



Dean and Chapter of Canterbury

The Cathedral Studios

Stained Glass Conservation at Canterbury Cathedral

Director: Dr. Sebastian Strobl, A.M.G.P.

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SPS/pjb

24th February 1994

Mr. H.P.M. Lawrence,
72 Bridge Down,
Bridge, Canterbury,
CT4 5BA

Dear Mr. Lawrence,

PATRIXBOURNE: ST. MARY'S CHURCH: SWISS GLASS
OUR REF. NO. 6698

As requested, please find enclosed my report on the condition of the windows of St. Mary's Church at Patricxbourne, and its Swiss glass in particular.

You can take from this report that, in my view, the condition of the mediaeval panels is sufficient for the time being, but that immediate action is strongly recommended with regard to its protection. We will be pleased to offer our service to carry out the necessary work.

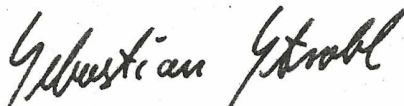
To give you an indication on the likely cost, I should advise you that we estimate for the installation of the said 6 mm Polycarbonate in all the main lights of both windows (not in the tracery or the east rose window!) the sum of approximately £1,220.00. This would include all charges for labour and material, but not V.A.T. However, it is possible to V.A.T. zero-rate the invoice if the church is a listed building. To prove this, we would need the relevant copy of the entry into the listed building registry. Please let us know if you can provide us with such a copy.

As mentioned in the report, we would be quite willing to come to the church again to discuss with you and the Architect the implications of my proposals. Please let me know whether you want us to do so.

I have tried to submit an informative report, giving as much detail as I regarded to be necessary. However, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you need more information.

I look forward to hearing from you again.

Yours sincerely,


DR. SEBASTIAN STROBL
DIRECTOR



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REPORT ON THE EAST WINDOW (I) AND OF THE SOUTH NAVE WINDOW (s.V) OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH AT PATRIBOURNE, KENT

The church of St. Mary dates from about 1170, being built at the time of the murder of St. Thomas a Becket. Serving the parish community for more than 800 years, it has now lost all its original glazing, which has been replaced mainly with 19th and 20th century stained glass of minor importance made by different artist and craftsmen such as Samuel Caldwell, the longstanding conservator at Canterbury Cathedral. However, there is some glass of major interest to be found in this church, as two of its windows contain 16th and 17th century Swiss glass, which was given to the church in the 19th century by members of the Conyngham family. Altogether ten small panels in the East Window (I) and eight small panels in the south window (s.V) have been set against a colourful (I) or clear (s.V) background, thus forming a patchy-like, but nevertheless, enchanting display. The content of these panels is described in the church guide, the relevant page of which is attached to this report.

The exposition of this highly precious glass to the open environment is understandably a matter of concern. Consequently, a survey has been arranged for by the parish to assess the present condition of the glass and to establish a catalogue of recommendation for its conservation and protection. The present report will try to achieve this. It is based on a survey carried out by the signatory on 8th February 1994 in the presence of the churchwarden, Mr. H.P.M. Lawrence.

Although we are looking at two separate windows, the fact that it is eighteen panels of the same provenance has led to the decision to describe their condition as one unit. Whilst reading the report it should be borne in mind that access to the windows was limited, and that the findings might be incomplete. However, the details that were obtainable will already give a good insight into the present condition of the panels.

Size of the East Window I:	1950 x 3000 mm
Number and sizes of lights:	2 - 1300 x 400 mm
	1 - 1950 x 560 mm
Size of South Window s.V:	2000 x 1230 mm
Number and sizes of lights:	2 - 1800 x 550 mm
Number of Tracer lights:	4

Findings

General condition of the:

- **stonework:** good; some cracks visible in the inner reveal of window s.V
- **saddle bars:** slightly rusty; connection to the panels via copper ties good
- **entire panels:** good, with the exception of the upper parts of the lower panels of window s.V (distorted)
- **leadwork:** good

4 to 6 mm round lead used in window s.V

3 to 10 mm round and flat lead used in window I

- **glass:** mainly good; fair in some areas of window s.V; some badly cracked panes in s.V, which are nevertheless secured and strengthened by backplating. Most of the cracks in window I already repaired with lead.
- **paintwork:** some loss occurred in the past; remainder appears to be stable.
At the time of survey, the inner surface of the windows was covered with condensation water, indicating a prevailing damp atmosphere in the church. In the long term this will have an adverse effect on the condition of the paintwork.

Recommendations

It can be taken from this survey report, that the overall condition of both windows has to be described as good and that no immediate action with regard to the conservation of the glass itself will be necessary. It is, however, advisable to monitor the glass at regular intervals to make reaction possible as soon as this situation changes.

With regard to the protection of the glass, the situation is completely different. Here, immediate action is strongly recommended. The existing protection of the windows is not sufficient for late mediaeval glass. In the case of window s.V, the use of copper wire guards even has the detrimental effect of staining the stone cill green. We therefore would recommend the permanent removal of these guards.

It has been mentioned in the findings that condensation water appeared on the inner surface of the mediaeval glass. In the long term, this will cause the glass to deteriorate and the paintwork to lift off. In order to avoid this, and also to protect the window against driving wind, direct approach of rainwater, vandalism etc., we would recommend the installation of sheets of 6 mm Polycarbonate (Makrolon or Lexan) on the exterior of all main lights of both windows.

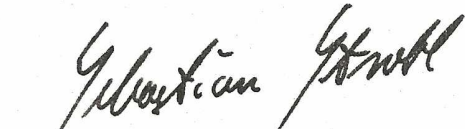
To reduce the well-known adverse effects of the use of sheets of polycarbonate to the appearance of the east wall of the church, we would recommend to keep the existing galvanised steel wire guards of the east window (I) and to install the sheeting in the interspace between the original glazing and the guards. We will be pleased to show the effect of the installation of such sheetings at a site meeting with the Architect and members of the parish.

Whilst carrying out the survey on the two windows in question, we had also a look at the other windows of the church to check their condition and to recommend action, if necessary. In general, the condition has to be described as good or sufficient, with the exception of the following:

- The guards of windows s.IV (east end of south aisle), n.V (Cooper-window in north aisle) and w.I (west window) have either started to rust or are entirely rusty already, causing brownish staining to the stone. They should be replaced in due course.
- The panels of window n.IV (east end of north aisle) are heavily bent. Although not in immediate danger, they should be releaded before too long.
- The same applies to the centre tracery light of window n.VII (westernmost window of the north aisle).

Again it was noticeable that the atmosphere of the church is very damp and that all windows therefore were covered on their interior surface with condensation water. This will, in the long term, have an adverse effect even on the 19th and 20th century glass. Action to improve the atmosphere in the building is therefore recommended.

Canterbury, 24th February 1994



DR. SEBASTIAN STROBL
DIRECTOR

SWISS GLASS

The Swiss Glass is exquisitely delicate in design and colouring and is a typical example of enamel glass as distinct from stained glass. These windows were obviously *vitreaux d'alliance* or commemorations of alliances between noble families and cover the period from 1538 until well after the Thirty Years' War in 1670. They were often used in Germany and France as decorations in public and private buildings, and portray both sacred and secular themes.

The eight panels in the south window of the *Bifrons Chapel*, reading top to bottom depict: the Crucifixion; St John the Baptist; Pyramus and Thisbe (like the martyrs depicted by medieval artists, Pyramus, with a sword thrust through his body, is suffering no pain); the Adoration of the Shepherds; Peter Gisler of Burglen (a town in the original Swiss Canton of Uri); the Raising of Lazarus (or some think the raising of Jairus's daughter); a Standard Bearer (of the Leventina valley in the Canton of Tessin. The winding road of the man driving pack mules is an original of the St Gothard Pass); the murder of St Meinrad.

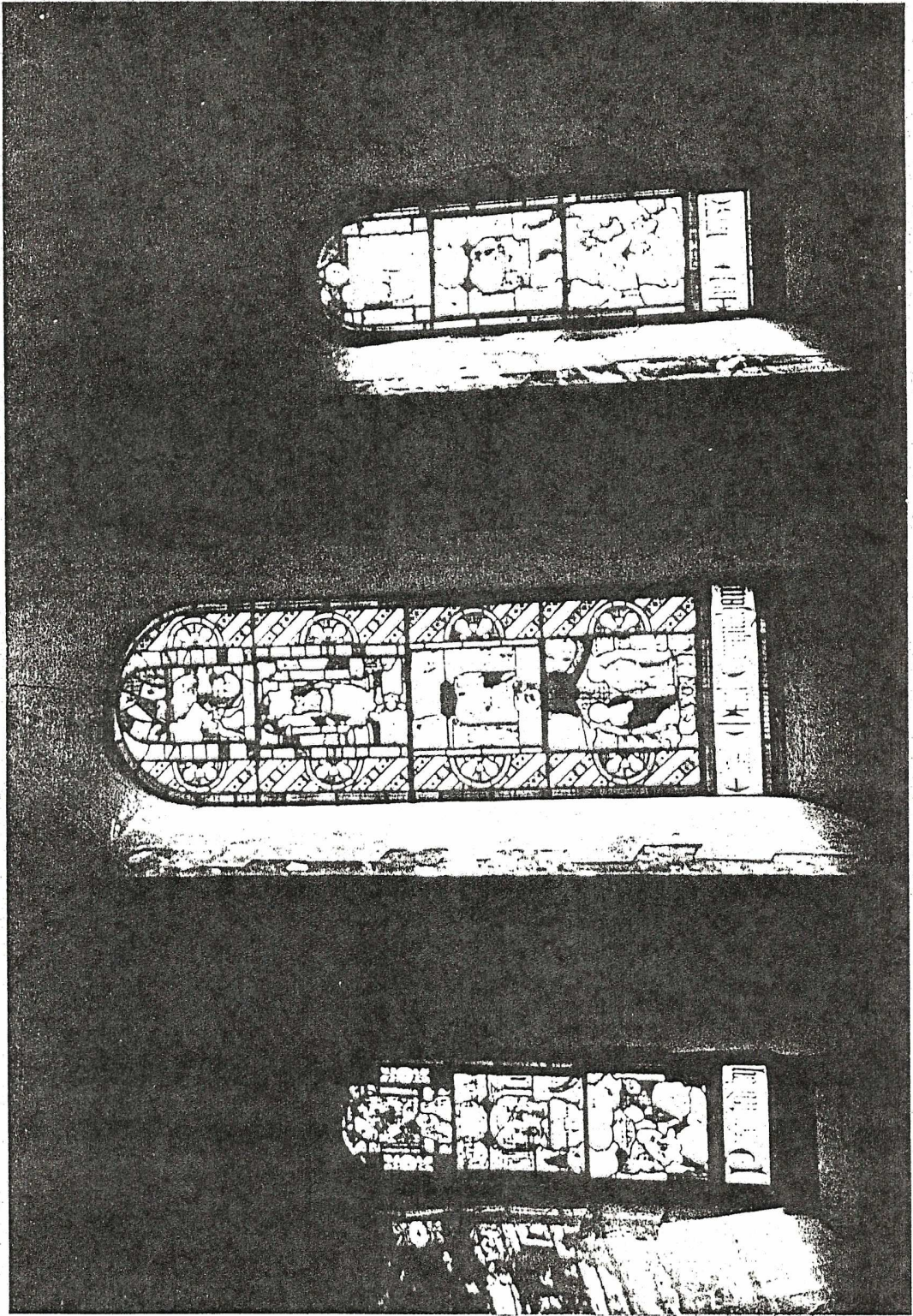
The ten panels in the Chancel reading from top to bottom are as follows:

North Lancet - Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (the towered city in the background is meant to be Lucerne and the three apostles are Peter, John and James); the Crucifixion (the inscription reads: "*Holy Angel and Messenger pray God for me, poor sinner, that he will forgive my sins and after this life grant me life eternal*"); Samson (holding in his hand the jaw bone with which he slew the Philistines).

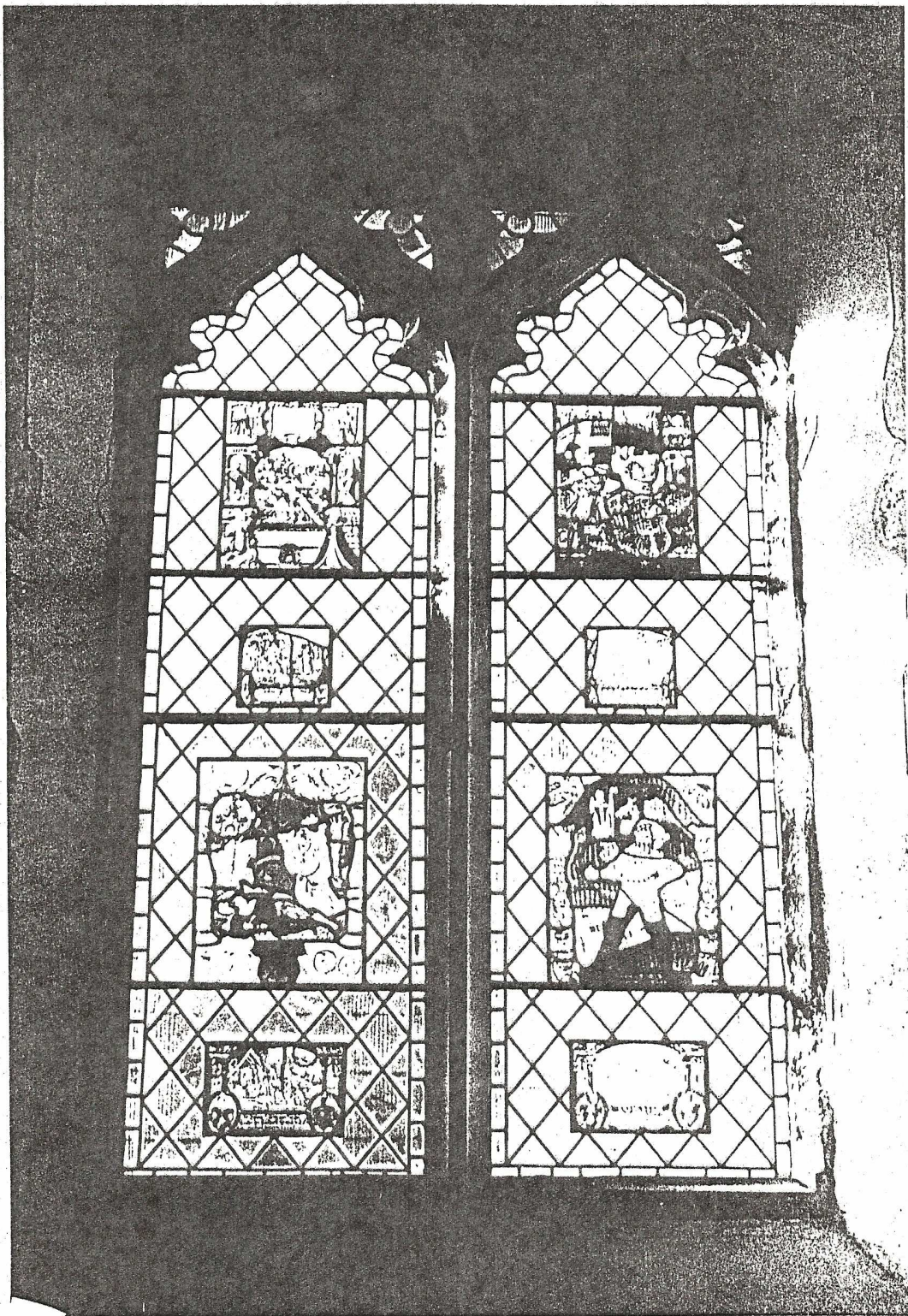
Central Lancet - A knight, Jacob Wirtz, 1579; a Roman soldier (an allegory of war); the Adoration of the Magi (there are also small pictures of the Adoration in the top left and right-hand corners); St John the Evangelist and Elizabeth of Hungary (this is the work of Martin Moser, the best 16th century glass painter in Lucerne).

South Lancet - A brilliantly coloured painting of a long-bearded knight in armour; Christ's Agony in Gethsemane; Samson slaying the lion (an exact copy, line for line, of the woodcut by Albrecht Dürer. The hill in the background represents Nürenburg, Dürer's native city)

Those who are interested in further examples of Swiss glass in the district should visit Temple Ewell church near Dover.



East Window I



South Window s. V