

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

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## DID YOU KNOW?

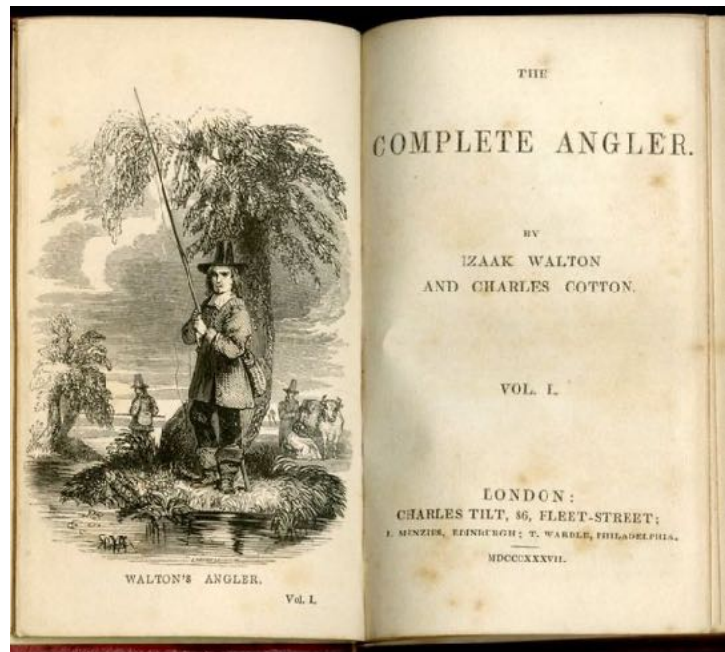


Izaak Walton fished in the River Avon with Bishop Seth Ward.

Mrs Eline McNamee née O'leary (left) was lost on the Titanic with her husband, manager of Liptons in Boscombe. They were recently married and moving to the US to take up another appointment for Sir Thomas Lipton. Eline's body was recovered by the SS Mackay-Bennett and the Bishop of Salisbury and his wife were among the many callers at the O'Learys to express their sympathy.

George Herbert (1593 - 1633), the famous metaphysical poet and orator, took holy orders and became the rector of the tiny St. Andrews Church at Lower Bemerton. He and his wife took on three orphaned nieces and the five, together with their servants, crossed the road to church twice a day. Twice a week he attended the Cathedral and afterwards would make music with the cathedral

musicians. He wrote much and his book *Outlandish Proverbs* (outlandish meant foreign) of 1,000 collected aphorisms includes *His bark is worse than his bite* and *Who is so deaf, as he that will not hear*. He is commemorated by a niche on the Cathedral west front and a memorial window. As for connections, his biography was written by Izaak Walton! Izaak spent much of his fishing time at Charles Cotton's property on the River Dove, Hartington (Derbyshire) - where my parents spent their wartime honeymoon.



## CORRESPONDENCE

Nick Pritchard writes: A couple of things I picked up by guiding at St Cross Hospital, Winchester: apparently the Winchester Geese were called this because of their habit of baring their white breasts to passing punters. This, as you said, was in Southwark, to be precise, in Cock Lane!!!! If you were unfortunate enough to catch something nasty off one of these ladies you came out in a rash known as 'goose flesh'...

Henri de Blois, Bishop of Winchester, used some of the huge taxes he made from these prostitutes to finance the foundation of St Cross Hospital in 1136.

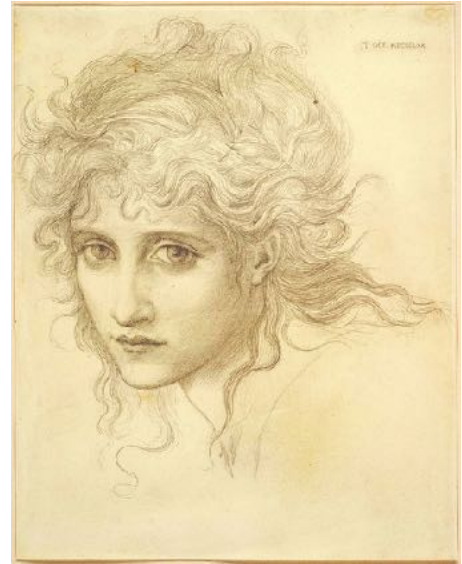
Editor - this subject all started with Love Lane in Salisbury; its a bit like turning over a stone.

## A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - No.1

**M**ike Deeming has kindly offered to contribute a regular piece on stories behind the Cathedral windows.

*People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within* - Elizabeth Kübler-Ross.

When you look at a painting depicting an unnamed person, as opposed to a portrait, it's tempting to surmise who is portrayed. I'm a fan of the artist Lydia Corbett, who, when studying art in Paris, became Picasso's muse as the 'Girl with the ponytail'.



But does the same happen with stained glass windows? Henry Holiday, who succeeded Edward Burne-Jones as chief designer at John Powell & Sons, was a leading designer of the 'Aesthetic Movement'. This movement built on the work of the Pre-Raphaelite artists and sought the ultimate in 'beauty', whether in fine art, literature or music. Holiday extended this approach to stained glass.



So when in 1880 he was invited by the children of Mary, Countess of Radnor to design a commemorative window depicting four Mary's and four Old Testament Holy women, it's not surprising that he turned to images of the women who had posed for so many pre-Raphaelite pictures. The windows (in the south quire aisle) show clear likenesses of Jane Morris (William Morris' wife), Fanny Cornforth (left) and Maria Zambaco (above). Maria Zambaco was a divorced mother who became Edward Burne-Jones mistress and tried to persuade him to share a suicide pact. Fanny Cornforth and Jane Morris were both mistresses of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. There's no evidence that Holiday was alluding to the biblical characters – he was concerned with portraying beauty.

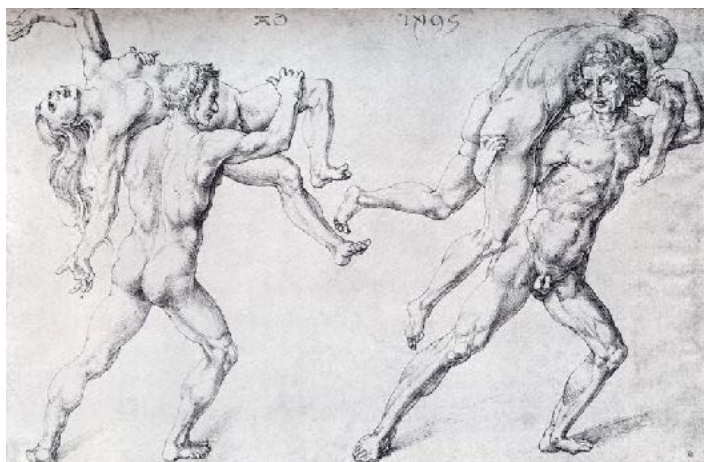
The aesthetic movement flourished at the end of the nineteenth century, but after 1900 the frontiers of stained glass shifted to the Arts and Crafts movement, led by Christopher Whall. The Cathedral has a magnificent example of this type of window through which we will peek on another occasion.

## CONNECTIONS

**Y**ou may well have come across the factions of the mercantile Guelphs and the landed Ghibellines that dominated Italian (and particularly Tuscan) politics in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. The *Guelphs* were supporters of the Pope and the *Ghibellines* of the Holy Roman Emperor. What I did not realise was that the names came from Germany where Duke *Welf* of Bavaria fought the Hohenstafens of Swabia (Holy Roman Emperors) whose castle was *Waiblingen*. The fascinating link is that the remaining German Guelphs became the ruling house of Hanover whose descendant is of course our Queen. The Prince Regent instituted a Hanoverian order of chivalry in 1815 named the Royal Guelphic Order (right). The current head of the Royal House of Hanover is the husband of Princess Caroline of Monaco and rejoices in the name



Ernst August Albert Paul Otto Rupprecht Oskar Berthold Friedrich-Ferdinand Christian Ludwig Prinz von Hanover Herzog zu Braunschweig und Lüneburg Königlicher Prinz von Grossbritannien und Irland (looks as if he was named by committee). A reborn Guelph Party was established in 2015 with its headquarters in Florence.



The Rape of the Sabine Women, so often the subject for painters and sculptors, is based on the early Roman myth of Romulus when there were not enough females to sustain the population. The neighbouring Sabines were invited to a ceremony during which the young Roman men carried off the unmarried girls. I gather that there is a reflection of this event in bridegrooms carrying their brides over the threshold - but hopefully not as portrayed by Albrecht Dürer, left.

### THE WOODWOSE

Our Cathedral is quite well off for examples of The Green Man, much beloved by modern druids, but what was this strange foliate face spewing branches and leaves? In 1939 Lady Raglan wrote a thesis on the subject that followed on from anthropologist Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890 - 1915). As a result it became accepted wisdom that these were pagan beliefs that had been absorbed by the Church. However, modern research has found no evidence of the Green Man before the Christian period; so what on earth could be the origin of these faces.

It appears that they arrived from France, probably with the stone masons and they lasted from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century in English church architecture. They are first recorded in France in the 10<sup>th</sup> century where they appeared as border illustrations in books written by monastic scribes. So it would seem they are stylistic inventions that became part of the Romanesque 'language of ornament'.

There are many influences at work here. Forests were ambivalent in Medieval times, representing an un-touched Garden of Eden as well as the haunt of outlaws and an unsafe environment. The *Tanglewood* of the foliage is also very reminiscent of Celtic art. There are elements of fertility and the endurance of Nature as well as spring overcoming winter; and here we come to the *Woodwose* or wild man of the forest that appears in heraldry as well as art. *Wode* incidentally meant 'mad'. Later perhaps Sir Gawain and the Green Knight was also an influence. Strangely there is also a female version known as *Sheila-na-gig* (from the Irish Sheila of the breasts). There is a good example (left), if rather shocking to modern tastes, of her in Kilpeck church, Herefordshire.



Once Christianised, the the influences on the Green Man changed; think of the Tree of Jesse and the *Hallowing of Fronds* in which the priest blessed the branches carried on Palm Sunday. The faces can be found in ceiling bosses, bench-ends, capitals, doorways, fonts, chancel arches and tombs. As you can see, the carpenters were just as enthusiastic as the masons. Perhaps the most famous examples are under misericords which as you know were designed to support the more elderly clergy throughout long services. What I hadn't

realised was that they were also designed so you couldn't doze off. Salisbury (1230s) is believed to have the oldest set in the country.

The Victorian Gothic Revival (Pugin, GG Scott et al) was responsible for quite a lot of the examples in parish churches. Finally, as a design, it moved into the secular world.

For more details I recommend Shire Publications' *The Green Man* by Richard Hayman.

### ALMSHOUSES & BENEFACTORS

**F**or those of us brought up under the Welfare State it is difficult to comprehend how important charity has been over the centuries, especially as for much of that time our city has not been an economically successful one. I am indebted to the Clerk to the Trustees of the Salisbury City Almshouse & Welfare Charities for the book *Caring* produced in 2000 by members of the Salisbury Local History Group. Let us start with the location of the existing almshouses administered by the Trustees that looks after some 200 souls.

- Steve Biddle House - Stratford Road
- Gloucester House - Stratford Road
- Hussey's - Castle Street
- Frowds House - Bedwin Street
- Taylor's House - Bedwin Street
- Sarah Hayters - Fisherton Street
- Hardy House - Mill Road
- Brympton House - Netherhampton Road
- Brickett's Hospital - Exeter Street
- Stoke's House - Carmelite Way
- Eyre's House - The Friary
- Trinity Hospital - Trinity Street
- Blechynden's - Winchester Street



**Trinity Hospital** is also the head office (above) and its Deed goes back to May 1379. Agnes Bottenham, the founder, was mentioned in J&T No. 50. The Pope authorized celebration of the mass in its chapel in 1390. The Sub-Warden was the working head with the Warden, usually the Mayor, in titular charge.



The Sub-Warden's accounts are in the Wiltshire Record Office and cover the period from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century to 1818. The work of the hospital was funded by legacies and the rents of donated property; a Calendar of Deeds dated 1532 lists 97 items of property, mainly in Salisbury and Downton but with some in London. Other sources were church collections, the sale of indulgences and from Proctors touring the region. It was completely refurbished following an appeal in 1702 but as insufficient funds were raised, property in Downton had to be sold. There were 12 residents originally and this was still the case in 1833, each receiving an allowance of fuel and a black cloak, with a shirt every other year.

**Mayor Thomas Brickett** built 5 almshouses in 1534 and the rents of two adjoining houses were used to cover repairs. Rebuilding took place in 1780 after which they housed 6 poor women who were spinsters or widows.

**Sir Thomas White** (above) died in 1566 leaving £2,000 (say £990,000 today), the interest from which went to 25 towns, including Salisbury. From this the Corporation was to make interest-free loans of £25 to 4 poor young men for 10 years. He also re-founded St.Johns College, Oxford which, being Roman Catholic, had fallen foul of Henry VIII.

**Joan Popley** (right) bequeathed 20 houses in London in 1570 to relieve the Salisbury poor. By 1733 (ie after the Great fire) there were 9 substantial houses yielding an annual rent of £421.11.0. This went partly to Brickett's, partly to the Workhouse with the balance going to the poor. Although not from this area, she married a Salisbury Alderman who probably also had property in London. Hers is one of the most useful legacies as it was often used to top up the others.



**Margaret Blechynden** of Covent Garden left £566.1.3 in 1682 (say £123,000) to build almshouses for 6 poor widows and keep them in repair 'for ever'. Her mother was from the local Eyre family, and her nephew, Sir Samuel Eyre, carried out her bequest. Typical of the many bequests given to almshouses was that of Elizabeth Lee who in 1755 gave £300 to be invested in 3% Consols (Government securities).

When it comes to the Eyre family one only needs to look at the wonderful monuments to be found in the Lady Chapel of St. Thomas', especially the alabaster corner monuments above the panelling at the East End, now recently restored. The family lived at No. 31 Cheese Market which was a lot bigger than today's structure as No.29 was added and which had a garden on the other side of the river with an access bridge. **Christopher Eyre** married the daughter of a London Alderman and was a Merchant Adventurer, an Upper Warden of the Leathersellers and a member of the City of London Common Council. He died in 1617 and left £400 (£102,000) to purchase land so that *the money was to be husbanded, that six or seven poor couples, past labour and children and known to be of honest disposition and God-fearing, might have convenient maintenance therefrom, for their lives.* He added £200 for the building. The almshouses were built in Winchester Street but when the ring-road was constructed a new building was erected in Blackfriars Way (1971). Its proximity to Churchill Way necessitated the installation of double-glazing. Christopher also left £260 to purchase land that would produce an income of £20 to maintain *a man fearing God* who would preach an evening sermon once a week in St. Thomas'. However it was the bishop who took the money, the egregious John Davenant.

**Edward Rhodes**, who fought tirelessly to free Salisbury from the power of the bishop, died in 1611 (a year before the city obtained its charter). He left six tenements with gardens in New Street to the Mayor and Commonality so that 40 poor people could have 12d every Good Friday. **George Mervin** was elected to the vestry of St.Edmunds church in 1649 when the nave stretched almost to School Lane. He had a *clapt seat* (folding) in his own pew for his servant. This was a status symbol, the poor having to make use of *fformes* at the back. He gave £100 for



an annual distribution among *poor decayed persons who do not receive weekly relief, nor are idle nor begging poor*. **Sir Christopher Willoughby**, whose family were Lords of the Manor of West Knoyle, was a staunch Royalist who used hunting to cover the meetings with fellow conspirators. In 1655 he was arrested and condemned to death but escaped dressed as a woman the night before his execution. He gave £400 to the city on the understanding that they would pay 4% interest to him and his assigns for ever, with 20/- going to the poor. This was not an uncommon arrangement. In 1678 he gave a

further £200 on condition that £16 per year be paid to the Churchwarden of West Knoyle.

**Thomas Taylor**, alderman of Salisbury endowed his lovely Almshouse (above) in 1698 with £1,000 (£174,000) and permission to cut down six oaks from his estate at Bramshaw. Matthew Best in his will of 1695 included £10 to purchase light-blue greatcoats for the six *almsmen*, usually needy tradesmen. If anyone died then his coat was to go to his replacement. After three years they could dispose of the coats as they wished.

As you will know by now, I like to find connections. Well, some years ago I was asked by the then Clerk to take on six of their gardens which I loved, and learned a lot. That charming lady is now partner to one of our Team Leaders!!!!

The story of the Almshouses will continue in a later edition.

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquess of Salisbury (1830 - 1903):

*A gram of experience is worth a ton of theory (Government?).*

*No lesson seems to be so deeply inculcated by the experience of life as that you should never trust experts (Covid?).*

*First rate men will not canvass mobs; and if they did, the mobs would not elect first-rate men (Trump?).*

*The splitting up of mankind into a multitude of infinitesimal governments, in accordance with their actual differences of dialect or their presumed differences of race, would be to undo the work of civilisation (Scottish Nationalists?).*

*Wherever democracy has prevailed, the power of the State has been used in some form or other to plunder the well-to-do classes for the benefit of the poor (my experience is the exact opposite).*

*The common sense of Christendom has always prescribed for national policy principles diametrically opposed to those that are laid down in the Sermon on the Mount (I think we can all agree with that one).*

*I have for so many years entertained a firm conviction that we are going to the dogs that I have got to be quite accustomed to the expectation (What would he have said 150 years later?).*

*The central doctrine of Conservatism, that it is better to endure almost any political evil than to risk a breach of the historic continuity of government (Are you listening Boris?).*

