

St Peter's Church Minsterworth



History and Guide

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A minimum donation of £1
would be appreciated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND NOTE

This is an updated account in which the writer has corrected some previous errors by research using original documents and the resources of modern scholarship until recently inaccessible. Much more work remains to be done to discover more about both the church and its parish.

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Margot Johnson, M.A., FCLIP,
Durham
October, 1994.

INTRODUCTION

The church of Minsterworth, built close to the bank of the river Severn, probably has a pre-Conquest origin. It lies at the west end of the old village street which runs parallel with, and at a distance from, the main Roman road from Gloucester to South Wales. The Roman engineers were too astute to construct their road on the lower ground, which was liable to constant flooding. Much later, probably in medieval times, a well-laid cobbled causeway was laid eastwards from the church to the old parish boundary to provide a safe foothold for horses and foot-passengers when the Severn had overflowed its banks.

In c.1030 a description of the boundaries of Hereford Diocese in which Minsterworth lay until the 16th century, mentions Minsterworth by name.

Its parson, Walter Map, who died c.1210, and who recorded many local stories, recounts that Edmund Ironside, King of the West Saxons, received a mortal wound at Minsterworth and was carried from there to Ross-on-Wye where he died on 30 November 1016. He was in the neighbourhood after making a contract at Deerhurst with King Canute to divide his Kingdom with him. Walter Map, an important person in his day, and in the royal service, was a prolific author. He helped to shape the Arthurian legends with his prose romance of Lancelot, the Holy Grail and the Mort d'Arthur.

In Walter Map's time, Minsterworth was a chapelry in the parish of Westbury-on-Severn. He was a Herefordshire man and Westbury's rectors were appointed by the vicars-choral of Hereford who held the advowson or right of presentation to the benefice. By 1261 separate appointments were being made to Minsterworth with the Crown as patron; and in 1266 the livings of Minsterworth and five other churches in the counties of Hereford and Gloucester were assigned by Henry III to his son, the future Edward I, for his maintenance during the King's pleasure. Vicars were appointed to carry out the parochial duties for a small income (the lesser tithes) while the greater tithes went to finance the prince. Some of the incumbents at this period were acolytes when appointed, being made deacon and then priest when already holding office.

In 1391-2 the parson of Minsterworth was granted an additional tithe of all fish in the pools of the Severn in the parish as well as at Duni, where there had been a fishery probably before the Norman Conquest.

In 1399 the Augustinian Canons of St Oswald's priory, Gloucester, acquired the advowson, and the Rectory of Minsterworth was in their possession at the Dissolution of the lesser religious houses in 1535.

Henry VIII granted the advowson to the bishops of Bristol, who at various times leased out the impropriation of the tithes. John Oakey, a local gentleman who died 13 November 1801 (see his Memorial Inscription - M18 on the plan - beneath the tower over the entrance arch) held the lease at his death, when it passed to his daughter, "the wife of Mr. Syms". There are a number of memorials to members of the Symes family in the church. (Names were spelled variously until the 20th century.)

The parish boundary at Minsterworth from early times followed the Denny brook on the north, and to the east, the boundary of the Hundred of Longbridge, which passes through the parish today. Moorcroft, now in Minsterworth, lay in Highnam.

The church, in common with some other early foundations, probably originally had no dedication name. In 1535, when it was given to the bishop of Bristol, it was referred to as St George, and that this was the local name is confirmed in a will of 1548/9 in which the testator desires to be buried in the churchyard of St George, Minsterworth. St Peter's is a comparatively recent dedication. Unfortunately it has been linked with the erroneous identification of Minsterworth with Mortune by the older antiquarian writers. Mortune has been proved by modern scholarship to be a deserted settlement site in Churcham parish and was owned by St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, at the time of the Domesday Survey.

The present church was built in 1870 to replace the medieval building which had become much damaged by repeated flooding from the high tides of the river Severn.

Flooding was a constant problem, and early parish registers were damaged by flood water. The last parish clerk, Mr Wintour Stephens, told of going up the nave in a boat in the floods of May 1852.

THE RIVER SEVERN

On the west side of the churchyard a broad track leading to the river bank widens into the Church Landing Yard. This was formerly an inlet (now filled in) forming a safe haven by the Church Rock, an outcrop in the river just below its surface at low tide, which leaves only a narrow channel for vessels to pass near the opposite bank.

The inlet was skirted by two public footpaths, the diagonal lines of which are now marked by stiles on the river bank and in the churchyard fence and wall and, on the opposite side of the track, by a culvert in the drainage ditch. This culvert and the stile in the wall mark the original end of the inlet. Within living memory a ferry crossed from the west side of this inlet to the opposite bank. To this inlet Minsterworth owed its prosperous trade from fisheries, water traffic and agriculture (*see also* page 10).

Until recent times, when constant dredging has deepened the main channel, and the banks have been consolidated and heightened by several feet, the land beside the river has been subject to extensive flooding, especially at the "spring" tides. The river has also meandered - an obvious reminder of its changing course is the Naight, a word meaning simply the "island".

The rich alluvial deposits left by the high tides made the riverside unusually fertile. Large orchards, used also as pasture, were valuable sources of income in the past. Sloops, dependent on wind and tides, carried the produce of Minsterworth as far away as Cardiff.

Salmon fishing and elvering were combined with farming and fruit growing until recent times, to provide the income of many families; while the Muster Roll of 1608 lists more than half the male inhabitants as sailors. Minsterworth also had its boat-builders, the yard of one of the last being at The Forge.

Today, the river is almost deserted, and the riverside paths are quiet. A few derelict buildings, scattered by the waterside, are all that remain of the fisheries. Many orchards have ceased to be profitable because of the increasing costs of labour and transport.

When the famous Severn Bore is expected, the scene changes. The bore is most spectacular at the high "spring" tides when there is a good south-

westerly wind; and crowds flock to Minsterworth Church Landing Yard to witness it where the riverside is easily accessible. At other times, the peaceful riverside is a fitting setting for a church so full of reminders of the eternal truths.

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

The old church was demolished in 1869, but its form can be deduced from various pieces of evidence. At its demolition it was described as having "two chancels and two naves". A description of 1803 says that the south chancel was separated by an arch, pointed, and with zig zag mouldings; and that there was a low west tower, unembattled.

The nave, on the site of the present one, was probably built in the 12th century, at first with a short chancel. Later the chancel was lengthened so that chantry priests could say the daily offices together with the incumbent.

It became the fashion to endow a church by providing income from land in return for masses and prayers to be said for specified persons in perpetuity. At first the incumbent carried out the duty, but the practice was stopped officially as it distracted him from his proper pastoral work. The popular practice of providing endowments for singing masses for the dead then continued in a different form, by the addition of chantry chapels to parish churches, served by their own chantry priests.

To the north side of the chancel at Minsterworth was added the chantry chapel of the de Minsterworth family, the principal local gentry, whose names and history can be traced into the 14th century. Their chapel was dedicated to Our Lady. The north aisle, also an addition to the original structure, would be divided from the nave by parclose screens, probably of carved wood. Within them was at least one other chantry chapel.

Each chantry was served by a chantry priest, paid from endowments, with the duty of singing masses for the souls of the founders, their families, and their descendants. Chantry priests often also taught local children.

These chantries functioned into the mid-16th century; but in 1548 it was reported that the income to pay the priest of Our Lady, and for the upkeep of the lights of another chantry (both sums from lands in the parish) had been

diverted for the past 5 years to meet the expense of repairing the "sea wall" against the recurrent floods. At the time there were 240 houseling people (i.e., communicants) in the parish. The housel is the old name for communion bread. The number suggests a total population much the same as today.

When chantries were abolished, the aisles, like the nave, had to be maintained at the expense of the parishioners; while the incumbent had to keep the chancel in repair; and the lords of the manor, or their assigns, their own chapel.

In 1548 also, the churchwardens complained in the Consistory Court that under their new patron, the bishop of Bristol, the chancel was in "great decay" both as to the roof and the glazing; that the twice-yearly distribution to the poor had not been made for the past four years; and that their deacon (the incumbent) had not been paid the 40s a year due to him for ten years.

The old church tower was oblong and surmounted by a spire. In 1702 the spire was struck by lightning and there was extensive fire damage which caused the bells to be melted down. On 17th June the following year, at the Archdeacon's Visitation, the church wardens reported that the steeple was shortly to be repaired. A new peal of bells was given by Sir Charles Barrow, Bart., of Highgrove, in 1788. The description is as follows:

	Cwt		Inscriptions
Tenor	9 approx	A ^b	"This peal was the gift of Sir Charles Barrow, Bart."
V	7 "	B ^b	"James Beirt and James Roan, Churchwardens"
IV	5½ "	C	"This peal was cast by John Rudhall"
III	5 "	D ^b	"Praise be to God"
II	4½ "	E ^b	"Prosperity to this parish"
Treble	4 "	F	"Come away make no delay"

John Rudhall was the last of that name at the Gloucester bell foundry. It originated in 1684 with Abraham Rudhall. He was succeeded by his sons Abraham and Abel, who were followed successively by Thomas, Charles and John Rudhall. When they retired, Mr Thomas Mears of Whitechapel Foundry acquired the business, and continued it in his own name, but in a few years he transferred the patterns to his London foundry. (*See also* pages 23 and 24).

THE PRESENT CHURCH

The foundations of the new church were laid in October 1869, 4 feet above the level of the medieval church, which had been entered by descending steps. In contrast the present church is approached up four or five steps.

The new building was opened in September 1870. The architect chosen was Henry Woodyer, M.A., well known at this period for remarkable gifts and earlier responsible for the design of Highnam Church. As a result, the vicar of the time, the Rev. Arthur Nettleship, wrote that the parishioners "enjoyed the possession of one of the most sightly and commodious village churches to be found anywhere in the neighbourhood".

Woodyer endeavoured to keep or reproduce the best features of the old church, re-using the font and the Jacobean pulpit.

The basic cost was £4,000, contributed by local landowners and parishioners. The largest contributor was a non-conformist whose name is unknown. In later years the church was embellished with stone carvings and commemorative stained glass windows, all with Christian symbolism intended to express and remind of aspects of the Faith.

The bells were re-hung in the north west square tower which is of 3 stages, battlemented. Because the bell frame was intended for the old oblong tower, it was impossible to ring correctly in the new square tower until it was replaced by a new square frame in 1880. Both this and the re-casting of the bells in 1903 by John Taylor & Co. of Loughborough, were the gift of the Viner Ellis family. An external west door to an octagonal stair turret leads to the ringing chamber (access may be arranged on application to the Vicar or Churchwardens).

THE EXTERIOR

It is always both interesting and informative to walk round the outside of a church before exploring the internal features.

The **north door**, with pointed 14th-century style doorhead, has on the left (E) the head of Queen Victoria, and on the right (W) that of Charles John Ellicott, D.D., bishop of Gloucester and Bristol at the time of the rebuilding. Above the door a small niche with pointed top is occupied by a small statue of St. Peter the Fisherman, commissioned to commemorate the millenium. It depicts a smiling St. Peter wearing a loin cloth with a fishing net full of fish over his right

shoulder, carved by Pascal Mychalysin the foreman stonemason at Gloucester Cathedral and dedicated by John Went, bishop of Tewkesbury, on 26th December 2000. The fishes in the net reflect the label-stop above the capital of a pillar on the north of the nave. (See also W.14, page 19.)

The **nave window heads** are carved from polygonal blocks of freestone, with no regard for symmetry, and have no drip moulds. The **windows on the north side** are of 13th-century style, each with two lights and shouldered rere arches (*see also* the interior). The **priests' door** (up a flight of steps rising from the west) leads into the former north chapel.

The **east window of the north chapel** is copied from the corresponding early 14th-century window of the earlier church, with Reticulated Tracery, a style formed entirely of circles drawn top and bottom into ogee shapes, to give a net-like appearance. It has a hood-mould (or dripstone, to throw off water) with, as label-stops, a female head on the north side, and on the south side a male head with a wig and preaching tabs. This is thought to be Joseph Butler (1692-1752), bishop of Bristol in 1736, dean of St Paul's 1740, bishop of Durham 1750-2, who died at Bath; scholar and author of *The analogy of religion, natural and revealed* . . . 1736.

The **chancel east window** has Decorated style tracery "like a butterfly", typical of c.1290-c.1350, and again reminiscent of its medieval counterpart. The hood-mould terminates on both the north and south sides with label-stops formed of bearded heads: on the north St Peter and on the south St Paul, a reference to the ancient dedication of the mother church of Westbury-on-Severn.

Both **gables** at the east end are surmounted by dissimilar crosses; while the gargoyles, at the east end of the gutter between the two, carries off the rainwater through a hippopotamus, a humorous use for a "river horse".

The **chancel's south side** has three windows. From the east end: the *first* is a Decorated style window of 2 lights, with, on the E. side a female head with centre-parted long hair and a folded neck scarf or wimple; and on the W. side a bearded male head; the *second* is also a two-light window with Decorated style tracery, and has on the E. side a female head with headdress and a necklace with round "jewel", and on the W. side a clean-shaven male head with preaching tabs; one of these heads is said to be Queen Caroline Wilhelmina of Ansbach (1683-1737), queen of George II; the other female

head and the two male heads have yet to be identified. The *third* window (next to the junction with the nave) is a single lancet.

The **nave windows on the south side** both have Decorated style tracery, but no hood-moulds and no decorative heads.

The **tower** and **west window** should be seen before re-entering the church. The west window is very tall and elegant, with two small lights at the top. On the south side is a bearded cleric wearing an academic cap and on the north a bearded head with a loose cap. The former is probably John Hooper (c.1495-1555), the Gloucester Cistercian monk and later Protestant Bishop of Gloucester burnt at the stake near his own Cathedral in the persecutions under the Catholic Queen Mary; and the latter may be John Wycliffe (1320-84), popular translator of the Bible into English, reformer, and opponent of the clerical abuse supported by John of Gaunt.

The **south porch**, facing the River Severn, is a handsome two-bay timber framed structure with outer doors against the weather. The south door was built as the main entrance to the church from the once busy riverside Church Landing Yard, from which boats once carried Minsterworth produce as far afield as Cardiff.

All the external heads and the gargoyle were commissioned by the Rev. William Balfour from the Lambeth sculptor Nicholls, on the recommendation of the architect, Henry Woodyer. Nicholls also executed the excellent internal sculptures above the nave capitals for which he submitted designs; but, Balfour said, "for the outside the sculptor was left to follow his own devices".

The **Churchyard** contains many interesting memorials, whose inscriptions illustrate the history of the area. Among the more recent is one "In loving memory of Frederick William Harvey, D.C.M., Soldier and Poet. Born 26.3.1888. Died 13.2.1957". Though born in Hartpury, he lived in Minsterworth from the age of 2, and for many years ran a legal practice in the Forest of Dean. His published poetry is highly esteemed.

The churchyard, originally smaller than at present, was once surrounded by open ground, probably serving as the village green. On its eastern side stood the village stocks. On the west side, a wide track runs down to the river bank and the Church Landing Yard. Here, until the decline of river traffic, vessels floated up an inlet (now filled in) to load and unload goods (*see also* page 5).

The present height of the river bank and of the landing yard were created as part of the flood bank about 1973.

The present churchyard wall replaces an older one, demolished in 1890, when it was decided to include "a piece of land at the north west and which hitherto had simply been waste ground".

In 1978, the small field between the church and the river was bought for a further extension. In 1988/89 the wall between the old churchyard and the new was removed and the whole area combined, with handsome wrought iron gates paid for from the "In Memoriam" fund. The new churchyard was consecrated by the Bishop of Tewkesbury on 30 July 1989.

THE INTERIOR

The **nave** or body of the church (Latin, *navis*, a ship) was imagined as a vessel carrying the faithful across life's waters (*see also* the *reredos* for a continuation of this theme). It is divided from the north aisle by an arcade of 4 bays with cylindrical columns and pointed arches, following more or less the style of the medieval church. The capitals were left blank to await future carvings.

On Henry Woodyer's recommendation, the Lambeth sculptor, Nicholls, was asked to submit plaster casts of designs for label-stops above the nave capitals. They were accepted and the carvings erected, together with those of the exterior, in 1884, for under £36. The designs represent the bounty of the area. From west to east they are:

grapes, representing the richness of the soil;
apples (this is a fruit-growing area);
fishes caught in a net, showing the bounty of the river;
flower, expressing God's loving tenderness.

The **roof** has scissor wind-braces.

The **seating** is of heartwood oak, the bench-ends having linen-fold panelling. The **pew runners** and **kneelers**, worked by parishioners, represent various aspects of the Christian faith (*see* detailed list, pages 20 to 23).

The **curtains** at the church doors continue the colours of the **pew runners** and **kneelers**. They were provided by the proceeds of a flower festival in June 1973 and hung on Maundy Thursday 1974.

The **18 memorial inscriptions** are summarised on pages 16-17 and the **windows** and their **dedications** are described in detail on pages 18-19 (*see also* the centre spread PLAN).

The **Mothers' Union Banner**, dedicated on 11 June 1936, hangs between two windows on the north wall. An **American Organ** at the east end of the aisle was given in 1947 by the Rev. Nigella Greening, who was one of the first women to be made deacon in 1987.

The **brass lectern** is inscribed around the base to the memory of William Francis Balfour. According to local tradition, it represents the life savings of the nurse to the Balfour children. Her grave, east of the porch, is marked by a kerb and memorial cross inscribed: In loving memory of Ann Neaves "Nanny" who departed this life May 27th 1908 aged 84. "She hath done what she could".

The **chancel screen** is splendidly carved in Early English style and surmounted by a cross. The woodwork matches the minister's and choir stalls, which, on the north side, stand before another good screen dividing the chancel from the former chapel.

Two **brass chandeliers** intended to carry oil lamps, are noteworthy (and excellent for modern flower arrangements at festivals).

The **east window** is by Capronnier of Brussels, 1876; two on the south side of the chancel are by Clayton & Bell, c.1870; and the **west window** (seen best from the chancel) is by Hardman, 1880. (For the subjects of the windows and their memorial brasses *see* the numbered PLAN and the list of windows on pages 18-19.)

THE SANCTUARY

The **reredos** and **retable** are of variegated white and pinkish marble. The reredos has three panels, the centre with a cinquefoil head enclosing a floreated cross. The square side panels, with decorated corners, each enclose equal armed crosses overlaid, left, with IHS (the first three letters of Jesus in Greek), and right, with XPS (the first two and last letters of Christos, Christ, in Greek). Each is set in rays of light, the colours of red and green suggesting

the port and starboard lights of a vessel, continuing the theme of the church building as a ship. The reredos is surmounted by four angels. Of the two in the centre, the left figure bears a chalice, the right a paten and the outer figures carry censers painted in gold.

The **litany desk** has a copy of the Litany beautifully inscribed on cream vellum. The calligraphy and binding were executed by Noreen Littleton in 1959 in memory of Mr and Mrs William Littleton, Annie Littleton, William Littleton and Frances Mary Littleton.

The **altar furnishings** are being replaced or re-furbished gradually. Those in green (for the Trinity season) were dedicated on 1 November (All Saints' Day) 1987.

A **niche** south of the altar is in place of the medieval piscina, which would contain a small basin, with a drain, for washing communion vessels. The unusual cinquefoil head with ball-flower decoration replaces the usual hood-mould.

The **sedilia**, adjacent in the south wall, with the eastern seat higher than the other, were for the priest and deacon at Mass and generally originate in this form in the 12th-13th centuries. This possible reproduction of a feature in the old church may be another indication of the dates of parts of that building.

The **plate** includes a chalice of 1833.

The **plaque** on the north wall of the sanctuary records the rebuilding of the church in 1870. The inscription reads:

The ancient Parish Church of St Peter at Minsterworth consisting of two naves and two chancels, portions of which were probably erected in the 12th century and the greater part in the 14th, was levelled with the ground not without regret for the destruction of a time-honoured House of God in the year of our Lord 1869. Liable however, as in the great floods it was, to be entered by the waters of the River Severn, which in 1852 overflowed the naves to a depth of eighteen inches, and at other times damp and unhealthy its floor being below high water mark, the old edifice seemed in its decay to have reached a state which precluded all attempts at repair. Therefore foundations of a new House of God, which standing on the site and though smaller, retaining the best features of the old, should have its floor raised four feet above the former level so as to exclude the river, were laid in the month of

October 1869, and in April 1870 the Vicar and Churchwardens, desiring to express their thankfulness at having begun and that with good hope of being enabled through God's grace to finish the erection of a house to His Name, desiring also to place on record the dedication of this new house, as of the old, to St Peter, laid in the North Wall of the chancel, to the glory of God and in pious commemoration of the aforementioned Apostle of Jesus Christ, this Dedicatory Stone.

Charles John Ellicott, D.D. Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol Arthur Nettleship, M.A., Vicar	John Bennett) John Stephens) Churchwardens Henry Woodyer, M.A., Architect
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An **organ**, built by P.G. Phipps of Cheltenham and dedicated on 3 March 1937, used to separate the north chapel from the chancel and was installed in the same position as its predecessors, but in a church not designed to incorporate a sizeable pipe organ in that position. An old harmonium used at first was replaced in March 1890 by a one-manual organ bought new in Cheltenham. This remained until its removal on 3 December 1906 when a larger one, a two manual organ was installed. It cost £45 together with the sale of the old organ, the money being raised by subscriptions and a jumble sale. An electric blower for the organ, referred to above, was installed in memory of Elsie May Greening (d. 10 April 1948) and her husband Arthur John Greening (d. 20 October 1948). A £3,000 project to restore the organ was completed in 1979. However, after the turn of the century, it gradually became more costly to maintain and it was decided in 2005 to replace it with a digital Monarke organ manufactured by Makin Organ Builders and installed in March 2006. This was dedicated on 30 July 2006.

The **north chapel** separated from the chancel by a screen is used at present as a vestry and separated from the north aisle by the only remaining pipes of the Phipps organ referred to above. It has a fine east window and right, another cinquefoil-headed niche, similar to that in the chancel, and again in the position of a medieval piscina. A plain arched alcove in the north wall and another in the south, may imitate medieval features containing lost recumbent effigies. In the floor, centre, a marble slab with inset brass commemorates Sir Charles Barrow, Bart., of Highgrove, who died in 1789, his wife Mary, d. 1778, and his sister Elizabeth, d. 1761. This probably continues the right of the Lords of the Manor to be buried in their own chapel, the former chantry on this site. The external priests' door may also imitate a feature in the old church.

A framed notice about the bells in 1788, before they were re-cast in 1903, hangs over the north alcove. "This peal was the gift of Sir Charles Barrow, Bart.," (See page 7.)

The **pulpit**, saved from the old church, is Jacobean and lavishly carved, with the round headed panels fashionable from the late 16th to mid-17th centuries. The east side, now unseen, is similarly decorated, only the south side being plain. It seems to have been adapted and the handrail is 20th-century work; its original site was probably part of the way down the nave.

The **font**, from the old church, is 15th-century and in Perpendicular style, with a panelled and buttressed octagonal stem. A mark on the stem is said to record the level of the invading flood water in the old church but the plaque is no longer there. The carved oak cover was the gift of Mrs. Watson-Munro of Hygrove in December 1915. The font's position by the main entrance signifies that baptism is the means of entering the body of Christ, His family, the church.

The **embroidery** is an altar cloth, which is one of several embroideries pieced together from disused medieval priests' copes by Katherine of Aragon and her ladies, probably when she and Henry VIII stayed at nearby Sudeley Castle (then a royal residence) from July to September 1535. Part of the figure of Christ (embroidered c.1382) missing from the cross on the embroidery at Winchcombe, is incorporated here. The Winchcombe embroidery, from the same source, was used as an altar cloth until 1872. It has Katherine's pomegranate badge alternating with a pansy in the border. (The inscription on the case is misleading.)

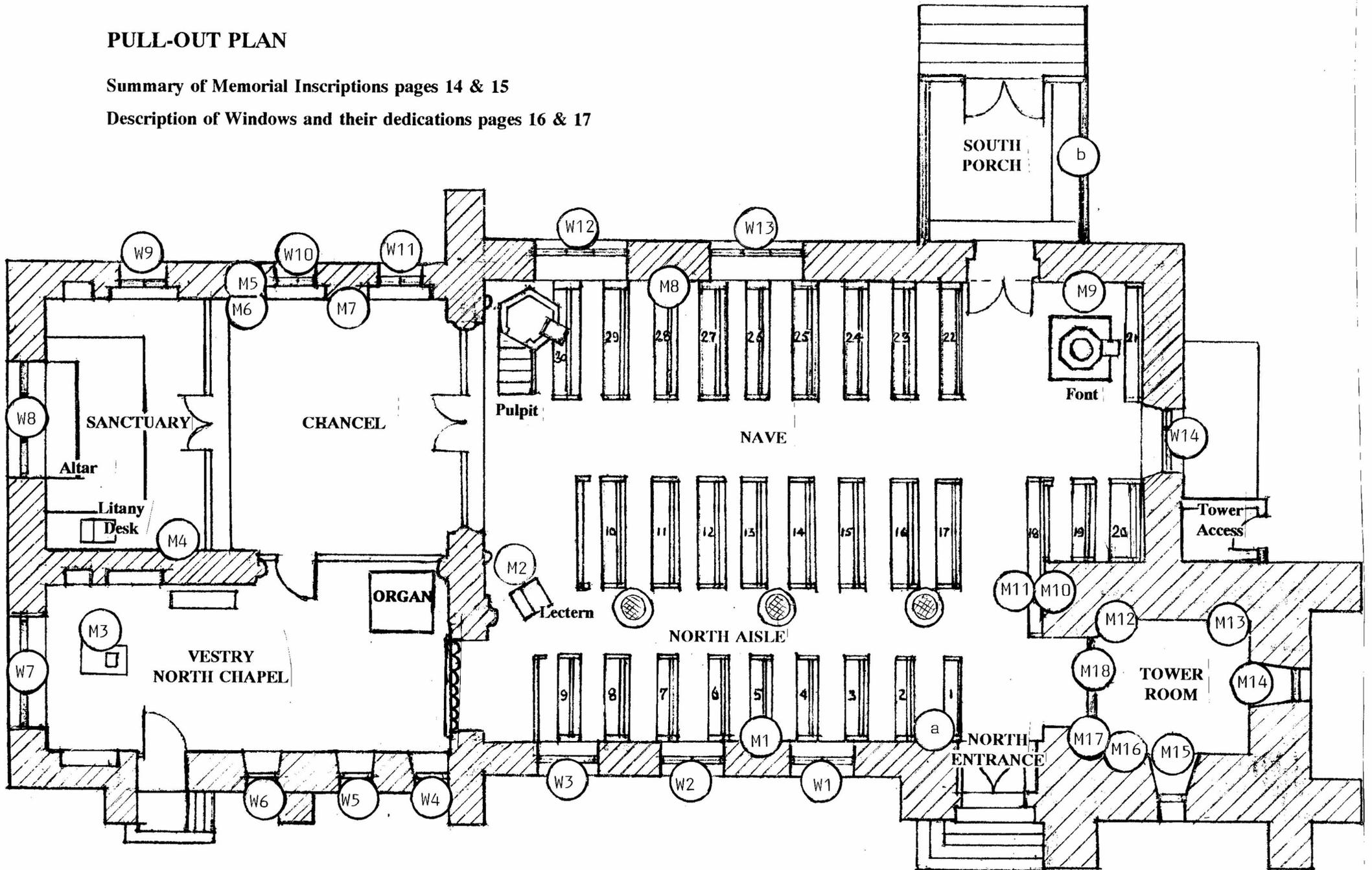
The **Standard**, left of the west window, is that of the (Royal) British Legion, Minsterworth and District Branch. Beside it, and below the west window, are framed **Rolls of Honour** of the Minsterworth men who served in the world wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45. Standing centrally on the sill of the west window (*see* W.14) is Pascal's **clay model** from which he carved the stone statue of St. Peter, in the niche above the north door (*see* page 8), presented to the church after display in the Cathedral with explanatory notice.

The **Room beneath the tower**, which contains a number of fine memorials from the old church, is entered through oak double doors made by Alan Lawtey, Churchwarden, in 1994 in a gothic style surround and surmounted by a shield bearing the crossed keys and inverted cross of St Peter. (Traditionally he was crucified head downwards.)

PULL-OUT PLAN

Summary of Memorial Inscriptions pages 14 & 15

Description of Windows and their dedications pages 16 & 17



ST. PETER'S CHURCH MINSTERWORTH

KEY TO PLAN

Summary of Memorial Inscriptions

- M.1 An unpolished stone: Jennifer Elizabeth Viner-Brady and Annabel Mary Viner-Brady, aged 8 and 4. Killed by enemy action 1942.
- M.2 Brass lectern: inscribed around the base to the memory of William Francis Balfour, d. 21 September 1890.
- M.3 On floor: brass set in white marble: Sir Charles Barrow, Bart., of Highgrove, d. 10 Jan. 1789, aged 80; and Mary his wife, d. 7 Apr. 1778, aged 70. Also his sister Elizabeth Barrow, d. 9 Apr. 1761, aged 46.
- M.4 On north wall of Sanctuary: dedication tablet on rebuilding of church, 1870, to replace building demolished 1869. Charles John Ellicott, bp. of Gloucester; Arthur Nettleship, M.A., vicar; John Bennett and John Stephens, churchwardens; Henry Woodyer, M.A., architect.
- M.5 On south wall of chancel: brass: Rev. William Balfour, M.A., 13 years vicar of this parish, d. at Weston-super-Mare 13 June 1892, aged 74.
- M.6 Below M.5: brass: Winifred Ann Balfour, widow of the Rev. William Balfour, d. 26 Aug. 1913, aged 90.
- M.7 Between windows behind choir stalls: bronze plaque: Charles Oldfeld Bartlett, M.A., Hon. Canon of Gloucester, Vicar 1906-30; b. 20 Feb. 1858, d. 6 Nov. 1937.
- M.8 Nave, S. wall; beaten copper plaque: Robert Nigel Oldfeld Bartlett, Captain, E. Lancs. Regiment, d. at Felahiyeh, Mesopotamia, 6 Apr. 1916, aged 22. Younger son of Rev. C.O. Bartlett (see M.7).
- M.9 Baptistry, S. wall: on case containing embroidery: case given in memory of Ernest Wallace Smart, lay reader, d. 1 Jan. 1955, aged 69.
- M.10 On west wall of nave: brass: in memory of George Viner Ellis, F.R.C.S., and of his brother Edmund Viner Ellis, J.P., the bells were recast, re-framed and re-dedicated, Dec. 1903.
- M.11 On west wall of nave: below M.10: brass: Anne Ellis, sister of the above, d.30 Dec. 1903, aged 83.
- M.12 Beneath tower, south wall: large wooden board: Bequest of Susannah Crump, 1763 to pay a school mistress; bequest of Daniel Ellis, 1785, to erect a school house for the school, endowed by his mother-in-law; the gift, 17 Oct. 1810, by Jeremiah Hawkins, of the land on which the school was built; bequest of Jeremiah Hawkins, 11 Jan. 1832, to Joseph Hawkins and William Viner Ellis of £200 in annuities to keep the school, built 1808, in repair, any funds remaining to be paid to the school mistress for her own use and to increase the scholars from 10 to 20, and after their death the fund to be administered by the vicar and churchwardens; Jeremiah Hawkins further bequest of £200 for bread to be distributed to the poor by the vicar and churchwardens. The Rev. L. Mansel, Vicar; W. Barrett, J.H. Morgan, Churchwardens.
- M.13 Beneath the tower, south wall: On oval black marble, a white marble monument surmounted by an obelisk with coat of arms and portrait medallion partly encircled by a wreath, with crossed torches beneath: Sir Charles Barrow of Hygrove, Bart., L.L.D., d. 10 Jan. 1789, aged 79.
- M.14 Beneath the tower, west wall: inscription (recessed) on white marble: John Stephens, d. 31 Mar. 1849, aged 66; Mary his widow, d. 18 June, 1866, aged 69.
- M.15 Beneath the tower, north wall, under window: white marble inscribed slab on black marble background: Mary Ellis, daughter of Daniel Ellis and his wife Mary Viner, b. 23 July 1770, d. 16 Oct. 1838; buried at St John the Baptist, Gloucester.
- M.16 Beneath tower, north wall, E. side: rectangular marble with elaborate surrounding carving, originally coloured and gilded, cherubs heads above and below; coat of arms: Mistress Anne Clent, late wife of John Clent, d. 30 May 1668, aged 38, after the birth of her 14th child.
- M.17 Beneath tower, east wall, N. side: white marble surmounted by white urn with draped cloth on black obelisk: Jeremiah Hawkins, d. 13 Jan. 1835, aged 80; William Hawkins, M.D., d. 14 May 1835, aged 25; and Rev. Thomas Hawkins, d. 8 March 1836, aged 46, both sons of the above.
- M.18 Beneath tower, over entrance arch: white marble, surmounted by an urn, with crossed palms beneath, all on a black marble plaque: John Oakey, d. 13 Nov. 1801, aged 54.

KEY TO PLAN

Windows & dedications, east from north door.

W.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 plain glass.

W.7 East window of vestry/Lady Chapel: Christ walking on the water with St Peter.

W.8 East window of chancel: 3 lights below tracery.

Left: The transfiguration of Jesus, Moses—with tablets of the law—and Elijah—with a scroll of the Prophets—before Peter, James and John.

Lower left: The wise men from the east.

Centre: The Crucifixion.

Lower Centre: The Last Supper.

Right: The descent of the Holy Spirit.

Lower right: The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan by John.

W.9 South wall of Sanctuary:

Left: Jesus commands to launch into the deep.

Right: The miraculous draught of fishes.

W.10 South wall of chancel:

Left: St Peter on the water appeals to be saved.

Lower Left: Christ hands the keys of the Kingdom to St Peter.

Right: At Jesus' arrest—Peter cuts off the ear of the High Priest's servant Malchus.

Lower right: Christ and the sleeping disciples in the garden of Gethsemane.

Brass below: In memory of Georgina wife of John Henry MacKenzie, and 2nd daughter of Lt.Col. J. Pauncefoot Hawkins, C.B., d. 6 Aug. 1869.

W.11 South wall of chancel: Jesus blessing the little children—"of such is the Kingdom of Heaven".

Brass below: In memory of Mary Elizabeth Stallard, infant daughter of William & Sarah Symes, d. 14 Feb. 1849. Dedicated 1874.

W.12 Nave, by pulpit:

Left: The Nativity—"He gave his son for us".

Centre: Jesus carries his cross—"Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many".

Right: The angel with women at the tomb saying—"He is not here, he is risen".

Brass below: In memory of Albert James Edwin, 3rd son of William & Sarah Symes, d. 28 Sept. 1869, aged 9. Window placed by his mother 1874.

W.13 Nave, South wall: The Ascension of Christ, with Mary & disciples watching.

Brass below: In memory of William Symes, d. 25 Nov. 1881, aged 63, and of Sarah Anne his wife, d. 4 Jan. 1879, aged 55; erected 1882.

W.14 West wall: Top lights: St Peter and St John. Below the transom:

Left: The Massacre of the innocents by Herod's soldiers seeking to kill the infant Jesus.

Bottom left: The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will be the mother of Christ.

Centre: Jesus teaches the multitudes.

Right: Jesus, 12 years old, talks with learned men in the Temple.

Bottom right: Joseph and Mary flee from Herod's soldiers to safety in Egypt.

In memory of Bellamira Hawkins, d. 20 July 1880.

Other items to note

- a. List of Incumbents on north aisle wall. (Engrossed from an earlier copy and kept up-to-date by Mrs Barbara Gunn.)
- b. South Porch furnishing and dedicatory plaque, undated.

Visitors' Book, which all visitors are invited to sign.

KEY TO PLAN

Pew runners & kneelers

Introduction

The runners on the seats are not only for the comfort of worshippers, but also to beautify God's house.

The various designs use sacred or local symbols to direct our thoughts towards God and his works.

The background colour of the runners is golden brown, to harmonize with the natural oak of the pews. In sacred art, gold and yellow symbolise the goodness of God, faith, and fruitfulness. The borders are of brown with red which is the colour of the Holy Spirit.

In the kneelers, the red of the Spirit predominates, but the gold of God's goodness also appears. Many designs on the kneelers also embody sacred emblems.

All the runners and kneelers, including those at the altar rail, have been made by Minsterworth parishioners. Their initials, and the dates of their work, are given in the list of pew runners.

Descriptions, with pew numbers (some of the runners are moved around to even usage so they may not be on a particular pew at any one time).

Centre:

1. The Holy Dove, representing the Holy Spirit, with the purifying flames of the fire of the Spirit as they descended at Pentecost (Whitsuntide). The manifold gifts of the Spirit.
2. Golden ears of wheat, typifying souls saved by Christ. "... gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. 13.30). (EAL 1968)
3. Emblems of the Creation, trees and animals (*see* Ps. 104). (JP 1970)

4. Alpha and omega: the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, often used to describe God. "I am . . . the beginning and the end" (Rev. 21.6). Also in the centre are the entwined Greek letters chi and rho, the first two letters of Christos, used by the early church as a Christian symbol. (JFJ 1969)
 5. The keys of St Peter, in whose name Minsterworth church is dedicated to God. Centre: a bishop's mitre.
 6. Noah's ark surrounded by a variety of animals saved from the flood. A reminder of baptism (Gen. 6.14-7.5). (JE 1970)
 7. Two central crosses and borders of varied coloured crosses. The Cross is the universal reminder of Christ's dying to save us all, and of Resurrection. (JP 1970)
 8. Trees. "The trees of the Lord are full of sap" (Ps. 104.16).
 9. Sun, moon and stars.
- Nave: north side, from the lectern:
10. Golden ears of corn Jesus said: "I am the bread of life" (John 6.35); together with the feeding of the five thousand (Luke 9.12-17). (RW 1969)
 11. Three heraldic emblems, representing our parish, our cathedral and the Province of Canterbury.
(1) The keys of St Peter, emblem of the Bishop of Gloucester and of our parish.
(2) Centre: in blue and white, the insignia of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Gloucester diocese is within the southern province of the Church of England.
(3) Three horizontal crosses representing the Cathedral church of St Peter and the Holy and Indivisible Trinity of Gloucester. (DMG 1968)
 12. An ancient scroll of the Holy Scriptures, with a primitive lamp. Inscription: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps.119.105). (JP 1968)
 13. In green, links symbolizing eternity.

14. In blue, linked circles. The cross within a circle represents eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. (DMJ 1969)
15. "THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD". A beautiful and colourful representation of Ephesians 6.11-17, depicting:
The girdle of truth;
the breastplate of righteousness;
the sandals of the gospel of peace;
the shield of faith;
the helmet of salvation;
the sword of the spirit. (JAG 1969)
16. Seagulls in flight, with the River Severn which flows past Minsterworth church. Nature, God's handiwork. (SAM 1971)
17. Fishes. The fish was an early Christian symbol. The Greek word for a fish is composed of the initial letters of "Jesus Christ Son of God and Saviour". Also interwoven fishing nets. (Mark 1.16-18) (BMG 1968)
18. The sacred vine, an early Christian symbol for Christ. Inscription: "The Master is here; he is asking for you" (John 11.28.N.E.B.). Christ says this to us now.
19. Three ships: disciples on the water of life. Fishing nets. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind" (Matt. 13.47). Various anchors. The hope set before us: "which we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast" (Hebr. 6.19). (BMG 1971)
20. Music with crossed keys of St Peter. (FLMP 1969)

Near the font:

21. The sacred vine, with clusters of ripened grapes. Jesus said: "I am the true vine" (John 15.1)

Nave: south side:

22. The long boats which used to carry cargoes from the Church Landing Yard along the River Severn to Cardiff. Also salmon nets, reminiscent of the fisheries. (CVJ 1969)

23. Centre: AGNUS DEI (the Lamb of God). Right: the font of baptism, adorned with the star of David. Left: the chalice and Bread of the Holy Communion. (DH 1968)
24. Various motifs of fishes. Fishes in the Gospel stories. Some of the first disciples were fishermen. Fishes were used in the feeding of the 5,000. Fishes were early Christian symbols. (BNL 1969)
25. HOLY HOLY HOLY. Haloes of Light and Glory express the mystery of the Holy and Blessed Trinity. (LKP 1969)
26. IMMANUEL (God is with us). The Incarnation. Centre: the Infant Christ, the herald angels of Christmas with trumpets, the Star of the Epiphany.
27. Fishes in various groupings. The miracle of the great haul of fish (Luke 5.1-7). (SRB 1968)
28. Of the Apostle St Peter. Crossed "keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 16.19), fish, bishop's staff, also shepherd's crook and bishop's mitre. Borders of chains: Peter's chains were broken by the Lord's Angel in prison in Jerusalem (Acts 12.7). (JP 1969)
29. The symbol of Jesus Christ, the Sacred Vine, with the fruit of the vine (John 15.1). (MJ 1968)

In **the ringing chamber**, a black framed board with a white inner border is inscribed in gilt:

JUBILEE!

ON TUESDAY JUNE 21st, 1887,
was rung in this tower 32 six-scores
of Grandsire doubles without a plain lead and
10 with, amounting to 5040 changes in 2 hours
& 30 minutes. THE RINGERS WERE STATIONED AS FOLLOWS.

S. MEADOWS, Treble	C. PUGH, 4th
A. WEBB, 2nd	J. ASHMEAD, 5th
A. ARTUS, 3rd	G. NASH, Tenor
CONDUCTED BY MR. J. ASHMEAD	

Also a framed inscription decorated with formal wild roses and leaves.

ST PETER

MINSTERWORTH

IN THIS TOWER ON SATURDAY 12th AUGUST
1989, AS A COMPLIMENT TO KEN EAST,
CHURCHWARDEN, AND HIS LADY WIFE, JEAN,
A QUARTER PEAL 1260 CHANGES IN EIGHT
METHODS, BEING:- REV. CANTERBURY PLEASURE
BOB, SOUTHREPPS PLEASURE, CLIFFORDS PLEASURE
LITTLE ASTON, PLAIN BOB, KENNINGTON, APRIL
DAY, AND SEIGHFORD, WAS RUNG IN 41 MINUTES
BY THE FOLLOWING RINGERS.

TREBLE. LYNNE S. HOGG
SECOND. C. JANE WHITING.
THIRD. LOUISE K. HAWKER.
FOURTH. VICTOR C. GIBSON.
FIFTH. E. JOHN GIBSON.
TENOR. RICHARD J. HAWKER.
CONDUCTED BY E. JOHN GIBSON.

Access to the room under the tower, the tower and ringing chamber
may be arranged on application to the Vicar or the Churchwardens.

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