

Days Out with A Religious Connection

Burford, Greete, Whitton and Coreley

The latest in our series of suggestions for days out **within easy reach of Sedgley** features a group of churches in the **Tenbury Wells/Clee Hill** area of Shropshire, visited in the autumn of 2016.

Shropshire is particularly beautiful at this time, with the reds and golds of the leaves providing a glorious backdrop on the country roads.



Martin explores the churchyard at St Mary's, Burford, near Tenbury Wells.

Magda and I followed our visit to **Farlow, Nash and Boraston** in October 2016 with an exploration of other churches in the **Tenbury Wells** area. The most notable of these was the church of **St Mary's at Burford**. Stepping through the main entrance at the south door, we knew we were in for a treat!



Magda enters the south door at St Mary's, Burford - into a sumptuous array of historical riches!

St Mary's is located near to **Burford House** about 0.7 miles to the west of Tenbury Wells. It is an active Anglican parish church in the deanery of Ludlow, the archdeaconry of Ludlow, and the diocese of Hereford. Its benefice is united with those of eleven other parishes to form the **Tenbury Team Ministry**. The church is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade I listed building.



The 14th century font, which is still in use today.



The nave at Burford, with its golden lamp holders.



The Victorian Rood Screen. It came to St Mary's from France or Belgium during the 1889 restoration by Georgina, sister of Lord Northwick, a philanthropist to the village.

The oldest surviving part of the church is the chancel, and dates from the 12th century, with the nave and tower from the 14th century. In 1889–90 the church was extensively restored by **Aston Webb** for the Honourable **Georgina Rushout of Burford House**. He largely rebuilt the tower, added buttresses and crenellation to the nave and chancel, and replaced the tracery in the windows. Inside the church he rebuilt the chancel arch and roof, adding carvings of angels.



The carving of an angel in the chancel roof.



The tomb and effigy of Edmund Cornwall, Heir Apparent (heir to the family seat?), who died aged 20 years. One of about a hundred of these wooden medieval sculptures left in England. He is believed to have been killed taking part in a medieval joust.



Tomb of Princess Elizabeth on the north wall, daughter of John of Gaunt and sister of Henry IV, buried in 1426.



A monument to three members of the Cornewalle family showing painted depictions of Christian saints on the outside - the triptych opens out to reveal portraits of three of the Cornewalle family.



The Burford Giant, Edmond Cornewalle. The painting is signed by Melchior Salabossh. It shows Richard Cornwall, 9th Baron of Burford d1568, aged 75. His wife Jenet, d1547. They stand with their eldest son Edmond who died without issue in 1585, aged 50. An inscription tells of the sweet harmony of his nature, his great strength of his body and his dainty touch on the lute - even though he was 7' 3" tall.



High altar, reredos and east window probably put in by Sir Aston Webb when he restored the church in 1889 for the Rushout family of Burford Hall. Aston Webb designed some of the façade of Buckingham Palace.



The magnificent pulpit.



The bell tower, with hatchment. The wires are attached to a carillon - a stationary set of five chromatically tuned bells in the tower, played from a keyboard .



An unusual decorative water butt on an exterior wall.



The beautiful churchyard with a layer of leaves in late October.



St Mary's Burford is located next to Burford House, an 18th-century country house. It now functions as a garden centre, cafe, garden and retail outlet.



The area we explored – having left Burford we drove north, calling at Greete, then Whitton, and finally Coreley on the way to Clee Hill.

Greete

The next church on our list for the day was **St James, Greete**, on the road from **Tenbury Wells to Clee Hill**. St James's was built in the 13th century.



St James, Greete.



There was a charming donation box at the entrance door to St James, Greete.



The nave and raftered roof at St James, Greete.



The altar and east window at St James, Greete. The table is said to have been donated by visitors from Tranmere and Sunderland, who have camped at Greete since the 1930s.

Leaving Greete we revisited **St Mary the Virgin at Whitton** - a church we had seen before, but which had been closed while the chancel, nave, vestry and porch were re-roofed. Indeed, the church underwent a major programme of restoration between 2005 and 2013 to preserve it for the future. Whitton parish has around 90 inhabitants and is part of the **Tenbury Team**.



An early medieval preaching cross in the churchyard at Whitton, with a tabernacle for the reception of the sacred host. It probably pre-dates the church.



The porch at St Mary the Virgin, Whitton. The recent restoration work on the porch can clearly be seen.



The Tower at St Mary the Virgin, Whitton. Thin Roman bricks can be seen in the structure - probably salvaged from the ruins of a nearby Roman villa.



The East Window at Whitton is the work of Pre-Raphaelite artist Sir Edward Burne Jones, executed by William Morris.



An attractive window with flowers and hymn number board at Whitton.



A chalice set into the stonework of the north wall at Whitton – this was originally on the grave of a priest.



The attractive nave and chancel at Whitton.



The beautiful secluded approach to St Mary the Virgin at Whitton.

The final church we visited on this trip to South Shropshire was **St Peter's, Coreley**. While the tower is 13th century, the chancel and nave are made from flemish bond brick, dating from 1757. There are stone cusped lancet windows set in 19th century brick. The tower has a wood shingle spire.



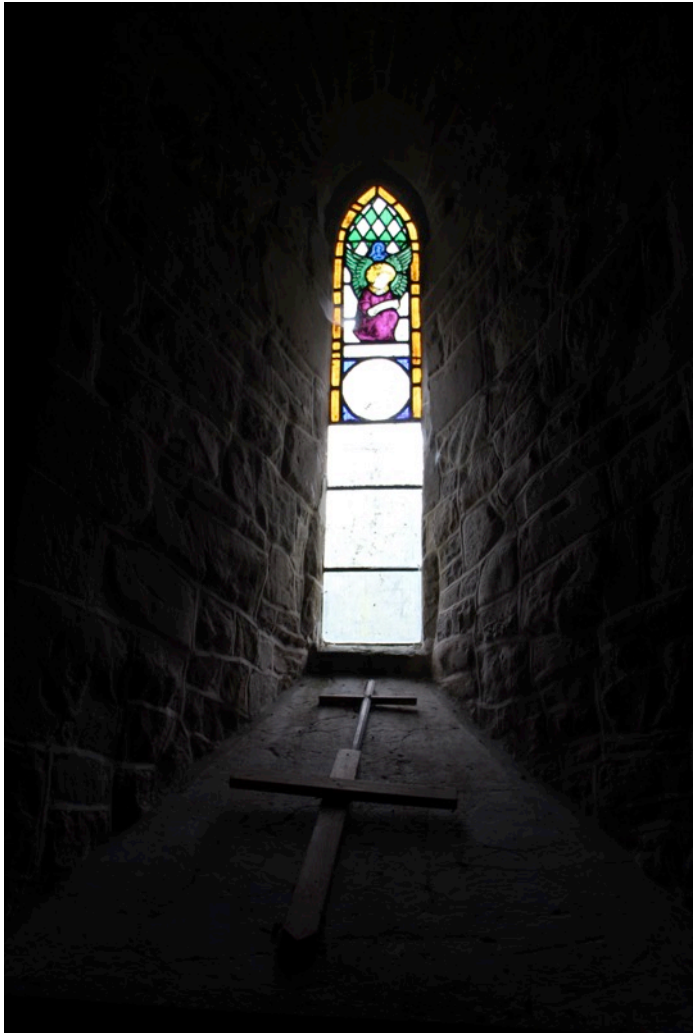
The church of St Peter, Coreley.



Home made jam on sale at St Peter's, Coreley. In the distance is the font.



A very unusual light fitting hanging from the roof of the nave at St Peter's Coreley.



An atmospheric touch – a cross lies in the window recess on the north wall of St Peter's, Coreley.



The altar and reredos at St Peter's, Coreley.



Martin admires the beautiful country views from the prayer cross at St Peter's, Coreley.



Beyond the churchyard is a lake at St Peter's Coreley.

Martin and Magda Jones October 2016.

Sources:

Information leaflets:

St Mary's Church Burford

St Mary the Virgin, Whitton

Wikipedia – St Mary's Church Burford.

Information card in church at Greete.

Information card at Coreley.