

A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 18

MIKE DEEMING WRITES:

Shields, coats of arms, armorials – the stained glass windows of the Cathedral display many examples. The best known are the shields at the base of the West window, six of which came from the Chapter House and date from around 1270. My favourites are the royal arms of King Henry VII at the top of the central lancet of the west window which date from 1506 and then the badges of the armed forces’ nursing branches in the Chapter House. But perhaps the most surprising is the shield from the armorial of Pope Honorius III, no less, amongst the group of shields in the window in the North quire aisle, alongside the Gorges’ tomb.



Key to the dispute between King John and the barons was the role played by Pope Innocent III and Archbishop Stephen Langton, as outlined in the recent Jot&Tittle 69. By 1220 both King John and Pope Innocent had died and been succeeded by the nine-year-old King Henry III and by Pope Honorius respectively. Thus it was Pope Honorius who had ‘granted the licence for transplanting the church’, according to the ‘Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey’. Langton and his steward, Elias of Dereham, back from Paris, were firmly re-established in England. These new appointees were all represented at the ceremony of laying of the foundation stone of the new Cathedral of Salisbury. Their arms are displayed with others in this North quire aisle window, together with a scene of the ceremony and a tribute to the craftsmen who built the Cathedral.

Previously this window had clear quarry-tile glazing. But Dean Sydney Evans had sought to create the effect of subdued light in the Trinity Chapel with the installation of the Prisoners of Conscience window; he was concerned that this effect was diminished by the bright light cast over the ambulatory at the West side of the chapel by this clear window. He invited the Cathedral’s glaziers to hold a competition to design a new window to reduce this light. The competition was won by the then newly-qualified Sam Kelly, now



the Head Glazier. The design, painting and cutting and leading-up of the glass and its installation were all carried out by Sam, though the original scene of the laying of the foundation stone had been drawn by Trevor Wiffen, head glazier at the time. The window was installed in 1982.



An afterthought in the picture was the image of Ginge, the workshop cat, in a face-off with a dog. Not surprisingly, this is the feature of this window most commented on, rather than the shield of Pope Honorius. Both the Pope and Ginge led distinguished lives. The

Pope finally settled the Barons' War in 1223 and started the Fifth Crusade. Ginge protected the Cathedral from mice for twelve years and, when he died in 1988, was buried beneath this gravestone just outside the cloister near the south-east door, 'a cat of great character'.

To find out more about the work of the Cathedral's team of glaziers, go to <http://www.salisburycathedralstainedglass.co.uk/>