

EXCURSIONS 1999

Report and notes on some findings

26 September 1998. Clive Paine and Martin Harrison

Wattisfield and Pakenham Churches

(This was the last excursion of the 1998 season, which it was not possible to report in the 1999 issue of the *Proceedings*.)

Wattisfield, St Margaret's Church (by kind permission of the Revd J. Fulton). There was a church here with twelve acres of land in 1086. The manor of Wattisfield Hall was held by Bury Abbey until 1539, and the manor of Giffords and Hallymote by the de la Poles, 1389–1511 and then by Charles Brandon, 1511–38.

The unbuttressed tower, with a tall tower arch and flushwork base, dates from c.1300. The chancel is Decorated, with a piscina and north door of that period. The windows are Perpendicular; the north-east window was inserted and the tracery of the east window renewed during the restoration of 1872. The nave has Perpendicular windows, and wills show money being left for fabric repairs in the mid-15th century. The north-east window has finer detail in the tracery and mullions, and may indicate the position of the altar of St Margaret's gild.

Davy in 1810 recorded the dado of the rood screen as 'carved and painted with figures', with the arms of George I over the chancel arch. Wills show that the rood loft and candlebeam were being made in the 1520s. Some panels are now re-used in the reading desks, lectern and vestry. The font is 15th-century with window tracery on the bowl, heads below, and a panelled stem on a new base of 1879. The cover is 17th-century, with ribs carved with birds' heads and scrolls.

The Perpendicular south porch has been extensively repaired in red brick. Over the entrance is a terracotta shield with the arms of de la Pole. The buttresses have flushwork panels with crowned M, IHS, S[anctus] and a possible Katherine wheel. The wooden north porch is probably late 15th- or 16th-century. Both Simon and Eleanor Burlingham, who died in 1533, requested to be buried in the north porch. Probably they, or earlier family members, had financed its construction.

Pakenham, St Mary's Church (by kind permission of the Revd I. Hooper). There was a church with thirty acres of land here at the time of Domesday. The plan of the church is Norman, with nave, central square tower and chancel. A chapel was added on the south side of the tower in the late 13th century, which was later demolished as a result of fire. The blocked arch to the chapel and the scar of its roof line are shown on drawings by Isaac Johnson in 1818 and Henry Davy in 1822. The present transepts date from the restoration by Teulon in 1849–50 (see these *Proceedings*, 1 (1850), 89–90).

The central tower was lowered c.1350, strengthened with diagonal buttresses, and an octagonal belfry stage erected with trefoil-headed windows. The brick battlements date from c.1805. The Early English arch to the south chapel was blocked and a three-light Perpendicular window subsequently inserted. In 1849–50 the south arch was re-opened, a copy made on the north side and another on the west side of the tower, to replace the Norman chancel arch. This last was to open up the view towards the east end of the church. The *Bury and Norwich Post* of 16 October 1850, reporting the re-opening, commented on the removal of the Norman arch as 'a change which we cannot commend . . .'. A Norman arch remains on the east side of the tower, and has shafts, saltire cross decoration in the abacus, and roll mouldings.

The nave has Norman west and south doors with scalloped capitals and roll mouldings. Two Early English plate tracery windows were inserted in the late 13th century, a porch added on the north side and a large Perpendicular five-light window in the west wall. A bequest of 1421

by Thomas Aunstey, priest, was made to the image of the Virgin Mary 'in front of the porch'. Below the south-east window on the outside is part of a stone coffin, which *may* be the tomb of Walter, mentioned as the founder of the church c.1100. A seating plan made prior to the 1849–50 restoration shows that the nave had box pews, and that the west gallery with seating extended two-thirds of the length of the nave. The present benches with fleurs-de-lis are copied from those at Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire, as suggested by Teulon. During the restoration a Doom painting was uncovered over the chancel arch on the nave side, a modern painting of which hangs in the vestry. The 15th-century font bowl has signs of the Evangelists and the Virgin Mary; there are angels below the bowl and seated figures against the shaft.

The chancel is Early English, with lancet windows and doors in the north and south walls. The east window dates from 1887, based on the original Perpendicular design. The reredos, carved (and probably designed) by Thomas Earp, was erected in 1867. Both Earp and Teulon sent bills for the reredos. Cynthia Brown suggests that the design is Earp's and that perhaps Teulon had a supervisory role. The door to the vestry is medieval and the choir stalls and rood screen are 15th-century but extensively restored.

24 April. *Joanna Martin, Philip Aitkens and Clive Paine
Hessett and Gedding*

Hessett, St Ethelbert's Church (by kind permission of the Revd A. Spencer). The 151st Annual General Meeting was held here. The nave was rebuilt to the design of master mason Simon Clerk, who leased the manor from the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds between 1445 and 1475 and was responsible for the Abbey's reconstruction following the great fire in the 1460s. He later contributed to the design of King's College, Cambridge. The early 15th-century tower at Hessett was finished by the Bacon family, who also built the porch. The church contains a wonderful set of recently restored wall paintings, including the Seven Deadly Sins.

Gedding, St Mary's Church (by kind permission of the Revd P. Barham). A church with six acres of land is recorded here in Domesday. The church consists of a Norman nave and chancel and a low tower. An ambitious scheme for rebuilding the tower and erecting a new south porch, by Bisshopp of Ipswich, was published in *The Builder* for 1885, but not carried out.

The nave has a small lancet window in both the north and the south wall. That on the south has concentric semi-circles with beads around the head, and is probably a piece of re-used Saxon work incorporated into the Norman lancet, with chevron designs in the jambs. A similar piece of chevron decoration is re-used between the south windows of the chancel. The 15th-century font has the arms of the Tiptoft family, related to the Chamberlains at East Harling. Nearby is the bowl of a pillar holy water stoup, with quatrefoils on the bowl and heads below.

The chancel has Decorated windows, piscina, sedilia and low-side window. In the 1884 restoration the floor was raised to such an extent that the piscina is almost at floor level. The Decorated chancel arch has an arched opening on either side, similar to those at Chevington. The north opening has a rectangular compartment below it, divided into two, which it has been suggested may have been a reliquary for a nave altar.

The will of Stephen Wymbysh of Buxhall, dated 1469, probably refers to the building of the tower. He leaves five marks to 'the reparacion of the tower for the souls of Sir Roger Chamberleyn [lord of Gedding, d. 1464] and his wife, and of me Stephen and my wife to be prayed for'. The battlements have the arms of Chamberlain (lords here, 1428–91) and crowned Ms. The eastern buttresses come down into the nave and are decorated with arches and heads.

Before the 1884 restoration by Bisshopp the nave roof had lost its ridge tiles, the floor was covered with fallen rubble, and only the chancel could be used for worship. The restoration involved the removal of box pews and three-decker pulpit, and added cusped and crocketed ogee arches on the eastern side of the chancel arch.

Gedding Hall (by kind permission of Mr W.G. Wyman). A very romantic-looking house, with its mellow red-brick walls reflected in the water of the moat. The present house is but a fragment of an ambitious courtyard-plan house that may never have been finished. The earliest, and most impressive, part is the tall gatehouse. The four-centred archway (now infilled) is flanked by two polygonal turrets, which are decorated with an unusual ballflower frieze. Though clearly of the late 15th or early 16th century, the lack of documentary evidence makes it difficult to date the Gedding gatehouse. It belongs to a group of impressive brick gatehouses which includes that at Oxburgh Hall (c.1482) and Archbishop Pykenham's Deanery Tower at Hadleigh (c.1490). It is therefore possible that the building at Gedding was begun by the prominent Yorkist Sir Robert Chamberlain (b. c.1435), but was curtailed when he was executed in 1491. Work may have restarted from the 1530s onward, under Sir Robert's grandson, the Catholic sympathizer Sir Ralph Chamberlain (c.1510–75). The range flanking the gatehouse looks later, and may be Sir Ralph's work. Recent excavations at the rear of the moated platform have uncovered substantial brick foundations that are probably part of the hall range.

Shortly before the death of Sir Ralph Chamberlain's widow Lady Elizabeth (*née* Fynes) in 1586, the reversion of the manor of Gedding, with the Hall, was sold by her son, Fitzralph Chamberlain, to Edward Rookwood of Euston, a noted recusant. The Hall then underwent a gradual decline, passing through the hands of the Page, Goodbourne, Buckenham/Bokenham, Johnson, Ewen and Maidwell families, most of whom were non-resident. At some stage between 1838 and 1883 the old forecourt of farm buildings, which lay in front of the house, was replaced with a new set of buildings to the west of the moat. In 1896 the dilapidated Hall was sold to a professional architect, Arthur Wakerley of Leicester. Wakerley restored the building, and extended it by adding a substantial brick tower. The Wakerley family sold the Hall c.1914. Gedding Hall changed hands several times during the 20th century, and was eventually bought in 1968 by Bill Wyman, then of the Rolling Stones rock group, to whom it still belongs.

*24 June. John Blatchly, John Fairclough and Tom Plunkett
Brightwell and Felixstowe*

The findings of this excursion are fully discussed by the excursion leaders elsewhere in this Part: see 'Thomas Essington at Brightwell and the Identity of his Sculptor' by John Blatchly and Geoffrey Fisher; and 'Drawings of Walton Castle and other Monuments in Walton and Felixstowe', by John Fairclough and S.J. Plunkett.

*10 July. Clive Paine
Whepstead and Dalham*

Whepstead, St Petronilla's Church. A church with forty acres is recorded in Domesday. Although quoted as the only church dedicated to St Petronilla, this is a very recent dedication. Wills from 1383 onwards show that the church had a pre-Reformation dedication to St Thomas, and that there was a gild and image of Blessed Thomas the Martyr. The new dedication occurred c.1883. Land in Whepstead had been granted in the 12th century to found St John's Hospital in Bury St Edmunds. The hospitals of St John and St Petronilla in Bury were sold in 1546, together with the land in Whepstead, and when the lost dedication was sought in the 19th century the wrong conclusion was drawn from the documentary evidence.

The chancel has windows of c.1250–1300, and a Decorated piscina and south door. In front of the communion rail a brass matrix with a foliated cross and a small effigy of a priest was probably for Richard de Colyngnam (d. 1383), who asked to be buried before the image of St Thomas. There is a floor-stone to the Revd Ambrose Salusbury (d. 1678), who petitioned the House of Lords concerning Church government in 1646. On the chancel south wall is a monument to Sir Francis Hammond (d. 1850), Equerry to King George IV. The chancel arch has Norman jambs; the arch itself dates from 1926. Some of the original chevron mouldings are reset in the doorway of the ringing gallery.

The rood screen to which a bequest was made in 1482 still remained in 1858. The stairs, as at Wingfield, are in the jamb of the south-east window. There is a piscina in the lower step, and another in the north window sill. These were for the altars of St Mary and St Margaret, before which there were lamps (mentioned in wills of 1462 and 1479).

The Decorated tower has been reduced in height to the top of the stair turret. The top of the north-west buttress has the initials 'W.H.' and the south-east the date 1582. Tradition (together with generations of Suffolk guide books) holds that there was once a spire which was blown down in the great storm that marked Cromwell's death in 1658. Though there was such a storm, the link with Whepstead seems to derive only from the county Directory of 1874. The fine west front has a Decorated doorway, Perpendicular window and three niches, all recently restored.

A major restoration took place in 1926, during which the chancel arch collapsed. The work, under the direction of H. Munro Cautley, included, as well as the new 'Norman' chancel arch, the Petronilla window in the chancel, the nave window with coats of arms of the past lords of Whepstead and Plumpton, a new vestry with toilet, and the uncovering of the rood stairs and piscina.

Dalham, St Mary's Church (by kind permission of the Revd B. Hayes). A church with forty acres is recorded in Domesday. The tower was 're-edified' in 1625 by Sir Martin Stuteville, patron and the Revd Dr Thomas Warner, rector, at a cost of £400. The details are recorded on a huge board in the tower arch. The parapet has three inscriptions and the date 1625; two of the bells have the Stuteville arms and are dated 1627. The base of the tower has a series of small lozenge patterns inscribed with initials. David Elisha Davy recorded these in 1828; could they represent the names of the other 1625 subscribers, or later restorers or workmen?

The Perpendicular chancel has a series of monuments to successive manorial families. The south-east window has the monument of Thomas and Edith Stuteville (the family held the lordship from 1417 to 1697); in 1447 Thomas bequeathed money 'to make a new window in the chancel south of my tomb'. This monument now combines parts of two other tomb chests, those of Thomas and Matilda (d. 1460) and Thomas and Anne (d. 1571). On the north side are marble bas-relief busts of Sir Martin (d. 1631) and two wives, with eight children below; he fought with Drake in 1585, and died while smoking at the 'Angel' in Bury in 1631. There is a monument to John Affleck (the first of the family at Dalham, where they were lords 1714–1901), of St George, Madras, who married Neeltje Shaape, described as 'castees' (d. 1729). The estate was purchased by Cecil Rhodes in 1901, but he died before returning to England, and it passed to his brother Col. Frank Rhodes (d. 1905), whose family remained here until 1927.

The Afflecks had a burial chapel on the north side, constructed by filling in the gap between the vestry and the east end of the north aisle. The chapel is now roofless, but there are remains of a four-light square-headed window on the north and blank plaster arcading around the inside walls. The entrance was from the east wall of the aisle. Davy described it as 'a vault containing 20 ovens in 5 rows of 4 each, those filled have mouths closed up with white marble and inscriptions'. These marble slabs have now been resited in the north wall of the churchyard. The Rhodes family have a burial area against the west wall of the churchyard. There is a series of monuments on the external north side of the church to indoor and outdoor servants, 1811–41.

The nave and aisles are Decorated, with arcades, doorways and piscina of that period, but the windows in the aisles and clerestory are Perpendicular. Wall paintings on the north side of the nave show the Seven Deadly Sins (as at Hessett) and the Seven Works of Mercy. Over and on either side of the chancel arch are scenes of the Passion, rather than the usual Doom.

25 September. Clive Paine
 Thrandeston and Redgrave

Thrandeston, St Margaret's Church (by kind permission of the Revd D. Stevenson). A church with eight acres is recorded in Domesday. Though the church is now dedicated to St Margaret, pre-Reformation wills show that it was dedicated to St Mary from at least as early as 1390. There is, however, one will of 1475 which refers to St Margaret as the patron saint.

The chancel is 13th-century, 'leaning' distinctly to the south, with Early English window openings, internal shafts and internal string course, but Perpendicular window tracery inserted. There are brass inscriptions to Elizabeth Cornwallis (d. 1537) and Prudence Copuldyke (d. 1619). The choir stalls are in the form of box pews made from a variety of panels and carvings. That on the north has two curious figures that may have come from Polynesia. A monument opposite may provide a clue, since it commemorates George Lee (d. 1861) who died in the Kingsmill group of islands in the South Seas. The vestry has a window high up on the north side. Could this have been a chantry with an upper floor?

The nave, aisles and clerestory are Perpendicular. The large sum of £5 was given in 1375 for 'emending the body of the church'. In 1475 £2 was bequeathed to repair the roof, and in 1491 the substantial sums of £13 6s. 8d. and £3 6s. 8d. were given to lead the roof of the nave and south aisle.

The rood screen is a patchwork of re-used and probably reworked old timbers, with the result that the panels of the dado do not line up with the divisions of the upper openings. The font has the Evangelists and flowers on the bowl, angels below and lions on the stem. An inscription records that it was restored by O.P. Oakes, Esq. in 1846, but we have been unable to find a link between the Oakes family and Thrandeston. Could the font have been moved from elsewhere? Both aisles have piscinas, that in the north being resited in the north wall when it was displaced by the rood stairs built into the south-east corner. In the north wall is a crocketed niche with flowers and leopards' faces. There is a good set of 15th-century benches with poppy heads, some with buttressed ends and figures on the arms.

The tower has a frieze of three shields below the west window. From left to right they are: (i) William Cornwallis, Esq. of Oakley (d. 1519) and his wife Elizabeth Stamford (d. 1537; she was buried at Thrandeston (brass in chancel), and their son Thomas (d. 1557) was Rector here and later Archdeacon of Norwich); (ii) Sir John Cornwallis of Brome, their eldest son (d. 1544) and his wife Mary Sulyard of Essex; (iii) John Herbert *alias* Yaxley of Mellis (d. 1505) and his wife Elizabeth Brome (d. 1530). Although money was left to 'new bells' in 1390 and for 'a window and tower to be made' in 1452, it is probable that the bells were hung in a cage and that no structure was begun. Five bequests between 1525 and 1530, and the evidence of the shields, indicate the date of major construction. One bequest of 1525 refers to 'my profere to the steeple to be paid as the residue of the town doth'. Others of 1526 and 1527 refer to making 'the new steeple'; in 1529 to 'edification and finishing'; and in 1530 to 'repaire'.

Redgrave, St Botolph's Church (by kind permission of Mr John Robinson, Churchwarden). The church with thirty acres of land was held by Bury Abbey at the time of Domesday. The tithes of Redgrave were allocated to St Saviour's Hospital, Bury, c.1160, and by 1211 Abbot Samson had erected a stone house at Redgrave. In 1227 Abbot Hugh had a market here on Thursdays and a fair at Botesdale every June. The Abbot's residence here accounts for the high quality of the stonework in the church, and the dedication of one of the side chapels to St Edmund. Wills from 1375 onwards show that the church was dedicated to All Saints before the Reformation.

The impressively large chancel has pairs of Decorated windows, one of which is repeated as the east window in the south aisle; a Decorated chancel arch; and a seven-light east window. In 1375 Thomas de Massager, chaplain, left £1 to glaze one of the south chancel windows. The later Perpendicular sedilia has canopied seats, tracery and angels. The Decorated south aisle was dedicated to St Mary. Thomas de Massager requested burial here in 1375. The south-east

window with fine tracery, hood mould, internal shafts and a low sill for a sedilia is probably that bequeathed by John Huberd in 1471. The south door is also Decorated, with two orders of shafts with leaf capitals, faces and flowers in the mouldings, and a niche over it supported by an angel. The porch was rebuilt in 1819.

The north aisle, in which Edmund Tabour requested to be buried in 1447, and to the 'edification' of which he gave the massive sum of £20, is dedicated to St Edmund. The Decorated windows match those of the south aisle. The Bacon family monuments were moved from their burial chapel to the west end of the aisle c.1710, with the result that the north door and adjacent window were blocked up. The massive 18th-century reredos was moved from behind the altar in 1951, and beneath it stands one of the desks from Botesdale Grammar School, founded by Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1561.

The Decorated nave has an impressive five-bay arcade of c.1350 with clusters of shafts. The north pier bases were replaced or encased to give them extra support in 1613. The Perpendicular clerestory has a pair of windows per bay, and on the exterior of the south side are flushwork panels of shields, geometric designs, a crowned Tudor portcullis and a crowned M.

When Davy visited in 1810 he noted that 'the aisles only are fitted with pews, the nave having remained unencumbered with anything till a few years ago when seats were placed there for the accommodation of the poor people.' The present box pews date from the 1851 restoration, those in the aisles still being marked 'free'. A red brick burial chapel was added to the north of the chancel by Sir Edmund Bacon in 1626. He gave the town of Redgrave £30 for 'keeping clean and maintaining in good reparacion the tomb of my dear wife [Philip, d. 1626] and the isle I builded to place it in adjacent to the chancel on the north part'. This floor-stone by Nicholas Stone was described by Davy: 'a stone whereon are her arms, lies lifted up in part as if some body were rising under it, or raising it up.' All the Bacon monuments were removed c.1710, as Davy again records: 'their bones and monuments were taken out and deposited in another new vault at the N.W. corner of the church when the Judges tomb was put up.'

On the north side of the chancel is the monument to Sir John Holt, Lord Chief Justice (d. 1710). It is by Thomas Green of Camberwell and cost £1,500. Sir John is in judicial robes, seated in an armchair, flanked by figures of Justice and Mercy. Daniel Defoe described it as 'that most exquisite monument'.

At the east end of the north aisle is the large and magnificent altar tomb of Sir Nicholas Bacon (d. 1624), son of the Lord Keeper, and his wife Ann Butts (d. 1611). The tomb chest was made by Bernard Janssen in 1611; and the two effigies added in 1624 by Nicholas Stone. He recorded: 'I made two pictures of white marble of Sir Nicholas Bacon and his lady and for the which I was paid by Sir Edmond Bacon £200.' Sir John Cullum noted, c.1780, that the monument 'is in the finest preservation, having a covering kept over it which is drawn up by a pully when there is occassion'. By 1818 the cover had gone and the parish clerk was paid £2 2s. per annum to clean it weekly.

In the chancel is the brass to Lady Ann Bacon's mother Ann Butts, wife of Edmund Butts. They had been married only seven years when he died, and she remained a widow for the remaining sixty-one years of her life. This is one of the best post-Reformation brasses in England, and was originally on a tomb chest noted by Sir John Blois in 1656, but gone before c.1780 when Sir John Cullum visited the church.

The white brick tower in a classical style was built in 1784 by Rowland Holt to replace the medieval tower which had become 'decayed'. Holt was at the same time casing Redgrave Hall in white brick, and the tower may have been intended as an extension of the park landscape. The *Ipswich Journal* for 11 February 1786 records the inauguration of the new peal of six bells on Friday 27 January; the following day 5,040 complete changes were rung in two hours forty-eight minutes.

Clive Paine,
Hon. Excursions Secretary