



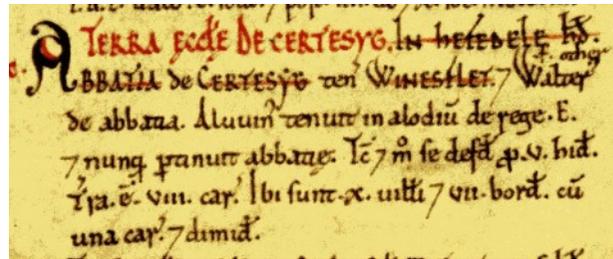
**850 YEARS OF OUR HISTORY
PLEASE HELP PRESERVE IT**

Registered Charity: 1124379

Origins of Winchfield and its church

Winchfield was first mentioned by its exact present name in about 727. However, "Winesflet" in Domesday Book(1086) is generally supposed to be Winchfield.

As it appears in the actual entry in Domesday Book:



Which translates as:

IX. THE LAND OF THE CHURCH OF CHERTSEY IN ODIHAM HUNDRED THE ABBEY of CHERTSEY holds WINESFLET, and Walter fitzOther [holds] of the abbey. Alwine held it of King Edward in alod, and it never belonged to the abbey. It was then, as now, assessed at 5 hides. There is land for 8 ploughs. There are 10 villans and 7 bordars with 1 ploughs. TRE it was worth 100s; and afterwards 60s; now 30s.

Since St. Mary's is believed to have been built around 1150 it is not mentioned in Domesday Book.

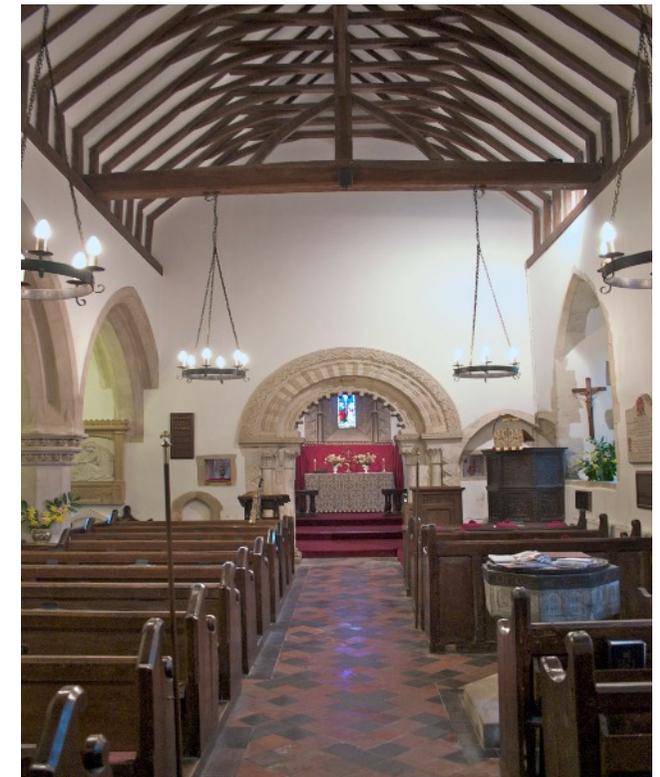
It is interesting to note that "field" in Saxon times signified an "unenclosed barren stony district". These parts of England were then afforested and Winchfield was probably a natural clearing within the forest at that time.

The Manor, in which the Church stands, was originally held by Chertsey Abbey. As the Church is pre-Reformation it was built as a Roman Catholic shrine for the benefit of the monks, who would have been more than a day's journey from their mother house.

Origins of Winchfield and its church

Since 1591 the Manor has passed through the families of Mason, Rudyerd, Bainbridge, Beauclerk, and Charrington. The white building standing to the North of the Church is Court House and is the original Manor House. Winchfield House, the present Manor House, was built by Lady Margaret Beauclerk at the end of the 18th Century.

The Church has undergone a series of changes during its long life but much of the present building is still the original Norman work. Major additions were made during the mid-19th Century notably the addition of the North Aisle and the extension to the tower with a new belfry.



The nave as it appears today showing the lovely Chancel arch.

Gems of St. Mary's

- The chancel arch is the glory of the church. It consists of a group of semi-circular arches carved with the chevron and other Norman ornamentation.
- The South East Window was designed by Laurence Whistler.
- The Font has an original Norman basin.
- The Pulpit is a very fine example of the art of the wood carver. It dates from 1634.



This beautiful Grade I listed church has played its part in Winchfield life for over 850 years. Generations have been baptised and married there, and buried in the churchyard.

It has been preserved for us and is a memorial to those who are commemorated in the church and churchyard. Now the challenge is for us to do the same and keep this historic church for future generations.

Further information about St. Mary's can be found in a booklet available at the church.

Friends of St. Mary's Winchfield

The charity was established in 2008 with the principle objective of supporting the fabric of this lovely Church. Its Charter states:

"The principal object of the Charity is to support the maintenance, repair, restoration, preservation, beautification and improvement of the fabric of the church and churchyard of St Mary's Winchfield and the monuments, fixtures, fittings, furniture, stain glass, ornaments and other chattels belonging to the Church."



The Font with its original Norman basin

Since the Friends were formed, they have supported a number of projects including:

- Replacement of Churchyard fencing
- Repairs to the tower render
- Removal of bird nesting debris
- Refurbishment of the gates and benches
- New gravelling for the pathways
- Reducing the crown of a large oak tree
- Safety improvements to the wiring
- Removal of a damaged fir tree

Since its incorporation, the Friends have raised £25,000, and provided financial support totalling over £6,000.



St. Mary's after removing the fir tree.



West end of the nave showing the organ loft

Work will be needed regularly to address problems of damp, the integrity of the belfry and the centuries-old render as well as responding to the actions deemed essential following the quinquennial reviews conducted by specialist architects from the diocese.

In order to continue this and other important work to preserve this fine Norman church, please join: