

# Visit to Little Gidding and Leighton Bromswold churches


8 October

The group met our guide for the morning, Simon Kershaw, at Little Gidding Church just off the A1 a few miles south of Peterborough. This tiny house of worship was rebuilt by Nicholas Ferrar in the 1620s from the ruins of an earlier church. He bought the manor to form a small religious community. Of particular interest is the unusual oak panelling with tall turned columns reaching upward from the seating round the edge of the nave. The communion table and other items of interest were examined with the usual enthusiasm associated with our society's visits.

The nearby farmhouse, on the site of the Ferrars' home, still operates as a religious community.

We drove the few miles to Leighton Bromswold Church, which was also in a ruinous state in the early part of the 17th century and was restored by the same craftsmen who had rebuilt Little Gidding. Nicholas Ferrar supervised the project for his close friend George Herbert who raised the money for the work. All the interior woodwork, including the roof, dates from the first decades of the 17th century, with the distinctive use of turned columns as seen at Little Gidding. A most unusual feature is the pair of pulpits, one on either side of the chancel arch. In fact one is a pulpit, the other a lectern, reflecting George Herbert's view that bible readings were of equal importance to sermons.

After thanking Nicholas Kershaw for showing us round these two churches we made our way to the Cock Inn at Hemingford Grey for lunch.

 Keith Pinn



Leighton Bromswold Church, showing its twin pulpits



LITTLE GIDDING CHURCH, 1851

From a drawing by the Rev Edward Bradley (Cutbert Bede)

Print taken from a drawing of 1851 showing Little Gidding Church as it appeared then. Unfortunately the gothic pulpit has since disappeared!