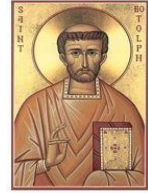




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



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1st February 2014.

Highlights this month

- St Botolph's Church, Eastwick, Herts.
- The people Botolph might have met in Francia.
- Correspondence from David Noy, William Howard, Dick Pascoe, Robert Beavis, Jean Stone and Robin Betser.
- Welcome to 5 new members.

Editorial.

I am delighted to report that the St Botolph's Swyncombe tea towel has become an important part of our family and is being treated with a reverence unknown by its predecessors. It remains in pristine white condition; my wife Zina has forbidden me to get any tea stains on it.

I was pleased to receive an email from Revd William Howard, the recently retired rector of St Botolph's Grimston (Norfolk), asking me why I had not yet featured any of the very interesting churches in his area. I promptly set the wheels in motion to put the matter right and visited his church a couple of weeks later; it will feature in the next issue.

I also received correspondence from my friend David Noy of Buckingham University, explaining the conundrum of Botolph Claydon. He told me that the village was first called by that name in early C19. The word stems from 'Botyl' being Anglo-Saxon for 'building'; this was later written as 'Bottle'. In all the Winslow documents up to C17 the village is called either 'Bottle' or 'Botul' Claydon. So there we are, - another mystery solved, - the village has no connection whatsoever with *our* Botolph. Thank you David.

Dr Sam Newton wrote giving me notice of the 'St Botolph Course' that he is running on 21st June 2014 at the Wuffing Education Study-Centre at

Sutton Hoo. Details will be available at www.wuffings.co.uk closer to the time.

Church Feature

Eastwick.

Approach:- Leave the M11 at Junction 7. Approaching on the A414, turn right into Eastwick Road. After passing Roseley Cottages, cross over Eastwick Hall Lane and follow the road down to Saint Botolph's church.

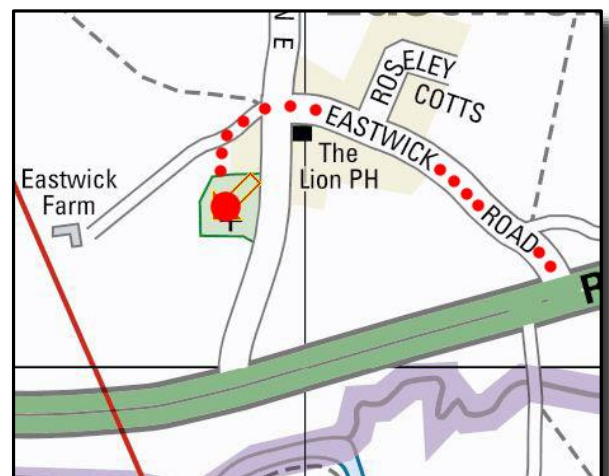
Key: Available from Lois Smith, CM21 0DT
Tel: 0279 431-123.

Contact: Revd Anthony John Giles, The Rectory, 1 Dovedale, High Wych, Sawbridgeworth, CM21 0HX.

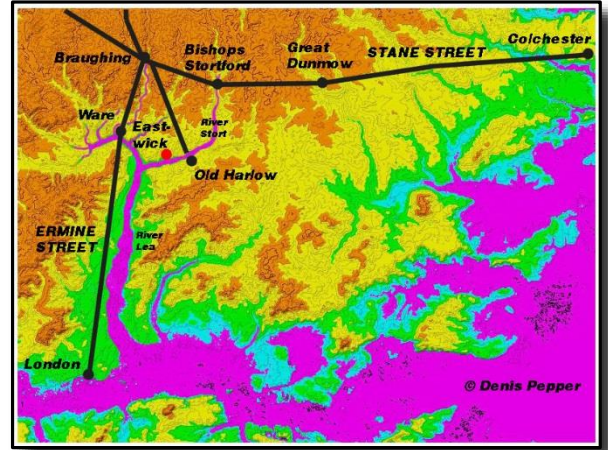
Tel: 01279 726-476

Location: 51.78515, 0.07763 CM20 2QY.

Listed Grade: II*.



The approach to the village (along the A414) takes you across two sections of the River Stort. The southerly section of the river is wide enough to be part of the canal transport system which leads from London via the River Lea to Bishops Stortford. The northerly section is just a narrow stream.



The principal town in the area, both in Roman and in Norman times, was Bishops Stortford and the easiest method of transport to and from London would have been via the River Lea. The fact that the Eastwick church was *not* built a further two miles to the east suggests that its occupants were perhaps looking for a quiet monastic life rather than one which provided a service for users of the Roman road.

Foundation of the site:

If Bishops Stortford is indeed the key to Eastwick's existence then, given that the town was abandoned after the Romans left in C4-5 and did not rise to prominence again until after C11, it is unlikely that the church would have had a C7 foundation.

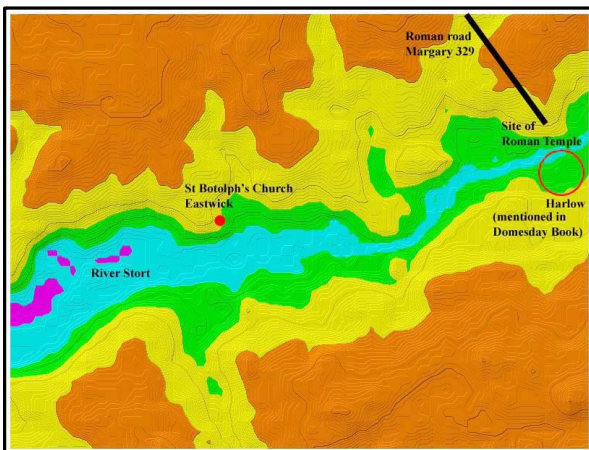
It was the Bishop of London (William the Norman) who caused a change in Bishops Stortford's fortunes when he purchased the estate in 1060. The foundation of the Eastwick church must, one feels, have been a product of this revived importance.

The present day church.

The structure as we see it today is described as being constructed from 'uncoursed knapped flints with limestone' and dates from 1872 when the local squire, John Hodgson, employed A.W. Bloomfield to completely rebuild the old C13 church using the original foundations and transferring much of the fabric.

The long, tall, lancet-style nave has no aisles. There is a northerly transeptal organ chamber and evidence that the original church had a south transept which was not rebuilt. The tower is 3-stage and has C19 battlemented parapets and

When the original Eastwick Church was built, the span of River Stort would have been as wide as the distance between these two sections leaving the church perched on the river bank.



Why would it have been here and who were the people whom it would have served? The nearest Roman road ran from Braughing to Harlow. **Harlow New Town** takes its name from the nearby 'old' town which dates back to pre-Roman times and it even has the remains of a temple to prove it. The humble village of **Braughing** lies importantly where Ermine Street (the road to the North) crosses the (east-west) Stane Street. But the church lies two miles distant from the end of the Roman spur road that ran south-easterly to Harlow.

corner gargoyles. There is a short pyramidal red-tiled spire. The interior is plastered.

Items of interest within the church:

1. The C13 chancel arch supported by beautiful Purbeck marble shafts. (Purbeck marble is a fossiliferous limestone which comes from Dorset where it has been quarried since Roman times).



2. The paired sedilias on the south side of the chancel. (There is also a sedilia on the north side which is possibly a reset piscina).



3. In the tower you will find the marble tomb with the 'Effigy of the Cross-Legged Knight'. The C13 workmanship is of the highest standard and this example is reputed to be the best in the country. Richard de Tany (d.1270) was a local knight who, apart from making a financially advantageous marriage and (probably) having this tomb built well before his death, seemed otherwise to make all the wrong decisions. He fought on the side of Simon de Montfort during

the Barons' Uprising and consequently incurred the king's displeasure. Thereafter he lived a 'lawless and dissolute life.' The base of the tomb is later than the top part and dates from C19.



4. The wooden cross next to the tomb came from the Ypres grave of Lionel Bowlby who was killed in action during WWI.

5. There are many finely-carved wall tablets to be seen throughout the church.



Foundation of the site: *c. AD 1080*

Domesday Book: The 1086 entry for Eastwick mentions the existence of a priest so one must presume that he also had a church.

Relevance of the church to Botolph's life: Probably none. The Botolph churches seem to fall into three categories:

- A: C7 churches which were relevant to Botolph's life,
 - B: 'Travellers' churches,
 - C: Neither of the above.
- Eastwick church would seem to be Type C.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to Lois Smith who came and unlocked the church within a few minutes of our telephoning her. She told us

that it has to remain locked because evidence had been found of people sleeping there.

She also gave us some interesting background details of village life. Eastwick lies within a commuter zone where young couples come to live so that they can have easy access to the metropolis. Sadly however they rarely seem to be interested in joining in with village life. There was, nevertheless, a good turnout of about 25 for the December carol service so the church is still a very relevant part of the small community.

Focus on Saint Botolph.

Botolph's contemporaries in Francia:-

In last month's issue (you might remember!) we were discussing the possible location of the establishment in Francia where Botolph trained. In this issue I would like to look at the people he may have met.



In C7 the northern part of Francia was divided into Austrasia and Neustria. King Dagobert was the monarch of Neustria; his Queen was Nanthild. Their younger son Clovis lived with them whilst their elder son had already been installed in Metz as King Sigebert III, ruler of Austrasia.

In Paris from time to time were St Eligius (aka St Eloi - sage and master goldsmith) and Erchinoald (who became the most powerful man in the French court after the death of King Dagobert).

In the local monasteries the abbess of Jouarre was Theodochilde and one of her protégées, Bertille, became Abbess of Chelles when it was re-founded during the period that Botolph was in France.

Abbess Burgundofara was in charge of the mixed monastery at which (it is thought that) Botolph was professed; her brother was Faro, bishop of Meaux.

Brief visitors to the area included the Irish missionary monk St Fursey (linked closely with Burgh Castle near Great Yarmouth) and Hereswith, sister of Abbess Hilda of Whitby.

So there were plenty of eminent people for Botolph to meet but the most important pair, from the point of view of his historical record, were two English princesses who were responsible for helping him to find land for his abbey of Icanho.

More about them in the next issue.

Readers' Letters and Emails

I am grateful for the kind communications of encouragement that I received from Dick Pascoe, Felicity Thomson, Jean Stone and Robin Betser.

Thanks

Many thanks to Jan Willson for giving up her time to show Zina and me around St Botolph's Grimston.

Membership of SOSB

I am delighted to welcome the following new members:-

Jan Willson (Grimston)
Buell Hollister (Brookline, Massachusetts)
Malcolm Peel (Church with Chapel Brampton)
Marion Peel (Church with Chapel Brampton)
John Sennett (Swyncombe)

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 a contraction of '*Botolph's Town*.'

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.