

JONATHAN & RUTH COOKE LTD
STAINED GLASS CONSERVATION
5 TIVOLI PLACE
ILKLEY
WEST YORKSHIRE
LS29 8SU
TELEPHONE 01943 602521
MOBILE 07968 967490

www.stainedglassconservation.co.uk

www.jonathancookeglasspainter.com

**Thornhill St Michael and All Angels
Resume of decisions regarding the creation/installation of a replica of the 1493
glass of the east window of the Savile Chapel (nII)**

The condition of the original material is the subject of other reports. Once the arguments were accepted that this glass could no longer fulfil the role of weatherproofing the building, and that its significance had been lost with its surface image, some replacement was needed. The English Heritage position had been from the outset that the window was an integral part of an historic interior. David Martlew, a lay reader in the Church of England, as well as research scientist, considered that the window had ceased to fulfil any meaningful liturgical function as it was illegible. A view within the parish was that the window was 'dead' and a new one should be commissioned, more in keeping with the mission of the Church in the twentieth century. The 'Doom' subject, including the depiction of the Dead rising from their tombs in shrouds was considered unsuitable by some for a modern theology.

Jonathan therefore offered to cartoon and create a new sample panel, that of St Michael, for display in the church, to inform debate. Consideration was given to the possibility of reusing the c19 glass, replacing only the c15 material, but this would have created a further set of problems for the displaced medieval glass. In the end, the decision of two main grant-giving bodies, English Heritage and the Church Building Commission, was in favour of the creation of a total replica. This decision was due to a number of exceptional factors: the unique subject matter of the original, the existence of a reliable body of material which could inform the reconstruction, and the significance and function of this window within its historic setting of the Chapel, and within the church.

The task of producing cartoons began, based on the internal evidence of the glass itself, wherever discernible, the Burlison and Grylls pre and post -restoration records, sometimes a synthesis of the two. Thomas Cooke created a composite image of the five main lights using the post-restoration cartoons and the c19 glass to assist with the creation of the new window. All Jonathan's new cartoons were submitted to

JONATHAN COOKE ACR
RUTH COOKE BA (ECON)
THOMAS COOKE MA HISTORY OF ART
PAUL FLANAGAN MA STAINED GLASS CONSERVATION

VAT REGISTRATION NUMBER 780 3194 28
REGISTERED NUMBER 4463255

Brian Sprakes, the author of the CVMA volume for West Yorkshire, and Thomas Cooke researched the inscriptions – the prayers spoken by the donors, consulting with, among others, Professor Nigel Morgan of Cambridge University. All text and detail was offered for comment to Brian Sprakes and David O'Connor, before cutting glass and painting began in mid 2012. All discussion and decisions were logged in e mail correspondence with all parties, and we have recommended that these e mails form part of the record of work.

The task of reconstruction for the main lights, though painstaking, was relatively easy. The traceries, however, presented other challenges. The decision to reinstate twelve apostles with attributes was based partly on detective work, part conjecture, a desire on the part of the parish to have twelve apostles in the new window, and a sense of rightness within the scheme.

"It may be argued that there is a specific link between the tracery lights and the dedicatory inscription, where intercession is the central theme. The tracery lights can also be read as part of the '*Heavenly City*' despite being physically separate from the main body of the window since, theologically speaking, this is where they belong."¹

Thomas Cooke's dissertation gives an indication of the discussions which ensued. There was some evidence in the glass itself that panels were not in their original positions within the tracery. The shape of the border of A2, and its apparent extension to fill the opening suggested relocation. "..... evidence internal to the window is that panels A5 and B3 have also been reversed. These changes were most probably effected during the 1870s although there is the possibility of earlier modifications. For this reason, it is somewhat difficult to establish any hierarchy amongst characters within the tracery lights."²

Identifying the tracery figures was not easy, as the Burlison & Grylls cartoons were not complete.

"The outer two[traceries], containing sunbursts, are too small to contain figures, and it can be assumed that the masonry, contemporary with the glazing scheme, has been designed to accommodate twelve figures. Easily identified by their attributes are Saint Andrew in A2 with a saltire cross, and Saint James the Greater in A3 with his pilgrim's staff and shell badge. However, Jones was not able to identify all of the saints portrayed as the internal surface of some had been entirely lost by 1970.

[Jones noted that] " there would have been twelve figures but his work was primarily a catalogue of the extant glass..... St Andrew and James the Greater are both apostles. Other identifiable attributes remaining in the glass include a long halberd-like weapon, a square headed axe, a spear, a crossed staff and a saw.....The attribute in panel B2 must have been mistaken by Jones in his attribution as a fuller's club, but it is more likely to be the saw of St Simon. Next to him, in panel B3 there appears to be St Matthias with his poleaxe. On the lower tier, panel A1 is described as a saint with a tonsure by Jones. Barely visible in the glass, is what could be the keys of St Peter. The tonsured head is furthermore one of the identifying

¹ Cooke, Thomas J. *I John Saw; Iconography, Private Piety and Donorship in the Savile Chapel, St Michael and All Angels, Thornhill*, MA dissertation, York: University of York, 2012, p.35

² Cooke, 2012, p.35

characteristics of St Peter. Next we see St Andrew with his saltire in A2 and in A3, St James the Great with his distinctive hat bearing the shell emblem, and his pilgrim's staff. Light A4 is not easy to identify, given its advanced state of decay, and here access to the Burlison and Grylls drawings made prior to restoration is useful. In their cartoons, we see a saint carrying a book and perhaps some other, indistinguishable, item..... Next along, we see what could be St Thomas with his spear, and St James the Less with the fuller's club, symbol of his martyrdom, in lights A5 and A6 respectively. A7 clearly shows a saint with a crossed staff, the symbol of St Jude. A8 could be St Bartholomew, as the saint appears to be carrying a large knife. Light A9 portrays a saint with a long handled axe which could represent either St Matthew or Matthias but, given the book in his hand, this would indicate the Evangelist, Matthew. The final light is once again not quite identifiable, even in the nineteenth century drawings, but if we accept that the tracery lights contain the apostles, we are left with two unassigned saints in A4 and A10, namely Philip and John. The cartoon of A4, as previously mentioned, portrays a saint with a book in his hand. As John is the only remaining apostle Evangelist, he must be the figure portrayed in A4 light, leaving St Philip in A10."³

Where c15 detail was missing, it was recreated by repeating other appropriate c15 tracery detail which had survived. Where Burlison and Grylls had introduced new figures, presumably to complete a series of apostles, these were copied.

Jonathan proceeded with the painting of the agreed design. He had familiarised himself with the window at close quarters over the monitoring period. Careful study of the remaining decoration on the glass, and of both sets of Burlison and Grylls cartoons which have a white body colour in the form of line work, representing the c15 stickwork through a stippled wash, gave him a good indication of the late c15 technique to be replicated. He also studied York glass of similar date in better condition. He determined that the original had been achieved by the use of a thick stippled wash, some worked back dry, with line work superimposed: further brushing back and stickwork to create further highlights, and stain applied to the reverse – all accomplished in a single firing. Though he could not be certain of the exact texture of the stipple or the amount of line work originally applied to faces etc. he only applied what he could justify with reference to the glass, and the cartoons, and as far as can be determined his glass painting method replicated that of the c15 glass painters. The materials used were Lamberts' hand made antique glass, Heaps lead, Reusche grisailles, Oster stains.

The Savile Chapel was rededicated by the Bishop of Wakefield on 4th November 2012. The window featured in the 2013 English Heritage publication *Conservation Basics*, in the Practical Building Conservation Series.

The project is ongoing, with plans to conserve and install several of the more intact panels into a light box display, in the Savile Chapel, with open secure storage of the remainder underneath. The conservation prior to display will necessarily be limited.

Ruth Cooke: May 2013

³ Cooke, 2012, p.36