

FACT SHEET No 314

THE WINDOWS AT THE EAST END OF THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH **By David Turner (issued August 2020)**

This research report was issued to Guild Members some 15 years ago, but was never issued in the Fact Sheet series. It has been updated and is now issued as a Fact Sheet.

All stewards know the story of the four lower windows at the East End of the Minster. They were, we are told, found by Henry Gally Knight, a member of the North Nottinghamshire gentry, whilst travelling on the Continent. He was in a second-hand shop in Paris (some accounts say a pawn shop), when he saw some glass panels gathering dust in a corner. He asked what they were, was told that they came from the Temple Church, and bought them on the spot. They were conveyed back to England and given to the Minster.

A very romantic story, which our visitors enjoy hearing. A nice, well-rounded story, with a beginning, a middle and an end. Surely that's enough? Well, no: for me, at least, not enough. As with most things to do with the Minster, I want to know more.

It is all a bit too simple and a bit too pat. Gally Knight brought the glass panels along to the Minster, had a look at them, assembled them and found that they made four scenes. As luck would have it, the Minster had four empty windows of just the right size. Chapter was very grateful and had the glass fitted straight away.

I didn't think that it could happen like that, so I wanted to investigate. Having previously shown that the four windows were made by Jean Chastellain in 1528-30 for the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus, at the South-East corner of the Temple Church in Paris, I turned my attention to the processes they underwent to become the precious artefacts that we show to our visitors today.

The man around whom the whole thing revolves, is Henry Gally Knight, so we must begin with him

Henry Gally Knight

Henry Gally Knight was "the man who found our windows". He was born on 2 December 1786, the only son of Henry Gally Knight of Langold Hall, Yorkshire, who was a barrister, and his wife, Selina, the daughter of William Fitzherbert of Tissington, Derbyshire. His grandfather John Gally (who assumed the additional name of Knight) was MP for Aldborough and Boroughbridge.

The Dictionary of National Biography tells us that Henry Gally Knight was educated at Eton College, and entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1805. He was a founder member of Grilion's Club in 1812, and joined Brooks's Club in 1816. Between 1816 and 1830 he published a number of poems, which often drew inspiration from his earlier travels through Spain, Sicily, Greece, Egypt, and Palestine. Knight's poetry received unsympathetic reviews from Byron (a former friend), and in 1831 he turned his attention to the study of architecture.

His father, also Henry Gally Knight, died at Langold on 23 April 1808, and he then succeeded to the family estates. The Times records the death on 2 January 1823, at Firbeck Hall, Yorkshire, of "Mrs Gally Knight", presumably his mother.

In 1828 he married Henrietta, third daughter of Anthony Hardolphe Eyre of Grove, Nottinghamshire, but they had no children. In May 1831 Knight, accompanied by the architect Richard Hussey, travelled to France to study the buildings and libraries of Normandy. After his return to England he published *An Architectural Tour in Normandy* (1836), which was translated into French by M. A. Campion and published in Caen in 1838. This work had a significant influence upon the French antiquarian Arcisse de Caumont, and in recognition of his work Knight was made a foreign member of the Société Française.

In August 1836 he travelled to Messina with the architect George Moore, a pupil of Edward Blore. Knight produced two books relating to this expedition: *The Normans in Sicily* (1838; French translation by M. A. Campion, 1839; German translation, ed. C. R. Lepsius, 1841) and *Saracenic and Norman Remains to Illustrate the 'Normans in Sicily'* (1840). In 1842–4 he published the two-volume *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Italy from Constantine to the 15th Century*, with eighty-one litho-chromatic plates, some by Owen Jones.

He was the author of several novels: *Ilderim, A Syrian Tale, Phrosyne, A Gretian Tale, and Alashtar, an Arabian Tale*. Although Knight's work was that of an amateur antiquarian and lacked acute stylistic analysis, his books did influence some early Victorian architects. *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Italy* in particular provided accurate, visual documentation relating to Italian medieval architecture.

Knight was MP for Aldbrough (1814–15), for Malton (1831–2), and for North Nottinghamshire (1835–46). As an MP he was regarded by his contemporaries as a fluent but infrequent speaker. In 1841 he was a member of the select committee on the fine arts, which initiated the historical fresco paintings in the Houses of Parliament. He was also Deputy Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire. Nottinghamshire Archives searched their records for me and found that Knight was admitted as a Burgess in 1819. They also have a schedule of land sold by John Dickmanton to Knight on 28 March 1821.

Nettleworth is a manor in the Parish of Warsop and Sookholme, and partly in the Hundred of Broxtowe and Parish of Mansfield Woodhouse. It was purchased about 1823 by Henry Gally Knight, except for Park Hall, seat of Captain Francis Hall Esq

Knight died in Lower Grosvenor Street, London, where he lived, on 9 February 1846, and was buried in Firbeck Church, Yorkshire, on 17 February.

His will directed that his Langold estate should be sold for the benefit of some friends. His other estates at Firbeck, Kirton, and Warsop were left to his widow during her lifetime. After her death the Firbeck estate and mansion were to go to the ecclesiastical commissioners for charitable uses.

The biographical material in the DNB and elsewhere does not help us with the critical period 1815 to 1820, when he found the windows and had them installed at Southwell.

Aldborough, which HGK represented in Parliament from 1814 to 1815, was a "scot and lot" borough, meaning that any man paying the poor rate was eligible to vote. Nevertheless, it was a small borough (not even including the whole parish of Aldborough, since Boroughbridge, also within the boundaries, was also a borough with its own two MPs), and by the time of the Reform Act it had an electorate of less than 100. This made it a pocket borough, easy for the local landowner to dominate.

In the 18th century, Aldborough was controlled by the Duke of Newcastle. In April 1754 Newcastle, who had just become Prime Minister, selected his junior colleague and future Prime Minister, William Pitt (Pitt the Elder), to sit as its MP. Pitt represented Aldborough for two-and-a-half years, but having fallen out with Newcastle and been dismissed from his ministry, he was forced to find a new constituency when he next needed to be re-elected to the Commons in 1756. Aldborough continued to return two MPs until the constituency was abolished in the great Reform Act of 1832.

In the book *Southwell Minster* by Kilpack, a copy of which is in the Minster Library, there is reference to a letter from Henry Gally Knight, sent to Archdeacon Wilkins from Firbeck Hall and dated 20 October 1837. Part of this is quoted by Kilpack, but the complete text can be found in Nottinghamshire Archives, where I was able to examine a copy of the original letter, in Knight's own hand. After some trenchant remarks about education policy, HGK goes on to say:

With regard to the four ancient painted windows, in your Collegiate Church at Southwell, I can but afford only meagre information. They are 4 in number, the subjects are the Baptism of Christ by St John, the Resurrection of Lazarus, the Entrance into Jerusalem, and the Mocking of Our Saviour.

I met with them, in 1815, in a pawnbroker's shop in Paris, where they had long remained, in neglected heaps in a corner. I was told, and I believe it to be true, that they came from the Chapel of the Temple, where Louis XVI was confined. Le Temple was, originally, the Mansion of the Knights Templar, and built about 1140. The painted glass must have been added much later as a decoration, either in the 14th or 15th Century.

It fortunately happened that, though the East End of the Choir at Southwell is not so old as the Chapel of the Knights Templar, yet was it erected before windows were divided by mullions. In consequence, the windows which had been painted for the latter were quite well adapted for the former.

*I remain, my dear sir, very sincerely
H Gally Knight*

It seems likely that the good Archdeacon, in writing to Gally Knight, was seeking rather more detail than this. There are, however, some interesting points. Firstly, the titles he uses for the four pictures differ from the names we normally use in our guide-books and on our tours. Secondly, he gives 1815 as the date when he found the glass, whilst we normally say 1818. (It may be that he found the glass in 1815 and it was not installed at Southwell until later). Finally, Gally Knight talks of "the Chapel" of Le Temple, not "the Church". Does he actually mean "Church", or is he alluding to a Chapel attached to a Church? And when he says Le Temple, does he mean the Temple Enclosure or the Temple Church?

The National Archives collections have several references to HGK, mainly collections of letters written by him to other people. I have not yet examined these, but I may yet do so, particularly the collection at Matlock containing many letters written to the Fitzherbert family.

The installation of the Glass in the Minster

How was the glass brought back to Nottinghamshire by Henry Gally Knight? Did he just say to the shopkeeper, "I want to buy those glass panels, please", haggle a bit, agree a price and then take them away with him? One presumes he had a carriage and a few servants with him at the time. It has a flavour of Charles Darnay fleeing revolutionary Paris in *A Tale of Two Cities*, or even of Sir Percy Blakeney smuggling out yet another aristocrat.

The rescue of this magnificent French glass and its preservation in an ancient church in another country makes for a wonderful story, but we just do not have any information about the actual process. Romantic tales, of course, should not be cluttered up with mundane details of practicalities, but it would be of great interest to know more.

Booth, in *Riddle of a Church's Windows* (Country Life, 27.03.53), has this to say:

The glass which Gally Knight brought back to England was made originally for round-headed windows and had to be adapted to fit Southwell's lancet windows. It is also probable that the original round-headed windows were wider than the present lancet windows and that the glass had to be cut down at the sides to make them fit. In 1848 the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland held a meeting at Lincoln. In the published report of the meeting C Winston had this to say about the window depicting the baptism of Christ: "The whole of this picture below the knees of Our Saviour is a modern addition by the late Mr Miller, who adapted the glass to the present lights."

The rounded appearance of the original glass is clearly visible and we often draw it to the attention of our visitors. The newer "pointed" glass is shown most clearly in *The Raising of Lazarus* where "the late Mr Miller" has created a piece of grey English sky to fit on top of the bright Parisian sky made by Jean Chastellain.

Evidence to support the assertion that the panels were trimmed at the sides by Miller is provided by the fact that the rounded profile in each Southwell lancet is rather flatter than it would be if the top panel was a full half-circle.

Mr Miller is somewhat elusive, but he is identified by John Beaumont in *Stained Glass in Southwell Minster* as Joseph Hale Miller (1777-1842). He does not seem to have been a well-known nineteenth-century glass painter, but he did do other work in the Minster. The two easternmost windows in the Sanctuary were made and fitted by him. John Beaumont gives the date of them as "1820-1825", leading us to speculate that they were made after Miller's work on the French glass and perhaps as a consequence of that work.

In any event, these two flanking lancets have a link with the imported glass. They are heraldic in style and show the arms of local worthies:

The one on the North side shows the arms of Gally (for Mr Gally Knight, Warsop), Saville (for Mr John Lumley Saville, Rufford Abbey), Middleton (for Lord Middleton, Wollaton Hall), and Manvers (for Charles, Earl of Manvers, Thoresby Park).

The one on the South side shows the arms of Knight (for Mr Gally Knight, Warsop), Southerton (for Vice-Admiral Frank Southerton, Kirklington Hall), Sutton (for Sir Richard Sutton, Norwood Park), and Clinton (for Henry Pelham Clinton, Duke of Newcastle, Clumber Park)

The flanking windows are clearly linked to the Jean Chastellain glass through Gally Knight, but what of the six other persons? Did Gally Knight commission these other windows and try to tie himself in to the higher aristocracy in this way? As usual, we need more information.

The Chapter Decree Book and the Chapter Minute Book for the period 1815 to 1830 are in the care of the Nottinghamshire Archives. I visited the Archives on several occasions to carry out a detailed perusal of these books and uncovered some very interesting information about the installation of all the glass at the East end of the church. It seems that the Chapter had a general scheme to re-glaze these ten windows (eight in the East wall and the North and South window immediately to the West of them), but that the plans underwent several alterations and revisions and the scheme became a very protracted one before the scheme was finally accomplished.

(For the sake of complete accuracy, of course, one needs to mention that there are twelve windows in the East wall of the Minster, four of them being above the vaulting and only visible when one is outside).

Attempting to trace the sequence of events by using the Chapter books can be difficult, because the handwriting is often less than clear and the minutes are frequently sketchy and do not necessarily reflect the extent of the discussions.

The first reference of any relevance that I have been able to discover is an entry in the Minute Book for 22 October 1807:

A letter from Mr Wilkins inclosing his demand against the Chapter amounting to £428.10.0 and offering to be a contributor in the sum of £40 towards the stained glass of the East Windows was read. An answer to be sent with thanks for the donation.

Over six years later, the Wilkins family begins to wonder whether anything is going to be done about a scheme to which they have already made a contribution, because, on 21 July 1814, the Minutes record:

Mr Wilkins to be informed in answer to his application for a Return of his Father's Donation of £40, that the plan of putting stained glass into the East Windows of the Church is certainly not given up, as the Chapter are only waiting for the Archbishop of York's sending what he proposed.

Whether the Wilkins letter acts as a spur to the Chapter we do not know, but on 20 October 1814, the following action is recorded:

The Residentiary to write to Mr Eckington of Birmingham to ascertain the best mode of putting the arms of the different Prebendaries into the upper windows at the East End of the Choir in coloured glass and also the expense thereof.

By 19 January 1815, when the Chapter meets, Mr Eckington has turned into *Mr Eggington*:

Mr Eggington appeared at this Chapter and exhibited different specimens as to the mode of introducing the Arms of the Prebendaries into the Upper Windows at the East End of the Choir and he was desired to prepare a Pattern according to the instructions now given with an Estimate of the Expense to be transmitted for the consideration of the adjourned Chapter.

The Chapter reconvened on 20 February 1815, with this result:

At the adjourned Chapter, the specimen sent by Mr Eggington was approved and the Residentiary was requested to communicate the proposal of putting the plan into execution to the absent Prebendaries, previously to the ensuing Chapter.

It would appear, however, that the Chapter did not proceed with Mr Eggington's proposals, because on 19 October 1815, the Minute Secretary records: *Mr Eggington to be informed that the Chapter do not consider that any order was given for his attendance at Southwell, and therefore that having only ordered one Pattern which was prepared according to the instructions given him by the Chapter on 19 January 1815 when he voluntarily appeared and exhibited different specimens, they conceive that the sum of Ten Guineas is a sufficient compensation.*

Whether Mr Eggington was mollified by this terse message is not reported, but no further reference to him appears in the Minutes. So who was Mr Eggington? Using Google, the closest possibility is William Raphael Eginton, "Glass Painter and Stainer to the Duke of Sussex, of Newhall Street". He sounds very grand, but that might just have been his marketing material. I am sure there is more to find out about Eginton, but I have not pursued him because he does not feature further in the Southwell story.

Nearly two years later, on 24 July 1817, a different attempt to make progress is made:

A plan for the Altar Windows has been submitted by Mr Ingleman and will be taken into further consideration at the next Chapter.

This action would appear to be not unconnected with this further Minute of the same date:

*Mr Eyre and Mr Goodenough having communicated to this Chapter that the Archbishop of York has authorised them to offer a sum of Three Hundred Guineas towards placing stained glass in the windows over the Altar at the East End of the Church, **Decreed** that the Residentiary do transmit the Thanks of the Chapter to His Grace for the liberal*

donation he has been pleased to offer and to inform him that a plan for the above purpose will be taken into consideration at the next Chapter.

Having affirmed on two occasions that it would consider the matter further at its October Meeting, the Chapter did not do so, there being no reference to the windows in the next Minutes. For the meeting after that, however, held on 22 January 1818, we read:

Mr Backler of Newman Street, London, voluntarily attended the Chapter with specimens of painted glass for the Altar Windows, which were partially approved. He is to submit a revised design, and further particulars of the Expense with a specification, etc., having regard to his present proposal of furnishing the four lower compartments for 500 guineas and the four upper compartments (including the Arms of the 16 Prebendaries) for 300 guineas. The Reverend Archdeacon Eyre is requested to receive the corrected Designs and submit them for the Approbation of His Grace The Archbishop of York.

The next mention of these plans occurs with reference to the meeting held on 23 April 1818, this time in the Chapter Decree Book:

Decreed that the further consideration of the Plan for filling the Altar Windows with stained glass be deferred until the next Chapter.

It then seems that there was a special Chapter Meeting on 5 May 1818. As a result of this, we find a rather startling entry:

It appearing by an advertisement in the [unclear, but possibly, in the context, "London"] paper that Mr Christie proposes selling by auction on Saturday next 5 ancient stained glass windows of dimension nearly corresponding with the size of the four lower altar windows, Mr John Becher is requested to attend the auction, and if he thinks the subjects worthy of attention to purchase 4 of the windows if they can be bought for 400 guineas, or the whole five, if not sold in lots, and the total [not certain of this word] do not exceed 500 guineas.

A communication of such intention to be made to the Archbishop of York and His Grace to be informed that Mr John Becher will wait upon His Grace on the subject on Saturday morning.

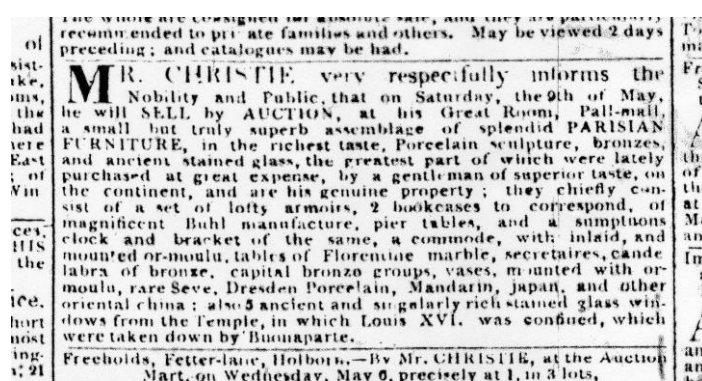
Where was this sale? It might have been in Nottinghamshire or in Yorkshire, with the Archbishop in residence at Southwell and easily able to confer with Mr Becher. It seems more likely, however, that the "Mr Christie" was the famous Christie of Christie's: in which case, the auction would be in London and if the Archbishop and J T Becher were also in London, as they frequently were, it would be easy for them to consult before the sale.

Subsequently, it was ascertained, through the Victoria and Albert National Art Library, that there was indeed a Sale at Christie's London on Saturday 9 May 1818, the weekend following the special Chapter Meeting on Tuesday 5 May. It is described as a Sale of Parisian furniture, bronzes and plate, with no mention of Stained Glass Windows, but the Library has a copy of the Catalogue and it is bound in a volume labelled "Picture Sales".

I then got in touch with the Librarian at Christie's Archives, which retains all Sale Catalogues, marked up with vendors and buyers. She indicated that information about the relevant sale was indeed available and she also mentioned that The Times would have carried an advertisement for the sale a few days before.

The next step was to contact the British Library's Newspaper section, where the staff were very helpful and searched their Digital Archive for Mr Christie. They found an advertisement on 24 April 1818, publicising the auction on 9 May. They offered to photocopy it if I sent the money first. Since, however, the City of Nottingham Central Library has a complete archive of The Times from 1786, I went there and looked it up myself.

Imagine my feelings when I found this:



For the record, the advertisement reads as follows:

Mr Christie very respectfully informs the Nobility and Public that on Saturday, the 9th of May, he will SELL by AUCTION, at his Great Room, Pall-mall, a small but truly superb assemblage of splendid PARISIAN FURNITURE, in the richest taste, Porcelain sculpture, bronzes, and ancient stained glass, the greatest part of which were lately purchased at great expense, by a gentleman of superior taste, on the continent, and are his genuine property; they chiefly consist of a set of lofty armoirs, 2 bookcases to correspond, of magnificent Buhl manufacture, and a sumptuous clock and bracket of the same, a commode, with inlaid and mounted or-moulu, tables of Florentine marble, secretaires, candelabra of bronze, capital bronze groups, vases, mounted with or-moulu, rare Seve (sic), Dresden Porcelain, Mandarin, Japan, and other oriental china: also 5 ancient and singularly rich stained glass windows from the Temple, in which Louis XVI was confined, which were taken down by Buonaparte (sic).

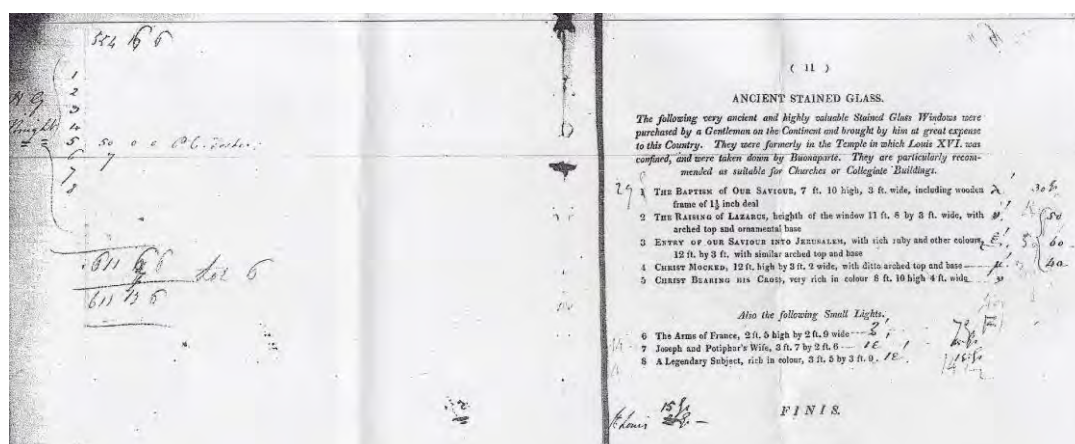
I contacted the Librarian at Christie's Archives Again and she found for me the marked-up Catalogue of the Sale.

After a very helpful telephone conversation, She sent me photocopies of extracts from the catalogue.

Here is its cover:



The relevant page in the Catalogue gives the vendor and purchaser:



Page 11 of the Catalogue reads as follows:
ANCIENT STAINED GLASS

The following very ancient and highly valuable Stained Glass Windows were purchased by a Gentleman on the Continent and brought by him at great expense to this Country. They were formerly in the Temple in which Louis XVI was confined, and were taken down by Buonaparte. They are particularly recommended as suitable for Churches or Collegiate Buildings:

- (1) THE BAPTISM OF OUR SAVIOUR, 7ft 10 high, 3 ft wide, including wooden frame of 1½ inch deal
- (2) THE RAISING OF LAZARUS, height of the window 11 ft 8 by 3 ft wide, with arched top and ornamental base
- (3) ENTRY OF OUR SAVIOUR INTO JERUSALEM, with rich ruby and other colours, 12 ft by 3 ft with similar arched top and base
- (4) CHRIST MOCKED, 12 ft high by 3 ft 2 in wide, with ditto arched top and base
- (5) CHRIST BEARING HIS CROSS, very rich in colour, 8ft 0 in high 4ft wide

Also the following Small Lights

- (6) The Arms of France, 2 ft 5 high by 2 ft 9 wide
- (7) Joseph and Potiphar's Wife, 3 ft 7 by 2 ft 6
- (8) A Legendary Subject, rich in colour, 3 ft 5 by 3 ft 9

The blank page opposite to the above has been annotated in handwriting. Lots 1 to 8 are bracketed and the name **H G Knight** written in. Clearly he was the vendor. No purchaser is shown for Lots 1 to 4, but Lot 5 (Christ Bearing His Cross) has a name against it, presumably the purchaser. It is not very clear, but it looks like "P C Foster".

Further contact with the Christie's Archives Librarian elicited an explanation of the handwritten annotations (some in ink, some in pencil) on page 11 of the catalogue:

Lot 1 had a reserve of 30 guineas

Lot 2 had a reserve of 50 guineas, reduced to 40 guineas in pencil

Lot 3 had a reserve of 60 guineas, reduced to 59 guineas in pencil

Lot 4 had a reserve of 40 guineas, reduced to 39 guineas in pencil

Lot 5 had no annotated reserve

Lot 6 had a reserve in pencil of 7 guineas

Lot 7 had a reserve of 15 guineas

Lot 8 had a reserve of 15 guineas, reduced to 14 guineas in pencil

The lots were not withdrawn, but the only interest in the room was in lots 5 and 6: "our" windows failed to attract bidders and did not sell. They could have been knocked down for 178 guineas, so where was Mr J T Becher, authorised by the Chapter to spend up to 400 guineas?

This information, tucked away in the auctioneer's archive, raises fascinating questions. Just when we need some crucial information, however, both the Minute Book and the Decree Book are silent as the grave.

It is clear that the worthy Sir Henry, always portrayed as a great benefactor to the Minster, was simply intending to sell "our" windows at auction. How then, did they come to be given to the Minster? Were Gally Knight and Becher present at the sale? Did they compare notes and come to an arrangement? Alas, the later Minutes do not say. They offer not a single clue to the conversations which must have taken place, nor to the decisions which must have been made. Chapter Meetings appear to have returned to the regularity of their quarterly cycle, because the next entry is for 23 July 1818. There is, however, no reference in the Minute Book to the auction, to the Archbishop, to Mr Becher, or to any outcome.

In the **Chapter Decree Book** for that date, however, we have the following laconic report:

***Decreed** that Mr Gally Knight's offer of four stained glass windows be accepted, and that a proper letter of thanks be addressed to him by the Residentiary.*

***Decreed** that Mr Knight's arms be inserted in the four windows in the manner most agreeable to him.*

The next entry, however, moves the story on to the practicalities:

***Decreed** that the workmanship of the four lower stained glass windows over the altar be done by Mr Miller of Swallow Street, London, and that of the four upper windows by Mr Backler, according to the Plan which has been approved, under the supervision of the Residentiary for the time being, Dr Barrow and Mr J T Becher.*

Suddenly, it seems, all the indecisiveness and postponements are replaced by action, with both upper and lower windows being worked on together. Between 5 May and 23 July, several things must have happened, but nothing is recorded. Were the five windows which interested the Chapter being auctioned by Mr Christie on behalf of Mr Gally Knight? Or did Gally Knight make his offer of some different windows when the plan to buy at auction fell through? We may never know, but we can at least try to find out more.

Whatever the circumstances, it is clear that the Gally Knight Gift did not lead to a separate project, since the glazing of all the windows at the East End, both lower and upper, were put in hand at the same time.

At the next meeting of the Chapter, on 23 October 1818, a doubt began to surface. In the words of the Minute Book:

The Residentiary, the Revd Dr Barrow and the Revd J T Becher are authorized to treat with Mr Miller for the 4 upper windows, in case Mr Backler declines the Terms to be transmitted to him by Dr Barrow, and that they may proceed to agree for the execution of the same. If Mr Miller is willing to undertake the work on the conditions now offered to Mr Backler.

This authorisation is not mentioned in the Chapter Decree Book for that date, but the contract for the four lower windows is made clear:

Decreed that the sketch delineated by Mr Miller for the completion of the four windows presented by H Gally Knight Esq., now exhibited, according to his proposal, engaging to put up the windows for the sum of £96, scaffolding and masonry excepted.

Then, in the following year, on 21 January 1819, the contract for the upper windows was agreed:

Decreed that the design now submitted by the Canon Residentiary, the Revd Dr Barrow and the Revd John Thomas Becher, for the purpose of ornamenting the windows, constituting the upper tier in the East End of our Collegiate Church, be adopted and that the Registrar be authorised to conclude an immediate agreement with Mr Backler of Newman Street, London, stipulating:

That Mr Backler shall execute four windows of stained glass for the upper tier in the East End of the Church, with five escutcheons, duly emblazoned, in each window, exhibiting, severally, the armorial bearings of the King, the Chapter of Southwell, the late Archbishop of York, the Archbishop of York, and the present 16 Prebendaries, with a figured ground and with a border surrounding the extremity of each window, according to the drawing delineated, and that he shall completely fix the same for the sum of four hundred and twenty pounds in full consideration, of all expenses of materials, workmanship, packing cases, carriage, personal superintendance, and every contingency except scaffolding and masonry; that one half of the above sum be paid at the execution of the agreement and the remainder when the contract has been certified as duly performed, by the Clerk of the Fabric for the time being.

The Chapter knew that it had some money earmarked for this work, recalling the donation reported to it on 24 July 1817. So it resolved to use the money to partially fund these considerable items of expenditure, because at the same meeting in January 1819, we find the following:

Decreed that the Benefaction of His Grace The Archbishop of York, amounting to £315, be expended to defray the cost of the above-mentioned four windows, with the exception of the escutcheons of the above-mentioned Prebendaries and that application be now made for one half of this sum.

It would appear that the Chapter had a last-minute worry about whether it was wise to include the whole group of Prebendaries in this scheme, because it was decreed that the cost of the Arms of the 16 Prebendaries should be discharged out of the Rota Fund,

but that anyone vacating his Prebendary before his Rotation should be charged the full cost.

It was also:

Decreed that all incidental and unforeseen charges attending the completion of these windows be paid out of the Rota Fund.

There is a hint in these decisions that the Chapter perhaps saw the lower windows as relatively straightforward (just receive the Gally Knight gift, have the glass adapted, have it fitted) compared with the complex task of designing four completely new windows and representing twenty different sets of arms on them.

It had been a hectic time, and at this same 21 January Meeting in 1819, the Chapter perhaps reflected this feeling by recording this:

Decreed that thanks be given to the Revd John Eyre, Dr Barrow and J T Becher for the trouble they have taken about the Altar Windows.

It would appear that the adaptation work on the Gally Knight windows had been completed by the middle of the year 1819, because in the Minutes of the Chapter Meeting held on 22 July 1819 we find:

Mr Miller to be informed that the lower tier of the Altar Windows must not be put up till the upper are completed - and they are not yet ready - but he may have half his demand if he wishes it.

That hint of concern is reinforced by a further Minute from the same meeting: *Mr Backler to be informed that Mr J Becher decidedly denies any understanding that the Chapter would consent to a postponement of the period for completing the upper tier of the windows - and to be required to say when he proposes fixing them up, that the Chapter may make their arrangements and use their discretion as to the delay of any proceedings for the non-performance of the contract.*

Perusal of the Chapter Minutes and the Decree Book for 1820 has revealed no further mention of either the Gally Knight windows or the Armorial Bearings windows. No doubt there was considerable impatience expressed during meetings as Mr Backler's work dragged on and Mr Miller waited to "put up" his windows. In the Minutes of the Meeting of 26 April 1821, however, we find progress recorded:

Mr Backler to be permitted to exhibit in his Gallery in London until the end of June next, the four windows which he has made for this church - and to be instructed to give information to the Archbishop of York that it is the wish of the Chapter that they be submitted to His Grace's inspection before they are viewed by the public.

A Minute of the Meeting held on 19 July 1821, tells us:

The scaffolding to be forthwith provided by the Committee for inserting the windows of stained glass.

In addition, an entry in the Decree Book relating to that same July Meeting reads as follows:

Decreed that estimates of the expense of providing wire work for the four windows in the upper tier of the East End of the Church be procured from Mr Backler, and from

some other respectable person, and that the Committee be authorised to order the wire work necessary for this purpose according to their direction

I don't know what "wire work" actually is. Could it be protective mesh, or is that a very modern concept? If it was some kind of finishing process, perhaps the upper windows were installed in the autumn of 1821 and the Gally Knight windows followed. I can, however, find no confirmation of this in the Minutes. The year 1822 passes without any documentary evidence about the situation, but the suspicion that all had not been well with the tardy Mr Backler is confirmed when a Minute from the Meeting of 17 April 1823 tells us:

Mr Backler to be entitled to any dividend that may arise under his Bankruptcy as far as the Chapter are concerned, in consequence of his having duly completed his contract.

The ill-fated Mr Backler was probably just one more in a long line of tradesmen who tendered for the wrong work at the wrong time and for the wrong client.

It seems likely, therefore, that the Chapter had eight completed windows in place in the East wall of the Sanctuary in the Spring of 1823. On 22 January in the following year, however, the Chapter turned its collective attention to the North and South walls and the two flanking lancets:

The Revd J T Becher to continue his correspondence with Mr Miller respecting the most eligible means of introducing into the windows at the East End of the Choir, the arms of H Gally Knight Esq., and of such Noblemen and Gentlemen as may wish to have them placed there.

It took another twelve months for anything to materialise, but on 20 January 1825 the Chapter:

Decreed *that the Arms of H Gally Knight Esq., now in the possession of the Chapter be inserted in the two windows next to the Altar, and that the windows may be completed by the addition of the Armorial Bearings of such [not legible] as may be disposed to present them to the Church.*

At the next Quarterly Meeting, on 21 April 1825, the Chapter then:

Decreed *that His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, the Right Honourable Earl Manvers, the Right Honourable Lord Middleton, the Honourable and reverent Lumley Savile, Mr Richard Sutton, Baronet, and Vice-Admiral Southerton be requested to accept the thanks of the Chapter for having presented their respective Armorial Bearings to be emblazoned on the windows of the Collegiate Church, and that the Residentiary do communicate to them severally this Decree.*

So far as these two flanking windows were concerned, matters were moving apace, and the Minutes of the very next Chapter Meeting on 21 July 1825 recorded:

The Design prepared by Mr J H Miller for executing the two Altar Windows, is approved, and is to be carried out by him on or before the Chapter Day in July 1826 for the sum of £210.

This is the first time that the Chapter has attached initials to Mr Miller, and gratifyingly, they agree with the information in *Stained Glass in Southwell Minster*, by John Beaumont, who records the artist as Joseph Hale Miller (1777-1842). When he next appears in the Minutes, however, he has lost his initials, the date is over a year later (19 October 1826) and he is being scolded:

Mr Miller to be informed that Mr Savile's Crest on his Armorial Bearings is not correct and to be required to rectify the same.

The Chapter Minute Book and the Chapter Decree Book were scrutinised further until the end of the year 1832, but no further entries came to light. Although the Minute Book contains lists of Bills to be Paid, I could not find payments to either Miller or Backler.

So far as the lower windows are concerned, Henry Gally Knight disappears from the Minutes as soon as the Chapter has received the panels and handed them over to J H Miller. He features a little more in connection with the two side windows ("Gally" and "Knight"), but he doesn't represent any problem to the Chapter, unlike, say, Mr Backler.

Gally Knight does appear in the Minutes around this period, however, as a landowner at Warsop. He appears to be very well "in" with the Chapter and a series of deals is recorded, involving purchases of land or exchanges of parcels of land to make the holdings of the Chapter and Gally Knight more conveniently grouped.

Let us illustrate this through the following, from 21 January 1819:

Decreed that the Residentiary be empowered to treat with Mr H Gally Knight for the exchange of the woodland at Warsop containing 43 acres for certain lands lying in the same Parish next immediately adjoining the Chapter's [not legible] land, and further to treat with Mr Knight for the lease of the land so exchanged for a term of 20 years at a certain back rent to be fixed by Mr Baily, provided that Mr Knight do pay to the Chapter the sum of three thousand pounds for the wood.

Decreed that the Residentiary be also empowered to treat with Mr Knight for the exchange of other lands which he now holds under lease from the Chapter, according to the report of Mr Baily, who is of opinion that an exchange, for the sake of convenience and contiguity, would be desirable.

On 22 July 1819, Gally Knight secures a reduction in the three thousand pounds in exchange for the erection of sufficient and substantial buildings for the purposes of husbandry, and on 20 April 1820 there is further exchange of land between Gally Knight and the Chapter.

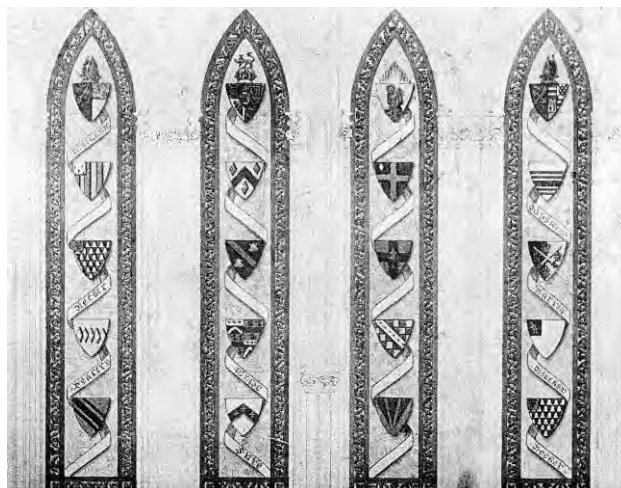
Did these land deals represent a quid quo pro for the gift of the priceless French glass panels? The Minutes, very properly, do not say.

Thus a study of the relevant records in the Nottinghamshire County Archives has shown that the Chapter was engaged in a complex project to fit stained glass into no fewer than ten lancet windows at the East End of the Minster, and that this project lasted from 23 April 1818 until 19 October 1826 and probably longer, depending upon how long Mr Miller took to rectify the Savile Crest. The installation of the four "Gally Knight" lancets was but a small (though apparently the smoothest-running) part of the project.

The upper windows, eventually made and proudly exhibited by Mr Backler, did not have a long life. They were replaced in 1876 by the four windows by Clayton and Bell showing the Four Evangelists. So these have now been in place for 130 years, whereas the Backler windows barely lasted 50 years. The Jean Chastellain glass, however, is now over 475 years old, assuming it was "put up" between 1528 and 1530 in the Chapel of the Sacred Name of Jesus.

Whilst searching for something else, I came across a drawing of the Backler Windows, together with a listing of the various coats of arms and their descriptions.

DRAWING OF THE FOUR WINDOWS



THE COATS OF ARMS

First Light

- 1) The see of York impaling William Markham Archbishop of York 1777-1807 Gules two keys in saltier argent in chief a crown or impaling azure on a chief or a demi lion rampant issuant gules
- 2) Shirley county Derby
Paly of six or and azure a quarter ermine
- 3) William Becher Prebendary of Woodborough 1778-1821
Vaire argent and gules on a canton or a stags head couped sable
- 4) William Dealtry Prebendary of Norwell tertiae partis 1785-1834
Azure five lozenges conjoined in fess argent
- 5) -----

Second Light

- (1) Royal arms for George III England Scotland Ireland and England with an inescutcheon for Hanover and the crown of Charlemagne
- (2) George Desmeth Kelly Prebendary of Normanton 1789-1823
Argent a chevron between three billets gules
- (3) Peter or Petre
Gules a bend or between two Escallops argent

- (4) Charles Wylde Prebendary of Sacrista 1798-1815
 Quarterly 1&4 Sable a chevron engrailed argent on a chief of the last three mullets of the first
 2&3 Or a fess between three harts heads erased sable horned and angued gules
- (5) John Eyre Prebendary of Norwell Overhall 1802-1830
 Argent on a chevron sable three quatrefoils of the field

Third Light

- (1) The Blessed Mary The Virgin of Southwell
- (2) Leigh
 Gules a cross engrailed and in dexter chief a lozenge argent
- (3) Henry Watkins Prebendary of Beckingham 1774-1830
 Gules on a cross floretty between four demi griffins or five cinque-foils pierced azure
- (4) Clifton of Norfolk
 Chequey or and azure a bend ermine
- (5) Francis Herbert Hume Prebendary of Halloughton 1785-1806
 Azure three piles engrailed gules issuing from the chief

Fourth Light

- 1) The see of York impaling Edward Venables Vernon Archbishop of York 1808-1847
 York as above impaling Quarterly 1&4 Azure two bars argent for Venables Argent a Fret sable for Vernon Or on a fess azure three garbs of the first for Vernon of Haslington
- 2) Samuel Francis Dashwood Prebendary of North Muskham 1810-1826
 Argent on a fess double cotised gules three griffins heads erased or
- 3) William Barrow Prebendary of Eton 1815-1836
 ? party per pale two swords in saltire argent between four fleur de lis?
- 4) Brooke Boothby Prebendary of North Muskham 1826-1839
 Argent on a canton sable a lion paw erased in bend or
- 5) John Thomas Becher Prebendary of South Muskham 1818-1848
 Vaire argent and gules on a canton or a staga head coupé sable.

One has to assume that this text is a description of the armorial bearings emblazoned on the four upper windows actually installed by Backler, although the listing is clearly different from that summarised in the Chapter Decree Book entry for 21 January 1819.

In March 1876, the Revd Hay Drummond, vicar of Rolleston, asked Ewan Christian if he could have the old glass from the upper windows, "with the painted coats of arms". Christian advised the Commissioners that "the glass was of no value and could not be used elsewhere", so it was handed over. Enquiries made of the present incumbent at Rolleston indicate that no one has ever heard of them.

I thought it possible that these three window installations (upper, lower and flanking) would require faculties issued by the Archbishop of York. Upon enquiring of the

Borthwick Institute, York, however, I was informed: "We have a particularly full index, covering original faculties, faculty books and faculties recorded in archbishop's registers and Church Court papers for faculties up to 1899, but we do not have any nineteenth-century faculties for Southwell Minster. Southwell Peculiar (belonging to the Minster there) included the right to exercise faculty jurisdiction in its own area, so would not have needed a faculty issued by the Archbishop. It is very possible that no attempt was made to actually issue faculties and that recording a decision in the Chapter's records was considered the equivalent: you may, therefore, have already found the only surviving information".

The Glass Artists

What of the glass artists involved in this saga? They were Miller (who adapted the Jean Chastellain windows and made the two flanking windows), Backler (who, very tardily, made the Upper Windows) and Eginton (who appears in the Minutes as Eckington and then as Eggington, and who never got a contract).

As mentioned above, we know from *Stained Glass in Southwell Minster*, by John Beaumont, that Miller is Joseph Hale Miller (1777-1842). We know from the Chapter Minutes that his address was "Swallow Street". Visiting the Leicester University Website Historical Directories and then making enquiries of The City of Westminster Archives and of The Corporation of London Guildhall Library, I was able to list the following:

1808	Miller, J	<i>Glass Warehouse</i>	107 Swallow Street
1815	Miller, J	<i>Glass Warehouse</i>	107 Swallow Street
1817	Miller, J	<i>Glass Warehouse</i>	107 Swallow Street
1820	Miller, J	<i>Stainer in Glass</i>	6 Shepherd Street, Oxford Street
1823	Miller, Jas	<i>Glass Cutter and Glazier</i>	6 Shepherd Street, Oxford Street
1826	Miller, J H	Stained Glass Painter	158 Regent Street
1830	Miller, J H	Stained Glass Manufacturer	158 Regent Street

And then, eleven years later, a more prestigious entry:

1841	Miller, Joseph Hale,	<i>artist in stained glass after the ancient or modern manner</i> ,	19 Warwick Street, Golden Square (from 158 Regent Street)
------	----------------------	---	---

There must, perhaps, be some doubt as to whether the 1820 and 1823 entries refer to the same man. The Jas, however, may have been a misprint for Jos, short for Joseph. "Glass Cutter and Glazier", though, sounds a little downmarket for the man who adapted the priceless Southwell Windows.

What about Backler? We don't have anything about him in *Stained Glass in Southwell Minster*, because his work was discarded and replaced in 1876. Using the same sources that were used for Mr Miller, we can list:

1815	No entry		
1817	Backler, John	<i>Stained Glass Works</i>	18 Newman Street, Oxford Street
1820	Backler, J	<i>Stained Glass Manufacturer</i>	18 Newman Street, Oxford Street
1823	Backler, J	<i>Stained Glass Manufacturer</i>	18 Newman Street, Oxford Street
1826	Backler, Jos	<i>Glass Painter</i>	18 Newman Street, Oxford Street
1830	No entry		

Guildhall Art Library very kindly sent me a copy of an advertisement by Mr Backler published on 26 May 1821:

“Stained Glass Works, No 18, Newman Street – Mr Backler respectfully informs the Nobility and the Public, that having completed THREE ALTAR WINDOWS for the Churches of Dudley, Southwell and Macclesfield, they will be EXHIBITED in his Gallery, for a short time previous to their removal; to commence on Tuesday, the 29th instant.”

The Chapter Meeting of 26 April 1821 had given permission for this, but the implication of the advertisement is that Backler only exhibited one Southwell Window.

According to the Chapter Minutes, Mr Backler was declared bankrupt in 1823, presumably as a “Stained Glass Manufacturer”, but he may have resumed work in the lesser occupation of “Glass Painter” by 1826. The Jos may be an error, or he may have changed his name to evade his creditors.

Little can be found about Eckington/Eggington/Eginton, but I did find an entry in Wrightson’s Triennial Directory for 1818:

Eginton, William Raphael *Glass Painter & Stainer To Duke Of Sussex*
Newhall Street, Birmingham

He sounds (or has made himself sound) somewhat upmarket. The Duke of Sussex referred to was Prince Augustus Frederick, the sixth son of King George III. The title was conferred upon him on 24 November 1801, but became extinct upon the Prince's death in 1843. As we all know, the title was revived on 16 July 2018, when it was conferred upon Prince Harry.

Conclusions

An investigation of the processes involved in installing the “Gally Knight” glass has shown that it was much more complex than I had imagined. Chapter complicated matters by trying to carry out a scheme for ten windows as one project and by employing craftsmen of doubtful competence.

The sensational discovery, however, is that the great Mr Gally Knight did not simply present these great sixteenth-century windows to his collegiate church, as we had all supposed. He tried to flog the glass for ready money first. Only when they didn’t sell did he offer them to the Minster. Frustratingly, we do not have entries in the Chapter books for the crucial time.