QUORNDON CHURCH
ST. BARTHOLOMew'S CHURCH
QUORNDON

HISTORICAL NOTES
BY
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ARCHITECTURAL NOTES
BY
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Historical Notes

By George Farnham, F.S.A.

The church of Quorndon, dedicated to St. Bartholomew, was founded in the first half of the twelfth century, and was until the year 1868 a chapel of the church of the Holy Trinity at Barrow-on-Soar.

Though we do not know the exact year in which the hamlet of Quorndon acquired a chapel of its own, we know that it must have been before the 16th of December, 1153, for on this date occurred the death of Ralph, earl of Chester, lord of the manor of Barrow, who, in his lifetime, had given the church at Barrow, together with the chapel at Quorndon, to Leicester abbey. This gift was confirmed by Hugh, his successor in the earldom, as well as by king Henry the Second. King Henry's confirmation was inspected by king Edward the Second in 1318. This inspection recites that king Henry had granted and confirmed in perpetual alms to the church of St. Mary in the meadows of Leicester and to the canons serving God there, whatever belongs to the said church from the gift of Ralph, formerly earl of Chester, viz., the church of Barewe, together with the chapel of Querendon, and the lands, tithes and appurtenances, together with that carucate of land which the said earl gave from his demesne lands in Barewe and Querendon.

From the documents preserved at Lincoln we further learn that an ordination of the vicarage of Barrow was made by William of Blois, bishop of Lincoln (1203-1206) as appears in the Register. This consisted of the moiety of the obventions belonging to the altar of the said church, and of the third part of the sheaves of the whole tithe in the parish of Barewe, with a messuage between the lord's court of the canons and the churchyard, and of one messuage in Querendon belonging to the chapel there. (Rot. Hug. Welles, ii, 305.)

In the Matriculus of Hugh Welles, bishop of Lincoln, compiled about 1225, we learn that the abbot of Leicester, the patron of Barrow church, had the said church for the use of the abbey by a grant of William (of Blois) formerly bishop of Lincoln. William, the vicar, had been instituted by Hugh Welles, now
the bishop of Lincoln, and he takes, in the name of the vicarage, the mediety of all the profits of the altar, and the third part of the tithes of sheaves, and he should serve the said church, and bear on its behalf all the episcopal and archidiaconal burdens. And he has the chapel of Querendon, which ought to be served by the mother church (of Barrow) on three days of the week.

The chapel of Quorndon was therefore entirely dependent for its services on the vicar of Barrow.

The above arrangement, as far as regards Quorndon, does not appear to have proved entirely satisfactory, for we are told that the floods between Barrow and Quorndon occasionally prevented the inhabitants of Quorndon from getting to their parish church at Barrow, and we must assume that the same cause sometimes prevented the vicar of Barrow from being able to serve the chapel at Quorndon as he was bound to do. In order to remedy this and to ensure that the inhabitants of Quorndon should have a daily service in their chapel, independently of the vicar of Barrow, John Farnham, in the year 1392, applied to the Crown for a licence in mortmain to alienate land and houses in Quorndon for the sustentation of a chantry priest whose duty was to celebrate daily in the chapel for ever. Two other inhabitants of Quorndon, John Smyth and John Herbert, associated themselves with John Farnham for this purpose, Smyth contributing a cottage and a toft (a very small enclosure) and Herbert a cottage, while John Farnham gave two virgates of land (about 40 acres) and one messuage.

Before a licence to alienate land in mortmain for the purpose of endowing a chantry could be obtained, certain formalities had to be gone through. It was necessary for an enquiry to be held in order to ascertain what damage might be done to the Crown or other persons if the king granted permission for the licence. The procedure was that the king sent his writ to the sheriff of the county in which the proposed alienation was situated, commanding him to summon a jury to ascertain of whom and by what services the land and buildings were held, their net yearly value, how many (if any) intermediaries there were between the king and the alienating owner, and whether, after the proposal had taken effect, there would remain to such owner sufficient property to satisfy the services on the alienated as well as on his remaining property, and to carry out the late owner’s duties to his country,
such as serving on juries, assizes, etc. And finally commanding the sheriff to send the result of the enquiry (technically called *inquisitio ad quod damnum*) into the Chancery under his seal and the seals of the jurors.

In the Quorndon case the enquiry was held at Leicester on Saturday before the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14) 1392, before John Mallore, the sheriff of co. Leicester, and a jury of twelve, who said that no damage would be done to the king or to other persons if the king granted the licence. They said that the aforesaid messuage, land, toft and one cottage were held of John Beaumont, lord of the manor of Beaumanor, by a service of 2s. yearly, and John Beaumont held the same of the king in chief by service unknown to the jury, and the remaining cottage was held of John Farnham by a service of 6d. yearly, and John Farnham held it of John Beaumont by service of making two advents at his court yearly, and John Beaumont held it of the king in chief by service unknown to the jury. And that there are no more intermediaries between John Farnham, John Smyth and John Herbert and the lord the king, and that the different lands and tenements in Quorndon and elsewhere remaining to the donors over and above the proposed gift are sufficient in annual value for discharging the right and accustomed services due from them, so that they will not become a burden on their country.

In consequence of this finding the licence to alienate was immediately granted by a fine of 100 shillings paid to the Exchequer under date 17 Sept., 1392.

Henceforward the chapel of Quorndon would have a daily service independently of the vicar of Barrow, though, of course, he remained the priest of the parish.

It is possible that the chantry priest was allowed by the vicar of Barrow to act as his curate in Quorndon, for Nichols in his History III, p. 1130, prints an undated indenture, which he says he copied from Charyte's rental of Leicester abbey, by which the abbot of Leicester had given leave to the community of Quorndon to have a chaplain there, to be chosen by the vicar of Barrow and presented to the abbot for his approval. Such chaplain was to vow obedience in all things to the abbot and vicar, and for this concession the community were to pay 40s. yearly to the abbot or vicar. Whether the chantry priest served as
QUORNDON CHURCH—FARNHAM CHAPEL, LOOKING EAST
QUORNDON CHURCH—FARNHAM CHAPEL LOOKING WEST
curate also or not, the vicar of Barrow no doubt had the appointment of the chantry priest, as the donors did not reserve the appointment for themselves and their heirs.

One of the very few documentary references to Quorndon chapel occurs in the year 1398, six years after the foundation of the chantry there. The chapel evidently was out of repair, and a papal letter dated 11 December, 1398, from St. Peter's, Rome, promised a relaxation of 3 years and 3 quadragene of enjoined penance to penitents, who on the feast of the Nativity of St. Mary the Virgin (Sept. 8) and on the feast of St. Bartholomew (Aug. 24) and the octave of the said Nativity, and of one hundred days to those who on the octave, visit and give alms for the fabric and conservation of the chapel of Querndon in the parish of Barrow in the diocese of Lincoln. The oblations are to be wholly devoted to such conservation and repair.

We hear nothing more about Quorndon chapel until the year 1548, when by the Act of 1 Edward VI chantries were dissolved. The last chantry priest in Quorndon was Gregory Prescott, whose name occurs as chantry priest in the Will of Nicholas Talland of Quorndon, 14 April, 1545, and he was still serving in 1548 until the dissolution. His predecessor in 1526, Thomas Bewepase is entered as stipendiary curate, which Professor Hamilton Thompson says means a stipendiary priest with the duties of a curate annexed to his obligation of saying his endowed mass. It is probable therefore that the chantry priest in Quorndon habitually acted as curate for the vicar of Barrow. By the enquiry taken in 1546 we learn that the income of the chantry from lands and tenements was £4 17s. 1d. yearly, from which must be deducted the outgoings 12s. 4d. principally accounted for by the payment of 9s. 2d. yearly to the king for tithe, leaving £4 4s. 9d. as the net yearly income for paying the chantry priest. (Reports and Papers, Ass. Soc. vol. xxx, part ii, p. 463 et seq.)

As the result of the dissolution of the chantry in 1548, the chapel of Quorndon was again wholly dependent on the vicar of Barrow for its services, who seems usually to have kept a curate in Quorndon. The salary of this curate was defrayed in part, by the trustees of the Quorndon Town Lands, who still pay £12 yearly to the vicar of Quorndon out of the income of this ancient
charity, originally given to maintain the church, bridges and school in the parish.

In 1584, however, the Town Lands were lost to the village and were not recovered finally until the year 1636, during which time the repairs of the chapel and the salary of the curate must have been defrayed by the inhabitants or by the vicar of Barrow or by both. This may be simplified by stating that the curate's salary was only £10 a year, and probably no repairs were done. The natural result was that in 1633 the chapel of Quorndon was badly in need of repairs, and the chapel-wardens had great difficulty in raising the necessary funds, which had to be obtained by a levy on all the owners and occupiers of land in the parish, most of whom objected to their assessment and compelled the wardens to waste money on law-suits which was badly needed for repairs.

The civil war intervening, little probably was done in the way of repair, for in 1661 the wardens state that the chapel of Quorndon in 1659 and 1660 "was very much ruinated and decayed so that the said ruins and decays would cost over £20 to repair, and that Francis Harris, the farmer of the tithes, had taken away the lead from the chancel roof, broken up the font and done other serious damage to the fabric." A fresh levy was imperative, and on this occasion all the inhabitants seem to have paid the amounts assessed on them with the exception of Francis Harris who refused to pay more than one shilling. The wardens accordingly commenced an action in the archdeacon's court against him. The depositions in the suit are preserved in the registry at Leicester, from which we learn many particulars; among others, that the inhabitants of Quorndon were obliged only to repair the nave, tower and chancel (which latter they asserted that Francis Harris ought to repair) of the chapel, that the south aisle was the chapel of the Farnham family of the Over Hall, and the north aisle that of the Farnhams of the Nether Hall, who repaired them at their own cost besides contributing their shares to the upkeep of the other parts of the building.

On the 4th of August, 1868, it was notified in the London Gazette that "such part of the parish of Barrow-on-Soar, co. Leicester, which is comprised within, and is co-extensive with, the limits of the ancient chapelry of Quorndon, should be assigned
QUORNDON CHURCH—FARNHAM CHAPEL
TOMB OF JOHN FARNHAM (D. 1587) AND DOROTHY (WALWYN), HIS WIFE
as a distinct chapelry to the church of St. Bartholomew, Quorn­
don." The royal assent to this severance had been given at
Osborne on the 30th of July, 1868. Thenceforward the chapel
of Quorndon became a parish church, separated entirely from
Barrow, and the patronage was vested in the Master and Fellows
of St. John's college, Cambridge, the patrons of Barrow church.
On the 13th of May, 1869, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners
received the royal assent for effecting an exchange of the patron­
age of Quorndon church and the church of St. Peter, Mount­
sorrel, which also was in the same patronage, for the patronage
of Fulbourn All Saints, co. Cambridge, of which the bishop of
Peterborough was patron. By this exchange the bishop became
the patron of Quorndon church and St. Peter's, Mountsorrel, and
the Master and Fellows of St. John's college received the patron­
age of Fulbourn All Saints. At that time the population of
Quorndon was stated to be 1622 persons and the income of the
vicarage was returned at £126 a year. Thus Quorndon chapel
became a parish church in 1868, its curate being at the same
time appointed its first vicar, and in the following year its
patronage was transferred to the bishop of Peterborough, and
to the bishop of Leicester in 1926, when Leicester became a
diocese. The present income of the vicarage is returned at £480
per annum, the increase being entirely due to the sale of iron­
stone from a small property (now sold) in Wartnaby, which an
unknown donor, at some unknown date, had granted to the
curacy of Quorndon chapel.
Architectural Notes

By A. Hamilton Thompson, M.A., D.Litt., F.B.A., F.S.A.

The church of St. Bartholomew consists of a chancel with an organ chamber on the north side, nave with north aisle of four bays and south chapel of two bays continued westward by a two-storeyed porch, and west tower. It originally consisted of a chancel and aisleless nave, built in the twelfth century, of which portions of the walls remain, together with the south or priest's doorway of the chancel and the south doorway of the nave. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, about 1270-80, the south chapel and porch were added.

Soon after this, a north chapel, similarly of two bays, though of slightly wider dimensions, was built.

The tower was added towards the close of the fourteenth century. No enlargement of the church took place until 1842, when the north and west walls of the north chapel were taken down, and a large extension was made in both directions, so that the present north aisle in width and length, is double the size of the earlier chapel.

The organ chamber was given by Mr. Warner, of Quorn Hall, in 1894, in memory of his father, to contain the organ given by Mr. William Farnham in 1887.

The chancel possibly was lengthened slightly eastwards in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Much of the south wall is still of twelfth-century date. The priest's doorway has a plain round head with chamfered edge, and, east of it, there remains a length of the chamfered string-course above which there was doubtless a row of round-headed windows at intervals. The present east window, much restored, and the angle-buttresses, are of the later part of the fourteenth century; the window south of the altar is modern. Until 1894 there were two low-side windows of two-lights with transoms opposite each other in the west parts of the north and south walls. Of these, the one in the south wall, with plate tracery in the head, is in situ; the other was removed in 1894 to the north wall of the new organ-chamber.

An arch of two chamfered orders, springing directly from the wall on either side without responds, divides the chancel
QUORNDON CHURCH—PRIEST'S DOOR IN SOUTH WALL OF CHANCEL.
from the nave; this, constructed in the fourteenth century, and now filled by a modern screen, no doubt took the place of the original round-headed chancel-arch.

The nave, as already stated, is substantially of the twelfth century, with a clerestory added in the fifteenth century. The south doorway is of two orders, with a round-headed arch with chevron ornament and jamb-shafts carved with spiral decorations. On the south side at any rate, much stonework of this period remains above and in the spandrels of the arches; but the wall was thinned upon the inner face when the arcade of the south chapel was built, and the consequent difference in the thickness of its eastern and western portions is well marked internally. The present clerestory windows are modern, and were made in 1865, when the church was restored under the direction of Mr. Ewan Christian, architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The south chapel and porch, as indicated above, are of one build. The arcade of two bays between the chapel and the nave has two chamfered orders; the arches are divided by an octagonal pier, and spring from half-octagon responds, all with moulded capitals of late thirteenth-century character. In the south wall are two windows, each of two lights, with mullions forking in the head. The present doorway of the chapel is between these windows, but originally there were three intersecting recesses in this position, while there was a flat-headed doorway beneath the south-east window. The three-light window in the east wall is rather later, with reticulated tracery of c.1320; it appears to be of one period of construction with the rest of the work, and it is possible that the chapel was not finished until after the beginning of the fourteenth century. It was begun with the porch at the west end, which is of two bays with quadripartite ribbed vaulting, the ribs being simply chamfered. The vaulting-shafts which divide the bays, with their capitals and bases, are modern. Above this is a room, now used as a vestry, which was reached originally by a doorway and newel stair in the south-west corner of the chapel, but is now reached by a stair in the angle between the porch and the nave. This room originally had a low parapet wall on the side next the chapel, into which its occupant could look directly; but in 1776 the dividing wall between chapel and porch was carried up to the apex of the
roof, so that the communication between the chapel and the upper room was barred.

The south chapel has been for centuries the chapel of the Farnham family of the Over or Upper Hall, and now contains four incised alabaster slabs in memory of several of the sixteenth century members of that family, ranging from 1501 to 1561. In the centre is the large table-tomb with effigies of John Farnham, one of the gentlemen pensioners to queen Elizabeth, who died in 1587, and Dorothy Walwyn, his wife. This monument was originally in the north aisle, the burying place of the Nether Hall branch of the family, as he was the owner of the Nether Hall; but was transferred into the south aisle in 1887. On the south wall between the windows is an undated monument to Thomas Farnham of the Over Hall, who died in 1574, and Anne Eyre, his wife; they are represented as kneeling at desks with four sons behind him and two daughters behind her.

The large white marble monument in the centre of the west wall was erected in 1817 pursuant to the will of Sarah (Farnham) late countess of Denbigh, in memory of her father and mother, Edward and Easter Farnham, and their family. For this purpose lady Denbigh bequeathed the sum of £600. The two alabaster tablets on the west wall were erected pursuant to the will of Edward Basil Farnham, who died in 1879, in memory of his father and mother, Edward and Harriet Farnham, his sister Sarah Anne Farnham and himself. For this purpose and for filling the east window with stained glass, he left the sum of £500. There are numerous other memorials on the walls and floor of the chapel to deceased members of the family. The carved panel of a man in armour conducting a siege, which is under the east window, is the middle panel from one side of the table-tomb of John Farnham.

The squint in the north-east angle of the chapel was reopened in 1887, when the chapel was re-floored and re-seated.

The chapel is fenced in from the nave by a plaster screen with cusped panels of the sixteenth century, on which is an iron grille.

The north chapel, as already recorded, was built shortly after the south chapel, and the portions of old work which are left in the present arcade indicate an almost contemporary date.
INCISED SLAB—IN MEMORY OF THOMAS FARNHAM (D. 1502) AND MARGARET (KINGSTON), HIS WIFE
INCISE D SLAB—IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM FARNHAM (D. 1548) AND DOROTHY (NEVILL), HIS WIFE
INCISED SLAB—IN MEMORY OF FRANCIS FARNHAM (D. 1557), RECORDER OF LEICESTER, AND MARGERY (CAVE), HIS WIFE
INCISED SLAB—IN MEMORY OF ROBERT FARNHAM (D. 1561) AND MARY (LANGHAM), HIS WIFE
The arcade, however, was greatly altered in consequence of the building operations of 1842 and only fragments of it remain in the enlargement of that date. The three-light east window of the chapel is of the same date as the corresponding window in the south chapel, but is now unglazed and communicates with the modern organ-chamber beyond. Below this, there is a fourteenth-century piscina in the east wall with ogee head and trefoil cusping. There is a squint, now blocked, between the chapel and the chancel. The chapel is fenced, like the south chapel, by a plaster screen, which has been lowered about six inches, from the nave.

The north chapel was for centuries the private chapel of the Farnham family of the Nether Hall. In 1763 Charles Farnham, the youngest son of Benjamin Farnham (whose father Henry Farnham rebuilt the Nether Hall and died in 1684), sold the remnant of the Nether Hall estate to John Willows of Leicester, who had married his niece, and with the estate the north chapel became the property of the Willows family.

By the will of Miss Easter Willows, who died in 1835, the north chapel passed to her cousin Edward Basil Farnham, who thus owned both the north and south chapels as his private property. His tenants used the north chapel and he and his servants the south chapel. This arrangement came to an end in 1887 when William Farnham remodelled the south chapel, swept away the existing pews and introduced oak stalls, as seen to-day. His servants and tenants used the north chapel until he left in 1893. The monuments that were in the north chapel until 1887 were then removed into the south chapel.

The low tower was added about 1380, and was provided with eastern as well as western angle-buttresses, the eastern pair blending rather awkwardly with the adjoining masonry of the nave. There is a single two-light belfry window in each face. The arch between the tower and nave, of two orders, appears to have been constructed somewhat later than the rest of the tower; the mouldings are coarsely worked, and the inner order is carried upon engaged shafts on the faces of the responds. This arch is now filled by a modern screen of good design from drawings of Mr. Thomas Fosbrooke, the well known Leicester architect.
The roofs of the church are modern, but some of the cambered tie-beams of the nave roof, with the wall-pieces and grotesque head-corbels on which they rest, may be old. There is a font, of which the bowl is modern, but the shafted base is probably of the 17th century.
CHURCH OF S. BARTHOLOMEW, QUORndon

LOW-SIDE WINDOW AT A WAS MOVED FROM POINT B IN 1894
THE SCREEN AT C WAS OPENED OUT IN 1886
THAT AT POINT E WAS BUILT UP IN YEAR 1804
PANELLED PLASTER.
SCREENS ARE MARKED PS THAT AT PR HAS BEEN REDUCED IN HEIGHT THEY ARE OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY DATE
ACCESS TO PRIESTS ROOM WAS ORIGINALLY BY MEANS OF THE NEWEL STAIRCASE AT N
THE TABLE TOMB IN THE FARNHAM CHAPEL ORIGINALLY OCCUPIED THE POSITION MARKED TT
PULPIT AND READING DESK STOOD IN POSITION MASKED UNTIL THE YEAR 1841
DUC

DIAGRAM.

CHURCH OF S. BARTHOLOMEW.

PLATE N°1

Diagram Plans Illustrating the Development from Norman Period to Present Time.

Norman (12th) 13th Century
14th Century
15th Century (Late 15th)
Clerestory

As Further Enlarged in Year 1842

As Enlarged in Year 1842

The Front of West End of Church

The Front of East End of Church

Locals Window at A was edited

See Plate N°2

PLATE N°1

12™ Century

DIAGRAM

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