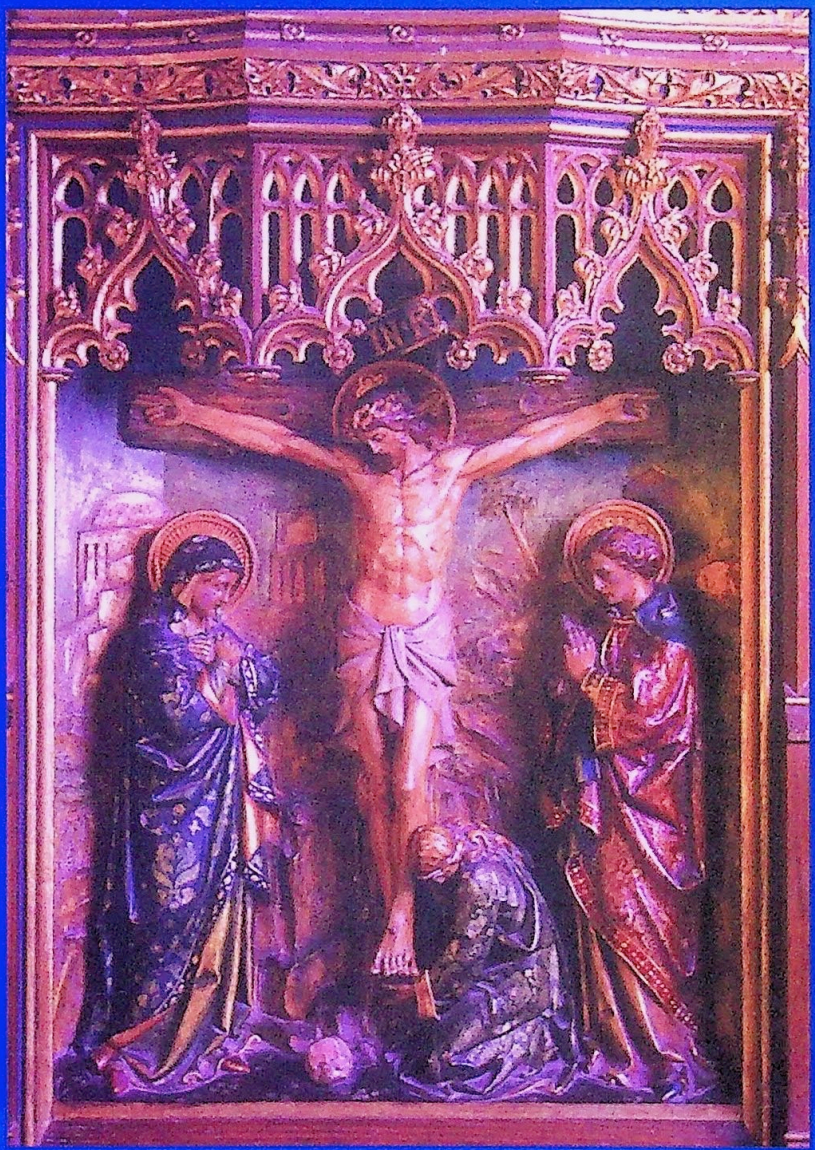
The Story of the Parish Church of

St Mary The Virgin

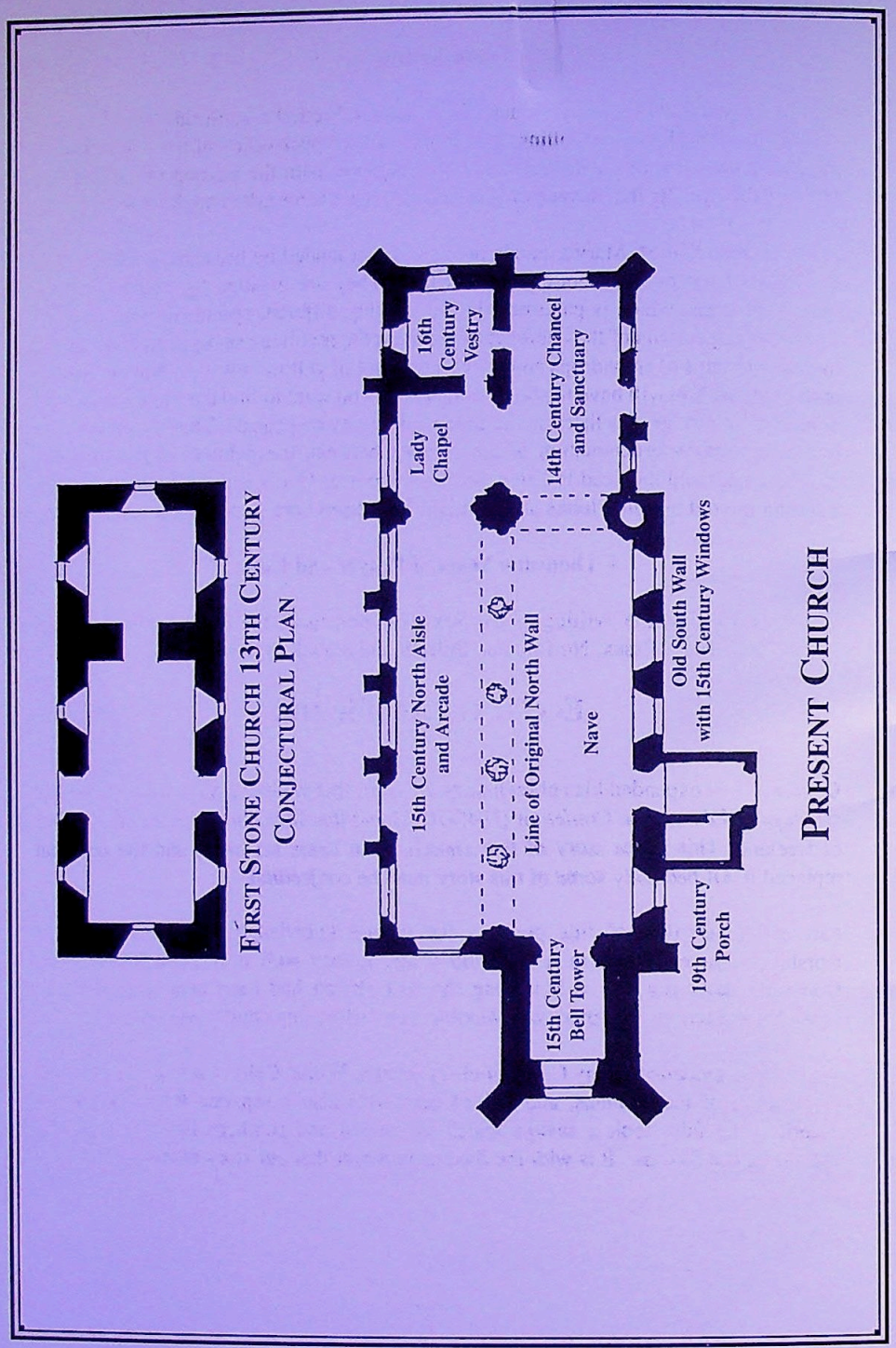
Edwardstone, Suffolk



This is the central panel of our beautiful Reredos portraying the Crucifixion. Every generation in Edwardstone gazes upon it and draws from it what it will; sometimes perhaps a glimmer of understanding of what it is to be "human, yet made in the image of God". This is the paradox of humanity.

It is also the paradox of God. His incarnate Son is at one and the same time helpless victim and Conquering redeemer; or rather helpless victim, so Conquering Redeemer. This is how God chose to spell out the most powerful force in all Creation, LOVE. And it is that love, the love of God, that is still proclaimed by His Church at Edwardstone.

~ Richard Titford



The Setting

One of the glories of St. Mary's Church is its setting. From the south side there is a long tranquil view of the gently rolling countryside of the upper valley of the River Box. A dappled patchwork of arable fields silently changing with the passing of the seasons engages the eye. "Is this heaven or just near it?" one visitor asked the Rector.

It can be seen that St. Mary's stands on a knoll surrounded by her ancient churchyard. So many of her parishioners quietly rest here. They are mantled by eleven different species of grass, which is patterned, by over eighty different species of wild flowers. The changing colours of the churchyard proclaim the revolving seasons. In early spring there are clumps of snowdrops and later a great riot of yellow cowslips. Not everything is so obvious. You will have to search diligently if you want to find the 'field mouse ear' or any of the rare species listed in the Botanical Survey on page 63. Thus the churchyard is a never-ending proclamation of the contrast between the richness of the Church's great festivals and the need to listen attentively to hear God's still small voice. In such a setting the old building looks as if it might have been here since time began.

A Thousand Years of Prayer and Care

In 1086 a royal scribe, writing of our Saxon Manor, made the following entry in the Lesser Domesday (Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk had a book to themselves):

Eccła. xxx.ac liƀe ṫre.

Once we have expanded his abbreviations we learn that we had a Saxon church here in the days of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) and that the church possessed 30 acres of freeland. This is the story of that church, what came before it, and the one that replaced it. Of necessity some of this story must be conjectural.

Part of the comfort of this place is the certain knowledge that Christians have worshipped here for almost a thousand years. It may well have been longer since Domesday does not tell us how long the first church had been here when Edward ascended the throne, and there was worship here before any church was built.

We have no evidence of any Celtic ministry locally. Whilst Celtic Christianity survived the coming of the Romans, and indeed there was also a separate Roman Christian tradition, the faith took a savage knock in eastern and southern England from the coming of the Saxons. It is with the Saxons however that our story must start.

The Saxons

As they settled down and sorted themselves out into their Kingdoms (a long and complex process from which England itself emerged) the Saxon Kings and their magnates sub-divided their territories to provide their principal supporters, the Thegns, with a means of living and a great patchwork of estates came into being. Edwardstone was one of these. Towards the end of the sixth century Augustine, hesitatingly and fearfully came to Canterbury and began the task of converting the pagan Saxons. The speed of the conversion suggests that perhaps the memory of Christianity had not actually been stamped out even though it was not openly practised. As the conversion got under way (with its many set-backs) the new Bishops were to found household communities that became diocesan centres. That done they set about founding additional small communities of monks or clerics. Kings and influential laymen followed their examples. Some of these new communities developed into contemplative orders. Many became mynsters supporting teams of missionary priests who evangelised the surrounding countryside. Some mynsters developed into abbeys, some into spectacular parish churches and some were utterly ruined in the later Viking raids. Something of this sort occurred at Stoke by Nayland (The Holy Place near Nayland). This is where I believe our missionaries came from, walking upstream along the Box River valley.

The missionaries travelled from estate to estate to preach to the local Lord and his family, and when they had won them over, to his staff, tenants and workers. The converts were encouraged to come to the mynster three times a year, at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun, when they made their oblations. They also came to marry, to bring their children for baptism and to be brought by their children for burial. As the missionary visits came to be anticipated a plot of land was set aside at each estate for the meetings. This enabled the missionaries to erect a cross, and this created what was known as a 'field church'. The ground would be consecrated and an altar built so that Mass could be celebrated. The old English word for holy ground was Ciric. The altar needed a shelter and this was built by the missionaries. I imagine it looked like the three sided model stable we use for our annual Nativity display. In time the local Lord would be moved to build a shelter, for himself, his family and the rest of the congregation and this became the nave. So the churchyard is much older than the church and it is an ancient and holy place in its own right. As is the way with language, Ciric came to mean the building rather than the land on which it stood. If you now pronounce each of the letters 'c' as 'ch' you can hear where the word church came from.

In those places where no progress had been made the founding of an estate church became one of the requirements for the recognition of Thegndom. Having built his church the Thegn took it upon himself to appoint someone, known as the Persona, to have the cure (care) of all the souls on the manor. He needed the approval of the Bishop before installation could take place. This right of presentation is known as the Advowson and the person exercising it as the Patron.
The estate church was known at the mynster as 'the inferior church' or 'the church of the second foundation' and its clergy who were not bound by monastic vows were known as

secular priests, which sounds like a contradiction in terms to our modern ears. To begin with the inferior church could neither baptise, marry nor bury.

The following independent sources of income developed to support the Saxon Persona who often ranked second only to the Thegn.

> Freeland given to the Church which the Persona could cultivate personally or farm out to a rent paying tenant. It would become known as the Glebe.
>
> The Laws of Ine (688-725) established a compulsory levy on all freeholdings known as Church-Scot. This developed into the tithe, which was quite literally one tenth of all the produce of the manor. In some unlucky parishes payments were made under both headings. The payment of tithes was made compulsory by command of Edmund I (940 - 946). Edgar (959 - 975) permitted one third of the tithe to be kept by the estate church the rest had to go to the mynster.
>
> Oblations which were the freewill offerings at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun which were detached from the mynster and offered locally. Oblations were also paid at the annual feast day which corresponded to the anniversary of the consecration of the estate Church.

The mynster, founded much earlier, was loath to see even more of its income diverted to a church of the second foundation. But eventually the estate church was able to wrestle away from the mynster the right to baptise, marry and bury members of its own flock. No doubt the older generation found it irksome to trail all the way over to a church at Stoke by Nayland and welcomed the change. But it would have been full of activity serving the needs of many manors. The young would miss the excitement and the chance of socialising with other young people whom they may not otherwise have met and would see the change as a mixed blessing. These were some of the birth pangs of what was to become a village based ministry, brought about more by local pride than any vision of the early Fathers of the Church.

Some livings were positively wealthy and patrons took to diverting some of this income to their own needs perhaps initially to re-coup the cost of building the church. If so they continued to enjoy an extra source of income and one which they could pass on to their heirs. The Advowson was to become a very valuable right and the subject of much litigation in the Middle Ages. The Persona was able to carry out his duties vicariously by paying a stipend to another priest to perform them, thus the "Vicarious" became known as the Vicar.

The Domesday Survey gives us the earliest spelling of our village name Eduardstuna. This means quite simply Aedward's Place (i.e. farming settlement) and tells us that our Saxon founder was a man of some standing. You will notice that the other parishes in the United Benefice are all named after geographical features, Boxford, Groton (a sandy stream) Newton, Waldingfield. Perhaps Aedward was the Thegn who built our first Church. Whilst this seems quite likely, sadly we shall never know, neither do we know anything about the effect

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of the Viking invasions except that we became part of the Danelaw. The heaviest Danish settlements were away to the north and they appear to have left no trace here. Domesday also tells us that Edward the Confessor had farmed out our manor to one of his Thegns who was Lord of the Manor in 1066 when Edward died. As he "held the Manor of the King" he was a Royal Thegn. He was Godwin son of Alfhere.

The Normans

After the Battle of Hastings 1066 we hear no more about Godwin. Perhaps he died at Stamford Bridge, perhaps on Senlac Hill. Be that as it may, Domesday records that the Manor of Eduardestuna was part of the great parcel of manors given by William the Conqueror to Robert Malet 'to be held of the King' in return for Feudal duties. He in turn granted our Manor to Hubert de Montchensi (who's name appears on the Battle Roll of Hastings) also in return for Feudal duties and Hubert and his Montchensi descendants held it until circa 1434.

After the violence and bloodshed of the Conquest and the harrying of the North the Normans set about establishing in the minds of the populace that they had come to stay. Their castles took care of this. In time as they began to feel secure, they also set about appeasing God in order to ease their souls' passage through Purgatory. William endowed three monasteries, including one at Senlac Hill where Harold fell. His Barons followed his example by making gifts to the Saxon Abbeys, extending and rebuilding them and founding new abbeys. On a smaller local scale as they settled down they began rebuilding the old Saxon churches. They also began setting up financial endowments, known as Chantries to pay for penitential masses to be sung for their souls.

The Chantry: In Eduardstuna Hubert son of Hubert above was to found a Chantry. He brought this about in 1114 by giving the Church with all its appurtenances, and another 2 acres added to the Saxon free land, together with some tithes on his property outside the Manor, to the great Benedictine Abbey at Abingdon, a Saxon foundation despoiled by the Danes and still in the process of recovering. In return the abbey was to found a Priory Cell here, staffed with two monks. We tell its story on page 26. In the year 1115 this gift was confirmed by Henry I (nicknamed Beauclerc because he was the first King since Alfred the Great who could read fluently). The confirmation gives the following details.

> The place (Eduardstuna) was **always** to serve for and to be used as a Monastic Cell. No Chaplain could be appointed to serve within the Church without permission of the Monks who resided there. (Their residence would be called The Priory). The Monks were to sing masses for Hubert's soul and no doubt for his ancestors and heirs.

The confirmation also specifies the transfer of the church to the Abingdon Abbey. Archbishop Ralf commended the two Monks from Abingdon to Herbert de Losinga the first Bishop of Norwich, who was now their diocesan bishop.

We note the word 'always'. It was Hubert's intention that the chantry should, quite literally, continue to the end of the world. All visible trace of this Saxon church has disappeared and the ancient south wall of our nave is what remains of the stone building that replaced it some 800 years ago. The best place to look at it is outside, where we can trace many of the changes that followed.

The New Stone Building: The Montechensi family had inherited a responsibility for sheltering the congregation. The Abbot of Abingdon had acquired the responsibility for sheltering the altar, and this undertaking would have involved them in much negotiation. When the time came to set out the foundation trenches it would have been a solemn occasion. On the vigil the Patron, the Abbot with some of his monks, the Master Mason, his journeymen, and no doubt some of the workers from the estate spent the night in prayer and meditation. They would have been eager to mark the point where the sun rose so that the all important sighting line could be set.

For a contract of this size the Master Mason may well have known nothing of grand buildings, so like his contemporaries, he fashioned the House of God in a homely shape he understood. He would have had in mind the simple plan of the home of a prosperous Ceorl, oblong in shape, perhaps an extra chamber at one end, and two opposing doors towards the other end. This had become the accepted basic layout for many estate churches. Our Ceorl no longer thrashed his own harvest on winnowing sheets spread outside his cottage so that his family could toss the grain and chaff up into the wind to clean it. Now at harvest he would use the old winnowing sheets and anything else to hand to form a temporary passage way between the opposing doors of his cottage and, with the doors wide open to admit a winnowing wind, thrash his harvest in there. As the precious grain piled up he would erect boards at each end of the passage to keep it in.

In the 21st century we still step over the threshold as we enter and leave our homes. For us it is a far cry from the time, in the great medieval poem, when the wife of Piers Plowman was "wrappen in a winnowing sheet to ward her from the weather", when, "barefoot on bare ice" she helped him in the winter.

Many early Houses of God incorporated the idea of opposing doors. Edwardstone still has both in use, so has Boxford (which also has two splendid porches) but Groton has bricked up her north door and Little Waldingfield has built a vestry round hers. (both have notable porches for their south doors). Newton reused a Norman doorway in her 14th century north wall and later filled it in and glazed the top half.

The Master Mason and his journey-men attended to the setting out of the building and cutting and setting the stone frames and tracery for the windows and frames for the doors and forming the chancel arch. They supervised the building of the rough flint walls by the estate workers, who, for their part, had never attempted anything like it before and, no doubt, were fervently hoping that they would never be instructed to do anything like it again. It is a great tribute to their labour that the south nave wall still stands.

It constitutes the oldest ecclesiastical wall in the United Benefice and together with the 14th century south wall of the sanctuary and chancel displays for us nearly all the different phases in the story of our church.

A Walk Round The Outside

As you approached the church from the car park you will have seen the beautiful 15th century tracery of the Perpendicular windows of the north wall. Then as you rounded the church corner you will have seen the stunning view that greets visitor and worshipper alike. The story of the church starts here with the south walls of the nave and of the chancel.

The South Side

13th Century (perhaps earlier): Not surprisingly both these walls have a similar appearance. However on closer inspection we discover that the Montchensi Nave wall is 42 inches thick while the 14th century Chancel wall is only 24 inches thick. The best way to look at these walls is to step off the pathway a short way out into the churchyard. From here you can see that the walls are faced with coarse knapped flints, all collected from the estate fields before the work could begin. If you look carefully you can see that the estate workers did their best to lay the flints in horizontal courses as the builders of an earlier age had done. They had also found a small supply of Roman bricks, the remains of a much earlier Roman building. As well as working them into the walls they were able to use them to form the south east corner of the first stone building. Perhaps some of the Roman bricks were rammed into the trenches to stiffen the foundations.

The size of this building was 56 feet by 18 feet (roughly three squares) and as you can see from the plan inside the front cover it was long and narrow. As indicated on the plan two thirds of the space would have been nave and one third chancel and sanctuary. Next we look at the tracery of the windows. I believe that originally they would have been Early English lancet windows - that is to say small, single light, narrow with high pointed arches. None remain, so this is of course conjectural, but is based on my belief that this wall was built before the 14th century.

14th Century: There was a great stirring of activity in church building. Locally our neighbouring parishes were setting about the building of their rather grand churches which were completed in the 15th century. In the process they appear to have pulled down all that had gone before. In Edwardstone the Montchensi family undertook their enhancement on a much more homely basis. The main walls of their nave were sound so they saw no reason to pull them down. And they resisted the temptation to build them any higher to let more light in. Instead they replaced all the existing Early English windows and fortunately just one of the replacement windows remains. This is the two light window between the porch and the tower. The tracery style is known as Decorated, it is fairly simple so can be designated early, as later Decorated work is superbly flamboyant. This window has of course been subsequently restored but I have concluded that this work was an honest copy of the original 14th century work.

The Prior of Colne (who was now responsible for managing the church in Edwardstone (see page 27), was not to be left out and he built himself a new chancel and sanctuary. Outside the 'texture' of his south wall changes and seems to be different either side of the priest's door. There may have been a smaller structure that was later extended or the difference may have arisen from repair work.

15th Century: Church re-building and extension was at its height. As was our custom Edwardstone took things a bit more quietly. Early in the century Sir Thomas Mountchansey (as the family now styled itself) removed the 14th Century window in the centre of the south wall of the nave and replaced it with a very much larger window in the new (for Edwardstone at least) Perpendicular style. To do him justice he may have done the same thing on the north wall but as this has disappeared we shall never know. Perhaps he was trying to catch the attention of his Creator in the hope that he would be granted a male heir.

As we continue to look at the nave wall we are now left with the two flanking windows. The architectural style is still Perpendicular but the flat Tudor shaped tops tell us they are later work than the central window. We shall tell you more about them and the fifteenth century additions when you come into the church.

19th Century: Before the 19th century there was a wooden porch on the south wall, sheltering the door to the Nave. It is possible that it may have been part of the 14th century improvements. Only an ancient cambered tie beam now remains and can be seen inside the Victorians' porch, over the church door, as you enter the nave.

The medieval porch was a busy and an important part of church ritual and parish life. It was here, in the porch, that the Priest and the Sponsors conducted the opening ritual on behalf of the baby (the christening) before it could be brought into the church for its Baptism. It was here also that the marriage vows were exchanged, the porch being deemed sufficiently holy and sufficiently public for such a purpose. It was here that public penance began, many commercial transactions took place, agreements signed and wills witnessed.

We live in a more prosaic age. Part of our 19th century brick porch serves as a store for brooms, dusters, dustpans and the like.

The West Side

Just beyond the porch at the west end of the church stands a fine flint tower. Its battlements are some 58 feet above the ground and round its base is a band of dressed flint panels. Towers were built by specialist teams so the estate workers would have been spared this task, although it is highly likely that descendants of the men who built our south walls acted as labourers for the tower team.

In 1979 the tower was judged to be in a very poor state. The sum needed to restore it (£18,000) seemed enormous. While we were wondering if the work was really as urgent

as the Diocesan Architect maintained, (don't we always?) nearby Bildeston Church flint tower (similar date) suddenly fell down. This concentrated our minds wonderfully as we were forced to face the choice of raising the money somehow or pulling the tower down. A public meeting was held and we hope the outcome will be visible for another 500 years. At the finish the work had cost a total of £31,471. But in addition to all the original work proposed we had incorporated a reinforced concrete ring beam against the day when the bell frame could be restored. You can see a small panel on the south facing wall of the tower displaying the names of the craftsmen who carried out the restoration work so carefully.

The North Side

16th Century: William Bogais in his will dated 7th September 1506 or, as his will so beautifully put it, "in the vigil of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary" instructed his executors "to make a vestry at Edwardstone church with my goods". This was done for him by workmen of the old school. The walls are 30 inches thick and the unknapped flints have carefully been laid in horizontal courses. Many observers have thought that it was "as old as the chancel". Have another look when you walk back to the car park. A second benefactor installed a fireplace and chimney. It must have been quite snug in there in the winter. There are some more notes about the north walls on page 61.

A Walk Round the Inside

After many centuries of burials the level of the churchyard has risen considerably. So you must step down as you pass through the Montchensi wall to enter the church. May we suggest that you begin your perambulation by walking across the church towards the font. As you pause to look through the great arch into the tower you will see the ropes of our ring of bells. Their story is told on page 34.

Medieval Glass: At the peak of the tower window there is a roundel of yellow stained glass depicting a fleur-de-lys. High in the tracery of the other west end window overlooking the font are two small lozenges of red glass. Sadly these three fragments are all we have left of our pre-Reformation medieval glass.

The 15th Century Extension: You now come to the north aisle. Circa 1434 the male line of the Montchensi family failed. Sir Thomas Mountchansey and his wife Beatrix were survived by a daughter called Jane. (So much for the new window). The Mountchansey heiress had married Sir Richard Waldegrave, Lord of Bures and Silvesters, a famous soldier.

This was a time of much alteration and addition to English parish churches. The gothic Perpendicular style was now fully developed and there was a great eagerness to display it. At Edwardstone Jane's Waldegrave descendants set about extending the church by building a north aisle and Lady Chapel and are probably responsible for the tower, although it may be earlier.

As will be seen by the plan inside the front cover, the Anglo-Norman church was long and narrow. The original windows would have been small and the inside dark and much in need of the many candles so favoured by the medieval church. The construction of the north aisle with its splendid windows not only nearly doubled the size of the church but also let in an enormous amount of light. And this was enhanced by two new flanking windows in the south wall of the nave which you will see have the same tracery as the north aisle windows. Also at this time the fine arch between the Nave and the Chancel would have been built. Where they exist, ancient Churchwardens' accounts show that ordinary Parishioners also contributed to such undertakings. We have no such records but we can get a glimpse of financial support in three surviving medieval wills. In 1463 Thomas Cros left "£3 and more if needed" for "a parclos" (parclose) and instructions that he be buried in "the new ylda" (aisle). In 1465 Agnes Bogays (relict of Thomas) left in her will 40 shillings for the "ad nova archam fabric". Whether this refers to the arcade or the chancel arch is now not clear to us. Later in the same year Edward Clark left 6 shillings and 8 pence for the "new archa".

The Arcade: The new north wall with its splendid windows was built, then the aisle's lean-to roof was erected, so the aisle was formed first. Then, slowly and painstakingly, the old north wall (now inside the building) was demolished and the arcade inserted bay by bay in its place. Birkin Haward in his 'Suffolk Medieval Arcades' writes of our arcade as being 'light and elegant in effect and no doubt the work of an accomplished master mason'.

The Font: Standing at the west end of the aisle and opposite the entrance door is the Font. In early medieval times it was the object of much parochial pride, since it demonstrated to all and sundry that the parish had successfully wrestled away the right to baptise its own flock from the local mynster church. Hand in hand would have gone the valuable rights to marry and bury as well. Infant mortality rates dictated that everybody came to be baptised on the day of their birth whenever possible. This was also very important for those babies destined to be their parents' heirs. Sometimes ornate proceedings were employed to fix the occasion in peoples' memories, later to be recounted by witnesses called to establish the date the heir came of age. In every sense the font was a fine symbol of parish authority in addition to its sacramental purpose. We tell more of its story on page 31.

Ancient Benches: Two ancient church benches stand in the corner against the walls here. They are all that remain of the seating that existed before the Victorian restoration. There were also many box pews and some had been fixed to the piers of the arcade. You can see many places where the piers needed repairs. The benches themselves have been repaired and the stepped ends are older, probably 16th Century, than the seat planks or the backs.

The Doorway: The north doorway is 14th Century no doubt being the re-used north doorway from the wall that was demolished.

The Wall Painting: High up in the corner of the west wall between the windows and overlooking the font is a painting of an angel with a censer. The first thing to be said about the wall painting is that it is post medieval and its date is a mystery although D.P. Mortlock (Suffolk Churches) suggests 18th Century. There is a chance that it may be a re-worked older painting. Perhaps we should content ourselves with the thought that angels are always welcome. With that comfortable thought in mind you may walk along the north aisle towards the east.

The Lady Chapel: At the east end of the aisle stands the Lady Chapel. Five hundred years ago an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary (Our Lady of Edwardstone as she is reverently called in more than one local pre-Reformation will) would have stood in the aisle's eastern bay. Edwardstone's fine organ now stands here, its beautiful plum coloured case dominating the scene. Its story is told on page 39.

The Brands: Jane Mountchansey had survived her husband and was succeeded by her son, Sir William, and the Manor remained in the Waldegrave family until 1598 when it was sold jointly to John Brand of Boxford and his son Benjamin, both wealthy clothiers. John died in 1610 leaving Benjamin as the Lord of the Manor. He decided to found a junior branch of the family and styled it as Brond and obtained a new grant of arms.

Benjamin died circa 1636 and his ledger stone with its splendid brasses now rests in the north aisle at the foot of the steps leading up to the Lady Chapel, although not in its original position. Sometimes it is covered by a protective carpet - you may roll it back to see the brasses but please replace it before you leave.

The brasses - demand our attention. As the Brands were Puritans themselves, with no taint of Popery, the Puritan iconoclasts left their brasses alone. They are intact and there are eight panels. Benjamin dressed in fine (but by then old fashioned) Elizabethan clothes with a large ruff, stands opposite his wife Elizabeth (née Cutler), who wears a calash head-dress with a French bonnet beneath it. She wears a small ruff around her neck and smaller ones around her wrists. They were married for 35 years and Elizabeth followed her husband to the grave after only "12 Days Divorcement".

The brasses of their six "sonnes" dressed in Stuart costumes and their six daughters dressed in a variety of costumes proudly support them. So they should - the inscription informs us that Elizabeth's children were "all nursed with her unborrowed milk". This was perhaps a reflection of the new Protestant values - strong in mind, strong in body. The eldest son John was to become Lord of the Manor after his father. In 1630 the second son Benjamin sailed with John Winthrop from Southampton in the 'Arbella' for America. John Winthrop was born in Edwardstone and became Lord of the Manor of our neighbouring parish of Groton. You can learn much more of him if you visit their church. In America he founded Boston, became the first Governor of Massachusetts and is now known as the Father of New England.

The Brands and the Bronds were eminent families, producing two High Sheriffs of Suffolk. Their pedigree and other memorials are on the wall nearby. The male line of the Bronds ran out after three generations and their heiress, another Elizabeth, married Sir Robert Kemp and he became Lord of the Manor.

When the Brands came to Edwardstone, all the building work was finished. This was a time of great sermons and lectures. Injunctions of 1547, 1559 and finally an Act of 1603 encouraged churches to provide 'comely and decent' pulpits. Old John Brand was not described on his brass (on the wall in the Lady Chapel) as "a freind (sic) and lover of pious and godly ministers" for nothing, and he would have been happy to oblige, and provide us with our fine octagonal pulpit. It has its original wall board and octagonal tester. At first it was set up further down the nave between the first and second windows. You will see that the wall board would have neatly covered the space between the windows. This was Puritan country of course but I cannot help feeling that many of the ordinary members of the congregation must have seen the introduction of long sermons as a poor substitute for the abandoned Church Ales. John's Brass also tells us that he "Hath left some remembrance to ye poore inhabitance (sic) of this Towne.....yearly for ever." (See page 17).

About this time we also recieved our fine ogee font cover. The Brands were to make one other very significant contribution to the church although it was not apparent at the time. In 1662 Benjamin's great niece, Susanna Brand, who lived at the Hall as a child and worshipped here, married John Morden, a merchant of the Levant and the East India Companies and you may shortly read about the consequence of this marriage alliance.

The Chancel and Sanctuary

The Altar - Made of oak it replaced the Reformation table. On the front it has three panels. The flanking panels are decorated by linenfold and the centre panel has a beautiful Paschal Lamb surrounded by a stylised crown of thorns.

The Reredos - Surely the crowning glory of the Victorian restoration. The Churchwardens' Log Book records the gift as follows "1910 A Reredos of three panels containing in the Centre the Crucifixion with St. Mary, St. John and St. Mary Magdalen, on the left a figure of the Archangel Gabriel and on the right of St. Mary was dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Ely (Dr. Chase) on March 8th 1910 at the close of a Confirmation held at 6.30pm. The design for the Reredos was supplied by C.G. Hare Esq. (Mr Bodley's successor). The figures were carved by Messrs Bridgeman of Lichfield, the canopy work was gilt, and the figures decorated by Mr. Harper of London. The figures were covered with Gesso, then gilt and finally the colouring applied."

The Piscina - This is the name given to the earliest fonts but it seems to have changed artefacts after only a short while and we now mean the shallow medieval wash basin let into the south wall of the Sanctuary. The opening is surmounted by a 14th century cusped arch. Before the arrival of the Puritan iconoclasts there was probably a decorative canopy. If so

it may well have looked something like the beautiful gilded canopy across the top of the 19th century Reredos. The damage to the cusps may be the result of knocking the canopy off the wall. The basin itself is gently fluted in a quatrefoil plan, but was not cut square to the wall line, neither is the drain hole drilled in the centre of the space. Clearly it was the work of a journey-man rather than a master mason. Perhaps he lived on the manor. We are lucky that the Puritans did not brick up this Piscina opening.

Before the Reformation during Mass the Celebrant would ritually wash his hands here. Because of the belief in the nature of the bread and wine as taught by the doctrine of Transubstantiation everything simply drained into the fabric of the wall on its way to being absorbed by the earth. There are no drainage spouts in the sanctuary walls of the other churches in the benefice which is quite usual. But Edwardstone has an earthenware spout. Was this inserted by a Puritan I wonder?

The Aumbry - This is the lockable cupboard set in the south wall of the sanctuary just beyond the Piscina and covered with a small curtain. It contains the consecrated bread and wine. This is new as the medieval aumbry was not as fortunate as the piscina and has disappeared. This is a practical response to a future of fewer ordained full-time priests having the cure of the souls of an increasing number of parishes in ever expanding benefices.
The Bishop having given his specific permission we are now able to have lay led services of "Holy Communion by Extension". These services differ from a Priest's Celebration, being a lay distribution by authorised persons, of the Bread and Wine which has been consecrated here by the Parish Priest in the presence of the congregation at an earlier service. This arrangement also allows a Lay Elder to take Communion to the sick when the Priest is not available.

The Sanctuary Door to the Vestry - The Puritans disliked the idea of the Vestry door opening into the Sanctuary so much that they bricked it up. Protector Somerset having already removed the Altar and the Tabernacles of our two Gilds from the Lady Chapel they cut a new doorway through the east end wall of the north aisle. It was a rough 'on the cheap' sort of job although they moved the old door here. The wall above the new doorway is supported on a simple wooden lintel which can be compared unfavourably with the stone arch of the original doorway uncovered and re-opened in the Victorian restoration.

The Bishop's Chair - For some considerable time on the rare visits of a Bishop a seat was borrowed from the nearby Hall. An anonymous gift has allowed the P.C.C. to make good its deficiency. The beautiful new chair was designed and made by Andrew Beckwith. The back of the newest chair in the church echoes the shape of the oldest bench ends near the font.

The Altar Rail - This was installed in 1993. It was designed by Peter Cleverly, Diocesan Architect and constructed by Messrs William Deaves.

May we suggest that you now walk between the Victorian choir stalls to the chancel steps for a view of the nave.

The Nave Roof: This is a single framed roof, probably erected in the 14th Century, with five sturdy tie beams. One is gloriously warped and as there is no sign of distortion of the timbers at either end it must have been installed in this condition. On each tie beam stands an octagonal crown-post with a moulded cap and base. Originally the crown-posts supported the crown plate (a lateral tie beam which ran the length of the nave). Each of the five trusses has a collar and each crown post has braces to the collar and braces to the crown plate.

When the Victorians carried out their great restoration they found the crown plate in an utterly ruinous state and in structural terms useless. Since the integrity of the structure of the building did not appear to suffer from the loss they decided not to replace it. And yet it appears visible when one is standing in the nave. But what we can see is the cosmetic device of what is, in effect, an elongated box, two sides and a bottom enclosing the remains of the original crown plate and looking remarkably like a solid beam. No mention of this is made in the Church Memorandum Report, but as I understand Victorian Restorers frequently used this device to cover up old timbers perhaps this isn't surprising.

The Rector maintains that the best way to view the roof is to lie on one of the pews with ones head nearest to the central aisle. This is not obligatory!

The beautiful wrought iron chandeliers were made by a Northamptonshire blacksmith, possibly Bainbridge Reynolds. They must have been a wonderful sight, when all the 96 candles were alight. I wonder how long it took to light them and to dowse them. They were wired for electricity in 1957 in memory of Frederick Younger, Churchwarden. The kind souls who used to clear up the wax drips on the floor heaved a collective sigh of relief.

The Visual Effects of the Reformation

As you stand on the Chancel steps looking around there are many things that you cannot see because they are no longer here.

Slowly and painfully many of the old medieval teachings and visual aids gave way to the teachings of the Reformed Church of England. With politics and religion inextricably intertwined there were to be many twists and turns. These included, the proclamation of a usurping Queen and her subsequent execution, and the deaths of two Archbishops, one by burning, the other by beheading, to say nothing of the countless numbers of judicial murders of others on both sides, the repulsing of a mighty seaborne invasion, a bungled attempt to blow up the House of Commons, a civil war, the judicial murder of an anointed King, the military imposition of a Puritan Commonwealth, the restoration of the Monarchy, and finally a bloodless revolution leading to the dethronement and exile of an anointed King, by his Son-in-law, who was threatening a very bloody one if necessary.

The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 became the continuing bedrock of the Church of England which, as the National Church, tried to steer a middle course between the pre-Reformation Church and the Puritan extremes But from the break with Rome in the reign of Henry VIll it was not until the accession of William and Mary in 1689 (eight Reigns in all and Cromwell) that the Reformed Church finally became secure.

With the Protestant insistence on a body of beliefs underpinned directly by the scriptures replacing a complex series of observances underpinned by Papal decree, the theological "cleansing" of the Church had endeavoured to begin on a high note. Whilst Henry VIII would take every opportunity to plunder Church property and cash, the 'Defender of the Faith' remained a Catholic (though not Roman) and needed to balance his position between the reformers and the traditionalists. His vacillations and mood swings were to check the speed of change. After his death the Reformation hit the Church like a sledgehammer as wholesale plundering got under way and the movement descended into an orgy of puritanical purging leading to devastating destruction.

We were to lose our Medieval stained glass, our Holy Water Stoup, our Gild Tabernacles, the Parclos of Thomas Cros, the Chancel Screen, the Rood Loft, the Holy Rood itself and whatever paintings there might have been upon the walls. The Brands would have approved. They were enthusiastic Reformers and had become staunch Puritans. But these were bewildering times for ordinary worshippers. They were to see the everyday rationale by which they had worshipped and lived together torn apart. Perhaps the most dramatic loss was the destruction of the Rood.

The Rood Complex formed a great focal point, and its splendid and dramatic proclamation of "Christ Crucified" dominated the nave. It had been the object of worship and veneration for generations. Above the screen that separated the chancel from the nave was the rood-beam supporting the Holy Rood, a great Crucifix with life sized figures of the Crucified Christ, his Mother, and St John. It was possible to walk along the beam to tend the many candles on the candlebeam. It was also possible to have a small altar on the beam. The puritans regarded the Holy Rood as the worst of all images and their orgy of destruction left none in Suffolk although a few beams survived. The wall behind the pulpit still houses the rood-loft winding staircase and the upper opening indicates where the beam was.

We can turn once again to some ancient wills. Agnes Bogays whom we met earlier left 12 shillings "To the making of the image of the new cross and for painting the cross and image". John Framlyngham's will of 1470 makes provision for the new Vicar to celebrate "on the Roodloft 15 masses for my soul and my parents souls". From this we learn that we had a small Altar on our Roodloft. William Kyng in 1496 left 20 marks "to the church of Edwardstone for to paint the Candlebeam".

Once the Reformation got under way such bequests disappear from the local wills. Nevertheless many of the congregation must have been loath to abandon the pattern of penitential rituals, which for generations they had been taught to observe. In particular they must have found it very difficult to surrender their belief that their prayers and

penances on earth would ease their ancestors' entry into heaven, coupled as it was with the hope that their own children would do the same for them. The family bonds linking those souls already in Paradise, and those in Purgatory preparing themselves for entry into Paradise with those still on Earth were very powerful ones. Despite this, the Reformation continued to make progress and the doctrine of Purgatory eased into obscurity in the English Church. As a result all its physical manifestations disappeared from most churches, Edwardstone amongst them.

The Charities

With the passing of the Brands the Lords of the Manor were not to play a leading role in the care of our parish church until the 19th Century. Everywhere the great period of church enlargement and enhancement had come to an end. For one thing there was virtually nothing much left to do. Any latent impulse to find something must have been extinguished by the violent iconoclasm of the Puritans. Added to all this was a growing unease about the disappearance of the caring function previously exercised by the abbeys all now utterly destroyed. Perhaps it is not surprising that the gentry deprived of the opportunity to found religious charities, redirected their philanthropic impulses towards founding secular charities. In Edwardstone the following charities were founded:

John Brand's Charity 1640
Isaac Brand's Charity 1709
Chaplin's Charity and Alston's Gift 1725
French's Dole 1728
Town Lands Charity 1810
Edwardstone Almshouses -
Mrs Ann Lovell Shepherd 1855

These valuable legacies are still in existence and are administered by Parish Trustees having been amalgamated into one scheme by Major General Cosmo Nevill in 1968. For the last twenty years Mrs. Elizabeth Powell has been the Confidential Clerk.

Earlier in our narrative we recorded that in 1662 Susanna Brand had married John Morden, a prosperous merchant from London. In 1688 he was created a Baronet by King James II. Sadly there were no children of the marriage. In keeping with the times Sir John became an important philanthropist by founding a great charity to provide homes for "elderly decayed merchants". Known as Morden College it was built to a fine design in the style of Sir Christopher Wren and stands on the south eastern edge of Blackheath, where it continues to flourish. Dame Susan also founded a Charity and her Morden Trustees have made many generous donations to the church. But first we must pause and take our minds back to the Reformation and one of its unexpected consequences.

Long before the Reformation many English parishes, Edwardstone amongst them, had their Rectorial Dues (the Great Tithes and the Glebe) gifted to one of the great religious foundations. If the Parishes supposed with the dissolution of the Abbeys and Monasteries the money would revert to them they were quickly disillusioned. Henry VIII seized the incomes and set about the business of selling them for ready cash. These 'annuities' quickly became tradable assets.

When he died Henry, apparently, still owned the Edwardstone Dues. His daughter Elizabeth I inherited them and later traded a parcel of properties which included the Edwardstone Dues for "some valuable manors" with the Bishop of Ely, who thus became the last of our ecclesiastical Rectors.

Very few of the new rectors, most of them laymen, exhibited much enthusiasm for diverting their annuities towards the upkeep of churches in which they had little or no interest. It is perhaps hardly surprising that churches became neglected, many fell into decay, some entirely ruinous. The Victorians were to mount a massive rescue operation and we recount our own story next.

The Lowry-Corry Restoration

In Edwardstone Colonel The Honourable Henry Lowry-Corry, youngest son of the Earl of Belmore, Patron and Churchwarden, responded to the inspiration of his wife Blanche, daughter of the first Viscount Halifax, (who was England's leading Anglo Catholic layman and an enthusiastic restorer of churches) and set in hand essential repairs and a complete restoration of the interior. He employed George Frederick Bodley as his Architect. Bodley was a famous cathedral restorer and designer of some of our finest late 19th and early 20th century churches. He took great pains over his work for our little rural parish church. Edwardstone is a tribute to his sensitivity. There was much to be done.

If you now stand under the chancel arch and look around, just about everything you can see within the building dates from this period. The only furnishings that predate this restoration are the pulpit, the font bowl and cover, the two ancient benches and five of the bells.

We will let the Church Memorandum Book tell us about the state of the church and the Restoration which began in 1877.

> "Mr George F. Bodley visited the Church in February with a view of seeing what was necessary to be done and to prepare plans etc.
>
> "At that time the roof of the Nave was of lathe and plaster white-washed, the lathes being nailed on to the braces which spring from the Wallplate and to the underside of the rafters, thereby showing no woodwork with the exception of the said wallplate, the big crossbeams, and the King-posts. The body of the nave was filled with high-backed pews of irregular height and size, the pulpit standing between the first and second windows counting from the East, with a reading desk below of the same style but of common workmanship, and with pews built up round it. At the west arch was a platform about three feet high, on which were arranged low forms for the schoolchildren: the floor was of white brick. The passage up the Nave was crooked to the church and along it were laid the three tombstones now in the Tower. The columns of the Arcade and all the stonework were white-washed, and the woodwork painted brown and varnished.

"The roof of the aisle was lathe and plaster showing the beams as is now the case in the chancel aisle, and the pews were similar to those in the nave. The Brass of the Brand family lay N. and S. against the vestry wall, evidently not its original position, and over the vestry door which stood nearly in the centre of the wall were fixed the alabaster tablet, now over the aisle door, and the one in memory of Mr. French, now facing North. The roof of the Chancel was lathe and plaster white-washed. Following the same lines as at present the seats were open, of varnished deal, occupying about the same space as at present, and had been put in at the same time as the first organ.

"The sanctuary began about 18 inches nearer the East and at the top of two steps were placed high communion rails. The Table itself was small, and over it was a ledge on which rested slate tablets, containing the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments. The door leading into the Vestry had at some time been removed, and the passage blocked up and plastered over. The floor was almost entirely paved with tombstones now placed in the Chancel aisle. (The Lady Chapel).

"All the plans having been prepared and the alterations to be carried out settled on, Mr Hawkins of Monks Eleigh was engaged as builder, and in August he boarded off the chancel and chancel aisle from the rest of the church and proceeded to strip it. Service was performed in the chancel for some months longer.

"The woodwork of the roof having been found to be in a ruinous state it was stripped of the tiles bit by bit and new rafters introduced identical with the old ones, and when any piece of the old wood was found passably sound it was used up again for braces. It appeared that it had been repaired once before since its original erection in the 14th century. It was re-plastered between, instead of beneath, the rafters, thereby showing all the woodwork which was stained so as to bring the three different aged woods to one colour. The plaster was brought to a parchment tone and the monogram "I.H.C." stencilled between the rafters. The gold stars were fixed on each timber to relieve the darkness of their look, and the wall-plate which was shallow and mean had a moulding added to it to increase its size.

"The Platform round the west Arch was cleared away, and the floor of the Nave and Aisle was re-laid on one level with Suffolk tiles, a Porritt stove being sunk to the west of the South Door.

"New oak benches were placed in the church being copied from two old which had been worked into the old pews, and whose bench ends are now part of the seats in the Tower and west end of the North Aisle. The fronts and backs were enriched with linen-fold carving copied from an old panel which was evidently the remains of an old screen dividing the aisle from the chancel aisle.

"The whole of the Nave, Tower and Aisle were panelled in oak from a new design by Mr Bodley and the columns and stonework, which were much injured were scraped and repaired.

"The lathe and plaster were taken off the aisle roof, and as there were gaps between the planking, which runs at right angles to the rafters, showing the lead, the intervals between the rafters were filled up with thin oak boards running parallel to the rafters. It was then stained to match the nave, and gold stars having been added, some verses of the Venite were written underneath.

"The Pulpit which was much damaged was repaired by Rattee and Kett of Cambridge, who replaced several missing panels, added the ornaments at the bottom and restored the pedestal. It was placed in front of the first window of the nave, and the steps were so arranged as to lead both up to the pulpit and into the Rood Screen staircase, the lower opening of which was closed by a new door and the upper by a curtain. An iron rail was added to the staircase being made by the village blacksmith, Dansie.

"The masonry of the window behind the pulpit being in a state of decay was renewed and the tracery was filled with stained glass designed by Mr Bodley and executed by Burlison and Grylls of Newman Street, London. The lower part was also reglazed.

"The Lectern was made by Franklyn of Oxfordshire.

"The 'Brand' Brass was removed to the top of the aisle.

"The regular Sunday Services were discontinued after the 18th of November and they were held in the School till 24th March 1878 when the Nave and Aisle were re-opened.

"The restoration of the Chancel was then taken in hand. The lathe and plaster was removed from the Chancel roof and it was boarded in deal, a new cornice was added, and the whole was painted in panels by Mr. Powell who was sent by Messrs. Leach of Cambridge who had previously stained all the woodwork of the Church. The 134th Psalm was written just above the cornice, a moulding was added to the East Window, and the east wall from the cornice up was painted with red flowers. All the tombstones were collected and placed in the chancel aisle, and the chancel floor was re-laid in Portland stone and slate, the Sanctuary being brought out as far as the commencement of the aisle arch.

"A new oak Communion Table was placed in the church and the altar rails were replaced by two oak kneeling desks. The doorway leading into the Vestry was re-opened and an oak door was hung. An oak Credence Table was introduced and the lower part of the East Wall was covered with hangings so designed as to harmonise in colour and effect with the altar cloth. They were made by Messrs. Watts

of Baker Street, London. The Tracery of the window was filled with glass by Burlison and Grylls.

"The deal benches were replaced by oak choir seats, the Poppy heads of which were copied from an old one which was found in pulling up the floor of the nave, and which with the exception of a skull found under a pew, and the traces of a receptacle for holding holy water which is behind the panelling just east of the South door, was the only object of any interest discovered during the restoration. The Choir seats were not placed in the Church till the end of December 1878 having been made by Mr. Hawkins. Low benches for the school children and a second stove were placed in the chancel aisle. The beams of its roof were painted red with gilt stars and the plaster was painted in black, white and yellow.

"The church was re-opened by Dr. Woodford, Lord Bishop of Ely on the 14th September 1878, the opening service at which the Bishop preached commencing at 3 o'clock. It was attended by about 25 of the neighbouring clergy in their surplices, who sat in the chancel including Archdeacon Chapman, Canon Grant, The Reverend E Spooner, Rural Dean, The Reverend Charles Martin Torlesse, (the longest serving) Vicar of Stoke by Nayland. The service was read by the Reverend George Studdert, Vicar of the Parish. A collection in aid was made after the sermon which realised £14.13shillings.

"On the following day Sunday 15th the Holy Communion was celebrated by the Bishop at the 11 o'clock service. The sermon was preached by the Reverend E. Spooner. In the afternoon the Preacher was the Reverend J Braithwaite, Rector of Great Waldingfield.

"A tablet on which was inscribed the Ten Commandments was placed West of the North door and a new benefaction Board was put over the South door. No mention was made on it of the "Three Cottages on the Road to Mill Green", which were included amongst the gifts on the one that was taken down as they were sold, the consent of the Ratepayers who assembled at a Vestry Meeting on the 14th day of February 1861, by the Guardians of the Poor of the Poor Union, under the authority of an Act passed in the Sixth year of the reign of King William IV. Both these boards were painted by Messrs. Watts of Baker Street."

The Memorandum Book then records the following additional work.

"1898 New East Window presented by Lady Louisa Magenis in memory of her Uncle, Major Richard Magenis and Anne his wife. At the same time Oak panelling stained and gilt, was placed on each side of the altar and the East End Wall above was decorated in colour."

So it was that a fine sound building was standing here at the beginning of the 20th Century. In the first quarter the Lowry-Corry family continued to beautify the church.

Twentieth Century - The Churchwardens' Log Book records the installation of stained glass windows between 1920 and 1928; these are dealt with in more detail in the section of our stained glass windows on page 41. In the second half of the century, after World War Two and the subsequent imposition of crippling estate duty taxes the emphasis for the provision of care had to change. In old buildings nothing stands still for long and the Churchwardens' Log is full of the never ending routine of repairs. The following table is simply a record of the major works of this period.

1956-7 Church wired for electricity. Heating in Chancel and Choir stalls.

1972 A screen for the organ bench was made and installed by Mr John White in memory of his wife Katherine Rose.

1973 Restoration of Chancel ceiling. Repainted in Bodley's patterns and colours.

1974 Restoration of north aisle roof. Porous lead replaced by stainless steel.

1977 The Sanctuary carpet was gifted by Groton Church.

1979-80 Flint work of tower completely repointed. Re-usable facing stones reversed. Defective stones replaced by Monks Park from Bath.

1982 Electricity supply line reinforced. Under seat heating to centre and south pews.

1984-85 Church rewired

1985 Restoration of roof of Chancel and of Nave. Tiles stripped, timbers treated, no replacements necessary, felt laid and tiles replaced.

1986 Bells restored. (see page 34)

1993 New Altar rail installed.

1997 Ringloop was installed to assist those with impaired hearing.

Never has there been such a concentration of work on the church building as there has been in the last half century. It is a fine record for such a small community. Some of the enthusiasm shows through in this extract from the Churchwardens' register of repairs and restorations. "Despite the fact the North aisle had been cut off from the rest of the Church by polythene sheeting, the accumulated dirt was indescribable. Twenty seven parishioners cheerfully scrubbed cleaned and polished the whole Church for three days in time for the Service of Thanksgiving held at the Harvest Festival on October 9th 1974."

There are many other stories to be told of Flower Festivals, Christmas Fayres, Barbecues, Cheese and Wines and other events, generous covenants, bequests and gifts, responses to appeals. But even with all the local effort it would not have been possible to achieve as much as we have without outside assistance and we place on record our abiding gratitude to the following organisations:

Church Building Society
Department of Environment
Diocesan Board of Finance
Diocesan Building Society
Historic Churches Preservation Trust
Nichol Young Foundation
Suffolk Guild of Ringers
Suffolk Historic Churches Trust

and our very good friends at Morden College.

Our growing connections with Morden College

As a result of research work undertaken from 1966-68 by the late Mr Reginald Saw, Archivist of Morden College, and Sir Gerald Hodgson of Eltham, a member of the Society of Genealogists and the Heraldry Society assisted by the Reverend Brian Bird then the Vicar of Edwardstone, a brochure on Lady Morden and the Brands of Edwardstone was produced by Sir Gerald for the Trustees of Morden College.

And there things might have stayed but by a happy chance it turned out that the Chairman of the Morden Trustees Sir Cullum Welch was an old regimental colleague of Major General Cosmo Nevill who was Churchwarden at that time. Sir Cullum was invited to Edwardstone and General Nevill and his wife paid return visits on subsequent College open days. During this time the Trustees paid for the restoration of the Brand memorials and made a number of generous grants towards repairs of the church fabric.

After Sir Cullum retired Sir Ralph Perring was invited to Edwardstone and following this set about expanding our connections. The guest list to the annual Founder's Day celebrations lengthened. Then Sir Ralph kindly accepted a suggestion and issued a luncheon invitation and on 27 October 1982 the following members of the PCC

Mrs Pamela Blaber
Mrs Nellie Gant
Mrs Cora Green
Mrs Phyllis Green
Mr Walter Green
Mr Johnnie Griggs
Mrs Nancy Mackenzie
Mrs Grania Nevill
Major General Cosmo Nevill
Mrs Joan Welstand
The Hon. Mrs Rosemary Lowry-Corry
Mr Peter Welstand

were entertained in the Quadrangle members' dining room. This was an historic occasion the presence of ladies being a somewhat unusual happening.

The following year the new Vicar Richard Titford brought his own enthusiasms to the relationship and now a party of residents visit us each year to attend our Harvest Festival, when the Morden Chaplain preaches. The visitors are entertained at homes in the parish and many friendships have grown up. The Morden coach brings residents to our annual Christmas Fayre and on a summer outing to Suffolk when we contrive to meet each other for lunch.

On Sunday 11 September 1983 the Reverend Tom Ashton was the first Morden Chaplain to preach at Edwardstone. He has been followed by the Reverend Michael Lillingston-Price, the Reverend Ronald Saunders, the Reverend Bob Hill and the Reverend Robert Nurton.

Once again the College administration has moved on and we greatly appreciate all the help and support we get from the Trustees and their Chief Executive - Clerk to the Trustees - Major General Sir Iain Mackay-Dick., KCVO, MBE.

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OBE, TD, DL
Alderman Michael Oliver

A copy of Dame Susan's portrait once thought to be by Sir Peter Lely but now attributed to the English School, c. 1690 hangs in the nave. Our oldest Baptismal Register dates from 1645. The record of the Baptism of Susan's younger sister Annie is the first entry. You can read about one of the ways Dame Susan's Trustees chose to celebrate the Tercentenary of the founding of the College in the Story of the Organs on page 39.

The Church Silver

Theft of Silver: The following note appears in the Terrier of 1850:

> "The Flagon Chalice Patera (Paten) and plate presented by Charles Dawson Esq. in the room of a Chalice the gift of Joseph Brand Esq. and of two plates which had been stolen from the Church."

Silver Chalice: inscribed Presented by Charles Dawson Esq. 1839 (his memorial is on the north wall of the Sanctuary.) The Chalice is silver gilt inside, ten inches high and its diameter is four and a half inches. The shape of the bowl is sexfoil and is inscribed with the monogram I.H.S. surrounded by the rays of a sunburst.
Marks: a leopard's head uncrowned : makers' mark is JA set over IA, Joseph and John Angell with a crown in the centre : the date mark is a Roman Q (1831) set in a square : there is a sovereign's head and a lion passant.

Silver Paten: described as a Tazza same inscription as chalice (underneath), also sexfoil in shape with a foot : stands three inches high : is eight inches in diameter : it has the same monogram with sunburst in the centre : and has the same marks.

Small Silver Paten: (no foot) same inscription (underneath) is eight inches in diameter : has the same monogram and sunburst : the marks are a leopard's head uncrowned : makers mark RH set in an oblong : the date mark is a Roman S (1833) : a sovereign's head and a lion passant.
Silver Flagon: same inscription (underneath), body is ten and a half inches high with a hinged lid : on the side of the body is the same monogram set in a sunburst : marks: a leopard's head uncrowned, lion passant: Queen Victoria's head, dated 1845.

Silver Wafer Box: It measures four inches by two and one eighth inches wide: the inside is silver gilt and there are five compartments: stands on four ball feet: the lid is decorated with simple cross, the following inscription is on the base St Mary's Church Edwardstone, In memory of KATIE and BERNARD YOUNGER.

Small Silver Chalice: on permanent loan from St. Gregory, Sudbury (faculty no. 135 of 1988) Height five and a quarter inches : Diameter three inches : 22 ozs : Mark Birmingham 1917.

Armada Dish: Diameter, six and seven eighths inches, marks: 'a leopards head uncrowned, lion passant, makers mark RG -Garrard.

Pair of Candlesticks: Silver plated, twenty inches high, the stem standing on a triangular base, each face displays two angel faces on sunburst, with "paws" as feet.

Contents of Black Carrying Box

A small glass wine flagon four and a quarter inches high with a silver metal collar with thread, a silver metal screw top with cork insert, overall height four and a half inches. A silver metal paten three and a half inches diameter. Marked with an ear of corn and two narrow leaves.
A silver metal pyx, embellished with a simple cross and is one and three quarter inches in diameter.

Separately a silver pyx the lid embellished with the outline of a cross bottony on a sunburst all in a circle and is two and three quarter inches in diameter. There are some very small marks which include a lion passant and a leopards head uncrowned.

BRASSWARE

Alms Dish: nine inches in diameter, decorated around the rim IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE

Font Ewer: by public subscription this was a gift of the parishioners at the time of the Lowry-Cowry restoration. It stands seventeen and a half inches high, diameter of the neck is three and a half inches and of the belly nine inches. Beak spout and sturdy handle.

The Story of Hubert's Chantry and the Priory

Ours was a very early Chantry and as I see it was not, as later Chantries were, housed in a Chapel built as an extension to an existing church but was the whole church itself. Further if we consider the date of the King's confirmation (1115) it seems so unlikely that we had a stone building by then that we can speculate that our Chantry was originally the wooden cum wattle Saxon Church building recorded in Domesday.

At first sight the choice of Abingdon an Abbey in Berkshire (as it was then, now Oxfordshire) for the gift may seem somewhat surprising. Close by at the great Benedictine Abbey at Bury St Edmunds the cult of St. Edmund King and Martyr was flourishing and he was held in very great awe. Just how powerful this was may be measured by William the Conqueror's untypically generous decision to leave intact the Royal Saxon patronage of the Abbey and to continue its exemption from paying taxes to the himself. The new Norman Lords of Suffolk took note and many added their own gifts but not Hubert.

It seems there was a strong friendship between the first Hubert and his battle leader Aubrey de Vere, whose younger son Walter held our neighbouring manor of Chilton.

The Chronicles of Abingdon Abbey relate that Fabritius the Abbot (doctor to Henry I) had nursed Geoffrey de Vere (Aubrey's heir) through a life threatening illness and at first he seemed to recover. In gratitude he set about making a gift to the Abbey of the "Church of Kensington" but relapsed and died. His Father confirmed the gift "for the soul of my son". This church was last rebuilt in the 19th century and is still known as St. Mary Abbots. Aubrey also gifted his own local church at nearby Colne (Earls Colne) to be a monastic cell subordinate to Abingdon and in return the Abbot sent two monks to Colne. This took place between 1100 and 1107. Later their number increased to six and later to ten.

The second Hubert was happy to follow the example of his influential neighbour. In addition to the Church and land in Edwardstone he also gave two parts of his manors of Staverton and Stanstead, together with a tithe of the rents of their mills and woods also pannage for the monk's pigs. He also gave a tithe of the rents of turbage (the right to cut turf) at Staverton.

Thus it was that (the Saxon title Persona had disappeared although it lives on in the word Parson) the Abbot of Abingdon became our first Rector. Technically it was the Abbey that was our corporate rector but as the Abbot acted as though he was Rector it is easier to think of him as such. As with the Priory at Colne he sent two monks to the Priory at Edwardstone. Their first duty was to sing penitential Masses for the souls of the Lord of

the Manor and his family, ancestors and successors, for the rest of time. No doubt they also ministered to the tenants and workers on the Manor.

Forty-five years after King Henry's confirmation, in the time of Abbot Wakeline (1160) with the consent of Hugh son of Hubert and the additional assent of his own son and heir Stephen, the Monks were transferred to the rule of Prior William at the slightly older and now larger Priory at Colne. The tithes, lands and dues went with them. And so the Priors of Colne became the Rectors of Edwardstone.

The transfer was confirmed by Herbert de Losinga Bishop of Norwich (who pocketed the fee instead of the King this time). The witnesses to the confirmation were Muriel the second wife of Hubert, and Stephen (Eldest grandson of Hubert and his first wife), and two monks John and Gilbert. We can speculate that they were the two monks who served Edwardstone at that time and, if we are right, we have the earliest names of Christian Leaders here.

The Bishop's deed also recorded an additional grant. Prior William had obviously been busy because a further 4 acres of Margarasdune was granted. This was the right of the Prior to let the Priory pigs wander in the woods and feed on the acorn mast alongside the Lord's pigs. Malediction is pronounced against any of Hubert's successors who "contravene these acts".

Later Stephen, at the time of his inheritance and making his own confirmation, specified that the limit of pastorage for the monks' cattle would be "from Edwardstone Mill to the Wood".

In 1215 the great reforming Lateran Council instructed all monastic Rectors to withdraw their monks and to install Vicars. Like the Saxon Vicars they were to be paid a stipend. Just when the Prior of Colne found it more advantageous to himself to make this appointment we do not know but it was sometime before 1254 that he decided to exercise his responsibilities vicariously and the Colne monks came no more.

Edwardstone Priory, founded as a Monastic Cell had a short life and was never more than a dwelling for two monks. It has left its name behind in Priory Green and Priory Farm. Meanwhile Colne with its thrusting Priors grew under the patronage of the powerful De Veres and became an independent Priory in 1311.

The records of The Nonarum Inquisition of 1340 show how the first Hubert's original gift of 32 acres had grown. The Prior of Colne now held 95 acres in Edwardstone (the Vicar had access to some of this land). It produced an annual income of 31s. 8d. The Prior also held a messuage with dovecote, curtilage and a garden valued at 10s. 0d. p.a. Additionally he held 2 acres of meadow (as they are listed separately perhaps they were the additional 2 acres given by the first Hubert) valued at 4d. p.a. Also 6 acres of pasture valued at 12s. 0d. p.a. Also the tithes of two mills valued at 6s. 0d. p.a. It is interesting to note that the Montchensi family were prospering and that a second mill had been built. In addition to the Glebe income of course the Prior had the valuable great tithes.

The Medieval Vicars' Lot

The first glimpse of our medieval Vicars' stipends comes from the records of the Norwich (i.e. Bishop of Norwich) Taxation of 1254 where the Edwardstone annual stipend was listed as 13s. 4d. (1 mark). This pitiful amount was being paid 39 years after the Lateran Decree. At this time £9.6s.8d was going to Colne. However things did improve but only after stern instructions to the monastic Rectors who were made to cede the following.

1) Some use of the glebe and a share in the Rector's rights of pasturage and margaresdune if the Vicar had any animals.
2) The income from the lesser tithes. Those deriving from labour services and minor produce and always the hardest to collect.
3) The income from Oblations. Michaelmas had been added to the three Saxon feast days.
4) Oblations offered at the annual service of remembrance of the consecration of the church.
5) Mortuaries - which were a sort of ecclesiastical heriot (the Lord collected the best beast on the death of a tenant) where the Vicar could lay claim to the second best chattel in recompense for "tithes forgotten". Not possible from the poorer families of course.
6) Fees for weddings and burials and pennies for Masses and Confessions.

This had its effect because the second glimpse we get of the Vicar's lot comes from the records of the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 when the living was valued at £4. 13s. 4d. which was seven marks. We do not know this Vicar's name. The third glimpse gives us rather more detail. We now know the name of the Vicar John Holbrook de Waldingfield Parva. (until recently there was a Holbrook Hall at Little Waldingfield). The Nonarum Inquisition of 1340 gives us the following itemisation of the valuation of this Vicars living:

Tithe of milk and other small tithes	40s. 0d.	
The four principal yearly oblations	40s. 0d.	
Oblations on the annual feast day	13s. 4d.	
	93s. 4d.	£4. 13s. 4d.

Forty nine years later and still 7 marks!

Remember please that these figures are valuations. The Vicar still had the unenviable task of collecting the money. Out of his stipend he was expected to set an example of charitable giving and hospitality particularly when either the Bishop or the Archdeacon came on a Visitation, always with retainers. He must have been little better off than his flock and was locked together with them in dependence upon the vagaries of the weather for his livelihood. Our first known Vicar, Alexander de Sudbury, was in office in the years 1315-16 when the appalling wet weather led to widespread cattle disease. He was still here in 1320 the beginning of several years of severe drought.

Annates, to give them their proper name, made matters worse. A new appointee to an ecclesiastical benefice had to pay the first years revenue known as the First Fruits of his Living, to his Bishop for onward transmission to the Pope (in passing we should also note that the laity had to pay a tax to their overlords when inheriting property). The payment of annates could be spread over the first two years. In 1454 John de Lopham was 'Collector of First Fruits in the Diocese of Norwich for the Archdeaconries of Suffolk and Sudbury' to give him his grand title. This was the year that John Framlingham became our Vicar and his living was valued at £4. 13. 4d. This was 114 years after the Nonarum Inquisition still seven marks, and still difficult to collect.

The Muster Roll of 1522 records that the living of the Vicar, Sir Roger Bocher, was £6.13s.4d.

Pre-Reformation testamentary bequests almost invariably begin with instructions to make a payment to "The High Altar for my tithes and oblations forgotten." Locally the amounts range from 4d. to 13s. 4d. in the surviving wills.

These figures do not represent any attempt to calculate an exact amount. Rather they represent a sort of "catch all", "just to be on the safe side" sort of an arrangement. The testator would not wish to arrive in Purgatory with outstanding debts to his local church on his conscience. He firmly believed that those relatives who had gone before him were unlikely to welcome him, to put it mildly, if his meanness had impeded their own progress towards paradise. From a practical point of view it cancelled the right of the Vicar to a mortuary. Nevertheless the money which went directly to the Vicar would have been welcome. There would be no catching up from the poorer members of his flock.

There was another, occasional source of income for the Vicar. Before the Reformation testators frequently left bequests to finance the singing of Masses for their souls to shorten their stay in Purgatory. Often these bequests by-passed the Vicar and went directly to Friars or to Chantry Priests. These were priests who had no benefice and who sang (chanted) Masses for a living. They were able to use the Parish Church for this purpose. Perhaps you will remember that this was strictly forbidden when the Monks were here. Abbots and Priors always kept a firm grip on their cash flow. The Vicar had no such protection, although he did not always lose out. In 1533 Robert Kyng, one of our wealthy clothmakers, wanted to be buried in Boxford alongside his parents. His tithe apology is fulsome and worth recording here "To the Vicar of Edwardstone as well in recompense of my tithes and oblations if any have by me negligently forgotten and not paid, as in recompense of such offerings profits and advantages as might have gone to him if that my burial had been in the same parish 13s. 4d." This must have been very welcome to Roger Bocher who was Vicar then.

The living at Edwardstone, robbed by appropriation (the diversion of church income to other religious houses) was never going to be comfortable. To everyone's relief in 1532 Henry Vlll suspended the payments of Annates. In 1534, on second thoughts, he re-instated them and annexed them to himself, just in time to catch poor Robert Nutton who was instituted

Vicar here in the following year. Queen Anne inherited this income and in 1704 used it to set up a fund to assist poor clergymen.

The Medieval Gilds:

The great gilds (particularly the Trade Guilds which do not concern us) built and staffed private chapels. The well-to-do gilds installed altars in churches and paid chantry priests. In the great towns and cities the wealth of these fraternities made them big business. As long ago as 1382 Richard II was becoming alarmed about the money going into them, rather than coming to him in taxation.

Those who could not afford such expenses could nevertheless unite in their own reciprocal scheme of funding and, as we shall see, our Parish was able to support two modest fraternities. Modest they may have been but they played an important part in local social life. Each acted as a mutual charity and above all as a religious society, and each one was dedicated to a saint. The highlight of the year was the annual feast held after the celebration of a Mass in honour of their saint.

Membership was open to both sexes, including single women, across all the social groupings, providing the applicant could afford the subscriptions, which inevitably excluded the very poorest. The doctrine of Purgatory was central to much of the gild's activity.

Members benefited from the knowledge that they would have a funeral properly conducted by the priest reciting the Placebo Dirigie (the Office of the Dead) in the presence of all the other members of the gild who were obliged to attend each paying one penny towards the cost, not without grumbling sometimes. Their names would then be entered in the Gild's Bede Roll. Each year in church at the annual Mass the complete Roll was recited. Like the Norman Lord of the Manor with his chantry, they believed that this practice would continue to the end of the world and in this way their members would never be forgotten either. They saw this as an extremely important arrangement when they came to contemplate the words taken from verse 5 of chapter 9 of Ecclesiastes "the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, *for the memory of them is forgotten*" and from verse 9 of chapter 44 of Ecclesiasticus (a book of the Apocrypha) "But of others there is no memory they have perished as though they had never existed, *they have become as though they had never been born*".

In Edwardstone we had two gilds, each with its own tabernacle, inside which was kept a monstrance. This was a decorated container holding the consecrated wafer, known as the Host. The Roman Catholic Church held, and still holds, that at its consecration it becomes the whole substance of the body and blood of Christ. This change of substance is known as Transubstantiation, a doctrine rejected by the English Church at the Reformation. One of the important duties of each of the Gilds was to maintain a burning candle before the Host and the figure of their saint which stood in the tabernacle. Another was to hold up a candle (or candles) to illuminate the Host when it was elevated by the priest in the Mass at the High Altar.

Our Lady may have shared her Chapel with them (or they may have been in the Sanctuary). I have wondered what our Tabernacles looked like. There may have been a lockable cupboard with some sort of superstructure to house the saint. Possibly there may have been a passing resemblance to a small corner kitchen dresser without the upper shelves, but with a great deal more decoration.

One Fraternity was dedicated to St. John the Baptist and the other to St. Mary Magdalene. These Gilds exercised their charitable functions out of the subscriptions of their members. But they welcomed legacies as well (nothing changes: we welcome legacies too!). The earliest reference I can find is in the will of John Framelyingham, (1470) Vicar of Edwardstone clearly a member of both. He left 2 shillings to each fraternity with a specific direction to St. John the Baptist that the money be used for the "sustenation of a light". This was the candle burning before the image of St John. In 1491 Robert King, a wealthy clothier, left a legacy for the painting of St. John's tabernacle '£4 and if more to be paid'. In 1522 James Gosnold, another wealthy clothier, left 6s. 8d. for the Tabernacle of St. Mary Magdalene.

The Muster Roll of 1522 entry for Edwardstone, records "The stock (cash and property) of Gilds there 40s (shillings)". The Lay Subsidy of 1543 records the value of the stock of St John the Baptist as £7.4s.8d and that of St Mary Magdalene as £5.3s.4d. This totals 248 shillings a healthy increase in the twenty one years since the Muster Roll.

Two years later in 1545 the Chantries and Gilds were closed down "vesting them in the King's hands". Another two years later the King was dead and his young son Edward VI on the throne. Protector Somerset pursued this confiscation of Church property with great vigour. However the locals saw this coming. The stock of St John's had decreased considerably while the stock of St Mary's had been spirited away completely and her Gild does not appear in the Commissioners' accounts.

At first sight our gild saints may appear to be an odd couple. They did to me until I remembered that John was the first person to recognise Christ, baptising him at the beginning of his ministry and Mary was the first person to recognise him after his resurrection.

The Story of our Fonts

The early Christians followed John's example and baptised their converts by total immersion in a river. After the Roman Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the state religion baptistries begin to appear. They were built near to but separate from the churches. One of the oldest was built at Ravenna in 390. It was an octagonal building with an octagonal bath in the centre. The Bishop administered the sacrament on the Eves of Easter and of Pentecost. In order to accommodate the urgent need of the very sick authority was given to priests. The Council of Cloveshore 747 issued orders that the Roman ritual was to be followed, adults were to be immersed three times, the priest stood in the font to hold a baby which was also immersed three times.

In Saxon England, after the conversion had run its course there was a reduction in large groups of adults and smaller fonts were installed inside the mynsters, some made of wood, some of lead and some of stone, all large enough for the complete immersion of babies. The baby was plunged completely into the water and the indignant yelling was seen as proof that the devil was being driven out. The timely administration of this sacrament was seen to be of the utmost importance and both civil and ecclesiastical law instructed the clergy to be ready 'both day and night'. A priest could be deprived of his living if he allowed a baby to die unbaptised by wilful neglect. Midwives were given authority to baptise in cases of emergency. So in retrospect it seems somewhat surprising that the 'estate churches' had so much trouble in obtaining permission to install their own fonts.

Fonts were kept charged with Holy Water and in 1236 there was an order that fonts be fitted with covers. The one at Edwardstone would have probably been in the nature of a simple flat lid. By the 16th century the water was being changed monthly with an established ritual to bless the new water.

With all this in mind it comes as a shock when we read in our Victorian Memorandum Book that in the 19th century the Font stood on a pile of rubble leaning against an arcade shaft. Now a font shaft is not something that can be broken in a casual accident. In the reign of Edward VI (1547 - 1553) churches were encouraged to move their fonts to the east end to be nearer the Holy Table and thus increase the participation of the congregation. In Elizabeth's reign (1558 - 1603) those churches which had complied were encouraged to move them back again because of the unpopularity of the order. We do not know if our own font was troubled in this way and, if it was, whether it was damaged. Had the shaft been broken then it is difficult to believe that it would not have been repaired then. In 1564 Elizabeth forbade the removal of fonts.

By an Act of 1641 the Puritan Parliament sent out commissioners to destroy "all scandalous pictures" in churches (many wall paintings were whitewashed so saved). The infamous Dowsing and his troopers swept through Suffolk but did not visit Edwardstone. However there were many other religious fanatics with similar commissions who were on the rampage. Dowsing was the one who left a written account. There is little doubt in my mind that this was when our font was desecrated. The rage against altars included fonts and "scandalous pictures" included carvings on font bowls and shafts.

The sides of our bowl are now quite plain but closer inspection reveals that they are not as thick as one would expect. This leads to the suggestion that they may have been re-cut to clean them up after an attack. This conjecture is supported by what appears to be some repair work on the NE and SE rims, where staples may have been fitted. These 'repairs' are very close to the outer edge of the rim and not nearer the centre where one would expect to find them.

The disappearance of the shaft also suggests an attack on the carvings.

As I see it the broken pieces of the shaft were piled up carefully and the bowl settled on top of them after the horizontal crack had been repaired. The parishioners of Edwardstone still wanted to bring their new born babies for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. However much they resented what had happened they were loath to effect a more permanent repair and settled for making the best of a bad job. Unremarked by the Puritans of the day the font became a silent parable of Christ's broken body on the Cross.

And if my supposition is correct, thus it stayed for two hundred years until it was replaced by another font, the gift of Miss Roberts in memory of her father who had been Vicar here. The broken bits of the shaft were thrown away and the old bowl and its later Jacobean cover were stored in the vestry where they must have been a glorious nuisance. Too much for the Victorian restorers it would seem. With Miss Roberts' consent, her font was removed and the fine ancient bowl with its cracks repaired was brought back and mounted on Purbeck marble supports standing on a stone plinth as we see it today. Somewhere along the way the finial on top of the font cover got knocked off and a village carpenter made a new one when the font was restored.

The Story of the Bells

In 1553 Edward VI ordered a Return of Church Goods and from this we know that Edwardstone had 4 bells. No doubt they were set in the sturdy oak frame that was to stand in the tower until 1986. Over the years all these original bells have been re-cast and added to.

It was in very troublesome times that we began our re-casting. In 1640 King Charles I had recalled Parliament after an eleven year interregnum. His first attempt collapsed quickly (known as the Short Parliament) and the second later in the same year (known as the Long Parliament) was hostile to him. In that year the Civil War was just out of sight over the political horizon, and nothing was going to stop it coming on.

Our three oldest bells were cast by members of the famous Graye family who worked at their family home and foundry known as the Swan With Two Necks, below Headgate in the Parish of St. Mary at Walls, Colchester. The eldest son, known as Miles Graye II, cast the first two bells.

1640	The Third Bell weight 5cwt 2qrs diameter 30ins inscribed "Miles Graye made me M 1640"
1641	The Fourth Bell weight 6cwt diameter 31 1/2ins inscribed "Miles Graye made in 1641 M"

The Civil War began in 1642 and the subsequent Commonwealth Puritan Government detested the "superstitious ringing of bells". Just three years after the Restoration, no doubt a busy time for bell founders, Miles Graye III, younger brother of Miles Graye II, cast our third oldest bell.

1663	The Fifth Bell weight 7cwt 2 qrs diameter 34 11/16 ins inscribed "Miles Graye made me 1663"

The younger Miles sometimes worked at the family foundry which had been badly damaged by the Roundheads in the siege of Colchester, and sometimes as an itinerant. His father Miles Graye cast his masterpiece, the Tenor at Lavenham (1625) in a field to the west of that church. In their simple inscriptions the two sons were following their father's example for he was noted for his reticence. This contrasted with the practice of many contemporary founders who were not above praising their own skills or criticising their competitors in the inscriptions they cast. The three bells they founded have stood the test of time and still ring out bravely from our steeple.

Not so the next founder on the scene a half a century later. John Waylett was an itinerant bell founder from Bishops Stortford. C.W. Hawkins (Suffolk Church Bells) tells us that in 1709 Waylett cast three bells for us, presumably in the open.

These were a First or Treble, a Second, and a Sixth or Tenor. Only one of these bells still speaks to us from the steeple and this is

1709	The First or Treble Bell weight 4cwt 2 qrs diameter 28 ins inscribed Mr. Cook and Nuting - cw 1709"

Hawkins tells us that because of the criticism of one William Culpeck, Waylett had to recast the Second Bell and we still have the recast bell in our ring.

1710	The Second Bell weight 4 cwt 3qrs diameter 28 9/16 ins inscribed "Tuned by W.M. Culpeck in 1710"

So the inscription tells us that Culpeck had his way over this bell! It is tempting to identify him with a William Culpake listed in the Edwardstone Hearth Tax Roll 1674 as a householder with two hearths. This surely is our William, or his father.

Perhaps the original tenor had Waylett's name on it as it is certainly not on his other two. Be that as it may, the Tenor Bell did not meet with approval either, but relations between Waylett and Culpeck were so strained that a new bell founder Thomas Gardiner of Sudbury was

employed to recast it. This may have been his first commission. Neither Waylett nor Culpeck was pleased with this turn of events. Canon J.J. Raven (The Church Bells of Suffolk) who does not mention Waylett, reports that in their quarrel Culpeck designated Gardiner "a want-wit". Apparently this barb went home but, as Raven remarks, "a quarrel with a founder is like a quarrel with a newspaper editor", especially one like Gardiner, who had no reservations whatever about making his way in the world by advertising his skill. On his bell at Ickworth he cast:

Tho Gardiner He Did Me Cast = I'll Sing His Praise Unto The Last

So perhaps it is not surprising that Gardiner's inscription on our bell brings the intensity of the antipathy between the three men to life today. He seems to be arguing with more than one person, so I think it safe to leave Waylett in our reconstruction. In the first line Gardiner dismisses Culpeck. In the second he brands Waylett as the 'want d-wett' (want-wit) and rounds them both up in the third line. How he enjoyed composing the inscription, which reads:

ABOVT TY SECOND CVLPECK IS WRETT =

BECAVSE THE FOUNDER WANT - DWETT =

THAIR IVDGMENTS - WARE BVT BAD - AT LAST =

OR ELCE THIS BELL I NEVER HAD CAST

THO GARDINER =

Gardiner did not date the bell but he did cast four shields on it. Only one other Gardiner bell has the same number (the 5th at Belchamp Walter) and it is dated 1712. Other bells of his at this time and later have three shields, then a few bells have one and then he dropped them altogether. So 1712 seems a safe date for our bell. This bell has a rope pattern on the canons.

Because of the state of the bell-frame full circle ringing had to be brought to an end in 1885, although it was still possible to chime the bells. Subsequently each clapper had a rope attached which was then fastened to a lever on a wooden frame set on the tower wall. Unfortunately, the clapper of Gardiner's Tenor was not properly adjusted so that it rested against the side of the bell. As a result over a long period the vibration weakened the bell metal and a crack developed, and eventually a large chunk of metal fell off the lip of the bell. After this the Treble Bell was chimed to call the faithful to worship and the Fifth was tolled to bid them farewell. The last person to be responsible for this service was Mrs. Cora Green, who carried it out for more than a quarter of a century.

However in 1984 under the leadership of Sarah Titford, a restoration project was started by an enthusiastic band of local ringers and would-be ringers. With the approval of the Parochial

Church Council and the support of the Suffolk Guild of Ringers, the Edwardstone Church Bell Trust was launched in early 1985. The cost of the restoration amounted to some £25,000 and, after a busy year of fund-raising and many generous donations, the target was reached early in 1986.

The entire restoration was undertaken by John Taylor & Co Ltd of Loughborough. First the bells were brought down with the assistance of local helpers and then the old oak frame. A new steel frame was fabricated and erected in the tower, standing on the new ring beam. After retuning five bells were re-hung. An album of coloured photographs recording this is on display at the back of the Church.

Because of the nature of the damage it was not possible to repair the old tenor and because of the importance of the inscription it was not possible to recast it. So Taylors cast a new bell at a cost of £5,000 which was generously donated by the Trustees of Dame Susan's Charity.

1986	The Tenor Bell
	weight 9cwt
	diameter 38 in
	inscribed 'The Morden College Bell'

One hundred and one years after full circle ringing had come to an end a Service of Thanksgiving was held on 6th September 1986 and the bells rang out again.

We now have two Peal Boards hanging in the tower. The first peal was rung on 25 November 1986 as "A Thanksgiving for their restoration and a compliment to the Reverend and Mrs Richard Titford". The second was rung on Rogation Sunday 8 May 1988, which was the first peal to include Edwardstone ringers.

The ringers currently consist of about 12 local people of varying ages and backgrounds, most of whom have learned to ring bells since the launch of the Edwardstone Church Bell Trust. It is hoped that they will pass on their expertise to generations to come so that the restored bells may continue to ring out their message over the Suffolk countryside.

The Thomas Gardiner Bell was removed on permanent loan to a site outside the Chapel at Morden College where it stands on a plinth with a plaque describing its history.

The Concorde Story: As you leave the bells you may like to take this story with you. One of the exciting ventures of Sarah Titford when raising money for the restoration was to rent a Concorde from British Airways and sell tickets for a ride. The full Concorde flew on St Edmund's Day, 20th November, and some £3000 was added to the funds.

Two years later the Rector was on a British Airways flight and reading the in-flight magazine. In an article about Concorde he saw the St. Edmunds Day flight featured. Apparently so did his neighbouring passenger who leaned over and drew Richard's attention to "some nutty Vicar" who had hired Concorde to raise money to repair his bells. "And", he added "they say he is on this flight".

The Story of the Organs

During the incumbency of the Reverend Walter Cramer Roberts (1848 - 1867) an organ was erected in the Lady Chapel, and consecrated in July 1864. It was built by Jones of Fulham Road, London and paid for by public subscription and was installed in the centre of the Lady Chapel with the organist facing north.

The Father Smith Organ: The Church Memorandum Book reporting, in 1879, details of the Victorian Restoration records the following:

> "The old organ was bought back by Messrs. Jones and has since been placed in Little Waldingfield Church. By the assistance of Mr. G.A. Hardacre of Hadleigh, late organist of Banbury, a second-hand organ was purchased from Mr Martin of Oxford. This instrument was originally built by 'Father Smith' in 1670 for the Sheldonian Theatre, a century later it was taken down by Byfield and placed in the Parish Church of St. Peter in the East from which Church it passed into the hands of Mr. Martin who rebuilt if for Edwardstone."

The Sheldonian Theatre, which was designed by Wren as the Assembly Hall of Oxford University, was opened in 1669. Its guide book tells us that "in 1671 the Theatre's first organ arrived. It was made by a famous Dutch craftsman Bernard Schmidt." The Vice Chancellor's accounts record that he was paid £100 for the organ which cost another £10 to paint.

In the mid 1720s the organ was removed to St. Peter's in the East, Oxford to make way for an organ built by Renatus Harris, and later from thence to George Street Congregational Church where the Sheldonian Guide reports "it was still going strong in the 1860s."

At this point it may be useful to lay to rest one of the Parish myths and to state that Handel never played on our organ. In 1733 he was invited by the Sheldonian to give a series of concerts on the Harris Organ. Thos. Hearne (Collections) records "This (the first concert) is an innovation". Not one of which he approved apparently for he writes of "Handel and (his lousy Crew) a great number of forreign (sic) fiddlers".

The original organ consisted of a single manual with Open Diapason, Stop Diapason, Principal, Twelfth, Fifteenth, Sesquialtera (bass), Cornet (treble) and Trumpet. Charles Martin rebuilt it for Edwardstone with two manuals and extending it generally. The beautiful case was designed by Bodley, the door panels reflecting the linenfold pattern he had earlier set on the Altar and the front and rear panels of the new pews. The beautiful tracery wing panels on the organ case were carved by Mr. McCullock of Kennington Road, London and the case was painted by Leach of Cambridge.

The opening service was held on 3 August 1879 and it is pleasant to record that Mr. Hardacre was the organist.

A table of fees hanging in the Vestry reveals that in 1947 the Blower was paid 2s. 6d. for pumping at marriages and funerals. In 1957 when the church was wired for electricity, an electric blower was installed at a cost of £10. Two years later the first electric blower was replaced with one that cost £74. In 1969 a thorough overhaul of the organ was put in hand. The work was undertaken by a freelance organ maker for a quoted figure of £750. Half was paid in advance and the organ maker absconded before the work was completed. It was discovered that some of the ancient pipes had disappeared and what remained had narrowly escaped destruction. The police were able to recover most of the missing pipes.

However it came to light that the work had been commissioned without the authority of an Archdeacon's Faculty. The Bishop made his displeasure known in no uncertain manner. In January 1970 the Vicar and Churchwardens appeared before a Consistory Court and were ordered to prepare a scheme for the restoration of the organ within six months for The Chancellor's approval. The repair work was undertaken by Messrs Cedric Arnold Williamson and Hyatt of Thaxted at a cost of £850. At a loss to know how to raise the money the Wardens launched St. Mary's first Flower Festival under the direction of Mrs. Bonnie Abrey, with the able assistance of Mrs. Cora Green.

The Flower Festival was such a success that other Festivals have followed, although in much happier circumstances. It was certainly a happier time for the organ when Mr. Peter Bumstead took charge of its maintenance. In 1994 he wrote an enthusiastic report about the instrument. Having reviewed its history and the work that had been done on it over the years, he concluded that whilst Edwardstone was fortunate to have a corpus of organ work from a period from which very little has survived, the organ really did not do itself justice.

He went on to present a detailed programme of enhancement to make it a more musical and resourceful instrument. With all the urgent financial problems of a small rural parish at the closing of the 20th century this exciting project might have remained beyond even Edwardstone's enthusiasms.

Cometh the (organ) pipe dream, cometh the happy coincidence, cometh the benefactor. Morden College was about to celebrate the Tercentenary of its foundation and the Trustees of Dame Susan's Charity generously chose to mark this by undertaking to pay for the whole of Mr. Bumstead's vision and he completed the work by June 1998. The total cost was £17,500 and a brass plate on the Organ commemorates this generous gift.

The organ was dedicated by The Right Reverend Eric Devenport the Bishop of Dunwich (1980-1992) on Trinity Sunday 1998 in the presence of Sir Alexander Graham, Chairman of the Trustees, Major General Sir Iain Mackay-Dick, Clerk to the Trustees, other members of the College and Mr Peter Bumstead, Organ Builder of Ipswich, and a delighted congregation.

The Stained Glass Windows

All the Heraldry in the windows is dealt with in the Heraldry notes starting on page 46.

East Window: The Church Memorandum Book records that 'a new east window' was presented to the Church in 1898 by Lady Louisa Magenis in memory of her uncle Major Richard Magenis and Anne his wife.

Tracery style: Perpendicular, 3 lights
Glass Maker Burlison & Grylls

In the upper tracery there is the Crucifixion in the centre light with a censing Angel in each of the flanking lights.

Each of the main lights is divided into upper and lower panels.

In honour of the Church's dedication, in the upper panel of the centre light and set upon a pedestal sits the Blessed Virgin Mary supporting the Christ Child whose arms are held out in blessing. St. Mary is also holding three lilies, the symbol of her virginity. In the lower centre panel is St. Edmund King and Martyr, wearing a gold crown and holding three arrows, the symbol of his martyrdom.

In the upper panel of the left hand flanking light is a Bishop carrying a pastoral staff and a bible. In the lower panel is St. Anne the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary reading a book (she is often depicted teaching her daughter to read).

In the upper panel of the right hand flanking light is a Bishop, with his right hand extended in blessing and his left hand holding a pastoral staff. In the lower panel is St. Margaret who is wearing a gold crown. In her right hand is a spear with a cross at the top and in her left hand a rope which is tied round the neck of a green dragon. Unfortunately this last detail is somewhat obscured by the pierced cornice along the top of the reredos.
St. Margaret was imprisoned in Antioch for her Christian beliefs and spurned temptations to renounce her faith by the devil, who appeared to her as a raging dragon. It is interesting that in this depiction she seems to have got the better of her dragon. Is she taking him for a walk?, unlike the fate meted out to his dragon by St. George in the next window. He doesn't look very grateful; perhaps he knows what is coming. Some stories have a much more gory end. In one she is swallowed by the dragon and bursts out of his belly, after making the sign of the cross. So perhaps it is not surprising that Margaret of Antioch was the guardian of women in childbirth. Her name would have been much invoked as well as the Blessed Virgin Mary in the last stages of pregnancy.

Sanctuary Window: Tracery Style 14th century early Decorated. 2 lights
Stained glass installed in 1920

In the small light centre top is some heraldry.

At the top of the left hand light is a white shield with a red cross. Underneath is the figure of St. George, patron saint of England, in plate armour and without a helmet, standing on a pedestal holding a broken spear in his right hand. Behind his feet is a dead red dragon also on the pedestal. The broken spear sticks in his throat.

At the top of the right hand light is a red shield with a white cross. Underneath is a figure of St. Martin of Tours carrying a long sword in his right hand and his gathered cloak in his left hand. St. Martin was born about 316. He was a Roman Soldier who converted to Christianity and left the army. He became Bishop of Tours and died on 11 November about 397. The most enduring legend about Martin relates that he cut his cloak in half and that is what we see him doing in our window. He gave it to a naked beggar in the winter. That night Christ appeared to him wearing his gift. Martin became an influential teacher and as his fame spread acquired the role of Father of Celtic Monasticism. We see his monastry in the background of the panel. When Augustine arrived at Canterbury he was able to install himself in a deserted church that had once been dedicated to Martin.

Both panels are said to be copies of paintings by Mantegna.

Inscriptions: across the top 'Not unto us O Lord' and 'Thanks be to God'. Across the bottom 'To the Glory of God and in memory of Frederick Richard Henry Lowry-Corry B.A. of Trinity College Cambridge F.C.S. Lieutenant R.F.A. younger son of Henry and Edith Corry of Edwardstone Hall born 1890. He died 30 September 1915 of wounds received at Ypres - buried at Etaples C.A.P.D.'

Chancel Window: Tracery style 14 century early Decorated single light.

This single light has a beautiful golden angel with a censer standing on a sunburst. There is a painted quarry background. It is a copy of some 14th Century glass at Evreux.

The inscription panel reads "In memory of Louisa Anne eldest daughter of Armar 3rd Earl of Belmore and wife of Lt. Col. Richard Magenis born 1837 died 1918. Buried at Edwardstone. A benefactress to this Church."

Pulpit Window: Tracery style - Late Perpendicular (Tudor top) three lights.
Glass designed by Bodley
Glass Makers Burlinson & Grylls

There are six small upper lights with an Angel in each.

The three main lights are divided into six biblical scenes. Beginning at the top left and reading across the labels tell us:

1. **Christ betrayed by Judas:**
Peter has a drawn sword - Christ braces himself to receive the kiss and holds out his hand restraining Peter - the High Priest's servant Malchus, searches on the ground for his ear.
Judas is holding the bag containing 30 pieces of silver.

2. **Christ bears his cross:**
Christ on the Via Dolorosa pauses to bless his Mother. At first I thought this might be St. Veronica about to wipe the sweat off Christ's face, but there is no cloth, also she has a halo and wears the distinctive 'Mary Blue'.

3. **Christ before Pontius Pilate:**
Pilate endeavours to wash his hands of the affair. A basin is being held out for him. It is rarely shown in other stained glass depictions of this moment, perhaps only half a dozen times in Europe. We have one of them.

4. **Visitation of the Blessed Virgin:**
Mary, finding herself pregnant, hurries to share her news with her cousin Elizabeth. She is some six months pregnant herself and her baby leaps for joy in her womb at the news. 'Blessed are you among women' proclaims Elizabeth, and Mary spoke the words of her great Hymn of Praise and Glory which we know as the Magnificat.
Elizabeth's baby is the future John the Baptist.

5. **There is no descriptive label for this illustration**
This is a depiction of the visit of the wise men. Mary is indicating her baby, Joseph stands watching, and, over his shoulder, so does an ox. The first of the Magi has taken off his cap and crown and kneeling is making his offering. There is a fine star.

   This panel has the inscription which reads
"To the Glory of God and in memory of Robert Elliston Wright died Feb 8th 1877"

6. **Baptism of Christ:**
Christ stands shin high in the River Jordan - John, on the bank is using a scallop shell to pour the Baptismal water onto the head of Christ - a dove with its personal halo is hurtling out of the sky "parting the heavens" and there is a second label within the picture proclaiming "This is my beloved Son".

All the panels are richly decorated by golden canopies

Nave Centre Window: Tracery style: Early Perpendicular 3 lights
Glass Maker: Burlison & Grylls

Centre top light, a cock, four larger lights with an angel in each, two smaller flanking lights with a red rose in each.

In the left hand light the figure of Abbot Samson stands reading a bible with a pastoral staff in his right hand. The Abbots of Bury St Edmunds were mighty men, both internationally and locally and none more than Samson. The Abbey owned the town and most of what we now call West Suffolk, then known as The Liberty of St Edmund and a great scatter of farms and manors outside Suffolk. Within his own territory the Abbot was the King's Vice-Gerant, so here the Archbishop, Diocesan Bishop and the Sheriff of Suffolk had no power. However, as we have already recorded, the Abbot's writ did not run in Edwardstone so it is, perhaps, a surprise to find him here.

In the right hand light is the figure of St Edith, wearing a golden crown, holding a pastoral staff in her right hand and a Norman abbey church in her left hand. The Church of England is blessed with two St Edith's, both from the first millennium.

The earliest was the eldest daughter of Edward the Elder (899-925) who was the eldest son of Alfred the Great (871-899). Her half sisters (Edward married three times) married the Kings of Burgundy, France, Provence and another married the Holy Roman Emperor Otto the Great. Edith settled for a contemplative life and became the Abbess of Polesworth.

The second Edith was the daughter of Edgar (959-975) and his second wife Wulfryth. To the great scandal of the Church, Edgar had abducted her from a nunnery and she lived with him for some years as his mistress until he married her. Once he had seen the error of his ways Edgar was to give great impetus to a far reaching monastic revival, diverting tithes to mynsters amongst many other things. Wulfryth took her daughter back to Wilton Abbey where she grew up. Edith founded a Church at Wilton, but she died in her early twenties having lead a life of great humility. A cult of holy wells dedicated to her memory grew up in Kent and other parts of the country.

So who is our St Edith? In our window we see her wearing a crown and holding a pastoral staff so I plump for the Abbess of Polesworth, although she is not so well known as Edith of Wilton.

The inscription reads 'For Henry William Lowry-Corry of Edwardstone Hall born 1845 died 1927 and Blanche Edith his wife born 1851 died 1921.'

In the central light is the figure of Melchizedek holding out a golden paten with bread and a golden chalice with a cover. Melchizedek appears so very briefly in the Old Testament (Genesis Chp. 14 vv 18-20) that he inspired the following (E.A. Robinson).

Melchizedek he praised the Lord
And gave some wine to Abraham
But who can tell what else he did
Must be more learned than I am.

I imagine that most visitors to our church would not know even that much, which is not surprising because his story is so ancient that it pre-dates the foundation of the Hebrew nation. So we may ask ourselves what is he doing in a window of this church in rural Suffolk, and what is his connection with Abram (God named him Abraham when he entered into his covenant with him which came later when Abram was 99). In a famous exploit Abram had raced across the plains of Mamre in pursuit of a coalition of local Kings (desert Vikings) who had sacked Sodom and were hurrying home with much booty and many captives who included Abram's nephew Lot and his household. After a night attack and a final cornering of the bandits near Damascus Abram returned victorious with everything and everyone. The King of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of the Kings.

With him came Melchizedek, King and Priest of Salem. He came out with bread and wine for Abram, clearly a desert ritual greeting. He blessed Abram and then he blessed God. Abram rewarded him with one tenth of everything he possessed (having refused to keep any of the booty). If we read Psalm 110 v. 4 we can catch a glimpse of the symbolic significance Melchizedek held for the Jewish nation. Of course the medieval Christian Church would have seized upon the payment of a tithe as an ancient precedent legitimising its own demands, read the Epistle to the Hebrews Chap.7, and they would have also seen any number of mystical and allegorical images hidden in this short story of an ancient meeting.

Firstly Salem equates with Jerusalem (as in the hymn 'Light's Abode Celestial Salem'). They would ponder on the offering of bread and wine, in a ritual greeting to the man who was yet to found the nation which would one day nurture the birth and then encompass the crucifixion of the Son of God, who, in turn, would institute a perpetual memorial of his earthly death with those two elements, whilst keeping the ancient Jewish festival of the Feast of the Passover. The ancient ritual of greeting and memory had become a present ritual of the most holy remembrance, for Christians across the entire world. Then is the mystical union of King and Priest. An earthly reflection of the Kingship of God as exhibited by God the Father, and the Priesthood of God as exhibited by God robed in flesh which leads us on to the Supreme Holy Paradox of God the Son as both victim and Saviour.

We may have lost sight of Melchizedek but the Roman Catholic Eucharistic Prayer seeks acceptance of the offering of "the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith and the bread and wine offered by your priest Melchiseldech." This would have been well known to a member of a leading Anglo-Catholic family.

Heraldry

We are very grateful to the Suffolk Heraldry Society who have kindly given permission to reproduce the information from their Booklet No 4 on Suffolk Churches.

Since you may not be familiar with the names of heraldic tinctures (colours) here is a list of those displayed in our church.

Argent	-	silver	Or	-	gold
Azure	-	blue	Sable	-	black
Ermine	-	a white field with black spots or tufts	Vert	-	green
			Proper	-	natural colour used
Gules	-	red			

Where arms on a memorial are uncoloured the tinctures are represented by a range of lines and patterns.

When this occurs it is indicated in these notes by not using a capital for the first letter of the tincture.

1. In the Sanctuary - On the back of the Bishop's chair.

Per pale Gules and Azure, a demi lion passant guardant, conjoined to the demi hulk of an ancient ship and between three ducal coronets. The Arms of the See of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Memorial Tablets

2. On north wall of Sanctuary - Coloured Shield

Quarterly 1 and 4 Azure a chevron Ermine between three arrows Or barbed and feathered Argent. On a chief Argent three Cornish Choughs Proper. A canton Gules charged with a mullet Or. DAWSON, of Spaldington Co. Yorks. Wharton Co. Lancaster and Chelmsford Essex. 2 and 3 Gules a cross patonce Or between four cinquefoils Argent. MANNING; in pretence Argent a cross flory voided Gules. PILKINGTON, Crest : A tabby cat's head guardant, erased at the neck, holding in the mouth a rat, Sable. DAWSON of Spaldington Co. Yorks. Motto : Vitae Vie Virtus. George Augustus Dawson of Groton House and Vicar of this parish, died 18th January 1848 aged 56. N.B. Reverend George Augustus Dawson, second son of Thomas Dawson of Edwardstone Hall and Anne his wife, only child of Thomas Manning, married Louise, one of the daughters and co-heiresses of the late Colonel Sir Thomas Pilkington Bart, of Chevel Co. Yorks.

3. Tinctured by lines - Quarterly 1 and 4 DAWSON, 2 and 3 MANNING. Charles Dawson of Edwardstone Hall, eldest son of the late Thomas and Anne Dawson of the same place, died 11th March 1855 in his 79th year. N.B. Anne Dawson was the daughter of Thomas and Grace Manning, only child of Lt. Colonel Norris.

Tablets in the Lady Chapel

4. Shield coloured - Azure two swords in saltire Argent hilts and pommels in base Or a bordure engrailed Or a crescent for difference. BRAND of Grays Inn and Co. Suffolk 1616. Crest : Out of a ducal crown Or a leopard's head proper, BRAND 1616.

Joseph Brand died 9th October 1674 aged 69. He left issue, three sons and four daughters.

5. BRAND (Swords)
Thomas Brand eldest son of Sir Joseph Brand of Edwardstone Suffolk Kt. by Dame Mary his second wife, who died at Carmarthen South Wales. Thomas Brand died unmarried 11th November 1705 and was interred on 9th December 1705 aged 31.

On south wall of the Lady Chapel

6. A bend between two dolphins embowed. FRENCH

William French, Citizen and Draper of London and Patron of this church of Edwardstone. Died at Tottenham Middlesex 7th January 1758 in his 84th year, second son of John French, some time of Groton.

In the north aisle

7. Arms tinctured by lines. DAWSON ; in pretence MANNING. Crest : DAWSON

Thomas Dawson late merchant of London, of Edwardstone Hall, died 21st July 1807 aged 60 years and Anne, his wife, died 13th April 1821 aged 70 years.

8. Tinctured by lines. azure on a chevron or between three fleurs-de-lys argent three estoiles azure. SHEPHERD. (The estoiles are generally gules). Impaling DAWSON. Crest : A ram passant proper. SHEPHERD.

William Shepherd late of Russell Square, London died 27th June 1815 aged 50 years. (In chancel - Ann Lovell Shepherd of Edwardstone Hall, daughter of Thomas Dawson, widow of William Shepherd of Bradbourne Kent, born 31st August 1781, died 30th November 1864).

9. Arms in lozenge - Quarterly 1 and 4 Vert a lion rampant Or on a chief Argent a hand erect Gules. MAGINNISE, Ireland for Magenis. 2 and 3 Gules a chevron between ten crosses patty Argent. BERKELEY in pretence, SHEPHERD. (Estoiles Azure).

Ann Maria eldest daughter of William and Ann Lovell Shepherd of Bradbourne Kent. Born 22nd January 1803, married in 1821 Richard William Magenis of Co. Antrim, Ireland and secondly in 1865 Henry St. John Mildmay Georges, late of the 19th Light Dragoons, died 1886.

10. Sable a dolphin embowed Argent SYMONDS, impaling Vert a griffin passant and a chief Or BRAND. 1612

Ann Brand, daughter of John James.

11. Tablet in the nave. On south side

Quarterly 1 and 4 MAGENIS. 2 and 3 BERKELEY, in pretence SHEPHERD Crest : A boar passant proper. MAGINNISE or MAGENIS. Motto : Sola Salus Servire Deo.

Richard William Magenis of Waringstoun Co. Down and Deran Co. Antrim. Formerly a Major in the 7th Fusiliers. Born 19th November 1789, died 4th December 1863.

Richard William Magenis was the son of Richard Magenis by the Lady Elizabeth Anne Cole, daughter of the first Earl of Enniskillen, and he was grandson of Richard Magenis and Elizabeth his wife, daughter and heiress of Colonel Berkeley, brother of the celebrated Bishop of Cloyne. N.B. There are several memorials of the Alston occupation of Edwardstone, but not a coat of arms.

BRASSES

Brass on the wall of the Lady Chapel

12. BRAND. (Swords) Crest : BRAND. (Ducal crown) Motto : Promptus.

John Brand, late of Edwardstone, and Susan his wife with whom he was espoused 45 years and had three sons and nine daughters. He died 6th October 1642, aged 76 years.

13. Brass on floor in the north aisle with effigies and three shields

Centre. BRAND or BROND (Griffen) Crest : BRAND (Demi griffin). Left. As centre but no crest. Right. or three bendlets sable over all a lion rampant gules. CUTLER of the Chantry, Sproughton.

Benjamin Brand of Edwardstone Hall and Elizabeth his wife (no date c. 1620). (Medcalfe Visitation of Suffolk 188.) Benjamin Brond of Swardeston Co, Norfolk married Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Cutler of Ipswich and Sproughton, by Alice his wife, daughter and sole heir of Thomas Gardner of Glemsford.

Brass Tablet on wall, south side of chancel

14. gules a saltire argent in chief a rose or. CORRY. Quartering sable a cup argent over it a garland and two laurel branches vert. LOWRY, impaling azure three naked savages ambulant in fess proper. In the dexter hand of each a shield argent charged with a cross gules in the sinister a club resting on the shoulder also proper. On a canton ermine three lozenges conjoined in fess sable. WOOD. (VISCOUNT HALIFAX).

Henry William Lowry-Corry, youngest son of Armar, 3rd Earl of Belmore, born 1845, died 1927, and his wife Blanche Edith youngest daughter of the first Viscount Halifax of Hickleton Yorks, born 1851, died 1921.

15. Brass Tablet on north wall, north aisle

Quarterly 1 and 4 CORRY, 2 and 3 LOWRY, impaling SHEPHERD. Crests : A cock proper, for CORRY and a garland of laurel between two branches of the same, proper, for LOWRY all over an earl's coronet. Supporters : Two tiger cats, guardant, proper, ducally gorged and chained or. Motto : Vigilando.

For Armar 3rd Earl of Belmore, born 1801, died 1845, and his wife Emily Louise, daughter of William Shepherd, born 1814, died 1904, and their children, Frederick Cecil George 1839 - 55, Mary 1840 - 54 and Emily 1844 - 64.

MEMORIAL SLABS ON THE FLOOR

16. In the Lady Chapel

A curious heraldic production, some parts very much worn, argent a heart gules and chief sable. SCAMLOR or SCAMBLER, impaling, two coats per bend, one being the main portion of the coat of BRAND (swords) and the other azure a fess dancettee ermine between six cross crosslets argent BARNARDISTON. Crest : A garb or banded gules SCAMBLER.

Mary Scamler, daughter of Joseph Brand and widow of James Scamler, late of Wollerton, died 6th March 1714, aged 75 years. James the son and heir of Edward Scamler, Bishop of Norwich, married Mary, daughter of Joseph Brand of Edwardstone. Sir Joseph Brand Kt. of Edwardstone married Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston of Kedington Suffolk.

17. In a lozenge - per chevron sable and argent three elephants' heads erased, counterchanged, SAUNDERS, impaling an escarbuncle, (unidentified).

Mrs Margaret Saunders, died 6th February 1720 in her 73rd year.

18. Much worn - A Griffin passant (completely obliterated 1978) and a chief or BRAND Suffolk 1612, impaling (The impalement does not appear to have been cut) SCOTT of Scots Hall? Crest : a demi griffin or holding a battle axe embowed, handle gules and head argent BRAND Suffolk 1612.

John Brand late of Edwardstone died 12th December...in the 36th year of his age...daughter of Frederick Scot of Scots Hall in Kent...

STAINED GLASS

19. Window on south side of chancel

(i) Quarterly 1 and 4 CORRY, 2 and 3 LOWRY
(ii) Argent a cross Gules
(iii) Gules a cross Argent

In memory of Frederick Richard Henry Lowry-Corry of Trinity College Cambridge, youngest son of Henry and Edith Lowry-Corry of Edwardstone, born 1890, died of wounds at Ypres 1915.

20. Window in south wall of nave

(i) Quarterly 1 and 4 CORRY, 2 and 3 LOWRY, impaling quarterly 1 and 4 WOOD (VISCOUNT HALIFAX) 2 and 3 Paly bendy Or and Azure a canton Ermine.BUCK Crests : 1 CORRY, 2 LOWRY. Motto : Virtus semper virides.

For Henry William Lowry Corry of Edwardstone Hall, born 1845, died 1927, and Blanche Edith his wife born 1851, died 1921.

(ii) DAWSON

(iii) SHEPHERD (Estoiles Gules)

21. FAMILY PEDIGREE

On the north wall near the organ - framed

Showing BRAND (swords) and BRAND (griffin).

ON THE NOTICEBOARD IN THE PORCH

22. The Arms of the See of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

23. Argent a fleur-de-lys Gules on a canton Argent a sinister hand Gules (For a Baronet) Impaling Azure two swords in saltire argent hilt and pommel Or within a bordure engrailed Argent (For Morden College).

Memorials without Heraldry

Sanctuary south wall

Ann Lovell Shepherd
Daughter of Thomas Dawson Esq.
Widow of William Shepherd Esq.
Born 31 August 1781
Died 30 November 1864

On the north wall near the nave door

A framed memorial headed
Edwardstone Men who served in the
Great War 1914-18
The names of those who died are set
in gold lettering and are repeated here

Ernest Everitt
Sydney Griggs
Frederick Griggs
John Holmes
Frederick Lowry-Corry
Ernest Peachey
Charles Stribling
Henry Finch
Frederick Grainger
Samuel Giles
Harry Griggs
Ernest Whymark
Leslie Williams

Chancel south wall

Ann Lee
Wife of Colonel Lee
Died at The Grove
2 June 1810
Aged 43 years
Also
Thomas Waring Esq.
Died March 14th 1822
Aged 50 Years

West wall on north side of tower arch

A framed memorial, headed
"Edwardstone Men and Women
Who served in the World War
1939-1945"
The names of those who died are
set in gold lettering and are
repeated here

Ernest Battle
Cecil Brown

West wall, on the south side of the tower arch

A framed list headed Vicars of Edwardstone
covers the period 1305 - 1983 (at present) and
is printed inside the back cover of this book.

Font

The brass memorial plate on Miss Roberts' font was transferred to the east side of the new base for the returning Early English font basin.

On the floor of the Lady Chapel

The Alston Family ledger stones

Elizabeth Filia natu septima
Josephi Alston Armi
Died age 15
Year 1724

Mariæe Filae natu quintae
Josephi Alston Armi
Died age 22
31 August 1726

Mrs Mary Alston widow
Mother of Joseph Alston Esq.,
Who departed this life
Decembe ye 17th 1740
Aged 92 years

Uxor Ambilis
Filius Unicus Isaaci
Reverendi Caroli Trumbull LL.D.
(rest of ledger stone hidden by organ)

Josephus Alston Armr.
Josephi Alston de Chelsea in Com
Middlesex Baronetti
Fili natu tertti

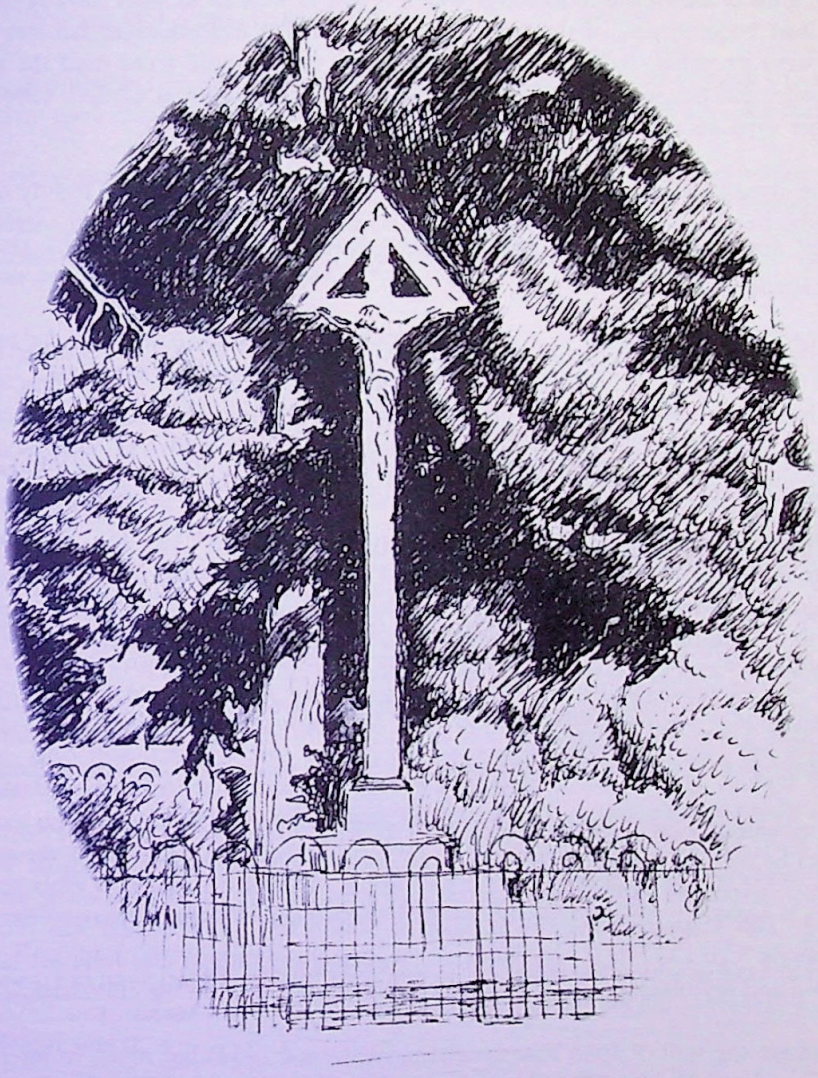
Age 15
Died 23 February 1717
Sadly this is all that can be seen on one ledger stone. The rest is hidden by the organ. Records show that this was the monument of William
Son of William Cooke *who was Buried three days after his death.*

And then there is a ledger stone completely hidden by the organ. It is worth reading the full text. There is a great mystery here particularly as the page that would have recorded the death (along with all the others at that time) has been torn from the ancient Parish Register. Here is the inscription:

John Jaggard Gent
Here interred
was barbarously shot to death at
Badly's Gate in Little Waldingfield
riding home from his dwelling
in Great Cornard to the
Priory in this Parish on ye 27th of
September 1699 whilst he was
loosing with a putt about the said
gate by the murderer who lay
concealed behind a Sallow-scrub
Till this bloudy design was
Executed & afterwards he fled
Away undiscovered
Gens 9 – 6 Aetatis suae 62

The War Memorial: An impressive design in the form of a wayside Calvary, the memorial stands at a road junction on a site once occupied by the village pound. The memorial faces west and five pine trees keep a sad silent vigil. On the base are inscribed the names of Edwardstone men who died in the 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 wars. It was dedicated on 14 March 1920.

At eleven o'clock on the eleventh day of the eleventh month each year a Service of Remembrance is held here.



A Few of our Medieval Vicars

Not all of them are visible to us today which is just as well as we only have room for a few. It had become part of the received wisdom of the Reformation that the earlier clergy were uncaring, inefficient and corrupt. No doubt some were (and the sale of indulgences had become a scandal) but I am pleased to record that modern scholarship no longer supports this blanket condemnation.

We have already seen how poorly our Vicars were paid. We should not lightly dismiss those who lived peaceably with their flock and whose only claim to fame seems to be that they did nothing to attract adverse attention from their Bishop or Archdeacon or Churchwardens.

Alexander de Sudbury instituted in 1305 is our first known Vicar. It is recorded that he granted some land in Edwardstone to the College of St Gregory in Sudbury. Nearly seven hundred years later they, now the parish church of Sudbury, repaid the compliment (quite unknowingly) by kindly donating on permanent loan to us a compact silver chalice which is regularly used in our Holy Communion services.

By 1348 the Black Death was raging across the country until 1350 when its virulence began to diminish. Many people fled and by 1349 it was recorded that many churches were bereft of priests. In Norwich Bishop Bateman stayed at his post and exhorted his clergy to follow his example. Edwardstone was among the many that responded. In 1347 William Payock was instituted, in 1349 Roger Pritteeburgh was instituted, in 1350 Robert son of John Walsokn, was instituted. Even if we cannot claim to be absolutely certain that it was the plague that was carrying them off one by one, we salute their willingness to take up their ministry when the plague was raging all around them.

I now include Robert Taylor a Chaplain of Edwardstone (i.e. a Chantry Priest) who, although he was not the Vicar (and probably not very popular with Thomas de Walpole who was), wrote the earliest and shortest Edwardstone will that I have come across. It is dated "The Thursday after the feast of St Simon and St Jude" and was proved at Lambeth on 3.10.1387. It is very short.... "To Isabel my mother and John her husband (my) bed and my other goods." He directed that he be buried in the churchyard.

By contrast, the will of John Framlyngham, (instituted 1454) has much to interest us. His will is dated 13.10.1470 and contains detailed instructions to ensure a really good turn out for his funeral, even though he was a member of both Gilds and could be sure of their attendance.

He asked to be buried in the Chancel and directed that the following payments be made

to each of 3 priests at my obsequies	4 pence
to each of 4 clerks at my obsequies	2 pence
to each of 4 other clerks	1 penny

to each of 8 paupers he left 3 pence each for holding candles for his trental - (a mass to be held on each of 30 consecutive days) and for a mass seven days after the funeral.

He also directed that the new Vicar (John Furneyse, who was instituted before the end of the year - no long interregnum here) to sing 15 masses on succeeding Fridays on the Roodloft, which is how we know there was an altar up there. The new vicar was to be paid one penny for each celebration.

He also left 6 pence to Margaret Munchensey (perhaps an unmarried aunt or a younger sister of Lady Jane Waldegrave, as she now was) "to pray for my soul's good and my friends souls".

He also left his red vestments and a surplice "for the good of the Church" which John Furneyse would have found most useful. We have recorded his bequests to the Local Gilds earlier.

In 1534, by the Act of Supremacy, Henry finally broke with Rome. The following year Robert Nutton became Vicar. Later he would be ordered to place a copy of Miles Coverdale's first complete English translation of the Bible in church. Two years later he would be ordered to replace it with a new translation, of which he had to bear half the cost, and the congregation the other half. He would read his Bishop's exhortation to the laity to read this Bible. A few years later he was ordered to restrict the reading to yeomen and women of gentle and noble status. In 1544 he had recited the first authorised service in English, which was The Litany, which we still use (albeit not very often) with surprisingly few alterations. Five years later, on Whit Sunday 1549, he took the first Holy Communion in English. He survived all the Henrican mood swings, and the first two years of the Roman Catholic restoration under Mary.

He appears to have been a faithful shepherd of his flock and seems to have been much in demand as a witness to local wills, (and managed to get his name spelt in a number of different ways).

He was accorded the title Sir Robert, which does not indicate that he was armigerous, but rather it was a courtesy title for a non-graduate Priest. The same can be said of Sir Roger Bocher, (1508), and no doubt quite a number of the others.

In 1574 Thomas Nicholson became Vicar. Nineteen years later in 1593 the following complaints were made about him to the Archdeacon on his visitation, who noted them thus:

> He weareth not the surplice
> He preacheth unlicensed as they think
> He hath two benefices (the other one was Groton)

Groton had a longer list of complaints about Thomas, which included the fact that he lived in Edwardstone.

There were also complaints at this visitation about the Churchwardens Richard Ware and Robert Bogis. Apparently they had not placed in Church (as instructed) the following devotional books, The Musculus, (a justification of the Christian faith written by Crammer's great friend Erasmus), and two other works of Christian edification, Common Places, and the Apology,

The three Vicars immediately before Thomas had dual livings, each of them sharing with Assington.

Thomas Fytche	1556-60	at Assington	1557-59
Baldwyn Durrant	1560-63	at Assington	1559-67
Daniel Davyes	1563 -74	at Assington	1571-73

and I know of only one other dual living

John Flasby	1706-36	at Groton	1703-36

In 1690 the clergy were obliged to swear an oath of allegiance to William and Mary. James II had fled to the continent but he was still alive and he had not abdicated. Eight bishops and some four hundred parochial clergy maintained that they had not been released from their oaths made to James and could not, in all conscience, undertake the new oath. In Edwardstone, Abraham Salter was deprived of his living along with all the others.

Advowson Problems: You may remember that earlier I wrote that the Advowson became the subject of much litigation. Before moving on we can take a quick glance at two examples. Things did not always run smoothly for our first Rector the Abbot of Abingdon. When he received the gift of the church of Kensington it came to light that the early church had been established without the authority of the Bishop of London. The Bishop promptly entered into a lawsuit and won the right to the Advowson, so the Abbot did not get all he had expected and, no doubt, the de Veres had intended. The Bishop of London is still Patron of the living.

After the watershed of the Reformation and the passing of many Advowsons into lay hands although having nothing to do with the parsons' home, the parcel of land, colloquially at first then formally, became known as the Rectory, or the Parsonage, or the Priory.

In 1638 a Petition was made by Thomas Dearslie, our Vicar, complaining that the farmer of the Rectory was not content with his impropriation (meaning the diverting of Church income into lay hands) worth £100 p.a. had also taken the Vicarage Tithes to the amount of £30, and on judgement against him had sold the Rectory to a "lawyer whom no ordinary man may cross."

The Doctrine of Purgatory and some Medieval Wills

In the section about the Reformation I wrote of the doctrine of Purgatory passing into obscurity in the English Church. Then when writing about the Gilds I indicated that Purgatory had once loomed large in the minds of the faithful. This is a highly complex subject but as it was central to much of church life it might be helpful to take a brief look at *pre-Reformation lay perception* of this teaching.

At death the soul which had not been condemned directly to Hell (from where there could be no return) did not go directly to heaven either, except, rarely, for truly saintly lives. Instead the soul went to a state called Purgatory where it would suffer great torment in order to cleanse it to prepare it for entry into Paradise. Initially its time there would be shortened by reference to good works it had performed on earth and to any indulgences it had been granted before death. But once there the souls could do nothing further to help themselves apart from manfully concentrating on the joys to come, for they were still members of Christ's Church.

As such they continued to care for their families on earth and could intercede for them, but, since they were powerless to help themselves, their perpetual cry to those on earth was to have mercy on them and pray for them, since prayers on earth could shorten their time of suffering. This created a real bond between the living and the dead.

The neglected dead could become angry and curse the living, which no doubt helped to motivate the careless or slothful on earth. It is perhaps not surprising that an elaborate pattern of ritual evolved to accommodate this obligation. The keystone of the prayer system was the Requiem Mass which was supported by the Obit (a re-run of the Placebo and Dirigie - the funeral service). We have already taken note of the provision made by the son of our first Norman Lord and, by way of contrast, by the parishioners who banded themselves into the religious fraternities of the Gilds.

When an individual came to write his last Will and Testament these considerations would be uppermost in his mind. So, whilst a will necessarily dealt with the disposal of earthly property, it could also be making important religious statements as well.

For many people therefore, but by no means all, there was the catching up on tithes that we have already mentioned. Then there was the provision of additional prayers after the funeral. Popular for those who could afford it was the Trental. This was a sequence of thirty Requiem Masses sung on each of the thirty days that followed the funeral. It became known as the Month's Mind. Temporary and permanent Chantries were set up.

Finally there was a last chance to perform good works, foremost amongst which were gifts to the church, gifts to the poor, and surprisingly to us no doubt, cash to repair roads and highways and bridges.

Let us now see how these concerns were reflected in a few medieval wills.

In 1457 John Cobbe left 10s for a Trental "for my soul and all the faithful departed" so he has neatly included prayer for everyone in Purgatory. However in the same way that a single spoonful of marmalade will spread more thickly on one slice of toast than on ten slices so a single trental for all the souls in purgatory provided each with a microscopic benefit.

In 1506 William Bogais the elder gave the Church the grand gift of the Vestry, and to take care of the prayers he made the following provision:

for four orders of Friars to sing his trentals

Friars of Sudbury	10s
Friars of Clare	10s
Friars of Colchester	10s
Black Friars of Ipswich	10s

and a fifth trental to be sung by a secular priest or a friar in Edwardstone Church. Rather fussily he lays down that it is "to be done from the time of my burying till the 30th day",

finally he directs his executors to provide an honest secular priest (i.e. not a Friar) to sing for his soul in Edwardstone Church for 3 years for £6 per annum. This is a good example of a temporary chantry.

The next few wills have one thing in common that the testators each wanted to found a permanent chantry.

In 1462 you may remember Thomas Cros left £3 for a Parclos. This would have created a small timber chapel, containing an altar, in the north aisle as near to the eastern end as possible. He endowed his chantry with two properties in Edwardstone "for my anniversary to be kept for ever". He also made the following funeral dispositions:

to each priest coming to my obsequies and being there	4d
to each greater clerk	2d
to each minor clerk	1d
to each poor man coming to my burial	1d

the last provision making sure of a good crowd at the funeral and also counting as a work of mercy - feeding the poor.

He also made provision for two sets of Trentals. One for the Friars of Sudbury and one for the Friars of Clare (they appear to have been popular in Edwardstone) each house received 10s.

William King's will, dated 18th July 1496, makes provision for an honest priest to sing in the church of Edwardstone for a year at the salary of 9 marks

Trentals are left in the hands of		and gifts are given	
The Friars of Sudbury	10s	Church at Boxford	20s
The Friars of Clare	10s	Church at Groton	10s
Whitefriars of Ipswich	10s		

To the making (repairing) Larchmer Lane 40s (good works)

He left to his Son a property called Chircheys, with its appurtenances except a pightle (a small piece of arable land) with which his obit was to be kept "as long as the world standeth". He also directed that "the pightle be put into the hands of the feoffees" (trustees) and "let it be written in the Massbook of Edwardstone."

In 1501 John Hammond directed some substantial gifts to the church:

firstly he left 9 marks for a priest to sing for his soul, then a legacy of 40s for the good of Edwardstone Church "in such things as may be most necessary". He left a property called Grisses at Stoke to his wife for her lifetime, after which it was to be sold and 10 marks of the proceeds to go to the good of Edwardstone Church. He left a second property called Ynglish to the disposition of his wife and executors, and after them to the Church - Reeves (Churchwardens) of Edwardstone, to keep (pay for) his Obit - a Requiem Mass and a recital of the Placebo Dirigie on the anniversary of his death. It is clear that he anticipated this going on to the end of time.

In 1503 the pious widow Isabel Kyng set the record straight, made gifts to the church and set about the achievement of perpetual memory in her own practical way:

"firstly then to the high altar of Edwardstone for tithes forgotten 3s 4d
to Friar Robert Strutt to sing for me (clearly a trental) in the same church 10s
to the same church a vestment with a cope price £8 or better
for a cloth to the pyx and a cloth to bear over the sacrament in necessary times 10s
to the same church a cloth of diaper work for an altar cloth"

and then the gift that was going to last until the end of the world.

Eighteen years later (the speed of change continues to accelerate) for all practical purposes in January 2000 a new Benefice consisting of Boxford, Edwardstone, Groton and Little Waldingfield came into action. It decided to call itself The Box River Parishes. For all further practical purposes Newton joined the group on 7th May. Richard Titford was formally licensed on 15th June 2000. The Order in Council bringing the new Benefice into legal existence will follow. In this collection of Parishes there are three historical Rectories and two Vicarages.

Development of Lay Ministry

It had for a long time generally been recognised that if by accident the parish priest could not be present at a regular act of public worship and neither another Priest nor a Lay Reader was available, then a Churchwarden was competent to read Morning or Evening Prayer. However Leslie Brown, our Diocesan Bishop 1966-1978, with admirable foresight, recognising that not all Churchwardens were willing to undertake this service, introduced to his Diocese the idea of appointing suitable persons as Lay Elders. Reacting to the continuing reduction in the number of stipendiary priests, under the guidance of the present Bishop, Richard Lewis, the original idea has become more formalised and now Lay Elders are appointed for periods of three years, which can be renewed subject to the formal approval of the PCC, the Incumbent and the Bishop.

Lay Elders of Edwardstone

1976 - onwards	Major General Cosmo Nevill
1992 - 98	Christopher Porteous
2000 - 05	Peter Welstand
2000 -	Antony Dodd

As we make our final preparations for printing we can record that a beautiful iron fence has been erected between the churchyard and the triangle by their sons in memory of Philip and Felicia Trimble.

We also record the theft of the base and stem of our Victorian lectern. A faculty has been obtained and a new lectern is to be made by Andrew Beckwith.

And finally, on a much happier note, and thanks to the generosity of Dame Susan's Trustees, we record the completion of a contract, undertaken by F.A. Valiant & Son, for extensive repair work. This has included deep seated cracks, much re-pointing of the flint walls, re-leading of many windows, conservation of the upper tracery of the north wall windows, re-tiling the roof of the porch and many other smaller but important items.

As at the beginning of the last century we can once again observe that there is a fine sound building standing in Edwardstone.

The Botanical Survey

The story of our church began with the churchyard, so it is fitting that it should draw to a close with a detailed look at the plants that grow there now.

This Botanical Survey was carried out by Mr. R.F. Hartley and others for the Suffolk Wildlife Trust in June, July and September 1995 and we are grateful for the Trust's permission to reproduce their findings. And we remember Johnny Griggs, and many others, who tended the churchyard for many years before this survey.

In the following lists:

F = Frequent O = Occasional R = Rare

No less than eighty three species of wild flowers were identified as follows:

Agrimony	*Agrimonia eup.*	O
Barren Strawberry	*Potentilla sterilis*	O
Black Bryony	*Tamus communis*	R
Black Horehound	*Ballota nigra*	O
Black Medic	*Medicago lupulina*	O
Bramble	*Rubus fruticos*	O
Broad-leaved Dock	*Rumex obtusifol*	R
Burnet saxifrage	*Pimpinella saxifraga*	F
Cat's Ear	*Hypochoeris radicata*	O
Cleavers	*Galium aparine*	O
Common Birdsfoot Trefoil	*Lotus corniculat.*	O
Common Broomrape	*Orobanche minor*	R
Common Knapweed	*Centaurea nigra*	F
Common Mallow	*Malva sylvestris*	R
Common Nettle	*Urtica dioica*	O
Common Ragwort	*Senecio jacobea*	R
Common Sorrel	*Rumex acetosa*	F
Common Vetch	*Vicia Sativa*	R
Cow Parsley	*Anthriscus sylv.*	O
Cowslip	*Primula veris*	F
Creeping Buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*	O
Creeping cinquefoil	*Potentilla reptans*	O
Creeping Thistle	*Cirsium arvense*	O
Curled Dock	*Rumex crispus*	R
Cut-leaved Cranes bill	*Geranuim dissec.*	R
Daisy	*Bellis perennis*	O
Dandelion	*Taraxacum sp.*	O
Dog's Mercury	*Mercurialis perennis*	R
Field Bindweed	*Convalvulus arv.*	F
Field Forget-me-not	*Myosotis arvensis*	O
Field Mouse-ear	*Cerastium arven*	R
Field Scabious	*Knautia arvensis*	O
Foxglove	*Digitalis purp.*	R
Germander speedwell	*Veronica cham.*	O
Goats beard	*Tragopogon prat.*	R
Greater plantain	*Plantago major*	R
Greater stitchwort	*Stellaria holostea*	R
Great Willowherb	*Epilobium hirsut.*	R
Ground Elder	*Aegopodium podagraria*	R
Ground-Ivy	*Glechoma heder*	O
Groundsel	*Senecio vulgaris*	R
Hairy Bitter-cress	*Cardamine hirsuta*	R
Hedge-bedstraw	*Galium mollugo*	F
Hedge Woundwort	*Stachys sylvatica*	O
Hemlock	*Conium maculatum*	O
Herb-Robert	*Geranium robert*	O

Hoary Plantain	*Plantago media*	O
Hogwood	*Heracleum sphon.*	O
Hop	*Humulus Lupulus*	R
Horse Radish	*Armoracia rusticana*	R
Ivy	*Hedera hedix*	O
Ivy-leaved Speedwell	*Veronica hederifolia*	R
Lesser Burdock	*Arctium minus agg.*	O
Lesser Hawkbit	*Leontodon saxatilis*	O
Lesser Periwinkle	*Vinca minor*	O
Meadow Buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*	R
Meadow Vetchling	*Lathyrus pratensis*	R
Mouse-Ear Hawkweed	*Pilosella officinarum*	R
Mugwort	*Artemisia vulgaris*	R
Musk Mallow	*Malva moschata*	R
Oxeye Daisy	*Leucanth vulg.*	F
Perennial Sow Thistle	Sonchus arvensis	R
Petty Spurge	*Euphorbia peplus*	R
Primrose	*Primula vulgaris*	O
Red Campion	*Silene diaica*	R
Red Clover	*Trifolium prat.*	R
Red Dead-nettle	*Lamium purpureaum*	R
Ribwort Plantain	*Plantago lanceol.*	F
Rough Hawkbit	*Leontondon hispid.*	O
Selfheal	*Prunella vulgaris*	O
Shepherds Purse	*Capsella bursa-pastoris agg.*	R
Smooth Sow Thistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*	O
Spear Thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*	O
Sweet Violet	*Viola ordorata*	R
Thyme-leaved Speedwell	Veronica serpyll	R
Travellers Joy	*Clematis vitalba*	R
Wild carrot	*Dancus carota*	O
White Bryony	*Bryonia cretica*	R
White Campion	*Silene alba*	R
White Clover	*Trifolium repens*	O
White Dead-nettle	*Lamium album*	O
Wood Avens	*Geum urbanum*	O
Yarrow	*Achillea mill*	F

Eleven different species of grass were identified as follows:

Annual Meadow Grass	*Poa annua*	O
Cocks Foot	*Dactylis glom.*	O
Common Couch	*Elytrigia repens*	O
False Brome	*Brachypodium sylv.*	R
False Oat Grass	*Arrhenath elat*	F
Meadow Foxtail	*Alopecurus prat.*	O
Perennial Rye Grass	*Lolium perenne*	F
Quaking Grass	*Briza media*	R
Smooth Meadow Grass	*Poa pratensis*	O
Sterile Brome	*Bromus sterilis*	O
Yorkshire Fog	*Holcus Lanatus*	O

Surveyor's comments: Majority of churchyard is cut, but not excessively, and rich ground flora (e.g. Common Knapweed, Burnett Saxifrage and Hedge Bedstraw) present beneath cutter blades. Additional plants present at grave and churchyard boundaries.

During the World War of 1939-45 it became apparent that the churchyard was running out of space for new burials. Colonel Sir Henry Lowry-Corry gave the church a strip of land adjoining the southern boundary of the churchyard and it was dedicated by the Bishop on Sunday 4th of May 1947. Over 50 years later it is still known as 'the new Churchyard'.

The Last Word

In 1080 Wulfstan, the old Saxon Bishop of Worcester, later St. Wulfstan (enthroned four years before the Conquest and kept on by William), reviewing the amount of ecclesiastical building that had taken place since the Conquest, looked back wistfully to "a happy age of holy men who knew not how to build stately churches" but who "under any roof offered themselves as living temples to God".

Over nine hundred years later we who are the inheritors of so much ancient beauty need to keep the example of those holy men before us as we strive to preserve the work of our ancestors. Perhaps the words of our Parochial Church Council Prayer will help to remind us.

Heavenly Father

May the ancient stones
of our Parish Church
Be sanctified through our prayers
and by our lives;

May its blessed tranquillity
and gentle holiness
Touch the hearts and minds of all
who pass through its doors.

In our clamorous world
may its timeless beauty
Afford us all
an earthly glimpse of Heaven.
And may we ever strive to be
living stones of Thy Living Church.

Amen

At the beginning of this book we saw the question posed "Is this heaven or just near it?" Ruth Rendell in her 'Suffolk' wrote "If you go in on your own when no one else is there, when no service is in progress, it is not just quiet inside, it is silent. The silence slips over you like a thin clinging cloak as soon as you have closed the door behind you. Inside St Mary's is a tranquil timeless silence which reminds the visitor that this is how many places must have been in the Middle Ages when this church was young".

In the Middle Ages, with the repetition of penitential requiems and memorial masses at four Altars and perhaps more and two tabernacles, the church would not have been silent for long. But Ruth is so right about the tranquillity the church possesses now. This may be its greatest gift to the new millennium. It is never locked and one can only hope that it never will be.

Index

Index

Index

The reprint of this book is dedicated to the memory of Grania Nevill

The Benedictine Monks

From 1114 until 1160 two Benedictine monks from Abingdon Abbey served the church here. From 1160 the Benedictine Priory at Colne appointed our monks. Two monks John and Gilbert were among the witnesses to the transfer and may well be the first names we have of Christian Leaders here. In 1215 the Lateran Council directed Abbots and Priors to withdraw their monks and to replace them with stipendiary Vicars. We know we had a Vicar here in 1254 but we do not know his name. The names that we do know are set out below.

The Vicars of Edwardstone

Date of Institution		Date of Institution	
1305	Alexander de Sudbury	1645	George Nelson
1322	John Holbrook de Waldingfield parval	1651	George Pretty
1347	Nicolas Corbridge	1673	Robert Colt
1347	William Payok	1686	Abraham Salter (deprived)
1349	Roger Prittlebergh	1690	John Eachard
1350	Robert, son of John Walsokn	1695	William Goffe
1355	William, son of John Walsokn	1706	John Flasby
1372	Thomas de Walpole	1736	George Sheldon
1397	Nicolas Walter de Isham	1779	William Aldington (resigned)
1401	William Aldous	1782	Thomas Preston
1431	Thomas Maunchell	1800	George Francis Barlow (resigned)
1436	William Prior	1806	William Pochin
1448	Thomas Marmouth	1816	George Augustus Dawson
1454	John Framlingham	1848	Walter Cramer Roberts
1470	John Furneyse	1867	George Hampden de Clare Studdert
1474	William Dykonson	1896	Augustus Packenham Fitzgerald West
1480	Thomas Tylwith	1923	Thomas Robert Browne
1501	William Undison	1928	Thomas Hubert Thurland
1508	Roger Bocher (or Butcher)	1940	Archibald Brian Bird
1535	Robert Nutton (or Nanton)	1971	David George Woodwards
1556	Thomas Fytche	1983	Richard Kimber Titford
1560	Baldwin Durrant (Deereham or Dyram)	2003	David William Matthews
1563	Daniel Davyes	2010	Judith Sweetman
1574	Thomas Nicholson		
1598	Thomas Dearsley George Pretty (resigned)		

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