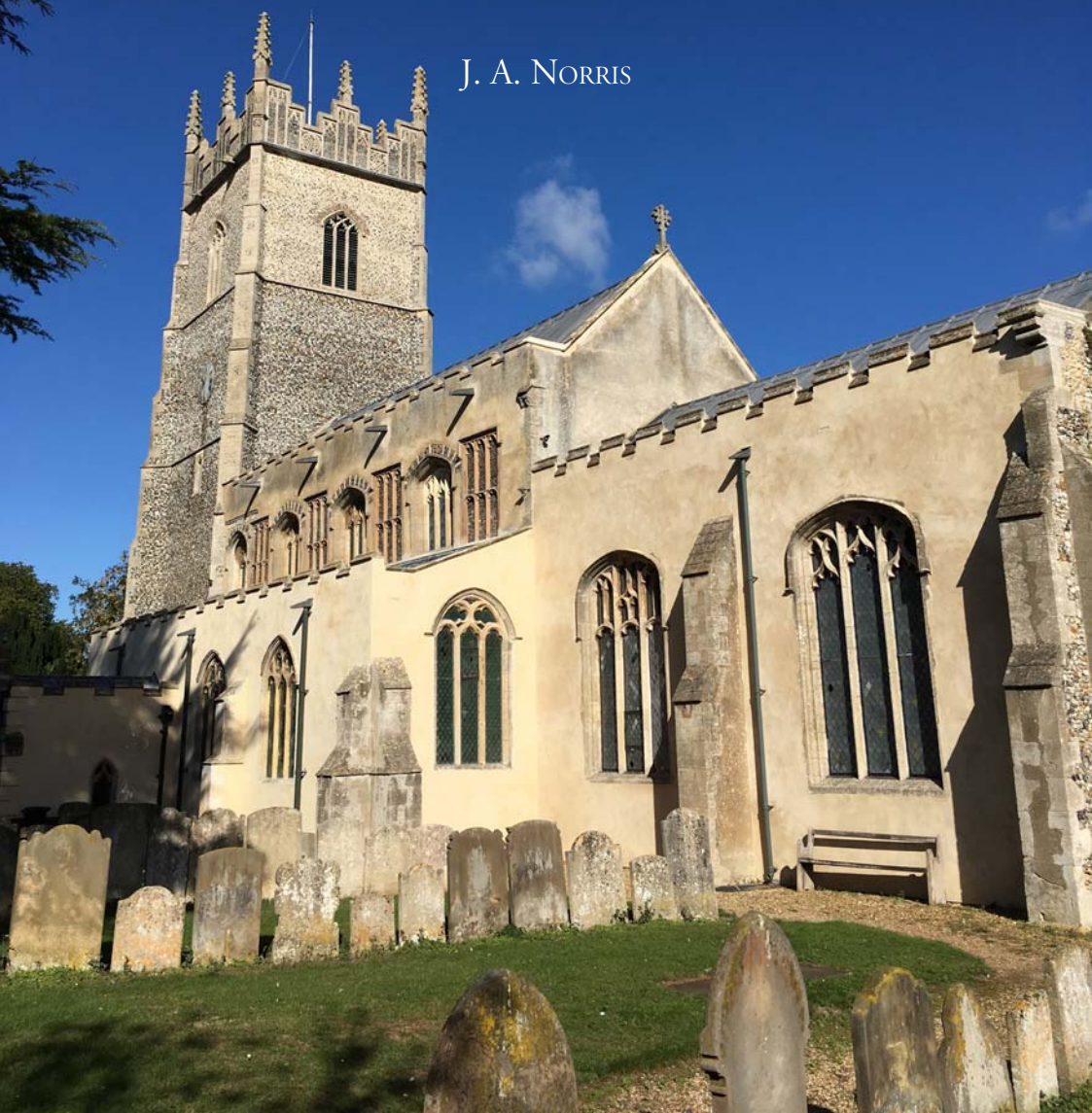


ST. ANDREW NORTHWOLD CHURCH HISTORY & GUIDE

J. A. NORRIS



ST. ANDREW NORTHWOLD

CHURCH HISTORY & GUIDE

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this history and guide has long since sold out, and from time to time the author has contemplated producing a second. The first was produced at speed in the summer of 1988, when his research was in some respects incomplete. There is more to tell now (and a correction or two to make), and it is possible to reproduce not only the Ladbrooke engraving of the church as it was in 1821 but also an 1858 engraving of the Easter Sepulchre, together with photographs of the Sepulchre today and of other church memorials. The publication of this edition in its new form has been made possible by a generous legacy from a former resident of the village, the late Mrs. Brenda Elliott.

J.A. Norris June 2003

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The author gratefully acknowledges the initiative of the organisers of the 1988 Craft and Flower Festival at St. Andrew's, who pressed the long-debated case for a new guide, and the unhesitating encouragement given by the Rector, Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council. Mrs. Mary Armstrong lent a rare copy of a previous guide by Mr. Simon Cotton and Mr. Roy Tricker from her own collection. The cover picture is the work of a former resident of Northwold, Mrs. Diana Cowell.

J.A. Norris July 1988

Second edition

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A QUICK GUIDE

Features of the



■ *Lych gate* in memory of Claude Thornton, Rector 1892-1910.



■ *Tomb of Charles Norman*, Rector 1833-1873, and his wife Caroline, just inside the churchyard on the left.



■ *South face of the clerestory*, with a 15th century inscription inviting visitors to “*pray for the soule of John Stayling*”.



■ *Perpendicular tower*, built in 1473, with eight pinnacles and flushwork patterns (decorative use of flint and other stone), diagonal stepped buttresses and a clock installed in 1807.



■ Early 14th century *porch* and 13th century *inner door*, and remains of *mediaeval painting* on the wall facing you as you enter.



■ *Painted hammer-beam roof* of the late 15th century, restored with the same colours in the 19th century.

■ *Early English arcade*, with alternate plain and foliate capitals, dating from the first half of the 13th century, though the westernmost bay was inserted when the tower was built.

■ *Memorial plaque* to Robert Burhill, Protestant theologian and controversialist, who was Rector (1622 – 41).

TO ST. ANDREW'S

church include:

■ *Latin inscription* on a tomb set in the chancel floor, commemorating John Novell (Rector 1641-61); and *memorials of the Carter family*, prominent in the public affairs of Norfolk during the 18th and 19th centuries, former occupants of the recently restored early Georgian Manor House immediately opposite the church.

■ *Font* on an 18th century baluster, placed in the chancel.

■ Reticulated stonework of *east window*, dating from Decorated period of 1290-1350.

■ *19th century stained glass* in the *east window*; attributed to Messrs. Heaton, Butler and Bayne, c. 1873, depicting Saint Paul, flanked by the four Evangelists, Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

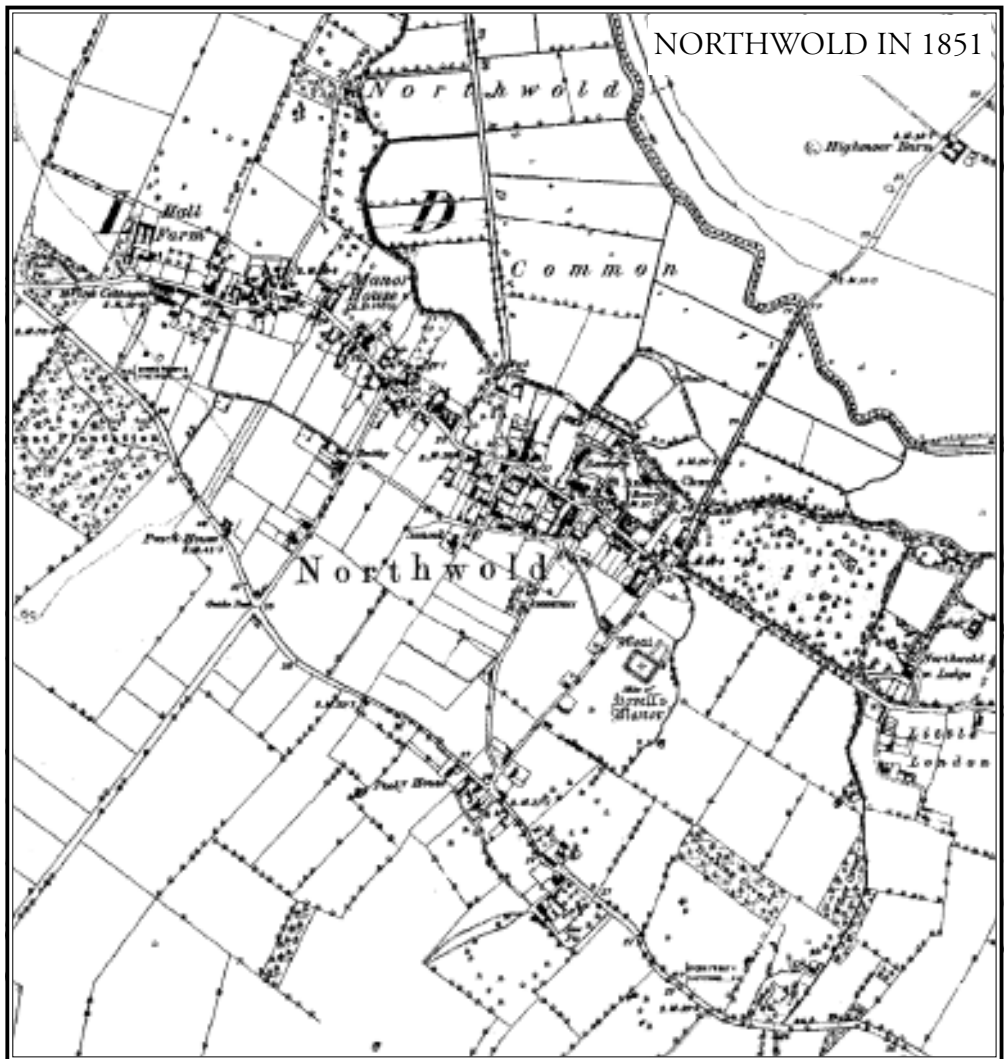
■ Late 14th or possibly 15th century rare *Easter Sepulchre*, in the north east corner of the chancel – explained on a banner just on the left as you enter the church.

■ *You will notice the strange fact that there is **no image of Christ** in any part of the church – other than the symbol of the cross.*



NORTHWOLD ENTERS WRITTEN HISTORY

For the first known mention of Northwold in historical records we have to go back more than a thousand years, into the brief golden age of Anglo-Saxon civilisation in England. In 970, when Edgar the Peaceable (crowned in 959), the great grandson of Alfred the Great, was King and Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury was his wise counsellor, a scribe wrote Northwold – spelt Northuuold – in an official document. It was in Edgar's reign that the name of the country was first written Engla-land (land of the Angles or English), and shires were divided into hundreds for administrative purposes. Ours was the Hundred of Grimshoe.



THE ELY CONNECTION

In Edgar's reign it was Bishop Ethelwold of Winchester who re-founded St. Etheldreda's monastery at Ely and gave to it the right to present an incumbent of its choice to the benefice at Northwold. Etheldreda, incidentally, is the Anglo-Saxon original of our name Audrey. In some pedantic sources she appears as Aethelthryth, but it is the same name. The Audrey in question was a real historical person, a royal princess of the East Angles, who was twice married, but died a virgin in the obliging eyes of the church. She preferred the celibacy of a nun to the married state, and it was she who founded the monastery at Ely in 673. She died in 679, and her shrine at Ely became an important centre for pilgrims. When her monks wanted stone for her coffin they went up river to Cambridge and took what they needed from the old Roman remains on Castle Hill.



St. Etheldreda

NORTHWOLD IN DOMESDAY

In the reign of William the Conqueror (1066-87) his new kingdom was thoroughly and minutely surveyed in the Domesday Book of 1086, where "*Nortwalde*" figures as part of the Hundred of Grimshoe. The king was interested in every detail, every piece of land, every man, freeman or slave, every plough-team and every other farm animal. The entry for Northwold confirms that "*St. Etheldreda had the jurisdiction and the patronage.*" This confirms beyond any doubt the church's already ancient



link with Ely Abbey. The fact that Ely had the patronage (the right to choose and appoint a Rector) in 1086 can only mean that a Saxon church was still standing. There is every reason to believe that it survived for some 140 years after the death of the Conqueror, for we know that a new church was built in or about 1229.

Left: Domesday Book

NORTHWOLD'S GREATEST SON – A BENEDICTINE MONK



uring the reigns of John (1199-1216) and Henry III (1216-72), Hugh of Northwold, the village's greatest son, was an important prelate at a time when abbots and bishops were among the most powerful men in the land. Starting as a Benedictine monk, he became the eleventh Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds in 1215, a day or two before the signing of Magna Carta, after a long tussle with King John as to who should have the right to make the appointment. The monks considered this to be such an important event that they left a full account of the controversy in their Abbey records. In their account they described him as “*vir mirae simplicitatis et mansuetudinis*” (a man of outstanding simplicity and gentleness). These qualities, combined with a virtuous determination to stick to his guns, at first commended him to the young Henry III, who saw him made Bishop of Ely and used him as an ambassador from time to time. One of his diplomatic missions was to conclude a contract of marriage between Henry and Eleanor, daughter of Raymond of Provence. Later there were occasional quarrels, marked by gentle firmness on Hugh's side and ill temper on the King's. But Henry and his son Prince Edward were among the guests when Bishop Hugh presided over the dedication of his beautiful new Presbytery at Ely Cathedral in 1253.



Hugh of Northwold's seal

Hugh had been consecrated as the eighth Bishop of Ely in 1229, but retained the dress and way of life of a monk. From the start he was a generous builder and beautifier of churches. A mediaeval chronicler remarked that Hugh “*was much commended for his house keeping and liberality unto the poore, which may well seeme strange, considering the infinite deale of money spent by him in building of his church and houses.*”

It is reasonable to conjecture that the building of the present Northwold church, the oldest parts of which date from the 1220s, and Hugh's promotion, first as Abbot of St. Edmunds in 1215 and then as Bishop of Ely in 1229 were no mere coincidence. The reign of Henry III was, after all, the period of Hugh's maximum power over the wealth of the church in East Anglia. So we may say that one of Hugh's first acts as Bishop of Ely was likely to have been to give money to build a church in the village from which he took his name. The heraldic emblem on the shield held by an angel on the hammer beam above the pulpit includes a Bishop's mitre. A contemporary described him as “*the flower of the Benedictine order, shining brilliantly as an abbot among abbots and as a bishop among bishops; profuse in his hospitality, and at table maintaining a calm cheerfulness which attracted all beholders.*” He died in 1254. His tomb can be found in his own Presbytery at Ely.

BISHOP HUGH'S EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

It is not too fanciful to imagine that Hugh took a personal interest in the building of the new St. Andrew's. This would help to explain the quality of the workmanship in what Nikolaus Pevsner call the "*beautiful arcade*." By this he means the row of piers and arches on each side of the nave. Their Early English pillars are quatrefoil in section, and stiff-leaf capitals alternate with plain ones. Here we have the present church's earliest surviving architecture. The author of the standard work on East



Early English pillar with stiff-leaf capital.

Anglian churches says that the capitals and bases of the arcades are second only in interest to those of West Walton, a building which Pevsner calls "*one of the most sumptuous Early English parish churches – not only of Norfolk.*" A more recent evaluation of Northwold's church appears in "England's Thousand Best Churches" by Simon Jenkins. He says that Northwold is a fine guardian of the frontier between the Breckland and the Fens; he too makes special mention of the arcade and (see p.10) the Easter Sepulchre. The author of the present guide, who saw Rheims Cathedral for the first time in the spring of 2000, was moved to

contemplate the unity of Christendom in the early Middle Ages by the simple fact that Northwold's little church and the vast masterpiece at Rheims were being built at the same time and with the same purpose, *ad maiorem gloriam Dei* (to the greater glory of God).



The arcade, east view.



The arcade, west view.

FROM EARLY ENGLISH TO DECORATED

Note that the arcade's westernmost bay, on each side of the nave, was added later. According to Pevsner the newer bay is in the Decorated style of approximately 1290 to 1350; Cautley places it in the next century, and associates it with the building of the tower in the Perpendicular style. The reticulated (net-like) tracery in the east window (whose stained glass is of the 19th century) belongs to the Decorated period, as do the aisle windows and porch, but Pevsner believes that the south door itself is of the same period as the arcade. Early descriptions of the church say that above the entrance to the chancel in mediaeval times there was a rood-screen with wooden panels of painted saints, which was probably removed by Victorian restorers. The chancel was much restored in the middle of the 19th century. Ladbrooke's drawing of the church in 1821 shows three windows divided by buttresses in the south wall of the chancel; now there are two.

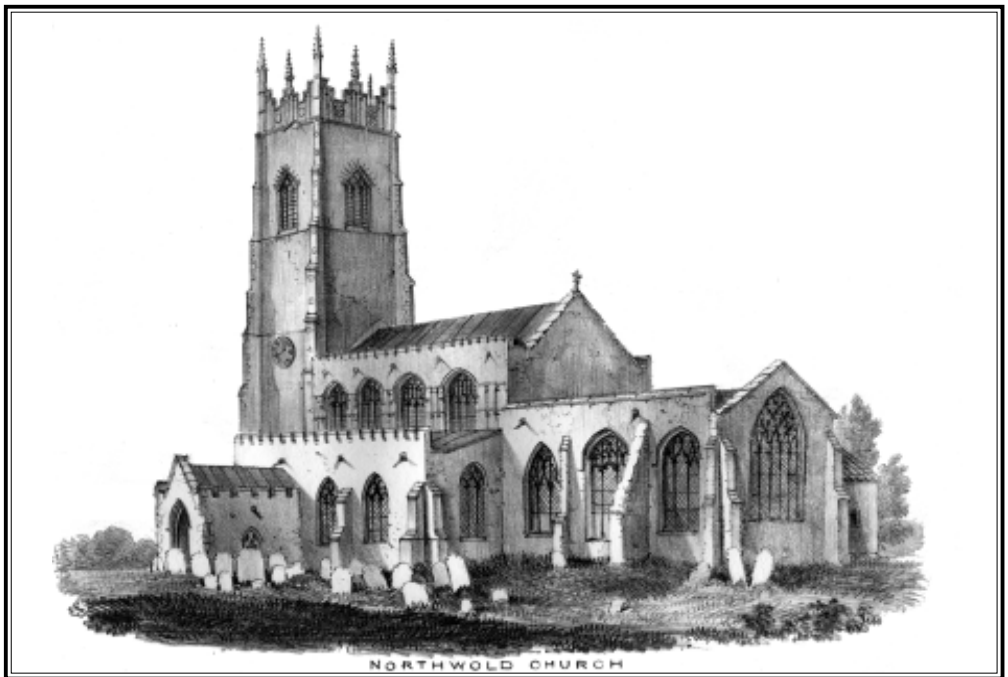


*Reticulated tracery
in the east window.*



Above: Decorated aisle window.

Below: Ladbrooke's illustration of the church in 1821.



EARLY RECTORS, THE BLACK DEATH & A WALL PAINTING



he name of Hugh's first nominee as Rector of Northwold has not survived, but when Hugh and Henry III were both dead and Henry's son Edward I (1272-1307) was on the throne, Ely sent Walter de Stow to be Rector. That was in 1290. Ralph de Pyltone succeeded him in 1314, and he lived on into the reign of Edward III, a time of great prosperity for Norfolk. Edward III ruled for 50 years (1327-1377). Bernard de Sautre became Rector in 1336.

Norfolk was prosperous under Edward III because of its wool, with Lynn as one of the most important centres of the export trade. But it was also during Edward III's reign that the bubonic plague reached this country – in 1348-49. It is estimated that the plague, known as the Black Death, killed between a third and a half of the population of England. Norwich alone lost 60,000. Perhaps these grisly fact help to account for a faded painting on the wall of the north aisle, relic of a time when the people were for the most part illiterate and received much of their religious instruction in pictures.

The painting illustrates the popular mediaeval tale of the Three Kings who went out hunting and came face to face with Three Dead Kings. You can still just make out the hawk on the wrist of one of the hunters, and the leg of one of the skeletons. If we could see the caption the dead would be saying to the living:

*"As you are, so were we.
As we are, you will be."*

A correspondent in the Netherlands, Mr. Fred Kloppenborg, has provided us with copies of several learned articles about the theme of this 14th-century painting, with photographs of specimens in other churches. Ours is not the only one to have faded over the years. The articles make no mention of Northwold's, and that may be because it did not come to light until the Galleries in the north and south aisles were removed some 50 years ago. The articles show that such paintings were not merely reminders of death but also illustrated sermons about the sin of Pride.

If the records are as accurate as they should be the plague did not touch Bernard de Sautre, who lasted as Rector from 1336 until 1397. John Sandon became Rector in 1397, but stayed for only a year. Robert de Wetheringsette succeeded him in 1398 and stayed 14 years. It is worth noticing that at this period surnames are settling down into their modern form. Sandon is our first Rector to do without the use of "de" followed by the place from which he came. There are places called Sandon in at least three counties, including Essex. Wetheringsett is in Suffolk.

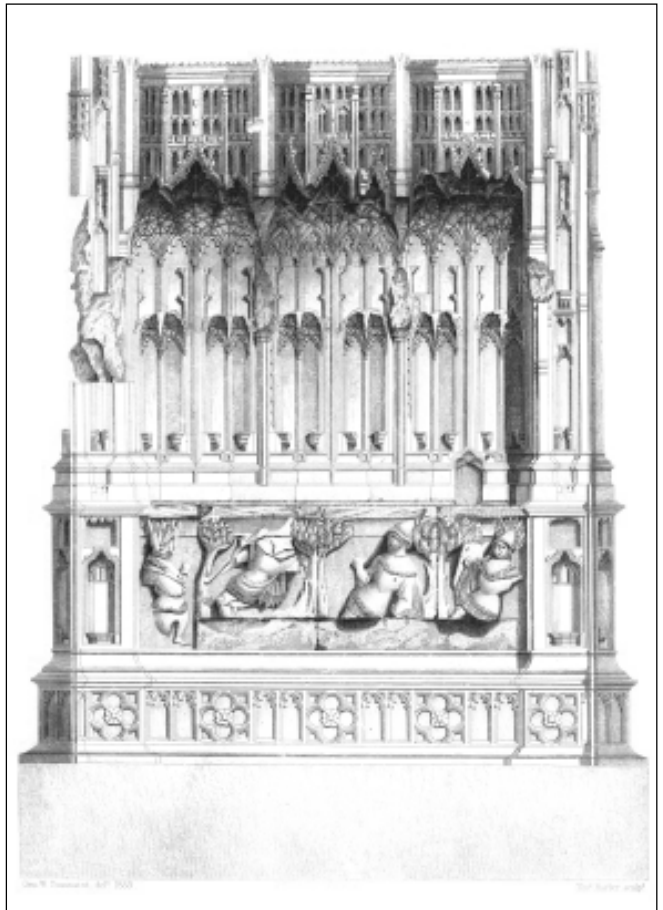
The wall painting depicts a hawk perched on the wrist of a hunter.

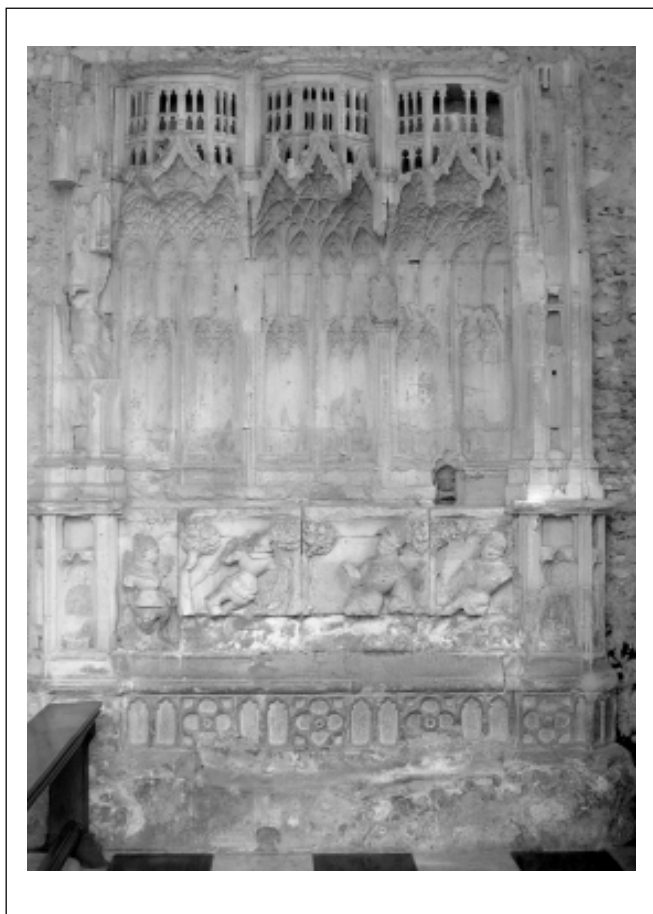


THE EASTER SEPULCHRE

One of the three Rectors starting with de Sautre was probably responsible for the installation of the Easter Sepulchre in the north east corner of the chancel, since the soldiers depicted on it wear the uniform of the army in the reign of Richard II (1367-99). Cauley, taking a similar view, suggests that this Sepulchre is probably of the 14th century. Pevsner, however, calls it a very lavish composition of the late 15th century. Thus may great experts differ.

As you enter the church, turn left and see the banner by Mrs. Eyles of Hall Farm, illustrating and explaining the Easter Sepulchre, which is one of very few surviving examples in England, with sad vestiges of its original beauty. The Sepulchre is in poor condition, partly because it is made of one of the least durable of local building materials - chalk - and partly, perhaps, because zealots deliberately defaced it during the Reformation (or the Civil War a century later). Even so a comparison of the Sepulchre today with the 1853 engraving reproduced in this guide shows that the decay is very gradual, mainly affecting the fine detail of the Gothic tracery. Behind the Sepulchre, revealed by the removal of some plaster from the vestry wall, is a blocked up doorway last used, presumably, in the 14th century.





WHO WAS JOHN STERLYNGE (*or Starling or Stalyng*)?

Another late 15th-century feature of the church is the clerestory or windowed upper story of the nave. Note from the south churchyard, as you come in through the lych gate, what Pevsner calls the “*blank straight-headed transomed stone windows*” between the actual clerestory windows. Roberts and Mortlock find this clerestory very striking, though Pevsner considers it “*ambitious, somewhat restless*”, while Cautley says it was “*shockingly restored.*” The layman might suppose that the false windows were the originals, filled in when the new clerestory was built, but all the experts accept them as deliberate additional decoration of the external wall.



The painted roof of the arcade.

An inscription on the outside of the south face of the clerestory invites worshippers to “*pray for the sowle of John Stalyng.*” Cotton and Tricker wonder whether he was the builder of the new parts of the church in the last quarter of the 15th century. It is known that a John Sterlynge of Northwold made his will in 1510. On the other hand a John Starling of Hockwold made his in 1462. Surnames were spelt in many different ways according to taste and mood in those days. On the face of it, the Northwold man seems the more likely candidate to be John Stalyng. Arthur Mee, always on the alert for a good story, but not giving his source, says that John Stalyng’s stone coffin is bricked up in the wall.

The painted roof, with its alternate hammer beams and arched braces resting in stone corbels is one of the finest features of the church. It is of the same period as the tower. Cotton and Tricker,

False windows alternate with the glazed clerestory windows.



echoing Cautley, suggest that the Victorian restorers retained the roof’s original colours. Note the golden-pinioned six-winged angels at the intersections, and the rosy-cheeked holders of heraldic shields on the hammer beams. One of them, as stated above, reminds us of Bishop Hugh.

HOW ST. ANDREW'S ACQUIRED ITS TOWER



fter the death (murder according to Shakespeare) of Richard II in 1400 England entered the century of the Wars of the Roses, the years from the accession of Henry IV, of the House of Lancaster, to the death in 1485 of Richard III, of the House of York. On Northwold's smaller stage Stephen Noble became Rector in 1412, followed by John Drew (1421), Thomas Belton (1435), Thomas Lane (1442), and John Downham (1465). In spite of England's internal dynastic troubles, and wars with France, this was a period of economic prosperity in East Anglia, a time when England's exports of woollen cloth increased fourfold. "By 1450," according to Briggs, "*cloth, not wool, was England's greatest export.*"

Inscriptions inside the tower record the fact that Richard Powle, Vicar of Foulden, gave 30 acres of land to help pay for repairs in 1479, and that Richard Constable of Northwold left property to the church in 1482. The tower, built in or about 1473, is in the Perpendicular style.

The west face of the tower.



Seven bequests paid for it, the largest being ten marks from John Wyntener in 1467. One mark was 13s.4d., and so the Wyntener bequest totalled £6.13s.4d (say £4250 in today's terms). In those days, according to G.M. Trevelyan, a country parson could live quite reasonably on £10 a year (about £6374 today). Wages were paid in pennies.

Pevsner writes: "*It is an ambitious tower. Diagonal but-*



Above: The tower steps.

Left: Pinnacle on the tower roof.



tressed with flushwork emblems" (i.e. decorative use of flint to show initials and patterns). "Such emblems appear also on the base frieze and a frieze above the doorway. Double-stepped battlements with flushwork paneling and eight pinnacles."

The emblems include A for Andrew and X for his cross, together with the wheel symbol of St. Catharine of Alexandria, who was reputed to have been martyred by being broken on a wheel. St. Catharine was patroness of learning, and her cult was widespread in mediaeval Europe. For example, in 1473, the probable year of the building of the tower, St. Catharine's College was founded in Cambridge.



In this picture we see three of the enthusiastic bell-ringers of all ages who can regularly be heard at practice and in action before services of all kinds. The Captain of the Bell-ringers, Mr. Charles Askew, can be seen on the left. Against the wall behind them stands the ladder to the clock chamber. Until the last years of the 19th century the clock operated from a lancet window in the bell-ringers' chamber. Originally there was a peal of six bells made by William Dobson of Downham in 1818. Two more bells were added later.

THE TUDOR PERIOD

Henry VII established his Tudor dynasty in 1485, after defeating Richard III at Bosworth. At Northwold Richard Hooke succeeded John Downham as Rector in 1494. Other Rectors of the Tudor period were Miles Ragon (1519), Robert Cliff (1526), John Clark (1538), Thomas Barnard (1554), Henry Thornewton (1556), Thomas Scott senior (1563) and Thomas Scott junior (1576). One of many tombstones in the floor of the church is that of Thomas Scott junior. He was an almost exact contemporary of William Shakespeare.

Two 16th century benefactors whose names are recorded in the tower were John Peyrs, Rector of Oxborough, and Edmund Attmeare (sic) who left property to pay for clothing for the poor. The Atmere Trust, with objects appropriate to modern circumstances, is still in operation as one of the village charities 500 years later. It exists to relieve people who are in need, hardship or distress. Other village charities of today stem from the gifts of John Peyrs and Richard Powle.

NORTHWOLD UNDER THE STUARTS AND CROMWELL



hen came the period of two Stuart monarchs, James I and Charles I, and the Republican interlude known first as the Commonwealth and later as the Protectorate under Cromwell.

Rectors were Daniel Wigmore, who succeeded the younger Thomas Scott in 1616, Robert Burhill (1622), and John Novell (1641-1661).

Robert Burhill DD has his memorial in a wooden tablet erected in 1727. It hangs on the west wall of the nave. The author of the memorial tribute praises Dr. Burhill's learned works in defence of the Protestant faith against the greatest champions of the "*Romish church*." He also credits Dr. Burhill with helping Sir Walter Raleigh to write the "*critical part of his history of the world*." He adds that "*at the breaking out of the troubles in October 1641*" Dr. Burhill took sanctuary in Northwold. In fact, he died there in that year.

It may seem strange that the Rector came to Northwold to die. Was he not there all the time? Not necessarily. It was common enough for an incumbent to have more than one living and to pay curates to look after the ones he could not attend to himself. Dr. Burhill was much too busy elsewhere. He made a profession of being "*a voluminous contributor to controversial divinity*." His help to Raleigh appears to have been as an advisor on Greek and Hebrew sources. Indeed, John Aubrey in his *Brief Lives* quotes Burhill's widow as saying that her husband had been a great favourite of Sir Walter Raleigh's and that "*all the greatest part of the drudgery* (of Raleigh's *History of the World*) *for criticisms, chronology and reading of Greek and Hebrew authors was performed by him...*"

The Burhill tablet is not the only reference to the "*troubles*." Just in front of the altar is the tomb of the Rector John Novell and his wife. The Latin inscription bears witness to unspecified sufferings under the "*tyranny of Cromwell (pseudo-Protector)*". This may also be the time when someone slashed at the Easter Sepulchre with a sword or stave, seriously damaging its upper left side.

An enigmatic inscription above the porch – "*Churchwardenes 1607*" – is believed to indicate that repairs were carried out in that year.



The Burhill tablet reads:

"On this South side of the Chancel lies the Body of ROBERT BURHILL, D.D., Rector of the Church and Residentiary of Hereford, who by his learned works writt in Latin Against the greatest Champions of ye Romish Church did great Service in general, As well as to ye Church of England in particular. He was most intimate with the famous Sir Walter Raleigh and assisted him in ye Critical part of his History of ye World. Was also a good Antiquary and Poet as well as a great Divine, which appears from several Valuable Manuscripts of his now in Oxford. In this Place he took Sanctuary at ye breaking out of ye troubles in October 1641.

"To revive the memory of so worthy and learned a man, Samuel Knight D.D.

M. S.
Deboræ Novell
(Cujus Exuvia Subter
marmor hoc deponuntur)
uxoris I^{nis} Novell

S. S. T. B
ILLE.

Exagro Surriensi ortus bonis literis Cantabrigiæ
enutritus D.D. Wrenij (Episcopi Eliensis)
ā Sacris Ecclesiæ hujus quondam Rector,
Sub Tyrannide Cromwellij (pseudo-protector=
= toris) plura gravia q^o Sustulit
tandem vero cum aura benigni-
= niori frui licitum efset, Vita
Orbatus est. Maij Enim
die I^{mo} anno æræ xti=
= anæ 1661 fatis
celsit, et hic jux=
= ta positus
Est.

ILLA

Annos xix a viro defuncto Superstes
fuit liberos pepêrit xi, quorum
pars major morti succubuêrunt,
et circumcîrcâ inhumantur, con=
= jugi fuit fida, pximis ami=
= ca, vidua vere casta,
familiæ decus, matro=
= nis exemplar sed
heu! extremum
clausit
diem

Anno { Salutis humanæ } 1679
{ Fælicitatis Suæ }

*The text of the Novell tomb
at the foot of the altar is
reproduced in the facsimile, left.
It may be rendered as follows:*

*"Sacred to the Memory
of Deborah Novell (whose remains
are placed beneath this stone)
wife of John Novell,
Bachelor of Sacred Theology.*

HE

*raised in the county of Surrey, nourished
in scholarship at
Cambridge, was, by the rites of
D. D. Wren (Bishop of Ely),
sometime Rector of this Church.
Under the tyranny of Cromwell (pseudo-
Protector) he suffered many
ills but at length, though permitted
to enjoy a more benign air, on the
1st day of May in 1661 AD
he died and was laid here.*

SHE

*survived for nineteen years
from the death of her husband.
She gave birth to eleven children,
most of whom succumbed and
are buried nearby.
She was faithful to her husband,
a friend to her neighbours, a truly chaste
widow, worthy of her family,
a model of motherhood, but alas!
she reached her last day in
the year of man's salvation
and happiness 1679.*

The Stuarts returned in 1660 in the shape of Charles II and his kin. John Novell lived long enough to see the Restoration and the nation's revenge on the regicides. His immediate successors were Thomas Wrenn (1661) and William Holder (1662). Other Rectors were Francis Roper (1686) and Thomas Armstrong (1691), who died in the same year as Queen Anne – 1714. Benefactions recorded inside the tower include that of Henry Partridge, whose father was Lord of the Manor and who left provision for bread for the poor by his will dated 1703.

GEORGIAN ST. ANDREW'S

The House of Hanover inherited the throne from the Stuarts. There were four Georges in succession. When roof timbers were restored in 1994 some of the most sturdy were found to have been installed in the reign of George II. Proud churchwardens had had their initials carved into them. A bracket attached later to another of them bore the date 1776, which American visitors will not be able to see but will instantly recall as the year of the Declaration of Independence of the United States.



The coat of arms of George II stands above the entrance to the chancel.

Rectors during the 18th century were John Clark (1714), Richard Oram (1757), James Bentham (1774), Peplow Ward (1779), Richard Watson (1780) William Hinton (1781), Thomas Waddington (1805) and George Waddington (1814). Under Richard Oram's will the parish belatedly received £50 (£2368 in our terms) in 1804 towards the installation of a church clock, which was installed in 1807 at a cost of £102.14s.6d. (say £4462 in today's

values). The same clock, refurbished several times after some long and some short interruptions, works well to this day. It strikes the hours with a particularly mellow note, befitting its great age. In 1818 William Dobson of Downham made a peal of six bells, a fact recorded in an inscription to be found on a shelf inside the tower. Two more bells were added later. Enthusiastic ringers use them regularly.

The Bridget Holder tablet.



Eighteenth-century church architects made galleries fashionable, and so St. Andrew's acquired some which concealed and marred the Early English arcade. They remained there until some enlightened restorers removed them in 1951. Some of the timber survives in a massive chest in the north west corner of the nave, used for storing altar hangings. Cautley visited the church before the galleries were removed and remarked that they disfigured the building.



The Victorian font at the west end of the arcade.

is one commemorating Ann (née Hopkin), who died in 1732. The author of the inscription describes her as “*an indearing wife, an indulgent mother, an affectionate relation, an honour to her family, an ornament to her sex.*” She was only 22.

Other tablets remind us of Bridget Holder (one of the benefactors remembered inside the tower along with Richard Oram), John Carter (died 1798, another benefactor), and Richard Whish (died 1810). The list of benefactors records that Thomas Waddington left property to accommodate a school and a parish schoolmaster.

The coat of arms of George II (1727-1760) stands high above the entrance to the chancel. Look at it through binoculars if you can. Cautley recalls that Royal Arms did not become compulsory in churches until the Restoration in 1660. In some churches 18th-century churchwardens, wishing to be up to date while unwilling to spend money, simply added a Hanoverian escutcheon to the original Stuart arms and changed the C of Charles to the G of George. Without evidence we cannot place the arms in St. Andrew's into that category. But visitors will observe a particularly dashing lion and unicorn protecting the Hanoverian arms. They are rather well painted. Until 2002 it was difficult to see the detail with the naked eye, partly because the painting needed cleaning but mainly because the church lighting shone only downwards. The new lighting reveals the coat of arms quite clearly for the first time in many years.

Within the chancel there is a font supported on an elegant 18th-century baluster; it was moved to that position when the present elaborate font was installed in 1882. Among the relatively few wall tablets of this period



The Georgian font.

Ann (née Hopkin) tablet.



MODERN TIMES – FROM CHARLES NORMAN ONWARDS

We enter modern times with the reigns of William IV and Queen Victoria and their successors to the present day. Next after Thomas Waddington as Rector was Charles Manners Richard Norman, born in 1799. Through his mother, Lady Elizabeth Norman (née Manners), who married Richard Norman of Leatherhead, he was a grandson of the 4th Duke of Rutland and nephew of the 5th Duke, and a great grandson of the 4th Duke of Beaufort. His mother's brothers were the 5th Duke of Rutland and two generals. He received the benefice of Northwold, worth £740 a year (just under £42,000 a year nowadays), from the Bishop of Ely in 1833. The tithes were commuted to a fixed rent charge of £896 (approximately £47,500 today) a few years later. In 1845 St. Andrew's Northwold was described as a "*large handsome fabric*" with a "*lofty tower (built in 1473) containing six bells and a good clock*" (see p.13). The parish at that time had 1140 inhabitants. The size of the population has not changed to any great extent since then.



Church funds paid for the organ, which was erected in 1868.

Charles Norman was a bachelor for the first eight years of his time in Northwold. Then he met and at the age of 41 married a spinster of 38 called Caroline Amelia Angerstein, whose father John was the owner of a huge estate round Weeting Hall. If Charles brought aristocratic connections, what did Caroline bring to the marriage? She was a granddaughter of John Julius Angerstein (1735-1823), who came to England in 1750 from St. Petersburg, where his German family had been settled. He was a Lloyds underwriter by the time he was 21 and went on to become one of the wealthiest men in England. When he died the British government bought his fabulous art collection in



*Mr & Mrs Julius Angerstein
by Sir Thomas Lawrence.*

1824 for £58,000 (at a conservative estimate about £3 million today) and used it as the nucleus of its new National Gallery. Connoisseurs of early Hollywood movies may remember the film *Lloyds of London*, made in 1936. Guy Standing played the pivotal part of John Julius Angerstein in what was then a star-studded cast including C. Aubrey Smith, Madeleine Carroll, George Sanders and Tyrone Power.

It was John Julius Angerstein who bought Weeting Hall and established the family there for more than a century, until Caroline's brother William sold it in 1897. The Rev. Charles Norman died in 1873, in his 74th year. Caroline herself died aged 77 in 1879. She lived for a while as a widow in Brandon Hall, which was also owned by the Angersteins, and did charitable works in Brandon as well as in Northwold, where the school and the almshouses bear the family name of Norman. Whittington owes to her the foundation of its separate church, later the centre of its own ecclesiastical parish.

Charles Norman was Rector for 40 years. Charles and Caroline Norman have their tomb just inside the south entrance of the churchyard, near the lych gate.

During Charles Norman's time – in 1852 – the church was re-seated, a fact recorded in an inscription on the wall inside the tower. When St. Andrew's underwent other restoration work, in the eighteen fifties and sixties, the restorers appears to have shown more respect for the character of this ancient church than many of their contemporaries showed to churches elsewhere in England. A drainpipe to the west of the porch bears the date 1857. Inside the church another sign of those times is the organ erected in 1868, out of funds "*from the Church Estate.*" This organ bears a modern plaque recording the fact that for 42 years of the 20th century Arthur Barber, a local farmer, was voluntary organist. The font in front of the tower dates from 1882. Its elaborately carved cover, suspended from the



The National Gallery when at the Pall Mall home of Mr J J Angerstein.

roof by a chain and capable of being raised and lowered, was added in 1887.

National, as opposed to family history, is reflected in the memorial tablet to Lieutenant William Carter of the 5th Fusiliers, who died in the siege of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He was 32. Tombstones and wall tablets bear witness to the close attachment of the Carter family to this church in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Victorian Rectors after Charles Norman were Richard Snowden Smith (1873), William Cowper Johnson (1889) and Claud Cecil Thornton (1892), who is commemorated in the fine and sturdy lych gate.

Since Thornton there have been nine Rectors: Nicholas

Gepp (1911), whose eldest son's death at Gallipoli in 1915 is commemorated in a tablet in the chancel; Alan Chaplin (1919); Arnold Wells (1924); Frederick Lacy (1935); James Thompson (1943 to 1955, when the benefice was suspended); David Savage (1958); Kenneth Taylor (1971); Canon John Rowsell (1981 to 1995); and Nigel Tuffnell (1997 to 2003) who arrived after a vacancy lasting a year and a half. At the time of writing the process of finding a new incumbent to succeed Nigel Tuffnell has just begun.

Framed lists at the east end of the south aisle and the memorial cross just outside the churchyard record the names of those who died in the two World Wars of the 20th century.

Until the nineteen fifties the church had no electricity supply, and there are villagers who still remember the oil lamps lit on winter evenings and the coke-fired boiler stoked by a churchwarden to keep the church as warm as it could ever be. The imposing structure seen from the road has always concealed a vast space impossible to heat to everyone's satisfaction. In the last half century the church has not escaped the effects of change in



The Rev. Charles Manners Richard Norman (1799-1873).

the social fabric of Norfolk villages, especially those which stem from the revolution in agricultural practice, the coming of television, the electrification of such railway lines as have survived the ruthless closures introduced by Lord Beeching, road improvements and ever wider car ownership. Kenneth Taylor was the last Rector to be responsible for St. Andrew's alone. Canon Rowsell was simultaneously Rector of Northwold and Vicar of Methwold. Nigel Tuffnell became the first incumbent of a new benefice stretching from Wretton through Stoke Ferry and Whittington to Northwold. In spite of all these changes there is no mistaking the fact that the village loves and is proud of its church and prepared to fill it on solemn occasions and joyful festivals.

J.A. Norris 2003

St Andrew's Church, August 2003



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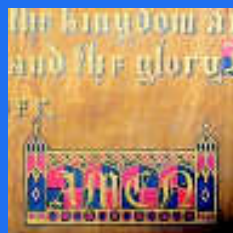


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