



## Stained glass fragment, head of an apostle or saint

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**Not on display**

**Title/Description:** Stained glass fragment, head of an apostle or saint

**Born:** 1340 - 1360

**Object Type:** Stained glass

**Materials:** Lead, Painted glass

**Measurements:** h. 133 x w. 310 x d. 15 mm

**Accession Number:** 758

**Historic Period:** 14th century

**Production Place:** Britain, England, Europe, Norwich

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This small fragment showing a male bearded head, with a halo, probably represents an apostle, or possibly the figure of St Paul, who would originally have held a sword and is often seen as a bald bearded man (see St Andrew's, Compton Bishop, Somerset for example). Sets of the apostles were a regular feature of English glazing schemes, where they often held scrolls each with a section of the Creed, part of the regular Mass liturgy (see for example two partial sets, one originally probably from Hereford Cathedral, c.1420-35 (Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 25-213) and one at St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire). St Paul was also a popular choice alongside other saints, typically paired with St Peter.

The yellow and clear glass colour scheme was standard for the heads in English 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century windows, at a period when it was not technically possible to paint areas of a single piece of glass with any colour other than yellow, using silver stain. The heads would be set alongside separately leaded panels of coloured glass for their robes and background.

Eleanor Townsend, March 2022

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## Further Reading

R. Marks, *Stained Glass in England during the Middle Ages* (London, 1993)

P. Cowan, *English Stained Glass* (London, 2008)

E. Carson Pastan and B. Kurmann-Schwarz (eds.), *Investigations in Medieval Stained Glass* (Leiden and Boston, 2019), particularly S. Brown, 'The Medieval Glazier at Work'

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## Provenance

Acquired 1980

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