ILKLEY PARISH CHURCH

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GUIDE TO THE CHURCH

1.   **Ilkley Parish Church** is built on the site of a Roman fort (as at Ribchester across the Pennines, Holyhead and elsewhere). The southern rampart of the fort ran a little to the south of Church Street, the eastern a little to the east of Lower Brook Street. The present church therefore stands on the ruins of Roman buildings, material from which has been used and re-used in the many re-constructions to which the church has been subjected

2.   The **exterior of the Church,** though it preserves the general appearance and proportions of a late medieval building, dates in the main from 1860-1 or later. There are only two exceptions to this: one is the fifteenth century tower, which, apart from a window on the north face and the small doorway on the south side, seems to be in its original state (notice the enormous blocks of gritstone used in its construction and the curious little niche high on the south-east buttress); the other exception consists of some of the north walls of the church—the aisle wall which is thought to be of the fourteenth century with fifteenth-century windows and a doorway added, and the clerestory wall, which seems to be medieval, though the windows were inserted in 1880 (notice the difference between the rubble construction of the older section and the regular coursing of the Victorian wall further east).

3.   In the churchyard (NB 2010 The crosses now stand in the Tower), between the church and the street, stand the three **crosses** which are among the more important monuments of Anglo-Saxon sculpture surviving. Since they can only be dated by style, and many of their surfaces are heavily weathered, authorities differ in detail on the date to be assigned to them; but all seem to put them within the century c.770-c.870. They were erected, that is to say, at a time when there was as yet no kingdom of England, when Ilkley was on the borders of the kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia, and when this part of England was plagued by Danish raiders.

As they now stand, the westernmost, or shortest, seems to be the oldest. It shows the much-weathered figure of a saint on the east face, with grotesque animals on the others. The easternmost cross has a highly stylised vine-scroll pattern on the east and west sides with intertwining animals (two of which look very much like hares or rabbits) on the street side and the church side. The carving on this cross is

still very crisp and sharp. The tallest, in the centre, is the latest in date (c.850-70). The head has not always been on the shaft and may not belong to it, but since it is of the same date and style as the shaft, it completes the design very happily. It came immediately from Middleton Lodge, and was set on the shaft in 1914. On the church side of this cross are much-worn representations of the four evangelists, each with a symbolic head (a man for St. Matthew, a lion for St. Mark, an ox for St. Luke, an eagle for St. John, though a little faith may be needed to distinguish these heads now). Three animal patterns are surmounted by Christ in Majesty on the side facing the street, and there are the usual vine-scroll patterns on the east and west sides.

All three are more or less fragmentary, and there are others, more fragmentary still, to be seen in the Manor House Museum close by. Almost certainly these crosses were erected to commemorate notable people buried here. They were originally painted, and glass or semi-precious stones may have been let into the eyes of birds and animals to give a barbarically splendid effect. The vine-scroll pattern, as it appears here, is a somewhat degenerate form of the 'Tree of Life', often 'inhabited', in other examples, by birds and animals to represent the faithful nourished [by] its fruit. In the Ilkley crosses the birds and animals have been placed in separate panels and are little more than grotesques, charming as they may once have been and in one or two instances still are.

4.   The **South Porch** has been rebuilt and the door is modern: but the doorway is old and can be dated, by the 'dog-tooth' moulding which adorns it, to the early years of the thirteenth century. It has probably been moved at each successive widening of the nave.

5.   The **interior of the church**, even more than the exterior, preserves the general appearance of a medieval building, though the whole of the eastern half of it dates only from 1860-1 or later. Much of the original material was re-used in the extensions and rebuilding then carried out, and the general style of the new work is so similar to the old that it is not at all easy, at first sight, to tell where one begins and the other leaves off. However, a careful inspection of the third arch from the west, on either side, will show the join.

Though relatively little survives of the medieval building, that little is of great interest if only as a historical puzzle. The present arcades of the nave (save the easternmost pillar and arch on each side) are thought to be of the fourteenth century, though the mouldings are so simple that it would be difficult to date them with any precision. The tower and tower-arch, as they stand, belong to the fifteenth century or later, and an examination of the masonry of the west wall of the nave will show that the south arcade (or possibly the wall that preceded it) was at some date moved about five feet to the south. This explains why the tower-arch is not in the centre of the nave; and the unbalanced effect which this produces in any interior view of the church looking westward is intensified by the fact that the west window,

in the tower, is itself not in the centre of the tower, being pushed to the north by the tower staircase. It will he noticed that the two ancient pillars and the western respond of the south aisle are set on bases that look like capitals reversed, while those on the north side have bases that do indeed look like bases though they do not fit the pillars. The central pillar on the north side has a roughly carved capital which is medieval though difficult to date more closely; and there is decoration also on the base of the western respond of the south arcade. The three western bays of the nave clerestory are ancient, save that the south side was re-faced on the exterior, if not rebuilt, in 1860-1, and windows were cut in the north side in 1880.

The western three bays of the north aisle are medieval. Doorway and windows (except the west window which is modern) are probably of the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, though the windowsills are modern replacements and the doorway has been made higher to correspond with a raising of the floor level. The south aisle, as it is at present, dates from 1860-1; so also do the east bays of the nave and aisles, the chancel, the present churchwardens' vestry and the organ chamber. The clergy vestry was built in 1880, choir vestry and chapel in 1927. A plaque in the chapel states that it and the choir vestry were erected in commemoration of the thirteenth centenary of the foundation of the church. There are good reasons for thinking that Ilkley church is a very early foundation, but none whatever for ascribing it precisely to the year 627. The chapel was furnished as a war memorial and dedicated by the bishop of Bradford in 1948. The furnishings were designed by the Warham Guild.

6.   Immediately on the left, as you enter the church by the south doorway, is the baptistry. The **font** is ancient, but of such simple design that it could hardly be dated. Note, however, the marks of a lock and of an attempt to bore a hole for a drain. It was cast out in a nineteenth-century restoration, and spent some time, first in the Vicarage garden, then in the churchyard and later under the tower, before it was eventually restored in 1930. A 'decent font cover' was ordered to be provided in 1634, and the present cover may well have been made in response to this command. This, too, had been discarded at some restoration. It was preserved at the Vicarage and brought back to the church in 1886.

NB 2010. The font has since been moved to the North Aisle.

7.   Under the tower are to be seen two stones of great interest. They were extracted in 1919, from the structure of the tower. Both are **Roman altars** in origin. The larger, about 3ft. 6in. high, has the remains of the *focus* on the upper surface, and, on the one undamaged side, a female figure which has given rise to many conjectures. The smaller, now broken in two, has a representation of the sacrificial pitcher and *paters* carved upon it in low relief. If either had an inscription, this was destroyed when a large semicircular cut was made in each of them. These cuts suggest that the stones once served as heads for windows or doorways, and their scale and general character have been thought to indicate that they were part of an early Anglo-Saxon building. If this is so they are examples of Roman material re-

used at least twice, once in an early Saxon building (a fore-runner of the present church no doubt), again in the fifteenth century tower, and possibly in a predecessor of the present tower. They are among the most venerable stones in the Riding.

Near by, in the wall of the tower, one or two other'rough carvings or scratchings may be made out. Note, also, in the south-western corner of the tower, the original doorway leading to the staircase which gives access to the bell-chamber, and in the north-west corner, the blackening of the stone-work (which may also be seen on one of the Roman altars) indicating the presence here, at one time, of a vestry chimney.

8.   The **blocked niche** (modern or a reconstruction) in the south aisle once contained the Middleton effigy. The piscina nearby appears to be modern, though it marks the place where the altar of St. Nicholas may have once stood. The piscina in the chancel is ancient and is said to have come from here.

9.   Of the monuments in the church the most remarkable is the **Middleton effigy**, now placed in a modern niche in the Chapel. Although it has been ascribed to his forbears, it now seems to be generally agreed that it commemorates Sir Peter Middleton who died in 1336, though it may well have been made some time before his death. This Peter was born c.1290 into a family which held extensive lands in this part of the West Riding for many centuries. His services to the king seem to have been judicial and administrative as well as military, for he was one of the royal justices in Yorkshire on many occasions from 1327, and he was sheriff of Yorkshire in 1335.

He is represented as lying cross-legged, with his head resting on a pillow supported by angels (only one survives), his feet on a lion. He wears a round-topped skull cap, hidden under a hood-of mail; his hands, uplifted in prayer, are protected by mail gauntlets secured at the wrists by buckled leather straps. A guige or sling. pas^{s}ing over his right shoulder, carried his shield, which bears the Middleton arms -- *(Argent) fretty (sable) with a canton of the second.*

The surcoat, a long garment often of silk, reaches almost to his ankles and is girt at the waist by a narrow, buckled strap, the end of which is looped up and tucked under at the right side. Under the surcoat may be seen the hauberk of mail, and underneath that again the bottom of the gambeson, a padded leather garment which carried the weight of the armour and acted as a shock absorber. The knee-cops, of boiled leather, are ridged and decorated with miniature shields: his legs are covered with mail and he wears short prick-spurs. At his side lies his sword in its scabbard, suspended on a sword-belt.

This effigy belongs to a well-known group which is thought to have been made at York. The dating, apart from the style of the armour which is hardly every quite conclusive, is based upon a passage in the will of William Middleton (dated 2 August 1549) who, if he were to die at his manor of Stubham, desired that he should be buried in St. Nicholas quire on the south side of the Parish Church of Ilkley, under the stone where his ancestor, Sir Peter Middleton, lieth'.

10.   The church also possesses a number of memorial **brasses.** They are late in date, and have none of the spectacular effigies that adorn many medieval examples of this form of memorial, but the', constitute an interesting seventeenth-century series, commemorating members of the leading Ilkley families of that time. Most of the inscriptions are in English and may be read quite easily. A tour of those erected before 1800 may begin at the west end of the nave.

On the face of the western respond of the north arcade,

i) To various members of the Watkinson and Lawson families who died between 1648 and 1671. The arms displayed are: *Quarterly 1 and* 4, *per pale (argent) and (sable), a chevron counterchanged, in the sinister chief a crescent (. . .) for difference.* Lawson. 2 *and 3 two bars in chief three roundels.* Crest. *Two arms embowed argent, supporting a sun proper.* Lawson.

Facing this, on the western pillar of the north arcade of the nave,

ii) Inscription to Watkinson Lawson, son of Godfrey Lawson of Leeds, who died in 1671 at the age of nine.

On the north side of the centre pillar of the north arcade,

iii) A small and scarcely legible inscription to Edmund Beeston (d. 1778), Vicar, and Elizabeth (d. 1764?) his wife.

On the north side of the chancel arch, near the organ is,

iv) A palimpsest' brass, mounted on a hinge. It had been loose for some time before it was put into this position, and may possibly not belong to Ilkley at all. One side shows part of a much larger brass, with the fragmentary inscription, in Gothic lettering, SEPULTURA JOWIS REYN . . . ET P'BENDARII DE STYLYNGTO . . . A John Reynald was prebendary of Stillington in York Minster from 1494 until his death in 1506, and, for the last seven years of his life he was also Archdeacon of Cleveland.

On the other side is the greater part of a memorial inscription to William Robinson, who died in 1562 and whose family used this part of Archdeacon Reynald's brass, however they came by it, for this purpose.

Across the church, on the south side of the chancel arch, there is an odd little inscription in Latin to

v) Anthony Coates, vicar of Ilkley, who died in 1665, having apparently held his vicarage throughout the Civil War.

On the south wall of the chancel, moving front west to east,

vi) Sarah, wife of Richard Strother, who died in 1731 at the age of 33, and Richard, their son, who died in infancy in the same year.
vii) Reginald Heber, son of John and Sarah Heber of Hollinghall, who died in 1687 at the age of two years and three months. Below the inscription is a representation of the child, crowned by two flying cherubs.
viii) Mr. Reginald Heber of Hollinghall, who died in 1654 (the brass has February 1658, altered to 1653, i.e. 1654 new style). Arms displayed: *Per Jess (azure) and*

(holes) a lion rampant (or) in the dexter chief a mullet (.)

ix) Christopher Heber, son of Master Reginald, who died 8 May 1649, at the age of 26.

X) Lettice, daughter of Reginald Heber, who died 25 April 1649, aged 18.

xi) Captain John Heber, son of Reginald Heber, who died 9 April 1649, at the age -of 28, having fought for Parliament in the Civil War. In the upper part of the plate is a crest, *Out of a ducal coronet a lady's head and shoulders proper in profile crined (or),* Heber. In the bottom left-hand corner, the Heber shield as on No. viii, and in the bottom right-hand corner, a crest, *On a wreath a inan's head with turhan.*

Nos. viii-xi are thought to be by the same engraver. They perpetuate the memory of Reginald Heber, who was the first of his family to live in Ilkley, coming to the parish in 1619, and three of his children who all died within about a fortnight in the spring of 1649. In such circumstances the texts engraved upon these brasses have more than a touch of pathos. The famous Bishop Heber was descended from Reginald's brother Thomas, a branch of the family that never lived in Ilkley.

On the north wall of the chancel,

xii) Richard Hoghon (i.e. Hodgson), vicar of Ilkley, who died in 1640.

xiii) Robert Hodgson, son of Richard, vicar of Stillington, who died just before his father, in December, 1639.

11.   The **furniture** belongs, for the most part, to the restoration of 1860 and later. There are, however, one or two survivals of older furnishings. The altar-table is ancient, thought to be Elizabethan in origin, though with additions and alterations. At the west end of the north aisle is an enclosed pew, of a kind common enough in the seventeenth century, though there are not now many survivors. It is generally known as the Watkinson Pew. The initials and date I.W. 1633 are carved upon it, and there is an interesting nineteenth-century notice on the door. It is a very agreeable piece of country woodwork. Five pew-doors survive from the old oak pewing. They are mounted on the west wall of the nave.

Of the modern furniture, the most pleasing piece is probably the organ case (1953). The pulpit is a memorial to 'H.B.' 1889, the lectern to Ada Hirst (1920), the screen of the chapel to Charles Walter Ikin Leather (1873-1939), and the Vicar's Stall was presented by Frederick A. Aykroyd, vicar's warden, 1911-1916. They are all very characteristic of their date.

12.   There is no ancient **glass** surviving. All the existing glass has been put in during the last hundred years or so. The east window is of Belgian glass, dating from c.1860. Opinions differ on its merits. The most interesting window is in the north aisle. It was provided by the change-ringers of England as a memorial to Jasper Whitfield Snowdon, a son of Vicar John Snowdon. He was a great authority on campanology, and the revival of the art of change-ringing owes a great deal to his influence, both in this country and abroad. When he died, in 1885, 'muffled peals to his memory were rung in almost every tower of note throughout the country.

2. HISTORY OF THE BUILDING

THERE must have been a church in Ilkley in the eighth century, some twelve hundred years ago. The evidence for this lies in the crosses; for if these are memorials, they must have been memorials to people of some consequence; and if such people chose to be buried in Ilkley, it must have been because there was a notable church here. However, although stone crosses are weighty objects, they are nevertheless moveable. One of these Ilkley crosses does indeed show signs of use as a gatepost, and the head of the largest has been brought down from Middleton Lodge in recent years. If, therefore, they are to be used as evidence for the antiquity of the church, we must be assured that they really do belong to it. Fortunately there is little difficulty here. References to them, as standing or lying in the churchyard, can be found going back through the eighteenth century to William Camden who saw them there at the end of the sixteenth. He speaks of them, it is true, as 'those engraved Roman pillars lying now in the churchyard and elsewhere', but it is clear that he is referring to the crosses. John Warburton, who passed this way in February, 1719, says that he saw 'several other antique stones in the wall of the churchyard, with dragons, bunches of grapes and other figures upon them, as is the cross in the churchyard'. Since the cross which bears the marks of the gatepost upon it is recorded as doing duty in the south gateway of the churchyard itself, it probably did not stray far. The stones were put in their present position by Vicar Snowdon (1842-78). Beside this, however, fragments of similar crosses have been found in the fabric of the church from time to time in the course of alterations. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the crosses belong to the church and are part of its history.

It is often supposed that Anglo-Saxon churches were of wood. Many of them probably were; but at Ilkley there was plenty of Roman stone lying about waiting to be used; and the Roman altars in the tower, cut to form window or door heads, are a good indication that this early church was in fact built of stone. They are indeed fragments of a church that could well belong to the missionary age; and if this were so they would provide one more example of the way in which the early Christian teachers and builders adapted pre-Christian sites and materials to their own use.

We do not know what happened to this first church at Ilkley. It is not likely to have been destroyed by the Danes, for they do not appear to have troubled middle Wharfedale unduly, and there is no clear evidence of a rebuilding in Norman times. Almost the only early architectural feature in the church that can be dated is the south doorway, which belongs to the early thirteenth century. This could have been built into an existing nave, either the Saxon nave or possibly a Norman nave which had replaced it; or it might have been part of a general rebuilding in the thirteenth century. It is just possible that the bases to the pillars of the north side are older than the pillars they carry. If this were so they could be evidence of earlier thirteenth century arcades and aisles, part of a general reconstruction of which the south doorway is now the only substantial survival. This possibility apart, however, there is certainly no reason why the Anglo-Saxon building should not have survived to the

thirteenth century or later, particularly since it was built of stone. Anglo-Saxon churches have survived virtually intact to this day at Ledsham and Kirk Hammertoe not very far away.

At some date, possibly in the fourteenth century, the present arcades of the nave were built. This could have been part of a reconstruction after the Scottish raids in the years following Bannockburn (1314), as elsewhere in Yorkshire; more likely, perhaps, it was later, when prosperity had returned or the lord of the manor was able to put some of the profits of the French wars into his parish church. But this is guesswork. Arcades were built when aisles were needed to enlarge a church. Of the north and south aisles that went with these arcades only that on the north survives.

During the fifteenth century the tower was built, or more probably, rebuilt. The general likelihood of there being a tower before the fifteenth century, and the enormous stones used in the construction of the present tower, both suggest that it is a reconstruction of an earlier, perhaps Saxon tower. After the tower had been built, or so it seems from the masonry of the west wall of the nave, the south arcade was moved some five feet to the south, widening the nave by that amount. It is likely that it was in this reconstruction that the old capitals (for such they seem to be) were re-used as bases for the pillars of this arcade. This moving of the south arcade would make it necessary to rebuild the south aisle. Now the present south aisle is nearly two feet wider than its fellow to the north, and there is clear evidence that when it was rebuilt again in 1860-1 it was rebuilt on the old foundations. It seems, therefore, that when the nave was widened, the south aisle was moved southwards and widened too. The present south aisle is thus the product of at least two rebuildings and one extension.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century the chantry of St. Nicholas was founded. Though there is little clear information on the point, this seems to have been, structurally, no more than the east end of the medieval south aisle screened off. Its position, therefore, was one bay west of the east end of the present south aisle. The clerestory of the nave was added early in the sixteenth century, most likely. On the north side there were apparently no windows until 1880. Though restored, three of the windows on the south side appear to be in their original form.

At the time of the Reformation, then, Ilkley had a characteristic though, so far as we know, undistinguished church of local type. It consisted of three bays, with north and south aisles, a low chancel to the east, a modest tower to the west, and a small chantry chapel somewhere on the south side, probably forming the eastern bay of the south aisle.

This building served the needs of the reformed liturgy and of the parishioners for more than three hundred years without fundamental change. Such changes as were made, were made to the furniture. The rood-screen, for example, dividing the nave from the chancel, appears to have survived into the seventeenth century, when boards

bearing the Royal Arms and the Ten Commandments had been mounted upon it. An order was made for its removal in 1634. At that time the church was furnished with pews of uniform pattern, though well-to-do men of the parish were having large family pews erected. Reginald Heber, for example (the Reginald Heber who, with his family is commemorated on brasses in the chancel), 'in 1633 caused a high pew to be placed and erected at the high end of the south side of the Church of Ilkley towards the Quire adjoining to the north side or ends of Sir Peter Middletons Quire, which is not uniform to any other of the Stalls in the saide Ranke of Stalls and … set about with five ballesters or turned posts and compassed about with a border of wood ingraved with sentences and his name and his wiles, the height whereof from the ground is 2 yeardes and a half'. The `ballesters' supported a tester and it was said that 'six persons at least may conveniently sit' in this pew. The reference in this document to 'Sir Peter Middleton's Quire' suggests that the old chantry chapel of St. Nicholas, screened off from the rest of the church and often referred to previously as 'St. Nicholas Quire', had been converted into a private pew for the Middleton Family. Both Heber's erection and the conversion of the chantry chapel were very characteristic of the time; and they were not the only family pews of this kind in the church, for the Watkinson pew still remains to us and, by a curious coincidence, is also dated 1633. The erection of these large pews often made difficulties by disturbing existing pews, and Reginald Heber's pew caused further offence by obscuring the view of the reading desk from 'Sir Peter Middleton's Quire', whereby 'those which doe sit in his Quire aforesaid cannot so well heare divine service and sermons'. It was therefore ordered to be removed in 1634. The Middleton pew disappeared later; but the pew-doors at present mounted on the west wall of the nave may well be relics of the standard pews of the early seventeenth century. The interior of the church at that time must therefore have been much cluttered, if agreeably cluttered, with carved oak. Further investigation may make it possible to give an impression of its appearance in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century before the oak pewing was removed in 1830.

The great change came in 1860-1, when the church was virtually reconstructed. The old chancel was taken down together with the vestry attached to it; likewise the east wall of nave and aisles and the whole of the south aisle, with the south porch. Nave and aisles were then extended some 16 feet to the east, that is, one additional bay was built, and the chance] rebuilt, probably to its original dimensions, east of this again. Thus the easternmost pillars and the easternmost bay of the present nave and aisles, and all to the east of that, date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The south aisle of the nave and the porch were rebuilt on the old foundations, and the south clerestory refaced on the outside, if not rebuilt. An organ chamber and vestry were built'to the north of the chancel as a continuation of the north aisle of the nave and a furnace room or heating chamber excavated beneath them. New furnishings were provided throughout, though monuments and memorials were preserved and replaced. New roofs were made for the aisles, the

chancel, and the extension to the nave, but part at least of the roof over the western three bays of the nave may be old.

Such a restoration was clearly not inspired by the false antiquarianism that has ruined so many of our medieval buildings, though the new work was made to match the old very closely. It was honest and practical. An ancient medieval fabric, designed for medieval liturgical needs, had fairly adequately met the requirements of the Anglican Church through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in so remote a place as Ilkley then was. But with the new ideas of the 'ecclesiologists' and the growth of Ilkley as a middle-class residential area (though the railway did not come until 1864-5), considerable adaptation was needed. So the church was enlarged, provided with open pews and choirstalls, and made acceptable to middle-class notions of decorum and comfort. As the faculty put it, the design was `to render the said church in every respect neat, uniform and commodious and fitting and proper for the celebration of Divine Worship and convenient to the Parishioners and Inhabitants of the said Parish of Ilkley'. Open pews and heating-chamber go together, practically as well as liturgically.

During this reconstruction, services were held in the old Grammar School. An ancient memorial, dated 1550, but having an inscription that was otherwise scarcely legible, was found under the old chancel and moved to Middleton Lodge, for the impropriator, Peter Middleton, having acknowledged his liability to maintain the chancel and having contributed to the cost of the reconstruction, had a right to objects found there. When all was ready, the church was re-opened by the Bishop of Ripon on 6 May 1861.

There were further alterations and repairs in 1880-2. Until then the interior walls had been covered with plaster and painted with scroll-work and passages from Scripture. This plaster was removed, new clerestory windows cut in the north wall of the nave, new vestries constructed and a new organ built by Lewis of Brixton. Finally, in 1927, the present Choir Vestry and the Chapel were erected under the direction of Sir Charles Nicholson; and the opportunity was taken to move the Middleton effigy from its obscure position in the south aisle to a niche specially prepared for it in the chapel. The chapel was furnished as a war memorial in 1946, and the organ restored, extended and provided with a handsome new case in 1953.

3. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

A PARISH CHURCH is more than a building. It is also an institution, a religious society led by its priest or minister. This society was early put on a territorial basis as a parish, and gathered up into the organization of Christendom, as it slowly developed in rural deaneries, archdeaconries, dioceses and provinces. After the Reformation, and to some extent before it, the State made use of this organization for its own purposes, and as the parish became a unit of local government, the church served, more than ever before, as a meeting place, and the vestry as an office, and so remained well into the twentieth century. If many of these functions of government have now passed to various local authorities, the parish church often retains some marks of this part of its history, though in the case of Ilkley much of this disappeared about a hundred years ago when new ideas of the functions of a church building were gaining ground. Such monuments as have been preserved are witness to local men and women who have taken a leading part in local affairs, and the parish registers, where they have survived more or less complete, provide a continuous record of parishioners of high and low estate. But even where an ancient church is wholly rebuilt, as happened at Leeds or Doncaster, much of the evidence for its history may be destroyed but its continuity as an institution is in no way interrupted.

This institutional side of its history is particularly interesting in the case of Ilkley Parish Church, for here it is quite well documented in medieval and later times, and there are reasons for thinking that it goes back a very long way indeed. The survival of the crosses may be taken to prove the existence of a church in Ilkley already in the eighth century; evidence of a circumstantial kind may, take it back further still.

Christianity was first brought to the northern Anglo-Saxons by an off-shoot of the Roman mission to Kent led by St. Paulinus. It was he who baptised King Edwin of Northumbria at York in 627. In the five years following he and his assistants preached up and down the country, but mostly in places that had been Roman towns, York, Lincoln, Catterick, for example; for early Christianity, apart from the Celtic west, was an urban religion. In their journeyings from one place to another, they, and St. Aidan with his fellows of the Scottish Church who followed them, must have used the Roman roads, which, even if they were falling into decay, must still have provided the best means of travel. Now, two Roman roads intersect at the Roman fort at Ilkley, and they intersect at what had long been an important river crossing. One road ran from Manchester towards Aldborough, the other, coming from York and Tadcaster, forked a little to the west of Ilkley, sending one branch in the direction of Lancaster, the other to Ribchester. It would be remarkable indeed if the earlier missionaries never passed this way, though it must be emphasised that there is no positive evidence that they did so.

What would they have found at Ilkley? The Roman garrison had moved out of the fort for the last time more than two centuries earlier; and it is likely that when this happened people living in the village that had grown up outside moved into the superior quarters now vacated, and a British village was established in the Roman fort itself. There is good reason to think that this village continued to exist through the Dark Ages. Not only was the church, when it came to be built, sited within the ramparts, but, from the most recent work on the subject, we may once more reasonably think that the name *Ilkley' is derived, in part at least, from the Roman `Olicana'. The excavations that were carried out on the Roman fort in 1919-21 showed that medieval buildings had existed on the site, but no archaeological evidence was then found, or in the later excavations of 1962, to suggest continuous habitation from Roman times. A great opportunity awaits future excavators here. The survival of the British kingdom of Elmet until King Edwin's time, however, suggests that Anglo-Saxon settlement in this part of Wharfedale did not take place until well into the seventh century, when the settlers themselves were Christian, or partly so; and the account of the consecration of St. Wilfred's church at Ripon (671-8) indicates that Christian Britons were still living hereabouts, or had been until very recently. One may reasonably suppose, therefore, that a passing missionary would have found British people living inside-the old Roman fort, most likely in patched-up Roman buildings, with perhaps an Anglo-Saxon landlord and a few Anglo-Saxon farmers in the valley. He may conceivably have found, also, that there was already a church here, deserted (as St. Wilfred's biographer tells us happened in this district) by British clergy fleeing from the advancing Anglo-Saxons; or he may have founded a church here himself, using the Roman materials that lay to hand for the building, including the Roman altars we still have. The evidence does not provide any certainty in these matters, but, such as it is, it seems to suggest quite strongly that Ilkley church was founded in the missionary age.

No record has survived to tell us how this Christian community fared during the next three or four centuries. The sculptured crosses are evidence of a church here in the eighth and ninth centuries, and the fragments in the Museum span the gap from then until the Norman Conquest fairly well. There is no reason to suppose that the life of the church was interrupted in Ilkley seriously, if at all, by the Danish invasions. Middle Wharfedale seems to have been spared their ravages during their pagan period—Archbishop Wulfhere of York thought it safe enough, in 870, to take refuge in Addingham, the next village upstream. The likelihood is that the church in Ilkley has been inexistence continuously from the seventh century at least.

At some date between the time when the earliest crosses were put up and the Norman Conquest, Ilkley was absorbed into the system of country parishes then growing up in England, and was coming to be served generally by one priest rather than the group of priests that had been more usual in missionary days. At the same time the lord of the village came to concern himself with the church and acquired a large interest in it and its revenue. Normally he would appoint the priest. All this may be deduced from evidence elsewhere and from the facts that Domesday Book records the existence of

a 'church and a priest' in, Ilkley, that the last Anglo-Saxon lord, who was called Gamel, was succeeded by William de Percy, the first of the Norman lords of the manor, and that the Percies continued to hold an interest in the church for some three hundred years after this. We do not know when the church was first dedicated to All Saints (the commonest dedication in Yorkshire), but it was so by the beginning of the fourteenth century. An 'altar of St. Mary of "Ylleclay" is mentioned in a deed of the early thirteenth century. This may represent an earlier dedication of the church, or simply a subsidiary altar in it.

After the Norman Conquest there is little to differentiate Ilkley from other country parishes in this part of England. The parish, when it can be defined, bestrode the River Wharfe and included the townships of Ilkley, Middleton, Stubham and Nesfield. At some date, probably in the twelfth century, the Percies transferred part of their interest in Ilkley church to the Kymes, for in all cases of which we have record before 1378 it was a Philip or a William de Kyme who presented a priest to the archbishop for institution. The earliest Ilkley priest whose name we know was a Richard, and he was preceded by one whose initial was B. Both were here early in the reign of King Henry II. The list of incumbents is fragmentary until the middle of the thirteenth century. In 1378, however, the church was given to Hexham Priory by Henry de Percy, earl of Northumberland, and Gilbert de Umfraville, earl of Angus (who had inherited the Kyme interest in Ilkley), and a vicarage was instituted. This meant that the Prior and Convent of Hexham, after the death of the priest who was rector of Ilkley at that time, became both patron and rector, though they were bound to make competent provision for their vicars. From the beginning of the fifteenth century, therefore, the parson of Ilkley was called a vicar, and that has remained his title to the present day.

When Hexham Priory was dissolved, with the other monasteries, the Crown took the rectory of Ilkley. It was sold in 1553 to Thomas Reve and George Cotton, speculators no doubt, from whom, presumably, it was bought by Christopher Maude of Hollinghall in 1554. He and his descendants held it for more than a hundred years. Subsequently rectory and patronage were separated. At the time of the reconstruction of the church in 1860-1 William Middleton acknowledged his obligation to maintain the chancel, an obligation that falls upon the rector, and contributed to the cost of its re-building. The descent of the advowson is given below with the list of incumbents.

From the seventh century, we must suppose, Ilkley was under the jurisdiction of the bishops of York, archbishops from 735. No doubt it would have been included in the Anglian diocese of Ripon, founded late in the seventh century, if that had not proved ephemeral. Little is known of the organization of the diocese of York until the twelfth century, when the archdeaconries and rural deaneries began to take shape. When that happened, Ilkley found iself in the deanery of Craven, which formed part of the arch-deaconry of York. In many parts of the county the ecclesiastical deaneries coincided with the secular wapentakes. In this case, however, though the deanery of Craven corresponds in a general way to the wapentake of Staincliff, that part of Ilkley

parish which lay to the south of the River Wharfe was in the wapentake of Skyrack, the remainder in the wapentake of Claro.

In 1836 the deanery of Craven was taken from York diocese to form part of the diocese of Ripon, then revived after some eleven hundred and fifty years. Ilkley remained in this diocese only until 1920, when the parish was transferred, with the rest of the ancient deanery of Craven, to the newly-created diocese of Bradford.

The chief development, so far as we know, in the organization of the parish church and its work during the later Middle Ages was the establishment of the chantry of St. Nicholas. This chantry was founded, apparently in 1474, by William Middleton, with an endowment of £4. 7s. per annum from the revenue of the manor of Ilkley. His son, Nicholas Middleton, when he held the manor (c.1500), assigned the rents of certain lands on it to make up this sum. At the time of the dissolution of the chantry, in 1551, these lands were described as 'Bakeston Beck, Leeds Hedes, Longlandes, le Cowlease, le Cowclose, Bowdyn Rayne, Cowclose, Holme Ynges, Gylclose, Stones, Hugh Crofte, le Byndeholme, Gayres Header, Dykeclose and Estclose', and they were then in the hands of six tenants. One of the objects of the foundation was to provide an assistant to the vicar, 'for so much as the same parish is of great circuit and a river called Wharfe passing and running through the midst of the said parish so that when the floods is up the curate being of visitation in the one part of his parish, cannot come to the church by the space of two days'. The Wharfe is an unruly river-, and perhaps there was something in this plea, for it had been used when Robert Plumpton wished to found an oratory in his manor-house at Nesfield in 1366.

We know the names of the first chantry priest, Robert Calverley, and of the last, William Mason. It is also possible that Robert Warde, described as 'capellanus' in the record of the court of Ilkley Manor in 1522, was serving the chantry. The altar seems to have been at the east end of the south aisle of the church, as it then was, in the position marked by a modern piscina. The ancient piscina in the chancel is said to have been brought from this position. If this is so, it is probably the only physical survival of the chantry. This was dissolved, along with the other chantries, under the act of 1547, and its revenues, instead of being used to promote education in Ilkley, were granted by the king to Sedbergh School. A schoolmaster, however, is recorded in Ilkley not long after, in 1575, and the earliest endowments of the grammar school that came into being early in the seventeenth century were intended, originally, simply to provide him with a regular salary. It is not impossible, though there is at present no specific evidence for it, that the chantry priests had previously acted as schoolmasters in the village, and that the chantry of St. Nicholas is the ultimate origin of Ilkley Grammar School. The old school building, which still survives, was erected in 1636-7; the present building on Cowpasture Road, stands appropriately on the ancient chantry lands.

Further research might make it possible to say more about the history of the parish during the Middle Ages, but it is doubtful if this would ever amount to very much. From the end of the sixteenth century, however, the survival of the registers and the churchwarden's books make something like a history of the parish and of church life here possible, though a good deal of work would have to be done upon them before such a history could be written. On a casual reading, one may be struck by the arrangements that still had to be made, in the seventeenth century, to deal with those occasions when one part of the parish was cut off from the other by floods, by the problems of poor relief and by the difficulties attributable to the fact that the lords of the manor had preserved their Roman Catholic faith. There are the usual records of burial in wool, of payments for dinners, bell-ringing and minor repairs to the church fabric, and for a wild cat's head in 1691; contributions to those who came collecting, armed with 'briefs', for the relief of distress caused by disasters of all kinds in all parts of the country. Local attachment to ancient ways is shown in the trouble which the changes in the calendar, made in 1752, gave to the compilers of the register, and the efforts which were still necessary, well into the nineteenth century, to persuade the relatives of a deceased person to permit burial on the north side of the churchyard. Such tit-bits, however, do not make the history that could be written, and which has not been attempted in this booklet.

The very rapid growth of Ilkley in the second half of the nineteenth century made even the enlarged parish church too small for its needs. In 1874 the first, temporary, St. Margaret's church was opened; the present building by Norman Shaw, was begun in 1878 and consecrated in the next year. Finally, St. John's, Ben Rhydding, was erected between 1904 and 1910. The ancient parish has been divided accordingly.

. LIST OF INCUMBENTS

- 'A church and a priest there' *(Domesday Book),* 1086.
- 'B'., priest of Ilkley, c.1170.
- Richard, 'priest of Ilkley', c. 1176.
- Andrew, 'parson of the church of Ilkley', early 13th century.
- Robert Flixthorpe, 1240 *(Philip de Kyme).*
- R. Octon, c,1280.
- William Malerbe, 1286 *(Philip de Kyme).*
- William Ashby, 1295 *(Philip de Kyme).*
- William Hastang, c.1301.
- Robert Cottingham, canon of York, 1305 *(Philip de Kyme).*
- Robert, son of William Cottingham, 1307 *(Philip de Kyme).*
- William Cottingham, 1324 *(William de Kyme).*
- William Spain, c.1340.
- John Beaupyne, 1362 *(still rector in* 1378).
- Gilbert Thorparch, c.1396.
- Richard Garmouth, 1406 *(Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- William White, 1428 *(Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- John Barton, 1473 *(Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- Thomas Harper, 1473 *(Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- Thomas Jenkinson, 1507 *(Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- Thomas Wardall, 1523 *(Grantees of the Prior and Convent of Hexham).*
- Robert Cressy (?)
- George Grovell, 1541 *(The King).*
- John Myddop, 1545 *(The King).*
- John Pulleyne, 1554 *(Christopher Maude).*
- John Wilson, 1568 *(Feoffees of Arthur Maude).*
- Thomas Carre, 1572 *(Feoffees of Arthur Maude).*
- William Sanderson, 1583 (?).
- Hugo Rawood, 1583 *(The Archbishop).*
- William Cooksun, 1595 *(The Queen).*
- George Snell, 1598 *(Thomas Maude).*
- Richard Hodgson, M.A., 1607 *(Robert Maude).*

- Anthony Coates, 1640 *(Robert Maude)*.

- William Hustler, 1665 *(The Archbishop)*.

- George Dawson, 1703 *(Stephen Wilks)*.

- John Rhodes, 1716 *(Stephen Wilks)*.

- Thomas Lister, 1727 *(Mrs. Florence Bowles)*.

- Henry Travers, 1735 *(The Archbishop)*.

- Thomas Lister (reinstated) 1736 *(Mrs. Florence Bowles}*

- Edmund Beeston B.D., 1745 *(Mrs. Florence Bowles)*.

- John Chapman, 1778 *(George Hartley)*.

- George Benson, 1801 (*William Leonard Hartley)*.

- William Holdsworth, 1813 *(William Leonard Hartley)*.

- Joseph Clarke, 1830 *(George Hartley)*.

- John Snowdon, M.A., 1842 *(George Hartley)*.

- Arthur Cleveland Downer, M.A., 1878 *(Bishop of Ripon)*.

- Howard Kempson, B.A., 1886 *(Mrs. Elizabeth Eyre)*.

- William James Stephens Muntz, M.A., LL.D. 1901 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- Francis Sinker, M.A., 1908 *{Hyndman Trust)*.

- Walter Francis James, M.A., 1913 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- Arthur Hesketh Higson, M.A., 1916 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- Charles John Hamer, Canon of Bradford, 1920 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- James G. Garland, M.A., Canon of Bradford, 1935 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- Ernest C. Cook, M.A., 1941 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

- Richard Cleland, 1967 *(Hyndman Trust)*.

From Richard Garmouth onwards, this list is probably almost complete. Before his time there are many uncertainties. Where the patron is known, his name is given in brackets; and where this is done, the date is the date of institution. From the fifteenth century a new vicar was generally instituted within two or three months of the death or resignation of his predecessor.

THE REGISTERS

The early registers consist of

I   Baptisms, marriages and burials, 1597-1656.

II   Baptisms, marriages and burials, 1673-1687. This volume, probably in unbound form, was loaned out in 1725, and was restored to the church, possibly incomplete, in 1886.

III   Baptisms and burials, 1690-1812, marriages, 1691-1745.

IV   Marriages, 1745-1812.

In addition there are

V   A volume of churchwarden's accounts, etc., 1618-1707.

VI   The same, 1708 to the end of the nineteenth century.

VII   The same, 1886-1888.

VIII A number of disjointed scraps of churchwardens' accounts and other pieces, mostly of the eighteenth century, now placed between the leaves of a large volume of blank pages.

THE BELLS

The earliest bells in the church of which we have any knowlege were cast in the seventeenth century. There were three of them,

1. IN JOCVNDITATE SONI SONABO 1600
2. SOLI DEO GRATIA 1636
3. GLORIA IN EXCELSIS J676

(Some authorities give the inscription on the second bell as *Soli Deo Gloria).*

In 1845 these were recast and augmented into a peal of six. Two were added in 1873 (No. I treble and No. 8 tenor) and the old No. 4 recast to form No. 5. The original frame carrying the peal had been of oak, and this showed such serious signs of decay in 1938 that ringing was stopped for a time. Following an appeal for funds, the whole ring was taken out of the tower, recast and rehung in a new steel girder frame. This work, however, was not completed until after the outbreak of war. Consequently, the new bells had to remain silent until their ringing would no longer be interpreted as a warning of imminent invasion. The weight of the tenor bell is $18_4'$ cwts. and the total weight of the peal of 8 is nearly 3J tons. The pitch is E natural. All the work on the bells of which there is any record has been carried out by the famous firm of John Taylor & Co. Loughborough.

THE ORGAN

There is no record of any organ in the church before 1830. In that year an organ was built by a local craftsman, Benjamin Whitley. This was replaced in 1862 by another by Grindley or Sheffield. Details of both organs are lacking. In 1882 a fine 3-manual instrument was built by the famous T. C. Lewis of Brixton. This served the church almost unaltered until after the Second World War. A long projected major re-construction was then brought to finality in 1953 when the Lewis instrument was rebuilt, enlarged, and modernised at a cost of £8,000. All the Lewis pipework was retained and the organ has 53 speaking stops giving it almost cathedral resources. The work was carried out by the John Compton Organ Co. Ltd., London. The very beautiful English Oak cases were designed by the late J. Stuart Syme of York and executed by Robert Thompson of Kilburn. The instrument has attracted considerable attention from organ lovers and players both in this country and America. It is unusual to find so comprehensive an instrument outside a cathedral or city parish church.

The plate is modern and of little interest save for a chalice which is said to date from 1614.

5. A NOTE ON AUTHORITIES

In addition to standard works on architectural history and local antiquities, the books and articles noted below are particularly useful. R. Collyer and J. Horsfall Turner, *Ilkley: Ancient and Modern* (1885) is an almost inexhaustible quarry. H. Speight, *Upper Wharfedale* (1900) and the centenary issue of *The Ilkley v Gazette,* 5 May 1961, provide additional general information. A number of articles in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* deal with particular points: Sir Stephen Glynne's notes of his visit to the church in May 1862, XIV (1898), pp. 345-6; the brasses, XV (1900) pp. 22-7; the bells, **XVII** (1903), pp. 222-3; the crosses, XXIII (1915), pp. 129-299 (esp. pp. 185-197, and cf. W. G. Collingwood, *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Ages,* 1927); the Middleton effigy, XXVII (1924), pp. 117-139; XXVIII (1926). pp. 345-379; XXIX (1929), pp. t-67; cf. pp. 232-6; the Roman fort XXVIII (1926), pp. 137-321 (for the Roman altars in particular see pp. 317-9). A report on the 1962 excavations, by B. R. Hartley, is printed in *Proc. Leeds Phil. and Lit. Soc.,* Lit. and Hist. section.
XII, pp. 23-72 (1966). W. P. Baildon's article 'The Maudes of Ilkley .. ' *(Thoresby Soc. Publ.* vol. XXIV, 1919) has useful points on the history of the rectory; N. Salmon, *Ilkley Grammar School,* 1607-1957 (1957) describes the early history of the school in some detail. For particulars of the patrons, rectors and vicars to 1568, see *Fasti Parochiales IV,* edd. Norah K. M. Gurney and Sir Charles Clay, Yorks. Arch. Soc., Record Series, CXXXIII (1971), pp. 61-66.
   The registers to 1812 were edited by W. Cooper for the Yorkshire Parish Register Society (1927). There are a number of Ilkley documents to be found among

the volumes of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society's Record Series, particularly those devoted to *Yorkshire Deeds and* the *Sallay Chartulary.* Such of the archbishops' registeres as have been printed will be found among the publications of the Surtees _'ociety; and the certificates of 1546 and 1548 relating to St. Nicholas' Chantry in vol. XCII of the same series. The Faculty for the alterations of 1860-1, with plan and specifications, is preserved in the Diocesan Registry, Bradford.

The writer of this handbook is greatly indebted to the Rev. E. C. Cook and the Rev. L. G. R. Howell, vicar and curate respectively when it was first compiled; to Mr. G. W. Elliott, who was then verger and who pointed out many details in the building which he would otherwise have missed; to the organist, Mr. A. E. Pickett, for information on the organ and the bells and for the photograph of the organ; to Mr. Tom Haigh who took photographs especially for this booklet; to Mr. John Addy for notes on seventeenth-century documents; to Mr. Michael Collinson (Leeds City Archives) and to Mr. Henry Firth (Bradford Diocesan Registry), for allowing him to see a draft of the Faculty of 1860 and the Faculty itself; to Mr. K. J. Boner who produced the plan, partly on the basis of one drawn in 1921 by S. D. Kitson and now in the Library of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, and to Mr. A. M. Lolley who re-drew it for printing; to Mr. R. M. Green, editor of *The Ilkley Gazette,* for information; to Mr. G. C. F. Forster for help with the proofs (1963). In preparing the revised edition of 1968, the writer received valuable suggestions from Mr. A. C. M. Duncan and again from Mr. A. E. Pickett.

May 2010 – Text of the booklet has been scanned and converted. Notes added to highlight that the Crosses now stand in the Tower and that the font has been moved.