

15 The Memorials

Introduction

Purley Church contains a number of interesting memorials, the oldest dating from the the early 16th century. When Street rebuilt the church in 1870 he took pains to preserve as many of the old memorials as he could by resetting them mainly in and around the tower. Since then many more have been added.

The memorials and epitaphs were recorded by Elias Ashmole in 1664 when he visited Purley on 13th March. These were published in his book on the subject published in 1666. Other memorials were recorded in 'Additions to Ashmole' published around 1800. A Mrs Becker recorded them again shortly before rebuilding and in recent years a detailed survey has been done by members of Project Purley.

The Historic Memorials

Perhaps the most historic memorial is that to Ann Hyde which is now to be found on the south wall of the tower. Her gravestone was one of those 'missing'. Ann was the first wife of Edward Hyde who went on to be the First Earl of Clarendon and was a major influence in English affairs after the Restoration. His second wife, Frances Aylesbury, brought him the key contacts which made his career take off. Their daughter Anne became the wife of King James II and mother of both Queen Mary II and Queen Anne. Our Ann Hyde was reputed to have died of smallpox while visiting Purley in 1632. There were Hydies at Purley Hall at the time but it seems more likely she was visiting her uncle who was living at the manor house of Purley Magna at the time. (See page 26)

The only St John memorial is also on the south wall of the tower. The St John's were lords of the manor of Purley Magna from the early 16th century until the late 18th. Jane was the link between the St John's and the Carew's the previous Lords of the manor who had owned Purley Magna since 1369. Her mother, Sanchea Iwardby, was the sister and heir of the last Nicholas Carew who had died in 1485. Jane inherited the manor from her mother while she was married to John St John and their son John eventually inherited.

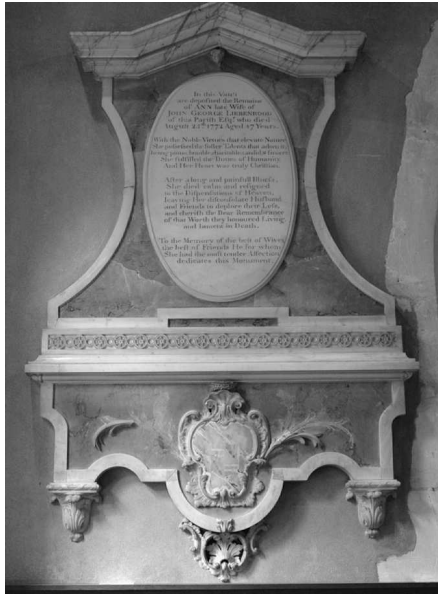


The memorial to Jane Iwardby (M)

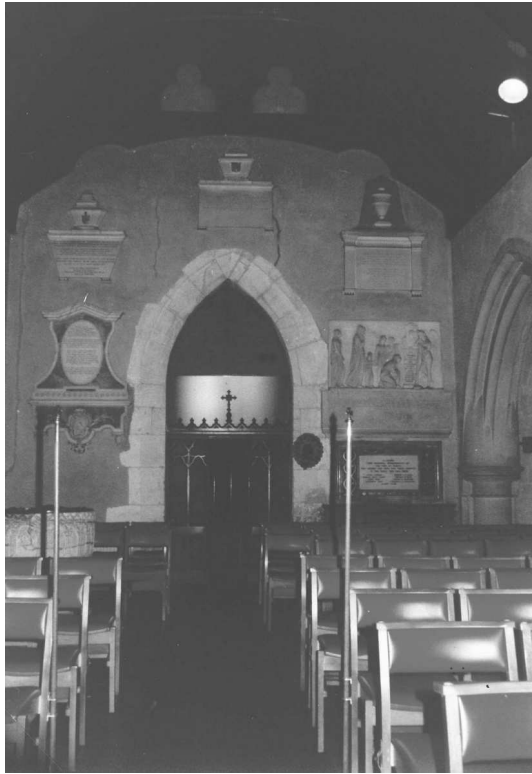


Memorial to Ann Southby [M20173]

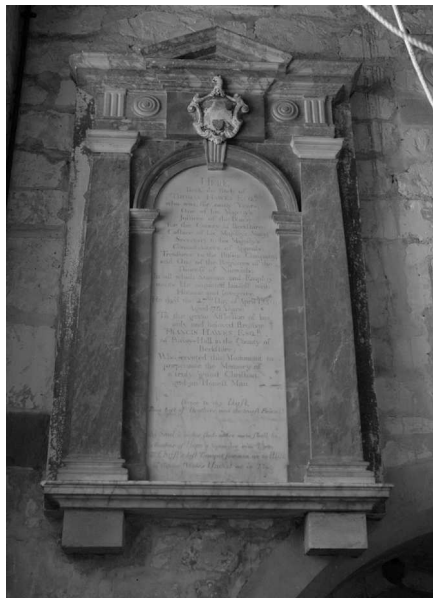
History of St Mary The Virgin Church, Purley on Thames



Memorial to Ann Liebenrood [M20170]



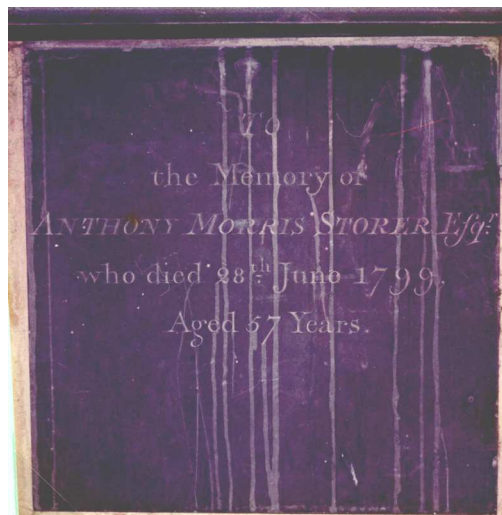
The east wall of the tower showing the reset memorials. Starting at 9 o'clock and going clockwise they are to Ann Liebenrood, John Engelberts Liebenrood, Elizabeth Sparrow, Anthony Morris Storer, Anthony Gilbert Storer, First World War, Second World War [M20048]



Memorial to Thomas Hawes



Memorial to John Engleberts Liebenrood [M20172]



A second memorial to Anthony Morris Storer - believed to be from his gravestone [M20047]

The Missing Memorials

It is clear from earlier records that not all the memorials have survived. The ones that are missing appear to have been mainly gravestones in the body of the church. They were mainly incised black marble and many similar examples can be seen in nearby churches, perhaps the best examples being in St Mary's Whitchurch on Thames.

There are nine memorials which have been identified as missing of which eight were recorded as gravestones. The other was a marble tablet to Francis Hawes and his daughter Elizabeth.

Remembering Rectors

Among the missing memorials is one to Richard Watts who was rector from 1623 until 1659. His son in law was William Noble of Leicestershire (died 1644) who is commemorated on a brass plate which used to be found beneath the 14th century window in the old vestry. This was removed in 1982 and has not yet been remounted. Interestingly on the back is a memorial to Agnes Norton who died in 1601.

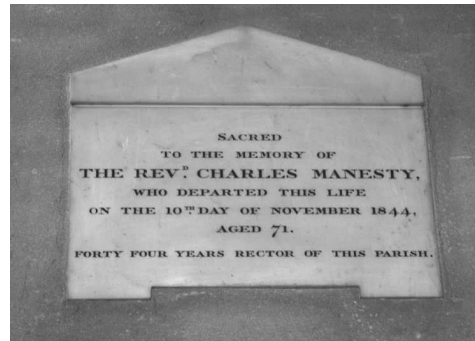
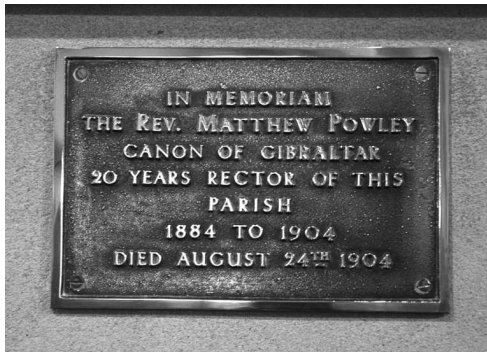
Charles Manesty is perhaps Purley's longest serving rector, although he may be surpassed by Walter Fachel who is believed to have served from 1280 to 1332. Charles died in 1844 and his memorial is to be found on the north wall of the chancel.

Charles Henry Travers is commemorated in a plaque on the south wall of the chancel in St Mark's church Englefield.

John Henry Dudley Matthews, rector from 1902 to 1914 met a tragic end by drowning. His memorial is on the south wall of the chancel.

Matthew Powley was rector from 1884 to 1899. His memorial is on the south wall of the chancel.

Harold Hawkins was rector from 1961 to 1967 and when the church was rebuilt in 1982 his children presented a new altar lectern and a pair of candlesticks which bear a commemorative plate.

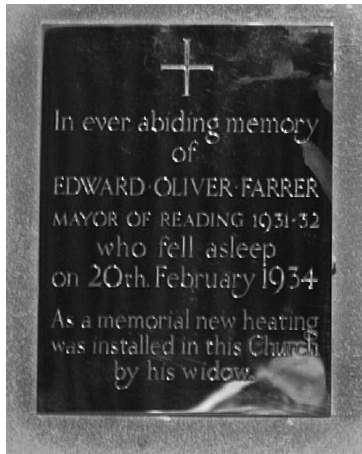


Memorials to two former rectors - (left) Matthew Powley [M20174] and right Charles Manesty [M20175]

Modern Memorials

The modern memorials exhibit considerable variety in form. There are three memorials in the form of windows, seven in the form of plates attached to a gift and a wooden plaque as well as the more traditional wall tablets.

The Sherwood family have three memorials. The earliest is to Richard Sherwood whose widow gave the money for the three lancet windows in the south wall of the chancel. Caroline Sherwood gave the lych gate in memory of her parents and a small plaque can be found inside the gate. Finally Edith Sophia Sherwood was a missionary in China who was one of the victims of the dowager empress Jung-Lu during the Boxer rebellion in 1902. Her memorial is another of those removed in 1982 and now reset in the chancel.



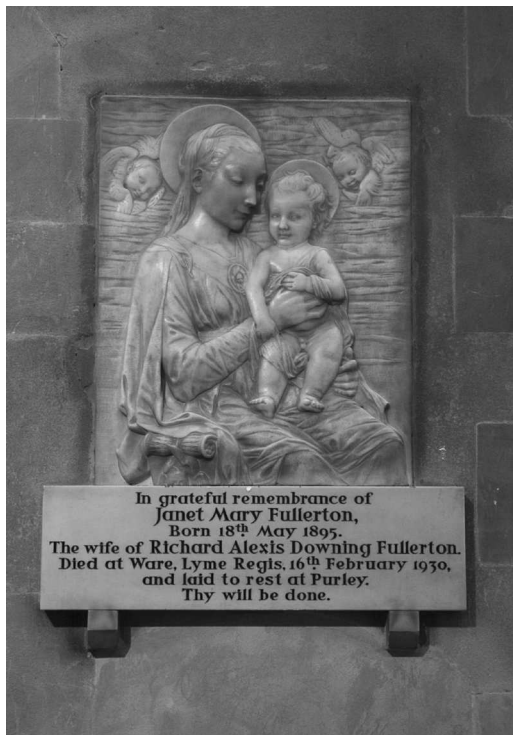
Memorial to Alderman Farrer [M20179]



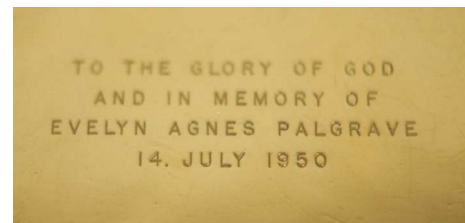
Memorial to Edith Sherwood [M20176]

Cecil Aldin was Master of Hounds for the South Berks Hunt and lived at Kennelgates (now Bowling Green Farmhouse) he was a noted artist and bon-viveur and his memorial is to be found beneath that of his son on the south wall of the nave.

Two long serving churchwardens, Herbert Tidbury (d 1951) and Charles Hodgkin (d 1949) have their memorials in the nave. Herbert, whose wife was Schoolmistress, ran a gunshop in Pangbourne and his memorial is on the south wall. Charles was Managing Director of Sigmund Pulsometer Pumps in Reading and chairman of the Parish Council for many years. His is to be found on the east wall. A third churchwarden was Ernest Spong, a former landlord of the Bedford Arms in Reading who established the Garden of Remembrance. His memorial is the reader's desk on the north of the chancel where a small brass plate may be found.



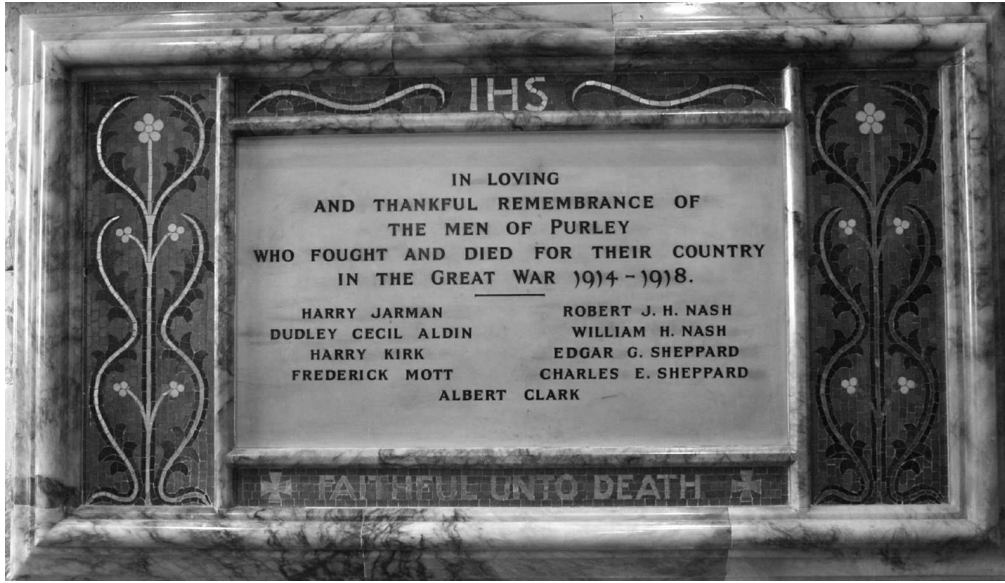
Memorial to Janet Fullerton [M20182]



Evelyn Palgrave was related to the compiler of 'The Golden Treasury' Her memorial is a paten (see chapter 17) The inscription is engraved on the underside [M20181]



The lectern was given in memory of Michael Rabone [M20180]



The First World War memorial (M)

War Heroes

There are memorials for both First and Second World Wars at the west end of the nave. They used to sit one over the other but after 1985 the Second World War memorial was moved to the other side of the tower arch. There are three other plaques to war heroes, two of which are duplicated on the main memorials.

Dudley Cecil Aldin was killed in action on Vimy Ridge when his unit the 105th Field Company, Royal Engineers, were engaged in digging tunnels between bomb craters to extend the trench system towards German lines. He is recorded on the main memorial as well as on a plaque erected by his father on the south wall of the nave.

Allan Powley was the son of Matthew Powley and he was killed in German East Africa during the campaign to take it from the Germans in 1916. His memorial is on the south wall of the nave.

There were three Nash brothers involved in the First World War, sons of Mr A Nash of Lower Farm (Scraces). Robert was taken prisoner by the Turks after the defeat at Kut in April 1916. He suffered appalling brutality and died in the following September. His brother William was killed in France in July 1916. Also related to the Nashes was Edward John Reed who died as a prisoner of war of the Japanese in 1943. He appears on the Second World War memorial and on the grave of his sister, Lillian Nash, in the new church yard.

Harry Kirk was a stoker on HMS Black Prince which was blown up during the Battle of Jutland in May 1916.

Harry Jarman was the son of the coachman at Westfields, the house which used to stand where Nursery Gardens now is. He died of wounds in August 1915. He is also commemorated on his mother's grave by the south wall of the old churchyard.

Hugh Lister was a nephew of Lord Lister and his mother owned the Old Rectory. He was ordained before the Second World War and often used to conduct services in the church for Mr. Skuse. He enlisted as a combatant rather than as a chaplain and earned a reputation for daring, winning the MC for a particularly ferocious attack on a German gun position. He was killed in action in 1944 and is commemorated on the main memorial as well as on a plaque on the north wall of the sanctuary.



Memorial to Dudley Cecil Aldin [M20183]



Purley's only Commonwealth War Grave of Charles Elliott [M20184]



Memorial to Alan Powley [M20177]



Memorial to Hugh Lister [M20185]

The Gravestones

The oldest gravestone in the churchyard is that to Sarah Barefoot who died in 1720. There are several other 18th century graves eg Eleanor Nichols (1721) and John Nichols (1725), Martha Lovegrove (1757), William Viner (1773) and Mary Viner (1784). Several of these have been levelled to facilitate grass cutting.

Three of the tombs in the old part of the graveyard have been listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. These are the ones to Edward Sherwood (1856) and John Sherwood (1792) both by Ashlar and that to Thomas Canning which was moved to its present position in 1985.

There is an official Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone to Charles Elliott in the new churchyard. Several graves bear additional references to men killed in the two World wars. In addition to those noted above there is a reference to Ronald Rawlins (1944)



The Lych Gate - erected in memory of John and Harriett Sherwood and their daughter Edith Sophia [M20059]