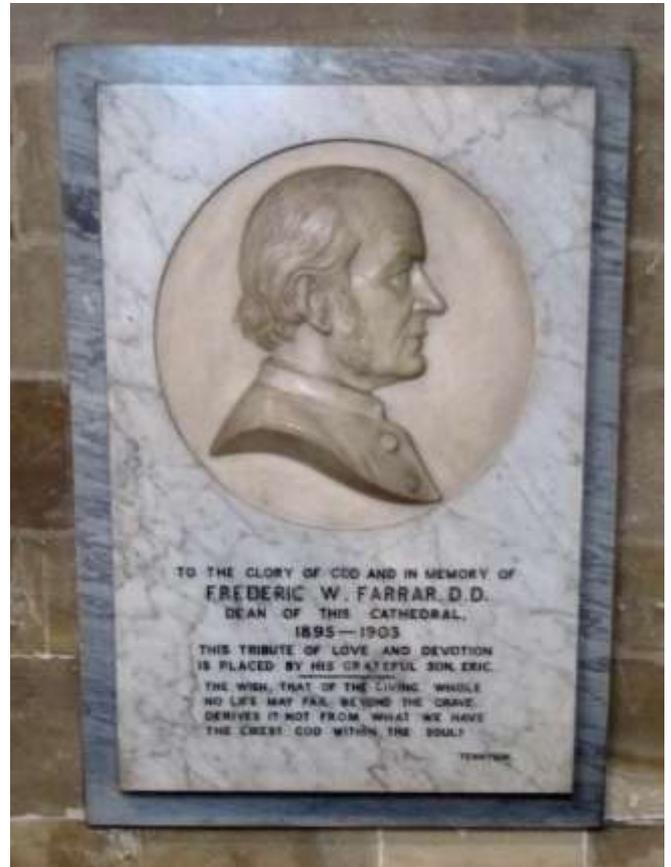


Dean Farrar

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Dean Farrar (carte de visite)



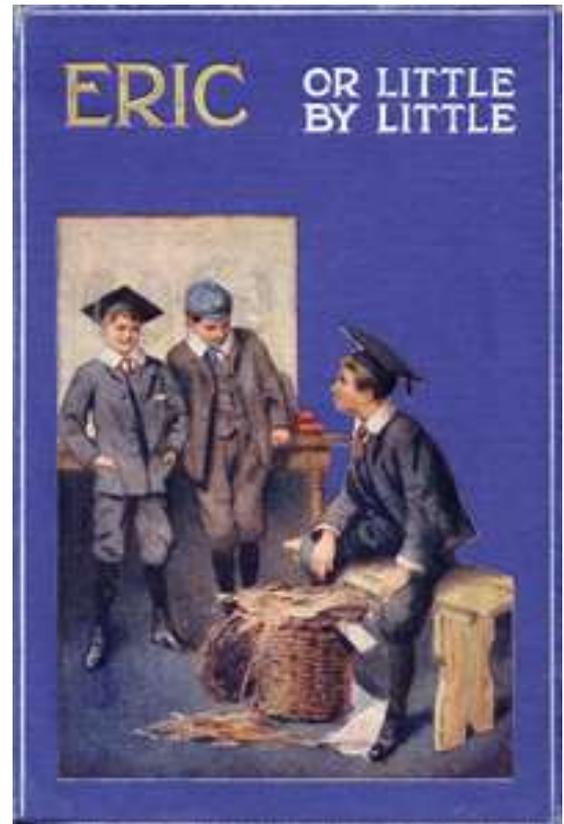
memorial Canterbury Cathedral nave

When Frederic William Farrar (1831-1903) was appointed Dean of Canterbury in 1895, he was one of the best-known churchmen in England. Perhaps his chief claim to fame was his substantial 'Life of Christ', a unique blend of popular style and recent scholarship, which had found its way into millions of homes. Less easy for later generations to understand is the great success of his 'Eric, or Little by Little', a tale of boyhood piety and its undoing.

A well-liked, public-spirited Dean, Farrar launched a national appeal for the restoration of the cathedral. Its success meant that, as well as essential roof repairs, it was possible thoroughly to restore the Chapter House and Cloisters, and complete the renewal of the Crypt. Under his auspices the 13th centenary of the coming of St. Augustine was vigorously celebrated, Archbishop Benson was buried in the cathedral – the first interment of a primate in Canterbury since the 16th century – and the Old Palace was restored for the use of Archbishop Frederick Temple. Before coming to the Deanery, Farrar had been successively Headmaster of Marlborough College and a Canon (later Archdeacon) of Westminster, where he

transformed the interior of St. Margaret's church and was active in the Temperance movement.

In some ways a man of his time, with his florid sermons – which drew large congregations – and his rather narrow idealism, he was something of a radical within the Church of England in his commitment to scientific research. As a schoolmaster he argued strongly for the addition of science to the curriculum. Among his many books was an account of 'The Origin of Language' which led Charles Darwin to propose him, successfully, for the Fellowship of the Royal Society. Though doubtful about human evolution, Farrar arranged for Darwin to be buried in Westminster Abbey, was among the pall-bearers, and on the Sunday evening delivered a eulogy. A liberal in the interpretation of the Bible, he provoked much controversy with a series of sermons in the Abbey criticising the doctrine of eternal damnation.



first published 1858

Dean Farrar is buried in the Cloister Garth; there is a memorial tablet in the Nave, and the west window of the Chapter House is dedicated to his memory. Many of the letters he received can be found in the Cathedral Archives (Farrar Papers). Among his grandsons was Viscount Montgomery of Alamein.

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