

The Churches of Far West Cornwall - Trail 4.

St Tewinock, Towednack; St Ludgvan and St Paul, Ludgvan; St Piran and St Michael, Perranuthnoe; St Hilary (at St Hilary); St Germochus, Germoe.

Tuesday 2nd August 2016

It was another damp, drizzly, misty day (our first week was much better).

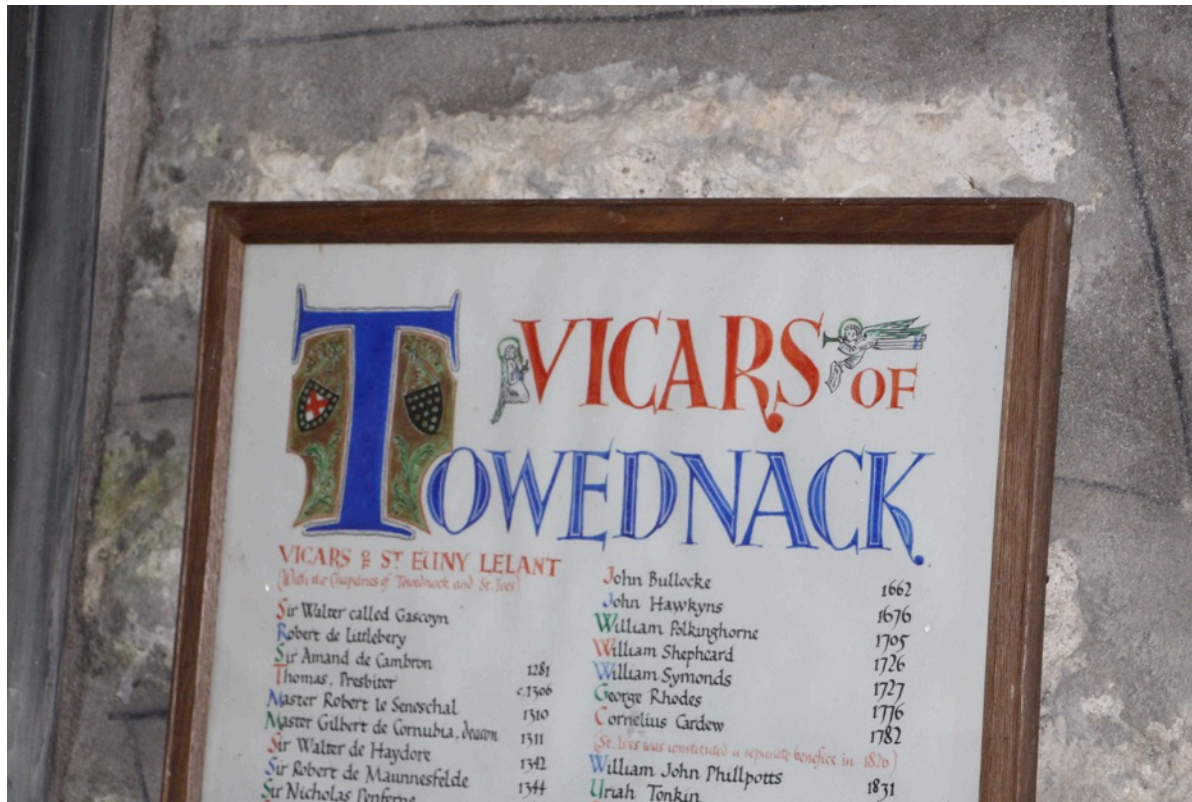
So after a quick walk for a paper, we packed a lunch bag and went church/village hunting.

We started off at Towednack, St TEWINOCK, which was hidden down a drive that appears to lead to a manor house or farm. It was used to film the marriage and burial services in the original 1975 Poldark TV series.

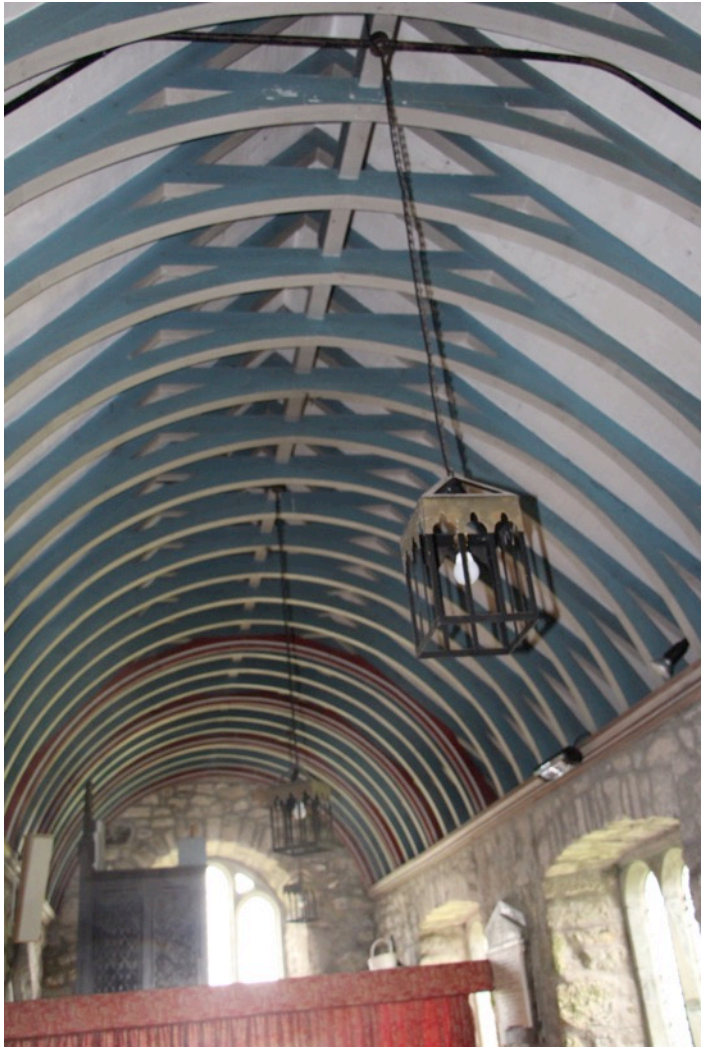


The church entrance at St Tewinock, Towednack.

The church was built in the 13th century, with additions in 1460 and a granite tower in 1500. It is dedicated to **St Tewinock** whose name is often interchangeable with **St Winwaloe**. St Winwaloe was a 6th century hermit on the Breton coast. He founded, and was the first abbot of, the monastery of Landévennec in Brittany and is buried there. 52 churches in Brittany are dedicated to him.



This list of vicars of Towednack goes back to 1281.



A brightly painted blue roof at Towednack.



Strikingly carved bench ends dating from 1633 are mounted on the wall, depicting two church wardens of the day. One bears the lettering 'Matthew Trenwith' and the other 'James Trehella'.



The simple altar at St Tewinock, Towednack.



The organ housed beneath an arch at St Tewinock, Towednack.

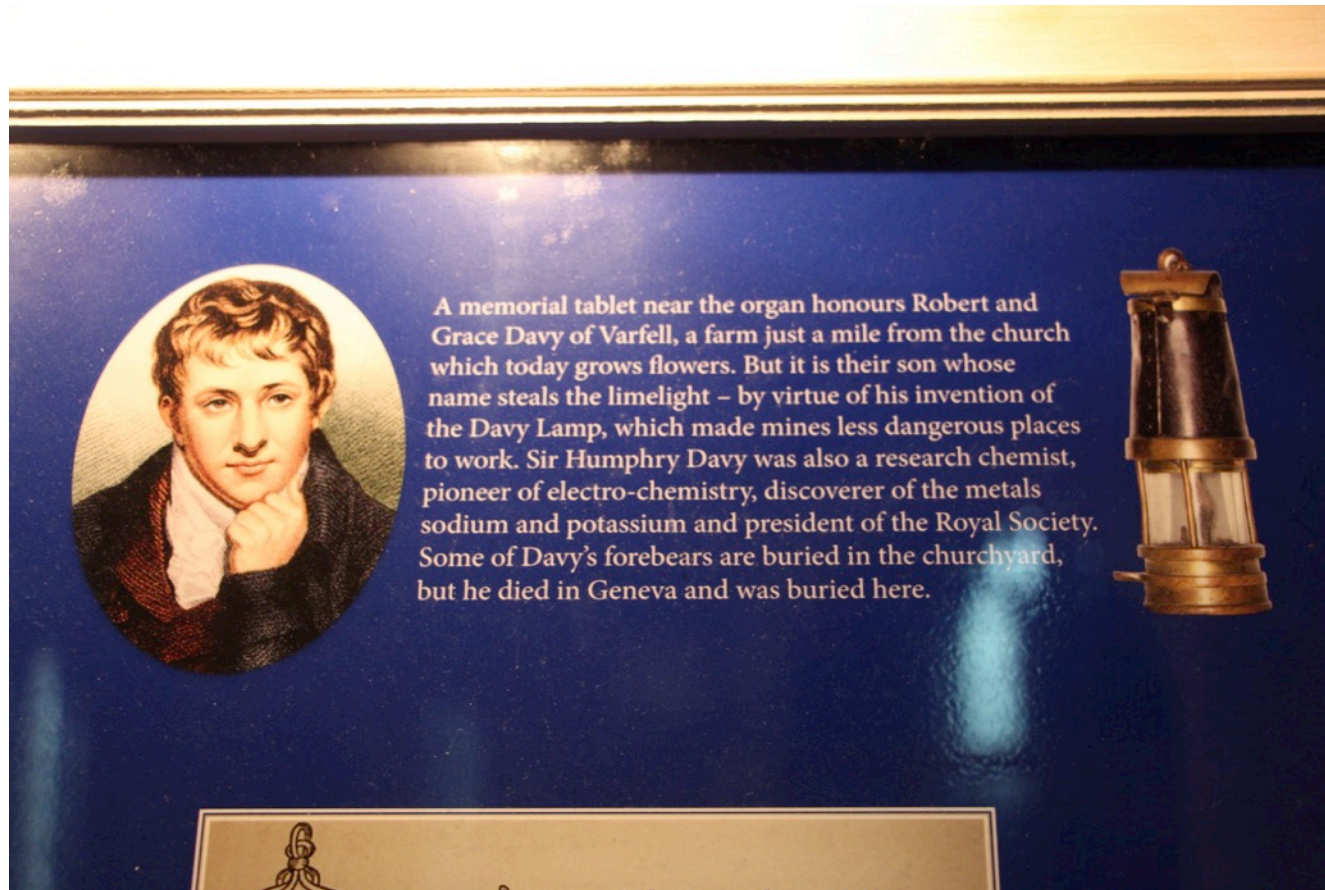
There is a simple yet really comfortable feel to the church with a lovely welcome. It even had a portaloos outside! While we were there a young tourist from Switzerland came in, looking for a friend in the village who was putting her up in a tent in her garden. She was walking the coastal path.

On to **Ludgvan**, to the church of **St LUDGVAN and St PAUL**. We parked in the church hall car park across the road – the church was located next to the pub. '**St Ludewon**' is believed to have been an Irish missionary who brought Christianity to this part of Cornwall in the 6th century.



St Ludgvan and St Paul, Ludgvan.

Inside there were some informative displays about the church and the surrounding area.



This information board contains information about Sir Humphry Davy whose parents are commemorated on a memorial tablet in the church. His invention of the Davy Lamp made mines less dangerous. He was a research chemist and President of the Royal Society. He died and was buried in Geneva.



A slate memorial to a former rector and his family - John South, who died in 1636.



The church tower at Ludgvan has numerous gargoyles.

Our next village was **Perranuthnoe** where the church is dedicated to **St PIRAN and St MICHAEL**. We parked in car park by the beach, had lunch and walked up through the village to the church. There was a really good feel in the church, it was well presented inside with good use of small spaces. We were joined by an organist who had come to practise.

Then afterwards we had a quick walk down to see the windswept, rainy empty beach.



St Piran and St Michael Church, Perranuthnoe

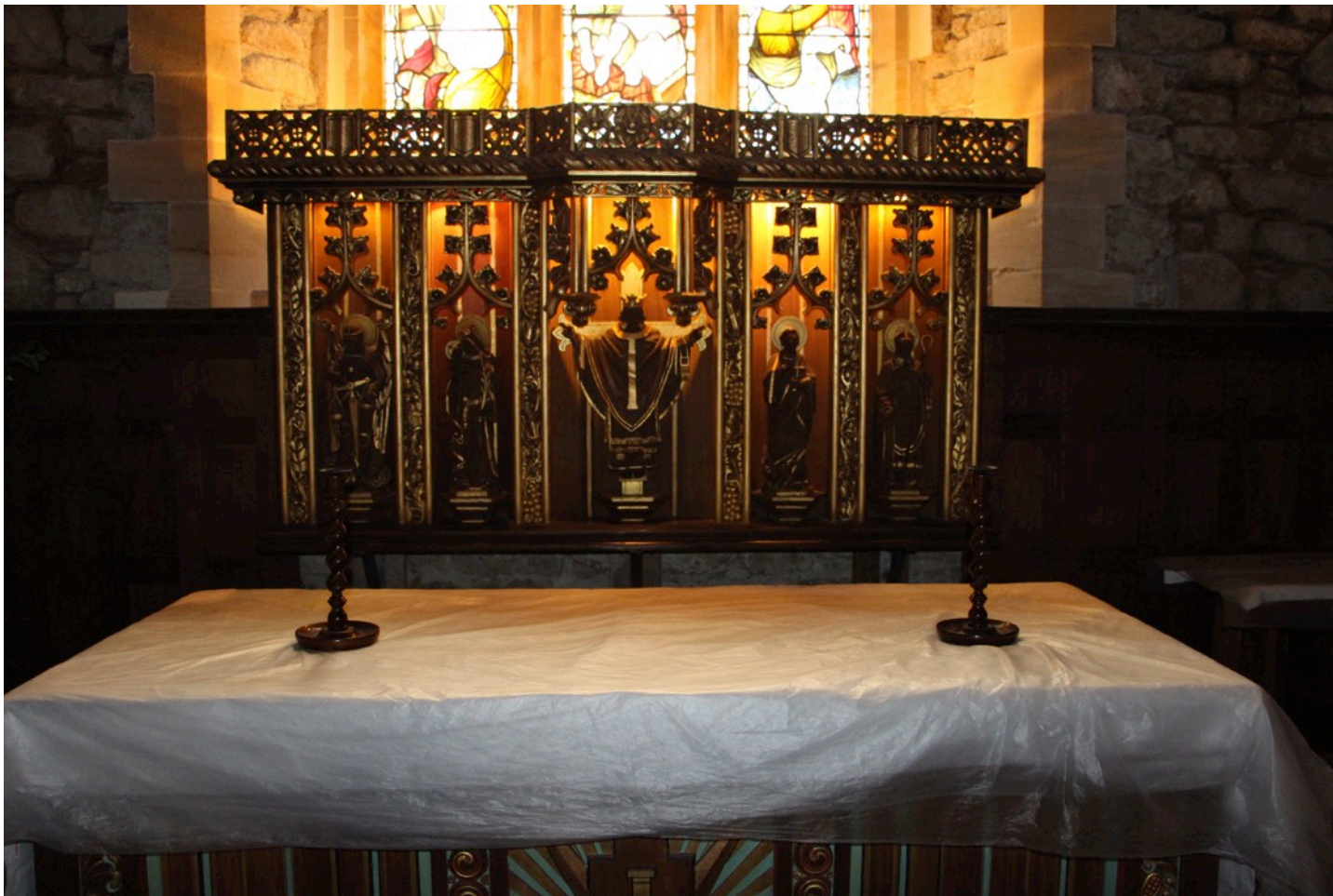
St Piran came to Cornwall from Ireland in around 498 AD. He landed near Perranporth and built a tiny church between there and Perranzabuloe where he ministered till his death in 520 AD. He is said to have taught Cornish tin miners new ways of smelting tin and created a pilgrimage trail via Perranuthnoe to Brittany. His emblem is a white cross on a black background – used as the Cornish flag today.



The rood screen and chancel at St Piran and St Michael, Perranuthnoe.



View from the pulpit at St Piran and St Michael, Perranuthnoe – they have a set of beautiful hassocks (kneelers).



The central figure on the reredos is Christ in Eucharistic vestments. On either side l to r are St Michael, The Virgin Mary, St John and St Piran.



The windswept, rainy beach at Perranuthnoe on the day of our visit.

Then we went on to **St Hilary, St HILARY church** where there was a grass cutter busy outside. The church and village was nationally famous in the 1930s when **Fr Bernard Walke** organized performances of his play 'Bethlehem' in the style of medieval mystery plays, which were broadcast on the BBC. The whole village was involved with the production.

Later there was much controversy when a gang of labourers invaded the church and smashed up the altars, paintings and images in protest at Father Walke's supposed 'Catholic practices'.

St Hilary was a 4th century Bishop of Poitiers who defended orthodoxy against a form of heresy. The connection may come from Benedictine monks of St Michael's Mount who came from their mother house in Normandy and who were responsible for pastoral care in the area. They chose a French saint to honour.



The porch at St Hilary - the church which was being prepared for a wedding when we arrived.



Inside St Hilary's there's a stone that was probably a milestone from the time of Emperor Constantine – a feature of the children's corner!



A most unusual altar in the Lady Chapel at St Hilary's, showing Christ in the city of Jerusalem.



Colourful paintings depicting local saints on the front panels of the choir stalls at St Hilary's.

Our final church on our last trail of the holiday was in **Germoe - St GERMOCHUS**. Alas there were diversions that prevented direct access so we had to approach the church in a very circuitous manner! When we arrived, again they were preparing for a summer wedding with the Flower Ladies busy at work. In the churchyard there was an unusual memorial called **St Germoe's Chair**.

Germochus was a king, one of a band of Irish holy men or missionaries who landed in the Hayle Estuary between 550-600 AD. Germoe probably taught here beside the stream and his subsequent burial place became a place of pilgrimage.



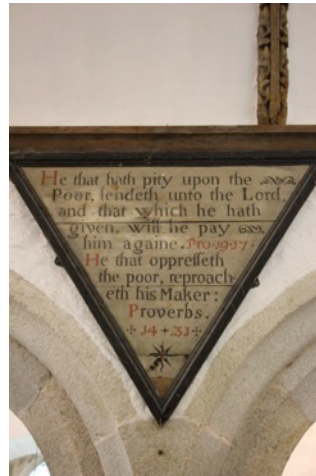
St Germoe's Chair - a strange building in the churchyard associated with St Germoe possibly once used in Palm Sunday processions.



We visited St Germoe's church on a rainy day. It is a Norman church, with 14th century additions. It was restored in 1861, 1891 and finally in 1956.



The corbels encrusted with moss and lichen on each side of the entrance porch are known as The Germoe Monkeys. The monkeys depict the spirit of evil being driven away from the front door.



Wooden framed text boards dating from 1724 - the only two that remain from many that used to adorn the walls.



The Laudian style altar was installed in 1962. It had been used for 300 years in the private chapel of the Duchess of Londonderry. Laudianism was an early seventeenth-century reform movement within the Church of England, promulgated by Archbishop William Laud and his supporters. It rejected the predestination upheld by the previously dominant Calvinism in favour of free will, and hence the possibility of salvation for all men.

Martin and Magda Jones

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18/8/16: First draft. Article to be updated later with more detail.