MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS AT THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. LAURENCE, BLACKMORE

1592 – 2026

Compiled by Andrew Smith

Summer 2026

Introduction

This edition is a work in progress, intended to update the work produced by the Essex Society for Family History undertaken in August 1997 and published in July 2001.

To record all the monumental inscriptions inside and outside the church building is, wait for it, a monumental task but the benefit of online publication means that the project results can be released in stages.

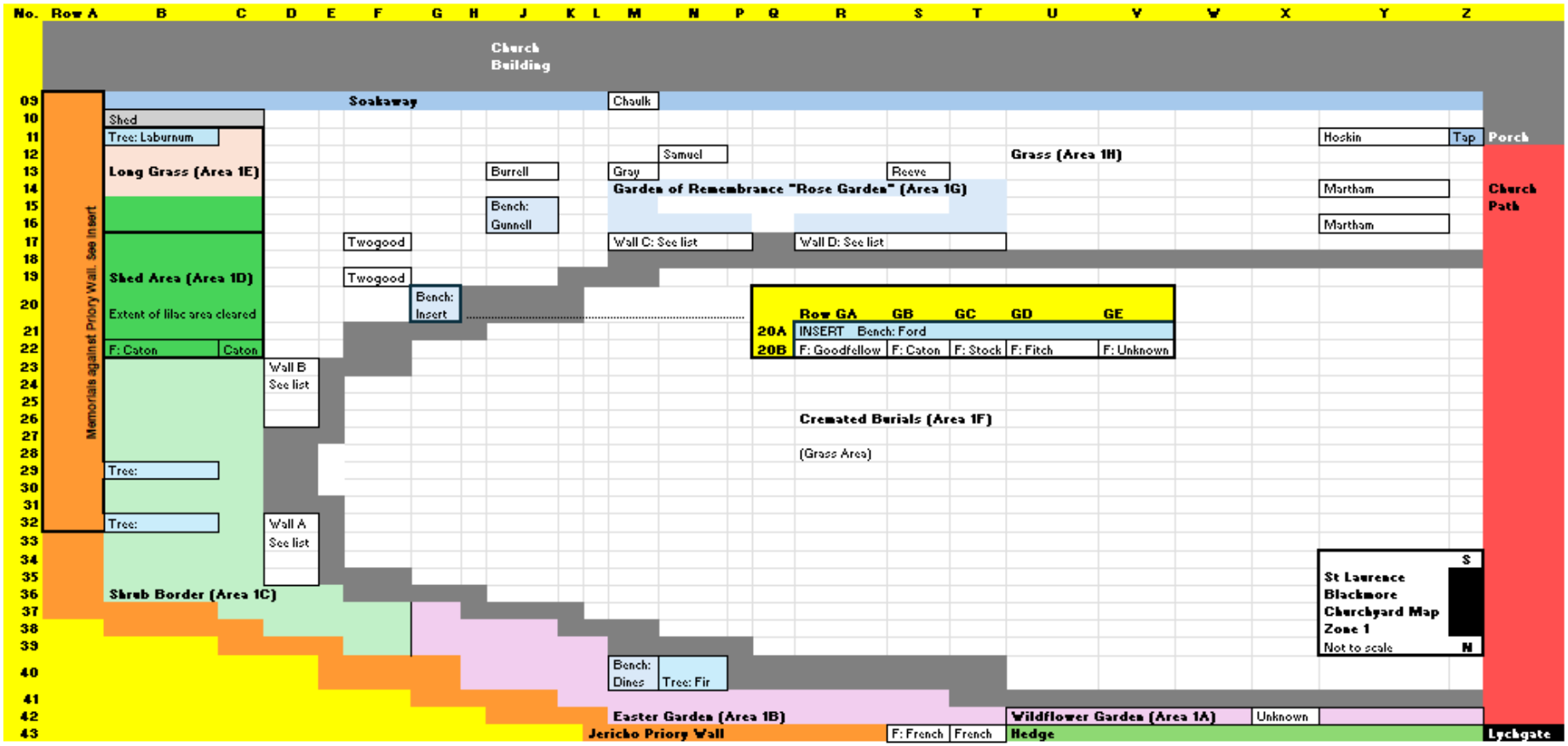
As a worshipping community signed up to Eco Church, keen to record locations of wildflowers etc and improve the area for both people and nature, a 'Churchyard Map' provided a good starting point. The grid pattern gives the location and surnames of those commemorated.

Churchyard Map

The churchyard is laid out in three zones.

Zone 1

The most important horticulturally is Zone 1 to the east of the church path which includes around its border:



Area 1A – Wildflower Garden, sown by schoolchildren in June 2026.

Area 1B – Easter Garden, informally planted with daffodils by schoolchildren in December 2025.

Area 1C – Shrub Border. This area was regeneratively pruned in August 2025.

Area 1D – “Shed Area”. This area was regeneratively pruned in August 2025 and left fallow.

Area 1E – Long Grass, created by the cutting grass in September 2025 allowing wildflowers to grow.

Area 1F – Cremated Burials lie within the path of the Millenium Garden of Remembrance. Plaques commemorating those interred are placed on walls. Viz:

Reading from left to right (north to south)

Wall A

	Bottom (B)	Top (T)
01	Poole	Poole
02	Leach	Gunthardt
03	Hunter	White
04	Blackwell	Richardson
05		
06		
07		
08		
09		Leigh
10	Laidler	Hall
11		Stanley
12		
13		Chester
14		
15		
16		Simpson
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
27	Ilsley	
28		
29		
30		
31		
32		
33		
34		
35	Holbrook	Banks
36	Parsons	Parsons
37		Skrimshire
38	Green	Hirons
39	Slow	Croucher

Reading from left to right (north to south)

Wall B

	Bottom (B)	Top (T)
01	Hammond	Kinselley
02		Abbott
03		Lucas
04		Holbrook
05		Hatch
06	Palmer	Palmer
07		Brazier
08		Perry
09		Edwards
10		Ketchell
11	Gosling	Rumley
12		Passway
13		Greener
14		Butler
15		Sands
16		Moor
17	Butler	Smith
18		Templeton
19		Phillips
20		St Pier
21	Davey	Chester
22	Cooper	Cooper
23	Keene-Carey	Darken
24		Davies
25		Tullett
26	Pitts (nee Lever)	Pitts
27		Blake
28		Greenhalch
29		Baker
30		Daborn
31		Keene
32	Smith	Toms
33	Smith	Lister
34	Ovel	Ovel
35		Reynolds
36		Dines
37		
38		Andrews
39	Sherwood	Brooks

Reading from left to right (front then reverse side)

Wall C

	Bottom (B)	Top (T)	Reverse (R)
01	Coatman	Wood	McCann
02	Kennard	Wright	Lemmon
03	Bremer	Clark	Wells
04	Oakley	Raison	
05		Jackson	
06	Town	Town	
07	Town	Smith	
08		Slimm	
09	Crane	Rodwell	Balcombe
10		Wilson	
11		Clark	
12		Clark	Reid
13		Perry	Aldsworth
14		Salmon	Brown
15	Pullen	Hay	Haward
16	Wakelin	Brown	Strickland
17	McArdle	McArdle	Marr
18	Wyatt	Moss	Stevens

Reading from left to right (front then reverse side)

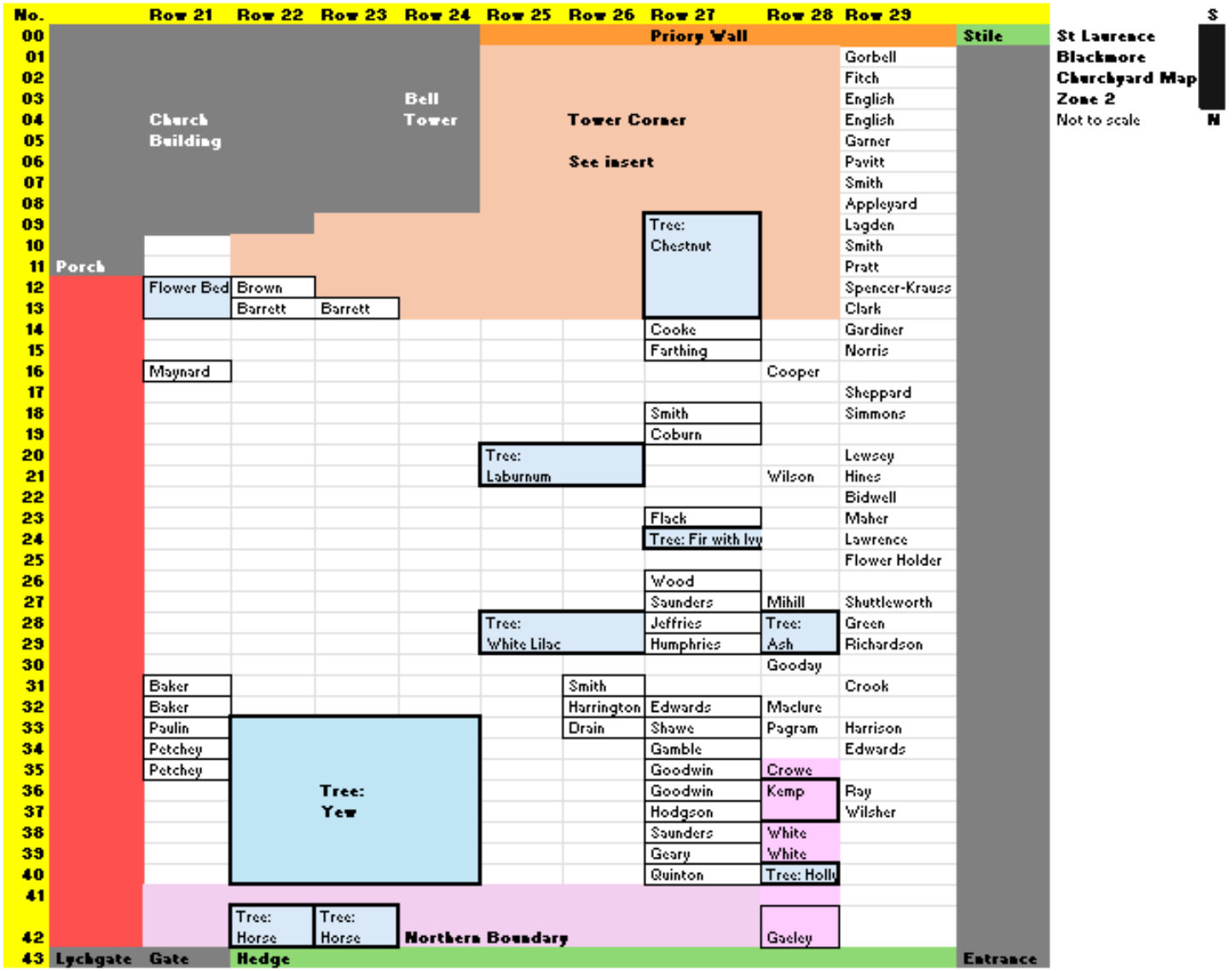
Wall D

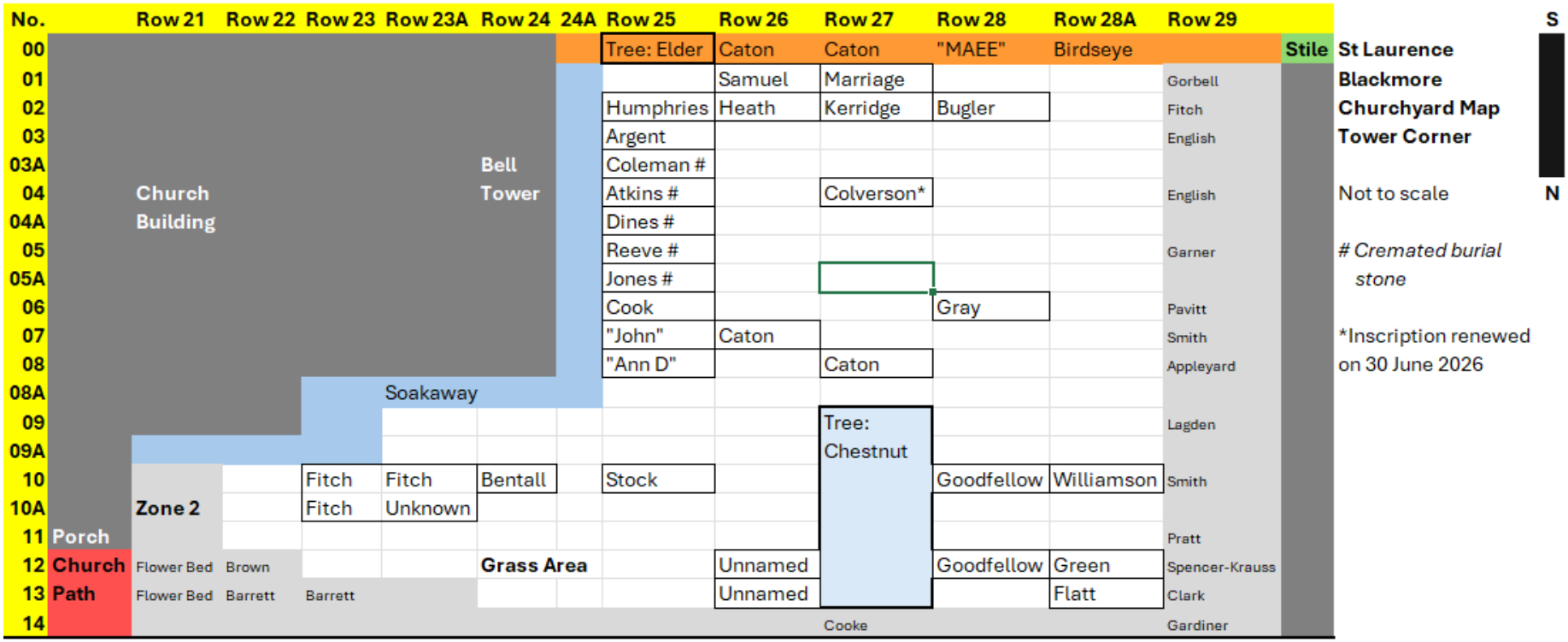
	Bottom (B)	Top (T)	Reverse (R)
01	Massingham	Cox	Ferguson
02	Puddephatt	Massingham	Jared
03	Hope	Neport	Whiteing
04	Andrews	Nicholson	Bell
05	Flegg	Newton	
06	Eames	Crawford	
07	Jeacock	Fogg	
08	Bretton	Happe	Cornwall
09	Mears	Pratt	Brockenhurst
10	West	Richardson	Brockenhurst
11	Cornwall	Cornwall	
12	Lennon	Wright	
13	Outlaw	Gunnell	
14	McCoy	Offord	Nicholson
15	Messen (nee Cornwall)	Adams	
16	Cannon	Speller	
17	Groom	Bury	
18	Barrie	Crowe	Quested

Area 1G – Old Garden of Remembrance. The area planted with roses, more recently deer-attacked and, in March 2026, primroses.

Area 1H – Grass surrounding graves closest to the church building.

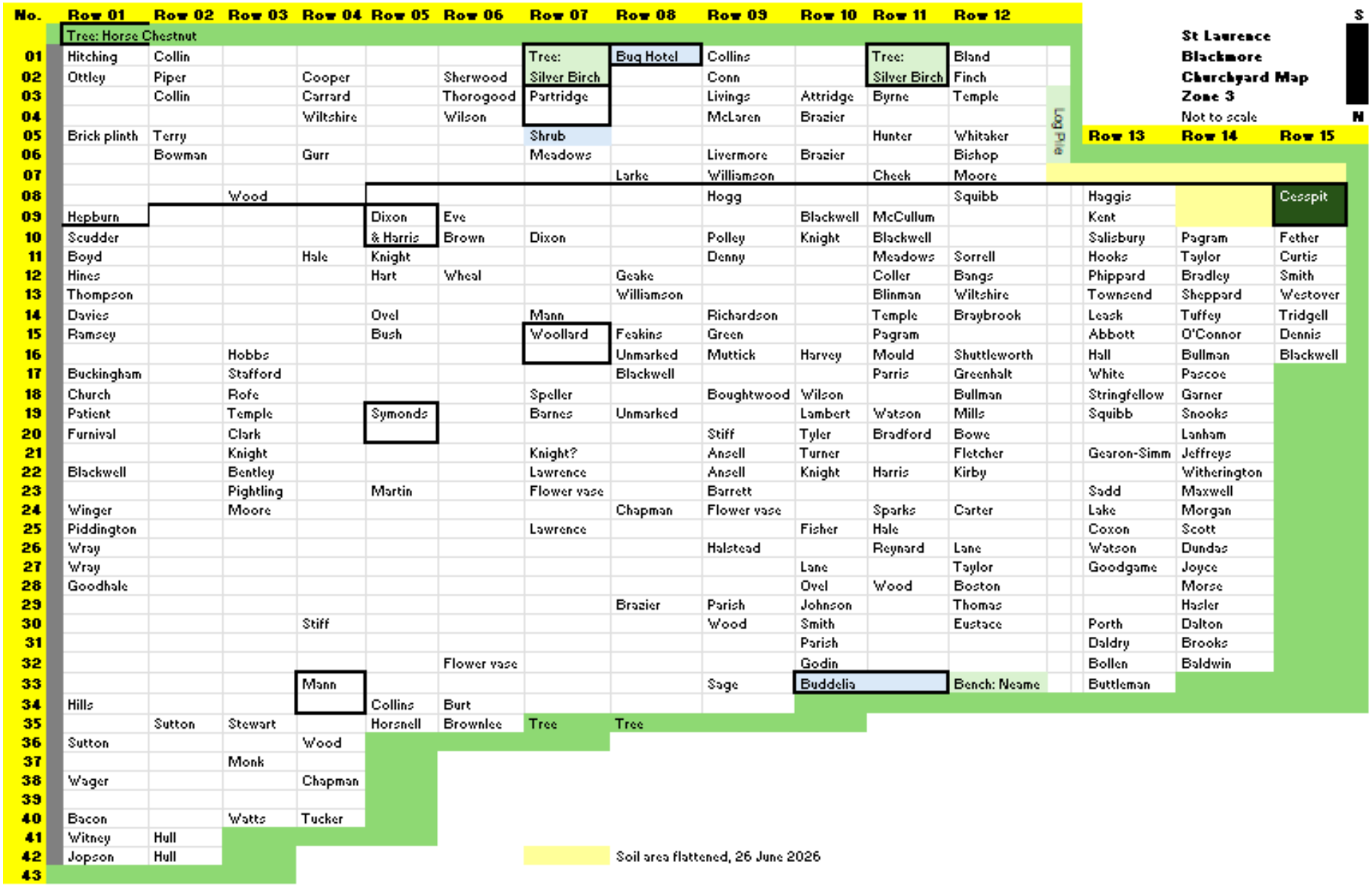
<u>Zone 2</u>


No.
Row 21
Row 22
Row 23
Row 24
Row 25
Row 26
Row 27
Row 28
Row 29
Priory Wall
Stile
Church Building
Bell Tower
Tower Corner
See insert
Porch
Tree: Chestnut
Flower Bed
Brown
Barrett
Barrett
Cooke
Farthing
Maynard
Cooper
Smith
Coburn
Tree: Laburnum
Wilson
Flack
Tree: Fir with Ivy
Wood
Saunders
Mihill
Tree: White Lilac
Jeffries
Humphries
Tree: Ash
Gooday
Baker
Baker
Paulin
Petchey
Petchey
Smith
Harrington
Drain
Edwards
Shawe
Gamble
Goodwin
Goodwin
Hodgson
Saunders
Geary
Quinton
Maclure
Pagram
Crowe
Kemp
White
White
Tree: Holly
Tree: Yew
Tree: Horse
Tree: Horse
Northern Boundary
Gadley
Gorbell
Fitch
English
English
Garner
Pavitt
Smith
Appleyard
Lagden
Smith
Pratt
Spencer-Krauss
Clark
Gardiner
Norris
Sheppard
Simmons
Lewsey
Hines
Bidwell
Maher
Lawrence
Flower Holder
Shuttleworth
Green
Richardson
Crook
Harrison
Edwards
Ray
Wilsher
Lychgate
Gate
Hedge
Entrance
St Laurence
Blackmore
Churchyard Map
Zone 2
Not to scale
S
N



Zone 2 is the area between the church footpath and public footpath with stile to waste ground outside of the churchyard close to the bell tower.

Zone 3



No.	Row 01	Row 02	Row 03	Row 04	Row 05	Row 06	Row 07	Row 08	Row 09	Row 10	Row 11	Row 12	Row 13	Row 14	Row 15
01	Hitching	Collin					Tree:	Bug Hotel	Collins		Tree:	Bland			
02	Ottley	Piper		Cooper		Sherwood	Silver Birch		Conn		Silver Birch	Finch			
03		Collin		Carrard		Thorogood	Partridge		Livings	Attridge	Byrne	Temple			
04				Wiltshire		Wilson			McLaren	Brazier					
05	Brick plinth	Terry					Shrub				Hunter	Whitaker	Row 13	Row 14	Row 15
06		Bowman		Gurr			Meadows		Livermore	Brazier		Bishop			
07								Larke	Williamson		Cheek	Moore			
08			Wood						Hogg			Squibb	Haggis		Cesspit
09	Hepburn				Dixon	Eve				Blackwell	McCullum		Kent		
10	Scudder				& Harris	Brown	Dixon		Polley	Knight	Blackwell		Salisbury	Pagram	Fether
11	Boyd			Hale	Knight				Denny		Meadows	Sorrell	Hooks	Taylor	Curtis
12	Hines				Hart	Wheal		Geake			Coller	Bangs	Phippard	Bradley	Smith
13	Thompson							Williamson			Blinman	Wiltshire	Townsend	Sheppard	Westover
14	Davies				Ovel		Mann		Richardson		Temple	Braybrook	Leask	Tuffey	Tridgell
15	Ramsey				Bush		Woollard	Feakins	Green		Pagram		Abbott	O'Connor	Dennis
16			Hobbs					Unmarked	Muttick	Harvey	Mould	Shuttleworth	Hall	Bullman	Blackwell
17	Buckingham		Stafford					Blackwell			Parris	Greenhalt	White	Pascoe	
18	Church		Rofe				Speller		Boughtwood	Wilson		Bullman	Stringfellow	Garner	
19	Patient		Temple		Symonds		Barnes	Unmarked		Lambert	Watson	Mills	Squibb	Snooks	
20	Furnival		Clark						Stiff	Tyler	Bradford	Bowe		Lanham	
21			Knight				Knight?		Ansell	Turner		Fletcher	Gearon-Simm	Jeffreys	
22	Blackwell		Bentley				Lawrence		Ansell	Knight	Harris	Kirby		Witherington	
23			Pightling		Martin		Flower vase		Barrett				Sadd	Maxwell	
24	Winger		Moore					Chapman	Flower vase		Sparks	Carter	Lake	Morgan	
25	Piddington						Lawrence			Fisher	Hale		Coxon	Scott	
26	Wray								Halstead		Reynard	Lane	Watson	Dundas	
27	Wray									Lane		Taylor	Goodgame	Joyce	
28	Goodhale									Ovel	Wood	Boston		Morse	
29								Brazier	Parish	Johnson		Thomas		Hasler	
30				Stiff					Wood	Smith		Eustace	Porth	Dalton	
31										Parish			Daldry	Brooks	
32						Flower vase				Godin			Bollen	Baldwin	
33				Mann					Sage	Buddelia		Bench: Neame	Buttleman		
34	Hills				Collins	Burt									
35		Sutton	Stewart		Horsnell	Brownlee	Tree	Tree							
36	Sutton			Wood											
37			Monk												
38	Wager			Chapman											
39															
40	Bacon		Watts	Tucker											
41	Witney	Hull													
42	Jopson	Hull													
43															

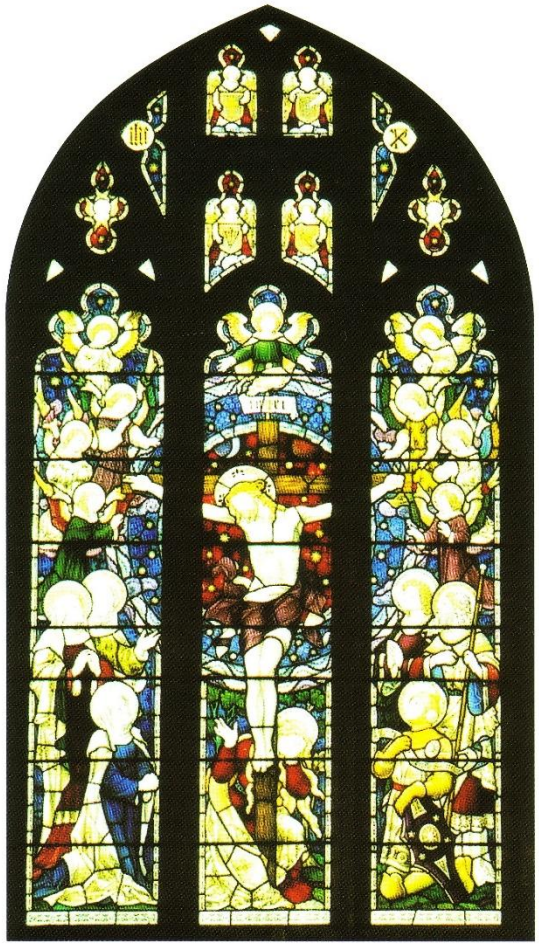
Zone 3 is the twentieth century churchyard to the west of the public footpath. A log pile (#1203) and bug hotel (#0801) were created in November 2025 and June 2026 respectively.

In the meantime, ...

Published in booklet form around 20 years ago were inscriptions on memorials inside the church, and on church windows. These booklets have been reproduced below.

Appendices

CHURCH WINDOWS



Preface

The Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore has been a place of prayer for well over 800 years with the Nave used, throughout the entire period, as a place of worship by the parishioners.

Its history is inextricably linked with the parish of Blackmore. The church underwent major renovation at the beginning of the twentieth century, and consequentially most of the painted windows' date from this era.

This booklet is a walk round tour of the church windows, explaining the links between the people commemorated.

A walk round tour

1. The East Window

Above the altar, is the impressive East Window (1907). It is a real focal point in the church and testimony to the Christian faith. Having three lights, it represents at the centre the Crucifixion of Christ. To the left are the Holy Women and to the right, St John, Joseph of Arimathea and the centurion.

The Essex County Chronicle reported the events of 22nd October 1907 as follows[1]:

The Bishop of Barking visited Blackmore on Tuesday to dedicate the new east wall and painted window there … The building of the east wall has been proceeding for some months under the superintendence of Mr. W. Chancellor, and has been carried out by Messrs Choat and Son, of Chelmsford. The cost has been provided by a generous

[1] Essex County Chronicle. 25 October 1907.

churchman who wishes to remain anonymous. The window is much larger than the previous one, and has added to the dignity of the ancient edifice. The church has been under gradual restoration, directed by Mr. Chancellor, for some years, and the present forms the fourth division of a great and important work, which, so far, has cost about £3,000. This money has been raised in gifts of three-pence and upwards. The pitch-pine pews of the church, which are of no great antiquity, are about to be superseded by chairs, which will be placed on a block floor, the bed of which will be of concrete.

The church was tastefully decorated for the dedication, and flags were suspended in Church-street. The Bishop of Barking was supported by the Revds. E. L. Reeve R.D., Charles Earle (Ingatestone), W House (Fryerning), J Tanner (Chipping Ongar), W H Bond (High Ongar) and the Vicar. The dedication service was conducted by the Vicar. "O God our help in ages past" was sung processionally, After the dedication the Confirmation service was held. The Bishop delivered an impressive address on the material and the living temple (Christian) of God.

Earlier in the day the bells were rung as a sign of thankfulness.

A number of friends were entertained to tea at the Vicarage.

In the evening, after a shortened Evensong, Mr A. H. Brown, of Brentwood, gave an organ recital, during which Miss Wilmott played selections on the violin.

2. Mothers' Union window

In the southeast corner, behind the monument to Thomas Smyth and his widow, Margaret, is the most recent stained glass. It is in memory of Margaret Eastmond, who died in 1979.

South Wall

3. Memorial Window

The church restoration of 1877 placed three window openings in the south aisle wall, mirroring those in the north. Previously it had been walled up, abutting the cloisters where the Augustinian monks would walk and assemble for worship. The old Priory was demolished in the 1540s.

One window is behind the organ, which was built in 1906. This is now blocked up.

Herbert James Brown

Rowland & Clara Pratt

This window is a memorial to an individual killed during the First World War. It is inscribed:

"I have not found so great faith in Israel.

"In memory of Herbert James Brown Lieut. Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Killed in action in Palestine Nov 6th 1917. Given by his widow.

On the right:

"Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me.

"To the memory of Rowland Richard and Clara Rebecca Pratt. Given by their three children".

Recent research has revealed the connection between Herbert Brown, who died in the First World War, the Pratt family and Revd. Walter Layton Petrie, the parish Vicar between 1888 and 1922.

Herbert Brown was born in Lee in 1884 and married Grace E Pratt in 1911. They had one child Peggy, born 1915. Following the death of her husband Grace married for a second time, to Stanley L Petrie.

The Pratt Family lived in Blackmore.

Rowland Richard Pratt was born in Navestock, Essex, in 1848. His wife, Clara (nee Patmore) was born in Takeley, Essex about 1855. Their children were Clifford, Ethel & Grace.

Rowland Pratt was a Churchwarden in 1907. He was buried at Blackmore, 8 May 1913, aged 64. Clara, his wife, was buried at Blackmore, 22 April 1912, aged 57.

In the 1911 census we find Grace Evelyn Pratt, aged 29, living at Hay Green Farm, Blackmore.

The family comprised:

Rowland Richard Pratt. Head. Married. M. 62. Occupation: Independant [Independent]. Born: Narestork [Navestock], Essex

Clara Rebecca Pratt. Wife. Married 34 years. F. 55. Occupation: At home. Born: Lakely [Takely], Essex
Rowland Clifford Pratt. Son. Single. M. 21. Working at home on farm. Born: Doddinghurst, Essex
Grace Evelyn Pratt. Daughter. Single. F. 29. Working at home on farm. Born: Narestork [Navestock], Essex

Grace married Herbert Brown at Blackmore on 15th July 1911. Herbert Brown, then aged 27, was an Engineer from Blackheath. His father was Ernest James Brown, a brick manufacturer. Grace Pratt, aged 30, was a Blackmore resident. Her father, Rowland Richard Pratt, describes his profession as 'Gentleman' [ERO D/P 266/1/12].

Herbert Brown was not a Blackmore resident as far as can be ascertained.

Grace later married Walter Layton Petrie's son, Stanley, of St Barnabas Vicarage, Sunderland.

The information from the 1911 census confirms the identity and relationship of the people commemorated. The window was given, principally, by Grace Petrie, daughter-in-law of the serving Parish Vicar.

4. Anniversary window

Then there is a window "To the greater glory of God and in memory of the 800th year of the existence of this Church".

Revd. Walter Layton Petrie (then Vicar of Blackmore) suggested a foundation date of 1114. By reference to a document, dated 1213, now in the National Archive, he counted back three generations of the Samford family, who founded the Priory, assuming each generation being 33 years. This seems somewhat over-stated and perhaps gives a date a little too early.

The earliest possible date of the current structure is thought to be 1150, but a more likely date is 1170. This can be seen in the Romanesque architecture at the west end of the Nave, and two short lengths of return wall.

North Wall

5. Air Raid Window

In what is now the kitchen:

"This window is erected as a thank-offering to Almighty God for the protection in the Great Air Raid of March 31st 1916".

During the First World War, civilians were subjected to indiscriminate bombing from Zeppelins from large airships which flew at high altitudes and later from attack by aeroplane. In all there were 53 separate Zeppelin raids on England, twenty in Essex, which then had army and naval garrisons at Harwich, Colchester and Southend, and docks along the River Thames.

This action was deliberately designed by the enemy to strike fear and to destroy morale. The country was unprepared for air attack and redoubled efforts to defend and counter-attack. Bombing civilians was an entirely new form of warfare and received outrage from the British people.

The night of 31st March 1916 was to be one of the greatest in terms of civilian casualties. In Lincolnshire, East Suffolk, Ipswich and Essex, 223 bombs were dropped killing 48 and injuring 64 people. The L14 and L15 flew over Essex, dropping bombs in Colchester, Braintree, Stanford-le-Hope, Thameshaven and Blackmore [ERO T/Z 473/1]. Four civilians were killed in Martin's Yard, Braintree by bombs dropped from the L14. Revd. Andrew Clark, Rector of Great Leighs, wrote in his Diary that the raiders had heard the town church clock strike eleven, "realised that they were over a town of some sort, and threw out three bombs by chance" [Munson, p121].

Reporting restrictions at the time prevented newspapers giving precise locations. The Essex Weekly News referred to "Friday's Attack On The Eastern Counties". No one was killed or injured in Blackmore, but there could have been a few near misses.

Revd Edward Reeve, Rector of the neighbouring village of Stondon Massey, wrote of the events in his 'notes for a parish history': "With the moonless nights and the still weather which has succeeded the wintry storms a succession of air-craft raids began. On March 31 five "Zeppelin" airships visited the Eastern Counties. One of them was heard over Stondon in the direction of Woolwich at 10.20pm, but we were destined to have a closer acquaintance with another of the group at a later hour. At 11.45 a Zeppelin dropped a series of bombs at the point where is the junction of Stondon with the parishes of Blackmore and Kelvedon Hatch: within easy distance of Soap House Farm. A machine-gun had been lately established at Kelvedon Hatch to watch for the raiders, and Capt. Hulton in charge claims to have hit the air-ship, causing it to drop the bombs hurriedly."

Revd. Andrew Clark in Great Leighs, some fourteen miles northeast of Blackmore, wrote, "11.50pm. several explosions in the south, followed by lights (probably searchlights)" [Munson p120].

Reeve continued, "Large numbers of persons from Brentwood and the surrounding district visited the spot next day, and the large craters caused by the bombs, some 15 feet in diameter and varying from 3 to 9 feet in depth, were the astonishment of all. The whole saucer-like cavities were left entirely clean by the explosion, and one local builder Mr J T Gann remarked there was no trace anywhere of the large body of earth which had been scooped out by the force of the bomb. Clods torn from the craters were sprinkled to a distance of 60 yards. Nine of the thirteen holes were quickly found: and fortunately no life was lost or building injured. All had fallen in open fields. Our windows at Stondon Rectory were violently shaken and considerable alarm was naturally caused. We in the close neighbourhood have much for which to be deeply grateful to an over-ruling Providence."

Five days later (6th April 1916) Reeve added, "Further enquiry shows that the bombs dropped on March 31st fell between the Soap House and the corner of Blackmore between the Church and Miss Barrett's house. Two were dropped in the lane near the site of the old Blackmore Mill. The remaining holes were to be found in a straight-line across the fields to Miss Barrett's at very short intervals. Many panes of glass were broken in the house by the concussion" [ERO T/P 188/3].

In terms of location, the bombs were dropped over Hook End near Blackmore House, Mill Lane then fields not more than half a mile to the east of Blackmore village itself.

The night marked a turning point for the allies because L15 was the first Zeppelin to be shot down during the War. The Anti-Aircraft gunners of the 3rd Company, Essex and Suffolk Royal Garrison Artillery based at Purfleet were credited with the success. This was a major breakthrough, and the Lord Mayor of London gave gold watches to the members of the gun crew. (He had originally put up a reward of £500). An eyewitness recorded, "It was about 12.15am on April 1st 1916 that she came across Essex from north east at a height of about 14000 feet … shrapnel shells [were fired] at the raider" [ERO D/DS 200/7]. An aeroplane failed to hit the target. The Zeppelin "dropped into the sea [near Margate] and sunk while being towed to land. Seventeen members of the crew were rescued and are prisoners of war at Chatham Barracks" [Essex Weekly News: 7 April 1916]. The news must have travelled fast because Robert Taylor Bull, of Burnham, recorded in his diary the following day, "A Zeppelin was brought down at Thameshaven". On 1st April he wrote: "A Zepp went over last night about 9 … with usual noise" [ERO T/S 245].

During September 1916, two Zeppelins were intercepted by members of the Royal Flying Corps at Billericay and Wigborough, marking the beginning of the end of the raids. Inside the church at Great Wigborough there is a small part of what remains of L33.

6. Barrett window

Then along the North Wall, firstly:

Jesus calming the storm with words, "Do not be afraid. Peace Be Still. To the Glory of God and in memory of Henry John Barrett obiit June 5th 1901".

7. James Robert White

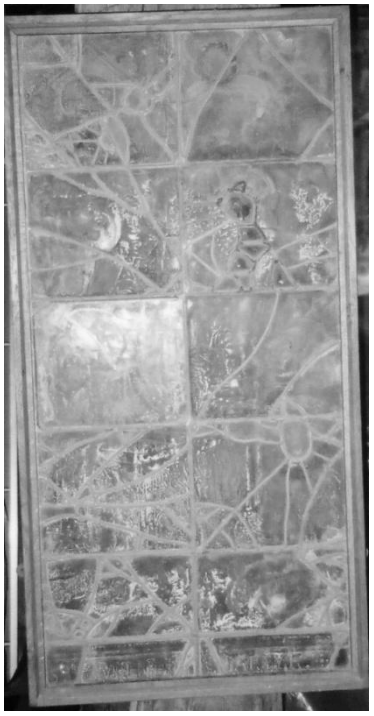
Secondly: "The window was erected by Parishioners and Friends to the Glory of God and in memory of James Robert White MB resident Doctor in this Parish. AD 1870 – 1901".

These two adjacent windows are memorials to those whose entries of burial are consecutive in the Register.

8. War Memorial Window

In what is now the Vestry, but from 1907 to 1988 was the site of a Lady Chapel, is a memorial to those who perished in the First World War. It depicts St Michael and St George and bears the inscription:

"To the Greater Glory of God and in memory of those connected with this parish who fell in the great war 1914 – 19. 2nd Lt. Gerald W Piggott, 2nd Lt. Ian Miller, Alfred Ellis, Herbert C Game, William E Rudling, Ernest C Martin, Arthur J Nash, Edwin Alexander, Harry Riglin, James Roast, Alfred Godding, Alfred Wheal, Ernest A Maynard, George W White, Herbert Miller, Edward Barker, Walter Herbert Wash RN, W H Scudder, Walter Brazier".



Recorded in the Vestry Minute Book[2] within four months of the end of hostilities:
A meeting of Parishioners was held in the Church Hall in Tuesday February 25th 1919 with respect to the erection of a painted window in Blackmore Church in memory of those connected with the parish who had fallen during the War … [was] adopted unanimously.

9. Vestry Window

In the private Vestry (locked) is a small window depicting Christ with the text, "I am the good shepherd".

10. St Laurence Window

Finally, the oldest glass which Blackmore depicts the martyrdom of St Laurence.

During the Second World War, the window in the easternmost dormer window was damaged by gunfire directed against enemy air-raiders (1940)[3]. A new design, "to replace the medieval one", was shown, in 1947, to Church Council members. "The design was not met with any enthusiasm". Consideration was given to its repair, but an expert from the Victoria and Albert Museum who examined the glass, in the 1960s, advised that although it is early 18th century, English, painted in enamels and yellow stain, it was in such poor condition that it could not be restored.

Bibliography

Clark, Revd Andrew (edited James Munson). *Echoes of the Great War (Oxford, 1985)*

Morris, Captain Joseph. *The German Air Raids on Great Britain 1914 – 1918 (Nonsuch, 2007). First published 1925.*

SOURCES

Essex Record Office Chelmsford Library

Commonwealth War Graves Commission:www.cwgc.org

[2] Essex Record Office. D/P 266/11

[3] In the Church accounts is an entry, Dec 30 1940. Boarding up windows. £2-16-6. (Essex Record Office. D/P 266/29/2).

MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

Preface

The Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore has been a place of prayer for nearly 900 years with the Nave used, throughout the entire period, as a place of worship by the parishioners.

Its history is inextricably linked with the people of Blackmore. Although individually the monuments and memorials tell little, collectively these represent the long monastic and family lines that held power in the parish.

This booklet, which accompanies "Church Windows", is a walk round tour of these monuments, explaining the links between the people commemorated.

Introduction

Blackmore's history divides into three periods. The Church was an Augustinian Priory throughout the Middle Ages.

John Smyth purchased the site and advowson (the right to appoint a Vicar) from Henry VIII in 1540. His family dominated the parish's history, for five generations, until the last surviving member, Thomas, died without issue in 1721.

The Smyth's sold the Priory land to a shipbuilder named Jacob Acworth in 1714. Thomas Smyth left his property, Smyth Hall, to his niece, Mary Tendring. It passed to her cousin, Thomas Alexander, in 1732, on condition that he adopted the name Smyth.

Thomas Smyth, though, left the Rectory to his cousin, John Gibson, son of John Gibson D.D., Provost of Queen's College, Oxford. Upon his decease, both Smyth Hall and the Rectory passed to Charles Alexander. The Crickitt family later held the advowson. Since then, there have been various holders. Patronage finally ceased, in 1899, when responsibility for nominating a Vicar passed to the Bishop of St Albans. In 1914, Blackmore transferred to the newly created Diocese of Chelmsford.

The church has a number of monuments and memorials, most of which are on view. In order to place each in context, a summary family tree of the Smyth family is given below.

Unseen memorial slabs

Thomas de Veer – the just Prior

Some of the slabs on the chancel floor have been carpeted over in order to preserve them from excess wear of passing feet. This includes the oldest dating from the end of the thirteenth or the beginning of the fourteenth century. This is situated in the middle of the chancel. It is a purbeck marble slab, which D. W. Coller (1861) says was, "robbed of its elegant, shaped cross of brass"[4]. Its inscription in Lombardic letters round the edge, according to the "History of Essex by a Gentleman" (Muilman, 1772): 'To the memory of the just Prior, Thomas de Veer'". The letters are illegible, but these too were once filled with brass. Chancellor (1890) suggested that Thomas de Veer was "doubtless a member of this distinguished family, but there is no further record of him"[5]. Thomas de Veer may have been the prior responsible for the planning and enlargement of the church, but why he is the "just" Prior is unknown.

Unknown Civilian

Another covered memorial, in front of the chancel steps is another old slab. It once contained a brass figure some 20 inches long, but only the top half portion survives, which has been removed for safe keeping from under the carpet. The brass is of a civilian, dated about 1420. The inscription is missing so the man's identity is unknown.

Stephen Smyth: 1602 - 1670

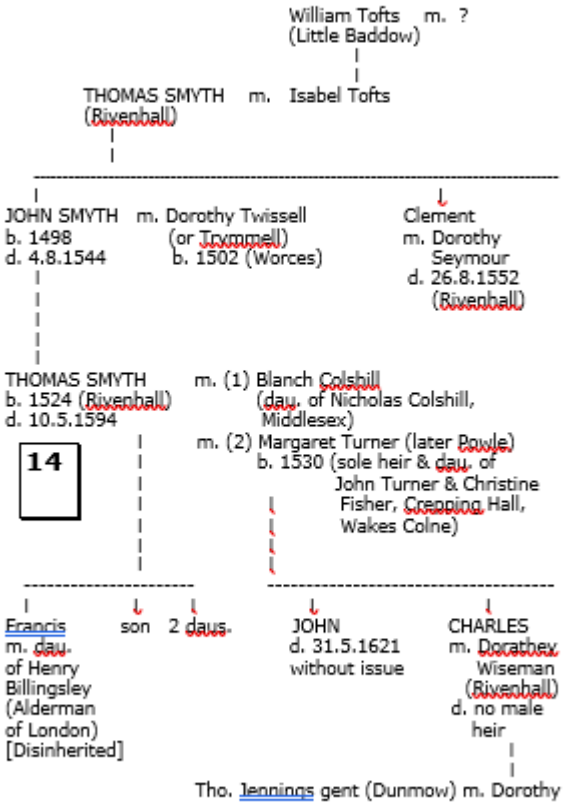
Other covered memorial slabs in the Chancel have, according to Chancellor, the following descriptions:

Herunder lyth the body
of Stephen Smith Esq who
departed this life the 22d day
of September and was buryed
the Thursday following in the
yeare of our Lord 1670
aged 68 yr

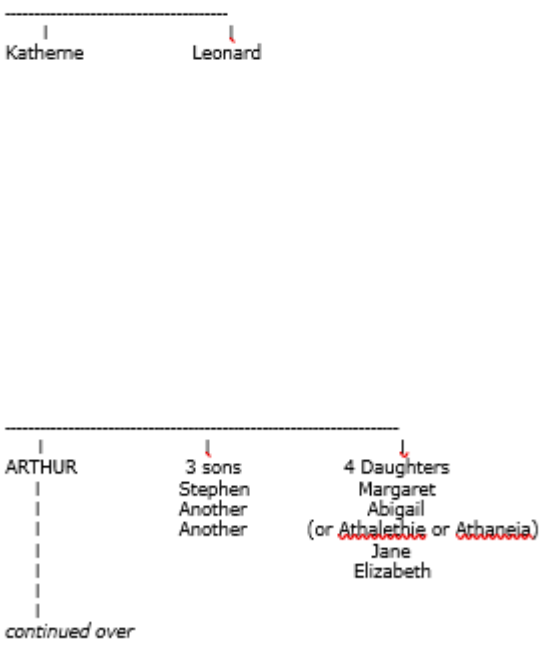
[4] Coller. The People's History of Essex (1861) p23

[5] Chancellor. The Ancient Sepulchral Monuments of Essex (1890) p17

SMYTH



FAMILY



continued over

Captaine STEPHEN SMYTH
b. 28.5.1602
bap. 18.8.1602
m. = Jane (Jone or Joanne) Bennett (dau of Tho. Bennett, Alderman of London)
d. 22.9.1670
bur. 29.9.1670 **U**

Dorothy (Dorithee)	Margaret	Mary	Stephen	ARTHUR
bap. 18.7.1632	?.7.1634 bur. 20.1.1704/5	10.11.1636	5.2.1637/8 bur. 21.3.1637/8	bap. 1.8.1639 d. 31.12.1667 bur. 1.1.1667/8 **U**

Key

U "U" denotes memorial not on public view.
"14" denotes memorial number – see plan

ARTHUR SMYTH
b. (Blackmore)
m. c.1602 = Anne Milward
d. 7.3.1622/3 b. 1592

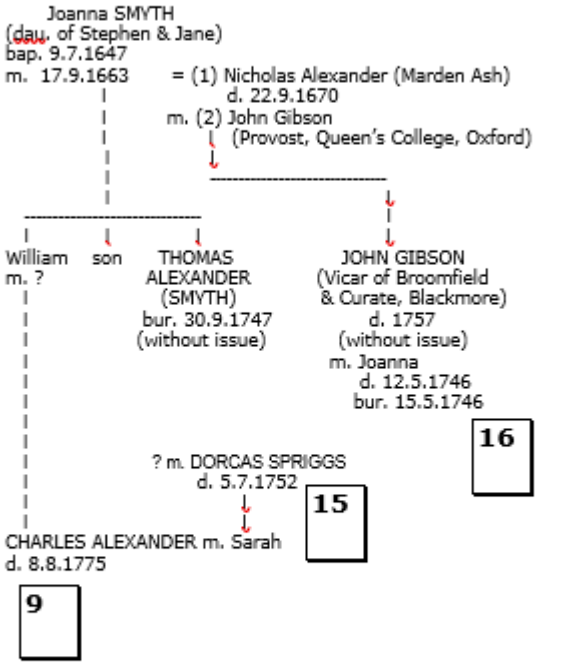
Thomas	Margaret	Arthur	Anne
b. 1605 (Braintree) d. (Virginia) [Emigrated]	bap. 10.6.1606 bur. 15.3.1608/9	bap. 30.8.1607 d. 1645 (Virginia) [Emigrated]	bur. 19.5.1610

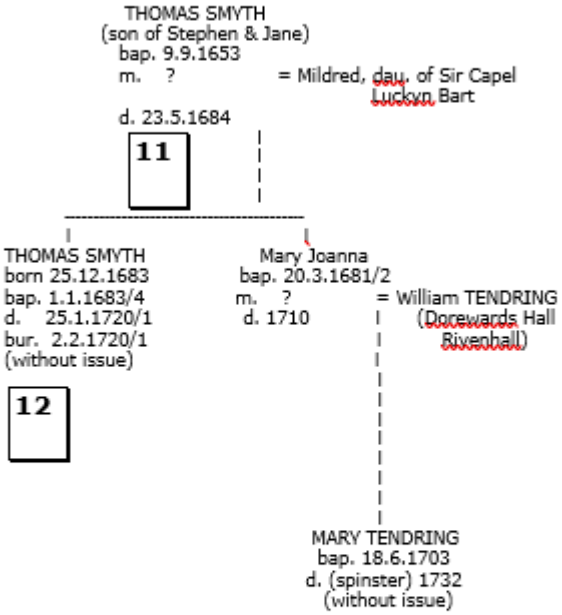
Stephen	Henry	Bridget	Bennet	child	Thomas	Christian
bap. 5.8.1641 d. ? bur. 22.12.1671 **U**	<14.6.1643>		24.7.1645 d. child	bur. 9.1.1649/50	<bap. 9.9.1653>	

Joanna
continued over

Stephen
bap. 7.8.1650
d. 14.3.1672/3
bur. 16.3.1672/3
13

continued over


Joanna SMYTH
(dau. of Stephen & Jane)
bap. 9.7.1647
m. 17.9.1663
= (1) Nicholas Alexander (Marden Ash)
d. 22.9.1670
m. (2) John Gibson
(Provost, Queen's College, Oxford)
William
m. ?
son
THOMAS ALEXANDER (SMYTH)
bur. 30.9.1747
(without issue)
JOHN GIBSON
(Vicar of Broomfield & Curate, Blackmore)
d. 1757
(without issue)
m. Joanna
d. 12.5.1746
bur. 15.5.1746
16
? m. DORCAS SPRIGGS
d. 5.7.1752
15
CHARLES ALEXANDER m. Sarah
d. 8.8.1775
9


THOMAS SMYTH
(son of Stephen & Jane)
bap. 9.9.1653
m. ?
= Mildred, dau. of Sir Capel Luckyn Bart
d. 23.5.1684
11
THOMAS SMYTH
born 25.12.1683
bap. 1.1.1683/4
d. 25.1.1720/1
bur. 2.2.1720/1
(without issue)
12
Mary Joanna
bap. 20.3.1681/2
m. ?
d. 1710
= William TENDRING
(Dorewards Hall Rivenhall)
MARY TENDRING
bap. 18.6.1703
d. (spinster) 1732
(without issue)

Stephen was the son of Arthur Smyth, whose burial is not recorded in the Blackmore Register, and who has no memorial. He was the grandson of Thomas and Margaret Smyth, whose memorial is in the southeast corner of the church.

Arthur Smyth: 1639 - 1668

Here under lyeth the
body of Arthur Smith the
sonn of Stephen Smith Esq
who dyed ye 31 of December
and buryed ye 1 day of Jan
in the year of our Lord [1667]
aged 28 yr

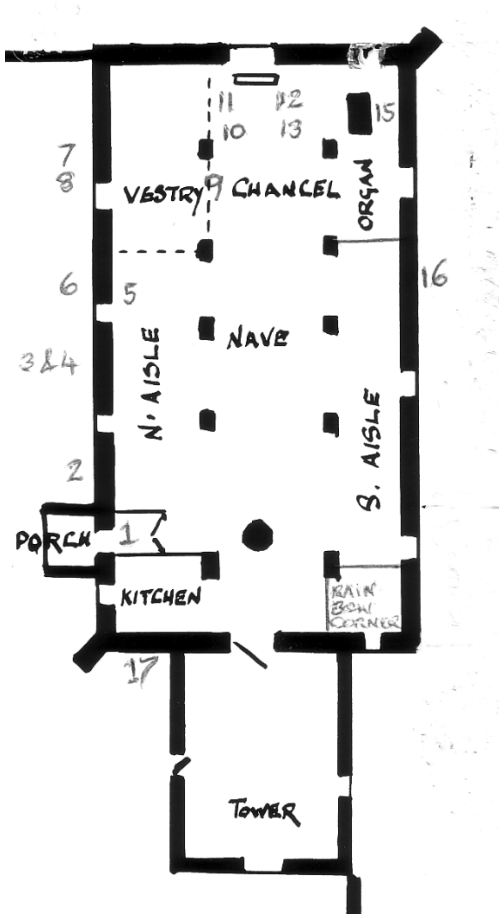
Arthur was the son of the above-named Stephen.

Henry Smyth: 1643 - 1671

Here under lyeth the
body of Henry Smith
the sonne of Stephen
Smith Esq who dyed the
22 day of December in
the yer of our Lord
1671 aged 28 yr

Henry, brother to above named Arthur and son of Stephen.

A walk around tour of the visible monuments and memorials



Plan indicating location of memorials

1. Robert and Eliza Peachy

The following monuments and memorials are visible. Starting at the North door and working firstly eastward along the north aisle (i.e. clockwise) these are recorded as below.

Underneath the doormat is a slab:

Here lies the body of

Mr Rob Peachy

also of

Mrs Eliza Peachey

Details of this couple is unknown.

2. List of Clergy

A list of Priors and Clergy is on the North Wall, just inside the entrance. [This was later moved to the South Wall by the Rainbow Corner]

3 & 4. Edgar Disney: 1810 - 1881

Memorial to Edgar Disney, buried at Fryerning.

On the North Wall:

Sacred

to the memory of

Edgar Disney

of The Hyde

Ingatestone Essex

and of

Jericho Blackmore Esquire

Born 22nd December 1810

Died 8th December 1881

He that believeth in the Son hath

everlasting life, he that believeth

not the Son shall not see life

St John chap iii, ver. xxxvi

Memorials of a very similar design may be found in the parish churches of Fryerning and Ingatestone. Members of the family, including Edgar, are buried in a large tomb on the north side of Fryerning churchyard.

Below the Disney memorial on the North wall is a brass plate:

This tablet

is erected by the Rev W Callendar Vicar of Black

more in grateful recognition of

the kindly munificence of Edgar Disney Esq of the Hyde Ingate

stone to whose generosity (independently of various donations from Parishioners

and others) the successful restoration of the Church of

St Lawrence is mainly due 1878

It has been suggested that the family is related to the animator, Walt Disney. There is, alas, no direct connection: perhaps a very ancient forefather.

5. Esther Acworth: 1711(?) - 1768

On the floor of the North aisle is a memorial slab:

Mrs. Esther Acworth daughter

of Sir Jacob Acworth Knt.

Who died the 8th day of September

1768

aged 57 years

Jacob Acworth purchased Jericho Priory from the Smyth family.

6. Commemorative plaque

On the North wall by the Vestry is a brass plaque:

To the greater glory of God
The roofs of the North and South Aisles
have been restored and part of the North Wall
rebuilt by a member of Christ's Church
In the year of Our Lord 1901

This gives a clue regarding the date of commemorations in the painted windows.[6]

7. Charles Alexander Crickitt: 1737(?) - 1803

On the wall in the Vestry there are two memorials:

To the memory of
Charles Alexander Crickitt
of Smyths Hall Esquire
many years one of the
Representatives of Parliament
of the Borough of Ipswich
who died the 16th Jany 1803
aged 65 years

[6] See separate booklet: "Church Windows"

also to the memory of

Sarah the widow of

Charles Alexander Crickitt Esq

who departed this life

the 29 day of July 1828

aged 84 years

8. Harriet Alexander Crickitt: 1789 - 1868

In memory of

Harriet Alexander Crickitt

the last surviving child

of the late

Charles Alexander Crickitt Esq M.P.

formerly of

Smyths Hall in this parish

she died

the 16th of November 1868

Aged 79.

Genealogical notes, dating from 1908, deposited in the Essex Record Office, say that the Crickitt family "were bankers at Ipswich, Colchester, Chelmsford and Maldon. They started the Old Bank, Ipswich in 1798. They represented Ipswich in

Parliament for 50 years. They owned several manors, among them Smyth Hall Blackmore, pulled down by Miss H Crickitt, it was an old Elizabethan Hall" [7].

The Crickitt family vault occupied this corner of the church until 1901.

The minutes of the Parochial Church Council record the proposal to create a side chapel in place of the Mausoleum. This entailed the removal and burial of three coffins in the churchyard[8] and rebuilding of part of the north wall of the aisle.

For posterity, the minutes[9] recorded:

Monday Novr 26 1900
The following are the inscriptions of the Coffins of the members of the Crickitt family

Sarah Alexander Crickitt

Died 28th August 1819

Aged 49 Years

Charles Alexander Crickitt Esq

Died 16th Jan 1803

Aged 65 years

Late Member for Ipswich

Mrs Sarah Crickitt

Died 29 July 1828

[7] Essex Record Office. T/G 82/1
[8] The last of which, according to Petrie (1898) was placed there in 1868.
[9] Essex Record Office. D/P 266 The Vicar, Churchwarden and Synodsmen of S Lawrence Blackmore (1893 to 1965)

Aged 84 years

Harriett Alexander Crickitt

Died Nov 15 1868

Aged 78 Years

9. Charles Alexander: 1700 - 1775

Moving now to the Chancel, on the north side there is a plain altar tomb in white marble inscribed:

Within this Tomb are deposited

the remains of

Charles Alexander Esq.

late Possessor of Smyths Hall in this Parish

and

a Captain in the Militia of this County

who departed this life Aug. the 8th 1775

in the 75th year of his age

10. Simon Lynch: 1600(?) - 1660

Then on the floor, under the loose carpet, is the memorial to the most colourful Blackmore character of the 17th century, Simon Lynch.

During an era of religious intolerance and political upheaval, in Essex, between 1643 and 1660, more preachers were ejected from their livings and replaced by Puritans than in any other County of England. This is not surprising because the County was a Parliamentarian stronghold with supporters keen to improve the quality of preaching. If the preacher was known to be a Royalist, or, maintained neutrality, then they were ejected. One such individual was Simon Lynch who was buried in the church. His epitaph reads:

Memorial to Simon Lynch (d. 1660)

Curate of Blackmore

Here lyeth the body of Simon Lynch

Rector of Runwell

Who for fearing God and the King

Was sequestered, prosecuted and persecuted

To the day of his death

By Gog and Magog,

And left issue, Elizabeth, Sarah, Simon

And Ithiel

Unto whome the Lord be mercifull

Who died ye 19th June 1660

Aged 60 yr.

Simon Lynch was appointed Rector of Runwell in 1629, and later, from 1646 or 1647, Curate of Blackmore. He was replaced as Rector at Runwell in 1644, by "Mr Oakely … a godly, able preaching minister"[10]. An earlier entry before the Essex Archdeaconry Court, in March 1635/6, at Ingatestone states:

Simon Linch. Rector of Runwell: speaking incesscent and vasumly speeches in the chancell near the Communion table. Admonished and dismissed.[11]

[10] H Smith. The Ecclesiastical History of Essex. (1934) p256. A quote from the Record of Parochial Inquisition held in Chelmsford on Thursday 5th September 1650.
[11] Essex Record Office: D/AZ/2/14 p15

Stephen Smyth's appointment of Lynch to Blackmore was unpopular with the parishioners. This is documented in the Record of Parochial Inquisition held at The Black Boy Inn, Chelmsford on 5th September 1650:

That Stephen Smith, Esq., receives the great and small Tythes of the said Parish. That Symon Lynch, Clerke, supplyeth the Cure by the appointment of the said Stephen Smith, Esq who payes him for his Paynes thirtye pounds per Ann. That the said Symon Lynch, Clerk, was putt out of Runwell for his scandalous life, and brought into this parish without the Consent of the well Affected Inhabitants.[12]

In Simon Lynch's Will, written in 1659, he specified the words to be inscribed on his tombstone. It bewails his plight – that of being taunted to death by Gog, the named enemy of God, the Antichrist in the Book of Revelations, whom Lynch considered to be the Parliamentarians of Cromwell's day.

Lynch lived just long enough to know of the Restoration of the Monarchy and the Church. He died just as he was about to take re-possession of the parsonage at Runwell following the ejection of Nicholas Greene whom his son described disparagingly as "a broken puritanical shopkeeper".

11. Thomas Smyth: 1653 - 1684

The first visible Smyth family memorial on our walk around is by the altar on the north side.

Here lyeth the Body of

Thomas Smyth Esqre who

died the 23 May Anno Dom

1684 aged 32 yeares

Since Art has taught insensate stones to speake

[12] Ibid. Page 253

I am a stone and needs must silence breake

Here lies the ruins of a generous minde

In this dark cell for a short space confind

A nobler part tied in his house of clay

To his own home made speedy hast away

And left this Pawn to be secured here

Till the Great Judge in glory shall appear

For longing soules like fire soare upon high

When they put of the clogg of mortality

Thomas was brother to "the hidden" Arthur and Henry, and son of Stephen. He died when his two children were very young. In his Will[13], he places "my Lands … in the severall pishes of Blackmore, Chappell als Portesbright, Wakes Colne, Lamarsh & Henny … and all my Rectory or Parsonage of Blackmore with all manere of Titles" into trust administered by Sir William Luckyn and Daniell Slater "for one and thirty years". From the money raised they were to make provision for both Mary Joanna, his daughter, and Thomas, his son. Mary would inherit £2,000 at the age of 18. To his wife, he left "five and twenty pounds by half yearly payments for & Towards ye mainteynance of my sd Daughter" until she reached 18 years of age, and likewise £25 "by half yearly payments towards the mainteynance and education of my son Thomas Smyth untill he shall Attaine unto the age of One and Twenty Years".

Thomas' servant received £5; the poor of Blackmore, £10; "Mr John Glasscock, Minister of Blackmore the summ of Tenn pounds".

To his "deare and Loveing Wife", Thomas bequeathed, "the use of all my plate Bedding Linen Brass pewter and Houshold stuffe for her Natural Life only the Bedd in the Chamber over the Great Parlor with the furniture thereunto Belonging I give unto my

[13] Essex Record Office. D/DQ 55/37

deare and Loveing Wife". She was appointed executor and required "to keep the Mantion House I live in called Smythes Hall in good and Tenantable Repaires for the good of my Heire". It appears that only if her son and daughter pre-deceased would his widow inherit.

The Essex Weekly News, 3rd August 1877, reported that, "A stone to the memory of Thomas Smyth, who died on the 23rd of May, 1684, which had been found in the course of restoration hidden away in an obscure corner, has been placed in the chancel floor side by side with the other stones to the memory of members of the Smyth family".

12. Thomas Smyth: 1683 - 1720

To the south side of the Altar, a slab reads:

Here lyes interred the body of
Thomas Smyth Esq the last Hier
Male of the ancient family of the
Smyths of Smith Hall in this
Parish who died a Batchelor on
the xxv of January Anno Domini
MDCCXX Aged xxxvii years
To whose memory his Niece and
Hieress Mrs Mary Tendring causd
this stone to be laid

As the inscription indicates, this was the last of the Smyth family line. Mary Joanna, his sister had died in 1710. Thomas had no male heir, so the family line passed to his niece, Mary Tendring.

13. Stephen Smyth: 1650 - 1673

Stephen Smyth

Then:

Ye that passe by come turn aside and see
The Portraiture of mans nativity
This way the young and old must goe
When captivate by Death's victorious bow
Death strikes the young as this on President
Learne hence this Lesson early to repent
The cause why Hee retired to bed so Soone
Hee rose betimes to take a napp at noon
So through the grace of Christ receivd his pay
With them yt bore the burden of the day

Here under
lyeth the body of
Stephen Smyth sonne of
Stephen Smyth Esqr
who dyed the 14th of March
in the yeare of our Lord
1672 aged 23

Stephen is again another brother, and son of Stephen. He was the third son to be named Stephen, because the elder siblings, bearing the same name, had died.

These slabs of black marble, as with the others which are visible in the Chancel, are all carved with the Smyth coat of arms, "a shield argent a cross gules between four peacocks close, azure, crest, a peacock's head erased azure, ducally gorged or". Constance Simmons wrote (1966): "It is interesting to notice the varying degrees of skill in the carving of the arms and inscriptions – from the best, which is beautifully executed, to the worst which is inaccurate and crude to an incredible degree".

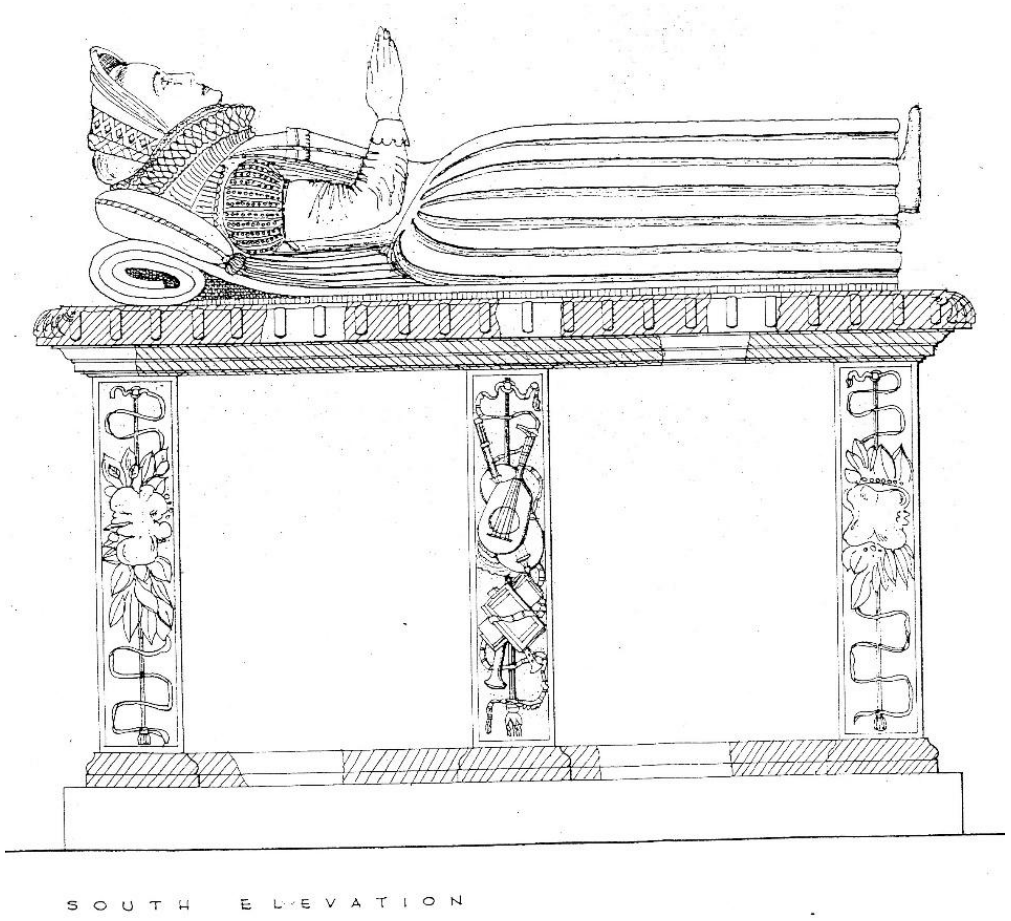
14. Thomas Smyth: 1524 – 1592

Margaret Powle (nee Smyth, Turner): 1530 - 1621

In the southeast corner is the memorial to Thomas Smyth Esq. and Margaret, his second wife. It was restored in 1960.

The monument to Thomas Smyth (d. 1592) and his wife, Margaret

North Elevation of monument taken from Plan



South Elevation of monument taken from Plan

When Thomas Smyth inherited the manor of Blackmore, in 1544, and "house called Jerico"[14] from his father, John, he completed Smyth Hall, using the materials from the former Priory.

[14] Essex Record Office. D/DQ 55/35

Thomas Smyth did not appear to be a great supporter of the local parish church. In the Visitation of 1572, it is recorded "that the parishe is pore and the tabell not as it ought to be, and the parish not able to buy a newe"[15].

Thomas' relationship with the parishioners was not harmonious either. In 1577, he appeared before the Archdeaconry of Essex Court accused, "with others openly in service time in the church made a brawl to the disquieting of the parson and the people gathered together"[16]. He confessed that there were "high words". Four years later he caused a rift he removed the right of the parishioners to use the chancel (1581), but the parishioners, who used the Church, claimed that both the Church and Chancel was theirs as an ancient right of use.

The Essex Record Office has the original document of the case: "Parishioners de Blackmore v. Smith" [17], made before the Archdeacon of Essex, in 1583. Four parishioners gave evidence, one of whom was John Symond.

JOHN SYMOND, of Blackmore, husbandman, [there about lxxv annos (75 years)] a native of Brentwood, aged 80, deposed to living in this parish the best part of his life and well remembered the religious house which sometime stode adjoining the church … pulled down by Sir Thomas Tuke … and left the part standing which lately was used for the chancell that Mr. Smith in controversies between him and the parishns did shut it up … which was no pte of Blackmore Church, but pcel of the Priory.

The Courts upheld the parishioners' claim but there is evidence to suggest that Thomas Smyth did not willingly relent.

In 1589, he was in Court again, claiming that "the said Chancell by no means appertaineth unto the said churchwardens of the said parish"[18]. On another occasion, in the same year, the churchwardens alleged that, "He is a contentious person and a slanderer of his neighbours. The Chancell of Blackmore is broken up by the default of Mr Smyth and it is not repaired again. And the said Mr Smyth doth not orderly frequent the church"[19].

[15] Essex Record Office. D/AZ/1/11

[16] Emmison. Elizabethan Life. Morals and the Church Courts (1973) p115

[17] The original document (Essex Record Office D/AE/D2 f30) is almost illegible, being the handwriting of the clerk while the Court was in session. There are two transcripts, both from the early twentieth century: Petrie. S Laurence (1914) p15, and, Essex Record Office D/AZ/1/7, by R H Browne.

[18] Essex Record Office. D/AZ/1/9

[19] Essex Record Office. D/AZ/1/8

15. Dorgas Spriggs: 1674(?) - 1752

Also, there is a slab:

Here Lies the Body of
DORGAS SPRIGGS who
Departed this Life, the
5th Day of May 1752
Aged 78 Years

She was Mother to
SARAH ALEXANDER, Wife
of CHARLES ALEXANDER
ESQR of SMYTHS HALL

Dorcas Spriggs was a descendent of the Smyth family, through marriage.

16. Joanna Gibson: 1687(?) - 1746

A marble tablet on the wall of the south aisle reads:

Juxta aram Dei
Cui frequens dum in vivis
aderat Hospes
Suas exuvias deponi Voluit

Joanna Gibson

Revdi Johannis Gibson S.T.P.

Coll Reg Apud Oxon Nuper Praeposti

Renera Vidua

Nicclai Alexandri, Gen,

De Marden Ash in Com. Essex

Filia natu mimima

Quam sub diros corporis

Languentem Cruciatus

Constans in Christo

Sustinuit fides

Obiit 12mo Maij 1746

Anno Aetatis 59

Ultima Optimae Malui

debita Reverentiae

et gratitudinis Monumentum

Revdm Joannes Gibson

Filius Unicus

Moerens extruxit

Memorial to Joanna Gibson

This, barely legible, memorial is to Joanna Gibson. Joanna was, according to the epitaph, “small and tormented with weak body” but died “faithful in Christ”. The monument was raised “in grateful memory by Rev. John Gibson, her husband, and Vicar of Broomfield, Essex”.

17. Barrett family

In the kitchen area are two brass memorials depicting the Barrett family line. These date from the early twentieth century.

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