

## **SECRET YORK**

*Discover what lies within the huddled maze of York's mediaeval streets; this walk takes you to fascinating buildings other visitors miss.*

*Highlights include:-*

### **ALL SAINTS CHURCH, NORTH STREET**

This 15<sup>th</sup> C church is arguably the finest mediaeval church in York with its High Church gothic atmosphere and ancient stained glass. Mediaeval fittings include a tip up misericord seat in the chancel and an Angel Roof with curly haired angels serenading from above. The 15<sup>th</sup>C stained glass is a rare survival, escaping both Henry VIII and Cromwell, and including such scenes as:-

-A 15<sup>th</sup> C representation of the Nine Orders of Angels including a man wearing glasses!

-The End of the World with earthquakes, sea levels rising, the sea ablaze, comets smashing into the earth and global epidemics-all very topical!

The church also has a modern hermitage attached-the Hermit has gone but the squint survives through which he used to peer into the church to follow services.

### **JACOB'S WELL, TRINITY LANE**

This is probably the finest late mediaeval house in York. It was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> C as a house for some of the Chantry priests of Holy Trinity Priory. Upon the dissolution of the Monasteries, Isabella Warde last prioress of St. Clement's Nunnery retired to this house, and lived here till her death in 1569. Later it became a pub-hence Jacob's Well i.e. a watering hole. The porch comes from the former Wheatsheaf Inn in Davygate and was moved in 1907. Look at comical carvings of husband and wife having a violent argument on the right side of the porch; on the right is the woman now a happy widow! The mischievous Devil mask on the right is very amusing. The building was restored by Charles Anelay in the 1992, and the topmost brick storey removed-it was over heavy for the timber frame. The Upper Room is used by the Butchers Guild as a Guildhall since they had to vacate their Hall on the Shambles in 1992. There is a fine view of the ruins of the Choir of Holy Trinity Priory from upstairs. In the main downstairs room is the 18<sup>th</sup>C Insurance plaque, originally outside, and corresponding insurance certificate, dating to the days when it was an Inn.

### **ST. MARY, BISHOPHILL JUNIOR**

Despite its name one of the oldest churches in York, and presumably the daughter church of the nearby St Mary Bishophill Senior, which may have Roman origins. It is the only complete roofed standing pre-conquest Viking period church building in York. Was already perhaps 100 years old when William the Conqueror landed; Eric Bloodaxe may have seen it. It is the only standing church Tower not burnt down by William the Conqueror in 1069, or rebuilt. The Tower is entirely built of re-used Roman stones from the nearby Walls, but the top stone are used as foundation and the Roman foundations in the top-so it is the Roman walls upside down! Inside the huge Tower arch is thought to be a re-used Roman arch, perhaps from some great public building, forum or Roman predecessor of Micklegate Bar. By the Tower arch is a fragment of an Anglo-Scandinavian cross-shaft, perhaps part of a preaching cross predating the church building.

### **HOLY TRINITY PRIORY** (1089-1538)

This is the oldest monastic site in York, as there was a 'Minster of Canons' here before Norman Conquest. It was destroyed in fire in York in 1069 in the Harrying of the North. In 1089 it was given to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Martin of Tours (Marmoutier) and became a daughter house or Priory. Most of present church rebuilt after great fire in York in 1137 and dates from late 12thC. It was dissolved by Henry VIII 1536-8, but it continued as a parish church after dissolution. In 1551 the Tower fell in a gale and destroyed the choir and transepts. So the church is now only half the height, length and width of pre-dissolution church. But it is the only monastic church in York still in use. Notice mediaeval stocks, only 5 holes. Legend that there was a one legged sailor permanently drunk, so made a set of stocks for him and 2 normal people! Truth is that they were being broken up for firewood about 100 years ago and vicar rescued them, but one end was lost.

### **ST. MICHAEL, SPURRIERGATE**

This church has been given a new lease of life as Christian coffee shop and restaurant with mouth watering home made food and fairly traded goods. Avertable gem with beautiful mediaeval glass; an ideal place to pause for refreshment on a tour!

### **ST. MARTIN-LE-GRAND, CONEY STREET**

15thC structure bombed out in 'Baedeker' raid of 29th April 1942, and restored as chapel of reconciliation in 1960. Former West window, which was taken out in war for safekeeping, and now re-set, is notable with a portait of the Donor Robert Seymour and scenes from life of St. Martin of Tours. St. Margaret Clitherow, the Catholic martyr, was baptised here.

### **GUILDHALL**

**The Guildhall** was built in 1447/8 for the Guild of St. Christopher and St. George. These were suppressed at Reformation. It was also used as a Common Hall for various trade guilds and by City Council. In 1483 Richard III was entertained here on his first visit as King-look for the plaque on the north wall. The hall was bombed out by incendiary bombs in the 'Baedeker' raid of 29th April 1942 and rebuilt. The Queen Mother reopened it in 1960. The roof timbers of oak, the windows and upper parts of the walls are all replacements. The stained glass window of history of York is noteworthy-see the leaflet available free at Reception for details of what it depicts. There are numerous displays around the hall about its history. Margaret Clitherow tried here 1586.

**Committee Room 1** is the prosaic name given to the inner chamber called Room 1 (door in far left-hand corner of hall). This was where the inner council of the Guild and later the City Council met. The room is mediaeval, though re-panelled in 1679 (see the date above the fireplace). Look for **2 secret passages**. One is to the left of the fireplace, and may have led down into dungeons below. The other is just inside the door on the left as you go in and is quite hard to find. It leads up to the roof, but it is too dark, steep and dusty to allow the public too far in. The ceiling is original, and includes some mediaeval roof bosses, such as The Virgin & Child and some modern replacements, such as the man with a forked tongue!