

Welcome to Carbrooke Church
Here are included notes relating to the building,
history and particular items of interest around the church.

Carbrooke Church dominates the village, built on the only hill in the area, and with a 99 foot tower, it certainly is a focal point.

Originally there were two churches, Carbrooke Magna and Carbrooke Parva. This is the site of Magna, Carbrooke Parva was located left of the bridge on the Ovington Road at Caudle Springs. Carbrooke Parva, stopped being used around 1424 when the priest resigned and it is recorded as having fallen down shortly after this date, the stone was removed to the current site where Carbrooke Magna was extended.

Incidentally, the road connecting Carbrooke Magna and Carbrooke Parva is known as Drury Lane after the Vicar Peter Drury who used the route to travel between the two Churches.

The Church consists of a chancel, nave, north and south aisles, north and south porches and tower. The majority of the church, with a few exceptions, is of the Perpendicular period.

At first sight the Parish Church of St. Peter & St. Paul appears to be a typical 15th century perpendicular church - and it was indeed largely rebuilt during the 15th century. In fact it was given, along with other lands, by Matilda, Countess of Clare to the Knights Hospitallers when their order was founded in Carbrooke in 1193 and their Commandery (the only one in Norfolk) was built on what is now sheep-filled pasture-land to the south. There are several features in the church which date from the early 13th century. There is some speculation that the original church (before its extension and the addition of the nave in 15th Century) may have had a round tower, possibly with Saxon origins, but any evidence for this is almost completely obscured, the Chancel being the oldest part of the church. It was perhaps at this time that it was dedicated to 'St Peter and Paul'. The Commanderie was dissolved in 1540, by Henry viii when he cut his links with Rome. The building then became the village parish church.

(For more details on the Commanderie, and The Knights Hospitallers, see the two booklets 'Carbrooke and the Commanderie of the Knights Hospitallers' and 'The Knights Hospitallers, Who Were They?' produced by Carbrooke Heritage Project).

THE COMMANDERIE

extended over the field where the school now stands and the field behind the Church. When the foundations for the new school building were being dug, (c1995) a team from the Norfolk Archaeological unit held a dig and made some fascinating finds, unfortunately it was not possible to leave the remains on show, so the foundations were recovered and the school built on top, but it was very interesting for the children to get first hand experience of Archaeology.

Although the church looks to be in pretty good repair, the Quinquennial inspection showed that the tower is in serious need of repair, along with the roof and windows, and repair of these is expected to cost around £200,000!

If you are wandering around the outside of the church, you may be interested in noting these points;

The South porch is of a very late date compared with the rest of the nave, possibly late 15th Century. Notice its knapped flint work and how the outer doorway is almost Tudor in shape. The porch shelters the late 14th Century doorway into the church, which was designed by an architect who also designed the towers of the neighbouring churches at Ashill, Caston and Thompson. The South doorway is a beautiful ogee arch of the decorated period and has peculiar chamfer terminations. The heads which finish the dripstone are modern.

Look for building remains in fields behind.

Only faint crop marks reveal the site of the Carbrooke Commandery which was just South of the church. The Knights Hospitallers collected alms for the care and shelter of pilgrims to Jerusalem and military duties arose from this. The modern St. John's Ambulance Brigade is their direct descendant and uses the same cross on their badge.

The Chancel was the old church, the Nave being added in 15th Century.

The south side of the nave continues the work of the architect who designed the tower. There are fine perpendicular windows for both aisles and clerestory.

The plain parapet to the roof here is not repeated on the other side.

The chancel North and South windows are roughly the same period as the nave, but this tracery shows a different design which is by another architect whose work can be seen at Litcham, and Kings Lynn St. Nicholas. Here the windows are definitely inserted into earlier chancel walls, because the Priest's door has one chamfer and is 13th century (Early English).

Look for bricked up door to North Porch/vestry)

The North porch is now used as a vestry, so it must be entered from inside the church. It has a tierceron star-vaulted ceiling supporting a small room above which is reached by a turret staircase inside. It will be seen that this matches the rood loft stairs which have the same quatrefoil opening and were built at the same time as the nave and tower.

The tower, north porch and nave all have a special string basecourse running around them which marks the work of one architect who also worked at Norwich St. Giles, Blickling and Barton Turf during the first half of the 15th century

Walk round tower – look for cracks (caused by lightning strikes in 1950's) that have been repaired. The tower is 99 feet high with a fine West doorway which has a frieze of shields, quatrefoils and heads with their tongues out. These heads are intended to send evil away from the building. Above this fine doorway is a large four light window which was added later and is not part of the original composition.

Halfway up the tower are some fine 'sound holes' with tracery and shields. Then there are large three light belfry windows, and at the top we see a shallow battlemented parapet, perhaps rather mean for such a fine tower. George Crabbe writing in 1865 notes that "the ill-proportioned tower formerly had a short spire"

The six bells despite being hung very high in the tower are still rung regularly. The treble is by John Warner of London, 1914, The 2nd and 3rd by Robert Gurney of Bury, 1669, 4th and 5th by Brasyer of Norwich. 1450-1513, tenor by Edward Tooke of Norwich, 1678. The 5th bell has five errors in its Latin inscription, which is very strange for such a capable bell founder but indicates it might have been done by an apprentice.

War Memorial and Grave yard For both WW1&WW2

There are 3 Murrells mentioned on the War Memorial and many of the Murrell family can also be found in the graveyard!

Unfortunately the Murrell name was lost from Carbrooke, (No doubt a legacy of the First World War). The Murrell family, had been in the Parish since before 1557 (when parish records began here), the Minns family, first recorded in 1681 still lives on with family in the village. The family was united in 1893 with the marriage of Herbert Jeremiah Minns to Gertrude Edith Murrell.

A framed list of all those who have served as vicar (or Commander) of Carbrooke, dedicated to the memory of Church Warden and organist Nora Wace.

3 tombstones in floor of aisle with brasses removed

Lady Chapel – first of 3 stone altars with consecration crosses and a piscina in wall.

The south aisle is known as the Lady Chapel because it is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The stone altar or mensa is also medieval and was presented by the Rev and Mrs Chambers. The oak support was made by the local craftsman Mr Cecil Smith. On this altar is placed a heavy ancient Bible. The light cotton altar frontal used here was designed and painted by artist friends of Father George Chambers - Murray Smith and his wife. Plaster wall-plaques and other fabric paintings were also made by them in the early '30s.

The south side of the nave continues the work of the architect who designed the tower. There are fine perpendicular windows for both aisles and clerestory. It seems likely that this architect remodelled the existing walls because the South door and South aisle piscina are much older. The Lady chapel has an ogee headed piscina, notch heads and finial contemporary with the 14th century South doorway. They may have come from the church of Carbrooke Parva of which nothing remains today.

This is the area of the church reserved for quiet contemplation and prayer.

NAVE

As in many parish churches the Carbrooke lectern is in the form of a carved wooden eagle.

The sense of space, beauty and loftiness here is most striking and it effectively spoke to the people of 15 century Carbrooke of the greatness of God. The nave has five bays of soaring 15th century arcades on each side with a clerestory above. (Clerestory or clear storey: the Nave roof is higher than the aisle roofs and projects above. The walls of this projection form the 'clerestory' and the windows are the clerestory windows). The nave roof timbers are largely original 15th century. It is arch braced, enriched with large bosses of floral designs at the intersections. (Bosses = carved projections often of symbolic devices. The ones here are floral designs; those in Norwich Cathedral nave are especially interesting.)

Note the false hammer beams at the base of the arches in the form of angels. They are termed 'false' in the sense that the beams project from the walls, but do not in any way support the roof. The wall posts rest on smaller projecting wooden figures, and there is a decorative cornice. According to Francis Blomefield, writing in around 1740 the roof was adorned with images of our Saviour and his Apostles which were demolished at the time of the civil war. According to George Crabbe the winged angels holding shields are copies of one (the eastern most North side) that remained. The corbels supporting the principals are carved into figures, most of these as also most of the bosses of the roof are copied from the old ones that remained.

Angels were very important to the medieval congregations as they represented music and were guardian figures. In Carbrooke we are very well guarded by the angels with three rows of carved and stone angels in the nave alone.

The arch way leading to the tower is one of the best features of the church but is often not noticed as visitors look from the west to the east. It pays to stand back in the centre of the nave to appreciate its very fine proportions of this arch, reaching up as it does to within a few feet of the nave roof.

A bequest from a parishioner allowed us to install a modern and very effective heating system in 1996. It is so efficient that it blows the candles out on the nave altar!

There is a ringers' gallery with nice balustrading from the late 18th century, and an original door to the belfry stairs is still in position. The Royal Arms are late Hanoverian from the period 1816-37, carved on wood and coloured.

STAND IN NAVE AND LOOK AT CHANCEL ARCH

The chancel arch, like that of the tower, is beautifully proportioned.

A notable feature of this church is the three tiers of canopied and battlemented niches on each side of the chancel arch. The only other church with this feature is St. Giles, Norwich. There is a fine three light window above the chancel arch.

ROOD SCREEN.

The fine rood screen dates from the 15th century and is a fine and rich specimen of Perpendicular style work; Particularly interesting and unusual is the carved frieze near the top showing the instruments of Our Lord's Passion, - nails, hammer with pincers, scourge, seamless robe, dice, etc. Also there are the insignia of the patron saints, St. Peter and St. Paul. The screen was restored in the 19th Century and sadly lost the paintings of Saints and angels on the lower panels along with the colouring of the nave roof. The top Tudor-pattern moulding is more modern.

The rood was the cross of Christ often flanked by the figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John. It could be found in many places in the church but was often found on a beam (the rood beam) across the chancel arch. These were almost all lost at the time of the reformation. In Carbrooke only the turret steps to the rood loft, upper doorway and the rood screen remain as evidence.

Note the two small platforms or brackets, one either side of the centre ogee arch of the Rood Screen, that would once have held statues of St Peter and Paul.

Medieval Painting

High on the clerestory wall on the south side of the Nave, is evidence of the medieval painting that must have covered much of the wall space at one time.

Bottom door to Rood Loft (Only the stairs now remain in Carbrooke)

CHANCEL

Ordinary church services are held in the Chancel, a beautiful light and airy space. From about 1988 members of congregation were invited to 'donate' a chair, which are now used rather than the traditional pews. This area creates an informal and relaxing atmosphere in which we can meet together.

The chancel North and South windows are roughly the same period as the nave, but this tracery shows a different design which is by another architect whose work can be seen at Litcham, and Lynn St. Nicholas. Here the windows are definitely inserted into earlier chancel walls, because the Priest's door (on the south side) has one chamfer and is 13th century (Early English 1190-1280).

The east window is really beautiful, dating from about 1300 (Decorated style). It has five lights with cusped (pointed) intersected tracery and a quatrefoiled circle (divided in four) flanked by two smaller circles with trefoils (three divisions, which makes a lovely and unusual composition. Notice the Early English shafting and internal arch to this window. George Crabbe suggests it might have been brought from some other church in the early 1800's.

The stained glass in this window is of this century commemorating Mrs. Judith Chamberlain, who died in 1910, aged 26. This is another part of the church where angels feature.

Tombstones for Alpe and Feverall

Priests door in South wall

2-seat Sedilia, Clamshell Piscina

The piscina here is set into a window sill next to the 13th century double sedilia, which has circular shafts and moulded pointed arches. Notice the carved heads on it which are popularly thought to represent Matilda and her son.

Main altar – second of 3 stone altars with consecration crosses

The altar stone is the original medieval one which was dug up in the churchyard. Like the one in the N. aisle it has the usual five consecration crosses and it has chamfered edges. It was reconciled for use again as the High Altar on Easter Sunday in April 1954. The large wooden table, made by a village carpenter, was used here for a time and now stands at the West end of the nave. The panelling in the sanctuary, behind the altar and curtains, is made from: old pew ends and came from Thaxted in Essex. An 'all-seasons' frontal was made by the church needle craft group and dedicated for use in 1996.

Kneelers

The pews are furnished with brightly coloured cushions for those who wish to kneel for prayer. Most have these have been made by parishioners and friends of the church since 1997 as part of a major replacement programme.

Note names of craftsmen etched on plain glass in other windows (1740 to 1828)

Brass Aumbry on wall in sanctuary in memory of Father George

In the corner of the Sanctuary (the easternmost part of the chancel beyond the altar rail) is the aumbry, the cupboard in the wall where the altar vessels, and sometimes the sacraments (the bread and wine) were kept. This one is not old but was added in memory of Father George Chambers.

Tombs of Matilda and son James in front of altar steps (links with Hospitallers)

Just before the altar rails are the earliest identifiable tomb slabs in Norfolk. They both bear a cross rising from a stem surmounted by a knob, and have a Latin inscription which may be translated:

"Here lies buried a mother of the family of Clare by a soldier of which (family) England boasts herself renowned"

And "A son rests interred at the right hand of his mother. Returning to his own birth he has sought this harbour".

These date from the early 13th century and are presumed to refer to Matilda and her son. Matilda was the widow of Roger, Earl of Clare, who founded the Commandery here about 1193. She had two sons, Richard and James; the former is believed to have been buried at Clare, so it is probably James who is buried here, and is popularly supposed to be represented in the carving on the sedilia.

Wooden Altar

This wooden altar table made by the village carpenter and was used as the main altar at the east end of the church until the medieval stone altar was discovered buried in the churchyard. Now it is used, when services are held in the Nave.

Pulpit

Restored by Mr Weiring, who removed the old top and put a Gothic type top onto the Georgian bulbous base.

NORTH AISLE

St John the Baptist's Chapel – third of the three stone altars

The altar in the North aisle is one of three medieval altar stones or mensa (table), abolished during the Reformation but found under the step of the chancel doors and restored to its former position circa 1908. It is inscribed with five crosses to symbolise the sacred wounds of Christ which would have been incensed and anointed when the altar was consecrated. After the Reformation many altars were replaced with simple communion tables and the focus of the church was shifted to the pulpit. There is historical evidence that in the 15th Century there was a chapel here dedicated to St. John the Baptist, who was important to the Hospitallers.

Crucifix on the altar is a figure of Christ Triumphant on an Oak Cross, given in thanksgiving for the recovery of John Ware in 1936.

Oak Aumbry corner cupboard given by Mrs Chambers.

War memorial: There is a framed list of those who served during the First World War

SEATING – POPPY HEAD PEWS.

Before the 15th century the congregation stood in the nave for worship. Then simple wooden benches were introduced and these were later embellished with carved **bench-ends** and poppy head finials. We are not certain of the date of the pews at Carbrooke, but the quality of the carving indicates that they are quite early. There is an interesting variety of carved animals and figures - each one having a symbolic meaning. The **poppy heads** are the carved termination of the pews which usually take the form, as in Carbrooke church, of a trefoil of close-knit foliage. Many such carvings were destroyed during the Civil War but fortunately those in Carbrooke escaped.

ORGAN

The Victorian organ was originally placed at the east end of the south aisle (where the Lady Chapel now stands) and was moved probably in the 1920's to the west end of the north aisle. It has a very good tone but perhaps lacks the power needed for such a large church. The casing is much larger than the organ requires and was probably added when the organ was moved.

NORTH PORCH – OUTER DOOR BRICKED UP

The north porch was used for a very long time as the vestry (where the priest dons his or her vestments or robes), and is now used as a Sunday School room. The north door has been bricked up and it can only be entered from the church. It has a remarkable tierceron star-vaulted ceiling which supports a small room above, reached by a turret staircase which matches the rood loft stairs. They have the same quatrefoil opening and were built at the same time as the nave and tower in the early 15th century.

Painting of King David

The painting which hangs by the tower arch shows King David playing a harp. It dates from 1747 and until the Victorian restoration it hung over a large pew for singers on the N. side of the church. It was restored by Mr Kennedy North.

FONT

The font (free-standing basin for baptism) has shallow decorated tracery designs on its bowl typical of the 14th century. It stands centrally at the west end of the church, but in many churches is much nearer the door, symbolising that baptism effects entry to the church. It probably was closer to the door, but has been moved at some time.

The floor (under the Nave carpet) contains many interesting memorial slabs, some with indents from former brasses. There are a number of interesting tombs to be found throughout the church, some of which clearly originally had brasses attached. The finest brasses date from the 14th century, but in many churches were destroyed either at the Reformation or during the Civil War.

OLD CHEST(S)

One 15th Century chest, others more recent. Antique oak chest by organ given by Mr Chambers. Large oak chest near vestry door possibly made by Mr Dewing and over 150 years old.

Note Stone coffin under ringing platform possibly base of stone in floor?

Original tower door leading to Ringers Gallery and roof.

The large west door or processional door into church under the tower, would also have enabled knights to ride into the building on horseback.

Glossary of Church Terms

Term	Meaning
Aisle	The spaces along the sides of the nave or chancel, and separated from it by an arcade. Aisles differ from transepts in being longer E-W than N-S.
Alb	A white linen vestment with close fitting sleeves, reaching nearly to the ground and secured round the waist by a girdle (cincture). Worn by clergy.
Altar	The holiest part of a church. In the medieval period the altar was a table or rectangular slab made of stone or marble, often set upon a raised step. After the Reformation the stone altars were replaced by wooden communion tables.
Angel roof	A type of late medieval roof in which the ends of the beams were carved to look like angels.
Antiphoner	An antiphon consists of one or more psalm verses or sentences from Holy Scripture which are sung or simply recited before and after each psalm and the Magnificat during Matins and Vespers. Hence an antiphoner is a book containing a selection of these.
Apse	The domed or vaulted east end of the church. In Britain the apse is generally squared off, while on the continent, rounded apses were common.
Arcade	A series of arches supported by piers or columns.
Aumbry	A cupboard, often lockable, used for storing church books, plate and equipment.
Bell Tower	A tower where the church bells were installed. This could be separate from the church, or, more usually, attached. Sometimes called a campanile.
Boss	Decorative sculpture at the intersection of two vault ribs.

Buttress	A structure (of stone, brick, or wood) built against a building to strengthen it by resisting the thrust of arches, roofs and vaults. A flying buttress uses arches or half-arches to transmit the thrust to a buttress standing clear of the wall.
Chancel	The area of a parish church at the east end, where the altar was located. Also known as the choir in larger churches.
Chancel Arch	The arch separating the chancel from the nave or crossing.
Chancel Screen	A screen dividing the chancel and the nave and crossing.
Chapel	A small building, room or area with its own altar set aside for worship. Large churches or cathedrals might have many chapels dedicated to different saints. A chantry chapel is a special chapel where prayers for the dead are said.
Chasuble	The principal and most conspicuous Mass vestment, covering all the rest. It consisted of a square or circular piece of cloth in the centre of which a hole was made; through this the head was passed. With the arms hanging down, this garment covered the whole figure of the priest. Like the other sacred vestments the chasuble, before use, requires to be blessed by a priest who has faculties for that purpose. When assumed in vesting for Mass, the act is accompanied with a prayer which speaks of the chasuble as the "yoke of Christ".
Choir	1) The part of a cathedral, monastic church or collegiate church where services are sung. Often spelled Quire in older books. 2) A group of singers.
Clerestory	The uppermost row of windows or upper story of a church where it rises above the aisle roof. So-called because it stands clear of the aisle roof. The Window openings allow extra light into the interior of the church

Column	A vertical support, usually round or polygonal.
Corbel	A projecting bracket often carved with grotesque monster heads.
Crossing	The area where the choir, nave, and transepts meet.
Cusps	The projecting points formed by partial curves within an arch.
Decorated	The style of Gothic architecture popular in England c.1260-c.1360. Characterised by all-over use of decoration, especially small-scale architectural motifs like arches and gables.
Diocese	The area of territory, with its parishes, under the religious jurisdiction of an individual bishop. An archdiocese is a larger area, including several dioceses, controlled by an archbishop. There are two archdioceses in England—Canterbury and York.
Early English	The earliest style of Gothic architecture in England, common from c.1180-c.1250. Known in the 19th century as Lancet style because of its use of lancets; also characterised by stiff-leaf ornament and the use of contrasting Purbeck or other dark, English marble.
Elevation	A vertical wall face of a building.
Font	A container, generally of stone, which contained holy water for baptism. Usually located near the entrance or west door, sometimes the fonts had elaborately carved wooden canopies.
Gable	The vertical, triangular-shaped end of a roof.
Gallery	A balcony or mezzanine overlooking the main interior space of a building. In a church the gallery is an upper storey directly above the aisle, with arches looking down

into the nave.

- Gothic** The dominant architectural style in the Middle Ages, used primarily from the later 12th century until the mid 16th century. It is characterised by pointed arches, rib-vaults, and large tracery windows.
- High altar** The main altar, usually located towards the east end of the choir.
- Lady Chapel** A chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary.
- Lancet** A tall, narrow, pointed window.
- Lantern** The windowed upper stage of a tower or dome.
- Lay** A lay person was anyone who was not a priest, monk, or otherwise in religious orders.
- Lectern** A reading desk, often in the shape of an eagle, made to hold the Bible during services. Usually made of brass.
- Liturgy** The words and music of a religious service.
- Mass** The main rite of the Christian Church, at which the Last Supper is commemorated through the consecration of bread and wine, which is then shared by the priest and the people. Sometimes it is known as Communion or Eucharist in the modern Anglican Church.
- Misericord** A folding seat which has a shelf on its underside to support a standing person. The bracket supporting the shelf was usually carved. This term comes from the Latin word for "mercy" and refers to pivoting wooden brackets in choir stalls which lifted up to provide relief for clergy who had to stand during long church services. Misericords are often ornately carved and decorative.
- Nave** The body of the church west of the chancel arch or crossing. The place where lay people stood during the

mass.

- Niche** Vertical recess in a wall, often for a statue.
- Norman** A common name for the type of Romanesque architecture used in England in the 11th and 12th centuries after the Norman Conquest in 1066.
- Ogee** A sweeping S-curve commonly used for arches and in tracery from c.1300.
- Orientation** The compass alignment of the church. The altar is usually oriented to the east.
- Parish** A parish is a portion of a diocese under the authority of a priest legitimately appointed to secure in virtue of his office for the faithful dwelling therein, the helps of religion. The faithful are called parishioners, the priest *parochus*, curate, parish priest, pastor
- Paschal Candle** The blessing of the "paschal candle", which is a column of wax of exceptional size, usually fixed in a great candlestick specially destined for that purpose, is a notable feature of the service on Holy Saturday of Easter. The blessing is performed by the deacon, wearing a white dalmatic. A long Eucharistic prayer, the "Præconium paschali" or "[Exultet](#)", is chanted by him, and in the course of this chanting the candle is first ornamented with five grains of incense and then lighted with the newly blessed fire. At a later stage in the service, during the blessing of the font, the same candle is plunged three times into the water with the words: Descendat in hanc plenitudinem fontis virtus Spiritus Sancti" (May the power of the Holy Spirit come down into the fulness of this fountain). From Holy Saturday until Ascension Day the paschal candle is left with its candlestick in the sanctuary, standing upon the Gospel side of the altar, and it is lighted during high Mass and solemn Vespers on Sundays. It is extinguished after the Gospel on Ascension Day and is then removed.

Perpendicular	A style of Gothic architecture popular in England from the mid 14th to the mid 16th century. Characterised by tracery with patterns of intersecting horizontal and vertical lines.
Pew	Wooden seats or benches in the church. Pews only appeared at the end of the medieval period. Often pews had carved bench-ends and were carved with animal or foliage designs.
Pier	A support (usually made of masonry or brick) for an arch. Generally larger and heavier than a column.
Piscina	A niche with a drain (like a sink) used to wash liturgical vessels after the mass. It was constructed near the altar, at the south wall of the sanctuary or other similar place.
Pre-Conquest	Before the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. Synonymous with Anglo-Saxon.
Pulpit	A raised platform from which the preacher addresses the congregation. Usually reached by steps or stairs, often covered by a carved canopy. A two-decker pulpit also incorporated a reading-desk, while a three-decker pulpit had a reading desk and also a parish clerk's desk.
Purbeck	A dark-coloured, shelly limestone from the Isle of Purbeck (Dorset) that can be polished to a high sheen.
Quire	Archaic term for the chancel or choir.
Renaissance	The 15th- and 16th-century intellectual and artistic revival of forms from Ancient Greece and Rome.
Reredos	A decorative screen behind the altar, usually highly carved.
Retable	A ledge behind, or attached to, the high altar, where ornaments were placed.
Reticulated	A type of window tracery which has a net-like pattern formed by a series of inter-linked ogee arches. It was

common in the early 14th-century Decorated style (from Latin *opus reticulatum*: net or lace-work).

- Romanesque** The architectural style common in Western Europe in the 11th and 12th centuries. It is characterised by massive masonry and round-headed arches inspired by ancient Roman models, and by the use of stylised ornament. In England it is often called Norman.
- Rood** A representation of Christ on the Cross erected at the entry to the chancel. Roods often had figures of the Virgin Mary on one side and St. John on the other. Almost all medieval roods were destroyed at the Reformation.
- Rood Loft** The gallery upon which the rood is supported.
- Rood screen** A screen built beneath the rood loft. Sometimes called the Chancel Screen.
- Sacristy** A separate room for storing sacred vessels.
- Sanctuary** The area immediately surrounding the high altar. The holiest part of the church.
- Secular** Not sacred. Of, or pertaining to, the world. Secular clergy were priests, not monks.
- Sedilia** The name given to a row of one or more seats near the altar on the south side of the sanctuary, used by the officiating clergy during the liturgy. It is the plural of the Latin word *sedile* meaning seat.
- Sexton** One who guards the church edifice, its treasures, vestments, etc., and as an inferior minister attends to burials, bell-rings and similar offices about a church. In ancient times, the duties of the modern sexton, who is generally a layman, were part of the functions of the clerical order of *ostiariatus*. The clerics called *ostiarium* had the keys of the church committed to them and were responsible for the guardianship of the sacred edifice, the

holy vessels, books, and vestments. They opened the church and summoned the faithful to the Divine Mysteries.

- Shaft** The body of a column or pillar between the base and the capital. It is especially used for the small columns found around a window, door, or other opening. Shafts are generally round, but may also be polygonal.
- Shaft ring** A characteristically Early English-style moulded band around a shaft. Used to cover the joints between the sections of a detached shaft, but also as a decorative feature.
- Shrine** A repository for the relics of a saint. Often in the form of an elaborate tomb embellished with gems and precious metals.
- Spire** The pointed top of a tower.
- Stoup** A container for holy water near the main entrance or west door. Can be built into the wall or free-standing
- String course** A horizontal moulding projecting from the surface of the wall. Used to visually separate different parts of the elevation.
- Tabernacle** A canopied frame like a miniature building, used around an image or over a statue.
- Tierceron** A type of ornamental vaulting rib.
- Tithe** A tax of 10 per cent of all income which was given to the parish church to support the priest and the work of the church. Tithes were taken on agricultural produce such as grain and newly born animals, on manufactured goods such as woollens, and on money income. In the Middle Ages and early modern period the payment of tithes was compulsory.
- Tracery** The open-work pattern within an opening, especially the

upper part of a window. Blind tracery is applied to a solid wall. Plate tracery has a decorative pattern of shapes cut through a solid surface, while in bar tracery the patterns are formed by shaped intersecting bands of stonework.

Transepts

The crossing arms of the church, generally aligned north-south.

Vault

A curved stone ceiling. A **barrel vault** is simply an arched stone tunnel. A **groin vault** is formed from intersecting barrel vaults. The edges (groins) where the vaults meet do not have ribs or other strengthening. A rib vault is similar to a groin vault but the vault surface (or webbing) is supported by diagonal ribs at the intersections of the compartments. Tierceron and lierne vaults are **rib vaults** with added decorative ribs. A **fan vault** was constructed of intersecting conical shapes, usually covered with blind tracery motifs.

Vestments

By liturgical vestments are meant the vestments that, according to the rules of the Church or from ecclesiastical usage, are to be worn by the clergy in performing the ceremonies of the services of the Church, consequently, above all, at the celebration of the Mass, then in the administration of the sacraments, at blessings, the solemn recitation of the canonical hours, public services of prayer, processions, etc. The liturgical vestments of the Latin Rite are: the amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole, tunicle, dalmatic, chasuble, surplice, cope, sandals, stockings (or buskins), gloves, mitre, pallium, succinctorium, and fanon. The vestments of the priest are the amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole, chasuble—vestments which the priest wears at the celebration of the Mass—then, in addition, the surplice and the cope.

Vestry

- 1) A room in a church where the clergy and choir changed into their vestments, which were sometimes also stored there, especially in smaller churches.
- 2) A group of parishioners who oversaw the secular functions of the parish.

