

St Edmund's Church, Emmeth

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General Information

This large Fenland church is predominantly Perpendicular in design. Although it underwent an extensive Victorian renovation it still retains features from earlier periods including : its Early English chancel, a superb roodscreen, a late 15th century font and impressive monuments to the Hewers' family.

The church has retained some small panels of medieval glass in the north aisle tracery lights however, the glass is mainly Victorian and includes work by William Wailes and Clayton & Bell. The contrast in styles and colours adopted by these two popular firms is apparent in particular between the east window (a typical Wailes' design) and Clayton & Bell's work.

North Aisle Windows

The glass in all the north aisle tracery lights dates from the mid 15th century. It constitutes the only useable pieces found in the churchyard during the church's 1865 restoration. It is assumed that they originally formed part of a complete set of windows which were destroyed by puritans in the 17th century.

North Aisle North 1 : Two musical angels flank a figure of Mary, which would have originally been part of an Annunciation scene, and a King.

North Aisle North 2 : Here we see two angels. One has six wings, wears a jewelled orle and carries a sceptre. The crown and sceptre are both emblematic of royalty and could identify the angel as Dominations, Powers of Principalities. The other figure wears a white alb and a purple dalmatic (coat) edged with yellow fur. He holds a censer and stands on a red cloud from which golden rays emanate. As such Woodforde assumes the angel is of the order Virtues or possibly Seraphim.

North Aisle North 3 : Here we see two recognisable figures. The first is an angel wearing a diadem and holding a large crown, who probably formed part of a larger group showing the coronation of the Virgin Mary. The other is a lovely figure of St Zita (also known as Citha or Sitha) of Lucca carrying her emblematic keys and rosary. David King speculates that she was made slightly later than the other panels.

East Window

This 1866 memorial window is dedicated to the memory of Charles & Mary Boucher. Designed by William Wailes in a 13th century style it contains 15 medallions depicting scenes from the life of Christ

This window is very typical of Wailes' work which rarely showed creative flayer but was of a constant standard in both design and craftsmanship. It is typified by its two dimensional High

Victorian patterns which are bright and colourful but by today's standards it could be judged to be somewhat garish.

West Window

This 1869 window again designed by William Wailes depicts three scenes from Christ's childhood : "The Nativity," " The Adoration of the Magi," "Christ's presentation in the Temple" and "Christ with the Elders." In the tracery lights the four evangelists are represented carrying their normal symbols i.e Matthew holds the Divine Man, Mark carries the winged lion, John holds an eagle whilst Luke carries the winged ox

South Chapel South

This c1875 window designed by Clayton & Bell depicts a Resurrection scene. Note that the colours are much richer than those employed by Wailes in the east window.

South Chapel East

This c1872 window is dedicated to the memory of Charles Metcalfe. Again designed by Clayton & Bell it depicts the Crucifixion. In the tracery lights the four evangelists are represented by their normal symbols i.e Matthew as the Divine Man, Mark as the winged lion, Luke as the winged ox and John as an eagle.