

# The West Window



## **‘A tender memorial to our beloved’**

The creation of the impressive West Window took place amid the turbulent years of the Great War.

It was planned as a memorial to Charles Henderson, from St John Lee, who died just after the outbreak of World War 1, ‘as a result of a chill caught while doing war work’.

The design was developed during 1916 by the well-known stained-glass artist Henry Bodset, the Rector Sidney Savage and Abbey architect Temple Moore, and was finally installed in 1917.

By that time, however, the window had become more than just a memorial to Charles Henderson and his widow unveiled it ‘...to the undying memory of those noble living and glorious dead, who went forth bravely to conquer and to die for God...’

On Christmas Day, 1917, Sidney Savage wrote from London to the congregation at Hexham Abbey:

‘This Christmastide is the saddest that has ever dawned upon this earth but Christ has come incarnate...the only hope of a sad world...’

This window is...a tender memorial of our beloved who have laid down their lives in the Great Fight for Right and not for rights...If, as I suspect, there are tears in your eyes – as there are in mine – let them serve to purify our vision. The darkest hour precedes the dawn. They have fought and finished. It is for us to carry on their work...’

On 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1918, the West Window was finally dedicated, just eight days before the end of the Great War.