

# Two Sisters, Two Churches: an examination of the phenomenon of shared churchyards in East Anglia

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MA in Local & Regional History

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

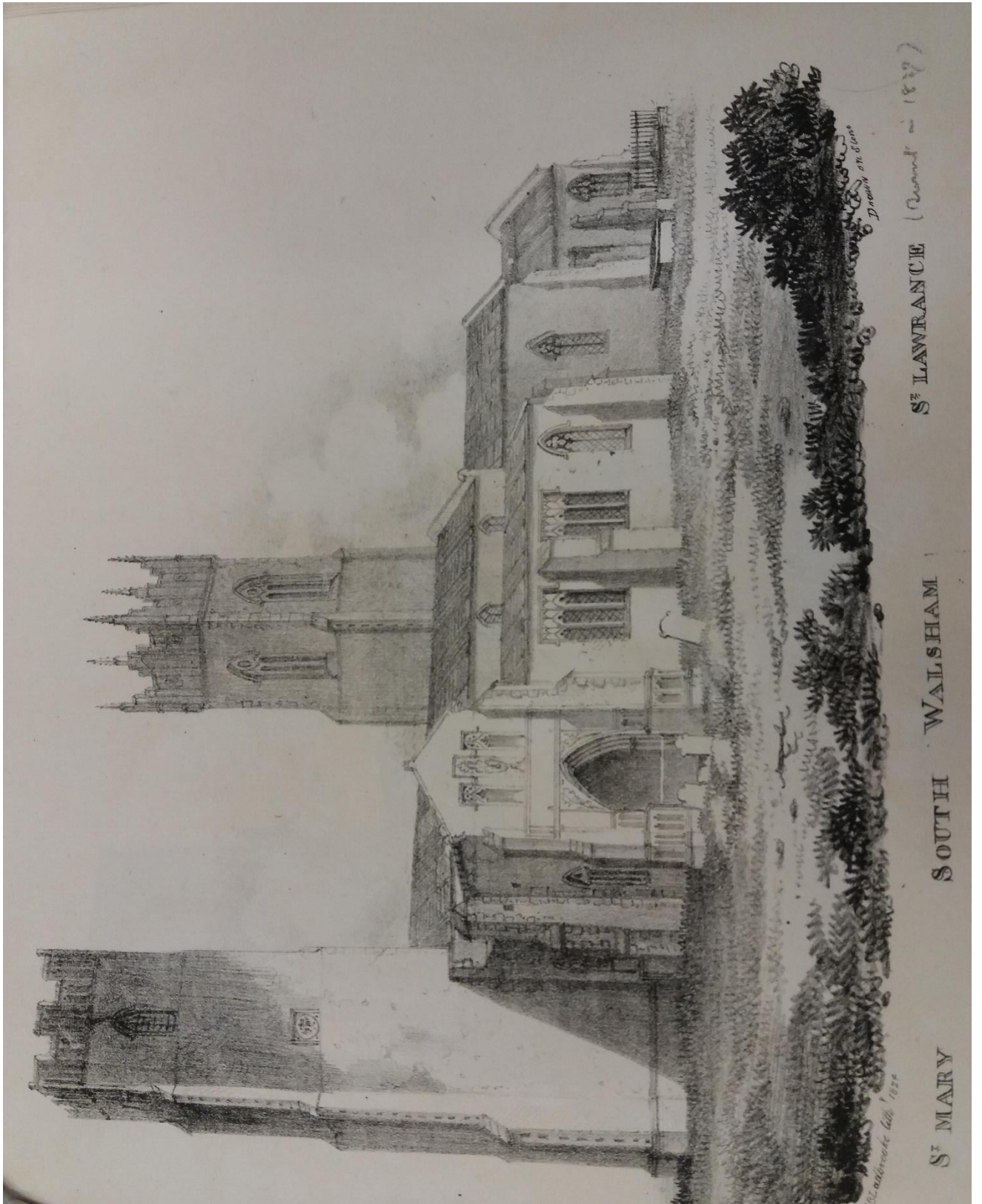
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September 1993

*This is a retyped version of the dissertation as approved. See further p vii.*

Frontispiece (overleaf):

The churches of St Lawrence and St Mary, South Walsham  
from Ladbrook's lithograph of 1824



*By architect 4th 1824*

*Drawn at 10 1/2*

S<sup>t</sup> MARY

SOUTH

WALSHAM

S<sup>t</sup> LAWRENCE

(Remod. in 1827)

Hlaford, ic lufede wlite huses þines:  
on stowe eardunge wuldres þines.

Ps xxv:8

(The Salisbury Psalter, c1100)

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## PREFACE

The topic of shared churchyards (by which is meant the occurrence of two churches with parochial status within the same churchyard) has been an interest of mine for many years. The road from North Walsham to Cromer used to pass the churchyard of Antingham, with its two churches: one intact, and one ruinous. It was in response to my questions that I was first told the legend of ‘The Two Sisters’ (referred to on p 1 below). The reason adduced for the ruinous state of one church was that the sister who founded it was a ‘bad lot’, and as a result, her foundation met with Divine disapproval. The church founded by the virtuous sister, of course, was still in use.

That there may be some truth behind this story, I have discussed in Chapter V. The topic is, however, one with considerable ramifications, and a full discussion is beyond the scope of a study of this nature. What I hope I have done is to identify some of the major areas which need investigation, and also to put forwards some tentative conclusions.

My thanks are due to a number of people without whom this study would never have been completed: to Dr Roberta Gilchrist, who has supervised it; to Angela Dain, Margaret Davie, Janet Lister, and Lee Longden, who have driven me hither and yon around to county looking at the sites of the churches; to the Rev’d Graham Hendy, Rector of South Walsham, who discussed his parish(es) with me; to the Parmentergate Educational Trust for a grant; to Mavis Wesley, who answered countless questions on its production; Phillip Judge, who allowed me to use his parish map of Norfolk as the basis for Fig 4.1; and the large number of friends who were willing to discuss aspects of the topic with me – and still retain an interest in it!

*Note, 2017:*

*Roberta Gilchrist left UEA in 1996 and went to Reading, where she is currently Professor of Archaeology; Margaret Davie and Mavis Wesley have died; and Graham Hendy left South Walsham for Southwell Minster, and now lives in retirement at Wells (Somerset).*

*This is a retyped version of the dissertation as approved, with some minor alterations of layout, including the incorporation of figures into the text (some of which have been redrawn) and the conversion of endnotes to footnotes, all impossible on the original Amstrad machine. A few extra pieces of information, either not available in 1993, or the result of developments since then, have been added: these are in italics. The bibliography and footnotes have been corrected and standardized. – NWG*