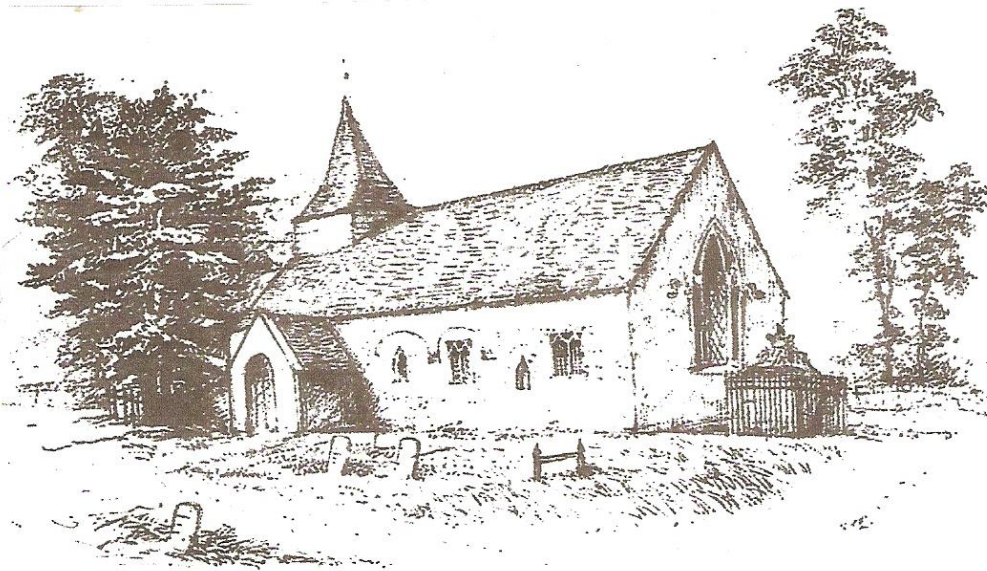




Little Bookham Church c. 1852. A. A. Cantwell.

Little Bookham Church

The Domesday Book, 1086, makes the first distinction between the parishes of Great and Little Bookham. As the Domesday Book makes no reference to a church in Little Bookham, it must therefore have been built after that date.

Little Bookham church is set apart from the village of Little Bookham, and is adjacent to what was the Manor House. The Domesday survey refers to the Manor of Little Bookham being held by Halsard of William de Braose, Lord of Bamber. The Manor remained in the Halsard (or Hansard) family until about 1291.

It would seem that Little Bookham church was built by the Halsard family in about the year 1100 as a manorial chapel.

The original church was of unknown dedication. It was rededicated to All Saints in 1986.

The north and west walls of the original church are most probably those now standing. A south aisle was added in about 1160, together with a new chancel. These however, were rebuilt several times over the years.

There are two windows of early 12th century date, that appear to be original – the West window and the westernmost window of the north wall. Other early windows, and parts of windows, would appear to have been reused when later alterations were made.

An early scratch dial was reused in the 15th century, and can now be seen in the top left hand reveal of the second window from the east end.

At the south-east of the chancel is an unusual piscina with two drains, probably of 13th century origin. The font is roughly circular, and believed to be Anglo Saxon.

The church was a typical Norman Church, in which the majority of the congregation either stood or knelt throughout the service, the elderly and infirm sitting on benches around the walls.

Little Bookham Church contains probably the finest collection of Hatchments in Surrey. These hatchments, or panels, display the armorial bearings of past Lords of the Manor.

The church is set in grounds of some 0.64 hectares in total. There are several mature trees in the churchyard, the most notable being an ancient yew, recently certified as being over 1300 yrs. old.

The church registers commence in 1636, and the church plate comprises various items of parish interest.

Gillian Davis

21st July 2013

Information taken from 'A History of All Saints Church' by S.E.D. Fortescue.