

YCCCART 2022/Y9

St Mary the Virgin church, Yatton

Part 4. Outside the church

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH TEAM (YCCCART)**

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St Mary the Virgin the "Cathedral of the Moors."

The church of Dundry stone dates to the early 13th century although at first sight appears Perpendicular (c.1350–1550).

FOREWORD

Covid severely restricted surveying action by YCCCART members. In order to continue meeting, when we could, a small group of us started looking at Yatton church, initially the outside only.

The results of periodic action from 2020 to 2022 has led to a series of reports.

The first three reports which are on *ycccart.co.uk* cover

The inside of the church

- 1) South porch, nave and aisles
- 2) Wyke and Newton chapels
- 3) Chancel and crossing

This report covers the outside of the church

Future reports will hopefully include

- 1) Church graffiti
- 2) A selection of graves

I would like to thank the following:

YCCCART members John Wilcox, David Long and Graham Bohannon for photographs and invaluable assistance. Marianne Pitman of Yatton History Society & YCCCART for information and documents. Lastly Vince Russett for inspiring this project and final editing.

Chris Short November 2022

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

SOUTH SIDE



Fig 1: The south side from the porch to the east end.



Fig 2: The east end of the south side.

The south side of the chancel is shown in Fig 2.



Fig 3: Corner of east end.



Fig 4: Ordnance benchmark.

On the eastern end of the south side is this Ordnance bench mark which indicates the height above sea level. In this case 13.426 meters.



Fig 5: East end showing doorway.



Fig 6: East end showing both doorways. The one on the left is on the eastern wall of the vestry.



Fig 7: Right hand doorway.

The doorway on the right above enabled the priests to enter the chancel without going through the nave.



Fig 8: Doorway on east side of the vestry.

The doorway on the left originally gave entry to the Chapel of St Thomas (now the vestry). The doorway enabled the priests to enter the vestry without going through the nave.



Fig 9: Vestry window.



The Vestry window is the only remaining Decorated style window and is said to date from the late c13 century.

The figures on the left and right terminate the window arch.

Fig 10: Figure on the left-hand side of vestry window.



Fig 11: Figure on the right-hand side of vestry window.



Fig 12: Location of gargoyle indicated by arrow.

The yellow arrow above (Fig12) shows the location of a gargoyle.



Fig 13: The fine gargoyle.



Fig 14: Parapets right of the south porch.



Fig 15: Close up view of parapets right of the south porch.

Below both parapets to the right of the south porch are the remains of three gargoyles. See Figs 16 to 18 below.



*Fig 16:
Below
bottom
parapet*



*Fig 17:
Below upper
parapet.
Left hand
side*



*Fig 18:
Below upper
parapet.
Right hand
side*



Fig 19: South porch.

The magnificent 15th century south porch is the most highly decorated in Somerset.

It has two storeys.

The arched entrance has a frieze of small leaves running up the jambs (lining of doorway) and along the arch.



Fig 20: Close up of doorway.

The ogee gable, indicated by the red arrow, has more foliage and naturalistic crockets (small, sharply projecting medieval ornaments decorated with foliage).



Fig 21: Blank panelling - left and right of doorway.

Blank panelling's sending up an ogee-curved crocketed feeler towards the gable are left and right of the doorway.



Fig 22. Circular feature on the right hand panel.

The right panel contains this circular feature, in Fig 22, which is about 10 cm (4 inches) in diameter.



Fig 23: Parapet above porch.

The parapet above the porch has a niche which once held a statue. Only the shield remains.



Fig 24: The shield at the bottom of the niche. Who's is it?



Fig 25: An angel under the parapet.



Fig 26: Mass dial right of the porch entrance.

On the right of the porch entrance are the remains of a Mass dial. You can still see the numbers 6, 7, 8 and 9 on the left and the central hole (gnomon) in Fig 26 above. The numbers suggest this is probably a late mass dial, perhaps contemporary with the porch.

By placing a stick in the hole the priest would indicate there would be a Mass by the shadow reaching the next number. The number would vary according to the season.



Fig 27: Above the Mass dial at Fig 26 is another smaller hole and possible Mass dial.

A small circular feature to the upper right in Fig 27 is possibly an abandoned mass dial.



Fig 28: Abandoned Mass dial? upper right.



Fig 29: Circular feature left hand side of porch.

On the left-hand side of porch is this circular feature. Another abandoned mass dial?

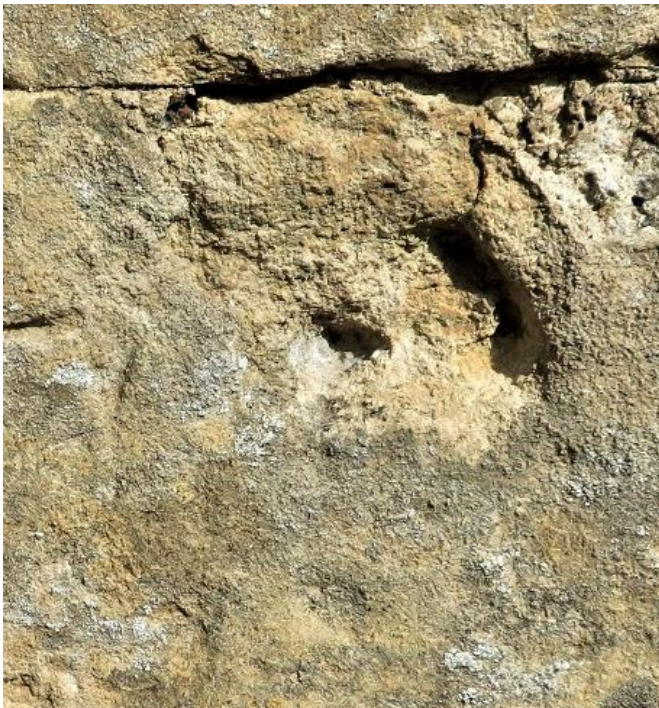


Fig 30: Close up of circular feature.



Fig 31: Eastern corner of porch.

On the eastern corner of the porch is the letter D (More recent graffiti?) and another possible abandoned Mass dial.



Fig 32: Close up of D and possible Mass dial.



Fig 33: Close up of possible Mass dial.

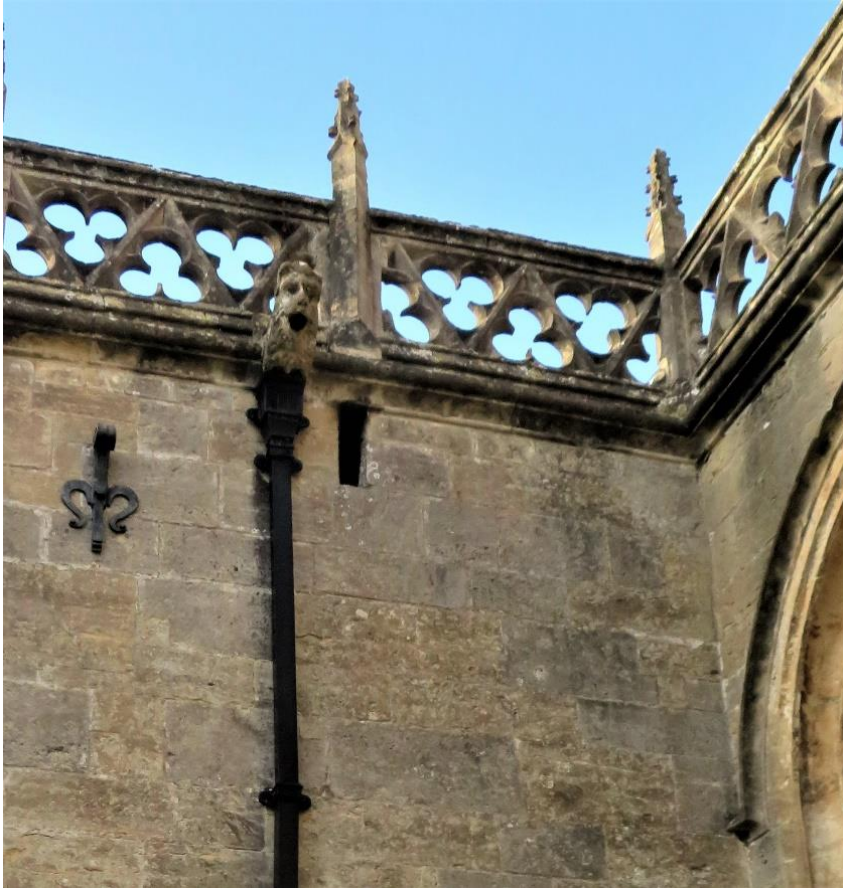


Fig 34: Right hand side of porch showing location of gargoyle above drainpipe.



Fig 35: Close up of gargoyle.

Another fine gargoyle.

A similar gargoyle is on the on the left side of the porch, as shown in Figs 36 and 37 below, again above the drainpipe.



Fig 36: The left-hand side gargoye.



Fig 37: Close up of gargoye.



Fig 38: Upside down Mass dial.

On the south wall adjoining the porch on the western side is the remains of a possible mass or scratch dial. It has been incorporated upside down (See middle top in Fig 38).



Fig 39: Mass dial. The correct way up.

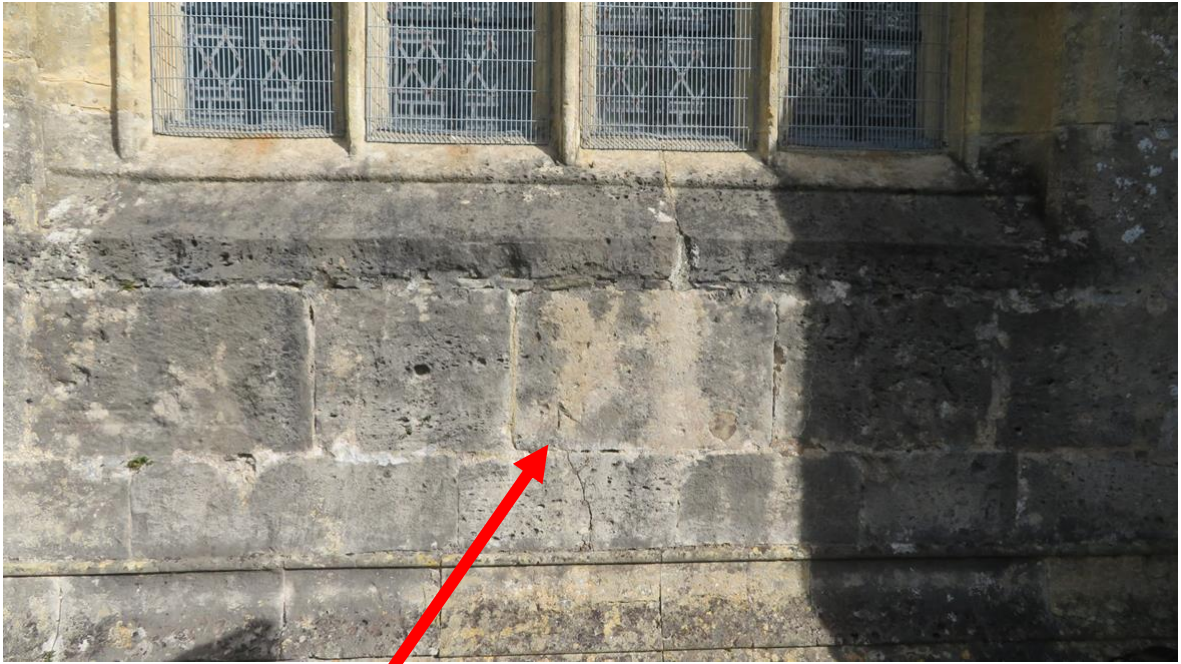


Fig 40: Letters on the south wall, east of the south porch.

East of the south porch on the south wall is the letter N. and an 'O', then to the right possibly an R or B.



Fig 41: Ape & toad east of the porch.

Above the windows east of the porch, is an ape holding open the mouth of a toad, shown in Figs 41 and 42.

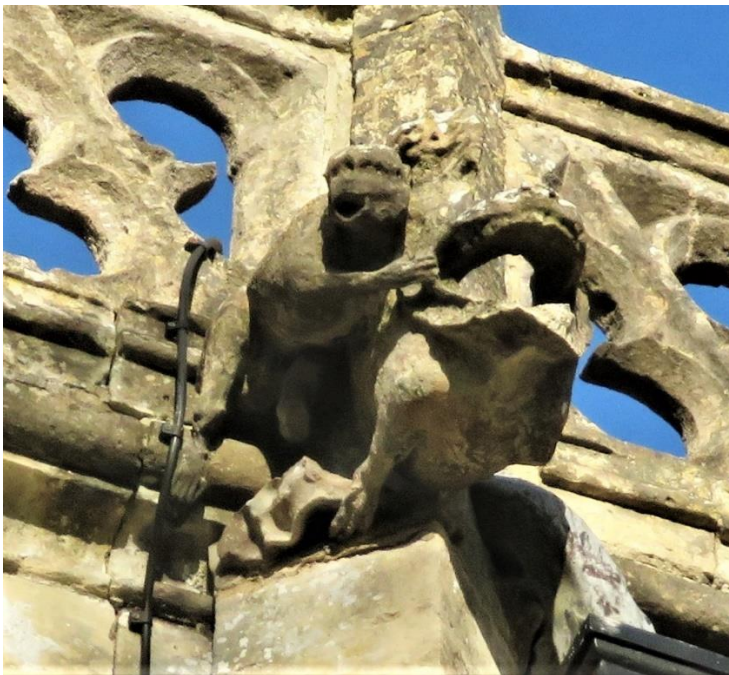


Fig 42: Close up of ape & toad.



Fig 43: Gargoyle location below top parapet.

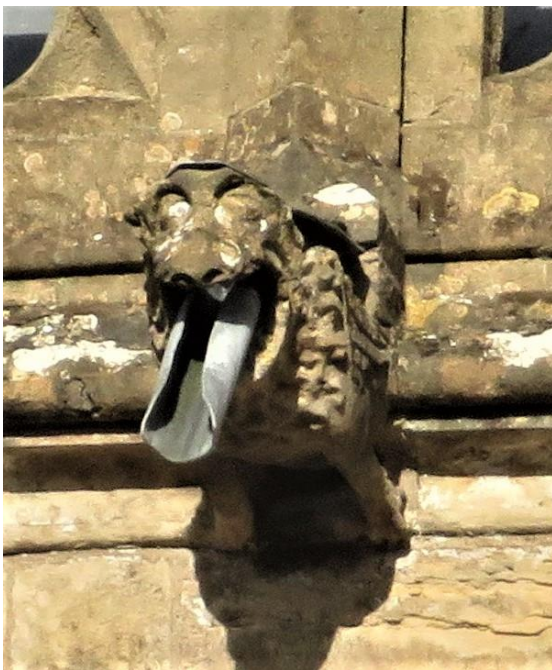


Fig 44: Close up of gargoyle.

East of the south porch
below the top parapet is
this griffin like gargoyle.



Fig 45: Gargoyle location further west.

Further west is a similar griffin like gargoyle with wings.



Fig 46: Close up of the gargoyle.

WEST END



The magnificent west end. A wonderful example of Perpendicular architecture.

It is said that in Somerset its only rival is at Crewkerne

Sadly the view of the west end, as illustrated by the early 20th century post card below, is now obscured by trees.

Fig 47: West end.

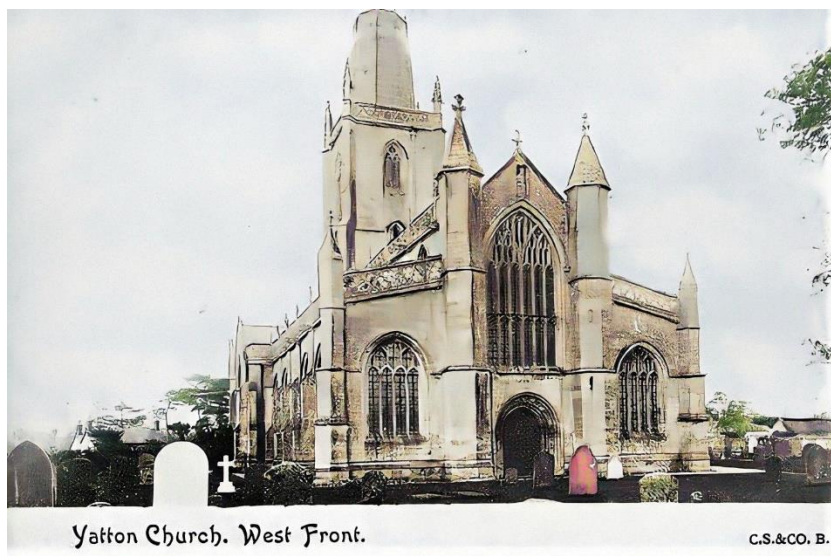


Fig 48: Early post card of west end.



Fig 49: Top of west end.

God holding the cross at the top of the west side. Shown in Figs 49 and 50.



Fig 50: God holding cross.



The great west window required major restoration work during 1999/2000

Left and right of the window (indicated by the yellow arrows) are the figures below (Fig 52).

Fig 51: Location of figures.



Fig 52: The figures.



Fig 53: The west end door.

The wooden doorway is said to have probably been inserted in the middle of the 16th century.



Fig 54: Top of the door arch.



Fig 55: Left of the west end door.

Left side of doorway. Note the headless statue (lower arrow on Fig 55) and that the lower parts of the doorway are weather worn. It has been suggested that the two square in-filled blocks about 1.5m above the floor and at the same height either side of the doorway (see upper arrow on Fig 55), may suggest there was once an outer, perhaps wooden, door.



Fig 56: Right hand side of doorway.

Right hand side of the doorway (Fig 56 above). This statue has survived.



Fig 57: Upper part of left arch. King Henry VI



Fig 58: Upper part of right arch. Queen Margaret of Anjou.

Carved heads are in the central groove of the west doorway arch.

Above - King Henry VI
Below - Queen Margaret of Anjou



Fig 59. The left-hand arch has graffiti towards top.

The graffiti on the left-hand side of the door (Fig 59 above) is identical to that on the left-hand side of the north door as shown below (Fig 60).



Fig 60: North door with square graffiti.

NORTH END



Fig 61: North side – south.



Fig 62: The gargoyles below the parapet

The position of the gargoyles are indicated by the yellow arrows in Fig 61 above.



Fig 63: Two gargoyles are under the parapet beside the new Chapter House.



This gargoyle is on the left-hand side under the parapet.

Fig 64: Close up of left hand side gargoyle.



Fig 65: Location of right-hand gargoyle indicated by yellow arrow.



This gargoyle is on the right hand side under the parapet.

Fig 66: Close up of right-hand gargoyle.



These gargoyles are partly obscured by the corridor of the modern Chapter House.

Fig 67: Gargoyles above the Chapter House corridor.



Fig 68: Close up of the gargoyles.



Fig 69: The new Chapter House.

The octagonal Chapter House was completed in 1975.



Fig 70: East of the Chapter House.



Fig 71: Left - East of the Chapter House.

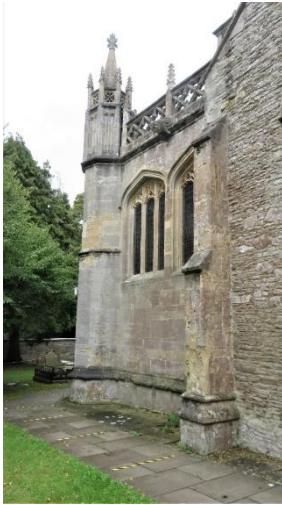
Fig 72: Above – Position of gargoyles below the parapets.



Fig 73. Close up of gargoyles.
Little remains of these gargoyles.



Fig 74: The western end of the Newton chapel.



*Fig 75: Above -
the extreme west
end of the north
side.*



Fig 76: A view of the parapet.

A gargoyle can be seen mid-way below the parapet in Fig 76.



Fig 77: Close up of the gargoyle.



Fig 78: The east end of the church.

The east window in the chapel is shown in Fig 78 above.

THE TOWER

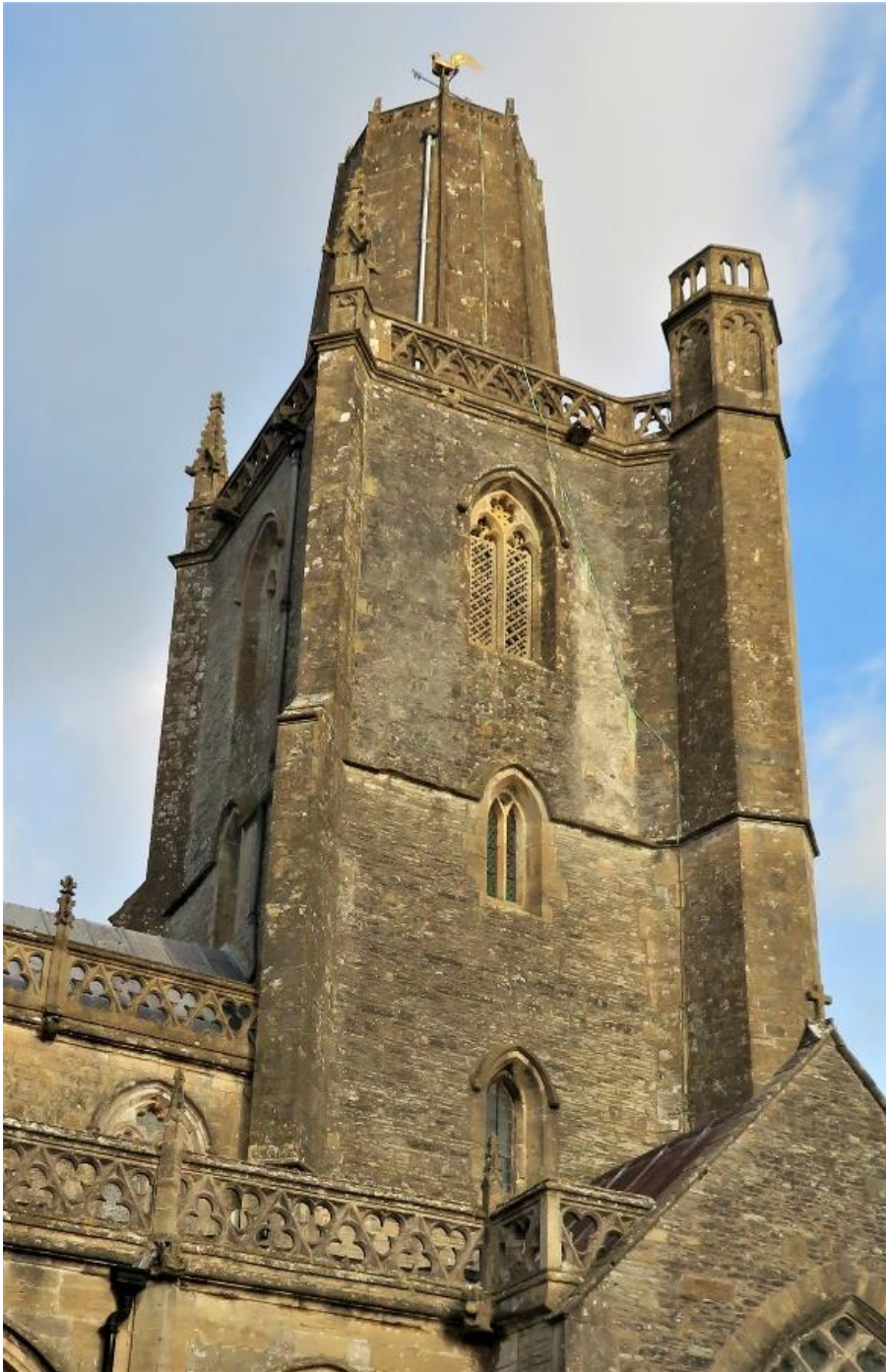


Fig 79: The tower.

The tower of 3 stages has diagonal weathered buttresses with crocketed pinnacles.

The lower section of the tower is said to date from about 1340.

Above this the now truncated spire was under construction in 1456.

Presumably because some fault occurred in 1595 two men and a boy reduced the spire to its present height.



Fig 80: The weather cock.



Fig 81: Front of the weather cock on a sunny day.

The weather cock dates to 1822, according to the Heritage Listing.

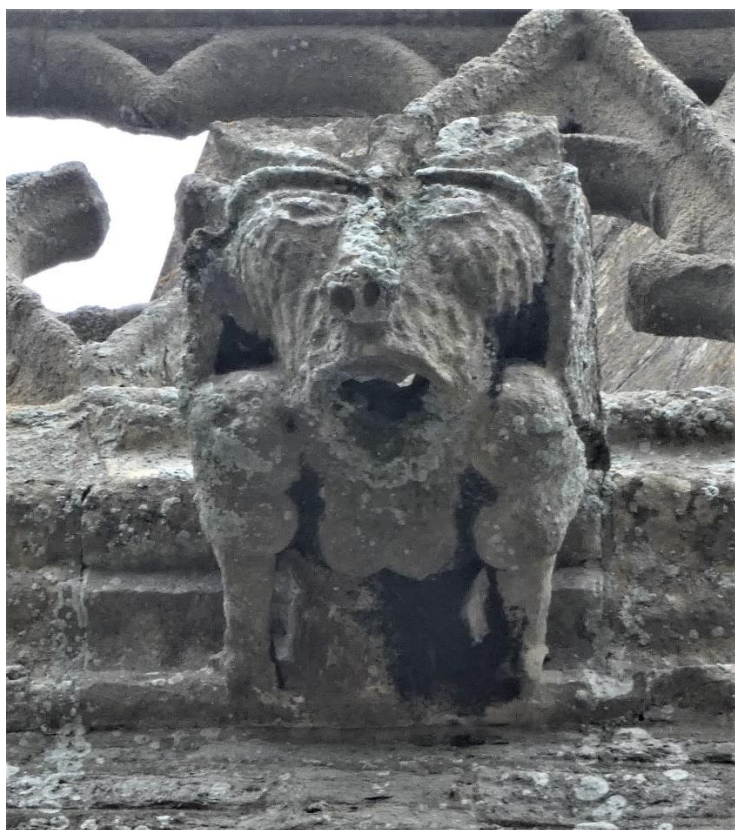
Tower north



Fig 82: The north side of the tower with the clock face.



Fig 83: Gargoyles on the north side.



Figs 84 and 85 (left) show close ups of these interesting gargoyles.

Fig 84: Left hand side gargoyle.



Fig 85: Right hand side gargoyle.

Tower west



Fig 86: Left hand side gargoyle.



Fig 87: Location of gargoyles.

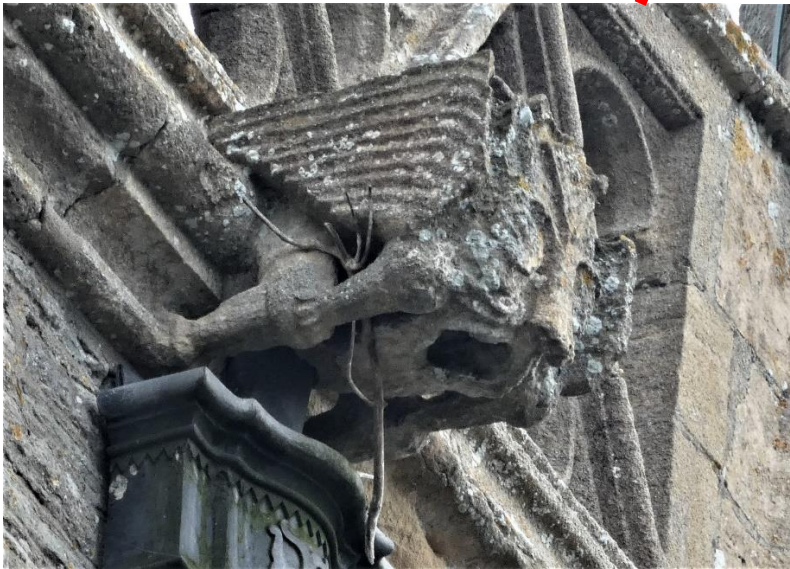


Fig 88: Right hand side gargoyle.

Tower east

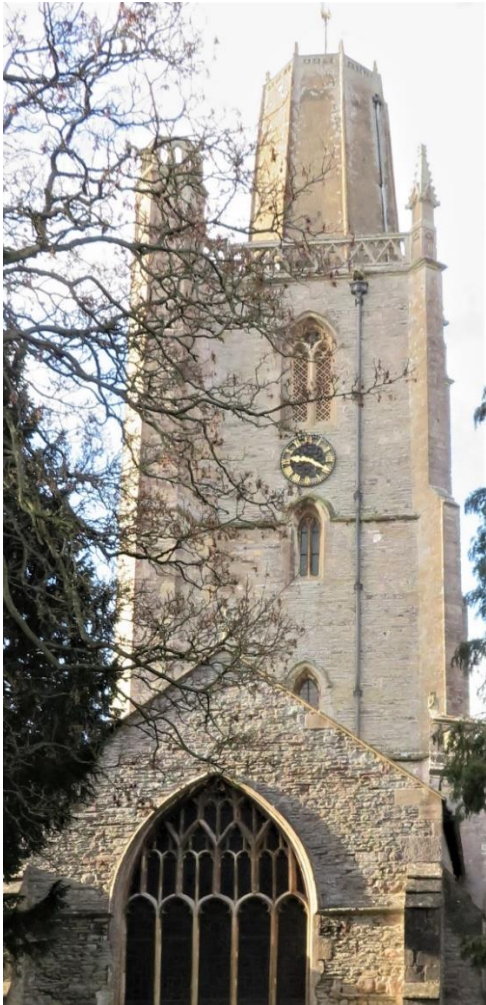


Fig 89: The east end of the tower.

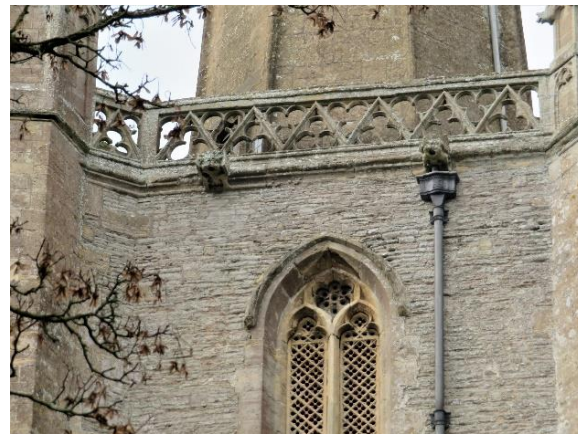


Fig 90: Location of gargoyles below parapet.



Fig 91: Close up of both gargoyles.

Gargoyles below the parapet.



Fig 92: Left hand gargoyle.



Fig 93: Right hand gargoyle.

Tower south



Fig 94: The south side of the tower with gargoyles below the parapet.



Left – the right-hand gargoyle.

Below – all that remains of the left-hand gargoyle.

Fig 95: The right-hand gargoyle.



Fig 96: The left-hand gargoyle.

The clocks

The clocks on the east and north sides dates to 1877. The remains of a 16th century clock are said to be stored in the bier house.

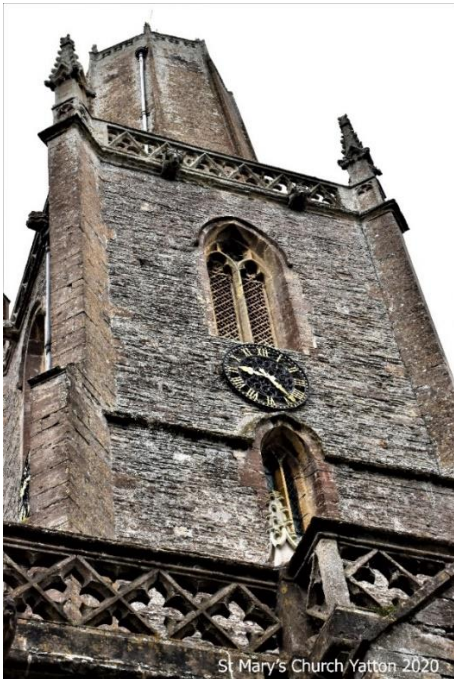


Fig 97: The clock on the north side.



Fig 98: The clock on the east side.

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