An aerial photograph of Saint Matthews Church, a Gothic Revival style church with a prominent square tower and a large rose window. The church is situated in a densely built-up urban area with many houses and trees. The entire image is tinted with a strong red color. In the foreground, a curved stone wall or path is visible. The text 'saint matthews' is written in a white, lowercase, serif font, followed by a right-pointing arrow. Below it, the text 'the church at the centre' is written in the same font style.

saint matthews →
the church at the centre

*saint matthews –
the church at the centre*

A GUIDE TO ST MATTHEW'S PARISH CHURCH, IPSWICH

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to commend this guidebook which has been composed with such devotion and meticulous care by one who has been Rector's Warden for a considerable number of years: it is this personal involvement in the life of the parish and congregation centred in the church building that gives his words such vivid content. In fact the whole booklet is a series of variations on the famous verse:

We love the place, O God
Wherein thine honour dwells;
The joy of thine abode
All earthly joy excels.

And what a building it is, with features of many different centuries up and down its aisles and chapels! It combines so well, as the author brings out, a homeliness and a holiness which is summed up in the words of the framed notice in the porch—

Preface

The Church of Jesus Christ was born on the Feast of Pentecost. As I write this Preface therefore, I am conscious also of the birth of the Christian family here at St Matthew's; a family which in 1990 will be 800 years old!

As you walk round this building, give thought, and thanks, for God, the Holy Spirit, who down the ages has inspired and encouraged countless men, women and

Author's Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to Maurice Walker (presentation), John Buckle and Walter Wright (artwork), Michael Warren (photographs), Philip Wood and Michael Rowe (proof reading) for their help freely given in the preparation of this parish booklet.

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE

Be welcome to this house
Whosoever you are;
Whether of this household
Or of another way,
Or wanderers or deserters
Be welcome here.

But you who are of the household
Pray for us now,
For us and for all sinners
Here or departed,
That mercy draw us all
One little pace
Nearer to love's unveiled
And dazzling face.

ROY SINKER

Rector of St Matthew's, 1967-77

Easter 1979

children, through the worship of this place, to be faithful witnesses to our Lord in this Parish and Town.

May that same Spirit inspire you and me today, 'to live and work to His praise and glory'.

DAVID MEIKLE,
Rector

Pentecost 1979

It has been written in honour of all those who have worshipped in St Matthew's Church and is published as a memorial to my father and mother. Herbert and Elizabeth Smith.

BERNARD SMITH



View of West Door and Tower

The Parish Church

The people who worship at the parish church of St Matthew in Ipswich look upon themselves as a family. How long this has been so is a matter of conjecture, but it is a family which goes back at least over 700 years to the time when Robert de Walmesford was presented to the living as parish priest by King Henry III. Ever since then the living has been in the gift of the Crown. There is evidence, however, that the church is much older for its name appears in a legal document dated 4th February, 1190, in the reign of Richard I.

Every family has its roots in a particular place and for the family of St Matthew's it is the parish church. Once it was a village church situated in the pasture countryside outside the borough walls. Now it is flanked on its eastern side by the busy dual carriage-way of Civic Drive and on its western side by Portman Road, the thoroughfare so well-known to the loyal supporters of Ipswich Town Football Club.

Both in its outward shape and in its interior appearance the church has changed considerably down the centuries. No one knows exactly what it looked like in 1270 but that it consisted of chancel, nave, a north and a

south aisle, the latter with a porch, there is little doubt. Thus it remained for about 500 years, but unhappily not as much as we would like remains from the medieval past.

In 1876, Sir Gilbert Scott, the Victorian architect, found that there had been so many alterations made necessary by an expanding population that it had 'less interest than many ancient churches'. Nevertheless, St Matthew's does, in its outward appearance, seem much older and more in keeping with its ancient foundations. This is because the materials used in the nineteenth century extensions have blended with the older parts of the fabric, and the Suffolk flintstone gives it a pleasant, venerable look.

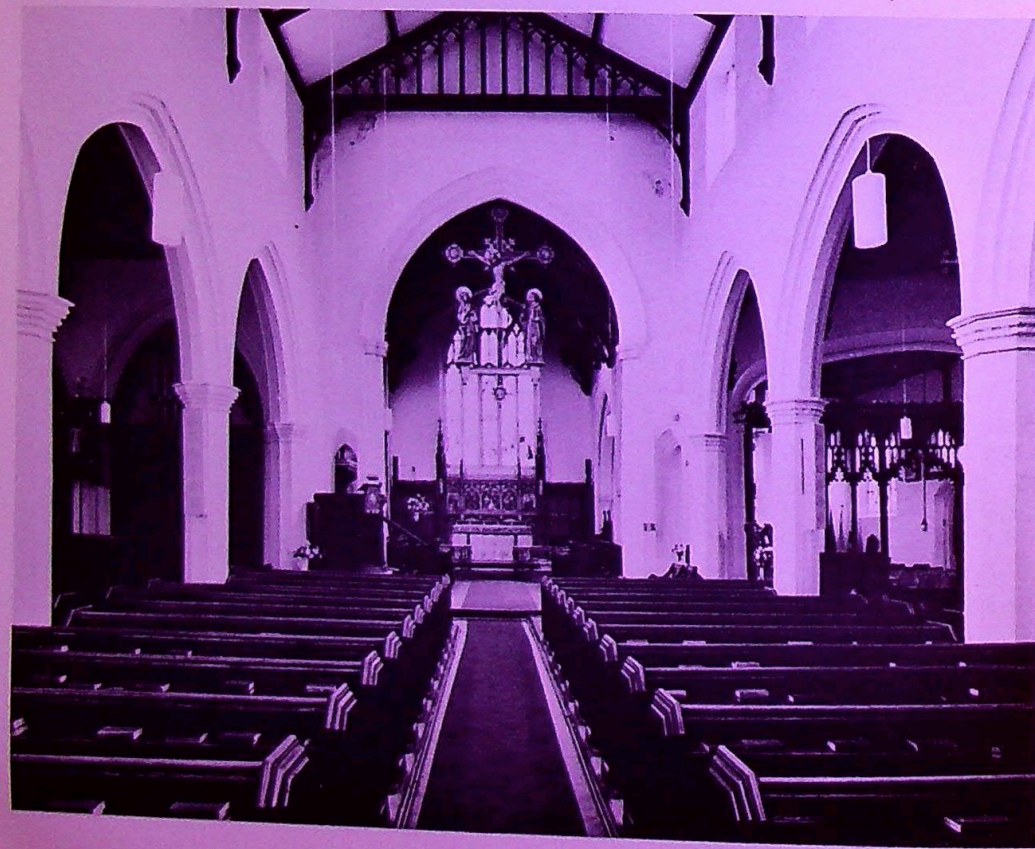
The usual approach to the church is through the well-kept churchyard by way of the path which leads from Portman Road. As he goes forward the expert will see before him a somewhat unpretentious building, almost square in shape, built chiefly in the Perpendicular style with some traces, here and there, of the earlier Decorated period.

The non-expert will, likewise, see an unpretentious building that is clean, dignified, well-kept and well-cared for. For him the

church stands with solid worth and quiet dignity in a peaceful setting. As one visitor has said, 'It is a homely church with the simplicity of a country church placed in a town setting'. For all members of St Matthew's family who worship here regularly it is all of these things and more.

It is a place of quietness and strength, a place of beauty and love and praise. It is the House of God and his spiritual home.

No records have been found which give positive information about the older parts of the church fabric. Only approximate dates can be given, even by experts. There is nothing which can be claimed as of great architectural beauty, but there are certain 'treasures' which are examples of good craftsmanship, and the church does embody the worship and workmanship of eight different centuries. Whatever one may think of the taste and the design no one can doubt the sincerity of purpose of those who have sought to maintain and beautify their parish church for seven hundred years. Their prime intention was to do their best and to give of their best for the glory of God.



The Nave

The Nave

We begin our walk round the church with our back to the West door. Ahead of us is the 60 foot nave with its red carpet taking us up to the Chancel Arch and the Hanging Rood with the sanctuary, the carved reredos, and the yellow-tinted East Window beyond. On either side are the pillars of the North and South Arcades.

The South Arcade This was the first to be built and is dated the early part of the reign of Edward III. The pillars are of considerable merit and are decorated with small carved roses (*paterae*). They match the design of the piscina at the east end of the chapel. Probably John le Tanner was the first incumbent to see this arcade in position.

The North Arcade This was probably built one hundred and fifty years later. It has been dated 1490, when Edward Ashton was parish priest, and the pillars have moulded capitals and are octagonal in shape.

The Nave Roof The roof is mainly of plaster and is divided into compartments. The timbers are slender and have moulded tie beams

and supports. The small Perpendicular windows were inserted in 1843, in the time of George Cosserat, when the walls of the nave were heightened. It is not the original roof which must have been of greater pitch since there are traces of the old filleting to be seen on the east wall of the tower.

The Pulpit was installed in 1860 when Charles Hicks Gaye was the rector. Made of oak, it was carved by Henry Ringham, an Ipswich woodcarver of Carr Street. It replaced a pulpit which had been removed to this position in 1843 from a site in the South Aisle. It is recorded that the removal gave universal satisfaction as 'it gave an unobstructed view of the whole congregation'.

The Lectern is a typical brass 'eagle' given in 1897 by the Misses Aldrich in memory of their mother who had worshipped here for many years in the nineteenth century after the death of her husband the Rev. John Cobbold Aldrich of St Lawrence's Church.

The Chancel Arch

The Chancel Arch is considered to be the oldest part of the Church. It is simple in design and is a good example of the style of the early years of Edward III's reign. Probably John le Tanner was the Rector at the time. There are two theories to explain why the arch is slightly askew. One says that it was the fashion to build arches in that way; the other says that subsidence of the foundations was the cause.

No doubt, for many years, St Matthew's, like all other medieval churches, had its roodloft and screen across the chancel arch. The roodloft was a shallow gallery which supported the figure of Our Lord on the Cross with the figures of His Mother and St John in vigil at His feet.

From this roodloft was read the Gospel at the Eucharist and it was reached by means of a staircase. The unevenness of the wall behind the pulpit shows where the staircase must have been.

Prior to the 1843 reconstruction there was also a dormer window on the south wall to shed light upon the Rood, a normal practice when the height of the building was low.

The medieval roodscreen disappeared at the time of the Reformation, either in the reign of Edward VI or by the eighth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1566). The Chancel Arch, therefore, remained clear

until 1895 when a choir screen was erected in memory of a nineteenth century parishioner, very well respected and a former mayor of the town, D. H. Booth. This was removed in 1958 to its present side in order to make way for the Hanging Rood.

The Hanging Rood The Hanging Rood owes its inspiration to the rood hanging in Johannesburg Cathedral in South Africa. It was the gift of the Haig family in memory of Nigel Somerville Haig, a Government veterinary officer who died in Kenya. The carving of the figures is original but the conception and the colouring are medieval. In the roundels are the symbols of the four Evangelists: St Matthew, the Man; St Mark, the Lion; St Luke, the Ox; St John, the Eagle. These symbols are also to be found in the East Window.

The Chancel

The Chancel is the focal point of all the worship of the St Matthew's family, and is perhaps the most handsome part of the church.

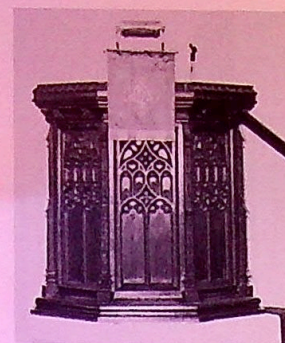
The Chancel Roof is a good example of the hammerbeam type of roof and dates from the reign of Richard II. Thomas Moonie, 1383-1404, was the likely incumbent when work on the roof commenced. In its present form it gives some idea of what the Nave roof looked like before the 1843 changes which were made necessary by decay.

The Angels bearing Shields Prior to 1843 these angels were situated in the nave roof but were then transferred to the beams of the South Aisle. From there they were brought to the Chancel roof in 1958. Six of them bear the instruments of Our Lord's Passion; the others, a device for St Matthew and a date, 1884.

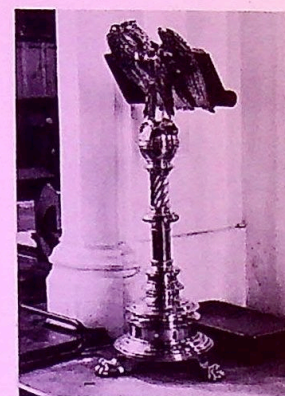
The Plaque Behind the Rector's stall is a brass plaque in memory of the Rev. Francis Haslewood (1875-1900) whose other memorial is the westernmost window in the South Aisle.

The Organ Before 1833 the music at divine worship was provided by a small orchestra which played from a gallery at the west end.

The first organ was installed in 1833, the second in 1854, the third in 1882. The first two were installed in the West Gallery, but



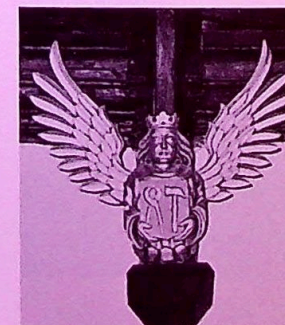
The Pulpit



The Lectern



The Hanging Rood



Angel Bearing Shield



The Aumbry

The Chancel

The Reredos



Reredos detail: St John



Reredos detail: St Matthew



Reredos detail: Wise Men

the second one, built by Mr Bullen of Pulham, Norfolk, was moved to the present site in 1860 in order to increase the number of seats. The third organ, built by the Hull firm of Forster and Andrews, was dedicated on 7th June, 1882. It was brought in several huge packing cases by water from Hull, and Dr Gladstone of Lancaster Gate gave a recital to mark the occasion. The second organ cost £200, the third £500. In 1834 the churchwardens paid a John Moore 10s a year to blow the first organ.

The third organ is the present organ and it has had a somewhat nomadic and controversial career. In 1921 it was removed to an empty space alongside the High Altar to make way for the War Memorial Chapel. This change was unsatisfactory both musically and aesthetically, and, after years of discussion, it was returned to its former unostentatious position in 1967. In the course of the removal it was renovated and brought up to date.

The Choir Stalls—benches as they were called when they were first installed—date from 1895. At the same time the nave and the chancel were newly paved and the marble steps put into the sanctuary.

The Sanctuary

Pride of place in the sanctuary must go to the *Reredos of Five Panels*. It is a memorial to Mary Ann Cole and given by her husband, Mr John Fenn Cole. The two outer panels depict the Annunciation, The Archangel Gabriel is clad in a red robe and around the Virgin Mary are the Latin words which mean, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord'. The centre three panels portray the Nativity with the shepherds and the Wise Men on either side of the manger. It is interesting to note that the second wise man, instead of carrying frankincense, is holding the model of a church.

The centre portion of the Reredos is divided from the wings by two high pinnacles with the figures of St Matthew and St John in their respective niches. Dedicated on St Matthew's Day, 1904, the carving was executed by Messrs Bacon of Newman Street, London, to the design of local architect, John Shewell Corder.

The Jacobean Monuments These are two of the treasures of the church. They are now rather faded and the inscriptions have been difficult to read for over a hundred years, but they depict two seventeenth-century gentlemen who lived in the parish. They represent the effigies of the father and mother of each family with a number of their sons and daughters kneeling in an attitude of prayer. Some are holding skulls which indicate that they died in infancy.

The easternmost monument is that of Richard Cock, portman of the borough, who died in 1629. The eight lines of commemorative verse are entitled *Gallicinium* (Cock-crowing), which is a word-play on his name, and they contain a warning of the judgement to come.

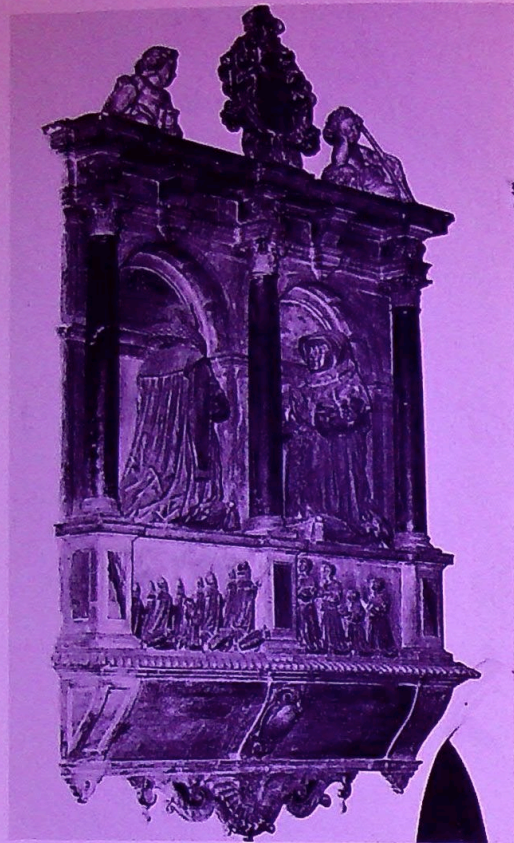
The poetic inscription on the other monument, by contrast, emphasizes the faith of Anthony Penning, and his Christian concern for other people. He was High Sheriff of Suffolk in 1607 and he died in 1630, much mourned by rich and poor alike. He and his family lived in Westgate Street.

The Aumbry This ancient niche was made into an aumbry in 1953 in memory of Mrs Edith Wright, wife of a local boatbuilder. The aumbry light above is a constant reminder of Our Lord's presence and the changelessness of God, our Heavenly Father.

The Sanctuary Chairs were dedicated at the same time as the altar rails and are a memorial to Mrs Ransome who worshipped in this church for many years.

The Altar Rails These are a good example of brass lateen work of the reign of Edward VII. They were given by the Guild of Communicants in 1912. The Guild met monthly as a preparation for Holy Communion and collected privately amongst themselves for the gift. When they had reached £40 there was an urgent appeal on behalf of the Day School. They handed over their £40 and began again to raise the £75 needed. The rails were dedicated on St Matthew's Day, 1912.

The Altar Gates are of a later date and are a memorial to a former churchwarden, George Moore.



*Jacobean Monument detail:
Child with hourglass*

Jacobean Monuments

The East Window

The story of this gift is a touching one. In 1890 Mr George Hewitt, a very successful businessman, wanted to express his gratitude by a gift to his parish church. He was able to see the replacement of the old wooden framework by stone and to approve the design for the stained glass centre light but, unfortunately, he died before the work was completed.

Four years later, another parishioner, Mr W. Gill of Dalton Road offered to complete the window, and on Thursday, 26th April, 1894, the present east window was seen for the first time in all its glory. The day was delightfully fine and the coloured glass sparkled with beauty.

The subject of the window is the Worship of Heaven, as revealed to St John the Divine. Our Lord is seated in majesty, His right hand lifted in blessing, His left resting on an orb. From the throne proceed light wings, the

signs of judgement and vengeance. There are the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne. On either side are the twenty-four elders, clothed in white, and casting down their crowns in adoration. The elders represent the Church; the living creatures (which also represent the Evangelists) represent the whole animate creation.

In the first light are Noah, Moses and Elijah; in the second, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St John with the chalice, St James the Great, St Stephen and St Alban.

In the centre light appear two martyrs with particular significance for St Matthew's: St Katherine with her wheel and patron saint of a medieval guild associated with the church; and St Cecilia, patron saint of music.

The fourth light contains the figures of St Peter, St Andrew, St Matthew with book and quill, St Lawrence with gridiron and St Sebastian with a handful of arrows. David, John the Baptist and Ezekiel are to be seen in the fifth light.



East Window



The St Katherine's Chapel

St Katherine's Chapel

If one leaves the chancel by turning right past the Processional Cross the visitor will find himself in St Katherine's Chapel. From 1921 to 1967 this chapel occupied the site now filled by the organ and was the old War Memorial Chapel, unveiled by Lord Allenby, and so named to revive the medieval chapel of the same name which appears in ancient documents of the fifteenth century.

The present chapel formerly housed, in part, the organ and the choir vestry. The altar was part of the furnishings of the old chapel; so too were the wings of the communion rail. These were carved in oak by Mr Sydney Cooper and were 'Laudian' in conception. This means that though they were twentieth century in craftsmanship their design followed the pattern laid down in the seventeenth century by Archbishop William Laud, who introduced such rails in order to promote a greater reverence in worship at the Holy Eucharist.

The George Memorial

In 1977 the centre panels were inserted into the altar rails as a tribute to the memory of the Rev. Ampat Thomas George, a much-loved assistant priest who died suddenly in June 1975. The individual glass panels represent the three principal areas of Father George's life: Kerala, Ethiopia and East Anglia. He was born and brought up in Kerala, South India; he served as a teacher and headmaster in Ethiopia for over twenty years; he was ordained to the priesthood in 1973 and was assistant priest of this parish for three years.

The Kerala panel illustrates a typical scene near his home town of Punnavelly; the Ethiopian panel includes the Lalibella Cross associated with one of Ethiopia's holy places and especially dear to Father George and the Ethiopian Royal Family; the East Anglian panel shows Father George speaking to a pupil of St Matthew's Day School.

The glass engraving was done by a local artist with an international reputation, Mrs Sheila Elmhirst; the matching and carving of the woodwork was executed by Mr Ingram Smith; the lettering was by Mr Bernard



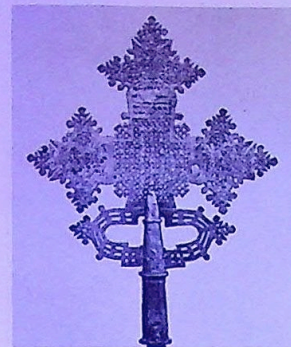
The Kerala Panel



The Ethiopian Panel



The East Anglian Panel



The Axum Cross

Reynolds, and the overall design by Mr Adam Gordon. All four were local artists and craftsmen known to Father George and all have links with St Matthew's Parish.

The Axum Cross

This is an original work by an unknown Ethiopian craftsman sent by 'anonymous' friends from Ethiopia as their tribute to Father George.

The design of the cross is distinctive and traditional to Axum, a holy place of pilgrimage in Tigre Province, Ethiopia. According to tradition Axum is the place where the Queen of Sheba deposited the Ark of the Covenant when she returned from Jerusalem after her visit to King Solomon.

The Eastern Window

This is dedicated to Jane Trimmer Gaye, second wife of the Rev. Charles Hicks Gaye (1847-75). She was a very well-beloved lady who was deeply mourned and the window was erected in 1853—the work of Hedgland, the stained glass artist. He worked to a design by Frank Howard, brother of Mrs

Gaye. This window has been the subject of much argument as to its quality. It was so, even when it was being executed. Some attempt has been made to suggest that it is the picture of Our Lady or a representation of St Katherine. The designer, himself, however, appears to have made no such statement. In a letter from Bombay in 1854 he said that his intention was to combine three elements, German, Italian, and Gothic. The German element was its style after the manner of Albert Dürer. The Italian influence appears in the drawing, also after the manner of the 1500s. The glass, in regard to its light, shade, and colour was more like the Belgian and Lower Rhine School of about 1560 and was reminiscent of St Gudule in Brussels.

The window is in three compartments. The centre light is occupied by canopy work which contains, within a niche, St Matthew. Beneath him, kneeling, is a female figure, a portrait of Mrs Gaye. On either side are groups of figures which represent Faith, Hope and Charity, the cardinal virtues.

In fairness it must be said, however, that the window can illustrate the traditional story of St Katherine of Alexandria, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of the Emperor Maxentius (312 AD). The figures then become the philosophers who disputed with her at the emperor's behest; the figures to her right become the young maidens for whom she became patron saint. Katherine was ordered to be broken on the wheel and there is a recurring motif of Catherine wheels in the window. After her death, so the story goes, angels transported her body to Mount Sinai, and a range of hills can be seen above her head.

It may well be that Frank Howard, in designing this memorial, was mindful of the fact that in the Middle Ages there was a Guild of St Katherine attached to St Matthew's and he wished, discreetly, to revive the ancient link

The Niche on the east wall. The decoration of this piscina matches the decoration of the capitals of the South Arcade, namely four-leaved flowers, characteristic of the later years of Edward III.



The Eastern Window

The Samaritan Window This was inserted in 1878 in memory of Thomas D'Eye Burroughes, churchwarden, alderman, justice of the peace, Chairman of the Board of Guardians, and an independent gentleman of pronounced views. From the records it is clear that the story of the Good Samaritan epitomises most effectively his life and his work.

The Window of the Six Acts of Mercy This window is from the atelier of Hughes and Butler of London and was inserted in 1866 in memory of James Jefferies. It depicts the six mercies extended to Our Lord as told by Him in the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, a parable only to be found in St Matthew's Gospel.

The Memorial Tablets These fall into two groups; the Rodwell group and the Layton group. The Rodwell tablets, three in number, are easily read and all belong to the family of William Rodwell, churchwarden in the 1820s.

The two Layton tablets refer to the Laytons, father and son, who ministered in this church from 1746 to 1831 apart from one short break.

The third tablet is to the memory of Edward Hasell, a Fellow of the Law Society, and a member of a distinguished Cumbrian family, whose descendant, Eva Hasell, became a pioneer of the Canadian Caravan Mission in the present century.

The Tombstones These are just visible behind the altar; they are much worn and mutilated. They mark the resting places of:

- Jane, wife of Dr Dade, buried 11th December, 1724.
- Christopher and Martha Barry (1759 and 1769).
- Jane Dade, daughter of Dr John Dade.
- Elizabeth Morris (1722).
- Captain Eustace Peacock and his wife, Sarah (1727).
- Edward Sheppard (1680).
- George Frohock (1733).
- John Frohock, barrister at law (1733).

The South Porch This was added in the extensions of 1860. Formerly it contained the Table of Benefactions, a list of donors who have bequeathed legacies to the church. They include:



The Old Contemptibles' Standard



The Samaritan Window

The Window of the Six Acts of Mercy



The Tombstones

- Edmund Daundy (almshouses).
- John Gibbon (clothing).
- Edmund Sheppard (shelter).
- Henry Skinner and Nicholas Kerrington (bread).
- John Crane (sermon).

These names are now preserved in a Memorial Book kept in the vestry.

The Old Contemptibles' Standard

Hanging from the south wall, near to the Jefferies' window, are the colours of the local Old Contemptibles' Association. Every year, on the Sunday in August nearest to the anniversary of the First Battle of Mons, these veterans of World War One have paraded at the church with their Colours flying. In April 1976 these Colours were laid up at the Garrison Church.

On the wall opposite, in the corner, hangs the Old Contemptibles' Standard. In 1935 the Ipswich branch of the Old Contemptibles' Association presented the flag to the church after receiving it from the Cenotaph where it had rested for a year. It was a condition of receiving it that it should be placed in a parish church for safe keeping in perpetuity. Unfortunately, in 1977, the Queen's Jubilee Year, it was removed by a sneak thief, and the standard now on display is its replacement. Fortunately, however, the original was recovered by the police some time later and it is now kept in the clergy vestry.

These standards are a reminder, not only of those who served in World War One, but also that for over a century St Matthew's was the Garrison Church of Ipswich.

The Booth Screen

This was formerly in the Chancel Arch. To make it fit the wider arch, additional carving was done by Barnes of Ipswich when the screen was removed to its present site in 1958.

Originally the screen had seven compartments and was carved in oak by John Groome to a design by John Shewell Corder. The carved angels each hold a shield with a separate device. Between each angel is a shield bearing the instruments of Our Lord's Passion. Also included is an open book, the emblem of St Matthew, the sacred monogram I.H.S., and monograms of the Virgin

Mary and St Matthew. For those who are interested in such details, the screen contains 102 different spandrels, 97 crockets, 15 filials, and 58 carved cusps.

This screen cuts off from the South Aisle the chapel chancel which was part of the 1860 extensions. In that year the east wall of the aisle was taken to its present position, the niche and the Gaye Memorial Window likewise removed, and the whole area given over to pews. Thus it remained until 1921 when the organ and choir vestry were sited against the eastern wall. From 1946 until 1958 the rest of the area was occupied by a stage given to the church by the Old Contemptibles' Association. During that period many notable stage productions of religious drama were enacted on this stage. At that time St Matthew's was probably the only church to possess a permanent stage. Permanence, however, proved to be only transitory, and it was removed in the alterations of 1958.

The South Aisle

The South Aisle was doubled in width in 1843 after the Rector, Churchwardens and a select committee met at the Golden Lion to decide what should be done about the dilapidated state of the church and the growing population of the parish. The alterations and extensions were paid for entirely by voluntary subscriptions and cost £412. It took just six months to raise £440.

In 1884 a new oak roof had to be put in, but the carved figures forming the bosses of the cantilevers were retained. They are made of oak and date from the sixteenth century. They are of different designs, some bearing shields with emblems of the Passion carved upon them. Other shields bear a guitar-like instrument and a harp.

The central shields were put in place in the 1950s when the angels were transferred to the chancel. They represent the Arms of the Diocese; the Arms of the Norwich Diocese, of which Suffolk was formerly a part; the Arms of St David's College, Lampeter, the college of Canon Brynley Jones, then parish priest; the Arms of the Province of Canterbury.

They were erected by the firm of Buckingham Bird which had a long association with the parish.



The Booth Screen

The Brame Window was inserted in 1880 by Sarah Ann Turner in memory of her father, George Brame. He was a member of a well-known Ipswich family, was one of the first letter-carriers in Ipswich, and was related to the Brames who had been keepers of the Town Gaol situated in St Matthew's Street.

In this window the twin virtues of Faith and Hope flank Our Lord as the Good Shepherd, who represents supremely the third great virtue, Charity.

The Mills Window was the gift of Dr W. P. Mills (1816–95), fifty years a parishioner, and very much respected as a mason, an alderman, and a doctor, especially by the poor.

The window portrays Saints Peter and Paul on either side of St Matthew who is seen pointing to Chapter 9, Verse 9, of his Gospel: 'And Jesus said, "Follow Me"'.
The Fletcher Window, otherwise the Ascension Window, was inserted in memory of Canon William Fletcher (Rector, 1900–1915) whose time here was often, in after

years, described as the 'halcyon days'. He was a very popular rector who did much to improve the beauty of the church and its worship. He also awakened the social conscience of the parish and did much good work, particularly for the unemployed.

His wife is remembered in the St Francis Chapel, and his son's name appears on the Roll of Honour.

The Haslewood Window occupies the place where the old porch used to be before it was blocked up in the 1843 extensions. It commemorates the Rev. Francis Haslewood (Rector, 1875–1900) and was inserted rather belatedly in the 1930s. Francis Haslewood was an ardent antiquary and a valued parish historian.

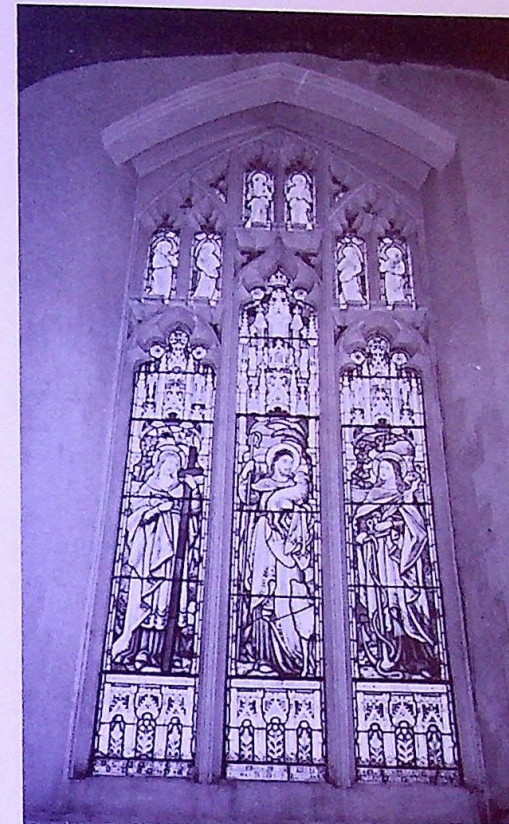
The centre light reveals Our Lord as High Priest with St Edmund and St Felix, two local saints, on either side. The arms of the Haslewood family—the little squirrel—also appears. The Latin inscription, freely translated, means: 'God sets me at peace with myself'. The window is the work of Messrs Bacon, London.

The centre light reveals Our Lord as High Priest with St Edmund and St Felix, two local saints, on either side. The arms of the Haslewood family—the little squirrel—also appears. The Latin inscription, freely translated, means: 'God sets me at peace with myself'. The window is the work of Messrs Bacon, London.



The Haslewood Arms

The Mills Window ▷▷



The Brame Window ▷



The Fletcher Window ▷



The Haslewood Window ▷▷



The Memorial Tablets Six in number, the two most interesting are the Hare and Chedworth mural tablets.

Jabez Hare (1820–37) was a young man who had great promise as a portrait and animal painter—hence the palette and brushes.

Lord Chedworth (1754–1804) was an eccentric gentleman who was a magistrate and a 'strenuous supporter of civil and religious liberty'. On his death he bequeathed £1,200 to the Rector, William Layton.

The War Memorial, which was formerly in the chapel near the vestry, was placed here in 1967 when the organ was returned to its present position. It preserves the memory of 68 parishioners who gave their lives in World War One.

Nearby are two brass tablets which commemorate two more young men who died in the service of their country in earlier wars.

The North Aisle

Once at the end of the South Aisle cross over to the font, where you will find yourself in the North Aisle, which was modernized in 1975.

The Victorian pitch pine pews were removed and the area was fitted out as an educational area where exhibitions and displays can be mounted and where members of the congregation can meet socially and comfortably.

The Font The font is fourteenth century and is regarded by many experts as the finest treasure our church possesses. It stands now on its fourth site since it was introduced into the church (about 1350 AD, according to one expert). First it stood at the end of the South Aisle opposite the old entrance to the church. This was because the Baptismal Service was taken in two parts; the first half being held outside the church door. Next it was placed in a central position at the end of the nave for similar reasons. Thirdly it was transferred to the Baptistry (now The St Francis Chapel) and finally it was placed in its present position when the St Francis Chapel was constructed in 1950.

The bowl is octagonal and has two uninteresting foliage panels. The other six, however, depict the Six Joys of Mary: the Annunciation; the Adoration of the Magi; the Assumption of Mary; the Coronation; the Glorification; and the Baptism of Our

Lord. At each angle there is a human figure, male and female alternately. Beneath the bowl are angles at each corner, whilst against the shaft stand the symbols of the four evangelists.

It is puzzling to know how this rich font with its Marian theme escaped the destructive visitation of William Dowsing in 1643. He had orders to destroy all 'superstitious images', and according to his diary he did destroy thirty-six such images. He missed the font and one can only assume that precautions were taken to deceive him—probably the decoration was completely plastered over.

The Font Cover is of carved oak and bears the figure of St Matthew at the top. It was gilded in 1953 to mark the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

The Font Ewer is of brass and has inscribed upon it the words: 'One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism'.

It was the gift of a number of confirmation candidates, their parents, godparents and friends in 1883, and it replaced a common zinc pail.

The North Doorway dates from the mid-fifteenth century. It was carefully dismantled and re-erected to preserve its character in 1877. During the alterations traces of a north porch, dated 1430, were discovered.

The Annunciation Picture This is a modern collage executed by Mrs Gwen Affron and was presented to the church to mark the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

The St Francis Chapel

The Screen, after a design by Lawrence King, was installed to mark the 700th anniversary celebrations in 1970.

The Chapel itself was created in 1950 as a memorial to Emily Marcella Fletcher, wife of Canon William Fletcher (1900–15) and to those who died in World War Two. It is the gift of the Mothers' Union and the sanctuary carpet, which bears the arms of the M.U., was also their work. The alcove in which the reredos is fitted was formerly a junk cupboard and the whole area, formerly the Baptistry, was enclosed in 1877.



The Jabez Hare Memorial Tablet



The Font



North Door

St Francis Reredos
The Gaye Window



Terracotta Plaque



The Reredos itself is interesting. The wood used in the making of the altar and reredos is ancient and formerly saw service in a Suffolk mill. The cross and the figure of Christ were carved out of one piece of wood.

The Terracotta Plaque is a carving of St Francis and the Wolf and comes from Assisi.

The chapel now serves a dual purpose. Not only is it a chapel where Holy Communion is celebrated, but it is also the choir vestry.

The North Aisle Roof This was constructed in 1877 when the aisle was doubled in width to give increased accommodation and to match the South Aisle. This work was done under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott. It was necessary to replace the roof timbers almost entirely, thus nothing remains of the fifteenth century roof. However, the carved wooden heads from under the old brackets were preserved and are to be seen in their former positions. The old windows were reset in the new wall. In the old aisle there was a gallery going along its full length but this was removed in 1865–66.

The Gaye Window helps us to remember the life and work of Charles Hicks Gaye (1847–1875). The window emphasizes the three characteristic aspects of his ministry: Education, Reconciliation, Consolation. Education is represented in the left-hand light by Eli giving instruction to the young Samuel. He is clad in the vestments of a High Priest and his mitre bears the inscription 'Holiness to the Lord'. The light contains the appropriate text, 'Apt to teach'.

Reconciliation is the theme of the centre light. It portrays Our Lord seated in the posture of the Rabbis when teaching, with his hand uplifted to draw attention to the beatitude, 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'.

Consolation is portrayed in the right-hand light. It shows St John leading the Virgin Mary away from Calvary and bears the inscription, 'Comfort them that mourn'.

Another interesting point about this window is the fact that the face of Eli is a portrait of the Rev. Charles Hicks Gaye himself.

The Painting, a reproduction of Correggio's *Ecce Homo*, was given at Easter 1903 by Miss Alice Green in memory of her mother. Originally it was planned as a reredos to a new chapel but the scheme never materialised.

The Memorial Tablets Miss Powles who worshipped in this church for many years placed this tablet in the church to preserve the memory of her two brothers who, tragically, died young and in somewhat dramatic circumstances.

The Hagioscope This, and the corresponding one on the south aisle, was cut through the chancel arch piers in 1860 to make it easier for the congregation to hear and to see the ministrations at the high altar.

The Piscina and Squint In the north pier of the chancel arch is an ancient squint. Its use is uncertain. It may have been a leper's squint; rather, it may have been introduced to enable the celebrant at a side altar to co-ordinate his elevation of the Host and Chalice with that at the High Altar.

The piscina has the usual shallow drain and a stone shelf to hold a pair of cruets. This indicates the position of a side altar, possibly dedicated to St Katherine of Alexandria or St Erasmus.

The Memorial Screen was given by the Rev. H. E. L. Purcell and was intended, in 1935, to separate the War Memorial Chapel from the body of the church. It was executed by Messrs Cubitt and Gotts and is a beautiful piece of work, framed and carved after the tradition of the great East Anglian screen-makers of the fifteenth century. Incorporated into this screen is another of the church's medieval treasures, the Painted Screen.

The Painted Screen of Saints and Donors These panels are a delight and a puzzle. Probably they belonged to the medieval roodscreen which was removed illegally at the time of the Reformation. Years later these remnants were found being used as the doors of a vestry cupboard. Canon Fletcher put them on display in the church itself and now they form part of the 1935 Memorial Screen.

In 1923 these panels were loaned for two months to a 'British Primitives Exhibition' held at the Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, London. Very few examples of such work are in existence and they provoked much interest.

The panels represent two groups, nine men and seven women, and the other four are in bishops' robes. One of them may be carrying a windlass which was the emblem of St Erasmus. It is thought possible, therefore, that the donors were members of the Guild of St Erasmus which is known to have had an altar in our church. Between 1465 and 1520 there were at least three guilds with St Matthew's connections: St Erasmus, St George, and Our Lady of Pity. The Painted Panels originate from the reign of Edward IV (1461-83).

One of the other saints, it is supposed, may have been St Nicholas or St Eligius (or St Eloy). The latter was patron saint of artists and craftsmen, particularly goldsmiths and silversmiths, for in his lifetime he had been a famous worker in gold and silver before becoming a Bishop of Noyon in the sixth century.

St Nicholas, of course, was the famous Bishop of Myra who became patron saint of schoolboys, sailors, pawnbrokers and thieves. St Erasmus was a shadowy second century bishop who was supposedly put to death by disembowelling, a fate which made him patron saint of stomach-sufferers! The windlass on which he was thought to have been executed made him popular with sailors from Naples who called him St Elmo.

Whether these suppositions are true or not, they do come down from medieval times and suggest an interesting picture of life in St Matthew's Parish five hundred years ago.

The Smythier Tombstone was discovered underneath the old organ, when alterations were being made in 1882, and was immediately removed to its present site. Though it had been buried for so many years it was found in an excellent state of preservation. It is a fine slab of black, Kilkenny marble, nine inches thick and weighing an estimated two tons.

It preserves the memory of John Smythier, a leading citizen of Ipswich in the seventeenth century. Not only was he successful as a businessman and portman of the town, he was also four times bailiff, twice in the reign of Charles I and twice in the reign of Charles II, although never in the Commonwealth period. This is surprising since he was a zealous Puritan, who appeared before the Star Chamber as a witness for the defence in the trial of Samuel Ward, lecturer at St Mary-le-Tower, who was accused of erroneous doctrine.

His wife, Elizabeth, was a relative of Captain Nicholas Kerrington whose name appears in the Table of Benefactions as the founder of the Kerrington Charity which is still paid into church funds.

The Servers' Vestry From 1921 to 1967 this area was the War Memorial Chapel; now it contains the servers' vestry and the organ chamber. It contains three points of interest:

The Daniels Window This was inserted as a memorial to Stephen Daniels, a young lieutenant, who died in Bangalore on active service. Appropriately it portrays three saints who sacrificed their lives: St Stephen, St George, and St Alban.

The Triptych was part of the furnishings of the old War Memorial Chapel which was on this site until 1967. Designed by J. Cogswell, the architect, it was unveiled by Field Marshal Lord Allenby in 1921.

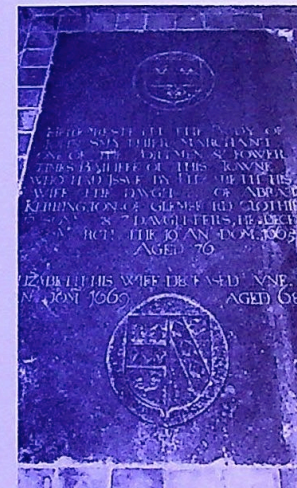
The Clergy Vestry contains the treasures of the church not on display. These include: the Communion Plate, the photographs of all the Rectors since 1847, a Book of Homilies of 1587, a cannonball of unknown date,



The Painted Screen



The Daniels Window



The Smythier Tombstone



The oldest bell

an eighteenth century sickle, a pewter flagon and plate purchased in 1632, the Memorial Book of Benefactors, the original Old Contemptibles' Standard from the Cenotaph.

There is also an altar cross which first appeared on Easter Day 1884. It was the gift of an anonymous parishioner who gave it as an Easter offering to St Matthew's Church. An agate stone occupies the centre; the other stones are onyx.

The same unknown donor also gave, a year later, an Alms Dish, beautifully chased with the sacred monogram in the centre. Around the margin there is engraved the text: 'God loveth a cheerful giver'.

The vestry itself was built in 1845 on the site of an ancient vestry which seems to have been sold, according to the churchwardens' books, in 1586 in order to raise funds.

The priest's door into the sanctuary was cut in the nineteenth century. Proceed into the chancel and return down the nave.

The West Door Ahead is the east wall of the Tower. Visible, since the removal of the unsightly gallery, is the West Arch and the West Screen.

The tower dates from the reign of Henry IV (1399-1413), although some think that its lowest section dates from the foundation of the church. The Tower Arch is well proportioned and an excellent example of the later Gothic architecture. It is spanned by the West Screen given by Mr and Mrs Fenn Cole in memory of William Cole, R.N. (Mr Cole's father) in 1900. Over the door a carved beam bears the inscription: 'Enter into His courts with thanksgiving and into His gates with praise'.

The Twin Flags These were given in 1932 by the Girls' Friendly Society to mark the long association of St Matthew's with the military in the Cavalry and Artillery Barracks. The association lasted from 1796 to 1928 when the barracks became a housing estate.

The List of Rectors hangs on the west wall of the tower. It is based on the research of the Rev. Francis Haslewood (1875-1900) but it contains one or two inaccuracies. (For pen portraits of the 54 rectors who have served this parish and other people connected with the parish see a companion booklet, *Parish Personalities*.)

The Turret Tower This leads to the ringing chamber and is to the left of the main door. It was built of brick in the early seventeenth century.

The Bells From Wodderspoon's *Memorials of Ipswich* it would appear that there four bells in the tower in the reign of Edward VI but only one of these has survived. This is the third bell which bears the inscription, *Ora pro nobis, Sancta Katerina* ('Pray for us St Katherine'). It was probably tolled to call members of the Guild of St Katherine to service. In 1583 the churchwardens paid a certain Webster for taking down a bell and transporting it to Bury St Edmunds for casting. He took it to a bell-foundry which had been in existence since the mid-fifteenth century, the Medieval Bury St Edmunds Foundry. The bell bears a shield on which are

1. The founder's initials H.S. (an approximate date for his work is 1475).
2. A crown and arrowheads which symbolize the martyrdom of St Edmund.
3. A bell, two keys and a cannon, indicating the work of the foundry.

Opposite the oldest bell is the newest bell which was hung in 1933. This was the gift of George Morfe, churchwarden at the time. It was cast in Messrs Bowell's foundry in Wykes Bishop Street, Ipswich, and the casting was watched by a party from the church. This bell also bears a happy inscription, a line from Milton's 'Solemn Music': 'And keep in tune with heaven'. A peal of 5,040 changes was rung in five minutes under three hours as a mark of appreciation.

Bell Number Five was made by the famous bell-founder of Colchester, Miles Graie, and was hung in the year of the Gunpowder Plot, 1605. It bears the inscription: 'Miles Graie Made Me 1605'. Miles Graie has been described as one of the best bell-founders England has ever seen, and the bell is the oldest known of any bearing his name. The other three bells were made (1772) by Pack and Chapman in their Whitechapel Road bell foundry, which still exists under another name. Their cost was £18 3s 1½d.

The Porch This was cut into the tower in 1845 and replaced the South Porch entrance which was blocked up. It contains a fine Jacobean chest and on the walls are memorial tablets to some of those parishioners whose cremated remains lie in the churchyard.

The Tower As has already been stated, the tower was probably built in the reign of Henry IV (1399–1413). It was built in three stages. The lowest stage is of the Transition Period, and one great point of interest is that the tower is built without buttresses. This stage and the one immediately above it, which includes the belfry windows, were built inwards, thus giving strength to the windows.

The upper storey has had a chequered appearance: it has been heightened; it has had a cement face which has been removed; it has had a brick parapet; it now has stone battlements. It has stood seven centuries very well but it has been repaired several times in the last 100 years.

In November 1884 the Rev. Francis Haslewood wrote, 'The Tower is now an ornament to the town'. It still is, and in 1977 it was floodlit for the first time in honour of the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

The Church Exterior This, too, has changed over the years, and despite the strictures which many experts have placed upon our 'much extended and much restored church' there is no doubt that our Victorian forebears, by strengthening and improving the buttresses, by refacing with Suffolk flint from Brandon, gave to the church its pleasant, venerable appearance.

One point of interest is the heraldic work on the north doorway. Two badges can be seen; now somewhat weathered, their meaning is an interesting mystery.

The Churchyard This has its points of interest. Once it was the largest in Suffolk because in 1801 glebe land adjoining the church was acquired from Robert Stones Durham, a former churchwarden. It was consecrated by the then Bishop of Norwich, later to become Archbishop of Canterbury. In recent years it has been much reduced in size. In 1962 the Church Primary School was built on the southernmost side and two years later the P.C.C., with approval from the diocese, leased the eastern area to the Borough Council so as to form part of the landscaping of the Civic Centre. Thus, by happy co-operation of Church and Town a pleasant garden has been provided for old people and passers-by in the shadow of the old church.

Within the present churchyard there is still the avenue of lime trees planted by Thomas D'Eye Burroughes to mark his church-

wardenate in 1852 and three silver birch trees planted in honour of the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

Many of the gravestones have disappeared over the years and many more have become eroded and illegible, but the inscriptions are all preserved in a book, *Ipswich Inscriptions, St Matthew's* by the Rev. Francis Haslewood. The earliest burial recorded is that of John Smyth, pewterer, in May 1516; the last, Harriet Footman in 1881.

Over 500 people were buried between these two dates: portmen of Ipswich, soldiers from the barracks, governors and prisoners of the local West Gate gaol, several magistrates, a lord of the realm, a celebrated painter (George Frost), churchwardens, ministers Anglican and Free Church, and many ordinary folk. Perhaps one of the most interesting inscriptions is that of an eighteenth-century midwife who 'brought into the World 1,776 Children as appears by her boks'.

Interments, except by special permission of the Home Secretary, ceased in 1855 but in 1950 the churchyard was re-opened for cremations.

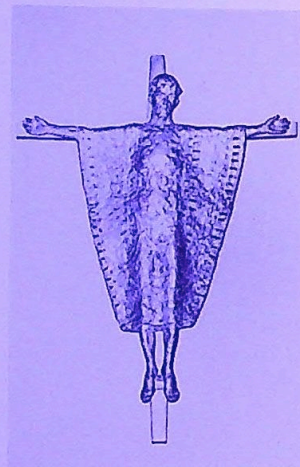
The Primary School Built in 1962, it replaced the old antiquated, dilapidated buildings of 1847 which were demolished to make way for the Civic Drive. The school has won a fine reputation for good, sound learning and in 131 years of its existence it has had but six headmasters.

Incorporated into the entrance hall is the original lintel of the 1847 main doorway. Inside, on the wall of the Assembly Hall, is a fine modern crucifix, cast in aluminium and designed by a local artist, Mr Bernard Reynolds. The crucifix is a memorial to the late Canon Brynley Jones, whose drive and leadership was responsible for the saving of our church school in 1946 and for the campaign to provide new premises in the ensuing years.

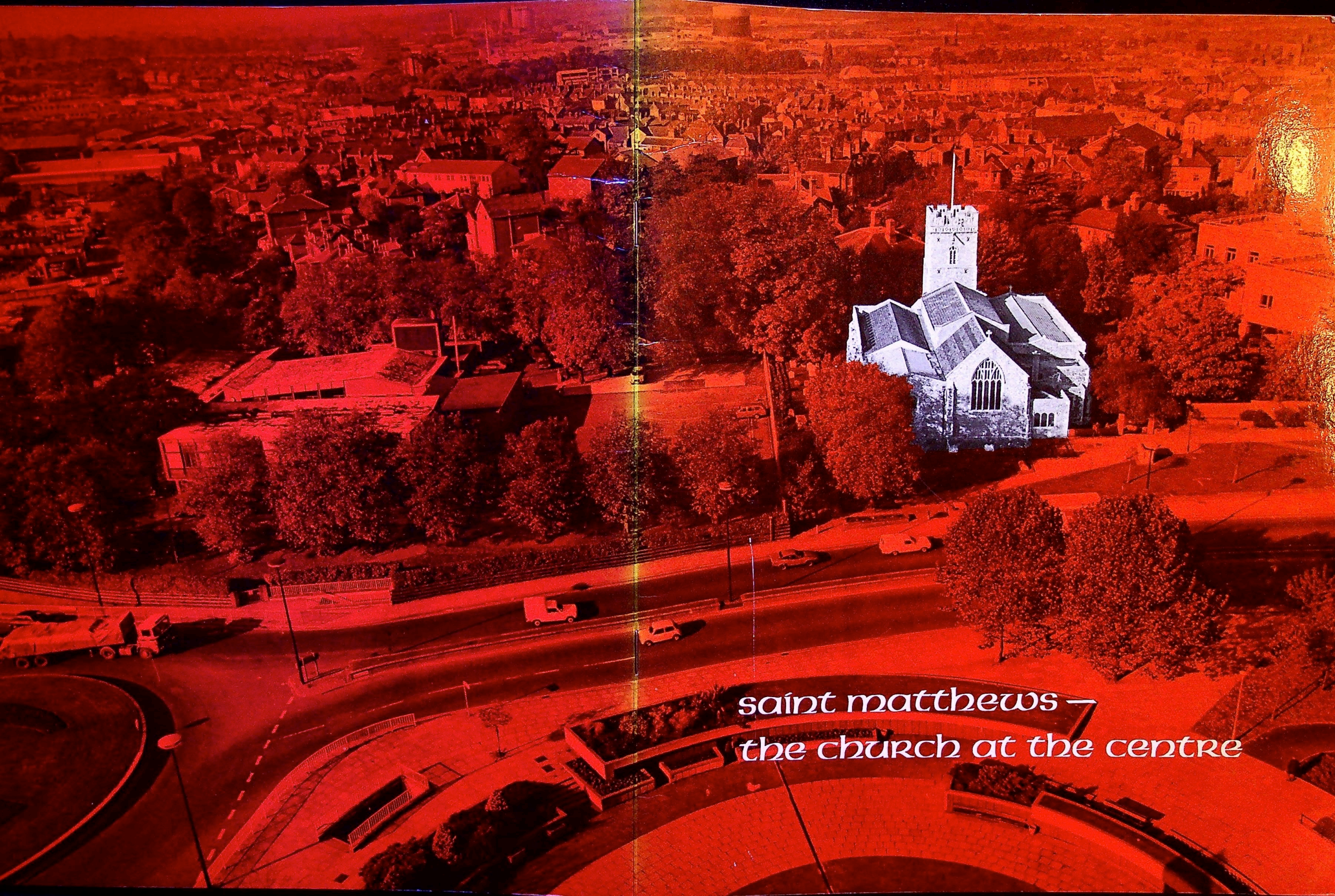
CONCLUSION

Your journey round the parish church is complete. You have been brought close to all those who have worshipped here for over 700 years and you have seen something of what they have tried to do for the glory of God.

Before you go please pray for those who work and worship here in the present that they may be worthy of their calling and that they may hand on, to those who come after, God's goodly inheritance.



*The Canon Brynley Jones
Memorial Crucifix*



saint matthews →
the church at the centre