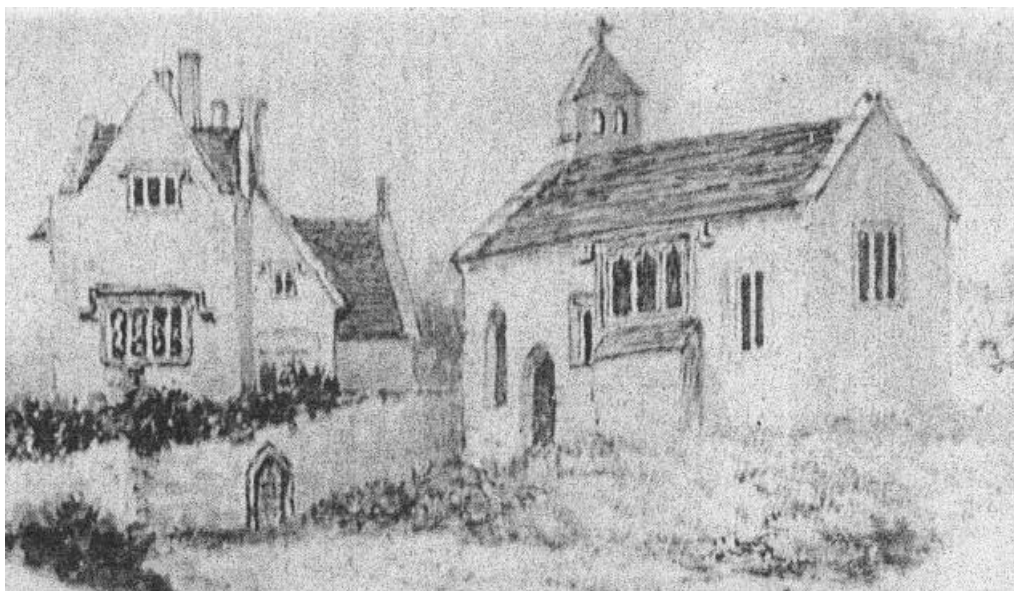


*“... In Thy Presence is the fulness of Joy...”*



A drawing of Lufton Church made in 1824, with Manor Farmhouse in the background, before both were re-built by Benjamin Ferrey in 1865.

## A brief guide to Lufton Church.

Please do take this Guide away with you as a souvenir of your visit.

Lufton as a settlement has a long history. The Roman Villa, barely half a mile away, is of national importance, and recent archaeological excavations have established Iron Age settlements very close at hand. The field opposite the church bears evidence of the medieval village, lost as a result of the Black Death. There has too, been a long history of worship on or very near the present church. Just outside the churchyard wall, a geophysical survey has revealed the presence of a small apsed building, which we may surmise was the original church, and is certainly Norman, if not much earlier in origin. The font now in the church was therefore likely made for that building, and so has been moved at least once before its present home. By the 13th. century, the church had been rebuilt, and was now on its present site. From this period dates the Holy Water Stoup, still in its original position behind the door for the convenience of worshippers as they entered the church. Later in the fourteenth century, we have the ledger stone beside the font, cut down from its original coffin-shape, probably in the 1865 re-build. Also from this period are the two bells. Two more ledger stones from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries have survived and can be seen at each end of the nave. By the early nineteenth century, the church displayed features of every period from at least Norman times. However, by the 1860s, the church was probably in a parlous state, and the Churchwarden Samuel Bradford Penny, who lived in the adjacent Manor Farmhouse, enlisted the sympathies of Squire Langton, the Lord of the Manor, to restore the building. Unfortunately, Squire Langton was extremely wealthy; a major land-owner in Somerset and Dorset, it was said that he was able to hunt for two days in a row without ever leaving his own property. Benjamin Ferrey (1810-1880) the Honorary Diocesan Architect, and one of the

most highly regarded figures of his time, was engaged to deal with Lufton. He was nothing if not thorough. His restoration consisted of demolishing the building entirely, retaining only those features already mentioned, and building a new church, reputedly on the same footings as the old one. Recent excavations of the church path for an electricity cable have revealed smashed medieval floor tiles and stone roof tiles, presumably from the old church, which with walling stone were used to level the site. (At the same time, Samuel Bradford Penny took advantage of Ferrey's availability to enlarge his Tudor farmhouse as a fashionable Gentleman-farmer's country house, in the form we see it today.) In 1865 the new church was opened, and although it is a charming Victorian building, and the present Churchwardens are grateful for the care and pains Ferrey took to ensure his building was of sound construction, we might regret the paucity of evidence of a continuity of worship for a thousand years which the previous building obviously contained. The subsequent years following 1865 have seen a history of accumulation of furnishings which add so much to the attractiveness of the building. Samuel Bradford Penny must have been justifiably proud of the work he had instigated at Lufton. He remained as Churchwarden until his death. He was also Churchwarden for ten years at Holy Trinity Church Yeovil, another Ferrey building, of some twenty years earlier. He died in Holy Trinity Church on the last Sunday morning of January 1900, having just received Holy Communion. One hopes he might approve of the furnishings which have been added to the building since his time. Two examples of the pews which were provided in 1865 still remain in the porch. The present fine oak pews, the panelling round the altar, together with the 'Tower' Kemp window, were given in 1912 as a memorial to Constance Batten, wife of a member of the prominent local

family of solicitors. The pulpit was a memorial donation in 1901. The ornamental brass candelabra, transformed from gasoliers, were an acquisition from Lufton Manor, when gas lighting was replaced with electricity. The exceptional brass chancel rails are a later donation, as is the remarkable neo-classical organ, built in 1976 by August Späth of Freiburger Orgelbau, one of only eleven such instruments by its maker in this country. Other recent introductions include the Tabernacle, where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, an excellent example of Victorian 'High Church' furnishing, with doors containing 'Pre-Raphaelite' decoration in enamel work and gold leaf, now in need of restoration. Outside a Standard Lamp, originally gas-lit, was installed at the churchyard gate to commemorate Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. The fourteen yews in the Churchyard are a testimony to the long history of this site. The building continues to be lovingly maintained by its small but devoted congregation, and is a classic example of a traditional country Parish Church in miniature, set alongside its diminutive Village Green. It still proclaims the faith which led to its foundation over a thousand years ago, and which finds continuing expression in the weekly round of faithful worship here.

We worship here every Sunday evening at 6.00.p.m.

1st., 2nd., 4th., and 5th. Sundays, Evening Prayer.

3rd. Sunday, Holy Communion.

All our Services are from the Book of Common Prayer.

If you wish to join us, you can be sure of a warm welcome.