

## ANOTHER GUIDE TO HUNWORTH CHURCH

ST LAWRENCE may seem a small and insignificant medieval church on first glance, but it offers a wonderful opportunity to study our church heritage.

Our parish churches have evolved through the centuries and few records remain of when, or how or who built them., churches were re-built on the same site with re-cycled materials: they were destroyed, damaged or abandoned. St. Lawrence's chancel was destroyed in a storm, and it has lost many of its original medieval features including stained glass windows, wall paintings and rood screen, graves have lost their brasses and inscriptions.

This guide asks you to look at the church -its materials and its design features as a guide to understanding the sequence of building development, you will gain an insight into how medieval masons shaped their raw materials and developed their designs; what their patrons demanded in design as well as appreciating the history of this parish church.

THE DOUBLE SPLAYED WINDOW on the south nave wall was discovered in the 1960's during refurbishment of the Church. There are less than a hundred such windows remaining in the U.K, with most in Norfolk. This type of window has been thought to date from the Anglo-Saxon period; but historians and architects now agree that it is more typical of churches dating from the early Norman historical period. These windows have been linked with the round towers of Norfolk churches and to the influence of a North sea European culture which pre-dated the Norman conquest. An arched double splayed window was probably built using a timber board inserted into the middle of wall's thickness. A hole in the board formed the shape of the opening. An experimental reconstruction of these windows can be seen at the Ecotech in Swaffham.

THE BRITIFFES (family crest 3 goats & 3 shells) were typical of local tenant families rising up the social Ladder. For over two centuries they were buried in this church. Thomas Britiffe was buried in March 1552/3. His grandson, Edmund, was buried in Hunworth

Church 1660/1. His tomb and that of his wife, Clemence, are one of the unmarked gravestones in the nave. His grandsons, Edmund & Robert Britiffe, bought the manor of Hunworth from, the Bacon family in 1700. Edmund and his wife Rebecca, who built nearby Hunworth Hall and its adjacent barns, lie beneath a much grander slab in the nave. Their union is also commemorated by the hearts and letters, "E & R B 1700", picked out on the barn gable. Edmund's ambitious and successful brother, Robert Britiffe, became an M.P. for Norwich and was Sir Robert Walpole's land agent and solicitor. Edmund's bankruptcy at the time of the South Sea Bubble meant the estate was transferred to Robert, though he never lived here. Through Robert's daughter Judith, the Hunworth estate passed to the Hobarts at Blickling, as her dowry. Edmund' son, Edmund, who became a civil servant in Queen Anne's reign, and his daughter, Henrietta, are buried under the marble slab nearest the altar. More Britiffes are buried at Baconsthorpe.

The Rev.JAMES BULWER (1794-1979) was undoubtedly Hunworth's most famous incumbent. Born in Aylsham, he became Rector of Hunworth in 1848, and in 1849 moved into the splendid, new Hunworth Rectory (at the top of the hill on the Holt Road- now known as Blickling House) entirely paid for by Lady Caroline Suffield of Blickling Hall. Bulwer's light parish duties enabled him to pursue many other interests! A Linnaean Society member for 62 years, Bulwer's Petrel was named after him. Bulwer was a keen antiquarian, who amassed a huge collection of papers (much of it now at Norwich Castle Museum). A talented artist and friend John Sell Cotman. Bulwer was an early patron of the Norwich Pre-Raphaelite, Frederick Sandys, several of his own watercolour sketches of Hunworth Church are stored in the Norwich Castle Museum. Bulwer was no typical Victorian parson; his modest tombstone is in churchyard on the north side.