

SIR STEPHEN GLYNNE'S IPSWICH CHURCH NOTES, 1832 and 1844

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Last of a line of nine baronets Stephen Richard Glynne was born in 1807 at the Flintshire family seat Hawarden Castle. His maternal grandfather was Richard Neville, 2nd Lord Braybrooke, who in 1802 came into possession of Audley End. The Flint-Essex connection thus created was further strengthened in 1814, when Neville's second son—Glynne's uncle—George became rector of Hawarden. During his early years at Eton and before he went up to Oxford in 1825 Stephen Glynne doubtless made his first acquaintance with East Anglia and its churches on visits to Audley End. In the same year as his entrance to Oxford, on the occasion of a visit to York, Glynne, then aged 18, made the earliest of his surviving five and a half thousand notebook entries on the structure and state of churches in England and Wales. The task preoccupied him for the rest of his life. As his duties as M.P. and then Lord Lieutenant of Flintshire allowed, he spent several weeks in most years travelling and recording for his collection of church notes. Glynne was aided throughout by a memory which his brother-in-law W. E. Gladstone praised as 'decidedly the most remarkable known to me of the generation and country'.¹ He died unmarried in 1874 as he was returning to his London rooms after visiting churches in Suffolk.

Like his American contemporary, the poetess Emily Dickinson, Glynne sought neither publicity nor publisher for his life's work, and while historical changes have increased and are still increasing the value of the notes their full significance has still to be fully realised. They represent first-hand, dated, or in most cases datable, detailed accounts, by an experienced observer with sharp eye and retentive mind, of the architecture of most important English and Welsh medieval parish churches before the Victorian restoration fever had got into full swing. R. J. Sherlock in his useful introduction to the Glynne notes on Surrey churches² shows that errors and omissions do occur, particularly in the recording of buildings which at the time were ill-lit, but on the whole Glynne's accuracy seems to compare very favourably with that of Professor Pevsner and his team today.

In writing about medieval architecture Glynne was clearly hampered at first by difficulties of terminology, since a scholarly

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*, viii (1908), p. 18.

² See list of published Glynne notes in n. 9, below.

appreciation of period styles was only then evolving in the wake of the gothic revival. In the 1832 Ipswich notes, therefore, 'curvilinear' was the term used for the 'decorative' period of gothic and 'rectilinear' for 'perpendicular'. In the description of the roof of the church of St. Mary-at-the-Quay the words 'a fine construction with hammerbeams' appear in the manuscript as a later emendation of the initial uncertain 'fine construction of an uncommon kind'.

Glynne's manuscript books contain notes on 103 Suffolk churches;³ in thirty cases the visits were made before 1840. The present selection comprises the entries made on the occasion of two visits to Ipswich, in July 1832 and June 1844.⁴ Ipswich had then, and still has, twelve medieval churches in its inner area, a number exceeded only by Norwich (33) and York (14). Unfortunately Glynne does not appear to have visited two Ipswich churches: St. Helen, described by Clarke in 1830 as seeming to be 'in the same state as when originally erected'⁵ and restored beyond recognition in 1835-37, and St. Mary Stoke, of which Clarke wrote: 'The porch, which is not inelegant, is of considerable antiquity'.⁶ This curiosity too disappeared during later restoration and alteration by Butterfield in 1870-71. The remaining ten churches

³ In addition to those on Ipswich churches there are notes on the following: Ashbocking, Badley, Barking, Barton Magna, Baylham, Beccles, Belton, Blakenham Magna, Blundeston, Blythburgh, Bradwell, Braiseworth, Bramford, Brandon, Brome, Bungay Holy Trinity, Bungay St. Mary, Burgh Castle, Bury St. Edmunds St. James, Bury St. Edmunds St. Mary, Chapel St. Mary, Carlton Colville, Chediston, Clare, Corton, Cove South, Creeting St. Mary, Creeting St. Peter, Debenham, Dennington, Exning, Eye, Flixton, Fornham St. Martin, Framlingham, Freston, Fritton, Gisleham, Gorleston, Gunton, Hadleigh, Halesworth, Haverhill, Helmingham, Holton St. Mary, Hopton St. Margaret, Ilketshall St. John, Kedington, Kersey, Kessingland, Kirkley, Lavenham, Letheringham, Lindsey, Long Melford, Lowestoft, Mellis, Melton, Mendlesham, Mildenhall, Monks Eleigh, Nayland, Otley, Pakefield, Palgrave, Rendham, Saxmundham, Southwold, Stoke Ash, Stoke-by-Clare, Stoke-by-Nayland, Stowmarket, Stratford St. Mary, Stuston, Sudbury All Saints, Sudbury St. Gregory, Sudbury St. Peter, Swilland, Thetford St. Mary ('on the Suffolk side of the river'—Glynne), Thornham Magna, Thornham Parva, Thrandeston, Thwaite, Ufford, Wenham Magna, Wherstead, Wickham Market, Wickham Skeith, Wixoe, Woodbridge, Worlingworth, Yaxley, Yoxford.

⁴ Other accounts of Ipswich churches dating from the same period, but without the particular detail of the present notes, are in: G. R. Clarke, *The History and Description of the Town and Borough of Ipswich* (Ipswich, 1830); J. Wodderspoon, *A new Guide to Ipswich* (Ipswich, 1842); J. H. Parker et al., *The ecclesiastical and architectural Topography of England, Part VII: Suffolk* (Oxford and London, 1855); J. Glyde, *Materials for a History of Ipswich*, unpublished, Ipswich Borough Reference Library cat. no. Q59 (includes descriptions of the churches taken from Ipswich newspapers of the 1880's and 1890's); see also the Revd. A. H. Denney's article and catalogue of the works on Ipswich churches by Henry Davy (1793-1865) in *Proc. Suff. Inst. Arch.*, xxix (1961), pp. 78-90.

⁵ Clarke, *History of Ipswich*, p. 313.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

have however also been conspicuously altered since Glynne's visits. Except for the nave arcades and chancel south arches, St. Mary-le-Tower is the work of the Ipswich architect Phipson and dates from 1860-70. St. Matthew was subject to eight restorations between 1843 and 1895. The chancels and roofs of St. Clement and St. Mary-at-the-Elms were renewed and their entire structures worked over after 1860. The towers of SS. Lawrence, Margaret, Nicholas and Peter are in whole or part the work of the 1870's or 80's. St. Mary-at-the-Quay was restored structurally in the 1890's, bombed in 1942, and threatened with demolition before renovation for secular use in 1960.

The 'ugly yellow stucco', which Glynne found covering outside walls at SS. Clement, Lawrence and Margaret, serves to remind us however of the poor physical shape of many of these buildings after long periods of neglect and of the unavoidable necessity of restoration of some kind. In 1843, the year before Glynne's second Ipswich visitation, Edward FitzGerald wrote from Boulge: 'I always put on my thickest great coat to go to our Church in: as the fungi grow in great numbers about the communion table'.⁷ While in Ipswich—'the Florence of Suffolk' as FitzGerald facetiously called it in the same letter—conditions at St. Mary-at-the-Quay in the period up to 1875 were even worse; a report of 1879 stated that 'it was not an unusual thing for someone of the congregation to disappear for a season through either the seat or the floor giving way'.⁸

Sporadically over the last ninety years sections of the Glynne notebooks have appeared in print, mostly in county antiquarian journals.⁹ The manuscripts are now in the keeping of St. Deiniol's Library, Hawarden, by kind permission of whose trustees the Ipswich notes are now first published. In preparing them for print abbreviations have been expanded and a very few editorial additions made, indicated by square brackets. I am grateful to Mr. Harry

⁷ Letter of 10 December 1843 to Frederick Tennyson, in FitzGerald, *Selected Works* (London, 1962), p. 511.

⁸ Glyde, *Materials for a History of Ipswich*, volume on the parish of St. Mary-at-the-Quay, p. 103.

⁹ Glynne's church notes on the following counties or dioceses have been published: Cheshire: *Chetham Soc. Remains*, N.S. xxxii (1894); Cornwall: *Notes and Queries*, CLXVII-CLXIX (1934-35); Devon: *Notes and Queries*, CXLIII-CLXVI (1932-34); *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. and Ant. Field Club*, XLIV-XLV (1923-4); Gloucestershire *Church Notes* (London, 1902); *Notes on the Churches of Kent* (London, 1877); Lancashire: *Chetham Society Remains*, N.S. xxvii (1893); Northumberland and Durham: *Proc. Soc. Ant. Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, 3rd ser., III (1907); *Surrey Arch. Coll.*, LV (1958); Wales and Monmouth: *Arch. Cambrensis*, 5th ser., I-V (1884-8), XIV (1897), 6th ser., II (1902), also *Notes on the older churches of the four Welsh Dioceses* (Clark, London, 1903); *Wiltshire Arch. and Nat. Hist. Mag.*, XLII (1896); *Yorkshire Arch. and Topog. Jour.* XII-XV (1893-1900), XVII-XVIII (1903-5), XX (1909), XXIII-XXIV (1915-7), XXVI (1922), and *Notes on Yorkshire Churches*, bound by Wood and Sloane (Liverpool, n.d.).

Wilton of Ipswich for kindly lending a print of an engraving by Henry Davy of St. Mary-le-Tower in 1841 to illustrate Glynne's notes (Plate VI).

ST. CLEMENT

June 10 1844

A large church, of the style so common in Suffolk and wholly perpendicular, except a small portion of the west walls of the side aisles. It consists of a west tower, nave and chancel with aisles, and a south porch. The south aisle is continued westward along the tower and also to the east end of the chancel. On the north side of the chancel is a vestry, eastward of the aisle.

The walls are chiefly of flints, and a large portion of the body [is] covered with ugly yellow stucco. The south porch is rather plain, and the body and chancel are without battlement. The tower has some of the ornamental flint work, but is much plainer than some other specimens. Its west window is of two lights and has decidedly decorated tracery, below it a plain door. The next stage has the square filled with stone tracery, so often found especially in Norfolk. The belfry windows are of three lights. The tower has a moulded parapet, without battlement and four pinnacles unfinished. The buttresses are chequered in flint and stone. The west window of the north aisle is of two lights with decorated tracery. All the other windows of the church are perpendicular mostly of three lights, but a few have been mutilated. The tower opens to the nave by an arch springing straight from the walls. The body is divided from the aisles by pointed arches, springing from clustered piers, having octagonal capitals with good mouldings and a flat longitudinal band carried down each of the four shafts comprising the pier. There are five arches on the north beyond which the vestry ranges. On the south are six continued to the east without distinction of chancel, except that the eastern pier is a square flat faced one with a shaft attached to each end. Over the arches is a clerestory continued quite to the east, and having windows of two lights set very closely in pairs. The original roof is concealed by a modern ceiling. There is a west gallery containing an organ, and others on the north and south. The pulpit and desk [are] unhappily placed so as to block up the view of the altar. The font is a very handsome perpendicular one, the bowl octagonal, each face with sunken panels, divided by pinnacles and charged with finely executed emblems of the evangelists and angels alternately. Beneath the bowl is a band of moulding with cherubims, the stem circular on a square base. At the angles are four animals sedant, and in the intermediate spaces four figures resembling St. John Baptist.

Near the altar are two brasses of late date. One exhibits a man between two women [with] the following inscription: 'Here

restyth the body of John Tye late merchant and one of the portmen of Ypswicke who deptyd this lyffe the XIII Julye 1583 and then beinge of the age of 58 yeares—which sayd John had two wyves Ales and Julyan and had issue by the sayd Ales two sonnes and three daughters—and by Julyan three sonnes and six daughters'.

There are the respective groups of children below the figures of the mothers. The other brass is of still later date.

ST. LAURENCE

June 10 1844

This is a perpendicular church consisting of a west tower, a nave and chancel without aisles. The exterior is very much patched with flint work, brick and stucco, but like other specimens in this county it seems that brick was mixed with the flint in the original work. The tower, which is perhaps the loftiest in the town, is much wanting in effect, the original flint work being so much patched with brick as well as mutilated. Hence a singular appearance is produced. There is an open arch on each side of the lower part of the tower and a tolerably good doorway on the west side with shafts and shields in the inner moulding. The nave is long and lofty and has on each side four handsome and large windows, each of three lights with the separate transoms embattled and set uneven. There is also a fine north door now closed. There is a plain pointed arch to the tower and a lofty one upon shafts to the chancel, within which is most unhappily placed a large gallery. In another western gallery is the organ and the wall of the tower about the arch is gaudily painted. The nave has a modern ceiling and pews regularly arranged on each side. The chancel is lower than the nave, and has tie beams. The chancel has a good east window of five lights, the tracery of which has some curved lines, the reredos is modern and contains the creed, decalogue etc. illuminated. The side windows of the chancel resemble those of the nave. On its north side is a vestry. The font has an octagonal bowl with tracery of rather ordinary character, upon an octagonal pedestal.

This church is so surrounded by buildings that it is not easy to examine the exterior.

[Later note:] Built about 1430.

ST. MARGARET

[1832]

This is rather a spacious and handsome church principally rectilinear consisting of a west tower, a nave with side aisles, and a chancel with side chapels. The tower is embattled, but very plain and built of flints. The nave is plastered on the exterior, but not the chancel which is partly chequered in flint and stone. The elevation of the south side is very handsome and has been very well

restored. The clerestory windows are numerous and closely set in pairs, each window being of three lights, and the spandrels enriched with foliage, above which is an embattled parapet of rich work, with panelling, waved lines etc. and the beginnings of pinnacles at intervals, not completed. The windows of the aisles have for the most part had their tracery modernized. The south porch is plain, but has three niches over the door. The nave is remarkable for a very fine wood roof of high pitch, the interstices of the framework filled with foliage and the whole covered with painting with armorial bearings. The beams spring from corbels representing figures in wood. The nave is divided from each aisle by five pointed arches with octagonal piers. The chancel is divided from each chapel by a tudor arch, and by another from the nave, on either side of which is a small door. The east window is curvilinear, now undergoing restoration; there is also a curvilinear window in the north chapel. In the south chapel is a rectilinear window of four lights, each light being crowned by an ogee crocketed canopy. There are some portions of ancient carving among the pews. The font is an octagon, having heads beneath the lower part of the basin. The south chapel of the chancel is flanked by octagonal turrets.

ST. MARY AT ELMS

[1832]

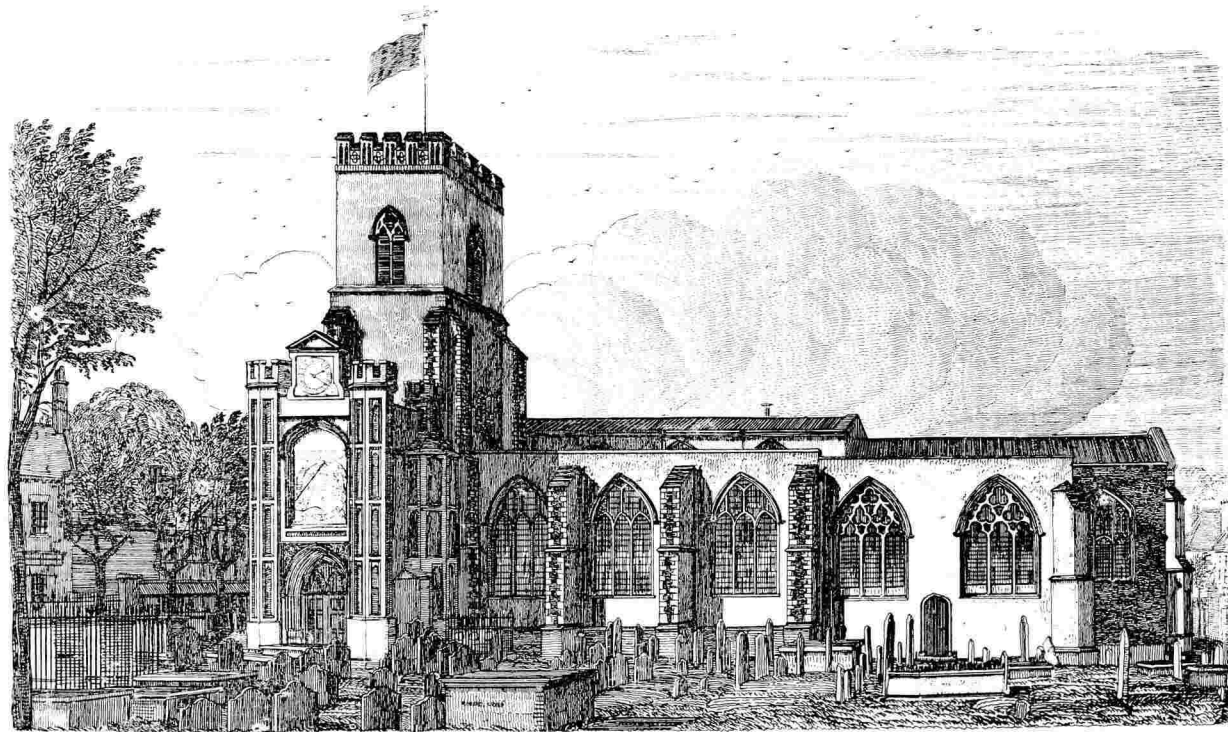
This church consists of a nave and chancel, each with a north aisle, and a brick tower at the west end, which has graduated battlements and is of the 17th century. The wall of the north aisle is also of brick. The nave is embattled and there is a small south porch. The whole is of rectilinear work, the northern windows are of three lights, the others have been mutilated. The nave is divided from its aisle by three pointed arches, one of which is higher than the others. The piers have the mouldings carried down the fronts and shafts attached to the ends. The chancel opens to the north chapel by one tudor arch placed oblique, and not in a line with the other arches. The font is octagonal, each face charged with roses, and fleur de lys on the pedestal. The west gallery has some good carving and elegant pierced panelling; and there are some portions of wood carving among the pews.

ST. MARY AT QUAY

[1832]

This is a rectilinear church consisting of a tower, a nave with side aisles, and a chancel with side chapels. The walls are enriched with a good deal of beautiful chequered work in flint and stone, and the flint work in the clerestory represents a series of small ogee niches. The tower presents a fine specimen of this kind of work

PLATE VI



St. Mary-at-the-Tower, Ipswich, 1841, by Henry Davy.

wrought very smooth, and its west doorway has a label and square flowers in the arch moulding. There is a plain south porch and no battlement to the body. The windows in the nave are of three lights, in the chancel of four. The nave is divided from each aisle by four pointed arches with piers of four clustered shafts in lozenge form. The roof is of timber, of very high pitch and a fine construction with hammerbeams like that of St. Margaret, the spandrels under the beams have fine panelling, and beneath each rib is a wooden image. The clerestory windows are set closely, and double over each arch. The chancel opens to each chapel by a tudor arch. In the north chapel is a plain tomb with a brass against the wall to Henry Toolye obiit 1551. The font is octagonal, each face enriched with animals or with angels bearing shields, and crocketed pinnacles between each face. The pedestal is also enriched with figures of animals.

ST. MARY AT TOWER

[1832]

This is a large church consisting of a nave with side aisles, a chancel with a south aisle, and a tower standing at the west end of the south aisle. The tower is very plain, but in front of it is a very large porch having two large octagonal turrets at the angles enriched with panelling. The church is almost entirely rectilinear, and some parts of it have the flint work so common in the neighbourhood. The west window of the nave is of five lights, many of those in the side aisles have been deprived of their tracery. The nave is divided from each aisle by five pointed arches and one half arch. The piers [are] of the same character as in the other churches in the town. The clerestory windows are of two lights, one over each pier. The ceilings of the nave and aisles are panelled and painted blue. The chancel is divided from the south aisle by two pointed arches, like those in the nave. On the north side of the chancel are two curious curvilinear windows of three lights, and one rectilinear one with shafts. The east window is rectilinear of five lights resembling that of St. Matthews. In the south aisle the windows are rectilinear of three lights. The chancel has a vestry on the north side and contains within some good wood carving about the ancient stalls. The font is a fine octagonal one, having the figure of a lion on each face and pinnacles at the angles. Under the basin is a band of foliage, and the base is circular enriched with figures. The nave is crowded with pews. On the north side is the Corporation seat, and in the west gallery a very fine organ.

ST. MATTHEW

1832

This church has a nave with side aisles, a chancel with a north aisle, and at the west end a very plain rectilinear tower of flints,

without a battlement. The whole church seems to be rectilinear, but most of the windows have been deprived of their tracery. There are, however, a few good ones in the chancel, and that at the east end is of five lights, and rather curious, each light being divided by two transoms embattled, and those in the alternate lights in line with each other. The walls are chiefly of flint; there is some ornamental flint work under the windows in the usual style of the county. The north doorway is in a square compartment and has flowered mouldings. The interior is neat. The nave [is] divided from each aisle by four pointed arches with octagonal piers. The chancel opens to the nave by a wide pointed arch rising from shafts, and to its aisle by another pointed arch. The pews and galleries are new and uniform.

ST. NICHOLAS

[1832]

This church is of rectilinear work and consists of a west tower of flints, a nave with side aisles, and a chancel with a north chapel. The tower has a west doorway, the mouldings of which are filled with shields and square flowers, above which is an ornamental panelled band of flint and stone, and a window of three lights. There are two belfry windows on each side, each of two lights with a dripstone. The top of the tower has a band of quatrefoil panelling and the buttresses have also flint work. The nave has no clerestory and a leaded roof; the chancel is tiled. In the west wall of the south aisle are two grotesque pieces of carving representing an angel and dragon. The windows are all deprived of their tracery and modernized. The nave is divided from each aisle by four pointed arches, the piers of clustered shafts with good moulded capitals. There is an organ in the west gallery. The chancel has a vestry on the north side with a lancet window.

ST. PETER

July 1832

This is a handsome church consisting of a nave with side aisles, a chancel with south aisle, and at the west end of the nave a lofty and beautiful tower of flint with stone corners, and of rectilinear work. There is beneath the battlement a band of ornamental flint work and the west doorway is very fine, the arch having three hollow mouldings filled with shields and pieces of foliage and springing from shafts. On each side of the doorway is a rich canopied niche. The body has no battlement. The south porch is rectilinear and has a doorway with a flowered moulding. The windows of the north aisle are curvilinear, of two lights with elegant tracery, those of the south aisle of the nave are mutilated. The nave opens to each aisle by four pointed arches springing from piers formed of

four clustered shafts. The clerestory on the south has rectilinear windows of two lights, on the north circular windows sexfoiled. Beneath the ceilings of the aisles is a cornice of tudor flowers. The chancel opens to its south aisle by two pointed arches with an octagonal pier, and in the south aisle are rectilinear windows. The font is a very splendid Norman one, the basin of immense size and square form sculptured with figures of grotesque animals, and supported on a central cylindrical pillar, surrounded by four smaller detached ones at each angle of octagonal form, and enriched with sculpture.

ST. STEPHEN

June 10 1844

A small church, wholly perpendicular much patched externally and comprising a west tower, nave and chancel with parallel south aisle and a south porch occupying the west end of the latter.

The tower is very plain, partly modern, partly patched in flints and brick. The porch has both the outer and the inner doorway with flowered mouldings. The windows throughout the church are of the usual Suffolk perpendicular kind, but one at the east end of the aisle is square headed.

The nave is divided from the aisle by three pointed arches, with light piers each having four small shafts attached, and with high bases. The chancel arch is set between two smaller ones, but it is not very clear whether this is original work. There are two arches between the chancel and its aisle, resembling those of the nave, and between the aisle of the church and that of the nave a flat arch. The roofs are rather plain. Over the altar is most abominably placed a gallery and an organ. At the west end another gallery. The font is nowhere to be found.