

ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH LITTLE WALDINGFIELD



A SUFFOLK 'LANDMARK' CHURCH

## **History and Guided Tour**

**CLIVE PAINE**



The nave, looking west. ©

St Lawrence's Church  
Little Waldingfield

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Clive Paine

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Clive Paine  
January 2015

## Foreword

St Lawrence's is a very special church for me. It has to be. It was the church in which I was married more than a quarter of a century ago. True, it wasn't the first time I had stood in front of an altar to tie the knot, but as my wife often reminds me, our marriage has endured, so perhaps our village church bestows a little luck on those who use it.

Richard Titford was the priest-in-charge when we first arrived in Little Waldingfield some three decades ago and he officiated at our wedding. His sermons gave me a fascinating insight into the workings of the Anglican Church and, though he surrendered his living here some years back (we were a three parish benefice when we arrived – a five parish group now, with both the additions larger than the original three villages combined), he remains a good friend.

The genesis of this guide was a talk delivered by Clive Paine in 2013 on the history and fabric of St Lawrence's church. While I was aware of the broad background of the Suffolk wool churches, it took Clive's excellent exposition of how our parish church had developed to make me realise Little Waldingfield had been punching above its weight for much longer than I could have conceived. We have a church in which we can be truly proud.

We in the village are not only in Clive Paine's debt for undertaking the task of writing this guide, but also to the children of the late Harry and Pat Clive – Andrew and Gina. It was their generosity that made its publication possible. Their only proviso was that any proceeds would go to the upkeep of St Lawrence's. Both Harry and Pat, whom I got to know well, worked tirelessly for this church. They would be proud, I'm sure, to learn that their good work continued after them.

Brian Tora



Fragmentary 15th-century glass set in the west window of the south aisle (p. 17). ©

## Welcome

Welcome to the church of St Lawrence, Little Waldingfield, part of the Box River Benefice. This is one of the late-15th-century landmark churches, rebuilt with the wealth made from the manufacture of woollen cloth in south-west Suffolk. In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, Great and Little Waldingfield were rated sixth in Suffolk for the number of cloths produced and the number of clothiers living here. The 1522 Muster Roll records weavers, clothmakers, fullers, shermen, drapers and tailors living in Little Waldingfield.

This magnificent church, funded by local families of clothmakers, is less well known than others in the area. This guide will help you explore the building and its contents and trace the way the congregation have worshipped God, listened and responded to His Word and proclaimed the Gospel here for over 900 years.

*If you wish to refer to the Guide as you walk round the church, please turn to page 9.*

## Outline History

### **Building the Church**

A church was recorded at Little Waldingfield, with ten acres of glebe land, in the Domesday Book of 1086. Nothing visible remains of this early building and most of the present church dates from the 14th to the late 15th centuries.

The chancel, which was the responsibility of both the Patron, the Prior of Earl's Colne in Essex, and the Vicar, was extended in the 14th century and remodelled in the 15th century.

The 78-foot-high tower dates from the 14th-century Decorated period, as can be seen by the west door arch, the belfry windows, the west window opening and the ogee-headed niche outside in the south wall. From the position of the eastern buttresses we can see that it was built separately from the rest of the church. The former (14th-century) nave was then built against the tower; there may also have been aisles at this period. The gabled

roof line of this nave shows as a scar over the tower arch. The height of the nave walls was then level with the present clerestory window-sills.

In the late 15th or early 16th century the nave, including the chancel arch and aisles, was rebuilt between the existing chancel and tower. A clerestory, with five windows each side, and a low-cambered arch-braced roof were added. All the new work in the Perpendicular style was distinguished by the use of a CROCKETED MOULDING, with a central finial and carved dripstones, round the arches, windows and the south door.



East end of the rebuilt, late-15th-century nave with low-cambered roof and clerestory. ©

At the same time a Perpendicular window was inserted into the earlier west window opening of the tower, to which stepped battlements with figures at each corner were added. The chancel was given new windows and 'Tudor' headed doors, and a chantry chapel was added on the north side.

A porch (p. 22) was built on the south side at a later date. The construction is different from the rest of the building: alternate bands of brick and flint, with some tile added, either at random or in ancient repair work. The windows with stepped horizontal transoms are unlike any of the others in the church.

Lastly a magnificent Tudor brick porch was added to the north door in the 16th century. This is difficult to date, as it is of so unusual a design (p. 24). The niche over the doorway may indicate a pre-Reformation date (before 1547) or it may have been included as part of the traditional porch design and was never intended to house a statue.



The north porch, built entirely in brick, with a profusion of decorations and mouldings. ©

Two features of the church's overall design are of interest: first, the placing of the north and south doors in the west bay of the aisle. This, on entering the church, gives the impression of a much larger and more impressive building. Secondly, having two ROOD STAIRCASES with CROCKETED TURRETS rising high above the roof-line. This is a rare and high status feature, found in Suffolk only at Clare and St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds. Even Lavenham church has only one such turret, on the south side.

## **The Rebuilding**

The dating evidence for the unified design scheme combining arcades, chancel arch, aisles, clerestory, roofs, windows and doors, is confusing.

Two parishioners left large bequests in 1441, totalling £4 13s 4d, to 'the new fabric of the church'. Another bequest of £2 was made in 1457 for the 'provision of the seats'.

In 1466 John Breon, butcher, gave 6s 8d to the repair of the porch; 6s 8d to repair the font and a further 13s 4d for 'making the new doors of the church'. This latter might be for a doorway or wooden doors, perhaps those surviving in the north (vestry) and west doorways. There may have been a similar one in the south doorway.

All this evidence would seem to indicate a mid-15th-century date for the rebuilding. However, the architectural details as described above all appear, on stylistic grounds, to be late 15th or even early 16th century in date. The low-cambered nave roof would support this later date.

A sizeable bequest of £2 was made 'to the work of the body of the church' in 1512. Significantly, the bequest was from WILLIAM APPLETON, citizen and draper of London, of the manorial family of Holbrook Hall.

There are brasses in the church to members of the Appleton, Wincol and Colman families, who were clothmakers and who in 1524 paid 84 per cent of all the subsidy or tax levied on the parish that year. These families may have paid for the rebuilding in their lifetimes and therefore only a relative living at a distance mentioned the work in his will. Throughout the Guide the term 'late 15th century' is used for the period of rebuilding, although it may have gone on into the 1520s.

## **The Pre-Reformation Interior**

Before the Reformation of 1547, the interior was very different from today. It was decorated in vibrant colours with paintings of the life of Christ and stories of saints, including St Christopher, with decorative friezes on the side walls and a Doom painting over the chancel arch. Some of the windows had stained glass and there were statues of saints, wall hangings and at least three altars in the church and another in the chantry chapel.

Documentary evidence from wills shows there were statues of St Mary, to the right, and St Lawrence, our patron saint, to the left of the High Altar; an altar to St Mary, as Our Lady of Pity, in the south and to St Catherine in the

north aisle. A piscina is built into the wall adjoining each of the altars. There were parish gilds, social and religious organisations, dedicated to St Mary and St Lawrence. The members would have met on the feast day of the saint to pray and celebrate Mass for deceased brothers and sisters of the gild. The High Altar had a reredos to which Richard Rysyng Esq. gave a massive £20 for a new panel in 1504. Could this indicate the refurbishment of the chancel?

Dividing the nave and chancel, under the chancel arch, stood the Rood screen with a loft or walkway, surmounted by large images of Christ on the Cross, flanked by St Mary and St John as a visual reminder of the centrality of the sacrifice of Jesus in the Christian faith. The loft was reached by means of NEWEL STAIRS on either side, which rose to give access to the lead roofs.

The left staircase was entered from the north-east angle of the north aisle: the top door came out in the north-west corner of the chancel. The entrance to the right staircase is uncertain, but the stairs are cut through by the squint. The exit door at the top is in the south-east corner of the nave. The bottom of the door shows the level of the Rood loft.

Above the Rood loft, level with the clerestory window-sills, was the Rood beam, or candlebeam, drilled with holes for candles burning in honour of the Rood figures. John Sheldrake gave £1 towards the painting of the candlebeam in 1458.

At the Reformation, all the above-described visual aids to worship were removed, except the altar in the chancel, which was now called the Communion Table. However, when the candlebeam was cut out, the ends were left embedded either side of the chancel arch, where they remain today.

In the 1522 Muster Roll a Vicar and three priests were recorded, all of whom were called 'Sir', a courtesy title given to non-graduate clergy. Sir Christopher Greening was vicar 1521–52. The priests, who may have served as chantry priests at the chapel and at altars within the church, were Sir Andrew Archer, Sir Anthony Abbot and Sir Thomas Walker.

## **The Early 19th-century Interior**

Two photographs taken in July 1868 (p. 7) when the Victorian restoration was partly under way give a rare opportunity to see what the church looked like in the early 19th century. The floor of the church throughout was of brick pavement, some of which still survives. The chancel was on the same level as the rest of the church. The Communion rails were on three

sides of the Table. There was a medieval poppy-headed bench, a box pew and a reading desk in the chancel.

The pulpit was in the north-east corner of the nave, having been moved there since 1828, when it stood further west, against the second pier from the east. In the period 1828–68 the pulpit and reading desk had been separated. The desk, with similar decorations to the pulpit, now stood on the south side of the chancel. On the south pier of the chancel arch was a hatchment for Job Hanmer (d. 1804) of Holbrook Hall and his wife Maria (née Syer).

The nave had new benches of 1868 on the north side, high box pews on the south side and a variety of old benches in the central aisle for children or the poor. It has been suggested that these benches might be for a day or Sunday school. The font stood on the north side, against the first pier from the west.

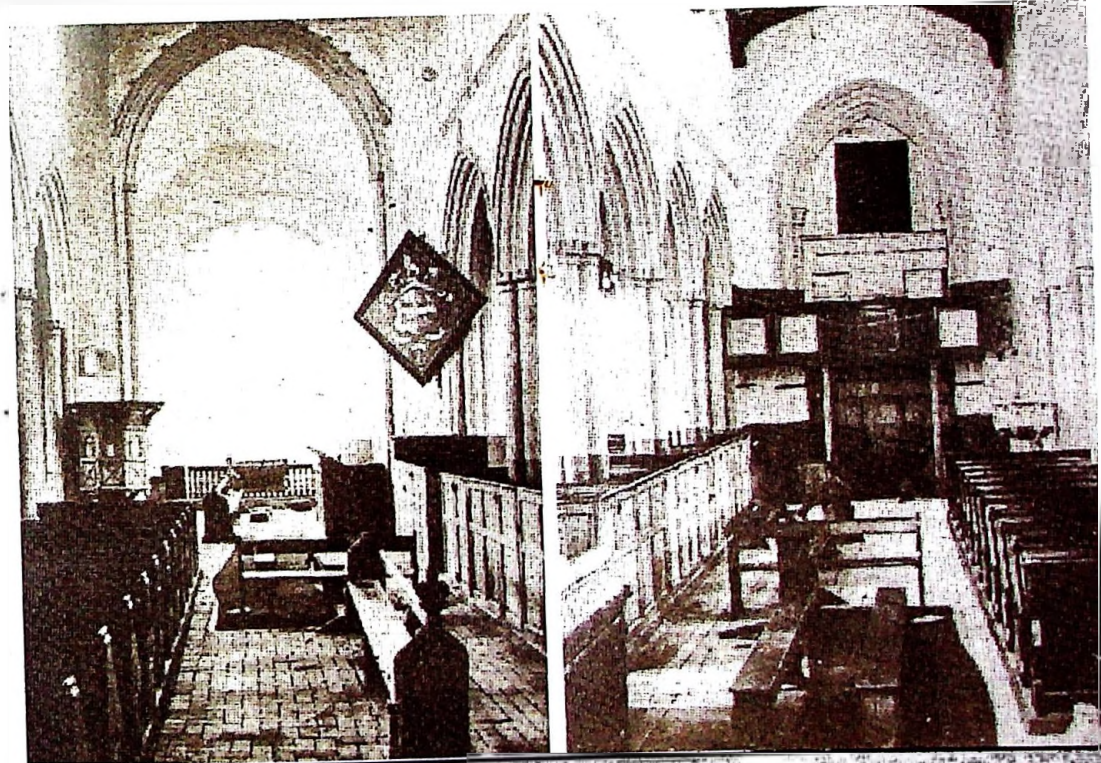
At the west end, the tower arch was boarded up and partly covered by the Royal Arms of George I dated 1716. Across the nave was a gallery, erected in 1819, for the musicians and singers. Payments to the church singers, their Christmas treat, hymn books and candles occur in the churchwardens' accounts. An harmonium is first mentioned in 1866. A payment for 'blowing the organ' in 1879 must indicate the arrival of the pipe organ, in use until 1947.

Below the gallery was a doorway into the bottom of the tower to give access, via staircase and two doors, to the gallery. In addition, in 1828 David Elisha Davy recorded that the walls of the chancel, nave and aisles had texts of Scripture painted on them.

### **The Victorian Restoration, 1868–1869**

The Vicar, the Revd Robert Andrews, began the process in early 1868, by providing benches on the north side of the nave. In May the Vestry (an earlier version of the Parochial Church Council, PCC) proposed that the church and chancel should be restored, and sought the agreement of Capt. F. Syer, the Lay Rector, for the chancel works. The Vicar was given permission to remove the gallery, at his own cost. Tenders were invited in July and the restoration began in March 1869, paid for by subscriptions. Thomas Elliston, builder and joiner, of Siam Garden, Sudbury, was the main contractor. Edmund Keogh, stone and marble mason, of North Street,

RIGHT Above: two photographs of 1868, looking east and west. Below: engraving, c.1750, also showing the former Almshouses built by Thomas Appleton.



and Henry Taylor, plumber and glazier, of Friars Street, Sudbury, undertook other parts of the work.

During the restoration the box pews were replaced with the present benches; the gallery was removed, the tower arch opened up; the font and pulpit moved to their present positions; the charity boards reset; the brasses moved to the north aisle and the nave floor laid with black and red tiles. The Hammer-Syer hatchment and the Royal Arms of George I were removed from the church. In the chancel the floor was raised over two feet in height by four steps; the area partly laid with Minton tiles; the Communion rails were reset to run in front of the Table and choir benches provided, of which two still remain in the chancel (pp. 15, 18).

### The 20th and 21st Centuries

The first stained-glass windows since the Reformation were inserted in the south aisle in 1897 and 1917.

Works to strengthen the chancel and south aisle were carried out in 1935, under the supervision of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. Electricity was laid on in 1937 in memory of George Wade of Park Farm, a churchwarden for 40 years. Central heating followed in 1938, which was replaced by an oil-fired system in 1957. A fund was established to maintain the churchyard in memory of Ellen, the widow of George Wade, in 1946.

In 1957 pews were removed from the south aisle and nave and replaced with chairs. The colour scheme to enhance the detail of the mouldings in the nave and the chancel roof was first carried out in 1960.

The south aisle roof was restored 1958–62 and the windows in 1994, the latter in memory of Dorothy Johnson.

A Lady Chapel was created in 1993 at the east end of the south aisle, exactly where the medieval Lady Chapel had been. The Communion Table is 17th century and was originally in the chancel. The cross was made by a local artist and craftsman, Frank Francis, from a piece of small-leaved lime from Groton Wood, once owned by John Winthrop.

The organ was sold in 1947 and replaced by a reed organ, which in turn was replaced by an electronic keyboard. The present organ, built in 1809 by Joseph Hart of Redgrave, was installed in 1989–90.

## Nave

The magnificent five-bay nave has height, light and colour. The low-cambered, ARCH-BRACED ROOF in ten bays (pictured on p. 2) has an embattled wall plate on each side above a moulded cornice.

At the east end, the corners are chamfered, to accommodate the TWO ROOD STAIRCASES, with the result that the first arch-brace is not flush with the wall. There is a smaller arch-brace filling the space. All this is evidence that the two staircases were built at the same time as the nave.

The arcades, clerestory windows and chancel arch have HOOD-MOULDINGS, with CROCKETS and central finial. This same design is repeated outside over the aisle and clerestory windows and the south door (pp. 23, 21). Below the clerestory windows, inside, is a HORIZONTAL STRING-COURSE decorated with square flowers. Within the string-course, above the apex and the junction of each arch, are wider panels, defaced at the Reformation. Close examination



Nave: arcade arch to north aisle. Crocket and finial decoration, with string-course above. ©

shows traces of angels and crowned heads; the latter can still be seen on the south door surround. The dripstones on the inside of the clerestory windows have cherub heads, as part of the heavenly host over our heads.

The TOWER ARCH does not have this sumptuous hood-mould decoration, evidence that the tower pre-dates the nave and aisles. Looking above the tower arch one can trace the roof gable of the earlier and lower nave, where it butted against the tower.

### Monuments (nave)

*North-east corner:* a brass erected in 1863 in memory of SAMUEL APPLETON, who emigrated to New England in 1636 and settled at Ipswich, Massachusetts. It was erected by a descendant, W. Appleton of New England. Members of the family in America still visit the church.

In 1630 the physician William Gager and his servant John Gosse, together with John's wife Mary, left the parish for New England under the leadership of John Winthrop of Groton, as part of the fleet of eleven ships.

In 1636 Samuel Appleton, aged 48, his wife Judith and their five children, and Humphrey Wincol and his wife Elizabeth all sailed for New England. The former settled in Ipswich and the latter at Watertown, Massachusetts.

*North-west corner:* this monument originally blocked the east window of the south aisle, until moved in 1897. The vault it refers to is at the east end of the south aisle, where the Holbrook pew was situated.

The monument records SAMUEL WARNER ESQ. (d. 1734), his wife Catherine (d. 1737), their four unmarried daughters (d. 1735, 1743, 1763 and 1773), their daughter Catherine (d. 1736) who married Henry Vere Graham (d. 1737) and their two infant sons.

The lordship of Holbrook Hall passed from the Warners via Ann, daughter of Henry and Catherine Vere Graham, to the HANMER family.

### Font

A bequest of 6s 8d was made to the 'reparation of the font' in 1466, which may actually indicate the date of its construction. There are parallels, in the subject matter carved on the bowl, with the font at Stoke by Nayland, which can be dated by heraldry to 1461-85.

Beneath the corners of the bowl are EIGHT SUPPORTING ANGELS, with their wings tucked in so that they do not touch. This band of angels is also present at Stoke by Nayland, although as with the bowl the carvings are not the same as here.

The alternating faces of the bowl have symbols of the FOUR EVANGELISTS, in between which are depictions of SEATED MONKS OR CLERICS STUDYING. This latter group have flowers carved around the borders of the panel.

Three of the figures are dressed as monks with capes and hoods, the fourth wears a cope with a morse or clasp across the chest. However the 'monks' might possibly be clergy in choir habit with tassels hanging from their capes. If the 'monks' are indeed monks the one in the cope might be a prior. Thus we would have a link to the Priory of Earl's Colne, Patrons of the church before the Dissolution, who may have presented the font as part of the refurbishing of the church.

The carvings are as follows, starting at the front (east) and going anti-clockwise: the WINGED LION for ST MARK; a seated monk with a book, with a lectern to the left and an inkpot and pen to the right; the WINGED ANGEL for



The 15th-century font. L-R: eagle for St John; seated monk; winged lion for St Mark. ©

ST MATTHEW; a cleric seated on a cushion with a book, wearing a clasped cope with a lectern to the left; THE WINGED BULL for ST LUKE; a seated monk with a lectern to the left and a book laid on the seat to the right; the EAGLE for ST JOHN; and a seated monk with a book and a lectern to the left.

The angels below the bowl are depicted as ARCHANGELS with feathers all over and wearing capes or cowls; one wears a cope. The stem would have had alternating seated lions and WOODWOSES or wild men, in the Suffolk tradition.

### **Pulpit**

This is an excellent example of 17th-century work, which may have been part of a two or three decker. The body has a tier of typical round-headed arches on reeded columns, with capitals and bases. Above, large carved SCROLL BRACKETS support the reading ledge, which is carved on the underside. The lower half of the pulpit has saltire crosses, similar to those on the reading desk in the chancel. Around the base are ACORN PENDANTS and the whole is supported on a round column. There are parallels with the pulpits at Edwardstone and Mildenhall nearby.



The pulpit. ©

### **Chests**

There are two chests at the west end. The one on the south side, with five metal bands, is made of Baltic, probably Polish, pine planks, with a rounded lid of poplar. This is one of 32 such chests in Suffolk dating from c.1400–20. The metal lock plate is decorated with leaves.

The other chest is of Baltic pine and has been dated by dendrochronology to c.1350–75. This date would also fit the DECORATED-STYLE WINDOW TRACERY carved on the front. At the top of each pair of 'windows' is a face, two lions to the left and a bearded man and wimpled woman to the right. There is a band of rosettes above and below the front panel.

Is it possible that the (later) mouldings, with crockets and finials, around arches and windows of the building were inspired by this tracery on the chest?

A photograph of 1897 shows a bracketed foot surviving on the left side, which had gone by at least 1937. The carving of this left 'window' continued down to the base of the foot. The lock plate has two keyholes: beneath the right one is a snake with an open mouth and bulging eyes.

### **Charity Board**

At the west end is a large board, recording that Edward Appleton Gent. of Lynes Hall, Edwardstone, in 1580 gave a house and land called Hocketts in Edwardstone for the benefit of the poor of Great and Little Waldingfield and Edwardstone.

### **Benches**

These date from 1868 and have oak ends, carved with quatrefoils. The seats and backs are made of pitch pine.

### **Lectern**

The elaborate Victorian wooden lectern was made c.1865–9, for Great Waldingfield church. When a brass lectern was presented in memory of the Revd Francis Braithwaite (d. 1889) the wooden lectern was given to Little Waldingfield church.

## Chancel

The chancel was the responsibility of the Patron, the Prior of Earl's Colne in Essex, and the incumbent to maintain; for this reason the chancel differs in its architectural detail from the rest of the church. The windows have different tracery, there are no external hood-moulds over the windows and the doors are of a different design. The 14th-century chancel was rebuilt or heightened when the nave, aisles and chancel were built in the late 15th century.

There is only one window on the north side, because the door led into a chantry chapel built against the wall. There may have been an earlier window here, which was blocked by the chapel. The east window is a 17th-century replacement; hence the tracery of the window is of a simpler form than the other windows.

In the pre-Reformation period there were large statues of St Mary, to the right, and St Lawrence, to the left of the Communion Table. In the south wall, to the right, is the PISCINA RECESS with a four-foil bowl and drain, used for washing the priest's hands during and the vessels after Mass. The adjoining window-sill is lowered to form a SEDILIA SEAT for the assistant priests and servers.

In the south-west corner is a SQUINT, through which the priest at the altar of Our Lady, in the south aisle, could see what the celebrant was doing at the High Altar, in order to synchronise their movements.

High up in the north-west corner is the BLOCKED UPPER DOOR of the Rood stairs, entered from the south-east corner of the north aisle. It is unusual to have the door opening into the chancel, rather than the nave, as the southern staircase does. This indicates that there must have been some other loft or gallery in the chancel, perhaps for an organ.

The remains of the CHANTRY CHAPEL can only be seen from outside, where the scars of the walls, roof, piscina, aumbry and doorway are visible (p. 24). The chapel would have been endowed by a wealthy family, as a place for a priest to 'chant', pray and celebrate Mass, on at least a daily basis, for the benefit of deceased and living members of the family. The best local example of a chantry chapel is the Clopton Chantry at Long Melford church. Praying for the dead was abolished in 1547 and so the chapel and priest would have been redundant. The chapel may have been demolished

soon afterwards, or converted into a vestry and later demolished. The engraving of the church c.1750 shows it had gone by that date.

The floor of the chancel was raised over two feet (62cm) in height, by four steps, in the 1869 restoration. Therefore the piscina, sedilia seat, south and north doors all seem low down.

The two boarded areas were the flooring of the Victorian choir benches, of which two are still normally in the chancel and the two shorter ones (p. 18) were moved in the early 1990s to the north and south aisles. The Minton tiles of 1869 in the sanctuary are more elaborate and decorative than those in the choir area, to emphasise the more sacred nature of the sanctuary.

### Monuments (chancel)

*Behind the Communion Table:* DEY SYER Gent. (1682–1740), aged 68. This ledger stone was originally to the north (left) of the Table and orientated in the usual east–west position, but it was moved here in 1869, in order that the Table could stand over it. The Syer family were Lay Rectors c.1762–1935+; Patrons c.1762–c.1850 and Vicars 1787–1850.

Frances, daughter of Dey and his wife Grace, has a ledger stone at the west end of the north aisle; she died in 1718 aged 4 years.

*North side:* WILLIAM PAYNE (1643–1723) aged 80. The handsome black marble slab was originally the top of an altar or table-tomb in this position. In 1869 the tomb was removed and the slab laid in the floor.

William was a London merchant, born here and brought home for burial amongst his ancestors. His enhanced social status and wealth meant that, unlike his parents, he could be buried inside the building.

*South wall:* LT. COL. LAMBERT HANMER D.S.O. (Indian Army) (1868–1918), aged 49. He died commanding his Regiment the 21st Cavalry (Prince Albert Victor's Own) at Tuz Kermatli, Mesopotamia, 29 April 1918. He was the son of Rear Admiral John Hanmer, formerly of Holbrook Hall and then from c.1910 until his death in 1919, of The Priory, across the road from the church.

### Stained Glass

*South-west window:* an engraved oval in memory of HARRY CLIVE (1919–1996). In 1979 Harry wrote a history of the parish, *Beyond Living Memory*, which appeared in a revised edition in 2013.

### Communion Rails

These 17th-century rails originally surrounded three sides of the Table. They were altered to run across the chancel in 1869. The Communion Table that went with these rails is now in the Lady Chapel.

### Reading Desk

This 17th-century reading desk can be seen standing on the south side in the 1868 photograph (p. 7).

### Kneelers

The altar kneelers were made by parishioners in 1990 and depict eight different forms of the Christian Cross.

## South Aisle

The *east end of the aisle* was the pre-Reformation Chapel of Our Lady of Pity. The PISCINA, with a circular drain, survives in the south wall. Although blocked on this side, the squint to the high altar is through the pier to the left of the east window.

This was also the burial chapel of the Appelson family, lords of Holbrook Hall manor (1433–1676). Brasses, now lost, were recorded here c.1602 for John Appelson (d. 1481) and his wife Margaret (d. 1468). After the Reformation the east end became the pew of the Holbrook Hall family. The Warner family, lords in the 18th century, had a monument, now at the back of the nave, placed over the blocked east window. Their successors the Hanmer and Mitchell families continued to use the east end as their area of the church. Mrs Mitchell had the Warner monument moved and a NEW EAST WINDOW erected and filled with stained glass in 1897. Thus we can trace at least a 450-year link between Holbrook Hall manor and this chapel.

### Roof

The aisle has a late-15th-century FIVE-BAY ARCH-BRACED ROOF, with wall posts between the windows. The battlemented wall plate, of which only the third bay from the east is original, has added Victorian flower panels. The FOUR CENTRAL BOSSES depict the gridiron and martyr's palm of St Lawrence, inspired in 1962 by the east window; a green man; two flowers and foliage. The roof was restored 1958–62, and an album of photographs showing the work can be seen on the table at the back of the nave. A list of American subscribers, including many Appletons, hangs by the south door.

### Stained Glass

*East:* as mentioned above, the window and glass date from 1897. The glass was designed by Clayton and Bell, in memory of JOHN MITCHELL, Barrister (1810–96), of Holbrook Hall. The main lights depict ST STEPHEN holding the stones with which he was martyred; ST JAMES THE GREAT dressed as a pilgrim with hat, staff and water bottle, holding a Bible to show his authorship of part of the Scriptures; and ST LAWRENCE holding a gridiron, as the means of his martyrdom, and the martyr's palm branch.

Above them six angels hold scrolls which read 'Gather my saints together unto me those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice'.

*South:* in memory of STANLEY LEECH WADE, Private in the Honourable Artillery Company. He was wounded at Bullecourt on 3 May 1917 and died of his wounds at Rouen on 17 June, aged 23. He was the youngest son of George and Ellen Wade of Park Farm. The window depicts DAVID, ST GEORGE and JONATHAN; above, the arms of the Hon. Artillery Company.

*West:* this collection of 15TH-CENTURY FRAGMENTS was moved from the east window of the north aisle in 1990 when the organ was installed. The



Fifteenth-century stained glass: two small eagles. ©

fragments include a female head with long hair, probably St Mary Magdalen; a male tonsured head; a male crowned head; part of a Latin inscription and two eagles.

### **Communion Table**

This dates from the 17th century, and was originally in the chancel.

### **Benches**

Behind the chairs is a bench, the ends of which are 15th century, with buttresses below the seat level. The poppy heads, seat and back are all Victorian. There is a similar bench of the same date in the north aisle.

## North Aisle

Before the Reformation this aisle had the altar of St Catherine at the east end. The PISCINA for the altar is in the east wall (behind the curtain) and was sited there because the ROOD STAIRS are in the usual position for the piscina. These stairs gave access to the chancel and probably to the Rood screen. The stairs also continued up to a doorway leading onto the nave roof. The stairway on the south side of the nave had the same function.

### **Roof**

The roof is similar to that of the south aisle, except that the wall posts sit on wooden corbels. Many more of the timbers were replaced in 1869. Four of the original bosses are carved as foliage, even though some look like faces.

### **Monuments**

*West end:* FRANCES, daughter of Dey and Grace SYER, whose ledger stone is in the chancel; she died in 1718 aged 4 years.

### **Brasses**

All these brasses were at the east end of the nave until the 1869 restoration. Starting from the west they are:

ROBERT APPLETON GENT. (d. 1526) and his wife MARY (née Mountney); this family were lords of Holbrook Hall manor 1433–1676. In the Muster Roll of 1522 and Lay Subsidy of 1524, Robert was the second wealthiest person in Little Waldingfield.

The four coats of arms are, clockwise from top left: APPLETON, with three red apples with stalks and green leaves; APPLETON AND CRANE (his mother) impaling MOUNTNEY (his wife); MOUNTNEY; CRANE. The two missing scrolls over their heads asked the Holy Trinity to have mercy on them. The missing rectangular brass had twelve coats of arms of the Appleton relatives. The missing Latin inscription is translated as follows:- 'Pray for the soul of Robert Appleton, gentleman and Mary his wife, which Robert died 27th August 1526, on whose soul God have mercy Amen'.

The next two stones, with indents where the brasses have been removed, were for Margery Appleton (d. 1504) and her husband Thomas (d. 1507).

The next group, nearer the wall, were reset in 1977. The original gravestone had images of JOHN COLMAN, clothmaker (d. 1507), and his wife Katherine. Below John are their six sons, and below the missing brass of Katherine are their seven daughters, four married, wearing butterfly headdresses, and three unmarried, with long hair. At the four corners were roundels with signs of the four Evangelists, similar to those carved on the font.

In his will John asked to be buried before the 'choir door', perhaps his term for the chancel arch, as his brass was originally in the nave. He bequeathed £20 to buy a cope and vestments for the Priest, Deacon and Sub-Deacon 'with my name and my wife's name to be set thereon' and a further £4 to buy a pair of chalices for the church.

The Latin inscription once on the grave is translated as follows: 'Pray for the soul of John Colman and Katherine his wife, which John died 27 January 1506 [1507] on whose soul God have mercy Amen'.

The brass against the organ case is for JOHN WYNCOL, clothier (d. 12 August 1544); in 1522 and 1524 John was assessed as the third wealthiest person in the parish. In his will he requested to be 'buried in the middle pace [aisle] of my parish church, whereupon I will have laid a marble stone with my picture and a scripture [inscription] graven in plate for the better memorial of the time of my decease'. The rectangular spaces either side of his 'picture' may have been for his sons and daughters.

### **Charity Boards**

These four boards, three of which are shown on the front of the west gallery in the 1868 photograph, record the parish charities. Clockwise from top left they record:

1. Four acres, the income from which was to pay for ringing the great bell from the Monday seven days after St Michael (29 September) until St Gregory (12 March). This would have been a pre-Reformation bequest, of which no documentary evidence remains.
2. Thomas Appleton in 1603 gave 10 loads of wood annually to the poor. His son Isaac in 1608 gave the Almshouses, adjacent to the churchyard, and 6 loads of wood annually to the inhabitants (p. 26).
3. A house called Wrenns in Sudbury purchased in 1629.
4. John Wyncol gent in 1580 gave 12 acres of land, the income from which was to be used for the poor.

### Organ

The organ, by Joseph Hart of Redgrave, dates from 1809 and sits within a late Victorian case. It was made for St Mary the Less in Thetford and moved from there in 1989. Following reconstruction and restoration the organ was dedicated by Eric, Bishop of Dunwich, in May 1990. Plaques on the organ record Joseph Hart, the builder; Derrick Hubberd, the organist; and Peter Bumstead, the restorer.

### Bells

The tower contains five bells. A bequest was made in 1462 for a 'new small bell to ring in the tower'. Other bells were described as 'decayed' in 1526 and 'broken' in 1544. There were three 'great bells' recorded in a national survey of 1553. One of these must have been used to ring from after Michaelmas to St Gregory's day, as recorded in the charity board.

Two of the present bells were made by James Edbere of Bury St Edmunds in 1612; one by Miles Gray of Colchester in 1617; and two by Thomas Osborn of Downham Market in 1785.

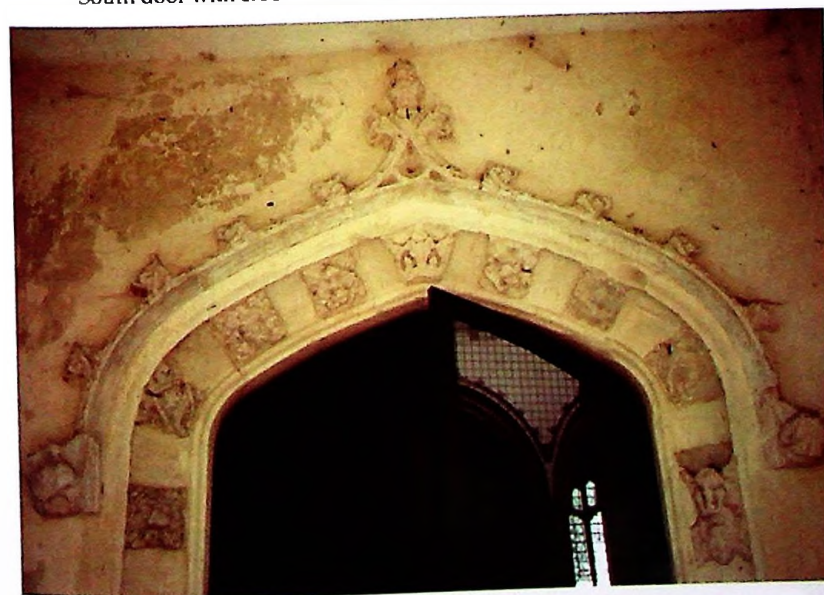
## What to See Outside

### Porch

The south door has a late Perpendicular or Tudor arch. The doorway has a band of 21 carved panels including square flowers, lion heads, a crown at the apex and a crowned head to the right. The moulding over the door has the usual crockets and central finial, but the dripstones are a praying angel to the left, and an angel with crossed arms to the right.



South door with crocketed hood-mould, dripstones and carved panels. ©



The carving is weathered, and either side of the door is the plinth of the aisle wall. Both these features indicate that the porch was added several years after the major rebuilding. Outside we can see that the construction of the porch differs from the rest of the church, with bands of brick and flint with some tile; stepped transomed windows and the minimum use of stone. The battlement stage has small crocketed pinnacles at each corner, with a central statue niche over the entrance.



The south porch. ©

### South Side

The windows of the aisle and clerestory have the familiar mouldings of crockets and central finials. However, the dripstones are a series of grotesque human and animal heads. These were placed on the outside of medieval churches to reflect the real and imagined terrors of the world. The viewer would find peace, contentment and freedom from fear by belief in



South side of the church, showing hood-mould and dripstones on the aisle windows. ©

Jesus and the sanctuary of the church. This is why the dripstones in the porch are angels and inside the clerestory windows are cherubs. The TWIN STAIR TURRETS rise above the roof line, and the top door onto the roof can be seen (front and back cover pictures). The engraving of c.1750 (p. 7) and a description in 1856 show that the upper part of the two turrets has been altered. No doubt the replacements were part of the 1869 restoration.

### East End of South Aisle

Passing round the end of the aisle: the east window of 1897 is set in the earlier opening once blocked by the Warner monument. Below the window is the enclosed burial plot (1877–1913) of members of the Hanmer and Warner families of Holbrook Hall. It was probably created when the family vault under the aisle was full or no longer used.

### North Side of Chancel

On this side of the chancel the scars of the east and west walls, roof line and blocked piscina, aumbry and doorway of the medieval CHANTRY CHAPEL can be seen. The base course of the chancel has been cut away where the chapel stood.



North wall of the chancel, showing the 'scars' of the former chantry chapel. ©

### North Porch

The porch was built up against an existing north aisle buttress, which can still be seen where the east wall joins the aisle. The porch is of an exceptional quality with moulded bricks used for the doorway decorative features, window openings and tracery. The north face is unique in having a double thickness of wall. The 'inner' one has buttresses and two octagonal crocketed turrets. The 'outer' one has a stepped weathered gable over a

multi-moulded entrance doorway. A central crocketed octagonal turret, with a niche, sits over the apex of both 'walls'.

### Tower

The diagonal eastern buttresses and the way in which the aisles butt against them show that the tower was built before the aisles. There are rows of vertical OPEN PUT-LOG-HOLES, where the scaffolding beams were inserted as the tower was built. They also indicate the height of each building stage. A tower of nearly 80 feet may have taken at least ten years to construct, allowing for settlement each winter.

The tower is 14th century. The west doorway has deep mouldings. The actual door, with a band of quatrefoil carvings, is 15th century and may

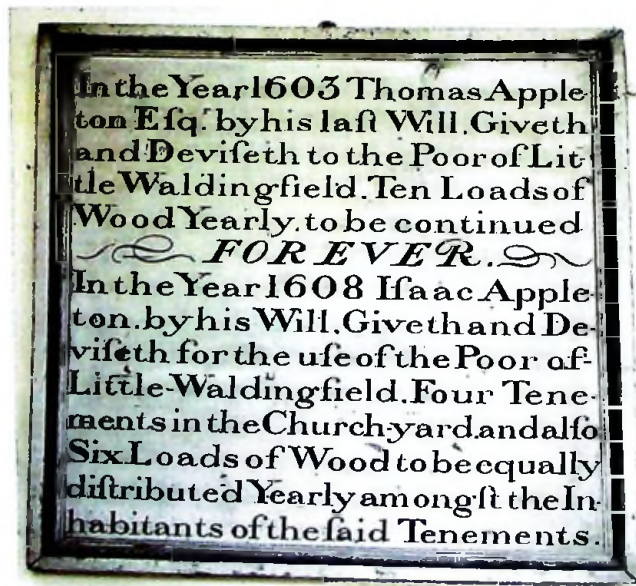


The parapet of the tower, with rare corner figures, headless probably since the Reformation. ©

date from 1466. The window above, with a 15th-century window in the earlier opening, is offset to the left (north) because of the internal newel stairs on the south, hence the slit windows. On the south side of the tower is a 14th-century niche with an ogee arch and stool for a statue.

The PARAPET has panels of flushwork, with a HEADLESS FIGURE OF A SAINT standing at each corner. These are a rare survival and similar seated figures can be seen on the Spring Chapel at Lavenham.

The row of buildings to the west are the former Almshouses given in 1608 (see pp. 7, 20), which were sold in 1935. The imposing building across the road to the south is called 'The Priory' but never was! The building was known as Brick House Farm in 1841 and later re-named. By 1883, when the Vicar is recorded as living there, it had been enlarged by its owner, Emily Hanmer, for use as the Vicarage, then some time after 1910 became the home of her step-brother, Rear Admiral John Hanmer.



Charity board detailing Isaac Appleton's gift of the Almshouses. ©



Roof carving, north aisle: origin and significance unknown. ©