

THE PETTIS PLATES

Sold to support

Gloucestershire Historic Churches Preservation Trust

Christian Brann (1923 – 2014) was a Cirencester-based entrepreneur and author/publisher, who specialised in Direct Marketing or Mail Order selling. During the 1980s he became Vice-Chairman of the *Gloucestershire Historic Churches Preservation Trust* (as GHCT then was) and organised the manufacture and sale of the **Pettis Plates** for the benefit of GHCT. The plates were made by one of his companies (Pettis Studios, Northleach, which operated from 1972 – 1988 and specialised in moulded glass plates). The plates were sold by a dedicated company, Historic Churches Collections Ltd, which was part of his Direct Marketing operation.

GHCT has been in contact with Mark Cowley who was brought up in Fairford and, after leaving school, worked for Pettis Studios and was involved with the production of this set of plates. Mark writes:

“I was involved in the photographing of the windows and subsequent interpretation to artwork. A lot of the elements were hand drawn. This artwork was then separated into colour layers, screen stencils were produced and the enamel transfers were screen printed by hand. The transfer was then applied to a per-cut circle of glass. Once dry, the glass was then kilned fired at 800C over a hand-cut plate-shaped mould. The glass would slump taking up the shape of the plate and fire the enamel at the same time.”

Each of the plates depicts a stained glass window from one of twelve Gloucestershire churches and it was planned that each would be a part of a limited edition of 500 (making a possible maximum of 6,000 plates). There is no record of how many were actually made; however none of the plates we have seen has a number higher than 100. Sales were nationwide (probably through advertisements in the quality Sunday papers). The buyers of the two complete sets that we know of were based in Hertfordshire and Cheshire.

It is no longer recorded how much this venture contributed to GHCT's funds.

The twelve Pettis plates are listed below:

Arlingham	St Mary	Two windows, dating possibly from the 14 th C
Cirencester	St John Baptist	Salome dancing before Herod (Hardman 1880)
Deerhurst	St Mary	St Catherine window, probably 14 th century
Down Ampney	All Saints	South window, shipwreck rescue, ca 1864
Fairford	St Mary	Corpus Christi Chapel, Transfiguration, 16 th C
Gloucester Cathedral		From the 14 th century great East window
Kempsford	St Mary	Christ in judgement, 19 th century
North Cerney	All Saints	Christ flanked by the two Marys, 15 th century
Northleach	St Peter St Paul	East window (Christopher Webb, 1963)
Selsley	All Saints	Christ blessing children (Burne-Jones 1861)
Tewkesbury Abbey		Part of the South window, 14 th century
Wormington	St Katherine	East window (William Morris, 1912)