



## ALL SAINTS CHURCH, SHARNCOTE

First, see the yew tree in the churchyard. It is 10 geet around the trunk!  
 The tiny church is a quaint place with walls and erches at all angles.  
 It has a double bellcote, 600 years old, but the porch with its sundial is a century older  
 and the inner doorway has a scratch dial on either side. This door is Norman, as is the  
 blocked door in the north wall.  
 The sturdy narrow chancel arch has shafts with carved capitals and is probably of about  
 1170.



The windows date from the 1300's. There is a blocked Norman window in the north wall of the chancel. It may have been an Easter Sepulchre: the cinquefoil-shaped niche lends to this theory.

There are traces of ancient paintings on the walls. There are also trailing leaves over the chancel arch, perhaps of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. [see below]

There is a piscina in the north chapel, with a small shelf within the arch. Another piscina in the sill of one of the chancel windows has three fishes carved under the bracket. It is probably 13<sup>th</sup> century. The priest's doorway in the chancel dates from this time as well.

The massive tub-like font is Norman.

When William Cobbett rode this way in the 18<sup>th</sup> century he saw 'flocks of goldfinches' in the churchyard. I have seen them there, too, in the very early autumns!.

Recently a beautiful new altar cover of handwoven pure silk has been given by descendants of the Townsend family who farmed Sharncombe from Sharncombe Olde manor. The exquisite embroidery is the work of a member of this family.



**Source:** All Saints. Anon. October 1990

Images: John Pope