

# History Trail of the C14<sup>th</sup> St John the Baptist Church, Shottesbrooke

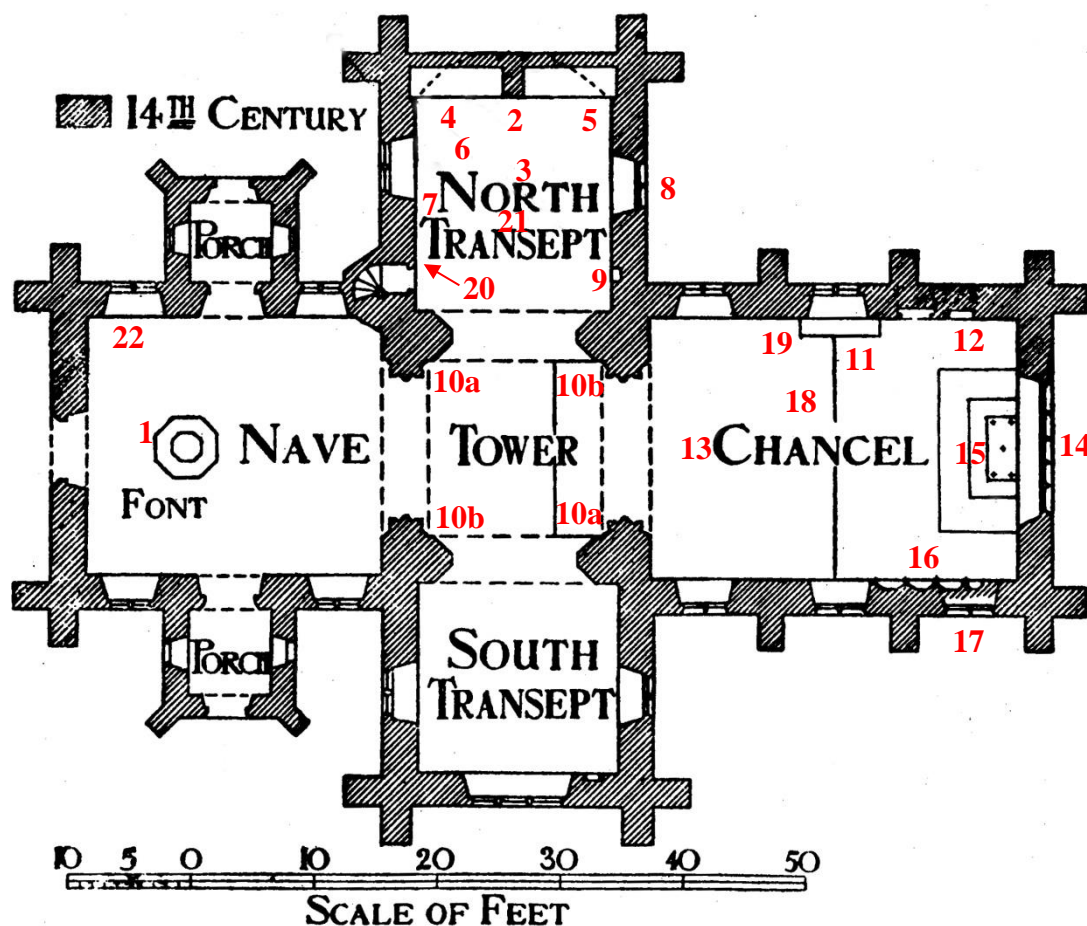


**Ann Darracott**



## *History Trail of St John the Baptist Church, Shottesbrooke*

Shottesbrooke Church is regarded as the finest decorated church in Berkshire. It was founded by Sir William Trussell in 1337 and the flowing tracery of its windows is typical of the C14th<sup>1</sup>. The monuments seen by Elias Ashmole in the mid C17th are noted.<sup>2</sup> Monuments put up since then are not listed as comprehensively. An account of armorial glass seen by Ashmole is available (see reference list) and contains details of both Trussell's career and those commemorated in the glass.



*Plan of Shottesbrooke Church<sup>3</sup>*

With the exception of the porches the timber framing of the roof is original (see Anon).

1. C14th Font; contemporary with the building of the church
2. Tomb of Sir William Trussell (d.1363; founder) and his wife Ida Boteler. When seen by Ashmole the recesses contained William encased in lead and his wife in leather. These

<sup>1</sup> A church at Shottesbrooke is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (VCH vol 3, p170) The flint facing of the walls of the chancel and tower is neatly squared but that of the walls of the nave and transepts is of a rougher character (Ibid, p167). The tower flints are not as neatly done as those in the chancel. The chancel flints are similar to those on the east wall of the C13th Knights Templars hall at Bisham Abbey so the chancel may be part of an earlier church at Shottesbrooke. The crucifix in stained glass in the east window of the south transept is said to be very early glass and, if so, could possibly have come from an earlier church.

<sup>2</sup> See his handwritten record; Ashmole 850 f289-293 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

<sup>3</sup> From Victoria County History of Berkshire, vol 3, p167.

now lost. The roofs of the recesses said to exhibit fan vaulting (very early example). The tomb seems to be too wide for the Transept.

3. Brass on floor showing a woman with elaborate headdress, head resting on cushion and hands together in prayer is the tomb of their daughter Margaret (d.1399) who was married to Fulk Pennbrigg (Pembridge). Most of the brass border inscription, seen by Ashmole, is lost. Symbols of St Matthew (angel) and St Mark (winged lion) survive
4. Stone on floor for Anne (d.1603), first wife of Richard Powle, Lord of the Manor of Shottesbrooke. Ashmole recorded a marble stone next to that of Anne for Richard Powle (d.1628). This is now lost and seems to have been replaced by the Noke monument. Further away there is a memorial for Richard Powle (d.1678), a kinsman (see 21). This stone dates from after Ashmole visited (in 1664-66). It seems likely some reordering of the monuments on the floor has occurred.
5. Brass on floor for Richard Gyll (Gill) Esq (d.1511), Sergeant of the Bakehouse for Henry VII & Henry VIII, and Baillie of the Hundreds of Cookham and Bray.
6. Brass on floor for Thomas Noke (d.1567), known as Father Noke, Esq of Henry VIII, Yeoman of Crown in England (if you look carefully you will see the characteristic insignia of the crown on his left shoulder). Brass includes his three wives and their children (brass for some children lost since C17th). Epitaph says he was aged 87 when he died! Latin epitaph below by Lady Elizabeth Hoby, then living at Bisham Abbey. Monument probably put there after 1578-9 when Noke's son, also Thomas, bought the manor. Ashmole describes this monument as being at the foot of the one for Richard Gill, again suggesting a reordering has occurred.
7. Marble monument on west wall for Lady Elizabeth Morgan (d.1638), daughter of William Morgan of Monmouth.
8. Window in memory of William Vansittart (d.1878) M.P. for Windsor.
9. Piscina on east wall (another occurs on the south wall of the south transept). The transepts provided more space for altars.
10. Portrait corbels for: a) Sir William Trussell; b) Philippa of Hainault, Queen of England.
11. Coffin-like alabaster monument<sup>4</sup> for William Throkmarton, (Throckmorton) (d.1535), Priest, Doctor of Law, and late guardian of this church. Penultimate warden of the college.
12. Aumbry cupboard near to blocked doorway with monuments to the Cherry family above.
13. Brass thought to represent John Bradwell, Warden of the college at Shottesbrooke, and William Frith, a London fishmonger, who left money in his will of 1386 for a chantry at Shottesbrooke. Bradwell was one of Frith's executors. Frith's brass said to be one of the earliest to an ordinary citizen. Note the swastikas (early crosses) on the priest's vestments.
14. East window<sup>5</sup> by Hardman in memory of Captain Nicholas Vansittart d. 1859, killed fighting the Chinese. His monument, with anchor and biography, is on the east side of the north transept.
15. Altar Cloth recalls in heraldry Shottesbrooke's history: coats are *bottom left* **Trussell**: William Trussell founded the collegiate church of Shottesbrooke in 1337 (unfortunately the wrong coat used); *top left* **Weldon**: Thomas & Edward Weldon were sold the college buildings in 1548 when, following the dissolution of chantries, it was in the hands of the king, Edward VI; *centre* **Royal Coat**: for Edward VI who decreed that the church of the college become the parish church; *bottom right* **Cherry**: Manor bought by William Cherry in 1698. His son Francis was a noted Jacobite, Shottesbrooke becoming a refuge for

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<sup>4</sup> Tiles, probably C14th, on the floor of the blocked up doorway to the right of this monument

<sup>5</sup> Almost all of the C14th armorial glass was still there in 1840 when seen by Carlos

those refusing to swear allegiance to William of Orange; *top right Vansittart*: In 1716 Shottesbrooke manor sold by Elizabeth, widow of Francis Cherry to Robert Vansittart. Their descendents the Smiths continue to reside at Shottesbrooke.

16. Piscina and Sedilia, all with ogee arches.
17. South window in memory of Rev. W. Vansittart & Charlotte his wife.
18. Double memorial to Dr Henry Dodwell d.1711, his wife Anne d.1750 and his descendants (latter stone obstructed by pews). Last entry on second stone in C19th.
19. Double Memorial on wall to Capt Coleraine Robert Vansittart (d.1886) and his sister Rose Sophia (d.1892), wife of Oswald Augustus Smith. Rose inherited Shottesbrooke Park from her brother.
20. Memorial on wall to Dr Henry Dodwell (d.1711) - this must be the original memorial (see 18). The inscription in Latin includes a resume of his career, mentioning Shottesbrooke. He was a Jacobite who had to resign his chair of history at Oxford in Nov 1691 because he would not swear allegiance to William & Mary. They had succeeded James II who was deemed to have abdicated in Dec 1688. From 1694 Dodwell lived at Shottesbrooke in a house provided by the then owner, Francis Cherry. Shottesbrooke became an important centre for Jacobites.
21. Black marble memorial to Richard Powle (d.1678) MP Berkshire, Knt of the Bath in 1661
22. Plaque on wall for Hardwick Mills Dyer MA Rector of Shottesbrooke Parish.

Many other monuments occur in the church including memorials for Vansittart and Smith (on the wall of the north and south transepts and on the floor of the chancel); Cherry (on the north wall of the chancel); Lee (on the floor of the south transept) and Brownrigg (on the walls of the west end of the nave). A memorial, almost indecipherable, that occurs furthest north on the west wall of the north transept, appears to be for Robert Dodwell of Doctors Commons and his daughter Anne (d.1877).

The Smith family, descendants of the Vansittarts, still hold Shottesbrooke. The late Sir John Smith founded the Landmark Trust to rescue historic buildings by developing them as holiday homes; their offices are adjacent to the church.

## *Chronology of the Lord of the Manor of Shottesbrooke and the Collegiate Church of St John the Baptist*

\* = memorial in church

<b>Time</b>	<b>Reign</b>	<b>Lord of Manor of Shottesbrooke</b>	<b>Collegiate Church</b>
1086 Domesday Survey	William the Conqueror	Alward the goldsmith held of the king whose father had held it from Queen Edith in the reign of Edward the Confessor	A church is mentioned at Shottesbrooke
1243	Henry III	Robert de Shottesbrooke; others hold manor until 1335	Parish church at Shottesbrooke exists: possible earlier church was adapted by Trussell in 1337. Chancel faced with squared flint whereas rest of church of rough flint.
1335	Edward III	John de Oxonia citizen & vintner of London conveyed the manor to William Trussell, son of William Trussell of Kibblestone, Co. Stafford	
1337	Edward III	*Sir William Trussell (d.1363) Founder of collegiate church	College founded; John de Lodyngton first warden (W), then William Sharp
1363	Edward III	*Margaret, Trussell's daughter, wife of Fulk Penbrugge (Pembridge), inherits	
1371	Edward III		(W) John Bradford
1384	Richard II		(W) *John Bradwell
1399	Henry IV usurps the throne in September	Margaret dies and her heir was William Trussell, her uncle's son. It remained in the Trussell family until some time before 1510	
Before 1510		Elizabeth Trussell married John de Vere, Earl of Oxford	
1535	Henry VIII		(W) *Dr William Throkmarton
1539	Henry VIII	Son Robert de Vere appointed Master/Warden of College	(W) Robert de Vere Last Warden
1547	Edward VI	Remained in the de Vere family	Dissolution of chantries. College and manorial estate belonging to it now in king's hands
1548	Edward VI		Granted to Thomas & Edward Weldon
1578-9	Elizabeth I	Edward de Vere sold manor to Thomas Noke, son of *"Father Noke". Still held by Thomas in 1583	
1590	Elizabeth I	Not known how or when the manor left the Noke family	Edward Weldon's son Thomas dies holding mansion house and site of college




1628	Charles I	Richard Powle, Registrar of the Court of Chancery, dies holding the manor, bequeathing it to Henry Powle, Sheriff of Berkshire, his kinsman, whose son *Richard inherits.	
1667	Charles II	From this date the descent of the college estate is identical with that of the manor	George Weldon conveyed manor of college to *Richard Powle, lord of Shottesbrooke, Kt of the Bath (d.1678)
1678		Richard's brother Henry Powle MP for New Windsor, Master of the Rolls 1690, inherits.	
1693			Church becomes a Rectory
Before 1698	William & Mary succeeded 1689 after James II abdicated in 1688	Henry Powle, whose library contributed to the Lansdowne collection in the British Library, sells to William Cherry. Cherry's son Francis made Shottesbrooke a refuge for Jacobites such as *Dr Henry Dodwell, the historian and Thomas Hearne, the antiquary. Dodwell lost his history professorship at Oxford because he refused to take the oath of allegiance to William & Mary	Incumbents include William Dodwell (d.1785) Archdeacon of Berkshire, son of Dr Dodwell. William was born at Shottesbrooke
1716	George I	Elizabeth, his widow sold the manor to Robert Vansittart, a merchant venturer. Remained in the Vansittart family until 1886	
1886	Victoria	*Rose Sophia Smith, sister of *Capt. C. Vansittart, inherited the manor. The Smith family continue to hold Shottesbrooke.	*Hardwick Mills Dyer MA, rector of parish from 1878 to 1905




Source:

Victoria County History for Berkshire, vol 2, p102-103; vol 3 p164-171.



## *The Surviving C14th Armorial Glass*

West Window	All three coats in this window were in C17th next to each other in a south window of the nave
	<p>William Clinton, Earl of Huntingdon (d.1354). He was among those commissioned to accompany Philippa of Hainault to England after she was married by proxy to Edward III in 1327. He was involved in the coup that toppled Roger Mortimer, Earl of March in 1330.</p>
	<p>Ralph Stafford, Baron Stafford (d.1372), founder member of the Order of the Garter. He was involved in the coup that toppled Roger Mortimer, Earl of March in 1330.</p>
	<p>Philippa of Hainault (d.1369), Queen of Edward III. The Queen appears to have been a benefactor of the collegiate church of Shottesbrooke.</p>

<p><b>West Window, North Transept</b></p>	
	<p>Edward III (d.1377), who began quartering France with England on his coat in 1340 to emphasise his claim to the throne of France. This coat could not have been put up before 1340.</p> <p>The King appears to have been a benefactor of the collegiate church at Shottesbrooke.</p> <p>This is the only coat in its original position.</p>
<p><b>North side of Chancel</b></p>	
	<p>A cadet coat for Ufford. Originally this coat was in a window on the south side of the chancel. The coat has been identified as representing William Ufford. Unclear who he was. A William is said to be brother of Robert Ufford, who was made Earl of Suffolk in 1337, the year Shottesbrooke was founded.</p>
<p><b>South side of Chancel</b></p>	
	<p>Ralph Neville, Lord Raby (d.1367), one of the commanders who captured King David II of Scotland at the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346. William Trussell who founded the collegiate church at Shottesbrooke was constable of Odiham Castle when the King David was imprisoned there. The king is said to have requested that Trussell accompany him back to Scotland in 1357 after his ransom had been negotiated. Originally this coat was on the north side of the chancel.</p>

Remnants of other medieval glazing can be seen in the tracery including figures of mythical beasts and St Katherine with the wheel.



All the armorial glass for Sir William Trussell and his wife that used to be in the windows of the north transept are lost. However, a C14th armorial (Trussell with a blue border) for a kinsman survives at St Michael the Archangel Church at Warfield, Berkshire, possibly representing a younger son or brother.



*Trussell armorial coat in the chancel of St Michael the Archangel Church, Warfield*

## *References*

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