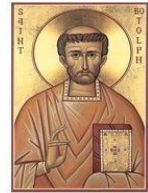




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



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Highlights this month

- St Botolph's Church, Quarrington.
- Medieval Cross-Channel travel.
- Welcome to new members.

Editorial.

I am pleased to say that the society is still generating a lot of interest. Our membership now stands at 210 email contacts - so that probably represents about 250 members. We have lost a dozen or so as, like water finding its own level, some people discovered that the society was not what they wanted - but generally members seem to look forward to the monthly newsletter and I have had many positive comments.

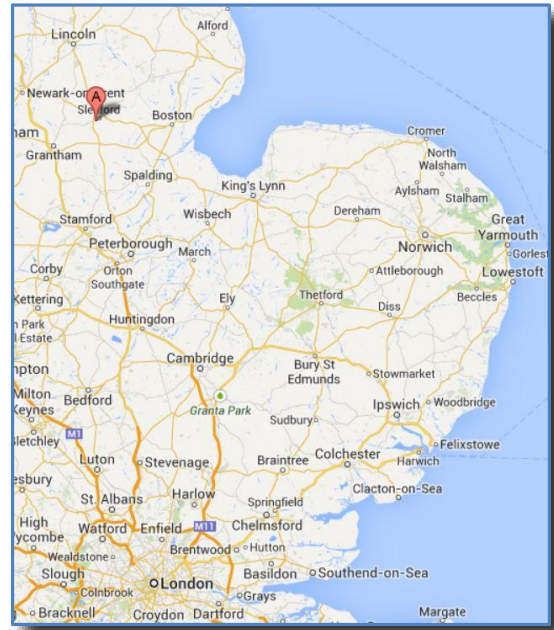
I would, however, welcome more controversy; it would be good to generate some discussion about the finer historical points so please do not be shy of emailing me about anything you dispute.

As this first year of the 're-established' society draws to its close I would like to thank you all very much for your support and interest and wish you a Very Happy Christmas and Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Church Feature

Quarrington

is in southern Lincolnshire, 20 miles from both Lincoln and Boston and 120 miles north of London. It lies just south of Sleaford.



Approach: *If coming from the south you will probably drive up the A1 and then join the B6403 and A153. After crossing the A15 roundabout the first turning on your right will take you up Northfield Road and 500 metres later you will see the church on your left. We parked outside the church in Town Road.*

Key: *The church is usually left open.*

Contact: *Revd. Sandra Benham. Tel: 01529 306-776*

Location: *52.9870, -0.4310. NG34 8RS.*

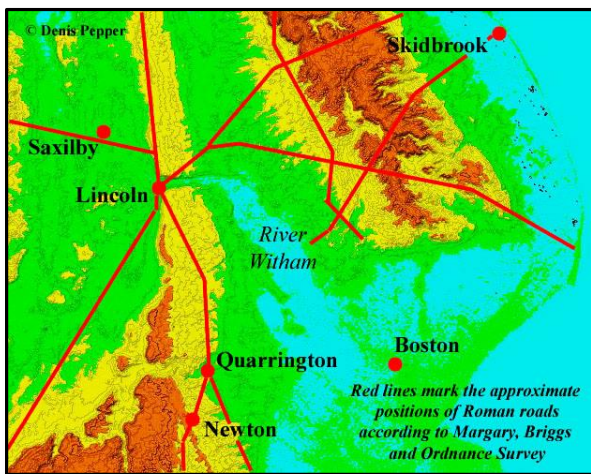
Listed Grade: *II**

Foundation of the site: The church was listed in the Domesday Book (1086) so the question, as always, is "What was happening on the site during the preceding 400 years?" - and of course the answer (as usual) is that we do not know. It would be glorious to think that Botolph's missionary work was so

productive that he managed to get field chapels established in all the (approximately

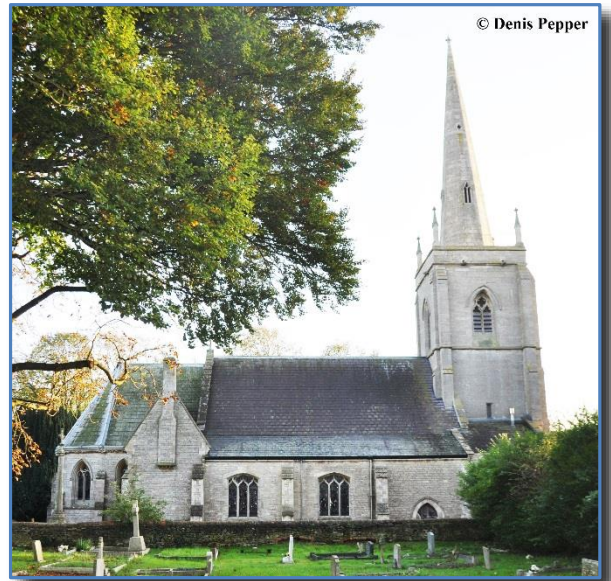


seventy) Botolph church sites during his lifetime and that they subsequently developed into the churches we know today. This is rather too much to hope for however. We must assume that he left behind him the legacy of a cult which so admired his Christian teaching that subsequent generations were inspired to build their own field chapels which became the history that we now enjoy.



It is interesting however, to envisage the topography as it is likely to have been at around the time that the first Saxon church was built at Quarrington. The church would have been on the firm ground adjacent to the marshy borders of the wider River Witham as it flowed down from the pool of Lincoln. The approximate positions of the Roman roads show how the builders (whoever they were) generally chose to construct their churches close to major trackways. Even today this

would be logical, - but was it a secondary aim in order to 'attract passing trade' or was it a *primary* necessity so that travellers could invoke Saint Botolph's aid in obtaining God's protection for their forthcoming journey?



The above photograph is not the view you will see on your arrival since, in order to obtain a good shot of the whole church, free of obscuring trees, I took it from the northern aspect. You will note, on the left, the polygonal apse which was built in 1862-3 when many other parts of the church were also remodelled.

History of the existing church:

In spite of the date of its origin there are no signs of Saxon structures - the earliest the building offers are the thirteenth century arcades.



The tower, spire and south wall of the nave are all C14 and it seems likely that, when they

were built, the opportunity was taken to widen the structure. The south windows and door are all of a very high quality suggesting that the C14 patron was affluent. There is a moulding above the door which seems to give the visitor a rude welcome, - or perhaps the figure is just repelling the devil?



Interestingly this is somewhat reminiscent of the face on the tympanum above the C16 door of St. Botolph's church at Barton Seagrave (see below). I would be interested to hear of any similar findings over church doorways.



In the C19 restoration work, a great effort was made by the architect and builder (Charles Kirk the younger) to maintain authenticity. Evidence of this can be seen in:-

1. *The C12 style North doorway.*
2. *The C13 Westminster style 'pentagonal' chancel apse.*
3. *C13 style chancel arch.*

4. *C13 style transeptal vestry.*
5. *The nave roof simulating an open barrel vault.*

Items of interest within the church:-

1. *Two C14 piscinas in the nave.*
2. *C14 font with C19 cover.*
3. *C14 windows with triangular heads in North aisle.*
4. *C14 South door.*
5. *C19 Chancel with beautifully-inspired floral capitals and corbels.*
6. *C19 choir stalls, chancel screen and pulpit.*
7. *C19 high-quality tiles in the chancel and around the base of the font.*
8. *There is an assortment of beautiful stained glass windows which are worth studying.*

Relevance of the church to Botolph's life:-

St. Botolph's church Quarrington is the closest 'Botolph Church' to Boston (aka BotolphTown / BotolphStone etc.) and if the saint did indeed make the town his base for a while then this location must come high on the list as one of his possible satellite foundations. Alternatively, as mentioned earlier, the first church on the site could have been built several hundred years later as a result of the saint's memory living on. I have found no record of any suggestion that the church was at any time dedicated to another saint.

Places of Interest in the vicinity:-

1. *Newton, Boston, Lincoln and Saxilby Botolph Churches - all within about 20 miles of Quarrington.*
2. *For those who like aeroplanes: Cranwell Heritage Aviation Centre (about 5 miles northwest of Quarrington).*
3. *The church of St. Denys in Sleaford.*

Thanks:

My grateful thanks to Christopher Micklethwaite of Quarrington for checking this feature to ensure I had not made any howlers. Christopher has produced an illustrated booklet vividly telling the history of both the church and the village. The booklet was so successful that it is now out of print but a new edition is being produced and will be available shortly.

Focus on Saint Botolph.

We have so far covered the following aspects in our (more or less) chronological review of Botolph's life. The 'Focus' has sometimes become pushed to one side in favour of administrative issues (seen below in square brackets):-

1. Apr His name
2. May Botolph and the London churches.
3. Jun [St Botolph's Day arrangements]
4. Jul [Investigation of Icons]
5. Aug His childhood
6. Sep Oblates & Novitiates.
7. Oct Six missing years: 632-638.
8. Nov [Luncheon report]

Travelling to France:

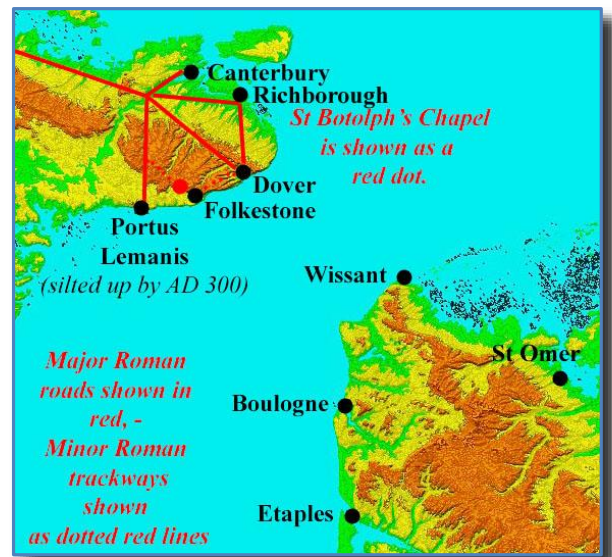
We still do not know *for certain* exactly where Botolph went to study but it is generally accepted that it was somewhere in France.

This begs the question of 'How would he have travelled there?' Sailing across the channel was not as hazardous in the seventh century as one might suppose; in fact there would have been a regular 'shuttle service' of skippers ready to ply their trade and take a few passengers along with their cargo. The boats of those days were of shallow draught and could, comparatively easily, take the ground in drying harbours and/or be pulled up onto the beaches. More landing places were therefore available then - although hopeful passengers would naturally make for the coastal inlets which were used most regularly. The route of choice would often be the shortest and so it would be the Dover Straits that offered the greatest attraction.

The map of Quarrington (above) illustrates the typical situation where most Botolph Churches are to be found situated close to Roman roads. But is the converse also true? i.e: Is it the case that wherever a Roman road (or any well-used ancient trackway) of East Anglia, Kent or Sussex, meets a site which is of increased importance to C7-C14 travellers, that we should *expect* to find a Botolph Church nearby? The positions of the four Botolph Churches of London seem to agree with this criterion.

Returning to the subject of coastal travel, the closest 'ports' to the shortest sea route for Botolph would have been Dover and Folkestone on the British side, and Wissant, Boulogne, St. Omer and Etaples on the French side (Calais was an insignificant sand bank at the time).

Until I started my research in 2008, Saint Botolph's Chapel in Folkestone had been consistently missed by all the writers who had listed 'Saint Botolph Dedications'. Does the existence of this chapel point to the fact that Medieval travellers were using *this* port in preference to Dover? Its 'discovery' would seem to suggest that there might be other as-yet-undiscovered similar chapels?



Welcome to New Members.

I would like to welcome the following members who have joined the society within the past two months:-

Penelope Coggill from Cambridge; **Simon Schanschieff** from Church with Chapel Brampton; **Christopher and Jane Micklethwaite** from Quarrington; **Emma Barber** from Ash near Canterbury (*who is researching C14 East Anglian psalters*); **Chris Sessions** from Elham Historical Society, and **Revd Dr James Olson** from Chicago.

Regular Endnotes

If this is your first 'Botolphian' and you have acquired it by circuitous means but would like to receive an email copy each month then just send an email to botolph@virginmedia.com saying 'YES PLEASE.'
If you wish to UNsubscribe then send the message 'NO THANKS.'

You will frequently see the 'twin' towns of *Boston* mentioned in these newsletters, - one in Lincolnshire and the other in Massachusetts USA. The relevance to the Society is that the name 'Boston' is a contraction of '*Botolph's Town*.'

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Folkestone, Kent. 1st May 2013.