



**CHURCHES VISITED AND REVISITED
(17/12/16 TO DATE) – BOOK 42**



TUESDAY 24th DECEMBER 2019



URC, Colchester Road, Chappel (from bus)

The church is in the village which is eight miles West of Colchester along the A1124 and is in the heart of the scenic Colne Valley. The area is mainly rural and it has become a sought-after place to live and many residents commute in from London. The URC building is the only mainstream non conformist church within a four mile radius



St Andrew's, Church Hill, Earls Colne (from bus)

The minster church at Colne, served by two priests and a deacon about 1040 was presumably at Earls Colne. Aubrey de Vere granted the church to Colne priory at its foundation, and the priory appropriated the rectory before 1254, retaining the advowson of the vicarage until the Dissolution, when it was granted to the earl of Oxford. The advowson descended with Colne priory manor until *about* 1886. The lords presented regularly until 1786, except in 1610 when James I presented by lapse. Thomas Carwardine in 1786 and his son John Bryan in 1824, son-in-law and son of the lord of the manor, were presented by men who were presumably acting as trustees. Samuel Blackall presented himself in 1867, as did David Methven in 1889.

By 1890 Methven had acquired the advowson, which was exercised by his executors in 1924 and 1926. In 1936 the advowson passed to the Diocesan Board of Patronage. The living was held in plurality with White Colne from 1967 and with Colne Engaine from 1988; it was united with Colne Engaine and White Colne in 1995. The vicarage was valued at 3 marks (£2) in 1254, the 'church' at £8 in 1291. In 1355 the vicarage was endowed with the small tithes of the tenants' lands, and it was worth £8 10s. 8d. in 1535. In 1640 parishioners agreed to more than double the vicar, Ralph Josselin's, income to £80; in 1650 the glebe was worth £4 and the tithe £24. In 1674 Richard Harlakenden gave to the vicarage the great tithes of about two thirds of the parish. In 1835 the average net income was £494. The tithe was commuted in 1838 for a rent charge of £616 15s., but in 1850 the net income was only *about* £400. By 1887 the tithe rent charge had been reduced to £611 3s. and fees averaged £17 12s.

The glebe comprised 1 acre of grass *about* 1 mile from the vicarage house until 1841 when it was exchanged for 4 a. of arable adjoining the vicarage garden. The vicar was assigned a house in the marketplace in 1355. In 1637 it comprised an open hall, a parlour, presumably with a chamber above it, a kitchen, and other rooms or outbuildings. Vicars occupied the house for most of the 18th century and rebuilt or remodelled it before 1810 as a brick house with a tiled roof. During the incumbencies of Thomas Carwardine (1786-1824), who lived at Colne Priory, and Robert Watkinson (1830-67), who lived at Colne Place, the house was occupied by curates, and it was rebuilt by Samuel Blackall, vicar 1867-89. The house was sold in 1956 and demolished in 1980; no. 95 High Street was bought to replace it.

Names of priests of Colne are known from about 1040, and the church seems to have been regularly served in the Middle Ages, many vicars staying 10 or more years, and one, William Noble (1436-87), for over 50. In 1306 the vicar was imprisoned for a robbery committed in Rivenhall; he was still in gaol and the parish in the care of the rural dean in 1309. Before 1317 he apparently sold the living to finance a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.



Baptist, Halstead Road, Earls Colne (from bus)

There has been a Baptist Church in the village since 1786 and the church has played a key role in Earls Colne history. At first, the congregation met in two converted cottages. In 1796 the first Baptist Church in Earls Colne was built, then in 1818 a larger one was erected. As the church grew larger, the present building was commissioned and completed in 1861. At the time it was the largest Baptist Church in Essex! The church has had a number of ministers over the years, pioneering new initiatives to better serve the village of Earls Colne and support the Baptist congregation here.

Over the last few years, as Earls Colne has grown as a village, the church too has adapted. During the week the church is used as a play school centre, whilst on Thursdays the church runs its own chatterbox mums and toddler group.



St Francis of Assisi (Catholic), Colchester Road, Halstead





St Andrew's, Parsonage Street, Halstead

It was the Saxons who gave the town its name: 'Hael' meaning healthy or well, and 'stead' meaning place. The name was undoubtedly due in no small part to the fast stream of refreshing water they found here. Anglo-Saxon tradition was passed on orally rather than in writing so very little is known about the first millennium. Most of the parish was held by the Anglo-Saxon Godwin, Earl of Kent but, with the Norman invasion we see some changes. Halstead increases in size enough to be recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) and the land comes under the control of Norman lords and knights. There is documentary evidence of a church having been on the site of St. Andrew's in the reign of King John (1199 -1216).

In 1251 a Royal Charter was granted for a weekly market near to the church and Halstead's growth was confirmed. In 1311 the Bouchier family became the most influential local lords and began a dynasty that was to have influence locally and nationally into the 16th Century. The greater part of the church - the nave, north and south aisles and the chancel, dates from the early years of the 14th Century. In the 15th Century there were the minor additions of the north vestry, and north and south porches. The physical look of the church then remained largely unaltered until 1850 when the west end was extended and the dominant tower was added. The early history of the life of the church community and of the town are best recorded in Holman's Halstead, Being Historical Notes Arranged by William Holman, "Pastor of the Church of Protestant Dissenters" in Halstead, Essex, 1700-1730 A.D. For more recent details please contact Halstead Town Council. The building is a Grade 1 listed building and the cost of maintaining it in its splendid condition is a major financial consideration.



Holy Trinity, Chapel Hill, Halstead

Holy Trinity Church is a redundant Anglican church in the town of Halstead, Essex, England. It is recorded in the National Heritage List for England as a designated Grade II* listed building, and is under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. The church stands to the north of the junction between Trinity Street (the A131 road) and Chapel Hill.

A chapel, Holy Trinity Chapel, was built on the site in about 1413, but this had disappeared by the 18th century. The present church was built in 1843–44, and most of it was paid for by Mrs Mary Gee of Colne House, Earls Colne. A grant of £500 came from funds provided by Parliament in the Church Building Act 1824.

The church was designed by George Gilbert Scott. As the building of the spire was nearing completion, it collapsed, fortunately causing only minor injuries to the builders. An organ chamber was added in 1876. The church was declared redundant in April 1987.

For the exterior - Holy Trinity is constructed in brick with flint facing. It has gault brick and limestone dressings. The roofs are slated with tiles on the ridges. Its plan consists of a nave with a clerestory, north and south aisles, a chancel, a northeast vestry, an organ chamber, and a southwest tower with a spire. The tower incorporates a porch. It is a Gothic Revival church in 13th-century Early English style.

The tower is tall with four stages. On its south side is a doorway. The second and third stages contain single-lancet windows flanked by arcading. In the third stage is a quatrefoil opening on each side. The bell openings consist of a pair of narrow lancets, with blind arches on each side. On the tower is a broach spire with two tiers of lucarnes. In the gable at the east end of the church is a wheel window, with spokes radiating from a hub.

Below this are three lancet windows of equal height. At all corners of the church are clasping buttresses. The sides of the aisles are divided into bays by buttresses, and each bay contains a lancet window. Along the clerestory is arcading with alternate blind arches and lancet windows. At the west end is a doorway, above which is a triple lancet window, with a single lancet above that.

In the interior - The walls are plastered and whitewashed. Between the nave and the aisles on each side is a six-bay arcade supported by alternating circular and octagonal piers.

The seating in the nave and aisles, and probably the font, with its square bowl on an octagonal base, date from the time of the building of the church. The lectern dates from 1906, and the choir stalls were added in 1913.

The paneling in the chancel, and the pulpit date from the early 20th century. At the east end of the south aisle is a memorial screen added in 1922. The stained glass in the west window dates from 1851 and is by Clutterbuck, the east window of 1887 is by Burlison and Grylls, the east window in the south aisle dated 1922 is by J. C. N. Bewsey, and three windows in the south aisle of 1931–32 are by A. K. Nicholson.

The three-manual organ was made in 1858. In 1878 E. W. Norman of Norwich and Diss either rebuilt it or supplied a new organ. This was subsequently restored in 1909 by Binns of Leeds, again in about 1970 by Cedric Arnold of Thaxted, and at a later date by Bishop and Son.



Methodist, New Street, Halstead

WEDNESDAY 25th DECEMBER 2019



The Church in Great Notley, Braintree

They are an ecumenical partnership church that's part of the Baptist Union, Church of England, Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, in association with the Roman Catholic Church.

MONDAY 30th DECEMBER 2019



Parish Church, Church Road, Stratford St Mary













Holy Trinity, Blythburgh

The parish church is dedicated to the Holy Trinity and known as the 'Cathedral of the Marshes'. Blythburgh was one of the earliest Christian sites in East Anglia. There was a church there in 654 to which the bodies of the East Anglian King Anna and his son, descendants of King Wehha, were brought after their deaths in battle at Bulcamp with the Mercian King Penda.

At the time of the Norman Conquest Blythburgh was part of the royal estate and had one of the richest churches in Suffolk, possibly a Saxon minster, with two daughter churches. It was probably the rich parent church that was granted by King Henry I to Augustinian canons some time between 1116 and 1147, becoming the priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A daughter church is likely to have been the predecessor of Holy Trinity. It was rebuilt in the 15th century. In the movement to dissolve the monasteries, the suppression of the priory was authorised in 1528 and it was dissolved in 1537, the reversion of the property being granted to local gentleman Sir Arthur Hopton in 1548.

The church underwent a series of disasters, man-made and natural. The most dramatic of the latter variety came on 4 August 1577, when a storm hit the area, and during morning service lightning hit the church, "cleft the door, and returning to the steeple rent the timber, [and] brake the chimes". The falling spire damaged the font and the roof (which wasn't repaired until 1782), destroying the angels in the west end bays. The door shows marks, which have the appearance of burns caused by candle flames, which the credulous associate with the devil's fingerprints. They have been associated with the 'Black Shuck' legend, which is the title of a song by the Lowestoft rock group The Darkness which mentions Blythburgh in the lyrics.

During the 17th century Holy Trinity was badly damaged when Parliament set out to remove what the Puritans deemed to be superstitious ornamentation from churches; Blythburgh was assigned to William Dowsing, a local Puritan, and on 8 April 1644 he went to the church and ordered the removal of "twenty superstitious pictures, one on the outside of the church; two crosses, one on the porch and another on the steeple; and twenty cherubim to be taken down in the church and chancel and gave order to take down above 200 more within eight days".

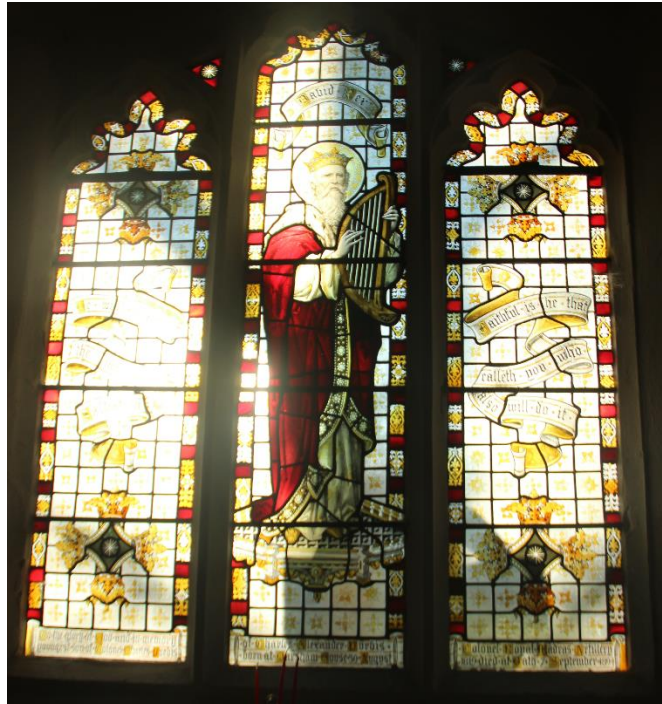
General neglect also played its part in the church's deterioration, resulting in part from rural poverty, and in part from the rise of Methodism (a Primitive Methodist chapel was founded in the village in the 1830s).

By the late 19th century the church was in a very poor state of repair, and in 1881 a restoration fund made possible the repair of the church, and then its maintenance after its reopening in 1884. The restoration was controversial with William Morris and his Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings opposed to the radical plans of the local building committee. Shortage of funds restricted the work that could be done. While the fabric was repaired, modern taste ruled out any return to the 15th-century colour scheme of the church; the thirty-six angels, set back to back in pairs on the arch-braced, firred, tie-beam roof had been brightly painted in red and green with much use made of tin foil and gold leaf. A modern reproduction is mounted above the south door.

The church has a two manual pipe organ by Bishop dating from 1951 which was almost completely rebuilt in 2003 by Rodney Briscoe. A specification of the organ can be found on the National Pipe Organ Register.

In 1962 the acoustic value of the building was discovered by Benjamin Britten, and some of the concerts of the Aldeburgh Festival are performed in the church.







All Saints, Wash Lane, Darsham

This is a medieval church that was restored in 1879 and 1887. This being to the nave, chancel, West tower and the South porch. This was mainly coursed flint rubble, stone dressings to the South wall of the nave and the chancel was plastered, and plaited roof.

It has a 15th century square tower, four stages and crenellated parapet, diagonal buttresses with flush work divided by a string course. A nave with 15th century windows, two to the North and three to the South, blocked 12th century North doorway with remains of arch, and porch rebuilt in 1887.

A 12th century South doorway to the nave, much restored but with original shafts and capitals. South chancel with two early 15th century windows and 13th century Priest's doorway, North chancel with three late 19th lancet windows, 15th century arch-braced nave roof of six bays, chancel roof with moulded wall plate and plaster ceiling.

A good early 15th century octagonal font with well preserved carved panels and stem, base step with original inscription. A nave with 18 15th century poppy head bench ends, 14 of them with traceried panelling, two further poppyhead bench ends in the chancel, an early 17th century pulpit and holy table, Royal Arms of George IV over the North doorway, cinquefoil headed niche to splay of central South nave window.

A North chancel with a fine wall monument to Sir Thomas Bedingfield (died 1660), alabaster and marble, with flanking columns supporting a pediment with two reclining figures, portrait brass on the chancel floor to Ann Bedingfield (died 1641), late stain glass to chancel and South nave and it was listed as a Grade 1 due to its surviving medieval work.



Abbey, Abbey Road, Leiston

In about 1363 the abbey was moved away from what was evidently a rather unhealthy location on swampy ground and rebuilt on its present site. The old abbey was dismantled for building materials (though a fragment of it can still be seen) and as a result the 14th century abbey incorporates some Norman features.

Robert de Ufford, Earl of Suffolk, oversaw the rebuilding of the abbey on a much larger scale than the original and included several new chapels.

The outside walls were finished with fine chequerwork, while the windows had delicate Perpendicular-style tracery. The abbey was home to Augustinian canons who followed the Premonstratensian rule. Their domestic buildings were damaged by fire in the 1380s and rebuilt.

After the suppression the king bestowed the abbey on his brother-in-law Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. A farmhouse was built into the corner of the nave and north transept and the abbey ruins were used as farm buildings, the church itself being used as a barn.

A new front was added to the house in the Georgian period and it is currently owned by music school Pro Corda. The Lady Chapel was also restored and furnished in 1918.



Reconstruction of the abbey as it would have looked in the 16th century

Lying in peaceful open fields these striking ruins represent parts of the abbey church and the fairly extensive remains of the buildings around the cloister.

The site is entered through the 16th century gatehouse, with its octagonal brick turret, which incorporates the cellarer's range – used for storage – on its northern side.

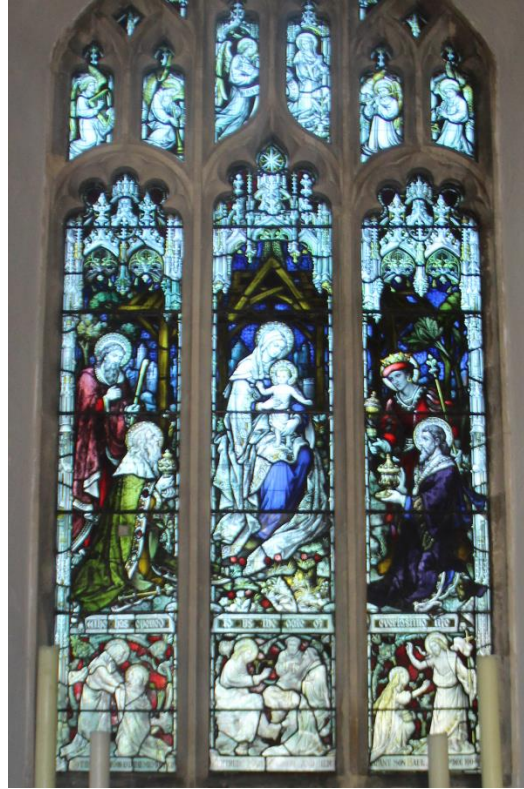
The cloister comes next, with traces of the canon's wash-place or lavatory against the wall of the south range. At the east end of this southern range are the remains of the day stairs that led up to the refectory or frater. The modern steps in their place afford a good view across the unusually well-preserved remains of the refectory and its basement, or undercroft, which has an outstanding pointed window.

In the east range are the remains of the warming house (over which was the dormitory or dorter), the chapter house and the sacristy, where books and vestments were kept.

The remains of the abbey church lie to the north of the cloister: a small arch in the sacristy leads into the south transept and the magnificent north transept arch is ahead. This part of the church – the presbytery, crossing and transepts – provides the best idea of its original stature.

The crossing tower remains to a considerable height and the north transept window – one of several that survive – is around 14 metres high. Between the presbytery and the north transept is the Lady Chapel, now thatched and with a wooden doorway.





St Peter and St Paul's, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh

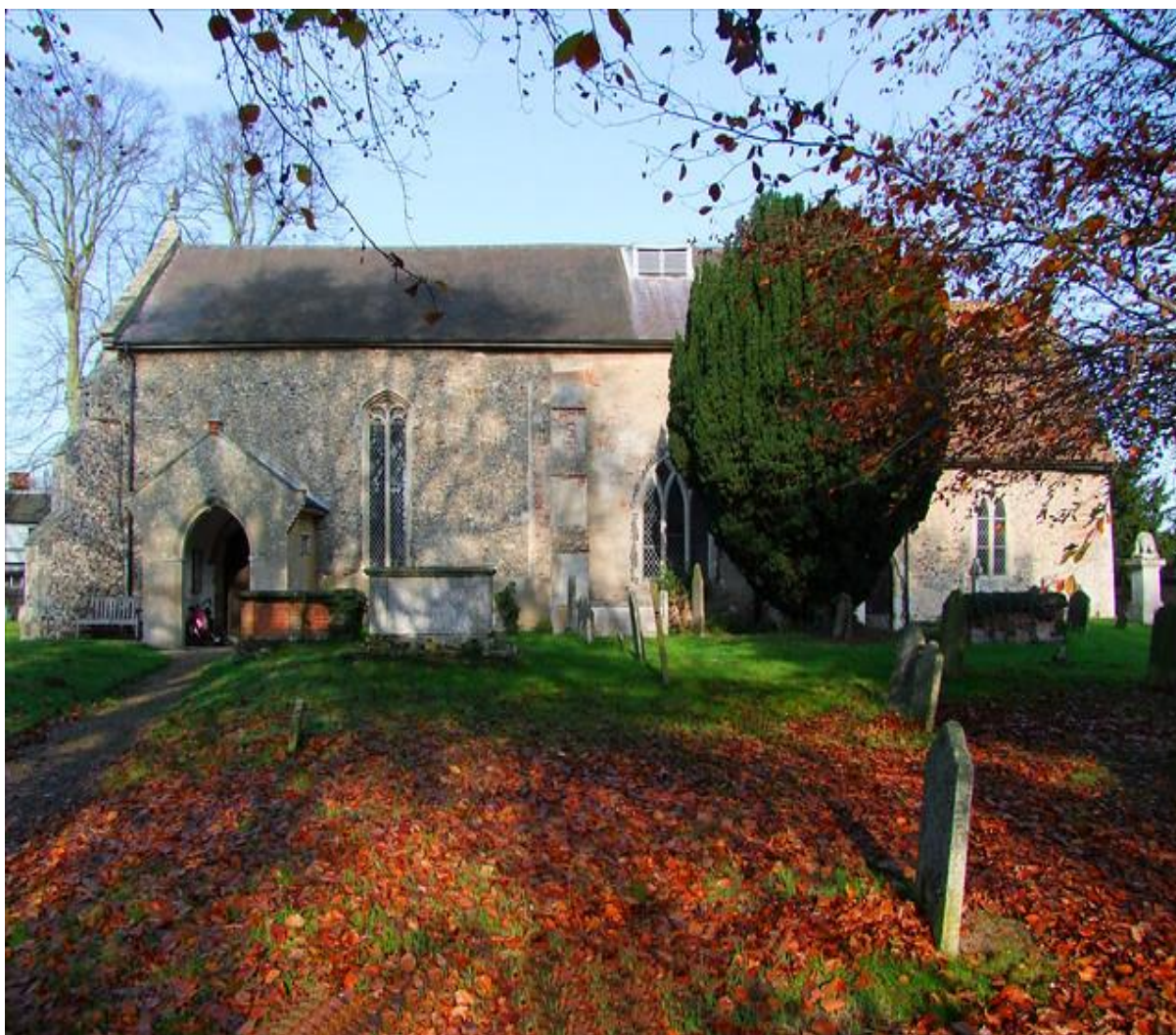
The church tower dates from the 14th century, but much of the rest is 16th century, including the nave, north aisle and north chapel of 1525-1529; the south aisle and chapel 1534-1535; the south porch of 1539 and the chancel 1545. It was restored between 1870 and 1871 by Henry Perkin and again in 1891 by EF Bishop. There is a memorial by Thomas Thurlow to George Crabbe the poet (died 1832) and a monument to Lady Henrietta Vernon, d.1786. The church is most famous as being the burial place of Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears; also buried in the churchyard are Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Joan Cross and Imogen Holst. Britten is also commemorated in a stained glass window by John Piper and Patrick Reyntiens. The church also houses a memorial to Newson Garrett and his wife, the parents of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson.



St John the Baptist, Farnham Road, Snape (from car)

The present church, which was originally thatched, is a 13th century building with a 15th century porch. There was a Snape church possibly on the same site, at the time of the Norman conquest. Now the parish works closely with the other two churches, Sternfield and Benhall, which are in the same benefice and share some services as well as clergy. It is in the Alde River Benefice with the churches of Benhall, Blaxhall, Farnham, Great Glenham, Little Glenham and Sternfield.





All Saints, Church Lane, Eyke (from car)

The church is a Norman structure of the 12th century and is dedicated to All Saints. The Church was founded in 1538.

From Suffolk Churches, an online journey though the churches of Suffolk one travellers account of the All Saints Church in Eyke was this, "All Saints sits quietly, with no tower to lead you to it from afar.

At first sight, this is a simple, if uneven, little church, somewhat barnlike in its ancient graveyard.

Tall elm trees around it are home to jackdaws and rooks; their cries fill the air as they wheel above you.

The modern little porch gives no indication that you are about to enter one of the more interesting churches in this part of Suffolk."

Sam' Mortlock a former Norfolk county librarian describes All Saints as having been "probably a cruciform church." Cruciform churches were common in the Middle Ages and "Generally form the shape of a latin cross they are formed through the intersection of two halls of similar heights that meet at right angles."

When the church was originally built by "the Manor of Staverton" it was valued at the price of "£6.00, which works out at 2d an acre."









St Andrew's, Station Road, Melton

The Living of St Andrew's dates from around 1146 and was a gift of the monks of Ely at a time when Melton was an important administrative centre of the Liberty of Ely. The original church of St Andrew's stands about a mile away from the present building close to the parish boundary with Ufford. During the 19th Century, partly influenced by the arrival of the railway, the centre of the population moved nearer the river leaving the church somewhat isolated and difficult to access. The present building was completed in 1868. Melton Old Church is now owned by a charitable trust and has become a popular venue for a variety of cultural, musical and social events

FRIDAY 10th JANUARY 2020



RCCG Stillwaters, Community Centre, Straight Road, Colchester

SATURDAY 11th JANUARY 2020



St Mary's, The Street, East Bergholt (from bus)

People have worshipped God on this site for over 1000 years but what you see today dates from about 1350 onwards and is late perpendicular in style. The tower begun in 1525 was never finished. Some people believe that the devil came at night and destroyed what had been built during the day until the builders lost heart. The other story is that Cardinal Wolsey fell out with Henry VIII and the source of money dried up. Make up your own mind! The end result was that the bells are housed in the bell cage built in 1531. They are thought to be the heaviest five bells still being rung in England and are rung every Sunday from 9.30-9.55, for weddings and other special occasions. The method of ringing makes them unique, they are pushed by hand rather than pulled by rope.

The big wooden west door under the tower has the following inscription SEIOFINEFYALA HEIHCMFE which is thought to be an abbreviation of the Latin "For holy church John Fine, Francis (or Frederick) Yual and others made (this gift) in honour of Jesus and Mary." The entrance to the church is through the south porch and the priest's room above was made famous by John Constable's painting. The oldest part of the church is the mid 14th century cross-wall either side of the chancel arch. The Easter sepulchre depicting the resurrection of our Lord is in the north wall near the sanctuary. The cross was laid in the recess on Good Friday and carried in procession to the altar on Easter morning. The memorial to Maria Constable, the wife of John Constable R.A. is above the sepulchre.

The blue lion of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, our patrons, can be seen. There is a consecration cross in the north wall of the Lady Chapel and see if you can spot which "Works of Christian Mercy" stained glass windows are back to front. The John Constable memorial window is in the south aisle (he was born in Flatford and died in 1837) and you can see his sketch of the chancel and sanctuary and an engraving of Willie Lott's cottage at Flatford.

Willie Lott's grave is on the left of the path leading up to the gate House. Both Dunthorne Graves are in the Churchyard and – just like Willie Lott's quite readable. They can be found by going straight out of South Porch over the grass towards Old Hall and they are both quite close to the Churchyard wall. Of course Constable's most famous painting "The Haywain" was painted at Flatford. Constable's parents are buried in the churchyard near the Garden of Remembrance but he was buried in Hampstead cemetery in London.

There are some interesting memorials including the one to Anna Parker, died 1656, which has a bear's head and camels and close to it the oldest inscription "What ere thou art here reader see...." John Mattinson was schoolmaster here for 11 years but then according to his memorial "accidentally shot." The Latin inscription reveals that he was a terror and delight to his pupils! The modern enclosure at the back of the church is called the West End and is used to serve refreshments and hold smaller meetings.



Methodist, The Street, Capel St Mary (from bus)



Horley Spiritualist, London Road, Ipswich (from bus)



St Peter's, Church Lane, Copdock (from bus)

This church will be a familiar sight to many travelers as it sits above the busy Copdock Mill interchange between the A12 and A14. Despite this, its pretty churchyard is a peaceful place, mainly because the A12 lies in such a deep cutting. St Peter's is a fairly large neat building, a testimony to the severe 15th century perpendicular which first created it and its almost complete refurbishment in the late Victorian times, one of the last in Suffolk of the century. In fact, the most obvious parts of this restoration, the nave roof and gallery, were installed as late as 1901, to celebrate the glorious Golden wedding of Queen Victoria three years earlier. Her death shortly before their dedication must have put a bit of a dampener on things.



St Mary's, Church Road, Stratford St Mary (from bus)

The tower of St Mary's is clearly visible on your left as you drive down the A12 towards Colchester and London. It stands at the Ipswich end of the village on the old road through.

Visitors may wonder at the size of the church in relation to the small village it serves - were the congregations once large enough to fill it? Probably not - the size of the church is an indication of the wealth of the community in the periods in which it was erected, not of the number of people who worshipped there. The church was built for the sheer joy of erecting a House of God as worthy of him as the builders could manage, and the comparatively small size and relatively meagre resources of the community that created this glorious building is astonishing.

Its earliest days

In this building and its predecessor church Christians have worshipped for more than a thousand years. The original, probably timber, church is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, in which there are said to be 20 acres of land attached to it. It is not known when the present stone structure was begun. The oldest visible portion is the interior of the tower, the arch of which dates it as having been built about the year 1200 or a little later.

The chancel may have been constructed at the same time. This early church must have consisted simply of nave and chancel, without aisles, and with a high-pitched roof without any clerestory, possibly thatched. The beautiful east window of Decorated or Flamboyant design seems to point to a building of an early date.

The enlarged size of the new church, together with its high elevation of roof, would seem to suggest an increase in population and in wealth in the lower end of the valley of the Stour, for a south aisle was clearly felt necessary in the 15th century, though the old tower was left unaltered.

The known story of the building of the new parts of the church - expanding outwards from the simplicity of the nave and chancel - begins in 1455 when the will of William Clerke senior, presumably the father of the John Clerk who came to live in the Gables opposite, gave half a mark (6s 8d) towards the church building. Three years later the will of William the younger says, 'I give to an Ele (aisle) in the church of Stratford 10 marks, and if they make none ele I give to the same church but 20s'. This dates the construction of the south aisle, and a little later mention is made in the Court Rolls of a gift of 'fabriciae' (possibly ironwork), which shows that the work was proceeding.

But the major construction was done by 2 members of the Mors family, whose benefactions are recorded in the inscription along the exterior base of the north aisle wall. Thomas and Margaret Mors completed the building of the western portion of the north aisle (up to where the vestry curtain now hangs) shortly before Thomas died in 1500. In his will he instructs his executors to dispose of the residue of his goods 'in building the body of the church of Stratford, as in making of the clearstory with windows and glassing convenient to the same with leading according to that I have showed my mind therein'. Margaret's will, dated 1510, leaves directions that she is to be buried 'in the North Yle by my husband'. She also bequeaths a certain sum for the building of a porch.

Thomas' son Edward was one of the executors responsible for seeing that this was done and, as the most easterly inscription on the exterior aisle wall implies, Edward and Alice his wife (daughter of a wealthy cloth merchant in Stratford) completed what Thomas and Margaret had begun by extending the north aisle to create the space now used as a vestry. In 1526 Edward directs his executors to 'make up the North Yle in form and manner as the other Yle is on the south side'. Edward's work was begun in 1530 and completed in 1531. The dividing line between the work of Edward's masons and those of his father is clearly shown in the flints of the facing of the wall - those of the western and earlier section are considerably larger and coarser in their finish.

The porch is the least ancient addition to the building in this period and, although Margaret Mors left 10s for the purpose in 1510, John Smith (another clothier and either father or grandfather to the John Smith whose memorial brass is in the central aisle) actually built it in 1532, as his initials and the date on the exterior show. Over the entrance of the porch is a niche which must once have held a statue of the Virgin Mary, but it is now empty.

Inscriptions commemorative of the founders occupy the lowest position on the north aisle's exterior wall, in large bold letters of stone lined with flint. The oldest of these is in Latin and translated reads, 'Pray for the souls of Thomas Mors and Margaret his wife, who caused this aisle to be erected in the year of our Lord 1499'.

FRIDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2020



New Church, Queens Street, Brightlingsea

The New Church is a new Christianity that provides a clear path to happiness and addresses your questions about God, love, and life after death with answers that make sense. The teachings are immediately practical and deeply spiritual: it is a religion to be lived, not just believed.



Oasis Community Centre, Lower Park Road, Brightlingsea

Oasis Community Church officially met for the first time on 12th February 2017 in Brightlingsea Community Centre. We are a church family who love Jesus and seek to follow Him. Our hope is for our church to be an Oasis, a place where you can find safety and be refreshed. It's also our hope that the way we live our lives will make Earth more like Heaven. Come along on a Sunday morning and you'll receive a warm welcome.





St James, Victoria Place, Brightonlingsea

St James' Church, which is set in the heart of Brightonlingsea in the High Street in Brightonlingsea, is open 8.00 to 2.00 weekdays, mornings on Saturdays and for worship at stated times on Sunday. It is the default venue for nearly all of both Sunday (except 3rd Sunday which is at All Saints) and weekday worship.

Their congregation is from a wide range of churchmanship but God is at the heart of our worship and our community. In recent years more use has been made of the building for school services, performances and concerts as it is the largest venue in the town with seating both downstairs and in the galleries.

A recent initiative of 'Sparklers' for 4-12-year-olds and their parents and carers at 10.00 in St James on the third Sunday of each month is showing great promise.

St James was built in 1836 extended by the addition of a gallery in 1860 and a new chancel and vestries added in 1958. Since 2013 the interior has been dramatically changed. A fully fitted kitchen, office and disabled toilet have been added, and the pews removed and replaced with new upholstered chairs.

The old heating and lighting have been completely replaced and the interior re-decorated throughout. We are now planning the next phase of the improvements. The building is now fit for multi-purpose use including concerts, school services, dinners, Church Lads and Girls meetings, breakfast on Saturdays and talks from celebrity Christians such as Paul Jones (Manfred Mann) and Fiona Hendley.

All this whilst respecting its primary purpose as a place of worship.



URC, Chapel Road, Brightlingsea



All Saints, Movers Lane, Brightlingsea (from bus)

There are two churches serving the coastal town of Brightlingsea. The more modern, situated near the waterfront, is St James. The older and more interesting historically is All Saints, set on a low hill about a mile inland from the sea, far from the core of Brightlingsea itself. In fact, so far from the centre of town is the church that we drove right past it before realising we'd arrived at our destination! All Saints was begun around 1250, though it incorporates parts of an earlier Norman church. It incorporates even more than that, for Roman bricks can easily be spotted in the walls, particularly in a round headed recess by the south door. Brightlingsea was associated with the Cinque Port town of Sandwich, Kent, and All Saints is still used as a meeting place for electing the Deputy of Brightlingsea, who serves as a link between Sandwich and the town. The most striking external feature is the embattled tower, built of local flint in the last years of the 15th century. The tower stands 97 feet high, in three stages, with a minstrel gallery built into the lowest stage. The tower really is quite remarkable; with one of the finest examples of diagonal buttress bracing in East Anglia.

Under the tower is a baptistry, housing a Tudor font, carved with roses within a quatrefoil. Considerable traces of gilding and colourful paint still cling to the stone surface. The Beriffe Brasses in the Lady Chapel, north chapel, and central nave aisles are a series of 16th century memorial brasses to the Beriffe family, wealthy local merchants and benefactors of the church. William Beriffe and his wife Joan have brasses in the nave aisle. In the north aisle is a touching brass to Mary Beriffe, showing her 4 sons and single daughter clutching her robe. Also, in the north aisle is a 16th century painted (not stained) Flemish glass panel depicting St Paul. This is part of a larger design, the rest of which is at Ely Cathedral. We do not know how the window came to be separated, and how a panel of a cathedral window came to be here in an Essex parish church! Magens monument (c) John Salmon Set into the floor of the Lady Chapel is a 13th century coffin lid. Also, in the Lady Chapel are brasses to generations of the Berife family.

The oldest is that of John Beriffe (d. 1496), and the youngest that of Alice Beriffe, who died in 1536. Alice's brass is a palimpsest; that is, reused. The reverse side has a much older brass of a medieval clergyman. In the chancel is a very large marble memorial to Nicholas Magens (d. 1764), a German-born lord of the manor, and one of the founding members of Lloyd's insurance company in London. Magens purchased the Brightlingsea estate only a year before his death, and his impressive monument was designed by Nicolas Read and erected in 1779. In the south chapel are late 17th century grave slabs, including those of Francis Wheeler (d. 1692), and his son Francis, who died just 2 years later. There is a 16th century statue niche in the south wall, with a headless figure who may be a bishop, or perhaps St Nicholas. The west tower The Victorian Frieze In 1872 severe storms along the North Sea coast caused widespread destruction and terrible loss of life. Thirty six local seamen were lost from Brightlingsea, and this disaster prompted the then vicar Rev. Arthur Pertwee, to create a frieze of individual tiles, each inscribed with the name of the deceased and the ship on which he served. William Stammers, church warden, and Albert Blyth, who wrote the inscriptions, helped Pertwee design the original frieze. The idea took hold, and since 1872 a tile has been added every time a Brightlingsea native is lost at sea. At first the tiles were limited to mariners by occupation, but this was altered to include anyone from Brightlingsea who lost their lives at sea. Hence we see a tile commemorating Sidney Siebert, who was not a fisherman, but was drowned in the wreck of the Titanic in 1912.

There are now over 212 tiles, each unique, each telling a story of tragic loss. It's a reminder of how closely the people of Brightlingsea have historically been tied to the sea. Reverend Pertwee, who served as vicar for 50 years, from 1872-1912, was known to climb to the top of the tower and raise a light on the flagstaff to guide the fishing fleet safely home in a storm. One maritime tragedy that is not commemorated visibly is the loss of sailors from the yacht Lorena in 1903. Nine crewmen were being rowed by a pair of local men to their ship in Brightlingsea harbour when the rowboat sank, drowning 8 crewmen and one local man. The sailors were buried in an unmarked mass grave in the churchyard, but there is a move afoot to create a memorial.

<p>SUNDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2020</p>



St Andrew's, Hall Lane, Sandon (from car)

St Andrew's Church, in its well-kept churchyard, overlooks the village green where one of the most magnificent trees in Essex stood here until it fell in June 2001. The tree was a Caucasus oak planted to commemorate the Golden Jubilee in 1887 of the Coronation of Queen Victoria. It was replaced by a new oak in March 2002, along with one to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth. The settlement of Bedenesteda (a stead in a valley) appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 as "a manor of 4 hides, 10 borders, 1 serf, 1 plough, 1 cow, 14 swine, and 24 sheep". The first mention of "Sandon" is Saundon (Sand dune) in 1274 in the rolls of the hundreds. It had become Sandon by 1303. The "players of Sandon" are mentioned in Maldon Corporation records of 1453 as being paid 20d for a performance of the Sandon Mystery Play at Maldon on Corpus Christi. Compiled by Dennis Terry 2001 Page 4 To the West of the porch there are traces of a Norman window about 22 inches wide splayed down inside to about: 12 inches. The early church building with its strong thick walls would have been looked upon as a fortress and such windows would have been useful for bow and arrow fighting and as they were not glazed would keep out some of the weather. The church had, at one time, a West Door, now the vestry window and the slots for the massive timber baulk securing the door against attack can be seen through the window.

The Organ can be seen in its gallery, which was originally used for ringing the bells. Built in 1912 it was moved to its present position from the east end of the north aisle in 1955 and restored and updated in 1981. The wall was broken through when the Chancel was built sometime after 1080. It was widened when the east wall was demolished and the Chancel extended eastward by about 4 feet in c.1450. The dark oak wagon roof was constructed at the same time, The Altar table is Jacobean (c.1620). The Altar rails were made in 1890 by Mr. Stibbard the local Blacksmith. The oak reredos behind the Altar and the figures (when facing the Alter) of St Alban (right) and St Andrew (left) date from 1900. Page 5 Revised August 2018 The Painting of St. Andrew (1972) and the Aumbry Safe Door (1968) in the north wall are by local artist the late Lynton Lamb. (See Chelmsford Museum) Under the Aumbry in the north-east corner is a shafted Piscina, the hatchet work carving on it closely resembles that in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral. It was discovered as part of the 'rubble' in fill in a buttress during restoration work in 1904. The North Aisle was added in 1350, the Arcade and pillars being of Caen stone, from France and brought up the River Chelmer to Sandford Mill, and then by cart to Sandon. The wall plate where the aisle roof joins the roof, was originally much lower as the bulge in the wall shows, indicating a rather low roof.

The roof was renewed in 1878 in fir. There are five scratch Sun dials on the S.E. buttress and on the priest Door porch once used to tell the times for services. Compiled by Dennis Terry 2001 Page 6 The south wall of the Nave (within an inch of being three feet thick) is Norman c.1080. One hammer beam roof truss (near the Chancel arch) is ball that remains of the six that formed the beautiful 15th century oak ceiling replaced in 1878. The stone Font is c1550, the stone mason is unknown. The wooden cover was given in 1935 by the incumbent at that time in memory off his wife; The Hebrew inscription reads "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing" is from Proverbs 18 verse 22. The Chancel Arch has undergone several alterations. It was originally the east wall of the Norman church and it would have had a narrow recess for an altar. High in the wall above this recess was a window, (the remains of which can now be seen as a niche from within the Chancel behind the central spot light). The Eagle Lectern was originally owned by the Church's patrons, Queens' College, Cambridge and was given to Sandon Church in 1894. The Pulpit once described as "the glory of Sandon Church" and "The finest of its kind in Essex" is an almost unique wooden Perpendicular wine glass specimen still with its original door dating from the reign of Henry VII (1500). It was originally painted red, green and, probably, gold. A Meeting Room with kitchen and toilet facilities was added in 1993 closely matching the main Building in construction and design.

The East Window was reglazed in 1920. The South Chancel window containing the original heraldic glass of the Doreward, Montgomery, Darcy and Fitzwalter families was refurbished in 2000 and had the shield of Queens' College Cambridge and a new shield to commemorate the Millennium added. The Choir Stall on the north side is c.1800 and the other 1930 The church Porch is Tudor brick with an unusual vaulted roof, and was built at the same time as the massive Tower in 1520. They were added by Cardinal Wolsey, who was granted the Manor of Sandon by Henry the VIII in 1510 and were built at the same time as Hampton Court and by the same architect, Giralamo de Trevis. In the tower there is a ring of six Bells hung on a oak frame 4 When the bells are rung, the tower actually sways in a semi-circular motion.