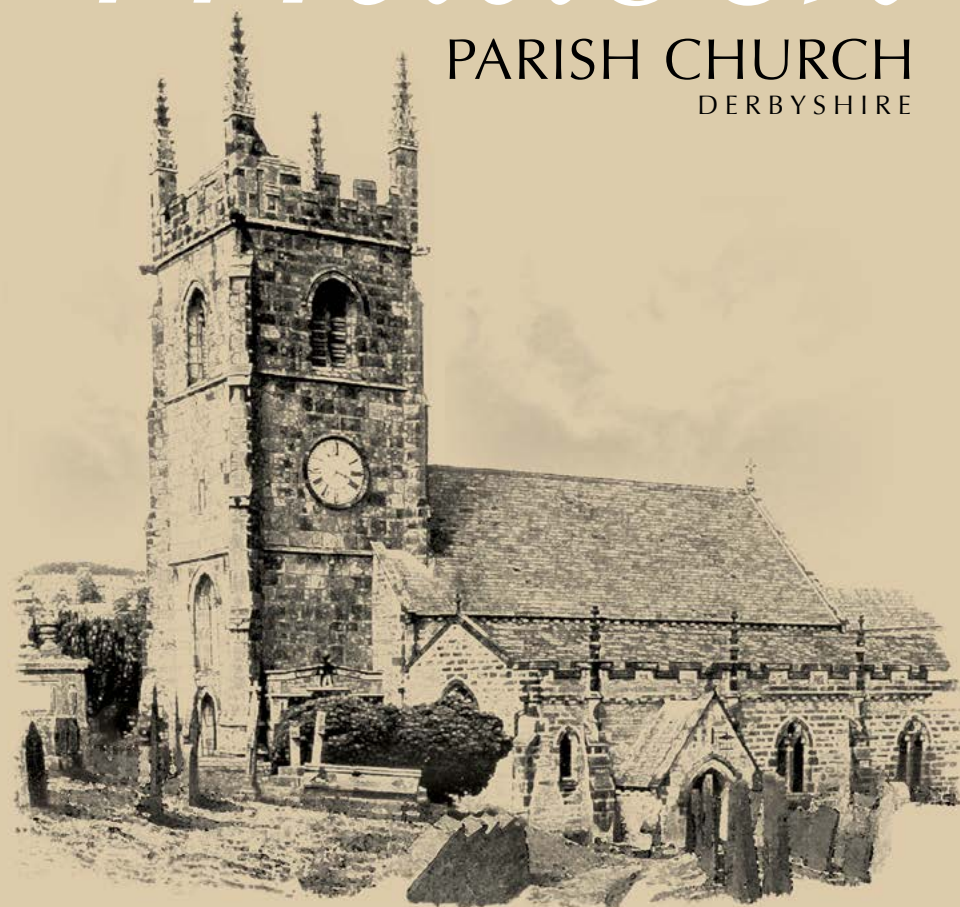




Matlock

PARISH CHURCH
DERBYSHIRE



A Praier to Seynt Gyle

Gracious Gyle, be never from us absent
For love of Jesu that bouhte us with his blood
John Lydgate

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE 2012
BY JOHN DRACKLEY



SAINT GILES



The drawing of St Giles reading some holy book while tenderly fondling the hind, his companion, is of a carving on a chancel stall by **Advent Hunstone** and was specially prepared for an earlier edition of this guide by the late **Douglas Percy Bliss**.

The drawing of a cherub on page 35, from an original by the late **Enid Bandey**, is a copy of a detail of a monumental brass of 1693 in the churchyard.

The photographs of the stained glass angel in the south window and of the dove in an east window of the Lady Chapel are by **Michael Stokes**.

The photograph of his statue of St Giles is by **Charles Gurrey**. Other photographs are by **Peter Shelton** with digital processing by **Jim Dunn**.

All photographs are used with the kind permission of the copyright owners. The author is indebted to **Mr W. D. Wain** for permission to reproduce the first state of the 1869 steel engraving of the church.

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MATLOCK PARISH CHURCH

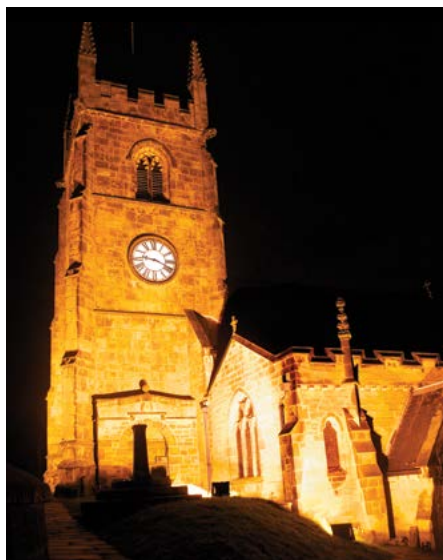
The visitor to Matlock, having caught sight of the fine perpendicular tower of the parish church of St Giles, standing high above the limestone cliffs that front the River Derwent, may well have ascended the steep path known as Stoney Way, expecting to be rewarded for the climb by the view of a distinguished and complete medieval structure. Having arrived at the church, our visitor may initially have experienced a sense of disappointment. Only the tower is ancient. The rest of the building exemplifies successive phases of the Victorian Gothic Revival. But, as often happens, first impressions prove misleading. Both the church and its surroundings offer much that is historic and beautiful in a place where God has been worshipped for many centuries.

ST GILES

Matlock Church is one of a large number of medieval foundations dedicated to the glory of God and in honour of St Giles, one of the fourteen, so-called 'auxiliary', saints, invoked especially by cripples, beggars and blacksmiths. In the Middle Ages his cult was widely popular among the rural poor. Apart from that at Matlock, eight other churches in medieval Derbyshire were dedicated to him: Caldwell, Calke, Great Longstone, Hartington, Marston Montgomery, Normanton-by-Derby, Sandiacre and Scarcliffe. This last church has in modern times been incorrectly assigned to St Leonard. (The church at Killamarsh was originally dedicated to St Mary, although an

erroneous attribution to St Giles appears already in the Rawlins Manuscript in 1821).

Not a great deal is known of the life of our patron saint. He is believed to have lived at some time during the eighth century as a hermit in the forest near the mouth of the River Rhone in southern France. He had there, as his only companion, according to the legend, a pet hind, which he had rescued from the pursuit of huntsmen led by Flavius Wamba, king of the Visigoths. The king, having been much impressed by the holy man, established for him a monastery of which Giles became the abbot. (A local hermit's cave, containing a crucifix carved out of the living rock and a niche for a lamp, may still be seen at Robin Hood's Stride,



The Church floodlit ▲

an outcrop of rocks in the nearby parish of Elton. A similar hermitage on the High Tor at Matlock was recorded in the mid-eighteenth century but no traces of this survive.) The church celebrates St Giles's Day every year on 1st September.

The statue of our patron saint on the west wall of the nave and the adjacent glass panel, lettered in English and Latin with a request for his prayers, were introduced in 2009. The figure of the saint with his deer and the arrow of the legend were designed, carved in oak and enlivened with restrained colour by Charles Gurrey, a gifted sculptor who has worked at York Minster and on the carvings of the west front of Guildford Cathedral. Mr Gurrey also designed the bilingual inscription. On the face of the glass panel, *Holy Giles, pray for us*, echoes the devout formula of the faithful, reiterated through the many centuries since the first foundation here of a parish church. On the reverse of the panel (but intended to be read through the glass from the front), *Sancte Aegidie, ora pro nobis*, gives the Latin equivalent of the invocation. Ann Sotheran, the stained glass artist, has realised Mr Gurrey's design with great skill. The use of yellow colouring for the English words and green for the Latin enables both texts to be discerned yet simultaneously creates a complex abstract pattern to which the shadow cast on the wall behind contributes its share, an effect at once mysterious and challenging attention. Charles Gurrey is to be congratulated on an imaginative artistic and devotional concept without apparent precedent. The statue and

the panel were funded by local giving and a substantial donation from the Cottam Will Trustees to whose generosity the parish is much indebted.

THE CHURCH IN ITS SETTING

Matlock was originally a series of small, detached settlements, which only gradually became linked together as a unified community. Even today, areas like Matlock Bath and Matlock Bank retain their individual identities and Starkholmes still insists on its separate village status. Matlock Town, the historic centre around the parish church, is no longer central in modern Matlock. Further, the demolition (in 1967) of the headmaster's house attached to the former Town School and the widening of the road here has destroyed the feel of an enclosed village green above the church. But the character of the place is too strong to have been entirely lost. There are a number of historic houses in a cluster around the church. Immediately above is The Wheatsheaf which, as its name indicates, was once, a hundred years



The Wheatsheaf ▲

ago, a public house, but long before that perhaps the medieval manor house. The date, 1681, on its façade no doubt relates to the seventeenth century dressed-stone re-fronting of the building but the former roof lines on the far gable end and the limestone rubble of the side and rear walls betray its more ancient origin. Recent renovations have identified very early oak window segments which are largely believed to be the original window sections recycled into the interior walls. In 1681 when the Wheatsheaf was having its wooden shutters replaced with stone and glass, Chatsworth was the first house in Derbyshire to have sash windows fitted to keep up with London fashions. Beyond the Wheatsheaf lies the Old Rectory, set back in its own spacious grounds, though in these grounds two modern houses have now been built, one of which is the new Rectory. The Old Rectory appears at first glance to be a late eighteenth century building but its irregular plan is a clue to an earlier, more complex history. About 1980 the remains of a fifteenth century corbelled chimney were discovered in a room on



The Old Rectory ▲

the first floor. Opposite the Old Rectory stands the former Town School, erected in 1870 and replaced in the 1990s by a new school higher up the hill. The Victorian building has been converted into housing. At right angles to the old school stands the Duke William public house, of 1754, commemorating the Duke of Cumberland, the victor of Culloden, anathematised by Scots Jacobites but celebrated by eighteenth century Hanoverians, in Matlock as elsewhere. The King's Head, a little below, has been a private house since 1970. A date stone, which has now disappeared, indicated a date, 1628, entirely consistent with the surviving form of the fenestration.



The King's Head ▲

The reconstructed building to the east of the churchyard, on the far side of Stoney Way, has seventeenth century features, including a re-sited window high in the gable wall.

The hillside rising steeply behind Church Street to the south of the church is known as Matlock Cliff. At its summit stands Riber Castle. Built in the 1860's by the local



The Duke William ▲

industrialist, John Smedley, the castle served as his residence, affirmed his status in the community and, as Professor Pevsner says, 'formed an ideal eye-catcher for the poetical visitors to the baths' on which Matlock's prosperity had been founded. 'Four grey walls and four grey towers' transport us at once to the world of the Lady of Shalott. Sadly a ruin since the end of the Second World War, the castle is now being restored.

MATLOCK: THE PLACE NAME

The earliest recorded mention of Matlock is in the Domesday Book of 1086. The name is there given in the form 'Meslach' which probably represents an alien scribe's attempt to reproduce the local pronunciation since from 1196 the place is consistently referred to as 'Matlac', 'Matloc', or 'Matloke'. K. Cameron, *The Place Names of Derbyshire*, explains the meaning of the name as 'Maethel ac', the oak where the moot (or

meeting) was held'. In the triangular green to the west of the church and just below the Wheatsheaf there is indeed now an oak tree (of the turkey oak variety). This was planted in 1924 to replace a tree, in fact a sycamore, which blew down in a gale in 1903. This in its turn must have replaced an earlier tree or trees. Where else should one look for the site of the tree, which gave Matlock its name? It seems odd that the obvious conclusion should have been missed until now.

Church Street, formerly known as Tag Hill, is part of a significant ancient thoroughfare linking Wirksworth and Chesterfield; the medieval bridge over the Derwent at Cromford, which replaced the earlier ford of the place name, testifies to the importance of the route. Only in the eighteenth century was a way cut through the rocks at Scarthin to allow a new road to Matlock Bath and beyond, following the line of what is now the A6. A prominent landmark such as a solitary large oak tree beside a well-trodden road would have identified a natural meeting place for an open-air public assembly and prompted the development of a settlement in its vicinity, especially one with the additional advantage of a sheltered, defensible position above the flood plain of a river.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

Although Matlock was mentioned in Domesday Book, there is no record of a church here in 1086.

The earliest written evidence for the existence of a church in Matlock dates from 1291. The Taxation Roll of Pope Nicholas IV then valued the Rectory (meaning here the income of the parish priest) at £10 per annum. After 1300 onwards we have a list of the rectors, almost complete to 1504, when the Bishop's Register fails to supply the name of the priest inducted at Matlock on 13 August that year. From 1527 the list is complete to the present day. But we do not lack indirect documentary testimony to the presence of a church in Matlock at an earlier period than the end of the thirteenth century. Thus the Victorian *County History of Derby* notes (Volume II, page 88) that 'between the years 1100 and 1107' Henry I gave the church of All Saints', Derby and that of Wirksworth to 'God and the church of St Mary of Lincoln to be held in *praebendam*...' This gift was formally confirmed on the accession of Henry II in 1154. The V.C.H. further notes (Volume II, page 88) that 'the advowsons of Matlock, Kirk Ireton, Thorpe, Fenny Bentley and others of minor importance were from an early date considered to pertain exclusively to the Dean of Lincoln'. [References to the original documents in support of all this information will be found at the relevant points.] From the Lincoln *Registrum Antiquissimum* we learn that in 1146 Pope Eugenius III granted to the Dean the livings of Chesterfield and Ashbourne, both '*cum pertinenciis suis*'

(i.e. with all things belonging to them). This allocation of numerous Derbyshire churches to the Dean of Lincoln during the first half of the twelfth century must strongly reinforce the suggestion that, if the presentation to Matlock were allocated to the Dean, as later history makes clear, the relevant grant was probably made at this time, even if no written document survives. It should be stressed however, that it was the right of appointing a priest to Matlock which was granted to the Dean and not the living itself. Matlock retained its own (usually) resident Rector.



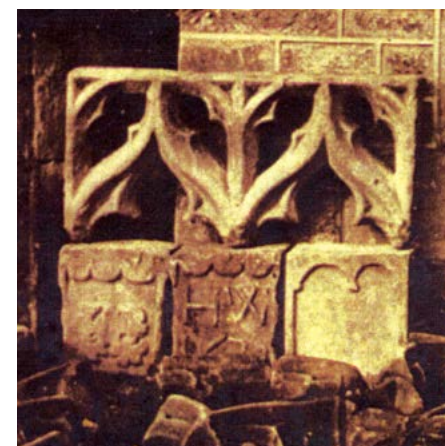
The 15th Century Tower ▲

Yet we are no means dependent on a speculative reading of secondary documents for our knowledge of this earliest period. That there was already a church at Matlock by the middle of the twelfth century is already confirmed by the surviving archaeological remains. The ancient font and the upper part of a Romanesque column which with its scalloped capital now serves as a stand for the statue of the Blessed Virgin and Child at the east end of the south aisle, together with a number of stone coffin lids, witness to the first church on this site for which we have firm evidence.

Extensive alterations to the earlier church evidently occurred at some time during the fifteenth century. The present tower in the perpendicular style, though modest by West Country or East Anglian standards, was an ambitious achievement for a small parish unaided by a wealthy patron. The remaining fragments of square-headed perpendicular windows, still stored at the church, may indicate the addition or enlargement of north and south aisles in the early sixteenth century. A stone carving of an angel playing small hand-held cymbals, which still survives, is clearly of medieval origin but its precise date or function is now uncertain. A south porch was added in 1636. Its façade, inscribed with the date, has been re-sited in its present position against the south wall of the tower. Two crudely-carved human heads serving as label stops are a gesture to Gothic tradition but the porch as a whole marked the arrival in Matlock of an, albeit provincial, Renaissance classicism.



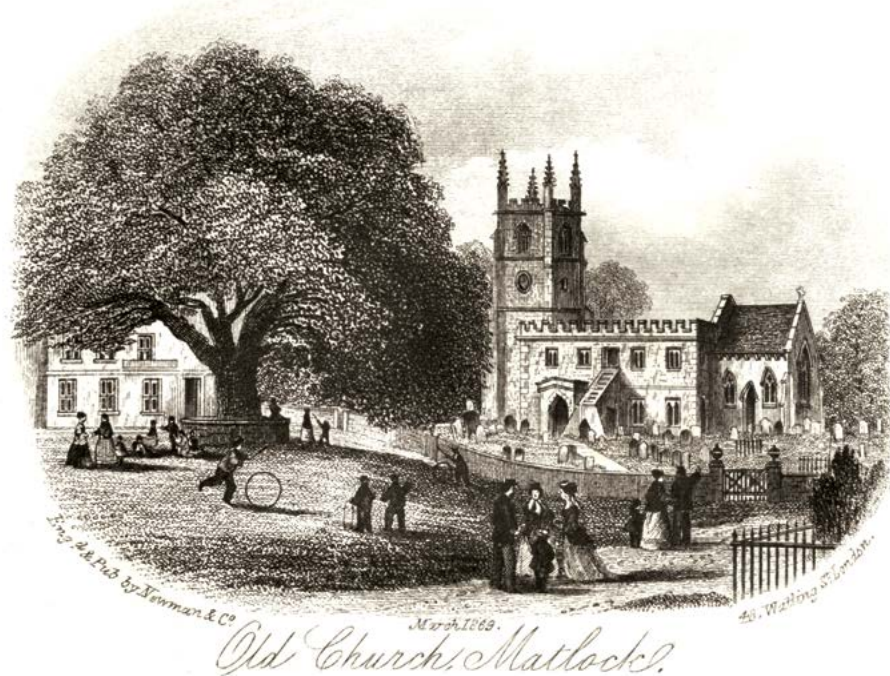
The Romanesque column supporting a modern statue of the Blessed Virgin ▲



An old photograph of the remains of a late perpendicular window head from the medieval church, standing on three 17th century gravestones ▲

Considerable alterations to the Church in the eighteenth century largely destroyed the medieval structure. Sir Stephen Glynne who visited the church in May 1840 noted that the only part of the medieval fabric (apart from the tower) then surviving was the chancel arch, 'of pointed form, very rude & plain'. A faculty was granted in 1760 for the rebuilding of the south aisle to (among others) Peter Nightingale, an earlier member of the family to which Florence Nightingale belonged. In 1783, Richard Arkwright, the pioneer of the industrial revolution, took down and rebuilt the north aisle. The result of these changes, we are told, was to cause

the church to appear 'something like a mill or factory with battlements'. An engraving, dated 1817, of a drawing of the church by Joseph Farington, R.A., well illustrates the raw functionalism of much of its exterior architecture at that period. The purpose of the changes was more commendable: to secure increased accommodation for a growing population. Archdeacon Butler, writing in 1823, noted that there was seating for a congregation of 'about 600' and that the church was very well attended. There were, however, no benches for 'the poor' of the kind provided elsewhere for those who could not afford to rent a pew. (This lack



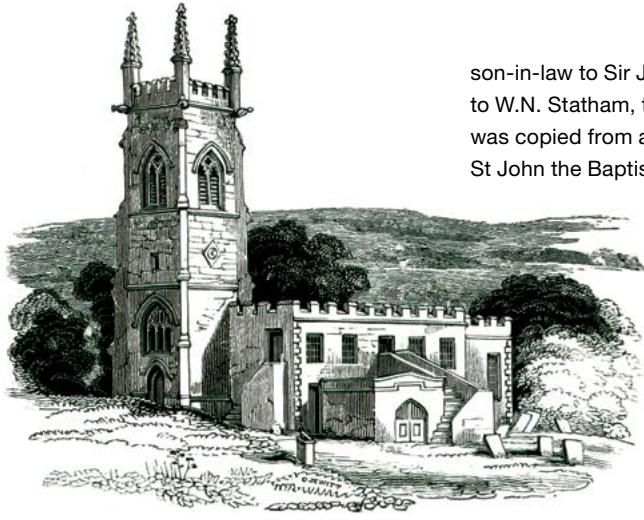
no doubt contributed to the success of the two dissenting chapels in Matlock, erected, one each, by the 'Methodists & Ranters'). Thus the local evidence would not appear to support the myth of a universal eighteenth century decline in religious observance. From Luttrell Wynne (1738-1814) we learn, however, that the Matlock congregation of his day had not succumbed to 'enthusiasm', the 'very horrid thing' against which Bishop Butler had warned John Wesley. After a visit to the church in 1771, Wynne wrote in his notebook:

“ At the parish Church at Matlock 3 peculiarities struck me viz the names of the different proprietors being written upon their pews - an anthem board, a peice (sic) of wooden board with the place name from whence the anthem is taken fixed in the gallery & turned towards the congregation the most remarkable of all was an old man with a long stick in his hand whose business it was to keep the congregation awake during sermon & who kept parading up and down the church...”

The Revd R.R. Rawlins, writing in 1827, describes the interior of the church as it then was and, no doubt, had been for most of the previous century. His description is confirmed by William Adam's, *Gem of the Peak*, 1843 and repeated in the *History of Matlock Parish Church* 1925 by W.N. Statham who may have been relying also on oral tradition and the memories of his family. He himself knew the church as it

was in 1870. The church had galleries on three sides supported by iron pillars. There was a curved, plaster ceiling adorned with paintings of the four Evangelists and allegorical figures of a decidedly polemical character, one representing the Christian religion trampling on the crescent and Koran and another of Faith, holding a cross and a Bible and trampling on a papal tiara and missal. In addition to these main subjects cherubs were used 'to fill up any blank spaces'. Above the singing loft in the west gallery was a fresco of David with his harp, attended by two angels and, behind these, figures of Death as a skeleton and Father Time, scythe in hand. Sir Stephen Glynne whose visit to the church in May 1840 we have already noted refers only to the paintings of the evangelists on the centre of the nave ceiling which he thought were 'apparently of the 17th Century'. Archdeacon Butler in 1823 had commented that the ceiling was 'ornamented with bad paintings'. On either side of the chancel arch were paintings of Moses and Aaron. These were favourite subjects of the period and the surviving examples at Hope parish church in the north of the county are, no doubt, very similar to the paintings formerly at Matlock. The charity boards of this period, of course, still remain in the baptistery and on the west wall of the north aisle. Wall paintings were once more introduced into the interior of the church at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1898 A.O. Hemming completed a decorative scheme in the chancel the main features of which were an Agnus Dei above the East window and two large-scale censings

PLAN OF THE CHURCH



Engraving of the church in 1843 by Orlando Jewitt ▲

son-in-law to Sir Joseph Paxton. According to W.N. Statham, the form of the east window was copied from a window in the church of St John the Baptist at Meopham in Kent. If

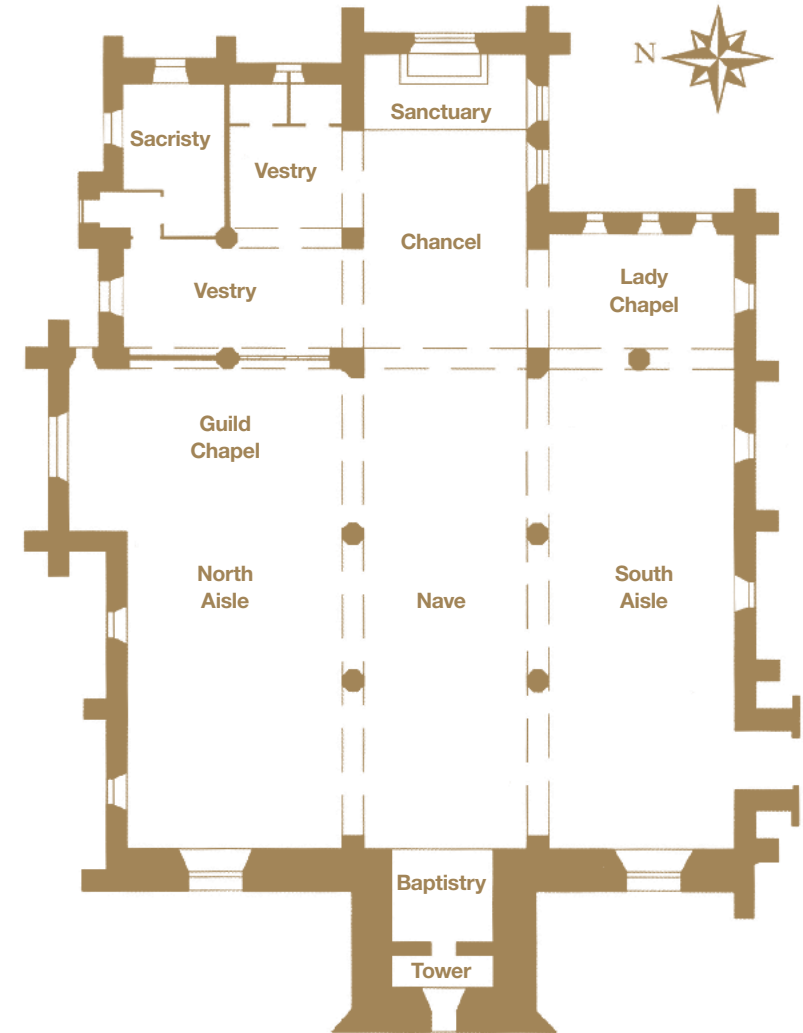
the original is indeed in the Decorated style of the early fourteenth century, the copy lacks the refined delicacy one would have expected. Its heavy mullions and tracery are much more characteristic of the High Victorian era. The two windows to the south of the sanctuary were originally

angels below to either side of the window. Originally the background to the figures was ornamented with IHS scrolls but these were later removed. The main figures however survived until the 1950s. (A.O. Hemming had provided the complete decorative scheme at St. Mary's, Cromford, which still survives, recently conserved and renewed, and his success there prompted his employment at Matlock).

THE PRESENT BUILDING

The Victorian restoration took place in stages over a long period. The former chancel was rebuilt in 1859, although a part of the north wall, containing a medieval aumbry, now concealed by modern oak doors, was allowed to remain standing. The work was carried out to the designs of G.H. Stokes,

separated by a doorway and their present arrangement results from the addition of the Lady Chapel to the south of the chancel in 1897. The opening of the archway into the chapel necessitated the loss of the doorway and the two windows' being set side by side. At this time the south aisle was once again reconstructed and enlarged by P.H. Currey of Derby, an architect whom Professor Pevsner considered 'worthy of being better known', commending especially his 'sound and sensitive churches' (Christ Church, Holloway is a particularly fine and large-scale local example). The three-bay nave had already in 1871 been rebuilt by Benjamin Wilson of Derby, an architect whose work included the new church at Swanwick, the Town Hall at Ashbourne and (now-demolished) an extension to Alfreton Hall.



THE CHANCEL

Here is situated the High Altar where the Eucharist is celebrated on Sundays and greater festivals.

To mark the particular significance of the sanctuary as the earthly meeting point between God and man, a lamp burns perpetually here in its ruby glass. This lamp serves also as the Parish Church's memorial to the men of Matlock who gave their lives in the Second World War. Their names are inscribed in a book in a window recess on the south side of the chancel. Advent Hunstone of Tideswell carved the clergy and choir stalls in oak to a design by W.N. Statham. The Rector's stall on the south side has a figure of the Good Shepherd. A figure of St Giles appears on the corresponding stall on the north side.

All this chancel woodwork was dedicated in 1908. Five years later, the same designer and craftsman added the present pulpit with the panelling and canopy work at the lectern. In 1969 the sanctuary was much improved by the removal of dark oak panelling, the riddel posts and curtains around the altar, the cleaning of the stonework and a redecoration scheme, the aim of which was to restore a simple dignity and beauty to the area where attention is concentrated at the Church's principal act of worship. Until the 1980s, there were two seventeenth century chairs set against the north wall of the sanctuary. These having been stolen, two walnut chairs in the Art Nouveau style stand in their place. The kneelers at the altar rail, designed by the Revd L.N. Childs, were made in 1970 by a group of seven people associated with the church, with the help of and under the

direction of the designer. The theme of the design, which is the creation of the world, is peculiarly appropriate at this point since, when the communicant kneels to receive the Blessed Sacrament, God mediates his living presence, in answer to faith, in and through the created Elements.

THE SIDE CHAPELS

The clergy of St Giles' serve three altars. In addition to the High Altar, there are altars in the two side chapels. The Lady Chapel, set apart in honour of Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, is situated at the east end of the south aisle. In this chapel, in a fine modern aumbry, the Blessed Sacrament is perpetually reserved.

The aumbry, which is set in the pillar to the left of the altar, has a fluted bronze door. In accordance with the usual custom, a white light burns before the Reserved Sacrament to declare the presence of Our Lord, the Light of the world, there made known to us in the forms of Bread and Wine. Because of this holy presence, the Lady Chapel is reserved for prayer. Visitors should enter only for that purpose and should preserve absolute silence. In the north aisle there is another chapel of considerable interest. It represents a revival in the modern age of the spirit behind the medieval guild chapels. This expressed itself in the will to consecrate to God art, craft, work and human relationships in industry, trade and society, leisure and adventure. The modern Guild Chapel in St Giles', dedicated in 1955, was furnished



Guild Altar and credence table designed by Cohn Shewring ▲

entirely by gifts from local industries and crafts. The centrepiece is the altar, made of Hopton stone, sensitively designed by Cohn Shewring, who also designed an aumbry and lamp for the Lady Chapel.

THE FONT

This is the most ancient object in the church and must date from the early twelfth century. By the middle of the nineteenth century, however, it had been removed from the church and buried in the Rectory garden. It was, no doubt, discarded when, at some time in the eighteenth century, a 'marble basin' was substituted to accord with contemporary standards of taste. A Victorian 'Gothic' font was installed in 1871. This in its turn was displaced when the Norman font was restored to its original use



The Ancient Font ▲

in 1924. At this time the wall and doorway behind the font were introduced to define the baptistery area.

The base upon which the font rests is certainly ancient but may not originally have served its present purpose. The carvings with which it is adorned have been variously interpreted but their true significance remains obscure. Why or when the upper part of the font itself was damaged is not now known. There may have been a holy water stoup here (cf. the Youlgreave font now at Elton) or perhaps a crucifix has succumbed to the violence of sixteenth or seventeenth century iconoclasts.



The King's Head Carving ▲

Immediately above the font may be seen a wooden carving of a king's head. This is the only surviving roof boss from the medieval church.

STAINED GLASS

The east window, designed and made by Lawrence Lee (1909 - 2011) and installed in 1969, is among the finest modern glass in Derbyshire. As a tablet in the sanctuary records, the window was given in memory of the Bailey family of the Butts, Matlock 1838-1938. The artist has written the following notes about his work:

"In general, the design is an attempt to express the central doctrine of Christianity — the Incarnation — by means of symbolism rather than figures... the first sketches were based on very primitive signs to represent concepts of man and God.

The signs are the earth coloured Y figure (man reaching out to God) and the blue inverted Y figure (God reaching out to man),



15th century oak door ▲



▼ The East Window

the ascending and descending branches interlocking to enclose a diamond-shaped space. The Christian apologist might argue that this space remained unfulfilled until the coming of Christ. In the present case the fulfilment is expressed by the threefold circle, i.e. the inner shape - the spirit of man; the purple circle - the human intellect; and the outer green circle - the body.

Descending from the top tracery is a form to suggest the richness of God available to man, entering the sphere of man at a narrow point where the only recognisable figure in the window is seen as the Christ crucified (This image has a formal function as a means of linking the tracery with the main lights and overcoming the heavy blackness of the stonework). The Incarnation is thus seen as the deliberate limitation of God to the scale of human tragedy. In the outer lights the rich green and red bands form an earthly frame on which the complex but rich patterns of man's activities are imposed at intervals until they reach the other - worldly forms in the tracery".

A considered appreciation of Lawrence Lee's later oeuvre, expressly including our Matlock window within a list of its best examples, is given in an obituary notice in *The Times* of 30 April 2011: 'Lee designed windows that could not be pigeonholed as either "modern" or "traditional". Although many were entirely abstract, he went on to produce windows that were a fusion of figurative, symbolic and abstract principles in a style all of his own which was flexible enough to encompass a

wide variety of concepts and subjects.' The writer perceptively notes that Lee's work was 'informed by a spirituality not fettered by conventional religiosity'.

The present east window replaces a Victorian window, perhaps by one of the Gibbs brothers or William Warrington, which in 1930 had been coated in black paint, an act of barbarism explained by the then general hostility to High Victorian art.

In addition to the east window of the chancel, Matlock Church possesses other interesting glass. A roundel, nine inches in diameter, containing glass of the fifteenth century, brought from elsewhere in the 1890s, was cleaned and repaired in 1983 by the York Glaziers' Trust. The glass, a fragment of a composition representing the adoration of the Holy Trinity, has now been set in the upper light of the south aisle window next to the Lady Chapel.



Dove in the Lady Chapel window ▲

The head of God the Father, the partial figure of a dove, symbolising the Holy Spirit, and one arm of a crucifix remain, together with

an angel's wing, a censer and a pinnacle, originally, no doubt, from an architectural canopy.

The south windows of the chancel, one of 1908, depicting Christ blessing the children, the other of 1922, illustrating the Angel of the Nativity appearing to the Shepherds and the Resurrection of Our Lord, both the work of Heaton, Butler and Bayne, replaced, in the subdued colours characteristic of this firm, two somewhat garish windows of about 1860 (which survived in store until 1969) (The bearded shepherd in the Nativity scene is a representation of Canon Kewley, Rector of Matlock from 1887 to 1922).

The west window of the south aisle is by the Kempe firm and was given in 1914. The firm was then owned by W.E. Tower, Kempe's nephew, and his rebus may be seen in a tracery light, super-imposed on the well-known 'wheatsheaf' mark. The glass illustrates the Crucified Lord with adoring saints, including St Giles, St Chad, St Hugh of Lincoln and St Werburgh in the left hand light and the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Peter, St Stephen and St Luke in the right hand light. St Luke is included no doubt because the window was in memory of Dr Hunter, physician to Smedley's Hydro, and his wife.

The small window nearby is the work of Alexander Gibbs, introduced in 1870, and artistically and technically much superior to the window of the following year, formerly in the Lady Chapel, which, designed by his brother Charles A. Smith, represented Eli and

the infant Samuel. The iconography of the temptation of Eve would have been familiar to Victorian church people from the steel engravings in their family bibles. The choice of subject may have been prompted by the contemporary controversy surrounding the publication of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*, although from the earliest times many Christian thinkers had discounted the quasi-historical elements of the Genesis narrative to penetrate the inner core of its moral meaning. The lines of Alexander Pope in his *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* may serve to elucidate the form of the serpent, traditionally understood to be a Satanic incarnation, as it appears in the window:

“Eve's Tempter thus the
Rabbins have exprest,
A cherub's face, a Reptile
all the rest...”

The west window of the north aisle, depicting Christ enthroned in majesty flanked by archangels, was inserted in 1893. It is a late production by Clayton and Bell and replaces earlier stained glass of which nothing is now known. The archangels are identified by their emblems. St Michael, below, is in armour and carries a shield and sword. St Gabriel carries the lilies of the Annunciation. On the other side Raphael holds a fish - for the explanation of which one must turn to the deuterocanonical book of Tobit. Also depicted in the window are the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist.



The Archangel Raphael ▲

The (much inferior) north window of the Guild Chapel illustrating the Ascension of Our Lord and dating from 1882, is the work of the London firm of T. Baillie & Co. These details may be gleaned from a very faded inscription in the lower section of the central light. That the design shows no trace of the influence of the contemporary Aesthetic Movement may be explained by its being among the last works of its maker, Thomas Baillie. His business, having been begun in 1838, ceased trading in 1883. The garish colouring and conventional composition of

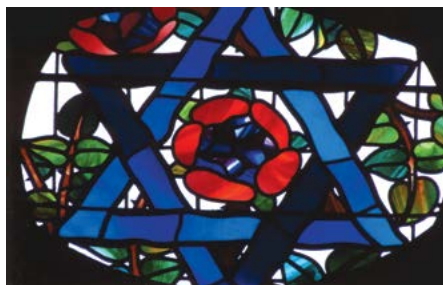
the window are characteristic of (especially) the commercial work of the earlier period and were by 1882 out of fashion in up-to-date artistic circles where subdued, not to say sometimes sombre, colouring and more accomplished figure drawing were expected.

Two windows are the work of James Powell and Sons. The earlier dating from 1881 is in the north aisle*. One light contains a representation of the Good Shepherd and the other reproduces Holman Hunt's famous image of Christ as the Light of the World. The later window is in the Lady Chapel. Dating from 1900, it shows the Risen Christ surrounded by angel faces**. The exquisite painting of the dove symbolising the Holy Spirit in the upper tracery light should be noted.

(*See *Derby Mercury* June 1, 1881, page 3)

(** See *Parish Magazine* July 1900)

Above the chancel arch is a small window of 1993 by Susan Mathews based on the design by J Aldam Heaton of a window now



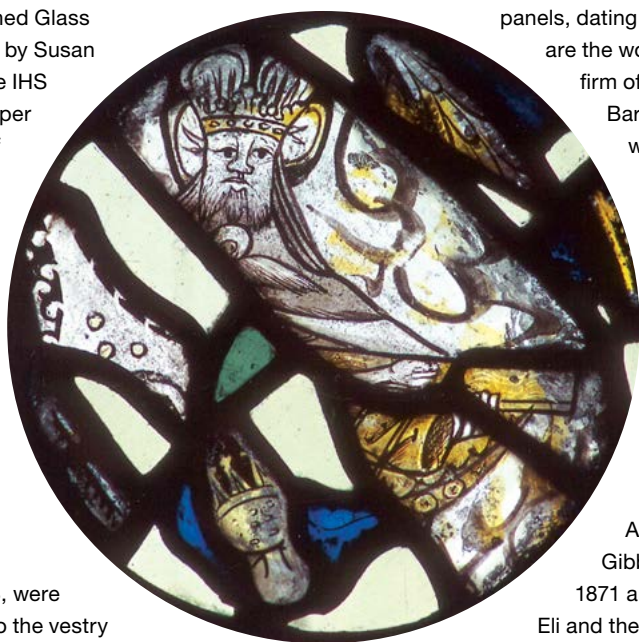
Window above the Chancel arch ▲

▼ The West window of the North Aisle



in the Ely Stained Glass Museum. Also by Susan Mathews is the IHS motif in the upper tracery light of a window in the south aisle. This was introduced in 2004.

Glass panels removed from the church of St James, Derby, closed in 1993, were introduced into the vestry window in 2004. Depicting pairs of angels, vested in dalmatics, each guarding the entrance to a shrine, the



panels, dating from c.1880, are the work of the firm of Lavers and Barraud and were probably designed by N.J. Westlake or under his direction.

In 2007 the window in the Lady Chapel by Charles Alexander Gibbs, dating from 1871 and depicting Eli and the infant Samuel, was replaced by a new window designed by David Pilkington and made by Michael Stokes. The main light displays the text of the Magnificat in sand-blasted lettering. (The glass proved too hard for hand-engraving). The design also incorporates the Marian motifs of the sun, the moon and the twelve stars.

A jewel-like border of coloured glass scintillates with the changing colours of the liturgical year. In the trefoil light at the top a small diamond-shaped panel of fourteenth century German glass, displaying stylised foliage in a cruciform pattern, is set in hand-made glass in subtly-varied shades of gold and pink. The window was a gift from the



14th century glass in the Lady Chapel ▲

donor in memory of his parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Violet Drackley.

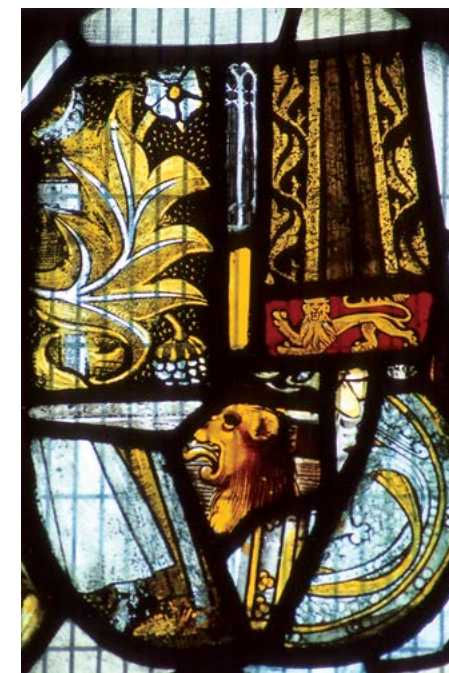


Window in the Lady Chapel ▲

The main tracery light of the south window of the Lady Chapel which otherwise consists of clear glass now contains, in a modern setting designed by David Pilkington and made by Michael Stokes in 2010, a panel of fifteenth century French glass depicting an angel with a thurible. The remarkable detail that the angel also holds an incense boat of some kind should not be overlooked. The Matlock panel was originally the left hand half of a pair. As far as it has been possible to

discover, it seems that the two angels (taken together) supply a unique instance of angels depicted, in either medieval or later glass, as holding at once both censers and incense boats. The modern lettering of the song of the angels at Bethlehem, Gloria in excelsis Deo, owes its yellow colour to the use of the same kind of silver stain as that employed for the medieval glass.

Also in 2007 a number of medieval fragments were incorporated in the main tracery light of the plain glass window in the north aisle.



15th century fragments in the north aisle window ▲

A memorial gift, the fragments derive from various sources and date from the fourteenth to the early sixteenth century.

THE CRANTSSES

Recently conserved, one of six surviving crantses or maidens' garlands is displayed in a glass case in the choir vestry, the others are in store. Each consists of a crown-shaped wooden frame wrapped in paper, adorned with paper rosettes and holding a variety of paper tokens or emblems: a fan, ribbons or a handkerchief. There are traces of polychrome decoration. Before the church was 'restored' in the mid-nineteenth century, it is said that 'well over thirty' were suspended from the old galleries. Although many garlands remain at Abbot's Ann in Hampshire, where garlands were still being made and used as late as 1974, few historic specimens survive in other English churches. Local examples may be found also at Ashford-in-the-Water, Trusley and at Ilam in Dovedale. The custom of carrying garlands before the corpses of unmarried females on their way to the grave was of ancient origin. St Augustine, St Jerome and other early writers allude to the practice of placing crowns at the head of deceased virgins. Ophelia in Hamlet was *allowed her virgin crants* (the reading is that of the Second and Third Quartos) despite her suicide. The crantses, or garlands, were hung up after the funeral in some conspicuous situation in the church in memory of the departed. From William Adam, whose *Gem of the Peak* first appeared in 1838, we learn that the custom



The recently conserved crants ▲

was then obsolete in Matlock. The remaining specimens must therefore date, at the latest, from the early nineteenth century and may well be older. Unlike examples elsewhere, the Matlock crantses are not identified by commemorative inscriptions.

THE WOOLLEY TOMB

Now placed under the west window of the south aisle, having been moved there from the east end of the north aisle in 1907, this altar tomb is that of Anthony Woolley of Riber, who died in 1578, and his wife. The upper slab is of alabaster, and on it are incised figures of the man and his wife, and

their six children. Round the margin of the tomb runs the following inscription:

“ Here lyeth the bodies of anthonie woolley and agnes his wyefe wch anthonie dyethe iiiiij daye of september in the yere of our Lorde m d lxxviiij (aged) lxxij on whose soules God hathe taken mercy on. ”

Professor Pevsner was almost certainly correct in his suggested attribution of this memorial to the Royleys of Burton-on-Trent. Similar work may be found in many Midland churches. At this period alabaster was still being quarried at Chellaston, near Derby. The Woolley family were prominent inhabitants of the district for many generations. The British Library has a large collection of manuscript material assembled by Adam Woolley in the early nineteenth century towards a projected but unwritten history of Derbyshire. In the Lady Chapel above the altar is to be seen an eighteenth century funeral hatchment displaying the Woolley coat of arms:

“ sable a chevron vairé or and gules between three maidens' heads affrontée coupé at the shoulders proper crined or. ”

OTHER MEMORIALS

B. Bryan, *Matlock Manor and Parish*, records the inscriptions on all the memorial tablets in the church existing at the date of publication. (1903). Since then three large stone panels have been fixed to the wall of the north aisle recording the names of the Matlock men who fell in the First World War. In the Lady Chapel an alabaster tablet has the inscription:

“ Ad majorem Dei gloriam/ et in piam memoriam/ Charlottae/ Edward Shefford Lyttel/ conjugis dilectissimae/ quae/ in brachia sempiterna Christi/ transmigravit/ a.d. quint. Id. Oct. MCMXVI/ Et laetati sunt quia requiescunt/ et deduxit eos in portum optabilem. (To the greater glory of God and in dutiful memory of Charlotte, the beloved wife of Edward Shefford Lyttel, who passed over into the everlasting arms of Christ on 11th October 1915. 'Then are they glad, because they are at rest: and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be'.) ”

The quotation is from Psalm 107 and does not follow the Latin of the Vulgate, the standard text of St Jerome's version of the Bible, but appears to be a translation from the English of the Prayer Book as given above.

A memorial in the Guild Chapel is worthy of special attention. Its inscription reads:

“ To the Memory/ of/ Captn W. Cumming of the 83d British Regt/ and 9th Portugese Cacadoros/ who/ having fought in the Battles/ of/ Oporto, Talavera, Buzaco/ and Fuentes de Onoro,/ fell in an attack on the French outposts/ near Bayonne,/ October 9 1813,/ in the 30th Year of his Age/ This Tablet was erected by his Brothers/ in whose esteem and affection he had/ that place to which Firmness/ of Mind and Urbanity of/ Manners justly entitle/ their Possessor. ”

This memorial which had become dirty and difficult to read was cleaned and conserved in 2008 by Skillington Workshop. The cleaning revealed that the Derbyshire alabaster of the 'Gothick' detail was remarkably pure and white for its late date and that the main panel is almost certainly formed from the local Ashford Black Marble. It may be compared with the memorial on the north wall of the sanctuary in the chancel. Recently much information about the Cumming family has emerged. Benjamin Bryan's, *History of Matlock* had already recorded that 'James Cumming, in practice as a surgeon at Buxton but a native of Matlock' was drowned with his young son in a boating accident on the river Derwent in 1852. It has now been established that James's father, Joseph Notzel Cumming, had been the Duke of Devonshire's Land Agent and had subsequently kept the Old Bath Hotel at Matlock Bath which his widow continued to run for many years after her husband's death in 1820. Joseph Notzel was the eldest brother of the Captain William Cumming of the memorial. James was consequently William's nephew. William George Cumming, to give him his full name, was born in 1787. He had another brother, confusingly called George William. Yet another brother among those who commissioned the memorial was the Revd James Cumming (1777 - 1861), Rector of North Runcton in Norfolk, Professor of Chemistry at Cambridge, Fellow of the Royal Society and author of *A Manual of Electro-Dynamics* and other works. The cost of the recent conservation of the memorial was

defrayed by contributions from Matlock Town Council, the Ernest Bailey Trust and the national War Memorials Trust as well as from private individuals.

In the chancel are brasses to two former Rectors. That to Henry Smith reads:

“ *Hic iacet Hen/ricus: Smith quo/ ndam istius Ecc/lesiae Rector qui/ mortem obit: Anno/ Doni 1640/ Divinus Medicus Musicus.* ”

(His will, dated 1634, bequeathed all his books and instruments to his nephew 'hoping that his father would breed him up a scholar'.) The other brass commemorates Joseph Fern who died in 1717.

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Arranged around the walls of the church is a series of fourteen pictures depicting Our Lord's last journey, from his appearance before Pontius Pilate to his entombment. These are known as the Stations of the Cross and are the focus of a devotion held



Our Lord meets his Blessed Mother - one of the stations of the Cross ▲

on Good Friday, from time to time in Lent and on other appropriate occasions. The artist who prepared the designs from which the prints were made was Thomas Noyes Lewis (1863-1946). He had exhibited at the Royal Academy between 1898 and 1904 and was well known in his day as a book-illustrator and painter, mostly of devotional subjects.

Like the statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child in the south aisle, the Stations came from the former church of St Francis, Hollingwood, in the parish of Staveley. The Stations were remounted and reframed in 1995 when they were installed here.

MUSIC AT MATLOCK

Until recently the organ in use at St Giles was a two manual instrument with pedals and was a 1996 rebuilding by Michael Thompson of Burton-on-Trent of an earlier three manual instrument erected in 1908 by J.H. Adkins of Derby. That in its turn had replaced, and perhaps included pipework from, an organ built in 1873 by Brindley and Foster of Sheffield. A previous organ had been installed in the old west gallery in 1844, the subscription list for which is still preserved in the contemporary parish register. Before 1820 Flight and Robson, 'organ builders to the Prince Regent', had supplied the earliest organ now known to have been placed in the church and this may have been a barrel-organ of the kind then much favoured by country parishes. The present organ is an electric instrument introduced in 2010. Both the surviving organ cases are the

work of Advent Hunstone of Tideswell and were originally made for the Adkins organ before the Great War. During most of the nineteenth century and probably before, a small orchestra frequently also accompanied the singing of services. The church band was said to have consisted in 1870 of 'fiddles, a clarinet and a bassoon'. Another source records that Phoebe Bown led the choir and played the 'cello in Matlock Church for many years. Already by the thirtieth year of her age, in 1802, she was widely famous as an eccentric character: 'Both jockey, cow-herd and musician'. A more distinguished figure from this district, Thomas Greatorex, became organist of Westminster Abbey in 1820. He was born in 1758, the son of Anthony Greatorex, a leading local musician and composer. Evidence for musical activity at an earlier period is rather scanty. There were organ builders at Wirksworth in 1503 when William and Nicholas Stroke are mentioned in the Calendar of Patent Rolls (see W.L. Sumner 'The Organ', Page 104). Although, as already noted, Henry Smith, Rector of Matlock, is described on his brass in the chancel as, inter alia, a musician, the instruments he bequeathed to his nephew in 1634 are regrettably not themselves specified. Of some two hundred local sixteenth to eighteenth century wills and inventories examined recently, only one or two indicate the testator's musical interest. Two or three 'pairs of old virginals', a dulcimer, a drum and a trumpet provided the only known instrumental music for the Matlock of the period up to 1750.

THE BELLS

THE CHURCHYARD

The older, lower, part of the churchyard, containing many seventeenth and eighteenth century monuments, repays inspection. There are moving epitaphs; the lettering and design of the stones, too, frequently display a refined distinction lacking in some Victorian and more recent work. The use of local stone for the monuments, now weathered and having acquired the patina of age, successfully ensures a harmonious and aesthetically pleasing setting for the church building. The two gravestones to members of the Dawber family from the early part of the twentieth century deserve particular attention. Sir Guy Dawber, famous for his understanding of the tradition of English vernacular building, was the architect in 1897 of the Chapel of St John the Baptist on Masson hillside, the interior of which has fine Arts and Crafts furnishings and fittings. At one time a chapel-of-ease to St Giles, St John's is now in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches. The Dawber family lived in Derwent Avenue and their grave stones, to the west of the north aisle of the church, were clearly designed by Sir Guy or under his influence, though his name is commemorated on one of them. The lichgate at the lower entrance to the churchyard was designed and carved by Advent Hunstone of Tideswell in 1908. At that time the eighteenth century stone gate posts here were moved outwards to allow room for the new structure and the boundary wall adapted to give aesthetic coherence to the architectural composition.

In the angle of the churchyard formed between the south face of the tower and the west wall of the south aisle of the church stands a sundial which is itself a listed structure, Grade II, although it replaces, and has probably made use of the base of, a much older, medieval, parish cross. The upper end of the churchyard affords the visitor fine views of Matlock and the Derwent valley. The large modern cross on Pic Tor is the town war memorial.

SIGNS AND SYMBOLS



The founder's mark of Ralph Heathcote on the old fifth bell, an ancient symbol of good fortune, within a medieval letter 'h'.



15th century masons' marks on the interior tower walls

*From rock to rock reverberated swells -
Hark! - the glad musick of the village bells...**

Bell	Note	Weight	Inscription
Tenor	F	14-0-0	I unto those that liveth well do toll their welcome passing bell. G. Hedderley fecit 1791. Recast A.D. 1904. Marian Wildgoose.
7 th	G	10-1-6	"Praise our God all ye his servants". The gift of Margaret Harrison of Dean Hill. A.D. 1904.
6 th	A	8-2-4	Jesus be our speed, 1626. Recast A.D.1904. In memoriam, Ann Hopkinson.
5 th	B ^b	7-3-1	Jno Woolley, Jno Wood, Ch.Wardens. Lester and Pack fecit 1767. Recast 1904. J.W.Kewley, Rector. J. Sladen, W.N. Statham, Churchwardens.
4 th	C	6-3-22	The Revd. Geo. Holcombe Rector, R. Mason, W.Godward C.Wards. G.H. 1791. Recast A.D. 1904.
3 ^d	D	5-3-27	Remunerabit calum benefactoribus meis. F. Walker, R.B.: S.T.: C.W., D.H., fecit 1718. Recast A.D. 1904.
2 nd	E	5-0-24	Ad Dei gloriam gratias pro Rectore referentes D.D.H. et C. Staples 1904.
Treble	F	4-2-22	In memory of Robert Wildgoose J.P. Praise the Lord O my soul and forget not all his Benefits. A.D. 1904.

These bells were cast or recast in 1904 by Messrs. Mears and Stainbank of the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, London and were rehung on ballbearings by John Taylor & Co in 1936.

Pre-Reformation Bell. Old Fifth

5 th	A	9-0-0	S(an)c(t)a Maria Magdalena O(ra) P(ro) N(obis) (with fylfot cross mark.) (i.e. St. Mary Magdalene, pray for us)
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The fylfot cross within a Gothic form of the letter 'h' also on the inscription band was the founder's mark of Ralph Heathcote of Chesterfield, who died in 1502. He was the first of his family to engage in bell founding. Six successive generations of Heathcotes continued the art until the middle of the seventeenth century but the Matlock bell is believed to be the oldest of their surviving bells.

*William Lisle Bowles, Monody written at Matlock, October 1791. The poetry of the Revd W.L. Bowles was savagely attacked by Lord Byron but warmly commended by S. T. Coleridge, in the first chapter of his Biographia Literaria where he particularly notices the Monody written at Matlock.

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Matlock Parish Church is a listed building Grade II* and is included within the Old Matlock Conservation Area. The official 'listing' with a technical description of the church may be consulted at the Derbyshire Record Office, New Street, Matlock.

The surviving parish registers, now deposited with the other parochial archives in the Derbyshire Record Office, begin in the year 1637. The church itself, however, retains a Book of Homilies reprinted 'by Authority of the Kings most Excellent Majesty' in 1633. A note in an English Secretary hand on the first page of the first homily informs us that 'This Boock belongeth to the parish church of Matlock Bought by Anthony Simpson at notingham of Mr Rockit the prise Eight shillings ye 5th of fabruary 1635'. The book, printed by 'Iohn Norton for loyce Norton and Richard Whitaker', has a contemporary, provincial, calf binding, recently repaired.

O gracious Gyle, of pore folk chef patroun,
 Medycyne to seke in ther dystresse,
 To alle needy sheeld and proteccyoun,
 Reffute to wrecchis, ther damages to redresse,
 Folk that were ded restoryng to quyknese,
 Sith thou of God were chose to be so good,
 Pray for our synnys, pray for our wikkidnesse,
 To Crist lesu that boughte us with his blood,

Cast vp-on us thy goodly pitous yee,
 To our requestis thyn eris doun enclyne,
 For the love of lesu and Marye,
 Born in Bedlem, she a pure virgyne,
 And as thou were tryacle and medycyne
 To kyng Charlis, whan he in myschef stood,
 Teche us the weye by thi gostly doctryne,
 To love that lord that bought us with his blood.

Geyn our enemyes wich ben in noumbre thre,
 The flessh the world the dredful fel serpent,
 Of thy grace and mercyfull pyte,
 To thi servauntis that serve the of entent
 Ageyn al trouble be with hem present,
 Maugre the fend and his furious mood,
 Gracious Gyle, be neuer from us absent
 For love of lesu that bouhte us with his blood.

We putte our trust and our affeccyoun
 In thi most faithful prudent gouernaunce,
 Be thow our sheld, our pavys and sheltroun,
 That were so famous by myracles in substance,
 Wrought by thy merit in Germanye & Fraunce,
 Maugre leviathan, mankyndes fo moost wood,
 Ageyn whos werre haue us in remembraunce
 To-fore that lord wich bouht us with his blood.

John Lydgate (c. 1370 - 1451)

HYMN FOR ST GILES DAY

Christ our Lord, our loving Saviour,
Thou thyself our light and day,
Grant to us a pure intention
That on this our feast we may
With thy saints in joy abounding
Praise thy name in tuneful lay.

He who fled from fame and rumour
That alone thy name should be
Solely his delight and pleasure
As thy service made him free
Knew in thee what grace can merit,
Losing self to live in thee.

As the prophet in the desert,
Nurtured by the ravens' fare,
Of the brooklet's water drinking,
Great Elias' worthy heir,
Giles, the hermit in the forest,
Lived to own his Father's care

How the hunted hind had sought him,
Finding refuge at his gate,
Made the king to marvel nobly
At the hermit's holy state.
Triune God, to thee for ever
Speed the souls who fly death's fate.

Giles, our saint, assist our worship.
Pray for us that we may sing
Always in this house to honour
Him the Lord of Life, the King.
Christ who healed the crippled beggar
Limping praises heavenward wing.

John Drackley August 1968

(The above hymn has been sung at the church every year on St Giles' Day for the last forty-four years)

PLEASE PRAY FOR US

The God whom Christians worship is the Creator and Preserver of the whole earth. All times and places are his. Yet, since general truths live in their particular instances, churches are the specific local emblems of God's universal presence.

Matlock Parish Church, from its foundation in Norman times, has offered to successive generations a centre where the meaning of human lives might be discovered in the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith. Here, each age has sought to interpret for itself and to transmit to posterity the unbroken tradition of the gospel.

In our time, too, Christian people still come 'to kneel Where prayer has been valid', to adore God and to receive the Bread of Life.

As, day-by-day, the Eucharist is celebrated in this parish church, transitory events and experiences; being presented at the altar, gain an eternal dimension. Our Lord, both Priest and Victim in the Holy Mysteries, recreates his people's imperfect offering to unite it and them with his one, all-sufficient sacrifice of love.

