

# My Easter Holiday Diary

*Big Ted*

*Dear Mr, Mrs, Miss and Master Reader: for a change, I thought I'd write about my latest adventures as a diary. I hope you enjoy it.*

**Wednesday** - I started my journey to Shropshire. I was seated safely on the back seat of car 'cos I like to look out the window. I've travelled in the boot before but it's not very nice as I can't see where I'm going and it makes me feel sick.

We stopped off at a couple of villages on the way to allow me to visit some new St Mary's churches. These were at Mucklestone and Hales.

We arrived safely at the cottage (in Burlton) and I was given a comfy chair to sit in. There are lots of dogs around which makes me rather nervous; I always think they will chew my splendid fur or tear me limb from limb.

**Thursday** - I visited St Mary's in Shrewsbury where I met a very nice lady who let me sit on the font to have my photo taken (and a very comfy font it was too). This church is not used for services any more but is looked after by The Churches Conservation Trust - and they're doing a really good job.

Then I found a place in the town called 'The **Bear** Steps' and had my photo taken there as well, I like places that are related to bears!

**Friday (Good Friday)** - three more St Mary's churches; this time in Ellesmere, Chirk and Ruabon.

Ellesmere is a really big church. The Sunday School children were putting the Easter Garden together near the font. Some nice ladies said "Hello" to me and told me they'd won prizes for their churchyard and the wildflowers that grew there. We explained that I was visiting St Mary's churches and that this was my 70th; they seemed very impressed.

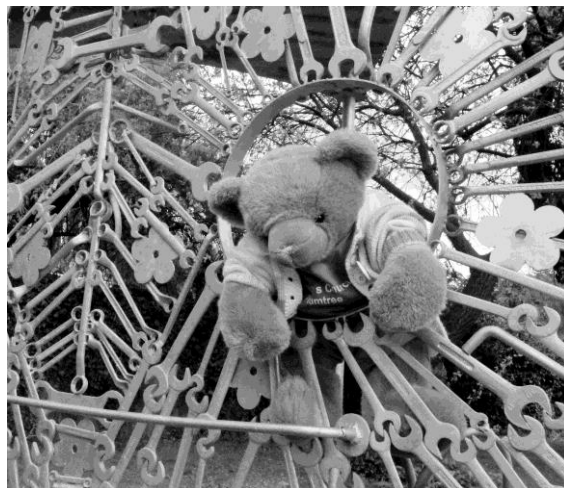
Then we went on to Chirk and looked round the lovely church (lots of stained glass and another comfy font) and I got a badge to wear. On our way out we met the people coming back from the Good Friday pilgrimage. They were really friendly and one lady shook my paw and said "Happy Easter" to me. Chirk is actually in Wales so this was my first St Mary's in Wales (but I've been to Wales before; I'm a very well-travelled bear, you know).

Finally we visited St Mary's in Ruabon (this is still in Wales). There was a Good Friday service going on and I didn't want to intrude so we looked around outside and I had my photo taken under the sign. This church is a shared church which means it is both Anglican and Roman Catholic; that must take some organizing.

**Saturday** - out and about again with another three more St Mary's churches. The first was in Knockin (snigger) where I met some very nice ladies who were doing the flowers. They shook my paw and said "Hello". One lady gave me a postcard of the church to take home (I wonder if they sell them in "The Knockin Shop", tee-hee!).

Then we moved on to St Mary's in Kinnerley where everyone said "Hello" and asked about me and where I lived. Here I was offered coffee and a scone which was very nice indeed (they're served every Saturday from 10:30, if you're in the area). It was very welcome for a peckish bear.

Then I went to St Mary's in Welshpool. This is a really big church in the middle of a complicated figure of eight one-way system. We drove past the church four times before we found where to park! I got a bit accidentally stuck in the rather nice brass rails leading up to the pulpit, and then again in a railway sculpture on the way back to the car (and Uncle Les took a picture).



Finally, I got in a mega muddle in Myddle (snigger) and visited a St Peter's church by mistake (so that doesn't count in my tally of "St Mary's"es), it was a nice church anyway.

**Easter Sunday** - A quiet day; I mostly snoozed. I did visit one St Mary's church at Acton Burnell. This is an old church with a leper's squint and a nice big font (of course I saw them both as a photo opportunity). The churchyard has a national collection of old Narcissuses [*I think the plural of "Narcissus" is "Narcissi", Big Ted*], many of them were still in flower and they were very pretty. AND there's bits of an old castle next door!

**Monday** - today it mostly rained. But I still got out and about and visited two more St Mary's churches, at Overton and Dudleston. I went inside both of them to look around. And in Overton I had a chat with another bear, which was nice. I hope it is sunny tomorrow.

**Tuesday** - the last full day of my holiday, it was sunny and I visited lots more St Mary's churches: Broughton, Astley, Crudgington, Edstaston, Whixall, and Market Drayton. I looked inside Astley, Edstaston and Whixall and checked out their fonts (Whixall actually had two fonts!). At Edstaston I had to hang on really tightly to stay on the font (pictured)!

St Mary's Crudgington (snigger) is part of the parish of High Ercall. It's a funny church with a wooden bell chamber and spirelet (I think that's a name for a baby spire).

**Wednesday** - time to head home again now. I really need a serious snooze in the Children's Corner. I only hope Little Ted's been keeping things in order in my absence.

Love, **Big Ted**

P.S. I've now visited 84 different St Mary's churches - and four of them were in Wales! They are all described on my web pages ([www.bigtedplumtree.uk](http://www.bigtedplumtree.uk)) where you can also find lots of photos of me.

