



ST MARY'S
CHURCH

NORTH COCKERINGTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE





THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION
TRUST WELCOMES YOU TO ST MARY'S
CHURCH, NORTH COCKERINGTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE

Many years ago Christians built and set apart this place for prayer. They made their church beautiful with their skill and craftsmanship. Here they have met for worship, for children to be baptised, for couples to be married and for the dead to be brought for burial. If you have time, enjoy the history, the peace and the holiness here. Please use the prayer card and, if you like it, you are welcome to take a folded copy with you.

Although services are no longer regularly held here, this church remains consecrated; inspiring, teaching and ministering through its beauty and atmosphere. It is one of more than 300 churches throughout England cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust. The Trust was created in 1969 and was, until 1994, known as the Redundant Churches Fund. Its object is to ensure that all these churches are kept in repair and cared for, in the interests of the Church and Nation, for present and future generations.

Please help us to care for this church. There is a box for donations or, if you prefer to send a gift, it will be gratefully received at the Trust's headquarters at 89 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1DH (Registered Charity No. 258612).

We hope that you will enjoy your visit and be encouraged to see our other churches. Some are in towns; some in remote country districts. Some are easy and others hard to find but all are worth the effort.

Nearby are the Trust churches of:

BURWELL, ST MICHAEL
5 miles S of Louth on A16

HAUGHAM, ALL SAINTS
4 miles S of Louth and W of A16

SALTFLEETBY, ALL SAINTS
6 miles E of Louth off B1200

SKIDBROOKE, ST BOTOLPH
7 miles E of Louth off B1200

SOUTH SOMERCOTES, ST PETER
8 miles NE of Louth off B1200

THEDDLETHORPE, ALL SAINTS
7 miles E of Louth off A1031

YARBURGH, ST JOHN THE BAPTIST
4½ miles NE of Louth via A16, A1031
& B1200

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by ANTHONY BARNES

Two churches in one churchyard are rare but the situation here is not unique. It arose because the original church was given in 1155 to the nearby Gilbertine Priory. With the dissolution of monasteries in the 16th century St Mary's became the church for North Cockerington, the slightly less ancient St Adelwold's (on the right in the cover picture) serving Alvingham. To come and worship, North Cockerington people would have to cross two fields, the river Lud and also a canal big enough, in an early 20th century photograph, to carry a trader's sailing barge. The 'Cocker' in the village's name means the crooked river.

In the circumstances it is not surprising that one of the two buildings should have been declared redundant in 1989. This probably did not happen as soon as might have been expected when the churches were illustrated in the Bridges Commission report which led to the establishing of The Churches Conservation Trust's predecessor in title in 1969.

The oldest part of the church is the blocked north window in the chancel which Canon Basil Clarke suggested is pre-Conquest. The font rests on the base of a Norman pillar, but this may have been imported from the ruins of the Priory. The chancel arch is 13th century. The north and west windows are early 14th century in style, if 19th century in execution. The nave arcade, south aisle and mutilated monument (with its long lion's tail) are all later 14th century. On the south side of the chancel a door appears to have been bricked up. At right angles to this one can see the quoins of the south-east corner of the nave before the south aisle was built.



Interior looking east
(ROYAL COMMISSION ON
THE HISTORICAL
MONUMENTS OF ENGLAND)

ST MARY'S CHURCH

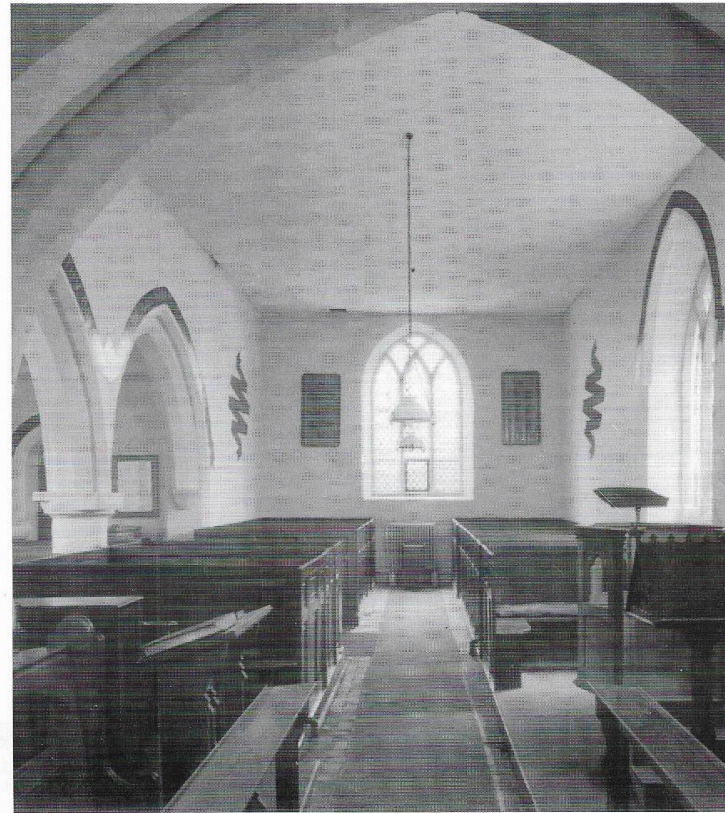
Ruinous in 1821, the church had been substantially repaired by 1835, and in 1841 the tower was rebuilt in stuccoed brick, the porch removed, and the nave and aisle were re-roofed under one span. The box pews date from 1841 also, by then a very unfashionable way of seating a congregation. The texts on the walls, vigorous and almost flamboyant in style, probably date from the 1841 restoration also. In the tower are three bells, the treble by a local 15th century founder; the second, also 15th century, by Robert Merston; and the tenor, 1634, from the Nottingham foundry, possibly by George Oldfield I.

St Gilbert of Sempringham, with whose order St Mary's was associated for nearly 400 years, lived from about 1083 to 1189. The Gilbertines were the only mediaeval monastic order of English foundation and eventually had 29 houses, half of them in Lincolnshire.

Repairs have been carried out for the Trust under the supervision of Julian Limentani, RIBA, of the Marshall Sisson partnership.

Front cover: Exterior from the south west showing St Mary's on the left
(CHRISTOPHER DALTON)
Back cover: Interior looking west (RCHME)

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