




ST MARY'S CHURCH



HAWKEDON



ORIGINS OF HAWKEDON DOMESDAY MANORS




Domesday Book has records of two manors in Hawkedon, or HAVUCHEDUNA, which later, in King Stephen's time (1135-1154) varies to HAUKE DUNE, and in documents ranging up to the present time is variously spelt HAKEDON, HAWGDEN, HAUKESDEN, HAWKENDON and HAWKEDON as it is today. *Haugh* signified 'a green plot in a valley' whilst '*don*' is a valley: the '*hawk*' could well indicate a number of those birds along the valley.

The two manors are respectively THURSTANESTON (ie Thurstan's manor or lordship) now Thurston End, and HAVUCHEDUNA, now Hawkedon.

Pre Domesday, in Edward the Confessor's time, Thurstaneston was held by Aetmar, a thane of Earl Algar, "there being for a manor two carucates of land" – a carucate being as much as a full plough team of 8 oxen, yoked four abreast, could cultivate annually and was about 120 acres. At the Norman Conquest the manor was given as part of his estates to Roger of Poitiers, one of William's Norman followers, but his son, who rebelled against Henry I, was deprived of the Earldom of Lancaster to which he had been raised and of all his estates in England.

The second manor in Domesday Book was HAVUCHEDUNA, which although owned by Alwin in the Confessor's time, is recorded in the survey as being held by Richard, son of Earl Gilbert, Earl of Brion in Normandy, who, because of his great assistance to the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings, was liberally rewarded with honours and lands both in Normandy and England. These great Norman barons had several lordships conferred on them, in fact Richard had no fewer than ninety five in Suffolk alone, so it is unlikely that he ever lived here. One of his sons is recorded in 1154 as making a grant of land "in Haukedune...seven acres of arable land and one acre of meadow" to the Abbey of St Edmund - evidence of there being land held in Hawkedon by the Abbey in Norman times.

A third Manor was Cresseners (now only remembered by Cresslands Lane) which appeared a hundred years after Domesday. It is important to the church however, as through one of the Cressener family, William who married Margaret Lady Scrope, comes some of the glass in the East window, and possibly explains why the arms of Richard III are also displayed there. Margaret's father was half brother to Cecily wife of Richard of York, mother of Edward IV, Richard III and George Duke of Clarence (of butt of malmsey fame). This William Cressener commanded a troop under Duke Humphrey of Gloucester at Agincourt.



But it was Robert Cressener (Father of William?) who in his will of 1410 bequeathed 3s 4d to the High Altar of Hawkedon, and 13s 4d to the Rector, Robert, son of John Wyketoft, (died about 1433). However, some two hundred years later the manor in Hawkedon was sold to Thomas Heigham, the actual house demolished in the early 20th century.

The connection with the Abbey of St Edmund is noted above, and this may explain some of the unusual features found in the church, particularly if pilgrims going to the shrine had broken their journey in Hawkedon and completed the last few miles on foot by way of the Stone Cross on the Wkepstead road.



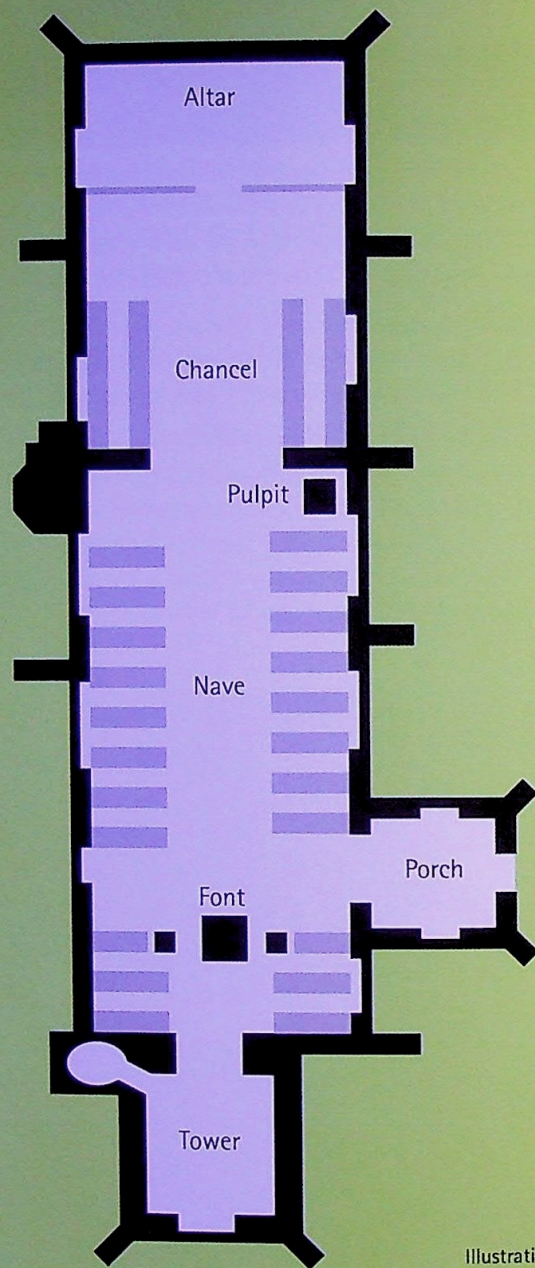


Illustration not to scale

INTRODUCTION

Surrounded by its churchyard, enclosed by the flint and brick wall, the church is located in the middle of the green at the centre of the village, a situation said to be unique in Suffolk.

That there has been a church in Hawkedon since Norman times is evident from the Domesday records of 1086/7 but the present church dates for the most part from the 14th and 15th centuries. Nothing now remains of the original Norman building (except the font) but the flint built church with its square tower and stepped angle buttresses is similar to many other Suffolk churches, but its central position in the middle of the green is unusual and gives a focal point to the houses around.

It is relatively recently that the dedication to St Mary Magdalene – rather than the Virgin – was convincingly suggested by Clive Paine* who discovered references to the Patronal Day as 22nd July. He also considers that the female figure with the auburn/red hair in the east window (see page 21) is possibly a depiction of St Mary Magdalene. Bequests offer further evidence not only of the dedication, but that a church was operative on the site during the 13th and 14th centuries. This is borne out by the 14th century tower arch and the Decorated style windows in the north and south walls of the chancel.



* local historian

THE EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

Looking at the exterior of the church, it is evident that the nave and tower are of later date than the chancel. Larger, wider 15th century Perpendicular style windows have replaced the earlier east window and all the windows in the nave. The tower window is also of this later period. Reconstruction work was certainly happening around 1452 (there is a record of a specific bequest), and similar work was taking place elsewhere in Suffolk at this time.

The 15th century porch has a rare brick castellated parapet and fine carved roof beams. On the outer wall is a canopied stoop, and a second, now filled in, beside the original church door, which dates from the 14th century.

Another unusual feature is the weathered mass dial, on the east side of one of the buttresses on the south side of the church.



THE INTERIOR

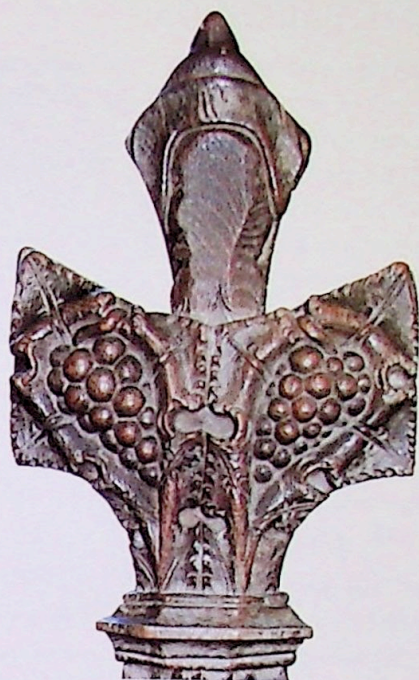
Entry to the church is through the south door; in front of you is the Norman font. The central round pillar is original, but the other small round columns at the corners are probably part of the 1912 restoration. Originally square, two of the corners have been cut off at some time, either to make it fashionably octagonal, or, more likely, to accommodate it near the north door, now blocked up. Visitors to the church during the 19th century record that the font was on the north side, but it may have been moved back to its present position at the time of the 1912 restoration. It has been suggested that the carvings on the bowl may represent either the Holy Trinity or the Tree of Life (new life given by baptism).



THE PEWS

One of the special features of this church are the magnificent oak pews with their diverse and unique set of "poppy head" bench ends. With the exception of the front two pews on the south side and one on the north, which are replicas, the rest are fine examples of 15th century woodcarving. Many of these heads have been defaced (literally), when all vestiges of the 'old religion' were being destroyed, most likely during the time of Edward VI (1547-53). One or two have been missed; some restored, as mentioned in Munro Cautley's book "Suffolk Churches". Each is slightly different, the most unusual however is the one on the north side with three moustachioed heads.





WALL PAINTINGS

Above the east window is a dark panel with the remains of a curious wall painting, discovered in 1855, now almost obliterated. It shows a crude representation of the Transfiguration, a rare subject in English art. The heads of St Peter, St John and St James with his pilgrim's hat, are described by E T Long in an article in 'The Burlington Magazine' 1940, with Moses and Elijah portrayed on each side of the figure of Christ. But the very unusual and curious feature of this fresco is that it shows the Light of the Transfiguration coming from the heart of Christ rather than from heaven above, which illustrates a tenet of the Orthodox or Byzantine faith, rather than the belief of the Western Church. It remains a mystery why this depiction should appear in a rural Suffolk church.

When the church was re-roofed in 1938 (see photograph on page 29) the painting was treated by Professor Eales from Oxford, and a tracing as it then appeared hangs beneath the Tower. (This is also now in need of attention). A further survey made when other work was carried out in 1999 confirmed that the original was too indistinct to warrant any further restoration.

The only remaining fragment of another wall painting – also discovered in 1855 – of St Christopher, who is traditionally depicted near the north door, can be seen on the north wall above the gallery.



Original painting above East window



Tracing of painting by Doris Pleydell-Bouverie

THE NAVE

The Rood Screen (in Anglo-Saxon 'Rood' means 'Cross') divided the chancel from the nave. The stairs to the Rood Loft (described in 1855 as being "of brick with stone dressings") go up behind the doorway on the north wall, now blocked up, and come out behind the Everard monument. We know from various bequests that Hawkedon had a Rood Screen with figures depicting the Crucifixion, St Mary and St John. These figures were removed at the Reformation, but the upper part still forms the front to the chancel pews on the south side. Those on the north side were copied, probably in the 19th century.

The remaining lower part divides the nave from the chancel, and paintings on two of the panels are just discernible: St Dorothy with her basket of flowers on the pulpit side and opposite possibly St Roche, to whom prayers were offered in time of plague, or maybe St James the Great in his pilgrim's hat.

An altar to the Holy Trinity would have stood in the corner in front of the screen and there is a record in 1471 of a guild dedicated to the Holy Trinity. This guild would have been a social organisation who met to pray for their departed members, especially on Trinity Sunday.

The Pulpit is early Stuart and may be contemporary with the Bishop's Chair in the Chancel. The modern lectern was presented by Lady Barrington-Ward in 1958 in memory of her husband, Sir Lancelot Barrington-Ward, who had been Rector's Warden in 1946 soon after they came to live at Hawkedon House. He was also physician to King George VI.

The Royal Coat of Arms on the south wall – it was again a legal requirement after the Restoration in 1660 that the Arms of the Sovereign be displayed in every church – are those of Charles II, changed to Queen Anne with the motto SEMPER IDEM and the date 1704 faintly discernable underneath the scroll DIEU ET MON DROIT 1750 for George II. At the top, it is just possible to see that the C has been changed to A and then G.



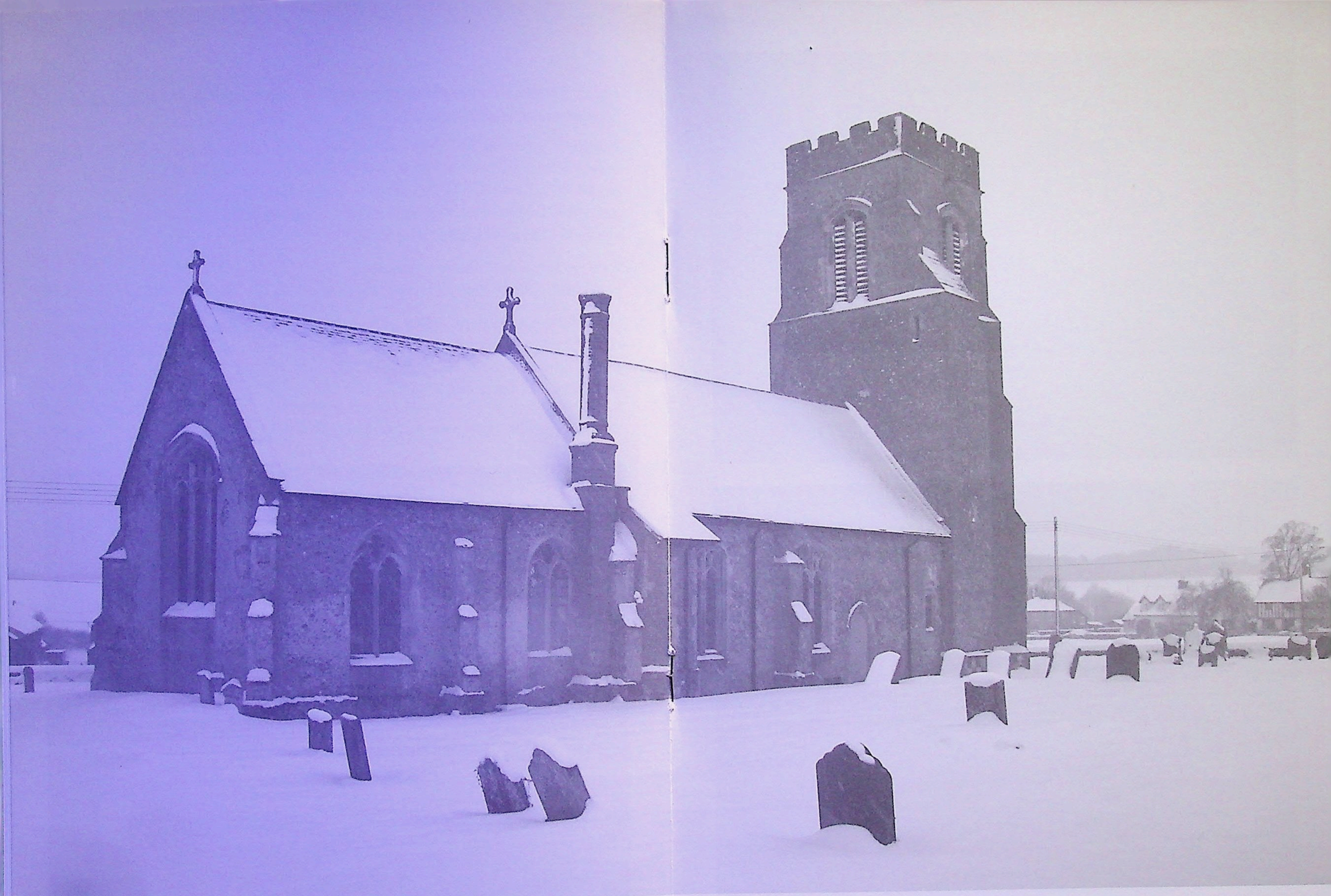
(Munro Cautley describes and photographs these arms in his book "The Royal Arms and Commandments in our Churches").

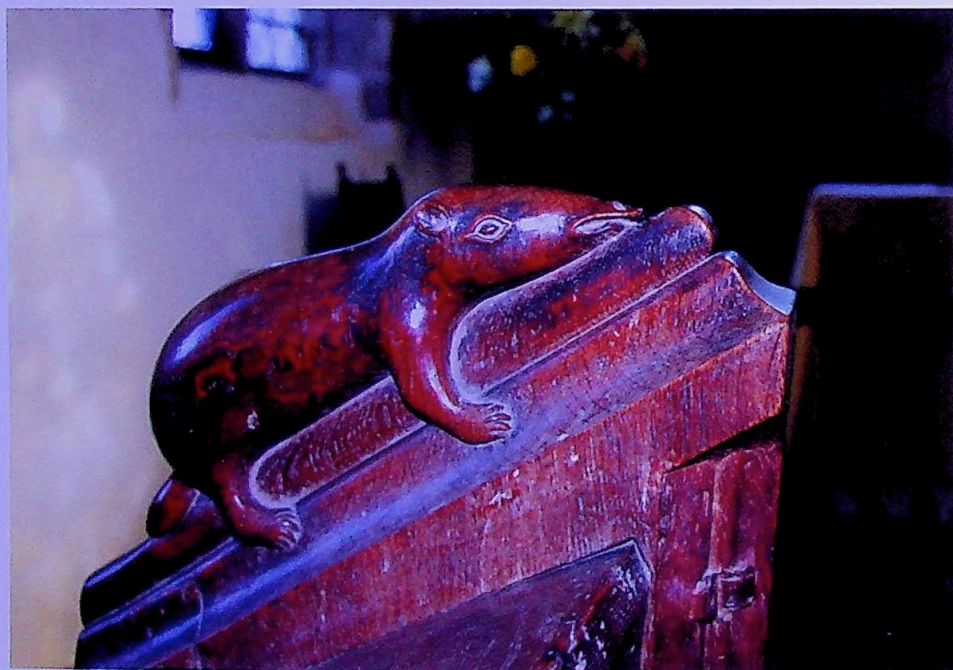
Also displayed in the main body of the church are various monuments to local families, including three hatchments. These were carried in front of the coffin in the funeral procession and then left in the church as a memorial, and belong to the Plume, Hammond and Oliver families, all at some time owners of the Manor of Hawkedon Hall, and connected to each other by marriage.

*Over the south door: Plume + Hammond;
north wall: Oliver + Richardson and Richardson + Plume*

The Gallery was designed by Detmar Blow in 1912 and the fine Norman Et Beard organ installed, when the Rev. Beilby Porteous Oakes was Rector and Bernard Gausson, his brother-in-law, organist. The organ was thoroughly cleaned and restored in 2009 and re-dedicated by the Bishop of Dunwich.







THE CHANCEL

In the chancel, the Everard monument on the north side, complete with hat pegs, is of interest. It was put up to commemorate Richard and Dorothy Everard by their sons-in-law Geoffrey Maltward, husband of Frances Everard, and Thomas Smythe who married Mary Everard.

The carvings on the pews of a chained bear and another animal, possibly a beaver, or maybe a pig - it resembles the pig in the east window - are rather fun, but whether these were the emblems of any particular family, or why they feature, is not known.

On the east side of the archway of the chancel door you can just make out the graffiti naming an early incumbent, nearly obliterated but copied down in 1814. "JOHN LAH-DNGE Curat of Hawkedon anno 1583".

The altar rails which are a fine example of 'barley sugar' turned woodwork, tapering towards the top, are 17th century, but the Elizabethan altar is now used as a Credence Table. The modern altar and reredos were erected in 1912 in memory of the Oakes family who lived at Thurston End Hall and were 'Lords of the Manor' and Patrons for nearly two centuries.



STAINED GLASS

Most of the original stained glass was destroyed during the Reformation and Cromwellian periods, but all the remaining early glass was collected, cleaned, re-leaded and reassembled in the east window by Dennis King the Norwich glazier in 1958. There is evidence from 18th century visitors to the church that there was some early heraldic glass, albeit fragmentary, in the chancel window on the north side at that time. (This, and the position of the font on the north wall, was confirmed by W Rotherham in 1887).

It is recorded that in 1814 the Rev. G.B.Jermyn, the Curate, repaired and cleaned much of the glass, which he removed and replaced in the east window, together with the two lozenges of swans which he brought from Swans Hall and the two fragments with the initials IR, the monogram of James I. Unfortunately in some instances he replaced them the wrong way round, so that the coloured side was exposed to the sun, wind and rain, and were irreparably damaged. However, the tonsured head of a monk, St Luke writing a book and St Andrew carrying his cross can be made out, as well as a wolf, an eagle, a scallop shell and three ears of corn along with the words *Virgo* and *Justice*.

Some of the glass in the lower right hand light is "silver stain"* probably from the 14th century, as in Merton College Oxford, and therefore predates the present building (another indication of an earlier church on the site), whilst at the top of the window surrounding the small angel's head is an example of 'grisaille' glass, or 'painting in grey tones' which allowed more light to filter into the building.

In the centre of the east window are the arms of Richard III, showing the arms of England and France within the Garter. The shield on the right hand side is that of the Harrington family, connected with the Manor of Thurston. It is just possible that the shield above the arms, are of the Cressener family.

The panel of the lady displaying her wedding ring, with a feathered demon behind, is confirmed to be St Catherine of Alexandria, whilst the four apostles, St Thomas, St Andrew, St Paul (or St Bartholomew), and St James the Great, at the top of the window are 17th century enamel painted panels. (See "Medieval Stained Glass in Suffolk Churches" by Rod O'Donoghue for more information.)

The windows on the south side of the chancel are a memorial to the Oakes family of Thurston Hall, Orbell Plampin Oakes Rector 1850-1882, and other members of his family, many of whom are buried in the south east corner of the churchyard.

* silver stain - a stain produced by applying a silver-compound solution to the outer surface of the glass. When fired the stain turns yellow, which can range in hue from pale lemon to orange.





THE PLATE

The Communion Plate, used only on special occasions, is said by Doris Pleydell-Bouverie to be unique. It is certainly unusual in that the silver gilt flagon has the full hall mark for 1659 (leopard's head, lion passant and B for the year) as well as the maker's mark of a hound séjant. The silver gilt plain bowled chalice and cover, used as the paten, stands on a hexagonal base with a cherub on each point and also bears the same maker's mark. To quote Doris Pleydell-Bouverie, "During the Commonwealth, when the use of the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden in Churches, many Anglican squires set up chapels in their houses, and this goldsmith made both secular and religious plate, particularly for the Royalists. The Fitzwilliam Museum in 1975 showed a collection of College Plate amongst which, from Pembroke College, was a Communion set of the same mark comprising a Chalice and Cover, two Patens, a Flagon and Alms dish – the Chalice and Flagon each having the same hexagonal foot with cherub-head finials. The work of this goldsmith is extremely rare." (*This valuable plate is no longer kept in the church.*)

The Chalice and Paten in everyday use were presented by Mrs Walter Cawston in 1965, and the silver bread box was given in memory of the Revd. H O Hutton on his retirement as Rector in 1979.

The simple wooden candlesticks now standing on the altar were made by John Stiff, a local man, to replace the brass pair stolen some years ago.

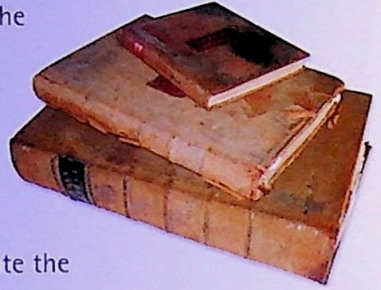


Interior view, used on postcard, 1931

THE BIBLE BOX AND BOOKS

Hawkedon has a Basket Bible printed in red and black. The Old Testament, Apocrypha and the New Testament by Robert and Thomas Basket dated 1754 and the New Testament by Thomas Basket 1753.

In addition there is a Book of Common Prayer dating to the reign of George II and a larger, much used Book of Common Prayer dated 1767 (MDCCLXVII) and inscribed "Bought by William Gilly Gent. March 11 1772 (price 16 shillings)". As the monarch changed, but the book continued to be used, 'George' has been scratched out and replaced by 'William' and 'Victoria'; in some cases carefully cut pieces of paper stuck onto the page to update the relevant prayers.



(To prevent further damage to the bindings the books are no longer kept in the bible box in the church.)



THE MEMORIALS AND BRASSES

Traditionally, the chancel was the responsibility of the Lord of the Manor, usually also the Patron, and the Rector (appointed by the Patron), so those families connected with Thurston Hall are buried in the chancel (Harrington, Everard, Maltward, Gilly, Oakes), whilst the Plume, Hammond, and Oliver families connected with Hawkedon Hall and Cressners are commemorated in the nave.



The Cokkeshall brass today

The one remaining brass in the centre of the nave commemorates **William Cokkeshall** of Hawkedon Hall who died in 1507, and his wife, who died in 1517/18, and their children (5 daughters and 2 sons).

Inscriptions to Edmund Plume and his wife Elizabeth, and their son Edmund and his wife are also in the nave, covered by the carpet to save further wear, the brasses long since gone.



A line drawing made in 1817

THE TOWER AND BELLS

In 1895 the Tower was struck by lightning, restored in 1897 and the 5 bells rehung, the tenor bell recast in 1896 by Mears & Stainbank London (now the Whitechapel Bell Foundry) when Beilby Porteus Oakes was Rector.

The first, second, third and fifth bells, inscribed "Miles Graye made me 1683", were made by Miles Graye junior of Colchester. The fourth bell inscribed "Samuel Sparrow + William Pettit Churchwardens J.S. Fecit 1721, was recast, or added by John Stephens of Norwich.

The earliest reference to bells are in 1452 when they are described as "to be newly bought" and 1471 when 13s 4d was given to "the buying of the new bell". A national survey of church bells indicates that there was a ring of four bells here in 1553.

Inscribed in the bell tower is the following bellringers couplet:

Ambrosius Chapmanus

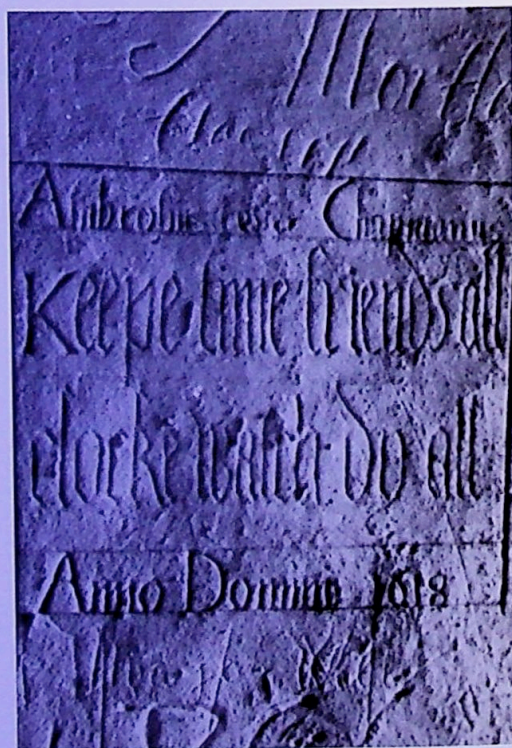
*Keepe time friends all
Clocke watch do all*

Anno Domine 1618

In the tower there is a plaque recording that on 8th January 1898 a peal of 5040 changes was rung consisting of 21 six scores of Bob and 21 six scores of Grandsire alternately in 3 hours 8 minutes by H Taylor, W Clarke, H Crick, W Taylor and G Middleditch being conductor.

The Quarter Peal of 1260 of doubles rung on February 17th 1996 was in thanksgiving for the life and work of Harry Clarke (1914-1996), who had been a leading ringer.

Other peals are recorded on 22nd November 1975, and Saturday January 8th 1808 (in 3 hours 8 minutes a peal of doubles), but there is no indication of the occasion. As recently as 2009 the Suffolk Guild of Bellringers rang various peals for a period of three hours – just for the fun of it!





IN THE CHURCHYARD

Gravestones in the churchyard date from the late 17th century and record the names of families closely connected with the village. Many of the inscriptions have worn away, but some remain, including that to the memory of George Sparrow who died November 23rd 1844 –

*It was so suddenly I fell,
My neighbours started at my knell
Amazed, that I should be no more,
The man they'd seen the day before.*

(A note in the burial register records that "he died of a fit in his garden").

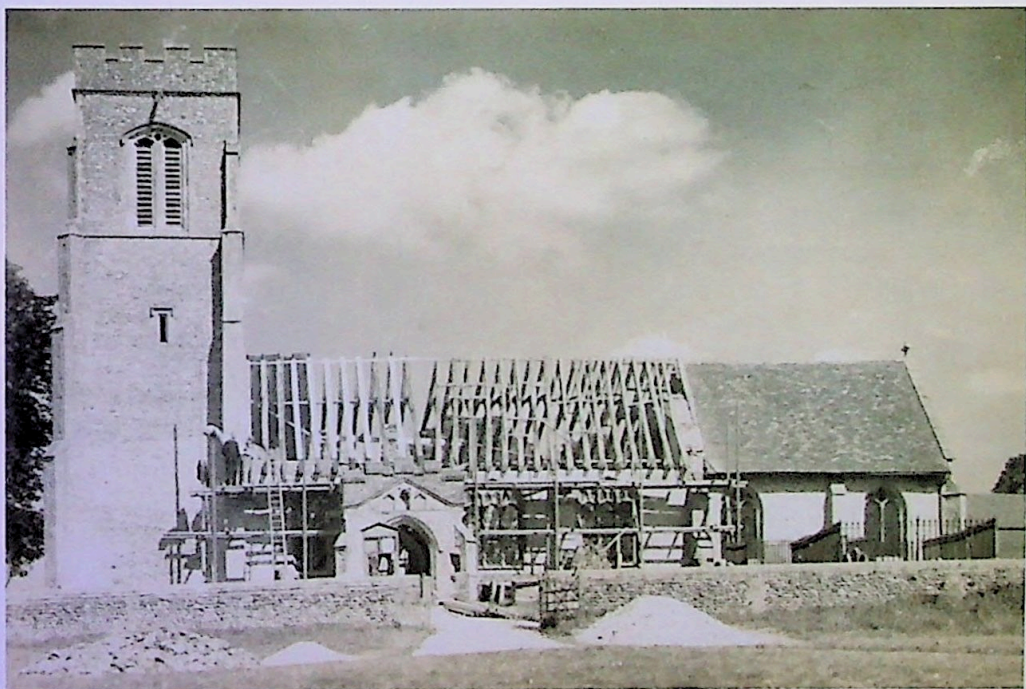
Other graves are unmarked, including that of Frederick John Craddock who was awarded (posthumously) the George Cross in 1943 following an accident at his place of work in Glemsford.



RESTORATIONS

Just before World War II extensive restoration work was carried out when the roof timbers, in some cases eroded by weather and unsafe, and the plaster ceiling were taken down. (The whole described as 'single-framed rafter type, plastered, with arch-braced tie beams). The timbers were replaced, or where necessary renewed, and the whole roof lined with oak and retiled (see photograph below). Munro Cautley, the Diocesan Surveyor advised and the builders, Cubitt and Gotts did a splendid job at a huge cost for a small community. The re-opening service was held at the church in February 1939 attended by the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

The Tower has been recorded as struck by lightning on at least two occasions: in the late 1890s repairs to the north buttress had to be carried out and the tenor bell recast and all five rehung (see above). Major tower and stonework restoration was carried out during the early 1990s under the guidance of Dennis Brown, one of the Churchwardens and an architect. He also supervised the later interior plaster repairs and redecoration.



HAWKEDON RECTORS OF NOTE

Anthony Sparrow, son of Samuel Sparrow, a well-to-do yeoman, was baptized in 1612 at Wickhambrook. He was a scholar of Queen's College, Cambridge, later a Fellow, and a portrait of him in Bishop's robes is preserved in the College. Always a loyal royalist, he was ejected from his college by the Earl of Manchester, head of the Parliamentary troops in 1644. But in 1647 his father procured him the living of Hawkedon which he held for five years. He was then ousted by the Committee of Religion, sitting at Westminster, because he constantly used the Book of Common Prayer instead of the "Directory". He retired to Depden where he married and had six children.

In retirement he wrote several learned books and treatises on Divinity, but at the Restoration he recovered his rectory at Hawkedon, was elected as a preacher in Bury St Edmunds, made Archdeacon of Sudbury in 1660, a peculiar of Canterbury 1660/61, Master of Queens, his old college in Cambridge in 1662, and Vice Chancellor of the University in 1664. He shortly afterwards resigned his living in Hawkedon where he laid out £200 in repairs. In 1667 Charles II made him Bishop of Exeter which See he held for nine years and in 1676 he was made Bishop of Norwich where he died at his palace in his seventy-fourth year, much revered and beloved but wasted with disease. He was buried at the east end of the Bishop's chapel attached to the palace. The Latin inscription in the chancel of Hawkedon Church to Holgate (Gulielmus Holgatum) is possibly by him, and it is probably he who gave the church its hound séjant chalice and flagon.

Stephen Newson, his curate, succeeded him in 1665. He too seems to have stuck to his principles, for along with a handful of others in Suffolk, including the incumbents of Long Melford and Hundon, he refused to swear allegiance to William and Mary following James II's flight from England in 1689. He was removed from office in 1690 and is therefore not buried at Hawkedon although his wife Elizabeth has a memorial stone in the chancel.

William Browne held the living from 1729 to 1755. American visitors to Hawkedon affirm that he emigrated with his three sons and aided the founding of Watertown, Massachusetts and was also the first Minister in Sudbury, Mass. But he must have returned to Suffolk as he is buried in the chancel, and with his wife is commemorated by a memorial tablet.

William Gilly MA, Senior – who bought the Prayer Book (see page 24) – was Rector for 27 years. His son, another William Gilly MA, Fellow of Gonville & Caius was Rector for 50 years, as the various memorial tablets record.

The latter's son, not Rector here, but born in Hawkedon, Dr **William Stephen Gilly DD** as Vicar of Norham, Northumberland did much to alleviate rural poverty in the Durham area as well as writing a number of books on the history of Protestantism. Much research on his life and work has been carried out by Mr Hugh Norwood and a splendid family tree – put together by one of Gilly's contemporaries, and also Curate at Hawkedon, George Bitton Jermyn, – is now held at the Bury St Edmund's Record Office.

At various times it is recorded that the incumbent combined the living with a neighbouring parish
Hawkedon is now part of the Suffolk Heights Benefice.

In the reign of Henry II	Alard
In the reign of Henry III	Master William of Kentewell
In the reign of Henry III	Hugh
1320	John Aunsell
1349	Roger Atte Spence of Fflete
1350	Robert Donkan of Wyrmegeye
1361	Thomas de Westowe
1391	Robert son of John Wyketoft
1433	John Fen of Glemesford
1451	Sir Henry Blome
1463	Sir Edmund ffrere Chaplain
1488	Sir Thomas Petthod Thomas Petyte
1493	Sir Robert Chekley <i>and also of Somerton</i>
1508	Robert Peyton
1544	Sir John Brek <i>Chaplain, and of Somerton</i>
1554	Sir John Langley <i>presented to the living on account of the deprivation, removal and forsakement of Sir John Brek</i>
1560	Robert Shawe <i>also presented to the living of Stansfield</i>
1584	Robert Ray
1647	Anthony Sparrow, Bachelor in Theology
1665	Stephen Newson
1690	Thomas Martin <i>Living void by the cesession and deprivation of Stephen Newson</i>
1709	Everard Maltyard <i>Living now lawfully void by the resignation of Thomas Martin</i>
1729	William Browne
1755	Henry Austin
1759	William Gilly
1788	William Gilly (1825–1836 James King, Curate)
1838	George John Haggitt
1850	Orbell Plampin Oakes
1882	J F Benson Walsh
1885	Beilby Porteus Oakes (Rector for 47 years)
1933	Guy Eric Smith
1935	Percival Edgar Brassel
1939	John Oliver Vince
1941	Harry Howard Waddington
1944	George Harry Talboys
1955	Paul Davison <i>Hawkedon combined with Stansfield</i>
1964	Hugh Overthwaite Hutton
1976–1982	David Parlane Shaw <i>1979 Hawkedon joined with Depden, Chedburgh and Rede</i>
1983–2000	David Wall
2001–2002	John Butler <i>Suffolk Heights Benefice formed to include Hargrave and Chevington</i>
2004–2007	Geoffrey Darvill
2009–2011	Dr Roger Brooks
2012	Cheryl Collins

Text and Research by Judith Wilson
Design and Photography by Mark Bates



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