

In her will of 1899, Mary Barton, formerly of Corsley House, left £10,000 for the purchase of a piece of land at Whitbourne Temple and the building of a proprietary chapel in the memory of her husband and son. The result is the delightful chapel of St Mary's.

Mrs Barton's will specified that a Trust – The Barton Trust – be established to look after the building. The Trust exists "to keep the church in repair and make provision for such services as they consider it right to demand of the Rector of Corsley".

The chapel is an Arts and Crafts Gothic set-piece and is Grade II listed. The building was designed by W. H. Stanley of Trowbridge – his only known church, and was built by Buyers Brothers of Westbury.



Architecture

The chapel is approached from the northeast under a lych-gate built by David Carruthers (Trustee of The Barton Trust). A charming spirelet with an octagonal bell-turret, cross-windows as bell-openings and griffin gargoyles crowns the east gable.

It is constructed from local Butts Quarry stone, with the plinth and quoins cut from Atworth stone and Bath stone used for decorative features. The roofs were originally covered with Broseley (Shropshire) plain clay tiles with lead valleys and flashings, but the south slope of the nave was recovered in concrete tiles in the 1990s. Raking buttresses with elegant cappings support the building on all four sides.

The light in this chapel is glorious. The nave is lit by two rows of three-light windows with depressed arches and cusped lights with decorative fleur-de-lys leadwork. The west gable has a three-light Perpendicular-style window with timber gabled bellcote on brackets. The bellcote and bell were given to the church in 1910 by Mr and Mrs Cookson of Sturford Mead.

One enters the church via the north porch, under a sinuous arch with foliage-carved spandrels and over a flagstone floor.



The nave walls are made of red brick with bright white pointing to the level of the stringcourse running over the window heads; the walls are ashlar above this. The chancel is entirely ashlar stonework, denoting the greater importance of the east end.

The roof structure is exposed throughout: the nave roof is formed of four-bays with arched collar trusses on carved stone corbels. The chancel roof is carried on three scissor-braced trusses.

The floors are laid with Minton tiles throughout: simple geometric patterns in red, green, and navy line the nave with more decorative tiles to the chancel and sanctuary. The floor to beneath the altar is laid with green and yellow marble.

The pews in the nave are carved at a stylish, raking angle from Kauri timber (New Zealand), while the choirstalls are cut from Austrian oak.





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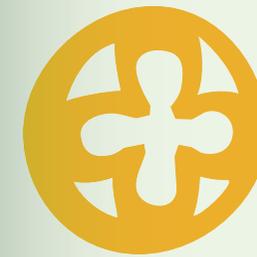
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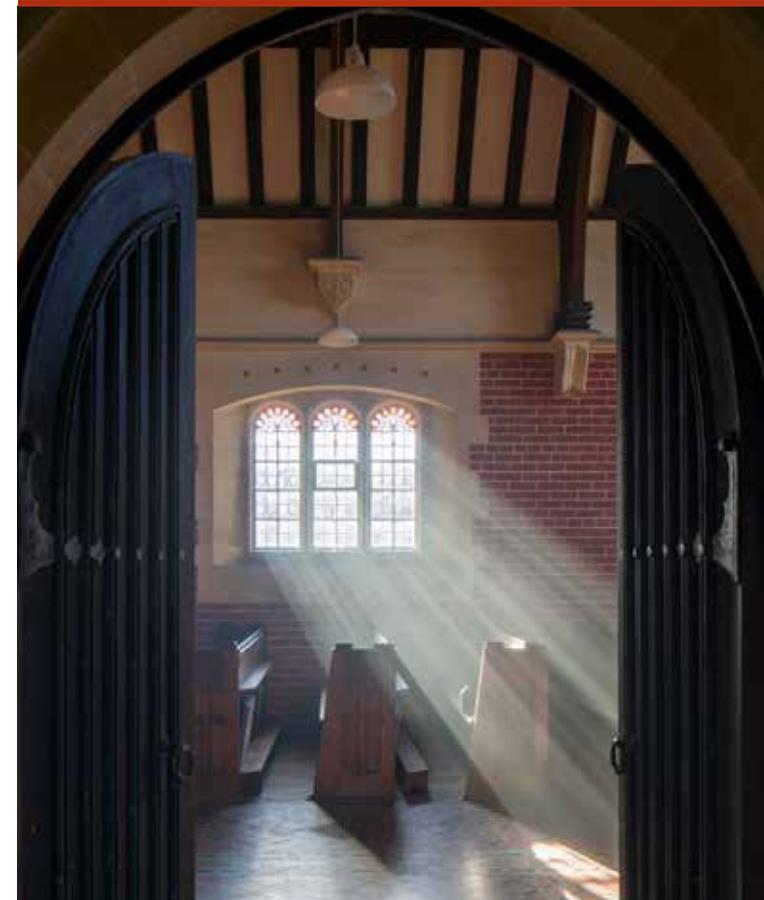
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Church of St Mary Temple, Corsley

a guide to its history

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