

Oxfordshire

BURFORD PARISH CHURCH

Building Analysis by Nicholas Cooper

Burford church has a complex history. Its general appearance as a building of the 15th century disguises work of many different periods. Periods of activity in the building, enlargement, alteration or repair of the church have alternated with periods of inactivity, and all can be seen as reflections of the changing economic fortunes of the town and of changing pieties and devotional attitudes on the part of the townspeople.

The development of the church and the major works done are described in detail in the sections listed below.

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| 1 | 11th/12th century: | stair turret |
| 2 | 12th century: | tower, chancel, nave, font. |
| 3 | 13th century (1): | chancel extended; transepts, south nave aisle, north chancel aisle |
| 4 | 13th century (2): | guild chapel |
| 5 | 14th century: | St Thomas's chapel; south transept chapel; font |
| 6 | 15th century (1): | tower, windows; nave and arcades; porch; north and south chancel aisles |
| 7 | 15th century (2): | guild chapel extended into the nave |
| 8 | After the Reformation: the 16th and 17th centuries | |
| 9 | 18th century to 1827 | |
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1 Eleventh/Twelfth Century: Stair Turret

There must have been a Saxon church at Burford, though nothing is known about its age or form. The existing central tower has a stair turret that in its lower level is structurally separate from it and probably pre-dates it. It retains an original doorway opening west at ground level, and a second door opening outward to the north some 3½ metres above ground level. This door is unlikely to have led into a rood loft (there is a later, blocked, rood loft door at a higher level), and is more likely to have given entrance to the upper level of a lost, perhaps timber structure standing on its north side.

A mutilated string course of an unusual form - different in character from those on the tower - runs round it on four sides.

High up on the south face of this turret is a crudely carved panel with figures, apparently of three people and an animal, possibly earlier in date and reset. It is not known what is represented, nor the date.

2 The Norman Church: Tower, Chancel, Nave, Font

The earliest church for which there is clear evidence was probably built in the mid 12th century, and had a central tower, a nave, a chancel of unknown length, and no transepts or aisles. Its date is unknown, but the rectory of Burford was given to Keynsham abbey in Somerset probably soon after the abbey's foundation in 1167, and the church may have been rebuilt very shortly thereafter. The tower and the west door are the only surviving elements of the Norman church.

2.1 The Tower

The 12th-century tower – which was raised by one stage in the 15th century and had a spire added above it – rises through four stages. The lowest stage has Romanesque arches east and west, to nave and choir, while the heads of former windows remain visible beneath the tower in the north and south walls, above arches that were cut through at a later date when transepts were added. Above this is a gallery stage, with a wall passage (now blocked)¹ round the inside of the tower on all four sides. Above the gallery stage, and also open to the inside of the tower, is a lantern stage with windows, some blocked, on all four faces. Over this again is a floored stage; it is uncertain whether this uppermost, 12th-century stage was originally floored, but it is likely.² This is now used as a ringing chamber; bells are hung in the 14th-century stage above. The originally free-standing stair tower is incorporated into the fabric of the tower above its lowest stage.

The capitals to the wall passages of the tower are for the most part plain, but those to the eastern passage are carved. Recognisable ornament includes a green man, and a pair of

lions. Window openings have a variety of ornament on both inner and outer faces, for the most part zig-zag but also including enriched roll mouldings.

2.2 *Chancel*

The line of a moulded, external string course can be traced for a short distance east of the tower along the north wall of the chancel. It has been suggested³ that the chancel may have had an apsidal end, but although such a feature is known in Norman parish churches, there is no clear evidence for this. However, it is possible that there was originally a chamber above the chancel. A blocked doorway above the chancel arch leads east out of a former wall passage in the tower (see below), and in the eastern wall of the lantern stage above this passage the central window is lower than those that flank it on either side, and may originally have lit a space beneath the apex of the chancel roof.

2.3 *Roof lines*

The levels of the original Norman nave and chancel are indicated by the original scars which remain visible against the east and west faces of the tower; on the west side, the lower of two former roof lines. Unexplained is the scar of a pitched roof visible inside the building against the south face of the stair turret and central tower, and evidently preceding the building of the south aisle in the 13th century.

2.4 *Font*

The font is probably Norman in origin, though recut with figures in the 14th century.

3 Thirteenth century (1): Chancel Extended; Transepts, South Nave Aisle, North Chancel Aisle

The church was considerably enlarged between around 1200 and 1240. This enlargement involved building north and south transepts, extending the chancel and adding a north aisle to it, and building a south aisle to the nave. North and south

transepts are evidently very close in date. The new crossing arches that were cut into the north and south walls, beneath the tower, were filled later, but enough remains visible of the capitals to the imposts to show that details and therefore dates were similar.

3.1 Chancel extended

Early in the 13th century the chancel was extended to the east. Blocked lancets remain in the north wall, and in the south wall are a restored piscina and sedilia of that period.

3.2 South transept; south nave aisle

On the south side of the church, the south transept probably remains through its full length, though all external openings have been altered and the roof raised and replaced in the 15th century. There is an arched opening on its west side which probably communicated with a nave aisle; this has a pair of colonnettes to the northern impost, with heavy stiff-leaf foliage characteristic of c.1200. The original height of the lean-to roof of this aisle is shown by a line of creasing on the south face of the tower, beneath the level of the present aisle roof.

The aisle was destroyed by the building of St Thomas's chapel in the 14th century and its original length and width are not known.

3.3 North transept; north chancel aisle

The north transept was probably the same length as the south, but was curtailed in the 15th century: part of a blocked lancet is visible in the west wall, cut by the line of the present north gable. A north aisle to the chancel was probably added at the same time or only a little later, with an arch (since enlarged) through the west wall of the chancel, and another arch (now partly blocked) cut through the north wall of the chancel. To the east of this blocked arch, the blocked lancets remain by which the chancel was lit before the north aisle was extended to the east in the 15th century. This aisle has also been widened to the north: the present north and east walls overlap the west end of the 15th-century chapel to its east. It is entered from the north transept by a 15th-century arch

that spans its full width, but the remains of the springing of an earlier arch are visible in the wall behind the southern impost of the later arch.

4 Thirteenth Century (2): the Guild Chapel

At some time in the mid 13th century a separate chapel was built in the churchyard by the Burford merchant guild, and it remained a self-contained, free-standing building until the late 15th century.⁴ It has been curtailed at the west end and lengthened into the body of the church at the east, and its original dimensions are not known. It was entered at the south by a (blocked) door which remains, with blind trefoils in the spandrels and with a niche over, which contained a crucifixion. Opposite this door, on the north side, is a (blocked) round-headed door with plain chamfer, possibly (but not certainly) earlier in date. Lancet windows remain in the north wall, the easternmost converted into a (blocked) squint in the late 15th century and the western cut when the chapel was shortened in length.

5 Fourteenth Century: St Thomas's Chapel; South Transept Chapel; Font

5.1 St Thomas's chapel

Later in the 13th century or early in the 14th, the present St Thomas's chapel was built to the west of the south transept, to include the space of the former south aisle. The chapel is raised over a vault which was probably built (and later served) as a charnel house. There is a piscina of that date in the south wall. The 15th-century tracery of the south window has been inserted into an earlier opening, indicated internally by the nook shafts of the jambs. Also in the south wall are two arched tomb recesses of the same date; it is not known who may have been buried here,⁵ and the dedication of the chapel to St Thomas of Canterbury is not recorded before the 15th century. At a later date it was referred to as the Burgesses' Aisle from its use by the Corporation, and openings were cut through the east wall to form a squint.

In the course of restoration in the 19th century an arcade of two arches was built dividing the chapel from the aisle to its north. G.E. Street, the architect responsible, claimed to have based these on evidence of former arches in this position. The roof

was also replaced and slightly raised: the original level can be seen externally in weather courses against the south face of the nave.

5.2 South transept chapel

Probably also in the 14th century a broad, arched altar recess with a cusped head was formed in the east wall of the south transept, with canopy work (now mutilated) at the centre, and a piscina at its southern end; it retains remains of a broad band of painted foliage. There are canopied niches at the south-east angle.

5.3 Font

The font, which may have originated as a characteristic round tub-font of the 12th century, was recut probably in the 14th century, with figures of the Crucifixion between St Mary and St John, and figures of SS Lawrence, Margaret, John the Baptist, Catherine, Andrew, and Hugh of Lincoln on other faces in panels beneath traceried heads.

6 Fifteenth Century (1): Tower, Windows; Nave and arcades; Porch; North and South Chancel Aisles

With the revival of economic activity in the late 14th century following the Black Death, and with the growing prosperity of the Cotswold wool trade, in a series of separate operations the church was enlarged and substantially rebuilt. As a result, the outside appearance of the church is now largely of the 15th century, although very irregular by reason of successive enlargements and alterations. In some cases the patrons of this work are known from inscriptions or wills, though not all the works for which money was given can now be identified. They are a significant indication of the wealth of the leading townsmen at the time and of their civic and devotional attitudes.

Works specifically referred to include the rood and a new gable window in an unspecified location (brass to John and Alys Spicer, 1437, now beneath the crossing), the upper stage of the tower and the spire (bequest by John Cakebread, 1396), the south transept window (framed by an inscription, undated, giving the name of its donor as

John Leggare), and perhaps the porch (with the arms of the Nevilles, lords of the manor). A merchant's mark in old glass reset in the east window, perhaps of one of the Wisdom family,⁶ was no doubt that of the glass's original donor, while the arms of Pinnock with the date 1485 were in a window of the south chancel aisle (described in John Pinnock's will as newly built) in 1574. A further bequest, to 'the altar of Thomas Spicer,' similarly suggests a strong personal identification with the parish church.⁷ Other bequests included sums for the repair of windows, bells, books and vestments, for a chalice, and in almost all cases for masses for the soul of the deceased. The John Spicer brass is the only one to survive, but indents show that there were formerly very many more memorial brasses, probably of leading townsmen in the later Middle Ages.

It may also be significant of an increasing identification of townsmen with the parish church that the chapel of the merchant guild, built in the 13th century, was extended in the 15th to connect with the church and rededicated to SS Mary and Anne, perhaps also indicating a growing identification of the civic life of the town with the church.

Fifteenth- and 16th-century wills also name a number of side chapels in the church to which townsmen bequeathed money: Holy Cross, Holy Trinity, All Souls, St Clement, St John, St Katherine, SS Mary and Anne, St Roch, St Stephen, and St Thomas, besides the high altar.⁸ Eight altar locations can still be identified, though few of their dedications are known. Several of these locations retain damaged brackets and canopy work for votive figures.

It may be indicative either of changing attitudes or of changes in the economic condition of the town, that in the earlier years of this period of improvement the works done seem to have been relatively minor, and that the larger works, perhaps calling for more collective involvement by the community, were only undertaken from the middle of the 15th century. However, so much is (necessarily) dependent on individual benefactors and private motives that generalisations are probably unwise.

6.1 Two windows; the re-roofing of the nave

Two new windows were inserted at the end of the 14th century or early in the 15th. The surround of the south transept window, referred to already, bears the inscription:

Orase [sic] pro animabus Patris et Matris Johannis Leggare de Borford per quem ista fenestra decoratur [‘pray for the souls of the father and mother of John Leggare of Burford by whom this window is ornamented’]

No date is given. A John Leggare was a feoffee of church lands in 1487, but the details of the window suggest an earlier date, and either an earlier John Leggare is referred to, or else he installed glass into an earlier opening. The roof and upper walls of the transept were altered later in the century, leaving the window intact.

At the west end, the existing west window pre-dates the remodelling of the nave and the addition of aisles. The outline is visible, inside the church and outside, of an earlier gable, pre-dating the addition of the present clerestory. This gable seems to correspond to the upper of the scars of two roof-lines against the west face of the tower, and it therefore seems likely that the nave was re-roofed and the upper part of the west gable rebuilt in one operation. It is possible that this west window is that referred to in John Spicer’s memorial brass of 1437, although this cannot be proved and it may be earlier in date.

6.2 Tower and spire; reinforcement of lower openings

John Cakebread, who died in 1396, bequeathed 10s. ‘ad campanili nostro emendando,’ for the repair or improvement of the tower,⁹ and its heightening and the building of the spire may be of the early 15th century. This uppermost stage is lit on each face by a two-light window with an ogee canopy and with a narrow, canopied niche for a figure on the face of each central mullion. The octagonal spire rises above the inner walls of the tower, leaving space for a parapet walk all round it. Inside, the diagonal faces of the spire are carried on squinches, each springing from a corbel with a grotesque mask similar in general character to those that carry the roof of the north aisle.

The increased weight of the new work evidently caused structural problems at lower levels. There has been substantial settlement to the nave and chancel crossing arches, while the transept arches were largely filled in and replaced with much smaller openings in the course of the 15th century. The earlier arched opening between the chancel and its north aisle was also partly filled, and a new opening made towards the east. Buttressing was introduced into the east and west walls of the north transept, and into

the north arcade of the nave arcade (all described below). Some openings in the lantern stage of the tower and in the wall passage may have been blocked at this period.

6.3 *Nave (mid 15th-century); St.Peter's chapel; pulpit; rood.*

The principal operation of the 15th century was the addition of arcades, aisles and a clerestory to the nave – additions clearly indicated at the west end where the aisles and the masonry of the clerestory butt against the earlier stonework of the west gable. A date of around 1450 is suggested by window forms and by the style of the figures on the cornice beneath the clerestory, while the junction with the porch, of after 1449, indicates that the latter is an addition (see below).

In building the new arcades, a problem that had to be overcome was that the existence of the stair turret to the tower brought the eastern impost of the south arcade further west than that of the northern, so that in order to make the piers of the two arcades stand opposite each other it was necessary to make the north arcade's eastern arch broader than the others. The space was filled with a chapel, the thrust of the arch carried across to provide additional buttressing to the tower, and the weight of the upper wall carried by a corbelled structure. The chapel has a traceried reredos and is enclosed by stone and timber screens, much restored in the 19th century. The dedication to St Peter rests on the discovery at that time of a fragmentary figure; it has no earlier support. It has been suggested¹⁰ that with the enlargement of the nave and aisles there would have been areas of the church from which the altar in the chancel could not be seen, and that the new chapel served as a people's altar, visible from the largest area possible.

The eastern part of the chapel was formerly enclosed on both sides by stone screens. The tracery of these screens has been cut away, perhaps when at a later date it became the pew for the Lenthall family living at The Priory. The damaged openings were re-cut and re-formed in the 1870s as a part of the restoration of the church, but the tracery was not made good. The western part is enclosed by 15th-century wooden screens, repaired but probably essentially original.

The pulpit, which now stands against the second pier of the north arcade, is also 15th-century, with blind traceried panels. Painting is 19th-century. Nothing remains of the rood loft, but it is recorded in the brass to John Spicer (died 1437, *above*), and the

former (blocked) door to it remains visible in the north face of the stair turret, where it had been cut through.

6.4 Addition and alterations north of the chancel and crossing: Sacristy (early 15th century), North transept, North chancel aisle (late 15th century).

Probably early in the 15th century, the present sacristy was built as a chapel against the north wall of the chancel, blocking the earlier lancet windows on this side. It retains a vaulted ceiling and a stone altar slab.

At a later date, probably in one operation and subsequent to the reconstruction of the nave, the north transept was reduced in length, and the north aisle of the chancel enlarged to east and north. The east wall of the enlarged north aisle can be seen internally to wrap around the west wall of the sacristy, showing the aisle to be later. Both areas are lit on the north side by identical late 15th-century windows beneath a continuous roof-slope and parapet. Corbels to the roof represent the four Evangelists. In the north end of the eastern wall is a reliquary recess, retaining traces of decorative painting.

6.5 The south porch

The south porch, adjoining St Thomas's chapel on the west and aligned with the nave arcades, was built after 1449 - a date indicated by the inclusion of the arms of the Nevilles (who acquired the lordship of the manor that year) among those on shields held by angels beneath the parapet.¹¹ The face has three canopied niches with figures set among panels of blind tracery; there is further blind tracery to the parapet. Internally there is further blind arcading and two bays of fan vaulting. There are two rooms in the upper levels, reached by a stair tower that has been cut into the south west corner of St Thomas's chapel.

6.6 South chancel aisle; south transept roof altered

Late in the 15th century a new aisle was built south of the chancel and west of the south transept, apparently paid for by John Pinnock who died in 1486. Pinnock's will expressed his wish to be buried 'in capella sancte Trinitatis sumptibus meis noviter

edificata' ['in the chapel of the Holy Trinity newly built at my expense'], and the Pinnock arms and the brass of Thomas Pinnock were recorded in the south chancel chapel in 1574.¹² The chapel has broad windows with depressed heads to south and east. Its building required the cutting of an arched opening between it and the transept, and at the same time the transept roof was raised and given a similar parapet.

7 Fifteenth Century (2): Guild Chapel extended into the Nave

Late in the 15th century the Guild Chapel was curtailed at the west end and extended to the east to butt against the porch and to connect with the body of the church. On the south side, it was wholly rebuilt east of the former door, with four window bays beneath a parapet; the junction made by this wall with the south face of the porch shows that the porch already existed when these alterations were carried out. A stair turret was added at the south west angle. On the north side, the 13th-century north wall remains as far as the junction with the body of the church, where the aisle was extended to meet it in line with the west end of the main building. Within the body of the church, there is a shallow offset at the eastern end of the north wall of the chapel, above the two eastern arches of the arcade. This offset may mark the former south parapet of the south nave aisle, before the extension of the chapel.

The work may be dated to shortly before 1500, as in that year Henry Stodham left instructions that he was to be buried 'in nova capella beate Marie ecclesie parochialis de Burford' ['in the new chapel of the blessed Mary in the parish church of Burford'],¹³ and by close similarities between the window details and those of the nave of St George's Chapel, Windsor, 1503-06. These are probably the work of the Burford mason Robert Janyns, who had been responsible for other recent work at Windsor and was probably the son of Henry Janyns, master mason for the choir of St George's chapel in 1477-84. On his death in 1509 Robert Janyns bequeathed a standing cup to the chapel of St Mary at Burford, and it can almost certainly be assumed that he was its mason.¹⁴

8 After the Reformation: the 16th and 17th Centuries

The practice of making bequests to the altars of the church was still in evidence in 1544, the year before the death of Henry VIII.¹⁵ But it will have ceased very soon after that,

and the immediate consequence of the Reformation for the fabric of Burford church was that new building ceased, while the existing fabric suffered in various ways from neglect, vandalism and from religiously inspired iconoclasm. The rectory, which had been in the hands of the Keynsham abbey, was leased in 1532 to Thomas Baylie, clothman of Trowbridge, and though the lease was transferred in 1546 to Edmund Harman it cannot have been good for the maintenance of the church that responsibility for the chancel rested with absentee laymen.

The most obvious losses were the destruction of the rood, which may have taken place under Edward VI and if not then certainly under Queen Elizabeth; the destruction of almost all the stained window-glass, which may have been carried out (as in many other places) as late as the 1640s; and the theft of almost all metal from memorial brasses, which had certainly begun as early as 1574 when Sir Henry Lee recorded the altar tomb in the south transept as 'defaced.'¹⁶ On the other hand, Thomas Pinnock's brass of 1490 and another of 1590, both now lost, were recorded as still *in situ* as late as 1660.¹⁷ (The Spicer brass probably only survived from its being covered by a raising of the floor; it was discovered in 1827.) It is likely that devotional wall painting was covered over early (a figure 'in a compartment of one of the walls facing the middle aisle' was discovered in 1838 and lost),¹⁸ but below the east window of the south chancel aisle there are lines of text from Tyndale's and Coverdale's translations of the scriptures, perhaps replacing a reredos with carved or painted figures.¹⁹ The reliquary recess in the east wall of the north chancel transept was probably filled in at this time, altars removed, votive figures lost and canopy-work damaged. The niches on the porch retain figures, but their heads are modern replacements.

Very little of this damage is documented, but it is clear that the church suffered during the Civil War. On 6 June 1644 the Earl of Essex quartered his troops in the church 'and used it with the greatest incivility,' among other things tearing down the pennons and flags over the tomb of Lawrence Tanfield and his wife (see *Monuments*). Prince Rupert's regiments, on the opposing side, were quartered in the church on 3 May 1645, after which payments were made 'for making cleane the church when the souldiers went away.'²⁰ Fairfax's defeat of the Leveller mutineers at Burford on 13 May 1649, and their imprisonment in the church for four days, will have provided plenty of opportunity for further destruction, either by the Levellers themselves or by Fairfax's men. One of the Levellers scratched his name and the date on the lead lining of the font: *Antony*

Sedley prisner 1649, and afterwards two men were paid 'for cleansinge the Church when the Levellers were taken.'²¹ Skirmishes in and around the town are recorded at other dates, and in view of the depredations by both sides in the conflict it will have been difficult or impossible to prevent damage being done.

With the Reformation the original chapel dedications were lost, to be replaced in the course of time by names which have probably been used at least since the 18th century. St Peter's chapel in the nave – a dedication which goes back only to the 19th century; the original dedication is unknown -- became the family pew of the occupants of The Priory. The Lady Chapel – the former Guild Chapel – came to be known as the Silvester aisle from the members of the Silvester family who were buried there from the 1560s to the 19th century. St Thomas's chapel was known before 1870 as the Burgess aisle, from its having been fitted up with pews for the Corporation. Probably in the 16th or 17th centuries a row of low, square-headed windows was cut through the east wall of the chapel to enable the occupants to see the high altar. The south chancel aisle remains known as the Bartholomew aisle from the monuments and ledger slabs to that family from the late 17th century onward. The south transept was known in 1827 as Baker's aisle and the north transept as Neale's aisle²² or the Bellfounder's aisle, from the tomb of Edward Neale, bellfounder, in the 17th century, and others of his family.

9 Eighteenth Century to 1827

Knowledge of the condition and history of the church in the 18th century is very far from complete, but what is known is probably representative of events during this period. It is likely that the damage done in the Civil War left the church in serious need of repair, but there is evidence that in the 18th century the church was often neglected and the churchwardens heavily in debt – so much so that on at least one occasion credit was refused for bread and wine for the Communion.²³ Damage is also recorded from natural causes. These included the partial fall of the spire in 1703 and in 1707, damaging the Tanfield tomb in the north chancel aisle.²⁴ Further repairs to the spire were needed in 1824.²⁵ Another source of injury was flooding from the mill stream that bounds the churchyard on the north and east, recorded in 1795 and 1809 and probably occurring on other occasions as well.²⁶

Now preserved within the body of the church is the turret clock made by Hercules Hastings in 1685, formerly in the ringing chamber.

Very little is known of the furnishings of the church before the 18th century, although at some date a west gallery was inserted, destroyed in 1827.²⁷

Repairs were carried out to the Silvester aisle in 1789-90, and the names of the churchwardens recorded on the roof beams.²⁸ Benefactors' boards dated 1733 and bearing the names of the then churchwardens are now hung against the west wall of the south transept, but were probably originally placed above the Silvester chapel arcade where the capitals have been cut back to accommodate them.

In 1826-7 a major rearrangement of the interior was carried out through the initiative of the Revd Alexander Dallas, curate. The object of this reorganisation was to focus the seating on the pulpit. This was placed in the centre of the nave, at the west end; pews in the crossing and nave were made to face west towards it, a gallery was erected in the north aisle with bench seats facing south, and north facing pews were placed in the eastern part of the Silvester aisle. There were probably already north-facing pews for the use of the burgesses in St Thomas's chapel. The lower parts of the walls were cased in wainscot. The transepts, chancel and chancel aisles were left empty of seats, presumably because from these locations it was too difficult to see or hear the preacher. These arrangements are recorded in a contemporary plan and in a model, both in the church.

At the same time the floor of the church was raised to lessen the risk of flooding, fragments of medieval glass gathered together and placed in the upper parts of the west window, and fragments of old woodwork – perhaps including what remained of the rood screen, of which nothing remains – assembled to make a screen in the western part of the Silvester aisle.²⁹ This too has now (2006) disappeared, but the wooden screen in the western arch of the Tanfield chapel – the north chancel aisle – is made up of a mixture of medieval and 17th-century work which may have come from here. At some time in the early 19th century the Tanfield tomb was repainted by Higgins, a Burford painter.³⁰

10 The Victorian Restoration, 1870-87; and Later Work

The arrangements of 1826-7, suited to the requirements of an evangelising curate, were totally unsuited to the rituals of Anglican worship in the later 19th century, and a major restoration was begun under the Revd John Burgess (vicar from 1860 to 1871), and continued under his successor the Revd W. Anthony Cass (vicar until his death in 1907). Work began with the nave and aisles in 1870-72, and continued until 1887 as money was raised for successive phases. George Edmund Street was in charge as diocesan architect until his death in 1882; the restoration of St Thomas's chapel (except for the new arcade, below, and work in the vault) was supervised by J.D. Sedding.

The principal works carried out were:³¹

- structural repairs throughout
- the removal of the gallery and pews; complete re-seating of the church
- removal of plaster from walls and ceilings
- new, pitched roof to chancel
- construction of arcade of two arches across northern part of St Thomas's chapel; new roof
- pulpit moved and placed in a new base.
- removal of bones from charnel house beneath St Thomas's chapel; conversion of the space into a heating chamber
- conversion of Priory pew into St Peter's chapel; creation of new reredos on the basis of surviving fragments³²
- new organ installed in the south chancel aisle.

On completion of the first phase of restoration in 1872, on Thursday 30 May there were three morning services in the church. Before the third (a service of Holy Communion at 11 o'clock):

‘the bishop, about forty clergy, and the choir, robed in their surplices, proceeded from the Vicarage to the Church, singing the 385th and 164th hymns from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.’

After the service, where the bishop preached,

‘the clergy and choir walked in procession to the Vicarage, singing the 320th hymn. At two o'clock, upwards of 300 of the parishioners and friends sat down to a luncheon, provided by Mrs Porter, of the Bull Hotel, in a large barn belonging to Mr Allen-Faulkner, situated at the upper end of the town.’

Numerous toasts and speeches followed, and the celebrations ended in the Priory grounds with music and dancing (to Synder and Gilmore's military band from Birmingham), evensong in the church, and a peal of bells.³³

Funds for the work came from a variety of sources. For some time before, Cass's predecessor John Burgess had evidently wished to restore the church, but work only became possible when Edward Marriott, JP, of the Great House, offered to match pound for pound whatever Burgess was able to raise from other sources – amounting by June 1870 to £779 from the town, and £212 from elsewhere. The total cost of the first phase of the restoration, up to 1872, came to £2670; the Ecclesiastical Commissioners paid for the work on the chancel (£781), the tower and Tanfield chapel were restored by subscription of £1303, and St Thomas's chapel was paid for by Marriott.

A number of other works have been carried out since the major, late Victorian restoration. These included restoration of the niches flanking the high altar, 1902.

¹ The date of this blocking is not known. It appears less complete as late as 1823: J. Skelton, *Antiquities of Oxfordshire*, Bampton Hundred, plate 2.

² By the early 19th century the stage below was also floored.

³ In the current (2006) guidebook on sale in the church.

⁴ R.H. Gretton, *The Burford Records* (1920), 105.

⁵⁵ Two effigies were recorded in 1660 in the north aisle. These have now disappeared. Gretton, *Burford Records*, 119.

⁶ Ibid. 109.

⁷ Ibid. 112-13.

⁸ Ibid. 107-14.

⁹ Ibid. 420.

¹⁰ By G.E. Street. 'Excursion to ... Burford', *North Oxon. Archaeological. Soc.* [10] (1870), 23-4.

¹¹ Gretton, *Burford Records*, 120. Now indecipherable, the heraldry was recorded by Richard Symonds in 1664.

¹² Gretton, *Burford Records*, 112-13.

¹³ Ibid. 114.

¹⁴ John Harvey, *English Medieval Architects* (2nd edn, 1984), 160; H.M. Colvin, *History of the King's Works*, III (1) (1975), 313-14; Gretton, *Burford Records*, 114.

¹⁵ W.J. Monk, *History of Burford* (1891), 41.

¹⁶ Gretton, *Burford Records*, 110.

¹⁷ Ibid. 117.

¹⁸ W.J.Monk, 39. This is probably the same as the figure of St Christopher over the third pillar from the east, recorded by the Revd John Fisher in 1861 ‘and now concealed by whitewash’. It was described at the time as ‘a grotesque painting ... [supposedly] part of an extensive work running along the other compartments.’ No trace of this remains, having been lost with all plastering from the walls. (Oxfordshire Record Office, Symonds VIII, 305.)

¹⁹ These are Romans 13, verses 12-14, and Ecclesiasticus 14, verse 19.

²⁰ Gretton, *Burford Records*, 206.

²¹ Ibid. 255.

²² Bodleian Library, MS Oxf. Dioc. c 454, f. 109.

²³ Monk, *Hist. Burford*, 37.

²⁴ Revd John Fisher, *A History of the Town of Burford* (Cheltenham, 1861), 110; Monk, *Hist. Burford*, 67.

²⁵ Monk, op. cit. 69.

²⁶ Fisher, op. cit.

²⁷ Monk, op. cit. 38-9.

²⁸ Ibid. 54.

²⁹ Ibid. 38-9. Described as ‘nondescript’ in 1872: *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 1 June 1872, p. 8.

³⁰ Burford, Tolsey Museum, MS notes on Monk’s *History of Burford* by W.J.Titcombe.

³¹ More detail of the work done, with names of donors, artists and craftsmen, is given in contemporary accounts, notably *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 1 June 1872, p. 8; in successive editions of *Kelly’s Directory of Oxfordshire* (1920 edition used here); and in documents cited in R.A.Moody, *The Victorian Restoration of Burford Church* (privately printed, 1999: copy in Burford church archives). Street’s own proposals and the reasons for them were contained in a letter to the vicar and churchwardens dated April 1870, printed in the parish magazine and reproduced in Moody, op.cit.

³² Dedication on the basis of a headless figure found behind panelling: Burford, Tolsey Museum, MS notes on Monk’s *History of Burford* by W.J.Titcombe.

³³ *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 1 June 1872, p. 8.