

22/1/17
in Skool

All Saints' Church

SHELLEY

SUFFOLK



A small church with an international history

by

Edward and Joanna Martin

All Saints' Church, Shelley

This delightful parish church of All Saints, tucked away in the Brett valley just south of Hadleigh, has a great attraction for those who visit. It is a wonderful example of an English country church with all its atmosphere of both history and worship.

It has served as the place of Christian worship in Shelley for seven hundred years and is still a very important spiritual 'home' for a small but enthusiastic congregation. Worship is held every Sunday and local people and visitors are always very welcome to join with us.

The recent discovery that Elizabeth Tilney of Shelley was the sister of one of the founding fathers of the United States of America, Bartholomew Gosnold, has both excited and intrigued us. The thought of her as a former worshipping member of this church has given us a very special link with our church heritage.

We of All Saints' Church hope that you will enjoy this church as much as we do. We hope that you will remember the life of our church in your prayers and that you will always feel welcome to this tranquil and holy place.

The Very Reverend Canon David A.C. Stranack, Rector.

The PCC of All Saints' Church Shelley would like to thank:-

Edward and Joanna Martin for writing this fascinating history of our church.

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Enjoying a beautiful position beside the River Brett in south Suffolk, Shelley church is an ancient structure with a fascinating history that connects not only with many important events and people in British history, but also with a surprisingly number of other lands around the world.

Scelfleage 'the grove on the slope or shelf', is first mentioned around the year 1002, as a place adjoining an estate of Ælfflæd, the daughter of Ealdorman Ælfgar and the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth of Essex, who died fighting the Vikings at the Battle of Maldon in Essex in AD 991. At this time the River Brett was called the *Mercyle* or *Mearcella*, meaning 'the boundary stream'.

At the time of Domesday Book, 1086, Shelley was one of three 'berewicks' or dependent settlements attached to East Bergholt, a larger settlement 3½ miles to the south-east of Shelley in the Stour valley. They were all being administered by Ælfric Wand on behalf of King William the Conqueror and had probably come into the king's hands as a result of the unsuccessful rebellion in 1075 of Ralph, Earl of Norfolk. Before the Norman Conquest they had belonged to King Harold and his brother Earl Gyrrh. Only two churches are listed for Bergholt and its berewicks (Bentley, Shelley and Shotley) in 1086, one of which was must have been at Bergholt itself.

In 1094 King William II gave Shelley to the **Abbey of St Martin at Battle** in Sussex, which had been founded by his father in 1070 on the site of the Battle of Hastings. The gift was confirmed by King Henry II, c.1154-61, but later in the 12th century he gave Shelley to the **Priory of Butley**. This Priory, near the east coast of Suffolk, had been founded in 1171 by Rannulf de Glanville, King Henry's justiciar. It is probable that the church living at Shelley was given to Butley at the same time, for it belonged to Butley Priory later in the Middle Ages. The first certain indication of a church does not come, however, until 1254. Throughout the Middle Ages the priory provided clergy to serve Shelley church.

In the 15th century the manor came into the hands of **John King**, Citizen and Grocer of London. King was dead before 1485, when his widow Alice made her will. Her heir was her grandson John King, her son William having predeceased her. John King, the grandson, died in 1506 and his widow Rose (the daughter of Sir Edmund Jenney of Knodishall) remarried Thomas Aylmer of Polstead. Together they sold Shelley in 1517 to trustees acting for Sir Philip Tilney.

Sir Philip Tilney belonged to a junior branch of a knightly family with estates in Norfolk and Lincolnshire, but gained advancement through the marriages

first of his cousin Elizabeth Tilney, and then his sister Agnes, to Thomas Howard, 2nd Duke of Norfolk. Sir Philip became the steward of the duke's important manor of Framlingham in 1495 and probably used his influence to gain entry to the royal court. He was a Knight of the Sword at the marriage of Arthur, Prince of Wales, to Katharine of Aragon in 1501 and was the treasurer of King Henry VIII's expedition into Scotland in 1513, being present at the Battle of Flodden, when King James IV was defeated and killed. After purchasing Shelley he built a grand brick mansion there, part of which still survives. He also built a brick chapel on the north side of the church, where he was buried in January 1533.

Tilney died just before his ducal connection turned into a royal one. In 1533 his cousin Elizabeth Tilney's granddaughter, **Ann Boleyn**, married **King Henry VIII** and gave birth to the future **Queen Elizabeth I**. In 1542 another connection was added when another of Elizabeth's granddaughters, **Katherine Howard**, was also married to Henry VIII. Advancement also brought danger, for both these queens suffered execution. Sir Philip's own daughter-in-law was one of Queen Katherine's ladies and was implicated in the queen's adultery and was sentenced to life imprisonment, but was later pardoned. In 1554 Sir Philip's daughter Elizabeth attended **Lady Jane Grey** at her execution and was given her gloves and handkerchief.

The Tilneys' royal connection was recognised in **1561** when Sir Philip's great-grandson, another Philip, **entertained Queen Elizabeth at Shelley Hall**. Curiously, Philip's only son, Charles, born shortly after the royal visit, got involved in the Babington Conspiracy against his cousin the queen, and, following a conviction for high treason, was hanged, drawn and quartered in 1586.

Philip Tilney, childless after the execution of his only son, was succeeded by his brother Emery in 1602, who in turn was succeeded by his son Thomas in 1606. Thomas had married, around 1598, **Elizabeth Gosnold**, the sister of **Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold**, one of the founders of **Jamestown in Virginia**. After Thomas's death, c.1618-20, increasing debt led his son Philip to sell Shelley, c.1627, to Capt. Thomas Kerridge, a merchant recently returned from India. Elizabeth Tilney ended her days a few miles away at Higham, but was returned to Shelley for burial in 1646. Her family faded away, with two of her grandsons going to Barbados in the West Indies in the latter part of the 17th century.

Thomas Kerridge, the new owner of Shelley, had had an adventurous past. Described as a sea-captain, by 1613 he was the agent or factor of the East India

Company factory at **Surat** in Gujurat province in north-west **India**, to the north of Mumbai (Bombay). This factory was established in 1612 and Kerridge became its President in 1615 and was still there in 1625. Whilst there he helped the to arrange the burial, in 1614, of John Mildenhall, a traveller in Persia and India, who is commemorated by a tombstone in the Roman Catholic cemetery at Agra, the oldest surviving memorial to an Englishman in India. He also encouraged Henry Lord to study the Hindu religion, which resulted in a two-volume publication entitled *Display of Two Forraigne Sects in the East Indies* in 1630. Kerridge seems to have made his fortune in India and returned to England to set himself up as a gentleman. He purchased Shelley Hall and in 1629 he had a grant of a coat-of-arms 'for his good services in the Great Moghul country'. In 1630 he married Susan Symonds, the daughter of a London merchant and the step-daughter of a Lord Mayor. In 1647 Thomas served as High Sheriff of Suffolk.

The Kerridge family came to an end with the death of Thomas's great-granddaughter, Cecilia, in 1747. For the rest of the 18th century and the 19th century, Shelley Hall was let to farming tenants by non-resident owners.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

The church consists of a nave, chancel, north tower, north vestry (formerly the Tilney Chapel), south aisle and south porch.

TOWER : The three-stage tower, with large northern buttresses dates from the early 14th century. It is built of mortared flints with limestone quoins and details; the red brick crenellations are however later. In 1557 Thomas Tilney of Shelley Hall left 40s to the 'coveringe upp agayne of Shelleigh church steeple', which may be a reference to works that resulted in the brick top. The bottom part was formerly an entrance porch, indicating that the original approach to the church was from the north. The large northern door is now partly blocked and not in use. The present south approach may have been a result of changes that occurred when Shelley Hall was built in the 1520s

BELLS AND CLOCK : The tower houses five bells, with the following inscriptions:

1. John Darbie made me 1663. Samvell Kerridge Esqvine gave me
2. Miles Graye made me 1629
3. + sancta o ana o ora o pro o nobis ('St Ann pray for us')
4. + sancta : maria : ora : pro : nobis ('St Mary pray for us')

5. John Hodson made me 1662. This bell was given by Samvell Kerredge Esqvier W.H.C. [W?].

Numbers 3 and 4 are medieval and were presumably among the 3 bells recorded here in 1553.

Number 2 was made by Miles Graye of Colchester (active 1605-46) in 1629 and was probably given by Thomas Kerridge to celebrate his acquisition of Shelley. Number 5 was made by John Hodson of Bishopsgate, London (active 1653-69) in 1662 and was given by Samuel Kerridge, Thomas's son.

Number 1 was made by John Darbie of Ipswich (active 1658-91) in 1663 and was also given by Samuel Kerridge.

It is possible that bells 5 and 1 were given to celebrate the restoration of Charles II in 1660.

In 1896 it was reported that they were 'never rung', instead they had 'a wondrous system of "clocking"'. The clock was fitted in 1904 and plays the Westminster Chimes on the bells at the quarters and also strikes the hour on one of them. The clock, which has faces on the north, west and east faces of the tower, was wound manually each day until 1980 when automatic electrical winding gear was installed.

SOUTH PORCH : The gabled porch has a timber-framed upper part, resting on dwarf brick walls and with stone seats on the inside. The framing may be rebuilt from medieval materials.

EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH : The walls are built of local flints, mortared together and covered with a layer of plaster. At the base of the walls several large sarsen stones (technically silcretes – hard, silica-cemented sandstones) can be seen. These stones occur sporadically across south Suffolk and are the residual hard fragments or 'clasts' from a layer of otherwise uncemented or poorly-cemented sand, called the Woolwich and Reading Beds, dating from the Palaeocene period (approximately 55 million years ago). They seem to have been favoured for the foundations of churches and some large examples have attracted superstitions that they were pagan symbols. Sarsens are best known, of course, for their use at Stonehenge, the prehistoric ritual site in Wiltshire.

The south wall of the chancel has a lancet window of 13th-century date. This was blocked up for many years, but was opened up again to commemorate the Millennium. The date 2000 is therefore inscribed on the glass. The priest's door and the east window were both renewed in the 1882-3 restoration of the church. The south wall of the aisle has two windows. The eastern one is a three-light window with trefoil heads, of 14th-century date. The western one has



intersecting tracery and mask-like stops on the hoodmould and resembles windows of c.1300 at nearby Little Wenham, Great Wenham and Raydon. The west window of the aisle is a 'Gothick' iron model that dates from the early 19th century.

The north wall of the nave has a straight-headed Perpendicular window of 4 lights.

INTERIOR : NAVE : An arcade of four bays with octagonal columns, moulded capitals and bases, chamfered 2-centred arches, separates the south aisle (?built about 1300) from the earlier nave. White brick floor laid in a herring-bone pattern pre-dates 1825.

In 1882-3 Shelley church was 'thoroughly restored' at a cost of £380 having been 'very much in need of repair'. The restoration included the removal of the

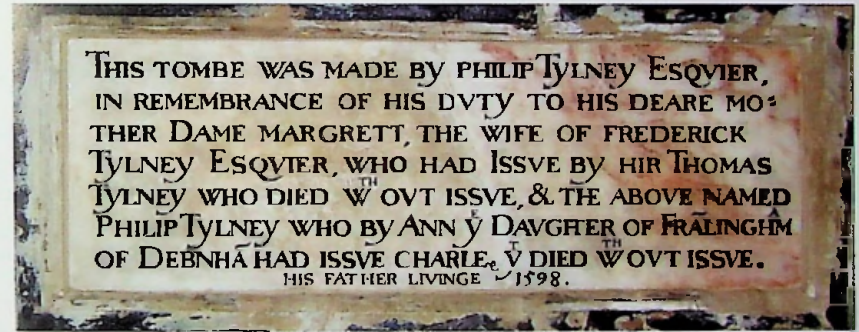


old pews and their replacement with solid oak benches. The fronts of the easternmost benches incorporate pieces of 16th-century linenfold panelling. A west gallery was also removed then. The octagonal font dates from the 19th-century.



Beneath the north nave window is the tomb of **Dame Margaret Tilney** (d.1597), daughter of Robert Buck of Long Melford and widow of Frederick or Frary Tilney of Shelley Hall (d. 1541) and of John Smyth of Cavendish (d. 1578). Recumbent painted stone effigy of Dame Margaret, praying and wearing a black dress with a neck ruff. Stumps of columns at the angles for a canopy that is now missing. Three coloured heraldic shields that must have crowned its top have been reset on an earlier Tilney tomb on the north wall of the chancel. The tomb bears the inscription:

THIS TOMBE WAS MADE BY PHILIP TYLNEY ESQUIER
 IN REMBRANCE OF HIS DUTY TO HIS DEAR MOTHER DAME
 MARGRETT, THE WIFE OF FREDERICK
 TYLNEY ESQUIER, WHO HAD ISSUE BY HIR THOMAS
 TYLNEY WHO DIED WTHOUT ISSUE, & THE ABOVE NAMED
 PHILIP TYLNEY WHO BY ANN, Y^E DAUGHTER OF FRA[M]LINGHAM
 OF DEB[E]NHA[M] HAD ISSVE CHARLES Y^T DIED WTHOUT ISSUE.
 HIS FATHER LIVINGE 1598.

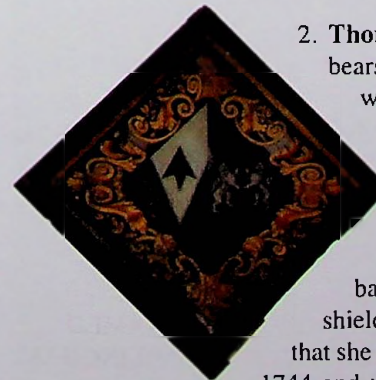


The Charles Tilney referred to in the penultimate line was the unfortunate youth who was executed for his part in the Babington Conspiracy in 1586.

Hatchments (these are lozenge shaped paintings bearing coats-of-arms that were hung up outside the house of the deceased as a form of mourning and later hung up in the church) on the north wall of the nave commemorate:



1. **Mary Kerridge** (d. c.1702) the widow of Samuel Kerridge of Shelley Hall (d. 1678) and daughter of Sir Thomas Garrard, Bt., of Langford in Norfolk. It bears a woman's lozenge with the arms of Kerridge impaling Garrard. The uniformly black background indicates that both she and her husband were dead.



2. **Thomas Kerridge** of Shelley Hall (d. 1743). It bears the arms of Kerridge impaling Porter (for his wife, Jane, the daughter of Richard Porter of Framlingham). The Porter arms are also shown on a small shield (termed an 'inescutcheon of pretence') in the centre of the Kerridge side – this was to indicate that Jane was an heiress. The white background colour to the wife's side of the shield (right hand side as you look at it) indicates that she was alive when her husband died. Jane died in 1744 and was buried at Framlingham, where there is a monument to her in the church.

A stained glass window in the aisle is by William Warrington of London and commemorates his apprentice Henry Partridge (d. 1864, aged 21), who belonged to a family that lived at Shelley Hall. In the churchyard there is the grave of his relative, the Suffolk historian Charles Partridge (d. 1955, aged 83).



CHANCEL : On the south wall of the chancel are a plain piscina and a bench sedilia. Late 16th-century octagonal wooden pulpit with linenfold panelling set on an octagonal stem with a moulded capital. Decorative tiles from the 1882-3 restoration around the altar. The communion rail is Georgian.

The choir stalls incorporate parts of early Tudor benches that are decorated with carved griffins holding shields with the Tilney arms. These are not in their original position and were probably originally commissioned by Sir Philip Tilney to be in his private chapel.



Until 2005, plain glazed tiles concealed two stone slabs in the floor in front of the altar step. These bear the indents of brass plates that formerly identified the people buried there: (only No.2 visible now)

1. In the centre, bearing the indents of a kneeling figure with a shield above its head. The antiquarian William Blois of Grundisburgh (1600-1673) visited Shelley in the late 17th century and recorded this inscription: *Hic iacet Wm. King fil. Joh. King, Do'o huius ville* ('Here lies William King son of John King, Lord of this village'). Blois also observed the shield and noted 'His coat (not there) a lion ramp &c'. This identifies the grave as that of **William King** of Shelley Hall, who died before 1485.

2. A broken slab on the north side, near the door into the vestry. It was recorded in this position by the antiquarian David Elisha Davey when he visited in 1825. Then, as now, it had a simple rectangular indent for a brass plate bearing the name of the person buried below. It is not mentioned by William Blois, so it had probably lost its inscription by the late 17th century. Stylistically, this is probably 16th or early 17th century in date.

This is possibly the grave of **Elizabeth Tilney**, the sister of **Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold**. Elizabeth and Bartholomew belonged to a junior branch of a gentry family that owned Otley Hall in east Suffolk. Bartholomew was one of the founders of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America, but unfortunately died a few months after the colonists arrived in 1607 and his contribution to the founding of America has thus been largely overlooked. However a contemporary chronicler described Gosnold as being 'the first mover of this plantation' and indicated that it was he who first promoted the idea of a colony. He is, therefore, a strong claimant to be the 'founding father' of the U.S.A.

In 1646 Elizabeth Tilney made her will in Higham St Mary and commended her 'body to the earth to be buried in decent maner in Shelly chauncell by Thomas Tylney Esquier my late husband'. The Shelley burial registers do not survive for this period, but luckily the Higham registers record that on the 10 April 1646 Elizabeth, widow of Thomas Tylney Esquire died 'and was buried in Shelley chauncell the day followinge'.

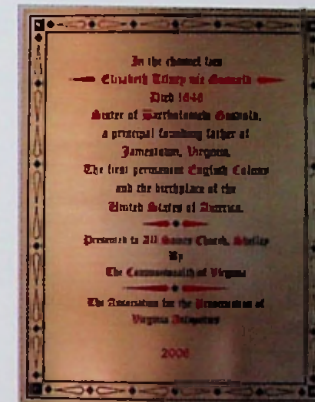
In 2003 a skeleton with a captain's staff was excavated at Jamestown in Virginia, U.S.A., which may be that of Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold. In order to try and more fully establish the identity of this skeleton, permission was sought by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities to excavate this grave in

Shelley church to recover DNA samples to compare with ones from the Jamestown skeleton. In a landmark decision, the Church of England gave its consent for the work, the first time that permission had ever been given for the exhumation of remains for a scientific study.



The work was done in 2005 by a collaborative team headed by Dr William Kelso of the A.P.V.A. and the Archaeology Service of Suffolk County Council. The earth-cut grave proved to contain the skeleton of a mature female buried in the remains of a hexagonal wooden coffin (a type of coffin introduced around the 1590s). A radiocarbon date indicated a death date of 1690 \pm 50 (i.e. 1640-1740). However the DNA tests indicated that the two skeletons were not related. It is therefore unclear whether just one, or none, of the skeletons was a Gosnold. Isotope tests on the teeth of the two skeletons in 2006, indicated that the Shelley woman had been brought up in a 'chalky' environment, consistent with an early life on the chalky clay of Otley; the Jamestown skeleton's teeth did not, however, have a similar 'chalk' signature.

Elizabeth Tilney is, however, certainly buried in the chancel and to commemorate this fact a bronze plaque was given to Shelley church by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the A.P.V.A. in 2005. This can be seen in a niche on the south wall of the chancel. The stone lifted in 2005 has been relaid in its original position, set in a new floor of traditional white bricks



In 1825 D.E. Davy recorded a third stone, on the south side of the chancel, which is no longer there. This bore a shield with a coat-of-arms which identifies it as the grave of **Dame Elizabeth Tilney (née Jeffery)**, the third wife of Sir Philip Tilney (d. 1533). She remarried Francis Framlingham of Crow's Hall in Debenham (who died at the siege of Boulogne in 1544) and then Lionel Tollemache of Helmingham Hall (d. 1552). Dame Elizabeth was still living in the later 1540s.

Shelley was visited in 1644 by William Dowsing, the Suffolk puritan with a mission to destroy or remove all superstitious images from churches. He recorded that 'We brake down 6 superstitious pictures; and took off 2 inscriptions with Cujus animae proprietur deus'. The superstitious pictures were probably stained-glass windows and the inscriptions were probably ripped off the tombs.



The stone tomb attached to the north wall has a frontage consisting of three arched panels, each with a shield. These bear the arms of Tilney, Tilney impaling Teye, and Teye. These indicate that the tomb was commissioned for Sir Philip Tilney (d. 1533) and his

second wife **Jane Teye**. Jane was still alive in 1517 but probably died not long afterwards. The coloured shields above the tomb belong to the later tomb of Dame Margaret Tilney in the nave. The tomb may have had the additional function of an Easter Sepulchre.

VESTRY (FORMERLY THE TILNEY CHAPEL) : Built of brick and attached to the north side of the chancel. In his will, dated 8 Dec. 1532, **Sir Philip Tilney** requested burial 'in my newe chappell in Shelley church'. His son Thomas, in 1557, asked to be buried 'in Shelleighe Church Chappell called Tylney Chappell by my father'.

EXTERIOR : The north wall of the chapel has two two-light windows, both originally plastered to resemble stone. The brick hoodmoulds have small carved stone heads as terminals. Between the windows is a small stone plaque with the Tilney arms. Above this, in the upper part of the gable, there is the outline of a blocked or dummy window with a hoodmould. The side walls have similar three-light brick windows. At the corners of the chapel are small polygonal buttresses surmounted by small male heads carved in stone.

INTERIOR : The entrance to the vestry is a narrow door on the north side of the chancel. This door is part of a fairly crude 18th-century blocking of a larger original opening. That opening is lined with very fine wooden panelling, some of which may not be in its original position. At the top of the east side are three panels with shields of the Tilney arms. In the middle of the west side there are three panels of 'parchemin' panelling enriched with flowers and bunches of grapes, with linenfold panels above and beneath. The ceiling is subdivided by



moulded wooden ribs into six-pointed stars, lozenges and triangles in a way that is strongly reminiscent of the geometric patterns on the ceilings of Hampton Court, dated to the 1520s and 1530s. This all seems to be part of Sir Philip Tilney's work of c.1530.

On the north wall of the chapel is a stone plaque bearing a finely carved achievement of the Tilney arms, with the helm and crest being supported by two griffins. A moulded ten-foot wooden pole, with a T-bracket at the end, which projects from near the top of the west wall, was probably intended for the display of a heraldic tabard and is probably original. It stretches out over a plain black slab in the floor that marks the likely grave of Sir Philip Tilney.



There are additional black ledger stones set into the floor:

1. Here resteth the Body of **Thomas Kerridge** esq. Lord of this Manner, who dyed y^c 20 December 1657, Aged 72 years, who had to wife Susan Simonds by whom he left issue two sonnes John & Samuel. W^{ch} s^d Susan was y^c daughter of Tho. Symonds Merchant and Alderman of London, by Mary his wife, who after his decease was married to S^r Martin Lumly K^t sometime Lord Maior of the City of London.
2. Here resteth y^c Body of **Dame Mary Lumly** the Relict of S^r Martin Lumly K^t sometime Lord Maior of the City of London, who died the 13th June 1650, aged 75 years, who left issue by her first Husband Tho. Simonds Merchant and Alderman of London, two Daughters Susan & Hester (Dame Mary's second husband was Sir Martin Lumley, Lord Mayor of London 1623-4 (and a grandson of Domingo Lomelino, an Italian who came to London from Genoa in the time of Henry VIII). He was buried in St Helen's, Bishopsgate, London, in 1634).
3. Here resteth the Body of **John Kerridge** Esq^r, son and heir of Thomas Kerridge of Shelley Hall Esq^r. & Susan his wife, y^c said John deceased at Cambridge, being fellow Commoner of Queen's College the 3rd Sep. Ano. Dom. 1661. Being aged 18 years.
4. Here resteth the Body of **Samuel Kerridge** Esq^r, Lord of the Manner of Shelley and son of Thomas Kerridge of Shelley Hall Esq^r. & Susan his wife, the said Sam^l died at Norton Novemb 3rd 1678, aged 33 years, who had to wife Mary Garrard, by whom he left issue two sons Tho. and Sam^l. & two Daughters Sarah & Mary, which Mary his wife was the daughter of S^r Tho. Garrard Knight & Baronet.

All Saints' Church, Shelley, Suffolk

