

More than a Minster

Beverley's churches, chapels and meeting houses

Introduction to the exhibition

"Beverley is a historic town dominated by two great buildings which were provided for the glory of God and for the service of the people of Beverley." (David Hoskin, Vicar of St Mary's)

Beverley is very fortunate in having two outstanding Anglican churches - Beverley Minster and St Mary's Church, which have been described as "one of the finest Gothic churches in England" (the Minster), and "one of the most interesting parish churches in the land" (St Mary's).

The Minster has been very well documented, and anyone wishing to know more about this beautiful building is recommended to visit the Minster itself. This exhibition therefore does no more than present a brief overview with a selection of some images showing the building's stunning architecture.



The Minster's west front. (Picture from Martin McNicol)

St Mary's Church was built and developed for the town itself, in an attempt to allow the townspeople to break free from the formality of the Minster. This church is less well known, particularly outside the town itself. Because of this, and through the personal involvement of several members of Guildhall staff and volunteers in the church, St Mary's has been covered in more detail here. The exhibition also looks at the town's other Anglican churches.



St Mary's Church from Beverley Minster. (Picture from Martin McNicol)

However, the story of Beverley's churches and chapels does not end with the Anglican church. The East Riding has long been a Methodist stronghold, with the Primitive Methodists being particularly strong in this area. A full history of all the protestant non-conformist chapels in Beverley is therefore attempted here, starting with the first groups to appear, the Presbyterians (who appeared in Beverley in 1689) right through to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints which was built in the 1960s.



Members of the Latimer Congregational Church outside the original "Tin Tabernacle" building in the 1930s. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)



Children of the Sunday School at the Baptist Chapel on Lord Roberts Road in 1933.

(ERALS DDX880/2)

Non-conformist chapels tended to proliferate as a result of individuals or small groups disagreeing with aspects of the established churches. This usually resulted in a new chapel being built, often in a style intended to impress, but without the membership of the means to support it. This was the case, for example with the United Methodist Free Church on Trinity Lane (see later), and particularly the little-known Church Methodist Movement which was unique to Beverley (see below).

This attempt to cover the breadth of churches and chapels in Beverley means that it has not been possible to explore them in depth. We hope that presenting the range of buildings, many of which have now disappeared, will surprise many people about this aspect of Beverley's history.

We are very grateful to all the individuals and church organisations who have helped with this exhibition. Without their help and support exhibitions such as this would not be possible.



The second Primitive Methodist chapel, which was on Wednesday Market from 1868 to 1956. (ERYMS 2006.43)



The Congregational Chapel on Lairgate, which was built in 1886 and demolished in about 1981. (ERALS DDX1525/1/5/51)

Church Methodists

In 1824 a respected Beverley draper called Mark Robinson was a prominent member of Walkergate Methodist Chapel. At the time there were proposals for the Beverley Methodists to leave the Hull Circuit, which deeply concerned Mr Robinson. He feared that this would mean a complete separation from the Established Church while he wanted Methodism to continue its close association with the Anglican Church. He therefore persuaded a Primitive Wesleyan Methodist preacher to come to Beverley from Ireland where similar concerns were already circulating.

In 1825 "The Church Methodists" were formed, a movement that was unique to Beverley as a result of Mr Robinson's efforts. William Crosskill of the Crosskill Iron and Waggon Company was another founder member.

Initially a chapel was opened in Cherry Burton but soon a new church had been built on Landress Lane.

This was an impressive mock Gothic structure that seated 800 people, but at the time of opening it had almost no members. It closed 5 years later in 1830 and was demolished in 1840, the materials being re-used to build the Minster's chapel of ease on Lairgate (St John's). A school hall associated with the nearby Congregational Church on Lairgate was later built on the same site.



The short-lived Church Methodist building on Landress Lane. (ERYMS 1997.292)

Beverley Minster

Beverley Minster is the Parish church of St John and St Martin. It was founded by John, Bishop of York, who built a monastery on the site where the Minster stands. When John died in 721 his body was buried in a chapel of the Saxon church, and the present church was built around his tomb after he was canonised in 1037.

The main period of building the Minster was between 1220 and 1425, using limestone from Tadcaster near York. Each of the three major phases of building resulted in a particular style of Gothic architecture: from c.1220 the east (altar) end was built in an Early English style, the nave was built from c.1320 in a Decorated English style, and the towers at the west end are classically Perpendicular style from 1420. The three styles are combined harmoniously by elements such as the continuous vaulting from end to end.



Continuous vaulting from end to end results in harmony of the different building styles. [Wikimedia Commons]



Also in the 18th century, a cupola was added to the centre of the building but was later dismantled, the pieces forming part of the ceiling space above the central crossing. [ERYMS 1997.454]

In the early 18th century the north transept gable was in a dangerous state, leaning four feet away from the vertical. In 1839 a massive timber framework was constructed to allow the overhanging gable to be forced back into position and underpinned. This work was carried out by Nicholas Hawksmoor as the architect and William Thornton, a York joiner and carpenter. [ERYMS 1997.494]



"What always does amaze me is how workmen in the period 1220 onwards managed with timber scaffold and ropes and pulleys to create that building, without the benefit of modern machinery and all our very sophisticated techniques of lifting and carrying. The size of some of the stone blocks at high level is huge and we would have great difficulty now in lifting them. Some of the cross timbers, the main beams in the roof areas weighing several tons, would be a mammoth job for us to lift, but this was done literally by brute strength of the workmen at the time and so that is always quite amazing to imagine how that work was carried out. It always makes one feel very humble". [Ross Allenby, Minster Surveyor]

"The Minster, it's rather a unique situation, certainly there are very few churches have this arrangement in that the maintenance of the fabric of the church is looked after by Trustees of the Minster Old Fund, whereas of course the Vicar and parochial church council look after the building as a place of worship. The Minster Old Fund actually is a very old body, it was set up in the reign of Elizabeth I in the mid 1500s." [Ross Allenby]



The right of sanctuary in Beverley existed from earliest times, probably granted by King Athelstan (924-939). Men and women accused of committing crimes came from all over England to seek the protection associated with the church. Beverley was unusual in that the whole town and immediate vicinity formed the sanctuary, and not just the Minster area.

This Anglo-Saxon stone seat known as the 'Fridstool' or 'Frithstool' is the oldest item in the minster, probably pre-dating the present Minster itself. It was probably used by church officials taking the fugitive's oath. [Picture from Joan Birns]

"The roof contractors who have worked over the years have often remarked how steep [the pitch of the nave roof is], it's steeper than most other roofs of large churches and that in itself creates a problem." [Ross Allenby]



Stone mason, Fred Pape, on the Minster roof with some of his workmen in 1910. [Picture from George Rowe]



The choir screen was designed by Sir Gilbert Scott and made by the well-known Beverley wood carver James Elwell, replacing an 18th century pseudo-Gothic screen. [Wikimedia Commons]



12th century Norman font of Fosterley marble, with its ornately-carved canopy, which dates from 1726. [Wikimedia Commons]



The canopy of the Percy Tomb is a superb piece of English Decorated stone carving, believed to be the work of five highly skilled early 14th century masons. The identity of the person commemorated by the tomb is not certain, but is most likely to be Lady Eleanor Percy who died in 1328, widow of Henry Percy, first Lord of Alnwick. Miraculously the tomb escaped the destruction of the Reformation and that of the Puritans in the 17th century and remains almost intact. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

The choir stalls were made by a family of wood carvers called Carver of Ripon in c.1520. There are 68 misericords, the largest number in England. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

"The quality of stonework and timber carving is quite remarkable. A lot of the beautiful areas of carving of course are out of sight almost at high level, which is very difficult for general public to appreciate." [Ross Allenby]



The difference between a cathedral and a minster: the former is a church containing a Bishop's throne and is the chief church of a diocese; the latter is a church which was originally staffed by a College of Secular Canons who did not live a cloistered life.

Protestant Non-conformity

Non-conformist protestant chapels started to appear during the separation from the established church in the 17th century. Chapel interiors were simple auditoriums, with the pulpit as the focal point and seating arranged to allow the preacher to see and be seen by the congregation. Two side aisles were preferred to one central aisle because this allowed the preacher to look directly upon his congregation. Decorative features were contributed only by the woodwork and iron work; memorials and stained glass were rare. During the week the chapel served as a social and educational centre, with class meetings, band meetings, sewing meetings, prayer meetings, Band of Hope and especially Sunday School.

Presbyterians & Congregationalists

Presbyterians

The first non-conformists in Beverley were a group of about 65 Protestant dissenters who had formed a Presbyterian congregation by 1689. Their first minister was a Mr Foster who became a well-known non-conformist preacher in Beverley in 1689-90. This group initially met in a stable in Well Lane at the corner of Cross Street, but by 1704 they had bought a site in Lairgate and built a meeting house.

The first meeting-house was blown down in a storm in February 1715, but was re-built by October. An adjacent house was bought for the Minister's residence (or 'Manse') in 1743. The congregation was around 120 in the late 18th century. The Presbyterian congregation became Independent in the later 18th century.

Independents & Congregationalists

Lairgate Independent Chapel



The Independent chapel on Lairgate, looking northwards, just prior to its demolition in 1886. The lady with the shawl is Mrs Dunn, a former Chapel-Keeper. The others are Mr & Mrs Pickering, the Chapel-Keeper's at the time the photograph was taken. [ERALS EUR 1/5/3/8]

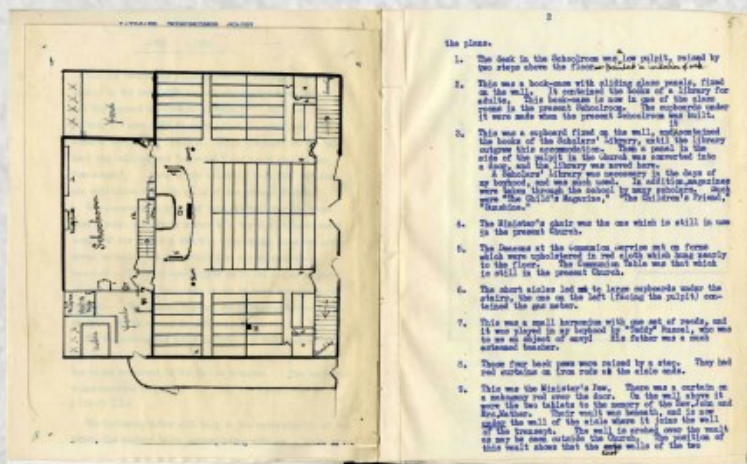
The Presbyterian meeting-house on Lairgate was demolished in 1800 and another 'neat' Independent Chapel built in its place.

In 1821 a schoolroom for a "Sabbath school" was built at the back of the chapel, with seats for 120 people and a small vestry off it. It seems from the records that much of the building work was done voluntarily.

There were 120 members of the Independent Chapel in 1829. This sect was later called Congregational because all its functions were vested in the local congregation.

Music came to the church in the 1840s when accounts were rendered for singing, and in 1851 for playing the 'Seraphine', a rather unpleasant-sounding precursor of the harmonium. The following year the account was for playing the organ, suggesting that a pipe organ had been obtained by then.

In the 1860s the sect extended their activities into the area around the Beck, and used the Temperance Hall on Holme Church Lane for their services.



A page from Rev. Robert Shepherd's book about the first Congregational Chapel, in which he recalls the layout of the chapel interior from his youth. [ERALS EUR 1/5/3/8]

By the time the Rev. Robert Shepherd took over the ministry in 1871 the schoolroom was very cramped, the chapel in a bad state of repair and the people discouraged. A new schoolroom was built on the corner of Landress Lane in 1879, and in 1886 the old chapel was demolished to make way for a new chapel. Many of the bricks were cleaned and incorporated into the new building. The new chapel was a larger and higher building described as Early English Gothic, seating 520 people.



Interior of the Independent chapel. [ERALS EUR 1/5/3/8]



The new Congregational Chapel on Lairgate, probably in the 1960s. [ERALS DDX 865/2/2 (left) and DDX 865/2/3 (right)]



The chapel survived as a prominent feature in Lairgate for 100 years. Eventually, a minute in the records of Toll Gavel United Church from July 1975 states: "Lairgate United Reform Church, who have approximately 30 church members and a building beyond repair, were anxious to join Toll Gavel."

The Lairgate church finally closed in September 1976 and was demolished in about 1981. A block of three houses was built on the site soon afterwards.



Ladies of the Lairgate Congregational Church in 1930. [From Mr R. Walker]

Congregationalists (continued)

Latimer Memorial Church

During Rev. Robert Shepherd's ministry at the Laigate Congregational Church in 1889 he also conducted dinner-hour services in a spare loft at the shipyard in Grovehill. These were greatly appreciated and, when the need arose for Sunday services, arrangements were made to hold them in the kitchen of a cottage near the riverside.



Sunday services were held in the kitchen of this cottage by the river. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)



The room at Tigar's Manure Works where services were held from 1903. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)

When the kitchen became overcrowded the owners of the nearby Tigar's Manure Works made a large room, seating 60 people, available on their site. Services were still being conducted from here in 1903. Eventually this room also became too small so the decision was made to build a hall which would be more suitable.

Consequently, an "iron" church was built with accommodation for 170 people, at a cost of nearly £300. This church was opened in 1904 by Dr Ambrose Shepherd. Its official name was the Shepherd Memorial Church, being dedicated to the Rev. Robert Shepherd who had died in 1894, but it was always unofficially known as the "Tin Tabernacle".



The "Tin Tabernacle", opened in 1904 by Dr Ambrose Shepherd in memory of his father Rev. Robert Shepherd who had started the services in Grovehill. (Picture from George Jesney)



Inside the Tin Tabernacle. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)

In 1906 the Reverend H.W. Abba became the missionary. At that time there were already hopes for the erection of a larger building, when the present building would become a schoolroom. In 1911 it became necessary to enlarge the hall and add a new room at the east end of the building. The new room was furnished from the Methodist Chapel in Trinity Lane.



The new room added at the east end of the original building. (Picture from June Hornsey)



A May Festival at the Tin Tabernacle in the 1930s. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)

It was soon realised that permanent larger premises were needed. In 1934 the new Church took an important step forward with the purchase of a site on Grovehill Road at a cost of 200 guineas, and a stone-laying ceremony took place later that year.



Building the new Latimer Church 1934-35. (Pictures from Congregational Magazine, reproduced from Latimer Church scrapbook, courtesy of Mrs M Barnett)



The new Latimer Church in 1935 (Pictures from Beverley Announcer, reproduced from Latimer Church scrapbook, courtesy of Mrs M Barnett)

The new Church had its Opening Ceremony in June 1935. The interior of the church was very impressive with seating for 400, with a semi-circular rostrum seating 50, and a special organ chamber. Behind the choir is a magnificent carved organ screen. It was reported that the church had "one of the most up-to-date heating systems in the country".

The Reverend Abba was at the centre of all these achievements and his ministry continued for 45 years, but with failing health he was finally forced to retire. He and his wife received many tributes on their retirement in 1951.



Inside the new Latimer Church in 1935. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)

The Latimer Church continues to thrive in 2010.

"They used to go to a reader's house, and they would take it in turns to put on these 'squashes', many as you could in a room and they'd put on sandwiches. They were sat round the table and had a little talk on religion and then had the sandwiches."
[Stephanie Fish]

"[Mr Smailes] always used to come to our house on Christmas Day morning, and me grandma specially made ginger wine for chapel folk. They had some lovely voices in the choir - Nellie Smailes, she could sing!" [Pat Rawlinson]



A performance of The Messiah in 1937, Rev. Herbert Abba's son, Raymond Abba, conducting. (Picture from Mrs M Barnett)

Baptists

The Baptist church traces its origins back to the ministry of John Smith (c1554-1612). He lived in Amsterdam and considered that Christians should make "baptism as their basis of church fellowship". A colleague of Smith (a Thomas Helwys) returned to England and formed the first Baptist church in Spitalfields, London.

By the early 19th century there were two Baptist sects in Beverley.

Scotch Baptists

Scotch Baptists differed from the Baptist church in their rejection of a trained or paid ministry. A small Scotch Baptist chapel was built in Swaby's Yard, Walkergate, in 1808 and had a congregation of 50 in 1851.



OS map from 1854 showing the location of the Scotch Baptist chapel in Swaby's Yard (bottom right hand corner). [Map reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationery Office Crown copyright 2008. East Riding of Yorkshire Council 100023383.]



The Scotch Baptist building in Swaby's Yard (now a restaurant). [Picture from Martin McNicol]



Scotch Baptist chapel built in Queen Anne style in Wilbert Lane in 1888. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

In 1888 a larger chapel, seating 200 people and including a schoolroom, was built in Wilbert Lane. The Scotch Baptist sect survived in Beverley well into the 20th century.

Particular Baptists

Particular Baptists, who held to particularly Calvinistic views, began meeting in Beverley in 1829, and the church was formally constituted with 30 members in October 1833. Initially the church members met in a large room in Wilkinson's Yard off Toll Gavel.

Well Lane Chapel

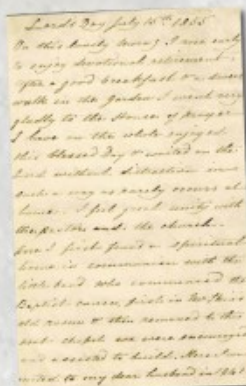


Well Lane Baptist chapel. [ERYMS 1997.639 (top) & ERALS PO1/14/6 (bottom)]

In April 1834 the members laid the foundation stone for a new chapel in Well Lane on land given by Dr Thomas Sandwith, who opened the new chapel (which seated 500) in November 1834. The first Pastor was Mr Robert Johnston of Greenock, who was said to be "a man of large faith and magnetic personality". During the 18 years of his pastorate he received 321 people into the church.



Wedding picture of Jim & Gladys Ruston at Well Lane Baptist chapel. (Note the tank in the background!) [From John Ruston]



A page from a lady's diary about the Well Lane chapel. [ERALS EB1/70]

*"Lord's Day July 15th 1855
On this lovely morning I rose early to enjoy devotional retirement. After a good breakfast & a sweet walk in the garden I went very gladly to the House of Prayer - I have on the whole enjoyed this blessed Day & waited on the Lord without distraction in such a way as rarely occurs at home. I feel great unity with the pastor and the church. Here I first found a spiritual home in communion with the little band who commenced the Baptist cause, first in Mr Ikin's old room & then removed to this neat chapel we were encouraged and assisted to build. Here I was united to my dear husband in 1841."*

In 1907 the pastor received a letter from the Town Clerk of Beverley asking "whether the church was prepared to dispose of the chapel with a view to the laying down of a new street". The Well Lane chapel closed in March 1909 and for 16 months services were held in "a spacious room above the Public Library" - now the Art Gallery.



Series of pictures showing the demolition of Well Lane chapel in 1909. [ERALS DOX805/1, PO1/14/7, PO1/14/8]



Lord Roberts Road Chapel



The foundation stone of the new chapel on Lord Roberts Road was laid in July 1909. [ERALS DOX805/1 and PH4/8/7]



The new chapel, which provided 400 sittings and included a Sunday School, eventually opened in 1910. [ERALS DOX805/1]



The Lord Roberts Road chapel was designed in a free Perpendicular style, and built in red brick and white terracotta. [ERYMS 2007.30.117]



Mothers and babies from the Lord Roberts chapel. [ERALS PHM/7/22]

The Lord Roberts Road chapel was closed around 1964, after which the congregation met until 1965 in the Friends' meeting house in Woodlands. A new Baptist church was formed in 2000, and now meets at Swinemoor Junior School.

Wesleyan Methodists

Methodism dates back to the Rev. John Wesley's evangelistic revival movement in the Anglican Church, which focused on bible study and a methodological approach to the scriptures. Originally Methodists were part of the Church of England and did not become an independent denomination until after John Wesley's death in 1795.

In Beverley a house in Wednesday Market was purchased by a group of Methodists in 1757. John Wesley himself is said to have preached in this house in 1759. He recorded in his journal "I preached at eight in Mr Hilton's yard, near the great street in Beverley; and was surprised to see so quiet and civil congregation". Wesley visited Beverley 15 times over the next 30 years, until his last visit in June 1790 when he was 87 years of age.

Wood Lane

A building previously used as a cockpit and a theatre in Wood Lane was bought by several leading Methodists from Hull in 1781. It was largely rebuilt as a chapel, and registered for worship in 1782. Wesley reputedly preached here in 1788, describing the building as "greatly enlarged".



The building in Wood Lane that was used as a Wesleyan chapel from 1781. [JERYMS 2007.30.137]

Walkergate Chapel



The first brick of a new purpose-built chapel in Walkergate was laid in July 1804, on the site of the present Methodist schoolroom. The new chapel was opened in September 1805, built with a heavy Classical façade and providing 700 sittings. A Sunday school was added in the 1820s. The building was enlarged in 1836-7, with services held in the Guildhall while the work was being done.

Re-opening of the Wesleyan Chapel, WALKERGATE, BEVERLEY.

The Public are respectfully informed, that this large and commodious Chapel, the RE-ENLARGEMENT of which is nearly completed, will be re-opened, FOR DIVINE WORSHIP, ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 18th, 1837. On which day there will be PUBLIC SERVICES at Half past Ten o'Clock in the Forenoon, at Half past Two in the Afternoon, and at Six in the Evening. The Trustees, together with the numerous Friends and Supporters of WESLEYAN METHODISM in the Town of BEVERLEY, beg to make this public announcement, most respectfully to invite the attendance of all classes of persons, upon the re-opening services of this Christian Sanctuary, which the Trustees and Liberty of their town have succeeded in enlarging for the accommodation and benefit of a large portion of the Inhabitants of BEVERLEY, and for the glory of Almighty God.

404 sittings (out of 1150) are appropriated to the use of the Poor.

To whom, by way of distinction, "the gospel is preached;" and who are hereby most affectionately invited to attend its celebration, if peradventure they may be made "rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him."



Two pictures of the Walkergate chapel [JERALS MRB/2/57] and a notice about the re-opening after building work in 1836-7 [JERALS MRB/2/61]

In October 1890 construction was started on the land behind the Walkergate chapel to provide a new chapel in a more prominent location on Toll Gavel.

The minister's house and a graveyard were located behind the chapel towards Toll Gavel. The location of the chapel was not ideal being "in a back street, hard to find by any stranger", as observed by a visitor to the town in the mid 19th century. In 1825 the Walkergate chapel became the head of the newly-formed Beverley Methodist Circuit.

Toll Gavel Chapel

The stone-laying ceremony for the new chapel was accompanied by combined choirs from Cottingham and Flemingate chapels, assisted by a string band. After the ceremony more than 1400 people sat down for tea in the Corn Exchange and the Congregational Schoolroom on Landress Lane. It was observed during tea that "the crush was such that when one of the inner doors was opened and the large number of people surged upon those in front, they were jammed against the door posts and one lady was carried out in a bad faint".



The building was designed in an Italian style by architects Morley & Woodhouse of Bradford. The front had an open portico with three doors and a long walkway forming an impressive entrance from the busy Toll Gavel. The total cost of the building was £4000, much of the money raised by the Young Mens' Association.

The frontage of the new Toll Gavel chapel with its impressive walkway, c.1904. [JERALS PG/1/14/152]



The chapel interior, c.1904. [JERALS MRB/2/57]



Toll Gavel chapel choir, possibly 1955. [JERALS MRB/3/112]



In 1903 the old Walkergate chapel was demolished and a new schoolroom built on the site facing onto Walkergate.



Left: Plan for the new schoolroom in 1903. [JERALS MRB/2/19] Above: The schoolroom on Walkergate as seen in 2000. [JERALS PH/1/21]

In 1926 the Wesleyan congregation at Toll Gavel was joined by worshippers from the United Methodist Free Church in Trinity Lane (see later). In 1955 some of the former members of the Primitive Methodist chapel in Wednesday Market came to Toll Gavel, and in 1976 they were also joined by members of the United Reformed (previously Congregational) Church on Lairgate. From this point it was known as the Toll Gavel United Church.

Below: Toll Gavel chapel following refurbishment. [JERALS MRB/6/31]

In the 1990s refurbishment of the chapel was carried out, providing more comfortable seats, space for performances around the pulpit area, an extended foyer with disabled access, and a new communion rail.

Work was also done on the schoolroom to allow for a wider range of community uses.

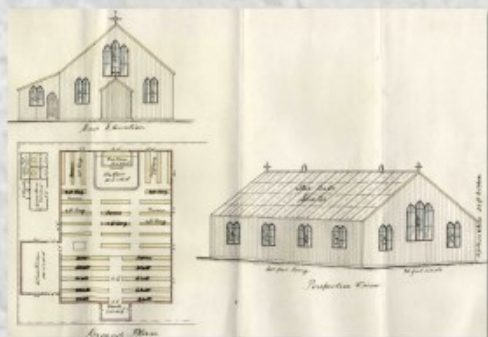


Wesleyan Methodists (continued)

Other Wesleyan Methodist chapels

Flemingate Chapel 1882 – 2005

Following establishment of the Walkergate chapel in 1805 the Wesleyans were eager to extend into other areas of Beverley. By 1817 Methodists were meeting in cottages in the Beckside area and by 1822 they had built a Sunday school on Holme Church Lane, which was also used for services. In 1825 a chapel was built at the head of the beck in Blucher Lane. By the 1880s there was sufficient confidence to look for a site for another, larger chapel. A site on the corner of Sparkmill Lane in the busy thoroughfare of Flemingate was eventually selected. The Blucher Lane chapel was sold the same year and later demolished.



'Tin Tabernacle' originally proposed for Flemingate but never built. (ERALS MRB/2/33)

Originally the Flemingate chapel was planned to be a "Tin Tabernacle", but this was rejected in favour of a brick building designed by R. Arnott of Beverley.



Flemingate Chapel in 2007 (after it was closed). (Picture from Chris Moore)

The chapel was built by R. Potts and T. Lawty of Beckside in a plain pointed Gothic style of red brick with white/blue bonding. It seated 282 people, with a schoolroom that could accommodate 250 children, and was opened in April 1882. The chapel was always closely linked with Toll Gavel, but membership was never large.

"There was never a wedding at Flemingate, ... it was never registered for marriage because nobody ever asked to be married there. In all those years from 1881 to closing in 2004 ... nobody ever asked to be married there. We had baptisms and funerals; my father was the last person to be buried from there. ... In a way it was a shame it closed when it did because Frank Myers, [who had been senior steward] was still alive and the one thing he wanted was to be buried from Flemingate but he actually died in 2005." (Bob Horton)



Frank Myers at Harvest Festival in 1998. (Picture from Geoff Stephenson)



Bob and Arlene Horton cleaning the chapel in 1998. (Picture from Geoff Stephenson)



Demolishing the Guild Room, which had been used as an ARP hut with an air raid shelter during the war. (ERALS MRB/2/33)

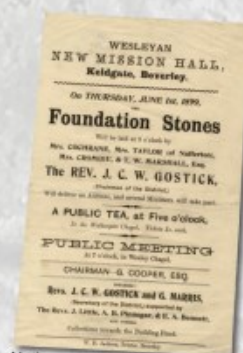
"When we were closing it there was two ladies who lived on Flemingate stopped me and they said what a shame you're closing the Church, such a lovely old Church. I said well where do you live, they said oh we live on Flemingate. I said is there a reason why you never came to the Church? Well we don't go to church; I said no nor does anybody else round here. I said there wasn't a single person off Flemingate ever attended a service in that Church in all the years I was there." (Bob Horton)

Major refurbishment was undertaken from 1982, with extensive paintwork, re-plastering, flooring, tiling and joinery being done by young people on the government-sponsored Community Industry Scheme. A final phase began in 1993 with structural repairs, repainting and decorating, and major improvements to the church hall. Despite these improvements, however, the chapel eventually closed in December 2004 and has now been converted to domestic flats.

"The trouble was the congregation was very old. Originally there was a Sunday School there, ... but when they opened a new church on the Council estate, Queens Road Methodists, ... to get it going they moved the Sunday School from Flemingate to Queens Road. Queens Road didn't last long, it died rapidly from lack of interest and the Sunday School just disbanded. It never came back to Flemingate. So that was when we lost all the children." (Bob Horton)

Keldgate Mission 1899-1963

There was missionary activity in Keldgate in 1879-80, probably in the form of weekly preaching services held in homes. A mission hall, which could accommodate 120 people, was opened in 1899. This was always referred to as a "mission", never a chapel. The mission hall was closed in 1963 and demolished in the early 1970s. The foundation stone was incorporated into the walls of town houses on Keldgate.



Notice about laying the foundation stones for the Keldgate Mission. (ERALS MRB/1/98)



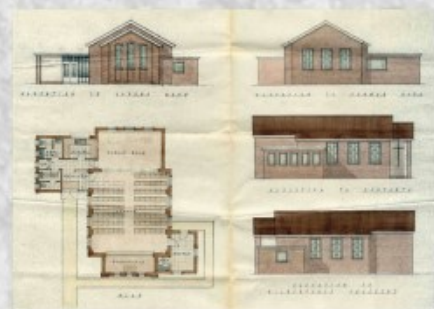
Members of the Mission in the 1930s. (ERALS MRB/6/31)



The Keldgate Mission, early 20th century. (ERALS DDX/1525/1/4/66)

Queen's Road Church 1961-1982

During the post-war years there was rapid development of new housing to the east of the town in the Swinemoor area. In 1952 the Beverley Borough suggested to the Toll Gavel Chapel that a new chapel should be built on the Swinemoor Estate. Despite an initial mixed reaction it was eventually decided to proceed and a number of local businesses were approached for financial support. A Methodist architect from Hull, Bernard Blanchard, designed the building, which was opened in September 1961.



The plans for the Queen's Road church in the 1960s. (ERALS MRB/1/114)

In the early days the church received little support, but gradually the numbers grew. At one time there were 60 children in the Sunday school and a small youth group developed. Eventually, however, finances became a problem and the minister was withdrawn, to the dismay of both the members and the surrounding community. Although the church continued for some time without a resident minister there was an increasing amount of vandalism and eventually the church was forced to close in 1982 and was later demolished.

Primitive Methodism

Primitive Methodism arose in 1810 after a split in the Methodist Church. The movement spread gradually northwards up the Trent valley and reached the East Riding in January 1819 when William Clowes arrived in Hull. In 1820 John Verity preached in "Beverley's spacious market place", and later William Clowes preached in the same place to "a large multitude". By 1829 there were around 70 members in Beverley. Eventually Primitive Methodism became very strong in the East Riding and Beverley had a flourishing congregation.

Wednesday Market Chapel

The first of Beverley's Primitive Methodist chapels was built in Wednesday Market in 1825. It was opened on May 1st 1825 by John Flesher and Thomas King, and was a plain building measuring 45 feet by 28 feet, with a gallery at one end. It seated around 400 people and later included a Sunday School.



The first Primitive Methodist chapel in Wednesday Market. [ERYMS 1997.421]

In the late 1860s the growing congregation decided that a larger, more imposing building was needed. The foundation stone was laid in March 1867, and the new chapel was opened in September 1868. This chapel was 70 ft long, with a 40 ft frontage and was designed by Joseph Wright, a prominent Primitive Methodist of Hull, in a Romanesque style of red and white bricks with stone dressings and black stringings.



The second chapel in Wednesday Market, built in 1867. [ERYMS 2007.30.114]



The interior of the Wednesday Market chapel. [ERALS PH/4/7/28 and PH/4/8/11]



Internally it was also impressive, with a gallery supported by 7 maroon pillars, iron scrollwork and windows with borders of maroon glass. There were gas chandeliers on tall brass pillars and brackets on the wall.

Sunday schools were always a feature of Primitive Methodism. At the Wednesday Market chapel a large schoolroom was built at the back, with 4 classrooms above it. The chapel had seating for 850 people, and the school had space for 500 children. The school was extended in 1903. At the school's re-opening Rev. Hunt gave an address in which he thought that Sunday schools increased social position, pointing out that "many men had risen from positions of relative obscurity to considerable prominence with only the education from Sunday School".



Crowds outside the chapel, c.1906. [ERALS DDX1525/1/11/64]

"The school room would have one of these big boilers, coke fire boilers, you know, you opened a door and pushed a shovel full of coal in." [Dorothy Walker] "I remember a big upstairs room with a lot of windows, and big brown teapots and potted meat sandwiches." [Mr J. Walker]



In the schoolroom kitchen in 1950. [Picture from Robert Horton]

During the war the schoolroom was operated as a social club for members of the HM Forces. Tom Hood recalls "We ran a canteen which achieved almost national fame, for many of the lads knew about us before any of them arrived. ... The number of beetroot and onion sandwiches we turned out must have been astronomical."

"We had [a choir], it used to be Mr Johnson he was the Choir Master and then Marjorie Judson she started a Junior Choir. ... Those are the members of what we call the inter class, you know the intermediate class. ... And that was in a yard which you used to have to go out of one of the school rooms you used to have to go through a door and then down some steps and that was sort of in a yard at the bottom of the steps." [Dorothy Walker]



Members of the 'inter' class in June 1951. [Picture from Dorothy Walker]



Wedding of Alf Gray at the chapel, early 20th century. [ERALS DDX1525/1/11/64]



Children on the chapel steps in 1950. [Picture from Dorothy Walker]



A chapel outing to Flamborough in 1940. [Picture from Dorothy Walker]



Possibly a Sunday School performance at the chapel, 1950. [Picture from Dorothy Walker]

By the early 1950s membership had dropped to 160, compared with 600 in the early days of the chapel, and since the war there had been a continual financial struggle. By 1954 the building itself was in a considerable state of disrepair with some major structural faults and it was recommended to the trustees that use of the building should be discontinued. In 1955 the congregation was amalgamated with those of Toll Gavel and Norwood. The chapel was finally sold to Crystal in 1956 and later demolished to make way for a new garage. This is now the site of Boyes.



The Crystal Garage on the site of the chapel in the 1960s. [Picture from Garry Russell]

Primitive Methodism (continued)

Norwood Chapel

Originally Norwood Chapel was a local "missionary" outreach of the Wednesday Market Chapel. The location was considered to have a sufficient concentration of housing and to be far enough away from the mother chapel. A stone-laying ceremony was held in August 1881, with a procession coming from Wednesday Market singing hymns. Tea and celebrations were later held at Wednesday Market.

The original chapel, behind the present chapel, was a plain building of red brick with stone dressings, and provided 150 sittings. At the time of opening there were 29 members and double that number attended regular services.

This Mission hall was always intended to be the forerunner of a larger building, and in 1901 the foundation stone of the present Chapel was laid in front of the original Mission hall. The new building was designed by J.C.Petch of Scarborough in a Plain Gothic style of red brick to match the Mission hall, which then became the schoolroom. The building has circular glazing in a central rose window and lancet windows, and was opened in October 1901, providing seating for 250 people.



Looking west along Norwood in the early 1900s, with the new chapel visible at the far right of the picture. (ERALS DDX1523/1/8/12)

Congregations and membership of the church grew in the 20 years between the two buildings – by the time the new chapel was opened there were 80 children in the Sunday school.

The chapel flourished over the following decades, with Jubilee celebrations in 1951. When the Wednesday Market chapel closed in 1955 the transfer of many of its members to Norwood gave the congregation a welcome boost.



The Norwood chapel organ. (ERALS MRB/3/125)



The Norwood chapel today. The roof of the original building (now used as a hall and community centre) is visible to the rear of the chapel. (Picture from Martin McVicol)

Evening services were discontinued in 1988 and also in that year there were discussions about developing the site as a local community centre. The original plan was to demolish and redevelop, but the scheme was revised and evolved into the Weekly Leisure Day, something to accommodate changing times. The chapel's centenary was celebrated in 2001.

Camp meetings

The Primitive Methodists were in favour of camp meetings in open air, which the Wesleyans condemned. Beverley was famous for its camp meetings on the Westwood, which could often last for the whole day. The first of Beverley's camp meetings was held in a field behind Norwood Walk in 1824. A Mr Matthew Denton, who kept a careful record in the early days, wrote the following account:

The field was thronged with people anxious to see and hear. Two old men who were supposed to come for the sport were sitting on a rail, which broke and the both fell into a pool of water to the merriment of the bystanders. One bystander composed this:

*Two aged sires, whose limbs did fail
Sat down to rest upon a rail
I look'd and lo the rail I found
Did help to fence a pond around.*

*These aged sires had lived so long
And oft had joined the giddy throng.
They and their sins, be not surprised,
Had grown to a prodigious size.*

*They proved too heavy for the rail
It broke and headlong in they fell.
Some laughed aloud, while others cried;
They're both converted and baptised.*

On another occasion, in 1827, when on their way to hold a meeting on the Westwood, the Primitives were met in the Old Waste by the Chief Magistrate in a great rage. He was determined to put an end to the proceedings and ordered them at once to leave off singing in the public streets.

United Methodist Free Church

In 1856 the Reform Methodists were holding services in the Temperance Hall on Well Lane (later used by the Salvation Army). The Reformers were the founders of the United Methodist Free Church in 1857. The following year an imposing new chapel was built on Trinity Lane, of red brick with a stuccoed front and a pediment supported by Corinthian pilasters.

The appearance of the building suggests it was built to impress rather than to accommodate – despite the chapel having seating for 800 in 1864 the membership was only 51. Not surprisingly there were serious financial difficulties from the start. Despite being £400 in debt in 1872 a new gallery and loft were built in 1876. By 1878, with a debt of £563 and a second mortgage having been refused, they attempted unsuccessfully to dispose of the building. Five years later another loan of £400 was taken out.

In April 1919, with the financial problems continuing to deepen, they approached the Freemasons to ask them to purchase the building. No action was taken until 1926 when permission was given for them to sell the property, and they sold it to the Freemasons for £1000. Most of the remaining members joined the Toll Gavel United Church and the building is now the Masonic Lodge.



The building that was the United Methodist Free Church on Trinity Lane, now the Masonic Lodge. (ERALS MRB/6/31)

St Leonard's Church

Until the Reformation Molescroft had a chantry chapel, built around 1323 and dedicated to St Mary. It is now not clear where this was located. In the mid 19th century a local resident, George Doyle, organised regular Sunday services in the kitchen of his sister's farmhouse on Church Road. In the 1880s services had moved to a hired Mission Room probably near the present location of St Leonards' Church.

In 1891 it was decided to build a chapel of ease in Molescroft as a daughter church to the Minster. A corner of Chapel Close, probably originally associated with the medieval chantry chapel, was donated by a prominent landowner from Bishop Burton, E.R.B. Hall Watt. Money for the building was raised to a large extent by an assistant curate at the Minster, the Rev L. Hughes, and the foundation stone was laid in June 1896. The new Mission Church (as it was often known) was opened in December 1896, with the Lord Bishop of Beverley, Canon Nolloth, in attendance together with the full Minster choir.



St Leonard's Church as originally built, probably photographed in mid 20th century. [ERALS PH/2/200]

The original building was small, consisting of an undivided nave and sanctuary with a bellcote at the west end. It was designed by Hawe and Foley (who also designed the Beverley Union Workhouse) and was described in Pevsner as a "pleasing yellow brick mission church in simple Early English style".

After the First World War, Molescroft began to develop as a residential area. As a result the numbers attending St Leonards' remained at a reasonable level, although never as high as in the church-going Victorian years.

Although the church managed to continue throughout WW2, after the war attendances dropped significantly and the church was closed for 6 weeks in 1946.

However, from the 1950s onwards the population of Molescroft began to grow again and the church thrived once more, with a new Junior Church also starting for the younger residents. By 1970 the Junior Church had over 60 members.



The extended church, pictured in 2003. [ERALS PH/2/200]

In 1978 the decision was made to extend the church and fundraising activities were started. Ingleby and Horner of Beverley were appointed as architects and E.A.Lythe of Walkington as the builders. The extension involved a chancel to be added at the east end, with the whole of the existing church to be used as the nave. During the work the Molescroft Parish Centre was used for Holy Communion. The work was started in autumn 1978 and a service of dedication for the new chancel conducted in April 1979.

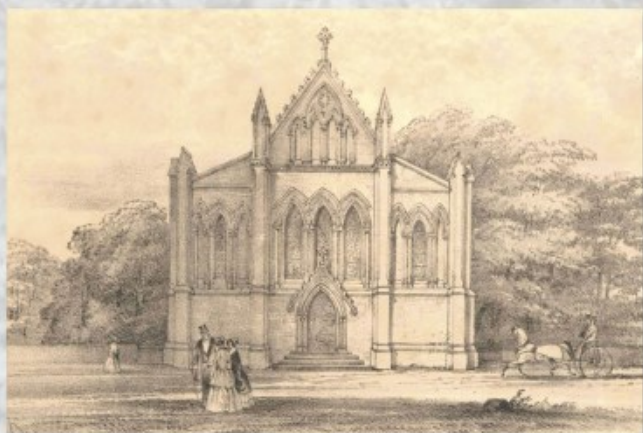
As Molescroft continued to grow another extension was added in 2001 to provide kitchen and toilet facilities and allow the building to be used as a meeting place as well as for church services. In 2010 St Leonards' Church continues to thrive.



The interior of the church in 2008. [Photograph supplied by and copyright of Colin Hanson]

St John's chapel, Lairgate

A chapel of ease attached to the Minster and dedicated to St John was opened on Lairgate in 1840 and consecrated in 1841. It was designed in an Early English style by H.F.Lockwood of Hull and built of grey brick with stone dressings using materials from the demolished "Church Methodist" chapel in Landress Lane. The building was simple, with only an undivided nave and sanctuary.



St John's chapel during the mid 19th century. [ERYMS 1997.483]

In the 19th century St John's became the fashionable church of Beverley because the Minster was unheated and St Mary's was damp. From 1864 – 1892 there was also a very popular ultra-Protestant preacher, Rev. W.B. Crickwell, who drew large crowds to his remarkable sermons.

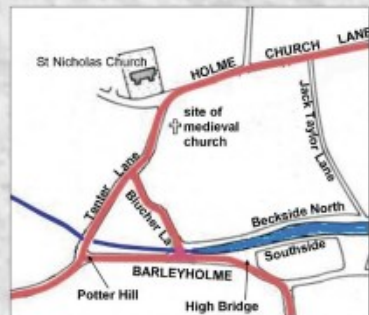


Following improvements to the situation in St Mary's and the Minster St John's became less popular and by 1939 it was said to have "largely outlived its usefulness" and was closed. During the war years it was briefly used again because the windows were easier to black-out than those of the Minster, but it was finally sold in 1950. It was later converted to the War Memorial Hall.

St John's chapel, early 20th century, before it was converted to the Memorial Hall. [ERALS DDX1321/5/39]

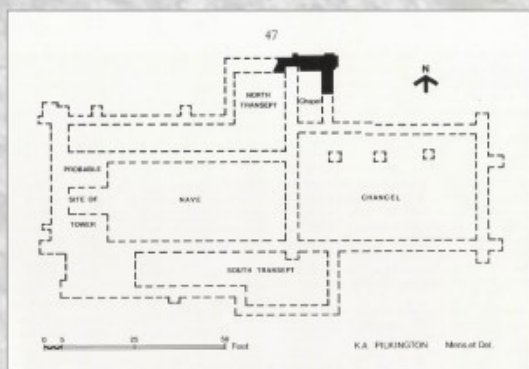
St Nicholas Church

St Nicholas was originally a chapel of ease for the Minster in the 12th century. The first reference to a church of St Nicholas was in 1160 when Thorold, a "Priest of St Nicholas", was recorded as a witness at Swine in Holderness. St Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors and merchants so this was an appropriate name for a church that was probably serving the expanding trading population at Beckside. By the 13th century efforts were being made to make St Nicholas more independent of the Minster as the Beckside community increased.



The little medieval church stood approximately 80 yards southeast of the modern church. From medieval times it was also known as Holme Church, possibly because the word "Holm" refers to slightly higher ground amid wet land, or possibly because of links with the local Holme family.

From later excavations it appeared that the medieval church consisted of a chancel with a north aisle, north and south transepts, an aisled nave and a west tower. The whole structure was 120ft long by 70ft across the transepts.



Probably layout of the medieval St Nicholas Church (remaining section shown in black).

The Beckside community declined during the 15th century as foreign trade was lost to Hull. This led to a neglect of essential repairs in the church, and in the 1530s it was reported that both St Nicholas and the beck were "nowe much decayid". The decline continued through Henry VIII's Reformation of the church in the 16th century. By the outbreak of Civil War in 1642 the end had come, and stone from the church was almost certainly used for fortifications. The tower was apparently left standing for some years, but in 1693 some of its stones were used in the repair of both the Minster and St Mary's. The church was gone by 1700 and the church yard became an "osier (willow) garth".



Looking from the town towards St Nicholas Church and the houses of Holme Church Lane, probably mid 20th century. [ERALS DDX1525/8/50]

In 1646 and 1648 attempts were made to join the St Nicholas parish with that of the Minster, but in 1668 Archbishop Sterne decreed that St Nicholas should join with St Mary's instead. Until the new St Nicholas Church was consecrated in 1800 St Mary's was the only church serving both parishes.

The Beckside community started to revive in the early 19th century. In 1806 there were moves to rebuild the St Nicholas Church, spearheaded by the local antiquarian Gillyatt Sumner. Sumner particularly objected to the tenant of the churchyard site digging up human bones, and stopping up springs which were "very much frequented by the inhabitants and others at a considerable distance as a Medical water".

In 1809 a new rectory was built on the old rectory site, and by 1823 the growing population in the St Nicholas parish was enough to support an independent parish church. In 1873 George Carr Glyn, the first Baron Wolverton and father of Edward Carr Glyn, rector of St Nicholas and vicar of St Mary's, died leaving £6,000 for the building of a church in memory of his sons. Edward Carr Glyn made sure that the money was directed towards the building of a new church of St Nicholas.

In 1876 work began on the new church on a site to the north of the medieval location which was too wet. F.S. Broderick of Hull was appointed architect, Simpson and Malone of Hull were the builders and James Elwell of the Beverley family executed the woodwork. The new church was built in a 14th century style imitating the Early Decorated style of Gothic architecture, and was dedicated in 1880.

Lady Wolverton contributed another £1000 for the tower, and the vestry was added in 1934.



Aerial view of the new St Nicholas Church. The location of the medieval church was in the bottom right corner of this picture. [Picture from Sanderson, 2001, reproduced by courtesy of Trevor Sanderson]

The expansion of the Grovehill Road, and Riding Fields estates in the 1930s to 1960s meant that by 1959 the status of St Nicholas could be raised to "independent parish church". Now the St Nicholas Church, which is the most modest of the three Beverley churches, serves the most populated parish.



St Nicholas Church, probably mid 20th century. [ERALS DDX1525/8/48]



In 1823 the font from the old church was recovered from the Westwood where it had been used as a boundary stone. It initially went into Gillyatt Sumner's collection and after his death in 1883 it was presented to the church and restored to use. [Pictures from Fiona Jenkinson]

St Nicholas Church (continued)



Peter Smith as a choir boy.
(Picture from Peter Smith)

"I joined the choir at St Nicholas church; I might have been 8 or 9. Once a month they had Holy Communion at 8 o'clock and I used to sing in the choir, and then we had the morning service at 10.30 and then we had evensong at 6.30. I went to Sunday School at Tin Tabernacle in the afternoon from 2 to 3, so I was at church, if it was Holy Communion day, 4 times on a Sunday. ... I think I was a choir boy for about 5 years." [Peter Smith]

"There was a Mrs Durham who was on the choir ... There was a Pat Dunn who was about my age. It was male singers, female singers and children all singing together in one choir. ... I can't really remember [how many children there were], there could have been 8 or 10 and there might be 4 or 5 men and 4 or 5 women, it might have been a choir of about 20. [Peter Smith]

"When my voice was breaking we used to have the assembly in the morning, ... but somebody was singing flat. And even though it was at morning assembly the choirmaster came down the rows to try to identify who was singing flat. He couldn't work it out so he'd split us into half, big morning assembly, whole of the school and then he'd identify which half it was in, then he'd split that half into halves, and then he'd split it into rows, and it was my row and I'd thought this isn't me is it? So when our row had to sing I didn't sing so he never did find out who it was. But I wasn't doing it on purpose." [Peter Smith]



Percy Huzzard, who was a chorister at St Nicholas for 65 years. (Picture from Revd Jonathan Evans)



The choir in the 1940s ...



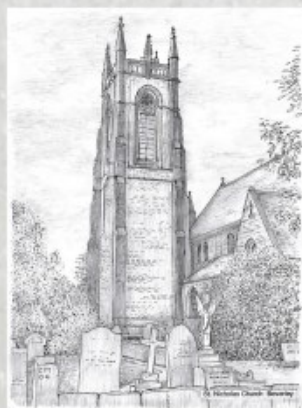
and in the late 1980s. (Pictures from Revd Jonathan Evans)



Sunday School children in 1934/5. (Picture from Derek Mitchell)



Children of the Sunday School in 1937. (Picture from Joan Binns)



Drawing of the church by David Marchant



Extensive damage to the fabric of the church was caused during a storm in 1976. (Pictures from Mr & Mrs Roebuck)



The interior of the church in the 1920s or 30s. The altar cloth was embroidered by the donor's mother in the 1920s. (Picture from Mrs Jane Kelsey)

St John's RC Church

For many years the Beverley Corporation opposed the cause of Catholic Emancipation in the town. Between the 16th and late 18th centuries there were few Catholic recusants (those who refused to attend the Anglican church) in Beverley, although members of several leading families were named among them.

In 1841 a resident priest in Pocklington founded a mission in Beverley. As a result of prejudice in the town their first meeting place had to be moved from a room in Norwood to the house of a member of the congregation in Walkergate. Around 20 people were meeting there after the priest left in 1842. In 1846 a house in North Bar Without was bought for a chapel and a resident priest was appointed. Numbers started to grow and by 1853, when there were around 90 people in the congregation, an outbuilding was converted to a chapel seating about 120 people.



St John's Roman Catholic Church in North Bar Without. [ERALS DDX1525/1/8/78]

Between 1860 and 1898 a day school was held in premises adjoining the chapel. The need to improve the school meant changes to the whole site, with the provision of a new chapel seating c.300. While the re-building was being carried out a meeting place in Dyer Lane was used. The new chapel was designed by Smith, Brodrick & Lowther of Hull in an Arts and Crafts Perpendicular style, built of red brick and white terracotta. The old chapel was then converted to a school and later a church hall.



The interior of St John's RC Church in 1970. (Picture from G. Gooding)

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

The Religious Society of Friends was founded by George Fox, who visited Beverley in 1651 and addressed people in the Minster. The Friends, or Quakers, have had a number of different meeting places in Beverley since then. Originally they rented a room before they built their first meeting house in Lairgate in 1702. The meeting house was rebuilt in 1714 and they remained there for the next 100 years. The Quakers also had a small burial ground on a site near to the present Tiger Inn.

The Lairgate meeting house was replaced, about 1810, by another at the northern end of Wood Lane. Here, too, they had a burial ground. It seems not to have thrived for long, as Oliver (1829) explained:



The original Friends' meeting house at the end of Wood Lane from about 1810, as marked on this map surveyed and produced by Hicks in 1811.

"At the end of it [Wood Lane], in a secluded situation, stands the plain and neat Quakers' Meeting House, which is a modern brick building, used by the society of Friends for the purpose of public worship. It is now almost deserted, for the congregation, which was formerly kept together by the joint exertions of Joseph Dickinson and Christopher Geldart, two singularly upright and sincere men of this persuasion, dwindled away imperceptibly after their decease; and at present very few of this sect remain in Beverley or the neighbourhood."

The building was used as a school in 1840, though the Beverley Guardian advertised a meeting there in 1857 and reported that *"a rather numerous congregation assembled"* (Beverley Guardian, 29 Aug 1857). The few Beverley Friends joined with those in Hull. The Wood Lane meeting house was eventually demolished.

Some 50 years ago there were meetings of the Beverley Friends once more. From about 1955-57 they were held in the Congregational Sunday School in Landress Lane (the building is now a shop), then they met for worship each Sunday morning in the Walkergate County Primary School (recently demolished) from 1957-61.



Outside and inside the present-day Friends' Meeting House off Woodlands. (Pictures from Joan Kemp)

In 1961 the Friends acquired another site off Woodlands, close to the old one, along Quaker Lane, and the Quaker Meeting House was opened on 25 Nov 1961. It is a light, single-storey building containing several rooms, with a small garden behind – 350 years of the Friends' presence in Beverley incorporated into a 20th century building.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (or Mormons) is in Manor Road, Beverley. The church was built mainly by the members themselves, literally with their own hands, in the early 1960s and was dedicated in August 1964. It is a spacious brick building in an attractive setting of lawns and flowering trees. This is a multi-functional building, containing a chapel, meeting rooms, offices and a kitchen.

A church member recalls that they had no meeting place of their own in Beverley before that date. Instead, they hired a meeting room in various places, including the Queen's Head in Wednesday Market, a hall in Lairgate and Hodgsons' Social Club. The church members used their own craft skills to build the church. Those without specific skills did the general labouring work. A retired plumber described how he worked on the building as a young man and then went on a "tradesmen's mission" to Leeds. Women could go on a "nurses' mission". Even today children, from about the age of 12, are encouraged to start saving money for the expenses of their future "mission", which is a fundamental aspect of church membership.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on Manor Road. (Pictures from Joan Kemp)

New church dedicated

THE Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Manor Road, Beverley, was dedicated by Elder Mark E. Peterson, the president of that West European Mission.

The local president, Robert B. Threlkington, said, "we have spent many hours building this chapel and we in Beverley know that it is the best chapel because we have helped to build it. There is something of us in the building."

He said that in the past three months the branch had grown by leaps and bounds. Three families had joined the church and this was a great thing so far almost a year there was not one baptism.

"The church is known throughout Beverley and many people find it hard to pass by without looking in," said Mr Threlkington. "This sparks off an interest for them."

"I am really glad to have such a branch behind me as it is the branch members that make the church. You are my life and you make me what I am and every time I come into the church I think that although we have our worries we also have our blessings."

"When I look and see the finished building it really makes me grateful that I worked on it."

Elder Peterson, before dedicating the church, congratulated the church members on the construction of "this beautiful building."

"I bring to you the blessings of the presidency of this church. This building is a credit to the whole community, to the church and each one of you," he said.

Article about the opening in the Beverley Guardian on 7 August 1964.

Salvation Army

In 1881 several locations were registered for meetings by the Salvation Army; these were the Temperance Halls on Holme Church Lane and Well Lane and the Assembly Rooms on Norwood. In 1885-6 a new Citadel on Wilbert Lane was built to replace the existing meeting places. It was designed by E.J. Sherwood of London, built of red brick with stone dressings in a plain north German Gothic style and had seating for 1200 people. It was closed in 1985 and later demolished, with meetings subsequently held in the former Methodist Sunday School on Walkergate.



Two views of the Salvation Army Citadel on Wilbert Lane in the 1980s shortly after it was closed. (JERALS DDX1525/1/12/48 & 49)

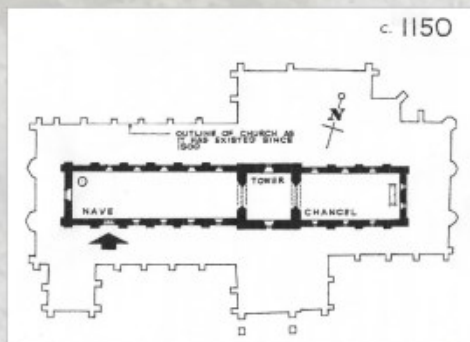


St Mary's Church

St Mary's was originally built as a chapel of ease attached to the altar of St Martin's at the Minster. It was situated at the opposite end of the town to meet the needs of the expanding community, and construction was probably started around 1120. The building was subsequently altered in as many as 15 separate building phases spanning 4 centuries until about 1524, unlike the Minster which was built in three main phases. St Mary's thus has elements representing all the main styles of Gothic architecture, adding up to "one of the most interesting parish churches in the land" (W.C.B. Smith).

1120-1150

The original building was simply a nave, tower and chancel, built of oolitic limestone from an outcrop below the chalk at Newbald. There are some remains of the original 12th century building, a few in the same position but mostly re-used and re-fixed during subsequent alterations. The original 12th century altar slab is still in the church, set in the floor partly beneath and partly behind the present altar. It is broken across the centre, probably a casualty of the Civil War.



The dark outline shows the plan of the church c.1150, with the light outline showing the present-day floor plan. [These illustrations come from W.C.B. Smith's book "St Mary's Church, Beverley: An account of its building over 400 years from 1120 to 1524" and are reproduced by courtesy of the St Mary's vicar and churchwardens.]

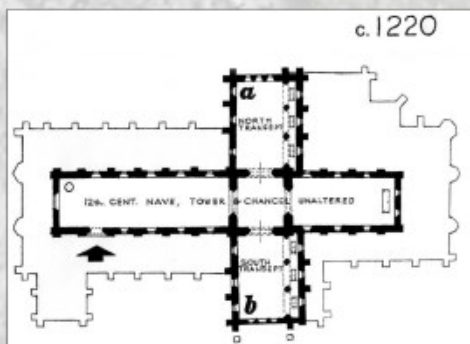
The original building was completed and in use by 1150. It was very modest, probably with a thatched roof, but was immediately adopted by the citizens and trade guilds of the town in the hope of eventually breaking with the formality of the Minster.

1185-1220

The popularity of the church meant that it was soon too small and the first expansion was being planned only 30 years later. Two long north-south transepts were built, the first between 1185 and 1200, and the second completed about 1220. The length of the transepts (111 feet)

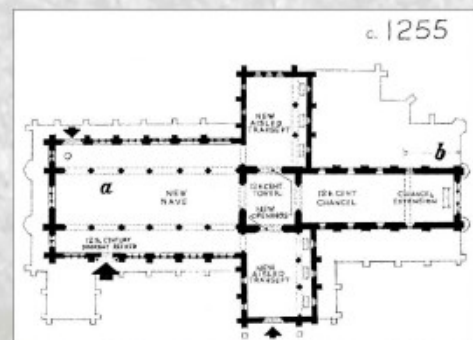
meant that six additional altars could be accommodated to allow the trade guilds to maintain their own altar lights. These transepts required openings to be made in the north and south walls of the 12th century tower, thus starting the weakening of the tower that led to catastrophe in the 16th century.

While the new transepts were being built at St Mary's two disasters occurred at the Minster: in September 1188 there was a calamitous fire, and sometime between 1200 and 1213 the central tower of the Minster collapsed into the church causing immense damage. While the Minster was out of action St Mary's Chapel became more important, and within a few years of completing the new transepts another alteration was planned.



1225-1255

Between 1225 and 1255 two extensions were built – a new, wider, nave and an extension of the chancel towards the east. The formation of aisles to the new nave further weakened the structure of the 12th century tower by removing vital buttressing at its NW and SW corners.

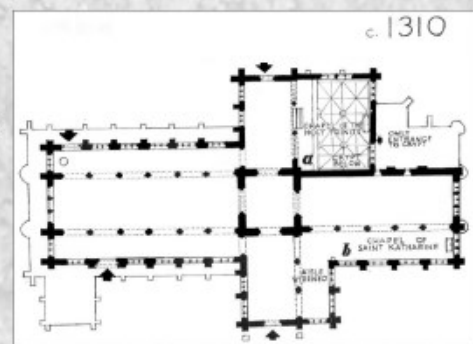


In 1269 St Mary's achieved a degree of independence from the Minster with the appointment of its own vicar, Roger de Rise. This allowed the church to control its own feasts and processions but there was still a requirement to attend the main processions of the Minster. There are a number of recorded threats of excommunication to priests and other members of St Mary's to remind them of their duties to the mother church.

St Mary's was always very popular with the merchants and tradesmen of the town, many of whom bestowed generous gifts to the church. Many of the craft guilds also maintained their guild-lights in St Mary's in the 13th century (up to 38 at one point).

1280-1310

Around 1280 work began on two important extensions at the east end of the church. On the north side a large chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity (now a vestry) was built over a stone-vaulted crypt; and to the south a chapel dedicated to St Katharine was built, together with an arcade between this and the chancel and a widening of the side aisle on the south transept.



The stone-vaulted crypt - today no longer used as a charnel-house but as an area for quiet reflection. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

The crypt beneath the Holy Trinity Chapel was a charnel-house or bone-hole, which were very common in the larger parish churches. They were used as a resting place for bones dug up from centuries of burials in the adjacent churchyards to make room for more burials and for extensions to the church.



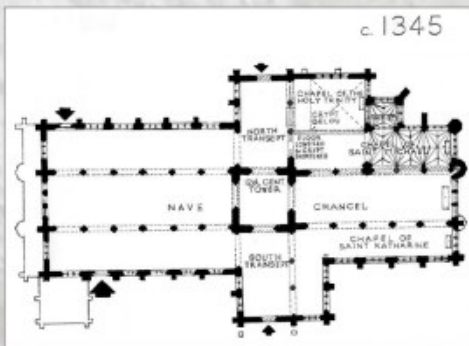
The crypt and Holy Trinity Chapel were originally planned to be at a lower level, but there were serious problems with flooding. This made it necessary to raise the crypt floor and thus the floor of the chapel above, resulting in the present-day vestry being about four feet higher than the rest of the church.

The Holy Trinity chapel raised above the floor level of the church, with the crypt beneath. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

St Mary's Church (continued)

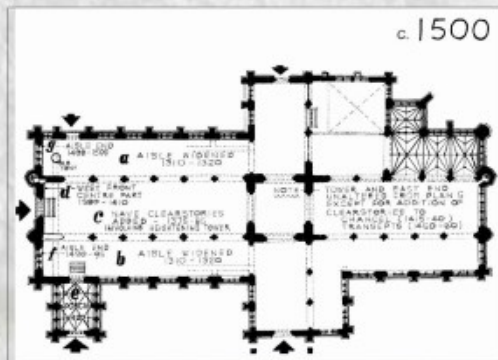
1325-1345

Between 1325 and 1345 the St Michael's Chapel and adjoining Sacristy were built in the north east corner. This chapel is considered to be "*one of the greatest masterpieces of Gothic art*" (John Bilson), and was probably part of a much grander master-plan that was halted by the Black Death in 1348-50. St Michael's Chapel is contemporary with the tomb of Eleanor Percy in the Minster and shows similar outstanding architectural features.



1380-1500

By the time of the Black Death in 1348 St Mary's had reached its present-day floor area, with the exception of a few feet at its west end. It was one of the largest parish churches in the country, with a floor area of c. 18,000 square feet, compared with 29,500 at the Minster. Beverley at this time was one of the 10th principal towns in England, second only to York in the north.



St Michael's Chapel (the Trinity Chapel / vestry is visible on the far left with the steps to the crypt below). (Picture from Martin McKillop)



On the doorway from the Chapel to the Sacristy is a carving of a pilgrim rabbit, which (legend has it) was the model for Tenniel's drawing of the White Rabbit in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. (Picture from Chris Hairsine)

Above St Michael's Chapel are two Priests' Rooms, which were built as part of the same scheme. It is thought that these would originally have been used by priests who may have slept here to be available for masses, particularly during festival periods. Early in the 19th century Beverley's first Sunday School was held here. Today the rooms serve as display space for a collection of artefacts from the history of the church and the town.



Some of the objects in the larger Priests' Room above St Michael's Chapel. One of the oak beams in the ceiling of this room is believed to have been the keel of a sea-going ship. (Picture from Fiona Jenkinson)

The most likely architect of this impressive building scheme is Ivo de Raughton, possibly with his son Richard, who were master-masons in the north of England at that time. A carving on the vault of the chapel showing a medieval artisan is believed to represent either Raughton or one of his contemporaries.



This carving in St Michael's Chapel is believed to represent Ivo de Raughton or one of his contemporaries.
(Picture from Chris Hairsine)

The church would not have been the impressive building we see today, and would have lacked the dignity that was due to such an important town. Its chancel, nave and transepts were low and dark, the roofs thatched and the side aisles were simple lean-tos.

In the 1380s therefore work on the new west front and towers was started, as well as the addition of the great clearstories (upper layer of windows) above the nave. After the Black Death many churches were changed in this way to allow in more daylight. The addition of the clearstories also involved heightening the 12th century tower.



This early 19th century lithograph by Francis Bedford shows the two layers of windows - the upper windows are the clearstories. [ERYMS 1997:499]

Clearstories were added to the chancel in 1415-1435 and to the transepts in 1450-1460. By this time stone for the building works was magnesian limestone from the West Riding.



Looking into the south porch today. (Wikimedia Commons)

The new south porch was added between 1410 and 1420. The porch was a very important element of a parish church, with many aspects of civil business, such as coroners' courts, debt collection, payment of legacies, being conducted here.



This watercolour by Ann Todd shows the nave clearstories from inside the church. (JERYMS 1997:232)



The painted chancel ceiling. The panel showing George VI is in the top right corner of this picture. [Wikimedia Commons]

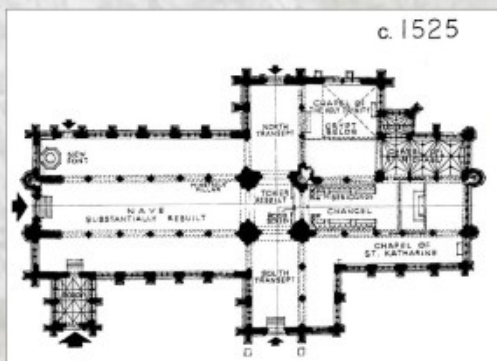
In 1445 the unique chancel ceiling was constructed, divided into 40 panels, each with a painted illustration and inscription representing an English monarch, up to Henry VI who was on the throne when the ceiling was painted. In addition to the 15 post-conquest kings up to that time there are 21 pre-conquest kings and 4 legendary pre-Christian kings. One of the legendary kings was removed (or repainted) in 1939 to substitute George VI, painted by Kenneth Elwell.

St Mary's Church (continued)

1520-1530

During the successive alterations to the church the 12th century tower had been weakened and raised. On 29 April 1520 the tower collapsed onto the nave causing extensive damage and loss of life. The extent of the damage to the tower and nave meant that a complete rebuild was necessary. Generous financial support was provided by citizens and the trade guilds and the rebuilding of the nave and a new taller tower was completed within 4 years. The minstrel's pillar on the north side of the nave records the contribution of the Guild of Minstrels to the rebuilding.

Speed was particularly important at this time as Henry VIII was threatening the future of the Church and a partially ruined parish church would have been a prime target for closure. Masons' marks in the tower tell us that at least 35 masons were employed.



The Minstrels' Pillar in St Mary's Church. [Wikimedia Commons]



A mason's mark on one of the arches. [Picture from Martin McNicol]



The 16th century font. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

A new font was provided for the church in 1530 and about the same time the south porch received its final stone vaulting. By this time therefore the church had reached its final form and has been changed very little over the following 300 years.



Drawing by Caroline Brereton from 1866 showing the arch into the south transept. [ERYMS 1997:621]



Part of the vaulting in the south porch is seen in this drawing by Caroline Brereton from 1866. [ERYMS 1997:625]

17th century

In 1604 the south aisle was hit by a lightning bolt during a severe storm, which also damaged the Minster and Holme Church (St Nicholas). Stone from Holme Church was used in the repair of both St Mary's and the Minster.

During the Civil War St Mary's suffered at the hands of both Royalists and Puritans. At this time all the medieval stained glass was lost, as well as many of the brasses and all the church's ancient books.

19th century

It is thought that the decoration of the nave ceiling with its blue background and golden stars dates from at least 1829.

In 1844 A.W.N Pugin, an eminent Victorian architect, proposed the elegant flying buttresses to the south wall to stop the movements that were occurring by that time. The buttresses were eventually added by his son E.W. Pugin in 1853. Today's increasing volumes of traffic in Hengate are now causing further problems, and had it not been for these buttresses the south transept would probably have already collapsed.

Pugin also noted that the accumulation of soil around the church was causing serious drainage problems. As a result the ground level around the church was lowered by about 3 feet to a distance of 6 feet away from the church walls, and the floor level within the church raised by about 18 inches to allow ventilation underneath.



The nave ceiling, painted blue with golden stars from about 1829. [Wikimedia Commons]



The flying buttresses on the south side, and the proximity to Hengate are clearly seen in this aerial view of St Mary's from 1920. [Picture from E Webster]

"The graveyard outside ... had been doubled up so there was six feet of soil on the top of the old graveyard and they started burying people in it again. So the level of the land around St Mary's was actually higher than the foundations so the water came in through the walls and the floor was a muddy puddle. You've got to think well why didn't they just dig it all out but they didn't, they built galleries down both sides of the building, going north and south, east and west to keep people out of the mud and filth that was coming in through the walls. It wasn't until 1864 when Pugin got involved that he dug out the graveyard away from the walls and put in a drain all the way round the building."

"When we were digging the foundations for the Parish Hall - and because the Parish Hall is built inside a graveyard we had to dig the foundations out by hand - we couldn't understand that we were digging through what was in effect top soil ... But when we got into the second layer, which was mud and clay, we were into the second layer of graves, and we also found the foundations of a small building which may have been a priest's house or even a small chapel in the graveyard itself."

"Inside the building there was an awful lot of restoration went on, on Pugin's faculty. They actually took the floor out of the building completely and lifted it eighteen inches and put footing walls down underneath to stand the floor on to give you ventilation underneath, which is one of the reasons the building's so cold most of the time 'cos you've got this magnificent under-floor cooling system." [Chris Hairsine, Churchwarden]



The ground level around the church was lowered by Pugin in the 19th century. [Picture from Martin McNicol]

The present oak pews were installed in the nave in 1866, and in 1875 a certain amount of further refining of the church was undertaken by Sir George Gilbert Scott. This work included moving the 15th century choir stalls and their misericords from the two chancel aisles to their present location in the centre of the chancel.



One of the 15th century oak choir stalls with its carved misericord. [Wikimedia Commons]

St Mary's Church (continued)

20th century

Much of the roof woodwork was attacked by Death Watch Beetle in the 1930s, as detailed in a film called "Villain in the Wood" made by Ernest Symmons in 1935. As a result much of the woodwork in the roofs of the chancel, nave and nave side aisles was replaced at this time, which was when Kenneth Elwell painted George VI onto the chancel ceiling.



The depiction of George VI that was painted on the chancel ceiling in 1939 by Kenneth Elwell. (Picture from Chris Hairsine)

Two pictures showing Ernest Symmons filming "Villain in the Wood" in 1935. (Top: picture from Janice Perry. Bottom: ERALS DDX1329/5/3)

"The clock, which is a magnificent piece of Victorian engineering, is showing signs of wear and tear so we're going to have to refurbish the clock and at the same time the clock faces, which are in a dreadful state, I mean you go down the market now, you can't actually see the clock faces from the market so we've got to refurbish those and, you know, again that's not a cheap job." (Chris Hairsine)

"There are more than 700 bosses here. And they were all repainted, well certainly the naves and the chancel, they were all replaced in the 1930s after the death watch beetle got in." (Chris Hairsine)



One of the bosses in the vaulting of the south porch. (Wikimedia Commons)



The organ fills the whole of the north transept. (Picture from Martin McNicol)

"The first record of an organ in St Mary's was in 1782 when the records show that there was an organ built by a Donaldson of York and we know very little about that. There's no sign of any pipe work or anything left over, it must have been totally removed and what you see and what you hear now is partly Forster and Andrews, a very highly respected international firm based in Hull from 1869 and then the organ was rebuilt and slightly enlarged by TC Lewis of London in 1907. Most of what you can hear played now is TC Lewis of London. It was extended again slightly in the 1950s and a fourth manual was added so now it's a full, very large cathedral size four manual organ of exceptional quality. It really is a joy to play and to listen to as well." (Alan Binnington, Organist and Choir Master)

"When recently we had some re-organisation to allow better disabled access to St Mary's, the architect suggested that glass doors be incorporated and with great perspicacity, he said this was not only so that people could see in before they take that tremendous step of crossing the threshold, to come into a church, but also so we could look out with a view along towards Saturday Market as a reminder of the fact that we were there for the benefit of the people of the town as well as in order to serve God." (David Hoskin, Vicar of St Mary's)



"St Mary's provides worship, that is the first and foremost reason for it being there, but it's also a beautiful building providing a very useful space and therefore gets used for all kinds of other things, concerts, exhibitions, very much part of the cultural life of the town." (David Hoskin, Vicar of St Mary's)

Rehearsing for the town's Chamber Music Festival, which takes place annually in St Mary's Church. (Picture from Martin McNicol)

"They went through a phase of gas heaters, during the time when the organ was powered by a gas engine: there's actually a gas engine in the Science Museum in Manchester which used to power a set of bellows and it's a wonderful little thing, not much bigger than a car engine. There were two bellows in the organ, one was powered by water, which came in from a water main on the street on North Bar Within, four inch water main which is still there, the other one was a gas engine which was inside. In 1868 when Hall and Broadfield rebuilt the organ it was hand powered but when it was refurbished in 1907 it became far too big to be hand powered any more and we have records that the 'Bellows Blower' was paid something like half a crown a year to pump the bellows to keep the organ going." (Chris Hairsine, Churchwarden)

"I think the future is very encouraging. I think there is every reason to be encouraged; we have a strong base of loyal members. They give generously of their time and also provide the finance that we need for maintaining the church. ... We also have a large number of people actively involved in worship ... in all kinds of ways so that it's most certainly not a one-man-band and that widely based ministry if you like is a good platform on which to build for the future." (David Hoskin, Vicar of St Mary's)

St Mary's Church *(continued)*

The Music Group *(by Diana Pocock)*

In summer 1991 I mentioned to our vicar, David Hoskin, that I thought it would be a good idea to include "worship songs" as well as hymns in our music, as I felt this would have more appeal to younger members of the congregation. He persuaded me to gather together a group of interested church members myself, and in July 1991 the St Mary's Music Group came into being. I undertook the responsibility with much reluctance, hoping to be able to retire to the back row once the group was established.

A year later we had 11 regular members, rehearsing on Wednesdays, and seeing ourselves as a "worship resource" with the aim of leading the congregation in the learning and singing of new music in the modern style. However, the congregation seemed reluctant to participate, possibly because we sang before the service and during the administration and could therefore be regarded as "background" music! We did receive some PCC funding towards the purchase of Mission Praise music books and proceeded to learn the new songs that appealed to us.

In 1993 we were featured in the BBC's "Songs of Praise" programme from Beverley Minster, but we were actually filmed rehearsing in St Mary's. Our ability to co-exist happily with the formal robed choir was highlighted in the accompanying interview.

By now we had been joined by Christina Brangwin, an excellent musician, and in due course she took over leadership of the group, which continued to flourish. In 2000 I became leader again when Christina moved to France. We had a few rehearsals with the Minster's music group, which were good fun, and with their more numerous instrumentalists and our greater numbers of singers we combined to make a good sound.

By 2001 we were contributing to worship at St Mary's on a fortnightly basis, with a repertoire of at least 100 songs, and we were receiving welcome encouragement from the congregation at St Mary's. In 2002 we hosted a gathering of music groups from other Beverley churches, from which it was encouraging to learn that, despite lacking the range of instruments that other churches had, numerically we were comparatively strong.

In 2004 I suggested that we should take part in the Cottingham Music Festival and, although we came second in a class of 2, we were only 1 mark behind the winners who were seasoned campaigners! We were complimented on our "adventurous" choice of music and the adjudicator thought our performance "very musical" but that we should try to "look less terrified"!!

Around this time the formal choir at St Mary's began to accept girls and ladies into its ranks, but I was surprised and pleased that our ladies remained loyal to the Music Group. However, like everyone else, we were delighted at the choir's new strength and beautiful sound and both groups continued to enjoy their mutually supportive and friendly roles in the worship at St. Mary's.

I was once again able to retire to the back row from 2005 when leadership was taken over by Canon Richard Frank. Although our wonderful accompanist Anne Cottingham had retired to Norfolk we were joined by the church's new Deputy Organist, Berry Lewis. Not only is she exceptionally talented as a pianist, but she also has the gift of a beautiful alto voice and is an experienced choral director, so it was a natural progression that she should, in due course, take over the running of the group.

At present (2010), almost 19 years since it was established, the St Mary's Church Music Group enjoys a membership of 17, including 2 flautists, and regularly contributes modern worship songs both before and during the 10am Holy Communion services, and also recently successfully hosted a Taize service at St Mary's. Despite this considerable commitment, the group always has been, and remains, very informal, rehearsing for only an hour on a more-or-less fortnightly basis.

New members are always welcome and there are no special requirements regarding age, instrument or ability, or even attendance at rehearsals. It co-operates and co-exists happily with the more formal, robed choir and many of the songs in its repertoire have been adopted for congregational use, alongside the traditional hymns, so bringing a new and different dimension to the part music plays in the worship at St. Mary's Church.



Looking up under the tower.
[Wikimedia Commons]



The pulpit.
[Wikimedia Commons]

The kneelers *(by Dorothy Mackley)*



All the kneelers are placed on the pews during church open days. (Picture from Chris Hairsine)

In 1994 we decided it was time to replace our old and well-worn kneelers in the Nave of St Mary's Church. This photo shows the results of our efforts today, with almost 300 kneelers on display. Every kneeler has been donated by parishioners and friends and each one has been lovingly handmade. These details are usually included on the reverse side. Most of the designs have been chosen from Jacksons of Hebden Bridge Collections and reflect the interests of the donor, to mark an event, an anniversary or as a memorial for a loved one. The designs cover a wide range of subjects, such as events in the Church year, seasons, festivals, church organisations, children's groups, historical, saints, cathedrals, wildlife, music, army, navy and RAF, national organisations and royal events. In one year, we received 6 Golden Wedding kneelers! This tells us something, as do all our kneelers, becoming a "potted history" of our congregation, and this continues.

Bells and bellringing

Beverley has two parish churches that each have a ring of ten bells: Beverley Minster and St Mary's. The churches of St Nicholas and St Leonard's also have one bell each that are chimed for services.

St Mary's Church bells

The earliest recorded reference to St Mary's bells appears in Scaum's Beverlac in AD 1417. It quotes an agreement whereby the bellringers would be paid 12d per year "for tolling the four principal bells".

In 1743 there were "six bells within their frames" recorded in the church and Parish Council log book known as 'The Terrier'.

The Churchwarden's book of 1883-4 recorded that "two new bells were supplied by Messrs Gillet and Co. Of London at a cost of £115 8s 9d, bringing the peal of bells up to eight in number." However, the new bells were claimed not to be in harmony with the old bells and this was confirmed by Messrs Taylor, the bellfounders who reported that:



Inscription on one of the St Mary's bells commemorating the new peal in 1900. [Picture from Richard Gibson]

"the quality and tone of all of them, excepting the seventh bell, is very inferior indeed. The effect of the clock striking the quarters is most excruciating, and must be annoying to anyone with a musical ear... The tower is an exceedingly fine one, and a grand peal of ten bells can be most conveniently hung therein on one level."



In the St Mary's tower. [Picture from Richard Gibson]

The new peal was cast in 1900 and was dedicated at a special service by the Archbishop in the presence of a large congregation.

In 2005 the bells of St Mary's were rehung to improve the rope circle and to correct some problems with odd-struckness, i.e. when a bell may ring slower or quicker than adjacent bells.

Beverley Minster bells

The peal of ten bells in Beverley Minster are in the north-west tower. There is also a large single bell, Great John, in the south-west tower which strikes the hour. Great John weighs over seven tons and is the ninth heaviest bell in the country. The Minster is thought to be the only church in the world where the quarter hour chimes are struck on bells located in a separate tower to the bell that strikes the hour.

The chronology of the bells is best explained by Mike Robson, the tower captain:

"The Minster originally had two bells given by Archbishop Kinsius in 1050. At some point later either one or both of these bells was lost when the central tower collapsed.

Somewhere between 1330 and 1360 four bells were actually cast on site in the church yard and put in a wooden tower at the west end of the Minster. These four bells were put into the present tower when construction was finished in 1420. It is not known when a large bell was put in the south-west tower. Over the years more bells were added to the ringing peal, one in 1663 and three in 1747.



The first Great John bell being moved from the Minster after Canon Nolloth sold it to Downside Abbey in 1902. [ERALS]

In 1901 the old peal of eight bells was taken out and a new peal of ten bells installed. Canon Nolloth, the vicar at the time, wanted quarter chimes that were different to anything else. He asked the Minster organist John Camidge to compose four tunes that would not be boring or repetitive, so that these could be incorporated into the new clock. The tune for the first quarter is a short one and they gradually get longer as it builds up towards the hour. When the last note of the hour quarter strikes, the clock mechanism kicks in and starts the other half of the clock in the south tower and the hour is struck on Great John. The quarters strike 24/7 and a lot of the locals can tell you what time it is just by hearing part of the tunes.



The new Great John bell in the south-west tower. [From exhibition: Bells and bellringing in East Yorkshire]

The previous clock had been put in by James Harrison, a famous clock maker. It played 10 tunes but they only struck at 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 9 o'clock, midday and midnight. The first tune was God Save the King and the others were well known tunes of the time. When it got to midnight on the Saturday the tenth tune which was made up of two Psalms was struck and these played throughout Sunday, reverting back to the other tunes at 3.00am on the Monday morning. The clock would not chime the same tune at the same hour on the same day for nine weeks."

In the old days one of the Minster ringers or the verger had to go up the towers every other day and wind up the clock. The current clock mechanism is electric and requires no winding up.

"When the war started it was decided that the bells would only be rung as a sign of invasion. Being a pupil at Minster Girls' School we were always very aware of the bells and we really noticed their absence during the war. On the Sunday that peace was declared, all the bells rang and what a wonderful sound it was! I can remember the peaceful feeling I had, knowing that it was all over. I felt free at last. It was a strange feeling, as if something had been lifted - a good feeling. Hearing the happy bells was very special to me after so many years." [Joan Birns]

Beverley & District Ringing Society

After the war there was a lack of bellringers, many of them had been killed or injured and churches found they had no one to ring the bells. The Beverley and District Ringing Society was formed in 1946 with aim of bringing together available ringers in order to hold combined practices and meetings to help train new ringers. The society currently has 35 churches in its area with ringable peals of bells.



Peal boards in the Minster tower, which list the order in which the bells are rung for each peal, possibly dating from 1901. [Picture from Christine Kendall]



Board in the Minster tower with a list of Ringers' Orders from 1823, including e.g. that "If any person ring a bell with hat or spurs on forfeits six pence". [Picture from Christine Kendall]