

A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY: REVD ERNEST GELDART AT KELSALE, 1881

by JAMES BETTLEY

ERNEST GELDART (1848–1929) was the most distinguished and prolific of the ‘priest-architects’ who flourished in the nineteenth century.¹ A High Churchman, he combined his clerical career with that of architect, mostly but not exclusively of ecclesiastical buildings, and was particularly known as an expert on church furnishing and decoration (Fig. 140). He kept a diary for much of his life, and the extract printed below covers a period of just over a month that he spent in Kelsale between 19 February and 21 March 1881.²

Geldart was born in Holloway, north London, the fourth of seven children.³ His father, Thomas Geldart (1809–1877), was secretary of the Town Missionary and Scripture Readers’ Society; his mother, Hannah Ransome Geldart, was a popular writer of religious or otherwise improving or inspirational books.⁴ In 1856 Thomas was appointed secretary of the Manchester City Mission and the family moved to the prosperous Manchester suburb of Bowdon.



FIG. 140 – Revd Ernest Geldart, photographed by Fradelle on 6 May 1885 for the *Church Portrait Journal* VI (1885), 40–42 (author’s collection).

In 1864 Geldart entered the office of the Manchester architect Alfred Waterhouse as a pupil. Waterhouse’s career was just taking off; in 1863 he had opened an office in London, and it was here that Geldart was sent. He quickly distinguished himself, but in 1871 he left the office and enrolled at King’s College, London, to read theology. While living in London he had been worshipping at one of the well-known Ritualist churches, St Mary Magdalene, Paddington, and had been actively involved in church matters: he became a member of the Guild of St Alban, and started the lay Brotherhood of St Dunstan attached to the church. He was ordained deacon in 1873 and priest in 1875.

Once a deacon, he found employment as a curate at St Andrew’s, Plaistow, one of the so-called ‘slum churches’, officially in Essex but for all practical purposes in London. He soon found that his health was not sufficiently robust for the way of life of a curate in an inner-city parish, and in 1876 he found a less demanding curacy at Hatchford, Surrey, where he remained until 1880. During this time he was able

to travel widely, visiting Australia, South America, and Europe. In 1880 he took up the temporary post of mission priest attached to Scottish Episcopal Cathedral of the Isles at Millport, on the Isle of Cumbrae, and it was while he was there that the question of becoming rector of Little Braxted, Essex, first arose. He left Scotland at the end of February 1881 and later that month the appointment was settled. He then had a month or so to spare, and he used it to visit a friend and colleague, Revd Arthur Warcup Malim, curate of Kelsale.⁵

THE DIARY

[Saturday] Feb 19. Was driven off to Chelmsford to catch the afternoon train to Saxmundham & by 5 o'clock I was tumbled out onto the platform where Malim met me, & gathering me & my bags into a "conveyance" of nondescript pattern we drove off to Kelsale. Dined with Malim & retired to bed in the empty Rectory.⁶

Feb. 20. LX S[unday].⁷ Celebrated at 8.0, said mattins at 11 & walked over to Carlton⁸ at 3. Coming back for the 7 o'clock Evensong at Kelsale Church. The choir are supposed to sing in unison – I am not quite sure but on the whole think bad harmony is preferable to bad unison singing.

Feb. 21. Was walked out to Saxmundham to call on Miss Harvey⁹ unto whom Moll¹⁰ engaged himself after 2 or 3 weeks sojourn here. We were shown into a drawing room over the shop,

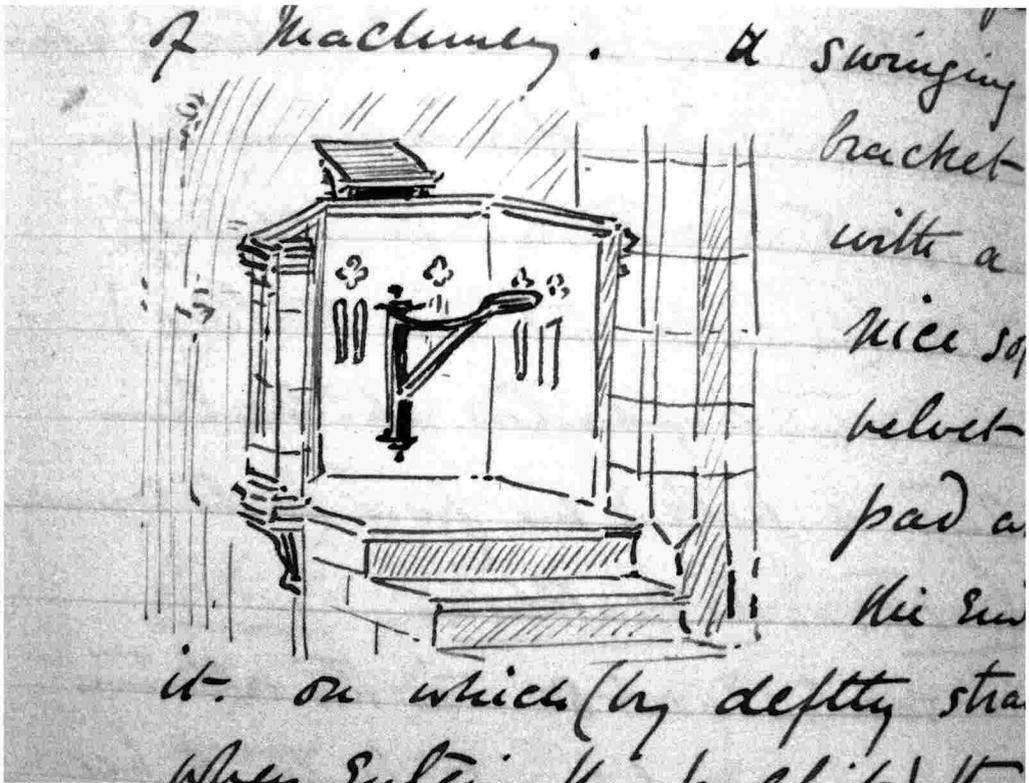


FIG. 141 – ‘A novel piece of machinery’: Leiston, 24 February 1881.

the walls of wh. were hung with atrocious drawings, presumably the fruits of that “higher education of women” to wh. the Miss Harveys have been subjected. Raven¹¹ the Vicar of Leiston (the next station on the line) came over & feasted at Malim’s cottage & booked me for a Lent sermon.

Feb. 24. S. Matthias. Celebrated at 8. In the afternoon Malim & I went over to Leiston to beg off my sermon, Du Cane¹² having meanwhile put me down without leave for a date inconveniently near the Leiston engagement. We called on Raven but he was out so we went on to the Church, wh. once was old but now – is restored in the most excruciating style of florid revivalism.¹³ The chief thing that strikes one on entering being that a general atmosphere of fretwork & rafters weighs down upon the soul of the unhappy beholder. The Pulpit contained a novel piece of machinery (Fig. 141). A swinging bracket with a nice soft velvet pad at the end of it on which (by deftly straddling when entering the pulpit) the preacher can sit at ease while to all appearances standing & swaying backwards & forwards the while to suit his action to his words.¹⁴

Feb. 25. I was marched out again on duty. 1st to call on the church warden & then to see a bedridden old woman.

Feb. 26 12.43 train to Halesworth then changed into a little toy railway of about a 3 foot gauge to go to Blythboro’ on the Southwold line.¹⁵ The train consisted of a little engine & one carriage divided into 2 compartments & seated like an omnibus. I stood outside the greater part of the journey & watched the proceedings of a few navvies who lay couched on gravel in



FIG. 142 – Blythburgh Church at about the time of Geldart’s visit
(*Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings*).

2 or 3 trucks which we drew behind us. Now & again these men would reach down to a connecting link & with a "snap" – lo the truck was left behind, so at intervals we parted with our following & reached Blythboro' all alone. Having only some $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour I rushed quickly up the village street to get the key. A civil woman accompanied me & let me in to a splendid ruin – a church of almost cathedral size (Fig. 142) having 18 or 20 windows in its clerestory on either side a flat painted roof with angels at the intersection of the cross beams (Fig. 143), wh. angels in some cases had fallen off altogether and in others had dropped their wings or let them droop feebly. Down the walls green streams show the inroads of the weather, & from one end to the other the place is tottering to its death.¹⁶ The Rood screen has

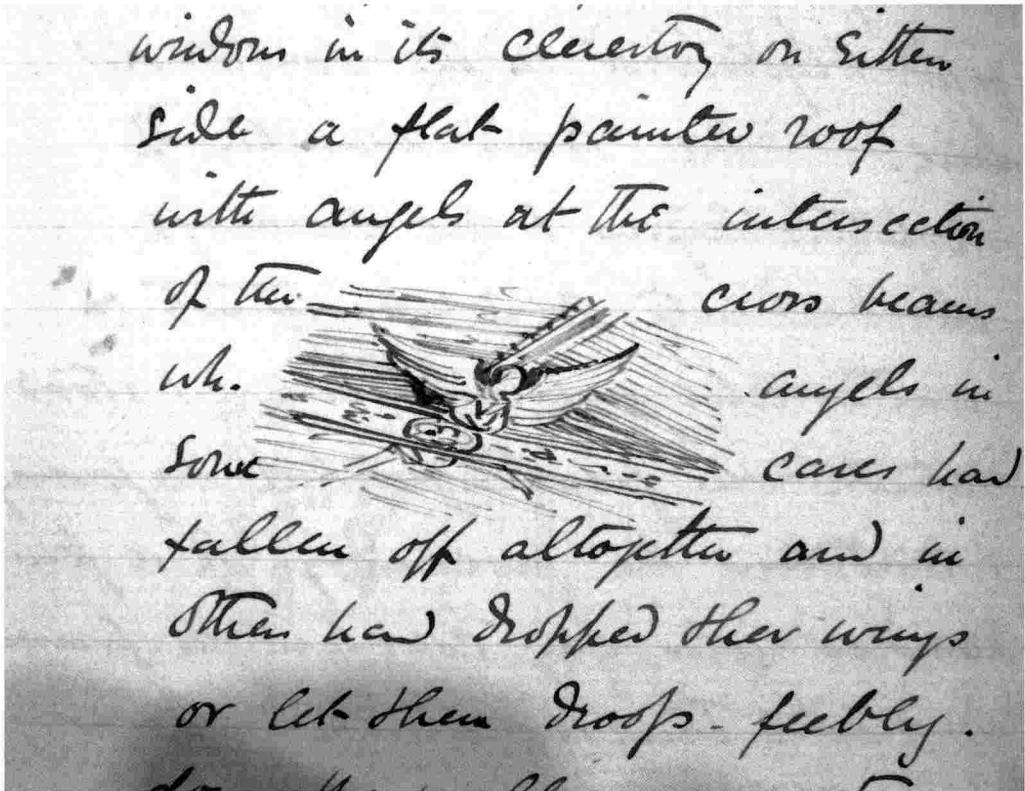


FIG. 143 – 'A flat painted roof with angels at the intersection of the cross beams': Blythburgh, 26 February 1881.

been sawn down sheer off at the panel tops, and the screen to the side chapels mutilated & then whitewashed. At the north of the sanctuary is an Altar Tomb of the latest Perpendicular to the memory of King (Neddy it sounded like), a Saxon King the sextoness told me, who certainly received honours late in the day.¹⁷ The alms box is a curiosity and would look better if the vicar had not decorated it by painting forget me nots or some such flowers in the panels. The stalls (those wh. remain) are richly carved & the wonder is they have not been sold or burned for fire wood. The sanctuary decorations consist of red blue & gold paper banners & texts plastered into one enormous dossal & covering the whole east wall up to the great east window, wh. poor window has been robbed of all its tracery & filled in solid down to the spring of the arch (Fig. 144). The lower part is filled with neat and inexpensive quarry glass of this pattern. Many of the other windows are filled in a more solid manner with brickwork

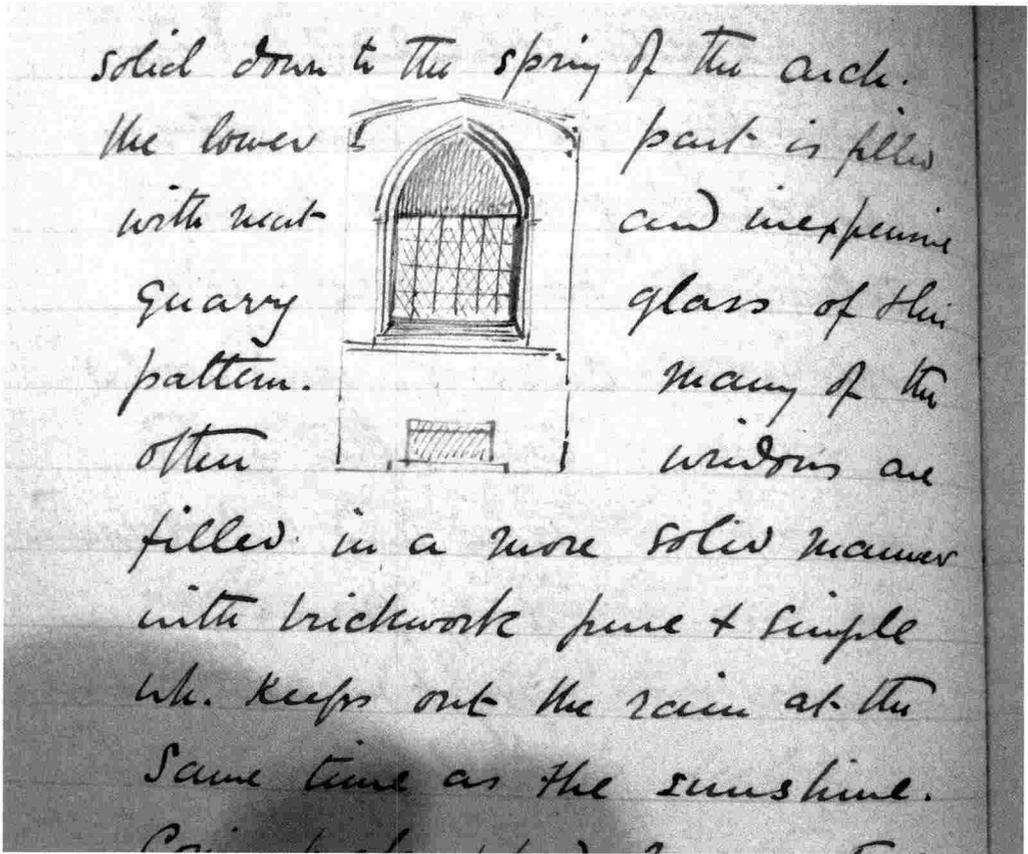


FIG. 144 – ‘The great east window wh. poor window has been robbed of all its tracery & filled solid down to the spring of the arch’: Blythburgh, 26 February 1881.

pure & simple, wh. keeps out the rain at the same time as the sunshine. Coming back I had 20 minutes or so to wait at Halesworth so I went to inspect the town & found one very curious old house with a cornice occupied by 2 gigantic dogs some 5 feet long each, supporting a shield in the centre.¹⁸ Got back at 4 o'clock & dined with Malim.

Feb. 27 L. Sunday¹⁹. preached at Mattins & took the children.

Feb. 28. At 9 o'clock went to communicate an old woman named Legatt. In the room I found her two daughters who quietly composed themselves to sit through the service binding a carpet the while! I had to request them to abandon their work & later on at the prayer of consecration they rose & seated themselves once more & I had to tell them to kneel down. It seems really that, among the best intentioned folk of that class, any idea of reverence is non-existent. A sharp regard to the main chance however exists as witness the two following cases from Kelsale.

(a.) An old man named Fitch²⁰ (if the truth must be known) had a claim upon the government of his country for £5.5.9 owing to his son lately deceased. He came to Malim when I was there one evening lately & delivered himself thus... ‘I'd rather have the handlin' of the money myself Sir. I don't say but what she's my wife & due pretty well, but ye see Sir when the women gets a handlin' of the money it goes pretty quick.’

With more words of caution as to the delivery of the money when Malim had obtained it for him he departed; but meeting his pastor by the road side a day or so later he said – “I say Sir, Don’t say anything to my wife about the odd 5/9! You see I’ve been put to a good deal of expense as it is.”

(b.) Another old man (or possibly the same) remarked of the Rector “O yes I like Mr Davies pretty well Sir, but he altered a good many things when he came here, which he didn’t ought to have changed.” Indeed – “You know Sir at the Sacrament we used to have the money divided out amongst us afterwards, & one don’t feel so ready to give to the collection now!” and this is rustic simplicity.

Mar. 1. The Rector came down and Malim & I kept the “shrove feast” with him.

Mar 2. Ash Wednesday. Celebration at 8.0. Mattins Litany & Communication at 11. Evensong at 7.0 with sermon by the Rector (Fig. 145).

After Mattins I incautiously stayed for a few minutes prayer and according to the “Blower” who resented the act it became the Talk of the village. There was someone he said “respectably dressed but there’s no tellin’, stayed in the church saying his prayers after the service: it isn’t safe to leave the church like that!” and this is Christianity: what a bitter sarcasm & what a sermon unpreached on closed churches. A poor sinner can’t say his prayers for ten minutes without it becoming the talk of the village.²¹

Mar 3. Walked over to inspect Theberton, a queer thatched Church with nothing remarkable except the Porch a fine piece of flint work & the Round Tower.

The south aisle is also remarkable for being gorgeously daubed with paint & seated with carved oak pews. In this aisle (restored & occupied by the Squire Doughty) formerly the labouring men used to sit and, said the old clerk, “they left the church when they were turned out of that and many of them have never been to church since” – 30 years!²²

Mar 5. [sic]²³ The government inspector Swinburne²⁴ came & examined the schools.

Mar 6. [sic] Went & inspected Saxmundham Church & found only the fragment of the old Roodscreen preserved in the vestry worth sketching.²⁵

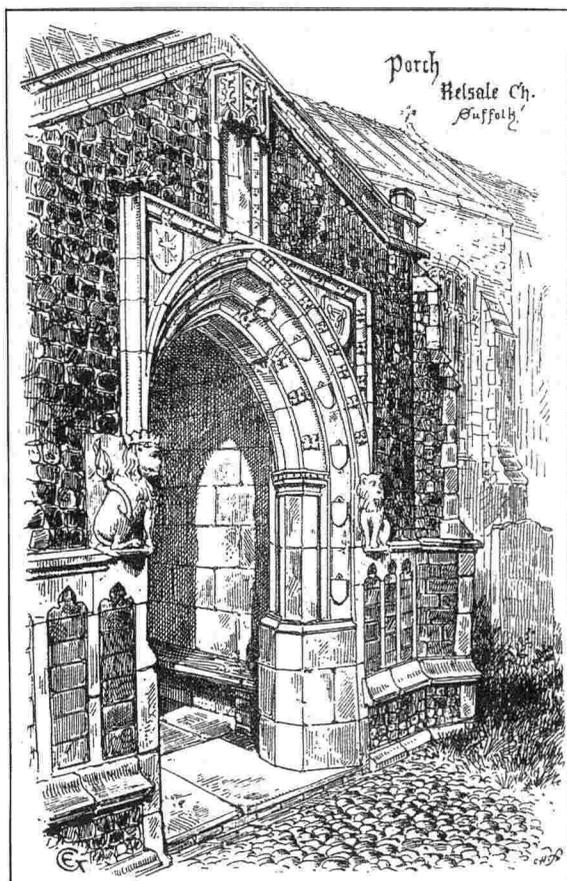


FIG. 145 – Kelsale Church porch, drawn by Geldart (Dawn of Day, June 1890).

Mar 7. [sic] Celebration at 8. Mattins & 2nd Celebration at 11. Evensong at 7 whereat I preached.

Mar 8. [sic] Walked over to Rendham & Swefling. Found both churches in an awful state, ½ the pews facing west backing the altar unreservedly. In Swefling Church just by the altar over the backs of the easternmost pew holders stands written a terribly true condemnation. "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not." It is not wonderful that here I found an enormous Independent Chapel with a full graveyard. Evidently a flourishing concern (Fig. 146).²⁶

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Mar. 8. The rector went back to London. I walked with Malim to Benhall & found it if possible worse than Rendham. A heavy thunder storm kept us in the Church for some time & we inspected its galleries & a north chapel which form an infant school, & wondered at the state of churchmanship which could tolerate such a building. Talking of Buildings

We are pleased to learn, that the Rev. Ernest Geldart, former curate of S. Andrew's has been preferred by Sir Charles Du Cane, Bart. to the vicarage of Little Braxted, near Witham.

reminds me of Little Braxted

here is a cutting from the Stratford Paper. wh. is glad to "learn".

This is well as the announcement only contains 2 mistakes, but I shall have to leave it in its state of thirst for knowledge.

Mar 12. I went at 9 o'clock to communicate an W woman in the parish & found the work as trying as such services usually make it. On arriving at the cottage I found the woman prepared a table set out with 3 plates, 3 wine glasses, a jar of water and a piece of bread sufficient for 2 people breakfast!

Mar. 13. Celebration at 8. Took Malim & Henry (Malim being at Carlton).

Mar. 14. Went to Southwold & saw the first Woodscreen

FIG. 146 - Sample diary pages, 7-14 March 1881.

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Mar. 13. Celebrated at 8. Took Mattins & Litany. (Malim being at Carlton).

Mar. 14. Went to Southwold & saw the finest Roodscreen probably in England, the richest in its colouring & gilding that is. The lower panels are wonderfully unmitigated & the figures well painted. The Pulpit is also a very fine specimen of late woodwork, also painted and gilded (Fig. 147). The most noticeable thing perhaps in the church is the base use to wh. the stalls have been put. The 3 western ones on either side of the Chancel Gate have been turned round bodily! & in them the members of the Corporation sit in state facing the congregation & peering over the top of the screen.²⁹ I sketched in the church till dusk & then after a breath of sea air on the cliff turned in to the Hotel & got some dinner before returning to Kelsale.

Mar. 19. Having hired the Horse & Trap from the station refreshment rooms I was driven to Dennington & Framlingham. Dennington is simply charming. The 2 side chapels are enclosed with carved & painted screens & the nave benches are the most perfect & the richest that I ever saw, scores of ends all carved & traceried to the nth, & each one of them looked so sharp cut & fresh that I thought they must be new but I found them all old (Fig. 148).³⁰ The Church at Framlingham has a good oak roof to the nave but the "state of affairs" is truly pitiable.³¹ The Castle has little else remaining but the walls & chimney shafts of twisted brick. I just went in and climbed to the top of the walls so as to conform to custom, but found little to detain me.

Mar 20. III S[unday] in Lent. My last Sunday at Kelsale. Preached in the Evening & had supper with Malim.

Mar 21. Up to town by the 12.32.

LATER HISTORY

Geldart was instituted as rector of Little Braxted on Easter Day (17 April) 1881. He returned to Kelsale

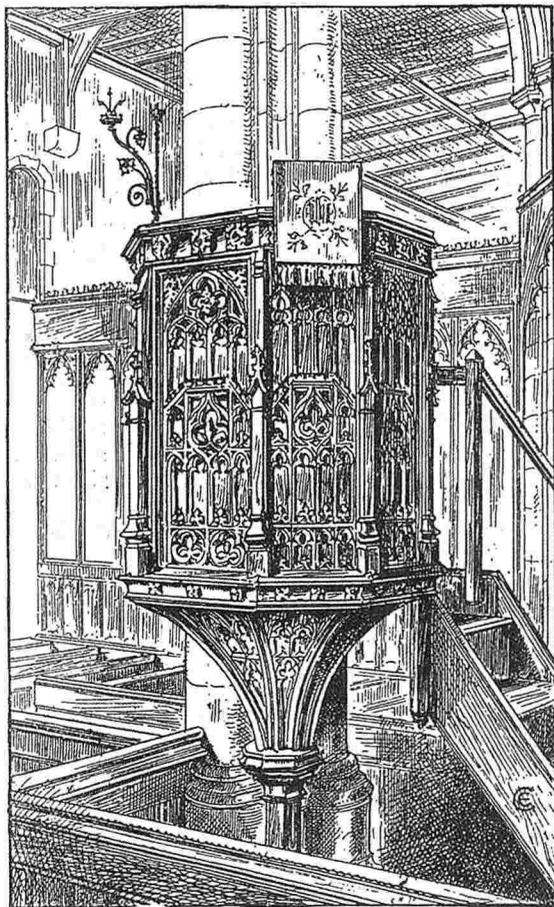


FIG. 147 – Southwold Church pulpit, drawn by Geldart on 14 March 1881 (*Dawn of Day*, September 1890).

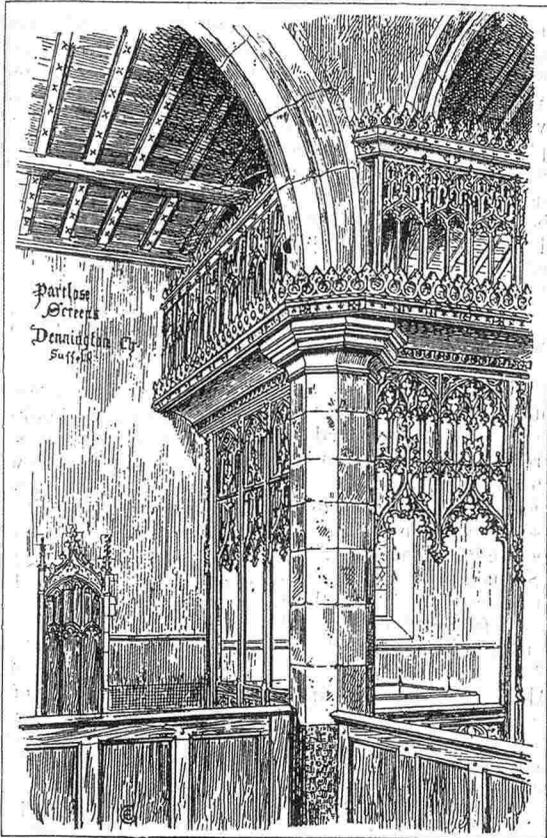


FIG. 148 – Dennington Church parclose screen drawn, by Geldart on 19 March 1881 (*Dawn of Day*, March 1890).

1877, he restored the chancel in 1886–87 and then added to south vestry and organ chamber in 1889. This commission arose because Geldart had met the brother of the rector, Arthur George Lee, on the return voyage from Australia in 1877–78. On 13 December 1886, Geldart

Took train to Elmswell Station near Bury St Edmunds thence 5 miles drive to Langham of wh. parish Lee a brother of my old Cuzco³⁶ friend is rector. After luncheon went & looked at his Chancel wh. wants fitting then back to tea & then dined at the squire's house Mrs Maitland Wilson³⁷ & 7 daughters! entertained us. Most charming people.

On 3 November 1888 he returned to Langham, saw the finished chancel for the first time, and measured up for the new organ chamber and vestry, which he in turn saw completed the following July.³⁸

His next major work was at Coddendam, where he first visited in 1891 ('off by train to Ipswich & to Coddendam by Needham Market Station. Found Wyles the Vicar a very nice fellow luncheon measurements ...³⁹). He restored the chancel, 1892–93, including demolishing an old vestry on the north side and building a new one (with organ chamber) on the south; the organ itself, with case designed by Geldart, was installed in 1896.⁴⁰ The east window, made by Percy Bacon Brothers to Geldart's design, was fitted in 1894, and it seems likely that reredos, also made by Bacon, was designed by Geldart.⁴¹ He also restored the south

on 21 December to inspect a reredos he had designed for the church; the commission presumably arose from his earlier visit, but is not otherwise mentioned in his diary:

12.30 took train to Saxmundham was met at the station & driven straight off to Kelsale Church to see the reredos executed by Cox & Co.³² Preached at Evensong & spent an hour or so after supper smoking in the rectors study where Malim joined us. Miss Austin³³ (the donor of the Reredos) was at Kelsale.

Geldart was involved with eight other Suffolk churches, although none of the later commissions can be directly linked with his visit to Kelsale. One seems to have come to nothing: a proposal to create a south chapel in East Bergholt Church in 1897.³⁴ At Thorington, in 1882, he designed a reredos in memory of Henry Alexander Starkie Bence (1816–1881). Like the Kelsale reredos, it was made by Cox, Sons, Buckley & Co., and is of carved oak.³⁵

The remaining projects were more extensive. At Langham, where the nave had been rebuilt by J.H. Hakewill in

porch, renewing much of the detail including the inscription over the entrance, the niche with figure of the Virgin Mary, and the parapet with its monogram in flushwork (Fig. 149).⁴²

At the same time, he was working at Thurston, where he was employed by the patron, E.W. (later Sir Walter) Greene of Nether Hall, Pakenham. Two visits are recorded in his diary, on 29 October 1892 ('Down to Witham 10.18 to Thurston. Omnibus met train & Mr Greene the patron ran us up to Church then on to luncheon & down to Church again') and 10 December 1892 ('To Witham, Ipswich, Haughley, Thurston. Greene met me & we had a good look at the Church & my plans. Lunch talk & back by 3.1'). As at Langham, the nave had been rebuilt by J.H. Hakewill, following the collapse of the tower in 1860. Geldart restored the chancel in 1892–93, including a new roof with angels, reredos, stalls, and other furnishings. The east window is a memorial to Greene's father Edward, who died in 1891, and it seems likely that it was designed by Geldart and

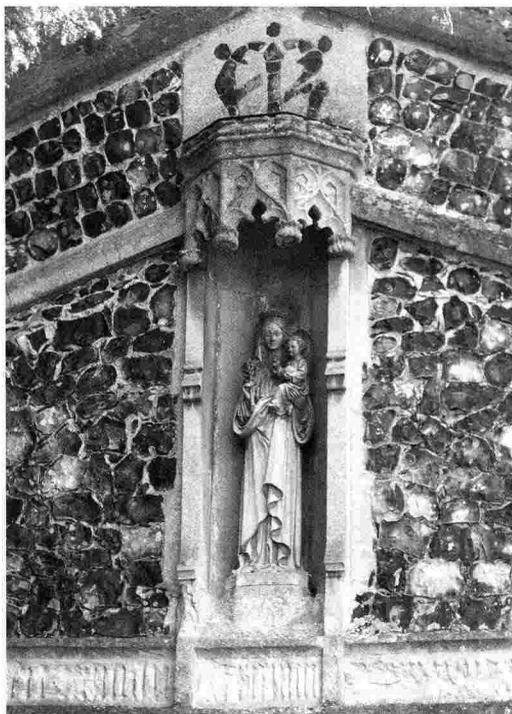


FIG. 149 – Coddendam Church porch, showing the worn inscription, statue, and flushwork initials by Geldart, c. 1898 (photo: author).

made by Ward & Hughes, whose signature appears on other windows in the church and who worked with Geldart on a number of schemes. They also made the rood screen, dated 1897.⁴²

On 8 September 1897, he travelled by 'train to Sudbury & then on to Kettlebaston preached at the Dedication Festival & measured up'. It seems he had first been approached by the rector, William Storer Sellon, in 1895, and Geldart proposed a new porch, new chancel roof, new floors throughout, a choir vestry at the west end and a sacristy behind the altar, as well as a rood screen, reredos, stalls, font cover, pulpit, and removal of the north vestry. Most of this was never carried out, but in 1902–3 the chancel was restored to Geldart's designs; the work was supervised by H.J. Wright. The rood screen and reredos were installed as part of the restoration, made by Taylor & Clifton, another firm with whom Geldart habitually worked (Fig. 150). The rood figures were added to the screen in 1930, and both the screen and reredos were painted by Patrick Osborne, 1948–49, with figures added to the dado of the reredos by Enid Chadwick of Walsingham in 1954.⁴⁴

The remaining two projects were much less ambitious. In 1902 he designed alterations to the chancel of Alpheton church,⁴⁵ including new altar and priest's stalls, made by Taylor & Clifton and T. Hadge of Hartest respectively.⁴⁶ Finally, in 1903 he proposed restoring the upper part of the chancel screen of Preston church (the lower part had been discovered in a farm building). The work was estimated by Taylor & Clifton, but although the lower part was re-erected in the tower arch of the church in 1907, Geldart's restoration was not carried out.⁴⁷

By this time Geldart had retired from Little Braxted (in 1900, on grounds of ill health) to Holmbury St Mary, Surrey. He continued to practise as a designer and, like many retired clergy, remained active as a priest as well. Little is known of his life after 1914, and he died in 1929.

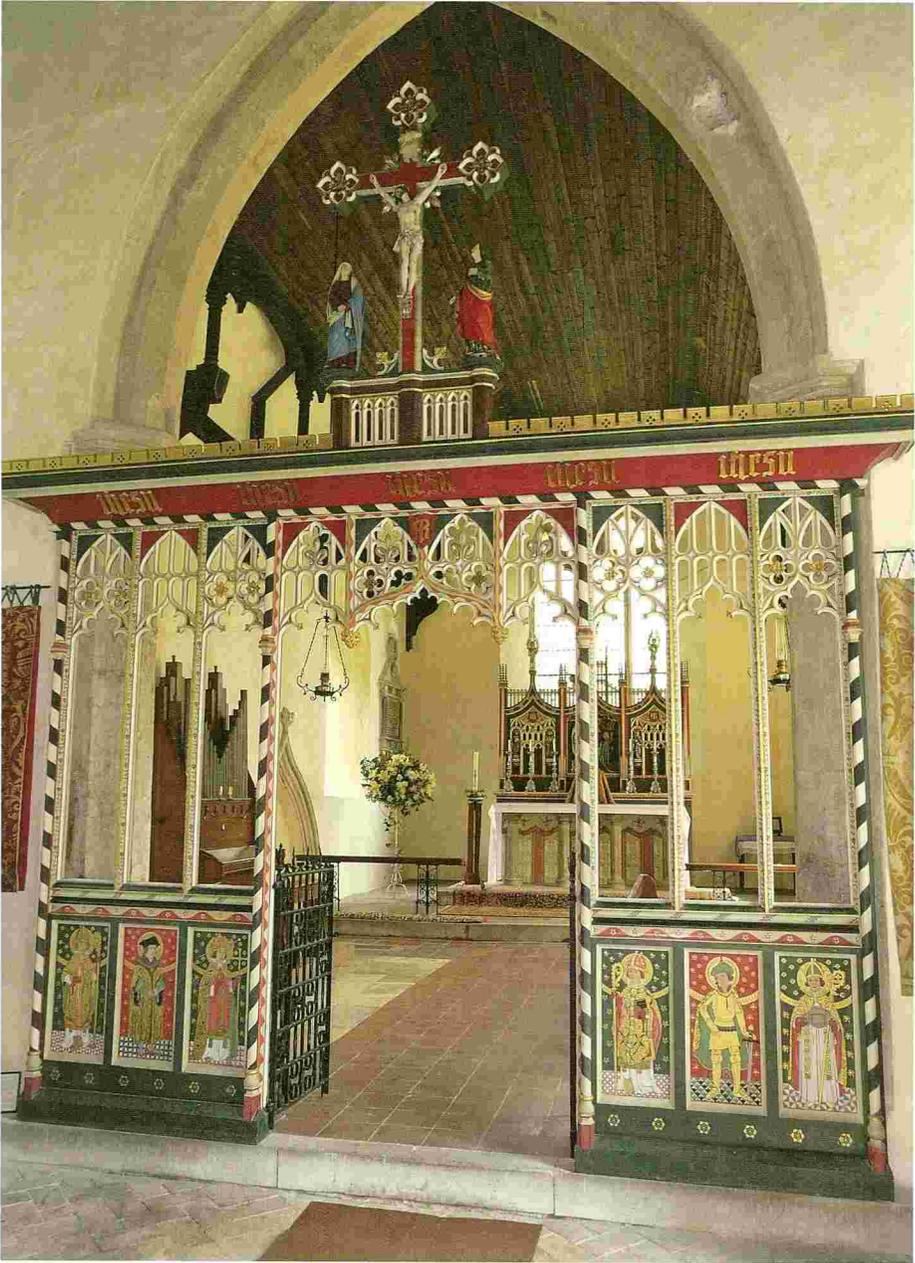


FIG. 150 – Kettlebaston Church rood screen and reredos by Geldart, 1902–3, with later decoration (*photo: author*).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Mr Francis Geldart for making the diaries available to me and for giving permission for them to be reproduced in this way; and to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings for permission to reproduce the photograph of Blythburgh Church.

NOTES

- 1 Bettley 2011(a), esp. 27–34. For general accounts of Geldart's life and work, see Bettley 1999 and 2000.
- 2 Diaries covering the years 1877–92, 1893–98, 1909, and 1911–14 are in private hands. A partial transcription has been deposited in Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, but the extract printed here is complete; a few minor changes have been made to Geldart's punctuation to make his meaning clearer. The earlier diaries, up to 1898, were written in lined notebooks, bound in red leather, measuring approximately 180mm x 115mm closed.
- 3 His most famous sibling was Edmund Martin Geldart (Webb 2004).
- 4 Hannah and her sister Emma, also a successful author, were daughters of Simon Martin, a partner in the Norwich bank Gurney & Co., and his wife Hannah Ransome, and were thus related to the Ipswich Ransomes (Mitchell 2004).
- 5 Malim (1842–92) was curate of Kelsale 1880–83. He was known to Geldart through his brother George Malim (1840–95), a fellow member of the Guild of St Alban and the Brotherhood of St Dunstan.
- 6 Now Kelsale Court. It stands to the west of the church. The absent rector was George Irving Davies, rector of Kelsale with Carlton from 1868 until his death in 1894.
- 7 Sexagesima Sunday, i.e. the second Sunday before Lent.
- 8 The rectory (living) of Carlton was consolidated with that of Kelsale, and the two parishes would be combined (as Kelsale-cum-Carlton) in 1884 (White 1892, 490).
- 9 Presumably one of the daughters of James Mattless Harvey, draper, grocer and valuer, High Street, Saxmundham: the 1881 Census records Edith Marion (aged 22), Clare Constance (21) and Ada Florence (18).
- 10 Revd William Edmund Moll, a clerical friend of Geldart's, who had been a curate at St Andrew's, Plaistow, at the same time as him, and who would also have known Malim. He is recorded as taking services at Kelsale between December 1880 and July 1881, perhaps as a locum rather than as a curate. Davies himself took no services at Kelsale from 5 December 1880 until 6 February 1881 (Register of Services, SROB, FC59/C3/1).
- 11 Revd Berney Wodehouse Raven (d. 1911), rector of Leiston 1874–1909.
- 12 Revd Alfred Richard Du Cane (1835–82), rector of Willingale Doe, Essex, 1873–82, and younger brother of Sir Charles Du Cane, patron of Little Braxted. It is not known how he and Geldart first became acquainted.
- 13 The church (all but the west tower) had been rebuilt in 1853–54 to designs by E.B. Lamb (Bettley 2011(b), 398–400).
- 14 This unusual mechanism has unfortunately not survived.
- 15 The narrow-gauge branch line from Halesworth to Southwold opened in 1879 and closed in 1929. Intermediate stations were Wenhaston, Blythburgh, and Walberswick.
- 16 The poor state of Blythburgh Church was a scandal and in December 1881 it was closed by the bishop of Norwich because of its dangerous condition. A controversial restoration, opposed by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, was carried out in 1883–84, with further campaigns in 1894–95 and 1906 (Thompson 1998).
- 17 'At the east end of the north aisle is shown a tomb, said to be that of Anna, King of the East Angles; and in the chancel another, for his son Firminus' (White 1892, 141). The tomb 'of the latest Perpendicular' that Geldart saw is presumably that of John Hopton (d. 1478).
- 18 No. 6, Thoroughfare. The carved bressumer in fact shows two crouching lions supporting a blank shield, and to either side scenes from legends performed by animals: on the left, it is thought, Ganymede being seized by Jupiter, on the right Reynard the Fox. Other interpretations have been proposed.
- 19 Quinquagesima Sunday, i.e. the Sunday before Lent.
- 20 Perhaps Isaac Fitch, recorded in the 1881 Census as road mender, aged 66.
- 21 Geldart was a member of the Incorporated Free and Open Church Association, which campaigned for 'The throwing open of Churches for the free and equal use of all classes; the general adoption of the Offertory as a substitute for Pew Rents; the Opening of Churches daily for private prayer; the Building, Repair, and Endowment of Free Churches; and the holding of Patronage' (advertisement in *Church Portrait Journal*, Jan. 1885). Geldart used this incident as the basis of an article (Geldart 1890 Jun.):

It is a good many years since I was at this Church, but I shall not forget it. The old sexton evidently thought that people ought to be outside the Church and not inside, except when Service was going on. After the morning prayers on Ash Wednesday I stayed behind awhile to pray; and the Curate told me afterwards that the sexton complained that "there was a decently-dressed person had been saying his prayers, so that he couldn't lock up the Church: it was, he said, the talk of the parish." I hope the inhabitants have found something else to talk of by this time; or better still, that they have ceased to wonder at God's House being used as a House of Prayer.

- 22 The south aisle was restored or rebuilt in 1845–46 by L.N. Cottingham for C.M. Doughty of Theberton Hall, who although himself a clergyman was not the incumbent of the parish. The aisle was transformed into Doughty's family chapel, with vault below. It is very brightly decorated, the scheme apparently based on traces of colouring discovered during the restoration.
- 23 Geldart's dating goes awry at this point. Sunday that week was 6 March, not 7, so what he calls 5 March was probably 4 March; by the second 8 March he seems to be back on track.
- 24 Alfred James Swinburne (1846–1915), author of *Memories of a School Inspector: thirty-five years in Lancashire and Suffolk* (3rd edn, 1912). He lived at Snape Priory.
- 25 He is presumably referring to the two painted panels of the old rood screen that now form part of a credence table in the chancel.
- 26 Sweffling (or Sweffling) was restored and re-seated 1883 by the rector, Revd Richard Peek, who acted as architect (*Building News* XLV (1883), 467). Geldart would have approved of this example of a fellow priest-architect, although not perhaps of the very mean quality of the furnishings he introduced. Rendham had been restored and re-seated in 1865 by William Patisson, and it is hard to see what Geldart found so objectionable there. The Independent Chapel may have been a flourishing concern in 1881, but it closed in 1978 and is now a private house. Built in 1750 and enlarged in 1834, it had galleries on three sides and must have accommodated a large number of worshippers.
- 27 The church was restored in 1841–42 by the patron, Revd Edmund Hollond of Benhall Lodge, who added a north transept and schoolroom, the latter an unusual survival. It has a gallery at the east end and also connects to a gallery in the north transept facing into the church, the effect unfortunately spoilt by the erection of an organ in front of the gallery in 1978.
- 28 A cutting from the (unidentified) newspaper has been pasted into the diary and Geldart has crossed through 'Bart.' (Du Cane, governor of Tasmania 1869–74, was not a baronet but KCMG: see Rimmer 1972) and 'vicarage' (the living was a rectory).
- 29 Some of the faces of the figures on the screen had been repainted by George Richmond in 1878. The pulpit was illustrated by Geldart (Geldart 1890 Sep.). In this article he also refers to the reversed stalls, as well as to the pews at Sweffling. *Dawn of Day*, Jan. 1891, carried a letter from the vicar of Southwold explaining that the situation there had been rectified (chancel reordered by A.E. Street, 1885–89). In 1930 the screen was cleaned by Prof. E.W. Tristram and the pulpit was repainted under the direction of F.E. Howard.
- 30 The carving was original, but not the painting, which had been redone in 1800. Geldart used the parclose screens to illustrate an article (Geldart 1890 Jan.). His theme was of work hidden away in village churches, most likely done (as he presumed) by members of a travelling guild:
 These travelling artists have long since died out, and if such work as this had to be done to-day, first an architect would draw the design, and then employ builders and carvers to do it, who would work by rule and plan; but we could not improve on the labours of these men, who themselves designed and did the work well, because they loved it.
- This mirrors Geldart's own practice of being a priest who designed church furnishings and on occasion executed the work himself.
- 31 Nave restored by E.S. Prior, 1888–89, chancel by John Morley, 1908–9.
- 32 *Sic.* The church furnishing company Cox & Sons, later Cox, Sons, Buckley & Co., executed many of Geldart's designs for furnishings and stained glass, and for a number of years he was employed by them as a salaried designer.
- 33 Georgiana Johanna Austin. The reredos was a memorial to her goddaughter Georgiana Mary Paulina Davies (d. 1875), daughter of the rector. See also Bettley 2011(b), 396–98.
- 34 Diary, 25 Oct. 1897. Some work was done in the south chapel at about this time, but cannot be attributed to Geldart.
- 35 *The Guildsman* I (1882), 69.
- 36 Geldart and Lee were passengers on the steamer of that name.
- 37 Agnes Caroline Maitland Wilson (1829–1913) lived at Langham Hall, then part of the Stowlangtoft Hall estate. She was the widow of Fuller Maitland Wilson, who had died in 1875.
- 38 Diary, 3–5 Nov. 1888, 30 Jul. 1889.
- 39 Diary, 30 Nov. 1891. Walter Wyles was not the vicar but the rector, for forty years from 1890.
- 40 Allen 1996, 452.
- 41 *Builder* LXXVI (1899), 50. The reredos has been dismantled but two of its panels are mounted on the west wall of the nave. The window was erected by Walter Wyles in memory of his father Richard.
- 42 Design dated 9 Oct. 1896 at Royal Institute of British Architects, London, PB147/12(1–2).
- 43 Tricker 1992, 10, 15–18.
- 44 Kettlebaston Parish Magazine, Aug. 1902; Tricker 1993, 2, 6–8.

- 45 Faculty, SROB, FE500/6/2/Alpheton/1.
 46 Notice in church by Revd H.H. Bartrum (1913).
 47 Design for restoration, 28 Feb. 1903, displayed in church; Wilkins 2007, 17.

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