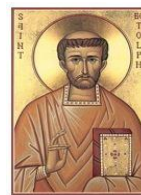




The Botolphian

Newsletter of
The Society of Saint Botolph

www.botolph.info



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President: Revd Timothy L'Estrange, Vicar of St.Gabriel's Church, North Acton.

Issue Number: 71

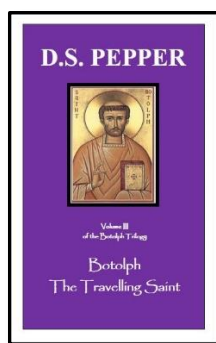
1st March 2019

Highlights this month

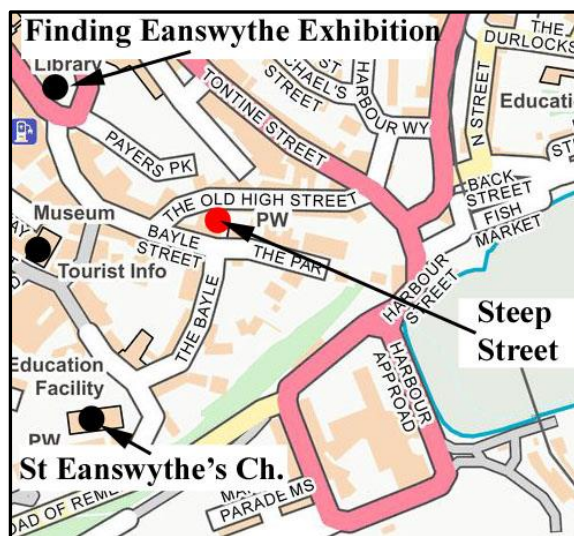
- **St Botolph-without-Aldersgate**
- It gives me great pleasure to welcome the following new members: Nanouschka Burstrom from Stockholm University; Father David Armstrong from St Botolph without Bishopsgate; Robert Cronin (member of the FE research group) from Hythe; Maureen Jordan (associate of the FE research group);
- Correspondence from Revd Margaret McPhee; Revd Paula Griffiths; Margaret Gornall; Roy Tricker; Colin Setchfield; Revd Mary Sokanovic.

Editorial

I am delighted to say that *Botolph the Travelling Saint* the final book in the Botolph Trilogy has now arrived and is ready to hit the bookshelves and the pre-ordered books are on their way to the purchasers. I am not having a 'proper' launch as I feel that it is time for a change so instead of this I shall be occupying the window settee in **Steep Street Coffee House**, 18,24 The Old High Street, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1RL from **9 a.m. to 5 p.m.** on **Tuesday 12th March**. I shall sit there with a pile of books ready to sign hoping that I do not spend all day without seeing any friends.



Steep Street, which is one of my favourite places, is run by Steve and Alice who are to be congratulated on the birth of their now-one-month-old son Jonathan. The Coffee House needs no advertising locally as it has a great reputation and is always busy but Steve tells me that Tuesday is their quietest day. It would be helpful but not essential if you were to ring me on 07802 646-644 to give me an idea of *when* you are likely to arrive so that we can try to ensure that everyone does not arrive at the same time.



You will recall my mentioning Folkestone's patron saint St Eanswythe (c.617-c.640), from time to time - and you might already have read about her in Volume I. In *Botolph and The Travelling Saint* Botolph returns (in 647) to Folcanstane to mourn her death. For the past two years I have been privileged to be part of a research group which, under the auspices of Christchurch Canterbury University, has been *Finding Eanswythe*. The result of our labours offers just one of a variety of venues that are ready to entertain you:

1. The exhibition is in the Sassoon Room of Folkestone Public Library. 2 Grace Hill CT20 1HD from 9 to 5 p.m. daily until Saturday 16th March.
2. Our lovely parish church, St Mary and St Eanswythe's at 5 Church Street CT20 1SE is not usually open on a Tuesday but my dear friend Ian Gordon has kindly agreed to open it between 11 a.m. and 12 noon - so please go and visit to ensure that his hour is not wasted.
3. The *Battle of Britain Memorial* up on the cliff-top at Capel-le-Ferne CT18 7JJ is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. but be prepared to spend at least an hour looking at the exhibits.
4. We have a similar museum which is equally interesting but in a different way. This is located at former RAF Hawkinge at CT18 7AG. (10am-4pm).
5. The Harbour Arm is a great attraction on sunny weekends. It is likely to be quiet on a Tuesday but is still worth a visit. It closes at 4 p.m.
6. The Leas (our spacious and gracious cliff-top walk) never closes.
7. Running parallel to The Leas at beach level is our famous Coastal Park which you might wish to visit on another occasion bringing the grandchildren to enjoy the Activities area while sons and daughters set up a barbecue in the woods.

So if **Tuesday 12th March** promises to be sunny and you *do* decide to have a day out in my home town (the high-speed train from St Pancras takes less than an hour to get to Folkestone Central) there will be a plentiful variety of things for you to do. I should mention that The Old High Street itself (a pedestrianised area with several excellent art galleries) is also worth spending some time on. It is part of our *Creative Quarter* the development of which is sponsored by the Roger de Haan Charitable Trust.

See www.rdhct.org.uk/folkestone

Details regarding my books will be found at the end of this newsletter.

Church Feature

Aldersgate, London

or more correctly:

St Botolph-without-Aldersgate

(Note the lack of apostrophe but the inclusion of hyphens).

Approach: *The simplest way would seem to be by Underground to Barbican Tube Station (Circle, Metropolitan, Hammersmith & City lines). Turn right out of the station and then walk south towards the sun (if you can see any) down Aldersgate Street, rounding the 'Museum of London' roundabout but going straight on and you will soon see the church on your right.*

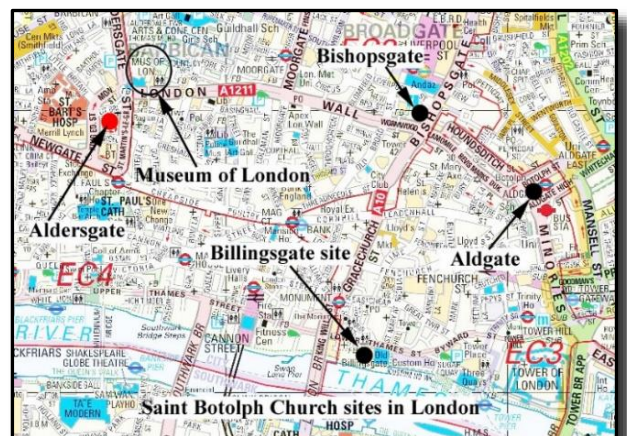
Location: Aldersgate Street, City of London, EC1 4EU; Lat/long: 51.517, -0.0972; NGR: TQ321815.

Key: Access to this church is restricted to:
Tuesdays (Aldersgate Talks) 1 - 2 p.m.
Thursdays 12 noon to 3 p.m.
Sundays (London City Presbyterian Church - www.presbyterian.london) 11a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

Contacts: phil.martin@aldersgatetalks.org
clare.jackson@aldersgatetalks.org

Rector: Revd Simon Dowdy
simon.dowdy@aldersgatetalks.org.

Listed Grade: I



In the manuscript *Nova Legenda Angliae*, believed to have been written by John of Tynemouth in c.1350, we find the following:

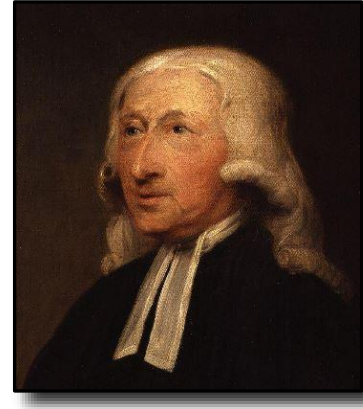
In a book of the Church of St. Botolph near Aldersgate in London, it is recorded that part of the body of St Botolph was translated here from the church of St. Peter at Westminster by King Edward of fond memory.

The King Edward referred to is Edward the Confessor who reigned from 1042 to 1066 so it seems that Aldersgate church was in existence then.

The church of Saint Peter was what we now know as Westminster Abbey which was originally founded by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, St Dunstan (c.909-988).



Clearly it was not this building. The stuccoed screen wall dates from 1831 and has seen various modifications the last being in 2008. Note the 4-columned Ionic portico. To the right of the picture near the bus is the road called Little Britain - which was there long before the name was usurped by David Walliams and Matt Lucas.



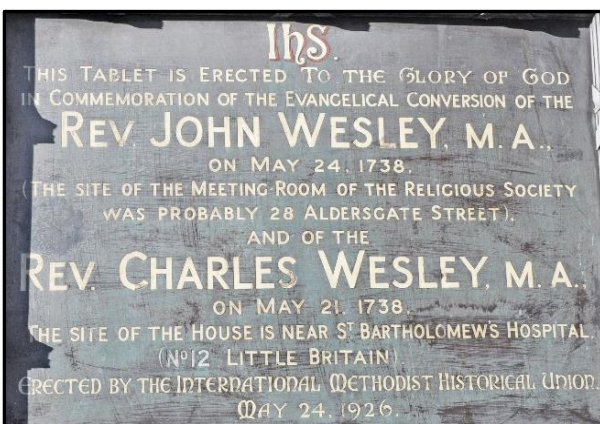
This is a detail of a painting of John Wesley by William Hamilton in 1788. It is said to be the only painting that Wesley accepted as being a true likeness. He was clearly influenced by living close to Saint Botolph's as his principle strategies, like those of the saint, were to travel widely and preach outdoors.



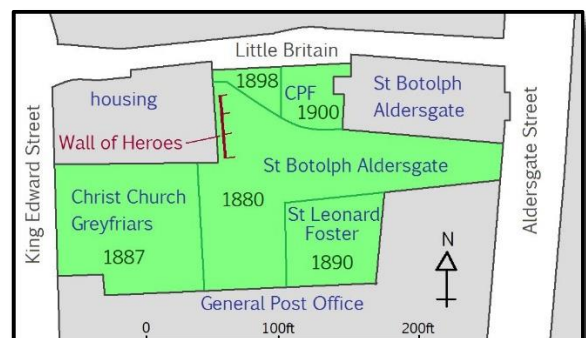
A plaque is affixed to the railings near the entrance to the churchyard.



The church is set in an area of land known as *Postman's Park* which was opened in 1880 and comprises a combination of the churchyards of St Leonard's Foster Lane, St Botolph's, and Christ Church Newgate Street.



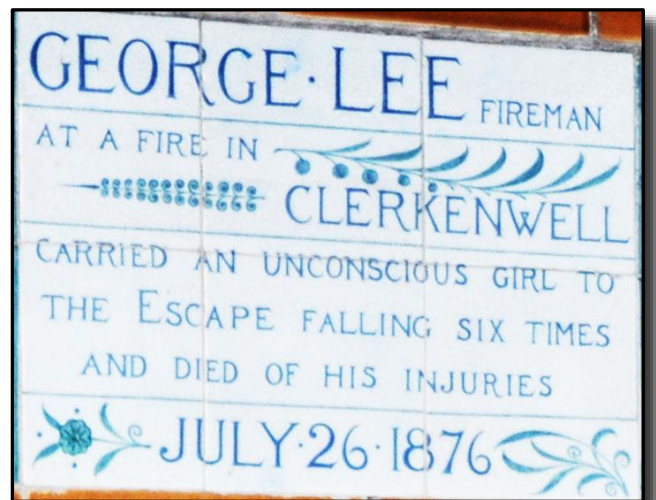
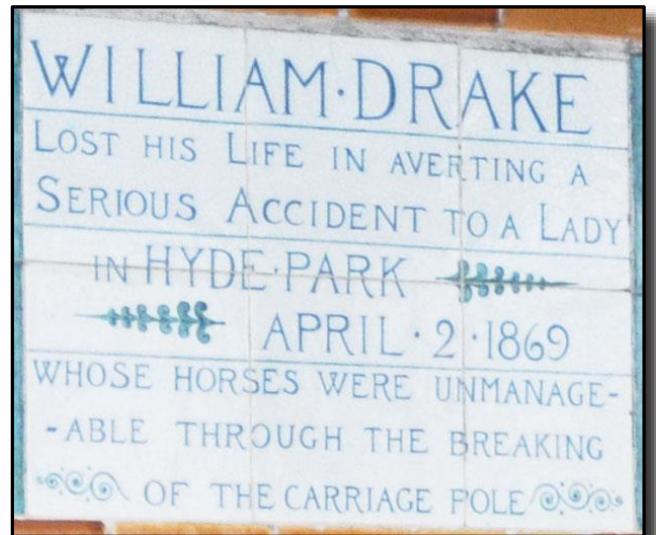
This commemorates 24th May 1738 when John Wesley - a pivotal leader of the Methodist church - and his brother Charles, had a spiritual awakening at number 12 Little Britain.



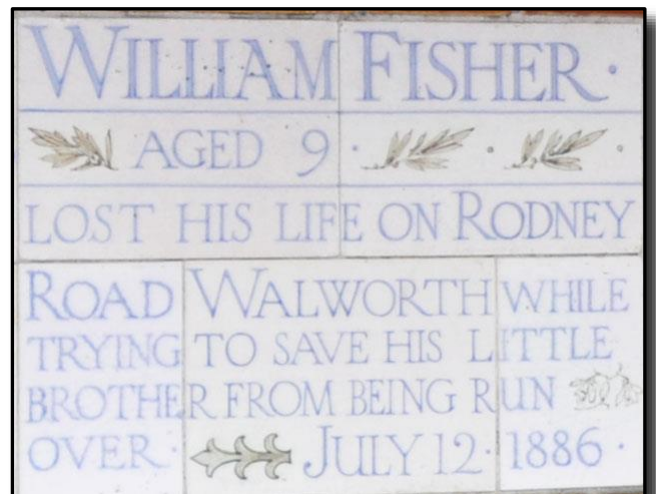
It acquired its name from the fact that the postmen from the adjacent General Post Office habitually ate their lunch there. As can be seen from a couple of previous pictures, the ground level of the park is somewhat elevated in comparison to the street outside. This is because, due to a shortage of burial space, corpses were often just laid on the ground and covered with soil.



An important part of this well-used and well-loved oasis of rest in the London Desert is the Watts memorial which was built in 1900 as a tribute to heroic men women and children. Names continue to be added from time to time.



In 2004, following the release of the film *Closer* in which many of the scenes were shot in Postman's Park there was a resurgence of interest in the site.



These are just a few of the sixty or so heart-breaking / heart-warming tablets in this memorial.



The entrance to St Botolph's is welcoming and the notice by the doorway tells us:

A church building has stood here for nearly one thousand years. The present building dates back to 1788-91 . . . come along to one of our midweek lunchtime services . . . Guild Vicar: Revd Simon Dowdy.

So we discover that this is a *Guild Church* - which is defined as *an English metropolitan church that has been freed from parish responsibilities in order to minister full-time to non-resident city workers*. The church was designated as such in 1950. The origin of guilds dates back to mediaeval times when, as today, they consisted of associations of craftsmen or merchants with similar interests. They often wielded considerable power. The two particular guilds associated with this church are those of the Ironmongers and the Cooks.

The hall of the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers (they were originally known as *Ferroners*) is situated nearby. The company ranks tenth in the order of precedence of London's liveryies. Their hall dates from 1925 but occupies the same site as that on which a series of three earlier halls stood, dating back to 1457. Today it is rather hidden from the main road but it comes to light if you take a stroll through the London Museum precincts.

The Worshipful Company of Cooks is the *smallest* of the livery companies but it is also one of the *oldest*, its origins dating to 1170.

Returning to the church we find two signs on the doorway inviting us to:

Tuesdays
Aldersgate Talks
Every Tuesday at 1 for 1.10pm (finish at 1.40)*
www.aldersgatetalks.org

Sundays
London City Presbyterian Church
Sundays at 11am and 6.30pm
www.lcpc.org.uk

This church is not an easy one to access from the point of view of taking photographs. As Simon Dowdy explained to me, the church is not considered to be a tourist attraction so its times of opening are limited.

I particularly wanted to hear one of the famous Aldersgate Talks and to 'people-watch' those who attended so we made a special visit from Folkestone 'up to the smoke' as we used to say.



And what a wonderful welcome we received to this bathed-in-a-mahogany-glow church. The opportunity for a snack always appeals to me but sadly we had already eaten. Others however soon came and enjoyed the food of which there was a plentiful supply.



And here we are ready to receive the visitors. The event is a popular one and was well-supported on the day we visited. I was tempted to take a picture when the seats were full but things like political correctness and data protection held me back. There were 30 or so attendees ranging in age from about 25 to 45 and all listened attentively while Carl Porter, who works for a City insurance firm, spoke on John the Baptist. His message was aimed at encouraging his audience to spread the word of God within their offices and he offered a few tips on how they might do that.

This inevitably made me think back to St Botolph. Whilst writing the final volume of his 'biography' I often found my imagination challenged trying to work out just *how* he would have evangelised; *how* he would have converted people without alienating them. Was it easier in those days at a time when the 50-year-old religion (which it was as far as the people of post-Augustine Britain were concerned) was so new and fashionable?



Here are the hosts. From left to right: the vicar - Revd Simon Dowdy (whom I first met six years ago), the curate Revd Phil Martin - and the speaker Carl Porter.



Knowing that my time in the church was limited I rushed around like a mad thing taking as many photographs as I could before Carl's talk started. Some of the photographs shown in this feature are from my previous visit in 2013 so you might notice a little lack of continuity regarding the position of the chairs.



This church is large and box-shaped with an apse at the east end which is cunningly hidden from the road outside by the addition of a screen wall so that the Aldersgate Street aspect is perfectly flat.



There are north and south aisles and a marvellous gallery.



At the western end there is *another* apse which, in the gallery, accommodates the organ. This was built by Samuel Green in 1778 and is the only one of its make surviving in London.



The southern part offers adequate extra seating as does its partner on the north side.



On the left, the 1705 Harris organ pipes at Aldgate and on the right the 1778 Sam Green organ pipes at Aldersgate.



The gallery provides a marvellous vantage point for photographers.



The long chair-less north aisle with the font at the end of it.



I often feel that fonts and font covers should be photographed separately since each has its own beauty and although they belong together neither should eclipse the other. I cannot recall ever having been accused of timidity but I often find myself reluctant to try my luck with the complex block and tackle mechanisms that are involved with separating such beauties - so most times, as in this case, I have to be content with photographing them in their wedded bliss.



The east window is special in that it is the oldest surviving painting on glass in the City of London. It was painted by James Pearson in 1788 and shows Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane before his death.

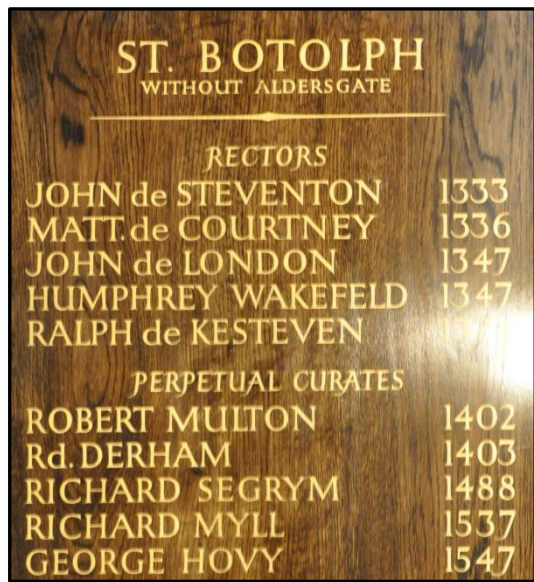
The painting is beautiful now but I guess that, in its younger days in the absence of skyscrapers, the church's eastern aspect would, for a few minutes at certain times of the year, have been exposed directly to the rays of the rising sun whereupon the chalice would have been stunningly illuminated. There must have been much heartache about the potential loss of this phenomenon when the screen wall (with its own east window) was constructed.



The ceiling is quite spectacular and it really needs a full page picture to do justice to it . . .



. . . but this will have to suffice to illustrate the magnificence of its design.



The first rector we meet is John de Steventon in 1333 - 280 years after the church was founded. One wonders who his predecessors were. Perhaps they were Norman and subsequently expunged from the records?

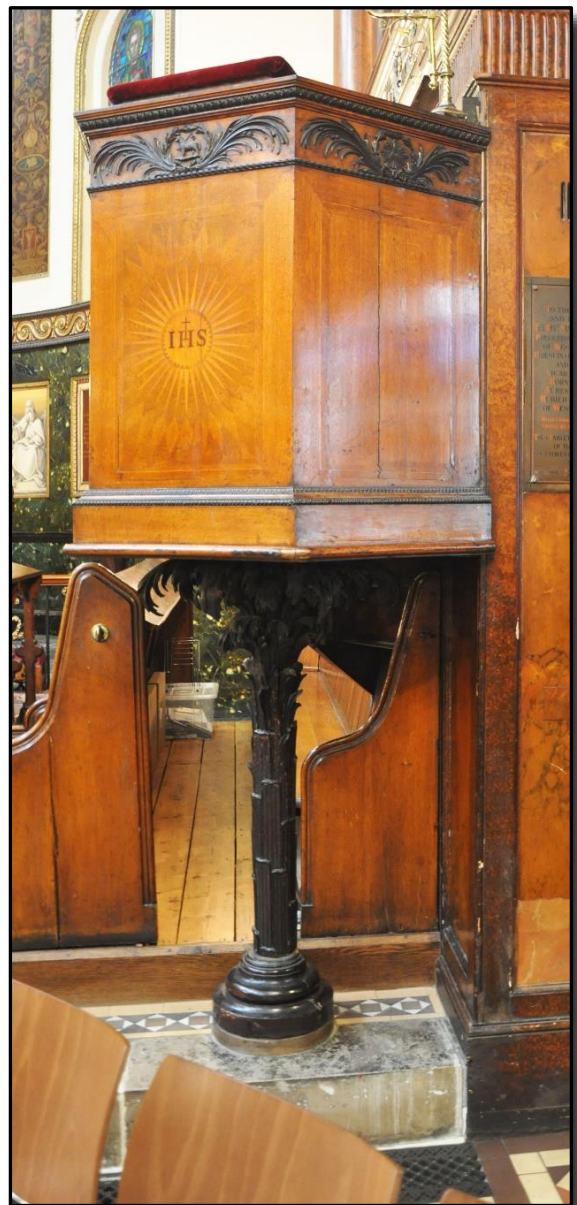


Here we have another Sword Rest to complement the one we saw at St Botolph-without-Aldgate last month. These are present in many of London's City churches but very rare elsewhere. They were

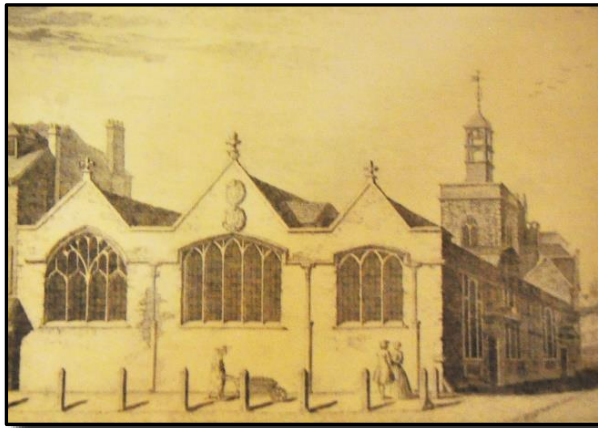
originally installed to hold the Lord Mayor's sword of state in the days when he was obliged to visit a different church every Sunday - a practice which came to an end in 1883. The rest would usually be attached to one of the front pews and the sword-bearing officer would place the sword in an upright position with its tip in the ring seen here just above the crown.

I think I must have described the process wrongly last month when I suggested that the lower wooden cup at St Botolph-without-Aldgate was for the tip of the sword. On reflection I think it must hold the pommel. The Aldgate sword rest has no upper ring . . . and I blame this for my confusion!

The majority of sword rests were installed in C18 and C19 although the oldest (at St Helens church Bishopsgate) dates from 1664 and it is made of wood.



A pulpit on a foliate pedestal which looks as if it is made of cast-iron - although I did not check this.



A picture from 1750 showing the present church's predecessor viewed from the northeast.

The Aldgate and Aldersgate churches

The basic structure of the Aldersgate building that we see today was the work of the north London surveyor Nathaniel Wright in 1788.

REPAIRING THE COMMON SEWER, IN BRIDGE-STREET, BLACKFRIARS.			
Cash advanced for the Purpose of carrying on the above Works, in pursuance of two Orders of the Court of Common Council, dated the 18th of February 1796 and 27th October 1796, which is to be repaid to this City's Cash out of the Produce of certain Bonds raised for the above Purpose, upon the Credit of the Surplus of the Orphans Fund.			
To Nathaniel Wright, on account of Disbursements	—	—	200 1 0
To Charles W. Clark, on account of Bricklayers Work	—	—	600 2 0
To John Tensdale, the like, for Carpenters Work	—	—	500 2 0
To Charles W. Clark, the like for Bricklayers Work	—	—	500 2 0
To William Rolfe, the like, for Carpenters Work	—	—	210 1 0
To Charles W. Clark, the like, for Bricklayers Work	—	—	200 1 0
To John Tensdale, the like, for Carpenters Work	—	—	200 1 0
To Nathaniel Wright, on account of his Commission, for Work done to the said Sewer	—	—	100 1 0
To John Tensdale, the like, for Carpenters Work	—	—	200 1 0
To James Boucock, the like, for Masons Work	—	—	500 2 0
To Nathaniel Wright, on account of Disbursements	—	—	200 1 0
To Nathaniel Wright, on account of his Commission	—	—	100 1 0
To John Tensdale, the like, for Carpenters Work	—	—	300 1 0
To Charles W. Clark, the like, for Bricklayers Work,	—	—	700 2 0
To him more, the like, for Ditto	—	—	500 2 0
To William Rolfe, the Balance of his Bill for Carpenters Work	—	—	66 8 6
To Thomas Poynder, for Bricklayers Work, from 8th December 1794, to 27th June 1795	—	—	95 10 6
To John Bathman, for superintending the Works in December 1793	—	—	3 19 2
To Nathaniel Wright, on account of his Commission	—	—	100 1 0
To George Dance, Surveyor	—	—	30 15 4
To Charles Hamerton and Son, for Paviments Work, in December 1794	—	—	23 2 2
To William Bond, for Disbursements, from 22d October 1795, to November 1796	—	—	69 9 1
Total—			£ 5,400 12 9

The only record I could find of him was in the accounts of the Court of Common Council of 1796 where both he and George Dance are mentioned in connection with reparatory work to the Bridge Street common sewer.

You may or may not remember that George Dance the elder was mentioned in last month's *Botolphian* as the surveyor who in 1744 rebuilt St Botolph-without-Aldgate.

Name of Parish, Dedication, and Nature of Benefice.	Population.	Diocese.	Net Value. £	Patron.
London (continued).				
St. Bene't Sherehog R	180	Lond.	—	unit. to St. Stephen, Walbrook, R.
St. Botolph Billingsgate R	207	Lond.	320	The Crown.
with St. George Botolph Lane R	229	Lond.	450	Dean & Chap. of Westminster.
St. Botolph without Aldgate PC	3994	Lond.	247	R. Kynaston, Esq.
St. Botolph Aldgate PC	9615	Lond.	3290*	Bishop of London.
St. Botolph without Bishopsgate R	10256	Lond.	258	Rector of St. Botolph's.
All Saints Chapel PC	—	Lond.	562	Dean & Chap. of Westminster.
St. Bride V	6860	Lond.	537	{ St. Bartholomew's Hospital, {
Christchurch V	2622	Lond.	—	{ Dn. & Chap. of Westminster.
with St. Leonard Foster Lane R	200	Lond.	—	unit. to St. Marg., Lothbury, R.
St. Christopher le Stocks R	72	Lond.	—	

The *Liber Ecclesiasticus* records that in 1835 the patrons of **Aldersgate** were the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

The patron of the **Aldgate** church was one R. Kynaston Esq. (who has also been rather elusive and the only detail I could find about him was that he played cricket for Marylebone).

The patron of the **Bishopsgate** church was the Bishop of London.

Dates for Aldersgate

1050 Earliest record of church

1333 Earliest recorded Rector

1627 Steeple rebuilt

1751 Partial rebuilding

1778 Samuel Green organ built

1783 Demolished

1788 Rebuilt by Nathaniel Wright

1831 Eastern screen wall built

1874 Restoration

1892 Restoration

1953 Restoration

1966 Restoration

2008 Further work to eastern aspect.

Comparative dates for Aldgate

1108 Earliest prior

1115 Earliest record of church

1489 Church rebuilt

1705 Harris organ built

1739 Demolished

1744 Rebuilt by George Dance the elder

1875 Restoration

1888 Restoration by J.F. Bentley

Classification?

So here we have a site which is known to have supported a Christian church by 1050 - a date when England had been ruled by Edward the Confessor (ruled 1042-1066) for seven years. But was it he who built the church? We know that his predecessor Harthacnut (ruled 1040-1042) made generous gifts to the church but is he likely to have built St Botolph's or is it more likely to have been his half-brother Harold Harefoot (ruled 1035-1040) or his father Cnut the Great (ruled 1016-1035)?

We know that Cnut built a memorial church in Ashingdon, Essex in 1020 to commemorate the lives of the soldiers who died at the 1016 Battle of Assundun so it is conceivable that he might have had a hand in building more churches that we do not know about.

Alternatively the church might have been founded even earlier. I doubt very much that St Botolph himself would have founded it but it might have been part of the late C10 Monastic Revival led by Bishop Aethelwold of Winchester. Either way, from its position at one of the principal gates to the City of London there can be no doubt that it was in the business of 'travel' and I would therefore suggest a B(ii) classification - a Travellers' church founded between 800 and 1066.

Thanks

My grateful thanks to Simon Dowdy and his team for their welcoming assistance.

Correspondence

1. Revd Margaret McPhee from St Botolph's, Hevingham, Norfolk who writes with the good news that the Hevingham's church roof has now had its lead replaced thanks to a sudden unexpected legacy which meant that two hefty loans were not needed.



Zina and I had visited the church in August 2016 just a short while after the theft was discovered and I must admit to finding the loss quite upsetting



... but here is Margaret, determinedly hammering the new lead back into place. She tells me that all sorts of alarms and security measures have been installed and I assume that one of those is a strategically-placed vat of boiling oil.

She and the whole church cordially invite members of the society (and any others who are interested) to join them on Sunday 26th May at 10.30 a.m. to give thanks and dedicate the new roof. I would certainly have attended if I was in the country but sadly I shall be abroad. If you attend please make yourself known to Margaret.

2. Revd Paula Griffiths wrote from St Botolph's Hadstock, Essex with a similar invitation to a Service of Thanksgiving for the successful completion of the church's restoration. Many parishioners have contributed both work and finance to this project. The service is on 17th March at 3 p.m. (nicely out of the sailing season!) so this time Zina and I will have much pleasure in attending.

3. Margaret Gornall wrote from Culpho and **Roy Tricker** wrote from Ipswich to say that although they always enjoy the *Botolphians* they both *particularly* enjoyed last month's feature on St Botolph without Aldgate.

4. In response to my query about the use of the form 'Botwulf' **Colin Setchfield** wrote from Aldgate and **Revd Mary Sokanovic** wrote from St Botolph's, Whitton - both of them offering extremely useful information, some of which I am still digesting. Thank you both. This is 'work in progress.'

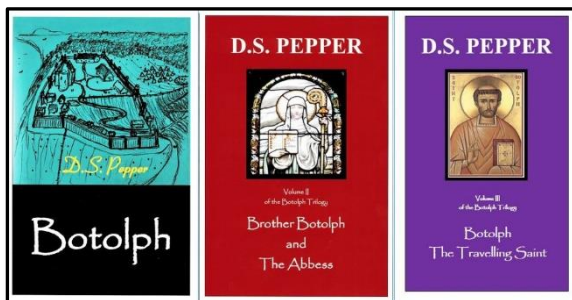
5. We must congratulate our president, Father Timothy L'Estrange on the 25th anniversary of his ordination by Jonathan, Bishop of Dunwich at the church of St Mary the Virgin, Halesworth, Suffolk on 26th June 1994. FT has clearly had an unavoidable link to Saint Botolph all his life. Halesworth is only 13 miles from Iken; his ordination was only nine days after St Botolph's day; Dunwich or Dommoc would have been Abbot Botolph's diocese; FT was later the rector of St Botolph's at the village of Botolphs in West Sussex; now he has served SOSB well by being president of our society the past five years. Thank you FT and congratulations!

The Botolph Trilogy

Volume I *Botolph* (from birth to 18 years)

Volume II *Brother Botolph and the Abbess* (from 18 to 27 years of age)

Volume III *Botolph the Travelling Saint* (from 27 to his passing onwards at 60 years of age).



Prices: Volume I at 8.99 plus £3 p&p
 Volume II at 12.99 plus £3 p&p
 Volume III at 12.99 plus £3 p&p

Special offers to SOSB members:

Volumes I&II together at £15 plus £3 p&p;
 Volumes II&III together at £19 plus £3 p&p;
 Whole trilogy I,II & III at £27 including p&p.

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REGULAR END-NOTES

If this is your first *Botolphian* and you have acquired it by circuitous means but would like to receive an email copy each month then just send an email to botolph@virginmedia.com saying 'YES PLEASE'. If you wish to UNsubscribe then send the message 'NO THANKS.'

You will frequently see the 'twin' towns of *Boston* mentioned in these newsletters, - one in Lincolnshire and the other in Massachusetts USA. The relevance to the Society is that the name 'Boston' is said to be a contraction of '*Botolph's Town*.'

Classification of Botolph Church sites:-

- A: **C7 church sites** relevant to Botolph's life.
 - (i) Founded by radiation from Botolph centres.
 - (ii) Founded along the course of Botolph's journeys.
- B: **Travellers' churches.**
 - (i) Founded before AD 800
 - (ii) Founded between 800 and 1066
 - (iii) Founded after the Norman Conquest.
- C: **Hanseatic churches** founded as a result of commercial enterprise.
- D: None of the above.

Typical Characteristics of Early St Botolph Churches.

1. Nearly all are in the eastern half of England
2. Most have Saxon foundations.
3. Many lie with 3 miles of a Roman road or well-used waterway.
4. Most are situated close to the bottom of an escarpment but well clear of water levels.
5. Many are strategically placed in areas which represent the beginnings, middles and ends of long journeys.

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