STAINED GLASS in the UK



- 0. STAINED GLASS in the UK Story Preface
- 1. MAKING MEDIEVAL GLASS
- 2. STORIES in GLASS
- 3. STAINED GLASS in FRANCE
- 4. STAINED GLASS in the UK
- 5. STAINED GLASS in ITALY
- 6. STAINED GLASS in BRUGES
- 7. STAINED GLASS in the NETHERLANDS
- 8. MODERN STAINED GLASS



Canterbury Cathedral, in England, boasts many beautiful medieval-era stained-glass windows. This image depicts the detail of a "Becket Window." Photo by <u>Tobias von der Haar</u>, online via Flickr.

When Rome ruled Britain, <u>Christians in Canterbury</u> (a town about sixty miles southeast of London) worshiped in a church ultimately honoring St. Martin. The ancient historian, Venerable Bede, provides background:

There was on the east side of the city a church dedicated to the honor of St Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen [Bertha, that is] ... used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptize, till the king, [Ethelbert] being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach openly, and build or repair churches in all places. (Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, Book I, Chapter XXVI.)

Still standing, <u>St. Martin's Church</u> is England's oldest still in use. (It is also the oldest in the English-speaking world.) Nearby is <u>Canterbury Cathedral</u>, known for its beauty and an <u>infamous murder</u>.

Although the Cathedral, dating from medieval times, has been vandalized and intentionally damaged, it still has a few original stained-glass windows, including:

- Adam delving (digging), circa 1176 (the oldest surviving window).
- Henry II with Archbishop Thomas Becket (that is, the king with the churchman who troubled him).
- <u>Virgin Mary</u> and <u>King Josiah</u> (the only surviving medieval panels in the <u>Jesse Tree Window</u>).

Some of the windows, in the current cathedral, include rescued and reused medieval glass. (Experts, restoring windows during medieval times, used ... urine ... as part of their repair mixtures.) Other windows, added (or conserved) throughout the centuries, reflect the style and color of later times:

- Poor Man's Bible Window (after reconstruction and restoration);
- Thomas Becket Window (made in the 1900s including some pieces of medieval glass);
- Murder of Thomas Becket (13th century rondels set in a 19th century restoration);
- Peace Window (created by Ervin Bossanyi in 1956).

A recent discovery, <u>during restoration work</u> at the Canterbury Cathedral, revealed the use of a "<u>space frame</u>," dating back to 1180. Before that revelation, experts had believed it was Alexander Graham Bell who'd devised the <u>space frame engineering solution</u>. This find, however, shows a working space frame in place about 700 years before Bell's idea.

<u>Westminster Abbey</u>, like <u>Canterbury Cathedral</u>, is famous not just for itself (and its <u>stained glass</u>) but for important events which have occurred there:

• It was the scene, for example, of Princess Diana's funeral (during which Elton John famously sang <u>Goodbye England's Rose</u>).

• As the BBC live-broadcasted that event, the cameraman (at 5:25 in the video clip) focused on the abbey's beautiful stained-glass windows.

Italy, likewise, is home to famous churches with gorgeous glass art. It's the next stop on our virtual journey.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/STAINED-GLASS-in-the-UK-Stained-Glass-Windows

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/STAINED-GLASS-in-the-UK-Stained-Glass-Windows

Media Stream



Canterbury - Statue of Bertha, Woottons Green

Image online, courtesy the <u>aclerkofoxford</u> blog View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Statue-of-Bertha-Woottons-Green



Oldest Church in England - St. Martin's

Image online, courtesy the St. Martin's & St. Paul's Parrish Canterbury website. View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Oldest-Church-in-England-St.-Martin-s



Canterbury Cathedral - Looking North

Image online, courtesy the <u>ciaoadriano.com</u> website.

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Looking-North



Canterbury Cathedral - Adam Delving, c. 1176

Image online, courtesy Jonathan Jones at $\underline{\text{The Guardian}}$ website.

View this asset at:

 $\underline{\text{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Adam-Delving-c.-1176}}$



Canterbury Cathedral - Henry II and Thomas Becket

Image online, courtesy the paradoxplace.com website.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Henry-II-and-Thomas-Becket



Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree, Mary Panel

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree, Josiah Panel

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Jesse Tree Window

 $Image\ online,\ courtesy\ the\ canerbury-cathedral.org\ website.$

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Canterbury Cathedral - Poor Man's Bible Window

Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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 $\underline{\text{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Canterbury-Cathedral-Poor-Man-s-Bible-Window}}$



<u>Canterbury Cathedral - Becket Window, North Ambulatory</u>

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Image online, courtesy the canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Murder of Thomas Becket

Image online, courtesy canterbury-cathedral.org website.

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Canterbury Cathedral - Restored Stained-Glass Window

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Westminster Abbey - Stained-Glass Windows

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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<u>Canterbury Cathedral - Peace Window</u>

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Westminster Abbey - Good-bye England's Rose

Clip online, courtesy the BBC.

View this asset at:

 $\underline{http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Westminster-Abbey-Good-bye-England-s-Rose}$



Westminster Abbey - Princess Diana's Funeral

Clip online, courtesy the BBC.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Westminster-Abbey-Princess-Diana-s-Funeral