



**CHURCHES VISITED AND REVISITED
(17/12/16 TO DATE) – BOOK 34**



VARIOUS VISITED IN THE PAST NOW INCLUDED

SOME TIME BETWEEN 2012-2014



Methodist, Bridewell Lane, Acle

As church historian Simon Knott wrote - have been told off for describing Acle elsewhere on this site as rather a dour place, although it is really the traffic which spoils it so, and it isn't the place's fault. It is the main river crossing of the Bure between Norwich and Yarmouth, as well as being the place that the A47 and the main railway line come together to cross on their journey between Norfolk's two largest settlements. And it feels as if it has a busy life of its own, which must be a good thing. This fine modern chapel sits beside the library on the road out of town towards Stalham. Using vernacular materials, but with a number of pleasing post-modern details, it is a surprise to learn that it is already more than twenty years old, having opened in 1989. How it came to be built is an interesting story.

We have explored elsewhere on this site the rise and fall of Methodism in England in general and Norfolk in particular; what was the great ecclesiastical enthusiasm of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries has lost more of its members in the last half a century than almost any other mainstream denomination. Methodism was very strong in east Norfolk, and almost every village had its own Methodist society and chapel. Some had more than one; there were various strains of Methodism before unification in the 1930s, at which point many of the chapels fell out of use. In recent years there has been an inexorable decline in congregations, and most chapels are not significant enough buildings for outsiders to wish strongly for their continued use. For example, in the late 1980s there were still working Methodist churches in the neighbouring villages of Stokesby, Runham and Filby, just to the north of Acle: now, all are gone.

But it wasn't the sales of the old chapels and their land which funded this new church. It was the dualling of the A47 through Acle, taking the traffic out of the town centre but putting it firmly in the path of the old Acle Primitive Methodist chapel.

The chapel was already proving inadequate; as the village chapels closed, the catchment area of the Acle community was spreading wider and wider, and in compensation for the road the Department of Transport agreed to pay for the building of a new church on the other side of Acle. It is now the proud flagship of the Acle and Loddon Methodist Circuit.



All Saints, Main Road, Kesgrave (seen from bus)



St Michael's, Main Road, Kesgrave

THURSDAY 1st JANUARY 2015





Cathedral, Southwark





St Paul's Cathedral

For more than 1,400 years, a Cathedral dedicated to St Paul has stood at the highest point in the City.

Frequently at the centre of national events, traditions have been observed here and radical new ideas have found expression under the iconic dome. In many cases these events have left some physical record as well as echoes in the intangible memory of the building.

The present Cathedral, the masterpiece of Britain's most famous architect Sir Christopher Wren, is at least the fourth to have stood on the site. It was built between 1675 and 1710, after its predecessor was destroyed in the Great Fire of London, and services began in 1697.

This was the first Cathedral to be built after the English Reformation in the sixteenth-century, when Henry VIII removed the Church of England from the jurisdiction of the Pope and the Crown took control of the life of the church.





Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey, formally titled the Collegiate Church of Saint Peter at Westminster, is a large, mainly Gothic abbey church in the City of Westminster, London, England, just to the west of the Palace of Westminster. It is one of the United Kingdom's most notable religious buildings and the traditional place of coronation and burial site for English and, later, British monarchs. The building itself was a Benedictine monastic church until the monastery was dissolved in 1539. Between 1540 and 1556, the abbey had the status of a cathedral. Since 1560, the building is no longer an abbey or a cathedral, having instead the status of a Church of England "Royal Peculiar"—a church responsible directly to the sovereign.

According to a tradition first reported by Sulcard in about 1080, a church was founded at the site (then known as Thorn Ey (Thorn Island)) in the seventh century, at the time of Mellitus, a Bishop of London. Construction of the present church began in 1245, on the orders of King Henry III.

Since the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066, all coronations of English and British monarchs have been in Westminster Abbey. There have been 16 royal weddings at the abbey since 1100. As the burial site of more than 3,300 persons, usually of predominant prominence in British history (including at least sixteen monarchs, eight Prime Ministers, poets laureate, actors, scientists, and military leaders, and the Unknown Warrior), Westminster Abbey is sometimes described as 'Britain's Valhalla', after the iconic burial hall of Norse mythology.

The abbot and monks, in proximity to the royal Palace of Westminster, the seat of government from the later 13th century, became a powerful force in the centuries after the Norman Conquest. The Abbot of Westminster often was employed on royal service and in due course took his place in the House of Lords as of right. Released from the burdens of spiritual leadership, which passed to the reformed Cluniac movement after the mid-10th century, and occupied with the administration of great landed properties, some of which lay far from Westminster, "the Benedictines achieved a remarkable degree of identification with the secular life of their times, and particularly with upper-class life", Barbara Harvey concludes, to the extent that her depiction of daily life provides a wider view of the concerns of the English gentry in the High and Late Middle Ages.

The proximity of the Palace of Westminster did not extend to providing monks or abbots with high royal connections; in social origin the Benedictines of Westminster were as modest as most of the order. The abbot remained Lord of the Manor of Westminster as a town of two to three thousand persons grew around it: as a consumer and employer on a grand scale the monastery helped fuel the town economy, and relations with the town remained unusually cordial, but no enfranchising charter was issued during the Middle Ages.



St John's Wood, near Lords Cricket Ground

SUNDAY 16th AUGUST 2015

As we stand in the entrance of the churchyard today we see a large impressive church with a strange truncated appearance and the tower unusually standing at the east end and which is somewhat lacking in height.

This was not always the case as the church in 1100 had a cruciform plan with nave, chancel, transepts and central tower, apart from the tower the churches dimensions would have been more modest than today.



St Mary's, Church Street, Attleborough

The church was altered and enlarged over the next two hundred years, by 1300 the tower was surmounted by a spire that is said to have been the tallest in the area and is believed to have fallen around 1700.

By 1405 the chancel and transepts had been given over to be used as the College of the Holy Cross, and the church had been remodelled in the Decorated style. The north porch was added in the mid-fifteenth century, it was a gift of Sir John Ratcliff, who died in 1441.

We now enter the church through the north porch, this is Perpendicular in style, note the beautiful vaulted ceiling. On entering the main body of the church that is formed by the Nave and Aisles we become aware of a very large, light area, this is brought about by the large windows and slender pillars that supports the nave roof and clerestory. It is worth comparing these pillars with the massive Norman ones that support the tower.

Standing in the centre of the nave looking east you now become aware of the jewel in the crown of this church, the Rood Screen, built by the Ratcliffe family around 1475 to separate the collegiate from the parochial part of the church and so excluding all but the College of Priests from the east end of the church. The screen stretches continuously across both the nave and aisles and is constructed of oak and is one of the best examples in the Country. The Screen is not the only thing that makes a visit worthwhile.

There are mural paintings on the walls of the Nave, Stained glass windows including ancient glass in the large west window, the pulpit, said to be by Ver Brugen of Brussels, a fine cast-iron lectern and a recent addition are the Stations of the Cross that were completed by the extremely talented artist, Helen McIlldowie-Jenkins. The Memorial Community Hall that was added at the rear of the church in 1994 caters for many community functions and is open to all for Coffee and Chat Saturday mornings.

SATURDAY 26th APRIL 2015



One of the great churches of northern Essex, St Mary's dominates the High Street of Dedham. The church as we see it today is primarily a 15th-century rebuilding of an earlier medieval church which existed at least as early as 1322. That early church occupied the site of the current south aisle chapel, an indication of just how much smaller it was than the grand 15th-century building we see today! The door to the vestry is thought to have been the main entrance to the 14th-century church. Work on a new church was begun in 1492 and completed in 1522. The walls are rubble and flint, so common in East Anglia. The tower is knapped flint, dressed with limestone. The striking west tower, finished in 1519, is totally self-supporting and features an unusual vaulted passage. An unsubstantiated tradition is that Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, gave money for the tower to be built.

Whoever paid for it, the tower is certainly striking; it stands 131 feet high and is visible for miles along the valley. Pause for a moment before entering and notice the beautifully carved panelled 15th-century door. The tracery panels are lovely, but the figures that once decorated the niches between the niches were defaced in the Reformation. Among the interior highlights is the tomb of Thomas Webbe (d. 1506), a local merchant who helped pay for the Tudor rebuilding. Another notable monument is that of John Roger (d. 1636). Much more modern are stained glass windows by the famous Kempe workshop (c. 1902-1907).



St Mary's, High Street, Dedham

MONDAY 28th DECEMBER 2015



St Mary the Virgin, Plough Road, Great Bentley





St Mary', Delvyns, Gaston Street, East Bergholt

SATURDAY 17th MAY 2016



Unknown – near Canterbury West Railway station



There was a river nearby and a building below connected to a priory and monks.



The Cathedral, The Precincts, Canterbury







St Thomas of Canterbury, Catholic, Burgate, Canterbury

St Thomas of Canterbury Church is a Roman Catholic Parish church in Canterbury, Kent, England. It was built from 1874 to 1875 in the Gothic Revival style. It is situated on the corner of Burgate and Canterbury Lane, west of Lower Bridge Street, opposite the grounds of Canterbury Cathedral in the centre of the city. It is the only Roman Catholic church in Canterbury, built on the site of a medieval chapel and contains relics of Thomas Becket. History Origin After the English Reformation, the Catholic community in Canterbury survived through the Hales baronets.

Sir Thomas Hales, 2nd Baronet helped Catholics after the 1688 Revolution. They had Masses said for them at their chapel in Hales Place. Masses were said at the chapel until 1923. It was then sold by the Jesuits in 1928. Foundation In 1859, a mission was started in the city. It was founded when a Mary Ann Wood gave 59 Burgate Street, the current presbytery, for the use of a Catholic priest. The land around the house was later purchased for the construction of a church and school. The land included a medieval chapel dedicated to St Mary Magdalene. In 1871, the chapel was demolished, but its tower remains standing.



St Augustine Abbey Priory Ruins, Canterbury

This great abbey, marking the rebirth of Christianity in southern England, was founded shortly after AD 597 by St Augustine. Originally created as a burial place for the Anglo-Saxon kings of Kent, it is part of the Canterbury World Heritage Site, along with the cathedral and St Martin's Church. The impressive abbey is situated outside the city walls and is sometimes missed by visitors. At the abbey, you can also enjoy the museum and free audio tour, along with our exciting new VR experience. Visitors can now experience the abbey as it would have appeared in the early 1500s with virtual reality headsets that enable visitors to 'walk' through parts of the 16th-century monastery and experience the site in an immersive way. New family interpretation also includes monks' habits that can be borrowed, while visitors can interact with objects as never before, revealing more about monastic life at the abbey.