



The Round Tower

Vol. XLII No 3

March 2015



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Yaxham. Our 2014 Study Day venue. 1974 photograph by Bill Goode.

The next issue is June 2015 and the deadline for contributions is 1st May.

Please send items for publication either as email attachments or on disc as **separate** files – text, photos, drawings etc., or by post to:-

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Membership Subscription

Minimum £10 (overseas £15) a year of which 40% goes towards the printing and posting of The Round Tower magazine and administration. 60% goes to the Repair Fund of the RTCS.

Magazines are published in March, June, September and December. The membership renewal date is the first day of the month following the application for membership.

To join the Society or to make any enquiry about your membership please contact :-

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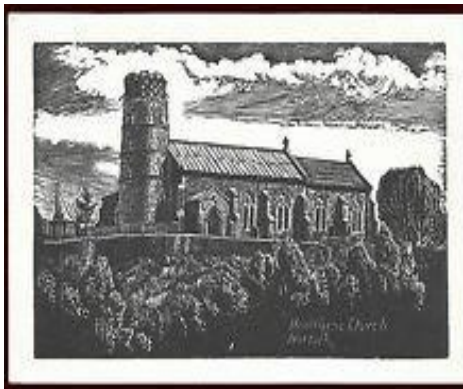
THE ROUND TOWER

The quarterly magazine of the Round Tower Churches Society

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You have been able to like us on Facebook for some time. You can now follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/RTCSociety>. If you are not as yet receiving the magazine as a PDF but would like to send the editors your email address.



EDITORIAL

Paul McNamee editor of The Big Issue reminds us on page 5 of one more reason why our churches are so important.

In early 2014 the late Stephen Hart was in discussions with Richard Harbord about Cockley Cley. In the light of Richard's research Stephen revised his appraisal of the church. The original church now seems unlikely to have been Norman. We will publish Richard Harbord's research on Cockley Cley in the June 2015 magazine. Stephen's reappraisal of Cockley Cley is here on page 8.

Anne Woollett reports on our 2014 Study Day at Yaxham on page 18. David Stannard has written us an article for the magazine. This will be published later on in the year.

Giles Emory of Norvic Archaeology tells us about the important find at Mautby on page 20. The toilet and kitchen extension has now been completed. There is a Celebration Day with a dedication service by the Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Revd. Graham James on Saturday 28th March 2015. If you have always wanted to climb a round tower the tower will be open to climb from 10am to 12. 30. The dedication service is at 2.30pm. Refreshments will be available all day.

The Round Tower Churches Society is very grateful to the late Stephen Hart for leaving us £2500 towards round tower church repairs. Details of how you can make a bequest can be found on page 22.



Mautby

IN PRAISE OF CHURCHES AND THE VALUE OF THEIR BEING ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE.

I like buildings. I like looking at them from the outside, how they are, how they fit with the world around them. But mostly I like looking at them from the inside. You can learn a lot about things from the inside of a building. I find this increasingly with churches and cathedrals. I can't remember the moment I came to really like the interior of churches.

But I know that some part of it was due to not having a lot of money and for want of something to kill time when I couldn't buy anything in the pub. And a switch flicked. Now I look for any excuse to roar 'look at the apse on that', and stand gawping at a vaulted ceiling or a recently discovered misericord. Whole social histories, deep seams of lives lived, are told in these places. They are out there for us all, for free.

Though not all are free. They need the money because as austerity bites, funding for such things is cut. They're easy targets..... But there is something in being able to go in, no matter how little money you have, to enjoy splendour. It can raise the spirit, change a mood. Why not see the value in that for a nation? Why close greatness to the few who can afford it? If things are closed, interests that are of yet untapped will remain forever untapped and a grey curtain of conformity and lack of ambition and reach will fall.

It seems a very high price to pay.

Paul McNamee editor of The Big Issue (no 1126: October 27th to November 2nd 2014).

Paul can be contacted at the Big Issue paul.mcnamee@bigissue.com or tweet @paulmcnamee

In the December magazine the article on St Mary's Westerly Waterless by H.T, K.T. and T.S. Norris included a drawing labelled 'Sketch of St Mary's done some time prior to 1855'. Thanks to Tim Cockerill of Weston Colville we now have an accurate date for this. Tim tells us that the sketch was made by the noted Cambridgeshire antiquary the Reverend William Cole on his visit to St Mary's on the 9th August 1752. He also sketched several coats of arms and the famous brass to Sir John and Lady Creke as well as making notes on much else of historic significance in the church (pages 180-181 of Monumental Inscriptions and Coats of Arms from Cambridgeshire edited by DR W M Palmer. Bowes and Bowes. Cambridge 1930).

Dates for your diary. Approximately twelve gardens open from 11.00 to 5.00 pm on Sunday May 24 and Monday 25th May in aid of St. Margaret's Church Topcroft. Refreshments available all day at two venues. There will be ample free parking and toilet facilities. The church will be open on both days.

Topcroft Hall gardens will be open. A six acre garden with a 500 year old mulberry tree under which Margery Brewes wrote the first Valentine Card to John Paston. These are wooded gardens with extensive herbaceous borders. Free Weatherley Buggy transport from Topcroft Hall gates to the hall gardens.

Free vintage bus transport around the village. £4 entry on the day including a map. Guide dogs only.

Beachamwell Village Open Gardens Day 2015 - Sunday 28th June – 12 noon to 5pm. Many lovely gardens will be open. Ploughman's lunches. Afternoon teas and live music in the Old Rectory Garden. A variety of stalls and a raffle. Adults £3 and children free. All proceeds in aid of St Mary's Church. www.stmarysbeachamwell.co.uk Enquiries 01366 328774 or williamsoldies@gmail.com

CORRECTION. On page 18 of the December issue, when describing Bungay Holy Trinity, it stated 'where early long and short work can be seen'. This should have read, where early herringbone pattern work can be seen.

Tours for 2015

ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY

9th May 10am Eccles, Quidenham, Croxton, before our AGM at Croxton Park at 2.15pm

Saturday Tours, first Church 2.30pm

6th June Hassingham, Acle, Fishley

4th July South Elmham All Saints, Ilketshall St Margaret, Gisleham

1st August Hardwick, Morningthorpe, Forncett St Peter

5th Sept Hardley, Hellington, Surlingham

CHURCH TOURS

on Sundays, first Church at 2.30pm

19th April * North Runcton, East Winch, Middleton, West Winch

17th May Hapton, Flordon, Newton Flotman, Tasburgh RT

21st June Barney, Kettlestone, Guist, North Elmham

19th July Welborne RT , Mattishall Burgh, Mattishall, Thuxton

*NB North Runcton has an Evening Service at 2pm on Sunday 19th April, to which we are all most welcome. It will be a short Service, so the Tour proper will start about 2.30pm as usual. There will not be a Service at the end of the afternoon.

Everyone is welcome to join us, and all Tours are free, though donations are encouraged at every church. Teas will be provided by one of the churches during each afternoon. The Sunday Tours normally end with a form of Evening Prayer at 6pm or 6.30pm (not on 19th April). This is optional. Further details from 'Lyn Stilgoe 01328 738237.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, COCKLEY CLEY

*Since publication of my papers in *The Round Tower* (1993) and *Norfolk Archaeology* (1995) and the recorded opinions of others suggesting that All Saints church in Cockley Cley may have had Norman origins, documentary research by Richard Harbord has elicited mentions of two early churches in the parish, St Mary's and St Peter's, but no reference to All Saints was found prior to 1300 when the first priest there was presented. The original church therefore seems unlikely to have been Norman, and this revised appraisal is based on that conclusion.*

Stephen Hart

All Saints church at Cockley Cley is a flint church comprising nave, chancel, north and south aisles, south porch and the remains of a circular western tower, but the church's present form results from major alterations in the 14th, 15th and 19th centuries.

The Original Church

The absence of documentary reference to All Saints church before 1300 implies that it may have been built in the late 1200s. Two windows in the tower with round-arch lintels may have been from elsewhere (St Mary's perhaps?), which could explain the apparent anachronism of features regarded as Norman in a manifestly later wall.

Originally the church was probably single-cell, with nave and chancel below a continuous roof, and a round west tower. Little remains of the original nave except parts of the west and south walls, the arcade later being formed in the latter. The nave height can be estimated by sloping features in the west wall south of the tower (Pl.3). The chancel walls are on their original alignments and seem to have had five lancet windows each side and three in the east wall, some of the present ones being original and others sensitively restored.

The nave is narrower now than originally. Measurements from the window in the west wall north of the tower, externally to the northward extent of the medieval flintwork where it merges with the Victorian aisle walling, and internally to the north face of the arcade wall provide convincing evidence that it had been wider (see Fig.1). They show that

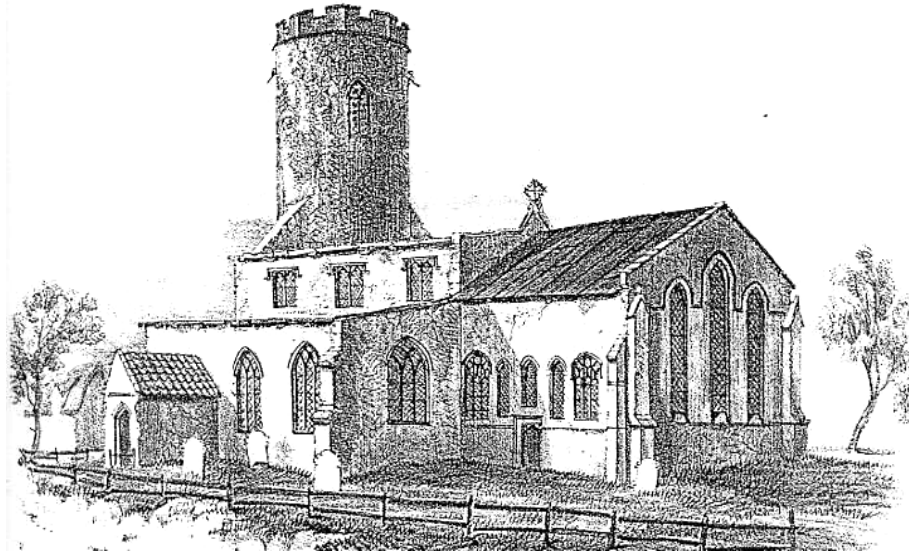
the medieval flintwork extends about a foot beyond the arcade wall thereby establishing the alignment of the original nave north wall as having been to the north of the present arcade wall and thus, that before the aisle was built, the nave was wider than it is now. It was originally about 19 feet wide at the west end; it is now about 17'10".

The tower may originally have been a little off-centre northwards because the tower door, unaccountably off centre southwards relative to the tower axis, was probably then central in the nave west wall. Since the nave was narrowed in C.19 as described below, tower's northward divergence is more evident.

Except for an octagonal parapet, the tower was circular to the top and is of interest because of its unique flint decoration. Two bands of black knapped flints about 9" high in its flint rubble fabric encircled the walls at about 12 feet and 24 feet above ground level. They can still be seen in the standing remains (Pl.2). The tower had a single-light west window with a cusped pointed arch and hoodmould directly below the lower knapped flint band and, above this a narrow stone window of Norman type with an arched lintel. On the south side, there was a similar but shorter window below the lower band. Just below the belfry openings there was a shallow offset, partly still visible on the north side. Four two-light belfry openings had cusped Y-tracery and above these a stone string course formed the base for the octagonal battlemented parapet of similar design to the one shown on Ladbroke's drawing of the 1820s (Pl.1).

Internally, the tower was circular; above a plastered ground stage the flintwork is coursed rubble, and its curvature uninterrupted where the tower meets the nave. The wall thickness at the apex of the tower arch is about six inches less than the nave west wall outside the tower implying that tower and nave walls were built together because if not, the internal curvature could not have been formed without improbable structural disturbance of the nave wall. Constructional unity is confirmed by the substantial sections of the tower wall that remained attached to the nave wall following the collapse (Pl.3), but it has been argued that a flat rendered area of wall exposed by the fall indicates

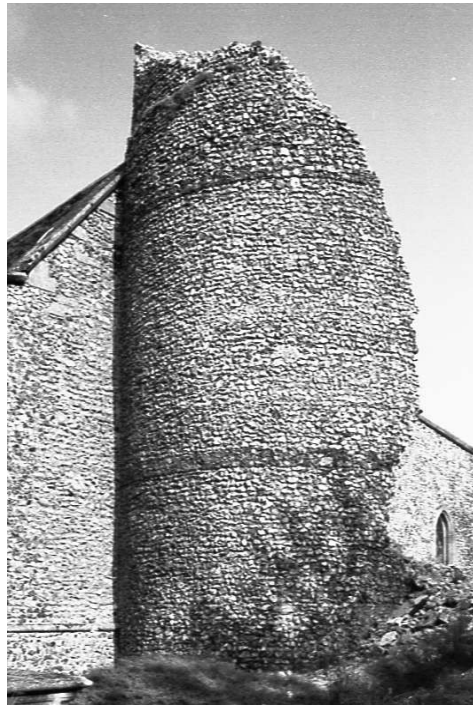
that the tower must have been added. That though, seems unlikely because the rendering appears to be trowelled up to the edges of the surrounding flintwork and so its extent is probably limited to the area now visible. It appears to have been the side of an opening or recess in the tower later blocked without trace.



Pl.1. Ladbrooke's drawing of Cockley Cley Church

The South Aisle, Chancel Arch and Arcade

The south aisle appears to have been added during the 14th century in conjunction with increasing the height of the nave and forming the chancel arch and nave east gable. The south door is probably the original nave's south door reset in the aisle wall. The aisle has a lancet in the west wall, two two-light south windows with cills, jambs and arches of Barnack stone though their Victorian pseudo-Decorated tracery is in a different stone, and a three-light east window with Intersecting tracery whose cill detail, hoodmould and headstops are identical to those of the south windows.



Pl.2 The tower from the north-west showing the two bands of knapped flints. A difference between the flintwork of the nave west wall and that of the Victorian north aisle can be seen.



Pl.3 The breach in the tower south wall. Sloping dressed stones may indicate the original nave verge prior to the raising of the wall when the south aisle was built.

Raising of the nave walls when the aisle was built was necessary because the apex level of its east window is such that the head of a lean-to aisle roof would otherwise have been higher than the original nave eaves level (Fig.2). When built, the aisle south wall was about eighteen inches lower than now as is shown by a horizontal straight joint about a foot above the windows, with different flintwork above.

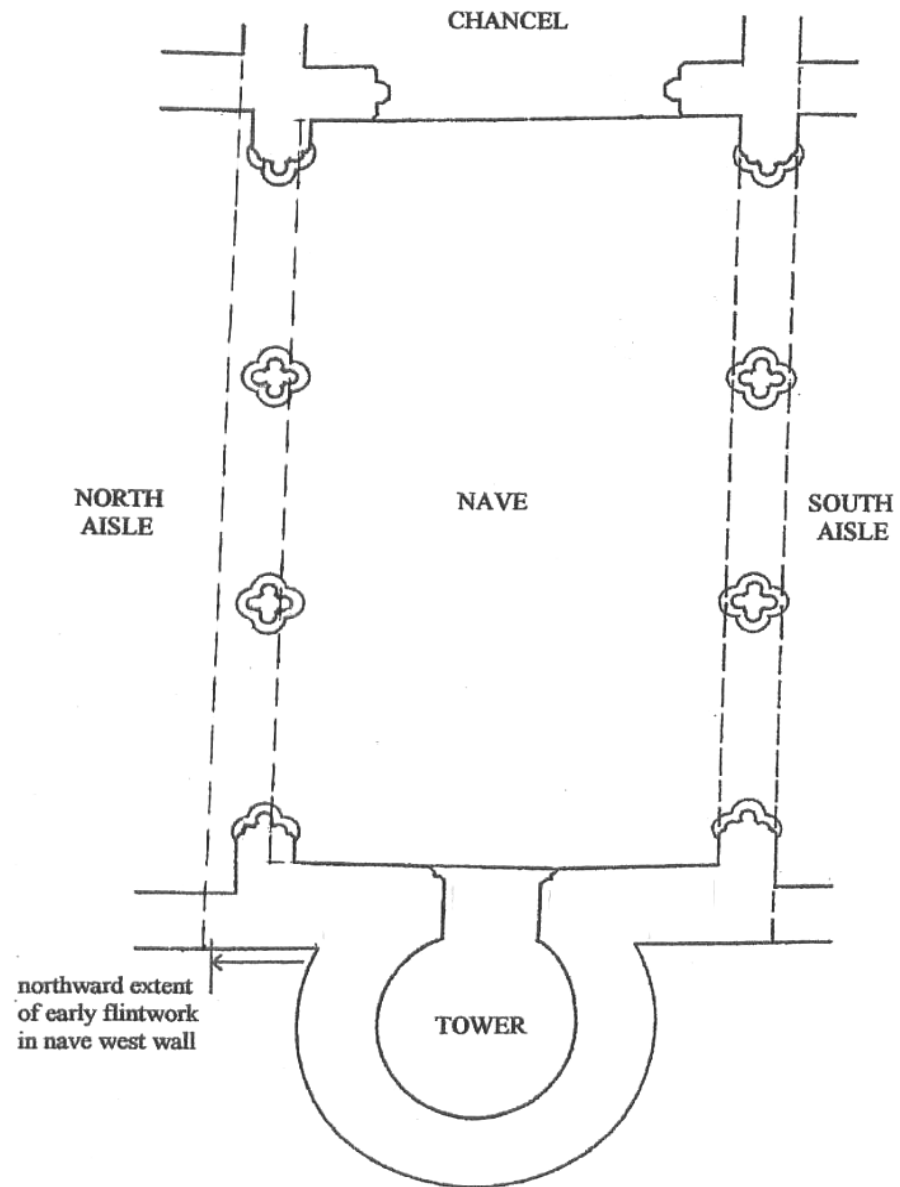


Fig.1 Part Plan showing existing and Deduced walls.
 Existing walls: Solid lines
 Deduced walls: Broken lines

Evidence of the raised nave walls is seen on the nave west wall south of the tower where the probable original gable verge line is suggested by a sloping line and dressed stones (Pl.3). Whereas the original lower walling is bonded to the tower, the flintwork of the raised section makes a straight joint where it abuts the tower wall (Pl.4), contrasting with the fractured tower walling.

A three-bay arcade was formed in the heightened nave south wall with quatrefoil piers and twice hollow-chamfered pointed arches.

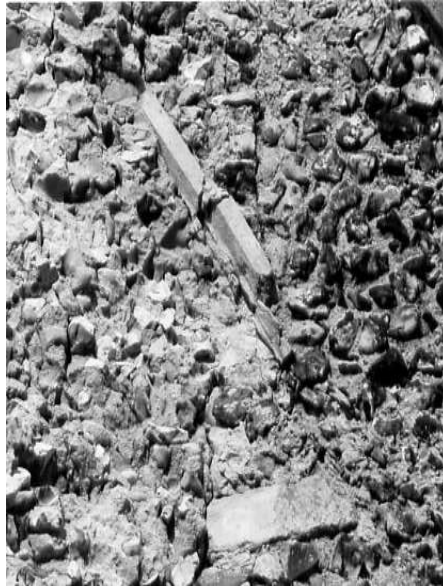
At the east end of the nave the chancel arch was built, the arch offset southwards by two or three inches, perhaps compensating for the contemporary added aisle. This would have exposed towards the nave a wider respond wall at the north jamb of the arch than at the south. Above the arch, the wall extends to form the east gable of a higher nave roof. The roof ridge would have met the tower a little below the east belfry opening, and owing to the tower's small deviation from the nave axis, at a point slightly south of its centre. Remnants of mortar in a line still visible above the present roof's flashings (Pl.5) may have been the weatherings of this roof to the tower wall.

It is uncertain whether the porch was built with the aisle or added in the fifteenth century.

Fifteenth-Century Alterations

C.15 alterations to the church included forming a clerestory and alteration of the chancel roof and south wall (Pl.1).

To provide space for clerestory windows in the nave south wall, the nave roof was removed, the nave side walls were raised further and the head of the aisle roof was lowered by raising the aisle south wall to allow a shallower roof slope that cleared the apex of the east window (Fig.2). Squared-headed windows were introduced in the clearstory south wall and presumably also in the north. The clearstory was given a low-pitch roof and the nave's east gable was modified to the same pitch with the apex stonework from the former gable reset. At the west end, the half-gables of the former roof on both sides of the tower were retained (perhaps to avoid damaging the tower walls had they been removed) and modified at the corners to suit the higher nave eaves level. The lower pitch of the nave east gable wall necessitated a lower pitch roof on the chancel and its east gable was modified accordingly.



Pl.4 A straight vertical joint above the lower of two sloping coping stones seen in Pl.3 where the raised section of the nave west wall meets the face of the curved tower wall on its south side. Below, the tower and nave walls were homogeneous.



Pl.5 The east face of the ruined tower. The present roof apex can be seen to meet the tower south of the centre of the belfry cill. An earlier roof suggested by a line of remnant mortar weathering would have met it nearer the centre.

Ladbrooke's drawing shows that the two outer lancets in the chancel south wall were replaced by three-light Perpendicular windows and the cill level of the middle lancet was raised to accommodate a square-headed priest's door.

Nineteenth-Century Alterations

Major alterations were made to the church in the 19th century under the architect Phipson.

The low-pitched nave roof and the clearstory were removed. The height of the south arcade wall was reduced to approximately its previous level, the nave north wall was demolished and a north arcade

matching the south one was built on an alignment south of the demolished wall, thereby reducing the nave width. The north aisle was built with windows of Decorated style and a lean-to roof.

A higher nave east gable was built, and at the other end, the two half-gables were modified externally and apparently thickened with inner faces built on an assumed ledge at about eaves level in the west wall such as is seen in many churches, and merging with the tower to give the wall a flat east face

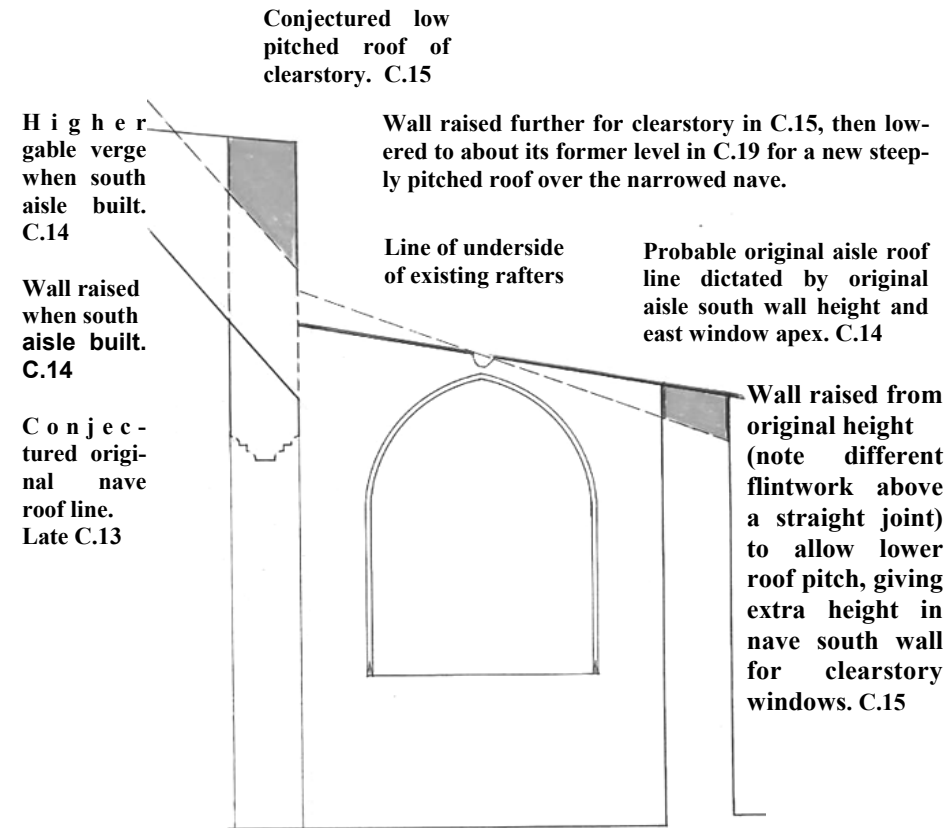


Fig.2. Diagrammatic Section through South Aisle and Nave South Wall. Broken lines indicate association with building the south aisle. Shaded areas indicate alterations related to the clearstory construction. Precise positions of roof lines on nave south wall are conjectural.

A steep pitch tiled roof was formed over the narrower nave. The consequential southward shift of the nave axis shows on the east face of the tower where, compared to the alignment of the former roof implied by the mortar weatherings on the tower, the present roof's ridge is seen to meet the tower off-centre, south of the belfry opening cill which was still in position after the collapse (Pl.5).

The reason for the different alignment of the arcade from the original north wall was probably to allow the respond walls on both sides of the chancel arch facing the nave to be the same length, in order to establish a symmetrical relationship with the arched profile of the new nave roof.

The narrower nave made the tower doorway off-centre to the north in the west wall whereas it had been central, and viewed from the west outside, the half-gable on the north side is now considerably smaller and lower than the one on the south; previously there would have been only a small difference.

The height of the chancel side walls was reduced, the east gable raised and a steep pitched roof built. The priest's door was removed from chancel south wall and the cill of the central lancet was lowered to match the adjacent ones. The two Perpendicular chancel windows were replaced with lancets.

The tracery of the south windows of the south aisle was replaced with pseudo-Decorated. Ladbroke's drawing shows these windows as three-light with Intersecting tracery although their cill stoolings show that they must originally have been two-light, perhaps with Y-tracery; it has been suggested that he illustrated wood frames set in the original outer stonework.

The belfry and its octagonal parapet were substantially rebuilt with much brick internally but reusing medieval stonework.

Comment

Walls incorporating knapped flint (as opposed to fortuitous cleft or broken pieces amongst rubble) as in the decorative bands on the tower of All Saints seem to date from no earlier than the late 13th century and so, if original, they establish the tower walls as post-Norman. Close

inspection after the collapse showed that these knapped flints are an integral part of the wall structure with uniform mortar through the full thickness of the wall. The Norman style windows in the tower are therefore likely to be re-set from elsewhere.

Refacing of the tower is discounted because of the homogeneous construction of the facing flintwork and the core of the walls.

The possibility that the whole tower was rebuilt as part of the 19th-century restorations is also unlikely because its flintwork is markedly different from the Victorian flintwork of the north aisle, and no bricks as were extensively used in the restored fallen belfry are to be seen lower down as might be expected if built then.

It has been suggested that the north arcade alignment represents that of the original nave north wall, but that is considered unlikely for several reasons. Had it been so, firstly, as shown by the longer respond wall in the chancel than the in nave at the north jamb of the chancel arch, the chancel north wall alignment would have been beyond (to the north) that of the nave wall; secondly, the extent to which the medieval flintwork in the nave west wall continues northwards beyond the arcade wall (see Fig.1) shows that the north-west corner of the original nave's north wall must have been north of the arcade wall's alignment; thirdly, assuming that the tower doorway had been central to the nave, the nave width would have been only 15'9" compared with a chancel width of 18' 7".

Stephen Hart.



John Scales wishes to thank our members for helping him to to raise £160 on the 2014 Norfolk Churches Trust Bike Ride. Half is going to the NCT and half towards repairs at Horsey. The photograph to the left is the font at Horsey.

RTCS Study Day September 27th 2014 at Yaxham.

Three excellent talks, a tour of Yaxham's round towered church and a lovely sunny day

David Stannard started the day with a talk about The Lost Round Tower of Eccles-next-the-Sea, drawing on illustrations of the tower and wills and inventories. Eccles was a result of and then a victim of changes in the Norfolk coastline: land which emerged in Anglo-Saxon times was lost in C14. In 1552 an assessment of the church goods indicates an array of silverware and hence that the church was still functioning. David's thorough analysis of wills indicates that after 1572 people were opting to be buried in nearby Hempstead rather than Eccles. His analysis of the storm records points to 1570 as a crucial year with bad storms which hit Yarmouth and resulted in a tidal surge at Fye Bridge in Norwich. David suggests that the storms probably broke through a sandbank which was protecting Eccles. After the storms the chancel and nave were demolished leaving the tower or steeple (or styppele to use the C16 term) standing, to act as a sea marker. The tower was still standing in 1895 and Eccles became an attraction for painters who have left many records of the steeple. Paintings show a round tower with an octagonal top of the late C14. In a will of 1380 Reginald of Eccles left 10 marks to purchase a new bell- probably to be installed in the new octagonal belfry.

In 1893 a plan of the remains was produced because of concern about the state of the steeple. More recent archaeological investigations undertaken when the sand over the church receded found the cobbled remains of the church and nave, but little sign of the chancel. They also found a spread of pottery, leather and metal work and even the remains of worked furniture preserved in the well. Pieces of masonry – mainly Caen stone- have also been found, probably from buttresses and the octagonal top of the tower.

After a short break Roy Tricker gave us a fascinating and amusing account of the ways in which churches were used until the Reformation. He took us through the key features of churches and the part they played in the medieval liturgy: the doors of the churches through

which processions passed; porches and their use for marriages and business arrangements, schools and accommodation for priests; fonts with locks and covers to prevent holy water being removed for nefarious purposes; wall paintings including paintings of St Christopher carrying the Christ child, and stained glass; the rood, screen and loft at the junction of the nave and the chancel. Roods were banned in 1540 but sometimes the screens are still in place as well as the stairs to the loft.

Roger Rosewell gave the final talk of the day taking us through the history of medieval stained glass in England from its first appearance at St Paul's Jarrow until its large scale destruction during the Reformation. In C11-13th glass came largely from two sources in France but gradually glass came to be made in England, first white glass and later coloured glass.



Glaziers worked alongside architects and masons, filling the spaces left by the masons. Glass was used for its colour but also as a basis for drawing. In their designs glaziers showed an awareness of patterns and themes used in manuscripts. The C14 grotesque at Ringland, for example, is similar to that found in manuscripts. The constraints of tracery at the tops of reticulated windows (the glass least likely to be destroyed) encouraged rows of saints or angels which could fit into the tracery rather than the story narratives more often seen in wall paintings, such as that of St Christopher.

From 1390s glass designs begin to reflect the International gothic style seen in rood screens, with a more naturalist feel with softer faces and shading and higher foreheads. In Norwich there were several schools using fine drawing techniques on yellow-stained glass. From 1500 there are examples of the renaissance making itself felt in glass designs.

During the day we visited the round tower church at Yaxham, beautifully set back from the road amongst trees. The tower has a large number of bands of conglomerate stones interspersed with flint and is attached to the church with fillets. Together with the substantial tower arch they suggest a Norman build, with C14 belfry windows. Inside are a finely carved font, and some impressive woodwork- a parclose screen and animal heads on the pews.

Anne Woollett

A medieval wax communion vessel from a Norfolk grave.

Excavations in Spring 2014 by Norvic Archaeology to enable the construction of a kitchen and toilet block extension on the north side





of St Peter & Pauls' Church at Mautby, near Caister on Sea, revealed numerous medieval to post-medieval burials.

The area appears to have been a focus for the burial of mothers and young children. However, the remains of a possible medieval priest burial were also found close to the north door. This individual was buried with a wax object on his chest, in the form of a paten dish. The object was in poor condition but still clearly recognisable.

Similar wax objects are rare but have been recorded from medieval burials elsewhere. Replica chalices have come from medieval graves at several monastic sites, including the Cisterican abbey of Hulton (Staffordshire) and the Cluniac abbey of Much Wenlock (Shropshire). One non-monastic example was a bees wax chalice and paten set recovered from the 15th century grave of Bishop Tulloch in St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney.

The recording of this burial practice at Mautby is significant as it adds weight to the theory that the use of replica funerary chalice and paten sets in wax was fairly widespread and not limited to burials at the greater churches and monastic houses.

Gile Emery. Norvic Archaeology

Bequests and Donations

Over the years RTCS has received a number of bequests, including a particularly generous bequest from the late Brian Harmer. These have allowed the Society to provide larger grants for churches than would be possible from Society subscriptions.

Bequests. Bequests are dedicated in their entirety to funding work and repairs in churches. This ensures a lasting legacy which enables future generations to understand and enjoy better our ancient churches. Making a bequest does not require that you rewrite your will. You can add a 'codicil' or write a Memorandum of Wishes which you place with your will or give to your solicitor for safe keeping.

Bequests come in two forms. A 'pecuniary gift' is the bequest of a set sum. A suggested wording for a Pecuniary Gift is 'I bequeath free of all taxes to The Round Tower Churches Society (Charity registration number 267996) the sum of £..... the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said society to be a good and sufficient discharge to my Executors for the said sum'.

A 'residuary gift' is the bequest of some or all of the remainder of your estate once bequests to friends and family have been met. A suggested wording for a Residuary Gift is: I give% of my residuary estate to The Round Tower Churches Society (Charity registration number 267996) and the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said society shall be deemed a good and sufficient discharge to my Executors'.

Donations. Making a donation means that you are able to enjoy the benefits your money can make in your lifetime. As an example one member recently gave the Society a four figure donation in memory of her late husband. That very week we received an urgent appeal from a churchwarden telling us about the sudden collapse of their roof timbers during repair work and the Society we were able to use this donation to offer immediate – and much needed- assistance.

ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY

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