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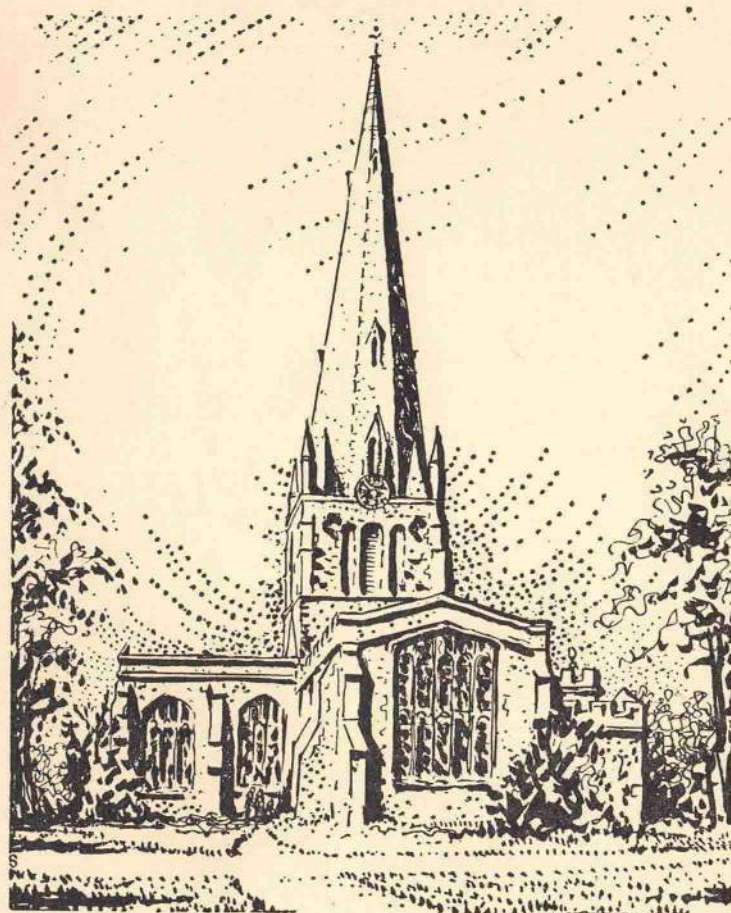
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Guide to the Parish Church of

ALL SAINTS LEIGHTON BUZZARD

by

The Rev. Canon John J. F. Scammell, B.A., A.K.C.
Vicar of Leighton and Rural Dean of Dunstable
Chairman, St. Albans Diocesan Advisory Committee
for the Care of Churches

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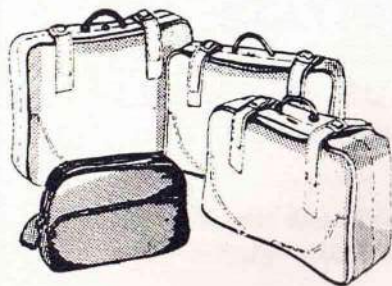
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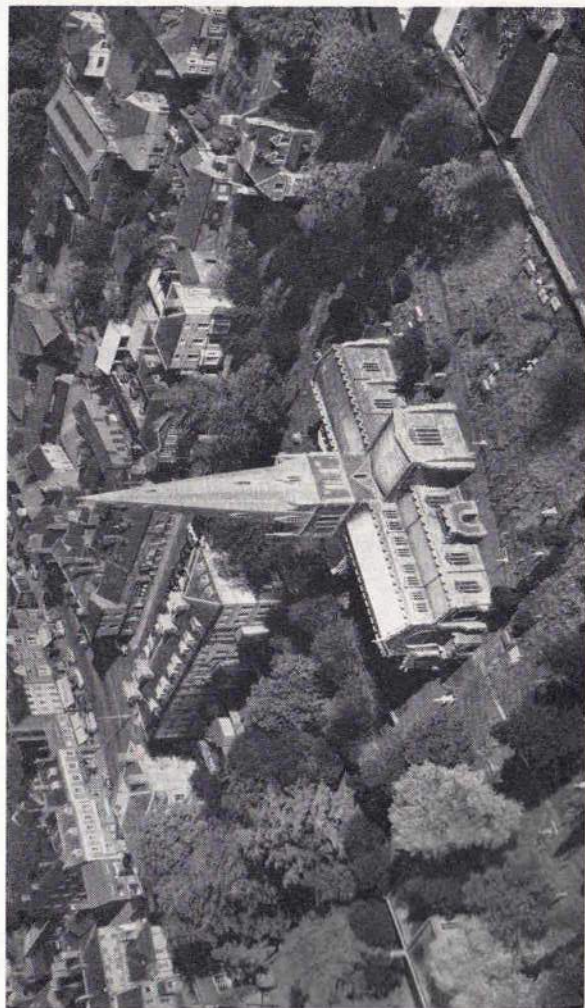
Long years ago Christians journeyed as pilgrims to offer worship and gifts at ancient and hallowed shrines in this land. So now do ye who enter this holy and beautiful house of prayer on your pilgrimage along the highway of life, linger awhile within its sacred walls, remembering with awe and reverence the presence of Him who dwells herein. Then ere ye go on your ways rejoicing, forget not to ask a blessing on thyself and on those who minister and worship here, and of your charity make an offering to the Glory of Thy God and in thanksgiving for the holy place to which these stones are an abiding witness.

HOURS OF SERVICE

Sunday. 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
9.15 a.m. Sung Eucharist.
6.00 p.m. Evensong.

Weekdays. See notice board in North Porch.

The Church Magazine may be obtained from the Church, 5p a month, or by post from the Vicar, £1.50 per year.



Leighton Buzzard Parish Church from the Air

Photo by H. Tempest Ltd.

This little guide book is planned both for those who have not much time to spare and for those who have. The former will find a concise summary of all the main points of interest on this and the next page; the more leisured visitors may study the lengthier articles which form the main part of the booklet.

THE CHURCH

The first historical notice of the present building is in 1277. The Church is cruciform, the full beauty of its plan being visible only to passing angels and airmen. The tower, spire, nave arcades and much of the wall fabric are of solid thirteenth century workmanship. The clerestory was built in the fifteenth century, when the pitch of the roofs was lowered and the tracery of most of the windows remodelled on Perpendicular lines.

External Features

The Spire is 191 feet high. Its mediaeval designer gave it a slight bulge (entasis) so that it might appear straight when viewed from a distance. On the side of the tower the traces of the older high-pitched roof are still visible.

The Gargoyles are a veritable menagerie of grotesques. They symbolise the evil powers that menace all who remain outside the Holy Church.

Everyone comments on the **Sundials**, of which there are five. One is on the north transept wall and can only register soon after sunrise or just before sunset.

The West Door is notable for its vast hinges, the work of Thomas of Leighton a great ironsmith of the thirteenth century, who made the Queen Eleanor Grille

in Westminster Abbey. Other examples of his work are to be seen at Eaton Bray and Turvey.

Two Stone Coffins of seventeenth century date may be inspected at the south side of the building. Their lids can be seen imbedded in the wall of the south transept inside the Church. (Note the crudities of layout and spelling.)

On entering the Church go to the west end of the aisle and view the whole length of the building. The Nave is only two feet longer than the Chancel and the Transepts are constructed in due proportion.

The Font, which has been moved from the west end of the nave, is earlier than the Church itself, and probably belonged to the earlier Church mentioned in Domesday.

The Roofs are interesting and contain much fifteenth century carved woodwork. Note the wooden figures of Apostles and Saints standing on corbel-brackets, with shields depicting the Instruments of the Passion and similar emblems. The patchy effect of the timber dates from 1959-60 when drastic steps had to be taken to deal with the death-watch beetle.

Monuments. When the Church was restored, the plainer tablets were moved into the north transept, where they were less conspicuous. Those remaining in the chancel and sanctuary all possess artistic merit. There are no ancient brasses, but the matrix of one depicting a prebendary of Leighton Buzzard may be seen in the chancel floor.

The Windows are a feature of the Church, no less than twenty-four of them being by the great artist, C. E. Kempe. They are full of beautiful colouring, skilful drawing and sound learning (pp. 21 & 35).

The Pulpit is Jacobean and was given to the Church by a local benefactor, Edward Wilkes, in 1638. He left a small legacy to pay for an annual sermon to the inmates of the almshouses which he endowed in North Street and this old custom is still kept up on the anniversary of his death, March 24th (p. 31).

The Chancel Screen is all that remains of the fifteenth-century rood-screen. Note the vestiges of colour at the base of the front panels and the traces of the old staircase to the rood-loft (p. 31).

The Choir Stalls are also fifteenth century work. It now seems clear that these originally came from St. Albans Abbey. Note the excellent misericords, and the finely carved kings' heads at the angles (p. 28).

The Altar Rails are Jacobean and are worth a close inspection (p. 32).

The Altar is of the same date and matches the altar rails.

The Reredos, and case of **Choir Organ** were designed by the famous R.A. and architect, G. F. Bodley, who was in charge of the restoration (p. 32).

The Piscina (or wall-drain) in the Sanctuary is a double one and indicates the early date of the chancel.

The Sedilia or seats for the sacred ministers at High Mass are also Early English. The principal seat is at the western end, which is unusual.

The Transepts originally contained two altars each. The stone parapet to the reredos of the Lady Altar, and part of the stonework over the Corpus Christi Altar in the South transept, are of fifteenth century date (p. 16).

Graffiti. Note the interesting scratchings on the pillars and especially on the south-west pier of the tower. Most of these are mediaeval, the best example being the famous "Simnel" carving, which is said to depict Simon and Nellie, quarrelling over the mid-lent cake (pp. 17 & 19).

The Organ is in two parts. The main portion (great and swell) is under the tower crossing, and the choir organ is in the chancel. The two are electrically connected and capable of producing some unusually interesting effects, in combination.

The Bells. There are eleven bells in the tower, ten of which form a fine peal, while the eleventh is a mediaeval long-waisted bell which emits two different notes when struck on either side, and was therefore known locally as the "Ting-Tang". It is probably the old Sanctus or sacring bell, dating from 1150 A.D. (p. 33).

THE PARISH OF LEIGHTON BUZZARD

Leighton Buzzard has belonged successively to four dioceses. Church history begins with the record that in the time of King Edward the Confessor, 1042-1066 the Church was in the hands of Bishop Wulfig of Dorchester, 1053-1067.

The Episcopal See was transferred from Dorchester to Lincoln before 1075, and the foundation charter of Lincoln Cathedral includes the Churches of Leighton Buzzard and Leighton Bromswold, Hunts. Both the Leightons have Prebendal stalls in Lincoln Cathedral, and have often been mistaken for each other. At the time of the Domesday Survey the Church was in the hands of Bishop Remigius. St. Hugh who was Bishop of Lincoln from 1186-1200 is said to have converted Leighton into a Prebendal stall. This is confirmed by the entry in the Bedford Eire that Theobald de Busar, Canon of Lincoln, was parson of the Church at Leighton in the time of King Richard.

The names of 68 Prebendaries are recorded in the documents with some of their history. Many of them were men of note—seven became Bishops, and ten Deans. There are very few gaps in the records, a proof that All Saints was not at any time a collegiate Church.

The Prebendary held the great Tithes and was practically the Rector. The Prebendary who succeeded Robert de Hardres was presented by the King, but there were many disputes between the King and the Pope about the presentation, sometimes with the result that two men were appointed, and it is difficult to decide who held the stall. The stall is now in the gift of the Bishop of Lincoln.

In 1837 Leighton was transferred from the Diocese of Lincoln to the Diocese of Ely, and in 1914 it was again transferred to the Diocese of St. Albans. The Prebend is still attached to Lincoln. It is now an honorary title, but the Prebendary of Leighton "Beau-desert" has to preach in the Cathedral at Lincoln on

the Sunday after Ascension Day and All Saints' Day.

The Prebendary stall is on the Decani (south) side of the choir. From the inscription on the stall it shows that the Prebendary was expected to say Psalms 24, 25 and 26 daily.

Near the Leighton "Bosard" stall is that of the Prebend of Leighton Bromswold, Hunts.

Leighton was a "Peculiar", and the Prebendary had Peculiar and Exempt jurisdiction in Leighton and its hamlets. Peculiars—areas in which an ecclesiastical dignitary other than a bishop held temporal authority—were established by the Bishop of Lincoln about 1160. At that time he released perpetually all Prebends in the Church from episcopal rights, willing that all the Canons of Lincoln should have perpetual liberty in their Prebends. From thence it was unlawful for any archdeacon or official of an archdeacon to exact anything—visitation, fees, etc.—from the Prebends or Churches appertaining to the Church of Lincoln.

In the 19th century the authority of the Archdeacon was not recognised, the Prebendary held his own visitations, but all that is left to this Peculiar today is that Leighton Parish Church has three churchwardens.

There was no monastic house connected with the Parish, but in the middle ages there were thirteen clergy on the staff serving Leighton and the surrounding villages.

Leighton Buzzard has been spelt, written and pronounced in an almost unbelievable variety of ways. There are over sixty different forms of the word "Leighton", and over forty of "Buzzard". The latter appears to have been derived from one Theobald de Busar or Boszart. Leighton became known as Leighton Bosart. Bozard. Basar. Busard. To distinguish it from the other Prebend of similar name, Leighton Bromswold, Hunts.

There is not the slightest authority to connect Buzzard with the bird of that name.

ALL SAINTS, LEIGHTON BUZZARD

We know that a Church stood in Leighton Buzzard in Saxon times, and it is more than likely that the early building was of wood, as were most buildings at that time when all England was forest. All traces of that building have disappeared. The first historical record of the present building is 1277. Nicholas de Heigham, who was Prebendary from 1269 until his death, 1288, "left sufficient of his goods to complete the Church at Leighton". We have no record of how much of the building was finished by Heigham before his death, but the bequest confirms that a Church was being built. The Tower, Spire, Nave, Arcading and most of the walls date from the 13th century, and the ground plan of the Church of that period was the same as it is now, except that Porches and Vestries have been added.

The Tower, 30ft. square and 69ft. high, rises considerably above the roofs and has an arcading of three bays on each side. The total height of the fine broche Spire is 191ft. It is of rather early character and has well marked entasis, or slight outward curving, so that it might appear straight when viewed from a distance. On the side of the tower the traces of the older higher pitched roof are still visible.

The Tower is built of local sandstone, the quoins being mostly Totternhoe clunch. The Spire is of Oolitic limestone, probably from Oxford. The Tower and Spire have been repaired: the upper 20ft. of the spire was rebuilt in 1857 after it had been struck by lightning, and again in 1952 when cracks were discovered in the top of the spire.

A drawing of the Tower in 1818 shows that there were no pinnacles. The present pinnacles were added in 1824.

The clock faces on the east and north side of the Tower are modern additions that do not harmonise with the architectural features. The present clock of modern electric design was presented by a parishioner, Miss Sarah Loke, in 1956. Clock face 1977.



The Chancel and Sanctuary

All walls have perpendicular battlements except those of the south transept, the gable end of the chancel and the old and new vestries.

The Gargoyles of the 15th century are in a good state of preservation. There are nine on the south and eight on the north of the nave, four on the south transept, and none on the north. Many reasons are given for the grotesque designs, but the prettiest idea is that representations of devils were put outside the Church, and angels inside. The Sundials are comparatively modern, four on the south transept and one on the north; this last can only show a shadow on the dial before 6.0 a.m. and after 6.0 p.m., although it is marked from 4 to 8. The Porches at the west, north and south doors have been restored. The west door is notable for its vast iron hinges, the work of Thomas de Leighton.

Interior

The Church is cruciform with a long Chancel peculiar to the late 12th century, and only 2ft. 6ins. shorter than the Nave. Inside measurements from the centre of the Tower arch are: Nave 66ft.; Transepts 24ft. 6ins.; Chancel 63ft. 6ins. The Chancel is the oldest part of the building, the Sedilia and Piscina which are Early English, point to the Chancel having been built before 1288. The most important of the three seats of the Sedilia is that of the west end, which is a step below the other two.

The Sanctuary is 4ft. 3in. above the Nave and is approached from the Chancel by five steps, which were re-arranged when the Chancel was restored by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1879 and 1906.

The Tower is supported by four massive piers, and the arches are unusually high (30ft.) for a parish Church.

The Nave Arcades, of four bays, are very plain. The

octagonal pillars have moulded capitals and bases. Most of the bases had to be renewed in 1886, they having been previously cut away, probably when the pews were fixed in 1840. The responds near the Tower and at the west wall enabled the original mouldings of the bases to be reproduced.

The hinge on the west door, contemporary with the 13th century Church, is an interesting specimen of 13th century ironwork; there is strong evidence that it is the work of Master Thomas de Leighton, who was employed to make the "Eleanor Grille" at Westminster Abbey. The Exchequer Queen Remembrancer accounts, 1293-4, record the payment of £13 to Master Thomas de Leighton, smith, for ironwork about the tomb of the Queen at Westminster, and for the carriage of the same from Legton to London.

Font. The font is Early English in design (1240) and is most likely a relic from the old Church. It consists of a massive bowl, supported by a bold central column and four smaller ones, with "water-holding" mouldings at the base. The metal plug is of later date, 1630.

Transepts. The 14th century Piscina in the North Transept, the two altar pieces, the Piscina and fine trefoiled niche in the South Transept, suggest that the original design for the Church included altars in the Transepts. We know from the will of one John Esgoer that in 1519 there were two altars in each Transept, and that they were dedicated to "Seynt Christopher, St. Erasmus, St. Appolome, and to Our Lady". The last mentioned was probably under the north-east window of the north Transept, and explains the square-headed niches in the splays of this window.

Before the Church was restored in 1885 all traces of these altars had been covered with plaster and white-wash, and it was quite by accident they were found. The 16th century altar piece over the side altar in the South Transept was found *in situ*, intact, and with sufficient colour remaining to enable the original colour

to be restored. The altar piece under the other window east of this Transept is not all original work. Two of the stones were found built into the sill of the window; they were replaced in their original position and new ones added. The square-headed recess or niche is of a later date and may have held a picture or relic or been a sacrament house. It now holds an Aumbry in which the blessed sacrament is reserved for the sick and dying. A white lamp burns to remind passers by of the nearness of Christ's presence under the veil of bread and wine.

It also marks the sacredness of this part of the Church as a place for quiet prayer and devotion.

The old string course in the Transept has been destroyed, but fortunately there was sufficient left in 1885 to enable the original moulding to be reproduced.

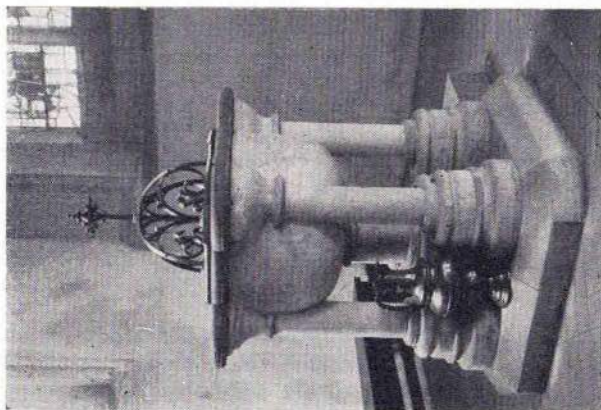
The entrance to the belfry stairs is in the North Transept. This also gives access to the organ loft. It is sometimes thought to have been the entrance to the Rood Loft, but the remains of the old Rood steps can be seen on the south side of the Chancel Arch.

Graffiti. While we proudly exhibit our remarkable display of mediaeval graffiti or scratchings on the walls and pillars of our old Church, we threaten the direst penalties upon any modern vandals who dare carve their name upon the stonework. After all, these scratchings were the work of our mediaeval forefathers, and in view of the cost of writing materials in their days they had a more legitimate excuse for the wall scribbling habits, and anyhow these ancient doodlers manifested a wider versatility than their modern counterparts.

A quick survey of the inside stonework of our Parish Church shows a wealth of drawings, many crude, but others of real artistic merit and value, subjects ranging from the divine to the diabolical. It is not easy to identify many of these scratchings. Their comparatively good state of preservation is due to the fact that



Graffiti—Domestic Strife
(see page 17)



The Font
(see page 16)

for many centuries they were hidden under several layers of limewash.

The scratchings on the south-west pier of the Tower, which retains some of its original colouring, is of early 15th century date. The open sleeved houppelande worn by the man and early form of the woman's head-dress suggest a date soon after 1400. It apparently represented a domestic disagreement and has no ecclesiastical meaning. It was uncovered during the restoration in 1885 and quite honestly its meaning is unknown. It is said that some watchers of the relic of St. Hugh's cloak which was kept in the South Transept whiled away their time carving it on the stone. Local legend asserts that it represents the old mid-Lent story of Simon and Nell and their cake. Simon and Nell were expecting their children home for Mothering Sunday—they wanted to make it a special occasion—but being poor could only scrape together a little dough and the remains of a Christmas pudding. They determined, therefore, to wrap the pudding in the dough, and in this way to make a tasty cake. However, the great question was how to cook it. "It is a pudding, and therefore it must be boiled," said Simon. "Rubbish, it's dough, and therefore it must be baked," said Nell. So the argument continued until Nell picked up her wooden spoon to enforce her argument, and Simon seized the dough in defence ready to throw it at his excited wife. Then they both thought of their children, laughed at their foolishness and made a compromise, by boiling the cake first and then baking it. Thus was evolved the first Sim, Nell cake. I know the intellectuals will give a superior smile and tell us that Simnel is derived from the Latin *similia*, meaning flour, but we shall continue to treasure the old picturesque legend of Simon and Nell.

On the south-east Tower pier are two shields; the small one with a little figure holding a covered cup has been identified as that of the Butlers, Earl of Ormond, of Great Linford and Aylesbury Manor. The larger shield is that of the St. Legers; the families were con-

nected by marriage, a daughter and co-heir of Thomas Lord Ormond having married Sir George St. Leger, ultimately bringing him to Great Linford. The shields must be later than 1515, when Lord Ormond died. It is conceivable that the family servants amused themselves scratching coats of arms on the stonework while their Lords and Ladies were occupied at their devotions. The families had nothing to do with Leighton.

On the same pier is a good design of a 13th century window, the best of many. The geometrical tracery shown probably represents the original design of the Transept window.

On the Chancel wall is the coat of Christ Church, Hants., representing the Trinity, found immediately behind the south return stall of the choir. It must have been drawn before the stalls were put in their present position. It depicts three circles arranged triangular-wise with a fourth circle in the centre. The Latin inscription round the edge reads: "The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost is not the Father". Reading to the centre it starts: "The Father is God; the Son is God; the Holy Ghost is God". On the south-west Pier of the Tower will be found two triangles forming a star. This in Christian law is a symbol of the Trinity.

On the south-east Pier there is a drawing of a king's head with a crown. A more detailed scratching of this kind of crown appears on the south-west Pier near the Lectern. Beside the king is a basilisk, or cockatrice, which was supposed to emerge from an egg laid by a cock in its seventh year, and hatched by a toad. It spent its life lurking in holes in the desert, and its breath and look were fatal. The one protection against this venom was a crystal held before the eyes, which reflected it upon the monster with fatal effects. The allegorist interpreted the cockatrice as a symbol of evil; the pure crystal being the spotless virginity of the Mother of Jesus through whom came the Saviour, who triumphed over the power of hell.

Somewhat less fearsome birds are seen on the south face of the same pier, one being a graceful heron. Some of the crosses to be found on piers may be pilgrims' marks. There are various names, etc.; the most legible will be found on the west face of the pier near the font, and it reads: *Nec Deus est nec homo praesens quem sernit imago. Sed Deus est et homo quem signat sacra figura*. Literal translation: Although the (sightless) image neither God or man describes, both God and man its sacred form reveals and signifies. The writer saw the true value of sculpture in Christian art as an aid to devotion.

Many alterations were made in the Church during the 15th century, mostly due to the influence of Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, who held the manor until her death in 1475. The work included the addition of the Clerestory to the Nave, the substitution of the present roof for the 13th century pointed ones, and replacing the old decorated windows with the less interesting 15th century work.

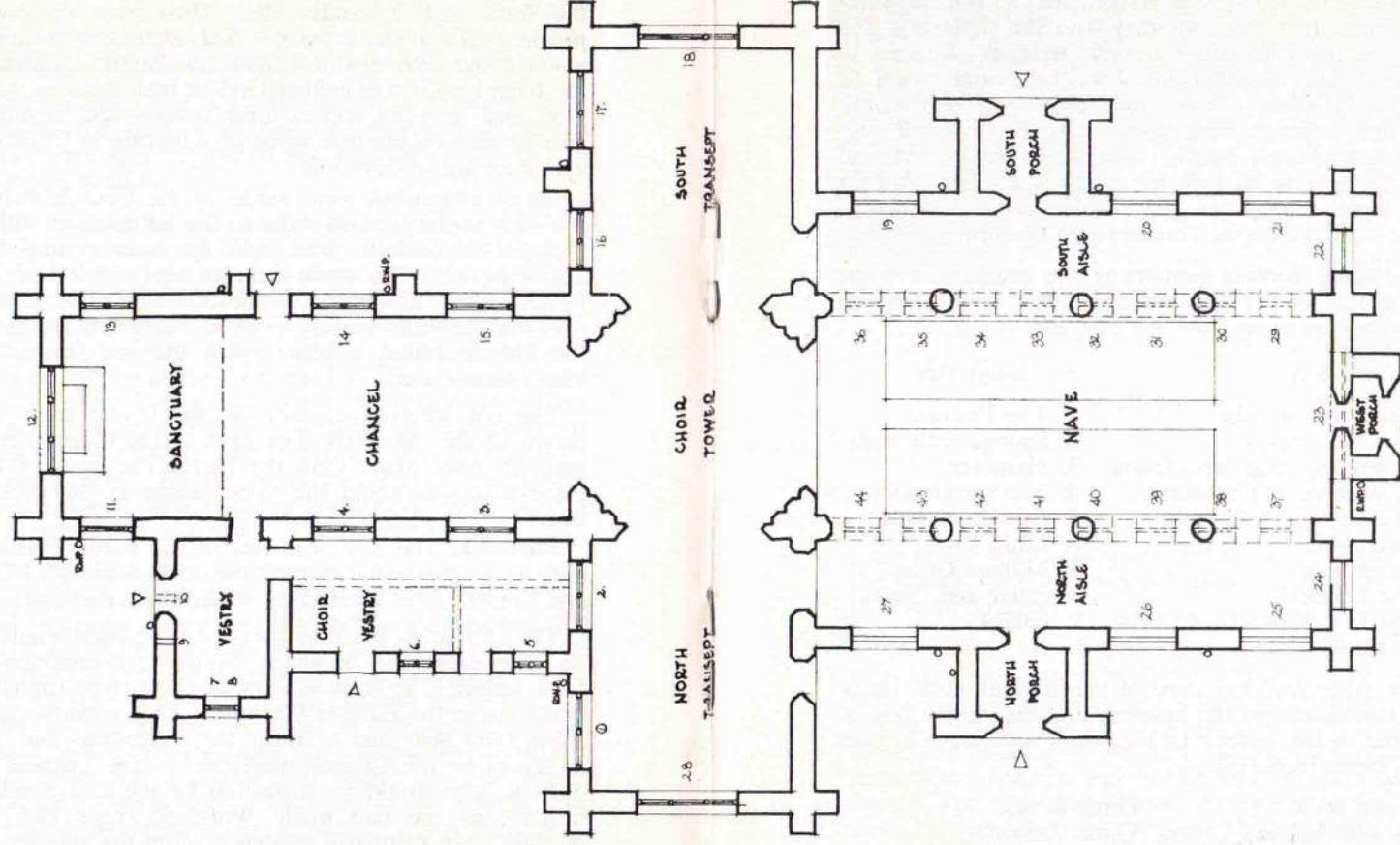
The old weather courses of the Tower show the height of the old roofs. The apex of the Chancel roof was 5ft. 6ins. lower than the Nave. The apex of the Nave roof was about the same height as the present one.

Windows. The east windows in the north Transept date from the early part of the 15th century (1400), and are the most interesting windows in the Church.

The clerestory has four pairs of three-light windows on either side—the "Howden" window, so common in East Anglia. The west window is also a type found in Churches in the Eastern Counties. These windows date from 1460-1480 and confirm the suggestion that the additions to the Church were due to the Duchess of Suffolk, who would be influenced by the East Anglian designs, as she had made Wingfield, near Diss, in Norfolk, her principal residence after the murder of her husband in 1450.

The cross of St. George upon the shield which ends

ALL SAINTS CHURCH LEIGHTON BUZZARD.



SCALE: 1/6" TO 1" (Approx)

the drip of the west window suggests that this window was built after the manor had been granted to Windsor in 1479. Most of the other windows date from the latter half of the 15th century.

Roofs. The fine trussed framed roof of the Nave has three bays. It is contemporary with the clerestory, and much of the 15th century work remains. Repairs to the roof are recorded in 1840, 1852 and again in 1926, 1927, when it was found that some of the timbers had suffered from want of ventilation and also from death-watch beetle. Timbers were treated and were thought to be safe for many years; but alas! in 1959 it was found that death-watch beetle had played havoc with the Nave, Transept and Chancel roofs.

The stone corbels supporting the bracket have the instruments of the Passion and other devices carved on them, beginning from the east end:—

North Side

1. Basin and sponge.
2. The Scourges.
3. Tongue spitting (also found in Winchester Cathedral).
4. The Crown of Thorns.
5. The Cock.
6. Three Nails.
7. The Ladder.
8. The Five Wounds of Christ.
9. Three Dice.

South Side

1. The Pincers.
2. Sponge with reeds.
3. Hammer.
4. The Seamless Coat.
5. Bundle of rods.
6. Latin Cross.
7. Maltese Cross.
8. Pillar and Cords.
9. (Blank).

The Aisle roof has some of the original work, including the figures on the brackets and the carved bosses.

Some of the corbels in the south aisle have devices upon them, including:—

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| An open book. | Three Roses. |
| Book with Maltese Cross. | Three Crowns. |
| Book with Latin Cross. | Emblem of the Trinity. |

The Transept roofs have been much restored, but



View of Nave Roof

some of the work is original, including the main beams, the figures on the brackets, and the carved bosses in the North Transept.

These roofs were lowered probably in the 15th century, also the Chancel roof, but retained some original work. The main beams are supported by bold carved figures representing the Apostles. There are ten of these, and starting on the east on the north side is St. Peter with his Keys, and on the south St. Paul with his Sword. The next pair are St. Andrew with his saltire cross by the organ, and opposite St. John with chalice and dragon emerging therefrom. This emblem refers to an occasion when the Apostle was offered a poisoned wine cup. The next pair are St. James the Less on the



*Carved Angel in Chancel roof
(see page 25)*



*Carved Angel in Nave Roof
(see page 24)*

north side with club, and his Epistle shown as a book; and on the south side St. Bartholomew with flaying knife. St. Jude on the north side with his halberd and his epistle; on the south, St. Philip with his long cross—shown like a processional cross. The last pair are: north side, St. James the Great shown as a pilgrim with broad brimmed hat, wallet and staff; and south side, St. Matthew with three money bags. In most cases the emblems refer to the way in which the Apostles were martyred, but Peter is shown with the keys of the heavenly gate, and Matthew's bags refer to his tax collecting, while James the Great is a pilgrim, thus showing his connection with his shrine at Compestella. You will also note the very fine carved angels in the roof; these are original. The emblems on the shield are based on the Great O antiphons sung before Christmas, and are as follows: Lion—O adonai, leader of the House of Israel. Lily—O Radix Jesse—O root of Jesse; Key and Sceptre—O Clavis—O key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel. Star—O Oriens—O Day-spring. Crown—O Rex Genitum—O King of Nations; Chalice and Host—O Emmanuel—God with us.

Scrolls. There are two of these at the west end of the Chancel. On one scroll is A.M.D.G.—J.J.F.S.—Vic and Dic; Rus—HAR Arch, and on the other A.O.B.—H.H.—H.A.R. Eccl. occ MCMLIX. The Chancel was completely restored in 1959 and the decorating of woodwork was carried out under the direction of Francis Stephens, of Faith Craft Ltd. Mr. H. A. Rolls, our Churchwarden and Architect, was responsible for all work of restoration.

The Lectern. This is the oldest piece of woodwork in the Church—it is an eagle with spread wings, and is an excellent specimen of the wooden eagles of the 13th century. The old chain of the Bible is still *in situ*. There are a number of brass eagles still surviving from mediæval times, but wooden ones are rare and people come from long distances to see ours. During the 1939-45 war, the eagle was carefully packed up and stored for

safety. It has been thought that the bird represents a buzzard, in allusion to the name of the town; but, of course, this is wrong.

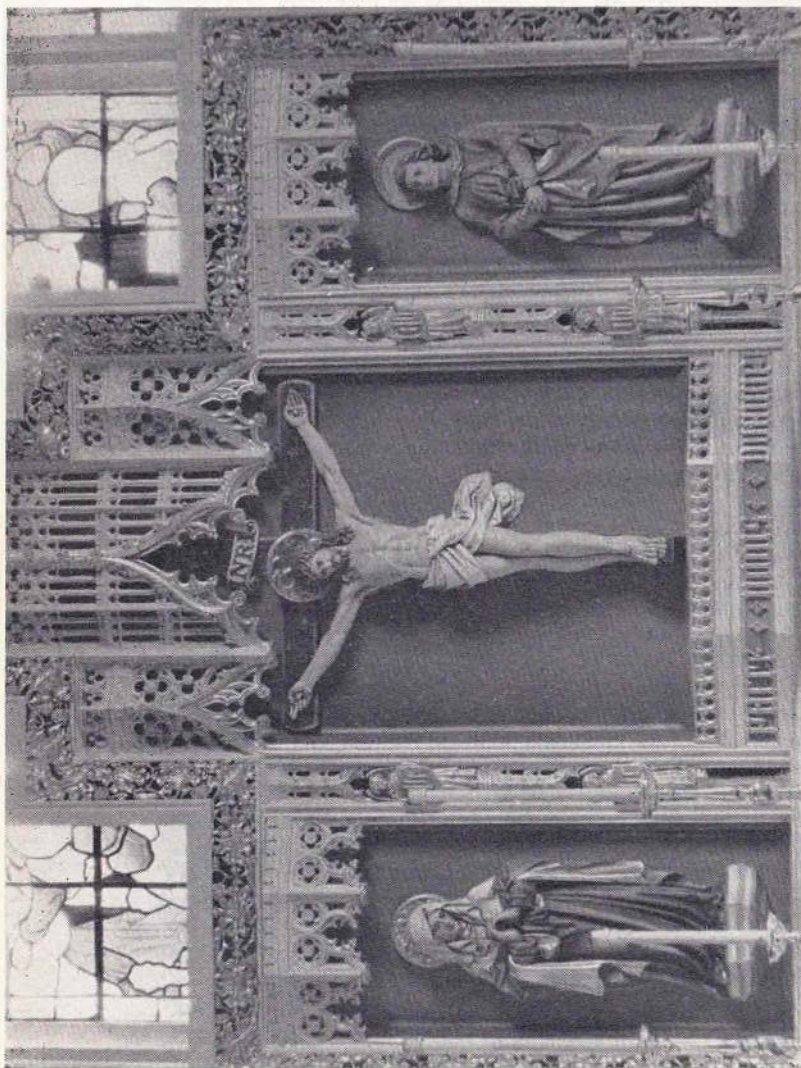
Choir Stalls. The Stalls are exceptionally fine and are admired by all who visit the old Church. They were not designed for the Church, but for some larger building. They are incomplete at the eastern ends, and at some time there existed an extra "return stall" on both sides.

The Stalls date from the beginning of the 15th century, but there is no record when they were placed in the Chancel. There has never been, to our knowledge, a staff of clergy to require 28 Stalls; they may have been introduced for the Fraternity of Corpus Christi founded in 1473. All the Stalls except one have misericords, 14 have heads in the centre, six foliage, two heraldic birds, and two men fighting; four have had their carvings destroyed, and there is one fixed seat, one on the north and three on the south have shields with coats, but these coats do not belong to any of the local families, evidence that the Stalls came from some other Church; but where? Briefly, two theories are put forward. The coats of arms were submitted to the College of Arms, and after careful search of the records the opinion was given that they came from some Church in the vicinity of Warwick.

A Mr. Joseph Proctor has pointed out that in 1592 his direct ancestor, Richard Proctor, married Alys Bolesworth in Leighton Church and came to settle here. His father, Sir Stephen Proctor, had acquired the lovely Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire from the Gresham family in 1597, they having bought it from Henry VIII. In 1609 Sir Stephen Proctor dismantled the Abbey Church and built for himself Fountains Hall with most of the old stone. "Is it not possible, if not probable," asks Mr. Proctor, "that he would give the old Choir Stalls to his eldest son to beautify the Church in his parish?"

The second theory was published in the *Leighton*

Buzzard Observer by Mr. F. G. Gurney. To him belongs the credit of identifying beyond question seven of the eight coats of arms, and suggesting a probable origin for the remaining one. There are two coats of the Earl of Warwick, two of the Frowicks of South Mymms, one of Thomas Thorneburgh—a contemporary of Dick Whittington and steward of St. Albans Abbey in 1391, a mutilated shield of the Aynel family and paired with this a group of three birds which Mr. Gurney thought to be the crows of John Cromer of Aldenham; the saltire cross, or St. Andrew's cross, of the Abbot of St. Albans is also depicted, and on one of the misericords a swan, which is the emblem of the Earl of Warwick. The important link between these names is that they were all connected with St. Albans Abbey, and this fact, taken together with evidence from measurements, show that these ancient Stalls were once used by some of the most famous monks in English Church history. The Stalls may have been thrown out of the Abbey at the Dissolution, and after languishing for some time in a builder's yard—they show traces of weathering—found their way to the old Church of Leighton, but when we do not know. The misericords are in excellent condition and are worth careful examination. The saints on the south side are figures of Apostles, and each has his own emblem. The right hand arm rest of the Vicar's Stall (south side) depicts St. Paul. He is identified by his sword with which he was executed. This confirms Mr. Gurney's statement that there is only one Stall missing from this end; for surely the first Stall would have been that of St. Peter. Others may be identified, St. Andrew with his X shape cross, St. James the Less with his club—he was clubbed to death—St. Bartholomew with his flaying knife, and St. Jude with a missionary preaching cross. On the north side the figures are not so easily identifiable. There is a bishop with his crozier—his mitre badly worn away—a monk and a figure in a turban, who may represent a prophet or a philosopher. The tops of the carved poppy heads at the end of each



High Altar Reredos
(see page 32)

range of Stalls have been slightly hollowed to hold rush lights.

The King's heads, so finely carved at the corners, are a unique feature of these Stalls. If what Mr. Gurney tells us is true, that they were made for St. Albans, then I think we may assume that the royal heads represent King Offa, the founder of the Abbey. Notice the arm rests of each stall. On one side an angel, on the other side a saint. Probably they symbolise how every man is accompanied on the pilgrimage of life by his guardian angel and his patron saint.

Chancel Screen. This is a good specimen of 15th century work. The lower part is fairly perfect, but the upper part has been cut away and the beam lowered. Some of the details are interesting, especially the attractive dolphin-like figures attached to the points of the tracery in the central archway. On one side of the tracery arches of the south side there are some excellent chameleons, and on the corresponding arch of the north side little eagles. The front panel of the Screen still shows traces of the original colouring, and in certain lights silhouetted figures of cockerels may be distinguished.

The remains of the stone steps to the rood loft may be seen on the south side of the Chancel arch. The rood is mentioned in a bequest made by John Esgoer in 1519, "to the maintenance of the Rode Light, $\frac{1}{2}$ quarter of malt".

No trace of the original Rood remains, but on the Chancel arch may be seen the iron staples which supported the hanging crucifix.

The Pulpit. This was presented to the Church by Edward Wilkes in 1638, the founder of the Almshouses which bear his name in North Street. The following is the inscription on the small folding board in the north

Transept: "In 1683 gave the cedar pulpit and a purple velvet cushion for the use of the minister." The pulpit is in excellent preservation except that in the panel at the back of the pulpit the original carving has been destroyed. Someone has attempted to repair the damage, but his efforts only achieved a disastrously crude effect. A new pitch pine Pulpit was placed in the nave in 1842, and the present one narrowly escaped being sold. It was in the Chancel for some years, and was used for weekday services which were held in the Chancel. During this time it was enlarged and the back extended with a new panel on each side; the carving on which does not bear comparison with the original. It was restored to its old position in 1886 and the steps and handrail added by Mr. Bodley at the cost of the Trustees of the Wilkes Charity. The sounding board was added in 1896 against the advice of Mr. Bodley, but it was a godsend to the preacher.

The Altar Rails. The altar and altar rails are excellent specimens of 17th century carving. The altar table was cleverly enlarged in 1890 when a new top was added and some carved work from the back was used to extend the front. The carving includes some quaint mask-like heads.

Reredos. The three-fold Reredos is about 60 years old and is well in line with the high quality of early examples. The triptych was designed by the late G. F. Bodley. The centre has three alabaster panels—the Crucifix, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. John, the work of R. Bridgeman, of Lichfield. The panels of the door are of leather and have four angels embossed; these are the work of Minnie King and Arthur Smallbones, two members of the Leighton Buzzard Handicraft Class for Cripples. All the panels have finely carved oak canopies and the frame is enriched with a bold deep cut vine pattern border. The whole of the wood carving is the work of H. Wibberley, a cripple member of the same Class (except the small figures between the central panels).

Alas! the fumes from the gas lighting took every bit of colour out of the work, leaving it all a drab brown; so in 1958 the whole work was restored and decorated by the Faith Craft Ltd., under the direction of Francis Stephens, the whole cost being borne by Mrs. H. Delafield and family in memory of her husband, Mr. H. Delafield.

The organ case, designed by G. F. Bodley, is often cited as a good example of how an organ should be treated. A similar design exists for the large organ under the Tower, but owing to the lack of money has never been put into effect.

The Bells. The Tower contains a fine peal of ten bells which compare favourably with any in the country.

There is also an interesting small bell, weighing about 1 cwt. 3 qrs. It has no inscription. It was probably the old Priest's or Sanctus Bell, and cast about the middle of the 12th century, i.e. about 1150. As the present Church was consecrated in 1277 the bell presumably belonged to an earlier Church and after 800 years is still rung. Its tone is not quite true, and so it is called "Ting Tang". The bell is very interesting. It is very much taller for its mouth diameter than the other more modern bells plotted on the sheet of Trapezoids, some of which are pre-Reformation. Also the sound-bow section is quite unlike that used today.

The bell is probably the oldest bell in the Diocese of St. Albans. The next oldest is the Priest's bell in the Cathedral at St. Albans, which is dated from 1290.

The other bells date from 1623 and 1639. Some of them were re-cast in 1787.

The tenor is used for tolling the Knell. There are various customs as to the "tellers" that are rung before the Knell. The following is the custom at Leighton:

three threes for a man; three twos for a woman; two threes for a boy; two twos for a girl.

The South Transept. In 1969 the South Window was reglazed with antique glass and the stone work restored. Also the decoration and refurnishings completed.

The Monuments. One of the stones in the west wall of the south Transept is the oldest monumental record in the Church, 1595-1641. These stones were found under the floor of the south Transept with the old stone coffins.

Some of the monuments in the Chancel are about the same period. There are six with dates prior to the execution of Charles I, 1649. Jackman is the only Elizabethan one in the Church and is a good example of the copper or latten plates of this period. It is in memory of William Jackman, of Billington, and his two sons. There are three figures kneeling on cushions; all have ruffs and are wearing long cloaks. The next in chronological order is the fine monument on the north side of the Sanctuary to Robert Wyngate, 1603. The two figures kneeling at the double fold stool are interesting, and the two little boys kneeling under them are supposed to be the two sons mentioned in the inscription. The grandson of John Wyngate—the left-hand little boy—on the monument, was Sir Francis Wyngate, of Harlington, the Justice of the Peace who issued the warrant for John Bunyan's arrest.

The Sclater monument is of interest as it is in memory of Arthur Sclater and his son Christopher, successive vicars of Leighton, 1624. The latten plate to the memory of Francis Wells and his wife has been mentioned as being a good illustration of the lay costume of this period, 1636. The other Wells monument has a great resemblance to the Shakespeare monument at Stratford-on-Avon. Edward Wilkes died 1646, but this monument was not erected until 1657. The Wilkes were

great benefactors of both Church and town. The remaining 17th century monuments for the most part belong to the Leigh family.

The Kempe Windows. C. E. Kempe, the famous stained glass artist of the 19th century, was born at Ovingdean, Sussex, on June 29th, 1837. He was educated at Rugby and Pembroke, where he took his M.A. After his first commissions, his fame rapidly spread, and he was widely employed not only in older churches but also in the many new churches put up at this period. His work is known by the greenish tint employed in the backgrounds and "white" glass, the careful and well-thought-out designing and placing of the figures, and the delicacy yet firmness of the drawings. His "mark" is a "garbe" or heraldic sheaf, also used by his successor, Tower, but in this case with the insertion of a small heraldic castle or tower in the centre of the sheaf. Kempe died on April 29th, 1907.



West Window
(see opposite)

Many . . . churches are spoilt by haphazard decoration and by a rather mixed assortment of windows by different artists. G. F. Bodley superintended all this part of the work, regarding the decoration as an integral part of the church. The work of C. E. Kempe appears in many of his churches, and is exactly suitable to them.

(*Church Builders of the 19th Century*—CLARKE.)

The Kempe windows of All Saints form a unique range in which the style of a master of his craft can be assessed at the peak of his power.

(*Collins' Guide to English Parish Churches*)

The Windows. The Kempe windows are a decided feature in the Church. Very few Churches, if any, have eight large windows and 16 clerestory windows by this artist.

All the windows except the large one at the west end have three large lights, over which are six small ones. Each large light has a figure with a descriptive picture under it, and the small upper lights are filled with angels carrying scrolls in shields.

A Kempe window is always an interesting and instructive study, and the small pictures are full of interest.

South Transept. 1. The Eucharist, as showing forth the Atonement. 2. The Resurrection of Christ, the King.

South Aisle. 1. Family Unity as depicted in four generations of the Patriarchs. 2. The Te Deum—this is by Kempe's pupil after his death. 3. Service of God by Prophet, Priest and King.

West End, behind font. Holy Baptism. North-west Corner—The Holy Eucharist. The great West Window. The Victory of Good over Evil. The windows in the North and South Transept are not by Kempe, and were filled with stained glass in 1865. Although it is very difficult to do justice to these windows alongside those of the Kempe windows, they are, however, interesting as showing the early efforts to regain the art of stained glass, and they are a step forward that made Kempe's work possible. North Transept—the Parable of the Good Samaritan; and South Transept—is now Antique Glass.

The East window which has scenes from the life of our Lord from the Annunciation to the Resurrection, with the Crucifixion as the central light, is the work of Gibbs in 1870, and it shows the advance from the earlier ones in the Transepts.

At the West End we have perhaps the most splendid window in the whole Church, for no one who has seen

this window glowing in the evening sun can fail to be impressed with its magnificence. It is splendid first in its dimensions and tracery, for it has five great lights, with 22 smaller lights above arranged in four tiers, and this vast window has been made by Kempe into a glorious blaze of colour. The 22 smaller lights bear angelic figures mostly arrayed in albs and stoles, or in deacon's dalmatics, some playing musical instruments and representing the nine angelic choirs. The five large lights, from left to right—St. George of Cappadocia, martyr, Patron of England. He is wearing the mediæval armour, standing upon a dragon, the symbol of evil. In one hand he holds a shield with the three royal Leopards of England, and in the other his lance with his flag. He was made Patron of England in 1222 by the Synod of Oxford.

St. Ethelreda—Saxon Queen and founder of the convent at Ely, of which she became Abbess. She was the first and most popular of canonised English women. She wears her nun's habit and veil with a princess's coronet over it, and carries her abbess's crosier. She is the patroness of the Diocese of Ely, in which Leighton Buzzard was, from 1837-1914.

The Archangel Michael, young and beautiful, standing upon a red dragon—that old serpent Satan—representing the conquest of evil by good in Heaven.

St. Hugh—beside him is the swan, the symbol of solitude, and in his hand he bears a model of Lincoln Cathedral, of which he was the founder. His right of being in the window is obviously that from 1072-1837 Leighton Buzzard was in the Lincoln Diocese, being a Prebendal Stall in the Cathedral.

St. Alban with the inscription *Proto Martyr Anglia*—the first martyr of England. He holds in his hand the sword of his execution and the martyr's palm. Alban was led out of Verulamium in the year 303, and was executed on the hill where the Abbey and his shrine now stand. Leighton Buzzard has been in the St.

Albans Diocese since 1914, so that his figure completes the history of the parish in this respect, although when the window was presented the parish was still in the Diocese of Ely. The design has proved even more appropriate than was first realised. The window was installed in memory of Charles Page and Sarah his wife, 1800-1876.

The Clerestory. These windows are particularly beautiful. Each window has three lights, and in the centre light of each is a head and shoulders of some Saint, all 16 of whom are commemorated in the Prayer Book calendar. The side lights bear shields with the usual emblems of each saint, and the whole is treated in such a way that there is plenty of white glass, so that the "Clerestory" fulfils its purpose of letting in plenty of light.

What could be more appropriate than that in All Saints Church so inclusive a body of Saints would look down on the worshippers below, who can say with truth in the words of the first verse of the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; "seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses—." Furthermore, the all-embracing nature of the Holy Catholic Church is well witnessed when we realise that among these 16 figures are four early martyrs, men of the Apostolic age, three Latin Virgin Martyrs; one Greek Virgin Martyr; a canonised archbishop of Canterbury; the founder of western monasticism; an Abbot hermit; two English martyr kings; an English Missionary saint; and two French Confessors.

North Side

1. St. Lawrence, deacon and martyr. In A.D. 258 the fury of the eighth persecution under the Emperor Valerian had reached its height and St. Lawrence was martyred by being placed on an iron frame like a grid-iron and heated by red hot coals. St. Lawrence is repre-

sented as a young man in the vestments of a deacon, with a grid-iron in one hand and a palm in the other.

2. St. Leonard, deacon and confessor, A.D. 559, was born at Le Mans. In England St. Leonard was formerly regarded with much honour, and about 150 Churches still retain their dedications in his name. He is represented in the dalmatic of a deacon with a book in his left hand and chains on his right arm, in consequence of his being remarkable for his charity towards captive prisoners.

3. St. Vincent, deacon and martyr, A.D. 304, is one of the early martyrs whose acts are quite authentic. His festival is observed in every part of the world, and the synod of Worcester in A.D. 1240 prohibited all labour except agricultural on this day. In this window he has a palm in one hand and an iron hook in the other, Datan, the Governor of Spain, having caused him to be stretched upon a rack and then to be cruelly torn with iron hooks.

4. St. Prisca, Virgin and Martyr, A.D. 270. Little is known about her, but she is believed to have suffered during the reign of Claudius. She is represented as quite a young girl with a palm branch in her hand and a lion near her. It is said that during her persecution the lion which was let loose to destroy her humbly licked her feet instead of tearing her to pieces.

5. St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury and Confessor, A.D. 988. The name of the saint signifying "firm as a rock", was aptly typical of his steadfastness in the faith. He was the first Benedictine Abbot of Glastonbury. He was successively Bishop of Worcester, London, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury. There are some 18 Churches in England named after him—six in Kent and six in Middlesex—the scenes of his Episcopal labours. He is represented with a book in one hand and an archiepiscopal cross in the other.

6. St. Fabian, Bishop and Martyr, A.D. 250, was beheaded by the Emperor Decius. The only Church in England which bears the name of Fabian is that of Woodbastwick, Norfolk, which is dedicated in the joint names of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, who have no connection with each other beyond being honoured on the same day. In the window he holds the sword and a palm in his hand.

7. St. Clement, Bishop, A.D. 100, noted for an epistle which he wrote to the Church at Corinth. In style and expression it has a resemblance to the epistle to the Hebrews. He is represented with a cross and palm in his hand, and an anchor by his side. This emblem is supposed to be allegorical of St. Clement's being commissioned to guide and control the ship of the Church, or of his constancy and faith.

8. St. Perpetua, Martyr, A.D. 803, cruelly martyred during the persecution under the Emperor Severus. She has been commemorated in the calendar since the time of St. Gregory. She has an open book in one hand and palm in the other.

9. St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr, A.D. 304, daughter of a noble and wealthy family in Syracuse in Sicily. She is represented in the window at the west end of the south side of the Clerestory with a palm branch and a burning lamp in her hand expressive of her name, which means "Light".

10. St. Edmund, King and Martyr, A.D. 870, martyred by the Danes, who tried to make him reject Christ. He was tied to a tree and pierced with darts and arrows, and had his head cut off. His remains were transferred to Bury St. Edmunds in 903. The arrows on the shields and in his hands refer to his death.

11. St. Giles, Abbot and Confessor, A.D. 724. Born at Athens of noble family. He is represented in the

habit of an abbot with a pastoral staff in his hand, by his side is a hind, a symbol of solitude and purity of life which is found accompanying several saints. St. Giles is the patron of cripples. Every county in England, except Westmorland and Cumberland, has Churches named in his honour amounting to 146.

12. St. Martin, Bishop and Confessor, A.D. 397. Apostle of Gaul. His family were pagan, but he became a Christian as a child. He was compelled to join the army, but maintained the character of a consistent Christian. He obtained his discharge, and afterwards became Bishop of Tours. In the window he is represented as a Bishop with a Crosier in his hand.

13. St. Benedict, Abbot, A.D. 543. Born of a good family, he was alarmed by the vice of his fellow-students and lived for some years in a cave at Subiaco, a wilderness about 40 miles from Rome. Later he founded the celebrated monastery of Monte Cassino, which has long been regarded as the parent institution of the Benedictine Order. Sixteen Churches are dedicated to his name in England. He is represented as an abbot with a Mitre and Crosier.

14. St. Edward, King and Martyr, A.D. 978. He was King of England—not of the West Saxons only, as he is described in the calendar. His stepmother had him stabbed to death at Corfe Castle, to make way for her own son, Ethelred. He is represented with a youthful countenance, having the insignia of royalty with a sceptre in one hand and a dagger in the other.

15. St. Boniface, Bishop and Martyr, A.D. 755, Apostle of Germany, born at Crediton, in Devonshire. He founded several bishoprics in Germany and was slain by a band of enraged pagans. He is represented in full episcopal vestments with an Archbishop's Cross and a palm branch in his hand.

16. St. Faith, Virgin and Martyr, A.D. 290. While still very young, after undergoing the most dreadful torments for refusing to sacrifice to Diana, being beaten with rods and half roasted on a brazier, was beheaded, confessing Christ with her last breath. There are 16 Churches dedicated to her memory in England, and also the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, is named in her honour. In the window a brazier is introduced as typical of her martyrdom.

Dear Visitor,

You have been looking round our very lovely Church and we hope you have enjoyed it all. The congregation of the parish have the great task of preserving this building for future generations. We have been presented with the tremendous demand for the sum of £47,000 for the work of restoration. The congregation have done wonders, and are striving to do their uttermost, but *your* help would be more than appreciated. Please be very generous with your offerings. Thank you.

LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

Almighty God from whom all good things do come; we thank Thee for all thy servants by whose skill and labour this House of Prayer was built to the glory of thy Holy Name. Lift up our hearts, we beseech Thee, to worship thy Eternal Majesty in spirit and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory world without end. Amen.

Wayfarer

Who comes here to visit this Church, do not leave it without a Prayer.

GIVE THANKS

To God for all His blessings; for those who in past ages built this place; and for all who worshipping here have gone forth to serve God truly in Church and State.

OFFER YOURSELF

In the Service of God's will and for the furtherance of His purposes of Righteousness, Truth and Beauty.

LISTEN

To what the Lord God will say concerning you:
"The Lord bless your going out, and your coming in."

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