

# West Dean

## Brief History of St. Mary the Virgin



This church is a Grade II listed building. The first tuft was cut in 1864 and the building was completed by 1866 in which year it was consecrated by Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury on Easter Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The total cost was £2,578 6s 4d to which many donations were made, chief among them £1,000 and the land by Thomas Baring, then Lord of the Manor, and £500 by the previous Rector, the Rev. George Glossop. The original accounts also include details of specific items such as £60 for the clock which was donated by Mr W T Beauchamp, publican of West Dean. The design was by the architects Pownall and Young of Bedford Square, London and the builder was John Crook of West Dean who was also the church warden and contributed £25 towards the pulpit.



The church is in the Early English style of architecture and constructed of flint, stone and brick with internal woodwork of substantial stained pine. It was built because it was known that the old church of St. Mary would not long survive, and it is of similar size to the old church. The opportunity was taken to incorporate into the new church some features from the old one such as medieval tiles and the font basin (photo of font cover). This basin is Norman, probably 12<sup>th</sup> Century, and was re-erected on a pedestal of Caen stone covered with fern leaves and shafts of marble.



The lectern also rests on a 12<sup>th</sup> century column. In addition, three bells from the old church were re-hung in the bell tower of the new one. The communion table dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Six windows by Morris and Company, were added in 1916-17. These are dedicated to the memory of Charlotte Amelia Glossop, her nephew Herman Theodore Wells and his sister Annie Isabel Wells.

Above the altar stands a reredos with a white marble cross beneath a canopy and over a beautiful relief of the Holy Lamb. It bears the inscription "To the glory of God and in loving memory of the Rev. George G P Glossop, MA, Vicar of Twickenham and formerly Rector of this Parish, who entered into rest April 23, 1874, this reredos is erected by his widow.

Burials continued in the original churchyard until 1896. It was then that the Baring family requested a large burial plot that could not be accommodated in the existing space and accordingly; and around the new church was consecrated, the first burial that of Elizabeth Baring in November 1897.



Trail sponsored by WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL.

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