

Mercifully, the plaster inside and out, was retained.

The candle brackets and iron chandeliers were made c. 1952 by John Bryan of Grosmont; the East Window, erected in 1954 in memory of Mr. E.H. Jones, was designed by Francis Stephens; and the Vicar's stall and Chancel prayer desks were given in memory of Captain N.C. Elstob, who is also commemorated in the gates bearing his initials, on the river bank. The north Window to the Sanctuary was given by Mr. and Mrs. H. Woodhouse. The South Window commemorates Chapel farm, destroyed when the A.40 road was built.

Other details include two low side windows, the Griffin monuments in the chancel and the plaster cast brought from Italy in the porch. The opening above the pulpit was made by a former Vicar looking for traces of a rood screen. He was unable to replace the stones he took out.

The bells consist of two 17th. Century ones, one dated 1876, and a Royal Head bell, probably cast at Worcester in about 1420, bearing as stops in the inscription, "Sancta Margareta Ora Pro Nobis", the heads of Edward III and his Queen, Phillipa. This is the only bell of this kind in the County.

The Church is subject to severe flooding and brass plates can be seen on the North side of the Chancel arch recording the height of the last three high floods. The water mark of the 1960 flood can also be seen on the plaster outside the Vestry.

In the Churchyard, there is the stone seat on the South side of the Chancel, sometimes erroneously called a "Leper Seat", and the base of a wayside cross brought from Wyesham, just South of the tower.

K.E.K. 1969



The Church of St. Peter,
Dixon
Monmouth.

In the Diocese of Hereford

SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, DIXTON

The derivation of the name - Dixon - underlines the antiquity of this site as a place of worship. The old Celtic name was Llandidwg, meaning the Llan, or enclosure of Didwg, probably a monk who evangelised this district for the Celtic Church. The Normans rededicated the Church to Saint Peter in the 12th. Century, but retained the founder's name and referred to St. Peter, Tydiuc. By about 1250 the "Ty" had been dropped and it was St. Peter's Diuc'ston. The name then evolved through Dukeston--Duxton to Dixon by the 15th. Century.

It lay in the old Welsh commote of Erging or Archenfield and the original building was probably destroyed when Gruffydd ap Llywelyn raided the district in 1054. It was rebuilt shortly after the Conquest and the herring-bone masonry of c. 1080 in the North wall of the Nave may date from that rebuilding. At this time the Church was appropriated by the Benedictine Priory in Monmouth and remained attached to that house until the Dissolution.

By 1100 Archenfield, including Dixon and Monmouth, had been seized from the Welsh church by the Bishop of Hereford. Dixon remained in the Diocese of Hereford until 1844 when it was returned to Llandaff. In 1914 Dixon was one of the Border parishes which was allowed to vote whether it wished to be in England or Wales, and by 209 to 29, voted to return to Hereford. So now, although the whole parish lies within the County of Monmouth, ecclesiastically, it is in the Deanery of Archenfield and the Diocese of Hereford, a strange administrative mixture but an accurate reflection of its history.

The tower and much of the existing fabric was completed by the 13th. Century and by 1300 its Vicar had become Bishop of Geneva, the only one so far to achieve such an exalted rank. In 1346, the year of Crecy, the Vicar, a Frenchman, was cited as an alien by the Bishop

of Hereford. He was, however, too old to be dangerous and was allowed to stay in office until he succumbed to the Black Death in 1348/9, a year which saw three different incumbents.

In 1536 the County of Monmouth was formed and the monasteries were dissolved. As a result, Dixon passed from Monmouth Priory, which had acted as Rector of the church, to a Lay Rector appointed by the King.

The Church records begin with William Clarke in 1630 and are fairly complete. Clarke was dismissed by the Puritans on the grounds of drunkenness and malignancy but returned after the Civil War and stayed until he died. His initials were on the old Three-decker Pulpit and in his time the rails were on three sides of the Communion Table, and there were box pews and a low Norman Chancel Arch.

The Royal Arms are those of Queen Anne. They were painted locally, as were the Tablets at the West end which are on tin and have a mistake in the Lord's Prayer. The Church Plate was given in 1755 by the Vicar and his wife. The Bible on the old Communion table near the South door was compiled by another Vicar, Thomas Bankes (1770 - 1805). He did not set foot in the parish until the year in which he died, so he had time to collect the information which this Bible contains, e.g.

"There are 3,566,486 letters in the Bible."

"The 21st. verse of the 7th. Chapter of Ezra contains all the letters of the Alphabet."

"The word 'and' occurs 35,543 times in the O.T. and 10,684 times in the N.T."

The Church was restored twice in the 19th. Century. In 1824 the box pews were removed and the Vestry was built. The three-decker pulpit was replaced and the Communion rails placed in their present position. In 1860, the Chancel Arch was raised, the gallery removed, the South Porch rebuilt, and, for good measure, the 1824 pews replaced by the existing ones. This, by J.P. Seddon, was easily the most comprehensive restoration.