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AN EDWARDIAN STAINED GLASS CHURCH WINDOW DEPICTING ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHING

by Clayton & Bell, made for the Victoria Street Congregational Church, Derby c.1906, later re-installed at the Central United Reformed Church, Derby c.1962, the rectangular leaded panel of the standing bearded figure with a halo, attired in his camel-skin tunic and holding his crossed staff - a scroll unfurling from it and declaring "Ecce Agnus Dei", a group of acolytes listen on; the group dropped into a field of obscured-glass rectangular panes and mounted in a steel frame,

DIMENSIONS: 126cm (49^{3/2}") High, 66cm (26") Wide, 2cm (0^{3/4}") Deep

STOCK CODE: 48952



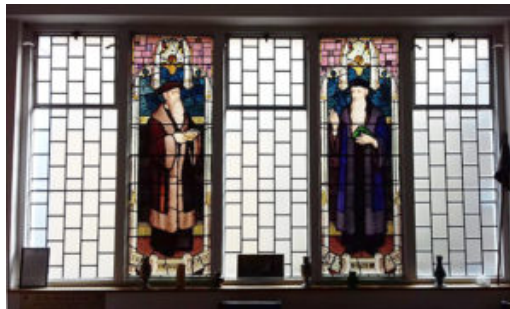
HISTORY

A series of beautifully painted stained-glass windows by Clayton & Bell, salvaged from the Central United Reformed Church in Derby, but originally from The Victoria Street Congregational Church, has been acquired by LASSCO.

The series, including this window – view them together [here](#) – were originally made 1906-13 for the Victoria Street Congregational Church in Edwardian times. They were removed when the building was demolished and installed in the new church in 1963, soon to be known as the Central United Reformed Church. Each of the singular figures – and the respective Biblical story depicted in the smaller corresponding panels – were cut out and dropped into a field of obscured plain glass at this point.

Two larger panels in the series, featuring Knox and Calvin, (also acquired by LASSCO [click here](#)) were made in Nottingham by Andrew Stoddart at a similar time, originally for a different Derby

church: The Green Lane Presbyterian Church. These two congregations were to merge as part of the Unification of 1972 – the creation of the United Reformed Church nationally. The windows from Green Lane were also united – and they were installed alongside the Victoria Street windows.



Calvin and Knox as installed at URC Derby

The 1963 building was recently demolished during a large redevelopment of this part of Derby. The church faced a conundrum as the safe removal of the glass, and perhaps the retention and re-use of it, was not a cost they could bear. Happily, it was all carefully removed on demolition and was later cut to uniform panels and re-mounted – all done by the demolition contractor who acquired the salvage rights to them rather than let them be destroyed. LASSCO has completed the restoration. The Central United Reformed Church is now re-sited in new building just up the road in Nottingham.

About the maker:

Clayton and Bell was one of the most successful stained glass window makers of Victorian times. The company finally closed its doors in 1993.

John Richard Clayton (1827-1913), an illustrator from London and part of the pre-Raphaelite crowd – and Alfred Bell (1832-95) from Devon – founded the company in 1856. Clayton had trained as a sculptor under Sir Charles Barry. The drawing abilities of Bell, who had grown up on his family's farm in Devon, had been spotted by Sir George Gilbert Scott who apprenticed him.

Scott passed down a number of commissions to the new partnership as they became established in the mid 1850's. With a boom in both church building and restoration, all needing gothic church ornament and stained glass, the firm quickly grew. Initially they shared premises

with Heaton and Butler who were manufacturing the glass they painted and set. By 1861 they had moved to Regent Street and were manufacturing their own glass – employing over 300 workers.

Among Clayton and Bell's most famous stained glass commissions were the West Window of King's College Chapel, Cambridge (1878) and windows for Exeter Cathedral (1873-76), Rochester Cathedral (1871-76), Bangor Cathedral (1870), and Pershore Abbey (1864 and 1869-73). They designed several windows in Westminster Abbey and St Margaret's Church in Westminster. See also – Exeter College, Oxford, Sherbourne Abbey, Dorset and St. John's College Cambridge. Scott gave them the commission to design the mosaics that decorate the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, London.

Queen Victoria awarded Clayton and Bell a royal warrant in 1883.