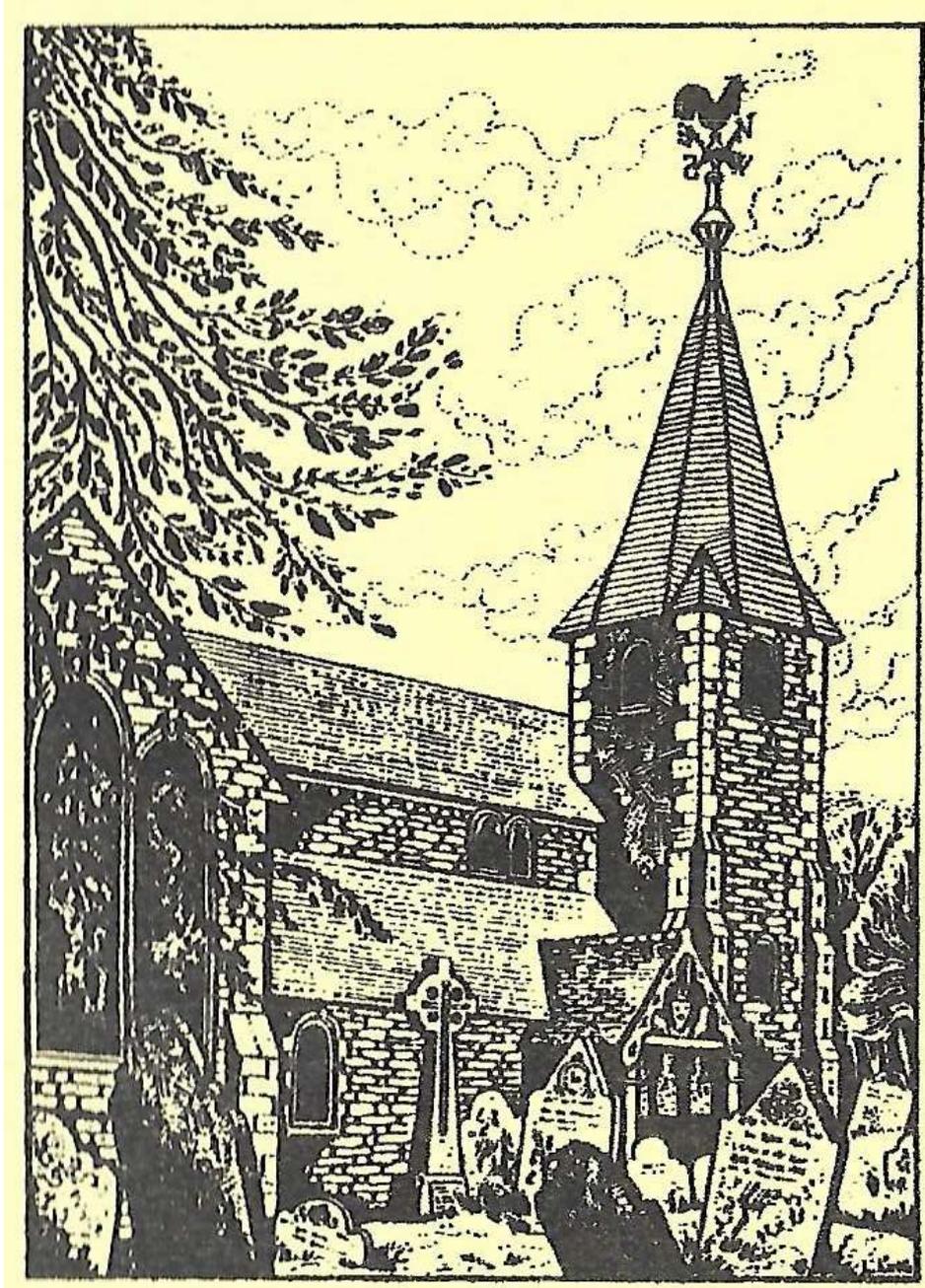


The Parish Church of St Thomas à Becket PAGHAM



**A Guide to the Church, Parish and
Harbour**

Revised Raise the Roof Edition

About this book

It is more than 40 years since, at the request of the Parochial Church Council, Mr H J 'Bob' Taylor wrote the original version of this Guide book. After a distinguished career in the Prison Service Bob with his wife Olive retired to Paghham, where he gave generously of his many talents in the service of both Church and community. In the intervening years there have been many changes as the life of both Church and community have evolved and there has been exciting new light thrown on the past. All this has necessitated a thorough revision of the text, with this new edition launched for the 'Raise the Roof Appeal'. But it is the editor's earnest desire that Bob's unique and elegant style should be preserved.

During his lifetime Bob wished to remain anonymous, but with the sales of his book now totalling thousands he will perhaps forgive us for acknowledging the debt owed by so many in their desire to learn something more of this fascinating place called Paghham.

This revised edition is both possible and appropriate in the context of the Raise the Roof Appeal, launched in 2016, and awarded with a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

We pray that the new roof will, then, enable St Thomas à Becket's Church to continue to be the home for the heritage and lives, the hopes and aspirations of the community for many years to come. The church and nation face interesting times. This community of Paghham has both challenges and opportunities from the threat of flooding and the prospect of many new homes, but all of us step out in faith and seek to build on strong foundations:

*'Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who labour build in vain.'*

(from, Psalm 127, our Raise the Roof text)



Parish Church of St Thomas à Becket, Pagham c. 1836

INTRODUCTION TO THE PARISH

1300 years ago Caedulla the King of Wessex gave Pagham and its lands to Wilfrid who, when Bishop of York, was driven into exile and finding refuge in Sussex brought both spiritual and material blessing to an impoverished and famine-stricken people. Later when the Bishop was able to return north he gave Pagham to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to this day the church and parish come under the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

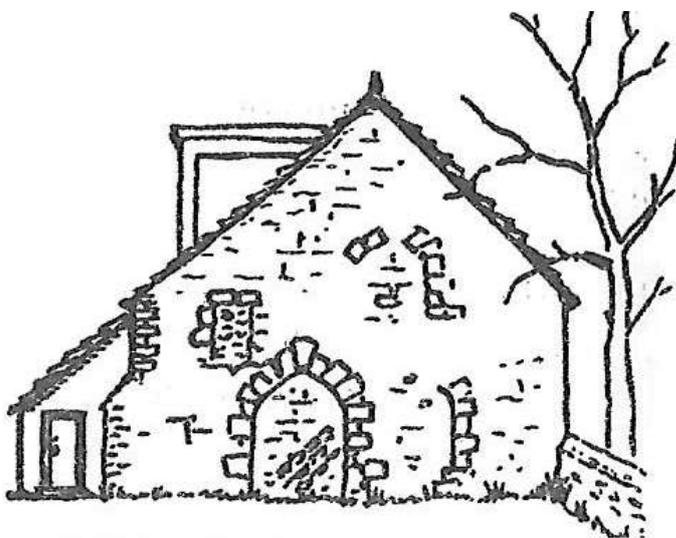
The above is on record but we now know that Pagham as a community existed right back to prehistoric times. Tempest, floods and other circumstances have both restricted and expanded the shape of the parish and it needs an imaginative eye to picture the parish of Pagham as it was when the present Church of St Thomas à Becket was built. The church was then the centre of the parish with a thriving port on its doorstep, farming communities and industries around it and a notable market which served and attracted people and business from afar. In the 13th century Pagham was the ninth largest port and fourth wealthiest parish in the Kingdom.

The church is now at the west end of the parish with a Nature Reserve its near neighbour and a few old historic buildings around it but little remains of the old village. This is a pity because antiquity has a beauty of its own. However, Pagham is by no means a dying community; on the contrary it is very much alive, growing and enfolding Nyetimber and parts of Aldwick with good buildings and well paved and lighted streets. Such things are important, old and new, but it is people who really matter and it is for the people of the parish and its visitors that this short history of the church and description of the parish is written.

THE CHURCH

The present church is dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury, better known as Thomas à Becket, who was Archbishop of Canterbury 1162-1170. He was murdered in his cathedral on 29th December 1170 and was canonised in 1173.

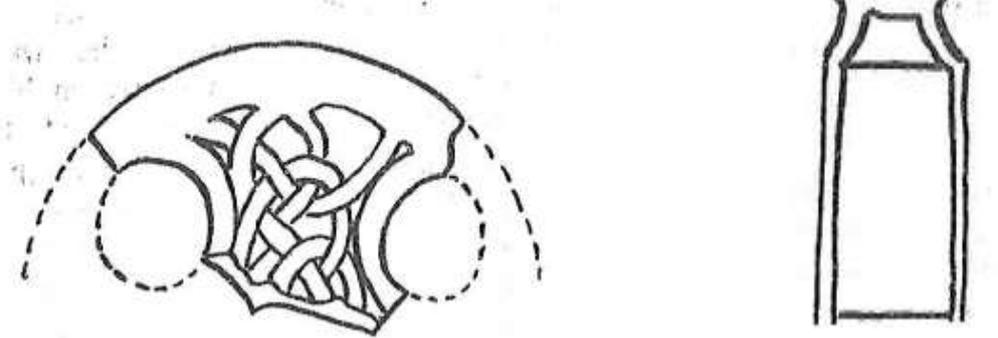
The connection with the See of Canterbury is mentioned in the Introduction, when the Manor of Pagham with others was handed over to Archbishop Theodore by Bishop Wilfrid. The land charter recording the original gift to Wilfrid by the Saxon king mentions 'the Church of St Andrew on the eastern shore of the harbour'. Presumably this is the site of the St Andrew's Chapel which stands in the garden of Little Welbourne next



door to the old Vicarage, and may be seen from the beach in the corner of the harbour. Some time since 1626 this building passed to secular purposes and is now used as a garage. It was thought that this must be Pagham's original place of Christian worship.

Old St Andrew's Chapel

Fragments of Saxon Cross



However, in 1976 it became necessary to replace the floor of the nave in the parish church which made it possible for the Sussex Archaeological Field Unit to carry out a dig in the body of the church. This revealed not only the anticipated remains of an earlier Norman church, but a smaller Saxon stone church as well. It was not possible to date these remains, nor did the dig reveal any traces of a wooden building which might have been the earliest erected on this site. Since these remains were to be permanently hidden under a new concrete floor, a number of stones were removed from the Saxon foundations and built up into the oak topped altar which now stands in the south transept as a visible link with more than a thousand years of our Christian heritage here in Pagham. A fragment of a Saxon stone cross which was also discovered in that dig is displayed in reconstructed form nearby. Back in the 1950s a Saxon burial urn was discovered in the churchyard and restored by the British Museum and is displayed in a cabinet in the south aisle.

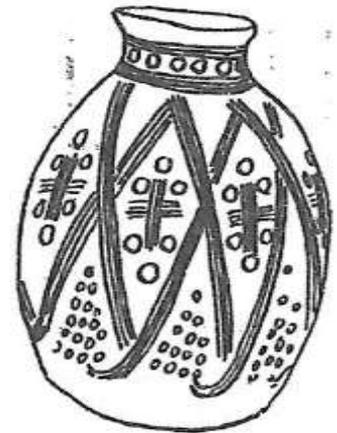
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New light was shed on the antiquity of this site in 1995 when an archaeological team dug the foundations for an extension on the south west corner of the church to form a new St Andrew's Chapel. These cut through a ditch which probably enclosed the original Saxon church. There were also signs of Roman presence. But most exciting was the discovery of three middle bronze age cremation burials dating to around 1500 BC; this was already holy ground in the time of Moses!

Cremation Burial Pots



Middle bronze Age

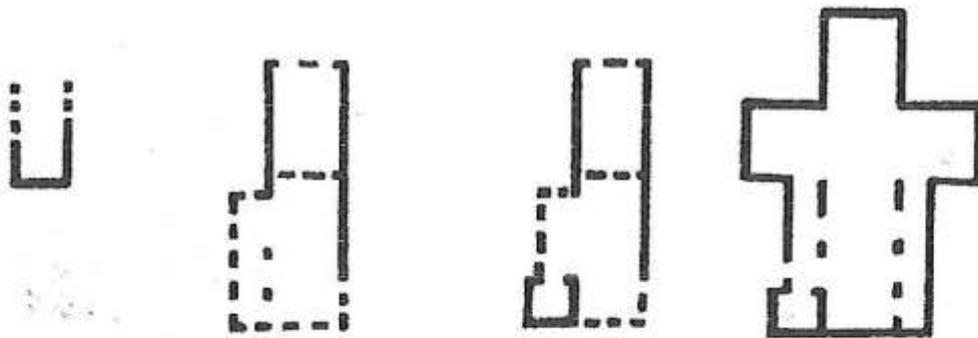


Saxon

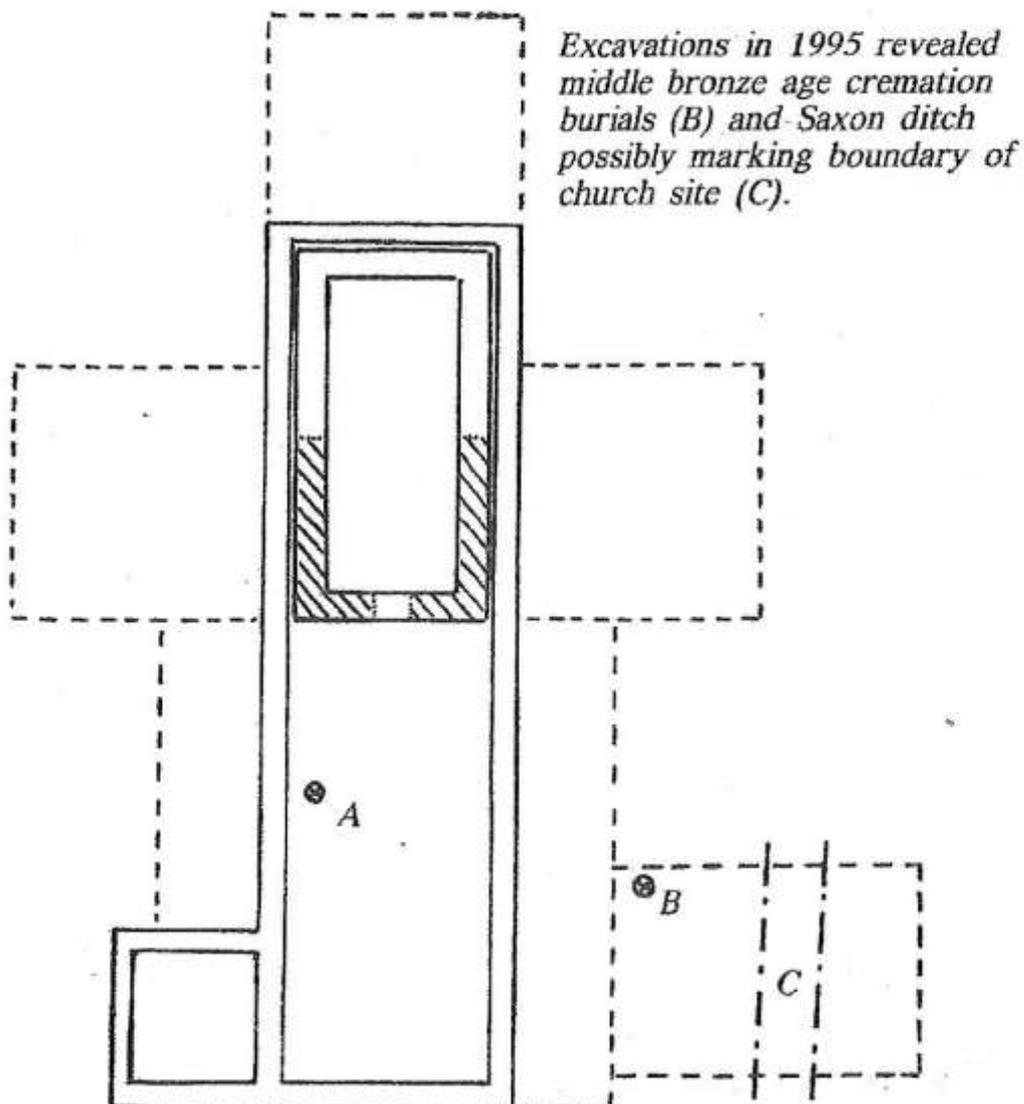
Either St Andrew's Chapel or the Norman church was visited by Archbishop Anselm in 1108 to consecrate Richard de Bellmeis, Bishop Elect of London. This ceremony was at the request of Henry I because the monks of Canterbury would not grant a dispensation for this to take place at Chichester. In 1151 Archbishop Theobald visited Pagham in connection with the preferment of John of Pagham to become Bishop of Worcester. In 1164 Archbishop Thomas à Becket had a dispute with John Marshall of Pagham about the overlordship of Mundham and Bowley. The King intervened and summoned the Archbishop to the King's Court and later to the Great Council at Northampton where he usurped the overlordship and fined the Archbishop.

These facts are mentioned to establish in the mind of the reader the status of Pagham and its surrounding manors in those early days.

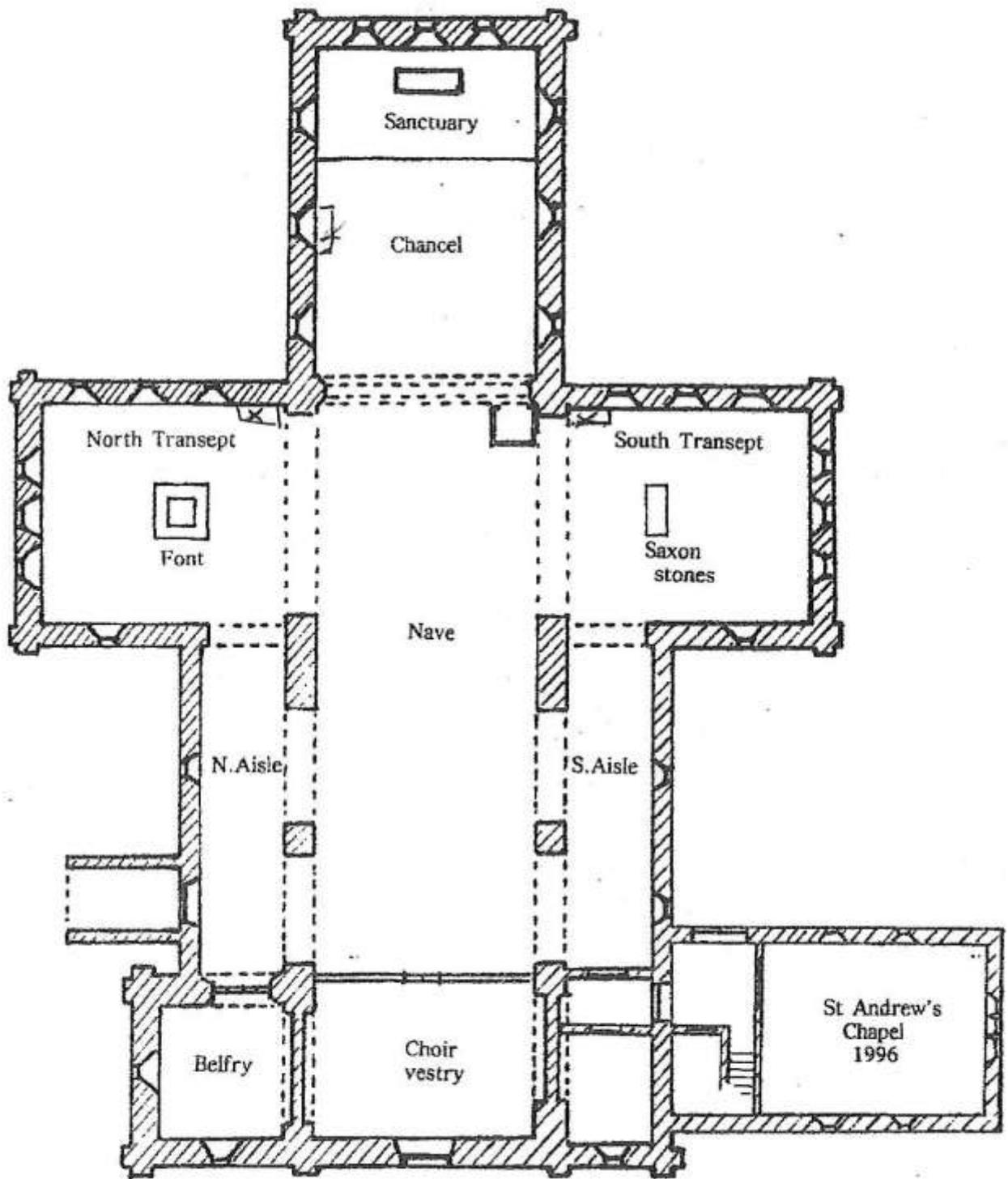
Our church was probably built within 40 years of the death of St Thomas à Becket, being a major enlargement of the existing Norman church, the original dedication of which is now unknown. In 1170 Richard of Dover, Becket's successor in the Archbishopric came to Pagham and in 1204 King John granted to the Archbishop the right to hold a market and fair at the port of St Thomas of Pagham. The tower, the nave and chancel are all 13th century work and a little of the chancel is 11th Century.



Archaeological excavations in 1976 indicated four stages in the building of the church as shown above. Saxon foundations actually uncovered shown hatched below; also position of Saxon cross (A)



Excavations in 1995 revealed middle bronze age cremation burials (B) and Saxon ditch possibly marking boundary of church site (C).



The rest is modern work of repair at various times of restoration made necessary by fire, tempest or plain neglect. Although much of the rest has been rebuilt and repaired over the centuries, the essential appearance and character of the church have been preserved.

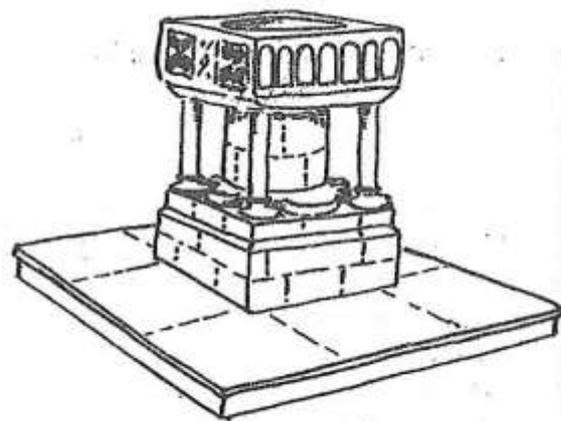
When the floor of the nave was replaced, opportunity was taken to install a new heating system and rebuild the pews, both of which have greatly enhanced the congregation's comfort. The box pews which in Victorian fashion occupied the front rows of the nave (and until the 1970s both transepts) were more or less reserved for the gentry, and were inclined to impede the view. These are now at the back giving the church a greater feeling of openness. Between 1970 and 1990 the local community raised and spent more than £100,000 on restoration work to preserve this much loved parish church for the generations to come.

The columns of the nave are in transitional style c. 1190-1195, the stiff-leaved capitals being of particular note. The chancel is Early English and the East window is a good example of the simplest style of that period. The lower part of the three lights is a particularly good example of medieval glass and was brought from a church in Rouen in the mid-19th century. The scenes depict (N to S) the nativity of our Lord, the Adoration of the Wise Men and the Circumcision. Above are the Arms of Archbishop Howley (Canterbury), Queen Victoria and Bishop Otter of Chichester. Repairs to the stonework, together with a rearrangement of the stained glass into its present form with the shields in the middle position, was carried out in 1939. On the south side of the sanctuary is a double piscina with a badly weathered gargoyle outside for the flow of water.

In 1836 the church was in such a bad state of repair that the west front including the window had to be entirely renewed. The present rose design was copied from a church in Palermo and the beautiful glass was given a century later by Sir Arthur du Cros in memory of the convalescence of His late majesty King George V at Craigweil House in 1929. Correspondence preserved in the Church archives between the Revd. G G Knox, then Vicar, and members of the Royal Household make

fascinating reading. [See our book, 'The King and Queen at Craigweil 1929', for sale price £2.] Queen Mary was a familiar figure at Pagham when she attended here for Sunday worship, and indeed her gracious behaviour and manner gave rise to the presentation of three pieces of painted glass for the window in the north aisle. One of these depicts the emblems of the passion, another the shield of Edward the Confessor and the third is a genuine 15th century roundel displaying 'A Pelican in her Piety'.

The Victorians built the choir vestry with gallery above and therefore removed the Norman font from its original position by the west door to a place in the south aisle now occupied by the Book of Remembrance. This siting of the font proved very inconvenient for those taking part in the service of baptism, hence its more recent removal to the north transept, formerly a gloomy part of the church which has since been restored and is now the baptistery. In many ways it is happily placed, the baptistery being spacious and in the stained glass windows a number of children look down on the font. The font bowl dates from the earlier church but the shaft and pilasters were renewed during the Victorian restoration.



Norman Font

During the period 1642 – 1660 there were many revolutionary changes in the Church. Bishopricks and other offices were abolished and ministers replaced vicars, as happened at Pagham. In the sanctuary there is a tablet in memory of Polyxena, wife of John Barfoot, Minister of Pagham (1652) with an inscription in Latin and English.

Close to the pulpit in the south transept is a stone in memory of Edward Darrell, 'Clerk to the Caterie of the Queen's (Elizabeth's) Household 1575'. Barton Manor, Nyetimber was owned by the Darrell family 1560 -1598. There is a link

between Barton Manor and Bowley Farm, another beautiful old manor house on the boundary of Pagham dating back to the 14th century. Mary Darrell, heiress to Bowley Manor married her relative Edward Darrell who thus succeeded to Bowley and died there.

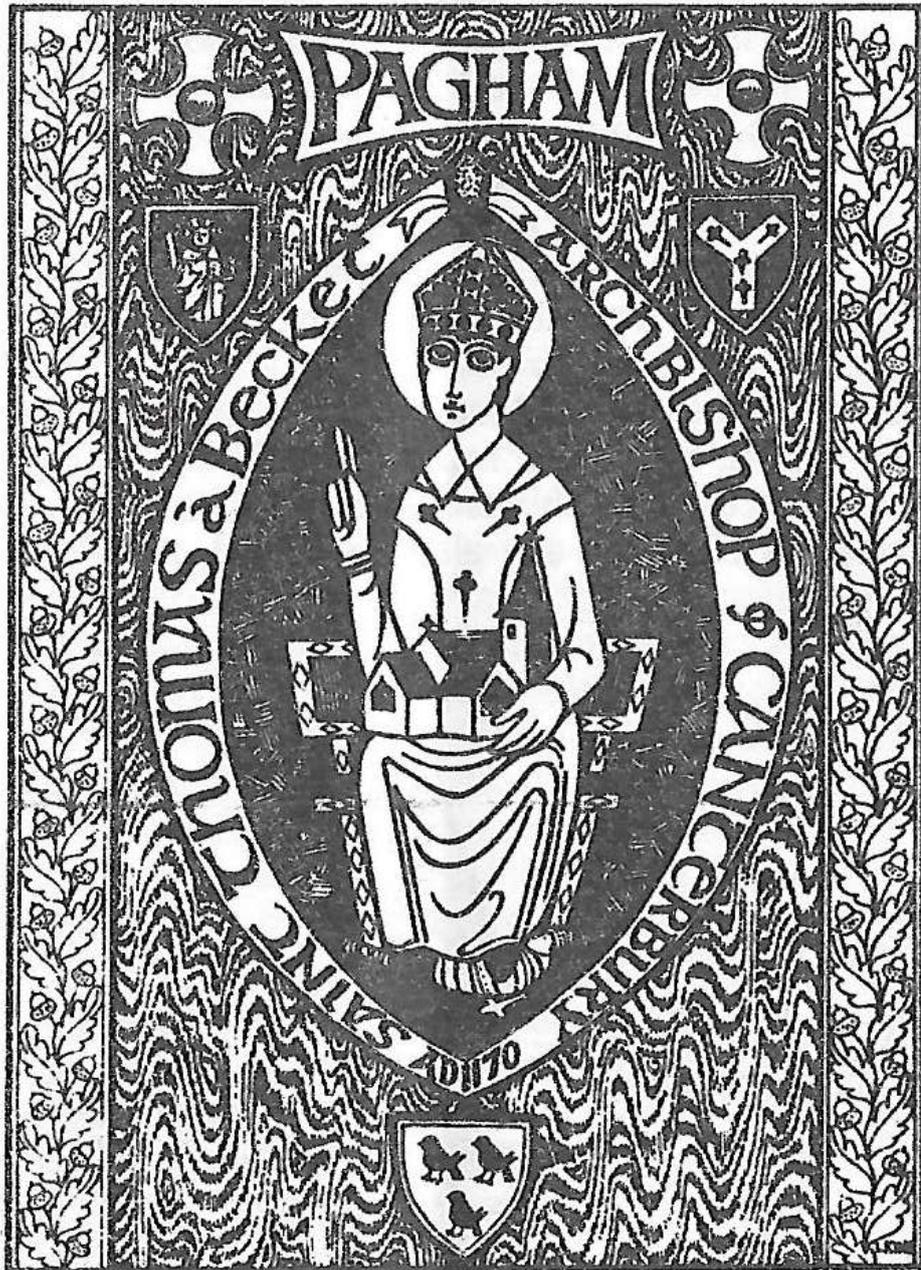
Prior to the finding of Saxon remains within the church a Saxon burial urn was discovered in the churchyard. It was restored by the British Museum and may be seen in a case in the south aisle. Two cherished possessions not on view are a King James Bible dating from 1639 and a charming little Elizabethan chalice.



*Elizabethan
Chalice*

A new treasure is the banner commissioned in 1979 to mark the completion of the church's restoration. Designed and executed by the late Yvonne Hudson and Rosalie Williams it is an outstanding example of exquisite modern craftsmanship. The central panel of unusual shape is based on the seal of Eastbridge Hospital, Canterbury, founded in 1190 to provide hospitality for pilgrims to the martyr's shrine. The knight with the drawn sword under Becket's feet is original, though the Saint is now depicted seated on a throne (cathedra) of medieval style with our church on his lap, a traditional symbolism of the special care which a church receives from its patron saint. The mitre is copied from Becket's own mitre which still exists in the keeping of the Abbey of Sens in France where he spent his exile. At the foot of the banner is Becket's personal coat of arms while above are the arms of Chichester and Canterbury. The oak leaf border symbolises both the faith and endurance of the saint and Pagham's origin as a Saxon settlement in a 'ham' or clearing in the great oak wood which covered this area in those times. The whole banner is worked on a background of blue watered silk, recalling the sea with its ever present influence on our life and history.

The timber framed spire is shingled and is surmounted by a curious 18th century ornament of lead which must have made a good landmark for coastal shipping. The spire was re-shingled in 2003 following extensive damage to the old shingles caused



The Becket Banner, 1979

by woodpeckers. Below is the belfry with a peal of six bells, the treble being hung and dedicated in 1974. The dates of the others are ii and v, 1666, iii and iv, 1832 (both recast from earlier bells) and vi, 1688. The third bell became badly cracked and had to be recast again in 1979. The ringing chamber is on the ground floor, the ropes passing through two other floors. In 1967 the bells were rehung in a modern steel frame in memory of a former Vicar, the Revd C E Payne. The old wooden frame was removed to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton which is well worth a visit. There were bells way back in the history of the church. In 1532 John Frye left by will 12 pence for the repair of the bells and his widow, a year later, left the same sum. About the same time there is a record of Pagham ringers being paid four pence for ringing. Bell ringing is still very much part of our church's life; new recruits and visiting ringers are always welcome.

In 1984 there was a major re-ordering of the chancel and refurnishing of the sanctuary with the primary object of providing a new altar rail extending the full width of the chancel (it was formerly cut short by the choir stalls) and with better access for the increasing numbers of communicants worshipping at our church Sunday by Sunday. This work was offered as a most generous gift in memory of a former member of the congregation. At the same time care was taken to preserve as much as possible of the existing material as it was given by the Revd Edward E Goddard, Vicar of Pagham 1823 – 1850, whose arms and crest may be seen in the Vicar's stall.

A further re-ordering was undertaken in 2008 to cater for increasing numbers and the regular use of the north and south transepts on Sundays. Some of the pews were removed to allow for a plinth to be built. A moveable altar was installed so that the Eucharist is focussed in the centre of the church and visible to all. A positive by-product of this re-ordering has been the ability to make better use of the space and light created in the centre of the church.

A church exists primarily for the worship of Almighty God and worship needs music. Our church is blessed with good acoustics which enhance every kind of musical offering. Until 1958 there was a small pipe organ standing in the position of the present console. This has been succeeded by a series of electronic organs: a Miller Martinette, a Compton, a Miller Series E, and most recently a Wyvern C220 with a very authentic sound, custom built and voiced to the church.

Mention has already been made of our new St Andrew's Chapel. This was built in 1995-96 with the primary purpose of providing suitable accommodation for the children's worship and teaching during the main Sunday service. They were formerly housed in the choir vestry which put unacceptable constraints on the modern child! The exterior of the chapel has been perfectly matched to the existing structure, but built and fitted out to the highest modern standards. It serves many valuable purposes within the Church's worship, work and ministry. The addition of simple kitchen facilities has also allowed the space to be used for social gatherings and as a meeting room. Above, another spacious room has been provided in the roof space, together with new access to the west gallery, which with its commanding view of the church is a popular place to sit for major services and concerts. Opportunity was also taken to provide much needed toilet facilities. The Chapel was re-dedicated in 2016 by the Archdeacon of Chichester.

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The Millennium Text was installed at the rear of the church, ready for the 2000 Millennium. Further details relating to this can be found in the Millennium Text Leaflet.

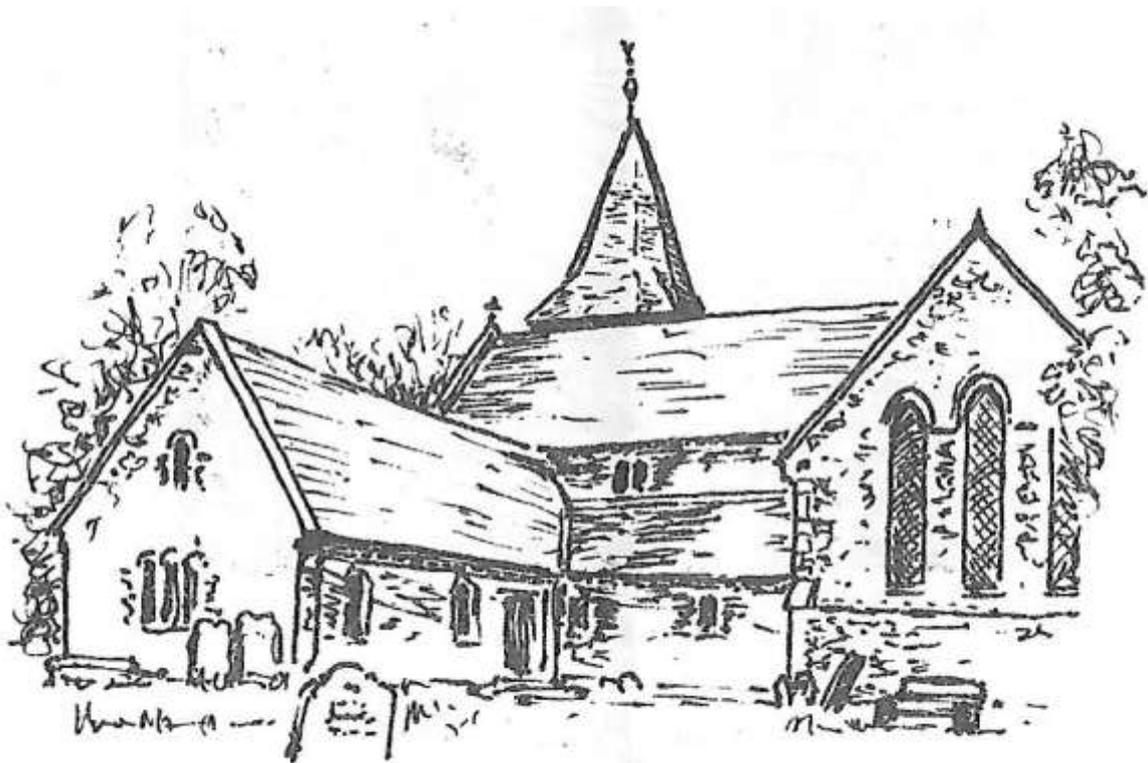
Parish registers record births, marriages and deaths as far back as 1707, all but the more recent ones being housed for safe keeping at the Diocesan Archives Office in Chichester, where all documents relating to tithes are also deposited.

A survey of all the graves found in the Churchyard was carried out in the late 1970s. The information, together with a churchyard plan has been placed in a folder which can be found

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at the back of church. Many people visit the churchyard in connection with their Family History research and it is hoped that the information contained in the folder will be of help to them. The information is also available on our website.

In 2007 Michael and Sandy Sell carried out research to discover more about those men of Pagham who gave their lives for their country during the First World War, and whose names are to be found on the War Memorial sited in the churchyard. This research culminated in visits to as many of the Commonwealth War cemeteries as possible to gather photographic evidence. The book which Sandy and Michael created was rebound in time for the centenary of the Armistice, and can be found at the rear of the church, close to the wall-mounted list of all those from Pagham who served in the First World War.



St Andrew's Chapel, 1996

THE PARISH

In 1341 Pagham suffered unprecedented gales and a great area of the parish was devastated by the sea. The hamlet of Charlton, between Barrack Lane and Sea Lane, was engulfed by the sea and disappeared. The harbour ceased to be useful and during the century Pagham's wealth slowly diminished and she gradually faded into obscurity. In 1401 Pagham was omitted from the list of south coast harbours. In 1696 there was an enquiry into Pagham Harbour lands and it was found that 2000 acres belonging to the King were derelict. There were several attempts, including in modern times, to open up the harbour again, but storms and the huge bank of shingle defeated them; all that is left of the original opening is a small land-locked basin known as the Lagoon, which during the summer months provides an admirable 'nursery' for novice dinghy sailors.

Since the start of this 21st century, Pagham beach has suffered severe erosion and the future is uncertain. Church and community combined in 2014 to form the Pagham Flood Defence Trust to raise funds required to protect our beach and village in the years to come.

At every tide the harbour fills and empties through a narrow gap in the shingle bank, setting up a strong current. Here and elsewhere in the harbour the sea defences are maintained under the vigilant eye of the Environment Agency. As an important area for migrant, nesting and wintering birds Pagham Harbour was declared a Local Nature Reserve by West Sussex County Council in 1964. The Nature Reserve incorporates 700 acres of inter-tidal saltmarsh with associated shingle banks at Pagham and Church Norton, and nearly 400 acres of surrounding farmland, pools, ditches and hedgerows. These habitats provide refuges for many migrant birds, not only waders like Stints and Spotted Redshanks but also birds of prey like the Osprey and Hobby and smaller birds such as Redstarts and Flycatchers. An important breeding colony of Little Terns is sadly in decline. During the summer these delightful birds can be seen hovering over water and diving to catch fish. Other breeding birds include Ringed Plover and

Oystercatcher on the shingle banks and Redshank, Lapwing and Shelduck in the meadows surrounding the harbour. Herons nest locally and can be seen, often standing motionless, by the side of channels or rifes, where one may even catch a glimpse of a Kingfisher.

During the winter months the area is alive with geese, ducks and waders which have moved south from their breeding grounds, spending the winter feeding on the mud, and at high tide, resting on surrounding farmland. One of the furthest travellers is the Brent Goose which breeds in northern Russia. Waders such as Dunlin, Curlew, Golden Plover and Godwits occur in large flocks, and the rare Avocet regularly winters here. The fields, hedges and reedbeds provide food for wintering Larks, Pipits, Tits, Finches and Buntings and nesting sites in the summer for Reed and Sedge Warblers.

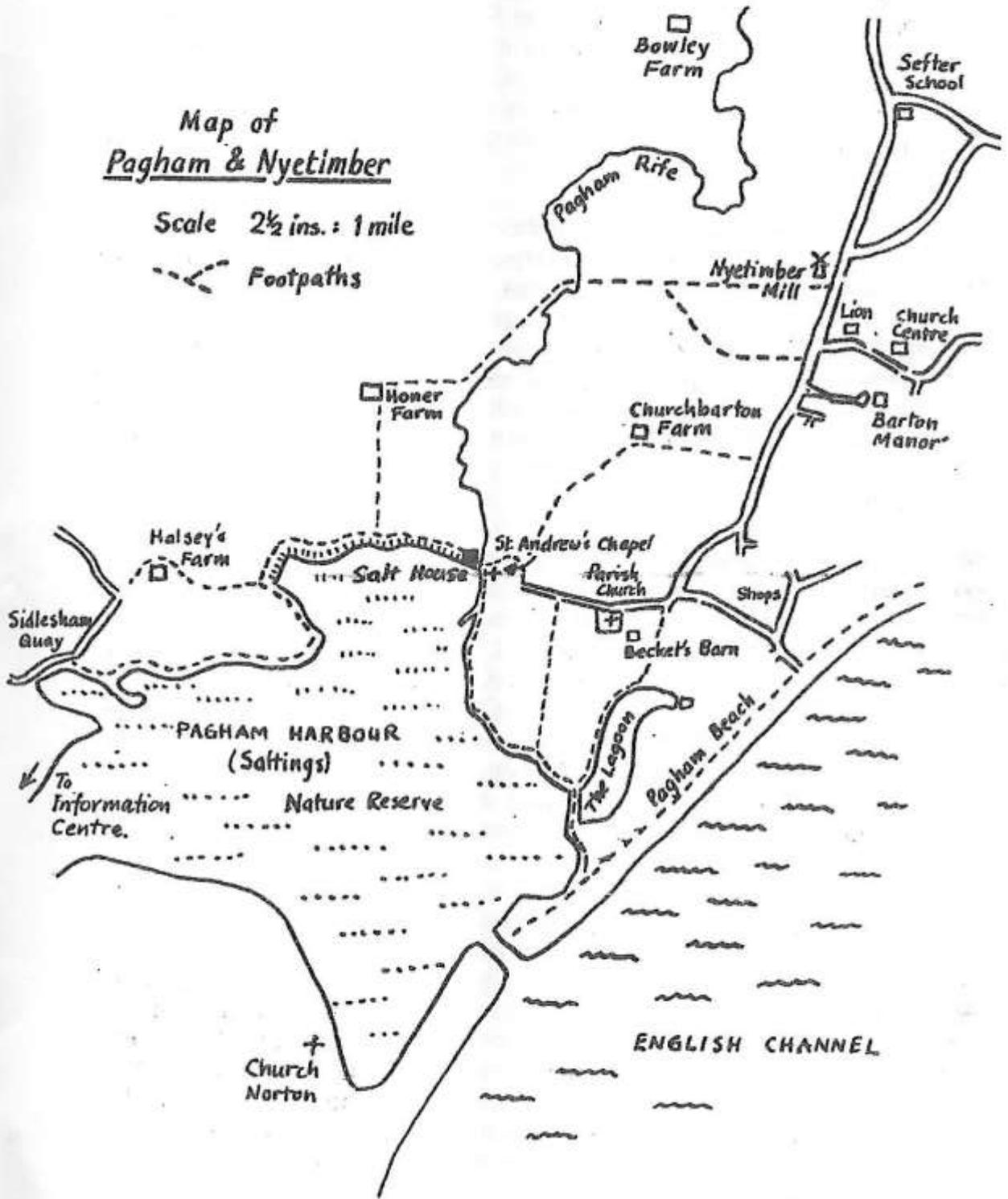
At Sidlesham Ferry there is an Information Centre with car park, nature trail and displays relating to the area and where leaflets and guides to the wildlife of Pagham Harbour may be purchased. It can be reached by car on the B2145 from Chichester to Selsey, or on foot from Pagham Church via Pagham Wall (harbour wall), Halsey's Farm and Sidlesham Quay. The old Salt House at the eastern end of Pagham Wall is occasionally open as an information centre.

There are a number of buildings of antiquity and interest in Pagham. Opposite the church is the Old Cottage which was, no doubt, the sexton's and was built about the same time as the present church in 1206 and was added to later. The walls are thick and built of flint and stone, some of the stone coming from Becket's Barn. The Barn itself was totally derelict in 1970 but has since been restored and rebuilt, retaining its mediaeval character, for use first as a restaurant and now as the administrative centre of the Holiday Village adjacent to the church. It is one of the few sites of large Rectories that remained more or less undisturbed for so long. The Rectory is first mentioned in 1299 during a dispute between King Edward I and Archbishop Winchelsea about the appointment of a Rector of Pagham, when it was recorded that the inhabitants of Pagham had besieged the Church and Rectory preventing the

Map of
Pagham & Nyetimber

Scale 2½ ins. : 1 mile

--- Footpaths



Rector's men from getting food and carrying away the Rector's corn. The Rector's income from Pagham's great tithes was then considerable. It is known that the Rectory was used by visiting Rectors when collecting tithes, but higher Church dignitaries stayed at Barton Manor. After the 13th Century the Rectory was adapted for farming purposes, the great tithe having been diverted for the founding of Canterbury Hall in Oxford for the training of new clergy following the Black Death. The Hall is now part of Christ Church College where the name lives on in Canterbury Quad. South of Becket's Barn is the Moat Meadow, but there are no longer any traces of its original use for storing water for the tide mill recorded in the Domesday Book, fishponds for oysters (a common food in those days) and salt slips for obtaining salt from sea water.

Further north in Nyetimber is The Lamb Inn, built in 1702-1706, which was an ale house and bakery. A grocery store adjoined the Inn and behind was a piggery giving local people bacon and pork. Opposite The Lamb stands the Old Malt House which has been converted to a private dwelling. On the other side of the Inn is the old Forge, now also a private dwelling. The Lion Hotel in Nyetimber Lane was built in the 15th century and was reputedly a smugglers' haunt with a supposed tunnel to Barton Manor. There is also a 'priest hole' and secret panel in a bedroom.

Barton Manor is reputedly one of the oldest houses in the country. It has a Saxon aula or hall with walls nearly three feet thick. A blocked up arch and herring bone masonry are within the period 800 – 1000 and there is a 13th century chapel. When the property was taken by the Crown, Queen Elizabeth I granted it to Edward Darrell, her 'Clerk of the Caterie', whose memorial tablet is in the church. Bowley Manor mentioned earlier is a beautiful house on the boundary of Pagham and goes back to the 14th century with a lancet window and a pointed arched door. It also contains the remains of a piscina dating back to the 12th century.

The Inglenook Hotel is a thriving family-run hotel formed from two older houses and frequently accommodates the receptions for weddings which have taken place at the parish church.

Greensleeves, also in Pagham Road, was again converted from two old cottages. The result is a perfect period cottage furnished in keeping with its age of 400 – 500 years. Under the original floors were thousands of oyster shells. An inglenook and two baker's ovens were also discovered, and a clay pipe which was found during the conversion has been cemented into the brickwork of the fireplace.

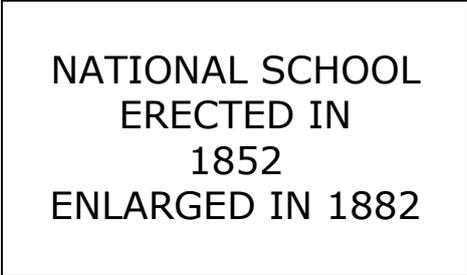
The Modern Pagham has a population of some 7000, although this rises considerably during the holiday season. Pagham Beach was developed between the Wars with dwellings constructed from redundant railway carriages. Most have now been redeveloped but you can spot the originals by their distinctive windows, some still bearing Smoking and Non-smoking signs! The houses and bungalows in Pagham and Nyetimber are in well-planned estates where, for the most part, care has been taken in spacing the properties and preserving as much as possible of the natural amenities. It is to be hoped similar care will be taken in the coming years as Pagham is likely to see significant new house building. This is the concern of the Parish Council; together with the protection of the natural environment, its improvement with planting of spring bulbs and trees, and the provision of such amenities as the hard standings near the Yacht Club and at Ledra Drive where the elderly may sit and even those in wheelchairs enjoy a view of the sea. An active Residents' Association keeps an eye on such things as well as providing social activities and a hardworking minibus. The beach itself is unspoilt, but with an amusement area on the approach near the Co-Op, formerly the Kings Beach Hotel.

Two shopping areas, near the beach and in Nyetimber, used to cover most of the domestic needs of the residents and visitors and deserve to be better patronised. Competition from out of town supermarkets now render their survival very precarious. It is a case of use it or lose it.

Pagham Yacht Club, one of the few to have its own freehold club house actually on the beach, has a full programme of sailing in the season. We lack a bowling green, so that the flourishing Pagham Bowls Club has to meet at Swansea

Gardens in Bognor, although short-mat bowling does take place at the Village Hall. The Cricket and Football Clubs are adjacent in Nyetimber lane, each with its own club house and pavilion. Church Farm Holiday Village caters for large numbers of holiday makers and summer residents. Pagham Luncheon Club, The Chestnuts Club and the Teapot Café all work hard in serving the needs of the older members of the community.

The lack of a school within the parish is an interesting reflection on the changing face of Pagham. In the north-east corner of the map may be seen Sefter School. The building still stands but for the past fifty years or so has served a number of commercial purposes, and is now a private dwelling. On its west wall a commemorative stone bears the following inscription:

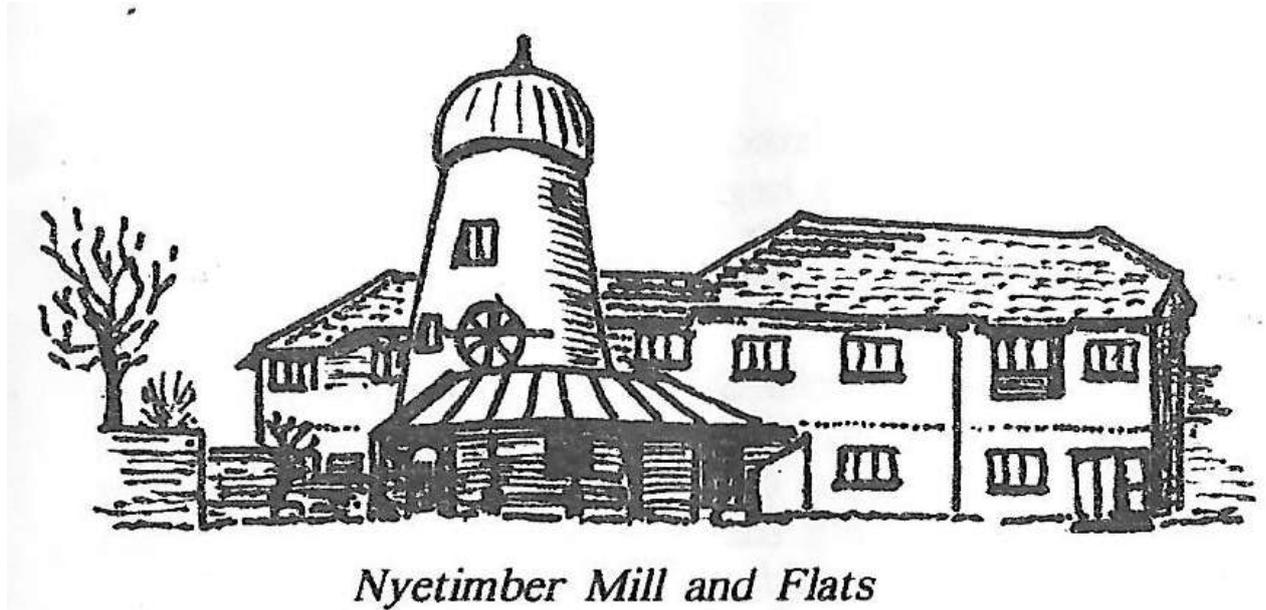


NATIONAL SCHOOL
ERECTED IN
1852
ENLARGED IN 1882

Its present isolated position seems rather odd until one considers that in 1825 it was centrally situated to serve a widely scattered rural community. By 1950 it was entirely unsuitable in size, position and facilities to serve the growing numbers of children in Pagham and Aldwick. It was therefore replaced by a new County Primary School at Rose Green which was well placed for its catchment area. Since then the population of Pagham has more than trebled and there were hopes at one period that at least an Infant School might be built within the parish, but financial stringency and falling birth rate put paid to that. All documents relating to Sefter School have been deposited at the Diocesan Archives Office in Chichester.

Our children are well provided for at Rose Green Infant and Junior Schools and with Secondary School opportunities in Bognor, Felpham or Chichester. Those who wish their children to be educated within a Church of England School have the

option of seeking places for them at Nyewood Infant and Junior Schools in west Bognor and at Bishop Luffa School for secondary education.



Nyetimber Mill and Flats

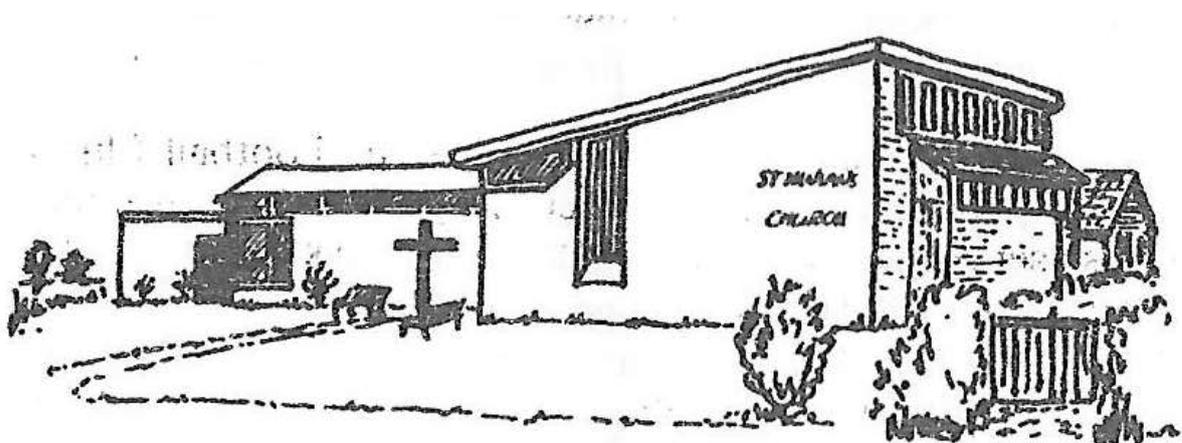
Nyetimber Mill is a notable landmark and was working until 1915 at which time it was maintained by millwrights Hurry of Emsworth. They also cared for Halnaker Mill which is visible to the north-east below the brow of the South Downs, if your eyesight is good enough! Nyetimber Mill then decayed to a state of ruin until work began in 1981 on an imaginative project to provide sheltered accommodation for people of retirement age. The site has now been developed in six blocks totalling 53 lease-hold one or two bedroomed flats, with the mill now handsomely restored and housing on the ground floor a communal lounge for all those living in the flats.

Pagham Parish Church Centre, located opposite the Football Club in Nyetimber Lane, was built by the Church in 1969 and served as the village hall until the building of the new Village Hall in 1998. The Centre is used every morning and some afternoons by a long-established Play Group. The Hall is available for hire and is used by a number of organisations. It is also the regular venue for the Church Ladies Club and is also used for some church social activities. It was originally conceived as a secondary place of worship to house the new Family Communion, leaving more traditional services at the Parish Church. This 'however' never came about as the Family

Communion rapidly became the principal Sunday service with congregations well beyond the capacity of the Church Centre.

In 1952 a Trust was set up to raise funds for a village hall for Pagham, but it was not until 1998 that the hall was finally built. It was designed by a local architect and based upon the appearance of a traditional Sussex Barn. In 2014 the hall was extended by the addition of a 50 seater small hall and a small kitchen and additional toilet facilities. The hall has proved to be a great success being used by many regular groups and a pre-school group, as well as one-off events such as wedding receptions and children's parties. The Church uses the Village Hall for both its Summer and Christmas Fairs. It is the venue for 'Pagham on Parade' and hosts the parish office.

Free Church people attend St Ninian's, founded in 1964 as a Presbyterian Church but which has since become part of the United Reformed Church. The church is built in a simple dignified modern style adjoining the original hall. Roman Catholics have to go a little further afield to St Anthony's, Rose Green, which is served from the mother church of Our Lady of Sorrows in Bognor Regis. Aldwick Free Church nearby is of the Baptist tradition. Good relations exist between the local churches as together we endeavour to set forward the kingdom of God here in the hearts and homes of our people.



St Ninian's United Reformed Church



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