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One of the larger objects in the museum's collection is the bell and bell-rope of the redundant church of Holy Trinity in Trinity Road. It was rescued by the White family of Widmere Farm, after rotting timber forced its removal from the bell turret, and loaned to the museum by the late John White, pictured here with it.

In 1800 the population of Marlow was 3,236. By 1850 it had risen to 4,485. In addition, due to the collapse of the river trade, the poorer citizens were moving from the bottom of the town by the river to the top. Rows of cheap cottages with basic amenities were appearing behind Dean Street and in the fields around, as well as more substantial cottages built for specific workers. All these people were encouraged and expected to attend church regularly, but All Saints, the new parish church, was overcrowded, in spite of a wide gallery which at that time covered the length of each aisle. There may also have been a suspicion that distance to the church from the top of the town was used as an excuse for non-attendance.

In about 1850 it was decided to build a small church, known as a chapel of ease, on a plot of land which the parish had acquired from Thomas Peers Williams at a cost of £120, at the top of what was then called Gun Lane. The architect Gilbert Scott was asked to supply a design in the Gothic style, and obliged with one of his standard designs for a small church. This had no bell tower, just an elegant wooden turret with a small tiled steeple, in which hung a summoning bell. Its construction cost the parish £3,000. On 13th August 1852 the new church was consecrated, and for over 100 years ministered to the residents of northern Marlow. The design was simple: a chancel with a nave and a narrow north aisle, built to seat 200 worshippers. Erected at the high point of Victorian Gothic, the building appears, at first glance, to be older than it actually is. Its situation, tucked quietly away from the main streets, fosters this impression.

Perhaps that was its undoing. By 1975, Holy Trinity's congregation was too small for the parish to continue to support it, so it was declared redundant and, several years later, sold as a commercial site. During the subsequent renovation, when the steeple was completely retiled, one of the White family, who had worshipped at the church, discovered the bell and bell-rope discarded in the churchyard and rescued them. Engraved with the date 1852, the bell weighs over two hundredweight.

For anyone interested in discovering more about the church, there is an article entitled [Old Trinity Church on the 'Marlow History' section of the Marlow Society website.](#)