

**FORMER CHAPEL, ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL,  
BRACEBRIDGE HEATH, LINCOLN  
STANDING BUILDING  
PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY**

SITE CODE: SJBH05  
NGR: SK 9813 6779  
ACC. NO. 2005.139

Report prepared for KB (Midlands) Ltd.

by

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June 2005



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EVENT: LI 6160

INTERVENTION: LI 10186

PRN: 61564, post-med →  
modern.

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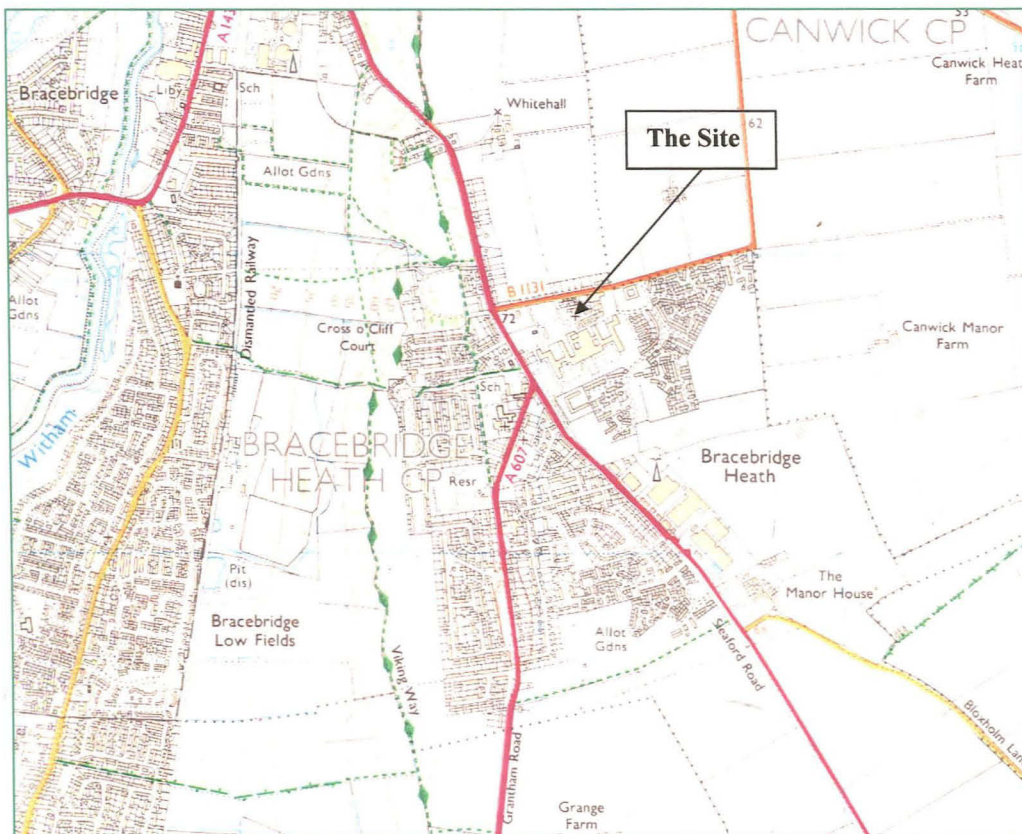
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### Summary

- *Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were commissioned by KB (Midlands) Ltd. to undertake a photographic survey of the chapel at St. John's Hospital, Bracebridge Heath, Lincolnshire, prior to its conversion to residential use.*
- *The chapel is a Grade II listed property forming part of the complex of buildings belonging to the former St. John's Pauper Lunatic Asylum. It was built in 1869.*



**Fig.1: General site location (scale 1:25,000)**  
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## 1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) was commissioned by KB (Midlands) Ltd. to undertake a photographic survey of the chapel at St. John's Pauper Lunatic Asylum, Bracebridge Heath, Lincolnshire. This was to fulfil the objectives of an agreed archaeological scheme of work; based on the recommendations of the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven District Council.

This approach complies with the recommendations of *Archaeology and Planning: Planning Policy Guidance Note 16*, Dept. of Environment (1990); *Management of Archaeological Projects*, EH (1991); *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*, IFA (1996) and the English Heritage document *Recording Historic Buildings - A Descriptive Specification* (RCHME 1996).

## 2.0 Site location and description

Bracebridge Heath is approximately 4km south of central Lincoln, in the administrative district of North Kesteven. The chapel is located to the south of Canwick Avenue and to the east of Caistor Drive, in the grounds of the former lunatic asylum. The surrounding area has recently been subject to extensive residential development. The chapel is currently disused and derelict, and is surrounded by herring fencing. The chapel is bounded by residential properties to the north, and Caistor Drive to the west, with waste ground to the east and a row of former hospital buildings, probably nurses' houses, to the south, now used as workshops.

National Grid Reference: SK 9813 6779.

## 3.0 Planning background

A full planning application and listed building application has been submitted to North Kesteven District Council, for the conversion of the chapel into four residential properties (planning refs. N/12/1481/04, LB/1858). A condition of the planning approval is the undertaking of a photographic survey of the chapel to standards broadly consistent with Level 1 RCHME recording.

## 4.0 Archaeological and historical background

St. John's Hospital was built as the County Pauper Lunatic Asylum in 1849 – 1852, with the addition of nurse's homes in 1884, 1916, 1933 and 1939. Pevsner cites the construction of the hospital as the impetus for the expansion of the settlement of Bracebridge Heath. The chapel itself was built in 1869 in Neo-Norman style (Pevsner & Harris, 1989). The hospital and associated buildings were abandoned in the late 1980s, since which time its grounds and the surrounding area has been subject to extensive residential development.

## 5.0 Methodology

A photographic survey was undertaken by the author to fulfil the requirements of the brief issued by the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven District Council. The standards and procedures employed approximate to Level 1 Recording, as specified in the RCHME document 'Recording Historic Buildings – A Descriptive Specification' (1996). The survey was undertaken on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2005, using a 35mm SLR camera. Further photographs were supplied by the client; taken in the winter, when vegetation against the north and south elevations was less dense.

## 6.0 Results

The chapel of St. John measures approximately 29m by 17m, the long axis being aligned approximately west-south-west to east-north-east. It is largely built of what appears to be local oolitic limestone, commonly referred to as Ketton Limestone, with ashlar quoins on the corners of the building and on the external buttresses. The roof is double pitched with slate tiles. The general architectural style employed is Neo-Norman/Neo-Romanesque.

The external features of the chapel were investigated first, after which the interior was examined.

*Eastern elevation (pls.1-4):* The east elevation has a single tripartite window in Neo-Romanesque style with semi-circular arches and large mullions and transoms, with simple tracery in the upper portion of the middle light. The windows are plain diamond pattern leaded windows, broken in places. The large central window is divided from the two side windows by decorative mullions in the form of plain Doric columns with Corinthian or stiff-leaf capitals.

The windows are framed by two buttresses, with clasping buttresses on the corners of the elevation. A simple stone cross marks the apex of the roof, with a copper vent cover below.

*Northern elevation:* The north side of the chapel could not be examined in detail due to overgrown trees and bushes along the boundary. Its appearance seemed to be consistent with the design of the southern elevation, discussed below.

*Southern elevation (pls.5-8):* Again, much of the south elevation was obscured by vegetation, although some detailed inspection was possible. This elevation has seven buttresses, dividing the wall into six bays, each of which has a window consisting of a single light with a rounded arch, again in Neo-Romanesque style. The glass in these windows is modern frosted, mostly broken, although the second window from the east end of the wall has its original stained glass intact (see *Interior*, below).

At the very east end of the wall, a small flat roofed annexe has been added, built in the same stone as the rest of the chapel. There is a wooden door in its south face. The window above this extension has been shortened to accommodate the annexe.

A boundary wall extends south from the south wall of the chapel, being attached to the third buttress from the west end of the elevation. An arched doorway has been inserted into the wall. The wall adjoins the north-west corner of the row of probable former nurses' houses to the south of the chapel.

*Western elevation (pls. 9-16):* The upper portion of the western elevation was largely similar to the eastern elevation, with a copper vent cover near the roofline, and an identical tripartite window. At the apex of the roof is a bellcote containing a single bell.

Below the window is a vestibule with a double-pitched roof and porches on the north and south sides. The west face of the vestibule also has a tripartite window, each light being divided by a plain Doric column with a Corinthian or stiff-leaf capital and a zig-zag decorated abacus. Over the window is a semi-circular relieving arch, infilled with parquet masonry.

The two porches each have two small windows with rounded arches on their southern elevations. Both doorways are capped with Neo-Romanesque arches in keeping with the rest of the chapel.

*Interior (pls. 17-24):* The chapel was accessed by the door in the south porch. The interior of this porch had a recent tiled floor, and a wooden door allowing access to the main hall of the chapel. The walls were painted white. The north door of the north porch was locked and its access to the vestibule was also blocked.

The vestibule had also been recently redecorated, with a carpeted floor and painted walls, and a large double door to the chapel proper.

The interior of the chapel consisted of a large open hall, with a roof supported by five scissor braced trusses, supported by plain corbels at the level of the window arches. At the east end of the hall was a raised marble altar. At the east end of the south wall, a wooden door allowed access to the small annexe observed on the external south elevation, with the reduced size window above. The next window to the south of this was the only one with complete stained glass panes surviving *in situ*. Two inscriptions were incorporated into the lower panel, reading;

“He is our God even the God of whom cometh salvation. God is the Lord by whom we escape death.”

and;

“Presented by G.K. Jarvis Esq., Doddington”

Other fixtures and fittings observed included radiators against the north and south walls and electric light fittings suspended from the roof.

## **7.0 Discussion**

The photographic survey suggests that the chapel is largely of one build, representing the original form of the structure. The only structural alteration apparent is the addition of a small annexe on the south-east corner of the building, and the concomitant reduction in size of the window above. It was not possible to access the annexe, and its function is unclear, as is the date of its construction.

Other later additions include electric lights, power points and radiators, as well as the tiling of the south porch.

Although disused and currently occupied by nesting pigeons, the building appears to be otherwise in good order. The walls show no sign of damage or subsidence. The roof is intact, both internally and externally, and all the original window and door frames are in a good condition, despite the window glass being mostly broken.

A single stained glass window has survived intact, in the south wall of the chapel. The dedication along the bottom panel of the window lists it as a dedication by a G.K. Jarvis of Doddington. The Jarvis family acquired Doddington Hall in 1830 as an inheritance to George Jarvis from Sarah Gunman. This probably refers to a Colonel G.R.P Jarvis who served in the army in India in 1794-9 and in Portugal under Wellington in 1808-10. His son was a G.K. Jarvis, who was schooled at Eton in 1818-20, and died in 1873-4. It is most probable that the dedication of the window is associated with this man, strongly suggesting that the window belongs to the original construction of the chapel in 1869.

## **8.0 Effectiveness of methodology**

The photographic survey allowed a rapid assessment of the buildings prior to their redevelopment. A permanent record of the structure now exists.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to thank KB Midlands Ltd. for this commission. Thanks also go to Wiggins Homes for allowing access to the chapel.



## 10.0 References

Pevsner N., & Harris J., 1989, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London

## 11.0 Site archive

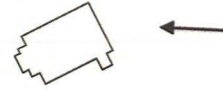
The documentary and photographic archive for the site is currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2005.???.

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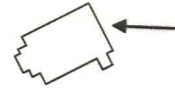
## 12.0 Colour Plates



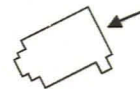
**Pl. 1:** General view of the chapel in the context of its surrounding landscape. Looking west.

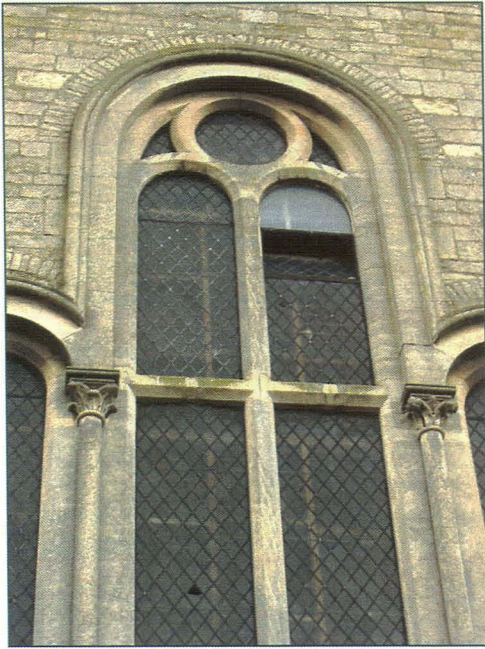


**Pl. 2:** General view of eastern elevation of chapel, looking west.

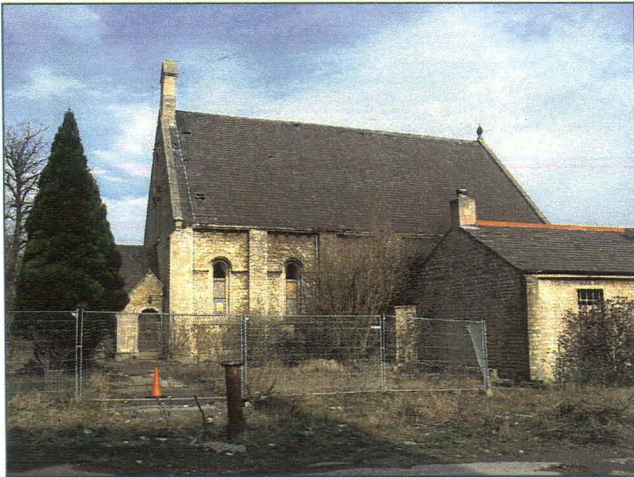
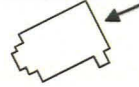


**Pl. 3:** Plate showing Neo-Romanesque tripartite window in eastern elevation. Looking west-south-west.

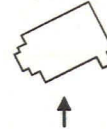




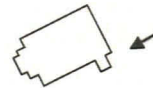
**Pl. 4:** Detail of central portion of window in eastern elevation, showing tracery in middle window and Corinthian capitals. Looking west-south-west.

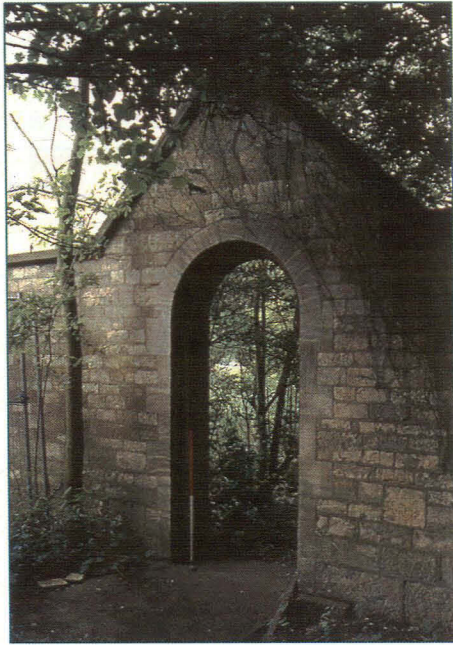


**Pl. 5:** View of southern elevation of chapel, with the probable former nurses' quarters to the fore. The south porch is also visible. Looking north.

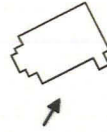


**Pl. 6:** View of small annexe at the east end of the south elevation. Looking west-south-west

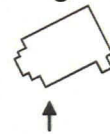




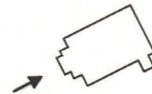
**Pl. 7:** Arched doorway through the wall which connects the south elevation of the chapel with the nurses' quarters to the south.

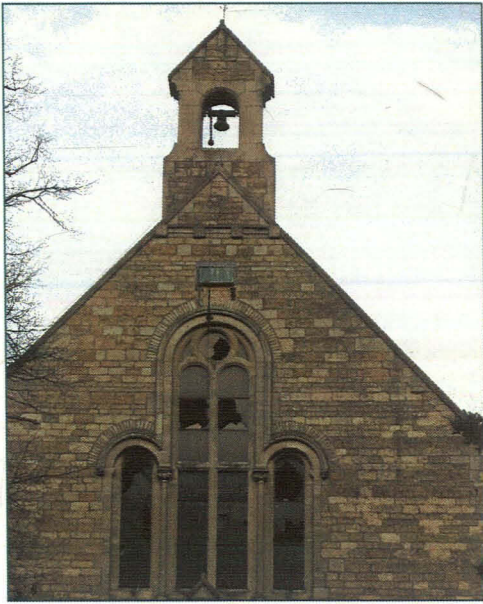


**Pl. 8:** Detail of south-east corner of chapel, showing the extent of overgrown vegetation at the time of the survey. Looking north.

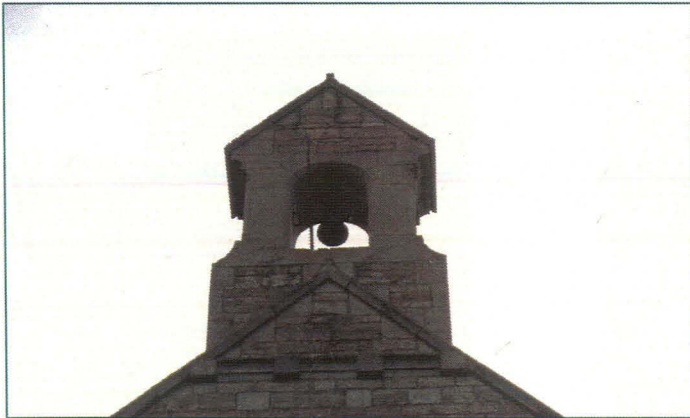
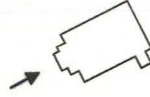


**Pl. 9:** West elevation of chapel, looking east-north-east.

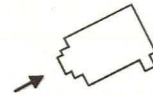




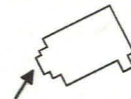
**Pl. 10:** West elevation of chapel, showing tripartite window identical to that in the east elevation. Note also the copper vent cover, again replicated in the east elevation. Looking east-north-east.

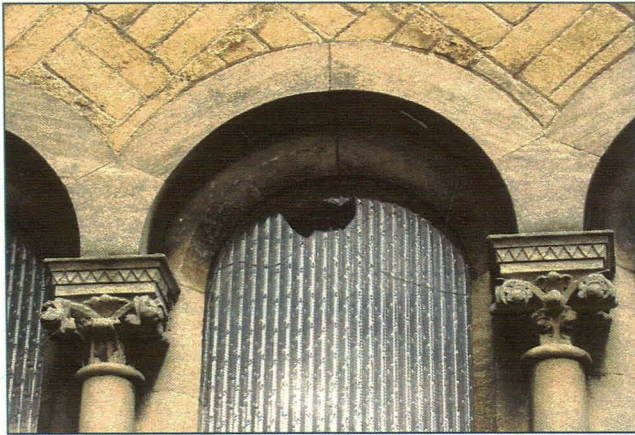


**Pl. 11:** Close up of bellcote on west elevation. Looking east-north-east.

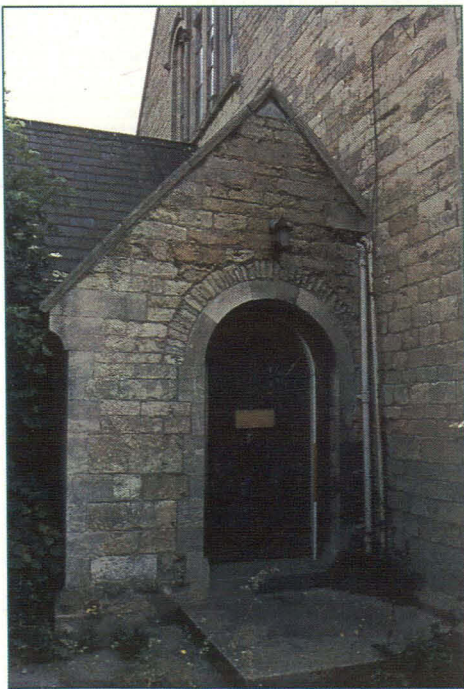
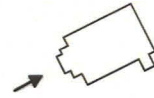


**Pl. 12:** View of window in west face of vestibule. Looking north-east.

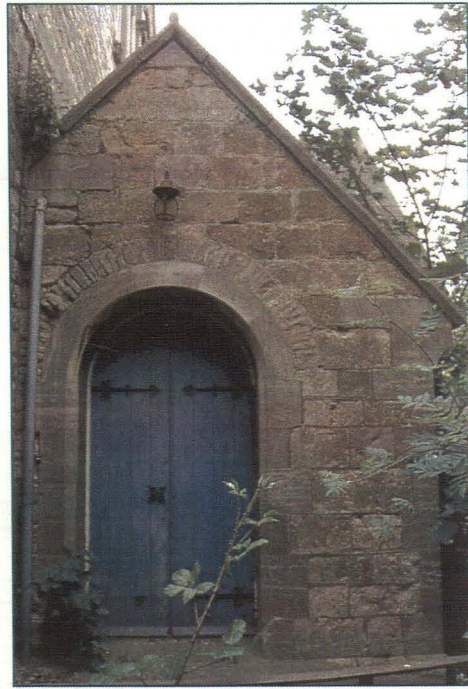
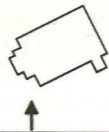




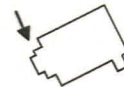
**Pl. 13:** Detail of Corinthian capitals in vestibule window. Looking east-north-east.



**Pl. 14:** East porch of vestibule. Looking north

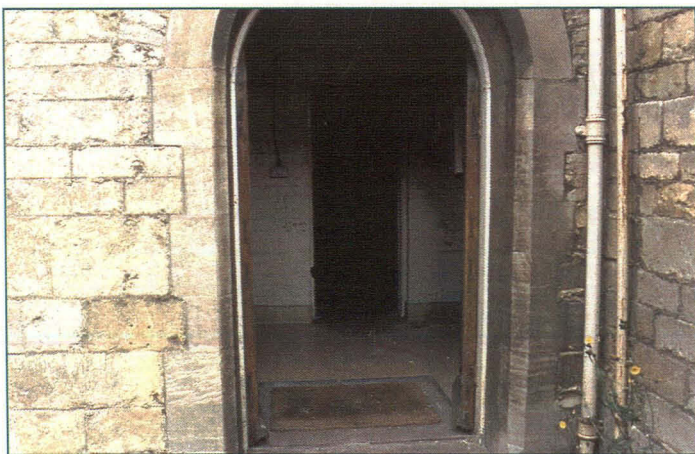
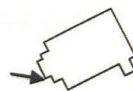


**Pl. 15:** West porch of vestibule. Looking south-south-east.

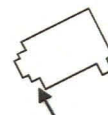




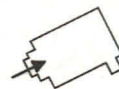
**Pl. 16:** Windows in west wall of east porch. Looking north-east.



**Pl. 17:** Interior of east porch with vestibule beyond. Looking north-north-west

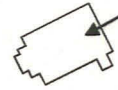


**Pl. 18:** Interior of chapel. Looking east-north-east towards altar. The reduced window in the far corner is also visible over the door to the annexe (shown in pl. 6).

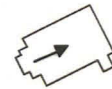




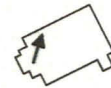
**Pl. 19:** Interior of chapel. Looking west-south-west. The three doors all exit to the vestibule.



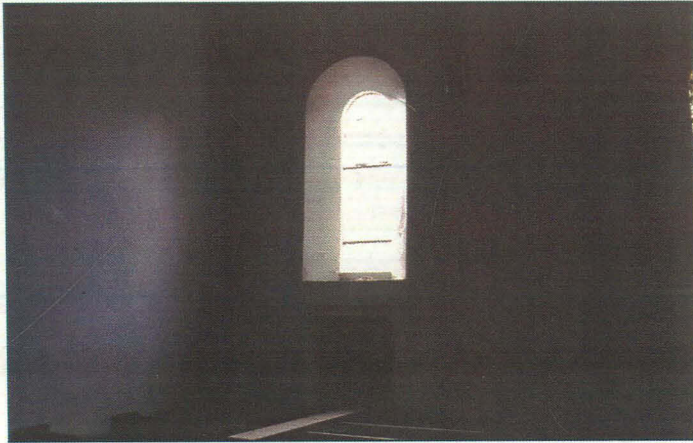
**Pl. 20:** View of scissor bracing of roof trusses. Looking east-north-east



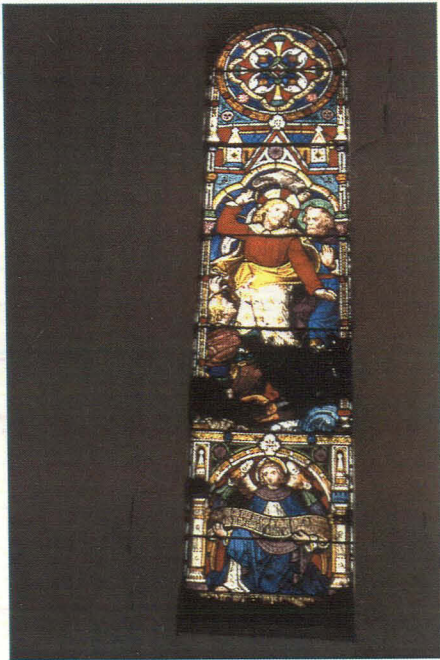
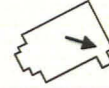
**Pl. 21:** Corbel on north wall supporting roof truss. Looking north-east.



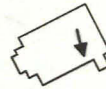




**Pl. 22:** Reduced size window, over door to annexe on south-east corner of chapel. Looking east-south-east



**Pl. 23:** Stained glass window in south wall of chapel (second window from east end). Looking south-south-east.



**Pl. 24:** Lower panel of stained glass window. The upper portion of text reads, "He is our God even the God of whom cometh salvation. God is the Lord by whom we escape death." The lower text is a dedication, reading, "Presented by G.K. Jarvis Esq., Doddington"

