

The Stained Glass Windows
Of
St. Mary's Church, Deane

THE EAST WINDOW

This beautiful window was executed by William Warrington of London in 1845 (in Vicar Girdlestone's time). It is 11ft wide by 14ft 6ins high and contains 14 figures in two rows of seven.

Jesus is portrayed in the centre of the lower row with 3 Apostles on either side; 6 other Apostles are in the upper row, together with St. John, the Baptist.

Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of 1849 states:

"The East window (of Deane Church), which is of great size, has been embellished with figures of our twelve apostles, in richly stained glass executed by William Warrington of London, and this imitation of ancient stained glass is said to be one of the best yet produced in the country".

Whittle, a Bolton historian, had this to say in 1855:

The eastern, or altar end, window is enclosed by a horseshoe arch of large span. The stained glass is splendid, being filled in compartments with 14 evangelical figures, in flowing robes, exquisitely coloured; and niche-cusped, fret and foliated work adorn the whole. The tracery consists of seven lights each in the three transoms, all grouped and mullioned."

The figures in the upper row, from left to right are:

St. Matthew, (LEVI, the tax gatherer) holding a sword.

St. Philip, holding a cross.

St. Peter, with a large key, as being the leader of the early Church.

St. John, The Baptist, holding a lamb.

St. Paul, holding what may be a scroll wrapped around a staff, with a decorated top.

St. James (The Greater) has a scroll under his left arm and holds a staff ornamented with scallop shell. The latter refers to pilgrimage, and St. James may have been the first disciple to go on a missionary journey. James and John were sons of Zebedee and, because they were impetuous, Jesus called them "Boanerges" or "sons of thunder".

St. Andrew holds two loaves. At the feeding of the Five Thousand, it was he who said "There is a boy here with five barley loaves and two fish". Tradition says that Andrew was crucified on a transverse cross – hence the St. Andrew's flag.

Lower row are:-

St. Simon the Zealot, a member of a strict Jewish sect – holds what might be the artist's impression of a falchion or type of broadsword (like a saw). Tradition says that he was hewed to death by heathen priests. Simon was a companion of St. Jude (or Thaddeus) on many missionary journeys.

St. Bartholomew (Nathaniel, according to St. John's Gospel) has a scroll under his right arm and there is a flaying knife depicted in his right hand. It is said that he was flayed before being beheaded.

St. John (the 'Beloved Disciple') has a golden chalice in his right hand. There is a legend that he was offered a golden chalice containing poisoned wine. He was the writer of the fourth GOSPEL; three Epistles and the last book in the BIBLE, "THE REVELATION TO JOHN".

Our Lord Jesus giving a blessing with his right hand, and holding a symbolic world in his left.

St. James (The Less), son of Alphaeus is holding a fuller's club in his right hand, and a scroll under his left arm.

St. Thomas called Didymus (the Twin); also called the Doubter has a scroll under his right arm and holds a spear in his left hand. The spear refers to his martyrdom, and tradition says it happened in India. Even King Alfred of Wessex, 800 years later believed that Thomas had been a missionary in India and sent alms to India "to St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew" as well as to Rome. St. Thomas is a patron saint of builders and sometimes has a carpenter's square attached to the spear.

St. Matthias is holding a sword in his left hand. He was chosen by lot to become an Apostle in place of Judas Iscariot. His missionary work was mainly in Judaea, where he was stoned and beheaded.

It appears that Mr. Warrington, the artist, has left out St. Jude (the companion of St. Simon on many missionary journeys) and put in St. Paul to make up twelve apostles, and with ST. JOHN, the Baptist, and our LORD Jesus, the 14 figures in the window.

To appreciate the full beauty of the window it should be viewed when the morning sun is shining. Then the gold of the chalice, the greens, blues and reds of the robes, and the many colours of the niches and small lancets rejoice the heart. If binoculars are available, the detail is seen to better advantage. If it is possible the viewer should see the window also from the outside, when the lights are on inside the Church. Disregarding the fact that it will be a mirror image, the warmth of the colours is beyond description.

In 1848, a book entitled "Sacred & Legendary Art" by Mrs. Jameson, was published. She had taken six years to compile a detailed work on the lives and legends of the early Apostles and Saints. She states that in Sacred Art, the Apostles are always twelve in number, but not always the same people. For example, St. Jude is often omitted to make room for St. Paul (as here at Deane). Sometimes St. Simon and St. Matthias are replaced by St. Mark and St. Luke, as in Palermo Cathedral. Also, on an ancient and beautifully carved pulpit in Troyes Cathedral, the arrangement of the Apostles has St. John, the Baptist, leading as a messenger, and the others following on.

Over the years there has been adverse comments about the Reredos (erected in 1886, in memory of Bishop Fraser, Lord Bishop of Manchester 1870-1885), obscuring the feet of the figures in the lower row. To determine if something could be done about this, Canon K.M.Bishop approached Manchester University in 1959, and I am indebted to him for permission to quote a letter from Mr.A.C.Sewter of the History of Art Department.

30th Sept., 1959

Dear Mr. Bishop,

I was most interested in seeing the East window of Deane Church, reputed to be a work of William Warrington (about 1845). I realise very well the nature of the problem for which you are seeking a solution. The appearance of the lower tier of figures in the window, with their feet hidden by the top of the reredos, is certainly worrying, and it would improve the effect of the East end considerably if some means could be found of preventing the overlap of these two features. Of course, if Warrington had been able to foresee this difficulty, he could quite easily have arranged to place his figures higher up in the lights, and to use some of the spare height in the form of pedestals below the figures, instead of occupying it all with rather extended canopy-work above them. I considered very carefully what possible alterations might be made in the window, in order to raise the lower figures clear of the reredos. There are, I think, two possibilities, but there are fairly strong objections against both of them. Firstly, the top sections of the lower tier of lights (upwards from the little ogee-arches made by gold coloured branches) could be taken out, and the rest of the glass raised up by about 8 inches, this space being filled at the bottom with an additional stone, sill, or with plain glass, or simple border patterns. This would be enough to lift the figures clear of the reredos, but it would mean losing a whole series of colour notes, skilfully used by the artist to balance the scheme of colour in relation to the backgrounds of the canopy work below, and the tier of figures above. It would also mean losing nearly all of the series of leaves introduced into the trefoil heads of these lights, again very skilfully calculated by Warrington to link the design of the whole window together, as they occur similarly at the heads of the upper tier of lights, as well as in the tracery panels.

Alternatively, it might be possible to cut out the lower halves of the tall panels of canopy-work and move the figures up, again by about 8 or 9 inches. If this were done, however, it is impossible to be sure that the canopy-work would appear to convect properly with the arcading immediately over the heads of the figures. I should certainly hesitate to recommend that either of these courses should be followed. After all, this window is a work of art, and a work of considerable historical interest, which ought to be preserved in its original form, if at all feasible, without mutilation. The quality of the coloured glass in the window, particularly the ruby, blue and green, is exceptionally good for the period; and though the 14 figures are not very elegantly drawn, they are at least boldly designed, and have a good deal of character. The window as a whole has a depth and glow of colour which is certainly rare in 19th century glass. When it is cleaned, I am sure it will look really beautiful. William Warrington was indeed one of the best English glass-painters of his time; he wrote a "History of Stained Glass", and supplied windows to, among other places, the Cathedrals of Ely and Truro. The 1840's were a period when remarkable changes were taking place in the art of stained glass in England, and any good work of that time stands in the same relation to the High Victorian stained glass revival as the Italian primitives do in relation to the Renaissance. Early Victorian glass may not be widely appreciated at the present moment, but in another generation or two it may well become the object of very high general regard.

In case you may respect my attitude to the window to be merely eccentric. May I point out that Peter Fleetwood-Hesketh, in his Murray's Lancashire Architectural Guide, 1955, says, in his paragraph on Deane Church, "There is good Victorian glass of various dates, particularly that in the East window". It may be worthwhile to mention that the Art Journal, in its special number devoted to the International Exhibition of 1862, where William Warrington and his son, both showed examples of their work, especially commends the windows by eight makers only; the first of them was John Hardman of Birmingham, and the second was Warrington. The writer comments that they are not mere literal copies of earlier styles, and remarks that they 'stood out conspicuous, both in style and colour, among the works by which they are surrounded'.

My own suggestion therefore, would be that the window, after the cleaning, releading and repair which I understand is proposed, should be returned to its position intact; and some other way be sought to solve the difficulty of the overlap with the reredos.

This reredos is already rather low, and any attempt to lower its main structure would result in its appearing rather stubby. It is surmounted, however, by a pierced gallery, 4 or 5 inches in height, and with some hesitation, I suggest that its removal might be the answer. In my opinion, the reredos itself, would not look worse without it, and it could be cut off quite easily, and the top neatly finished off level, with little expense. The few inches thus gained would be just enough to allow the feet of the figures in the window to be seen, if not from the Altar steps, at least from the body of the Church. I can appreciate that there may be sentimental and perhaps other reasons, why the reredos should not be interfered with, but it comes to a choice between tampering with the window and tampering with the reredos, I should not hesitate to advocate preserving the window intact, as much the more valuable work of art of the two.

I suppose the only absolutely unobjectionable solution would be to raise the whole fabric of the window in the East wall by 10 inches or so. This would, of course, add considerably to the expense of the task, no doubt a sufficient burden already. Anyhow, I hope that this report may help your Parochial Church Council to reach a decision on what is undoubtedly a tricky problem.

Yours sincerely,

A.C.Sewter.

THE CHANCEL

South Side

Called the Tempest window, it has a piece of old stained glass depicting the coat of arms of Baroness Beaumont who was one of the Tempest family of Lostock.

SOUTH AISLE

Hulton Chapel – east wall

Here we see two oval pieces of stained glass, beautifully designed, showing the arms of the Hulton family. Probably from the 17th Century, it is the oldest stained glass in the Church.

Hulton Chapel – south wall

A three-lights window in memory of Sir William Hulton (born 1844) who died in 1907. The left light shows St. Luke with a lily; centre light – St. George and the Dragon; right light – St. Peter with fish and sceptre.

The European War 1914-1918 Memorial window

It has four lights depicting from left to right:-

St. George of England, with flag and sword;

St. Patrick of Ireland, blessing with his right hand and with Bishop's staff in his left;

St. Andrew of Scotland, clinging to a 'transverse' cross (cross saltire) with his right hand, and with the Scriptures in his left; St. Andrew was crucified on a 'Y' shaped cross or tree.

St. David of Wales with a Bible and Bishop's staff.

The 'Sunday School' window (1856)

This is in memory of Elizabeth Heelis who did great work for the Sunday School. There are three lights, depicting children being brought to Jesus, who holds a child in His arms. "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven".

See also the ELIZABETH HEELIS window in the North wall.

BAPTISTRY

On the south side is the Bowden window (1932), in memory of Clara Bowden, wife of James E. Bowden. The left light shows St. Mary with children; on the right, our Lord wearing a crown, and holding a sword and reed.

On the west side is the Booth window (1946) – in memory of James Booth who was a churchwarden, and Florence M. Booth. Also of John P. Booth (died 1981) and Charles L. Booth (died 1946). In the upper part of the left light is the arms of Manchester Diocese – three mitres set vertically. The upper part of the right light shows the arms of Whalley Abbey – three fishes holding Bishop's crooks. St. Philip's meeting with the Ethiopian official is portrayed – as told in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 8.

NORTH AISLE – from the West end

The Bennett window (1959)

This is a three-light window in memory of Ann Hepple Bennett, wife of Doctor Bennett, M.D., who was a lay reader in our Parish. It was designed by Mr. H.R. Keedy and shows John and Charles Wesley with their mother. This is one of the few memorials in our churches, which depict any of the Wesley family who were such ardent preachers of the Gospel, and who always remained in the CHURCH OF ENGLAND. The small pictures in the lower part of the window show (1) John preaching in a church; probably the original Ridgeway Gate Chapel, Bolton, now replaced by the Victoria Hall; (2) The High, Oxford, similar to what it was around 1750, representing one of many places that the Wesleys had visited to preach the Gospel; and (3) the burning of their home at Epworth, Lincolnshire, by people who disliked their father. John was rescued, and so he said, “He was a brand, plucked from the burning”.

Elizabeth Heelis window

In memory of Miss Elizabeth Heelis who died in 1865. She is also commemorated in the Sunday School window in the South Aisle. This is sometimes called the ‘Dorcas Window’ because it shows a woman named Tabitha (“her name in Greek is Dorcas, meaning a deer”), who lived in Joppa and made clothes, and did much charitable work among the poor. Acts Chapter 9, verses 36-43.

Greenhalgh Window – three lights (1881)

In memory of Jane Greenhalgh, wife of James Greenhalgh, “Greenhill”, Deane. It depicts three of the Beatitudes from Jesus’s ‘Sermon on the Mount’. (St. Matthew Chapter 5; St. Luke Chapter 6).

Left light – “Blessed are they that mourn ...” Martha (or Mary) meeting Jesus when he was called to heal Lazarus, their brother. However, Lazarus had died before Jesus arrived at Bethany, but he raised Lazarus from the dead. St. John Chapter 11.

Central light – “Blessed are the merciful...” Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth to salute her, after the Angel had told her (Mary) that Elizabeth would bear a son. St. Luke Chapter 1. God’s mercy had been showered on both Mary and Elizabeth.

Right light – “Blessed are the pure in heart...” Depicts Jesus with two of his disciples, probably Philip and Nathaniel. Jesus said of Nathaniel “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile”. St. John Chapter 1, verses 43-50.

The George Marsh window – Three lights (1897)

In memory of George Marsh, the Deane Martyr, who was burned at the stake at Chester in 1555, and is mentioned in Fox’s Book of Martyrs. (there is a copy amongst our old books, kept in the cabinet.)

This window was erected by Mr. James Boardman in 1897. Mr. Boardman had been a warden of St. Mary’s, Deane, from 1867 to 1872 and then moved to London. He is the author of ‘Records and Tradition of Deane Church, Village and Parish’ (Two volumes).

Mr. & Mrs. Boardman were both natives of Deane, and the window was given in thankfulness for 40 years of marriage. The window was dedicated on Wednesday, March 10th, 1897 by the Bishop of Ballaratt (later to become Suffragan Bishop of Blackburn). It is a three-light window depicting Faith, Charity and Hope.

Left light – Faith holding a cross. The verse (Acts 14, verse 27) specifically refers to Gentiles receiving the Faith through the preaching of Paul and Barnabas.

Central light – Charity – the giving of food and clothing 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, verse 13.

Right light – Hope, holding an anchor. Titus, Chapter 2, verse 13. Above is a three-light clerestory window, representing Moses, Aaron and David.

The John Kynaston Cross window (1887) – 4 lights

In memory of John Kynaston Cross of “Fernclough”, Deane M.P. for Bolton and Under Secretary of State for India.

From left to right: the first light shows Jesus with his hands together and a dove descending. Above the dove is a hand with finger pointing. The Latin below the hand may be translated “Behold my beloved Son”. The picture shows the scene after the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. (St. Matthew Chapter 3; St. Mark Chapter 1; St. Luke Chapter 3).

Second light – An angel stooping with a golden chalice. The Latin (lower right) taken in conjunction with that in the lower left of the third light reads “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed”.

Third light – Jesus is kneeling, praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. There are flowers in the foreground and trees towards the back. The Latin in the upper half of the picture reads “He bore our weakness Himself and took away our grief Himself”.

Fourth light – Jesus is wearing a crown, as “King”, giving His blessing and holding an orb with a cross, in His left hand. The Latin on the scroll reads “Come to me all who labour and are heavy burdened. I will give you rest”. The Latin along the bottom of the window reads:- “Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world give it peace”.

Above the Kynaston Cross window is a 4-light clerestory window. Angels are depicted in the 1st, 2nd and 4th lights, and a sacrificial lamb with a red cross flag in the 3rd. the Latin above the 1st, 2nd and 4th reads “You are blessed Lord, in the firmament of the sky and worthy of praise and glory, and exalted on high through the ages”.

The Chapel window

This window in the east wall of the Chapel is modern stained glass. It was designed by Mr. G. Pace of York, who was also the architect of the Chapel, which was dedicated in 1976 by Canon K.M. Bishop (Vicar of Deane 1950-1974). The window was given by Mr. & Mrs. M. Crook in memory of their parents. Mr Pace indicated the theme of the window as tongues of fire leaping upwards.

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The early fathers of the Church, the first authors of Christendom, expressed the mystical relationship between glass and light; the brilliant effects of stained or coloured glass in association with light. In the Renaissance period, stained glass became to be regarded as the most truly Christian of all the Arts. From 1200 right-up to the present, glorious examples of beautiful windows have been designed, all over Europe. In England, the windows in our Cathedrals and Churches show the development of the art to a magnificent degree. To quote Professor D. Talbot Rice in "Realms of Art",

"The strength of the English artists in stained glass, lay in their portraiture, and in their treatment of heraldic themes in ornamental panes".

So let us with Sir John Betjeman, in his poem "Sunday Mornings, Kings, Cambridge":-

"Join choir and great crowned organ case, in centuries of song
To praise Eternity, contained in Time and coloured glass."

APRIL 1985