



Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1733 onwards and divers historical prospecting.

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A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 3

Mike Deeming writes: As you stroll up the North quire aisle past the morning chapel, it's easy to miss one of the Cathedral's most extraordinary windows. Two lancets of grisaille glass rise above two charming biblical scenes.

The grisaille is 13C, some from the Chapter House and some removed from the Trinity Chapel east window when the Prisoners of Conscience window was installed there in 1980. But look more closely at the pictorial panels – the baptism of Christ and Abraham receiving the angels. What is exquisite about these 16C Netherlandish glass images is the use of silver stain.



When we use the term 'stained glass' these days we usually refer to all coloured glass in a window. But most glass isn't actually 'stained' – the colour is introduced in the original glass melt and is correctly referred to as 'pot-metal' glass. So individual pieces of glass would typically be of one colour throughout. Most medieval (and then Gothic revival) glass would be in deep blues, reds, yellow and greens. But look more closely at this picture of the baptism. You can see there are shades of yellow within pieces of white glass – hair and foliage. This is achieved by painting a silver nitrate solution (or mix of silver and gamboge) on the glass, and firing it again. The silver nitrate penetrates the glass

and changes the glass ionisation, causing it to filter yellow light instead of the clear or white light. So, in practice, very little 'stained glass' is actually stained. The technique was developed in Germany and Flanders in 14C and here you see some of the best examples in the Cathedral. The contrast with the purple pot metal glass used here for the angel's wings and Christ's cloak is striking. Note the Latin inscription *Hic est filius meus dilectus in quo* ('This is my son in whom I am well pleased', Matthew 3:17) emerging from the Holy Spirit descending as a dove, with silver-stained wings.

Of course, silver stain was very expensive,



so its use tended to be limited to such items as hair, halos or royal crowns. It's worth looking at other windows here to see if you can spot the staining!

The window is dedicated to two former Canon Treasurers, Charles Myers and Robert Quirk, and a fitting tribute to their guardianship of the fabric of the Cathedral.

THE GHOST OF THOMAS CRAPPER

Something of a revolution in hygiene began in Victorian times. Chapter minutes
S January 1898: Robert Francis accepts post of Under-porter. Clerk of Works to examine lodge and report on removal of water closet and erecting a new one elsewhere.

The Communar and the Masters of the Fabric were authorized to carry out the work necessitated by the requirements of the Urban Sanitary Authority with regard to water fittings to water closets.

Agreed estimate of £30.9.0 for new WC in Close Porters' lodge but instructed that the ventilation of the WC must be carefully provided for.

Consent given to Bursar of Marlborough College for: Conversion of stables into laundry.

Removal of insanitary closets and substitution of earth closets.

Removal and substitution of ventilation pipes.

Removal of present flushing and replacement by deluge flushes.



THE ROBBER STONE

The Robbers' Stone II Memorial stone. c.1840 is made of limestone and found on the verge of the A360 just south of West Lavington. It is approximately 1.6 m high with cast iron plate attached to front, bearing inscription of a robbery on October 21 1839 and the pursuit, apprehension and punishment of four felons. It commemorates a victory for law and order over highwaymen who roamed the lonely downs in the Lavington area.

At this spot Mr Dean, of Imber was Attacked and Robbed by Four Highwaymen, in the evening of Octr. 21st. 1839. After a spirited pursuit of three hours one of the Felons Benjamin Colclough fell dead on Chitterne Down. Thomas Saunders, George Waters and Richard Harris, were eventually Captured, and were convicted at the ensuing Quarter Sessions at Devizes, and Transported for the term of Fifteen Years. This Monument is erected by Public Subscription as a warning to those who presumptuously think to escape the punishment God has threatened against Theives and Robbers. Note the spelling of "thieves" as "theives" on the monument!

The second monument within MOD land at Chitterne which records the death of one of the fleeing robbers: There is a further monument within MOD land at Chitterne which records the death of one of the fleeing robbers. Unfortunately, it is not accessible to the public. The inscription reads:

This monument is erected to record the awful end of Benjamin Colclough, a highway robber, who fell dead on this spot in attempting to escape his pursuers after robbing Mr Dean of Imber in the evening of October 21, 1839, and was buried at Chitterne without funeral rights. 'The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them' Proverbs 21.7 The three companions in iniquity, Thomas Saunders, George Waters and Richard Harris were captured and sentenced at the ensuing Quarter Session of Devizes to transportation for the term of fifteen years. 'Though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished' proverbs 11.21.

What actually happened?

Matthew Dean was making his way home to Seagrams Farm at Imber from Devizes market on 21 October 1839, when he was attacked by four men near Gore Cross Farm. They pulled him to the ground from his horse and robbed him of three £20 notes from the North Wilts Bank, a sovereign and a half in gold, £2 in silver and his hat. The robbers ran off towards West Lavington.

When Mr Dean recovered, he followed the men on foot, enlisting the help of Mr James Morgan, John Baish and James Kite of Gore Cross Farm “take a stick in your hand as a man has been robbed” yelled Baish. The chase was on with one robber losing his pursuers and eventually the three other robbers were tracked down. Morgan left Baish and Kite to get further assistance from William Hooper who brought his gun.

The robbers were then surrounded and challenged, but denied all knowledge saying “we’ll fight for it first”. William Hooper told them to seize the robbers at which point Colclough shouted “you b...., I’ll blow your brains out!”

“Fire away, have the first shot” replied Hooper, but Kite and Baish were reluctant to grapple with them, so instead Hooper kept shouting in a loud voice to attract further attention “Robbers!” with the robbers retaliating by trying to drown out his voice by shouting “Fox hunters, Tally Ho, Tally Ho”

The robbers then ran off again and a 3-hour pursuit ensued with extra re-enforcements joining the party in the form of Hooper’s brother James, who happened to be crossing the down from Tilshead to Imber, Hooper’s shepherd and his son from Imber and Mr W. Sainsbury to help them with the arrest.

One of the robbers, Benjamin Colclough, fell and was left , but the chase of the remaining two continued.

Exhausted, they were finally surrounded, but still put up a spirited resistance with their fold sticks, threatening Mr Sainsbury who retaliated by holding up his large whip and saying “If this is not enough for you, I have a brace of bulldogs (pistols) in my pocket. If you make the least resistance, I will shoot you dead on the spot”

At last they surrendered; the pursuit had lasted over three hours and the stolen pocket book was later found on the down and the notes safe.

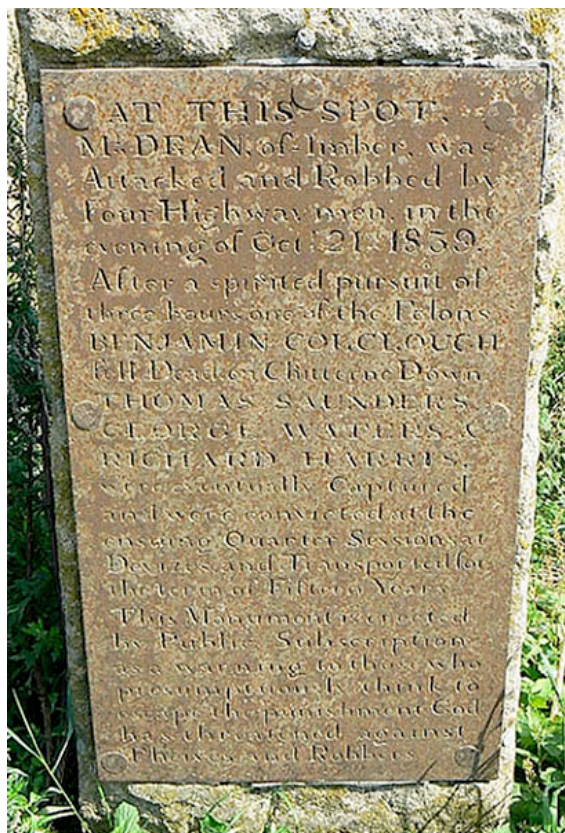
The two robbers were escorted to the Lamb public House at West Lavington and given to the constable.

The next day, Morgan found the third robber (Benjamin Colclough) dead on the downs. His death certificate states he was 35 years old, a hawker, and that he died from ‘rupture of a vessel on his brain, produced by over exertion in running away to escape justice’.

The fourth robber, (Richard Harris), was later apprehended and committed to Devizes Prison with the others others (Thomas Saunders and George Waters), pending their trial.

The Jury at Benjamin Colclough’s inquest gave the verdict of felo-de-se one who ‘deliberately puts an end to his own existence, or commits an unlawful act, the consequences of which is his death’.

The three robbers were sentenced to 15 years transportation and embarked on board the convict ship Lord Lyndoch for Hobart, Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania) on 5 September 1840, arriving on 5 February 1841.



There were many other instances of highwaymen accosting travellers on Salisbury Plain in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, especially on market days with farmers having to travel well-armed. These two memorial stones were put up as a deterrent!

DID YOU KNOW?

In Medieval times writing (*scriptura*) and scripture (*scriptura*) were synonymous.

By 1215 all towns had at least one school.

A few girls attended primary school but almost none went to grammar schools (11-15 years) and above that level was solely a male preserve.

In 1179 Pope Alexander III decreed that each cathedral should maintain a schoolmaster to teach its clerks and other poor scholars for nothing. This is recorded in a diocesan statute of Salisbury in 1215.

A well brought-up aristocrat was expected to be skilled at chess.

For further education it was necessary to go to France, especially Paris. Some of the teachers were English, notably Stephen Langton who taught Theology and was responsible for arranging the Bible in books and chapters.

The full Arts course took 9 years ending in an MA but most just attended for a year or two. By 1215 half the Salisbury canons were MAs.



Richard I's nurse was named Hodierna (left) and gave her name to the Wiltshire village of Knoyle Hodierna.

Richard I was a celebrated song-writer. *Ja nus hons prins* (no man who is in prison) can still be bought in music shops today.

John was sent at the age of 7 to the household of the Justiciar, Ranulph Glanvil where he may have gained his interest in law.

At the time when anti-semitism was at its height a church deacon fell in love with a Jewish woman. Stephen Langton had him defrocked in 1222, and burnt at the stake!!!!

There were certain *Great Fairs* in which not only English but European suppliers showed their wares. The most famous was St. Ives in Cambridgeshire which lasted 3 - 4 weeks every year after Easter. Not only were wooden stalls set up but front rooms of houses were hired out and cart-parks were

overflowing. Boston, Lynn, Stamford and Winchester were also popular. St Giles church outside Winchester lasted for 16 days from 31 August and enabled English merchants to trade direct with the continent without using the costly London middlemen.

When London marshes froze over, skilled winter sportsmen tied animal bones to their feet and propelled themselves with iron-tipped poles.

William The Marshall was the acknowledged master of European tournaments. Richard I encouraged the English to emulate the skill of the French and set up five official sites, one being between Salisbury and Wilton.

For more such nuggets I recommend you purchase a copy of **1215**, The Year of Magna Carta by Danny Danziger & John Gillingham, Coronet Books 2003. You can get a very good second-hand copy from Amazon for £2.69.

Gesælige niwe gear!