

Stained glass at St. Margaret's Crick.

As you enter the church of St. Margaret's, you may be struck by the light coming through the clear leaded lights. Enter further and you will see stained glass in the north and north east windows and as you look to the east your eye is caught by the magnificent stained glass window designed by Lavers and Barraud and erected in 1863 with the dappled reds and blues reflected down towards the chancel.

Before we get to this gem of a window let us take a look at the other two in the north and north east.

North window

Some fragments of 16/17 century Flemish glass, an archbishop in mitre and cope, a roundel with an almost complete bishop's coat of arms, small silver stained bird in an oval, three heads and fragments of decoration. Rearranged by A Wilkinson in 1955. Restored in 1995 by Monastery Glass Shutlanger.

How wonderful to imagine what great windows they might have come from!

Turning to our right we face the **North East window**.

Two palm leaves surrounded by yellow and many coloured glass panes surrounding an empty cross.

The *palm leaf* has been associated with victory from pre-Christian times. It was therefore a logical step for it to become a symbol of Jesus' victory over death, and of the Christian's victory over sin, the world, and the Devil.

Jesus made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem with a palm in his hand and the road was spread with palm branches cut from the fields.

Ref: Mark 11 verses 1-11, Matthew 21 verses 1-11, Luke 19 verses 28-44, John 12 verses 12-19

Note the empty cross. (A symbol of the Christian hope)

Going towards the chancel steps we get nearer to the window erected in memory of the Revd Swainson's (rector 1836 to 1871) mother Harriet. Here you can begin to pick out the stories and characters that helped formulate the Christian faith. For many people pictures were the way they learned and understood their faith.

In central position we see John the Baptist wearing a hair shirt and carrying a wooden cross. To his left two of the gospel writers Mathew and Mark and to his right are the other two Luke and John each holding a book. Above these four Gospel writers are their signs:-

- *Matthew* (Man/angel) The Gospel reveals Jesus' humanity.
- *Mark* (Lion) The Gospel reveals Jesus' kingship
- *Luke* (Bull) The Gospel reveals Jesus' sacrificial ministry.
- *John* (Eagle) The Gospel is soaring and revelatory.

Below the main characters there are five panels representing scenes or stories in the Gospels.

From left to right.

- St. Timothy learning his faith through reading Isaiah with his mother (Eunice) to commemorate Revd. Swainson's mother. It could equally refer to Mary or Jesus learning at the feet of their mothers.
- Jesus raising Jarius' daughter with St. Barnabas. (Mark 5 verse 22 and Luke 8 verse 41)(St Barnabas, the Patron Saint of Merchant Taylors School where Charles Swainson was educated.)
- Jesus preaching.

- The resurrection. (Luke 24, John 20, Mark , 16, Matthew 28)
- The centurion at the cross. (Luke 23 verse 47, Mark 15 verse 39, Matthew 27 verse 54)

Above the main characters, in the centre, is the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God). The lamb has a halo. The message is that Jesus is the sacrificial lamb that has triumphed.

First and third rows

Flower patterns and three Trinity shields. [A medieval device for illustrating that the three separate persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) of the trinity are not three separate Gods].

Second and fourth rows.

There are angels with lute, harp and censers.

The Reverend Charles Swainson played a prominent part in setting up the first non-paying schools in Crick and also in their subsequent management.

In 1847 land was purchased from Mary Goddard and the boy's school, which had stood on the site, was refurbished and rooms for the head teacher added, mostly funded by bequests and endowments from local people. It provided education for boys. Today the building is the home of the Crick Club, which provides various social facilities.

Swainson also played a major role in setting up a free school for the education of girls of the village. He acquired two old cottages from a William Bucknell in 1846, had them demolished and erected a school on the site. Both the site acquisition and building costs were met by Charles Swainson. Today, this former infants and girls school serves as a community building and is known to all as "The Old School".

All the glass in the church is Victorian or later except for the 16/17th century fragments in the North window.

References to stained glass from earlier times, now sadly lost, can be found in documents dated 1718, 1791:-

- 'The windows were antiently very finely ornamented with figures and arms of the Astley family. At present there are portraits of some of the apostles with their names in several of the windows'

and from 1849 :-

- 'I saw two fair monuments of a lady and a knight surrounded by cinquefoils (a flower of the rose family). In this window his gown is all covered with cinque foils of Thomas de Astley and there is another, the wife of this Thomas ,her gown all cinquefoils.'

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You mention Rev Swainson went to Merchant Taylors School. Up until the second part of the 20th century it was a requirement for the incumbent to have been educated at the Merchant Taylors school and also St John's College Oxford. I think Cannon Dunn may have been the last to meet the requirement. None of the more recent rectors have had this qualification.

You mention land was purchased to extend the Boys School. This was in July 1847 for £20 from Mary Goddard. Was she a landlady at the Wheatsheaf at this time, I can't find a record that she was?

My information about what is now the Old School and the Club comes from the Records Office at Northampton. I went with Mr Day some while ago to look when he was seeking information about the Rev Swainson. Of course Swainson used his own money for purchasing the cottages and building the girls and infants school but also renovating ie rebuilding the boys school which had been on the spot since at least the early 1700's and had become in a poor state. The extra land allowed a decent building with rooms for the headmaster to be built which is what we see today.