

PUGIN and BARRY

Article

According to the book *Changing Scene*, by H. T. Milliken (ed. 2007),

'The east windows in the chancel and side chapel had been filled with plain glass. This was a temporary measure until the right kind of stained glass could be decided upon by the architect, who was still travelling on the Continent, and by the Earl of Ellesmere....

The origin of the glass in the main east window, and three of those in the chapel, remains... a mystery. They have variably been ascribed to Italian, Belgian, Flemish or South German sources, but recent experts' opinion favours the view that they are composed of South German, possibly mixed with some English, stained glass collected by Scott on his travels.'

The Wikipedia entry for the church states that *"Twelve windows were acquired by Scott from France, Belgium or Italy depicting saints, two others were made by the studios of Edward Burne-Jones and the aisle windows are Powell's cast glass."* So, the origin of the glass, the designers and the installers of the east windows all seem to be unknown.

However, recent research is revealing some very interesting information and, to understand this better, some names and details need to be explained. George Gilbert Scott (born 1811, Kt. 9 Aug. 1872), the architect of the church, had been a great admirer of the burgeoning Gothic Revival style of architecture, and in particular of its greatest proponent, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (born 1812). They met briefly for the first time in about 1838, but rarely after that, Scott learning most from the various books and tracts that Pugin wrote. Scott referred to him as *"the great hero of our revival."* Charles Barry (Kt. 11 Feb. 1852) was already a great and renowned architect by this time, born some years earlier in 1795 in London. He is above all best-known for winning the competition to design the new Palace of Westminster in 1835, following the destruction by fire of the old palace in October 1834. For this work, he was knighted in 1852. A. W. N. Pugin was recruited by Barry to help with the interior design (furniture, stained glass, sculpture, wallpaper, decorative floor tiles, mosaic work, etc.) and collaborated with Barry between 1844 and 1852 (the year of Pugin's death on 21 September). To these names must be added a fourth, John Hardman, of Birmingham. Lesser known certainly than the others, he was the son of John Hardman, the founder of a button-making firm. In 1838, at Pugin's instigation, Hardman Jr. expanded the family business to introduce ecclesiastical metalwork made to Pugin's designs. In 1845, the firm branched out again, into the making of stained glass.

To add to this mix, must now be included the Earl of Ellesmere. Under the terms of the third Duke of Bridgewater's will, Lord Francis Leveson-Gower changed his name to Egerton in 1833 and inherited Bridgewater House and the income arising out of the Bridgewater estates. The London house needed to be renovated and enlarged to hold an extensive art collection, and it was quickly discovered that the supporting walls were too decayed to sustain a new upper level; and so it was decided to pull the whole of the old building down and to erect a new house. The man chosen to design the new house was (Sir) Charles Barry. Barry's first design for the new house was submitted in 1841, but six years elapsed before it was begun. It was completed for Lord Ellesmere in 1854. So, the main players were all known to each other by the time of the consecration of St. Mark's and the elevation of Lord Francis to the peerage as Earl of Ellesmere in 1846.

The Manchester Guardian of (Wednesday) 27 August 1851 carried an article about the coming visit of Queen Victoria in October of that year, in which it detailed some of the arrangements that were being made for that visit. It mentioned that Earl Grey, her Majesty's Secretary of State, had visited the Hall during the past week to discuss these with the Earl, and further mentions that *"Other contemplated alterations and improvements connected with the house itself, have rendered necessary the presence of Mr. Barry, the architect, who is stated to have been at Worsley, in conference with the noble earl, as to the requisite arrangements and preparations to be made."*

A book published by John Murray in 1868, *"The Architect of the New Palace of Westminster,"* gives a further insight. Written by the Rev. Alfred Barry (son of Charles Barry), it was in response to a pamphlet written by E. W. Pugin (Pugin's son) entitled *"Who Was The Art-Architect of the Houses of Parliament?"* - a war of words between the two sons over Pugin Jr.'s claim that his father had been the true architect of the Palace. On page 43, in quoting from the diary of Sir C. Barry, Alfred Barry writes:

1851, Aug. 22. - At Worsley. Pugin and Hardman called.

So, this corroborates the article in *The Manchester Guardian*, quoted above; in fact, three gentlemen met with the Earl in Worsley on Friday 22 August 1851 - but for what purpose?

Margaret Belcher (1936-2016) was born in New Zealand and became an acknowledged scholar and specialist on the life and work of A. W. N. Pugin. In 1987, she began to edit his letters, a work that eventually ran to five volumes, from 2001 to 2015. In volume 5, she quotes from a letter written by Pugin to his third wife, Jane, as follows:

*Liverpool, Thursday night
Liverpool, Thursday, 21 August 1851*

My Dearest Jane

We have arrived safe here - ... we are going about 6 o'clock tomorrow to Lord Ellesmere about the glass, and then to Pantasaph. ...

*Ever dearest Jane
with love to all the littles ones
Your devoted and affectionate husband
A W Pugin*

Belcher then gives a very brief résumé of the life of Lord Ellesmere, before presenting further information about the purpose of the visit. She writes:

On 7 June 1851, Barry wrote to Hardman from Westminster to tell him that Lady Ellesmere asked about the glass for St. Mark's and Barry did not know what to answer; his letter survives in SGL. In response to Hardman's immediate report of delay, Barry decided to halt any work and have all cartoons and instructions sent to him so that he could show Lady Ellesmere what was proposed. After notifying Hardman to this effect on 9 June, he explains on 12 June why he is anxious: 'If it were possible I would much like you to see the old glass already in the window in order that you may not fail of harmonizing the new with the old;' white glass is to be avoided, and a 'dark rich tone of colour produced'.

By 16 June Barry gives Hardman the order to proceed as Lady Ellesmere approves of what is intended, and on 7 July he urges Hardman to dispatch a workman to fix the glass at Worsley as soon as possible. SGDB enters to Lady Ellesmere at 12 July 1851 an east window for £35 and a smaller east window costing only £10; there is a note of Barry's name at the foot of the entry.

Lady Ellesmere sent a letter on mourning paper from 'Worsley' on 'Wednesday', probably 13 August; her letter is preserved in SGL 1851; apparently she wrote to Barry, who forwarded her communication to Hardman with a covering note on 15 August.

"The Window in Worsley Church is completed & I am sorry to say unsuccessful. The execution is pretty in itself but wholly unsuited to the rest in colouring. It has the effect of a gown of which the skirt is crimson, & the body pink.

Now the question is can anything be done to improve it. Who is the executor of it? Did he ever see the window?

I should be inclined to have him down to look at it; but before determining upon this, should like to know his name & address".

Belcher's conclusion is that it was this condemnation that brought the three men, Barry, Hardman and Pugin, together at Worsley about a week later.

The involvement of such prominent figures is fascinating and brings another dimension to the history of the Church here at Worsley and to the breadth of contacts of the Earl. Clearly, the commission of the east windows and the concern of Lady Ellesmere were very important to the three men. The relative costs of the two sets of windows is, today, quite astonishing. In reference to the book *'The Work of Sir Gilbert Scott'* by David Cole, 1980, Belcher points out that his suggestion that *'Pugin, perhaps as late as 1852 and doing his last work of this kind, designed some of the stained glass for Scott's church of St. Mark, Worsley, near Manchester, seems to be new'*.

As for the concern of Pugin to get this work right, Martin Harrison in his book *'Victorian Stained Glass'*, 1980, writes that (Pugin) *'laid the foundations for the successful revival of the medieval principles of stained glass design'* and throughout his working life continued *'to set the highest standards in English stained glass'*.

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I can also confirm from another source about the involvement of Pugin in the east and south chapel east windows. Stanley A. Shepherd recently produced a book on "The Stained Glass of A. W. N. Pugin" which reproduces all the Office Records etc for all windows he made... I'll photograph the relevant page and send it to you with this. You'll see that the order was placed in 1850 (executed 1851) for 19 pieces of tracery for an east window and 11 pieces of tracery for a smaller east window, I have counted them all and figures are correct. The book also reproduces the letter you found from Lady Ellesmere which compares the new glass as a pink body to a crimson skirt!

At least I was half right when I suggested that the main lights in the east window replaced an earlier work but got it the wrong way round! If the contract was with Pugin and he died the following year 1852, then perhaps the Ellesmere's decided not to pursue a 'damages' claim or likewise. However, while I agree with Lady E that the tracery lights do not blend at all well with the earlier glass, these are very important panels and represent some of the last work designed by Pugin while he was still alive.

Currently I am writing up everything Paul kindly sent me along with what I have researched on the Ely and Brightlingsea connection. This will then be forwarded to my good friend Elizabeth who is in charge of the archives at Ely Cathedral. She too is fascinated by the links with Worsley as indeed was the Bishop of Ely whom I met at a function, he wishes to be kept informed of developments! Together with Elizabeth we might find further information as to the exact origins of our collected panels. I hope to get up to Ely to meet Elizabeth in the next two or three weeks, Deanery Synods permitting, but will of course keep you full updated on anything we find.

(from Chris Parkinson: 16 June 2017)

'damages' is just a piece of my Essex colloquialism - Lady Ellesmere was clearly upset by the glass designed by Pugin and made by Hardman & Co. and may have sought some financial redress (what I referred to as 'damages') from Hardman and/or Pugin. It would appear she decided not to, perhaps because the contract to make the glass could have been with Pugin himself and he died the following year, or she was pacified by the company who made the glass, Hardman & Co or maybe Barry. Whatever, the glass by Pugin remains. Pugin worked with several glass makers but eventually persuaded his friend John Hardman who manufactured ecclesiastical metal items, to set up a stained glass dept. Pugin had all his subsequent windows made by Hardman (& Co) until his death in 1852.

The information regarding Pugin, Barry and Hardman is extremely useful as it suggests Barry (who was working at the Ellesmere home) was now apparently advising on the fittings at St Mark's - not the original architect G. G. Scott. This information is corroborated with Stanley Shepherd's research who names Pugin as the designer. The information gives an indication on how important commissions from the Ellesmeres were to the three gentlemen concerned, this will be of use to other researchers working in this field.

(from Chris Parkinson: 17 June 2017)

72 Worsley, St Mark (CoE)

1851. Client: the Rt. Hon. Lady Ellesmere, Worsley Hall, near Manchester.

Office records. *Order Book*, 1850, f. 123, Nov. 28. *First Glass Day Book*, 1851, f. 119, Jul. 12: 'An East Window of Stained Glass of 19 pieces of/Tracery//£35/A smaller East Window of Stained Glass of 11 pieces/of Tracery .../£10.'

Letters. *JHA: John Tait to C. Barry*, 1850 (in 1851 box): Nov. 20: 'I beg to forward you templets [sic] for the head of the communion window of St. Marks Church Worsley which I hope will convey all the information you require.' *Barry to Hardman*, 1851, Jul. 7: 'You may send your man to fix the Glass at Worsley Church as soon as possible.' *Lady Ellesmere to Hardman*, 1851 box, undated: 'The Window in Worsley church is completed & I am sorry to say unsuccessful. The execution is pretty in itself but wholly unsuited & the rest unendearing[?]. It has the effect of a gown[?] of which the skirt is crimson & the body pink. Now the question is can anything be done to improve it who is the executor of it? Did he ever see the window? I should be inclined to have him down to look at it; but before determining upon this I should like to know his name and address.'

Literature. Wedgwood (Pugin's Diary): Pugin visits Manchester, see Gaz.67.

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I have this morning (with interruptions) read the long letter to which I referred yesterday. It was sent by James Attwood in 1972 to Harold Milliken, recounting the extensive refurbishment to the church between 1952 and 1956. He was a stonemason who committed a lot of time and energy to the church - over 5 years!!

1. The Earl in his letters to Scott did suggest various additions, in that he could get antique stained glass from Munich, he may have mentioned about the Church Plate coming from Germany and the Pulpit from Belgium, but these things were talked over after the fabric was built - there wouldn't have been much point in discussing them before, would there?

2. The discussion then became general and most of the Committee asked various questions. Mr. Preston the Vicar's Warden asked me about the stained glass windows and could I recommend anyone to fix the glass when the East window tracery was restored. We had a later meeting some months afterwards about this.

3. It was proposed and decided to carry out the first phase of the work which came to £2,500 which included the scaffolding required but did not include the Chancel East Stained Glass of the window. I knew there were only two firms in the Manchester area who could be entrusted with the work. Incidentally one firm did the East window and the other one did the Ellesmere Chapel at a later date. Both windows were to be treated as separate items as and when the occasion arose for the work to be done. ... I asked him (Mr. Pointer of Pointers of Grosvenor Street, Manchester), to meet me at the church. He came with his foreman. I asked him if he could give me some idea of taking the glass out, re-leading it and re-fixing. He replied - Well Mr. Attwood, not exactly, there is more to it than just that. Some of the glass seems to be thicker than the others. The thin glass isn't English, it's continental, which is surprising why it shouldn't be here. In any case under these circumstances it should be double glazed to protect it. I am not prepared to re-fix it with wire grilles as protection, with the double glazing could be in excess of £500. ... Certain it is the glass will have to be taken out and cleaning it and assembling it, leading it, bringing it back and fixing in position.

[PRS March 2017]