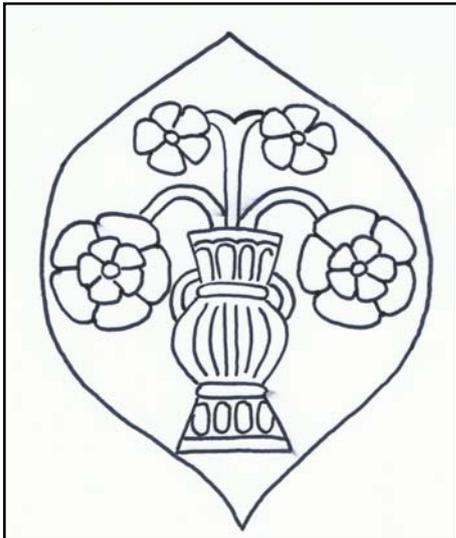
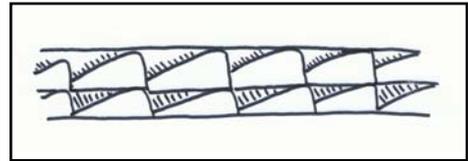


Men of the Stones: The Stonemasons tale

There has been a church in Lakenheath since before the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. The first church would have been built of timber and today nothing is left of that early building. Shortly after the Norman Conquest the wooden church was rebuilt using stone. 

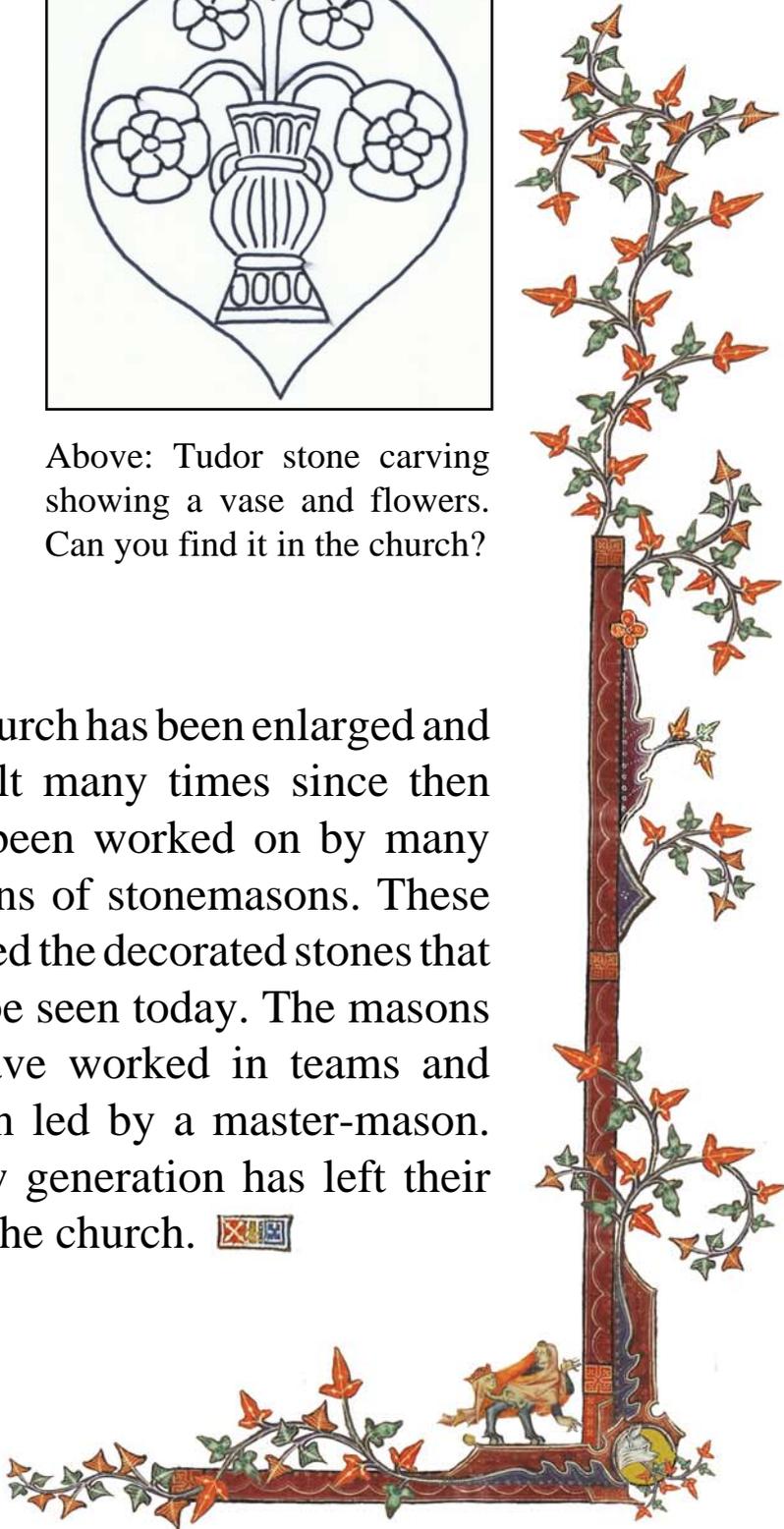
The rough stone would have been brought here all the way from Northamptonshire-probably mainly by boat. Some pieces of this early stone church can be seen today, such as the large carved archway that sits between the nave and chancel.

Below: Stone decoration from the early Norman church. Can you find it in the church? What does it remind you of?



Above: Tudor stone carving showing a vase and flowers. Can you find it in the church?

The church has been enlarged and rebuilt many times since then and has been worked on by many generations of stonemasons. These men carved the decorated stones that can still be seen today. The masons would have worked in teams and have been led by a master-mason. Each new generation has left their mark on the church. 



The Font

The carved stone font in Lakenheath church (right) was made in the 13th century. The carving is of a very high quality and it is said to be one of the finest in the whole of Suffolk. The font is where the parish priest would christen newly born children and welcome them into the local community. The children of Lakenheath have been baptised in this font for over 750 years.



Things to find and do

1. How many sides does the font have? See if you can count them.
2. How many pillars hold up the font?
3. In the middle ages the font was painted in bright colours. Can you find any traces of the early paint? What colour is it?

