filled with stained glass again designed by Sebastian Comper. As with the new window in the north wall of the chapel, it is signed with Comper's 'trade mark' of a strawberry fruit and flower. The window shows at the top the RAF crest as it is dedicated to the memory of Flying Officer Richard Kirby Crowther, RAF who was killed in 1944.

Sebastian Comper lived to the great age of 87 years, and his ashes were buried beneath a memorial tablet in the chancel floor on 5 December 1979. The tablet is an exact copy of the one in Westminster Abbey beneath which

his father's ashes are buried. Apparently Sebastian Comper left detailed instructions as to how his ashes were to be buried and provided precise dimensions as to the size of the hole. It is reported that when the ceremony was due to take place, it was discovered that the urn with the ashes was too large for the hole provided and Mr Comper's remains had hastily to be transferred to a container of more appropriate size.

In May 1976 an aumbry was installed in the south wall of the church, next to the piscina by the Blessed Sacrament altar, together with a white sanctuary lamp which burns perpetually. These were given by Mrs Eileen Whyte-Venables in memory of her husband, Dr H A Whyte-Venables, a former churchwarden of St Mary's. An aumbry (or 'ambry' as it is sometimes spelt) is a small cupboard near an altar used for storing sacred vessels and, in this case, the 'reserved' sacrament (ie bread and wine already consecrated during a service of communion). These can be used for the sick or dying. For instance, one Rector is known to have administered the last rites to a dying victim of a road accident on Church Hill who asked for the services of a priest.

In November 1977 a Faculty sanctioned the removal of the chancel railings placed there in 1927, thus completing the opening up of the whole of the east end of the church as envisaged by Mr Comper in his 1956 plans. When, in 1981, the new custom was introduced of having an altar *between* the sanctuary and the nave with the priest facing towards the congregation and that same congregation being able more readily to 'meet around the Lord's table', it was easy to position there a new altar given, built and carved by Mr Robert Tunnell. (This altar is now used in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel).

Flood lighting the outside of the church was switched on for the first time at Christmas 1982. The then Rector, the Revd Basil St C A Maltin, wrote in the parish magazine of this latest development: 'Our Church, high on a promontory, can be seen from every approach to Pulborough; from the A29 both North and South, and a rather special view coming from Stopham as well as from across the Glebe Field from Lower Street. Illuminated, our Church building will shine as a beacon, pointing the finger of God to Heaven as an early concept of the tower.'

Perhaps the Saxon Christians might have approved of this use of their Roman hilltop site.

THE BELL TOWER

The Tower is embattled and commands a panoramic view from Toat Tower to the North and the Downs and flood plain of the River Arun to the South.

Inside, it is apparent that at some stage the tower was intended to be vaulted. There are four ribs springing from angels (one now missing) holding shields. Corbels (projections from the face of the wall used as supports) are probable survivors of the gallery in which Rector Bourke's young men 'misbehaved' in 1881. This part of the church is now used as a choir vestry. Massive west doors lead out into the churchyard. There was originally a newel staircase leading to the upper stages of the tower but this has been blocked up. The bellringers today have access from outside the tower on its west side. The ringing chamber is reached by thirty-nine dark, winding stairs, with no handrail.

In the Parish Magazine for March 1925, 'FJ' writes:

Pulborough Church Bells

Dr Tyssen's 'Church Bells of Sussex', published first in 1864 by the Sussex Archaeological Society, records the inscriptions on the three oldest of the five bells then in the tower. These inscriptions were:

- 1 Sancta Katerina ora pro nobis □ ✠
- 2 Gloria Deo in excelsis. AA. R.C. 1636. BE.
- 3 John Welpham. Peter Woods. Churchwardens. 1665. WP. RP.

The petition for the prayers of St Catherine was one with which the people in the fifteenth century were familiar, and the name of the saint was frequently used in dedications. In the shield and cross are seen indications of the period at which this bell was founded, for Dr Tyssen says that the Balcombe shield and Litchington cross were used by founders between 1486 and 1500. At present this bell bears the inscription: 'Re-cast by J J Boxall, 1876. Warner & Sons, London'. This means that the cost of recasting the bell at Warner's foundry was provided for by Mr J J Boxall, whom I remember well as a churchwarden much esteemed by Rector Sinclair.

Of the bell dated 1636, it is explained by experts that the initial letters, following the (latin) inscription 'Glory to God in the Highest', represent the names of the wardens, and the 'B.E.' signifies Bryan Eldridge, the founder's name.

The initials WP.RP on the third bell are those of William and Roger Perdue, bell-founders. There is reason to believe that William Perdue had a temporary foundry at Chichester in 1665 and 1666.

In the eighteenth century two bells were added to this peal of three. The inscriptions on them are:

- 1 Thomas Lester and Thomas Pack of London fecit 1754. Peter Mose Esqre.
- 2 Thomas Lester and Thomas Pack of London made me 1754. Richard Clement and Jno. Giles Churchwardens.

To commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the peal was enlarged to eight bells, and each of the three bells of this addition bears the inscription:

'Glory to God. In memory of the 60th year of the happy reign of HM Queen Victoria. Cast by Taylor of Loughborough, 1897'

The total weight of the bells is two and three quarter tons.'

When the church tower was repaired in 1955, the names were revealed of a few who had helped to maintain the bell-ringing tradition in the past. One inscription, almost indecipherable today, reads:

'William Ayling, William Harwood, Thomas Lucas, Charles Strudwick, Richard Andrew, John Marsh, Thomas Bennet, Beautify this bellfry in ye year 1785'.

Another says:

'James Stace, aged 26, Harvey M Trevatt 23, Charles Wilmer 21, W S Trevatt 20 and Henry Nye 22 beautify this bellfry AD 1835'.

and adds the following:

'NB. All ringers that use this bellfry,
The Sexton fees do not deny,
for if the bell you overthrow,
pay down 6d, before you go.
Pull off your hat and gloves lay by,
Or pay down 6d immediately.
And if you take God's name in vain,
Pay down 1/- for your pains.
Beware of this whenever you ring.
God save the King'.

THE WINDOWS

There is no medieval stained glass in Pulborough Church. Such coloured windows as exist are either mid- to late-Victorian or twentieth century.

'A Guide to Stained Glass in Britain' by P Cowen speaks of 'tens of thousands of later Victorian windows that were to flood into the churches - a deluge that ranges from badly designed and feebly drawn compositions with standardized, sentimental characteristics, often badly fired and executed, to mediocre, yet competent factory-line products, through to the occasional magnificent work'.

The windows in the church are both of the 'enamelled' kind and traditional 'stained glass'. The Curator of the Stained Glass Museum in Ely Cathedral defines the difference as follows: 'Enamelled windows' means that they consist of glass which has been painted with coloured enamel and fired. The base glass would be white (ie uncoloured). The window is treated rather like an oil painting with the enamels painted on the glass in the same way that a picture is painted. It was not a terribly successful method of creating a stained glass window as the enamels are not as durable as traditional glass paint, often flaking off, and also the windows made in this way often lacked the luminosity of the traditional way of making windows.

Traditional stained glass windows consist of coloured glass which is then painted with black or brown paint to obscure part of the piece to create shading, or to define features in a face for example, or drapery. This is then fired in a kiln to fuse the paint into the glass to make it permanent, then the window is assembled using lead strips. The thing to remember is that the colour is already in the glass; it is not painted on as it is in enamelled windows.

The only reason enamelled windows were made is because the skills of producing coloured glass were lost for a period of nearly two hundred years, and were only rediscovered about 1850.

Both enamelled and traditional stained glass windows are painted but in different ways.'

CASP in an article in 'The Messenger' of September 1947 wrote: 'The earnest fanaticism of the Puritans sought to glorify God by destruction.

Surely every window once glowed with colour - our Parish Churches were 'the poor man's Bible' - when poor men could not read. Window and painted wall told of God's love shown in the life and death of the Lord Jesus. They showed also the example to be found in the lives of the saints of God.

For a hundred years men have sought to restore some of this beauty. Pulborough is fortunate - it has no windows utterly unworthy, as have many other churches'.

The coloured windows of the church are here listed in order as the visitor walks round the church.

1 Onley Chapel. The North Window. (1958)

A new window of four lights filled with armorial glass as a record of those chiefly responsible for the repair and refurbishment of the chapel in 1958. The window was designed by J B Sebastian Comper (son of Sir J Ninian Comper). It bears in the right hand light the strawberry motif used by Sebastian Comper as his signature.

2 Onley Chapel. The East Window. (1968)

A single pointed light designed by J B Sebastian Comper and again signed with his strawberry plant of flower and fruit. The upper half of the window shows the Royal Air Force crest. The lower section depicts a middle-aged St Anne along with a very girlish Virgin Mary in a blue robe. The window is dedicated to the memory of Flying Officer Richard Kirby Crowther, RAF, who was killed in 1944. Flying Officer Crowther courageously escaped from Crete a month or so after the German invasion of the island, only to be killed by a Flying Bomb after his return to England.

3 North-east wall of Chancel. (1874)

Two pointed lights under an arch. Window inscribed 'In affectionate and grateful memory of Helen Ann Burrell who founded the Almshouses in this parish. This window is erected by her nephew, Walter Sinclair AD 1874'.

The artist is unknown. The window depicts in the left hand light a female figure and the legend 'Dorcas full of good works'. In the right hand light Christ is depicted with Mary of Bethany and the legend reads 'Mary hath chosen that good part'.

4 The East Window. (1859)

Three lancets under a two-centred head. Glass predominantly red, green and blue. Designer unknown. Erected (according to the legend in the window) 'To the memory of the late Rev John Austin, MA, who munificently bequeathed £3367 to promote the education of the poor in this parish of which he had been Rector more than 34 years. This memorial window was erected by his friends and the parishioners as a lasting mark of their gratitude and esteem'. The design is mostly geometric. In the centre there is a small depiction of the Good Shepherd.

CASP in the article previously referred to comments: 'The east window certainly is monotonous. The Good Shepherd is a moving subject - but the name-parable can perhaps be given a fuller meaning than in the window here. 'The Good Shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep'. Almost alone of Parish Churches you have no window or picture or sculpture to show His supreme sacrifice'.

5 The Sinclair Window in the centre of the South Wall of the Chancel. (1879 or 1880)

A fifteenth century (Perpendicular Style) window was uncovered during repairs to the church in 1879. Artist unknown. The window has three lights. The first depicts 'Spes' or 'Hope' as a female figure holding a Bible. Beneath the figure is a female head and the text 'Thou art my hiding place and my shield. I hope in Thy Word'. In the centre light, 'Fides' or 'Faith' is depicted as a knight in armour. Beneath is a male Victorian worthy and the text 'This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith'. The right hand light depicts 'Caritas' ('Charity' or 'Love') as a female holding a basket of apples. Beneath is a female head and the text 'Let us love one another for love is of God'. Are the three heads portraits of Rector Sinclair and his two wives whose impressive pedigrees are set out on the memorial tablet below? There, the inscription reads: 'This window, long covered up, was accurately rebuilt and filled with stained glass in loving gratitude'.

6 Single Light Window in south wall of Chancel next to Chancel Arch. (Probably 1859 - see Story of Church)

Possibly an enamelled window, presented by the Revd W Gore of Rusper. Artist unknown. Depicts Mary as Queen of Heaven, holding sceptre in one hand and a lily in the other. Predominant colour red.

7 East Window of the South Aisle. (1927)

This is a fourteenth century (Decorated period) window of two trefoiled lights, with a quatrefoil, under a two-centred head. This glass was given by Annie Cole in memory of her sister, Jane Elizabeth Cole. The window is the work of William Glasby of Kensington.

William Glasby (1863 - 1941) was an ecclesiastical artist. His work is very much in the style of the artist William Morris and is sometimes confused with his work (William Morris in 1881 leased an old factory at Merton Abbey where he was able to keep under his own supervision the printing of textiles, the production of stained glass and the weaving of tapestries designed by his 'school'). Glasby exhibited designs for stained glass in the Royal Academy on several occasions during the first quarter of this century. He spent his whole career in

London but moved to Horsham three years before his death in 1941 at the age of 77.

The window depicts St Mary the Virgin and the Angel Gabriel in a somewhat Pre-Raphaelite style. Mary wears a blue robe over a red underskirt and carries a Madonna lily in her left hand. Underneath is the text: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord'. Gabriel, depicted with crimson wings and a white, gold and turquoise robe, carries an olive branch. His message is spelt out below: 'Blessed art thou among women'. In the quatrefoil, a dove is surrounded by the words 'Peace on Earth'.

CASP writes rather sourly: 'Your church is dedicated to the Blessed Mother of God Incarnate.

In the little chapel in the south aisle the window shows the Annunciation. From its style it is either from Merton Abbey or shows the influence of that school. It is red in colour but as a window lets in too little light. The Blessed Virgin is a Syrian girl but has not life. The Gabriel has nothing of the splendour of the Psalmists. 'He maketh His angels spirits and His Ministers a flame of fire'.

8 The Baptismal Window at the West end of the South Aisle. (1929)

Stained glass. Designed by J Ninian Comper. Everyone who had been baptised in the village was invited to contribute to the cost of the work. The inscription reads 'Dedicated to our Lord by the Children of the Parish, 1929'. It depicts at the top the arms of the Diocese of Chichester (a seated figure with a two-edged sword in his mouth and a Bible in his hand) and those of West Sussex (six martlets, ie birds without feet). Below, a very youthful Jesus holds a baby in his arms and five other children are gathered around him, one each being held by a kneeling woman and a standing woman. A scroll bears the words: 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not'. The background is a delicately drawn all-over pattern of wild flowers, butterflies, dogs, birds and fish.

9 The West Window (1927)

Designed by Mr (later Sir) J Ninian Comper. Given by Mr W G Burnett in memory of his wife. Three light window in the fifteenth century (Perpendicular) style.

The centre light depicts the Virgin and Child with the legend 'Sta Maria vgo'; the left hand light shows St Richard of Chichester and the legend 'Sanct. Ricardus'. St Richard carries a branch of a fig tree

which he is known to have tended while resident at the Old Palace, West Tarring. The right hand light shows St Wilfrid, the Apostle of Sussex, carrying a fish in a net, symbolic of his tutelage of Sussex fishermen. The legend is 'Sct. Wilfridus'.

'In your west window in the tower,' glows CASP in the September 1947 article already referred to 'you have something exquisite. The two great heroes of the Sussex Church, St Wilfrid and St Richard of Chichester. They stand, those supremely great men, in reverent adoration of Our Lord; in veneration, too, of His Blessed Mother. St Wilfrid, with his fishing net by which he overcame the stubborn Sussex conservatism that had kept Sussex back from the faith; St Richard, the humble, devout servant of God.

St Wilfrid brought food to starving Sussex - surely a saint to be venerated today! but he brought first to the fair land of the South Saxons the revelation of God in Jesus.

St Richard is known far beyond Sussex for his lovely prayer, an index to his saintliness. Let us pray with our Saint to Jesus:

May we see Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly,
and follow Thee more nearly'.

The remainder of the windows in the church are filled with plain glass of a blue/green tint in varying depths of tone. The windows have amber glass surrounds.

Very little damage was sustained by the windows during the hurricane of 1987. Only a few small panes were dislodged.

THE MEMORIALS

North Aisle

- 1 North doors erected in 1910 in memory of Catharine Louisa Shaft.
- 2 Brass between middle and easternmost window, to Thomas Harleyng. The marginal inscription, translated, reads: 'Here lies Sir Thomas Harleyng, Canon of Chichester and Rector of Ringwood and Pulborough, who died 8... of May, AD 1423, on whose soul may God have mercy, Amen'. The figure, vested in cassock, surplice, fur almuce, cope and mittens, stands beneath a canopy surrounded by the marginal inscription above of which only one word is missing.
- 3 North wall. Black and white marble tablet. James Heath d. 24 Feb 1817, aged 74, and wife Elizabeth, d. 11 March 1832, aged 89.
- 4 Above arch to Onley Chapel. Black and white marble tablet. Mary Ann, daughter of William and Mary Heath, and wife of Peter Horlick, d. 1 March 1843, in 21st year of her age.
- 5 On wall to left of lectern and above cupboard. Wooden plaque painted by George Kruger Gray, 1942, with inscription: 'In appreciation of the kindness shown by the people of Pulborough to the Peckham Central Schools during the World War'. Bears the coats of arms of the LCC and of the WSSC. Below is the Peckham School Badge - a lion rampant and a spray of London Pride on each side. The plaque was presented on 28 March 1942.

The Onley Chapel

- 6 In the north-east corner. A tomb of Purbeck and Sussex marble under a simple embattled canopy; this dates from c. 1495 and it is believed that it was originally in memory of Thomas Cymbe of Pulborough who died in 1494, and was moved from the south wall of the chancel. The recess is occupied by a large slab of Purbeck marble inscribed 'To the Memory of Mary, Wife of John Austin, A.M. Rector of this Parish, who died March 12th, 1851. Aged 81 years. Also of John Austin, A.M. who died Decr. 4th, 1856. Aged 86 years'.

Chancel

- 7 Floor of Sanctuary. Black slate slab 'John Sebastian Comper. Artist and Architect: 1891 - 1979 and Zoë his wife. Requiescant in Pace'.
- 8 East wall of chancel arch. Black and white marble tablet. Elizabeth Marriott of Darfield, Yorks. d. 3 July 1788, aged 74.
- 9 & 10 North wall. Two black and white marble tablets. (i) William, son of James and Elizabeth Heath, d. 14 Jan 1813, aged 38 (ii) James Heath, d. 25 April 1830, aged 63, and wife Mary, d. 16 Dec 1831, aged 67.
- 11 On angle of north wall with Onley Chapel. Tablet of white marble, with a cherub having a drapery round his neck from which hangs a scroll with rollers top and bottom: 'To the memory of Mrs Eliz. Coles ye most Loving Wife of Christor Coles of this Place Gent: the most Dutyfull Daughter of Sr John Tippetts Knight Surveyor of His Majestie' Navy by the Lady Margaret his Wife Shee left Heirs to Inherit Her Many Virtues two Children John & Eliz: Twenty six years of age ... Shee went for Heaven the 4th Decem 1683.
- 12 On north wall. Black and white marble tablet, with urn. Revd Harvey Spragg MA, FSA, rector for 35 years d. 1 June 1796, aged 73, and wife Sarah, d. 12 April 1820, aged 81.
- 13 Floor Slab in extreme south-east corner. 'William Legg, gent. d. 20 Oct, 1728, aged 25; John Legg, rector, d. 23 June, 1736, aged 44; John Parham, gent. d. 14 Feb 1753, aged 58; Benedicta, relict of the Rev John Legg, d. 11 March, 1755, aged 64'.
- 14 Matrix of brass in floor with inscription plate. Judith Apsley, bur. 31 May 1706, aged 52 and her husband, John, of Pulborough, bur. 18 Mar 1713, in his 76th year; with separate shield of arms of Apsley impaling Peckham.
- 15 Floor Slab. 'Mary, wife of John Austin, d. 12 March 1851, aged 81; John Austin, MA, d. 4 Dec 1856, aged 86'.
- 16 South wall under Sinclair Window. Alabaster and mosaic tablet 'To the Glory of God and in most beloved memory of the Rev. William Sinclair, MA Oxford (5th Son of the Rt. Honble Sir John Sinclair Bart MP of Thurso Castle, Caithness by his wife Diana daughter of Alexander Lord Macdonald of the Isles) Prebendary of Gates in the Cathedral Church of Chichester, 21 years Rector of this Parish, formerly 19 years Vicar of St George's Leeds and 10 years an Officer in the 4th Madras Light Cavalry; born 4th Sep 1804 AD fell asleep in the Lord 8th July 1878.

also of Helen Elizabeth his first wife daughter of William Ellice Esq MP by Harriet Ross of Rossie his wife born 16th January 1812 Married 28th Dec 1837 fell asleep in the Lord at Ventnor AD 1842. also of Sophia Mary Georgiana his second wife, daughter of the Rev. James Tripp Rector of Spofforth Yorkshire by Eliza Howard Harvey his wife born 24th April 1824 married 15th April 1846 fell asleep in the Lord at Lonsdale House Fulham 22nd July 1885.

This window, long covered up, was accurately rebuilt and filled with stained glass in loving gratitude, by their surviving children'.

- 17 South wall. Alabaster tablet. 'James Archibald Sinclair, child of the Rev. William Sinclair and his wife Sophia, bur. Aug. 1857, aged 6'.
- 18 South wall. Black and white marble tablet. 'Edward William Tredcroft, LLB, Rector of 26 years, born 25 Oct. 1749, d. 4 Aug. 1822.'

Nave

- 19 North side of south arcade. Black and white marble tablet. Ann, wife of William Blunden, coheirress of John and Mary Cobb, d. 7 Dec. 1828, aged 89 and William Blunden, d. 2 Feb. 1832, aged 78.

- 20 North side of south arcade. Wall tablet of white and coloured marbles, with urn, to members of the Cobb family; the eighteenth century inscription is illegible from ground level.

- 21 In centre aisle. Floor slab with matrix of brasses of small half-length effigy and an inscription plate.

The South Aisle

- 22 Wall Brass. 'Edmund Mille, gent. (died 27 October, 1452) and his wife Maud', with one shield of arms remaining out of four.

- 23 Wall Brass. 'Richard (died 10 April 1478) son and heir of Edmund Mille', with one shield.

- 24 South wall. Two War Memorials. The First World War memorial is of rather brightly coloured alabaster, with a scrolled top and a shield on a plaque in the break between the scrolls. This contains a gold cross on a red background. A laurel wreath is carved below the 68 names commemorated. The Second World War Memorial is a simple slab of stone with 18 names recorded, beautifully lettered.

- 25 West wall of south aisle. Alto-relievo by John Gibson, RA (1790 - 1866) of Rome in memory of William Edgar Hammond and his wife,

Ellen Catherine. Hammond is shown dying comfortably in a chair with his wife and four children in attendance. An angel flying above beckons them to heaven. The Hammonds 'were for many years residents in this parish'. As the monument was put up in September 1895, it must have been commissioned more than 30 years earlier.

The Tower

- 26 On the north wall are the remains of a rectangular memorial set flush in the wall against an ornamental painted background of ermine spots; the inscription is illegible from ground level.

PLATE

The only ancient plate belonging to St. Mary's is an elegant plain silver cup with a deep bowl and lid, inscribed 1587. It was perhaps used as a ciborium or vessel for communion wafers. This is lodged in a bank for security. The other communion vessels, crosses, candlesticks and processional candlesticks are modern and mostly plated or of white metal. The candlesticks and crosses in the Onley Chapel and Blessed Sacrament Chapel and the two altar lamps are all modern and of brass. It is not possible to give a comprehensive list of all the donors.

RECORDS

The parish registers date from 1595. The volumes not in current use are held by the West Sussex Record Office, Chichester, together with many other records relating to the parish of Pulborough.

THE ORGAN

The organ, made in 1895 by Bryceson Bros Ltd of London, was purchased from a mansion in Holmwood and installed in the church in 1947. It has three manuals, and pedals. All speaking stops consist of entirely independent ranks of pipes. It was rebuilt in 1966 by Hele & Co of Plymouth and the opening recital was given in the church on 6 May 1947 by J Birch, the Organist and Master of Choristers of Chichester Cathedral.

THE ARCHITECTURE

St Mary's Church, which stands on high ground above the flood plain of the River Arun, is built of local stone. The roof is mostly tiled with Horsham slabs.

The nave and Onley Chapel in the north aisle were built in the early thirteenth century in the 'Early English' style, with plain lancet windows, some single, some grouped in pairs and the east window a group of three lights. The chancel roof is plastered and supported by two plain tie-beams.

The church was extended in the first half of the fifteenth century to include a nave with aisles on the north and south sides separated from the nave proper by arcades (a series of arches) each of four bays. The columns supporting the arches stand on massive octagonal bases and have moulded capitals. Above each arcade is a clerestory with four windows, consisting of two trefoil-headed lights under a main arch. The aisles have what Nikolaus Pevsner calls 'Winchester' windows (as in Winchester Cathedral) each with two main lights subdividing into four at the top. One window in the north aisle is blocked off by the organ. The nave roof is of the trussed-rafter type with five kingposts supported by tie-beams resting on corbels. There is also a fifteenth century (Perpendicular) window in the centre of the south wall of the chancel.

At some time during the fourteenth century, part of the nave extension must have been started as the east wall of the south aisle contains a fourteenth century (Decorated style) window of more florid and curvaceous design than the others in the nave. Also of fourteenth century origin are the three 'sedilia' or clergy seats in the sanctuary. These have ogree-headed arches. Notice the 'piscina' (with drainage now blocked up) beyond the sedilia and used originally for washing communion vessels. There is a similar but smaller piscina in the south aisle, again with a blocked drain, and a stone shelf under a semi-circular chamfered head.

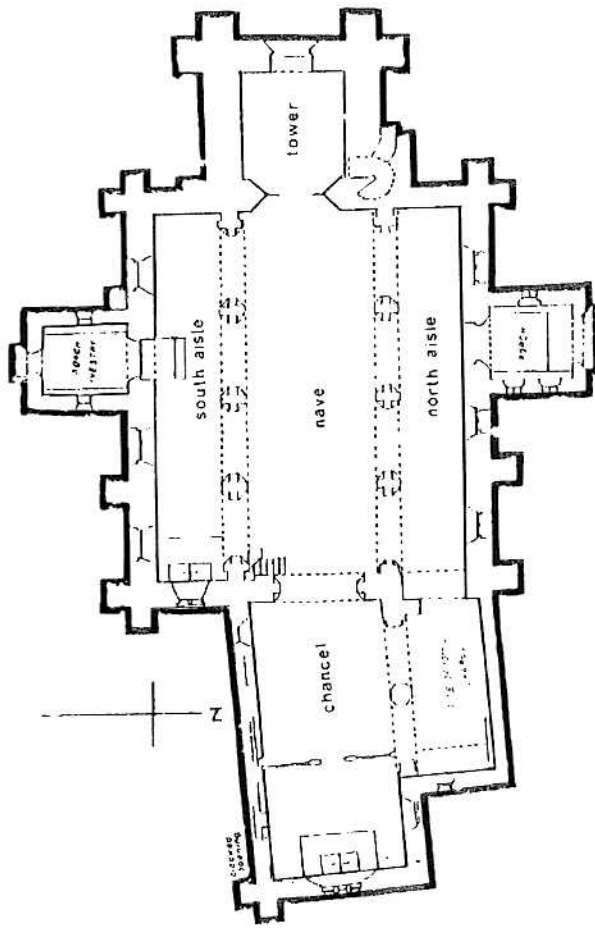
The battlemented tower at the west end (also fifteenth century) shows the remains of vaulting. Presumably a roof was originally projected but later abandoned. Access to the tower from inside the church has now been blocked up. The west window in the tower has three cinque-foil lights with vertical tracery under a wide pointed arch. Details of the glass in this and other windows is dealt with under a separate section. The parapet of the tower is embattled and the roof is a low pyramid topped by a weather-vane.

Several head-stones and coffin slabs have been used as paving in the north porch and before the north and west doors.

The north porch (fifteenth century) has a holy water stoup and stone benching. It is still possible to see the iron fittings and slots where beams were placed to secure the door.

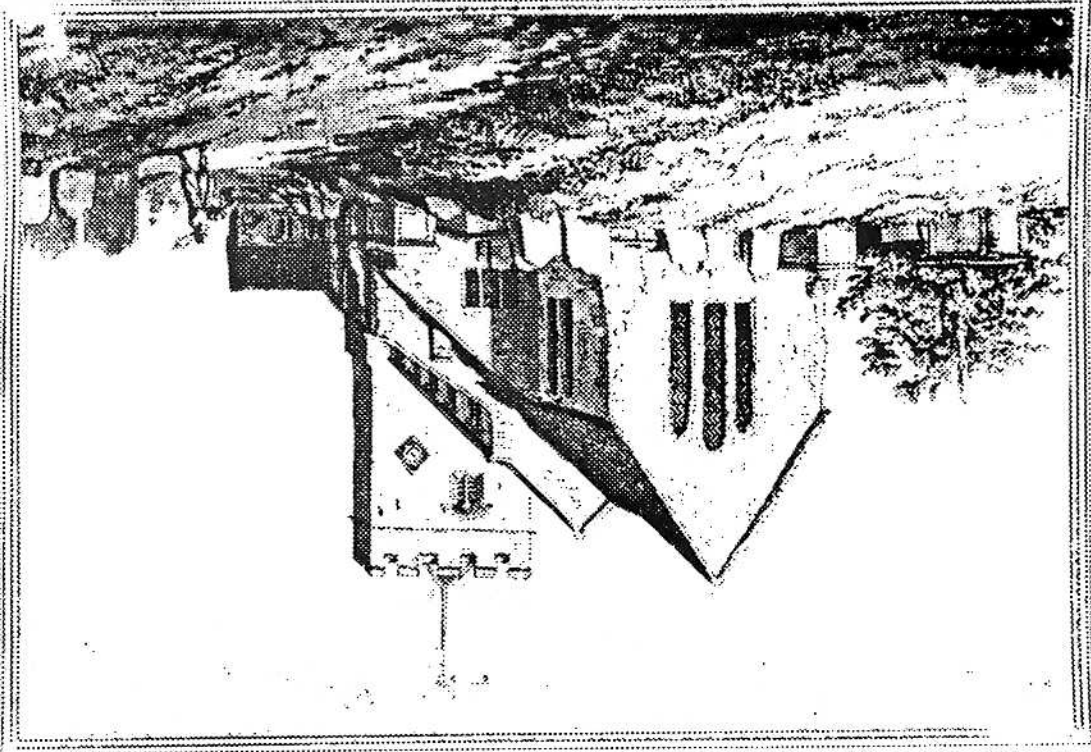
The font is twelfth century, possibly from the original Saxon church which is believed to have occupied this site. The square bowl is of Purbeck marble and stands on a later sandstone base.

The chapel at the east end of the north aisle was restored in the late 1950s having for many years been used as a vestry. A new vestry was made out of the south porch which was constructed in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.



RECTORS OF ST MARY'S, PULBOROUGH

1402 or 3	Thomas Harlyng
1423	Nicholas Tildeston
1491	Reginald Bassett
1500	William Atkinson
1510	Thomas Shelly
1530	John Thorpe
1530	Thomas Adished
1542	Leonard Rembresbye
1549	Geoffrey Thompson
1556	Nicholas Hackett
1585	John Hudson
1589	Thomas Drury
1614	Theophilus Kent
1615	Lawrence Pay
1639 or 40	Randolph Apsley
1658	William Cooper
1658	Matthew Poole
1658	Jeremiah Dyke
1658	John Goldsmith
1659	Randolph Apsley
1663 or 4	Thomas Rollison
1669	John Mille
1676 or 7	John Harison
1698	Isaac Woodruffe
1717	Edward Williams
1719	John Legg
1729	Francis Mose
1735	John Legg
1736	Paul Batchellor
1759	Harvey Spragg
1796	Edward William Treadcroft
1822	John Austin
1857	William Sinclair
1878	Hon George Wingfield Bourke
1904	Frederick Baggally
1921	Ernest Isaac Frost
1944	George Herbert Watson Royle
1971	Basil St Clair Aston Maltin
1990	Keith Wilkie Denford



A WALK ROUND THE CHURCH

Walk across to the Font (Norman) and look down the length of the church. It will be seen that the chancel and nave are not in line, the former sloping markedly to the north-east. It has been suggested that this angle echoes the head of Christ on the cross, usually depicted drooping to His right, but it is more likely that a mistake was made when the original thirteenth century church (the chancel and east end of the north aisle) was extended in the fifteenth century. Notice the soaring clerestory of the 'Perpendicular' style nave and the kingposts and trussed rafter style roof.

You will have entered through the North Porch (also fifteenth century). Notice the holy water stoup and the slots and metal hooks originally used for barring the door.

On the wall in the North Aisle is a list of Rectors dating continuously from 1402. The earliest of these is Thomas Harlyng, commemorated in a fine brass next on the north wall. Further down the aisle on the right hand side is a plaque presented to the church by a school evacuated from London during the Second World War. Note the London Pride depicted on it.

Two steps take you up to the Onley Chapel which formerly housed the organ but was restored in the late fifties. The work was carried out under the supervision of J Sebastian Comper whose 'signature' of a strawberry plant can be seen in both windows of this chapel. His ashes are buried under the slate plaque in the sanctuary floor before the beautiful 'English' altar designed by him to open up the chancel and give it a more traditional appearance. The chandeliers in the church are also of his design.

The two carved wooden chairs in the chancel are seventeenth century as is probably the communion rail as well.

The thirteenth century features of the church are the lancet windows in the chancel and the piscina for washing communion vessels. The large window in the south wall of the chancel is fifteenth century. It had been bricked up and was only revealed in 1879. The 'sedilia' or clergy seats are fourteenth century as is the window above the altar of the Blessed Sacrament chapel in the south aisle. The glass of this window was designed by William Glasby. Also in this chapel is another piscina and an aumbry for consecrated wine and wafers. A perpetually lighted lamp in the wall above is a reminder that the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

On the south wall of this aisle are brasses to the Mille family and the Memorials to the fallen of two World Wars. The South Porch is now a vestry.

The gothic-style wooden screen to the tower was designed by Sir Ninian Comper (father of Sebastian) who also designed the children's window in

the south aisle and the big west window in the tower. Under the tower can be seen remains where a vaulted roof was projected but later abandoned. Over the cupboards on the south wall are the Royal Arms of King George III.

More details of the windows and the many memorials can be found under the preceding appropriate sections of this 'Story of St Mary's, Pulborough'.

The 'Story of St Mary's' so far

We hope that everyone enjoys this latest history of our church as much as Mary Dennis Smith has enjoyed compiling it. We are grateful to her for all her hard work, and very glad that such a comprehensive book is now available.

However, even as this goes to print the congregation is discussing ways of adapting and re-ordering the interior of the church which will involve the seating, the vestries and the organ, and hopefully will also provide meeting rooms and other facilities on two levels at the back of the church.

We hope that we may soon be able to add another chapter to our story.

K Wilkie Denford
The Rectory
Easter 1992

SOURCES

The following are in the West Sussex Record Office, Chichester:

Faculties, Wills, Minute Books etc and extracts from M A Lower's 'History of Sussex' (pub 1870) and James Dallaway's 'A History of the Western Division of the County of Sussex' (pub 1819).

'15th and 16th Century Wills' collected by the Sussex Archaeological Society.

'Notes relating to the Parish Church of St Mary, Pulborough, Sussex, derived from 15th and 16th Century Wills' by R Garraway Rice, FSA (1897)

(Mr Garraway Rice lived next door to 'The Elms' in Rectory Lane, Pulborough where the new bungalows now stand).

'Thomas Harlyng, Canon of Chichester and Rector of Pulborough'. Notes compiled by Miss A J Macdonell.

'Sussex Monumental Brasses from the Sussex Archaeological Society Records', Vol LXXIX (1938)

'Guide to the Church of St Mary, Pulborough' by Francis W Steer, MA, FSA (1961)

'Pulborough Parish Church, 1921 - 1931' by the Revd Ernest I Frost

'The Parish Church of St Mary' by the Revd Ernest I Frost (1931)

'Notes on the History of Pulborough Church' by Mrs J E V Thompson

'Pulborough: a Pictorial History' by Ivy Linda Strudwick (1983)

'To the Lord's Place & Beyond' (ed David Morris) (1989)

Parish Letter (undated) by the Revd Frederick Baggallay

Pulborough Parish Almanack, 1880 and 1881

St Mary's Parish Magazine from January 1905 to October 1991 (known as 'The Messenger' from 1946 - 1969)

Newspaper cuttings between 1857 and 1878 kept in a scrapbook by the Revd William Sinclair (loaned by Mrs Jean Seagrims)

The Curator of the Stained Glass Museum, Ely Cathedral, Cambridgeshire.