

## St John the Baptist, Stowe

The Parish of Stowe means 'holy place' or 'church'. The church which was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, stood in the south-west corner of the field opposite Stow farm and was mentioned in the Domesday Book. The church was pulled down in 1780.

It is believed that the font from St. John the Baptist was discovered by a Mrs Willis at Shillingthorpe and then remained at her home, Braceborough House until 1916 when it was placed in Barholm Church. The font has an octagonal bowl of Barnack stone, probably 12th century Saxon work, with most unusual carving, dogtooth, circles and petalled flowers. A new base was designed and fitted at a cost of £5.1s. The bowl retains the signs of the staples provided to lock down the font cover to prevent Baptismal water (only renewed at Easter and Whitsun in the Middle Ages) from being stolen for magical purposes. It is believed that the bowl was used at Shillingthorpe Hall as a pickling tub for pork.

Another interesting piece which St Martin's has obtained from Stowe is the wooden altar which is believed to date back to the Edward VI order in 1550 that all stone altars should be destroyed and wooden ones put in their place. This table is situated at the west end of the nave.

### Bibliography

*Information supplied by the St. Martin's Church Guide book written by Simon Cotton and produced by Roy Tricker and the following:-*

*J.T. Irvin "Barholm Church" Journal of Architectural Association (1891)*

*G.M. Livett "Notes on Barholm Church, Lincolnshire", Associated Architectural Society Reports (1913)*

*H.M. & J. Taylor "Anglo Saxon Churches"*