

## Selected examples of stained glass from the Burrell Collection

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**45-364 Prophet Jeremiah, French, Abbey Church of Saint Denis, c.1144.**



This small panel is a lost piece from the bottom right-hand corner of the Infancy of Christ window at St.Denis. (Identified by Prof.H.Wentzel in 1961 by its inscription -Novum fset dominus super terrain: femina drumdabit virum (The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man) - quotation from Jeremiah 31:22, prophesying the birth of Christ.) The Abbey of St. Denis was one of the first buildings in the style of Gothic architecture. The Patron of St.Denis, Abbot Suger (sometimes called the "father of Gothic architecture"), kept a detailed record of the rebuilding of the abbey and it is in this that he referred to the stained glass windows. He devised the subjects for them and arranged for them to be glazed "by the exquisite hands of many masters from different regions". In Sugers architectural concept the windows were very important, because of his concern with the symbolic and spiritual qualities of light: "to illumine men's minds so that they may travel through it to an apprehension of God's light". (In one of the Abbey's windows Abbot Suger is represented as a donor presenting a stained glass window.) The Jeremiah panel is of particular importance to the collection because of this origin, but also because of it's excellent condition. The original 12th c. glass is of the highest quality.

**45-385 Marriage at Cana, French, Clermont-Ferrand, 1275-85.**



It is unlikely that the layout of our three panels is original, but the border motifs indicate that they are from the same window. The middle panel depicts the feast at Cana taking place immediately before or after Christ's miracle of turning water into wine. The other two probably portrait donor figures. Medallion windows were very popular in the late 12th and 13th century (well suited to incorporate a strong metal ferramenta necessary to support glass over a much increased surface area compared to earlier windows). The individual panels depicted scenes from the Old and New Testaments or the lives of the saints. They were usually placed along the aisles of the church where they could be seen. The artists used bold simple drawing techniques and avoided complicated designs and subtle iconography so that there should be no mistaking their message. The Burrell panel is virtually in it's original condition and even the lead has not been replaced.



45-2 Beatrix van Vaikenburgh, English (Oxford School), c. 1275.



The earliest surviving representation of a donor in English stained glass. Also the earliest surviving example of the Oxford School of Glass Painters. Beatrix van Vaikenburgh was the third wife of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans ("Rex Allemannie"). Beatrix title was Countess of Oxford; her title quoted on the stained glass window "Regina Allemannie" has been disputed and discussed by various experts. W.Burrell was enchanted when he discovered that Beatrix's stepson Richard Plantagenet and his first cousin Edward I. slept in a bedroom of Hutton Castle the night before the Berwick massacre in 1296 very close to where the Beatrix panel hung from 1923 until 1944!

**45-75 Princess Cecily, Canterbury Cathedral, c. 1483.**



Originally from the Royal Window of the north-west transept, as a kneeling figure beside the donor portraits of her parents Elisabeth Woodville and Edward IV and six of their children. In 1642 the window was almost completely destroyed. Most of the glass in its place in Canterbury today was replaced either in the restoration of 1789 (it appears that this is when the figure of Cecily disappeared) or in the 19thc. Recommended literature: Madeleine Caviness "The Windows of Christ Church Cathedral Canterbury", CVMA Publication. The portraits were based on paintings from life. This new naturalism is associated with the 15th c Flemish style of painting, however no workshop has been identified. Compare painting style to Beatrix panel also to discuss the yellow -stain technique.

***Yellow-stain, or silver-stain, developed around 1300.***

*Compounds of silver (nitrates, chlorides, oxides, sulphides) stain glass yellow (soak into the glass rather than sit on the surface as other paints) when applied to the glass and fired in a kiln. Depending on the composition of the glass and the temperature at which the stain is fired onto the glass, the stain will vary in colour and intensity from a pale lemon to deep orange.*





Showing a man surrounded by vices and virtues.

Good example to show the expert use of silver-stain on white glass.

At the time this panel was painted the medieval tradition of stained glass had practically died. New styles of architecture would no longer incorporate large and dominant and light-absorbing areas of coloured glass. Also, the style of painting had changed and stained glass is less suitable to depict detailed realism on any grand scale - not the least because different coloured glass has to be held together by a lead profile, and lead, being nontransparent, always appears as a bold graphic line.



A domestic roundel commissioned to commemorate the marriage of a Swiss couple in Zug (a town). Painted entirely in enamels and yellow-stain and shows how the use of these colours on a small surface offers possibilities for detailed and realist drawing.

Enamels are pigments made from coloured glass. They have been in use on vessel glass and ceramics since 1500 BC. On window glass they were introduced only at the beginning of the 16thc. The use of enamels allowed the glass painter to use many different colours on one piece of glass.

Conservation report of the panel in file.

South Gallery (opposite Hutton Dining Room)



45-485, Life of Christ and the Virgin, German, Boppard am Rhine, 1440-46.



The six panels in our collection make up half of a large window originally made for the Carmelite Church at Boppard and depicting scenes from the life of Christ, his nativity, and passion and surrounding the scenes focusing on the life of the Virgin. The other panels are in collections in Zurich, Detroit and N.Y. (Cloisters). The Burrell panels depict the following scenes:

**top/left - Christ before Pilate**

Pilate in scarlet and ermine, Christ bound, led by soldiers

**base/left – Gethesmane**

"Agony in the garden"

Angel with cross and chalice appearing to Christ who is kneeling, at the foot of a hill in front of the sleeping disciples,

### **top/right – Resurrection**

Christ holding banner steps out of tomb between two angles. Two guards reclining in foreground,

### **base/right - Christ appearing to St.Peter**

Peter seated beside a rock with raised hands and a large key, Christ with banner and scarlet robe,

### **centre/top – Annunciation**

Set in room with the Virgin kneeling in a blue robe separated from the Angel Gabriel by a scroll: ave gracia plena dominus tecu(m)

### **centre/base - Birth of the Virgin**

Child standing on the red cover of a curtained bed held by her mother. A servant beckoning at the right and a midwife washing in the foreground.

The window is part of a vast glazing programme of seven enormous windows, each one in praise of the Virgin, whose Immaculate Conception the Carmelites had vigorously upheld at the Council of Basel in 1439.

Political and social upheaval in Europe (this time it was the Napoleonic invasion of the Rhineland and the secularisation of the monasteries) caused five of the windows to be removed in 1818. They were replaced with plain glazing. The windows remaining in the Church were lost (no documentation about this). The five windows were to be installed in the private chapel of Count Puckler in Lausitz. However only one window was ever unpacked. The others were eventually sent to Berlin, where they were given a letter and number. On the basis of these numbers it has been possible to identify most of the panels and to place them within their original scheme.

Recommended literature: The Metropolitan Museum Journal, paper by Jane Hayward on the Reconstruction of the Boppard glazing scheme.



45-489.2 Siegfried von Gelnhause and his Wife, German, Boppard, 1440-6



Depicts donor figures that would have had their place under one of the lights of the Life of Christ window. Gelnhausen donated a part of the stained glass not only for the sake of his soul, his immortality, or to show off his wealth, but because it was useful to show allegiance to the Carmelite order in a region dominated by their influence.

Just above the donor panel, across the bottom of the three lights of one window, would have been the reclining figure of Jesse, the father of David. Windows depicting the life of Christ replaced the more common Genealogy of Christ Tree (example later) in Germany during the 13th-15thc.



45-487 St.Cunibert and Bishop Saint, German, Bottrop, 1440-6



These two figure lights are also from the glazing programme in Bottrop. Originally a three light window, they would have been positioned next to St.Michael (now in San Francisco), with St.George, St.Quirinus (both lost) and the Virgin and Child with the Holy Dove (US, private collection) in the panels underneath.



#### 45-489 Glorification of the Virgin and the Ninth Commandment, ditto



These two panels are part of the Kaiser Window - most important in the entire glazing scheme as it bore the arms of the Emperor Aibrecht II.

A large part of the glazing programme surrounding the figure of the Virgin has been lost. The remaining 10 commandments panels can be found at the Schnutgen Museum in Cologne.

The ninth commandment panel shows two groups of people standing underneath a banner "Thou shalt nor bear false witness". From above the half figure of God is smiling benignly down at the pious on the right that are shown kneeling in prayer. The group on the left are pointing fingers at each other (bearing false witness) much to the obvious delight of a little devil above their heads.

The importance of the Boppard Windows cannot be overemphasized. Not only because of their sheer size and beauty, but because they have survived as an important scheme base on the cult of the Virgin Mary. Similar windows were mostly destroyed during the religious upheavals and wars.

45-393, 45-394 Tree of Jesse, French (Rouen), early 16th c



Again these panels are just parts of a much larger window. The genealogy of Christ was based on the prophesy of Isaiah 11:1

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots."

Jesse, the father of King David is shown recumbent at the base of the window. From his side grows a stylised tree on whose branches are placed various kings, prophets and patriarchs surrounding the central figures of Christ and the Virgin. In the Burrell window only King David can be identified. There are no other known fragments of the window.

### Revelation Chapter 12 verse 1

'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.'

*This refers to 45-489 Glorification of the Virgin (above),*