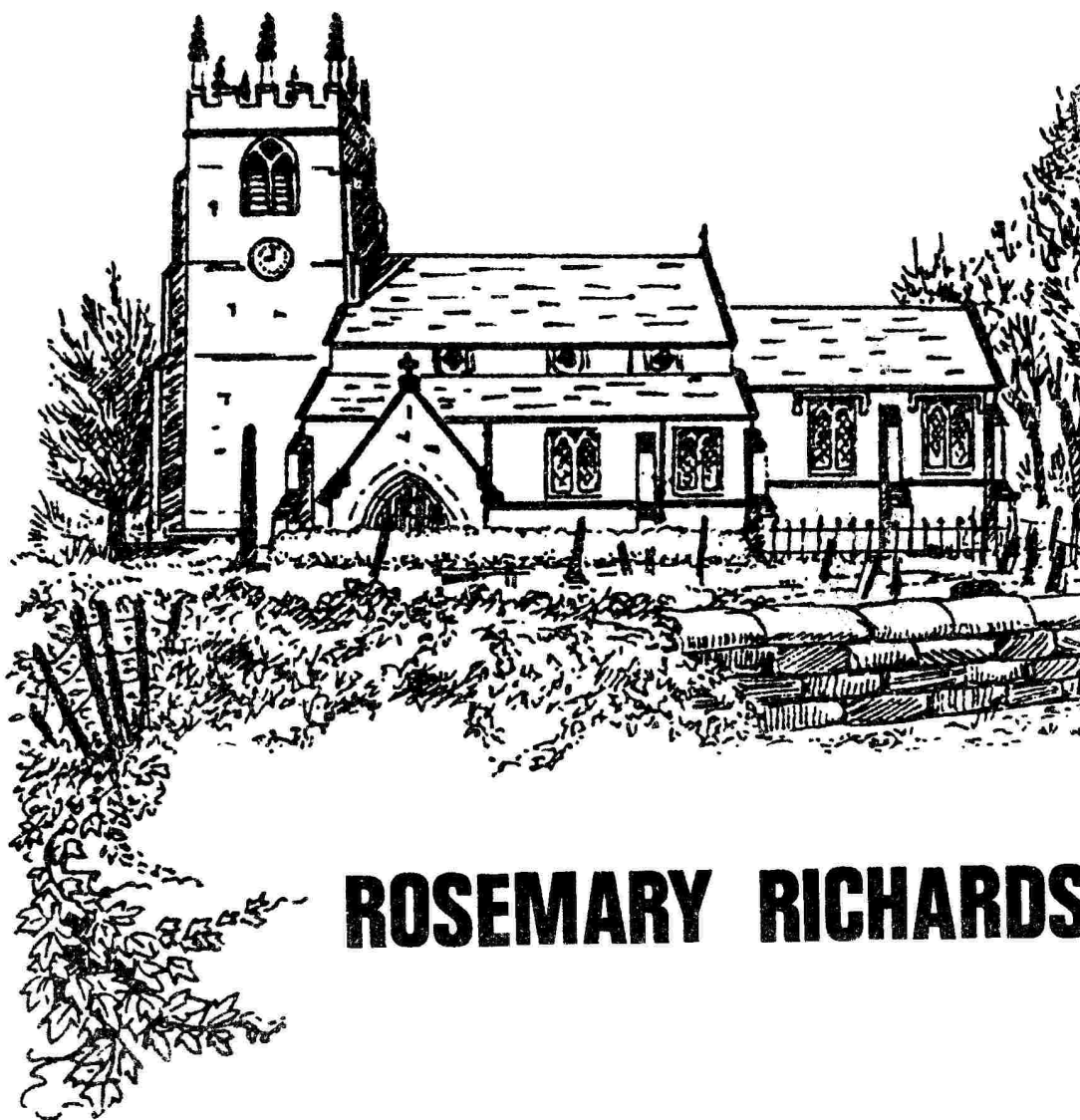


# **THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN BEIGHTON**



**ROSEMARY RICHARDS**

*Dedicated, with affection to the congregation  
of St. Mary the Virgin, Beighton*

All proceeds from the sale of this booklet will  
go to St. Mary's Church funds

*For the faith which cemented these stones and raised this church:*

*Father we thank you.*

*For the prayers of generations embedded in these walls:*

*Father we thank you.*

*In our worship; in our prayers; in our church; in our lives:*

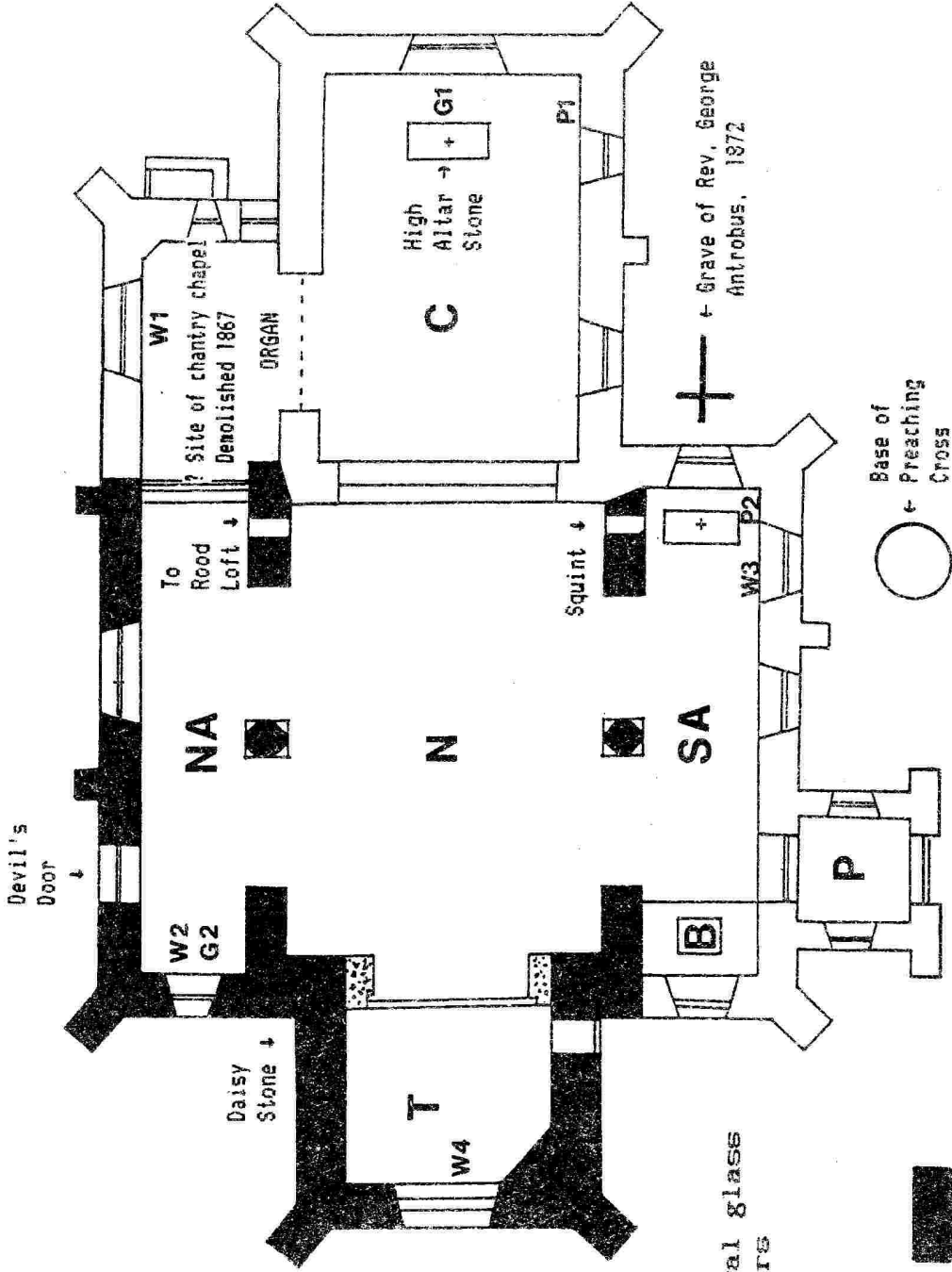
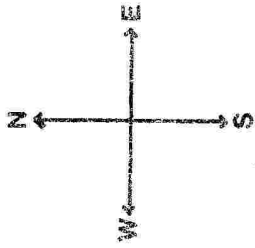
*Father we praise you. Amen.*

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Plan of The Church . . . . .	4
Introduction . . . . .	5
Architecture . . . . .	7
Dedication . . . . .	7
Restoration and Rebuilding . . . . .	8
Baptistry . . . . .	10
South Aisle . . . . .	10
Chancel . . . . .	11
Area behind the Organ . . . . .	14
Tower Arch . . . . .	15
North Aisle . . . . .	15
Nave Arcades . . . . .	16
Monuments . . . . .	16
Stained Glass . . . . .	17
Church Plate . . . . .	17
Registers etc. . . . .	18
Bellringers Chamber and Screen . . . . .	18
Bells and Church Clock . . . . .	18
Church Yard . . . . .	19
Vicarage . . . . .	20
Appendix I List of Vicars etc . . . . .	21
Appendix II Medieval Glass . . . . .	24
Appendix III Glossary . . . . .	25
Appendix IV References . . . . .	27

GROUND PLAN OF ST. MARY'S BEIGHTON  
(Not drawn to scale)



- P Porch
- B Baptistry
- T Tower
- NA North Aisle
- SA South Aisle
- N Nave
- C Chancel
- ? 13th Century
- 14/15th Century
- 1867/68
- W1-W4 Windows with medieval glass
- G1 G2 Medieval grave covers
- P1 P2 Medieval piscinas (restored 1867)

↑  
Grave of Thomas Rose  
1655

○ Base of  
Preaching  
Cross

↑ Grave of Rev. George  
Antrobus, 1872

## INTRODUCTION

In 1951 the Rev. H. Pickles, Vicar of St. Mary's, wrote a handbook called "The Story of the Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Beighton", as one of the features marking the eight hundredth anniversary of the consecration of the church in the twelfth century. Since then, various duplicated pieces of paper have been produced, but no proper guide or history has been available either for the congregation or for visitors. This booklet is an attempt to rectify this situation. It describes the church as it is now, including the changes that have taken place since the 1950s, and from an historical viewpoint, draws upon some documentary material not used by Fr. Pickles.

In order to help those readers not familiar with the layout of the church, I have included a plan (page 4) on which many features of interest mentioned in the text, are located. For those not familiar with the terminology of church history and architecture, there is a Glossary (Appendix III). All the words are printed in italics the first time they appear in the text. And finally, for those who want to delve further into the history of this fascinating church, I have included a list of the references I have used in preparing this booklet. (Appendix IV).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

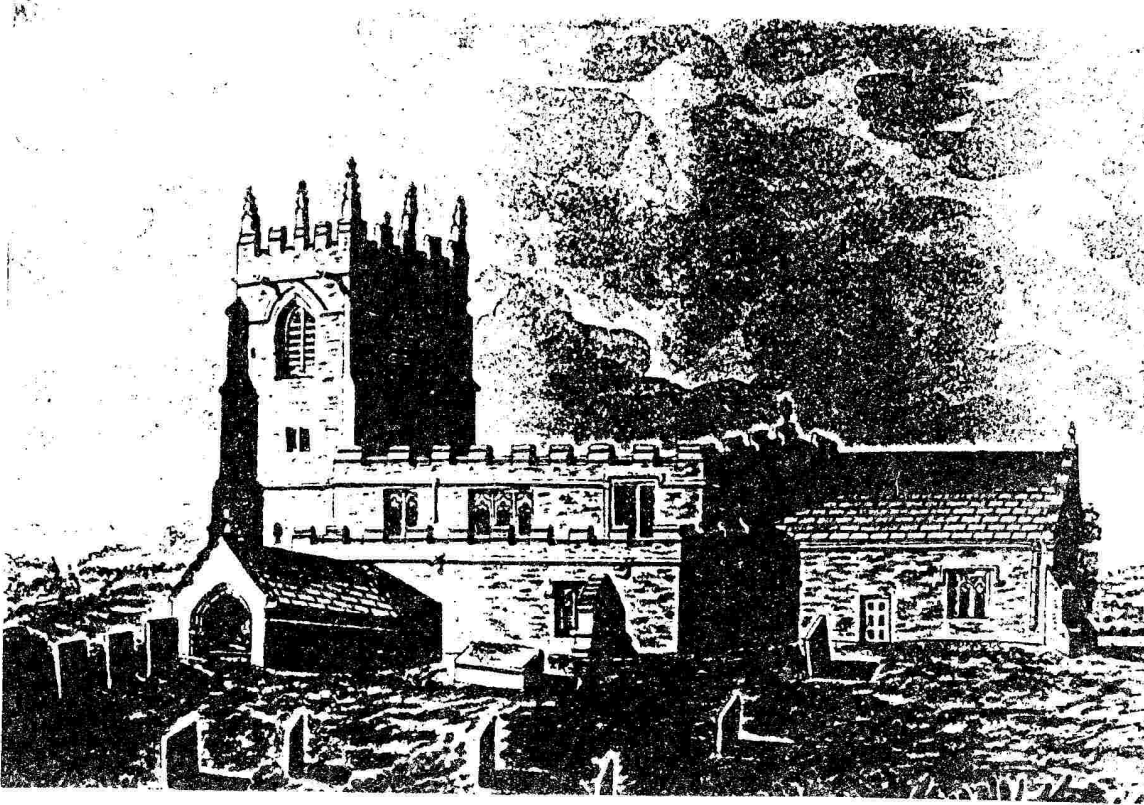
I should like to thank the following for their advice and help; to the Derbyshire County Library for permission to reproduce the drawing of St. Mary's from the Rawlins Manuscript; to the Rev. H.W. Cooper, Vicar of St. Mary and St. Rhadegunde, Whitwell, Isle of Wight, for information about St. Radegund including details of the 1987 celebrations in Poitiers; to Canon K.W.H. Felstead for information about peals rung on St. Mary's tower bells; to the Rev. H. Pickles for his advice and interest; to the Rev. John Vaughan for permission to reproduce some of his drawings featured in Fr. Pickles book; to Mr P.F. Ryder for permission to reproduce his drawing of the medieval grave cover in the north aisle; to the Rev. Michael Ridley and Mr Philip Antrobus for information about the Rev. George Antrobus and for permission to reproduce the portrait of George Antrobus from a painting in Mr Antrobus' possession; to Dr. David O'Connor for his survey of St. Mary's stained glass; and to English Heritage and to the Sheffield Archaeology Unit for advice on the architecture of the church.

Especially, I should like to record my thanks to Mrs Kay Battye for her continual encouragement and for all she has taught me about local history in the six years I have lived in Beighton; to my husband, Alan Richards, Vicar of Beighton, for his patience over this project and for permission to reproduce his drawing of St. Mary's, and to Richard Proctor and Roger Walters, whose assistance with the final production of this booklet have been invaluable.

I hope that I have done justice to all the kindness I have received, and to the beauty and fascinating history of this ancient parish church.

Beighton March 1991

ROSEMARY RICHARDS



**Beighton Church March 21st 1823  
Drawn by Rev. R . Randall Rawlins.**



**Beighton Church 1985  
Drawn by Rev. Alan Richards.**

## THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, BEIGHTON

Although surrounded by modern housing, Beighton is an ancient Anglo-Saxon settlement, mentioned in the Domesday Book, on the borders of Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Since 1967, though formerly in Derbyshire, Beighton has been in the County of South Yorkshire and the City of Sheffield. Before 1974, the ecclesiastical parish was in the Diocese of Derby, and before Derby Diocese was established at the beginning of this century, in the Diocese of Southwell. Up to 1884, Beighton was part of the old Diocese of Lichfield and is now in the Diocese of Sheffield.

The church is situated in an interesting defensive position high above the Ochre Dyke which flows in a valley below on the west and north side. Over the hill to the north lies the Shirebrook, part of the ancient border between the kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria, and in later times between the counties of Yorkshire and Derbyshire and the ecclesiastical provinces of York and Canterbury.

The ancient parish stretched to the Shirebrook in the north, out to Birley Moor in the west, to the Shortbrook in the south and to the River Rother in the East. It included the present communities of Beighton, Hackenthorpe, Sothall and Waterthorpe, and parts of Westfield, Frecheville and Owlthorpe.

### ARCHITECTURE

The present architecture of the church dates from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with extensive alterations to the *chancel* and south *aisle* in 1867.

### DEDICATION

There is no record in the Domesday Book of a church in Beighton, and as far as is known, St. Mary's was first built in about 1150 AD. This is based upon the discovery of a crumbling late Norman chancel arch in 1867. The church was originally dedicated to St. Radegund - a saint who came from Thuringia, an area of Europe which is now part of the new united Germany. The church is first mentioned in a deed undated but of the reign of Edward I (1272-1307), now among the Campbell Charters in the British Museum. The following abstract of this document can be found in the 'Descriptive Catalogue of Derbyshire Charters' by T. H. Jeayes, 1906:

"Grant, for fourscore marks, from Dom. Walter de Furneus, miles, to William de Furneus, his brother, of the manor of Becton; rent 1d, due on St. Radegund's Day in St. Radegund's Church, Becton, Witn. Dom. Thomas de Furnival, Dom. William de Cressi, Dom Thomas de Eywyle, milites, etc. Temp. Edw. I (Cmpb. iv, ii)."

St. Radegund was, at one time, married to King Clothaire of the Franks, one of the founders of the French nation. When Clothaire murdered her brother, St. Radegund left him and became a nun. She later founded a convent in Poitiers where she spent the rest of her life in prayer, study and good works. In 569 AD she obtained a large fragment of the true Cross for the convent from Emperor Justin II, which, it is said, inspired Bishop Venantius Fortunatus (c.530 - c.600) to write the hymn "Vexilla Regis". In the nineteenth century this was translated by J.M. Neale as the hymn 'The Royal Banners Forward Go', which is still included in some hymn books used today.

St. Radegund, who died on August 13th 587 AD is still considered an important saint in Poitiers. A festival was held in the city in 1987 to mark the fourteen hundredth anniversary of her death.

The exact date when the dedication of the church was changed from St. Radegund to St. Mary is unknown at the present time, but in the early sixteenth century wills of the inhabitants of Beighton, St. Radegund is referred to as the patron saint of the church. As late as 1557, Richard Treeton of Sothall in his will dated 7th April, asks to be "buried in the churche yard of V(ir)gyn Radegond at Beghton". There is a little modern statuette of St. Radegund on top of one of the pillars in the *nave*.

### LIST OF RECTORS, VICARS AND PATRONS

A list of Rectors, Vicars and *Patrons* is attached to one of the pillars in the nave, (See also Appendix I). Originally, the parish priest was the Rector of Beighton, but in the middle of the fifteenth century the *advowson* passed to Sir James Strangeways of East Harlsey in north-east Yorkshire who had married Elizabeth the eldest daughter and co-heiress of Philip, Lord Darcy, the previous Patron. In 1456 Sir James Strangeways gave the advowson to the Priory of Mount Grace at Ingleby in north-east Yorkshire. They appropriated the position of rector and the great *tithes* and appointed vicars instead. The first vicar to be appointed was John Tynker who died in 1480 and whose grave cover is now under the High Altar.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, the advowson was granted to Robert and William Swift of Rotherham and ultimately passed through inheritance to Lord Manvers. Since 1974, the Bishop of Sheffield has been the patron.

### RESTORATION AND REBUILDING: OCT. 1867 - DEC. 1868

St. Mary's has experienced many structural and liturgical changes over the centuries, and by the nineteenth century when the church was 700 years old, certain parts of the building, in particular the *chancel*, were in need of repair. When the Rev. George Antrobus was appointed vicar in 1865, he is said to have been appalled at the state of the church. George Antrobus was an energetic High Churchman who had spent fifteen years (from 1847 to 1862) as priest-in-charge of St. John's Withyham, near Crowborough in Sussex. St. John's was built in 1839 and was one of the earliest churches to be influenced by the *Oxford High Church Movement*.

In 1867, the whole of St. Mary's apart from the *sanctuary* was covered with box-pews allocated to specific parishioners, many of whom were irregular in their church attendance. The only free seats were behind the wall at the east end of the nave on the north side, near the entrance to the *Rood Loft*. It is also possible that the growing population of Beighton in the 1860s placed increasing pressure on the free seats.

In 1867-68 a massive rebuilding and restoration project took place - the walls of the chancel and the south *aisle* were taken down and rebuilt on the same foundations. The *clerestory* windows in the nave were removed, the pitch of the roof in both chancel and nave was raised, a *gallery* at the west end of the church was taken out, and the area now behind the organ was pulled down and rebuilt. During this rebuilding, the original late Norman chancel arch was discovered above the pointed fourteenth century chancel arch when the plaster was removed from the walls. The present nineteenth century chancel arch is based on the original, but is unlikely to be an exact copy as the original would have been slightly lower and narrower. The box-pews were removed and bench pews substituted which were open to all parishioners.

It would appear that the size of the church was not altered in any way as the internal measurements today are almost exactly the same as those recorded before 1868.



The alterations were the responsibility of Samuel Rollinson (1827-1891), a stone mason turned architect from Chesterfield who carried out work on several churches in north-east Derbyshire in the late nineteenth century. This restoration project did not take place without outraged letters to the local press, where complaints were made that the church was being destroyed. The following letter is an example, written to the Sheffield Daily Telegraph on 15th October 1867:-

“Sir, I am sorry to tell you Beighton Church is in the hands of the Philistines, and unless rescued at once will be demolished entirely. With your permission I will briefly describe this old church, and then your readers will be able to judge for themselves how wholly inexcusable this miscalled restoration is. The plan comprises tower, nave, north and south aisles, and chancel. The tower and nave are very fair specimens of fifteenth century work, and are in good preservation, while the chancel is rather earlier and built of rubble and much decayed. The nave and aisles are to be entirely pulled down and rebuilt in a totally different manner, after the noble yclept ‘Churchwarden Gothic’.

The rebuilding sacrifices a splendid old oak roof, with beautifully carved bosses, etc. The chancel is also to be pulled down. This perhaps requires rebuilding, but great care should be taken to preserve the fine east window, piscina, aumbry, and other interesting features. I am not an architect, so this letter cannot be inspired by professional jealousy, but is written in the hope of calling public attention, ere it be too late, to the aid of this ill-fated but interesting old church.

I am sir, yours faithfully,

TOMBSTONE.”

‘Tombstone’ whose identity is at present unknown, was unable to stop the work proceeding, but the controversy aroused was sufficient to be mentioned in Samuel Rollinson’s obituary twenty three years later, in the Derbyshire Times of 25th April 1891.

Lord Manvers, who as Patron and *Lay Rector*, contributed £500 towards the cost of the alterations, used his influence ‘directly and indirectly’ to assist the adoption of Samuel Rollinson’s plans for the alteration of the church at the Beighton Vestry Meeting held on 7th August 1867. He did this, in particular, by requesting in writing that two unenthusiastic parishioners, Jarvis Radley and George Green, gave their support to George Antrobus. Mr. Thomas Dunn of the Sheffield Coal Company who leased Birley Vale Pit from Lord Manvers, also attended the Vestry Meeting to add his weight, proposed the motion adopting the plans, and gave £100 to the restoration fund.

The additional expenditure of about £2500 was raised by the vicar and parishioners. A large proportion is said to have been contributed by George Antrobus himself. As far as is known, the accounts of the Restoration Committee have not survived.

After about fourteen months’ work, the reopening of the church by the Right Rev. Bishop Trower, acting on behalf of the Bishop of Lichfield, was reported in the Derbyshire Times of 12th December 1868. The church was crowded for the occasion, and Lord and Lady Manvers were among the many guests who attended the service and the celebration lunch held afterwards.



**The Church in about 1840**

An old water-colour of the church dating from about 1840 (above), was given to the church by Miss A.M. Erskine, granddaughter of the Hon Thomas Erskine (Vicar 1821-59). It gives a very good idea of what the church must have looked like externally from the fifteenth century until the 1867 restoration. The original now hangs on a pillar in the nave.

### **BAPTISTRY**

The font dates from 1867. The stained glass in the *baptistry* window and the marble columns of the font were donated in 1867 by Mr. Thomas Oakden, a Beighton resident. The stained glass may be the work of Messrs Drury & Smith, glaziers, of Sheffield. A wooden font was used in the early nineteenth century, and a very old font which had been used for a long time as a water container in the churchyard was buried there by George Antrobus in about 1868.

At present, a small portable stone bowl, which can be found in the chancel, is used for baptisms. This dates from about the late eighteenth century, is inscribed with the letters 'J.B.' and an indistinguishable date.

The parish chest is made of oak, and is thought to date from the nineteenth century.

### **SOUTH AISLE**

The south aisle was rebuilt in 1867 re-using the original stone blocks. The 1840 picture of the church shows only one window in the south wall of the aisle. However, two windows were inserted in 1867, and these contain earlier re-used stone, some of which must have come from the dismantled clerestory.

### **St. Michael's Chapel**

The chapel at the east end of the south aisle was dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel in about 1941. The wooden altar was built in the joiners' shop at Brookhouse Colliery, which, until the pit closed in 1986, also provided oil for the miner's lamp hanging in front of the altar.

The *niche* for a saint which now contains a statue of the Virgin Mary and the *piscina* on the south wall were restored in 1867, their presence indicating the existence of a chapel in this area during the Middle Ages.

### **Squint**

In the wall between the nave and the south aisle at the east end, there is a large square opening which was filled with rubble and stones until cleaned out in 1867. At present, its original function is unknown, but it is thought either to have been some sort of *squint*, or perhaps a large *ambry*.

### **Window**

The window at the east end of St. Michael's Chapel is dedicated to the Rev. George Antrobus who died on November 15th 1872 and is buried in the churchyard nearby. The stained glass in the window dates from the same period.

### **Altar Frontal**

The modern green altar frontal was designed and embroidered in 1989 by Mrs. Mirabel Richards, mother of Rev. Alan Richards, vicar 1984-91.

### **CHANCEL**

The old chancel, 'built of rubble and much decayed', and perhaps the oldest part of the church before 1867, was pulled down during the 1867 restoration and rebuilt on the same foundations with a higher pitched roof and gable end. Newly excavated stone from a local quarry owned by Lord Manvers was used by Messrs. Ash and Clayton of Sheffield who were responsible for all the building work on the church. Some re-used stone can, however, be seen in the *tracery* of the two windows on the south side. There was originally a priest's door in the south wall of the old chancel, which was not replaced.

### **Chancel Arch**

The present chancel arch was built by Samuel Rollinson in 1867. It is said to be based on the original late Norman chancel arch, traces of which were discovered in a deteriorating condition in 1867 above the medieval pointed chancel arch when the plaster was removed. The Norman arch was probably lower and narrower than the nineteenth century copy, but it was still a large feature of the church. Examination of a ground-floor plan of the church dating from 1815 and including a scale, has revealed that the distance between the columns of the chancel arch is the same today as it was before 1867, so it would appear that Samuel Rollinson built his arch on the foundations of the medieval arch.

The medieval arch, which was probably built in the late fourteenth century at the same time as the *nave arcade*, was described by Richard Randall Rawlins when he visited St. Mary's in the early nineteenth century:-

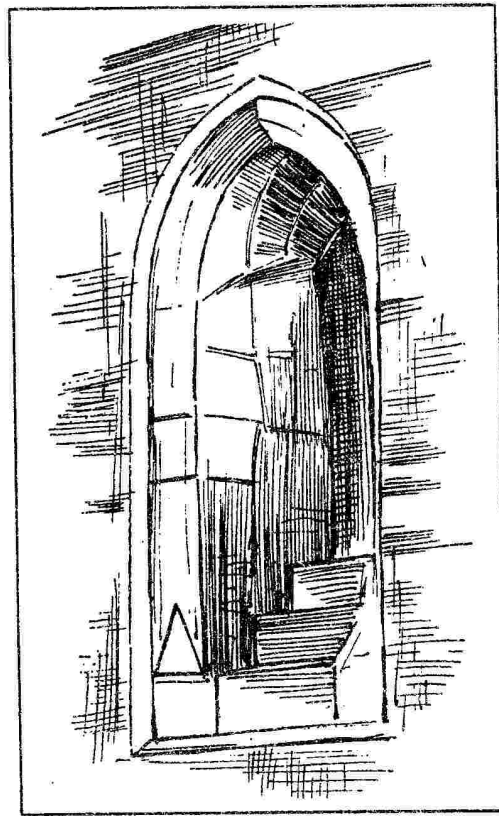
“The chancel is entered through a pointed arch, supported on *corbels* resembling those in the body of the fabric”.

### Rood

The *Rood* over the chancel arch shows the figure of Christ on the Cross with St. Mary and St. John the Evangelist on either side. This was dedicated at Easter 1969 in memory of Fr. Paul Ashwin (Vicar of Beighton 1932-39) and Fr. Reginald Redfern (Vicar of Beighton 1939-46). It is the work of Sir Ninian Comper (1863-1960) and came from the Church of All Saints, Emscote, Warwick.

### Rood Loft

There was a *rood screen* and loft in the church before the Reformation. The remains of stone steps can be seen in the raised opening in the north wall of the nave. The steps must have descended into the area behind the organ. The Derbyshire Times of 12th December 1868 states that this doorway was found and opened during the 1867 restoration.



Remains of the Rood Steps in the north wall of the Nave

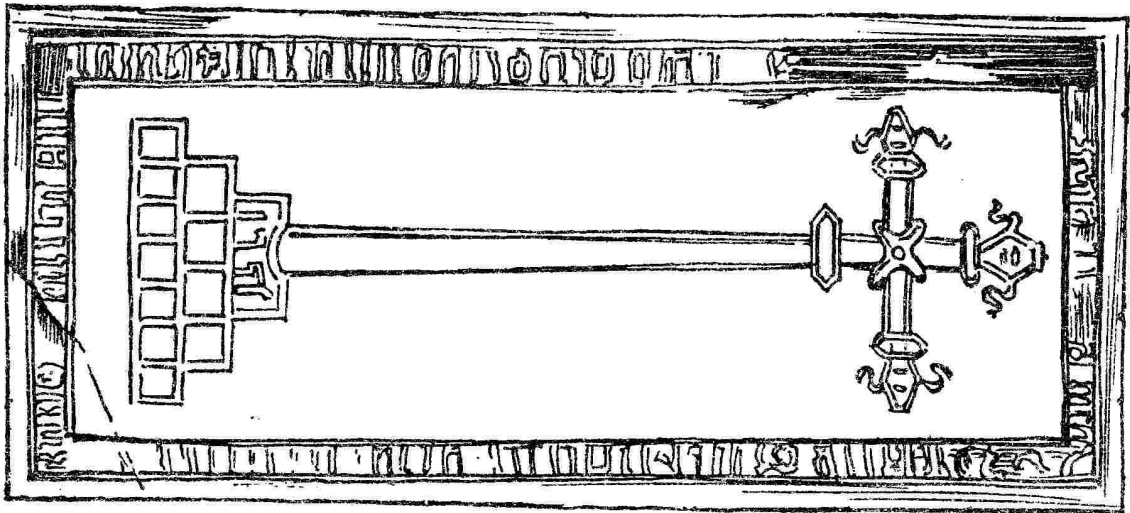
### High Altar

In about 1964 the high altar was moved forward from the east wall of the church and placed above the grave cover of John Tynker, first vicar of Beighton who died in 1480, in such a way as to obscure much of the inscription on the cover. According to a recent inspection the inscription as far as it can be deciphered is as follows:

“(Orate) pro anima domini”  
(Joha)nnis Tynker quondam perpetui vicarii de Begh(ton)  
corpus.....et cuius anime (prop)icietur  
deus Anno domini millmo quadringentisimo octog(esimo).

(Pray for the soul of master John Tynker, formerly  
perpetual vicar of Beighton....body....and may God have  
mercy on his soul. The year of our Lord 1480...)

John Tynker’s grave cover has been moved several times since 1480. John Higden, vicar of Beighton, who died in 1613, in his will dated 28th January 1613 asks “that I be buried under the tombe stone wher Mr. Tynker lyeth buried in the chancell at Beightone who was buried 1480”. The stone was still in the chancel when Richard Bassano visited St. Mary’s on an heraldic visitation in about 1710. Before the 1867 restoration, the stone was standing upright in the vestry which was in the area now behind the organ. George Antrobus then placed the grave cover on the north side of the high altar where it remained at least until the end of the *incumbency* of the Rev. Harold Pickles (Vicar of Beighton 1946-57). When it was removed to its present position is not quite clear, but it would appear to be in the 1960s.



**John Tynker's Grave Cover, now under the High Altar**

The high altar stone itself was found during the 1867 restoration buried under the area at the end of the north aisle which is now behind the organ. This may indicate that it was originally the altar stone of a *chantry* chapel which was possibly sited here before the Reformation. The stone is a pre-reformation altar stone still bearing the five consecration crosses, possibly dating from the twelfth century, but probably later.

#### **Piscina and Aumbry**

These were restored and rebuilt during the 1867 restoration.

#### **East Window**

This is probably a nineteenth century reconstruction of the fourteenth century window in the old chancel but placed higher in the east end wall of the church. The nineteenth century stained glass in the east window is dedicated to the memory of Marietta Stone who died in infancy on 26th August 1868 and Agnes Wilson, her sister, 1864-1881.

#### **Reredos**

The *reredos*, showing Jesus Christ with his disciples at the Last Supper, was placed in the church in the 1960s during the incumbency of Fr. Colin Nield (Vicar of Beighton 1964-68). It is said to have come from St. Anne's, Netherthorpe, in Sheffield, which was closed in 1964.



**Reredos: The Last Supper**

Its origins are unknown at present, but expert opinion has described it as Italian alabaster, possibly nineteenth century Victorian. As far as is known the reredos was brought to St. Michael and All Angels, Neepsend, Sheffield, during the nineteenth century. This church was opened in 1867 and closed in 1952.

### Organ

The present organ was built by Messrs Brindley and Foster of Sheffield in about 1887 and is said to have been moved to St. Mary's in 1928 when it was completely renovated. The organ had a major overhaul in 1989 and was restored at a cost of £5,500 by David Watson of Sheffield.

### Choir

From the plan attached to a faculty of 17th September 1867, it seems as though choir stalls were introduced by George Antrobus. Certainly a choir from Beighton assisted by choirs from neighbouring churches, amounting to some fifty men and boys, sang at his funeral which was described as being 'choral throughout'. The stalls were removed from the chancel in about 1966.

### Pulpit and Lectern

The pulpit dates from the 1867 restoration and the eagle *lectern* is dedicated to Lily Jennings who died on 18th January 1954.

### AREA BEHIND THE ORGAN

This is one of the most interesting areas of the church and may be the site of the chantry chapel, apparently dedicated to St. Mary, which was destroyed at the Reformation. In the Chantry Rolls the following is recorded for Beighton:

'BEYGHTON' - The chauntrye founded by dyverse persons wh gave lands unto Or Ladyes alter for fyndyng a priste to syng or saye masse daylye and other devyne service cvi<sup>s</sup> iij<sup>d</sup> clere ciiij<sup>s</sup> x<sup>d</sup> besyds v<sup>s</sup> iij<sup>d</sup> rente resolute. Hen. Jervis chauntrye prist stock iij<sup>s</sup> xi<sup>d</sup>.

Some details have survived of Richard Ashe, one of the *chantry priests*, from the inventory of his goods and personal effects taken at the time of his death in January 1541. He appears to have been a very grand gentleman who among other items owned a 'cardynall hatte', three gowns valued at 10/-, 5/-, and 3/4d respectively and also a 'buckslyn cotte'.

Francis Wortley, the patron in the middle of the sixteenth century seems to have acquired these chantry lands, for at his death in 1583 the inquisition gives him certain lands and property and 'a parcell of a chantry of St. Mary at Beighton, held of the Queen'.

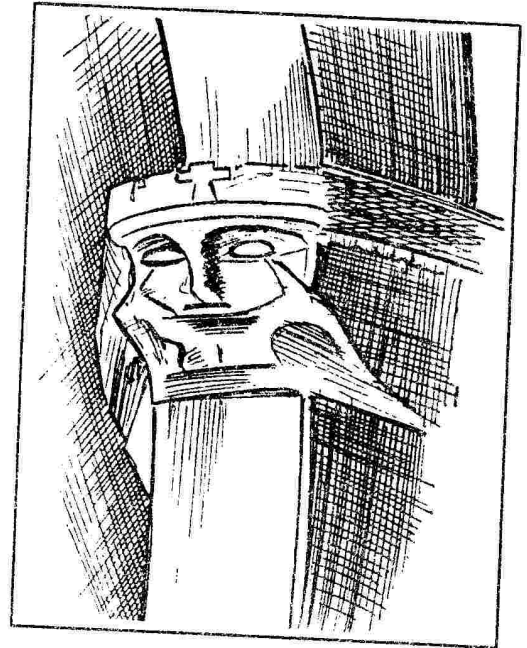
Sometime after the Reformation this area was separated off from the rest of the church and was known as the 'Linacre Quire' or Linacre family pew. The Linacres were a well known Derbyshire family, originally from Brampton. They do not appear to have lived in Beighton after the seventeenth century.

By 1815 the medieval arch leading from the Linacre Quire into the chancel was blocked up, and this area was used as a vestry although it was known as a chapel or chantry well into the nineteenth century. In 1867, the arch was unblocked,

demolished and a new arch built, leaving space for an organ. The vestry was pulled down and rebuilt as a vestry proper, with a door at the east end, and it was proposed that some sort of heating system be installed underneath, presumably to make the church more comfortable for worship. A screen of oak divided the vestry from the north aisle.

### TOWER ARCH

There is some variation of opinion over the age of this arch but it is generally thought now to be the oldest original piece of architecture in the church, dating possibly from the thirteenth century. The capitals of the arch are characterised by a decoration in the Romanesque tradition and by a human head with a widely distended mouth. The carvings are not identical. The line of an early high-pitched roof can be seen on the wall above the arch at the west end of the nave. Marks in the stonework caused by the western gallery erected in 1722 and taken down in 1867 are also visible.



Carving on capital of Tower Arch, now partially obscured

### NORTH AISLE

This part of the church dates from the fifteenth century and, apart from the area behind the organ, was largely unaffected by the 1867 restoration. There are fifteenth century windows at the west end and in the north wall of the aisle; although the latter has been extensively repaired, probably in the eighteenth century. The repair can be seen more clearly on the outside of the church.

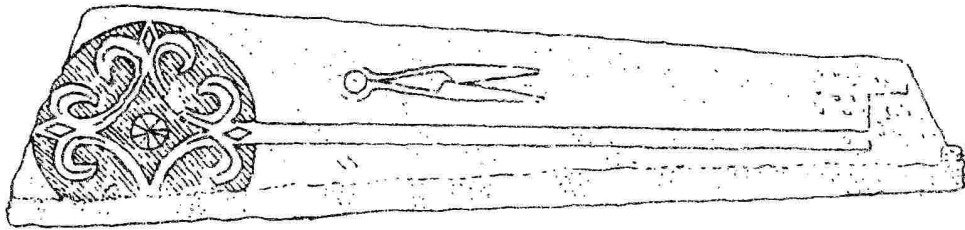
#### North Door/Devil's Door

This door has been blocked up at one time and re-opened again as a smaller exit, possibly in 1867. This can be seen both from the inside and outside of the church. The fourteenth century hood may have been moved from somewhere else - possibly the pre-1867 porch - as the stone is weathered and the masonry around the hood is disturbed. This can be seen more clearly on the outside of the church.

The north door of a church used to be known as the Devil's Door. It was kept open during baptisms to let out any evil spirits in the child. Most of the Devil's doors were blocked up as times became less superstitious.

#### Medieval Grave Cover

This is now a part of the window sill of the west window of the north aisle and has recently been dated c.1250-1350. The shears are a common grave symbol and can indicate either a male or female grave, though in Derbyshire it is thought they usually indicate a chief shepherd or tradesman.



### Medieval Grave Cover

In the past, this stone appears sometimes to have been confused with a memorial which disappeared before 1867, to Edward Bowcette Esq. (or Dowcette or Richard Bosville) and Johanna his wife. This was dated 1501 so the earlier dating of the grave cover makes this connection unlikely.

### NAVE ARCADES

Both the north and south nave arcades probably date from the late fourteenth century. The centre pillars contain many filled-in holes which may be the marks of some medieval partition across the middle of the church, or perhaps they are connected with the box pews which were removed in 1867.

### MONUMENTS

At the present time there are not many old gravestones and memorial plaques in St. Mary's, and judging from the opinions of earlier writers, this has always been the case at least during the last two centuries. In 1815 the church was re-pewed and a new floor laid, and it is possible that some old gravestones were lost at that time. In 1867 a large amount of gravel was removed from the church and the floor lowered to its medieval level, but George Antrobus and Samuel Rollinson do appear to have been scrupulous about replacing memorials existing in 1867 and mentioned by earlier writers.

Apart from the two grave covers already referred to, two gravestones exist on the north side of the chancel, virtually under the organ seat. One of these is very worn but evidence suggests it almost certainly refers to the Jermyns, a wealthy family who, during the eighteenth century, owned property in Hackenthorpe, Eckington and Drakehouse in Beighton.

The second stone was recorded by Richard Randall Rawlins when he visited the church in the early nineteenth century. The inscription is as follows:

"Affection consecrates this stone in memory of Martha Marshall late of Waterthorpe who departed this life Nov. 19th 1818 aged 81. Anthony Dawson Gent whose ashes rest at Sandwich in Kent. Also in memory of Hannah Dawson relict of the above Anthony Dawson who left this vale of tears, resting in hope through the merits of her blessed Redeemer of a joyful resurrection with those so dearly loved on earth; in the mansions of eternal bliss - who departed this life the 29th day of December 1824 aged 57 years. And 4 children who died in infancy

Give Joy or Grief, give Ease or Pain  
 Take Husband, child away  
 But let me meet them all again,  
 In thine eternal day"



Right under the organ itself are two gravestones which appear to be eighteenth century in character. Although they are impossible to identify they may refer to members of the Drake family, including John Drake, Vicar of Beighton, died 4th February 1763, as these memorials are mentioned by earlier writers. On the north wall of the chancel there is a memorial to The Rev. Edward Reynolds M.A. Vicar of Beighton 1872-1889, and on the south wall a brass plaque to Henry, son of Rev. R. Stewart Hare, Vicar of Beighton 1889-1911, who died March 10th, 1903 aged 14 years.

Part of a gravestone can be seen on the floor just in front of the pulpit. The inscription is in Latin and appears to refer to someone who died in November 1741, possibly aged 64. At the present time it has been difficult to identify the gravestone with any certainty but it may refer to Marmaduke Drake, Vicar of Beighton, who was buried on 2nd December 1741.

On the south wall of the nave beside the 'squint' hang two brasses. The inscriptions are as follows:

1. "Here lyeth the body of M(ist)er William Jessoppe Vicar of Beighton who departed this life Aprill the 18th 1667 haveinge given to the said parish fifty shilines a yeare for ever."

2. "Here lieth intered the body of M Robert Jessoppe of Waterthorp Gen<sup>t</sup> who departed this life May the 4th Anno Dom 1753 aged 67 years."

The plaque commemorating William Jessoppe is mentioned by Bassano in 1710, but both brasses disappeared in the eighteenth century. They were found by the Rev. A.B. Maughan (vicar of Beighton 1911- 32) in a second-hand shop in Whitby, and restored to the church.

Mr William Jessoppe, who was appointed by the Parliamentary Commission, was vicar of Beighton during the Commonwealth, and in his will dated 18th April 1667 left property in trust, the rents to go towards the provision of schooling and the relief of the poor in the parish.

In the bellringing chamber there is a memorial to John Marshall, died January 21st 1791, and a large wooden board dating from the early nineteenth century giving a list of the benefactors to the poor of the parish, and to Beighton School. This group of trusts is now known as the Beighton Charities. William Jessoppe is amongst the original contributors.

### STAINED GLASS

Most of the stained glass in the church dates from the nineteenth century including the fragments in the clerestories and in the north and south aisles. However, interspersed with these fragments are pieces of medieval glass dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which are described in more detail in Appendix II. The medieval pieces are not necessarily in their original situation. They are said to have been found in the rubble of the walls during the 1867 restoration, when they were placed in their present positions.

### CHURCH PLATE

The earliest pieces of church plate date from 1868 and 1869. The silver offertory plate has 'Beighton Parish Church, Christmas Day 1868' inscribed on the base, and

the silver chalice and paten both have 'Beighton Parish Church 15th January 1869' inscribed on the base. A 'plated' flagon, chalice and paten, and salver of pewter, recorded by Samuel Butler, Archdeacon of Derby, in his 1823 visitation, have disappeared.

## REGISTERS AND OTHER DEPOSITED PARISH RECORDS

Many parish records relating to St. Mary's including the old registers are held by the Sheffield Record Office. The first surviving register dates from 1653 and is interesting because it records the civil and ecclesiastical changes imposed by the Commonwealth. Births, including still-births are recorded in the register but apart from two isolated instances no baptisms are recorded until after the Restoration and the re-introduction of the Prayer Book in 1662. The sixteenth and early seventeenth century registers have not survived.

During the Commonwealth, at least until 1657, banns of marriage were published in St. Mary's but couples from Beighton were married in a civil ceremony, conducted mainly by the Mayor of Chesterfield.

Apart from the year 1764/65, the Churchwardens' Accounts only exist from 1825.

## BELLRINGING CHAMBER AND SCREEN

In 1951 a bellringing chamber with a glass screen was constructed in the upper part of the tower arch to commemorate the eight hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the church. As far as is known, the bells were rung from the ground floor before that date.

## BELLS AND CHURCH CLOCK

There have been tower bells in the church since at least 1764. The Churchwardens' Accounts for that year include entries for purchase of bell ropes and a payment to the ringers to ring in the New Year. In 1773 a restoration of some sort took place, and by 1784 there must have been at least six bells because a *peal* of *Minor* in seven *methods* was rung on Shrove Tuesday of that year. In the *Leicester and Nottingham Journal* of 13th March 1784 the following entry is recorded:

"On Shrove Tuesday last was rung by the society of ringers at Beighton, in the county of Derby, the following six bell peals, making in the whole 5040 changes in 2 hours 59 minutes, viz: Violet; Tulip; Primrose; Cheapside Bob; College Trebles; College Pleasure; Oxford Treble Bob."

In all, five peals of 5040 changes were rung at St. Mary's between 1784 and 1865 which is most unusual for a church with only six bells. The visitation of Rev. Samuel Butler, Archdeacon of Derby, in 1823 recorded six bells with a *tenor* of about fifteen hundredweights. In 1837 the bells were recast and hung in the present wooden frame by W. & J. Taylor, then at Oxford. In 1919 the bells were re-hung in the same frame, also by Taylors. The bells have been rung irregularly during the twentieth century, but in 1987 after fifteen years silence, the bells were restored to a ringable condition through a gift given in memory of Dr. Leonard de Dombal, who was a general practitioner in Beighton from 1936 to 1968.

The bells are in the key of G, and the tenor weighs just over nine hundredweights. At the present time the bells ring out every Sunday morning for worship but unless further work is undertaken they are likely to become silent yet again.

The present church clock and chimes were installed in 1920 in memory of those Beighton residents who died in World War I, 1914-18. The memorial itself is on the wall of the north aisle of the church. The clock was electrified by W. M. Potts and Sons, Leeds in 1965.

## CHURCHYARD

The Churchyard was extended in 1858 by purchasing land from Lord Manvers which is now on the east side of the path from the *lychgate*. In 1899 another extension took place after the demolition of the old vicarage (see below). The churchyard is now only used for burials when existing graves are re-opened and for the interment of cremated ashes. Beighton Cemetery on School Road, which received its first burial in October 1930, is available for those who wish to be buried locally.

## Porch

The church porch was built in 1867 to replace the earlier porch demolished during the 1867 restoration.

## Preaching Cross

The base of what may be the old preaching cross can be seen by the porch near the wall of the south aisle. When Bassano visited the church in 1710, in the churchyard he recorded a cross of three steps with a high standing stone. By 1867 only two of the steps remained.

## Tower

The tower, the west window and the belfry windows probably date from the late fourteenth century. Some evidence of the foundations of an earlier tower are said to have been found during repair work in 1966. A carving of a large daisy can be seen on the north side of the tower about one quarter of the way up. This may be a *mason's mark*, a *practice stone* or a *guild symbol*. A small piece of the line of the flat nave roof removed in 1867 can be seen on the east side of the tower especially from the south of the church. Although the tower has been re-roofed at some time, the cross beams in the belfry ceiling are hand-hewn and the wooden nails are clearly visible.

## Lychgate

The lychgate and wall with memorial plaque were built in 1959 to commemorate those killed in World War II, 1939-1945.

## Graves

The oldest graves are immediately to the south, west and east of the church and reflect the geographical distribution of the old parish. The oldest grave in the churchyard belongs to Thomas Rose of Sothall who was buried on 9th May 1655. This is situated under the hawthorn bush by the path to the west side of the tower. The *table top graves* on the south side of the church include many of the prominent members of the parish in the eighteenth century such as the Shirts and the Jessoppes, and the scythe and sicklemakers of Hackenthorpe - the Taylors, the Inkersalls and the Staniforths.

On the north side of the church by the path leading to Tye Road is the grave of Lucretia Smith, Queen of the Gypsies, a local character who died in 1844.

## VICARAGES

There have been three known vicarages in Beighton. The present vicarage, in Tynker Avenue, was built in 1984 and is about a quarter of a mile from the church. From the beginning of this century the vicar lived in the large house on Beighton High Street opposite the Manor Farm House

Before 1899, the vicarage was on what is now the south side of the churchyard towards the church hall. From the Ordnance Survey map of 1875, it would appear to have been at about right angles to the church tower and to have stretched back to the path which now runs from the lychgate to the church. There are no graves in this part of the churchyard before the turn of the century.



Rev. George Antrobus  
Vicar of Beighton  
1865-72

## APPENDIX I

### Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Beighton List of Known Rectors, Vicars and Patrons

Rectors	Patrons
12th century and most of the 13th century: no records available. Late 13th century: Richard, clerk of Bectona Geoffrey de Bectona; (end of century) John de Bectona	
1316 Bartholomew de Cotyngham	The Lord Roger (Fienes)
1349 Geoffrey de Haddon	John Darcy
1356 William de Fereby	The King (as guardian of heir of John Darcy)
? Richard de Beuley	
1367 Richard de Raundes	The King
1374 Richard de Kyngeston	Philip Darcy
1396 John del More	Philip Darcy
1429 Roger Wyresdale	Philip Darcy
1435 Thomas Warkesley	The King
1442 Matthew Lachford	James Strangeways
1456 William Orwell (Collated by Bishop)	Prior of Mountgrace
<b>Vicars</b>	<b>Patrons</b>
? John Tynker (Buried at Beighton 1480)	Prior of Mountgrace
1490 Thomas Atkinson	Robert, Prior of Mountgrace
1535? Leonard Lynley (died 1538, Buried in chancel) †	
1538 Thomas Rainshaw	
1543 Ralph Royez	The King
1557 William Wordsworth	Robert Swift
? Nicholas Harvey	
1567 George Harvey	Francis Wortley
1603 John Higdon (died 1613., Buried in chancel) †	
1638 Edward Haslam	Robert, Earl of Kingston-upon-Hull
1640 John Hunne	Robert, Earl of Kingston-upon-Hull
1650 William Jessop (died 18th April 1667. Buried at Beighton)	Appointed by Parliamentary Commission
1667 Thomas Goold (buried at Beighton 1st March 1674)	Sir Samuel Jones (during minority of Henry Pierpoint)
1674 Henry Burdyn	
1690 Thomas Jackson	S. Pierpoint
1703 Marmaduke Drake (buried at Beighton 2nd Dec. 1741) †	
1733 John Drake	Evelyn, Duke of Kingston

1745	John Drake Jnr. (buried at Beighton 7th Feb. 1763)	Duke of Kingston
1763	Thomas Purcell (buried at Beighton 29th July 1764)	Duke of Kingston
1764	Joseph Meller	Duke of Kingston
1769	Richard Morton **	Duke of Kingston
1821	Hon. Thomas Erskine (buried at Beighton 5th Jan. 1859)	Earl Manvers
1859	George Hardolph Eyre	Earl Manvers
1865	George Antrobus (buried at Beighton 21st Nov. 1872)	Earl Manvers
1872	Edward Reynolds	Earl Manvers
1889	Robert Stewart Hare	Earl Manvers
1911	Andrew Brown Maughan	Bishop of Southwell
1932	Paul Basil Honeybourne Ashwin	Bishop of Derby
1939	Ernest Reginald Redfern	Bishop of Derby
1946	Harold Pickles	Bishop of Derby
1957	William Gilbert Potts	Bishop of Derby
1964	Colin Nield	Bishop of Derby
1969	Robert Edwin Michael Vickers (died 1st Dec. 1975. Ashes interred at Beighton)	Bishop of Derby
1976	Alan Roy Billings	Bishop of Sheffield
1978	Alan Gardner Livesley	Bishop of Sheffield
1984	Alan Grenville Richards	Bishop of Sheffield
1991		

\*\* Perhaps the most amazing Vicar of Beighton was Richard Morton (1769-1821). During his 52 years as vicar he was non-resident and officiated at only fifteen marriages and not a single funeral or baptism. For twenty five years of his incumbency all the work appears to have been done by Joseph Dixon, his faithful curate.

Source: List to 1939 compiled by Rev. E.R. Redfern (Vicar of Beighton 1939-46) and published in Beighton Parish Magazine Jan. 1941. A framed copy is attached to a pillar in the Church. Additional information concerning deaths/burials is inserted where marked: (†)

### Chantry Priests

Richard Ashe (died 1541 was buried in the Church)

### Assistant Curates

1763	Christopher Alderson	1873	Bennett Blakeway
1767	Richard Barton	1874-6	David Melville
1772	Nicholas Kirkby	1876-7	H. R. Rolfe
1774	Jno. Cundall	* 1879	Robert Gray
1777	J. Wolstenholme	* 1880	A. J. Binnie
1779	George Brewer	* 1880	G. N. Merrefield
1786	Francis Cresswell	* 1881	C. T. Buchanan
1787	Isaac Johnson	1892-5	Basil Wilkinson Peacock
1794	Joseph Bromehead	1895-6	W. Benson Bellis
1796	William Alderson	1896-1901	James McIvor Stephens
1797-1821	Joseph Dixon	1902-3	A. Body
1832-4	Urban Smith	1907-11	Edward William Lumley
1834-6	Thomas Hirst	1912-13	Frederick William Kingston
1836-8	Gregory Bateman	1913-14	Thomas Daniel Rees
1838	P. Bowen	1914-15	Ll. D.A. Rees
1838-50	Thomas Mountain	1915-18	Ernest Lionel Freer
1850-2	George J. Garton	1932-33	W. Sambridge
1852-53	C. M. Preston	1933-35	Frederick Rothwell Bolton
1853-55	T. Eversfield	1937-39	Frederick Hugh Mountney
1856-7	W.H. Whitworth	1966-69	Geoffrey Harold Sidaway
1857-8	Samuel P. Purser	1985-88	John Gilliver (Non- stipendiary minister)
1864	Thomas Ault	1989-	Susan Katherine Proctor
1865	Chas S. Badeley		
1867	George A. Smallwood		
1868-72	F. W. Sankey		

\* In the case of these four names, the registers do not make it clear whether they were Assistant Curates or Officiating Ministers for several months.

Source: (1763-1939) Research by Rev. E.R. Redfern, (Vicar of Beighton 1939-46) published in Beighton Parish Magazine March 1941.

## APPENDIX II

### MEDIEVAL GLASS

The information on the medieval glass is taken from a survey of the church glass by Dr. David O'Connor of the History of Art Department at Manchester University, who visited St. Mary's in November 1990.

#### Area behind the Organ

This area of the church contains mainly nineteenth century glass, but in the two central *tracery lights* of the window on the north wall, are two *roundels* both 15cms in diameter in white and yellow stain dating from 1325-1350. They show various symbols associated with the Trinity, such as clover leaves and interlocking triangles.

#### North Aisle: West Window

The central tracery light of this window consists wholly of medieval fragments apart from the white margin. The right hand and bottom pieces have been inserted inside out so the colour is on the outside of the window. Apart from the top left-hand piece bearing the inscription, the glass dates from 1325-1350 and is described as yellow, white and yellow stain and acorn and oak-leaf grisaille. The top left-hand piece dates from the fifteenth century and the inscription reads:

‘..o statu he(n)r ...’ Originally this would have read  
‘Orate pro bono statu henrici .....’ ‘Pray for the good state of Henry ....’

The glass was dedicated while this gentleman was still alive, otherwise the inscription would have read: ‘Orate pro anima henrici ....’ ‘Pray for the soul of Henry ....’ To whom the inscription refers is not known at the present time.

#### South Aisle: Window nearest Side Altar

The left-hand tracery light contains a small piece of fifteenth century canopy work in white and yellow stain. The central light is entirely nineteenth century, and the right-hand light contains fifteenth century foliage work in white and yellow stain.

#### Bellringing Chamber

In the tracery lights, the central roundel in pot-metal yellow dates from 1325-1350. The top and bottom pieces on either side of the roundel are possibly pieces of medieval glass, which may date from the time the tower was built at about the end of the fourteenth century. These pieces of glass are in white and yellow stain, and it is thought they are still in their original positions in the window.

Apart from a tiny triangle of fifteenth century glass in white and yellow stain on the far left, the rest of the stained glass in this window dates from the nineteenth century.



## APPENDIX III

### GLOSSARY

ADVOWSON	The right of appointing a clergyman to a parish.
AISLE	An extension of the church either side of the nave.
AUMBRY	A recess or cupboard used in medieval times to keep sacred vessels or books in.
BAPTISTRY	The part of the church where the service of baptism takes place.
CHANCEL	The area of the church east of the nave. Normally separated from the nave by the Chancel Arch.
CHANTRY	A chapel built to sing or say mass for the souls of its founder.
CHANTRY PRIEST	A clergyman appointed for this purpose.
CLERESTORY	The part of the church above the aisle roofs, containing windows for additional lighting.
CORBELS	A projection jutting out from a wall in order to bear a weight. Often carved.
GALLERY	A supported balcony or seating platform.
GUILD SYMBOL	Identification mark of a medieval association of craftsmen.
INCUMBENCY	The period of time during which a vicar or rector holds office in a parish.
LAY RECTOR	In previous centuries a layman entitled to the Great Tithes but also responsible for the maintenance of the chancel.
LECTERN	Reading desk.
LYCHGATE	A roofed gate to a churchyard, formerly used as a temporary shelter for the coffin before a burial service.
MASON'S MARK	The identification mark of an individual mason.
METHOD	A specific pattern of changes rung on church bells.
MINOR	Changes rung on six church bells.
NAVE	The body of the church from the tower arch to the chancel.
NAVE ARCADE	The arches separating the nave from an aisle.
NICHE	A recess in a wall especially one to contain a statue.

OXFORD HIGH CHURCH MOVEMENT	A Movement founded in the 1830s which aimed at bringing back to the Church of England some pre-Reformation principles and liturgical practices.
PATRON	The individual or organisation which holds the right to appoint a clergyman.
PEAL	Now generally 5040 changes rung without stopping on church bells. In the 18th century a peal on six bells was usually 720 changes.
PISCINA	A stone basin set into the wall for washing the priest's hands and sacred vessels.
PRACTICE-STONE	A piece of stone used by a mason's apprentices to try out their skills.
REREDOS	A carved or painted panel behind the altar.
ROOD	Crucifix above the arch separating the chancel from the nave.
ROOD LOFT	A gallery above the Rood Screen.
ROOD SCREEN	A screen crossing the nave beneath the chancel arch.
ROUNDELS	Round pieces of stained glass.
SANCTUARY	The area containing the altar.
SQUINT	An opening cut through a chancel wall to enable worshippers or second priest in a side aisle to see the priest's actions in the chancel or sanctuary.
TABLE TOP GRAVES	Flat rectangular graves which look like large chests.
TENOR (BELL)	The largest bell with the lowest note in a set of church bells.
TITHES	In previous centuries, a tax levied on parishioners to provide maintenance for the parish priest. Great Tithes were collected from such items as corn and hay. Little Tithes were collected from less valuable produce such as eggs and honey.
TRACERY	Ornamental patterns in the stonework forming the head of a window.
TRACERY LIGHTS	Small areas of glass at the top of a church window.

## APPENDIX IV

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	1815	Ground plan of the church (PR 73/77/1) and (MaB 320/9 with 1867 Report on back)
	1867	Repairs to church and chancel (PR 73/77/2)
	1899	Pulling down the vicarage and erecting a new one (PR 73/77/3)
	1941	To form a chapel in the south aisle (PR 73/77/7)
	1964	To reposition the altar in the sanctuary (PR 73/77/13)

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