



ST.ANDREW'S CHURCH, MUTFORD

ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OVER TIME

A DETAILED & PERSONAL INSIGHT

Tim Twineham (Warden)

September 2026 v4.2

Changes: Additional info on Galilee, font, bells and chapel. Some restructuring.

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Introduction

This booklet aims to provide a summary of what is known of and what can be seen at St Andrew's Church, located in the small rural village of Mutford, Suffolk.

It aims to fill many of the knowledge gaps in various short articles, summaries and observations made over time by former Church Wardens, Rectors, antiquarians, visiting historians, architects, and enthusiasts who recorded their personal observations during their travels from church to church.

As well as these sources, some of my conclusions are guided by books covering Medieval parish churches which provided insight for the major features of this church. When seeking guidance, however, I have learned that if you put the same question to different authorities, no matter how learned, you will likely get different answers. However, I am pleased to say that all the authorities I read or contacted agreed there is some uncertainty in their conclusions.

Additionally, the Faculty system of the Church of England which has governed permissions for works on church buildings since the c.13 can be helpful in identifying historical changes to the fabric. However, there is no complete record for St. Andrew's as past wardens seem to have adopted the path of asking forgiveness (if found out) rather than seeking permission.

My motivation for the book came in part from a past warden, Ivan Jacob, who left the area in 2019 after 40 years living in Mutford. He wrote an excellent pamphlet on the church for the Millennium and was happy for me to use it as a basis. Sadly, he passed away in 2025 before I could send my paper to him. His ashes now reside in the churchyard. RIP Ivan.

If you have any comments or, even better, additional information, please contact me via the email below. For suggested changes, it would be much appreciated if the reasoning or better still, provenance, could be provided to support the observation.

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Thank you for reading this booklet and your interest in St Andrew's.

Special thanks to

- Caroline Rawlings (former assistant DAC secretary in the Diocese of Norwich) who provided a lot of early guidance for the general history
- Felicity Hillier for good conversation, research skills and an ability to translate c.14 Black Letter Gothic Latin and c.17 Faculty English into something I could understand
- Jenny Sheahan for patience in proof reading, adjusting English and checking sources
- Herbert Tonkin, Architect, for guidance, advice and correction
- David Butcher (historian) for advice on the wider context

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Terminology

I have used an abbreviated term to denote the century I am talking about, so c.11 means the 11th century (1001 – 1099).

I have also tried to minimise the use of detailed architectural terms, primarily as I am not qualified to use them but also because their use can often make text inaccessible to most normal folk, as you will find if you delve into the bibliography.

The classification of the architectural styles of the windows should be regarded as an interpretation rather than a fixed determination. The Decorated style preceded Perpendicular; the date of changeover is important as this paper estimates that the church was rebuilt just prior to the boundary between the two. Depending on the reference, the boundary extends between 1330 and 1400.

Obviously, there is nothing to stop a mason continuing to make a window in the Decorated style (or reusing one from elsewhere) after the Perpendicular style became more common, nor local masons continuing to use Anglo-Saxon techniques after 1066; dating based on style can only be a guide.

An important family in the c.14 were patrons of St Andrew's. Their family name varies according to the source you read: de Hemgrave or de Hemegrave or de Hengrave. Although they were also patrons of the church in the village of Hengrave near Bury St. Edmunds, I have chosen de Hemgrave since that is what is carved on the font. The Wikipedia entry for Hengrave church, however, references the founding family as de Hemegrave.

I use the term Anglo-Saxon to reflect the management prior to the Conquest (the administration of Harold Godwinson or Harold II). After the Conquest, the term Norman is used. Where there is uncertainty, I have used the term Anglo-Norman, although I have noted an increasing trend in academic articles and books to use the term Saxo-Norman.

The sale of the advowson (which will be explained as you read this paper) happened in 1353 or 1354 depending on what you read. The former is when the agreement was made; the latter is when it was enacted. I will use 1353 as this is when the transfer was declared.

Bibliography

The following publications include subjective pen pictures of St Andrew's:

- **D. Butcher – The Half-Hundred of Mutford: A Domesday and Medieval Exploration. 2013**
This provides a history of the half-hundred which bore the same name as the manor
- **H.M.Cautley – Suffolk Churches and their Treasures. 1954**
This was the 3rd edition but some observations appear to date to the first edition in 1937
- **W.Goode – East Anglian Round Towers and their Churches. 1982**
Published by the Round Tower Church Society
- **S.Hart – The Round Church Towers of England. 2003**
Published by the Round Tower Church Society. Mutford is honoured by several pages
- **A.Mee – The King's England – Suffolk. 1942**
- **D.P.Mortlock – The Popular Guide to Suffolk Churches. 1992**
Many of the observations come from earlier visits, some of which were later updated by others, so you get a mixture when reading about St Andrew's

Recommended books (and one paper) on Parish Churches in general:

- **J Blair – The church in Anglo-Saxon Society. 2005**
An academic masterpiece
- **H Braun – Parish Churches. 1974**
Quite subjective and uses an entertaining style of English
- **H Braun – English Medieval Architecture. 1985**
- **R Fleming – Britain After Rome. 2010**
Very thorough and easy to read. Rather cheekily it is written by an academic in the US
- **S Heyward - Stone Building in Romanesque East Anglia. 2013**
An academic paper. Search online using the title
- **R Morris – Churches in the Landscape. 1989**
- **N Orme – Going to church in Medieval England. 2021**
- **J Derriman – Chancel Repair Liability. 2006**
Written as a guide for land owners to determine their liability following a rather fraught legal case in 2003. I used this when researching Annex 1. Though very well written, is not for the faint-hearted unless you have a legal background.

Websites

I have not included websites in this booklet since URLs can change – and are tedious to retype from a document. A search for “Mutford St. Andrew” will bring up many sites.

The origins of St Andrew's

The Little Domesday Book of 1086 (Circuit VII covering Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex) mentions two churches in the manorial settlement of Mutford. We can assume that St Andrew's is one of these, although there is no precise evidence to confirm this. It is situated on high ground (10m) which is a favoured position for churches and, as the sole survivor, could be assumed to have been the more important of the two – what would have been originally termed a “lesser minster” church in the categories defined in Anglo-Saxon times (King Æthelred's code of 1014).

The second church would most probably have been a ‘field church’ - placed to be more convenient to people living further away but still under authority of the priest of the minster church and still within what later became the parish.

It is worth noting that churches only featured in the Domesday Book if they had an endowment of land to support the priest thus making them a taxable asset, although there were exceptions. The entry for Mutford simply states

2 churches with 43 acres combined

These 43 acres are collectively called glebe which is discussed in Annex 1.

St Andrew's is located on the eastern side of the manorial settlement, so any field church would have been well over to the west. The current village of Hulver some two miles to the west did not exist as such when the Domesday record was made, but there must have been settlement in this area which later developed into a village outside the Mutford parish. The people living in this area may well have been served by this field church. The local yeomen (freemen owning land) may have funded its' construction and paid for a priest to attend from time to time, thus saving them and their villeins and serfs the trouble of making the required trek to the mother church in all weathers.

Minster churches had graveyards and the sole rights to bury people, gaining the attendant fees; field churches were not allowed to bury people and would be fined if they did. Minster churches also received various dues such as tithes and were very vigilant over maintaining this privilege.

The system of parishes as we now know them became widespread in the c.11 and mostly consolidated by the end of the c.12 when they numbered around 9,500. Parishes likely reflected the boundaries of the manorial estate and were in effect their ecclesiastical counterpart. St. Andrew's would have been the ‘mother’ church of the parish.

It is worth noting that St Andrew's is now sited well away from the rest of the village but this would not have always been the case. Metal detectorists have scoured fields north of the church but found nothing from the early Middle Ages so it is not clear where the main settlement was located as that would have been a prime spot (being downwind of the manor where the lord dwelt). Wherever it was, it moved. As an historian once put it, many churches are now lonely monuments in the landscape.

First Build(s)

Annex 2 provides an historical context for the early church in East Anglia.

St Andrew's would have been originally founded as a manorial church at the cost of the local lord of the manor.

The question is: when?

From the c.10 after Viking rule had been overcome in East Anglia, manors were ordered by King Æthelstan to pay a tithe to support the ministry of the (local) clergy. This was a compulsory and enforceable religious levy (a tax) on arable and livestock production; the tithe (in kind) was supplemented by income from lands endowed to the church when it was created (glebe) and also by fees for services such as burials.

The result of this law was that Anglo-Saxon Lords of the Manor (thanes) built churches (lesser minsters) on their own land to divert their tithes to it, rather than to a distant more senior minister. They would naturally wish to appoint a family member as the priest (rector), thus retaining this income within the family; the appointment, however, had to be ratified by a bishop.

The trend to build local churches increased significantly after the Norman Conquest so St. Andrew's could well have been founded in this period, but there is some evidence that it was earlier (explained more in Annex 2).

There seem to be two options for when the stone tower was constructed, but there is no unequivocal evidence (historical or architectural) for either. These are that the tower was

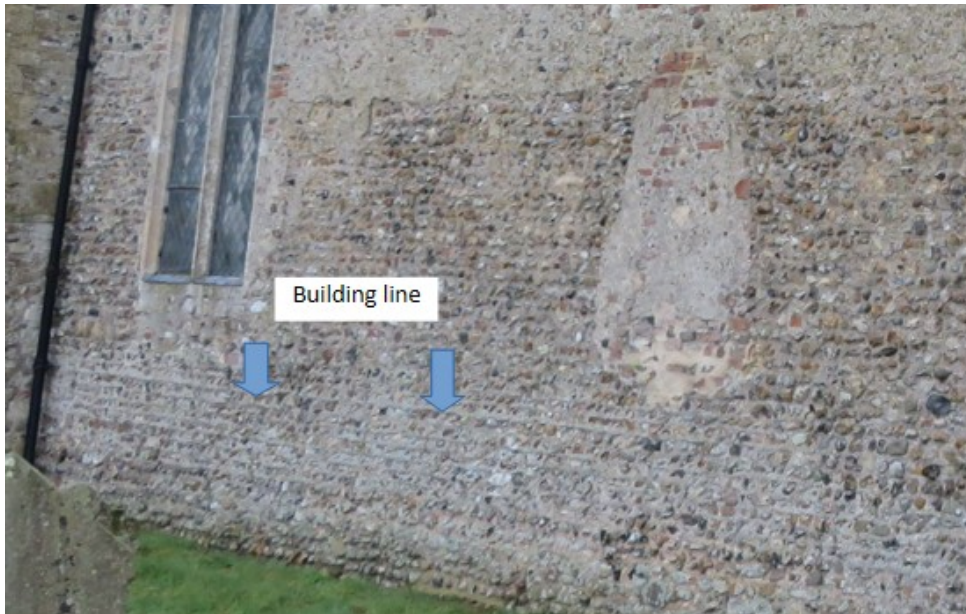
1. built or begun before the Conquest. There was stability during the rule of the English House of Wessex (middle c.10) and also following the reign of the Danish Christian king Canute (early/mid c.11), both of which brought periods of settled peace, providing confidence for major building work. The Historic England listed entry gives this option as a possibility.
2. built after the Conquest and classified solely as Norman. The c.12 is where most authors who have written about our church feel most comfortable.

In a time when building towers was important for one's social standing, I find it odd that if a wooden church was founded in the c.10, an Anglo-Saxon Lord would not have at least started to build his tower since by the time of the Conquest, as several generations of his manorial family would have existed since the founding. Surely one of them would have wanted to impress.

Only the north nave wall and tower now remain from the first build in flint. Who paid for it is unknown, but the manor of Mutford and the advowson of the church (the patronage) were held by Bandemar duBoys (also known as de Bosco) under King Henry II (1154-1189), so this family seems the best candidate.

Time to Build

It is worth noting that it takes considerable time to build a church, especially one with a tower of 1.5m thick walls. Building lines on the north nave wall show where the season's work stopped (see below) – and the work needed to stop as people had to return to their fields at certain times of the year and the mortar needed time to set. Richard Morris' book referenced in the bibliography estimates that fine churches took decades to complete so although our small rural one would take less time. One architect I asked estimated that the highest (safest) level of build in a season would be 4-6 feet; so the tower (at its original height) would have taken 8-10 years to complete.



Dedication to St. Andrew

It is not known whether St. Andrew was the original dedication of the church as this could change over time, likely at the desire of the local Lord and patron. Frustratingly, the earliest historical references I have to St. Andrew's just refer to 'the church'.

After the Reformation in the c.16, dedications to saints were forbidden and so disappeared, which would therefore account for the church being referred to without a saint's name. For example, a Faculty of 1695 granted for this church and now held in the Norfolk Records Office makes no mention of St. Andrew. Dedications reappeared during a revival in the c.19; if the original dedication had been forgotten, then a new one would be used based on any information available.

There is no evidence of the church alignment being aligned to east on the St. Andrew's day (30th November). Many academic papers have been written on the alignment of churches to their saint's day. (Academia.com has over 30) and the conclusion is that such a theory belongs in the same waste-paper basket as that for churches being sited on ley lines.

However, St. Andrew was a dedication used in Anglo-Saxon times, so it is possible we have always had this dedication.

Major rebuild in c.14

An overview of the building phases as I understand them is shown below.

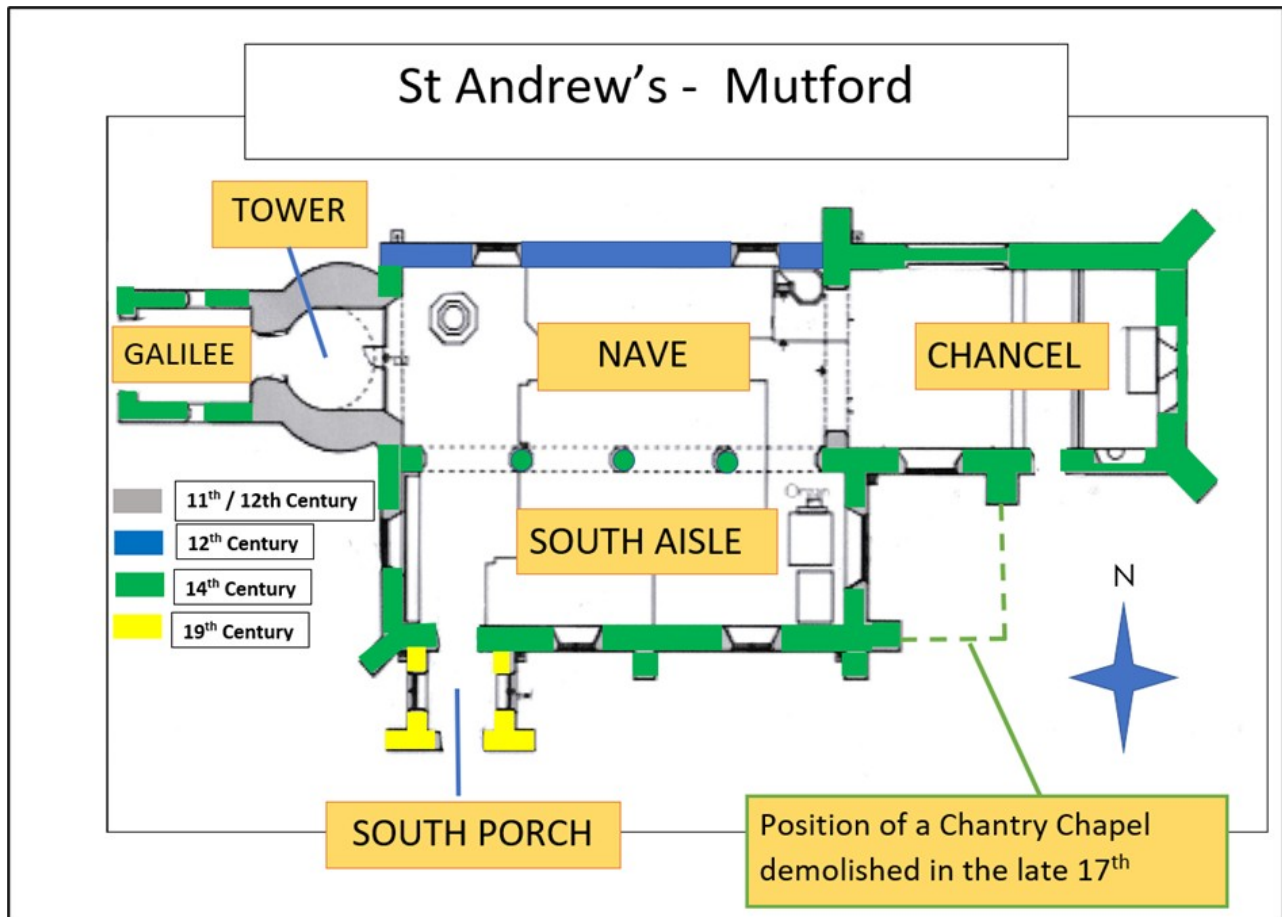


Figure 1 Church plan

Prior to the c.14, St. Andrew's would have been in flint and was a simple thatched affair with a low tower, similar to that at St. Michael's & All Angels in the neighbouring parish of Rushmere, just over a mile away to the south-east.

A rebuild occurred in the early c.14 and was likely paid for by the de Hemgrave family, who held the manor of Mutford from 1234 until 1419.

Why rebuild? Here are some options and there is no record as to any of these being correct

- The Lord of the manor wanted to display his wealth and piety (and also create a chantry for his family)
- Population growth and the possible demise of the 2nd church which would have been of wood and probably in a very poor state after 300 years or so
- The church had fallen into such a state of repair through neglect that it became necessary. This was not uncommon apparently. Possibly a new generation of the lord of the manor decided to step in

What was done?

- the height of the round tower was increased and topped by an octagonal belfry
- the chancel extended and adorned with large windows
- A south aisle added with an arcade of 4 piers and arches
- A porch added on the south side and the north door blocked
- a Galilee (porch) added to the west end of the tower with possibly the west tower entrance being inserted (unless that already existed)
- a side chapel included at the east end of the aisle for use as a chantry

Only the tower and north nave wall survived from the earlier Norman church. The original arch between the tower and the nave would have been similar in height to the arch between the tower and Galilee (west porch). Some considerable effort went into widening and heightening this by cutting through walls well over 1m in width. There is a view that the original arch (if Norman) was reused as a tomb arch on the north wall (this is covered later).

Most early churches had two doors set facing each other around 2/5 of the length of the church from the western end. This is true at Mutford, where the external wall shows evidence of a north entrance and one small (filled) window in Norman style. With some imagination you can see also where a second window was located on the external wall, slightly to the west of the eastern nave window.

The now-filled north door would originally have been used in the Palm Sunday procession when the congregation went through it, processed round to the east end and then to the south side, finally re-entering by the west door in the tower. Some believe that the north door was opened during baptisms to permit evil spirits to leave the child but that is now largely discredited (there is a compelling article in the July 2025 *Antiquary* magazine by Dr. Nicholas Groves). This door was likely walled up during the Reformation in the c.16, when many such doors were blocked up to stop such processions, as well as to stop draughts.

The external flint fabric of the church would have been rendered in lime mortar to keep it secure. This needed to be regularly maintained and lime-washed, probably every year by local people. It is not known if this was voluntary, paid work, or an obligation to the lord for church maintenance. Much of the original lime render had been allowed to fall off in Victorian times as they liked to see the underlying work (which the original builders would probably have rather stayed hidden); this removal later resulted in the deterioration of the wall fabric. However, the absence of render does allow earlier features to be seen, especially on the tower (various filled lancets and the original belfry openings) and on the north nave wall (Norman window and door).

The Gothic windows in the chancel can narrow down the date of the rebuild a little as these are Decorated in style (1300-1350). One source I read stated that the east window was in the later Perpendicular style. The first known building to use this style was in 1332 (a chapter house for Old St. Paul's Cathedral). As it can take several decades for new architectural ideas to migrate away from where they are first introduced, the date for the rebuild would then be the third quarter of the c.14 using this guidance. One heritage site cites 1355 as the earliest date for the rebuild but I believe this to be unlikely. In 1353, shortly after the Black Death had

run its course, Sir Edmund de Hemgrave sold the advowson to the warden and scholars of the Hall of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (now Gonville & Caius college, Cambridge); with this went the rights to the manorial tithes owed to the church.

It is unlikely that the scholars would have funded this rebuild as their purchase was primarily to get the income from the lands and tithe. Therefore, I believe that the chancel rebuild had to be completed prior to the impact of the Black Death and the sale: i.e. before 1348.

A pre-Black Death date is reinforced by the date of the first recorded rector – 1327. Although there would have been earlier rectors, the fact that this is the earliest discoverable date likely means there was a lengthy period before then where there was no rector, due to the rebuilding.

A newspaper article from 1933, recording a St Andrew's Day service at Mutford, reports that the then Dean of Norwich referred to the blocked-up window in the chancel as "...a beautiful traceried example from about 1340". So, there are multiple opinions on possible dates and no definitive answer—but a completion date preceding the Black Death seems the best fit.

An aisle was added on the south side, separated from the nave by the series of columns termed an arcade. According to my architecture books, the octagonal plinth at the foot of the columns is typical c.14 work. Some of the columns still retain what has been assessed by one historian as 'mason marks' but other visitors have not been so impressed: one suggestion being that a child was bored! These are best seen on the second pillar from the old organ by shining a torch vertically upwards against the column.

The aisle also has two Y-traceried windows in the south wall which may be original, but two knowledgeable visitors stated that the Y-tracery was probably inserted later and reused from elsewhere, possibly after the dissolution of the monasteries after they were demolished to make way for grand homes. However, English Decorated Y-tracery first developed at the end of the c.13 and so these windows could be original. The west window with the filled-in rose decoration is certainly viewed as original.

The round section of the tower was also raised and is discussed in detail in the next section.

Larger windows were also put into the north nave wall, one replacing the north door.

The chancel was increased in size to increase the space for the priests and to allow for larger windows, so better illuminating the mass for the worshippers, although they were still separated by a screen (removed long ago).

The cost of such a rebuild would have been extremely high and funded by the family of de Hemgrave. This family held the manor of Mutford until 1419, over 60 years after selling the advowson.

The Tower

St. Andrew's tower is ~20m high and the tallest round tower attached to a parish church in Suffolk. The original height of the round section has been estimated to be 12m – roughly the same height as that of St Michael and All Angels church in Rushmere, a mile away. The round section of St Andrew's tower was later extended by about 3m in the c.14 rebuild.

Below the octagonal belfry, the tower has windows at three levels.

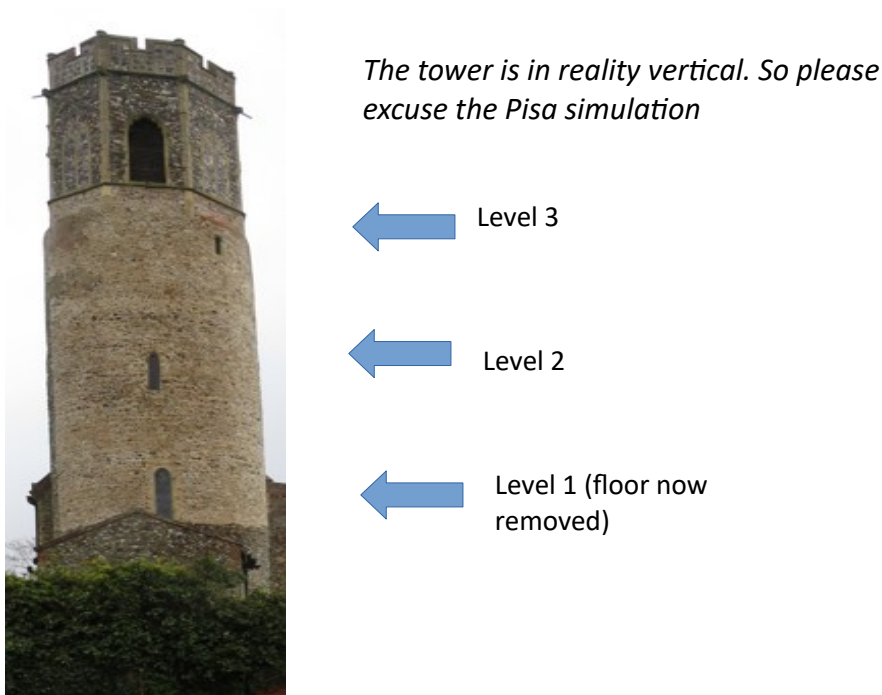


Figure 2

The lowest level would originally have had a floor where the pre-c.14 bell ringer(s) would have stood; this has now gone. On the external south and north sides it is possible to see two filled narrow openings (also called loops by some). On the west side, there is a much larger glazed lancet window overlooking the Galilee ridge and this would have been originally the same size as the other two. The enlarging and lowering of this window was probably done during the c.14 rebuild when the Galilee porch was added – and the floor removed.



Figure 3 inside of tower showing filled areas

On the tower's second (middle) level, there are three windows at the compass points, with the north and south blocked and only the west remaining, which is glazed. Brick and stone infill around their arches indicate that they were originally much wider. On the east side facing into the nave is a triangular-topped filled doorway (arrowed) which would have opened below the nave ridge.

The presence of now-filled slots in the stonework on all four sides (see picture on previous page) indicates that these held beams which crossed and held a cage in the centre from which hung a single bell which was rung from the floor below (i.e. level 1). Some of these still have stone corbels protruding slightly from the wall which would have supported the beams.

After the rebuild, and the bell(s) had been elevated to the new octagonal belfry, level 2 became the ringing floor. The east triangular-headed doorway then became a squint to allow the ringer(s) to see the priest at the altar so the bell could be tolled at the appropriate time during the mass. This would have been known as the sanctus window. Below are pictures of the Sanctus window prior to and after internal repairs to the tower in 1975. Personally, I wish they had not bothered with this 'repair'.

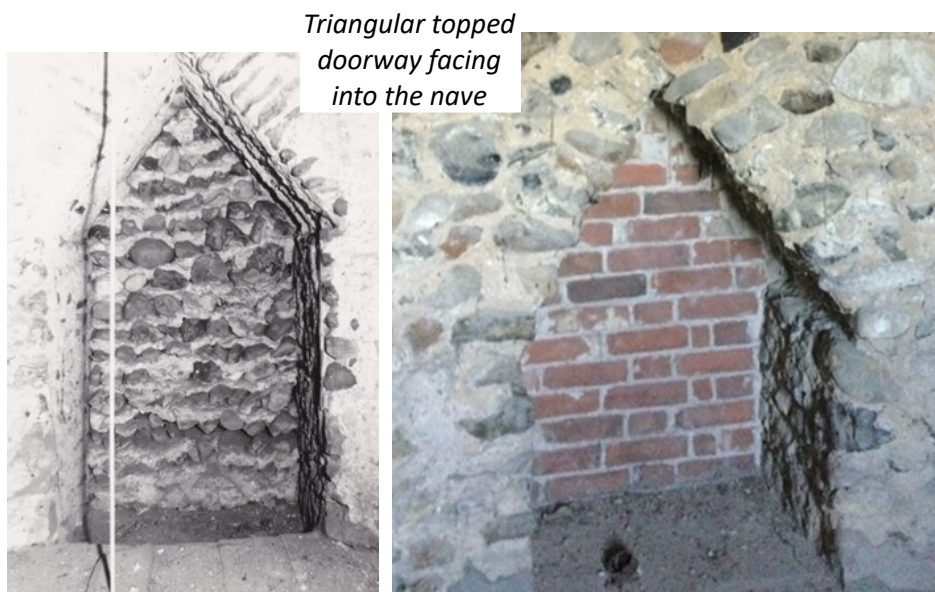


Figure 4 before

Figure 5 so-called improvement 1974

Prior to its use as a sanctus window, it was probably used to access the original belfry for maintenance and used a ladder, presumably kept within the tower. Alternatively, it might have been an access door to a nave roof area implying there was a ceiling in the latter. An excellent booklet produced for St Margaret's church in Hales, Norfolk cites this purpose for a similar feature in their church.

However, there is no clear evidence that there were roof timbers to support such a ceiling in St. Andrew's, although such evidence could have been removed in the rebuild. This filled-in aperture was rediscovered in the early c.20 when the wall facing into the nave was uncovered, presumably having previously been coated in lime mortar.

Level 3 of the tower has just one small lancet window with a fine surround facing south-west.

One thought was that this window was used to signal to the occupiers of the adjacent manor house which has evidence of c.12 scarf joints and passing braces (indicating an aisled hall suitable for a Lord of the Manor) in its oldest fabric. Another option is that the second church referenced in the Domesday Book – the field church described earlier – may have been in line of sight of this window in order to signal the lower status church when to start the mass.

St Andrew's lies on a small hillock contained within a 10m contour line. Examination of old maps revealed a patch of rough ground 2 miles to the west with hints of an old structure which is shown on early Ordnance Survey maps and also on an early aerial photograph of 1945. This also is adjacent to a 10m contour line with only one rise between this place and St. Andrew's. The tower, at well over 20m, would have been visible from the field church (if it existed there).

However, the engraving below shows another window on this level (arrowed) which has since been lost and replaced by brickwork in the c.19. Note also that the tracery in the belfry opening above is still in place and so was lost after it was drawn (1846). The brick infill is late c.19 as this is when this method of visible repair started to be used. introduced by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (founded in 1877 by William Morris) to show where the repairs had been made, as opposed to restoring the fabric as it was thought to have looked originally. Such visible infill is termed 'spabbing'.

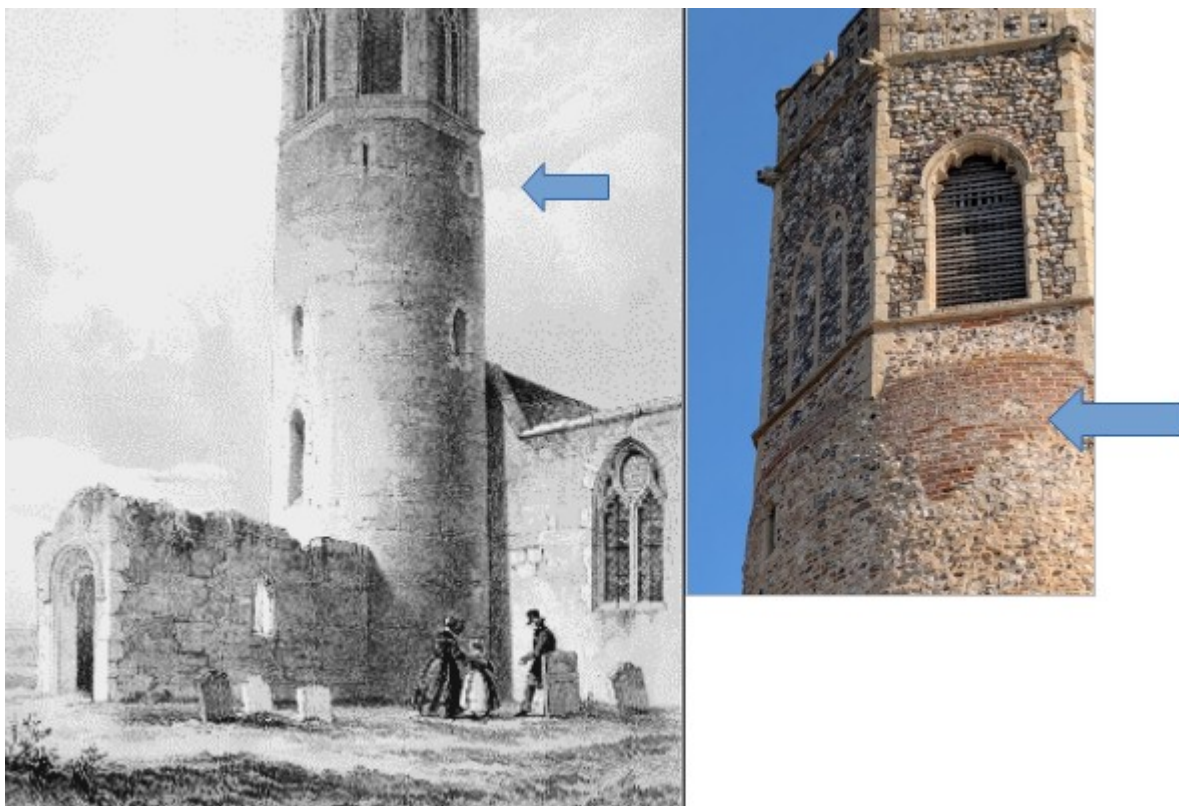


Figure 6 1846 engraving (left) and Victorian 'spabbing' (right)

Some believe that the octagonal belfry above level 3 was either added later in the c.15 but there is no evidence that the third level was used for bells and there would be little point building a separate round level above the belfry. Another view is that the absence of a string course between the heightened round section and the octagon implies that they were contemporaneous, although a visiting architect pointed out that stones in string courses were of high quality and a prime target for reuse.

The tower was therefore most likely first raised in round section and topped by the octagonal belfry in one build. All of which makes it higher and more splendid than neighbouring churches, which was likely in the mind of the patron.

Note the broken tracery (now fitted with louvres) and the adjacent filled window. Whether that was ever open and not built this way originally is not clear.



Figure 7 close up of belfry

[Tower Arch](#)

The arch between the tower and the nave would originally have been considerably narrower and lower; widening and matching the style to the chancel arch implies this was done in the c.14 rebuild.

The arch can also tell us something about the c.12 build. The tower has the same width all the way round and examination of the arch and how it bears the load of the upper tower fabric shows that the nave west wall is narrower than that of the north wall. This implies that the tower was already there or was being built at the same time (which covers all options).

Bells and bell frame

A bell was tolled to mark specific times during the mass, for alerting workers in the fields what the hour was and possibly also to sound the alarm, like a modern siren.



The inside of the tower was repaired in 1975/6 using modern bricks in the silence chamber to fill large holes (see picture). As stated earlier, these holes were thought to have been used to hold the original bell frame, which would have crossed in the centre and supported a cage containing a single bell, rung from the (now absent) floor.

Various online resources, however, state that it was typical for English churches to have 2 bells, so possibly the framework held by the earlier timbers held more than one.

Figure 8 level 2

The tower now has three bells – all made in Norwich: a large bell marked 'John Brend made me 1638'; a medium sized bell marked 'John Brend made me 1636' and a small bell marked 'Anno Domini W.B. 1615'.

When I later discuss evidence for the chantry, a 1695 Faculty asking for its demolition referred to the sale of a split treble bell to help defray the cost. This implies that one of the current bells came to replace it from elsewhere.

In 1976, the bells were removed and the existing wooden frame replaced by one of steel. It was during this work that the tower was struck by lightning and heavy stones were dislodged from the belfry parapet. Two workmen from A&K Woodgate Ltd had a narrow escape. The steel frame itself was cleaned and repainted in 2023 (picture on next page).

In 1977, the bells were rehung by Whitechapel Bell Foundry (now closed) after two were retuned. They were then hung 'dead', which means that they do not move but are struck by a clapper in a fixed position; this was necessary as the foundry felt the main structure of the tower was too fragile at that time to permit the bells to be rung as a change. Hanging dead is not great for the bells but they are only rung prior to services or weddings.



Figure 9

One piece of the wooden bell frame recovered in 1976 showed a carved date of 1651 which is when England, having deposed King Charles, was ruled by Oliver Cromwell. The carving presumably was done when the frame was installed, though it seems odd that two of the three bells predated this time by not many years and any deterioration of the frame would surely have been fixed then. It is therefore likely these bells were brought from elsewhere and possibly this is the first time the church had 3 bells. The carved date could also be graffiti by a bored workman carrying out later repairs. We will likely never know.

The chancel

The earliest churches had small chancels – usually containing just the altar. These were mostly extended in the c.14 to accommodate more clergy. Seating would also have been provided and this presumably was of wood as there is no evidence of a stone seat within the wall (sedilia) as in the aisle adjacent to the now-demolished chapel.

According to a 1982 supplement to Cautley's 4th edition entitled "Victorian Church Building And Restoration In Suffolk" by Anne Riches, our chancel was restored and re-roofed in 1881. The timber rafters likely date from this time.

St Andrew's chancel has four windows. The first is the imposing Decorated Gothic window in the east end behind the altar.



Figure 10 East chancel window

From the outside, there is clear evidence of repair in the arch, where some cement work can be seen in the upper sections (arrowed).



Figure 11 external view of east chancel

Some commentators believe that the external decorative flint flush-work beneath this window was rebuilt in Victorian times, but this is not a universal view with most believing it to be original. Whether this was at the time of the major rebuild in the c.14 or a later enhancement in the c.15/c.16 when use of knapped flint was more widespread is unknown. The flint is most likely of local origin as East Anglia is a major source of the material.

The second window is at the east end of the south wall. It must have suffered damage at some point since the tracery is considered Victorian in style. As the chancel was restored in 1881 presumably this repair was done at that time.



Figure 12: Eastern most window of chancel

The third is the other window in the south wall and this was inserted when the chapel was demolished in the late c.17. The external wall still shows a brick-infill arch-like area around the window. Whether this was really an entryway is discussed later.



Figure 13: 3rd window of chancel



Figure 14 blocked north chancel window

The final window (pictured left) is on the north side. Cauntley asserts in 1937 that this window was originally a very fine c.14 window in the Decorated style, with vertical mullions and was bricked up because the tracery had failed. This puts paid to a local belief that the window had been blown out in WW2; furthermore, this belief was further debunked by the author who spoke to someone who had mapped all WW2 bombs in the area (!), and the nearest bomb was a doodlebug landing a few miles away.

Although the brick filling was later rendered (1950s?), after rainfall it is still possible to discern the mullions and brick headers beneath the render.

But it gets more interesting...

Below is a photograph from when the nave roof was replaced in 1976. The blocked window on the chancel can be clearly seen. When that area is expanded (second picture) the window line seems to go all the way down to the ground. The Corpus of Romanesque Architecture's online entry for the church claimed this showed there was to access a north chapel but there is no apparent evidence for this, especially when you look at the internal structure (next page).



Figure 15 re-roofing of nave in 1974

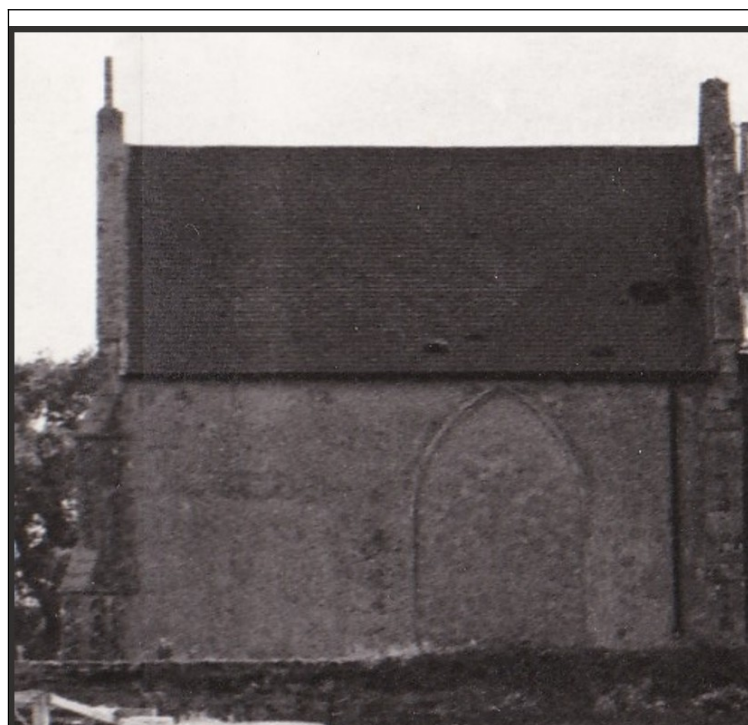


Figure 16 close up of filled window from previous figure

Below is the other side of the blocked up chancel window. There is a clear sill in place with reveals and mouldings which properly terminate on it. These match those for the east window (see arrows).

Therefore, the 1976 photograph represents a mystery as there was no access here.



Figure 17 showing the chancel window mouldings

Another window?

During some restoration work behind the altar in 2015, evidence of a curved arch was noted in the brickwork. The arrow in the photograph (scan of a rather poor printed photograph) shows the top of what looks like an arch.



Figure 18 arch?

Several theories abounded when this was discovered: a hidden doorway or a window to allow lepers to receive Holy Communion. However, it is most likely evidence of an aumbry which is a lockable cupboard used to store vessels with the bread and oil used in the service.

The height of the arch is low (1m above the top step) but the three steps at the altar would not have been present in Medieval times so it would have been at waist height. The only problem with this proposal is that is not the usual position for an aumbry which was on the south wall. However, Barnby church has a niche behind the altar which also may have served such a purpose, although its shape (a very lopsided arch) is a mystery.

The chancel was originally reserved for the burial of priests but during the Middle Ages, important lay people were interred there (more on these later).

A bit more on the chancel

An interesting titbit from Sucklings 1846 book "The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk, Volume 1" P276:

The remains of strong foundation-walls lead us to infer that the old Norman chancel extended further eastward than the present elegant erection

This observation was also mirrored in a letter dated 1934 to the rector concerning foundations beyond the east end which were laid at a different orientation to those now in place; the implication is that there was something in stone visible beyond the east end. There is nothing visible now. However, the author dug a gravel gutter along the east end as part of controlling vegetation and went probably a little deeper than necessary on the north corner near the diagonal buttress. About a foot down there were some laid bricks of recent style but nothing monumental.

The rood

After the 4th Lateran Council of 1215 (which agreed transubstantiation of the host), clergy were required to take action to prevent irreverent access or abuse of the holy objects held in the chancel and so a barrier was erected between the chancel and the nave. This could be a curtain or a screen.

In The Pocket Histories of Suffolk Parishes published in the Suffolk Chronicle & Mercury (which existed between 1914 and 1934) there is the following entry for our church:

'Much woodwork of various periods decorates the interior of this spacious house of worship and amongst this must be mentioned the old rood beam across the chancel arch, in which can be seen the nails which originally supported the figure'.

A rood is a large crucifix placed over the entrance to the chancel and often placed on a beam spanning the chancel arch (the rood beam). The beam referenced is assumed to be that depicted below, but it seems very high and may have been raised when the nave roof structure was changed in 1881, the 1920s or 1976. We will never know as I could find no records.



Figure 19 rood beam?

One commentator records that “remains of the rood screen are probably incorporated in the modern tower screen”. It is more likely that this was the simple wooden screen from a later time as the wood is not c.15. Part of this screen was moved to separate the tower from the nave in 1976 when the nave roof was replaced as there are pictures of it in situ in 1950 (see arrows on the next picture).



Figure 20 before 1951 showing the screen (arrowed)

If there had been some residual evidence for supports for a rood beam on the stone capitals of the arch, they were probably covered over in lime wash in 2006 when the church was decorated for the rather expensive sum of £10k.

Memorials

There are several memorials in the chancel. These are all described in a file held at the back of the nave on the c.15 chest. Three are of particular note, two of which are described in Annex 3. The remaining memorial is centrally placed in front of the altar and half overlaid by cement altar steps which, given the floor has Victorian encaustic tiles, were put there when the chancel was restored in 1881. The inscription reads:

Here lyeth the body of
SUSAN the wife of JOHN
VERDON gent* who departed
this life the 22nd
Of July 1673

There is no online information concerning this lady, but she was clearly very important.

*gent is the lowest form of minor gentry and follows Knight, Esquire and Armiger. Essentially it means yeoman (landowner).

Nave

The nave was where the congregation initially stood, and from the c.15 increasingly sat on benches (pews). In the early days the nave also functioned as a village hall so the chancel and nave would have been separated by a screen to restrict access to the altar space during those times when secular activities occurred.

Re-roofing the nave in the early c.17

The original roof would have been thatched and pitched at a high angle of 50 degrees or more. This was replaced in the late c.17 by tile, as evidenced by two entries in the Diocese of Norwich Faculty book for 1693 and 1695 which after interpretation and translation from c.17 English by Felicity Hillier (a local resident) can be summarised as:

1693 – petition to raise money to replace the nave roof. This refers to the repair of the church and churchyard walls, being financed partly by a rate levied on the parishioners and the sale of some lead and a cracked or split tenor bell.

1695 – additional petition to shorten the south aisle by 13 feet and to sell the lead from the roof of that section

The latter petition was presumably raised once the work to replace the thatch had started and the builders had discovered a problem with the chantry/chapel which was stated to be “much decayed”. The deterioration would have happened in the 150 years following King Edward VI's closure of such chapels.

As tiles require a lower pitch than thatch, the nave walls were raised at this time.

Raising the nave ceiling in the 1920s and 1970s

The ceiling of the nave was raised from the level of the tie-beams to further up the roof slope in 1926-7 and a plaster & lath ceiling installed.

That ceiling later failed and was later removed in 1974 when the tiles and some rotten timbers were also replaced, leaving the rafters and purlins exposed to look similar to those in the chancel. The whole roof was laid bare at that time (figures 15 and 16 on page 22). At that time, gravestones on the south side near the entrance were moved and realigned as you see them today. What you see on the memorials does NOT lie underneath (which is a shame). I believe this was done to facilitate mowing (by scythe).

Electricity arrived in 1955 courtesy of a generous warden (William Balls) which allowed the removal of the paraffin lanterns visible in figure 20 on page 26. Also visible in that picture are box pews which were replaced in 1976 with some recovered from the church of St John the Baptist, Lowestoft; St John demolished in 1978 following flood damage in the 1950s.

The hanging candelabras you see today were commissioned from a blacksmith in Lound and hung in 1975 and paid for by a very active member of the church at that time (Odyll Abbott) who had campaigned to keep the church open (and won!). The candelabras are used every

year at our Christmas carol service.

Nave Floor

Originally this would have been of beaten clay, lime-washed with possibly rushes laid. At some point, the floor was dug out and set with hand-made floor bricks, some of which remain on a 1m wide strip of floor adjacent to the west wall of the aisle, by the main door. This was probably where some item of furniture such as a chest had been sited, possibly to store items under lock and key. The presence of this chest preserved these old bricks when Gault bricks (made with white clay from Cambridgeshire) were laid in the rest of the nave.

There are only two recorded instances when the roof of the nave was repaired: in the 1920s and the 1970s. Until further information is forthcoming or the Faculty authorising the work is found, the assumption is that the mortared Gaults were laid in the 1920s as the church would have been closed for the roof repair, and so there was an opportunity to do other extensive work.

More recently in the 1970s, when the central box pews were removed, the replacements were set on two raised platforms of Gault bricks set loosely on sand (I know this as I removed one to find out). These would have been recycled from elsewhere.

At the east end of the aisle in front of the decaying Victorian organ, square pamments (handmade clay floor tiles) have been used instead of Gault bricks. There is also an odd line of half-bricks in front of the first bench (arrowed below) and it is not clear why. It cannot be for a parclose (screen restricting access to the chapel) because the sedilia (niche in south wall for a seat) would have been left outside the screened area. It also cannot have been for the Victorian organ as that arrived here in 1951. The best suggestion is that the pamments were laid from the east wall and also against the existing Gaults on the west. Where they met, was



Figure 21 eastern floor of aisle

a gap and rather than break a pamment, the builders decided to break bricks. If you have an alternative suggestion, please email!

Tomb arch

The Norman style chevron moulded arch in the north nave wall shown below is described by Historic England as likely a memorial to the founder of the church, identified as Balderic de Bosco (born c.1140) or his daughter Hilderberga. This would imply that the church was founded or re-founded in the c.12.



Figure 22 so-called tomb arch

Some sources state that the stones could have come from the original tower arch as the arch measurements appear to fit. Alternately it could have been the original chancel arch before the rebuild as these arches would have been significantly smaller.

There is, however, a problem with such an early date for this arch. Two windows in the north nave were inserted during the rebuilding in the early c.14, one of which replaced the north door and the other sited where the arch is now situated.



Figure 23 exterior view of where tomb arch lies

Examination of these windows reveals that they were later replaced by two-light Perpendicular windows, likely in the c.15

The arrows show the depth of the c.14 windows. However, measurements reveal that the top of the "tomb" arch lies above the earlier sill level, so this arch cannot have been there when the c.14 windows were put in.

Alternatively, the Victorians may have decided to fake the tomb (a conceit).

Nave wall painting

On the wall facing the main entrance, there is a much-degraded wall painting discovered in the late 1890s. Below is an extract from a church description written in 1988 by the curate at that time (Meg Guillebaud) which quotes Arthur Mee's description of 1942.

On the North wall there was a mural depicting St Christopher carrying the infant Christ over a river. According to Arthur Mee this had the surprising detail of a 'shell at the feet of the saint from which peeps a jovial monk' and there were 'sea shells as well as fish in this river'. The mural was covered in the 17th century by the text of the Lord's Prayer and Creed. This has since been removed but the cost of restoring the mural is prohibitive and it is preserved under whitewash.

It is likely that the covering mentioned by Mee comprised wooden boards which hid the mural. When these were removed, the mural was discovered. The whitewash applied to preserve it would have been very dilute to stabilise the paint but allowing the detail to remain visible.

A visiting restorer told me that the original painting would have dated from the c.15 and that top layers of paint were likely removed along with the limewash protection to reveal what we see today. By holding a torch vertically underneath, the scrape marks can be clearly seen.

Members of the church congregation in the 1980s remember being able to discern some detail (but not to the level described by Mee), but the use of paraffin and later Calor gas heating damaged the paintwork through condensation, resulting in what you can now see, which is not a lot.



The painting in all its ghastliness

Figure 24 St. Christopher in poor state

The restorer gave little hope for its restoration, and a tongue-in-cheek appeal to the Diocese by the author to permit me to restore the nave wall to its Puritan glory by applying a deep coat of opaque lime wash was gently refused.

Pulpit

The pulpit came from a round-towered church at Morton-on-the-Hill in 1968 and was purchased as a memorial to William Balls who had been a churchwarden at St Andrew's for 40 years. Several visitors have suggested it is in the wrong place but it has been there for over 80 years so here it stays!

Font

Although Mortlock recorded that the High Gothic font was the gift of Dame Elizabeth de Hemgrave in 1380, a translation of the inscription has revealed that it was actually the joint gift of Sir Thomas Hemgrave and his wife Elizabeth and no date is visible. It is a mystery where Mortlock got this date although it seems a sensible one. Elizabeth died in 1402 and was buried in the Augustinian Priory at Thetford. Sir Thomas died in 1419 (the last of the Hemgrave line); it was thought that he was originally buried in the Choir of Norwich Cathedral, but his name is absent from the list of burials but there is an online reference to his being interred in the Chapel of St. Mary in the Field in Norwich which was demolished in the c.16. He and his wife Elizabeth are known to have paid for repairs to churches in both Mutford and Hengrave, near Bury St Edmunds.

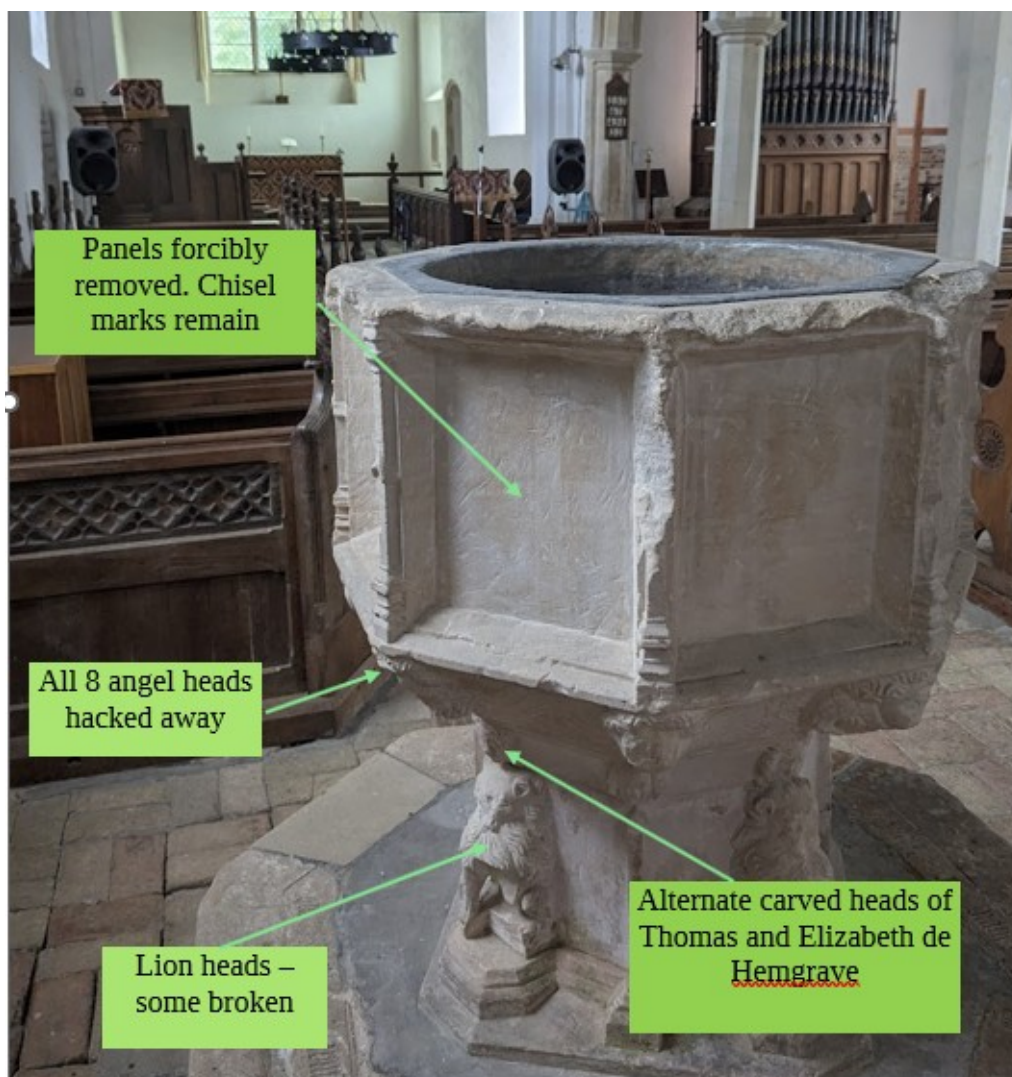


Figure 25 Font of 1380

On the plinth of the font is a Latin inscription in black-letter Gothic script:

*Orate manr Thom de Hemgrave militis [&] Elizabeth uxoris /blank/
qui ista fonte id fecit*

A translation by David Butcher is:

"Pray for Lord of the Manor Thomas Hemgrave knight and Elizabeth his wife /blank/
who made this same font."

/blank/ is where part of the pedestal had been damaged and repaired using cement. The text in this area is therefore missing. A comparison with inscriptions of similar style and date in other churches reveals it would not have been a date. Sir Thomas was in his twenties when he acceded to the Lordship of the Manor in 1379 and it is possible that he and his wife decided to mark their new role with this gift; thus Mortlock's 1380 is a reasonable bet. This would make the font one of the earliest octagonal fonts as these are usually dated to the c.15.

The octagonal shaft supports a lead-lined basin supported by heads of angels, all of which have been hacked away. The side panels on the octagonal pedestal have also been forcibly removed, possibly during the Civil War or the visit of William Dowsing in 1653 who recorded in his diary that "we brake down 9 superstitious pictures and removed 9 superstitious inscriptions", so 8 of these could have been the panels or the 8 angel heads. The lion heads beneath them were clearly not viewed as superstitious and most remain, damaged over time.



Figure 26 mason's mark

It is possible to see masons' marks in the basin recesses where the decorative panels were placed. These panels likely displayed the arms of Thomas and possibly also those of his wife's family (Herling or Tuddenham as her mother married twice and it is not apparent when Elizabeth was born).

As well as these marks, chisel marks can be seen when the panels were forcibly removed.

Finally (for the font) it is not clear why it is on the north side of the church and not near the south door which is the usual position as a large part of the baptism ceremony occurred at the door (which is why the porch was likely built, to shelter the people gathering there).

Above the lions at the base of the pedestal are carved heads which a visiting historian informed me are likely to be 'patrons of the font'. These would be images of people who paid for and donated the font. The eight heads alternate between female and male figures and their headgear is consistent of a date of the late c.14. Below are pictures who may represent Elizabeth and Thomas de Hemgrave.



Figure 28 Lady Elizabeth



Figure 27 Sir Thomas

Holy Water was kept in the font at all times rather than being provided fresh each time. This was to allow appropriately blessed water to be on hand if there was an urgent need to baptise a newborn infant close to death, as child mortality was more prevalent then and un-baptised infants could not be buried in the churchyard. There is evidence on the top of the font for where a lock had been fixed to secure a cover because during Medieval times Holy Water was sometimes sought after for superstitious reasons – hence the need for a cover and lock. There is a hole at the bottom of the bowl which discharges directly into a drain pit under the floor.

When this font was first installed, there was no seating in the church, and the various processions would flow easily past it. Nowadays it is crowded by an oversupply of electric organs.

The Aisle

The aisle was constructed in the major rebuild of the c.14. The two south facing windows have Y-tracery which Mortlock dates to around c.13 and believes these may have been from the earlier south nave wall, demolished in the expansion. Others believe the windows are much later, reused from elsewhere.

Originally the roof of the aisle would have been covered with lead and low pitched, whereas the nave and chancel would be thatched (later tile). St. Andrew's has had lead stolen from the aisle twice in the past 15 years and now has a stainless-steel roof; unfortunately, this was not designed to allow ventilation of the timbers and so condensation forms, which is why much of the wood is now stained white in places.

The roof timbers of the aisle are interesting as one of the wooden supports drops over the window opening (arrowed below), not something which would have been designed.



Figure 29 South Aisle roof structure

It has been proposed that the timbers were reused from another building. This probably happened around 1696 when the chapel was demolished, and extensive repairs made at that time.

The Faculty for this work stated that the existing lead and a cracked treble bell could be sold to fund the costs of "a good coat of tile". It is assumed that the lead in question was from the chapel and the tile is for the nave to replace thatch. There is evidence that the nave roof pitch was reduced from above 50 degrees to allow this (heightened eaves).

The south aisle itself would have retained a lead roof due to its low pitch.

The niches in the wall at the east end of the aisle (piscina and dropped window-sill sedilia) are discussed in the next section.

The aisle west window is in Decorated style (early c.14). The tracery of the rose has been filled in - most probably in the early c.19 as we have an engraving of 1846 showing it in this state. This was done due to the tracery failing (as happened to the north chancel window). It is not in a great state and is slowly rising up the list of maintenance needs.

The Organ

The now decaying organ is a two manual instrument purchased in 1951 from St. Mark's church in Oulton Broad. Prior to that it had been housed in a side chapel in Norwich cathedral and pressed into service when the main cathedral organ caught fire during Evensong in 1937.

When the main organ was repaired, it went to St. Mark's in Oulton Broad, who later sold it to us. It was modified in the 1960s with an electric pump and was used for many years before failing and now represents an eyesore blocking light from the south aisle window. Removal of these things however needs a Faculty which I am told requires that the organ be sent to a good home. Sadly, a scrap dealer would not qualify.

Royal Coat Of Arms

All churches in England were obliged to display the Royal Arms once King Henry VIII appointed himself Head of the English Church in place of the Pope in 1534.

The arms above the south door of displays the royal initials WR. As the frame is bordered in black, it has been proposed that the arms represent King William IV and that the frame was blackened to commemorate his death in 1837.



Figure 30 Royal Coat of Arms

However, the arms are that of the Stuart dynasty, not Hanoverian. Discussions with the Diocese gave two options: the cipher was overpainted to save money when the monarch changed, or the wardens found a cost-effective local artist who only had the Stuart arms to work with. Close examination of the paint revealed no overpainting, so it looks like the second option, especially as the writing quality of the motto is poor.

Cautley in his 1934 publication "Royals Arms and Commandments in our churches" stated that the painting displays a date of 1831, but for a long time I could find no trace of this date. Fortunately, our treasurer who is an accountant (and so has a keen eye for figures), spotted the date at the foot of the painting.

(June 26) The painting has been temporarily removed for assessment by a restorer.

Chapel

A small chapel originally existed at the east end of the south aisle and is now only represented by a place for a priest to wash the holy vessels (piscina) and a place for him to sit which is a niche in the south wall (sedilia) as indicated on the diagram below.

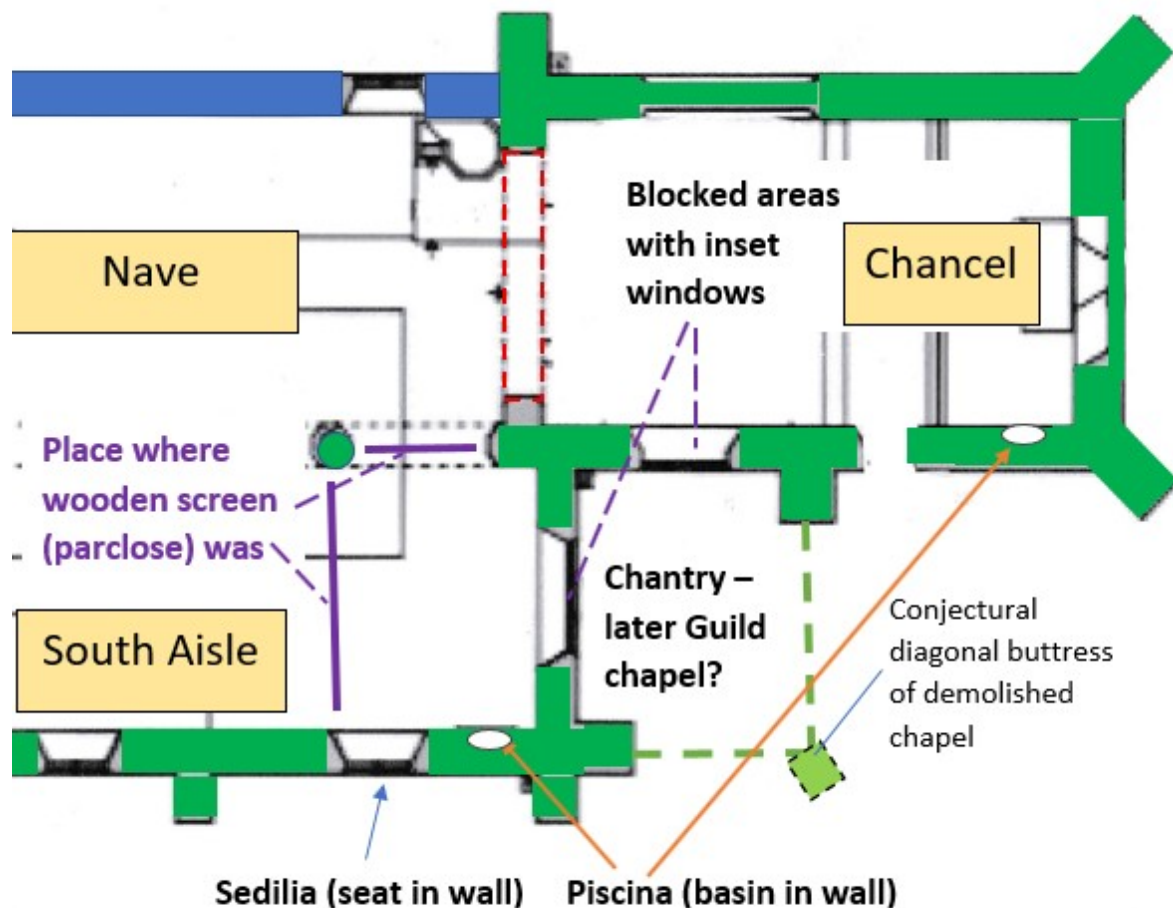


Figure 31 east end of church showing elements of the lost chapel

Elements of the chapel are dealt with in the following pages.

Piscina and Sedilia

The ornate c.14 piscina was accompanied by a sedilia, where the chantry priest would have sat.

The blue arrow indicates where the stone support had been broken off. And it would originally have stretched across the niche beneath the window. It may have had a wooden seat which was rather forcibly removed at some point given the damaged stonework.

Why the wall changes thickness where the green arrow is pointing is a mystery to me.

For interest, seating was only provided for the lay congregation in the c.14 and c.15; before that they stood and could walk about, though most books on Medieval churches indicate that ladies of note and the infirm would have seats.



Figure 32 Piscina and sedilia

The chapel likely began life as a privately-endowed chantry, as the piscina is far more ornate than that in the chancel. A chantry was usually dedicated to the Lady of the Lights (Mary) and used for masses for members of the family (living and dead) who founded it.

A past booklet on this church and comments on the Historic England listing site state that a guild for St. John the Baptist existed in Mutford prior to the Reformation and presumably this was sited in this church. These comments are likely sourced from Suckling's 1846 book mentioned earlier but he gives no provenance. If true, this usage would have been after the chapel ceased to be used as a chantry in the c.15 when the de Hemgraves died out and would have held masses for guild members after their death to reduce their time in purgatory. There were over 500 such guilds in Suffolk between 1300 and 1500 and were formed by wealthy residents. Chapels and chantries were closed in 1547 during the reign of King Edward VI.

There is some evidence (masonry infill) in the aisle columns of a wooden screen (parclose) in front of the chapel which would restrict access to it and enclose the sedilia and the piscina (purple lines in figure 31 on page 37).

c.17 Demolition & Making Good

The chapel was demolished in the late c.17 evidenced by a Faculty of 1695 asking permission to shorten the south aisle by 'around 13 feet'. The east of the aisle (i.e. the chapel) was stated to be "much decayed" and there is a suspicion that the east wall had started to fall away due to poor foundations or ground disturbance (internal grave?). Externally, you can see the unsympathetic brickwork and windows inserted after the chapel was demolished.



1 This buttress was placed where the east chapel wall had originally joined the chancel. It is made of bricks from a different kiln to those used in numbers 2-5, likely due to the need to ensure the chancel south wall was not jeopardised during the rebuild, so this buttress was built as a priority and the other bricks (also found in the north graveyard wall) came later.

2 Although it looks like an arch existed between the chapel and the chancel, this is not borne out by close examination. The arch shape is bounded by irregular reused stone – not what you would expect if there had been a masonry arch there. The stone may have been reused from a demolished buttress. Why this brickwork was shaped this way is unclear.

3 This window is likely a later replacement for one which failed long ago. An engraving from the mid c.19 shows it was much smaller (assuming the artist faithfully reproduced it).

4 This buttress serves no real structural purpose and was likely placed there to tidy up the end of the south aisle wall after the chapel had been demolished.

5 As with {3} some lower window sections have been replaced and, in this case, the sill raised, as evidenced by two courses of fairly modern brick under the replacement sill.

Lighting and Heating

Below is an undated photograph (likely 1960s) showing two pipes (arrowed) above the eastern south aisle and south chancel. These would have been connected to stoves which provided heating. Later, Calor gas was introduced and this likely caused the wall painting to significantly deteriorate. Electrical heating has been used since 2005.

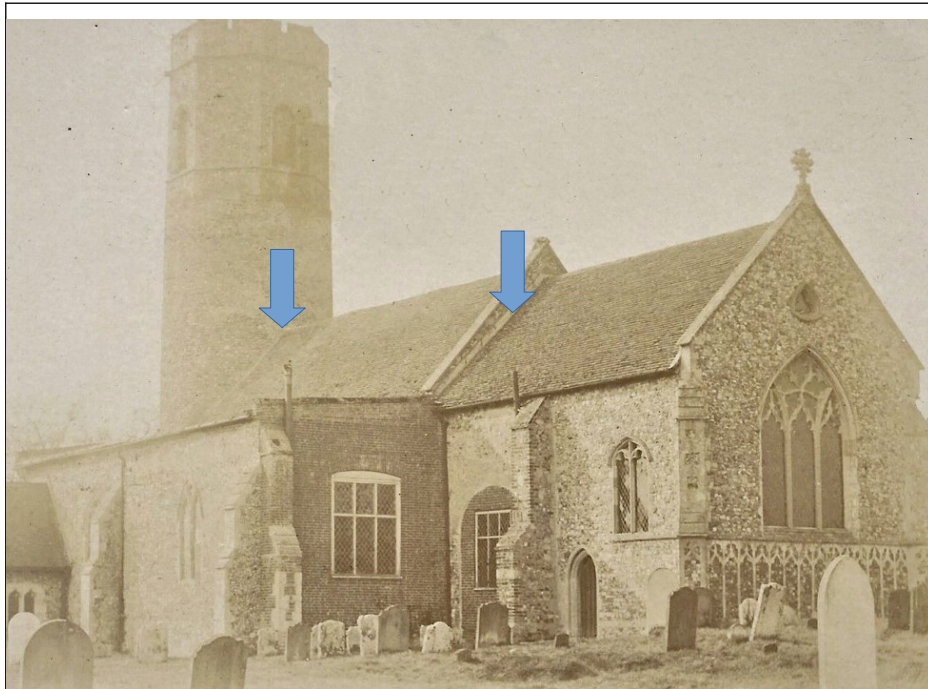


Figure 33 1950s heating pipes

Lighting would have been by candles until oil lamps were hung from the tie beams in the nave and chancel. These were in use in the 1950s and replaced by electric lights in 1955. Four chandeliers were later hung from ties in the mid-1970s when the roof was overhauled and are used in the annual carol service. Together they hold 96 candles.

Benches/Pews

The pews on the south side of the nave and in the south aisle originally came from St. Peter's church in Lowestoft when it was demolished in the 1970s, following a period of redundancy. The centre pews originated in St. John's church in Lowestoft, demolished in 1977 following extensive flood damage in the early 1950s and replaced our existing c.17 box pews. This was at the same time as the nave roof was replaced as the whole space had to be cleared for scaffolding. Removing the box pews was apparently very well received at the time and one day I will find someone who liked them.

The pews against the north wall of the nave are much older with carvings on the bench-ends (known as poppy-heads due to their similarity to carvings on a ship's poop). Some restoration can be seen, but some upper sections have been identified as c.15. It is unlikely these pews were replaced in the 1970s as the plinth is of much higher quality and has ventilation holes to permit rising moisture from an earth/clay floor to escape. There are no bricks underneath.

Porches

South porch

Porches were where various legal activities were held including marriages, baptism and re-admission of women after giving birth. Thus some shelter was needed from the elements, and this was likely the main reason for the south porch.

The earlier porch had a niche for a bowl to hold Holy Water (stoup) where worshippers could wash their hands on entry. This was replaced in 1891 and the east wall of the replacement structure partly obscures this. There seems to be no obvious reason for doing this.

Apparently, Victorians liked scenic ruins which is why a new porch was built whilst the Galilee was left covered in ivy. Read on...

Galilee (porch)

The Galilee porch, or technically just Galilee, against the west end of the tower is the only one in the country now attached to a round tower. Their purpose is not really understood but it is said that this was where penitents waited prior to being re-admitted into the church. If so, it makes you wonder about its large size; possibly this meant that Mutford had a lot of regular and wealthy penitents who decided not to get wet whilst waiting to be readmitted. More opinions can be found in the comments section of the listed entry on the Historic England site.

This is an extract from a book published in 1809 by George Millers concerning Ely cathedral

"This is called a Galilee, and is almost a singular instance of such an erection in this county. Here the penitents used to sit, while they waited their readmission into the church; and this may account for the name, by which such porticos were anciently called, the Galilee. As Galilee, bordering on the Gentiles, was the most remote part of the Holy Land from the holy city Jerusalem, so was this part of the building, most distant from the sanctuary, occupied by those unhappy persons, who, during their exclusion from the mysteries, were reputed scarcely, if at all, better than heathens."



GALILEE PORCH, PROBABLY THE ONLY ONE ATTACHED TO A ROUND TOWER.

It was originally thatched, but this photo (to the left), published in the Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury in 1925, shows the Galilee in ruin and covered in ivy. The roof was restored in 1934 when the eaves were raised to allow lead to be used as this needed a shallower pitch than that used for thatch otherwise it would creep. A receipt for the sale of this lead in 1953 is in the church records and the money was retained by the Diocese for maintenance of the church. The roof was then covered in felt.

The doorway into the tower was either inserted in the c.14 rebuild or an existing Norman door altered and the Early English Gothic arch added (left hand picture). When the porch was added to create a flat surface for the east end of the porch, a flint & mortar infill was set against the tower (known as a fillet) and this is shown arrowed in right hand picture.



Figure 35 West door into tower



Figure 34 fillet

The porch has two “windows” but a visiting inspector from English Heritage who had once been a cathedral glazier did not believe that the two apertures had ever been glazed, despite the presence of glazing grooves. The window components were therefore likely brought in from somewhere else and not made on site. The two openings are offset by about one foot to prevent wind from blowing straight through, which supports this view.

At the time of writing, following a consultation, Diocese guidance has proposed aterne-coated stainless-steel roof to replace the decaying felt. Although the porch may then resemble a 1960s scout hut, the metal apparently dulls quite quickly resembling lead in colour which hopefully will not get stolen in error. We are currently in the process of raising money for this expensive repair (circa £15k) and any contributions would be very welcome.

Mass Dial(s)

There is an inscribed dial on the south-west corner of the Galilee. Although the central spike (gnomen) is no longer there, there is a hole and the markings for the daylight hours can be clearly seen beneath the hole. (Left hand photo below).

Technically this is a sundial (as the sun shows the time) but is more usually referred to as either a scratch dial (reflecting the markings) or a mass dial (indicating when mass should be celebrated). They were mandated for churches in around the year 1000 by Pope Sylvester II.

A 1937 list of mass dials in Suffolk (Rev. HA Harris) states that St Andrew's had two such dials on the Galilee porch. There is a suspiciously round hold on the right-hand jamb of the south Galilee window (right hand photo) which could have been for a gnomon, indicating the possible presence of this second dial but there are no definitive markings.



Graveyard & Cemetery

There are just under 350 visible memorials in the graveyard and cemetery. There are also unmarked graves whose presence can be determined by gaps between existing memorials. This can be especially seen in the adjacent cemetery.

However, over the centuries, the number of burials in a rural Medieval churchyard would have been much higher. Prior to the late c.19 when cremation became more usual, graveyards had to be used. The current population of Mutford at around 400 is only slightly more than that recorded in 1086. Assuming this remained fairly constant (except during times of plague), it is estimated that there have been between 8,000 and 9,000 burials here, assuming 10 per year. It is not known where plague victims would have been buried.

Over the centuries, due to the reuse of space (termed overburial), the level of the graveyard rose, and the church floor is lower than the churchyard by several inches.

Our earliest known grave marker at St Andrew's is dated 1719 wrong and is the nearest stone to the tower on the south side. She was Elizabeth Barber and a child of just 3 weeks.

The church was granted title possessory to the adjacent cemetery in 1922 and the first graves were interred there in 1923. The cemetery is no longer used due to the height of the water table, and new burials ceased in the mid-1970s. Interments into existing graves are still carried out so the cemetery is not technically closed (to do so requires legal permission).

A Grade II listed cenotaph is present in the cemetery and remembers the deaths of 11 servicemen in WW1 and 3 in WW2. From the 1911 census, the population of Mutford was also around 400. An analysis of the census by local resident Alec Hillier revealed that the eleven deaths in WW1 represented around 10% of eligible men (volunteers or conscripts) and their loss would have significantly impacted the village.

The churchyard is registered with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust as a habitat for wildflowers, so mowing is restricted to the paths leading to recent graves apart from an annual clearance. Individual graves remain the responsibility of the family responsible for the burial; some are regularly visited and maintained; others far less so. The cemetery is currently maintained independently and not by the church.

A 1977 book "Change & Decay. The future of our churches" contains a lovely paragraph by Pamela Burgess:

It became fashionable [in the 1950s and 60s] to have a tidy well-kept churchyard which could be entered into 'best kept village' competitions. Bulldozers tore up and shattered memorials, the ground was levelled and grassed and churchyards degenerated into suburban lawns"

May Mutford long continue to be protected from such degeneration, and we retain our rural look

Cross Socket Stone

Near the south porch is a large stone which sits on a 50mm octagonal stone plinth 50mm below the ground. The plinth is broken in two pieces.

The stone has a shallow square socket (arrowed) whose depth is 100mm in the centre and 60mm at the edges, which means it held something chamfered. One view is that it was for temporary use – a waypoint for processions or for pilgrimages where a wooden cross was carried there, erected and a service held before the pilgrimage moved on.

An on-line search reveals there are many churches with such stones near their south entrances and some of these still have permanent stone crosses. These crosses would be used in processions such as on Palm Sunday or at Rogationtide (which would feature a procession round the parish boundary). If this was a permanent cross, to keep the shaft of the cross in place would likely require the bottom section to be wider than the hole with a tenon to fit into the hole, likely mortised in lead.



Figure 36 cross socket stone

My suspicion is that this stone was imported from elsewhere as there is no mention of it in any of the records I have.

Rectors

Although rectors would have been inducted from the original foundation, the first recorded rector I have found is for 1327 which is when I believe the major c.14 rebuild of the church was completed or well under way. Since then, there have been over 60.

After 1353 when the advowson (see Annex 1) was purchased by what later became a college of Cambridge University, the appointed priests were technically vicars (deputies) as the college assumed the role of lay rector and appointed a priest acceptable to the bishop. Many of these priests were masters of the college, presumably Fellows who were retiring since their tenure as rector was generally short implying they died within a few years of taking up office.

A list of all known rectors is present in the nave. Two were ejected (removed from office) - the first when Cromwell took over the country as Protector, and the second when Charles II returned as king and the Puritan clergy were persecuted in their turn.

Current Position

Congregation

At the time of writing (2026) the church remains active with two services a month with a congregation of less than 15.

One entry in the Service Record in the 1920s was interesting: there were 5 communicants but over 60 in the congregation. I was told that if a farmer went to church, so did his workforce.

Maintenance

In addition to Gonville & Caius college who have always honoured their obligation to assist with repairs to the chancel, several charities and trusts have helped us maintain the building in recent years. Without their help, the church would be in a far worse condition, and we are extremely grateful for their support:

- Norfolk Churches Trust
- Round Tower Church Society
- Suffolk Historic Churches Trust
- Benefact Trust

Our current project is to re-roof the Galilee, after which we can apply for the church to be removed from the Heritage At Risk register. The church was placed on the register in 2021 by Historic England due to the state of the tower pointing, the poor state of the chancel gutters and the decaying Galilee roof. Since then, the first two have been largely dealt with, though flintwork on the tower parapet will need attention at some time.

We hope, funds permitting, to re-roof the Galilee before the end of 2027.

Changes to this paper

More information will certainly come to light and necessitate change and additions. This will be due to my further reading, suggestions and corrections (with justification!).

END OF MAIN PAPER (Annexes follow)

Annex 1 – Advowson and Chancel Repair Liability

The advowson is the right to present a candidate to the bishop to undertake the role of rector at the church. With the post goes the great and small tithes from the produce of the manorial (later parish) lands. If the rector had a deputy (vicar) then they would usually receive the small tithe. In 1353 this happened:

Edward de Hemgrave, knight, to grant the advowson of the church of Mutford to the...

Chancery: Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum, Henry III to Richard III. Inquisitions taken as a result of applications to the Crown for licences to alienate land.... Edward de Hemgrave, knight, to grant the advowson of the church of Mutford to the warden and college of the scholars of the Hall of the Annunciation of St. Mary in Cambridge, for them to appropriate

Held by:	The National Archives, Kew - Chancery, the Wardrobe, Royal Household, Exchequer and various commissions
Date:	25 January 1353 - 24 January 1354
Reference:	C 143/310/12
Subjects:	Legal Religions

Note: in the above, the archivist mis-typed Edward de Hemgrave. It should be Edmund.

This text thus shows that the advowson was sold to what later became Gonville & Caius College of Cambridge University. The College then assumed the role of lay (non-ecclesiastical) rector and would supply the candidate—usually one of their own time-served Fellows, who would then become vicar of the church. The College also received the full income from the tithes of the parish.

Responsibility for the maintenance of the church lay solely with the rector until ecclesiastical statutes of the late c.13 required the parishioners to maintain the tower and nave, the rector retaining liability to maintain the chancel at his own cost.

Now known as chancel repair liability, this latter maintenance responsibility is associated with the tithe associated with the glebe land owned by the church. As this land would have been rented to lay folk, it was not exempt from tithe. The great tithe would go to the College with the priest retaining the small tithe.

In 1836, tithes in kind were replaced by a monetary “rentcharge” for the glebe land at that time (around 24 acres). A hundred years later the Tithe Act of 1936 extinguished rentcharges but the liability for chancel repair remained, and the apportionments of this liability were recorded by the Tithe Redemption Commission in a Record of Ascertainment for each parish.

This means that repairs to the chancel must be paid for by whoever would have received the rentcharge from glebe land. All glebe land and buildings still owned by parish churches were taken over by the Church Commissioners in 1978 when clergy were salaried, rather than their depending on income from church lands and their own resources.

Gonville & Caius college retain 55.5% liability, the rest being mostly devolved to the Parochial Church Council under the Endowments and Glebe Measure of 1976 (effective in 1978).

Annex 2 – Some historical context for the early church at Mutford

A paper published by Stephen Heywood in 2013 gave a convincing argument that there were no stone-built churches in Norfolk prior to the Conquest (although others disagree). As Mutford is close to the border that analysis likely applies also to Mutford. This would indicate that if a church existed prior to 1066, the church itself was of wood.

Since we believe the church is one of those recorded at Mutford in the Domesday Book of 1086, it would have been a late Anglo-Saxon wooden church.

By the end of 910, Edward the Elder (son of Alfred the Great) had conquered East Anglia from the Vikings and established English royal control of the region. This is when various sources state that the Christian Church was properly re-established following the demise of the Danelaw (when Vikings governed the area).

In 937 King Æthelstan (son of Edward the Elder) decreed that thanes (minor lords) must build a bell tower on their land to serve as watchtowers against future Viking incursions and also to give status to the Lord. These could have been in timber as that would comply with the law and is cheaper and quicker to build.

Therefore, it seems likely that a wooden church was built here in the early c.10 as Christianisation spread and a wooden tower added after this law was passed. At some point however, our flint and mortar tower was erected. Richard Morris' book (p.276) stated there was a Great Rebuilding in stone between 1050 and 1150 AD which is a likely candidate for St. Andrew's.

The lower section of St Andrew's tower exhibits some Anglo-Saxon features, and different authors have attributed these to being constructed before the Norman invasion or afterwards as builders of churches in rural locations would still be using Anglo-Saxon methods well after 1066 as that is all they knew. Anglo-Norman seems a safe bet.

In summary there could have been a wooden church (no tower) in the c.10 enhanced by a wooden bell tower later that century followed by a stone tower in the c.11, or possibly built concurrently with a stone church in the c.12.

Annex 3 – Evidence for a Chantry

Orme's book (P102) advises caution when categorising chapels as chantries. The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk (vol. I) records that Sir Thomas de Hemgrave, who died in 1419, made a bequest to the church where "he makes for the good of his soul; for the soul of Joan, his mother, who lay buried there".

The family of de Hemgrave were patrons of the church until shortly after the Black Death and likely paid for the major reconstruction in the early c.14, including building the chapel. Given the ornate piscina, and evidence for a parclose, this was likely erected to be a chantry for the family.

Sir Thomas was the son of Sir Edmund Hemgrave and his first wife Joan de Lisle who is referred to above. Sir Edmund remarried in 1373, so Joan must therefore have been buried in the church before then, which is also close to the reported date of 1380 when the font was donated by Sir Thomas and his wife, Elizabeth.

Joan's memorial slab is likely the damaged cross-slab tomb in the chancel. Following a discussion with an academic at Liverpool University who had been researching chancel tombs, this memorial originally had a brass cross and boundary inscription which could have been one of those removed by William Dowsing in 1653. However, her memorial lies off centre and to one side of a memorial stone to George Watts dated 1710, which is in prime position. Her memorial must have been moved to allow him to be sited there. Also, it is unclear whether she would have been allowed burial in the chancel in the c.14 as this place was reserved for priests.

Fortunately, some help can be provided by the Diocese of Norwich Faculty system. A Faculty of 1696 requests a 'shortening of the aisle by 13 feet'. This corresponds exactly to the footprint of the lost chapel which was demolished.

Chuntries and chapels were dissolved in 1547 during the reign of Edward VI, so this part of the church had likely not seen much use for around 150 years. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the chantry likely had been repurposed as a guild chapel during this period.

One of the names of the petitioners for the Faculty in 1696 was that of George Watts (mentioned above) whose memorial is in the central position of the chancel. Lady Joan was therefore likely buried in the chantry in the late c.14 and then transferred to the chancel when the chapel was demolished and her memorial (damaged and without brass work) also moved.

The next page shows the memorial to George Watts.

The marble memorial to George Watts (gent)



As stated earlier, the term gent is the lowest form of minor gentry and follows Knight, Esquire and Armiger. Essentially it means yeoman (land owner).

The inscription in a form of monumental Latin has been translated by a classics teacher at Framlingham College as

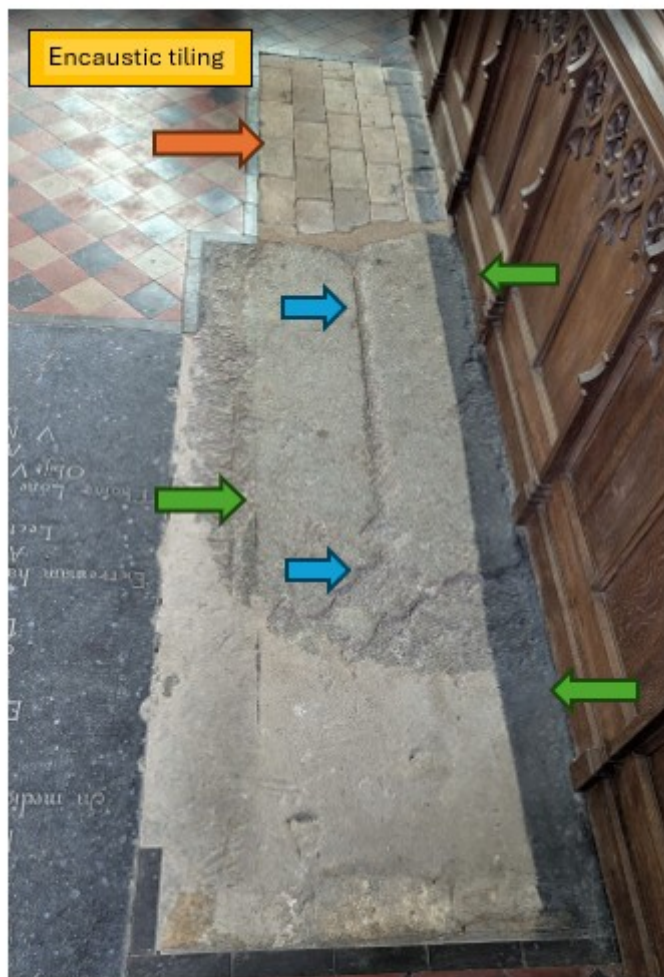
For his piety in regard to the Church of Christ
Among his people with whom he lived
Most greatly to be missed
Moreover, this same man,
This parish church
Which has a faithful guardian
Living, he took care for its restoration;
Dying he ordered it should be further beautified
From his own goods.

Clearly, George Watts was highly regarded and rewarded with a place in the chancel for his (likely financial) support for the works undertaken in 1696.

The memorial to Lady Joan de Hemgrave is described on the next page.

Below is the tomb memorial of Lady Joan which was originally had a central brass cross fleury, which is a cross adorned at the ends with flowers; it and an inscribed brass surround were likely ripped out by William Dowsing in 1653.

The blue arrows (in picture below) show the position where the brass cross (lower arrow) would have been on the end of a central bar (upper arrow). The green arrows show the original position of the brass boundary inscription, partly hidden under the wooden plinth. The stone memorial was clearly broken when moved as indicated by the cement repair at the bottom of the picture.



An interesting mystery is indicated by the orange arrow. The Victorians lay the encaustic tiles around the memorials but also enclosed an area of Gault bricks.

For what purpose? It will no doubt remain a mystery which may be in part answered when we have the nerve to lift and move the very heavy plinth.

Annex 4 – How wealthy was the Rector in the early c.14?

The rector would have income from several sources:

- glebe land (land endowed to the church) providing a direct income
- tithes (10%) of products produced in the parish:
 - great tithe (hay, corn and wood)
 - small tithe (everything else including animal products such as honey, cheese)
The small tithe was typically one quarter or third in value of the total tithe.
- income from voluntary gifts (altarage), tax on death (mortuary) and other services (such as registration for baptism)

Together these would form a benefice, which can be translated as “reward” and was known as the living. The tithe was paid annually in kind at an appropriate time for the product. It therefore paid the rector to keep a watchful eye on farming activities. In addition, there was

- personal or family resources

Mark Bailey's *Medieval Suffolk: An Economic and Social History, 1200-1500* covers the period of the mid-c.13 to c.14 as follows:

Rectors and the smaller monastic landlords occupied the same social stratum as the lesser lay landlords. The average rectorial income was around £10 per annum, and therefore directly comparable to the income of the average manorial lord. The size of the glebe (the rector's own holding) varied from parish to parish, although David Dymond estimates that most contained around 40 acres.... A holding of this size was broadly comparable to the demesne land held by the average lay lord, and it was comfortably big enough to feed the rector's own household: consequently it is likely that rectors were regular suppliers of surplus agricultural produce to the market.

Mutford's glebe land recorded at 43 acres in the Domesday Book is slightly larger than the average mentioned above and apparently this was sufficient to support a rector quite comfortably and included the ability to hire servants. The British history online entry for Mutford (applying to a time after 1066, but before 1353) gives a glebe of 46 acres spread across 3 parishes so some more land must have been acquired later.

The benefice of Mutford was valued at £10 in 1254. The holder of the office at that time is unknown as our records only begin in 1327. According to the History of England site, a skilled labourer in the fourteenth century had an annual income of between £2 (in 1300) and £4 (in 1390), though masons and master carpenters would earn more. A servant would receive £1.

In summary, to become the rector of Mutford parish was likely a Desirable Thing.

After the advowson passed to what became Gonville & Caius college it is likely the appointed priest, known as a vicar (deputy) continued to receive a portion of the tithe, possibly only the small tithe as well as income from the remaining glebe and mortuaries.

END OF PAPER