

## St Andrew Auckland

The parish church of St Andrew Auckland, usually known as South Church, is an impressive building consisting of a five-bay aisled nave with transepts, a two-storeyed south porch and a lofty western tower, and a four-bay chancel with a northern vestry.

The only external walls of the **Nave** are at clerestory level, above the roofs of the aisles and transepts. On the south there is a range of six windows, each of two cinquefoil-headed lights under a four-centred arch having a chamfered hoodmould with shaped stops; the east jamb of the easternmost is awkwardly overlapped by the west wall of the south transept. There is a similar series of five windows on the north, stopping short of the north transept. Above is a



The church from the south-east

chamfered oversailing course at the base of the parapet, which has a coping chamfered on its upper angles.

At a high level, the external faces of the east end of the nave is oddly set back c 20 cm from that of the walls of the transepts, forming sunk panels. That on the north has been infilled, but the straight joint that defines its north side remains visible.

The **West Tower** is built of roughly coursed large rubble, with cut dressings; the stair turret and the added fourth (belfry) stage are in better-quality coursed and squared stone. The tower rises in four stages, with a string-course/set-back dividing the lower two, and chamfered set-backs between the upper. There is a boldly-projecting stair turret, octagonal above a square base, at the south-west corner, rising to a pyramidal cap of stone slabs at just above the base of the belfry. At the north-western angle are a pair of shallow stepped buttresses and there is another midway along the west side, all rising to the base of the third stage; at the east end of each side wall (and now set in the re-entrant angles between the tower and clerestory walls) are what appear as deeper stepped buttresses only rising midway up the second stage. The tower has a simple chamfered plinth, but the buttresses (and stair turret) a more elaborate one with a moulded top member.

The lower stage of the tower has two tall lancet windows on the west, one on each side of the central buttress; above the head of the northern, and set a little further to the north, are the remains of a narrow square-headed window with a broad chamfered surround, the lower part of which has been destroyed by the insertion (or heightening) of the lancet. The north and south walls at this level have shoulder-arched windows with chamfered surrounds, that on the south

now opening within the choir vestry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century western extension to the south aisle.

The second stage has similar shoulder-arched windows on north and south, with in each case a small square window, without cut dressings, broken through the wall a short distance below their sills. On the west at this level is a narrow square-headed window with a broad chamfered surround, of similar character to the blocked window below. The third stage, the original belfry, has an opening in each face composed of two lancet lights divided by a circular shaft with a moulded capital and base, within an outer arch that is almost semicircular in form. The openings on the west and south are displaced from the true centre of the wall to allow for the stair turret, showing that this (or a predecessor in the same position) is contemporary with the tower. Above these openings is a row of damaged corbels, presumably marking the base of the original parapet; there seems to be a slight change in the character of the masonry on this line, although at only a little over half the height of the stage.

The fourth stage, the 15<sup>th</sup> century belfry, has a large opening in the centre of each face; these are each of two cinquefoil-headed lights within a four-centred arch with a casement-moulded surround. There is a hollow-chamfered string course at the base of the parapet, with directly below it, in the centre of each wall, a boldly-projecting stone spout; the crenellated parapet has a moulded coping.

The **South Aisle**, including its 19<sup>th</sup> century western extension, is of five bays, the porch projecting from the third. The extension has the same chamfered plinth and moulded string at window-sill level as the remainder of the aisle, but is built of snecked stone, with a stepped buttress at the west end of the south wall. The west end has a lancet window and the south wall a two-light window with simple Y-tracery and a moulded hood with carved stops; this is typical of the other windows in the side walls of the aisles, and has the look of a genuine medieval piece re-used<sup>1</sup>; below it, between the sill string and the plinth, is an area of disturbed masonry. To the east of it is a broad buttress in older stone, which was originally the clasping buttress at the south-west angle of the medieval aisle, now carried up as a 19<sup>th</sup>-century octagonal chimney stack. The westernmost bay of the aisle proper is built of coursed roughly-squared stone, with a parapet, above a chamfered oversailing course, of rather better-squared fabric. This bay has another two-light window of the same type, its tracery and head renewed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The two bays to the east of the porch, with a stepped buttress between them, have windows of the same type, largely restored; much of the walling of the first bay is in snecked stone, indicating 19<sup>th</sup>-century rebuilding or at least re-facing.

The **South Porch** is of two storeys, with stepped buttresses set midway along each side and paired at the outer angles. The outer arch is of two-centred form, with a continuous chamfer to its inner order, and a moulded outer order carried on renewed jamb shafts with old moulded caps and bases (now eroded into shapelessness) under a moulded hood with worn head stops. Above is a window of two trefoil-headed lights with a trefoil in the spandrel, within a moulded two-centred arch which has had its hoodmould replaced or coated in cement, with eroded stops. In the gable above is a sundial dated 'MDCCXLIX' (1749).

In the southern bay of the west wall is a window of two trefoil-headed lights with a quatrefoil

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<sup>1</sup>Possibly from the north wall of the chancel; old plans show that the arch to the 1881 organ chamber removed a window here.

over, its inner frame renewed, within a casement-moulded surround under a hoodmould with shaped stops; the northern bay is occupied by a square stair projection lit by chamfered square-headed loops; the lower of the two on west is set within the blocking of a square-headed doorway. The stair turret is constricted of better-quality squared stone than the remainder of the porch, except for the upper metre or so of its walls which are clearly restoration. Immediately to the south of the turret, above the top of the mid-wall buttress, is a narrow square-headed loop; a patch of later stonework further south may indicate another window position.

The east wall of the porch has two more two-light windows similar to the one on the west (except that the northern has no hoodmould); on the upper floor there is a small chamfered square-headed window in the northern bay<sup>2</sup> and possible traces of another in the southern.

The **North Aisle** like the south is built of roughly-coursed and roughly-squared stone, with some areas of 19<sup>th</sup> century snecked stone, and is articulated into four bays by stepped buttresses; it has a parapet like that of the south aisle. Its west wall is clearly butted up against the older buttress at the east end of the north wall of the tower, and has a chamfered plinth which appears again only in the easternmost bay of the north wall. It has a single lancet window, its head restored. Both west and north walls of the aisle have had a string-course at window-sill level, but it has been cut back, and only traces survive, except in the easternmost bay of the north wall, where it has been restored. The second bay of the north wall has a doorway with a two-centred arch of two continuous chamfered orders; all its dressings have either been renewed or faced in Roman cement. The other bays have the usual two-light Y-tracery windows; that in the third bay (with a considerable area of 19<sup>th</sup> century snecked stone around it) is all restoration but the other two seem old in part; the buttress between the third and fourth bays also seems entirely of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, but the others appear basically medieval.

The **South Transept** was largely rebuilt in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, in snecked stone, although older masonry survives in the lower part of the west and northern bay of the east wall. There are paired stepped buttresses at the southern angles, and the usual plinth and sill string; the ashlar parapet has a hollow-chamfered oversailing course at its base and a moulded and embattled parapet, at a lower level than that of the north transept and chancel. On the west a chimney stack is corbelled out from the wall at the level of the aisle parapet, with to the south of it, high up, a square-headed window of two lights with flattened four-centred, in a hollow-chamfered surround; its irregular dressings suggests that it is an old feature re-used. The south wall of the transept has a big three-light window of three lancet lights with the spandrels pierced, under the usual moulded hood with shaped stops; above, the embattled parapet is carried up and over the shallow-pitched gable..

The east side of the transept has two more three-light windows in the same style; directly above the head of the northern is a section of chamfered oversailing course, well below the present parapet.

### The **North Transept**

The North Transept is built of squared and roughly-coursed stone, but the fabric of the north and west walls is virtually concealed by heavy pointing; there is clear evidence that the walls

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<sup>2</sup>Is this the 'small blocked loophole at the north-east angle of the porch' that Hodgson (1899, 100) thought indicated a former garderobe?

have been heightened, especially on the east. There are paired stepped buttresses at the northern angles (with a shorter one set centrally beneath the window) and a chamfered oversailing course below the parapet, which is continued horizontally beneath the shallow gable of the north wall. The west wall has a plinth and string course continued from the north aisle; its only window is set high up, in the heightened section, and is a two-light one with Y-tracery within a segmental-pointed arch, under a hoodmould without stops; there appears to be a disturbed area of masonry to its south, above the roof of the aisle. The north end of the transept and its buttresses have a larger and steeper plinth than the west side; the end wall has a large two-light window with simple Y-tracery and a four-centred head; its hoodmould is extended across the gable as a string, at the same level as that from which the side walls have been heightened.

On the east of the transept the level from which the wall has been heightened is marked by a slight set-back, with yellow stone above. The large and steeply-chamfered plinth is continuous with those of the north end wall, and of the adjacent chancel; the moulded string, partly restored, also links through to that on the chancel wall. At the south end of the transept wall the string steps up beneath a three-light window, similar to the three in the south transept, that looks like an insertion; below its north jamb, between the string and plinth are traces of a possible small blocked opening. Further north are two lancets which looks genuine medieval work. In the upper section of the wall, set centrally, is a two-light window like that in the west wall; the area of walling around its head clearly having been rebuilt in a greyer roughly-coursed stone.

The **Chancel** is built of coursed squared stone; both side walls show a very clear change in fabric at about three-quarters height, to rather larger and greyer stone, below an ashlar parapet with a moulded string at its base and a moulded and crenellated coping. Each side wall is articulated into four bays by means of stepped buttresses; all the bays (except the westernmost on the south) have a steep two-part plinth, and all have a moulded string below the windows, and what looks like a cut-back string above.

The western bay of the south wall has a single chamfered plinth, apparently continuous with that of the south transept; above is a small square-headed low-side window; all its dressings are recent restoration, presumably reproducing an old feature; it is set in an area of disturbed masonry, indicating the position of a former priest's door, the only visible remnant of which is the chamfered sill in the course above the plinth. Above the string are a two-light window of the usual type (with Y-tracery and a moulded hood with shaped stops) with to its east a lancet, both heavily restored. The second bay, in which the full chancel plinth commences, has a similar pair of openings, similarly restored, the two-light window being set so close to the adjacent buttress that it loses its western hoodmould terminal. The third bay has a priest's door with a two-centred double-chamfered arch (its head is of 19<sup>th</sup>-century masonry and its jambs of Roman cement) that interrupts the string course, and pushes the sill of a third two-light window up to a higher level than the two to the west.; here not only does the hoodmould end short, but the east face of the adjacent buttress has been crudely cut back to allow the insertion of the window. To the east the string recommences at a higher level, beneath the sill of a more authentic lancet window, then in the fourth bay continues beneath another medieval lancet before stepping down below a fourth and final two-light window, more heavily restored; only in this bay is the two-light window placed to the east rather than the west of its adjacent lancet.

On the north of the chancel, the two bays to the west of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century vestry have a stepped buttress between them; each has a two-light window of the usual type, that in the first bay being

set hard up against the west end of the wall, and having its hoodmould cut away; east of it disturbed masonry indicates the position of a former lancet, more clearly seen internally. The bay to the east of the vestry has a single relatively unrestored lancet window.

The east end of the chancel has large clasping buttresses at its angles, and a pair of smaller buttresses beneath the great east window; above the plinth there is an additional chamfered string-course, and the moulded string above steps up over the small buttresses. The window is of five lancet lights with the spandrels pierced, a larger version of the transept windows, and all its external dressings are in 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar. Around the extrados of its head the adjacent wall fabric shows a distinctive pecked tooling, as if it has been cut back. Above the window the moulded string at the base of the parapet is stepped up to run adjacent to the moulding of the embattled coping as this is carried over the shallow gable.

The Vestry on the north of the chancel is constructed of snecked stone of later-19th century character. The plinth and moulded string of the chancel wall are continued round it, and there are clasping buttresses at its northern angles. On the north the moulded string steps up under a central lancet window, and the parapet has a small central gablet. On the west a small box-like porch, with a square-headed doorway on the north, is built out over the perimeter drain; the moulded string is carried round the porch at the base of its low ashlar parapet.

### **The Interior**

The church is generally entered through the **South Porch**, the internal walls of which are plastered. On each side is a restored stone bench; above the bench at the north end of the east wall is a segmental-arched recess (behind plaster) containing the semi-octagonal base of what may have been a stoup. The windows in the side walls have casement mouldings to their internal openings, with eroded moulded hoods and carved terminals. The inner orders of all three are all restoration; interestingly, these are quite different from the arrangement illustrated by Billings (1846, plate 2) and described by Hodgson (1899, 98) by which the internal splays were additionally provided with moulded trefoiled arches set on shafts with 'distinctly Geometrical capitals'<sup>3</sup> The porch is covered by a two-bay quadripartite vault springing from mid-wall shafts and corbels in the angles, the ribs being moulded with a roll and fillet between two hollows. The south door has a two-centred arch, its continuous inner order moulded with a roll and fillet, and its deeply-moulded outer order carried on renewed shafts with old and worn moulded capitals and bases; there is a moulded hood with head stops.

Inside the main body of the church the walls are all of bare stone, much of it bearing a distinctive tooling that probably relates to the removal of plaster during 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration.

The **West Tower** opens to the nave by a two-centred arch of three chamfered orders, springing from semi-octagonal responds with moulded bases and capitals, under a moulded hood that is continued horizontally on either side as a string course. Above the arch the wall is of coursed roughly-squared stone, and there is a central square-headed doorway, now blocked, quite tall and broad, with a rebated surround. Vestiges of an earlier steeper roof-line are visible, and lengths of straight joint high up close to the side walls which appear to indicate the eastern angles of tower, both pre-dating the addition of the clerestory. Lower in the wall are various

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<sup>3</sup>The porch was restored in 1901 Hicks and Charlewood being the architects involved. A letter attached to the faculty refers to the removal of 'the present interior stonework which is quite modern and inferior in character',

infilled sockets that must relate to former galleries.

Within the base of the tower the western lancets have segmental-pointed rear arches with chamfers to their heads only, with their sills and the walling directly below renewed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Above the northern can be seen the remains of what has been termed a 'high-end window'; the north end of the sill survives, cut into by the head of the lancet below<sup>4</sup>. The shoulder-arched windows on north and south have rear arches of near-triangular form, without any chamfers; there also have renewed sills.

Set diagonally in the south-west corner is a square-headed doorway giving access to the newel stair which ascends to a plain square-headed doorway into the ringing chamber, which has rough-cast walls and a boarded dado. The three windows have shouldered rear arches, those in the north and south walls being set in full-height recesses which also include the small secondary openings beneath them; a cupboard in the east wall is set in the recess of the blocked door visible from the nave. The beamed ceiling is probably of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date; the east-west beams are supported on two heavier north-south one with braces to the wall face below..

The newel stair continues to a very plain and rough opening into to the chamber above the ringing chamber, the original belfry. The internal walls here are heavily mortared, and the former bell openings have segmental rear arches with cut voussoirs. Above the doorway several large slabs are set diagonally, to carry the stair into the belfry above; at least two of these are re-used cross-slab grave covers. The floor of the present belfry is carried on four heavy north-south beams, additionally supported by big braces rising from large 19<sup>th</sup>-century corbels, and wall-plates set on a second range of corbels at a higher level, some of which may be ancient.

The newel stair continues, its stonework is a state of active decay; in the final section at least three of the treads are re-used medieval cross slabs, turned upside-down (see 'sepulchral monuments' section). At the head of the newel is a simple four-ribbed vault; a final straight length of stair (with an old, possibly medieval, door hung at its base) rises diagonally through the angle of the tower to give access to the belfry. Here the internal walls are of roughly-coursed rubble, and the four belfry openings have rear arches with roughly-shaped voussoirs. The belfry roof is old; there is a slightly-cambered central tie, ridge and purlins.

The **Nave** has five-bay arcades; the arches are of two-centred form, with deep mouldings, and moulded hoods; the only carved stops are above the second pier from the west of the north arcade, in the form of the head of a king (traditionally Edward I) facing the nave and a woman, (his queen?), to the aisle, and on the aisle side of the first pier, another female head. The western responds are square, with the inner order coming down onto semi-octagonal corbels; the first and third piers of each arcade are octagonal, and the second and fourth of clustered form; the four principal shafts have fillets, with four smaller circular shafts set between them. The eastern respond of the south arcade is of semi-octagonal plan, and of the north arcade a corbel above the pulpit. Hodgson (1898) makes much of differences in detail between the arches, in his reconstruction of the building history. The two eastern arches of the north arcade have mouldings identical to those of the chancel arch; the easternmost has identical mouldings on both faces (to nave and transept) but the western has its outer order chamfered towards the aisle. The south arcade has very similar mouldings, but here all the arches have their outer

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<sup>4</sup>This is seen by Hodgson (1898, 194-6) as the result of a change in plan during building

order chamfered on the aisle side<sup>5</sup>, although there are differences in the details of the capitals and bases. The western three bays of the north arcade are seen as later; although the mouldings of the inner order remain the same as those further east, those of the capitals, bases and hoodmould are all different, and the outer order (towards the nave) changes from a roll-and-fillet to a wave moulding. The arcades have seen considerable 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration; all the bases of the south arcade, and its eastern respond, seem to have been renewed; the second pier of the north arcade has no fillets to its shafts, and may have been re-cut, whilst the third pier and the ornate eastern respond (with foliage and dogtooth) looks wholly renewed.

At the east end of the nave, to the south of the chancel arch, is a small piscina with a two-centred arch, evidence of an altar standing in front of the rood screen.



The internal openings of the clerestory windows have quite broadly splayed jambs and segmental rear arches of the type formed by a rib chamfered on its lower angles. Infilled sockets in the internal west jamb of the westernmost window of the north clerestory may relate to former gallery arrangements.

Interior looking east

At the west end of the **South Aisle** a 19<sup>th</sup>-century doorway, with a two-centred chamfered arch, opens into the choir vestry in the western extension of the aisle; its hood is formed by part of the moulded string, largely renewed, that is continued round both walls of the aisle. Above is the outline of a blocked window (a lancet) with a near-triangular rear arch. On the south of the aisle, all the windows have virtually triangular rear arches of the chamfered rib type. To the west of the south door is a doorway to the stair up into the parvise, the room above the south porch. This has a segmental head and chamfered surround, and a casement-moulded hood with worn head stops. The south doorway has a two-centred rear arch with a chamfer only to its head; above it is a small blocked window, almost square, with a chamfered surround, that would have looked from the parvise into the church. To the east of the door a straight joint, from the string course upwards, indicates the position of the north-east angle of the porch. The first two-light window to the east of the porch has an old rear arch but restored jambs, whilst the internal surround of the second is largely old. At its east end the aisle opens into the south transept under a segmental arch of two chamfered orders, dying into the wall on either side.

<sup>5</sup>Indicating that the south transept was not part of the original design.

In the **North Aisle** the windows all have segmental-pointed rear arches; the lancet in the west wall has a chamfer to its head only, whilst the two-light windows in the north wall have rib-type rear arches. As in the south aisle the sill string, again largely renewed, runs the full length of west and north walls. The internal surround of the north door is concealed by woodwork; to its east much of the internal face of the wall is of 19<sup>th</sup>-century snecked stone, but a column of old masonry remains between third and fourth bays, and again to the east of the window in the fourth bay, where c 1 m from the end of the wall the internal east jamb and turn of the arched head of an earlier window are visible. At the east end, as with the south aisle, there is a segmental arch of two chamfered orders opening into the transept.

In the **South Transept** the south wall and the south half of the east wall are of 19<sup>th</sup>-century snecked stone. The moulded string course that crosses the west wall steps down beneath the sill of the large window on the south; all three of the large three-light windows in the transept have rear arches of the rib type, that of the south window almost triangular, and those of the two windows on the east of segmental-pointed form. Beneath the eastern jamb of the window in the south wall is a piscina with a moulded and trefoiled arch, with a pair of bowls, the eastern sexfoil and the western circular. All its stonework is 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar, but it presumably reproduces an older feature. There is another piscina on the east, beneath the southern jamb of the northern window; in this case the trefoiled arch seems old, and the bowl renewed; immediately to the south of it is a square-headed aumbry with a rebated surround that seems old in part.

The west wall of the **North Transept** has a second string-course, chamfered on its lower angle, c 3 m above the usual one; above it is the high-level window, which has a segmental rear arch with a chamfer only to its head. The lower parts of the north wall have been largely rebuilt or refaced in snecked stone of late-19th century type. On the north the lower string runs beneath the window and then steps down just short of the east end, whilst the upper is stepped up and then forms an internal hood to the window, which has a segmental-headed rear arch with a continuous keeled moulding. On the east the lower string is stepped up under the three-light window, which has a segmental-pointed rear arch of the rib type; the two lancets to the north have internal surrounds with a continuous keeled moulding like that of the larger window in the north wall; the high-level string forms an internal hoodmould. The two-light window in the upper section of the wall has a four-centred rear arch with a chamfer only to its head, and widely-splayed jambs. At the south end of the wall is a piscina with moulded trefoil arch and small circular bowl, the latter restoration..

At the entrance to the **Chancel** the chancel arch has mouldings virtually identical to those of the eastern arches of the north arcade; its outer order is chamfered towards the chancel. Although some sources describe the arch as rebuilt<sup>6</sup>, much of it seems ancient, although both of the large corbels from which the inner order springs (which have 13<sup>th</sup>-century-style foliage and nail-head) have been renewed; there is a moulded hood with foliate stops. The chancel has an internal string at the level of the sills of the windows, of semicircular section, and another moulded string above the heads of all the windows. The lancet windows have moulded internal surrounds, and the two-light ones segmental-pointed rear arches of the rib type; a common hoodmould is carried over all of them. All the windows except that above the low-side have level sills directly above the string course. The string is stepped up over the priest's door, which is cut through the western arch of the earlier sedilia; it has a flattened triangular head with a

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<sup>6</sup>The current guide leaflet states that in 1864 the present chancel arch 'replaced the original lower and narrower one.'

chamfer, in 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar. The sedilia have deeply-moulded arches of segmental-pointed form, carried on attached shafts. The central set has a rounded back whilst the eastern, and apparently the cut-away western as well, are square in plan.

Immediately to east of the sedilia is a further sizeable recess, with a trefoiled arch, now quite eroded, with remains of what looks like nail-head ornament; it has attached shafts in its jambs, but their lower parts have been replaced by square blocks of 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar. Beyond this recess, usually seen as an additional sedile, the string steps down to a lower level, and, forming the sill of the easternmost two-light window, cuts awkwardly across the head of piscina with restored deeply-moulded jambs and two bowls, the western cinquefoil and the eastern sexfoil, each with drains,

On the north side of the chancel the lower moulded string seems virtually all renewed, and at the west end of the wall the internal jambs of the first two-light window seem all restoration; c 1 m to the east of it is the east jamb and about half of the head of an earlier blocked lancet with a moulded surround. The second two-light window has renewed jambs and an old rear arch. The big 19<sup>th</sup>-century arch to the organ chamber has a segmental-pointed head and is of two chamfered orders; the upper string-course is carried up and over it as a hoodmould. In the eastern bay beyond it there is a recess directly below the lower string, with a raised semicircular moulding to the jambs of the same section as the string that forms its head; above the string is a lancet with the usual moulded inner frame.

The lower part of the east wall is concealed by the reredos. The internal frame of the east window seems old, with various infilled sockets in the jambs; the rear arch is of the usual rib type. To either side of the head of the window a curved line appears in the masonry, possibly relating to the arched braces of a previous roof.

The **Western Extension of the South Aisle** has a floor inserted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; the lower room is now a kitchen, with a 19<sup>th</sup>-century ashlar fireplace (segmental arch and moulded stone mantelpiece, now in poor condition) in the south-east corner. A stair ascends alongside the north wall to the upper room, now the choir vestry; the windows on west and south both have segmental-pointed rear arches of the rib type.

The **Parvise**, or upper room above the south porch, is reached by a stone newel stair from the south aisle; at the foot of the stair the recess of a blocked doorway on the west is now plastered over; at the head a shoulder-headed doorway opens into a single room, its walls plastered and yellow-washed. Its windows have plain internal lintels; high in the north wall is a square-headed window, and a chamfered stone surround, looking out over the aisle roof.

## The Roofs

The nave has a nine-bay roof of late medieval character, with moulded tie-beams carried on short wall posts with arch braces springing from corbels set between the clerestory windows, and continued at a similar spacing beyond them. The tie-beams carry short king posts with arched braces to the ridge, but the purlins rest directly on the ties; the ridge and purlins are simply moulded.

The south aisle roof is of seven bays, with the ties carried on short wall-posts springing from simple corbels, and may also be late medieval. The north aisle roof is very similar in style but might be of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date. The transept roofs, each of three bays, and five-bay chancel roof are all similar in style to that of the nave, but appear 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The roof of the South Porch, exposed over the Parvise, is of some interest; it is of three bays, and has simple truncated principal trusses, a distinctive County Durham type typical of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Fittings and Furnishings

Many of the furnishings of the church are of late 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century date and do not call for special mention. The **Font**, with a cylindrical stone bowl upon a clustered shaft, was dedicated in 1939 and the stone **Pulpit** (modelled on one of the clustered piers of the nave arcades) bears a plate stating that it was presented 1941 replacing a predecessor of 1861. The **Choir Stalls** are the only significant medieval item, and date from the episcopacy of Cardinal Langley in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century; 24 of the original 28 stalls survive, with misericords generally carved with foliage, except for two which bear the arms of Langley and the Cross of St George, each surmounted by a coronet.

Standing in the South Transept is a **Benatura** formed from a Roman altar, with the arms of Bishop Nevill (1437-1475) on the front; Greenwell (1868) relates that it 'was recently found in excavating a drain around the church'.

Five **Bells** were hung in the tower in 1720; Boyle (1892, 506) gives their inscriptions; three more were added in 1881 and all were recast in 1911-12. The **Bell Frames**, of bolted timber construction, are probably of 1881; they are of frame layout type 8.3 (Pickford 1993, 54). are of later

### Carved Stones

The church contains four pieces of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, which are fully described and illustrated by Cramp (1984, 37-41):

- (1) Most important are four sections of a major cross, dated to the last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> or the first quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, re-set in their relative positions in an otherwise-plain stone cross erected at the west end of the nave, in front of the tower arch, c1931.

The other three pieces are all in the collection of lapidary material at the west end of the north aisle:

- (2) A fragment of another cross shaft of the same date
- (3) A complete grave cover of the mid-10th to mid-11th century.
- (4) The lower part of a grave cover or grave-marker of the same period.

Amongst the same collection of material are several Romanesque corbels, probably of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

### Sepulchral Monuments

Ryder (1985) describes and illustrates 13 **Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers**, mostly of 12<sup>th</sup> or early 13<sup>th</sup> century dates; nos 1-12 are now displayed at the west end of the north aisle, and (13) built as a tread (carved face downwards) at the head of the newel stair to the parvise. During the inspection of the church in connection with the present survey a further 8 slabs have been found:

- (14) In the chamber beneath the ringing chamber, one of several slabs forming a corbelled-out projection above the door to the newel stair. The full-length slab probably survives intact, but all that is exposed is an incised cross shaft
- (15) Immediately above (14), an eroded slab with cross carved in relief and four-circle or bracelet cross head.
- (16) Forming the underside of a tread in the tower newel stair, the 15<sup>th</sup> from the top. Incised interlaced diamond cross, late 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- (17) Forming the underside of a tread in the tower newel stair, the 14<sup>th</sup> from the top. Cross head carved in relief, of four broken circles with a central 'box'. Late 12<sup>th</sup> century
- (18) Forming the underside of the topmost tread of the tower newel stair. Remnant of incised design, cross head of four circles or bracelets. Late 12<sup>th</sup> century
- (19) In the internal splay of the south jamb of the western belfry opening; fragment with part of the head of an incised cross with knops on the cross arms and fleur-de-lys terminals with upwards-tuned leaves.
- (20) Fragment formed the lowest voussoir on the west side of the rear arch of the southern belfry opening, with incised chalice - part of the grave slab of a priest.
- (21) Small slab re-used as one of the blocks of the internal east jamb of the southern belfry opening, facing into the tower. Relief carved design; cross rising from stepped base to head with fleur-de-lys terminals within a wing, with a pair of shears on the l. of the cross shaft.
- (22) Slab visible externally in the south-east face of the stair turret, near the top (best seen with binoculars); incised cross shaft with stepped base.

### **Effigies**

In the 'Museum Corner' at the west end of the aisle are two effigies

- (1) Oak effigy of a knight of c1340, c2.4 m long. Hunter Blair (1929, 26-7) describes it:

The head, in a conical bascinet to which a well-carved mail camail is laced through eyelet holes, rests upon two cushions. A loose surcoat, girt by a narrow belt and falling in formal folds to the knees, cut well open in front, covers a mail hauberk, with arms continued as mittens; beneath is a quilted shirt or gambeson. The legs below the knee are in plates, or possibly cuir-bouilli, with flanked genouillères. The hands are joined in prayer, and the legs crossed below the knee. The feet in mail, with the spur leathers remaining, rest upon a lion with tail

curved over its back; in later times someone has carved a pig's snout upon it. The mail is expressed by interlacing rings. (the sword is) broken off just below the hilt. It hangs from a broad plain belt buckled, in front, around the hips. A narrow shield strap passes over the right shoulder but if there ever was a shield it has been destroyed.

(2) Sandstone effigy of a late 14th century lady. Hunter Blair (*ibid*, 42-43) describes:

The head rests upon two tasseled cushions; the hair is in a jewelled net, framing the face in a square style, with a jewelled band across the forehead. It is covered by a kerchief falling in folds at the back. The neck is bare and without ornament. The kirtle has tight-fitting sleeves, the cuffs covering the hands to the knuckles. The surcoat or gown has shorter tight-fitting sleeves; it is fastened in front by a row of seven large buttons; below the waist it falls in voluminous folds over the feet; long lappets, now partly broken off, hang from the shoulders nearly to the feet. The hands are joined in prayer, and the feet, in pointed shoes, rest upon a crouching dog.

### Brasses

Hung on the north wall at the west end of the north aisle is a life-size brass figure of a priest (Hodgson 1898 pl.X11 and 175), possibly a dean, intact except for part of the head; it is thought to be of late 14<sup>th</sup> century date..

In the nave floor a little to the north-east of the west respond of the south arcade is a blue limestone slab with a brass plate inscribed:

*Hic iacet lanclotus Claxton qui obiit xiE die mes febrarii  
Anno dni MCCCCxviE cui ater ppiciet' deus Amen*

At the west end of the north aisle is a large slab cut in the form of three steps; in the lowermost is an indent or an inscription and shield, in the central an indent for the effigy of what looks like a priest, and in the topmost an indent of what Hodgson (1899, 181-2) saw as a figure of the Virgin Mary with the infant Christ.

Hodgson also describes a slab in the chancel floor with an indent for an elaborate foliate cross with the fixture of a priest (perhaps a dean) at its centre, reused for a plate commemorating Fridesmonda, the wife of Bishop Barnes, d.1581. This, along with other indents etc in the chancel floor, may now be concealed by fixed carpeting<sup>7</sup>. There is another indent, with the figure of a knight, and four shields, at the west end of the north aisle.

### Post-Medieval Monuments

The church preserves a number of attractive 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century **Wall Monuments**. On the north wall of the tower is a marble tablet with a moulded surround to Thomas Brackley d.1757 steward to the Bishop of Durham. On the west wall of the nave, on either side of the tower arch are two more memorials, on the south a tablet with an open pediment and central urn, to Ann Belt d.1735, and on the north an attractive shaped marble tablet with flanking cherubs to Francis Pewterer 'who was auditor and keeper of Auckland Castle to Nathaniel Crewe William and Edward, Lord Bishops of Durham', d.1738. In the south aisle a marble

<sup>7</sup>A rubbing of the Fridesmonda Barnes brass is given by Waller (1892); it is not clear from his comments whether the brass was removed from its slab during the 1881 restoration.

tablet above the door to the parvise is to Margaret Maxwell d.1807 (signed by Isaac Jopling of Gateshead) and to the east of the main door is a tablet to Mary Jane Wilkinson d.1803; between the eastern two windows is a wall monument to Major General John Anthony Hodgson, d.1849, of the Bengal Native Infantry.

Higher up on the west wall of the nave are a pair of **Hatchments**; the northern has a coat of arms and the motto 'Resurgam'; the southern the same arms and an inscription to Ralph Bowser, Merchant Adventurer d1690<sup>8</sup>. On the north aisle wall west of the north door is a third hatchment dated 1657 with an inscription commemorating Gertrude Wren.

In the floor of the north transept is a worn ledger stone dated 1721 (?) with a Latin inscription.

### Historical Notes

The two Aucklands were an early possession of the church in Durham as they are included in the list of lands pledged by Bishop Aldhym (995-1018) and the Cuthbert community.

- 1083 When the Norman bishop William of St Carileph expelled the secular canons from Durham, provision was made for them in the churches of Auckland, Darlington, Heighington and Norton.
- 1292 The collegiate status of the church was confirmed by Bishop Bek; the college consisted of ten canons and a principal at first styled rector but later dean.
- 1428 The statutes of the college were revised by Bishop Langley.
- 1794 The first detailed antiquarian account of the church is given by the Durham historian Hutchinson (III, 329-330):

'The church of St Andrew is situate on the banks of the river Gaunless, on a fine rising ground, in the midst of a narrow valley; distant from the town of Bishop, or North Auckland, about a mile. This edifice is in the form of a cross, with a tower at the west end. The chancel is in width seven paces, and in length seventeen paces, neatly finished with oak, having fourteen seats or stalls on each side; in the south wall, by the altar, are three niches for officiating priests. The chancel is lighted by six irregular windows to the south, and three to the north; the east window is of five compartments under a pointed arch: by the fragments of coloured glass, it seems the windows were formerly highly decorated; paintings of our Saviour's sufferings still remain in the north windows (footnote – these have lately been removed, and the windows glazed with plain glass.) It is separated from the crossaile by a fine pointed arch, with elegant mouldings, rising from brackets. The cross aile is in length thirty paces, and in width seven paces. The north end is lighted by four windows, one to the north (composed of three compartments) and three to the east; two narrow ones towards the end, the third containing three compartments, and all of them under pointed arches. In the large window to the east, in this limb of the cross, are remains of an inscription painted on the glass; the date appears 1386; beneath the inscription are the arms of Bellasys, and in a belt round them the following words:

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<sup>8</sup>Summers (1980, 23) describes only the first, suggesting that it may commemorate the same Ralph Bowser.

“Bellysys Bellysys base was thy sowell  
When exchanged Belysys for Henknowell”

This is now called Kennet’s Porch. The south limb of the cross is lighted by three windows, one at the end, and two to the east, all consisting of three compartments, and under pointed arches: under the south window is a nich, with water basons. The nave is uniform, having two side ailes, formed by tows of four pillars, the first and third clustered, the intermediate ones octagonal, supporting pointed arches, light and elegant; the nave is in length thirty-four paces, and near twenty paces in width, regularly stalled with oak, and kept in good order. It is lighted by three large windows in the south aile, and two in the north; six windows in the upper range to the south, and five to the north: the tower rises on a pointed arch, springing from pilasters. There is a large gallery at the west end. ... (goes on to describe two effigies)

1834 Mackenzie and Ross (II,289) note that the gallery at the west end of the nave was inscribed ‘Robert Hilton. Gen 1721’ and contained an organ. The south porch has ‘three arched windows....now built up’ and the south wall of the chancel had ‘three pointed lights....with blank arches between them’,

1856 Fordyce (1, 542) adds some further information:

‘The edifice, in all its main features except the roofs, is a complete Early English cruciform church.....The upper storey of the tower was built in 1417..... Part of the windows on the south side of the chancel were renewed about two years ago.... The west end of the nave and the north transept are occupied by galleries. There is an organ in the western gallery. Amongst other recent improvements, an effective drain has been made around the church, which keeps the interior completely free from damp.

The churchyard contains about two and a quarter acres, having had an additional acre added to it about twelve years ago’.

### **Faculties and Other Records of Structural Changes**

1859 Alterations and improvements to the church included the removal of galleries, box-pews and a three-decker pulpit.

1881 Major restoration when the south transept was largely rebuilt, the western extension to the south aisle and the organ chamber added, and the floors were relaid. Total cost of these works was £4,300.

Unfortunately no pre-1890 faculties appear to survive.

Code (All prefixed DDR/EJ/FAC)	Date	Content
3/373/6	8.3.1894	Two lych gates in churchyard wall and close small gateway
3/416/17	12.4.1901	Restore porch

3/602	13.11.1911	Removal and recasting of the bells
3/2353	23.12.1930	Stone saxon cross
3/2766	18.9.1939	Erection of a stone font
3/2798	12.12.1940	Erection of a stone pulpit
3/3588	4.2.1953	Restoration of church
3/3824	14.12.1955	Restoration of the roof of the south aisle
3/5821	13.11.1979	Structural repairs and re-roofing...
3/5826a	31.12.1979	Erection of panelling and other alterations under bell tower and removal of ten pews from north transept, with repairs to flooring.
3/6525a	19.5.1987	Alterations to create kitchen, toilets and choir vestry.
3/7169	8.11.1990	Re-roofing of tower, south porch and south transept

## Structural History

Most writers have quoted the analysis of the church set out by the Rev J.,F.Hodgson (1899) and this scheme, with one or two minor qualifications, is followed here.

The major part of the church appears to have been built in a single programme of works; Hodgson proposes that the nave, chancel, north transept and eastern part of north aisle came first, followed by the west tower and south aisle, and finally by the western three bays of the north aisle. He admits that as regards architectural style the whole campaign could be placed almost anywhere in the second or third quarter of the 13<sup>th</sup> century<sup>9</sup>, but after a long discussion of the likelihood of work being carried out under the various episcopates of the period, argued that they were built under Bishop Stichill (1260-1274) with the initial phase of work being completed at the close of this period by the construction of the western section of the north arcade, in which the various mouldings show a clear transition from Early English to ‘the purest and most unmistakable Geometrical’ (ibid, 103). The head stop over the third pier of the arcade is seen as representing Edward I, crowned at Westminster in 1274, the year of Stichill’s death.

Two major phases of alterations are tied in, perhaps just a little too neatly, with the re-foundation of the college by Bishop Bek in 1292, and the episcopate of Bishop Langley (1406-1437) who in 1428 further revised the statutes. Hodgson, in his typical manner, was scathing about both. Bek’s alterations - the insertion of a series of additional and larger

<sup>9</sup>In fact some of the mouldings of the chancel arch/eastern bays of the north arcade are similar to those of the Great Hall (now Chapel) at Auckland Castle, which he saw as of the late 12<sup>th</sup> century

windows in the chancel are seen as ‘of the meanest and shabbiest kind possible’. Along with these went, the raising of the nave aisle walls and the addition of the south transept/ Nevertheless this late 13<sup>th</sup> century work was judged slightly less abhorrent than Langley’s early 14<sup>th</sup> century scheme, which included the heightening of the chancel, addition of the clerestory to the nave and the construction of the present belfry (which documentary evidence dates to 1416, at a cost of £6.13s.4d). Hodgson thought these were ‘about as bad as anything of that time well *could* be’ and that they ‘put the finishing touch of ruin and disfigurement upon the church’ (ibid, 148).

Linking together historical and architectural evidence is always dangerous, but it is difficult to argue with Hodgson’s overall scheme, although it remains possible that the initial construction preceded Stichill by a decade or two. Pevsner & Williamson (1983, 412)<sup>10</sup> unconvincingly put the entire construction to the period of Bek’s refoundation of the college, admitting only ‘some change in plan’; the linked internal hoodmoulds of the chancel windows are seen as disposing of the argument that the lancets and two-light windows are of different dates.

Returning to the initial construction of the 13<sup>th</sup> century church, it is generally agreed, on the strength of the lapidary evidence, that there was a preceding church on the site. The suggested sequence of building, with the north aisle being built in two separate parts, only really makes sense if the new church was being constructed around the pre-existing core of this earlier building. There is no real suggestion that pre-13th century fabric survives in situ; nevertheless, it seems reasonable to suppose that the earlier nave was the same size as at present, which underlines the importance of the older church.

The 13<sup>th</sup> century church, as first completed, would have been a building with steep-pitched roofs, and low walls to the aisles, possibly with some form of gablets over their lancet windows; the south porch would have stood up even more boldly above the adjacent aisle than it does today. Hodgson argues that the tower would have been topped by a wooden spire. The south wall of the chancel would have had a continuous sequence of eight lancet windows, two to each bay; during Bek’s alterations one lancet in each bay was replaced by a two-light window. The great east window looks like late 13<sup>th</sup>-century work as well. Hodgson was concerned that the extent of what seemed to him undisturbed masonry adjacent to the clasping buttresses seems to preclude it having replaced the pattern of fenestration - a triplet of lancets - one might have expected from comparable earlier 13<sup>th</sup>-century buildings. The plan of the buttresses also suggests an original three-lancet scheme. However, this problem would be solved if all the masonry above the string course, from buttress to buttress, were rebuilt by Bek.

Hodgson’s assertion that the two eastern bays of the north aisle were built first and the western section of the aisle only completed later seems quite reasonable; the evidence of the straight joint between the north-east buttress of the tower and the rubble west end wall of the aisle seems quite conclusive.

The south transept is thought to have been added by Bek and its architectural features, although virtually all renewed, mostly tie in with a date at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the north transept new windows were inserted at the south end of the east wall (probably replacing a lancet) and in the north wall. The large north window has mouldings to its rear arch of earlier

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<sup>10</sup>The account of the church here was ‘completely rewritten by Jane Cunningham’. The manner in which the south chancel buttress have been crudely hacked back to allow the insertion of the two-light windows alone would surely discredit her view.

13<sup>th</sup>-century character, but these have probably been re-used from the earlier lancets. The present two-light form of this window may be no older than the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Hutchinson refers to a three-light window here.

One then comes to the matter of post-medieval alterations to the church; as usual these were almost entirely erased by Victorian restoration, and attracted little interest from antiquaries of the period such as the Rev.Hodgson. A valuable pre-restoration ground plan of the church survives in the Archdeacon Thorp collection at Durham Cathedral Library. Whilst obviously incorrect in some details (it shows the arcades as of three broad bays rather than five) it indicates galleries over the western part of the nave and north transept (the former was probably constructed in 1721 - see 'Historical Notes' section), and a vestry partitioned off at the west end of the south aisle; it also shows only an external door to the newel stair up to the parvise. At this time it seems likely that many of the windows in the church had been altered; Billings' 1845 print shows the chancel with its larger windows stripped of their tracery and the intervening lancets blocked up<sup>11</sup>.

The first major Victorian restoration would appear to have taken place in the 1850s. A Sub-Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle (Greenwell 1868) thought that the works had been carried out 'in a very conservative spirit' (a Mr Austin being the architect) but made further recommendations; the westernmost window on the north side of the chancel, which alone seems to have retained its old mullion, should be opened out, and other windows restored, and the walls stripped of plaster. It is clear that most of the chancel lancets were still blocked.

A second restoration was carried out in 1881, when the walls were stripped, although the Antiquaries' insistence that 'nothing stronger than a hard brush should be employed in this process' was clearly disregarded.. Arthur Bromfield would appear to have been the architect at this time. At this time the south transept was virtually completely rebuilt, although apparently in facsimile of what was there before, the vestry was added at the west end of the south aisle and the organ chamber on the north side of the chancel.

## **The Churchyard**

The churchyard is irregular in plan, and extends a considerable distance north of the church; the church stands towards the south-west corner, with the ground falling away steeply to the south and west, where the churchyard wall is more in the nature of a retaining wall, standing up to c 4 m high above Crown Street to the south. The wall is mostly of rubble; there are lych gates of 1894 at the south-east and north-west corners, and an approach via a flight of steps from the south, with a pair of slender piers with steep pyramidal caps (late 19<sup>th</sup> century?) at their base and a more substantial pair of older (late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> century?) piers at the top. Immediately to the west of the steps is a blocked opening with a pointed arch in the external face of the churchyard wall, possibly no more than a relieving arch.

The churchyard monuments are largely of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, although there is a scatter of smaller 18<sup>th</sup> century stones both north and south of the church. Some distance to the north of the

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<sup>11</sup>Although Hutchinson fifty years earlier refers to six windows on the south of the chancel, suggesting that some may have been blocked in the intervening period.

church is a slight bank with some old trees, which may mark a former boundary, before the extension mentioned by Fordyce made in the 1840s.

### **Archaeological Assessment**

This is one of the most important of the medieval parish churches in County Durham, and occupies the site of one or more earlier buildings; the major cross from the late 8<sup>th</sup> or early 9<sup>th</sup> century underlines the early importance of the site. Although, as often, 19<sup>th</sup>-century restorations will have caused a lot of damage from an archaeological point of view, the church is still of great importance. It is not clear how much underfloor deposits have been disturbed; there is clearly an extensive underfloor heating system, and Hodgson (1899, 93) refers to 'evidence for no fewer than something like one hundred and fifty internments in the limited area of the transept' seen in the 1881 restoration. Nevertheless, any disturbance of floor levels will merit archaeological monitoring, as it is likely that some remains at least of major Pre-Conquest and Norman churches will survive.

Above ground, the walls were stripped and tooled over in 1881, so any evidence of wall paintings etc will have been lost. Outside the church, a perimeter drain constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century will also have disturbed stratigraphy adjacent to the external wall faces. However, due to the importance of the site the churchyard (apart from its 19<sup>th</sup>-century northern extension) must also be regarded as an area of potential archaeological significance.

Peter F Ryder July 2005

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