

## THEBERTON CHURCH.

The next stage, a short one, brought members to the church of S. Peter, Theberton, where they were courteously received by the rector, Rev. J. C. S. Mathias. A paper was read by Rev. F. Haslewood, the Honorary Secretary. He observed there are in this church unmistakable traces of the Norman style of architecture, though the prevailing characteristics are of the Perpendicular order, as exemplified in the chancel, nave, and south aisle, as well as in the tower, which is circular in the lower part but octagonal in the upper stage. The date of the lower portion may be the 12th century. There is no arch between the chancel and the nave, both being under the same roof, which is thatched with reed. In the usual place in the south wall of the chancel is a plain piscina, and westward of the same three sedilia. There is a niche in the east wall on the north side, which probably served as a locker for the sacred vessels. The original rood screen has been utilized for choir stalls. The church underwent extensive alterations in 1836 and 1848, principally at the expense of the Doughty family. The chief point of interest to the ecclesiologist is the remarkably fine Norman doorway in the north wall. It consists of an arch of two orders, each having a zig-zag moulding and supported by a round pillar having a plain capital. The height of the opening is 6 ft. 6 in., and its width 3 ft. 3 in. The date seems to be that of the tower. At the west end stands an octagon font (date 1480 or earlier) having symbols of the Evangelists alternated with shields. The pedestal is supported by grotesque figures, with roses over them. In the spandrels of the arch of the porch door are two shields, one bearing the emblem of S. Peter, and the other two crossed swords emblematical of S. Paul, to whom possibly the church was originally dedicated conjointly with S. Peter. In the churchyard, close to the south porch, is an altar tomb, bearing the following quaint inscription:—

Here is a stone to sitt vpon  
 Vnder which lies, in hopes to rise  
 To ye day of blisse and happinesse  
 Honest John Fenn the sonn  
 of William Fenn, Clarke, and  
 Late Rector of this parish,  
 Being turned out of this  
 Liveing and sequestred for  
 His loyalty to the late  
 King Charles the First.  
 Hee departed this life the  
 22 Day of October Anno Dom.  
 1678.

In the register is the following Memorandum:—"That William Fenn, clerke, upon the seconde day of Aprill in the yere of our lorde

1626, being lately inducted into the church of Theberton in Suffolk did then and there in the tyme of Divine service openly reade the 40 articles intituled articles agreed upon by the Archbishops and Byshops in the convocation holden at London anno domi, 1562, whout eyther addinge or detractinge and wh the declaration of his unfeined assent and consent unto the same and every of them in the presence of us whose names be here under written." This Rector apparently enjoyed his benefice in peace till the troubles came upon Church and State, when charges of misdemeanour were brought against William Fenn. He was pronounced a great enemy against the proceedings of Parliament, that he had frequently drunk healths to Prince Rupert and others, rejoiced that Sir William Waller was routed, and went up and down boasting the great Parliament man, Waller, was routed. Further, that the said parson Fenn had conformed himself to all Bishop Wren's injunctions, and "hath frequently bowed towards the fount and communion table, and hath read the book of Liberty for Recreations on the Sabbath Day." The result of this was that a committee of the House of Commons in Parliament concerning plundered ministers, February 17th, 1643, "It was that day ordered by the said committee that the Rector of Theberton, in the county of Suffolk, be forthwith sequestered from William Fenn for several great misdemeanours, and that some godly and orthodox divine be recommended to the examination of the Assembly of Divines to examine his fitness to have the said sequestration, &c., and that the said William Fenn is hereby commanded to forbear to cut any timber, etc." (John White). Page, in his History of Suffolk, states that the estate of Theberton, or Thewardetuna, was anciently vested in the Bygods and Segraves, for they presented to the church until 1350, but soon after that period the Abbot and Convent of Leiston were patrons. There is nothing specially noteworthy amongst the existing monuments, but a well-known statesman of modern times reposes in the churchyard beneath the east window, where there is a monument to the memory of the Right Hon. Thomas Milner-Gibson, of Theberton House, President of the Board of Trade and Cabinet Minister from 1859 to 1866. Born September 3rd, 1806; died February 25th, 1884.

CHURCH NOTES. By H. I. and David Elisha Davy. Taken Oct., 1806.

*Add. MS.* 19,082.

The Church consists of a Nave, Chancel, and S. Isle.

The Chancel is 44ft. 2in. long, and 20ft. 9in. wide, and at the distance of 17ft. 7in. from the East end, the whole area is raised 3 steps. The Communion table is encompassed with a rail & banister: & over the Table in 4 compartments, are the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, & Belief.

Both the Nave and Chancel are under the same roof, which is covered with reed.

The Nave is 54ft. 9in. long, and 24ft. 7in. wide. In the S.E. angle

stands the Pulpit, which is of oak, painted yellow, octagon, the sound board heptagon, & on the oak upright is the date 1628. Near the West end stands the Font.

The Nave is divided from the Isle by 3 arches; the Isle is 33ft. long, & 12ft. 3in. wide, & is covered with lead. There is a small Piscina in the S.E. corner. The whole Church is very irregularly seated & pewed with deal & oak.

The Floors of the church, chancel, & Isle, are chiefly of white brick, except the raised part in front of the Communion rails, which is of small square tiles, formerly glazed, black & yellow.

The Steeple is of flints, circular to the Bell chamber, from thence octagon, plastered; the battlements in compartments of black flints. In it are four Bells thus inscribed.

1. Nos sumus instructi ad laudem Domini 1594. Arms, France & England. E. R. 2. John Darbie made me 1663. 3. J. A., J. D. 1614. 4. J. A., J. D. 1614.

On the South side is a Porch of stones, with compartments of black flints. Over the door are two shields. 1. 2 Keys in saltire. 2. two swords in Saltire, wards erect & outwards, points of the swords erect.

The outside of the Church is covered with plaister. On the North side is a very handsome ornamented Saxon arch; and on each side of the Chancel, for about one third of the way from the West are the remains of a Stone cornice nebulée.

The outer walls of the Isle are of black flints with a brick parapet. On the Buttresses are the letters, S.I. & M. & on each a shield of arms, now obliterated.

#### MONUMENTS.

##### *In the Chancel.*

Against the South Wall westward, is a small mural monument of w. marble, & on it.

In the Church yard  
near this place  
lie interred the Bodies  
of Thomas Ingham Gentleman  
late of this Parish  
and Milecent his Wife  
The said Thomas departed this life  
the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 1720,  
in the seventieth year of his age.  
And the said Milecent  
departed this life  
the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June 1708  
in the 56<sup>th</sup> year of her age.

Arms, above.

Ingham, Per pale, or & vert, a cross moline, gu:—

Crest. On a chapeau gu. turned up of erm. an owl, arg.

Arms, below, Ingham, impales Wychingham, Erm. on a chief sa.

3 crosses croset (patée) arg.

*In the Nave.*

On a small brass plate, in black letter.

Orate p̄ aīa Katerine Page  
Cuius aīe ppicietur Deus Amē.

*In the Isle.*

On a flat stone.

Margaret Forster  
died 15<sup>th</sup> of  
May 1755  
aged 30  
years.

A Table monument, at E. end of chancel, in churchyard.

To the Memory of  
Cecilia Whittington  
who died December 8<sup>th</sup> 1816,  
in the thirty fourth year of her age.

When Dust to Dust and Earth to Earth,  
Has told the end of mortal Care ;  
Love hovers o'er departed Worth,  
And, sheds its fancied Tribute there.  
If Youth and Pleasure feel the wound,  
And Joy suspended pours the Tear ;  
Then bring the Rose, then scatter round  
The Treasures of the Summer year.  
But ah ! dear Maid, no wreath of thine  
Such gladsome Homage ere should know ;  
For thee the humble Flower I twine,  
That blooms amid the Virgin Snow  
For that fair form and snowy hue  
Best fits the lovely form below ;  
And the cold in which it grew,  
Was kindred to the Life of Woe.  
But rest fair Maid, rest here in Peace,  
To thee another Spring is given :  
The Storm is past, thy Sorrows cease,  
And thou shalt bloom again in Heaven.

Davy thinks the above lines were composed by Rev. John Mitford, the intimate friend of the deceased's Father, Jacob John Whittington, Esq., of Yoxford. She died at the House belonging to Capt. Wootton, occupied by her mother, in this parish.

Revisited June 28, 1836.

The whole Church has lately been repaired ; the roof has been ceiled, the pews made uniform, of deal, but the lower part of the Nave is filled with seats. The Pulpit has been removed to the N. side, near

the E. end of the Nave, all the white-wash has been carefully removed from the Font; it is of sandstone. There is no Arch between the Nave and Chancel. In the S. wall of the Chancel, near the E. end, is a Piscina. Everything else remains nearly as in 1806.

*In the Chancel.*

Within the Communion rails, on S. side. Yorkshire stone.

The Rev<sup>d</sup> Benjamin Taylor,

Rector of this Parish, Died

June the 19<sup>th</sup> 1748, Aged 54 :

On the North side the Remains  
of Elizabeth his wife, Died

February the 19<sup>th</sup> 1747, Aged 53.

Also of his mother died Aged 85.

Revisited June 8, 1848.

Considerable alterations have been made in the Church since I was here last. Chancel, present state :

The floor of the Communion Table is 3 steps above that of the rest of the Chancel. The greater part of the Chancel is pewed.

Nave. - All the Pews have been removed, & the whole fitted up with open seats, inclosed with low doors, the heads carved, of deal stained. The Pulpit is fixed to the N. wall, octagon, the reading desk in front, square. At the W. end a small gallery has been erected, supported by low depressed arches of wood.

In front of the Gallery stands the Font: w<sup>ch</sup> is octagon, on the faces are lions seiant, & angels bearing shields alternately, on the shields are—W. The emblem of the Trinity. N. The emblem of the Crucifixion. E. A plain cross. S. 3 cups, with wafers over them. The stem is supported by figures & lions seiant alternately; but much mutilated. Height of the stem 2ft., of the bowl 1ft. 7in. Breadth of the faces 1ft. 1in. Diameter over the top, 3ft. Depth of the basin, which is of lead, 10in.

On the N. side near the east end, at some distance from the floor is a narrow doorway, now closed, which was the way to the Rood loft, the upper entrance still visible.

Isle. This has undergone a complete alteration, at the expense of Mr. Doughty: the area has been filled with very handsomely carved seats; those appropriated to Mr. Doughty himself being of oak, & more elaborately wrought, the others of deal.

The floor is laid with encaustic tiles, of 3 patterns.

At the E. end, in the S. wall is a small piscina.

The windows are by Williment & cost £50 each.

1. Eastward. In the centre, the figure of S. Peter, holding in one hand a key, in the other an open book, nimbus. Beneath him Sanctus Petrus.

2. Four coats of arms; Doughty.

3. A figure of S. Paul, a long sword. Sanctus Paulus.

The Porch has undergone a thorough repair, also at Mr. Doughty's expense.

The total cost being little short of £2,000. The late Mr. Cottingham was the Architect, & the work carried out by Mr. Thurlow, & Mr. Bright, both of Saxmundham, the former for stone work, the latter for the wood carving.

The E. wall of the Chancel has a large mixture of bricks, in pieces with the rough stone, & is probably of modern date. The arch of the window on the N. side of the Chancel, is of red brick. Under the Eaves of the Chancel, N. side, w. end, is a kind of stone cornice nebulé in form, this is continued from the west end, to about half the length of the Chancel; when, from a break in the wall, it appears as if the eastern part was of a modern erection; below this moulding or cornice, there is a window with an equilateral arch, of 2 lights, the mullion simply branched at top; on the wall, at the height of this middle window, runs a string of stone to the same extent as the cornice above. This cornice may perhaps be the remains of a corbel table. These are probably the remains of an older fabric than the rest of the building, & may be referred to the former half of the 14th century, as the period of erection. The walls are all of rubble, & have been cast over, tho' most part of the covering is now fallen.

The N. door of the Nave, which is now closed, is N. circular & consists of a double arch, one within the other each having a zigzag moulding, & each supported by a round pillar, having a plain N. capital.

The date of the door may be about the 12th century.

Theberton Registers: begin 1548—1651.

M<sup>d</sup>. yt this register book was maid in the yeare of our lord god 1598 & yt conteyneth the Christininges Mariages & burialls from the yeare of our lord god 1548 w<sup>ch</sup> were in the Towne of Theb'ton in the countie of Suf. First page is signed Reighnald Plumér minister.

Burials 1678. John Ffenne Wheelwright was buried 24<sup>th</sup> Octobris in Woollen, in Theberton Church-yard.

1574. Robt. Page the parson of Thebarton & Margaret Hooe married ye last of March.

At foot of register 1627: the signature of Willm Fenn Rect<sup>r</sup>.

1628. Judeth ffenn daughter of Wm ffenn minister & Elizabeth his wife baptised Janu<sup>ey</sup>. 15.

1638. Joane Fenn daughter of Willia ffenn & Dorathie his first wife was buried the 6 day of Aprill.

1630. Thomas Fenn sonne of W<sup>m</sup> Rector & Elizabeth buried 15 Novebr.

#### CHURCH PLATE.

Cup: 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. Diameter Silver, scroll pattern.

Flagon. "Theberton Ex dono Thome Ingham Ibidem Generosi."

Paten old 4 $\frac{7}{8}$  in. diameter.

Two Plates The Gift of the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Tho<sup>s</sup>. Strong to the Parish of Theberton.

1666. 13<sup>th</sup> Februarie John Cary Cl. Rector of Theberton was Buried.

Memoranda that John Hacket Clerke Rector of the Church & parish of Theberton in Suff. being inducted into the s<sup>d</sup> Church & Rectorie the fiveteenth day of Januarie Annō Dni 1668 on Sunday being the last day of the same Month according to an Act of Parliament made in the fourteenth yeare of the Reigne of or Souaigne Lord Charles the second King of England &c. entitled an Act for the Uniformity of Publick Prayer & Administracon of Sacraments & other Rites &c., haveing openly publicly & solemnly read the Morning & Evening Prayer &c in the Church of Theberton, & openly before the Congregacon there assembled did declare his unfeigned assent & consent to the use of all things in the s<sup>d</sup> booke: and then & there did produce a certificate under the hand & seale of the Lord Bishop of Norwich bearing date 30 Dêcemb. last by w<sup>ch</sup> it appeared that before his Institucon into the s<sup>d</sup> Rectorie of Theberton he had submitted to the declaration or acknowledgement mencōd in the s<sup>d</sup> Act viz<sup>t</sup> that it is not lawfull upon any p<sup>t</sup>ence whatsoever to take Armes against the King & in such words manner & forme as in the Act is p<sup>r</sup>scribed, & also on the last day of Januarie did openly & publicly in the same Church read the same together with the s<sup>d</sup> Declaracon, and likewise subscribed in the time of divine service in the presençe of the Congregacon there assembled.

Mem that the s<sup>d</sup> John Hacket on Sunday 14 Feb. 1668 in the Church of Theberton in the time of divine service openly & publicly read the thirty nine Articles.

## RECTORS OF THEBERTON.

- 1307 JOHN DE FRAMLINGHAM. Presentations at Record Office, f. 18.  
 1310 JOHN TRIDYAN. Ibid. fol. 21 b. m. 4.  
 1312 L. DE RUSLDON. m. 19.  
 1403 RICARDUS, rector of Theberton.  
 1496 ROBERT ROWSE  
 1561 ROBERT FOKELYN, name among Freeholders of Theberton.  
 Edw. VI. Lans. ms. 5.  
 1574 ROBERT PAGE, married Margaret Hooe, March 31.  
 1603 REIGNOLD PLUMER. The signature of Reignald Plumer, minister, occurs on the first page of Parish Register. There were at that time 120 Communicants. (Proceedings of Suffolk Institute, vi., 377.) Reginald Plumer was buried at Theberton, Aug. 30, 1625.  
 1625. WILLIAM FENN, inducted Ap. 2, 1626. Ejected Feb. 17, 1643. Liber Institutionum. Com. Suff. at Record Office. J. Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy. Ed. 1714, ii., 248.  
 JOHN CARY was buried Feb. 13, 1666.  
 1668. JOHN HACKETT, inducted Jan. 15, 1668.  
 1672. ZACHARIAH FISKE.  
 1683. ROBERT WYCHINGHAM, Regin, B.A. 1674; M.A. 1678.  
 1724. ROBERT WYCHINGHAM (son of above) Regin, B.A. 1705; M.A. 1709.  
 1730. ROBERT HACON, Kath. B.A. 1700; M.A. 1704; Vic. of Westleton 1710. Died 6, bu. 9 May, 1737, at Westleton, æt. 57.

1737. BENJAMIN TAYLOR, Cai. B.A. 1713; Vic. of Darsham 1720; Rec. of Bramfield 1730. Died 1748, æt. 54. *Gent. Mag.*, 1737, vii., p. 372. *Lond. Mag.*, 1737, p. 336.
1748. JAMES BENNETT, C. Tr. B.A. 1722; M.A. 1726. Also Vic. of Aldeburgh 1729. *Gent. Mag.*, 1748, xviii., p. 428. *Lond. Mag.*, p. 429.
1755. JOHN WHITTINGTON, M.A., per Literas Regias 1756; Rector of Sudbourn with Orford 1753. *Gent. Mag.*, pp. 201, 249; Sept., 1755, xxv., p. 429. Died 1770.
1770. JAMES BENET, Jes. B.A. 1753; M.A. 1785; Vic. of Aldeburgh 1769, *Gent. Mag.*, p. 415; Rector of Dennington 1784—88. Died at Chelsea, Feb. 1792, æt. 61. Bu. at Aldeburgh. *Lond. Mag.*, 1770, p. 642. *Gent. Mag.*, xl., p. 488.
1792. WILLIAM WYATT, Fellow of Pemb. Hall, Cam., B.A. 1762; M.A., 1765; F.R.S.; was also Rector of Framlingham cum Saxsted 1782. Died at Framlingham, Feb., 1813, æt. 72. *M.I. Ipswich Journal*, Feb. 6, 1813. *Gent. Mag.*, 1792, i., p. 485.
1814. JOHN CARLETON, D.D., Worc. Incorp., M.A. 1805; B. and D.D. 1805; rector of Hartest cum Boxted 1799, *Gent. Mag.*, ii., p. 1166; Stansfield 1808, *Gent. Mag.*, ii., p. 1184. Chap. in ord. to George III., *Gent. Mag.*, 1814, i., p. 89.
1819. THOMAS STRONG, of Winchester and S. John's Coll., Camb., M.A., Rector of Clyst, S. Mary's, Devon., 1795. Resigned this and Theberton 1841. *Gent. Mag.*, lxxxix., i., p. 177. Died at Bath, March 14, 1860.
1841. HENRY HARDINGE, B.A., was a short time P.C. of Woodbridge. His wife, Fanny, died in London, June 15, 1848. He buried at Theberton, Feb. 4, 1865, æt. 58. *Ips. Jour.*, Aug. 28, 1841: *Gent. Mag.*, 1841, p. 312. Author of: *Gift of Tongues*, 1836, pp. 88. 11 Village Sermons, Anonymous, 1840, pp. 198. "Amicus," Address Letter to Inhabitants of Woodbridge, 1841. *New Principles for the Poor*, pp. 142. *Common Sense for the People*, Anon., 1846, pp. 32.
- In a letter dated Theberton, 21 Sep., 1857, speaks of himself as "the son-in-law of Sir W. Betham," says, "I have published my first canto of a poem, a prelude to others, says it had been reviewed by the 'Express' of this day. It is called 'Zaddok.'" (Fitch Coll., Ipswich.)
1865. WILLIAM BRADSTREET, Em. Coll., Cam., B.A. 1837; Deac. 1838; Pr. 1839; formerly Vic. of Nackington and C. Lower Hardres, Kent, 1840—65; Rector of Theberton 1865—81, *Illus. Lond. News*, 1865, p. 159. R.D. of S. Dunwich 1877—81. Living at Windsor 1890.
1881. GEORGE WATSON, S. John's Coll., Cam., B.A. 1847; Deac. 1847; Pr. 1848; formerly C. of Wortley, Leeds, 1847—50; Honingham, Norf., 1850—55; Hampton in Arden, Warws., 1855—60; Norton-by-Daventry, 1860—65; R. of Great Sutton, Essex, 1866—81. Residing at Norton Court, near Bristol, 1890.