



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

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Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Knights Templar  
in Glass

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# Knights Templar in Glass

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Prepared by



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## INTRODUCTION



## Stained Glass

**S**tained glass has been produced since ancient times. Both the Egyptians and the Romans excelled at the manufacture of small colored glass objects. Phoenicia was important in glass manufacture with its chief centers Sidon, Tyre and Antioch.

In early Christian churches of the 4th and 5th centuries, there are many remaining windows which are filled with ornate patterns of thinly-sliced alabaster set into wooden frames, giving a stained-glass like effect. Evidence of stained-glass windows in churches and monasteries in Britain can be found as early as the 7th century. The earliest known reference dates from 675 AD when Benedict Biscop imported workmen from France to glaze the windows of the monastery of St. Peter which he was building at Monkwearmouth. Hundreds of pieces of colored glass and lead, dating back to the late 7th century, have been discovered here and at Jarrow.

Stained glass, as an art form, reached its height in the Middle Ages when it became a major pictorial form used to illustrate the narratives of the Bible to a largely illiterate populace. In the Romanesque and Early Gothic period, from about 950 to 1240, the untraceryed windows demanded large expanses of glass which of necessity were supported by robust iron frames.

The design of a window may be abstract or figurative; may incorporate narratives drawn from the Bible, history, or literature; may represent saints or patrons, or use symbolic motifs, in particular armorial. This publication illustrates examples of Knights Templar depicted in stained glass – many, in former Templar structures.

# Church of St Andrew

Temple Grafton, Warwickshire, England



*Figure 1 Church of St. Andrew*

St. Andrew's at Temple Grafton dates from 1875 and is an attractive example of Victorian church architecture, the work of architect Frederick Preedy (who also designed stained glass). The south west spire is particularly distinctive, with its timber-framed belfry story.

It replaces a much humbler medieval church, originally built by the Knights Templars (hence the village's name), of which no trace remains following the Victorian rebuilding. The old church appears to have been roughly cruciform with a small weather-boarded belfry at the west end and shows evidence of alterations spanning the Middle Ages.

The east window depicts Christ's Ascension with a full complement of apostles reaching upwards towards Jesus, and is typical of Preedy's boldly colored work, all executed in a primitive, neo-medievalist style. The larger four-light west window features two central figures, more convincingly medieval in design, representing a Knight Templar and Knight Hospitaller, surrounded by six scenes representing the Acts of Mercy, with a the Lamb of God filling the cinquefoil tracery above. It is again the work of Preedy, though a more complex design.

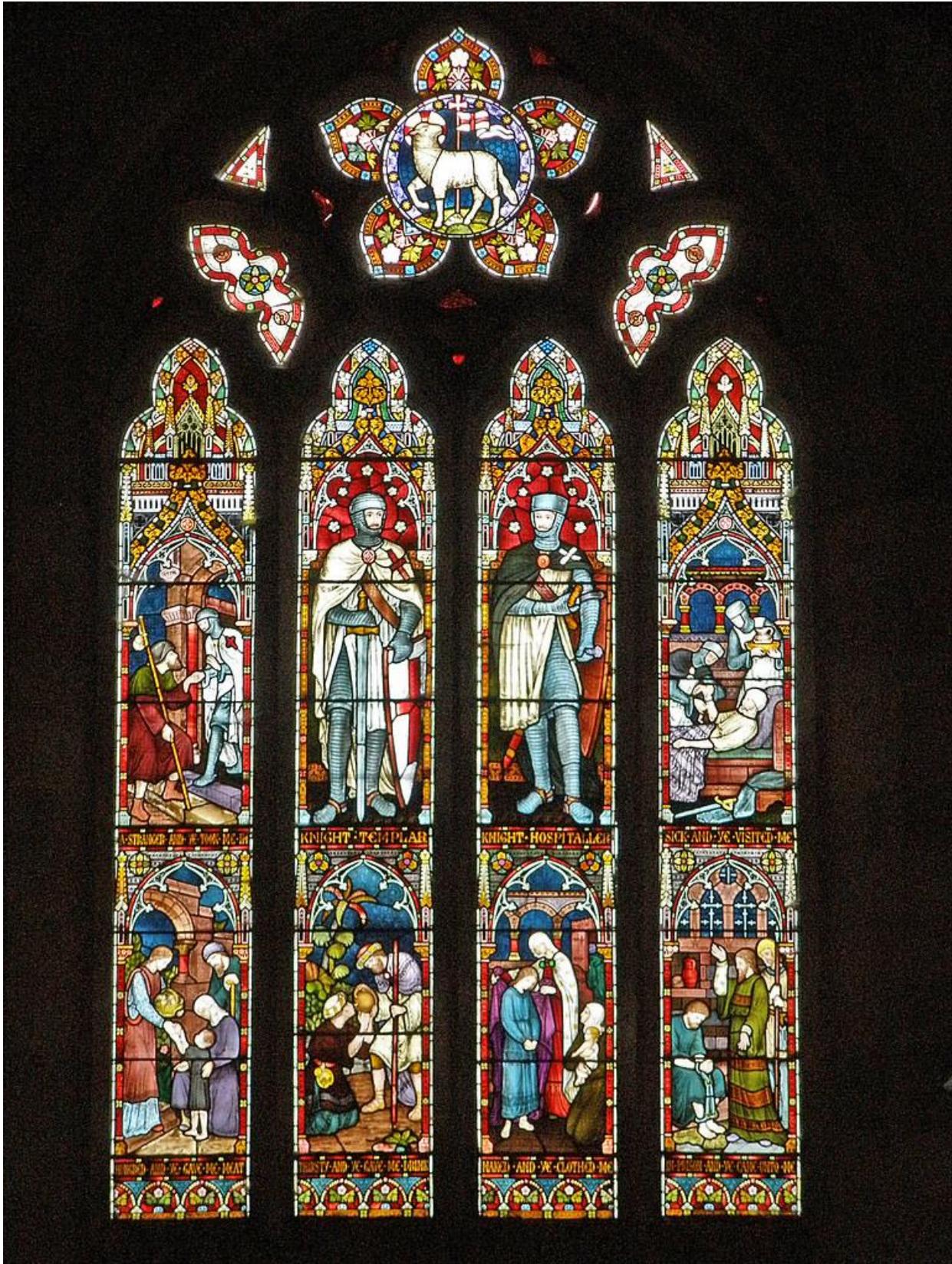


Figure 2 East window – Church of St. Andrew

# Rothley Court Hotel

Westfield Lane, Leicester, England



Figure 3 Rothley Court Hotel

Rothley, (pronounced *Ronth-Ley*), is a country house in Leicestershire, England. It was originally mentioned in the Domesday Book, and later associated with the Knights Templar. Rothley Temple, or more correctly Rothley Preceptory was associated with both the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller.

Rothley Preceptory was established around the year 1231; however, records show "The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon" owned land at Rothley as early as the reign of King John (1199–1216). On the establishment of the preceptory King Henry III granted the Knights Templar the manor and church at Rothley. The preceptory would come to own land in 13 neighboring villages, including granges used for farming at Baggrave (near

Hungarton) and Gaddesby. The knights of the preceptory also owned the Manor at Gaddesby.

Around 1250, the preceptory was recorded as having a yearly revenue of £62. 10s. 5d., which was used to help fellow Knights Templar in Acre, in modern-day Israel.

In 1284, King Edward I granted the preceptory's knights a charter, permitting them to hold a weekly market, on a Monday, at Rothley, and an annual fair in honor of Saint Barnabas each June. This lasted until 1306, when King Edward issued the knights with another charter permitting them to hold a market and festival at their manor at Gaddesby, instead of at Rothley. This charter afforded a weekly market on a Wednesday and an annual festival in July in honor of Mary Magdalen.

On November 22, 1307 Pope Clement issued a Papal bull, known as the *Pastoralis Praeeminentiae*, which instructed the monarchs of Europe to arrest all of the Knights Templar, and to seize their properties on behalf of the church.

Initially, King Edward II of England refused to believe the allegations against the Templars. However, in 1308, Rothley Preceptory, together

with the Templars' other possessions in England, were seized by the Crown.

An inventory of the dissolved preceptory from 1309 reveals that the preceptory consisted of both a hall and a chapel (thought to have been built around 1240), and had over 350 sheep.

The stairway depicts a Knight Templar and Knight Hospitaller.



Figure 4 Stairwell windows at Rothley Court Hotel



Figure 5 Detail of Templar Knight



Figure 6 Detail of Hospitaller

# Temple Church

London, England



*Figure 7 Temple Church*

The Knights Templars first established the chief house of their order in England, without Holborn Bars, on the South side of the street, where Southampton House formerly stood, adjoining to which Southampton Buildings were afterwards erected: and it is stated that about a century and a half ago, part of the ancient chapel annexed to this establishment, of a circular form, and built from Caen stone, was discovered on pulling down some old houses near Southampton Buildings in Chancery Lane. This first house of the Temple, established by Hugh de Payens himself, before his departure from England, on his return to Palestine, was adapted to the wants and necessities of the order in its infant state, when the knights, instead of lingering in the preceptories of Europe, proceeded at once to Palestine, and when all resources of the society were strictly and faithfully forwarded to Jerusalem, to be expended in

defense of the faith; but when the order had greatly increased in numbers, power, and wealth, and had somewhat departed from its original purity and simplicity, we find that the knights resident in London begin to look abroad for a more extensive and commodious place of habitation. They purchased a large space of ground, extending from the White Friars Westward to Essex House without Temple Bar, and commenced the erection of a convent on a scale of grandeur commensurate with the dignity and importance of the chief house of the great religious-military society of the Temple in Britain. It was called the New Temple, to distinguish it from the original establishment at Holborn, which came thenceforth known as the Old Temple.

The Temple church was consecrated on 10 February 1185 by Heraclius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The church was the heart of the Templars site in London and therefore the center of activity for the whole of Britain. The Templars received a great deal of royal patronage, Henry II was present at the consecration of the church; King Henry III favored them so much that he wished to be buried in the church. To make ready for this occasion, the choir of the church was pulled down and the far larger one, which we see today was built in its place. This was consecrated on Ascension Day 1240 in the presence of the King.

Following the dissolution of the Templars, the London preceptory was taken over by King Edward II. It then passed into the hands of the Knights Hospitaller.

Depictions of Knights Templar are numerous. In the east end of the south window are depicted four Grand Priors of the order in England, viz. Geoffrey Fitz Stephen (1180), Americ de St. Maur (1203), Alan Marcel (1224), and Robert Montforde (1234).



Figure 8 Grand Priors - south window, Temple Church

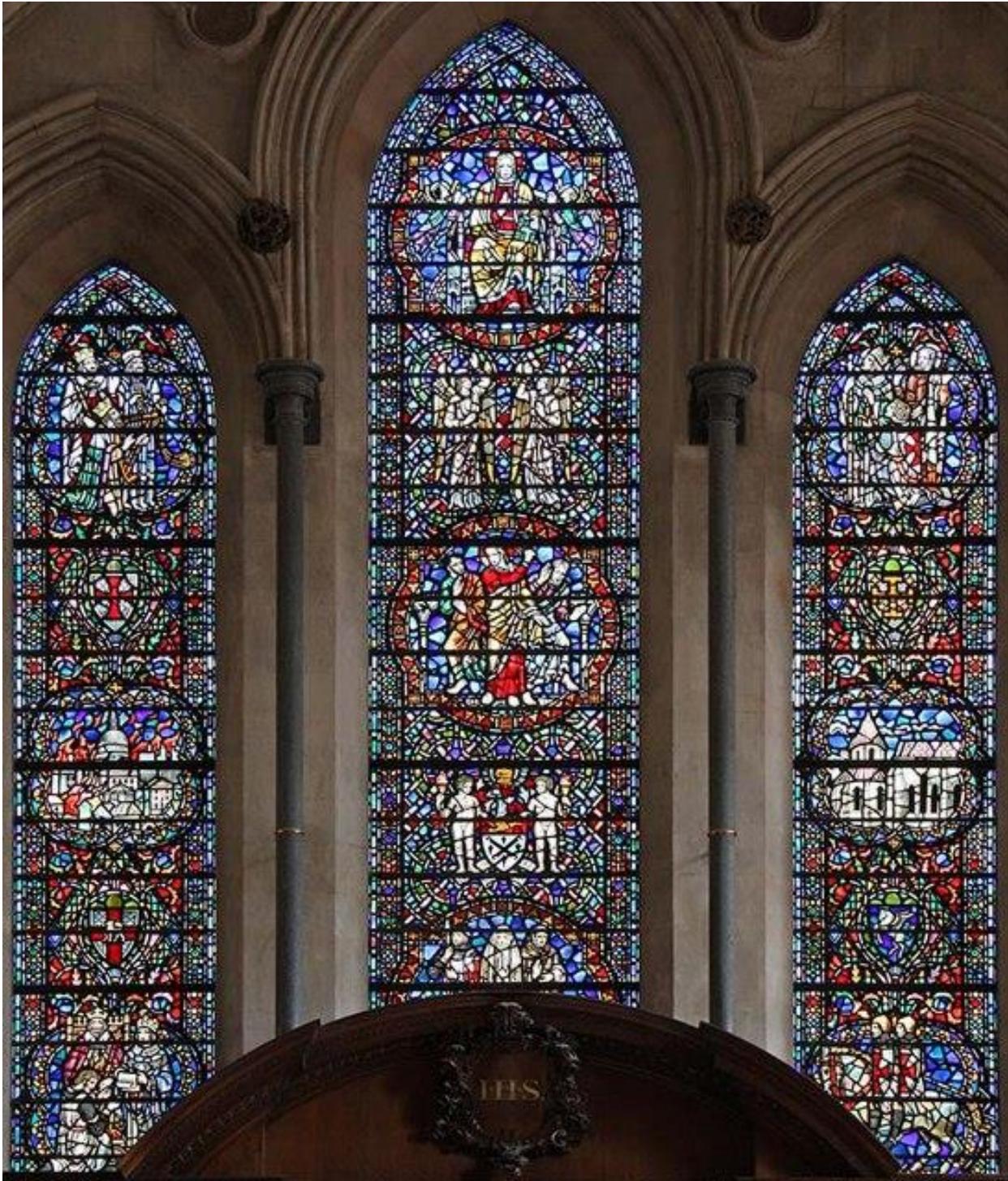


Figure 9 East window, Temple Church

The east window contains depictions of two knights on a single horse – the seal of the Templars – and a Templar shield with cross pattée.

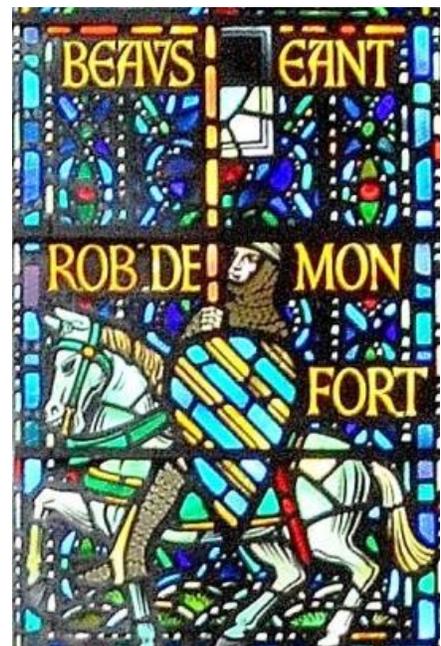
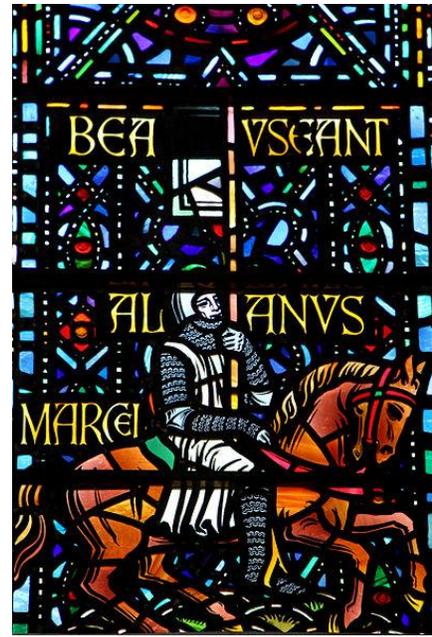
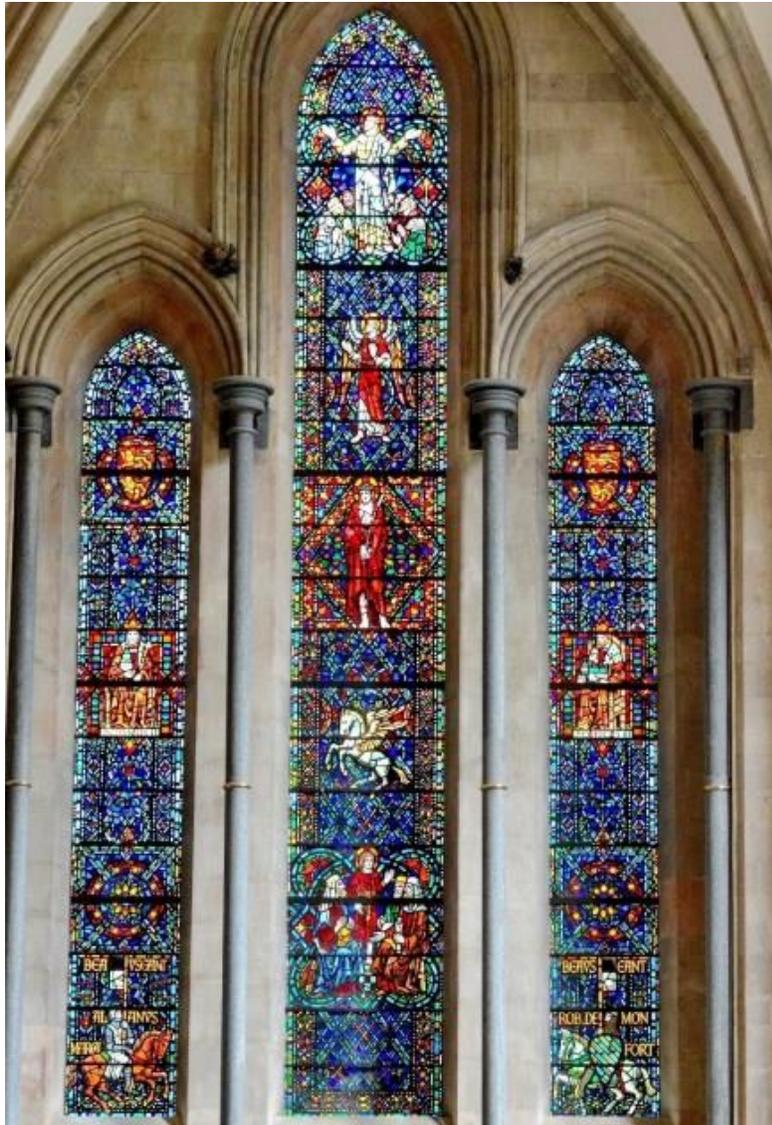


Figure 10 South window, Temple Church and details of lower panels

The central compartment of the south window has a building, inscribed “Civitas Bethlehem” which corresponds with the Temple of Jerusalem on the north window. The attendant knights are Alanus Marcel and Robert de Monfort

# St. Mary the Virgin Church

St. Briavels, Gloucestershire, England



*Figure 11 St. Mary the Virgin Church*

English Bicknor is a village and civil parish in the Forest of Dean district of west Gloucestershire, England. The village is near the county boundary with Herefordshire, opposite which is the village of Welsh Bicknor. The two villages are on opposite sides of the River Wye.

The parish church is Norman, built in the 12th century. It is in an oval churchyard of Anglo-Saxon origin within the outer courtyard of a Norman motte-and-bailey castle. The exterior walls were restored in the Victorian era. Only the exterior stonework of the 13th-century west tower is original. Earlier the church had a crossing tower, but was it built from the soft local sandstone which became unsafe.

Inside the church, both the four-bay north arcade and five-bay south arcade are Norman

Romanesque, but their capitals have different decoration. The font is also Norman. The church has also a stained glass window made by Percy Bacon in 1908.

Monuments in the church include a ledger stone from about 1420 with a rare example of Lombardic script that translates "Pray for the soul of our departed brother in Christ". Other monuments include three Medieval stone figures. Cecilia Muchegros, who lived in the village and died in 1301, and Hawisia, who died in 1353 and whose figure is dressed in a long flowing robe, each have a dog at their feet. The third figure is of a priest, with an old body and a young head. It is not known who he was, but may have been the priest in the church in the early 14th century.



Figure 12 Window depicting St. Michael and Knight Templar, St. Mary the Virgin Church

# St. Mary's Church

## Temple Balsall, Solihull, West Midlands, England



Figure 13 St. Mary's Church

Temple Balsall is a small hamlet within the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull in the English West Midlands. It is one of the oldest and most interesting sites in the borough. It is named after, and dates from the time of, the Knights Templar. They farmed about 650 acres of the estate in the 12th century, and established Balsall Preceptory where a number of brothers lived and ran the estate. After the Order was suppressed, the estate was given to the Knights Hospitaller of St John. They lost it when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and Queen Elizabeth I gave the estate to Robert Dudley. The 13th-century church and Old Hall, and 17th-century almshouses survive.

It is thought that the church was built by the Knights Templar and is the Mother Church of the Templars and the Knight Hospitallers. Knights of both Orders are illustrated in the Altar window.



*Figure 14 Detail of Knight Templar and Hospitaller, St. Mary's Church*

# Temple Church

Cornwall England



Figure 16 Temple Church

Temple is a small village in the parish of Blisland on Bodmin Moor in Cornwall, England. Temple derives its name from the hospice founded by Knights Templars who built a refuge for pilgrims and travelers, en route to the Holy Land, in the 12th century. On the suppression of the Templars it passed into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers (in 1314), who held it until the religious houses were suppressed by Henry VIII. In 1901 it was a curacy of Warleggan and in 1934, the parish of Temple was incorporated into Blisland parish.



Figure 17 East window, Temple Church

Temple Church was built c.1120 on land owned by the Knights Templar. It became famous as a place where marriages could be performed without banns or license. This came to an end in 1744 when the church first came under episcopal jurisdiction. By the mid-19th century, it had become a ruin and a final service was held on 29 January 1882, in front of a "large congregation" led by the Reverend J Brown. It was rebuilt (by Silvanus Trevail) in the following year. The church is dedicated to St. Catherine.



Figure 18 East window detail

The church contains several references to its links with the Knights Templar, including a cross pattée in the east window and a depiction of a mounted knight in the north window of the church tower

# St. James' Church

Manorbier, Pembrokeshire, Wales



*Figure 19 St. James' Church*

Sometime in the 6th century a Celtic monastery was established by St. Pyr on a hillside site at Manorbier. The saint gave his name to the location, for Manorbier evolved from the Welsh for 'belonging to Pyr'. You can see evidence of the Celtic monastery in the circular shape of the churchyard.

St. Pyr was also the first abbot of the monastery on Caldey Island. The Welsh name for Caldey is 'Ynys Byr', or 'Pyr's island'. Pyr is said to have died after falling down a well while drunk, though it isn't clear from historical accounts whether that well was on Caldey Island or at Manorbier. It seems plausible that the saint was buried at the monastery he established at Manorbier, which would place his grave under or near the present church.

In the middle of the 12th century a Norman church was built on part of the earlier monastic site. By that time Manorbier Castle had been built on the opposite hillside by the De Barri family, and the De Barri's probably had a hand in establishing a new church here. The most famous member of the De Barri family was Gerald, fourth son of Odo de Barri who built the first castle. Gerald became famous as Gerald of Wales, known for his scholarship and historical writings. Gerald recounts taking shelter from a storm inside St. James' church in 1153, when he was 7 years old.

In 1301 Sir John de Barri gave St. James' church to Monkton Priory in Pembroke. That priory was itself granted to the Abbey of Sez in Normandy, making it an 'alien house'. During the Hundred Years War all alien houses lost their rights to

tithes, so Manorbier would have been an independent church.

The oldest part of the present building is the striking west tower, which dates to the middle of the 12th century. The nave may be 12th century as well, but the chancel is mostly 13th and 14th century, and the entire church was remodeled in the Victorian period. The most interesting historic feature is the exceptional nave arcade vaulting, which will have architectural historians in raptures. In the chancel is a 14th century effigy of a De Barri family member, possibly John de Barri, who died in 1324. On the north wall are the royal coat of arms to William IV, painted on wooden boards and looking rather the worse for wear. There are 2 fonts, one small octagonal one, set on a modern base, and another possibly Norman font with scalloped edges to the bowl.

In the vaulted porch you can still make out remnants of medieval paintings on the ceiling. Restoration work during the Victorian and Edwardian periods brought St James church one of its great treasures; a series of excellent stained glass windows by some of the finest craftsmen of the time. There are several windows by the Joseph Bell Company of Bristol, and a WWI memorial window by the Burlison & Grylls firm.

It is interesting to note that the depiction of the Templar is of “Hugh Paganis, Founder of the order of St. John of Jerusalem.” Hugh Paganis is also known as Hugues de Payens – first Grand Master of the Knights Templar.



Figure 10 Window depicting Alfred the Great and Hugh Paganis, St. James' Church



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