



St John the Baptist Church, Harringworth



1 THE VILLAGE OF <<PLACE>>

Harringworth is a small village in north east Northamptonshire, three miles from Uppingham and 11 miles from Stamford. It lies in the valley of the River Welland close to the border with Rutland and is overlooked by the Welland Railway Viaduct. This is the longest brick built viaduct in Britain. The railway line and viaduct are very popular with steam train and heritage enthusiasts and the village is also a popular destination for walkers, campers and cyclists.

From Wakerley or Laxton approach Harringworth down a long steep slope towards the village, where a Mediaeval Cross stands at the crossroads, and has a shaft and five steps. It was possibly erected in 1387 when Lord Zouche obtained the liberty of a yearly fair for three days beginning on the



eve of St John the Baptist, and a weekly market every Tuesday. The steps were repaired, and the Cross and topmost stone of the shaft were renewed in 1837.

On a cottage near the Cross there was a GOTHIC CHIMNEY, which possibly was originally the Old Manor House. In 1939 the chimney was removed to the Old Smithy nearby, when the cottage

was demolished. In the walls of this cottage were found two stone masks, similar to several in the Church; they have now been placed on a windowsill in the South Aisle of the Church.

Around the corner stands one of the oldest inns in the county, The White Swan, a coaching house of importance since the 15th Century. Part of the front is 16th Century.

2 ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Church of St John the Baptist has a 12th Century Tower, with a 14th Century SPIRE, with carved heads (one with its tongue sticking out!) The top of the spire was renewed in 1892. In the tower and on the church walls are lists of benefactions to the Parish.

The original porch was 15th Century, North door 14th Century, and South doorway 15th Century. The Porch was rebuilt at various times, and last in 1909. The arches are 13th Century, the outer one having dog-tooth moulding. The inner arch is supported by one of the Tudor period.

The Nave has 14th Century arcades with four arches on each side. Most of the South Aisle roofs are original, and have old bosses of curving stone of the Tryons, who are buried here.

The interior of the Church has many carved heads, especially in the South-west corner of the North Aisle. The exterior has double-gabled buttresses on the South aisle, and two grotesques at the East end of the Chancel.

The Church was thoroughly restored during the incumbency of Rev. F.S, Edmonds, Vicar 1886-1898, and the work was completed in 1892. The



plaster was removed from the side aisles, and not replaced. The Nave had been previously seated with box pews facing North, and the Pulpit placed with its back to the Tryon vault.

A few pieces of 15th Century coloured glass are to be seen in the side windows of the Chancel. Fragments of 14th and 15th Century glass were also taken from the East window in 1919 and placed in windows in the North aisle, where there was already some 14th Century blue and red glass.



The other fragments of coloured glass are probably not earlier than the end of the century.

The EAST WINDOW was the gift of the parishioners and others, in memory of those who gave their lives in the 1914 - 1918 war. It was dedicated by Dr F.T. Woods, Bishop of Peterborough. A tablet of Clipsham stone with Runcorn stone borders, records the names. Both this window and the East window in the South aisle are the work of Burlisson and Grylls.

2.1 THE CHANCEL

The Chancel is late 13th century. In the latter part of the 15th Century the Chancel was rebuilt and the walls raised, much of the old stone being re-used. The sedilia, 14th Century, are weatherworn, which suggests the Chancel was roofless before the rebuilding in the 15th Century.

The Chancel was restored in 1892 in memory of Thomas Tryon who died in 1888. The modern roof dates from that time. Prior to this restoration the East wall of the Chancel had been boarded with oak panels.

The altar and rails were given in 1909 by Rev. A.P. le Maistre, Vicar 1898 - 1910. The oak chair in the Sanctuary was given in 1913 in memory of Rev. F.H.M. Blaydes, Vicar 1843 - 1886. The prayer desk was given in 192A by the Rev. F.S. Edmonds in memory of his son, who fell in the Great War (1914-18). All other prayer desks were made from the former Pulpit at the time of the last restoration. The oak chair behind the Screen was given in 1944 by the Rev. Canon B.E. Foyster, Vicar 1911 - 1947.



The Piscina south of the altar, a stone basin with hole, is used by priests to wash their hands. The arch of the Piscina has been made from an old window head, and part of an aumbry, or a low – sided window.



Triple Sedilia, seats used by the clergy, rather battered by time during its 500 years. This now contains a tapestry given by Commander W.G. Jack in 1989 in memory of three members of his family. The missing stone column of the original Sedilia is represented by the Tree of

Life in the tapestry.

There are three mural tablets in marble to members of the Blaydes family. The handsome oak screen, which retains its loft and staircase, dates from the 15th Century. Note the remains of red and green painting.

2.2 THE NAVE

The Pulpit is Jacobean and was brought from Barrowden, Rutland, at the time of the last restoration. It had been in a mutilated condition. Parts of the sounding board remain at Barrowden, and the date there is seen to be 1605 A.D.

The Lectern came here at the same time as the Pulpit. The carved figures, St Andrew and St. Paul, appear to be 15th Century work.

The Litany Desk was given in memory of Marguerite, wife of the Rev. F.S. Edmonds. She died in 1895.

On the floor of the Nave, and partially covered by carpet, are one brass and three stones to former Vicars of Harringworth, one of whom, Matthew Palmer, lived to the great age of 110 years!

2.3 NORTH AISLE

The vault which occupies two bays of the North Aisle was used as a burial place for members of the Tryon family at Bulwick Park from the latter part of the 17th Century until the year 1833, when the last interment took place. It was built by Moses Tryon who died in 1656. The ironwork is a good example of the work of about 1700 A.D.



There are four mural monuments in marble to members of the Tryon family in the North aisle (and one in brass in the Chancel). The stone in the centre of the largest of the monuments is a replacement. The wording has been slightly altered from that which is recorded in Bridges' "History of Northamptonshire".

The Hatchment with the arms of the Tryon and Brereton families was to Thomas Tryon who died in 1825.

One ancient carved bench end survives beside the North door. The organ was formerly in Deene Church, Northants. The Vestry was possibly made from a family pew.

2.4 SOUTH AISLE

The East Window in the South aisle was given in 1923 in memory of members of the Bartlett family.

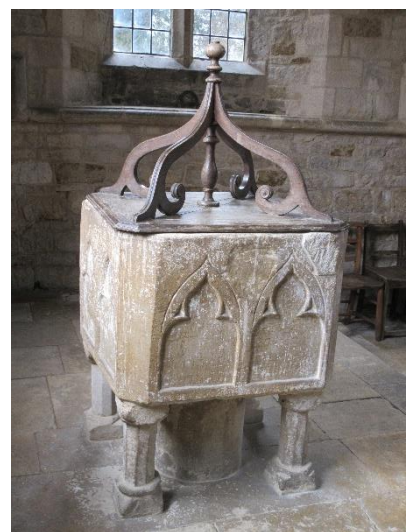
The Altar dates from the 17th Century, and the rails are part of the old rails from the Chancel. There is a further Piscina and another Triple Sedilia with sombre heads above.

The Oak Bench is the only piece of pre-reformation seating remaining in the Church.

To the West of the main door, the Hook was used for removing burning thatch from cottages.

The Font is late 12th Century, but with 14th Century carving, now much mutilated. It stands on a vault which appears to have been railed off at some time.

The piece of stone on the window sill West of the Font is part of another 12th Century Font. The face masks on the other window sill corner from a demolished cottage near the village cross.





2.5 THE CLOCKS AND BELLS

The clock was given by Thomas Tryon in 1879.

In the Tower, used as a Priest's Bell, is the former SANCTUS BELL, said to have been brought from Lyddington, Rutland, and given by Philip Repington, Bishop of Lincoln 1405-1420, who had a residence there. It is 15ins in diameter, was cast by Johannes de Colsale about 1410, and is inscribed *PHILLPS: EPC: LINCOLN: SPES: MEA: IN: DEO: EST." (My hope is in God)

In the tower is a ring of six bells, which were rehung in an iron frame by Mears and Stainbank, London, in 1913. They were returned by Taylors of Loughborough in 1992, and rehung by the Rutland Church Bell Restoration Stewards in August 1992.

2.6 RING OF SIX BELLS

	Weight	Diameter	Note
Tenor	11 cwt 0qtrs 24lbs	3ft 31/2ins Note F	F
Fifth	8 cwt 2qtrs 9lbs	3ft 11 1/2ins Note G	G
Fourth	7 cwt 0qtrs 15lbs	2ft 11 ins Note A	A
Third	7cw1 0qtrs 0lbs	2ft 9ins Note B Flat	B Flat
Second	5 cwt 2qtrs 0lbs	2ft 7 1/2ins Note C	C
Treble	5 cwt 1qtr 0lbs	2ft 5 1/2ins Note D	D

The tenor was cast by Thomas Eayre of Kettering in 1755, and is inscribed "CAELORUM CHRISTIE PLACEAT TIBI REX SONUS ISTE. (Christ, Heavens' King, may this sound please you) THO:EAYRE DE KETT: FECIT, 1755"

The fifth, fourth and second are inscribed "THOMAS MEARS & SON OF LONDON FECIT, 1805"

The third was cast by Tobias Norris of Stamford in 1603, the year of the accession of King James 1, and it bears the inscription: 'NUNC IACOBUS EGO CANO VOBIS ORE IVCUNDO. 1603'(I James, now sing to you with cheerful voice) "RICHARD HARRIS, WILLIAM ASHLEY, ROBERT CLARKE, JOHN HANNSE, ROBERT SMITH, ALLON BOUDON, WILLIAM LAUNT."



"RECAST BY MEARS AND STAINBANK A.D. 1913" The bell had been badly cracked before it was recast. The inscription in the old lettering was reproduced.. The treble was added to the ring in 1913, and was the gift of the Vicar, B.E. Foyster and Margaret, his wife. The inscription is "MEARS AND STAINBANK FOUNDERS LONDON 1913. PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD"

Full Peals were rung in 1913, 1931, 1933, 1946, and 1964.

REGISTERS

The Parish Registers date only from 1695, the earlier registers have been missing for many years. All registers are held at the Northamptonshire Record Office, except those in current use. (Baptisms from 1904, and Marriages/Burials from 1998).

2.7 CHURCH PLATE (CURRENTLY HELD IN THE TREASURY OF PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL)

- A small silver Chalice and Paten 1570
- A large silver Chalice, Paten, Credence Paten, two flagons 1705

These last were the gift of the Hon. Jane Tryon.

2.8 OTHER ARTEFACTS HELD, BUT NO LONGER ON DISPLAY FOR SECURITY REASONS

A helmet, formerly in the Chapel of All Hallows, between the Church and the original Manor House, on the tomb of Lord George Zouche, who died in 1569. This is mentioned in Bridges.

A clarinet, given in 1929 by Beatrice Wyles. This instrument was part of the Church Band in the days before there was an organ in the Church. The clarinet had been played by her grandfather, William Dams, who died in 1876, aged 80.

2.9 RECENT RESTORATION WORKS TO THE CHURCH

In the last 25 years much work has been carried out within the Church. In 1981 the whole of the Nave roof was re-covered in stainless steel, in 1982 the porch roof was re-slatted, in 1984 the walls of the Nave and Chancel were lime washed, the chancel walls having been repaired and re-plastered by the Patron. Electrical heating was installed and more recently the Church was re-wired for lighting, new fittings provided, including the three chandeliers in the Nave. A



water supply has been installed, and the Chancel and south aisle roofs repaired. New altar frontals have been acquired, and modern kneelers created with local, Millennium and Jubilee themes. Most of the work has been completed by our own parishioners, and we are particularly proud of the altar rail kneeler - worth your closer inspection!

The electric light at the gate, which replicates its Victorian oil-lit predecessor, was installed by the village to commemorate the Millennium.

In October 2010 Harringworth became part of the new Lyddington Benefice, together with the parishes of Bisbrooke, Caldecott, Glaston, Lyddington, Stoke Dry and Seaton with Thorpe by Water.

A more efficient heating system was installed in 2010 and the electrical wiring system was also upgraded to current standards.

The tower is now flood-lit at night. The flood-lighting was funded by Harringworth Appeals Committee.

In 2015 we were able to install a lavatory and server in the church.

In 2007 the churchyard was closed for burials. Regular maintenance is carried out by the Local Authority, with the addition of spring and autumn maintenance days carried out by the village community.

3 STONE COFFIN IN THE CHURCHYARD

This coffin, which has been hewn out of one block of stone, was found by ironstone workers in 1932. It was about three feet below the surface in a field on the left side of the road to Laxton, at the top of the hill, known as Scotgate. The lid of the coffin was of undressed stone and was very badly damaged. The coffin lay pointing north and south, and is believed by some to date from the time of the Roman occupation. A similar, but smaller, coffin was found in the same field in 1933, but was too badly damaged to be removed to the churchyard.

4 THE MANOR HOUSE AND CHAPEL OF ALL HALLOWS

The site of the Manor House of the Zouche family is now occupied by two cottages and a barn. The east wall of the barn is of considerable thickness,



and of good dressed stone. Probably it was part of the outer wall of the Manor House.

Leland gives the following account of the Manor:

"The Lord Souch hath a right goodly manor place by the Parish Chyrch of this village, builded castelle like. The first courte whereof is clene doune, saving that a great piece of the gate house and front of the walle yet stondeth. The ynnere parts of this place is neatly welle maintauned, and hath a ditch about it. The walles of this ynnere courte be in sum places imbattelled. And within this court is a faire chappelle, in the bodie whereof lyeth one of the Souches byried, and a great flat stone over him. There is a parke by this manor place, and a fair lodge in it. I heard say that this place hath bene long time if the Souches handes, and that they have counted it for one of their chiefest howses."

In 1305 William de la Zouche founded and endowed a chantry for two priests. The Chapel stood to the east of the Parish Church, an apsidal building fifty eight long, twenty four feet, six inches wide. In his History of Northamptonshire, Bridges mentions large ruins of the out walls of this Chapel. A small part of the moat remains on the east of the barn mentioned above. It ran south along the Churchyard wall, then east, and then north to the river again, thus surrounding the Manor House and Chapel.

5 OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The content of this information document has been taken from an information leaflet available for purchase in the church

Mick McQuade
March 2018