



Our latest Church Record, that of St Mark's Upper Hale, Surrey, was submitted to the CRS in May 2021 and we presented it to the church at a very small, distanced and masked gathering about a month later. Our recording began in January 2020 and of course shortly afterwards, COVID struck! We were fortunate to be assisted and encouraged by the wonderful people at St Mark's who allowed us to work in the church whenever the regulations allowed.

St Mark's is a small and apparently unassuming Victorian church with some interesting contents and whose history is firmly rooted in the local community. We were drawn to consider recording the church by an article in the local newspaper. It concerned the efforts to raise funds for the conservation of mural paintings in the chancel of St Mark's which were at that time a little known treasure. The murals were painted by Miss Eleanor Catherine (Kitty) Wallace Milroy between 1911 and 1920. Influenced by a blend of European Symbolist paintings and the Arts and Crafts Movement, the murals depict various religious themes and views of the local area. The figures in the scenes are known to be modelled on local people.



Our involvement helped the efforts to conserve the murals by enabling additional links with supporters of the Arts in Farnham. We feel that this is just one example of the importance of Church Recording. The conservation work began in April 2021, effectively closing the church, so we had a deadline! Ironically, COVID isolation worked in our favour as the team had more time than usual to spend on their efforts. In addition, we were very gratified by the willing help we received, mainly by email, from outside organisations and experts whilst we were unable to visit libraries and archives. Special thanks are due to Nick Seversway, a local picture restorer who first recognised the significance of the murals some years ago and who gave us generous help with our descriptions.

In December we were delighted to hear that St Mark's had been given Grade II listed status by English Heritage for the mural paintings, and this month we hear that the church has been further recognised by being listed for the 2022 Surrey Heritage Awards. A very interesting and detailed description of the murals can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1476301?section=official-listing>

## From the Farnham Church Recorders, February 2022



If you are in the area and would like to see the murals, the viewing times are on the Parish website <https://badshotleaandhale.org/>. In addition, the Museum of Farnham has an exhibition about Kitty Milroy and the restoration of the murals, open until 30th April.

Other items of interest in the church include a splendid Edwardian organ, stained glass windows by John Blyth and a Bible given to the church when it first opened as a Mission Chapel by the Bishop of Winchester, who at that time lived in Farnham Castle. The Bible was rebound in the 1960s by Anthony Gardner, an eminent bookbinder who taught at Farnham College of Art.

With the continuing support of TAS Farnham we have now moved on to record St John's, the parish church of which St Mark's is a daughter church.

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