



**CHURCHES VISITED AND REVISITED
(17/12/16 TO DATE) – BOOK 30**





**Penny Meadows, London Road, Marks Tey, Colchester
(former Marks Tey Methodist Church)**

The Penny Meadow story started in 2008 when Jan Johnstone, who at the time was the head of the post 16 department of a local special school, pioneered a house in the community where the emphasis was on Life Skills and Personal development rather than academic achievement. The house in the community proved to be a great success. In 2010, when looking for onward provision for the school leavers, she was disappointed that there did not seem to be any provision that would carry on the work done in this initiative. Jan passionately believed that there was a need for such a provision, It was then that we decided to create a facility that would provide progressive life skills training, enable and facilitate personal development, provide an environment to encourage and cultivate socialization and to offer a respite service that was a friendly home from home. We were very aware that a healthy life style, life and independent living skills, employability and preparation for employment were important qualities to encourage and develop, coupled with high self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence.

After more than 12 months planning and organizing Penny Meadow opened at 67 London Road, Marks Tey in July 2011. In 2012 Penny Meadow rented some land in Dedham where a small herd of 6 Alpacas, some sheep and three Donkeys were homed. Large animal care became a very popular activity and in 2014 Penny Meadow purchased land of its own in Wakes Colne, just a short drive from their Marks Tey base.

This is where their young people gain work experience, learn about large animal care and land management and look after our small flock of sheep, 20+ Alpacas, 4 Donkeys and 2 miniature Shetland ponies.

By 2015 Penny Meadow needed more space and arranged to rent the now defunct Marks Tey Methodist Church, just a very short walk from the house. Here they have a large hall, catering kitchen, student common room and disabled facilities as well as a large grassed area and woodland where they now run forest school activities.



St James, Church Lane, Little Tey

TUESDAY 25th DECEMBER 2018



St Nicolas, Chipping Hill, Witham

Seen from the car - St Nicolas' Church is the Anglican Parish Church of the town of Witham and, with the parishes of Rivenhall & Silver End, Terling, Fairstead, White Notley and Faulkbourne, makes up the Witham and Villages Team Ministry known as Pilgrim Rivers MMU. They are part of the **Church of England** in the **Diocese of Chelmsford**, and we are also a member of Churches Together in Witham.



St Germanus, Faulkbourne

Seen from the car - **St Germanus Church** is a parish church for the Essex village of Faulkbourne. It stands in the park of Faulkbourne Hall. It is Norman and hold many memorials to the Bullock family (inhabitants of the hall since the 17th century), formerly including the helm and pennon-rest of Sir Edward which was stolen in 1969.

It is dedicated to Germanus of Auxerre and was restored in 1886 by the Rev. Frederick Spurrell, with the assistance of the architect Sir Arthur Blomfield. Rev. Spurrell presented a history of the church to the Essex Archaeological Society on 30 August 1877, a transcript of which can be found in their records.

He dates the church as Norman, built towards the end of the reign of William I of England, and suggests that the reason for the building being dedicated to Saint Germanus is probably that it was consecrated on 31 July, his feast day. It is now served as part of the Witham and Villages Team Ministry.



St Etheldreda, Church Hill, White Notley

GV II Parish church. Has an 11th century chancel then with an apse and chancel arch. 13th apse removed and present square extension built, possibly also the arch in the north wall. Circa 1250 south aisle and south arcade of nave and late 13th north aisle and north arcade. 14th south porch. Late 15th/early 16th timber belfry. Circa 1885 north vestry, possibly on the site of a former chapel. 19th and later restorations.

Flint rubble, the north and west walls plastered. Limestone clunch and Roman brick and tile dressings. Red plain tiled roofs. Cross finial to Chancel gable end. Square weatherboarded belfry surmounted by an octagonal spirelet.

Exterior: chancel. East window of three lancets restored 19th. Brick buttresses to north and south walls. Three windows to south wall, 19th lancet eastern with 13th internal detail, central of similar form and date, restored, western circa 1330. Two trefoiled lights with tracery and two centred head. Between these windows is a 13th doorway with chamfered jambs and two centred head. 14th/15th framed and battened door. East of this door are traces of a 11th arch in Roman brick and the former end of the chancel.

The 19th north vestry with two-light eastern window adjacent to which is a re-set round headed window. Gabled dormer with two lights. North aisle with four brick buttresses, eastern window of two cusped two centred head lights in a pointed segmental head. The western window similar. North doorway. 13th with double chamfered two centred arch. South aisle, south wall with three two-light windows in two centred heads, the two eastern are 14th restored, western 19th/20th.

There is a square headed window to the east wall, west wall with 19th single light windows to north and south and a similar date central three-light window with tracery in a moulded segmental pointed head with label. Above this window is a small pointed light with label. Buttresses to each angle and right and left of central window. 14th gabled south porch with cambered tie beam and two arched braces forming a two-centred arch. East and west sides with brick plinth and six lights with diamond mullions, collars to each rafter pair, cusped bargeboards. 14th south door, moulded, panelled and with tracery to upper part. Strap hinges.

Interior: chancel. Roof of seven cants with moulded and carved wall plates. Four 17th panels between ashlar one relating to Henry Neville, Knt. and Alice his wife 1639. 19th stained glass to windows. 19th mosaic reredos. 19th altar rails. Piscina 13th double trefoiled heads, sunk quatrefoil over, above which is a 19th pointed arch. To west of piscina are three trefoiled arches in plaster, date and use unknown. Two centre archway in north wall discovered during restorations of circa 1885. Above this archway was the small round headed window, now in the east wall of the vestry. It is cut in a single stone believed to be a Saxon gravestone. It contains stained glass provisionally dated circa 1220 depicting a crowned figure holding a relic (thought to be the oldest piece of English stained glass in Essex). There are two roundels of stained glass in the north aisle window, one a child's head and one a robed crowned figure, probably 200 years later in date. Also in the vestry is a small piscina once part of the original chapel, and three painted lino panels of the Lord's prayer and 10 Commandments.

The 11th Chancel arch has square responds and semi-circular arch of Roman brick. To either side of the chancel arch are plastered and painted niches with semi-circular heads. Paintings possibly 16th. Nave roof, seven cants with two tie beams on wall pieces with arch braces, these form four centred arches with void spandrels. South arcade circa 1250 of three bays with arches similar to north arcade. Moulded capitals and bases to round columns. Graft to eastern pillar. North arcade, late 13th of three bays with octagonal columns and two centred arches. There are traces of paintings to pillars and walls. In the south wall the line of the two centred arch of the former doorway to the rood stairs is visible. "Thou God Seest Me" painted over north doorway.

12th large dugout chest. 14th octagonal font, moulded base, two centred arches to stem, bosses to soffit. Circular panels to each face with shields and faces, one a child in a robe. North Aisle. Screen early 16th. Five bays, moulded cornice and mullion. Central doorway with trefoiled and sub-cusped heads, carved spandrels. Side bays with ogee heads, moulded mullions and cornice with three mortices over. South aisle screen. Early 15th. Five bays including middle doorway with trefoiled and sub-cusped head, side bays with cusped and traceried heads, moulded cornice and mullions. North aisle roof, six bays, moulded wall plate, curved braces to principals. South aisle roof, similar with carved heads at the feet of principal rafters. Hatchment, Charles II. 20th carved wood pulpit, with pierced panels, centre panel of Christ the Shepherd supported by a winged angel and surmounted by two kneeling angels. Floor slab Wm and Katherine Cordale 1750, 1770. Bell turret. Late 15th/early 16th. Four supporting columns with moulded capitals. Arch braces to side girts. Two centred arches to front and rear, that to front with cusping. See Church Carpentry, C.A.Hewett for detailed drawing. RCHM 1.

Mr Dennis King of Norwich pronounced the figures depicted St Etheldreda, who is the only female saint depicted with a crown (Queen) and book (Abbess). The Bishop of Colchester stated that we must assume she is the patron saint of White Notley Church. The church was re-dedicated to St Etheldreda, Sunday 4th October 1959.



The Church in Great Notley

THURSDAY 27th DECEMBER 2018



Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Gilray Road, Diss



Methodist, Victoria Road, Diss



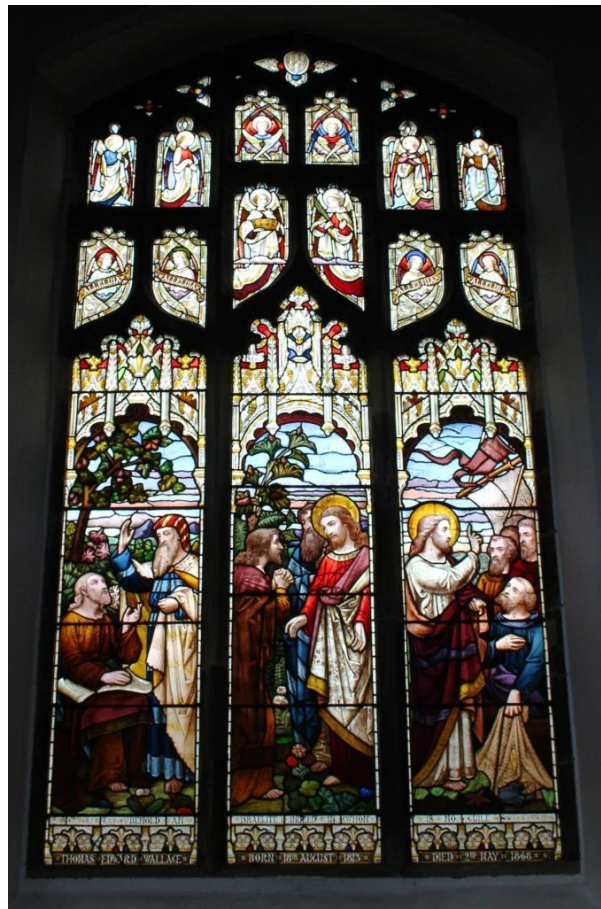
URC, Mere Street, Diss



Across the water in the distance was the Baptist church in Denmark Street



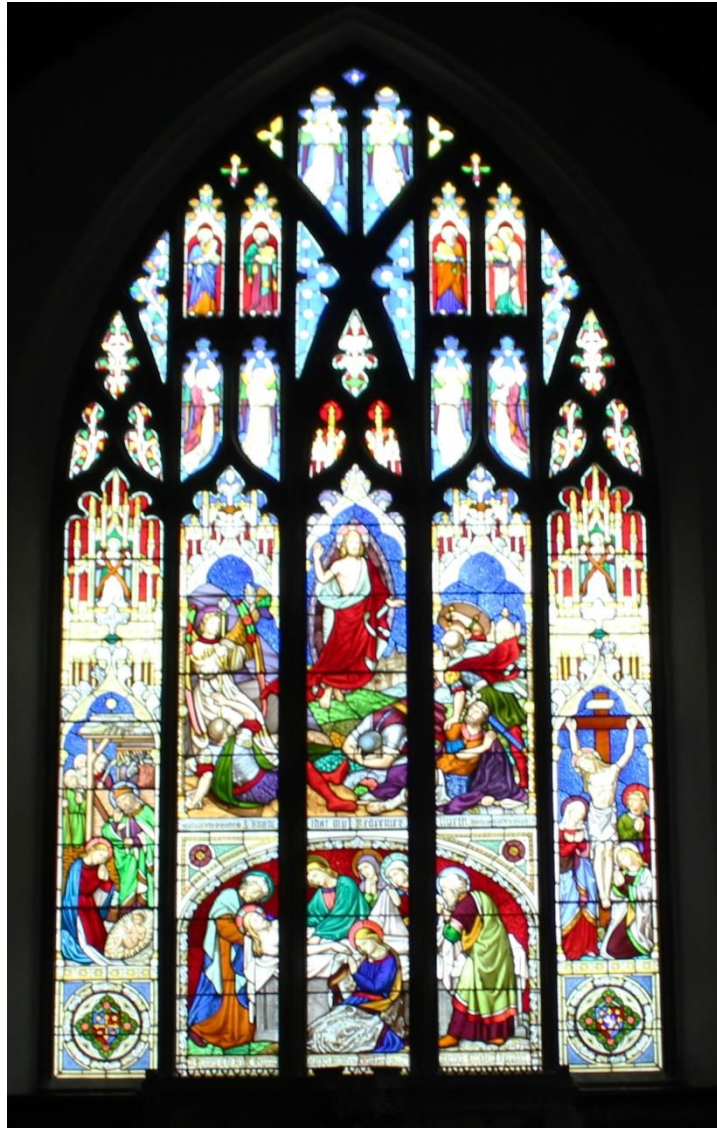
St Mary the Virgin, Mount Street, Diss



There were a lot of stained glass windows to see and photograph in St Mary's.











Then I was off to find the three new churches on my list





Salvation Army, Sunnyside, Diss



St Henry Morse, Catholic Church, Shelfanger Road, Diss



This splendid Catholic church of 2012 on the Shelfanger Road was the replacement for the 1952 church of Holy Trinity down in the town. Holy Trinity itself was a fairly utilitarian conversion of a former bakery, and had been enlarged for Diss's growing Catholic population as recently as the turn of the 21st Century, but it was clear something new was needed. Diss had only become a Catholic parish in 1968, and the continuity of the church during the penal years was maintained by local big houses rather than in the town.

Henry Morse was a local lad. He was born at Brome just over the Suffolk border in 1595 towards the end of the Elizabethan period. At the age of 19 after the death of his father he went to France, and was received into the Catholic Church at the English seminary in Douai where his brother was studying for the priesthood. Eventually ordained himself, he served the faithful in Newcastle and London. After a number of narrow scrapes he was eventually arrested and charged with treason, and of being the cause of treason in others. Taking the vows of a Jesuit while imprisoned, he was condemned to death by hanging, drawing and quartering, the standard punishment for treason, in 1645. The anti-Catholic fury of the Elizabethan period had dissipated somewhat, and at his martyrdom at Newgate Morse was mercifully allowed to die on the scaffold. When his bowels were wound out of him and his body cut into quarters, the crowd surged forward to dip their handkerchiefs in his blood.

The new church cost almost exactly a million pounds, funded by the sale of the land on which the former church stood.

The style could be termed agricultural vernacular, and the architects were Hollins of Framlingham. The structure successfully combines a square worship space at the east which can be extended into the hall to the west with a flat for the resident priest, a nice medieval touch. The overwhelming impression inside is of a church full of gathered light.

The parish brought their font with them, but the restored details of stained glass windows around the sanctuary were from Stowmarket Catholic church, in which parish this originally was. The rood came from the Catholic chapel at RAF Marham, and the altar from the Carmelite convent at Langham. The modern abstract glass installed at Holy Trinity barely a dozen years earlier was also brought here, and forms a west window into the parish hall.

All in all, a church done well, seemly and fitting for Catholic worship and suitable for the life of the parish in the 21st Century. It appears to be open every day.



Baptist, Denmark Street, Diss

They are ordinary people from all walks of life who have been transformed by Jesus' work on the cross. As a result the Bible is really important to us as they believe it is how God speaks to them today. They also seek to be a praying people because they can do nothing without God's help and power. It is through the Holy Spirit that as a people they have the power and the understanding and the gifts to be able to serve God.



St Mary the Virgin, Mount Street, Diss





Hope, Vines Road, Diss

They are a charismatic community church based in South Norfolk, serving the towns of Diss and Harleston and the surrounding area. DC3 (Diss Christian Community Church) began in 1948, and are members of the Evangelical Alliance, a partner church with 24-7 prayer and part of the Pioneer Network. Their story started in August 1947 when a Christian evangelist came to Diss. A large group of people heard the gospel of Jesus and they became Christians. In 1948 they formed an Assemblies of God church and appointed their first pastor. In 1955 the church purchased a property in Mount Street, Diss, where meetings continued for the next 30 years. Over those years many changes took place and in 1985 it was decided to establish a new church called Diss Christian Community Church (DC3).

There were 29 members in total. The following the present site in Vines Road was purchased. Phase 1 of the building was completed with 18 months and the church moved in. Phase 2 of the building, which includes the Sports Hall, was completed in January 1997, with the hope that it could then become a part of the community and somewhere that was welcoming and open to all. In 2005 they then began a new congregation in Harleston, which initially met in a small upstairs room in the Leisure Centre. This part of Hope Church now meets in the Archbishop Sancroft School. In October 2017 DC3 became part of the Pioneer Network of Churches and in February 2018 they launched the Hope Church.







St Peter and St Mary, Station Road West, Stowmarket



URC, Ipswich Road, Stowmarket



Our Lady's Catholic, Stricklands Street, Stowmarket

FRIDAY 28th DECEMBER 2018



Methodist, Grundisburgh Road, Woodbridge





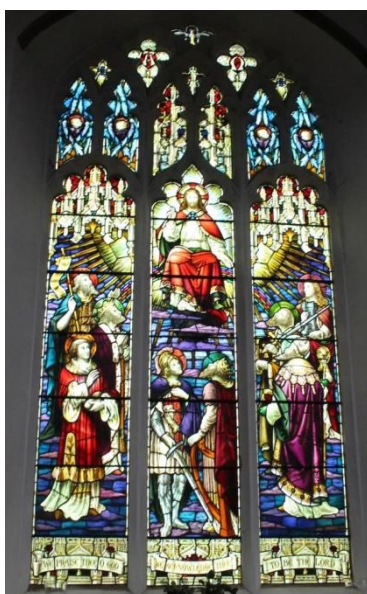
Salvation Army, Gobbitts Lane, Woodbridge

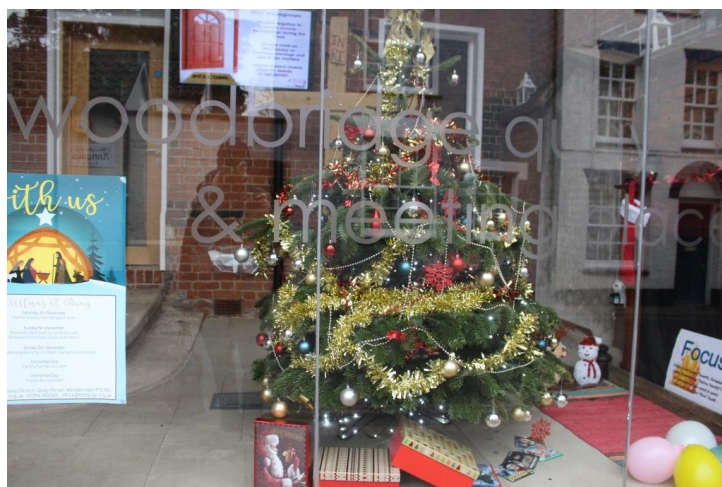


St John's, St John's Hill, Woodbridge



St Mary the Virgin, Market Hill, Woodbridge





Quay Baptist, Quay Street, Woodbridge

Woodbridge Quay Church was formed when Quay United Reformed Church merged with Beaumont Baptist Church. They are members of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, and the Evangelical Alliance.



URC, Quay Street, Halesworth



St Mary's, Steeple End, Halesworth





St Edmund, King and Martyr, Halesworth



St Mary's and below the redundant Methodist in London Road, Halesworth.





St Mary's and it was the War Memorial and below the Poppy shelter





Baptist, Station Road, Beccles





St Michael's, New Market, Beccles

Beccles is the most urban of all Suffolk's smaller towns. Its industrialisation and the large rural catchment around it, make it seem much bigger than it actually is. In fact, its population of just over ten thousand, makes it but the eighth largest town in Suffolk. Another part of this illusion is maintained by the sheer scale of St Michael's church, and the accompanying bell tower.

St Michael is the only church in Suffolk other than St Andrew, Bramfield, to have a bell tower separate from the body of the church. This is more common over in the fens and marshes of north Cambridgeshire and west Norfolk, which may give us a clue to what happened here.

The church was built first, without a tower. A bequest of 1369 by Robert de Mutford left money for building the 'new church', and the porch, which we'll come to in a moment, was the result of a 1455 will. But in the early 16th century, in a display of piety, power and civic pride, the great square belfry was built to the south east. Solid, faced in stone and lined in brick, it rises almost 100 ft above the street. The parapet was never built; the Reformation intervened. But why was it built here at all?

The obvious place, at the west end of the nave, is marshy, and the ground falls away to the river. And another reason, of course, is that its actual location is grander and more prominent, set on the side of the former market place. By the middle of the 20th Century, the parish found it difficult to afford its upkeep, and in the 1970s it was sold off to the Borough for the nominal sum of one penny.

You walk westwards from the tower into the south side of St Michael's churchyard. The great south porch, with its turret beyond. Now, if St Michael did not have its great bell tower, it would perhaps still be famous for its south porch. It dominates the whole of the south side, rising above the south aisle on two storeys. It is one of the biggest medieval porches in all Suffolk. Inside, bosses depict incidents in the ministry of Christ. The other interesting feature of the south side is curious. This is the small castellated porch to the chancel door. Above it, a now blocked doorway leads onto the parapet, an outdoor pulpit, apparently. Could it be a Victorian conceit? The blocked doorway matches one on the north side, except that there, it is the entrance to the rood loft stair turret.

Stepping into the church, you enter a long, open space accentuated by the long arcades running towards the east. There is no chancel arch, no physical separation of nave and chancel. Everything is neatly ordered, but perhaps a little characterless. Pevsner thought it *bald and grey*, and in truth it is a bit sombre. This is partly the result of a terrible fire on the night of November 29th 1586, which completely destroyed the interior of the church, along with some eighty adjacent houses. Almost everything we see today postdates the fire, some of it rebuilt, the rest restored. It didn't help that the restoration of the 1860s was at the hands of John Hakewill, a local architect whose churches are rarely joyful affairs.

However, your eyes are easily drawn through the 1920s screen to the star of the show, a seven-light east window, filled with glass by Heaton, Butler and Bayne. And here is another curiosity, for the figure of St Michael at the bottom holds his scales, which should contain a sinner being weighed against his sins. However, the scales here appear to contain a man and a woman. I wonder which was intended as the sinner, and which the sin?

The Stuart royal arms are another oddity, because they are a fretwork design and, at first glance, you may not notice what is wrong with them. And then it strikes you that the lion and unicorn supporters are the wrong way round.

In fact, both sides are painted, so as there is no chancel arch it must originally have been intended for the arms to hang from the roof and be visible from both sides.

Hardly anything survives from before the Reformation, except the font. This is a cheap and cheerful Purbeck marble job of the 13th century, familiar from many a tiny village church, with its greenish stone and carved blank arcades. It seems rather unusual in such a big church, so perhaps the original font was destroyed in the fire, and this may have come from elsewhere.

In short, it cannot be escaped that the great glory of St Michael is entirely vested in its exterior, especially when seen from a distance, where, as Pevsner rightly says, it is *not easily forgotten*. Internally, the aisles and clerestory are grand enough, but the lack of any medieval survivals means it is hard to see St Michael as much more than the rather sombre CofE parish church it has become. Mind you, some Suffolk churches have managed that without a fire.



Hungate Church, Beccles

1652 The first **INDEPENDENT** Congregation in Beccles formally constituted.

1687 Land purchased in Hungate, followed by building of the first Meeting House on the site around 1690.

1773-1803 Joseph Heptinstall's ministry leads to considerable church growth.

1812 A new **INDEPENDENT** Chapel erected on the existing site during the ministry of Isaac Sloper (1803-1834).

1836 The building was greatly extended, with an enlarged facade and galleries.

1861 Substantial two storey extensions to rear of the church building adding a minister's vestry and school rooms.

1879-1880 A School Hall was built alongside church alterations which provided a high pulpit, new pews, an arched apse for the organ and a balustrade etc.

1972 Amalgamation of the **CONGREGATIONAL** and **PRESBYTERIAN** churches to become the **UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

1977 The **METHODIST CHURCH** in Station Road closed and members moved to join with the **UNITED REFORMED CHURCH** in Hungate. Further alterations were placed at the front of the worship area for the choir.

1983 A church lounge was built linking the Church with the Hall, new toilets and a kitchen were included.

2003 Interior of church extensively remodelled, modernised and improved. Pews replaced with chairs. The previous worship area entrance was converted into two cloakrooms. The 1977 false ceiling removed and replaced with a canopy backlit with halogen lights. A new access to the worship area was provided by the conversion of the three side windows between the church and the lounge.

2013 Our own Rev Don Moxon compiled an history entitled "THE STORY OF HUNGATE CHURCH, BECCLES 1652 - 2012. An Independent and Methodist Church History of an East Anglian Town".



Quaker's, Smallgate, Beccles

SUNDAY 30th DECEMBER 2018



St Julian, St Julian Alley, Norwich

Above is St Julian's church. This is one of the oldest churches in the city of Norwich. A surviving Romanesque door and several small oculi (rounded windows) suggest an Anglo-Norman church. **Julian of Norwich** Julian (1342-1413) was a 14th century mystic, an anchoress, or female hermit, who lived in a small cell attached to St Julian's church, next to one of the busiest roads in medieval Norwich. Strangely, we do not know her real name; she is only known by her association with the church of St Julian.

In truth we do not know much of anything about her, except that she almost certainly was not a nun, but a lay person who chose a life of contemplation. She was also not the first person to use the anchorite cell attached to St Julian's church; it was used before her time and again after her death. Julian is remembered at Norwich Cathedral with a statue on the west front and a pair of stained glass windows. One of the windows, in the Bauchon Chapel, portrays her as a Benedictine nun, which she was not. She is often called a saint as well, and she's not that either!