

A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 11

MIKE DEEMING WRITES:

Edward Woore (1880-1960) was one of a group of young artists who became disciples of Christopher Whall, the leader of the Arts & Crafts movement in stained glass. From the 1890s, Whall had been advocating the key importance of the stained glass artist being involved in all stages of the process of designing and making stained glass windows.

This was in total contrast to the major Victorian window makers, where the artists handed over their designs to large workshops where each of the various stages – choosing glass, cutting, painting, leading, installation – could be handled by different teams. The self-portrait here (above) was

drawn by Edward, modestly straightening a lead calm, and is used as the frontispiece to Whall's seminal book 'Stained Glass Work', published in 1905. This book was one of the Artistic Crafts Series of Technical Handbooks which covered a whole range of topics from jewellery to embroidery, cabinet making to bookbinding, and it became the standard guide for all stained glass artists in the UK throughout the twentieth century.

Woore was decorated for his service in the First World War, during which he served in the Leicestershire Regiment and lost the sight in one eye. After the war, he became manager of Whall's Hammersmith studio. The photo (left) shows Woore here eating a bun and another artist, Rachel Tancock, finishing a banana. In 1924 he moved across the Thames to Deodar Road,



Putney, to one of several houses there with rooms with large east-facing windows, giving ideal light for his work. Other artists, including Rachel Tancock, moved as well, and gradually Putney too became a focus for stained glass art.

Our Woore window in the North quire aisle of the Cathedral (right), was made in 1932 and is a memorial to Dean William Page Roberts, who was Dean throughout WW1. The images of the refugee Ruth and of King David here are stark lessons about war, but hold out the hope of reconciliation and striving for a better future. They also extend the family tree shown in the medieval Jesse window in the nave, which depicts Christ as a direct descendant of Jesse, the father of David. From the artistic point of view, Woore uses plenty of slab glass, glass of varying thickness, to create wave effects.



Stylistically, he pays tribute to the designs of Charles Rennie Mackintosh; and, in his novel approach to grisaille (greyish) glass in the borders, he maximises the light through this north-facing window. Although many windows carry maker's marks, this one is unusual in that it carries his full name, and is thus a fitting tribute to an outstanding artist.