

The Parish Church of St Andrew, Sandford on Thames



Foreword

Our history has shaped our identity, and knowing our history helps us to recover our sense of identity. For Christians that means above all the history of the church; and for everyone some history of our country. Local history is concrete and specific. Liz

Shatford's 'new Pevsner' on Sandford and its church will enable residents to feel more at home in the village and better to 'own' their church building. This belongs to us all, and that is more than those who worship there regularly. Those who worship regularly in the church have been especially excited by this project, and hope that other visitors too will find here, in a story echoed in different ways in many thousands of villages in Britain, a small part of what is their heritage too. We are grateful to Liz, the architect who designed the Welch Room, clerk to the Council and licensed lay minister at St Andrew's.

Rev. Robert Morgan, Vicar

The Parish Church of St Andrew, Sandford on Thames

A Historical Guide by Liz Shatford

The Church

St Andrew's is a late 11th century and 13th century building, much restored and enlarged in the 19th century. It is constructed of local limestone rubble with ashlar dressings and with a plain tiled roof. The plan consists of a two bay nave with north aisle, chancel, west tower and south porch plus vestry. The original Norman rubble stonework (most probably quarried from the adjacent field) may be seen in the lower parts of the south wall and the east wall of the chancel; the eastern end of the chancel is probably a 13th century extension. The south doorway has an early Romanesque round arch with plain tympanum and an old double-boarded ribbed door. The original north doorway is incorporated in the fabric of the 19th century north aisle. It is extremely narrow and has plain jambs and a recessed tympanum with a large lintel. The North door was that traditionally used for taking coffins out of church and was made narrow to obstruct the Devil. The early Romanesque window in the south wall of the chancel has exterior shafts with cushion capitals.

History

St Andrew's Church, Sandford on Thames, owes its earliest existence to the ancient Benedictine abbey of the Virgin Mary which was founded at Abingdon in 675 by Cissa, one of the subreguli of Centwin. In 811 the Abbey was presented with rights over some lands in the district by the Mercian king Kenulf and then in 1050 Edward the Confessor granted Earl Godwin '*Four Hides in Communi Terra*' in the district. A 'hide' was a unit of land reckoned enough for a family; about 120 acres. Godwin didn't hold the four hides for long because four years later the same king granted the same '*Four Hides in Communi Terra*' to the Abingdon Abbey. The village boundaries set out in these ancient charters may still be traced in today's landscape from the descriptions given in the charters.

Besides the land, the other major possession of the Abbey in Sandford was the water mill, near the crossing point of the Thames. It was a corn mill for the use of the abbey until it passed into the hands of the Templars at the beginning of the 14th century. In 1826 a new mill was built on the site for the manufacture of paper

and when that burnt down in 1872 another new mill on the same site was built and the old malt house was converted into a public house; the King's Arms.

In the Domesday Book the village of Sandford is listed among the Abbey possessions. *Wenric holds of the Abbot Sanford...In the same vill. Robert & Roger hold 1h. of the Abbot;* the possessions included the 'four manses on common land. The Victoria County History states that *'Wenric...has been identified with some confidence as Gueres de Palances who heads the list of military tenants of the abbey in its chronicles'* and there were eighteen families listed as living in the village. Some time before the end of the C.11 a branch of the family became 'de Sandford' and the Hundred Rolls 1279 tell us that St Andrew's church was founded by Gueres de Palances on the fee of Ralph de Sandford. The church was a very small building consisting of a nave with a narrow Norman arched door on the South side and another on the North. The chancel was originally about half the length of the present one and divided from the nave by a much narrower arch than today. A wooden bell-cote was erected on the roof at the West end.

Littlemore Priory and St Andrew's

At some time during the reign of king Stephen, in the 12th century, Robert de Sandford, also a knight of the Abbot of Abingdon founded the Benedictine Priory (known as the 'Mynchery' or 'the Place of Nuns') on a piece of pasture called Cherley in Sandford together with an endowment of 6 virgates (approx 180 acres) of land. It was dedicated to Sts. Mary, Nicholas and Edmund, and Robert's daughter Christine became a nun there. After a few years it became settled that the patron saint was St Nicholas only and the name of the priory, which for some years varied between Sandford and Littlemore became fixed as Littlemore. Maud was the first Prioress at the Littlemore Priory and as rector she paid the salary of a curate for the 'little field church' built on a hill in the Sandford Manor. In those days the term 'curate' meant a clergyman who had the charge ('cure') of the souls in a parish, not today's meaning of vicar's assistant. The church stood in the open village field, because the churchyard was not enclosed until 1789, when the present day stone wall was built. In 1220 a discussion was held regarding the possibility of the '*ordination*' of a vicarage but there were insufficient funds (though there is a reference in the Hundred Rolls to the '*messuage of the chaplain of Sandford*' indicating a resident

curate in the village) and the church remained a stipendiary curacy until the early 18th century when the Victoria County History for Oxfordshire tells us it was regarded as a perpetual curacy and exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. However, by the early 19th century the Bishop was being asked to licence the curate and the parish became subject to episcopal visitations. There was not to be a parsonage house until the 20th century and the living was said to be the poorest in the Deanery if not the county. The church was dedicated to St Andrew but was sometimes referred to as St Mary, Sandford, though this may have been confusion due to the church being under the jurisdiction of the Abbey of St Mary at Abingdon. In those days the curacy was in the royal patronage so the king had the right of presentation and in 1204 King John presented an unnamed curate. 12 years later William Fitz-Herbert, clerk of Thomas de Sandford, was presented by letters patent to St Andrew's, which was then vacant. In 1220 the right of presentation passed to the Littlemore Priory.

Sandford Manor and the Knights Templars

Robert de Sandford's descendent, Thomas de Sandford, was a Knight Templar and Chamberlain to King John. The Templars had been founded in 1119 as one of the spiritual Orders of Chivalry, dedicated to prayer and poverty. By 1200 they had become a league of rich and powerful warriors with 'Temple Courts' or Preceptorys all across Southern Christendom. About 1240, the Manor of Sandford was handed over by Thomas de Sandford to his fellow-Templars who established their headquarters, the Preceptory of the Templars of Oxfordshire, Hampshire and Berkshire there. They thereby became patrons of Littlemore Priory and took over right of presentation of the curacy.

'The good Queen Maud, wife to King Stephen, gave the manor of Temple Covele or Cowley in this county to the Knights Templars. who made it a house of their Order, and placed a preceptor there, who was afterwards removed to Saunford; which manor these knights got possessed of by the bounty of Sir Thomas de Saunford knt... and soon after fixed here, as upon their dissolution did the Knights Hospitallers, this being the chief residence of a preceptor & brethren that had under their management most of the estates in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire &c. belonging to that Order.' (Tanner, Notitia Monastica, ed. Nasmyth, Cambridge, 1787)

The cartulary of the Templars, probably made as a result of this move, makes many references to the village and gives some of the villagers' names. Some of the early references are to land holdings in the present day field and recreation area around the church known until fairly recent times as Church Close. Faint traces of these early holdings can be seen on an aerial photograph taken in ca.1930 and were confirmed on an archaeological earthworks survey carried out in 1980.

The power of the Templars grew so great towards the end of the 13th century that Philip IV of France carried out a general arrest of the Order in 1307 and within a few years succeeded in disbanding it. Their goods were seized, hundreds executed, the Grand Master burnt at the stake. The order was suppressed and William Sautre, preceptor of Sandford was seized and brought to trial.

A few years later the Manor and Littlemore Priory, comprising about 250 acres in all, were transferred to the ancient and respectable Order of the Knights Hospitallers. For 200 years the Hospitallers occupied the Manor peacefully until in 1520 they were evicted following their refusal to accept the Royal Act of Supremacy.

Five years later, in 1525 Littlemore Priory was dissolved by Papal Bull. It was worth at that time £12 in spiritualities (the church of Sandford) and £21 6s 6d in temporalities (from houses in Oxford.) Together with the Manor at Sandford, the priory was given to Cardinal Wolsey for his new college at Oxford (now Christ Church). However Wolsey died in 1530 and on his death the Preceptory and Priory lands were conveyed back to the King.

Abingdon Abbey was dissolved in 1538 and the last Abbot resigned in 1539.

The Powells

The Preceptory and the manorial lands around it were bought in 1542 by Edmund Powell, a Welsh Catholic who converted the old stone building to a small up to date Tudor Manor House. The Powells were to become the chief family in Sandford from the 16th till the mid-18th century.

Seven years later when Edmund Powell acquired the Mynchery at Littlemore the Powell fortunes were established. By the mid-century the family was lords of the Manor of Sandford, the most considerable landowners in the district and also patrons of St Andrew's Church, for the charge of which they paid a stipendiary curate although as Catholics they did not present the curate. Since they were a Catholic

family, they continued to use the old chapel of the Knights Hospitallers as their private chapel and it was here that the remains of George Napier the martyr were buried after he had been hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor on November 9th, 1610.

Thomas Hearne gives us the only clue to the appearance of the Powell Manor in the 16th century, though there must have been additions and alterations by the time he paid his visit there. The drawing his engraver produced for him in 1722 depicts a small, romantically irregular house under haphazard gables and clusters of tall chimneys. The entrance porch is advanced from the main block and faces a typical walled forecourt; the North and South wings form the characteristic E-plan of many Tudor buildings. The South wing seems to have been devoted to the storage of farm implements, and hens and geese are shown in the yard beside it. The North wing is partly hidden by foliage but the capitals of three pilasters appear to consist of carved heads. Hearne remarked, *'These are the Heads of Veil'd Nuns... one of wch. some take to be done for the Virgin Mary, tho' she be veil'd and there is the Head of a Man also.'*

The Powells held the Manor continuously from 1696 till 1760 when it passed to a family called Walter and then to the Duke of Marlborough. In 1902 the property, known successively as Manor Farm and Temple Farm, was bought by Magdalen College and the manorial rights lapsed. The College restored and improved the building with a careful use of the old materials and the retention, where possible of the original walls and beams.

In St Andrew's Church two black marble tablets in the chancel floor and the black and white marble wall-tablet in the tower commemorate the Powell family. The latter was put up in 1661 to the memory of Sir William Powell of Tutbury, Staffs, who had died in 1656. A cornice of white marble above the black tablet, which is inscribed in Latin, bears a winged cherub and the Powell Arms. It is supported by two columns of black marble resting on brackets carved with cherubs each side of a winged skull. Traces of colour and gilding still remain here and there on the moulding and the coat of arms. The two floor-tablets commemorate Sir John Powell, who died in 1678, and Anna Betham widow of Sir Richard Powell, who died in 1692, aged 86.



Powell memorial

The Reformation and Civil War

Following the royal visitation of 1547/8 there was an energetic despoiling of parish churches all over the country. Walls were whitewashed, windows broken; vestments, Mass books and anything connected with the old Catholic religion were thrown out and destroyed. Many items were sold. Anything which smacked remotely of idolatry- reliquaries, altars, images – was destroyed. It was at this date, or soon after, that St Andrews lost its church cross possibly to be used elsewhere as building material and also its mediaeval altar, stone altars being a particular abomination. 100 Years later, during the Commonwealth period, Oliver Cromwell's puritan soldiers carried out another spectacular phase of destruction. John Aubrey the 17th century antiquary tells us that '*The doors are gone and the paving...the font has gone to make a trough*' What is remarkable is that the St Andrew's mediaeval stone font survived this period of destruction.

The Font

It is something of a mystery how the 13th century font at Sandford should have survived this period. For fonts were useful articles. Broken from their bases and thrown into a corner of the churchyard, they lay there for the taking by any villager who needed a drinking trough for his cattle or a mixing-bowl for his hens. J H Parker in his 'Guide to the Architectural Antiquities in the Neighbourhood of Oxford' described the old font; *a large plain stone font probably of the 13th century or earlier: it is lined with lead, and the drain is still used.* This font was presumably still in the church during the 1840's as it is mentioned in further editions of the same work; but at some time since then it was thrown out; presumably during the second phase of restoration. What happened to it after this no one knows for certain; but, opposite the magnificent West doorway of Iffley church stands a plain 13th century octagonal stone font-bowl, whose history is obscure; and in the middle of the new cemetery at Radley, there is a weatherworn octagonal stone font-base, corresponding in both measurements and antiquity to the Iffley bowl. This is, according to a correspondent in 'Notes and Queries' the base of the old Sandford font. It lay, he adds, *for many years in the grass by the roadside at Radley Great Wood on the other side of the Thames, used perhaps as a mounting-block for horsemen and was removed to its present position in 1935.*

The Porch

The main interest of the porch is the date of its erection, for very few such embellishments were put up during the Commonwealth. This may have replaced the ruin of an old Norman porch damaged beyond repair in the Civil War, when Charles 1 is said to have crossed the ford by the mill with his army and Cromwell to have stabled horses in the church. During the restorations of 1840 "*a well-wrought Norman capital*" was dug up near the South doorway. It is a small unassuming stone porch under a pitched roof with no decorative features at all except a square stone tablet above the door bearing the inscription:-

‘CONDIDIT ME DNIA ELIZA: ISHAM

ANNO GRATIAE 1652

PORTICUS PATRONAE

Thankes to thy charitie, religiose Dame,

Wch found mee old & made mee newe againe.’

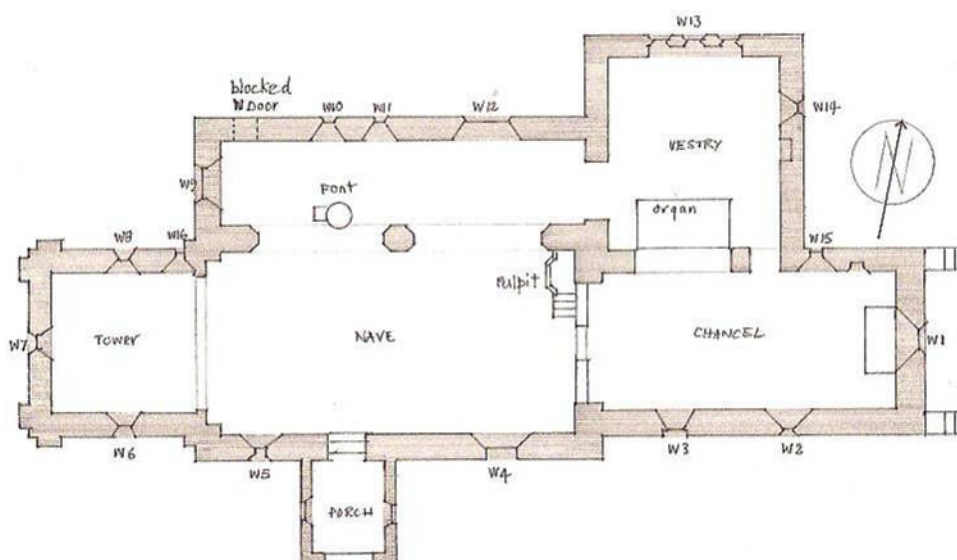
The inscription was composed by the Rev. Forebench. Rev. Charles Forebench became Minister of St Andrew’s in 1646. He was also Vicar of Iffley and a pugnacious Royalist. He suffered severely during the Commonwealth for his opinions and seems also to have scandalized his Sandford parishioners by his behaviour. *‘He would drink more than became him, and often say, Before God, in his common Discourse.’* He was accused of neglecting his cure, failing to observe the fasts instituted by the Puritans, and of openly defending the memory of the Earl of Strafford. He was desperately poor and burdened with a wife, five year old twins and a three year old baby. John Walker tells us in his ‘Account of the...Sufferings of the Clergy etc. (1714) that:-

‘He serv’d the small Cures of Sandford and Iffley near Oxon; each of which were worth him about 8 £ a Year: Which being too little for the Support of his Family, he was forced himself sometimes to cleave Wood for a Livelihood, and his Wife worked Button-Holes for 2d. a Dozen. with a poor Taylor, In whose Cottage they lived at Sandford; and who is yet, or was lately, living, and gave this Account of him. Whilst he was Resident upon these Cures, as I take it, he was seiz’d, and Imprisoned at Woodstock, for Reading Common-Prayer; as is remembered by what he pleasantly

said, when set at liberty. *viz.:* 'If I must not read it, I am resolved I will say it by Heart, in spite of all the Rogues in England.'

In 1994 the original stone tablet was removed and buried in the churchyard because it was in poor condition and a replica was carved and erected in its place. Inside the porch is a 17th century wooden poor-box and on each side of the Norman doorway is a stone seat, grooved with small hollows. These are said to have been carved for the children who sheltered in the porch on rainy days or had to wait outside for their parents. They were used for a 17th century game called Cherry-pit, or Cherry-stone, a kind of primitive tiddley-winks.

Elizabeth Isham was widowed in 1626. She was descended from Sir William Dunch of Little Wittenham who had died in 1611 after achieving a marriage with Oliver Cromwell's aunt, Mary, and nine children. The Dunches are buried in Little Wittenham Church. The alabaster effigies of Sir William and his wife recline there, their nine children in miniature below them. The eldest of these was Elizabeth's father, Edmund Dunch, afterwards Governor of Wallingford Castle. Elizabeth Isham is known to have lived in Sandford although the nature of her connection is not known but she bequeathed five pounds per annum for various benevolences and twenty shillings in addition for the relief of four widows of Brightwell in Berkshire, who would come to Sandford for its distribution. There is a note in the Sandford Parish Register of 1657 that Elizabeth Isham was 'buried at Wittnam August 7th 1657'





Porch

Parish Registers

In 1538 Thomas Cromwell made it mandatory to register all baptisms, marriages and burials and in 1598 it was decreed that all entries were to be written into parchment registers and copies (Bishops transcripts) to be deposited with the Diocesan Registrar. The first Sandford parish registers date from 1572 and give fascinating glimpses of village life at the time. For instance a memorandum from one of the early registers reads;

'Memorandum taken from a paper which was an old copy in ye hand of Thomas Bernard October 6 1684 by R D curat That the parts of the Pound of Sandford were set out upon Sunday the 3rd of April 1625 with the consent of Mr Edmund Powel, Mr Hugh Parsons, Mr Richard Parsons, Mr Edwards, John Bernerd and the rest of ye cottagers.

Imprimis Mr Edmund Powell is to mend so much as belongeth to 4 yard land which heretofore was parcel of ye Farm his part being the gate & 2 gate posts.

Item Mr. Hugh Parsons for his 6 yard lands is to mend ye Stone wall adjoyning to his own grounds.

Item Mr. Richard Parsons is to keep in reparacion ye Stone wall which goes by ye Street & part of ye railes thereto adjoyning.

Item Mr. Edwards for 3 yard lands is to keep in reparacion two posts & the rails belonging to them.

Item John Bernard & ye cottagers for 3 qtrs with ye Minchery for three yard lands are to find & maintain one post & ye rails there belonging.

This is as taken out of a paper which Thomas Kennington alias Bernard shewd Me & I gave to Mr. Edmund Powell Junior.

Richard Davies'

Communion Table

When the stone altar was removed during the reformation period, a new wooden communion table had to be provided. It was said that one had been contrived from the refectory table of the Minchery. In the 17th century there was a short time of relative prosperity when the chancel was paneled and a new table and furnishings supplied. The old table was then removed to the Manor House. There is a memorandum in the parish register of 1680 that '*Richard Davies, Clerk Curate at Sandford near Oxford did give unto the said Parish a Communion Table with a Satten Carpet embroydered with Thisles in Gold, Crimson etc. at the same time put up the Wanescot over the said Table and erected the Wainscot Seat in the Chancell.*'

In its turn another replaced this table in 1709 and then in around 1840 the wooden table became replaced by an 'Anglo Norman' stone altar with five consecration crosses on the top and a central device on the front panel of three nails encircled by a crown of thorns. At that date and until 1964 a stone altar was theoretically an illegal item of church furniture because while the wooden communion table symbolized a commemorative feast, the stone altar carried the Roman Catholic overtones of the sacrifice of the Mass.

The stone altar appeared in the church at the time of the first major alterations since the addition of the 'Isham' porch and at the same time as a similar one was installed in the new neighboring church of St Nicholas at Littlemore. It was at the time of the Tractarian revival in the Church of England, which was spearheaded by John Henry Newman who had been vicar of St Mary's, Oxford since 1829 and who designed and built the Littlemore parish church. Two of Newman's friends and admirers were Frederick William Faber and John Rouse Bloxham. Bloxham was a scholar of ecclesiology, a ceremonialist and an antiquarian and as curate at Littlemore was given a free hand by Newman to furnish and fit his new church. F. W. Faber had been ordained Deacon in 1837 and in May 1839 was ordained priest and spent the following two months as officiating minister at St Andrew's, Sandford. The Vicar of Sandford at that time was the Rev. Edward Latimer who had been vicar since 1831 but was also Rector of Waddesdon in Bucks and so appointed a succession of officiating ministers to Sandford. During his short time in

Sandford, Faber baptized a child (Frederick Heath) on July 14th and donated some altar furnishings (*Memorandum 1839, that the Revd. F W Faber of University College Oxon, Officiating Minister of this parish gave unto the said parish bible, 2 communion books and a red velvet table cover and clothe to side table of Communion with book cushions and 2 gilt candle sticks and floor cloth.)*

Lewis Carroll

Another well known visitor to St Andrew's was the Rev. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) who preached on several occasions by invitation of his friend Rev. W.H. Ranken. His first visit on Whit Sunday 1862 is commemorated each Whit Sunday by the 'Alice Sermon' on the theology of his two most famous works. On another occasion he rowed out to Nuneham Park with friends but was unfortunately caught in a heavy shower of rain and had to be dried off in the schoolteacher's house adjacent to the church where Ranken lodged. It is said that this provided the inspiration for the 'pool of tears' episode in Alice in Wonderland which was first published in 1865.

Churchyard

The date on the earliest known tombstone in the graveyard is 1684; there are none earlier because until then it had been the custom to bury the dead six deep and not mark the graves. By that time the population of the village was barely double that at the time of Domesday. The churchyard was not enclosed until 1789-90 when '*fencing was ordered to be done*' and the stone wall was built. Memorandum in parish register: '*the yew tree in Sandford churchyard was planted on Good Friday in the year of our Lord God 1800 by John Roberts, Clerk.*' The lay office of parish clerk was a very old one. John Roberts had been clerk since 1782 and his duties would have included helping the minister during services and in the general care of the church. The yew tree was possibly planted at that spot in the South churchyard to mark the position of the old churchyard cross, the stump of which still stands on its worn stone crudely carved base at the foot of the tree. J Buckler has drawn a view of the church in 1821 showing the original church building with no tower, just a belfry, and with the chancel taller than the nave. The drawing also shows the stump of the churchyard cross, the very young yew tree and the new stone wall.

The first stage of modern restoration.

By the end of the 18th century many parish churches had been neglected to the verge of ruin, Sandford among them and so in 1814 St Andrew's was inspected and surveyed for repairs by Henry Hunt of Great Rollright. Ten years later it was described as '*in very bad state.*' The chancel arch was on the point of collapsing, the North wall was crumbling, the old mosaic pattern of bricks on the chancel floor was in confusion and the bell-tower riddled with dry rot. It had always been a poor living managed by non-resident curates and with no parsonage house. In 1526 the curate's salary was £2 per annum, and a century later Charles Forebench was being paid barely twice as much. By 1760 it had risen to £6 13s 4d, by 1810 to £11, by 1825 to £50. Throughout most of its history it had been the poorest living in the county. In 1722 Thomas Hearne commented that St Andrews Church was '*A small thing and of mean building*' The chancel had been panelled in 1680, when there was a brand new Communion Table '*wth. a Satten Carpet Embroydered with Thisles in Gold, crimson, &c.*' The plate, recorded in 1552 as a chalice, a pyx, a censer and two brass candlesticks, had disappeared by 1705 and been replaced by a chalice, paten, salver and '*a silver Flaggon weighing 26 ozs*'; there had also been a '*fine Diaper Communion Table Cloth with a white fringe.*' Only the paten remained in 1814, when the church must have presented an air of melancholy decay. The Chancel arch was in a very poor state and had to be strengthened. This was done in 1827 and then in 1840 the present tower was built in the Anglo Norman style by the Architect John Macduff Derick. He was an Irishman then living in St John Street, Oxford, and one of the original members of the Oxford Architectural Society. Derick designed an imitation Norman tower, His blunt, two-storied tower in late Romanesque style makes no unnecessary gestures; its base is almost square, its height little more than twice its width, so that it only just tops the nave, and makes an unobtrusive harmony with the remainder of the building. The four bells were re-hanged; the earliest bell cast in 1592 and inscribed "Prayse the Lord", the next "This bell was made 1606". The date carved on the hanger of the 3rd bell is 1692 and the small minute bell is not dated.

Inside, there were further restorations. The chancel had to be entirely rebuilt and the floor repaired. The roof of the nave was raised higher than that of the chancel; and there was the new altar. Memorandum from register:- '*the first stone*

of New Tower was laid the 30th Day of January 1840 and was opened for publick service on Sunday the 28th of June following after being closed 9 weeks the tower and gallery and sittings under. And Pulpit Arch between Nave and Chancel being all newly erected and Pews repaired with 2 new windows.'

The second stage of modern restoration

In early 1864 it was brought to the attention of the Incumbent and ratepayers that:-

1. Several cracks were appearing in chancel and tower arches of the church
2. The chancel arch was in decline
3. The north wall of the nave was yielding to thrust from nave roof.

The condition of the fabric was discussed – some ratepayers suggested '*to do nothing but build buttresses to support the north wall.*' There were suggestions that the architect had exaggerated the serious state of the building decay while others agreed with the architect that the church needed thorough repair. The incumbent, W.H.Ranken suggested that as the church provided accommodation for only one third of the present population of the village, now, if ever, was the time for enlargement and so the necessity for some of the repairs would thereby be obviated. A north aisle would both serve the purpose of buttressing and provide the desired increase of accommodation. The estimated cost of a new nave roof, north aisle with vestry, reconstructed chancel arch and renovated interior was £542. Rev. Ranken offered to be responsible for the whole of this sum with the exception of £50 for which the parish should be responsible. Work commenced in July 1864. There were changes and additions, including a pipe organ (1885-86 payment for boy to blow organ 5/-), and the final cost was £730. The stone used was dug out of a field farmed by a Mr. John Allen and the church was reopened on Feb.24th 1865

The mid Victorian Gothic font which stands in the church today was added to St Andrew's during this second period of restoration. This font was designed by James Brooks, a keen High Churchman who later became architect to the Canterbury Diocese. He drastically altered the body of the Sandford church but was faithful to his intention of rebuilding '*in character 13th century.*' The Powell monument was moved from the South wall of the chancel back to its original position on the South wall of the tower, two altar tombs which had stood beneath it, one decorated '*with*

debased Arabesque work on the front', were removed altogether, the North wall was pulled down and the present North aisle built, opening into the Nave through an arcade of three arches. The wooden gallery at the West end where 18th century villagers would have sung psalms to a couple of flutes and a bass-viol was removed as were nearly all the remaining 17th century poppy-head benches which were replaced with pews. Encaustic tiles, arranged 'lozenge-wise' embellished the chancel floor; and above all this the church was graced with a new roof, also 'in character 13th century.'

The Vestry

The vestry was built in 1893 in memory of J. O. Westwood MA, Hopeian Professor of Zoology as a gift from Dr V W Whitmarsh, the wife of the vicar, Rev. E. D. Whitmarsh (1877-1901). The architect was H C W Drinkwater (also architect of St Philip and St James vicarage.) The Rev. Whitmarsh built 'Elmslea' in Church Road where he lived in lieu of a vicarage, and his portrait hangs in the vestry.

The School

In 1830 the church Sunday school received a grant of £30 from the National Society and was thereafter constituted as a day school. At that time there were 55 children and by 1893 the attendance roll had reached 109 pupils. The school building was founded in 1860 and served many generations of children until 1966 when it closed. The buildings were sold in 1972.

The Reading Room

The Rev. W E Sherwood (1901-1910) was made mayor of Oxford 1913-1914 and donated a reading room to the parish. By 1979 it had served the parish well and was in a state of some decrepitude so plans were made for a new village hall. It was built on the north eastern corner of Church Close near to the site of the medieval fish pond. The hall was opened in September 1981.

The Welch Room

The Parish Room, dedicated to the memory of Frank Welch, was built in 1996 by members of the congregation. Dennis Harris led the team and was assisted by the late Joe Smith, the late James Gladwell and others.

Windows

There are 16 windows in the church excluding those of the porch and they are of differing periods and design. Starting at the East window in the chancel and moving round clockwise they are:-

1. 13th century pointed-trefoil lancet. Stained glass crucifixion 1856 by Willement.
2. 13th century pointed-trefoil lancet. Stained glass.
3. 11th century Romanesque window with roll label and exterior shafts with cushion capitals.
4. 1877 2-light with plate tracery. Gift of Miss Hussey, in memory of her father, Professor Hussey and her uncle, William Ley.
5. 1877 trefoil-headed lancet. Gift of Miss Hussey, in memory of her father, Professor Hussey and her uncle, William Ley.
6. 19th century. The west window in the tower was placed there (by his children) in memory of (Sir) William Palmer, 1803-1885, Fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, who was sometime curate at Sandford, distinguished theologian and ecclesiastical antiquary, with close connections with the Tractarians of the Oxford Movement.
7. 1840 narrow round-headed lights. Stained glass window
8. 1840 narrow round-headed lights.
9. 15th century square headed perpendicular style window of 2 traceried lights which early 19th century views show east of the south porch. (J Buckler 1821)
10. 1865 small trefoil-headed lancet
11. 1865 small trefoil-headed lancet
12. 1865 small 3 light trefoil-headed lancets
13. 1893 narrow 3 light pointed lancet lights
14. 1893 small trefoil-headed lancet
15. 19th century narrow round-headed lancet
16. High level, very long narrow rectangular light probably from when there was a gallery in tower (removed during 1865 work)



Norman window

Some clergy of Sandford on Thames

(Un-named) clerk presented by King John	1204
William Fitz-Herbert, clerk of Thomas de Sandford	1216
'William' (presented by John, Prior of Preceptory	1335
The Rev. Charles Forebench (Minister)	1646
The Rev. Richard Davies (Curate)	1680
The Rev. H Pearson (Curate)	1813
The Rev. John Johnson (Curate)	1828 – 1830
The Rev. W E F Latimer (Vicar)	1831 – 1862
The Rev. W. Palmer (Curate)	1831
The Rev. Frederick Vane (Officiating Minister)	1836
The Rev. J Barrow (Curate)	1837
The Rev. F J Faber (Officiating Minister)	1839
The Rev. F R Barker (Officiating Minister)	1844 – 1850
The Rev. John Slatter (Officiating Minister)	1852 – 1861
The Rev. W H Ranken (Curate)	1862 – 1867
The Rev. C E Ranken (Vicar in 1870)	1867 – 1870
The Rev. L J Lee (Vicar)	1871 – 1875
The Rev. H A Harvey (Vicar)	1875 – 1876
The Rev. J S Treacher (Vicar)	1876 – 1877
The Rev. E D Whitmarsh MA DCL (Vicar)	1877 – 1901
The Rev. W E Sherwood MA (Vicar,)	1901 – 1910
The Rev. W I D S Read MA (Vicar)	1910 – 1920
The Rev. P G Latham MA (Vicar)	1920 – 1959
The Rev. M A Malik (Vicar)	1961 – 1963
The Rev. D J Fehrenbach MA (Vicar)	1965 – 1984
The Rev. PH Rogers MA (Priest in Charge)	1985 – 1987
The Rev. P Mayhew MA (Priest in Charge)	1987
The Rev. R C Morgan MA (Priest in Charge)	1987 - date