

## The Union of Science and Art: Stained Glass Windows for the South Kensington Museum

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### Introduction

Few of today's visitors to the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) take more than a cursory look at the internal and external decorations of the museum building; yet, as Julius Bryant has demonstrated, the museum building is itself a 'work of art'.<sup>1</sup> When first constructed, the purpose-built South Kensington Museum (as it was then known) was extensively decorated using various media including majolica, plasterwork, sgraffito, tiles, wall paintings and friezes, glass and ceramic mosaics, and stained glass windows. The museum buildings were of as much interest to visitors in the 1860s and 1870s as the collections that they housed. Museum guidebooks interwove descriptions of the decorations of the building with information about the objects on display, and included illustrations of the internal decorative features of the building (including some of the stained glass windows) alongside museum objects.<sup>2</sup> Yet subsequent studies of the museum have tended to treat the history of the building and that of its collections as two distinct topics.

Stained glass was once a key feature of the museum building. Decorative glass, whether coloured or stained, prominently adorned windows by the North and West 'Ceramic' staircases, in the Ceramic Gallery, refreshment rooms, and on the staircase landings leading to the Lecture Theatre (*Fig. 1*). These windows punctuated the building at various public intersections, creating focal points as well as signposting visitors to the surrounding galleries. Like much of the architectural decoration, the stained glass windows were also self-conscious expressions of the aims and purpose of the world's leading museum of art and design; their subject matter, style, iconography, and symbolism celebrated the broader role of the museum in artistic education.

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<sup>1</sup> Julius Bryant, *Designing the V&A: The Museum as a Work of Art (1857–1909)* (London: Lund Humphries in association with V&A Publishing, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> *A Guide to the South Kensington Museum* (London: Spottiswoode, 1869), pp. 34–35; *The South Kensington Museum: Examples of the Works of Art in the Museum and of the Decorations of the Building with Brief Descriptions* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1881).

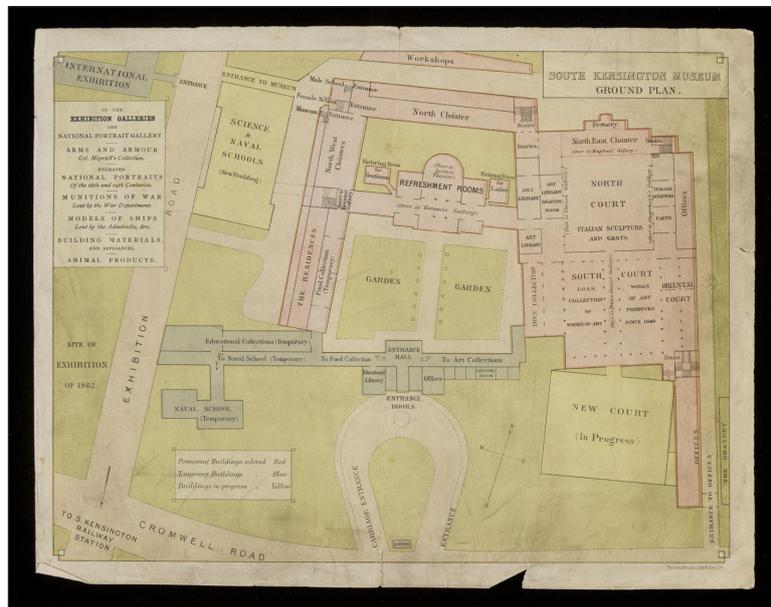


Fig. 1: Vincent Brooks (1814–1885), *South Kensington Museum Ground Plan*, c. 1867–73, colour lithograph on paper, 220 × 284 mm, Victoria and Albert Museum, Prints & Drawings (E.931–1976). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This block plan shows the permanent buildings, temporary buildings, and buildings in progress at the South Kensington Museum, c. 1867–73. Arranged around a central quadrangle marked ‘Garden’, the permanent buildings include the central apsidal block on the north side of the quadrangle, housing the refreshment rooms on the ground floor and the Lecture Theatre and Ceramic Gallery above. The West ‘Ceramic’ Staircase is visible to the west, positioned between the North West Cloisters and the Residences. The North Staircase is shown on the east side on the corner which joins the North Cloister to North East Cloister. To the south of the quadrangle are linked temporary structures (coloured in green) housing the Naval School and other collections. A further temporary structure is shown in the top-left corner of the plan: a range labelled ‘International Exhibition’ on the west side of Exhibition Road. Buildings in progress (coloured in yellow) comprise the Science & Naval Schools (now the Henry Cole Wing) and New Court (now the Cast Courts). The museum was entered through a temporary structure from Cromwell Road.

Many of these windows were removed and replaced with plain glazing in the early twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> Only the stained glass windows in the refreshment rooms remain *in situ* as part of their original interior decorative schemes. While some windows have been lost or destroyed, others remain

<sup>3</sup> Most were removed as part of internal rearrangements to the building under the direction of Cecil Harcourt-Smith (1859–1944), director of the Victoria and Albert Museum from 1909 to 1924 and chairman of the Committee of Rearrangement. He ‘determinedly set out to obliterate as much of the internal decoration as he could’. John Physick, *The Victoria and Albert Museum: The History of the Building* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), p. 12.

in the museum's store. The rediscovery of several stained glass panels originally placed in windows on the Lecture Theatre landings has happily led to their conservation and reinstatement in recent years.<sup>4</sup> With the aid of surviving visual and written records, this article narrates the circumstances of the commissioning, design, and installation of individual windows within the building, bringing to life a lost scheme and reminding us that stained glass was once essential to the decorative ensemble of this important public building.

### **Illuminating an institution**

Collectively, these windows visualized, articulated, and embodied the aims and ambitions of the South Kensington Museum and its associated Schools of Design. Established in the wake of the Great Exhibition, the origins of the museum and development of its collections have been well documented.<sup>5</sup> The formation of the Museum of Manufactures (as it was first known) was closely intertwined with the Department of Practical Art, founded in the same year, and rebranded in 1853 as the Science and Art Department (hereafter referred to as 'the Department').<sup>6</sup> The Department, headed up by Henry Cole (1808–1882), was responsible for the Government Central School of Design (renamed the National Art Training School in 1853) and all its regional branches, together with the newly established museum.<sup>7</sup> By

<sup>4</sup> The panels were rediscovered in 2011 and were reinstalled in 2012. See Sherrie Eatman, 'The V&A's Historic Stained Glass Windows', *V&A Conservation Journal*, 61 (2013) <<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/journals/conservation-journal/spring-2013-issue-61/the-v-and-as-historic-stained-glass-windows/>> [accessed 30 March 2020].

<sup>5</sup> On the history of the museum, see also C. H. Gibbs-Smith, *The History of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: HMSO, 1976); and Anthony Burton, *Vision and Accident: The Story of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V&A Publications, 1999). On the development of its collections see, for example, the series of articles in *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14.1 (2002); and Julius Bryant, *Creating the V&A: Victoria and Albert's Museum (1851–1861)* (London: Lund Humphries in association with V&A Publishing, 2019).

<sup>6</sup> The Science and Art Department was a division of the government's Board of Education (previously known as the Committee of the Privy Council on Education), funded to promote science and art to improve national industry. The Department was based at the South Kensington Museum from 1853 until it was integrated with the Board of Trade in 1899. See Henry Cole, *The Functions of the Science and Art Department*, Introductory Addresses on the Science and Art Department and the South Kensington Museum, 1 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857).

<sup>7</sup> The Government School of Design was originally founded in 1837 and was also known as the Central School of Design from 1841; under Henry Cole's leadership it became the Central School of Practical Art from 1852, and then the National Art Training School from 1853 until 1896.

1854 discussions were underway to relocate the Museum of Manufactures from its temporary premises at Marlborough House to a permanent home on the Kensington Gore estate, a site in South Kensington purchased by the 1851 commissioners with profits from the Great Exhibition.<sup>8</sup> The South Kensington Museum, as it was aptly renamed, opened to the public in 1857 in a temporary iron building nicknamed the ‘Brompton Boilers’. The complex of permanent buildings forming the Victoria and Albert Museum today is the result of piecemeal construction, adaptation, and demolition of various structures over a number of decades.

As general superintendent of the museum from its foundation until his retirement in 1873, Cole oversaw a key period of construction at the South Kensington site.<sup>9</sup> The building work was devised and directed by military engineers rather than trained architects, an arrangement that was both cost- and time-effective. Naval engineer Captain Francis Fowke (1823–1865), who joined the Department in summer 1856, was appointed architect and engineer in November that year, succeeding Lieutenant Colonel Henry Cunliffe Owen (1821–1867). A team of Royal Engineers was attached to the Department, and barracks and carpentry workshops were created on-site. Fowke’s plans, which he presented to a parliamentary select committee in 1860, created a footprint for the site, and building works progressed rapidly, as and when funds were made available. After his death in 1865, Fowke was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Y. D. Scott (1822–1883), who completed the works according to Fowke’s plans, and then commenced a second phase of building works according to his own plans from 1869 until 1882.

The first permanent buildings constructed to Fowke’s designs on the South Kensington Museum site were the Sheepshanks Gallery (1856–61), for the display of a collection of paintings endowed to the museum, and the Vernon and Turner galleries (1858–59), to house a collection of paintings endowed to the National Gallery but lent to Cole’s museum. The need for additional and more suitable buildings to house the museum’s permanent collections led to the construction of a range of eastern galleries (1859–61), and the North and South courts (1860–62).

The next phase of Fowke’s architectural plan, carried out from 1862 onwards, saw the building of the northern range of the quadrangle to house the National Art Training School, a new lecture theatre, and refreshment rooms. This range formed the new public entrance to the museum and

<sup>8</sup> The Great Exhibition made a profit of £186,000 for the museum (Gibbs-Smith, p. 3).

<sup>9</sup> “‘South Kensington’ and the Science and Art Department”, in *Survey of London* (London: London County Council, 1900–), xxxviii: *South Kensington Museums Area*, ed. by F. H. W. Sheppard (1975), pp. 74–96, available online at *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol38/pp74-96>> [accessed 30 March 2020].

provided an opportunity for architectural embellishment. Built in red brick with terracotta decoration in a Lombardic Gothic style, these were the first buildings to be erected in the characteristic South Kensington style, which combined modern approaches to materials and techniques and took inspiration from Northern Italian Renaissance architecture.

Under the overall institutional direction of Cole, assisted by Superintendent of the Art Department Richard Redgrave (1804–1888), the decoration of these new buildings was entrusted to Godfrey Sykes (1824–1866), who was made chief decorative artist for the museum in 1859. Sykes recruited a group of assistant artists in 1863, including Francis Wollaston Moody (1824–1886), Reuben Townroe (1835–1911), and James Gamble (1837–1911), who had all trained at the Schools of Design.<sup>10</sup> The programme of decoration was principally carried out by these artists, although a handful of external artists and manufacturing firms were also involved, demonstrating a collaborative approach to design and production in which trained art teachers, artists-in-training, and manufacturing firms all played a role.

A number of stained glass windows were introduced to the building as part of internal decorations carried out in the 1860s and 1870s, beginning first with the North Staircase (constructed 1864–65; decorated 1866–68) and the West ‘Ceramic’ Staircase (constructed 1865 but not in use until 1868; decorated in stages 1866–78), followed by the Ceramic Gallery (constructed 1865–69; decorated 1868–72), Lecture Theatre landing (constructed 1864; decorated 1869–70), and, finally, the trio of refreshment rooms (constructed 1866; decorated 1867–78).

The decision to incorporate stained glass into the museum’s interior decorative scheme coincided with several events that shifted the museum’s focus to the burgeoning stained glass industry, for the first time since the 1840s. Although today best known for its medieval and Renaissance stained glass collections, the museum’s first acquisitions of stained glass were actually two contemporary panels of Continental stained glass purchased from the 1844 Exposition des produits de l’industrie in Paris.<sup>11</sup> These panels were made by leading royal manufactories in Sèvres and Munich, and provided model examples for British artisans to be used as teaching aids within the Schools of Design.<sup>12</sup> In spite of the numerous examples of British and

<sup>10</sup> Townroe and Gamble were both former students of Sykes at the Sheffield School of Art. Moody may have also been taught by Sykes. See Tim Barringer, *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 222–35.

<sup>11</sup> Susan Newell, ‘Collecting for the Nation: The Origins of the Glass Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Acquired c. 1840–60’, *Journal of the Glass Society*, 1 (2019), 47–63 (p. 52).

<sup>12</sup> A window depicting the Virgin and Child designed by Antoine Béranger and made at the Manufacture nationale de Sèvres (museum no. 58–1844); and a window depicting St Cecilia and St Agnes, made at the Königlichen Glasmalereianstalt, Munich (59–1844), now suffering major paint loss.

foreign stained glass displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851, no stained glass windows were selected for purchase by committee on behalf of the Schools of Design.<sup>13</sup> In fact, no further acquisitions of *contemporary* stained glass were made by the museum until the 1860s. The reawakened curatorial interest appears to have been directly stimulated by two events: firstly, the London International Exhibition of 1862, which demonstrated the considerable developments made in the design and production of British stained glass since 1851; and, secondly, an Exhibition of Stained Glass and Mosaics held at the South Kensington Museum in 1864.

At the London International Exhibition of 1862, large stained glass windows by British studios were mounted within the terminal walls of the main transepts of the exhibition building.<sup>14</sup> This display demonstrated the fast-expanding British stained glass industry, which provided much work for artists and freelance designers trained in the Schools of Design. This highly acclaimed display of stained glass must have been noticed by the architect of the International Exhibition building, Captain Fowke, who was also working on the South Kensington Museum building at this time.

Just two years after the International Exhibition, in 1864, the South Kensington Museum hosted its very own Exhibition of Stained Glass and Mosaics.<sup>15</sup> Organized by Richard Burchett (1815–1875), master of form at the Government School of Design, and artist Thomas Gambier Parry (1816–1888), who had been one of the judges for stained glass at the 1862 International Exhibition, this 1864 exhibition was part of a drive to showcase British developments in stained glass. It was especially significant in demonstrating a range of secular stained glass by the leading British stained glass studios of the time, such as Lavers & Barraud, Powell & Sons, and Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., and seems to have directly stimulated the desire to incorporate stained glass windows into the South Kensington Museum building.

### **Townroe's Trades window (designed 1864, made 1866)**

Immediately following this exhibition, in the summer of 1864, a competition was launched for the design of a large round-headed window, measuring almost 19 ft high by 11 ft wide (approx. 5.8 × 3.4 m), for the first

<sup>13</sup> Clive Wainwright and Charlotte Gere, 'The Making of the South Kensington Museum II: Collecting Modern Manufactures: 1851 and the Great Exhibition', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14 (2002), 25–44. Pugin, whose stained glass (made by Hardman & Co.) won a Prize Medal, sat on this committee. Yet it would seem that none of these exhibits were purchased because they were already destined for other settings. See Jasmine Allen, 'A. W. N. Pugin, Stained Glass and the 1851 Medieval Court', *True Principles*, 5.1 (2016), 11–28.

<sup>14</sup> Jasmine Allen, *Windows for the World: Stained Glass and the International Exhibitions, 1851–1900* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), pp. 52–56.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Gambier Parry and Richard Burchett, *A Catalogue of the Exhibition of Stained Glass, Mosaics, etc.* (London: HMSO, 1864).

landing of the North Staircase.<sup>16</sup> This staircase is now closed off to the public, but originally provided the main access to the upstairs picture galleries where, from 1865, the Raphael cartoons on loan from Queen Victoria were displayed. The selected theme for the window was a passage from Ecclesiasticus (also known as Wisdom of Sirach):

The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure; [...]  
 How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, [...]  
 So every carpenter and workmaster, that laboureth night and day; [...]  
 The smith also sitting by the anvil, and considering the iron work, [...]  
 So doth the potter sitting at his [...] wheel [...]  
 All these trust to their hands; and every one is wise in his work. Without these cannot a city be inhabited: and they shall not dwell where they will, nor go up and down: [...]  
 But they will maintain the state of the world, and all their desire is in the work of their hands. (Ecclesiasticus (KJV) 38. 24–25, 27–29, 31–32, 34)

The competition brief required entrants to submit a scale design, along with a full-size cartoon and a completed specimen panel (Physick, p. 89). Although the competition was open to ‘all nations’, no foreign entries materialized.<sup>17</sup> First, second, and one of the joint third prizes were all awarded to members of the South Kensington Department.<sup>18</sup> Reuben Townroe won the competition, Matthew Elden (1839–1885) came second, and the consolation prize worth £10 was jointly awarded to James Gamble and Alfred Hassam (1842–1869).<sup>19</sup>

The stained glass window made to Townroe’s winning design was destroyed in the Blitz, but surviving black-and-white photographs and a drawing by John Watkins reveal the overall design and arrangement (*Fig. 2*).<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Townroe’s sample panel and a number of coloured full-scale cartoons for the lower portions of the window survive in the V&A Prints

<sup>16</sup> South Kensington Museum N.P.B. Board Minutes, 1864–1870 (12 July 1864), London, National Art Library (NAL), 86.CC.25, pp. 8–9.

<sup>17</sup> *Twelfth Report of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1865), pp. 8–10.

<sup>18</sup> The judges were Earl Somers, Lord Elcho, Beresford Hope, Gambier Parry, D. Seymour, Capt. Fowke, Mr Stirling, Mr Digby Wyatt, Layard, and Redgrave. Board Minutes, 1864–1870 (12 July 1864), NAL, 86.CC.25, pp. 8–9.

<sup>19</sup> Gamble’s panel of a Ploughman submitted as part of the competition survives in the V&A (museum no. 230–1865). Hassam was a painter and stained glass designer employed by Heaton, Butler & Bayne in the early 1860s, but little is known about his artistic training.

<sup>20</sup> Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, pp. 76, 77. See also, Physick, pp. 88–89 (*Figs. 83, 85*).



Fig. 2: John Watkins, *The North Staircase*, c. 1876–81, pen and ink drawing, 430 × 293 mm, Victoria and Albert Museum, Prints & Drawings (8089K). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This drawing was one of twelve plates published in *A Series of Twelve Plates of Views and Decorative Details of the Museum from Drawings by John Watkins* (1889). It shows the first stained glass window to be installed as part of decorations of the South Kensington Museum, the Trades window designed by Reuben Townroe and made by Lavers & Barraud.

& Drawings collection, providing opportunity to study the design of individual portions of the window and determine the original colour scheme.<sup>21</sup>

Townroe's design divided the window into three main sections and combined ornamental and figurative elements. The upper section was emblazoned with royal emblems and mottos, the entwined initials of Victoria and Albert (V&A) and Science and Art (S&A). In the middle section were two large allegorical figures representing Science and Art, both crowned with

<sup>21</sup> There are eleven surviving cartoons in total for the lower sections of the window. V&A Prints & Drawings, museum nos. E.2985–1911 through to E.2992–1911.

laurels. On either side were scenes illustrating the educational function of the Schools of Design: teaching in a library and in a scientific laboratory. A biblical inscription running across the top and middle of the window ('Work while it is day for the night cometh when no man can work' (John (KJV) 9. 4)) addressed the working population who, thanks to the museum policy of opening in the evenings, could visit the museum after a working day.

In the lower part of the window were nine scenes arranged in three rows, comprising eight small square panels with a central circular medallion. The square panels depicted trade scenes inspired by the verses from Ecclesiasticus quoted above, which appeared in full in a painted inscription at the bottom of the window. From left to right, the first row of trade scenes depicted 'The Driving of Oxen', 'The Architect and Builder', and 'Two Men Talking about Bulls'. In the second row were 'The Sculptor', a central medallion with an angel representing 'Immutability' (the unchangeable wisdom of God), and 'The Painter at his Easel'. The final row depicted 'The Carpenter at his Bench', 'The Blacksmith at his Anvil', and 'The Potter at his Wheel'. These trade scenes emphasized the value of agricultural, industrial, and artistic labour, while reinforcing a hierarchy in which agriculture and architecture were prioritized and placed at the top. Beneath these were the fine arts of sculpture and painting, supported by the skilled practical crafts of carpentry, blacksmithing, and pottery below. The inclusion of the central medallion of an angel bearing a scroll with the word 'Immutability', against starry skies with the celestial sun and moon, stood for the unchanging nature of God and imbued the scene with both a theological and cosmological significance.

These three distinct sections of the window were united by neo-Renaissance ornament including scrollwork, garlands, and baroque pilasters, in keeping with the museum's architecture.<sup>22</sup> These figure groups and trade scenes were set within architectural niches and framed by columns; the window surface was treated like a wall surface and architectural details were painted to appear in relief. The *Illustrated London News* did not think much of the design or execution and described Townroe's window as 'a pseudo architectural framework of rather clumsy debased character [...]; a profusion of ornaments and emblems. Altogether, the effect is rather crude and poor, and the result can at best be regarded only as a not altogether unpromising experiment.'<sup>23</sup>

As examples of the complex relationship between art and manufacture, the windows for the South Kensington Museum reveal the separation that often existed between artistic design and material production, issues that have served to sideline stained glass within the art historical canon. Although the preparatory designs and full-scale working cartoons for the

<sup>22</sup> It was specified that the window's architectural decorations should be Italian Renaissance in character. Board Minutes, 1864–1870 (12 July 1864), NAL, 86.CC.25, pp. 8–9.

<sup>23</sup> 'Fine Arts — Additions to the South Kensington Museum Buildings', *Illustrated London News*, 17 October 1868, p. 383.

Trades window were drawn and coloured by Townroe, the window was made in the workshop of Lavers & Barraud in Covent Garden and cost twenty-six shillings per square foot.<sup>24</sup> A letter from the Lavers & Barraud office to the Department specified that

we take it for granted that as an artist, Mr. Townroe will enlarge his sketch himself, and supply us with the cartoons, with colours arranged upon them — if he does not do so, it will hardly be his window, and the cost will be increased by 10/- per foot. (quoted in Physick, p. 90)

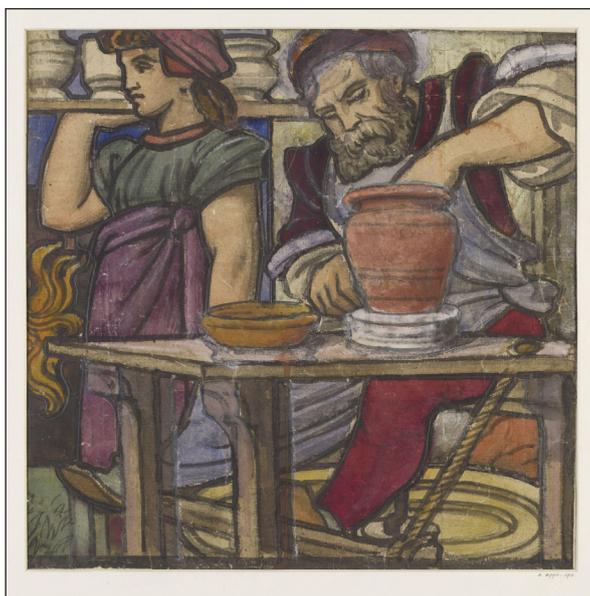
We can infer from this that Townroe had little, and perhaps no, prior experience in this medium, and that the artists and craftsmen at Lavers & Barraud, a successful firm specializing in stained glass, wanted to ensure that their work was costed appropriately.

Comparison of the trial panel submitted by Townroe to the competition illustrating *The Potter at his Wheel* (Fig. 3) with the surviving colour cartoon (Fig. 4) reveals Townroe's inexperience in designing for stained



*Fig. 3:* Reuben Townroe (designer), Lavers & Barraud (maker), *The Potter at his Wheel*, 1864, stained glass panel, 18 × 18.5 in., Victoria and Albert Museum (228–1865). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This is a sample panel for the Trades window, which may have been exhibited at the 1864 Exhibition of Stained Glass and Mosaics held at the South Kensington Museum.

<sup>24</sup> The estimate was approved on 9 June 1866. Board Minutes, 1864–1870, NAL, 86.CC.25.



*Fig. 4:* Reuben Townroe, *The Potter*, c. 1864, watercolour on paper, 16.25 × 15.88 in., Victoria and Albert Museum, Prints & Drawings (E.2990–1911). © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This drawing appears to be a cartoon for the stained glass panel depicting the Potter in the Trades window.

glass. Several changes were made when translating the design into coloured glass to make the process of selecting, cutting, arranging, and leading up the pieces of glass easier, as well as to simplify the overall design. For example, in the cartoon, the left-hand strap of the potter's white apron is visible over his red smock, but the strap was omitted from the sample panel because it would have required the use of three pieces of coloured glass (ruby, white, ruby) rather than just one (ruby). The potter's bench was also adapted and repositioned to make the scene less overcrowded, the objects on the bench were reordered, and a pair of callipers was inserted to fill a subsequent gap. The pots on the shelf in the background were also simplified in shape, and the colours of the assistant's garments and potter's hat were altered to adjust the balance of colour.

#### **Moody's Union of Science and Art window (1866)**

While the Trades window was being made, designs for a second, slightly smaller stained glass window (4 × 2 m) to be installed at the foot of the North Staircase were in progress.<sup>25</sup> This window depicting allegorical figures

<sup>25</sup> An estimate for the window (£110) was approved on 9 June 1866. Board Minutes, 1864–1870, NAL, 86.CC.25.

represents the Union of Science and Art, overseen by Wisdom.<sup>26</sup> It was designed in-house by another member of the South Kensington Museum team, Frank Wollaston Moody, and made at James Powell & Sons' studio in London in 1866.<sup>27</sup> This window survives intact in good condition in the museum store (*Fig. 5*), and the original colour cartoons for the window also survive in a fragile state.<sup>28</sup>

The subject of this window was again inspired by a religious passage. A Latin inscription running around the border of the window contains selected verses from the Book of Proverbs concerning the teaching of wisdom:

EGO SAPIENTIA HABITO IN CONSILIO ET ERUDITIS  
 INTERSUM COGITATIONIBUS [...]  
 PER ME REGES REGNANT ET LEGUM CONDITORES  
 JUSTA DECERNUNT  
 PER ME PRINCIPES IMPERANT ET POTENTES  
 DECERNUNT JUSTITIAM  
 NUNC ERGO [...] AUDITE ME BEATI QUI CUSTODIUNT  
 VIAS MEAS  
 EGO DILIGENTES ME DILIGO ET QUI MANE  
 VIGILANT AD ME INVENIENT ME. (Vulgate)

I, wisdom, dwell in counsel, and am present in learned thoughts, [...]  
 By me kings reign, and lawgivers decree just things; [...]  
 By me princes rule, and the mighty decree justice; [...]  
 Now, therefore, [...] hear me: blessed are they that keep my ways;  
 I love them that love me: and they that in the morning early watch for me, shall find me. (Proverbs (Douay-Rheims) 8. 12, 15, 16, 32, 17)

In the upper part of the window, Wisdom is shown enthroned on a cloud, holding a book and a flaming torch. Small groups of workmen are gathered at either side of her feet, seated on steps behind balustrades, waiting for her guidance. In the centre, figures representing Science and Art join hands

<sup>26</sup> Physick mentions this window but does not seem to have known it survived (p. 90).

<sup>27</sup> Moody also designed the east and west windows for St Botolph's Church, Bishopsgate, London, made by Powell & Sons (1869). The east window remains *in situ*, but an IRA bomb destroyed the west window (illustrated in the *Building News*, 27 June 1877, p. 683) in 1993. See Caroline Swash, *The 100 Best Stained Glass Sites in London* (Malvern: Malvern Arts Press, 2016), pp. 146–47.

<sup>28</sup> The cartoon for Wisdom Enthroned (museum no. D.60–1905) can be viewed at <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O135473/knowledge-enthroned-design-for-stained-unknown/>> [accessed 31 March 2020].



Fig. 5: Francis Wollaston Moody (designer), Powell & Sons (maker), *The Union of Art and Science*, c. 1866, stained glass panel (NCOL.7–2012, NCOL.8–2012, NCOL.9–2012) © Victoria and Albert Museum, London. This window, recently rediscovered in store, was originally located at the foot of the North Staircase.

and exchange a sceptre and a flaming torch. Scenes in the lower section of the window illustrate the fictile arts, architecture, and metalworking. In the first, a group of potters are depicted in their studio, with a potter at his wheel in the foreground. In the second, an architect draws up plans while construction work takes place in the background, and in the third and final scene, a blacksmith is shown striking his anvil.

Like Townroe's design, this also appears to have been Moody's first foray into designing for stained glass. When the window was exhibited in Paris at the 1867 Exposition universelle, critics drew attention to the 'heavy and unpleasant figures'.<sup>29</sup> Judging from the painting style, the thick trace lines, and heavy modelling of the figures (notably the faces, hands, legs, and feet), Moody may have had a hand in painting the glass himself at Powell & Sons' Whitefriars studio.

Both Townroe's and Moody's windows for the North Staircase depicted practical arts that embodied the union of Science and Art and emphasized their value (under the guidance of Wisdom) to mankind. In doing so, they symbolized the educational role of the South Kensington Museum and its Central Training School and associated Schools of Design located across the country. These themes were reinforced by didactic religious texts, demonstrating the convergence of ecclesiastical and secular themes in nineteenth-century secular stained glass.

### A pair of windows for the Ceramic Staircase

The West, or Ceramic Staircase, which remains accessible to the public, is well known for its elaborate decoration, with walls and ceilings adorned in ceramic decorations which included majolica (polychrome glazed earthenware) mouldings, painted vitrified ceramic tiles (a mixture of fresco, ceramic painting, and mosaic), stained glass, and mosaics.<sup>30</sup> The overall decorative scheme was devised by Moody, who designed two stained glass windows for the first landing, which were installed in 1872 and 1873 and removed in 1912 under the instruction of Sir Cecil Harcourt-Smith, director of the V&A from 1909 to 1924 (Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, p. 65).

<sup>29</sup> T. Gambier Parry, 'Report on Painting on Glass — (Class 16)', in *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition 1867*, 5 vols (London: HMSO, 1868), II, 377–90 (p. 382).

<sup>30</sup> For an excellent interpretation of the Ceramic Staircase, see Charlotte Drew, 'The Ceramic Staircase: Minton and the Reinvention of Luca della Robbia at the South Kensington Museum', *The Minton Archive* <<http://www.themintonarchive.org.uk/in-depth-the-ceramic-staircase/>> [accessed 31 March 2020].

Parts of these windows survive in a broken and fragile state in store.<sup>31</sup> The windows on the theme of Science and Art were conceived as a pair and displayed side by side. The first represented Art and featured portraits of Rubens, Rembrandt, Titian, Michelangelo, Raphael, Palissy, Palladio, and Cellini.<sup>32</sup> The second window represented Science and portrayed Newton, Leibniz, Copernicus, Galileo, Euclid, Archimedes, Priestley, Wollaston, and Watt.<sup>33</sup> Moody's full-scale cartoons were drawn first onto muslin and painted by a group of former pupils of Schools of Design working under Moody's supervision, before the design was transferred onto glass, fired, and leaded at Powell & Sons.<sup>34</sup>

### The Ceramic Gallery

The Ceramic Staircase led to the Ceramic Gallery on the first floor, where a series of fifteen stained glass windows (each of two lights and comprising four panels) depicting the history of the ceramic arts were installed between 1869 and 1871.<sup>35</sup> These windows were designed by William Bell Scott (1811–1890), a former master (1844–64) of the Newcastle School of Design, one of the regional branches of schools established under Cole. Bell Scott's windows for the Ceramic Gallery were the only stained glass windows installed in a museum gallery. They illustrated the history of ceramic art in ancient Chinese, Egyptian, Indian, Persian, Greek, and Etruscan civilizations, followed by Moorish Spain and subsequent European developments in Italy (allocated three windows), the Low Countries, Dresden, Palissy, and Sèvres. The final three windows were devoted to English wares, culminating in Wedgwood. As one contemporary

<sup>31</sup> Four of the six panels survive in store (there were three panels in each window), although these are in poor condition with parts missing (museum nos. NCOL.10-2012, NCOL.11-2012, NCOL.12, and NCOL.13). Correspondence with Sherrie Eatman and Terry Bloxham, V&A Museum, June 2019.

<sup>32</sup> The illustration in *Physick*, p. 90 (*Fig. 87*) is incorrectly labelled as part of the window at the foot of the North Staircase, but this illustration actually depicts one of the two windows designed by Moody for the West 'Ceramic' Staircase.

<sup>33</sup> *Decorations of the South Kensington Museum 1862–1874* (London: South Kensington Museum, 1875), p. 13.

<sup>34</sup> The group working at South Kensington under Moody following Sykes's death in February 1866 included William Wise, assisted by Owen Gibbons, E. Wormleighton, and H. W. Foster. Powell & Sons received £174 8s. 8d. for these two windows. Board Minutes, 1864–1870 (21 July 1868), NAL, 86.CC.25, p. 94.

<sup>35</sup> Bryant states there were fourteen windows along the north side of the gallery (*Designing the V&A*, p. 66), but fifteen windows are documented in a detailed contemporary account. See Moncure Daniel Conway, 'The South Kensington Museum', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, September 1875, pp. 486–503.

noted, the windows in the Ceramic Gallery acted as ‘a frame around the objects whose history they tell’.<sup>36</sup>

In order not to detract from the objects on display, these windows were not made using coloured pot metal glass but conceived and executed entirely in painted grisaille (or ‘graffito’ as Bell Scott called it) (Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, p. 68). Cole instructed that they ‘should be treated with lines like the old German and Italian engravings’.<sup>37</sup> The figurative scenes were painted in monochrome onto single sheets of Hartley’s Rolled Plate glass (a machine-rolled glass) using vitreous pigment and burnt umber ground in silica, and silver stain was applied at the edges to create a yellow frame around each scene. Bell Scott’s choice of Hartley’s of Sunderland as the supplier for this glass demonstrated his strong connections with the North-East.<sup>38</sup> Hartley’s Rolled Plate was selected deliberately for its textured surface, which obscured the view through the windows, preventing visitors from looking onto the kitchens, and also reduced the amount of sunlight entering the gallery.<sup>39</sup> These windows appear to have been removed from the Ceramic Gallery between 1910 and 1920 and most panels, recently rediscovered in store, have survived.

### Lecture Theatre staircases

At the same time as he was working on the Ceramic Gallery windows, Bell Scott was also working on a scheme of decorative windows for the landing of the two staircases leading from the Ceramic Gallery to the Lecture Theatre, which were executed in a similar style on Hartley’s Rolled Plate glass, in 1869 and 1870. The two rectangular windows on either staircase landing were each filled with six decorative rectangular panels, making a total of twenty-four individual glass panels across all four windows.<sup>40</sup> Twenty-two of the panels from the Lecture Theatre staircase landings survive, and in 2012 were reinstated in a manner suggestive of their original arrangement (Eatman).

The panels on the East Staircase represented scenes from the lives of medieval and Renaissance artists, and those on the West illustrated various

<sup>36</sup> Moncure Daniel Conway, *Travels in South Kensington* (London: Trübner, 1882), p. 52.

<sup>37</sup> South Kensington Museum N.P.B. Board Minutes, 1865–1873 (6 November 1869), NAL, 86.CC.24, p. 28.

<sup>38</sup> Susan Newell, ‘The Hartley Glassmaking Inheritance in Sunderland: A Brief History’, *Journal of the Glass Association*, 6 (2001), 48–56.

<sup>39</sup> *Autobiographical Notes of the Life of William Bell Scott*, ed. by W. Minto, 2 vols (London: Osgood, McIlvaine, 1892), II, 107–08, 170.

<sup>40</sup> Bell Scott’s preparation of the designs was carried out for £130. Board Minutes, 1865–1873 (15 January 1870), NAL, 86.CC.24, p. 29.

classical subjects associated with art, industry, and agriculture, including Pygmalion, Vulcan, and Orpheus. Bell Scott intended for these windows to be part of a wider decorative scheme with painted murals on the walls of the staircase and landing, but the remaining decorations were not commissioned, due to budget cuts (Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, pp. 70–71). Nevertheless, Bell Scott's Ceramic Gallery and Lecture Theatre staircase landing windows reveal how the museum's own decorative programme showcased and encouraged artistic experiments with affordable mass-produced glass materials typically associated with horticultural buildings, while demonstrating the decorative and practical uses of such glazing in windows.

### The refreshment rooms

The trio of refreshment rooms, first opened to the public in 1868 and reopened following restoration in the 1970s, are the only parts of the museum to have retained almost complete original glazing schemes. The three refreshment rooms include the large central refreshment room (today known as the Gamble Room, opened in 1867, and decorated between 1867 and 1875), and two side rooms: the Green Dining Room or 'Morris Room' (largely decorated 1865–68) to the west, and the Grill or 'Poynter' Room (decorated 1868–73) to the east. For the first time, external artists were invited to carry out some of the internal decorative work in these refreshment spaces, a decision that may have been influenced by the sudden death of Sykes in 1866. Yet these busy spaces devoted to public comfort and modern convenience also presented an opportunity for the museum to bring in leading contemporary decorative artists. Each room warrants proper study in its own right but, for our present purposes, will only be given brief mention in the context of the other (now lost or absent) stained glass windows designed and made for the building.

The Morris Room, decorated by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., is one of the earliest examples of this firm's design for a secular interior. The delicate decorative rectangular stained windows feature garland weavers designed by Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1898) against a decorative patterned background of bullseyes, as conceived by Philip Webb (1831–1915).<sup>41</sup> The Poynter Room, or Dutch Kitchen, was the second-class dining room. Edward J. Poynter (1836–1919) was invited to tender for the decoration of this room in November 1865 although it was not completed until 1874. Poynter designed the stained glass here in an Aesthetic style and it was made by London interior decorating firm Crace & Sons. The eastern

<sup>41</sup> Morris & Co.'s estimate for the glazing was £272. Board Minutes, 1864–1870 (10 October 1866), NAL, 86.CC.25, p. 43.

window continues the theme of the seasons, while that in the north wall (a reproduction made in 1974) is based on Aesop's fable of the Fox and the Crow.

The overall decorative scheme of the central Gamble Room, on the theme of eating and drinking, was begun by Sykes and completed by Gamble and Townroe. The series of five stained glass windows in this room was designed by Gamble and the glass was also painted by him, but cut, fired, and leaded up at Powell & Sons.<sup>42</sup> The windows were installed gradually between 1867 and 1875, and are the only windows in the refreshment rooms to follow the South Kensington style.<sup>43</sup> They contain several small figurative scenes with larger allegorical figures in the centre, together with inscriptions on the theme of dining from various literary and biblical sources. Renaissance ornamental devices and architectural projections unite these disparate elements. Above and in between the windows is an extensive ceramic frieze running around the room showing putti harvesting, dining, and reading newspapers. Four iron columns encased in majolica ornament, made by Minton, Hollins & Co., dominate the room. The decoration also served a practical purpose: the ceramic tiles covering every wall surface improved standards of hygiene, and the stained glass windows blocked diners' views of the unsightly exterior kitchens, icehouse, and other working buildings (Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, p. 56).

### Showcasing the Schools of Design nationally and internationally

The South Kensington Museum is inseparably associated with the Schools of Art, or rather with the National Art Training School, for the decorations of the buildings are, to a great extent, the work of men whose skill was developed by its teaching.<sup>44</sup>

Following the death of Sykes in February 1866, the Department reported the loss of a man with 'an energy and untiring industry, [...] [who] worked on almost to the day of his death, founding, it may be hoped, a new school of decorative art'.<sup>45</sup> The decoration of the South Kensington Museum continued under Moody and his associates, many of whom were former pupils of Sykes.

<sup>42</sup> Parts of the windows in the Gamble Room are modern replacements (following damage sustained in the Second World War); Box 81 (194), NAL, A29.5.1924.

<sup>43</sup> *Twenty-Second Report of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1875), p. 391.

<sup>44</sup> John C. L. Sparkes, *Schools of Art: Their Origin, History, Work, and Influence* (London: Clowes, 1884), p. 114.

<sup>45</sup> *Thirteenth Report of the Science and Art Department of the Committee of Council on Education* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1866), pp. xiii–xiv.

The stained glass windows designed and made for the South Kensington Museum represent the work of a group of individual artists who had trained in the Schools of Design and then found employment within them. Although not conceived as one harmonious scheme, these windows presented cohesive ideas and shared a language of allegory, institutional symbols, religious quotations, and neo-Renaissance ornament. Those windows designed in-house under Sykes's direction were unified in their themes as well as in their division of space and use of colour and ornament, in what might be described as a South Kensington house style, which was in keeping with the wider decorative programme and the Lombardic Gothic style of the museum buildings.

The names of Townroe, Gamble, Moody, and Bell Scott do not appear in the canon of nineteenth-century stained glass, yet their artistic training, careers, and approaches to stained glass design were products of the Schools of Design's teaching system and typical of numerous artist-designers working in this period. The system of teaching devised by Redgrave focused on drawing techniques, and was divided into stages: Drawing (stages 1–10), Painting (11–17), Modelling (18–21), and then Elementary and Advanced Design (22–23).<sup>46</sup> Artisans were trained to produce ornamental and figurative designs in varying styles for many different media, as evidenced in the variety of works designed and executed for the South Kensington Museum. Yet, while artists were versatile designers, they lacked the specialist knowledge and skills required for the particular medium of stained glass. These artists did not have the skills or facilities to cut, paint, fire, and lead their own glass at South Kensington and were largely ignorant of the material processes involved. In this they were not alone; many stained glass designers did not engage directly with the craft of making stained glass windows, leaving their designs to be realized by craftsmen within large stained glass firms who were used to working in glass and lead. The Department's aim to improve artistic education as applied to industry was exemplified in the South Kensington Museum's stained glass windows, which were the result of successful collaborations between artist-designers and craftsmen within manufacturing firms.

In 1867 an opportunity was presented for the Department of Science and Art to further promote the national and provincial Schools of Design as a model for artistic education across the world at the Exposition universelle in Paris. Four windows made for the South Kensington Museum were sent to Paris as part of a large display organized by the Department. The selected windows included the two North Staircase windows (Townroe's Trades window made by Lavers & Barraud, and Moody's Union of Science

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<sup>46</sup> Anthony Burton, 'Richard Redgrave as Art Educator, Museum Official and Design Theorist', in *Richard Redgrave 1804–1888*, ed. by Susan P. Casteras and Ronald Parkinson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 48–70.

and Art made by Powell & Sons), one of the windows from the Ceramic Staircase (Art, designed by Moody and made by Powell & Sons), and a window for the central refreshment room on the theme of Temperance (designed by Gamble and made by Powell & Sons). All four windows were displayed in the grand vestibule of the main elliptical Palais de l'industrie.<sup>47</sup>

The Department's display in Paris raised the international profile of the Schools. In an article published in the *Gazette des beaux-arts* in 1867, French critic Paul Allard (1841–1916) acknowledged the role of the South Kensington Museum in artistic education and its influence in improving British art and industry. He described the Department as 'an army arranged for battle, and ready to advance from every side at the first signal'.<sup>48</sup> Édouard Didron (1836–1902), stained glass artist and nephew of archaeologist Adolphe Napoléon Didron (1806–1867), may have had these windows in mind when he also remarked that 'the union of Science and Art is a favourite topic for our neighbours and must be singularly developed on the crossings, the vaults, the walls and the tiles of their religious and civil buildings'.<sup>49</sup>

## Conclusion

The South Kensington Museum entered a difficult period in the 1870s when responsibility for the buildings was transferred to the Office of Works. After Cole's resignation in 1873 over funding cuts, the programme of decoration slowed down and by 1876 had come to a halt. By the early 1880s, the core team involved in the building's decoration was no longer there.<sup>50</sup> Pragmatic decisions were taken in the meantime as funding dwindled. For example, in 1873 students in the Department executed a series of designs by Moody intended for windows in the Cast Courts as painted translucent blinds rather than stained glass, in the hope that these blinds could be used

<sup>47</sup> For reviews of these windows, see Parry, 'Report on Painting on Glass', p. 382; Francis Kirchhoff, 'Glass Painting', in *Reports of Artisans Selected by a Committee Appointed by the Council of the Society of Arts to Visit the Paris Universal Exhibition, 1867* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1867), pp. 70–83 (p. 82); and Édouard Didron, *Les vitraux à l'exposition universelle de 1867* (Paris: Didron, 1868), p. 56.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Allard, 'L'Art-Department et l'enseignement du dessin dans les écoles anglaises', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 23 (1867), 393–418: 'Une armée rangée en bataille, et prête à se porter de toutes parts au premier signal' (p. 411). Translations from the French are the author's own.

<sup>49</sup> 'L'union de la Science et de l'Art est un thème favori pour nos voisins et doit être singulièrement développé sur les croisées, les voûtes, les murs et le dallage de leurs édifices religieux et civils' (Didron, p. 56).

<sup>50</sup> Scott was dismissed in 1882, and Townroe resigned the same year in protest at his lack of payment. Moody left in 1883.

as cartoons for actual stained glass at a later date.<sup>51</sup> However, the buildings were left unfinished until a competition launched in 1891 led to the completion of the museum building by Aston Webb (1849–1930), and in 1909 the museum reopened as the Victoria and Albert Museum. Various extensions have been added to the building since, although no further stained glass windows have been designed or commissioned for the buildings.

Yet, in the nineteenth century, stained glass was a vital part of the original decorative scheme of the museum building. The stained glass windows designed and made especially for the South Kensington Museum are indicative of a rich and underexplored heritage of nineteenth-century stained glass in secular contexts. These windows reflected the museum's collection and its core purpose as a national institution for the promotion of artistic and technical education. The museum building, as visitors experience it today, is incomplete without them.

The removal of many of the windows in the twentieth century reminds us how vulnerable decorative architectural features, such as stained glass windows, are to changes in taste or reordering. These actions also demonstrated a lack of regard for ornamental or decorative glazing, which formed a considerable proportion of the stained glass produced in the nineteenth century. Studies of ornamental art formed the basis of teachings at the Schools of Design, and in his 1873 *Lectures and Lessons on Art*, Moody promoted ornamental art, or 'art without subject', and praised the South Kensington Museum, noting 'we have here a profusion of works in every conceivable material of the highest excellence'.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, another early name for the museum was the 'Museum of Ornamental Art'.

The reinstatement of portions of the Lecture Theatre landing windows in the last decade is an encouraging sign that more of the stained glass windows that once adorned this prestigious building might eventually be returned. In the meantime, further appreciation of this unique glazing programme and a more sophisticated understanding of the South Kensington style, as well as of nineteenth-century approaches to allegory, ornament, and symbolism, may also help us to reappraise and appreciate other secular glazing schemes, which have been largely forgotten in our histories of the medium.

<sup>51</sup> One of Moody's designs for a painted blind depicting Mansart for a window within the Cast Courts survives in the V&A Prints & Drawings collection (museum no. 75009). Illustrated in Bryant, *Designing the V&A* (Fig. 182); and see <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1092651/design-for-painted-window-blind-photograph-department-of-science/>> [accessed 4 April 2020].

<sup>52</sup> F. W. Moody, *Lectures and Lessons on Art* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1873), p. 56.