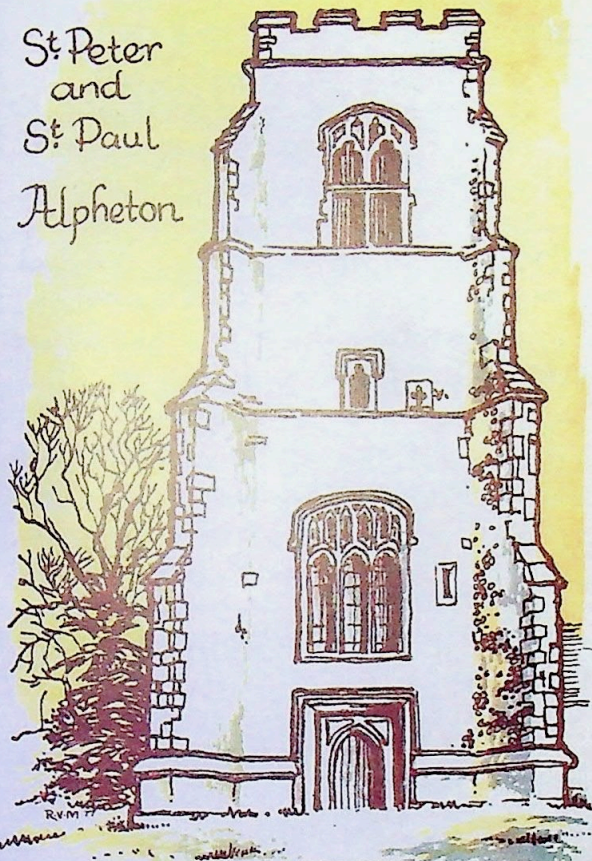
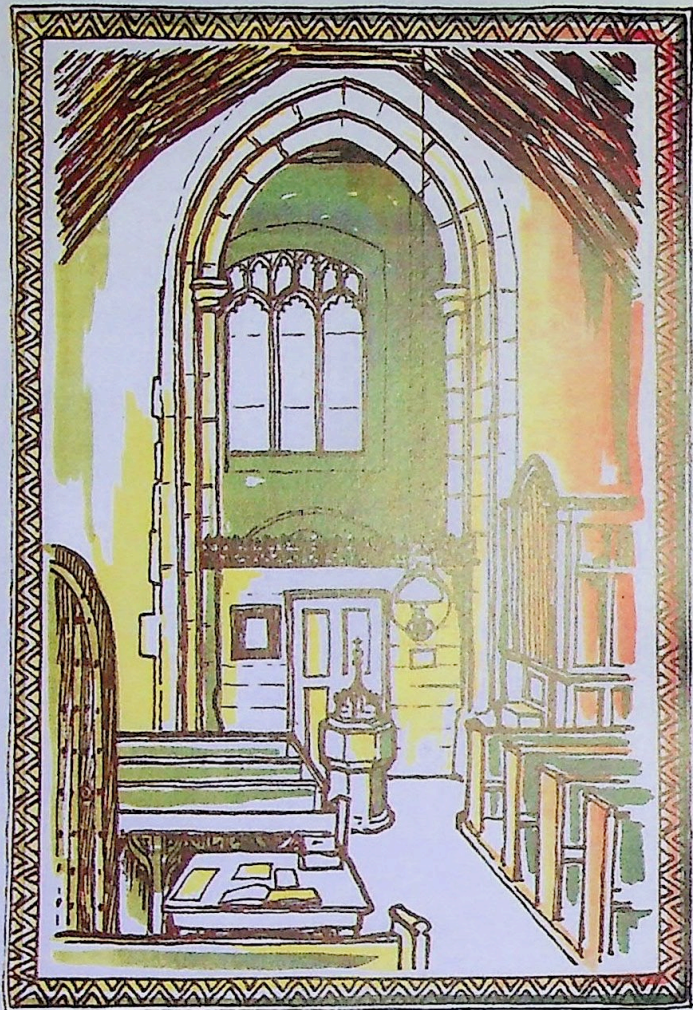


St. Peter
and
St. Paul
Alpheton





The Bells

There are now only two bells, the two largest having been sold in 1780 "to pew the church". The inscriptions on the two remaining bells are "Robert Gumey made me, 1667."

From the returns of the Hearth Tax, reimposed in 1662, Robert Gumey's name appears in St Mary's parish register, Bury St Edmunds, as possessing a house with three hearths. He was probably a bell-founder there.

The Font

Its 13th century base of black Purbeck marble had four corner pillars. The upper part or bowl, has disappeared and was replaced by 15th century

octagonal work. The cover is modern, having been placed there to commemorate the death of King Edward VII in 1910

On the north wall of the Nave are the remains of a wall painting of Saint Christopher. Though its details are faded, the main outline can still be traced, and an impression of the original, drawn in 1913 can be found nearby. On the South side of the Nave the windows contain some 15th century glass.

Drawn by
Capt. L. Robins 1913



The Pews

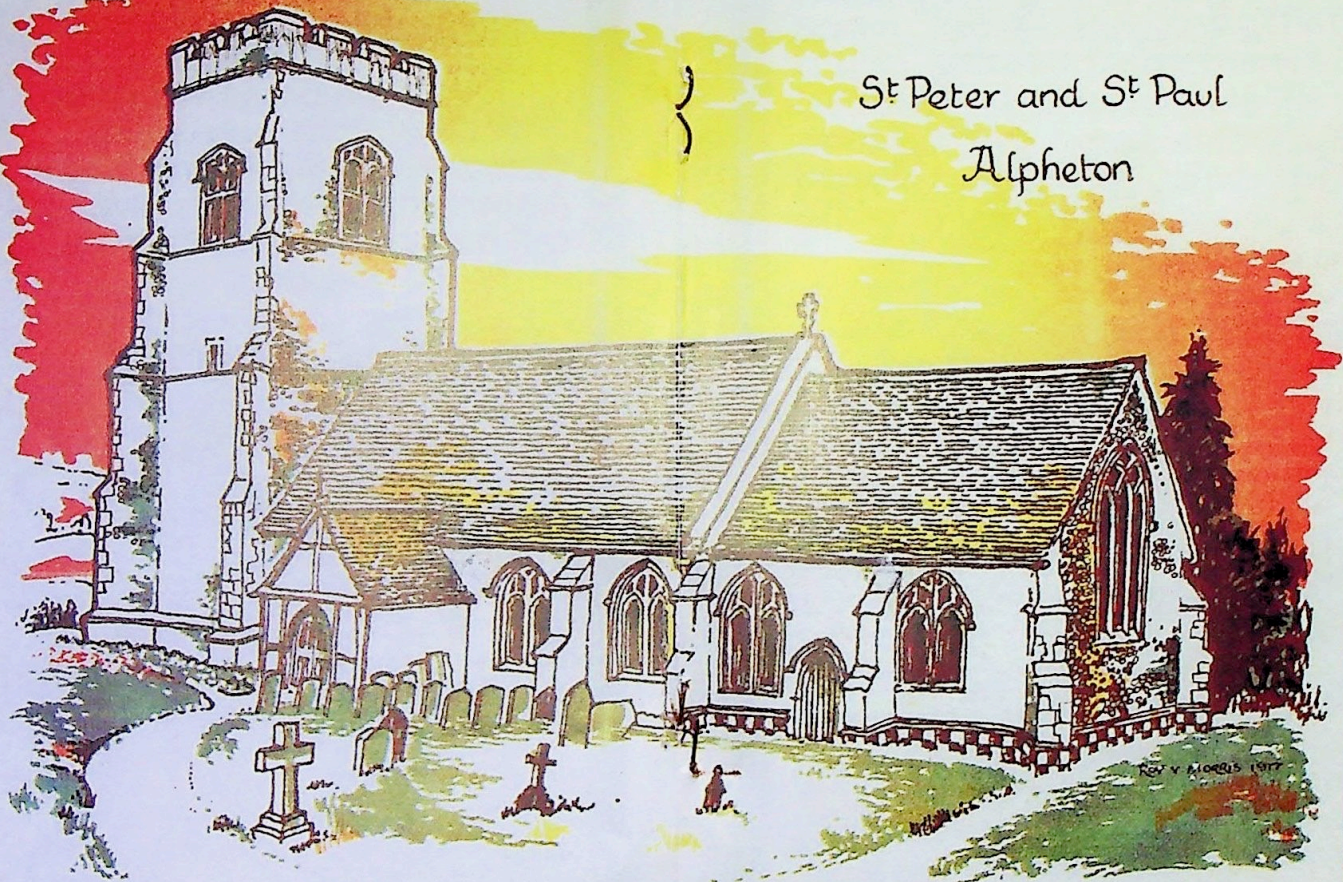
The poppy heads and some of the choir stalls are almost certainly of mediaeval construction. A number of them were made from oak trees grown in the grounds of the old Rectory.

The Pulpit

The pulpit is Jacobean, though the base is modern. Originally a three decker, it stood on the north side. Prayers were read from the lowest stage, lessons from the middle and sermons from the top.



St Peter and St Paul
Alpheton



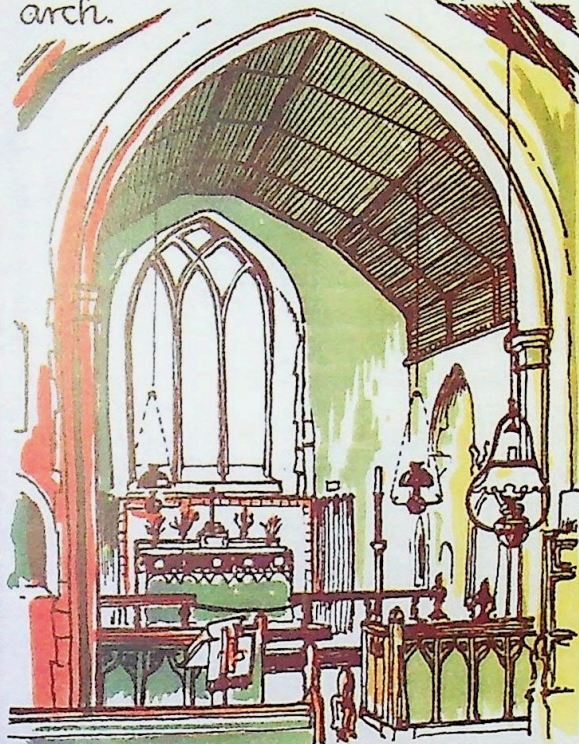
REV. V. MORRIS 1977

The Chancel Arch

The niche on the South side shows considerable traces of colour. It probably once held an image of a saint or the Virgin Mary and was destroyed along with the Rood Screen during the Reformation. On the North side the niche has been resited higher on the wall to accomodate an opening made in 1839, through which the choir could see and hear the preacher more easily. This has undoubtedly weakened the north pier of the arch which has subsequently required strengthening.

In 1906, the decayed base of the old Rood Screen was replaced by a stone one, and the staircase to the Rood Loft, hidden since 1839 was rediscovered and opened to view

Nothing remains of the actual screen, but it is apparant that it was secured in the grooves cut into the stone work of the arch.





The Chancel

The back of the priest's stall in the Chancel is composed of two misericords.

The 14th century Piscina and Sedilia were probably fine examples of carving of the period, though only the Piscina and the Sub-deacon's seat to the west retain their ogee arches.

No guide to this Church would be complete without mention of more recent restoration work.

In 1934, the Church with crumbling tower, leaking roof and decaying buttresses was in a lamentable state of repair. Much is due to the boundless energy of the Rector of that time, "Father Joe" Williamson, of Stepney fame, who approached every person of note in the country, including members of the Royal Family, and finally secured the money necessary to carry out the restoration work.

During the last six years three windows, including the East window, have been repaired and reglazed, oil heating has been installed and the exterior newly rendered.

In 1976 the Church was fortunate in its acquisition of a

pipe organ. The organ case dated about 1825, is similar to others made by Bryceson, a prolific builder of barrel organs. It clearly once housed a barrel organ, and a list of tunes, unfortunately beyond deciphering, is pasted inside the back panel of the case. The organ itself is of a later date and its construction suggests the work of Wheaton a small Cambridge builder of the mid-19th century.



Still the work continues. In 1989 work was put in hand to repair the ceiling of the Nave and once this was completed, further repairs were carried out on the windows and Tower.

The most important event in recent times was the celebration in 1991 of the millennium of the Church. Although as has been said earlier, the exact date of its founding is not accurately known, it is generally assumed that it was in about 990 from the time of Edmund the Elder and the 1000 year date was therefore believed to fall in 1990 or thereabouts. The event was marked by a beautiful flower festival and photographs of this can be seen on the

right of the Vestry door.

In 1996 the old oil heaters were replaced with under pew electric heaters which have transformed the Church in winter. Also at this time the bells were brought back into use again and a gift of new ropes from a Parishioner enables them to be rung each Sunday before Church.

The hassocks embroidered by the ladies of the Parish have recently been refurbished and they do much to enhance the interior, while outside the Churchyard where many Parishioners still ask to be buried, is kept tidy with many new trees planted over the years to enhance the peaceful and beautiful place.

All the continuing work is testimony to the fact that the present villagers of Alpheton are still eager to preserve this ancient and lovely Church.

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Originally written and compiled by Mrs. E. F. Morris and Mr. A. H. Morris, Churchwarden 1967-87 and designed and printed by Mr. R. V. Morris Churchwarden 1977-78. Revised by Sir Anthony Mullens Churchwarden 1997.

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