



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

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A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 24

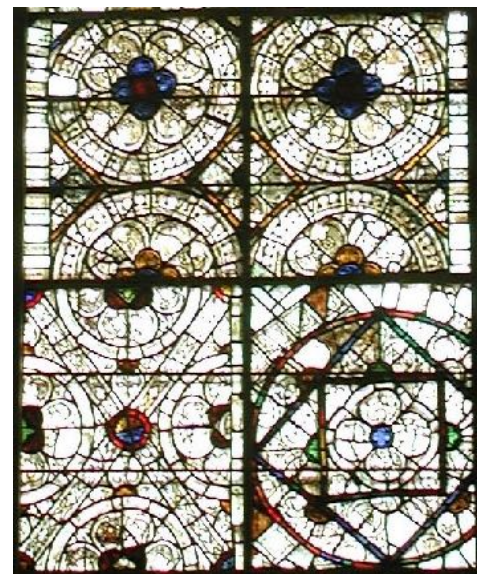
MIKE DEEMING WRITES: Surprisingly, Thomas à Becket and King Henry III stand alongside one another in the East window of the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral, despite Becket having been murdered 37 years before Henry was born. Of course, by the mid C13, Henry was firmly established, albeit with the reduced powers enshrined in Magna Carta, the links with Rome had been re-built and Becket had been canonised. These superb windows were installed in 1896 and are the work of A O Hemming, one of the lesser-known Victorian stained-glass artists.



Alfred Octavius Hemming (1843-1907) trained as an architect in Edinburgh, then joined Clayton and Bell in 1868, before setting up his own firm A.O. Hemming & Co in 1883 in Cavendish Square, London. He was very much in the Gothic Revival tradition with outstanding use of colour and detailed design. This advert from a trade magazine in the 1890s mentions that he wasn't just involved in stained glass, but also in mural decoration in churches. His work can be found in many churches across England, in addition to the cathedrals of Canterbury, Ripon and Salisbury.



One of the first windows he made after setting up on his own is the 1884 memorial to George Arney in the North transept (see J&T 57) – and the Canterbury windows closely match this style. Later, in Salisbury, he was commissioned by Eleanor Hamilton, widow of Dean Hamilton, to restore and assemble the medieval grisaille found in the glaziers' workshop above the Trinity Chapel: these panels were installed in 1896 in the North windows of the SE transept (above the vestry) in 1896. This was so successful in demonstrating the incredible skill and artistry of the medieval glaziers and of Hemming himself that, on Eleanor's death, her daughter commissioned Hemming to totally reglaze the North windows of the North transept mirroring these medieval designs. This is a dramatic contrast to James Bell's south transept windows (installed as a memorial to Dean Hamilton) which copy some of the grisaille from the West end of the Cathedral. Standing at the crossing,



the full impact of these amazing creations can be seen. I always ask visitors there which they prefer – by a short head, I would say that Hemming comes out better than Bell.

In Salisbury we are fortunate to have the widest range of medieval grisaille window designs in the country. We're indebted to A O Hemming for bringing these back to life. Hemming didn't have a maker's mark, but occasionally signed his work, as here in St Mary's Church, Farnham Royal.



THE WHISTLERS

As I am sure you know, the onetime residents of the Walton Canonry were brothers Rex and Laurence Whistler. Rex was a well-known painter who unfortunately was killed in July 1944. His younger brother was an exceptional glass engraver and it is to him we owe the Prism in the Morning Chapel and the Booker Panels in the North Quire Aisle. Laurence also served in the army and not only had to cope with his brother's death but also that of his 27 year-old wife Jill in November 1944. Laurence described the prism's scratched images as needing a dark background to be truly visible, *light needing the darkness to become articulate*. He also engraved a glass bowl for Dean Evans on his retirement

Rex had been painting a mural in Mottisfont Abbey when war was declared. At the top of the cornice he wrote *I am painting this ermine curtain as Britain declared war on the Nazi tyrants. Sunday, September 3rd*. After agonising for some time he wrote to the Brigade of Guards offering his services as a draftsman - he was not on Kenneth Clark's list of official war artists. He was accepted into the Welsh Guards where he delighted his men by transforming their dreary quarters in Brighton with *elegant and unlikely murals*. He had to leave the Canonry which was taken over by the army. It is said that the blacksmith at Codford made him a metal box that was welded to his tank to contain his paintbrushes. As a tribute, the Welsh Guards provided the lantern that houses the prism.

Quotes from Felicity Russell's lecture, Friends' Day 2013.

HIDDEN GEM

We try to have a break in Padstow once a year, and this year, on our last day, we visited Saint Petroc Minor at Little Petherick which we had often passed but never had the opportunity to look inside. It was late afternoon and getting dark, so we stumbled around looking for the light switches. When they were switched on we gasped aloud to see such opulence in such a small



parish church. It turns out that one of the ministers was Tractarian (High Church) and brought in Sir Ninian Comper (1864 - 1960), one of the last Gothic Revival architects to remove earlier changes and create his special magic.



UNDER OUR NOSES

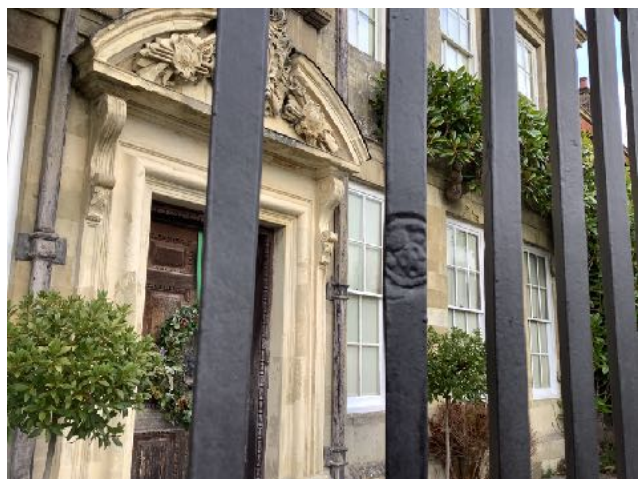
Outside Mompesson House I ran into Tony West, blacksmith extraordinaire, who pointed out to me the marks (see right) on the hand-made railings. These were to make sure the smith got paid for the work he had carried out. It is amazing what is ‘hidden in plain sight’. There was also a railing that was too short and had a piece grafted on with what I believe is called a *scarf joint*.

JOHN LACKLAND

As you probably know, John was also nicknamed *softsword* and a contemporary rhyme of 1214, after the watershed battle of Bouvines, went as follows: *The warrior at Winchester, up at the exchequer. Sharp at accounting, slack at Scripture.*

With reference to my use of the word ‘watershed’, David Carpenter commenting on Bouvines, wrote: *In Germany it undermined Otto and set up Frederick II. In Normandy it ended the chance of an Angevin recovery. In Europe it made King Philip supreme. In England it shattered John’s authority and paved the way for Magna Carta.*

HAPPY AEF TERRA GEOLA - Saxon *After Yule* (William the Conq. chose 1st Jan).



IMPORTANT NOTICE

Dear Reader

Jot & Tittle

has been issued for over three years now.

Gratefully, the interest has grown significantly.

In order to better serve our readership,

Jot & Tittle will move to a web-based format in **February**

and be delivering its issues through direct mailing.

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Thank you in advance

Editor: Mark Brandon.

If this creates a problem please let me know.