



A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.

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A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 33

MIKE DEEMING WRITES:

When you enter the St Thomas Chapel in the north transept, facing you on the east wall are two fine Clayton and Bell windows from the 1870's. They were moved here from the south transept in 1924 when the WW1 windows were installed. They depict scenes from Christ's entombment and resurrection – on the left from the top, Christ's appearance to Mary, the Angel and two Marys at the tomb and Christ's body being prepared for burial – on the right Christ's appearance to two disciples at Emmaus, His appearance to St Thomas and His charge to St Peter.

But who do they commemorate? Many windows will include a dedication in the glass and, failing this, sometimes a brass plaque is mounted nearby with the commemoration. Plaques are the order of the day here, but they are on the slope below the glass and impossible to read from the floor, partly because of the height and angle and partly because of discolouration over the decades. Sam Kelly kindly got a ladder out and photographed them for me and, with a bit of care, they can be deciphered. So, what do the plaques reveal? A Scottish invasion!



The plaque on the right (south) side commemorates the Rt Rev John Douglas DD, who was Bishop of Salisbury from 1791 till his death in 1807. He was born in 1721 in Pittenweem, Fife, the son of a shopkeeper, and schooled in Dunbar and then Oxford, before attending Balliol College, Oxford for his degree. After a gap-year in France and Flanders, he was ordained deacon, served as an army chaplain at the Battle of Fontenoy, then returned to Oxford and was ordained priest. His life turned round when he was introduced to the Earl of Bath (the 2 -day Prime Minister in 1746) who invited Douglas in 1748 to accompany his 17-year-old son William, Viscount Pulteney, on the Grand Tour. Thus, a lifelong friendship with Lord Bath ensued which gave Douglas a string of livings and connections. From 1750 onwards and guided by Lord Bath, he wrote endless political and literary papers and pamphlets, including, for example, a pamphlet vindicating Milton from

charges of plagiarism. These papers led to him being described by Oliver Goldsmith as "the scourge of imposters, the terror of quacks". He was appointed an honorary DD, FRS, Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries and Trustee of the British Museum. With Bath's patronage he progressed through parishes to the Chapter of St Paul's, in 1787 becoming Bishop of Carlisle, in 1788 Dean of Windsor and in 1791 Bishop of Salisbury. His contacts were developed in the 60's and 70's at the 'British Coffee House', run by his sister as a haven for

Scottish ex-pats, and then from around 1790 at 'The Club', the first and most elite of the London Clubs, set up by Joshua Reynolds and Samuel Johnson. There he continued writing including the official reports on Captain Cook's travels – another member of The Club was Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, who was the botanist on Cook's voyages.

As Bishop of Salisbury, he automatically was appointed Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, which gave him accommodation in the Salisbury Tower at Windsor Castle. The portrait (possibly by Romney) shows him wearing the Garter Mantle with the Chancellor's Purse. He lived largely in London and then at favoured watering holes in the summer. He died in 1807 and is buried in the vaults of St George's Chapel, Windsor. Of any significant contribution to his religious duties or to the Salisbury diocese, I can find no record.

His son, William, was ordained too and became the Canon Precentor of Salisbury Cathedral; William's wife Anna bore six children, one of whom commissioned the window in 1870. The plaque records that the window is in memory of his grandfather, father, mother, aunt and four siblings.

Another Scot, the Venerable William Macdonald (1783-1862), is commemorated in the left lancet. He was Archdeacon of Wilts for 34 years and Canon Residentiary of the Cathedral. He served several different parishes during his time in Salisbury and was Prebendary of Bitton, giving him a seat in the Quire close to the Canon Precentor. His daughter, Frances, funded the lancet and her name too is recorded on a second plaque (shown here), set just above the first plaque below this lancet. She was the widow of the Rev George Thomas Marsh who was vicar of All Saints, Sutton Benger, near Chippenham, for 26 years.



The windows are designed as a pair, with the six biblical scenes similarly styled. But the give-away for their relative status is the coat of arms in the Douglas lancet. This shows the Virgin and Child representing the See and the quartered arms of Douglas and Ogstoun, all enclosed in the Garter with motto and ensigned by a mitre.



Ogstoun in Elgin is now the home of Gordonstoun School – a far cry indeed from Salisbury!

CLOISTER CLUE



Whilst working on the Mulberry Tree garden behind the Chapter House, I couldn't help noticing the East wall of the Cloisters (left). According to our Clerk of Works, this is the point where the wall was extended as the Bishop gave more land to the Cathedral on condition a door was put in to give him better access from the Palace. Note that this is the one place where there is no buttress. You can also see a rather amateur joining of the two walls with the southern part standing proud.

Now, if you look at the same corner from the South side (right) you will see that the top wall arcading does not extend to the corner. This is more evidence for the expansion of the Cloisters but of course this is also the point at which the Library extended to before being cut back.



THE MULBERRY QUESTION

Working as a Cathedral volunteer gardener I have overheard guides tell the story of the Mulberry Tree. How

James I was duped by the King of France and shipped over Black Mulberries not the White that are needed for silk production. I suppose one should not let the facts get in the way of a good story, but here is what really happened. James I in 1607-8 asked the nobility to plant some 10,000 mulberry trees for silk production. The only British mulberry trees at that point were largely left over from the Roman occupation and much prized by the Tudors for their fruit.

Unfortunately, it is too cold for the White Mulberry (*Morus alba*) which originally hailed from China. So, with expert advice, James I (and Charles I) planted the Black Mulberry (originally from Persia) which can be used for silk making but produces a coarser thread which is rather prone to breaking. You will recall that pictures of the time show the Thames frozen over so a mini Ice Age did not help matters. Incidentally, the silk-worms did not live on the trees; instead the young shoots were harvested and taken to the silk farms for the 'worms' to eat in comfort.

The *Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* in 1685 led many Huguenots (French Protestants) to emigrate to England, bringing the knowledge of silk production with them. Their industry thrived but used imported silk. Incidentally, James did plant white mulberries in his colony of Virginia where the climate was better suited to them, but still the silk industry failed. A tenuous connection to our tree might be via the 1st Earl of Salisbury whose famous Head Gardener, John Tradescant the Elder, planted mulberries at Hatfield House in 1611.



Our tree is definitely a black mulberry (*Morus nigra*) as even before it is in leaf it can be identified by its alternate lateral buds (see photo, left, *courtesy of tree Guide UK*). Ovid's story of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, parodied in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, tells the myth of how the mulberry fruit turns from white to red. The children's song *Here we go round the mulberry bush*, on a cold and frosty morning may refer to the kings' repeated

attempts to produce silk but as mulberry is a tree not a bush, the earlier version of *Here we go round the bramble bush* might make more sense. This is very appropriate to the Cathedral as our mulberry is surrounded by brambles.

THE DUCK AND CAT

My latest book is *Devizes & Central Wiltshire* by John Chandler (of *Endless Street* fame) published by Hobnob Press in 2003. In the Chapter on the administrative district of Charlton (between Upavon and Urchfont), he mentions that the downland part of the parish was purchased by the War Department in 1898. *It has been estimated that eight million shells have landed on Charlton Down since then (rendering any alternative use in future impracticable).*

However the story that really caught my attention was of one Stephen Duck, a poor thresher who taught himself to read and write (not particularly good) poetry. He was discovered in 1729 and became the protégé of Queen Caroline. His wife having died, he married the queen's housekeeper and took holy orders. He obtained a rich living in Surrey but became depressed and on his way back to Charlton, drowned himself.

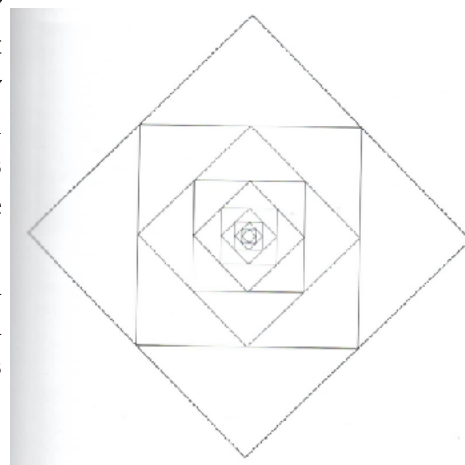
His memory has been preserved by an annual Duck Feast at the local pub, the *Charlton Cat* (right, now a tea room). Originally meant for Charlton threshers the feast was financed by the profit from a small plot of land, *Duck's Acre*, given by Lord Palmerston in 1734. The feast is presided over by the Chief Duck (sometimes a member of the **Fowle** family)! By the way, the Cat is probably a corruption of Cut (nearby deep cutting). The pub sign was originally the arms of the Poore family which included a leopard supporter and hence *Cat*.



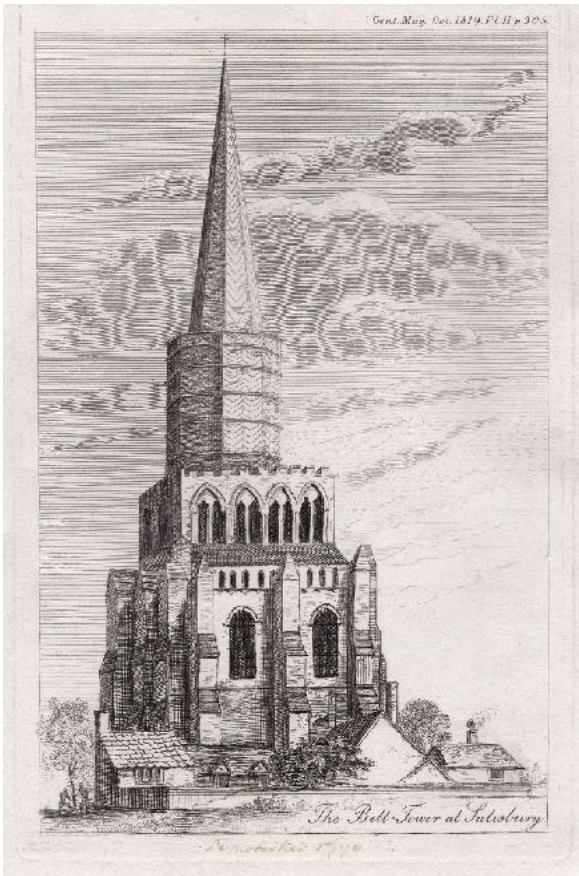
BUILT BY DESIGN

As you know, medieval 'architects' were very into proportion (which alas is not always true today). The late professor Lisa Jardine (daughter of Jacob Bronowski) wrote in *Worldly Goods* how the change in art 'angels' from the aristocracy to the merchant class led Renaissance artists to include mathematics in their painting as this is what the donors understood. Even earlier, educated churchmen would be able to relate to their 'architect' over the geometry behind great buildings - which was seen as divine proportion.

You are I am sure familiar with the *Golden Section* which in part accounts for the satisfying proportion of the Parthenon. It was used in Salisbury Cathedral in the great piers of the Crossing. A ratio I had not come across before though, is the series of 11 progressively smaller 90° rotated squares, inscribed within an original square. This means that the side of the first square equals the diagonal of the second, and so on. If the side of the largest square was 58', the sequence will be 41', 29', 20' 6", 14'6" and 10'3". 58' and 41' appear in the chapter house and the cloister. 14'6" is the radius of the main arcade arches and 10'3" the radius of the triforium arch. The smaller squares 2'7" and 1'10" controlled the dimensions of the pier designs.



Matthaus Roriczer wrote about this in the 15th century showing that both late and early Gothic still had much in common. The illustration and much of this information comes from *Salisbury Cathedral (Perspectives on the Architectural History)* by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England 1993.



NOW YOU SEE IT.....

Some of you were confused by the 1768 painting of the spire-less Bell Tower in J&T No.88. Left is an older engraving reproduced in the Gentleman's Magazine of 1819 in the Public Domain. There is also a print dated 1761 in the Bodleian Library. The wooden spire made the building height 200 feet high.

Sumptuous and Richly Adorn'd (RCHM 1999): 'By the mid 18th century the belfry was surrounded by houses and shops and the ground floor had been turned into an ale house. The rowdy behaviour of the tavern's clients did nothing to endear the dilapidated tower to the Dean and Chapter and in 1758 the third storey of the belfry was taken down. 5 cracked bells were sold in 1778 and in 1790 the sixth bell and the medieval clock were relocated to the Cathedral tower. The belfry was then demolished in 1790 and the remaining two bells sold for £105.'

NORMAN STORMIN

Those of you who have read Handbook No. 2: *The Spire & the Storm* will know all about the dreadful storm of 1362 that drastically altered the coastline of the North Sea. In reading the history of *The Cinque Ports* (Edward Hinings, Spurbooks 1975), there were also three ghastly events in 1286-7 which altered the coastline of Kent and East Sussex. Winchelsea and Broomhill were destroyed and New Romney was left a mile from the coast. Hastings castle collapsed and blocked the harbour and Thanet was no longer an island (see map, courtesy of Clem Rutter, Free Documentation License). On the plus side, Rye benefitted from the re-routing of the River Rother.



When they were not manning ships to protect our coastline, the fishermen of the Cinque Ports were notorious and very violent smugglers. In 1747 they broke into the Customs House in Poole and removed 37 hundredweight of impounded tea, passing through Fordingbridge on their way home to pick up fellow criminals.

Ed's Anecdote: I was surprised to find the Hospital Works Dept. employed a young lady to run their stores who was known to one and all as *Norman!* On enquiry, it turned out to be short for the punning *storeman norman.*