

## 2014 BSMGP TOURING CONFERENCE: YORKSHIRE EAST RIDING

**THURSDAY** The evening began with a talk on the local artists Harry Stammers and Harry Harvey by Ann Sotheran. The first Harry, who had worked for Powell and Whippell, had a very delicate early painting style, but later evolved a dramatic, stylized style with heavier linework. Harry Harvey, a Birmingham student who then worked for Stammers, had characteristically lively figure drawing and was fond of using verdian green (detail below).



**FRIDAY** The started in Hull itself, where the first stop was Trinity House chapel. Here was an 1840 panel (right) based on a Raphael, dating to the very end of the Georgian period of enamel painting, with Classical motifs, of which there are few survivors. Though attributed to Robert Stangroom, it was possibly by a glass painter called Latham

who painted on Dunbarton sheet. Such panels were often exhibited at the time as 'performances' in galleries, backlit and then unveiled dramatically.

Very close to this was Holy Trinity Church, one of the largest medieval parish churches in the country. Here is a powerful and exquisitely coloured window by W Morris's friend Walter Crane, made by James Sylvester Sparrow (below). The subject is Psalm 148, though the design has a heavy influence of William Blake. The



rich colours are achieved by using Prior's slab glass. There is more of Sparrow's work elsewhere; he called himself the 'Wagner of stained glass' and used plating to achieve dark, moody effects in clouds, for instance. One window is by Whall's assistant Mary Hutchinson – his influence is evident in the use of gold-pinks and streakies, and the Whall-like lettering. A 1930s Ballantine window is very progressive (they had just taken on William Wilson and other Edinburgh graduates who were very A&C influenced) in its use of peacock blues, streakies and Venetian glass. Other windows are by Frederick Christmas, Clayton & Bell, and Hardman – the E and W windows being replacements for Zeppelin raid casualties.

At All Saints Church in North Cave, where we stopped for lunch, we found some Kempe roundels in his characteristic muted green and red colours. A Burlison & Grylls window in the north in late medieval style has much violet-blue glass made specially for them to imitate 15C blue. On the S side is a window by RA Bell, an RCA teacher and designer closely associated with the A&C movement, made by Arthur Dix. The E window by Douglas Stachan replaces one blown out in WWII by a landmine, and was

commissioned by the local Clitheroe family, who knew Strachan socially. One of his last windows (1950), it shows Christ in Majesty and exemplifies his increasingly simplified figure drawing – here done with a few stylized strokes, quite symbolic, with shard-like, easy-to-cut shapes and poetic rather than naturalistic landscapes (below).



After lunch we set off for All Saints in Brantingham, where all the windows are Victorian or younger: Pevsner describes them as 'an instructive array', but singles out the examples in the south chancel by Kempe (1899) and C Whall (1906) as the best. In the nave is a window by JCN Bewsey, sometimes called 'boozy Bewsey', who was described by Peter Cormack as one of the best of those who 'purified the muddled colours of Kempe, returning to the purer colours of the 15C'. A C Whall window on the S side exemplifies his use of pure whites; he also left raw areas of unpainted glass to achieve his



'sparkle' effect. Other windows are by O'Connor, who worked with Pugin and other Gothic Revival artists, Clayton & Bell (1923) and JW Knowles.



We arrived at St Helens, Welton for afternoon tea. As well as stained glass by Jean-Baptiste Capronnier and Harry Stammers, there were several Morris and Burne Jones works here, affording the chance to compare their work from the 1870s to the 1890s. The 1879 E window of St Helena is the earliest Burne Jones. An 1887 pair of Morris-Jones windows in the S chancel depict St Cecilia and St Agnes in white glass (below), emphasizing BJ's superlative drapery linework – though the leading around it is less so. By his late career, however, BJ had altered his designs so that the leading could become extensive and more successful.

Back to the campus, we attacked dinner with relish, which was just as well, as Tony Benyon then treated us to a blistering tour around his 'tree diagram' of 19C glass painters and firms – among them, according to Old Bailey records, were forgers, convicts transported to Australia, and those who simply vanished.



**SATURDAY** In the morning, we began at All Hallows, Walkington with windows by Harry Harvey (detail left) and Sep Waugh. Then on to St Marys, South Dalton for coffee ... and, last but not least, a church by John Loughborough Pearson, who also designed Truro Cathedral, and who worked in the 13C Gothic Revival idiom, with a complete glazing scheme by Clayton & Bell, revealing the firm's changing style from the 1860s to the 1900s. In their earliest windows, these colour schemes are very rich: peacock blues, bright rubies, and deep claret grounds. There is also a deliberate reflection in the glazing of the architecture. Their W window has almost-calligraphic linework in a 14C idiom, and was 'taking Pugin a stage further', adopting a fresh approach using new iconography – they had 'picked up the Gothic thread and were adding a new expression of their own day' (to quote Peter C). At this stage, the firm was experimenting with putting various substances on the kiln shelf underneath the glass to achieve texture, and they kept the linework bold and simple with little tone/shading. By the 1880s, their painting was much more tonal, and their colours had been muted down, plus they were adding in 'white tints' to create a silvery effect. All the windows here were cartooned by George Daniels, the firm's main cartoonist at that time, although the firm later used many others.

St James, Warton, is a redundant church containing more windows by RA Bell, notable among which are two lunettes on display that were taken from the Wilson family mausoleum, designed by John Bilson and Bell's lifelong friend George Frampton, when it was demolished in 1966, along with sculptures by George Frampton and Gilbert Bayes, his pupil. Bell had worked for Guthrie of Glasgow alongside Dix, who made most of his windows in this church. The lunettes, however, were by Henry Payne from Birmingham School of Art, whose was lauded for his

wonderful drawing, refined line work, use of cross-hatch shading, and fine choice of glass (such as the gold-pink venetian). The mausoleum, its windows and sculpture commemorate Lady Isabel Wilson, who died in childbirth in 1905. One lunette has three figures representing her virtues: courage, hope and 'love to death'; the other (above) shows her borne to the heavens by angels, clasping the dead baby to her breast, while her grieving husband, dressed as a soldier, kneels at the right side.

The first afternoon stop was St Edmund at Seaton Ross. Here was a 1953 Ascension window by Harry Stammers, drawn in graphical 'Festival of Britain' style, with a black on light green Adam, Eve and snake against an architectural background. The central figure, in smoky mauve-violets, is surrounded by spiky angels descending from above. Here also is a 1975 Harry Harvey – a St Christopher striding forcefully through the waves, a dynamic composition of circles and spirals.

At St Oswald, Hotham, we saw five Douglas Strachan windows 1938–48, commissioned by the Clitheroe family to commemorate the wife of Tom Clitheroe who died in 1937. His granddaughter explained the history of the project, which had kept Strachan in work through the difficult war years and comprise a major part of his final work (he was 70 when he finished these). Strachan is here using a Romantic, visionary idiom, with ethereal, stylised, Blake-like angels in colours like those in Blake's watercolours.

Finally, on to North Hull and St Michael and All Angels, to see two lancets and a small panel by Leonard Evetts (1957–8). Christine Boyce, his former student, explained his approach, in which he was concerned with harmonious division of lines, both horizontally and vertically; colourwise he worked from whites and pale tints at the edges into rich deep tones; he did not cartoon, but to give a fresh feel went straight from sketch to glass, working back from a matte with little tracing. His use of ascending verticals gave a sensation of the windows rising right up to the spire – or as one Newcastle professor put it 'looking at an Evetts window is like listening to Mozart!' *Chris Wyard*

