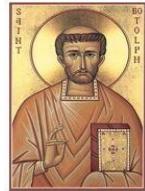




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph
www.botolph.info



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1st December 2016

Highlights this month

- St Botolph's church, Westwick, Norfolk.
- It gives me great pleasure to welcome the following new members: Peter Horsefield from Trunch, Norfolk; Derek Boughton from Elham, Kent; Bishop Trevor Willmott from Dover; Revd Mark Thomson and Jan and David Pursell – all from Quarrington, Lincolnshire.
- Correspondence from Revd Sally Hughes, Rose Doherty, Patricia Croxton-Smith, John Sennett, Roger Howlett, Peter Van Demark and Peter Horsefield.

Editorial

I am very sad to announce the death this month of one of our members, Jane Micklethwaite of St Botolph's Church Quarrington Lincolnshire. She and her husband Christopher have been members for some considerable time and Zina and I were privileged (together with 170 others) to attend her funeral today 1st December. This included a full Requiem Mass and was held in the pretty church of St Botolph's. Thank you for your hospitality Christopher.

--o--

Earlier this month, you may remember, a fully-preserved Christian Anglo-Saxon graveyard was discovered in Ryburgh, Norfolk. This is the first of its type to be found in Britain and has been approximately dated as being from between C7 and C9. There were 89 burials of which 76 were in coffins made from hollowed-out tree trunks with a lid placed on top.

If, after more precise carbon dating, the cemetery proves to be mid-C7, this would be most important to us since it would increase the likelihood that the

local Botolph Churches that we know about were founded at that time.



I am afraid however that it is far more likely that the site will be dated as being rather later. Whatever the date, the Anglo-Saxon community would have built wooden churches and, by virtue of the fact that the wood of the coffins has been so well preserved by the ideal conditions of acidic sand and alkaline water, it may well be that some sign may be found of the foundations of other churches.

Church Feature

Westwick, Norfolk.

Approach: From Norwich take the B1150 road towards North Walsham. The church is about 12 miles away and to drive there should take about 30 minutes. 1.27 miles after passing through the village of Scottow take the next turning on your right towards Worstead. After 500 yards turn left at the crossroads and 250 yards up this narrow track you will be able to park outside the church.

Location: Westwick, Norfolk NR10 5BP. NGR: TG2860325950. Lat/Long: 52.7827, 1.3884.

Key: Available from the church treasurer on 01692 405471.



The map above once again reminds us of the close siting of the five St Botolph churches in this region – with Bale distancing itself further to the west.

Vicar: Revd Lowe. (*I may stand to be corrected on this*).

Services: This benefice covers Tunstead, Soley, Worstead, Swanton Abbot and Scottow as well as Westwick so the services are rotated. Group Sung Eucharist is held on Sundays at 10.30 a.m. and at 6.30 p.m. there is Evensong . . . but at which church? It would seem that the best solution if you are visiting would be to ring the Treasurer on 01692 405471.

Listed Grade: I



Westwick is a village and civil parish in north Norfolk. A ‘wic’ is a word of Saxon origin and is usually defined as meaning ‘a trading area.’ It is found in the ‘wich’ form in the names of cities such as Norwich. As well as Westwick in Norfolk, there is another St Botolph’s Church at Eastwick in Essex. St Botolph’s Westwick possesses a 1567 chalice on which the location is inscribed as ‘West Weck.’



This church is normally kept locked but it was Betty Jackson who drew the short straw and was delegated to let us in. The C15 west tower proudly presents itself as the ‘guardian of the gate.’

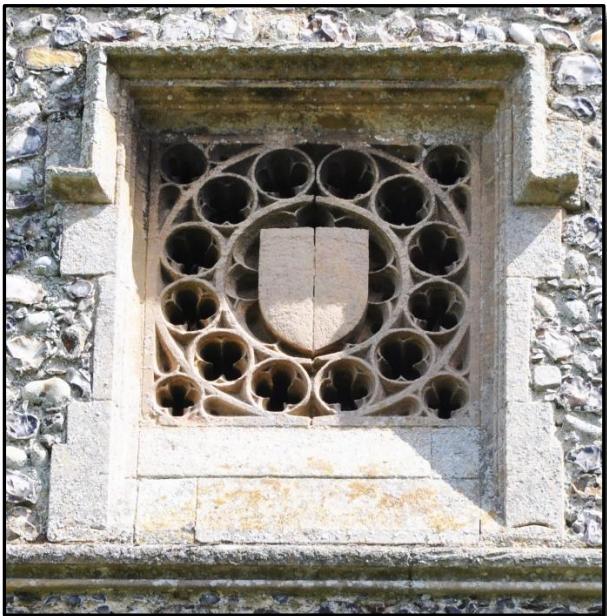


Once through the gateway into the church grounds we were able to examine the finely sculptured base of the tower with its cusped lozenges and

shields. The sacred heart of Christ is shown surrounded by a crown of thorns. As the guide book says – it is very surprising that these survived the Reformation.



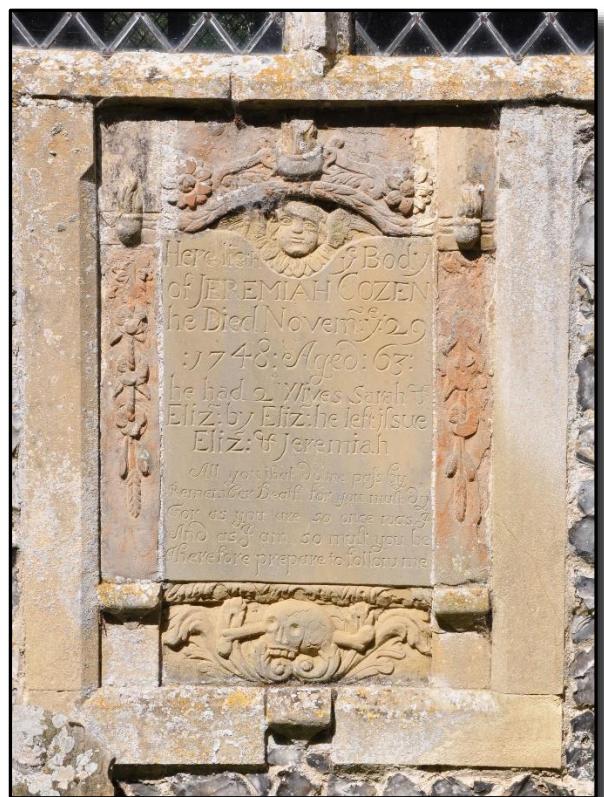
The crowns of thorns are repeated at the top of the tower where there are motifs of 'B' and 'W.' The guide book tells us that these represent 'Botolph' and 'Westwick.' I was surprised by this because it is a feature I have never seen elsewhere but I guess the innovation must be a product of the C19 restoration.



Much loving care and craftsmanship has been expended on the tower and the decorated sound holes bear testament to the fact that no expense was spared to make an interesting and artistic feature out of the simplest of structures. Only one bell now exists although there are records which show that there were originally three.



Inserted into the south wall is a memorial stone to Jeremiah Cozens who died in 1748 aged 63.



The plaque bears a skull at its base representing the notion of mortality. The lower inscription (which is similar to that of a Thomas Gooding buried in Norwich Cathedral) reads:

*All you that do pass me by
Remember death for you must die.
For as you are so once was I
And as I am so must you be
Therefore prepare to follow me.*



The south porch is mainly C15 and in the picture above you can just catch a glimpse of the unusual design of its blue ceiling. The church has records of 4 year old Samuel Druery and his 2 year old sister who died of scarlet fever in 1842. Due to the infectious nature of their illness their funeral was conducted in the porch rather than the main church.



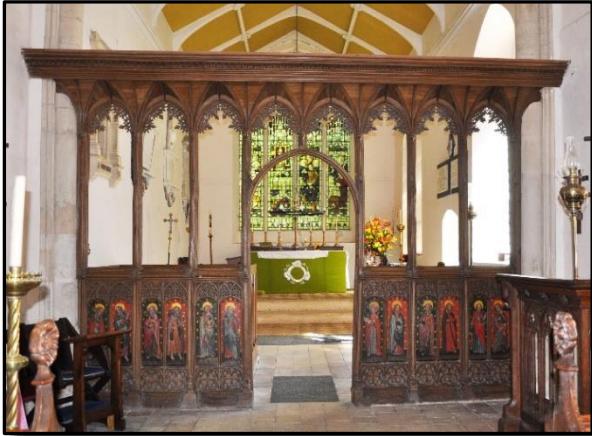
And, speaking of baptism, the font is C16. The octagonal bowl is supported by an abacus of eight cherubs.



As you enter you will notice, on your right, the stoup. Custom dictates that members of the congregation dip their finger into the consecrated water contained in the stoup and make the sign of the cross to remind themselves of their baptism.



The screen at Westwick is referred to as ‘The Chancel Screen’ rather than ‘The Rood Screen’ and this makes me wonder if it ever supported a Rood (cross).



It is pre-Reformation however, dating from C15 so it seems likely that a cross was present once.



Both the screen and its paintings were extensively restored in C18 but most of the individual panels still show evidence of the deliberate defacings carried out by the Reformation and the Puritans.



From left to right the apostles which are depicted are St Jude (boat), St Simon (fish), St Matthew

(halberd), St James the Great (as a pilgrim), St John (cup and serpent representing the poisoned chalice he was given), St Paul (sword).



And again from left to right: St Peter (keys), St Andrew (saltire cross), St Thomas (spear), St James the Less (fuller's club), St Philip (basket of loaves) and St Bartholomew (flaying knife). I am indebted to the church guide book for interpreting these figures.

TRUNCH	WESTWICK
Thomas	Jude
Philip	Simon
James the Less	Matthew
Matthew	James the Great
James the Great	John
Peter	Paul
Paul	Peter
Andrew	Andrew
John	Thomas
Jude	James the Less
Simon	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew

As a matter of idle curiosities I compared the order of the saints with those on the similar screen at Trunch (which we featured in October 2016) to see if the different order would tell me anything. It did not – but perhaps you have an idea on the subject?



A wild-eyed Judas is seen clutching his bag containing the 30 pieces of silver.



The east window, a memorial for John Berney and the Petre family – long time squires of Westwick, is a magnificent example of C19 work done by Clayton and Bell.



It depicts the Last Supper with Jesus surrounded by his disciples.



At the top of the windows in the south aisle can be seen several panels which are devoted to bumble bees and flowers which were one of the passions of the bee-keeping Revd Henry John Coleman who was rector from 1873 to 1907.



As a result of this, even today, the PCC keeps the churchyard as a conservation area, only cutting the grass at specified times each year.



And, as you will see from the panel above, it was from the proceeds of the honey produced by Revd Coleman's bees that the windows were able to be reset.



At the turn of the north edge of the chancel arch a mischievous dog (at least I think it is a dog) looks down on the congregation.



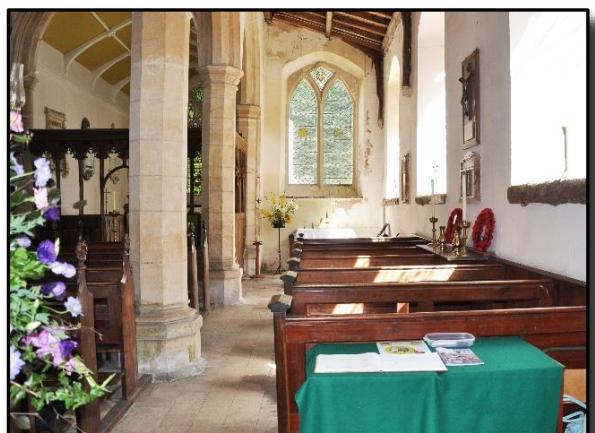
While at the base of the next corbel, a concerned mistress seems to show her consternation with the expression of "Oh dear Pugsy – what have you done now?"



The North Chapel is separated from the Nave by a wooden Parclose Screen which at some point in its history has been painted and grained.



To the right of this altar is another piscina and in the corner above this is a corbel which would once have carried the statue of a saint. Was this St Botolph's Chapel one wonders? To the left of the altar is an aumbry – the locked cupboard in which is kept the Reserved Sacrament – i.e. the consecrated bread and wine which is taken out to those who are unable to attend Holy Communion for health reasons etc.



At the east end of the south aisle is the Lady Chapel, once again separated from the nave by a parclose screen. At least I *presume* this is known as the Lady Chapel since the guide book shows, on the altar, a triptych depicting Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Botolph. Sadly on my visit the triptych was not in place.



To the south of the altar is a C15 piscina.



The moulding bears a motif of flowers and the base has a ball flower ornament.



Above the vestry door are the arms of Queen Victoria. I have often seen such emblems in different churches but until I read the Westwick guide book I had not heard of the ruling that, following the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the display of the Royal Arms in churches was required by statute. Writing *The Botolphian* is a constant education!

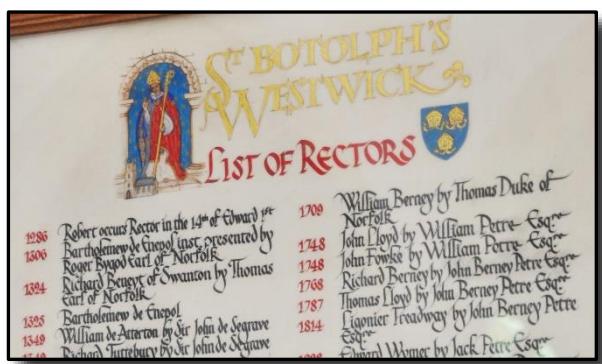


There are quite a few memorials in the church – most of them being to the Berney/Petre family. That above is to John Berney, the 1707 builder of the nearby Westwick Hall. His epitaph tells us that he was:

a Man in Religion Sound & Exemplary. In his dealings of Strict Honour & Integrity. Unwearied in the Service of his Friends. Highly Esteemed & Valued in His Neighbourhood. And in His Death Universally lamented By all that knew Him. He dyed Sep 24th In the year of Our Lord 1730 and in the year of His Age 58.

Classification:

The same old question: by whom was this church founded – and why and when was it dedicated to Saint Botolph?



Regarding the church's foundation, the List of Rectors seems to shed some light on this. The first rector (in 1286) was Robert who was installed in the fourteenth year of the reign of Edward I. The second rector (in 1306) was Bartholemew de Enepol who was presented by Roger Bygod, Earl of Norfolk; this tradition of rectors of St Botolph's Westwick being presented by the Dukedom of Norfolk continued for the next 250 years.

The Domesday List for Westwick records no church and no church lands although the vill was quite large with 20 households. The overlords in 1066 consisted of Earl Harold and the abbey of St Benet of Holme. The lord in 1086 was Albert Grelley and the Tenant-in-chief was Roger of Poitou.

Five local wills dating from 1460 to 1474 record bequests for the building of the bell-tower.

It would seem that Westwick was small in comparison to the nearby ‘very large’ Scottow (which Domesday records with 1 church) and the ‘very large’ Worstead (which had 2 churches). The farming community must have prospered

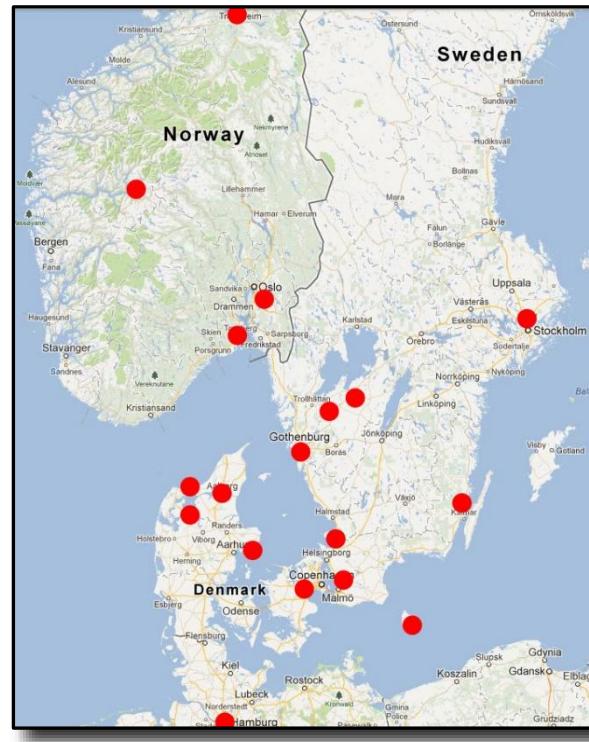
over the next 100 years resulting in a church being founded on this site by 1286. Further prosperity brought the sponsorship of the Dukes and Duchesses of Norfolk and the construction of the tower. This would make it a Botolph Type (iii) church (i.e. founded after the Norman Conquest).

But why was it dedicated to Saint Botolph? Was it a ‘Travellers’ Church?’ It was close to a Roman road it is true but it does not really look as if it is placed at the ‘beginning middle or end’ of a long journey – although I realise that this nebulous point is debatable. It seems that we need a new layer of classification.

The Hanseatic League was founded in the middle of C12 when merchants from Lower Germany formed a trading alliance. From C13 to the middle of C15 the League dominated northern Europe’s overseas trade. London was a major centre of this trade but during this period London was eclipsed in the League’s favours by Boston in Lincolnshire. And Boston, as we know, was a central focus of the cult of Saint Botolph. Boston’s fortunes at that time were intimately entwined with the success or failure of the farming lands of the rest of East Anglia.

Since Saint Botolph was the patron of Boston, it would be logical that new churches which sprung up as a result of the prosperity brought about as the result of a trading link with that town, should also be dedicated to Saint Botolph? This would have been done partly as a matter of respect and partly perhaps for superstitious good luck - hoping that Saint Botolph – now with a new role as *Patron Saint of Farmers* - would look down on them favourably and bring good yields in wheat and wool.

But this has even greater connotations since the very ports in Scandinavia which the Hanseatic League served and which willingly traded with East Anglia were places like Trondheim, Ardal, Oslo, Jutland, Roskilde, Bodilske and Stockholm, all of which, as seen in the map below, have, in the past, had churches which were dedicated to Saint Botolph. Seamen have always had the reputation of being superstitious and who better to intercede for them when they prayed to God for fine weather, rapid passages and survival as they plied their trade between ports but *Saint Botolph* – saint of the port they had left and saint of the port to which they were sailing?



Thus a third role was added to his portfolio – *Patron Saint of Sailors* (although to be fair it may be that this only applied to the Scandinavian passages).

We are now entering a field which requires much more research before we are able to find definitive answers to the riddles of St Botolph’s ‘Scandinavian Aspects.’ I believe that the study of churches like Westwick which have (almost unknowingly) played an integral part in the development of the Hanseatic alliance might offer us major clues.

We therefore have a divergence at this point. Two entirely separate *raisons d'être* for Botolph churches – the ‘Travellers’ Churches’ many of which have Saxon origins - and the ‘Hanseatic Churches’ most of which have Late Middle Ages origins.

I would therefore class St Botolph’s Church, Westwick as C – a Hanseatic church.

Thanks

My thanks to Betty and Alan Jackson for opening the church for us – and to Saskia Elson and her son who facilitated the whole visit.

Readers' letters and emails.

1. **Revd Sally Hughes** wrote with some interesting pictures of the Stoke Albany St Botolph's. On consulting my records I discovered that I had visited the church in 2012 but had only taken pictures of the outside of the church so I look forward to returning and meeting Sally.

2. **Rose Doherty** wrote from the USA with some questions about the evidence (or lack of evidence) for the location of St Botolph's reliquaries.

3. **Patricia Croxton-Smith** sent me more interesting information about the location of Cnut's Battle of Assundun together with her fascinating new book entitled 'The Story of Hadstock.'

4. **John Sennett** wrote from Swyncombe saying that he appreciated seeing people in some of the pictures in *The Botolphian* as it helps to show the size of doorways etc. I am bearing this in mind for future photographs.

5. **Roger Howlett and Peter Van Demark** wrote from the USA that they were looking forward to welcoming me to Boston MA . . . and I am certainly looking forward to meeting them. The dates of my visits are now settled in that we will arrive in Boston on Thursday 12 October 2017 and leave on Thursday 19 October – quite a short trip - but we are taking the slow route home!

6. **Peter Horsefield** wrote from Trunch in Norfolk and sent me some interesting 'drone pictures' of the Botolph's Church there. One or two amusing emails passed between us in which he corrected some of my misconceptions. Thank you Peter.

Please do not hesitate to write to me or send an email to botolph@virginmedia.com if you have any alternative views to those expressed in *The Botolphian*. It is good to engender some controversy from time to time!

Regular Endnotes

If this is your first 'Botolphian' and you have acquired it by circuitous means but would like to receive an email copy each month then just send an email to botolph@virginmedia.com saying 'YES PLEASE'. If you wish to UNsubscribe then send the message 'NO THANKS'.

You will frequently see the 'twin' towns of *Boston* mentioned in these newsletters, - one in Lincolnshire and the other in Massachusetts USA. The relevance to the Society is that the name 'Boston' is said to be a contraction of 'Botolph's Town.'

Classification of Botolph Church sites:-

- A: C7 church sites relevant to Botolph's life.
- B: 'Travellers' churches.

Bearing in mind that the Danish invasions started in c.800 and continued for 200 years, it seems logical to sub-divide Type B (and perhaps type C) churches into those which appear to have been founded:-
(i) before 800
(ii) between 800 and 1066 and
(iii) after the Norman Conquest.

- C: 'Hanseatic' churches.
- D: None of the above.

Typical Characteristics of Early St Botolph Churches.

1. All are in the eastern half of England
2. Most have Saxon foundations.
3. Many lie with 3 miles of a Roman road or well-used waterway.
4. Most are situated close to the bottom of an escarpment but well clear of water levels.
5. Many are strategically placed in areas which represent the beginnings, middles and ends of long journeys.

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.