

MIKE DEEMING WRITES:

The Cathedral's windows reveal some most unusual neighbours, no more so than in the St Thomas Chapel in the North transept. There Charles Garland Verrinder stands side-by-side with Andrew Bogle Middleton.

Charles Garland Verrinder (1806-79) was for many years the Head Verger in the cathedral and is commemorated in a window that depicts four figures from the Old Testament – Moses, David, Abraham and Melchizedek - people central not only to Christianity, but also to the Jewish tradition. Melchizedek is generally considered to have brought the bread and wine to Abraham, thus in some ways presaging the role of the head verger.

Verrinder's son, Dr Charles Garland Verrinder (1834-1904) was a Cathedral chorister, studied at Oxford and then with Royal Organist Sir George Elvey. His forty-five-year career as the first organist of the West London Synagogue (Britain's first 'Reform' synagogue) overlapped with his work for the church. Across his career he composed and arranged numerous Hebrew liturgical settings, some with English translation, and took the opportunity as a respected organist and Doctor of Music to present lectures on Jewish music to the wider Victorian public. To some extent he was controversial; some viewed his role as having undermined the traditional Jewish liturgy music; others as having made a bridge with the Christian tradition, as indeed was the role of the West London Synagogue.

Dr Andrew Bogle Middleton (1819-79) was the leading advocate for replacing Salisbury's open canals with drainage sewers after the cholera outbreak of 1849 in which Salisbury was more severely affected than any other comparable city in England. The late Alastair Lack, one of our guides, has written extensively on Middleton, most recently in 'Salisbury Cathedral – 800 years of People and Place', in the Sarum Studies series. The window that commemorates Middleton's life depicts Christ and the woman of Samaria and Hezekiah bringing water to the City. This blue plaque can be found on the corner of Waterstones in New Canal.



The reason they are neighbours, of course, is that, as they both died in 1879, their windows are contemporary. Although the Verrinder lancet was originally placed here in the St Thomas Chapel, the Middleton lancet was initially in the South transept and was moved to the St Thomas Chapel in the North transept in 1924 when the South transept chapels were re-dedicated as memorial chapels for the dead of WW1.

The stylistic similarity of the windows belies the fact that they were in fact made by two different glaziers. The Verrinder window was made by Clayton and Bell, the most prolific of the Victorian

glaziers; they were widely used for commemorative windows throughout the Cathedral and made all the replacement windows in the South transept chapels. The Middleton window is by Ward and Hughes who also glazed the adjacent window (the memorial to Louisa Bowes Read). Both use similar designs with colourful images framed by copies of medieval grisaille patterns. Both companies were early users of the superb new coloured glass developed under Charles Winston's guidance to best match the medieval glass. They do in consequence sit comfortably alongside one another. Generally, Clayton and Bell windows tend to be strong on story-telling whilst Ward and Hughes windows follow simpler formal biblical images; perversely, the opposite is true here, with the Middleton lancet clearly conveying the story of fresh water being channelled to the city.



Thus Verrinder and Middleton remain unlikely neighbours but both are represented by outstanding Victorian glaziers' craft and both touch on key events in Victorian history.