

## THE MURDER OF WILLIAM STORR

"CARTWRIGHT WENT STRAIGHT TO A CUTLER'S SHOP, WHERE HE BOUGHT A SHARPENED SWORD, AND SET ABOUT TRACKING WILLIAM STORR DOWN."

**One of the bloodiest events to happen in Market Rasen was the murder of the Reverend William Storr in 1602.**

There was a dispute over land between the Lords and the inhabitants of Market Rasen and it all came to a head one day in church, where the Rev Storr was celebrating the Sabbath.

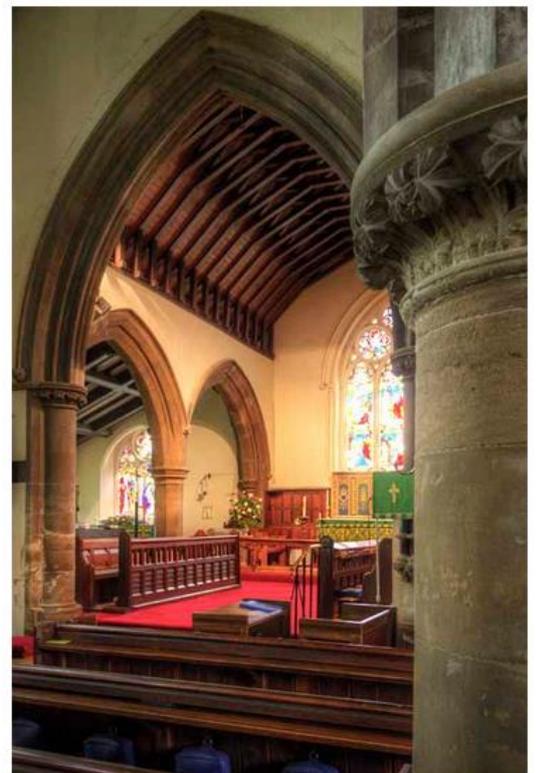
After Sabbath had ended a huge argument broke out amongst many members of the congregation about the disputed land. At first Rev Storr stepped in to ask that the crowd show some respect for the fact that they were in a church. Then he acted as a kind of referee for the argument, insisting that each side should nominate someone to put forward their case. But the men arguing insisted that the Rev Storr himself, being a man of God, should settle the argument or at least give his views. He wasn't really willing to get involved, but still the Reverend gave his opinion – and it certainly didn't go down well with one man present, 23 year old Francis Cartwright.

Francis was son and heir to one of the Lords of the town, but William Storr was on the side of the townspeople in the dispute. So not only did Francis verbally abuse the Reverend in his own church, he continued the argument the very next day when he came across William in the market place. In public, Francis Cartwright called the Reverend 'a scurvie, lowsie, paltrie priest' and threatened anybody who agreed with the Reverend by saying he would 'cut his throat, tear out his heart and hang his quarters on the Maypole'!

Needless to say William Storr sought the protection of the Magistrates and soon afterwards he preached a sermon which Francis Cartwright felt was aimed directly at him. In the words of the time, Cartwright became 'more and more thirsted for revenge', and about a week later he saw the Rev Storr walking



Illustration of the maid arriving at the scene of the Storr murder, from the pamphlet 'Three Bloodie Murders', published in 1613



Inside St Thomas' Church, where the rift between Cartwright and Storr began in 1602

alone early one morning. Cartwright went straight to a cutler's shop, where he bought a sharpened sword, and set about tracking William Storr down. When he found the clergyman, he stabbed him 24 times with the sword until a woman came across the scene and Cartwright fled.

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## REFERENCES

- <http://www.hellenicaworld.com/History/MasonJackson/en/ThePictorialPress.html>
- Tudor Market Rasen - Market Rasen Branch  
WEA published 1985

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