

SKYLINE



November 2022



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the magazine of the **FRIENDS OF THE CITY CHURCHES**

✧ Noticeboard ✧

DAVID JESSOP

ST MARY ABCHURCH

Ever since the Friends moved into **St Mary Abchurch** in May 2013 it has felt at times as though we were living in the middle of a building site. Drilling equipment, monitoring wires, cranes and the like have littered the church – especially the church tower, and a regular stream of workmen and women has moved in and out of the building on a daily basis. This was all part of the work associated with the building of a new Northern Line platform at Bank Station, which goes directly under the church.

All this has now come to an end. Bank Station has its new platform. The wires and other monitoring equipment prominent on the walls have vanished; work on strengthening the tower is complete; several panes of glass in the main windows have been replaced or repaired. St Mary Abchurch has survived it all. The Friends have kept the church functioning throughout all this building work.

St Mary Abchurch since 2013 has hosted countless services, baptisms, weddings as well as talks, AGMS, exhibitions and other events. We were warned in 2013 that the place might have to close for several years. It hasn't. Indeed because of the volunteer work of many Friends it has not only stayed open, but it has grown significantly more prominent. A big thank you to everyone who helps here.

Now the Church of England has decided to build on the importance of St Mary Abchurch, and anticipates increased visitor numbers after the Cannon Street entrance to Bank Station is opened later this year. The project to rewire and relight the church, repair the organ and make the building generally accessible for wheelchair users has now begun – more on this in later issues.

As part of this revamping of St Mary Abchurch a new vicar, The Revd Malcolm Torry, was licensed in the church on 31 August. Malcolm will work with the current chaplain, The Revd David Goodburn, who will continue to take the Wednesday services. Malcolm has served for many years in South London parishes. He has published several books on the concept of basic income for every individual, as well as aspects of philosophy and Christian faith.

Malcolm will oversee the programme of works on the church, and at the same time he will set up a formal Guild Church structure at St Mary Abchurch – with an electoral roll, Guild Church Council, church wardens etc. (This structure has been in abeyance for many years). And, of course, an important part of his work will be to minister to the expected increasing visitor numbers in this part of the City. We wish him well.

Send 3s/4d we're going to a dance

We all know the Chinese whispers for 'send reinforcements, we're going to advance'. Friends are mishearing: bluntly, there is an urgent need for new life in the trustees; an urgent need for someone to mastermind IT issues; an urgent need for someone to arrange events.

As the change of editor, planned for this month has not happened, Judy Stephenson cannot embrace events as well. An organiser for lectures, visits etc is sought. Equally Lesley Thrift has enough on her plate with Watching issues, she cannot juggle the website and zoom-broadcasting to boot.

You know the expression – the more you put in, the more you get out: are you too modest? Please step forward!

BECKY BANFIELD,
HONORARY TREASURER

Dear Friends

I'm delighted to report three more grants have been paid, with a number of applications in the pipeline. Supporting our City churches with financial grants towards the costs of their capital projects is an important part of our work. **St Mary at Hill** has received £2,000 towards the cost of installing handrails at their west door. I'm sure all who use the west door will be pleased to have the extra safety feature, do check them out. **St Giles Cripplegate** has had a problem with spalling stonework – basically the stone has been crumbling as a result of water penetration. We have donated £2,000 towards these vital repairs. And finally, we recently supported a large project at **St Dunstan in the West**, as they repurpose and refurbish their space to create a new administration area, with a grant of £5,000.

Please do let the City churches staff know that our application process is simple, and encourage them to apply. Particularly in these days of rising costs, our support, your support, is more valuable than ever.

NANCY BRANSON

Carol Service

The carol service gives us a wonderful opportunity to socialise over tea and cake. This year we also hope we shall all be able to meet our new vicar properly. We would be very grateful if a few more Friends would be pleased to help with the refreshments, whether it be setting up, pouring, serving, clearing up or baking. There will be a table selling Christmas cards and other merchandise, which will also need manning.

All volunteers please contact nancy@london-city-churches.org.uk

OLIVER LEIGH-WOOD, CHAIRMAN

It is so tiresome and saddening that yet again our outing to the churches of Romney Marsh has had to be cancelled; and this year because of rail strikes (twice). Third year lucky: we hope to be able to announce the 2023 date shortly. Nil desperandum. We shall enjoy them all the more!

EDITORIAL

Brian Evans died in August after months in hospital and an even longer illness. Very few Friends will not have come across him: erstwhile Watcher co-ordinator, regular contributor to *Skyline*, often but not always as 'Music Friend', trustee with a clear, practical head. His funeral needed to be postponed, as the original date conflicted with that of Her Majesty the Queen. There were, therefore, fewer Friends at **St John's Wood church** than wanted to go. The affectionate service reflected his deep involvement with FCC, as well as with his church and the choir. A poem embracing many of the City churches 'whose names like a chime so sweetly call', was read by his cousin. Those who spoke about him, each knew a very different Brian: all agreed he made a good friend and perfect guest. Should any Friends like to make a donation in his memory, the charities mentioned in Brian's will are: The National Deaf Children's Society; The Friends of Llandaff Cathedral; St John's Wood Church; and FCC.

There will be a memorial service for him at **St Mary Abchurch** Wednesday 19 April at 3pm.

Our front cover reflects the role of the heralds of the College of Arms, and of **St Paul's Cathedral** in the ceremonial surrounding the death of the Queen and the accession of His Majesty King Charles III. I was at the Tower for the 96-gun salute and heard the single bell tolling at **St Peter ad Vincula**. It was unmuffled because it is very small and hangs out in the open, and can't easily be reached. See Dickon Love on p5. (I failed to hear the tolling of **All Hallows Barking by the Tower**, perhaps the wind was blowing in the wrong direction, or perhaps my ears let me down.) Those of you who write for *Skyline*, know that I ask many questions. Dickon assures me that the bells were indeed tolled.

My joy overwhelmed me at **St Mary at Hill** when I found an elegant handrail, which enabled me to get in and out without assistance. I was so excited that when Nicki came down with the Handbook, I went down and up again – just to show her I could.

Some time ago my fellow Watcher pointed out that a column was needed in *Skyline* where Friends could raise issues which were troubling them and which other Friends might know something about. You will find on p10 a column headed PLUMS, which I hope will become a regular feature. Let me explain the name: 'Notes and Queries' has already been claimed, and so I have tapped into my nursery rhymes: Little Jack Horner.... put in his thumb and pulled out a plum (what a good girl am I). If you have a better title, which promises reward as well as puzzle – tell me.

The Revd Richard Bray, whom Friends will remember from **St Botolph Aldersgate**, is now rector at **St Anne Limehouse**, and approached us for advice for a Watching scheme there. Lesley Thrift and I have had a few meetings with them, and the church is now open 10-4 on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Philip Reddaway needs more Minders (as they choose to call them) and as many Friends live in East London, you might enjoy the experience. I hate to say this to Philip, but all the wags who ask us what we are Watching for the churches to do, will be able to make similar quips about Minders. Contact him to volunteer on: philipcfesa@gmail.com. He is clearly trying to avoid our mistakes, so I asked Richard what he had found irritating when we Watched St Botolph. Ever kindly, he said nothing, except that sometimes the Watchers liked to chat, but the administrative staff were busy. We might do well to remember that.

Jonathan Causer has almost completed the Index. I had a meeting with him, and we set ourselves tasks. We found a few minor snags, and are confident that the new year will bring the Index online. It will then not be necessary to flick through all the back issues on our shelves in order to find the article on such and such, which so and so wrote.

Other FCC novelties include a blank note card celebrating Sir Christopher Wren (see p16).

Finally, our Vice-chairman has revealed his hidden depths. His first novel has just been published by Austin and Macauley, and is available from Amazon in Kindle, hardback and paperback editions. David Jessop has promised me a review copy of *The Vicar of Abchurch* in time for February's *Skyline*. But if you need stocking fillers – go buy (NB this is fiction).

JUDY STEPHENSON

Letters to the Editor

Mark Parsons writes from

Berthoud, Colorado: You may put me down as one of those who read your editorial with great interest. In fact, the whole online edition of *Skyline* is terrific!

I was visiting London in late May and happened upon **St Mary Abchurch** as the Watcher and a nice man were struggling to put up a string of flags across the front door to decorate for the Jubilee. Being a tall, and still somewhat nimble, Yank I asked if I could help, was put to work, and was thus pleased to be able to say I was a small part of the Queen's festivities. They were most kind and showed me around the church, including the pully system that lifts the font cover, and the wonderful Gibbons carvings, which were part of my original goal that day. After years of visits to London, studying Wren and Gibbons, seeing the churches, using the Friends' brochures and leaving but meager donations, I was pleased to be able officially to become a Friend and supporter. I look forward to being part of such a noble calling.

Thank you for the fine publications, the website, and for helping keep the churches open and used. If I lived closer I would love to become a Watcher, since I am pretty nimble, and can even carry trays down stairs (I think. I will practise).

Meriel Wiltshire writes: I have recently been reading again, and feel lucky to own, a third edition copy (Spring 1948) of Gerald Cobb's *The Old Churches of London*. It has even kept its dust cover, with a splendid panorama of the City. It is a wonderful glimpse of post-Great Fire London, and the rebuilding of the City churches.

There are the vestries' diligent and

detailed recording of disbursements for materials and labour (sometimes including the names of craftsmen and craftswomen employed on the numerous sites, with Cobb's interesting aside: 'was it a custom for wives to carry on the business of their deceased husbands?').

There were dinners and bribes offered to speed up work on a particular church, though included too were gifts made out of gratitude for services rendered.

In addition the photographs, fine line drawings (many by William Niven) and atmospheric Arthur Garratt paintings of church interiors make the perusal of the book a real pleasure.

Gerald Cobb's memorial plaque in **St Benet, Paul's Wharf** is certainly most apt in describing him as an ecclesiologist.

Steve Henry writes from Topeka,

Kansas: All American flags are flying at half-staff until the Queen's burial. I have never known that gesture to be observed for a foreign leader's demise. I'm pleased that President Biden took that action. I entered the post office for West Topeka on Saturday morning. Outside, the flag flew at half-staff. Inside, a large photo of Her Majesty stood on an easel.

The Queen's passing and the people of the UK were included in Presbyterian prayers this morning, as well as at Brewster Place vespers, for which I play each Sunday afternoon. We're doing our best to honour a most honourable person.

Katrina Bradley writes: I'm not knocking anybody who wants to buy flowers etc to leave at the palaces etc in memory of the Queen, but have decided to do something more 'permanent' by buying a tree, for the Platinum Jubilee Great Tree Canopy: <https://shop.queensgreencanopy.org/>

Just think if we all brought a tree (£10) what a wonderful act of remembrance and legacy...

Peter Browne writes: I didn't think that I needed Tony Tucker's book on

sword rests, but often while sipping my coffee in **St Mary Aldermary's** HOST cafe and pointing out to restless camera twitchers that they're missing out on snapping one of only two remaining carved wooden examples, I realised that I needed to know more for myself. So, I bought my copy, and with subsequent visits and Watches at City churches have begun a closer and unexpected interest.

Having only visited **St Mary at Hill** for evening lectures, I looked forward to Watching there and experiencing this spacious and uncluttered example of Wren's genius in the light of day. I also expected to enjoy – according to Mervyn Blatch *A Guide to London's Churches* – 'the finest set of sword rests in the City'. I refer readers to pp43-47 of Tony's book for a glimpse at both the range and skills displayed in these historic ornaments.

But lo! there's nothing to behold here, apart from the crowned top of one sword rest ignominiously stored in a vestibule, peeking out above a glass pane. There's certainly ample space for the sword rests to be attached to the walls and the wainscot.

Jesus said that no man keeps a light for it to be hidden under a bushel: surely 34 years after this collection was rescued from the rubble of St Mary's own Great Fire of 1988, it is time for these gems no longer to be hidden in bubble wrap in the basement of this elegant building.

CORRIGENDUM

Eric de Bellaigue has pointed out that in his review (August 22) of *In the Shadow of St Paul's Cathedral*, the penitential figure standing before the preacher at Paul's Cross in Margaret Willes's admirable book should read James Bainham NOT James Burnham. Bainham was one of the five men condemned to the stake by Sir Thomas More during his tenure as Lord Chancellor.

Your Editor apologises.



announcement came at 6:30pm and that changed everything. We quickly fitted muffles to the clappers of the bells, opened the sound shutters, and within minutes the mournful sound of muffled bells filled Fleet Street, making this the first church to react to the news.

Muffled ringing is a sign of mourning, most often heard on Remembrance Sunday or in Holy Week. On these occasions, one side of the clapper is fitted with a piece of leather, so that the bells ring alternately loud and soft in a stirring effect known as ‘half-

muffled’ ringing. However, when it is the monarch who has died, tradition leads us to muffle the bells fully, save the last stroke of the tenor bell. The listener hears the permutating changes softly cascading from the louvres, followed up by the strident funereal beat of the tolling tenor bell’s backstroke. For ringer and listener alike, the sound is an unfamiliar one, not heard for over 70 years, and had the effect of stopping many in their tracks.

At noon the following day, tolling took place. At **St Paul’s Cathedral**, Great Tom (the 5-ton hour bell) was chimed 96 times: once every 60 seconds, in a tradition going back more than 250 years. Also chimed by hammer was the 2-ton bourdon bell at **All Hallows by the Tower**. The tolling of ‘full circle’ swinging bells required more

dexterity as other tenor bells were set at one stroke and then 360 degrees later set at the next stroke, 96 times. This took place at St Dunstan in the West, **St James Garlickhythe**, **St Magnus the Martyr**, **St Margaret Pattens** and **St Olave Hart Street**. That evening there was a Service of Prayer and Reflection at St Paul’s Cathedral, which was preceded by tolling on the 3-ton tenor bell, and concluded with half-muffled ringing.

During the remaining period of mourning, full peals of over three hours were rung at St Magnus (fully muffled), **St Mary le Bow** (fully), **St Michael Cornhill** (half), St Olave (half) and St Paul’s Cathedral (fully). Quarter peals took place at **St Katharine Cree** (half), **Holy Sepulchre** (fully) and **St Vedast alias Foster** (half). I have only reported on ringing that has been published in *The Ringing World*, and it is possible other shorter pieces of ringing or chiming took place at other churches.

We ringers feel hugely privileged to have been part of the City’s mourning, which itself has been leading the rest of the world. Ringing muffled has been an interesting experience, but we hope that we will not be required to fit them again for a good few years yet. ✨

DICKON LOVE

PEALING IN MUFFLED SADNESS

As one who organises bellringing in the City, I was prepared for ‘Operation London Bridge’, the code name for Her Majesty’s funeral plans. But when the time came to swing into action (excuse the pun), none of us felt prepared for the loss of our beloved Queen.

The news arrived at lunchtime from my contact in government that we should prepare ourselves for the announcement. The protocol to follow depended on which side of 4pm the announcement was to be made, with the formal tolling to take place at either 6pm or 12 noon the following day.

Since the Royal Jubilee Bellringers were already due to assemble at **St Dunstan in the West** that evening, I made sure the start was an early one. 4pm came and went, and so practice ringing commenced as normal with the sound shutters closed. The





BOOK REVIEW



LONDON CLAY – JOURNEYS IN THE DEEP CITY

TOM CHIVERS

431 pages; 8 black and white maps; comprehensive index and author's notes.

Penguin Random House, 2021; £10.99 (Hardback Doubleday £15.19); ISBN 978-1-5291-7671-1

LYNNE BAINBRIDGE

I should begin by saying what this book is not . . . It is not a dry geological history of London as the title might suggest! Tom Chivers elegantly peels back the capital's layers, concentrating on areas known to him from childhood, or those he has come to know through living and working in the city. He is as fascinated with underground London as he is with the surface. This is a journey of discovery on several levels some of which are highly personal and moving, where the author's background as a published poet is felt in the lyricism and emotion of the text.

Over eight highly readable chapters, we are taken on virtual walks. The author guides us through each describing the history ancient and modern, the geology and topography. He reveals one of the last vestiges of ancient woodland in London, the impact of the Great Fire, the Olympics, industry, new development overlying ancient sites, and the numerous London waterways, large and small, seen and unseen.

A map accompanies each chapter to help you navigate the subject and I felt that you could follow the author's peregrinations should you wish - such was the detail. Indeed, I found myself consulting an A-Z, or online maps to follow the text more directly especially in areas that I was unfamiliar with, such as the

Lea Valley. Often it is only by looking at a map that you can appreciate what went before, and why areas of London became known for certain trades or industries.

The genesis of the book was his fascination for a hole behind a hoarding in Aldgate, near to his home, and over nine years he discovered the history of the area and the site that the sinkhole occupies. This kindled his fascination with other parts of the capital, from his former childhood home in south London to his new home with his young family in Rotherhithe.

Sites within the City, or close by include a walk along the Walbrook, a descent underground to visit the super sewer and a more malodorous one to the Fleet sewer, as he attempts to trace the River Fleet upstream from sewer to its source.

If like me you feel that there is always something new to learn about London and the City in particular, then this book is a welcome addition to the shelf!

THE LONDON JOURNAL OF JOHN MACKAY, 1837-38

DAVID E COKE

121 pages; 90 illustrations

Published by London Topographical Society (Publication No.185) 2022
£25 (£20 to members of the London Topographical Society)
ISBN 978-0-902087-71-9

CHRIS DOLAN

Many readers will be familiar with the firm of John Bell & Croyden, the long-established pharmacy in Wigmore Street. Like other celebrated West End traders (Hatchard, Fortnum & Mason, Hamley's, Twinings) the company had its origin in 18c, having been founded by John Bell in 1798. The original premises at 338 Oxford Street included a shop at the front with a laboratory behind, and staff living quarters above. A pioneer of modern pharmaceuticals, Bell enjoyed a high reputation, and in 1841 his son Jacob founded the Pharmaceutical Society

(later the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain).

The firm offered highly-prized apprenticeships to aspiring young pharmacists, which in addition to shop and dispensing duties, included classes in chemistry, Latin and elocution. One such apprentice was the Edinburgh born John Mackay (1818-1881), who spent just over a year with John Bell – between February 1837 and April 1838. His time in London made a deep impression on the 19-year-old, and he committed his thoughts to a diary which takes the form of weekly letters to an imaginary friend. This diary (or journal), edited and annotated, forms the basis of the latest book from the London Topographical Society.

The apprentices were kept busy, and inevitably many of the diary entries focus on mundane activities in the pharmacy, particularly during the 'duty weeks' (one in three) which required daily attendance throughout the opening hours of 8am to 11pm, with the possibility of being called up during the night as well.

Despite this strict regime, Mackay enjoyed an active social life while also benefiting from many of the attractions London had to offer. A strict Scottish Presbyterian by upbringing, he was at first shocked by the prevalence of Sunday leisure activities in London, though as his year progressed he allowed himself to be increasingly diverted by out of town trips, particularly along the Thames – eastwards to Greenwich and Woolwich and westwards to Richmond. These excursions often involved walking what to us would seem huge distances, though he sometimes made use of the 'buss', and rode on the newly opened London and Greenwich Railway, at that time the only railway in the capital. (His voyages to and from Edinburgh were by sea.)

His religious observances were far from being neglected, however, and he found a spiritual home in the **National Scotch Church** in Regent Square, close to the Foundling

Hospital. (Badly damaged during World War 2, the church was subsequently demolished.) Occasional forays to other churches were less happy, and he both disliked the English form of worship and found the standard of preaching inferior to what he was used to. In the City itself he found a rare exception in **St Sepulchre without Newgate** (now known as **Holy Sepulchre**) which he visited twice, enjoying the sermons both times. **St Dunstan** close beside Temple Bar left him unmoved, and while he was overwhelmed by the external and internal architecture of **St Paul's** he was far less impressed by the liturgy and ceremonial.

In general Mackay avoids commenting on national events or affairs of state, with one highly significant exception - which resonates with us in the light of recent events: the death of William IV and the accession of Victoria. He describes visiting St James's Palace to view one of the daily bulletins on the King's deteriorating health, followed a few days later by a trip to the undertakers in Bond Street to see the (empty) coffin before its dispatch to Windsor - there is no mention of any lying in state. He is clearly quite taken with the elegant young Queen (almost his exact contemporary in age) and more than once goes out of his way to see her drive by in her carriage.

As is usual with the London Topographical Society's publications, the book is lavishly illustrated with contemporary prints and etchings, and is provided with meticulously researched footnotes and references. Although perhaps of only tangential relevance to the FCC, it is to be recommended as a fascinating personal impression of London in the first part of 19c.

JUDY STEPHENSON

HAWKSMOOR EXPLORATION

The idea was to rinse our sensibilities of Grinling Gibbons, and pause before immersing ourselves in Christopher Wren. The two Hawksmoor churches selected, both re-evaluated and 'improved' by the Victorians, seemed to fit the bill.

The Revd Jeremy Crossley met us at **St Mary Woolnoth**, which he described as his 'toy' church, unlike the church we



were going on to, **St Anne Limehouse**, which is grandly set in grounds. He pointed out how Butterfield had removed the galleries, but retained their fronts, which are simply pushed back to the wall. Originally the pulpit was much higher, allowing the preacher to be on a level with the congregation in the gallery. As well as the grandiose, **St Mary Woolnoth** is full of intriguing details. Queuing for the loo, we could examine display cases, like the one illustrated here with its archery allusions.

At **St Anne** we were received by a member of Care for **St Anne's**. We were able to examine the Gibbs Rodgers carvings, and were given an extensive tour of the crypt, with its poignant reminders of the experience of East London during ww2. ✨



Left: Gibbs Rodgers pulpit at **St Anne Limehouse**

JOHN BETHELL

St Mary Woolnoth is the only church in the City to be designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor, and the only one there to be financed by Queen Anne's Act of 1711. Of the Wren/Vanbrugh/Hawksmoor triumvirate, the last was most influenced by late classical Roman architecture: his masterpiece the mausoleum at Castle Howard. The extraordinary Lombard Street exterior of **St Mary** can be read as another example of this.

The pulpit is perhaps the most spectacular item within **St Mary**. Its bulging sides are what is termed 'bombé' or 'serpentine' by furniture experts, though no furniture I have seen has the stepped sides which are such a feature here. The tester is carried on tall slender panels - not really columns in my book - with Corinthian capitals on top. An iron rod takes much of the weight from above.

There is fine carving throughout, but the highlight is the sun-burst decoration on the front panel. In his book *After the Fire*, Angelo Hornak has an interesting analysis of this. The craftsmen are named as Darby, Smith and Appleby. ✨



PHOTO JOHN BETHELL

DAVID BARTLE

ARCHIVIST, WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF HABERDASHERS

11: THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF HABERDASHERS: CHURCH LINKS AND LIVINGS

From the adoption of St Catherine to be its guiding patron saint in 14C, to its motto to ‘serve and obey’ the will of God in Tudor England’s protestant beginnings, it must be recognised that the origins of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers are deeply bound up with the importance of Christianity in Medieval England.

So, in this article we shall look at links between the Company and its churches through time, both as places of worship and as livings for which the Haberdashers’ Company has had a duty of care down to the present.

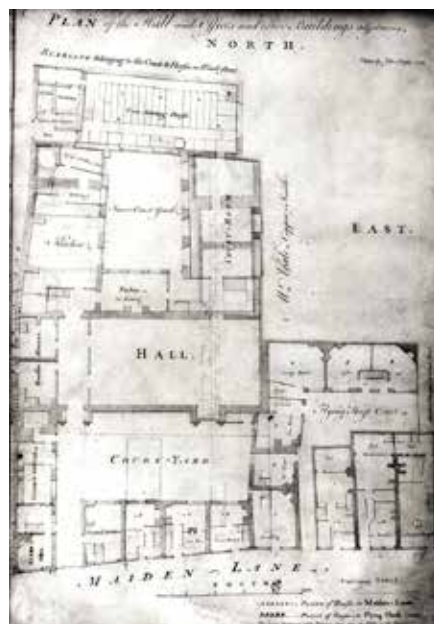
It was back in the 1320s and 30s that members of the fledgling Fraternity of Haberdashers first began to meet together for common good in a side chapel dedicated to St Catherine of Alexandria in the old **St Paul’s Cathedral**. This common good was threefold; to pray to St Catherine for the souls of one another, to decide on arrangements for the care of elderly members, and to identify young boys to be brought into the trade by servitude (apprenticeship).

These three original strands of the Company’s Christian ‘charity’ exist to this day in the continuing use of a Company church and chaplain, provision of almshouses (or rather care homes) and the practice of apprenticeship.

So, it is today that the Haberdashers’ Company has long been divorced from its original trade which formed part of the cloth and clothing trade of the Middle Ages and Tudor periods. At that time a garment began with the purchase of cloth, of wool or fine fabric depending on

one’s purse. These would be sold by the draper and mercer respectively. Then a tailor (today a merchant tailor) would create the basic garment. The haberdasher would give it decoration with fine ribbons, lace, pins and especially, if a complete wardrobe were needed, a suitable hat too.

This all died away through the late 17C down to 19C, until as today mass production and import of clothes got underway. In replacement the Haberdashers’ Company found itself increasingly involved in education, as initiated by its 17C benefactors. This educational involvement is the main business of the Company today. Almshouses in Monmouth, and Newland, Gloucestershire, Newport, Shropshire, and London have come and gone through time, including the present where, for example, the Monmouth almshouses are now professionally run care homes, of which we are just patron.

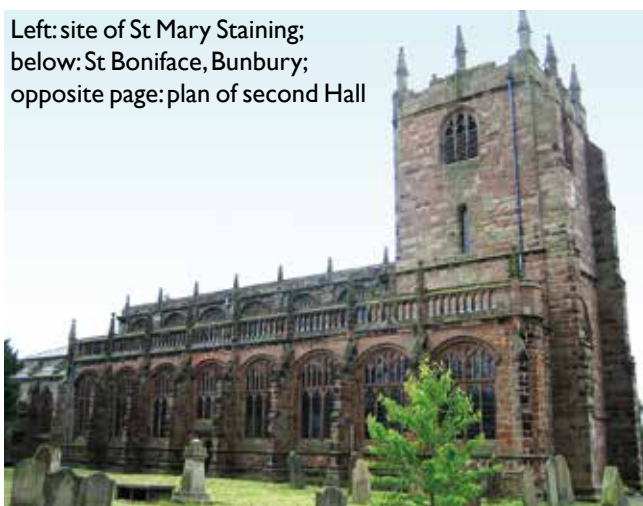


Returning to the Company church links, by the early 15C the Haberdashers’ fraternity dedicated to St Catherine, had moved on from St Paul’s, and established a link with the parish church of **St Mary Staining**, near the Haberdashers’ Hall. Then in 1448 the fraternity achieved full livery company status through its incorporation as the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers. In 16C, one of the religious practices of the Haberdashers, that was an early responsibility of the newly appointed Wardens of the Court, was to arrange a feast on the first Tuesday in August, to which all other members of the Yeomanry (essentially the Freeman) would be invited, or rather summoned:

‘...all the said fellowship to be warned by the Beadle to come on the day when the said election shall be made, to the Hall of the said fellowship, to the intent they may go to St Marie Staying church, there to hear divine service and every one to offer a penny, whereof the one half to be to those of the poor and the other half to the Curate of the same parish as the Wardens shall think good’.

On the Old London Bridge, throughout most of its existence, Haberdashers were the most dominant trading community. The **Chapel of St Thomas Becket**, at the midpoint of the bridge, was undoubtedly used by these traders in their worship and observance of Christianity.

Both in St Mary Staining and in many other City churches there were graves and monuments to deceased Haberdashers. Often a City church was chosen by the family of the deceased in the parish where they lived. One early responsibility of the Company Beadle was to visit these various memorials annually, to ensure they were in good repair, and honour the deceased at anniversaries of their death. This practice only drew to a close in 20C with changing priorities in the work of the Beadle. Today the Beadle mainly looks after Hall



Left: site of St Mary Staining;
below: St Boniface, Bunbury;
opposite page: plan of second Hall

commercial bookings and general maintenance. He has a flat and lives there during the week. He is also master of ceremonies at dinners.

As well as holding many religious festivals and services in St Mary Staining, the Company also held ceremonies used in the presentation of a newly elected Master there, around St Catherine's Day, each November.

But sadly, our devoted use of St Mary Staining from 15c, through the Reformation and into the 17c, was brought to a sudden end by the loss of both the church and the Company's first hall in the Great Fire of 1666. With the building of the second hall there came several other changes. One was the loss of a single City church with which the Company was associated, and the other was the creation of a non-conformist chapel within the building of the second Hall, built in replacement of the first in Gresham Street.

I mentioned earlier our benefactors. In 1614 William Jones had left in his will funding to support protestant preaching, both in his home town of Newland, Gloucestershire (along with a boys' school in Monmouth) and also in the City of London. This followed the example of his friend Thomas Aldersey who in 1594 had taken on a church living in Bunbury, Cheshire, his home town, to be run by a good protestant clergyman and schoolmaster.

So, in the City of London, throughout 17c and right down to 20c when it stopped, the funds Jones provided paid a clergyman to deliver

passionate homilies, from the pulpit in a rotation of City churches. This was really part of the Company's growing religious non-conformity at this time, and demonstrated a desire to live up to the intention of William Jones to reach the largest possible audience of the deserving poor. This was administered by the Company through its Jones Lectureship Charity.

At the same time the non-conformist chapel in the Hall itself was used as a parish facility by residents, who had homes around the Hall. It registered births, marriages and deaths in records which can still be consulted in our archives. There still exist several of the fiery speeches of the protestant clergymen who preached in the Company chapel, for example: *A Sermon preached [by Thomas Gibbons] at Haberdashers Hall [Chapel], On Occasion of the Tremendous Earthquake at Lisbon, November 1 1755.*


In 1630 the Company was given £2,000 by Dame Mary Weld to buy rectories or parsonages with a view to starting an 'eternal cycle of benefaction'. So it was that the following churches came under our patronage: **St Peter, Chertsey; St Mary Magdalene, Albrighton; and All Saints, Wigston Magna, Leicestershire.** In addition several other churches came under our patronage: through Edmund Hammond, Haberdasher in his will of 1638 'Newnham with Awre & Blakeney, Gloucestershire', and as mentioned earlier, through Thomas Aldersey came **St Boniface,**

Bunbury. Finally, in 19c, through the Jones Lectureship Charity, came **St John the Baptist, Hoxton, All Saints, Hatcham, and St Catherine, Hatcham.**

Following ww2, and the loss of so many City churches, there were two further changes. The first was the formal adoption of another City church to be the Company's church with a Company chaplain: **St Lawrence Jewry.** The Company helped pay for its restoration and redecoration. The other change was that the principal lectureship activity of the Jones Lectureship Charity to fund a preacher in a rotation of City churches became formally known as 'The Golden Lecture', a nickname it had been developing in the previous decades in reference both to its monetary generosity and the devotional nature of the preaching sought.

The association with St Lawrence Jewry lasted until 2021, when the Company transferred its Company church and chaplain to **St Bartholomew the Great** as the present Company Hall, its fourth, is in West Smithfield.

Lastly, the Company has been fortunate in more recent history to have had six Masters who were in holy orders at the time of their election:

- 1894 The Revd Charles Eginton
- 1896 The Revd Edwin Pope
- 1920 The Revd H. P. Prosser
- 1928 The Revd Alban Williams
- 1962 The Revd Anthony Cope
- 2021 The Revd James Power 



The Weathervane on St Nicholas Cole Abbey

The City churches give us a great many different weathervanes, which often go unnoticed, because people tend not to look up as much as they should! They range from simple arrows to golden cockerels, and to things specific to a particular church, such as **St Lawrence Jewry's** grid-iron, which represents the instrument on which the saint was martyred, or the key to the gates of heaven on top of **St Peter Cornhill**.

One of the finest of these weathervanes is the 3-dimensional ship on **St Nicholas Cole Abbey**. It originally came from **St Michael Queenhythe**, a church which was demolished in 1876. The ship is in full sail, with fine masts and intricate rigging, plus a gold flag on the stern and a gold pennant on top of the main mast.

The weathervane was brought to St Nicholas Cole Abbey when the church was restored in the early 1960s, after being damaged in the war. The church is only a short distance from the location of St Michael Queenhythe, and has a connection with the sea through its patron saint St Nicholas who is patron



saint of seafarers as well as of children (Santa Claus), pawnbrokers, and more.

This fine weathervane is visible from many viewpoints and looks particularly good when catching the full rays of the sun – but you need to look up, of course!

– PLUMS –

In answer to Sally Phillips' appeal in August's *Skyline*, James Lovely has found:

ALFRED MOORE

13 MARCH 1862 – 22 MAY 1924

♣ In some places the surname is mis spelt as Morre. Alfred was better known as Fred.

♣ Parents were Theodore Moore 1830-1886 and Anne Maria Constable 1839-1915. Father was an auctioneer.

♣ Spouse was Ada Helena Glanfield born in Hackney, 1868-1947. Married in Woodford, West Ham 20 July 1899.

♣ Children were Christopher Constable Moore 1901-?; Alfred Stephen Moore 1903-?, and Sylvia



Glanfield Moore 1909-1994.

♣ Alfred was born in the parish of St Dunstan, Stepney and living at 48 Mile End Road in 1871, according to the census of that year.

♣ In the 1901 Census listed as an auctioneer and estate agent with a cook and housemaid living in.

♣ In the 1911 census listed as a surveyor and auctioneer with a

governess from Germany of British parentage, a house maid and a cook. Living at Eskdale, Oakley Park South, Whetstone.

♣ Post Office directory of 1902 lists him as an auctioneer of 7 Leadenhall Street EC and 144 Mile End Road. Similar listing in the 1890 Post Office London Directory. Listing in other directories as Valuers, land and estate agents.

♣ In 1905, 1910, and 1915 same listing in Post Office Directories as an auctioneer and surveyor.

♣ Died 22 May 1924 leaving an estate of £17,463.2s.7d (about £74,000 today).

♣ Booth poverty maps of 1889 show Mile End Road to be a well-to-do middle class district.

COMMUNION SPOONS IN THE CITY OF LONDON

4: 19C

The dominant function of these communion spoons seems now to have emerged as that of straining particles of sediment from the wine. Domestic spoons continued to provide new spoons for straining the wine, though their design evolved steadily, as seen in the following examples.

An *Old English* strainer spoon, as seen at **St Margaret Lothbury**, is pierced all over, unlike most earlier Hanoverian spoons, here with straight-forward round holes. These are arranged in various geometric patterns, circles, half-moons and 'figures of seven', in a bowl that is even more egg-shaped than its predecessors. However, it does have a double-drop where the stem joins the underside of the bowl. The stem is now quite plain and its end turns down, unlike its predecessors, though more clearly approaching the design of 20c. Clearly being pierced all over suggests it is no longer needed for putting the droplets of water into the communion cup, and its function must have been solely as a strainer. The date on this spoon is 1818.



Top: St Margaret Lothbury; above: St Pancras New Church; right: St Mary Kensington



An *Old English* 'style' strainer spoon is also found at **St Pancras New Church** though their priest, perhaps rather conscious of liturgical ritual, requested a pair of spoons. His congregation, swelled by new residents in St Pancras, made the most of the Duke of York's gift in 1822, to mark the consecration of their church. Their new chalice, much larger and deeper than earlier communion cups, allowed for a congregation regularly numbering several thousand, with two spoons, also of a larger size to match the chalice. Several needs are accommodated, the pierced spoon for removing foreign bodies and stirring the water and wine, the unpierced spoon being used for delivering a measured quantity of wine to the chalice. Here we see what had previously been just an ordinary domestic spoon pattern specially designed as a constituent part of the communion set, rather than just added to an existing set. The marks found on the reverse of the stem include the maker's mark 'PS' for Paul Storr, who designed the complete communion set.

The new church of **St Mary Abbots, Kensington**, did much the same in commissioning George Adams to design its new communion plate. Here we have a spoon which is again definitely

not an ordinary domestic spoon but one for a specific purpose in church, signified by the cross, where previously was normally found the finial. It is certainly pierced in the bowl but rather more delicately than earlier spoons with their lines or patterns of rounded holes. Perhaps removing foreign bodies was rarer by this time, 1875. The mixing of wine and water was considered as important as the delicate 'breaking' of bread. This is suggested by a matching knife found as part of this communion set.

A few such spoons continued to be designed into the 20c specifically for use at the altar table, usually with somewhat smaller bowls than seen in earlier centuries, and less emphasis on straining the wine but more on the ceremonial action of the priest. Most new designs however are found in those new churches built across London as the city grew, whilst City churches found no need to replace their existing spoons, especially as their use steadily declined and their spoons retreated to the back of the church safe! ✂



Where there is Brass • 9

FOR MERCERS' SAKE

The brass to Nicholas Leveson, 1539 and wife Denys, St Andrew Undershaft

Nicholas Leveson's tomb in **St Andrew Undershaft**, had already been erected before his death in 1539. It was originally between the two eastern pillars of the north aisle. At an unknown date, possibly during the 1764 restoration, it was dismantled, and the slab bearing the brass was placed on the east wall where it remains.

The brass shows Nicholas Leveson and his wife Denys, with their eight sons and ten daughters, all in civilian dress. From the mouths of their parents are scrolls with a Latin text. From his: *Deus misereatur nostri* while hers continues: *et benedicat nobis* (May the Lord have mercy on us and bless us). To the side of the male figure is a shield bearing quarterly 1 and 4 Gules a fess nebuly argent between three leaves slipped Or for Leveson, 2 and 3 Argent a chevron gules between three cinquefoils vert for Prestwood. The shield to the side of his wife bears Argent five martlets sable on a chief azure three ducal crowns Or, for Bodley. A central shield between the scrolls bears the arms impaled, above which is an inscription that reads:

THIS MONUMENT WAS
REPAIRED AT THE COST
OF THE PARISH
IN THE YEAR 1764.

This inscription, was placed in the indent which originally held a depiction of either a Trinity or resurrection which would have been removed as a result of the Dissolution.

Immediately below the figures is the inscription in six lines of black letter:

Here under this tombe lyeth bury(e)d the bodyes
of Nycolas leveson mercer sometyme Cheryffe
of London and M(er)chant of the Staple at Calys, and
Denys his wyfe, whych Nycolas decessy(e)d y^e xx day
of August An^o D(o)mini M^oVcxxxix, and y^e sayd Denys
y^e seconde day of Dec(em)ber A^o M^oVclx whois souill
Jhu p(a)rdon.

The Leveson family originally came from Stafford in 13c century when a Roger Leveson owned property there.

This in turn descended to Richard Leveson of Prestwood and Willenhall (†1503) who married Jane, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Bradbury. They had three sons, John, who died without issue, Nicholas and James. Nicholas came to London as a young man, and was apprenticed to the mercer, William Browne in 1502. With his apprenticeship complete he became a member of the Mercers' Company serving as Warden in 1520 and 1529, before becoming Master in 1535. In 1534 he was elected sheriff of London. He was also a merchant of the Staple of Calais.

He married Denys, daughter of Thomas and Joan Bodley of Black Notley, Essex. Eight sons and ten daughters are shown on the brass, but only four sons and two daughters are mentioned in Nicholas' will. This shows that either they had already received their inheritance or had died young, probably the latter. The family homes were in Lime Street, then a fashionable part of London with their country residence at Horne Place, Halling, Kent. According to his will Leveson also owned land in Essex, Kent, Middlesex and Staffordshire.

Denys survived her husband for a number of years, dying in 1560. She also requested burial in St Andrew Undershaft, in the middle aisle at the end of her pew where she used to sit at service time. She directed that her body should not be 'seared' but enclosed in a coffin made of boards. Her funeral was described by Henry Machyn, a

clothier and diarist in his entry for 9 December 1560. Some 60 mourners dressed in black were at the service with the church decorated in black with the family arms, while the choir comprised 24 'clarkes syngyng'. Following the service a 'grett dener' was provided for all those who had attended the service.



SOURCES
C B Boulter,
Monuments, Tablets

and Brasses in the Church of St. Andrew Undershaft
1934

W H Overall, 'Notes on Two Monumental Brasses in the Church of Saint Andrew under Shaft, Leadenhall Street', *Trans London and Middlesex Arch Soc* (1871-73), IV

J G Nichols ed, *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London*, Camden Society (1848)

TNA, PROB 11/43/645 (Denys' will)

TNA, PROB 11/27/552 (Nicholas' will)



PETER LUNOE

ST ETHELBURGA, ABBESS

St Ethelburga on Bishopsgate is a 'peculiar'. That is to say that whilst a consecrated Christian church, it is not part of the Diocese of London, but is separately administered, in this case by trustees.

This arose following the April 1993 IRA Bishopsgate bomb, which very severely damaged the structure. For several years there was much discussion about selling the site, but when Richard Chartres became Bishop of London in 1995 he was strongly supportive of the church's restoration, provided that it had a clear purpose. Thus was created the Centre for Reconciliation and Peace, which has offices above the south aisle, and uses the church for a broad range of events. The building was restored, and reconsecrated by the bishop in 2002, who then officially opened the Centre.

Ethelburga was a 7^c Abbess of Barking, the first woman in this country to head a monastic order. Her brother was Erconwald, Bishop of London, after whom it is believed Bishopsgate was named. She was known for going among the victims

of plague (London has had many of these) to tend the sick; a very dangerous thing to do in those times. Given her eminence in the early Church in this country, it is perhaps surprising that there are not more dedications to her. I know of only three others, a parish church in Hastings, a small church in Yorkshire, and the Roman Catholic church in Barking close to the site of the Abbey. The founding of **All Hallows by the Tower** also known as All Hallows Barking is attributed to Ethelburga or Erconwald.

It is not known when a church was first built here, but by 1250 there are records of a church dedicated to St Adelburga the Virgin. The current building dates from 1415, with many later alterations and major rebuilding at the end of 20^c. The great fire of 1666 did not reach this corner of London.

The church interior now is small and plain, with a south aisle and nave but no north aisle. When visitors arrive at the west door the first thing they may notice is the splendid east window. This depicts Ethelburga, and

is highly symbolic. A modern window, the artist Helen Whitaker used shards from the Victorian window to create Ethelburga's cloak. She is shown striding forward past an arch of her church towards a hazel bush, a symbol of hope. So the window celebrates that after destruction, there is a gathering together and onward progress.

Some of the events that the Centre hosts are cross-faith meetings, but if held in the church they are in a Christian space. Therefore in 2006 they erected the Tent in the garden, the only Bedouin yurt (not surprisingly) in the City. As it is circular and in a garden, when people of different faiths meet here, they meet on an equal basis. The yurt has seven windows each of which has the word 'Peace' in languages representing a broad spectrum of beliefs. These are Taoism, Islam, Buddhism/Shintoism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Shamanism (popular in South and North America).

There have been several recent articles in *Skyline* about artefacts in and from St Ethelburga. They reflect the artistic treasures and historic connections of our City churches, in this case a church we very nearly lost in 1993, but which happily survives. ✨

TO BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING: THE BIRTHPLACE OF SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN

If you drive south down the A350 from Warminster you come to a sign pointing you to the village of East Knoyle: ‘The birthplace of Sir Christopher Wren’. The village is delightful, and to the north has a steep escarpment from which there are wonderful views over the Blackmore Vale. Apart from ‘The Wren Shop and Post Office’ there is nothing to see of the Wren connection until one reaches the church: a lovely Early English stone building.

Wren’s father, Dr Christopher Wren, having been chaplain to Lancelot Andrewes the Bishop of Winchester, was appointed rector here by him in 1623. Andrewes had already appointed his older brother, Matthew Wren, to the bishopric of Hereford. Shortly after his appointment, Dr Wren married the daughter of the squire of nearby Fonthill Bishop, where he already held the living.

They had several daughters followed by a son, Christopher, who was born, baptised and died ‘within the hour’. The next year on 20 October 1632 the future Sir Christopher was

born – or was he?

In the church there is a photograph of the parish register entry for the second Christopher’s baptism, which clearly shows the year as 1631! I have looked at the registers online and seen that the Christopher who lived only an hour is shown as baptised on 22 November 1630. It seems Wren’s biographers have struggled with this for years, including Lucy Phillimore in 1881, who decided the register entries must be errors. Certainly, *Parentalia or Memoirs of the family of the Wrens*, written by Sir Christopher’s son, also Christopher, states ‘Sir Christopher Wren only son of Dr Christopher Wren, Dean of Windsor, was born at East Knoyle in Wiltshire on 20 October 1632’. However, Lawrence Weaver writing in 1933 says ‘Wren’s son was incurably casual and inaccurate’.

Adrian Tinniswood in 2001, believes that the register entries are in the same hand from 1538 to 1650, so have obviously been rewritten and possibly mistakes made. John Aubrey, who was a friend of Wren’s and

intended to write his life, says he was born in the parsonage house at East Knoyle on 20 October 1631 at 8pm. Aubrey goes on to say that Wren made himself a year younger than he was, ‘though he need not be ashamed of his age, he has made such admirable use of his time’. Aubrey says he happened to meet the parson of East Knoyle who said the register was accurate. Perhaps we shall never know for sure.

Aubrey was wrong in saying Wren was born in the parsonage, as there had been a fire there, and he was born in a cottage, now demolished, on the green. He did, however, live in the parsonage as a small child. It is difficult to see this house as it now forms the back of a lovely Georgian house built in 1799.

Dr Wren was a fine mathematician and architect himself, skills which he clearly passed to his son, who was delicate as a young child, and was educated at home by a tutor. The *Parentalia* says that he then went ‘for some short time before his admission in the University’ in 1646, to Westminster School. Dr Wren had been appointed Dean of Windsor in 1634, and the family possibly moved there in 1635, although Dr Wren retained the living at East Knoyle. Wikipedia thinks that the family lived there for half the year at least until our Christopher was eight.

This seems likely as it was only





in 1635 that Dr Wren began his scheme of plastering in the chancel of East Knoyle church to emphasise the symbolic connection between earth and heaven. Pevsner thinks the scheme, which resulted in Dr Wren and his plasterer's being accused of heretical practices, was not completed until 1639. The plaster-work is unique in a parish church and is well-worth seeing, with Jacob's Dream and an Ascension, partially mutilated in the Civil War, among many verses and inscriptions and a kneeling man believed to be Dr Wren. I like to think that our Christopher Wren would have known the work.

He certainly knew the 'Wren steps', which his father built in the north-west corner of the churchyard, presumably as a short-cut to the

rectory. As the chief volunteer in the Wren shop said to me 'I like to think that he learned to walk on those steps'. But whether he was baptised in the present font is debatable: it is merely described as C17.

Dr Wren, having been removed from the parsonage because of his Royalist sympathies in 1646, spent the last ten years of his life with his daughter in Bletchington where he died in 1656. However, the *Parentalia* quotes from Aubrey's *Miscellany* a story of Sir Christopher's being at 'his father's house at Knoyle' in 1651. The church guide-book suggests that Sir Christopher leased a house in the village until 1662, but after that the Wren connection is at an end. ✨

SOURCES

- John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, Folio ed, 1973
- Anthony Claydon et al, *A Guide to East Knoyle Church*, 2017
- Lucy Phillimore, *Sir Christopher Wren, his family and his times*, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co, London, 1881
- Adrian Tinniswood, *His invention so fertile, a life of Sir Christopher Wren*, Pimlico, London, 2001
- Lawrence Weaver, *Sir Christopher Wren: scientist, scholar & architect*, Offices of Country Life, London, 1923
- Wikipedia
- Christopher Wren, *Parentalia or Memoirs of the family of the Wrens*, 1750

Diary

Any suggestions for future events should be sent to events@london-city-churches.org.uk

The ballot will be held on Wednesday 16 November.

Please use the booking form and remember to enclose a stamped sae. Please allow a generous week for your tickets to arrive

**1 Tuesday 22 November
12.30**

St Cecilia's Day Concert

Flautist Jane Gilbert, well known to us from the Tooting Broads, will give a rousing concert together with Ian Shaw, to celebrate St Cecilia, the patron saint of music.

£5 per person via the booking form or on the door

St Mary Abchurch

**2 Monday 12 December
2.30 for 3pm**

FCC Carol Service

Join our annual service of lessons and carols led by The Venerable Luke Miller, assisted by The Revd Malcolm Torry and The Revd David Goodburn. The choir will be the City of London School Chamber Choir, directed by Richard Quesnel.

Booking essential for seating, catering, and also zoom numbers.

Zoom Meeting

<https://uso6web.zoom.us/j/89309615585>

if this does not work outside the UK, log into zoom in the usual way, and then 89309615585

St Mary Abchurch

**3 Wednesday 25 January
6 for 6.15pm**

St Mary le Bow

The Revd George Bush will again give us the rector's 90-minute tour of his church. (October's tour was hugely oversubscribed).

£10 per person
St Mary le Bow

**4 Saturday 11 February
10 for 10.30am**

Southwark Exploration

A circular Walk with Steve Welsh to churches just beyond the City boundary, but with huge City connections.

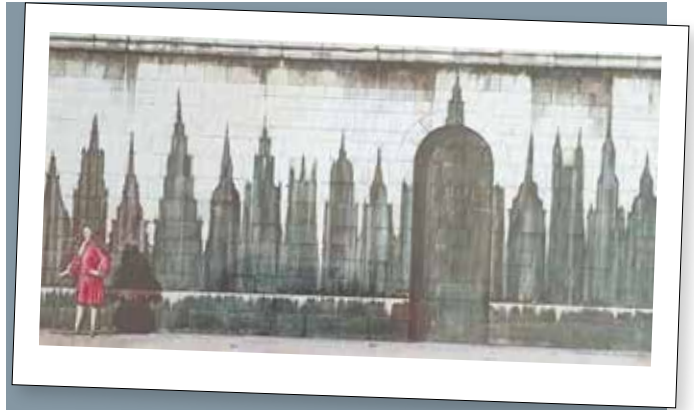
£10 per person
St Mary le Bow

**Wednesday 23 November
10.20 for 10.30**

Watchers' sign-up meeting



Can you find this carving?
St Michael Paternoster Royal



To celebrate the Christopher Wren tercentenary, we have this new blank card, taken from a watercolour by Andrew Ingamells in a private collection. As always £5 for 10

SAVE

BRITAIN'S HERITAGE



Image: Dalton Waterworks, Eveleigh Photography

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