

Women in the windows

The St Nicholas Window (7)

– the east window of the south Aisle

Powerful women feature as human figures and in the symbols in this window.

This was one of the oldest windows in the church. A lot of the original glass was lost when it was repaired in the 1800s.

Who are the women in the window?

The kneeling women were probably donors, wealthy York women who paid for the window. The standing female figure is Our Lady (Mary, mother of Jesus). She is dressed in purple which is unusual for images of Mary. We more often see her wearing blue robes.



Eleanor effigy at Westminster Abbey

What other women are here?

Look for the castles (Castile) and the covered cups in the border running round the middle panels. These are the symbols of Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I. The legend is that she sucked the poison from a snake bite on his foot and saved his life.

Did you know...?

Eleanor was well-educated, and a successful businesswoman who managed her own fortune. As queen, she encouraged literature, the arts and garden design.



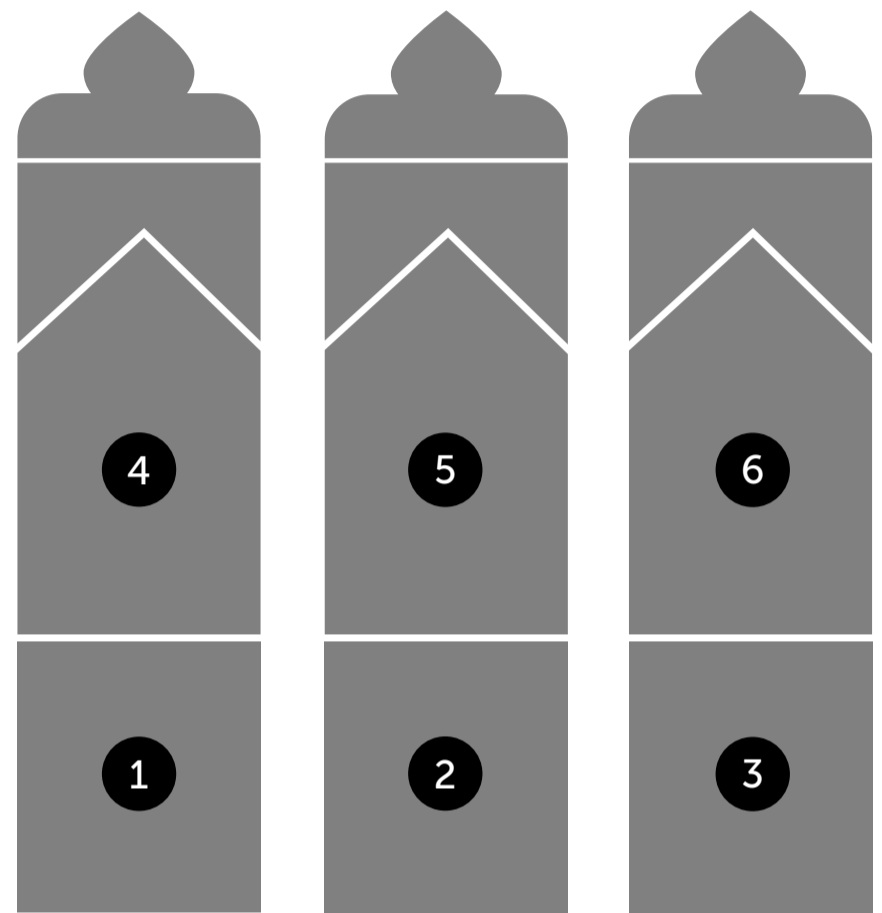
Mix and match?

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Some of the figures in this window are from the original 1300s window. The rest are from later repairs to the window over the centuries. Discover the original features that remain.

1. This image of Our Lady (Mary) is from the original window.
2. The Crucifixion (Jesus Christ on the Cross).
3. St John the Evangelist (gospel-writer). This is another figure from the 1300s. At this time St John and Our Lady were often shown in art on either side of Christ on the Cross. They were the only people to stay by the cross when Christ died.
4. The kneeling lady here was probably a donor. Her figure is from the original window.
5. Jesus Christ holding the cup of sorrow in the Garden of Gethsemane. This is a scene from just after the Last Supper, before the Crucifixion.
6. Another kneeling lady donor from the original window.



Close up of the bird in the border

Look for... the long-beaked bird on the oak leaf border. This triangular piece of glass may be from the 1600s. It was possibly part of another window.

