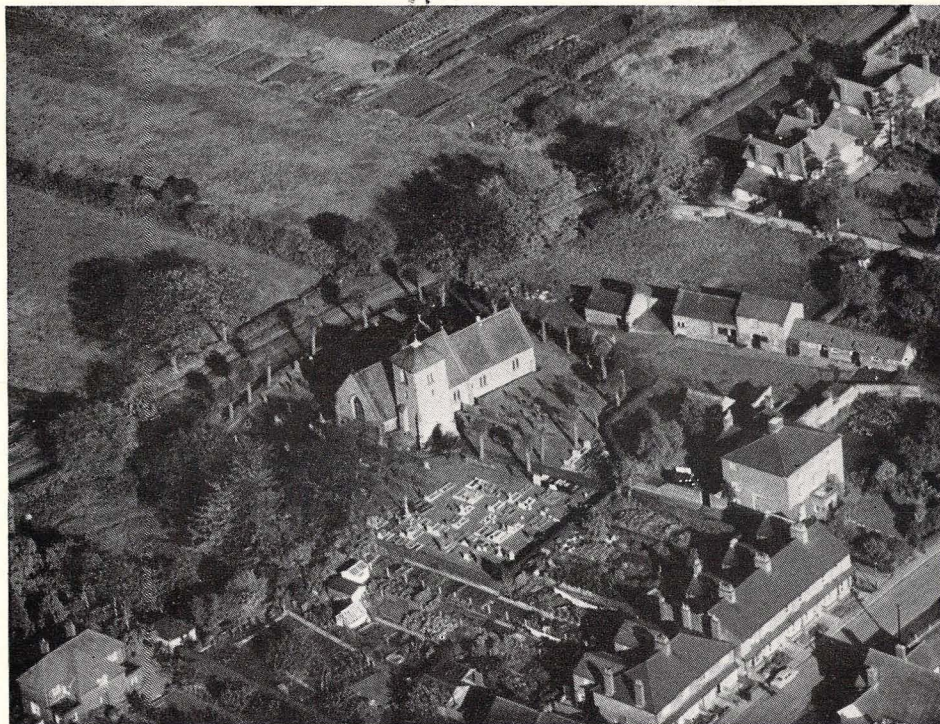


SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S KIRBY MUXLOE

DIOCESE OF LEICESTER



"St. Bartholomew's in its Setting" (1963)

Aerofilms Ltd.

Church Guide

DECEMBER, 1969

TWO SHILLINGS
TEN NEW PENCE

*to coincide with the Ruby Year of Kirby Muxloe's existence as a
separate parish (1930—1970).*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ARE MADE TO THE FOLLOWING:

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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KIRBY MUXLOE CHURCH GUIDE

Brief History of the Parish

KIRBY, later Kirby Muxloe, founded by the Danes probably in the late ninth or tenth century, appears in Domesday Book (1086) as Carbi, "Caeri's settlement"; it then contained a working population of eight. Although this place-name does not have the same derivation as the common "Kirk-by," denoting a place with a pre-Conquest church, it would be wrong to infer that Kirby may not have had its small place of worship at this time. The advowson of the mother church at Glenfield (Clenefeld), where Domesday Book mentioned a priest, was one of six Leicestershire churches given to the Normandy Abbey of St. Evroult by Hugh de Grantemesnil in 1081. Kirby is known to have had a church by 1168, but the present restored mid-nineteenth century building, dates from the Early Decorated Period, the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.

The Lincoln Bishops' Registers disclose (in Latin) in the Rolls of Hugh of Welles that between c. 1209 and 1220 "Matthew de Cantelupe was presented to the living of Glenfield by the abbot of St. Evroult" and that "he has Braunston Chapel which has a resident chaplain, also Kirby where he should officiate three days in the week." Glenfield, with its two chapelries, remained under the Bishops of Lincoln until Leicester Archdeaconry was transferred to the Diocese of Peterborough in 1839. A further transfer took place with the creation of Leicester Diocese in 1927, and within the next ten years both chapelries became separate livings.

Kirby, though a chapelry for at least eight centuries, has seen the rites of baptism and burial administered for at least the last 450 years. It is recorded that in 1306 the baptism of Simon Pakeman, son of the Lord of the Manor, of Pakeman's Place (the site of Kirby Castle), took place at Glenfield.

Ralph Petch, in his will (1508), though asking for burial in the chancel of Glenfield church, bequeathed 3s. 4d. "for the maintenance of the Chapel of St. Bartholomew of Kyrby" and also gave one ewe and a pullet to the Sanctuary of that chapel. Three years later Elizabeth Kent, also buried at Glenfield, left 3s. 4d. and "a torche" to Kirby chapel. Another interesting early bequest, that of a quarter of malt, was made by Robert Duckett, rector of Glenfield, who died in 1531. Other wills show that burials were taking place both in Kirby Church and churchyard by 1514. Kirby churchwardens are first mentioned in 1510 complaining about Glenfield churchyard fence being out of repair.

The *Muxloe* part of the village name appears to date from later the same century. By 1582, the Kirby suffix required to differentiate the village from Kirkby Mallory is coming into use as *Muckelbye*, and thereafter many variants, including *Mullox*, *Muckle* (possibly meaning "great") and *Muckles(s)*, are regularly found. This last word became the usual addition until the late eighteenth century, after which *Muxloe* was the accepted form, despite earlier objections. For example, on the fly-leaf of "A Register Book of Kerby Muxloe" begun in 1703, is written "Kirby Muckless not Muxloe." The Muxloes settled at nearby Desford, and c. 1723—27 a member of that family lived at Kirby Frith Hall, but otherwise they had no proved connection with Kirby Muxloe.

Kirby's population, after fluctuating around the hundred mark for five centuries, more than trebled during the nineteenth century, due to residential development consequent upon nearby Leicester's thriving industrial activity. Seemingly only the growth of non-conformity in the Parish prevented an enforced enlargement, with its attendant dangers, of Kirby's small but historic church. An order in Council dated 29th July, 1930, constituted Kirby Muxloe (then with a population of 1,500) with Leicester Forest a separate Ecclesiastical Parish, which had boundaries somewhat more extensive than the civil; the present population totals around 10,000. The Leicester Forest area, since its disafforestation in 1628, had

been extraparochial to Kirby. The Leicester Forest East housing growth in recent years necessitated the building of a daughter church on the Hinckley Road near the Kirby Lane/ Red Cow corner. That fine modern church, dedicated to St. Andrew, and consecrated by the Bishop of Leicester on 21st September, 1966, replaces the temporary accommodation that had served, with increasing inadequacy, that end of the Parish for so long.¹

(Note: Kirby's sister chapelry, Braunstone, became separated from Glenfield in 1937.)

Dedication

THE earliest known reference to the dedication of Kirby Church to St. Bartholomew occurs in the Petch will (1508) mentioned earlier. Other churches within Leicester Diocese similarly dedicated include Foston, Quorndon, Snarestone and Sproxton.

Bartholomew, the name means son of *Talmi*, was one of the twelve Apostles, but little is known about him. Some theologians identify him with the Nathaniel mentioned in St. John's Gospel. Bartholomew is supposed to have been flayed to death in Armenia. In the western Church, St. Bartholomew's Day is kept on 24th August.

Interior of the Church

ALTHOUGH there are no fine monuments, the neat clean and intimate atmosphere of this small 70 foot long church (only 150 sittings), consisting of simple nave, chancel and sanctuary, each separated by a single low step, is not without its appeal.

1. Further particulars of St. Andrew's Church and the history of Leicester Forest East are contained in a separate booklet. (1966).

The Nave

A £1,000 restoration under the Leicester architect, Henry Goddard, took place in 1848-50, with further minor work to 1859; the Church Building Society contributed a grant of £40. The initial, costly but most necessary, phase involved re-roofing and re-building the north wall of the nave. The Archdeacon's 1842 Visitation had mentioned the bad state of the roof on this side: slates were missing and the wet was coming in. (The previous major roof repairs appear to have been in 1710 when slaters were paid £13 10s. 0d.). The church was re-furnished, the old deal pews, "yellow-painted" pulpit and the wooden chancel screen being removed. The low Deal gallery at the west end, erected after 1670 (no faculty survives), was demolished in the early 1900s but marks showing through the plastered walls remain where the gallery was once supported; it must have obscured the rather ill-placed lancet window, probably original, in the south wall. Thomas Bradbury was paid ten shillings for sitting in the gallery with the children during morning service from Easter, 1884, to Easter, 1885. "The large ancient square font upon a circular base" under the gallery, referred to in Nichols' History, was broken up when the gallery was dismantled. A new font was placed near the south-west corner of the nave.

The only coloured glass in the west window is a small square showing the Pascal Lamb accompanied (as is customary) by the banner of St. George. This symbol occurs again in the centre panel of the reredos. The previous window, given by T. H. Pares, of Kirby Frith, in 1858, was blown out by the blast of two parachute mines during the late evening of 19th November, 1940. This loss is a poignant reminder of the blitz, which made Kirby Muxloe, in the words of one national newspaper, "the worst bombed village in Britain." Miraculously there were no fatalities but the Free Church received a direct hit and several houses in Church Road, Main Street and Station Road had to be demolished. 350 other houses suffered damage of varying degree. For three months the Free Church had use of St. Bartholomew's for separate services.

On the north wall of the nave is an Oak Tablet surmounted by a Crucifix, which was originally positioned to the right of the chancel arch near the south wall of the nave. The inscription on this World War I Memorial reads:

1914—1919

THE EAST WINDOW IS PLACED IN THIS CHURCH BY THOMAS AND BEATRICE HOLLIS TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE LOVED MEMORY OF THEIR ELDEST SON JOHN GORDON HOLLIS LIEUT. 7TH LEICESTERS. KILLED ON THE SOMME JULY 14TH 1916 AGED 27 AND AS A PERPETUAL MEMORIAL OF THOSE MEN FROM THIS PARISH WHO ALSO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR KING AND COUNTRY WHOSE NAMES APPEAR BELOW.

Lieut. Col. D. H. Blunt, D.S.O. Herbert Bury. George Cullen. Charles Cullen. Frank Dixon. George Maddar. George Over. Cyril Russell. Harold Sleath. William Smith. Samuel Upton. Ernest E. Wilshere.

(For ease in reading, the short lines, in raised Roman capitals, of the Memorial itself, have not been respected).

Thomas Hollis, of Hollis Bros., timber merchants, lived at Barncroft, Stamford Road, Kirby Fields.

Next, proceeding eastwards along the north wall, will be found the DALRYMPLE two-light window (c. 1900) depicting St. Catharine and St. Dorothea. The nearby Vicar's Board "In affectionate Memory of our First Vicar" lists the six vicars who have served Kirby in its short independent life; these are listed later.

The only item of interest on the south side of the nave is the piscina at the east end of the wall. It is clearly older than that in the Sanctuary. Piscinas are traditionally found to the south of an altar, and this one suggests a nearby site of a subsidiary altar, most probably in pre-Reformation times, or the existence of the main altar in this position in those distant days when the church may have comprised nave alone. Clarification is impossible.



Design of Royal Coat of Arms, 1816-1837

Reproduced from "The Observer's Book of Heraldry,"
by permission of the publishers, Frederick Warne & Co. Ltd.

The Royal Coat of Arms

AN upward glance reveals the Royal Coat of Arms above the well-defined Chancel arch. Due to its dark colouration, the full complexities and beauty of the Arms' design may not be immediately apparent, but the Lion and the Unicorn (the Supporters) are easily seen, as are the flowing curves of the Mantling. At first sight, this seems to be the usual Royal Shield, divided into the well-known "Quarters":

ENGLAND 1	SCOTLAND 2
IRELAND 3	ENGLAND 4

England—three golden lions *passant* on a red field; Scotland—a red lion *rampant* within an intricate border; Ireland—a golden harp on a blue field. The whole is

encircled by the Garter inscribed: "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" ("Evil be to him who thinks evil of it").

A pair of binoculars aids fuller appreciation of the fine mane and beard of the Unicorn, with his delicate and magical hooves, securely tethered with a golden chain. At the top of the picture is a G.R. and below the Garter and above the motto is England's red rose, Scotland's thistle, and Ireland's little shamrock. A close re-examination of the shield itself reveals a minute shield superimposed in the centre, bearing the Arms of the Kingdom of HANOVER: it is in three parts. In the top left, two golden lions on a red field represent BRUNSWICK. At the right is the blue lion *rampant* of LUNEBURG, whose gold background is sown with small red hearts. In the base of the shield appears the white horse *courant* of WESTPHALIA on a red field. The whole is surmounted by the Crown of HANOVER. In the middle on a yet smaller shield, scarcely discernable, is the crown of CHARLEMAGNE. The presence of the Crown of Hanover, which replaced the Elector of Hanover's bonnet, enables the Coat of Arms to be dated between 1816 and 1837. In the earlier year the Congress of Vienna made Hanover a Kingdom.

Nichols, in 1811, mentioned a Royal Coat of Arms above the chancel arch. In 1853 the Arms were cleaned, painted, varnished and re-fixed for 14/6d.; it seems therefore that the old Arms had probably been previously brought up to date.

The Chancel

AS we move into the Chancel, note that the Bible on the walnut eagle lectern was given by Mrs. Knibb at Easter, 1917, and the New English Bible is in memory of Harry Ireland (the village plumber) who died in 1960.

The attractive chancel ceiling, decorated with fleurs-de-lis and ornate crosses, acts as a false roof and the timbers above it have recently been treated with a wood preservative.

The first organ, opened on 1st December, 1853, was installed in a day and a half by Nicholson of Leicester for £80, and the present instrument by J. Porritt of Leicester dates from 1901. On the case is a memorial plate to Horace Webster, Organist 1930-1963. On the right side of the organ is the Vestry door. A vestry was built in 1891-2, as part of a £300 Fund, which was also devoted to the laying of a tessellated floor in the Sanctuary and to modifications to the tower. The cost of the Vestry, enlarged in 1926 by M. A. Davey to plans by George Nott, was reduced by granite supplied from demolished Castle Farm out-buildings, and further defrayed by a £200 collection. A table in the Vestry was made in 1910 out of the old oak frame for Kirby's 1606 bell.

A small grey polished stone tablet, in red Roman capitals, is in memory of Alfred Whorlow, Canon Emeritus of Wakefield, and Kirby's first Vicar. The north window, depicting the Resurrection, was inserted in 1912 for £50 in memory of the Rev. George Postlethwaite, "curate"¹ of the Parish from 1894 to 1910, who lies buried on the other side of the wall. Three centuries earlier, the Archdeacon's Visitation for 1637 commented unfavourably on a boarded-up pane in this window, mentioning also holes in other windows "whereby owls get in and defile the chapel." Payments "to the Glasier" appear in the Churchwardens' Accounts in most years, the usual amount being six to eight shillings.

Burton, in 1622, wrote of eight coats of arms in the church, but by Nichols' time, only three remained, including one of the arms of Hastings (*Argent, a manuel Sable*—a black sleeve on a silver shield) then in the east window. The Hastings were Lords of the Manor from 1455-1630.² A later east window was given by Thomas H. Pares of the Leicestershire banking family, in 1858. At the suggestion of his son, Major Edward H. Pares, a Faculty was issued on 12th May, 1917,

1. Theoretically assistant curate; the rector of Glenfield was the curate of Kirby.
2. The last member of the Hastings family to reside regularly at Kirby was Walter Hastings (died 1616). Both he and his wife, Joyce, were buried at Kirby. No memorial survives.

for removing the three old panels in the east window on condition that they were inserted in other chancel windows. The Nativity and Baptism panels were duly inserted in the south chancel window, but the Crucifixion one does not survive.

The replaced east window is, with the Royal Coat of Arms, Kirby's greatest treasure. Though relatively modern and detailed, its colours and design, by Christopher Whall, are attractive. It was given, as already noted, by Thomas and Beatrice Hollis as a Memorial to their son and others of the Parish of Kirby, Glenfield and Braunstone, who had sacrificed their lives in World War I.

In the centre of the three-light window Christ, standing, is depicted with a Crown in his left hand: "Be Thou Faithful Unto Death and I Will Give Thee a Crown of Life." The Martyrdom of St. Andrew appears beneath. The left light shows St. George of England, armoured, with the slaying of the Dragon at the base. St. Michael of France in the right light, has Satan cast out of Heaven beneath. The mass of intricate small detail high up in this window includes the colourful miniature Royal Shield in the centre light and the tiger, badge of the Leicestershire Regiment, in the spandrels of the outer lights. (The internal outline of the present east window suggests that at some time in its chequered history, it was larger than is now the case).

The stone reredos, bought by public subscription in 1856 for £35 and supplied by Lindley and Farn of Leicester, comprises five panels. The Pascal Lamb is found in the centre between the sections devoted to the Lord's Prayer and the first four Commandments on the left and the remaining Commandments and the Apostles' Creed on the right. Observe the "Vine and Lilies" window to the right of the reredos.

A mural monument on the south Chancel wall comprises a large slate slab, surrounded by ornamental marble, with a broken pediment on top, and cherubs and flowers at the sides and cherubs beneath. The inscription reads: "*Near this Place*

lieth FRANCIS ST. JOHN ESQR. who died October ye 16, 1732, aetatis suae 45. When living, he ordered ys wall peice to be erected to his memory." His wife and a son were also buried in the Chancel. Francis St. John, of the Cold Overton family, lived at Kirby Frith c. 1727-32. Nichols mentions his Arms (*Argent on a chief Gules, two mullets pierced, surmounted by a crescent or*, = two silver stars, pierced, on a red field with a golden crescent above), but these have now disappeared.

The south window in the chancel, with St. Matthew in top centre, shows the Nativity in the left light and the Baptism in the right. Notice "the spirit of God descending like a dove" (Matthew III. 16)—the overuse of a vivid blue lessens the effect somewhat. The low-side window (more clearly seen from the outside) with its non-grille portion blocked up, supposedly enabled the Sanctus bell at the Elevation of the Host in the Mass of pre-Reformation times to be heard outside the church.

Electric light cost £56 to install in 1930. A plate near the light switches in the porch indicates that a bequest of Harry Moore (1878-1955), who farmed Thorneyfields, was devoted to the renewal of the installation in 1961. The solid fuel heating system was replaced by a gas-fired installation in 1967.

Church Plate

IN about 1830, some plate was stolen but a pewter plate and large cup remained, the latter inscribed "1634. *This Communion cupp is ye gift of Mr. Francis King for the use of the Chappel of Kerby Muchlesse in ye Parrish of Glenfield.*" Miss Ann Moore presented silver cup, paten and flagon on Christmas Day, 1849 and ironically the old cup was sold to defray the heavy restoration expenses! A silver chalice, still in regular use, and portable Communion set was bought in 1934 with a £25 bequest under Miss Oram's will.

Exterior

MUCH of the building is of white sandstone and gravel with some granite and stone rubble, but the north wall of the nave was re-built last century in blue Derbyshire stone. From the path on the north side the confused level of the roof lines is unpleasing to the eye (but note that "weathered green" lion recumbent somewhat ignobly and precariously on the chancel roof). It is a revelation to view the church to best advantage from the south-west corner of the churchyard. Some of the window tracery is thought to be original early Decorated Period work of about 1300; note again the low-side window on the south chancel wall and the blocked up doorway (compare the Priest's door shown on the Nichols' print).

The Tower and Bells

THE church porch is incorporated in the low "restored" south-west Tower, which is under 30 feet in height and is surmounted by a pyramid-roof complete with weathercock, originally supplied and set up in 1824 by Cort, Cort & Barston of Leicester for £4 10s. 0d. As late as 1835 the tower had a wooden top. Now the whole church is roofed with Swithland slates.

Bequests to the ringers in early wills suggest that the church had three bells in the late sixteenth century, but none of these survive. Three of the present ring of five bells are over 300 years old. Those dated 1606 and 1609 are inscribed: "BE . YT . KNOWNE . TO . ALL . THAT . DOTH . ME . SEE . THAT . NEWCOMBE . OF . LEICESTER . MADE . MEE." The older and heavier of these, re-cast in 1907 and additionally inscribed "*In memory of Gilbert and Jane Mee.*" weighs 7 cwt. 1 qr. 5 lb. and sounds A Flat. The third old bell, dated 1636, cast by Hugh Watts of Leicester, is inscribed:

"I.H.S. NAZARENVS . REX . IVDEORUM . FILI . DEI . MISERERE . MEI." ("Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, Son of God, Have Mercy on Me."). Two new bells cast by J. Taylor & Co. of Loughborough and dated 1909 are each inscribed: *"This Bell was Placed Here by the United Effort of the Parishioners."* In addition, one reads *"Praised be the Lord,"* and the other, *"The Lord's Name be Praised."*

A celebration ring of 5040 Doubles in 2 Methods lasting 2 hours 39 minutes was conducted on 19th June, 1909, by the late Ernest Morris, the authority on Leicestershire Campanology. The whole ring, unsafe after enforced wartime silence, was re-hung in 1946 at a cost of £256. The bells were recorded and first broadcast by B.B.C. Radio Leicester in 1968.

The increased ring caused Kirby's dialless tower clock and its original oak frame to be removed: later it was deposited in Newarke Houses Museum, Leicester. The Churchwardens' Accounts show that William Davis of Croft made it in 1720 for £8 1s. 0d. "and the old klok."

The Churchyard

PARTIAL levelling was effected a few years ago, and Kirby has several times received favourable mention in the Diocesan Tidy Churchyard competition. The oldest Headstones, immediately to the south of the church, include several dozen examples of Swithland slate artistry from the early eighteenth century onwards. Notable family groups include Carver, Forman, Spencer and Hooke. A gruesome skeleton is depicted on John Willson's head-stone in the most easterly row. West of the tower is a stone to Joseph Bir(t)chnell (1801-55) of Leicester, Swithland slate headstone engraver, several examples of whose work are still to be found at Kirby and elsewhere. He was related to the Wilkinson family of Kirby.

The Registers

PARISH Registers of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, always kept separate from those for Glenfield, date, with a few gaps, from 1597. They exist, albeit poorly kept, for the disturbed Civil War and Commonwealth Period, including this entry, "*Robert Port was confirmed Pastor of Kirby Mucklesse by Authority of Parliament the 21st June 1649.*" Register details, for 1561 and 1566, survive amongst the Bishop's Transcripts in the Archdeaconry records in Leicester Museum. The earliest entry reads "*Elizabeth Jones, daughter of Thomas Jones, Gentyllman, chrystened the xxij (23) day maye (1561).*" Among the Burial entries for 1849 are "Edmund Watkins and William Moore (aged 21 and 25 respectively) lodging at Kirby Muxloe were killed upon the railroad," (then in course of construction).

The Registers and other Parish Chest contents have been deposited in the Leicestershire Record Office¹ since 1951. The Churchwardens' Accounts survive from 1704 and have been quoted elsewhere in this guide.

Services

IN 1835 there was one Sunday service, alternatively morning and afternoon and Holy Communion only 4 times a year. This had been the normal arrangement since before 1710. In 1859, 110 services were held with 22 weekday services during Lent and Holy Communion was celebrated monthly.

Sunday school membership increased from 30 to 70 between 1835 and 1838.

1. 57, New Walk, Leicester.

Vicars

Canon A. WHORLOW	...	1930-1932
Rev. G. E. SIMMS-REEVE	...	1932-1945
Rev. H. PAIGE HUDSON	...	1945-1950
Rev. C. M. WEDGWOOD	...	1950-1954
Canon C. G. STUART COX	...	1955-1969
Rev. L. F. BOWLES	1969-

The Patron of the living is the Lord Bishop of Leicester.

The Vicarage

THE old Vicarage, originally the National School, built “in the Swiss style” in 1858, was situated at Glenfield Lane corner. After the Barwell Road Council School opened in 1910, the old building became a Sunday School until the new Church Rooms in Main Street were built in 1924. The old School, occupied as a parsonage for the Curate from 1926 and for the Vicar from 1930, became remote from the village as Kirby’s growth spread southwards and the present house on Station Road has been the Vicarage since 1947.

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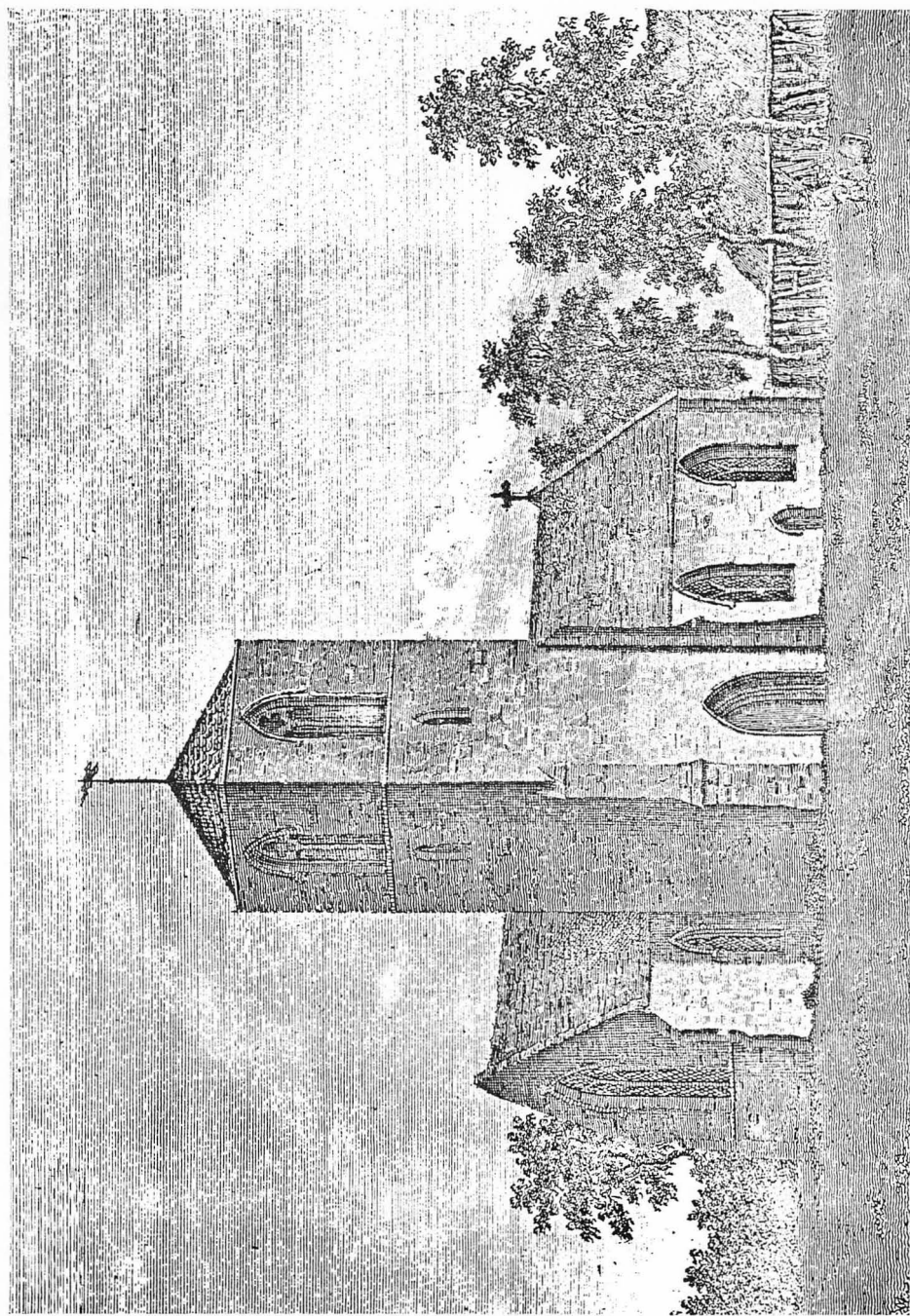
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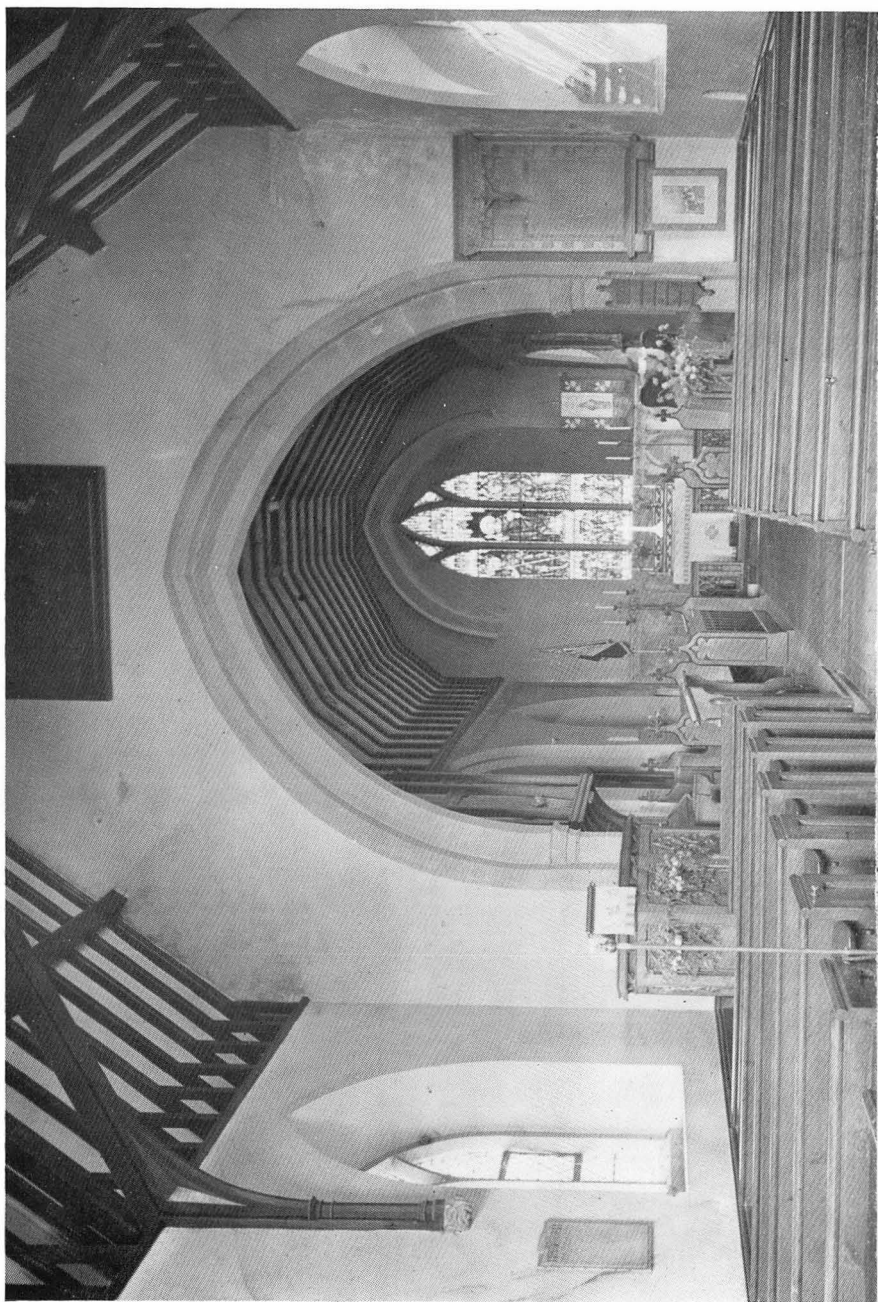
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- Archdeaconry Records (including Bishop's Transcripts, Visitation and Church Inspection Papers), Archives Department, Leicester City Museum, New Walk, Leicester.
- Bishops' Registers and Faculties at Lincoln Diocesan Record Office, Northamptonshire Record Office and Peterborough Diocesan Registry.
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- E. M. Dickson: *The Royal Arms in Kirby Church* (typescript notes).
- E. Morris: *Notes on Leicestershire Church Bells* (Library of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, The Guildhall, Leicester).

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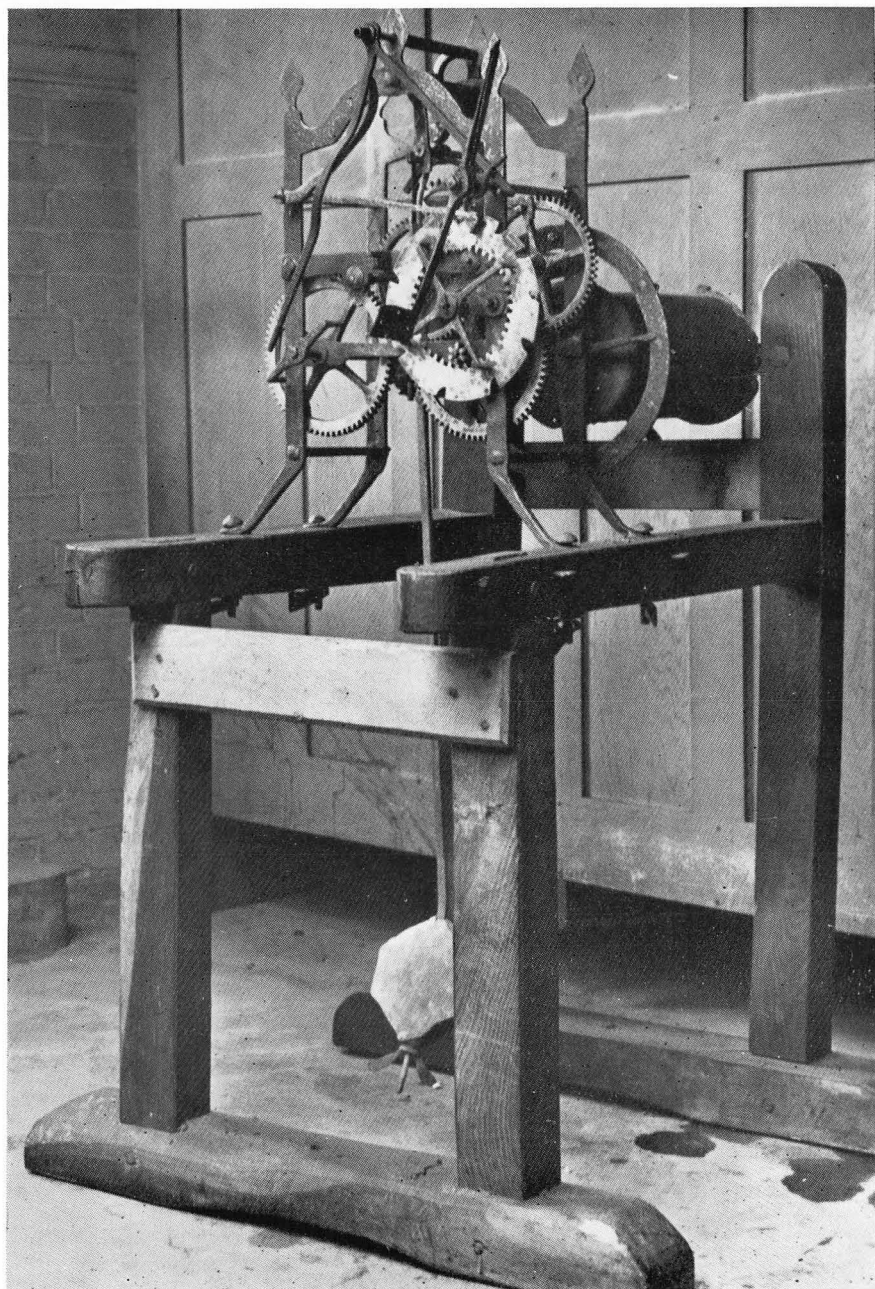


Engraving (?1792) reproduced from Nichols' "History of Leicestershire" Vol. IV, part ii (1811)



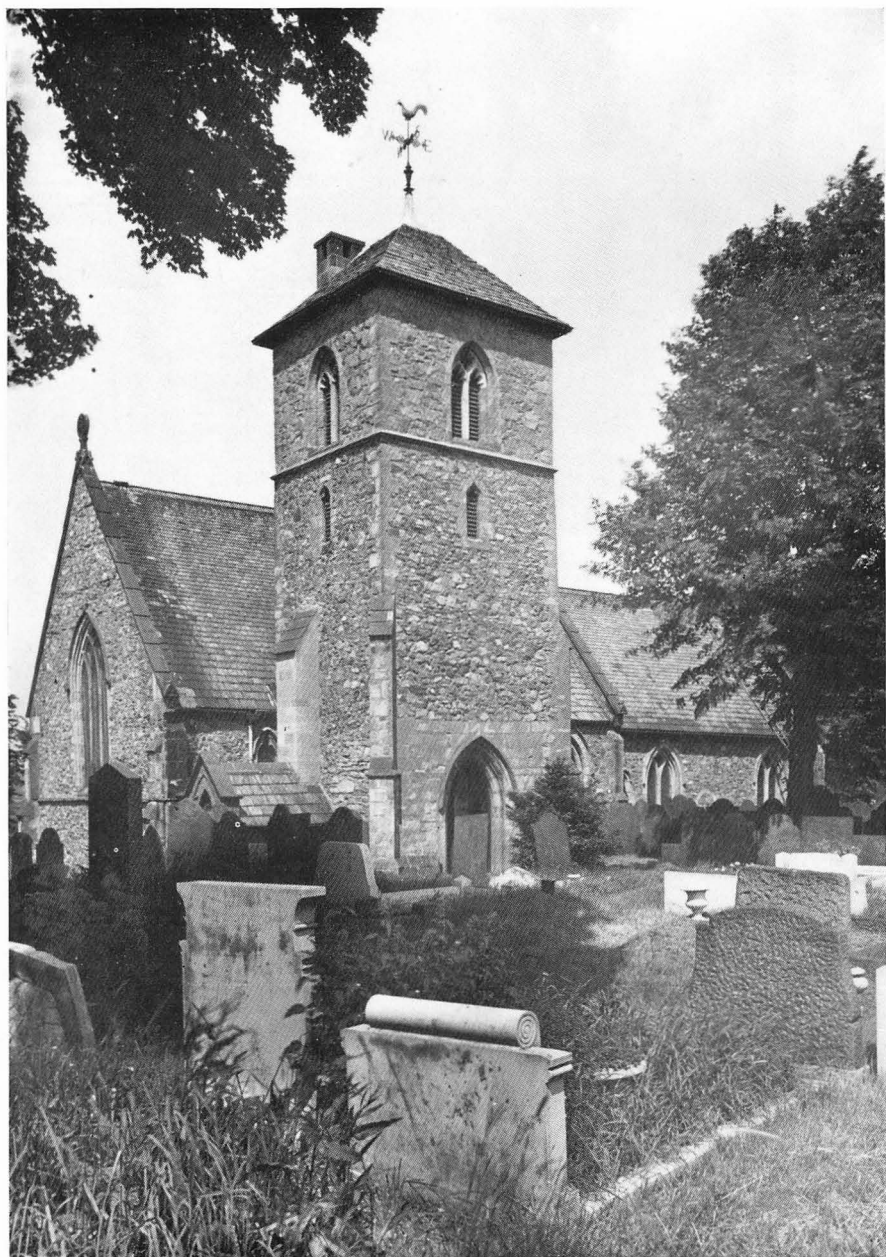
Interior looking East (1945)

Note the War Memorial in its former position.



The eighteenth century Clock
Now in Newarke Houses Museum, Leicester.

Leicester City Museums



Crown Copyright: National Monuments Record

The Church from the South-west (1945)

Note the gravestones in the foreground before part of this Section was levelled.