

Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire

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Church of St Mary & St Hardulph

Grid ref SK 405 233

Sculpture

cross-shafts

No surviving fabric, but unique architectural carvings from C8 now included in the Norman and later fabric

Taylor

Originally a hill-fort (till AD 1) about the year 676 an Anglo-Saxon minster was founded on the hill by Friduric, a local Saxon Ealdorman. It was almost certainly attacked by the Danes in 873.

The Church stands on a hill of magnesium limestone which has been producing stone for roadmaking and lime for agricultural purposes for many years. It will be seen that much of the hill has

been quarried away in the process and in other ways.

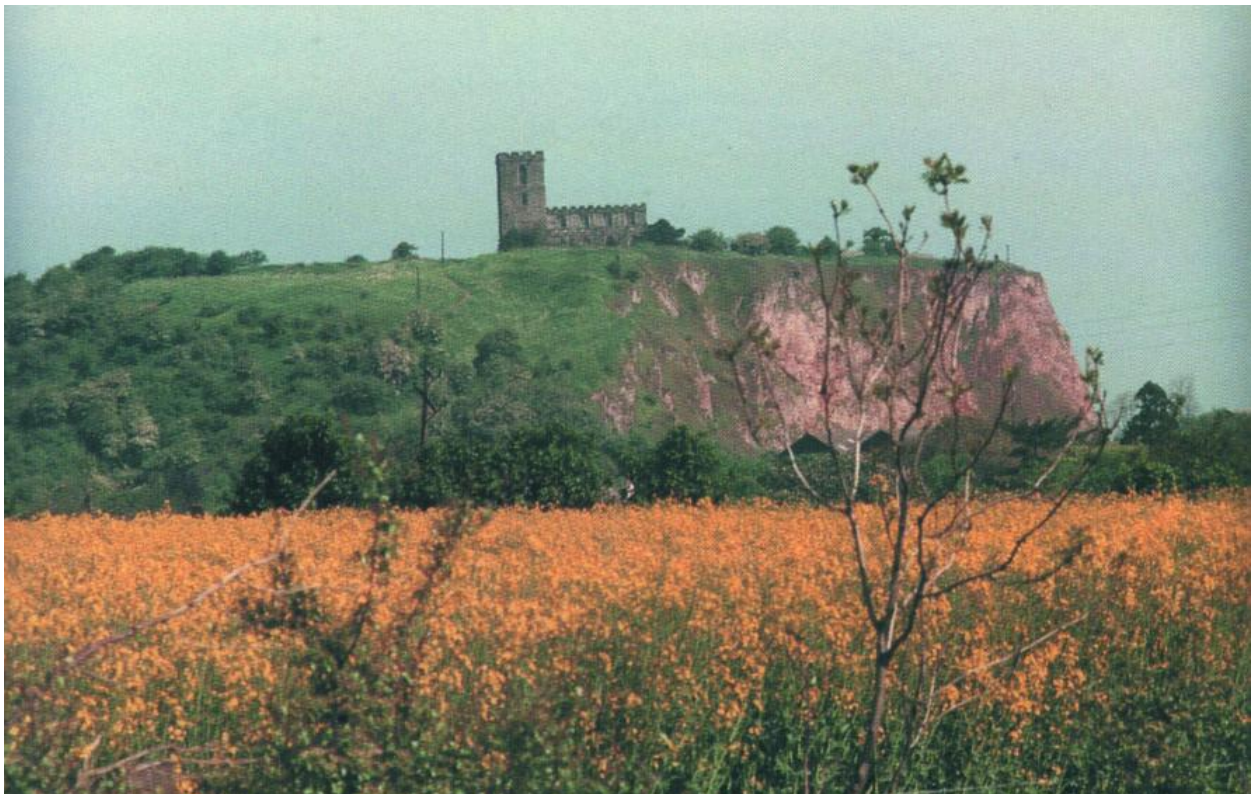
From Church Guide

Saxon Carvings

At the east end of the south aisle are a series of panels of figural sculpture in the Mercian style (note simple drilled eyes and feet shown in profile). Carved friezes: vine scroll ornament behind altar, Anglian beasts and birds in south wall, pelta design and interlace above the spandrels of the arches. In the tower a figure blessing in the Greek manner.

Cross-shafts

At the west end of Shirley aisle, frags of C9 cross shafts.



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Above: Lion

Above right: Part of one of the friezes, showing abstract ornament also familiar from manuscript examples, cf Vespasian Psalter

Right: Angel giving the blessing in the Byzantine manner, situated in the tower ringing chamber



Frieze behind Altar in the Lady Chapel - The Blessed Virgin Mary and female Saints