

CHAPTER VI.

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A "Coventry school" of glaziers circa 1398-1430.

An important series of windows erected in the Midlands between the years 1398-1430 appears to be the work of a group of closely related glaziers. Their work is found in six churches, a private chapel and a guildhall and is widely distributed over five counties. Three of these places are in Warwickshire: the parish churches of Wixford and Mancetter and St. Mary's Guildhall in Coventry. Two are in Leicestershire: the parish churches of Thurcaston and Frolesworth. The remaining places are the private chapel of the Vernons at Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, the collegiate church of Tong, Salop, and the parish church of Newark on Trent, Nottinghamshire.

In five of these cases there is quite firm evidence for dating the stained glass within quite close limits.

ST. MARY'S HALL, COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE. (1)

The date of the erection of the Hall is known from documentary sources. It was built between the years 1394 and 1414.⁽²⁾ The main lights of the six windows in the east and west walls of the hall originally contained full length figures of kings, the nobility and important personages associated with Coventry and the Guild.

(1) See sub. catalogue Coventry, Warws. for a full account.

(2) Ibid. T. Sharp Illustrative Papers on the Antiquities of the city of Coventry (1871) p.211 citing the Coventry City Annals.

There are records of twenty of these figures, the full extent of the series, however, may have included more. The tracery lights of these windows appear to have contained demi-figures of angels emerging from clouds. One complete angel and the heads of three others remain (St. Mary's Hall. Catalogue Numbers 52-55). The glazing of these windows probably took place over a number of years. The internal evidence suggests that the earliest window cannot have been erected before 1398 and that two windows must be after 1423 and 1425 respectively. (3)

The Oriel window of the Hall contains fragments removed from the later North window. These fragments are mostly of late fifteenth century date, there are, however, remains of some figures that are close in style and execution to the demi-angels in the east and west windows. These include a small kneeling angel, holding a book, from part of a canopy shafting (St. Mary's Hall Catalogue Number 18) and standing figures of prophets, also from canopy shaftings (Catalogue Numbers 3, 4, 5.)

TONG. SHROPSHIRE. (4)

The collegiate church of St. Bartholomew the Apostle at Tong was erected shortly before 1410. The statutes of its founder

(3) see sub. catalogue Coventry. Antiquarian sources for a discussion of these windows and their dates.

(4) see sub. catalogue Tong, Shropshire for a full account.

Isabella, widow of Sir Fulk de Pembrugge are dated March 1410 and state that the college had been raised and built. It is probable therefore that the year 1410 represents a 'terminus post quem non' for the glazing of the windows.

The west window of the nave contains three large incomplete figures of SS Edmund and Peter and the Virgin Mary, who holds the child Christ, standing below canopies (Tong. Catalogue Numbers 10, 11, 12). Also in this window are two angels, each holding a shield of Christ's Passion (Catalogue Numbers 14, 15) and a large head of a saint (Catalogue Number 1). These figures are not necessarily in situ.⁽⁵⁾ Originally the main lights of this window contained kneeling donor figures of Sir Fulk de Pembrugge, the founder's husband, together with his great nephew and heir Sir Richard Vernon and Benedicta his wife.⁽⁶⁾ No vestige of these figures now remains. The east window of the chancel retains some glass in situ in the tracery lights. In the apex lights is an Annunciation (Catalogue Numbers 25, 26) and below this are figures of the Virgin and Child; St. Mary Salome with her children; St. Mary Magdalen and the Symbols

(5) The present east window of the chancel contains modern copies of these figures, and there is a local tradition, communicated by the vicar, that the figures now in the west window were removed from this east window. There appears to be no precise proof of this.

(6) see sub. catalogue Tong, Antiquarian sources for a full account.

of the Evangelists. (Catalogue Numbers 29-31, 33-36).

WIXFORD. WARWICKSHIRE. (7)

The chapel of St. John the Baptist, on the south side of the parish church of Wixford, was erected by Thomas Crewe between the years 1411-1418. (8) Only a small portion of the original glazing remains, its date is probably contemporary with the erection of the chapel. The tracery lights of the east window originally contained a set of the Twelve Apostles, distributed over twelve lights. Only two figures remain: SS Philip and Thomas (Wixford. Catalogue Numbers 6, 7). Also in the tracery lights are six shields of arms, all in situ, which reflect Crewe's career and landed holdings. (Catalogue Numbers 3-5, 8-10). The contents of the main lights are missing. There are a number of fragments from canopy designs showing angels, each playing a musical instrument and kneeling in a shafting. (Catalogue Numbers 11, 12, 15, 16). These may have originally been part of the design of the main lights. The tracery lights of the two south windows of the chapel contain similar figures of angel musicians emerging from clouds and either playing an instrument or holding a scroll of music. (Catalogue Numbers 17-26).

(7) see Sub. catalogue Wixford, Warwickshire for a full account.

(8) *ibid.* The chapel appears to have been erected after the death of his wife in 1411 and before his own death in 1418. This is inferred from the inscription on their tomb.

HADDON HALL. DERBYSHIRE. (9)

The east window of the chapel at Haddon Hall contains an inscription stating that it was glazed for Sir Richard Vernon and his wife Benedicta in the year 1427 (Haddon Hall. Catalogue Numbers 25-29). The general scheme of the window is substantially complete although individual details have perished. The main lights contained a crucifixion of Christ with attendant Saints, distributed over five lights. The Christ crucified, the Virgin and a St. John Baptist remain (Catalogue Numbers 16, 17, 18). Associated with the crucifixion were the Symbols of the four Evangelists, two remain namely the Angel of St. Matthew and the Lion of St. Mark (Catalogue Numbers 13, 14). In the lower left part of the window is a kneeling figure of Sir Richard Vernon. (Catalogue Number 18). A companion figure of his wife, assuming such existed, is missing. (10) At the base of each of the three centre lights is a shield of arms held by three angels. (Catalogue Numbers 19, 20, 21). The angels and Sir Richard Vernon are all represented standing or kneeling on a black and white tiled floor. This arrangement gives a line of continuity across the window and

(9) See sub. catalogue Haddon Hall, Derbyshire for a full account.

(10) Schnebbelie's drawings of the Haddon windows, dated 1791, contain no vestige of such a figure (Society of Antiquaries, Red Book, Derbys. pp.20-21). It is known, however, that some glass had been removed before this date, see sub. catalogue for details.

suggests that this is the original order. The lost figure of Lady Benedicta Vernon would, therefore, have occupied the lower part of the extreme right hand light.

The tracery lights of the east window are mainly dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The Annunciation, the Virgin and Christ Child and the coronation of the Virgin are represented together with attendant female Saints. (Catalogue Numbers 1-5, 10-12). These figures are all in situ.

It has been suggested that the glass in the easternmost window on the north and south sides of the chapel is later in date than the east window.⁽¹¹⁾ Each of these windows has six tracery lights. Originally these contained a series of the Twelve Apostles. Eleven figures remain, mostly incomplete, and their original order has been disarranged. A reconstruction of the original design shows a stylistic order within each window and an iconographic unity between the two windows, suggesting that both windows are of the same date.⁽¹²⁾

The main lights of the north window contain four figures, St. Michael, St. Anne with the Virgin and St. George (Catalogue Numbers 36-38). The contents of the main lights of the south window are missing.

(11) C. Cox. Churches of Derbyshire. Vol.11. pp.87-94.

(12) For a reconstruction of the original order see sub. catalogue Haddon Hall.

There are no reasons on stylistic criteria for supposing that these two windows are any later than the east window, which is dated 1427. The figures in the main lights of the north window (Catalogue Numbers 36-38) are set against a trellis ground of white quarries, each bearing a conventionalised foliage design. An identical arrangement is employed for the figures in the east window. The disposition of figures on quarries is original: parts of the nimbus of the Christ crucified and the cross, together with the demi angels, holding chalices to collect His blood, are painted on the same pieces of glass as the adjacent quarries (Catalogue Number 17). The head types and details of execution are very close. For example the head of the St. Michael in the north window (Haddon Hall 36) can be compared with the head of the angel behind the Vernon shield in the east window (Catalogue Number 20). The stylisation of their feathered wings, similar to peacock's feathers, is identical.

The suggestion that the two side windows are later than 1427 was prompted by the appearance of a shield of the arms of Pype in the south window (Catalogue Number 55). Above the shield is inscribed "Mergareta Pype ux(or) ei(us)" for Margaret Pype, wife of Sir William Vernon, son and heir of Sir Richard Vernon. Originally the Pype shield was accompanied by a shield of the Vernon arms, with an annulet for difference, for Sir William

Vernon.⁽¹³⁾ It is quite clear therefore that these two shields were erected before the death of Sir Richard Vernon in 1451.⁽¹⁴⁾ The date of the Vernon-Pype marriage is not known. It had taken place before 1435, possibly before 1428.⁽¹⁵⁾ However even if further research shows that the marriage took place after 1427 this will not necessarily mean that the two side windows are later than the east window, as there is no definite evidence to show that the Vernon-Pype shields formed part of the original glazing of the side windows. It is therefore suggested that there is no adequate reason for dating the two side windows later than the east window.

THURCASTON. LEICESTERSHIRE.⁽¹⁶⁾

The east window of the chancel at Thurcaston was the gift of the rector John Mersden who was also a canon of St. George's chapel Windsor. The window originally contained an inscription recording his gift together with the date. Unfortunately the portion giving the date was incomplete when Nichols copied it.⁽¹⁷⁾ However the

(13) This shield is no longer extant, it is known from Schnebbelie's water colour copy; "Willms' Vernon" was inscribed above the shield.

(14) *Con op. cit.* did not know of the companion shield of Sir William Vernon's arms.

(15) See sub. cat. Haddon Hall, for full details.

(16) See sub. cat. Thurcaston, Leics. for a full account.

(17) Nichols. History of Leicestershire, Volume III. p.1058.

window was probably erected before Mersden's death in 1425 or shortly afterwards. (18)

A small portion only remains of the original glazing scheme and this is very fragmentary. The main feature of the window appears to have been a crucifixion of Christ. A small fragment of the cross and the legs of Christ remain (Catalogue Numbers 7, 31) together with two demi angels, each holding a chalice to collect the blood of the crucified Christ (Catalogue Numbers 26, 28). The symbols of the Evangelists were probably associated with the Crucifixion, one only remains: the Angel of St. Matthew (Catalogue Number 21).

The distribution of the other remaining fragments is conjectural. The kneeling figure of John Mersden (Catalogue Number 39) may have been associated with the crucifixion. However it may equally well have been placed in the lower part of the window, possibly before a devotional image of the Virgin and Child.

(18) His death on the twenty-seventh of January 1425 is recorded on his brass before the High Altar at Thurstaston. The inscription in the window requested prayers for his soul. This, however, does not preclude the erection of the window during his life as the east window of the chapel at Haddon Hall, erected during the donor's lifetime, has a similar style of inscription. Mersden's will contains no provision for the window, it does, however, provide for his tomb. (Will dated 10 October 1424 printed in extenso in E. F. Jacob. The Register of Henry Chichele. (III Vols). Vol.II. p.333).

The scroll above his head, which reads "xpi filii dei" would be appropriate to either position. There are many fragments of canopies, these are too incomplete to permit a reconstruction of their original design. (Catalogue Numbers 15, 19, 34). It seems possible that originally these canopies contained figures of prophets in the side shaftings, fragments of which survive (Catalogue Numbers 17, 36).

There is no precise dating evidence for the glass in the remaining three churches of this group.

MANCETTER. WARWICKSHIRE. (19)

The glass here consists of a single head and shoulders of a Saint, possibly St. Peter, now inserted in a north window of the chancel (Catalogue Number 33). An accompanying inscription "Jacobus minor", in black letter script, suggests that this and the figure may have formed part of a series of the Twelve Apostles.

NEWARK-ON-TRENT, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE. (20)

The glass at Newark is now inserted in the east window of the south choir aisle of the parish church. It is the most extensive collection of this period remaining in the Midlands and is of an extremely fine quality. There are seven virtually

(19) See sub. catalogue Mancetter, Warwickshire for a full account.

(20) See sub. catalogue Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire for a full account.

complete narrative panels. These depict scenes from the lives of the Blessed Virgin and Christ. Four scenes relating to the Virgin show:- the suitors of the Virgin in the Temple, the Visitation and Annunciation and an incomplete Funeral of the Virgin (Catalogue Numbers 43, 46, 50, 52). The infancy of Christ is represented by the Massacre of the Innocents and the soldiers before Herod (Catalogue Numbers 42, 51) and His Passion by a fragment of a Crucifixion and Deposition ⁽²¹⁾ and the Assumption of Christ (Catalogue Numbers 47, 51). There are also considerable remains of canopies, together with human figures and birds standing in the side shaftings (Catalogue Numbers 41B, 42B, 43B, 44B; 46, 49). The style of all these panels is consistent throughout and appears to be the work of a single master designer.

FROLESWORTH, LEICESTERSHIRE. ⁽²²⁾

The glass at Frolesworth is now inserted in the side windows of the chancel. Originally it belonged to the tracery lights of the east window. The chancel appears to have been rebuilt by Edmund Wolfe, who was instituted as rector in 1401. ⁽²³⁾ Unfortunately neither the date of his death nor the next presentation to

(21) These are now leaded together in a single panel. Cat.No.47.

(22) See sub. catalogue Frolesworth, Leicestershire for a full account.

(23) *ibid.* A statement to this effect appears to have been inscribed on his tombstone, this is now either lost or covered over.

the living are known.

The glass comprises six figures of prophets and apostles together with two censuring angels (Catalogue Numbers 1-8). The prophets and apostles are each represented standing behind a battlemented arcade, one figure only, a prophet, retains its original head (Catalogue Number 2). The contents of the main lights of this window are unknown. One of the remaining tracery figures has an alien head that may have originally been in the main lights (Catalogue Number 1). This is painted by a different hand to the prophet figure (Catalogue Number 2) but is probably of the same date.

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

The glass in the eight places summarised above is, it is here suggested, to be considered as the work of a group of closely related glaziers extending over the years circa 1398-1430. A number of general and particular points of design and style in common can be observed in this glass.

The most striking general characteristic is the predominance of white glass and yellow stain over coloured glass. The large figures of Saints Edmund, Peter and the Virgin and Child, together with the canopies over them, in the west window at Tong are all painted on white glass with touches of yellow stain and matt shading. The only coloured glass here are the blue and red diapered grounds behind the figures (Tong. Catalogue Numbers 10, 11, 12). This glass has been dated circa 1410 at the latest, the east window of Haddon Hall chapel is some seventeen years later, dated 1427. This contains virtually no coloured glass. The Virgin of the Crucifixion (Haddon Hall Catalogue Number 16) has a blue tunic, the other figures in the main lights, together with those in the tracery lights, are all executed in white glass and yellow stain with matt shading. At Newark coloured glass is used somewhat more extensively for draperies and other accessories but, even so, the white glass and yellow stain are the main features of each panel.

It has been noted that the figures in the east window and the two side windows at Haddon Hall are set on a trellis groundwork

of white quarries and that this disposition is original. Each quarry is painted with a conventionalised foliage design, consisting of a quatrefoil flower superimposed on four oak-like leaves radiating outwards. Identical quarries are found at Tong as the original ground to the two figures of angels each holding a shield of Christ's Passion (Catalogue Numbers 14, 15). Very similar quarries occur at Thurcaston, before 1425 (Thurcaston. Catalogue Numbers 4, 13).

The Tong angels are but subsidiary figures, possibly from tracery lights. The full length figures in the west window, already referred to, are set against brilliant coloured grounds diapered with a "seaweed" foliage design (Catalogue Numbers 10, 11, 12). Identical diapers are found at Wixford (Catalogue Numbers 3-10) circa 1411-18, at Thurcaston (Catalogue Numbers 8, 40) pre 1425; at Newark (e.g. Catalogue Numbers 50, 51). The east and west windows of St. Mary's Hall Coventry also appear to have had this type of diaper behind the figures in the main lights.⁽²⁴⁾ It is particularly noticeable in the more complete panels at Tong and Newark how the colours are concentrated in these backgrounds and act as brilliant foils to the figures which are, either wholly or in part, executed in white glass and yellow stain.

(24) None of these diapers survive, they are known from T. Sharp's water colour copies of the figures now in the Aylesford Collection, Birmingham Reference Library.

The representation of small figures in niches in the vertical shaftings, framing either narrative scenes or full length figures, is a particular feature of the glass in this group. The most complete examples remain at Newark. There are three types: male saints and secular figures, the latter in contemporary dress and displayed birds (Catalogue Numbers 45, 49 and 46 respectively). Similar figures of prophets, saints and a kneeling angel occur among the fragments at St. Mary's Hall Coventry (Catalogue Numbers 3, 4, 5, 18). At Wixford, c. 1411-1418, there are the remains of kneeling angel musicians (Catalogue Numbers 11, 12, 15, 16) and at Thurcaston, pre 1425, there are fragments of prophets (Catalogue Numbers 17, 36). Also at Thurcaston is another form of shafting, consisting of a niche containing a column, with a plain band wound around the column (Catalogue Number 43). This detail is also found at Tong among the fragments of canopy design (Catalogue Number 12). None of the Tong canopy fragments retain any suggestion of having contained small figures in niches.

The stylistic affinities of this glass are well evidence by the method of painting human heads. The heads generally conform to one main type: small oval faces with a slightly pointed chin, round eyes, rather long noses with an accentuated bulbous tip and short square mouths. The features are modelled with washes of matt enamel, the strength of this modelling, however, is subordinated to the painted line. This linear, rather than chiaroscuro,

modelling is particularly prominent around the eyes. For example the head of the Virgin at Tong (Catalogue Number 12) can be compared with the St. Anne and the Virgin at Haddon Hall (Catalogue Number 37) or with the Virgin and St. Elizabeth in the Visitation panel at Newark (Catalogue Number 46). The Tong St. Peter (Catalogue Number 11) should be compared with the St. Peter in the Ascension of Christ panel at Newark (Catalogue Number 51) or with the saint's head, probably also St. Peter, at Frolesworth (Catalogue Number 1). The large patriarchal saint's head at Tong (Catalogue Number 1) is similar in type and design to one at Thurcaston (Catalogue Number 12). This list could be considerably extended; in short, however, it seems proper to suggest that there is a strong 'family' resemblance between the examples cited.

It may be significant to point out that, despite the various affinities this glass displays, there is no remaining evidence of identical cartoons being used in different places. There are a few examples of identical subjects, the cartoons used for them are quite different. For example there are two roundels of a similar size each depicting the Angel of St. Matthew, one at Haddon Hall (Catalogue Number 13), the other at Thurcaston (Catalogue Number 21). The angel in the Haddon example is represented seated on a grassy bank holding a scroll inscribed with the Evangelist's name. At Thurcaston the angel is shown at half length emerging from shell-like clouds holding a name scroll. More similar, at first sight,

are the demi figures of angels holding chalices to collect the blood of the crucified Christ which occur at Haddon Hall and Thurstaston. The general design is similar. They are shown emerging from shell-like clouds, they all wear white albs and amices and have similar cork-screw twists of hair. Some particular details of drawing are distinctly different. The Thurstaston angels have plain wings with overlapping parallel rows of feathers (Catalogue Numbers 26, 28). At Haddon the wings are much more elaborate, and appear to be free interpretations of peacocks' feathers (Catalogue Number 17). The details of the design of the chalices in these two cases also differ.

This absence of repetition and divergence in particular details are, perhaps, to be expected. It must be remembered that the production of this group of windows extended over a number of years. Tong datable before 1410, Wixford c.1411-1418, Thurstaston before 1425, Haddon Hall dated 1427, St. Mary's Coventry built 1394-1414 but the glazing of the windows extending over the period 1398-1426 or later. The production of this glass, therefore, can be seen to have extended over a period of about seventeen years at the least. In addition some of the stylistic differences are attributable to economic considerations, different types of design being of different prices. The documentary evidence for varieties of design and their respective prices is scanty but is, in one particular case, rather informative. The account rolls covering

the years 1445-1450 for the building of Eton College show that John Prudde of Westminster glazier provided four main types of design at varying prices. (25) He charged eight pence half penny a foot for powdered glass with figures of prophets, probably figures on a groundwork of quarries. (26) Glass "flourished" with lilies and roses and shields (?) of arms cost tenpence a foot. (27) Other glass wrought with different figures and borders was one shilling a foot. (28) Subject windows, presumably more detailed narrative scenes, were supplied at two different prices, one at one shilling and twopence a foot, (29) the other at one shilling and four pence. (30) The evidence of these documents suggests that the

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- (25) Extracts from the accounts are given in R. Willis and J.W. Clark 'The Architectural History of the University of Cambridge.' (IV. Vols. 1886) Vol. I. pp. 383-405.
- (26) *ibid.* p. 393-4 1445-6. Glass for the renovation of the old Parish Church at Eton. "Johanni Prudde .. pro vi^c xxxviii pedibus vitri operati vocati powdred glasse cum xii ymaginibus prophetarum ... precii pedis viiid ob".
- (27) *ibid.* p. 403. 1449-50 for the College Hall: "Et eidem pro cc iii^x et viii pedibus vitri florissat' cum liliis et rosis ac certis armis precii pedis x d; xii li."
- (28) *ibid.* p. 394. 1446-7 for the parish church: "Et in denariis solutis Johanni Prudde pro vi^s xi pedibus di' vitri operati cum diuersis ymaginibus et borduris ab ipso emptis .. xxxii li vid."
- (29) *ibid.* p. 403. 1449-50 for the College Hall "Johanni Prudde vitratori pro ciiii^x xi pedibus et iii^{or} pollicibus vitri historialis pro Aula Collegii precii pedis xiiid.
- (30) *ibid.* p. 394. 1445-6 for the parish church: "Et eidem pro lx pedibus vitri cum diuersis picturis ab eo emptis ... precii pedis xvid.

type of glazing as seen at Haddon Hall, of figures simply set against a trellis groundwork of quarries, represents a cheaper class of work than, for example, the figures with coloured grounds and canopies at Tong or the narrative panels at Newark. The quality of glass required was largely determined by the patron's pocket. There is a small piece of historical evidence to suggest the possibility that a single workshop might have made both the more expensive variety at Tong and the cheaper type at Haddon Hall. Sir Richard Vernon, donor of the Haddon glass, was the great nephew and heir of Sir Fulk Pembrugge, whose widow Isabel founded the collegiate church of Tong. Moreover the portraits of Sir Richard Vernon and his wife Benedicta were originally included in the west window at Tong.⁽³¹⁾ It would be natural for him in 1427, when the east window of Haddon was glazed, to employ the same workshop that had earlier provided the windows for Tong.

It has been suggested that the glass in the Midlands discussed above displays a number of stylistic affinities in common. The glass is perhaps too widely disposed geographically and covers too wide a period in date to suppose that a single workshop could have produced all of it. It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that the artists concerned have sufficient similarity in style and technique to suggest a common origin. There is some evidence to

(31) See sub. catalogue Tong, Salop. Antiquarian sources for a full account.

suggest that in the propagation of this type of design Coventry was an important centre, although this style may not have originated there.

On the tenth of December 1405 an indenture was signed between the Dean and Chapter of York Minster and one John Thornton of Coventry, glazier. Thornton contracted to glaze the east window of the Minster and to complete the work within three years. The indenture states quite precisely that he was required to make the design for the window with his own hand, but would "only paint the same as necessary according to the ordinance of the Dean and Chapter."⁽³²⁾ The window was completed in 1408, the date together with Thornton's monogram are painted on one of the tracery lights.⁽³³⁾

Despite the importance of this window there is no adequate work dealing with it and a comprehensive set of photographs has never been published.⁽³⁴⁾ The main lights of the window contain

(32) H.J. Westlake. *History of Design in Painted Glass*. (1886) Vol. III p. 72 prints the indenture. F. Harrison *'The Painted Glass of York'* (1927) p. 129, gives a translation of the indenture. See also J. Knowles *'The York School of Glass Painting'* (1936). Chapters XVI, pp. 212-222. John Thornton of Coventry and the Great East Window of York Minster. For notes on the post war restoration see E. Milner-White in the *Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. XXX. (1950) pp. 180-184.

(33) Knowles. op. cit. p. 217 gives a facsimile of the monogram and the date.

(34) Harrison op. cit. pp. 214-16 lists the subjects, the proper arrangement of the scenes as suggested by Dr. M.R. James has been followed in the latest restoration, see Milner-White op. cit. p. 180-181.

Old Testament scenes and scenes from the Apocalypse of St. John. There are altogether some one hundred and seventeen panels in the main lights. A comprehensive catalogue of all the features of the window is here impossible: it must suffice to indicate some of the more important stylistic features. There is a preponderance of white glass and yellow stain over coloured glass. The latter is particularly used for the "seaweed" diaper grounds behind the figures. Each scene is framed by a vertical shafting each containing a figure of a prophet, either seated or standing, in a niche. The facial types conform to one main design, rather oval faces with small round eyes, long noses with a bulbous tip and short square mouths. The features are lightly modelled with matt washes but the modelling is subordinated to the painted line. John Thornton remained in York after the completion of the 'Great East Window'. He was made a Freeman of the city in 1410⁽³⁵⁾ and was still alive in 1433 when the Dean and Chapter made a payment to him.⁽³⁶⁾

There is no further documentary evidence relating to his work in York. It has been suggested that a number of stylistic similarities exist between the east window and the St. William

(35) Knowles. op. cit. p.217 citing Freeman's Roll. 1410.
Freemen of York i Surtees Soc. XCVI.

(36) *ibid.* citing York Minster Fabric Rolls. Surtees Soc. Vol. XXXV.

window in the choir transept of the Minster. The attribution of this window to Thornton has therefore been proposed by Mr. Knowles. (37) This attribution is perfectly acceptable. The particular stylistic similarities as pointed out by Knowles are, in brief, identical head types, seaweed diaper grounds, the use of figures in the vertical sideshaftings and a peculiar tree form with a closely set vertical fork and clump roots represented above the ground. (38) The St. William window is not directly dated. The evidence of the donor figures, members of the Ros family of Hamlake suggests circa 1413-1423 as the most probable date. (39)

(37) J. Knowles. "Technical Notes on the St. William window in York Minster". Yorks Archaeol. Journal. Vol. XXXVII. (1949). pp. 148-161 particularly pp. 158-161.

(38) E. Milner-White in Friends of York Minster, Report 1955 adds that in the east window panel, of St. John receiving the messages to the Seven churches, the figures of seven archbishops, symbolising the seven churches, are identical with each other, and also identical with the statues of St. William in the Miracle scenes of the St. William window.

(39) J. Fowler "On a window representing the Life and Miracles of St. William of York." Yorks Archaeol. Journal. Vol. III (1874) pp. 198-348, see pp. 214-17. A closer dating of 1421-1423 has been suggested by the Very Rev. E. Milner-White (Friends of York Minster Report 1955), the evidence is not conclusive.

Mr. Knowles has also pointed out that there are a number of close resemblances between the St. William window and the East window of Great Malvern Priory, Worcestershire.⁽⁴⁰⁾ These similarities as listed by Knowles are as follows: the head types are identical,⁽⁴¹⁾ as are the tree and plant forms,⁽⁴²⁾ two minor decorative forms are identical: a belt clasp rather like a catherine wheel⁽⁴³⁾ and the drawing of a ladder,⁽⁴⁴⁾ and a common tracery motif of a quatrefoil with a roundel in the centre, where the four cusps converge.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Knowles concluded that the Malvern east window was the product of the York workshop.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Rushforth pointed out, that prior to the restoration in 1860, there was a boss at the apex of the Malvern east window carved with the arms of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, quartering the arms of

(40) Knowles in G.M. Rushforth Medieval Christian Imagery (1936) pp.50-51. See also Notes and Queries 12th Ser.VII (1920) 483.

(41) York: head of paralytic in Miracle of William of Werburgh compared with Malvern head of Judas in Last Supper. (Rushforth fig. 13.)

(42) York: trees in panels Fall of Herebald and Fall of Edward I, Malvern: trees in Nailing of Christ to Cross (Rushforth fig.18)

(43) York: panel Edward I. falling, Malvern: Deposition. (Rushforth figs. 20 and 21).

(44) York: Man hanging tapestry. Malvern: Deposition, (Rushforth figs. 20 & 22).

(45) York: canopies above donors. Malvern: window tracery of upper canopies. (Rushforth. p.51. fig. 19).

(46) Knowles. in Rushforth. op. cit. p.54.

Dispenser and Clare for his second wife Isabella Dispenser. They were married in 1423 and both died in 1439. Rushforth suggested that the window was probably glazed between these years and also accepted the attribution to the York workshop proposed by Knowles.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Mr. Knowles has more recently modified his views:- "There seems ... to have been some connection, but one very difficult to account for, between the St. William window at York, and the East window of Great Malvern Priory. It would be hazardous to draw any definite conclusion from these resemblances. They cannot have been accidental, and the similarities of details might be accounted for by the designers using cartoons, or excerpts and tracings from cartoons, which had previously been used at York."⁽⁴⁸⁾

The main characteristics of John Thornton's style of glass painting, as evidenced by the East window and St. William window, at York Minster, are paralleled by the contemporary stained glass in the Midlands that has been discussed above. There is the same predominance of white glass and yellow stain over coloured glass. The same use of blue and red 'seaweed' foliage diaper backgrounds acting as a brilliant foil to the figures. The display of small figures standing in the vertical shaftings is common to both sets. More particular comparisons can be made between the painting of

(47) Rushforth op. cit. p.48, p.50.

(48) J. Knowles 'Technical Notes' op. cit. p.161.

human heads. Knowles has pointed out the close affinity between the profile head of a paralytic from the St. William window⁽⁴⁹⁾ and the head of Judas in the Last Supper at Malvern.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Both these heads can be compared with the profile head of one of the Apostles in the Ascension of Christ panel at Newark (Catalogue Number 51). The line of the nose, the three curls at the lower edge of the beard are common to all three and the curly twist of hair at the centre of the forehead is identical to the Malvern figure. The head of St. Peter at Tong (Catalogue Number 11) can be compared with the St. Peter in the Last Supper at Malvern,⁽⁵¹⁾ they are almost identical. The head of Richard Ros in the St. William window⁽⁵²⁾ is very similar to the St. John in the Newark Ascension (Catalogue Number 51). The Newark head of the Virgin Annunciate (Catalogue Number 50) or the Virgin at Haddon Hall (Catalogue Number 37) have a pronounced similarity to the female head in a Baptism subject in the St. William window.⁽⁵³⁾ In all these cases the head types follow a consistent pattern,

(49) Knowles in Rishforth. op. cit. Reproduced in Knowles 'Technical Notes' op. cit. pl.X. facing p.160.

(50) *ibid.*

(51) Rishforth. op. cit. fig. 13.

(52) Photograph at the Courtauld Institute (Knowles 42).

(53) Reproduced in Knowles. Technical Notes, op. cit. pl.1, facing p.150.

small oval faces, bulbous tips to the noses, short square mouths and an accentuation of linear modelling, particularly around the eyes.

It seems quite proper, therefore, to say that there is a strong family resemblance between Thornton's work at York of 1405- c 1423 and the Midlands' glass of circa 1398-1430, together with the Malvern East window of circa 1423-1439. These resemblances rather weaken the suggestion made by Mr. Knowles that Thornton's work constitutes a particular style emanating from York. (54)

These resemblances are not surprising, after all Thornton is known to have come from Coventry. The question now is did this style of glass painting have a particular association with Coventry or not? A final resolution of this problem is not yet possible.

Any evaluation of the importance of this particular style of glass painting found in the Midlands and in Thornton's work at York must seek, first of all, to find the sources of this style. This style has little, or nothing, in common with the earlier work in the Midlands. (55) There is, however, an important connection

(54) Knowles. in Rushforth, op. cit.

(55) i.e. the Midlands as defined by this survey: Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire.

with an Oxford school of glass painting of circa 1380-1410.

NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND WINCHESTER COLLEGE.

The foundation stone of the college founded by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, at Oxford was laid on the fifth of March 1380. The society of the college entered into formal possession of the building on the fourteenth of April 1386. The building accounts for this period do not survive. Although there is no precise documentary proof it is almost certain that the glazing for the college was carried out by Thomas Glazier of Oxford.⁽⁵⁶⁾ He is first mentioned in the records of New College in August 1386 when the Steward of the Hall's book records that he dined in hall.⁽⁵⁷⁾ He had dinner in hall on five occasions in 1387-8 and six times in the following year. He continued to have meals in hall about four times a year for the next ten years, from 1388 onwards he is recorded as having them with the Fellows.⁽⁵⁸⁾ His ability was obviously highly regarded by William of Wykeham as he employed him to provide the glass for his other college at Winchester.⁽⁵⁹⁾

(56) C. Woodforde 'The Stained Glass of New College, Oxford' (1951) P.1-4.

(57) *ibid.* p.4.

(58) *ibid.*

(59) J.D. LeCouteur 'Ancient Glass in Winchester' (1920) Chapter IV. Glass in Winchester College, particularly pp.62-98. Le Couteur first pointed out that Wykeham's Household expenses for 1393 include payment for carrying "glass for windows of my Lord's College" from Esher, near Oxford, to Winchester. (*ibid.* p.63). The east window of the college chapel originally contained a figure inscribed "Thomas operator iatius vitri" (*ibid.* p.80).

It would appear that the windows of New College chapel were glazed circa 1383-1386.⁽⁶⁰⁾ The glass for Winchester was being produced in 1393⁽⁶¹⁾ and was probably completed before 1394 and certainly before 1400, as Wykeham's will makes no provision for it.⁽⁶²⁾ His will, however, does provide for the completion of the remodelling of the nave of Winchester Cathedral and the glazing of the windows.⁽⁶³⁾

No detailed analysis of this glass at Oxford and Winchester has ever been undertaken. The following remarks are, therefore, tentative. There seems to be a stylistic progression between the glass at New College c. 1383-1386 and that at Winchester College c. 1393. At New College the large full length figures of Old Testament Personages and Saints have a strange hieratic air. For example the faces of Adam and Judah.⁽⁶⁴⁾ They have long broad faces with large eyes, long straight noses and broad firm mouths. They wear a worried look. The important thing to note is the importance of the linear modelling. The faces are modelled with

(60) Woodforde op. cit. points out that the glazing requirements would be known by 1383 and were probably complete for the chapel by April 1386.

(61) Le Couteur op. cit. p.63.

(62) *ibid* p.63-4. The College was handed over to the Wardens and Scholars in 1394. The absence of any mention in the will seems quite conclusive evidence for a pre 1403 dating.

(63) The will is printed in Lowth's 'Life of Wykeham' (3rd Ed. corrected 1777). Appendix No.XVII.pp.XXXII-III. The windows were to be glazed as follows: those of the south aisle and clearstorey first, beginning from the west, then those of the north aisle and clearstorey, also beginning from the west.

(64) Woodforde. op. cit. pl.1.

light washes of matt but the modelling is subordinate to the painted line, this is particularly noticeable around the eyes and in the drawing of the hair and beards. The west window of the Ante chapel of New College originally contained a Tree of Jesse. Part of this still survives and is now in York Minster.⁽⁶⁵⁾ There seems to be a distinct change in these figures. The drawing is much more delicate and softer, the proportions are different, the faces are smaller and more rounded. For example the prophet Amos⁽⁶⁶⁾ should be compared with the figure of Enoch.⁽⁶⁷⁾ This greater delicacy may be influenced by the smaller size of the figures dictated by the requirements of the subject matter.

The east window of Winchester College also contained a Tree of Jesse, part of which survives.⁽⁶⁸⁾ There can be no doubt that it is by the same hand as the New College Jesse. The same softer style of drawing is again in evidence. Compare, for example, the figure of Nathan with the Oxford Amos.⁽⁶⁹⁾ The rounder face type is well evidenced by the head of the Virgin,⁽⁷⁰⁾ this should be

(65) *ibid.* pp.20-21 and pp. 102-105.

(66) Reproduced in M. Rickert. Painting in Britain. The Middle Ages. (1954). pl. 172-6.

(67) Woodforde. *op. cit.* pl. V.

(68) Le Couteur. *op. cit.* pp.72-83. The original was replaced by a copy in the 1825-1828 restoration. Part of the Jesse has been returned to the college.

(69) Rickert. *op. cit.* pl. 172 a. b.

(70) Photograph at the Courtauld Institute (BB55/1080).

contrasted with the more hieratic Eve, with a much broader chin and wider mouth at New College⁽⁷¹⁾ or the Royal Saint there.⁽⁷²⁾

This softer style also permeates the large full length figures at Winchester College. Three of the original figures are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum: Saints John Evangelist, James minor and the Prophet Zephaniah.⁽⁷³⁾ It is instructing to compare the head of Zephaniah⁽⁷⁴⁾ with, for example, the New College Adam.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The basic similarity is not denied, the drawing, however, of the Zephaniah shows considerably more freedom and vivacity of line, this is particularly more noticeable in the more detailed drawing of the eyes and the realisation of the hair and beard.

The link between this Oxford-Winchester glass of circa 1383-1393 and the later glass in the Midlands, together with Thornton's work at York, is a general rather than a particular one.

(71) Woodforde. op. cit. pl.IV.

(72) *ibid.* pl. IX.

(73) Reproduced in Le Couteur. op. cit. pl.XXXVIII. See also B.Rackham A Guide to the Collections of Stained Glass. Victoria and Albert Museum (1936) p.50 and pl.IX.

(74) A detailed photograph is given in J.Baker, 'English Stained Glass' (1960). pl. 54.

(75) Woodforde. op. cit. pl.11.

The manner of painting heads, with the washes of enamel subservient to the painted line, and the rounded head types are similar. The Winchester College Virgin and Child should be compared with the Virgin and Child at Tong (Catalogue Number 12). The head of the King of Sicily(?) from the St. William window⁽⁷⁶⁾ should be compared with the prophet Zacharias at Winchester College.⁽⁷⁷⁾ The canopies at Oxford and Winchester are wholly executed in white glass and yellow stain: the somewhat eccentric canopies at New College⁽⁷⁸⁾ are not found imitated in detail in any of the later glass. The 'seaweed' foliage also occurs at Winchester College. These considerations rather suggest that John Thornton of Coventry and the other glaziers in the Midlands of circa 1400-1410 were at least aware of the type of work that Thomas Glazier of Oxford had produced circa 1383-1393.

It has been suggested that the glass in the nave clearstory and aisle windows of Winchester Cathedral of circa 1403 is also to be attributed to Thomas of Oxford.⁽⁷⁹⁾ This seems extremely probable. It is to be noted that here Thomas of Oxford, for the

(76) Reproduced in Knowles. Technical Notes, op. cit. Pl.VIII facing p.158.

(77) Photograph at the Courtauld Institute (BB 55/1081)

(78) See below for remarks on the canopies.

(79) C. Winston 'A Short Notice of the Painted Glass in Winchester and its Neighbourhood. (A paper read at the meeting of the

Archaeological Institute at Winchester in 1845 reprinted in C. Winston 'Memoirs illustrative of the Art of Glass Painting' (1865) pp.65-76), first noted that the glass in these windows "is of precisely the same character as the original glass now remaining in the north south and west windows of the ante-chapel of New College, Oxford." (ibid. p.65).

first time so far as we know, introduces small figures standing in niches in the vertical side shafts framing the main figures, (80) similar in type to those in Thornton's East window at York or those in the Newark panels.

The development of all the visual arts in England in the second half of the fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century was conditioned by influences coming from abroad. These influences, in chronological order came from Italy, Bohemia and the Low Countries. It seems that some particular aspects of the development of English manuscript painting are of some importance in clarifying the developments in stained glass painting.

The Italian element is found in the 1350's and 1360's in the wall paintings executed for St. Stephen's chapel Westminster. (81) A few fragments are preserved in the British Museum. One scene,

(80) Le Couteur. op. cit. Pl.IX. Glass not in situ, inserted in the easternmost window, North choir Clearstory.

(81) E. Tristram. English Wall Paintings of the Fourteenth Century. (1955) pp.206-219.

the Destruction of Job's children, is framed by an architectural surround with small figures in niches in the vertical shaftings, similar in type to those found later in stained glass.⁽⁸²⁾ Here also can be seen the ultimate prototype for the oval head with short curly hair that is such a feature of the glass that has been discussed. The Italian influence continues until the end of the century, being modified in its later stages by a different style from Bohemia.⁽⁸³⁾ A particular instance of Italian influence is seen in representations of the crucifixion with demi figures of angels holding chalices to catch Christ's blood. This iconography is first found in Italian art in Giotto's crucifixion in the Arena Chapel Padua of c. 1305.⁽⁸⁴⁾ It first occurs in English art in the crucifixion page of the sumptuous missal executed in 1383-1384

(82) *ibid.* pl. 1.

(83) See particularly M.R. James and E.G. Millar 'The Bohun Manuscripts'. Roxburghe Club 1936 (199) for the effect of the Italian influence on English manuscript painting in the later 1360's, 1370's and early 1380's. Professor Wormald distinguishes the sobering influence of Bohemia in the latest part of Bodleian MS. Auct D.4.4. the latest of the Bohun manuscripts.

(84) C. Carra Giotto. (1925). pl. LXIII.

for Nicholas Lytlington, Abbot of Westminster.⁽⁸⁵⁾ It occurs also in the glass at New College (86) at Thurcaston pre 1425 and in the east window of Haddon Hall Chapel of 1427.

The canopies above the figures at New College, Oxford, display an interest in three dimensional plastic representation of architecture that is more fully developed than anything earlier in English glass painting.⁽⁸⁷⁾ There are two main types of canopy design, the first shows a trefoil arch set before a three sided battlemented structure, with diagonally recessed sides and round towers at the corners, with a squat tower rising behind it.⁽⁸⁸⁾ The second type shows a round headed arch surrounded by a heavy embattlement, pierced by windows with a forward projecting circular tower at the centre, with an open tower rising behind, also set diagonally.⁽⁸⁹⁾ The bases below the figures also have a diagonally

(85) J. Armitage Robinson and M.R. James. The Manuscripts of Westminster Abbey. (1909) pp.7-8. The page is reproduced in E.G. Millar English Illuminated Manuscripts of the XIV c. and XV.c. (1928) pl. 71.

(86) Woodforde. op. cit. p.67.

(87) See above Chapters II and V for earlier examples employing perspective.

(88) Woodforde. op. cit. pl.1 canopies above figures of Judah and Adam.

(89) *ibid.* pl. VI and VII, canopies above figures of Jeremiah, St. Athanasius and a Bishop.

placed central pier. The canopies above the Winchester College figures display more precision in their spatial arrangement, the architecture is reduced in area and the coloured background is used to emphasise the spatial depth.⁽⁹⁰⁾ A related resurgence of interest in the problems of three dimensional representation is seen particularly well illustrated in two important manuscripts of the latter part of the fourteenth century. The first of these is the Carmelite Missal reconstructed by Miss Rickert.⁽⁹¹⁾ The Missal was probably written at Whitefriars, London before 1391 and illuminated before the end of the century by several hands.⁽⁹²⁾ The date of the illumination suggested by Miss Rickert has, however, been disputed.⁽⁹³⁾ One artist in this manuscript, Miss Rickert's 'Hand A', shows a particular interest in setting figures and buildings in a carefully continued spatial relationship. For ^{/contrived} example in the initial containing the 'Dedication of a Church',⁽⁹⁴⁾

(90) Rackham op. cit. pl.IX.

(91) M.Rickert. 'The Reconstructed Carmelite Missal' (1952)

(92) *ibid.* p.44.

(93) C.Kuhn 'Herman Scheerre and English Illumination of the early fifteenth century The Art Bulletin XXII (1940) pp.138-156, particularly p.152-3 suggesting that Hand A is the work of a Flemish master and assistants, under the influence of Herman Scheere, c. 1410.

(94) Rickert. op. cit. pl.VII.

although there is no attempt to create a realistic representation of the scene, there is a successful realisation of the plasticity of the church with an ordered procession of ecclesiastics and laymen around it. In the 'Purification of the Virgin' initial the Temple is set diagonally with its front wall removed to show the events taking place inside. (95)

The second manuscript is the missal executed for Sherborne Abbey, Dorset, between 1390-1407 and illuminated by John Siferwas. (96) A particular feature of his style is the display of figures and scenes in elaborate canopies. For example that on page 216 of this manuscript contains at the top a 'Noli Me Tangere'; Christ enthroned at the centre; at the foot are the Bishop of Salisbury and Abbot of Sherborne, and below, on either side of the hexagonal base are the scribe and illuminator. The vertical shaftings have figures of Saints Peter and Paul and two others standing in niches and more figures stand in the top part of the canopy proper. (97) The concern for creating a convincing spatial depth is similar in interest to Hand A of the Carmelite Missal and the New College - Winchester College canopies.

(95) Rickert. op. cit. pl.IX.

(96) J.A. Herbert, The Sherborne Missal. Facsimile edition Roxburghe Club. 1920.

(97) E. G. Millar. op. cit. pl. 82.

There are affinities of purpose between Hand A of the Carmelite Missal and Thornton's East window for York Minster. A detailed comparison is difficult, not only because of the different techniques employed, but particularly because of the disparity in size. The Missal illuminations are, at the most, only about three and a half inches high, whereas the panels of glass are three feetsquare. However in such panels in the window at the 'St. John receiving the messages to the Seven churches' the realisation of the church⁽⁹⁸⁾ set along a diagonal line is close in type to the Dedication scene in the Missal already discussed.

The detailed stylistic influences behind the styles of the Carmelite Missal Hand A, Siferwas, and the slightly later artist Herman Scheere are involved and are the subject of some dispute.⁽⁹⁹⁾ However, whatever the outcome of these arguments is, it seems correct to suggest that in the later part of the fourteenth century and early fifteenth century, the developments in stained glass design are analogous to contemporary developments in manuscript painting in England.

(98) A large church is represented adorned with the figures of seven bishops, in niches, to symbolise the Seven Churches.

(99) See Rickert op. cit. and Kuhn op. cit. for differing views on this subject.