

A walk around St George's Church (Numbers in brackets refer to numbers on the plan)

The *Tower* (1) was probably first built early in the 13th century and rebuilt in the 17th to house the bells. It was reduced in size which leads to its unusual rectangular shape. The earliest complete arch in the church is from the 13th century and leads from the tower to the nave in Early English style. The large west window was added in the next century and later reset higher.

The *Nave* has a complicated architectural history. The first three nave arcades have 13th century round columns and bases, with rebuilt and heightened octagonal sections added in the 14th. The capitals are octagonal with one slightly different (2). In the mid-15th century the nave was extended eastwards when the new chancel was built. The small arches at the east end of the arcades probably used to open into chapels at the east end of each aisle. Alterations in 1996 included removing the choir stalls in the chancel and inserting the dais with the central Communion Table and moveable reading desk. The nave has a clerestory of four two-light windows each side, and a tie-beam roof sadly lacking its angels, which appear to date from the mid-15th century. One of the few remaining carved roof bosses could be a pelican, a medieval symbol of Christ.

At the west end of the *South Aisle* is an interesting memorial window (3) designed by Hugh Arnold in 1909. It is to John C Traylen, a Stamford architect who was responsible for repairs to many churches in the area, including St George's. In the 1880's he removed the box pews and galleries on three sides of the nave, which his predecessor Edward Browning had inserted in the remodelling of the church in the 1840's, and extended the aisles westwards adding both transepts. A few fragments of medieval glass can be seen in the south aisle (4). The *south transept* has photographs (5) illustrating early drawings of the original Garter windows in the chancel, and some modern glass (6). The octagonal font probably dates from the 15th century.

The *Chancel* with its magnificent roof, is the finest part of this historic church, built in the middle of the 15th century. It was financed by William de Bruges who was the first Garter King of Arms and is buried here. He ordered seven glazed windows to illustrate figures of the original 25 Knights of the Garter and scenes from the life of St George. Only a few fragments of any medieval glass remain in this church. In the south east window (7) is St Catherine with her wheel and St Anne teaching the Virgin

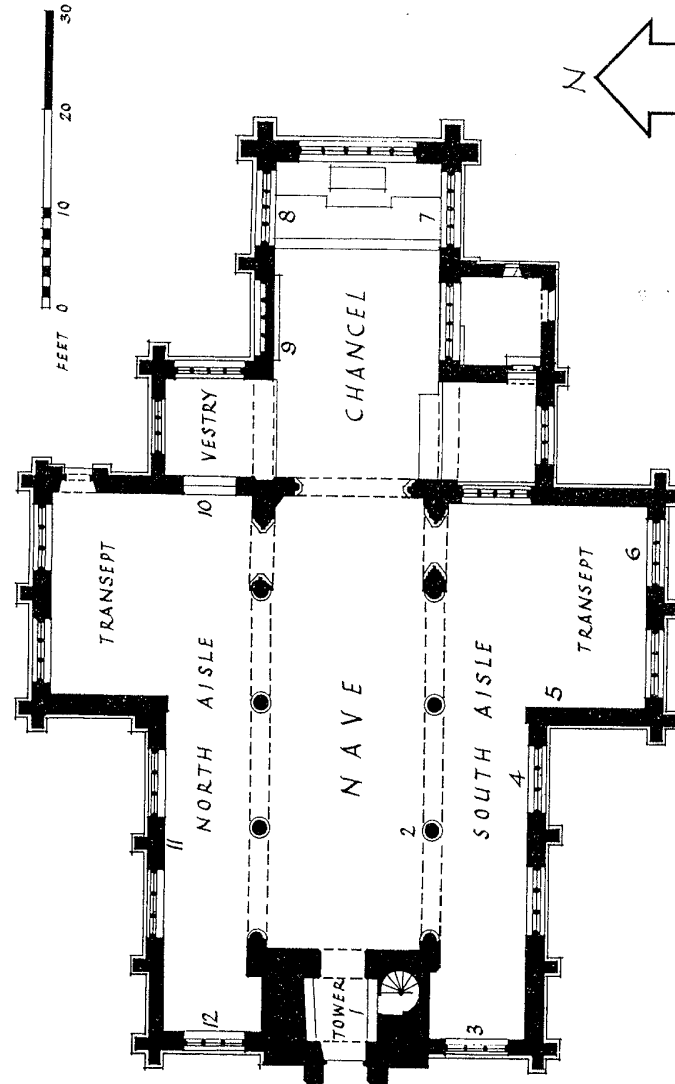
Mary to read and a mitred head - possibly St Thomas, all pre-dating de Bruges. The head of a knight - possibly Sir John de Lisle - is a rare example of de Bruges' portraits. The outer panels from 1871 show St George and St Paul, reminding us that these two parishes were amalgamated in 1552. The glass in the north eastern window (8) was assembled in 1732 using some of the garters that surrounded the original portraits of the knights, with later copies added. These "quarries" have the Garter motto: *Hony soyt qui mal y pense*". Two of de Bruges' windows were entirely removed in the 1870s

when the east wall was rebuilt and the vestry and organ chamber added.

The roof of the chancel has six fine angels, carved as requested in de Bruges' will of 1449, and repainted since. They carry shields with "Signs of the Passion" to aid worshippers in their contemplation of Christ's suffering on their behalf. He also had a beautiful rood screen carved, a small fragment of which is now inserted in the North Aisle (10). On the chancel north wall (9) is a particularly fine memorial to Sir Richard Cust and other family members inserted in 1797. Cust married into the Brownlow family and thus inherited nearby Belton House. Buried beneath the chancel in 1540 is David Cecil; his grandson was the famous William Cecil of Burghley House.

At the east end of the *North Aisle* is a small brass tablet (10) commemorating Tobie Norris (died 1626). He and his family were bell founders for about 100 years, latterly living in St Paul's Street. Many churches in the area, including this one, have bells from their foundry. On the north wall is a fine medieval memorial tablet in Old French (11) to Blanche, Lady Wake who died in 1379. She was buried in Greyfriars, now the site of Stamford Hospital. It was found during the rebuilding of High Street in 1966, (in a house where Tesco is now). Ten years later it was moved here with her coat of arms. Translated it means: "You who enter this house pray for Blanche, wife to Lord Wake, daughter of Henry Earl of Lancaster, on whom God have true mercy." More fragments of medieval glass are at the west end of the aisle, including a Garter quarry and some faces (12). The toilets below this were installed in 2010, along with the servery in the west end of the South Aisle, making the use of the church building more fitting for the 21st century.

There are many *memorial tablets* on the walls of the church commemorating members of the armed forces and died overseas, and families of clergy who ministered here. The *churchyard* has headstones mostly of limestone and a few slate; the earliest is dated 1699. They were moved to their current position around the wall in 1939. The whole of the exterior of the church appears in Perpendicular style (1350-1540), apart from the tower, with battlements throughout.



Welcome to St George's

I hope you enjoy your visit to this wonderful historical building. However, it is of course much more than an historical building. It is a living building. It is a place of worship, fellowship, learning and prayer. At the weekends it is alive with people of all ages; for ultimately the church is not a building but the people. This is a place where the church meets and has met for more than 9 centuries.

That balance of the building's historical roots and its contemporary use are a good picture of what it means to be a Christian. Christian faith is rooted in history. We believe that God sent his only Son, Jesus, into the world 2,000 years ago to show us His love and to deal with the problem of our sin, when He died on the cross. We believe that He rose from the dead and has opened up the way to eternal life. Yet the wonder is that these events of history can be a living part of our own individual lives and of the Christian community as we put our trust in Jesus Christ.

St George's, the historical building, stands as a symbol pointing us back 900 years to when it was built and 1100 more years to the coming of Jesus. St George's, the contemporary Christian community stands as a symbol pointing to the present day reality that God is still in the business in Jesus Christ, changing lives and bringing people to know Himself.

If you want the full package, you need to visit both St George's, the building and the people. We aim to be a place where faith can be expressed but also where questions can be asked and discoveries made. We'd love to see you!

Martyn Taylor
Rector

St George's Church, Stamford is a thriving evangelical church nestled in the heart of the town of Stamford. We have a mission to proclaim the gospel to everyone locally, but also have a role to play in the revitalisation of the church across Lincolnshire.

We are a church where:

- Jesus is at the centre;
- The Bible is our guide;
- And people matter

We are also a Resource Church, so we help other churches to grow, and flourish.

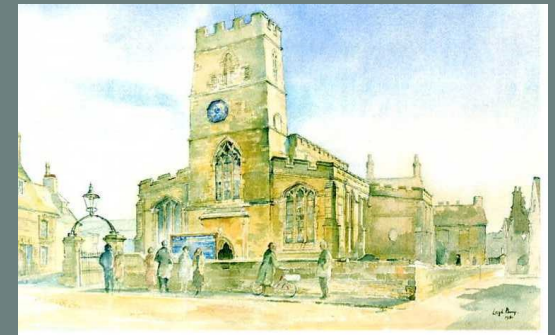
For further information please visit our website:
www.stgeorgeschurch.net

Church Services

1st Sunday	9.15 & 11am 6.30pm	All-Age Service Evening Service
2nd Sunday	9.15 & 11am 6.30pm	Holy Communion Evening Service
3rd Sunday	9.15 & 11am 6.30pm	Morning Service Evening Service
4th Sunday	9.15 & 11am 6.30pm	Morning Service Holy Communion
5th Sunday	9.15 & 11am 6.30pm	Morning Service Evening Service

1st and 3rd Wednesday at 12 Noon - Said Holy Communion

The Church Office
27-29 St George's Street
10am-2pm, Monday to Thursday
Tel: 01780 481800
office@stgeorgeschurch.net



HISTORY
AND WELCOME