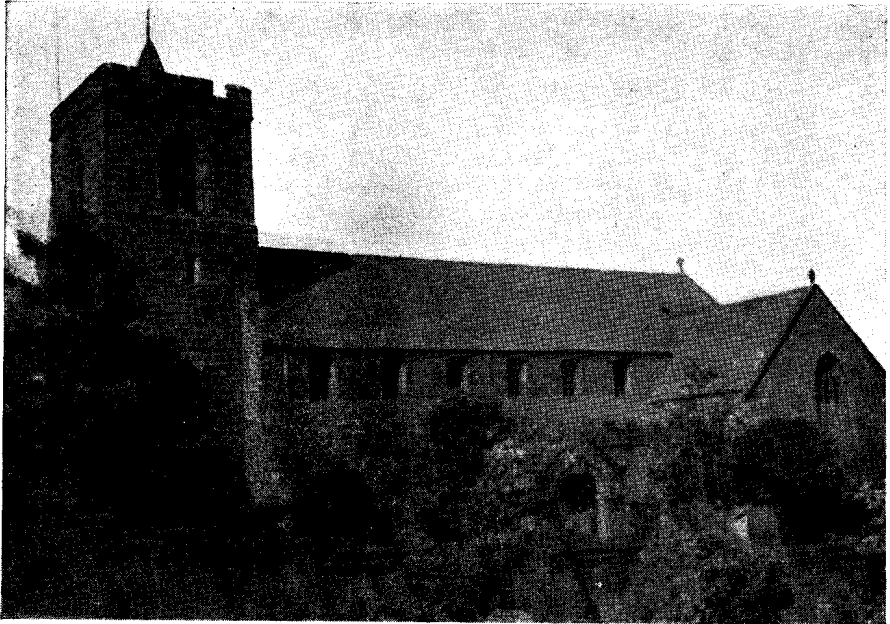


The Parish Church of All Saints Otley

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Brief Historical Notes compiled by F. Morrell

SAXON CHURCH

Otley is referred to in Domesday Book as having a church and priest, but the precise date, founder and character of the original church are lost in antiquity. There appears to be evidence, however, to assume that a church was founded and built in the late **7th century**.

NORMAN CHURCH

The first Norman church, built on the site of the Saxon structure in the **11th** or early **12th century**, is now the Chancel, which in its early form extended 16 feet westwards, the foundation of a west wall being discovered during restoration work in 1867.

1240 A.D. The Norman church was enlarged by the addition of the Nave, Transepts and Tower.

1485-1500 A.D. The two aisles and south porch completed, and the East window inserted, replacing the Norman.

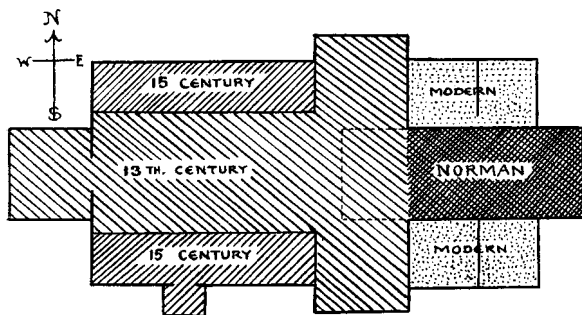
1851 A.D. The present roof and clerestory added to the Nave.

1867 A.D. Prior to this date the floor level of the Chancel was lower than the Nave, but in 1867 the Chancel floor was raised 18 inches and the Nave floor lowered about 1 foot. The 17th century "box" pews, remains of which are to be seen in the North vestry, were replaced by the present oak seats, the galleries were taken down, and the pulpit moved from the West pillar of the North transept to its present position.

A TOUR OF THE CHURCH

Baptistry.—We commence at the Norman North door which, with the stonework of the West and North-West windows of the Baptistry was moved to its present position when the aisles were added in 1485. The Font and raised floor were gifts of Mr. Francis Darwin in **1868**. The remains of ancient crosses are evidence that

Christianity existed in Otle in Saxon times. Of three on the pedestal, the first is part of a cross which must have been one of the most artistic in Britain, and is known as the "Angel" cross,



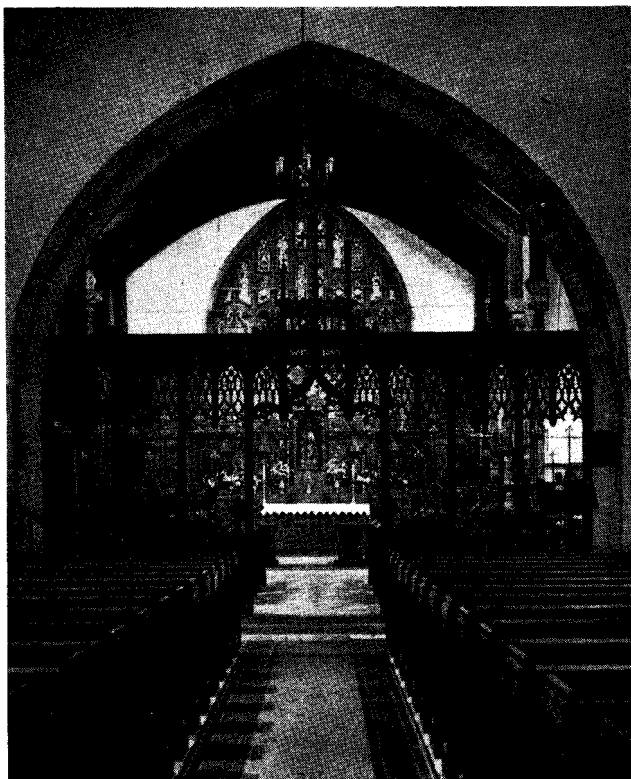
GROUND PLAN.

dated by Prof. W. G. Collingwood to be **750 A.D.** The War Memorial in the Church-yard is a facsimile. A different and perhaps later cross-shaft displays two wyverns, and is known as the "Griffin" cross, of date, **c. 800 A.D.** The centre one, of Anglian interlace work, is dated **860 A.D.** The small fragment of stone is known as the "Warrior" stone, discovered in 1867 when it was found necessary to underpin the South wall near the porch. The wall was found to rest upon two stone coffins, each containing a perfect skeleton, the cover of one of these being the small stone displaying a warrior in knee length garb holding a sword with a pommel shaped hilt, and dated **950 A.D.** The upright grave cover is **11th century**.

Tower.—The screen and tower window were given by William Fison, of Burley, in **1884**. The bells above, eight in number, have been re-cast and re-hung in **1748**, **1782**, and **1922**, and are well known as being exceptionally melodious. The Church clock, made by Harrison of Aberford, dates from **1793**. The unusual carillon

to play every four hours. The various stones under the window are parts of Saxon crosses. The old oak beam was taken from the belfry when new bells were re-hung in **1748**.

South Transept.—Proceeding along the South aisle, we reach the South Transept, which prior to the Reformation was a Chantry dedicated to St. Catherine. The large tomb has the arms of Fairfax and Aske, the recumbent figures being Sir Thomas, first Lord Fairfax of Cameron (d. 1640) and his wife, Helen (d. 1620). They were the grandparents of Sir Thomas Fairfax, the great Parliamentary general in the Civil War. A brass nearby commemorates Lady Wentworth, of Wooley, the daughter of the first Lord Fairfax. Other wall monuments are of the Fairfax family of Menston and the Fawkes of Farnley. The canopy of the Sanctus Bell-turret, taken down in 1851, is to be seen under the South window.



Chancel.—Before entering the Chancel notice the military Drum which belonged to the "Otley Armed Association" formed in **1797** to repel Napoleon's threatened invasion. The Rev. James Bailey, vicar at the time, was largely responsible for the formation of the Association. The Chancel screen was the gift of William Fison

added at the same time. plays a different tune each day, being set whose arms, with those of Ripon Diocese, are above, with the date **1893**. On the North wall is a quaint memorial of crude workmanship exhibiting a man in a shroud, connected with William Vavasour of Weston and Stead, **c.1618**. Nearby is an elaborately carved tomb to Walter Fawkes (d. 1825) and his second wife, whilst opposite, on the South wall, a marble tablet is to the memory of Francis Fawkes (d. 1786), the last surviving male of the Fawkes' of Farnley.

Sanctuary.—Note the characteristic Norman windows placed high in the walls, for many years blocked up until being re-opened in 1865. The piscina is a plain round arched Norman one. The altar-shaped tomb of Doric style was erected in **1610**, as a memorial to John Dyneley of Bramhope. The tracery of the East window dates from the late **15th century** ; the Altar rails from c. 1702-14, and the oak altar, reredos and marble floor from **1912**, placed in at a cost of £995.

North Transept.—Passing the Georgian pulpit we come to the North Transept Chapel, anciently a Chantry Chapel dedicated to St. Mary, now restored after a lapse of 410 years. The cross and candlesticks are a memorial to a former vicar, Archdeacon T. J. Williams. The old piscina is to be seen near the pulpit. On the North wall is an interesting brass with heraldic tree, dated **1593**, recording the alliance of the Lindley and Palmes family of Lindley. Other **17th** and **18th** century wall tablets are of the Lacon family (ancestors of Lord Halifax), Barkers of Otley (steward of the Manor of Otley), and Fawkes of Farnley.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

In 1867 capitals were restored to the Nave pillars, and by a grave error added to the two Transept pillars, destroying the whole character of the arches. The Chancel arch, Transept arches and Tower arch are all of the same period—13th century. Galleries erected in the 18th century were removed in 1867, the one at the West end being approached by two flights of stairs which circled the western pillars. Note the arches above, cut away for head space.

The **Registers** commence in **1562**, and contain many interesting entries, which include the baptism of Thomas Chippendale of Otley (June 5, 1718), the world famous cabinet maker. John Wesley's signature appears in 1788 as officiant at a wedding. A list of Churchwardens is to be seen on a brass in the North aisle, and a more complete list from **1583** is behind the North door, as is also a list of Assistant Curates from **1754**, and Parish Clerks from **1609**.

Other wall tablets in the Church include Dalton, of Caley, Dunn, Maude, Smith, Fourness, Sheriton, Richard Vitty (Headmaster of the Free Grammar School 1687-1703), Henry Humphrey (vicar 1708-44), Henry Wilson (vicar 1761-82). The oldest memorial to a vicar is, alas, on the floor in the porch, being to Thomas Harrison, vicar 1668-88.