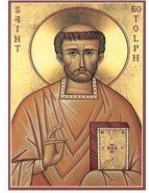




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



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President: Revd Timothy L'Estrange, Vicar of St.Gabriel's Church, North Acton.

Issue Number: 26

1st June 2015

Highlights this month

- St Botolph's at Church with Chapel Brampton, Northants.
- I am delighted to welcome new members Christopher and Jeannie Esdaile from St Botolph's Church, Hardham, West Sussex.
- Emails from John Sennett, Kathleen Tyson Quah and Mark Tattum-Smith together with many helpful indications of likely attendance at the ...
- SOSB ANNUAL LUNCHEON ON **TUESDAY 13th OCTOBER 2015 AT THE CAMBRIDGE CITY HOTEL AT 12.30 for 1 p.m.** (Thanks to Marion Peel and Rob who pointed out that I had the date correct but the day wrong in the last issue).

Editorial

At last I am pleased to be able to report to those of you who have been kind enough to keep badgering me for an answer, that I have finally received my results and can now confirm that the University of Buckingham has seen fit to award me an M.A. My dissertation was, you may remember, entitled *The Scientific Hagiographer: Daniel Papebroch and the case of Saint Botolph*.

Papebroch, who was born in Antwerp in 1628 and died in 1714, was a 'collector of information concerning the saints' and it was he, and his contemporary Jean de Mabillon, who were responsible for collating most of the material upon which we now rely to give us information about Saint Botolph. Mistakes were made however and there were unfounded assumptions which have subsequently caused confusion. In my dissertation I identified ten such matters, most of them insignificant in themselves, but, when added to the jigsaw of other pieces of information, they will, I hope, contribute to a wider understanding of Saint Botolph's life. I anticipate publishing this work within the next twelve months.

Church Feature

Church with Chapel Brampton

Approach: *Coming from Northampton, take the A508 and then branch off onto the A5199. A little way after a sharpish turn to the left you will see Sandy Lane. Follow that to the crossroads and then turn left into Harlestone Road and you will soon see St Botolph's Church on your right. Parking is not easy. It seems to be acceptable to leave cars near the entrance but we passed the church and then turned sharp right and parked on the verge in Church Lane.*



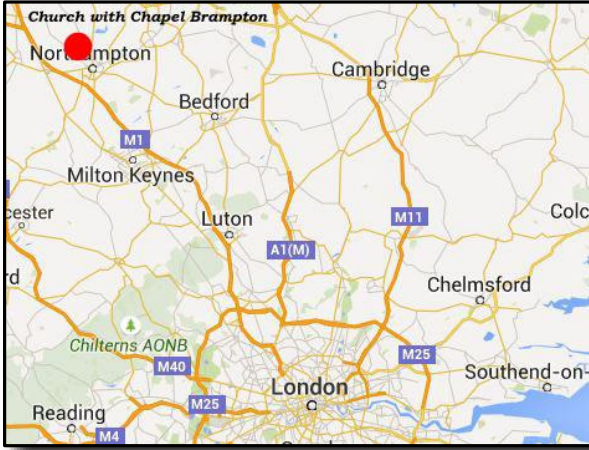
Key: *If the church is closed telephone 01604 847-531.*

Vicar: *Revd Susan Jane KIPLING, Benefice Office, The Rectory, Main Street, Great Brington, Northants NN7 4JB Tel: 01604 770-402.*

Church services: *Sunday Services are normally held at 9.15 a.m.*

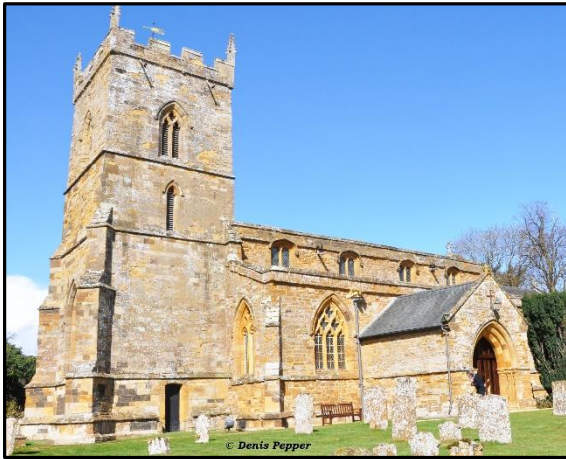
Location: *Harlestone Road, Church Brampton, Northamptonshire NN6 8BF. 52.2849, -0.9488. SP7180465712.*

Listed Grade: **II***



Church with Chapel Brampton lies in the district of Daventry. The name of the parish is rather a mouthful and comes of course from the merging of two originally separate parishes.

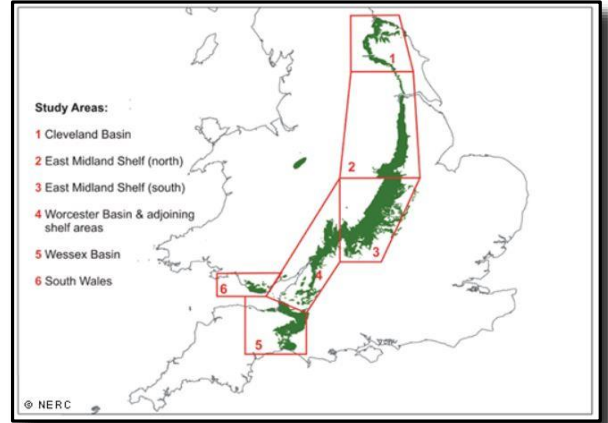
In shortened form they are known as ‘The Bramptons’.



The church fabric is described as being of ‘squared coursed lias’ whereas to me it appeared to be of soft sandstone.

According to the British Geological Survey ‘lias’ is a limestone which was deposited in the Triassic and Jurassic ages and exists as a belt extending from Dorset to Yorkshire as shown in the map below.

It always fascinates me to think that when we look at a building we are so frequently looking at a sample of the geology which lies beneath it - whether it be clay turned into bricks or the hewn rock itself.



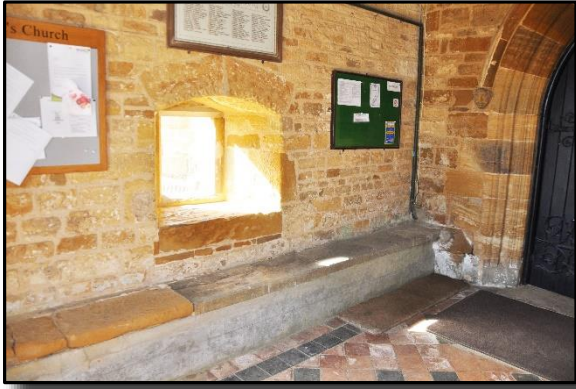
The detail below shows the richness of colour of lias. One unfortunate aspect of the Lias Group is that the outcrop (consisting of a fair amount of clay as well as of limestone) has the highest incidence of landslides in the United Kingdom.



Conversely to most churches where the latest addition is often the south porch which has been added as an afterthought to protect the congregation from the elements, in the case of this church the porch is the *oldest* part of the building.



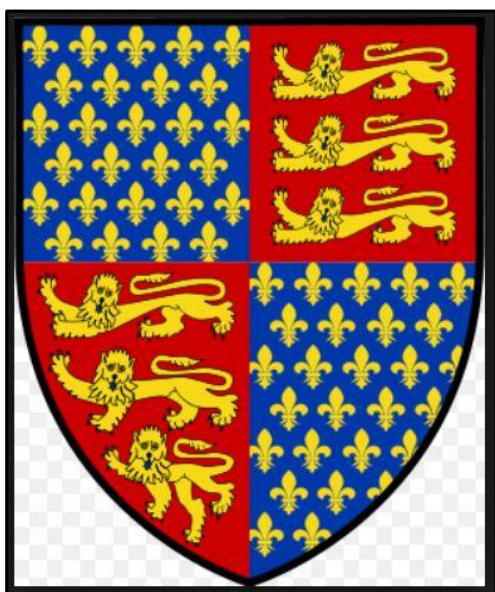
It was inside this porch that the parish court was held and above the inner door is the armorial shield, or hatchment, of King Edward III.



This shows a combination of the English lions and the French fleur-de-lys which dates it to the earlier part of the king's reign, i.e. to c. 1340.



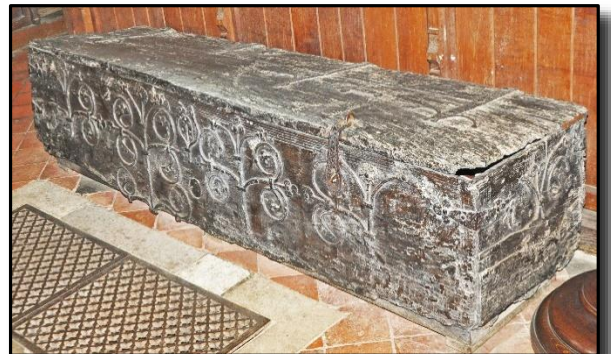
The coat of arms was designed by the king to indicate that he considered himself a claimant to the French throne through his mother Isabella of France. Later in his reign he decided to reverse the quartering as shown below.



The ironwork on the door beneath is no less spectacular than the shield itself.



Once inside the building we find another example of fine ironwork on a wooden chest which is older than the building itself. It dates from C13 and is one of a pair, the other being at St James Church, Icklingham in Suffolk (8 miles NW of Bury St Edmunds and 15 miles East of Ely). The two chests are not identical but are thought to have been made by the same craftsman and have been used as portable safes containing ecclesiastical treasures for one of the great religious houses and acquired by St Botolphs at a later date. I have noticed that many Botolph Churches have a large antique wooden chest tucked away in some corner or other but this particular example is the most historically important that I have come across.

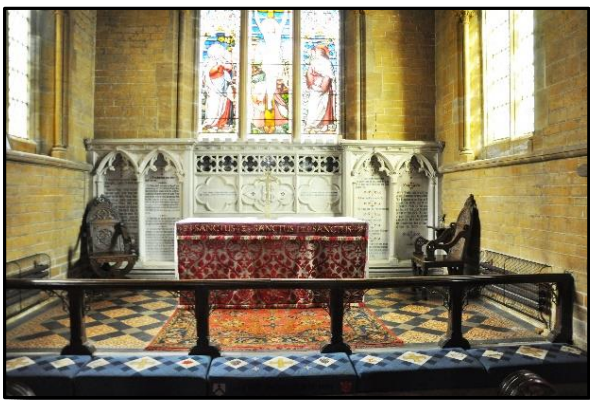


At the western end of the C14 nave stands the font which was locally carved and intended to feature in the Great Expedition of 1851 but sadly was not ready in time.

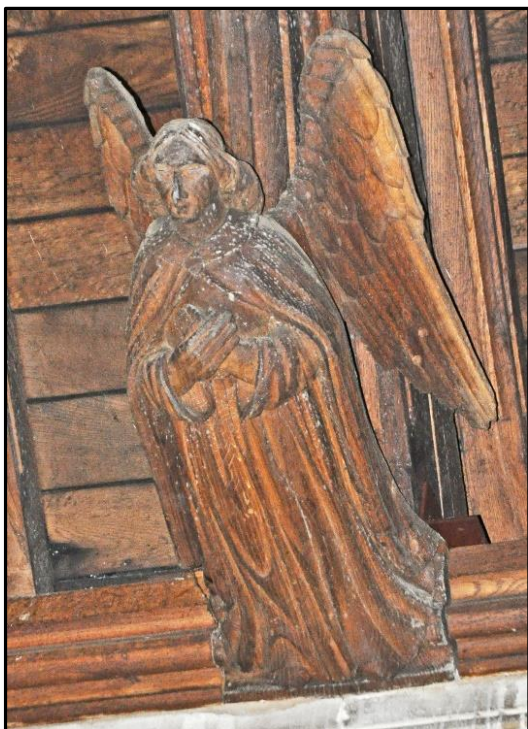




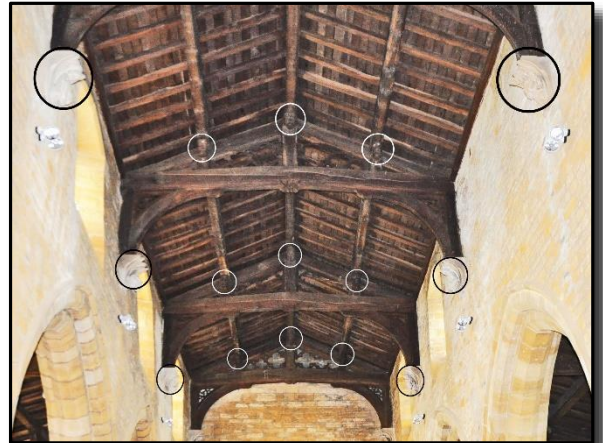
The Chancel was rebuilt in 1859. The stained glass east window depicts the Crucifixion.



Around the fine roof, are carvings of angels. These are but a few of the wonderful carvings in this church.



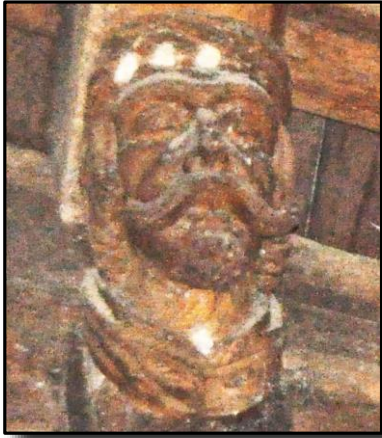
If you stand under the chancel arch and look up to the timbers of the nave roof you might just be able to make out some of the 24 carved wooden heads. Those which face eastwards are all male and those facing westwards are female.



In order to get a good view of these, you really need to use a large and powerful torch so this is an important item of equipment to take with you if you are proposing to visit this church. The white rings in the photograph above represent the position of the carved heads whereas the black rings show the position of the carved stone angels which can be seen to be playing a variety of medieval musical instruments. The instrument featured in the photograph below is a ‘psaltery’.



The wooden heads are particularly difficult to photograph but my ‘Brampton Mentor’ Derek Cummings was very excited about the images I managed to produce.



We agreed it would be fun at a later date to get some floodlights and use a camera tripod and do the job properly to bring these wonderful characters into the light.



The sight of the photographs inspired Derek to come up with what seems to be a very feasible theory about the origin of the carvings ... however I will not pre-empt him but leave him to divulge that elsewhere. Talking of which, here is a photograph of Derek expounding some of his theories at an unusual 'preaching stone' in the churchyard.



Close to the porch are some well-preserved ancient tombstones, one of which is to Richard Bartlett, a prominent church member and a churchwarden. It carries a C17 stonemason's 'typo': *His ageed 82 Anno Dni 1672.*

Turning to your right as you leave the chancel, you will see a carved oak pulpit on a Caen stone base supported by columns made from alabaster quarried in Leicestershire.



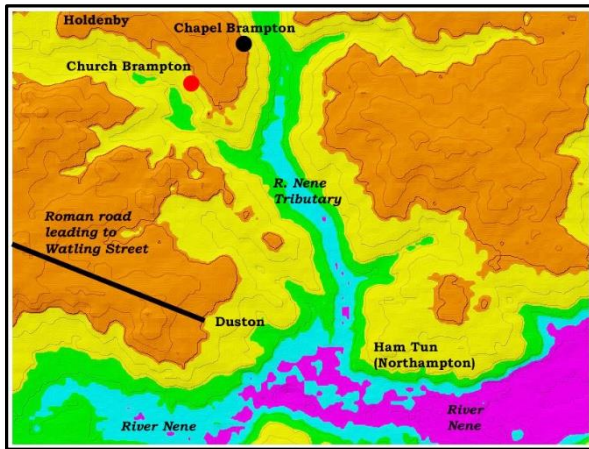
The Bell Tower at the west end of the church, is of three stages and contains a ring of five bells, dated 1607, 1616, 1619, 1628 and ... 1996. The original fifth bell was stolen in the winter of 1856 (metal thieves were a pest even then) and in spite of its route being visible in the snow, it was never recovered.

Church Brampton lies between two great houses: Holdenby House, built by Sir Christopher Hatton and at that time one of the grandest houses in England, and Althorp, home of the Spencers. Both of these characters feature greatly in local history.

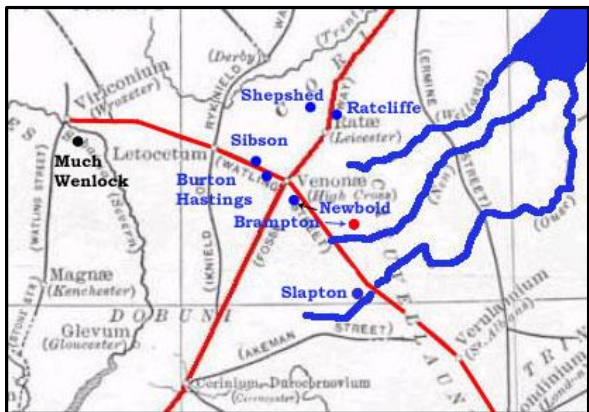
In C19 Earl Spencer, broke the neck of his favourite horse, Merry Tom, whilst fox-hunting just north of Chapel Brampton when he tried to jump the River Nene. A monument was erected at the end of what is now known as 'Merry Tom Lane'. On the monument was written "Here Lies the body of Merry Tom" beneath which a local wag added "Ridden to Death by Careless John".

The stream over which Earl Spencer tried to jump was, in Saint Botolph's seventh century, a much wider tributary of the River Nene and vessels heading for the open sea would have passed an insignificant settlement on the east bank then known as 'Ham Tun' (Home Farm). By C13 this

settlement's name had been changed to *Northampton* to differentiate it from the many other Hampton villages. On the west bank, the village of Duston was served by a Roman road which led directly from Watling Street. Rounding the headland, vessels could join the main section of the River Nene and head for the North Sea.



Our avid readers will notice that the map below has been modified from that shown in the last issue of *The Botolphian* where, erroneously, Church with Chapel Brampton had been shown south of the River Nene!



Classification.

Thus, once again, we find a Saint Botolph's Church built in a classical situation: close to both a Roman road and to a watery highway. This church undoubtedly dates from C14 but ... as usual it is thought that it was successor to a previous church. In the absence of any other evidence however, I think we must, for the moment, classify Church with Chapel Brampton as B(iii), i.e. a Traveller's church founded after the Norman Conquest.

My grateful thanks

and those of Zina, to all those 'Bramptonians' who turned out to give us such a marvellous welcome and sustained us with tea and cake. In the

photograph below these are (from L to R) David Buxton, Michael Henley, Janet Buxton, Derek Cummings, Sylvia Robertson, Marion Peel and Ray Broom. Thank you all.



Readers' letters and emails.

1. Luncheon: Many thanks to all of you who wrote telling me that you would (or in a few cases 'would not') be joining us for the Annual Luncheon on October 13th. I look forward to hearing from others.

2. John Sennett (Swyncombe) kindly wrote to point out the St Botolphs Festival on the Green at Peterborough 12-14 June, information concerning which is available at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Botolphs-Festival-on-the-Green-Peterborough/408907682176>.

3. Kathleen Tyson Quah commented on the Slapton feature, reminding me of her feeling that the location of Botolph Churches was closely linked with the regulation of trade and the collection of tolls. She has recently been reading Bede and we discussed a lot of issues mentioned by Bede that related to Botolph. Thank you Kathleen.

4. Mark Tattum-Smith wrote: 'to confirm that the Russian Orthodox Collegiate Church of the Ikon: Joy of All Who Sorrow will be making its annual pilgrimage to St Botolph's Church, Iken on Saturday 27 June at 12 Noon. We will sing a moleben (service of intercession) in honour of the saint and then after the service all pilgrims are invited to a buffet lunch through the generosity of the Anglican Parish at Iken. More details will be posted shortly on our website: www.mettingham.org.uk. Alternatively please contact Deacon Andrew Bond on 01986 895176'.

Endnotes

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: Neither of the above.

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.