

THE CHURCH OF St. ANDREW & St. MARY HOW CAPLE- HEREFORDSHIRE

How Caple was mentioned in the Domesday Survey in 1090. Parts of the present Church however, date back to 1210 AD although there is evidence that there was once an earlier Church. In 1210 the CAPLE family lived in the big house next door, since when only two families have lived at the Court; the Gregories and the Lees.

The present CHANCEL was built in the 13th. Century. The NAVE was rebuilt in the first half of the 14th. Century when the SOUTH PORCH (now THE VESTRY) was added. The lovely CHANCEL ROOF is early 16th. Century, but was lowered in 1887. The NAVE ROOF is late 17th. Century. The PULPIT was made in 1630 and the sounding board was copied from that in Christchurch Cathedral in Oxford. The FONT was discovered in the garden of the Court and is late Norman. The Jacobean font which it replaced is in the porch.

In the late 17th. Century, Sir William Gregory bought the estate from the last of the Caples. Sir William was the son of a local Vicar and a distinguished lawyer, M.P. for Hereford and Speaker of the House of Commons.

The SCREEN in the Chancel Arch is Jacobean and very unusual. It shows the Arms of William and Mary as a token of Sir William Gregory's acceptance of the "Bloodless Revolution" of 1688. It is believed that the carving is by Grinling Gibbons who also worked at Holme Lacey, not far away.

Sir William began to restore the Church in 1691. Two years later he resurfaced and largely re-built the Nave and the South Porch. He also added the TRANSEPT or GREGORY CHAPEL. The Gregories are commemorated in this Chapel and you will find the Arms of this family on the outside of the tower.

THE PARLIAMENT CLOCK was added in 1939; it is dated 1793. These clocks were introduced so that the general public should know the time, after a tax on clocks was introduced by Parliament.

THE STAINED GLASS

Four of the six Nave windows are by Mr. A.J. Davies of the Bromsgrove Guild and are excellent examples of modern work.

There is also a modern window as a Memorial to the men of How Caple who lost their lives in the Great War.

The North window has some fragments of 14th. Century glass.

The window at the East end of the Church represents the Church's two Patron Saints— St. Andrew and St. Mary and the crests of the three families who, since 1200, have owned the How Caple Estate together with the patronage of the living; the Caples, the Gregories and the Lees.

THE MONUMENTS

Five of these are dedicated to the memory of those members of the Lee family who were killed between 1915 and 1921; a most tragic decimation of the family.

There is also a Roll of Honour on which are commemorated the thirteen men who died in the Great War. This seems a great many for such a tiny Parish.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to our much-loved little Church.

THE HOW CAPLE DIPTYCH

The How Caple Diptych is believed to have been painted near Augsburg, or possibly Nurnburg, in Southern Germany in the 16th. Century. It was probably commissioned by a St. Claire Nun, (The Nun being presented to the Virgin in Panel 3.)

At some stage it was formed into a Diptych (two panels hinged or strung together) so that the panels could be displayed on either side of a statue or altar-piece.

Since its restoration by the Courtauld Institute in 1984, the Diptych has been placed on the North wall of the CHANCEL above the Choir Stalls. Each picture was initially mounted on balsa wood and the whole has been enclosed in an oak frame. Special chemicals have been inserted to avoid further deterioration. Each panel can be swivelled so that both back and front can be appreciated.

The Diptych was presented to the Church by Mr. Lennox Lee in 1920. It was originally purchased by Sir Joseph Lee in the Netherlands over a century ago.

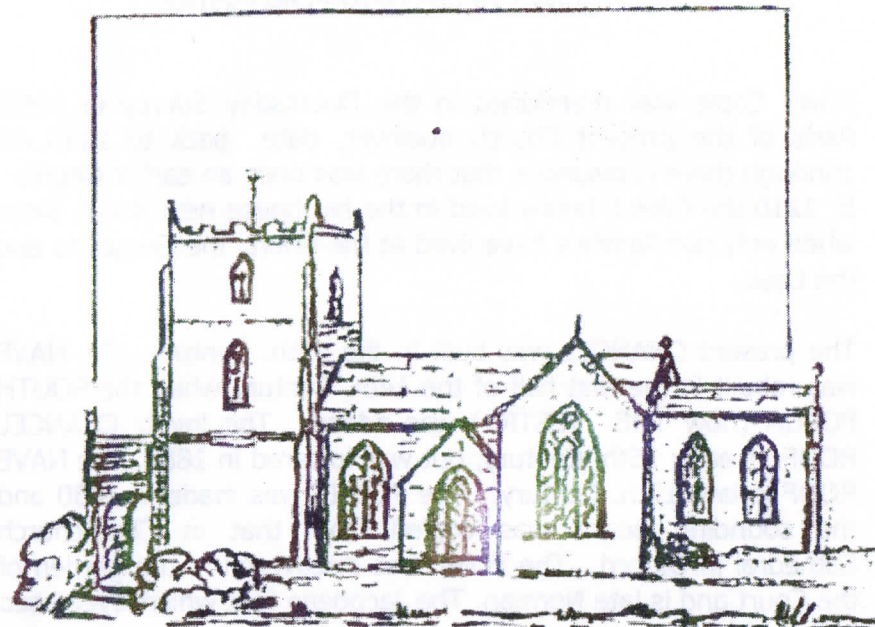
The Panels are believed to represent

<i>The Seven Joys Of The Virgin</i>	<i>The Mass Of St. Gregory</i>	<i>The Death Of St. Francis</i>	<i>The Seven Sorrows of The Virgin</i>
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Reverse

<i>The Death Of The Virgin</i>	<i>The Washing Of The Feet</i>	<i>Seated Virgin and Child</i>	<i>The Death Of St. Clare</i>
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There is little information about the origin of this work of art. If any visitor has any information about its origins, or perhaps might have seen something which may have formed the centre-piece of this staggeringly beautiful Triptych, do please tell Roger Lee at How Caple Court.



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