

This is the fourth of an occasional series of articles by David Stone about incidents in the history of Swanton Morley and its church

'HONEST TOM' MARTIN AND HIS VISIT TO ALL SAINTS' CHURCH IN 1731

Part 2

HIS VISIT TO SWANTON MORLEY

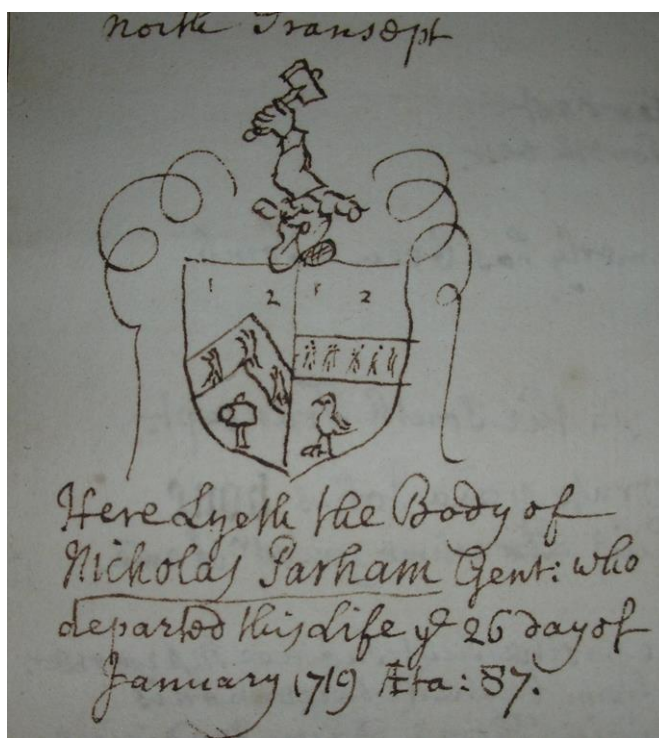
Tom Martin first visited All Saints' Church on Christmas Day 1731, and his notes say:

“On Christmas Day in the afternoon I was to see this church but service at that time performing it was too late for me to transcribe the inscriptions. There are several gravestones for the family of Parham. A brass plate in the chancel for Edmund Pylgryme Rector qui obit 1503 (as I remember) with other brasses and stones.

The building stands upon an eastern declivity. The body of the church. North and South Isles are leaded, the chancell is tiled. A square steeple, in which hang 5 tuneable bells. All of the pillars and windows are neat & beautiful. Tho' painted glass is for the most part broken, yet some venerable remains of saints etc may be distinguished.”

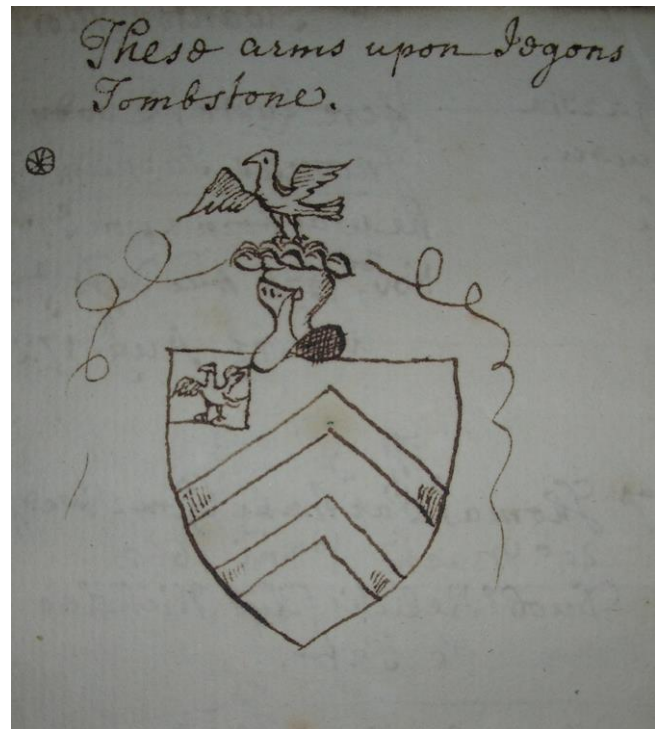
There was a subsequent visit and this was probably quite soon afterwards because no other date is given.

This time he copied all the memorial inscriptions and made some rather fine sketches of the various coats of arms, including this one of Nicholas Parham that can still be found in the nave.



He recorded some memorials that are no longer in existence. For example, although we still have memorials to many later members of the Parham family, Martin also recorded a James Parham who died on 28 November 1698, aged 71.

Here is his sketch of the arms of William Jegon who was rector from 1680 to 1711. This memorial is now in the chancel.



He also recorded finding in the nave, an interesting memorial which was still in the church in about 1900, but is now missing. This read:

Here resteth ye body of Amya ye wife of John Sheldrake
ye fifth dau of Hamond Farrour of Wenderlinge Gent
And left issue John, James, Ann, Amya
and was buried ye 2 of December 1658 Aetatis sua 29
Her tyme was short and longer is her rest
God called them soonest whom he loveth best

At the end he makes the following comments:

“In the South ‘Isle’ there was: ‘an old arch in wall where formerly has been a tomb’. And in the North ‘Transept’: another arch answering.”

“There were upon the steeple 4 pinacles (sic) but one falling into the churchyard and two dropping upon the church and doing great damage the fourth was taken down to prevent further mischief.”

“On two of ye north Chancel windows are two persons kneeling in blue gowns but no arms or inscr.”

“On the south windows are some words in round pieces of glass. I believe J..hu Mcy and Lady Help.”

“A charnel house (or vestry as they call it) under the altar.”