

## Review: Autumn lecture 'Imported continental glass in Kent churches'

This lecture, given by our Hon. Librarian Leslie Smith FSA, looked at the imported continental glass in the churches of his home county. They were found mainly at Bishopsbourne, Cowden, Patrixbourne, Temple Ewell, Ramsgate (Pugin's church), and also at Otterden Place, Woodchurch and Elham. His research drew on 1930s studies by a Mr Toke published 1932–9 in *Arch. Cant.*. Many windows were also listed in William Cole's 1993 book for the CVMA Great Britain. The glass was scattered around the country, but was commonest in East Anglian owing to the presence in Norwich of the textile merchant/auctioneer John Christopher Hampp, a major source of continental glass in the late 18C, and the auction catalogues are another good source of historical detail on this glass.

After 1802 and the short-lived Peace of Amiens that followed the French Revolution of 1789, Hampp had set off with his 'scholar and gentleman' friend Seth William Stevenson FSA, on a tour of Europe, mainly to sell his textiles, but also to buy and import ancient church glass. After the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789, religious orders were dissolved, and in 1792 the National Convention ruled all goods belonging to these communities were to be placed 'in the safe keeping' of the French state. Much was sold, including the windows, providing an abundant, cheap source. Hampp's diary of 1802–3 noted Rouen and Paris purchases, from where he visited relatives in Germany, and bought in Aachen, Cologne and Nuremberg. He was not the first to go on a buying tour; in the 18C, some on the Grand Tour had bought back antique glass, either for their own collections or on behalf of others including Horace Walpole. In 1785, Greenwood printed a catalogue for a 'Grand Tour' sale (see Berserik & Caen (2007) Vol. 1, Antwerp: XX; Wayment (1988): 23).

In 1795 the French Revolutionary Army invaded the Low Countries, and again seized the abbey's goods. In Limburg in Belgium, the chapel at the Cistercian Herkenrode Abbey had its 11-metre-high windows, dating to the 1530s, removed and replaced by plain glass. In 1802 they were bought for £200 by Sir Brooke Boothby and installed at Lichfield (JSG XXXII, (2009): 49–90). Generally, however, the glass comprised small panels of a type developed by Flemish painters from the 15C onwards. An early example is found in a diptych by Hans Memling, at the Sint Janshospitaal, Bruges (1487); it depicts Maerten van Nieuvenhove before the Virgin. The height of these small panels, however, was in the 16C.

By 1802, Hampp was selling his glass,

Samson and the lion, Patrixbourne



first supplying the glass for a sale at Farebrother, Conduit Street, London. He later sold glass from his warehouse in Norwich and at Christies' premises, then in Pall Mall. The catalogue of his 1804 sale of 'Ancient stained glass' 284 lots of panels of all sizes from 15' high down to 'a great variety' of 7" x 9" tablets and coloured glass (JSG VI (4), (1937): 193; JSG XII (1), (1955/6): 22–9). Stevenson printed the catalogue. The catalogue of his 1808 auction at Christies in Pall Mall lists 'a most valuable and unique Collection of Ancient Stained Glass, comprising noble Altar Pieces, Windows for Churches, Collegiate Buildings, and Gothic Country Residences ... The Whole collected, at a very great Expense, by a Gentleman of enlarged Information and fine Taste [i.e. Stevenson] during the early Part of the French Revolution, from the suppressed Churches and Religious Houses, in Germany, France and the Netherlands' (JSG II(2), (1927): 92). A 1816 sale there of 47 lots of 'Ancient Flemish stained glass' is listed as raising £335,18s.6d (see JSG VI (4), (1937): 217–20).

Next the speaker addressed the question of who were the collectors of this glass in Kent. First, at Canterbury Beane (1829), there was a Mr ES Curling of Deal, who was His Majesty George the Fourth's Consul for the Netherlands; the glass is now in Canterbury Museum. The buyer (1837) of the glass at Patrixbourne was the Marchioness Cunningham, who was George IV's mistress from 1820 till his death early in the morning of 26th June 1830. (She spent the rest of the night packing!) She afterwards retired to live in Patrixbourne until her death in 1861 aged 92. At Bishopsbourne, the Renaissance Flemish Glass on the South side was inserted by Buckingham Family, who owned Bourne Place until the mid 19C (JSG VI (3), (1936): 112–20). At Temple Ewell, the glass was provided by R. Halford (1852), of whom nothing is known. At

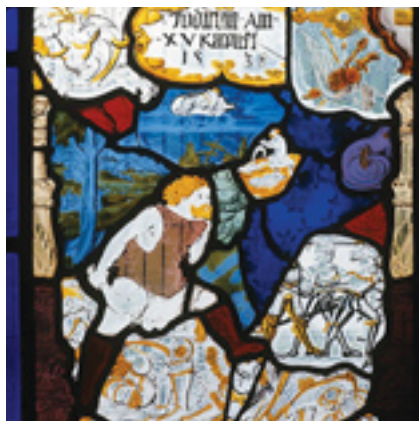
Ramsgate, the glass was collected by Pugin, who had visited France for 12 days in August 1849. In her 2007 book *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain*, Rosemary Hill writes how how had obtained them by dubious means from an old glass mender who had accumulated fragments as they dropped out of windows over time. 'He had no intention of selling, but he was out and Pugin was able to talk his way into the house: "... you know I can gammon [deceive or fool] old women ... and at last she let me into a place full of fragments I got all I want I was there till 11 at night"'. Pugin's collection included depictions of the Sacrifice of Isaac c.1515 (scene from Genesis 22). There is an Adoration of the Magi (c. 1525); St Stephen (with stones) and St Catherine (broken wheel and sword) (c. 1525); the 'Triumph of Ecclesia over Synagoga' (Ecclesia holding a sword and (?)clock, seated on a stag trampling Synagoga, who holds a broken trumpet) (c. 1525) – a very similar panel is at Earsham, Norfolk; 'Christ before the High Priest'; and some glass from the Sainte Chapelle.

The speaker then moved on to details of the iconography and the design sources. The majority are biblical or sacred subjects, often copied from or modified from 15–16C engravings. From a 1974 article by William Cole listing over 60 of the original engravings from 17 artists (JSG XV (2): 19), Leslie had found eight in Kent, including Albrecht Durer and the Flemish/Dutch artists Maerten van Heemskerck, Maarten de Vos and Hendrick Goltzius, and the Swiss artists Brandolf Roter of Lucerne, Peter Beck of Altdorf, Hans Casper Gallati and Hans Funk.

At Patrixbourne, a panel of Samson and the lion (above) is from a 1487–8 Durer print of Samson and Lion (scene from Judges 14). Another at Patrixbourne has Samson trampling on the Philistines (Judges 15). A third, of Samson and Delilah at Bishopsbourne (c. 1590), is from a print in *The Story of Samson* by Maerten van Heemskerck (1498–1574), a Haarlem painter.

The artist Maarten de Vos was prolific and often copied (e.g. Aegidius Sadler II's engraving of 1592/3). Windows over the main door at Otterden Place, a country house owned by the Wheler family, include a 'Sacrifice of Isaac' based on a de Vos print now in the British Museum. A different version of this theme is in Pugin's collection.

At Cowden Church are seven rectangular panels (1596–8) after drawings by Hendrick Goltzius, a pupil of Philips Galle, including seven on 'The Passion of Christ': the Last Supper,



Mount of Olives, The Betrayal, Ecce Homo, Christ bearing the Cross, The Crucifixion, and The Entombment.

Other popular themes are 'The Flight into Egypt' – panels with this scene being at Temple Ewell, Elham and Otterden – and 'Massacre of the Innocents' – with an example seen at Bishopsbourne. This church is rich in themes, including 'Building the Tower (of Babel?)', an Annunciation/St Ann with Virgin and Child (1650), a Man Paying Gravediggers, Musicians (possibly a King David reference?), Ss Peter and Paul, John the Baptist, two on The Prodigal Son as well as heraldic glass, depicting the Royal Arms and those of the Beekingham Family, which were probably brought there from Beekingham Hall in Tolleshunt Major, Essex.

The speaker returned to Patricbourne to show its wealth of Swiss glass from various painters. One panel of Peter Gisler of Burglen in the Canton of Uri, referencing his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1583, is from Peter Bock. So too is a Nativity (1589) and a Crucifixion (1589) with an image of Christ on the Cross the same as one at Canterbury. A bearded standard bearer of the Val Leventina in the Canton of Tessin stands with legs astride, in the tradition of those guards; above him is a bishop in chasuble standing in front of a golden throne, while a golden ox floats over a church – a puzzling allusion. Brandolf Roter of Lucerne was the painter of a 1550 panel showing a traveller and pack of mules crossing St Gotthard Pass (above).

There is also 17C Swiss glass at Patricbourne. A panel from Martin Moser of Lucerne depicts St John the Evangelist with a serpent in a chalice, and St Elizabeth of Hungary with a loaf of bread. Panels dated 1670 are by Hans Casper Gallati, including a John the Baptist and a Raising of Lazarus (or Juiras's daughter?). Another depicting the Murder of St Meinrad in 861 shows the bridge at Lucerne; in this story two robbers about to kill the hermit were asked to put a candle at his head and feet, which they did, but on going to light the candle found it already lit. They fled, but were pursued by Meinrad's pet ravens, captured by the villagers, and

executed. An Adoration of the Shepherds (below) includes a pet dog, some interesting closed crooks, and a mysterious figure behind the stable.



At Temple Ewell is more 17C Swiss glass, with subjects including the Coronation of the Virgin, The Madonna of Loretto, the Adoration of the Magi, and an Annunciation with Angel Gabriel apparently wagging his fingers at a shocked-looking Mary! There are also composite panels (popular at the time) with bird and stags, and the Arms of the 13 states of the Swiss Confederation.

There are further interesting panels at several other locations. At Elham is a Marriage of Rebecca and Isaac (c. 1525) and at Smeeth a Christ in Majesty enthroned, holding an orb and giving the sign of benefaction. One 17C, possibly German, panel at Woodchurch depicts The Sudarium with Christ's image held by Ss Peter, Paul and James (below). Another shows Fides (Faith) carrying a cross and chalice and wafer. At Otterden Place, a Netherlandish window (c. 1570) above the main door depicts an angel with bow with symbols of military, church and regal symbols below. The tongues of flame suggest it may be allegorically depicting the Seventh Plague, from the Old Testament source '*and the Lord sent thunder and haile, and fire ranne along upon the ground*' (Exodus 9: 23), using the story as a metaphor for the eventual destruction that will be visited on the country's Catholic Spanish rulers who have repressed the Protestant faith and people, and is possibly a political statement at the time of Holland's campaign against the RC Church and Spain (1568–1648). The Liverpool Walker Gallery contains a similar image of the Seventh Plague. Another panel at

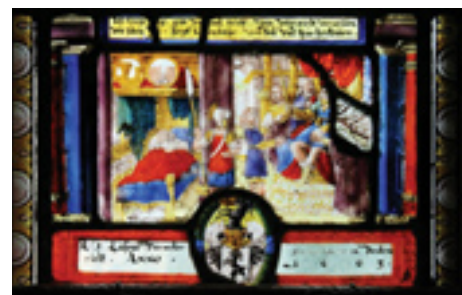


Sudarium, 17C German?, Woodchurch

Otterden shows a young man standing before people at a feast; this is the Prodigal Son's brother, complaining about the welcome given to his returned sibling. Two similar versions of this scene exist and may be the source: one at Pauillac Castle, France and a colour (reversed) print at the Louvre.

The speaker concluded with two stories featured in the panels: 'true love denied' and 'lust denied'. The first is told in a charming panel by Hans Funk (c.1530) at Patricbourne. It shows the final scene of the mythic lovers Pyramus and Thisbe, who are parted by their families but communicate through a crack in a party wall; in the end Pyramus stabs himself, after he finds Thisbe's bloodied veil and falsely concludes that a lion has killed her, and she is shown lamenting over his prone body.

The second story is of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. A set of 16C Swiss panels at Temple Ewell depict (1) Jacob and 11 sons - minus Joseph, who was sold into slavery by his brothers; (2) he eventually becomes Potiphar's top servant, but after he refuses the advances of Potiphar's wife he is falsely accused and jailed; (3) he is released from jail after interpreting inmates' dreams so as (4) to interpret the Pharaoh's disturbing dream (below). (5) Finally, Joseph forgives and receives his brethren.



At Woodchurch, below the Sudarium is a detail of Joseph fleeing from Potiphar's wife in her bedroom ...



To finish, the speaker listed some key texts:

William Cole: *A Catalogue of Netherlandish and North European Roundels in Britain*. CVMA Great Britain, British Academy, 1993.  
 Timothy Husband: *The Luminous Image; Painted Glass Roundels in the Lowlands, 1480-1560*. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1995  
 CJ Berserik & J Caen: *Silver Stained Roundels and Unipartite Panels before the French Revolution. Vols 1-3*. CVMA Belgium, 2007, 2011, 2016.