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4.1.7., St Mary's

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 St Julian has been prepared by Dr Judith Everard drawing on draft text by Dr Penny Upton and others but has been substantially researched by her. The description of the building and its predecessor is by Wendy Horton.

Illustrations may be found in a further file.

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26  
27 **ST MARY'S**

28  
29 St Mary's was an Anglo-Saxon royal foundation, said to have been founded by King Edgar  
30 (959–75) as a collegiate church. The foundations of at least one earlier church underlie the  
31 present church. The rebuilding of the church on a comparatively large scale in the mid 12th  
32 century suggests that the college may have been reorganised about that time. St Mary's was a  
33 royal free chapel claiming exemption from the jurisdiction of the bishop by 1245. Routine  
34 service of the church was performed by a parochial chaplain, usually styled curate, and vicars  
35 choral. The college was dissolved in 1548; the church evidently qualified to continue as a parish  
36 church and the curate remained in office.<sup>1</sup> St Mary's retained its peculiar jurisdiction, including  
37 probate of wills, until the 19th century, despite repeated challenges to its status.<sup>2</sup> From 1578 to  
38 the end of the 18th century the living was served by a curate who was nominated by the borough  
39 bailiffs and the headmaster of Shrewsbury School. The curate was also the town's public  
40 preacher and for this reason had more prominence and standing than might be expected. The  
41 post-Reformation history of the church and its clergy cannot be understood without considering  
42 the conjoined post. There was an enduring connection too with Shrewsbury School; until 1882,  
43 the school attended Sunday morning service at St Mary's and the medieval Trinity chapel came  
44 to be known as the Scholars' chapel. The church also played a civic role in the town, there  
45 being, for instance, an annual service for the members of the corporation. For Owen and  
46 Blakeway (successively curates of St Mary's)

47 It is a very main ornament of our ancient town, and has always been duly appreciated by  
48 the parishioners, who have cheerfully borne the charges of its frequent repairs.<sup>3</sup>

49 And Cranage observed nearly a century later:

50 when a diocese of Shropshire is formed, Shrewsbury must be the centre. If St Mary's is  
51 chosen as the cathedral church, it will not be inferior to many another where a bishop's  
52 stool has already been set up.<sup>4</sup>

53 In 1987 the church was declared redundant. A new benefice was formed, St Chad with St Mary  
54 and St Alkmund, the right of presentation henceforth to be exercised by the bishop of

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<sup>1</sup> *VCH Salop*, II, 119–23.

<sup>2</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 361.

<sup>3</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 312.

<sup>4</sup> D.H.S. Cranage, *Architectural Account of Churches of Shropshire*, vol. 10 (1912), 963. But cf. the competing claims of Holy Cross (the Abbey church).

55 Lichfield.<sup>5</sup> The building itself was transferred to the Churches Conservation Trust in whose  
56 custody it remains.

57

## 58 CHURCH ORIGINS AND PAROCHIAL ORGANISATION

59

60 The origins of St Mary's are unknown; 'not a scrap' of its medieval archive survived the  
61 Reformation,<sup>6</sup> while, as a royal peculiar, the church did not feature in episcopal records. It has  
62 been argued that it was in existence as a minster church 'by c.700' – a theory partly based on  
63 the very large and coherent parish associated with the church early in its history – and that its  
64 precinct formed a proto-urban nucleus for the future town.<sup>7</sup> The medieval college of St Mary,  
65 however, commemorated King Edgar (959–75) as its founder, a date that receives tentative  
66 support from the dedication which was favoured at that time. It is therefore probable that Edgar  
67 endowed (and possibly re-dedicated) an existing church and established a college of priests  
68 there, as he did at St Alkmund's.<sup>8</sup> The church 'named St Mary' is recorded in the *vita* of St  
69 Wulfstan, during his episcopal visitation c.1070, when the townspeople were astonished that  
70 Wulfstan neglected the *ecclesia* of St Mary to pray instead at the mean *oratorium* of St Peter.<sup>9</sup>

71 St Mary's college may have been reorganised in the mid 12th century, around the same  
72 time as the college of St Chad; this is suggested by the rebuilding of the church on a  
73 comparatively large scale and to a prestigious design.<sup>10</sup> By the 13th century there was a dean  
74 and a number of prebendary canons, while the cure of souls was administered by a parochial  
75 chaplain, usually styled curate, and vicars choral.

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<sup>5</sup> SA, P257/D20/2.

<sup>6</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 302, 325.

<sup>7</sup> S.R. Bassett, 'Anglo-Saxon Shrewsbury and its Churches', *Midland History* 16 (1991) 1–23, 8; N. Baker, *Shrewsbury – An Archaeological Assessment of an English Border Town* (2010), 86, 211; D. Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church in Shrewsbury. A History of St Mary's Church* (2014), 1–3; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 303–4.

<sup>8</sup> A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), 'Certificates of the Shropshire Chantries under the Acts of 37 Henry VIII, cap. IV., and 1 Edward VI, cap. XIV', *TSAHS*, 3rd ser. 10 (1910), 305; U. Rees (ed.), *The Cartulary of Lilleshall Abbey* (Shrewsbury, 1997), p. 134.

<sup>9</sup> R.R. Darlington (ed.), *The 'Vita Wulfstani' of William of Malmesbury* (Camd. Soc. 3rd ser. xl), 26–7, 92; M. Winterbottom and R.M. Thomson (ed. and trans.), *William of Malmesbury. Saints' Lives* (Oxford Medieval Texts, 2002), 67. The miracle recorded here is Wulfstan's prophecy of the future greatness of the *oratorium* (as Shrewsbury Abbey), which indeed occurred between the events recorded and the time of writing the *vita* ('*Vita Wulfstani*', ed. Darlington, p. viii). The only claim made here for St Mary's is its existence and, implicitly, that it was the most appropriate place of worship for a visiting bishop at that time. Cf. Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 303; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 3; A. Duggan, 'The Royal Treatment: The 12th-Century Building Campaign at St. Mary The Virgin, Shrewsbury, Shropshire', MA dissertation, York University, Toronto (2017), 6 note 1, 23–4.

<sup>10</sup> *VCH Salop.* II, 115, 120; Duggan, 'Royal Treatment'.

76 St Mary's was among the royal free chapels in 1245 claiming exemption from the  
77 jurisdiction of the bishop, an exemption confirmed by agreement with Bishop Roger de Meulan  
78 in 1281.<sup>11</sup>

79 The parochial territory associated with St Mary's, probably from early in its history, was  
80 extensive, lying generally north of the Severn. It included the northern part of Shrewsbury and  
81 beyond to the suburbs of Castle Foregate and Coton Hill; in the countryside the parish extended  
82 to Fitz and Mytton in the west, Clive in the north, and Astley in the northeast.<sup>12</sup> Portions of this  
83 territory in and near Shrewsbury were detached to endow the royal collegiate churches of St  
84 Juliana and possibly St Alkmund (pre-1066), St Michael in the Castle (1066 × 1086) and  
85 Battlefield (1409<sup>13</sup>). Broughton, apparently held by both St Mary's and St Chad's in 1086,  
86 became a chapelry of St Chad's; Blakeway proposed that the Broughton credited to St Mary's,  
87 and already having a priest in 1086, might be identified with Clive, which is not named in  
88 Domesday Book but was a chapelry of St Mary's by 1255.<sup>14</sup>

89 The large extent of the parish included several chapelries, at various times: Albrighton,  
90 Astley, Berwick, Clive and Fitz. The chapels of Astley, Clive and Fitz, at least, had medieval  
91 origins.<sup>15</sup> Fitz chapel was effectively lost to St Mary's in the mid 13th century, after being  
92 donated to Haughmond Abbey.<sup>16</sup> (Little) Berwick chapel originated as the chapel to almhouses  
93 built by Sir Samuel Jones in 1672 but by the mid 19th century was attended by local residents.<sup>17</sup>

94 Albrighton chapelry consisted of the townships of Albrighton and Leaton; there was a  
95 chapel of ease from at least the 1660s, rebuilt on the same site in 1841. This large and remote  
96 northwestern portion of the parish was detached from St Mary's in 1860 when Albrighton was  
97 created a district chapelry.<sup>18</sup> The same year, Leaton and part of Great Berwick were assigned  
98 to a consolidated chapelry – uniting the contiguous portions of the parishes of Preston Gubbald,  
99 Fitz and St Mary's – centred on a new church of Holy Trinity at Leaton.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> 1245: 'Annales de Burton', *Annales Monastici*, I (Rolls Series, 1864), 275–6; 1281: *Magnum Registrum Album*, Staffs. Historical Collections, 3rd ser. (1926 for 1924), 251–2; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. Shrews.* II, 306–8.

<sup>12</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 341.

<sup>13</sup> *Cal Pat Rolls* 1408–13, 173–4.

<sup>14</sup> J.B. Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred or Liberties. Clive', *TSAHS* 2nd ser. 2 (1890), 333.

<sup>15</sup> S. Bagshaw, *Shropshire Directory*, 132ff.

<sup>16</sup> U. Rees (ed.), *The Cartulary of Haughmond Abbey* (1985), nos. 322–6; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 306.

<sup>17</sup> Field, *Church and Chapel*, 74.

<sup>18</sup> J.B. Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred or Liberties. Albrighton or Adbrighton', *TSAHS* 2nd ser. 1 (1888–9), 94–103; Albrighton Parish Registers (Shropshire Parish Registers), Introduction,

<sup>19</sup> J.B. Blakeway, 'History of Shrewsbury Hundred or Liberties. Leaton', *TSAHS* 2nd ser. 6 (1894), 379; *London Gaz.*, 31 Mar. 1860, 1302–3.

100 New chapelries were created in the 19th century to serve the growing population of  
101 industrial workers north of Shrewsbury. St Michael's church was built at the end of Castle  
102 Foregate (Ditherington) in 1828–30 and became a separate parish in 1852.<sup>20</sup> All Saints  
103 Castlefields, a 'new ecclesiastical district' in 1871, with the present church consecrated in  
104 1879, was made a district chapelry out of St Michael's parish in 1883.<sup>21</sup>

105 In 1875 the portion of Harlescott within St Mary's was allocated to Battlefield parish,  
106 along with the rest of Harlescott and Allbrightlea from St Alkmund's.<sup>22</sup>

107

108 *Advowson*

109 As a royal peculiar, patronage of the appointment of the dean of St Mary's college lay with the  
110 crown. The bishop of Coventry and Lichfield exercised some control over the college for a  
111 short period in the mid 15th century: John Burdett (dean 1444–9) was archdeacon of Chester  
112 and his successor John Launcell was instituted by the bishop. Royal control was reasserted by  
113 1457, however, when John Crecy was appointed dean by the Crown. In 1462 the bishop was  
114 forbidden to exercise jurisdiction over the college.<sup>23</sup> The college was dissolved in January  
115 1548, when the dean was appointed vicar of St Mary's.<sup>24</sup> The advowson still presumably  
116 belonged to the Crown, but this arrangement was in any case short-lived.

117 In 1572 the patronage of St Mary's and its dependent chapels, together with the rectory of  
118 Chirbury, all formed part of the grant to the bailiffs and burgesses of Shrewsbury as the  
119 additional endowment for the free grammar school. The school governors were to relieve the  
120 Crown of payments to St Mary's clergy: a stipend of £13 6s. 8d. to the vicar of St Mary's, a  
121 pension of £6 13s. 4d. to a priest, and stipends of £5 to the clergy serving at Clive and Astley.  
122 After the payment of these and other rents, the surplus was to be used for the maintenance of  
123 the school according to orders to be devised by Thomas Ashton.<sup>25</sup> The ordinances agreed in  
124 1578 laid down that the 'curate' of St Mary's should be a former pupil of the school and a  
125 university graduate, and ideally a burgess's son, if a suitable man could be found. Failing that,  
126 he should be a man born within the parish of Chirbury. Only if no suitable person could be  
127 found was the appointment to be made of someone of like sufficiency. The curate was to

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<sup>20</sup> Henry Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, 84; VII, printed description of the church and consecration ceremony, dated 1 Sept. 1830; Field, *Church and Chapel*, 74.

<sup>21</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 24 March 1871, 5; *Cambrian News*, 7 Nov. 1879, 7; *London Gaz.*, 28 Aug. 1883, p. 4218.

<sup>22</sup> *London Gaz.*, 19 Mar. 1875, p. 1695. In 1851, the township of Albrightlea was said to be in St Mary's parish: Bagshaw, *Shropshire Dir.*, 132.

<sup>23</sup> *VCH Salop*. II, 119–23, notes 192–4, 212–15.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, note 238.

<sup>25</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS. and Many Other Sources* (1889), 37–9.

128 receive a stipend of £20. The right of election was vested in the bailiffs and the headmaster of  
129 the school. The effect was to place the power of nomination in the hands of the mayor and  
130 corporation subject to a veto which might be exercised by the headmaster. The ordinances also  
131 laid down rules for the conduct of the curate and the circumstances in which he could be  
132 dismissed, including for non-residence.<sup>26</sup>

133 These arrangements for the election were to give intermittent trouble and not all the curates  
134 at St Mary's conformed to these rules. They were however broadly restated in the Shrewsbury  
135 School Act of 1798. This vested the advowson of St Mary's, Astley and Clive in the mayor and  
136 aldermen 'and assistants', implicitly removing the right of the headmaster. In making  
137 appointments they were to favour, *ceteris paribus* ('all other things being equal', a formulation  
138 which would cause a great deal of trouble later), former pupils of the school who had spent  
139 their last two years of school education there, who were graduates of Oxford or Cambridge and  
140 the sons of burgesses. Failing that, preference should be given to those with the same  
141 qualifications but born in the parish of Chirbury. The headmaster or second master could be  
142 presented, however, having resigned his office at the school, without having to meet these  
143 criteria.<sup>27</sup>

144 The first election made under the 1798 Act was in 1826, on the death of John Brickdale  
145 Blakeway. There were four candidates; a vote was held of 'the Corporation at large' and the  
146 great majority of the votes (33 out of 41) were for Archdeacon Hugh Owen, then incumbent of  
147 St Julian's.<sup>28</sup> The second election in January 1828, following Owen's death, was more  
148 controversial, with resistance to the appointment of William Gorsuch Rowland despite him  
149 being the son of a vicar of Holy Cross and the curate of Holy Cross and St Giles for the past  
150 35 years. Rowland finally received 17 votes, the other candidates, both said to be well  
151 connected with members of the Corporation, received 16 and 14 votes, respectively.<sup>29</sup> The  
152 Corporation was divided but resolved that the best candidate should have the living: 'They  
153 wished to have a sound, orthodox, honest, man amongst them, and relationship and favour  
154 prevailed nothing, and Mr Rowland had the living'.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report* (HMSO, 1864), 593–4; *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 45–8.

<sup>27</sup> 'An Act for the Better Government and Regulation of the Free Grammar School of King Edward the Sixth at Shrewsbury', 38 George III, c. 60, sect. 28; *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report*, 601.

<sup>28</sup> Henry Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV: SA, 6001/3056, fos. 5v, 13r.

<sup>29</sup> Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V, fos. 65–6; SA, P257/W/7/1.

<sup>30</sup> *Eddowes's Jnl*, 17 Aug. 1835; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 25 Nov. 1853. Rowland did not meet the criteria for appointment having not spent the last two years of his schooling at Shrewsbury.

155 The Corporation returned the curacy of St Mary's, its chapels and the vicarage of Chirbury  
156 to an enquiry into ecclesiastical benefices in the gift of corporations of 1836.<sup>31</sup> The Corporation  
157 therefore announced its intention to sell the patronage as it was bound to do under the terms of  
158 section 139 of the Municipal Corporations Act. This was queried within the town. The  
159 Secretary of the Church Commissioners ruled that the Act did not apply in this case.<sup>32</sup> A  
160 petition laid in Chancery by the school governors argued that the mayor, aldermen and  
161 burgesses were merely charitable trustees and therefore the court had the right to make  
162 arrangements for the future administration of the trust. A counter-argument was made before  
163 the court that the Corporation was not a trustee at all, but that the property was vested in them  
164 for their own use. The 1798 Act had distinguished between those parts of the property which  
165 yielded a beneficial income (property which was assigned to the school) and the remainder  
166 which was vested in the Corporation subject to the restrictions contained in the Act. Lord  
167 Chancellor Cottenham ruled in November 1836 that the advowsons were not liable to be sold  
168 under the terms of the Municipal Corporations Act but that they should be placed in the hands  
169 of trustees in place of the Corporation. The 'Trustees of the Right of Presentation to the  
170 Chapelry of St Mary, Shrewsbury' were thus brought into existence although no arrangement  
171 was apparently made for the replacement of trustees as they died.<sup>33</sup> In 1849, the Corporation  
172 having taken it upon itself to fill the vacancies, the school governors brought a petition in  
173 Chancery challenging their right to do so. The Lord Chancellor held that the Corporation had  
174 no right in the matter.<sup>34</sup>

175 In 1853 a vacancy arose on the death of Rowland's successor, J. Oliver Hopkins. The  
176 Trustees quickly advertised the vacancy, quoting in their advertisement the rules for  
177 appointment laid down in the 1798 Act. *Eddowes's Journal* then printed a letter (signed  
178 'Barrister') stating that amongst the candidates were men who did not meet the criteria for  
179 appointment. The letter was, in effect, a warning that, if the Trustees did not follow the criteria,  
180 especially that of favouring a burgess's son, then they would be challenged in Chancery.<sup>35</sup>

181 The question was discussed at a meeting of the town council and agreement reached that  
182 the Trustees would be written to reminding them of the rules for appointment.<sup>36</sup> On 17  
183 November the town clerk, J.J. Peele, acting as secretary to the Trustees, wrote to the mayor and

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<sup>31</sup> BPP, 1836, 74 XL 27, 'Return of Benefices and Other Ecclesiastical Patronage in the Gift of Corporations in England and Wales, 1836', p. 19.

<sup>32</sup> SA, 3365/2738, letters, 6 Jan., 5 Mar., 7 Apr. 1836.

<sup>33</sup> English Reports, 1 My. & CR, pp. 518–24 which gives details of the recent history.

<sup>34</sup> English Reports, 1 Mac & G, 86, pp. 1195, 1290–5, *In re. Shrewsbury School*.

<sup>35</sup> *Eddowes's Jnl*, 17 Aug. 1853; *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 19 Aug. 1853; *Eddowes's Jnl*, 28 Sept. 1853.

<sup>36</sup> SA, DA5/100/2, 9 Nov. 1853.

184 council announcing that the choice of the Trustees had fallen on Francis Morse, a former pupil  
185 of Shrewsbury School and a Cambridge graduate. Morse thus met some of the criteria but not  
186 the one on which the Corporation members placed the greatest emphasis – he was the son of a  
187 minister from Warwickshire and not the son of a burgess. The council met in a special meeting  
188 on 22 November where it was resolved that the ‘council receives with regret the  
189 communication from the Trustees announcing the appointment of a stranger ... having heard  
190 no sufficient reason for the infringement of the rights of burgesses which have been held  
191 inviolable for the space of 20 years’. When challenged, Peele gave his opinion that the clause  
192 in the 1798 Act only gave preference to the son of a burgess when two or more candidates (who  
193 met the education criteria) were judged to be equal: in short, that it was a tie-breaker and not,  
194 as the councillors would suppose, the key criteria for appointment. The question therefore  
195 resolved itself into one of burgesses’ rights. In effect it was maintained by them that the  
196 successful candidate had to be the son of a burgess unless no suitable candidate presented  
197 himself, rather than the son of a burgess being preferred over candidates of equal merit.<sup>37</sup>

198 An editorial in *Eddowes’s Journal* on 23 November complained that the Trustees had  
199 appointed a man who, ‘although in some respects qualified, is found wanting on the most  
200 important point, that of being the son of a burgess’. A public meeting, requisitioned by a  
201 petition of 151 inhabitants, was held on Monday 28 November,<sup>38</sup> where a motion that

202 This meeting has heard with regret and disappointment that the incumbency of St Mary  
203 has been conferred on the Rev. Francis Morse, a stranger, and not connected by even the  
204 remotest ties of burgessship with the borough of Shrewsbury, to the exclusion of several  
205 candidates, sons of burgesses, who are fit and proper persons duly qualified according to  
206 law and therefore entitled to the preference.

207 was easily passed. A motion approving the actions of the trustees moved on behalf of the  
208 parishioners of St Mary’s failed. A resolution promising litigation was passed and a committee  
209 established to accept donations towards its cost. The town was not entirely hostile to Morse. It  
210 was expected that he would enter into the curacy on 4 December, but before he could do so an  
211 interim order was secured against him.<sup>39</sup>

212 The case was argued before the newly-appointed vice-chancellor, Sir William Page Wood.  
213 In December 1853 he found against the majority opinion of the Trustees and declared Morse’s

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<sup>37</sup> SA, DA5/100/2, 22 Nov. 1853. See also the long account of the meeting in *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 25 Nov. 1853. This includes a long exposition of the recent history of the patronage by Peele.

<sup>38</sup> Reported at length in *Eddowes Jnl*, 30 Nov. 1853 and *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 2 Dec. 1853.

<sup>39</sup> *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 7 Dec. 1854.



214 appointment to be void. Wood held that a son of a burgess had the right to be preferred over  
215 any other candidate of equal merit, as the burgesses had argued. The vice-chancellor's opinion  
216 did not pass without criticism – it was the subject of an editorial in the *Morning Chronicle*  
217 which saw the curacy as being ‘an outrage upon common decency’ and called for reform.<sup>40</sup> At  
218 a full hearing on 28 July 1854 the vice-chancellor restated his provisional finding and the  
219 injunction against Morse was made perpetual. A public meeting on 25 September heard Peele  
220 say that he wished to seek a definitive ruling on the powers of the Trustees, having received  
221 counsels’ opinions critical of the vice-chancellor’s decision, but the same meeting agreed to  
222 oppose any appeal.<sup>41</sup>

223 At this point Francis Morse accepted another benefice, thus resigning whatever interest he  
224 might have had in St Mary’s.<sup>42</sup> Subsequently the Trustees, apparently without further  
225 advertising, offered the curacy to Thomas Bucknall Lloyd, the vicar of Meole Brace, the  
226 brother of the current mayor and a man who met all the criteria for appointment however read.  
227 This appointment seems to have been widely applauded and Peele, speaking publicly at the  
228 meeting where Lloyd’s appointment was announced on 25 September, indicated that it was the  
229 appointment that the Trustees would have made all along if Lloyd had offered himself earlier.  
230 Consequently the rights of the burgesses and Vice-Chancellor Wood’s order on their behalf  
231 were never tested, for Lloyd remained at St Mary’s until 1889, by which time the Trustees had  
232 been dissolved under the terms of the Public School Act of 1868 and the patronage had  
233 transferred to the bishop of Lichfield. Lloyd’s successor, Newdigate Poyntz, was appointed  
234 without controversy.<sup>43</sup> The bishop continued to exercise patronage until the last incumbent of  
235 St Mary’s, Bernard Thomas Maddox, was appointed in 1974.<sup>44</sup>

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### 237 *The Peculiar Jurisdiction of St Mary’s*

238 St Mary’s came to be distinguished as a ‘royal free chapel’ when diocesan organisation began  
239 to impinge on the rights of the Crown and the dean in the 13th century. St Mary’s was among

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<sup>40</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 23 Dec., 30 Dec. 1854; *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 4 Jan. 1855 (editorial quoting the *Morning Chronicle* and a letter to the *Chronicle* by B.H. Kennedy). *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 6 Jan. carried letters complaining about Kennedy’s letter.

<sup>41</sup> The key source for the later stages of the dispute is the report of the public meeting of 25 Sept. 1854 where the committee of burgesses established the previous December presented their report on the resolution of the dispute. Counsels’ opinions and much correspondence are printed with the report of the meeting. *Eddowes’s Jnl*, 27 Sept. 1854. See also the editorial in the same issue calling for the end to the litigation.

<sup>42</sup> He was licensed to St John’s, Ladywood, Birmingham, in September. *Worcester Jnl*. 30 Sept. 1854.

<sup>43</sup> The Lichfield Diocesan Directory for 1879 gives the patronage as being vested in ‘The Trustees of Shrewsbury School Livings’. That for 1880 gives the patron as the bishop. Ex inf Mithra Tonking, Archivist to the Diocese. *Register of St Mary’s Shrewsbury*, p. xiv.

<sup>44</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 32.

240 the royal free chapels claimed in 1245 to be exempt from the jurisdiction of the bishop and its  
241 exemption from ordinary jurisdiction was confirmed by agreement with the bishop of Coventry  
242 in 1281.<sup>45</sup> The bishop of Coventry and Lichfield appointed at least one dean in the mid 15th  
243 century, but the Crown resisted this challenge and by a writ of 30 January 1462 Edward IV  
244 forbade the bishop to exercise jurisdiction over the college.<sup>46</sup> By that date, the peculiar  
245 jurisdiction was exercised by an official appointed by the dean.<sup>47</sup>

246 With the dissolution of the college, the Crown continued to assert St Mary's immunity  
247 from episcopal authority and conveyed it to the bailiffs and burgesses of Shrewsbury along  
248 with the former college's spiritualities in 1571. The peculiar jurisdiction was occasionally  
249 challenged in the later 16th century, but most seriously under Archbishop Laud. In 1629 the  
250 bishop of Lichfield, Dr Thomas Morton, attempted to exercise his right of visitation at St  
251 Mary's, where the curate denied his authority and referred him to the bailiffs. In response, the  
252 bailiffs relied on the charter of Edward IV and the uninterrupted exercise of the jurisdiction by  
253 the Crown and the bailiffs and burgesses of Shrewsbury. This did not end Bishop Morton's  
254 efforts, but the matter dropped with the abolition of episcopacy in 1646.<sup>48</sup>

255 The exercise of the jurisdiction – the post of official – was leased out by the bailiffs and  
256 burgesses for defined terms of years or the life of the lessee. Initially, the official was normally  
257 the curate of St Mary's. During the Interregnum, the headmaster of Shrewsbury School held  
258 the office, but he was ejected in 1662. After the Restoration, the official was usually an eminent  
259 lawyer, administrator or clergyman in the diocese. During the dispute between John Lloyd and  
260 Benjamin Wingfield from 1735, the jurisdiction was leased to Richard Rider, the chancellor of  
261 the diocese of Lichfield. He resigned the office in 1739. Thereafter, starting with John Lloyd,  
262 it again became normal for the incumbent to exercise the jurisdiction.<sup>49</sup> There may have been  
263 questions over the ownership of the jurisdiction: some leases were made in the name of the  
264 bailiffs and burgesses and latterly the mayor and aldermen: others in the name of the mayor  
265 and the headmaster of Shrewsbury School. The last occasion on which a lease of this sort is  
266 known to have been made is 1828.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> VCH Salop ii, 120.

<sup>46</sup> *VCH Salop*. II, 120; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 310.

<sup>47</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 365.

<sup>48</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 364–5.

<sup>49</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 366–7.

<sup>50</sup> SA, 3365/2590, also SA, P257/W/7/1. The lease of 1828 is noted in 3365/74, 25 Jan. 1828. The history of appointments of the official is set out in a brief for the opinion of counsel of 1760 on the right of the Corporation to lease the office, in particular to the headmaster: SA, 6833/5, fos. 214-219.

267 The authority of the ordinary extended over the parish of St Mary's including its  
268 chapelries. As an exempt jurisdiction, the ordinary fulfilled most of the functions of the  
269 Diocesan. The only pre-Restoration records of the exercise of this jurisdiction are an elaborate  
270 set of presentment articles issued in the name of John Tomkys.<sup>51</sup> The extant records start soon  
271 after the reestablishment of the jurisdiction after 1660 and include three act books (1674–97,  
272 1705–9, 1709–32) and a wills register (1707–16).<sup>52</sup> An index to the wills proved shows that  
273 occasional wills continued to be brought forwards for probate until the statutory abolition of  
274 the ecclesiastical probate jurisdictions in 1858.<sup>53</sup> The series of marriage licences runs through  
275 to 1842, but it would appear that in most other respects the jurisdiction was moribund after the  
276 mid 18th century.<sup>54</sup>

277

### 278 *Income and Property*

279 By 1066 the temporal endowment of St Mary's included one virgate in Meole Brace near  
280 Shrewsbury and a total of 10 hides in Astley, Broughton, Clive and Mytton. It retained these  
281 estates in 1086.<sup>55</sup> The church's urban property must all have been held in alms – in the 13th  
282 century it possessed 18 burgages in Shrewsbury, of which six were held by canons as pertaining  
283 to their prebends. Most of these burgages paid an annual rent of 6*d.* but were assessed *c.*1280  
284 to be worth considerably more, around 5*s.*–7*s.* each.<sup>56</sup> In 1255 there were 10 prebends with a  
285 total value of £19 plus £4 13*s.* 4*d.* from the chapelry of Fitz.<sup>57</sup> By 1291 there were nine prebends  
286 in the gift of the dean and the value of ecclesiastical benefices totalled £42 16*s.* 8*d.*<sup>58</sup> In 1535  
287 the church was assessed at £13 1*s.* 8*d.* in rents, tithes and oblations.<sup>59</sup> In 1543 the college leased  
288 to Arthur Kelton its tithes from Coton, Astley, Harlescott, Berwick, Albrighton, Leaton,  
289 Woolascott, Sansaw, Cliff, Castle Foregate and within the town, and the dean's house, worth  
290 £22 4*s.* 0*d.* per annum.<sup>60</sup> In 1546, shortly before its dissolution, the prebends of the dean and

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<sup>51</sup> SA, P257/B/3/1, pp. 170–81.

<sup>52</sup> SA, P257/W1/1; W1/2, W1/4; W11/9.

<sup>53</sup> SA, P257/W/11/11.

<sup>54</sup> In 1823 the corporation asked that the power to grant marriage licences, which had been reserved to the Diocesan by statute of the previous year, be restored. SA, 3365/74, 23 Jan. 1823. There are additional records of the peculiar jurisdiction, 1722–88, at Staffs Ro, CE 24.

<sup>55</sup> For details of the college's endowments up to the Dissolution, *VCH Salop.* II, 119–21. See also *VCH Salop.* II, 310, 314 for Domesday holdings.

<sup>56</sup> U. Rees (ed.), 'A Late 13th-Century Rental of Tenements in Shrewsbury', *TSAHS*, 66 (1989), 79–84, 82.

<sup>57</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 306, transcribed from 1255 'hundred rolls', but not printed in *Rotuli Hundredorum*.

<sup>58</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 308. *Taxatio* gives the value of St Mary's at £23: *Taxatio*, 247b.

<sup>59</sup> *Valor Eccl.* III, 188; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 328.

<sup>60</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 329–30. Cf. a similar list from 1853: *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report*, 604.

291 seven canons were valued at £22 7s. 4d. and a parish priest was paid £6 6s. 8d; the college's  
292 net income was £32 4s. 2d. per annum.

293 At the dissolution of the college in 1548, all of its endowments and revenues, spiritual and  
294 temporal, were taken by the Crown. The greater part of the spiritualities, principally the great  
295 tithes of Astley, Clive, Sansaw, Leaton, and Almond Park, were then granted to the Corporation  
296 in 1552 as part of the endowment for Shrewsbury's free grammar school.

297 St Mary's was then reconstituted as a parish church with no glebe. The incumbent was  
298 henceforth to receive a modest stipend, surplice fees and the profits of the peculiar jurisdiction.  
299 The Shrewsbury School ordinances of 1578 provided a stipend of £20 for the curate of St  
300 Mary's, as much as the Corporation could afford when its priority was funding the new school,  
301 yet too meagre to attract a clergyman of the quality needed to exercise the ecclesiastical  
302 authority of the official of the royal peculiar as well as a prominent civic role. The solution was  
303 to create a public lectureship for the town to which the living of St Mary's was attached. Dr  
304 Edward Bulkeley was the first to hold this office, from around early 1579, having been offered  
305 a stipend of £52 as public preacher and the Drapers' Hall as his residence.<sup>61</sup> The Corporation  
306 struggled to find this stipend, while avoiding the taint of usury offensive to the preachers.  
307 Various financial arrangements were tried until 1620 when Richard Wynne made a bequest of  
308 £300 for the stipend and maintenance of the public preacher was used to purchase land at  
309 Edgerley (Shropshire). By then, with Protestantism firmly established, there was less need for  
310 the public lectureship. The office was preserved, however, as a way to fund the curate of St  
311 Mary's. From the 18th century, the Edgerley land was leased to the curate/public preacher to  
312 collect the rents himself.<sup>62</sup>

313 The curate's stipend had been fixed at £20 by the 1578 ordinance, however, between 1657  
314 and 1775 the stipend doubled to £40 and it was said to have increased again in 1776.<sup>63</sup> The  
315 1798 Act gave the School Trustees a general power to apply surplus funds to increase the  
316 salaries or stipends of the ministers of the school's livings.<sup>64</sup>

317 The income of the incumbent, William Gorsuch Rowland, was itemised in 1836 as follows.  
318 He received from the School Trustees a salary of £200 but this had varied over time. For a  
319 period they had only paid him £130. He received a payment of £2 7s. 0d. as the interest on a

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<sup>61</sup> *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report*, 593; *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 47; R.W. Hoyle, 'Building a "Spiritual Temple" in Shrewsbury: the Public Preachers 1578–1618', *TSAHS* 97 (2022), 75–95, at 78–9.

<sup>62</sup> Hoyle, 'Building a "Spiritual Temple"', 83–5.

<sup>63</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 131.

<sup>64</sup> *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report*, 600.

320 capital sum in their possession. He had the income of £11 8s. 0d. from the land at Edgerley –  
321 Rowland saw it as his fee for his Sunday afternoon sermon. He also received surplice fees  
322 worth £20 or £30 a year.<sup>65</sup> The Chancery scheme for management of the school of 1853  
323 provided a stipend of £300 for the curate of St Mary's.<sup>66</sup> The terrier of 1884 recorded that the  
324 income consisted of a tithe rent of £351 5s. 0d. and an additional £50 paid as a grant from the  
325 Ecclesiastical Commissioners; the income from the land at Edgerley was then worth £79 per  
326 annum; Thynne's Gift, £2 7s. 0d. per annum, and Jones's Charity, £6 from land at Astley, to  
327 pay for evening prayer; fees in total averaged £26 9s. 10d.<sup>67</sup> By 1914, the tithe rent had reduced  
328 to £213, but the incumbent still received the grant of £50, £70 from the land at Edgerley and a  
329 lectureship fee £10, Queen Anne's Bounty 16s. 6d., Thynne's Gift £2 7s. 0d., Jones's Charity  
330 £11 15s. 0d. and surplice fees of £10.<sup>68</sup> In 1941 the living was a worth £550 per annum.<sup>69</sup>

331

### 332 *Clergy House*

333 In the Middle Ages, the dean and each of the canons would have possessed separate houses  
334 within the college precinct. No structural remains of these houses are known and the precinct  
335 can be identified only generally as St Mary's Square. The deanery stood near the Dominican  
336 friary at the north-east end of the square. Vicars choral had a relatively unimportant role at St  
337 Mary's and there is no evidence of a hall for their communal residence such as that at St  
338 Chad's.<sup>70</sup>

339 The deanery was leased to Arthur Kelton in 1543 as 'the house or mancyon place called  
340 the deanry or college', with two gardens and an orchard, at 13s. 8d. per annum.<sup>71</sup> In 1546, 'the  
341 dwelling house of the dean, with the appurtenances, now unletten' was valued at 8s. per  
342 annum.<sup>72</sup> At the dissolution of the college in 1548, the deanery was assigned by the Crown as  
343 the residence of the former dean, now vicar. However, Kelton's lease was renewed in 1549 and  
344 in 1554 the Crown sold the site of the college, including the deanery.

345 When the living of St Mary's was combined with the public lectureship in 1578, the  
346 Drapers' Hall was leased and offered as a residence for the incumbent, initially Dr Edward

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<sup>65</sup> SA, 3365/2738, letter, 10 Feb. 1836.

<sup>66</sup> *Public Schools Commission, Appendix to Report*, 603.

<sup>67</sup> SA, P257/F/1/1; S. Watts (ed.), *Shropshire Glebe Terriers, Part 2 (Llanyblodwel to Wroxeter)*, 108.

<sup>68</sup> SA, P257/H/3/1–11 St Mary Parish Magazines 1913–15, May 1914.

<sup>69</sup> *Kelly's Dir. Shropshire* (1941), 221.

<sup>70</sup> For detail and references, see *VCH Salop*. II, 223. The former deanery is recorded in a deed of 1645: SA, 6000/1459.

<sup>71</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 330.

<sup>72</sup> Hamilton Thompson (ed.), 'Certificates of the Shropshire Chantries', 305.

347 Bulkeley, and his successors John Tomkys and Thomas Laughton.<sup>73</sup> In 1618 the Drapers’  
348 Company leased their hall to a rival preacher, Julines Herring, and the new incumbent of St  
349 Mary’s, Samuel Browne, was paid an extra £6 13s. 4d. per annum in lieu.<sup>74</sup>

350 In 1671 William Thynne gave £100 to purchase a house for the minister. This was not  
351 fulfilled but the Corporation invested the sum and, by the early 19th century, was paying the  
352 interest to the curate.<sup>75</sup> The requirement that St Mary’s curates should have close connections  
353 with the town before their appointment would have meant that some already had property in  
354 the town. Thomas Bucknall Lloyd (curate, 1854–88) resided at Whitehall,<sup>76</sup> and deemed  
355 ‘Thynne’s Gift’ to contribute towards the rent, being worth £2 7s. 0d. per annum in 1884.<sup>77</sup>

356 In 1884 it was recorded that £2,100 was ‘now in hand for the purchase or erection of a  
357 house’ to be used as a parsonage.<sup>78</sup> This may have been used to purchase Benbow House,  
358 beside the river at Coton Hill, was purchased by the parish in 1890 shortly after the new  
359 minister, Newdigate Poyntz, chose to reside there.<sup>79</sup> In 1910 the 16th-century property known  
360 as St Mary Cottage on the north side of the church yard was transferred into the ownership of  
361 the parish. The initial trustees were the Lichfield Diocesan Trust but in 1912 these were  
362 replaced by local trustees; the vicar and churchwardens of St Mary. The property was initially  
363 used as the verger’s residence.<sup>80</sup> Also in 1912, the ‘old house of residence belonging to the  
364 benefice’ apparently having been sold, the Governors of Queen Anne’s Bounty and the vicar  
365 purchased a house in St Mary’s Court from Dr Edward Burd of Newport House, Shrewsbury,  
366 for £1,600.<sup>81</sup> Dr Burd also donated adjacent land for the church hall, built in 1912–13 (see  
367 below).

368 Revd Egerton Edward Farrar Walters purchased a house named ‘Holly Bank’, Berwick  
369 Road, Shrewsbury, with outbuildings and garden (600 sq. yd), as a residence for the incumbent  
370 in 1960.<sup>82</sup> Finally, in 1976 the livings of St Mary’s and All Saints Castlefields were united,  
371 including the vicarage of All Saints at Severn Bank.

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<sup>73</sup> Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 79, 82.

<sup>74</sup> Coulson, *Regime & Religion*, 79.

<sup>75</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 394.

<sup>76</sup> *Crockford’s Clerical Dir.* (1865), 397; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26, noting that Lloyd had been born at the ancient house known as the Stone House, facing St Mary’s and neighbouring the former deanery (see Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 342).

<sup>77</sup> SA, P257/F/1/1; Watts (ed.), *Shropshire Glebe Terriers*, 108.

<sup>78</sup> SA, P257/F/1/1; Watts (ed.), *Shropshire Glebe Terriers*, 108.

<sup>79</sup> SA, 6833/5, fo. 213. Benbow House is marked ‘Vicarage’ on the 25" OS map, c.1892.

<sup>80</sup> SA, P257/D/14/1, letter dated 21 Oct. 1987 from G.C. Baugh to Preb. M. Pollitt at St Chad Shrewsbury – this letter mentions that the property is Grade 2 listed. Historic England, list no. 1270602, Grade II, listed 1953.

<sup>81</sup> SA, P257/F/7/1.

<sup>82</sup> SA, P257/F/8/1–4. No. 37 Berwick Road is named ‘St Mary’s Vicarage’ at the time of writing.

372

373 RELIGIOUS LIFE

374

375 **Middle Ages to Reformation**

376 At the end of the Middle Ages, the clergy of St Mary's believed that their church had been  
377 founded by King Edgar to be served by a dean, seven prebendary canons, and a parish priest to  
378 celebrate divine service daily and to provide the cure of souls.<sup>83</sup> This may at least speak to  
379 some institutional continuity, although the collegiate body and spiritual provision is likely to  
380 have been reformed after the Norman Conquest. In 1186 × 1189, a charter concerning  
381 'Derfald', the former deer park north of Shrewsbury castle, was issued and sealed by the dean  
382 and chapter of the church of St Mary and attested by R. (Richard) the dean, Master Richard  
383 Hernalde and Master Thurgar (presumably canons) and 'Horm' vicarius'.<sup>84</sup> The term 'vicarius'  
384 has been taken to mean that Horm' was the officiating minister of the church,<sup>85</sup> although it  
385 could equally be a secular office akin to steward. Nevertheless by the 13th century it is likely  
386 that the dean and canons were not normally resident; the office of dean being mainly a source  
387 of royal patronage for servants of the crown, the dean in turn having patronage of the  
388 prebends.<sup>86</sup> The arrangement may have been for one of the prebendary canons to be in  
389 attendance and manage the college, while a curate and vicars choral were employed to serve in  
390 the church.<sup>87</sup>

391 In 1255 there were ten prebends, representing those of the dean and seven canons, with  
392 values ranging from £3 13s. 4d. down to £1, plus two of significantly lower value, 6s. 8d., held  
393 by Robert the chaplain and Hugh de la Penne, perhaps also a chaplain.<sup>88</sup>

394 In 1548 there were said to be 1,200 houseling people (communicants) of the parish. The  
395 college then consisted of the dean, seven prebendaries,<sup>89</sup> three vicars choral, and a curate. The  
396 curate, John Buttery, clerk, also held a prebend at Battlefield church; the value of his stipend  
397 was second only to that of the dean's prebend.<sup>90</sup>

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399 *Guilds and Chantries*

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<sup>83</sup> Thompson, 'Certificates', 305.

<sup>84</sup> Rees (ed.), *Cart. Haughmond Abbey*, no. 280. Richard the dean attests no. 279.

<sup>85</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 304, 372.

<sup>86</sup> *VCH Salop* ii, 121. Eg. *Rott. Litt. Claus.* II, 161 (1226); *Cal Pat Rolls* 1350–54, 364.

<sup>87</sup> *VCH Salop* ii, 121.

<sup>88</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 306.

<sup>89</sup> 'Prebendary' is not noted after Edward Beeston's name in the chantry valuation (Thompson, 'Certificates', 336–7), but the context suggests he was one of the seven prebendary canons.

<sup>90</sup> Thompson, 'Certificates', 305, 336–7, 345; *VCH Salop* ii, 121–2. See also Hunter, 'Church Goods', 402, 405.

400 At the dissolution of the chantries, St Mary's had just three: Our Lady, Holy Trinity and  
401 Sturry's chantry. The service of Our Lady was endowed by various parishioners and its  
402 revenues were spent principally on the stipend of one of the vicars choral as chantry priest.<sup>91</sup>  
403 The Drapers' Company established the guild of Holy Trinity, incorporated in 1462, to  
404 administer the almshouses recently built by the draper Degory Watur in St Mary's  
405 churchyard.<sup>92</sup> The fraternity employed a chantry priest to serve at the altar of Holy Trinity in  
406 the Leybourne chapel. At the dissolution of the chantries, this was Edward Beeston, possibly  
407 one of the prebendary canons, who received a stipend of £4 for this service.<sup>93</sup> Sturry's chantry  
408 was projected in the will of Richard Sturry in 1469 but founded by his son John in 1522/3. Two  
409 chantry priests were employed exclusively for this service, the altar being in the south  
410 transept.<sup>94</sup>

411

### 412 **Reformation to Interregnum**

413 In August 1552 when the church goods of St Mary's were inventoried, John Buttery ('Butler')  
414 was still curate.<sup>95</sup> The church's goods included: nine copes, six sets of vestments, and various  
415 necessities for daily mass such as two chalices and two patens and a sanctus bell. Within a year  
416 this had been reduced to one chalice and paten, five bells and a sanctus bell, the bulk of the  
417 goods having been confiscated by the Crown.<sup>96</sup> Only a few months later, with the accession  
418 of Queen Mary, the parishioners seized the opportunity to restore some of what had been lost  
419 in the preceding years.<sup>97</sup> John Lane, who was paid £4 annually during the reign of Mary, was  
420 very likely the curate.<sup>98</sup> In the first year of Mary's reign, 8*d.* was paid for mending the rood,  
421 3*s.* 7*d.* for making of the high altar and 1*d.* for mending an alb. In the second year of the reign,  
422 2*d.* was paid for making the Easter sepulchre and a further 2*d.* for a frame to set it on. In the  
423 fourth year there is evidence of increased expenditure perhaps as a result of the parishioners  
424 becoming settled once more in Roman Catholic practice. The outlay that year included 5*d.* for  
425 hooks and nails to set up the rood; 2*s.* 6*d.* for making an altar in the Lady chapel; and 2*d.* to a  
426 workman to make the [Easter] sepulchre.

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<sup>91</sup> Thompson, 'Certificates', 337–8; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 342; *VCH Salop* vi, pt 1, 123.

<sup>92</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 334–40; *VCH Salop* vi, pt 1, 123.

<sup>93</sup> Thompson, 'Certificates', 305, 336

<sup>94</sup> Thompson, 'Certificates', 338; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 333–4; *VCH Salop* vi, pt 1, 123.

<sup>95</sup> Hunter, 'Church Goods', 402, 405; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 345.

<sup>96</sup> Auden, 'Inventories of the Church Goods of Shropshire temp. Edward VI.', *TSAS* 12 (1900), 84–112.

<sup>97</sup> For all extracts from the accounts see: SA, P257/B/3/1.

<sup>98</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 372.



427 All this effort was in vain as on 1 November 1559, following Queen Elizabeth's accession,  
428 the churchwardens at St Mary's paid 4*d.* for removing timber from the rood and three years  
429 later the cross and upper part of the rood loft were taken down and the timber sold. Money was  
430 spent instead on, for instance, wine for Holy Communion, which was now shared with the laity.  
431 In 1576 bread and wine were bought for communion in Holy Week and Easter, Low Sunday,  
432 Whitsun, Michaelmas, All Saints and New Year's Day. This is indicative of how the daily mass  
433 of the pre-Reformation Church had been reduced to occasional Red Letter Days. Also  
434 indicative of a change in religious emphasis are the payments made in 1577 of 14*s.* for a new  
435 pulpit and 14*d.* for setting it up; and 3*s.* 4*d.* for painting of the Ten Commandments. At a public  
436 assembly of parishioners held on 31 August 1589 it was agreed that a silver chalice should be  
437 bought for the communion, paid for by selling the church organs. A sum of £4 was duly raised  
438 from this and a chalice bought for £1 18*s.* 6*d.*

439 In other respects change was slow. For example, the churchyard cross at St Mary's was  
440 pulled down as late as 1581 and at night.<sup>99</sup> In 1584 the churchwardens were ordered to remove  
441 three superstitious images and inscriptions in the north window, together with the stone altar.  
442 There were further complaints in 1595 that the churchwardens had failed to remove from the  
443 north window 'the feigned miracle of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary'.<sup>100</sup>

444 This serves to illustrate that Protestantism did not replace long-held beliefs and practices  
445 without a concerted effort at instruction of both clergy and laity. In 1561 Thomas Ashton was  
446 appointed headmaster of the free grammar school and town preacher, and ministers of St  
447 Chad's undertook preaching for a small stipend in the 1570s. Once Ashton's ordinances for  
448 the school were settled in 1578, he promoted the creation of a town lectureship to be  
449 associated with the living of St Mary's, which was now in the gift of the town bailiffs and the  
450 headmaster. The first appointment under Ashton's ordinances was Dr Edward Bulkeley in  
451 1579.<sup>101</sup> Bulkeley had been reluctant to accept, but once in post showed the spiritual  
452 leadership expected of the town preacher. In 1581 he arranged for morning services to be  
453 held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday: in St Julian's at 8 am, St Chad's at 9 am and St  
454 Mary's at 10 am.<sup>102</sup>

455 From the foundation of Shrewsbury School, its relationship with St Mary's does not  
456 appear to have been conceived of as anything more than proprietorial. The 1578 'Bailiffs'

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<sup>99</sup> W.A. Leighton (ed.), 'Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury, 1372–1603', *TSAHS*, 3 (1880), 239–352 at 288

<sup>100</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 356; Phillips, *History of Shrewsbury*, 86.

<sup>101</sup> Hoyle, 'Building a "Spiritual Temple"', 78–9.

<sup>102</sup> 'Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury', 285, 289.

457 Ordinances' for the school provided that the boys should say daily prayers in the school room  
458 and attend church on Sundays in the parish in which they boarded.<sup>103</sup> Closer relations  
459 developed between the school and its parish church under Dr Bulkeley and Thomas  
460 Lawrence (headmaster 1568–83). In 1583 it was ordered that St Mary's should toll a bell at  
461 11 am (the school dinner break) and 5 pm for the benefit of the school pupils as well as the  
462 townspeople.<sup>104</sup> The masters and scholars began to attend St Mary's regularly for services  
463 and sermons on Sundays and festivals. In c.1582 the school drew on £20 of its capital to  
464 repair 'the chapel in St Mary's church', that is, the medieval Trinity chapel, for the purpose,  
465 and thereafter paid an annual rent; 53s. 4d. was paid for two years' rent in 1595.<sup>105</sup> The  
466 school was flourishing; with 360 scholars in 1581, the boys occupied both the chancel and the  
467 chapel.<sup>106</sup> It had come to be known as the Scholars' chapel by 1587 when a schoolmaster,  
468 Richard Atkys, was buried there.<sup>107</sup>

469 Bulkeley resigned in 1582, having identified a successor in John Tomkys. It is not clear  
470 how Tomkys conformed to the criteria for appointment to the curacy of St Mary's either, but  
471 as candidate for a town lectureship he had the qualification of familiarity with contemporary  
472 Swiss Protestant theology and practice, and was appointed apparently without any objections  
473 being raised.

474 As curate and official in 1584 Tomkys conducted a particularly rigorous visitation in  
475 which nearly one hundred questions were addressed concerning the morals and daily habits of  
476 the parishioners. The range of questions covered every conceivable misdemeanour. For  
477 example: whether there was a table of the Ten Commandments in the church; whether morning  
478 and evening prayer were being said by the minister on Sundays and holy days in a distinct  
479 voice so that the people may hear and be edified; and whether the young were being catechised  
480 every Sunday at 6 am. Each and every parishioner also had a duty to report any instances of a  
481 whole range of moral offences. These included any neighbour who failed to take communion  
482 at least three times a year; any known or suspected mass books, vestments, copes, images,  
483 relics or anything papistical and who owned them; whether any tradesman had his shop open  
484 during divine service; whether there were any men with two wives or any women with two  
485 husbands; any instances of blasphemy, adultery or drunkenness or any deriders of God's word

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<sup>103</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 51, 74–5.

<sup>104</sup> 'Early Chronicles of Shrewsbury', 295.

<sup>105</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 75; J.B. Oldham, *A History of Shrewsbury School 1552–1952* (Oxford, 1952), 21–2, 179 note 1.

<sup>106</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 60; Oldham, *History of Shrewsbury School*, 40, findings of 1613 Commission of Inquiry.

<sup>107</sup> *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 79: extract from Shrewsbury School register.

486 or the sacraments.<sup>108</sup> No presentments are known to have been made on these articles, however.  
487 The exercise has been likened to an attempt to emulate the Protestant regime of Geneva, but  
488 with the weakness that parishioners who did not appreciate this regime could justifiably attend  
489 sermons in other churches or move to other parishes in Shrewsbury.<sup>109</sup> In the same vein,  
490 Tomkys exercised the spiritual leadership expected of the town lecturer by condemning the  
491 traditional festivities of ‘the Shearmen’s tree’, which took place in St Julian’s parish.<sup>110</sup>

492 On Tomkys’s death in 1591, the bailiffs invited Edward Bulkeley to return. His continued  
493 reluctance forced the Corporation to look for another candidate in Cambridge, where Thomas  
494 Laughton was selected. Laughton was in post only from 1593 until sometime before his death,  
495 in London, in 1597. It proved difficult to fill the vacancy mainly because the combined stipend  
496 of the curacy and lectureship (around £70) did not attract the best candidates. Furthermore, the  
497 Corporation appear to have set a high standard for the learning and prestige of the town lecturer,  
498 ignoring the application of Andrew Daker, vicar of St Alkmund’s, even though he was well  
499 qualified according the 1578 ordinance.<sup>111</sup> The curacy and lectureship was offered to William  
500 Bright, a fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, trained in preaching and exposed to the  
501 latest Presbyterian ideas.<sup>112</sup> Bright held the joint offices until his death in 1618. Ironically,  
502 towards the end of his life, a new radical preaching movement arrived in Shrewsbury, whereby  
503 townspeople contributed to fund a preacher – Julines Herring – who conducted meetings in  
504 private houses, a situation condemned by Bright who is said to have enjoined the bailiffs ‘to  
505 carefully resist the purpose of many who laboured to obtrude upon the towne to succeed in his  
506 place a Non-conformed minister’.<sup>113</sup>

507 After Bright’s death, the Corporation sent to Emmanuel College again, but in 1619  
508 appointed Samuel Browne, an Oxford graduate who had been born in Shrewsbury. According  
509 to the anti-Puritan vicar of St Chad’s, Peter Studley, Browne too struggled with a Puritan  
510 faction who treated him ‘so rudely and unchristianly’ that it shortened his life; he died 1632.<sup>114</sup>

511 The Puritan faction prevailed, however, with the appointment of Dr James Betton (curate,  
512 1632–c.1642). Betton was arrested c.1640, presumably in relation to his non-conformity, but  
513 was spared by the abolition of the Court of High Commission in July 1641 and apparently

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<sup>108</sup> SA, P257/B/3/1, pp. 170–81; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 362–4; Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 80.

<sup>109</sup> Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 80.

<sup>110</sup> Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 81.

<sup>111</sup> Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 82–3; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 377–8.

<sup>112</sup> Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 67.

<sup>113</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 377. For Julines Herring, see J. Eales, ‘Herring, Julines (1582–1644)’, *ODNB*; Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 67, and ‘St Alkmund’s’ in this volume.

<sup>114</sup> Hoyle, ‘Building a “Spiritual Temple”’, 83; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 376–7

514 returned to his parish.<sup>115</sup> According to Owen and Blakeway, Puritanism commenced at St  
515 Mary's in 1641 when the altar was taken down.<sup>116</sup> The quantity of church goods at that time  
516 was meagre and included a gilt chalice, a silver bowl, a great church Bible and a book called  
517 *The Apology for the Church of England*.<sup>117</sup> The trend was postponed, however, with the  
518 outbreak of the Civil War and Shrewsbury hosting a Royalist garrison. Charles I visited  
519 Shrewsbury in September–October 1642 while rallying his forces. The king stayed at the  
520 Council House, and is traditionally said to have taken Holy Communion at St Mary's,  
521 confirming his commitment to the Church of England.<sup>118</sup> Whether the incumbent would have  
522 been willing, or even present, to conduct the service is questionable, however. A supporter of  
523 Parliament, Betton absented himself from Shrewsbury, he later claimed, to avoid  
524 imprisonment.<sup>119</sup>

525

### 526 **Interregnum**

527 The vacancy at St Mary's was filled, between 1642 and 1644, by Nicholas Proude, a burgess's  
528 son who had been one of the first foundation scholars from Shrewsbury School to St John's  
529 College, Cambridge. Proude was archdeacon of Cashel, but the war in Ireland caused him to  
530 return to his home town. He was ejected from St Mary's in 1645 when Shrewsbury was taken  
531 by the Parliamentarians and later resumed his career in Ireland.<sup>120</sup> Dr James Betton may have  
532 been reinstated but within months he was promoted to the rectory of Worthen. His successor  
533 was Samuel Fisher, a Presbyterian. By the summer of 1650, Fisher anticipated persecution by  
534 the Independents. He remained in Shrewsbury during an outbreak of plague, with Thomas  
535 Blake, vicar of St Alkmund's, ministering to those who remained in the town, 'in that doleful  
536 time, in continual expectation of arrest', before both took refuge at Myddle with the  
537 sympathetic minister there, Joshua Richardson.<sup>121</sup> Fisher was formally ejected in 1650 'for not  
538 taking the Engagement against the King and House of Lords'.<sup>122</sup> The offices of curate, official

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<sup>115</sup> Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 90; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 378.

<sup>116</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 369, citing churchwardens' accounts.

<sup>117</sup> SA, P257/B/3/2.

<sup>118</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* I, 423 note 1; II, 369.

<sup>119</sup> J.E. Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire During the Civil War, Commonwealth and Restoration', *TSAHS* 3rd ser. 7 (1907), 241–310 at 278; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 378; Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 86–7, 90, 105, 106.

<sup>120</sup> Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire During the Civil War', 253, 262; H. Cotton, *Fasti Ecclesiae Hibernicae, i. Province of Munster* (Dublin, 1851), 54; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 380–1. *A History of Shrewsbury School from the Blakeway MSS.*, 108.

<sup>121</sup> S. Fisher, *A Love Token for Mourners ...* (London, 1655), 183, cited in Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 114–15, 168.

<sup>122</sup> Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire During the Civil War', 264, 271, 282, 304; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 378–9, 380; Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 106.

539 and public preacher being vacant, in 1651 the Corporation took advice and invited Dr John  
540 Bryan, who declined to leave his post in Coventry.<sup>123</sup> With the advice and support of Richard  
541 Baxter, the Corporation next offered them to Francis Tallents.<sup>124</sup> Tallents, a respected academic  
542 and preacher in Cambridge, was reluctant in view of the experiences of recent curates and the  
543 parish was fortunate to secure his services.<sup>125</sup>

544

#### 545 **Restoration to 1854**

546 The Corporation and the parishioners favoured Francis Tallents continuing as curate after the  
547 Restoration, but he could not conform to the Act of Uniformity and was deprived in 1662. He  
548 continued to worship at St Mary's and became a central figure in the emerging nonconformist  
549 community in the town.<sup>126</sup> The rails were replaced around the communion table, £3 5s. was  
550 paid for a surplice and 11s. 6d. for a Book of Common Prayer and two other books. With  
551 evident feeling, someone wrote in the churchwardens' accounts: 'this year EPISCOPACY and  
552 the LITURGIE of the Church were restored GLORIA DEO AMEN 1662'.<sup>127</sup> It was noted the  
553 following year that the church had a great Bible and a Book of Common Prayer, a font of stone,  
554 a communion table 'decently kept', a pulpit, a large surplice, and the ten commandments. Most  
555 importantly, perhaps, the churchwardens stated that 'we have an able and honest orthodox  
556 minister who is conformable to the orders of the church', Robert Fowler (curate, 1662–79).<sup>128</sup>

557 The churchwardens were still required to present any parishioner who offended the moral  
558 order. Thus in 1664 they presented Mary the wife of Thomas Hickock 'for speaking abusive  
559 and scandalous words against our minister Mr Fowler' and Thomas Hickcock for allowing  
560 several people to tipple in his house at the time of divine service.<sup>129</sup> In April 1670 Thomas  
561 Morris was presented for bringing a swine through the church yard at the time of divine service;  
562 and Philip Mayre 'for molesting the congregation & misbehaving him selfe at time of divine  
563 servis'.<sup>130</sup>

564 Thomas Dawes, curate from 1679 to 1715, fully met the criteria of being a burgess's son,  
565 educated at Shrewsbury School and Cambridge; his conformity evidenced in his sermon as

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<sup>123</sup> Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 117; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 147–8.

<sup>124</sup> See 'Tallents, Francis (1619–1708), Clergyman and Ejected Minister', *ODNB*; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 379–80; Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 117–18.

<sup>125</sup> Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire During the Civil War', 283, 284, 297.

<sup>126</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 370, 380–3.

<sup>127</sup> SA, P257/B/3/2.

<sup>128</sup> SA, P257/W/5/2/2; Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire During the Civil War', 301.

<sup>129</sup> SA, P257/W/5/1/35.

<sup>130</sup> SA, P257/W/5/1/33.

566 public preacher on the day of the funeral of Queen Mary in 1695.<sup>131</sup> James II visited  
567 Shrewsbury on 24–25 August 1687, staying at the Council House.<sup>132</sup> During the visit, the king  
568 exercised his power of healing by touch – without success, according to Richard Gough.<sup>133</sup>  
569 This ceremony is likely to have taken place in a religious setting, possibly St Mary’s. A Bible  
570 and a Book of Common Prayer, in matching fine bindings ‘bearing James II’s cipher on the  
571 covers’, may have been donated to St Mary’s on this occasion.<sup>134</sup>

572 John Lloyd was curate from 1715 to his death in 1743. He was a pluralist, which conflicted  
573 with the obligation of residence for the public preacher. In 1735 the Corporation suspended the  
574 public preacher’s stipend and paid it instead to Benjamin Wingfield, the son of the vicar of St  
575 Julian’s. Lloyd, however, refused him access to the pulpit of St Mary’s. As other 18th-century  
576 curates were pluralists, without incurring the same sanction, and Lloyd was appointed official  
577 in 1735, there must be more to the attempt to deprive Lloyd of the public preachship than his  
578 pluralism alone.

579 Benjamin Wingfield succeeded Lloyd as curate of St Mary’s in 1744.<sup>135</sup> Within four years  
580 the wardens began presenting him at the visitation for various forms of misconduct (it is not  
581 clear, at this date, who was the official, to whom these presentments were made). In 1748 it  
582 was alleged that Wingfield neglected ‘to give Notice on Sundays to the People what Holy Days  
583 are to be observed in the following week particularly on the 24th of July last of the observation  
584 of St James’s Day’. He had also ‘failed to read the Athanasian Creed on the days appointed in  
585 the Rubric’; to read publicly the Exhortation ‘appointed to be read when he giveth warning of  
586 the Lords Supper’; and to read on the previous Sunday, ‘the Prayer for the whole state of Christs  
587 Church militant in Earth’.<sup>136</sup> In 1753 he was again presented for similar lapses. At that  
588 visitation he retaliated by presenting the wardens ‘for suffering an unlawful assembly in the  
589 church every month’ and for not calling him to their accounts ‘nor acquainting him with any  
590 accounts’. Wingfield’s omission to say the Athanasian Creed points to sympathies with the  
591 Unitarian wing of Presbyterianism.

592 Shrewsbury School had resumed attendance at St Mary’s on Sundays at an unknown  
593 date. The number of scholars having declined, in the 18th century there was sufficient seating  
594 for them in the chancel. Appointed under the school’s new statute of 1798, the reforming

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<sup>131</sup> Coulton, *Regime & Religion*, 149, 154–5.

<sup>132</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, I, 495–7.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 497.

<sup>134</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 15.

<sup>135</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 383; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 18.

<sup>136</sup> SRO, PSh/V/5.

595 headmaster, Samuel Butler, objected to the scholars' attendance at St Mary's. His initial  
596 proposal to resume the school's use of the Scholars' chapel did not materialise. Butler then  
597 campaigned to withdraw from the church completely and hold Sunday services in the school  
598 chapel, where, he argued, there would be less distraction and sermons more relevant to the  
599 boys could be preached. The School Trustees disagreed and closed the matter in 1812. The  
600 school continued to attend St Mary's on Sunday mornings – interrupted only by the  
601 restoration works in 1864 – until it moved to the Kingsland site in 1882. In 1870 T.B. Llyd  
602 made an appeal to the old boys of the school for donations towards his restoration, reminding  
603 them that the 'scholars occupy the chancel of St Mary's church where the statutes provide  
604 they shall attend morning prayer on Sundays'.<sup>137</sup>

605 Edward Blakeway was curate, official and public preacher from 1763 to 1794. He resigned  
606 in favour of his nephew, John Brickdale Blakeway, then aged 29.<sup>138</sup> Thus began the succession  
607 of three curates of St Mary's who were friends sharing a deep knowledge of and dedication to  
608 Shrewsbury's history and the preservation of its monuments: J.B. Blakeway (curate, 1794–  
609 1826), Archdeacon Hugh Owen (curate, 1826–7) and William Gorsuch Rowland (curate,  
610 1828–1851).<sup>139</sup>

611 Prior to his appointment at St Mary's, Rowland had already spent 30 years as curate of  
612 Holy Cross and St Giles, overseeing the restoration of St Giles church for regular worship. His  
613 most conspicuous contribution to St Mary's was replacing its mostly plain glass with an  
614 important collection of stained glass he had acquired from churches in Belgium, the  
615 Netherlands and Germany, aided by the Shrewsbury craftsmen of David Evans of Betton &  
616 Evans.

617 Another important development of Rowland's incumbency, however, was a scheme to  
618 benefit the rapidly growing population of industrial workers north of the town. Under  
619 Rowland's authority, a scheme was undertaken from 1828 to provide a parochial charity  
620 school, to replace that hitherto held in a chapel of St Mary's, and a new church, with mostly  
621 free sittings, at the northern end of Castle Foregate. The purchase of an acre of land there  
622 enabled the building of a new church and also a new burial ground for St Mary's parish, the  
623 school on lower ground about 200 metres to the south. Both church and school were designed  
624 by John Carline. Subsequent building and the construction of an embankment for the  
625 Shrewsbury–Chester railway has obscured the relation of the sites and their setting, described

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<sup>137</sup> SA, P257/B/11/18, 1, 2.

<sup>138</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.*, II, 384; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 20.

<sup>139</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 20–5.

626 lyrically by Henry Pidgeon: ‘The situation chosen for the church is delightful, as, though nearly  
627 at the extremity of the Castle Foregate, it is seen to advantage from most of the approaches to  
628 Shrewsbury; its western side commands an interesting view of the town ... On the northern  
629 side is a picturesque dell, the ancient course along which the majestic Severn once proudly  
630 rolled its winding stream; the eastern prospect being bounded by the Wrekin and the gentler  
631 eminence of Haghmond’.<sup>140</sup> St Michael’s church was consecrated in 1830 and became a  
632 separate parish in 1860 (see above). The school, known as St Mary’s and St Michael’s Schools,  
633 opened in 1832.<sup>141</sup>

634 At the religious census of 1851, St Mary’s had seating for 900, of which 200 were free.  
635 The attendance on Sundays was 600 in the morning and 500 in the afternoon. Additionally, St  
636 Michael’s church had seating for 810 of which 670 were free. The attendance there on Sundays  
637 was 500 general congregation and 300 Sunday scholars, morning and afternoon.<sup>142</sup>

638

### 639 **Mid 19th century to the early twenty-first**

640 The appointment of Thomas Bucknall Lloyd in 1854 and his long tenure brought to an end the  
641 conflict that had for so long been associated with the patronage of St Mary’s, and was in other  
642 ways good for the church and parish. Lloyd was an able administrator, he undertook civic  
643 duties, and was made archdeacon in 1886. Furthermore, ‘The fabric of St Mary’s Church was  
644 to him an object of loving care, and it owes much of its present beauty to his initiatives in the  
645 work of restoration and preservation.’<sup>143</sup> Lloyd left St Mary’s in 1889, and his successor was  
646 the first curate of St Mary’s to be appointed by the bishop. Newdigate Poyntz – later rural dean  
647 of Shrewsbury and a prebendary of Lichfield Cathedral – faced the challenge of a large part of  
648 his church being destroyed by the collapse of the spire.

649 On 11 February 1894 whilst ‘the spire was being repaired [...] and the work was nearing  
650 completion [...] the great gale came and blew down upon the roof of the nave about 40 feet of  
651 spire’. The nave was destroyed, apart from the font, and the walls of the clerestorey also needed  
652 to be rebuilt. A nationwide appeal raised £6,000 within 14 days and total monies received from  
653 the appeal were £7,778 5s. 7d.; building costs were £6,566 6s. 8d. leaving a surplus of £286  
654 11s. 9d. which was utilised for general church funds.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Pigeon, ‘Salopian Annals’, VII, printed insert.

<sup>141</sup> See ‘Education, c.1600–2000’ in this volume.

<sup>142</sup> Field, *Church and Chapel*, 74.

<sup>143</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26.

<sup>144</sup> Shrewsbury Chronicle, 16 Feb. 1894 (for which see P257/B/12/1). SA P257/B/12/4, Report of the Vicar, Churchwardens and Committee appointed to carry out the restoration of the church after the fall of the spire, 11



655 Poyntz was socially conservative – he objected to the statue of Charles Darwin being  
656 erected outside the old school – and had been exposed to the Oxford Movement in his training  
657 for the ministry. Bartles-Smith suggests that he may thus have ‘prepared the ground’ for the  
658 Anglo-Catholic worship that distinguished St Mary’s in the following decades.<sup>145</sup> Anglo-  
659 Catholic worship had been available at All Saints Castlefields since the 1870s.<sup>146</sup> William  
660 Geoffrey Pennyman (curate 1910–1918) introduced a choral service of Holy Communion one  
661 Sunday each month at St Mary’s, and invested in both the choir and a new organ to that end.  
662 These changes were widely noticed and in some quarters viewed with suspicion. Pennyman  
663 quickly fell out with his organist and choirmaster and brought in his own.<sup>147</sup> In 1914 scarlet  
664 cassocks were introduced for the choir but to allay any concerns over this the vicar commented  
665 in the parish magazine:

666 may I say for the benefit of any of our dear critical friends that these red cassocks do not  
667 denote anything whatever in the way of ‘high’ or ‘low’ ... but are simply those which  
668 appertain to a Royal foundation.<sup>148</sup>

669 St Mary’s parish hall was built in 1912–13 on a site to the south of the church donated by  
670 Dr [Edward] Burd.<sup>149</sup> It was soon put to use with the outbreak of the First World War. In  
671 September 1914 the parish magazine reported that ‘our parish hall has been filled with troops  
672 since the war began’ and also a few months later the incumbent reported that ‘I have been  
673 visiting some of the wounded who have just come to Shrewsbury.’ By the start of 1915 a  
674 concert intended to be ‘arranged for the benefit of the German prisoners who are interned here’  
675 had to be abandoned because of complaints made from outside Shrewsbury.<sup>150</sup>

676 The Hon. Horace E.S.S. Lambart (curate, 1918–1925) completed the move to Anglo-  
677 Catholicism in 1919 by introducing sung Eucharist as the main service at 11 am every Sunday.  
678 According to Bartles-Smith, whose family moved from All Saints to attend St Mary’s under  
679 Lambart, ‘The Anglo-Catholicism of St Mary’s was always moderate. The Eucharist was from  
680 the 1928 edition of the Book of Common Prayer ... We were confident Catholics, moderate

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February 1894 [?1898] which includes the names of donors and accounts. There are photographs showing the state of the interior after the spire’s fall in SA, PH/S/13/S/12/2-8 and P257/B/12/5.

<sup>145</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26–7. For Poyntz disapproving of the Darwin statue, *Wrexham Advertiser* 3 Mar. 1894.

<sup>146</sup> B. Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges. The Suburbs of Shrewsbury 1760–1960*, 25–6.

<sup>147</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 30 Sept. 1910.

<sup>148</sup> SA, P257/H/3/1–11 St Mary Parish Magazines 1913–15 (not complete), April 1914. This was widely reported outside Shrewsbury.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, April 1913. It is not mentioned how the monies were raised but the site was given to the parish by Dr Burd.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 1914, Jan. 1915.

681 and liberal in our approach.’<sup>151</sup> Lambert’s Anglo-Catholic leanings were viewed with great  
682 suspicion. During his time at St Mary’s, the mayor and corporation accepted his invitation to a  
683 civic service there which it was agreed was to take the form of mattins. But Lambert broke his  
684 word and the civic party found themselves attending a sung eucharist. As Bartles says, they did  
685 not return.<sup>152</sup>

686 In 1930 St Catherine’s mission hall was constructed on Corporation Lane for the residents  
687 of the Coton Hill municipal estate. From the end of the Second World War until the 1970s  
688 regular evensong was conducted by a lay reader, Cyril Roberts, and Holy Communion services  
689 were conducted by St Mary’s clergy; parishioners organised a Sunday school and youth club.<sup>153</sup>  
690 St Catherine’s mission hall was sold to the Society of Friends in 1985 and continues in use as  
691 Shrewsbury’s Quaker meeting house at the time of writing.<sup>154</sup>

692 Bartles-Smith regarded the incumbency of Prebendary Egerton E.F. Walters (curate,  
693 1956–69) as ‘mark[ing] the high point of St Mary’s’. The sung Eucharist became High Mass.  
694 In 1963 Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, visited St Mary’s to celebrate the (supposed)  
695 millenium of the church’s foundation.<sup>155</sup>

696 By 1968 the rationalisation of Shrewsbury town centre parishes was being considered.  
697 Henry Horatio Follis was appointed to St Mary’s in 1969 on condition that he also serve St  
698 Alkmund’s, which lacked an incumbent since 1963.<sup>156</sup> Perhaps to bring more consistency to  
699 the worship at the two churches, Follis proposed varying the Sunday services by having Sung  
700 Eucharist only on alternate Sundays. Some of St Mary’s congregation defected to All Saints  
701 Castlefields where Sung Eucharist was available every Sunday. The experiment lasted for less  
702 than a year before Follis restored Sung Eucharist on all Sundays, but many members of the  
703 congregation had left and did not return. The service register gives the number of Easter  
704 communicants at 238 in 1968 but 133 in 1971.<sup>157</sup> Follis moved to a new benefice in 1971,  
705 perhaps leaving the church fatally weakened.

706 In 1972 the Archdeaconry Pastoral Sub-Committee recommended that St Mary’s parish  
707 should be united with those of St Michael and All Saints. In 1974 Thomas Bernard Maddox  
708 was appointed priest in charge of St Mary’s. In 1976 St Michael’s was declared redundant and

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<sup>151</sup> Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 28–30.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>153</sup> *Shrewsbury Chron.*, 21 Mar., 24 Oct. 1930, cited in Trinder, *Beyond the Bridges*, 137; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 29.

<sup>154</sup> R. Thornes, L. Leach and J. Davies, ‘A Gazetteer of Nonconformist Places of Worship in Shrewsbury’ (ts, VCH Shropshire, 2022), A 14, pp. 48-9.

<sup>155</sup> *Birmingham Daily Post*, 2 May 1963, 5; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 31.

<sup>156</sup> See ‘St Alkmund’ in this volume.

<sup>157</sup> SA, P257/D/20/2, cited in Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 32.

709 Maddox was instituted as vicar of St Mary's and All Saints. As Bartles-Smith observed, it was  
710 significant that the ceremony took place at All Saints, as it was that church rather than St Mary's  
711 that had a future. By 1975 the Easter communicants had dropped to 80. Maddox now took  
712 Anglo-Catholicism to its most extreme, naming the main Sunday service 'Sung Mass'.<sup>158</sup>

713 In 1957 the first of many appeals was launched as death watch beetle had been found in  
714 the roof of the south aisle. Other defects in the fabric were also apparent.<sup>159</sup> By the mid 1970s  
715 the list of repairs had become enormous whilst the congregation was getting smaller.<sup>160</sup> In 1981  
716 the Department of Environment were prepared to finance the restoration but on condition that  
717 the church was made redundant. This proposal was supported by the Archdeaconry Pastoral  
718 Committee but resisted for a time by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Mary's.<sup>161</sup> At  
719 the same time the roof was continuing to deteriorate and the stonework to erode.<sup>162</sup> In 1982 the  
720 PCC supported unanimously the motion put forward by George Baugh that the church should  
721 not be made redundant.<sup>163</sup> But within five years the PCC accepted the inevitable, in the words  
722 of the incumbent, Father Maddox, 'with great reluctance and sadness in our hearts';<sup>164</sup> the  
723 church was declared redundant in 1987. A new benefice was formed, St Chad with St Mary  
724 and St Alkmund, the right of presentation henceforth to be exercised by the bishop of  
725 Lichfield.<sup>165</sup> The building itself was transferred to the Churches Conservation Trust in whose  
726 custody it remains. It is now used a public venue for concerts, meetings and exhibitions: it has  
727 a visitor centre and café.

728

## 729 CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

730

### 731 **Site**

732 The church is located on the highest point in Shrewsbury, a plateau on the north-east of the  
733 town overlooking the River Severn. The rectangular churchyard is fronted by St Mary's Street,  
734 formerly Ox Lane, to the west and bounded by St Mary's Place on the north, east and south  
735 sides. The graveyard was originally larger, as revealed by finds of skeletal remains and graves,  
736 and probably fluctuated in size over time. It is likely that there was a walled precinct beyond

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> SA, P257/D/1/1.

<sup>160</sup> SA, P257/D/1/5.

<sup>161</sup> SA, P257/D/1/5.

<sup>162</sup> SA, P257/D/1/6.

<sup>163</sup> SA, P257/D/1/6.

<sup>164</sup> SA, P257/D/1/6.

<sup>165</sup> SA, P257/D20/2.

737 the bounds of St Mary's Place, possibly going back to Saxon times, but no material evidence  
738 has been found. Owen and Blakeway noted that St Mary's church stood in a large open space  
739 and the visual aspect must have been striking. The former college was located south-east of the  
740 church, on the site of the extensive Salop Infirmary buildings, which have done much to close  
741 in the aspect. Following the Dissolution, the college was sold into lay hands in 1554-5.  
742 Immediately to the north was the Great Stone House belonging to the Lee family of Langley,  
743 started before 1612, which became the site for the Nurses Home built adjacent to the infirmary  
744 in 1908-10. A row of timber-framed almshouses fronting Ox Lane on the west boundary of the  
745 graveyard was demolished in 1825.<sup>166</sup> (Fig 1)

746

### 747 **The Pre-Norman Church**

748 St Mary's church was a collegiate foundation with Saxon origins, the focus of a large rural  
749 parish and probably the beneficiary of royal land grants. In Shrewsbury, the parish controlled  
750 much of the land north of the High Street, which occupies a slight valley, from which the  
751 parishes of St Alkmund's and St Julian's were later carved out. The ancient St Chad's church  
752 was the focus to the south of the High Street. Excavations inside St Mary's church in 1864 by  
753 Archdeacon Thomas Lloyd, undertaken as part of a restoration, exposed the foundations of an  
754 earlier church 76 ft long and 27 ft wide, which had a rectangular nave and small apsidal chancel.  
755 It ran from the east face of the west tower, offset beneath the lines of the arcades, with an apse  
756 beyond the western crossing arch. Cranage reported that the Saxon nave was slightly narrower  
757 than the succeeding Norman one and its foundations were of re-used fabric, possibly brought  
758 from Roman Wroxeter, up to 4 ft thick and 4 ft deep. The 11 ft-long apsidal chancel was  
759 constructed of freshly-quarried masonry and is interpreted as Saxon as it pre-dated the Norman  
760 crossing.<sup>167</sup> (Fig 2)

761

### 762 **The Medieval Church**

763 After the Norman conquest, St Mary's church was the largest and most senior church in  
764 Shrewsbury, a royal free chapel outside episcopal control. Its Norman form and subsequent  
765 stylistic developments have similarities with other Shrewsbury churches, particularly St

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<sup>166</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 310; Shropshire HER PRN 62487, 01493; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 87, 185; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 8; SA 8611/TP/2; Historic England NHLE 1254655: former Royal Salop Infirmary; SA PR/2/436: Drawing by Philip Vandyke Browne.

<sup>167</sup> J. Newman and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Shropshire* (New Haven, 2006), 526-7; Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 86-7, 92; Archdeacon Lloyd, 'Architectural History of St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury', *TSAS*, 17 (1894), 358-71; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 924-5; Shropshire HER PRN 01353; Information from church, 8 Feb. 2021.

766 Alkmund's and St Chad's, but St Mary's church is the only one whose fabric wholly survives.  
767 Depictions of the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly by Revd Edward Williams and those  
768 published by Revd Hugh Owen, show much that is still visible today. St Mary's church saw  
769 particularly rapid development over a period of about 60 years between the late 12th and mid  
770 13th centuries, stylistically late Norman to Early English, the range of mouldings and  
771 ornamentation of significant interest to church historians.<sup>168</sup> (Figs 3, 4, 5)

772

773 *Norman Architecture (1070–1180)*

774 The cruciform Norman church was built around the middle of the 12th century and consisted  
775 of an aisle-less nave, crossing supporting a small lantern tower, north and south transepts and  
776 a one-bay chancel, all constructed of red sandstone. Norman fabric is visible in the transepts,  
777 including a chamfered plinth, roll string courses and pilaster buttresses. There is a stair turret  
778 in the north-east corner of the north transept which provided access to the roof. Internally,  
779 Norman work can be seen in the nave above the inserted arcades, above the crossing arches  
780 and in the west bay of the current chancel (choir). On the south side of the choir is part of the  
781 sedilia, a tall niche formed by detached round columns with scalloped capitals supporting a  
782 thick round arch with zig-zag mouldings, right of which is a decorative band leading to the  
783 jamb of the next seat. On the external side of this wall is part of a buttress with chamfered  
784 plinth, which would have been close to the east end of the chancel. Adjacent to the Lloyd  
785 monument on the north wall of the choir is the shoulder of an arch of a former Norman window.  
786 In the south transept are two surviving upper storey windows close to the crossing, a round-  
787 arched light to the west and a circular light to the east. In the east wall of the north transept is  
788 a small chapel in the form of a barrel-vaulted recess, visible as a shallow outshut externally. A  
789 shallow projection in the east wall of the south transept with two small round-arched lights,  
790 now within Trinity chapel, was probably also an altar chapel.<sup>169</sup> (Figs 6, 7, 8)

791 At the end of the Norman period (c.1170–80), a substantial three-stage west tower was  
792 added, with chamfered plinth and pilaster buttresses. The third stage has no buttresses and may  
793 have been truncated for the Perpendicular fourth stage. The fabric of the lowest stage is a  
794 mixture of Keele Beds red sandstone and grey gritty stone of similar composition to that at

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<sup>168</sup> Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 923–63: for a detailed account of the mouldings and ornamentation; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 526–33; NHLE no. 1344964: St Mary's church, Grade I listed; SA, 6001/199: D.C. Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynn's Church Notes for Shropshire* (1997), 92–5; E. Mercer, *English Architecture to 1900: The Shropshire Experience* (2003), 20–1, 26, 45–6, 55; Revd Hugh Owen, *The History of Shrewsbury* (c.1825), incorporating SA XLS2392 with illustrations; SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, *Watercolours*.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, particularly Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 931–2.

795 Roman Wroxeter, whilst one large block to the south has a Lewis hole.<sup>170</sup> This masonry was  
796 probably brought from Wroxeter and used in the Saxon church, before being salvaged and re-  
797 used a second time. The Norman west entrance has a semi-circular arch with three orders of  
798 square mouldings, containing a plain tympanum with lower segmental lintel over double doors  
799 with strap hinges. The upper two stages of the tower were constructed of freshly quarried Keele  
800 beds red sandstone, with single round-headed openings with two orders of mouldings to the  
801 second stage, and pairs of round-headed louvres to the third stage. A survey in 1922 showed  
802 that the walls of the Norman tower were 4 ft 6 in. thick.<sup>171</sup> (Fig 9)

803 The wide pointed tower arch between nave and tower chamber has two orders of square  
804 mouldings supported on responds with scalloped capitals carved with foliage and nail-head.  
805 An impost band decorated with floral bosses continues across the west wall of the nave (Figs  
806 10, 11).

807

#### 808 *Early English style (c.1190–1260)*

809 After the construction of the tower, there was a significant programme of remodelling from  
810 c.1190, when the church reached its current size, approximately 205 by 85 ft. This  
811 exceptionally fine work is in the western English tradition with stylistic similarities with Wells  
812 Cathedral. As well as alterations to openings, it included the addition of aisles and nave arcades,  
813 the extension and heightening of the chancel, and north and south chapels between chancel and  
814 transepts. Early in this period (1190–1210), low round-arched doorways with two orders of  
815 mouldings were inserted into the ends of the transepts, both offset to the west and allowing the  
816 canons access to the altars in the east walls. The inner orders are bullnose, whilst the outer  
817 orders have attached shafts with foliage capitals, supporting roll mouldings to the north arch  
818 and more exuberant bands of crenellations with floral motifs to the south arch. Cranage noted  
819 that the internal east jamb of the south door extended into an arcade along the south wall,  
820 entirely replaced in the 19th century.<sup>172</sup> (Fig 12)

821 The aisles are clearly later than the west tower, butting against its eastern buttresses, and  
822 were followed by the insertion of the nave arcades. The aisle ends have scars revealing they  
823 were originally single-storey lean-tos, each with a lancet window. The low walls would have

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<sup>170</sup> Lewis holes were commonly used during Roman construction, particularly of columns and bases.

<sup>171</sup> Baker, *Archaeological Assessment*, 92–3, Shropshire HER PRN 01353; SA, P257/B/16/8; Duggan, ‘Royal Treatment’, 21: the segmental lintel is a Shropshire feature. For the identification of the stone I am grateful to David Pannett.

<sup>172</sup> See n. 3 above and especially Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 932–3.

824 necessitated gables over any side openings, a scar in the internal north-west corner suggesting  
825 a north porch.<sup>173</sup>

826 The exceptionally fine four-bay nave arcades have square piers with groups of three  
827 narrow clustered shafts to each face with rings and stiff leaf capitals. They rest on the Norman  
828 foundations which are 4 ft deep. The arches are round rather than pointed, probably to minimise  
829 disruption to the Norman fabric above, and have roll and chamfered mouldings to the outer and  
830 inner orders, respectively. Piers for vaulting shafts were included as decorative motifs only and  
831 are similar to those in Worcester Cathedral. The south arcade is thought to have been  
832 constructed first as the shafts are keeled, whilst those to the north are mainly filleted. Human  
833 heads peep from the foliage of the northern capitals, one wearing a crown and another a mitre.  
834 The fine carvings have similarities with those at Wells Cathedral and may have been  
835 undertaken by the same masons.<sup>174</sup> (Fig 13)

836 The four crossing arches are lofty and pointed and typically Early English, but the detail  
837 is similar to the nave arcades so they are probably contemporary. Round rather than pointed  
838 arches lead from the transepts into the aisles due to the height restrictions of the latter, whilst  
839 corresponding arches lead into the north chapels. These openings have square inner and  
840 bullnose outer orders, respectively, the capitals with foliage and scallops. The south-west arch  
841 cuts through the original Norman light in the west wall of the south transept.

842 The chancel was extended from one to two bays and heightened, the east end reaching its  
843 current position, probably in the early–mid 13th century. It is represented by the fabric beneath  
844 the east window sill and on the north side including a pilaster buttress. There were angle  
845 buttresses clasping the east end which have been re-faced externally, but the south face of the  
846 south-east buttress is visible inside Trinity chapel. When the chancel was heightened, a vaulted  
847 roof was inserted, marked by pairs of tall pointed arches on the internal north and south walls.  
848 A few fragments of mouldings remain, but the walls were disturbed when the vaulting was  
849 subsequently removed. In the east bay of the north side is a triple lancet window with exuberant  
850 mouldings, the rere-arches with detached marble shafts (replaced in 1858) with foliage impost  
851 supporting carved beasts. There was probably a matching window in the south wall. An internal  
852 stair turret leading to the roof is located in the north-east corner.<sup>175</sup> (Figs 14, 15)

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid., particularly Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 951. The aisles were constructed of Keele beds red sandstone, visible in the aisle ends and internal north side. David Pannett, pers comm. 9/11/2022.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., particularly Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 946–9.

<sup>175</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 528–30; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 316; Mercer, *English Architecture to 1900*; Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*.

853 Two small square chapels with lean-to roofs were built between the transepts and chancel.  
854 St Catherine's chapel to the north was matched on the south side by a predecessor to Trinity  
855 chapel, marked by a lean-to scar on the outer east wall of the transept which also crosses the  
856 circular Norman window. The chapels were accessed from the chancel via chamfered pointed  
857 arches on clustered keeled shafts with foliage capitals. In the east wall of the north chapel is a  
858 short lancet.

859 Around this time, the transepts were heightened and re-fenestrated with stepped triple  
860 lancets to the north and south ends with several orders of continuous mouldings, clustered  
861 shafts and small foliage capitals. During repairs to the north end of the north transept in 1821,  
862 fragments from earlier lancet windows were found within the wall, suggesting more than one  
863 phase of rebuilding. The side walls had plain single or paired lancets, whilst internally, new  
864 mouldings were given to the entrance arches of the transept east chapels.<sup>176</sup> (Fig 16)

865 Fine north and south doorways were inserted and a south porch added in the early 13th  
866 century. The porch is constructed of mixed stone with a wide round-arched entrance with three  
867 orders of mouldings on shafts with foliage capitals, the central order with ornate chevron  
868 banding. To the sides are two-light plate tracery windows, the arches on thick round columns,  
869 with a pierced quatrefoil and foliage motif under the arch. They are early examples of their  
870 type. Inside the porch is a rib-vaulted ceiling supported on filleted shafts in the corners, with  
871 foliage capitals including acanthus. The round-arched north and south doorways are similar,  
872 but the latter is more ornate and slightly earlier. Both have three orders on attached filleted  
873 shafts with stiff-leaf capitals. The central arch of the south doorway has a crenellation motif  
874 and the hoodmould has a chain of crocus-type blossoms. The central arch over the north  
875 doorway has triple rolls, the hoodmould decorated with leaves.<sup>177</sup> (Figs 17, 18)

876 It has been argued that the building campaign was funded by Henry II (1154–1189), and  
877 the erection of the west tower, and probably the remodelling of the transepts and beginning of  
878 the aisles were undertaken in his reign, but the programme must have continued into the reigns  
879 of subsequent monarchs. Owen and Blakeway proposed that the chapter wished to enlarge the  
880 church around 1232, when it was the venue for protracted diplomatic negotiations before papal  
881 judges delegate between Henry III and Prince Llywelyn. Such a date would correspond with  
882 the fine Early English detail and extension of the chancel (and see here Wells Cathedral for

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<sup>176</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 315; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 935.

<sup>177</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529–30: Similar chains of crocus blossom are found at Haughmond Abbey and Edstaston; SA, 6001/199: See depiction of south porch by E.P. Owen; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 311; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 923–63; Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*; Mercer, *English Architecture to 1900*.



883 comparison), but the earlier lancets buried in the north transept wall suggest that some parts of  
884 the building were re-edified more than once.<sup>178</sup>

885

886 *Decorated style (c.1260–1360)*

887 An upper storey was added to the south porch in white sandstone with a two-light  
888 transomed window with trefoil decoration, providing an unheated room which may also have  
889 provided access to the tower which had no staircase. At the same time, buttresses were built  
890 against the front angles of the porch to support the wide entrance arch. The doors have narrow  
891 cusped panels with reticulated tracery, composed from a 14th-century rood screen. The aisles  
892 were probably raised in pink sandstone at this time.<sup>179</sup> (Fig 17)

893 At the south-east corner is the large four-window Trinity chapel in Decorated style,  
894 thought to have been founded by the Leybourne family c.1360 and replacing the smaller Early  
895 English south chapel. It was built against the south transept, blocking its windows, the east end  
896 flush with the chancel wall. A large Decorated arch was formed leading into the chancel set  
897 below the chancel vaulting ribs. The three-light transomed south windows had curvilinear  
898 tracery in alternating designs, divided by narrow square buttresses, as shown in late 18th-  
899 century paintings.<sup>180</sup> (see Fig 4)

900 In the north chapel, a large tomb recess was built into the north wall, the two-centred arch  
901 with several orders of ribbed mouldings and a hoodmould (see *Monuments*). The chapel was  
902 also heightened at this time and a spherical triangular window inserted high up in the east wall.  
903 Subsequently, probably in the late 14th century, a three-light window was inserted into the  
904 north wall with both Decorated and Perpendicular characteristics. Beneath on the exterior side  
905 is a plain-arched tomb recess which may be contemporary.<sup>181</sup> (Fig 16)

906

907 *Perpendicular style*

908 Major alterations took place in the late 15th century in Perpendicular style, characterised by  
909 white Grinshill stone. This was in common with other Shrewsbury churches, but may have

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<sup>178</sup> Duggan, 'Royal Treatment', 13; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 952; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* I, 110–11; II, 323–4; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 528; Mercer, *English Architecture to 1900*; N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. North Somerset* (1958), 279: Wells Cathedral was re-consecrated in 1239 following a campaign by Bishop Jocelyn (1206–42).

<sup>179</sup> SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, 1788; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 943, 960.

<sup>180</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529, 531; SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen, interleaved paintings; Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*, 95; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 939–43; SHYMS FA/1991/196: Watercolour, anon., 1790; SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, 1788.

<sup>181</sup> Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 938–9.

910 been instigated here by Adam Grafton, dean of St Mary's for 30 or 40 years. Most significantly,  
911 the fourth stage of the tower and an octagonal spire were added, together forming an edifice  
912 222 ft high. The Norman tower may have been truncated, as its third stage is short, and its  
913 south-west corner was rebuilt for a new internal staircase. Each face of the fourth stage has  
914 pairs of two-light cusped and transomed louvres within square panels, surmounted by plain  
915 battlemented parapets. These are shown in a painting of 1788 by Revd Edward Williams, along  
916 with the spire which has ogee-headed cusped lucarnes.<sup>182</sup> (see Figs 3, 4)

917 The north and south aisles were raised in white Grinshill stone with parapets and three-  
918 light Perpendicular windows were inserted, whilst the gable of the south porch was raised to  
919 match and a polygonal stair turret built in its north-east corner. A clerestorey was constructed  
920 across the whole of the nave and chancel, completely changing the roof profile and the  
921 appearance of the church. It was lit by paired two-light cusped windows with single lights  
922 nearest the tower, divided by narrow buttresses surmounted by pinnacles with crockets, and  
923 crowned by parapets. This necessitated the removal of the crossing tower and the vaulted  
924 ceiling in the chancel and a reduction in the height of the transepts. Removal of the chancel  
925 vaulting allowed for the insertion of a large new east window. An exceptional oak-panelled  
926 roof was installed in the nave, decorated with cusped quatrefoils in circles with motifs and  
927 pendants at the interstices, the cornices decorated with fruits and vines. Mounted in the apex at  
928 the east end is a carved angel playing a clavichord, a very early representation of a stringed  
929 instrument.<sup>183</sup> (Figs 19, 20)

930 Trinity chapel was appropriated by the Draper's guild from 1461. The guild's chantry  
931 priest apparently lived in the chamber above the south porch. The sedilia, with their flat cusped  
932 ogee arches which once had canopies, according to Owen and Blakeway, may be  
933 contemporary, along with the matching piscina to the left and a Perpendicular east window.<sup>184</sup>

934 Inserted into the east chapel of the north transept was a window with four-centred arched  
935 head of late Perpendicular form, along with a piscina against its south wall. After the  
936 Dissolution, the window was converted into a doorway and used by the parishioners until after  
937 1825 when it was converted back into a window. The chapel was subsequently re-instated.<sup>185</sup>  
938 (See Fig 16)

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<sup>182</sup> SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, 1788; Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*, 92–3.

<sup>183</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 528, 530; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. II*, 324.

<sup>184</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 941–4; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist. II*, 321; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 6–7.

<sup>185</sup> Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 935.

940 **Post-Medieval**

941 The Perpendicular east windows of the chancel and Trinity chapel were damaged by storms in  
942 1571 and 1579, respectively, and were replaced by Elizabethan examples lacking any  
943 architectural merit, that in the chancel of eight lights with a transom. The replacement for  
944 Trinity chapel consisted of two tall transomed three-light windows with ogee hoods separated  
945 by a narrow buttress, all under the original window arch. It was funded by public  
946 subscription.<sup>186</sup> (Fig 21)

947 An upstairs chamber was made over the north transept in Elizabethan times with a two-  
948 light stone-mullioned window above the east doorway. The north transept was used as the  
949 Consistory court of the Royal Peculiar and in 1589 this chamber was assigned to the clerk.<sup>187</sup>

950 A gabled timber-framed north porch, dated 1619 on the decorative tie beam, is shown in a  
951 painting. It was taken down in 1801 but a scar marks its position. In the churchwardens'  
952 accounts of 1650 an allowance of £56 was made for repairs to the north aisle. It was  
953 substantially rebuilt in 1651, including the addition of two buttresses and the renewal of the  
954 windows in Perpendicular style. There was said to be a date inscribed on the upper north-west  
955 corner, perhaps now behind the porch. The south transept has a panelled, nailed and studded  
956 door dated 1672. The top of the spire was damaged in 1662 and again in 1690 following an  
957 earthquake, when 18 ft and 40 ft was rebuilt, respectively.<sup>188</sup>

958 By September 1798 the church was in a poor state of repair and the churchwardens asked  
959 Mr Potter, architect of Lichfield, to provide a survey and estimate. During the following year,  
960 Telford, Simpson and Lee provided a methodology for the repairs and a committee was  
961 established to oversee the project. The work appears to have been extensive and continued for  
962 several years, a church rate being raised to pay for it. Placing a new roof over the existing nave  
963 roof, to preserve the fine oak-panelled ceiling beneath, was seen as the most urgent task,  
964 accompanied by raising the clerestorey, rebuilding the parapets and installing new lead gutters.  
965 From March 1800, repairs were undertaken to the aisle roofs, the south porch, the tower and  
966 spire. The East window of 1571 was restored and many of the windows were re-glazed.  
967 Materials specified were white Grinshill stone, English oak and Westmorland slate. During this  
968 time, the floor of the church was re-paved, necessitating the removal of the old inscribed grave

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<sup>186</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529, 531; SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 945; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 316, 321; Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynné's Church Notes*, 95.

<sup>187</sup> Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 936; SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen; SA, PR/4/47: Early 19th-century painting by 'Potter of Lichfield'.

<sup>188</sup> SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen: Painting; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 528–9; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 956; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 14.

969 slabs, which had been recorded in 1790, possibly in anticipation of this work. In 1804-5, large  
970 buttresses of ashlar blocks were built against the aisles, two against the south wall and one  
971 against the north, between those of 1651.<sup>189</sup>

972 Henry Pidgeon reported that the tower was embellished in 1816-17 with the addition of  
973 crowning corner pinnacles decorated with blind traceried panels and crockets. A note on Revd  
974 Edward Williams's painting of 1788 states that the top of the spire was rebuilt in 1818,  
975 confirmed by Pidgeon who said it was also raised by 3 ft and the lucarnes embellished with  
976 ornate pinnacles. The bell chamber windows on the second stage were undergoing repair in  
977 June 1823, whilst in Spring 1824 the fabric of the lowest stage was restored. A letter in the  
978 *Salopian Journal* in June 1824 praised the work being done on the tower and urged that it be  
979 continued along the south side and to the east end.<sup>190</sup>

980 Repairs to the north side of the church began in November 1826. The chamber over the  
981 north transept was re-opened and the window unblocked and reglazed. The chamber was to be  
982 repurposed for storing archives relating to the church. New drip-moulds were provided for the  
983 north windows, the north doorway was restored and the east lancet of the north transept was  
984 unblocked. Likewise, the south porch was repaired, its ancient west window unblocked and the  
985 door replaced with cast iron gates.<sup>191</sup>

986 In the late 1820s, when he became the incumbent, Revd W.G. Rowland scraped the mortar  
987 off the Norman arches and restored the foliage on the capitals. He also exposed the pair of  
988 small round-headed lights in the east wall of the south transept (now internal), thought to have  
989 been used for distributing dole after the altar went out of use.<sup>192</sup>

990

### 991 *Trinity Chapel*

992 Following the dissolution of the chantries, Trinity chapel was dilapidated and probably roofless  
993 until 1582 when it was restored and converted into a chapel for scholars of the Free School. At  
994 the time they wrote, Owen and Blakeway reported that the chapel was in use as a parish school.  
995 During the 19th century, boys from Shrewsbury school attended St Mary's on Sunday  
996 mornings. Drawings by John Buckler held in the British Library show the four-window Trinity

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<sup>189</sup> SA, P257/B/6/1-3; (8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, p. 104; Janice Cox, TSAHS, 91 (2016), 19: The 1790 record was not entirely in accordance with the account by Revd Hugh Owen, 1808; Owen and Blakeway, Hist. II, 314; Newman and Pevsner, Shropshire, 529.

<sup>190</sup> SA, 6001/3055: Henry Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', I (10 Sept. 1823, 12 April 1824); SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, 1788, watercolour. *Salopian J. July 1828* (8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, pp. 98-9).

<sup>191</sup> Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (Nov. 1826, 2 Feb. 1827); 8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, pp. 98-9.

<sup>192</sup> Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V (2 July 1829).

997 chapel in 1813 when there was a narrow doorway in the east end, now marked by irregularities  
998 in the masonry. His drawing of 1821 shows St Mary's church entirely without the chapel, whilst  
999 in 1823 the chapel is shown again. Whilst it has been suggested that the fabric was dismantled  
1000 and an exact replica was constructed, there is little corroborative evidence, either in terms of  
1001 the fabric or historical documentation. A report in the *Salopian Journal* in 1828 had described  
1002 the south side of the church as having been repaired, so it is possible that Buckler's drawing  
1003 was in anticipation of this work. Pidgeon reported in January 1826 that five new pinnacles of  
1004 little merit were placed on Trinity chapel by a mason named Ellis, and these are taller than  
1005 those shown by Revd Edward Williams in 1788. The Elizabethan east window was described  
1006 by Glynne in 1845 as mutilated and altered. Cranage noted in c.1910 that the parapets, string  
1007 course and plinth were new, whilst the roof structure was also modern.<sup>193</sup> (Figs 22, 23)

1008 The ogee-arched sedilia in the south wall of Trinity chapel originally had canopies, but  
1009 these were missing by the time they were drawn by John Buckler in May 1821. At some point  
1010 ornate and well-carved hoodmoulds over the Sedilia and piscina to their east, and of medieval  
1011 carved alabaster panels were inserted into the backs of the seats (see below). The disappearance  
1012 of the Decorated arched recess for the Leybourne tomb, drawn c.1733 by William Mytton, still  
1013 requires explanation.<sup>194</sup> (Figs 24. Also Fig 15.)

1014

### 1015 **Later 19th-Century Restorations**

1016 A major programme of repairs and restoration was undertaken by Samuel Pountney Smith,  
1017 architect, between 1855 and 1863. Work to the tower and spire, particularly to the parapets,  
1018 cornice and pinnacles, was carried out from 4 June 1855 at a cost of £793 7s. 3d. The lay  
1019 impropiators met in August 1855 to discuss an estimate for repairing the chancel, including  
1020 taking out the east window and the dilapidated gable above and repairing the north-east stair  
1021 turret, the whole costing £580 12s. to be shared out amongst them. Pountney Smith's new east  
1022 window had eight lights with intersecting tracery and much cusping, the glazing by David and  
1023 Charles Evans (see below). Design inspiration had come from the Decorated east window of

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<sup>193</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529, 531; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 321; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 941–6; SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93; Revd Edward Williams, 1788; SHYMS FA/1991/196: Watercolour, anon., 1790; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (Jan. 1826); Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*, 95; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 9.

<sup>194</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 944–6; SA, PR/2/391: Engraving by W. Finden, 1825, after J. Buckler; SA-IMG1834 & 1878: Drawings by William Mytton, c.1733 (Originals in Cadbury Collection, University of Birmingham); Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (Jan. 1826).

1024 Carlisle Cathedral. In 1858 the detached shafts of the north chancel window were replaced in  
1025 black Purbeck marble.<sup>195</sup>

1026 In 1864 Archdeacon Thomas Lloyd directed a significant programme of restoration in the  
1027 nave, including excavations for the installation of water pipes for a new heating system which  
1028 revealed the foundations of the Saxon church (see above). Afterwards, a new Minton tile floor  
1029 was laid, followed by the insertion of inner entrance doors, oak fittings and seats, the latter  
1030 costing £850. Lloyd and his committee wished to continue the restoration in the chancel, the  
1031 responsibility of the lay impropiators, and they **circulated** a fund-raising leaflet in February  
1032 1869. The scheme was agreed in October with an estimated cost of between £1,500 and £2000,  
1033 and included a new oak-panelled ceiling and encaustic floor tiles by Godwin.<sup>196</sup>

1034 A single-storey vestry with parapets was built in 1884 by Paley and Austin of Lancaster  
1035 between the chancel and north chapel, with a shallow north-facing gabled porch and pairs of  
1036 two-light windows to the north and east. It replaced a smaller flat-roofed vestry, which in turn  
1037 replaced one with a gabled roof. The latter was mentioned in 16th-century accounts but had  
1038 been demolished by 1701 when the vestry was housed in the former north chapel. Archdeacon  
1039 Lloyd inserted the two high open arches over the nave crossing arch to improve the lighting  
1040 *c.*1886.<sup>197</sup>

1041 In 1888 the Elizabethan east window of Trinity chapel was replaced by a large window in  
1042 Decorated style with a rose under the arch. A central buttress divided the two parts, in imitation  
1043 of the previous arrangement, but this was removed and infilled with glass in 1897, resulting in  
1044 a seven-light window with wider central panel (see Fig 23). Floor tiles by Maws were laid,  
1045 whilst the low doorway west of the south wall was re-cut, the hoodmould with head bosses of  
1046 Queen Victoria and Sir Lovelace Stamer, suffragan bishop of Shrewsbury from 1888.<sup>198</sup>

1047 Disaster occurred on Sunday 11 February 1894 when part of the spire was blown down in  
1048 a ferocious gale. The *Shrewsbury Chronicle* reported that about 40 ft of the spire fell through  
1049 the nave roof, causing serious internal damage. Under repair at the time, the tower had  
1050 scaffolding around it, which may have acted as a lever. The nave was filled with wreckage  
1051 from the roof and ceiling and much of the seating was destroyed, but fortunately, the font and

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<sup>195</sup> SA, P257/B/9/1–2; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529–31; SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 930, 962.

<sup>196</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 930–1; SA, 6001/199: Painting by E.P. Owen, 1812; SA, P257/B/11/3, 6, 13; Lloyd, 'Architectural History'; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26.

<sup>197</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 529; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 939. See also, G. Brandwood, *The Architecture of Sharpe, Paley and Austin* (2012), 208, 235; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26.

<sup>198</sup> SA, 6001/199: Revd Hugh Owen; SA, 6001/372/3, fo. 93: Revd Edward Williams, 1788; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 945; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531.

1052 pulpit were unharmed. The spire was reconstructed by A.E. Lloyd Oswell, architect, later in  
1053 1894, partly funded through public subscription, this specialist work undertaken by Blackburn,  
1054 Starling & Co. of Nottingham. In addition, much of the clerestory had to be rebuilt and the  
1055 nave ceiling restored. The angels may have been added to the intersections of the panels at this  
1056 time, along with wings for the clavichord player at the eastern apex.<sup>199</sup> (Fig 25)

1057 A gabled north porch of bright red stone was added in 1897–8 as a memorial to  
1058 Archdeacon Thomas Lloyd, designed by A.E. Lloyd Oswell and built by William Bowdler. In  
1059 Decorated style, it has an ogee-arched doorway with ballflower and foliage ornamentation, the  
1060 finial supporting a sandstone niche containing a statue of Madonna and child, the carvings  
1061 undertaken by Robert Bridgeman. The sides have narrow four-light windows. A tall polygonal  
1062 stair turret providing access to the bell chamber was built in the angle of the tower and north  
1063 aisle in the late 19th century.<sup>200</sup>

1064 Photographs from a survey made in 1922 by Lloyd Oswell show internal cracks in the  
1065 tower. He asked the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) for their opinion.  
1066 A meeting was held in the tower with their representative and the builder John Thompson of  
1067 Peterborough. It was noted that the cracks were in the Norman walls, caused by the weight of  
1068 the bells and their oscillation. Strengthening work was proposed using reinforced concrete  
1069 bands, insertion of ties and grouting. The drawings were approved by the Incorporated Church  
1070 Building Society (ICBS) who provided a grant, the rest coming from public subscription: A  
1071 poster depicted the tower from the south-west, labelled with the proposed repairs and a request  
1072 for over £4,000. John Thompson & Son proceeded with the scheme in 1925–6.<sup>201</sup> (Fig 26)

1073 As the numbers of parishioners declined after 1945, the maintenance of the building  
1074 became an unsupportable burden on the parish. Nonetheless, repairs were carried out on a  
1075 number of occasions.

1076 S. E. Catterall of Shrewsbury replaced A. G. Chant as consultant architect for St Mary's  
1077 church in 1959. Mr Catterall produced a substantial specification for repairs in November 1963  
1078 with a separate estimate for St Catherine's chapel window. A restoration appeal was opened in  
1079 the Summer of 1964 to raise funds for the work, which was to be undertaken by Messrs Furze  
1080 of Nottingham, masons, and Williams and Watson of Liverpool, glaziers. A cheque for £1,000  
1081 was received in November 1964 from the Historic Churches Preservation Trust. In 1966, fund-

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<sup>199</sup> SA, P257/B/12/1: Excerpt from *Shrewsbury Chron.*; SA, P257/B/12/3–4; SA, P257/B/12/5: Photograph; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 27.

<sup>200</sup> SA, P257/B/13/2–8. This even red sandstone, which easily weathers, is probably from Nesscliffe quarries. David Pannett, pers. comm. 9/11/2022.

<sup>201</sup> SA, P257/B/16/2–10, 19; Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS), 11524, fos. 1–29.

1082 raising for the window glass reached its target of £3,000. Prebendary Walters arranged a  
1083 thanksgiving service in July 1966 to celebrate the restorations of the previous seven years.  
1084 These had included the rebuilding of the eastern and south-eastern buttresses and the inner wall  
1085 of St Catherine's chapel, repairs to the fine oak roof and restoration of the stained glass, at a  
1086 cost of approximately £14,000. The glaziers had replaced much of the Victorian glass with  
1087 plain glass, whilst being careful to retain the ancient fragments, which had much improved the  
1088 lighting. Prebendary Walters noted that a further £600 was required to complete the latter  
1089 task.<sup>202</sup>

1090 A new restoration fund was established by the PCC in July 1972 starting with a legacy of  
1091 £250 from Mrs Philips, to which visitors' contributions were added. In the Autumn of 1972,  
1092 Peter Downing of Wood, Goldstraw and Yorath architects, undertook a quinquennial  
1093 inspection which recommended urgent repairs to the leading of the roof and gutters. An  
1094 estimate of £3,682 for re-leading the nave roof was received from Norman and Underwood of  
1095 Leicester in December. Downing produced a further contract relating to the leaded gutters of  
1096 the north and south chapels in August 1973. The masons were R. Bridgeman and Sons of  
1097 Lichfield, the contract worth £2,796 which was paid in 1974-5. The contract document  
1098 included a section on the south aisle and south porch roofs, but this was not undertaken until  
1099 the early 1980s.<sup>203</sup>

1100 Peter Downing remained the consultant architect during the early 1980s when the  
1101 restoration of the south aisle and south porch roofs was undertaken. It including the laying of  
1102 stainless steel sheeting, lead coverings and associated masonry repairs. The cost had been  
1103 estimated at £39,000 of which £29,000 was eligible for a grant from the Department of  
1104 Environment, leaving a balance of £10,000 for the PCC to raise. A Faculty was obtained in  
1105 July 1982 and three tenders were received, the lowest from Stephen Heath of Stoke-on-Trent  
1106 for £18,774. In 1983, Trinity chapel roof was re-covered in slates by Sandy's of Stafford at a  
1107 contract sum of £14,020.<sup>204</sup>

1108 St Mary's church was declared redundant on 21 July 1987 although it is still consecrated  
1109 and occasional services are held there. The Diocese of Lichfield asked the Churches  
1110 Conservation Trust to take St Mary's church into its care, who in 2022 are committed to raising  
1111 funds for the management, upkeep and restoration of this highly significant church.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> SA P257/D/11/1

<sup>203</sup> SA P257/D/11/3-4

<sup>204</sup> SA P257/D/11/5-7, 10

<sup>205</sup> SA, P257.



1112

### 1113 **Fittings and Furnishings**

1114 The ornate octagonal font is a fine example of the Perpendicular style. Carved from white stone,  
1115 each face has a quatrefoil in a circle and a central boss depicting a rose or foliage in high relief.  
1116 On the underside of the corners are angels bearing shields, though now eroded. The octagonal  
1117 stem is hollow, with pierced ogee arches to each face between narrow buttresses. It was in the  
1118 north transept in 1845 but was moved to the west end of the nave, its original position, as part  
1119 of Archdeacon Lloyd's re-ordering of 1869. The decorative polygonal pulpit of French  
1120 limestone is against the north-east crossing pier. It was designed by Samuel Pountney Smith in  
1121 1853 and carved by an Italian, George Landucci, who had come to Shrewsbury in 1850. It has  
1122 high arches containing the crucifixion in relief, angels and figures, raised up on a stem. The  
1123 former wood-panelled pulpit, reached by steps, was located on the north side of the nave.<sup>206</sup>  
1124 (Fig 27)

1125 There was an organ loft at the west end of the nave, the well-carved wooden organ case  
1126 being made by John Harris and John Byfield in 1729. A Tudor-style stone arcade c.10 m long  
1127 was inserted beneath the loft by John Carline Jnr, mason, in the early 19th century, a donation  
1128 from Revd W.G. Rowland. It consisted of three four-centred arches divided by narrow  
1129 buttresses and decorated with rosettes and foliage. Carved angel heads and pateras decorated  
1130 the cornice, above which was a blind arcade which formed the gallery front. In August 1833  
1131 the organ was fully restored through the munificence of Revd W. G. Rowland. The work cost  
1132 over £100 and was undertaken by Messrs Bowsher and Fleetwood of Liverpool.<sup>207</sup>

1133 As part of Samuel Pountney Smith's restoration c.1860, the architect relocated the arcade  
1134 to his own garden at The Limes, Belle Vue, where it became a folly. The organ was then moved  
1135 to the north transept, suspended on a loft. A large new organ by J.J. Binns of Leeds was  
1136 subsequently installed, but some of the 18th-century casing was re-used.<sup>208</sup> (Figs 28, 29, 30).

1137 In 1845 there was a heavy Greek-style altar screen which had been given by Richard  
1138 Tisdale in 1706. Revd Hugh Owen donated a marble altar slab bordered with jasper in 1789,  
1139 which had previously belonged to William Pulteney, earl of Bath. In c.1870 Archdeacon Lloyd

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<sup>206</sup> Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*, 95; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 26; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 315; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 951; SA, 6001/199: Painting.

<sup>207</sup> 8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, p. 105.

<sup>208</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 937; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 28; Shropshire HER PRN 04423: The arcade was described in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1834, the account probably by Henry Pidgeon; SA PH/S/13/B/2/35: The former garden of The Limes is now in the grounds of Coleham Primary School.

1140 discovered fragments of a medieval altar slab decorated with crosses, which after the  
1141 Reformation had been re-used to block three ancient aumbries behind the reredos. Lloyd  
1142 removed the fragments and buried them under his new altar whilst the reredos was replaced.  
1143 Revd Owen's altar slab was moved to the north chapel. In 1889–92, A.E. Lloyd Oswell  
1144 installed painted and gilded blind arcading around the Sanctuary, incorporating sedilia on the  
1145 south side. At the east end of Trinity chapel is a 19th-century gothic-style stone reredos with  
1146 traceried arcading and tile inlay, whilst the altar, with its richly carved and painted front, was  
1147 made by the stained glass artist, Margaret Agnes Rope (1882–1953). Her father, Henry John  
1148 Rope, was a churchwarden and a surgeon at the Royal Salop Infirmary and is commemorated  
1149 on a marble tablet in the south aisle.<sup>209</sup> (Fig 31)

1150 In 1776, eight bells by Messrs. Peck & Chapman of Whitechapel were installed in the  
1151 tower, funded by subscription and from the sale of the six former bells. Two more bells, by  
1152 Thomas Mears of Whitechapel, were added in 1811 but were not regarded as a great success.  
1153 Two new bells were added in 1828 when the bells were rehung, possibly replacing the latter,  
1154 and the internal framework was repaired. All the bells were recast in 1911 by Taylor & Co.<sup>210</sup>

1155

#### 1156 **Monuments**<sup>211</sup>

1157 Mounted on the floor of the tower chamber are fragments of four sepulchral slabs bearing celtic  
1158 crosses. The largest, of late Saxon date, has a circular cross-head and inter-laced work in relief  
1159 and was found under one of the north arcade piers during work for a new heating system c.1864.  
1160 The second largest has an ornate cross-head in relief, the matrix formerly filled with pitch or  
1161 coloured plaster.<sup>212</sup>

1162 On the north side of Trinity chapel, under the arch leading to the chancel, is a fine altar  
1163 tomb surrounded by delicate cusped arcading with trefoils in the spandrels. The slab bears an  
1164 effigy of a knight in chain-mail and plate armour holding a sword and shield, his lower legs  
1165 crossed over a lion, and is thought to represent Simon de Leybourne (d. 1300 × 1315), or  
1166 possibly his son, John (d. 1348). The tomb must have been in the original south chapel before

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<sup>209</sup> Cox (ed.), *Sir Stephen Glynne's Church Notes*, 95; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 322; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 926, 930–1, 939, 945; Cranage interpreted the aumbries as Early English; SA, 6001/199: Painting by E.P. Owen, 1812; SA, P257/B/11/3, 6, 13; Lloyd, 'Architectural History', 363; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 8; The Churches Conservation Trust: St Mary's Church, guide (2010).

<sup>210</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 312, Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', VI (Nov. 1828); Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 19.

<sup>211</sup> For inscriptions in the church at the end of the eighteenth century, see Janice Cox, 'Writ in stone. The monumental inscriptions on the floor of St Mary's Shrewsbury, 1790', *TSAHS* 91 (2016), 19-30.

<sup>212</sup> W.A. Leighton, 'The Early Incised and Sculptured Stones of Shropshire', *TSAS* 5 (1882), 252–4, Figs 3, 21; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 533.

1167 the Leybourne family remodelled the structure in c.1360. As noted above, it was depicted  
1168 within a tomb recess in c.1733 by William Mytton, but there is no longer any trace of the recess.  
1169 In July 1816, the altar tomb was moved to the north side of the chancel to make it more  
1170 conspicuous. It was noted that the tomb was slightly damaged and the slab had been prised up.  
1171 On investigating the interior, leg bones and a skull were found, representing two or three  
1172 individuals, underneath which (and wrapped in leather) was a headless skeleton, thought to be  
1173 that of Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, who was executed in Shrewsbury in 1403. This re-  
1174 appropriation would explain why the tomb had been re-opened.<sup>213</sup> The Leybourne tomb had  
1175 been moved back into Trinity Chapel by 1828.<sup>214</sup> (Figs 32, 33)

1176 Mounted on the backs of the three sedilia in Trinity chapel are rectangular alabaster  
1177 carvings of probable 15th-century date, showing religious scenes including the Baptism and  
1178 the Holy Trinity depicted above a kneeling donor. Their provenance is unclear and they may  
1179 have originated in Pitchford (Shropshire).<sup>215</sup> (See Fig 24)

1180 Immediately adjacent to the Decorated tomb recess in the north chapel is an alabaster grave  
1181 slab set upright, with incised figures of Nicholas Stafford (d. 1471), former bailiff of  
1182 Shrewsbury, and his wife, Catherine (d. 1463), both under a canopy and with an inscription  
1183 around the edge. It was the lid of an altar tomb with ornamental shields along the front which  
1184 had been inserted into the tomb recess replacing the original tomb. The lower parts of the arch  
1185 were altered to make space for it and head bosses of a bearded man and woman added. The  
1186 altar tomb was removed in 1825 when the vestry was renovated.<sup>216</sup> (Figs 34, 35).

1187 Outside the west entrance, south of the tower arch, is a replaced stone tablet recording the  
1188 death of a stuntman, Robert Cadman, who died in 1739 aged 28. He attempted to fly from the  
1189 spire over the River Severn but fell to his death due to a mistake with his rope and cord.<sup>217</sup>

1190 There are a number of significant wall monuments. In the north aisle is a fine rococo tablet  
1191 of pink and grey marble with books on the outer corners of the cornice and an inscription in  
1192 Latin, all topped by an urn and dedicated to Revd John Lloyd (d. 1758). It is by Thomas  
1193 Farnolls Pritchard, whose name is carved on the soffit. Another rococo monument by Pritchard  
1194 is located on the north choir wall and is dedicated to Mary Morhall (d. 1765), of white and pink

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<sup>213</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 533; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 943–4; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 396, also I, 196–7; SA-IMG1834 & 1878: Drawings by William Mytton, c.1733; David Parkes, *Diary* (16 July 1816); SA, PR/2/394: C.W. Radclyffe, *Lithograph*, 1843; The Churches Conservation Trust: *St Mary's Church*, guide (2010).

<sup>214</sup> 8184/2, *Watton newspaper cuttings*, II, p. 99; *Salopian Journal*, July 1828.

<sup>215</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 944–5; Information in church.

<sup>216</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 397; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 960.

<sup>217</sup> Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 409–10.

1195 marble with an achievement and urn at the top and a group of cherub heads at the bottom.  
1196 Adjacent is a classical-style monument signed by J. Nelson dedicated to the Lloyd family,  
1197 including Revd Richard Lloyd (d. 1733), the cornice supporting a large cherub and urn in front  
1198 of a grey obelisk. There are further monuments on the south choir wall relating to the Lister  
1199 and Lloyd families, including Mary Lister (d. 1730), by Thomas White of Worcester, with  
1200 weeping putti to the sides and a tall segmental pediment with cherubs in clouds. Mounted on  
1201 the south wall of Trinity chapel is a worn 18th-century slab with large heraldic emblem  
1202 dedicated to the Gardner family of Sansaw.<sup>218</sup> (Fig 36)

1203 On the west wall of the north transept is a large tripartite monument of Grinshill stone  
1204 commemorating Revd John Brickdale Blakeway (d. 1826), historian, author and vicar of St  
1205 Mary's church. In Decorated style, it was designed in 1828 by John Carline Jnr, was funded by  
1206 public subscription and was referred to in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as an elegant and chaste  
1207 design. A large cusped ogee arch fronts a niche bearing an inscription flanked by narrow arches,  
1208 all above a blind arcade and decorated with pinnacles and crockets. Across the north wall are  
1209 monuments in a similar style relating to the Hughes, Parry and Dukes families, whilst the walls  
1210 are decorated with plaster diapering with a gothic design.<sup>219</sup>

1211 In the late 1820s a campaign was launched to gather donations for a monument to Admiral  
1212 Benbow (d. 1702). This only came to fruition in 1843 when a monumental tablet, placed in the  
1213 north chapel above the doorway to the vestry, was unveiled. It consists of a marble bust on a  
1214 background of drapes, mounted above a pedimented tablet with a ship carved in relief, with an  
1215 inscription below. It was carved by John Evan Thomas of London, who had obtained portraits  
1216 of Benbow from Shrewsbury and Greenwich and confirmation of his rank from the  
1217 Admiralty.<sup>220</sup> (Fig 37).

1218 In the tower chamber is a chest tomb with recumbent effigy under a drape, by Richard  
1219 Westmacott Jnr, depicting Colonel C.R. Cureton who died in 1848 in the Sikh war, uniformed  
1220 and with medals and a sword.<sup>221</sup>

1221 There is a First World War memorial against the north wall of Trinity chapel, an inscribed  
1222 tablet on a stepped base supporting a cross.

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<sup>218</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532–3; J. Ionides, *Thomas Farnolls Pritchard of Shrewsbury. Architect and 'Inventor of Cast Iron Bridges'* (Ludlow, 1999), 233; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 961; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 398–402.

<sup>219</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 961; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (9 Sept. 1828) and 8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, p. 99.

<sup>220</sup> SA, P257/B/22/1–10; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532; above, section 2.6, 'Public monuments' for a fuller account.

<sup>221</sup> Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 961; Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532.

1223

1224 **Stained Glass**

1225 Of great significance and beauty is the tree of Jesse in the east window, the glass given to St  
1226 Mary's in 1792 and inserted by John Betton following the collapse and demolition of old St  
1227 Chad's. It had been taken to St Chad's from the Franciscan (Greyfriars) church in Shrewsbury  
1228 after the Dissolution, having been a gift from Sir John Charlton of Powis and his wife Hawise  
1229 in the early 14th century. Sir John and his son Sir Owen de Charlton are depicted at the bottom  
1230 in chain-mail, the style suggesting a date range of 1332–53. Depicting a recumbent Jesse from  
1231 which a genealogical tree rises, the colours are exceptionally vivid, the human figures in  
1232 Decorated style. In the late 1820s, post-medieval mosaic glass was replaced by old fragments  
1233 of Winchester glass. The whole window was replaced during Samuel Pountney Smith's  
1234 restoration in 1855–63, but the glass was re-inserted and restored by David and Charles Evans.  
1235 David Evans is commemorated in the top panels under the arch.<sup>222</sup> (Fig 38)

1236 St Mary's church has an exceptional assemblage of medieval stained glass from  
1237 continental Europe which was collected by Revd W.G. Rowland before 1851. A significant  
1238 collection of early 16th-century German glass, originally from Altenberg Abbey near Cologne,  
1239 was purchased by Revd Rowland for £425 and was placed in the chancel north windows and  
1240 central south aisle window. It depicts scenes from the life of St Bernard of Clairvaux. Glass  
1241 from Trier is found in the east window of the south aisle, dated 1479 and depicting St Helena,  
1242 Madonna and child, and King Charlemagne. Another window in the north aisle depicts the  
1243 Canon of Trier cathedral in the 1470s, whilst a contemporary window to its right depicts the  
1244 lives of saints. There is also glass from the Cistercian nunnery of Herchen in the Rhineland and  
1245 from Liège in Belgium including a figure of St John the Evangelist in the east lancet of the  
1246 north transept. Revd Rowland re-glazed the south windows of Trinity chapel after removing  
1247 the transoms and brick blocking beneath, two with glass from Liège, the others with heraldic  
1248 shields formerly in the east chancel window. There is a good collection of 17th-century Flemish  
1249 roundels with painted biblical scenes, prominent in the north transept chapel and the vestry,  
1250 with 12 and 24 roundels, respectively. Pidgeon noted in September 1829 that the west plate  
1251 tracery window in the south porch was opened up and glazed. There was no evidence for  
1252 previous glazing as there were no grooves. Roundels were inserted and are shown in a painting  
1253 of 1862 by W.G. Herdsman. English roundels of uncertain date were inserted into the top

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<sup>222</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 962; Owen and Blakeway, *Hist.* II, 318; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V (30 Sept. 1829); Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 25.

1254 quatrefoils of both plate tracery windows, one a poor depiction of a crab (cancer) and the other  
1255 a lion (leo).<sup>223</sup>

1256 Much of the 19th-century glass is by David Evans of Shrewsbury. This includes the outer  
1257 triple lights of the east window of Trinity chapel, those on the right produced in 1846 for Revd  
1258 W.G. Rowland, those on the left put up at the behest of his brother, Daniel, and containing a  
1259 depiction of the Adoration of the Magi after the 17th-century painting by Murillo. At the west  
1260 end of the north aisle is a bright figure of St John in 14th-century style, by David Evans c.1840,  
1261 but within a glass canopy of c.1380, thought to have come from Winchester College chapel. In  
1262 similar style, Mary is depicted in the west light of the tower within a 14th-century glass canopy.  
1263 The north transept triple window includes an emblem of the Royal Arms of George III, moved  
1264 from the south transept at the expense of Revd Blakeway before his death in 1826. The flanking  
1265 lights depicted colourful saints by David Evans, c.1830, erected by Mrs Blakeway,  
1266 subsequently replaced by plain glass. The south transept triplet had Christ flanked by saints set  
1267 in ovals, 1829, by David Evans, but in 1851 they were re-glazed by Charles Evans,  
1268 incorporating three 14th-century figures including St Thomas, a memorial to Revd W.G.  
1269 Rowland and a gift of his brother, Daniel. The chancel clerestory also includes work by  
1270 Evans.<sup>224</sup>

1271 Of unknown hand in the north chapel are the 19th-century crucifixion scenes in the three-  
1272 light window and the colourful Christ with old glass beneath in the small triangular east  
1273 window. The wide central light in the east window of Trinity chapel, opened up on the removal  
1274 of a buttress in 1897, is a darker piece by Powells depicting Christ risen and the gift of Dr  
1275 Edward Burd in memory of his wife, Elizabeth.<sup>225</sup> (see Fig 31).

1276 Eight stained glass panels were produced by John Davies of Shrewsbury for the side  
1277 windows of the north porch, a memorial to Archdeacon Thomas Lloyd. They were made in  
1278 1899 at a cost of £4 12s. 0d. and incorporated medieval continental glass, whilst the suffragan  
1279 bishop of Shrewsbury, Sir Lovelace Tomlinson Stamer, gave £60 for a brass tablet to be placed  
1280 in the window.<sup>226</sup>

1281

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<sup>223</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 531–2; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 963: The glass is reputed to be by Albert Durer; Bartles-Smith, *A Royal Church*, 24; NHLE 1344964: St Mary's church; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V (30 Sept. 1829), VI (Aug. 1829); SHYMS, FA/1991/004: Painting by W.G. Herdsman, 1862.

<sup>224</sup> Newman and Pevsner, *Shropshire*, 532; Cranage, *Architectural Account*, 962; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', V (2 July 1829, 30 Sept. 1829), VI (May 1829); NHLE 1344964: St Mary's church. See 8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, p. 99 regarding the stained glass in the north and south transepts in the 1820s.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> SA, P257/B/13/10, 11, 27. For Stamer see the long obituary in the *Shrewsbury Chronicle*, 6 Nov. 1908.

1282 **Graveyard**

1283 The graveyard is flat and rectangular, the church set back towards its north-east corner. It was  
1284 originally larger, as shown by skeletal remains and inhumations found during water main  
1285 renewal works around the east and south sides of St Mary's Place. On the north side, grave cuts  
1286 were revealed beneath the cellars of St Mary's Cottages along with sherds of medieval pottery.  
1287 In 1801-2, the graveyard was cleared, levelled and enclosed by iron railings, the work being  
1288 undertaken by Joseph Birch jun.<sup>227</sup> Pidgeon noted that the north side of the churchyard was  
1289 extended by 7–8 ft in May 1826, into an area which had previously been part of the graveyard.  
1290 The row of timber-framed almshouses on the west side of the graveyard are depicted in a  
1291 drawing of 1823 by Philip Vandyke Browne but were taken down in 1825. Pidgeon noted that  
1292 when a new grave was cut on the site of the almshouses in 1830, an ancient sepulchral stone  
1293 was retrieved, showing that the graveyard once extended further west.<sup>228</sup> (Add Fig 39: Vandyke  
1294 Browne)

1295 A plot of land 70 ft square on the west side of Ox Lane and opposite the almshouses, was  
1296 purchased in c.1820 as an addition for the burial ground. The graveyard never materialised and  
1297 the piece of ground was sold on in 1829, coinciding with a decision by the vestry to purchase  
1298 land for a new burial ground with a new church, St Michael's in Castle Foregate, which was  
1299 consecrated in August of that year.<sup>229</sup> (Fig 40)

1300 There were previously iron railings 5 ft high with finials, shown in an undated design  
1301 drawing, on a stone plinth 1 ft high, itself on a low brick wall. Those on the west side were  
1302 finished in April 1826 following the demolition of the former almshouses and included a west  
1303 entrance for the parishioners. At that time, the lane to the south was a route for cattle going to  
1304 fairs. A Faculty was obtained in December 1940 for the removal of the railings and gates so  
1305 the iron could be used in the war effort. The latter were replaced by new oak gates costing £75,  
1306 funded by the Corporation of Shrewsbury.<sup>230</sup>

1307 The stone plinths are still in place, bearing holes for the original iron railings, with renewed  
1308 wooden entrance gates to the south and west, between square stone piers with capstones. There  
1309 are 19th-century tomb slabs, many with saddleback profiles, which have been cleared to the  
1310 sides, except to the south-west. Also in this location is a sandstone war memorial by G.H.

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<sup>227</sup> 8184/2, Watton newspaper cuttings, II, p. 104. This was undertaken concurrently with the repairs to the church by Telford, Simpson and Lee.

<sup>228</sup> Shropshire HER PRNs 62487, 60231, 60307, 01515; SA, PR/2/436: Philip Vandyke Browne, drawing; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (Apr. 1826), VI (Feb. 1830).

<sup>229</sup> SA, P257/B/28/7; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', VI (4 Dec. 1829), VII (Aug. 1830). Cf above, section 2.9, 'Burial grounds'.

<sup>230</sup> SA, P257/B/28/9, 15, 30; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals', IV (Apr. & May 1826).

1311 Davies of Shrewsbury, erected in 1920 by the National Association of Discharged Sailors and  
1312 Soldiers, Shrewsbury Branch. It consists of a triple stepped plinth with memorial tablets  
1313 mounted on their faces, surmounted by a cross. The plinth is within an enclosure, the short  
1314 corner posts listing the various campaigns.<sup>231</sup>

1315 New oak gates were purchased for the graveyard in 1965. A specification and quotation  
1316 from Albert Isherwood of Wem, timber merchants, was accepted by Mr Catterall in March  
1317 and the south gates were erected in July. At the west end of the graveyard, some alterations  
1318 were required to a tombstone before erection of the gates, which were to be fixed to the  
1319 church-facing side of the existing piers to increase the width of the entrance. At the same  
1320 time, a Faculty was received for widening the path to the main west door, which required the  
1321 removal of the Millington tombstone. A stone-paved path was laid to surround the church.<sup>232</sup>

1322

1323

#### 1324 **The Former College**

1325 The former college of St Mary was on the site of the Salop Infirmary building, now a shopping  
1326 centre below and flats above, which is immediately south-east of the church on an escarpment  
1327 above the river. The first Salop Infirmary was established in 1745–7, replacing Mr Kynaston's  
1328 property. It was a three-storey classical-style building with hipped roof, with a lower block on  
1329 the north side (see Fig 16). Owen and Blakeway reported that during excavations for its  
1330 construction, a brass seal bearing a representation of the Virgin and child was found, the  
1331 inscription attributed to the reign of Edward III (1327–77). It was bought by Revd Owen who  
1332 wanted it restored and returned as an instrument of the Royal Peculiar; its current whereabouts  
1333 are unknown.<sup>233</sup>

1334 In the 1820s the infirmary was completely rebuilt on the same site at a cost of £16,000,  
1335 following plans submitted by Edward Haycock, architect, as the existing building was regarded  
1336 as confined, inconvenient and ruinous. The foundation stone was laid in July 1827, the money  
1337 raised through subscription and preaching sermons. When the old building was levelled, there  
1338 was a splendid view of St Mary's church from the east and south-east of the town, Pidgeon

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<sup>231</sup> Shropshire HER PRN 31322.

<sup>232</sup> SA P257/D/11/1

<sup>233</sup> Shropshire HER PRN 08393; Historic England, NHLE 1254655: Former Royal Salop Infirmary; SA, PH/S/13/S/15/1; Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals' V (6 July 1827); SA, 6001/198/165: Revd Hugh Owen, Drawing.



1339 expressing regret that a new site had not been chosen for the infirmary. The nurses home built  
1340 immediately to the north in 1908–10 further closed in the visual aspect.<sup>234</sup>  
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<sup>234</sup> Pidgeon, 'Salopian Annals' IV (16 Nov. 1826), V (29 May & 19 July 1827); Shropshire HER PRNs 10534, 01493.