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This text is made available to readers in advance of its full publication. We welcome suggestions for improvement, references and, of course, we invite readers to point out errors.

The history of Holy Cross and St Giles has been prepared by Dr Judith Everard drawing on draft text by Dr David Cox.

The account of the buildings is by Wendy Horton. She again was assisted by an earlier draft prepared by Dr Cox.

Illustrations may be found in a further file.

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HOLY CROSS AND ST GILES

Holy Cross church originated as the church of the Benedictine abbey of St Peter, Shrewsbury, where an altar in the nave, dedicated to the Holy Cross, served the parishioners of the Abbey Foregate suburb. The nave survived the Dissolution and continues to the present day as the parish church of Holy Cross, known today as Shrewsbury Abbey or the Abbey church. St Giles's church originated in the early 12th century as the chapel of a leper hospital at the southern limits of Abbey Foregate.[1] By the 15th century the chapel had an important role in parish life. Although largely abandoned during the 17th and 18th centuries it was restored in 1826-7 and enlarged in 1871-2. Situated as it was in a growing suburb, in 1857 St Giles became a district chapelry of Holy Cross parish. In 1983 St Giles joined the parishes of Atcham and Sutton in a combined benefice, independent of Holy Cross.[2]

CHURCH ORIGINS AND PAROCHIAL ORGANISATION

A 'parochia' (or part of one) was already established at the eastern approach to Shrewsbury in the 11th century,[3] when Siward, son of Æthelgar, a kinsman of Edward the Confessor, built a wooden chapel associated with his hall at the east gate of Shrewsbury next to the Meole (later Rea) brook, near its confluence with the Severn.[4] It was said to have been the least of Shrewsbury's churches and despised by the town's inhabitants in the 1070s but, appearing in the 12th-century *vita* of St Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, this is likely a literary device to credit Wulfstan with prophesying the Norman abbey's flourishing.[5] The Saxon church may have had burial rights, on the evidence of charcoal burials, typically a pre-1100 practice, found within the former abbey precinct.[6]

By 1082 Roger of Montgomery, earl of Shrewsbury, had acquired the chapel and the land around it from Siward, apparently with a view to founding an abbey there.[7] He gave the chapel and a nearby house to his clerk Odelerius of Orléans, who began building a stone

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[1] For the history of St Giles hospital, see 'The Hospital of St Giles, Shrewsbury', VCH *Salop* ii, 105.
[2] This chapter is based on the account of Holy Cross church from 'VCH: Abbey Foregate', draft by David Cox, to whom the authors are greatly obliged. For the history of St Peter's Abbey, see 'Houses of Benedictine Monks: Abbey of Shrewsbury', VCH *Salop* ii, 30–7.
[3] 'ubi erat parochia civitat(is)': Domesday Book. *VCH Salop* VI (1), 11; N. Baker (ed.), *Shrewsbury Abbey* (Shrewsbury, 2002), 15, 17, 193, 207–8.
[4] *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1969–80), iii. 142.
[5] *The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury*, ed. R.R. Darlington (Camd. 3rd ser. 40, 1928), 26–7; *VCH Salop* VI (1), 11, 12; Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey*, 15.
[6] *VCH Salop* VI (1), 12; Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey*, 44, 193.
[7] *Cart. Shrews.*, pp. 1, 33.

church (*basilica*) next to the house in or shortly before 1082. Odelerius promised the new church to Earl Roger for his proposed abbey; the earl began the stone claustral buildings ('monachiles officinas') in 1083, and in 1087 conventual life began there.[8] Odelerius' church, the *monasterium* of St Peter, was given to the abbey by Earl Roger by 1087;[9] it was presumably also the conventual church while the new abbey church was being built. In 1094 Earl Roger was buried in the unfinished abbey church.[10]

The church of St Giles was probably founded in the early 12th century. Its dedication, by *c*.1136, and its peripheral location 'at the going out of the town'[11] suggest that it was built to serve the adjoining leper hospital.[12] The abbey church and St Giles formed two spiritual poles of the Abbey Foregate suburb. The *vita* of St Winifred by Robert, prior of Shrewsbury, tells how the saint's body, when brought to Shrewsbury by the monks, *c*.1136, was first placed in the church of St Giles. After this event had been sufficiently publicised and a large crowd assembled, a ceremonial procession carried the body to the abbey church.[13]

The parish of Abbey Foregate was served by the altar of the Holy Cross in the nave of the abbey church from at least 1255.[14] There was a nominated vicar by this date.[15] St Giles's chapel had an important role in Abbey Foregate parish. By the 15th century it seems to have served the parish generally. In 1424 the burgesses and commonalty of Monks' Foregate leased to the vicar of Holy Cross the lands and tenements designated for the repair of St Giles's church.[16] A vicar of St Giles appeared as a secular cleric alongside the monks of Shrewsbury Abbey in 1432.[17] In 1483 two wardens were responsible for both Holy Cross church and the 'parish' church of St Giles.[18]

The dedication of the abbey church to St Peter ended with the dissolution of the abbey. The survival of the abbey church was determined by the continuing need for it to serve as a parish church, and the dedication to the Holy Cross was adopted. By 1825 the parish was

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[8] *Eccl. Hist. of Orderic Vitalis*, iii. 142, 146, 148.
[9] *Salop. Domesday: Folios and Maps*, ed. R.W.H. Erskine (1988), f. 252b; *Salop. Domesday* [Intro. and Translation], ed. Williams and Erskine, p. [64]. Some later sources give the dedication of Odelerius' stone church as St Peter and St Paul: *Cart. Shrews.* i, 5, 32; ii, 254–5.
[10] *Eccl. Hist. of Orderic Vitalis*, iii, 148; *Cart. Shrews.* i, 32.
[11] 'ecclesia … in urbis exitu sita est': Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii. 38 (for the date), 40, 174 n. (quoting Bodl. MS. Laud c. 94, f. 162v.).
[12] *The Letters and Charters of Henry II*, ed. N. Vincent (Oxford, 2020), no. 2484; *VCH Salop.* Ii, 105.
[13] Above, note 11.
[14] *Cart. Shrews.* ii, 321; SA, P250/B/23/1 (1260 × 1276).
[15] *Cart. Shrews.* ii, 321; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 142, 145.
[16] W.A. Leighton, 'Notes Relating to the Abbey Parish Church Estate, Shrewsbury', *TSAS* 1 (1878), 15–98, at 35.
[17] *The Cartulary of Lilleshall Abbey*, ed. U. Rees (Shrewsbury, 1997), no. 389.
[18] SA, P250/B/24/9.

generally known simply as 'the Abbey parish' and Holy Cross church is now normally called Shrewsbury Abbey.[19]

In 1857 St Giles was created a district chapelry out of Holy Cross parish, with a perpetual curacy in the gift of the vicar of Holy Cross.[20] In 1983, St Giles, with St Eata's, Atcham, and the former parish of St John's, Sutton, formed the ecclesiastical parish and united benefice of St Giles with Sutton Shrewsbury.[21] Holy Cross parish remained independent, incorporating St Peter's church, Monkmoor.

Advowson

The abbot and convent exercised patronage of the vicarage of Holy Cross until 1540.[22] At the Dissolution, the Crown acquired the advowson and retained it until 1797, when it was granted to Thomas Noel Hill, Baron Berwick, in exchange for the advowson of two Suffolk churches.[23] In 1856 his grandson the fifth baron agreed to sell the advowson to the Revd George Cottam and William Manby.[24] It was offered for sale in 1860[25] and was apparently purchased by the earl of Powis, who in 1862 transferred the advowson back to the Crown in exchange for patronage of the vicarage of Wrockwardine.[26] The Crown conveyed it in 1873 to the bishop of Lichfield.[27]

St Giles chapel, attached to a leper hospital by the mid 12th century, was probably under the patronage of the abbey.[28] After the Dissolution, it was served by the clergy of Holy Cross church. The vicar of Holy Cross continued to appoint the ministers of St Giles after it was created a district chapelry. In 1860, the advowson of Holy Cross was advertised for sale with the perpetual curacy of St Giles.[29] The advowson therefore passed with that of Holy Cross to the bishop of Lichfield in 1873.[30]

Endowment

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[19] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii. 142; https://www.shrewsburyabbey.com/
[20] SA, P250/B/46/2 (map); SA, P255/F/3/1.
[21] SA, P186/F/1/1; *London Gaz.*, 27 Oct. 1983, 14124.
[22] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii. 150; *VCH Salop.* ii. 36.
[23] 37 Geo. III, c. 121 (Priv. Act); SA, 112/5/20/11–14.
[24] SA, 112/5/44/30.
[25] SA, P255/F/1/1; *Shrews. Chron.*, 17 Aug. 1860, 1.
[26] *London Gaz.*, 29 Apr. 1862, p. 2213.
[27] *London Gaz.* 6 May 1873, pp. 2264–5; SA, P253/F/2/1.
[28] *VCH Salop*, ii, 105.
[29] *Shrews. Chron.*, 17 Aug. 1860, 1.
[30] *Kelly's Dir. Salop.* (1885), 938.

Holy Cross seems to have had no glebe except the vicarage house.[31] Between 1279 and 1292 part of the tithes due to the abbey's almonry from Abbey Foregate were assigned by the abbot to the vicar of the Holy Cross. With minor exceptions, the vicar was to have the small tithes and half the grain tithes with all the tithes of crofts and curtilages; later, half the hay tithes were understood to be included.[32] In the early 14th century the vicarage was valued at 13*s.* 4*d.*[33] The vicar's gross income was £8 in 1535 and he owed the abbey a yearly pension of 31*s.*[34] After the dissolution of the abbey, the medieval endowment of the vicarage was preserved, consisting of the vicarage house and plot, half the tithes of corn and hay and all the small tithes of the parish.[35] In 1772 the value of the living was estimated at about £80, uncertain because the tithes were shared between the vicar and several impropriators.[36] By 1838 the vicar had moduses in lieu of tithes on cows, calves, colts, garden produce, and smoke. Those and the other tithes were commuted to £355 in 1840,[37] and the vicar's net income in 1891 was £249.[38] In 1901 the living was augmented by £51 a year from a private benefaction of £1,000 matched by £700 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.[39]

St Giles

In 1839 the Revd Richard Scott, a former vicar of Condover,[40] and the Revd Robert Lingen Burton, vicar of Holy Cross, personally endowed a separate minister of St Giles's,[41] and Scott left a further endowment by will proved in 1848.[42] The living was augmented in 1886–93,[43] to be worth £170 a year (net) in 1900.[44]

Clergy Houses

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[31] SA, P250/B/24/15.

[32] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* Ii, 143–4.

[33] Probably a rounded figure, for what was classed as a benefice of very low value. Stratford, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stoneleigh MSS, DR 18/31/3, fos. 75r–100r, p. 88, cited in 'Benefice of Shrewsbury, Holy Cross (Altar of Shrewsbury Abbey)', *Taxatio*: https://www.dhi.ac.uk/taxatio (accessed 2021).

[34] *Valor Eccl.* (Rec. Com.), iii, 186, 190.

[35] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* i. 143–4; S. Watts (ed.), *Glebe Terriers of Shropshire, pt. 2 Llanyblodwel to Wroxeter* (Keele, c.2001), 95–7.

[36] SRO, B/V/5/18; Watts, *Glebe Terriers*, 96–7.

[37] TNA, IR 29/29/291.

[38] *Crockford* (1891), 1777.

[39] *Lond. Gaz.* 14 June 1901, p. 4014.

[40] *Alum. Oxon. 1715–1886*, ii. 1266.

[41] SA, P255/F/2/2, P255/Q/2; Pidgeon, *Memorials*, 83.

[42] Ibid.; Watts, *Glebe Terriers*, 106.

[43] SA, P255/F/2/2.

[44] *Crockford's Clerical Dir.* (1900), 1155.

The tenement of the vicar of Holy Cross, by 1355, was a plot extending south from the king's highway (Abbey Foregate) to the mill brook, just below the abbey's mill.[45] There was a vicarage house by 1538.[46] In 1693 it was a two-bay house fronting the street with a two-bay barn, gardens, fold and yard.[47] By the early 19th century these premises were regarded as unsuitable for the vicar's residence and were rented out, by 1841 as two dwellings.[48] After a fund-raising campaign in the parish, a large vicarage house was built on the site in 1892, designed by A. E. Lloyd Oswell.[49] That house still stands within the buildings of the Holy Cross Care Home. There does not appear to be a vicarage for the Abbey church at the time of writing.

A new 'parsonage house' or 'vicarage' was built for the district chapelry of St Giles in 1868–9, on Belvidere Lane (later Belvidere Road), with a grant of £725.[50] In 1938 the vicar applied to Queen Anne's Bounty for a mortgage to make improvements.[51] The site was acquired by SCC for the new Shirehall development *c*.1963. The house itself was left standing; at the time of writing it stands marooned in the Shirehall car park and is used for council purposes. A new vicarage was built *c*.1954 at the top of Abbey Foregate, near St Giles's church.[52] The present vicarage is 127 Abbey Foregate.[53]

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The Middle Ages

In the Norman abbey church, both the west door and a north door, towards the western end of the nave, opened to the street outside the abbey precinct and hence could be used by parishioners and other lay people to gain access to the church. A screen across the middle of the six-bay nave divided it laterally into two three-bay halves, the western half being the space used for the parish church.[54] A porch was later added to the north door and vested in the churchwardens.[55] Originally two-storeyed and accessed from within the nave, the north

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[45] SA, P250/B/23/6, pd. Leighton, 'Notes relating to the Abbey Church Estate', 23. See TNA, IR 29/29/291; IR, 30/29/291/1, field no. 175.
[46] SA, P250/B/24/15.
[47] Watts, *Glebe Terriers*, 95.
[48] SRO, L3916/1/1, f. 77 (typescript copy: SA, C 97); SRO, L3916/1/2, no. 47; Watts, *Glebe Terriers*, 96–7.
[49] SA, P250/F/7/1; SA, DA5/710/15/6; *Shrews. Chron.*, 25 Mar. 1892, 5.
[50] SA, P255/F/2/1–8; SA, DA5/710/12/3; O.S. Map 1/500, Salop. XXXIV. 11. 13 (1882 edn.); Watts, *Glebe Terriers*, 106.
[51] SA, P255/F/2/10.
[52] H.D.G. Foxall, *A Gazetteer of Streets, Roads and Place names in Shropshire* (Salop County Council, 1967).
[53] https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4498/ (accessed 2021).
[54] Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey*, 26. See below, 'Church Architecture' by W. Horton.
[55] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, ii, 68–9 and plate.

porch was remodelled in the late Perpendicular style, a third storey and stair turret added, and ornately embellished with tall, ornate statue niches.[56] In the later 14th century, the three western bays of the nave were remodelled to accommodate the construction of the west tower.[57] The stylistic difference between the west and east of the church would have enhanced the distinction between parochial and monastic spaces. There was a burial ground for parishioners beside the abbey church.[58]

The William 'of Holy Cross' who attested a grant to Shrewsbury Abbey *c*.1182 may have served the altar of Holy Cross in the abbey church.[59] Between *c*.1212 and 1231, a William 'clerk of [the] cross' witnessed several grants to the Abbey, mostly of property in Abbey Foregate.[60] Between 1236 and 1255, the record of a dispute involving the Abbey was attested by Henry 'vicar of the altar of Holy Cross of the said Abbey'.[61] Henry's successor was probably Gilbert 'vicar of Holy Cross', the first-named witness to a lease by the Abbey of land in Abbey Foregate (1266 × 1271).[62] Evidently the vicarage had already existed for some time when Abbot John of Drayton (1279–1292) assigned part of the tithes of Abbey Foregate to the vicar, William of Baschurch, and his successors.[63] In 1324, Martin, vicar of Holy Cross, attested a grant by Abbot William to the chapel of St Martin in the abbey church to maintain a lamp in honour of the Holy Cross and St Martin.[64]

The vicarage of Holy Cross was one amongst the numerous livings in the gift of the abbot and convent, and priests – mostly of local families – were transferred between them, generally avoiding pluralism. Roger of Humphreston (in Donington par.) was vicar of Holy Cross from *c*.1344 to 1349 when he was presented as rector of the Abbey's church of Donington. His successor, William Tandy, appears to have begun his career independently of Shrewsbury Abbey, receiving benefices, during the crisis of the Black Death, from the bishop and from Buildwas Abbey; he was vicar of Holy Cross from 1349 to 1365. Thomas More was vicar of Holy Cross from 1402 to 1426, when he was presented as vicar of Wrockwardine.[65] More's successor, William Kemsey, held the vicarage of Holy Cross for

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[56] Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey*, 28. See below, 'Church Architecture' by W. Horton.

[57] Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey*, 28. See below, 'Church Architecture' by W. Horton.

[58] See below, note 215.

[59] *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, 154 no. 177; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 145 note 1.

[60] *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, 162 no. 189, 166 no. 192b, 181 no. 210d, 189 no. 219b, 273–4 nos. 290–1, 399 no. 438.

[61] *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, 321 no. 355, perhaps Master Henry. See also *ibid*., 193 no. 224, 493.

[62] *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, 192 no. 223. Cf. a charter perhaps made by the same Gilbert while Henry was still vicar: *ibid*., 193 no. 224 (Gilbert son of Richard, clerk, of Abbey Foregate).

[63] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 143–4. John of Drayton: *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, xxiv–xxv. The manor and church of Baschurch belonged to Shrewsbury Abbey: *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, *passim*.

[64] *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, xxix. Martin died in 1330: Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* II, 145.

[65] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 145. Donington and Wrockwardine: *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, *passim*.

barely a year before transferring to the vicarage of Stottesden, in an exchange with the incumbent there, John Gomond. Gomond was vicar of Holy Cross from 1427 to 1430, when he was presented to the Abbey's church of Berrington. In 1430 Richard Lye was presented to both the vicarage of Holy Cross and the rectory of Edgmond on the same day, but immediately resigned Holy Cross and William Marshall was instituted there instead. The incumbents of the later 15th and early 16th centuries were William Marshall, Thomas Morris (d.1503) and Richard Baker (d.1530).[66] Baker was succeeded in 1530 by William Hordley, the incumbent during the dissolution of the Abbey (1540).[67]

The parish church had a keeper of the light of the altar of the Holy Cross in the later 13th century[68] and two such in 1374.[69] From the 13th century onwards the wardens received gifts of houses and land for the maintenance of the parish church.[70] There were two 'keepers of the works of the church' (*custodes operis ecclesie*) in 1419–20,[71] who were called 'wardens or keepers of the works and fabric of the church' in 1493[72] and were presumably the churchwardens mentioned in 1483.[73] '[W]ardens or keepers of the light of the Holy Cross' are mentioned in 1513[74] and two 'keepers of the goods and ornaments of the altar of the Holy Cross' of 1538.[75]

By 1420 the 'community of the parish' had a common seal,[76] which it shared with the bailiffs and burgesses of the liberty of Monks' Foregate.[77] Impressions survive on a lease from the churchwardens of 1512, which calls it the 'parish seal',[78] and on another from the 'keepers of the goods and ornaments' of 1538.[79] It is a pointed oval measuring 2 1/8 × 1 5/16 in.; the design is bisected by an upright wand or staff of office, on the left of which is an arm holding a pastoral staff and on the right an arm holding a drawn sword; the design alludes to the shared use of the seal. At the circumference the legend reads (lombardic) SIGILLUM

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[66] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 146. Stottesden, Berrington, Edgmond: *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, *passim*.

[67] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 146; T.S. Ball, 'The ancient churches of Shrewsbury. A description of the antique and valuable silver plate. VI. The Abbey Church (parish church of the Holy Cross)', *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 20 Oct. 1905, 9; SRO, B/A/1/15, 24 May 1558. Hordley was a manor of Shrewsbury Abbey: *Cart. Shrews. Abbey*, *passim*.

[68] SA, P250/B/23/1. Cf. Leighton, 'Notes relating to the Abbey Church Estate', 21.

[69] SA, P250/B/24/4.

[70] Leighton, 'Notes relating to the Abbey Church Estate', 21, 24–7, 45–8, 50.

[71] SA, P250/B/24/7.

[72] SA, P250/B/24/11.

[73] SA, P250/B/24/9–10.

[74] SA, P250/B/23/13.

[75] SA, P250/B/24/15.

[76] SA, P250/B/24/7.

[77] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 142.

[78] SA, P250/B/24/12.

[79] SA, P250/B/24/15.

COMMVNE DE FORYATE MONACHORUM.[80] The churchwardens had two matrices in 1598[81] and 1808. One was an attempted copy of the other;[82] one was perhaps for the wardens, the other for the bailiffs and burgesses, until 1586 when the liberty was incorporated in Shrewsbury borough.

Guild

In 1487 Abbot Thomas Mynde founded the guild of St Winifred in Holy Cross church to maintain the existing chantry of St Winifred; it was for men and women, who were to elect a warden, admit future members and maintain two chantry priests.[83] There was a pointed oval common seal measuring 2¾ × 1¾ in. which depicted the beheading of St Winifred with, above, the founder's initials and, below, a shield bearing a sword and key crossed, and at the circumference the legend (black letter) SIGILLUM COMMUNE FRATERNITATIS BEATE WENEFRIDE VIRGINIS IN ECCLESIA SANCTE CRUCIS INFRA MONASTERIUM SANCTI PETRI SALOPIE.[84] The abbot and convent gave meadows called the Gay and the Conynger in 1487.[85] By 1548 six cottages, three gardens, and a rent of 1*s*. 4*d*. had been added to the guild's endowment. In that year the chantry was dissolved and the Crown sold the estate, valued at £7 19*s*. 8*d*. a year (gross), to Sir George Blount.[86]

A plan to create 13 new dioceses from the proceeds of dissolution of the monasteries, *c*.1539, had it been carried out, would have seen Holy Cross church as the seat of a bishopric formed of the counties of Shropshire and Staffordshire, endowed with the revenues of Shrewsbury Abbey.[87]

Reformation to Interregnum

At the dissolution of St Peter's Abbey, Holy Cross was recognized to be a parish church with an estimated 700 communicants.[88] The vicar of the altar of Holy Cross was therefore allowed

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[80] Description of seal based on Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 143 (engr. from a matrix); W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts of the British Museum* (London, 1887–1900), ii, p. 186 (from a cast); surviving impressions.

[81] Leighton, 'Notes Relating to the Abbey Church Estate', 43.

[82] H. Owen, *Some Account of the Ancient and Present State of Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1808), 135.

[83] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 124–7; *Cal. Pat.* 1485–94, 158; VCH *Salop* II, 30–7 notes 90–91.

[84] Description of seal based on Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 128 (engr. from the matrix); Birch, *Cat. of Seals*, i, p. 843 (from a cast). The matrix is recorded as extant in 1825: T. Pennant, *Tour in Wales*, i (1784), 35–6.

[85] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 127.

[86] A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), 'Certificates of the Shropshire chantries under the Acts of 37 Henry VIII, cap. iv., and I Edward VI, cap. xiv.', *TSAS* 3rd ser. 10 (1910), 312 (gross value £8 5*s*.), 344; *Cal. Pat.* 1548–9, 31; TNA, E 318/38/2045, m. 11 (ref. supplied by Mr. Champion).

[87] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* i. 322–3; *L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xiv (2), pp. 151–2; *VCH Salop.* ii, 2.

[88] 'Certificates of Shropshire Chantries', 312.

to remain in office and the endowment originally awarded by the abbot and convent was preserved. The 50 years following William Hordley's death, *c*.1557, were marked by apparent stability in the incumbency, against a certain confusion in the administration. Edmund Bennett was instituted to the vicarage of Holy Cross in 1558 by Richard Prynce as executor of John Prynce.[89] In 1583 the Crown presented an Edmund Bennett to the vicarage to fill a vacancy on ground of lapse of time; and a man of the same name was instituted in 1599, probably remaining the incumbent until 1610.[90]

Bennett's successor was Francis Gibbons of Shrewsbury (vicar, 1611–40), the grandson of William Langley who had purchased the abbey site in 1546.[91] Gibbons's presentation to Holy Cross, however, was apparently made on the recommendation of Oxford colleagues (Gibbons was made Doctor of Divinity in 1617). A pluralist of Laudian views, Gibbons was also a chaplain to the king.[92] Unsurprisingly, he employed a curate at Holy Cross; Richard Tailer was appointed in 1616.[93] On Gibbons's death in 1640, James Logan, a Scotsman, was instituted, remaining at Holy Cross until Shrewsbury was taken by the Parliamentarians in 1645.[94]

Henry VIII's grant of the abbey site to Watson and Herdson in 1546, and their conveyance to William Langley, did not refer to the parishioners' interest in the western half of the nave of the abbey church.[95] Langley presumably wished to dismantle as much of the church as he could. By 1558 he had demolished much of the eastern arm and transepts including the central tower and had removed the eastern end of the nave roof. Arbitrators then ruled that he should reinstate the nave roof and give the parishioners enough stone to wall up the east end of the nave and its aisles, and should give them a glazed window from the north side of the church.[96] The east walls and window were inserted in 1566,[97] thus adding the eastern half of the nave permanently to the parish church. Additionally, the 'wall that the rood loft stood on', which had presumably screened the monastic part of the nave from the

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[89] SRO, B/A/1/15, 25 May 1558.
[90] Edward (*sic*) Bennett, vicar in 1579: SRO, B/V/1/11; Crown presentation: *CPR 1582–1583*, 17 Oct. 1583; vicar in 1599: TNA, E 331 Coventry&Lich/8 (Returns to First Fruits Office); vicar on 24 July 1605: SRO, B/V/1/24.
[91] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 136–7, 146.
[92] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 146, 159; B. Coulton, *Regime and Religion. Shrewsbury 1400–1700* (Logaston, 2010), 84, 88.
[93] SRO, B/V/1/32, 28 Aug. 1616.
[94] SRO, B/V/1/67, 4 May 1640; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 146; Coulton, *Regime and Religion*, 102–6.
[95] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 135–6; SA, 6000/142.
[96] SA, 6000/1970.
[97] *Cal. S.P. Dom.* 1601–3, p. 563; SA, P250/C/1/1, ff. 16v–18v.

parochial part, was removed between 1573 and 1577.[98] The sale of the abbey site in 1546 included the parish burial ground beside the abbey church.[99] Subsequently St Giles's churchyard became the main parochial burial ground.[100]

Interregnum to 1660

With Shrewsbury under Parliamentarian control from February 1645, the upper storey of the west tower of Holy Cross (the Abbey) church was removed to prevent it from being used strategically by an opposing force.[101] St Giles's church was used to house Scots prisoners of war, presumably after the battle of Worcester in 1651.[102] By May 1645 the vicar, James Logan, had been removed and replaced by Joshua Richardson, stipendiary curate of Broughton (in the Liberties of Shrewsbury). In 1646/7 Richardson was promoted from Holy Cross to the rectory of Myddle, where he was held in such high regard that after the Restoration he was re-presented to Myddle by the earl of Bridgewater as patron. John Beale and Moses Leigh followed as ministers of Holy Cross, the latter leaving for Norton in Hales in 1650.[103] John Bryan, the son of Dr John Bryan, a well-known Coventry preacher, was minister from 1650 to 1659, when he was promoted to St Chad's.[104] Throughout the Commonwealth, a conservative ethos seems to have prevailed at Holy Cross, to the frustration of some Presbyterian ministers.[105]

Restoration to mid-19th Century

The former incumbent, James Logan, had been restored to the vicarage of Holy Cross by 1662, but resigned the living in 1663.[106] Conservatism was still evident when Logan was succeeded by Timothy Hammond, who had been deprived of his living of Preston-on-the-Wealdmoors under the Commonwealth. On Hammond's death in 1671, the former Presbyterian minister Moses Leigh, now conforming, was restored to Holy Cross.[107] A young

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[98] SA, P250/C/1/1, f. 31.

[99] *L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (1), p. 689.

[100] J. Hunter (ed.), 'Inventories of the Church Goods in the town of Shrewsbury at the time of the Reformation, and Proceedings Respecting Them in the Reign of Edward VI. A.D. 1552–3', (repr. from *Archaeological J.*, 12), *TSAS* 10 (1887), 399–408, at 401; SRO, L3916/1/1, f. 78.

[101] Below, notes 179, 183.

[102] See 'Religious Architecture' by W. Horton, below.

[103] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 147.

[104] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 147–8; Coulton, *Regime and Religion*, 117–18, 127–8, 132.

[105] Coulton, *Regime and Religion*, 127.

[106] SRO, B/A/1/17, 25 July 1663; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 146, 148.

[107] Hammond: *Clergy of the Church of England database*, https://theclergydatabase.org.uk (CCEd), Person ID. 26904. Leigh: Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 148; *Calamy Revised*, 320–1.

curate, John Wagstaff, was appointed in 1675. Leigh died the next year, and his death marked the end of the Civil War generation at Holy Cross. Leigh's successor, Samuel Pearson, had to sue the farming tenants of Abbey Foregate for payment of tithes.[108]

Samuel Pearson (vicar, 1676–1727) and his successors, John Latham (vicar, 1727–50) and William Gorsuch (vicar, 1750–81), were local men who devoted their whole careers to Holy Cross and did not hold other livings.[109] Latham provided material on Shrewsbury churches to the antiquary Browne Willis.[110] Gorsuch compiled and published detailed tables on the demographics of his Holy Cross parishioners spanning three decades – pioneering work that 'formed one of the principal bases upon which … the whole system of life-insurances [was] founded'.[111] In 1772, Gorsuch reported that there were no Nonconformists or Roman Catholics residing in the parish, and that he resided continuously.[112]

By the early 18th century, the church of St Giles was in a state of neglect – part of the chancel roof had gone – although the churchyard was still used for burials. Repairs were effected in the middle of the century, and by 1772 the Revd. Gorsuch could report that Holy Cross and St Giles 'are either of them the Parish Church and we perform every office in them indiscriminately, as it is most convenient'.[113] The antiquary David Parkes published some of the monumental inscriptions from St Giles in 1794, remarking that that church was 'now only an appendage to the parish of Holy Cross, service is perfomred in it but seldom'.[114] The large and peaceful churchyard of St Giles attracted some residents of town centre parishes to choose burial there.[115]

William Oakeley, in contrast to his immediate predecessors, was of the south Shropshire gentry, and held the livings of Forton (Staffs.) from 1748 and Eaton-under-Heywood (Shrops., dioc. Hereford) from 1759 before adding the vicarage of Holy Cross in 1782, the same year as he was appointed domestic chaplain to the bishop of Lichfield. Oakeley resided at Abbey Foregate; his son Charles was made a baronet in 1790 for service in Madras, taking

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[108] SRO, B/V/1/77, 1 Dec. 1676; TNA, E 134/35Chas2/East19; SRO, B/A/4/29, 28 Nov. 1727.
[109] SRO, B/A/4/29, 28 Nov. 1727; B/A/1/21, 8 Aug. 1750; B/A/1/24, 28 Aug. 1782; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 148–50. For Pearson's Shrewsbury network, see, e.g., the will of Thomas Bowdler, school founder, 1723: SA, P256/Q/8/3.
[110] Oxford, Bodl. MS Willis [?38, 47, 72, 81, 82]; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 149.
[111] SRO, B/V/5/18; *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, 61 (1771), 57–8, 71 (1782); Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 149–50, citing Richard Price, *Observations on Reversionary Payments…* (London, ?1772).
[112] SRO, B/V/5/18.
[113] SRO, B/V/5/18. For the 18th-century repairs to St Giles, see below, 'Church Architecture' by W. Horton.
[114] D. Parkes, 'Church notes from St Giles, Shrewsbury', *Gentleman's Mag*., 64(8) (1794), 694 and plate opposite.]
[115] Owen, *Some Account*, 140.

the title Oakeley of Shrewsbury, and on his return to England in 1795 settled at 'the Abbey'.[116] In 1793, the young William Gorsuch Rowland, grandson of the late vicar William Gorsuch, was appointed as stipendiary curate.[117]

William Oakeley died in 1804. His successor was the first since the Crown had assigned the advowson to Lord Berwick, who presented his domestic chaplain, Henry Burton of Longner Hall, next door to Berwick's seat, Attingham Park. Burton was already vicar of Atcham as well as rector of Madeley (Shrops.).[118] In 1825 he appointed his nephew, Robert Lingen Burton, as curate, with a stipend of £100; the next year Burton the elder resigned the vicarage, valued at £240, in favour of his nephew.[119]

Enthusiastically supported by William Gorsuch Rowland, who personally financed major repairs to the decayed church, Robert Lingen Burton strove to develop St Giles's chapel as a regular place of worship within the parish (see below, this section).[120] In 1828, however, Rowland was promoted to the living of St Mary's, Shrewsbury.[121] Successive curates were destined for distinguished careers: Edward Bickersteth, who first published his *Questions Illustrating the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* in 1844 while still curate, was later dean of Lichfield,[122] and William Waltham How (curate, 1848–51), became the first bishop of Wakefield.[123]

The medieval churchwardens and the endowments they administered survived the Reformation. The parochial fund known as the Abbey Church Estate, in the hands of the churchwardens, was worth £40 per annum in 1772.[124] It consisted *c.*1831 of 14½ a. of land, six houses, and ground rents from 11 others. The total rental, £127, was then considered sufficient to cover the maintenance of both Holy Cross and St Giles's churches without the need for a church rate.[125]

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[116] CCEd, 'Oakeley, William (1741-1894)', person ID. 18684, where Forton is not mentioned, but see CCEd, 'Forton', location ID. 2924, which also records several curates there from 1758; SA, 6001/3056: Henry Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, f. 42r (1826); 'Oakeley, Sir Charles, First Baronet (1751–1826)', *ODNB*.

[117] SRO, B/A/1/26, 13 May 1793; CCEd 'Rowland, William Gorsuch (1793–1828)', person ID 19656; memorial plaques in Abbey church.

[118] CCEd, 'Burton, Henry (1779-1831)', person ID 9589; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 150.

[119] SRO, B/A/11/2/C, 31 July 1825; Pigeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, June 1826, f. 24r; J. Burke, *A Genealogic and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland Enjoying Territorial Possessions or High Official Rank* (London, 1838), iv, 263–4.

[120] Pigeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, fos. 37r, 58r; V, 10r, 20r.

[121] SA, P257/W/6/2, 29 Jan. 1828.

[122] *Eddowes's Jnl,* 30 Oct. 1844, 3; *Wellington Jnl*, 15 Sept. 1883, 6; 'Bickersteth, Edward (1814–1892)', *ODNB*.

[123] 'How, William Walsham (1823–1897)', *ODNB*.

[124] SRO, B/V/5/18.

[125] Leighton, 'Notes relating to the Abbey Church Estate' pl. 1; *24th Rep. Com. Char.* H.C. 231, p. 275 (1831), xi.

By 1800 the wide but shallow sanctuary of Holy Cross church was railed on three sides and raised on two steps. The communion table was backed by a large 18th-century wooden altarpiece, which included painted figures of Moses and Aaron.[126] The pulpit and reading desk stood on the south side of the nave at its mid-point facing north. They were faced by regular blocks of pews in the nave[127] and by three galleries in arches of the north arcade.[128] The west end of the south aisle was walled off as a vestry and the west end of the north aisle was used as a school,[129] with its own west doorway.

In the 1820s there were around 60 Easter communicants.[130] Services in the early 19th century were said to have been 'solemn but cheerful', with everyone facing the pulpit.[131] At the 1851 census, there were about 700 sittings and the church was '(ordinarily) well filled'.[132] The re-orderings of 1861–3, 1882–3 and 1886–8 increasingly emphasised the sacrament of the altar, as did that of 1967, which brought the altar forward to the people.[133] Any vicar who attempted rapid change, however, risked conflict with the parishioners, as *c.*1730 when they petitioned the bishop against the vicar's ejection of a painting.[134]

The revival of St Giles's church reported in 1772 may not have been long-lived. By 1808 the church was once again only used for funeral services and for two annual services, held there by custom.[135] In 1825–7 a major restoration programme was undertaken,[136] but regular services were not introduced until 1836 (see below, 'St Giles').

Mid-19th Century to Present

By 1855, Robert Lingen Burton felt he could not manage the full demands of the parish and planned to resign. He was persuaded to continue in post and instead arranged for St Giles to be divided from Holy Cross as a district chapelry, to which, as vicar of Holy Cross, he would appoint himself.[137] On Burton's resignation of Holy Cross in 1857, Philip Whitcombe was

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[126] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 82; J.P. Neale, 'The Abbey Church, Shrewsbury' (engr. 1826; copy in SA, class C 71.4).
[127] BL, Add. MS. 36378, f. 81.
[128] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 82.
[129] *Ibid.*, 76; D.H.S. Cranage, *An Architectural Account of the Churches of Shropshire* (Wellington, Shropshire, 1894–1912), x, 889.
[130] SRO, ?L3916/1/2, no. 47.
[131] *Salopian Shreds & Patches*, viii, 123.
[132] Field, *Church and Chapel*, 72.
[133] Below, this section.
[134] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 148–9.
[135] Owen, *Some Account*, 139; T. Howell, *The Stranger in Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1816), 107; Pigeon, 'Salopian Annals', I, fos. 15r, 59r; IV p. 25bis, f. 31r, V, fos. 20r, 21r, 33r, 78r.
[136] See 'Religious Architecture', below.
[137] SA, P255/F/3/1/1–26.

instituted vicar. Whitcombe, already in his fifties when appointed, remained in post until his death in 1881. His successor was Edward de Villars Bryans, who had long served as curate of St Mary's.[138] Thereafter, for the late 19th century and first half of the 20th, Holy Cross was a mid-career posting.[139] Both Bruce Blaxland (vicar, 1905–25) and, more importantly, Francis Aidan Hibbert (vicar, 1925–30), published historical works. Since *c*.1930 [or Ralph John Charles Lumley (vicar, 1957–83)], however, Holy Cross has been the final pastoral posting before retirement for its incumbents.[140] Conservatism still prevailed in 1986 when a parish meeting passed a motion of no confidence in the vicar after he began opening the church for secular events.[141] The vicar at the time of writing is Revd Dr Tom David Atfield (2018–).

The red-brick mission church of Holy Cross, Cherry Orchard, on the corner of Monkmoor Road and Tankerville Street, designed by A. E. Lloyd Oswell at a cost of £600 with seating for 120, opened in 1885. It was also used as an infants' school for the Abbey Foregate National School.[142] It was still in general use as a church hall in the 1950s. The Shrewsbury Christadelphian congregation took over the premises in 1994 and continued there at the time of writing.[143]

In response to the housing development of the Monkmoor estate in the north of the parish between the wars, a new mission church, St Peter's, was constructed in Monkmoor Road in 1939. The building was intended to serve as a schoolroom and temporary church until a permanent church could be built. That scheme was later abandoned and St Peter's remained in dual use until a church hall designed by David Morris was added in 1992.[144] A suffragan bishop of Shrewsbury was first appointed in 1888.[145] The proposal for the creation of a new diocese of Shrewsbury with Holy Cross as its cathedral church was revived in the early 20th century. The plan was approved by a large majority in the Church Assembly and a bill was passed in the House of Commons, but rejected by the House of Lords in 1926, by 61 votes to 60. The move was still anticipated, and applicants to the benefice of Holy

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[138] *Wellington J*., 28 Jan. 1882, 7.
[139] William Henry Draper (1889–98), W. Leeke (1899–1905), Bruce Blaxland (1905–25), Francis Aidan Hibbert (1925–30): *Crockford's Dir*.
[140] L.A. Wilkinson, Ralph John Charles Lumley (vicar, 1957–83), Frederick Ian Ross (vicar, 1984–2002), Christopher Sidney Sims (vicar, 2003–9), Paul Gregory Firmin (vicar, 2010–18): *Crockford's Dir*.
[141] *Shrews. Chron.* 14 Mar. 1986, p. 6.
[142] SA, DA5/710/7/60, DA5/710/12/40; SA, P250/J/1/1; *Kelly's Directory of Herefordshire & Shropshire, 1895. [Part 2: Shropshire]*, 194.
[143] R. Thornes, L. Leach and J. Davies, *A Gazetteer of Nonconformist Places of Worship in Shrewsbury* (2022), 93–4. http://www.vchshropshire.org/drafts/Nonconformist_Gazetteer_public_text_16022022.pdf m
[144] See below.
[145] *Kelly's Directory of Herefordshire & Shropshire, 1895. [Part 2: Shropshire]*, 192.

Cross were assessed partly for their capacity to lead cathedral services. Nevertheless by 1931 the plan had been quietly shelved.[146]

The Abbey Church Estate, administered by the churchwardens, *c.*1910, consisted of 7 a. of land and six houses, valued at £161 15*s.* a year.[147]

A new Guild of St Winefride was formed in 1987 to support the work of the church.[148]

St Giles

In the early 19th century St Giles was not furnished with pews and the only services held there, other than funerals, were two held by custom to celebrate the 'eel pie' wake (the Sunday before 3 July) and the 'cherry pie' wake (the Sunday after 12 August). On those festivals, Holy Cross church was closed and large numbers attended the special services.[149] The church underwent restoration in 1826–7 (see above). In 1836 regular Sunday services began at St Giles for the neighbourhood's growing population and nine pews were installed.[150] At the 1851 census, there were 196 sittings – about 110 free and about 86 'other', with pew rents yielding £35 per annum; the church was '(ordinarily) well filled'.[151]

In 1857 a district chapelry was formed out of Holy Cross parish, with a perpetual curacy in the gift of the vicar of Holy Cross.[152]

Incumbents of St Giles

Robert Lingen Burton was the first minister of St Giles, from 1857 until his death in 1887. While perpetual curate of Ford (Shrops., Hereford dioc.), Burton had purchased Ford House and other property in Ford village,[153] but by 1861 he was resident for at least some of the year in Shrewsbury, at Abbey House.[154] Burton's successor was Hudleston Stokes, rural dean of Lichfield, who reportedly left the vicarage of Wall (Staffs.), with a net value of £180 per annum, for just £111 per annum at St Giles. Stokes was vicar from 1887 to 1894, when he left for the rectory of Stapleton (Shrops.).[155]

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[146] 'Shrewsbury Abbey Church: Cathedral Foreshadowed', *Wellington J.*, 27 Apr. 1907, 10; 'A Future Cathedral', *Truth*, 10 Sept. 1930, 7; 'Lichfield Diocesan Conference', *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 3 October 1931, 10. Information from Dr William Price whose accounts of these events is anticipated.

[147] SA, 4044/67, ff. 10–12, 27, 71, 73.

[148] I. Ross, *Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul* (1993; copy in SA, D 97 v.f.), 5.

[149] Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', I, fo. 59r; IV, fos. 25*bis*, 31r, V, fos. 19v, 33r, 77r–v; Pidgeon, *Memorials* (1837), 81; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 5 Apr. 1872, 5.

[150] Pidgeon, *Memorials* (1837), 82–3.

[151] C.D. Field, *Church and Chapel in Early Victorian Shropshire*, Shropshire Record Ser. 8 (Keele, 2004), 72.

[152] *Lond. Gaz.* 13 Jan. 1857, 145.

[153] 1841 Census, Ford parish; G. Williams, *The Country Houses of Shropshire* (2021), 258. See *Leeds Times,* 5 May 1860, 3; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 17 Nov. 1875, 1.

[154] Census returns for Holy Cross parish, 1861, 1871, 1881.

[155] *Burton Chron.*, 19 July 1888, 2; *London Evening Standard*, 3 Feb. 1894, 2.

Subsequent vicars of St Giles, however, held the benefice until retirement. Frederick Roberts was vicar of St Giles for over 25 years until his death in 1922.[156] In 1932, on the death of the incumbent D. T. Owen, the living was advertised as worth £525 per annum with a population of less than 900.[157] E. S. Banfield, then rural dean of Shifnal, was instituted in 1947.[158]

The first rector of the parish of St Giles with Sutton Shrewsbury was Philip James Williams, appointed in 1984. He was succeeded in 2014 by the Revd Andrew Knight, the incumbent at the time of writing.[159]

The use of St Giles churchyard as the parish burial ground ceased in 1863.[160]

Thomas Maynard How, brother of the Revd William Waltham How (early in his career, curate of Holy Cross), resided at Nearwell House and was an important patron of St Giles, serving as churchwarden from 1860 to his death in 1903.[161]

St Giles church was formally re-opened in 1872 to celebrate the extension of the church and construction of a new chancel.[162]

Annual parish dinners were regularly held in the 1870s.[163] In 1893 a 'parish room' was erected in Abbey Foregate, designed by A. E. Lloyd Oswell.[164] Around 1900, an annual parochial tea and entertainment was held at the Armoury in the Christmas holidays to raise funds for 'parochial purposes'.[165] The church cricket team, *c*.1905–10, including the vicar, played at a ground on Wenlock Road.[166]

St Giles Church Hall, of prefabricated construction, was erected in 1961 within the new Springfield housing estate, on Sutton Road in Sutton.[167]

In 1983 Sutton was added to the ecclesiastical parish and a united benefice of Shrewsbury St Giles with Sutton and Atcham was formed.[168]

[156] *Birmingham Daily Gazette,* 1 Feb. 1922, 3.
[157] *Lichfield Mercury*, 20 May 1932, 4.
[158] *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 21 June 1947, 3.
[159] Crockford's: https://www.crockford.org.uk/places/10677/the-benefice-of-shrewsbury-(st-giles)-with-sutton-and-atcham
[160] SA, P250/A/4/4, p. [401].
[161] Brass memorial plaque in St Giles church; *Old Salopians Yearbook*, 19 Jan. 1904, quoted at https://stgilesshrewsbury.org.uk/DocumentStore; SA, P255/F/3/1/9.
[162] SA, D 97 v.f.; *Eddowes Jnl*, 10 Apr 1872; *Shrewsbury Chron*., 5 Apr. 1872, 5.
[163] *Eddowes's Jnl*, 10 May 1871, 4.
[164] SA, DA5/710/17/22; SA, P255/J/1–2.
[165] *Wellington Jnl*, 28 Dec. 1901, 6.
[166] *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 30 Apr. 1909, 9.
[167] SA, P89/J/1/2.
[168] *Lichfield Diocesan Dir.* (1990–1), 77.

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE: HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Wendy Horton

The Site

Holy Cross church incorporates the aisled nave, north porch and west tower of the former abbey church which was on the north side of the monastic buildings of Shrewsbury abbey. The abbey was located in an eastern suburb of Shrewsbury, on the outer side of the English Bridge over the River Severn, which leads into the town. The abbey site has undergone several destructive events, starting with the Dissolution in 1540 when the roofs were immediately stripped of lead to prevent a further worship, but the nave of the abbey church was retained for parochial use. Damage was inflicted during the Civil War, and in 1836 when Thomas Telford drove his new London to Holyhead road through the abbey ruins, changing the visual aspect of the church. The setting was further impacted by the construction of a new railway and small station close to the south side of the church in 1866. There were church restorations in 1861–3 and 1882, and major additions to the east end by John Loughborough Pearson RA in 1886–8. From its inception in 1840, the graveyard has been an irregular shape, bound by the original Abbey Foregate on the east, north and north-west sides and Telford's road on the south side, all leading to a point at the west end which is now a forecourt to the magnificent west entrance front.[169] (Figures 1, 2)

The Medieval Church

In late Saxon times, a small wooden chapel dedicated to St Peter was erected on the site by a wealthy man, Siward, adjacent to his hall. It was in a secluded position, separated from the town by the River Severn near to its confluence with the Meole Brook, and appears to have been a small private monastery. No evidence for the Saxon church has been found and potential for its survival is small, but late Saxon charcoal graves excavated in 1896 suggest it had a burial ground. In 1082, Roger de Montgomery, earl of Shrewsbury, granted the church to Odelerius, who travelled to Rome that year and vowed to replace the wooden building with an edifice of stone dedicated to Sts Peter and Paul.[170]

Roger de Montgomery founded Shrewsbury Abbey for the Benedictine Order in 1083, explaining his designs to his nobles and granting the whole eastern suburb for this purpose.

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[169] N. Baker, *Shrewsbury: An Archaeological Assessment of an English Border Town* (Oxford, 2010), 186; J. Newman and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Shropshire* (New Haven, 2006), 518; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 54–5; VCH Shrewsbury part 2, 'Burial grounds', pp. 2–3: http://www.vchshropshire.org/drafts/ShrewsburyPart2/2_9_Burial%20grounds.pdf.

[170] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 2–5; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 91; N. Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey: A Medieval Monastery* (Shrewsbury, 1998), 1.

During that year, he brought over monks from Sées, Normandy, who were skilled in architectural work and they began the construction of the Foregate and monastic offices in or before 1086. At least parts of the abbey church had been built by 1094 when Roger de Montgomery was buried there. The nave also functioned as a parish church and had a vicar before 1255. Particular prominence was given to the west front, facing the English Bridge and Shrewsbury, with access directly from the street. The north porch also faced onto the original road, whilst the south side provided access into the cloisters via two doorways. A plan of *c.*1815 by John Carline the younger shows the outline of the medieval church before the Dissolution. There was an aisled nave and north porch, a large crossing with north and south transepts and central tower, an aisled chancel with a Lady chapel beyond, and a large west tower. Owen and Blakeway give approximate measurements. The overall length was 302 ft, including a nave of 123 ft, and the width between the ends of the transepts was 133 ft. From the Dissolution until Pearson's addition of 1888, Holy Cross church had occupied only the former nave, so the medieval church had been 2.5 times longer, though not an exceptional size for an abbey church. The internal length of Pearson's addition is 65 ft 6 in., leading to a current overall length of *c.*188 ft, still considerably shorter than the medieval predecessor.[171] (Figure 3)

Norman

Although the nave retains much Norman fabric, the western three bays were substantially rebuilt internally to incorporate a large west tower in the late 14th century. The Norman fabric is purple-brown Keele beds sandstone quarried from shallow deposits within the parish, probably from the Belvidere area to the east, which was owned by the abbey. It is found at lower levels of the building and includes pilaster buttresses, which are particularly prominent on the south wall, and string courses. The aisled nave was of six bays, the round-arched west doorway with three orders of roll mouldings on renewed shafts and cushion capitals within a shallow porch projection. Norman fabric survives to shoulder level of the doorway and there were Norman windows to the west ends of the aisles, both replaced later. The north door, within a later porch, has a semi-circular arch with two orders of semi-round mouldings on thick responds with cushion capitals and an outer plain arch. Above the aisles of the eastern three bays are the inner round arches of the Norman triforium galleries divided by pilasters, the outer walls and windows lost by 1658, at least on the north side. Matching

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[171] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 6–8; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 142; Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey: A Medieval Monastery*, 1–3; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517; Shropshire HER PRN 00983; SA, PR/3/263: Plan by John Carline jnr, *c.*1825; see Pearson's plan, Figure 29.

arches at right-angles at the east end, facing into the former crossing, were later infilled with rubble.[172] (Figures 4, 5, 6)

At the east end of the nave are stub walls at right angles, all that remain of the west sides of the transepts. The stub wall of the north transept survives to a higher level than that to the south and has an inserted Decorated window re-using a Norman jamb. Francis Sandford's drawing of 1658 shows round-headed windows in two tiers above this, along with a fragment of the north-west corner of the central tower (see Figure 6). The stub of the south transept has a pair of low round-arched openings. Cranage recorded rebates for doors around the west, cloister-facing, sides of these arches, which he interpreted as book cupboards. Owen and Blakeway, in constrast, believed the arches related to west-facing chantries in the south transept. Above the rebates, Cranage noted the remains of string courses, a corbel for the cloister roof and part of a window. Geophysical surveys in 1995–6 located the Norman two-bay chancel with apsidal-ended ambulatory. It was extended by a narrow rectangular building 18 m long, interpreted as the Lady chapel, probably added in the late 12th or early 13th century.[173] (Figure 7)

Internally, of the six-bay Norman arcades, the eastern three bays remain. Semi-circular arches of two square orders rest on heavy round piers with plain ringed capitals. The north-west arch is not symmetrical, suggesting the arcade was built from the east end. In the centre are full-height rebated piers, thought to have divided the monastic and parochial halves of the nave, and to mark the position of the former rood screen. Immediately west are the springing and responds of Norman arches cut away by the later work. Above the arcade is the Norman triforium, directly aligned and with sturdy round pillars supporting semi-circular arches. The nave arcades join the massive clustered piers at the west end of the former crossing, the attached shafts and responds with scallop capitals. After the Dissolution, the eastern parts of the piers were left exposed outside, but a carving of a dove is preserved on the upper surface of the north pier base on its south-east side. At the east end of the north aisle, leading into the former transept, is a stilted Norman arch with one roll and two square orders, on responds with heavy scallop capitals, which are so large they make the arch unusually narrow. On the upper surface of one base is a carving of a serpent. The corresponding arch in the south aisle

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[172] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517–20; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 68; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 57, 63; D.C. Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes for Shropshire*, Shropshire Record Ser. 1 (Keele, 1997), 97; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 873, 876–8.

[173] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 872: These rebates no longer survive, *ibid*., 886–7; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517–20; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 146; SA, PR/2/328: Drawing by Francis Sandford, 1658; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 59–60, 70; Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey: A Medieval Monastery*, 28–9.

was replaced in the late 14th century, but the Norman plinths remain. Cranage recorded the lower part of the Norman jamb of the easternmost south doorway, now obscured by a chest tomb. The aisles are each half as wide as the nave and were once vaulted, remains including piers with cushion capitals, three against the south wall with small decorative motifs such as hatching and scrollwork. It is not clear when the vaulting was removed, but probably during the medieval period.[174] (Figures 8, 9)

Early English

Holy Cross church has less surviving Early English embellishment than other Shrewsbury churches, perhaps due to the extensive size of the original Norman building. Re-fenestration of the lost parts cannot be ruled out, and the former Lady chapel at the east end would be typical of this period (see above). Towards the west of the south aisle is a round-arched doorway, the attached shafts with filleted roll mouldings with stiff leaf capitals, of late 12th-century appearance though restored in the 19th century. It may have replaced an earlier doorway as there is part of a blocked arch towards the centre of the wall.

The lower storey of the north porch is composed of small blocks of masonry which are later than the Norman work and earlier than its late Perpendicular front. On the east wall is the base of a corbelled chimney stack rising from a hollow-moulded string course, suggesting that the porch was always storied. Inside the porch is a contemporary tunnel vault (see Figure 5), along with the inner bases of the outer doorway. The upper storey was originally accessed via a staircase from a narrow doorway in the north aisle, the lancet head with two rolled and filleted mouldings of early 13th-century form.[175] (Figures 10, 11)

A precinct wall was built around the abbey for defensive purposes following an attack by Llewelyn ap Iorworth in 1215. It was probably built in conjunction with the town walls following an instruction by Henry III. The structure was constructed of local soft green sandstone, and was later supported by timber props dendro-dated to 1268–1310.[176]

Decorated

A cusped two-light Decorated window with quatrefoil under the arch was inserted into the west wall of the north transept, replacing a Norman window. There are mouldings of a former Decorated window at the west end of the south aisle, also replacing a Norman window, which may be that shown in the Buck brothers' engraving of 1731. Internally, towards the east of

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[174] Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 146; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517–19; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 97; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 872–5, 882; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 59.

[175] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 887; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 519.

[176] Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 69, 143.

the south aisle wall is a piscina with cinquefoiled head. The precinct wall was taken down and rebuilt in Keele beds red sandstone in the 14th century, the high structure supported by buttresses and decorated with crenellated parapets.[177] (Figures 12, 13, 14)

Perpendicular

There was a campaign to take down and rebuild the western half of the nave in the final quarter of the 14th century, using red sandstone brought from the abbey's quarries at Eyton-upon-Severn. A large tower, 104 ft high and 25 ft square at the base, was inserted into the western 1.5 bays of the nave. The next 1.5 bays were rebuilt with narrower, two-bay arcades. Tree-ring dates from the belfry floor provide a date range of 1380–95, whilst the style is early Perpendicular but with some elements of the former Decorated style. Externally, the western three bays of the Norman triforium and clerestorey were removed and replaced by a new clerestorey, the fabric continuous with the tower and containing four three-light Perpendicular windows (renewed), under a continuous hoodmould and with plain parapets. The north aisle windows, seen in Sandford's drawing of 1658, appear to be contemporary (See Figure 2).[178]

Immediately above the west entrance, the tower has an unusually large window with ogee hoodmould decorated with crockets, its finial reaching the string course to the upper stage (see Figure 1). The window has seven lights and two transoms under a pointed arch, the style attributed to William Driffield, mason, who undertook similar work at Lichfield Cathedral. Beneath the two transoms, the lights have cinquefoiled heads but those in the bottom tier were always infilled with masonry. Above the transoms, the three outer lights are beneath sub-arches with Decorated-style motifs, but rising above the central light and filling the space under the arch are rectilinear panels in typical Perpendicular style. The Norman west doorway needed strengthening to support the weight of the tower, so three inner orders of white sandstone with wave and roll mouldings were added, which were restored in the 19th century. The flanking pilaster buttresses were rebuilt with pointed canopied tops and included at mid-level canopied statue niches containing figures of St Peter and St Paul (renewed). The short second stage has pairs of two-light belfry openings to each face, the lights cusped and with quatrefoils over. Immediately above the finial of the great west window is an ornate canopied niche of grey stone containing a well-carved statue of a man in

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[177] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 884; SA, PR/3/271: Engraving by Buck brothers, 1731; SA, 7675/99: David Parkes, painting; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 143.

[178] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 57; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 146, 165; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 95, 97; SA P250/B/32/1; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 518; SA PR/2/328.

armour traditionally identified as Edward III. Revd Blakeway had an old painting of the church showing the west tower with an additional fourth stage of pale grey stone. This is entirely plausible as several Shrewsbury churches have Perpendicular upper stages built of Grinshill stone, whilst it is likely that the top of the tower was taken down during the Civil War (see below).[179]

Internally, the fine pointed tower arch is necessarily tall to avoid its apex being visible from the outside through the west window. It has three orders of narrow wave or ogee mouldings in polychrome sandstone on small ringed imposts, the responds with wider wave mouldings. Two-bay arcades of red sandstone were inserted into the western part of the nave, the narrow pointed arches with ogee and sunk-chamfered mouldings on quatrefoil-shaped piers with fillets and small ringed capitals. The western bays of the aisles were altered at the same time, and the vaulting must have been removed if still present. At the east end of the south aisle, the arch leading into the crossing was rebuilt with a four-centred head on responds, all with wave mouldings. This resulted in a wider doorway, whilst the adjacent doorway leading into the south aisle from the cloisters was also widened and a four-centred arch inserted.[180] (Figures 15, 16, 17)

The north porch was remodelled in late Perpendicular style using large blocks of red sandstone (see Figure 10). It was of three storeys with tall battlemented parapets and was given a new front containing a tall square-headed doorcase of white Grinshill stone with a hoodmould with head bosses and narrow ogee mouldings. Inset is a pointed-arched doorway with similar mouldings on attached shafts, the spandrels decorated with shields inside quatrefoils. The upper storeys have two-light windows under nearly flat arches, the lights with cinquefoiled heads. These are flanked by tall statue niches which had ornate canopies in 1658, that to the right with a female robed figure said to represent St Margaret. On the outer sides of the niches are shields within quatrefoils. In the southwest angle of the porch is an octagonal staircase turret with slit windows and a small pointed west door. The far west window of the north aisle was replaced by a three-light square-headed window. [181] (Figure 18)

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[179] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 518; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 875–8; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 62–3; SA, 6001/199: Hugh Owen, *Some Account of the Ancient and Present State of Shrewsbury* (1808) interleaved with watercolours and drawings, 51.

[180] Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 146; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 95, 97; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 519-20; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 875–6, 883.

[181] SA, 6001/372/1, f. 53: Revd Edward Williams, Watercolours, 1788; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517–20; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 96–7; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 887–8; SA, PR/2/328.

The Post Medieval Church

Immediately following the Dissolution in 1540, the roofs of the monastic buildings were stripped of lead, with the exception of the nave and west claustral building. The latter had Norman herring-bone masonry, but the bays adjacent to the church were rebuilt as a dwelling in the late 16th or early 17th century with timber-framed additions. The nave of the church was retained for parochial use, the central steeple was taken down and the choir left as a ruin until 1740 when it was cleared away. In 1566 a new east end for the parochial church was formed by building a wall between the two large western piers of the Norman crossing. It was lit by a Perpendicular-style window with two transoms, reconstructed from medieval fragments thought to be from the north side of the church. The arches at the east ends of the aisles were infilled with masonry and small square two-light windows. The south aisle may not have been fenestrated until after the Dissolution as it faced into the cloisters.[182] (Figures 19, 20)

The north porch has panelled and studded doubled doors with a moulded timber pediment dated 1640. During the Civil War, when parliamentary forces held a garrison in Shrewsbury from 1645, they inflicted wilful damage on the church to prevent it being taken by Royalist forces approaching from the south and east. They reduced the height of the tower, given its proximity to the English Bridge, removing the probable upper stage of pale grey stone (see above). Lead sheets on the roof inscribed with the date 1647 were found at their current level during repairs to the tower in *c*.1906 (see below). Sandford's drawing of 1658 shows the tower with a ragged top, whilst the battlemented brick parapets were said to have been erected in 1690. The parliamentarians also slighted the walls of the church, particularly on the north side of the nave, the repairs recorded inside by a stone inscribed 'Hughe Davis and John Powell, Wardens, Anno 1649'. Two breaches were repaired in 1652, then another in the west end of the north aisle in 1653 when the window was replaced. Inside, a wainscot partition was installed across the western bay of the north aisle to form a vestry in 1653/4, and a belfry floor was inserted into the tower chamber in 1673, the date on one of the beams, which obscured the west window.[183]

The clerestorey over the eastern half of the nave collapsed and building work took place to make good the damage in 1704–6. The clerestorey itself was not reconstructed, resulting in

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[182] SA, 6001/372/1, f. 53; SA, PR/3/323: Etching, William Pearson, *c*.1807; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 114, 186; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 97.

[183] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 870, 879–80; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 519; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, figure opposite 60, 62–3, 77; SA, PR/3/271: Engraving by Buck brothers, 1731; SA, PR/2/328: Francis Sandford, 1658; SA, P250/B/32/1–2.

a lower roof-line over this half of the church. Six tall gabled dormers of brick and stone were added over the south aisle, dated by an inscribed roof beam to 1704, and seen in an engraving of 1807 by William Pearson and a drawing by John Buckler. The fenestration is irregular, the gable lights not always aligned with the windows below. In 1729, the eastern three bays of the north aisle roof were replaced by tall gables and the windows were heightened but retained parts of their original tracery. The only surviving late 14th-century window was that to the west of the porch, as shown by Revd Edward Williams. It was noted by observers that the work on both aisles was unsympathetic in character.[184] (Figures 19, 20, 21)

In 1714 a wainscot partition was inserted across the west bay of the south aisle and the vestry was moved there from the corresponding position in the north aisle. The latter space had become a school-room with an external west doorway by 1731. The south vestry received a new three-light west window before 1809.[185] (see Figure 13).

In 1797 the north porch was restored by John Carline and Henry Linell. The battlemented parapets of great character were removed and replaced by a small front gable bearing a quatrefoil and plain side parapets. The mutilated statue niches with ornate square canopied tops were also rebuilt, in a wretched style, in the assessment of Owen and Blakeway.[186] (see Figures 10, 18)

In *c.*1800 the doorway into the south aisle which had led from the cloisters was blocked up, a recess formed on the inside and the exterior dressings renewed. The narrow round-arched door under the west window of the north aisle, used by the school, was opened up in the 19th century having been previously blocked.[187]

A handsome new organ by Gray of London was erected in 1806 at a cost of 365 guineas raised by public subscription. It was situated on a new west gallery supported by a Gothic-style stone screen with three arches divided by buttresses rising into pinnacles. Above was a blind arcade forming the gallery front bearing the coats of arms of the benefactors. The gallery was extended in 1817, primarily to accommodate children and at the expense of the National School. There were also galleries on the north side which were removed in 1808. (Figure 22) [188]

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[184] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 874, 880–1; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 97; H. Southam, *TSAS*, 27 part 2 (1904), Miscellanea, x–xi; SA, PR/3/323: William Pearson, *c.*1807; SA, 6001/372/1 f. 53; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 77, Drawing by John Buckler: South view, early 1820s; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 69.

[185] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 884–5; SA, PR/3/271: Buck brothers, 1731; SA 6001/299: Plan, 1770.

[186] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 68–9; SA, 6001/199: interleaved drawing.

[187] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 880, 883: At the time of writing, the north-west bay was a coal store; Newport and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 519; SA, 6001/199.

[188] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 82; Howell, *Stranger*, 94; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 871; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 81, Drawing by John Buckler: Interior looking west, May 1821.

In 1814 the belfry floor inserted in 1673 was removed by the curate, W. G. Rowland, and the heraldic stained glass was replicated using seventeenth-century drawings held by the College of Arms (see stained glass, below). The blocked south tower windows were opened with new tracery in 1820. A full-width neo-Norman stone reredos of five round arches, the central one higher, was installed by John Carline in 1839, replacing a wooden screen depicting Moses and Aaron. Carline's reredos is shown in a photograph of *c*.1880, along with a stone altar rail which he added in 1845. The pulpit, adjacent to the south-east arcade pier, was said to be carved with foliage and tracery.[189] (Figure 23)

Revd Richard Scott (d. 1848), the great benefactor of Shrewsbury churches and who is commemorated inside the church, was responsible for a new east window consisting of triple stepped lights with new stained glass inserted in *c*.1836 by John Carline. Revd Scott also funded six new windows and parapets for the south aisle in *c*.1841 and west windows for both aisles. New statues of St Peter and St Paul were carved in 1841 by John Carline and installed in the existing canopied niches flanking the west window. The previous St Peter had fallen in 1780 and St Paul before that. The west doorway was restored, the jambs and capitals replaced and the inner orders renewed, whilst the sill of the west window was rebuilt.[190] (Figures 1, 4, 24)

Thomas Telford had been planning a new London to Holyhead road since the 1820s. His proposed route in Shropshire led directly from Wellington to Chirk, bypassing Shrewsbury to the north through the village of Hadnall. The route was surveyed in detail by John Macneill in November 1831 and the plan deposited with the county. Many townspeople felt this route would be detrimental to commerce in Shrewsbury, including those businesses providing accommodation for travellers. Following a meeting at the town hall, a committee was established in January 1830 to petition parliament for the original route through Shrewsbury to be maintained. This was successful and in 1836 work on the section approaching Shrewsbury commenced. It passed immediately adjacent to the south side of the the Abbey church, affecting its setting, and destroyed all that was left of the monastic buildings except for the north lean-to of the west claustral range which butted against the church and was used as a savings bank. The latter was demolished in 1841 improving the front aspect of the church.[191]

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[189] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 77, 82; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 876; SA, PH/S/13/A/2/3.

[190] SA, PH/S/13/A/1/57: East window by John Carline; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 518; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 876–7; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 97.

[191] SA, DP 234; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, 1 Dec. 1829, 8 Jan. 1830; SA, 6001/130, Pidgeon MSS, 1837; B. Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges. The Suburbs of Shrewsbury, 1760–1960* (2006), 48.

A programme of restoration was undertaken in 1861–3 by Samuel Pountney Smith, architect, involving the nave, aisles, tower, pews, organ and heating system. Minute books suggest the work was carried out piecemeal as and when sufficient donations had been received. The inner semi-circular arches of the Norman triforium had been infilled after their galleries were removed. These blockings were replaced by polychrome stonework with pointed lights and roundels in the style of plate-tracery, enhancing the exterior appearance. (see Figure 21) The blocked north tower windows were also opened up and re-fenestrated. Internally, Pountney Smith removed the west gallery and organ, took down the partition wall of the former school-room in the north-west bay, and relocated the organ there. During the course of the work, the organ was temporarily put onto a moveable platform against the north wall of the tower chamber. A plan of 1866 with numbered pews and a list of freehold sittings shows the organ in its new location, whilst a new elaborately carved stone pulpit was also installed. A decision was made in June 1863 to erect a shallow inner west porch. The Gothic-style structure of pale grey stone has a four-centred arch with quatrefoils in the spandrels and battlemented parapets.[192] (Figure 25)

The coming of the railways further affected the setting of Holy Cross church. The Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway, which passed between between the church and the English Bridge, had opened in 1852, but more damaging to the setting was the Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway which began in 1866. A small terminus station was built on the site of the abbot's lodging on the south side of Telford's road. The line was not a commercial success but had a variety of owners and functions, including in the Second World War when it was used to transport ordnance to a depot in Nesscliff. The last train left Abbey station in March 1960 and in 2011–12 the building was restored as a heritage attraction. The station yard subsequently became a car park.[193]

Permission was received for re-ordering the church in September 1882, the scheme undertaken by J. L. Randal, architect. Three tombs were moved from the south-east corner to the tower chamber, whilst the organ was moved from the north-west corner to the east end of the south aisle. A short choir was provided with facing clergy and choir stalls, children's pews behind to the north, and two reading desks. Randal's arrangement did not last long, being followed in 1886–8 by J. L. Pearson's major restoration.[194] (Figure 26)

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[192] SA, P250/B/27/2/2: Minutes; SA, P250/B/41/2: Plan, 1866; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 874.
[193] Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 48–9; Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust, 'Abbey Foregate Project': https://shrewsburyrailwayheritage.com/abbey-station
[194] SA, P250/B/41/3: Faculty including plans, 1882.

John Loughborough Pearson RA (1817–97) was a Gothic-revival architect based in London who specialised in ecclesiastical buildings. In a long and productive career, he was particularly renowned for reviving the art of stone vaulting. His original design proposals for Holy Cross church were extremely ambitious, perhaps with a view to the building becoming a cathedral. He reconstructed the plan-form of the original abbey church including the crossing with transepts, a central tower and spire, and a large chancel with small eastern apse and ambulatory. Additions were to include a two-storey south porch with stair turret, matching that on the north side, and clergy and choir vestries in the angle of the north transept and chancel. Internally, the font remained adjacent to the south pier of the tower arch, whilst a new pulpit was constructed against the north-west crossing pier. There was much ornamentation shown in the design drawings dated March 1886, in a combination of Gothic styles. The south porch was clearly a focal point, with doorcase to match the north doorway, a band of traceried statue niches above, and flanking buttresses with statue niches rising into tall pinnacles. The outer walls of the Norman triforium galleries were to be reconstructed with neo-Norman windows under gables and a new clerestory. Also included was a proposal for a lesser scheme with a conventional two-bay chancel. There were two alternatives, one retaining the transepts and one without, the drawings showing significantly less ornamentation.[195] (Figures 27, 28)

Lack of funding meant the alternative, least expensive scheme was pursued, perhaps with a view to extending the church later. Following a vestry meeting held in June 1886, a faculty was obtained on 4 August of that year. It stated that a restoration was required, with the addition of a new chancel with vestries and an organ chamber on its north side. Along with new furnishings, the pulpit was to be moved in front of the north-east crossing pier and the aisle seating re-positioned to face forwards. The faculty, as usual, stated that any graves encountered had to be decently re-interred, and in this case there were many graves on the site of the proposed chancel. These were marked up on a separate plan in July 1886 by John Nurse, surveyor, who made a list of the grave slab inscriptions including name, date of death and age.[196] (Figures 29, 30)

Constructed of pale red sandstone in lancet-style, Pearson's addition consists of a lofty two-bay chancel with short flanking north and south chapels. The roof height was designed to match the 14th-century nave roof and is continuous with it. Detail includes tall stepped angle

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[195] 'John Loughborough Pearson', *Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660–1980*: scottisharchitects.org.uk; SA, P250/B/30/2–4.

[196] SA, P250/B/30/1: Faculty including plans, 1886; SA, P250/B/50/1.

buttresses with gablets, white sandstone dressings, parapets supported on decorative corbels and tall lancets linked by continuous hoodmoulds and sill bands. The east end has three tall pointed lancets and a sexfoil in the gable. Ragged stub walls demarcating the unbuilt transepts were constructed at the ends of the chapels, with small niches built into them to give the impression of a ruin. The end walls have tall round arches designed to lead into the unbuilt transepts infilled with sandstone ashlar and windows, stepped triple lights to the south and two-light plate tracery windows to the north. In the east angles of the chancel and chapels are small single-storey lean-tos with short lancets and a small north doorway.[197] (Figure 31)

Inside, Pearson's fine and lofty interior contains a choir or quasi-crossing in neo-Norman style to match the existing Norman clustered piers with their responds and scallop capitals. There is a high round chancel arch with square mouldings, the remaining crossing arches with continuous semi-circular mouldings, and a wood-panelled ceiling. (Figures 32, 33)

The sanctuary is in Early English style with more ornamentation than the plain lancet-style exterior. In line with Pearson's expertise, it has a fine stone vaulted ceiling with roll-moulded ribs on long corbels with ringed shafts, including eight ribs in front of the east window which give the impression of an apse. The windows are at a high level with splayed jambs. Below them, a gallery runs around the Sanctuary. On the south side of the Sanctuary are four pointed arches over three sedilia and a piscina. The arches to the north and south lean-tos have narrow ringed shafts and responds, and the lean-tos have stone groin vaulting. The organ is sited in the north chapel, the vestry is in the north-east lean-to, whilst the south chapel and lean-to now form the Lady chapel. Pearson also replaced much of the tracery of the tower west window.[198]

In July 1893, a faculty was obtained for raising the roof of the nave and rebuilding the clerestory along with other improvements. This followed a vestry meeting in April where it was announced that an anonymous gift had been offered to fund this work and it was resolved to accept it immediately. The project was undertaken by the architect's son, Frank Loughborough Pearson, to the exact design shown in his father's drawings and in neo-Norman style. The clerestory has pilaster strips dividing the bays, plain corbelled parapets and round-arched lights with continuous impost bands. The internal roof structure has plain tie beams and collars (see Figure 4).[199]

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[197] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 517–19.
[198] SA, P250/B/30/13.
[199] SA, P250/B/31/1: Faculty; SA, P250/B/30/4; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 518; 'Frank Loughborough Pearson', *Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1660–1980*: scottisharchitects.org.uk; SA, PR/2/323: Francis Sandford, 1658. The arrangement is not dissimilar to the original Norman work.

Structural issues arose with the tower after 1900 and reports and specifications were submitted in 1904–6 by Harold Brakspear FSA, architect, of Corsham. Cracks had appeared near the south-west angle and north-east stair turret due to the vibration caused by ringing the bells, and he recommended re-hanging the bells on a new frame. There was also considerable weathering on the south and west elevations which required making good, along with replacing the string course beneath the west window and parts of the sill, jambs and quoins. Some of the lead sheets on the roof required replacement, including those inscribed in 1647 (see above). The estimated cost was £1,300 excluding the re-hanging of the bells. After he obtained access, Brakspear reported (in July 1906) that the cracking was worse than expected, especially in the north-east corner. Mr Bowdler, builder, was asked to undertake the work using red Runcorn sandstone bound by lime mortar. New lead sheets were laid over the existing inscribed sheets on the roof, with the date and names of the vicar and churchwardens.[200]

A report on re-hanging the bells was produced in March 1909 by George Fellowes Prynne of Westminster. He felt the walls had not been sufficiently strengthened by Brakspear and suggested that bell ringing should be abandoned. In 2015, eight bells were located above the tower chamber, which were chimed and not rung using the Ellacombe chiming mechanism.[201]

Furnishings

A disused font of 1653 is on display between the chancel and Lady chapel. The wide and shallow circular basin has four heads biting drapery, the latter continuing around the rim, with foliage and flowers below. It was found in the Abbey gardens and reinstated in the early 19th century, explaining its eroded and mutilated form. A medieval cross-head with carved figures on each face, now at St Giles's church, was used as the stem. In 1845, the Norman font at St Giles' was in use at Holy Cross church. Conversely, the wide stone basin font with pronounced round mouldings on a thick stem of paler stone, was removed to St Giles in the 1820s before being returned. It is adjacent to the south pier of the tower arch and is reputed to be the upside-down base of a Roman Tuscan column although this has not been verified.[202] (Figure 34)

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[200] SA, P250/B/32/1–2.
[201] SA, P250/B/32/3; 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 29.
[202] Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 98; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 874; SA, 6001/199: interleaved drawing; BL, Add Ms 36378 ff. 43, 79, 85, Drawings by John Buckler: Font with drapery on a cross-head stem; basin font removed to St Giles' church in the 1820s.

A mid 12th-century pillar piscina on a tall stem, consisting of a narrow bowl with cable mouldings and decorated with animals and leaves, is located in the north aisle. It was part of a collection in John Carline's garden, later the grounds of the Technical College, and was donated by the Corporation of Shrewsbury in 1901.[203]

Mounted on the north arcade of the nave is a rectangular stone block, the carved front depicting Virgin and child under an ogee canopy with cusping and finials, probably of 14th-century date. Although it is about the size of a medieval cross-head, there are no carvings on the faces at right-angles and a moulding on the left suggests it may have been part of a larger piece.[204] (Figure 35)

On display in the north aisle are two stone slabs with carved Decorated arcades. Cranage believed they were from a chantry dedicated to St Winefride and part of a screen or reredos. The cult of St Winefride attracted pilgrims to the abbey church up until the early 15th century. The larger part is well-detailed, the five niches with cusped ogee arches with crockets, divided by buttresses. The left arch is wider and broken off at the left end, and in the 19th century contained remnants of a crucifixion sculpture, suggesting this was the central panel with four lost niches to the left. On the rear side are trefoiled arches containing shields, so the screen was meant to be seen from both sides. The smaller fragment has three surviving niches in the same style, the right end broken off, and retains figures of St John the Baptist to the left, and probably St Winefride in the centre and St Beuno to the right. It may originally have joined the left end of the larger piece or been placed at right-angles. This smaller slab was brought from Revd Hugh Owen's garden, before which it was built into the gateway arch of the English Bridge explaining its eroded and smoke-blackened appearance.[205] (Figures 34, 36)

The polygonal red sandstone pulpit by John Pearson has inset white stone panels carved with saints and angels standing on beasts, on a corbelled stem and with curved steps. There is a wooden triptych behind the altar, designed by Pearson but painted and gilded by Clayton and Bell, with a Crucifixion in the centre flanked by four saints with outer wings depicting the apostles. The oak choir and clergy stalls have ornate traceried arcading to their fronts. The Lady chapel has a neo-Norman stone reredos by A. E. Lloyd Oswell, architect, with an

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[203] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 875.

[204] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Historic England, Images, Card 5094/28, 1958.

[205] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 881–2; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 98; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 73–4; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 167.

ornamented round arch enclosing a carving of the Nativity by Robert Bridgeman. It was a gift in memory of Mrs Juson in 1901.[206] (Figure 37)

A new organ by William Hill & Sons was installed in the north chapel in 1911, replacing that of 1806 and costing £850. The organ case of pale panelled wood was designed in 1937 by Sir C. A. Nicholson.[207]

Monuments

Towards the east end of the south aisle, under the recess formed by the blocked doorway, is the eroded effigy of a knight wearing chain-mail and a surcoat and holding a long sword. Although said to represent Roger de Montgomery, founder of the abbey, the style of the attire and the filleted roll moulding around the north and east edges of the slab in Early English style, suggest an early to mid 13th-century date. It was said by Owen and Blakeway that the Heralds found the monument amongst the ruins of the abbey church in 1623, and believing it to be Earl Roger, asked for its reinstatement inside the church, after which it was placed in the south aisle under the east window. On their visit in 1633, the Heralds placed an inscription inside the coffin. The tomb was moved at right-angles into the south doorway recess in 1807 and Pidgeon noted in June 1826 that it had lately been lifted onto a chest with Gothic-style arcading. Pidgeon also reported the discovery of a plain stone coffin about 3 ft below ground in the former cloisters close to the south doorway, which he had no doubt belonged to Hugh, 2nd earl of Shrewsbury, who was killed by an arrow in 1098. The coffin was left *in situ*.[208] (Figure 38)

Of interest in the centre of the south aisle is the lid of a stone coffin decorated with a large foliate cross and priestly figure, dated to *c*.1300 and brought from St Giles's church. (It is described under St Giles' church, see below.) In the north aisle opposite the porch, and brought from old St Chad's church, is a well-preserved grey stone effigy of a robed figure praying with his head on two cushions and a lion under his feet. The coif over his head suggests a judge, the style dateable to *c*.1300. At the west end of the south aisle are two white stone bearded and robed figures, possibly representing late 14th- or 15th-century hermits. They were brought from St Alkmund's church and had been aligned head to toe on a long tomb chest divided by a buttress and bearing traceried panels with shields. Nearby is a grey

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[206] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 870; 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 24.

[207] 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 17, 26.

[208] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 99; Owen, *Some Account*, 131–2; Howell, *Stranger*, 92; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. i, 45; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (26 June 1826); Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 889–90; SA, 6001/130: Henry Pidgeon MSS, 1837.

stone effigy of a knight in chain-mail holding a large sword and with legs crossed over a lion, of *c*.1270 and thought to have come from Wombridge Priory.[209] (Figures 39, 40)

Three large chest tombs with painted effigies were brought from other Shropshire churches when they were rebuilt. Placed in the south aisle was a large alabaster tomb bearing effigies of William Charlton (d. 1544) and his wife, Anne, the sides decorated with Perpendicular-style arcading with ogee canopies within which are angels and figures bearing shields (see Figure 14). The tomb stood in Wellington churchyard for about 30 years after the old church was demolished in 1788, but as the alabaster was being badly damaged by weathering, it was taken to Holy Cross where it was restored and painted. The second chest tomb was brought from St Alkmund's churchyard in 1824 and is a memorial to Alderman William Jones (d. 1612) and his wife Eleanor (d. 1623), the sides bearing Greek-style motifs and shields. It was placed at the upper end of the south aisle and restored and beautified by their descendant, T.T. Jones. Already present in the north aisle was the Elizabethan chest tomb representing Sir Richard Onslow, speaker of the House of Commons (d. 1571) and his wife, the side panels divided by balusters depicting two sons and four daughters and several coats of arms. It was brought from old St Chad's church, where it was situated under the arch between the chancel and Lady chapel, following its collapse in 1788. The positions of these chest tombs have been altered, the Jones and Charlton tombs now in the north aisle and the Onslow tomb in the south aisle. There are 18th-century grave slabs laid on the floor, particularly towards the east, many carved with ornate heraldic emblems.[210]

There are many wall monuments dating from the 17th century onwards. In the north-west corner is a crude bust of a bearded man, framed by black Corinthean columns supporting a cornice with heraldic emblem. Dedicated to Alderman John Lloyd (d. 1647) and his wife, Rebecca, daughter of Thomas Wingfield, it was brought from St Alkmund's church following its demolition in 1794. It was formerly located at the east end of the south aisle, where it had been in St Alkmund's. On the south wall is a large cartouche with exuberant foliage and swags, surmounted by an urn and cherub head, dedicated to Thomas Rocke (d. 1678). To the right is a very large classical-style monument signed by the designer, C. Conny, dedicated to Sir Richard Prince (d. 1665) and his son, Philip. It has a black marble oval tablet on a white background with swags over the top, weeping putti to the sides and a

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[209] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 99; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 890; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 163–5 including drawings, one copied from an original by Revd Edward Williams.

[210] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 166–9; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', I (9 Aug.1824); 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 21.

cornice bearing a heraldic emblem surmounted by two putti holding a crown. Beneath is a winged skull and foliage. Also in the south aisle is a monument to Edward Baldwyn (d. 1735), with polychrome Ionic columns supporting a triangular pediment with an urn, and a heraldic emblem beneath. The north aisle includes a monument by John van der Hagen, sculptor, dedicated to Thomas Jenkins (d. 1730) and his wife, Gerturde (d. 1767), with fluted consoles supporting a cornice with draped urn fronting a grey obelisk. To its west is a Gothic stone monument to Edward Jenkins of Charlton Hill (d. 1820) by J. and J. Carline, a tablet within a cinquefoiled arch under an open pediment, between pilasters rising into decorated pinnacles. Also on the north side is a tablet surmounted by a draped urn against a grey obelisk, dedicated to Samuel Scoltock, architect (d. 1819). On the north wall of the nave is an unusual monument to Nathaniel Betton (d. 1800) and members of his family, with a carving in relief of a youth writing.[211] (Figures 41, 42)

At the west end of the south aisle is a large Gothic-style monument of grey stone dedicated to Revd Richard Scott (d. 1848), benefactor of Shrewsbury churches, raised as a mark of gratitude by the parishioners of Holy Cross and St Giles churches. It was designed by John Carline and carved by Richard Dodson. A panel under a four-centred arch lists his projects, all under a shallow ornamented pediment. Adjacent to the right is a free-standing monument to Mary Anne Burd (d. 1859), a cylinder supporting a statue of a woman holding a cross and Bible, by Peter Hollins. On the north wall of the tower chamber is a Gothic-style stone war memorial with battlements, under which is an arch containing two ogee-arched panels with lists of names, divided by an inverted sword, with an inscription beneath reading, 'In memory of those officers and men of this parish who fell in the Great War 1914-19'.[212]

Stained Glass

The west window of the tower was filled with armorial stained glass during the reign of Richard II, as part of the original construction of the tower. In the opinion of Owen and Blakeway,[213] the heraldry suggests a date of *c*.1388, which correlates with the dendrochronological dates of 1380–95 (see above). A sketch of the window was made by Francis Sandford in 1658 and deposited in the Heralds' College, along with descriptive notes made by Sir William Dugdale in 1663. The window was partly obscured in 1673 when a belfry floor was inserted. By the time the full window was revealed by removal of the belfry

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[211] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520–1; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 888–91; SA-IMG2428: Mytton collection; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 155–8, 170.
[212] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520.
[213] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 76–80 and plates.

floor in 1814, none of the medieval armorial glass remained. Replacement glass was made in 1814 by John Betton, copying Sandford's drawings. The project was funded and supervised by Revd W.G. Rowland, and further armorial glass was added to the lower lights in 1839 by David Evans. Towards the east of the north aisle is a window by John Betton, 1806, depicting St Peter, the arms of Lord Berwick, and the armorial glass of the former incumbents of Holy Cross, finishing with Revd Burton, 1804. This window was formerly at the east end of the aisle and was a gift of Lord Berwick. The stained glass in the east window formed part of Pearson's restoration of 1888. It is by J. H. Powell for Robert Hardman & Co. and depicts the Crucifixion in the central lancet, flanked by St Peter and St Paul in the outer lancets. The Lady chapel window, by T. D. Randall, 1954, depicts St Mary, but also includes some old continental glass. Two late 20th-century windows are by Jane Grey, one in the north aisle commemorating St Winefride (1991), another in the south aisle depicting St Benedict but also in memory of the Shropshire author Edith Pargeter (Ellis Peters) who died in 1995.[214] (Figures 23, 43)

Graveyard

The high crenellated enclosure wall constructed in the 14th century is shown in a painting by David Parkes (1763–1833) with a four-centred arched gateway at the east end. It is also shown in a drawing by John Buckler and on John Carline's plan of *c.*1825, extant to the east of the church and joining its north-east corner. By the late 17th century, the enclosed space had become gardens, described by Celia Fiennes in 1698 as having gravel walks, a green house, evergreens and citrus trees. There was a larger area beyond, on the site of the monastic cemetery, with fine grass walks. The southern half of the gardens was destroyed by Telford's new road in 1836. In 1840, the Abbey Cemetery was established by a private Act of Parliament, the dual purposes being to provide a new burial ground and protect the setting of the church. The remaining sections of the enclosure wall were removed soon after. A large plan of the cemetery made on cloth in 1868 shows the current boundary, the area given as 7360 square yards. No new graves were cut after 1890. Low kerb stones surround the disused graveyard which includes mature trees. At the east end is a granite sculpture marking the centenary of Wilfred Owen's birth, commissioned in 1993 and by Paul de Monchaux. It is

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[214] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 77–80; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 870, 882; 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 23, 25, 29.

named 'Symmetry' and bears the inscription, 'I am the enemy you killed, my friend'.[215]
(Figure 44, also 3)

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE: ST GILES

Wendy Horton

Setting

Little is known of the medieval hospital of St Giles but Owen and Blakeway reported that considerable remains of its foundations were visible west of the church. The hospital buildings also extended to the north, including the site of the former almshouses. By the turn of the 20th century, Cranage noted that there was nothing left to see. Wenlock Road, the main route to Worcester which was turnpiked in 1752, passes to the west of the church, and its widening over the years, along with suburban development, must have removed all traces. Blocks of old red sandstone are visible in the lowest levels of the west pavement boundary, possibly re-used from the hospital buildings.[216]

The Medieval Church

The church began as the chapel of the adjoining medieval hospital and was first recorded in 1136. It was a leper hospital so was located on the periphery of the town, overseen by Shrewsbury Abbey, later Holy Cross church. All the major styles of church architecture, Norman, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular were present in the chapel, so it must have been viewed as worthy of investment and embellishment throughout the medieval period. The appearance and development of the medieval church can be re-created from 18th- and 19th-century depictions and descriptions, including architectural drawings of 1854 by Ewan Christian. Successive restorations and enlargements during the 19th century have reduced the medieval character of the building.

Much of the south wall of the nave is 12th century, the fabric consisting of irregular red sandstone with a chamfered plinth and the lower part of a pilaster buttress between the windows. To the west of the south wall is a Norman round-arched doorway, mainly of red sandstone and with two orders of continuous round mouldings. The plinth continues around

[215] SA, 7675/99: David Parkes; SA, 6001/199; SA, PR/3/263: John Carline, plan, *c*.1825; BL, Add Ms 36378, f. 58, Drawing by John Buckler: East view, 1813-14; Owen, *Some Account*, 113–14; Howell, *Stranger*, 155; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 187; Baker, *Shrewsbury Abbey: A Medieval Monastery*, 17; SA, P250/V/6/1, V/2/2; 'Shrewsbury Abbey, Guide' (2015 revision), 17; VCH Shrewsbury part 2, 'Burial grounds', pp. 2–3.
[216] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 174–5; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 915; B. Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges. The Suburbs of Shrewsbury, 1760–1960* (2006), 68.

the south-west angle, suggesting this was the original position of the west end. (Figures 45, 46)

The north entrance was used by the lepers of the adjoining medieval hospital. Little remains of the original 12th-century north wall as an aisle was added during the early 13th century, but the arch from the Norman door is said to have been re-used for a window. The Early English aisle had a pointed doorway, drawn in detail by John Buckler in 1821, a tall west lancet, graduated buttress and three-bay arcade consisting of pointed arches on circular columns with moulded capitals. Massive square piers were attached to the north sides of the columns, but these may have been parts of the original 12th-century wall along with the stubs at each end. This arrangement is shown in a plan of 1768 and suggests a somewhat crude construction technique. All these features are corroborated by Ewan Christian's drawings of 1854 and early 19th-century paintings. A decorative frieze of sunk quatrefoils was added to the north sides of the massive square piers, possibly at a later date.[217] (Figures 47, 48, 49)

Embellishment occurred in the early 14th century when three Decorated windows were installed, in the south walls of the nave and chancel and the east end of the north aisle. The latter is distinctive, with three heavily cusped lights and two mouchettes over, and was later reconstructed elsewhere. A tomb recess was probably built inside the south chancel wall (see monuments, below), whilst nearby to the west, in the south nave wall, was a trefoil-headed piscina.[218]

In the 15th century, the nave was raised by c.1 m. above the original wall plate using large blocks of coursed white and red sandstone, visible in the south elevation and shown in Revd Edward Williams' watercolour of 1788. The internal roof structure is contemporary and has trusses with large cambered tie beams, arched braces and collars. The original east end truss has tie beam and arched brace and was above the Perpendicular chancel arch. Of red sandstone, not the more common white sandstone of this period and possibly from the abbey's quarries, it has diagonally-set piers, squared imposts and a pointed arch with two orders of relatively crude wave mouldings. More typically Perpendicular was the transomed four-light east window with four-centred arched head. The north aisle windows were late

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[217] J. Newman and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Shropshire* (New Haven, 2006), 525–6; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 915–18; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 62, Drawing by John Buckler: Detail, June, 1821; D.C. Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes for Shropshire*, Shropshire Record Ser. 1 (Keele, 1997), 91; SA, 6001/3055: Henry Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, 22 Oct. 1826; SA 6001/299; SA, PR/2/382: unknown author; PR/2/379: Eva Burton; SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen, *The History of Shrewsbury* (*c*.1825), incorporating SA XLS2392 with paintings and drawings; SA, 6001/3065: Thomas Farmer Dukes; SA, P255/B/6/2: Drawings a–f.

[218] SA, P255/V/1/1; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 916; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 91; SA, P255/B/6/2: Drawings a–f.

Perpendicular with square heads, visible in John Buckler's drawing of 1813.[219] (Figures 49, 50, 52)

The 17th and 18th Centuries

Cranage reported that both Holy Cross and St Giles's churches were used to house Scots prisoners in 1651 following the Battle of Worcester. Holy Cross was damaged during the Civil War, and it must be assumed that St Giles's was not being used for regular services. By the early 18th century, the church was in a ruinous state and seldom used except for burials; a drawing of the south side by William Mytton in *c*.1733 depicts a partly roofless chancel and a timber-clad west bellcote. A total of £36 was spent on repairs in 1740. Anonymous drawings show that a narrower bellcote with round-headed louvres had been erected by 1768. The Decorated tracery of the south nave window had been replaced by a wooden frame and the lower half was blocked, as also revealed in Revd Williams' watercolour. An engraving of the north side published in 1794 shows raked buttresses supporting the north chancel wall, also shown in Buckler's view of 1813.[220] (Figures 50, 51, 52)

The Early 19th Century

In 1816, Thomas Howell noted that services for public worship were only held twice a year, the church otherwise being used for funerals; the building was unadorned, with a paved floor and worm-eaten benches. The soil had built up around the church due to continuous interments, almost reaching the sills of the north windows, whilst five or six steps led down to the south door. Ground levels around the church were lowered by approximately 5 ft in 1826, undertaken at the expense of the parish and in advance of a restoration supervised and funded by the curate, William Gorsuch Rowland, and Revd Richard Scott, both of whom are commemorated inside the church. Henry Pidgeon noted that Rowland was to repair the fabric of the chancel and insert a ceiling at his own expense. He also re-opened a small lancet in the north side and a large pointed window in the south side, previously plastered over, filling it with fragments of painted glass. The floor was lowered in front of the altar and suitable rails erected. The repairs necessitated the removal of a large monumental slab from the south wall, which revealed a tomb recess of 15th-century appearance (see Monuments, below). Rowland

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[219] Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 91; SA, 6001/372/1, f. 54: Revd Edward Williams watercolours; SA, PR/2/382; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 111, Drawing by John Buckler: North-east view, 1813; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 917.

[220] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 869, 915: the churchwardens' accounts refer to cleaning St Giles's church after the Scots; SA-IMG2430 (original in University of Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, William Mytton Collection, MYT/6); SA, 6001/299; SA, 6001/372/1, f. 54: Revd Edward Williams, 1788; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, 1 Sept. 1826; SA, PR/1/490: *Gentleman's Mag.*, Aug. 1794, 694: engraving by David Parkes; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 111, Drawing by John Buckler: North-east view, 1813.

also supervised the levelling and re-paving of the floor in the nave. He moved the pulpit slightly, from adjacent to the south chancel pier to the south-east corner of the nave, which required the removal of two large pews.[221]

The restoration continued the following spring. In the first week of May, workmen started repairing the roof, which was in a wretched state, and a new weather vane was erected. The capital of a former pier was found in the wall immediately beneath the eaves.[222]

With the works completed and the church decorated, a service was held on Sunday 1 July 1827 attended by 500 to 600 people. W. G. Rowland presented a fine stained glass window for the east end, executed by David Evans of Shrewsbury, and he described the panels in some detail: the four lower panels depicted the evangelists, with biblical scenes above, and an inscription along the bottom recording his donation and the year 1827. The small lancet in the north side of the chancel was embellished with a painted representation of St Giles.[223]

The large pointed window in the south nave wall still contained a wooden frame with patched up glass, as shown by Buckler in 1821. This was removed and replaced in 1828 by stone tracery of good design, with a quatrefoil under the head containing stained glass, and diamond glazing in the panels below. Other north and south windows were glazed with lozenge-shaped panes, all funded by W. G. Rowland.[224]

Following the substantial restoration, regular services were resumed from 1836. A view from the south by John Homes Smith shows the nave with windows reinstated, a trefoiled lancet towards the centre and the large two-light window with quatrefoil to the right. The west bellcote was rebuilt again in 1852, a gabled stone structure with two bell openings, shown in a drawing by Eva Burton. In 1858, a decorative half-timbered south porch was constructed as a memorial.[225] (Figure 53)

Late 19th-Century Enlargement and Alteration

Enlargements and alterations in the late 19th century significantly changed the appearance and character of the church, the three largest schemes being undertaken in 1860, 1871 and 1895. A scheme for enlargement by the Shrewsbury architect, Samuel Pountney Smith, was

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[221] H. Owen, *Some Account* (1808), ; T. Howell, *The Stranger in Shrewsbury* (Shrewsbury, 1816), 107; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 915; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (1 Sept. 1826, 22 Oct. 1826).
[222] Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, 7 May 1827.
[223] *Ibid.*, V, 1 July 1827.
[224] *Ibid.*, VI, 22 Nov. 1828; BL, Add Ms 36378 f. 112, Drawing by John Buckler: South view showing wooden-framed window, 1821.
[225] SA, P255/V/1/1; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 915, 917; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 91; SA, 6009/179: painting by J.H. Smith, 1820–60; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 525; SA, PR/2/667: drawing by Eva Burton.

accepted on 17 June 1859 at a vestry meeting, receiving a faculty from the Diocese of Lichfield in January 1860. It involved demolishing the north aisle and replacing it with a new nave slightly larger than the existing nave. Pountney Smith's view was that the 12th-century south wall was the most interesting part of the church, so the extensions should be on the north and east sides only. This may explain why Ewan Christian's proposals of 1854 were rejected, as his new south aisle, superficially matching the north aisle, would have involved the demolition of the south wall except for the doorway. Pountney Smith proposed that in future, his new nave would be followed by a large new chancel, north tower and vestry. These structures never came to fruition, so the new nave effectively became a large aisle, allowing the number of seats to be increased from 183 to 280.[226] (Figure 54)

Pountney Smith devised a further, less ambitious scheme in 1867 with an additional bay at the east end of the north aisle with an opening into the chancel. It was to cost either £800 with an organ bay or £550 without, with seating for an extra 100 persons. The parishioners preferred alternative proposals by J.L. Randal, architect, reaching an agreement in May 1871. Randal's design involved the wholesale reconstruction of the east end of the church. The nave was extended eastwards by one bay, necessitating the removal of the chancel arch, and a new higher and wider chancel was built. Pountney Smith's north aisle was also extended by one bay to accommodate a vestry and organ chamber. The Perpendicular chancel arch was reconstructed between the chancel and organ chamber and the north arcade was rebuilt and extended at both ends, forming nearly five bays in total, which opened up the space and allowed for seating for 403 persons.[227] (Figures 55, 56)

The medieval tomb recess in the south chancel wall was now on the site of the extended nave and had to be moved slightly southwards to fit the new wall alignment. The two-light chancel window with Y-tracery was re-assembled above the tomb recess, but the piscina in the nave wall was left in its original position. A photograph of 1891 shows the exterior south side of the church following these changes.[228] (Figures 57, 58)

Following Randal's enlargement of 1871–2, the Perpendicular east window was relocated to 28 Belle Vue Gardens, Shrewsbury. It was erected as a garden folly, probably by the antiquarian and printer Henry Adnitt, who built Nos. 28–30 and was living there in 1881. Some carved masonry was also found in the rockery.[229]

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[226] SA, P255/B/6/14: Faculty; SA, P255/V/1/1; SA, P255/B/6/2: Drawings a–f.

[227] SA, P255/B/6/18; SA, P255/B/6/21; SA, P255/B/6/1.

[228] SA, P255/B/6/2: Drawings a–f; SA, PH/S/13/W/3/1.

[229] Shropshire HER PRN 01542; Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 94–5, including plate 69.

The final programme of alterations was by the architect A. E. Lloyd Oswell of Shrewsbury, which received a faculty in March 1895. A short south transept was added to the chancel to house the organ. The former vestry and organ space was converted into a north chapel with approximately 50 seats, and a door was inserted into the east wall leading to new clergy and choir vestries. The Decorated window with mouchettes, at the east end of the north aisle originally and then in the vestry, was moved to the south end of the new transept.[230] (Figure 59)

The Fabric of the 19th-Century Church

The current church consists of nave, chancel, south transept, west bellcote, north aisle, north chapel and north-east vestry. The character is overwhelmingly late 19th century despite the survival of some medieval features and others which have been moved and re-assembled.

At the west end above the 12th-century plinth is some coursed red sandstone which may be medieval. The fabric from mid-level upwards is grey and red stone of 1852, including the three-stage bellcote projection which has white sandstone dressings and a mid-level lancet. Its gabled bellcote is of red sandstone ashlar with two cusped louvre openings and a quatrefoil over. The projection is flanked by inserted lancets. (Figure 60)

At the east end of the medieval south nave wall is the added bay of 1871, of red rubble sandstone matching the 12th-century work and terminated by a large buttress. The external outshut for the tomb was reconstructed and contains a red sandstone tablet bearing a sepulchral cross-head with intersecting circle. Its provenance is unknown, but it may date to the late 12th or 13th century. Above the outshut is the re-assembled Decorated window with Y-tracery. The nave is lit by the trefoiled lancet of 1827 and a two-light plate-tracery window, a memorial of 1865, which replaced W. G. Rowland's two-light window with quatrefoil.[231] (Figure 61)

The chancel, south transept, north aisle and chapel are typical of the Victorian Gothic, mainly of snecked red sandstone with grey and yellow sandstone dressings under steeply pitched roofs. Detail includes frequent buttresses, raised copings and kneelers and Decorated-style windows. There is little difference between the work of 1871 and 1895. The east end has kneelers decorated with foliage and a large four-light window with head-stops depicting a man to left and woman to right.

The five-bay north aisle has a dentilled eaves cornice and a shallow gabled porch towards the west, whilst the west end projects beyond the nave with a large four-light

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[230] SA, P255/B/7/5/1.
[231] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 916; SA, PH/S/13/W/3/1.

window. The north chapel is a continuation of the aisle and has a sandstone stack to the north east, originally heating the vestry, and a round window in the east end.

The south transept of 1895 has the re-assembled Decorated window with mouchettes in the south end (see Figure 61), and a two-light window in the east wall with a small recess on its right to avoid blocking the south chancel window. The contemporary single-storey vestry with curved walls was erected in the angle of chancel and north chapel, projecting beyond the east end. It has grey stone dressings with parapets and large decorative buttresses, two wide windows and a round-arched door.[232]

The Interior

The north arcade of 1871 has a partial arch at the west end, so consists of nearly five bays. The short round columns with ringed capitals and bases support pointed chamfered arches, probably copies of the medieval predecessors. The spacious north aisle of 1871 has a lofty five-bay roof with arched braces and struts above the collar, and a tall stone arch with continuous chamfered moulding leading into the single-bay north chapel.

In the chancel is a keeled and panelled roof and two sedilia in the south wall with attached shafts and trefoil-headed backs. There is light wood panelling throughout, probably of 1895, including the reredos, choir stalls, altar rail, reading desk and organ front.

In 1895 Lloyd Oswell erected three pointed moulded arches leading from the chancel into the south transept, nave and north chapel, respectively. The arches are supported on corbels with marble wall shafts, the corbels and capitals decorated with flamboyant foliage and ballflower ornament. There is a similar corbel at the east end of the arcade. (Figures 62, 63)

Furnishings

The church has a Norman font which originated from St Michael's church, High Ercall, before being moved to Holy Cross church and subsequently to St Giles's by 1851. It was exchanged for two fonts, one with grotesque heads biting drapery, which were returned to Holy Cross.[233] The round Norman bowl is decorated with chevron banding above a crude arcade in relief, the round arches on large impost blocks, within which are symbols, including Celtic crosses, human figures and fleur-de-lis. The circular stem, with incised chevron

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[232] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 916; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews*. ii, 176.

[233] Owen, *Some Account*, 132; *Gent. Mag*. lxxxiii (1), 306.

decoration, is of paler stone and may be late Norman. In the south-east corner of the nave is an octagonal wooden pulpit with narrow panels.[234] (Figure 64)

Monuments

There was a substantial assemblage of medieval coffin slabs decorated with crosses inside the church, some with plain cross-heads, others with decorated arm ends and most with calvaries. They were thought to commemorate former masters of the adjacent hospital. Owen and Blakeway refer to three very ancient stones built into the floor of the nave, bearing crosses but with no inscriptions. A plan of the church dated 1768 shows the three slabs in position just in front of the chancel arch, adjacent to the pulpit. They had been measured and drawn by William Mytton *c.*1733, and are reproduced in a later drawing by Revd Hugh Owen, along with another. In 1821, John Buckler drew five coffin slabs with crosses, two of which were said to be in the chancel. The cross-fragment built into the exterior wall of the tomb recess probably represents a further slab.[235] (Figure 65)

Most significant was the decorated lid of a stone coffin once in the chancel, probably originally in the tomb recess, which had a saddleback profile and depicts a large foliate cross in relief and a priestly figure wearing an albe, surrounded by a bell, chalice and wafer, book and candlestick. These insignia are of the minor orders, below the level of priest, deacon and sub-deacon. The style of the cross-head suggests a date of *c.*1300, but the lid also has an inscription added around the edge 'TMOREUA', thought to refer to Thomas More, vicar at the Abbey Church, 1402–26. His remains may have been interred under the slab, the tomb being re-appropriated, whilst the arch of the recess was rebuilt (see below). The coffin lid was moved to Holy Cross church *c.*1824 where it remains on display in the south aisle.[236]

During the restorations of 1826–7 undertaken by W. G. Rowland, a large monumental stone slab was moved from the south wall of the chancel, revealing the pointed-arched tomb recess of 15th-century appearance. Inside was a stone coffin containing bricks and the bones of two people. These were immediately re-interred with the monumental slab over, but the recess was left open. The bones are probably those of members of the Nicholls family who re-appropriated the tomb in the late 17th century. A Walter Nicholls, maltster of Abbey

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[234] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 917; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 526; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 74–5.

[235] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 164, 176; SA, XLS11613: Article by J. Pettigrew (1862), including note from Henry Pidgeon; SA 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen; SA-IMG1699-1701, 2429; SA 6001/299, 37; BL, Add Ms 36378 ff. 113-14, Drawings by John Buckler: Coffin slabs, 1821; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 520, 525; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 91; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 916.

[236] Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 164–5 and plate.

Foregate, is recorded in a lease of 1680 and Glynne noted that the tomb in the recess bore a date of 1685.[237]

Ledger slabs of the 18th and 19th centuries are laid on the floor in the nave, although they are partly obscured. There are two marble wall monuments in the north aisle. An oval tablet on a slate background by V. Hagen, stonemason, is dedicated to Martha Gorsuch (d. 1761) and her husband. Below is a classical-style tablet with pediment dedicated to Revd John Rowland (d. 1815), rector of Llangeitho, Cardiganshire, and Master of Shrewsbury Free Grammar School. He was married to Mary, née Gorsuch (d. 1821), who is commemorated along with their son, Revd William Gorsuch Rowland (d. 1851).

A copper tablet was erected in memory of Thomas Maynard How (d. 1904), former churchwarden, on the north pier of the chancel arch, which was paid for by public subscription.[238]

At the west end is a First World War monument, a rectangular marble tablet with raised central panel bearing a cross, which lists the men who fell. To the left is a small wooden tablet to those who died in the Second World War. A marble tablet on the south wall is dedicated to John Turner Clough Hazledine, killed in France in 1915.

The organ in the south transept is dedicated to Douglas Jesse Reece (1924–2006), who was organist in the church from 1947 to 2004.

Stained Glass

The church is well endowed with stained glass, most 19th century and much moved around. Cranage reported fragments of medieval glass in the south transept south window and the nave south-east window, including a depiction of a head wearing a yellow crown, but this has all been replaced. The north chapel window has a band of three small sacred paintings by David Evans which formed part of the east window presented by Revd W. G. Rowland in 1827 (see above). In the south window next to the door are the heraldic emblems of Revd Richard Scott, who helped fund the restorations of 1826–7.[239]

In 1905 there was a faculty for rearrangement of the stained glass. The glass in the west window of the north aisle was removed and disposed of, and was replaced by the glass at the east end of the chancel. The latter was in fact being moved back to its original position: dedicated to William How (d. 1862), this brightly-coloured window by O'Connor depicts

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[237] Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV, 1 Sept. 1826; SA, P/B/24/37; Cox, *Glynne's Church Notes*, 91.

[238] SA, P255/B/7/5/2: Faculty, 8 Apr. 1905.

[239] Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 918; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 526; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, 7 May 1827.

biblical scenes and parables. At the same time, a new window by Kempe, depicting the Resurrection, was installed in the east window in memory of Thomas Maynard How (d. 1904), former churchwarden and son of William. In the south nave wall is a plate tracery window of 1865 in memory of Ellen Sutton, who had donated £50 towards the cost of the enlargement. The glass depicts miracle scenes in vesica panels, by Powells but to a design by Casolani and Cooper. Behind the pulpit is a late 19th-century painting showing St Giles shielding his deer, by Richard Lloyd and dedicated to Henry Burd. Windows in the north aisle include the Nativity by Ward & Hughes, in memory of Thomas Howells (d. 1868) and a window by Pearce, dedicated to Thomas Southam of The Hollies (d. 1895). The east window of the south transept is composed of re-used glass fragments and was erected by the warden and fellows of Winchester College in gratitude for the gift of original glass restored to the College.[240] This may be associated with the Winchester glass fragments arranged to form the outline of figures, inserted into the north aisle windows by Revd Rowland.[241]

Graveyard

St Giles has a large flat graveyard located between London Road and Wenlock Road, to the east and west, respectively. It used to be larger still, extending further north and incorporating a row of four almshouses. These have been demolished and replaced by single-storey bungalows.[242]

The Abbey church had a limited graveyard for lay people in the medieval period, which was closed to burials with the dissolution and sale of the Abbey precinct, hence St Giles functioned as a mortuary chapel and burial ground for several centuries. Most surviving gravestones are of early- to mid-19th century date, some relating to residents from Abbey Foregate and beyond. This use came to an end in May 1854 when it was ordered that burials be discontinued on the grounds of public health and following an Act of Parliament, the only exception being interment within existing vaults with conditions attached. There are some grave slabs of the 1860s, but none thereafter.

Drainage works were undertaken in the graveyard, taking care not to disturb the burials, in February 1830. In 1863 a specification was drawn up by J. L. Randal, architect, for straightening and levelling the graveyard and constructing a new footpath leading from London Road to the church porch. The almshouses were still standing and a hedge bounding

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[240] See J.H. Harvey and D.J. King, 'Winchester College stained glass', *Archaeologia* 103 (1971), 149–77.
[241] Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 526; SA, P255/B/7/4/2: Faculty; SA, P255/B/7/4/1; SA, P255/V/1/1; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, 17 Feb. 1828.
[242] Google Maps (satellite), 27/10/21; Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 6.

their garden was to be removed and backfilled to create a level surface with the graveyard. A second footpath led from this garden to London Road. The area was being developed as a residential suburb, a plan of 1867 showing building plots for sale along and between Wenlock Road and London Road. A new lychgate was erected at the Wenlock Road entrance in 1881-2, again under the direction of Randal. A fellowship hall of red brick was constructed close to the north side of the church by 1999, a memorial garden laid out to its west.[243] (Figure 66)

Churchyard Cross

South-west of the church porch and in its original position is a standing cross. The octagonal stone base is medieval, possibly 13th century, and is 0.6 m high with chamfered upper half. The large socket was apparently used as a pest-basin during the plague, where coins could be washed before circulation. A two-tier plinth, tapering shaft and four-sided cross-head are reconstructions of 1957, an inscription on the plinth stating that the restoration was undertaken in memory of Revd Frederick Knight and his wife Louisa. The cross-head is intended to resemble the original and bears figures in high relief on two sides.

A 15th-century cross-head lies outside the south wall of the church, probably once part of the medieval cross. It is four-sided under a canopy with human carvings on each face, including an eroded figure holding a Bible. This is probably the cross at St Giles that was pulled down by the churchwardens between 1584 and 1586. By the early 18th century, the cross-head was lying in the boundary bank of the graveyard. It was then re-used as the base of a font, with a lead stem inserted through the top of the canopy. The font to which it was attached may be that of 1653, with grotesque heads, now at the Abbey church but located at St Giles church during the 1840s.[244] (Figure 67)

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[243] Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', VI, 8 Feb. 1830; SA, P255/V/1/2; SA, P255/B/9/1/1–3; SA, P255/B/9/21; Shropshire HER: Giles Carey, pers. comm.

[244] Shropshire HER PRN 01550; Cranage, *Churches of Shropshire*, x, 918; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* ii, 175.