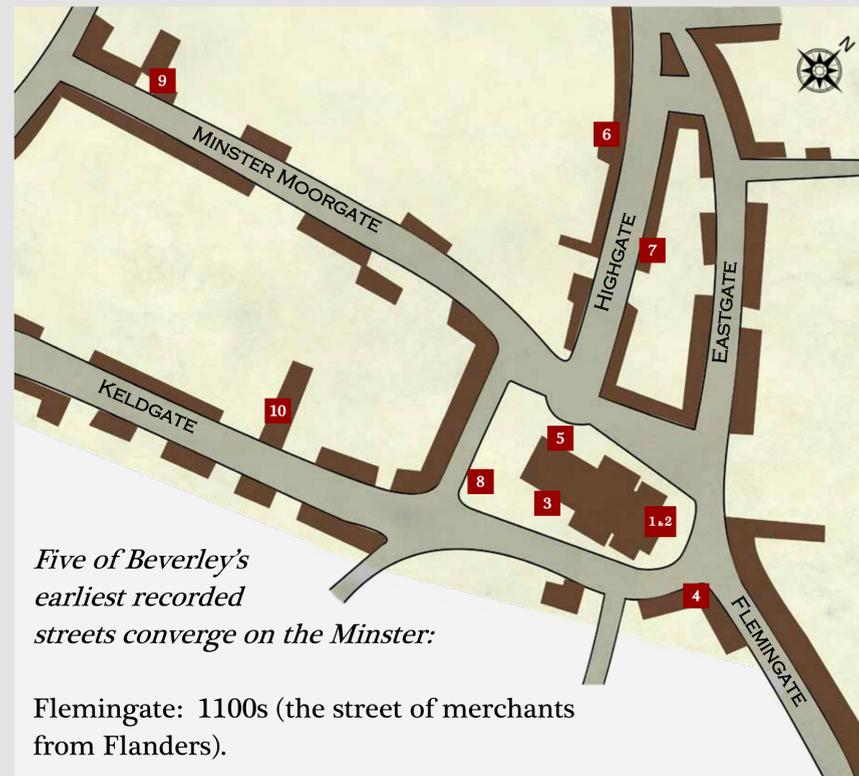




On 7th May 721 John, Bishop of York, died. His body was buried in the monastery he had founded on or near the site where Beverley Minster now stands. King Athelstan (d. 939) was credited with granting rights, sanctuary and other privileges to the church and town of Beverley.



BEVERLEY MINSTER AND ITS SURROUNDINGS



Five of Beverley's earliest recorded streets converge on the Minster:

Flemingate: 1100s (the street of merchants from Flanders).

Keldgate: 1274 ('keld' meaning spring; 'gate' the Viking name for street).

Minster Moorgate: earliest name Moorgate; by 13th century known as Minster Moorgate (the street leading from the Minster to Westwood).

Highgate: earliest name was Alta Via (highway) - the main route between the Minster and North Bar. By 1417 it is recorded as Hegate; in 17th century known as Londoners' Street after merchants from London who had their shops here.

Eastgate: 13th century.



The canons' large market (now Wednesday Market) stretched from the Minster as far as Toll Gavel. As Saturday Market became the main market of the town, encroaching buildings formed Eastgate and Highgate. A new porch was added to the Minster giving entry to the church from Highgate. On each side of the door are statues (c. 1900) of the saints after whom Beverley's four parishes are named: St John the Evangelist, St Mary, St Nicholas and St Martin.

For 600 years the annual Ascensiontide Fair took place in this area. Before the fair began the gold and silver shrine of St John was taken from the Minster and carried in procession up Highgate to St Mary's Church and around town. Members of the Guilds, sitting in specially constructed 'castles', watched the procession.

By mid 18th century the annual fair had moved to Norwood and fashionable Georgian brick replaced medieval timber.



A 15/16th century timber framed house on Highgate, demolished 1956.

300 years after his death Bishop John was made a saint. Throughout the medieval period pilgrims came in great numbers to visit his tomb where many miracles were recorded.

In 1188 a fire in Beverley destroyed much of the town and badly damaged the Minster church. A building programme began which lasted for 250 years. Stone was brought from quarries near Newbald and later by river from Tadcaster.



The Minster from SW, 1834. The cupola over the crossing, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, dated from 1723 and was removed in 1824.

Beverley Minster grew into one of the greatest Gothic churches, famous internationally for its unity of style.



A timber-framed and jettied house which stood on the corner of Flemingate and Minster Yard South circa 1850. It was probably built in the 15th/early 16th century.

At first the provost, the seven canons and clergy at the Minster lived in the Bedern (an Anglo Saxon word meaning 'house of prayer') which occupied land west of St John's Street. Later the canons' individual houses lay round the Minster. On Hall Garth Field, south of the Minster, the Archbishop of York had a moated manor house and vast parks stretching southwards.



The Monk's Walk (previously the George & Dragon) in Highgate has a medieval interior, a 17th century central passage and a Georgian facade.

For many centuries the Minster has been associated with education. The medieval grammar school in the church yard was rebuilt in 1606 but the building was demolished in 1816 when the school moved to Keldgate.



The Grammar School, with St John's Street and Keldgate in the background.



Charles Warton's almshouse.

Four almshouses were built close to the Minster, two of which are still used: Charles Warton's (1688) and Ann Routh's (1749). The Wartons of Beverley Parks were generous benefactors to the Minster and the town.

Almshouses provided communal living for the elderly who lived rent-free and received a weekly allowance.



Ann Routh's almshouse.



For more information please visit Beverleycivicsociety.co.uk

Produced by the Beverley Civic Society assisted by Beverley Guildhall