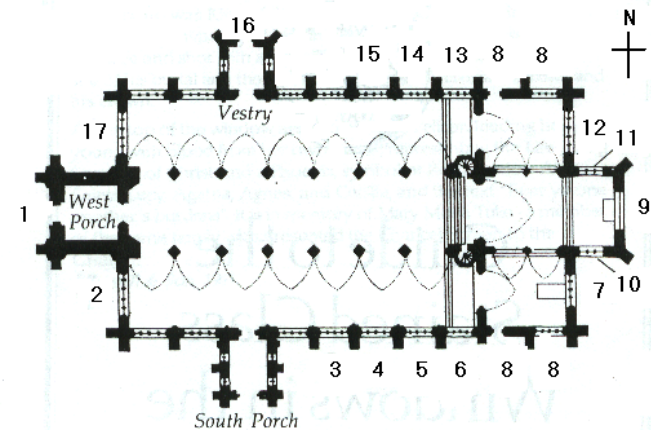




# The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin Saffron Walden

## Guide to the Stained Glass Windows

### Guide to the Stained Glass Windows



The numbers start at the West End under the Tower, proceeding round the church in an anti-clockwise direction

1. This window represents the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. The baby Jesus is held by Simeon, and he is flanked by Mary on the left and Anna on the right. The Nunc Dimittis words of Simeon 'Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace' are applied to the Revd R Clutton who died in 1868. Made by J Powell & Son of Whitechapel, 1868
2. This single head is the oldest piece in the church and may represent either Henry VI or (more probably) his wife, the militant Margaret of Anjou, who visited Saffron Walden in 1452 on her way to Norwich. The bell-ringers were fined for not welcoming her with a peal.

## The South Aisle

3. The first window represents the four Evangelists. The Gospel writers are often shown accompanied by the symbols of lion, ox, eagle and man, but not in this case. St John is shown as a young man in contrast to the other mature figures. In Memory of the Richards family  
Lavers & Barraud, 1860.
4. The next has two lights, each showing scenes of Jesus' life. Jesus sits by a well in conversation with the Samaritan woman. When Jesus says he has access to the living water, she replies 'Give me this water that I thirst not'. Mary Magdalene is shown confronted by the resurrected Christ. Mary being unmarried is shown with her hair loose. Jesus is saying to her 'Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father'. In memory of John Harding.  
Ward & Hughes, 1870
5. The next window concentrates on the life of the Virgin Mary. It is in memory of Mary Parkinson Atkinson, wife of a local doctor and JP. Her father-in-law, also a doctor, is commemorated by a window on the opposite side of the church. The scenes show Gabriel telling Mary she is to be the mother of Jesus greeting Mary when she visits her. At the very top are some famous women from the Bible – Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, Deborah and Ruth – and at the bottom in what is called the predella are scenes showing good deeds.  
J Powell & Son, 1916
6. The fourth window shows the Good Shepherd, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan and the Sower. In memory of Martin Nockolds.  
Lavers & Barraud, 1858

7. In the south chapel, the glass is one of two heraldic windows given to the church by the first Lord Braybrooke at the time of a major restoration in 1792. (The other is No 16). It shows the arms of Lord Braybrooke and his wives Anna Maria Schutz and Katherine Clayton, surmounted by a baron's coronet and supported by the Howard lions. On either side is the star of the Order of the Bath. Sir John Griffin Griffin was installed as a Knight of this Order in 1761. The painter was James Pearson of Westminster.
8. The leading of the plain windows in this and the north chapel is in the shape of the saffron flower.

## The Chancel

9. The east window in memory of Eliza Taylor was installed in time for Queen Victoria's Silver Jubilee. The top tier shows angels with palms and music. The middle tier shows the Ascension of Christ, worshipped by angels and apostles. The lower tier shows the Nativity with the Wise Men, the Baptism of Christ, the Crucifixion (with Mary, St John and Mary Magdalene) the Last Supper and the three Marys at the empty tomb with the angel.  
Ward & Hughes 1862
10. On the right of the east window we see St Helena with the cross and chalice representing Faith, Lady Bountiful as Charity and a Saint with the anchor as a symbol of Hope.  
Ward & Hughes, 1872
11. Opposite is another 'Mary' window, this time Martha's sister. We see the practical Martha busy with the preparations for the meal, and Jesus talking to Mary, who hangs on His words.  
Ward & Hughes 1872.

12. The north chapel; window is very colourful. The central panel shows Mary and Jesus, worshipped on the left by shepherds and on the right by the Magi. Further to the left are biblical characters leading up to Christ's Nativity. We see King David with his harp, Isaiah with a scroll of his prophecies, the reforming young King Uzziah and John the Baptist. Opposite them are the Apostles, St Peter with the keys of heaven, St Paul with a sword, St James with a pilgrim staff and scallop shell badge on his hat and St John with a chalice. The central small figures are those of the donors, the Braybrooke family of Audley End. In memory of Charles Cornwallis, 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Braybrooke and his daughter, Augusta Strutt. Burlison & Grylls, 1904.

## Painting

The painting in the north chapel is a copy, by the English artist Matthew Peters RA, who was also a clergyman, of the picture of St Jerome and the Holy Family by the Italian artist Correggio. The original is in the gallery at Parma. St Jerome was a very learned man and made the first translation of the Bible from Greek into Latin – the Vulgate. In the picture, an angel points out to the Infant a passage in the book held by the saint in his left hand, while in his right he is holding the writings from which he made a translation. St Jerome is supposed to have pulled a thorn out of a lion's paw, hence the lion, bottom left. The painting was given to the church in 1793 by the first Lord Braybrooke.

## The North Aisle

13. The first window is in memory of John Frye who was the organist here from 1824 to 1884, and was first appointed when he was eight years old. The figures are of the Temple musicians of the Old Testament. The text is from Psalm 67.  
J Powell & Son, 1888
14. The middle window is the other 'medical' one, in memory of Dr Harold Atkinson. The top part, or tracery, shows shields with the arms of six institutions with which Dr Atkinson was associated – Saffron Walden Grammar School, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge University, St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons. The next tier shows four pairs of figures from the Old and New Testaments associated with healing (Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, St John, St Luke, St Peter and St Paul). The main scene of Jesus healing the sick goes across all three lights. Below are the virtues expressed in the life of a physician, Temperance, Prudence, Justice and Fortitude. Between are drugs used in medicine – yellow gentian, aconite, foxglove, saffron crocus, cinchona, poppy, deadly nightshade and eucalyptus. The scroll reads 'Honour a physician with the honour due to him'.  
J Powell & Son, 1908

15. The last window is of the East Anglian saints and their symbols and heraldry. St Alban was the first English martyr, a Roman soldier who took the place of a monk during a time of persecution. His grave at St Albans is the site of the Abbey and his diagonal cross is the sign of the city and the diocese. Next to him is St Helena who discovered the True Cross, and was the mother of Emperor Constantine. She is said to be the daughter of 'Old King Cole' of Colchester. The arms of Colchester below show the cross and three crowns of East Anglia.

St Etheldreda was the queen who fled to Ely and built an abbey there in 673. We see her holding the cathedral in her arms and the heraldry is of Ely diocese. St Edmund was king of East Anglia and a Christian. He was defeated by invading Vikings in 870 and was martyred by being tied to a tree and shot with arrows. Bury St Edmunds was built on the site of his burial and the arms of the city show crossed arrows and his crown

At the top of the window are two birds – a pelican feeding her young with blood from her own breast, representing the life-giving sacrifice of Christ, and a phoenix, symbol of the resurrection. Also Saints Lucy, Agatha, Agnes and Cecilia, and the text 'Bear ye one another's burdens'. It is in memory of Mary Maria Tuke, of the family which presented the chancel screen to the church.  
J Powell & Son, 1911.

16. Above the clergy vestry (south porch) are the Braybrooke Achievements, the Arms of Braybrooke impaling Clayton (Sir John Griffin Griffin's second wife). Sir John was the first Lord Braybrooke. The roundels on either side are surmounted by a baron's coronet. The glass painter was James Pearson of Westminster. All this glass was formerly in the old east window of the north chapel, (No 12) from whence it was removed in 1904.
17. The north west end window contains the Millenium Window, the design of the Virgin and Child being inspired by the Mother's Union banner which was created by the Sewing Circle. The stained glass is by Tony Sandles of Swards End and the window was installed to commemorate the Second Millenium 2000AD.

These revised notes are based on those of Muriel Simpson, who compiled the original leaflet with advice from Martin Harrison, author of 'Victorian Stained Glass'. Dr K F Dixon has contributed sections on the glass showing heraldic material, and on the copy of the Corregio painting. Miss M Trigg contributed a note on window 14.