

## St John the Baptist's Church Badingham

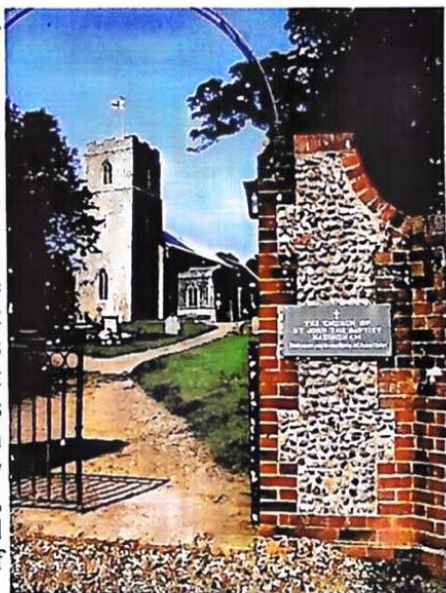
**The Village of Badingham** is situated close to the source of the River Alde, at a point where a stream joins with the main flow and the fall of the river bed shallows out, making the River in bygone years navigable to small flat bottomed 'punt like' boats to the sea. Fords across the river would have maintained a water level throughout the year. The clay-soiled uplands would have been forested with Oak trees until the Saxon era. Habitations prior to Roman period would have been on the banks of the Alde and the stream that flows in from the north, past the site of the Church.

The route of a Roman road from the neighbouring parish of Peasenhall to Coddendam [Combretoivium] passes through the village. This route would have been used to carry merchandise to and from the harbour at Dunwich for the 300 or so years that the Romans controlled the country. Remains of a Roman villa were found to the south of the road, on the West Bank of the Alde

The period between the Roman departure and the arrival of immigrants from across the North Sea would have been quiet, with only local leadership of a very sparse population. Hence, when the sons of a man called Bada arrived and made their way up-river, they were free to settle and build 'halls' for themselves, one either side of the Alde and one at the Source of the River Yox a mile over the hill to the East.

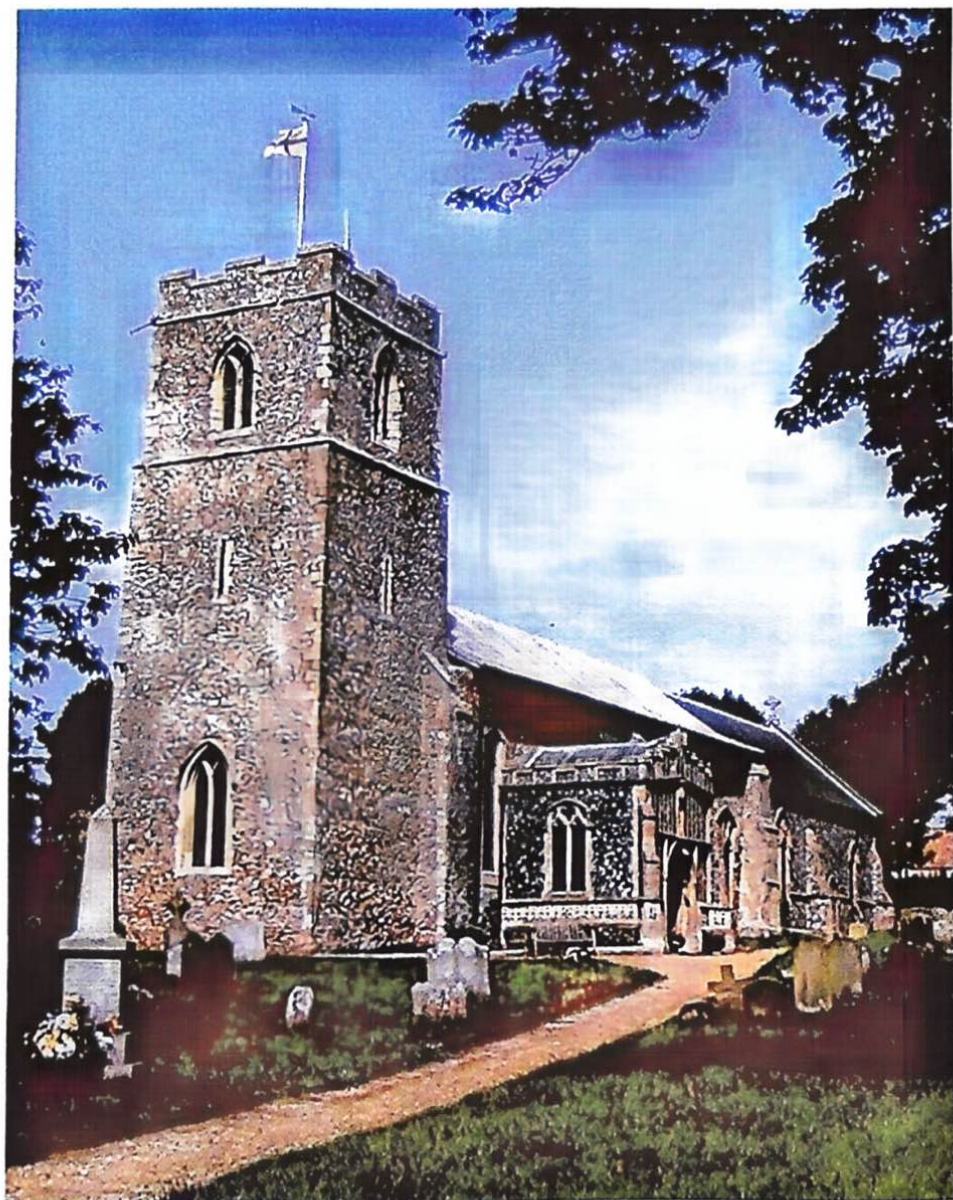
The area renamed Badingham became a settlement again.

**The Parish Church** stands upon an old pagan holy site, the knoll of Burstonhaugh between the marshes of the valley and the wet oak-woods that, fifteen hundred years ago clothed the higher tableland. When the first missionaries came to Badingham they rededicated the old pagan site. The great festival at Burstonhaugh had been mid-summer night, with its blazing bale-fires and specially brewed ale with the people running through the smoke with great excitement! - so the new church was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, whose feast is on mid-summer day. Hence celebrations continued for the peoples of Badingham with 'Church Ale' being brewed specially for the occasion. In 1521 Christopher Parrott, a parishioner of Badingham died. In his will he left two bushels of malt for the making of the 'Church Ale' !



The church is so built that at sunrise on the patronal festival the sun shines straight in at the east window. This means that the long axis of the church lies nearly NE and SW, instead of the more usual east and west: it will be seen that the sundial over the porch is set at an angle to the wall.

**The Churchyard**, which has been a burial ground since pre-Christian times was enlarged in 1923 to 2.3 acres. The earliest stone monument is dated





1710. The area is grassed; volunteers from the village cut it and keep the churchyard tidy. It is on a Southwest-facing slope, set back from the roadway giving it a very peaceful and cheerful atmosphere.

**Badingham Community Gardens** As you enter through the Church gates up the path from the road you will see on your far left our Community Garden. Please take the left hand fork of the path and walk up to take a closer look.

The Community Garden opened in 2012 after a year of planning and building. These gardens are a true community project with many villagers coming together to create them. The aim was to have a place to visit within the churchyard where villagers can come and enjoy the peace and participate in gardening their own plot. We have a number of these individual plots kept and tended by families and individuals.

The entrance to the gardens is through a handmade bespoke gate, beautifully designed and created by Robert Foster. The late John also created the great 'tool' bench within the gardens. This bench offers a very welcome place to rest. Two sides of the gardens are planted up with an 'edible hedge' which include elderberries, cob nuts, rose hips, and blackberries. One side edge of the garden has blackcurrants and raspberries. Then either side of our gate entrance are flower borders which are used to decorate our Church. Amongst the flower borders are alpine strawberries, a delicious treat in the summer. The gardens have all ages coming to tend them, from the youngsters from Badingham playschool to the busy families enjoying a space to grow fresh vegetables, to the retired villagers taking up a plot for a hobby. The gardens have become a very popular part of our village.

We hope you enjoy taking a look, enjoy the gardens and enjoy their beautiful, peaceful setting.

**The Church Exterior.** The flint tower with stone quoins is ancient and the lower stage probably dates from Norman times: observe the narrow lancet in the south wall, with the top carved out of a single stone. This may be a Saxon window re-used. The tower contains a ring of five bells. The flint flush-work porch dates from 1486. The spandrels over the door show a vigorously carved dragon and a very much weathered "Wodehouse", or wild man or maybe St George?. There is a delightful, carved hound or Tiger on the weathering of the SE buttress of the porch. The nave walls show a great variety of materials including much Tudor brick in the upper courses. The Southeast wall of the chancel, which was rebuilt in Victorian times, is of uncompromising grey flint. The engaged shaft of the original SW quoin of the nave is now part of the tower buttress; a much-eroded carving on the weathering of this buttress is probably of the head of St. John the Baptist. On the north wall, above the roof of the boiler room are traces of a north porch.



**The Interior.** The nave roof and the Seven Sacraments font are Badingham's greatest treasures, but the visitor will probably be first struck by the fact that the nave floor slopes upward: rising twenty-five inches from the font to the chancel steps. The engaged shafts on each side of the tower arch are part of the Norman church. The windows include thirteenth century lancets on either side, that on the north wall having an image niche of later date below it; two clerestory windows left by the Edward

Rous in his will to light the rood, and dating from 1506; and an eighteenth century clerestory window in the NW corner, which lit the choir gallery, now demolished. Just inside the south door is a curiously asymmetrical niche, which probably contained the stoup.

The single hammer-beam roof of the nave is, according to the late Munro Cautley "the perfect example of a single hammer-beam roof". Of it he writes "Roofs may surpass this one in elaboration, but certainly none can in technical skill and refinement of detail". The spandrels between the wall posts are carved with flowers and reptiles.

The angels on the upward canted hammer-beams were placed there by the Rev. Foster Stable Barry Rector 1898 to 1908; the original hammer-beam angels were probably those mentioned by William Dowsing who records that at Badingham, he beat down "sixteen superstitious cherubim's". There are still traces of a painted pattern on the ceiling of the roof.

There are five mediaeval "poppy-heads" on the benches in the Northwest corner of the nave.





In the ringing chamber at the base of the tower are early nineteenth century copies of the Lord's Prayer. Creed and Commandments painted on canvas.

The pulpit is of the time of Charles I. The pulpit canopy is supported by singularly hideous carved grotesques. The reading stall on the opposite side of the church was probably the clerk's seat of a "double-decker", now separated from the pulpit.

The chancel has an arch-braced roof of varnished pitch pine, and much dark Victorian stained glass. On the north wall are two tombs. The western tomb is an altar tomb of a member of the Carbonell family, probably Sir John Carbonell (1423). On each side of the tomb is a carved image bracket, and above the canopy are three stone helms with crests. The Carbonells lived in Badingham Hall, now destroyed, at the Northeast corner of the parish. The eastern and more elaborate tomb is that of William Cotton, of Colston Hall, and of his wife Lucie, and is of the time of James I. This tomb displays much elaborate heraldry of the Cotton and Rous families. The Cotton arms (azure, an eagle displayed argent armed gules, a crescent for difference or) and the Rous arms (sable, a fess dancette or between three crescents argent) are impaled on a shield borne by a charming little nymph above the tomb. William Cotton was a "batchelour" of the Civil Law, and his image wears a lawyer's gown and indoor shoes.

The late fifteenth century font is one of the loveliest in Suffolk. The beauty of its proportions is best appreciated from the chancel steps. The eight panels of the bowl, reading clockwise, are:

East. *Baptism*. The baby is being "warily dipped" in the font. The mother, wearing a wired head-dress, has the chrism rode over her right arm.

Southeast. *Marriage*. Note the turban cap in the bridegroom's hand.

South. *Ordination*.

Southwest. *Confirmation*.

West. *The Eucharist*. The rite is shown at the Elevation of the Host. Note the sacring bell in the hand of the server, and the two altar lights.

Northwest. *Penance*. Note the horned and winged fiend expelled by confession; and the somewhat cynical note stuck by the fact that the penitent is a woman!



North. *Extreme Unction.*

Northeast. *The Baptism of Our Lord.* The Baptism is by effusion.

The octagonal shaft of the font bears archangels on the east and west panels; the four bishops of the church bearing scrolls, on the quarters; St. Edmund, crowned and carrying a large arrow, on the south side; and an unidentified walking figure on the north.

Badingham possesses an Elizabethan chalice and paten of 1568. The chalice is decorated with a chequer-board pattern in place of the more usual arabesques. Several Elizabethan chalices in this area bear similar ornamentation, and it is presumed that they are the work of a single itinerant silversmith

The Parish registers include the restored paper register of 1538, the year when registers were first ordered to be kept.

## Translations:

Epitaph on the death of Catharine Cornwallis

*Here lies Catharine, the greater part ("better half") of her sorrowing husband, the third daughter of her father Blennerhassett. She died in the thirty-fourth year of her age, a wife for no fewer than seven years. United in marriage to John Cornwallis, she was no mean example of character. Noble virtue shone in her unblemished heart. Her mind was honest, her body pure, her life temperate. The one was blessed in his wife: the other in her husband. O transitory life, you bring no lasting good! For when she had already blessed her spouse with their fifth child, bearing the sixth, she died in giving birth.*

*She died on January 23rd in the year of our Lord 1584*

	Philip	Anne
Sons	Thomas	Daughters
	Francis	Elizabeth

*Below this marble  
Barrington Blomfield. S.T.P.,  
ordained that his body should be buried.*

*Rector and patron of this church*

*he was born within the parish on 19th February 1689*

*His father was Barnabus, priest and his most worthy predecessor*

*He married Mary, the eldest daughter of Anthony Wingfield  
of Stonham Aspal, gentleman.*

*She died, greatly lamented and in sure hope of resurrection in Christ  
on 3rd October 1757, aged 64 years*

*and here on the left side of her husband lies buried.*

*He, full of years and ready for heaven,  
even as a weary traveller quits the road,  
quietly died in the same hope and assurance  
and gave back his soul to God the Creator*

*They both desire to lie in peace  
until the last trump shall summon them.*



### Cotton - Rous Tomb

Apart from the Bible quotation and the final three columns this epitaph is composed in Latin elegiac couplets, one of the major Classical verse forms. Its address to the passer-by at beginning and end also derives from ancient Roman custom.

Left hand side

Stone (addressed) to Reader

*Their son set up this monument to both his  
parents and granted to them the power of  
living among the living, and to me (ie. the  
stone) the power of speaking. When talk of  
their reputation falls silent, I shall be  
repeating these truthful sounds.*

*Theirs was an ancient lineage and conduct  
that graced that lineage : integrity of  
character and honour without blemish. They  
cared for the widow and the unfortunate  
suckling orphan. To the poor they extended  
a ready, generous and kindly hand.  
The husband lay here first, his beloved wife  
came too, when the fifth crop had been cut  
by the sickle. See, how well grim death  
unites happily in a shared dwelling and couch  
those whom love united well.*

*What is your life? It is even a vapour, that  
appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth  
away. James 4*



Right hand side

*One dwelling, one couch held them in harmony before.  
One stone holds them laid together beneath it.*

(in English)

*Here lye the bodyes of William Cotton Esq., Batchelour of the Civill Law, who died the 22th of  
May in the year 1616; and of Lucie, his wife, daughter to Reginald Rous of Baddingham Esq.,  
Who died the 7th of August in the year 1621. They had issue Edward and Catherine.*

*See, the two surviving offspring, the first of Cotton, strive to imitate their parents.*

*The tree has fallen,  
\* Lucie has shone,  
\* A Rous Rose was born  
And once flowered.*

*Enough for you is a verse as brief as the brief span of life.  
Go on your way, traveller.*

(\* puns are made on the name Lucie Rous and the Latin words for 'light' and 'rose')

# St John the Baptist's Church Badingham

## Rectors and Curates

### Rectory mentioned in Domesday Book

1280	Walter de Cretyng	1764	John Bade
1308	Peter le Counte	1793	
1308	John de Gialingham	1793	Temple Fisk Chevallier
1313	John de Badingham	1810	Clement Chevallier
1318	Firminus de Lavenham	1810	John Greenwood
1321	John de Cayly	1811	Charles Fisher
1328	Radulphus de Ingham	1818	
1349	John de Winston	1816	Clement Chevallier
1355	John Bakepool	1832	Robert Gorton
1384	John Nicol of Readham	1840	Thomas Mayhew
1405	John Worrok alias Preston	1841	
1432	Thomas Birtou	1847	Robert G Gorton
1432	John Russell	1851	
1491	William King	1858	Fredrick R Gorton
1508	John Smyth	1873	Robert G Gorton MA
1508	William Clerk	1898	Foster Stable Barry
	Dominus John Dowby Copellianus	1908	John R T Henwood
1546	John Rous	1923	James G Wilkie
1551	Henry Reignalde	1928	Edward C Oakley
1576	Nicholas Man	1943	Henry B Graham
1595	Edward Ballard MA	1945	Clement M Ricketts
1600	Francis Driver		Bishop of Dunwich
1628	Simon Sumper	1945	David Atkins
1644	Joseph Ward	1947	Richard Hare
1653	John Luffe (Registrar)	1950	David Pasterfield
1655		1953	Peter H T Hartley
1659	Joseph Ward	1954	Peter H T Hartley
1679	Barnabus Bloomfield	1985	Andrew J Turner
1728	Barrington Bloomfield	1992	Barry Middleton
1762	H Matthews	1997	Malcolm Pickering
	A Willis	2000	Jonathan Olanczuk
	Dey Syer	2018	Martin Percival
1763	Temple Chevallier		
1763	William Baynes		