

ANTINGHAM ST MARGARET

Introduction

The ruins of St Margaret's Church. The nave dates to around 1100, with some possible Late Saxon elements. The tower dates to the 14th century and the chancel to the 14th and 15th centuries. The church was abandoned in the late 17th century and is located in the same churchyard as St. Mary's church (NHER 6855).

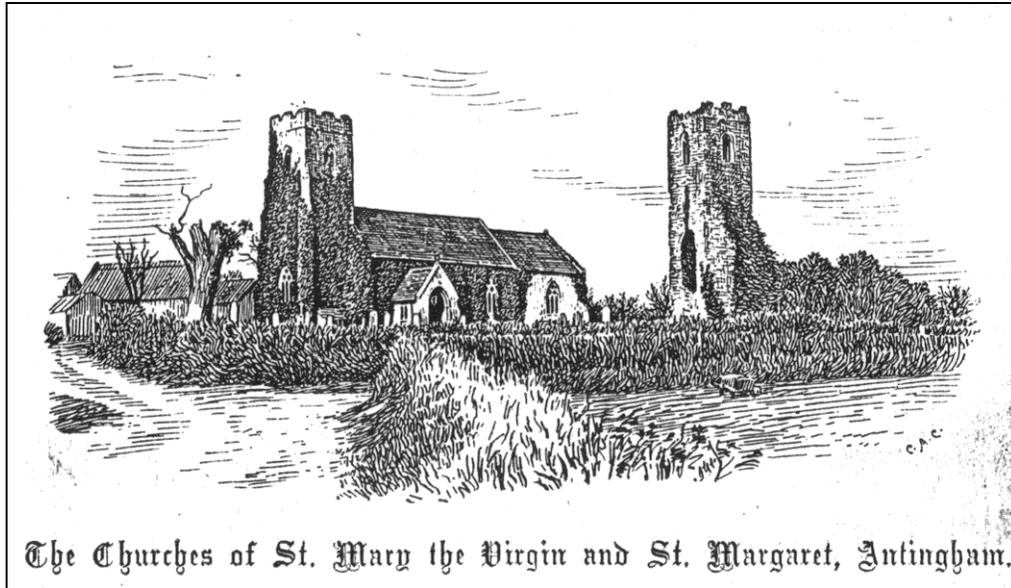


Figure 1 - View of the Churches about 1900

History

In Edward the Confessor's time, and at the Domesday Survey, the Abbey of St Benet at Hulme held a lordship in Antingham. This was known as St Benet's or Antingham Chamberlain's manor. St Margaret's formed part of this manor (unlike St Mary's which was of the Antingham Witchingham and Wallishes Manor). Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 St Margaret's Church received no further help from St Benet's Abbey and went into decline. At the time of the reformation St Margaret's became part of the Parish of Ludham and was subsequently consolidated with the parish of North Walsham. This consolidation formally took place in 1748 (N.R.O., FCB/2, 144), but had probably been in operation much earlier, since in 1703 a faculty was granted 'to take down the old walls of the ruined church of Antingham St Margaret provided the stones and other materials be employed to no other use but to the repairing of the steeple and church of Antingham St Mary and the churchyard walls there' (N.R.O., FCB/1. 452). Thus St Margaret's appears to have begun to fall into ruin before this date. St Margaret's was finally consolidated with Antingham St Mary in 2003.

Interpretation and Dating

The nave is the oldest part of the structure, to which chancel and nave have been added. It is difficult to be precise about the date of the nave, but the coarseness of the conglomerate quoin points to an 11th or early 12th century bracket. Earlier visitors testify to its Norman origins: Cox (1910, 1, 164) refers to a Norman south door, while Pevsner (1962b, 75) believed it to be 'probably Norman'. To this Norman core, a west tower was added in the first half of the 14th century, to judge from the tracery of the belfry window. The chancel is more difficult to pin down, but diagonal buttresses are ubiquitous in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Chancel

The north wall stands to a height of some 8 feet but precious little else remains. A gap in this wall suggests a window opening, but no detail survives. The east wall is occupied by a large tree, and the south wall has completely gone - save the south-east corner, where a diagonal buttress can be made out (strangely this buttress is not shown on Ladbrooke's print of 1823 (Figure 2), which views the church from the east; but there are further inaccuracies in the print, such as the form of the belfry windows).

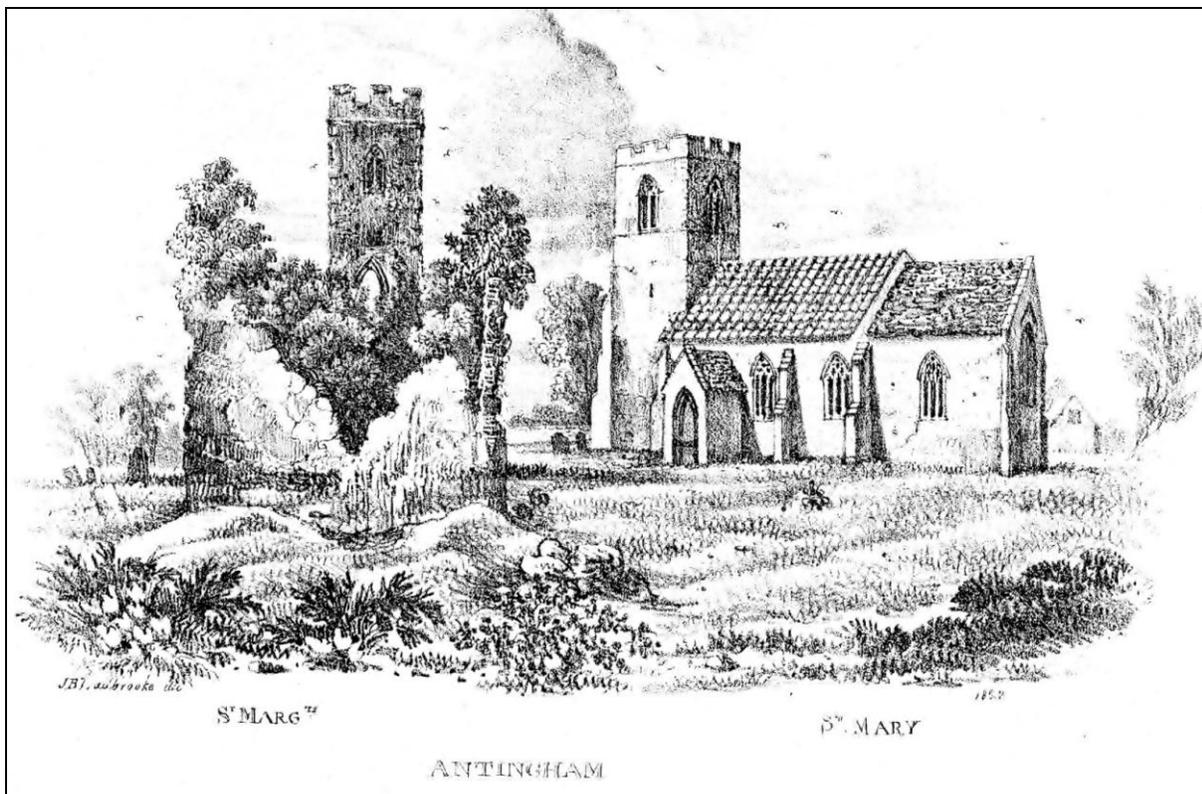


Figure 2 - View of St Margaret & St Mary by Ladbrooke 1823

Nave

A clean vertical joint, visible in the north wall marks the division of chancel and nave; evidently the chancel is an addition to an earlier nave. From the outside, the nave

north-west corner is visible; the nave is about 1 foot wider than the chancel on this side. The corner itself is interesting, constructed of large conglomerate quoins, but projecting slightly north of the nave north wall to form a pilaster buttress. On the interior at this corner, there is a hollowed-out niche, possibly the remnant of a rood-stair. The south-east corner of the nave is much more decayed, but some conglomerate quoins can be made out. Much survives of the rest of the nave, but little can be discerned beneath the thick mantle of ivy. Gaps in the walls suggest the south wall had two windows and a doorway, the north wall one window and a doorway; but no details are visible. Both western corners are constructed of conglomerate quoins.

West Tower

The proportions of the tower are slender, with no buttresses and a tall tower arch. Quoins are of squared limestone (although greatly robbed), the tower arch is of chamfered brick, but most of the rest of the fabric is coursed flint (larger, smoother flints than the nave). The tower is clearly an addition to the west wall of the nave: there is a vertical break, 2 inches wide in places. A large cavity is all that can be seen of the ground floor west window. At first floor level, there is evidence of a narrow aperture in the west face and a large rectangular opening above the chancel arch in the east face. Of the belfry windows, only the eastern one survives entire: the two cusped main lights are surmounted by a cusped oculus. Much of the parapet has crumbled, but enough remains to indicate its crenellated form



Figure 3 - View of Tower from Nave

Condition

The church is roofless throughout, with a mass of foliage growing inside nave and chancel, and all walls covered with ivy. Some walls have disappeared (chancel south and east walls), the rest are very crumbly. Most worrying is the tower, riven by a vertical crack the height of its west face; there has been much robbing of the tower walls. Combined with the inroads of ivy, the structure is in a very dangerous condition. It is now fenced off for safety reasons.

Churchyard

St Margaret's occupies the southern part of a large rectangular churchyard containing both churches. There is no visible division separating St Margaret's churchyard from St Mary's, but it is probable that they were originally distinct. It is interesting to notice that the masonry wall which forms the boundary to the east of St Margaret's only extends across the southern half of the churchyard. Hedgerows form the remaining boundaries. Some of the headstones near St Margaret's go back to the 18th century. A piece of Barnack cross-slab is now in St Mary's church. It is of late cross paté type with round-ended ribbon ornament. It is likely to date from 1120-1160. It is unclear whether this came from inside one of the churches or from the churchyard.

Archaeological Record

Long (1970, 3) mentions a porch, although no remains are now visible.

Bryant (1900, 256) refers to an image of St Margaret in the porch. He also says that: "In St Margaret's church in 1552 there were three bells of six, three, and two cwts., and two clappers, and in the porch was an image of St Margaret. In the church was a guild, and a light of St Margaret. In 1575 there were these arms:

"Antingham S'ce Margarete. In the chauncell windowe Antingham - Sable a bend argent, no other coates."

Before 1702 the church was decayed and useless, and a faculty was obtained to sell three bells, which were in St Mary's church, and also to repair St Mary's with materials from the old walls of St Margaret's."

Perhaps remains of Norman doorways and windows lie in the rubble round the church. Whilst several examples can be cited in Norfolk, the presence of two churches within the same churchyard is still a rarity.

References:

Ruins and Disused Churches of Norfolk, Neil Batcock 1991

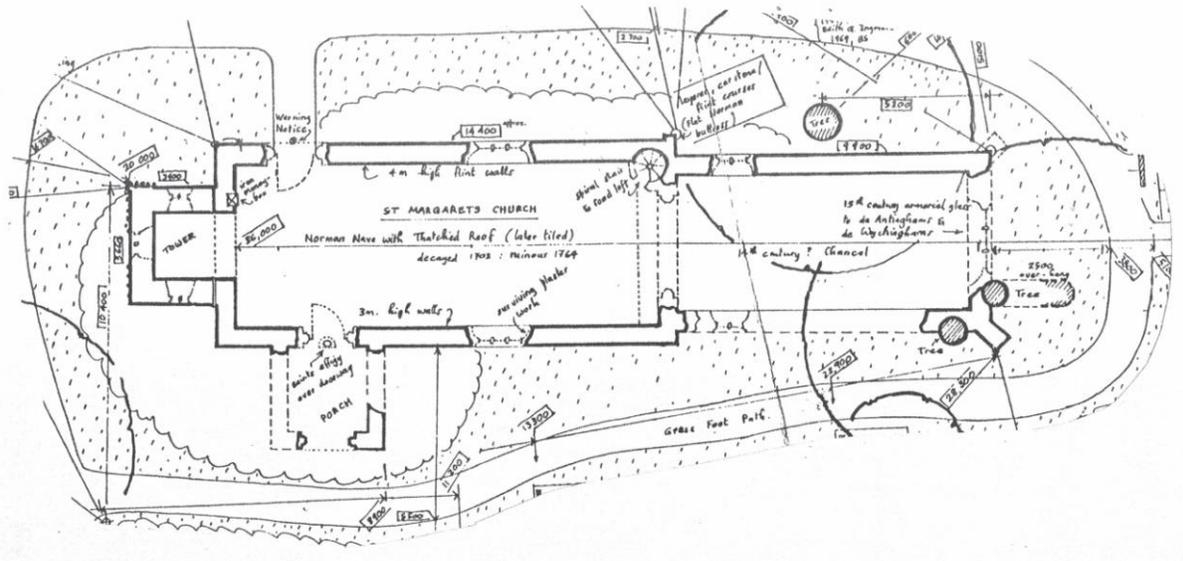


Figure 4 - Floorplan

RECTORS OF ST MARGARET'S

- 1291, *Thomas* occurs rector.
- 1302, *Walter de Pickering* instituted, presented by the abbot.
- 1304, *John de Norton*, by the King, in the vacancy of the abbey.
- 1318, *Robert de Carleton*, collated by *Garcellinus*, Cardinal St. *Marcellinus*, and vice-chancellor of the Pope.
- 1331, *Ralph de Welyngham*, by the abbot.
- 1433, *John Shaw*. *Ditto*.
- 1447, *Thomas Apylton*. *Ditto*.
- 1463, *And. Belle*. *Ditto*.
- 1468, *Sim. Aleyn*. *Ditto*.
- 1473, *Thomas Cook*. *Ditto*.
- 1504, *Sim. Holle*, by the Bishop, a lapse.
- 1518, *Thomas Gardiner*, by the abbot.
- 1519, *Edmund Halteman*. *Ditto*.
- 1528, *John Godbere*.
- 1554, *Robert Church*, by *Robert Rugge*, citizen and alderman of *Norwich*, by virtue of his lease, as I take it, of this manor from the Bishop.
- 1559, *Richard Gatefeld*, by *Franc. Rugge*.
- 1560, *Nicholas Church*, by the Bishop, a lapse.
- 1570, *William Fasset*. *Ditto*.
- 1582, *John Wright*. *Ditto*: in 1603, he returned 56 communicants, and was vicar of *Ludham*.
- 1610, *William Starkey*, by the Bishop.
- 1617, *Edmund Wilson*. *Ditto*.
- 1662, *Robert Bullock*. *Ditto*.
- 1675, *Nicholas Pollard*. *Ditto*.
- 1679, *George Raynsond*, by the Bishop.
- 1690, *Robert Harvey*. *Ditto*.
- 1701, *Thomas Jeffrey*. *Ditto*.
- 1736, *John Fowke*, by the Bishop.