

Three of the four lower panes of glass are recorded as having been made in 1663 for £1.18s. Robert Mackarell is recorded as having received five shillings for 'carrying the glass to London and back again and for calling on the glass painter to make them in haste'.

The lower four panes show the arms of Charles II; Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, High Steward in the reign of Charles I; the arms of the Hatton family, three of whom were Recorders between 1638 and 1676 and the arms of William Lord Hastings, Lord High Chamberlain, who witnessed the sealing of Edward IV's charter to Kingston in 1481.

'Gaderyngs' and Gillyflowers

The old Kingston maypole and Morris dances were revived in 1911 to commemorate the coronation of Kings George V and Queen Mary. This commemorative window shows some of the characters who appeared in the 'Kyngham' games. These were plays and dances known to have been performed in Kingston in the 15th and 16th Centuries. Other games were also held with different characters including the Robin Hood games. Money was collected in 'gaderynges' to pay for expenses with profits going to the repair of the church. Kingston's Churchwardens' accounts, surviving from the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII, record expenses for food and costumes. For example, in 1509 4d was paid for 'mete and drynke for the mores dausers on Corpus Christi day' and in 1510 25s 7d was paid for 'Robyn Hodes cote and for litell Johnys cote and for the freres cote'.

The window is a copy of an old window which used to be in Betley Hall, Staffordshire.

The figures in the window, possibly copied from an engraving by the Flemish artist, Israel von Mecheln, are the Fool, the Moor, the Franklin (freeman who owned land but not a noble), the Minstrel, the King of May, the Lover (wearing a gillyflower on his forehead), the Disard (jester), the Queen of May and the Friar.



The King of May

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The Stained Glass Windows in Kingston Museum



The stained glass windows in Kingston Museum were once in the old Town Hall—now the Market House. They were moved to the Museum after the new Guildhall was built in 1935. The windows were designed by Dr W E St Lawrence Finny, keen local historian and seven-times mayor of Kingston. He was advised by Heaton Butler and Bayne of London.

Heralds and Heraldry

All of the windows include heraldic shields and coats of arms. Heraldry originated in the Middle Ages to mark noble families and individuals. Particular heraldic symbols were granted to describe the personal characteristics of the bearer's ancestry. Symbols were also chosen as puns on the bearer's name; for example, the Swinford family bore arms showing swine's heads.

The heralds of the early Middle Ages not only granted arms to living noblemen and noble women but also to mythical and historical figures. These are known as 'apocryphal' arms'. The arms of the Anglo-Saxon kings shown in the windows were never borne by the Kings themselves, but were granted later, as heraldry developed. Today arms are granted to worthy individuals by the Kings of Arms at the College of Arms with the assent of the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshall of England.

Follow the windows clockwise around the gallery, beginning with the window directly above the shop

Saints and Martyrs

This window commemorates the 1000th anniversary of the coronation of King Edward the Elder. It bears the arms of King Edward VII, as well as the apocryphal arms of the seven Anglo-Saxon kings thought to have been crowned in Kingston. The arms of Edward the Martyr are identical to those of Edward the Confessor; both kings were venerated as saints after their deaths. The design for these arms was taken from a coin issued during the reign of Edward the Confessor.

King Athelstan

Presented to the Town Hall by Dr Finny in 1924, this window commemorates the 1000th anniversary of the succession of King Athelstan. The greatest of the monarchs crowned in Kingston, Athelstan completed the work of his grandfather, Alfred the Great, by uniting the warring Kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England for the first time.

First Charter

Kingston was granted its first charter by King John in 1200. This window, unveiled a year early, commemorates the 700th anniversary of the event. Funded by public subscription, it was unveiled by William Court Gully MP, Speaker of the House of Commons and first Honorary Freeman of Kingston. The window also bears the arms of local dignitaries, including the Duke of Cambridge, an important landowner, the Borough Recorder, Charles Bardswell, the High Steward, Henry Lord Thring and Dr Finny himself.

The four trading companies named on the window controlled all business in Kingston until the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. The companies were the Mercers (fabric traders), the Butchers, the Cordwainers (shoemakers) and the Woollen Drapers. The Monks of Merton Abbey, who are also named on the window, held the living of All Saints' Church.

A copy of the 'Alfred Jewel', made for King Alfred, is shown in the centre of the window.

Royal Borough

In 1927, King George V confirmed the title 'Royal' to the Borough of Kingston. This commemorative window was presented to the Town Hall by Dr Finny. It shows Kingston's arms and the Corporation Seal confirmed by a Charter of 1481. The design of the arms derives from the three fisheries recorded in Kingston at the time of the Domesday Survey.



'Severall Kings'

Dr Finny designed this window to incorporate 17th century glass which had originally come from the Tudor Guildhall. This stood on the same site as the Town Hall of 1840, today's Market House.

The Chamberlains' accounts record that the four upper panes were made in 1618 for £14.10s by William Delaney. They show the arms of James I (VI of Scotland), his Queen, Anne of Denmark and the arms of the Borough of Kingston. They also show part of the arms of Charles I as Prince of Wales. The arms of James I are surrounded by 'Armes of the Severall Kings that have aunciently reigned within his nowe dominions'.