



ST. MARY'S CHURCH
CREETING
EAST SUFFOLK

PRICE: ONE SHILLING

CREETING ST. MARY

Consolidated with Creeting All Saints and Creeting St. Olaves, in the Rural Deanery of Bosmere, Archdeaconry of Ipswich, Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and County of Suffolk.

*Our home is here, where God delights to dwell;
As welcome guests we make God's house our own . . .*

J.C.L. (1830-1873).

*This is a place where prayer is wont to be made—
a house which Christ, by His sacramental Presence,
makes a home. Our courteous Lord willeth that we
should be as homely with Him as heart may think
or soul may desire. But let us beware that we take
not so recklessly this homeliness as to leave courtesy.*

—Julian of Norwich (living 1373).

*Watch-tower of Faith, thro' immemorial years,
Ancestral church, altho' thy walls are grey,
Time's mellowing impress but the more endears
The place where our forefathers were wont to pray.*

—The Revd. John Clarke Lewis,
Curate of Creeting St. Mary, 1859—65.

FOR long our land was known as “the ringing isle”. In Tudor times the people of Creeting moved and had their being to the music of church bells. On Sundays and saints' days the notes of the three bells in St. Mary's tower mingled with those of the trio of All Saints' church while, away to the North, ringing from St. Olave's bore a part in the melody, to which the Creeting known as St. Peter, or West, contributed.

By 1553, St. Olave's church apparently had ceased to be regularly used. A century later the authorities noted “No church, no churchwardens.” What happened to its bell(s) no one knows. All Saints' tower retained its “Great bells iii” down to Hanoverian times. Then a faculty was sought and granted for the pulling down of the church, which had become ruinous. All Saints churchwardens' accounts for 1801-1802 include these items:

Bill for Weighing Bells	0	7	0
By Cash recd. for 3 Bells.					
weight 17 (cwt) 3 (qrs.)	81	19	0

By this time St. Mary's three bells had been reduced to one, as appears from the minutes of a public meeting of the two parishes held on Midsummer Day 1801:

In consequence of the Church of Creeting All Saints now pulling down . . . it was Agreed that ye parish of Creeting All Saints be permitted to join an aisle to ye north side of Creeting St. Mary church . . .

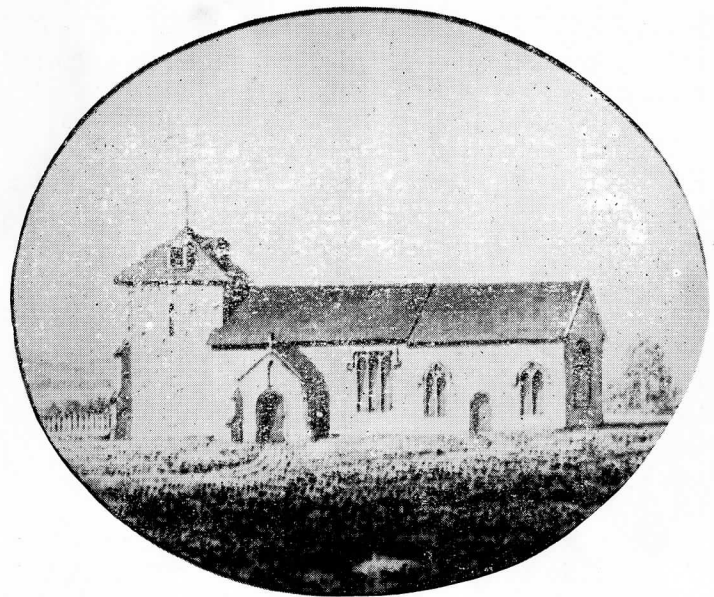
BUT: that in consideration of ye benefit to be derived from ye steeple and Bell of Creeting St. Mary: & as they will have no steeple to erect, agreed that the inhabitants of Creeting All Saints do in future share ye expenses of any repair done to ye steeple, or bell, of Creeting St. Mary's church

St. Mary's solitary bell, hung in a chestnut frame and wheel, came from the foundry of Thomas Gardiner of Sudbury in 1727.

WHEN the Domesday Survey was made (1086) the Abbey of Bernay in Normandy held here "a church with 12 acres". This may well have been St. Mary's, which retains a NORMAN DOORWAY and formerly had Norman windows in the South wall (uncovered at the 1884 restoration). The commanding position overlooking the Gipping valley is suggestive of an early site.

The 17th century Blois manuscript distinguishes this as "Creeting Mary with ye Spire", "The Church . . . with the Spire Steeple" (9 November 1659). References in the Feet of Fines for Suffolk dated 1240 and in the Norwich Institution Books 1331 to "Stepelcreting" show, by the personal names cited, that Creeting All Saints was so designated. The Suffolk antiquary D. E. Davy, however, claims that *St. Mary's* was called Creeting High Church or Creeting Steeple.

At some unrecorded date St. Mary's spire fell, probably carrying some of the tower with it. In 1827 D. E. Davy noted "Steeple, a low square Tower". He added "modern"—he was wrong there—and continued "a plastered one, with a wooden cupola, covered with tiles . . . Here was formerly a lofty steeple and spire."



*From a drawing by Isaac Johnson, c. 1800.
By courtesy of the Chief Librarian, Ipswich Borough Libraries.*

The Revd. A. J. Deck in 1855 dignified the cupola. His account runs:

"The lower stage of tower is D(ecorated) . . . the upper stage is mutilated, and surmounted by a small modern spire." The tower is heavily buttressed in brick at the North-West and South-West angles. It was heightened about 10 feet (to 47½ feet) and battlemented in 1885. Over the two-light window in the West wall is a stone carved with the engrailed cross of *Ufford*, Earls of Suffolk. The same arms appear on the 14th century tower of Combs church. The style of the Creeting window and these arms suggest that the tower was recon-

structed by William de Ufford, 2nd Earl of Suffolk, who died in 1382. The window moulding has portrait corbels, a man and a woman.

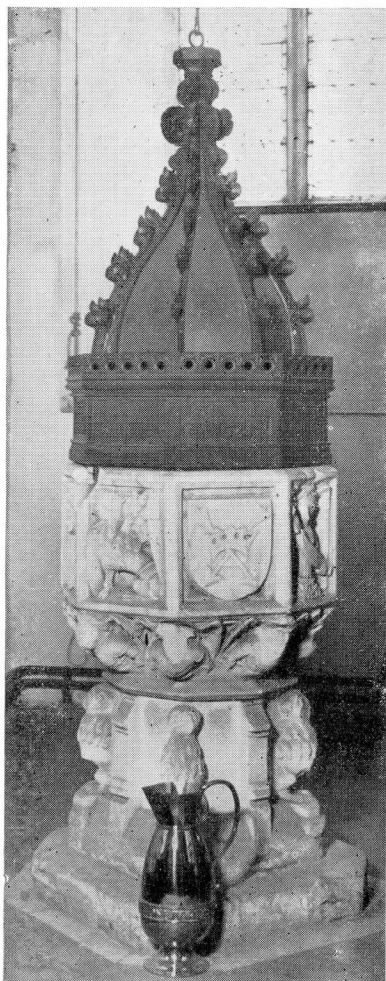
The main entrance to the church is through the Norman doorway referred to above. This is no more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. It has cushion capitals under square imposts supporting a plain roll arch with an outer half-ring of elevated semicircles. This doorway is in excellent preservation, having been protected from the elements since early Tudor times by a PORCH, the South face of which has flint and stone panelling with a foliated and pinnacled niche over the head of the outer doorway, which doorway has angel corbels. The porch has two side windows and an open timber trussed roof with oak cornice. In the North-East corner is a triangular headed HOLY WATER STOUP, with renewed base. In the porch legacies were paid, much business transacted, and ceremonies performed, including the marriage service, as Chaucer's Wife of Bath reminds us: "Housbonds at church dore I have had five."

Nave and chancel are under one continuous open roof of pitch-pine. There is no chancel arch. An archaeologist, visiting the church in 1855, recorded "Nave is too modernised to distinguish the style".

The original 13th century chancel was practically rebuilt in the 1880s, when the priest's doorway between the two South windows, shown in the D. E. Davy plan of 1827, in the Johnson drawing and the Henry Davy etching, was removed. The present chancel is raised three steps above the nave.

Until 1802 the main plan was chancel and nave only, with West tower and South porch. Then, to provide for the congregation of All Saints, part of the North wall of the nave was taken down and a transept, measuring 24 feet in length and 18





feet wide, constructed. Eighty years later this transept or "Ayle" was enlarged to form the existing North aisle, new accommodation being required for worshippers displaced by removal of the Western gallery. The aisle was extended Eastwards to provide an organ chamber.

Under the tower stands the FONT, of traditional East Anglian type. The octagonal bowl is carved with the emblems of the Evangelists alternating with (1) emblem of the Trinity, (2) much defaced, two swords in saltire (?), (3) a crown transpierced by 2 arrows in saltire, heads downwards (Arms of St. Edmundsbury Abbey), (4) a fesse with charges above and below, perhaps for De la Pole (the family held the Manor in the 14th and 15th

centuries). The shields numbered 1, 2, 4 are held by angels; No. 3 fills the whole framed panel. All these angels, and seven of the eight angels supporting the bowl, have been deliberately defaced. The shaft, rising from a roughly

moulded base, is guarded by four lions, mutilated. It seems likely that the font dates from the period when Eton College acquired the advowson, 1462.

The restored FONT-COVER bears an inscription in Latin rendering thanks to God for George John Dupuis, Rector of this Church 1840-1862, whose younger son Edward J(ohn) G(ore) Dupuis, baptised here 16 November 1843, caused this cover to be renovated, Easter 1907.

The PULPIT "of oak, wainscotted with sunk panels and tracery on a stone base" is late Victorian. It replaces a former hexagonal pulpit, towards the cost of which All Saints and St. Mary's both paid £5 5s. in 1805.

The Chancel SCREEN was given in 1902 in memory of Charles Turner of All Saints Hall, 50 years churchwarden (d. 1901) and Martha, his wife (d. 1881). It accords with the screen on the North side commemorating Ann Walne Heath (d. 1881), daughter-in-law of the Revd. Benjamin G. Heath, Rector, 1803-1829.

The three-manual ORGAN was repaired and equipped with an electric blower in memory of the 45 years incumbency of Canon H. A. Fleetwood, 1908-1953.

The name of another rector appears on the Communion rails: William Laurence Eliot M.A. "Fellow of Eton College and Rector of this Parish from 1862 to 1877".

In the South wall of the sanctuary, behind panelling, is a trefoil-headed arch with piscina. The "very fine and early 17th century HOLY TABLE with heavy carved legs and rail" (H. Munro Cautley) has an unusual appendage, a tin cylinder, closed at one end, with cap lid at the other, diameter 4 inches, attached on the under side of the table and formerly used for storage of records.

Formerly a North window had old glass. "Honest Tom Martin" (1697-1771) of Palgrave "could not get the key, but thro' a window could see upon a N. window (1) sable 3 escallops, (2) Instruments of the Passion, (3) Azure a ducal coronet or, & thro' it 2 arrows in Saltire." Earlier, Blois had noted "In Glasses" two of these shields and another. None of this old glass remains.

The late Revd. Edmund Farrer, F.S.A. (d. 1935) recorded in his journal "March 1890 . . . The interior of the church is all neat and good, and the modern stained glass window at its E. end is to my mind almost perfect, as the colouring is so soft. It was designed and executed by Kemp(e)." This window was given by the late Mr. R. H. Tidswell of Bosmere Hall in memory of his brother, Benjamin Ingham Tidswell, "who died while serving his country June 18th 1885, buried at Abu Simbol."

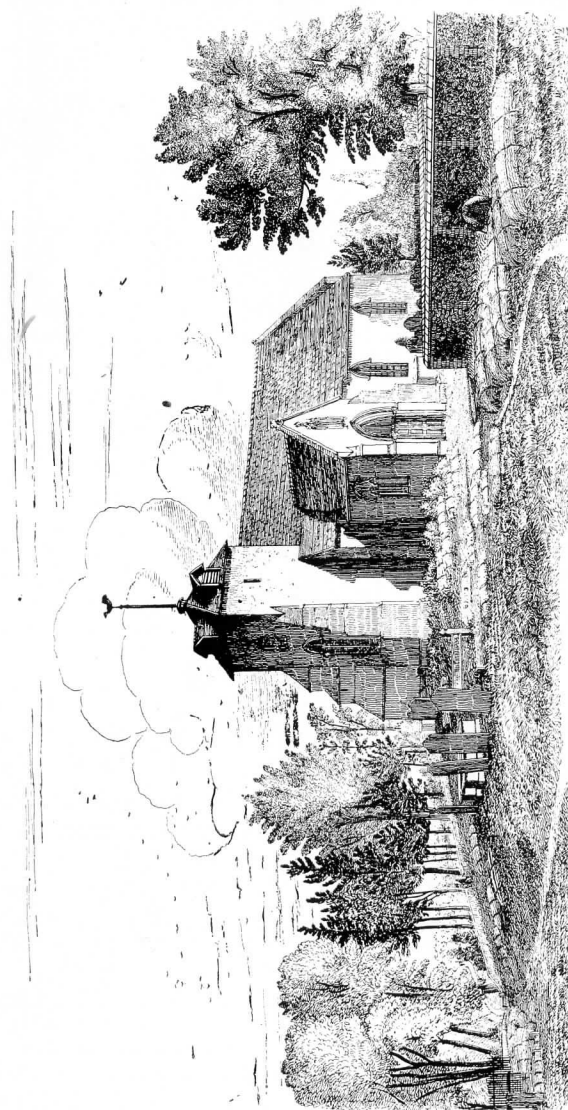
Other windows presented by Mr. Tidswell and Helena Maud, his wife are the King David three-light in the South wall, 1903, and the two-light on the North side commemorating their only son, Cecil Richard Tidswell, Captain, 1st Royal Dragoons, and Flight-Commander, Royal Flying Corps, "born in this parish 22 Nov. 1880, killed in action while flying in France 16 Oct. 1916."

Two other memorials call for mention:

(1) Floor stone by the South door, bearing arms of *Rous* impaling *Tyrell* for (Mrs.) Grace Rous who died in 1728, aged 70.

When she married her second husband, Lawrence Rous of Badingham, Suffolk, she—and presumably he—presented to this church a Paten bearing their arms and having date letter for 1694.

From the same source must have come the fine silver-gilt standing cup of 1613, with cover of 1616, having the initials "J.G.". It was doubtless the private drinking cup of this lady's first husband, Jacob Garrard of Dodds in this parish. Cup and cover formed Nos. 577 and 578 at



*St. Mary's Church in 1838.
From an etching by Henry Davy (1793-1862).*

the Ipswich Church Congress Loan Exhibition, October 1927, and jointly No. 86 in the "Silver Treasures from English Parish Churches" Exhibition at Christies, January 1955.

(2) On tower wall, black marble tablet, with arms of *Uvedale* impaling *Cooke*, for Rear-Admiral Samuel Uvedale, 1808, aged 79.

Born at Barking Rectory 1729, he entered the Navy at the age of 12, was appointed Post Captain 1754. "January 16th 1780, this hero distinguished himself as a brave officer in the victory off Cape St. Vincent, obtained over the Spanish squadron under Admiral Don Langara: in which gallant action, under Sir George Brydges Rodney, Captain Samuel Uvedale commanded the *Ajax* of 64 guns, and gallantly engaged three of the enemy's ships at the same time, one of which, the *St. Domingo*, blew up in the action. Captain Uvedale was wounded, and was obliged, in consequence, to leave his station: and was appointed by Sir George Rodney to convey his dispatches to the Admiralty." He bought from the parishioners the thatched Mere House, rendered "redundant" by the opening of Barham House of Industry, and built (in All Saints parish) Bosmere Hall.

* * * *

In the conjoined CHURCHYARD of All Saints and St. Mary the oldest remaining monuments (uninscribed) are two medieval sepulchral slabs serving as steps outside the North doors of the church. They probably came from All Saints' Church, the site of which is marked by a flat stone, broken across, over the burial-place, within the church boundaries, of John Whitmore, 1795, and members of his family.

The earliest inscribed memorial is the brick altar tomb hard by the south wall of St. Mary's church commemorating John Rozer, late of Needham, died July 29th 1688, aged 59, a well-to-do woollen draper.

The War Memorial Cross, nearly encircled by lavender, perpetuates the memory of the sixteen "men of this Church

and Parish who laid down their lives in the Great War 1914-1919" and the four who "fell in the Second World War 1939-1945."

Somewhere in this churchyard lie buried the remains of one who has passed into local legend. A parish register entry reads: "Elizabeth Woods of Creting St. Olaves, 83 years of age, was buried 20th eve of February 1801—"Ye length of her coffin 3 feet 4 inches, its width 1 foot 1 inch and a half, its depth 1 foot 9 inches—this singular character lived some years in ye chimney of her house on Creting Hills." An inserted note adds: "The dwarf known as Sally Woods lived in the lane on Creting Hills still known as Sally Woods' Lane. When her cottage fell she lived in the chimney."

A mezzotint engraving, by S. W. Reynolds after a painting



By courtesy of the Chief Librarian, Ipswich Borough Libraries.

by Sir George Beaumont, was "Published as the Act directs, May 12th 1800." It carries these details:

"Elizabeth Woods of Creeting Hills, Suffolk, born of respectable parents in 17 . . . , and now living (May 1800,) possessed on the death of her husband a life interest in 12 acres of land, with the house in which they had lived, and of which she could never be induced to quit possession. The buildings, however, falling into decay, were gradually demolished, till nothing remained but the oven and two chimneys, in the larger of which this singular character and two daughters persisted to reside for sixteen years, with no other defence against the weather than a screen of bushes, which they shifted according to the direction of the wind. A few boards composed their bed, the mother's head resting on a large flat stone, which was her seat by day, and her feet affording pillows to her daughters, whilst the oven served them for wardrobe and store room."

The one-storeyed building of white brick with slate roof on the Northern boundary of the churchyard dates from 1837. It has been used in turn as schoolroom and vestry.

The churchyard gates of ornamental iron scroll-work were given in 1939 in memory of Charles Henry James (1859-1932) and Kate Alice Mary James (1859-1938).

The register begins in 1681, the earlier volume(s) having been lost or destroyed.

BEQUESTS

- 1378 JOHN CASPE, rector of the church of St. Mary Creeting: "To be buried in the chancel of the same church" (Norwich C.C.)
- 1473 THOMAS BLOMVYLL of Needham chaplain: "To the church of the B.V.M. of Creeting 6s. 8d." (Norwich C.C.)
- 1474 ROSE ELY of Nedham Market widow: "Item for the repair of the church of Creeting Blessed Mary 3s. 4d." (Ipswich Wills.)
- 1496 THOMAS COOKE of Creeting Om: Scts: "To the high Alter of St. Mary Creeting 12d. and to the Repa(ra)cyon of the sd. cherche" (Bury Wills.)
- 1509 RICHARD EVENOTT of Creeting St. Olave: "To the highe Awter of the cherk of St. Mary 20d. To the reparacon of the sd cherk of our Lady 6s. 8d." (Ipswich Wills.)
- 1521 RICHARD CRYSPYN of Creeting alhalowes: "To the heygh Alter of Creeting St. Marys for tythes forgotten and to be prayd for 8d. & to the Rep(ara)cons of the same church 3s. 4d." (Bury Wills.)
- 1533 ELIZABETH ASPELONDE of Creeting Saynt Marye wedowe: "Body to be buried in chyd. of our Ladie of Creeting near my husband . . . I will have a trentall of messys said by an honest prest in the same church for the socr. (succour) & comfort of my soule my husband's soule my friendys soulys & of all cristen soulys . . . Item I geve to the reparacons of the saide Cherch of our Ladie in Creeting 3s. 4d." (Ipswich Wills.)
- 1534 WILLIAM GRESSANT Citizen & Haberdasher of London: "To the parish church of St. Marye Creeting a vestment of white damask brodered with angels with all that belongs to it price of 5 marks" (Somerset House Wills.)

- 1535 JOHN OXCLIFF parson of Cretyng Saynt petyrs: "To the heygh altar of creting saynt Marie 12d." (Norwich C.C.)
- 1543 RYCHARDE SCHEFFELDE of Creting Sanct maryes preste & p'son of the same Creting: "My bodye to be buried in the Chauncell byfore the Image of our ladye To the parson of the same church nexte to come 12d. to praye for my sowle To the Reparacone of the same church 2s. To Chrystyan Stode wydowe that kypyth me 6s. 8d." (Norwich C.C.)
- 1547 ROBERT BUGG of Cretyng Saint Maries clothier: "To reperation of steeple of Saint Mary Creting 10s." (Somerset House Wills.)
- 1549 THOMAS ANWYCKE of Cretynge Sancte marie: "towards the rep(air)yng & mendyng of the steeple of Cretinge Sancte maries 2s." (Ipswich Wills.)
- 1561 OLIVER CRAMPTONNE parsonne of Stonham Aspole clerke:- "Unto the parishe of Cretinge Saynte Maryes t(w)o kyne to be mayntennde & uppholden for ever by the Wysdome & discretionne of the Church wardennes & Constables of the saide Cretinge for time being & the yearlie produce to be distributed & given yearlie unto the poore people." (Norwich C.C.)
- 1574 WILLM. SILLIBANKE of Cretinge St. Marie clarke; "My body to be buried in the church yearde of Cretinge St. Marie." (Norwich C.C.)
- 1615 THOMAS LEWES of Creting S. Mary Clothier: "To the Towneship of Creting S. Mary £5 to be paid by my executors when they will get in the full value of the two neat given to the pore of the said Towne towards the purchasing of a piece of land to be employed only to the relief of the pore of the said Towne & to such pore as do best endeavour themselves to live in their vocations to bring up there children from Idlenes." (Ipswich Wills.)

- 1619 JOHN CAMPE of Creating St. Maries, gent: "My executor and overseers shall every year on St. Thomas Day or within 3 or 4 days before or after deliver . . . 30s. into the hands of the parson and church wardens of Creatinge St. Maries for the time being to be employed as follows:—
"Towards mending of their church yearly 6s. 8d.
"Towards mending of their chancel yearly 3s. 4d.
"To be distributed yearly amongst poor of their parish of Creating St. Maries for ever 20s residue." (Somerset House Wills.)
- 1671 JOANNA SPRING of Creting All Saints Widdow (of Samuel Spring, senior, Rector): "Unto the poor of the 3 Cretings All Saints St. Mary & St. Olave 20s." (Bury Wills.)
- 1674 SAMUEL SPRING of Creting All Saints Clerk: "To the poor of the 3 Cretings £5." (Somerset House Wills.)
- 1693 ROBERT JACOB of Stowupland, Gent: "Margaret my wife & John Jacob my executors . . . desiring & commanding them to cause my body to be buried in the Chancell of the Parish Church of Creating St. Maryes aforesaid If liberty can be obteyned for the same." (Bury Wills.)
- 1707 MARGARET JAKUES now wife of Richard Jaques of Wetheringsett Clerke: "I desire my body should be buried in the Chancell of Creting S. Maries aforesaid as near my late deceased Husband Mr. Robert Jacob as conveniently may be & my executor would within ten moneths after my decease buy one large Gravestone of about 10-12 pounds value & lay it over me and my said deceased Husbands graves with this inscription (vizt.) Here lyes the Bodyes of Mr. Robert Jacob who departed this life . . . her(e) lett the day of my death & the year be added & I desire I may be carried to Creating in a Decent Hearse." (Bury Wills.)
- 1720 JOHN BOKENHAM Rector of Creting St. Mary's: "Only I desire & my will is that I be buried as near as conveniently may be to my deceased wife & that a handsome stone be placed over us with the times of our deaths ingraven upon it & 20s to be given to the poor of the parish where I am buried." (Mickfield). (Ipswich Wills.)

1728 GRACE ROUS of Creting St. Marys widow: "£10 to the poor of the p'ish of Creting St. Mary to be laid out & disposed . . . amongst the most Indigent & aged p'sons in the said p'ish." (Norwich C.C.)

1814 MARGARET UVEDALE, widow of Rear-Admiral Samuel Uvedale, (died 16 December 1814, aged 69) "The Sum of Three hundred pounds was given by the said Margaret Uvedale to the Rector and Churchwardens for the time being of the parish of Creting All Saints Upon Trust to apply and distribute the Interest thereof at their Discretion towards the relief of poor persons residing in the said Parish being of the age of sixty years and upwards and who shall have resided for one full Year. "This Benefaction to be distributed in this Church on the 25th day of December in every year." (Mural tablet.)

PATRONAGE

For rather more than 300 years there was a priory of Benedictine monks here, a cell of the Abbey of St. Mary, Bernay in Normandy. This Abbey appointed the Rectors (sometimes delegating the duty to "the Prior of Creting"). King Richard II intervened to present in 1379-80, 1382 and 1383 in view of the war with France, and the youthful King Henry VI presented in 1423, the Queen in 1424. At the suppression of alien priories in 1462 King Edward IV granted the possessions of the Priory of Creting St. Mary for the endowment of Eton College, including the advowson, and the Provost and Fellows of Eton have exercised their right from 1471 onwards, except in 1474 when William Grey, Bishop of Ely presented.

RECTORS OF CRETING ST. MARY

*Priests who by claim of heaven-born hierarchy
From age to age in long unbroken line
Receive, bequeath with lustre lit on high
The lamp of truth for others to let shine . . .*

—John Clarke Lewis.

1254	GILBERT DE NORTON	1507	RICHARD SHEFFELDE
1290	JOHN MONIOT	1543	OLIVER CRAMPTON
1327	JOHN DE SKYROUN	1560	WILLIAM SALABANK
—	HUGH DE ASSHEBY	1577	THOMAS ORAMS, Deacon
1332	HENRY DE WYGORN	1604	ROBERT COTTISFORD
1338	ROGER DE BROM	1611	GEORGE TURNBULL
1338	JOHN DE CASPE	1649	SAMUEL SPRING*
1379		1662	
-80	WILLIAM DE WELTON	-3	BENJAMIN RANDALL
1382	RICHARD DE MIDLEHAM of Kirkeby Ravensworth	1693	JOHN BUCKENHAM
1383	HENRY DE NEUBOLD	1720	MARK PURT
1386	WILLIAM TAILOR (?)	1753	GILES EMLY
1404	JOHN RUSSELL	1790	JOHN ROBERTS
1415	WILLIAM TOURNOUR	1803	BENJAMIN GEORGE HEATH
1423	NICHOLAS DE KESTEVEN	1829	JOHN BRIGGS
1424	JOHN DE LENGE (LYNGE)	1840	GEORGE JOHN DUPUIS
1471	JOHN STYLE	1862	WILLIAM LAURENCE ELIOT
1474	JOHN WELFORD	1878	FRANCIS EDWARD DURNFORD
—	PETER FRESSELL	1881	FRANCIS FURSE VIDAL
1484	SIMON SKYDMORE	1908	HENRY ARTHUR FLEETWOOD
1485	GEOFFREY MATHEW	1953	In sequestration
1486	WILLIAM CANONICUS		<i>Curates-in-charge:</i>
1498		1953	PHILIP FIELDER HOLLAND
-9	WILLIAM SMITH	1954	MAURICE CARNE CLAY

*Ejected. "He died desired, lamented and honoured, in 1673. He was buried in the church of Creting."—(*The Nonconformists' Memorial.*)



St. Olaf panel in East window of St. Mary's Church.

ST. OLAVES AND ALL SAINTS

The only pre-Reformation church in Suffolk dedicated to St. Olaf or Olave, King of Norway (died 1030) was in Creting. Its site is marked on the Ordnance Survey map: the rising ground immediately across the way from Wolney Hall. "The Terrier of 1845 shows St. Olaves' Churchyard as Church Glebe, and the Terrier of 1886 gives its area as 1 rood 35 perches", wrote the Revd. H. W. Andrews, curate of St. Mary's, in 1908. He added, "Foundations evidently still in ground at the top of rise, about 30 yards N.E. of the cart-road into field ex High Road to Earl Stonham."

Robert Cottisford "qualified by a union from the late Bishop of Norwich" was "parson of Creting St. Olaves and also of Creting All Saints, half a mile apart" in 1603.

The Commonwealth Survey of Benefices, 1649, noted "All these Cretings very near together."

Benjamin Randall held all three livings simultaneously in the 1670s, but St. Olave's and All Saints maintained their separate identity until an Order of 17 October 1711 united them.

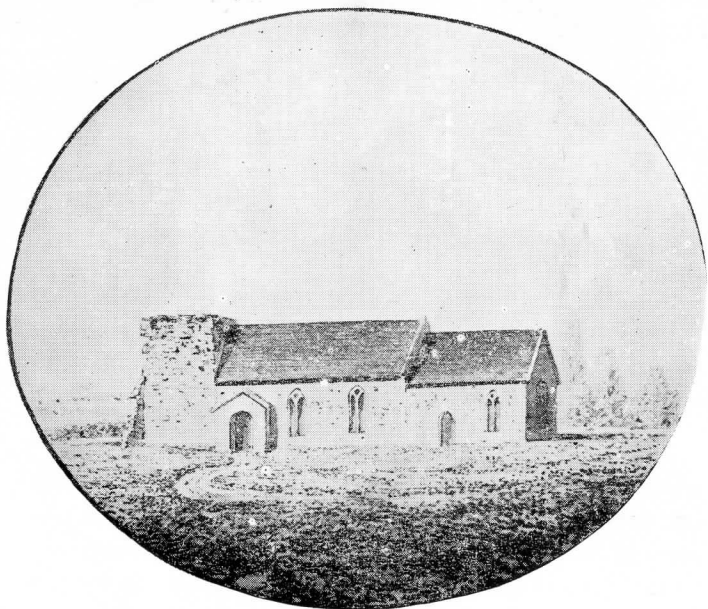
For the last century and a half Eton College has appointed rectors of the consolidated parishes of St. Mary, All Saints, and St. Olave.

No foundations of All Saints Church are to be seen, for when the building was demolished it was found that walls and tower had been built merely on the levelled ground. The bowl of the plain font belonging to this church found its way to the Rectory garden and the pedestal strayed to Ringshall. These were reunited and presented to Stowupland Church in 1843.

In 1951 the population of the combined civil parishes was 508. The ecclesiastical parish contains 748 souls.

H. R. LINGWOOD.

*Bosmere House,
Martlesham. Trinity, 1958.*



All Saints Church.

From a drawing by Isaac Johnson (1754-1835).

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