

to use as a mortuary chapel, and the rest of the building was demolished, with the new west wall and doorway, in place of the old chancel arch, being paid for by the incumbent. Subsequently little used, it was formally declared redundant in 1984 and vested in the Redundant Churches Fund (now The Churches Conservation Trust) five years later.

## Exterior

The church consists of a single rectangular structure 17 ft (5.2 m) square, which formerly formed the chancel of the much larger church. Whilst it may initially appear to be a simple building, there is much of interest to be seen in it. The walls are built of local rubble with quantities of flint and pale limestone dressings.

Directly over the west door is a fragment of a 13th-century stone coffin-lid with a relief cross. The wall into which it has been built was constructed in 1884 to create a west wall to the chancel where the original chancel arch would have been. The present doorway is made up of various carved stones that must have come from different parts of the original church, as they do not match. Just to the left and higher than the coffin lid can be seen a fragment of medieval window tracery used as rubble for the wall. The other three walls, which are all 13th century in date, are built on a slight stone plinth and have (later) brick angle buttresses at the east end. On the south side is a blocked priest's doorway with a well-preserved mass dial near the bottom of the left-hand jamb. This would have been

used to tell the time of services in the medieval period. The east wall displays an upper blocked window, which now contains an inset cross of flint. This window was constructed in 1796 to throw light into a newly built pew inside.

The churchyard, which is still the responsibility of the parish, contains several monuments of note – including one to William Buckley who built the present Moundsmere Manor in 1908. This magnificent mansion is based on a wing of Hampton Court Palace. Buckley was also responsible for establishing the first ever Tuberculium

Tested herd of cows in the country. An owner of a previous Moundsmere was James Oades who was found guilty of blasphemy in 1637 and whose penalty was a fine of £100 and an order to make public penance both in this church and in Winchester Cathedral.

To the west of the church, just outside the present inner fence, there are two sarsen stones which are reputed to mark the corners of the original church.

A photograph, taken just before the church was demolished, shows an endearing structure consisting of nave with western bell-cote and dormer window to light a gallery, and a classically-inspired north chapel. The latter was built by William Guidott who married Patience Soper and contained both his family pew and burial vault. He also built the present Preston House.

## Interior

### Floor

The floor is made up of a mixture of stone flags, ledgerstones and tiles. Most were relaid here when the greater part of the church was demolished, so their original locations are unknown. There are 32 medieval tiles of varying design. The most important memorial is the brass to Katherine Dabrigecourt (d.1607), which was made at the end of the period when this type of memorial was fashionable. Near the door is a large plain slab which may be the upturned mensa, or top, of a medieval altar. The majority of memorials on the floor date from the 18th century – some of them have high quality lettering. That to Elizabeth Soper has the year shown as 1733/4 reminding us of the confusion at the time when the country was in the limbo state of recognising both the Julian and Gregorian calendars, whose years started on different dates. In England, dates before 1752 were usually calculated according to the Julian calendar, but as most of continental Europe used the Gregorian calendar, dates that occurred in the 'overlap' months of January, February and March (up to the 25th, which was New Year's Day in the Julian calendar) were often written like this to reflect both.

Nearby is a small brass inscription to John Waterman (d.1726) who was 59 years minister of this church.

### Windows

There are few windows in the church. The earliest may be seen in the north wall, consisting of a lancet opening with a rounded top and pointed inner arch. This dates from the late 12th century and is the earliest

dateable feature to be seen in the church. The large east window is of 18th-century date, as is the squatter, blocked, lancet above it. In the south wall is a fine two-light window dating from the 15th century. The east window contains painted glass with texts in diagonal scrolls and is dated in the bottom left-hand corner May 1892, whilst the north window contains fleur-de-lys quarries which probably date from the last restoration of the building before its demolition.

### Wall paintings

On the east wall are two medieval consecration crosses – painted to show the bishop where to anoint the building with holy oil when the church was reconsecrated in the 13th century, when this surviving part of the building was new. There would originally have been 12 of these crosses inside the (larger) building. Higher up there are some Victorian Texts and fragments of what must be medieval work above the consecration crosses.

### Wall monuments

The church contains five wall tablets. Two similar designs, to members of the Soper family, date from 1729 and 1731. They are of marble with fruit and flower surrounds and a cherub's head at the base. The Sopers were patrons of the church and, as mentioned previously, married into the Guidott family. Of slightly later date is the white marble tablet to Thomas Baker who died in 1794.

This shows a white urn against a grey obelisk, with a blank shield below, possibly designed to be painted with the arms of the deceased. The largest memorial, erected by Elizabeth Hall in 1818, commemorates Thomas and

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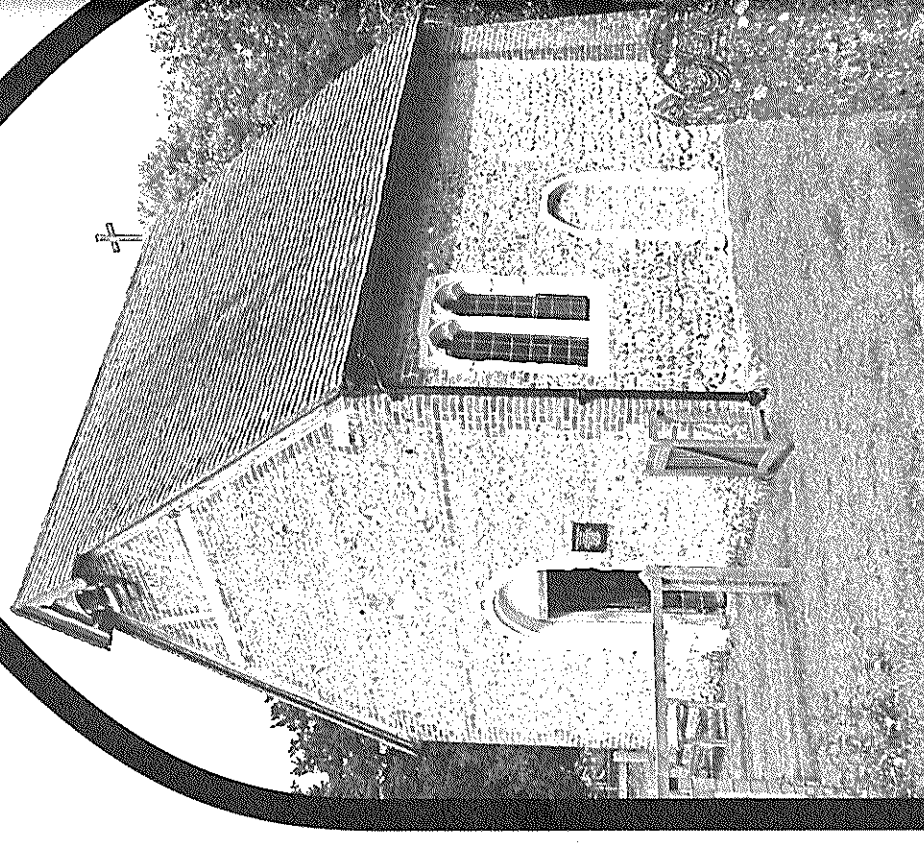
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Photograph by John E Vigar  
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THE CHURCHES  
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# Old Church of St Mary the Virgin Preston Candover, Hampshire



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