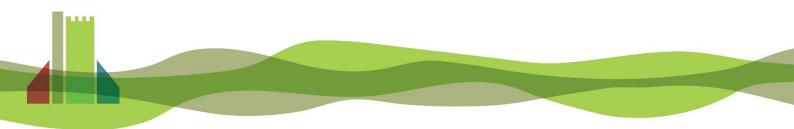
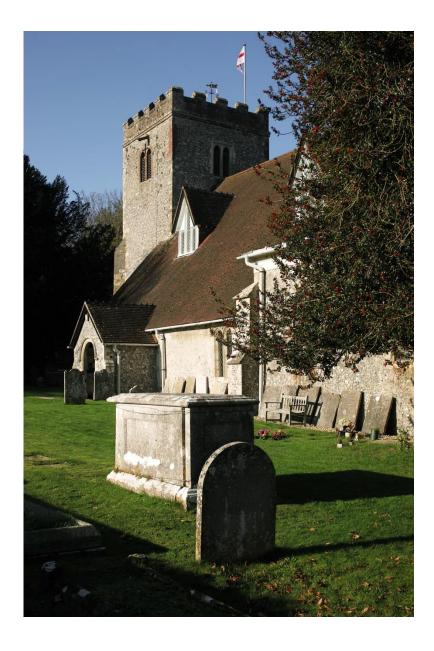
St Mary & All Saints, Droxford

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St Mary & All Saints, Droxford



A Brief History & Guide

Introduction

St Wilfrid may have established a religious foundation at Droxford during his mission to the Meon Valley during the period 681 to 686, but the name of the village was not recorded until the year 826, when 20 hides of land at 'Drocenesford' were granted in a charter by King Egbert to the Old Monastery at Winchester.

The Domesday Book of 1086 described 'Drocheneford' as being held by the Bishop of Winchester for the benefit of his monks, and having at that time a church valued at 20s, but no evidence has yet been identified of an Anglo-Saxon building on the site of the present church, or elsewhere in the village.

As we see it today St Mary & All Saints is a building of many periods and styles -a village church that has evolved organically over the centuries, both for its religious use, and as the centre of a local community.

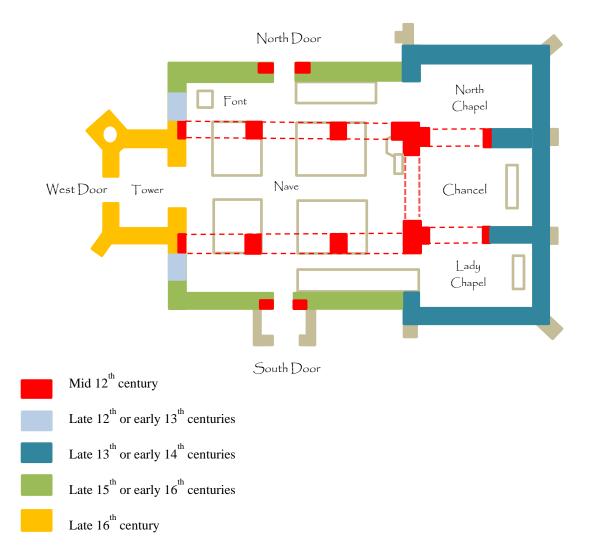
Our knowledge of the Norman and medieval church at Droxford is largely based upon interpretation of its early stone fabric, much of which still exists, and those specific features that survived the Reformation and the attention of the Puritans.

Since the 16th century a more personal history has evolved, much of it based upon records of the Vestry, memorial inscriptions, and informal memorabilia. This provides a strong link to many of the generations who have frequented the church in the past, and illustrates how they continued to use and modify the building and its contents to meet both local needs, and the wider theological and social demands of their own particular times.

St Mary & All Saints is not in itself an exemplar of one particular architectural style or ecclesiastical movement. Its most significant characteristic has always been a continual process of change and adaptation, resulting in the many diverse elements that make the church what it is today, and which somehow manage to complement each other in a single historical and architectural heritage that is greater than any single part.

The first part of this booklet provides a brief overview of the significant stages in the construction of St Mary & All Saints. This is followed by a guide to the various parts of the church. A list of all known rectors of Droxford is included at the end.

Schematic plans of different periods of the church are shown at appropriate points in the text. A plan of the building as it now stands is shown overleaf, with an indication of the likely dates of the main stonework.



The Norman & Medieval Church

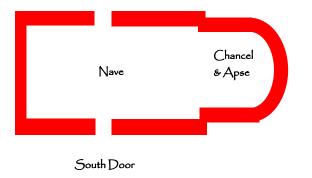
It is not known what form the Anglo-Saxon church at Droxford would have taken.



The earliest features of the present church that can be dated with some confidence are the carvings on the chancel arch, and the north and south doorways, which are thought to be from about 1150. The chancel arch has a simple zig-zag pattern, whilst the doorways have more sophisticated arrangements of zig-zags, chevrons, and spirals. The chancel arch stands in its original position, but was raised by about four feet during the 19th century.



These features may originally have formed part of a simple two-cell building, possibly with a semi-circular apse at the eastern end.



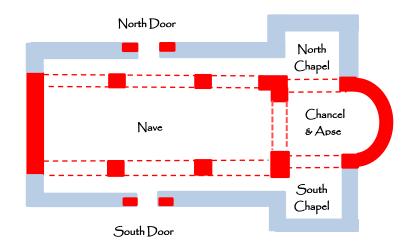
Stone segments of the earliest windows of the church can be seen above the arch in the south wall of the chancel.





The substantial walls of the nave and chancel retain much of their original Norman fabric. Pointed arches were cut into them at the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th century to open into newly constructed aisles and side chapels, suggesting that this was an active and well-patronised village church during the middle ages.

It is thought that both side chapels were originally dedicated to St Mary, since the will of Roger Bryklesworth, dated 26th April 1390, bequeathed 20 quarters of barley 'to the fabric of the two chancels of Our Lady adjoining the principal chancel on either side'.



In the Middle Ages St Mary & All Saints would have been decorated with wall paintings, and adorned with painted statues and much other religious symbolism. Most of this was removed or destroyed during the Reformation and under the Puritans, but sufficient still remains to give some idea of how the church might looked and functioned during the medieval period.

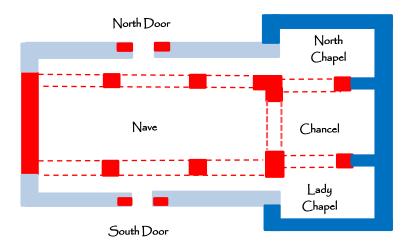
There are three piscinae, which were used for washing communion vessels, one in each side chapel, and one now hidden under the panelling in the sanctuary. The north chapel and chancel also have aumbries, which were used to store the consecrated bread and wine.





Above the pulpit is the upper opening from a narrow staircase, which would have given access to a rood loft running across the top of the chancel arch, and carrying a representation of Christ on the cross, with his mother on one side, and St John on the other. Beneath this there would probably have been a rood or chancel screen separating the chancel from the nave. Screens were also fitted around the Lady Chapel, as can be seen by marks that still exist on the stonework.

The chapels appear to have been enlarged at the end of the 13th century or the beginning of the 14th century, and the apse may have been removed at the same time.





The windows in the north chapel and Lady Chapel have stonework in the Decorated style, also dating from the late 13th or early 14th centuries. All have cusped Y-tracery, except for the east window of the Lady Chapel, which has cusped-intersecting tracery.

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Alternative Draft

In the Lady Chapel there is the recumbent Purbeck marble figure of a woman dating from the same period, which is thought to be part of an altar tomb installed by John de Drokenesford in memory of his mother.

John de Drokenesford, the son of a local squire, was at times Rector of Droxford, Keeper of the King's Wardrobe to Edward I, Chancellor of the Exchequer to Edward II, a chaplain to the Pope, and Bishop of Bath & Wells. He returned to Droxford to consecrate the altars of St Mary & All Saints in 1316/17. It is believed that the marble figure was removed at the time of the Puritans, but was recovered from a nearby field early in the 19th century, and restored to the church.

The arch from the Lady Chapel into the chancel rests on two carved heads, which probably date from the late 14th century. Their identity in unknown, but they may represent local personalities of the period.

> Also in the Lady Chapel, to the left of the altar, is a late 14th stone niche. This would originally have contained a statue, probably of the Virgin Mary, which was most likely removed at the time of the Reformation. Its ogee-shaped canopy is decorated with roses and miniature vaulting, and it retains traces of medieval paint.

The south and east walls of the north chapel display the remnants of an extensive area of wall painting, with floral sprays set in a masonry pattern. There are also traces of medieval paint on the stonework of the south arcade, which has the faded remains of a pattern of intertwined red roses.













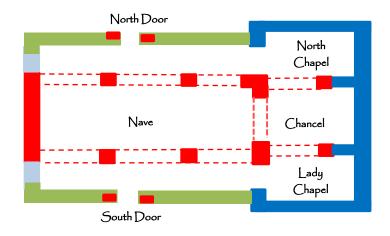
Graffiti appear in a number of parts of the church, on both stonework and woodwork. Some have names or initials, and a few are dated. They include a number of ritual protection marks, including one daisy-wheel or hexfoil design.

There are four medieval mass dials on the exterior of the church – two on the jambs of the south doorway, and two on the south wall of the Lady Chapel – marked to indicate the canonical hours of the church ritual.



The Tudor Church

The side aisles of the church were widened late in the 15th or early in the 16th centuries, and the Norman doorways were yet againmoved to the new outer walls.



The Reformation in the 16th century, partly brought about by the break with the Roman Catholic Church to facilitate the divorce of Henry VIII from his first wife, Katherine of Aragon, and partly by pressure from radical religious movements in Europe, resulted in significant changes to the principles of belief, the ordering of services, and the decoration and furnishings of the church.

Wall paintings were covered over, and screens were taken down. Statues and other religious symbolism were removed or destroyed. The stone altars set

against the east walls of the chancel and chapels would have been replaced by wooden communion tables, and the Book of Common Prayer became the basis of all worship.

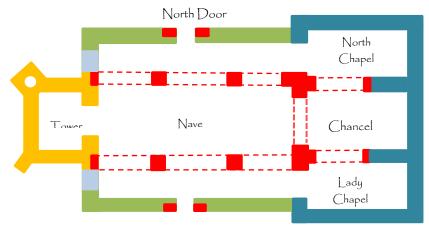
Dr Cuffold became rector od Droxford in 1533 and was in office until 1559, serving through the later years of the reign of Henry VIII, the reigns of Edward VI and Mary, and for a short time at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I – a period that witnessed much of the religious turbulence of the Reformation. It is recorded that his house contained a chamber, a study, a hall, a parlour, a little chamber, and a 'preste' chamber. Among his possessions he had had five featherbeds valued at £7.00, and eleven pairs of sheets worth £1.10.

Thomas Bilson, recorded as being rector of Droxford in 1583, became Bishop of Worcester in 1596, and Bishop of Winchester the following year. After the death of Elizabeth I he became a spiritual adviser to James I, and preached the sermon at his coronation on 25th July 1603. He was a leading member of the team that compiled the King James Bible, and is buried in Westminster Abbey, where he lies between the tombs of Edward III and Richard II.

The tower, with its square stair turret set diagonally in the north-west corner, was added late in the Tudor period. Above the west door of the tower is a plaque showing the date AD1599, which is thought to refer to the main parts of the present structure. An inventory of church goods made on 15th July 1552 included 'Foure belles in the Steple', which indicates that this replaced or added to an earlier construction of some sort. The brick battlements were added later, and some of the stonework around the west door is more recent.



The tower originally contained four bells – a treble of 1606, a second from 1631, and a third and tenor from 1672. A fifth bell, from St Margaret's Church, Canterbury and dated 1625, was added in 1969. The tower is fitted with a gilded clock from 1861, and surmounted by a gilded weather-vane.



South Door

The east window of the chancel, and the windows of the side aisles, are in the Perpendicular style.



The Stuart & Commonwealth Church

The floors of the church are made up of a varied mixture of tiles, slabs and memorial tablets, the oldest with a date being a black marble floor slab in the north chapel in memory of Edward Searle, a local farmer who died in 1617. An unmarked slab next to it may be of a similar age.

Nicholas Preston became rector of Droxford in 1642, at the start of the Civil War. In 1650 he was replaced by an Independent minister, Mr Robert Webb, who was reputedly a good scholar and an eminent preacher. At the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 under Charles II, Nicholas Preston returned and 'thrust out Mr Webb and his family with their goods in a rough and violent manner'. Mr Webb and his family were taken in by the kindness of a local gentleman, who happened to be a papist. Nicholas Preston lies under a light brown marble slab in the south aisle.

The Restoration brought Jacobean altar rails, which are still in place today.



In 1676 a religious census of all persons aged 16 or over recorded the following affiliations in the parish:

Conformists	345
Papists	2
Non-Conformists	20

In 1684 the Churchwardens of the parish noted that 'all is well ... saveing ... that the roofe of our Church and some of the Windows want some small mending which shall be done forthwith.'

They also recorded that 'the Minister of the place hath usually beene absent 3 (partes) of the year'. The minister concerned was William Hawkins, whose frequent absence may have been due to the fact that he was also Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral. He married Anne, daughter of the angler Isaak Walton, who had written *The Compleat Angler*, and may have spent some of his final years fishing nearby in the River Meon.



The churchwardens also noted that 'the Perambulation hath not been yearly observed but with intermission', that 'John PERRIN, Thomas CLEVELEY and his wife, Simon FFRYE and his wife, Cuthbert REAVES and Mary his wife come very seldom to Church', and that 'Cuthbert REAVES came into Church in the time of Divine Service with his hatt on and kept it on all the time he stayed there'.

A number of members of the Morley family, who lived at the Manor House, are commemorated by impressive 17th and 18th century wall memorials near the font. A large marble cartouche with carved scrolls is dedicated to Francis Morley, who died in 1690. It was probably made in the workshops of Edward Pierce, a mason sometimes employed by Sir Christopher Wren.



A rectangular marble tablet nearby is in memory of Sir Charles Morley, the elder son of Francis Morley, and his wife Lady Magdalen Morley. Their son Charles, who died in 1752, is commemorated by a white marble tablet with a veined marble surround, supported on acanthus leaf brackets.

An oval slate tablet set into the pillar adjacent to the font has a Latin inscription which records that Francis, second son of the Rev. Francis Morley, himself the second son of Francis Morley Esq., died on 15th March1690, having lived just 8 months. He had been baptised in Winchester Cathedral on 5th August 1689.





In the north chapel is a stone tablet to Susanna Nourse, wife of Dr Peter Nourse, rector of Droxford from 1701 to 1722, Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Queen Anne. It is possible that she is buried in one of the three coffins re-discovered in a vault beneath the north chapel in 1973.

A rectangular white marble tablet with a dark grey frame, also in the north chapel, records that Mary Myngs and Elizabeth Nourse, daughters of Dr Peter Nourse and his wife Susanna, were also interred in the vault.

Dr Nourse was originally buried beneath the altar, but his grave stone was moved to the belfry floor when the sanctuary was tiled between 1868 and 1886, and has been badly eroded as a result

Doctor Lewis Stephens was rector from 1722 to 1746. His monument is a circular tablet let into the south wall of the Lady Chapel. He may have built or re-built the Old Rectory, which is now a private house, and he bequeathed a chest of old books 'to the Parish Church of Droxford to remain there for ever in a press made at my expense for that purpose

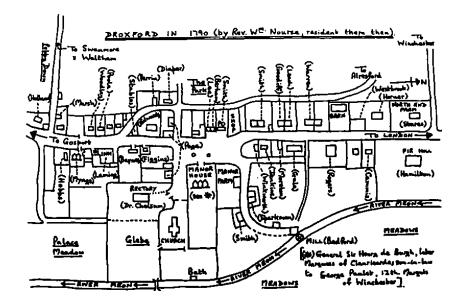




Dr James Chelsum, who was rector from 1782 to 1801, is reported to have been rather a pugnacious gentleman, who was not always 'persona grata' with his parishioners. On 15th July 1783 his Vestry agreed ' ... that whereas great offence has recently been given to well disposed Persons by the profaning of the Sabbath by persons openly playing at different Sports on the Sabbath-day, in opposition to the established Laws of the Land, proper extracts of the Laws in force against persons absenting themselves from public worship & profaning the Lord's day, be transcribed and affixed to the Church Doors, signed by the principal Parishioners; they declaring at the same time their resolution to correct and suppress such abuses & profanations.'

On 22nd July 1789 it was resolved that 'the offer of the Rev^d Dr Chelsum To present the Parish with an Organ (capable of being so fitted up as to need no Organist and to cause no Expense whatsoever to the Parish in general) be thankfully accepted', and to be paid for by private subscription. It is recorded that it was an organ with two barrels, and 'It stood at the West end, on the floor. There was no entrance then to the Church through the Belfry. The West entrance was made at this time.'

A map originally drawn by the Reverend W^{m.} Nourse in 1790 shows Dr Chelsum in residence at the Rectory, with its glebe running down to the River Meon. A number of the houses shown on this map survive, and still give a distinctive Georgian appearance to the centre of the village.



The Burial Register records that Dr Chelsum was buried on May 1st 1801, aged 63 years. His grave is not identified, and no monument exists to him in the church or the Churchyard.

Other Vestry minutes give a good idea of parish life in the Georgian period. On 8^{th} April 1807 the Vestry stipulated that '... 6^{d} per dozen should in future be paid for Sparrows as incouragement for the Distruction of that Kind of Virmin.' On 26^{th} July 1813 it agreed '... that no further steps should be taken for the detection and conviction of the persons who are suspected of having stolen the Communion Plate from this Church ... (and) ... that the said Communion Plate should be replaced by subscription.' On 21^{st} December 1826 the Vestry meeting adjourned forthwith '... to the Hose of Harry READING at the White Horse Inn in Droxford in Consequence of a Funeral now pending.'

Among the monuments on the wall of the south aisle is an impressive white marble memorial in memory of Richard Goodlad of Hill Place, and his second wife Frances.



Mr Goodlad was a rather authoritarion magistrate, described by William Cobbett in his *Rural Rides* as 'a cock Justice of the Peace'. In1815 he sentenced eight boys and four girls between the ages of 11 and 15 to a month in prison for being rogues and vagabonds, and begging from door-to-door. He was Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire in 1803, and Sheriff in 1818.



William Garnier was rector of Droxford from 1801to1831. He laid out the Rectory garden and, together with the rector of Meonstoke, a relation of his who was a great lover of trees and an expert in their cultivation, he planted the Beech Walk in order that they might walk under pleasant shade to each other's houses. He was married to Lady Harriet North, daughter of John Brownlow North, Bishop of Winchester.

The Victorian Church

William Garnier was succeeded by James Adair Griffith Colpoys, who was rector from 1831to1868. The first wife of Reverend Colpoys was Anne Sumner, a daughter of John Bird Sumner, who was later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. She was also a niece of Charles Sumner, Bishop of Winchester. Anne Colpoys died in 1833and is buried near the east wall of the Church. The Rev. Colpoys then married Fanny Campbell Nash in 1838.



Significant changes to the furnishings of the church took place during his incumbency. In 1847 the galleries that had been erected at the east and west ends of the nave during the 18th century were taken down. At the same time the Georgian box pews were removed, 'much ancient oak being cast out and sold', and the church was completely re-fitted with pine pews which filled the nave, side aisles, and Lady Chapel, with seating for congregations of up to 300. Many of these pews remain today.



The brass eagle lectern was the gift of Mr Richard Redfearn Goodlad of Hill Place, in memory of his wife who died in 1867

The Reverend Stephen Bridge was rector of Droxford from 1868 to1886. He is reported to have been an evangelical churchman who liked services to be decently and reverently conducted, and was jealous for the appearance of the Church.





The pulpit, a Victorian copy of a 15th century design, was given to St Mary & All Saints in 1882 by the congregation of St Matthew's, Denmark Hill, where Stephen Bridge had previously been minister, when they acquired a new one.

There is a brass memorial to him on the south wall of the Lady Chapel, and the east window of the Lady Chapel is a memorial both to himself and his wife Margaret.

An early photograph shows the church as it would have been during the latter part of the Victorian period. It has religious inscriptions on the stonework, and on the panelling behind the altar. The pulpit is located under the chancel arch rather than in its present position to the north side. The rood loft access has been covered with plaster, and there are more rows of pews than there are today.



The 20th Century Church

Canon John Vaughan was rector from 1902 to 1910, and in 1903 carried out a major restoration programme in the church



The number of pews was reduced, and the pulpit moved to its present position. The Jacobean altar rails that had been removed during the Victorian period were

restored. The sanctuary itself was panelled in fine dark wood in the Jacobean style, and the religious scripts removed from the stonework. Many of the medieval features of the church that had previously been hidden were revealed once more. After this restoration most of the church appeared much as it does today.

Despite this physical re-ordering, St Mary & All Saints remained evangelical in its theology until the time of Canon Leonard Etheridge, rector from 1926 to 1946.



Canon Etheridge introduced sung Evensong, sung Morning Service, and lighted candles. When he brought in robes for the choir on Easter Day 1934, two members left in protest, but the wider congregation and parish came to appreciate the fact that their Church was now no longer 'peculiar' in the ordering of its services.

The font is from the 20th century, but copied from a Norman design. Its wooden lid, added later and inscribed with the date 1980, is decorated with an ornate wrought iron cross.



The neo-Jacobean oak screen was designed in 1935 by the eminent architect Sir Charles Nicholson, at the time when he was working on the designs for Portsmouth Cathedral.



It was originally located at the entrance to the north chapel by the bequest of Laura Annie Williams, who died on 26th January 1935, and had been organist of Droxford church for over 40 years.

Those from Droxford who died in the 1914-1918 war are remembered by a rectangular alabaster tablet on a blue mosaic background, surmounted by a red mosaic pediment, mounted to the left of the north door, and manufactured by James Powell & Sons of the Whitefriars Glass works.



Those who died in the 1939-1945 war are commemorated by a memorial tablet and a pair of ornamental gates which are located in the Square at the entrance to the churchyard.

In the Lady Chapel a stone plaque is dedicated to Neville Lovett, first Bishop of Portsmouth from 1927 to 1936, who retired to Droxford in 1946.



The reredos in the Lady Chapel was given by her family in memory of Hannah Talbot-Ponsonby, and is dated 6th January 1952. It shows the *Agnus Dei* in the centre, lilies on the right, and the Sacred Monogram IHC on the left.



The 21st Century

The church has recently benefitted from the acquisition of a good quality electronic organ. This replaced a Victorian pipe organ, originally installed in 1873, and shown here being dismantled.



Other recent acquisitions include upholstered oak chairs for use in the Lady Chapel and chancel, funded by a grant from the Diocesan Mission Opportunities Fund, and donations from members of the congregation.

The children's corner has been improved with furniture made by a local craftsman, also funded by the Mission Opportunities Fund and local donations.

In 2016 a major restoration of the fabric of the tower, south roof, and both chapels was undertaken, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.



Plans are in hand to build an extension on the north side of the church to house kitchen, toilet, office and storage facilities, and convert the north chapel into a community café and heritage centre.

The church benefits from the flower arrangements provided by an enthusiastic grouop of local volounteers. Those shown below are from Harvest Festival 2016.



Stained Glass

The stained glass in the church is from many of the leading designers and manufacturers of the 20^{th} century.

The two south windows of the Lady Chapel, installed in 1903, are by George Daniels of Clayton & Bell. In the left hand window, which is a memorial to Robert Harrison, rector of Droxford from 1886 to 1902, the risen Christ appears to St Peter. In the right hand window, dedicated to Frances Julia Bevan, who died in 1895, he appears to Mary Magdalene.



The single-mullion window in the west wall of the south aisle is dedicated to Isaac Westbrook, a painter and glazier of Droxford who died in 1868, and his wife Elizabeth who died in 1907. It depicts the Virgin Mary on the left, with a text from the *Magnificat*, and Simeon on the right with a text from the *Nunc Dimittis*, and was made in 1909 in the studios founded by Charles Eamer Kempe. It has his company signature, a wheatsheaf, in the bottom right hand corner of the left hand light, superimposed with the black tower of his heir, Walter Tower.



In the west wall of the north aisle is another single-mullion window, dating from 1920 and manufactured by James Powell & Sons, showing St Nicholas on the left and St Christopher on the right. It was installed in memory of Captain Lancelot Napier Turton, Royal Navy, who was lost at sea in 1918, and buried at Aden.



The east window of the Lady Chapel, installed in 1938, was designed by Martin Travers, who was at the time chief instructor in stained glass at the Royal College of Art. It is a memorial to the Reverend Stephen Bridge, rector from 1868 to 1886, and his wife Margaret. The hand of God is depicted at the top of the window. Below it a dove represents the Holy Spirit. On either side are the crests of the Bishoprics of Winchester and Portsmouth. The initials of Stephen and Margaret Bridge are depicted at the top of the side lights. The Virgin & Child are depicted in the centre main light, surrounded in the side lights by St Francis, St Wilfrid, St George, and St Stephen.



At the bottom right hand corner of the window are the arms of Stephen and Margaret Bridge, superimposed with the initials SB.



The stained glass in the east window of the chancel is a memorial to members of the Hulbert family, installed after the previous Victorian window was damaged during the Second World War, and shows the Nativity, with below it the Annunciation.



It was designed by Christopher Webb, a leading designer of stained glass during the first half of the 20th century, and manufactured by Hawes and Harries of Harpenden.

The window adjacent to the font in the wall of the north aisle depicts scenes from the Creation, based on an Anglo-Saxon miniature in the British Museum. It was designed in 1982 by Carl Edwards of the Fulham Glass House, and is dedicated to Alice and Henry Wigg, the wife and son of Major Robert Wigg. The hands of

Christ support the sphere of the world, and hold the compass and scales. Heaven is symbolised by the stars in the background, and earth by the green segment in the circle. The doves represent the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters.



At the bottom of the window, a leaping carp is a symbol for baptism.



The year 2000 millennium window, by Vanessa Cutler, shows Noah's Ark in the Flood.



Rectors of Droxford

Peter Rusciniol, 1231

Peter de Abuzun, 1250

John de Berewik, 1280

Nicholas de Audeby, 1289-1308

John de Drokenesford, 1308-1310

Philip de Drokenesford, 1310-1315

Michael de Drokenesford, 1315

- Richard de Hamptone, 1367-1374
- John de Dounay 1374
- Richard Gomfrey, 1375-1377
- Roger Bryklesworth, 1377-1390
- John de Swafham, 1390-1394
- Willian Norton, 1394
- Poggio de Florencia, 1423
- Michael Cleue, 1477
- David Persons, 1480
- William Holden,1485
- William Cuffold, 1533-1558/9
- John Willyams, 1559-1582/3
- Thomas Bilson, 1583
- John Harmer, 1596-1613
- Christopher Hurst, 1613-1628
- Richard Neile, 1628-1642
- Nicholas Preston, 1642-1650
- Robert Webb, 1650-1660
- Nicholas Preston, 1660-1664
- William Hawkins, 1664-1691
- George Fulham, 1691-1700
- Thomas Goodwin, 1700-1701
- Peter Nourse, 1701-1722
- Lewis Stephens, 1722-1746
- James Cutler, 1746-1782
- James Chelsum, 1782-1801
- William Garnier, 1801-1831

J.A. Griffith Colpoys, 1831-1868

Stephen Bridge, 1868-1886

Robert Harrison, 1886-1902

John Vaughan, 1902-1910

Jacob Stephenson, 1910-1926

Leonard Etheridge, 1926-1946

Gerald Page, 1946-1964

Thomas Strangeways, 1965-1969

John Townsend, 1969-1974

John Beaumont, 1974-1987

David Henley, 1987-2003

Jim Foley, 2003-2009

Stuart Holt, 2009-2014

Tony Forrest, 2015

Bibliography

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