



### A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 26

**M**IKE DEEMING WRITES: One of the privileges of being Head Boy of 'H' House at Winchester College was to wear a bowler hat for the house photograph. In 1877 this privilege fell to Clifford Wyndham Holgate, seated in this photo. A studious pupil he also distinguished himself in being part of the team that won the Ashburton shield at Wimbledon that year – not tennis, but an inter-school shooting competition held at the National Rifle Association site there, before it moved to Bisley.

From Winchester, he went up to Brasenose College, Oxford, where his tutor was a young Rev John Wordsworth, himself a Wykehamist, who later recalled that it was “their friendship that shaped his (Holgate’s) career”. Holgate graduated in 1881 and spent two years at Lincoln’s Inn before serious illness forced him to warmer climes to recover. He spent two years with his sister in Australia and New Zealand where he compiled two pamphlets classifying the countries’ libraries. He returned to England in July 1885, coincidentally the same month that John Wordsworth was installed as Bishop of Salisbury. Needing a legal secretary, Wordsworth invited Holgate to take up the position. So Holgate studied ecclesiastical law, was called to the Bar and moved to Salisbury in 1886, living in the Bishop’s Palace for the next 16 years, never marrying. Whilst continuing to act as the Bishop’s legal secretary, Holgate was a cornerstone of the various organisations representing Wykehamists, writing numerous articles for their magazines, corresponding regularly with fellow old boys and attending all their gatherings. But his biggest contribution was to research and publish the Winchester Long Rolls (two volumes covering the years 1653-1721 and 1723-1812), a listing of all the boys who attended the school, with their personal details and family connections. All this research he assiduously carried out in his study in the Bishop’s Palace, and some of the correspondence is still extant.

He was promoted to Diocesan Chancellor in 1902 and also appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the



position of Actuary to the Lower House of Convocation. This necessitated a move to London. But serious illness struck again, leading to his premature death in 1903 at the age of just forty-four. Throughout his short career, he was recognised for his sincerity and unswerving loyalty; the Bishop felt he had lost both a son and a brother.

One of his other interests was Winchester Castle, birthplace of King Henry III, and particularly the Great Hall where the Arthurian Round Table is housed. William Longespee was arguably King John's most loyal baron and it may well be that Holgate modelled himself on Longespee, in his relationship with Bishop Wordsworth. Holgate left numerous books, paintings and other memorabilia to the school and the castle, and a substantial legacy to Salisbury Cathedral. In 1950, the stained glass artist Christopher Webb, who was working on the window commemorating George Herbert, was also invited to design a Cathedral window to commemorate Holgate, to be installed behind the Hertford monument at the East end of the South quire aisle. Appropriately, Webb modelled the window on those in the Winchester Great Hall, with armorials of key people and places associated with Holgate's life. At the top there are the arms of King Henry III and



Longespee, below that, those of Winchester College and of Brasenose College and below that, those of the Holgate and Wordsworth families. Tucked away behind a monument of great significance, unobtrusive but an essential part of the fabric, the window reflects Holgate's own life. It is also close to Wordsworth's cenotaph in the Trinity Chapel, reflecting the closeness which existed for most of Holgate's life.

Reverting to the very first photo above, it's interesting to wonder about any other famous connections. I'm sure there are many, but one that I spotted is the pupil Lothian Bonham Carter, great-great-grand-uncle of the actress Helena Bonham Carter!

*I'm grateful for the advice of Suzanne Foster, archivist of Winchester College, in writing this article.*