

BUCKS CHURCHES.

St. James', Birtton.

The Vicar issued an appeal last March for help from outside his parish, which has no wealthy residents, for funds for the repair of this 14th century church. The tower is reported to be in an unsafe condition. The appeal is backed by the Bishop of Oxford and the Bishop of Buckingham.

St. Peter's, Medmenham.

The sub-committee of this Society was consulted last February as to some proposed embellishment of the chancel of Medmenham Church, and reported through their Hon. Secretary, Mr. Forsyth, F.R.I.B.A.

SS. Peter and Paul, Ellesborough.

Familiar to us all from its prominent site and its nearness to the Great Western Railway, Ellesborough Church was very much restored in 1854 and 1871,* when this process was commonly more drastic than now; "The walls were almost entirely re-faced outside, the chancel, tower, and south aisle were partly re-built, vestry and organ chamber added, and the building generally restored. The chancel is modern except the chancel arch. . . ."† Happening to have a drawing of this church by J. Buckler, dated 1837, a wash drawing in Indian ink, carefully executed by this well-known artist, I have thought it might be interesting to compare this with the building as we see it now and as shown in a recent photograph.

The R. Com. Report, in its description of the church, states that "the tower is almost entirely modern," but a comparison of the two views raises some doubt as to the truth of this, the similarity,

* P.O.D.

† R. Com: Report, South Bucks, 1912.



ELLESBOROUGH CHURCH Before the Modern Alterations



ELLESBOROUGH CHURCH As Now

even to the weatherings of the buttresses (where the modern architect often fails) being so great. The chancel, as shown in the old drawing, was probably, from its small size, of earlier date than the 15th cent. chancel arch, which might, likely enough, have taken the place of a smaller opening of the 12th century. The flat-headed windows shown in the drawing may have been 17th century renewals. Of alterations and destruction here before 1854 Lipscomb ‡ tells us that a north porch was taken down in 1828 and the doorway closed. "One of the windows on the south side has been closed for the erection of a monument" (to Lady Bridget Croke, 1638). "Between the nave and chancel are remains of an old carved and gilt oak screen, with four cinque-foil headed and crocketed arches, under a pediment; and in the spandrils of the central arch, on each side, a swan. The north side of the nave was formerly fitted up with pews, but the opposite side retained the old open seats of the time of King James, with folding or moveable stools fastened to the ends of the seats, capable of being drawn out for the accommodation of persons in the middle of the nave. These have been lately removed and another range of pews substituted. In the chancel are three very ancient chests." Possibly some view may exist of the fine screen described above and thus barbarously removed.

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‡ Hist. of Bucks, 1847, II., 183.