

18 Fittings and Furnishings

Church Objects

For a church to function effectively it must employ a number of objects. Some of these will be very specific to use in a church, others will be everyday items which could serve in many locations. Many of these objects have been gifts of parishioners to commemorate a loved one, to mark an occasion or merely to respond to a need. Often items wear out, have been stolen or are mislaid but frequently fashions change and objects in regular use get put aside and something new comes into use.

Inventories

Inventories for many churches survive, usually from the Restoration or Reformation period when they were made as a prelude to confiscation. The nearest we have for Purley is a brief list in a churchwardens presentment in 1677 when it was recorded that Purley had:-

- One great Bible
- Two copies of the Book of Common Prayer, one for the Minister and one for the Clerk
- A register book in parchment (which survives)
- All other books convenient for the church
- A Stone Font (which survives)
- A Communion Table
- A Communion cloth and cushion

In 1297 Bishop Quinnell of Exeter issued a list of what he regarded as the minimum inventory for a parish church in his diocese and we may assume that Purley would not have been very different. It read:-

- Chalice of Silver or silver-gilt
- Ciborium of silver or pewter
- Pyx of silver or ivory for the reserved sacrament
- Pyx for unconsecrated bread
- Chrismatory of pewter for holy oils
- Censer
- Incense boat
- Pax brede (a tablet, usually of wood and decorated) for the kiss of peace)
- Three cruets
- Vessel for holy water
- Altar Stone (fixed and immovable)
- Altar cloth
- Altar canopy
- Altar frontal
- Font of stone (kept locked to prevent superstitious use of baptismal water).
- Image of the patron saint
- Image of the Virgin Mary
- Tenebrae (a multiple candlestick for holy week)
- Pascal candlestick
- Two processional tapers

Two great crosses, one portable
Nuptial veil
Pall to spread over coffin
Bell
Lantern and handbell to carry before the priest when visiting the sick and dying
Two sets of vestments, one festal and one ordinary
Rochet
Two surplices

In addition they were to have the following books:-

Good manual for occasional services (eg Baptism, Marriage and Burials)
Ordinal (for the yearly offices)
Missal (for words and ceremonial of the Mass)
Collect book (for prayers)
Legenda (lessons from scripture and the lives of saints)
Gradual (Hymns for the Mass)
Troper (Hymns for other services)
Venitory (Psalms for Mattins)
Antiphoner (Music for the canonical hours)
Psaltar
Hymnal
Copy of the Statutes of Synod
All books and vestments to be stored in a great chest.

The inventories of many churches were sold off, confiscated or destroyed at various times between the Reformation and the Restoration and it would seem that Purley was no exception. However objects were re-acquired as they could be afforded if they were still needed and now Purley has almost all the items on Bishop Quinnell's list or their modern equivalent.

Musical Instruments

We have no knowledge of the musical arrangements before 1870, but soon after building work commenced it was decided to amend the design slightly and provide accommodation for a new organ. This was ordered from Mr Holditch and installed in 1873. It was a single manual instrument. most of whose sound was locked into the organ chamber which occupied most of the old vestry. In 1935 it was reported as being full of dust and Nelson Cooper the organist was instructed to get a quote for having it cleaned and repaired. It was cleaned and rebuilt several times and electrical pumping arrangements were provided in the 1950s.

It had the following stops:-

16 ft bourdon (pedals)
8 ft viola da gamba
8 ft open diapason
8 ft clarabella
4 ft principal
4 ft flute
2 ft 15th

In 1965 there was a proposal to turn it into a two manual instrument and add

8 ft cor oboe
4 ft geigan octave

2 ft super octave

also to add a new bass octave to the 8 ft viola da gamba.

It was removed to provide more space in 1982 and sold to St Peter's Church, Quarrendon, who also paid the costs of dismantling and removal.

A Crane upright piano was also purchased from a bequest by Mrs LaHive in 1976 but it is very difficult to tune and is now almost never used. An interim 2 manual Baldwin 'Interlude' electronic organ was rented during and immediately after the building of the new extension. Trials had been conducted on a computer organ and eventually a two manual instrument was acquired from Baldwins in 1984 at a cost of £7500 and installed in June of that year. The electronic organ was thrown in as part of the deal and retained. This was stolen from the church around 1987.

A few tambourines were obtained for the choruses which became very popular in the 1980s and have been used occasionally. The odd appearance of a guitar has been made, but on the whole Purley has been very conservative with its musical instruments.

The Ancient Embroidery

At one time there used to be a piece of Elizabethan embroidery in the church. It was first noted as being in the church in the Churchwarden's presentment of 1553 (see page 17). It had been used as an altar covering; but after the 1870 rebuilding it was hung in the vestry. The Reverend John Dudley-Matthews did not approve as he considered the subject matter to be unsuitable for a church. In 1904 he sold it to the Victoria and Albert Museum for £60. It was on display there until 1982 but is now in the reserve collection. A photograph of three of the scenes was hung in its place in the vestry. (See page 18)

The embroidery consists of two panels 2165mm by 57mm. It is petit point on canvas embroidered with coloured wools and silks with parts raised by padding. It is dated from the late 16th Century. The panels depict scenes from Ovid's 'Metamorphoses', although the figures are costumed in Elizabethan style.

The first panel tells the story of Venus and Adonis (Metamorphoses x and xii). It shows a wooded landscape with two scenes in the foreground. On the left Adonis lies attacking a wild boar with a spear beneath an apple tree. On the right Adonis lies dead mourned by Venus and three nymphs. In the top right Venus is seen departing through the clouds in a chariot drawn by birds. In the middle distance is a winding stream and a fountain with hounds pursuing the boar. In the background can be seen a temple and other buildings and undulating hills.

The second panel tells the story of Myrrha, the mother of Adonis (From Metamorphoses x, ix to xl). The panel has four separate scenes. On the extreme left Myrrha attempts to hang herself in an arcade surrounded by vines and is prevented from doing so by the nurse. In the centre left she tells the nurse of her love while sitting in an ornamental garden. In centre right the nurse leads her to the bed of Cinryas, under which is an owl. On the extreme right she is pursued by Cinryas and turned into a myrtle tree.

It is thought that the two panels once formed a valence which hung in the ancient manor house and that it was acquired by the church sometime in the 16th century when a Tudor manor house was built. The two pieces were then sewn together to be used as an altar covering.

Other Works of Art

The church has several pictures; but all are reproductions excepting an original oil painting by Ray Herring which hangs in the foyer of the new vestry. It is entitled 'Purley People through the Ages' and depicts parishioners dressed in costumes from mediaeval to modern times grouped around the 12th century font.

A small item of sculpture can be found behind the sedilla in the Chancel. It is a carved lady's head, supposed by some to depict the Virgin Mary.

One could also classify the five gargoyles on the tower as minor works of art.

Vestments

Before the Reformation we can assume that priests wore full vestments (alb, chasuble etc) to celebrate the Mass and had at least one cope for ceremonial occasions. By Elizabeth's time these had been supplanted by a black gown or cassock with a ruff and covered by a surplice and black preaching scarf for services. The surplices tended to disappear during the Commonwealth period but reappeared shortly afterwards. Vestments began to reappear in the Church of England with the influence of the Oxford Movement in the latter part of the 19th Century; but as far as we are able to ascertain they have never reappeared in St Mary's Purley.

Coloured stoles have replaced the preaching scarves for sacramental services with the colour reflecting the season. Many of the stoles in use belong to the church but some have been the property of the clergy as have been cassocks and surplices.

In recent years we have seen lay-readers officiating and assisting at services wearing cassock and surplice with a blue preaching scarf.

Choir robes consisting of ruff, black cassock and surplice were in use after the Second World War and probably date from much earlier. These had disappeared by the early 1970s and the choir wore street clothes. Soon after David Evans' arrival he introduced a unisex robe of bright scarlet modelled on a monk's habit and girded with a white cord.

The Millennium Embroidery

A commemorative embroidery in cross stitch was produced by parishioners for the millennium. It was designed by Jackie Benstead and her small committee and consists of 6 inch by 6 inch panels which join together to form a grid of 5 by 10. Panels are numbered from 1 to 50 starting at top left and working left to right and then down. The plan is as follows:-

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Football (Purley Jubilee) | 16 The Barn |
| 2 Tennis (crossed rackets) | 17* Chalices |
| 3 Sports and Social Club | 18* Church |
| 4 Cricket (Purley CC badge) | 19* Church |
| 5 Bucknell's Meadow (see saw) | 20 River launch |
| 6 Scouts (badge) | 21 Tylehurst Lace |
| 7 Jasmine Cottage | 22 Fishing |
| 8 Concorde | 23* Font |
| 9 Purley Park Trust | 24 River Thames (Kingfisher) |
| 10 Village Shop | 25 Pre-school Playgroup |
| 11 Parish Council | 26 Bus |
| 12 Car | 27 Hand of Friendship |
| 13* Church officers 2000 | 28* Bell |
| 14 High Speed Train | 29 Memorial Hall |
| 15 Health Visitor Clinic | 30 Purley Tots |

31 House	41 Wednesday Club
32 Home Farm	42 C of E Infant School
33* Wedding	43 Long Lane Primary School
34 Mapledurham Lock	44 Denefield School
35 Purley Rise Stores	45 Pathfinders
36 Allotments	46 Trentham Bowls Club
37 2	47 Women's Institute
38 00	48 Project Purley (map of Purley)
39 0	49 Thames Vale Singers
40 Hot Air Balloon	50 Horticultural Society

The panels marked * formed a central cross. (See page 130)

After the initial design the panels were passed to the many community groups in the village to stitch. For one of the panels a donation was sought from anyone who would care to do just a few stitches and several panels were completed by friends and relatives from as far away as Cornwall who had no other connection with the village. However the majority were stitched by villagers.

The panels were joined together to form the complete embroidery by the co-ordinating committee who added the border of leaves where the stitcher had either got it wrong or could not manage it and the complete work was completed in time for the Millennium celebrations

A leaflet was produced listing all the people who stitched the several panels. :-

Sheila Adnett, Mary Barrett, Jackie Benstead*, Melissa Benstead, Ann Betts, Millie Bordiss* (42) Henry Bordiss, Anne Brown, Barry Brown, Jean Bull, John Chapman (16, 48), Wendy Chapman, Leslie Charlesworth, Sara Charlesworth, Eva Darrington, Melanie Davies, Rita Denman, Vera Farrow, Vicky Fidler, Hazel Firth, Carolyn Fitzmaurice-Hart (50), Claire Pearson*, Graham Pearson, Sue Fraser, Annie Glibbery, Myra Hayden, Joanna Hope, Daphne Howard, Jean Howell, Roger Howell, Rita Hunt, Hazel Ireland, Maureen Kennedy, Gill Lewis, Norma Linning, Andrew Mackie (26), Christine Mackie, David Mackie, Linda Mackie, (26) David Manning, Anabel Mason, Diane Mattheson, Wendy McMahon, Vicki Metcalf (32) Gladys Morris, (13, 18, 19, 27, 28, 33) Jean Neal, Debby Newman, Sally Robertson*, Pam Sands, Margaret Schofield, Fiona Sidorowicz, Abi Stinson, Angie Stokes, Suzanne Stout, Annette Townsend* (17, 23), Maureen Watkivs*, Michael Watson, Jane White, Dorothy Wilcox, Sheridan Williams, Bethany Woodward, Jessica Woodward, Nicki Woodward.

* were members of the co-ordinating committee.

Apologies to those who we could not associate with a square

Books for Public Use

Up to Victorian days the congregation were expected to provide their own hymn and prayer books. Certainly by the end of the 19th century most churches provided these for the congregation but expected the people to come equipped with their own bible.

As far back as can be remembered St Mary's used Hymns Ancient and Modern and updated to the Revised Edition around the late 1950s. David Evans introduced a new style in hymn singing and acquired a variety of modern Hymn and Chorus books, including '100 Hymns for Today' 'Fresh Sounds' and 'Living Waters'. Most of these were replaced when the new edition of Ancient and Modern came out in 1986. In 1987 a specially produced book of choruses entitled 'Purley Praise' was produced by Jackie Paynter and this supplemented the new edition of Ancient

and Modern, especially at the 09:30 First Worship service and the 18:30 new-look Evensong. A second edition was produced in 1990 slightly shorter and containing several new choruses. David also introduced 'Psalm Praise' containing metrical versions of many of the psalms.

The 1662 Prayer Book was still in use, having gone through several new editions until the 08.00 Communion Service switched to Rite B. In the 1960s and 1970s the Church of England introduced a number of experimental texts for the Holy Communion Service known as series 1 to 3. These were introduced as they were issued at St Mary's. When the new Alternative Services Book was approved in 1980, Rite A was adopted as the version for the 11:00 service and a special printing of the Communion Service was commissioned to save having to purchase the full ASB. Other sections were also obtained for funerals, burials, baptisms etc. and for the 8.00 am Communion Service at which Rite B replaced the 1662 service in 1984. This service was dropped in 1987. In 1987 a special abbreviated service sheet was produced for the First Worship Service. This was followed in 1988 by a similar sheet for the Evening Service and one with additions to the booklet for the Family Eucharist.

The Church of England agonized over service books around the turn of the millennium. The 1980 Alternative Services Book had not proved very popular being too modern for some and too staid for others. After considerable deliberation a new Prayer Book was approved in 2000 which restored many of the old forms of prayers but which also provided a wider range of alternatives. Extracts from this book, specially reproduced for St Mary's services is in use in 2001.

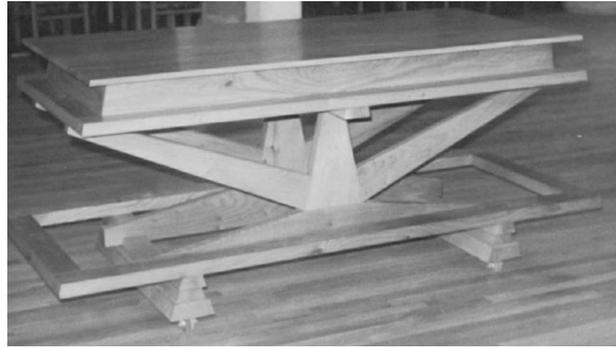
In 1985 and 1986 pew copies of the Good News Bible were acquired. Later a lectern copy was produced and this is now the version read most often except at the 10:45 Eucharist where the readings are prescribed in the Alternative Services Book and are taken mainly from the New English Bible and the Jerusalem Bible with a few from the Revised Standard Version.

The Rebuilding Gifts

After the rebuilding in 1983/84 several items were donated by parishioners to support the services when the church was turned through 90 degrees to incorporate the new extension and provide more seating. A portable altar was donated in memory of Hugh Duncan and there were new wooden candlesticks. A pair of prayer desks with armchairs was given in memory of George Kingham and a portable pulpit completed the essentials. In addition two of the roof beams from the demolished north aisle were re-shaped into a cross which was first mounted on the wall to



The new furniture in use when the church was turned around to face south. The lectern given in memory of Horace Rabone was easily moved. The picture shows the two prayer desks and portable altar. [M20196]



The portable altar [M20194]

*Left - the portable pulpit
which is hardly ever used.
[M20192]*

the left of the south door but which later was moved to the north wall of the new hall. A further gift was a set of three heavy curtains with fittings to separate the nave from the new hall.

Miscellaneous Items

Many other objects have been acquired for use both within the church and in the churchyard. In the furniture line there is an oak cabinet for altar frontals, two bookcases for hymn books etc, one of which was given in memory of William Telfer in 1934. A number of folding tables of plastic and aluminium purchased in 1981 and a wooden lectern given in memory of Horace Rabone in 1959.

Other items for use during services are:- an altar cross of brass, two brass altar candlesticks and a processional cross; two identical church wardens staves surmounted by a brass maltese cross; A tubular brass communion rail and a set of three portable wooden communion rails and kneelers, acquired 1983.

A large steel safe by Cyrus Price of Wolverhampton was acquired second hand in December 1915 for £8-13-6 and the vestry is equipped with an old desk. A sanctuary lamp was brought back from France by a parishioner after the First World War. There are several lawn mowers of various vintages and a good set of gardening tools kept in the gardening shed. Cleaning tools, flowerpots and stands and other such items are kept in the old vestry. The various youth groups have acquired a good stock of small tables and chairs, a table tennis table and much other equipment of various kinds.

In 1918, after the end of the first world war, a parish clock was provided by the Fullertons with its mechanisms in the first storey of the tower. The clock itself was on the south face of the tower. The Mothers Union which flourished until the 1970s had a processional banner which was kept initially in the sanctuary but later in



The clock mechanism inside the tower [M20197]

