

The St. Hilda Window



This window is located in the north-west corner of the north aisle. St. Hilda (of Whitby) was the founding abbess of the monastery at Whitby. It was there in AD 664 that King Oswiu (or Oswy) of Northumbria held a synod to calculate the date of Easter and to declare that his kingdom would follow the customs of Rome, rather than those of Iona, as practised by Irish monks.

In her left hand, she is depicted holding a model of the monastery of Whitby. The original was destroyed between 867 and 870, and was not rebuilt until some time after 1078. It was dissolved in 1538/9. The other panel is of St. Werburgh, who is holding a model of Chester Cathedral.

Much of the information about this window has been provided by Christopher Richardson of the CVMA - a British Academy Research Project, hosted by the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of York.

"I have identified one of your other windows, you probably know about it already. It is the two light window featuring St Hilda.

The 1930 Directory of the British Society of Master Glass Painters lists it as being by Arthur L. & Charles E. Moore, 1849-1939 and 1880-1956 respectively. Sadly, this is the one directory that does not give a date of its manufacture/insertion - the society produced directories throughout the 20th century until 1972.

I had a close look at all the other windows, especially the Suffer Little Children and baptism windows. Both look very similar to other windows by A. L. Moore, before his son joined him. On closer inspection of the St Hilda window I found their signature, under the unnamed lady's left foot. I think this window is the work of C. E. Moore, having a much more modern feel to it. The attached images shows the signature, and the similarity in Christ's hair and nose in your slc and a window by A. L. Moore at Llandudno. However, similarities in style is not a definite attribution. "

It is worth noting that the second rector of the parish was Earl Mulgrave (1872 - 1890). Mulgrave Castle stands within the boundary of Whitby and the Earl (later the Marquis of Normanby) retained a very strong link with the area.

Arthur Louis Moore (1849–1939) was an English glass-maker who specialised in stained glass windows. He was joined in the business by his son **Charles Eustace Moore** (1880–1956) in 1896.



The other figure to the right is that of St. Werburgh. She is the patron saint of Chester, and is portrayed holding a model of Chester Cathedral. She was the daughter of King Wulfhere of Mercia (himself the Christian son of the pagan King Penda of Mercia) and his wife St. Ermenilda, herself the daughter of the King of Kent.

She obtained her father's consent to enter the Abbey of Ely, which had been founded by her great aunt Etheldreda, the first Abbess of Ely and former queen of Northumbria. Werburgh was a nun for most of her life and eventually became the fourth Abbess of Ely. She died on 3 February 700 A.D. and was buried at Hanbury, in Staffordshire.

Her shrine remained at Hanbury until the threat from Danish Viking raids in the late 9th century prompted its relocation to within the walled city of Chester. By 1057, St. Werburgh was being regarded as the patron saint and protector of Chester.

This panel has plain glass beneath the image of the saint because it suffered damage at an earlier date and was replaced with plain glass.