

# Faringdon Parish Church.

## Before Restoration and After.

**DURING** the period of the Crimean War All Saints' Church, Faringdon, was restored. The work comprised the removal of all Pews, Galleries, and other fittings; the entire re-building of the South Aisle of the Nave, and of the Aisle which runs parallel with the South Transept, called the "Littleworth Aisle," (which was originally built for the use of the people of Littleworth); building an Organ Chamber out from the North Aisle of the Nave; repairing all the stone work where it was damaged by the erection of the Galleries or from other causes; placing a new roof of the original pitch on the Nave; re-seating the whole Church with oak open benches, and paving the floor with Minton's plain tiles. The Transepts were separated from the Nave by masses of masonry, which had proved great hindrances both to sight and hearing; this masonry was therefore removed and arcades formed by the introduction of circular Piers, the effect produced by this arrangement being exceedingly good. Eastward of the North Transept a Vestry was erected with a high pitched roof, and beneath it a Chamber for the hot water apparatus. Works were also executed within and about the Chancel and Pye Chapel, at the cost of Mr. D. Bennett, the Lord of the Manor. These works embraced the external restoration of the Fabric; new glazing to the windows, oak Stalls and Stalls and Subsella in the Chancel, restoration of the ancient Sedilia, and furnishing them for use; an entirely new floor of Minton's encaustic tiles without the rails, and a beautiful dais for the Communion Table, formed of similar tiles; and, as the children had hitherto been without proper sittings, Mr Bennett seated the Pye Chapel with open benches for their use.

The panels of the reredos were filled with the tables of Commandments, the Creed and Lord's Prayer, and two Texts above the doors of the singularly placed aumbries in the East Wall.

The Font was placed near the South Door. The Prayer Desk and Pulpit were placed within the Tower. The Caen Stone Pulpit is a portion of an octagon, low with moulded trefoils in the several panels and small carved spandrels—~~open at the back,~~ and approached by four steps from the floor of the Nave. The Prayer Desk was of oak in a stone base, and had carved panels in the Standard.

The Vestry had an oak parclose up to the springing of the arch, which was discovered in the East Wall of the North Transept.

Three beautiful stained glass windows by Mr Wailes of Newcastle were placed in the Littleworth Aisle as Memorials to members of a family well known in this town.

Here is a sketch of the Church before its restoration photographed from the original by the Vicar of Faringdon in an old 'History of Faringdon,' through the courtesy of Mr. Alan G. Haines.

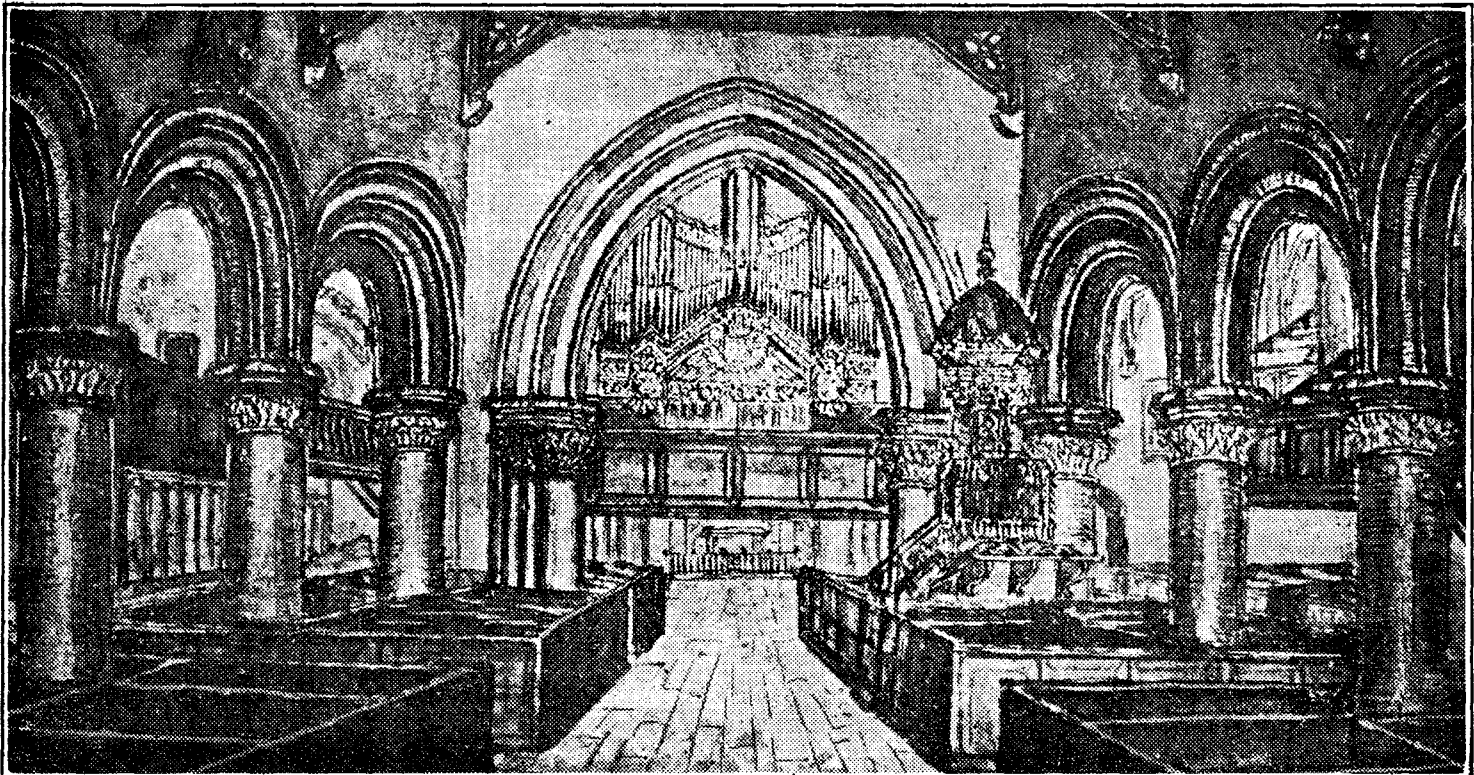


Photo by the Rev. W. Carey Ward.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, FARINGDON, BEFORE RESTORATION.

The Re-dedication ceremony took place on Wednesday, September 29th, 1854, by the Bishop of Oxford (Bishop Wilberforce). In the procession there were the Committee, Churchwardens, 47 clergy, the Ven. Archdeacon Clarke, and the Bishop. The Vicar at that time was the Rev. H. Barne. Dr. Marsh, the senior trustee and patron of the living, preached in the evening.

The *Faringdon Advertiser* of October 2, 1854, says: "To one who knew the Church a few short months ago, and has not seen the progress of the works, the effect of its present beautiful condition would be most startling; he would naturally enquire from whence have you rescued these fine old Piers with their carved capitals and moulded bases, whence these fine massive Piers which carry the Tower? I never saw them in the old Church? No, truly, they were hidden by unseemly galleries and pews and deal inclosures—and were only seen by those, who with the curiosity of an ecclesiologist looked behind and between these monstrous erections and there found traces of their beauty."

In order to give a comparison we reproduce a recent photograph of the Church taken at the same angle as the old one.



Photo by the Rev. W. Carey Ward,

#### ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, FARINGDON—PRESENT DAY.

Of more recent years several minor alterations and improvements have been made to the sacred edifice. For instance, the organ was in 1901 reconstructed and removed from the North Aisle of the Nave and placed in the Pye Chapel, and the old organ chamber was afterwards converted into a most convenient and imposing Baptistry, the mosaic floor of which was the gift of Mrs. Charles Edwards. The choir now occupy the handsome old oak stalls on either side of the Chancel, and in 1912 the old Reading Desk was removed and carved oak seats provided for the Clergy on both sides of the Chancel Steps, and in close proximity to that on the North Side now stands a carved oak Lectern.

Another improvement and a considerable preventative to draught was the erection in 1904 of an Oak Vestibule Screen placed inside the South door; and last, but not least, the re-casting and re-hanging of the bells and the restoration of the chimes and Church clock at a cost of £1,200 has been the most recent accomplishment.