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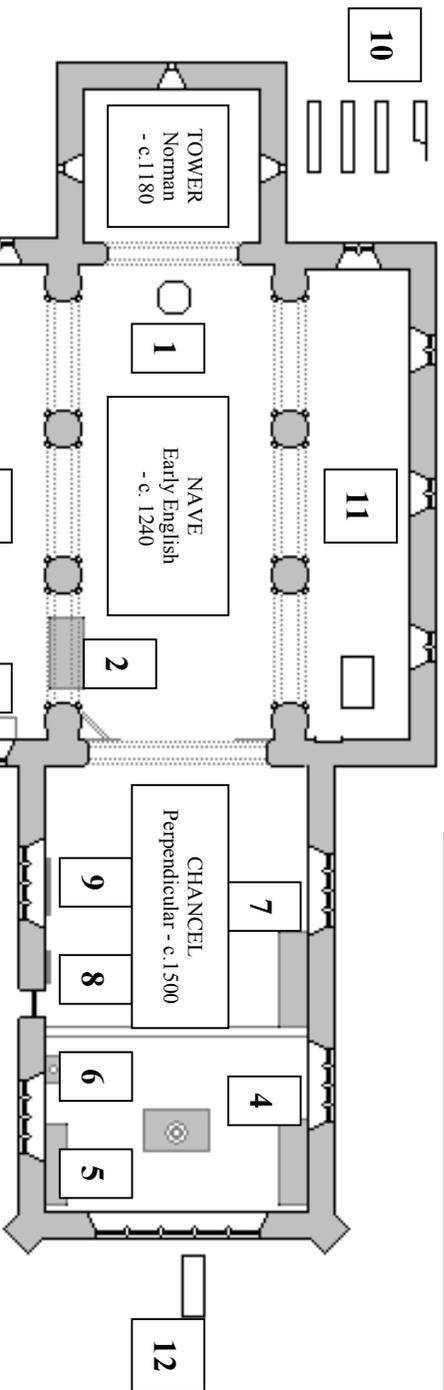
THE CHURCH OF

ST MARY THE VIRGIN

AT MARHOLM



A plan of the church of St Mary the Virgin,  
Marholm. (Not to Scale.)



**KEY**

1. The Font
2. Knight's Tomb
3. Lady Altar
4. Tomb the first Sir William Fitzwilliam died 1534.

5. Sir William Fitzwilliam died 1599 and his wife Ann, daughter of Sir William Sidney. This Sir William Fitzwilliam was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under Queen Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup>.
6. Monument to Edward Hunter alias Perry died 1646

7. William, First Earl Fitzwilliam died 1719 and his wife
8. Memorial to Evelyn Wentworth Fitzwilliam
9. Memorial to The Hon. Lady Hastings
10. 14<sup>th</sup> century Floriated grave slabs
11. North And south Aisles
12. Fitzwilliam memorials at the East End outside the Church.

**The Church of St Mary the Virgin at Marholm** dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and for most of its history has been linked with the nearby Church of St Kyneburgha of Castor.

## THE TOWER

The earliest part of the Church still standing is the squat **Norman West Tower** (c 1180AD), with its deeply splayed windows. The Tower Arch to the nave has crocket capitals to the responds. The east wall of the tower is thinner than the others, which could suggest an earlier date, (i.e. a pre-existing nave against which the tower was built). Above the tower arch is a curious carved figure.

## THE NAVE

**The 13<sup>th</sup> Century Nave** consists of Early English arcading with quatre-foil piers (c 1240). The original nave roof line can be seen against the tower so that the clerestory windows must have been added later. Their triple cinquefoil lights suggest the Decorated period (15<sup>th</sup> cent). The North and South Aisles were extensively restored in 1868. The aisles were badly damaged in the 16<sup>th</sup> century following a fire, and until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the nave arcading was blocked up with masonry. The east window of the South Aisle above the Lady Altar (3) is a 13<sup>th</sup> century. The North aisle has a reset trefoiled piscina (13<sup>th</sup> century)

**The Font** (1) is octagonal with 17<sup>th</sup> century leaf and rose decoration, but the font itself is probably medieval.

In the **South Aisle is a restored Knight's Tomb** (2) in the form of a panelled altar tomb. The effigy is thought to be 14<sup>th</sup> century and is possibly Sir John de Wittlebury, the then Lord of the Manor.

## THE CHANCEL

**The Chancel** was constructed c1530 by Sir William Fitzwilliam, who bought the nearby Milton Park Estate from Peterborough Abbey in c1500. Although Milton is in Castor Parish, the Fitzwilliams used Marholm as their parish church. Curiously it seems that the family and inside staff were buried at Marholm, whereas outside staff, their stewards, agents and so on were buried at Castor. The Chancel is quite grand, with a large Perpendicular Window with 5 lights at the East End which has Fitzwilliam heraldic glass, and fragments of earlier medieval glass, and on the North and South side, two four-light windows.

### **The Chancel Contains Memorials to the Fitzwilliam Family:**

**North wall – East corner: (4) Sir William Fitzwilliam** died 1534. This is a canopied altar tomb, with brasses of Sir William and his wife. The altar and canopy have quatrefoils and ogee arches. The lower part is mainly marble (possibly Alwalton), but the upper part is painted plaster. A brass plaque records that the monument was repaired by the then Lord Fitzwilliam in 1674, possibly after being damaged during the Civil War by Cromwellian soldiers.

**South Wall – East corner: (5) Sir William Fitzwilliam** died 1599 and his wife Ann, daughter of Sir William Sidney. This Sir William Fitzwilliam was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under Queen Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup>.

**South Wall – beside priest's door. Monument to Edward Hunter** (6) alias Perry died 1646. This is a black obelisk with a cartouche supported by weeping putti. Note the inscription, as Edward Hunter died at the time of the Civil War, and it includes a request that passing Cromwellian puritan soldiers should not desecrate the monument: *To the courteous souldier. Noe crucifixe you see, noe frightful brand of superstitions here, Pray let me stand.*

**North Wall – West: (7) William, First Earl Fitzwilliam** died 1719 and his wife. This is one of the finest 18<sup>th</sup> century monuments in the county. Made by James Fisher of Camberwell. It consists of life size figures framed by Corinthian pilasters and a pediment. The contract with Fisher dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 1718 for the sum of £900 is still at Milton.