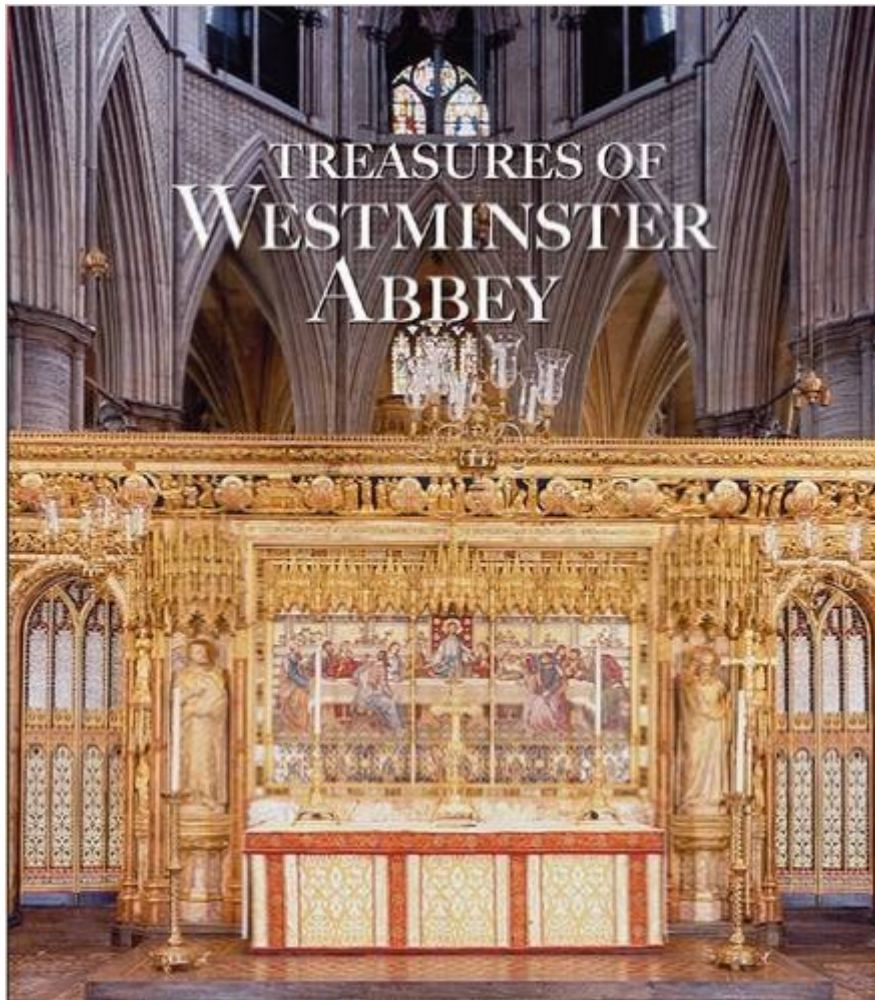


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Treasures Of Westminster Abbey



Synopsis

The Treasures of Westminster Abbey celebrates an iconic building and its rich artistic heritage. The Abbey, one of Britain's greatest medieval buildings and among the best-known churches in the world, has a history stretching back over a thousand years. Founded as a Benedictine monastery in the mid-tenth century and with the shrine of its principal royal founder, St Edward the Confessor, at its heart, it is also the coronation church where monarchs have been crowned amid great splendour since 1066. The present church, begun by Henry III in 1245, was planned with that in mind and is a treasure house of architectural and artistic achievement on which each succeeding century has left its mark. Seventeen out of the thirty-nine sovereigns crowned in Westminster Abbey also lie buried within its walls. Their medieval and Renaissance tombs, though among the most important in Europe, form only a small part of the extraordinary collection of gravestones, memorials and monumental sculpture for which the Abbey has long been famous and which is comprehensively surveyed in this lavishly illustrated book. Many of the most significant individuals in British history are remembered here: royalty and aristocracy, clergy and politicians, writers, scientists and musicians. Ranging from the thirteenth-century shrine of St Edward and the Renaissance splendour of Henry VII's Lady Chapel, to the literary memorials of Poets' Corner and the statues of Twentieth Century Martyrs on the Abbey's west front, The Treasures of Westminster Abbey describes the stained glass, furniture, sculpture, textiles, wall paintings and many other historic artifacts found within this remarkable church.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 2006, I was one of 1,000,000 people to visit Westminster Abbey, and I have a smaller guidebook from that visit. But this book is a great addition to my England memorabilia. You aren't allowed to take pictures inside the Abbey, so I have to rely on books! The book's oversized 11 x 9.5 format is nice for the occasional full-page photo of a part of the abbey. But it's the mostly smaller photos of monuments, windows, etc. that really make this book great. All photos are in color. To quote the "Note To Readers" preface, this book "describes almost all the tombs, memorials and gravestones that can now be seen at Westminster Abbey, but it certainly does not claim to mention every burial within the church and its precincts; for of this there is no complete record. ... The formal burial register only begins in 1607. ... [Sources] suggest that more than 3,000 people are buried in Westminster Abbey. ... Over the centuries, stones have been replaced or removed and inscriptions have been worn away." Though every grave might be described, only a portion are pictured. Of necessity, it would be a humongous book if each one had a photo. But almost all graves have nice snippets of biography. I've read quite a bit of English history, but I still ran across people about whom the snippet only whetted my appetite. For example, the Quire has a tablet for William Tyndale, died 1536. His English translation of the New Testament was used much unchanged in the King James Bible. His biographical snippet ends with this line: "Tyndale was burned at the stake in Vilvorde, near Brussels." What?!! And then there's the photos, bringing back memories of monuments that ranged from awesome to ridiculous. Lady Elizabeth Nightingale's huge monument is awesome.

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