

Children's Answers are in Bold. Further information is for interest and discussion.

INTRODUCTION

This church is dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. Most of the church dates back to the 13th century, with the present nave replacing the original 12th century building.

1 FONT

Water is put into the font for baptism. The font is made of stone with a lead lining to stop the water leaking out. It is usually placed near the main entrance to the church because baptism marks the first stage in the Christian journey. This font is unusual in that it is square and carved with lozenges (diamond shapes).

The font lid was locked to stop people stealing the water which has been blessed (Holy Water). Some even believed that witches used this water to cast spells.

2 TOMB

The top of the figure's head has been shaved.

This hairstyle is called a **tonsure** and was a sign of humility and religious devotion in mediaeval times.

3 LECTERN

The book read from the lectern is the Holy Bible.

The Koran is the holy book of Islam. The Torah, written on scrolls, contains the teachings of the Jewish people.



4 ALTAR

The bird is a **pelican**. **She is pecking at her breast to draw blood to feed her chicks because other food cannot be found.** This grouping is called a "pelican in her piety", and has come to symbolise Christ's Passion and the Eucharist (Holy Communion). The Latin inscription is translated as "God so loved the World". The altar is the focal point of the church, where the main Christian act of the Eucharist takes place.

5 REREDOS

These four shields show some symbols of the Crucifixion, also known as the "Instruments of the Passion". The objects on the fourth shield are **dice**.

The shirt represents Jesus' seamless robe. In those days, soldiers were allowed to keep the possessions of the people they executed. This robe was of such good quality that

they all wanted it, so they gambled for it with dice. (John. 19: 23-24)

The other objects shown are:-

Shield 1 Hammer to knock in the nails and pincers to remove them.

Shield 2 Crown of Thorns and the three nails.

Shield 3 Sponge on stick used to give a drink to Jesus, spear used to pierce His side to verify death and ladder used to remove His body from the Cross.

6 STAINED GLASS

Jesus is holding a **lamb and a crook**. He is **shown here as a shepherd**.

The image of the Good Shepherd is the most common symbolic representation of Christ found in early Christian art (John 10:1-21; Psalm 23).

The window is dedicated to **Henry Herbert May**, son of Edmond and Mary Elizabeth.

He died on 8th May 1857 aged 3 months and 19 days.



7 PULPIT

The pulpit was painted **blue and gold**. There is a trace of the original paint on the right hand side of the backboard. The priest speaks from the pulpit which is raised above the congregation so s/he can see, be seen and be heard more easily. **The canopy is a sounding board to magnify the voice.**

8 WALL PAINTING

The flowers have **five** petals and as such are called "cinquefoils".

Church walls were often decorated with paintings of biblical stories or patterns. Unfortunately, many of these early wall paintings have been destroyed by damp or the walls have been replastered and painted over. Some pictures were also systematically destroyed or whitewashed during the Reformation in the 16th century. This pattern of flowers is a relatively rare survivor.



9 PISCINA

This arched niche with basin and drain is called a piscina. It was needed for rinsing the communion vessels – chalice (cup) and paten (plate) - "**holy washing up**".

10 ORGAN

There are **6 red organ pipes and 7 green, totalling 13**.

The organ has many more pipes than this but the rest are hidden from view. **The longest pipes make the lowest sounds** as with treble versus tenor recorders, and oboe versus bassoon.



11 BELLS

These are **the clappers from the original bells**. They were first hung in the church tower in **1718**. They were placed on the wall in 1990 when the bells were rehung. The church has **six** bells. **These are rung to summon people to worship and to give information**. A peal of bells can be used to tell people something joyous is happening like a wedding. A bell is tolled for a funeral and can indicate how old the deceased was. The bells can be sounded at times of danger as occurred in some places during the World Wars.

12 HERALDRY

This animal's head on the helmet above the shield in the North-West corner could be **a donkey** but nobody really knows. This is the crest of the Browe family who became lords of the manor of Great Casterton in 1394.

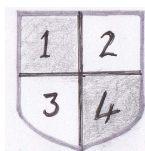
The shields are as follows:-

North-West corner – this is quartered. Browe family arms in 1 and 4 quarters, Warren in 2 and Folville in 3

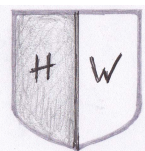
North-East corner – Browe family arms

South-East corner – blank/faint carving?

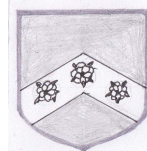
South-West corner – Browe family arms impaling Warren family arms. H = Husband's side W = Wife's side.



Quartered



Impaled



Browe



Folville



Warren

If you stand in the nave and look up towards the Bell Tower arch, you will see a black diamond shaped board painted with the Royal Arms of George II (1727-1760). Interesting fact – George II was the last king of England to lead his army in to battle.

13 GROTESQUE

Mediaeval masons often carved people's heads as decorations; these are called grotesques. They can have many meanings, part of a church's "sermon in stone", which could be "read" and understood by the illiterate congregation.

This head may be sticking his tongue out to remind you to be quiet entering the church. It is hard to speak properly with your tongue out!

(Try if you like).

He could be a symbol of Satan, often shown with his tongue out; or a reference to the sin of gluttony; or a sign to scare off evil spirits, "a sacred scarecrow"; or a joke against someone the sculptor knew.

The grotesque on the other side of this pillar seems to be **talking out of the side his mouth**. This could be to warn people to be careful what they say and not to gossip unkindly. You decide!

