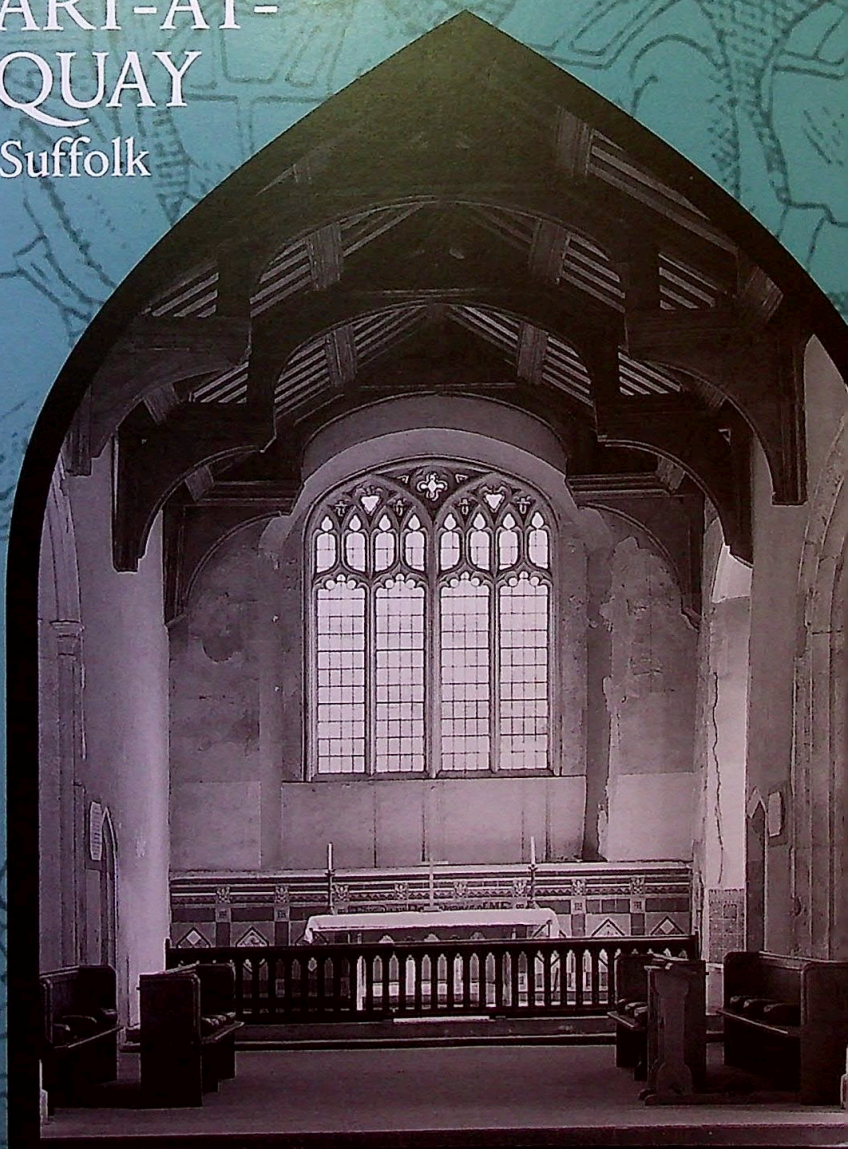
THE CHURCHES
CONSERVATION TRUST

CHURCH OF ST MARY-AT-THE-QUAY

Ipswich, Suffolk



Key Street, Ipswich, Suffolk

Church of ST MARY-AT-THE-QUAY

by Roy Tricker (Field Officer with The Churches Conservation Trust 1991–2002, church enthusiast, historian and lay canon)

HISTORY

St Mary-at-the-Quay, one of 12 mediaeval churches in Ipswich, is situated in the heart of the town's dockland. In the Middle Ages this area was the home of prosperous merchants – now it is mostly a commercial area, with few residents. Four of the town's ancient churches are dedicated in honour of the Mother of Our Lord – St Mary-le-Tower, St Mary-at-the-Elms, St Mary-at-Stoke and St Mary-at-the-Quay; the last because of its close proximity to the river and the busy port. Yet the church stands in Key Street, its vane displays a large key and it has often been called 'the Key Church'. The term is not however a total misnomer, because the quay was known as the 'Kay' in 1306 and it is not unnatural that this old word and its Danish equivalent 'Kaai' should develop into 'Key'.

Within the parish was an important part of the mediaeval Port of Ipswich, including the Common Quay, the Customs House and the homes of wealthy merchants who traded from the port, including Henry Tooley, whose ship the *Mary Walsingham* sometimes journeyed to Iceland, William Sabyn, who had a great 100-ton ship and Thomas Pownder, who marked each of his bales of cloth with a 'T' and two crosses. Much of the northern part of the parish was occupied by the Blackfriars monastery. After its dissolution in 1538, over time its grounds and buildings served a variety of important and useful purposes, including Christ's Hospital for poor and destitute people, the Bridewell Prison, the Town Library, the Shire Hall and the Grammar School. In the south-west part, near Foundation Street, was Henry Tooley's 'Foundation' – his almshouses, which remain today and had close associations with their parish church.

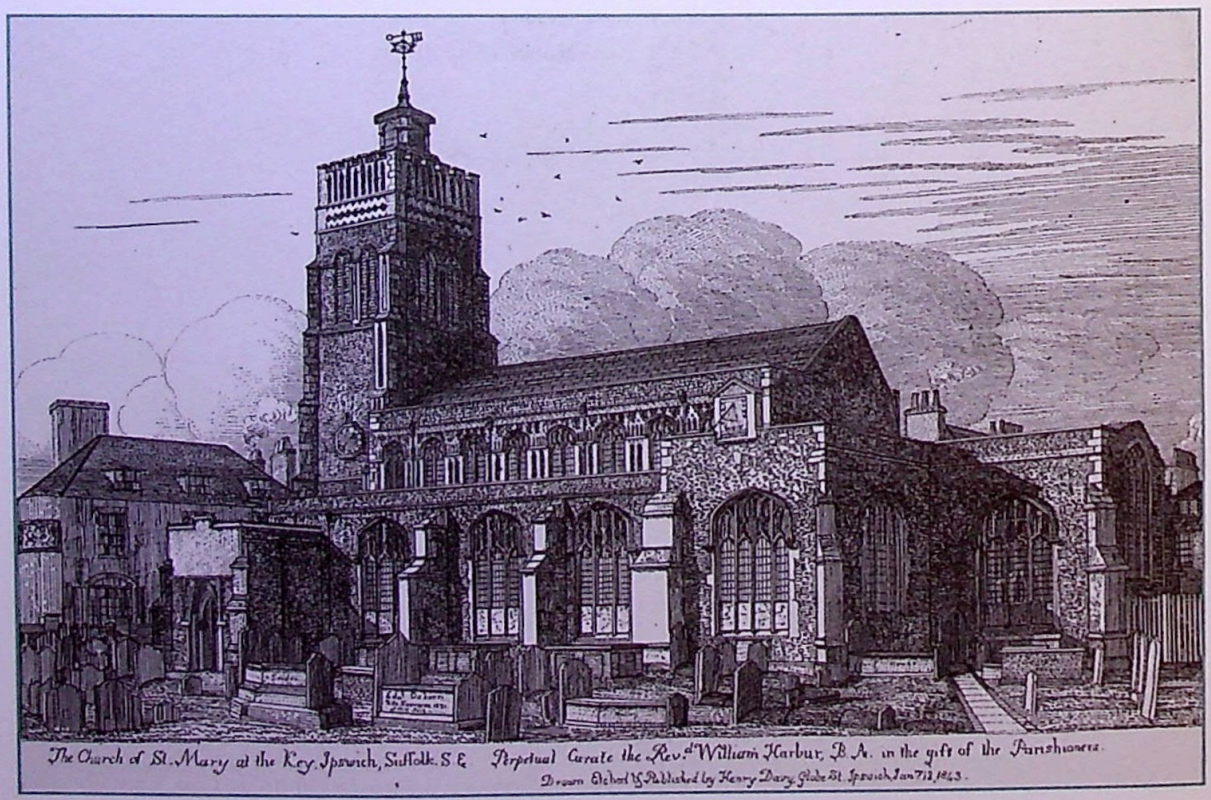
Front cover: The church today, looking eastwards (Clifford Knowles)
Left: Henry Tooley's tomb in the north transept (Clifford Knowles)

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRESENT CHURCH *c.*1443–1543

Although an earlier building on the site is known to have existed, the present church grew during this hundred-year period, when many large and famous East Anglian churches took their present shape. A number of people may well have contributed towards the rebuilding, but the records of only a very few major benefactors have survived. A will of 1443 bequeathed the sum of 20 shillings to the fabric of the tower, so presumably by then the work was beginning. A large bequest by Richard Gowty in 1448 provided 'sufficient Calyon stone for the whole church to be built' in the churchyard where he wished his body to be buried.

Another generous benefactor was Dame Elizabeth Gelget, whose will of 1528 asked that she should be buried with her late husband before the 'Jesus Altar' here and gave a generous bequest to add to that of her husband, payable to the churchwardens 'as the building of the same should go forthward'. She made a further bequest of £7.13s.4d to the Dean of Cardinal Wolsey's proposed college which was to occupy the site of the Priory of SS Peter and Paul to the north of St Peter's church 'for the roof that I lately bought of him for the said church at the Caie, if the churchwardens do use the said roof for the said church'. The canons had been evicted from their priory in 1528 and the foundation stone of the college was laid that year, but by late 1529 Wolsey had fallen from grace and in 1530 his embryo college was suppressed. Presumably Dame Elizabeth had purchased a redundant roof from one of the priory buildings – maybe from the refectory or part of the church. It is not known if her wishes were carried out, but it is not impossible that the splendid nave roof is made of timbers brought from the priory or, which may be more likely, that it was the chancel roof (the timbers of which are certainly not in their original positions) that had been transported some 200 yards (183 metres) down the road.

St Mary's in 1843, etched by Henry Davy



It is thought that the south aisle was built (or maybe completed) by William Sabyne, who died in 1543 and to whom the nearby Blackfriars monastery was granted by King Henry VIII in 1538. The north aisle and transept may have benefited from the generosity of Henry Tooley, who was buried in the latter in 1551.

So the church was completed and has remained structurally almost the same as it is today. The main external differences are seen in the tower and porch. The porch once had a handsome embattled flint and stone parapet, with corner pinnacles. The tower, which needed drastic restoration in the early 19th century, had a fine Suffolk double flushwork parapet in flint and stone, with stepped battlements and central niches, and probably looked like a taller version of the tower of St Nicholas' church.

An inventory of the church's possessions, made sometime between 1547 and 1553, included a pair of silver censers and two cloth-of-gold copes, but a silver-gilt cross and pax, together with five chalices and a chrysmatory, were sold by the churchwardens to pay off the debt still owing for 'byldyng of ther churche and for ledyng, plastering and pavyng the same'.

ST MARY'S AFTER THE REFORMATION *c.*1600–1870

During the 17th century a clock was placed in the tower, which was crowned by a distinctive lead-covered cupola for the clock bell (dated *c.*1660). The large gold-painted key weathervane was in place by the 1670s. During the 18th century a pedimented sundial was placed above the south transept gable.

The interior was transformed to cater for the new liturgical needs of the reformed Church, with its emphasis upon the preaching of the Word. A great three-decker pulpit was set up against the first pier from the east on the north side of the nave. This towered 12 feet (3.7 m) above the forest of box pews which filled the church, the carved woodwork from the mediaeval benches having been cut up and used as joists in the floors upon which they stood.

These commodious chambers were described by a 19th-century writer as being 'of the most abominable ugliness, which were so deep that a short person sitting in them could neither see or be seen'. There were two extremely large box pews in the chancel, occupying about half its total area. David Elisha Davy, who visited the church in 1811, noted that the communion table was enclosed by three-sided rails and on the east wall above it was a framed and wainscotted altarpiece, painted with a 'Glory' (the Hebrew word for God, surrounded by clouds), flanked by texts of scripture. Above the chancel arch hung the royal arms and over the tower arch was a large framed board inscribed with the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Commandments, and details of four parochial charities.

Around 1806–08 the tower underwent drastic restoration, when its upper parts were rebuilt and other repairs carried out. Its elegant proportions were retained but the former Perpendicular belfry windows and the west window were replaced by 'Y' tracery in Portland stone and the fine flushwork parapet with a cheaper-looking substitute in flint and gault brick, with rather an overdose of little battlements. The white Portland stone was shipped into the nearby docks. Messrs James De Carle (stonemason), Thomas Webb (bricklayer) and Joseph Rust (carpenter) did the work and the architects were Thomas Fulcher and his son Robert, who were clearly fond of Portland stone, because Thomas patented a waterproof composition in imitation of this material for stuccoeing and colouring brick buildings.

Like its neighbour, St Peter's, St Mary's embraced the principles of the Evangelical movement in the Church of England during the early 19th century and in 1813 became the second Ipswich church to begin a Sunday School. In 1872 the Simeon's Trustees bought the patronage of the living for £1,070 and subsequent hardworking incumbents of their choosing maintained a caring Evangelical ministry here until the church closed.

VICTORIAN RESTORATION WORK 1870–1901

By 1870 the condition of the church's fabric and furnishings had become dilapidated and tawdry. Davy had noted with disgust in 1811 that the south chapel had become a glory-hole, with an area of it 'enclosed to put away the dirt of the church, with the tools, brushes, etc.' The pews described above made the place 'hideous to behold'. Matters had not been improved by a violent storm in 1843 which had completely flooded this and two other nearby churches.

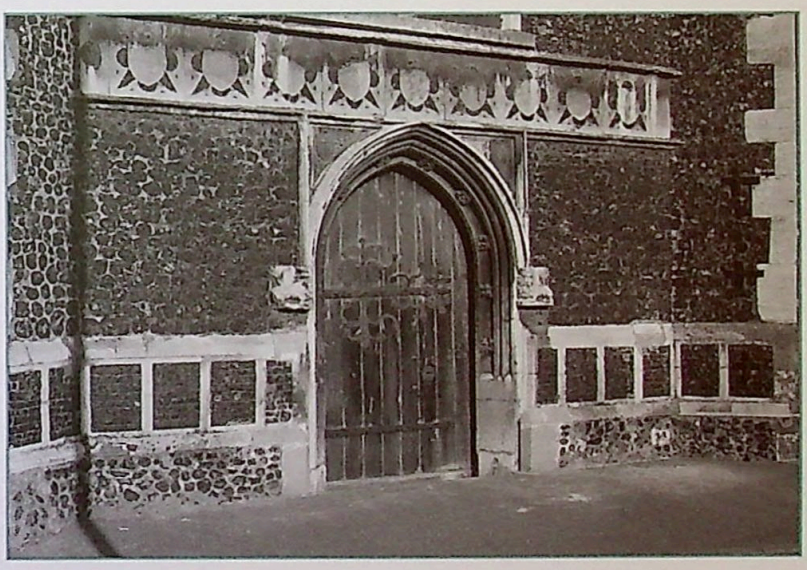
By now the wealthy wool merchants had long since left the neighbourhood and this had become one of the smallest and poorest parishes in the town. Nevertheless a meeting was held in 1870 to discuss the possible restoration of the church. This was to take place gradually by stages as money became available. The driving force behind this initiative was the senior churchwarden, Henry Medgett Eyton – architect and County Surveyor, who was prepared to draw up the plans, giving his services free of charge. Under his supervision the church's gradual transformation developed as follows:

1874 The first stage, which involved the removal of the box pews from the nave and its reseating with benches made for temporary use at St Mary-le-Tower, and also the removal of the box pews from the chancel, which were replaced by oak benches incorporating remains of 15th-century benches discovered when the pews were removed. The stonework of the east window was renewed, the chancel roof repaired, the font cleaned of plaster (this took the workmen a week) and moved, the lower two decks of the pulpit were dismantled and the 17th-century 'pulpit proper' was placed in the north-east corner of the nave. A new communion table was provided by the Revd J Dunningham (vicar) and portions of stonework cut away from the arcade piers for the box pews were made good.

1876 The second stage, completed in May 1876, involved the removal of the box pews in the aisles, further repairs to the arcade piers and placing the door from the old Grammar School in the south porch. New chancel stalls were provided, along with new communion rails and a new sanctuary floor of Maw's tiles. The east wall was lined with encaustic tiles, two of which bore inscriptions. The following year a new clock was placed in the tower by J A Haskell, of Tavern Street.

1879 The new vicar, the Revd George Lovely, conducted the reopening services after the third stage of repairs, which included opening up the tower arch and installing the tower screen, restoring the south aisle windows, cleaning the arcade piers and pulpit, replacing the temporary seating from the Tower church with handsome oak poppyhead benches and the provision of a new organ, by Godball of Ipswich, in the south transept.

The west doorway (Clifford Knowles)



1882–83 The old north vestry was replaced by a new and larger one.

After all this painstaking work, it must have been a terrible blow when on 12 March 1898 the church was officially closed, having been declared unsafe and insanitary. Edward Fearnley Bisshopp, the Ipswich architect and Diocesan Surveyor, reported that the nave roof was liable to fall at any time, the north clerestory was in a critical state, the porch (then used as a coal-store) and the stonework on the south side of the church were dilapidated and had been poorly patched up with brick. Furthermore, the low level of the church and its close proximity to the river had caused flooding on many occasions in the vaults beneath, resulting not only in dry rot but also deposits of sewage and other unsavoury matter beneath the floor which were producing a 'sickly and disagreeable odour' throughout the building, rendering it an insanitary health risk.

There was talk in high places of redundancy, but the vicar, the Revd W Stewart Walford, was determined to appeal through newspapers and influential friends for the £3,000 needed to put the building right. The versatile E F Bisshopp (who designed new chancels for St Mary-at-the-Elms and Holy Trinity churches, sympathetically rebuilt the tower at St Nicholas and designed the vast red-brick church of St Michael) drew up the plans and the church remained closed for three years. The nave roof was taken down, its timbers were re-framed, decayed parts replaced with new oak, then carefully put back, re-boarded and re-leaded. The roofs of the north aisle, south transept and porch were also repaired. New oak-block floors were provided beneath the seating and the gangways were paved with

The interior before 1942 from the ringers' gallery

old ledger slabs. The southern churchyard boundary wall was rebuilt slightly nearer the street, handsome wrought-iron gates were provided and the south porch once again became the church's main entrance. A little later, when more money had been collected, the north clerestory windows were restored.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS

St Mary's was aptly described at the turn of the century as 'once the church of the rich, but now the church of the poor'. Poor the parish may have been, but the church entered the 20th century saved from closure, with its own vicar, a choir, several parochial organisations and an active congregation. However in 1922 the diocese dared to suggest that the parish should be united with St Peter's and a Commission of Enquiry was held. The vicar (the Revd F H Nicholls) and others protested that out of a population of 1,000 church attendance was between 60 and 80, some 50 missionary boxes were taken out and the vicar visited all the public houses in the parish regularly. The scheme was

The last vicar, the Revd James W Blanch (1923–42), is remembered as a very friendly, caring and hardworking pastor. A convinced Protestant evangelical, he supported the Protestant Truth Society's work and St Mary's congregation even regarded St Peter's – also in the evangelical tradition – as being rather 'high church' in comparison with their own. Until Mr Blanch left, St Mary's retained the practice of the preacher removing his surplice and donning a black preaching gown for the sermon.

When Mr Blanch left to be vicar of Dronfield, Derbyshire, in 1942, St Mary's was united with nearby St Peter's. Morning and evening services continued to be held (with 34 communicants o Easter Day) until 18 October when the register records 'Church closed because of enemy action'. No more services were held.

Although in 1940 a 220 lb (100 kg) bomb pierced the chancel roof but did not explode, the bomb in 1942, which fell to the east of th church, shattered many of the windows and considerable damage. In 1948 the church wa officially closed and it was cleared of most o furnishings in 1949. The pulpit went to Elms

church, the benches to St Andrew's, Britannia Road, the organ to St Alban's, Norwich and the brasses to Christchurch Mansion.

In 1959 the church was rescued from demolition by the Friends of Friendless Churches, through the efforts of its honorary director, Mr Ivor Bulmer Thomas, and some £12,000 was spent on restoring and adapting it for use as the Headquarters of the Boys Brigade. The works included the erection of partitions in the south aisle, cloakrooms and the present floors. The font was removed for use at Brantham church, but came back in the 1970s. The Boys Brigade used the church from 1961–73, when it was vested in what is now The Churches Conservation Trust.

In the Trust's care, much has been done to conserve the building, including dismantling, repairing and replacing (using a crane) the chancel roof in 1981, the removal of the vestry, repairs to the fabric, dismantling of the domestic adaptations in the south aisle and reshaping its breeze-block divisions and, in 2001, carrying out major repairs to the tower.

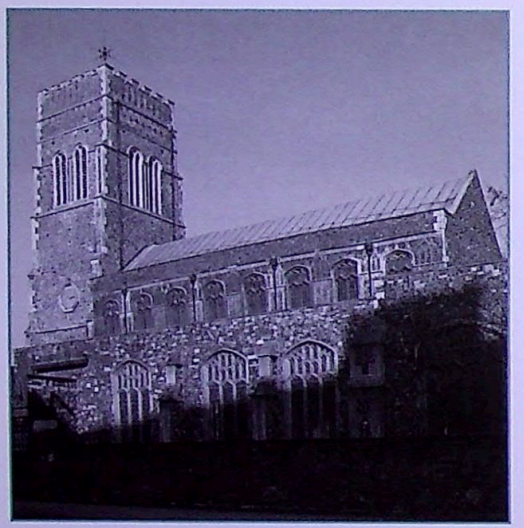
EXTERIOR

The **setting** of this 'downtown' dockland church is interesting, if not exactly idyllic. It stands in the busy commercial area of Ipswich, its flint walls dwarfed by tall buildings and with traffic speeding past on the merry-go-round which forms one of the town's main thoroughfares.

The southern boundary wall of the **churchyard** was re-erected in 1901 and given its regal wrought-iron gates. Although the gravestones have been moved, the graves levelled and the churchyard partly paved and terraced, it does provide a small oasis of green in an area where there is little vegetation.

The church itself is a compact and well-proportioned building, which shows the beauty and dignity of late-15th-century Perpendicular architecture. It is unusual to find a church which was built entirely during a single architectural period; only the tower windows have since been altered in a different style. The **walls** are faced with knapped flints (split to expose their dark cores), with some brick and reused stone. The flintwork of the tower is particularly fine, the dark cores of the flints making it look quite black in the sunlight. A careful look at the masonry of the west wall of the north aisle shows where the north-west corner of the nave was positioned before the aisle was added. The building is strengthened by buttresses – that at the junction of the south aisle and transept being a little larger than the others because this was the position of the staircase in the wall which gave access to the rood-loft.

The exterior from the south-east (Clifford Knowles)



The nave, transepts and chancel are capped by parapets, the south nave parapet still retaining the light-coloured gault bricks with which it was restored in the 18th or early 19th century. Of special note are the **hopper-heads** above the downpipes which drain the water from the nave roof. These have little cartouche decorations, with initials (maybe of the churchwardens) and the date 1747. Such pieces of 18th-century metalwork are a rare survival. The **windows** are elegant and uniform, of three lights in the aisles and four lights in the transepts. The south transept windows have long been blocked, as has the north aisle doorway, but the small priest's doorway in the chancel retains its mediaeval door. The east window (the lower portion of which remains bricked up) was renewed in 1874. Above the aisles rises the handsome **clerestory**, which is pierced by eight sets of double windows, surrounded on the south side by flushwork panelling in flint and stone.

Slender diagonal buttresses, faced with flushwork, strengthen and enhance the western **tower**, which rises to a height of 73 ft (22.2 m) and has the remains of its decorated stone base-course on the north and south sides. The west window and the pairs of two-light belfry windows have simple 'Y' tracery and are of Portland stone, inserted in 1806–08. Of this date is the parapet, which is faced with pseudo 'flushwork' using flint and Suffolk gault bricks. The staircase abutment on the north side rises to the level of the bell-chamber. The well-restored 15th-century west doorway has fine craftsmanship, with crowns, foliage and shields in the arch moulding and a squared hood-mould resting upon crowned lions. In the spandrels between the hood-mould and arch are shields with the instruments of the Passion and the emblem of the Holy Trinity. Above the doorway is a frieze of flushwork shields. The wrought-iron weathervane, with its distinctive key, was made in comparatively recent years, although there has been a key above this tower for at least three centuries.

The south **porch** is now a shadow of its former glory, having been altered and patched up over

the years. Its side windows have long gone, as have its embattled flushwork parapet and the carved corbels which flanked its 15th-century entrance arch. The panelled doors (*c.*1700) were originally at the old Grammar School in Foundation Street and came here after several years of use at St Mary-le-Tower in 1876. Very little mediaeval woodwork remains in the roof timbers inside the porch and only very slight traces remain, in the north-east angle, of the former holy water stoup recess. The **south doorway**, however, is an attractive piece of 15th-century craftsmanship; its arch is studded with flowers and the door is the original, having admitted worshippers and visitors for over 500 years. Its sturdy iron closing-ring is still in place. This almost certainly served as a sanctuary ring, clutched by fugitives claiming the right of sanctuary which was afforded to all within the confines of the church. Its nearness to the river probably made St Mary's a popular place for sanctuary and it is known that two murderers (John Bryd in 1338 and Nicholas Soweband in 1341) 'fled to the church of St Mary de Caye' for sanctuary. This also shows that there was a previous church on this site.

INTERIOR

The absence of furnishings and the abundance of light enable the visitor to appreciate the fine proportions and pleasing architecture of this spacious interior. Before most of the Victorian tinted 'cathedral' glass was shattered in 1942, the church was rather dark, as can be imagined from the glass which has survived in the north-west clerestory window and in the tracery of many of the other windows.

The aisles are divided from the nave by elegant four-bay **arcades**, of which the south arcade leans dramatically outwards. Their arches rest upon rapidly-decaying quatrefoil (four-lobed) piers, with thin vertical bands (known as fillets) at their extremities. These rest upon moulded bases and terminate in moulded capitals. Careful comparison of the two arcades reveals that they are not quite identical; the northern arches are more elaborately moulded and there is more moulding on their capitals, whilst their bases are slightly smaller than their southern counterparts. The arches linking the aisles and chancel to the north and south transepts also differ between north and south. The chancel arch, with its half-octagonal responds and embattled capitals, is broad and rather low, the expanse of wall above it emphasising the loftiness of the nave. The tower arch – the simplest of all – just 'dies' into the walls each side. The two transverse arches across the south aisle were a way of modifying the ugly (1959) breeze-block partitions in the 1990s.

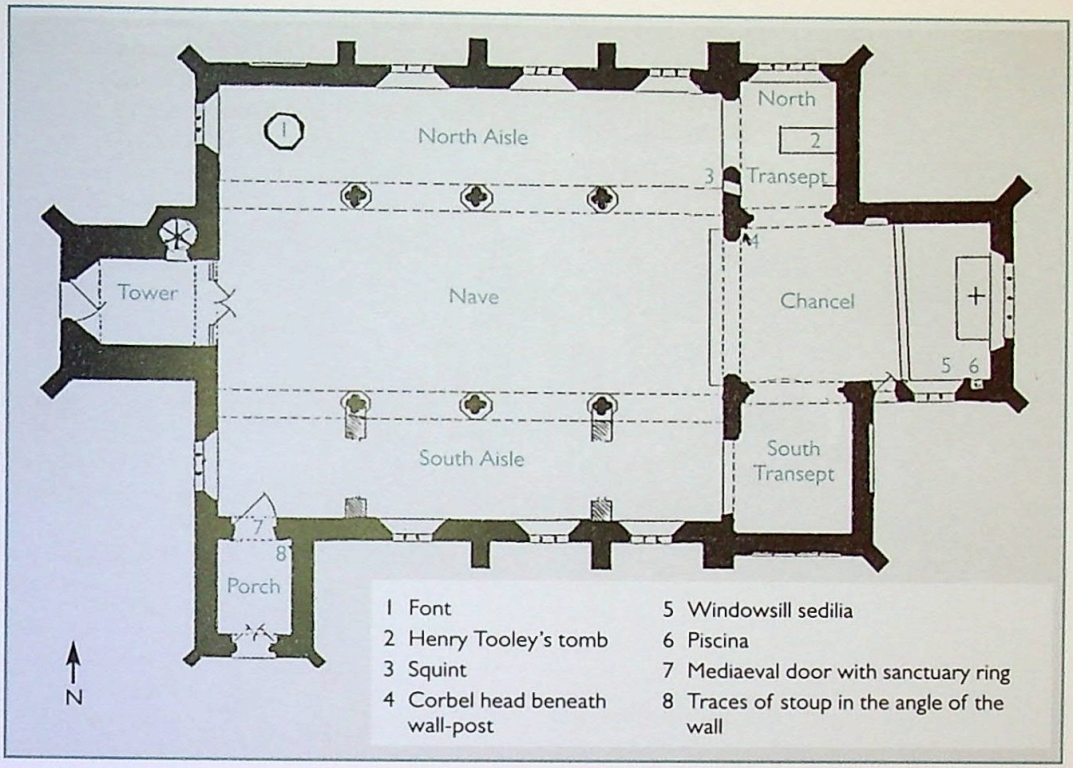
The 15th-century font (Clifford Knowles)

The wooden **tower screen** was part of H M Eyton's 1870s restoration. Above it is the ringing gallery, from which the six **bells** in the tower are still occasionally rung. The treble bell is by Thomas Gardiner of Sudbury (1739), the 2nd and 3rd (1663) and tenor (1662) were cast in the Ipswich foundry of John Darbie, the 4th (1613) is by Miles Graye I of Colchester and the 5th (1775) by Pack & Chapman of London. The tenor bell has a diameter of almost 34 inches (86.4 cm) and weighs approximately 7 cwt (355.6 kg). The clock was repaired by David Bearcroft in 1997.

The octagonal 15th-century **font** stands at the west end of the north aisle and is of a design which is very common in East Anglian churches. Around its stem are four lions (two with very curly manes) and four slender buttresses. Above these is a band of little flowers, and eight angels with outstretched wings support the underside of the bowl. Carved in the eight panels of the bowl are the emblems of the four Evangelists (the angel of St Matthew, the winged lion of St Mark, the ox of St Luke and the eagle of St John), alternating with four angels (three wearing stoles and one with a cowl), bearing shields which are now mostly defaced, although that facing (almost) east may have shown the instruments of the Passion and the rampant lion (which was not regarded as a superstitious image by the Puritans) is almost untouched. The shields rest upon folds of material.

Beside the arch from the north aisle into the north chapel is a small rectangular **squint**, giving a view towards the high altar and enabling a priest celebrating Mass at a side altar here to see what was taking place in the sanctuary. A small **brass plaque** nearby commemorates the visit of Lord Maclay, President of the Boys Brigade, to open the church for the Brigade's use in 1961.

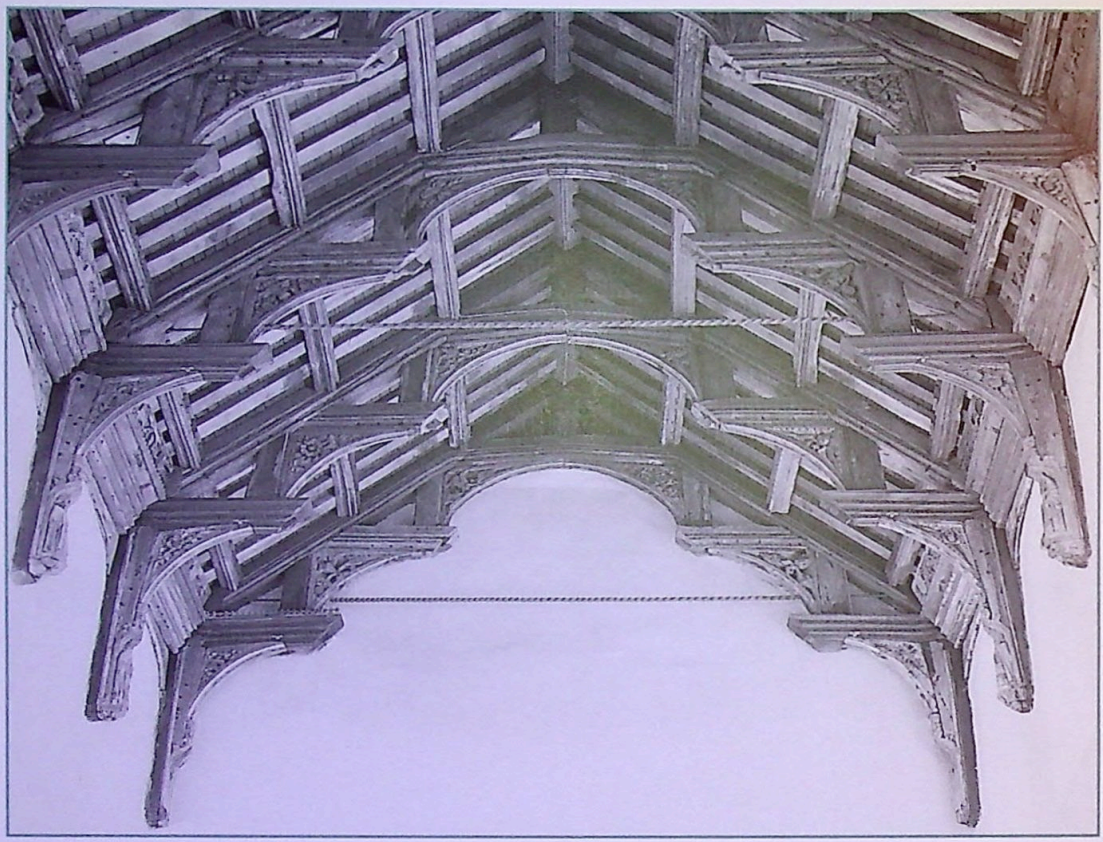
The **chancel** is rather short and low compared with the lofty nave and it 'weeps' (deflects) very slightly to the north; also the east wall is not quite at right-angles with the north and south walls. The south-east windowsill has been lowered to form **sedilia**, where the celebrant, deacon and subdeacon could sit during certain parts of the mediaeval High Mass. Nearby, beneath a cinquefoil-headed recess, is the **piscina**, into which was poured the water from the washing of the priest's hands at Mass. The **communion table** was given by the vicar in 1874. It has trefoil-headed openings, bordered with little stencilled flowers and has been heightened and lengthened during subsequent years. H M Eyton designed the table, the **communion rails** and the scheme for lining the sanctuary walls with **coloured tiles**. These are of various patterns, including hexagonal shapes, two of which frame inscriptions – 'I am the Rose of Sharon' and 'I am the Lily of the Valleys' – each having a picture of the appropriate flower. The lower part of the south-east window splay is also lined with encaustic tiles. The four 19th-century **benches** in the chancel were brought here in the 1990s from Holy Trinity church Bungay. The blocked 15th-century **north doorway** led to the vestry, which was taken down in 1974–76.



The **nave roof** is the crowning glory of the church; it is not only one of the grandest of the 15th-century double hammerbeam roofs, but experts judge it to be one of the earliest to be constructed – around 1455. Spanning the enormous width of 21 ft 9 in (6.63 m), it was carefully repaired in the 1898–1901 restoration, when its decayed timbers were renewed. The 'new' timbers are darker and browner in colour, whilst the mediaeval ones are lighter and have worn more grey. The eastern bay was once painted as a **canopy of honour** over the former rood crucifix and there are still very faint traces of red pigment and white 'barber's pole' decoration on its timbers. On the **wall posts** are robed figures, set beneath little crocketted canopies. Although badly defaced by the Puritans in the 1640s, these were once identifiable saints and Apostles – one has an 'X' shaped cross, showing that he was St Andrew. Even the undersides of the wall posts are beautifully carved with foliage and little figures.

Along the tops of the walls are **cornices** (or wall-plates) which are now mostly plain but were once adorned with angels (as may be detected in the section above the fifth clerestory window from the east on the north side). Above the cornices are timbers carved with an **undulating tracery pattern and shields**, but it is the hammerbeam construction which is the outstanding feature of the roof. There are two sets of **hammerbeams**, one above the other, retaining at their ends the tenons where carved angels once fitted. Above these, the upper part of the roof is spanned by **collar-beams**, which link the north and south sides and help to hold the roof together.

In the angles between the vertical posts and the hammerbeams, also forming central arches beneath the collar-beams, are curved **arch-braces (or spandrels)** and these are rich in 15th-century woodcarving on both their eastern and western sides. There are 96 carvings in all,



which make fascinating viewing through binoculars. They include a variety of leaves, flowers, foliage patterns, fruit, pomegranates, shields inscribed with capital letters, a little man reclining (beneath the fourth northern collar-beam from the east, and facing west) and the occasional human face.

The **south aisle roof** retains some of its mediaeval timber framework, although parts of it have been considerably altered. Originally it was strengthened by carved arch-braces where it joined the aisle and nave walls. Only two sets of these now remain – they are carved with foliage. The **north aisle roof** is mostly late 15th or early 16th century, with seven arch-braces where it joins the outer wall, some of which are carved with blank shields in foliage, although one also has a cross. The **north transept roof** is mostly original, many of its timbers being moulded, whilst the **south transept roof** has been almost entirely renewed.

Most of the timber framework of the **chancel roof** is mediaeval, although clearly not as it was originally built. It has been suggested that it was brought here from elsewhere – perhaps from the former Blackfriars monastery, or maybe this was the roof purchased by Dame Elizabeth Gelget from the Priory of SS Peter and Paul. It is a late-15th-century single hammerbeam roof, the lower of its two sets of purlins having been fixed in position by vertical timbers. One worn but interesting **carved face** remains at the base of the western wall-post on the north side.

Left: The eastern part of the nave roof (Clifford Knowles)
Right: The Pounder brass c.1525

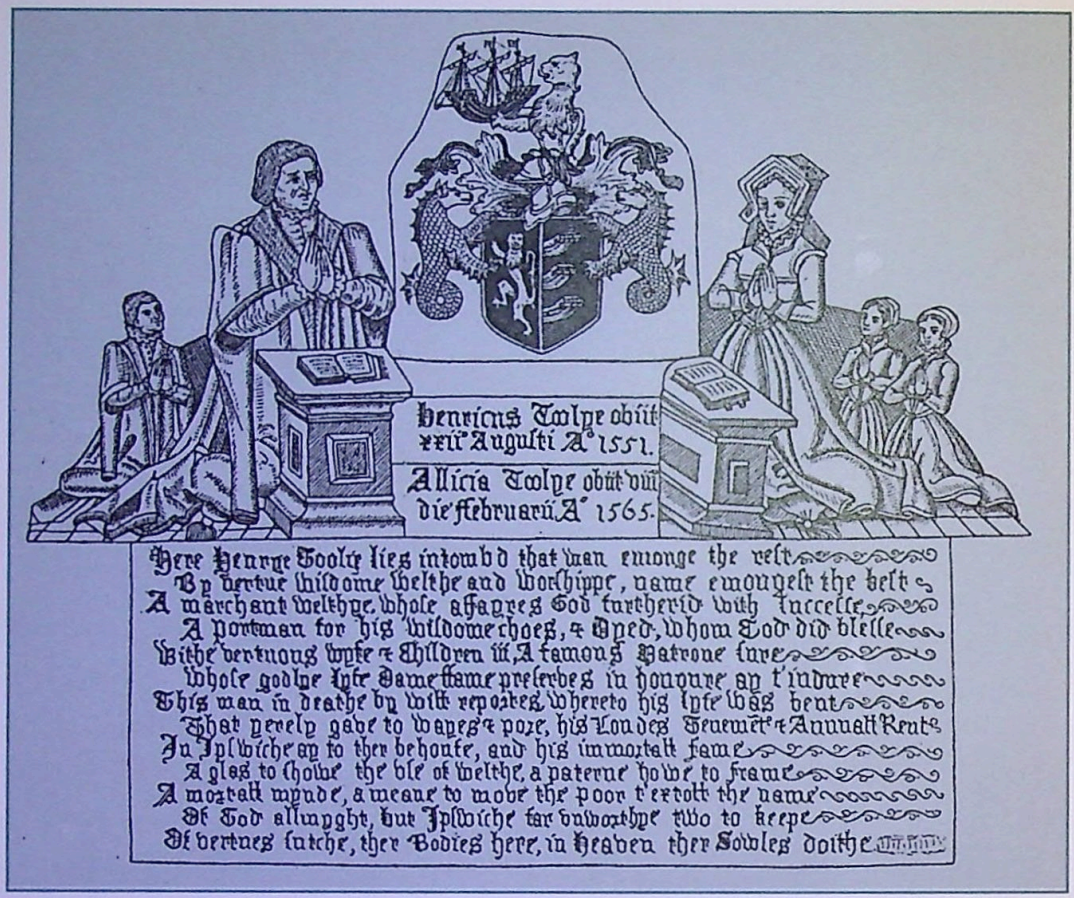
MEMORIALS

A few of the many memorial slabs which covered the floors of this church (Davy recorded 34 of these) may still be seen, and also some memorial plaques on the walls, commemorating past worthies of this church and parish.

The Pownder brass This is one of the finest Flemish brasses in England and is now in the care of Ipswich Museums, although an accurate facsimile, made by William Lack, may be seen in the church. This rectangular brass measuring 45 in by 28 in (114.3 x 71.1 cm), a superb piece of craftsmanship in metal, filled with exquisite detail, was set in the chancel floor. At its centre stand the figures of Thomas Pownder (merchant, one-time bailiff of the town and town coroner) and his wife Emma. He wears a fur-trimmed gown which is open to show his two tunics beneath; she wears a tunic with large open sleeves and an under-dress buttoned up to her waist. Her headdress is shown in profile to its best advantage and a rosary hangs from a clasp at her waist. Beneath them kneel their two sons (one with a bag or purse at his waist) and six daughters. There are classical columns each side and near the top are three shields, showing the arms of the town of Ipswich, Thomas' merchant's mark and the arms of the Merchant Adventurers. In the four corners are the emblems of the four Evangelists and linking these is the inscription, recording that he died in 1525, but with the year of her death not filled in.

The Tooley tomb and brass In the north transept is the table-tomb of Henry Tooley, merchant and portman of Ipswich (d. 1551) and his wife Allicia (d. 1565). The tomb-chest (with lozenge-shaped panels in its sides which once had shields with coats of arms) projects westwards from the east wall where, within a framework of carved and traceried stonework, was their brass, which is now also in the care of Ipswich Museums. In its place is a rubbing of the brass, made by Dr John Blatchly. It shows the arms of Ipswich, on one side of which Henry and his son kneel before a prayer desk with an open book upon it and on the other side, at another desk, Allicia kneels, with her two daughters. Beneath is an epitaph in 13 lines of verse extolling their virtues.

The accounts for Tooley's charity records payments between October 1567 and October 1569 for the making of 'Mr Tolyes tombe' and its 'platt' (brass plate). These include 16d



'to Nicholas Brame for makyng of a platt for Mr Tolyes tombe' and later £7.6s.8d 'to Allen Gamon of London', probably for the making of the tomb itself. It has been suggested that Gamon could well be identified with one 'Aleyne Gaulyn', a London marbler who, with Roger Sylvester, bought 'seven score poundes of olde and broken lattyn' from St Faith's in the City of London in 1552.

Henry Tooley's generosity continues today in the almshouses that he founded which may still be seen in Foundation Street, a short distance to the north of the church, and bear the inscription, 'In peacefull silence let great Toolie rest. Whose charitable Deeds bespeak him blest A.D. 1551'.

The vicar of St Mary-at-the-Quay was also chaplain to the residents of the almshouses and, under the instructions of Tooley's will, a service took place every Friday morning, which all residents had to attend. At its close they proceeded to Tooley's tomb, where an official in livery read the roll-call of their names and handed to each one the little packet containing his or her dole money for the week. This was placed upon the tomb and then picked up by the recipient and the worn surface of the slab shows where this took place. This ceremony continued until the closure of the church.

Various **ledger slabs and burial slabs** from the floors of the church have been assembled in the north transept. Those in the floor are:

- Ledger slab to Robert King (1793) and Eleanor (1792).
- Ledger slab to William Westhorp (1748) and Elizabeth (née Wenman) (1752).

- Slab with indents for brasses of a male, female and inscription.
- Large slab with indents for brasses of a male, an inscription and four shields.
- Slab with indent for a brass inscription.

The slabs now fixed to the lower parts of the wall are as follows:

- Richard Dobson, merchant (1743).
- William Hasslewood, who died aged 3½ years, who has the following (and now very worn) epitaph – 'The hasle nut orft children cropes/ God Hasilwood in childhood lopes/Their parent yeild, God sayd he's mine/And tooke him home, say not he's thine'.
- Robert Stephenson MA, Master of the Grammar School (1695).
- An almost illegible slab with traces of an inscription.
- John Warner (1638), with a small indent for a lost brass inscription, which read – 'I Warner was once to myself/Now warner am to thee/ Both living, dying, dead, I warn/See that thou warned be'.

The following **memorial plaques** may be seen on the walls of the church:

- The Revd George Lovely (1895) who was vicar here for 19 years. (North transept)
- Oval plaque, with a skull beneath and a coat of arms above, to Thomas Bert (or Bret) and Mary his wife. There seems to have been some doubt about the spelling of their surname, the lettering of which has been 'corrected'. The plaque was given in 1633 by their son John, who was Prothonotary to the Court of the King's Palace at Westminster. (North transept)
- Commander John Billingsley RN (1886) and Mary (1884), who were generous benefactors towards the restoration of the church. This plaque, which is decorated with ball-flowers, was erected by grateful members of the congregation. (South aisle)
- War Memorial, by J Wippell & Co., to 22 parishioners and supporters of the church who died in the First World War (1914–18). (Nave, west)
- The Revd William Harbur (1851), vicar for more than 20 years. (Chancel, south)
- Plaque to the Revd J Dunningham's father and eldest son, who both died in the year 1853. (Chancel, north)

This guide has been adapted from *St Mary-at-the-Quay, Ipswich – Its History and Treasures* by Roy Tricker, which gives additional details of the church and parish.

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Right: The leaning south arcade, looking south-east (Clifford Knowles)
Back cover: One of the many carved spandrels adorning the nave roof (Clifford Knowles)

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1 West Smithfield London EC1A 9EE
Tel: 020 7213 0660 Fax: 020 7213 0678 Email: central@tcct.org.uk
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