



YORK



SOUTHWELL

# The Church of ST. GILES

West Bridgford Nottinghamshire



ST GILES



PRICE 25 PENCE

1976

## ST. GILES' CHURCH, WEST BRIDGFORD NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

The church is dedicated to St. Giles', who was the patron saint of cripples and wayfarers and those who worked on farms and gardens. He was the first Abbot of St. Giles, a famous abbey in the South of France, near Arles, and originally lived in a cave as a hermit with a pet fawn as his companion.

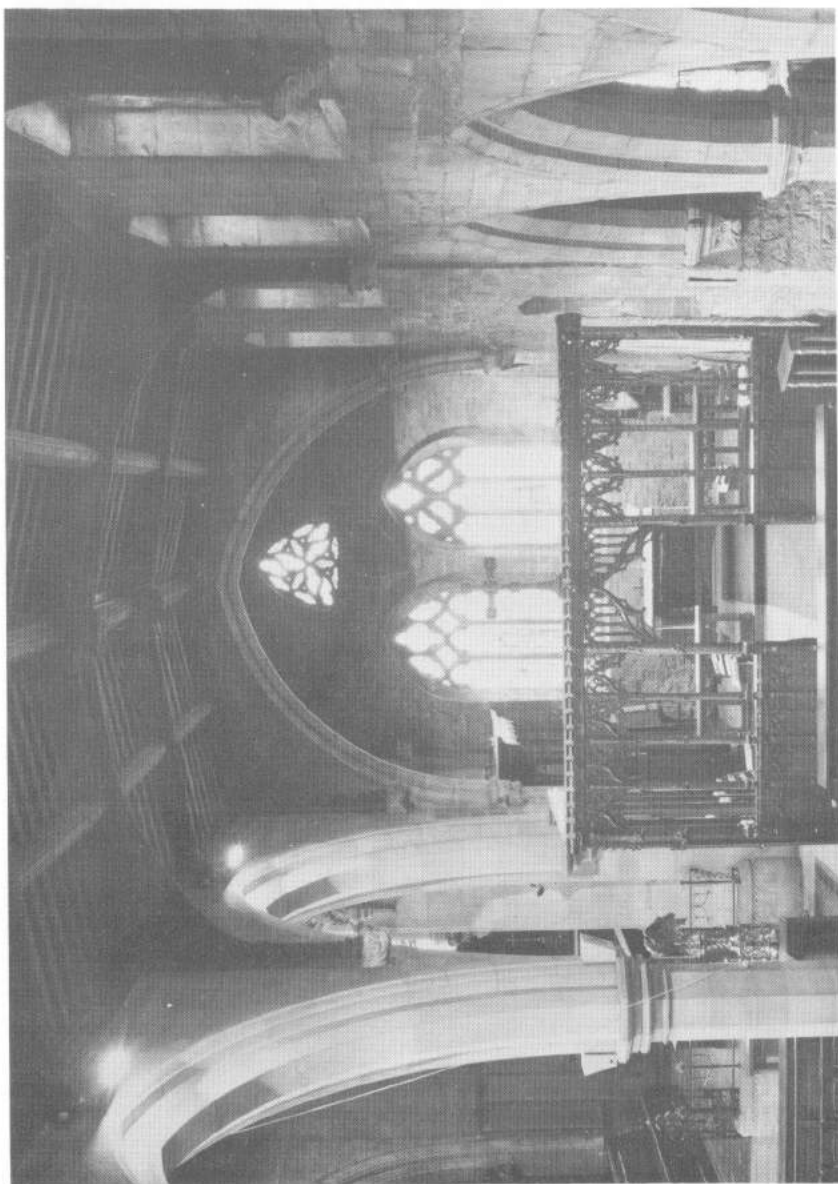
There is no mention of a church in the Domesday Survey of 1086, and no architecture of the Norman period appears in the building. The oldest part of the church is to be found in the south wall of the old chancel, and the Rector's door is about 1230. Probably the church was originally built by the Lutterell family, who were Lords of the Manor of West Bridgford, and lived in Gamston, a small hamlet in the parish, in the thirteenth century. The first name recorded in the list of Rectors, is Luke de Crophill, 1239.

The **Old Church** consisted of nave, south aisle, south porch, chancel and western tower.

The **Nave** is separated from the aisle by an arcade of four bays. The pillars, arches and clerestory windows are Perpendicular in style and were rebuilt about 1400. The entrance door is Early English, about 1250. Another small door near this one is now blocked up, and formerly led to a small chamber over the porch. This has been pulled down and the porch rebuilt. The **South Porch** is large for so small a parish as Bridgford was when it was built, but it is noteworthy because it was not only the entrance porch but would also be the meeting place for civil business, hence the stone benches on either side to seat the senior citizens and infirm of the period.

The south and east windows in the old church are Decorated style, about 1350, and were restored with new stonework in 1871. In this aisle the old roof may be seen. (see illus. 1). The small west window was cut from a single stone, about 1250. A piscina with part of an old window are in the south wall, showing there was once a side-chapel here.

The **Chancel** arch was moved several feet east-ward and two clerestory windows added in 1898. A unique arrangement of three windows may be seen in the east wall, with decorated or flowering tracery, about 1350. The uppermost window is carved from a single stone and was restored in 1871; the old window may now be seen in the porch, very much weather-worn.



*Illus. 1 — The original church with its roof and 1381 Oak Screen.*

**Sedilia** (see illus. 2) The stone seats were used by the priest and his assistants during part of the Communion Service. The usual number is three and it is rare to find only two. The carving is copied from that of the windows and was probably the work of an apprentice about 1350.

**Aumbry.** A small recess in the wall used for storing the Communion vessels. Ancient village churches had no vestries.

**Piscina.** A small basin with a drain, used for washing the vessels. The aumbry, piscina and Rector's door are all Early English and this is the oldest part of the Church, about 1230.

The two south windows were inserted later to give more light and are late Perpendicular, about 1500. The Communion Table is Elizabethan and this chapel was rededicated with new furniture in 1934.

The **Tower** is in three stages of dressed ashlar masonry, surmounted by battlements and pinnacles, and supported by diagonal buttresses. It is 15th Century and has a newel staircase in the south-west corner. On the outside of the tower, near the footpath, may be seen high up on the south wall a stone bearing an Old English inscription 'Christ the stone of help', which was probably a dedication stone.

When the Tower was erected it contained three bells. One bell has the founder's mark of Richard Mellers, the Nottingham bell-founder, mayor of the city in 1499, about the time when the tower was finished. This bell is no longer used and is preserved at the foot of the modernised Bell Tower in which a peal of eight bells (the largest weighing half-a-ton) was hung in 1956. (see illus. 3)

When the Church was restored in 1871, the plain octagonal stone **Font** was fixed in its present position under the tower.

The **Screen** stood for five centuries at the entrance to the old chancel and is a good example of the earliest type of screen and was erected about 1380. The tracery lower panels have been restored.

In the North Chapel is a low sepulchral arch dating from the 14th Century moved from the old chancel and now has under it a stone effigy, locally known as 'The Stone Man'. (see illus. 4). The effigy is ecclesiastical, with crossed legs — the posture usually reserved for figures commemorating Crusaders or Church Benefactors. The Arch stone and the Effigy have been identified as stone from the same quarry at Hucknall, Notts. The Effigy was found in about 1800 in a field near the junction of Melton Road and Loughborough Road — probably marking the western





*Illus. 2 — The Sedilia with it's unusual two stone seats. Circa 1350.*



*Illus. 3 — The 1499 Bell.*

boundary of West Bridgford at that time. It was used by a farmer as a boundary stone for almost a century and was taken into the Church in 1898.

The **Communion plate** is old and one chalice bears the inscription 'West Bridgford 1659' and a silver bowl, paten and flagon are dated 1809. The church registers are complete from 1559.

A great restoration took place in 1871-2 at a cost of £800. The old 'horse-box' pews and three-decker pulpit were removed.

In 1896-8 the new chancel and nave were added and the north wall of the old church pulled down at a cost of £6,000. The pulpit is a fine modern one by Sir Charles Nicholson in 1948. There are many stained glass windows in the Church which are much admired.

The East Window is a memorial after the first war 1914-18 and the choir stalls were erected at the same time. The window depicts the Crucifixion. The West Window shows the Resurrection scene and is dated 1936.

On the north side of the church there is a window erected in 1971 in memory of two former choristers, Mr. & Mrs. F. Laws. This window was designed by Whitefriars Stained Glass Studios of Wealdstone, Middlesex.

The Organ is a large three-manual by Henry Willis, the builder of many cathedral organs. It contains 40 stops and 2,000 pipes, with electro-pneumatic action and is one of the finest in the Midlands. It was rebuilt and enlarged in 1952, at a cost of £7,000.

In 1911 the population of the parish was 12,000 and it was decided to complete the church. The North Aisle was then built and dedicated in 1912.

The church now has accommodation for 1200 and is one of the largest in the diocese.

The present Rectory was built in 1964 and is the third to be built on the site and replaced one which was 100 years old.

As the area developed two daughter churches were built to serve a growing population.

**St. Luke's, Alford Road.** This church was dedicated by the Archdeacon of Nottingham on the 29th August, 1951. The old army huts were replaced with a new hall which was dedicated by the Bishop of Sherwood on the 7th September, 1969. The parsonage house at 75, Stamford Road, West Bridgford, was purchased in June, 1965.



*Illus. 4 — The Stone man in the 14th century.*

**St. Paul's Boundary Road.** This church on the southern boundary of the parish, was built in three stages, the first starting in 1960 with a dual purpose hall. The second phase was in 1966 when an extension was added to the hall and dedicated by the Bishop of Sherwood on the 18th November, 1966. The third phase consisting of a permanent sanctuary and a parsonage house was dedicated by the Bishop of Southwell, the Right Rev. D. Wakeling, on the 5th March, 1975.

## RECTORS OF WEST BRIDGFORD

| <i>Date of<br/>Institution</i> | <i>Rector</i>            | <i>Date of<br/>Institution</i> | <i>Rector</i>                  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1239                           | Luke de Crophill.        | 1662                           | Edward Greathead, M.A.         |
| 1267                           | Robert Luterell.         | 1673                           | Thomas Houghton, M.A.          |
| 1315                           | Andrew Luterell.         | 1692                           | Joseph Bruen, B.A.             |
| 1330                           | Henry Luterell.          | 1717                           | John Stokes, M.A.              |
| 1349                           | John de Aslackton.       | 1723                           | John Stokes.                   |
| 1369                           | Thomas de Haverthorpe.   | 1749                           | Thomas Rose, M.A.              |
| 1415                           | Richard Clarke.          | 1764                           | John Gage, M.A.                |
| 1437                           | William Wragby.          | 1770                           | William Thompson.              |
| 1450                           | William Funtance.        | 1803                           | Peter Thornton, L.I.B.         |
| 1479                           | Robert Hyll.             | 1818                           | Levett Edward Thoroton, B.A.   |
| 1479                           | John Alcock, D.D.        | 1831                           | Roger Pocklington, M.A.        |
| 1506                           | Robert Lovell.           | 1834                           | William Musters, B.A.          |
| 1517                           | Walter Wright.           | 1862                           | William Roe Waters, B.A.       |
| 1529                           | Walter Basse.            | 1894                           | James Robinson, M.A.           |
| 1556                           | John Cooke.              | 1903                           | Henry Marsh Edwards.           |
| 1571                           | Robert Grene, M.A.       | 1904                           | Richard Hargreaves, M.A.       |
| 1614                           | Francis Withington, B.A. | 1930                           | Cyril Northcote Hatfield, M.A. |
| 1648                           | Samuel Coates, M.A.      | 1941                           | Reginal Felix Wilkinson, M.A.  |
|                                |                          | 1961                           | Frank Edward Worwood, A.L.C.D. |