



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

LONDON

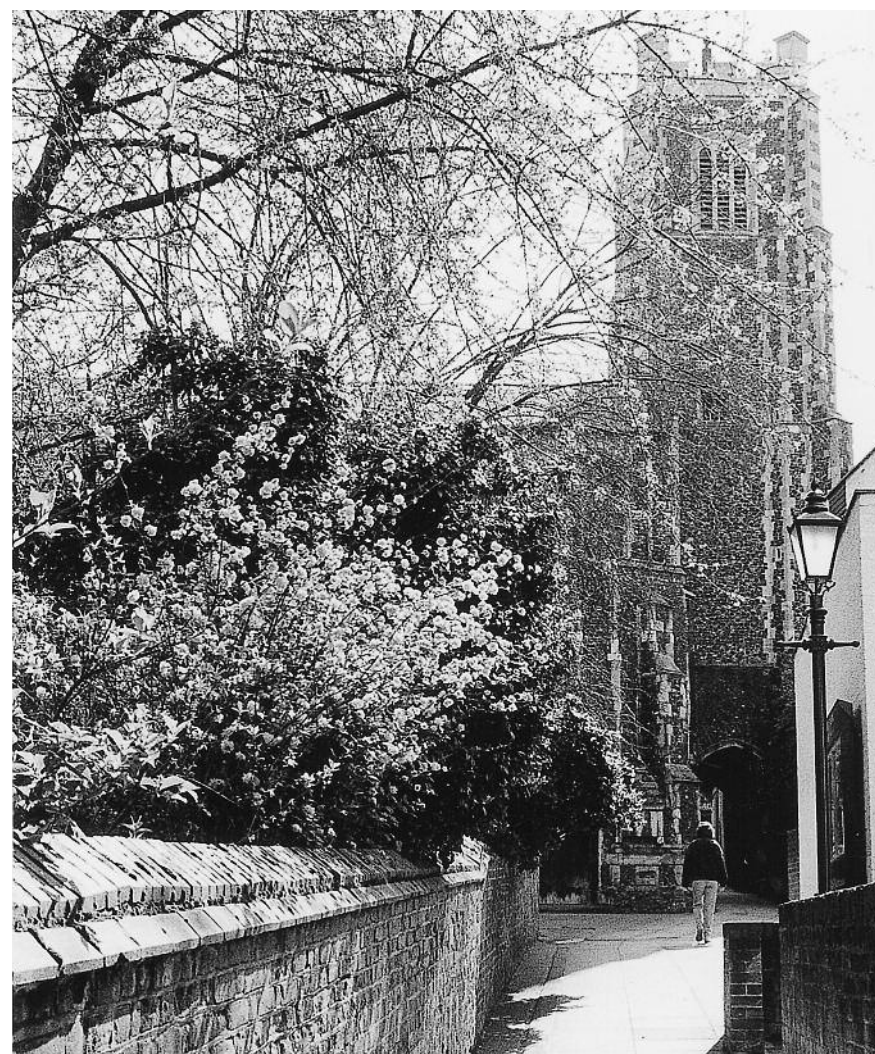
*Registered Charity No. 258612*

PRICE: £1.50



THE CHURCH OF  
ST JOHN  
THE BAPTIST

MADDERMARKET  
NORWICH, NORFOLK





THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION  
TRUST WELCOMES YOU TO  
THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN  
THE BAPTIST  
MADDERMARKET, NORWICH, NORFOLK

*Many years ago Christians built and set apart this place for prayer. They made their church beautiful with their skill and craftsmanship. Here they have met for worship, for children to be baptised, for couples to be married and for the dead to be brought for burial. If you have time, enjoy the history, the peace and the holiness here. Please use the prayer card and, if you like it, you are welcome to take a folded copy with you.*

*Although services are no longer regularly held here, this church remains consecrated; inspiring, teaching and ministering through its beauty and atmosphere. It is one of more than 325 churches throughout England cared for by The Churches Conservation Trust. The Trust was created in 1969 and was, until 1994, known as the Redundant Churches Fund. Its object is to ensure that all these churches are kept in repair and cared for, in the interests of the Church and Nation, for present and future generations.*

*Please help us to care for this church. There is a box for donations or, if you prefer to send a gift, it will be gratefully received at the Trust's headquarters at 89 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1DH until 30 September 2002. We will be moving to new offices in the autumn of 2002, so please look out for announcements in our churches or visit our website [www.visitchurches.org.uk](http://www.visitchurches.org.uk) for details of our new address.*

*We hope that you will enjoy your visit and be encouraged to see our other churches. Some are in towns; some in remote country districts. Some are easy and others hard to find but all are worth the effort.*

Nearby are the Trust churches of:

**NORWICH, ST AUGUSTINE**

*Just off inner ring road where it joins  
A140 to Cromer*

**NORWICH, ST LAURENCE**

*St Benedict Street*

## THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

MADDERMARKET, NORWICH, NORFOLK

by ROY TRICKER

The church of St John the Baptist at Maddermarket stands in the heart of this city of fine churches. Norwich is a church enthusiast's paradise, because it possesses more mediaeval churches by far than any other English town or city. The square mile within the city walls of Norwich contains an amazing 31 buildings that are or have been parish churches, along with the ruins of three others, in addition to the cathedral and the great Dominican church which is now St Andrew's Hall. Before 1969, when the Brooke Commission made recommendations enabling the church to manage its buildings more effectively in what had become a vastly over-churched city, 21 of the parish churches were still in regular use for Anglican worship. Now, after the process of parochial reorganisation, people seeking a Sunday service in the city have nine from which to choose. The majority of the 22 'retired' churches (including one which became redundant at the Reformation) are in the care of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust, which has maintained these priceless buildings, enabling many of them to take on new and exciting leases of life through which they continue to serve the city, the Church and the community. Three Norwich churches – St Laurence, St Augustine and St John at Maddermarket – are in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust, and as such they continue their ministry (along with more than 320 other English churches) as consecrated and beautiful buildings, maintained and conserved with Government and Church money for all to visit and enjoy.

Although one of the smaller Norwich churches, St John's is a fascinating piece of living history and fine craftsmanship of many periods. A variety of Norwich worthies are commemorated in its wealth of memorials, which include one of the finest collections of monumental brasses in the city. It is also a very significant example of a church adorned for sacramental worship in the Catholic tradition and for the last century of its active life it was one of the city's much-loved Catholic centres.

*This booklet tells something of its story and describes its features and treasures, including those not accessible to visitors. If you wish to use it as a walk-round guide to the church and its precincts, please turn to page 11.*

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

'How old is this church?' is a frequent and very sensible question asked by visitors to an old church. The answer is usually far from simple and this is true of St John's. From what can be seen in the building itself and from what little documentary evidence is available, some of the main landmarks in the church's long history are as follows:

**c.1050** – It is thought that there was a church on this site at the time of King Edward the Confessor. No visible evidence remains of this earlier building, although some authorities have conjectured that part of the present north porch could possibly be the base of a Saxon tower.

**c.1310–30** – By this time St John's had become much larger than the tiny 11th-century church, and had a structural chancel containing the present east window and possibly also what has become the east window of the north aisle.

**1450** – The Revd William Bowle, LLB, was instituted as Rector. He was the first incumbent to be presented by the Custos and Fellows of New College (or Winchester College) Oxford, who continued to be patrons of the living until St John's ceased to be a parish church over 500 years later.

**c.1490–1510** – Like most of the city churches, St John's underwent a major rebuilding programme during the 15th century, leaving it structurally much as we see it today (apart, maybe, from the lost chancel). In 1392, £20 (a very considerable sum in those days) was bequeathed towards building a new aisle. The south arcade has been dated c.1445–52 and the close similarity of its piers to those in Wiveton church suggests that it is by the same mason. In 1452, Robert Blickling left £2 towards new leading and roofing, suggesting that the nave and south aisle were completed shortly afterwards. That enabled Ralph Segrym (Mayor of Norwich in 1451), who was buried in the Lady chapel in 1471, to donate the screen which bore his merchant's mark. Authorities suggest that the north arcade is later and may date from c.1495–1510.

**1578** – The Corporation books record that 'The wall in St John's Church Yarde to be cleane taken downe for the widening of the strete' in preparation for the visit of Queen Elizabeth I to the city. Although this does not mention any part of the church fabric, it may have been around this time that the chancel was removed and its east window placed in the new east wall.

**1822** – The Vestry minutes record that the upper part of the tower 'as far down as the sills of the sound windows is in a very decayed and dangerous state'. It was resolved to take this stage down and rebuild it 'in a proper manner, using as much of the old materials as shall be found fit for the purpose'. The churchwardens' accounts record payments for the work to F Stone (surveyor), R De Carle (stonemason – his memorial is in the church), Henry Lock (carpenter), Charles Barnes (bricklayer) and others.

**1835** – The lead roofs were replaced with slate; also a Mr Banham was paid £11.5s.9d. for a new parish pump (possibly that which survives today).

**c.1840** – A new sloping western gallery was designed and constructed by Thomas Fisher. Its front rested upon cast iron columns.

### Rectors, restoration and 'ritualism' during the past 150 years

**1835–63: The Revd John Perowne.** Mr Perowne, who had been a journeyman printer with the *Norwich Mercury*, became a missionary with the Church Missionary Society in Bengal. He was a staunch evangelical and was the first incumbent for many years not to be a pluralist. For almost a century, rectors of St John's (including Henry Bathurst, who was later to become Bishop of Norwich) had also been incumbents of the New College livings of Great and Little Witchingham. Whilst St John's was worth around £110 per year, the Witchinghams paid in the region of £700, so these clerics employed curates (at a yearly stipend of £58 in 1835) to care for their city parish. The last of these was Perowne, who then became rector. Three of his sons also became priests – John ended up as Bishop of Worcester, Thomas became Rector of Redenhall and Archdeacon of Norwich and Edward (who was curate to his father at St John's from 1850–51) became Master of Corpus Christi College Cambridge, Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University and a Royal Chaplain. Mr Perowne left in 1863 to become Rector of Ashby and Carlton St Peter until his death in 1881.

**1863–72: The Revd George Frederic Price, DD.** Dr Price was a Fellow of New College Oxford. This was his first parish and he subsequently became rector of Little Sampford, Essex, Vicar of Romford, Essex and rector of Whitburn, Sunderland. Under his guidance St John's continued in the evangelical tradition and became a popular and well-supported church. From **October 1863 to April 1864** the church underwent a thorough restoration. The architects were Messrs E W Elmslie, Franey & Haddon of London (who designed the Imperial Hotel and station at Great Malvern and St Thomas' church, Winchester, and restored Haverhill church, Suffolk). The contractor was Mr S Hall, who was a parishioner. The work included rebuilding the walls (which had become some two feet (0.6 m) out of perpendicular), the roofs remaining in place secured by supports and braces. The old nave ceiling was taken down and replaced by the present stained boarding. The vestry was partly taken down and rebuilt and the north-east window, which had been blocked, was opened up. The internal stonework was scraped and cleaned, new stone steps replaced the old gallery stairs, a new pulpit (designed by Mr Hall) was provided, and also a communion table given by Mr R B Scott. A new font and new seating were provided for, but did not arrive until a little later. New gas fittings, supplied by Mr Pank, comprised brass stems, each branching out into three jets. At the reopening on 5 April 1864, the Bishop of Norwich preached and the choir was augmented by choristers from the cathedral. The total cost on completion of the work was £1,431.14s.5d and the collection at the reopening services realised over £77 – a large amount of money in those days.

**1872–82: The Revd Henry Langston Rumsey.** He came here from a six-year curacy at the 'advanced' Anglo-Catholic church of St Barnabas, Pimlico, and during his time the seeds were sown at St John's of the Catholic tradition for which it was to be well known and which remained here up until its closure. It is said that those who had learned of the notoriety of St Barnabas', where terrible anti-ritualist riots had taken place, took great exception to Fr Rumsey's appointment to what had been a popular evangelical church. The new rector, however, was a very earnest and caring priest, whose hard work and careful teaching actually won his parishioners over and by the time he left it was one of the best-attended churches in the city. He went on to Staffordshire, to be vicar of G F Bodley's magnifi-

cent church at Hoar Cross, then later at G E Street's fine village church at Denstone. It is said that he finally left St John's having failed to recover from the shock of the devastating gas explosion, which occurred in September 1876. Whilst conducting choir practice after Evensong, he lit a taper, intending to light one of the gas standards and there followed such an explosion that the nave floor was uprooted, seats were hurled everywhere (with such force that pieces of woodwork actually stuck to the roof), windows were shattered and much other damage was done. Although choir members had their hair singed and the rector was knocked down and stunned, nobody present was seriously hurt. The damage to the building was estimated at about £1,000. Fr Rumsey lived until 1924 and following his death a requiem was offered for him at St John's.

**1882–87: The Revd Charles Henry Pilkington.** Fellow of New College and formerly rector of Letton and Willersley in Herefordshire, Owslebury in Hampshire and St Mary Magdalene's Worcester. He left St John's to be rector of Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire.

**1887–94: The Revd Arthur Felton Still Hill.** St John's was his first parish, after several curacies. He left here for Lower Cam, Gloucestershire, having exchanged livings with his successor. Then, in 1892, he exchanged Lower Cam for the living of Dufton, Westmorland. The first service register, which he began in 1891, shows a moderate 'Prayer Book Catholic' tradition here, with Holy Communion at 8 am, Matins and Litany at 11 am, and Evensong at 7 pm, each Sunday, and also occasional 'Choral Celebrations' and Communion on Thursdays and saints' days. Sunday communicants averaged c.14–18 and there were 79 communicants at Easter 1892.

**1894–98: The Revd Robert Alexander Hunter.** He was ordained and served several curacies in Ireland, and then at Pilton and Heavitree in Devon, before becoming vicar of Lower Cam from 1888. During his brief incumbency here the Catholic tradition was maintained, with teaching given in sermons about the Apostolic Succession, the Holy Eucharist, the Holy Catholic Church, etc. Fr Hunter died on Easter Sunday 1898.

**1898–1923: The Revd (later Canon) William Busby.** Fr Busby came here at the age of 32 from a seven-year curacy at the Anglo-Catholic stronghold of St Mary's, Crown Street, Charing Cross Road, a poor parish in London's West End. His family were lords of the manor in Addington in

Buckinghamshire, and it is thanks largely to his ingenuity, generosity and artistic taste that St John's has the very distinctive interior that we see today. He certainly began his ministry here in grand style; his institution and induction to the living took place at the church in the presence of a large congregation (which is the norm nowadays but at that time was almost unheard of), with a stirring sermon by Bishop John Sheepshanks, the first Bishop of Norwich to be sympathetic towards the Catholic Movement.

He is remembered as a hard-working and caring priest, who advanced the church's Catholic tradition. During his time the 11 am Sung Mass was established as the main Sunday act of worship, the Midnight Mass at Christmas was introduced and within a few years the Mass was celebrated daily. Visiting preachers included Fr P N Waggett of Cowley and Fr V S S Coles of Pusey House, Oxford. In 1900 the church was closed for three weeks for the colouring of the walls and roof and in 1912 more redecoration took place following damage from the great flood in August that year. During the second decade of the 20th century, under Fr Busby's skilful supervision, the interior was gradually transformed, with the introduction of the altarpiece, organ screen, side chapels and stained glass windows.

Fr Busby left in February 1923 for the parish of Welborne, where he beautified the little round-towered church (which had been gloriously restored by a Victorian rector) and made his vast rectory available as a diocesan retreat house. He was made an honorary canon of Norwich cathedral in 1940. In 1944 he retired to a house in the Close and died in February 1951.

**1923–30: The Revd Arthur William Evelyn McComb.** Ordained priest in 1908, Fr McComb served several curacies in England and Canada, was rector of a parish in Ontario and, after three further years' curacy at St Mary Stoke, Ipswich, began his seven-year ministry at St John's. During his time here the church developed a fine musical tradition and congregations grew. In 1926 there were 138 communicants at Easter and 165 at Christmas. He left to be rector of the city churches of St Margaret and St Swithun, a few hundred yards away, in St Benedict's Street.

**1930–58: The Revd William Edward Duxson.** After curacies at St Bartholomew's Battersea, Beccles, Holy Trinity Greenwich, Hingham and Lakenham, then five years as vicar of Ketteringham, near Wymondham, Fr Duxson arrived in August 1930. He was a priest of the very extreme 'papalist' tradition and it was during his time here that St John's became

known in local folklore as 'the highest church in Norwich'. Sunday Evensong was replaced for a time with Solemn Vespers and Benediction (the latter often in Latin), the 11 am Asperges and Solemn Mass was strictly non-communicating, all the Roman saints days were kept, there were processions of Our Lady and days when the reserved Sacrament was solemnly exposed for 'the reunion of Christendom with the Holy See'. Fr Sandys Wason, who had been ejected from his Cornish parishes and subsequently refused a bishop's licence because of his 'extreme' practices, preached for Ascension Day 1931 and Fr Fynes Clinton brought a Catholic League pilgrimage here in 1942. In 1937 there was a requiem for Herbert Rumsey Wells, a churchwarden, who was one of the city's colourful characters. He was a hat-maker, with a very eccentric shop at the corner of St John Maddermarket and St Andrew's Street, who took great pride in advertising himself as the most expensive cap-maker in the world. He also made beautiful vestments and was skilled in illuminating books and manuscripts. There was an annual November Requiem Mass for all deceased rectors, parishioners, benefactors and members of the congregations. After the war, congregations dropped dramatically, with only 17 communicants at Christmas 1949 and 15 the following Easter. Fr Duxson left in 1957 for the Fenland parishes of Fridaybridge and Coldham; he retired to Sheringham two years later. *Maddermarket*, his scholarly (if a little eccentric) history of the church and parish is still read and sought after.

**1958–82: The Revd Canon Claude Hugh Palfrey.** Reared at the Anglo-Catholic stronghold of St Peter Parmentergate, King Street, Fr Palfrey served curacies at Wymondham Abbey and Thorpe St Andrew before becoming vicar of Bawburgh. He had considerable musical talent and a most remarkable singing voice, and was Deputy Master of the Cathedral Choristers from 1949–58, when he was appointed precentor of Norwich Cathedral and rector of St John Maddermarket. Thus he combined in his own inimitable way his important role in the very much 'established' Anglican worship at the Mother Church of the diocese, with steering the 'outré' goings on at his rather eccentric city church. It did not worry him when the organ became unplayable because his own powerful musical instrument was his voice, which, backed by a small group of cantors, rendered unaccompanied and complicated plainsong magnificently. During his time Anglican Catholics from all over Norwich flocked to St John's for events like the annual

celebration of the feast of King Charles the Martyr and the 60th anniversary requiem for Father Ignatius of Llanthony, whose embryo community of Benedictine monks had lived for a while at Elm Hill, Norwich. Fr Palfrey was rector of St John's until its closure in 1982.

**1982–90:** During this period St John's was used by the Greek Orthodox community as their church and in March 1990 it was vested in what is now The Churches Conservation Trust. The Trust subsequently commissioned repairs by John Youngs Ltd under the supervision of the late Roger Taigel, and also conservation of the brasses by William Lack and cleaning of the monuments by Michael Bayley and Richard Wilson.

## THE CHURCH'S ENVIRONMENT AND FORMER PARISH

*(significant buildings, existing and demolished, are highlighted)*

St John's is very much a 'downtown' church; it is barely 150 yards (137 m) from the Guildhall and the famous Market Place, at the heart of the city of Norwich. Its parish was tiny, stretching about 200 yards (183 m) from east to west and about 300 yards (274 m) from north to south. It roughly formed a rectangle, with Pottergate crossing horizontally near its southern border, Charing Cross and St Andrew's street about midway and the River Wensum (including Duke's Palace Bridge) forming its northern boundary. One thoroughfare crossed the entire parish vertically – the northern end of Dove Street, which became St John Street (now St John Maddermarket) passing the east end of the church, and then became Duke Street, leaving the parish at Duke's Palace Bridge. St Gregory's church stands only 100 yards (91 m) to the west of St John's and the churches of St Andrew and St Peter Mancroft (which is now the parish church for this part of the city) are both within 300 yards (274 m). The ancient **church of St Crowche** (originally the church of the Holy Cross, or Sancte Crucis) stood near the west side of Exchange Street until it was demolished in 1551; a plaque recording its existence may be seen on the wall of the Quest shop. Although nothing now survives of this church, part of its chancel was revealed in 1838 when the *Hole in the Wall Tavern* was demolished.

A large area in the northern part of the parish, (where the multi-storey car park now stands), was occupied by the **Duke's Palace** and its grounds.

This splendid house, which was the largest private house in the city, was built by the Duke of Norfolk as his residence in 1540, rebuilt by a later Duke in 1602 and largely demolished in 1711. King Charles II stayed there in 1671. After 1711, the one remaining wing of the former palace became a workhouse and parts of the house survived in the *Duke's Palace Inn*, which was demolished in the 1960s.

In 1764, the 10th Duke (who, like most of his line, was a Roman Catholic) built a **Roman Catholic Chapel** on part of the site. This ceased to be used after 1794, but the building (a simple structure with a delightful plaster ceiling) survived until it was demolished to build the car park. It was used by the Norwich Subscription Library in 1839 and later by the Norwich Museum until this moved to the castle in 1894. From then until 1933 it was part of the offices of the Guardians of the Poor, which later became the Public Assistance Committee.

By 1905, this area on the north side of Charing Cross was occupied by the **Free Library** and the **Public Baths**. Further west was the large clothing factory of F W Harmer, known as **St Andrew's Works**, to the north-west of which, towards the river, was the **Power Station**, which provided the electricity to power the Norwich tramway system. Charing Cross was originally the shearing (or shearers') cross. The stone cross was demolished in 1732, but it is clear that this was one of the centres for the cloth cutters who were part of the woollen industry which made Norwich such a thriving city in mediaeval times. On its south side still stands the **Strangers' Hall**, built in 1565. The 'Strangers' were the Flemish and Walloon master-weavers who came here from the Low Countries to be part of the thriving textile industry. A special red vegetable dye used as a pigment for the cloth was called 'madder'. It was made from certain yellow flowers and, although there are no remaining records of any such market in the area, it is almost certain that St John's stood near the '**Madder Market**' where these flowers were sold.

When the Duke of Norfolk's chapel closed c.1794, the Roman Catholics built a new chapel and school on land that had been part of the back garden of Strangers' Hall, which served as its presbytery from 1797–1880. **St John's Roman Catholic Chapel** was a simple and functional building but it had a devotional and beautiful interior. After it was sold in 1896 it became the Salvation Army barracks and in 1921 it became the

**Maddermarket Theatre**, founded by the charismatic Mr Nugent Monck, who was churchwarden at St John's. This was the first theatre to use an Elizabethan-style apron stage and it is still a theatre of national renown.

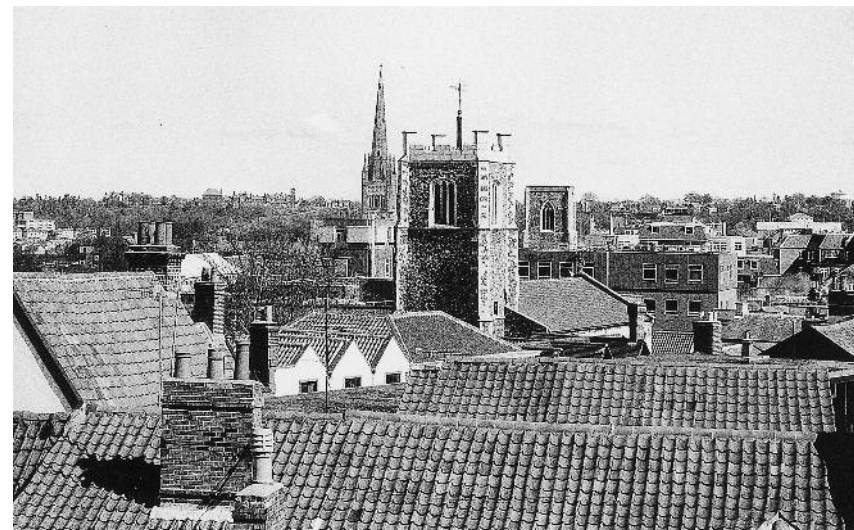
In the south-east corner of the parish, at the junction of Exchange Street and Bedford Street, stood the city's **Corn Exchange**, a fine building, opened in 1861 and demolished in 1964.

The old house which adjoins St John's to the west was at one time one of the city's many pubs and had been restored by the Norwich architect, George Skipper. In 1914–15, Fr Busby acquired it for St John's as a **Church House**, although he (and his successor) continued to live at the old red-brick Gothic Revival rectory at the corner of Unthank Road and Essex Street, about a mile (1.6km) away). In the early 1940s, Fr Duxson moved



*The exterior from the south-east*

(ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF ENGLAND)



*St John's tower, with St Andrew's, St Michael at Plea and the cathedral in the background*

(THOMAS WEAVER)

into the church house, which became the rectory for the rest of his time here, although it was known as the Mission House.

Like so many downtown parishes, the population has been drastically reduced over the past 150 years, as buildings have been put to commercial use and people have moved out to the rapidly expanding suburbs. In 1801, 1,698 people lived in the parish, but this figure had fallen to 704 in 1851, 367 in 1901 and 181 by 1937. In 1957, the resident population was only 65 people.

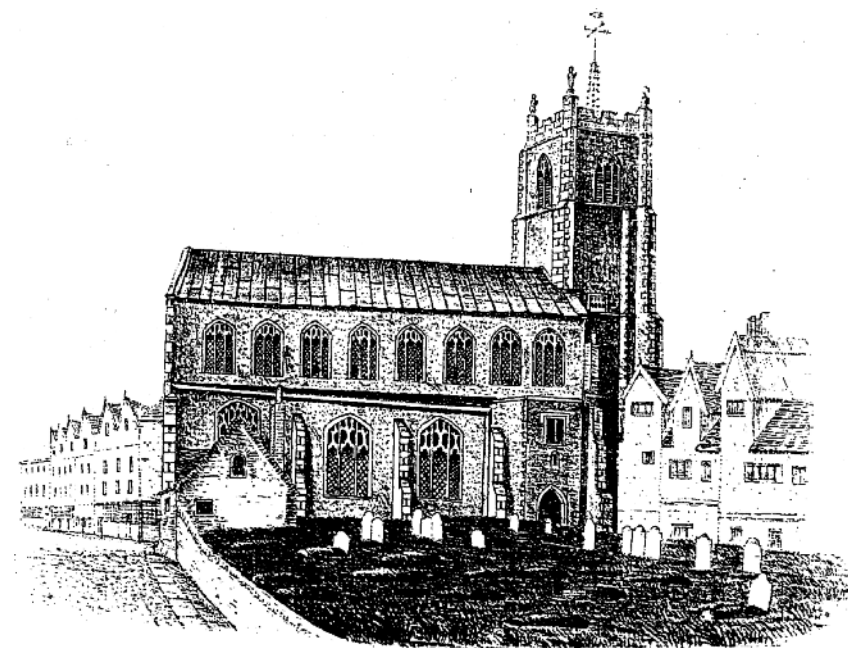
Like several of the city's churches, St John has become increasingly hemmed-in over the years by other buildings. Although these have gradually taken up all possible available space on its east and west sides, they have provided it with an eccentric and very distinctive **setting**. Its main entrance is on the south side, which fronts Pottergate, where the churchyard fence is only a few feet from the south aisle wall. The east wall and vestry stand right beside the street now known as St John Maddermarket (but formerly St John Street), which runs northwards to Charing Cross. St John's Alley descends on the west side of the church, passing under the





*The north porch*  
(RCHME)

processional arches at the base of the tower. This meets the other street at the foot of the wedge-shaped **churchyard**, which tapers like a long, thin triangle northwards from the church, contained by walls of brick and flint – its level, in places, high above the surrounding pavements. Near the northern tip is the old parish pump, considered years ago to be in a ridiculous position for the provision of healthy drinking water! When James Sillett etched the church from the north in the 1820s, the churchyard appeared a little more rectangular. Although the east wall of the church was against the street, the tower appears to have stood within the churchyard. It would certainly have done so in mediaeval times, because the processional way beneath the tower, made necessary because there was no churchyard to the west, ensured that processions remained upon conse-



*St John, Maddermarket by James Sillett c.1828*

crated ground.

The view up to the church and its walled churchyard from Charing Cross presents a tree-shaded oasis in the heart of the city. The churchyard contains some interesting memorials and headstones. On its west wall is a plaque to William Kemp, the actor and friend of William Shakespeare, who made a bet in 1599 that he would morris dance from London to Norwich in nine days and triumphantly leapt over the wall as he won his wager. The **headstones** to be seen alongside St John's Alley include one to James Crabtree (1822) with a pelican, dividers and what may be Masonic emblems, and another to Priscilla, wife of Samuel High (1820s) with various emblems of mortality. Only about seven feet (2.1 m) of churchyard remain between the south aisle wall and the pavement. Some churchyard was lost about 1918, when motorised fire engines replaced horse-drawn



vehicles and Pottergate was widened to accommodate them. A few **plaques** on the aisle wall commemorate former parishioners, including John Loades, a grocer (1756), and also Robert Feldgate (1720) and members of his family. A little plaque on the north wall of the vestry commemorates George Forbes, who came from Sheals in the county of Aberdeen.

## EXTERIOR

It was largely its urban setting – even in the Middle Ages – which determined the unusual **proportions** of St John's. Unlike the majority of mediæval churches, the building is almost as broad as it is long and there is no structural chancel or sanctuary. In several 15th-century Norwich churches the aisles terminate one bay short of the east end and at nearby St Gregory's there is a processional passageway beneath the sanctuary. It has been suggested that the east end might have been shortened slightly, maybe in preparation for a visit by Queen Elizabeth I to the city in 1578, when the street was widened and the churchyard wall taken down to facilitate this. Like most East Anglian churches, St John's is constructed mainly of **flint**, and many of the individual flints have been knapped to expose their shiny cores. Above the narrow aisles rises the stately **clerestory**, with sets of lofty three-light windows each side, which flood the interior with light at high level. Apart from its far eastern and western ends, the clerestory walls are faced with ashlar stone, which was expensive to import. Beside the eastern window of the south clerestory is a **sundial**, possibly of 17th- or 18th-century date.

The walls of the **aisles** are strengthened by elegant buttresses and are pierced by sets of three-light Perpendicular windows. Around the arches of most of the windows and doorways at St John's are voussoirs with Tudor bricks (or in some cases 19th-century replacements) attractively incorporated into the flint masonry. Beneath the south-east window is a small priest's doorway and the western bay of this aisle forms a porch, although this is not apparent from the outside, apart from the south doorway, which is now the main entrance to the church. Much of the stonework of the present flamboyant five-light **east window** was renewed in 1864, but it has carefully reproduced every detail of the original high-quality window of c.1320–30 (i.e. over a century older than the rest of the church) which it replaced. A drawing of the original window appeared in *Norfolk*

*Archæology* in 1849. It was almost certainly the east window of the former chancel, reset here. A careful look at the present east wall will reveal where it has been rebuilt or refaced in more recent times above the springing of the arch of the east window. The **north aisle east window** is early-14th-century in style and may also have come from the former chancel. At the north-east corner (and at a slight angle to the east wall) is the small and rather humble-looking **sacristy** which, although rebuilt in 1863–64, looks much as it did when James Sillett sketched the church c.1820.

Unique amongst the many and varied church porches in Norwich is the **north porch** at Maddermarket, because its north face has been chamfered each side to look like a half-octagon, with a buttress supporting its north-west face. This was clearly once the main entrance to the church and its deep 15th-century entrance arch is embellished with 16 hanging shields. Above it is a simple niche, with a pedestal for its former statue. A triple square-headed window gives light to the parvise chamber above.

The graceful western **tower**, although smaller and less magnificent than some Norwich towers, is nevertheless an elegant piece of design and is proportionally quite lofty. Its west wall is not easily visible because it is in the garden of the house next door, from where it can be seen that there was at one time a western arch at the base of the tower, in addition to the northern and southern arches which provided a vaulted processional passage beneath the tower. These arches have three orders, their shafts supporting moulded capitals. The rib-vaulted ceiling has 12 carved bosses, and also a large (but now very worn) central boss. Above the passageway on the south side is a blocked two-light Perpendicular window; a similar western window still admits light to the chamber inside. The silence chamber, above this, is lit on the north and south sides by square traceried 'sound-holes' – a feature of Norfolk and Norwich churches, which were constructed to admit light and air rather than to let out sound. The bell chamber, which has three-light windows in 16th-century style was rebuilt and altered in 1822, under the direction of Mr F Stone, surveyor. The tower has a shallow embattled parapet, faced with Portland stone and with the bases of pinnacles set diagonally at the corners. These until recent years were crowned with carved creatures which are now stored inside the tower; they brought the height of the tower to 78 feet (23.8m) – now it is about 75 feet (22.9m).

Elegant diagonal buttresses strengthen the tower and enhance its profile

on all four sides. These extend to the base of the parapet and from them rise the pinnacles, which are also placed diagonally – an unusual feature. An abutment in the north-east corner contains the staircase to the parvise chamber of the porch and to the tower gallery, and the staircase vice to the upper chambers of the tower may be seen in the north-west corner.

## INTERIOR

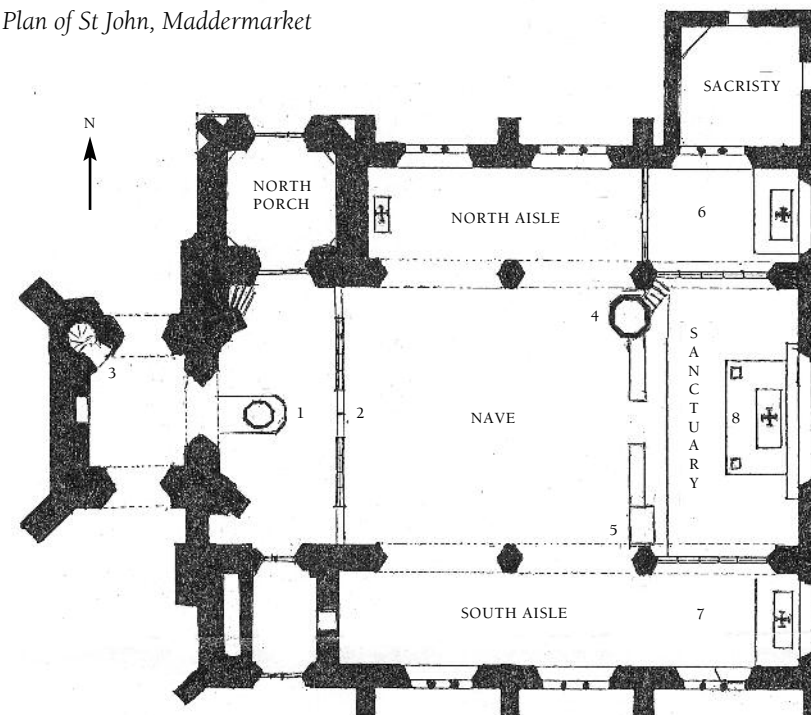
Entry by means of the **south porch** involves a descent of three steps into the porch and two more into the church. The porch is totally hidden in the western section of the south aisle and careful observation will reveal that there is a hidden space between the porch and the west end of the aisle, which contained the staircase to its upper chamber. This little room still exists but is now inaccessible although there is an internal window to light it, high in the south aisle wall inside the church.

The porch has a 15th-century vaulted ceiling, although some of its details, particularly the central parts, are now missing. Three carved floral bosses and three carved faces remain however, along with four circular shafts in the corners of the porch, the floor of which is paved with burial slabs and square pammments. The simple south doorway, its arch framed by a hood-mould resting upon carved mediaeval faces, contains mediaeval doors, with the ironwork for the former sanctuary ring, which was grasped by fugitives claiming the right of sanctuary within the church.

The **north porch** is more magnificent, perhaps because it was the most direct entrance from the Duke's Palace. Hanging shields adorn the inner side of its outer entrance arch and the north doorway into the church has a moulded arch which is much more ambitious than its southern counterpart. The ribs and bosses of its elegant vaulted ceiling have been picked out in black and gold. The bosses show four faces and eight foliage designs. After the First World War and in memory of the fallen, Fr Busby furnished this porch as the Chapel of the Holy Souls (its altar now stands at the west end of the north aisle) and thus it remained until the church was closed.

Upon entering the church in mediaeval times it was the custom to make the sign of the cross with holy water, as a reminder of one's baptism and as an act of symbolic cleansing and rededication. This water was kept in **holy water stoups** and the recess for one of these may be seen on the

*Plan of St John, Maddermarket*



- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Font  | 5. Lectern                  |
| 2. Western screen (gallery area to west of it) | 6. Blessed Sacrament Chapel |
| 3. Tower staircase (from gallery)              | 7. Lady Chapel              |
| 4. Pulpit                                      | 8. High Altar               |

north side of the nave, partly hidden beneath the later dado panelling.

Because of the lack of a structural chancel or sanctuary, the church is almost as wide (54½ ft (16.6m) from north to south) as it is long (about 59 ft (18m) from the west wall of the nave to the east wall). The broad nave (spanning some 28½ ft (8.7m)) is divided from the rather narrow aisles (each a little over 10 ft (3m) wide) by handsome 15th-century **arcades** of three bays. A careful look at the piers supporting the arches will reveal that the two arcades differ slightly in their design. It is thought that the south arcade (the one with similarities to work at Wiveton, near Cley) dates from c.1445–52, whilst the north arcade (with similarities to those at the city churches of St George Colegate and St Michael at Coslany)



*St John's in its heyday, with exposition throne above the high altar tabernacle*  
(RCHME)

may well date from the 1490s.

Internally, it can be appreciated how the **clerestory** windows indeed form a 'clear-storey', flooding the upper part of the church with light. As this was the final part of the structure to be built, it may not have been completed until the early years of the 16th century.

Although greatly altered and modified in 1863, the **nave roof** is a splendid piece of construction, preserving some fine mediaeval timberwork. It is best viewed by lying flat on one of the benches and thus avoiding neck-strain. The roof is supported upon tall wooden wall-posts, resting upon shield-bearing angel corbels. Wooden arches frame the clerestory windows and from the tops of the wall-posts ribs splay out to form delicate plaster vaulting, with little foliage bosses. This vaulted coving may well indicate a roof of similar construction to that at St Peter Mancroft, where it covers

hammerbeams. Here the vaulting joins east-west beams, which are punctuated by mediaeval angels with folded and outstretched wings. The central area is now lined with 19th-century boarding, the original roof above it having been replaced.

The **aisle roofs**, although much restored, retain much of their mediaeval timber framework. The carved spandrels in the north aisle are original, although the fine painted ceiling over the north chapel has been replaced. It was in the same style as that in the Lady Chapel and the salvageable parts were taken for safe keeping to the Castle Museum. In the south aisle, although most of the fretwork in the spandrels is modern, the 15th-century boarded and painted ceiling over the Lady Chapel remains, but is now very faded. The western bay has motifs in circles, surrounded by foliage, and the two eastern bays show angels with outstretched wings and inscribed scrolls on a background studded with crowned 'M' motifs (the 'Maria' emblem of the Blessed Virgin Mary).

At the west end, the **tower buttresses** protrude into the church, flanking the lofty **tower arch** which, although partly hidden by the organ case, is an elegant piece of design. Beneath it is the handsome and commodious **musicians' gallery** (stretching 12½ ft (3.8m) into the nave) – a neo-Jacobean tour de force, designed by John Burton and made in 1912 by William Bagley, St John's talented churchwarden, who lived nearby in Pottergate. Its front, with open arcading and detailed strapwork decoration, has a gated central entrance and a Latin inscription from Psalm 147, verse 13, 'He hath made fast the bars of thy gates and hath blessed thy children within thee'. The gallery is crowned by openwork spirelets (similar to those on 17th-century Norwich font covers) and wooden scrollwork with the arms of William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and founder of New College Oxford, who were the patrons of this church (south), the diocese of Norwich (centre) and those of Fr Busby's family (north).

Access to the gallery is by means of a **staircase** in the north-west corner of the nave. Its 19 steps through the thickness of the wall give access to the first stage of the tower, above the vaulted passageway. From this lower staircase a short wooden staircase branches northwards to the **parvise chamber** over the north porch. This was the choir vestry and it contains a considerable library of Anglo-Catholic church music.

From here is the door to the gallery, containing the **organ** – originally

*Interior, looking north-west*

(RCHME)

the work of Robert Hope-Jones, member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers, who was Chief Electrician of the Lancashire and Cheshire Telephone Company until 1889, when he channelled his love of the organ and his inventive skills into building and developing church organs in his own very distinctive style. He is credited with the invention of the diaphone, which was so frighteningly loud that it was developed for use all over the world as a foghorn. Having worked for a time here in Norwich, he emigrated in 1903 to America and, with financial backing from Mark Twain, set up an organ company, which went bust and was purchased in 1910 by the famous Mr Rudolph Wurlitzer. A faculty of 1904 indicates that the Hope-Jones organ was replaced that year with a new one by Messrs Norman & Beard (also of Norwich) for the sum of £350. This instrument, however, is of great interest to organ enthusiasts (many of whom believe

it to incorporate Hope-Jones' work), despite the fact that it has been out of action since the early 1960s. When Hope-Jones built his organ in 1897, its detached console stood in what is now the Lady Chapel, with a primitive electric action using telephone wires and Leclanche Cells. Sections of the telephone cable still exist, along the top of the south aisle wall and appearing again along the southern section of the west wall above the gallery. The organ itself was hand-pumped and has remained so, and on the console is the tiny bell push, which enabled the organist to communicate with the organ-blower in the tower. In 1904, Norman & Beard substituted pneumatic action for the telephone cables and in 1912 the console was moved to the gallery, facing westwards towards the choir and organ case. The console itself looks very much like Hope-Jones' work, with its distinctive row of 'rolling' stop-keys.

The specification is as follows:

- Pedal Organ: Bourdon (16'), Flute (8'),  
 Great Organ: Open Diapason (8'), Clarabella (8'), Dulciana (8'), Principal (4'), Flute (4'), Fifteenth (2'), Clarinet (8'),  
 Swell Organ: Bourdon (16'), Horn Diapason (8'), Lieblich Gedackt (8'), Gamba (8'), Principal (4'), Piccolo (2'), Cornopean (8'), Oboe (8').

There are three couplers, and also a spare stop, which may have been intended for a tremulant. There is a 'kick' swell pedal, and there are three combination pedals for both Swell and Great organs. It is believed that Norman & Beard replaced the original Hope-Jones Open Diapason with one taken from the Hill organ at Eton College Chapel.

From the lower **tower** chamber, behind the organ, a spiral staircase of 31 steps ascends to the silence chamber. Part-way up is a blocked doorway which is also visible outside and must at one time have connected with another building to the west of the church. At silence chamber level is a blocked western window and an eastern opening which now leads into the roof void but may have originally been a sanctus bell opening, giving a ringer a view of the altar so that he could sound one of the bells to announce the climax of the daily Mass. Although externally the staircase turret appears to rise to the level of the bell chamber, access to this and to the tower roof is by means of ladders. The bell chamber walls, which were

rebuilt in 1822, are lined with brick. The six **bells** were removed and sold in 1971 to be melted down and their metal reused. The top five were cast in 1765 by Lester & Pack of Whitechapel and the tenor bell (weighing about 10 cwt/508kg) by Patrick & Osborn of the same foundry in 1784; they were rehung in their rebuilt chamber in 1822.

Beneath the gallery stands the **font** of c.1864, its bowl embellished with inlaid patterns in various coloured marbles. This arrived shortly after the restoration and was given by the architect. Its lid is crowned with an open-work wrought-iron design.

The lower parts of the walls are lined with 20th-century **dado panelling**, which rises to a higher level in the two side chapels. The north aisle has original **wall arcading**, which is a distinctive feature of the Norwich churches. At the base of one of its piers is a carved angel with a book. On one of the north arcade piers hang a painting of the **scourging of Jesus** and a portrait of **King Charles the Martyr**.

The church is seated with **benches**, which were part of the 1863 restoration scheme but arrived shortly afterwards. The **pulpit** was designed and made by Mr Hall, the contractor for the 1863 restoration. Its stone base has small carved panels, with crosses, the HIS monogram in a triangle and two carvings of Christ. Two carved angels look out from beneath the book-rest. The **sounding board** above it looks older – maybe partly 17th-century work – and may well have been ‘imported’ by Fr Busby. The majestic oak antiphonal **lectern** contains fine 18th-century woodwork and has a revolving double desk of the type found in continental monasteries rather than Anglican churches, made to carry the Antiphoner, Gradual and Lectioner from which the cantors would intone the various parts of the Mass or read the lessons at the Divine Office. It may well be continental (possibly Italian) in origin and was presumably acquired for the church by Fr Busby, as was the sumptuous (and possibly Spanish) **paschal candlestick** of bronzed brass, with the Lamb of God emblem on one side of its base.

The **gothic screens** dividing the chapels from the sanctuary are also of 1863. All traces of the mediaeval rood-screen, which spanned the church, have long disappeared but during repairs in 1835, when some of the old box pews were removed, portions of the mediaeval parclose screens, which spanned the eastern bays of the arcade, were discovered. Tillett states that



*St Agnes Panel formerly in the Lady Chapel of St John the Baptist. Photograph reproduced by courtesy of Victoria & Albert Museum*

these were ‘curiously carved and painted with the figures of various saints, having been carefully covered up with thin pieces of wood to preserve them. The six paintings portrayed, on double panels, St George (in armour, his spear piercing a dragon) and St Appollonia (pincers on her left hand and a tooth in her right), St Leonard (with crosier and manacles) and St Agnes (with sword and book), St Agatha (holding pincers and her amputated left breast) and St William of Norwich (the boy martyr, with three nails in his head). Also on the panels was the merchant’s mark of the donor of the screen – Ralph Segrym, who was Mayor of Norwich in 1451 and is buried in this church. These treasures passed into the possession of a Mr Charles Lock of Exchange Street and then to the Earl of Orford. Although SS George and Appollonia are now lost, the other two double panels are in the care of the Victoria and Albert Museum. They measure 40 x 29½ inches (1.0 x 0.7m) and have floral

patterns on their reverse sides.

Dominating the interior, sombre yet majestic, is the mighty **altarpiece**, its canopy, resting upon a pair of regal Corinthian columns, forming a



*A service about to begin, c.1928*

baldacchino over the altar. The dark woodwork provides a perfect backcloth to the richly-adorned high altar, with its colourful frontal, tabernacle and six tall candlesticks. This early-18th-century tour de force in English oak was made in 1739 for the church of St Michael at Coslany, whose parish adjoins St John's to the north, across the river. It originally had a central painting of the resurrection and side panels with the four evangelists, whilst on the pedestal in the open pediment was the pelican in her piety, feeding her young with blood from her own breast. After the chancel at St Michael's was restored in 1883, the altarpiece was purchased by Mr JJ Colman, of Corton House, near Lowestoft. This woodwork was advertised for sale in an auction at Corton House in July 1917 and Fr Busby purchased it for the sum of 42 guineas. The centrepiece, which is flanked by Corinthian pilasters, is now a painting of the Last Supper, with the Apostles sitting at a round table. This is a copy of a painting by the Italian artist Livio Agresti; the original is in Forli Cathedral in Italy. At the top is a richly-carved cornice, that curves round from above the sides of the altar-

piece to embrace the canopy, which is surmounted by an open pediment, rising some 18 ft (5.5 m) above the floor.

The lower part of the east wall is lined each side with glazed tiles, which flank the now hidden gothic **reredos** of 1863. This is still in place and comprises five gabled stone arches.

The **Lady Chapel** on the south side was recreated and furnished in 1914–15. Its baroque-type reredos, which is believed to be the work of Martin Travers, has a central recess with a shell-like canopy, for Our Lady's statue, and is attractively painted with colourful motifs, including several lilies – one of Our Lady's emblems. The renaissance Black Madonna, which stood here, is now in Norwich Cathedral treasury. The Latin inscriptions relate to Our Lady – '*Regina Sanctorum Omnium*' (Queen of All Saints), and also (from her Magnificat, Luke 1, verse 49) '*Qui Potens Est*' (He that is mighty) and '*Fecit Mihi Magna*' (Has done great things for me). The 19th-century **altar table** may well have been the 1863 high altar.

The **Jesus Chapel** on the north side was furnished in 1911 and has a beautifully carved **screen** in 17th-century style, surmounted by a balustrade with openwork spirelets. The wainscot **panelling** is also mock 17th-century work (the Latin inscription over the sacristy door proclaims, 'I will rejoice in Jesus my God') but the richly carved frame to the **reredos** is much older and possibly continental. Here the Blessed Sacrament was reserved for the sick and dying in the **tabernacle**, the metal door to which is delightfully painted.

## STAINED GLASS

Because of the 17th-century iconoclasts and the gas explosion in 1876, little of the church's mediaeval glass has survived. Many of the remaining fragments were collected together and assembled in the north aisle windows. Much of the glass now in the church is 19th- or 20th-century but, like mediaeval glass, it was designed to teach the faith and is interesting because some of its subject matter is unashamedly Anglo-Catholic.

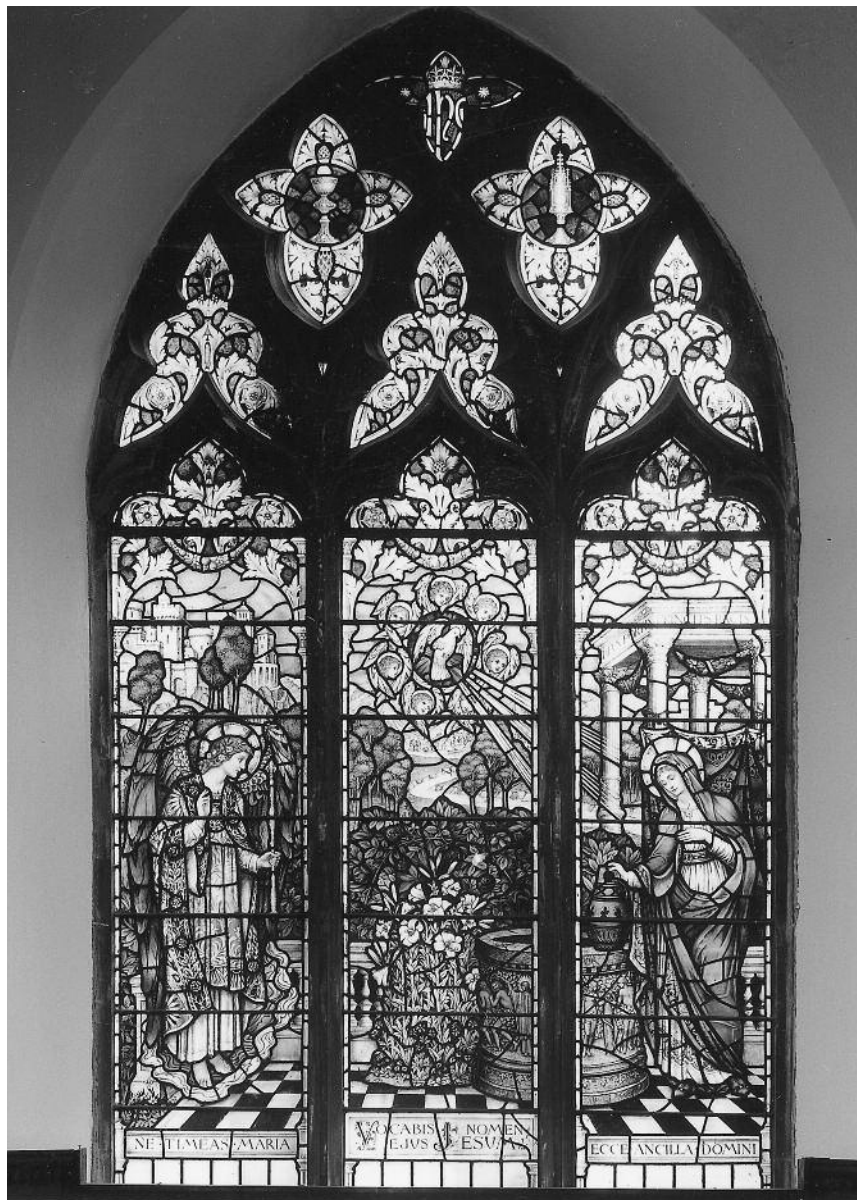
The windows are as follows:

### **Tower, west window**

In the tracery are the emblems of the four evangelists. The stained glass in the main lights was blown out in the gas explosion.

### **North aisle (west to east)**





North Chapel, east window. The Annunciation, with Gabriel (left), Mary (right) and the Holy Spirit (centre)  
(RCHME)

**North-west** – Angels with the Five Wounds of Jesus on the cross, the IHS monogram and the Blessed Sacrament. Beneath is the figure of St Edward the Confessor, of which the top part is mediaeval; he carries a sceptre and ring. In the tracery are angels with the instruments of Christ's Passion, and two with horns, whilst at the very top is Jesus with an orb.

**North, centre** – Jumbled fragments of 15th-century glass, with three faces in roundels. In the tracery are more fragments and six faces in roundels, with Our Lady at the very top. The mediaeval glass in this window was given to Fr Busby and was assembled here in 1913.

**East window** – The three main lights contain a beautiful Annunciation scene, in which the angel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary at a well to tell her that she is to be the mother of Jesus. Between them is the Dove of the Holy Spirit, surrounded by angels. At the top are the Blessed Sacrament, the IHS monogram and the Sacrament exposed in a monstrance. This window, by James Powell & Sons, cost £165 and was given by the communicants of the church in 1913.

#### South aisle (west to east)

**Small window, high in the west wall** – This is not easily visible, but shows St John the Baptist and was given in memory of Emma Eliza Chamberlin, who died in 1872.

In the small tracery lights of the **three south windows** are most of the Old Testament prophets in 20th-century glass, inscribed with the Latin forms of their names.

**South, west** – In tracery: Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Elijah and the patriarch Samuel, with a Baptism at the very top.

**South, centre** – In tracery: Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, with a priest saying Mass at the very top.

**South-east** – In tracery: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea and Joel, with Our Lady and Child at the very top. The main lights of this window show the Tree of Jesse, which was a mediaeval way of showing that Our Lord had descended from Jesse (the father of King David), as the prophets foretold. The Latin inscription is translated 'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse' (Isaiah 11, verse 1). The sleeping Jesse reclines at the root of the tree. Above him are representatives of succeeding generations – David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Hezekiah, Josiah and Jesus in the arms of his Mother. This window was given by Fr Busby in 1916 to cele-

brate the silver jubilee of his ordination and has a Latin inscription, together with his coat of arms. The glass is thought to be by King of Norwich.

**East window** – Around the central figure of Our Lady are six angels with symbols of her. In the tracery are St Dorothy (with basket of flowers), St Agnes (with palm and lamb), St Etheldreda (with Ely Cathedral), St Margaret (with book and spear), St Lucy (with knife and palm) and St Cecilia (with little organ). This window, by James Powell & Sons, was given in 1915 by Fr Busby's mother, in memory of his brother, Charles, who died in December 1914.

#### East window, above the high altar

In the glass which fills the fine 14th-century tracery of this window may be seen the Lamb of God emblem and the pelican in her piety. In the main lights are two tiers of scenes from the life of Jesus. The lower tier is totally obscured by the altarpiece but the upper tier shows five scenes from the story of the healing of the Centurion's Servant, including a Roman shield emblazoned with a golden sun. This window dates from c.1870 and was restored following the gas explosion of 1876. It was designed by Mr T J Scott and made by J & J King of Norwich. It was given in 1870 in memory of Priscilla, Ann and Miriam, the wife and daughters of James Chamberlin, who was churchwarden here.

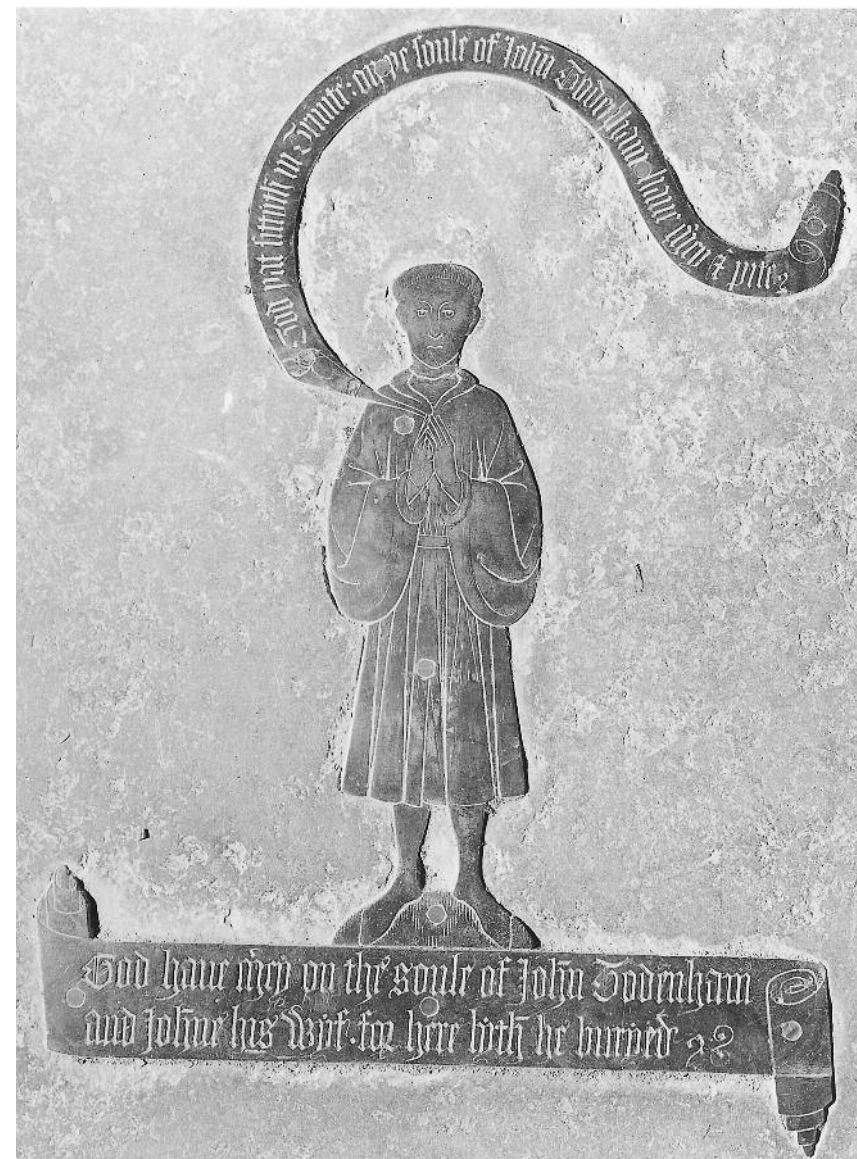
## MEMORIALS

Many Norwich worthies, who were part of this church and community, are commemorated by what is considered to be the finest collection of brasses in Norwich, and also by monuments, plaques and ledger slabs to be found on the walls and in the floors of the church. Here are represented Mayors and Aldermen, a Duchess, a variety of tradesmen and several 'Doctors of Physick'.

#### Brasses

These were all originally set in burial slabs in the floors of the church. Now only three are still *in situ*, the rest having been mounted on boards at the west end. They have recently been cleaned, repaired and resecured. They are as follows:

1. **John Todenham** (c.1450). A small brass in the north chapel floor, but



North Chapel, brass to John Todenham

(RCHME)

originally in the chancel. John holds a scroll, inscribed 'God yat sitteth in Trinite: on ye soule of John Todenham have mcy and pite'.

2. **Ralph Segrym**, Mayor of Norwich in 1451, MP in 1449 and donor of the screen. He died in 1472 and is portrayed wearing his mayor's mantle, with his wife, and with his merchant's mark on the one remaining shield. This huge slab was originally in the Lady Chapel but is now in the nave floor.
3. **Thomas Caus**, Mayor of Norwich (d.1506). His brass inscription has gone but four lead shields, with his merchant's mark and his initials 'TC' remain in the south aisle floor. He lived at what is now the Strangers' Hall.

The brasses now removed from their slabs and mounted at the west end are as follows:

In the north-west corner is a board with four inscriptions, to –

1. **John Martin** (c.1500)
2. **Richard Skottowe** (1616) and his wife **Marie** (née Sotherton), (1619). He was an alderman and they lived opposite the church, at the corner of Dove Street. They had 11 sons and three daughters. Their brass was reused as a palimpsest in memory of **Mary Ann Kemp** in 1845 (see the resin facsimile of this to the left). The register records their burial 'under the great stone by the chancell dore'.
3. **John Melchior** (1657), with skull and crossbones.
4. **John Melchior (Sr)** (1707/8, according to which version of the calendar one used at the time) and **Cornelius Melchior** (1713).

Working from north to south are the following brasses –

1. **William Pepyr**, Sheriff in 1469 (d.1476) and **Johanna** his wife. (From the Chancel.)
2. **John Terry** Mayor of Norwich in 1523 (d.1524) and his wife **Letty**s, with two sons and two daughters. Here the rhyming inscription is unusually set above the effigies and between them is a large shield with their arms. (From the chancel.)
3. **Walter Moneslee**, Sheriff in 1409 (d.1412) and his wife **Isabella**. (From the worn slab at the west end of the nave.)

4. **Nicholas Sutherton** (or **Sotherton**) Mayor of Norwich in 1539 (d.1540). This inscription and shield were found in pieces in the north aisle in 1989. The inscription is a palimpsest; its reverse side (see the resin facsimile beneath) shows the lower part of a lady of c.1460, with her children at her feet. (The original slab, partly covered, is between the chancel and north chapel.)
5. **John Marsham**, in his robes as Mayor of Norwich in 1518 (d.1525) and **Elizabeth** his wife, with a rosary hanging from her belt, and a perfume box.
6. Beneath is part of a pedestal. Missing parts have been outlined from an old rubbing in the library of the Society of Antiquaries, which has recently handed over from its care a group of eight daughters from this brass. The lost inscription is known to have been a palimpsest. (Originally in the south aisle.)



*Children from the Marsham brass*

(SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES)

7. Inscriptions to **William Adamson**, rector (1707), **Mary Adamson** (1706), **Sarah Emperor** (1735) and **William Emperor** (1761).
8. The effigy of **Johanna Caus**, with her rosary and purse hanging from her belt, and also one shield, remaining from the brass of Thomas Caus, Mayor of Norwich in 1495 and 1503 (d.1506) and his two wives. (From the chancel.)

Two boards face each other in the north porch –

1. That on the west side has the large brass of **Robert Rugge**, Mayor of Norwich in 1545 and 1550 (d.1558) and his wife **Elizabeth**. (From the south aisle.) The lost plates have been outlined from an old rubbing.
2. Opposite are resin facsimiles of the reverse sides of this palimpsest, showing parts of a priest in Mass vestments (c.1320) and an abbot (c.1340) – possibly from St Benet's Abbey, near Horning. Robert Rugge's brother William was the last Abbot, who became Bishop of Norwich after the abbey was dissolved in 1536. There is also a shield and part of a lady of c.1440.

### Monuments and plaques on the walls

#### South aisle – west wall:

1. From their monument on the west wall, the kneeling effigies of **Christopher Layer** (1600) and his wife **Barbara** (1604) face each other across a prayer desk, with their three sons and five daughters beneath them. Above the desk is a skull and above this is the sun, casting its rays, whilst on the side pilasters are fascinating personifications of Peace (Pax), holding a palm and treading weapons underfoot, Vanitas, a naked lad standing on the globe of the world, Glory, a female standing on the moon and Work (Labor), a man with a spade and a skull at his feet.
2. Nearby is a brass plaque to **Samuel Grimmer**, Mayor of Norwich (1890) and his wife **Arabella** (1905).

#### South wall – west to east:

1. **George Haggard** (son of William and Frances, of Park Street, Westminster) who died at St Petersburg, aged 16, in 1817, and his brother, **William Haggard**, of Bradenham Hall, who died in 1845.
2. A pretty monument to **Nicholas and Agnes Sotherton** (1540), whose effigies kneel each side of a prayer desk, he in his magistrate's robes and

she with a neat cap and a jewelled clasp and both with proportionally very large hands. Nicholas was a grocer and was Mayor of Norwich in 1539. He lived at what is now the Strangers' Hall.

3. **James Fisher**, 'many years a highly respectable inhabitant' (1839).
4. **Francis Gillians** (1719), a weaver of worsted. His generous benefactions make interesting reading, including money for 'binding out apprentices', the income from rents from his houses in St Michael at Thorn parish to pay for Sunday afternoon services with sermons in this church from Low Sunday to the Sunday before Advent to be conducted by whoever preached at the cathedral in the morning, and for a service and sermon on St Andrew's Day by the rector.
5. Plaque to **Henrietta Paine** (1891), widow of Joseph Simpson Paine of Richmond, and to her daughter **Henrietta** (1908).
6. Near the chapel entrance is the fine monument to Alderman **Thomas Sotherton** (1608) and **Frances** (widow of John Foxe of Aldeburgh). They face each other across a prayer desk, with their two sons and five daughters beneath them. Three of the children carry skulls, showing that they died before their parents. The epitaph, which is worth pausing to read, tells the reader that, 'Under this cold marbell sleeps / hee for whome even marbell weeps ..... So all must tread ye path that hee hath dun / & by death follow worthy Sutherton'.
7. Near the south-east corner is the attractive cartouche of **John Rushbrook** (1743) and his wife **Elizabeth** (1738).

#### North aisle – west wall:

1. Gothic Revival monument, with two ogee-headed arches, commemorating members of the **Gostling family**, who are buried in the vault beneath, including **Francis (Sr)** (1806), **Mary** (1794), **Francis (Jr)** (1835), **Ann** (1796) and **Frances** (1799).
2. **Samuel Thurston** (1837 and also in the vault), **Esther** (1855), and their son **John**, a surgeon (1829).
3. **Thomas Farnell** (1853), **Ann** (1854) and their daughter **Ann Mary** (1834).
4. **George Pank Kemp** (1882) and his wife **Mary Ann** (1845).

5. **Walter Nugent Monck CBE**, the founder of the Norwich Players and creator of the Maddermarket Theatre in 1921, who was also churchwarden here and died, aged 81, on 21 October 1958.

#### North wall:

1. **James Norris** (1856), his wife **Mary Ann** (1883) and son **John** (1865).
2. In the north chapel is the memorial, by A Curtis, to **Abigail Jenney** (1728), daughter of John Bosely and wife of Thomas Jenney, and their two small children **Anne** and **Hannah**. Also **Mary Jenney**, the second wife of Thomas, and their son **Jonas**, who were buried on the same day in 1729. There is a cartouche of arms at the summit and two skulls may be seen at the base.

#### Nave, south – west to east:

1. **Ann Lewis** (widow of Francis, of Boultybrooke House, Radnorshire) (1802), **Anne**, their daughter (1831), **James Boyce**, their son-in-law, solicitor of this parish (1809), and his widow **Ann** (1831).
2. **Thomas Bubbin**, 'late Captaine of militia' and Mayor of Norwich (1717) and **Mary** (1705). This memorial is crowned with a draped recess, containing a boy carrying a helmet.
3. **William Emperor** of Brooke (1761) and his wife **Theodosia** (1752) – 'A gentlewoman of amiable endowments and adorned with every human virtue'. A cartouche, with their arms at the base.
4. **Isaac Hurn** (1848) and **Elizabeth** (1856). She was buried in the Rosary Cemetery.

#### Nave, west end:

1. **Charles Gills** (1829) and two infants. South wall.
2. **Daniel Harmer**, merchant (1851) and **Maria** (1858); also their son-in-law **William Jay** (1843), grandson **William Harmer Jay** (1850) and only daughter **Maria** (1888).
3. **Robert de Carle**, stonemason, who worked on the tower restoration (d.1837), **Mary** (1824) and their son **Edward** (1814).

#### Nave, north – from west to east:

1. **John Robins**, 'upholster' (1723), his brother **Joseph** (1725) and Joseph's wife **Elizabeth** (1733). This memorial has an urn.
2. **William Power Hicks** 'postmaster of this city' (1853) and his sons

**William John** (1843) and **Frederick** (1847), all of whom were buried in a vault under the Gallery; also his widow **Jane** (1857), who was buried at Bixley.

3. **Robert Rushbrook** (1781), his wife **Sarah** (1788) and their daughters **Mary** (1775) and **Elizabeth** (1805). This memorial, by T Rawlins, has an urn at the top and a cherub at the base.
4. **Edward Suttleffe** (1774), his wife **Ann** (1814) and their son **Thomas** (1778).
5. '**The Virtuous Lady Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk**'. She was the daughter of Thomas, Lord Audley, of Saffron Walden and the second wife of Thomas, the 4th Duke of Norfolk. (He was widowed three times and, because of his attempts to make Mary Queen of Scots his fourth wife, was beheaded in 1572.) Although Margaret died, aged 23, in 1563 and was buried with great pomp and solemnity on the north side of the chancel, she had no memorial here until 1791, when this rather humble tablet was erected by her descendant, Lord John Howard of Walden; it was restored by Lord Howard de Walden in 1903. Her splendid effigy lies beside that of the Duke's first wife, Mary FitzAlan, on a tomb in St Michael's church, Framlingham, Suffolk.
6. **William Henry Haggard** (1813) and **Susan Rebecca** (1804).
7. **Robert Bagge Scott** (1865), who contributed generously towards the church's restoration in 1864.

Small plaques set low to the **north and south of the reredos** commemorate –

1. **Anna Priscilla Chamberlin** (1858) and her sister **Miriam** (1862), the infant daughters of James and Priscilla Chamberlin.
2. **James Chamberlin** (1874) and his wife **Priscilla** (1867).

The floors of the church contain a variety of **burial slabs**. A few have brasses and several have indents for former brasses, which are either lost or mounted at the west end of the church. There are also ledger slabs, some with their inscriptions now worn away and others still recording the people who were buried beneath them, some in what must be a maze of family vaults beneath the church. Amongst those commemorated are:

1. **John Wilson** (1730) and **William Emperor** (1735). By the south door.
2. **Benjamin Wrench**, Doctor of Physick (1717). Nave, south.

3. **John Rushbrook** (1743) and **Elizabeth** (1738), also **Robert Rushbrook** (1781) and **Mary** his daughter (1775). Beside the font. These are also commemorated by plaques on the walls.
4. Members of the **Gostling family**, who are also commemorated in their memorial on the west wall of the north aisle nearby.
5. **Joseph** (1797–1830) and **Eloise Stannard**. Near the vestry door. During his short life, Joseph became a distinguished member of the Norwich School of Painters.
6. **Dame Rebecca Wrench** (1727) and two of her daughters. Nave.
7. **Sir Benjamin Wrench**, Doctor of Physick and husband of Rebecca (1747). South aisle.
8. **Thomas Rawlins**, Architect (1789) and **Mary** (1785). (He designed Robert Rushbrook's memorial on the north nave wall.) South aisle.
9. **Maria Stebbing** (1710). Lady Chapel.
10. **John Ansell** (1826) and **Sarah** (1833). Lady Chapel
11. **Anna Duke** (1649), wife of Dr John Duke of Colchester and daughter of John Snelling of Boxford, Suffolk; also her daughter and son-in-law, **Judith** (1652) and **Robert Paynell** (1658) and their daughter **Anna** (1647). Lady Chapel.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge and pay tribute to three previous booklets about St John's – *St John the Baptist's Church, Maddermarket, Norwich*, by Lella Raymond, *St John the Baptist, Maddermarket*, by Canon Claude Palfrey and *Maddermarket*, by the Revd WE Duxson, and also to excellent surveys of the heraldry and the monumental inscriptions in the church. I am grateful to Mr Peter Ward for the wealth of information that he has shared with me from his extensive research, and also to Jon Crampton, Birkin Haward, Simon Cotton, Simon Pulham, Anthony Barnes, Katherine Weaver and others for their advice and help. I also thank the Staff of the Norfolk County Record Office, the Norfolk Local Studies Library and Lambeth Palace Library for the use of material in their care.



The 18th-century antiphonal lectern (RCHME)

*Front cover: Spring in Norwich – looking southwards up St John's Alley*  
(THOMAS WEAVER).

*Back cover: Christopher Layer's (c.1600) monument on the west wall of the south aisle* (RCHME).

© The Churches Conservation Trust 2001  
Series 4 no. 154  
March 2001