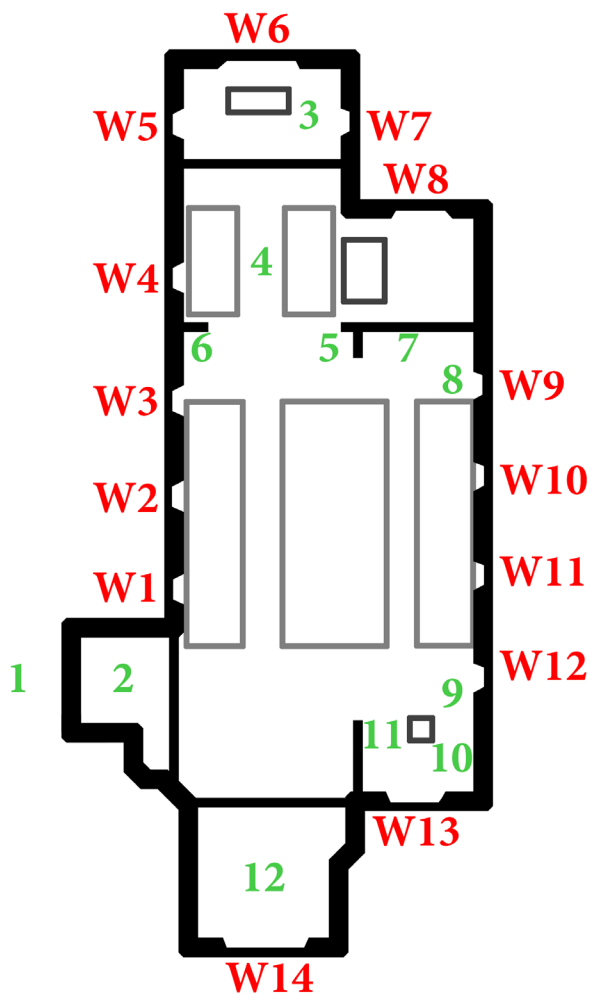


The History of
St. Cyr's, Stinchcombe

*A guided tour through the people
of this village and its church*

A WARM WELCOME TO ST. CYR'S CHURCH, STINCHCOMBE



Key: **Green Numbers: History Tour**; **Red Numbers: Windows Tour**

For centuries St. Cyr's has been the spiritual and social heart of Stinchcombe village. This booklet has been designed to lead you in a circular tour around the church, identifying points of interest and imparting a little about Stinchcombe's wider history and people through the objects that remain here. If you wish to admire our stained glass in more detail, the final pages take you around the church in another circular tour identifying each window separately.

1. OUTSIDE

On a fine day our tour starts outside in the churchyard. The church is elevated above ground level, and this is believed to be a result of the medieval tradition of burying people on top of each other, eventually raising the level of the ground.¹ The gateposts date from 1855, designed by J.L. Pearson (see Section 3).

There are several fine table top tombs in the churchyard, many of which are officially listed features in themselves. The plough by the south wall was originally kept under the tower, and was used during Epiphany for the 'Plough Sunday' service when the congregation would walk the village boundary to bless the fields.

The statue of St. Cyr, situated in an alcove on the northern side of the tower, was installed in September 2000 to celebrate the millennium. It was sculpted by Rory Young, and he used his young godson as a model for St. Cyr.²

St. Cyr is remembered as a child martyr. In AD 304 Julietta and her three-year old son Cyr (or Cyricus) fled to Tarsus to escape persecution, but were identified as Christians. Julietta was tortured and Cyr was brought before the governor of Tarsus. The child punched the governor, who in turn threw him to the ground, killing him instantly.

There are a handful of churches dedicated to the pair (together or individually) in England, but they are more popular in France and Italy with more than 500 churches or localities named after them. Most famous is the foremost military academy in France, founded by Napoleon, the 'Special Military School of St. Cyr'.

The war memorial, a few metres away, was originally destined for the churchyard - but permission to place it on consecrated ground was refused.³ It was sited in its present location to be as close to the church as possible. It replaces a tree planted there for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. Before then it had been the site

of the village stocks and pound. It is thought to be the place where Prince Rupert put a number of roundhead soldiers to the sword - this event became known as the 'Stinchcombe Quarter'.⁴

2. THE PORCH

Along with much of the tower the porch dates to the 14th century, a time when the Black Death caused a shortage of labour. Arable farming was gradually replaced by sheep farming and this brought new wealth to the area.

The earliest mention of a church in Stinchcombe is in the Berkeley manuscripts: "the Church of Cam with the Chapel of Stinchcombe was granted to the Abbot of St. Peter's at Gloucester in 1156 by Robert Berkeley."⁵ None of this early building remains.

There is likely to have been a church here at the time of the Norman Conquest. Cam is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (AD 1086) and, in his 'Analysis of the Domesday Survey of Gloucestershire', Charles S. Taylor states that "under Cam were certainly included the present parishes of Cam and Stinchcombe."⁶ In 1630 the church was separated from Cam and a Perpetual Curate was appointed.

In 1760 the whole church was repaired and at this point it consisted of a chancel, a nave with a gallery, one bell (see Section 12), and the tower and porch as we see them today. By 1780 the Parvis Room above the porch was called 'The Cottage Room', and tenanted by an elderly lady named Margaret Povey (rather unkindly described as "a dirty old woman" in one letter written by Mrs. Purnell-Edwards).⁷ A chimney above the east wall suggests that a fireplace was situated in the Parvis Room at one point, hopefully providing at least some heat for Margaret Povey.

The Parvis Room had a large internal window added, looking onto the nave below, for the benefit of the Purnell family of Stancombe Park who used it as their family pew. The disputed ownership of the porch often caused tension. In 1840 Mr. Purnell secretly ordered the removal of the body of his infant child from a tomb in Dursley one night and had it reinterred under this porch, in his new family tomb, without any consultation with either vicar - a clear breach of ecclesiastical law. In 1908, when the vicar ordered the ivy on the outside of the porch trimmed, Mrs. Purnell-Edwards was outraged by the "interfering with the rights of private

STANCOMBE PARK

Stancombe Park was part of the estate of William Purnell of Dursley (died 1805). His daughter and would-be heiress Anne, the wife of Robert Bransby Cooper, of Brooke Hall, Norfolk, predeceased him by a year. The estate therefore passed to her son, Purnell Bransby. He adopted the surname Bransby Purnell by deed poll in 1805, and came of age in 1811. In 1813 he married and started to remodel Stancombe Park, and he also began to create the valley water garden. He died in 1866, having been a stern head of the family. Mr John Purnell, the heir, had been kept at home for his entire life on a very small allowance and one pint of beer a day!⁸ John Purnell did not enjoy his inheritance for long, because he was elderly himself by the time his father died, and it was not long until it passed on to his daughter Miss Emily Anne Purnell.

Rev. David Edwards (vicar of North Nibley from 1853 until he died in 1908) married Miss Emily Anne Purnell in 1882 and they lived at Stancombe Park - though it was a marriage of money and convenience, certainly not love. The narrow, winding paths and tunnels that lead around the stunning gardens were apparently designed, using the dowry from Miss Purnell, because Rev. Edwards (Purnell-Edwards as he named himself) was in love with a gypsy girl. He would meet her deep in the garden at the beautiful temple, overlooking the lake, for secret 'assignments'. Miss. Purnell (now Mrs. Purnell-Edwards) was apparently so large that she could not get down the paths and would therefore be unable to discover them! She died in 1928, and the following year it was sold to Mr Samuel Chew-Hooper.

Stancombe Park burned to the ground in 1840, and amazing tales are told of gold sovereigns scattering and melting all around. Some people reportedly stepped on them and melted them into their feet, eventually taking them to the grave with them. It had been rebuilt by 1880 as a near replica, but with some changes, which explains the mismatch of building styles in places.

The Grade I listed gardens are still stunning. Much of their allure comes from the fact that they feel secluded and hidden, though you can now book the temple for holidays or romantic elopements of your own. It was voted, in a poll conducted by the Independent, the "most romantic getaway in Britain".⁹

property". The Bishop, Archdeacon and many legal experts were called upon to clarify the situation, which was resolved only on the death of Mrs. Purnell-Edwards, when ownership of the Parvis Room passed to the Church.¹⁰ The fine memorial tablet on the wall commemorates the use of the porch as the Purnell family tomb.

The ceiling has a low lierne-vault with carved bosses, including a green man with a length of foliage sprouting from his mouth



3. THE ALTAR

By 1850 the church building was almost unusable due to dilapidation and poor building standards during its construction.¹¹ The incumbent, Ven. Sir George Prevost Bart., and his curate, friend and brother-in-law Rev. Isaac Williams therefore funded and organised the rebuilding of the church (with the exception of the tower and porch) – leaving it largely as we find it today. J.L. Pearson was the architect and designed the church in the Tractarian style. Bishop Monk consecrated the new building on 26th July 1855. Bishop Samuel Wilberforce preached in the morning while Rev. John Keble preached in the afternoon.¹²

The reredos, by Pearson, was installed by Isaac Williams' wife, in memory of her husband. The side panels were added in 1893 in memory of his son Henry. The dove was thought a fitting subject for the church of the child martyr, while the three fishes carry obvious religious significance. However there is also a personal story here – the three fishes reference the fact that Isaac William's three sons, while attending Winchester, were nicknamed after fish - with Henry being the trout. The design is taken from a carving on the font in Gloucester Cathedral.¹³

4. THE CHOIR STALLS AND ORGAN

The choir stalls were rearranged to their present formation in 1934.¹⁴ The style of placing the chancel and altar higher than the nave, by the use of steps, was prevalent in the nineteenth century – the three steps traditionally representing the Holy Trinity. However they also serve an obviously useful purpose in a church built on such a slope as ours. Before the 1855 rebuilding the church simply sloped

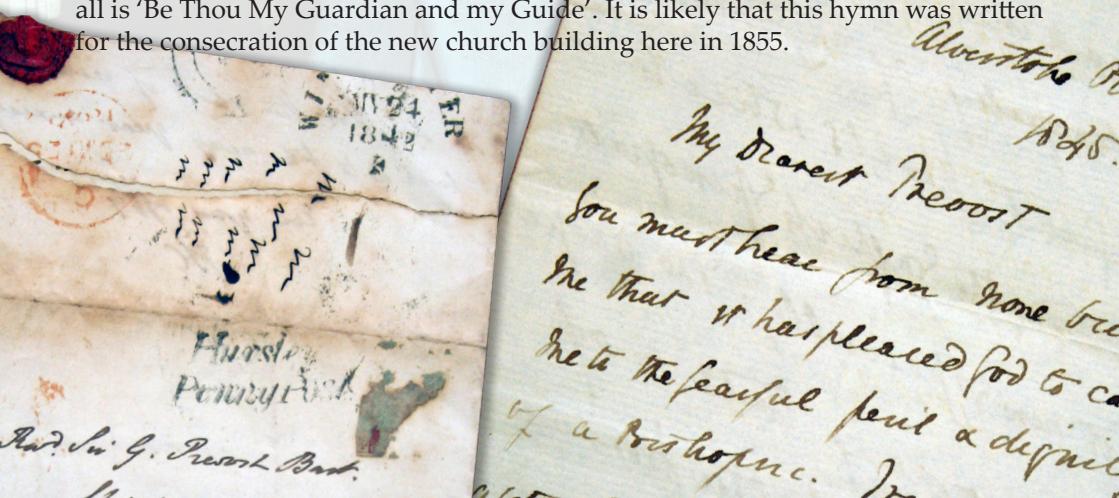
Sir George Prevost, born 20th August 1804, was only 12 when his father died and he became the 2nd Baronet. He was ordained a priest in 1829. He became a lifelong follower of the 'Oxford Movement', and was hugely inspired by Thomas Keble - whom he served as curate in Bisley from 1828 to 1834 - and his brother John who was a leader of the movement.

On the 25th September 1834 he was instituted to the perpetual curacy of Stinchcombe. He was offered what we now call The Old Parsonage to live in, but it was in poor repair and he felt it did not befit either him or his ailing wife.¹⁵ He therefore built The Manor to live in, before building what we now know as The Old Vicarage for Rev. Isaac Williams. The building was used as the Vicarage until 1955, when Stinchcombe was joined with North Nibley church. Since then no incumbent has lived within the village.

Sir George Prevost was Rural Dean of Dursley from 1852 to 1866, Proctor of the Diocese of Gloucester and Bristol from 1858 to 1865, Archdeacon of Gloucester from 1865 to 1881, and Honorary Canon of Gloucester from 1859 to his death at the age of 93 in 1893. Despite this he worked tirelessly and charitably for his parishioners in Stinchcombe and encouraged devout living, daily prayer¹⁶ and regular attendance at Holy Communion¹⁷. He made himself very available to the 350 or so people who lived in the village, many of whom were farm labourers, and was ready to offer advice and help wherever required. Woe betide you if you strayed from the path however - he presented a family Bible to all newlywed couples in the church, but would remove it from them, and deliver a stern lecture, if their behaviour was not pious enough. It is largely due to his hatred of excessive alcohol consumption, and the fact that he felt the Church should be the centre of village life, that we have no public house today.¹⁸

Rev. Isaac Williams came to Stinchcombe sick and preparing to die in 1846, but he survived and lived here for another 19 years until his death in 1865. During that time he studied and wrote extensively. His autobiography, edited and published after his death, was printed and a one-off special edition was created for St. Cyr's.

Rev. Williams wrote much poetry, as well as several hymns. His most famous of all is 'Be Thou My Guardian and my Guide'. It is likely that this hymn was written for the consecration of the new church building here in 1855.



up, producing what was described as an “uncomfortable effect”!¹⁹

The tiles in the chancel are replicas, by Minton, of a design found in the original church. The tiles in the nave were added during the twentieth century, replacing large flagstones.

In 1855 the organ was situated near the tower, but in 1867 a new organ – built by Gray and Davison – was given by Mr A. C. Williams, son of Rev. Isaac Williams, and it was placed where we find the organ now, in the chancel. By 1872 there were complaints about it however and it was seen as ‘no credit to the builder’. In 1894 the organ was moved to Leonard Stanley church²⁰, and a new one was built and installed here by Liddiatt and Son, of Leonard Stanley. In 1977 dry rot was discovered at Christ Church, Lancaster Gate, London. This well known church was demolished, and the organ pipes were moved to Stinchcombe in 1982.²¹

The electrification of the organ was carried out in 1938, eliminating the need for an organ-blower to work the hand-blower manually in the vestry.

The choir, as in so many churches, was originally all boys, but numbers gradually dwindled and ladies were allowed to join under the Rev. Parfitt.²²

The processional cross was given by Miss L. and Mr M. St. John Mildmay in memory of their parents. It was designed by Gwilym Jones of Rodborough and made by Stevens and Scrooby at Chalford. These men had been partners of Gimson and Van de Vahl at Rodmarton – traditionally direct descendants of the William Morris workshop.

5 & 6. THE LECTERN & PULPIT

Our beautiful lectern was given in 1898 by Rev. and Mrs Purnell-Edwards of Stancombe Park (see Page 5) in memory of members of their family, as the inscription on it makes clear.

The pulpit, by Pearson, was added as part of the 1855 redesign. The provision of a pulpit was made compulsory in 1603, so there certainly was one previously. Pearson had the pulpit installed where we find the lectern now, and it was only moved to its present location during the 1934 remodelling.²³

7. THE SOUTH AISLE

This entire aisle of the church was added with the 1855 rebuild, and it makes the church unusually large for such a small parish.

The screen, while only dating back to 1855, is a window to the past in that it is designed to match the remnants of an old screen, originally separating the nave and chancel, found in the walls while the church was being rebuilt. The remains of a rood staircase were also found in the wall, thought to date back even earlier.²⁴

The banner tapestry hanging on the vestry wall was embroidered by the three Misses. Drew of Leith Hill and was given to the Stinchcombe Hill Musical Festival when it was started. By 1978 the Festival had ended, and the tapestry was given to the church.

8. THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Children's Corner was added in 1934, when the chancel was also altered.²⁵ In 1855 the church was lit by oil lamps which hung from the roof and cast many shadows. In the darkness the school children could get up to all sorts of mischief, so the school accounts of 1872 show a payment of £1 "for the care of boys in church".²⁶

As in so many places, the tragedy of infant death struck the families in Stinchcombe often during the 19th century. Even so, in 1875 there were 69 children on the Sunday School register, with an average attendance of 63. The boys were always led out of the church through the north door, while the girls had to exit via the west door. A demure mien and sober clothes were the rules. A small girl arrived one Sunday with a pink rose in her hat - she was quickly given a stern lecture and sent home!²⁷

9. THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

The Book of Remembrance was given in 1998 by the then organist David Ford, in memory of his late mother Jean.²⁸

10. THE FONT

The font was originally located at the back of the north aisle, at the top of the tower steps. It was moved to its present location in 1966.²⁹ The font ewer for baptisms, given as a mark of esteem to Ven. Sir George Prevost Bart. by the laity and clergy of the diocese in 1884, is still in use.³⁰

The wooden candlesticks near the font were made from the old wooden bell frame, removed in 1971 (see Section 12).

11. THE ABYSSINIAN CROSS

To find the Abyssinian Cross you must turn your back to the font and face north: it is within a specially designed alcove in the wall. The Abyssinian Cross was given to the church in 1987. It was given by HIM Emperor Haile Selassie I to Mrs Awdry of Kingshill House in Dursley. When he was forced to flee his home country, after Mussolini's invasion in 1936, she showed him kindness and hospitality.³¹

Mrs Awdry's daughter, Mrs Aldridge, lived in Stinchcombe during this time so it is quite possible that Haile Selassie visited Stinchcombe and perhaps even prayed in St. Cyr's – for prayer was a hugely important part of his life, and he spent quite some time in nearby Dursley.

12. THE TOWER AND BELLS

For many years the tower opened out onto the nave, producing draughts. Local craftsman Mr John Pinch built the screen in 1994, which has made a great difference.

Before 1882 there was only one bell, engraved "John Pinfold, Gent. Churchwarden 1692". It was 13½ cwt (43¾ in diameter, F). It had been cast by Messrs. Rudhall of Gloucester.³²

In 1882 Rev. Cooper, whose mother had recently died at Piers Court, gave five new bells in her memory. The existing original bell became the tenor of the new ring. The new bells were cast by Messrs. Warner & Sons of Cripplegate, London.³³ The ring set was engraved as follows:

- 1) St. Cyr, the Boy Martyr AD 305
George Prevost Bart., Vicar
John S.W. Pearce)
William Harris) Churchwardens
- 2) LET THE HILLS HEAR THY VOICE
- 3) THINK WHEN THE BELLS DO CHIME,
TIS ANGELS MUSIC
- 4) OH THE TIDE OF SWEET AND SOLEMN SOUNDS FLOW ON
TIL DISCORD FINDS NO PLACE AND ALL IS UNION.
- 5) RING ON, RING ON AND NEVER CEASE,
TIL ALL IS PEACE AND LOVE ON EARTH.
- 6) *[No known inscription, recast from original bell]*

They were first rung at the dedication service on April 13th 1882.³⁴ In 1967 the tenor bell was found to have a small but fatal crack. After much debate and discussion it was decided that the bell should be recast into a new treble, and that the fourth bell should be recast to bring it in tune (the previous bell having been tuned to Bb), forming the lighter present ring:

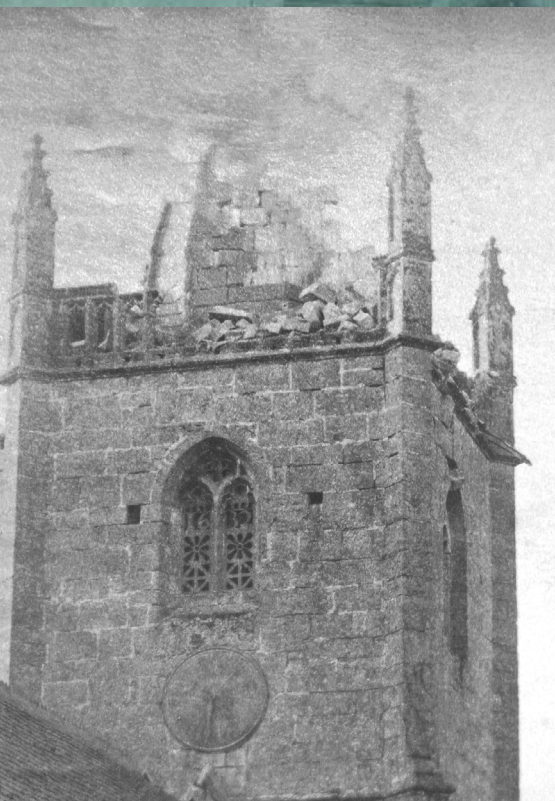
Bell	Weight (cwt)	Diameter	Note	Founder	Date
1 (Treble)	4-3-05	27¾ in	E	Whitechapel Bell Foundry Ltd.	1971
2	4-2-13	29¼ in	D	John Warner & Sons	1882
3	5-1-19	30½ in	C	John Warner & Sons	1882
4	6-0-24	33 in	B	Whitechapel Bell Foundry Ltd.	1971
5	8-0-15	36¼ in	A	John Warner & Sons	1884
6 (Tenor)	9-3-20	38¼ in	G	John Warner & Sons	1882

Bell ringing here has, as in many churches, gone through periods of popularity and periods of silence. In 2009 parishioner Mr Richard Bartlam ignited an interest in bell ringing throughout the village, forming a new band, and in 2011 an anonymous donor funded the building of our ringing platform, built by Mr John Pinch.



Main Image: The casting of
the bells in 1971

Left: The destroyed spire, 1883



This installation makes ringing much easier and more comfortable – particularly in the winter when previously the damp flagstone flooring often forced ringers to don wellingtons.

In 1971 an automatic ringing system was installed alongside an upgraded ‘manual’ ringing mechanism. Ironically, on the day of the dedication service for the automatic system, a bolt of lightning hit the tower, breaking the system for a first time.³⁵ The automatic system was eventually turned off due to the electricians regularly short circuiting much of the church.

Those who say ‘lightning never strikes the same place twice’ have obviously never visited St. Cyr’s, because the tower was first hit by lightning on 22nd November 1883, causing damage to the fourth bell (which had to be recast as a result) and destroying the spire. Local legend has it that the spire was found next to the tower in one piece, as if it had been plucked off the tower and simply placed gently on the ground. The children in the school, opposite the church, were watching from the window and saw the spire destroyed.³⁶ The event must have been even more upsetting for those involved than we might imagine because Ven. Sir George Prevost Bart., the incumbent, had purchased a lightning conductor and it was waiting in his home to be installed.³⁷ The insurers paid out £850 towards repairs, and a further £150 was raised by subscription among the parishioners. However the work was easier than thought, and it only cost £625, so the remainder was pooled with more money – raised from the laity and clergy of the diocese – which went towards the purchase of a font ewer and the installation of our great west window (see Section W14).³⁸

St. Cyr’s has suffered from some vandalism during its lifetime, but there is one piece of ‘graffiti’ in the church with special significance. As you climb the tower steps, before you reach the chamber housing the bells, there is a storage room halfway up the tower. The door leading into this room has been marked with the following inscription, written in chalk:

A H
X X
H D
For ever

which can be ascribed to two young parishioners – Mr Andrew Hill (brother of future Churchwarden Mr Michael Hill) and



Evelyn Waugh in his
library at Piers Court

EVELYN WAUGH

Stinchcombe's most famous resident, Evelyn Waugh, lived at Piers Court from 1937 to 1955. It was here that he wrote what is arguably his most famous work, 'Brideshead Revisited'. He rarely, if ever, visited St. Cyr's (attending St. Dominic's Catholic Church in Dursley) and was quite liberal in his resentment towards the village and its inhabitants.

Amongst friends he called Stinchcombe 'Stinkers', and he regularly complained about how small his eight bedroom home was. However he was, for a time, Chairman of the Parish Council and he was known to have given a gregarious welcome to the Stinchcombe Silver Band on their annual carol singing tour of the village.³⁹

'The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold' is a largely autobiographical account of his own nervous breakdown (his wife insisted to friends that Evelyn was fine, but he delighted in telling people that he had been "clean off my onion!")⁴⁰. The playful poaching of Gilbert Pinfold's name from Stinchcombe's history was another way for Waugh to create similarities between himself and the main character in his story - for both Waugh and a Mr John Pinfold had, at one point or another, owned Piers Court.

When finally instructing his estate agent to place Piers Court on the market, Waugh wrote the unforgettable words: "I don't want the house advertised. But if you happen to meet a lunatic who wants to live in this ghastly area, please tell him. ... I don't want frivolous sight-seers. Only serious lunatics who want to live near here."⁴¹

Miss Heather Dennis (daughter of our then Churchwarden Mr John Dennis) were two young parishioners and members of the newly formed band of 1971. Love bloomed across the bell ropes and in 2013 they celebrated their Ruby Wedding Anniversary, having been married in St. Cyr's in 1973. The newlywed couple rang the bells themselves before leaving the church after the ceremony.

13. REFERENCES

Much of this information comes from the 1977 history booklet, written by the late Mrs Margaret E. Wood. Revisions and additional material were provided by Sebastian J. Hamilton. All other sources are listed below (see back page for stained glass sources and page 23 for Image Credits):

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- ² *St. Cyr's Stinchcombe and St. George's Upper Cam Joint Magazine* (January 2001)
- ³ K. Hedges and I. Randall *A History of the Village of Stinchcombe 1857 – 1957* (1957)
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- ⁷ GA, GDR/V14/1/69
- ⁸ See 3, p. 5
- ⁹ <http://www.thetemple.info> (accessed July 2014)
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- ¹⁴ Glos. Archives (GA), D7942/469
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- ¹⁶ G. Prevost *A Manual of Daily Prayers* (1846)
- ¹⁷ A sermon written by G. Prevost to be read to the parishioners upon his death – GA D2962/39
- ¹⁸ See 3, p. 12
- ¹⁹ See 9
- ²⁰ *History of Stanley St. Leonard Church* p. 4
- ²¹ <http://www.camandstinchcombe.org.uk/oldweb/cyrhis4.htm> (accessed July 2014)
- ²² See 3, p. 15
- ²³ GA D7942/469
- ²⁴ See 11
- ²⁵ See 23
- ²⁶ See 3, p. 13
- ²⁷ See 3, p. 15
- ²⁸ *St. Cyr's Stinchcombe Parochial Council Minutes of Meeting* (20th January 1998), Item 97/98:174
- ²⁹ GA, GDR/F1/1/1966/1866
- ³⁰ See 3, p. 13 and GA, D143/1
- ³¹ Sign underneath the Abyssinian Cross
- ³² See 3, p. 14
- ³³ *ibid.*
- ³⁴ *The Parish Magazine for Berkeley, Coaley, Dursley, King-Stanley, Stinchcombe and Uley-cum-Owlpen* (April, 1882)
- ³⁵ M. Bliss and F. Sharpe *Church Bells of Gloucestershire* (1986) pp. 581-2
- ³⁶ *The Parish Magazine for Berkeley, Coaley, Dursley, King-Stanley, Stinchcombe and Uley-cum-Owlpen* (November, 1883)
- ³⁷ See 3, p. 13
- ³⁸ See 26
- ³⁹ Various letters in *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. M. Amory (1980)
- ⁴⁰ F. Donaldson *Evelyn Waugh: Portrait of a Country Neighbour* (1968) pp. 61-2
- ⁴¹ Evelyn Waugh to Messrs Knight, Frank and Rutley, 4 July 1955 in *The Letters of Evelyn Waugh*, ed. M. Amory (1980) p. 443



Stained Glass

W1. Clayton and Bell (c. 1879)

This window depicts St. Philip assisting Jesus in the Feeding of the Five Thousand. St. Philip is also depicted holding a spear with the patriarchal cross, a symbol regularly attributed to him.

St. James (James the Just, who many argue was a brother of Jesus) is depicted at his death. The scribes and priests ordered him to denounce Jesus, who by this point had been crucified and resurrected, but he refused and instead boldly reaffirmed his faith in Jesus as Christ. He was sentenced to death by stoning, but one of the priests shouted at them to stop because St. James was praying for them.

In anger one of the fullers threw his staff at St. James and killed him instantly. St. James is therefore depicted holding a fuller's club, while the quote "We count them happy which endure" comes from the Epistle of James, which he is traditionally believed to have written.

This window is dedicated to Sophia Mary Shewen, given by many who knew her. She died aged 73 in 1879, having done much for St. Cyr's during her life.



W2. Clayton and Bell (c. 1890)

The window depicts St. Simon and St. Jude, who are traditionally associated with each other – both are interred in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, under the altar of St. Joseph.

St. Simon holds a fish, while St. Jude holds a ship representing the Church and his missionary voyages. St. Jude has often been more 'sidelined' than some saints, due to the similarity between his name and Judas Iscariot.

The window is dedicated to Miss Mary Mabbett, who died aged 62 in 1890, given by the family of the late Mr Henry Mabbett. Miss Mabbett was an extremely wealthy local woman who was generous to the Church.





W3. Unknown (c. 1855)

This window is clear, with lead comes marking out the diamond panes, and local legend has it that this was so that the priest, when sitting in his seat taking a service, could look through to the road and see who was not attending!

W4. William Wailes (c. 1870s)

This window depicts the Transfiguration of Jesus, depicting Christ alongside Moses (holding the 10 Commandments), Elijah (helpfully holding a banner with his name on it) and three Apostles – the traditional artistic portrayal of this important moment within the New Testament.

The window is dedicated to Rev. Isaac Williams (see Page 7), and money was raised by parishioners to install it.



W5. William Wailes (c. 1865)

This window depicts the Ascension with Jesus rising into Heaven. Below is the Virgin Mary and what appears to be twelve disciples, though there were only eleven at that point because Judas Iscariot had not yet been replaced. The feminine looking person by Mary is actually St. John (see the depiction in W6 - the East Window).

The window, along with the one next to it (see Section W4), is dedicated to Rev. Isaac Williams (see Page 7), with the money for this window given by his family. The plaque confirming the dedication includes the quote “If we suffer we shall also reign with him” (2 Timothy, 2:12). This has a poignant relevance to Rev. Williams who suffered from much ill health throughout his life.





W6. William Wailes (c. 1855)

The beautiful east Window depicts the following from the left:

St. Matthew, who is shown collecting taxes (his former profession) in the presence of Jesus. In the main image he seems to be accompanied by a lion, while usually he is given the symbol of a human.

St. Mark is shown beside Jesus, who is healing a deaf and mute man (Mark 7:34). Jesus said the word “Ephphatha”, meaning “Be opened”, and this appears below the window (behind the reredos). In the main image he seems to be accompanied by a human, while usually he is given the symbol of the lion. This stems from the theology of Isaac Williams (see Page 7 and the Williams reference on Page 24). The four attributes come from the four living creatures of Ezekiel 1:4-14, 10:1-17 and Revelation 4:6-8. Isaac Williams felt the emphasis on the regal nature of the kingdom in Matthew’s Gospel suggested the lion, while the vivid portrayal of Jesus’ humanity in Mark’s Gospel pointed to the human. This marks a departure from centuries of tradition, set by the patristic writers including Augustine, Irenæus and Gregory the Great.

Jesus – who is shown on the Throne of Power giving the traditional blessing, and is also depicted being crucified, with the Virgin Mary and St. John at the foot of the cross.

Below St. Luke, accompanied by a bull, we find a depiction of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which appears in his Gospel (Luke 15:11-32).

St. John is shown taking Mary the mother of Jesus into his care, as instructed by Jesus. In the main image he appears to be accompanied by his usual symbol of the eagle.

This entire window is dedicated to the Ven. Sir. George Prevost Bart. (see Page 7).

W7. William Wailes (c. 1858)

This window depicts the resurrection, with a strong central image which manages to portray both the power and serenity of the risen Christ.

The three smaller images beneath show Jesus appearing to Mary, Jesus appearing on the shore to the Apostles who were fishing and St. Thomas touching Jesus' side.

The Latin inscription below the window reads:

“In honorem dei atque in avorum memoriam Henrici
Vizard pietas AD 1858”

which translates roughly as:

“In God's honour and in devoted memory of the
ancestors of Henry Vizard AD 1858”

Henry Vizard was a great philanthropist in nearby Dursley.



W8. James Powell & Sons, (1855)

To view this window you must peer up above the vestry. It is sometimes considered, because of its relative plainness against the other windows, to be of lesser importance.

However its colouring and intricate design mark it out as a beautiful window in its own right. It is an unusual design for a rose window (rose windows were often favoured by Pearson, the architect) and it stands out among the other windows in the church. It is thought to have been created using the stamped quarry technique, whereby the pattern of the glass is pressed out in relief by machine before being painted. Powells patented this technique, preventing its use by other stained glass manufacturers.

A survey of our windows in 2013 found this to be the only stained window in imminent danger. The Parochial Church Council considered itself lucky as this window has a 'sacrificial border' - a border of clear glass around the window which can be inexpensively broken if the window needs to be removed. Our other windows are stained to the edges, which would make their repair a more costly procedure.



W9. Clayton and Bell (by 1875)

This window depicts St. Barnabas helping the poor and needy, and St. Paul being converted on the road to Damascus. Take time to observe the facial features on this latter image in particular as they show real emotion. The staff and sword carried by the Apostles respectively are traditional symbols for them.

The window is dedicated to Charlotte Maria Jane Cooper. This is the mother of a Miss Cooper who lived at Piers Court and was instrumental in starting a dinner in 1876 for the women of the parish. Held in November, and served in the schoolroom, the feast was most impressive. Replying to a vote of thanks Miss Cooper said she had done it for the women because she felt the men always had the best of it. This was, of course, quite a controversial comment for the time!

W10. Clayton and Bell (between 1875 and 1877)

This window depicts St. Matthew, who is shown following Jesus, and St. Thomas, who is shown touching Jesus' side.

The author considers Thomas's face to be one of the finest expressions of emotion in our collection of stained glass.

The window is dedicated to Richard Harrington and Jane Williams, two departed children of Rev. Isaac Williams.



W11. Clayton and Bell (by 1875)

This window depicts St. Jacob (otherwise known as St. James, son of Zebedee) being beheaded. He is the only Apostle whose martyrdom is recorded in the New Testament, when Herod has him executed, and therefore he is generally regarded to have been the first Apostle to be martyred.

The window also depicts St. John who is writing his Gospel, assisted by an angel. The eagle, his usual symbol, is also present.

This window is dedicated to Edward Weight of Clingre, who died in 1857 aged 74, and to his wife Eleanor Clara who died aged 45 in 1841. The window was given by their son Edward Weight, vicar of Calder Vale.



W12. Clayton and Bell (between 1875 and 1877)

This window depicts St. Andrew who is – as in so many depictions - holding a Saltire, which represents both his ministry and the type of cross on which he was martyred (at his own request, because he did not feel worthy to be martyred on the same style of cross as Jesus had been).

The window also depicts St. Peter holding a key, a traditional symbol of Peter's role as the foundation of the church. He is also depicted during his liberation from prison. He was awaiting trial under Herod, when an angel came to him and told him to leave. St. Peter's chains fell off and, thinking it was a vision, he followed the angel out of the prison. The doors opened of their own accord and he was able to make his escape (Acts 12:3-19).

This window is dedicated to Elizabeth, widow of Daniel Weight of Clingre. She died in 1848 aged 87. The window was given by her daughter, Mary Elizabeth Weight, who was the widow of Washington Hallen Weight and died herself, aged 65, in 1864. Clingre was then legally a separate tithe within Stinchcombe, while now it is just a name given to a certain area within the parish.



W13. Unknown (c. 1855)

This large, clear window was installed with the rebuilding of the church in 1855.

It has never been filled with stained glass, and is unfortunately too high for us to really appreciate the excellent view which it commands.



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Page 7: Glos. Archives D2962 Correspondence of the Venerable Sir G Prevost

Page 12 Casting: GA P312 CW 3/7

Page 12 Destroyed Spire: GA D2593/2/473

Page 14: Chris Glass, used with kind permission.

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W14. Wailes (1884)

This window depicts several events from Jesus' birth. The main image shows the Magi offering their gifts to the child Jesus held in the arms of Mary, who is seated on a throne. Three of them have nimbuses around their heads, marking them out as the Magi. This arrangement is particularly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites.

The three other figures are a soldier and two young boys, without nimbuses. They are likely to represent fellow travellers with the Magi.

Smaller images depict the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary, Mary and Elizabeth (wife of Zachariah, mother of John the Baptist) during the Visitation, and Joseph showing Mary into the stable. Rather marvellously it would appear that the Inn in this depiction seems to have a pub sign with a lamb on it (with quite obvious Christ connotations), which is an interesting and unusual modern piece of religious imagery.

A further three images show the angel Gabriel (with a very youthful complexion) appearing to

the shepherds, Mary and Joseph in the stable, and the three Kings (or Wise Men) following the star.

The Latin verse at the bottom reads "Ecce virgo concipiet et pariet filium et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel", taken from Isaiah 7:14. This translates as "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, God with us."

The lettering above the west window is Greek. First a 'Christogram' (IHS), then the Chi-Rio (the first two letters of Christ's name in Greek), then the letters Alpha and Omega – the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, representing the beginning and the end.

The money left over from the tower repairs was put towards the installation of the west Window, dedicated to Ven. Sir George Prevost Bart. (see Page 7 and Section 12).

SJH, 2014. For booklet references see page 15 and for image credits see page 23. Advice on the stained glass was given by Mr. Alan Books, for which grateful thanks are extended. For the stained glass pages the author's own general knowledge has been a leading source, but others include:

R. Taylor How to Read a Church (2003)

D Verey and A Brooks 'Pevsner' The Buildings of England Gloucestershire 1: The Cotswolds (2000)

I Williams Devotional Commentary on the Gospel Narrative (v.I) (1842)

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