

## 13 The 'Living Churchyard' of St Peter and Paul, Deddington

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The churchyard is an ornamented space, a neat and tidy green sward with orange lichen-encrusted gravestones, a sanctuary as much for trees and shrubs as for the memory of the departed. Herbaceous plants such as aubretia and polypody grow between stones atop the old walls, cock's-foot and shepherd's purse grow on gravel margins, and in the ambit of wide-spreading yew trees large populations of dog-violet and wood anemone fulfil a vision of woodland beauty. Male-fern, more vigorously than in any of the parish woodlands, grows as if it were the potted plant of the north door. In springtime, the waiting winter ground is sprung with daffodils and primroses, yellowing the feet of the tall lime trees of the sun-facing side. Like the church that blends different architectural styles, and is a textbook of historical periods, the churchyard too is a quilt woven in time without a single author or fixed pattern, and is never finished.



*Photo 13.1: A burst of sunshine illuminates the far left-hand foliage of a wide-spreading English yew (Taxus baccata) near the north wall on a winter's day. The summits of the gravestones in the Deddington churchyard are dusted with snow, but the grey-white spots are a lichen (Diploicia canescens), which is common in English churchyards. The churchyard is a sanctuary too because trees and shrubs are more often pruned, providing help for their preservation*

*Photo 13.2: The 17-century tower of the church of St Peter and St Paul, 'the most noted of all Oxfordshire and seen from the farthest', is here seen across the fields of Earl's Farm from Green Hedges Lane on a rare winter's day in 2000, when there is a dusting of snow on the ground*



The church of St Peter and St Paul is a spacious building of local ironstone with a tall tower, standing on high ground on the east side of the row of shops that front the marketplace (Photo 13.2). According to Pevsner, 'The present chancel and nave are basically early C13, but were remodelled in the late C13 to C14'. [1] By the early 14th century the church, with the exception of the west wall, had taken on the

basic form we see today. [2] While the church is over 750 years old, most of the gravestones and tall trees are from the 19th century.

In 1634 the tower and spire fell. A new tower was planned, but the Civil War intervened. When reconstruction began in 1683, St Peter and St Paul was fitted with a new look: a tower without a spire. Eight pinnacles are crowned by gilded vanes. They glint in the sun and shift in the wind, high roosts for village jackdaws. Rising above the height of the pinnacles, and set in the middle of the tower roof, is a short flagpole. Below the bright clock on the western side the rustic figures of saints Peter and Paul, saved from the medieval church, face the world with worn features and weathered garments (they were last repaired in the 17th century and had new heads fitted in the 20th). Deddington church tower can be seen from as far away as the summit of Steepness Hill, and from outside the parish along the ridge from the Oxford Road to Duns Tew.

The tall broad-leaved trees of the churchyard are horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), lime (*Tilia x europaea*), English oak (*Quercus robur*), and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). Four lime trees, their canopies touching, mark the eastern boundary of the original churchyard, and were planted in February 1879.[3] Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) grows high in two of the limes (Photo 13.3). In early spring, lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*) carpets the earth between two lime trees by the gravestones of John Hopcraft (1874) and Eli Hopcraft (1902). The diameter at breast high (dbh) of these limes are: 95 cm (22), 75 cm (23), 75 cm (24), and 85 cm (25) (see Map 13.1 at the end of this chapter). Other plantings of 1879, which have not survived to our day, included: 'some Firs in the northeast corner; a row of Laurels under the old Malt House; and some Shrubs on the north side of the Church; one of the latter, a fine Bay, was the gift of Mrs Franklin ...'[4]

The churchyards of Adderbury, Bloxham, and Deddington each has a tall tree as a point of reference and focus for the eye. A tall oak (Photo 13.4, see below) plays this part superbly in the Deddington churchyard; a copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* var. *atropunicea*) in St Mary, Bloxham; and a cedar-of-Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) in St Mary, Adderbury. Tall and wide-spreading, the oak of St Peter and St Paul recently had surgery: a large lateral branch was cut off, and the limb above the knob left by the amputation has a fracture line – just visible in the photograph – making a second surgical operation necessary.

Other tall trees in the churchyard are listed in Table 13.1.

Other tall trees in Adderbury are horse-chestnut, Lawson's cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), and Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*); in Bloxham, horse-chestnut, lime, and sycamore trees, but tallest are two Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), woody skyscrapers from California, acquired when St Mary added land from Godswell Manor. In Deddington, there are lime, horse-chestnut, Lawson's cypress, oak, and sycamore, all of great height.

Hardy evergreens, including many species from other countries, are a mainstay of the churchyard woody flora, confirming Bean's observation that, 'In no class of outdoor plants is our indebtedness to the floras of other countries as evident as in

**Table 13.1: A Comparison of Tall Trees in the Churchyards of Three Neighbouring Medieval Churches**

Species	Adderbury	Bloxham	Deddington
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (Sycamore)	0	+	+
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> (Horse-chestnut)	+	+	+
<i>Cedrus libani</i> (Cedar-of-Lebanon)	+	0	0
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> (Beech)	+	0	0
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> var. <i>atropunicea</i> (Copper Beech)	0	+	0
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (Ash)	0	+	0
<i>Juglans regia</i> (Walnut)	0	+	0
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i> (Scots Pine)	+	0	0
<i>Quercus robur</i> (English Oak)	0	0	+
<i>Tilia x europaea</i> (Lime)	0	+	+
<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> (Large-leaved Lime)	+	0	0
<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i> (Lawson's Cypress)	+	0	+
<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i> (Wellingtonia)	0	+	0



Photo 13.3 (l) Lime (*Tilia x europaea*), two of the four tall trees on the edge of the old churchyard. The tree closest to the north wall has mistletoe growing in its crown. Lime is one of the commonest hosts of mistletoe. According to Archie Miles, lime trees and blossoms 'have a history as symbols of feminine beauty, happiness, conjugal love, sweetness and peace'. Lime, which grows in parks and gardens all over Britain and Europe, is a hybrid between large-leaved lime (*Tilia platyphyllos*) and small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*)

Photo 13.4 (r) Winter sunshine on the gravestones in the Deddington churchyard beneath the great oak, just pruned. With the low lateral branch removed the tree will seem more balanced, but less true to its asymmetrical character; however, the hydra-head of the main trunk, with its wiggly branches, is characteristic of English oak (*Quercus robur*)



the case of hardy evergreens.'[5] Evergreens are emblematic of a desire for eternal life, the wish that love be constant and memory everlasting. Of non-coniferous evergreen shrubs/small trees there are 'Gold Tip' box (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Gold Tip'), cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), native holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), varieties of holly (*I. aquifolium* 'Bacciflava' (Yellow-fruited Holly) and *I. aquifolium* x *altaclerensis* 'Golden King' (Highclere Holly 'Golden King'), spotted laurel (*Aucuba japonica* 'Variegata'), and strawberry-tree (*Arbutus unedo*). Evergreen ivy (*Hedera ilex*), here as everywhere in the parish, covers the ground and clings to walls, providing nesting sites for some birds and winter feed for others. Most evergreens are coniferous plants, including English yew (*Taxus baccata*), the traditional tree of the English churchyard, rich in a heritage of ancient lore, and Irish yew (*T. baccata* 'Fastigiata'; in some accounts, Irish yew is also known as *T. baccata* var. *fastigiata*), a recent arrival enjoying considerable popularity.



With the expansion of trade and empire in the early nineteenth century, plant explorers from Great Britain collected from around the world. In that time, David Douglas (1798–1834), son of Scotland and one of the greatest plant explorers of all time, was the first European to see the vast forests of the Pacific North-West. Others followed in his footsteps. By 1853, when Western red-cedar (*Thuja plicata*) had been introduced to Great Britain, conifers were in fashion on great estates; their example soon was copied on lesser estates, and in small market town churchyards. The fashion for conifers, and perhaps also the romantic aura of the nation from which it came, led to the reintroduction into Oxfordshire of the Scots pine, the species having disappeared from southern England by 9800 BP ('before present').

Yew is the most abundant conifer in the churchyard, counting *Taxus baccata* and *T. baccata* 'Fastigiata' together. A fastigate tree has upright branches forming a narrow outline. Irish yew was found in Northern Ireland, perhaps as early as 1760; cuttings were distributed, and the tree became popular in England. In the churchyard of St Peter and St Paul there are ten Irish yews and seven English yews. If we count two saplings, the English yew total is nine. Yew seems naturally pleasing, whereas Irish yew improves if it is shaped, lending itself to the topiarist's art, as it is in the churchyard of St Martin in Sandford St Martin, where the Irish yews, planted along the straight walkway, are shaped like great urns.

In Anglo-Saxon times (AD 450–1066) yew ('iw' as it was then spelled) often grew on hilltops, and is remembered today in hill words such as Yewhurst, meaning 'wooded hill of yew'. English yew is sometimes shrubby, has reddish flaky bark, forms nearly pure-stand woodlands on chalk and limestone, and may grow to 28 m high. Both English and Irish yew have multiple trunks; English yew sometimes has contorted trunks. Both conditions may be seen in the churchyard of St Peter and St Paul. Yew trees grow slowly; as they become old they lose the capacity to add new wood each year, and can even seem to stop growing in their trunk diameter for long periods. Some of the oldest native yews in England are alleged to occupy ancient burial sites dating from the neolithic period, but Deddington's English yews are not so old. It has been said that our oldest tree is the Fortingall Yew in Scotland, possibly 9,000 years old; others suggest that estimates of the age of yews have been exaggerated. Probably 500 years is the best estimate for the oldest yew trees at Kingley Vale, West Sussex, the largest yew woodland in the United Kingdom.

The yews of St Peter and St Paul were probably planted in the last quarter of the 19th century. *Taxus baccata* is wide-spreading, overmantling the gravestones, seeming to draw them into a circle of protection provided by their evergreen boughs. The dbh for wide-spreading yews is given in Table 13.2.

The yew trees of greatest girth, and so probably the oldest, are nearer to the eastern end of the churchyard than to the western end. Tree numbers 13, 29, and 30 especially are wide-spreading; the radius of number 30 is about 5.5 m (see Map 13.1). In general, trees of the greatest diameter are associated with gravestones of the earliest dates.

**Table 13.2: Dbh (cm) of Some Wide-Spreading English Yew Trees in Association with the Gravestones in the Deddington Churchyard**

Yew Tree Number*	Dbh (cm)	Date of Death on Gravestones Nearby
2	67.5	1890, 1891, 1895, 1896, 1900
4	65	1869, 1882, 1884, 1885, 1895, 1921, 1924
6	72	1834, 1877, 1879, 1884, 1895, 1898
11	71	Gravestones on perimeter only: 1828, 1875, 1880, 1883
13	74	1826, 1867, 1869, 1879, two gravestones with angels
14	62.5	1865, 1883, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1899
29	74	1816, 1816, 1822, 1831, 1849, 1863, 1868, 1894
30	79	1785, 1815, 1835, 1861, 1865
31	-	1803, 1812, 1860, 1874, 1875, 1878, 1890

\*Refers to tree numbers on Map 13.1.

It often happens in nature that an effect pleasing to man, such as the shade of a yew tree, the tidy character of its underwood, the absence of a rampant ground storey, may be a by-product of poison, or the aggressive competitive strategy built into the plant's genes. The 'floristic poverty' under *Taxus* 'is probably a reflection of intense root competition' for water.[6] Under two of the largest English yews and one Irish yew (all three near the oak tree) are two large patches of early spring flowers: a patch of wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) 1.5 m x 2.4 m, and a patch of early dog-violet (*Viola reichenbachiana*) 6.4 m x 6.4 m mixed with ground elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*). Once, these patches were smaller; but thankfully, and due to a policy inaugurated by the church warden, Mr George Fenemore, of Clifton – not to cut the wild flowers before they had set seed – the patches of early dog-violet and wood anemone have the satisfying dimension of woodland stands. Wood anemone occurs infrequently in churchyards generally, and is not found in Adderbury or Bloxham (or in Little Tew or Great Tew either, to mention two churchyards pursuing policies of letting nature take its course). Further protection of the wood anemone would not be amiss, for it is considered one of the prettiest flowers of ancient woodland. The hardihood of early dog-violet, a plant which naturally favours woodland, but which in the churchyard prefers life beneath English yew to places more well-lit, with less water stress, or less toxic, is impressive. By comparison to the early dog-violet, sweet violet (*Viola odorata*) is rare, but it occurs prominently between gravestones laid at a slant on the ground near the eastern exit from the churchyard. Both the blue-violet and white colour forms are here, three patches of the first and one of the latter. When the flowers of the early dog-violet die back, the ground storey beneath *Taxus baccata* is a blanket of violet leaves; only later does it become 'gloomy and bare'. [7]

Churchyards are uniquely esteemed as arboreta, planted with exotics as well as cultivars. Most conspicuous of the exotics in the Deddington churchyard are the Lawson's cypress trees, but, in all, there are eight taxa of non-native shrubs and small trees (Table 13.3).

Two cultivars (20, 26) of holly have been planted in the churchyard, each with variegated leaves. These varieties of a non-coniferous evergreen tree/shrub are not

**Table 13.3: Non-Native Shrubs and Small Trees of the Deddington Churchyard**

Species	First Record*
Cherry Laurel ( <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> )	1886
Golden Rain ( <i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> )	1879
Lilac ( <i>Syringa vulgaris</i> )	1870
Oregon Grape ( <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> )	1927
Laurel ( <i>Aucuba japonica</i> 'Variegata')	-
Strawberry-tree ( <i>Arbutus unedo</i> )**	-
Wall Cotoneaster ( <i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i> )	1870
Lawson's Cypress ( <i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i> )	1955

\*Refers to the first record of the plant in Oxfordshire.

\*\*The strawberry-tree grows as a shrub or small tree, is native in Europe north to the Republic of Ireland, and has never been reported as growing wild in Oxfordshire.

listed in Clive Stace's *New Flora*,[8] but they are in Harold Hillier's *Manual of Trees and Shrubs*. [9] Cultivated since ancient times, holly is admired for its handsome lustrous leaves, dense habit, and the bright red fruit on the female tree in winter. Variety in colour is provided by *Ilex aquifolium* 'Bacciflava' and *I. aquifolium* x *altaclerensis* 'Golden King', with blades of margins entire, yellow in the middle and green at the edge. By various estimates, there are 300–400 species of holly in the temperate and tropical regions of both hemispheres.

Of deciduous small trees, unusual rather than common varieties are preferred, which may account for the hawthorn called *Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet', with deep red flowers, and one of the prettiest cultivars. A red horse-chestnut tree (*Aesculus carnea*), which is a hybrid of *Aesculus hippocastanum* x *A. hippocastanum pavia*, and grows 9–15 m high, has been planted in the south-western corner. The strawberry-tree grows to 4.5–9.4 m high, but higher (to 12 m) in its native districts in South-West Ireland, especially on the islands and shores of the Lakes of Killarney. Tradition and novelty, trees and shrubs native and non-native combine in the horticultural ornamentation of the old churchyard. A complete list of all trees, shrubs, and woody climbers is presented in Table 13.4.

Because English and Irish yew trees are so abundant in the churchyards of north Oxfordshire, and because they are so easily recognised, it is easy to overlook other taxa. Not only is it interesting to discover the variety of small trees and shrubs in one's own churchyard, but it is interesting to compare the commonalities and differences among churchyards of neighbouring churches of medieval foundation (Table 13.5). Five species occur only once, while holly and yew occur in each site.

## 1. The New Churchyard

East of the lime trees is an extension of the churchyard called by some 'the cemetery', and by others 'the new churchyard'. The vegetation of the old churchyard is managed by the church; the new churchyard (cemetery) is managed by the Parish Council. The immediate effect of the open and largely unplanted space is that much could be done to enhance the beauty of this austere ground. There is a large oak (and one

**Table 13.4: Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Climbers of the Deddington Churchyard**

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<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> (Sycamore)
<i>Aesculus carnea</i> (Red Horse-chestnut)
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> (Horse-chestnut)
<i>Arbutus unedo</i> (Strawberry-tree)
<i>Aucuba japonica</i> 'Variegata' (Spotted Laurel)
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i> 'Gold Tip' ('Gold Tip' Box)
<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i> (Wall Cotoneaster)
<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp. (Cotoneaster)
<i>Crataegus laevigata</i> 'Paul's Scarlet' ('Paul's Scarlet' Hawthorn)
<i>Forsythia x intermedia</i> (Forsythia)*
<i>Hedera helix</i> sp. (English Ivy)
<i>Hedera</i> cv. (Variegated Ivy)
<i>Hypericum</i> sp. (St John's Wort)
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i> cv. (Holly)
<i>Ilex aquifolium x altaclerensis</i> 'Golden King' (Highclere Holly 'Golden King')
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i> 'Bacciflora' (Yellow-fruited Holly)
<i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> (Golden Rain)
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> 'Worplesdon' (Sweet-gum)
<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> (Oregon Grape)
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> (Cherry Laurel)
<i>Prunus subhirtella</i> 'Autumnalis' (Autumn Cherry)
<i>Quercus robur</i> (English Oak)
<i>Rosa</i> sp. (Climbing rose)
<i>Rosa</i> sp. (Climbing rose)
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (Bramble)
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> (Elder)
<i>Syringa vulgaris</i> cv. (Lilac)
<i>Taxus baccata</i> (English Yew)
<i>Taxus baccata</i> 'Fastigiata' (Irish Yew)
<i>Taxus baccata</i> 'Fastigiata Aureomarginata' (Golden Irish Yew)
<i>Taxus</i> sp. (Yew)
<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i> (Lawson's Cypress)
<i>Tilia x europaea</i> (Lime)
<i>Viscum album</i> (Mistletoe)

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\*Not found in 2001.

sapling oak), a high well grown box and two excellently billowing holly trees which stand opposite one another on the crunchy gravel path, like a guard of honour, leading to the war memorial. Facing the visitor, with 48 names on three faces of the stonework, is this inscription: 'Sacred to the Honoured Memory of Those Men Who Fell in the Great War, 1914–1918'. On the opposite face, looking east, is a second inscription: 'Live Thou For England We For England Died, 1939–45'. Nine names are written below this inscription, plus that of R. Hall, 1950, who presumably 'fell' in the Korean War. Shrubs and trees of the cemetery are noted on the map. The ground flora is not rich (no wood anemone here), but on the north wall (south-facing) there are patches of *Aubrieta deltoidea* (aubretia) growing more abundantly here, in fuller sunlight, than on the north wall of the old churchyard.



**Table 13.5: Small Trees Compared**

Species	Adderbury	Bloxham	Deddington
<i>Acer platanoides</i> var. <i>Schwedleri</i> (Norway Maple)	0	+	0
<i>Betula pendula</i> (Silver Birch)	0	+	0
<i>Carpinus betulus</i> (Hornbeam)	+	0	0
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (Hawthorn)	0	+	0
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i> (Holly)	+	+	+
<i>Laburnum anagyroides</i> (Golden Rain)	0	+	+
<i>Magnolia stellata</i> (Star Magnolia)	0	+	0
<i>Malus</i> sp. (Apple, ornamental variety)	0	+	0
<i>Malus</i> agg. (Apple)	0	+	0
<i>Prunus subhirtella</i> 'Autumnalis' (Autumn Cherry)	0	+	+
<i>Prunus</i> sp. (Cherry)	0	+	0
<i>Pyrus pyraeaster</i> (Wild Pear)	0	+	0
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> (Rowan)	0	+	0
<i>Taxus baccata</i> (English Yew)	+	+	+
<i>Taxus baccata</i> 'Fastigiata' (Irish Yew)	+	+	+

Comparison of the herbaceous flora of St Peter and St Paul with that of St Mary, Bloxham, is interesting because each church looks after its flora in a different way. The Bloxham policy is 'leave alone', the new churchyard ecology of 'live and let live'. Deddington's policy, with the exception of early dog-violet and wood anemone patches, is 'neat and tidy'. Quite possibly there is a micro-climatic difference too, for the Bloxham churchyard is now a moist meadow tall-grass habitat. Species thriving there may not thrive on the more elevated and drier ground of Deddington, where the sward is mown, like a cricket pitch, and the grass by the gravestones is strimmed to their edges. Bloxham has opted for systematic neglect, allowing grass and weeds – cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*) – to achieve their full height and go to seed. A list of herbaceous species not shared by Deddington is listed in Table 13.6.

**Table 13.6: Herbaceous Species of the Churchyard of St Mary, Bloxham**

<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> (Sweet Vernal-grass)
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i> (Cuckooflower, Lady's Smock)*
<i>Centaurea nigra</i> (Common Knapweed)
<i>Geranium robertianum</i> (Herb-Robert)
<i>Galium verum</i> (Lady's Bedstraw)
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i> (Ground-ivy)
<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i> (Spanish Bluebell)
<i>Papaver dubium</i> (Long-headed Poppy)
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i> var. <i>sativa</i> (Wild Parsnip)
<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i> (Green Alkanet)
<i>Primula veris</i> (Cowslip)
<i>Ranunculus auricomus</i> (Goldilocks Buttercup)
<i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i> (Great Burnet)
<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i> (Hedge Mustard)
<i>Trifolium pratense</i> (Red Clover)
<i>Vicia sepium</i> (Bush Vetch)

\**Cardamine pratensis* was found in the Deddington churchyard, but not recently; it is widespread and abundant in St Mary, Bloxham, growing well beside tall grasses.



The Oxfordshire Churchyard Survey, on which Table 13.7 is based, was conducted – and the first species list prepared – by Roy Maycock and Aaron Woods, who visited the Deddington churchyard in October 1989 and April 1990. A copy of the Maycock-Woods list has been in the safekeeping of Kristin Thompson, of Deddington. The woody plants were first identified by Frank and Elizabeth Tothill, formerly of Deddington, in 2000. A second survey was made in 2001 by Thomas

**Table 13.7: Herbaceous Plants and Ferns of the Deddington Churchyard and Adjoining Cemetery**

<i>Achillea millefolium</i> (Yarrow)	<i>Lapsana communis</i> (Nipplewort)
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i> (Ground Elder)	<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i> (Autumn Hawkbit)
<i>Alliaria petiolata</i> (Garlic Mustard)	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i> (Oxeye Daisy)
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> (Meadow Foxtail)	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i> (Pineappleweed)
<i>Anemone nemorosa</i> (Wood Anemone)	<i>Medicago lupulina</i> (Black Medick)
<i>Anisantha sterilis</i> (Barren Brome)	<i>Muscari armeniacum</i> (Grape Hyacinth)
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> (Cow Parsley)	<i>Myosotis</i> sp. (Forget-me-not)
<i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> (Thale Cress)	<i>Narcissus</i> sp. (Daffodil)
<i>Arabis caucasica</i> (Garden Arabis)	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> (Procumbent Yellow-sorrel)
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> (False Oat-grass)	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> (Ribwort Plantain)
<i>Arum maculatum</i> (Lords-and-Ladies)	<i>Plantago major</i> (Greater Plantain)
<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i> (Aubretia)	<i>Plantago media</i> (Hoary Plantain)
<i>Bellis perennis</i> (Daisy)	<i>Poa annua</i> (Annual Meadow-grass)
<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i> (Elephant-ears)	<i>Poa pratensis</i> (Smooth Meadow-grass)
<i>Calystegia sepium</i> (Hedge Bindweed)	<i>Polypodium vulgare</i> (Polypody)
<i>Calystegia silvatica</i> (Large Bindweed)	<i>Potentilla reptans</i> (Creeping Cinquefoil)
<i>Campanula</i> sp. (Bellflower)	<i>Primula vulgaris</i> (Primrose)
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i> (Shepherd's Purse)	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> (Selfheal)
<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i> (Hairy Bitter-cress)	<i>Pseudofumaria lutea</i> (Yellow Corydalis)
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i> (Cuckooflower)	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i> (Bulbous Buttercup)
<i>Cirsium arvense</i> (Creeping Thistle)	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> (Lesser Celandine)
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i> (Spear Thistle)	<i>Ranunculus repens</i> (Creeping Buttercup)
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> (Field Bindweed)	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> (Broad-leaved Dock)
<i>Crepis capillaris</i> (Smooth Hawk's-beard)	<i>Sagina procumbens</i> (Procumbent Pearlwort)
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> (Ivy-leaved Toadflax)	<i>Saxifraga tridactylites</i> (Rue-leaved Saxifrage)
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i> (Cock's-foot)	<i>Sedum acre</i> (Biting Stonecrop)
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> (Male-fern)	<i>Sedum spurium</i> (Caucasian-stonecrop)
<i>Elytrigia repens</i> (Common Couch)	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i> (Groundsel)
<i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> (Winter Aconite)	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i> (Bittersweet)
<i>Erophila verna</i> (Common Whitlow-grass)	<i>Sonchus asper</i> (Prickly Sow-thistle)
<i>Euphorbia lathyris</i> (Caper Spurge)	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i> (Smooth Sow-thistle)
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i> (Petty Spurge)	<i>Stellaria media</i> (Common Chickweed)
<i>Festuca rubra</i> (Red Fescue)	<i>Taraxacum</i> agg. (Dandelion)
<i>Galanthus nivalis</i> (Snowdrop)	<i>Trifolium dubium</i> (Lesser Trefoil)
<i>Galium aparine</i> (Cleavers)	<i>Trifolium repens</i> (White Clover)
<i>Geranium molle</i> (Dove's-foot Crane's-bill)	<i>Urtica dioica</i> (Common Nettle)
<i>Geum urbanum</i> (Wood Avens)	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i> (Great Mullein)
<i>Hedera helix</i> (Ivy)	<i>Veronica arvensis</i> (Wall Speedwell)
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i> (Hogweed)	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i> (Germander Speedwell)
<i>Holcus lanatus</i> (Yorkshire-fog)	<i>Veronica filiformis</i> (Slender Speedwell)
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> (Bluebell)	<i>Veronica hederifolia</i> (Ivy-leaved Speedwell)
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> (Cat's-ear)	<i>Veronica polita</i> (Grey Field-speedwell)
<i>Iris foetidissima</i> (Stinking Iris)	<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i> (Thyme-leaved Speedwell)
<i>Iris</i> sp. (Iris)	<i>Viola odorata</i> (Sweet Violet)
<i>Lamium album</i> (White Dead-nettle)	<i>Viola reichenbachiana</i> (Early Dog-violet)
<i>Lamium purpureum</i> (Red Dead-nettle)	<i>Viola riviniana</i> (Common Dog-violet)

Curtis and Justin Mathews, then at the Forestry Institute, University of Oxford. The species list in Table 13.7 combines Maycock-Woods with our own investigations. Of additions to the Species List (Chapter 14), the most significant is mistletoe (see Table 13.4) – a semi-parasitic evergreen shrub not formerly recorded in Deddington parish, and a new tetrad record for the Oxfordshire Flora.[10]

## 2. The Parish Council Cemetery (opened AD 2000)

Past the 'Fish 'n' Chip' shop along the Hempton Road, just beyond the furthest western extent of the Windmill Centre playing fields, is a second extension of the churchyard. The ground is consecrated, but the property belongs to, and is managed by, the Parish Council. It is a smaller space than the old churchyard, but more regular in the layout of the stones and trees. Amenities are a bench, a water trough, and a bin for discarded flowers. Larger decorative features include 21 trees, arranged in generously-spaced rows. Most are medium in size; none are evergreen, as if eternal life were no longer an article of faith. Three silver birch trees (*Betula pendula*), in 'memory of Rene Spengler, 1998', are planted near the entrance and seem to join hands in a circle. The only tall tree is an ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), bending its outreaching branches over the cemetery ground from a hedge on its eastern side. Of special interest is a group of whitebeam trees (*Sorbus aria* agg.) growing in no other public site in the parish, and giving distinction to this one.

## 3. Birds in the Deddington Churchyard

In 2000, Sylvie Spenceley, of Deddington, visited the churchyard of St Peter and St Paul to report on its bird life. Species heard but not seen were counted, as were species seen flying, even if not in the churchyard. In six visits Mrs Spenceley saw

**Table 13.8: Trees of the Parish Council Cemetery, Hempton Road**

Species (number)	Size
<b>A. Trees on the side toward Deddington village</b>	
Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> )	tall
Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> ) (2)	medium-small
Sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> )	medium
Wild Cherry ( <i>Prunus avium</i> ) (2)	one medium, one small
<b>B. The middle space</b>	
Large-leaved Lime ( <i>Tilia platyphyllos</i> ) (3)	medium
Silver Birch ( <i>Betula pendula</i> ) (3)	small
Whitebeam ( <i>Sorbus aria</i> agg.) (3)	medium
<b>C. Far side toward Hempton</b>	
Beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> ) (2)	medium
Norway Maple - a red cultivar ( <i>Acer platanoides</i> var. x)	small
Sycamore ( <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> ) (2)	medium
Wild Cherry ( <i>Prunus avium</i> ) (3)	two big, one small

19 species, blackbirds and jackdaws most frequently, the first hopping from wall to ground, the others roosting on the pinnacle vanes. Rarest, seen only once, were goldfinch, great spotted woodpecker, longtailed tit, rook, swallow, and swift, but 'rarest' is judged only in relation to the set of six visits. Goldfinches are actually seen often, on other visits, but not as often as chaffinches. Swallows may be expected in late April, swifts not before the first of May. Collared dove, mistle thrush, and robin were seen on only two of the six visits; but seen between three and four times, and therefore neither infrequent nor common, were blue tit, chaffinch, great tit, greenfinch, wood pigeon, and wren. Table 13.9 is a summary of the birds seen on the dates given as the headings of the columns when the churchyard was visited. More birding expeditions to the churchyard by more birders will no doubt add to this list and strengthen the view that the churchyard habitat, and the condition and abundance of its plant life, is an important contribution to variety in the ecosystem of Deddington parish.

**Table 13.9: Birds Seen in the Deddington Churchyard**

Species	18/3	25/3	22/4	29/4	13/5	11/6
Blackbird ( <i>Turdus merula</i> )	+	0	+	+	+	+
Blackcap ( <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> )*	0	0	0	+	+	0
Blue Tit ( <i>Parus caeruleus</i> )	0	0	+	+	+	0
Chaffinch ( <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> )	0	+	+	+	0	+
Collared Dove ( <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i> )	0	0	+	+	0	0
Goldcrest ( <i>Regulus regulus</i> )	0	0	0	+	0	0
Goldfinch ( <i>Carduelis carduelis</i> )	0	0	0	0	0	+
Great Spotted Woodpecker ( <i>Dendrocopos major</i> )	0	0	+	0	0	0
Great Tit ( <i>Parus major</i> )	+	+	+	0	0	0
Greenfinch ( <i>Carduelis chloris</i> )	0	+	+	+	+	0
Jackdaw ( <i>Corvus monedula</i> )	0	+	+	+	+	+
Kestrel ( <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> )	0	0	+	0	0	0
Longtailed Tit ( <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> )	0	0	0	+	0	0
Mistle Thrush ( <i>Turdus viscivorus</i> )	+	0	0	+	0	0
Robin ( <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> )	0	0	0	0	+	+
Rook ( <i>Corvus frugilevus</i> )	+	0	0	0	0	0
Song Thrush ( <i>Turdus philomelos</i> )	0	0	0	0	+	0
Starling ( <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> )	0	0	+	0	0	0
Swallow ( <i>Hirundo rustica</i> )	0	0	0	0	0	+
Swift ( <i>Apus apus</i> )	0	0	0	0	+	0
Tawny Owl ( <i>Strix aluco</i> )*	0	0	+	0	0	0
Wood Pigeon ( <i>Columba palumbus</i> )	0	+	+	0	+	0
Wren ( <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> )	+	+	+	+	+	0

\*Voice only.

Hedges rather than stone walls mark field boundaries in Deddington parish, and, although brash, chips of ironstone and flakes of limestone lie abundantly on the surface of ploughed fields, standing stones are rare. Lichens grow on woody plants – on the lower limbs of churchyard lime trees, for example, worked timber (such as a wooden gate) and soil surfaces, as well as on stones; but for many species Deddington churchyard – with church walls, tombstones, and boundary walls – is a

garden of stony substrates. The more varied the kinds of stones, the more likely it is that the churchyard will host a high diversity of lichen species. A striking example of this specificity can be found on the coping stones of the south boundary wall. A single stone is made of pink Triassic sandstone and is colonised by a cracked, pale green crustose lichen, *Lecanora polytropa*, attracted to it as if by a magnet. There is no sign of this lichen on the dark Jurassic ironstones on either side, nor on the limestones further to the east, although all of these carry a rich variety of other species.

The church walls are too shaded on the south side to be uniformly rich in lichen species, but on the north side shade favours a typically distinctive community of species, including the bright green, powdery *Psilolechia lucida*, reminiscent of the idle chalkings of a child. The mossy slopes at the base of the tower are colonised by species gaining further nutrients filtering down from the bird perches on the parapets high above them.

There is a random mix of stones gathered from a variety of sources in the boundary wall around the extension yard. A single, white limestone carries the almost luminous, blue fruiting bodies of *Sarcogyne regularis*, while a reused, broken brick provides the only surface for *Trapelia involuta*. A number of unusual species colonise the nooks and crannies of the west-side wall-top, including the dark, red-brown rubbery lobes of *Leptogium plicatile*. Within the extension yard itself, a further distinctive niche occurs wherever a thin mix of moss and soil gathers over the granite chippings enclosed by kerbs. It is typically colonized by tufts of brownish-green cup-lichens of the *Cladonia* genus.

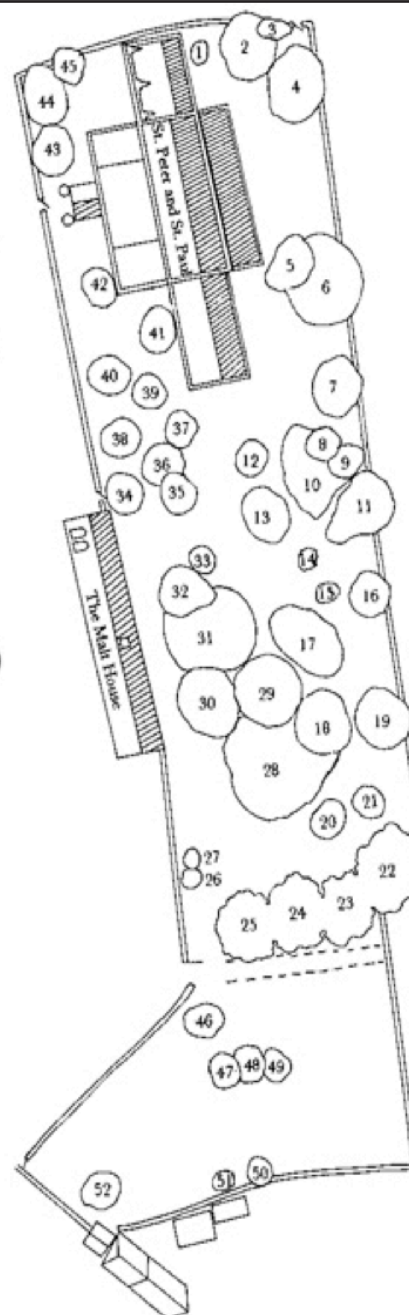
Most lichens thrive on sunshine, and so the species on stone memorials vary in relation to whether the surface is facing south and west or north and east. *Psilolechia lucida* is again prominent on the less-well illuminated faces of some sandstone headstones. The more well-lit ironstones are enhanced by the neat, fluted orange circles of *Caloplaca flavescens* and the thicker, more ragged, powdery white lobes of *Diploicia canescens*, perhaps the most abundant lichen in the churchyard.

Looking at a different habitat, one may see leafy lichens on the lower branches and outer twigs of the tall lime trees. A diet of pollen falling from their canopies, and droppings rich in nitrogen from perching birds, encourages the growth of further leafy species on the headstones below, most noticeably *Xanthoria calcicola* with spectacular orange-yellow rosettes.

To date, the attractive churchyard of St Peter and St Paul, Deddington, contains 122 lichen taxa, 113 of which are on stone, 14 on wood, 3 on soil, and 48 on the church, making it the richest site so far in Oxfordshire, and places it within the top 25 in Britain.



**Sweet-gum** (*Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Worplesdon') 1 (sapling)  
**English Yew** (*Taxus baccata*) 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 13-15, 29-31  
**Cherry Laurel** (*Prunus laurocerasus*) 3, 51  
**Irish Yew** (*Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata') 5, 8, 9, 16, 17, 19, 45  
**Golden Irish Yew** (*Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata Aureomarginata') 36  
**Sycamore** (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) 10  
**Lawson's Cypress** (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) 12, 34, 35, 41  
**Horse-chestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) 18  
**Holly** (*Ilex aquifolium*) 21, 47-49, 52  
**Holly** (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Bacciflora') 20  
**Holly** (*Ilex aquifolium* x *altacelerensis* 'Golden King') 27  
**Lime** (*Tilia x europaea*) 22-25  
**'Gold Tip' Box** (*Buxus sempervirens* 'Gold Tip') 26, 37, 46  
**English Oak** (*Quercus robur*) 28, 50  
**Golden Rain** (*Laburnum anagyroides*) 32  
**Spotted Laurel** (*Aucuba japonica* 'Variegata') 33  
**'Paul's Scarlet' Hawthorn** (*Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet') 38, 43  
**Autumn Cherry** (*Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis') 39  
**Strawberry-tree** (*Arbutus unedo*) 40  
**Lilac** (*Syringa vulgaris*) 42  
**Red Horse-chestnut** (*Aesculus carnea*) 44



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Photo 13.3: Quotation from Miles, Archie (1999). *Silva: The Tree in Britain*. Ebury Press, London.

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