

WELCOME TO St. MARY'S LINTON



A guide for Visitors

***There is a more detailed
account on the Visitor's
Table***

www.lintonvillage.com

Welcome

All are welcome to rest here, to enjoy the peace and maybe pause for prayer and contemplation. People have been coming here for a thousand years and more and you are welcome now. People come Sunday by Sunday to worship God. People come here in joy and they come in sorrow; they come to be baptised and married and at the end of life to be laid to rest. People come to escape the bustle, to step aside from the daily round and to seek for something missing from their lives.

An opportunity to reflect

Some people like to have some written prayers they can say and you will find some on the Visitors' table that may be helpful; please feel free to take a sheet with you when you leave.

Yet prayer is not only words: you may prefer just to pause and ponder. In the words of one of the Psalms

"Be still and know that I am God".

Feel the presence of God and let your thoughts flow.



If I climb up into Heaven, thou art there:
if I go down to Hell, behold, thou art there also.

If I take the wings of the morning,
and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea,
even there also shall thy hand lead me,
and thy right hand shall hold me.

From Psalm 139

Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden
and I will refresh you.

St Matthew 11.28

O God, whose grace is sufficient for all our needs:
lift us, we pray, above our doubts and anxieties
into the calm of your presence;
that guarded by your peace we may serve you without
fear all the days of our life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Early history

There was an Anglo-Saxon Church on this hilltop at a time when Linton was an influential community, whereas Ross was only a manorial church within the manor of Linton.

Domesday book



The Domesday Book of 1086 makes it clear that at that time the priest owned land, that there was a Royal manor at Linton, that the Church received dues from further afield than the present parish and that its influence was waning. The Church and its priest were held by the Abbey of Cormeilles. The fact that Aston Ingham (i.e. 'East') and Weston-under-Penyard (West) may be named for their directional relationship to Linton supports this

supposition. However with the removal of more than half its parish to form the new independent manor of Ross in c1016 the status could not be maintained.

The present building dates from the following Century (12th) and has been developed ever since, the main alterations being in about

1200, 1245, 1361 and 1876 but a cursory glance both inside the Church and out shows that builders of different ages have just adapted what they found and used any handy materials; sometimes

changes were made somewhat haphazardly, often resulting in doors and windows being half obscured and arches misaligned.

Fuller information about this and many aspects of the Church can be found in papers on the Visitors' table.



During your visit can you spot old box pews used as panelling and any of the following?

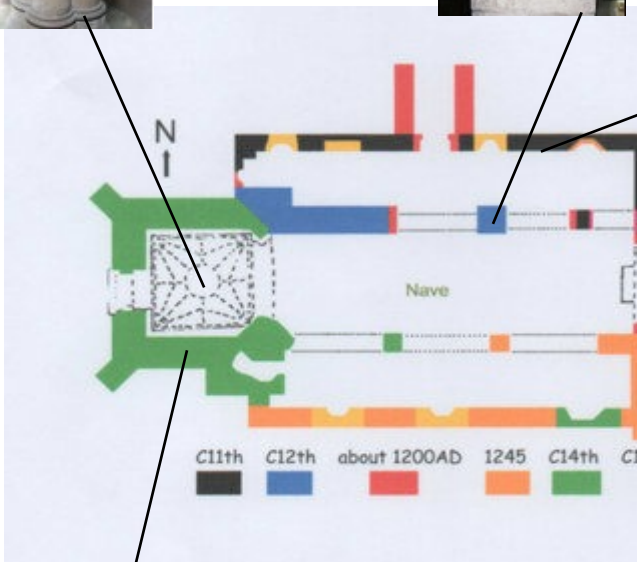
The head pictured above	A tractor	A mason's mark
Thomas the tank engine	2 piscinae	The Linton ram

By the West doorway stands Palin's font. Just as Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan,



nowadays people are welcomed into the Christian family by baptism with water from the font.

The Norman pillar and the earliest parts of the church are made of tufa, quite porous, like the nearby Roman Ariconium.



The Baptistry with its superb ceiling is to many the architecturally most pleasing part of the Church and probably accounts for the building's Grade 1 listing. The rib vaulting leads down from the opening which was left for raising the six bells up into the belfry above; this vaulting springs from corbels with a crouching figure holding a

cudgel, a hooded man, a grotesque mask and a beast's head. The bells call people to prayer before services.

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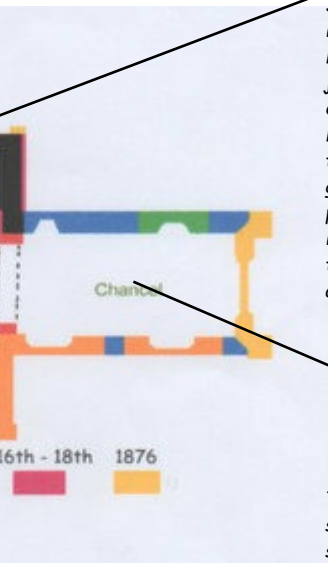
Ancient tombstones are often fascinating for us to-day. One on the South side of the church is worth a visit to look for the fine memorials to the Bonnors and Edward Palin's monument. You can see here much of the land was owned by the Church rather than the Squire.

The inside Vestry wall are current church. The pillar possibly from buildings in

The picture is a copy of a Madonna and Child painted in about 1650 by the Spanish painter Murillo. It was given to St Mary's by the



Sisters of Mercy in gratitude when in 1960 after some 40 years they left their settlement in Church Lane just below the North end of the Churchyard. The Sisters of Mercy lived there between 1920 and 1960; they were familiar figures in their grey tunics and nursed elderly people and visited the sick & took in evacuees during WW2, living out their Christian faith by looking after their 'neighbour'.



The altar table stands in the sanctuary at the focal part of the Church. Here bread and wine are offered in token of the body and blood of



Jesus Christ given for us, as at his Last Supper, and received by the congregation kneeling at the rail.



is tower was built about 1361 to replace an earlier one which had led to its East. The draw bar holes on either side of the massive door remind us that the tower may well have been a place of safety, like the keep in a castle.

Wall here may raise a smile; and when in the Churchyard you may like you will notice that Linton has no suggestion of a strong feudal dynasty:

THE PALIN CONNECTION

The fortunes of the Church and Village were transformed when St John's College Oxford appointed the Reverend Edward Palin as Rector in 1865. He was the great grandfather of Michael Palin, whose prodigious talents and lovable personality we all know and appreciate to-day.



The Reverend Edward Palin stayed in Linton for 38 years until his death. He was a generous benefactor to the village and his philanthropic ministry is remembered for many things during his long tenure - e.g. the rebuilding of the Rectory, the restoration of the Church, the building and extension of the school and the provision of a village water supply. He was clearly a man of substantial means and generous disposition. The school is now a fine refurbished Village Hall, in all but name a reminder of his generosity.

Yet none of this would have happened had he not taken a holiday in Switzerland one Summer during his brilliant academic career at St John's. There he fell in love with Brita, a beautiful Irish American girl he met. The problem for him was that for a future career in the University, where he was apparently tipped as a likely President of the College, he had to remain a bachelor sworn to remain celibate. He was obliged to accept the living at Linton, a church he apparently regarded as the draughtiest place in Christendom! This story is told in a film entitled "American Friends" directed by Michael who also played his great grandfather.

How fortunate for Linton that Edward Palin followed his heart. He and Brita are buried in the Churchyard, leaving behind a community he had greatly enriched.

THE ANCIENT YEW TREE

The old yew tree near the North Porch is famous for its size as well as

for its age - it has stood on this hill top for over 2,000 years -and David Bellamy, pictured here inside the tree, suggested 4,000. It also shows the Yew's spectacular facility for regeneration.



The fire There was no doubting the need for regeneration after it was set alight on the evening 18 October 1998; it took two engines all night to ensure the fire was quenched.

Its good health Yet despite its sorry upper branches the tree is remarkably healthy and is renowned for its freedom from disease, with good evidence from before and after the Millennium.

There is more information about the Yew at <http://www.ancient-yew.org/treeInfo.php?link=564>