

THE CHURCH of ST. NICHOLAS.
Stillington, North Yorkshire



History

It is recorded in the Domesday book that the Manor of Stillington was held by the Canons of St. Peter at York and so continued after the conquest. In the description of the estate, however, there is no reference to the existence of a church there at that date. This does not necessarily mean that there was not one as of the 140 Yorkshire churches that have ancient crosses in them, only 45 are mentioned in the Domesday Book.

There is no record of a vicar having served in the parish prior to Peter de Topcliffe in 1329. The manor continued in the hands of the prebendary and was in the Liberty of St. Peter. In 1616 a lease or assignment was made to William Ramsden, and in 1625 Christopher Croft had a lease of it for a term of three lives. In 1649 the Parliamentary trustees for the sale of lands belonging to the Dean and Chapter of York sold the manor to George Gill of Leeds; In the same year he sold it to Christopher Croft, who appears to have obtained a grant of it from the Dean and Chapter after the Restoration. He was Lord Mayor of York in the time of Charles 1, and was knighted on the occasion of his entertaining that monarch at his own house.

** Prebend = a clergyman's stipend (salary) drawn from a special endowment (funds or property donated)*

The Building

General

The Church of ST. NICHOLAS consists of a chancel 32.25 ft by 16 ft with north vestry, a nave 44.25 ft. by 16 ft with side aisles, making a total width of 33.50 ft. west tower and south porch. The total length is 87.75 ft. The measurements are all internal. (see appendix 1)

The church was so largely rebuilt in 1840 that little indication of its history is left. The "Nave was rebuilt and another bay was added at the west end. The Tower which had been on the south side was re-erected in its present position. Although the steeple that was on the old tower was not replaced. The four Belfry Windows were reused as was the West Window.

See drawing at end of this article. A concrete base was laid beneath the Tower, some 5 feet deep and projecting 18 inches beyond the "effects".

Probably much of the old work was reused and much left in situ. At that date the opportunity was taken to include the nave and the aisles under one roof and the chancel roof follows the same pitch.

Previously the aisles were under separate roofs. The corbels (six to each side) that supported the roof trusses of the aisles are still in situ.

The chancel was largely left unaltered, although the Arch was taken down and rebuilt. The work cost £668, including repairs to the Tower and ridge tiles caused by the bad weather of 1840/41, arriving before work was complete. Over 10 tons of larch wood were used. See end of book for a summary of the costs prepared by the churchwardens Noah Wynn and John Radcliffe.

Baptisms and Burials appeared to have been carried on without interruption during this period but, there were no Marriages between 29.12.1840 and 26.7.1841. Again none between 29.11.1842 and 28.12.1843. (A time of major alterations to the Church) Around this time one could expect at least six a year.

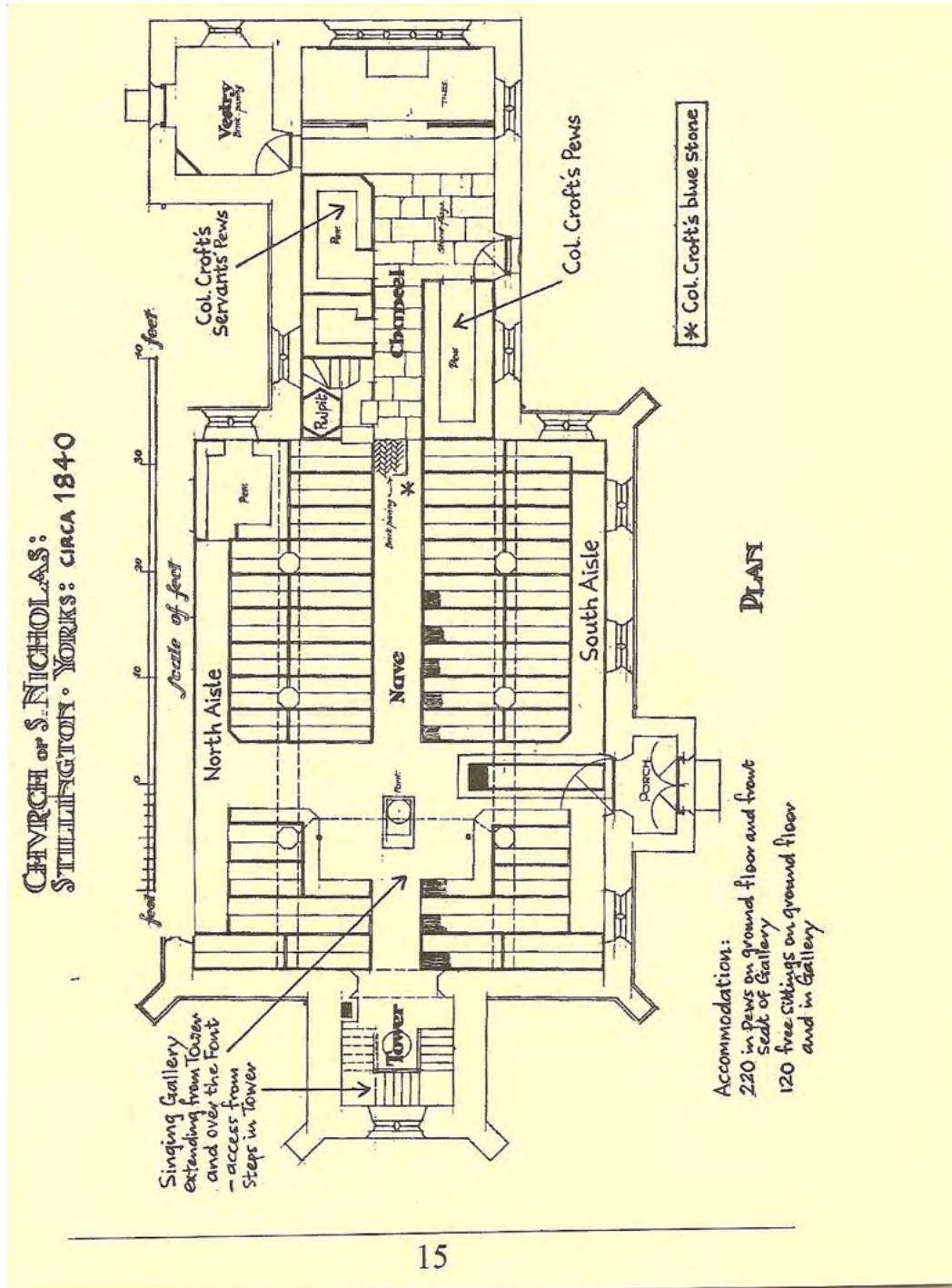
The Terriers of 1770 through to 1817 all refer to a "Steeple" not to a Tower. The steeple was taken down when the major alterations took place in 1834/40 and not replaced onto the new tower.

Churchyard and Cemetery

On 20th October 1824 all the jurors of the Manor Court signed (see appendix 1) and caused to be recorded their complaint that the vicar, Thomas Hutton Croft had taken into his vicarage garden part of the northern side of the churchyard equal to 40yds 2ft. in length by 14 yds wide. Nothing further is recorded..

The churchyard on the West side was extended in 1866 by a gift of £199 from Mary Lobley to the Church Commissioners to enable them to purchase the Freehold from the Manor of her Copyhold property of 1 Rood 36 Perches (see page 35 and *Borthwick Institute Ref R 1V k 369c*). As one leaves the churchyard to go onto North Back Lane there is on one's right hand a headstone inscribed "In Affectionate Remembrance of Mary Ann Sowray widow of Thomas Sowray who died at York Dec 26th 1871, age 75 years. The remains of the above named Thomas Sowray are interred in the old portion of this churchyard. He died may 5th 1866 Aged 83 years". In 1935 a Faculty was granted to extend the graveyard footpath to create an exit via a gate (1935/1/29) The Old Churchyard was closed to burials on 27th October 1976. (see p. 36). In 1977 Hambleton District Council accepted responsibility for its maintenance. Although this has now reverted to the Parish. Permission was given in 1936 to lay headstones flat in the churchyard (1936/2/15).

The cemetery on (North) Back Lane was given to the Parochial Council on 12th Feb, 1934 by Thomas Christopher Horner J.P. (North Riding Register of Deeds Vol 620, Page 27, No 11 Reg 14.4.1934. see page 37). He was husband of Ada Jane Wynn (1863-1932), daughter of Noah Wynn of Stillington. Their daughter Constance married the Rev H.W. Smith of Stillington at Riccall in 1944. She was his second wife
The cemetery was opened in 1937.



PLAN of CHURCH **following** the major alterations – see end of booklet for further drawings
 It will be seen that the old tower which was where the porch now is was taken down and replaced at the West end of the church which had been extended by one Bay.

Mr. W.H. Brierley F.R.I.B.A., F.S.A. (Architect) in a request report to the Rev.M.H.Smith in 1906 states that the building is an **interesting structure dating from the 13th century** With traces in the Chancel of earlier work i.e. 12th Century Priest's door and 13th Century Lancet arch in the tower.

The stone cross on the roof was given by Mrs. Newman and Miss Maskill (sisters) in 1950 in memory of Mr.E.E. Newman who was organist for twenty five years.

Chancel & Vestry

The Chancel has a five light east window with a traceried four-centered head, and in the south wall are two square-headed two-light windows, also traceried in the head. Between the last two is a priest's door and further east in the same wall is a plain piscina



The Chancel arch dies into the wall on either side. The Vestry on the north side is of 15th century date, with a single light square-headed east window

In the Chancel is a blue stone which has contained two shields of arms but the brasses are removed. Torr says that a Sir Christopher Croft, was buried at Stillington, on 3rd April 1605, in the Chancel, under a blue gravestone. However, on a page in the Church Register there is written in the early 1800's "On the Inscription Plate on the large Grey Marble in the Chancel.

John(James) Willford Pre: of Stillington, Vicar of this Worshipful Place applied himself with like zeal to the(Study and) Profession of Divine Wisdom, in which being enriched with great maturity of knowledge he imparted the same to the People by such Assiduities in preaching, and exemplified in himself in the Holiness of Life, that he merited in the Highest World the Promised reward and Glory. Here rests his body, his Soul was translated hence 26th March, 1605 in the 52nd year of his Age, leaving behind him his sorrowful Wife Elizabeth, Daughter of Richard Ashenden Esq, and five children by her, John & James and Jane & Cicely & Catherine.

Note: Cicely married Christopher Croft at St.Denis Walmgate in 1610. Sir Christopher Croft

was Lord Mayor of York in both 1629 and 1641 and was knighted in 1641 and is buried at St. Michael's Spurriergate, York. James Wilford was Vicar of Sutton on Forest 1585-1605

This stone has now been covered over by a thin film of cement

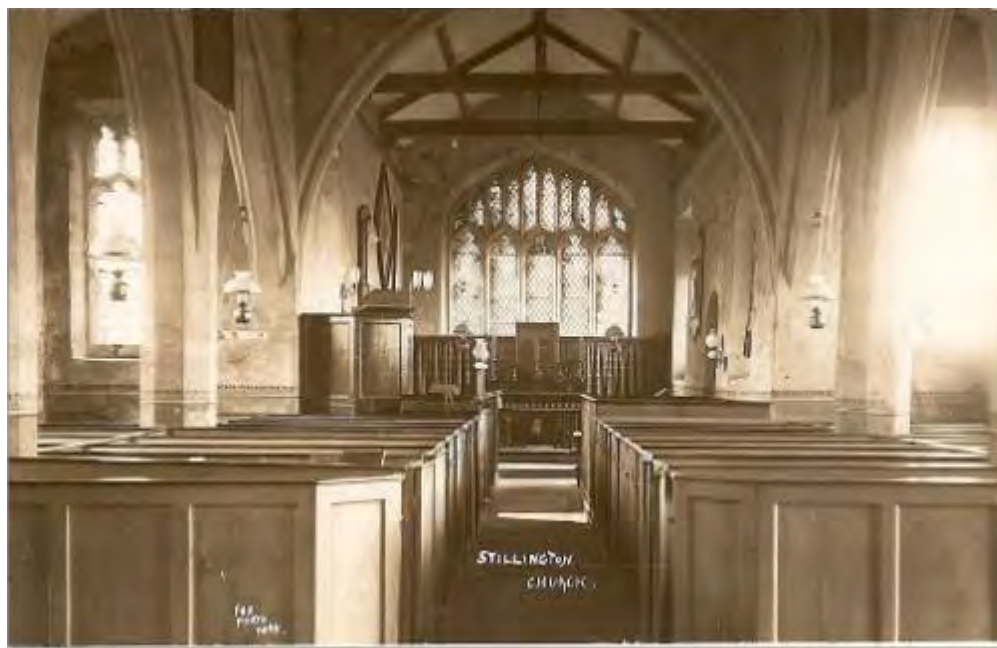
Above the Chancel steps is the Royal Court of Arms dated 1739 (these are now extremely rare) which was ordered by the then Monarch, George 11 to be displayed in church where parishoners were of doubtful allegiance. It is interesting to note that the treble bell was also cast in 1739, during the time that Richard Musgrave was vicar.

Also in the Chancel is a hatchment displaying the Croft coat of Arms. and monuments on the north wall to the Croft family (Quarterly indented erminois and gules with a leopard rampant gules in the quarter).

There is also a tablet in the North aisle dedicated to Mrs. Jane Staniforth (d 1775) & her husband William (d 1782) and, also in the Chancel a tablet to the Rev John Varey (d 1794).

The North Vestry door was replaced in 1954 in memory of Mrs. Hughes and a new door was placed in the priests doorway in 1950 as a memorial to Mr. E.E.Newman, who was organist at Stillington Church for 25 years 1923 -1948. The War Memorial by Robert Thompson was dedicated in 1946.

Nave & Aisles



The Nave and Aisles are four bays long, the arcades springing from octagonal piers without capitals. The aisles are lit by square-headed two-light windows similar to those in the South wall of the Chancel. The roofs all date from 1840, and the curious corbels to the flat aisle roofs are probably also of that date.

A Faculty was granted in December 1782 for the erection of a gallery at the West end (*D/c. Fac 1782/2*). It was re-erected in 1840 and was taken down in October 1932. The 1914-18 War Memorial of stone was erected and dedicated in 1920.



Porch

In the third bay of the South side is a shallow porch with a pointed outer doorway.

Built into the wall in the porch above the arched head of the south door is a stone slab sculptured in low relief which is stated to be a representation of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the church.

T.Whellan's Topography of the North Riding attributes the sculpture of St.Nicholas to the 12th or 13th Century. The porch was completely restored in 1840 and the exterior stone cross added by the P.C.C. in 1930 at the time of further major repairs to the porch.

The Main door was given in memory of Ada Jane Horner, (nee Wynn, daughter of Noah Wynn) In February 1932 by her husband J.C.Horner J.P.

It used to be the practice to seal or swear a legally binding agreement in the porch of the Church as is evidenced by Richard Cholomley of Brandsby in his Cash Book, on 26th May 1609 (pages 27 and 290 kept at Easingwold Library ISBN No 0 906035 31 7 Published by North Yorkshire C.C. in 1988.).-

"I and Christopher Hebdon entered Bond with and for Thomas Cholomley in £252 for the payment of £126 unto Thomas Cocke (Cook) the 26th day of November next (1610) in Stillington church porch"

The Exterior

Some of the stones in the Chancel walls, outside the church, have grooves worn with the sharpening of tools or weapons. Similar marks appear on the walls of the churches at Crayke and Sutton on Forest. Just above these grooves is an old sundial marked in the stone; the lead marker has been broken off. This is to be found just to the right of the Priests door.

The reproduction Victorian Street Lamp beside the entrance path was made by Don Barker of Wiggington, York, and was installed in February 1997. It was given in Memory of Donald Holmes by his wife Moira and dedicated in April 1997.



Baptistry & Font

A new font was given in 1871 in memory of Mrs. Caroline Haffenden, daughter of Admiral Croft, but on 22nd October 1932 was taken out and the old font brought back into use, from behind the main entrance door. After a period out of doors the font given in the memory of the Admiral's daughter was transferred to Wass Church. The old octagonal one (believed to be Norman) used to stand under the tower. In February 2011 it was moved to the north aisle in line with the porch door. The Baptistry was rearranged in memory of Margaret Elizabeth Willis, who died in November 1981, by her husband Dr. Francis Peter Willis.

Visitors may be interested in reading the Parish Review of St. Nicholas Stillington and St. Mary's Marton in the Forest, compiled by John Picard & Geoffrey Bainton in 1988 as part of the Parish's preparation for a Deanery Review.

Tower

As mentioned earlier the church had a steeple prior to 1830. In a plan prepared in 1840 after the church was rebuilt, the tower and porch were previously in the position of the present porch and the West wall is now in a position some seven feet to the east of where it used to stand.

The tower used to have pinnacles but these were taken down in 1902 as they were in danger of falling. Extensive repair and maintenance work to the tower was completed in 1914 without the pinnacles being replaced; the outbreak of war prevented this being done and has not since been accomplished.

The plan also indicates a singing gallery over the West end of the nave; this was removed in October 1932. A Faculty was granted on the 23.12.1782 for the erection of the original one (*D/c. Fac 1782/2 Borthwick Institute*)

The tower is of three stages with diagonal buttresses at the angles rising to the base of the belfry. The walls of the belfry stage are set back considerably on the exterior and are each pierced by a pointed two - lighted window of 15th century character.

The plain parapet is corbelled out, and in the centre of each side is a diminutive gablet.

Bells

The tower contains three bells; the first inscribed "Exultabo in deo 1698" John Dade, Vicar, 5 3/4.cwts Founder S.S.Ebor. The second, is a pre-reformation bell inscribed, in black letters "+ Sancta ihs Maria ihs Hora ihs pro nobis"; the third "Deo Gloria, 1739" the treble was recast in 1942 to the Memory of John Leslie Hutchinson R.N of H.M.S. Kashmir sunk in the battle of Crete in 1941.

All bells were rehung when the tower was restored in 1914. Apart from normal times the Bells are rung on "Gunpowder Treason Night" (5th November) and are tolled on the day a resident of the Parish, dies.

The Clock

There is no record of the maker or when the clock was first installed. However the Warden's Cash Book of 26th November 1755 records the payment of 3s.6d "for Winding up the Clock" . Similar payments were made in the following years. Further many years later a meeting was held in June 1869 to consult parishioners with regard to repairs needed. An extensive restoration of the works was completed in 1903 and the clock's last major overhaul was in 1938, with the last dial restoration taking place in 1961. The clock stopped in 1996. Brothers Charles and Allan Hutchinson have had the clock repaired in memory of their late father John Hutchinson. He was Churchwarden for sixty years, during which time he looked after the clock. He died in 1980. His son Allan continued with the winding of the clock from 1976 until recent time. An anonymous donor paid for the winding of the clock to be automated in 2005. The Newey family has been connected with the repair and restoration of the Church clock for three generations. Geoffrey Newey has carried out the most recent restoration. The clock was rededicated by the Bishop of Selby on 9th February 1997. Charles Hutchinson produced a booklet setting out the history of the clock. He died on 2nd February 2012. His booklet is reproduced at the end of this book. (see appendix 2)

Glass

In the east window is a small fragment of ancient glass. The portion of modern stained glass in the East Window, depicting a Dove was a family memorial to Miss Mina North who died in 1986.

The stained glass of the window on the north side of the nave was given by Mrs. Mary Denton and her sons John and Malcolm in memory of her husband and their father Charles Edward Denton, who was born in Stillington in 1902, and was one of the first pupils at Stillington School when it opened in 1907. He eventually returned as headmaster of the village school from 1945 to 1967. Charles was an avid gardener, hence the chrysanthemums, in the tracery of the window, along with the Lord's Weather vane to indicate his love of cricket. Daffodils are represented with a book and pen, symbols of his vocation. The window depicts St. Nicholas, patron saint of the Church; both saint and teacher are remembered for their concern for children.

Pipe Organ

In 2000 an unfortunate Court Case took place as a result of its removal. (appendix 3)

Lecturn

In 2003 the Eagle Lecturn was renovated by Mrs. Jillian Richardson (appendix 4)

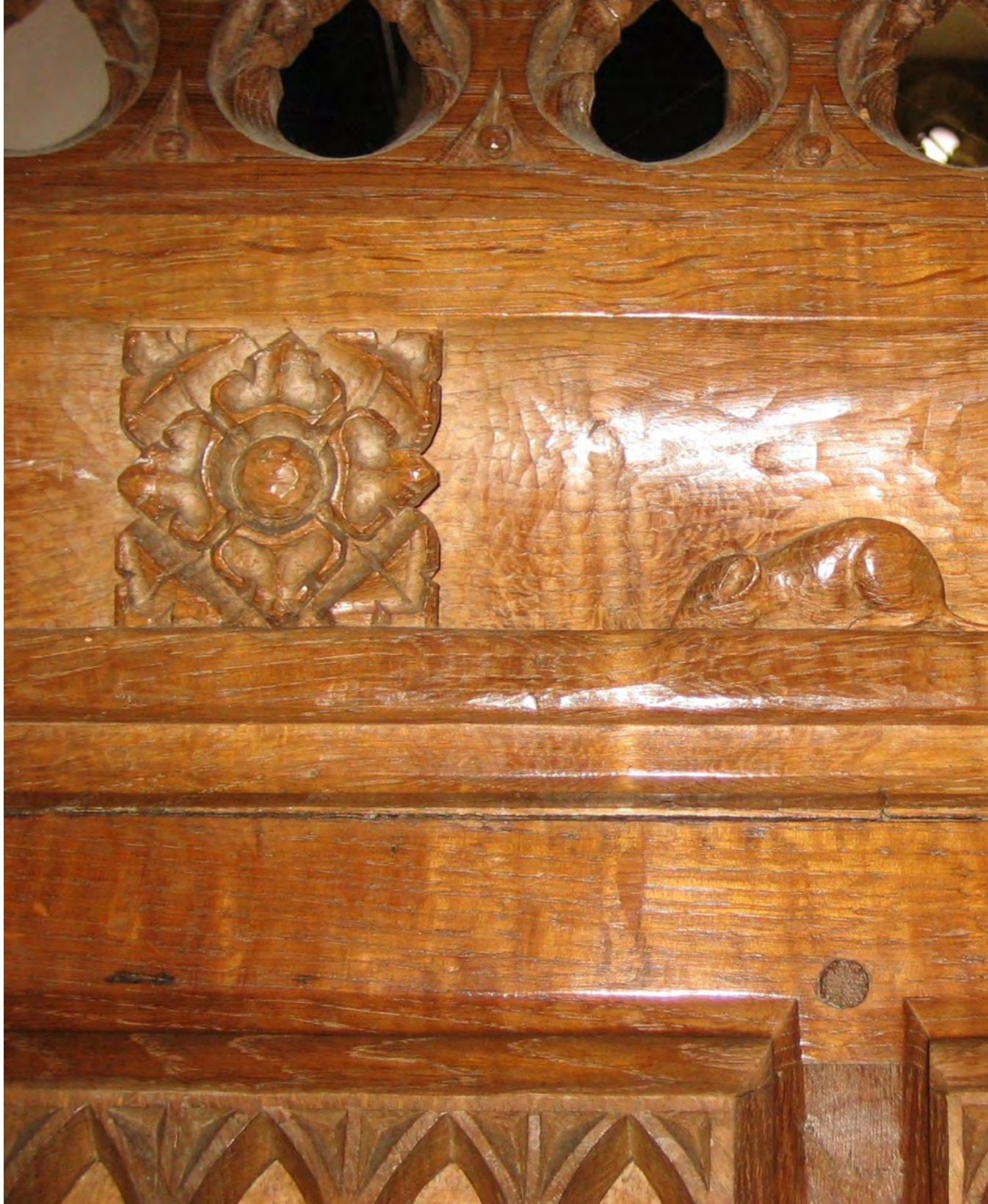


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A memorial to the late Ruth Thompson was fitted as part of the East Window on 20th March 2001. The window depicts the Lamb and flag, in a setting of Holy Land flowers and stones.

Ruth had a great love of flowers and was involved with the flowers at St. Nicholas for many years, and also the lamb depicts the lamb of God, being Jesus the Son of God, who said "Suffer the children to come to me". Ruth was very much involved with work with children during her life. Her husband Peter Thompson arranged for the window to be inserted.

The ashes of both Ruth and Peter are buried in the new cemetery



Church Woodwork and Other Items

Within the church are some fine examples of Robert Thompson of Kilburn work viz: the Communion Rails in memory of the Bullen family, Choir Stalls and Pulpit, the Lectern and the screen around the Altar. (Faculty 1935/1/39) The Tower screen which was erected in 1935. Also the Side-Altar of 1936 presented by Miss Maskill and Miss Spink (Faculty 1936/2/15) and as previously mentioned the War memorial in the Chancel

The oak kneeler for the side altar was made in the late 1930's and given by Mr.J.B.Hutchinson, (Vicar's Warden for 60 years).

The bookcase on the wall by the south door was made by Mr. Grainger of Brandsby whose sign is an acorn, in 1966, in memory of John Robert Colbeck, who was Sidesman for 20 years, and died in December 1963. It was given by his wife. The combined Bookcase and Cupboard near the main door was made by Michael Cole of Stillington and was given by the family of Mrs.Mary Moore who had served the church as Sacristan and Deputy Warden. It was dedicated in 1996. The four oak Candle Sconces, two by the Font and two in the Sanctuary are a gift from Mr.Bill Cox and his family, given in September 1996 in memory of his wife Frances and son David. They were made by Norman Darnley of Huby. The two Candle Stands were given by Geoff Benson in Memory of his wife Margaret, and were dedicated on 8th March 1998.

In June 1936 Mr.Hutchinson made and gifted a pair of Churchwarden's staves.

The Green Altar frontal was given by Mr. & Mrs. Newman of Wellington House in 1936. It was made by St.Hilda's Guild of Ecclesiastical Embroidery at Scarborough. Mrs. Newman followed this by the gift of Sanctuary hangings. Dec 1936 Rev. H.R.Wilson gifted the oak crucifix.

Sept 1937 Mrs. Jaques gave crochet work for the fair linen cloth for the side altar.

March 1938 Mr. and Mrs. Newman gifted a Violet Altar Frontal, consisting of a silk brocade with fringe and 2 orphreys for decoration and use at Lent and Advent.

April 1938 Gift by Mr.R.Wood of a pair of brass altar vases in memory of his wife.

April 1938 Mrs.Newman gave a Violet Pulpit fall.

April 1939 Gift of Lace cloth for the altar.

Plate

The plate includes a Chalice inscribed "William Wilkinson, Robert Morlay, Chourch-wardens of Stillinton, 1664". (sic).This was carefully restored and brought back into use by Clarkson of Northallerton in May 1939. The Chalice bears the old York mark a Fleur-de-Lys and a Leopard's head crowned, date letter poor and indistinct. No mark as to establish who was the exact maker, but the silversmith suggests that it is after the style of the craft of Thomas Mangry a York Silversmith who worked in York around 1664. There is another Chalice, inscribed "to the Glory of God and in memory of my father Herbert William Smith, Priest My Mother Jennie and Brother Donovan Brand (Smith) Christmas 1960.

There is a silver salver inscribed "To the Glory of God and in Memory of Richard S. Kerrison Presented by his Parents to St.Nicholas' Church Stillington. July 5th 1919."

Kneelers

A voluntary group of ladies from the village embroidered and upholstered the church kneelers in celebration of the Millennium. (2000). The project was initially funded by the Craft Group but soon people wished to dedicate the kneelers to past family and friends, the initials and dates being on the end of each kneeler. The designs were taken from the upper east window, the lower stained glass being added later. The ladies met once a week and a very friendly and enthusiastic group emerged, this becoming a very important part of the project. Twenty-five kneelers were completed in two years, all of which are in use in the Church, except for the two wedding kneelers which are kept in the vestry.

Registers

The registers before 1812 are as follows:(1) mixed entries 1666 to 1702;(2)mixed entries 1703 to 1778, marriages to 1753 only (on a fly leaf of this book are signatures of Laurence Sterne, vicar 1744 and 1767); (3) marriages 1754 to 1812; (4) baptisims and burials 1778 .

All registers not in current use are lodged with the Borthwick Institute at York University and maybe consulted by family historians by appointment.

Charities

In 1654 Jane Rawden left a cottage-house and yard to the poor with a common share upon, containing seventeen acres & six Perches upon West Moor (Green Lane). Ten acres are farmed and the remainder is natural woodland.

In 1713 William Cook left to the poor 5 shillings to be paid every St. Thomas's Day out of his allotment in the Roobers, and in 1715 Alice Cook left to poor widows the sum of 5s. out of the same property.

In 1836 John Calvert by will bequeathed £100 to be invested and the income applied for the benefit of poor widows. The legacy was invested in £102.13.11d consols (with the official trustees). The dividends, amounting to £2.11.4d., are applied in gifts of money.

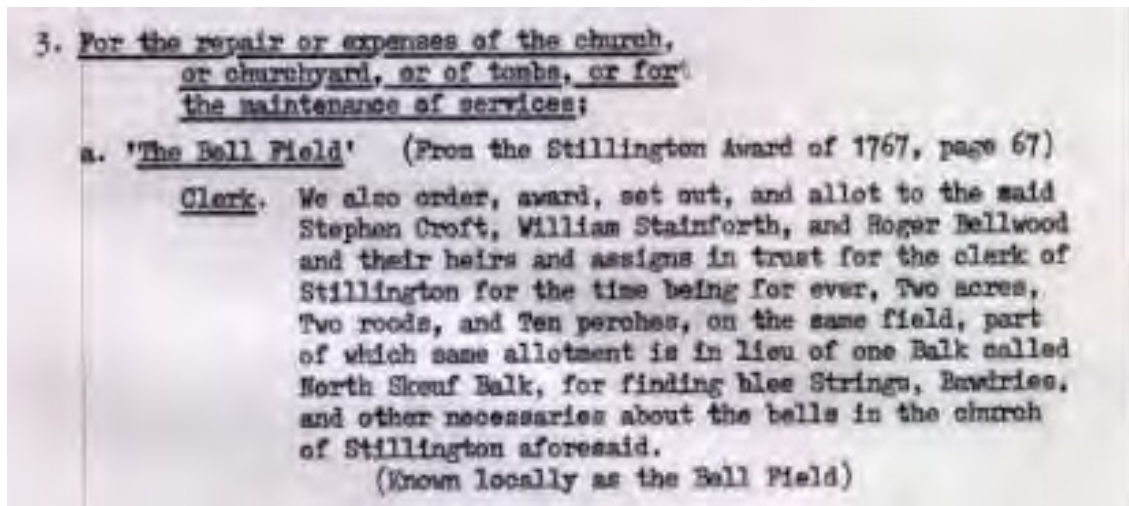
These gifts are recorded on the Boards on the west wall of the church. According to the "History Topography & Directory of North Yorkshire Part 11", printed in 1890, there were three cottages for the poor in the village. These were adjacent to the main Green, running parallel to North Back Lane These no longer exist.

The charity is made up of eight trustees, four of whom are nominated by the Parish Council and one ex-officio who is the Vicar of the Parish of Stillington. The remainder of the trustees are co-opted.

The current income of the above is £1000 per annum. This is mainly distributed at Christmas. The trustees are at liberty to consider any need in the parish.

The Bellfield

Extract from Stillington Award of 1767 page 67



For hlee strings read bell strings

By an Indenture dated 6th February 1885:- Appointment of new Trustees & Conveyance-

Elizabeth Catherine Croft of the Crescent Blossom Street in the City of York, Spinster and Henry John Ware of the same City, Gentleman of the one part

Harry Croft of Stillington Hall in the county of York Esquire, The Reverend William Henry Jemison of Stillington aforesaid Clerk in Holy Orders, Vicar of Stillington and William Richardson aforesaid farmer of the other part

All that the said "Clerk's Field" being the Close or parcel of land containing by estimation 2a 2r 10p Described in the thereinbefore in part recited Award of the 10th day of September 1767 situate in the parish of Stillington in the North Riding of the County of York which said Close or Field was then in the occupation of Tenniswood.

Witnesses

John Tatham Ware Solicitor of 6 New Street York.

The said Catherine Croft and Henry John Ware

Signed & sealed in the presence of

John Tatham Ware

Solicitor of 6 New Street York

Henry John Ware

Ref Vol 1 Page 587 No.251 N.R.C.C. Record Office Northallerton



Vicarage

In a deed of Endowment of the vicarage of around 1280 granted by Thomas Corbridge, then prebend of Stillington (from 25.6.1280 until he became Archbishop of York on 12.11.1299). mention is made of the Vicarage, its garden and 4 adjacent crofts. *Borthwick Institute-Cleveland Miscellanea 1/5. (See Appendix 7)*

In July 1649 the Vicarage was surveyed prior to the sale of all Deanery lands by Act of the Commons. At that time it consisted of 6 low rooms, 2 Chambers, a Barn, Oxhouse and stable all in good repair.

Lambeth Palace Library Vol 17 COMM/12A/17 1647-52 No.210

The Coach House in the garden adjacent to North Back Lane was built by John Varey, vicar 1768-1794 and bears his initials in wrought iron on the gable ends.

The old vicarage was pulled down many years ago and the present one erected in 1895 in its place. This is now in private ownership (1987. Sold for £200,000) and was considerably extended in 2009.

The Terrier of 9.10.1770 written by John Varey, the vicar describes the Vicarage as follows:-

“A vicarage house built of brick 14 yards long and 8 wide covered with Tyle and the back part With thatch. Containing 3 rooms. On a floor, (a later terrier made plain that there were 3 rooms upstairs)

The lower rooms laid with brick and the Chambers with Deal together with a Dairy and two little back Rooms all plastered – A kitchen 6 yards by 4 built of brick covered with tyle. A barn 16 yards long by 7 wide built all of wood and covered with thatch. A stable 7 yards long and 5 yards wide built with Lathe and plaster and covered with thatch – a little front garden, a little kitchen garden an Orchard With a little back yard and a wall consisting of 2 roods more or less with quick fences.

In 1781 Laurence Sterne wrote in the Church Register, “I planted at the East end of the Vicarage House A pear tree called the St. Germain and at the West end the Bergamot”. Also that in May 1745 hailstones, some 6 inches in diameter broke all the windows in the south and west of the house.

COURTS

CHURCH - Spiritual jurisdiction was invested in Stillington Prebendal Peculiar Court, a tiny ecclesiastical court. Records should have been turned in to the dean and chapter of York, the parish laying within the Liberty of St. Peter, an odd political entity governed by the dean and chapter. In 1755, when Sterne presided, William Johnson and Jane Nelson were "presented" for "the Crime of fornication together, they since being married". In another the case Jane Harbottle a poor woman who had had three bastards was with Robert Jepson (one of the supposed fathers) "presented" for the Crime of Fornication. Jane pleaded guilty and had to walk to York to pay her fine (fourpence) to pick up a printed penance. On her return to Stillington she had to stand outside the church on a Sunday, barefoot in a shift holding a candle and read her penance "wheras I good people forgetting my Duty to Almighty God, have committed the Detestable Sin of Fornication with Robert Jepson a married man."etc (Sterne, in fact paid the fine) Robert Jepson did not support the child and the "Jury Book" the following spring shows that the Parish set aside £5.10s at the rate of 7 pence per week. Jepson did not appear before the Church Court and was eventually Excommunicated on 31st August 1755. On 14 February 1760 2 years after Jane's death he appealed to the superior spiritual court of the dean and chapter on the grounds that he was not guilty. He won his appeal and was received back into the parish and in 1769 was elected to the jury.

LAURENCE STERNE

The name of Lawrence Sterne is closely connected with the village of Stillington. In March 1742-3, soon after his marriage, he was instituted to the living in fulfilment of a promise made to his wife by Lord Fairfax. Sterne held it in conjunction with Sutton (1744-1768) where he lived for nearly twenty years, conducting the morning service at Sutton, and walking across the fields to Stillington in the afternoon to preach his weekly sermon, unless other attractions presented themselves en route. One Sunday no vicar appeared to conduct the afternoon service, and the parishioners afterwards discovered that a covey of partridges raised by his pointer had engrossed the attention of their pastor, and Sterne had returned home to get his gun.

So unpopular was he with his parishioners that they would render him no assistance when he was nearly drowning through the ice breaking under him while skating on one of the ponds at Stillington Carr.

It was to him that Stillington owes an Act enclosing 1400 acres in 1766. He surrendered the tithes of wool and lambs and received in compensation a share in the common land.

Sterne had a great admirer in the squire, Stephen Croft, who was perhaps the first to see the book *Tristram Shandy*. It was at Stillington Hall that Sterne threw his famous novel into the fire on finding it unappreciated by Croft's friend's Croft rescued it before it was burnt.

Sterne's first daughter Lydia was baptised at Stillington on 1st Oct 1745, she died and was buried next day. On 2nd Dec 1747, his second daughter, also called Lydia was baptised at Stillington

The Methodist connection in Stillington

One of the earliest preachers was Robert Spence who was born in 1748 in Stillington. He was a groom to Laurence Sterne but was dismissed when he became a preacher. He was local preacher for 57 years.

In 1767 Thomas Wilkinson built a Methodist Meeting House, with Joiner's Shop above on the West side of the Village Green. (*The Forge*) Between 1785, and 1818 George Walker built a Methodist Chapel on land owned by him in Main Street. In 1818 this property is described as being a Front House Garth and Methodist Chapel. In 1767 his father had owned the site described as Front House Garth and Shoemaker's Shop. In 1844 a new Chapel was built on the site, capable of holding 400 people. In 1860 permission was given by the Wesleyan Chapel Committee to erect a school.



In the 1970's it was decided that the Chapel was far too large. It was sold and the school room was converted into a multi-purpose building. A row of terraced houses now occupies the site of the original chapel in Main Street near to the present chapel.



In the early 1800's a small Primitive Methodist Chapel was built at the corner of the York to Easingwold Road. The building was pulled down after the 1939-45 War, in order to widen the road junction.



Relations between chapel and church are good. There are joint monthly family services. A joint pastoral care scheme operates. There is a joint craft group, which also runs cream teas and a craft and cake stalls on bank holiday Monday.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

In 1660 Henry Bridgeman, afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man, was appointed to the prebend of Stillington, which he held amongst various other benefices, though he appears never to have lived there.

The Burials Register records that on 27th January 1760 William Walker aged 112 years was buried.

TERRIERS (see also under Vicarage)

Copies of the Terriers are attached.

Terriers-Stillington

Held at Borthwick Institute, York University

1727 –Vicar Richard Mulgrave But I did not copy any more information.

1742 – Vicar Richard Mulgrave But I did not copy any more information.

1743 But I did not copy any information.

1749 But I did not copy any information.

1760 But I did not copy any information.

17.5.1764 – Vicar or Curate Marmaduke Callis. He mentioned 3 Bells and a Clock.

But I did not take any further information

9.10.1770 – Vicar John Vary. He mentions 3 Bells, a clock, Silver Cup but no Communion Plate.

He goes on to say " A Vicarage House built of brick, 14 yards long and 8 wide, covered with Tyle and the back part with thatch containing 3 rooms on a floor, the lower rooms laid with brick and the Chambers with Deal together with a Dairy two little back rooms all plastered. A kitchen 6 yards by 4 built of brick covered with tyle. A Barn 16 yards long by seven wide built all of wood and covered with thatch. A stable 7 yards long and 5 yards wide built with lathe and plaster and covered with thatch.-A little front garden, a little kitchen garden, an Orchard with a little back yard and a well. Consisting of 2 roods more or less with quick fences.

28.6.1777 – Vicar John Vary. He mentions 3 Bells, a clock, Silver Cup but no Communion Plate.

Stillington Terrier 18th June, 1778

A true and perfect Terrier of the House, Glebe Lands, Tythes Mortuaries and Easter dues, belonging to the Vicarage of Stillington.

A Vicarage house built of Brick, 14 yards long and 8 Yards in Breadth covered with tyle. Containing 3 rooms on a floor, the lower rooms laid with brick and the Chambers with Deal together with a Dairy and two little back rooms all plaistered and ceiled. A kitchen 6 yards by 4 built of brick and covered with tyle. A barn 18 yards by 7 built of wood and covered with thatch. A stable 8 yards by 4 built of brick and covered with tyle. A little front garden, a little kitchen garden. An orchard with a little back yard, a Draw well. Consisting of two Roods or thereabouts with quick fences. A parcel of Common Land lately inclosed consisting of 87 acres 10 perches with quick fences which said 87 acres and 10 perches abutting East on Thomas Grangeby and West on Stephen Croft Esq. A close in the Carr Field consisting of 11 Acres, 3 Roods and 25 Perches abutting East on George Walker jnr & Robert Prest and West on William Stainforth Esq with quick fences. A Close in the Ing Field consisting of 6 acres 3 roods and 25 perches abutting West on William Stainforth Esq and East on Roger Leckonby with quick fences. Also a Close in the Ings consisting of 11 acres 1 Rood and 25 Perches abutting East on Henry Tennant and West on William Stainforth Esq with quick fences. A Croft on the North side of the House consisting by estimation 5 acres abutting East on Stephen Croft and West on John Tenant and Thomas Grangeby with quick fences. A composition of £5 a year payable from Stephen Croft Esq at Michaelmas (29 Sept) in lieu of small tythes from the Prebend Lands. Great Tythes and small are due in kind to the vicar from the old Inclosures but extinguished in the new Inclosure by a late Act of Parliament. In the West end of a field called the Hurn, there are three lands belonging to the Vicar by estimation one acre and a half or thereabouts. Also in a field called the Geldings three swathes of Grass.

There is also to the Vicar at Easter from every inhabitant within the Parish of Stillington who is arrived at the age of sixteen years and upwards the sum of two pence for a communicant, for a cow received one penny, a calf a half penny, a foal a penny, bees a penny, Garden a Penny, likewise there is due the Tythe of Geese, Hens, Eggs, Apples. Pears, Ducks, Pigeons, Turkeis and Pigs, together with Mortuaries as occasion they shall

occasion happen.

In the Church 3 Bells, a Clock and a silver Cup for the Communion whereon is inscribed the name of Robert Morley.

To the Parish Clerk there belongs a Close in the Ing Field containing two acres two roods and ten perches for providing Bell Ropes, Bawtries and other necessaries, and his Stipend which consists of four pence a year from every house in the Parish and amounts to near 27s per annum.

The Church-yard which is the property of the Vicar is repaired by the Parish, the Chancel by Stephen Croft Esq and the Vestry by the Vicar.

A wedding by Banns is to the Minister 1s 6d, by Licence 10s, to the Clerk by Licence 3s 4d, by Banns 1s.-
A churching, seven pence. A Funeral seven pence to the Minister, to the Clerk sixpence and to the Sexton sixpence.

The above is a perfect Terrier

As witness our Hands the 18th day of June 1778

John Walker Curate

William Martin, John Bean, John Richardson, Joseph Wilkinson, Thomas Wilkinson, William Cobb

16.10.1781 – Vicar John Vary. He mentions 3 Bells, a clock, Silver Cup but no Communion Plate.

3.7.1786 –Vicar John Varey, written by Thomas Wright described as “Town Scribe”.

I did not copy this document.

31st July 1809- Vicar William Oddie. But I did not copy any more information.

5th September 1817

Vicar William Oddie at Visitation held at Thirsk on 10th September 1817

The church is an ancient strong stone built fabrick covered with a leaden roof in good repair and the body of it maintained by the Parish. The Chancel by Harry Croft Esquire-And the Vestry by the Vicar. In the steeple are three bells and a Parish Clock- within and belonging to the Chancel there is one Communion Table with a covering of green cloth. Also one linen cloth for the same with two knapkins. One silver Communion Cup weight eight ounces and a half whereon are subscribed the names of William Wilkinson and Robert Morley Church Wardens of Stillington 1664 Two pewter flagons and one Patten for the Bread. In the Reading Pew is one large Bible and one large Common Prayer Book both in good condition and one Pulpit Cushion covered with Green Cloth.

Extract from the Terrier of 18th June 1778

The Church-yard which is the property of the Vicar is repaired by the Parish, the Chancel by Stephen Croft Esq and the Vestry by the Vicar.

Chancel Repair Liability-Under Tithe Act 1936 was extinguished in August 1940 by payment of £105.11.1 To the Tithe Redemption Commission who invested it in the name of “The Diocesan Authority for the Diocese of York in respect of the Church of Stillington”. The investment was in £3 Govt Redemption Stock Payment was made by William Ware in whom was vested the legal estate immediately before 2nd Oct’ 1936. This means that the York Diocesan Board of Finance is responsible, but the Stillington Congregation have to find the money as they have done in the past.

*In early 2000 the Church (Commisioners) drew strong attention to the Lord of the Manor’s liability to repair the **Chancel**, until they were reminded that this had been extinguished. They have quietly overlooked their responsibility to repair the **Vestry** and the local PCC have had to find the money for this. Previous Terriers (e.g. 1778) stated that the Vicar was responsible for **repairs to the vestry**.*

STILLINGTON CHURCH

Plan prepared by J.B. and William Atkinson, drawn before the church was rebuilt. It shows the tower and porch in the position of the present porch and the west wall in a position some seven feet to the east of where it now stands. It also shows a singing gallery over the west end of the nave.

These drawings are part of the archives of the firm Brierley Leckenby and Groom, held at the Borthwick Institute of Historical Studies at the University of York.

Wording on Plan –Pre 1840

Outer Porch

Brick Buttress to sustain Tower

Tower

Old Tower out of the Perpendicular and dilapidated (Note There was a steeple on top of the old Tower. This was not replaced when the tower was rebuilt)

Nave

- (a) **Outer Wall South Side**---The angle of Wall to be taken down & etc
- (b) **West End**----This wall which is much decayed to be taken down and the West end prolonged. Above the word "taken" is written "Buttress"
- (c) **Inside Church at West End**—Singing Gallery above with old free seats under it all much decayed.
- (d) Font against pillar
- (e) **North West corner**—Stairs to Capt Crofts Pews (this referred to William Croft 1782-1872 who became an Admiral on 23rd November 1841, but in 1840 was still a Captain). ABCD. see plan as to where A.B.C.D. are marked "upstairs"
- (f) **North aisle**—Open Pews much dilapidated and underneath that Pews much dilapidated.
- (g) **Centre Aisle** Below these words is written Pews much dilapidated and below that Open Pews much dilapidated
- (h) **South Aisle**

Chancel at join of Nave to Chancel

On North side

- (a) Pulpit
- (b) Clerk Read Desk
- (c) Clergyman's pew
- (d) Col Crofts Servants

On South side

- (a) Col Crofts Pew (This would have referred to Harry Croft 1775-1853) elder brother of William. Note there was a stove in this pew.

Vestry Note. No door to churchyard.

East End

Altar Table

.....

In 1915 the new tower was restored, some stone was renewed in the east window and the east and south walls of the chancel were underpinned.

In the 1930's the upper part of the porch was rebuilt, the north west gable footstone was renewed and the north wall of the vestry had the plinth renewed and underpinned.

William Oddie, Vicar of Stillington-
Chancery Court 1st July 1817-23rd July 1818
Held in front of Mr. Henry John Dickens M.A.

It was alleged that the Rev'd William Oddie was guilty of habitually "drinking to excess" in his parish, during the years 1811 to 1817. It was also claimed that Oddie had sometimes been so drunk that he was unable to conduct divine service, had sometimes conducted services irreverently, and had once during a service drunk the wine which had been set aside for celebrating the sacrament. The two churchwardens John and Henry Sowray brought several witnesses who confirmed these allegations. The Court found against Oddie, condemned him in costs and suspended him for three years. The Court appointed William Thompson of Stillington (on a Bond of £500) to collect church rents and tithes pay the curate and keep the vicarage in good repair during that period. The Reverend Isaac Grayson was appointed Curate for the next three years, on a salary of £25 per annum.

Oddie did not produce any witnesses in his defence. However there were a number of witnesses against him, viz: John and Henry Sowray, the two churchwardens of Stillington. John Cass, the publican of the White Bear, and a lodger John Thompson, aged 29, a carpenter stated that Oddie would arrive at the pub at around 5.00am before the household had risen, knocking on the door asking for access. He would drink spirituous liquors until he became intoxicated fall asleep and then drink more. On many occasions they had to help him home. Miss Mary Cass age 24 years, daughter of the publican made a very similar statement as her father.

John Calvert a Stillington farmer, aged 58 years, who had lived in Stillington for 29 years also stated that in Jan to March 1817, he had seen Oddie drunk in Stillington. As did Thomas Brown, aged 21 a local butcher.

Mrs. Sarah Robinson age 52 years, Housekeeper to Colonel Croft and wife of Joseph Robinson, servant of Colonel Croft at his house in Portman Square, London, made a similar statement.

William Croft, aged 35 years, resident of Stillington for the last six years and brother of Colonel Harry Croft gave evidence against Oddie.

During the years 1810 to 1815, a young vicar, William Henry Dickson was living in Stillington with his wife Mary Anne Dickson, aged 34. Between them they gave evidence that Oddie was drunk on a number of occasions whilst conducting services & that on 29th March 1812 they attended church when Oddie was so intoxicated that William Henry had had to take over the service. Also on one occasion he had drunk some of the wine set aside for Divine Service.

Miss Cecilia Mary Thompson, age 19, living with her father in the house directly opposite the church (*Church Farm House ??*) for the last six years, said that on many occasions in January to March 1817, when she got up in the morning around 6.00a.m. she would see from her window, Oddie walking backwards and forwards, in the churchyard still in a drunken manner from the previous evening.

William Thompson, Agent to Colonel Croft. Resident in Stillington for the last 6 years. He stated that he would walk to the White Bear to collect his letters that had been left by the Post on its way from York to Helmsley and on many occasions he would see Oddie in the pub in a drunken stupor. His face was black from excessive drinking and he was of the opinion that Oddie would kill himself through drink. Thompson said that like his daughter, Mary, he had seen Oddie pacing around the churchyard in a drunken manner early in the morning when Thompson was getting dressed.

Buried at Stillington:- William Oddie, on 19.11.1821, aged 61. John Bent Oddie on 25.3.1821, aged 19. Edward Oddie on 8.9.1827, aged 36. Lieut 33rd Foot

Grahame Richardson 2013

The Prebendaries and Vicars of Stillington

York Minster was in receipt of a large amount of income from the lands, properties and Rights it held in its area of jurisdiction. This income was divided up into manageable portions by appointing canons in charge.

Each canon had a stall in the Minster (usually with an altar) and he in turn would appoint a vicar to reside in the area covered by the "prebendary". The following are the Canons/Prebendaries appointed for Stillington according to "Fasti Eboracenses, or a catalogue of the Cathedral Church, York from the earliest times to Year 1840 (Raines collection at York City Archives).

In 1086 the church of St. Peter (York Minster) held 10 carucates of the archbishop's fee in Stillington, 4 carucates in Nawton, and one carucate in Wumbleton, both of the parish of Kirkdale, and the archbishop held half a carucate in Coulton, soke of Helmsley.

It is interesting to learn (from Mrs. Susan Doktor of Wumbleton) that "In 1802 a piece of waste land belonging to The Rev Croft of Stillington was purchased by the freeholders of Nawton and the following year a School was ready for use. It was built by public subscription to serve the needs of Nawton, Beadlam and Skiplam, and the building is still in use today as it forms part of the Memorial Hall in Nawton. It was the first voluntary school in the parish of Kirkdale".

In 1816 The Wumbleton, Nawton & Harome Enclosure Act was passed. In it 1Acre 0Rood 8Perches were Allotted to George Spouton on the Common adjoining Moor Lane Road and Harom & Wumbleton Road on the West.

Also 1Acre 1 rood 2perches containing a house adjoining an allotment were allotted to Richard Trenam . This had land awarded to Edward Fenwick on the East and next to Land awarded to Richard Trenham on the West of the township of Skiplam on the North and the Helmsley and Kirkby road on the South.

Both properties to be held as Copyhold of the

Manor of Stillington. On 6th July 1894 both these properties were subject to an Indenture between Harry Croft of

Stillington Hall and John Trenam of Nawton. The following day Trenham sold the two houses on the first property to the occupiers, Joseph Emmett and Richard Spenceley and the field to Frances Excelby of Clarendon Terrace, York, Widow.

I assume that the first transaction was the disposal of the copyright.

As per York Minster Fasti

Year 1160-65 Page 68

Thomas son of Paulinus. As a canon of York he released to Riveaulx abbey his claims to the bounds on Welburn by his land of Nawton and Wumbleton, which had been perambulated by Roger de Mowbray and his men, **date assigned 1160-65** (E.Y.C., i, no. 164; and cf. ix, no. 162) Thomas was witness to several charters at York to as late as 1194.

Year 1227

Mag. Serio de Sonning as canon of York he was the successful plaintiff for 6 acres of meadow in Wumbleton as the right of his prebendary of Stillington, Michaelmass term 1225 (Cur, Reg. R., xii pp. 123, 191). He was still alive in 1227.

Year 1253 Page 165

Thomas de London –He is the first mentioned Prebendary of Stillington in Torres MSS. During the vacancy of the See prior to the appointment of Walter Grey, *see Drakes appx LXV 1(NB A man of the same name was granted the preb, of Stillington by the Crown 28 March 1352 (C.P.R., 1350-1354 p.242; Fasti, iii, 213); and the entry for 1253 is a almost, if not quite, certainly a mistake for this.*

Year 1258 Page 169

John de Langton-N. As canon of the Preb. Of Stillington he was party to a final concord for a rent from a tenement in Langtoft 20 Oct 1258 (Yorks. Fines, 1246-72, p. 108). He was probably archdeacon of York in the period 1260-62

Year 1280

Thomas de Corbridge an extent was made of the prebend at Stillington of **Master Thomas de Corbridge**, prebendary since **25 June, 1280**. He had there a manor house, three carucates of land in demesne, twenty acres of meadow, two watermills a windmill and 66 bov' in servisel besides being a rector of the church.(See Cowling York Library). He also held a demesne manor house in Nawton with 11 bov. In demesne, and land and a meadow in Wumbleton with 10 bov. In sevice; 2 carucates in Langtoft let to free tenants; and a free tenant holding a messuage and 3 bov. in Coulton.

The assessment of the prebend for the taxation in 1291 was £46.13.4

Year 1300 Page 224 and 241

Francis Gaytoni

He was an Italian Cardinal and nephew of the Pope. In 1307 he was promoted to the Archdeaconship of Richmond per provisionam papalam and died in 1317

1304 John Bough or Busshe. He succeeded Francis Gaytoni who must have resigned before his promotion to the Archdeacon of Richmond which did not take place until 1307

Prebendary

Vicars

- 1295** Walter Clerk named in the extant of that year was probably a parish clerk or even a prior.
- 1301** John the Clerk named in the Lay Subsidy Roll of that year was probably a parish clerk or prior
- 1311** Page 258 **John Hotham**
- 1316** Dec 7 **Thos de Charlton**
- 1328** 4 April **John de Godelegh** died 1332
- 1329** **Peter de Topcliffe**
John Safts
- 1332** Page 303 **Peter de Cedonio** 2nd Feb In 1348 he left £20 to the fabric of the church for the new choir-see *Browne's History No XXII p126*
- 1340** Page 313 **John Berenger** 13th Oct
- 1341** **John Walworth** may have been a victim of the Black Death
- 1349** **Robert de Wetwang**
- In the years 1368-1401 Brother Robert of Stillington, a canon at Marton Priory, was a vicar of Sutton Forest* It maybe that the canons of Marton were also priests at Stillington *Torre MSS (2a) Cal ing Misc loc vi (1392-9) p246(2)**
- 1352** **Thomas of London (King's clerk)** 28th March by reason of avoidance of the Archbishop of York (according to Calendar of Patent Rolls Edward 111)
- 1355** **Roger de Holme** July 1
- 1366** page 145 **Adam de Holme** July 1
- 1369** **William of Beverley** July 6
- 1369** **William de Ganton**
- 1373** **Thomas de Huggate**
- 1370** **Henry de Wakefield** Jan1 (became Bishop of Worcester in 1376)
- 1376** **John de Shepey** Dec 3
- 1376** **Guyodo** Cardinal May 24
- 1377** **John de Collum, Vicar of Stillington**
by Will desires his body to be buried in the Quire of the Church.

- 1558 Robert Burland 6 Aug Maybe also John Boxall 1558-59**
- 1559 Thos Atkinson 11 Mch he died 1571**
- 1571 George Rowe 25 Oct He was also rector of Wheldrake**
- 1578 (Sir) James Welford** He was also vicar of Sutton on Forest. His daughter Cecilia married Sir Christopher Croft who was Sheriff of York in 1618 and then Lord Mayor in 1629 and 1641. In 1590 he contributed £30 to the Queen's Loan a form of taxation by Queen Elizabeth 1st.
- 1585 William Magson Will proved 21st April 1609 desires his body to be interred in the Chancel**
- 1605 Philip Ford w.e.f 27.3.1605**
- 1607 George Houseman**
1626 Stephen Berrier
1635 Robert Hodson
1639 Francis Beaumont MA He gave up the post voluntarily (appointed 9.1.1639/40) **1646**
George Leake Appointed by the House of Lords on 12th Sept 1646 as Commonwealth Minister (died 25.7.1662)
- 1660 Alexander Medcalfe**, ejected, see Samuel Palmer's "Non conformists Memorial" Vol 11, 1775, lists him as ejected Minister of Stillington
- 1660 Henry Bridgeman**
- 1662 Thomas Marsden MA-ejected in the same year as a non-conformist**
- 1662 George Lambe**
- 1690 Timothy Cookson**
- 1682 Barnabus Long**
- 1692 John Dade MA** Took Oaths to William and Mary at Thirsk on 4th Oct, 1692
- 1685 Leonard Welsted**
- 1694 Edmund Wickens**
- 1696 Robert Banks**
- 1716 Charles Blake**
- 1716 (11th July) Richard Musgrave MA**
 In 1743 he returned to Archbishop Herring that there were 83 families in the parish. Ursula wife of Matthew Linton, and Marmaduke Clemenge were Roman Catholics, though Clemenge's wife and children were Protestants
- 1730 Richard Lovett**
- 1745 Lawrence Sterne** . In 1761 he paid Marmaduke Callis to be Curate
- 1749 Frances Wanley**

- 1749 **Hugh Thomas**
- 1750 **Frances Wanley**
- 1750 **James Worsley**
- 1768 **John varey** (Died 6.4.1794 age 75
buried at entrance to Church
In 1770 he employed John Walker as Curate
- 1777 **Pierson Lloyd.**
- 1781 **John Dealtry**
- 1794 **William Oddie** In 1805 he employed John
Cookson as Curate. In 1817, he was suspended for 3 years for
drunkenness. The Rev's Isaac Grayson being appointed for that
period as Curate.
- 1797 **Robert Croft** also Rector of Rowley near Beverley
and canon. He was the younger brother of Stephen Croft
of Stillington
- 1822 **Thomas Hutton Croft MA**
He employed the following Curates
1829-34 Charles Hall Croft-buried in Churchyard
1849-54 Frederick Stewart
1867-69 John Cockram Denny-buried in Churchyard
1870 J.C.Denny-replaced
1870 John Wilson . 1873 W. Bennett
- 1831 **Thomas Hutton Croft** 3rd son of Robert Croft and was
vicar of Hutton Buscel nr. Scarboro' and of Stillington
- 1875 **William Tassie Vernon**
- 1873 **William Henry Jemmison LLB**
Died 1905
- 1888 **Frederick Wildman Goodwyn**
- 1918 **Cecil Henry Hamilton Cooper**
- 1906 **Matthew Henry Smith MA**
- 1910 **Alfred Ramsden MA**
- 1912 **Albert John Perkins BA**
- 1927 **Herbert William Smith**
- 1933 **Frederick Richardson**
- 1956 **William Peter Mason BA**
- 1961 **Reginald Iliff**
- 1964 **Anthony Cyril Bickerseth**

1965 Donald Vaillant Hewitt

1968 William Ward

1974 Thomas Ernest Hughes

1978 Richard White

1982 William Hugh Bates MA

1989 Robin Geoffrey Fletcher

1995 David Lee

2001 Suzanne Sheriff-lives in Tadcaster

2005 Christopher Ellis

Church Wardens for Stillington 1753-1773

The Church Warden was chosen (*originally in the 1600,s at the Court Leet*) at the Vestry Meeting, held at Easter. The warden's first duty was to attend the Visitation to be sworn in. His duties included attending the Visitation at York, Thirsk or Malton, twice a year to report anything amiss or irregular in the parish. Examples of these were, adultery, whoredom, incest, drunkenness, swearing, not communicating at Easter and not attending Church on Sundays or Holy Days. He had to maintain the fabric of the church, provide bread and wine for Holy Communion and pay the parish clerk. There was a very lengthy set of questions, known as Articles, which he had to answer regarding the above duties and also as to the conduct of the vicar. Stillington had two wardens. At this time only men were wardens.

The costs of the Church Wardens for 1753/54 were copied into the main Cash Book on Feb 26th 1755 and amongst other items it recorded:

Soap and oil for the bells, winding up the clock, purchasing a register and one oak box to keep it in, (*by 1759 the Register must have been full as the then Church Warden had to pay for a "Parchment for ye Regdchester 1s.6d"*) buying candles, mending windows, washing napkins and surpluses, and repairing the churchyard stile.

On November 5th payment was made for food and drink to those who rang the bells on what was described in later accounts as "Gunpowder Treason Night". This event was never missed. Naturally Christmas Day was special and payment was made for ringing on that day also. This was over and above the annual payment made by the Constable of approximately 10s.0d. The bells were rung on other than Holy Days as can be seen when on 6th February 1757/58 1s.0d was paid for "Ringing for ye King of Prussia".

Considerable quantities of wine were purchased, at Christmas Day, Easter, Whitsuntide and Michaelmas. A total of six gallons in 1757 for example at a cost of 8s.3d for a gallon and a half, plus 1s.3d for fetching it, presumably from York. Bread was of course also being purchased but at less cost. In 1754/55 the loft stairs were repaired, John Hall was paid for "Work at ye Church 1s.3d". Each year an Almanack was purchased, this presumably was a calendar of Holy Days. The church clock required constant attention. Some 6s.6d was spent on "Getting stones for ye church wall". And again the churchyard stile needed repairs. In 1759 Marmaduke Mortimer was paid 10s.2d for mending the church leads & glazing, and on 3rd July Nathaniel Mason was paid £3.00 "for painting ye Church Dial. To do this the Dial had to be taken down at a cost of 2s.0d. A few days later they paid Wm. Colton 10s 6d "for the clock mending" and 4d for a new screw for the pointer. On October 3rd they paid William Prest £1.7s.0d for the Dial Board. And in 1759 a book of Homilies was purchased at a cost of 12s.0d.

1760 was interesting in that it records: Sept 15th "Going twice to Coxwold & to York about a Terrier (*list of parochial land*). Then on 4th October "Paid to the Spiritual Court for a Citation for ye persons neglect of not sending a Terrier in time to (de)liver into Court. Laurence Sterne was vicar at the time and one could imagine, from his reputation, that he had been dilatory in supplying some information to the Wardens and that they had had to make two journeys to Coxwold to get it and then had to pay the Court for the delay.

Every few years a copy of the Church Register had to be sent to the Bishop. This is recorded as having been done on 14th August 1762 (and also in 1766). On November 7th of 1762 they recorded "Spent on ye singers from Dunnington 2s.6d"

Every year there is an entry "Paid for ye Cess Casting 2s.0d, or Cess Assessment". Cess is a tax so it maybe that each year they worked out the "tax" required from the parishioners in order to pay the church costs.

Confirmations must have been regional affairs as on 15th July 1756 they record "Both our troubles for going to Boroughbridge to ye confirmation 5s.0d. For papers for writing their tickets with a list of names 2d". Again on 1st July they "Paid at ye Confirmation at Malton for Eating & Liker 4s.9d". They

paid 2s.10d for hire and feed for two horses to get to and from Malton. Finally they paid “to a Barber 6d for ye Parson”. Presumably they felt that he needed tidying up before the ceremony.

In 1763 the biggest single item of expense was for a Church Prayer Book, costing 16s.0d.

Richard Wood plastered the church in September 1764 at a cost of 7s.0d and in March 1765 Duke Mortimer was paid 12s.5d for twelve and a half pounds of solder and a days work. The door key must have been lost in 1765 as 1s.6d had to be paid for a new one.

The church windows and roof required constant attention. In 1767/8 nearly £6.0.0 was spent on lead.

In February 1766 there must have been need to see one of the Croft family on some subject as the Church Warden charged 2s.0d for going to Howsham Hall.(In 1757 Stephen Crofts’ daughter Henrietta had married Hugh Cholomley of Howsham Hall).

In April 1766/67 they had to take the Clock down and carry it to Thomas Newstead’s house, paying Gilbert Kid of Malton to come over and repair it at a cost of £1.9.3d

It is at this stage I would comment that quite often each church warden reported spending the same sum on the same day for a number, but not all items. Whether this was duplication or whether they split the cost between them is unclear.

1770 saw quite a bit of activity in repairing the church. John Hall the builder was church warden so it is not surprising that he used his skills and knowledge on matters he felt needed attention He listed the following, Paid:-

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Glazier | £1.1s.0d |
| Myself & someone, day & a half pointing | 5s.6d |
| Lime & hair | 1s.0d |
| Going to Richard Mays to Chose Bricks | 2s.0d |
| Church gate | 7s.6d |
| Gate Stoup | 2s.0d |
| 2000 bricks loading | 12s.0d |
| Thomas Newstead for 8 bushels of lime | 4s.0d |
| Myself 8 days & a half laying floor and white washing | 17s.0d |
| My 2 sons each 8 days | 19s.4d |
| 3 bunches of lats (<i>lathes</i>)and 800 of 4d nails | 6s.10d |
| Paid for Spanish White | 6s.6d |
| One bushel of hair | 6d |
| 2000 bricks | <u>£2.0.0d</u> <u>£7.5s.2d</u> |

On 10th March 1771, both he and the other church warden gave 2s.0d to” Crake” singers. A new Bible & Prayer Book was purchase in 1772 at a cost of £2.17.0d.

At that time the church had a porch as mention is made on April 18th 1772/73 of paying John Stappylton for mending “Cherch porch Binch 1s.0d”.

Finally on 3rd August 1773, 5s.6d was paid “For ye Pulpit Shifting”.

The Book stops at 1773.

STILLINGTON CHURCH & GRAVEYARD

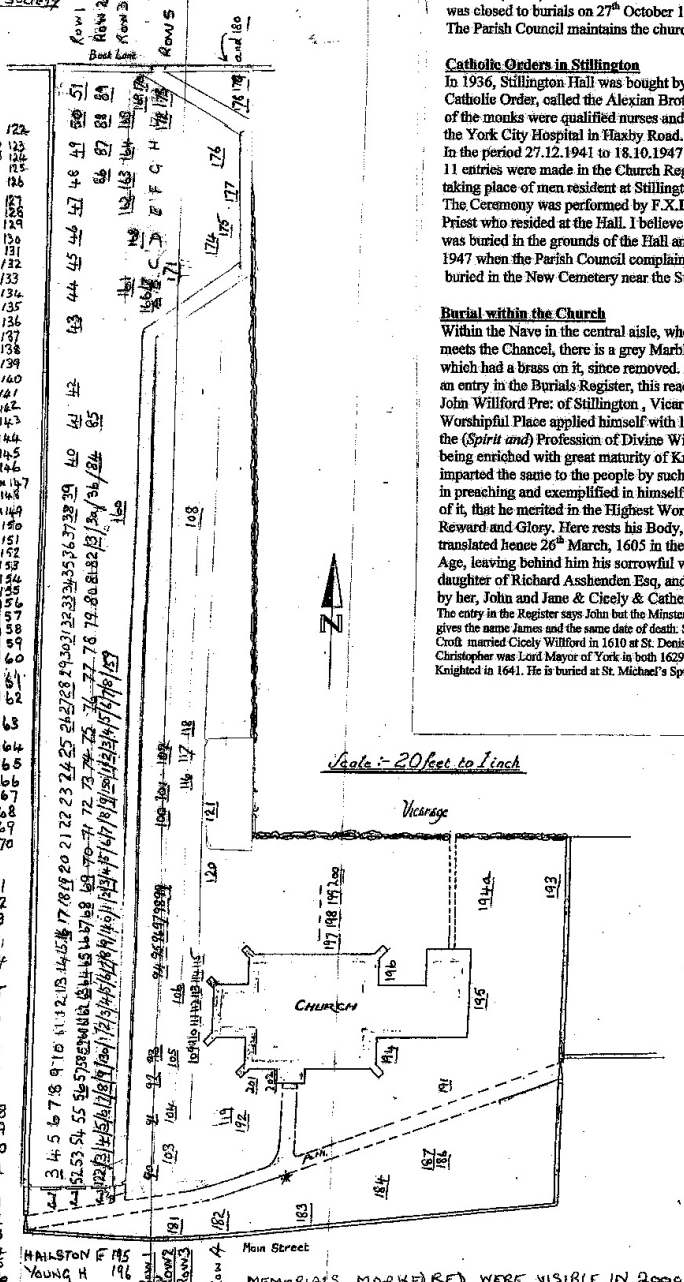
Prepared by G. RICHARDSON from
Map supplied by WILKINSON circa 1925

FOR GREATER DETAIL OF INSCRIPTIONS OR MEMORIALS SEE BLOCK PRODUCED BY
CITY OF YORK DISTRICT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
FOR DATES OF BURIALS 1760-2011 SEE
SHEETS ATTACHED

KEY

ON LEFT HAND SIDE OF PATH

| ROW 1 | ROW 2 | ROW 3 |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
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Churchyard
The churchyard was extended to the north in 1866 and in 1937 was further extended on land to the north of (North) Back Lane. The Old Churchyard was closed to burials on 27th October 1976. The Parish Council maintains the churchyard.

Catholic Orders in Stillington
In 1936, Stillington Hall was bought by the Roman Catholic Order, called the Alexian Brothers, some of the monks were qualified nurses and worked in the York City Hospital in Hasby Road. In the period 27.12.1941 to 18.10.1947 some 11 entries were made in the Church Register of burials taking place of men resident at Stillington Hall. The Ceremony was performed by F.X. Lynch, Catholic Priest who resided at the Hall. I believe that at least one was buried in the grounds of the Hall and removed in 1947 when the Parish Council complained. Others were buried in the New Cemetery near the Surgery.

Burial within the Church
Within the Nave in the central aisle, where the Nave meets the Chancel, there is a grey Marble slab, which had a brass on it, since removed. According to an entry in the Burials Register, this read :-
John Willford Pre: of Stillington, Vicar of this Worshipful Place applied himself with like zeal to the (Spirit and) Profession of Divine Wisdom, in which being enriched with great maturity of Knowledge he imparted the same to the people by such assiduous in preaching and exemplified in himself in the Holiness of it, that he merited in the Highest World the Promised Reward and Glory. Here rests his Body, his Soul was translated hence 26th March, 1605 in the 52nd year of his Age, leaving behind him his sorrowful wife Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Ashendon Esq, and five children by her, John and Jane & Cicely & Catherine. The entry in the Register says John but the Minister list of Prebendaries gives the name James and the same date of death. Sir Christopher Croft married Cicely Willford in 1610 at St. Denis Walmgate. Christopher was Lord Mayor of York in both 1629 and 1641 and was knighted in 1641. He is buried at St. Michael's Spurriergate, York.

Scale - 20 feet to 1 inch

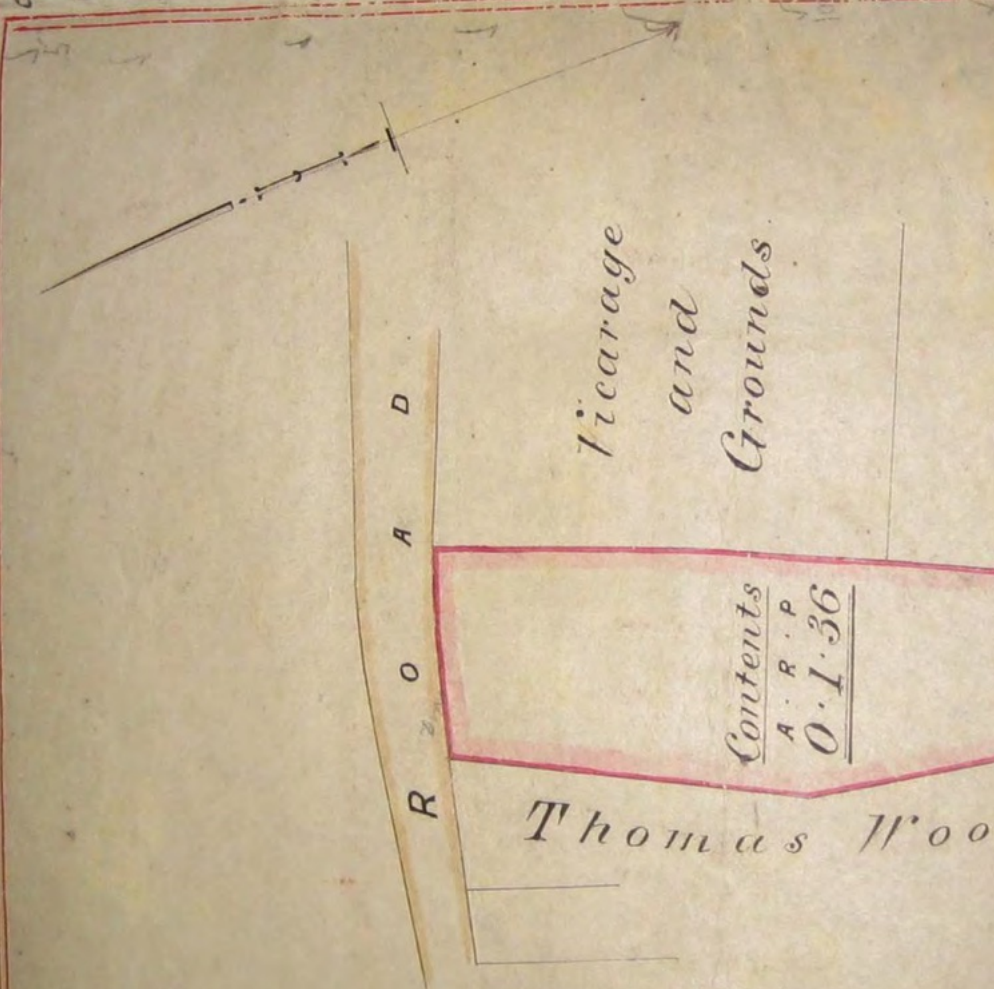
CHURCH

MEMORIALS MARKED RED WERE VISIBLE IN 2000

G. RICHARDSON 22-12-2011

KNOWLSON *
Mrs SLATER
E. A. ELLIS
SARAH ANN KNOWLSON
ARTHUR SHALLWOOD
JOSEPH STUBBS
M^{rs} E. A. ELLIS

... in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixteenth
 the Session before in the Court and passed in the Session
 Acts and particularly of an Act passed in the Session
 Commissioners to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in
Mary Lobley late of Stillington in the County
 George Thompson late of Stillington aforesaid a woman
 peculiar Jurisdiction of Stillington aforesaid on the twenty
 on the twenty
 presents in the
 that fifty eight
 Dorothy of
 for that purpose
 Horatio W.
 for England
H. W. D.
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 of Copefield
 unto the st
 Our Road
 the Road



Land given by Mary Lobley in 1866



At the Court at Buckingham Palace

THE 27th DAY OF OCTOBER 1976

PRESENT,

THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
IN COUNCIL

Whereas a Representation duly made to Her Majesty in Council by the Secretary of State for the Environment that burials should be discontinued as hereinafter directed in St. Nicholas' Old Churchyard, Stillington, in the County of North Yorkshire, has in pursuance of an Order in Council made the 2nd day of July 1976, and duly published, been taken into consideration by a Committee of the Privy Council:

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers conferred on Her by section 1 of the Burial Act 1853(a) and of all other powers Her enabling is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. Burials shall be discontinued forthwith and entirely in St. Nicholas' Old Churchyard, Stillington, in the County of North Yorkshire, which is shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto.

2. This Order may be cited as the Burial Grounds (St. Nicholas' Old Churchyard, Stillington, North Yorkshire) Order 1976.

N. E. Leigh

North Riding Register of Deeds- New Church Yard

Volume 620 Page 27 No.11 Registered 14th April 1934

Copy of a Voluntary Conveyance to be Registered on behalf of Herbert William Smith of the Vicarage Stillington, Vicar.

Date 12th February 1934

Parties Thomas Christopher Horner+ of Riccall in the County of York Justice of the Peace (the Donor) and the Reverend Herbert William Smith of the Vicarage Stillington The person or Persons or Corporate Sole or Aggregate in whom is now vested the Churchyard or Burial Place known as Stillington Churchyard.

Township Stillington in the North Riding of the County of Yorkshire

Verbatim Copy of the Deed I Thomas Christopher Horner of Riccall in the County of York J.P. (Donor) being seized for an estate of inheritance in fee simple in possession free from incumbrances of the piece of land and hereditaments hereby conveyed under the authority of the Consecration of Churchyards Act 1867 do hereby freely and voluntarily give grant and convey unto the person or persons or Corporate Sole or Aggregate in whom the Churchyard or Burial Place known as Stillington Churchyard is now vested his or their successors ALL THAT piece or parcel of land situate on the north side of the Back Lane at Stillington in the North Riding of the County of York containing 1 acre or thereabouts Ordnance Measure and being part of a close of land containing 1.320 acres Ordnance Measure numbered 244 on the Ordnance Survey Map of Stillington (edition 1916) and shewn on the plan drawn on these presents and thereon coloured and edged around in pink and all right title and interest in the same and every part thereof To be held forever as part of the Churchyard or Burial Place and for no other purpose whatsoever and I the Reverend H.W. Smith vicar of the said Vicarage and Parish of Stillington do hereby for self and successors Incumbents for the time being of the Benefice of the said Parish of Stillington and on behalf of the Parochial Council covenant with the Donor that on obtaining possession of the said land hereby conveyed I will forthwith erect and maintain etc etc a fence the whole length of the land on the East side

Recorded in the Books of the Church Commissioners for England and Wales pursuant to Sec 29 (4) of the Settled Land Act 1925 Vol 52 Page 292 9th March 1934

Drawn up by Munby and Scott, 3 Blake Street, York, Solicitors.

+ His wife, Ada Jane (1863-1930) was daughter of Noah Wynn (1826-1929) of Stillington.

They were parents of Constance Ada Horner born 4.5.1910 She married Herbert W. Smith, vicar of Stillington in 1944 at Riccall, Howden.

Sundry

The wall at the east gate from Main Street-There are shale stones built into the wall. If one looks carefully, you will see that there are a large number of Fossils within them. Some Mussel-like ones that are called Devil's toenails, some have finer flat scallop-shaped shells. Similar fossil encrusted shale has been found when Marl ponds were dug to the south of the village. These creatures lived in mud which would suggest that the area was once flooded. Marl is clay that was used to stabilise the light sandy land and prevent erosion. That is why there are so many small ponds in the sandy areas where it was dug by hand and then spread on the land.

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Prepared by Grahame Richardson updated January 2016

“The Scaffolding”

Anyone could be forgiven for thinking that the scaffolding around the church tower has become a permanent feature. But, rest assured, it should be gone within another two or three weeks.

The stonemason at the beginning of the contract did give a warning, whenever you carry out work on an old building it is almost inevitable that you would find extra things to do. Little did we know!

Under York Diocesan rules the church building has been examined by an architect every five years for decades and any work deemed necessary after the inspections has been carried out, so we thought we really shouldn't have any problems.

Unfortunately, work carried out a little over a hundred years ago to replace the main supporting timbers for the frame which holds the bells had been done wrongly. The new steel beams fitted at the time were embedded in the tower's stone walls rather than being supported within the walls and, therefore, structurally independent of the walls. In consequence, as the bells have been rung over this last century they have been shaking the tower, opening up significant cracks which only became evident with inspection from the scaffolding. Furthermore, the cracks had allowed water into the stonework, not only rusting the ends of the beams embedded in the walls, but also the freezing of the water in winter had opened up cracks in a number of the stones themselves. There was no danger of the tower actually collapsing but there was no point in repairing the cracks and not dealing with the root cause - the wrong fixings for the bell frame. The ends of the old steel beams needed to be removed from the walls, replaced with new beams refixed on stainless-steel brackets inside the tower walls and a number of quite large shattered stones replaced.

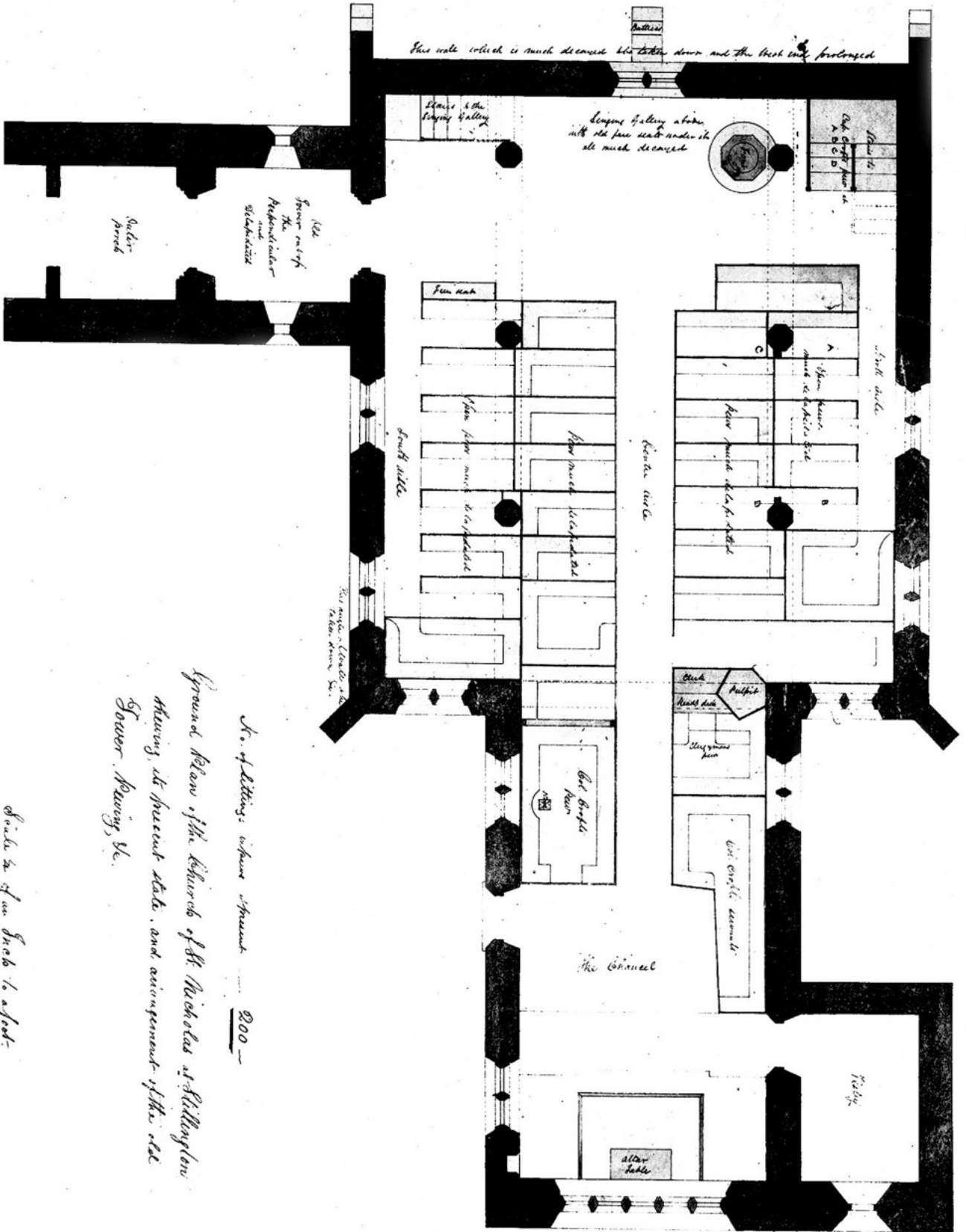
As can be imagined this has all taken time, hence the continued presence of the scaffolding.

There have been two further unfortunate consequences: inevitably the total cost of the project has increased substantially and the examination of the bells and bell frame has highlighted significant problems in this area too, the full implications of which have yet to be quantified. Sadly, the bells will not be ringing for some time yet.

The good news is that whilst the scaffolding has been up the opportunity has been taken to repaint and renovate the face of the church clock and a new flagpole has been fixed, externally, to the northern face of the tower.

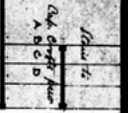
So, hopefully, all the tower problems have been dealt with and there will be no problems for some time to come. Now onto the bells!

JC



This wall which is much decayed has been taken down and the back wall prolonged

Longer gallery added with old pane seats under it all much decayed



Old tower with the new vestibule and staircase

No. of letters above ground 200
 Ground plan of the church of St. Nicholas at Billington showing its present state, and arrangement of the old tower, rising, &c.

Scale in feet

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A History of Stillington Church Clock

By Charles E. Hutchinson



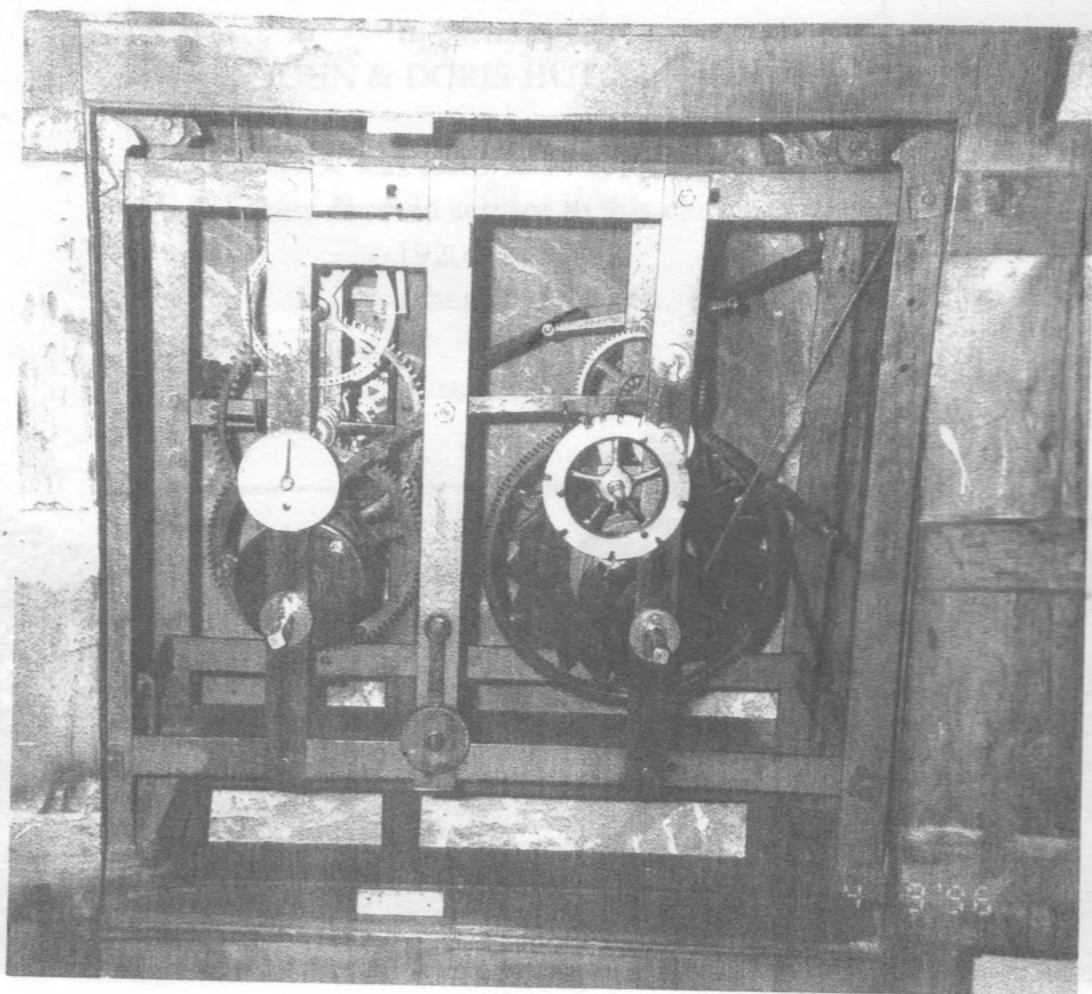
The Church of St. Nicholas, Stillington, North Yorkshire

November 1996

Price £1

This booklet is dedicated to my late father, Mr. John Best Hutchinson
of Stillington, York, whose carefully kept records form the basis of
my own research.

C.E.H.



The mechanism of Stillington Church clock

Acknowledgements

Mr. G. Newey for technical details;

Miss K. Smith for her kind permission to use extracts from Parish
magazines compiled by her father the Rev. H.W. Smith;

Mr. D. Hutchinson and Mr. E Bacon for photographs;

Mr A. Hutchinson for assisting with research.

An Absent Friend

Many readers will have noticed that the Church clock in Stillington has in the past few months been giving the wrong time. This is despite the diligent care and twice weekly winding by Mr. Allan Hutchinson over the last 20 years.

The clock has now been dismantled and removed for a full and extensive overhaul by clockmaker Mr. G. Newey. Mr. Newey's father, Richard, overhauled the clock in 1938 and it has given no trouble until the last few months.

Mr G.J.F. Newey, grandfather of the current clockmaker, rebuilt the clock in 1903. Nearly a century of excellent service has been provided by the same family. Richard Newey was a personal friend of the Hutchinson family and frequently visited Stillington in his BSA three-wheeled touring car.

The present overhaul was felt by my brother Allan and myself to be a fitting memorial to our parents Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Hutchinson, in recognition of some 60 years devoted service to Stillington Church. A plaque to be erected in the choir vestry is being provided by the Stillington P.C.C:

The face restoration is now complete, having been re-painted and gilded with gold leaf by Mr. G. Newey and his assistant Mr. Edward Bacon. A recent appeal has raised sufficient funds to pay for this and the refurbishment of surrounding stonework.

My brother and I trust that after this restoration, many years of trouble-free service and convenience will be enjoyed by all who "*seek the time*".

Tout Pour L'Eglise !

Early History of the Clock

There appears to be no record of when the clock was first placed in the tower or of the identity of the maker. Prior to 1869 this had been a one-pointered clock as was common in that period. The presence of the gold diamonds on the face between each hour confirms this.

On June 29th, 1869 a meeting was held for the purpose of consulting the parishioners concerning repairs needed to the clock. The churchwardens, Mr. Wm. Richardson and Mr. T Hailstone, with a committee consisting of Messrs. Robert Bosomworth, John Weatherill and John Richardson obtained an estimate from Messrs. Darling & Wood of York. This amounted to £10, with the addition of a minute finger and works, £7.10.0. extra.

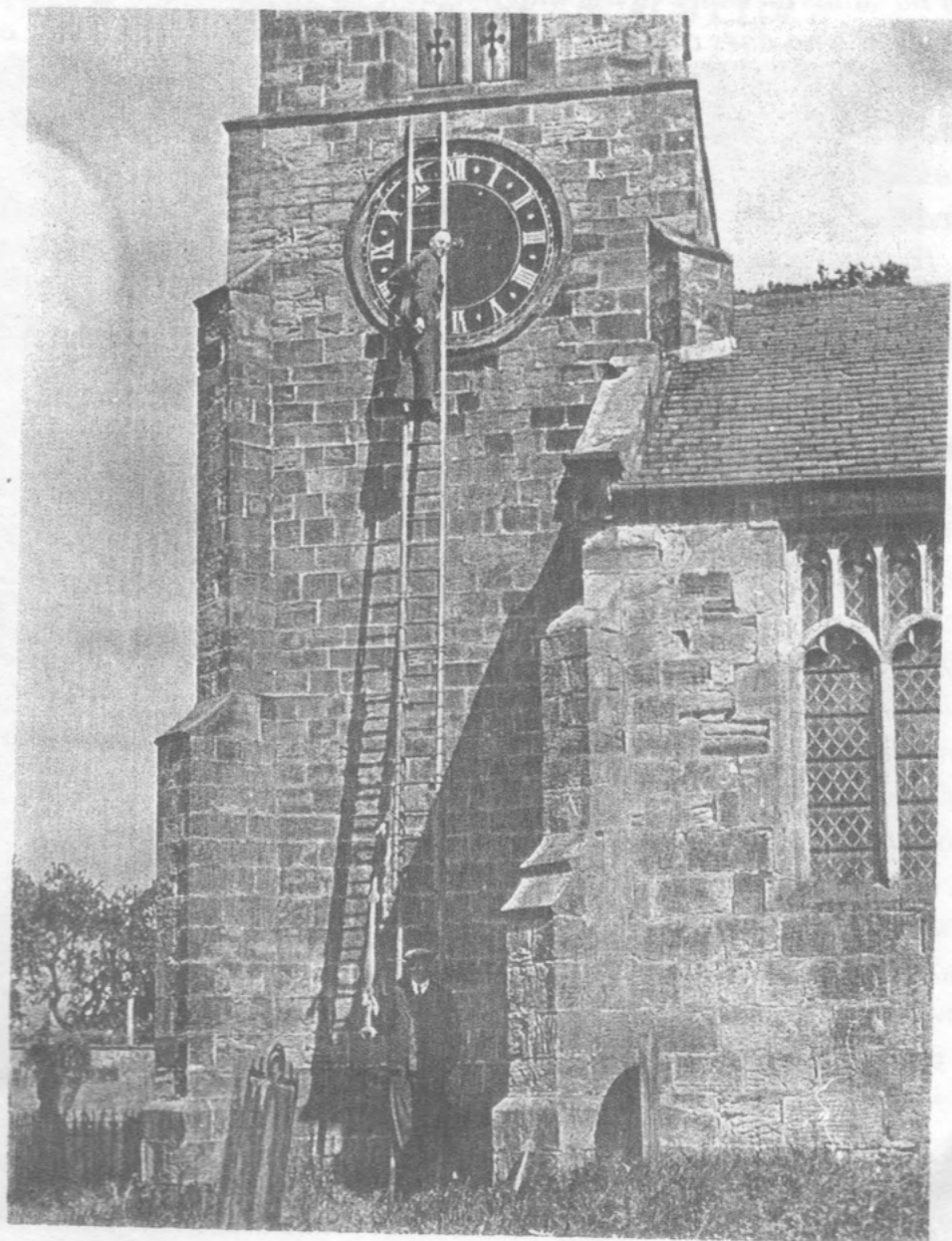
The estimate was accepted on July 13th, 1869 on the following conditions: the work be completed within two months; no extra charge for painting and gilding the dial; good time keeping be guaranteed for twelve months; half the money to be paid on completion of the work and the other half at the end of the guarantee.

On April 18th, 1876 an estimate was obtained from Mr. Henry Barker, Clockmaker of Easingwold, for making the clock strike. At the same meeting the question of winding was discussed and Mr. John Russell, who lived next door to the church, was appointed to do this duty.

In April 1903 Dr. Gramshaw, the village doctor, was thanked for his efforts in raising the money for repairs. During this restoration the clock was almost entirely reconstructed by Mr. G.J.F. Newey of York.

In 1927 the face of the clock was re-painted by Mr. S. Ford of Sutton-on-the-Forest at a cost of £11.8.0.

The restoration of the clock that took place in 1938 was undertaken by Mr. R (Dick) Newey and was necessary because the timber supporting the dial work on the inside of the tower had decayed. This meant a reconstruction of the wheel work connected with the pointers. The slave dial was added at this time. The minute hand is 3ft. 11ins. long gilded with 24ct. gold leaf. The hour hand measures 2ft. 1in., also gilded. Mr. J. Hutchinson made a wooden case to enclose the clock mechanism, complete with a glass observation window, through which an accomplished eye could check the accuracy of the clock.



Mr. R. Newey at the clock face assisted at the bottom of the ladder by Mr. J. B. Hutchinson who is holding the minute hand.

This is an extract from the Parish Magazine of September 1938, written by the vicar, Rev. H.W. Smith.

"It is a truism to say that we do not appreciate anything until we lose it, and this certainly is true of our Church clock. Day and night it ticks out the time for us, and strikes the hour with unceasing regularity, and above all, we know that if the clock says 11-0 p.m. that is the correct time.

Never have I known a church clock so reliable and accurate, and this is due in no small measure to the indefatigable care of Mr. [John] Hutchinson who does all the winding and the regulating voluntarily and willingly.

As you are aware, the clock ceased to function a short time ago, and as soon as I returned from my holiday I missed the familiar striking. I learned that repairs were needed. Mr. Hutchinson has kindly supervised them. He informs me that all the work has been done and the clock is once again in order.

Mr. Hutchinson has compiled this account for your information:

The whole of the dial work was found to be worn, and the timber supports were rotten. The timber has been removed, and the dial work entirely reconstructed. This is now securely clamped to the clock face by means of a steel tube and lock nuts.

The couplings driving the dial work were worn out after 35 years of continuous service, and have been replaced by two new double universal couplings of cast brass.

A new ratchet wheel has been fitted to the fans which govern the striking of the clock, all the main arbors have been rebushed, and the minute hand re-silvered.

The count wheel has been cleaned and the numbers stamped on it.

A new banker has been fitted to the striking gear, and the check-spring of the hammer reset.

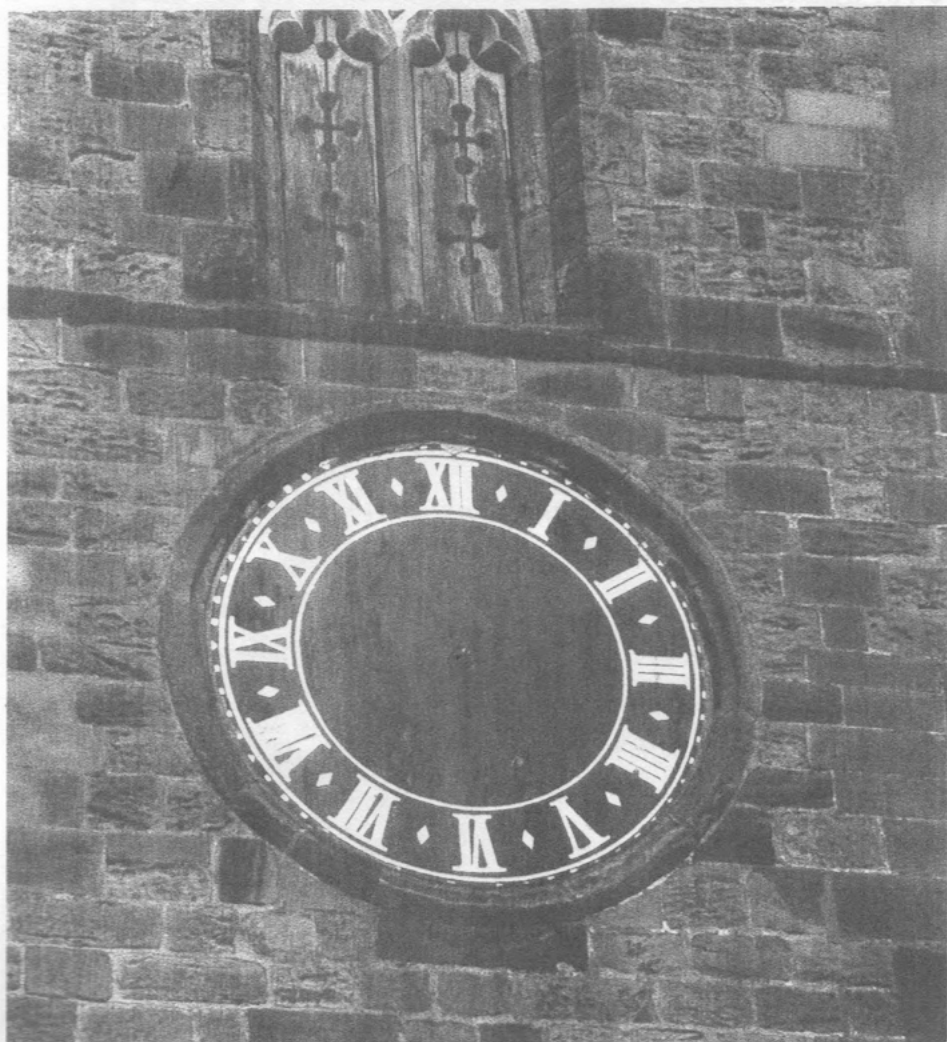
The worn out cable of the striking train has been replaced.

New pallets of specially hardened steel have been fitted to the escapement, and the escapement rebushed. All pulleys etc. have been cleaned and the clock frame painted.

The work is estimated to cost £10 and if a further sum of £3 could be provided, it would be possible to fix a small minute dial in the choir vestry in order to give the exact time for bell ringing etc.'

Mr. Hutchinson has offered to be responsible for the necessary woodwork if the improvement could be put in hand at once. The total sum required is about £13 and Mrs. Newman [of Wellington House] has kindly undertaken the collecting of the money.

Roughly speaking it works out at about 2/6 per house, and for this sum you are assured of always having the correct time at your disposal. I appeal with every confidence for this sum. Some people will be able to give a little more than the halfcrown, and this will make it easier for those who find the giving of 2/6 a more difficult matter, but I do hope that we shall all be ready and willing to do our share in the paying for the repair to our estimable friend - 'THE CHURCH CLOCK'."



The 6ins. thick stone clock face is 5ft. 4ins. in diameter.

In 1961 the outer dial was painted and re-gilded by Mr G.J.F. Newey and his son. The Architect's Fee was £3.3.0. and the Clockmaker's £16.5.0. Donations of £13.13.6. were received and a Collection amounted to £8.15.6.

The 1996 Restoration

The clock has been totally dismantled. Firstly the pointers were detached from the clock face on the church tower some 26ft. 6ins. above the ground. Then the mechanism was removed from its case in the clock chamber. However, since it was too large to be brought down the tower intact, the iron frame holding the clock was dismantled so that it would fit through the trap door in the floor of the clock chamber. The pendulum, (13ft. 6ins.) which has a two second arc (or swing) and a frame suspension to the bob, was removed from its case. Mr. Geoff. Newey was delighted to discover the following inscription on the reverse side of the bob:

'G.J.F. Newey fully overhauled this clock 1903'

The pendulum case had not been opened in subsequent restorations since 1903 so no one had known of the existence of this inscription.

Mr. Geoff Newey describes the main renewals and repairs:

"The universal brass couplings driving the pointers have been cleaned and polished.

The ratchet wheel which controls the fans governing the striking of the clock have been remade.

A new click has been installed. The old click had worn to a razor blade thickness and if allowed to continue could have caused the disintegration of the clock.

All the arbors have been rebushed and the minute hand re-silvered. The count wheel has been repainted and polished.

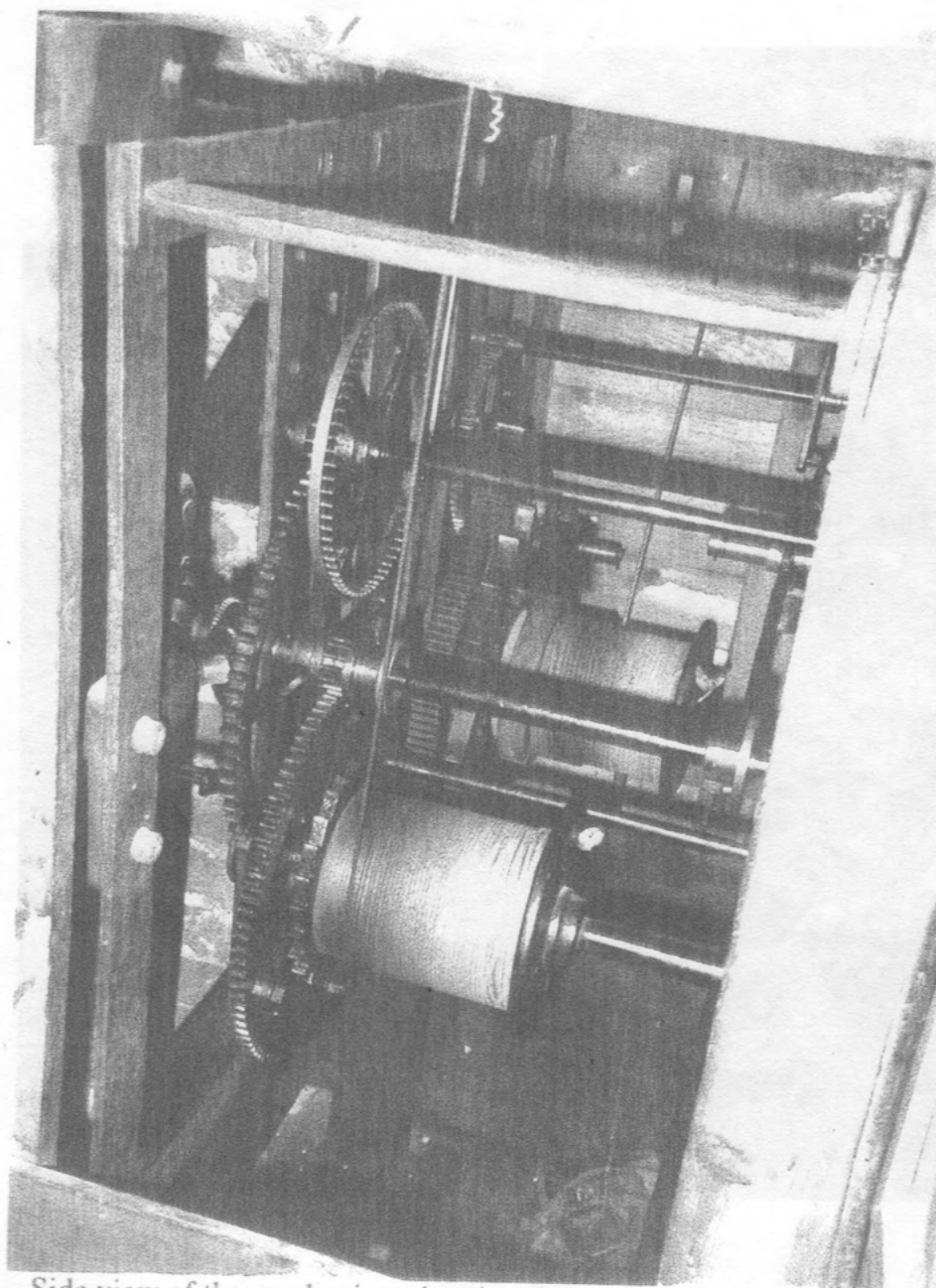
The check spring of the hammer has been reset and both the steel winding striking train cables replaced with new ones.

The escapement has been rebushed, all pulleys etc. have been cleaned and the clock frame stripped and re-painted.

The slave dial and mechanism have been cleaned and adjusted and further fine adjustments if necessary are to be made after the movement is replaced in the tower.

The pendulum frame has been cleaned and re-painted and connection refurbished.

The present restoration at the time of writing is well on the way towards completion. The face restoration is complete and again has been finished in 24ct. gold leaf.



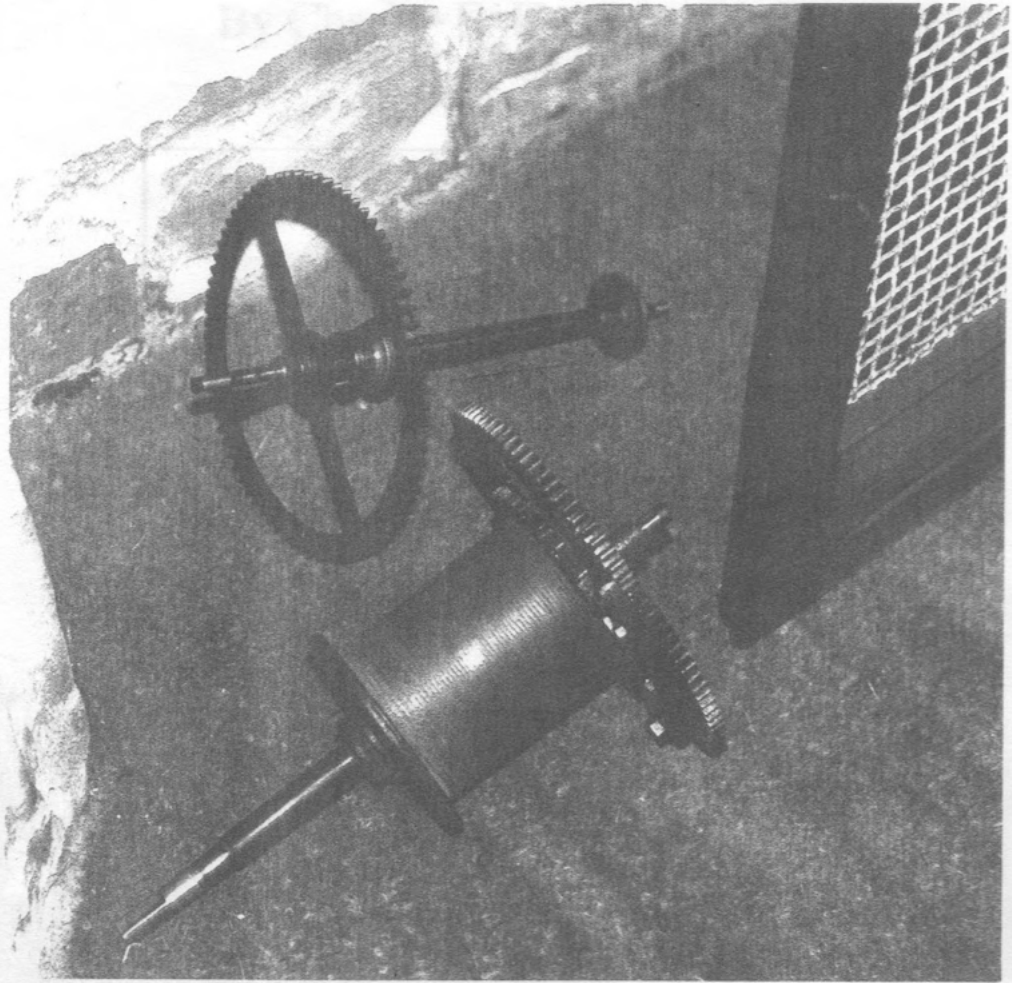
Side view of the mechanism showing the going and striking trains.

Mr. Allan Hutchinson and Mr. Dennis Law have restored and painted the inner stonework of the face and the wall behind the pendulum case inside the church. They have generally restored the clock chamber.



From left to right: D. Law, A. Hutchinson, G. Newey, C. Hutchinson.
Photograph by E. Bacon.

A History of Stillington Church



Clock parts awaiting transport to the clockmakers.

Appendix

A report of the 1996 restoration of Stillington Church clock can be found in the *Yorkshire Evening Press* of September 24th. 1996.

An article is due to appear in *Yorkshire Life* in the New Year 1997.

The author has a collection of photographs taken of the restoration of 1996.

In Memory of
JOHN & DORIS HUTCHINSON

This clock was restored in appreciation of
their devoted service to this church
1920 - 1980
by their sons Charles and Allan, 1996.

Plaque donated by the P.C.C.

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