

## The Reformation

Whilst the Middle Ages could hardly be described as times of peace and tranquillity, they were nothing in comparison to the upheavals that faced the Church during the sixteenth century. Reforming zeal abroad found its way to England through the crisis precipitated by Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1536. For Barrowby Church, as for so many other ecclesiastical buildings, these changes were to result in considerable damage. The nearby Abbey of Neubo was suppressed in 1566, and soon pulled down. Almost all of the medieval stained glass in the church was destroyed, with only a few tiny, high up pieces remaining, presumably because they were difficult to break.

Where the present screen divides the nave from the chancel, a Rood Screen stood. Both sides of the remaining screen are from the fifteenth century, in Perpendicular style, the centre part is only about 70 years old. The Rood Screen would have supported a large crucifix, flanked by the gilded figures of the Virgin Mary and Saint John (in 1524 one Sir Richard Bozon had bequeathed 20s for their gilding). In 1561 these figures of Mary and John were burned. Such screens were pulled down and destroyed in hundreds of churches at this time, often despite vociferous local objections, and sometimes scenes of violence!

The surviving screen has been in various parts of the church through the centuries; it was in its present place 1848 but from the Ven. Ed. Trollope's notes in 1867 we know parts of it were placed on either side of the east window in the chancel. Later in the century it was moved to a place under the tower, returning to its present place this century, when the middle part was carved.

Parts of the pulpit are made of old wood but it is basically Victorian. The old wood from the Decorated period could have come from the screen. Other parts were made into seats for use in the church in 1563, the rest was kept, gradually being used for mending beams.

The original altar stones were broken and used as paving stones for the porch in 1565. At the same time the altar cross, fourteen candlesticks and a pair of censers were sold to George Vernon who resold them to Arthur Wilson a pewterer of Lincoln. The other item destroyed in that year was the Easter Sepulchre. No trace of this remains. In 1566 the churchwardens reported that 'two hand belles' which belonged to the church in Queen Mary's time had been 'sold to Thomas Clarke the younger sens Michaelmas past and he hath broken them in pieces'. Amongst things lost were the holy water vat of brass and copes and other vestments which were torn or defaced - one parishioner bought a cross cloth and made it into cushions.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, the Church of England was formally established, its doctrines enshrined in the 39 Articles of Religion. A sense of stability gradually returned, and with it came a fine new Rectory in Barrowby (now a private house).