

# The Chancel Arch

The impressive oak rood-loft, or Rood Screen, depicts the Crucifixion of Jesus, flanked by St Mary and St John, dates from 1920, and was designed by E. H. Fellowes as a war memorial after the horrors of what we now call the First World War. The names of the dead from that war are inscribed to the left hand side, and were supplemented by the names of those who died in the Second World War, recorded on the right hand side. Henley was quite a small town, so that the number killed is a grim testimony to the carnage of war – especially when you see the full list of First World War deaths on the Remembrance tablet in the St John's Memorial Chapel at the West End of the church under the Tower.

Note also the two doorways at high level which would originally have led onto the top of the mediaeval rood screen – wide enough to accommodate an altar where a priest would say mass each day.

On the wall above the arch itself is the mural of the Adoration of the Lamb, inspired by the vision of St John the Divine in Revelation. In the centre is the Lamb, standing on the sacrificial altar; he is surrounded by the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and, from below, flows the Fountain of Life. Angels and saints fill the rest of the painting.

It was designed and painted by the Rev'd Ernest Geldart in 1891. He was quite a prolific priest-architect, responsible for some 163 projects, mainly in Essex, but also here and at St Cuthbert's, Philbeach Gardens in Earl's Court. The work is based on Hubrecht and Jan van Eyck's altarpiece in Ghent Cathedral (c1432).