

# welcome to all saints church silkstone

## “The Minster of the Moors”

Welcome to the parish church of Silkstone. A church has stood on this site since before 1066 AD, the place of Christian worship reaching back over 1,000 years. In the years prior to 1066, there was a wooden church of some type on this site. The parish of Silkstone took in the greater part of the wapentake of Staincross, a Viking administrative area predating the Domesday Survey of 1068. The shape of nearby Penistone parish suggests that the eastern section was carved out of the enormous territory that once was served only by Silkstone Church.

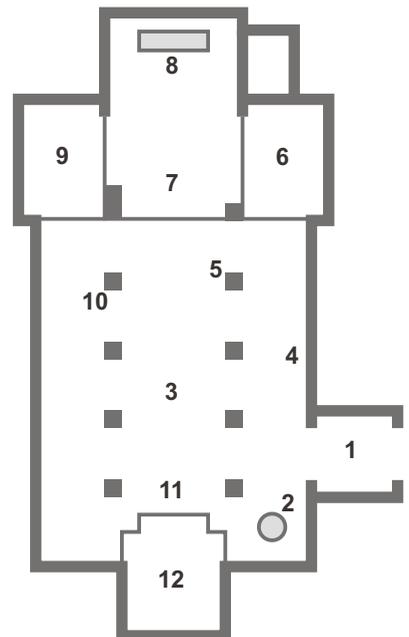


Around 1100, the Saxon Lord Ailric was an important figure who owned many of the surrounding villages and townships. Lord Ilbert de Lacy granted out his fee to Ailric who thus retained possession of Silkstone. It was here he built his church.

Although the church lies on or near the site of the wooden Anglo-Saxon church, the present Grade I structure has 12<sup>th</sup> century monastic foundations and was largely remodeled in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In 1130 Ailric's son, Swaine, gave the church and a chapel at Cawthorne to the monks of Pontefract. Silkstone church is referred to in ancient 12<sup>th</sup> century documents as the “Minster of the Moors”.

### The South Porch (1)

This is the main entrance. On your right-hand side is a board with all the names of the incumbents of this church. The porch was used for civil business, absolution of penitents, baptismal services and calling marriage banns.



## **The Font (2)**

This was given by the mother of Revd W. S. Barker. This replaced a sandstone font, which in turn replaced the ancient Medieval stone font. The baptistry window behind depicts the flight from Egypt and the journey to the Promised Land. Also notice the painting of Moses to the left of the tower. He was a Hebrew law giver and led the Israelites out of Egypt. See the enlightenment on his face, he is said to have lived to be 120 years old.

## **The Nave (3)**

This is the main part of the church where people sit. The word comes from the Latin 'Navis', meaning ship, this being thought of as a symbol of the church. Many Bishops have described the nave as Cathedral like. The architecture is early Perpendicular and the circular pillars in the nave are probably re-worked and re-used Norman stonework. Look up at the numerous roof bosses in the nave, north and south aisle roofs, they show Green Men, Janus and articles of the Crucifixion. The nave arcades date from a transitional period around the year 1200. The box pews were installed in 1862. Notice the pew numbers and purchase plaques. The north and south aisle pews were removed in 1969, as were the ones around the baptistry and west end of the nave.

## **The Bramah Memorial (4)**

Walk down the south aisle. Joseph Brama was born in 1748 in Stainborough and baptised in this church. He became a famous engineer and inventor and later changed his name to Bramah. His inventions include a type of flush toilet, the hydraulic press, the beer pump and most famously, a type of lock. The two marble plaques on the south wall celebrate his life.

## **The Lectern (5)**

The lectern is the stand which holds the Bible and from where passages are read during services. The ball represents the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus being carried on the wings of an eagle all over the world.

## **The Bretton Chapel (6)**

The chapel contains several memorials to the Wentworth family. The huge marble memorial is to the Cavalier Sir Thomas Wentworth of Bretton Hall. He became a Baronet in 1664 and died in 1675. His helmet is displayed high above the memorial. He is buried with his wife, Grace, who after his death married the Earl of Eglington. She died in 1698. Notice that her figure is raised higher because she had become a Countess after his death. The staircase in the corner of this chapel led up to the old rood loft. Also, notice the interesting tapestry reredos.

### **The Chancel (7)**

Move back into the nave and through the intricately carved screen which dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It has been scarred by the removal of the triple-decked pulpit but is still a wonderful piece of carving. This chancel area is also called the choir and the roof is of hammer beam structure. The organ provides musical accompaniment for hymns and prayers. Silkstone church previously had a large pipe organ. Also in this area are several wall plaques to notable families.

### **The Sanctuary (8)**

The sanctuary is the specially railed off area and is the holiest part of the church. Notice the splendid stained glass window and the two wall plates at either side showing the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. The high altar is a special table where the bread and wine are placed during Holy Communion, representing the body and blood of Jesus. During the Communion, candles are lit to remind us that Christ is the light of the world. Look at the beautiful mother of pearl cross behind the altar. It was brought from Jerusalem in 1890.

### **St James' Chapel (9)**

This chapel is dedicated to St James the Greater and to the people of Hood Green and Stainborough. Ancient records show it as 'St James' Choir'. The glass screen is set in a Norman arch. The north door in this chapel was originally the entrance to the tower, when it stood over the chancel up until 1495. A pauper's bench is on the inside. Here are the tombstones to Sir Gervasius Cutler of Stainborough Hall (1645) and his wife Magdalenae (1664).

### **The Pulpit (10)**

The pulpit is the raised area from which a sermon or talk to the congregation is made. It dates from 1832 and replaced a triple-decked pulpit which was thought to have been of great age. Continue down the north aisle to the now sealed up north door. It was reputed to be a pauper's door with a small corner seat on the outside.

### **The Royal Coat of Arms (11)**

Walk past the children's corner which is a play area for our very junior church members. All Saints has a vibrant Sunday School. The Royal Coat of Arms stands above the new tower room. It is carved on both sides and the lion and unicorn reverse. Henry VIII commanded that the Royal Coat of Arms be displayed in all churches. These Arms are George III (1738-1820). Also notice the painting of Aaron to the right of the tower. He was the brother of Moses and was denied entry into the Promised Land. These paintings of Moses and Aaron were originally at either side of the high altar.

## The Tower (12)

Originally the central tower stood above the chancel crossing. It was moved to the west end of the church in 1495 and stands around 80 feet high. It holds 6 bells in total. The oldest is 498 years and the youngest is 290 years old.

## The Churchyard

Take a walk around the outside of the church. Among the striking features are the flying buttresses, battlemented parapets and pinnacles. There are many gargoyles still in good condition and complemented by three new sculptured figures, of a Silkstone rose grower, a French mayor and a current churchwarden. There are many interesting tombstones, ledger tombs and table tombs. On the east side of the chancel is an unusual medieval tomb. Unfortunately, it does not have an inscription.

As you leave the churchyard by the south west path, you will see the Huskar monument to the horrors of the industrial revolution when young children worked in the coal mines. It records the drowning of 26 children, aged 7-17 years, on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 1838. We will commemorate the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008.

Thank you for visiting our ancient church, we hope you have enjoyed your visit and hope you will return in the future. Please sign our Visitor's Book.

Goodbye and may God always be with you.

## Sunday Services

1 <sup>st</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	9.15am (Eucharist)
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays	6.30pm (Evensong)
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays	10.45am (Eucharist)



Text: J Travis (Churchwarden)

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