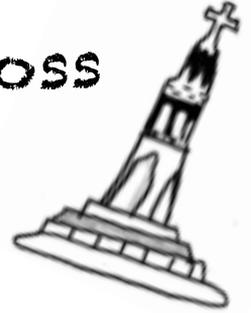




(Horrible) History of Ilam Cross

by Ilam Schoolchildren



Beware! We have discovered that Horrible Histories* are usually plain-speaking, a bit shocking, filled with fun, jokes and quizzes, and definitely not like a history lesson! They are full of amazing stories about people, and help us understand how real life might have been in the past.

**Horrible Histories have inspired these children's work. For more about Horrible Histories, visit www.horrible-histories.co.uk*



Generous Jesse

Jesse Watts-Russell was a kind man. He always thought of others, and Ilam villagers were lucky to be able to share a village with him.

He demonstrated this kindness when his wife, Mary Watts Russell, died in the 1840s at age 48. To remember her he built a cross, also known as Ilam Cross, in the middle of the village. Many years later you can still see it. The top was rebuilt in the 1960s when high winds blew the cross and top section off. Luckily it didn't hit anybody on the head! The people replaced it with a plain, boring one, but now it has got a new funky top section just like the original.



Jesse once complained, just like your mother does, that the village houses were blocking his view so he ordered to have them removed! However, he built more houses further down in the village, and the locals were delighted! Ilam Cross is now over 170 years old. You can work out the details!

As well as the cross, Jesse built a statue which is in Ilam church. This statue is called the David Pike Watts Memorial.

Quiz!

Unjumble the letters to reveal the hidden words from the text above (the capital letters help you work out how the words begin!):

- a) Clls soamr _____ b) eseJs _____ c) Rtstselh Waus _____
 d) Mrieaolm _____ e) Grseeuno _____ f) yarM _____

ANSWERS - a) Ilam Cross, b) Jesse, c) Watts Russell, d) Monument e) Generous, f) Mary

Around and about Ilam Cross

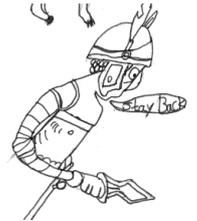
Deadly disaster and healing harmony came to Ilam in Medieval times through St Bertram, a.k.a. the Prince of Mercia - see if you can find his well in Ilam Park!

Deadly Dovedale

Prince Bertram, who ruled the ancient kingdom of Mercia in the 8th century, brought fame to Ilam. He started out as a noble man but ended up as a poor man (just like your teacher). When Bertram was rich he travelled to Ireland to find a bride, and married a beautiful princess. The princess had a baby then they journeyed back to Mercia.



On the way they had to sleep in a cave in Ilam. After the day's travelling they were all starving so the prince went out to find some food. When he returned his wife and baby were gone! But when he turned round (get ready for murderous medieval mayhem) he saw a wolf running away with his baby in its mouth.



The prince was devastated and turned to God for help. He became a hermit and later a saint, threw away his royalty, living instead in a cave. Yes, you heard me right! The prince lived in a cave.



Er, excuse me, shellfish, I said a hermit, not a Hermit Crab!



He made home remedies and treated the people of the village, as well as visitors from miles around. He also healed wounds and broken arms or legs, and asked the sick to crawl through a hole in his cave in order to be cured.

St Bertram's healing remedies

To make your own you will need a bottle of not just any still water and then you need to get it blessed by God. The Reverend of Holy Cross Church, Ilam, recommends you turn to 21st Century medicine instead!

Disease	Cure
The black death	Holy water
Broken leg	Bandage soaked in Holy water
Measles	Holy water-based cream and crawl through a hole.
Small pox	(you guessed it!) Holy water.

*****Quiz Question*****

Who became a hermit?

A: Mary Watts-Russell

B: St Bertram

C: Your teacher

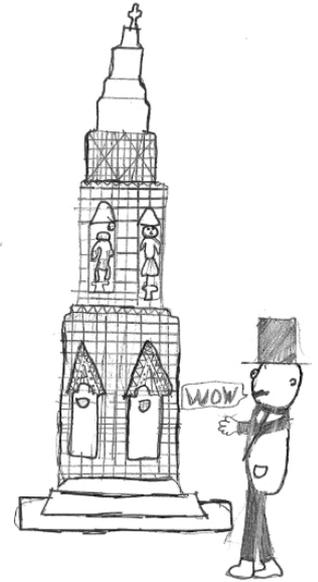
Back to Ilam Cross!

The Cheerful Champions of Ilam Cross

John Macduff Derrick - Architect who designed the Gothic monument

Richard Westmacott - Sculptor who carved the original Ilam Cross

Wendell Holmes - Rich man (right) who was unable to trace any owners and eventually paid out of his own pocket to put a temporary top on the Cross

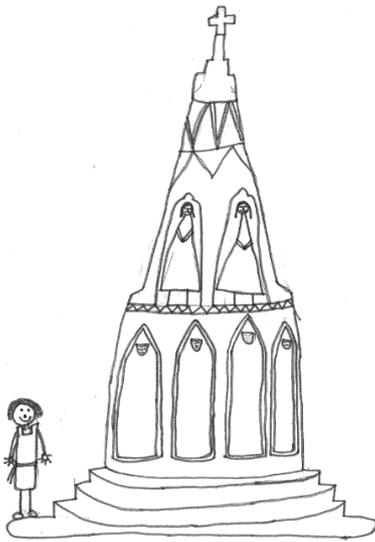


Phil Mottram - Historian and leader of the Save Ilam Cross team

Ian Ward, Jacob Ward, Andy Hoddinot, and Derick Carr - Stone Masons who restored, cleaned and repaired Ilam Cross

Hang on, they're all men!

But don't worry - there are plenty of women involved in the saving and upkeep of Ilam Cross as well. Sue Prince (drawn left) from Ilam is a champion too - she helped the Ilam Imp to start his own Twitter account (that's really true).



The beautiful Ilam angels are female too, and let's just remember who started all of this!

Quiz Questions

When did the top of the cross fall off?

- 1906s
- 1996s
- 1960s

How many angels are there on Ilam Cross?

- 4
- 6
- 8

How many are new?

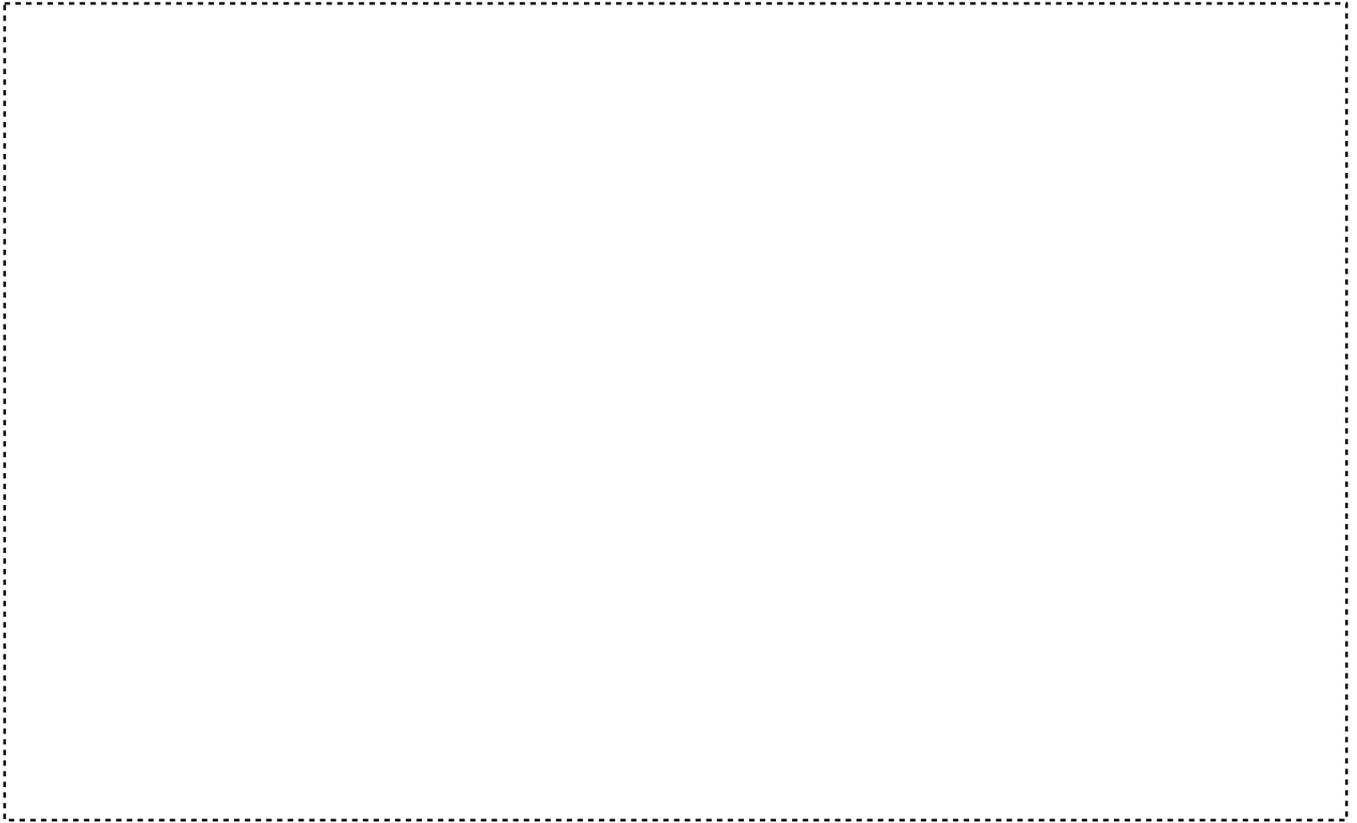
Write it here: _____

3 top tips on how to survive if you're Mary Watts Russell:

1. Don't have 8 children
2. Try to like your neighbours (they may murder you especially if you live in Ilam Hall)
3. Don't stand in front of a car

Mary did have 8 children, liked her neighbours and did stand in front of a car. Apart from standing in front of the car. She didn't do that one.

Here is a space for you to draw a bit of Ilam Cross. You could do the whole thing, the Imp (if you can find him!), or some of the detail that you like.



Now, go to Ilam Hall, stand at the top of the stairs on the terraced garden, and see what you think of the view. Decide if you are A, B, C or D.

- A) Rubbish, they should never have moved the houses.
- B) Stunning, aren't we lucky to be here and see this.
- C) What is that strange roof-shaped cut-off hill? (Thorpe Cloud)
- D) Other thoughts, write here:

If you really love Ilam Cross, you can become a Friend of Ilam Cross and give £10 a year. Or even better, twist the arm of someone older and richer instead!

This guide for families and school groups was produced by Ilam Schoolchildren with help from their teacher Ms Wilson, and is intended to make real local history fun just like our hero Terry Deary does in his Horrible Histories. We hope we haven't offended anyone and that you enjoy the history - horrible or not - local to you.

Also involved were a local educational company Lifeworlds Learning, and The Ilam Cross Trustees, with help from all the other organisations in the village. The guide was funded by the Trustees, as part of the Ilam Cross Restoration project - visit the Ilam website for more details about the funders involved.