The Ursula Margaret Pye Windows

The Ursula Margaret Pye windows can be seen in the west-facing wall of the south porch.

So, who was Ursula Margaret Pye?

The following is an extract from the address given on behalf of the family by The Rev'd Toby Marchand at Ursula's funeral. Thursday 7th March 1996

Born 16th October 1902 she was an only child. Her father was a P & O Liner Captain who died at the age of 39 when she was three and a half years old. For her first six years she lived at "Vivian Lodge" in Chingford. In 1908 she was bought to "Langham House", Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, so as to be near her mother's brother, where she lived until her death at the age of 93.

Until she was nine Ursula was educated by a governess, Miss Hughes, who was the daughter of the first vicar of Holy Trinity, Bishop's Stortford. From 1912 her education continued at the Bishop's Stortford Convent where she took the London University Matriculation Examinations.

As her mother was not keen on her going to Oxford she studied for an external degree at home with the help of local teachers from Bishop's Stortford College. She first of all obtained a Pass Degree in English, French, Latin and Mathematics and went on to obtain an Honours Degree in Medieval and Modern Languages that included English, Gothic and Medieval and Modern French. This knowledge was put to good use during the Second World War when Ursula was offered a teaching post at the Convent, which she gladly accepted, and spent the next four years teaching English and Latin.

A devoted member of St Michael's Church, that began as soon as she arrived in Bishop's Stortford. The vicar at that time was Canon Lane (vicar for 38 years) who prepared her for confirmation.

Ursula's mother did not approve of Electoral Rolls, so unknown to her mother, the vicar, The Rev'd Michael McCarthy added her name to the electoral register. She was elected to the PCC where she served for 60 years.

She was interested in Africa and worked as a secretary to the Bishop's Stortford Churches Missionary Society for Uganda.

Until her death Ursula was the President of the Bishop's Stortford History Society.

On 1965/66 News Years Eve Ursula had a fall that was the beginning of the end, she died in Broom End Nursing Home. She is now buried in Chingford.

About the windows

Three designs were put forward of which No. 2 is that chosen.

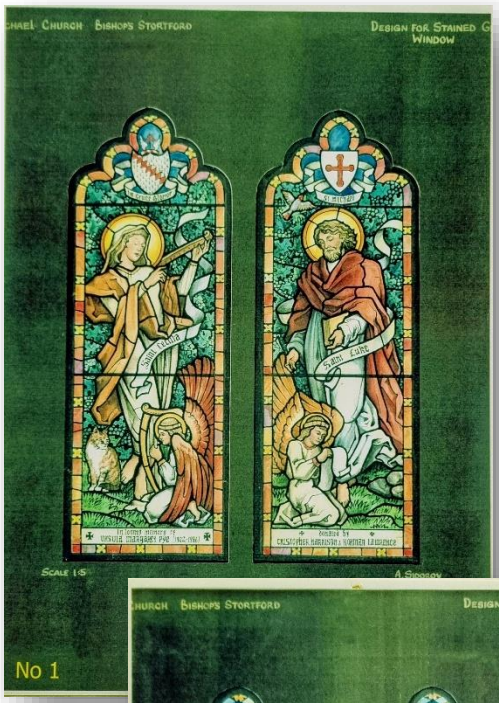
The following is an extract of a communication from Mr Norman Lawrence (descendant of the Pye family) to The Rev'd Toby Marchand.

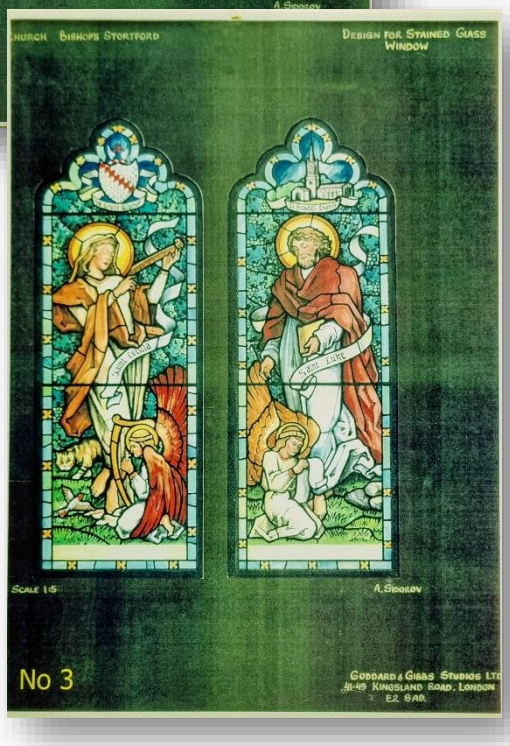
“Ursula was passionately fond of animals and birds. Her beloved cat "Tigger" sits at the feet of St Luke, representing Ursula's love of history, art and the theatre.

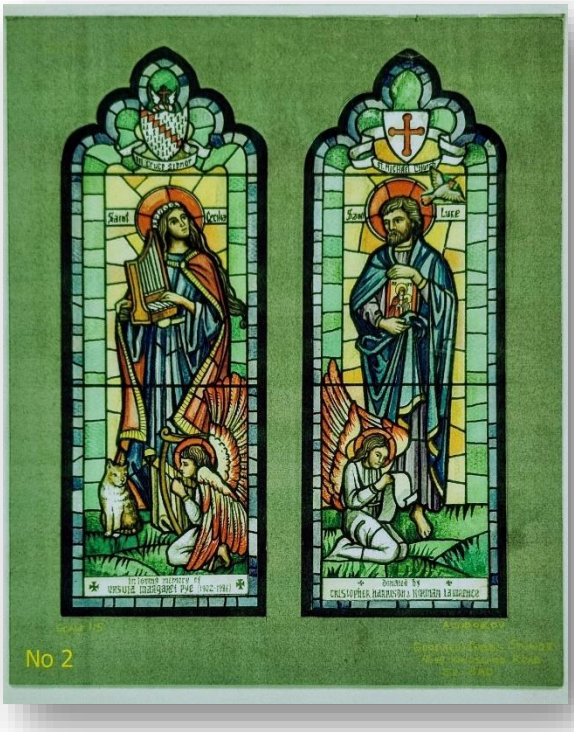
St Cecilia, the patron saint of music, illustrates Ursula’s love of music, she played the recorder, alto viol and practiced the piano daily until her last year.

The Pye family coat of arms is at the top of the left window and St Michaels cross is at the top of the other.

These windows are the gift of Ursula's mother's nephew Christopher Harrison, representing her mother's side of the family and her cousin Norman Lawrence, a descendant of the Pye family.”







Further information

Design artist:	Alexander Sidorov
Manufacturers and installers:	Goddard & Gibbs Ltd Kingsland Road, London
Date installed:	September 1998
	Church Archive Ref. 189