

St Mary the Virgin, Cockfield

Cockfield parish church, which stands at the east end of the village on the south side of the village street, consists of a nave with a four-bay north aisle and a south porch, and a chancel with organ chamber and vestry on the north. As seen from the street, behind its screen of mature trees, the church appears entirely of 1910, but the southern elevation discloses that substantial medieval work survives in the eastern part of the south wall of the nave and the chancel.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Exterior

There are two fabric types in the walls of the **Nave** ; the medieval work (ie the eastern two-thirds of the south wall) is of roughly-coursed and roughly-squared stone, whilst more recent parts are of snecked roughly-squared stone. The dressings are gritstone, the medieval ones much weathered, those of the 1867 work tooled-and-margined (and with a bluish tinge) and those of the 1911 work diagonally-tooled yellowish stone. The variation in size of the quoins at the south-western angle suggests that older work has been re-used. There is a chamfered plinth, a string-course chamfered above and below (on the west end, and the south wall east of the porch) and a chamfered oversailing course on the south at eaves level.

The west wall has a pair of lancet windows .with chamfered surrounds, and simple hoodmoulds, chamfered above and below; above and between them is a vesica with a chamfered surround and a hoodmould/label of the same type. All the dressed stonework of these openings is of 19th-century type, except perhaps for the uppermost three blocks of the north jamb of the northern lancet, which are much more weathered, and might possibly be medieval work re-used. The steeply-pitched gable has a coping, chamfered on its lower angle, which is continued on the face of the bell-cote, which has stepped sides and a pair of lancet-arched openings with roughly-shaped imposts , with a quatrefoil piercing in the spandrel, and a gabled cap with the same type of coping as the gable below, and a simple cross finial.

At the north end of the wall (dividing it from the west wall of the aisle beyond) is a heavy two-stepped buttress, which the string-course is continued round.

The south porch is sited a little to the west of the centre of the south wall of the nave; the south doorway, within the porch, has a two-centred arch of two chamfered orders, with jambs of the same section. There is a hoodmould, chamfered above and below, carried on imposts of the same section; on the west, but not on the east, the impost is continued beyond the hoodmould to the side wall of the porch. The dressings of the doorway have considerable remains of some reddish pigment, of uncertain age.

West of the porch are three lancet windows, set fairly close together. The eastern is are-set medieval piece (from the east end of the north wall of the nave), although the uppermost block of each jamb and the hoodmould have been replaced.. The central has dressings of the 1867 type, except for the uppermost block of each jamb and the head, and is presumably the

western lancet from the old north wall, whilst the western is entirely of 1911. East of the porch are three more broadly-spaced lancets; the central one seems authentic medieval work in its entirety, whilst the outer ones have dressings of the 1867 type. The string-course is largely of tooled ashlar, probably of 1867, although sections beneath the easternmost lancet, and again adjacent to the porch, look older.

The quoins at the south-east angle of the nave look to be of 19th-century date in their present form. The eastern gable has the same type of coping as the western, and carries a Greek cross finial.

The plinth and string course are continued round the **South Porch** which is constructed of roughly-coursed and roughly-squared stone; the two-centred outer archway has a chamfered surround and hood, the string serving as an impost band. On the block below each impost the chamfer, broach-stopped at the base, is increased in width by means of a carved stop or panel with an attractive stylised leaf. The gable above is quite steep, with a coping chamfered on its lower angle, and carries a ring-cross finial on a short shaft with nail-head on its angles; the side walls have an oversailing chamfered eaves course.

The **North Aisle** is of same fabric as the 1911 parts of the nave, and has similar architectural detail. The west end has a stepped triplet of lancets with a small square-headed vent in the steeply-pitched gable above which carries a cross finial; the valley gutter between nave and aisle empties into a rainwater hopped under a small four-centred arch.

The north doorway, now the main entrance into the church, is set close to the west end of the north wall of the aisle, and has a large two-centred arch of two continuous chamfered orders. To the east of the doorway the plinth is stepped up by c 1 m above a chamfered segmental arch, by which the wall is carried clear of a late-19th century tomb. Above this are a pair of lancets and further east a group of five, these lancets lacking hoodmoulds. The east end of the aisle (partly covered by the organ chamber/vestry) has no openings other than a square-headed vent high in the gable, which as usual has a cross finial. Some of the quoins at the north-east angle of the aisle, and the large block at the base of the coping, look like older work re-used.

The Chancel deflects noticeably to the north of the central axis of the nave. Once again a change in fabric type denotes the division between medieval and 1910 parts. The medieval western part is of roughly-coursed roughly-shaped stone, little more than rubble, whilst the eastern is of rather better-squared stone; more pain seems to have been taken here to match in the new work with the old. There has also been considerable re-use of genuine old dressings in the eastern extension, seen in the angle quoins, plinth, string and dressings of the east windows. There is a chamfered eaves cornice, entirely of 19th century date.

At the west end of the south wall is a blocked square-headed low-side window with a chamfered surround, and immediately beyond it a blocked priests' door with a small two-centred arch and a chamfered surround, with imposts linking to the hoodmould; on the east side the sill string abuts on the hoodmould of the doorway c 10 cm above the impost. Above the string are two genuine medieval lancets; their hoodmoulds, although heavily weathered, appear to be chamfered on the lower angle only. The sill of the western has been cut down to the level of the string. The junction with the 1911 extension is marked by a structural crack

The east end has a stepped triplet of lancets, above the string course, which here is of tooled ashlar, and may be an 1867 restoration. The upper section of the central lancet - uppermost four blocks of each jamb, and head - is all restoration; the flanking lancets have only the heads and the uppermost block of each jamb replaced.. The steep gable with its ring-cross finial is all of 1911.

The short exposed section of the north wall of the chancel has no features of interest.

The vestry and organ chamber are built of coursed roughly-squared stone; the angle quoins at the north-east corner are of tooled ashlar, and rather irregular; they might be 18th-century (?) work re-used. The chamfered plinth is extended round the block, although on the north it is now partly buried. The block has a gabled roof parallel to the chancel, but is considerably narrower than the north aisle of the nave. On the north is a two-centred chamfered doorway, with neat stops to the jambs and a chamfered hood and imposts; it is approached by a slab bridge, and directly below is the square-headed doorway of the boiler room, reached by a descending stair from the west. At the west end of the wall is a small lancet. In the east end is a window of two lancet lights with a larger quatrefoil in the spandrel; a separate semicircular ashlar block above gives a semblance of an arched head; this window is presumably an 1867 pieces re-used in 1911.

The Interior

The internal walls of the nave and aisle are of bare stonework; those of chancel and organ chamber / vestry are plastered. In the **Nave** the south door has a segmental rear arch of tooled ashlar which is clearly restoration, although the jambs are medieval. The lancet windows all have trefoiled rear arches. Only the central lancet of the three east of the porch has old internal jambs and head; its rear arch is of rather different form to the others; the rear arch of the eastern of the three lancets west of the porch also seems old, although obviously re-set.

The arcade between nave and north aisle is of four bays, with pointed double-chamfered arches with a hoodmould curved above and chamfered below, carried on circular piers with moulded 'holdwater'; bases set on square plinths, and simply-moulded circular capitals. The western respond has a half-shaft carrying the inner order, whilst the chamfer of the outer is continued to ground level. The eastern respond shows a similar treatment of the outer order, but the inner is carried on a moulded corbel.

Within the **North Aisle**, all the windows have trefoiled rear arches; the north door has a segmental rear arch with a chamfer to its head only, now concealed by an internal wooden porch. Beneath the easternmost of the five lancets towards the east end of the north wall is a re-set piscina with a plain square-headed opening and remains of a projecting bowl (with drain), the front of which has been roughly cut away.

At the east end of the aisle are a pair of two-centred arches, each of a single chamfered order, the eastern opening into the Organ Chamber and the western simply a blind recess, in which a small square-headed window with a chamfered surround (showing sockets or a horizontal bar) has been re-set, with above it two more cross slabs.

Both nave and aisle have identical crown-post roofs of four bays, the crown posts having moulded capitals and bases and curved braces springing to collar purlin and to the pairs of scissor braces; there is ashlar to the eaves. The aisle roof is boarded over to produce a wagon roof.

Several pieces of medieval cross slabs (see 'Sepulchral Monuments' section) have been built into the internal faces of the side walls of the **South Porch**, which has a roof with collared rafter pairs, ashlar, and a moulded wall plate.

The **Chancel** is entered through a pointed arch of two chamfered orders, carried on jambs of the same section. A bold impost band, with roll mouldings to its upper and lower angles, is stepped round the arch and continued back to the side walls on both faces of the wall, except on the north towards the nave where it has been cut away by the ...monument. Above and below the imposts the chamfers of arch and jambs have large broach stops; the bases have a simple chamfered plinth.

Of the four lancets on the south of the chancel, the eastern two have exposed ashlar dressings to their trefoiled rear arches, but not the western; beneath their sills is a string, chamfered above and below, that only seems to exist in its original form beneath the eastern of the old lancets. Beneath the western pair is an old piscina, now in line with the altar rail. It has a two-centred arch with a roll moulding, and a projecting semicircular bowl with a petalled pattern carved in relief; a drain runs out through the wall. The three eastern lancets have renewed trefoiled rear arches, with exposed dressings. The doorway to the vestry, midway along the north wall, has a trefoiled ogee head, and the arch to the organ chamber, at the west end of the wall, rather an odd two-centred arch with a chamfered outer order and rather odd cinquefoiled crimping to the inner.

The chancel has a chamfered stone cornice to the heads of the side walls, and boarded wagon roof; against the east wall an arch-braced truss springs from moulded corbels, painted over, that are probably of 1867.

The door into the **Vestry** has a segmental-pointed rear arch, with a chamfer; to the east is a plain 19th-century fireplace (with a contemporary cast-iron grate) set in a projecting chimney breast; on the east of the chimney breast is a recess (now within a cupboard) spanned by a chamfered segmental arch, its stonework (presumably 19th century) now very decayed.. The east window has a segmental rear arch, as has the north door. The roof has common rafters with scissor braces, and ashlar to the eaves.

FITTINGS AND FURNISHINGS

In the Sanctuary the carved **Reredos** and the panelled and brattished **Dado** were presented in memory of William Summerson d.1891 and his wife Anne d.1898; there is a marble tiled pavement.

The carved openwork **Rood Screen** (in memory of Second Lieutenant Herbert Walker Summerson, killed in 1918, who is depicted kneeling at a desk in a carved panel on the north side), **Pulpit** and **Reading Desk** are also of c.1920; the Summerson family were colliery owners, who lived in Cockfield. There are carved **Openwork Screens** of similar date to the

arches of the Organ Chamber, opening towards both the chancel and the north aisle.

The pine **Pewing** in nave and north aisle is of 1911; the sides of 17th century **Box-pews**, with open panels having widely-spaced diablo balusters, have been re-used as a dado on the south side of the nave and at the west end of the north aisle. A pre-1911 photograph (west end of nave) shows this dado lining both walls of the nave.

The **Font** stands just within the north door, and has a heavy octagonal basin, chamfered on its lower angles, on a short square shaft with chamfered angles broach-stopped above and below, and a square base and circular plinth with an added step on the west. The present church guide pamphlet describes it as 'probably of local manufacture from the 17th century' although Boyle (1892, 527) and Hodgson (1912,65-66) see it as c.1200.

The **Stained Glass** - only in the chancel - is all of late 19th/early 20th century date, and of little particular interest.

A brass plate on the west wall of the nave records that the two **Bells** were 'recast and rehung' in 1896.

Two old **Photographs** of the church, taken prior to the 1911 alterations, are hung at the west end of the north aisle, one showing the interior of the church and the other a north-west view.

SEPULCHRAL MONUMENTS

The most important monuments in the church are a collection of medieval **Cross Slabs**; all have been described and illustrated by Ryder, nos 1-11 (1985, 66-68, plate 13) and nos 12-14 (1994, 44-45). Brief summaries of each slab are given below:

- (1) Slab in floor on north of sanctuary; cross with shield bearing 'a fesse dancette within an engrailed ordure' (Boyle `1892, 527) and the inscription 'ROGER VAVASOUR'; later 14th or 15th century.
- (2) Slab in floor on south of sanctuary; similar cross but with chalice on shaft and secondary inscription 'William Lamb 172 (5?); currently in a serious state of active decay.

Slabs (3) and (4) are built into the internal face of the east wall of the north aisle, above the re-set northern low-side window:

- (3) Small slab; incised cross with sword on left; 13th century?
- (4) Small slab; bracelet cross with sword on right. Late 12th or early 13th century.

Slabs (5) to (7) are built into the internal face of the east wall of the south porch, and (8) to (10) in the west wall.

- (5) Head of four-circle or bracelet cross, very worn. late 12th or early 13th century.

- (6) Upper part of slab, very worn, but with large dog-tooth ornament on edge. 13th century.
- (7) Slab with relief carving of bracelet cross, with sword on right of shaft and a series of fleur-de-lys springing from the shaft on the left. 13th century. This slab is in a state of active and continuing decay.
- (8) Incised slab with cross head similar to slab (1), and sword on right. 14th or 15th century.
- (9) Incised slab with unusual cross head, within a circle, and sword on right of shaft. 14th century?
- (10) Lower part of a slab now hidden by a fixed notice board; cross shaft with stepped base and sword blade on right, the marginal chamfer being ornamented with raised half balls. 13th century?
- (11) Slab now lost, but drawn by Hodges (1884, plate 27); bracelet-derivative cross head with trefoil terminals, carved in relief within a sunk circle; incised cross shaft and small two-stepped base some distance from the foot of the stone. Probably later 13th century.

Slabs (12) - (14) are built into the internal face of the north wall of the north aisle, quite high up:

- (12) (West of door). Incised cross shaft and remains of possible emblem alongside.
- (13) (East of door) This may be the same as slab (11) drawn by Hodges, or one virtually identical to it, except that the base is missing.
- (14) (Above door). Head of slab; incised design of cross head rather like (1) and (8): 14th or 15th century.

Lying on the north side of the chancel is a small **Effigy** of a girl, only 3.12 m long. 'The head rests on cushions, and the costume points apparently to the 14th century as the period of the figure, but the whole monument is too much decayed to enable any very satisfactory opinion to be formed as to its date. The effigy remained till lately in the churchyard. The local tradition is that it represents girl who was drowned in the moat of Cockfield Hall' (Boyle 1892, 527). The effigy is of gritstone, and the arms are broken away, although at present its condition seems relatively stable.

On the east wall of the nave, to the north of the chancel arch, is a **Wall Monument** to Thomas Watson d.1713 and Hannah his wife d.1696, with a swan-necked pediment above, a moulded surround and a coat of arms.

HISTORICAL NOTES

- 1311 The earliest reference to clergy here in a will of William Vavasour, to 'Hugh, rector of Cockfield'
- 1794 Durham historian William Hutchinson (III, 282) was not overly impressed by Cockfield church: 'the church is a miserable place of worship'
- 1834 Historians Mackenzie and Ross (II, 213) supply the first detailed description of the building, describing it as ' a humble structure, apparently of great antiquity, consisting of a nave and chancel, without tower or side-aisles. The entrance is on the south; and the nave is separated from the chancel by a pointed arch. There are three lancet lights to the east, and two on the south side of the chancel. The nave is lighted by three narrow pointed windows on each side. The font is a ponderous octagonal basin of freestone; and the pulpit is of oak, with antique carving. There is a gallery at the west end of the church. In the north all of the nave is a sculpture of the royal coat of arms, inscribed C.R.; and near it a painted one dated 1726...A flat slab in the chancel is sculptured with a cross and a chalice, and "Thomas Lamb, 1725"....In the churchyard, near the south-east corner of the church, is a recumbent figure of a female, in stone, 3½ feet long, said by tradition to represent a scholar drowned in the moat of Cockfield Hall...'

FACULTIES AND OTHER RECORDS OF STRUCTURAL WORK

Faculty No. And Date	Works
1733	Sixty-seven yards of roof slates were replaced
1746	Seventy three yards of roof slates replaced
1792	The Rector repaired and overed with blue slates the choir, at his own expense
1831	The church was completely re-roofed and strengthened, at a cost of just over £54.
1865-1867	Major alterations, when the gallery was taken down; the works cost £1164 5s 1d.
(above references from Gomersall 1988)	
562 12 July 1910	Enlargement of church. Plans by Charles Hodgson Fowler, the Diocesan Architect. Estimated cost was £1600, and

		accommodation was raised from 98 to 329. The faculty plans show the old vestry being retained but extended to E
967	28.10.20	Rood screen
4151	22.9.59	AC Improvement of the heating boiler
4623	16.10.63	Installation of oil-fire central heating boiler and tank and four radiators
4688	17.6.64	Erection of a new communion rail and two oak doors at the outside of the South Porch
5069	16.8.68	Installation of an aisle altar
5088	17.10.68	AC Roof repairs
5334	1.6.72	AC General repairs
5814	6.10.79	Replacement of heating boiler
5898	6.1.81	Rewiring of boiler house
6387	2.7.86	Introduction of a lectern and repair of glazing
6475	19.2.87	Pointing of chancel wall; replastering; replacement of tank; roof repairs, gutters, redecorating
6782	31.8.88	Minor repairs to stonework
6996	28.11.89	Repairs of leaded glass windows
7004	18.12.89	Removal of pews, lighting, carpets, curtain, houseling bench etc.

THE STRUCTURAL HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The Medieval Building

Antiquarian sources all seem to agree as to dating the medieval parts of the church to around 1200, and the surviving architectural features would all correlate well with this date. However, the notably skew alignment of the chancel, and the slight variation in both wall thickness and fabric type between nave and chancel, might imply that the chancel is later than the nave, although none of the three lines of evidence is strong enough to be confirmatory.

Other than the surviving 13th-century features, it is known that there was an original lancet at the east end of the north wall of the nave, and a second small low-side window on the north of the chancel.

One feature of the medieval church which aroused antiquarian attention was the provision of a pair of piscinae in the aisleless nave, indicating additional altars (probably serving chantry chapels) which presumably backed onto the east wall, on either side of the chancel arch.

There is very little evidence for later medieval changes; Hodgson (1902, 207) saw both low-side windows as 'insertions of much later, though uncertain, date', although this is perhaps arguable.

Post-Medieval Changes.

The only surviving evidence of a number of alterations in the 18th and early 19th centuries is seen in a few old illustrations and antiquarian accounts. A gallery at the west end of the nave, thought to have been inserted in the 18th century, is shown on plan of 1825 in an MS volume compiled by Archdeacon Thorp (Durham Cathedral Library), reproduced above. The plan shows a single window at the west end of the nave, three in the south wall, to the east of the porch, and one at the east end of the north wall; the chancel is shown with two windows on the south and three on the east. However, Mackenzie and Ross (1834, 213) refer to 'three narrow windows' on each side of the nave.

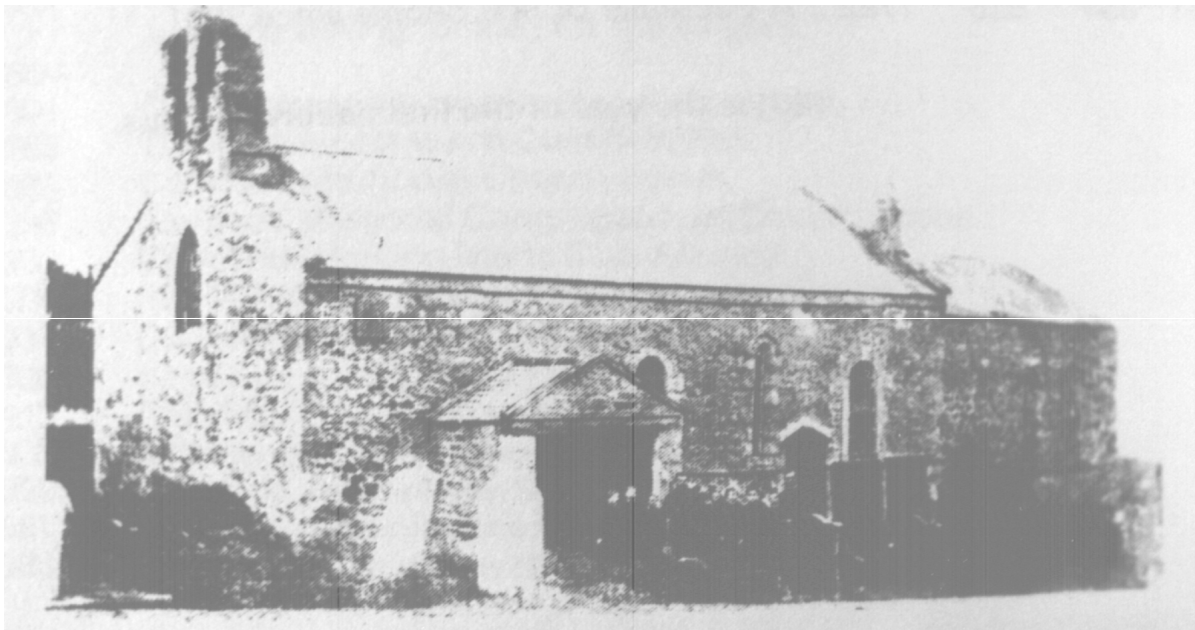
A pre-1867 photograph (reproduced in Gomersall 1988), showing the church from the south-west, shows low-pitched roofs, and quite a broad Gothic-arched window high in the west

gable (presumably lighting the gallery, although the 1825 plan implies that it was at a lower level); in the south wall of the nave a solitary lancet was flanked by a pair of round-arched windows, probably of 18th or early 19th century date. The south porch had a wide opening beneath a timber lintel. A small chimney stack appears to rise from the coping of the east end of the nave, close to the south-east angle.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile map of c 1860 shows an outline plan of the church, with a small projecting block at the west end of the north wall of the nave, and another west of the south porch. The former is clearly the old north vestry, shown in dotted outline on the 'before 1910' plan of the church in the National Monuments Record; it does not appear on the 1825 plan, and was presumably built after this date; the latter may have been some sort of shed or outbuilding, but appears neither on the early plan or the pre-1867 photograph.

The 1865-1868 Restoration

The first of two major programmes is usually referred to as the 1867 restoration, although works proceeded from 1865 until 1868. It appears that the architect for this work was Charles Hodgson Fowler (Gomersall 1986) who later in his long career was responsible for the 1911 works.



The 1867 restoration was carried out with a careful regard for the surviving medieval features of the building, and the building returned to what was assumed to be its 13th-century form; the works occasioned praise from such authorities as the Rev J.F.Hodgson of Witton le Wear, who was frequently scathingly critical of restoration work; he saw Cockfield as 'save for the loss of its original roof - now, however, well restored, remaining almost untouched' (1902, 207). The west end was either refaced or rebuilt, with a pair of lancets and a vesica above, and a new bellcote, whilst the two round-arched windows on the south side of the nave were replaced by lancets; the three lancets in the east end, which had presumably been altered at some stage, were given new heads. The north vestry was removed and replaced by a new

vestry/organ chamber on the north of the chancel, and a lancet window introduced to replace its doorway from the nave. The arch to the new Organ Chamber displaced the northern low-side window, which was re-set in the west wall of the Organ Chamber (Hodgkin 1913, 85). The cusping of the arch to the Organ chamber and the rather odd form of the east window of the vestry perhaps betray the architect's lack of experience. The south porch was rebuilt in fitting Gothic style; both nave and chancel were given high-pitched roofs. Inside the church the west gallery was removed.

The 1911 Changes

In 1911 the increase in the population of the area prompted a major enlargement of the medieval church; Hodgson Fowler was by now Diocesan Architect, and carried out the works with a very close regard to the original features and style. Despite the major enlargement, his work was so unobtrusive and cleverly matched in that experienced historians have been misled by it; Sir Nikolaus Pevsner (Pevsner & Williamson 1983. 121) appears to consider the whole chancel as genuine medieval work, despite the fact that it is clearly documented that Hodgson Fowler doubled it in length, re-using the materials of the old east wall in its successor. He also extended the nave to the west (apparently re-using the fabric of his 1867 west end in similar fashion) and added a full length four-bay north aisle, or in effect a parallel nave; both the genuine lancet from the east end of the removed north wall, and the 1867 one from further west were re-located, forming a group of three with a brand new one, to the west of the south porch. He also extended the Vestry/Organ Chamber eastwards, re-using older fabric wherever possible; the northern low-side window, which he had already re-sited in 1867, was moved again, to the internal wall face of the east end of the new aisle, and the northern of the two piscinae in the nave was relocated in the north wall of the aisle..

There had been much debate in the 19th century about church restorations, and increasing pressure to retain medieval features, and to respect their style when new fabric was erected. Cockfield is one of the best examples of such a restoration in County Durham; Hodgson Fowler was meticulous in following the style of the earlier features, almost to a slavish degree, with the result that the remodelled building, now much larger than the original, is only dimly lit by narrow lancet windows. Whilst the new north aisle is stylistically very much in harmony with the older work, it could be argued that its plan and proportions are out of character with genuine work of this period in the area, although, given the constraints of the extra accommodation required, and of the site itself, it is difficult to see how else the problem could have been handled.

THE CHURCHYARD

The churchyard is roughly rectangular in plan, with a entrance gate of later 19th or early 20th century date near the west end of the north side; the roadside wall is c 1 m high, with a simple arched coping, carrying plain loop-topped rails.

The monuments in the churchyard are almost entirely headstones, the earliest being of 17th century date. They are set in a series of very regimented and regular north-south rows, with a large space being left clear south of the nave. This regularity seems alien to a graveyard that has been in use over several centuries, but is explained by the statement 'The gravestones

were placed in their present positions at the time of the 1911 works' (Gomersall 1988, 7); what is not clear is why such works were carried out.

At some time subsequent to the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of c1860 the churchyard was apparently extended into a field on the south, which has more recently been cleared of its monuments (largely later 19th/early 20th century headstones) which have been re-sited against the boundary walls, and has returned to use as a paddock.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

As has been made clear, Cockfield church is a much-altered medieval fabric, and cannot be rated of great archaeological potential, although some interesting questions remain unanswered; it cannot be assumed that the c1200 date of the earlier architectural features correlates with the first ecclesiastical foundation on the site, and the question as to whether the nave and chancel walls are of the same build needs to be resolved.

However, archaeological deposits beneath the floors of the church have clearly been disturbed to some extent, not only by the usual generations of burials, but by an underfloor heating system, evidenced by grates in the nave, north aisle and chancel. Nevertheless, any sub-floor works within the building, (perhaps excepting the north aisle) will require some degree of archaeological monitoring.

Outside the church, there is, as often, a perimeter drain, which will have destroyed, at least partially, the relationships between the structure and any archaeological deposits adjacent to its external wall faces.

As regards the above-ground fabric, any works involving the extant medieval fabric will also require vigilance, especially within the chancel where the internal wall faces are concealed by plaster; at the time of survey repairs to decaying plaster on the north wall are contemplated. It is possible, although perhaps unlikely, that earlier plaster, and even wall paintings, may survive beneath this, so any repair works should be preceded by an investigation of select areas; even if no old plaster survives the fabric of the wall, or at least of its medieval western section, should be recorded if exposed.

Priorities

One important conservation problem was noted, in that several of the medieval cross slab grave covers, which form a collection of some importance, are in a state of active and serious decay; this is especially true of slab (7) low in the east wall of the porch, and slab (2) in the sanctuary floor, both of which are suffering the effects of damp. Professional advice need to be sought as regards both the causes of the damp, and, fairly urgently, the stabilisation and consolidation of the stone.

Peter F Ryder July 1998

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Archaeological Assessment August 1998**

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St Mary the Virgin Cockfield

Archaeological

Assessment

August 1998

Roger Vavasour cross slab
(after C C Hodges)

Peter F Ryder

Historic Buildings Consultant

St Mary the Virgin, Cockfield.

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1. West view

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2. General south view

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3. The chancel from the south

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4. East end

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5. North-east view

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6. South door

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7. Nave looking east

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8. Nave looking north-east into north aisle

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9. East end of south wall of nave, with piscina.

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10. East end of north arcade, and Watson memorial

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11. East end of north aisle, looking north, with re-set low-side window and piscina

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12. Chancel, looking east.

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13. Chancel, looking west.

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14. Medieval cross slabs on east of porch.

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