Middleton-On-The-Wolds, St. Andrew

The Church of St Andrew is an ancient stone edifice, built in the latter part of the Norman era, on the site of one mentioned in the Domesday book. It consists of a chancel, nave, aisles, South porch, and a Western tower containing six bells, and a clock presented by an anonymous donor. The Church has a pyramid-topped tower, an inverted boat shaped roof and stands on a hill overlooking the village.

The chancel, which is unusually long (40 ft by 21 ft) was erected about the year 1280. The inside of the walls was built in local chalk in the nineteenth century. In the chancel are three ancient sedilia, the piscina and a curious aumbry. A niche in the chancel arch contains a bronze age beaker, circa 2,000 BC, which was discovered in a local gravel pit in recent years. The chancel is illuminated either side by tall lancet windows. Seven of them were re-glassed in 1981 with stained glass leaded lights in richly coloured symbolic designs by Mr. Younger working in collaboration with Mr Sims, the York architect. The three windows at the North side represent God the Holy Trinity, Alpha and Omega symbolise God The Father, The Creator, the Beginning and the Ending. The ChioRho and star design stands for Jesus Christ. The dove descending into the cruciform halo speaks of God the Holy Spirit. Seven is the scriptural number for completion, fulfilment and perfection. Each window has three vertical bands representing the spiritual dimensions of life, and four bands representing the material world shot through with the Spirit. Where these bands intersect are twelve points of bright colour, twelve being the scriptural number for the Universal Churcha.

The windows looking South correspond with those on the North, representing the material elements of Air, Earth, Water and Fire. "Air" with a suggestion of star motifs corresponds with God the Creator and in this connection the alpha represents the compass. "Earth" links in with God the Son, and incorporates the idea of the seasons of the year, sun/moon shapes and harvest colours. "Water" recalls the grace of God's Spirit in baptism and the chalice and twelve brightly coloured grapes symbolise Holy Communion. The fourth window, "Fire", overlooking the sanctuary is composed of fiery reds and ambers and incorporates the cross of St Andrewa.

The nave was erected about 1360, it contains two arcades of sturdy Norman pillars surmounted by pointed arches. One pillar is octagonal and set curiously out of line with the points of the compass. The West end of the North arcade has a carving of two grotesque faces under the corbel.

It is thought that the font is from the twelfth century. The Church registers date from 1678. The organ-was purchased at a cost of £200; it was presented in 1876.

There are two ancient gravestones from a Church that once existed at Kiplingcotes, the figure on one of these is said to represent the founder of the Church.

The Church underwent a thorough restoration in 1873 by J M Teale of Doncaster at a cost of £3000. The tower, which had been erect-ed in lieu of a small octagonal turret with dwarfed spire added in the previous century, was rebuilt, as were the walls of the aisles, and new roofs were placed on the nave and the chancel, which were at the same time re-seated with pitchpine benches.

There were originally two bells in St. Andrews Church. 'Lost villages of England' (Beresford) p66 re Kiplingcotes, quotes one William Wilkinson, yeoman, 1689, "*There was a chapel and the lesser of the two bells in Middleton Church was brought thither when the tower was demolished*". Both the bells were recast in 1799 for J R Jerram records Middleton; 1. THOs MEARS of LONDON FECIT 1799, 2. THOMAS MEARS of LONDON FECIT 1799. The treble weighed 2.0.6, and the tenor 3.0.4.b" During the restoration of 1873 the two bells were removed from the tower, recast by Taylors in 1873 into the current fourth bell and were placed in the tower when restoration was completed b ". The third and fifth bells were added four years later, the second and the new treble were added after a further seven years and the tenor was added just before the turn of the century.

Details of the bells.

Date Diameters Weight

Treble 1884 26½ " 4.1.25

2nd 1884 29½" 5.3.15

3rd 1877 31½" 5.1.18

4th 1873 33 5/8" 6.3.2

5th 1877 37 3/8" 9.1.12

Tenor 1897 42" 14.0.13 in the key of G.

Inscriptions on bells.

Treble; J:TAYLOR AN CO FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1884

2nd; J:TAYLOR AN CO FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1884

3rd; J:TAYLOR & CO FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1877

4th; J:TAYLOR & CO FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1873

5th; J:TAYLOR & CO FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1877

Tenor; \*AUDITE ET VENITE\*VENITE ET AUDITE 1897 (Listen and come, come and listen) Line 2; line of leaf decoration Waist; (T) a Taylor medallion.

When the Beverley and District Society was formed in 1946, Mr. Ted Dooks represented Middleton-on-the-Wolds at the first meeting in the vestry room of Holy Trinity Church, Hull. Mr. Dooks was elected as a member of the first committee. Other Middleton ringers of that time were Joe Dunn and son Wilf (who were joiners and undertakers), Erny Parker, and a local schoolmaster Mr. Goodrick. In 1957 the bells fell silent when the bearings and gudgeon pins became worn. Neglect then aggravated the situation, until all six bells reached a dangerous condition and needed rehanging. In 1972 the Parochial Church Council launched an appeal to raise £800 for their renovation, and an article appeared in The Drif-field Times to publicise the fact. Mr. Dooks and Mr. Parker returned to the ringing room to teach a new band how to chime the bells. When the bells had been rehung change ringing began once again and the bells were rung regularly for services.

The top of the tower became unstable and ringing ceased again in 1980. Then in March 1981 six hefty clock weights plunged forty feet into the vestry below, demolishing a bench and smashing the stone flagged floor.

By the time the tower was made safe and the clock repaired, many of the older members of the band had died and none of the other ringers returned.

The Reverend H. Lesley Artley came to the Benefice in 1989, and he soon let it be known that he wished St. Andrews bells to be rung again by a local band. A band from St. Mary's, Beverley rang the bells for harvest festival, 1990, which coincided with the Bever-ley and District Society's ringing festival week, and Mr. Derek Watson set up a display in the Church. The possibility of start-ing a new band was discussed. As a result of this a new band was formed and on 22nd November 1990, a team of Society ringers began tuition. A team of Middleton ringers rang the bells for the Easter Sunday service 1991, for the first time in eleven years. This band and several new learners ring the bells regularly for services and weddings. There are no records of quarter peals or peals in the ringing room at present.

Janet Richards

Notes

a. Information sheet, 1981, by Rev. Roy Howe and Shirley Howe (previous Rector to the village and his wife).

b. Researched by George A. Dawson, who visited and inspected the bells in 1968 when cataloguing bells Ln the whole of the East Riding.

c. Diameters measured from the bells by George A. Dawson.