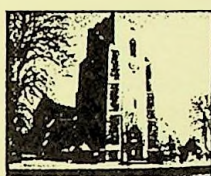


St. Mary's Church,
Haughley



Church Guide
£1

*Welcome
to the Church of the
Assumption of the Blessed
Virgin Mary,
Haughley.*

St. Mary's is the Parish church of Haughley. There has been a church in Haughley since Anglo-Saxon times, and many generations of Haughley villagers have worshipped together in their Parish church .

The building that you see today is a compilation of architectural styles from the 12th century to the present day.

It owes much of its appearance to medieval stonemasons and Tudor and Victorian carpenters. Nevertheless, it would be a neglected monument without today's congregation, who pay for repairs, arrange the flowers, mow the churchyard, ring the bells, sing in the choir, sew, mend, clean, polish, paint.....

We hope that this booklet will help you to discover some of Haughley church's heritage.

We hope, too, that you will appreciate the church for what it was made for: a place for the community to gather together and worship.

Haughley is part of the Deanery of Stowmarket, the Archdeaconry of Ipswich and the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

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The early history of Haughley Church

Haughley is a Saxon place-name which probably means 'a high clearing in the woods'. The name is first mentioned in an 11th century Anglo-Saxon will in which Haughley belonged to a lady called Leofgifu.

The Domesday book tells us that before the Norman conquest in 1066 Haughley and its church belonged to Guthmund.

Its first Norman lord was Hugh de Montfort, and the present church building lies in the outer bailey of Haughley Castle, which was destroyed in 1173. The 'duckpond' near the church is part of the moat around the inner bailey. The castle gave Haughley a special status, which resulted in the church's history taking a slightly different course from other local churches. Unlike Wetherden, the church never belonged to the abbey at Bury St. Edmunds.

Henry II took the manor of the 'Honour of Haughley' into his hands when one of its owners (Henry D'Essex) was defeated in a duel and became a monk (see the banners in the nave). It then passed to various people favoured by the crown, including Ralph de Broc, who had a hand in the murder of Thomas Becket.

In the early 13th century it was given to Richard, Earl of Cornwall (and brother of King Henry III). Richard was lucky enough to survive a shipwreck, and paid for a new abbey to be built at Hailes (Gloucestershire) to give thanks to God. He gave Haughley land and Haughley tithes to his new abbey, and from then until the abbey was dissolved (1539) the vicars of Haughley were appointed by Hailes Abbey. This is of particular relevance to the South Aisle (page 8).

The Reformation of the 1530's brought enormous upheaval to Haughley church. Until then it had been a Roman Catholic church, but the switch to Protestantism changed the way the church looked and the way the congregation worshipped, and had a far-reaching effect on attitudes and beliefs. The very name of the church (Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) represented an incongruous Catholic belief (though it was usually just called 'Haughley church' even before the Reformation). Protestantism scorned elaborate decoration, coloured paint, gilding, saints and images, but it seems that the local population hadn't the heart to wreak wholesale destruction on the church. It is highly probable that many local people simply kept a low profile, since the Lords of the manor at Haughley park persisted with Roman Catholicism.

The right to appoint vicars fell to local families such as the Bells and Tyrells.

The earliest surviving church registers (and other church records) date from 1557, and they have been kept almost continuously to this day.

Puritan fervour in the mid 17th century brought Haughley a minister dubbed 'Decalogue Dods' after a very long sermon about the ten commandments.

List of clergy

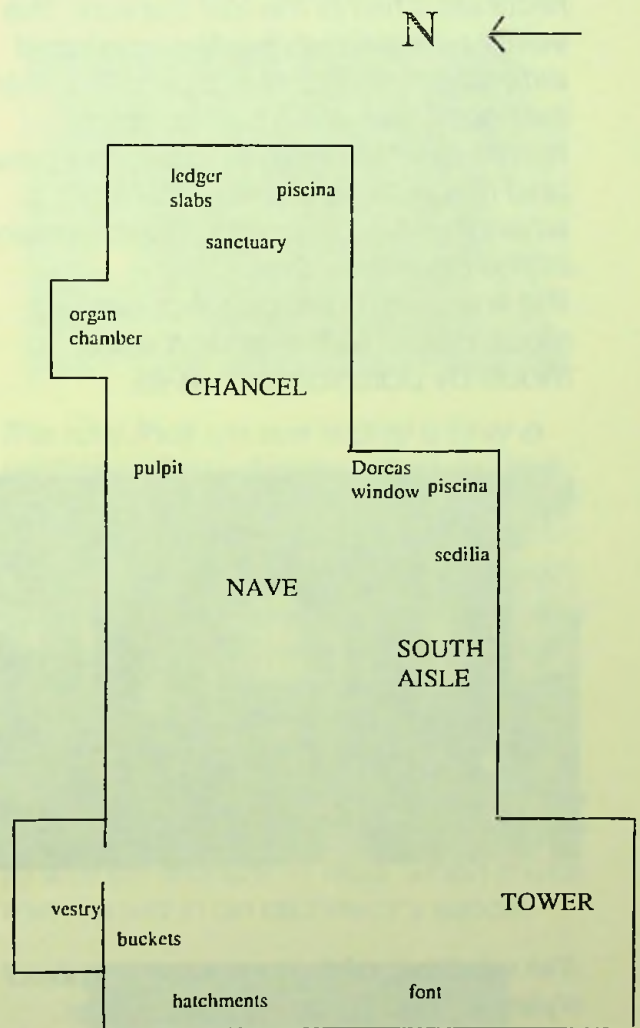
Haughley has a continuous record of vicars dating back to John de Monte Luelli in 1255. (He was probably Italian: there was civil unrest in the 13th century about the number of Italian priests in England). Our first female vicar, Deirdre Parmenter, was appointed in 1997.

Building materials

Suffolk is covered in a thick layer of clay, chalk or sand, and for this reason we lack large building stones. Most of our medieval churches are built of flint, and Haughley is no exception. Between the large mortared flints of the inner and outer walls is a filling of flint rubble. A close look at the walls of the church shows that flint was not used exclusively: other stones, tiles and bricks have been incorporated. Given the early date of the tower, it is probable that any bricks in the walls are re-used Roman bricks. The top of the tower has coursed brickwork. The corners of the walls are built of large blocks of limestone from outside the county. Different limestone has been used for different periods of building (you can tell by the kind of lichen that grows there). We think that our oldest buttresses are on the north wall of the nave and may date from the twelfth century, and it is interesting that one of these buttresses contains a re-used piece of channelled limestone from an even older building. Limestone has been used for our gargoyles on the tower and South Aisle, and there are tiny gargoyles on the high windows on the north side of the church. A brick tunnel runs under the church from the east end to the north-west end. Its entrance is near the pulpit. It is probably a drain, but it may have had other uses. The large and small timbers of the roof are oak. The nave and chancel are roofed with slate, and the South Aisle roof is made of stainless steel sheets.

Plan

The plan below shows where various features described in the remainder of this guide-book may be found: (not to scale)



The Nave

The nave is the main part of the church, and it's probably the oldest part. Some sections of the north wall may date back to the 12th century, but most of the visible structure is of a much later date.

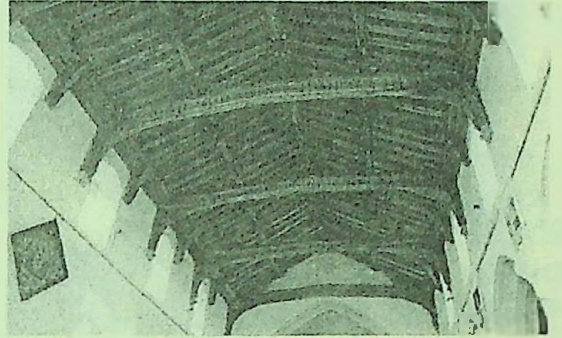
The entire west wall was braced and reconstructed in the last century. The vestry was added (by Andrews) and extended westward in the 1970's. This extension was a conversion of a former coal and coke house. The pews and the pulpit date from the 1870's, when there was a major refurbishment of the church interior.

The kneelers (hassocks) that add so much colour to the church were made by parishioners in 1986.

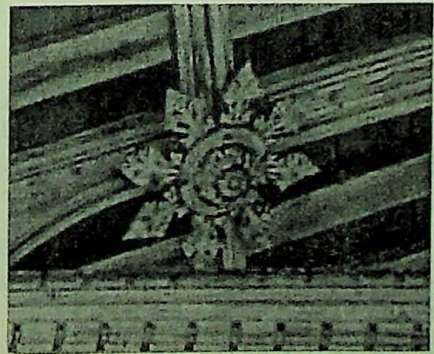


The windows of the nave are of mixed styles, some Decorated and some Perpendicular. It is worth pointing out that the height of the nave was raised sometime around the 15th century. The small high windows of the clerestory were added for the purpose of illuminating the nave's most startling feature, the timber roof.

Technically, the roof has alternating oak arch-braces and cambered tie-beams, but it is the decorative effect rather than the construction that is so striking. Everywhere there are carved timbers and floral roof-bosses: the original timber has a silvery sheen, but the roof also includes Jacobean and Victorian repair work.

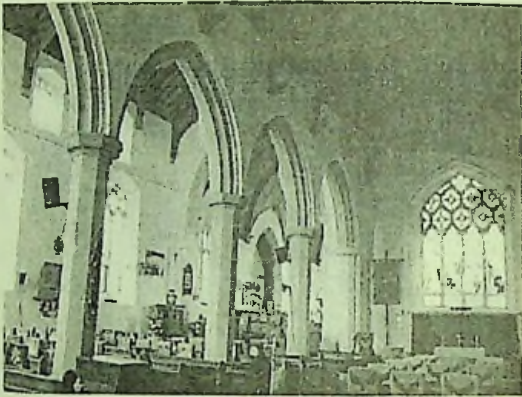


The roof that we see today is only a vestige of the splendour that existed before the 1534 Reformation. Several pre-Reformation wills describe the rood-beam and the rood-loft, which were timber structures at the east end of the nave. We know that the rood-beam at Haughley had carved, painted and gilded figures of Mary, John and at least two angels. A cross would have stood at the centre of the rood-beam. The beam itself (or part of it) was still existent in 1865, when it was mentioned in an architect's report.



South Aisle

This is the most decorative part of the church with its angel roof and stained glass windows. It's joined to the nave by a five-arch arcade supported by octagonal limestone pillars.



Early 16th century will leave money for "makyng of ye Ele (aisle) in Haughley church", and this is an appropriate date for the style of the angel roof. There are eighteen angels on brackets at the ends of beams, carrying such items as books or musical instruments. At the east end of the aisle there are some smaller angels parallel to the wall, and the carved rafters also carry central floral bosses.

The hassocks of the south aisle have angels to complement the roof.

The South Aisle may have undergone a radical refurbishment in the early 16th century, but several items show that it was built at an earlier date. The entrance is Early English (1300), the window traceries (not the glass) and the piscina are of the Decorated period (about 1350).



Furthermore, a letter from the pope (dated 1393) encourages people to visit and give money to a Chapel of St. Cross in Haughley church on the 'Feast of the Invention and Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and the Dedication'.

At the time the vicars of Haughley were appointed by the Abbot of Hailes (Gloucestershire), and (amongst many relics) Hailes claimed to own a fragment of the True Cross. This may be the reason why there was a chapel dedicated to the Cross in Haughley. (Hailes also claimed to possess a sample of Christ's blood, but at the Reformation there was some correspondence about whether or not it was duck blood!)

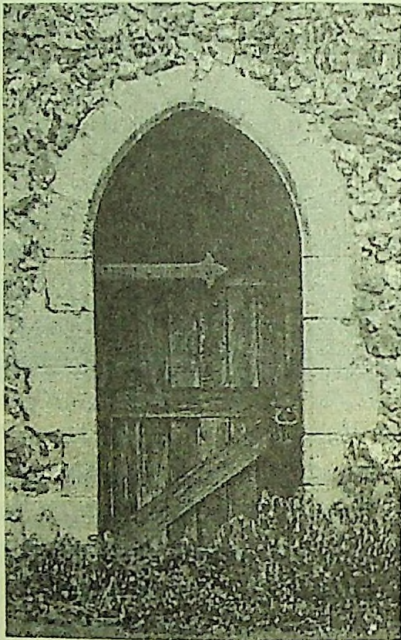
We do not know for certain that the South Aisle is the Holy Cross chapel, but it seems probable. Fifteenth century will describe an image (Mary?) and a cross in the chapel.

Today we use the South Aisle for early morning services or other services when we expect a small congregation.

The chancel

The chancel is at the eastern end of the nave where the high altar and choir stalls are situated.

The chancel at Haughley dates back to the early 14th century, and has a small priest's door in the south wall.



The windows are of the later Perpendicular style. Behind the altar-rail is the sanctuary, where you will find a Jacobean holy table, an ancient wooden chest and a 'bishop's chair'. The piscina is described on page 16.



Much of the visual effect of the sanctuary is brought about by the soft furnishings: the altar linen was made by Miss Dorothy Simmons. The long altar kneeler is dedicated to the sufferers of Alzheimer's disease: it was made by several church members during 1996 through the initiative of former churchwarden Mrs Nesta Taylor.

On the floor behind the altar there are four black marble ledger slabs in memory of the Ray and Tyrell families (see also 'Hatchments' on page 17). Access to the Ray vault was beneath the entrance through the altar rails. This is the 'high status' end of the church for a burial: lower status burials were towards the back of the church.

A 'tunnel' runs under the chancel: its entrance may be seen outside the church below the east window. It may serve as a drain, but it is bricked off from the tunnel under the nave.

The choir (a good SATB choir with up to 20 members, formed in 1991 by Rev. David Burrell, with Martin Seymour as organist) bought the choir-stall lamps in 1995, and Mr Dennis Spink made the fixings.

The organ is a single manual organ with a straight pedal-board. It was made by Alfred Monk of London and installed in the newly-built organ chamber in 1878. In the same year the chancel roof was fitted with its present barrel-vaulting to improve the acoustics.

One of our longest-standing organists was Kathleen Coe. She played for forty years, and a memorial made by her son Richard (with carving by Rob Lewis) is displayed near the organ.

The Tower

At Haughley the tower is sited in an unusual position: south of the nave rather than west.

Its Y-shaped 'Early English' windows allow us to date it fairly precisely at 1300 A.D.



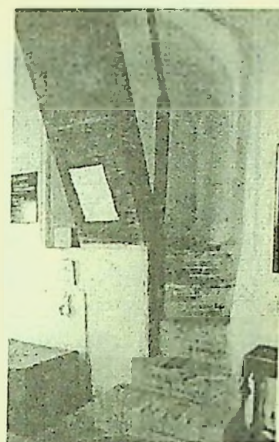
Its diagonal buttresses are only at the front, and it can safely be concluded that a pre-1300 chapel of some description stood between the nave and the tower.

The ground floor of the tower forms the porch, which was traditionally the place for villagers to carry out financial or legal transactions. Its secular role is illustrated by the pegs on the porch roof: they are for the fire buckets described on page 19.

The magnificent doorway into the church is Early English, and the south door is inscribed with the date 1699 (which may be the date of the door or the date of a repair).



The first floor of the tower is the ringing chamber, where a resourceful team of bell-ringers gathers for practice on Monday evenings. Brick and wooden stairs lead from the ground floor to the chamber. It has been suggested that the moulded supports for the banisters are remnants of the rood screen, and that the moulded timber of the porch ceiling may be from the rood beam (see page 7).



The bells themselves are two floors above the ringing chamber. There are five of them, reputedly the heaviest ringable five in Suffolk. Four were cast from the pre-reformation bells in 1579 by Stephen Tonni of Bury St. Edmunds, and are inscribed:

"DE BURI SANTI EDMUNDI STEFANUS TONNI
ME FECIT WL 1579 SUMPTUS NOSTRORUM
SUNT HAUGHLYE VIVORUM"

The treble was made in 1702 and recast in 1885 by John Warner of London in memory of local surgeon W. Ebdon. It is inscribed with the details of the recasting.

The church also has a set of hand-bells.

The tower clock (which is wound twice each week!) was installed in 1903, a gift of the Bevans of Plashwood.

The Font

At Haughley we possess a wonderful example of a type of font produced in the eastern part of East Anglia between the late 14th and 15th centuries. It's known as an 'East Anglian' font, and because it features the symbols of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, it's also called a 'Four Evangelists' font.



The font consists of a pedestal and bowl carved from limestone, the inside of the bowl being lined with lead. The bowl is octagonal in shape and has eight carved panels. Four of the panels contain the symbols of the evangelists:

- Matthew (an angel with a scroll)
- Mark (a lion)
- Luke (an ox)
- John (an eagle)

The four other panels feature angels holding:

- A St. George's cross,
- The Holy Communion symbol (three cups and three wafers)
- The arms of Bury St. Edmund's abbey
- The Y-shaped Trinity emblem.

The pedestal is carved with four lions and four naked hairy wildmen or 'woodwoses'. Three of the wildmen are carrying clubs. They may symbolize the heathens of our community who have never been converted to Christianity.



Many of the figures on the font have damaged faces. This kind of destruction was carried out by iconoclasts, who objected to seeing images in church buildings. Some damage was incurred in the wake of the Reformation, but much was perpetrated by William Dowsing and his followers in the 1640's. There is no record that Dowsing visited Haughley, but he destroyed an enormous amount of church property in the neighbouring village of Wetherden. (Destruction of the Latin inscription on the Trinity emblem suggests that the damage should be dated at the Reformation).

The font cover was made in 1979 by churchwarden Mr George Parry, using wood from HMS Ganges, a naval training base.

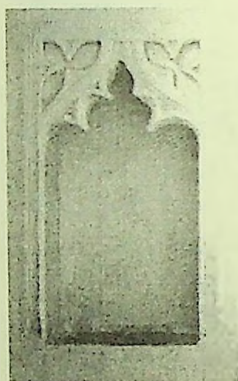
The font is still used today for christenings, although we place a container of water within the bowl rather than fill the whole lead lining. We christen about a dozen children and adults each year, mostly during church services.

Piscinas

Piscinas are basins built into the wall near an altar: they are for washing the chalice (cup) used at communion. The hole in the basin returns the water to consecrated ground.

Haughley has two piscinas, both belonging to the 'Decorated' period of the 14th century.

The one in the chancel is probably the earlier, and has a square head, a curved 'ogee' arch with trefoils either side and a plain round recess in the basin.



The piscina in the South Aisle has an arched head with a cinquefoil decoration and a flower-shaped recess in the basin.



Beneath the window adjacent to the South Aisle piscina is a sedilia, which was a medieval seat for the priest and two deacons who read the bible at services.

Hatchments

Hatchments are diamond-shaped boards painted with the coats of arms of wealthy local families.

From the late 17th century until the early 19th century they were displayed at the family residence to indicate a death in the house, and they were also carried at the funeral. Many were transferred to local churches when the custom died out.

Haughley has five hatchments belonging to families at Plashwood and Haughley Park. They hang at the west end of the nave, and they are for:

Families associated with Plashwood:

REV. RICHARD RAY, died 1758. "**RESURGEMUS**", features **three red birds (marllets gules), black lion rampant and ostrich crest.**

SIR GEORGE WOMBWELL (husband of Rev. Ray's granddaughter, Suzanna Rawlinson), died 1780. "**IN COELO QUIES**", features a **red (gules) shield, unicorn crest and skull at base.**

RICHARD RAY (son of Rev. Richard Ray), died 1811. "**ET JUSTE ET VRAY**", features **two black lions rampant and ostrich crest.**

ELIZABETH TYRELL (daughter of Richard Ray, wife of Charles Tyrell), died 1826. "**RESURGAM**", features **two large panthers and boar's head crest.**

Haughley Park families:

WILLIAM CRAWFORD (father of Rev. William Crawford, who endowed Haughley School), died 1835. "**CONQUIESCO**", features **black lion rampant and blue/white zig-zag (per fess indented azure and argent)**



Windows

Haughley has windows in three main styles:

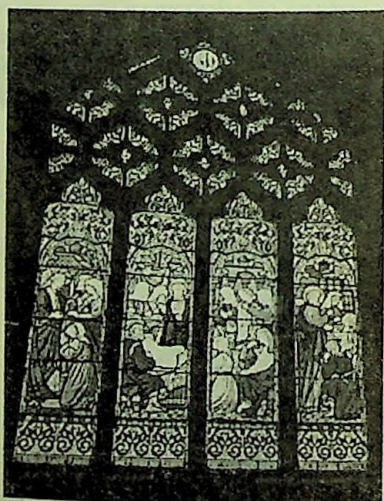
Early English (1300) in the tower,
Decorated (1300-1350) in the South
Aisle and the Nave window nearest
the chancel,

Perpendicular (1350-1500) in the
chancel, clerestory and Nave.

There is medieval stained glass in the
west window of the nave. The two
shields represent:

- the three crowns of Anglia (pre-Reformation diocesan arms?)
- the arms of Thomas Beaufort (son of John of Gaunt, grandson of Edward I)

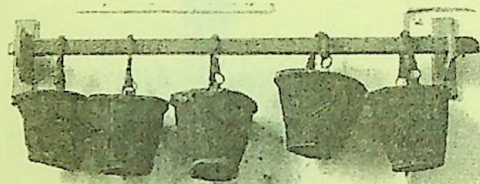
Victorian stained glass is found in the
south windows of the South Aisle
(annotated vines in both windows)
and in the east window of the aisle.
The east window is an 1897 memorial
to Arabelle Williams of Haughley Park.
It is a 'Dorcas' window (respectable
women/widows of Victorian times
belonged to Dorcas Societies).
Dorcas, or Tabitha, was raised to life
by the prayers of St. Peter. (Acts 9)



Fire Buckets

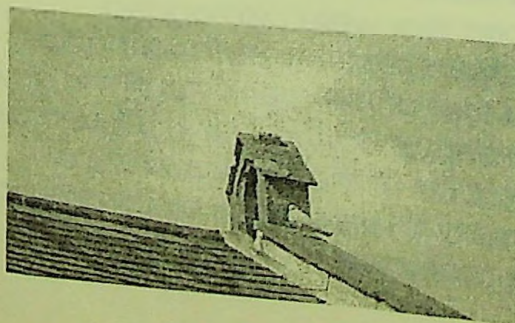
Haughley church possesses a
collection of thirty-four 18th century
leather fire buckets. They are painted
with their dates and 'Haughley', and
some bear a white cross and five red
marks, the sign of the five wounds of
Christ.

Five of them now hang at the back of
the nave, but they were intended for
the ceiling of the porch, where there
are several rows of pegs. Fires were a
constant threat to a village with
thatched roofs: £825 worth of damage
was incurred in a fire in the early 18th
century.



The Sanctus Turret

Haughley church is notable for having
a sanctus bell turret in situ above the
east end of the nave. The sanctus bell
was rung daily when the priest lifted
the bread and wine at Mass. Those
who were not able to attend could
pause to pray at this moment.
The bell was removed at the
Reformation, and the metal may have
been included in the 1579 recasting of
the tower bells.



The War Memorial

The war memorial was erected in 1920 following the First World War. It was originally inscribed with the names and regiments of twenty-eight young men from Haughley who died fighting in France and Flanders, though some of the fallen who died of wounds after the war are not on the memorial.

The war memorial is a statue of Christ on the cross with Mary on His right and John on His left. It is thus the same imagery that stood on the rood beam before the Reformation (page 7).



The war memorial fell down in a gale in 1947. A plain cross was temporarily installed, but the original work was found and restored in 1995 with financial help from the Parish Council. Mary and John had broken off and had to be re-carved. The names of the fallen were re-inscribed (this time without their regiments), and the names of the fallen from the Second World War were also added.

Villagers place wreaths of poppies at the foot of the memorial in the days leading up to the 11th of November, and part of the Remembrance Sunday Service takes place around the memorial.