

MALTON

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29/09/51

TOWN STREET, Old Malton ✓
(South East side)
St Mary's Priory Church
(Formerly Listed as:
TOWN STREET, Old Malton
(South East side)
Church of St Mary the Virgin and
boundary walls)

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Part of nave of priory church; now parish church. 1147-1154; partly rebuilt late C15-early C16, following fire; extensive alterations c1732; C19 and C20 restorations. Priory founded by Eustace Fitz-John; rebuilding for Prior Roger Shotton; restorations by Temple Moore and George Pace. Ashlar and rubble stone; roof not visible.

6-bay continuous chancel and nave with triforium; south-west tower. East end has C19 three-light window of stepped lancets, now blocked, beneath hoodmould. North wall rebuilt incorporating 4 round-headed lights beneath continuous raised band; eaves band beneath plain parapet. On south side blocked original south arcade and triforium beneath plain parapet. Panel-traceried double doors in west doorway of 5 orders of semicircular arches. Roll-moulded arches, enriched with dogtooth mouldings, on detached shafts with waterhold bases, shaft rings and waterleaf capitals. Moulded hood on foliate stops. Restored Perpendicular window above door, of 5 cinquefoiled lights beneath 3-centred panel-traceried head; at each side, C13 jamb shafts survive from original window. Doorway and window are flanked by blind lancets on slender detached shafts with waterleaf capitals, beneath moulded hoods. Crocketed gable cross.

To north of west front are remains of chamfered plinth of north-west tower, and 2 stages of pilaster buttress abutting the west front. South-west tower of 3 stages, on double-chamfered plinth, with clasping pilaster buttresses, the south-west one with inset angle shaft rising full height of tower. 2 lower stages of tower west face have single lancet windows, both of 3 roll-moulded orders, on detached shafts with waterleaf capitals, and shaft rings to second stage window. Inner order on ground stage is enriched with continuous ballflower moulding, and on second stage is chamfered. Both windows have leaf-stopped hoodmoulds. Belfry openings are paired lancets of 2 orders beneath dogtooth-moulded hood on leaf stops. Above belfry openings are

2 roundels of dogtooth moulding, pierced by quatrefoils. North-west buttress has blind lancet on each stage, similar to those on west front. Slit openings to vice in south-west buttress.

On south face, ground stage has single round-headed light. Arcade of 3 lancets, outer ones blind, to 2nd stage, beneath continuous hoodmould; similar arrangement to belfry, centre lancet blind, with dogtooth hoodmould. Pierced roundels are repeated above belfry openings. To east, ground stage has blocked pointed arch to former south aisle, between multiple shaft responds, the south one bearing traces of leaf capital. Single round-headed light to 2nd stage. Tripled lancets to belfry, the outer 2 blind, beneath continuous dogtooth hoodmould, and pierced roundels.

On the north face, 2nd stage round-headed light is blocked, and belfry opening is single lancet. Belfry openings have scalloped louvres.

On the west face, dogtooth moulded string course at 2nd stage level continues across west front, broken by inserted west window, and returns on south face. Plain string course to belfry stage encircles tower. Tower surmounted by plain parapet over corbel table, carved as unfurled leaf buds.

INTERIOR. North arcade of 3 round arches of 3 orders at eastern end, and 2 rebuilt 2-centred arches of 2 orders at western end; 6th bay is built-up. Inner order of all arches is chamfered, and rebuilt piers are octagonal with moulded capitals, except westernmost which has clustered shafts with octagonal capitals and bases. Eastern arches have moulded hoods. 4th pier from east has a double tier of cinquefoiled panelling under crocketed ogee hood, and abacus inscribed: Rogerus prior Orata p(ro) bono stat(u) m(agist)ri F. Inscription incorporates the Shotton rebus, a tun shot through by an arrow. 2nd and 6th piers have inset vaulted niches beneath crocketed canopies. In 5th bay is a blocked-up door with a 3-centred head.

C12 triforium gallery survives over 3 eastern bays. Each triforium bay is arcaded with semicircular centre arch between narrow pointed arches, springing from detached shafts with moulded capitals and bases. Centre arch encloses paired pointed sub-arches on central shaft with leaf capital, beneath quaterfoil pierced through tympanum. Moulded string course at sill level. At western end, triforium area rebuilt, incorporating cusped panelling over continuous sill string course, stepped-up above rebuilt eastern arches.

South arcade: round-arched, corresponding to eastern bays of north arcade. From east, 4 piers are cylindrical; 5th is keeled with angle shafts; 6th is clustered with 12 shafts, 4 with fillets; all have waterhold bases and moulded capitals.

West respond is keeled, between 4 attached shafts, and has leaf capital. C12 triforium gallery survives. On each side, stubs of vaulting shafts spring from corbels at triforium sill string level. Original corbels are carved either with scallop or stiff-leaf foliage; replaced corbels are angels holding shields inscribed with the Shotton rebus. Tower: entry through westernmost arch of south arcade. Deeply splayed lancet in west wall, between corbelled shafts with moulded bases and leaf capitals. Round-headed window later insertion. Vaulted ceiling reconstructed. Fittings. Re-used misericords in choir stalls. East end dossal and tester, sanctuary panelling, and traceried organ case by Temple Moore. Fine carved screens close off tower arch and west doorway. In south-east corner of sanctuary is coffin lid carved with floreated sword. The church, though much reduced in size, is the only surviving building of the Gilbertine Priory of St Mary, founded between 1147 and 1154 by Eustace Fitz-John, and is the only church of the Gilbertine Order still in regular use. The Priory site is scheduled as an Ancient Monument, County No.383. Part of the undercroft of the refectory is incorporated in buildings of the adjacent house called Old Abbey (qv), also known as Abbey House. (Buck S: The South-West View of Malton Priory in Yorkshire: 1728-; Pace G G: A Brief Guide to St Mary's Priory Church, Old Malton: York: 1977-).