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Fragment Of A Border, From A Grisaille Window

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Since it allowed for white hair at the same time that it produced the necessary contrast between hair and flesh, this curious yellow-skinned type seems to have been reserved for figures of advanced age. The style of cap in panel (B) is used with equal discrimination, most frequently appearing on the heads of Old Testament figures, especially prophets (CVMA, 1970, pls. 24, 65). Even the contrast in the Pitcairn figures between the meticulous rendering of faces and the more summary, at times even crude, articulation of drapery and hands is a feature characteristic of this Norman group.

Having established a Norman provenance for the Pitcairn figures, it now may be possible to associate them with a specific site. None of the windows created by the Norman workshop for the Virgin Chapel of the powerful Norman Abbey of Jumièges, under construction after 1325—or for the church of Saint-Pierre in Jumièges, almost completely rebuilt after 1332—remains *in situ*. Although it is not known how and when the windows were removed from their original location (both churches are now in ruins), a few fragments have survived from what was once an elaborate program of standing figures, made for one or both of these architectural additions. The parish church of Saint-Valentin in Jumièges contains fragments of ornamental glass. Six figures and additional ornament from Jumièges once filled the windows of the sixteenth-century chapel of La Mailleraye, until a bomb in 1942 pulverized some of the glass and severely damaged what it did not destroy (Lafond, in Jouen, 1954; Lafond, 1955). Similarities in type and the equivalence of scale make it likely that the Pitcairn panels were once part of this fourteenth-century glazing.

Four of the figures at La Mailleraye were part of a twenty-four figure *Credo prophétique* in Jumièges. In this popular fourteenth-century iconographic scheme, apostles holding phylacteries with phrases from the Christian creed were juxtaposed with prophets who held citations from Old Testament prophecies, in a typological arrangement (Mâle, 1925, 251–53). If it were initially a full-length figure, the Pitcairn Prophet (panel B) would have fit into such a program. In fact, the position of his inserted, identifying phylactery may have taken the place of his prophetic scroll. The figure then would have been similar in design to that of Amos at La Mailleraye (Lafond, in Jouen, 1954, fig. 5), whose upward look of inspiration is equivalent to that of the Pitcairn Prophet.

The incorporation of the other Pitcairn figure into the glazing of Jumièges is more problematical. His bonnet and costume preclude his identification as either prophet or apostle, since they were dressed differently in the work of this Norman shop. This type is generally used for auxiliary figures, and it is possible, based on its use for the donor in the Virgin

Chapel in Rouen, that costume and coiffure reflect contemporary fashion. Is it not possible that the Pitcairn figure was also a donor—perhaps a monk from Jumièges, as suggested by his cowl?

Although it is regrettable that all of the glass from Jumièges has been divorced from its original context, if the Pitcairn panels preserve figures from the glazing of this Norman abbey, it was a fortunate circumstance that placed them securely in Bryn Athyn in 1942, when the panels at La Mailleraye were almost totally destroyed.

M. W. C.

Purchased, Lawrence sale, New York, January 28, 1921.

Ex collection: Henry C. Lawrence, New York (until 1921).

Bibliography: Lawrence sale cat., 1921, no. 360, ill.

see colorplate XIII

92. Fragment of a Border, from a Grisaille Window

France, Sens, Cathedral of Saint-Étienne

About 1310–20

Pot-metal glass

Height, 63 cm. (24¹³/₁₆ in.); width, 15.6 cm.

(6¹/₈ in.)

03.SG.146

This was once part of an extraordinarily delicate border whose design was based on an organically conceived, ascending vine placed against a streaky red ground. Sprigs with three leaves branching out from a continuous stem are reserved on alternating pieces of emerald green and golden yellow glass. A red fillet parallels the main stem on what was the inner edge of the border. A blue fillet and a white breaking fillet form the outside boundary at the left. The lower of the two green sprigs, one piece of each of the yellow leaves, and portions of the breaking fillet are modern replacements. These restorations can be easily distinguished by the quality of the glass itself and by the bland, measured definition of the foliage, as compared to the spontaneity and liveliness of the fourteenth-century painting.

Raymond Pitcairn purchased this panel in 1921 from Joseph Brummer. Nothing further is known about the fragment's modern history, but it can be identified with a border framing two lancets of grisaille in the first clerestory window from the west, on the north side of the nave of Sens Cathedral. Best known as an Early Gothic church of the second half of the twelfth century, Sens has undergone numerous restorations in the course of its eight-hundred-year history. One of these, involving the enlargement of the clerestory, reconstruction of the southwest tower

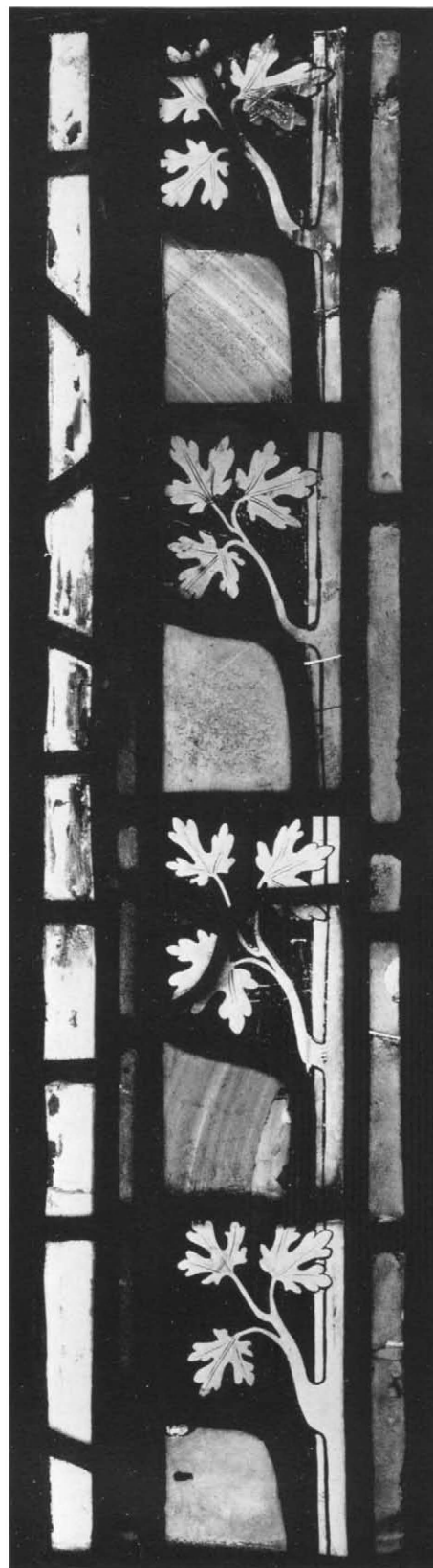
(which fell in 1268), and construction of a new western terminal wall, occurred during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Kurmánn and von Winterfeld, 1977). The Pitcairn fragment was produced in the course of this extended campaign. Although there is little written documentation of the progression of this restoration, Archbishop Étienne Becquart's donation of money for the construction of two bays of the nave clerestory, recorded in 1308 (Porée, 1907, 567), provides a possible *terminus post quem* for dating the Pitcairn panel. The style of the border is consistent with an early-fourteenth-century date. Although the design is similar to borders in the ambulatory of Saint-Ouen in Rouen (CVMA, 1970; bays 33, 36) from about 1330, the absence of silver stain in the Sens border, the vigorousness of its painting, and the saturated quality of its color argue for a somewhat earlier date.

There is, however, a significant difference between the border, as it is currently installed in Sens, and the Pitcairn fragment. The framing design is simpler in Sens, and neither of the colored fillets flanking the vine in the Pitcairn panel is present. In their place are two white fillets, obviously later additions in modern glass. The authenticity of the arrangement in the Pitcairn panel is confirmed by the even patination of the exterior surface and by the presence of a revealing strip of corrosion, which runs across the bottom of the entire piece, traversing each fillet, the vine, and a portion of the red ground.

It is curious that the fourteenth-century borders in Sens frame grisaille panels whose centripetal patterns, hatched grounds, and stylized foliage indicate a date just before the middle of the thirteenth century. (For the dating of grisaille, see Lillich, 1972; *idem*, 1973.) It is possible that this juxtaposition was created by a fourteenth-century shop, but the extensive restorations in, and alterations to, the border, as well as the appearance of one totally modern panel of grisaille, suggest that a more recent campaign was responsible for creating this composite window. A controversial restoration at the middle of the nineteenth century, notorious for its destruction of the fourteenth-century chapels in the nave aisles (Chartraire, 1928, 35), provides a possible occasion for the extraction of this fragment, the alteration of the remaining border, and its combination with earlier grisaille. This hypothesis can be confirmed only after a careful study of archival documentation and of the actual glass in Sens, but it is the existence of this exquisite Pitcairn fragment, preserving as it does the primitive design of the fourteenth-century border from Sens, which has formulated the questions.

M. W. C.

Purchased from Joseph Brummer, Paris, March 11, 1921.



92