

## 1644 Puritan Changes in Lakenheath.

When the Book of Common Prayer was forbidden by Parliament, the vicar, JOHN GRIGSON, refused to obey and was expelled from the living of Lakenheath and a new 'minister', puritan John Westwood was appointed. He stayed here for 17 years.

In Puritan England baptisms had to take place in secret and funerals had to be carried out without a burial service. Weddings could only take place before a Justice of the Peace.

Puritan beliefs were strictly enforced and once again our church received the attention of parliamentary officials who supervised the destruction of windows and tomb brasses. The inside of the church was completely altered to become a 'preaching house' and an ordinary table replaced the altar. The iron fixings of an amplifying preaching board or sounding board can just be seen on the wall above where the pulpit was placed and the pews were turned to face the pulpit. Replacing the destroyed windows with plain glass was very expensive and a common solution was to brick them up. At least one was treated like this in St. Mary's but later it was restored.

The supervisor of the destruction of St. Mary's was probably WILLIAM DOWSING of Laxfield, Suffolk.

Puritans believed in an austere life-style and disliked activities like dancing and gaming but the biggest change came when Christmas and Easter holidays were suspended.

*J T Munday.  
St. Mary's Church Guide.  
Wikipedia.*

Oliver Cromwell.

Cromwell was related to the Stywards through his mother, Elizabeth. A committed Puritan, he became MP for Cambridge and gained swift advancement in the Parliamentary cause. He was largely responsible for the formation of the 'New Model Army', before later becoming Lord Protector.



Toy Gun known as a Petronnel with Ramrod dating to around 1600 AD *Ron Morley*

Eriswell Hall, mill and warren were confiscated by Parliament because of the royalist sympathies of the Beddingfield family who were Lords of the Manor there. Not long after, the manor was sold to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England. However, the Stywards kept their tenancy of manorial land, but under the control of Parliament, and at a considerably increased rent.

The ancient church known as Little St. Peter's between Lakenheath and Eriswell collapsed and its stone was later used to build an addition to the tower of St. Mary's which was used as a school room.

The restored tower of Little St. Peter's is in the field next to the old Eriswell Barns.

*Churches of East Anglia: Suffolk: 704*

There were great celebrations throughout the country when Charles II regained the throne. St. Mary's was gradually returned to its former state under the new vicar Edward Swanton and loyalty to the crown was shown by the placing of a large Royal Coat of Arms above the south door.



Coat of Arms – Charles II Lakenheath - Parish Church