

# ST. MARY'S, PATRIBOURNE

Patribourne Church lies a mile away from the old Roman Road from Dover to Canterbury and is a typical example of early Norman architecture. The village of Patribourne derives its name from the fact that an earlier owner of the manor was called Patrick. In Domesday Book it is described as follows:

"In Borwart lath. In Bridge hundred. "Richard, son of William, holds of the Bishop (Odo of Bayeux half brother to William 1st) Borne. It answers for six sulings. There is the arable land of eight teams. In demesne there are three teams. And forty four villans with three bordars have ten teams. A church there. And one slave. And four mills of sixteen shillings and eight pence. A fishery of sixpence, pasture, from which foreign men have ploughed eight acres of arable land. Wood of four logs. In the time of King Edward it was worth £18."

In 1254 the Church was served from the Priory of Augustinian Canons at Beaulieu in Normandy. In 1258 it was served by the Priory of Merton in Surrey, until 1410. This Priory was the same that founded Merton College in Oxford. Since that date the Manor has been in the hands of a very few families: the Says, Cheyneys, Taylors, Bargraves and the Conyngams. The latter family still have extensive interests in the area. As was common in the late 18th Century the manorial court was still held in the village, called the Court Leet and Court Baron of Patribourne, Merton and Cheney. There are several original Tudor houses in the village, though some houses were built in the 19th Century in mock-Tudor by the Conyngam family.

The Church at Patribourne is famous for two reasons, firstly because of its unique arch over the south-west door under the clock and secondly because of the very fine collection of Swiss stained glass. Both of these are described in detail later in the guide.

It is unusual for the tower to be in the centre of the Church over the south-west doorway.

The Church dates from the time of the murder of Becket in 1170 and comprises a narrow chancel, nave and very narrow south aisle. In the East Wall of the chancel are three Norman windows. Two of the three bells in the bell tower were cast in Canterbury in 1674 and bear the inscription "Ave Maria Gratia Plena." The north aisle was built in 1827 and although recently restored is of little architectural interest. However, the south aisle immediately on your right as you enter the Church is quite unique and is known as the Bifrons pew or chapel. At the foot of the steps leading into the chapel is the memorial tablet on the floor to the Bargrave family (1663) of which one of the members was Dean of Canterbury in the 18th Century.

## CHANCEL

The chancel has typical recessed Norman windows and a window shaped like a Marigold. Notice the two Aumbries or lockers used to contain the sacred vessels, and a Piscina of geometrical design. There was

PATRICK

DOMESDAY  
4 mills

BEAULIEU 1254  
MERTON 1258  
↓  
1410  
SAYS  
CHEYNEYS  
TAYLORS

18c MANORIAL  
COURT  
MOCK TUDOR

1170 BECKET  
CHURCH founded  
1674 BELL  
NORTH AISLE 1827

CHANCEL  
PISCINA of  
Geometrical design

also a hagioscope or squint in the south pier of the chancel arch, which originally gave a view from the south aisle to the altar. The arch is horseshoe shaped which is uncommon. Beneath the chancel is the family vault of the Conyngham family. At the West end of the Church is an old carved altar screen dating from the 16th Century which used to stand behind the altar. In the north aisle are the memorial tablets to the Hughes-Hallet family, who have had long associations with the village.

### SOUTH DOORWAY

The South doorway is extraordinarily beautiful and is a fine example of early English craftsmanship. It is reputed that the masons who built Rochester Cathedral and Barfreston Church between Canterbury and Dover also built this one. The original mass clocks or mass markers may be seen on the jamb of the doorway. The doorway is in five orders and from top to bottom is as follows:—

SORDERS

1. The first order is carved with a knot of foliage with human heads framed in it alternating with birds and beasts. One head has a long moustache and wears a hat.

2. The second order bears a looped cable and is round.

3. The third has floral crosses alternated with semi-human and winged monsters with foliated tails, known as wyverns.

4. The fourth has an enriched chevron.

5. The last is moulded with straps laid across and this encircles the tympanum carved with a seated figure of Christ surrounded by the apocalyptic creatures and angels. Above this doorway you will notice a triangular canopy marked out by a moulding enriched with zig-zag decorations; and within the canopy is a small arch niche complete with carved shafts and moulding forming the head; within this niche is the Agnus Dei or Lamb of God. If you look carefully you can see the outline of the Lamb, head with halo and the flag on the back. On the west side of the door can be seen some of the original Norman brickwork.

### PRIEST'S DOORWAY

There is also a smaller Priest's doorway leading to the chancel on the South side. It is thought that the figure above the doorway is an early representation of St. Thomas of Canterbury as there is a mitre on the head while the right hand appears to be raised in benediction. The figure is surrounded by nailed head, beaded cable and ribbon chevron mouldings. A third doorway is to be found on the North side but this is of little interest.

### SWISS STAINED GLASS

The Swiss stained glass is exquisitely delicate in design and colouring and is a typical example of enamel glass as distinct from stained glass; these windows extend over a considerable period from 1538 until well after the Thirty Years' War in 1670 and were obviously vitreaux d'alliance or commemorations of alliances between noble families. They were often

HORSESHOE ARCH

OLD CARVED ALTAR  
SCREEN 16c.

SOUTH DOORWAY

§ ROCHESTER  
BARFRETON

MASS CLOCK  
§ MASS MARKERS.

SORDERS.

1st HEAD LONG  
MOUSTACHE/HAT

2nd WYVERNS

5th. AGNUS DEI

PRIESTS DOORWAY

EARLY REPRESENTATION  
§ ST. THOMAS

SWISS STAINED  
GLASS

1538 - 1670

Vitreaux d'Alliance

18 in all

Enamelled glass

Subject is painted onto or

scrap of plain white glass

with a vitreous pigment consisting

of finely powdered glass mixed with

an oxide or other chemical to give

the colour.

used in Germany and France as decorations in public and private buildings. Of the 18 panels in this Church, eight are inserted in the South window of the Bifrons chapel and beginning from the east and reckoning from top to bottom the details are as follows:—

⑧  
LEFT

1. THE CRUCIFIXION.
2. ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST on the banks of the river Jordan. This has been executed in brown pigment.
3. PYRAMUS AND THISBE. This panel by Hans Funk is of Bernese workmanship but the cartouche above the white horse is of later date. Like the martyrs depicted by all mediaeval artists, Pyramus with a sword thrust through his body, is suffering no pain while Thisbe gazes down at him!
4. THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS. Notice the angel in the right-hand corner with a scroll marked "Gloria in Excelsis."
5. PETER GISLER OF BURGLEN. This town is in Uri, one of the original Cantons in the Swiss Confederation. Gisler made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and subsequently became Commissioner of Bellinzona now in Canton Tessin at the entrance to the St. Gothard pass.
6. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD. It has also been suggested that this might be the raising of Jairus' daughter.
7. STANDARD BEARER of the Leventina valley in the Canton of Tessin. The winding road of the man driving pack mules is an original representation of the St. Gothard pass.
8. THE MURDER OF ST. MEINRAD. This picture is full of the details of the Saint's life and martyrdom.

- clear wood of silver white stain*
- CRUCIFIXION
  - ST JOHN BAPTIST
  - PYRAMUS & THISBE
  - ADORATION OF SHEPHERDS
  - PETER GISLER OF BURGLEN / URI
  - RAISING OF LAZARUS TESSIN
  - STANDARD BEARER (CLEAR)
  - MURDER OF ST MEINRAD.

RIGHT

THE CHANCEL

North Lancet No. 1 Top

1. CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. The towered city in the background is meant to be Lucerne. The three apostles are St. Peter, St. John and St. James.
- + 2. THE CRUCIFIXION. The inscription reads: "Holy Angel and Messenger pray God for me, poor sinner, that He will forgive my sins and after this life grant me life eternal."
- + 3. SAMSON holding in his right hand the jaw bone with which he slew the Philistines.

LEFT

Central Lancet

1. A KNIGHT, JACOB WIRTZ, 1579.
2. A ROMAN SOLDIER. This bears a resemblance to the magnificent suit of Roman armour which was made for the Emperor Charles V. The figure is an allegory of War; hence the description VICTORIA on the warrior's shield.
3. ADORATION OF THE MAGI. There are also small pictures of the Adoration of the Shepherds and of the Annunciation in the top left and right-hand corners.

1538  
figure in front of a fountain  
He is to lead down his spirit  
Crescens + la revivis

- GETHSEMANE
- CRUCIFIXION
- SAMSON
- JACOB WIRTZ
- ROMAN SOLDIER
- ADORATION OF THE MAGI
- ST JOHN EVANGELIST.

4. ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST AND ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY. This is the work of Martin Moser, the best glass painter in Lucerne in the XVIth Century.

**South Lancet No. 1 Top**

1. A brilliantly coloured painting of a long-bearded knight in armour.
2. CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.
3. SAMSON SLAYING THE LION. This is an exact copy line for line of the woodcut by Albrecht Dürer. The hill in the background represents Nuremburg, Dürer's native city.

Those who are interested in further fragments of Swiss glass in the district should visit Temple Ewell Church, near Dover.

**Authorities:**

English Parish Churches by John Betjeman. Swiss Stained Windows in the Churches of Patricbourne and Temple Ewell, N. E. Toke. Reprinted in Archaeologia Cantiana Vol. XLIV. Guide and Historical Notes to the Parish Church of St. Mary, Patricbourne, near Canterbury, Rev. W. Knight, M.A., 1930. Architectural Notes on Patricbourne Church by Rev. G. M. Livett, F.S.A., 1909. Kent, by Frank Jessup, Patricbourne Church.

This guide was prepared in 1965 in memory of Mrs. Kathleen Wiltshire, who lived in Patricbourne and worshipped regularly in this Church.

**LIST OF WORK OF REPAIRS AND RESTORATION TO ST. MARY'S CHURCH, PATRICBOURNE, CARRIED OUT IN RECENT TIMES**

- 1855 Tower restored by Elizabeth Marchioness Conyngham.  
1876 Tower Clock presented by George Henry Marquis Conyngham.  
1939 Extensive repairs and restoration carried out under the direction of W. A. Forsyth, F.R.I.B.A. (Vicar, Rev. H. Knight.)  
1946 Main electricity connected. Lighting and heating installed (cost, £700). (Vicar, Rev. W. H. Gregory.)

The following works were carried out under the direction of A. W. Swaine, F.R.I.B.A.:-

- 1954 Extensive repairs to the East wall of the Chancel. Chimney stack for fire place in Bifrons Chapel removed (cost, £700). (Vicar, Rev. G. A. Church.)  
1958 Spire reclad with Cedar Shingles (cost, £750). (Vicar, Rev. R. A. Penney.)  
1959 Roof timbers treated with insecticide. Fire place in Bifrons Chapel blocked up. North Aisle: Hughes-Hallet Memorial Tablets moved to West wall. Window in East wall opened up and glazed. Interior of church redecorated (total cost, £680). (Vicar, Rev. R. A. Penney.)

Thus it will be seen that in the last 20 years over £2,800 has been spent on essential restoration work, including the installation of a modern lighting and heating system. Of this sum, £545 has been provided by grants from the various bodies listed below and the balance has been found from within the Parish.

EAST BRIDGE DEANERY.  
FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES.  
HISTORIC CHURCHES PRESERVATION TRUST.  
INCORPORATED CHURCH BUILDING SOCIETY.  
MARSHALLS CHARITY.

① BARGRAVE Open fireplace

John Taylor purchased Bifrons in 1694 + died in 1729

Raised a beautiful garden to Bifrons, gave several ornaments of value to the Church, was a strict Puritan + just dealer + friend to the poor.

Elderst son Brook

Captain Bridges Hatterson Taylor accidentally drowned by the upsetting of a boat off Brixide in 1814

Denes of Lydd

Rev. Charles Hughes Hallet of Higham.

Henry 1st Lordess of Conyngham.

CHRIST AGONY GARDEN S G  
SAMSON SLAYING THE LION  
NUREMBURG. DÜRER.

BARGRAVE

BROOKE TAYLOR

CONYNGHAM

HUGHES HALLET.

RIGHT