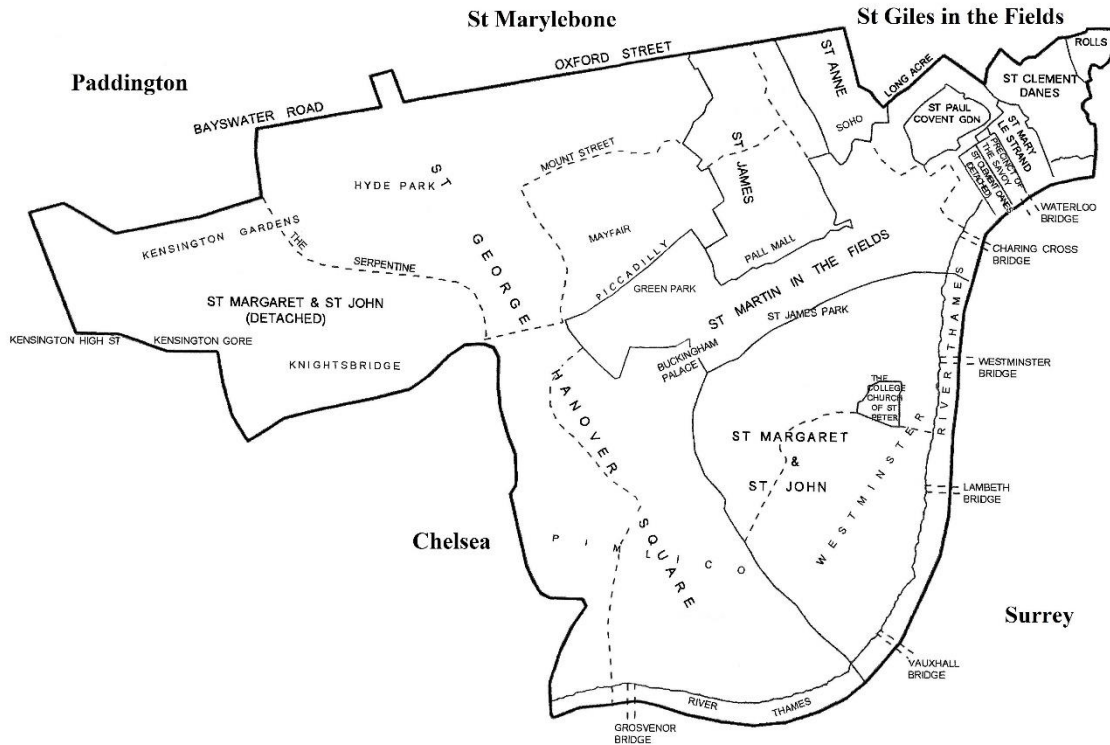




LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

ST JAMES PICCADILLY

St James Piccadilly, which is also known as St James Westminster, was a parish in the Liberty of Westminster, created in 1685 from the ancient parish of St Martin in the Fields. The City and Liberty of Westminster was succeeded as an administrative body by the Metropolitan Borough of Westminster in 1900 and then by the London Borough of Westminster in 1965.



The area that is now Piccadilly, situated as it was in the open countryside between the cities of London and Westminster, was occupied by the Hospital of Burton Lazar and those of St Giles and St James in medieval times. These hospitals had been founded to care for lepers, who were required to leave the City of London within 15 days. Upon the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539, most of this area came into the ownership of Henry VIII. Some of this land he kept for his own use (St James's Palace, which is still a royal palace to this day, stands where the old St James Leper Hospital had been) and the rest was leased out to tenants. Many of these leases were still running at the time of the Restoration in 1660, when the area began to be developed. St James's Palace is within this area but is extra-parochial, with its own administration.

The Society has produced a Parish Guide to St James Piccadilly which includes further information about the churches below as well as nonconformist and other denominations.



LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

St James, Piccadilly, also St James Westminster



The church was consecrated in 1684 following local people's petitioning to become a separate parish from St Martin in the Fields. It was big enough to seat 2,000 people. The steeple was added later but had to be taken down in 1687 after cracks appeared, and it was not finally re-erected until 1699. The church was renovated in 1937 only for it to be badly damaged by a bomb during World War II but it was reconstructed in 1953. Records of the parish of Saint James Piccadilly include: baptisms (1685-1963), marriages (1685-1986), burials (1685-1853) and are at Westminster City Archives.

St John the Baptist, Great Marlborough Street

This separate parish was formed to serve an area extending up to Oxford Street. It was using temporary accommodation from 1865 until its church was consecrated in 1885. It was closed in 1937 when the parish was amalgamated with St Thomas, Regent Street, and the church was demolished. Records include baptisms (1871-1937) and marriages (1886-1936) and are at Westminster City Archives.

St Luke, Berwick Street

A Huguenot Church, known as La Patente, was established in Berwick Street in 1689. In 1694 it moved to Little Chapel Street and in 1707 the vestry of St James proposed fitting it up to be a chapel of ease to the parish. A new church was built on the same spot and was consecrated in 1839, a parish being assigned in 1841. In 1935 the parish merged with St Anne Soho and the church was demolished in 1936.

Records include baptisms (1845-1935) and marriages (1853-1934) and are at Westminster City Archives.

St Peter, Great Windmill Street

This church was consecrated in 1861. In 1953 the parish was united with the combined parishes of St Anne Soho and St Thomas Regent Street and St Peter's was closed in 1954 and demolished. Records include baptisms (1851-1951) and marriages (1865-1953) and are at Westminster City Archives.



LONDON WESTMINSTER & MIDDLESEX FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

St Philip, Regent Street

This chapel was built on the lower end of Regent Street, south of Piccadilly Circus, in 1820. It was demolished in 1904. Records include baptisms (1861-1903) and are at Westminster City Archives.

St Thomas, Regent Street

This church was erected as a proprietary tabernacle by Dr Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, in King Street (now Kingly Street), off Regent Street in 1702. In 1869 it became a district church in the parish of St James and was dedicated to St Thomas. The district of St Peter, Great Windmill Street was joined to St Thomas in 1937. In 1954 St Thomas was joined to St Anne Soho. Records include baptisms (1854-1954) and marriages (1870-1991) and are at Westminster City Archives.

++++++