



## About St Michael's Church

A hidden gem secluded in the picturesque Shropshire countryside, the church of St Michael nestles in the grounds of the Elizabethan Upton Cressett Hall.

Although the settlement of Upton dates to Anglo-Saxon times, the earliest parts of the church were built in the Norman period, soon after the Conquest in 1066. The south doorway, chancel arch and font date from this time.

Owned by the Upton family at the time of the Domesday survey, the manor passed into the hands of the Cressett family during the 14th century.

The hall continued to be the Cressett family seat for several centuries. The family were staunch Royalists during the English Civil War and often in positions of service to the king. The crypt in the church served as the burial place for both families from the Norman period to the 18th century.

Owing to a dwindling congregation in the 20th century, the church closed in 1959. It was placed in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 1972, when extensive repairs were carried out. St. Michael's is a fine example of a small parish church possessing simple but stunning beauty.

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### Access

Due to their age, historic church floors can be uneven and worn and lighting can be low level. Please take care, especially in wet weather when floors can be slippery.

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Church of  
St Michael

Upton Cressett



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## The historic church of St Michael

### 10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 A remarkable survival from the early 13th century, this **wall painting** was discovered in 1968. The wings and body of an angel are clearly visible and it has been suggested that the other figure is an enthroned king. The figures are framed with scrolling vines.
- 2 This **rubbing** was taken from a brass which once hung in the chapel and depicts Richard Cressett and his wife Jane. They are accompanied by their two sons, Robert and Richard, and their three daughters, Catherine, Elizabeth and Alice. The original 17th-century brass is now in Monkhopton church, a few miles west of Upton Cressett.
- 3 The narrow glazed **windows** are inserted into a splay, a funnel-shaped frame which increases the amount of light flooding into the room. This was a typical feature of Norman buildings. The coloured glass in some of these windows is Victorian.
- 4 The sturdy **chancel arch** dates to the 12th century and is embellished with typical Norman zigzag carvings. The arch would have formed a boundary, separating the congregation in the nave from the chancel, the sacred part of the church.
- 5 A modestly-decorated Jacobean **pulpit**, carved with lozenges and flutes on the top rail, with an additional lectern.
- 6 An outstanding example of Norman masonry, this **font** is decorated with a trefoil motif and cable-moulding around the rim. The font basin is lined with lead.
- 7 The **timbers** at the west end of the church date to the late-medieval period. It is rare to find such posts left exposed inside a church.
- 8 Built in the 13th century, this private family **chantry chapel** is surprisingly large in relation to the rest of the church. The Cressett family did not become associated with the church until the 14th century, suggesting the chapel was commissioned by the de Uptons.

- 9 The **gothic arches** set into the north wall indicate the former presence of a north aisle, built perhaps during the 13th century. The aisle was demolished at a later date, possibly due to a dwindling local population requiring less space inside the church.
- 10 This 14th-century **porch** hides the exquisitely carved Norman doorway. The porch has shielded the carvings from the weather, preventing their erosion. The door itself is no longer in use.

