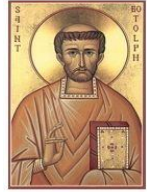




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



The Saint Botolph icon above is copyright © Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, MA and used by permission. All rights reserved.
Admin: Denis Pepper, 17, Cliffe House, Radnor Cliff, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2TY. Tel: +44 (0)1303 221-777 botolph@virginmedia.com
President: Revd Timothy L'Estrange, Vicar of St.Gabriel's Church, North Acton.

Issue Number: 62

1st June 2018

Highlights this month

- **St Botolph's Church, Graveley, Cambridgeshire.**
- Patronal Festivals: You will already have received details in a supplementary email of those being held at Church with Chapel Brampton, Bishopsgate, Aldgate and Hadstock. At the end of this newsletter in the correspondence section there are further notices from **Father Stephen Anderson of Cambridge; Christine Hayes of Stow Longa, Cambridgeshire; Revd Laura McPhee of Hevingham, Norfolk** with notices of their churches Patronal Festivals.
- There is also correspondence from **Dr David Noy, Dr Lesley Hardy, Mo Edwards, Mhairi Ellis, David Buxton and James Evans.**

Editorial

As I get closer to the publication of Volume III of my Botolph Trilogy (still on track for November this year) and as I also approach the completion of my circumnavigation of Botolph Churches (this issue marks the 62nd waypoint of - shall we say 75?) I believe that I have found the answers to several questions which have been puzzling researchers for many years.

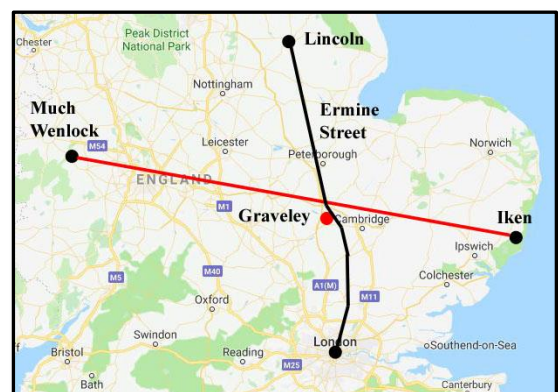
In historical research there are very few definitive solutions. Most of the 'so-called' answers have been greatly influenced by those specialists who have performed the research - and this will always be the case in spite of apparent caution and careful citation of sources of evidence.

Some of the things that I have discovered will not go down well with everybody as the revelations will dispel some of the myths which have grown

up around our saint - although his reputation, you will be pleased to hear, remains untarnished.

I have concluded that he was primarily an evangelical missionary whose aim was perfection in Holy Teaching and Holy Living. His evangelical methodology was '*travel, preach, capture and plant*'. In this he was unusual - particularly by comparison with his predecessor in the same field, the great Saint Felix of Dunwich who died in 648 - just six years before the construction of Botolph's Abbey of Icanho.

The church featured in this month's issue is important because it (like Stow Longa featured in March) lies on the track which leads between Icanho in Suffolk and Much Wenlock in Shropshire. A track which featured hugely in Botolph's later life and in the creation of Botolph churches.



The track passes through the sheep country which, in the High Middle Ages, gave us the wool trade with which the cult of Saint Botolph became closely associated.

There is yet another factor. The Graveley church lies close to the transit of Ermine Street (London to Lincoln) and several other ancient north-south trackways. Long after Botolph's death, travellers' routes became associated with him -

and chapels, shrines and churches grew up and were dedicated to his name.

So which of these influences will we end up laying at the church door of St Botolph's Graveley as the key to its foundation? Does it owe its existence to Much Wenlock, sheep farming or the presence of Ermine Street?

Church Feature

Graveley, Cambs.

Approach: Travelling from the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon road turn off at Junction 26 onto the A1096 St Ives road. At the roundabout take the third exit onto the B1040 towards Biggleswade. After 1.6 miles turn right towards Graveley. A mile later at the T-junction turn right and then 150 metres later turn left. The long straight road points tantalising at the church but at the last moment veers to the left and then curves round to the right as it enters the village. At the Village Sign, turn right into Fielding's Place and, keeping to the right, park outside the church at the end of the road.

Location: Fielding's Place, Graveley,
PE19 6PW; Lat: 52.2607, Long: -0.1702;
NGR: TL249640;

Key: The church is always open during daylight hours.

Priest: Revd Nigel di Castiglione is the Team Rector. Tel: 01954 267-241

Team churches: Bourn, Boxworth, Caxton, Conington, Croxton, Elsworth, Eltisley, Graveley with Papworth St Agnes, Kingston, Knapwell, Lolworth, Longstowe, Papworth Everard, Toseland and Yelling . . . [15 in total].

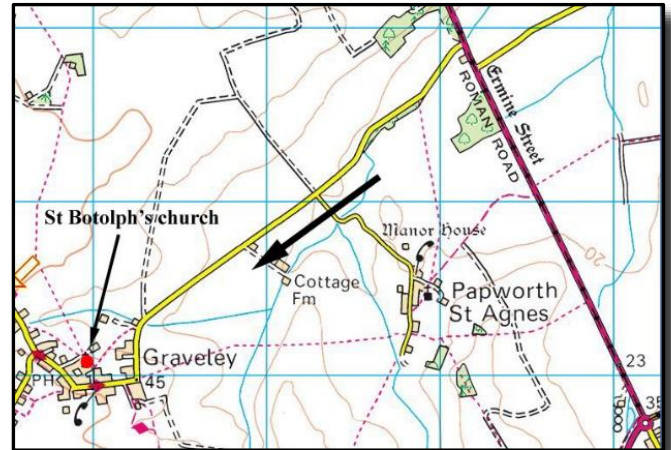
Church Services: Morning Prayer is held every fourth Sunday at 1030 a.m.

Listed Grade: II*.



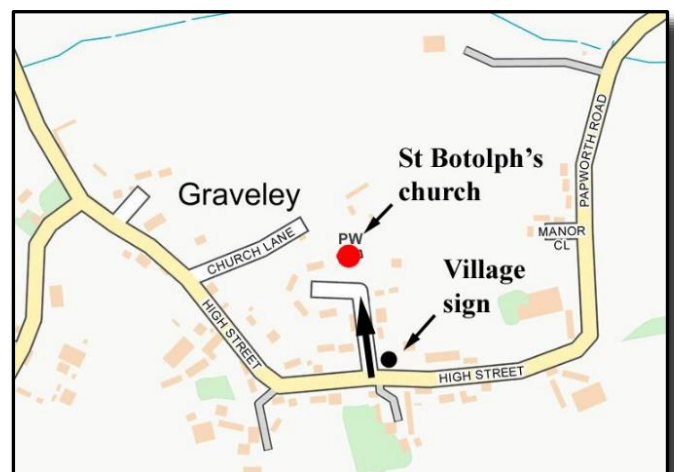
Graveley lies right on the western border of the county of Cambridgeshire.

Much of my information about this village and its church comes from an excellent booklet *Village History* written by L.W.F. Wheeler and dedicated to Graveley's villagers - in particular to Mrs Anne Bishop, historian and wife of one of the Rectors.



After leaving Ermine Street we drove to the church along a long straight road (marked with an arrow above) and I remarked to Zina how obvious it was that that the approach road was Roman too. And yet it apparently is not!

Indeed it seems to point straight at the church but at the final moment, you have to do a wiggle to the left and then a wiggle to the right before you finally arrive.

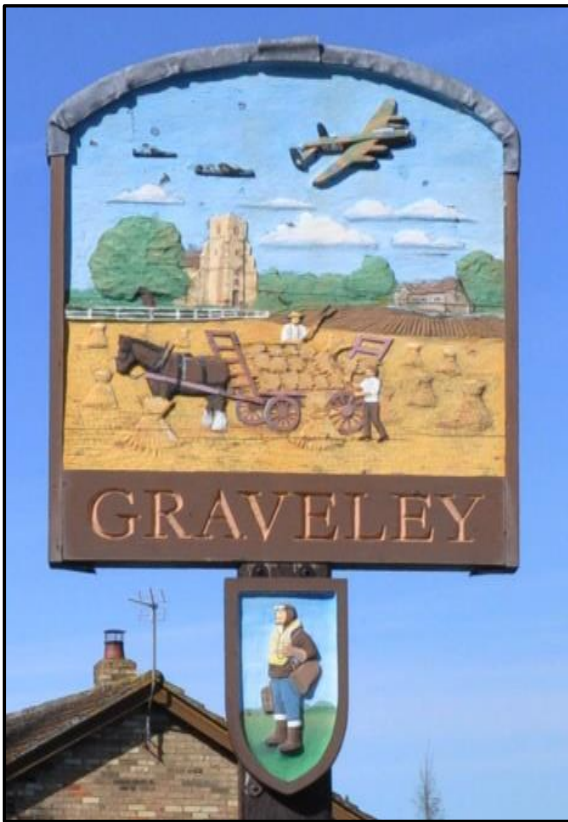


This was my second visit to this church and each time I have been seduced into going up Church Lane instead of Fielding's Place.

When you visit, which, as with all these churches I hope you will, turn right at the village sign.



In 1941 the government requisitioned nearby land for an airfield and it was used by bomber squadrons until the end of World War II. It closed in 1946 but re-opened briefly in the 1950s.



The village sign reflects the association of the RAF with the village. It also shows the church and, on the right, the school which finally closed in 1961 having been founded in C18. The school building was constructed in 1872 when it housed 70 children.



Village History suggests that, the land being heavy clay, Graveley was not settled until C8. St. Ives, only 6 miles to the northeast, was settled by C6 however and that long straight non-Roman road I mentioned earlier, leads stubbornly in that direction. *Graveley* is thought be derived from *Greaf* (trench . . . or grave) and *Lea* (a clearing).



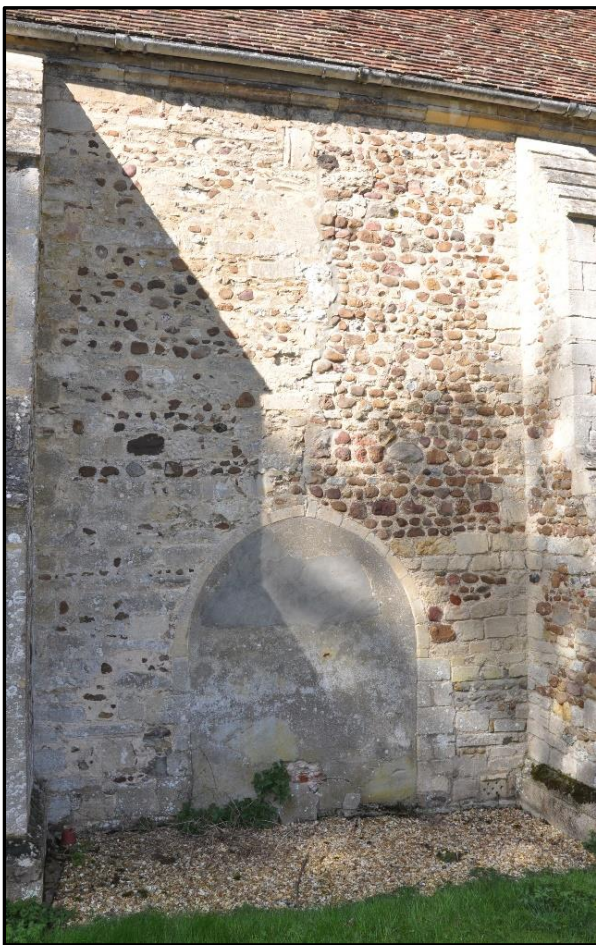
The basic part of this church dates from 1255. The three-stage tower was added in C15 and the clock was donated anonymously in 1932.



The south door (just visible to the right in this picture) has been sealed up and entry to the church is via the west door.

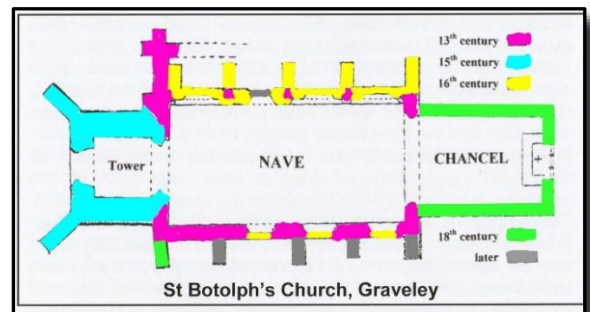


The stonework is not unattractive, consisting of striations of limestone ashlars interspersed with ironstone clunch. The trouble is, as seen in the earlier picture, that it starts and stops in such a random manner.



Both the north and the south doorways were closed - and the south porch demolished - in 1875.

The stonework of the wall in the picture above shows what a vast amount of re-building has been done.



The plan shows the main part of the nave (in pink) as C13; the tower as C15 and the north wall of the nave (yellow) as C16. However, *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely Vol 9* tells us that somewhere here fragments of Norman stonework survive from an older church. I was unable to identify these.



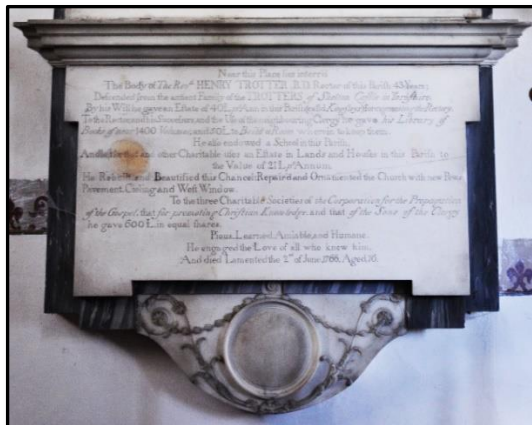
This shows the outline of the arcading which originally led into the now-demolished north aisle. To me this is very reminiscent of . . .



... St Botolph's church in the village of Botolphs in West Sussex.



Revd Trotter was a great benefactor to the church and the village. He was born in 1689 and became rector in 1723. He married in 1725 but sadly had only five years with his wife before she died, followed within the next 20 months by their four children. He never remarried but threw himself into village life for the next 36 years - amongst other things paying personally for a schoolmaster to teach the local children.



I do not often feature church memorials but I felt that this one - to *The Reverend Henry Trotter, Rector of this Parish for 43 years* - merited inclusion. After listing his many charitable acts it finishes by referring to him as: *Pious, Learned, Amiable and Humane. He engaged the Love of*

all who knew him. And died Lamented the 2nd June 1766 Aged 76.

It also notes that it was he who *Rebuilt and Beautified this Chancel*. The 1400 books of the library of Rev. Trotter were found to be of great antiquarian value and they went first to Jesus College Cambridge and subsequently to the University of London where they are now.

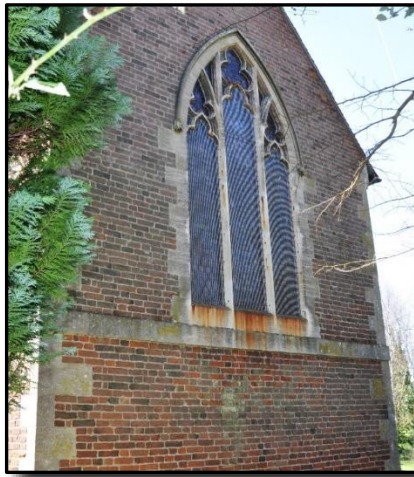


Attached to the south wall of the chancel is a tombstone which reads:

Underneath is deposited the body of MARY second daughter of MAJOR CHARLES WARREN of the 55th Regiment of Foot. She was born at Bellary in the East Indies on the 18th day of May 1855. In Dec 1857 leaving Secunderabad she journeyed with her parents to Bombay and from thence by sea to Suez and having crossed the Desert on a Camel and passed through Egypt arrived safely in England by way of Malta and France.

Nevertheless it pleased the Almighty that she should be early removed from this world. She died after a short illness at the Rectory of Graveley on the 19th day of August 1858 aged 3 years and 3 months.

Today we take the availability of good drinking water for granted but in 1873 the Sanitary Inspector reported that he was most concerned about the quality of the village's drinking water the supply of which came from the pond opposite the Three Horseshoes Public House. In 1906 an order was made that water from the reservoir should be boiled and filtered before being drunk. The story is long and convoluted but whereas adults seemed somehow to survive it may be that the children were more susceptible and this might perhaps be the reason behind the deaths of little Mary Warren and the Trotter children.



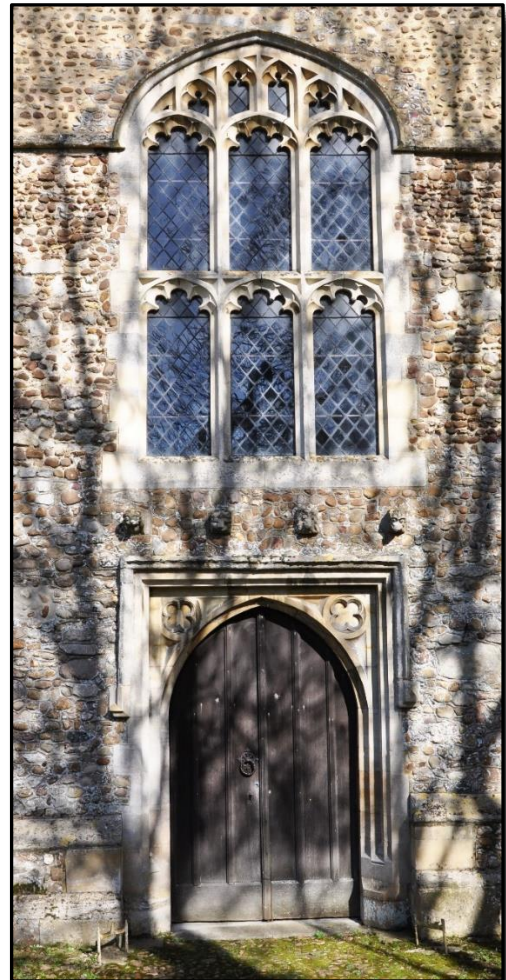
In about 1870 the roof of the chancel was raised so that the Gothic east window could be placed.



After the north aisle was pulled down (in C16 or C17) the octagonal pillars which supported the arches were included in the new buttresses. These apparently can just still be seen - but they beat me - perhaps you will have more success.



The massive tower with its now-substantial buttresses looks as though it was built to last but they (the buttresses) were greatly reinforced in C19. As we will see later, at one time the tower had a spire.



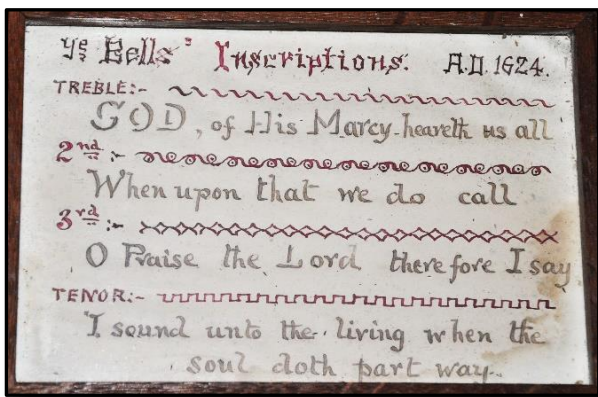
In 1909 the tower was restored further and the heavy west door was divided into two because it was felt that its banging was the cause of the cracks that were beginning to form in the masonry..



Above the square hood moulding, four gargoyles guard the entrance.



And inside the door are displayed four clappers: *Our work is done, at rest we lie, so may ye say when death is nigh.* Gravely said.



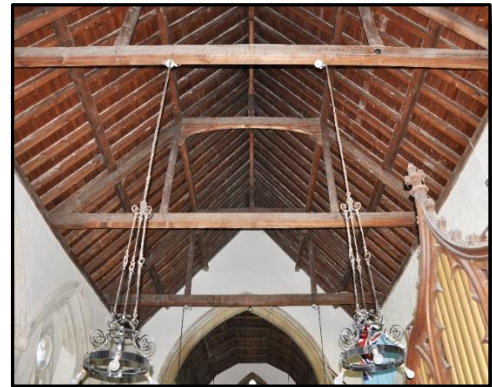
Another notice tells us of the inscriptions on the (1624) bells that are hidden in the tower.



As we enter through the west door we pass on our left the ladder that leads up to the ringing chamber.



I am not sure whether these are the pews which were given by Revd Trotter but it seems likely that they are. The 1855 organ came from Papworth St Agnes in c.1977 when their church became redundant. There is an heroic tale of the organ being gradually dismantled by four local men and transported by tractor and trailer to be stored in a barn before sufficient funds could be raised for the experts to be called in to put it together again.



The nave has a pitched roof supported by queen posts.



This picture shows the remaining signs of the north arcade as seen from the *inside*.



On the south wall, the flags are a poignant reminder of the church's connection with the RAF. It was at this village's aerodrome that FIDO - a fog dispersal system - was first introduced. Petrol burners were placed 50 yards each side of the runway and were lit as and when needed - the heat from them dispersing the fog. It was first used in November 1942 when four Halifax bombers were landed safely and subsequently a further 103 aircraft were saved by the system.



The lovely Millennium Tapestry was created by the ladies of the village. They describe it as being 'a snapshot of aspects of life in Graveley in AD 2000.'



Now here is a gem - sadly I have no idea of its date - but it shows several interesting features:

(i) a steeple, (ii) smaller buttresses to the tower, (iii) a south porch, (iv) the old chancel. The view must date from around 1700. The size of the chancel belies the County History's comment that the medieval chancel was 'almost as long as the nave.' I did not study the picture closely but I wonder if it is a C19 conjectural reconstruction.

1256	Richard de Groceman	1696	William Huxey
1338	John de Huntingdon	1702	Samuel Aubrey
	William Overton	1718	Richard Warren
1383	Raymund Barkere	1721	John Lucas
1391	William Dunstable	1723	Henry Trotter
1399	John Bathe	1766	William Wicksted
1400	William Golding	1796	Jacob Costobable
1402	Thomas Parys	1805	William Coppard
1406	John Hollesore	1813	Philip Jodrell
	John Spelman	1829	John Warren
1446	John Seaman	1853	John Birkett
1465	William Fraunceys	1881	William Cleave
1466	Thomas Tote	1905	Osmond Fisher
1475	Gardin Elkinrop	1925	Frank George
1489	Simon Stalworth	1929	George Shenton
1492	John Decunson	1942	G. R. Welford
1494	Thomas Hutton	1944	L. W. Cook
	Hugo Adams	1964	W. D. Galsworthy
1517	John Nevill	1977	Mark Bishop
1518	John Ireland	1986	David Kitching
1545	Robert Burnat	1991	Tim Marks
1561	Leonard Ramon	1996	Peter Taylor
1568	Francis Wiseman	2000	Alastair McCallum
1662	Methanai Haughton		

There is a long list of rectors, not all of whom applied themselves conscientiously to their incumbency.

1256	Richard de Groceman
1338	John de Huntingdon
	William Overton
1383	Raymund Barkere
1391	William Dunstable
1399	John Bathe
1400	William Golding
1402	Thomas Parys

The County History mentions Robert Hall being rector in c.1280 and suggests that he was a local man. He is not mentioned on the church's list. The History also tells us that a chaplain from Eltisley was killed by one of the rectors (perhaps William Overton) in c.1358.



The parish chests - one for the church and one for the school.



The font dates from C19 and replaced a medieval one that had been recorded in 1748. I wonder where that went to. Is it still being used - perhaps as a jardinière - growing shrubs in one of the local gardens?



Conflicting sources say that in C18 the hexagonal pulpit was either donated by Jesus College Cambridge or given by Revd Trotter.



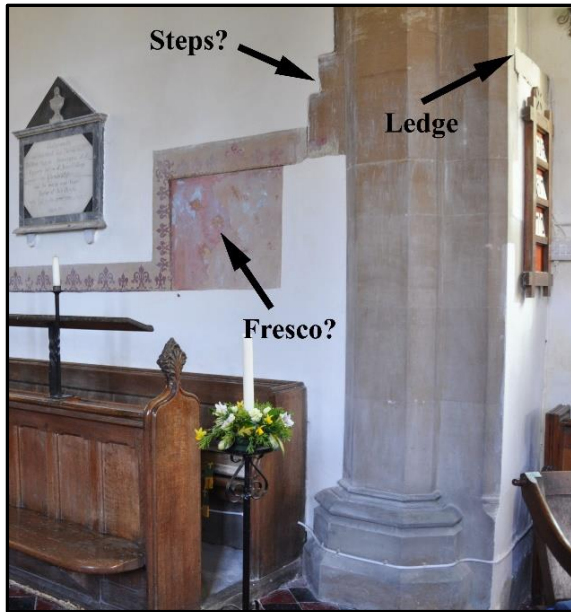
View towards the west tower.



At the west end of the church is a gallery which is thought to date from C17 by virtue of the fact that one of the beams has *16 ATC 14* carved crudely upon it.



The rood loft was removed in the 1870s when the chancel was raised and a new chancel arch built but the remains of the upper rood doorway (seen in the picture above) remind us that it was there. However there must have been a staircase to gain access to this doorway. Was there a wooden structure in the chancel itself - hidden behind the rood screen? I have never seen such an arrangement before as rood stairways are usually built into the masonry. In spite of trawling through the internet I cannot find pictures of a wooden rood stairway with access from the chancel.



Perhaps this was Revd Trotter's own idea. Evidence for it lies in the fact that the 'frieze' (I am not sure I have right word here) around the middle of the chancel wall takes a sudden leap up towards the level of the doorway. Preserved below this 'leap' is painted area.



'Fresco' was my first thought when I saw it but for one thing the chancel walls are not old enough

and for another the term signifies a specific technique of painting on wet plaster. This in fact is simply a section of wall which was covered by something soon after the wall was first painted (in 1733?) and then re-revealed when that 'something' was later (1870?) removed. It seems likely that that 'something' was a box-like structure which supported a wooden rood staircase.



Looking at this corner from the *outside* there are no signs of there ever having been an external staircase. I hope somebody will be able to come up with a solution to this 'rood mystery.'



The chancel has no piscina, aumbry or sedilia. We might surmise that they existed in the pre-1733 chancel but were dispensed with when the new one was built.



I have a weakness for decorative metalwork - particularly of this gold / black design and I love to see items such as this altar rail support which dates from the church's refurbishment in the 1870s.



... and it contains the figure of Saint Botolph.

Classification

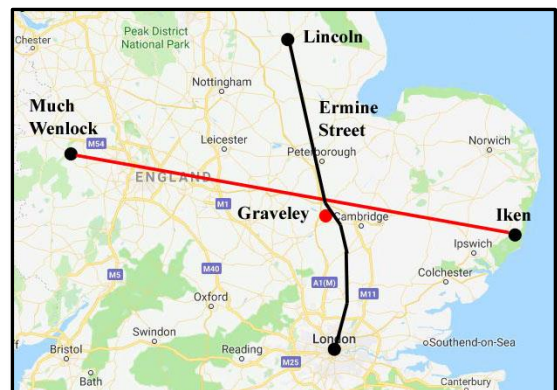
So where does St Botolph's Graveley stand in the grand order of things?

As you might recall from my editorial we are left with the following possibilities:

(i) that St Botolph founded a field chapel here on one of his journeys to or from Shropshire in C7.



The stained glass in the east window (given in 1931 by Fred Fielding in memory of his wife) is 'nicely done' and has two particular virtues - it lets in plenty of light ...



(ii) that the church, being in the middle of good sheep farming area, was founded for the community in C12 or C13 and dedicated to Saint Botolph because of the association of his cult with farming.

(iii) that the church grew up somewhere between C10 and C13 and prospered as a result of business enterprise ministering to the needs of travellers on the London-Lincoln road and was inevitably dedicated to the Patron Saint of Travellers.

There might have been other factors of course but three would seem to be enough for the moment.

--O--

Another thought which is worth considering is that most chapels and churches were not founded and dedicated in the same breath. It is likely that our saint founded many field chapels which remained undedicated - perhaps for centuries - until somebody found a need to do so - and the name of Botolph might not have been the one that was chosen. Equally likely is the scenario that a church, originally named after a 'competitor' saint, might have had its dedication changed after the owner of a chapel discovered that other communities were being more successful than his. People of the Middle Ages were even more superstitious than we are and they might well have thought that by adopting 'Lucky Botolph' as their patron, their fortunes might improve.

--O--

Option (iii)

As is often the case with Botolph churches research draws out hints that the church was built on the foundations of an earlier church. This one has certainly been dedicated to its present patron since at least C14. Although it was almost certainly used by travellers in a minor way there is no evidence that this was ever its primary *raison d'être* so I do not believe that option (iii) is the right choice.

Option (ii)

The church is certainly in farming country but I have come across no evidence of a landowner who might have been involved with its construction.

Option (i)

It is the suggestion that there was an earlier church on this site, together with its location on the Much Wenlock road that makes me think that option (i) is the answer.

Botolph would not have founded a field chapel anywhere unless a community already existed at that location. We are told that the eponymous name of *Greaflea* dates from at least C8. But the nearby St Ives was already settled by C6 so there is the possibility that a small community was in existence at Graveley in C7 - and it was *small communities without a church* for which Saint Botolph would have been searching as passed that way in C7.

Conclusion

I would classify Graveley as 'A(ii)' - i.e. likely to be a C7 foundation created as a result of one of Botolph's journeys.

Correspondence

PATRONAL FESTIVALS

- 1. From Father Stephen Anderson at St Botolph's, Cambridge:** Here are the details of our Patronal Festival, in case there is an opportunity to circulate them:
Sunday 17th June Patronal Festival
8am: Holy Communion
11am: Procession and Sung Eucharist
Preacher: Revd Dr James Garrard, Canon Precentor of Ely
- 2. From Christine Hayes at Stow Longa, Cambridgeshire:** We are planning a Benefice choral Evensong on the 17th at 3pm to be followed by strawberry teas and Pimms! Hope the weather is kind.
- 3. From Revd Margaret McPhee at Hevingham, Norfolk:** St Botolph and St Mary the Virgin Church, Hevingham, will be celebrating on Sunday 17 June with a Morning Worship focused on the life and lessons of St Botolph, 11am.

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

- 4. Dr David Noy** (a long-time friend of mine from the University of Buckingham) wrote: I went on a trip to Colchester this week which was very interesting. While passing Colchester Town station I noticed that the sign said "formerly St Botolph's". I was most impressed to find that your saint even had his own station! [Ed: I did not know of this previously and I find that Wikipedia tells us: *The station was opened in 1866 by the Tendring Hundred Railway, a subsidiary of the Great Eastern Railway, with the name St. Botolph's. It was renamed Colchester Town in 1991.*]
- 5.** Another interesting snippet came from my friend **Dr Lesley Hardy of Canterbury Christ Church University** (they know how I love these little anecdotes), who wrote: *Just reading Middlemarch and came across a reference to St Botolph...on the London Rd outside Middlemarch.* [Ed: I came to the conclusion that the church referred to was Newbold-on-Avon - the one with the lovely wind-vane showing a peripatetic St Botolph with a donkey - as seen here].



6. Mo Edwards wrote from Devizes suggesting that the 'magazine' illustrated in the last *Botolphian* might have been used for storing candles or tapers. This is the best suggestion I have had so far. Thank you for that Mo - and for your kind comments.

7. David Buxton wrote from Church with Chapel Brampton in Northants with the delightful news that their church is going from strength to strength. He also gave details of their patronal festival which I publicised in a supplementary email.

8. Mhairi Ellis wrote from Bishopsgate London: Thank you Denis - fascinating as ever. Particularly the reference to 'the four hymns' - is there a book of St Botolph hymns I haven't come across I wonder? or have I missed something in a previous *Botolphian*?

[Ed. Ah - I am glad you mentioned that Mhairi. Your comment was in response to a letter from Joanna Comer of Lullingstone. I must admit to wondering if I had full information about the four St Botolph hymns that she mentioned. I have a file on the subject but, apart from some information from Revd Sam Funnell most of them are in relation to the Eastern Orthodox Church. I will write to Joanna and ask her for further details].

9. James Evans wrote from Ruxley Garden Centre, near Dartford in Kent (which accommodates the ruins of St Botolph's church) saying that he had just got around to reading my article and thanking me for it and saying that he had learnt a lot about the church that he did not know previously.

--O--

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 END-NOTES

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.
 - (i) Founded by radiation from Botolph centres.
 - (ii) Founded along the course of Botolph's journeys.
- B: **Travellers' churches.**
 - (i) Founded before AD 800
 - (ii) Founded between 800 and 1066
 - (iii) Founded after the Norman Conquest.
- C: **Hanseatic churches** founded as a result of commercial enterprise.
- D: None of the above.

Typical Characteristics of Early St Botolph Churches.

1. Nearly 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.

Copyright

All rights of 'The Botolphian' newsletters are reserved to Denis Pepper and no items may be copied reprinted or reproduced for commercial purposes without written permission. Readers are however encouraged to copy and transmit the newsletter as long as this is for purely personal use. Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013. (Last revision 22 October 2017).