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# St Mary & All Saints Church Rivenhall Essex
# Church Guide



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Website www.stmarysrivenhall.co.uk

## RECTORS OF RIVENHALL

1185 Robert - possibly Robert of Rochester, the subject of one of the Thomas Becket Canterbury windows.

1255 Peter. DE ROSSA (of Rochester) Lord of-the Manor; became a Knight Templar before his death in 1255.

1255 John DE ANTIOCH; had been the clerk of one of King Henry 3rd's unpopular half brothers - Geoffrey de Lusignan; the King gave John the living.

1300 Henry DE BLUNTESDONE (Blunsdon) held many livings as King Edward 1st's Almoner; a generous man who slipped the disgraced first Prince of Wales secret money! Pope Boniface 8th allowed Henry to retain Rivenhall at the King's request, in 1300.

1330 William DE LALLEFORD until at least 1339; was one of the attorneys of Robert de Scales who was Lord of the Manor in 1337.

1352 Richard DUNS probably here in the Black Death, '48-51.

1302 John DE CLEYE until at least 1397; probably here during the Peasants' Revolt,1381. In 1396 he received a fifth share in the patronage of the living with "Land lying under Rivenhall Cemetery, in a pasture called ‘e Cowlase' " - the site of the present Rivenhall School.

1405 Andrew NEWPORT exchanged livings with the next man:- John DYNE (Was he related to Richard Dun?)

1407 John WHITACRE came when Dyne resigned.

1435 John KEYNELL who,with'Robert' & Lalleford is called the 'Parson' of Rivenhall.

1456 James GOLDWELL; Doctor of Civil Law-shrewd & merciful; Became Archdeacon of Essex,1461;then Dean of Salisbury; Principal Secretary to King Edward 4th and then the King's Proctor to Pope Sixtus 4th. Later in the same year,1472,tho Pope consecrated him Bishop of Norwich; the completed tower and spire at Norwich were due to Goldwell and his splendid tomb is in the South Choir. (Died 1499)

1461 John WODDE - became Archdeacon of Middlesex in 1475; a Bachelor of Thoology, 'Wood' as we would call him, had been vicar of Rettendon, Essex.

1475 Henry RELTHWATT

1490 Robert UNERWOOD -from Sth. Fambridge Vicarage d.1496.

1497 John OPLETE M.A.

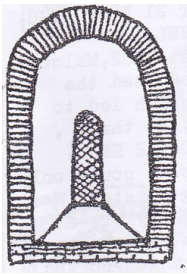
1534 Clement ROCHESTER,M.A. (Rector of Faulkbourn 1534 also)

1539 William LOVE -also Vicar of Witham & buried there

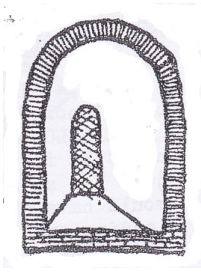
1560 William DAWES, Bachelor of Law.

1565 John FAUNT

# Our Church has been in continual use for over 1000 years



The yellow plaster of those window splays in the original, dating from 980 AD. The one on the right (South side) was built with a wider splay at its western side to enable more sunlight to penetrate the interior. Blocked up in the restoration of c.1300, they were re-opened & glazed in the early 1970s



Rivenhall Church appears to be Victorian, but underneath its exterior stucco and internal 19th century plaster, there are **thick Saxon walls for almost the entire length of the nave and for half of the length of the chancel**; they are built from flint rubble and Roman tile taken from the Roman Villa which once dominated this site. For much of our knowledge we are indebted to Dr Warwick Rodwell and his wife Kirsty, who did several years archaeological research upon the church and its parish; they have shown that this building and at least two earlier churches (see centre pages for detail), served a community which was dispersed and straggly throughout most of its history. With a small population there was never any need to construct side aisles; there were seldom any inhabitants wealthy enough to consider drastic alterations for self aggrandisement. The simple box structure received only simple additions. So, much that is old has remained.




RECONSTRUCTION OF SAXO-NORMAN CHURCH

BEGIN your walk-about OUTSIDE on the north, or vestry side, where the plaster has been removed from the wall.

***Here at Rivenhall, we have an almost entire Anglo-Saxon two-celled church building, standing about 21 feet high, right up to its original eaves level.***

In the BBC's 'Origins' programme in August 1982,Malcolm Billings stood here with Dr Rodwell and discussed the feature, a highlight of 3 years of excavation, which led to this important discovery; look, as they did, at that ***small long narrow window with a semi-circular head***, about 14 feet from the ground. In the 1960s there was only an edge of it beneath the decaying plaster. We would have said it was Norman, but Dr. Harold Taylor, a leading expert, points out that Anglo-Saxon windows were also round headed. This window and its companion on the south side are single-splayed, rather than double:- a Norman rather than Saxon feature, but the radio-carbon dating of the wooden window -sill on this north side was pre-conquest and centered on 1,000 A.D. The glazing is modern. A. C. Edwards in his 'History of Essex' includes Rivenhall among 16 churches in the county, which retain Saxon work; the late Nikolaus Pevsner's guide book which states;-"Rivenhall St Mary & All Saints 1838-9. Brick, with the use of original walls" (This guide was updated as 2nd Edition in 2007 by James Bettley and is available form good book sellers) this was 'on target' but hardly enough to ensure a state grant for much needed repairs. Subsequently the building was restored to a mainly Victorian style including grants by English Heritage at a total cost £500K during the period 1995– 2002 more on this later.

Look at the remains of the ***14th century buttress,*** in the middle of the north chancel wall, beneath an early Victorian 'window'(1838) that never was! (Mere decoration) To your left is an untidy Medieval surface, but to your right is the older, neater Anglo-Saxon; the older was made to be seen, the newer work to be covered over.

The foundations of the 14th century work are many feet deep, but the older walls (and of the nave) appear to have no foundations! The earlier craftsman, however, had rammed rubble into the clay, making a thick elastic hoggin which has proved itself over a millennium; this mortar is in better shape than that of the later,l4th century work. You can pick out the molding of ***two 14th century windows***. The chancel had lost its 19th century battlements and pepper-pot pinnacles. We can blame an architect in the 1950s for this but these were later restored in the

1990 works as shown in the photograph on the front cover.

Walking round to the S. side of the chancel, notice the restored ***PRIEST'S DOORWAY;*** the Clipsham stone corbel - heads are of Julius Caesar & the Blessed Virgin Mary-1972. **ST MARY & ALL SAINTS,** the patronal dedication is one of 50 such dedications in England today; Essex has 5 of them.-Taken separately, "St Mary" is the oldest & most popular English dedication, while "All Saints" is second.

***MEDIEVAL REMAINS***

Beyond the porch & set in the grass lies what is probably the flat stone top of the old ALTAR, removed on Puritan orders in 1550 (Edward 6th). None of its 5 consecration crosses survive. It was found here in August 1971.

***THE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING***

DRAW-BAR N. nave doorway - sketch p.18; a stout length of timber could bolt this entrance, today this hole is used for holy water.

***WALL PAINTING*** N. nave wall near pulpit; when Samuel Western's Latin Memorial was moved from where it blocked the north chancel Saxon window, this painting was uncovered part of a larger design, E.Clive Rouse said it would have been in a hand-mirror type frame, i.e. not a frieze. Additional lettering was added in the late Middle Ages.

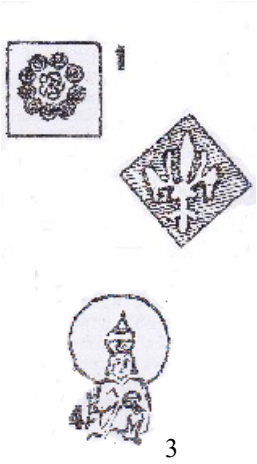
***ROOD-LOFT STAIR-WELL*** The cut-away section of walling by the S.nave, square-headed window shows where this was.

***STONE COFFIN LIDS*** After their discovery in 1877 these were set in new positions in the chancel floor- 12th & 13th C. OLD FONT S. Chancel- Priest's doorway - Octagonal & from c.1300;it stood many years in the Old Rectory garden.

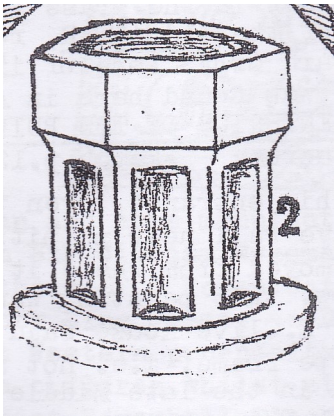
***THOMAS TUSSER,*** author of "500 Points of Good Husbandry" & probably born near Hoo Hall in 1524 would have been baptized at this font; so was a baby one Sunday in 1815 when the battle of Waterloo was being fought.

***THE SEDILIA*** (Clergy seats) c.1300 is E. of this doorway but concealed by the splendid tomb & memorial to **RAPHE WISEMAN** & his 1st wife, Elizabeth nee Barley, grand•-daughter of the infamous Richard, **Lord RICH**, Henry VIII's cruel Chancellor; he helped to destroy the saintly **Sir THOMAS MORE**,- whose descendant, **Isabella Roper**, strange to say, married **Thomas WYSEMAN**, son of Raphe & Elizabeth. These Wyseman's were the protestant branch of the family, but this tomb, nevertheless, was vandalised in Oliver Cromwell's time. Thomas Wyseman is represented by one of the three kneeling brothers. Note Raphe's funeral helm above.

## Some Important artefacts of St Mary's:




3






4

1. Manufactured on the Suffolk –Essex Border, tiles of this pattern were set into the church floor between 1300 and 1310 A.D**.**
2. Adjacent to main entrance a medieval font in use until 1850's dates from 1300's
3. Sketch of 15th Century glass in Chantry 9 at King's College Cambridge; depicts God wearing a papal crown; this glass was taken from Rivenhall chancel c.1878 and set in a window at the old rectory, it was later sold to King's about 1921
4. Central stained glass panel in East Window from top:-

- CHRIST IN MAJESTY (1)Christ with a halo is sitting on a double mandorla (a sort of body halo) supported by two angels. Christ has ascended in triumph and both rules the world, symbolised by the open book of the Law on his left knee, and blesses us, symbolised by the right hand gesture
- THE ENTOMBMENT (2) Of course, Christ was raised from the grave to ascend into heaven, and this medallion tells that part of the story by showing his burial after his death on the Cross. The details of the sarcophagus and the lamp show interesting detail of the 13th C. fashion in design
- VIRGIN AND CHILD (3) The Virgin Mary has always been important in the life of the Church as demonstrated by the dedication of our own church to her. In the twelfth century there was a particular emphasis on her role as Mother of God. Our medallion is unique in combining the iconography of the Virgin in Majesty with the Virgin

of Tenderness. Majestically she is seated on a throne., haloed and crowned with two angels in attendance holding scepters (the Virgin is Queen of Angels). Yet on her lap she holds the Child Christ and tenderly she looks at him and not straight ahead and offers him her breast, symbolising her motherhood of Christ. The dove of the holy spirit reminds us of his role in bringing Christ to birth.

- THE ANNUNCIATION (4)The Virgin Mary is standing in front of a chair with a cushion in a period decoration. She holds up her hand in surprise and prayer at the visit of the Angel Gabriel half kneeling on the left.

**The Royal Arms of KING JAMES 2nd**

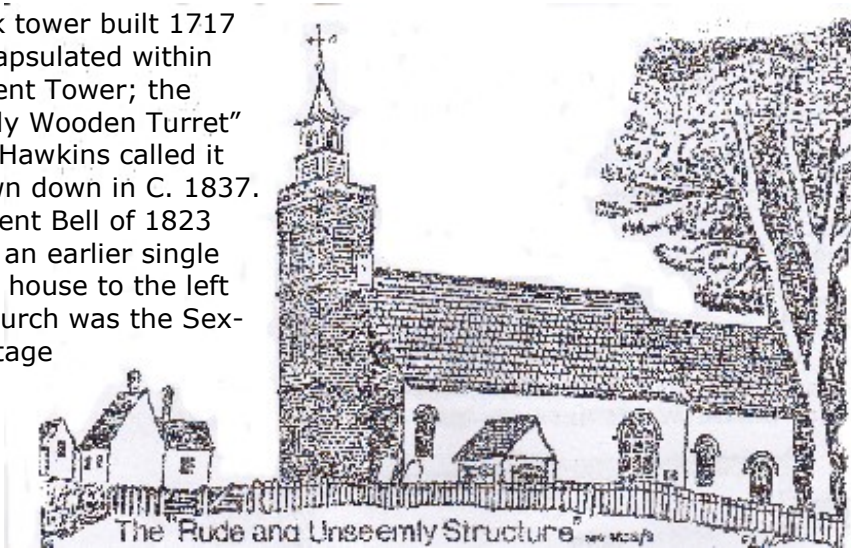


Over the south doorway were restored in early 1977: The original was probably paid for by Sir WILLIAM WYSEMAN Bt. died June 1688 , they are one of only two examples from James 2nd's reign, to be found in Essex, The other is at Ashingdon,

## 18th CENTURY

In Dec.1692,the aged Thomas Western, puritan and arms manufacturer, had bought the Rivenhall estate from Sir William Wyseman's heirs; the Royal Arms above, although those of a Roman Catholic, were at the same time a reminder of how King James, as Duke of York, had rebuilt the fleet and brought Western prosperity! Western so divided his money amongst his children, whilst still living, that there was little to do much at Rivenhall Place x Park. The church tower was leaning badly, but he merely constructed a vault for his family under the chancel floor. ***The iron memorial*** in the chancel floor lists his sons: Samuel, Thomas, Maximilian in descending order - but Samuel was to die before he did. His ***Latin epitaph*** may be seen on the ***north chancel wall.*** The iron memorial was once in the center of the chancel, at the entrance to the vault; it was moved in 1878. The one sure way to get money to run the estate was by marriage. In 1712 a special Act of Parliament was passed to enable William Western "infant" to settle his ancestral estates and betake unto himself a wife. She was Anne, the daughter of Sir James Bateman a wealthy man in the City. Anne gave Rivenhall Church its priceless church silver, now kept at the bank and in 1717, when her father became lord Mayor of London, was credited with providing the new brick tower; the old one had fallen down in about 1710. At the foot of this behind the locked door may be seen ***her iron memorial*** It, too was no doubt moved in 1678 to its present location.

The brick tower built 1717 now encapsulated within the present Tower; the "Unsightly Wooden Turret" as B. D. Hawkins called it was blown down in C. 1837. The present Bell of 1823 replaced an earlier single one. The house to the left of the church was the Sextons Cottage



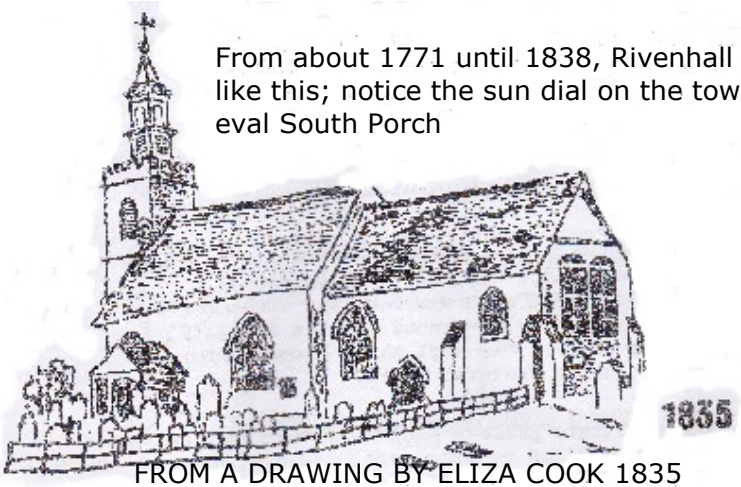

The church is of one piece with the chancel only the latter is half a yard narrower on each side and above is much lower, than the church; both are tiled. At the west end a brick tower with battlements and leaded in the middle of which rises a wooden steeple which ends in a spire painted like lead; this was done about 1717. there is but one Bell."
From the Essex Historians, Philip Morant 1768
The drawing is based upon a water-colour, painted before 1837

Imagine the shock when the village woke one morning in 1714 to find the church tower had collapsed. A tower had been planned in the 14th century but it was probably the Black Death plague that delayed it. When it was eventually built a century later, were the

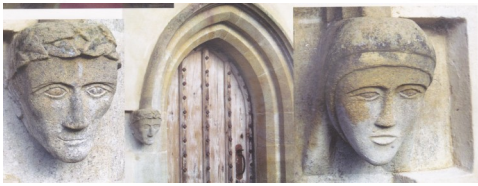



foundations inadequate for the sand and gravel sub soil, or was the tower struck by lightning? We may never know! We do know that parts of the church have sound well constructed foundations, whilst in other places the foundations are negligible.

From about 1771 until 1838, Rivenhall Church looked like this; notice the sun dial on the tower & the Medieval South Porch



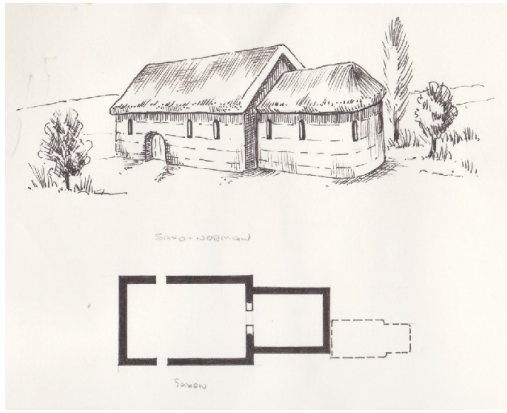

FROM A DRAWING BY ELIZA COOK 1835



The picture is of the Priests door in the south side of the Chancel. On the left is a head reputedly ***Julius Caesar left and on the right the Virgin Mary Mother of Jesus*** . Linking nicely to the Roman Villa which stood in the sight of the church and which was built with many of the original roman bricks incorporated in the structure.

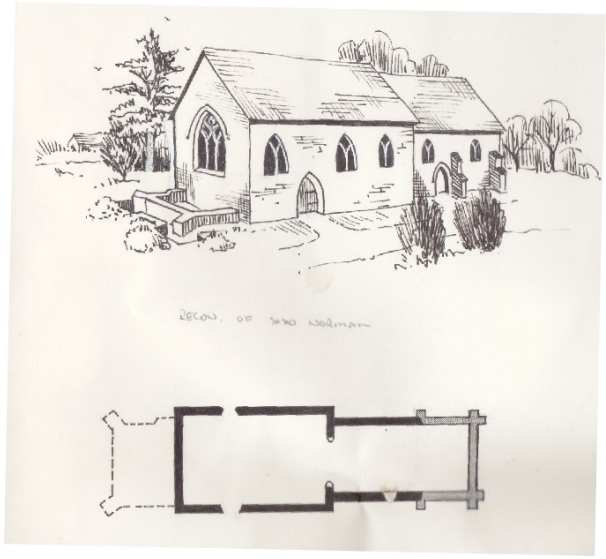
The ***986 Walker pipe organ*** was rebuilt and enlarged in it's present location in 1981 by Alan McKirdy of Long Melford the Organ was originally bought from Canford Magna in Dorset replacing a Grover Organ some parts being used in the rebuilt organ. The organ was consecrated by the Bishop of Colchester on July 7th 1981. The Organ is reputed to have been in use in St Georges's Chapel Windsor between 1904 and 1930. Dr Edmund Fellowes, who directed the choir at Windsor between 1924 and 1927 has told how Parratt described the arrival of a quite inadequate Organ. Our Walker Organ arrived at Windsor in1904 and left there in 1930. We have drawn our own conclusions let it be said in it's reconstructed form it is a superb instrument. It is worth noting that Martin Shaw who adapted the tune Royal Oak used for "All things Bright and Beautiful" played here on many occasions.





C.980

1. C980 AD Previous wooden church abutted the eastern end it would have been similar to Greensted, Ongar-dotted above
2. Radio Carbon Dating of burials which followed the apsidal curve (see top sketch) indicate a strong likelihood the structure pre dates 1066



C.1300

3. This phase was wasa fairly accurately dated at between 1300 & 1310 when Almoner Bluntesdone was rector; Robert Burnell d. 1292 Edward 1st's Chancellor was patron. An attempt had been made to build a tower in the previous century but got no further than trenches being dug. This tower was built without proper foundations & it fell in 1710.



1710

4 Ann Bateman later Western, then Doliffe bought much needed wealth into the hard-up Western estate

5 1838 After years of Neglect, Lord Western was persuaded to re-build; with John Adey Repton's symmetrical design he paid Wm. Siggers to do a rude & unseemly repair.



6. Bradford Denne Hawkins counter-restoration: the destruction of 1838 (the Earthquake) was mollified by Samuel Parmenter, builder of Braintree; the south porch was built & doorway re-opened and the draughty tower-door of 1838 was kept shut. Floors were lowered to their Medieval level. While the cracks in the east wall are attributed to the earthquake they would probably have appeared for normal structural reasons in any case.



This drop wall clock in an oak case was made in 1871 by Christian Lance of 99 the Strand. The clock was originally given to Rivenhall working men's club by Sir William Tite (1898-1973) Sir William was the architect for the restoration of Great Tey Church although his connection with Rivenhall is obscure. The working men's club built by Henry Dixon in Rivenhall End was demolished in 1966 to make way for the duelling of the A12. As a result a new Henry Dixon Hall was constructed at Rivenhall End and there was no place for the clock. The hall committee decided to donate the clock to the Church. Where it hangs now. It is in good working order and keeps good time.

## Rivenhall Churchyard



The churchyard at Rivenhall is beautifully maintained by an enthusiastic "gang" of volunteers and has been the subject of an eco-congregation award ( http:// ew.ecocongregation.org/) for the maintenance of a bio-diverse environment where all sorts of plants and wild-life can thrive. Recent surveys of Cowslips, Butterfly's grass hoppers and all types of Snakes, Toads Lizards etc indicate that the bio -diversity plan is working. When you explore the churchyard you will find areas that are neatly maintained and others where the wild plants and flowers are allowed to flourish this is deliberate and explains why the church received it's award.

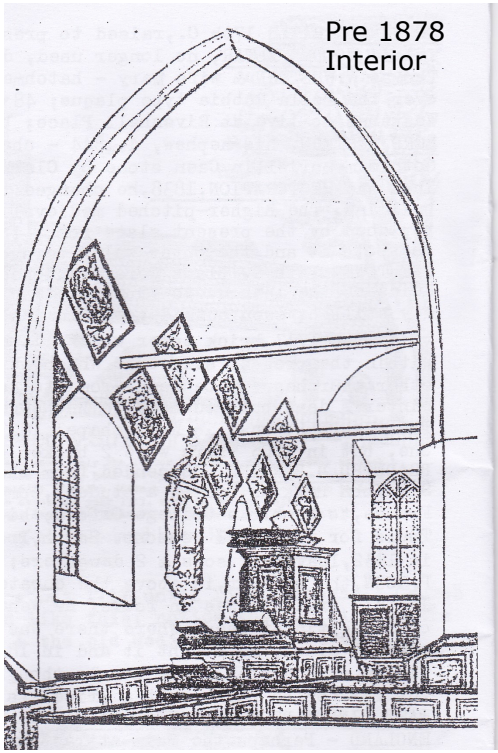
The Churchyard is also famous for it's interest to Archaeologists. The church was built on the site of a 200 AD Roman Villa and you can see in the north wall the Roman Bricks interspersed with flints used in the original buildings of 980 AD. A large area of the Churchyard was excavated on two occasions and a Saxon Burial layer was found. These bones were later analysed and became the subject of a BBC documentary, due to the evidence found of Syphilis among the mediaeval 1st Century population a disease previously thought to have come to Europe through Christopher Columbus.

***COMMUNION RAILS*** 17th C.,raised to present level 1878 an inlaid ***WOODEN ALTAR,*** no longer used, dates from this time. Thomas W.WESTERN & wife Mary – hatchments N. nave wall, over the Della Robbia type plaque; 48 yrs rector & last Westerns to-live at Rivenhall Place; both died in 1823. ***LORD WESTERN,*** his nephew, d.1844 — chancel N. sanctuary — Gothic memorial in Caen stone by Clarke of Wigmore Street. In a sad ***RESTORATION,1838***, he changed the whole look of the building. The higher—pitched medieval peg—tiled roof was replaced by the present slate roof; the tower was altered and both it and the outer walls were covered in stucco. ***THE TOWER*** 14th C. plans were abandoned — Black Death? Ruins of the 15th C. tower complete with stair—well (N.) may still be seen outside; within its ruined walls they built the 1717 brick tower which, itself, is contained within the present structure which is 65 feet high. Six other churches may be seen from its summit on a clear winters day, but you need to know where to look!

The one ***BELL,*** cast in Whitechapel 1823, replaced a single one, but in 1705 there were 2 broken bells, in the tower. ***BRADFORD D. HAWKINS***, descended from the Elizabethan Admiral Sir John Hawkins, had as a student, commuted from Tours in France, to Pembroke College Oxford; his father had moved to Tours for financial reasons. Sarah, Bradford's wife, died in 1832,leaving 2 sons & 2 daughters; her memorial by P.ROUW, the younger, is above the curate's stall, N. chancel. In 1839 Bradford was in Tours where he had gone to settle his fathers affairs after his death; he went 35 Km to the church of St Martin at *Chénu* where there was much dirt—encrusted stained glass. Using his inheritance he bought it and in 1840 set it in the E. window at Rivenhall; the locals thought him extravagant, but for £65 he had bought a priceless treasure. ***EAST WINDOW BEST 12TH CENTURY PARISH CHURCH GLASS IN ENGLAND*** — Perhaps the main attraction of this church (see Patrick Jenkins 1000 best churches. ***FRENCH 12th C***. Medallions (more information on p.6 & back cover page) Besides the 1150 Chartres dating, the Entombment is very like the one at Chemille sur Indrois of 1176. The ARCHBISHOPS wear the pallium; crosiers 'facing out' signify they are not mitered abbots. Robert LEMAIRE, bottom R.H.corner has become Rivenhall Parish Council's logo. ***THE LATE MEDIEVAL FRENCH GLASS,*** E. window is also very good; ***THE HOLY SPIRIT DOVE*** now in the S. nave window, is set back to front. All of this glass was buried in World War 2 & narrowly missed destruction; it was re—arranged in better order in 1948. ***THE NETHERLANDISH GLASS*** 16th & 17th C. in N. nave window is worth noting; the small quarries are modern.

**PRE-1878.**

Note the. box pews; the central pulpit and the clerics desk.


Pre 1878 Interior

**FORTY YEARS DRAUGHTY AND DAMP 1838 - 1878**

The way into church was under the tower; the priest's door in the chancel was the only other access; this situation merely invited the strong westerly winds to annoy congregation; even those in the west gallery must have shivered! At this time, the outside ground level was well above The 10th century original and most of the old box pews were decaying through rising damp.

B.D Hawkins wrote that the pews and other un-churchlike furniture must be removed and replaced by substantial seat benches, pulpit and, reading-desk, lectern "etc.." not of a more modern fashion, but of a form and style which prevailed in primitive times in all our national churches." He was bending historical truth a little, but an appeal to antiquity was sure to gain support - although his own family paid for about one third of the restoration - the local clergy and gentry did not fail him. The present pews and lectern (his memorial) witness to his popularity; his daughter, Sarah, paid' for the pulpit.

This COUNTER RESTORATION was aimed at remedying the worst aspects of lord Western's work and was in tune with. Hawkins's gift of the magnificent east window; another window given by Hawkins in memory of his brother John Croft Hawkins virtual founder of the Indian Navy, was destroyed by enemy action in World War 2.

THE COUNTER-RESTORATION 1877/8

Samuel Parmenter, architect and builder, was renowned for his restoration of St Michael's Braintree. He found that the former Lord Western had in 1838 - "done what in those days was called repairing and beautifying:-

by cutting off all protecting portions of the stonework, knocking out all the stone tracery from the windows and covering the whole surface of the walls, both inside and out, with Roman cement stucco . ." (Essex Weekly News, March 1st 1878)

The old SOUTH DOORWAY was opened up and the present PORCH was built at a cost of £50. The old gallery was taken down and a new tower-arch built of stone for £20.(It is now hidden by the organ) Two square-headed side windows at the east end of the nave were opened out and re-glazed; the southern one marks the position of the stairway to the medieval rood loft; the northern one contains the only glass not shattered when, on Ash Wednesday, 26 Feb,1941, a German parachute mine exploded. This glass is a memorial to a son of rector Willmott, killed in the Great War; the Roman soldiers uniform is very appropriate on this site of a former Roman villa.

The whole church floor was lowered, and re-set with the present Minton black and red tiles; medieval tiles, as on page four, being taken out and several memorials being re-sited. An entrance was made on the north side of the nave for a new vault for the heating apparatus, the chimney going up through one of the octagonal buttresses.

B. D. Hawkins chose English oak instead of Pitch Pine for the pews and it put another £100 on to the bill - £379, instead of £279. The total cost of the work was £592.

By the re-opening day on 27th Feb.1878 some £570 had come in from donations: about half of it came from the Hawkins family and their friends, £100 came from the Western family patron. Sarah Hawkins, daughter of the rector, added a homely touch by doing the carved woodwork on the pulpit - as it stands to this day.

THE GREAT ESSEX EARTHQUAKE,9.20am TUESDAY 22 Apr1l 1884

Rivenhall church did not suffer like Peldon church, which was nearer the epicenter; walls at right angles to the fault-line which runs roughly from Colchester to Southampton seem to have been most affected. Our east window still shows the cracks down the line of the medieval splay. The churchyard wall suffered and this was rebuilt by parishioners in the 1960's names of those taking part can be found in the wall.

**Rivenhall 19th Century Bell and a love story**

Rivenhall's 19th Century rectors usually added something to the parish to mark their obtaining the freehold of the living:-

Shirley WESTERN 1820-1824: The 1822 Charity cottages & 1823 bell;
John LEWIS 1824-1853:Curates, including B.D. Hawkins;
Bradford HAWKINS1853-1882: The School, schoolhouse & font;
Frederick BRIDGES1882-1896: The Old Rectory Lodge.

Shirley was rector of Hemingstone in Suffolk from 1798 when he agreed to succeed his uncle, the Rev'd Thomas Walsingham Western of Rivenhall Place, as rector of Rivenhall in 1820..'agreed', because he had left the area under a cloud many years earlier. He was to hold both parishes in plurality until his unexpected death at the rectory glebe-house in April 1824. He died unmarried and intestate.

He was baptized at Rivenhall in 1768, the younger brother of the future Lord Western and son of Frances & Charles Western of Rivenhall Place. Charles died in an accident when Shirley was only 3yrs old and was probably spoiled by his single parent mother. He went to Felsted School & graduated from Queens' College Cambridge with a B.A. in 1791. In that same year a Sarah Bridge of Rivenhall presented her illegitimate child called "Shirley" for baptism at Rivenhall. The child was a boy.

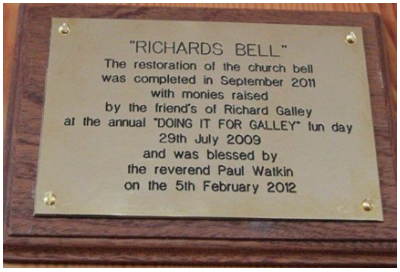
Rector Shirley Western took his name from the family of Shirley and it would have been a rare thing in those days for a girl to he named Shirley. Charlotte Bronte popularised the name as a girl in "Shirley" in 1849 and, of course, the 20th Century produced Shirley Temple. Sarah Bridge seems to have been the love of Shirley Western's life but because she



was of a lower class there was no likelihood of marriage. Sarah was found a husband in the shape of a John Ouilter, and married at Rivenhall in Feb. 1795 whilst Shirley Western, M.A. ,presented himself to the bishop of Norwich and was ordained in 1797.

There was a poem amongst his effects which seems to have been written by him to Sarah in which he takes his sad leave of her. When Shirley came back to Rivenhall, the Quilter couple had left the parish. His poem, "A Farewell" begins:

"Once more, enchanting girl, adieu!
I must be gone, while yet I may.
Oft shall weep to think of you;
Put here I will not, cannot stay."




***The fifth and final verse ends***:

"O say - but no, it must not be.
Adieu, enchanting girl, adieu!
Yet still, methinks, you frown on me;
Or never could I fly from you."

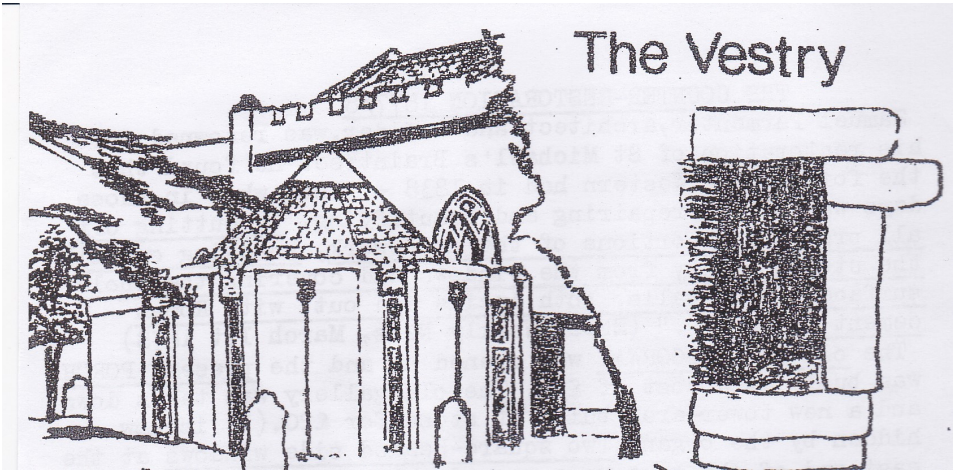
The bell was probably paid for by the Westerns. The bell it replaced may have been cracked and recast or this 1823 bell may have been a new one.

Used as the 5 min. bell before services, occasionally at weddings, and regularly at funerals -it was also used to give people working in the fields those times of day which were important to them..
Since Shirley Western's ministry it has been tolled by incoming rectors at the time of their institution to the living.

Mrs Beryl Blackerby, who has lived in the village all her life, can remember the church caretaker taking her and a group of friends up into the church tower when she was 8 years old. She remembers how large it seemed to her and how beautiful the view was from the top, where they were able to wave to all those below. She remembers that the church bell was silent during the war For the last 20 years St Mary's bell has also been silent - once again in need of repair.

The bell was cast at Whitechapel in 1823 replacing an early Bell although in 1705 there were two broken bells in the collapsed tower.

In 2009 Michael and Marie Galley decided to raise the money needed to enable the Bell to be rung again and having raised £4,500 for the necessary work this was completed during 2011 and the Bell was re-dedicated in February 2012. The day bought heavy snow but the villagers rallied round and a full church were thrilled to hear the bell rung again. Intrepid Church Warden Oliver Clarke climbed to the bell and took the photograph opposite.



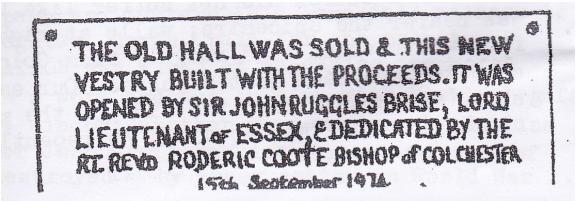

The Octagonal Vestry with kitchen & toilet" built 1974 from the proceeds of selling the old church hall was designed by the Laurence King Partnership and built by Bakers of Danbury. Rivenhall is still a scattered parish and there was need for 'on the spot', facilities for fellowship.

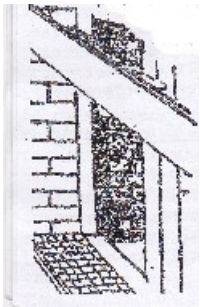
The tombstone in the sketch above the word kitchen is that of Ruth Jane Rayner, 1st Headmistress of the village school, which is adjacent to the church.

The vestry has been the subject of recent further modification with the addition of a modern Kitchen and the installation of disabled toilets

**Cavity for Medieval Draw Bar**

In the doorway on the north side of the nave;; it was uncovered when the doorway was reopened, in 1974. This now houses 'holy water' for those who wish to use it.



The little brick cubes which adorn the entrance way to the new vestry once graced the corridors of the old Roman Villa they are called tesserae.

1579 Henry CRANE,M.A.,formerly 10yrs rector, Little Braxted.

1612 George BOSWELL,M.A., acquired North Benfleet 1641 and made to give up Rivenhall in 1643.

1644 Richard WARD, ejected by the Puritans (Civil War)

1647 George LISLE, M.A.'A Godly and able minister'; did not accept the 1662 Prayer Book and was expelled. He was imprisoned in Colchester for his non-conformist preaching and was the founder of what is now the United Reformed Church in Witham.

1662 Richard ARGALT,, M.A., Formerly at Aythorp Roothing.

1670 Richard STRUTT,B.A.,-had been rector of Faulkbourne.

1675 John RAWLINS, M.A.

1720 Samuel HARRIS, D.D.,F.R.S.First Professor of Modern History at Cambridge; Charles Guyon, Vicar of Cressing, M.A., ran the parish & was buried here 1732.

1733 William HATSELL,M.A. -"A very worthy and good-tempered man;' although his written words suggest the very opposite. Said to have been stone deaf, he rebuilt the Old Rectory, which was derelict in 1733.

1772 Thomas Walsingham WESTERN,L1.B. Lived in Rivenhall Place and died very wealthy; Lord Western's uncle.

1820 Shirley WESTERN,M.A. Lord Western's younger brother. He was rector of Homingstone, Suffolk from 1798 until his death at Glebe House, Rivenhall in 1824. The Rivenhall Church Bell, 1823, was cast in his time,

1824 John LEWIS,M.A. also rector of Ingatestone. During his ministry the parish was run by the assistant curate, Bradford D.Hawkins - from 1830. Lord Western's church restoration was eclipsed by Hawkins' purchase of the French Stained Glass (1840 not 1839).

1853 Bradford Denne HAWKINS,M.A., Carried out Counter Restoration culminating in 1878; he built the school and personally provided the School House.

1882 Frederick Bealey Hanson BRIDGES,M.A. Built the Lodge House at the Old Rectory.

1897 Herbert Henry WILLMOTT - rector during the Great War.

1921 Andrew Allan HUNT,M.A. Built old Church Hall and opened St Francis' Silver End.

1939 Cecil Gordon Aldersay SWANN,M.A. - Saw to the restoration of Stained Glass after World War 2.

1953 Joseph Posford LANKESTER,A.K.C. Church Restored.

1960 Arthur David KING, A.K.C. Restoration completed.

1966 David NASH, B. D. , A, K. C. ; New Vestry & Organ.

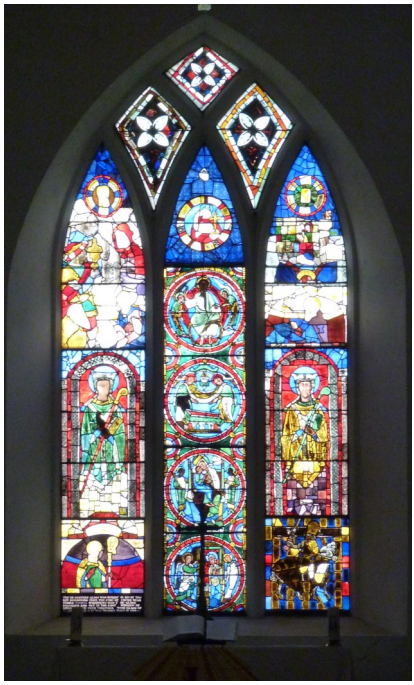
1983 Frank MILLER

1988 Nigel COOPER Had church restored to Victorian splendour

2005 Sharon MILES Bell restored to working order

2011 Paul WATKIN

**The Twelfth Century Stained Glass**



The East Window at St Mary's is considered by the experts to be one of the finest examples of the stained glass art still in existence today.

Rivenhall church was remodeled in 1838-9 by J. A. Repton, but archaeological investigations suggest original fabric dating back to 10th or 11th century survives. Much of the old glass together with some other pieces at the Rectory was brought to the church in 1840 from France by the then Curate (later to be Rector), Revd B. D. Hawkins. The 12th and possibly the 13th and 16th century panels are said to have come from the church of St Martin at *Chénu* in Sarthe. The church at *Chénu* was rebuilt in the 16th century but has architectural features of a late Romanesque building of c1150. This date supports Grodecki's suggestion for the earliest glass brought to Rivenhall being made about 1170-80. The fact that parish churches in France and England were installing painted glass during the 12th century. Whilst there is no documentary evidence that the later 16th century glass came from *Chénu*, the rebuilding of the church in the 16th century suggests it could well have come from there.

Composition of the Glass From *Chénu*

The glass from *Chénu* was set in the east window at Rivenhall around 1840. The layout was modified in the 1950's.

*<u>Current Layout of the Glass in the East window</u>*

*Four large medallions with borders representing a Majesty, an entombment of Christ, the Virgin and Child and the Annunciation, late 12th C; two large figures of bishops or abbots, 12th C; a figure on horseback in banded mail with background, possibly heraldic and inscription 'Robert Lemaire', 13th C; the Adoration of the Magi, fragmentary, late 15th /early 16th C; a bishop and various panels with figure subjects, fragments etc of various dates. (Details of the medallions are given on page 6).*