

ST HELEN'S CHURCH LEA, GAINSBOROUGH

Memorial to the Marshall family – West window of North aisle (1.5 m x 3.2 m) 2021

This new window is in memory of the Marshall family, of Marshall, Sons and Co of Gainsborough. Marshall's produced large numbers of steam traction engines, steam rollers and agricultural machinery of all types. The design links the traction engine, celebrating the achievements of the Marshall firm, with St Helen, the dedicatee of the chosen site for this memorial.

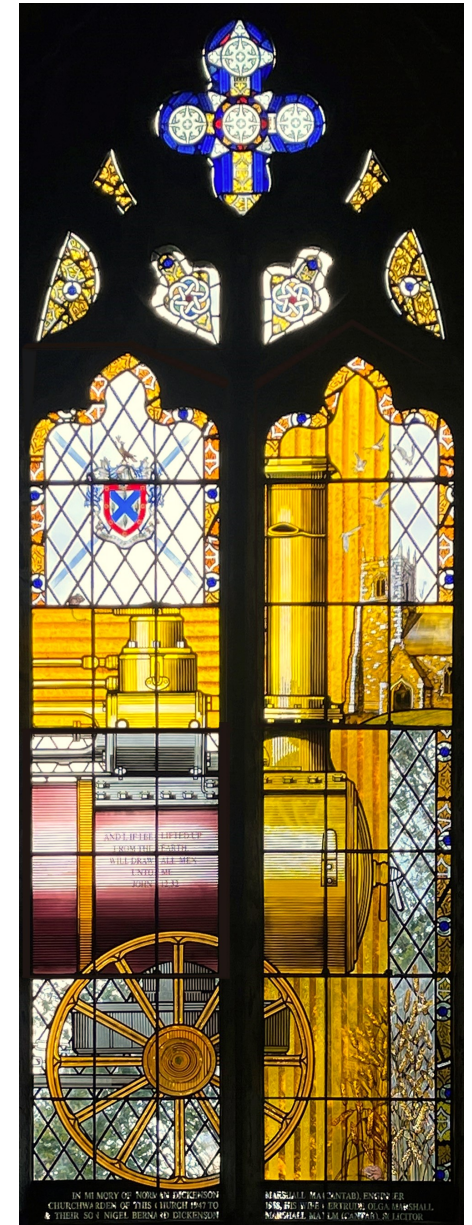
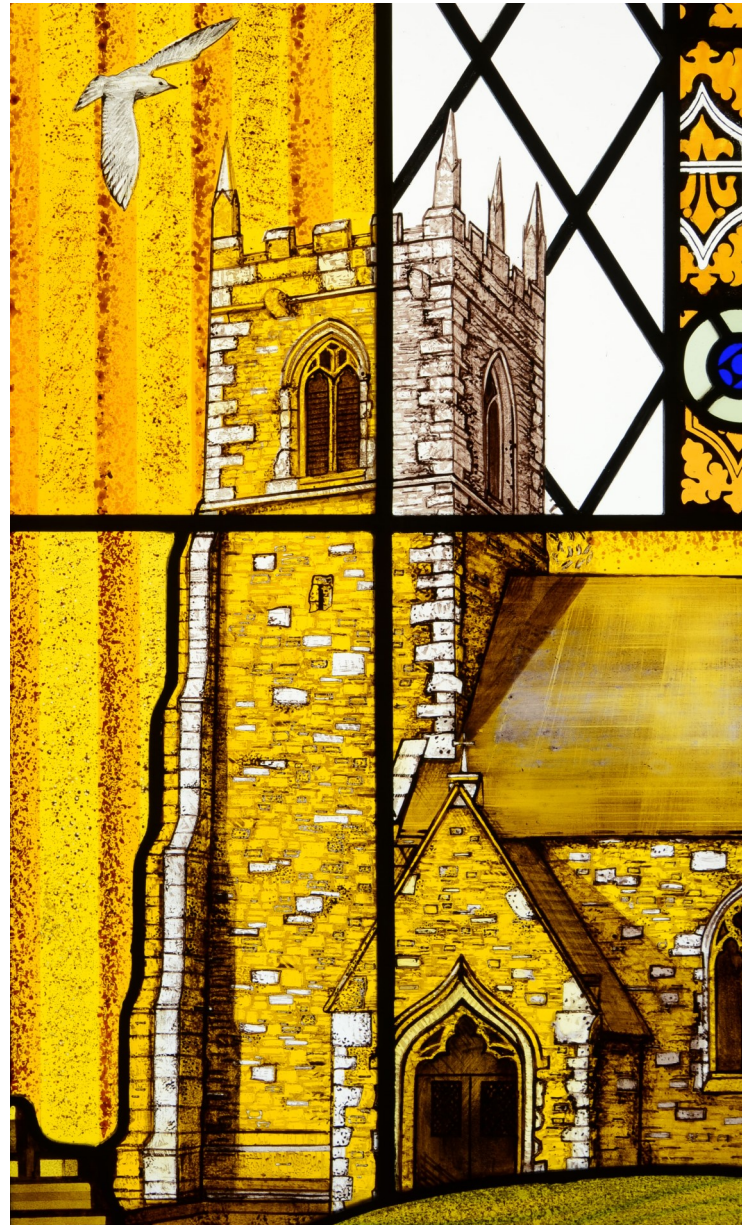
The True Cross of St Helen forms the central feature of the window, depicted in bright golden yellow across the two lights, with St Helen's Church, Lea, shown at the heart of the Cross.

In the foreground a Marshall traction engine is working the land, its upright chimney accentuating the shape of the Cross seen in the newly ploughed earth of the field in the background. The traction engine is named (from the Latin *tractus*) for its ability to draw machinery, just as Christ, through His earthly sacrifice on the Cross, draws us to Him. This link is made clear through the biblical text quoted across the cylinder of the traction engine: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me' [John 12:32].

Above the church, seagulls flock over the freshly ploughed land, adding vivid animation and signalling the wholeness and goodness of God's living creation. To the lower right we see a field of barley, a staple crop in ancient Palestine and the food of the poor throughout the Bible; Christ himself fed five thousand people from five barley loaves and two fishes (John 6:9-10). A harvest mouse runs through the field above the traction engine.

The arms of the Marshall family are placed above the traction engine to the top of the left-hand light.

The new window has been designed to work with the existing tracery lights composed of Powells pressed quarries, which were conserved as part of this project. Elements of the tracery glass were copied to create the decorative borders of the new stained glass window.



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