

A HISTORY OF ST ANDREW'S IN 100 OBJECTS



9.

Holy water stoup

Date: 15th century

This object lay hidden away from the time of the Reformation in the 16th century to the church's major restoration in 1880. English medieval churches had stoups for holy water in their porches. They originate from some of the earliest church buildings which had fountains where worshippers entering the church would wash their hands and faces. By the middle ages the meaning of this had been extended so that those coming to worship were reminded of their baptism—and that they needed the cleansing of their souls as well as their bodies.

The architect of 1880, William Smith, wrote this:

'In the corner of the porch a stoup was discovered, but in so dilapidated a condition that no attempt has been made to restore it. In the bowl of this stoup (part of a Madonna) was found...'