



## *A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.*

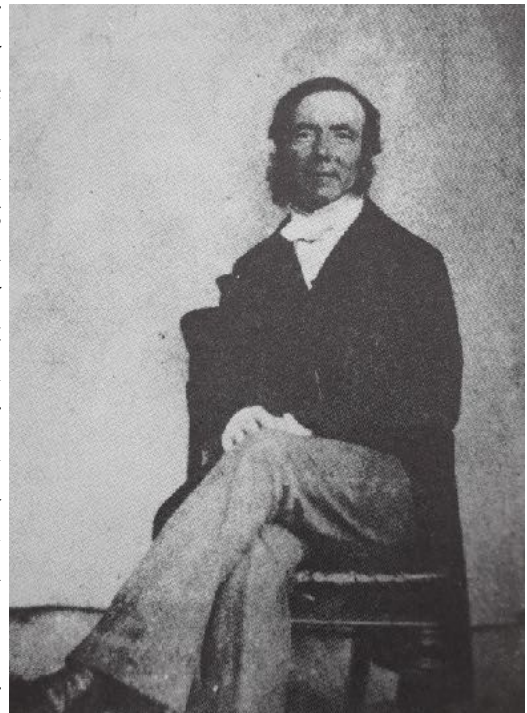
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### A PEEK THROUGH THE WINDOW - NO. 42

#### **M**IKE DEEMING WRITES:

Distraught at being jilted, it was said that the heiress Maria Langstone thereafter agreed to marry the first eligible and suitable bachelor that she met. Thus it was in 1840 that the Rev Anthony Huxtable (1808 – 1883), pictured here, stepped into the breach, taking her as his new bride back to his parish church of St Bartholomew, Sutton Waldron, North Dorset. The village thrived on farming and the making of linen buttons. He had been vicar there since 1834 and when Maria duly inherited a fortune, the first thing they did was to reconstruct the Old Rectory. They bought two large farms, to indulge his scientific interest in farming; there he carried out extensive experiments over the decades on how to enhance crop yields and, in particular, on the effects of using liquid sewage as a fertiliser! He became a key member of the Chemical Committee of the Royal Agricultural Society of England and wrote numerous articles for its journal.



The next item on the agenda was a new church for their parish, and the resulting gothic revival masterpiece, dedicated in 1847, was described by John Betjeman as “one of the most lovely examples of Victorian architecture”. It is the masterwork of the architect George Alexander and the outstanding internal decorations are by Owen Jones, using tiles designed by Augustus Pugin. Huxtable was appointed Archdeacon of Dorset in 1862 but, sadly, ill-health forced him to give this up after only nine months. He was made Prebendary of Torleton, and sat in the Cathedral quire stall bearing that name, alongside the stall of the Canon Precentor. Maria died in 1874 and the next year he married the widow Susannah Gott, who on his death in 1883 set up the Huxtable Memorial Charity which supports the poor in the parish to this day. She also commissioned a Clayton and Bell window for the Cathedral in his memory, installed in the north quire aisle as near as possible to the Torleton stall.

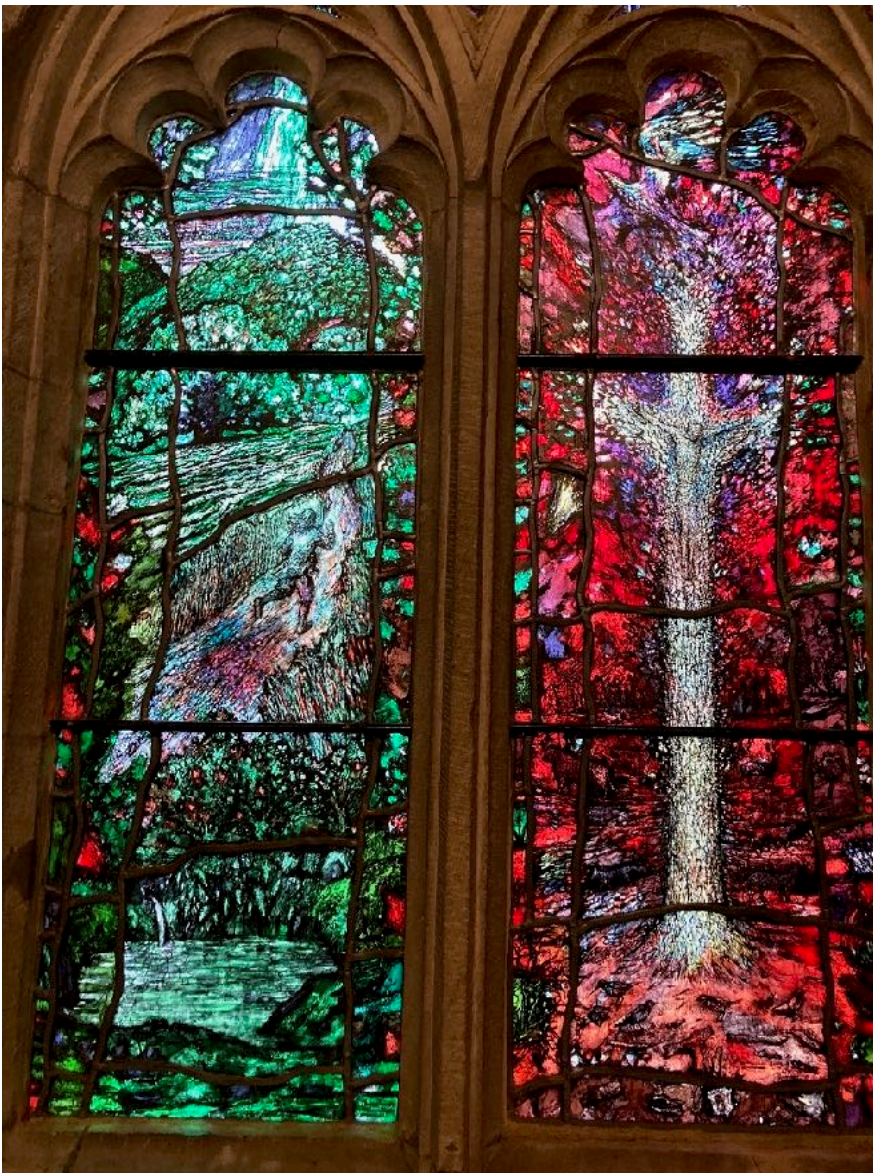
Torleton (now called ‘Tarlton’, though I suspect it sounds the same in a West Country accent!) is a hamlet in the Rodmarton parish in Gloucestershire. The manor was given as a prebend to the Cathedral around 1142 and confirmed by King Henry II in 1158. The early twelfth century, Grade-2-listed St Osmund Chapel was restored in 1875 and retains its fine Norman font. In 1997 four windows were added at the east end, designed by the Dorset-based glazier, Thomas

Denny. Denny is now one of the most highly regarded stained glass artists in England with numerous works in cathedrals and churches across the country. He is pictured here working on windows for Sunderland Minster. He aims to promote the public perception of stained glass as an art form – he said in a 2006 article in the magazine *Dorset Life* - ‘..stained glass is not always recognised as part of the art world, although stained glass windows are some of our most ambitious public works of art. Not many artists (John Piper is an exception) have bridged the gap between painting and stained glass in the public’s mind.’”



Whilst the Cathedral window is modest, I like to think that Huxtable is commemorated too in the outstanding Denny windows in Tarlton and the extraordinary secular windows in Sutton Waldron.

Ed: You know my love for connections - I couldn't resist including the wonderful pic left which is one of Denny's windows for the Audley Chantry in Hereford Cathedral. Image courtesy of



Thomas Denny (website: [thomasdenny.co.uk](http://thomasdenny.co.uk)). His style reminds of the painter Samuel Palmer (1805 - 1881).

The windows are in fact to the memory of Thomas Traherne (1636 - 1674), Anglican cleric and theologian. His writings have similarities with William Blake and Gerard Manley Hopkins.

**LAVERSTOCK AND FORD**

**S**arum Studies 6 is a local history of this Salisbury parish printed by Sarum Chronicle in 2019. Some points which have so far caught my eye:

Domesday Book - *There are 6 villeins [tenant tied to the land] and 8 bordars [holding land from a Lord in return for menial work] with 2 ploughs. There is a mill rendering 7/6<sup>d</sup> and*

18 acres of pasture. Of this land a fourth part has been put in the king's forest [Clarendon]. The standard land holding of a villein was about 30 acres. Bordars and cottars [status in doubt] ranked below villeins but above serfs in the social hierarchy. On average a bordar farmed about 5 acres of land, just enough to feed a family.

Poll tax - In 1379 the minimum age was raised to 16, and the amount payable ranged from 4d to 10 marks (a mark was worth 13/4<sup>d</sup>).

Sorviodunum (Roman Old Sarum) - A few miles to the east, the area boasted its own amphitheatre at Winterslow.

A Roman stone coffin was found at Laverstock in 1937 but nobody wanted it. Much later it was thought to be an old horse trough, broken up and the pieces used to help level the lower end of the churchyard.



The Aethelwulf ring - An Anglo-Saxon ring found in a cart-rut in 1781 and given to Lord Radnor who passed it on to the British Museum. Aethelwulf was the father of Alfred the Great and was king of Wessex from 839 to 858. The design is of two *Trewiddle style* [ named after the hoard found in Cornwall] peacocks flanking a tree-of-life.

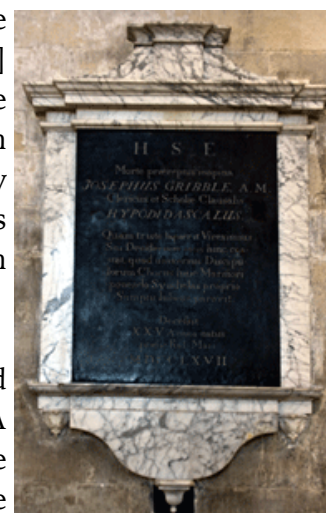
The Middle Ages - Laverstock church was served by one of the Cathedral's Vicars Choral. The Laverstock vicar was often also the Master of the Hospital of St. Nicholas.

Neighbouring Clarendon was the largest deer park in the country and the greatest palace outside London.

### TOMB TALK - Henry Stebbing

James Harris in 1825 writes: A white marble monument in the South Aisle is dedicated to Henry Stebbing DD [1687 - 1763] Archdeacon of Wilts. and Chancellor of the Diocese of Sarum, he was formerly preacher to the Hon. Society of Gray's Inn, London, in his diligent discharge of which office, for near twenty years, he was very greatly esteemed for his sound, plain, and instructive sermons; for his eminent abilities in theology are sufficiently seen in his works, which will last as long as learning itself shall continue.

He was much engaged in controversy, wherein he always distinguished himself, and was always allowed to be on the side of truth\*. A strenuous, able, and intrepid advocate for the Christian Religion and the Church of England. He was adorned with all the virtues which become the scholar, the divine, the honest man, and the good christian. At



length, worn out with age and labour, he gently fell asleep, in the year of our Lord 1763, aged 76. Henry H. erected this monument.

\*Perhaps his most famous controversy was with Thomas Chubb (1679 - 1747). Thomas was born at East Harnham and his education was curtailed when his maltster father died. He became apprenticed to a glover and then a tallow-chandler before moving to London to work for the Master of the Rolls. He returned to Salisbury where his friends enabled him to devote the rest of his life to study.



He questioned the morality of religions whilst defending Christianity. He also distinguished between the teachings of Jesus and that of the Evangelists.

The painting of Stebbing, above, is by Joseph Highmore and can be found in the National Portrait Gallery. That of Chubb, left, is by Thomas Gainsborough and is in the SCAD Museum of Art (Savannah, Georgia). Both paintings are in the public domain.



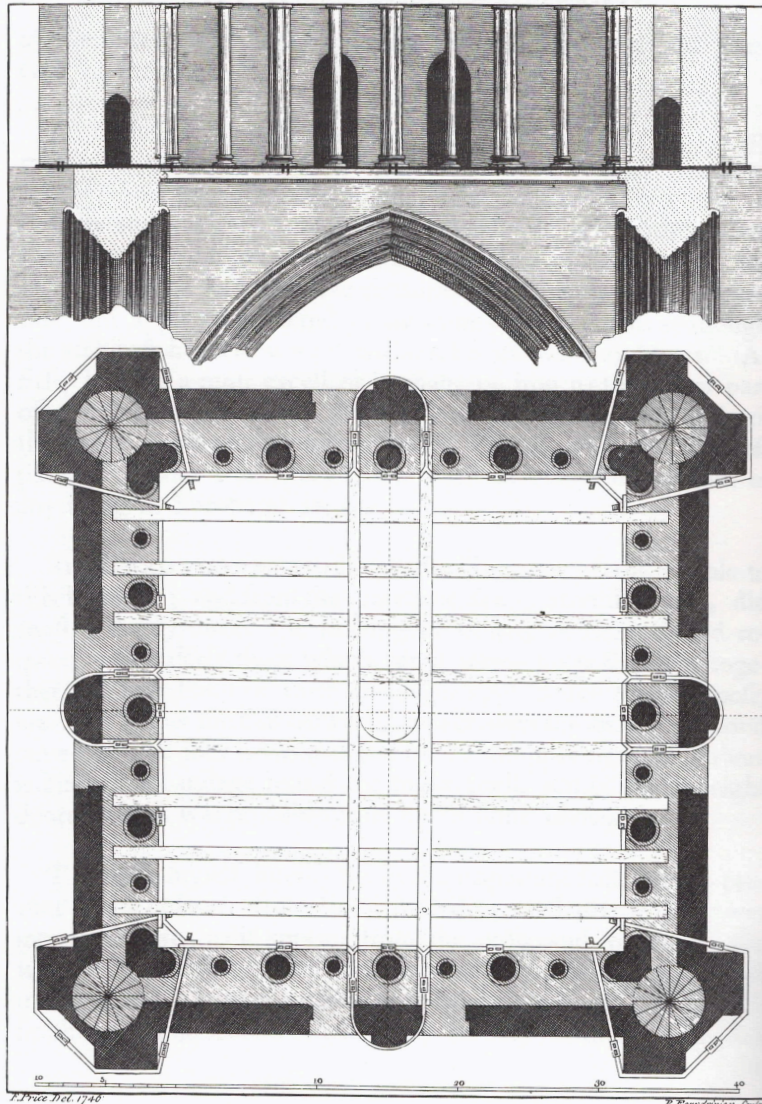
#### ARCHITECTURAL FIRST-AID

I have a facsimile copy of Francis Price's (Clerk of Works) 1753 book, *A Series of particular and useful Observations made with great diligence and care, upon that Admirable Structure, The Cathedral-Church of Salisbury Calculated for the use and amusement of Gentlemen and other curious Persons*. Francis's 1747 portrait by George Beare (right) is courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

He discusses at length the repair to the tower, a section of which I quote (whilst turning the Fs to Ss): *For this purpose, the second architects bandage, commended by Sir Christopher Wren, was examined with the utmost care; I mean, the bandage just above the arcade: And it was hoped, that even this might be improved; accordingly a scaffold was made, both within and without the tower, a little below the floor of timber, immediately above the vaulting; by this we were the better enabled to inspect the spreading shattered parts, and to apply proper methods for its security.*

*Accordingly a band was made of the shape and bigness that the iron was intended to be made by, of yellow deal only, and this was neatly fitted in every particular, and marked so as to be put together in the cloysters for examination, where it met with such approbation. that it was immediately ordered into*





*A Plan and part of the Section of the Tower, shewing the form of the Iron Bandage.*

execution; and I hope it will prove to be a well considered application. The iron bandage was forged by Mr Richard Pearce, at Rumsey, and was three times painted with white lead and oil, which not only will add to the duration, and be a means of preventing rust, but it was a vast help to drive in the several keys at the joints, and in fixing the whole; where the bandage lies close to the walls, or in the weather, it is carefully covered with sheet lead.

Left is one of Price's illustrations from Salisbury & Stonehenge Edition Facsimil Facsimileses, Andover.

#### THOSE WERE THE DAYS

**D**avid Burnett's book *On Salisbury* (Compton Press) includes this passage: The genuine piety of the middle-class family was exaggerated by the presence of the cathedral and the large number of clergymen who lived in the city. Bibles were chained to reading desks in the

station waiting rooms for the waiting travellers to consult. The cathedral chapter employed a woman whose sole duty was to remove the daisies from the Close lawns; its dust was laid by water carts which toured its walks before the residents awoke. It was a world that is now

extinct, and one must turn to Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* and the novels of Trollope for an understanding of the morality and behaviour of nineteenth century Salisbury. The picture right is a coloured restoration print of an original postcard of the junction between the Wilton and Devizes roads by Jason Pearce (available

