

## VISITORS, PLEASE TAKE ONE

and place your Offerings in the Box.

### Huyton Parish Church



ST. MICHAEL

#### THE NAME "HUYTON"

The Name of Huyton has been explained in various ways, but one simple derivation, and perhaps the most probable, is "High Town," "The farmstead on the hill." In Domesday Book the place is called Hitune.

The Church stands on an eminence, crowning a ridge, which runs North and South, and is dedicated to St. Michael. Dedication to St. Michael is frequently found in Churches erected on hills.

The Church contains most interesting remains of ancient work. It has passed through many phases of alteration and still retains a quiet dignity and a mellow beauty which cause it to rank deservedly as one of the most historic and valuable churches in Lancashire.

#### DATE OF THE CHURCH

The date of the foundation of the first church at Huyton is not known, but it would appear most probable that a Church existed here in Saxon times. The ancient font which now stands at the east end of the south aisle has been described as very early Norman or possibly Saxon (Notes on Lancashire Churches—Chetham Soc.) and it is considered that this is probably the font of the foundation. It is however certain that a Church stood here in the 12th century, at which period it was granted to the priory of Burscough, by Robert, son of Henry de Lathom. Of the earlier clergy of Huyton, the names of two have

been preserved—Ernald, who was Chaplain in 1191, and Richard, son of Robert (formerly Rector of Walton), who was Rector about 1228. The latter is probably identical with "Richard, rector of Huyton," whose name occurs a little later than this, and the Richard de Walton, rector in 1254 (Burscough Reg. fol. 68b, 69 and 69b, quoted in V.C.H.). The list in the Church porch commences with this Richard.

In 1277 Roger de Meulan, Bishop of Lichfield, ordained a vicarage, and in 1291 the Church was estimated to be worth £10 per annum (approximately £500 in present day values).

Before 1815 the Church consisted of Nave, narrow South Aisle, Chancel—13 ft. shorter than at present—and Tower. About 1815 the North aisle was added and the North arcade made corresponding to that on the South. In 1822 the present South aisle was added, and the Chancel was lengthened. The present dimensions are—Chancel 34 ft. by 24 ft.; and the Nave 60 ft. by 25 ft.

A further general repair and re-seating took place in 1873. There still remains to be seen in the South side of the Chancel (exterior) a small priest's doorway, probably of late 15th century date.

The date of the present Tower is uncertain. The year 1664 is inscribed on the top of this, but the lower part contains remnants of much earlier work.

#### CHANTRIES

Two Chuntries were founded here; the first by John de Winwick, rector of Wigan, in 1350, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary; the other by his brother, Richard de Winwick, dedicated to St. Michael, the Archangel. John de Winwick came from this district and became a very prominent Churchman. He held many important positions, among which may be mentioned those of Chaplain to Edward III, and Treasurer of York Minster. It is almost certain that the tunsured effigy in alabaster lying at the East end of the South Aisle is the effigy of John de Winwick who died in 1359, and who was buried in his Chapel on the South side of this Church. An abstract of his will—copied from that in the Library of Lambeth Palace—is now preserved among the archives of the Church. It is dated 3 October, 1359. For further details see *John de Winwick and his Chantry in Huyton Church*, by Captain F. Crooks, F.S.A., Vol. 77 Historic Soc. of Lancashire and Cheshire.

#### ROOF

In 1555 the Church was reported to be in a very ruinous condition, and Philip and Mary ordered an inquiry, whilst about 1592, the lay rector was called upon to repair the Chancel which was "ruinated."

The former Nave roof, which dated from about the end of the 16th century, took the place of an earlier high pitched roof, which would appear to have been ruinous, causing the South arcade to lean outward, forcing the pillars out of the perpendicular. Over the Eastern tie-beam is the Stanley crest, and on the next beam a cherub's head of 17th century style. Both the Chancel roof and the Nave roof were renewed in 1927. One of the beams in the Chancel roof before the renewal in 1927 bore the date 1641.

## CHANCEL SCREEN

This splendid piece of work dates from about the year 1460. The arms which are carved on the screen are those of Harrington (a fret impaling Ireland (Six fleurs de lys with a crescent for difference). The Harringtons were formerly lords of the manor of Huyton, and the screen is believed to have originally formed the division between the Harrington chapel and the church proper.

## FONTS

The oldest font is the one now standing in the South Aisle. It was found buried under the Tower on St. Michael's Day, 1872, and is the one already referred to at the beginning of this leaflet. Its carving contains eleven faces, supposed to represent the Apostles without Judas Iscariot. The other font stands at the West end of the Church, and is octagonal with panelled bowl and moulded base. It dates from the latter half of the 15th century. Prior to 1871 this font stood in the Chancel near the Priest's door, and the middle of the East end of the Nave was blocked by a large "three decker" pulpit, reading desk and clerk's desk.

Besides these two fonts, an object near the East window outside, is regarded by some authorities as a peculiar ancient font, though others hold that it is a quern for grinding corn.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### (a) Brasses

In the Chancel there is a brass to the memory of the celebrated and devout Elizabeth Farren, Countess of Derby, wife of the 12th Earl of Derby. She was buried in the family vault in Ormskirk Church.

On the South side of the Nave, attached to the fifth pew from the East end, there is a brass to the Revd. William Bell, M.A., who was elected by the parishioners to the vicarage of Huyton in 1642, but ejected in 1662 on account of his non-conformity. He ultimately returned to Huyton and died there on the 10th March, 1683-4.

There is also in the Chancel a brass to Jonathan Fletcher, Archdeacon of Sodor and Man, 1668.

### (b) Litany Desk

This is 17th century work, and appears to have been a private prie-dieu, with place for books or ornaments. The Arms carved thereon appear to be those borne by the Holden family.

### (c) Credence Table

This is made up of two panels of different dates, probably brought from the Netherlands by the Earl of Derby about 1850-60.

### (d) Register and Churchwardens' Accounts

The Registers date from 1578, and there are two volumes of Churchwardens' accounts dating from 1721 and 1783 respectively.

### (e) Bells

There are 6 bells, the treble, second, and fourth by C. & G. Mears, of Whitechapel, date 1846, the third and fifth, date 1872. The tenor is dated 1606, and inscribed on it are the names of several local families of note at that date.

A still older bell, dated 1512, was given in 1850 to the daughter Church of Roby.

The passing bell is tolled as follows:—two for a child under 12, three for a woman, and four for a man; after a short interval the bell is again tolled for a number of strokes equal to the age of the deceased.

The Curfew is rung at 8 p.m. during the winter months.

### (f) Heraldic Glass in Clerestory Windows

These arms are those of leading local families and their connections in the first half of last century. On the North side of the Nave from West to East they read as follows:—

(1) ? Betram	(5) Rawson	(9) Ireland
(2) Gladstone	(6) Leigh	(10) Earle
(3) Birch	(7) Edwards	(11) Moss
(4) Harrington	(8) Sandbach	(12) Sherbourne

On the South Side of the Nave reading from East to West:—

(13) Smith of Edmondthorpe	(17) Robinson of Liverpool	(22) Uncertain
(14) Le Strange	(18) Uncertain	(24) Willis
(15) Hopwood	(19) Byng	(25) Feilden
(16) Craven	(20) Cotterell	(26) Jones
	(21) Langton	

### (g) Organ

By Messrs. Rushworth & Dreaper, was presented by John Stone, Esq., in 1925, in memory of his son; and the screens in the North Aisle by Tom Stone, Esq., in the same year in memory of his brother. The design of the screens and the organ case is by Mr. F. E. Howard, of Oxford.

### (h) War Memorial

This was erected in 1923 to the design of Mr. P. A. Robson, of Manchester and London.

### (i) Mausoleum of the Case Family

Situate on the North side of the Church is the Mausoleum of the Case family (formerly of Huyton), dating from 1681. It is now used as a vestry. The Cases presented some very handsome silver Communion Plate to the Church in the 17th and 18th century. It is still in use.

(k) The Sundial and the 18th century ironwork over the East and South entrance gates to the churchyard are worthy of notice.