



The Round Tower

Vol. XLIV No 3

March 2017



£2 to non members
www.roundtowers.org.uk

Your committee has decided not to advertise RTCS items for sale through the magazine. We will continue to sell items on our tours. The W. J Goode, Jack Sterry and Stephen Hart books on round tower churches can often be found at <https://www.abebooks.co.uk>. Abe Books is the best online source for second hand books in the country.

ROUND TOWER CHURCHES SOCIETY TOURS

6th May 10am at Fritton St Edmund, Ashby, Lound, before RTCS AGM at Lound Village Hall 2.15pm. Bring lunch.

Saturday Tours, first Church at 2.30pm

3rd June South Pickenham, Threxton, Merton

1st July Theberton, Thorington, Bramfield

5th August Matlaske, Stody, Letheringsett

2nd September Wacton, Aslacton, Tasburgh

NORFOLK CHURCH TOURS

Sunday Tours, first Church at 2.30pm

23rd April Ranworth, South Walsham, Upton, Fishley RT

21st May Saxlingham, Field Dalling, Langham, Binham

18th June South Lopham, North Lopham, Kenninghall (There might be restoration work here requiring a change of church), Fersfield

16th July Weasenhams St Peter, Weasenhams All Saints, Great Massingham, Little Massingham

Everyone is welcome to join us, and all our 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. The Service on 18th June will be the Deanery Evensong at Diss at 6pm. Further details from 'Lyn Stilgoe. 01328 738237 or ja-stilgoe@aol.com.

The next issue is June 2017 and the deadline for contributions is 1st May 2017.

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 £20 (overseas £30) a year of which 25% goes towards the printing and posting of The Round Tower magazine and administration. The rest 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
www.roundtowers.org.uk

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2017**

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One of our members points out that one of the photograph used to illustrate Witton St Margaret in the December magazine is in fact Potter Heigham. Well spotted.

For up to date information visit the website. For up to the minute information follow us on Twitter or like us on Facebook. Links to the RTCS Facebook page and our Twitter feed can be found at:
www.roundtowers.org.uk

Buildings of England by T.J.Clark.

*Time and again, however well we know
the landscape of love,
and the little churchyard with lament-
ing names...*

*time and again we go out two together,
under the old trees...*

Rainer Maria Rilke

Not time and again, but- this being Ruby, my daughter aged six- just once.

One typical Norfolk afternoon, as I recall it,
In early summer, so that the oaks creaking in the hedgerows
Were still mostly black against the sky, and the wheat and barley
grey-green.

It was mid-afternoon, after a long morning tacking from church to church.

I was on a Norfolk high,
Always convinced that inside the next protesting church door
Would be a piece of shattered fretwork to put even Trunch in the
shade,
Or a Dance of Death more desperate than Sparham's.

The three kids had put up with me as the hours went by,
Many a major prize had been offered, for the first to spot the wild
man

Or the window with the star of Bethlehem or the pig
Doing something unmentionable on the misericord.

Ruby's patience was wearing thin. Crisps and blackcurrant in The
Victory

Were no longer enough to keep the demon boredom at bay.

And Ruby's boredom was a force, a power of blackness, that all of
us feared.

Where were we, exactly? I'm no longer sure.

Maybe we'd stopped to see the flint hulks of the old cathedral at North Elmham
Sullen in their field, Ministry signs rotting among the nettles,
And then headed west and south, into what even Pevsner calls
'This strangely obscure and inaccessible area' with St Mary's
Beeston at its heart.
How was I supposed to resist the great man saying 'Interior... impressive,
Wide and high, with its tiled floor and untreated oak very moving'?

Ruby, in her tea-lady blue pinafore, stamped half-heartedly on the tiles
And showed no sign of softening at the sight of untreated oak.
We filed out of the porch into the sun. The air was heavy in the churchyard, smelling of yew.
Across the road was a roll of low hills, picture postcards inviting, fields with half-ripe barley,
And just over the ridge another church tower- a high square tower
With battlements and coats of arms like Erpingham's or Wighton's, maybe the west tower
Of Weasenham St Peter's, 'unbuttressed', says Pevsner, 'Early English...
Note the remarkably ornate north side (Perp), with flushwork decoration'.
It was just over the hill, goddamn it!

Major prize for the first...

Ruby stood in the road, hands on hips. She turned towards us. She knew what was brewing
And delivered her ultimatum, booming from the bottom of her six-year-old lungs:
'If I see another bloody church today, I shall throw up!'

It was not unlike the time three years earlier, when, trying as usual
To cram too much of a (botched) dream of fatherhood into
The available space, I had read the kids the opening of *David Copperfield*- the terrible Mudstone chapters-

And Ruby had exited after a page or so, going along the landing to say to her stepmother,
White-faced but calm, frightened, considerate, as if taking pity on my mistake,
'I think I am too young to hear this.'

Reproduced with kind permission from the poet T.J.Clark and The London Review of Books. Thanks to Lyn and Gen Ellis for suggesting this splendid poem to us.

Hemblington, All Saints Church: Archaeological Excavation for an extension on the north side. January 6th to 16th 2015.

Introduction. Norvic Archaeology was appointed by Ruth Brennan of Ruth Brennan Architects on behalf of All Saints, Hemblington to undertake archaeological excavation and monitoring of groundworks associated with a small extension on the north side of the church to accommodate a lobby kitchen and toilet (Planning Ref. 20131595). The excavation footprint for the extension measured c.4m by 4m. A c.9m long trench-arch sewerage system was also installed within the churchyard to serve the extension. The archaeological work was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by Kelly Powell of the Historic Environment Service (HES Ref: CNF 454232) on behalf of Broadland District Council. The aim of the mitigation work was to record the presence/absence, date, nature, and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the development footprint, including the excavation of burials where necessary. This report presents a brief description of the methodology followed and an archaeological interpretation of the results. On completion of the project, the site archive will be offered for long term deposition with Norfolk Museums Service following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

Archaeological and historical background. All Saints church (NHER 8521) consists of a chancel, a nave with a south porch and western tower. The walls are flint and mortar and although now roofed with tiles the roof was once partly leaded and thatched. The church has a round tower which incorporates elements of early stonework which may either suggest that it dates from the Saxon-Norman period, or that it was rebuilt using stone of this date. The chancel dates to about 1300, the nave was re-built in the 14th century in Decorated style. The roof and some windows date to the 15th century. The chancel was the financial responsibility of the rector of the parish or their overseer whilst the remainder was the responsibility of the laity. This division is the reason why a chancel is often a different date from the nave and why, as at Hemblington, the chancel remained more modest when the nave was expanded in volume at the desire of its wealthy 14th century patrons. In the south wall of the nave there are several examples of reused Romanesque style architectural fragments with moulding and ornamentation. Other early architectural evidence includes a few pieces in the fabric of the west wall of the nave on the north side of the tower which includes a small slab of Barnack stone with a blocked piercing. The nave has 14th century doorways on the south and north sides, the north one having been bricked up until this recent development. It is recorded that there were once medieval lights dedicated to St Mary, St Catherine and St Margaret perhaps with saint figurines installed in the church. The south porch is primarily of brick and is thought to be of 16th century date, it has plain cross decoration formed from flush knapped flints either side of the entrance arch. General alterations were made in 1903 by W.D. Caröe and the Chancel was rebuilt in 1910 (Pevsner 543, 1997). Although the chancel roof is modern the nave roof is of arched-brace construction and still retains traces of its original colouring – which was carefully retained when the roof was repaired. The rafters are powdered with the sacred monogram IHC and the letter M painted in red on a white background. In 1937, during removal of thick white-wash from the walls a nationally important example of a 15th century

mural was revealed. The painting was fully uncovered and preserved under the direction of Professor E W Tristram of the Victoria & Albert Museum. The mural depicts the legend of St Christopher, a very popular subject within parish churches, of which this is one of the best preserved nationally. The 15th century octagonal font is highly decorated with religious figures and was re-coloured in 1937 under the direction of Professor Tristram. Near the south doorway, mounted at bench height, is a long stone coffin-lid of 14th century date decorated in relief with a floriated cross at both ends with a central 'double omega' design. Another coffin-shaped slab forms a step at the doorway. There are several brass inscriptions on slabs within the Nave floor, mostly of late 15th to early 16th century date. A few glazed medieval floor tiles of various sizes and forms have been re-laid in the northeast corner of the nave. The existing churchyard was extended to the north in 1953, an area of which is currently used for new internments. The Blofield and District Conservation Group maintain the southern area of the churchyard as a natural area where grass and flowers are only mown once a year. The present gated entrance and pathway is relatively new. Until the 1960s the gated entrance was sited at the south-west corner of the churchyard with a shallow hollow way and path leading directly to the south porch. The church was saved from possible demolition after the roof was blown off in a great gale of 1894 by the Churchwarden Godfrey Weston of Gable Farm, who secured its restoration. Godfrey's son, also Godfrey, also became churchwarden and instigated a further restoration phase of work in 1968, which saw the introduction of electric light and heating.

Previous Archaeological Monitoring. In November 2009, a machined service trench was dug from the edge of the churchyard to bring a water supply and a duct for cables to the area of the blocked north door, with no finds or burials noted. In 2010, an outside tap at the blocked north door was left running which flooded the inside of the church and caused subsidence below the flooring. The repair work required the investigation of soft ground and the relaying of a new floor. Archaeological monitoring of the works confirmed that

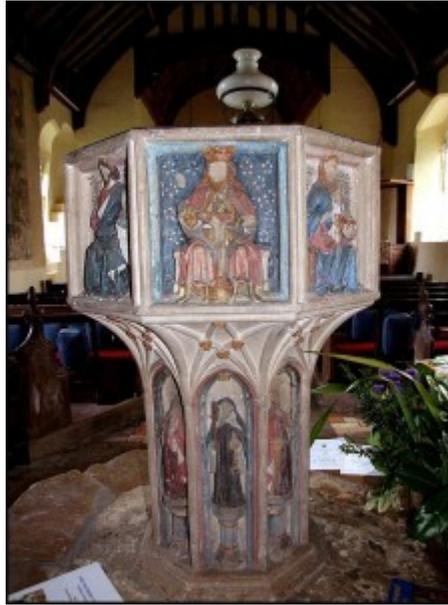
the ground had been repeatedly dug into for burials (Bates 2012). A small area of stratified deposits was identified and may have represented make up for a former surface. In the south-east part of the nave a short length of mortared flint masonry appeared to represent a flint wall which was aligned with that of the chancel to its east.



Summary of the January 2015 excavation results. The excavation has provided additional information on the construction method of the 14th century nave, which made use of shallow stonework over well consolidated banded footings. Prior to the expansion of the 14th century nave, an earlier east-west wall set above banded footings was robbed out in its entirety. This appears to be evidence of a former north aisle of uncertain date and longevity. A boundary ditch was revealed on the north side of the church, which formerly demarcated the medieval churchyard. Residual medieval pottery collected from the cemetery soils suggest that the area was subject to medieval midden burning or manuring activity. A total of 30 graves were identified, of which 25 were excavated either in part or in full. The sample included a relatively high number of non-adults, which may indicate some form of zoning by the north door, particularly as many of the children were of a similarly young age range. The majority of the graves are likely to date from the 13th to 14th to century into the late medieval period, with one which certainly predated the 14th century expansion of the nave. Four 19th century to early 20th century graves were identified, of which only one required full excavation. An unusual petroglyph noted on a buttress by the north door may be some form of medieval to post-medieval graffiti, possibly a form of 'merel' mark used as superstitious ward. Noteworthy finds include two pieces of medieval window glass, an oak leaf mount cast in lead-alloy, a musket ball modified into a counter for gaming or counting and two fragments of possible Roman brick/tile.

Part of the medieval mural





The editors are very grateful to the Rector and Hemblington PCC for giving us permission to quote from the archaeological report. For those who want to know/learn more the full report can be found at <http://www.hemblingtonchurch.org.uk/>.

Flintspiration: Norwich Medieval Churches Weekend, runs from Saturday April 29 to Bank Holiday Monday, May 1, 2017. A festival celebrating the 31 medieval churches of Norwich. For details of the festival as it continues to take shape, visit their website www.flintspiration.org. At the time of going to press the website has yet to go live.

Anyone interested in getting involved as a host in a church, or as an advisor helping people to enjoy the festival can contact Stella Eglinton at: stella.eglinton@norwich-churches.org

If you plan to visit the Norwich round tower churches over the weekend take the March 2016 Round Tower magazine with you which includes Richard and Anne's article on the Norwich Round Tower Churches.

Kerdiston St Mary's Chapel or Church (a lost round tower church and village).

Location; two miles north-west of Reepham, Norfolk. TG 0855 2397; Eynsford Hundred. HER 57957.

The site was recently identified on an aerial photograph by Norfolk archaeologists Imogen and Trevor Ashwin. It shows the crop marks of a church with a western round tower. At the eastern end was an apse which later, perhaps around 1300, was modified to provide a square ended chancel.

In his survey of the Ruined and Disused Churches of Norfolk (East Anglian Archaeology, 51, 1991) Neil Batcock calls it St Mary's Church.



The site shown is in a large field called Chapel Hill Close, north of the former railway line to Norwich; now the '*Marriot's Way*' footpath which follows an east-west direction. On the photograph is what appears to be the shadow of a lost track-way on a north-south axis. The site of the church lies 160 metres south of 'Giants Moat' which was probably the place of the manor-house, associated with the church. 60 metres to the south is another moat. There are a few farms nearby such as the Old Hall (HER 21,006; TG 0874 2414), to the north-east which may also have been the successor of the Giants Moat and that too was probably moated. The Old Hall dates mainly from the early 17th century but it was probably on the site of a Romano-British farmstead.

The manors of Kerdiston and Reepham were inextricably linked from the beginnings. In fact the Domesday Survey only mentions Reepham as an appendage to Kerdiston and not the other way round. The Earl of Surrey and Ralph Baynard each had manors there with about 2 carucates (240 acres) of land each and a total of 82 men who mostly lived in Reepham. This is now a small market town with a population of about 2,800 people – including the scattered farms of Kerdiston.

There is no village in Kerdiston; it is not listed under the ‘lost villages of Norfolk’ so it is tempting to think there never was a village there. So why did it have its own church? Clearly with a bell tower it was more than just a domestic chapel.

The de Kerdiston family was probably enfeoffed there by their Norman over-lord. The first recorded was a Rose de Kerdiston in 1242. At least eight further generations followed. Roger de Kerdiston (1273-1337) was Sheriff of Norfolk and Keeper of Norwich Castle. Inside St Mary’s Church, Reepham is a spectacular tomb with his effigy shown in armour. He rests on a chest with panels bearing eight mourners. Above is a double arch separated by a pendant. Some think Sir Roger was buried



The de Kerdiston tomb. Unusually the effigy lies on a bed of cobbles.

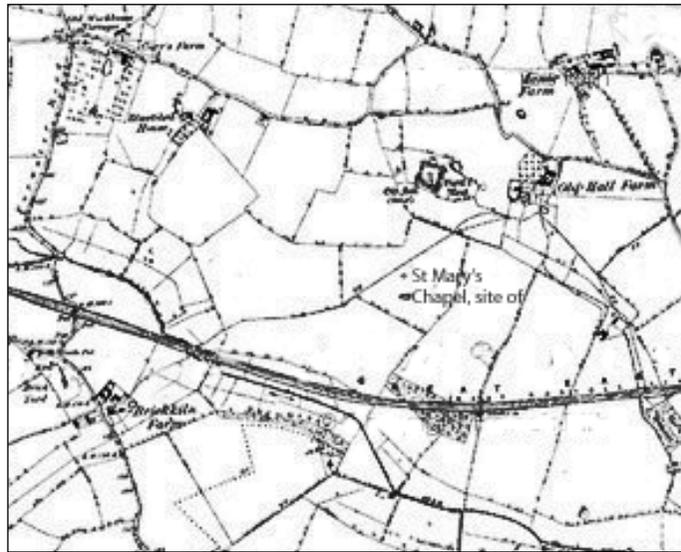


here but uncertainty over that and the style of the monument suggests it shows his son, William de Kerdiston, 1288-1362; or was it made by his son in his father's memory and designed in a later style?

The Rev Robert Whitefoot was a curate or an assistant priest in St Mary's Church 1319-27. By 1343 he was the Rector of Kerdiston shortly before the Black Death. By that time that church had acquired a south aisle. William de Kerdiston, junior (1321-91; generation 6) and his wife Cecily, are shown in an equally spectacular brass memorial; he in armour and both under an elaborate traceried canopy. Were these tombs transferred from Kerdiston to St Marys when the former church was demolished? William and Cecily completed the building of Claxton Castle in Suffolk and that then became the family's main seat. Despite that, they donated many things to St Mary's Church in Reepham (In the 1369, '*Church Goodes* survey' - Kerdiston Church was not listed). Their son Leonard de Kerdiston also made several donations to St Mary's Church as did his son, Sir Thomas de Kerdiston (generation 8) who presented a priest there in 1429. He and his wife Elizabeth also gave gifts to a Norwich Priory in 1448. They seem only to have left daughters. One was Philippa de Kerdiston who presented to Kerdiston as late as 1452. That is the last record of any connection between the family and this church. In 1586 the Crown awarded the 'site of the manor' to Ambrose Willoughby so we can be sure that all trace of it and the adjacent church had long disappeared by that date. C Hugh Bryant ('*Norfolk Churches*', c1900 pubn) says that the stones were used to repair adjacent cottages.

Francis Blomefield listed two other small manors in Kerdiston – one belonging to William de Burgolian 1275; another to the Calthorpe family which was leased to the de Kerdistons. It is unlikely they were more than a single farm. The Church records are not much help in answering why there was a church in Kerdiston. The 1254 valuations for the Sparham Deanery lists three churches in Reepham (only) – St Mary's was the one associated with Kerdiston and was the largest. West of that, sharing the same churchyard and adjacent to the market place is St Michaels which served a small parish west of Reepham - Whitwell. On the south side of the churchyard was All Saints Church which served the parish of Hackford. That one had been demolished by 1796.

Looking at the modern map we see that all three ‘parishes’ of Kerdiston, Hackford and Whitwell are all part of the modern and enlarged parish of Reepham. They are made up of scattered farms and small number of cottages. None have a village centre or a church. Hackford and Kerdiston shared the lordship of the Earl of Surrey but otherwise there was a variety of manors. There are other examples in Norfolk where several churches share a single burial yard. Hackford and Whitwell retained their own parish boundaries until the 1920s and originally they had their own jurisdictions.



Faden’s Map of 1797, shows a stream with its marshy meadows on the west side of Reepham forming a vee-shape as it flows south. Kerdiston was sited north of this. On the lane north of Reepham leading to Guestwick is Smith- field Bridge where it crosses the stream; then Kerdiston Cross which is medieval. Reepham means the ‘village of the reeve’. There is a survey map of 1588 which shows ‘Kerdy Green’. The 1840 Tithe Map shows that many people of Reepham had an allotment near to home and grazing in Kerdiston. The largest building in Kerdiston was workhouse built in the 1800s in the northern part of Kerdiston but later demolished.

The 1923 map of Norfolk parishes shows Reepham being seven miles long east-west, only one mile deep north-south, except for a 'bump' in the middle and that was the tiny parish of Kerdiston. To the west was another tiny parish of Thimblethorpe.

This is an interesting discovery as there are few other round towered churches in this part of central Norfolk. It encourages us to think there are many more lost church towers waiting to be discovered.

Notes:

Blomefield, vol 8, 242

Rose de Kerdiston, LOM 26 Henry III, 1242

Fulk de K, 43 Henry III, 1259

John de K, temp Henry III (up to 1272)

Roger de K, died 11 Edward II, 1318.

He married Joan de Brews, daughter of Edmund Bacon. Their son was;

William de K, 1288 – (35 Edward III), 1362, 74. His son was;

William de K,

Sir Leonard de K held ½ knights fee there in 3 Henry IV, 1402

Sir Thomas de K, living in 14 Henry VI (1436) married Elizabeth. They gave 300 marks to the Augustian Friary in Norwich and in 1448, a silver cross.

Their dau and heiress? was;

Elizabeth de K, wife of Sir Terry Robsert.

That appears to have been the end of the male line after 9 generations.

28 Elizabeth I, 1586; Ambrose Willoughby was given the site of the manor. The patronage of the church later reverted to the Crown.

There were three manors in Kerdiston;

1. Burgolian's Manor which was Earl Warren's manor in 1086 with 2 carucates. William de B, held it and died LOM in 3 Edward I; 1275. Hugh de B of Great Snoring, Nfk, died as LOM in 25 Edward III, 13; 1340. His cousin and heir was Sir Ralph Shelton. His descendant, Catherine Shelton was the widow of Edmund Lomner 5/ 6 Philip & Mary; 1558.

2. Calthorpe's Manor, which Sir William de C, sold (a lease?) in 15 Edward I; 1287, to William de Kerdiston, senior. The Calthorpe family later sold it to the Parkers.

3. Baynard Manor

NA 12, 282; reduction in lay subsidy assessment following the Black Death.

Reepham is not listed at all under Eynsford Hundred entries. Kerdiston-cum-Reepham are clearly lumped together.

Kerdiston, £7, £7 to pay in 1340s; later valuation; 36s – 8d, £5- 3s-4d to pay.

NA 17, 96; Sparham Deanery, church valuations in **1254**;
Reepham St Mary, 32 marks, £21-6s-8d; 17 marks, £11-13s-4d (listed twice)
St Michael, 13 marks, £18-13s-4d; 15 marks, £10 to pay
All Saints, 14 marks, £9- 6s- 8d; 15 marks, £10 to pay.

Kerdiston was not listed.

At the time of the Great Survey in 1086, William de Warren (item 8.2) held an estate with a freeman and two carucates of land; 38 other men with three ploughs; half a priest and half a church with 7 acres of glebe. There were two other freemen with 80 acres; the total value of the different parts of this estate was 120s, paying a substantial 15d, in tax. Ralph Baynard also had an estate there (item 3.11). In the later Middle Ages the Baynards dominated Reepham. In it a freeman held 2 more carucates and 31 men with 6 ploughs; pig woodland; meadows, cattle, sheep, goats. 3 1/2 other freemen held 25 acres valued at, £4-5s-0d. This huge value was because part of Reepham and its residents were included in the valuation. In fact this is the only place in the Survey where this Reepham is mentioned so the impressive figures given for Kerdiston may in fact have more relevance for Reepham. Significantly it was '*Repham*' that held the jurisdiction over the estate.

In St Mary's Church, Reepham is the effigy of Sir Roger de Kerdiston or, perhaps his son William. The 18thc writer, Blomefield says that Sir Roger was buried in Langley so the latter person seems more likely. Eight mourners are placed in panels on the tomb chest which before they decayed, were delicately carved. The canopy is tall with two arches separated by a pendant. De Kerdiston is shown dressed in armour and chain mail lying on a bed of pebbles. This is an important monument testifying to his importance. Sir Roger (1273-1337) was the sheriff of Norfolk and Keeper of Norwich Castle in 1331; and an MP from 1332-1337.

His son Sir William de Kerdiston (1307-61) and wife Cecily Brewes of Salle are shown in a magnificent sepulchre brass in the chancel under cusped canopies; he in armour and she in a long flowing dress.

There were once three churches in Reepham but now there are two which are physically joined to each other end to end. The three churches shared the same churchyard in the middle of the town east of the market place (granted a charter in 1277). Each represented a different parish – hence the association of St Mary's with Kerdiston. William de K was rector there in 1318; Sir Thomas de K presented in 1429, and his widow? Philippa in 1452.

The Rev Robert Whitefoot was the curate or one of the priests serving St Mary's Church, Reepham, 1319-27. By **1343** he had become the Rector of Kerdiston, shortly before the Black Death. By that time it also had a south aisle. Curiously Kerdiston is not listed under the lost villages of Norfolk. C Hugh Bryant says that stones from the chapel were reused in adjacent cottages. In the **1369** '*Survey of Churches Goodes*' in Norfolk, and Sparham Deanery in particular Kerdiston Church is not listed so it may have been abandoned by then. Robert Whitefoot had become a priest in Taverham where he originated from but he does not appear in the clergy list there.

The de Kerdiston family may have originated from there but Sir William de K, junior (1325-91) had completed construction of Claxton Castle in Suffolk which became their main seat. His wife Cecily lived on after 1401. Sir William gave several things to St Mary's Church in Reepham listed in the 1369 survey; a gradual (book); a linen cope; vestments – a chasuble, tunicle, dalmatia bearing his coat of arms. Leonard de Kerdestone donated a ruby coloured cope; a curtain; a piece of decorative cloth etc.

Richard Harbord

Summer Tours 2016 – Part 3

Bexwell St Mary was the first church on our August tour. The church is constructed predominantly of carstone. The tower rises to just over 50 feet and is circular for three quarters of its height, with a later octagonal top. Ten original belfry openings in the circular section are now blocked. Young swallows nesting in the porch welcomed us to the interior which was much changed during the 19th century. On the south wall a 17th century memorial has symbols of mortality, including an hour glass and a grave diggers spade. A 20th century memorial records the death of 2nd Lieutenant C.D. Prangley, the rector's son, killed during the Great War. His wooden battlefield grave marker is also on display. A fragment of medieval glass in a north window, shows the head of a man with a forked beard.



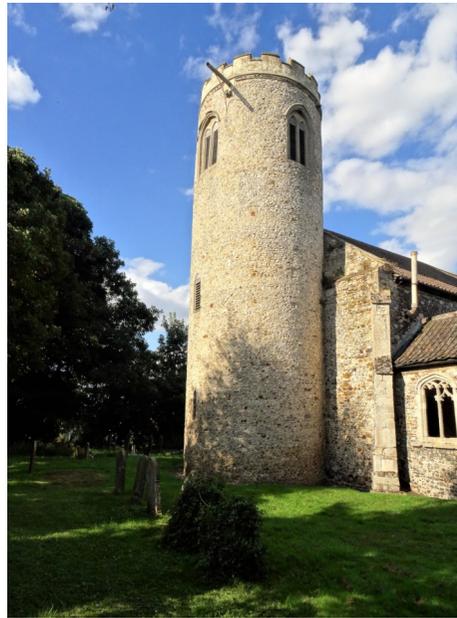
Bexwell, St
Mary.

West Dereham St Andrew has much conglomerate or ferricrete in its fabric. The tower has the largest diameter of the Norfolk Round Towers, measuring just over 17 feet internally at ground floor level. Including the octagonal belfry, it is 47 ½ feet high. The 16th century octagon has bell openings framed in Tudor brick, with an arched frieze, also in brick, above. Inside the church a party of volunteers were working to install lavatory facilities, but this did not impede our explorations. A life size marble figure is part of the Memorial to Col. Edmund Soane, who died in 1706. He is shown in armour, with his helmet at his feet. ‘In the reign of King William and Queen Mary he went a volunteer to the wars in Ireland’. In the churchyard, another soldier is remembered. His gravestone tells us that Emmanuel Gaminara was born in Genoa in 1794. ‘He was a soldier in the 2nd Imperial Guard under the ‘Great Napoleon’. He died at Downham Market in 1892.



West Dereham,
St Andrew.

East Walton St Mary has a tower built mainly of flint and circular for its full height of 56 feet. There are fine Perpendicular windows on either side of the nave. Much work was carried out here during the 18th century, including the partial filling of the chancel arch which is nearly 20 feet wide, by what Munro Cautley described as ‘a wooden erection’. The white plastered ceiling is of the same period, as are the box pews and the three decker pulpit. A late 14th century octagonal font has quatrefoil carvings on the panels, while a medieval brass in the floor requests prayers for William Bacar and Margaret his wife. The parish bier is a well preserved wheeled example of its type.



Dick and Michael at
East Walton St Mary

A dull grey day heralded our September tour of three churches, which lie close to each other, south of Cromer. Unfortunately, the weather deteriorated as the day went on. **Thurgarton All Saints** is in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust. Long ruinous, the tower was taken down in the 19th century. Its remains, as well as the nave and chancel, are thatched. Carved poppy heads and medieval benches are the great treasures of this church. 15th century bench carvings include musicians, a dragon and two tuns (perhaps a partial rebus for Thurgarton). From more recent times, I particularly enjoyed the iron Tortoise Stove, with a tortoise displayed on the ironwork surrounded by the words ‘slow but sure combustion’.



Thurgarton
All Saints

Rain had set in when we arrived at **Wickmere St Andrew**. Here the tower is circular for its full height of just over 47 feet. On entering the church, one is met by a large statue which makes an immediate impact. With head inclined slightly, the Angel holds an open scroll bearing the names of the men of the parish killed in the Great War. There are many Walpole memorials here, with the most striking being the effigy of the 5th Earl of Orford, on a casket tomb at the east end of the north aisle. A simpler memorial is a battlefield style grave marker to Lieutenant H.S. Walpole, killed in action in 1918. Both the late 14th century piscina and sedilia have cusped ogee arches. There are armorial shields and Tudor roses on the spandrels, all under a cornice with interspersed blank shields and Tudor roses. A carved poppy head on a bench end shows lilies in a vase, a symbol of the Annunciation.



Wicknere
St Andrew

Persistent rain had not dampened our spirits when we arrived at **Thwaite All Saints**. A tower circular for its full height of 45 feet, it was restored in 1896. Inside the church a fine pulpit is dated 1624 and the base of the 15th century screen has some original colouring. Also of note, is a large ironbound chest and a floor brass that has survived complete with its inscription and the figures of John Puttok and his wife. During the 19th century restoration a north extension was added. A notice hanging in this room mentions ‘Little Ones’ suggesting this may have been used as a Sunday School room.



The Put-
tock brass
from
Thwaite All
Saints

As always at the end of a tour season, our thanks go to ‘Lyn and Richard for their work as tour leaders. We must also mention the local people who make us welcome at their churches and provide refreshment, to them also we say a big “Thank You”.

Stuart Bowell

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