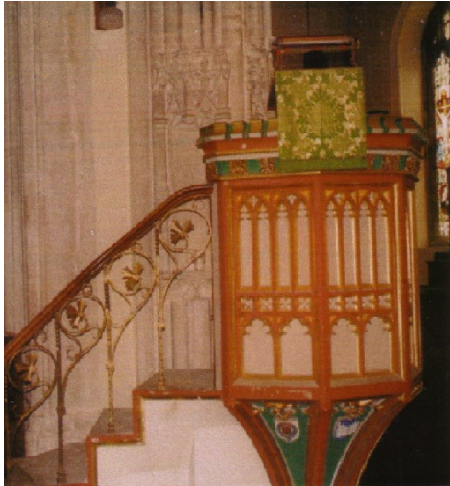


THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CHURCH



The Pulpit in Caen stone was introduced in the latter part of the 19th century and was decorated in the 1960's in memory of a former mayor of Tiverton.



The Lectern was presented in 1875 and is very handsome. Its decoration employs many symbols of St. Peter's including a fish, a key, a cock and a church



The Norman Doorway (North entrance)

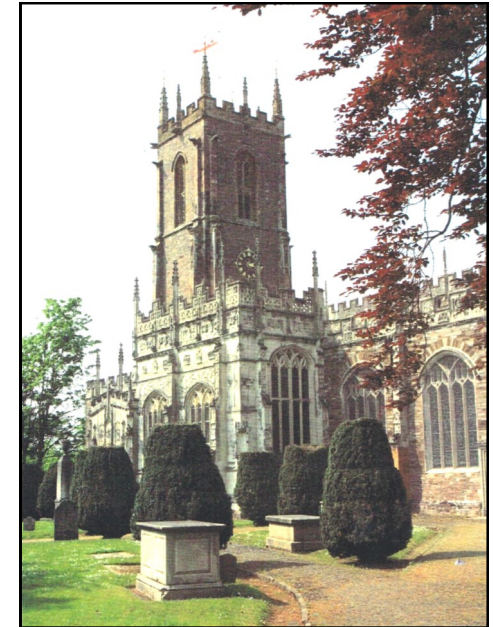
With the exception of the Norman doorway, the oldest parts of the existing church are the Tower and the Chancel arch, both 15th century. There is documentary evidence to show that after a period of great neglect, the church was largely rebuilt between 1412 and 1429. A century later, when the wool trade was bringing prosperity to the town, John Greenway added his splendid chantry chapel and carved porch.

Then came the Reformation when the church was stripped of its ornaments. Still more grievous destruction occurred during the Civil War when both church and castle were besieged and looted by Cromwell's forces.

After the Reformation, efforts were made to re-furnish the church. The organ dates from 1696, and John Newte bequeathed his library (not open to the public) in 1715. But the 18th century was a period of stagnation until its closing years when Wesley's preaching brought fresh vigour to church life.

Early on in the 19th century there was a burst of enthusiasm for improving and restoring the fabric. This was short lived and to some extent ill judged. It was followed a quarter of a century later by the thorough-going restoration of 1856. Since then there have been only minor changes of which the chief are the furnishing of the Memorial Chapel in memory of those who died in the 1914-18 War and the refurnishing of the Greenway Chapel in 1952.

The Parish Church of St. Peter in Tiverton



For over a thousand years there has been a Christian Church on this site.

As the mother Parish Church of the town, it has played a leading role in the worship and history of Tiverton.

Situated high above the river Exe , and beside Tiverton Castle, its setting in a beautifully maintained churchyard makes it well worth a visit.

St.Peter Street, Tiverton,
EX16 NR
Limited on-street parking.
Nearest car park—Market car park
(up to 2 hours)

The first stone church on the site was consecrated by Bishop Leofric in 1071, and has seen many changes including damage during the Civil War and enlargement during the 19th century.



The Greenway Chapel

Of particular interest are stone carvings of ships (armed merchantmen and galliasses of the period) on the **Greenway Chapel**. John Greenway (1460—1529) a man of humble beginnings, was a wealthy wool merchant in the days when Tiverton was a leading centre in the wool trade, and his own ships carried wool from Topsham and Dartmouth. He gave the Greenway Chapel in 1517 as a Chantry Chapel, and some of his fellow merchants also rebuilt the South Aisle.

Above the ships, along the second string course are 21 scenes from the life of Christ. The principal figures all face the spectator, suggesting that these are representations from miracle plays.

The porch was restored in 1825. The arms are those of Princess Katherine, daughter of Edward IV, aunt of Henry VIII and Countess of Devon who resided at Tiverton Castle. Above the door is shown the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary with John and Joan Greenway kneeling one on either side.

Among the devices on the barrel vault appear Greenway's merchant mark, woolpacks, ships and anchors. Notice the fine 16th century door leading into the chapel

The Kneelers, worked by members of the congregation since 1963, are remarkable and colourful examples of the tapissers' craft.



The Mayor's Pew, in the South Aisle of the Nave, is notable for the figures of the Lion and the Unicorn which almost certainly date from 1615 when Tiverton received its charter as a borough. These figures are identical with those on the tomb of Mary Queen of Scots in Westminster Abbey and are said to be by the same carver.

The Chancel is earlier than the Nave and has been less heavily restored. The piers are original, of late 15 century date. The Chancel Arch is surmounted by the Courtenay Arms, crest and supporters. The Courtenays were Earls of Devon for three centuries until the line died out in the mid 16th century. The table tomb to the south of the sanctuary is that of John Waldron, a cloth merchant who died in 1579. It is Gothic in style in contrast with that of George Slee on the north side which is characteristically Jacobean (1613).

The Memorial Chapel in the North Aisle was furnished in memory of those who fell in the 1914-18 war. The reredos shows a soldier, a sailor, an airman and a nurse standing by the cross. The screen bears the names of the fallen in both World Wars together, and with the reredos and other oak furnishings of the chapel, was the work of Herbert Read of Exeter

The Nave was restored in 1856, but the capitals are original and belong to the early 16th century.



The Candelabrum was given to the church in 1707 and was hung in the Nave. In the 1856 restoration it was removed and found its way to Holcombe Court.

In 1941, after a turbulent history it was returned through the good offices of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter. It is a fine specimen of 18th century brass founding.



The Organ was originally located on the chancel screen and was rebuilt by Christian Schmidt in 1606 despite strong opposition from those with puritanical leanings. It was moved to the west end in 1829, and then to the enlarged north aisle in 1867 when Father Willis was commissioned to rebuild and enlarge it. In 1847, Samuel Reay premiered his organ arrangement of the march from "Mid Summer Night's Dream" at the society wedding between Dorothy Carew and Tom Daniel. This arrangement was then played at the wedding of Princess Victoria in 1858 and has since become a popular wedding march throughout the globe.