



The 800 year old history of  
**St Andrew's Church**  
**Kirton-in-Lindsey**

Chirchetone in the Domesday Book

£1.50



St Andrew's in Kirton-in-Lindsey is a church with a long history. The very name Kirton means 'town of the church' which shows its importance in this area from the seventh century onwards. There are indications that the earliest church could well have been built on the site of a Roman temple. Certainly the Saxons built their place of worship here, though the remains of this structure are few. In about the year 1200 the original Saxon church was virtually pulled down to be extensively enlarged and rebuilt in the Early English style. This, with additions and renovations over 800 years, is the church you see here today.



## The Town and its History

Because of the church the town grew in importance and it has an interesting past. In around 628 the manor and soke was owned by King Edwin of Mercia, under whose patronage St Paulinus preached, bringing Christianity to this area. Much later in 1023, it was owned by Lady Godiva. Her descendant, Earl Edwin of Mercia held it until 1066 but after the Conquest the manor of Kirton (called Chirchetone in the Domesday Book) passed to the monarch and then to the Duchy of Cornwall. The only kings known to have spent some time at this manor, presumably worshipping in our church, were King John and King Edward I. The manor was often gifted to nobles who served the Crown, but always passed back to the monarch or the Prince of Wales on the death of the Lord or Lady in question. In this way some famous historical figures have held the lordship here, amongst them Theodoric of Alsatia (a descendant of Charlemagne), the infamous Queen Isabella and the chivalrous Black Prince. George IV, when Prince Regent, sold it to discharge his gambling debts to John Julius Angerstein, a wealthy Russian Jew. Angerstein's famous art collection later formed the basis for the treasures of the National Gallery. Thus the manor passed out of Royal hands.

Kirton-in-Lindsey had attained the status of a market town, but it was Queen Isabella who granted the right in 1324 to hold two Fairs each year, thus bringing considerable revenues to the town. By 1789 a gaol (known as the House of Correction, or Bridewell) was built, along with a Court House where the Quarter Sessions were held.

## A Guided Tour around the Church

Use the sketch map on the centre pages and the numbers to find your way to the most interesting features.



### Saxon Door way & Tympanum (1)

Our church has played a central part in the town's history, undergoing many modifications through the ages. The oldest visible part is probably the priest's door, set now in the south wall of the chancel. Viewed from the outside the arched stone, or tympanum, is fine pre-Norman carving of close-beaded interlace and foliage, with chevron moulding above.

*The Saxon Tympanum over the door*

## Carved Pillars (2)

Notice that the pillars of the North Arcade are set on stones which once formed part of the wall of an earlier, perhaps Saxon, church. These pillars themselves were built at the end of the 12th. century, as shown by the style of the carvings along the capitals and are much finer than the later pillars of the South Arcade.



*The North Arcade pillars, and a detail from one of the carved capitals*



*The Medieval Tower*

## Tower (3)

The massive Tower was erected in the 1200s. It has a splendid West Door with dog-tooth carving, and good foliage carvings on the capitals of the jambs. Inside an unusual double arch leads to the nave. It is remarkable that the nave floor is higher than that of the tower and this is because of the old practice of burying people of importance within the church itself.

375 people are interred within St Andrew's according to the Ross manuscripts in Lincoln.



## South Porch (4)

The South Porch is now a place for private prayer but was once the main entrance to the church and boasts a fine 14th century archway. It housed the baptismal font until the 1860s.

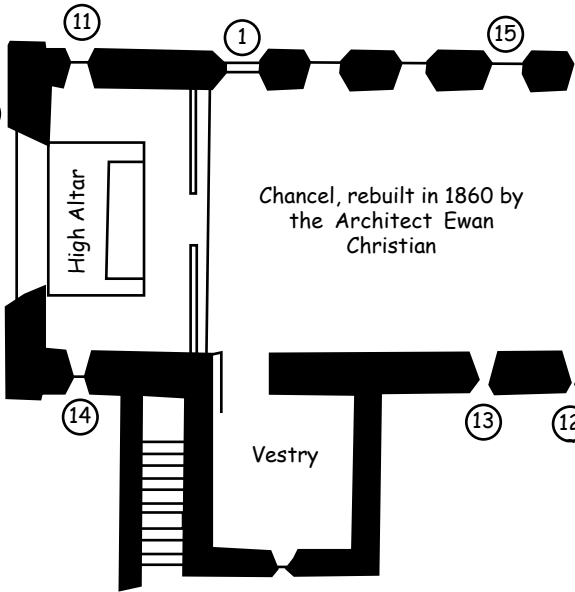
*The 14th century archway into the South Porch*

①⑦ Marks of consecration on the medieval altar



① The priest's door has a fine Saxon tympanum above it.

⑥ East window



A rood screen stood between nave and chancel from 1350 to 1860. It is now in a Diocesan repository.

"Rood" is an archaic word for 'cross'.

J.W. Walker organ. 1874

② These may be of the church



Both the north and south aisles added in the late 1400s, together with the clerestory (upper level windows above).

## St Andrew's Church, Kirton-in-Lindsey

The numbers refer to descriptions in the text giving more information



## Later Additions and Alterations

In the 15th century the clerestory was added over the north and south aisles. At the same time the tower was strengthened with additional buttresses and decorated on top with a parapet and pinnacles.

In 1553, during Queen Mary's reign, three **great bells** were installed in the tower, together with a sanctus bell.

In the 1860s the church was restored. The **Rood Screen** which had stood between the chancel and the nave since 1350 was removed and replaced by the existing chancel arch. The entrance to the Rood loft (removed in 1565) can be seen high up on the wall behind the organ. The Rood Screen has been preserved and is now housed in specialised storage in an ecclesiastical repository.

Also in 1860, during the restorations, a mutilated pre-reformation **mural** was discovered. It depicts the crucifixion with Jesus' sacred wounds flowing to the seven sacraments. Unfortunately this has now faded and vanished.

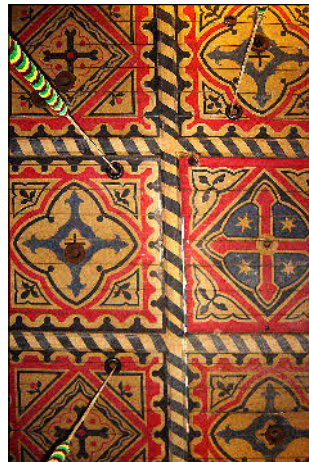
In 1798 **six bells** were cast by James Harrison of Barton-upon-Humber to replace the original three. Two more were later added in 1982, to create a fine **eight bell peal**.

A fine **Arts & Crafts ceiling** can also be seen in the ringing loft chamber.

In 1874 an **organ** (5) was installed, built by JW Walker and Sons, replacing the Church Orchestra. The nearby vicarage, now in private ownership, was begun at the same time and lies to the south of the graveyard, which was closed in 1947. In 1900 the parishioners donated a **clock** for the tower (see front page), to mark the turn of the century.



*A sketch of the damaged mural*



*The ringing loft ceiling*

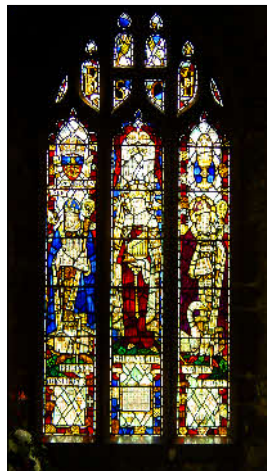


*The J Walker Organ*

## The Windows (6-15)

The East Window (6) above the High Altar depicts the life of Christ, from his birth at the bottom to his ascension at the top. Of interest is the murder of Thomas a Becket in the left hand window. In the Lady Chapel (7) the window dedicated to St Andrew was given by the Duckering family. Beside it, on the south wall, the window depicts the building of Lincoln Cathedral (8) and commemorates the Howlett family. Close by is the Selby window (9) and that in memory of Reverend H R Garvey is on the south side of the Baptistry (10).

Commemorative windows in the chancel include those to the Reverend Stuart (11) and his wife Charlotte (12), Thomas and Sarah Fowler (13), Reverend R H Charters (14) and Hannah Wetherell (15).



*The Howlett Window*

## The Knight (16)

An effigy of a knight, perhaps Sir Gilbert Waterhouse who served Henry III, can be seen between the nave and the Lady chapel. This figure may have been defaced at the time of the Puritans. It was hidden for a while beneath the floor before it was rediscovered in 1862 and placed in its present position.



*The Knight*



*The Medieval Altar in the Lady Chapel*

## The Medieval Altar (17)

In 1936 the ancient altar in the Lady Chapel was discovered beneath the tower and though it showed signs of wear, the five crosses of consecration were still visible. It has been repaired and restored to its original purpose though at the Reformation was used as a threshold, as an act of desecration. Graffiti from the 18th century can also be seen.

## The Future

A house of God serves the people in its parish. Even from this brief history, it is easy to see how the church has been adapted through the centuries to meet the changing needs of its parishioners. Today, exciting and groundbreaking events are happening here in Kirton-in-Lindsey. Denominations once divided have re-united in fellowship and the new United Mission Church of St Andrew's embraces Anglicans, Baptists and Methodists and is the focus of worship within the community. The new UMC halls have been created from the Baptist buildings close by, whilst the Methodist buildings have become the Wesley Centre, offering activities and social outreach to the people of Kirton-in-Lindsey.

### **A Celtic Blessing.**

May the road rise to greet you as you go  
May the wind be always at your back  
May the sun shine warm upon your face  
May the rain fall soft upon your path  
Until we meet again  
May God hold you in the hollow of His hand

*We hope you have enjoyed your visit to our treasured church.*

*Please come again.*

#### **Sources:**

- 1) "The Church in Kirton-in-Lindsey: A History", by L.A.E. Dejaridin. Published by the Kirton-in-Lindsey Society
- 2) "The History of Kirton-in-Lindsey" by Oxoniensis
- 3) "Church in Focus". An article in the Catholic News. December 2003
- 4) "Church of St Andrew, Kirton-in-Lindsey" P.B.G.B.
- 5) Poster by R.W. Pacey 1969