

North Aisle



The Doorway Which Goes To Nowhere

Originally this doorway would have led, via a flight of steps, to a rood screen. This would have enabled the priests to "parade" across it in full view of the congregation during the service as part of the ceremonial aspect.

Flags

Maidstone was home to the army, The Royal West Kent Regiment. Their 'colours' (flags of battle) were laid up in the church as a memorial - and for safe keeping. Many of them have since been removed to a special chapel in the Maidstone Museum.

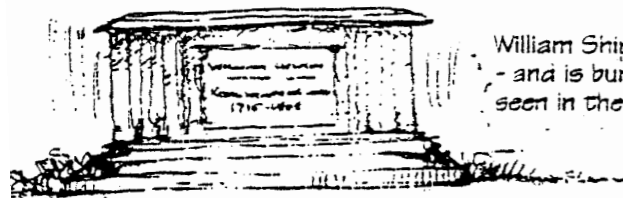


The Astley Memorials

The Astleys were a prominent family in Maidstone and once owned the Archbishop's Palace, next to the church. The black marble table and the large memorials on the wall by the window carry their coat of arms. Sir Jacob Astley commanded the Royalist Infantry at the battles of Edgemoor and at Naseby. The smaller of the male figures on the big Astley memorial was the cousin of Anne Boleyn and was made Master of the Jewel House to Elizabeth I.

The Churchyard

The Tomb of William Shipley 1715 - 1803



William Shipley was the founder of the Royal Society of Arts - and is buried in All Saints churchyard. His tomb can be seen in the northwest corner by the north porch.

The Statue of St Mary

In a niche in the north east corner of the outside wall of the church is this statue of the Virgin Mary. It replaces the one recalling the name of the original church on this site.



The Archbishop's Doorway

Opposite the great west door to All Saints church is a small doorway - now blocked in - which was used by Archbishop Courtney to enter the church from his palace, which is next to the church behind the church wall.

A visit to
All Saints Church
Maidstone Kent



In 1395 Archbishop Courtney obtained permission to convert the former church of St Mary's Maidstone into a collegiate church for 24 priests. The new church is dedicated to All Saints.
Who was the Archbishop who built All Saints?

Is All Saints 100, 600, 900, 1000 years old?

The College

The master of the college had his own house (now The Kent Music School).

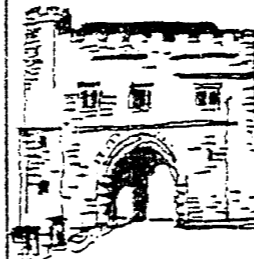


Who was the first master of the college?

J _ H _ W _ T _ N

The 24 priests lived in the college buildings where they would eat and sleep. See the tall Tudor chimneys on the church side of the college rooms.

The College Gateway



This was once the main route to the church from the south. Why is there a small arch built into the north side of this gateway?

Alms (cheap wine and bread) were given to the poor, under the archway, on the right hand side, from a doorway, the Almery.

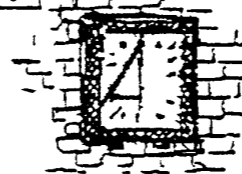
The Treasurer's Tower



This part of the college once held all the church valuables.

Below this tower there once used to be a ferry rowing boat across the river to the 'Lock Meadow' on the further side. This area was once the deer park belonging to the Archbishop.

Vestry

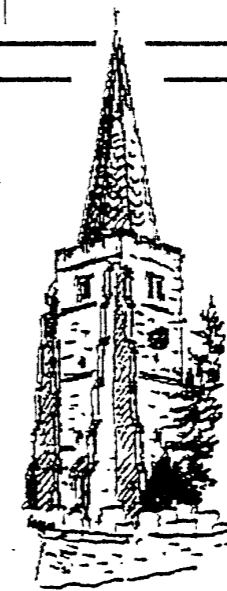


On the south wall of the vestry is this form of clock.

What is this type of clock called?

How does it work?

The Tower



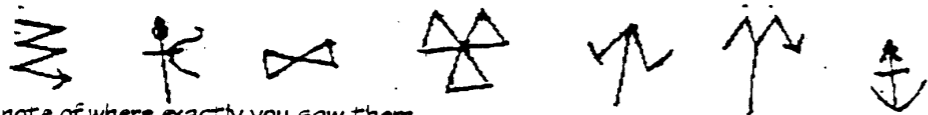
All Saints church once had a spire which added a further 90 feet (27 metres) to the height of the tower.

When did it lose its spire?
1405, 1693, 1730, 1894

What was the reason for this?
Look in the tower porch to find out the answer.

The Church

The stonemasons who built the church of All Saints left their individual marks on the blocks of stone that they shaped. See if you can find the following marks.



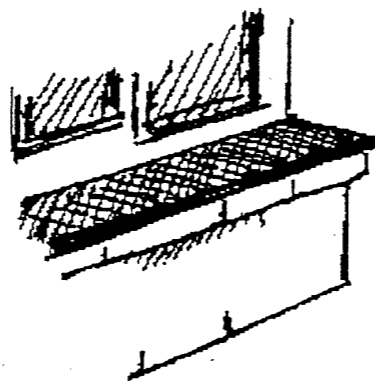
Make a note of where exactly you saw them.

The South Aisle



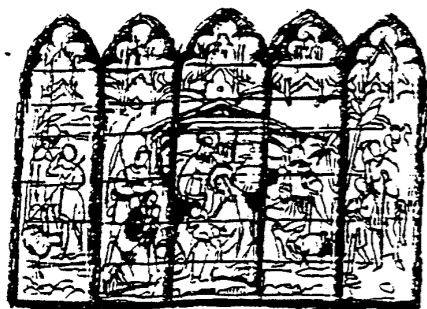
Look for these holes on either side of the tower door. One is deeper than the other.

What are they for and why is one deeper than the other?



Along the walls of the church is a stone ledge. The church did not have seats in the Middle Ages when services were a lot longer. The weak or sick people sat on these ledges during the service.

Hence the saying "The weakest go to the wall"



This scene from the stained glass window at the west end of the aisle tells a well known story. What is the story?

Another window on the south wall tells a well known Bible Story called a parable. What is a parable?



What is the story about?



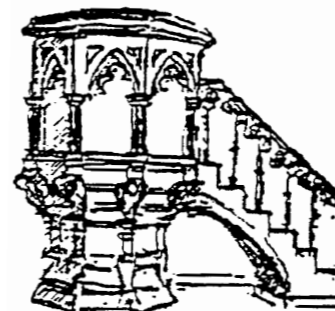
The Washington Memorial

Lawrence Washington lived in a house not far from the church. Look carefully at the coat of arms at the top of the memorial.

Which country has stars and stripes on its flag?

The Nave

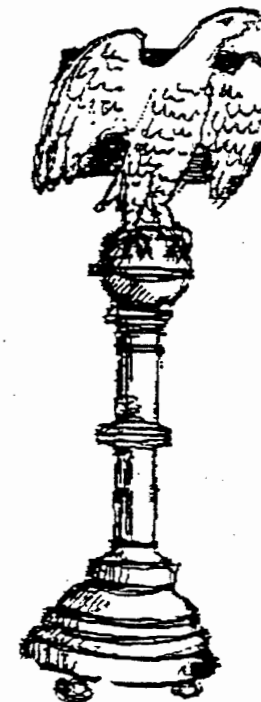
The nave is the main part of the church. The word comes from the latin 'navis' meaning ship. It is interesting to note our word 'navy' comes from the same source.



The Pulpit

During the service one of the clergy will give a talk to the people. What is this part of the service called?

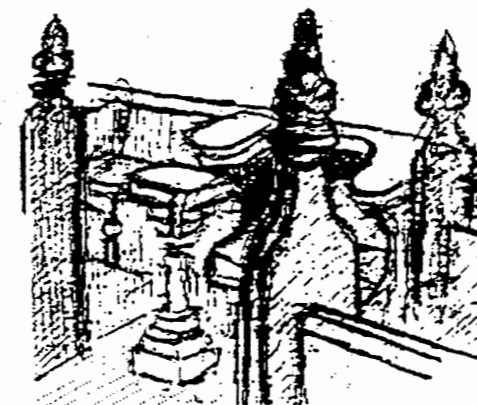
Why do you think the pulpit is raised above the level of the floor?



The Lectern

Also, at times, passages from the bible are read out. What is this part of the service called?

Before printing was invented all books were hand written and illustrated by monks or priests. Books were therefore rare and for this reason the Bible was often chained to the lectern to prevent it from being stolen.



The Corporation Pews

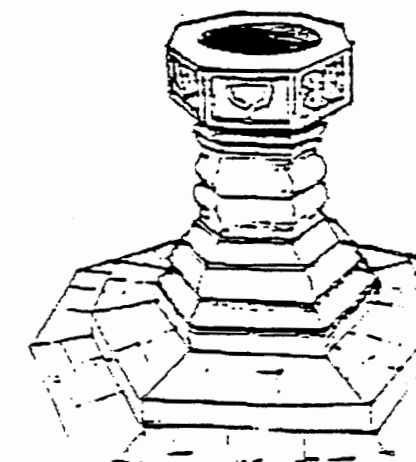
Because All Saints is the 'civic' church of Maidstone - the mayor and councillors have their own pews.

Have a look at the Mayor of Maidstone's seat, find the coat of arms.

The Font

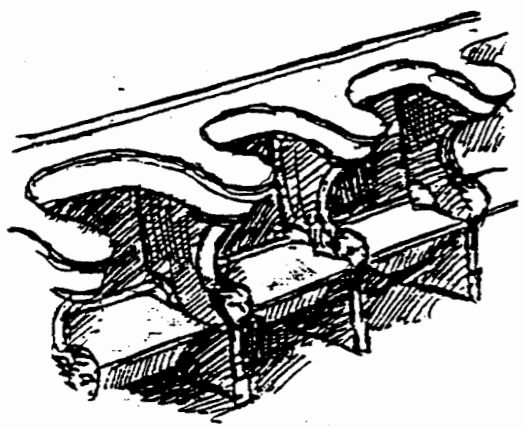
The font, with its bowl, holds the water used at baptism when new members are welcomed into the church. Young children have godparents to help them live their christian lives.

All Saints font is Jacobean - its predecessor is now in another church. Look for the marks where a lid once fitted.



Chancel

Misericords - (Mercy Seats)



Look carefully at these 14th century seats. They allowed the priest to rest on the ledge of the tip-up part during long services, giving the appearance of standing up. Note how the arm rests have worn smooth over the years.

Look particularly for this seat (illustrated on the right).



Who do you think this man was?

What has he got in his hands?

Wall Paintings

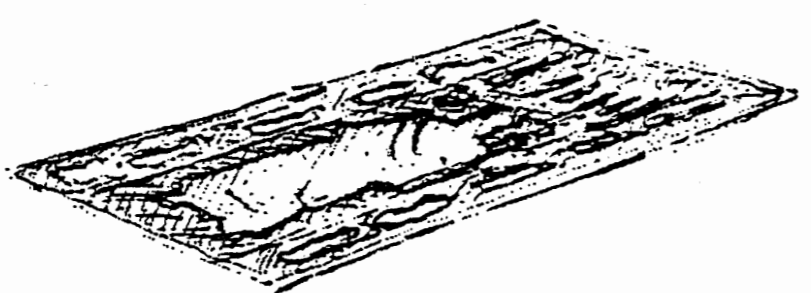
The two roundels on the left appear on the walls of the chancel. Look on the walls above the choir stalls. They are not as old as the church itself being just over one hundred and forty years of age. They were painted in Victorian times.



Name the saints you can see.



Memorial To Archbishop Courtney

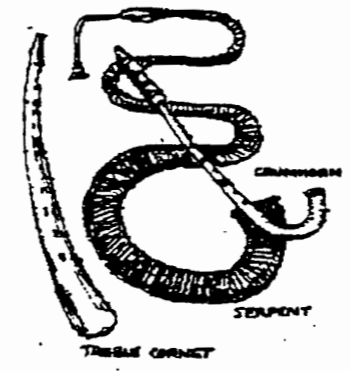


This large stone slab - now set into the floor between the choir stalls was once mounted about a metre high but was lowered to floor level in Victorian times when an unknown skeleton was discovered inside.

Archbishop Courtney was probably buried in Canterbury Cathedral.

The Organ

The single most expensive item in the church is situated in the south chancel aisle.



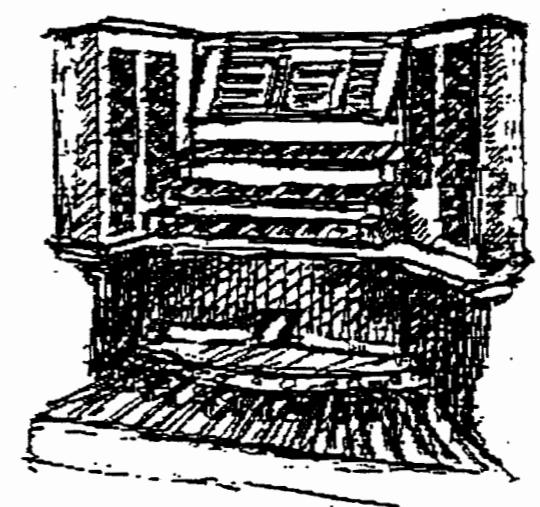
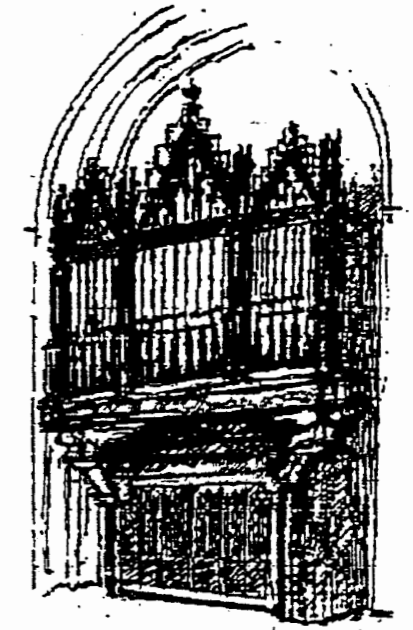
Music has always played an important part in christian worship. Monks would accompany their litanies with singing - called 'Plainsong'. In medieval times a small group of musicians - playing such things as flutes and stringed instruments - would make their music from a small gallery, usually at the back of the church.

Small organs were involved from a very early time.

In the course of time people were replaced by an improved mechanism capable of copying sounds made by the musicians.

An organ consists of keyboards - as in a piano - but linked to pipes of varying lengths and supplied by wind to make them sound.

Originally the bellows which supplied the air were pumped by hand. Today the wind is supplied by an electric motor turning a big fan (similar to a large hairdryer).



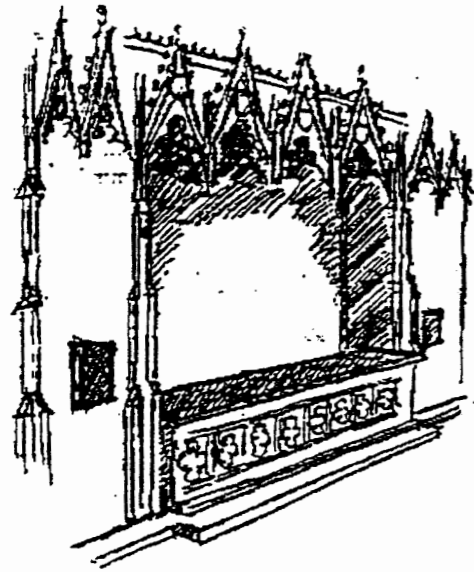
All Saints Organ Console

Look at the stops on the console and see how many different instruments you can find then complete the word search.

The spelling can be up, down, sideways, diagonally or even back to front!

E	T	U	L	B	R	S	P
N	R	I	C	F	C	T	I
O	B	O	E	L	R	U	C
B	M	C	I	U	X	B	C
M	Y	L	M	T	M	A	O
O	A	P	R	E	B	T	L
R	E	V	T	A	O	B	O
T	E	N	I	R	A	L	C

The South Chancel Aisle

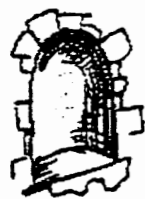


The memorial shows a pictorial history of a local Maidstone family.

Look at the children. How are their clothes different from yours?

On the memorial the boys have their names engraved - the girls do not! Why do you think this is?

Find the skull on the memorial, why is it there?



By the priests door, in the south chancel aisle, is a niche set into the wall. Originally it would have held holy water in a small bowl.

Other, similar, niches by the south side of altars are called 'piscinas' and are where the priests used to rinse the communion vessels - the chalice and the patten. Which is which?

What is the chalice used for in the Communion Service?

What is the patten used for in the Communion Service?

ST Thomas Beckett Chapel

Wotton's Tomb

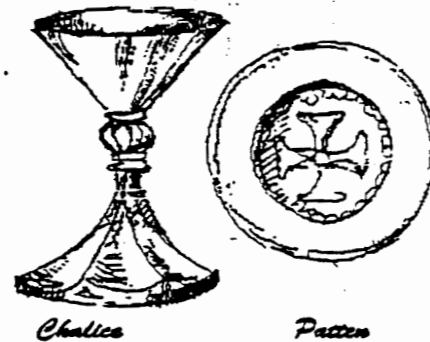
John Wotton was the first master of the college of priests.

Look at the medieval painting on the back wall. It shows Wotton being presented to The Virgin Mary. He is kneeling and an angel is with him.

Look for the sword slashes where an attempt was made to destroy the painting.

Who is the saint with a wheel?

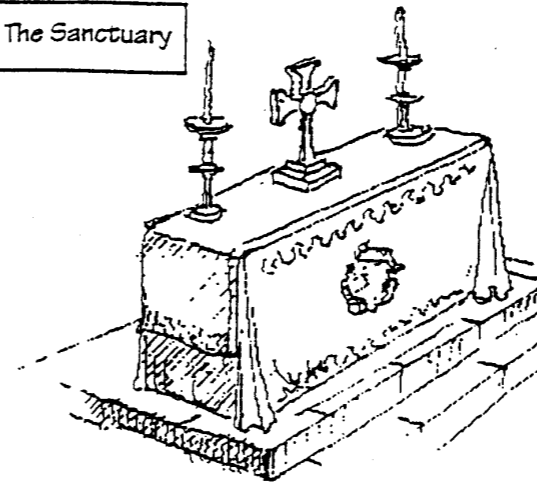
The Beale Memorial Brass



Chalice

Patten

The Sanctuary



The Altar

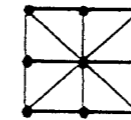
The altar stands on the highest ground floor level in the church. It looks like a table - and even has a cloth draped over it.

What, in the Bible, does this remind us of?

The Sedilia

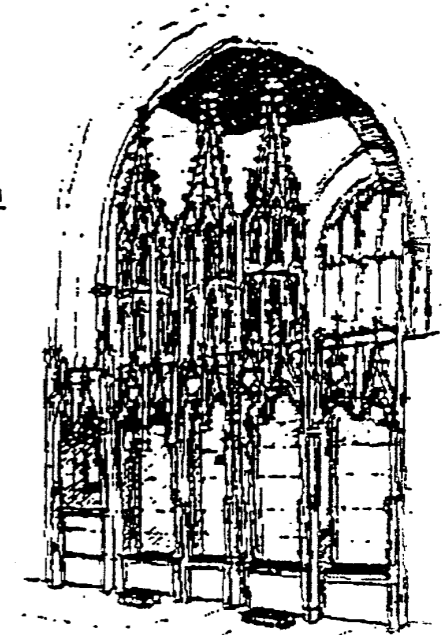
These stone seats are where the priests celebrating the service sit. They are always situated on the south side. In All Saints there are four of them (normally there are only three) and they are on the same level (usually they are stepped up).

Under one of the seat cushions, cut into the stone is a game called "Nine Mens Morris" or "Ovids Game". Find it!



Look at the shields above the seats. Choose one and copy the design, who does it represent?

There are 4 shields



The Bishop's Throne

There is a Bishop of Maidstone but he is not resident at All Saints church. When he does come for services this is where he sits.

See if you can find the unusual little animal which is carved on the arms of this seat.

