



About St Mary Magdalene's

Following the Norman Conquest of 1066, the manor of Stapleford was given to the Ferrers family, who were ennobled as Earls of Derby. In the mid 13th century, the Ferrers family fought Henry III alongside of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester. After changing hands several times, the manor went to the Sherard family in 1402, when Robert Sherard married Agnes, the daughter of Lawrence Hawberk, holder of Stapleford at that time. The Sherards remained lords of the manor until 1859, when the last family member died.

Although an earlier church is known to have existed, it was replaced by the present church in 1783. This new church was designed by George Richardson, who also designed the ceiling of the 'Marble Hall' at Kedleston Hall. Despite the decidedly Gothic-looking exterior, the interior is firmly rooted in the neo-classical tradition. Along with a late-medieval brass, the church contains several monuments to the Sherard family, all of which were taken from the earlier building.

The church was placed in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 1996.

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Access

Due to their age, historic church floors can be uneven and worn and lighting can be low level. Please take care, especially in wet weather when floors can be slippery.

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To protect these churches, and others like them, we need your help. If you enjoy your visit please give generously or if you would like to become a CCT supporter and join in our exclusive 'behind-the-scenes' visits please go to our website.



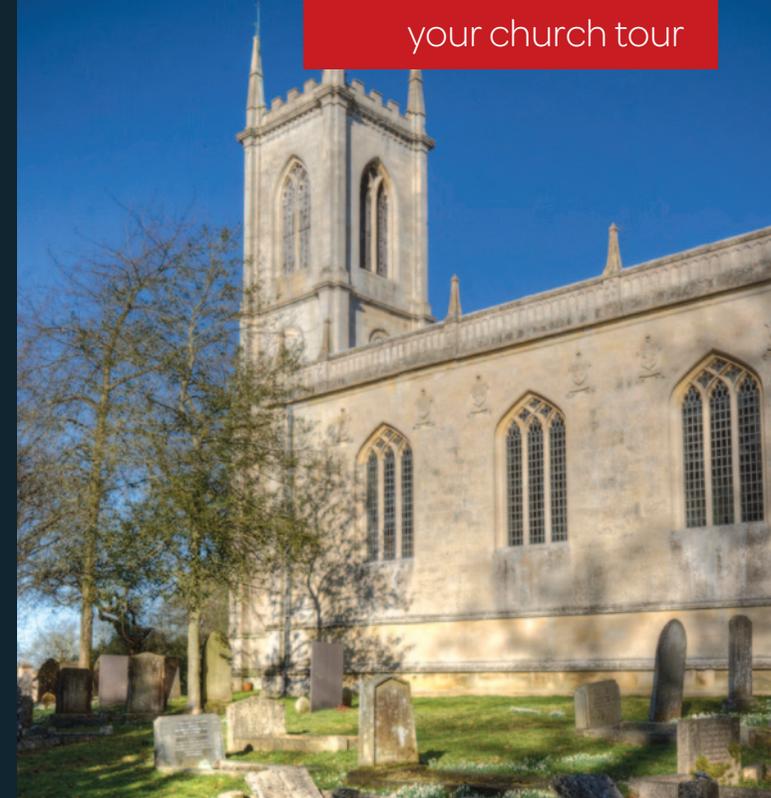
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Church of
St Mary
Magdalene
Stapleford



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The historic church of St Mary Magdalene

10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 A three-bay oak **gallery** at the west end of the church was intended as the Sherard family pew. The carving over the fireplace depicts their family heraldry.
- 2 The **royal arms** are those of George III (1760-1820). They include a white horse, the symbol of the house of Hanover.
- 3 **Commandment boards** flank the window at the east end of the church, bearing the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Creed. Such boards were common after the Reformation, when teaching the Word of God in English became a priority.
- 4 The **pulpit and desk** are the most highly-decorated pieces of woodwork in the church. They are carved with arches, leafy sprays and abbreviations for the name Jesus.
- 5 The **stalls** are built in three tiers along the nave walls, facing each other. The woodwork is panelled and fairly plain but incorporates delicate and attractive borders of arches.
- 6 Set into the floor of the central walkway is the **brass** commemorating Geoffrey Sherard (d. 1490) and his wife Joan. The small figures beneath them depict their seven sons and seven daughters. Their family coats of arms are shown in the four shields at the corners of the slab.
- 7 The **Sherard family monument** was dedicated to William Sherard (d. 1640) by his wife Abigail, who was also buried there. A ram is placed at William's feet and at Abigail's, a greyhound. There are also several statues of babies and infants around the edge of the monument, believed to represent their own children.
- 8 The large marble **monument** on the north wall of the church commemorates Bennet Sherard, first Earl of Harborough, who died in 1732.
- 9 The **World War I monument**, a small plaque on the north wall, is easily missed. It is dedicated to Colin Bramall and Ernest Knott.

- 10 The impressive marble **reredos**, designed by Richard Brown of Derby, was added to the church in 1795. The middle is set with Blue John stone, giving the impression of a wealthy church. It is also adorned with an anchor and a snake.

