



The church is first mentioned in 1195 and was built for those living on the west side of the town. It enjoyed a special relationship with the great Benedictine abbey which was situated just east of the church. St Lawrence's appears to have been rebuilt about 1295 and again about 1540. But the abbey's dissolution in 1540 reduced the church's fortunes so that by 1659 the parish had no clergy and was served by the vicars of All Saints next door. It soon fell into a state of decay and in 1718 it was stated that the church was virtually unusable in winter. However a new vicar was appointed in 1735 and repairs were put in hand, involving the demolition of the north arcade and raising the walls of the north aisle with a new roof spanning nave and aisle. But this new roof soon collapsed and the building became derelict and disused.

In 1836–37, under the patronage of Edward Rudge, a thorough restoration was carried out by the architect Harvey Eginton; the north aisle was remodelled and a new north arcade built and new furnishings added. In the later 19th and 20th centuries good stained glass was inserted in the windows.

By the 1970s the parishes of All Saints and St Lawrence found the burden of maintaining two ancient churches increasingly difficult. Consequently in 1978 the parishes were officially united and St Lawrence's declared redundant, being vested in The Churches Conservation Trust the following year. Since then the Trust has carried out extensive repairs to the fabric and ensured that the church is available to be used for events and for occasional services.



Trust churches nearby

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Churchill, St Michael | 4 Spetchley, All Saints |
| 2 Croome D'Abitot, St Mary Magdalene | 5 Strensham, St John the Baptist |
| 3 Pendock Old Church | 6 Worcester, St Swithun |

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St Lawrence's Church

Evesham, Worcestershire

A walk round guide



1 The church is entered through the west door of the tower. The **tower** and spire date from the early 15th century. As in All Saints, the base of the tower forms a west porch; the stone **vault** above the first stage of the tower is by Eginton. The stone **screen** above the inner door into the church was added by Eginton; the organ and choir occupied the gallery at first-floor level until 1874.

2 The ribbed and panelled **ceilings** of the nave and chancel are Eginton's work of 1836–37.

3 The north **arcade** and north aisle and **clerestories** were rebuilt by Eginton but are faithful copies of the original.

4 Wheeled **bier** from St Peter's church, Pebworth, 19th century.

5 The **glass** in the westernmost window of the north aisle is by F W Skeat, 1956; the other windows are by Geoffrey Webb, 1938–44. Except for St George and the Dragon, they depict scenes from Evesham's history: The Vision of Mary appearing to Eof, St Egwin and Simon de Montfort, slain in the Battle of Evesham, 1265 (cover). St Egwin (or Ecgwin), according to legend, walked to Rome, his feet chained to a post and the key thrown into the Avon. In Rome, Egwin went fishing in the Tiber, caught a fish and found the missing key in its mouth.

6 **Stone carving** of a 'green man' discovered in 1931 and probably once part of a monument to Thomas Newbold, Abbot of Evesham 1491–1513.

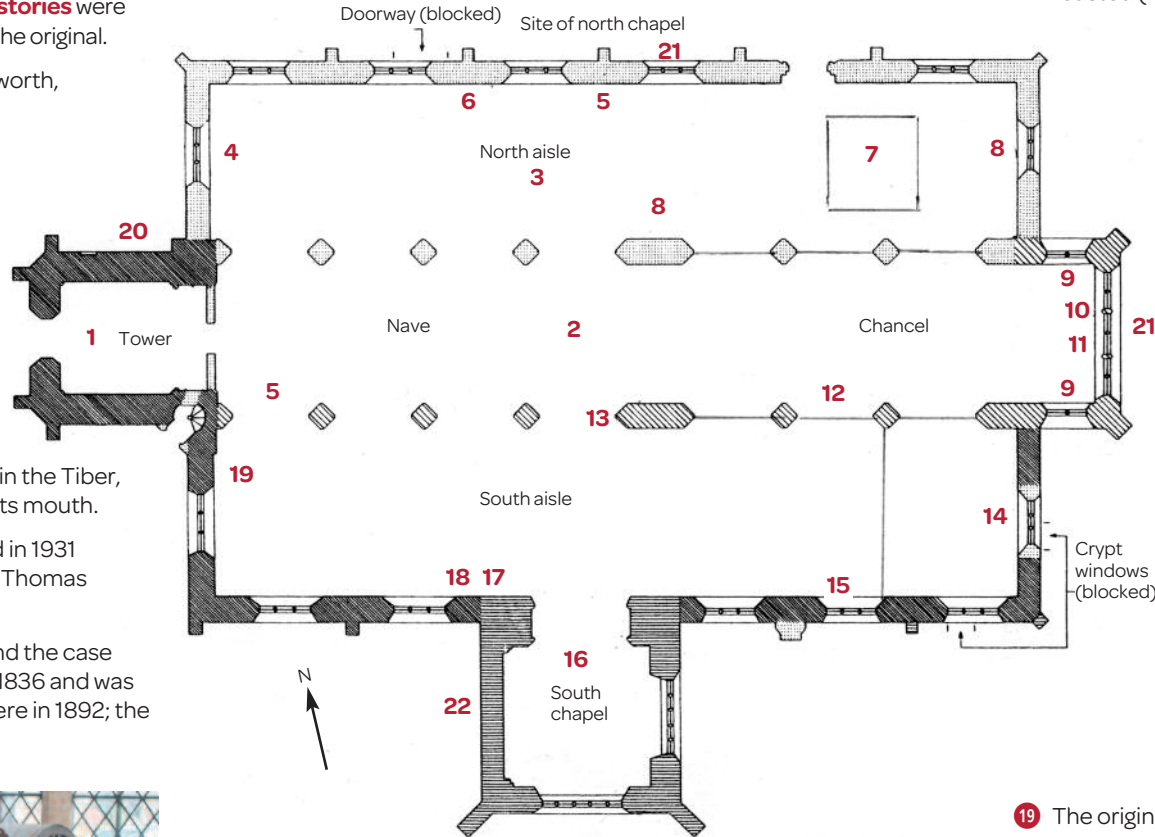
7 The **organ**, by Nicholson's of Worcester and the case designed by Eginton, was originally built in 1836 and was located in the west gallery. It was moved here in 1892; the detached console is more recent.



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8 **East window** of the north aisle shows scenes of Pentecost with the 11 disciples, Isaiah, John the Baptist and Joel (Frederick Preedy, 1862).

9 North and south chancel **windows**; in brilliant colours they depict (north window) Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, Sampson carrying off the gates of Gaza and David displaying Goliath's huge head; and (south window) the Four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, with their pens and books (Alexander Gibbs, 1864).



10 Main east **window** depicts The Resurrection, the Last Supper, the Evangelists, the Arms of Worcester Diocese, the grid-iron on which St Lawrence died, the Arms of Evesham Abbey and of Edward John Rudge, the local squire and chief promoter of Eginton's restoration of the church (Thomas Willement, 1862).

11 Stone **reredos** with the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments and Creed (Eginton). Below is the altar table dated 1610.

12 The wooden parclose **screens** each side of the chancel were provided by C A F Whitcombe in 1911.

13 The wooden **pulpit** with figures of apostles, also by Whitcombe, 1906.

14 East **window** of the **south aisle** depicts The Crucifixion (M O'Connor, 1847, in memory of Edward Rudge).

15 The glass in the **south aisle** windows depicts (from easternmost) Christ in Glory with several sheep, alive and roasted (A L Wilkinson, 1957); a foliage cross with roundels showing Christ in the carpenter's shop, the healing of Jairus' daughter, Christ washing the disciples' feet (Paul Woodroffe, 1934); The Nativity (F W Skeat, 1963).

16 The **south chapel**, traditionally Abbot Clement Lichfield's chantry, early 16th century. Fine fan vaulting with stone niches and panelling below the windows. The **font** with octagonal bowl is Eginton's copy of its 15th-century predecessor (see 19). The east window depicts David and St Luke, The Good Shepherd, St John and Isaiah all in colourful clothing (S Evans, 1932); the south window shows ten miracles including the Feeding of the Five Thousand (J Hardman, 1864).

17 **Stone carving** found with 6 above, c.1490: shows the Arms of Evesham Abbey and the letters 'S' and 'E' in panels, referring to St Egwin or Ecgwin, founder of Evesham Abbey.

18 The only significant **monument** in the church, to John Hanbury Beaufoy, d.1836 (C Lewis of Cheltenham).

19 The original **font**, 15th century, discarded by Eginton in 1836–37 and returned to the church in 1980.

20 On the **exterior** of the church is a much defaced **relief** of the Crucifixion.

21 The **parapets** are richly decorated with openwork battlements. The buttresses and stone panels of the east end are quite elaborate.

22 The plain **west wall** of the south chapel is where the 'very great and curious walk' to the Abbey may have adjoined.