

## The Italian Influence in All Hallows Church

**Rev. George Townshend Hudson** was the Rector of Harthill between 1848 and his death in 1884. He was trustee and chief manager of the Osborne family estates for many years. He was the nephew of the **6th Duke of Leeds**, being one of the sons from the marriage of Harrington Hudson, of Bessingby Hall with Lady Anne Townshend, sister of Charlotte who married the 6th Duke. Even though the family re-located to Hornby after Kiveton Hall was demolished in 1812, the two families remained in close contact.

The Dukes of Leeds were Patrons of All Hallows church from 1695 onwards. Sir Thomas Osborne, first Duke of Leeds, bought Harthill's chief manor from Grace, Viscountess Charworth, a descendant of Sir George Chaworth who had married Gertrude Serlby, and thus owned most of Kiveton and Harthill. In 1675 King Charles II gave or sold the advowson of the Rectory of Harthill in perpetuity to him.

George Townshend Hudson had several siblings. One was **Harriet** who married Henry Darley (see the Lastingham connection). Harriet was the mother of **Bertram Darley**, who became the Rector of Harthill in 1891.

Another was **Sir James Hudson** (1810-1885) who was a British diplomat and is noted for his time as British Ambassador to Turin between 1852 and 1863, as an Italianophile and strong supporter of Italian unification and a collector of Italian art. In 1863 he refused an ambassadorial post in Constantinople, not wanting to leave Italy. He undertook various business interests, and moved from Turin in **1864** to a villa near Florence, where he stayed until his death in 1885.

It was Sir James Hudson who commissioned the windows at St Mary's Church, Lastingham, together with the ones at Harthill. There is a record of his commission for some 30 'historiated windows' in the complete workshop catalogue of Ulisse De Matteis in Florence. Dr Nancy Thomson of St Olaf's College in the USA, a world authority on his work thought there were no examples of De Matteis' work in the UK. De Matteis has work in several

cathedrals and great churches in northern Italy, including Santa Croce in Florence.

By his technique of “vitrail archéologique” in his studio in Florence, De Matteis joined pieces of glass of various colours together with lead comes to create an image, **(the medieval way)**.

### The Lastingham Connection

Bertram Darley’s sister Ann was the eldest daughter of a rich Yorkshire landowning family based at Aldby Park near York. He maintained a second home at Lastingham where the family had further lands. Ann married Sir Sydney Ringer, an eminent physiologist and Professor of Medicine at University College in London. Their daughter Annie tragically died at the age of 7 in 1875, and the restoration work at St Mary’s church , Lastingham was commissioned in her memory together with five windows by Ulisse De Matteis.

The Italian influence in All Hallows is also shown in the elaborate wood carvings in the Church. The pulpit and the lectern are inscribed “1877 Carlo Scarcelli in Legno”. The front of the altar is thought to have been adapted from a prayer desk also attributed to him.

### The Italian Windows

#### Background

The vast majority of English glass was smashed by Puritans under Oliver Cromwell. Churches which retain a substantial amount of early glass are rare. Very few of England's large windows are intact. Those that contain a large amount of Medieval glass are usually reconstructed from salvaged fragments. The east, west and south transept windows of York Minster and the west and north Transept windows of Canterbury give an idea of the splendours that have been mostly lost

With the growth of industry in the late 18th and early 19th centuries , especially with commercial glass production , a revival of stained glass manufacture began and led to the development of that industry on an unprecedented scale.

**There are five windows** in All Hallows church now attributed to **Ulisse De Matteis**, thanks to visits by two accredited teams of stained glass conservationists .

☒ The large East window in the Leeds chapel ,dated 1882, Our Lord and two angels ☒ The Caritas panel in the South Aisle 1884 ☒ The three clerestory windows on the south side 1879 : from the East end are depicted the Saints Andrew, George, Helen, Paul, Our Lord, Peter, Ethelfreda, David and Patrick.

(George Townshend Hudson was still Rector during this period and his brother James was living close to Florence).

On looking closely at these windows it is possible to see the signature of Ulisse De Matteis together with his colleague Natale Bruschi together with the date.

Conservation?

The York Glaziers Trust led by Sarah Brown, visited All Hallows church in November 2017 and produced a detailed report with advice on restoration and conservation . It is suggested that the windows are removed for cleaning and repair; that external glazing is fitted and the windows are then returned in a frame, with a gap between thus providing a system of “ internally ventilated isothermal glazing”. This work would cost in excess of £100,000.



Caritas panel – window in S. Aisle(cracked)

*The attribution is in the narrow, yellow panel below the inscription “CARITAS”*

Part of the East window in the Leeds Chapel



Three Clerestory windows



## Other notable windows in All Hallows Church

### **The North Aisle**

Towards the west end of the North Aisle is a window made in 1886 depicting the Good Samaritan and the Good Shepherd in memory of Reverend George Hudson. This window was made in London by Messrs Lavers, Barraud and Westlake - a gift from the friends of this Rector who has had so much influence on the Church.



At the west end of the North Aisle the window commemorates Mark Hydes, former chorister and benefactor and his son Alonzo, organist. 1999.

Moving east along the north aisle is a recent window in plain glass designed by R G Simms.

### **Chancel**

The large East window, the Crucifixion, St John and St Mary, was replaced as part of the Restoration work in the 1890s . It was unveiled in 1899, a gift by CW Hudson (another of George Townshend Hudson's siblings) and made by C E Kempe. Charles Eamer Kempe's studios produced over 4000 windows which can be seen in churches and cathedrals all through the UK. His signature of the symbol of a sheaf of wheat can be seen in some of the top lights. The window is dedicated to the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Leeds.

### **West window**

The glass was designed by JF Bentley, architect of Westminster Cathedral in 1876. Dedicated to George Walker 1874 and Dorothy Walker.

### **South chapel (St George's chapel)**

Christ in Majesty by Faith Craft Works, London 1952

## Acknowledgements

Dr David Miller , Honorary Research Fellow, School of Life Sciences , University of Glasgow : 2007 - A Solution for the Heart, the life of Sydney Ringer, Benefactor of St Mary's Lavington

Nancy Thompson : 2007 - "The State of Stained Glass in 19th-Century Italy: Ulisse De Matteis and the vitrail archéologique"

York Glaziers Trust : December 2017 - Condition report on the windows designed and manufactured by Ulisse De Matteis and Conservation recommendations

Photographs by Pat McLaughlin and Kev Blizzard

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**Family Tree showing the Hudson connection between the Dukes of Leeds, Harthill church and Lastingham church**

