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THE SUNDIAL PAGE

'Toller Porcorum'

Toller Porcorum is one of two villages that lie some nine miles west-north-west

of Dorchester in Dorset. The name conjures up visions of a Roman legionary encampment, but its true origin would appear to be much more down-to-earth. The second village is the nearby Toller Fratrum. Both villages take the name *Toller* from the River Toller, now called the River Hooke, *Toller* being an old Celtic name for a 'hollow stream'. The Latin affixes evidently date from the early 14th century, *Fratrum* meaning 'of the bretheren', referring to the possession of the manor by the Knights Hospitallers, whilst *Porcorum* literally means 'of the pigs', referring to its herds of swine or to the wild boar that once frequented the surrounding woods.

Both these villages have historic churches, that of Toller Fratrum having a Norman font and being dedicated to Basil the Great, an eastern saint. Whether or not there is a friendly rivalry between the two villages I do not know, but the good people of Toller Porcorum brought their village, or rather their church, St Andrew and St Peter, to the attention of the sundial world, following the Millennium year, when they commissioned a stained-glass sundial to mark the event.

As regular readers of *CLOCKS* may have become aware, stained-glass sundials are very rare. Most date from the 17th century, following the earlier purges of religious glass, at a time when glass-painters were no longer employed to produce biblical scenes for church windows. In 1988 I listed some 36 known stained-glass sundials (Christopher St J H Daniel, 'Sundials in Stained-Glass in England and Wales', *CLOCKS*, Volume 10/10, April 1988, pp30-37), most of which I had personally visited and recorded, the majority of them dating from the 17th century. Since the publication of this article, some eight more historic dials of this kind have come to light whilst, sadly, two have disappeared without trace. Thus, perhaps, there are 40 such historic dials still extant in Britain

today.

With the 20th century revival of interest in the sundial, a few modern stained-glass sundials have made their appearance, particularly following the Millennium year. Two of these have been commissioned by livery companies for their Halls in the City of London, the first being the Tallow Chandlers'

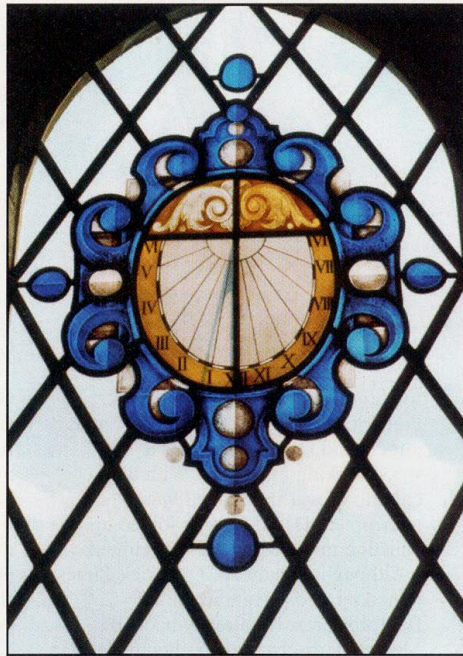


Figure 1. The stained-glass sundial, by John Hayward, in the church of Toller Porcorum.

Company, portraying the Company's coat-of-arms and those of the Past Master responsible for the commission, and the second being the Pewterers, who have reconstructed their own 17th century dial. The latter original sundial is attributed to John Oliver (1616-1701), who was one of those who worked under Sir Christopher Wren in the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire. I have myself contributed to the number of modern stained-glass dials, having designed one for Buckland Abbey (Sundial Page, 'A Memorial to Drake', *CLOCKS*, Volume 21/7, July-August 1998, p35), and one for the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in York (Sundial Page, *CLOCKS*, Volume 22/8, August-September 1999, p36), both of

which came in quick succession, like the proverbial double-decker buses!

No doubt there are other historic stained-glass sundials yet awaiting 'discovery' and there are certainly other modern dials of this kind of which I do not know, but it was within the last two or three years that I came to learn of the sundial at Toller Porcorum, when a copy of the record sheet submitted for the *REGISTER* (of 'fixed location sundials') of the British Sundial Society was sent to me. However, it was not until last year that I came to know something of the stained-glass artist who had made it.

It happened that an elderly aunt of mine had died and that her funeral service was to be held in St Mary's Church in the village of Old Basing, near Basingstoke. Whilst I had visited the church on previous occasions, I was greatly surprised to discover a stained-glass sundial in a south-facing window. I didn't recall having seen any such dial in the church before but, on closer inspection from within the building, I saw that it was a modern work, commissioned to mark the Millennium. The dial was similar in style to that of the one in the parish church of Toller Porcorum. Both dials, in fact, are plain in themselves; but decorated in an elegant and colourful baroque manner. On making enquiries, I learned the name of the maker, John Hayward, to whom I wrote to discover more about his work in making stained-glass sundials.

John Hayward was born in 1929, studied painting at St Martin's School of Art, London and, following National Service in the RAF, he joined a firm in 1952 making stained-glass in Westminster. In 1961, he moved to Surrey to work freelance, designing and making his own glass. He was soon commissioned to design and make the Great East and Great West windows for the restored church of St Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside, in the City of London, followed by windows for the church of St Michael, Paternoster Royal—the church of Dick Whittington—also in the City. In 1989 he moved to Dorset and in 1995 he won a national competition to design and make new glass for the Great West window of Sherborne Abbey, which was dedicated in 1998 in the presence of HM The Queen and HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. Undoubtedly, John Hayward has contributed colour and beauty to the heritage of this country, an achievement of which he can surely be justly proud. He has also added two fine stained-glass sundials to the corpus of such dials in this country.