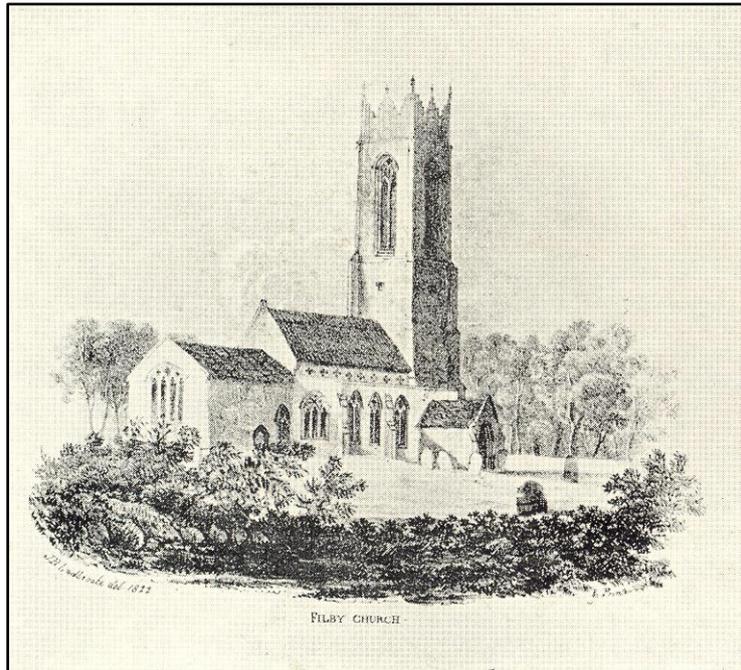


All Saints Church, Filby, Norfolk, England.



The Church

Filby was an important village in Saxon times and the original church which stood here was one of the earliest in the district. The present building and is dedicated to All Saints. It has been described as “the most beautiful in East Flegg.” John de Wykelwode is the first known Rector: he was presented in 1315 by Robert de Fileby whose family were then lords of the manor.

The Tower

This, together with its West door and window, is a fine example of the Perpendicular style (c.1400-1575). The fact that even a small community could boast such a magnificent church is due partly to the prosperity of the mediaeval wool trade in East Anglia. The unusual figures on the top corners represent the four Latin Doctors of the church. There are five 17th Century bells with chiming apparatus.

Tower Door

Why are there seven locks on the doorway to the belfry? One suggestion is that the tower, with its iron clad door, was used as a strong-room for the village valuables and as a refuge against marauders from the sea and other disturbers of peace. Alternatively, the door might once have been the lid of the parish alms chest?

The Font

The octagonal font in Purbeck marble is from Early English period (c.1200-1275). Despite a modern appearance, it is the oldest item in the church and was probably transferred from the earlier building.

Stained Glass

None is earlier than the Victorian period. The medallions in the North Aisle (left hand side) are an imitation of the 13th century style.

The Pulpit

The 'wine glass' pulpit is the original mediaeval one dating from the Perpendicular period: the stem probably used to be 15 inches longer.

Side Chapel

The altar in the South Aisle is dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The Aumbry was a gift from members of The Filby Association and was dedicated at the unique Filby Homecoming in September, 1968. We traced our descent from Roger de Fileby and others who were Lord of the Manor in the 13th and 14th centuries

Rood Screen

The lower part of the screen dates back to c.1450 and is one of the few surviving pre-Reformation painted screens. It is accounted second in quality only to Ranworth and was the work of the same school of Norfolk craftsmen. Although its beauty is faded, it reminds us of the power of colour and symbolism in an illiterate and bookless age.

Why should four of the figures depict Virgin Martyres of the 3rd Century? From left to right, the panels portray:-

1. St. Cecilia (AD 230) with wreath of flowers.
2. St. George and the dragon.
3. St. Catherine of Alexandria (AD 250) holding a sword and book and standing on a wheel.
4. St. Peter with keys.
5. St. Paul with sword and book.
6. St. Margaret of Antioch (AD 278) piercing a dragon with her crozier.
7. St. Michael the Archangel weighing souls.
8. St. Barbara (AD 235) with a tower in her hands.

Monuments

The "Lucas Angel" on the south wall of the chancel is a fine work of its kind and was executed by Hermann of Dresden in the 1830's. Near the altar steps, there are stones to commemorate three Rectors who between them ministered here for 140 continuous years. They are:-

James Wace	40 years (1681-1722)
Thomas Whaites	48 years (1722-1770)
Christopher Taylor	49 years (1771-1820)

Church Treasures

The chalice and paten are of solid silver and the former is quaintly inscribed: "1636 R.L. E.D. Churchwardines for the Towne of Ffilby." These Communion vessels have been in constant use since the reign of the Royal Martyr, King Charles 1. Edward Boys, Rector of nearby Mautby, had been his chaplain.

The registers date back to 1561, in the reign of Elizabeth 1, and are well preserved.

Strangely enough, the only reference to the Filbys is an entry concerning the marriage of Elizabeth Filbye to Thomas Mantrope in 1661. The oldest registers have been deposited with the Norfolk Records Office.

Other Features

By the North and South doors are well preserved Stoups for the holy water with which the faithful crossed themselves on entering. The rim has been worn by the fingers of many generations.

On the right of each altar there is an opening which serves double purpose: the bread and wine for Communion are placed on the Credence shelf and the Piscina is a soakaway used in cleaning the vessels afterwards.

The Roof

One of the few remaining thatched roof churches in Britain and was re-thatched in 2006/7.

2016

The church underwent reordering and the pews were removed to make space for other events to be held there. Carved wooden ends from the pews were re-used to make cupboard doors and other items within the church. The kitchen and toilets were modernised.

The Filby Hymn

From all over the world we come
Happy to meet again.
Thy blessing Lord on us we pray
On this our Filby day.

Our grateful thanks for journeys done
And steps in safety trod.
Thy blessing Lord on us we pray
On this our Filby day.

The months and years have passed away
In sorrow, joy and hope.
Thy blessing Lord on us we pray
On this our Filby day.

Stretch forth thy hand to absent friends
In sickness or in need.
Thy blessing Lord on them we pray
On this our Filby day.

This hymn is sung on Filby Sundays at All Saints Church - to "Saint Fulbert CM" which is the tune of "Ye Choirs of New Jerusalem"