



The Olle Centrepiece

One object, owned by the Mayor of St Edmundsbury, sums up the Magna Carta link for Bury St Edmunds – the meeting of the barons with the Archbishop at the Abbey to force King John to accept Magna Carta.

The Centrepiece was the bequest of Robert Arthur Cecil Olle, twice Mayor of Bury St. Edmunds, Alderman Honorary Freeman of the Borough, Alderman West Suffolk County Council 1975.

Bury St. Edmunds, 'the hub of East Anglia' is depicted at the centre of a symbolic wheel with the Arms of St. Edmundsbury granted on 15th May, 1976. The wheel symbol is very old. It also symbolises the passage of time - Bury's antiquity, its past, present and future. The wheel represents the communion of saints and the reunion of the faithful - the Archbishop making the Barons swear on the high altar of the Abbey.

The Boss in encircled by twenty seven shields of arms. That of King John - red with the three lions of England and that of Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury - half blue, half red crossed with a sloping strip of gold. The shields of the twenty five barons are also shown.

The transparent enamels echo King John's cup at Kings Lynn, the earliest surviving piece of English Medieval secular plate and traditionally the only piece recovered from King John's treasure lost in the Wash.

It is interesting to note that the twenty seven letters of the Borough Motto "Sacrarium Regis; Cunabula Regis" parallel the twenty seven shields of Arms so that each letter of the Motto radiates from the point of a shield.

It was designed by Mr. Louis Osman, B.A. (Arch.), F.R.I.B.A. His work included the new housing for the Lincoln Cathedral copy of Magna Carta. His wife Dilys was the enamellist of the centrepiece.



Detail from the Olle centrepiece

www.burymagnacarta.org



Magna Carta is owned and loaned by Lincoln Cathedral.

Bury St Edmunds Magna Carta 800 Partnership



St Edmundsbury Cathedral



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