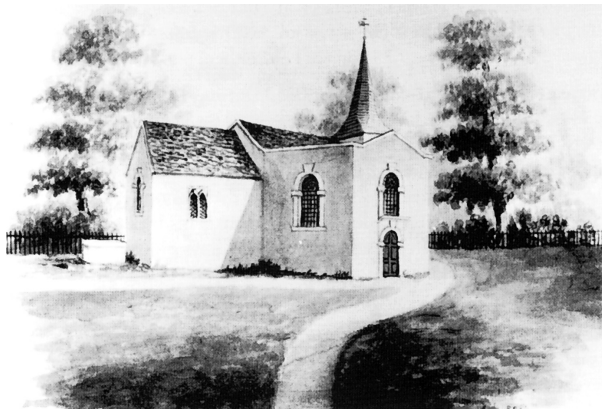




## Welcome to St. Margaret's



Picture of original Church by RS Miles, 1838

**1. The original church** was built in the grounds of the manor house known as Halstead Place, just across the road. Very little remains of the old manor house and the whole area is about to be redeveloped. It is still possible to see the original church site and some remaining grave-stones by walking up the public footpath from Church Road. This area is now listed by English Heritage as it is a significant example of a medieval church site probably built on Saxon foundations.

It was decided to build the present church on this site in the late 1870s and St. Margaret's was consecrated by The Archbishop of Canterbury on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1881. It was built in the style of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century and contains several items which highlight the colourful characters of the past.

*Now walk in an anti-clockwise direction down the south aisle and on your right you will see:*

**2. The Deane Windows** installed in 1955 to commemorate the work of Francis Deane (Rector 1903 –1915) and his wife Jessie. During their ministry Halstead's fame as a centre for soft fruit and strawberry growing in particular was great. Hundreds of itinerant fruit-pickers came to the village every year and both strawberries and huts can be seen in the first window.

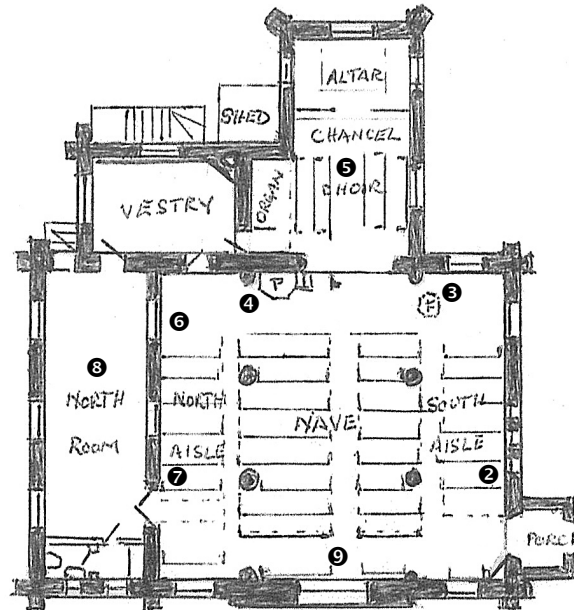
**3. The Font**, dated 1849, was moved from the old church and now forms part of the Children's corner. Children's activities today are many and varied and there are about 20 children in the choir and many attend the regular holiday clubs, and later Pathfinders.

*Look behind the font and you will see:*

**4. A 16<sup>th</sup> Century Brass** which commemorates William Petley and his wife who lived at Halstead Place. The other 15<sup>th</sup> century brass commemorating William Burys in 1444 is on the other side of the nave, behind the pulpit. **(Brass rubbing only by permission of the Rector/Churchwardens)**

*Walk towards the altar.*

**5. The Chancel** was the site of the original burial chapel built in 1854 by JP Atkins of Halstead Place. In **1881** the new church was built by T.F. Burnaby-Atkins of Halstead Place at a time when the population of Halstead had expanded to 474 and church congregations were about 100 adults and 30-40 children. The stained glass windows were donated by Mr & Mrs Burnaby-Atkins.



*Now walk back and turn to the north aisle past the pulpit.*

**6. The North aisle** has a **Burne Jones window** and several commemorative plaques of families who played a prominent part in Halstead over the years.

**7. The Rectors' Board** replaces an older version and was dedicated in 2004. In 1983 the livings of Knockholt & Halstead were combined.

*Now take a break and have a sit down in The North Room!*

**8. The North Room** was added to the Church in 1992 giving a meeting room, kitchen and toilet all of which are appreciated by today's parishioners. In **1999** the construction of the **Millennium Mosaic** by a local potter and engineer was one of the major features of Halstead's Millennium Celebrations. It was installed in the North Room and shows the wide range of properties and people in the parish in the year 2000, as well as the nearness of London and Eurostar travelling at speed through Knockholt Station.

*Back to the main Church!*

**9. The Memorial Window** on the west wall was made by Casolini in 1867 and was moved from the old church to its present position in 1881. The red marble grave-stone in the floor below this window is that of Sir Thomas Watson (died 1621) and his wife Dame Elizabeth, who lived at Halstead Place and carried out substantial alterations to the former church. The present bell, which is rung at nearly every service, was one of 4 bells donated by Sir Thomas. The massive coffin slab on the west wall is that of William de Chelsfield who died in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. Several other plaques on the west wall have been moved from the Otford Lane Mission Church which was in use when the area was farmed by many smallholders and it was too far for those parishioners to walk to Church in Shoreham. The Mission Church closed in 1985 but can still be seen as you drive along Otford Lane.