

At a meeting of the Chapter on October 19th 1775, it was decreed that - "The church be new coloured with a light stone colour, the Earl of Harborough proposing to give £20 towards defraying the expense of the same, and that the further charge be paid out of the moneys arising by the sale of the wood at Warsop."

There is a pencilled note in the margin of the Decree book, which states - "all scraped off by me - G W". These initials are almost certain to be those of Archdeacon George Wilkins, who set up a subscription in 1852 to clean off the whitewash in the church.

I have found an account dated June 1775, from Mr. J Frost of Acton, for " painting & gilding in Southwell Minster. Some of the items charged for are as follows:

To 700 leaves of gold.....

To gold size and gilding....

To gilding several upright mouldings, used 147 leaves of gold....

There is then another account dated August 1777, which reads as follows:

To doing all the walls, ceilings etc. in the Quire, twice over. stone colour ...

To doing all the walls etc in the Ante Quire twice over, stone colour ...

To colouring the Portal, twice over...

To lime and painting several parts of the Minster...

To writing 51 dozen and 11 letters upon the stone pillar...

To painting the skreen or carved work under the organ, three times over, stone colour...

It is possible that the penultimate item should read "pillars", as 623 letters is rather a lot to get on one pillar. I would imagine that this refers to the nave, and if it was one pillar, which one would it have been, and why?

I can find no instructions from the chapter to carry out the gilding work done in 1775, or anything to indicate whether the painting of 1777 covered up the gilding, but I don't think this would have happened.

It would appear therefore, that the church was painted until 1852, when Archdeacon Wilkins started to scrape it all off, and although he (as did Ewan Christian) referred to it as whitewash, it must have been this light stone colour.

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