NOTES ON RITUALISTIC ECCLESIOLOGY IN NORTH-EAST NORFOLK

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The remarks which it is proposed to offer here on the churches of the north-eastern part of Norfolk, being confined to observations on the buildings and their fittings only so far as they appear to illustrate the belief and ceremonial of the mediæval church, I have ventured to entitle Ritualistic Ecclesiology; as it is not intended to notice any features in the architectural or constructive sense usually implied under the designation of Ecclesiology.

Norfolk may be called a "happy hunting-ground" for the ecclesiologist, as the churches are unusually numerous for the area they occupy, are generally easy of access, and a very large number of them were re-erected or altered at the close of the fourteenth century, a date from which till the middle of the sixteenth, the unaltered English ritual displayed the greatest amount of its splendour, and probably was in no place more effectually carried out than in the ecclesiastical edifices of East Anglia, a conclusion to which I think every ecclesiologist will come who has inspected a fair number of these buildings.

It is hardly necessary to say that in Norfolk there are several examples of churches standing in the same churchyard, as at Antingham, and Gillingham; but at Weybourne, on the north-east coast, there is a still closer combination of ecclesiastical edifices, the monastic and the parochial churches being conjoined in the following singular manner:—The tower of the former, of very early Norman date, forming now a north chapel to the

parish church, the east wall of the chancel of which was the west wall of the monastic nave, and is quite solid, there being no east window to the parochial edifice; this latter had its own tower, so that the appearance of the combined churches resembles that presented by a somewhat similar example at Wymondham, also in Norfolk.

A peculiar feature in some of the smaller parish churches is the great width of the nave, as at Aylmerton and Hempstead (near Eccles); a width allowing of a western tower flanked by windows in the end wall, even where there are no aisles. At Reedham, there is a similarly wide body with western tower, and covered with a single span roof, the east wall of this nave has two arches, the northern one opening into the chancel, the other into a south chapel.[1] The position of the tower in the middle of the west wall forbids the idea of there having been a central arcade under the apex or ridge of the roof; such as is not unknown in some few examples. These wide aisleless naves were perhaps intended to facilitate preaching to large congregations, as we find them in several of the churches erected by the Dominican order abroad, an order called also that of the Friars Preachers, from the prominence given by them to pulpit oratory. The space obtained by the width of these naves also allowed of altars being placed one on each side of the chancel arches, the piscinas in connection with which remain in numerous examples.

At the Collegiate Church of Ingham, we have the singular feature of a chapel raised one storey above the rest of the floor of the building; it is now in ruins, but the holes for the joists which carried the flooring, and the piscina remain; the latter in the south wall shows conclusively the use to which the chamber was applied. The only similar instance that I know of in England is at Horsham in Sussex, where there is a chapel placed over a crypt. In both these cases they occur on the north sides of the chancels. At Horsham there was an altar dedicated to St. Michael, which was probably the one in the chapel mentioned, as there are altars in the galleries of

[1] The ruined nave at East Beckham, has two arches in its east wall, a chancel arch, and a smaller opening north of it.

some foreign churches, and erected in honour of that archangel.

There is a very peculiar arrangement at the east-end of the chancel at Tunstead, and which can perhaps be best described as a vestry, similar in position to that seen in some late examples at the back of the high altar; here it is within the building and occupies the whole width of the chancel, having a depth of about four feet; there is a doorway on the south side, entered by a descent of one or two steps, whilst on the north is a flight of eight high and solid stone steps, landing on the flat stone roofing of the chamber; in this roof is an iron grating, and besides this and the door there are no other openings. The use of this apartment the stairs and aperture are quite unknown, but I venture to suggest that it was a relic chamber, because the permanent character of the approach to the roof points out that it was in frequent use, and the narrowness of the platform, together with the position of the iron grating, forbid the idea that there could have been a second altar in such close proximity to the "Master Altar," as the French call it. If access to the roof over the chamber was only occasionally required, a common wooden ladder would have answered the purpose equally well without the wide and inelegant stone steps, and my conjecture is that the worshipper ascended, and kneeling on the platform prayed to the saint whose relics he beheld under the grating.[1]

Singular as is the chancel at Tunstead, that at Rollesby, near Martham, is equally remarkable, and here also I think we may attribute its peculiarities to ritualism in connection with relics. In the interior angle, formed by the junction of the east and south walls, is a square

[1] That permanent and elaborate arrangements were sometimes made for the exposition of relics, is proved by the structural features existing at the west end of Lapworth Church, Warwickshire, of which a description and engraving are given in *Arch. Journal*, vol. xxii, p. 37. If the grating in the chamber at Junstead is modern, perhaps another theory may be advanced as to the probable use of the apartment, namely, that it served as an Easter sepulchre, the chalice and host being passed through the aperture at Easter, and borne down the stone steps to the principal altar. Instances of Easter sepulchres behind high altars are not unknown abroad; one is mentioned by Lubke as follows, "Behind the high altar in the centre chapel of the choir corridor in the Church of the Holy Cross at Gmünd, is to be seen a holy sepulchre, a valuable work of the fourteenth century," Lubke, Ecclesiastical Art, pp. 250-251. A similar chamber to that at Tunstead is said to exist at Brisley, also in Norfolk. See Norfolk Arch., iv, p. 305.

enclosure made by two pointed arches, placed at right angles to each other; they are about a foot thick, and the east window, a Perpendicular one of three lights, has the splays of the jambs or sides continued to the ground, leaving a recess in the wall, a feature somewhat unusual in connection with an east window; the whole arrangement suggests that a passage was intended through the arches and behind the altar, which would usually in the middle ages stand a couple of feet or more from the east wall.[1] No tradition exists as to the use of this singular addition to the end of a church, and its preservation through the last three hundred years of a changed ritual, borders on the marvellous. The theory which I advance respecting it is that the arches supported a chasse, or reliquary chest, under which sat any diseased person desirous of obtaining his cure by the intercession of the saint whose relics were placed above him. This idea I consider to be supported by some remarks furnished by Mr. John Hewitt, in a paper published in the Twenty-sixth Volume of the *Archæological Journal*, and devoted to the consideration of a perforated tomb at Newington Street, Kent. Amongst other examples the writer describes the shrine of St. Dizier at Alsace, and gives an engraving from an old illumination, reproduced in a work of M. Viollet-le-Duc, which exhibits an altar with its retable, at the back of which, supported partly by the east wall and partly by the reredos, is a chasse of relics.

Concerning this representation an extract is given from the above author's book to the following effect: "The retable masks and supports the reliquary, under which anyone might place himself, according to an ancient custom to obtain the cure of certain infirmities."[2] I believe that at Rollesby the arches may have been the supports of a chasse of relics under which a person sat for the cure of his malady, and then passed out behind the altar. In confirmation of this view I am informed

[1] The centre of an altar so placed at Rollesby, would be exactly commanded by a squint still remaining in the north aisle of that church.

[2] At the present day the German pilgrims to the Church of S. Apollinaris, erected on the high hill north of Remogen, on reaching the edifice find, "a monk and acolytes awaiting them. The priest then takes the relic which is the skull of S. Apollinaris encased in an artificial skull set with gold and precious stones, and holds it over the head of each pilgrim, after he or she has reverently kissed it." Cath. Times, July 27th, 1888.

that some years back there was a kind of seat under the arches in question. At Westminster the shrine of St. Edward has open arches, under which, I believe I am correct in saying, it was customary to seat those who desired that saint's intercession to cure their maladies. Respecting the shrine of St Dizier Mr. Hewitt quotes a passage from Didron to the following effect: "The tomb of St. Dizier in the little Church of St. Dizier, in Alsace, is nothing but a stone hollowed into the form of a little cell with two openings. Until 1835 persons suffering from mental malady were passed through these apertures; then they plunged them into a spring of water which runs through the village of Val. An analagous ceremony took place in Auvergne, at the tomb of St. Menoux, for the cure of head-aches." *Didron*, xviii, p. 51. The arch opening on the north side of the enclosure at Rollesby, and the lowered sill of the east window suggest that the invalid, after sitting under the relics, passed round the back of the altar to complete the cure. Passing through or round a sacred object has been a very common process in faith-healing,[1] and having never met with any explanation of the peculiarities seen at Tunstead and Rollesby, I have ventured to suggest the above solutions of the problems—which may be worth very little.

Nearly all Norfolk churches possess west towers, the doorways of many being of great richness; thus at Hickling the western entrance is combined with the window over it and a lofty niche in the apex of the latter, and decorated with more than thirty shields in panels. The width of many entrances is very great, so as to allow of the free egress and ingress of processions; at Tunstead, the opening has a clear space of six feet and seven inches; whilst at Felmingham it is no less than seven feet three inches; in both cases the doors are necessarily folding ones At Cromer a band of sex-foils runs entirely round the doorway with six winged seraphs within the panels, and at Acle we find the donors of the north porch in a spandril of the outer door-head where

[1] At baptism in the Greek Church, the child is carried thrice round the font, and at marriage the newly wedded pair walk three times round the temporary altar erected in the church.

they appear "bidding their beads."[1] A consecration cross remains on the same entrance, one of the two directed to be made by the bishop in the Roman ritual. The parvise is a frequent feature in East Anglian churches, and at Cromer there is one over each of the north and south porches.[2] These chambers were sometimes the abodes of recluses, both male and female, and the church at Lowestoft, in Suffolk, but on the border of Norfolk, still retains the porch chamber which tradition says was occupied by two sisters before the Reformation. Even after the sixteenth century they were occasionally inhabited, and it is said that John Gibbs, the non-juring incumbent of Gissing, resided in the north porch of the church there after his expulsion from his cure. Frequently the floors of these parvises rested on groining; the bosses, of which exhibited religious figures or emblems.[3] At Worstead we have one with the Holy Trinity; two throned and triple-crowned personages, with the dove at their knees; a symbolical representation differing from the usual mediæval one as commonly met with in England.[4] Our Lord is seen ascending, accompanied by angels, on the centre boss at Hemsby, whilst His mother is figured on another. The coronation of the Blessed Virgin was at Cromer on a boss, now re-placed by one of a different design, and St. Michael, the patron saint of Worstead, appears in a similar manner. Holy water stoups are frequently met with, and there is a very elegant example at Aylmerton, where the bowl is under a finialed arch and carried by a shaft springing from the floor.[5]

[1] The base mouldings of the towers are frequently enriched by flint panel work, bearing the emblems or initials of the patron saints of the churches to which they belong. At St. James, South Repps, the scallop shell of the Apostle is introduced amid waving tracery, and at S. George's, Hindolvestone, the crowned G, and a floriated cross are similarly placed. The lower part of the tower at Coltishall bears the crowned I, for S. John the patron of that church. At North Repps the cornice over the west door has panels charged with IHC. and M.R. alternately.

[2] Cromer possesses three porches, north, south, and east.

[3] The wooden floor of the parvise at Aylsham, has richly moulded beams supported by curved braces springing from angel corbels. At Aylmerton the roof of this chamber has been prettily decorated with flower patterns in colours. When the apartment was inhabited and entered from the inside of the church, the doors of the latter were fastened by wooden bars let into holes in the walls, a practice still in use in some countries of the East.

[4] At S. Nicholas, Lynn, the central and largest boss represents God the Father enthroned within a rayed glory, and tripled crowned; the smaller surrounding bosses bear figures of angels.

[5] At Felbrigge there are two stoups in connection with the south porch.

At North Walsham a very curious altar table is preserved in the vestry, it is about the middle of the sixteenth century in date, long and narrow, as though intended to be sat at, it has turned legs which carry a frieze inscribed "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ," &c., over which the words "And blood" have been inserted in smaller letters; over the inscription is a band of pierced trefoiled tracery, showing the work to be very early in the Reformation period.[1] At Wickhampton, there is, I believe, an altar stone in the churchyard, but I have met with none *in situ*. The altar platforms remain at the ends of the aisles at Salthouse, with wooden risers, and the recesses for the altar tables or reredoses exist at the same place. Tunstead retains traces of the panelling over the high altar, and above the site of the north chapel altar at Worstead is a long panel bordered with foliage, which is said to have contained a representation of the beheading of St. John the Baptist.[2] The piscinas differ in many cases from those in other parts of England, being formed in the east splays of the side windows, the outer angle of each piscina being fitted with two arches supported by a shaft, and under the canopy thus constructed is the basin, which is single and foliated. An Early English one, of the more usual English form, is at Strumpshaw; it is very elegant and with two drains. At Upton the aisles have single piscinas under peculiar canopies filled with pierced tracery of very pretty design; whilst the high altar has a sunken sill for a seat, slightly raised above which is the basin for the piscina, without any covering. At Sherringham is the rare feature of one on the ground, the orifice being on the top of a small stone, moulded like the base of a column; it was in connection with an altar at the end of the north aisle. At Trunch is an example in the unusual position of the north wall of the north aisle, though there is ample room for its insertion in the southern

Baconsthorpe has a recess for one in the western respond of the north aisle. There are two stoups one over the other at Billingford, Norfolk, whilst at S. Nicholas, Lynn, is one in the shape of a small octagonal font bowl with panelled sides, and an angel bearing a text.

[1] At Winchcomb, Glos., "The table for Communion is placed in the fashion of Puritanical times, enclosed in a quadrangular space with seats all around and accommodation for kneeling." *Arch. Journal*, vol. xvii, p. 353.

[2] At Wilton, Norfolk, the reredos of the high altar is said to remain, with paintings of SS. John Evangelist and John Baptist.

respond.[1] At Wroxham there are squints from each aisle, and at Trunch there was one from the now destroyed vestry.

Beautiful as are the traceried bowls of many of the East-Anglian fonts, their interest is, I think, far surpassed by those which bear representations of the administration of the sacraments on seven of their sides, whilst the eighth has some appropriate scripture scene. These sculptures are mostly confined to this district, the only place where, so far as I am acquainted, a similar series exists, being at Farningham, in Kent. The idea intended to be conveyed in some examples is that the sacraments accompany the Christian from his birth until his death, and "after death the judgement," that event forming the subject of the last panel at Marsham and Martham, in the latter example epitomised by a figure of our Lord, flanked by two angels, triple crowned and bearing trumpets, a small skeleton rising from a tomb beneath our Lord. At Gresham the baptism of the Saviour forms the conclusion of the series. Many of these representations exhibit the ceremonies attendant on each rite very clearly, and often with a sly touch of humour. At Martham the priest in Baptism is seen dipping a nude infant into the font, whilst acolytes, one with an open book, the other with the cruets, stand at the left hand of the ecclesiastic, and the mother of the child kneels in front bidding her beads. An attendant in the representation of the same sacrament holds the chrysom cloth at Marsham. At this church Penance shows the confessor and his penitent beneath the outspread wings of an angel, whilst the devil is skulking away with his tail between his legs. At Gresham the figure of Satan was so dreadful that when uncovered from a coating of plaster some years back it was chipped away, leaving only its outline.[2]

[1] The high altar at Baconsthorpe, has a very beautiful Perpendicular piscina, with two trefoiled arches on marble shafts, and a third arch in the splay of the window whose lowered sill forms the sedile; there is a basin under the western arch but none in the eastern, which thus formed the shelf for the cruets. At S. Nicholas, Lynn, there is a piscina without any sinking, but simply four holes pierced through the slab beneath the recess, a very unusual arrangement. At Roughton, near Cromer, there were two piscinas, one near the high altar, and another in the now destroyed vestry.

[2] Confirmation as represented at Gresham, Martham, and elsewhere, shows babes in long clothes brought to the bishop; in an example at West Lynn, Norfolk, a man holds one child, a woman another; probably as representatives of the two sexes.

These sculptures were very often coloured and gilded, and the spandrils over them occasionally show the various *instrumenta* employed in the administration of the ceremonies. At Acle the font has panels, one of which has the usual representation of the Trinity, and another the virgin of Pity, the latter a curious composition, as our Lord is portrayed reclining in the arms of His Mother, who appears to be offering to him her breast.[1] Buckenham Ferry has on the shaft among other figures those of SS. Margaret and Nicholas, the first being the patroness of motherhood, and the second, the patron of childhood. Seated lions and woodhouses, or wild men, are placed alternately on the shafts of many Norfolk and Suffolk fonts, as at Acle and Ludham, in the former county; at Ludham the woodhouses are male and female, the latter holding a little woodhouse in her arms.

Woodhouses are the supporters of some coats of arms and form charges on others, but this does not, I think, account for their appearance on the stems of so many fonts, for they would seem to have entered into other features of church decorative sculpture. Thus, at Potter Heigham was a large figure of one, part of which has been placed in the niche over the south porch doorway, and there is in the accounts of Mettingham College, Suffolk, the entry of a payment in 1413 of 40^{d} to Thomas of Yarmouth for making a "woodwyse" or woodhouse. The presence of the statues in churches of such "halfe-beastly men," as Spenser entitles them, is unaccounted for.[2]

At Potter Heigham is a remarkable font which, with the high steps forming the base, is entirely composed of terra cotta, or moulded brickwork, the joints of which being wide and the edges of the various pieces very ragged, would seem to show that it was originally covered

[1] Our Lady of Pity occurs on the font bowl at West Drayton, Middlesex, upon which there are also the Crucifixion, and a symbolical representation of "the acce laid at the root of the tree." The stem of this remarkable font is pierced in an unusual but elegant manner.

[2] In the Faerie Queene, book ii, canto x, we read—

"But far inland a salvage nation dwelt,
Of hideous giaunts and halfe-beastly men,
That never tasted grace, nor goodness felt."

And in book iv, canto 7—

"—— a wilde and salvage man
Yet was no man, but onely like in shape
And eke in stature higher by a span
All overgrown with haire."

with an extremely thin coating of plaster, such as was used in former times, but never seen now.

The canopy enclosing the font at Trunch is so well known that it is only alluded to here as displaying traces of a crucifix and its attendant figures, having been once fixed on its east side. Pyramidal covers of rich character have adorned the fonts at Worstead and North Walsham, the latter example ending in a pelican for finial, as in many other cases both at home and abroad. At Sherringham the font, placed as usual in Norfolk in the central passage of the nave, has over it a tie beam entering into the construction of the roof and furnished with wall pieces and curved braces, all having been elaborately polychromed, and evidently intended to support the chain connected with the canopy of the font under it.

At the above-named village, and at Barningham Northwood, the seats are shortened in length, or splayed off as it were, to allow of the free progress of processions round the font. In the latter example, immediately east of it, is some stonework let into the floor; it is exactly like a wheel window, and forms a circle 5 ft. in diameter, with a small nave or round in the centre, from whence radiate eight spokes, ending in trefoil arches, the interstices being filled in with neatly cut pieces of brick. This remarkable inlaid figure appears to me intended for a wheel of fortune, placed before the font, as an emblem of human life begun at baptism, to which opinion some measure of support is given by tradition, which asserts that it is a *wheel* placed in memory of a coachman; so that popularly the stonework is considered a wheel, and not the template of a window, as some have conjectured it to be, though there are no traces of any circular window at Barningham Northwood. The probability of its having been intended for a wheel of fortune does not appear so improbable when it is remembered that the same object was painted on the wall at Catfield, in this part of Norfolk. Allusions to fortune and her false wheel are frequent in contemporary writers, such as Chaucer and Gower, and occur in the works of the 16th century Spenser. Great dignity is given to many East Anglian fonts by the number and richness of the steps upon which they are

placed; elaborate panel work cover the risers of many, and on the tread of one set at Acle is inscribed a request to pray for the souls of the donors. Occasionally the upper ranges of steps are so contrived as to allow four out of the top range to project in the form of a cross, as at Potter Heigham; in others, two only do so, as at Worstead, on the east and south sides, and where they are traditionally thus placed for the priest and the sponsor.

There is a very interesting leaden font at Brundal, where the bowl has several crucifixes upon it, the date is very late Norman, or more probably Early English; the figure of our Lord has the feet uncrossed. Another fine leaden example was at Great Plumpstead; but it has been so shockingly mutilated that only a portion remains about the depth of an ordinary stew-pan. I had been led to expect a third specimen at Hasingham, but was disappointed to find that it had been replaced by a stone one of common-place design. Notwithstanding the iconoclastic doings of the Puritans the old fonts were generally respected, and the only seventeenth century one that I have met with occurs at Burlingham St. Edmund, where the stem has very quaint columns to support the bowl.

The many charmingly beautiful rood-screens remaining in Norfolk and Suffolk show us in a vivid manner by their painted effigies, the saints chiefly honoured by our ancestors. The Apostles are those most frequently met with after which come the four Evangelists, and the four Fathers of the Western Church. Perhaps next may be placed the two deacon martyrs, Stephen and Laurence, generally seen together on the same screen; the prophets of the old dispensation and the nine choirs of angels were duly honoured, as were the local saints, either those canonized in due form, or such as were reckoned saintly only in popular estimation. Perhaps St. Catherine is the foremost in the number of female saints pourtrayed on these screens, but SS. Cecilia, Helen, Margaret, Barbara, and Mary Magdalen appear with almost equal frequency. The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin is seen at North Walsham, and she appears in company with her mother St. Anne, at Somerlayton, in Suffolk, but on the Norfolk border; her effigy does not occur frequently on screens,

as in most churches she had an altar, image, or chapel devoted to her honour. The Apostles are figured so frequently that it is unnecessary to mention any examples. At Beeston, St. Peter holds a book inscribed "Credo in dm. pat. onpt.;" he is placed immediately north of the screen doorway at Filby, and St. Paul, in a corresponding position, south of it. The keys held by St. Peter are occasionally conjoined in base, as at Filby and Ludham. St. Mark at Potter Heigham is presented to us carrying his emblem of the lion very comfortably seated on his right arm, and St. John at Belaugh holds a chalice from whence an extremely ugly black devil is issuing. Many figures exhibit excellent examples of the ecclesiastical vestments. St. Jerome is always in the scarlet robes of a cardinal, and at Ludham his hat has the broad brim turned down and decorated with several golden ouches or broaches, whilst at his feet gambols his pet lion like a small dog, in a most playful manner.

St. Gregory seen triple-crowned at Upton, wears the mitre of a simple bishop at Tunstead, where he holds a double crozier; at Potter Higham this emblem is in the form of a single cross, and is altogether omitted at Upton. St. Benedict at Burlingham St. Andrew, has a large tonsure, and holds a pastoral staff which pierces a howling demon at his feet, another devil is laughing behind the saint's back and both have skins of dark brown dotted over with red spots, like those of the fish called plaice; the saint is vested in appareled albe, which is crossed by a bright green stole, and covered by a cope of the same colour. At Great Plumstead, the patriarch of western monks is in the full black habit of his order edged with gold, and having two golden broaches attached to the hood, a feature which I have not met with elsewhere. At Hempstead, St. Francis shows uplifted hands to exhibit his stigmata, whilst a crozier leans against him; this emblem is I believe unusual in connection with this saint. In the same church SS. Stephen and Lawrence shew the sleeves of their dalmatics turned back over their arms in a curious manner. St. Clara with book in left hand and monstrance in right, is at Trimmingham, where she appears in full conventual dress of a puce colour, whilst the Benedictine costume and attributes of an abbess

adorn the figure of St. Etheldreda at Upton; here the habit is coloured a very dark green, and a rich crown surmounts the hood. St. Withiburga, born at Holkham, Norfolk, appears in an interesting picture at Burlingham St. Andrew, clothed in royal robes duly ermined; in her left hand she carries an elaborate model of a cross church inscribed "Ecclesia de Dereham," in allusion to the one she founded at that place. With her right hand she upholds her mantle, and on either side of the figure trip two harts, as symbols of the solitary life of the saint. St. Cecilia at Filby is crowned with a rose garland, and bears another in her hand for Valerian, her betrothed husband, in accordance with the legend, which says:—

> "Valerian goth home and fint Cecilie
> Within his chambre with an angel stonde;
> This angel had of roses and of lilie
> Corones two, the which he bore in honde,
> And first to Cecile, as I understonde,
> He yaf that on, and after gan he take
> That other to Valerian her make."
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> *Chaucer, Cant. Tales*, 15,686. 15,692.

A fine series of prophets exists at Aylsham, the figures being remarkable for the variety of life-like attitudes in which they are placed by the artist. A similar company of Old Testament worthies was at Salthouse, but of much less merit in conception. The remarkable screen at Barton Turf with the nine choirs of angels is well known. St. George combating the dragon appears on many screens; at Filby his effigy is clad in armour and appendages of a thoroughly German type. St. Eligius at Hempstead has a hammer in one hand and a horse's leg in the other. Occasionally saints of whom little is known appear on screens; thus at Upton is St. Joan of Valois holding a very capacious wicker basket, and a bowl as large as an ordinary wash-hand basin. St. Petronilla appears at Trimmingham with book and key, and at Worstead is a remarkable female saint bearded and tied to a cross; she is crowned and the nimbus is placed at the back of the cross. In the same church is also St. William of Norwich, thorn-crowned, with a knife in his side, and holding two nails.

Kingly saints were much honoured and the screen at Catsfield bears no uncrowned figures on its panels, whilst

at Burton Turf, a parclose is similarly enriched with royal saints. St. Edmund appears at Trimmingham in company with another personage who may be Saint Edward the Confessor; he holds a small bird in his left hand, and is remarkable for having not only a respectably sized forked beard, but abundance of long flowing tresses reaching to his waist; the Confessor holding up the traditionary ring is figured at Ludham, where is also the local royal saint Walstan with his emblem of the scythe; he is met with also at Burlingham St. Andrew, where his legs are bare to the knee in allusion to his having given his shoes to a beggar.

King Henry VI. is often seen on East Anglian screens as well as wall paintings, in which representations due attention is paid to the fact that he was uncanonised; thus at Barton Turf, he is unnimbed, whilst at Ludham he has the aureole, but in both cases the word *Rex* is prefixed to his name, instead of Sanctus, placed before those of the saints with whom he is associated. I know of no emblem given to this saint, but a painting at Weasenham had an antelope at his feet.[1]

At Sherringham the screen and loft are unusually perfect, retaining the staircase with its upper and lower wooden doors. In the aisleless nave at Hempstead there were altars on either side of the screen, it having been returned at right angles to enclose them; and at Tunstead the north and south ends of the loft projected beyond the rest. Before the west face of the screen at Ludham is a platform several feet wide, raised on one step, similar to one at Hitcham, Suffolk, which, however, has two steps. At Potter Heigham the loft appears to have been east of the screen, but is generally supported by a beam resting on two posts, a foot or two west of the rood-

[1] The personal popularity of Henry VI, must have been very great in East Anglia, especially if the political tendencies of the people in that part of England, were in favour of the Yorkists, as they are said to have been. Many wills give directions for pilgrimages to be made from places in the Eastern counties to the king's temporary burial place at Chertsey; that of Margaret Est, of S. Martin's-in-the-Bailey, Norwich, dated 1484, provides a sum to enable a man to go for her "on pylgrymage unto ye Abbey of Cherksey ther as King Henry lyeth." Norf. Archæol., vol. iv. Another will, that of a Lady Darcy, enjoins her servant Marguerete Stamford to go a pilgrimage to "Seint William of Rowchester, and to King Henry." Essex Arch. Trans., vol. iv, p. 6. These vicarious pilgrimages were not confined to Christianity, but the Mohammedan rules also commanded that "these who cannot go themselves must hire some other to go in their room." Sale's Koran, p. 44, n.

screen, as at Sherringham, and at Burton, in Sussex. The rood was often borne on a beam above and independent of the loft, as at Tunstead, where the mortises for the cross and the attendant figures are plainly visible; this beam also remains at Ludham and Potter Heigham.[1] At Acle and Worstead the screens rise to a magnificent height, and the one at Ingham was of stone, of which part only remains.

The condition of these fine screens is in many cases lamentable, partly from the effects of time, but still more so from bad usage or neglect. Several have been demolished during the last few years, others have been cut up to form reredoses, as at Beeston and Salthouse, or put away with old lumber, as at North Repps; but the worst case is at Lessingham, where from the nave roof having fallen in during the winter previous to my visit, I am unable to say if any of the screen remains amid the ruins.

The rood-loft staircase is often formed in Norfolk churches in the following manner. A flight of steps is placed in front of the lower doorway of the stairs turret, which is thus entered at three or four feet from the floor level, and the turret itself does not spring from the ground but is projected from the wall at some distance from it, and supported on a cross arch, as may be seen at Belaugh. A similar arrangement was a favourite one for the staircase leading to the parvise. At Catfield this is made a very pretty feature, the inner doorway being in an angle having a battlemented cornice; in the same edifice the rood-loft stretched across both aisles, and some of the steps up to it were cut in the sills of the adjacent windows in an ingenious manner.[2]

There is a feature in East Anglian churches not often seen elsewhere, I allude to the mediæval western gallery or bell solar which is found in many of the more important edifices, and treated in a much more ornamental manner than the generality of later west galleries, of

[1] The rood-beam at Sutton bears a text in modern lettering, perhaps replacing a former inscription. At Shopland, Essex, the rood was carried on a tie-beam of the roof (there being no chancel arch), the mortise for its insertion being very clearly seen. At Salhouse and Scarning the Sanctus bells are said to be still hanging from the screens.

[2] This method of constructing the rood-loft staircase occurs also at S. Michael's, Ormesby, and elsewhere.

which these erections were the prototypes. They are often supported by stoutly timbered framework and arched bracing pieces, as at Aylsham and Trunch; both are coloured, the latter in a bold and rather vulgar design, and is destitute of a gallery front. At the magnificent church of Worstead, the bell solar is an elegant structure groined in wood in a manner similar to that of a rood-loft; an English inscription running along the front, records the erection of it in 1501, when there "Wer hus bodis Chrystofyr Kat Jefferey Dey;" an early instance of churchwarden self-glorification. There were bell solars at Cromer, Felmingham, and the ruined edifice at Overstrand. It is hardly necessary to say that they were not intended for congregational purposes, but as their name indicates for the greater convenience of bell ringing.[1]

There are many examples of low side windows, those at Sherringham and Wickhampton have their sills lowered to form seats similar to those often found in connection with altars; this feature shows that at both places it was customary for someone to sit before the openings inside the chancels, and, I consider, thus proving these lychnoscopes were for confessional purposes. At Ludham there has been an opening, now blocked, immediately under the west window, in place of the usual doorway; it resembles a wide lancet and has the head simply trefoiled, and the sill has under it a piece of moulded work or stringing course; it is placed at a height suitable for a person to kneel before the opening and look through it. Western low-side windows occur at the ends of the north aisles at Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, and St. Mary, Guildford, Surrey. At North Walsham, close to the inside of the north doorway, has been an opening 6 in. high by 4 in. wide pierced in the wall, at about 4 ft. from the floor, and was probably for confessional uses. A lychnoscope is found on each side of the chancel at Hempstead.[2]

[1] There is also a bell solar at Hindolverston; in all the instances cited the towers in which they are met with have western doors, showing that these galleries were intended to facilitate the passage of processions through the western entrances whilst the bells were being rung.

[2] At Hargham, near Attleborough, there is a wall at the back of one of the sedilia, which is pierced through; "this opening went to the outside of the wall,

There is a statement in an archæological work that only one Easter Sepulchre exists among the 729 parishes into which Norfolk is divided; this is quite incorrect, for besides the noble one at Northwood, reported to be the largest in England, there are many others, of which that at Baconsthorpe deserves notice. The front has three arches over which is another panelled and flanked by pinnacles; it is pierced through at the back into the sacristy. Another somewhat resembling the above is at Kelling, in the same neighbourhood; here the pinnacles are combined with the panel work in an effective and original manner.

A long cupboard is provided for the parish processional cross and banner staves in some East of England churches; there is a large one in the north wall of the tower at Cromer, and at Catsfield it is formed in the west wall of the nave, north of the belfry.

There is a beautiful wooden pulpit resting on a stone base, at Burlingham St. Edmund's; it has been highly coloured and gilt, and round the cornice is the text in Latin: "Among those born of women there has not risen a greater than John the Baptist." A very ancient example is, I believe, at Thurning, Norfolk, and a late one at Hingham bears the text "Necessity is laid upon me, yea woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel," 1 Cor. xx, v. 6.

At Ludham there is a remarkably rude alms box, placed at the west end of the nave; it consists of a post hollowed out of the solid at the top, and firmly clamped with stout iron strap-work, which has been furnished with three padlocks; a more elegant example remains at Blythburgh, Suffolk, but also with the receptacle for alms sunk out of the block of wood. Townley in his work *Biblical Literature* says: "This kind of poors-box is common all over the north of Europe, and is placed either at the church door, the entrance to the churchyard, or at the roadside adjoining the church." At Sprawston, Norfolk,

but not directly, so as to serve as a squint, but with a curve, so that it could only be used for the purpose of speaking or hearing through. Externally it had been bricked up." Norf. Arch., iv, 351. At Melton-Constable the lychnoscope is provided with a desk, and the same feature appears at Doddington in Kent. An engraving of this peculiarity is given in Glynne's Churches of Kent, p. 200. An Article on Medieval Confessionals will be found in Reliquary, vol. xxiv, p. 129.

there is an alms collecting box, of 17th century date, similar to one at Shipley, Sussex.[1]

Consecration crosses are generally plain red crosses-patée and there are four such at Upton, two near the chancel arch and the others adjacent to the aisle piscinas; but at Worstead the consecration crosses are differently treated and become prominent features in the wall decorations; whilst to a certain extent retaining the patée outline, the emblem is floriated, and in some of them encircled with a garland of foliage and flowers, whilst others had black letter legends round them, the size of these crosses is also larger than usual. I am only aware of one other example of an elaborately ornamented consecration cross—at Darenth, Kent, where there is one painted on the south wall of an aisle. In the present Roman ceremonial observed at the consecration of a church, the bishop "anoints with holy chrism the crosses on the two stone door-posts of the church," and afterwards "the bishop proceeds to anoint the twelve crosses on the walls of the church, and afterwards incenses them." An engraving from an illumination (given in the *Art Journal* for 1866, p. 359), represents a bishop anointing these crosses on a church interior, of which emblems three are seen, one over each of the piers of the nave arcade; they are of the patée form, and reached by a ladder on which the bishop is represented standing. At Cowfold, in Sussex, the same ceremony was performed at the dedication of the new Carthusian monastic church, a few years ago, temporary staircases being erected for the purpose.

The remarkably fine church at Salthouse, a little village near Holt, has aisles of four bays, each of which has two complete and long two-light windows, a conception giving a wonderful amount of dignity to the edifice, and which I have not met with elsewhere. These windows have their inside sills lowered for seats, forming an almost continuous bench table, and at Belaugh there is a stone seat at the west end of the north aisle, whilst at Tunstead both aisles have benches of stone.

[1] At Whatton, Norfolk, is an Alms-box dated 1639, with text "Remember the Poore," it is fashioned like a half-length figure, with a bag in the left hand, into which the alms are dropped. See Norf. Arch., iii, p. 398.

The wooden seats which remain are generally narrow and low, with very small bench-ends. At Martham and Ludham they had no backs, but in the latter place the end row of seating had the space under it elaborately panelled with pierced tracery. There is a fine series of bench-ends at Sherringham, having among other things carved on them a mermaid, cat and kitten, and a crying child with its nurse. At Trunch there are wiverns and sphynxes on the stall ends.[1]

Considering the numerous fittings which exist perfect in so many churches of East Norfolk the quantity of stained glass remaining is remarkably small. The choirs of angels appear to have been in the upper part of a window at Hempstead, of which only a power, triple crowned, and a six-winged seraph remain; there are several saintly figures at Martham, including a large one of St. Michael with scales, and others of SS. Agnes, Edmund, Margaret, and Martha, and some pretty bordering remains refixed at Potter Heigham. The emblems of the Eucharist, a golden chalice and white host, are on the red field of a shield at Plumstead At Belaugh the *Excursions in Norfolk*, published in 1819, mention an interesting window, showing St. Michael as the patron of the Universal Church; this has quite disappeared, and such being the case I quote the account given of this glass: "In the north chancel window of the church St. Michael holds a sceptre and a sword, and a pair of scales with the bible in the other hand, and under him are a number of men, women, and children; above him is a Latin inscription in ancient characters, expressing that Saint Michael is the guardian of the faithful people" (*Ex. Norf.* I, p. 124.) At Lammas the same work records the representation in one window of the Last Judgement, and the Blessed Virgin Mary as patroness of the seven corporal works of mercy (I, p. 165). I am unaware if this still exists.

Ancient altar cloths are said to remain at St. Gregory's Norwich, and a frontal from the ruined church of Whitlingham, to be preserved at Trowse.

At Great Plumstead a volume of the Pharaphases of

[1] At Long Stratton, Norfolk, the open seats are stated to have nearly a hundred different patterns on the finials.

Erasmus remains in the church chest. It is very perfect and has quaintly engraved initial letters, another book at the same place is a sixteenth century collection of 117 Homilies.

The tomb of Sir Roger de Bois and his wife, dated about 1380, at Ingham, has a very beautiful sculptured representation of angels presenting the souls of the former to God, and the angelic figures at the sides of the same monument are unusually graceful in design.

In many churchyards, there formerly existed chapels, which were separate buildings; the remains of one such exist at Salthouse, and there was a similar erection at Hickling now destroyed. The mortuary or charnel chapel at the west end of Norwich Cathedral had its exact counterpart at King's Lynn; in both cases there was an undercroft lighted by windows and surmounted by a lofty single aisled chapel.[1] The only churchyard cross I have heard of in East Norfolk is at Ingoldsthorpe. A very pretty wayside one remains at Aylmerton, and has a well designed base and shaft; the head, however, is new. Respecting these latter crosses, I cannot refrain from quoting a passage from the will of an East Norfolk lady, one Joan Thurcock, of Cley-next-the-Sea, it bears date 1505, and says: "I will that myn executors do make a crosse of tree be twix thys and the church, if so be they may gett the ground of some gode man to set the crosse on and ther to have a restyng stole for folkys to syt on." At Hemsby there are four crosses at some distance from the church, and said to have marked the space included as a sanctuary.[2]

Much more could have been said on the ritualistic ecclesiology of this part of England, especially as regards the fine rood-screens; but as, in the words of an old preacher, I would "rather send away my hearers longing than loathing," I bring these remarks to a conclusion.

[1] In 1308, a carnary or charnel-house was built in the churchyard of S. Nicholas, Great Yarmouth, by a widow Sybilla Flath, with a chapel over it, and endowed by her for two priests to conduct divine service in it. In 1588, it was pulled down and one of the city towers, King Henry III tower, converted to a receptacle for human remains. Manship's History of Great Yarmouth, quo. in Guide to S. Nicholas Church, p. 26.

[2] The boundary of the sanctuary space at Ripon, was "indicated by eight crosses surrounding the church at some distance, one of which remains in a ruined state, and is called Sharrow Cross." About Yorkshire, p. 219.