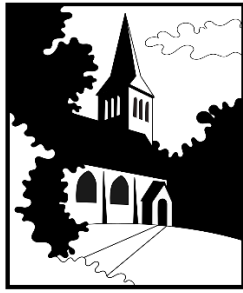


# Victorian & Edwardian Stained Glass



Marta Galicki

Published by



# FRIENDS OF ST NICHOLAS CHURCHYARD

C/O St Nicholas Community Hall | 34 Robin Hood Lane | Sutton | SM1 2RG | UK

© Historic England

English Heritage published the booklet “Victorian & Edwardian Stained Glass” on the occasion of the exhibition of the same title at the RIBA Heinz Gallery, 25 June – 1 August 1987.

It was edited by Victor Belcher & Andrew Saint.

Chapters from the booklet covering the firms “Lavers, Barraud and Westlake”, and “James Powell and Sons, Whitefriars” by Marta Galicki have been reproduced here by kind permission of Historic England.

Front Cover: East Window of St Nicholas Church by Lavers & Barraud.

Photo Credit: Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard





*Detail, East Window, St Nicholas Church, Photo Credit: Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard*

## LAVERS, BARRAUD AND WESTLAKE

The original firm of Lavers was established in 1855 by Nathaniel Wood Lavers (1828-1911) at 30 Southampton Street, Strand, where the business was listed as 'painted window glass works and plated and sheet glass warehouse'. From 1858 Lavers was associated with Francis Philip Barraud (1824-1900) as 'artists and manufacturers of painted glass'. The next year Lavers and Barraud settled permanently in Endell Street, Covent Garden, in a lively Gothic-style manufactory-studio designed by the architect Robert Jewell Withers. This highly decorated red-brick building was illustrated in *The Builder* which praised it as a sensitive addition to the frontage in Endell Street. The journal described its open internal floor plan, which was designed to accommodate 'the employment of a large number of men under careful supervision'.

Lavers and Barraud had known one another from at least 1849 when both men were employed by the glass firm of James Powell and Sons of Whitefriars. Lavers was a craftsman-businessman and not a designer, and he therefore sought out talented artists as his freelance designers when he went into business on his own. As early as 1855 he depended on Alfred Bell (1832-95) as a regular cartoonist until Bell united with John Richard Clayton (1827-1913) to form their own partnership. In 1856 Charles West Cope (1811-90), RA, designed some cartoons for Lavers, and for a short time in 1857-8 Henry Stacy Marks (1829-98) succeeded Bell as a regular cartoonist.

Between 1849 and 1852 Barraud had designed many windows for Powells, including one of their entries in the Great Exhibition of 1851, and when Marks left Lavers, Barraud became the latter's partner and chief designer. Barraud's output for the firm was extensive over the next ten years. He preferred diminutive, tightly packed, figure medallions, and although capable, appears not to have chosen to do the more important commissions. Generally his work for Powells had been rather mediocre but after joining Lavers there was a marked improvement in his sensitive, subdued Gothic style.



Lavers and Barraud, however, needed a permanent designer and consulted the architect William Burges for suggestions. He proposed Nathaniel Hubert John Westlake (1833-1921), who in 1858, at the age of 25, entered the studio. The firm's claim to prominence rests mostly on the reputations of the very talented Westlake and James Milner Allen who also provided many designs in the 1860s. Burges had such a high regard for Westlake that he was one of the only people mentioned by name in his Cantor Lectures, given at the Society of Arts. Westlake had been born in Romsey and later studied under a Mr Yarndel, who taught him the basics of the 'Humanities'. He also studied drawing but his interest in art was not at first passionate. He wanted to become a 'middy' at sea but his plans were altered for domestic reasons and he ended up in a publisher's house in Paternoster Row. Meanwhile, he had become devoted to art and passed away his lunchtimes at the British Museum and his evenings at the School of Art at Somerset House under William Dyce and John Rogers Herbert. He subsequently studied art at Mr Leigh's. During this period he sought out costume examples at the British Museum for a picture on which he was working. While making sketches there he developed an interest in mediaeval art, and became a firm admirer of the Pre-Raphaelites. In 1858, when he published some of these drawings with notes and translations, he caught the attention of William Burges and Edward Poynter, among others. The literary journals of the day welcomed his volume of drawings and this led to his recognition as an author and artist.

Burges subsequently employed him, along with Stacy Marks, Poynter, Burne-Jones and others, to carry out some decorative subject painting on a cabinet and other furniture that he had designed. In 1860 he provided a design for Burges for the east window of Waltham Abbey, but the commission ultimately went to Burne-Jones and was made by Powells. At the same time he was also engaged by Cardinal Wiseman to execute a painting for his residence in York Place.

In the late 1850s Westlake was responsible for many of Lavers and Barraud's designs. Initially these followed the rather crowded compositional formula already established by the firm, but he soon produced more open compositions and his designs acquired imagination and variety. By 1863-5 he was generating his best work, and it was at this stage that he started to collaborate with the architect John Francis Bentley, an association which lasted until 1883 when a quarrel ended the relationship. After 1865 Westlake's originality as a designer diminished, but this happened to many Gothicists during the late 1860s when the Gothic Revival style began to wane. Like many other artists working then, he began to design bold pictorial windows rather than working in two-dimensional early-mediaeval styles. As the years passed, his stained glass windows became less sensitive to the architectural context in which they were placed, while compositionally the designs became looser and more individualistic. In short, Westlake made a rather sudden transition from the early Gothic manner of his prime into the eclectic style of his mature years which depended heavily on sixteenth-century prototypes. As the Aesthetic Movement gathered momentum, the colour of his stained glass became diluted. His work after 1866 never had the freshness of contemporaries like Henry Holiday, who probably influenced him, or



Burne-Jones. There was a call for more windows and this forced Lavers and Barraud and other firms to stray increasingly towards factory-like production procedures over which Westlake had less control. He was made a partner in the firm in 1868 when it became known as 'Lavers, Barraud and Westlake', and in 1880 he became its sole proprietor.

Westlake eventually became a respected scholar of mediaeval styles and wrote his noteworthy and richly illustrated *History of Design in Painted Glass* (1884), which covers in four volumes the history of painted glass from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries. He began the treatise at the age of 24 and it took him over twenty years to complete. He dedicated the work to his patron and intimate of many years, the third Marquess of Bute, who had commissioned him to carry out subject paintings for the chapel at Cardiff Castle, presumably in collaboration with Burges.

Barraud died in 1900 and the firm was subsequently called 'Lavers, Westlake and Co.' Lavers died in 1910, but from 1909 the firm went under the name of 'Nathaniel Hubert John Westlake F.S.A., artist' until Westlake's death in 1921. During the First World War Westlake apparently closed the business in Endell Street and in 1917 moved the scaled-down operation to his home address at 20 Clifton Gardens, Maida Vale. Despite his prolific career his estate was worth only £1,100 upon his death and the firm closed permanently. From 1880 until the end of Westlake's life the windows executed by Lavers and Barraud were technically excellent but rarely of the quality made during the first decade of the firm's existence, which was characterised by a boldness of energy and experiment.

Another outstanding artist employed by Lavers, Barraud and Westlake was John Milner Allen, already mentioned, who worked for the firm from 1861 to 1867. His style was characterised by extremely robust, distinguished figures of a mediaeval quality; at its most accomplished his work was as good as Westlake's. From the late 1860s Allen's career is largely undocumented but he did work as a freelance designer and specialised in secular work. Secular glass, often of an armorial kind, was also produced on a large scale by the firm from the 1880s.

Aside from those already mentioned, the following artists also designed for Lavers, Barraud and Westlake over the years: Lewis Day (1845-1910), who worked for them from 1864; Frederick Smallwood (b.1829); Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98), who produced one design, 'the Annunciation', of 1860; Henry Holiday (1833-1927), who, although he was at that time under agreement with Powells, managed to amend his contract and design a number of windows for Lavers and Barraud over a fifteen-year period; Michael Frederick Halliday (1822-69), a friend and pupil of Holman Hunt and Millais; Clement William Barraud (b. 1843); and, of course, John Richard Clayton (1827-1913), who worked for Lavers and Barraud as a freelance designer from 1855 to 1858. There were certainly others.





*Detail, South West Window, St Nicholas Church, Photo Credit: Friends of St Nicholas Churchyard*

## JAMES POWELL AND SONS, WHITEFRIARS

The Whitefriars glasshouse, located on the former site of the Whitefriars monastery, between the Thames and Fleet Street, was founded in the early eighteenth century and until the mid nineteenth century produced mainly flint glass. In 1834 James Powell (1774-1840), a London wine merchant, bought the glassworks, probably when it was at a fairly low ebb. Powell was himself not a craftsman or designer but an entrepreneur who invested in the business for the benefit of his sons. Upon his death the firm passed to his three sons, Arthur, Nathaniel and James Cotton Powell, who in 1844 established a stained glass department. The firm subsequently thrived under succeeding members of the family, especially Harry J. and James Crofts Powell, and continued well into the second half of the twentieth century.

It was under the Powell family that the firm became one of the most important studios and glass manufacturers of the Victorian period. It not only led a revival of English handblown glass but employed some of the



most avant-garde artist-designers to be found. For many years located in Temple Street, Whitefriars, the firm is well known for the simple, elegant domestic glass, often coloured, made from the 1860s onwards, but the Powell factory also produced coloured muff glass for decorative glazing, certainly from the 1830s, and in its stained glass studio windows were executed according to the designs of talented artists such as Edward Burne-Jones, Henry Holiday, and Walter Crane.

Powells' stained glass benefitted from the scientific researches of Charles Winston (1814-64), a lawyer by profession, who had dedicated himself to the study of the history of stained glass. It was primarily due to his collaboration with Powells that the firm was able to play such a crucial role in Victorian ecclesiastical design. His greatest problem was improving the quality of glass that was available to the artists, and he sought through his experiments to find a material similar to real mediaeval glass rather than the thin homogeneous glass then currently available. In 1847 he published the most important book of the period on stained glass, a two-volume treatise entitled *An Inquiry into the Difference of Style Observable in Ancient Glass Paintings, especially in England: with Hints on Glass Painting, by an Amateur*. Winston was not only interested in the 'mosaic' technology of stained glass, in which each colour was represented by a separated piece of glass, but also in a stylistic 'classification'. In his book he provided craftsmen with specific stylistic examples much as Rickman had done for architecture. He also examined relationships between windows and interiors and suggested various choices of subject. His real accomplishment was his rejection of modern techniques in order to 'discover' a new and authentic style which was based on all the uncertainties that the modern age was trying to eliminate. These included the irregular thickness of glass, dependence on lead lines and the lack of consistency in colours.

The firm's reputation in stained glass rested on the extremely large stable of talented and prominent freelance designers who were commissioned to provide designs. One of the earliest of their designers in the 1840s was Francis Philip Barraud, but the first of great note was Edward Burne-Jones who provided a stained glass cartoon for the firm in 1857 at the age of 24. After his early association with William Morris at Oxford, Burne-Jones had been taught drawing by Rossetti, who was instrumental in obtaining for Burne-Jones his first commission for stained glass from Powells. The nature of Rossetti's own association with Powells' stained glass studios is uncertain; and it is unclear whether or not he actually provided designs himself or solely recommended other artists to Powells. These stained glass cartoons were practically the first work that Burne-Jones produced and were contemporary with his mural paintings at the Oxford Union. Burne-Jones provided designs for Powells until 1861 when his final work was a 'Tree of Jesse' window for Waltham Abbey in collaboration with William Burges. In the same year he became a founder member of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Company.

Among the architects who appear in Powells' archives in the 1840s were William Butterfield, Anthony Salvin, Richard Cromwell Carpenter, J.M. Neale, Benjamin Ferrey, Thomas Henry Wyatt, and Benjamin Woodward. In the 1850s Powells recorded business with Sir George Gilbert Scott and



later with his son, John Oldrid Scott. The architect Thomas Graham Jackson, a student of Gilbert Scott, provided domestic ware and stained glass designs for Powells between 1868 and 1877 and extended their Whitefriars premises in the 1890s. Also listed are Philip Charles Hardwick, Henry Woodyer, John Loughborough Pearson, Rhode Hawkins, Raphael Brandon, George Edmund Street (who had a very close relationship with the firm much like T.G. Jackson), Edward Blore, and Arthur William Blomfield.

There were a prolific number of designers by the 1860s although some are only known to us as faceless names: Bouvier, Grieve, Moberly, and Henry Casolani, a freelance artist who executed numerous designs for tracery light figures and medallion panels until about 1870. Also from this period are: Lyon, who established his own firm with Moberly in 1864; Moody; and Henry Ellis Wooldridge (1845-1917), a freelance artist-designer, who executed work primarily for Powells until the 1880s, when he took over from Ruskin as Slade Professor at Oxford; Henry Stacy Marks (1829-93), who provided a design in 1858; N.W. Lavers (later of Lavers and Barraud) and Edward Poynter (1836-1919), who designed windows for a minimum of eleven churches for Powells between 1858 and 1866. Lavers and Barraud as well as Clayton and Bell kept business accounts with Powells as late as the mid 1860s, and probably longer.

Correspondence between Charles Winston and Arthur Powell indicates that Powells had a difficult time finding a permanent designer. According to these documents Moody was Winston's choice over Poynter as 'an artist to take the designing part of [Powells] establishment', but Powells apparently originally approached Albert Moore, who suggested Henry Holiday to fill the void left by Burne-Jones's departure. Holiday's name and Powells' stained glass studio are almost inseparable from the 1860s to the 1890s. In *Reminiscences of my Life* (1914), Holiday writes that in December 1862:

... I received a call which had an important influence on my after career. A Mr Moberly, the head man at the glass-works of James Powell and Sons in Whitefriars, came and asked if I would make some designs for them. He explained that Burne-Jones had been doing their most important cartoons, but that he had now joined with William Morris, and by the advice of Albert Moore they came to see me . . . I told him I had never done anything of the kind before, but he did not mind that; they wanted to get out of the cut-and-dried-work of the conventional cartoonists for stained glass; so I agreed to try.

Holiday was hopeful that the liaison might lead to interesting work and also provide the steady income he needed. During this crucial early stage of his involvement with stained glass William Burges gave him much support and assistance. Holiday had worked for Burges in early 1861 when he was commissioned to paint a panel for a cabinet which Burges had designed and built for himself. Holiday had also collaborated with Burges at Waltham Abbey, where the architect had commissioned him to paint a panel on silver for a blind window and provide a stained glass window for the south aisle.

Once Holiday began his first commission in early 1863 for Powells, Burges invited him to use his offices for sketching. Burges had many books on



stained glass and also provided Holiday with technical advice since Holiday had no such background. The design was approved by Powells and Holiday executed the cartoons, but the window was never made as a result of a quarrel within the family that had commissioned it. Holiday was disappointed but this episode did not harm him professionally. During 1863 Powells asked him to provide designs for two more windows and also 'Burges, who had kindly helped me at the start, seemed to appreciate my designs for he entrusted two windows to me'. During this time Holiday enjoyed the friendship and encouragement of the likes of William De Morgan and Simeon Solomon.

During the 1860s Holiday was also on cordial terms with Burne-Jones, who became a long-standing friend and must have also provided advice and support. His early work shows the influence not only of Burne-Jones and Morris but Rossetti as well.

In 1863, after Holiday had provided quite a few cartoons for Powells, his efforts were warmly acknowledged by the firm, and Holiday recalled:

... old Nathaniel Powell, the head of the firm, a most kindly man, called in person to bring me a cheque, to say how much he admired the cartoons, and to make me an important offer to the effect that if I would make designs for them only, they would guarantee me as much work as I could do . . . I soon decided to accept the offer for the present, on the understanding that the arrangement should be terminable at the wish of either of us.

From this point onward, Holiday was in quite a new and advantageous role and he was especially pleased and encouraged to have been the firm's choice to succeed the distinguished Burne-Jones. From a personal viewpoint, he was now assured of a steady income that made it possible for him to propose marriage.

Although at that time Holiday had an exclusive arrangement with Powells in regard to stained glass designs, he had his contract altered in order to collaborate as early as 1864 with Lavers and Barraud and with Heaton, Butler and Bayne in the following year. This latter association lasted for fifteen years. Holiday still worked as a freelance decorative painter, notably for Burges who believed that he should see Italy as soon as possible. Holiday wrote: 'And as I was evidently destined to spend much of my time in decorative work I quite agreed with Burges's opinion'. By now he employed a young glass painter and architect named W. Gualbert Saunders who had been a pupil of Burges's and who helped him with his cartoons. Saunders accompanied Holiday to Italy in 1867. The two of them were intending ultimately to associate professionally but this never happened.

Upon his return to England in 1868 Holiday approached his work with immense enthusiasm, confident that he had acquired much knowledge from the best mural and decorative painting in Italy. Soon after he wrote:

One thing I never felt tempted to do, and that is to imitate the work of past ages. We may learn from them, we may be inspired by them, . . . we must express ourselves and our ages or . . . we must step forward and open out new fields. If we imitate . . . the past, our work will be a lifeless sham . . .



William Burges, a devoted mediaevalist, did not see things in this way and wanted Holiday to design in a mediaeval manner. Holiday refused and felt that that was the approach of the commercial firms which he despised. He believed that their work lacked creativity and originality, and took issue with many architects who even in the late 1860s believed Gothic to be the sole 'Christian' architecture. Holiday appreciated that the Gothic Revival was a valid reaction against Georgian church architecture, but he saw its recourse to industrial production methods as a failing.

He saw Powells and Charles Winston as lights in the dark in their concern with authentic technology and progressive designing. He also had a deep respect for William Morris's and Burne-Jones's work in the decorative arts, especially stained glass, and credits them with much of his knowledge although he 'never imitated their work'. He deeply regretted his inability to continue collaborating with Burges, his early mentor.

Besides Holiday, other designers for Powells in the 1860s included Philip Webb, Ford Madox Brown, William De Morgan, Edmund S. Sedding (architect and younger brother of J.D. Sedding), and James Francis Doyle. Albert Moore provided a single design of 1862 for Thursford Church, Norfolk, which Birkin Haward calls 'one of the exceptional windows of the century' and shows the quality of Powells' 'antique' glass as well as originality of design. Account books of the 'Window Department' from December 1845 to 1868 include the following entries: South Kensington Museum, John Hungerford Pollen, Thomas Gambier Parry, and the Marchioness of Waterford. J.W. Brown was an Aesthetic-movement designer who began working freelance for Powells in 1877. Harry Burrows was a freelance artist who first designed cartoons for Powells in 1872 and provided primarily Aesthetic style designs for them well into the 1880s. Charles Handgrave, also an Aesthetic designer, arrived in 1874.

Upon his return from Italy Holiday's mature, classical style slowly became evident. By 1871 he was well-established and confident and he had immense influence on the design philosophy at Powells. From that point on, the firm ceased to produce Gothic figures on machine-pressed quarries and replaced them with large classical figures in soft tones. Also gone were lozenge-shaped quarries based on mediaeval prototypes. The Aesthetic Movement began to take hold and provided the ubiquitous sunflower and other natural forms rather than canopy work.

As the years passed Holiday became more and more frustrated by the lack of quality in Powells and other firms' glasswork compared with the mediaeval glass in places like Chartres, York and Canterbury. Ultimately he 'had become convinced that no commercial establishment, however well-meaning, could give me what I wanted . . . ' and he established his own studio and staff in Church Row, Hampstead, in 1891 after almost thirty years of designing for Powells. He took with him Powells' chief glass painter at the time, William Glasby, and J. Dudley Forsyth, who was an apprentice. Ultimately they both became respected stained glass artists in their own names. Once Holiday was in control, the technical quality of his glass was so superior that he regretted that he had waited so long. A fine example could be seen in the now demolished Essex Unitarian Church, Notting Hill, London. The window was rescued and is now exhibited at the Ely Stained Glass Museum. In 1914 Holiday ceased operating his studio

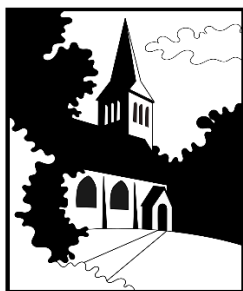


and arranged to have his designs executed by Lowndes and Drury, and shortly before his death, he worked with E. Liddal Armitage (d. 1967). Harry J. Powell (1853-1922), who had been a member of the firm since 1875, soon became largely responsible for the running of the company and retained control until 1920. In the 1890s Powells produced stunning, elegant Art Nouveau shapes in opalescent or tinted glass as tableware. This was also the decade when Sir William Blake Richmond designed the controversial mosaics executed by Powells for St Paul's Cathedral. Powells were also great innovators and pioneers in the manufacture of tesserae for glass mosaics. In 1919 the company became 'James Powell and Sons (Whitefriars) Ltd' and in 1923 moved from Whitefriars to an extensive modern building in Wealdstone, Middlesex. When James Hogan (1883-1948), an employee and ultimately a designer of the firm since the age of 15, became managing director he encouraged experiments in stained glass, especially thirteenth-century methods.

In 1923 Harry J. Powell's book *Glassmaking in England*, which documented the firm's philosophy concerning twentieth-century glass, was published. This was also the year in which Powells opened a showroom and studios at 98-100 Wigmore Street. During the inter-war years Barnaby Powell (1891-1935), son of James Crofts Powell, was the principal designer of domestic glass in the firm and provided a wide variety of experimental and sometimes curious vessels. Another distinguished designer of domestic glass, William J. Wilson, who ultimately followed Hogan as managing director, joined the firm in the 1930s. In 1973 the stained glass department of Powells ceased production and in 1980 the glassworks closed.

An extensive archive of written material and drawings survives from James Powell and Sons and is divided between the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Museum of London. Those materials relating to stained glass, which include cash books containing clients' names, are fully described in John Gordon Christian's 'Source Material: The Archives of Whitefriars Studios, London' in *Artifex*, volume I, 1968. Other cartoons and designs were sold at Sothebys in 1976.





— FRIENDS OF —  
ST NICHOLAS  
CHURCHYARD