



The South Window, Foxley Church The Luce Memorial Window

The artist who designed, and probably painted, the window was **Louis B. Davis (1861-1941)**. Davis attended Abingdon School where the archivist has built up an impressive file on him. He then went on to the South Kensington Schools (today's Victoria and Albert Museum) and his first known work is in the form of illustrations for *The English Illustrated Magazine* in the 1880s. By the early 1890s Davis was living at Dorking in Surrey where he began working in stained glass in collaboration with Christopher Whall, the leading figure in English stained glass at the turn of the 20th century. Later in the 1890s Davis moved to Pinner in Middlesex, where his house included a cartooning studio. One of Davis's earliest stained glass commissions was for the east window of Littlemore Church, Oxford (c.1896); others are at Kelvedon Church, Essex, and Wynyards Park, Co. Durham. In the early 1900's Davis began a long collaboration with the firm of James Powell & Sons of Whitefriars who were glass manufacturers as well as stained glass window makers. Exploiting the range of superbly coloured and textured glass produced by Powell's – some of it made specially to Davis's requirements he designed a number of important windows for churches in Scotland. The St Margaret Window in Paisley Abbey, the heraldic windows of the Thistle Chapel in St. Giles', Edinburgh, and the Choir windows of Dunblane Cathedral are perhaps the best known of these. They were painted, under Davis's supervision, by Thomas Cowell, one of Powell's most skilful glass painters. As well as Davis's Scottish work, mostly commissioned through the architect Sir Robert Lorimer, there were many windows for churches in England, including one in the chapel at Cheltenham College. The most representative series, spanning the first thirty or so years of the 20th century, is in Anselm's Church at Hatch End, Middlesex, a short distance from the artist's home at Pinner. During the First World War, Davis was seriously disabled by the effects of a domestic accident with a gas fire when gas poisoning limited his powers of speech but he continued to design stained glass in the inter-war years. Two of his later windows are at Rockbeare Church, Devon and St. John's Church Perth.

The Luce Memorial Window:

The window is in memory of Walter Cecil Luce, youngest son of Colonel Charles Luce, churchwarden of Foxley Church in the 1900s and first mayor of Malmesbury. Walter, born 27th November 1873, died of typhoid while on active service during the second Anglo-Boer War. He was a lieutenant of the Volunteer Service Company of the Wiltshire Regiment. He died at Springfontein in South Africa on 11th February 1901. He is also commemorated in Salisbury Cathedral.

This window depicts, in the centre light, the Archangel Michael as the captain of the Angelic Host. The Cross of St. George is used here as a general symbol of Christianity rather than a specific reference to England's patron. In the side lights are other members of the Angelic Host, each shown with one of the symbolic attributes described in the Biblical writings on the Heavenly Hierarchy or in later writings such as those by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. The army of youthful angels was clearly thought an appropriate subject with which to commemorate a young soldier.

At the bottom of the window is a scene of Malmesbury Abbey and also Daniel's Well, near Halcombe Hall, the Luce family home (now Malmesbury Manor). The family also owned the local Brewery near Daniel's Well.

The L.D. Monogram was invariably used by Louis Davis to sign both his illustrations and his stained glass windows.

OPC Source: Foxley Church