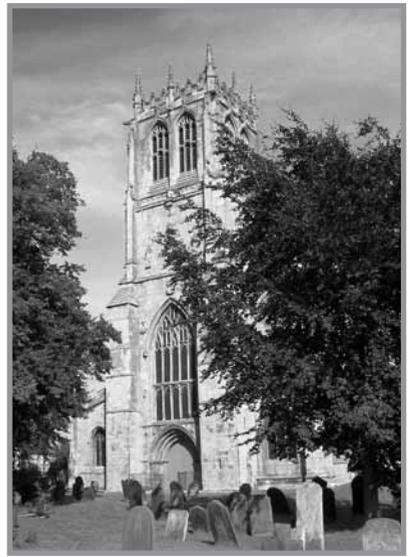


# welcome to st mary's church tickhill



A warm welcome to the parish church of St Mary, Tickhill. Following the Norman Conquest of 1066, William the Conqueror rewarded one of his greatest supporters, Roger de Busli, with the grant of extensive lands in South Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire.

Roger built a motte and bailey castle on high ground (Tica's Hill), close to where the church of St Mary (Mary being the Mother of Jesus) was later to be founded, and the new town of Tickhill was established. The moated castle was later rebuilt in stone and was to become one of the most famous castles in the land.

Before the Conquest and the subsequent creation of Tickhill, there was a small Anglo Saxon village at Dadesley, with its own church and priest. The Saxon church of All Hallows stood about a mile away from St Mary's, beside the road to Wilsic.

St Mary's church dates from the early 1100's and has rightly been described as one of the finest medieval churches in Yorkshire. It is built of creamy-white magnesian limestone, quarried from the valley close to Roche Abbey. Like most ancient churches, over the 900 years or so of it's life, many changes have been made to it. Today, the church that is such a well-known and loved local landmark is essentially in the style of the Perpendicular period (1350-1530), being "more window than wall".

As well as the predominantly Perpendicular work, glimpses of earlier architectural styles can be seen; there is a small, semi-circular headed Norman (before 1200) doorway leading to the tower stairs, Early English (1200-1250) lancet windows in St Helen's chapel in the north-east corner of the church, and on the north wall of St Helen's chapel there are two fine windows of the Decorated period (1250-1350).

## **Royal Coat of Arms (1)**

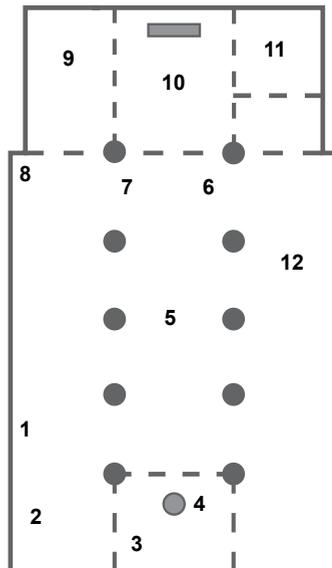
Hung above the north porch door are the Royal Coat of Arms of King George I, who reigned between 1714 and 1727. By order of King Henry VIII all churches had to display the Arms of the monarch of the day, as tokens of loyalty to the crown and obedience to the sovereign as head of the Church.

## Monuments (2)

Close to the north door stands the alabaster Fitzwilliam tomb of around 1525. On it are the much damaged effigies of Sir Thomas Fitzwilliam and his wife Lady Lucy, surrounded by iron railings.

Next to this is the earlier tomb of William Estfeld, who died in 1386, and his wife Margaret. Apart from quatrefoil decorations it is plain and unmarked. The brass inscription that went with it is now fixed to the north wall of the chancel.

Nearest the tower stands a much more recent memorial tomb, which was brought to St Mary's in 1908 from Hazelbech in Northants. On it is the effigy of Louisa Blanche, wife of Cecil Foljambe (later Lord Liverpool) and their second son. Also notice the ancient stone coffin and floriated stone coffin lid in this area near the west wall.



## The Parish Chest (3)

Notice the old parish chest, made of elm and dating from around 1500 (before the time of banks and building societies). Chests such as this with multiple locks were used to store documents, valuables and church linen. The vicar had one key and the churchwardens had one each – as a medieval security measure, all had to be present to unlock the chest!

## The Font (4)

The font, dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is protected by a ciborium which is a canopy or covering supported by columns. Many thousands of Tickhill children have been baptised in this font over the centuries.

## The Nave (5)

The nave is well lit by the large aisle windows and 16 clerestory windows. There is also (unusually) a large window above the chancel arch which allows yet more light into the church.

The nave and aisles are filled with Victorian pews with cast iron heads at the ends. Some of the pews have numbers painted on them, from the time when pews were rented by members of the congregation. The window glass to the south aisle is a treasure of the church, dating from around 1485. Unfortunately, over the years the glass has been damaged and disorganised.

## **The Lectern (6)**

The lectern is a bookstand to support liturgical books. This wonderful example is Edwardian, dating from 1908 and is made of wrought brass. On it is St John the Evangelist, and an eagle standing on a globe.

## **The Jacobean Pulpit (7)**

In the early 1600's it was ordered that pulpits should be placed in every church. A pulpit is an elevated stand from which the vicar preaches and reads to the congregation. This pulpit is of Jacobean style. It was made from old church timbers.

## **Staircase to Rood Loft and Screen (8)**

The lower and upper doors to the staircase can be seen, which led from the north aisle wall to the rood loft from which the Gospel would be read on Easter Day, and from which the choir would sing during services. The staircase is now used for gaining access to the aisle, chancel and nave roofs.

## **St Helen's Chapel (9)**

The chapel was built on to the north-east corner of the church in the late 13<sup>th</sup>/early 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Early English lancet window between the chapel and the chancel was originally an outside window. There is a "Y" shaped Early English window on the east wall.

On the north wall are two windows of the Decorated style, popular in the early 1300's. An ancient tomb in the north wall has a cross carved along the bottom. The tomb recess was later used as an Easter Sepulchre, representing Jesus' tomb; the Blessed Sacrament was kept here from Good Friday to Easter Sunday and then it was processed around the church with great ceremony.

## **The Chancel (10)**

Unusually small in comparison to the nave, the chancel contains the high altar and reredos. The stained glass of the great east window shows the Ascension and the Last Supper. The organ and choir stalls are also situated in the chancel.

## **St Luke's Chapel (11)**

Originally a medieval chapel, it was converted to its present use as a chapel and meeting room in 1992, when the screens separating the chapel from the chancel were also fitted. The tombstone of John Sandford c1429, a benefactor of the church, is placed here.

## **South Aisle Piscinas (12)**

There are two ancient piscinas on the wall of the south aisle. The one nearest the east end of the aisle is under a wonderful ogee arch and has traces of ancient painting around it.

The one nearer the main doorway has a carved face at either side, and a recess in the wall to its side may have been an aumbry, a cupboard in which the chalice and plate were locked.

## **The Tower**

The great tower stands 124 feet high, with huge buttresses supporting it. The large west door has dog-tooth decoration and the parapet of the tower has pinnacles which match those on the aisle and nave roofs.

Each face of the tower has a niche with figures which are badly weathered. On the north face is God the Father, on the west side the Lord in Majesty, on the south side the Holy Trinity, and on the east side the Blessed Virgin Mary and the child Jesus.

**Thank you for visiting our ancient church. We hope that you have  
enjoyed your visit and that you will return in the future.  
Please do sign the Visitors' Book before you leave.**

You are most welcome to join us if you are in Tickhill over a weekend.  
Service times are to be found on the church noticeboards.

**God, you are in this place.  
Fill me with your power,  
cover me with your peace  
and show me your presence.  
Amen.**



Text: The Parish Church of St Mary's, Tickhill & HERITAGE INSPIRED  
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