

A CONDENSED HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS
WILLOUGHBY

- 1215 A.D. The existence of a Church in Willoughby was established when Ralph, son of Wigan, died leaving a widow Aubrey who held the Church, and one acre of land, in dower.
- 1242 AD. On the death of one IVO. the whole manor, and the advowson, was enfeoffed to the hospital of St John the Baptist, the forerunner of Magdalen College, Oxford.
- 1280-1290. It is probable that the West Tower and the North and South Porches were added during this period. The lower West Window is of similar design to the South Aisle Windows dated 1280-1290 in the Church of St. Mary. Stoke Golding, Leics.
- 1350-1380. The North Aisle windows came into being probably by insertion into the existing wall.
- 1500-1530. The Arcade, of three arches on either side, and the Chancel Arch are attributed to this period.
1552. A Church inventory revealed the existence of three bells and a sanctus bell.
- 1620-1640. The Chancel was rebuilt and furnished with choir stalls, lectern, and pulpit. The present pulpit is of this date.

1713. Five bells, a minor peal, were hung in Willoughby Church Tower. The bells were cast and hung by Joseph Smith of Edgbaston.
1724. A ^{Chiming device} ~~Carillon~~ was brought from Southam and installed in Willoughby Church Tower. This still exists, together with the Church Clock of that period, in the tower.
1779. The Chancel was rebuilt to its present form.
1781. A sixth bell was cast and hung by William Chapman of Whitechapel Foundry. This foundry, under its former owner Lester Pack, cast the first bell for neighbouring Wolfhamcote Church. The foundry is now known as Mears and Stainbank.
1913. Heating installed.
1920. The bells were condemned as unsafe.
- 1923-1926. Appeals were made for the restoration of the bells. An estimate was accepted from Mears & Stainbank for restoration work and re-hanging. The bells rang again on Boxing Day 1926.
- 1963-1969. Major restoration of the church fabric was undertaken by Messrs Hoynes, Builders, of Daventry. Seating in the South Aisle was removed and the existing Baptistry created, from a design by Mr Kellat, Architect, of Rugby. The nave was completely re-roofed on the existing timbers, which were found to be in good order. The Church Tower was made good and the church seating and floor were reconstructed where there was evidence of woodworm or dry rot.