

Norton Malreward is an unusual name and its origins are uncertain. A popular explanation is that the village derives its second name from a feat of mighty strength by one Sir John Hautville who, in the reign of Edward I.,(1272-1327) resided in the adjoining hamlet of Norton Hautville (now Norton Hawkfield) which is said to have taken its name from that family. Legend has it that King Edward, who was an occasional visitor at the house of Sir John Hautville, on one of his visits desired a practical demonstration of the reputed Herculean strength of his host, Sir John agreed and asked the King to provide three of the biggest men in his army for the purpose. Sir John took two of the soldiers, tucked one under each arm, and grasped the third soldier in his teeth. He then proceeded walk to the church and climb the stairs to the top of the church tower. The two soldiers under his arms protested at the rough treatment they were receiving and Sir John squeezed them more tightly to keep them quiet. When he reached the top of the tower the two soldiers were found to be dead. The soldier in his teeth survived his ordeal! King Edward was so impressed by this feat that he presented Sir John with all the lands in his parish, remarking at the time that it was "*but small reward*", hence the name "*mal-reward.*" Delightful though this legend is, it is more probable that the name originates from a family called Malreward (or Maurward) who were people of great distinction in the county, and in Devon and Dorset,

OR, it may be that Malreward is a corruption of Malregard who was a tenant of the Bishop of Coutances, (owner of the land) in 1238

Holy Trinity Church

Norton Malreward



Visitor's Guide

WELCOME to Holy Trinity Church, Norton Malreward

We hope you will allow sufficient time to look at the church in detail and also to sit and reflect upon the generations of families who have worshipped in the church since the twelfth century.

THE PAST

Since its Norman construction the church has undergone great changes in both style and dimensions. The present church consists of a chancel, a nave of three bays, south aisle, south chapel, porch and western tower with embattlements

The main body of the church (Nave, and Chancel) are of Norman construction (late 12th century) and were probably built on the site of an even earlier church.

The baptismal font is also thought to date from the Norman period.

The Tower was added in the 15th century and the south aisle and south chapel (where the organ now stands) were added in 1861 along with considerable renovation and the installation of pews.

In architectural terms, the crowning glory of the church is the Norman chancel arch which has survived in immaculate

condition. It is one of the best examples of its type in existence.

Let's take a brief tour around the church.

- **The Yew Tree**

Immediately outside the west door of the church is a Yew tree, thought to be hundreds of years old. In 2000, as part of our Millennium celebrations another Yew tree was planted just inside and to the left of the church gates. This tree was propagated from the famous Crowhurst Yew which is estimated to be 4000 years old.

- **The Crypt**

Under the west end of the church is a crypt in which the remains of five members of the Daubeny family are buried. The Daubeny's were great benefactors of the church in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The crypt entrance (stone steps) is on the south wall, just around the corner from the west front of the church. The crypt was last opened fifteen years ago when investigations were being made to ascertain the causes of damp on the west wall.

- **The Porch**

As you enter through the west porch, look at the two stone tablets set in the walls. On the south side is a memorial to 'Mary, the daughter of Henry and Mary Sheppard, who deceased the 3rd day of June 1669'

Then the following words:

'This tender one beneath this stone did heyr to none'

One wonders who she was and how old she was when she died?

On the opposite north wall is an ancient stone, probably moved from some other part of an earlier church. Engraved upon it are two incised crosses but no inscription. Also in the porch is the top of an ancient tomb. On either side of the porch is stone benching . typical of that seen in early churches.

- **The Font**

In the centre of the south bay you will see the Norman font, square in shape and ornamented by carving and inscription. Note the carving and the inscription.

- **The Norman Arch**

Now walk down the nave aisle and look at the simple, yet exquisite carving of the chancel arch. There are many examples of this type of arch in existence but most are at the west door of churches and therefore have been subjected to centuries of weathering. This arch

has, we think, always been an interior feature, hence its pristine condition.

- Admire also the intricate carvings at the top of the south aisle columns which were added in 1861. Note the fine detail of the vine leaves and grapes.

- **The Organ**

The pipe organ (built and dedicated in 1912 for £270) now stands in what was the 1861 south chapel which would have contained pews and a small altar and would have been used for weekday services. The pipe organ, built by William Hill of Bath, is still in good condition and is maintained by the local organ building firm of Roger Taylor.

- **Memorial plaques and tablets**

Around the walls of the church you will see a number of stone memorial tablets and some brass memorial plates. Some are inscribed to the memory of past clergy and their families, others to notable benefactors of the church. A framed list of past and current clergy can be seen on the window sill near the rear of the north aisle.

Marble and stone wall tablets were very much admired in Edwardian and Victorian times. They were affixed to the walls with iron rods buried into the wall masonry. Sadly, the passage of time has resulted in corrosion of the iron fixing rods and churches everywhere are now faced with the dilemma of costly replacement of these fixings. The Shute-Adams family memorial, on the north side of the west wall is a case in point. In 2009 this tablet fell from the wall, demolishing two pews. It was repaired and remounted at a

cost of £750. Church law states that PCC's are responsible for the safe upkeep of the monuments.

Note particularly the brass wall plates on the west wall. These are inscribed to the Daubeny family who were very generous benefactors of both the village and the church. Five members of the Daubeny family are buried in the crypt beneath the west end of the church.

- **Stained glass windows.**

East wall (behind the altar)

This window has three lights and represents Christ blessing little children. It is in memory of the Rev. William Stock who was rector of the parish from 1893-1898. The window was erected by his daughter,

South aisle

There are three stained glass windows in the south bay. The central window represents 'The Good Shepherd' and 'The Light of the World' and a memorial to the Daubeny family. The east window is filled with stained glass in memory of a former rector.

- **The Hatchment**

Hatchment is heraldic terminology – it is a frame bearing the escutcheon of a dead person, usually a knight or a gentleman and it is meant to be placed in front of his house or over his tomb. The coat of arms is incorporated and the black border indicates mourning.

This Hatchment bears the coat of arms of the Shute-Adams family – great benefactors of both the village and the church. It was restored in 1984.

North aisle

- **The Tower**

The West Tower, not part of the original Norman construction, was added in the 15th century and altered in 1861 during the great renovation and rebuild of the

church. Entrance to the tower is via a door in the west porch and a narrow spiral staircase to the belfry and thence via a vertical ladder to the battlements.

The tower is not, sadly, open to the public.

A new flagpole was added to the tower in 2002, from which the flag of St George, patron saint of England is proudly flown.

Two bells are hung in the tower.

*Sir John Hautville could certainly **not** have carried three men up the present spiral staircase, there is barely room for one person to ascend!*

- **The Roof**

The roof of the church is mainly of slate tiles with lead flashing in hips, valleys and gutters. In light of the current epidemic of metal theft from church roofs, this is, perhaps, a blessing. The entire roof was replaced in 1908, along with other significant church repairs.

THE PRESENT

Reordering of the church 2012

During 2010/11. the Parochial Church Council discussed at length the current financial viability of the church and its relevance to the local community. It is no secret that under-

used and under-financed churches, especially rural ones, are closing at an alarming rate. In an attempt to update facilities and make the church building more 'user friendly', certain alterations were made during the early part of 2012. It should be noted that the alterations were agreed only after lengthy debate, research and prayer. The alterations were planned to minimise the capital outlay and maximise the existing space within the church.

You might wonder why we chose to site a W.C. inside the church rather than build an external extension to house both W.C. and Servedy. In the financial climate of 2010/11, the cost of such an extension to a Grade 2 listed building would have exceeded £70,000. The agreed reordering work approx. £25,000, most of which has been raised from a variety of charitable trusts and grant aid bodies. Local fund-raising activities provided any shortfall.

The 2012 alterations

- **Organ** In order to create space for a W.C. and small servedy, the organ was moved from its west facing position and repositioned so that the console faces northwards into the chancel. This also gives the organist a better view of the clergy and altar.

- **W.C. with facilities for the Disabled**

In line with current Disability Access legislation, a W.C. toilet has been provided in the south chapel area with ramp access for people with wheelchairs.

- **Servery**

A small servery has been provided to allow simple refreshments for the congregation and other users of the church.

- **Screen**

A wooden screen has been erected between the south chapel and the south aisle, with ramp and door access for wheelchair users.

- **Pews**

Some pews were removed from the south bay to allow room for the repositioning of the font, formerly just inside the west door. This traditional position was very cramped and prevented the majority of the congregation having a clear view of the moment of baptism. The new position in the south bay allows much greater participation by all.

- The removed pews were repositioned along the south wall and can be used as a seating area for refreshment and conversation after services.

THE FUTURE

The people of Norton Malreward and Norton Hawkfield are, and always have been, very generous with both their time and their financial support. Thanks largely to their skills, labour and time, the church is maintained in a good state of repair for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

Maintenance is, however, a costly and time-consuming activity. Just keeping gutters, downpipes and drains clear of autumn and winter debris can be problematic (as was discovered recently – see photo below!).

This church is, and always has been, a community church. The work of parochial church councils, past, present and future is, foremost, to maintain the church to the glory of God so that current and future generations can worship here, receive the sacraments of the church, Baptism, Holy Matrimony and Holy Communion and, at the end of life, the Last Offices of the Church. This inevitably involves change from time to time in order to speak to newer generations. It is not difficult to imagine to opposition engendered in 1861 when massive

structural additions were made, including the introduction of pews, although it is true to say that ordinary parishioners had little say in church matters in those far off days.

The current PCC are totally committed to ensuring that their stewardship of this beautiful church will not only ensure its physical future but also make it an attractive and welcoming environment in which Christian folk can meet, worship and have recreation together.

Illustrations needed

Photo Church

Porch

Norman Arch

Font

South chapel WC & server

Exterior ?

Drainpipe blockage plug

Hatchment

Cartoon: Sir John carrying soldiers

? Quiz