



TRUE PRINCIPLES

The Newsletter of the Pugin Society

Chairman's Remarks

WINTER 1997

This has been the first full year of the Society, a year that has seen us grow considerably in membership, secure in finance and varied in activity. In July members of the Society were given an extremely warm welcome by parishioners of Cheadle, the weekend being a most enjoyable mixture of the instructive and the social. Society members also attended Caledonia Gothica in Dundee in October, by all accounts a most rigorous round of tours and lectures. Also in October this year's AGM day was held in Ramsgate on a glorious autumn day that showed the town at its best. As well as lunch overlooking the harbour and a lecture from John Newman on Pugin and Kentish medieval churches, the text of which is reproduced in this newsletter, we were given the rare opportunity of a

guided tour around St. Augustine's Monastery. Next year we are hoping to hold the AGM in and around St. George's Southwark. This will also take place in October. Readers will no doubt have no-

ticed that the drawing of St. George's which appears as the masthead of True Principles is back-to-front. I have no rational explanation for this oversight which is my fault; I can only ask the members to accept it as a charming idiosyncrasy.

Many thanks to all those who have corresponded with members of the committee and contributed so generously to this newsletter and particularly to the Secretary, Treasurer and of course the founding and outgoing Chairman, Judith Crocker, all of whose hard work and vision, certainly not mine, created the Society.

Nick Dermott



This delightful drawing is the work of Alice Tait, the daughter of member Shirley Tait. Alice is currently at work on a Pugin project for her Art History A Level. The drawing shows part of the series of carvings by George Myers on the Pugin Tomb and depicts Jane Knill and her two children Margaret and Peter Paul. Pencil, 31.5 x 21.5cm.



This Issue's Contributors

JOHN PURKIS

John Purkis was Hon. Secretary of the William Morris Society from 1990–1993. He is an Associate Lecturer with the Open University, for whom he has worked since 1970. He has written on Morris, particularly in connection with Burne-Jones, and also on various celebrated nineteenth-century literary figures.

ROBIN CRAIG

Robin Craig was Senior Lecturer in Economic and Social History at University College London. He took early retirement and now lives in Kent, where he writes extensively on maritime history.

MARY DITTRICH

Mary Dittrich has had an interesting career in banking, which led her, amongst other places, to Germany, where proximity to the village of Kiedrich caused her to become much involved in local matters, and not least, of course, with the extraordinary life – and, in particular – death, of Sir John Sutton, Bart.

PATRICIA SPENCER-SILVER

Patricia Spencer-Silver is well known to Puginians for her book Pugin's Builder: The Life and Work of George Myers. This absorbing and scholarly study of a great Victorian builder has added interest in that the writer herself is a descendant of Myers.

For biographical details of MICHAEL BLAKER and DAVID MEARA please see previous issue

Acknowledgements

The Pugin Society, as is its custom, would like to thank all those who have continued to support it. We would particularly like to thank Alexandra Wedgwood, our Patron, for all her interest and encouragement, and also Rosemary Hill and all the other Pugin experts who have so generously given us their time, expertise and help. Special thanks are due also to the Ramsgate Society, under the chairmanship of Professor Brian May, which has consistently helped to publicise and support us, and also to our designer, Michael Pennamacoor, who has always willingly and uncomplainingly provided us with a most professional presentation.

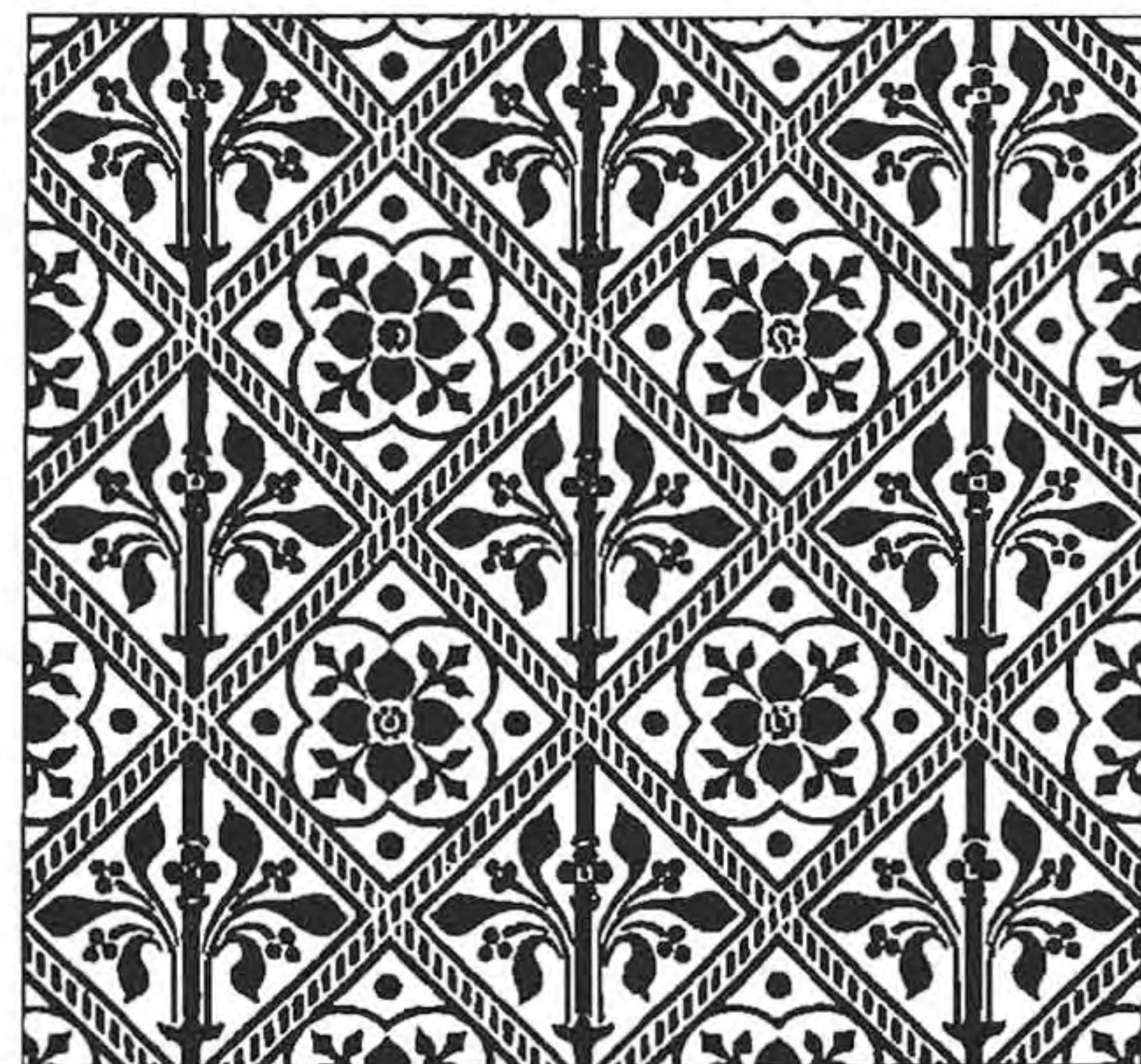


PINEAPPLE

This is an early example of Pugin reviving gothic patterns and applying them to wallpapers in the 1840s. It was commissioned in special colours by Andrew Lloyd-Webber for his private residence in Berkshire. It was also used in 1975 in the Leader of the Opposition's Room (then Margaret Thatcher) in the Houses of Parliament.

TRELLIS

This paper was designed by A.W.N. Pugin for his house, The Grange in Ramsgate, Kent, where it was used in the hall, staircase and corridors. This adaptable design can also be seen at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith and Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire.



John Purkis takes us on a trip round a Mancunian residence with Puginian associations and shows, incidentally, what may be achieved (in terms of visits) by a mention of the Pugin Society.

An Unscheduled Visit to Abney Hall

by John Purkis



At Cheadle (not that Cheadle!) near Stockport, Greater Manchester, is a large mansion “in early Tudor style”, used until quite recently as the town’s civic offices. It is now leased to a group of computer companies. This means it is only open to visitors on National Heritage Day. It was not National Heritage Day, but a bleak Monday morning. Having turned up at a quarter to nine, we explained our case to a friendly security officer — “We are Puginists, that’s to say Puginians, members of the Pugin Society”. After a while we were allowed to tour the site, and then to catch a few glimpses of the interior.

Abney Hall, then known as “The Grove”, was built in 1847 for Alfred Orrell, who had been Mayor of Stockport. The house was much smaller than the present structure, but did have Gothic Revival interiors including painted wooden ceilings. It was not entirely clear to us on our brief visit whether any of this has survived. Orrell died in 1849 and the new owner James Watts, a former Mayor of Manchester, soon enlarged the building. His architects were Travis and Mangnall, who were also constructing the Watts warehouse, now known as Britannia House, Portland Street, Manchester. From the 1850s Watts was able to receive Royal and other distinguished visitors in his grand new house. There were further extensions in the 1890s. In the twentieth century the house was made famous by Agatha Christie, who was related to Watts’ grandson — see *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding*.

The Pugin connection is both remote and obvious. I cannot believe that Pugin ever visited the site, since work from his designs began in

1852, but the décor and colours and furnishings that remain in situ all look right. The references in Belcher (D712/800) indicate that Crace, Hardman, Minton and possibly Myers all worked from Pugin’s designs. The movable furniture which had been a prominent part of the scheme was dispersed in 1957. Nevertheless it was a joy to be able to see the ceilings, walls and the lantern above the stair hall so well displayed. There seems to have been a certain amount of cleaning up, which appears to have been entirely beneficial.

One of the more curious features of the surrounding estate is the heated kitchen garden. Warmed air from the house, which was produced by a furnace in the cellar, found its way through a tunnel under the drive to a tall ventilating shaft, cunningly disguised as a belvedere tower. It was then circulated through the cavity walls of the garden. One would like to believe that this was an idea which originated with Pugin or his associates, but I doubt it.

The former 350 acres of the estate have been reduced to 213 in order to accommodate the M63 and other road-building schemes, but enough remains to give one a chance to work out the original ground plan, roughly the reverse of the present orientation, with the carriage drive approaching what is now the garden front of the house. The security officer explained all this, before showering us with offprints like a University Professor – a very British touch – and sending us on our way. All in all, this would be a pleasant place for Puginians to wander in if more time were available. Think of it when National Heritage day comes round again.



Correspondence

The Pugin Society has, in the course of the last six months, received many most interesting letters, extracts from one or two of the most pressing, or timely, of which we publish herewith:

The first is from Professor Andor Gomme, and should help to put our Northern members, particularly, on the alert – please contact us with information or suggestions re the buildings referred to:

“... I feel sure that you will already be primed with information about the long-standing problem of Cotton College, over which the Staffordshire Moorlands Council have been wrestling in vain for a year & more, attempting to find a solution in the absence of any identifiable owner & in view of the very extensive vandalism that has taken place. I’m sure that the Conservation Officer would welcome any support for saving what can be saved out of the wreck.

The convent next door to St. Giles’s at Cheadle has lately been put up for sale: so far as I am aware, it is in sound condition, but since a sale is bound to result in a change of use, there may be questions arising about what

alterations can be considered acceptable.

Thirdly, the Archdiocese of Birmingham, which now owns & administers Alton Castle, has put in for lottery funding – though with what precisely in mind I don’t know. I understand that it is the intention of the church authorities to use the castle in some way as a children’s centre... Presumably the lottery application implies some fairly large-scale works, but the colleague who alerted me to this couldn’t find out what was in mind: it may be simply conservation of a building which has had little spent on it in recent years; but it would perhaps be worth the Pugin Society’s while to make enquiries ...”

Another letter, which will be of great interest to members, and should cause them to check their diaries, comes from the Revd. Keith Triplow, Rector of St Lawrence, Tubney, Berks, who writes:

“Thank you for the offer to mention the 150th anniversary of Tubney church to the members of the Pugin Society. As you know, we believe that St Lawrence, Tubney is the only complete Anglican church designed by Pugin. In fact, when historian Graham Hutton and poet John Betjeman made a radio broadcast in September 1952 for the centenary of Pugin’s death, they specially mentioned Tubney church, and suggested that it might be preserved as a Pugin memorial (it was closed between 1951 and 1954 because the roof was dilapidated).

The church was consecrated on 11th February 1847 by the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, and to mark this anniversary, the church will be open for visitors on Tuesday 11th February between 11am and 4pm, with historical displays and refreshments. On Sunday 16th February the Bishop of Oxford will be coming for an anniversary Evensong service at 3pm, to which members of the Pugin Society will be most welcome.”

Other letters of particular note include one from Father Michael Fisher, a non-stipendiary priest who is also author, artist and craftsman. He sent us in addition his recent fascinating book, *A Vision of Splendour*, which we will be reviewing in our next issue. Meanwhile, we enclose a flier about the book in the current issue.

The Pugin Society has also been involved in correspondence over the major issue of the future of St Francis’ (church and monastery), Gorton, Manchester, built by Edward Pugin between 1866–72. This is a big subject, and one on which we hope to expand in our next issue when we hope to concentrate particularly on Pugin buildings at risk, or even – also – on some success stories in this area.

Greetings Cards

The Pugin Society’s new greetings card this year, which is suitable for any occasion, depicts a magnificent fireplace designed by Edward Welby Pugin for the Granville Hotel, Ramsgate in the late ‘60s. On the fireplace is incised the motto: ‘Pile on the logs to make the fire great’. A Gothic pun, perhaps. The card is in colour, and is obtainable in packs of ten for £5.00, plus £1.00 postage and packing.



The ghostly figure of Sir John Sutton which you see on this page has a particular, and perhaps surprising, relevance to this lively article about a unique Puginian figure.

Puginian Expatriate Extraordinary Sir John Sutton, Bart (1820–1873)

by Mary Dittrich

In the Pugin chantry at St. Augustine's, Ramsgate there hangs a medieval Flemish altarpiece by an unknown artist, depicting Our Lady of Sorrows with St. John and Mary Magdalen. It was given to Pugin in 1845 by his friend and patron, Sir John Sutton, a gifted member of an old and wealthy family who, especially after his conversion to Catholicism, single-mindedly pursued the Gothic ideal until his death. Like Pugin, he seems to have worn himself out too early. Nevertheless, when he expired in Bruges on 6 June 1873, by which time, to the chagrin of his Anglican relatives, he had run through a large fortune glorifying God along strictly Puginian principles, he left to posterity many restored antique church organs, significant church restorations at home and on the Continent, and a unique choral tradition. This would surely have vanished but for Sutton; but in a quiet Rhineland village it still flourishes. We shall see how Sir John, devout but evidently with a mind above business affairs, had also founded a seminary in Bruges for the training of priests for the English province. This project, involving buildings in the most lavish Puginesque, folded immediately on his death because his exasperated family in England turned off the financial tap. However, Bruges gave him a magnificent funeral, vast amounts of bread were distributed to the needy, and on 9 June 1873 he was buried in Sint-Kruis churchyard. There he lay in an imposing tomb for the next hundred-odd years.

Pugin had been commissioned by the Sutton family in 1844 to work on a family chantry in Norfolk. Evidently his ideas were warmly embraced by the younger man, who was attracted by the Oxford Movement while an undergraduate at Jesus College, Cambridge. A fine keyboard musician and choirmaster, and an authority on organs, Sutton became a Catholic in 1855. By then, wid-

owed after a marriage which had lasted a month, he had left England more or less permanently for the Continent, travelling in Germany, he came across the idyllic and growing village of Kiedrich, close to Wiesbaden. Set in rolling hills and overlooking the Rhine, it is dominated by the exquisite 15th century church of St. Valentin & St. Dionysius. This housed among many art treasures, an organ dating back originally to about 1480! In this setting the men and boys of Kiedrich were still singing the Latin liturgies in a local dialect of plain-song called "Kurmainzer", which has certain stylistic ornaments and is written in neumes. When Sutton came on the scene this tradition was endangered, as the Bishopric at nearby Mainz preferred pure Georgian.

Our mild-mannered, almost reclusive English aesthete was captivated by all this. Able to command the skills of the best craftsmen, especially in Bruges, he set up house in Kiedrich and devoted himself between about 1857 and 1871 to the restoration and Puginian embellishment of the masonry, furnishings and stained glass of the ancient church. The organ, rebuilt in Bruges, was set into a splendid case. To ensure the survival of the moribund local plainchant, Sir John endowed the Kiedrich choir school. Then, having marvellously embellished the place at great expense, while at the same time pursuing those grandiose plans for an English College in Bruges, he went off to care for a sick manservant, and himself died two years later without returning to the village. Nothing had been done about the burial vault he had planned in the church yard. The money in the choir foundation was swallowed up in the course of history. But the Kiedrich choir sang on, keeping alive the memory of its benefactor, though, until about 1970, his exact burial place was unknown. They were enlightened by the Revd. C.H. (Hilary) Davidson, an





The organ in the church of St. Valentin & St. Dionysius, Kiedrich. The fifteenth-century case was restored at Sutton's expense in the Béthune workshops in Ghent. The gallery and two doors were added at the time, and the doors are decorated with nativity scenes by the Nazarene artist August Martin.

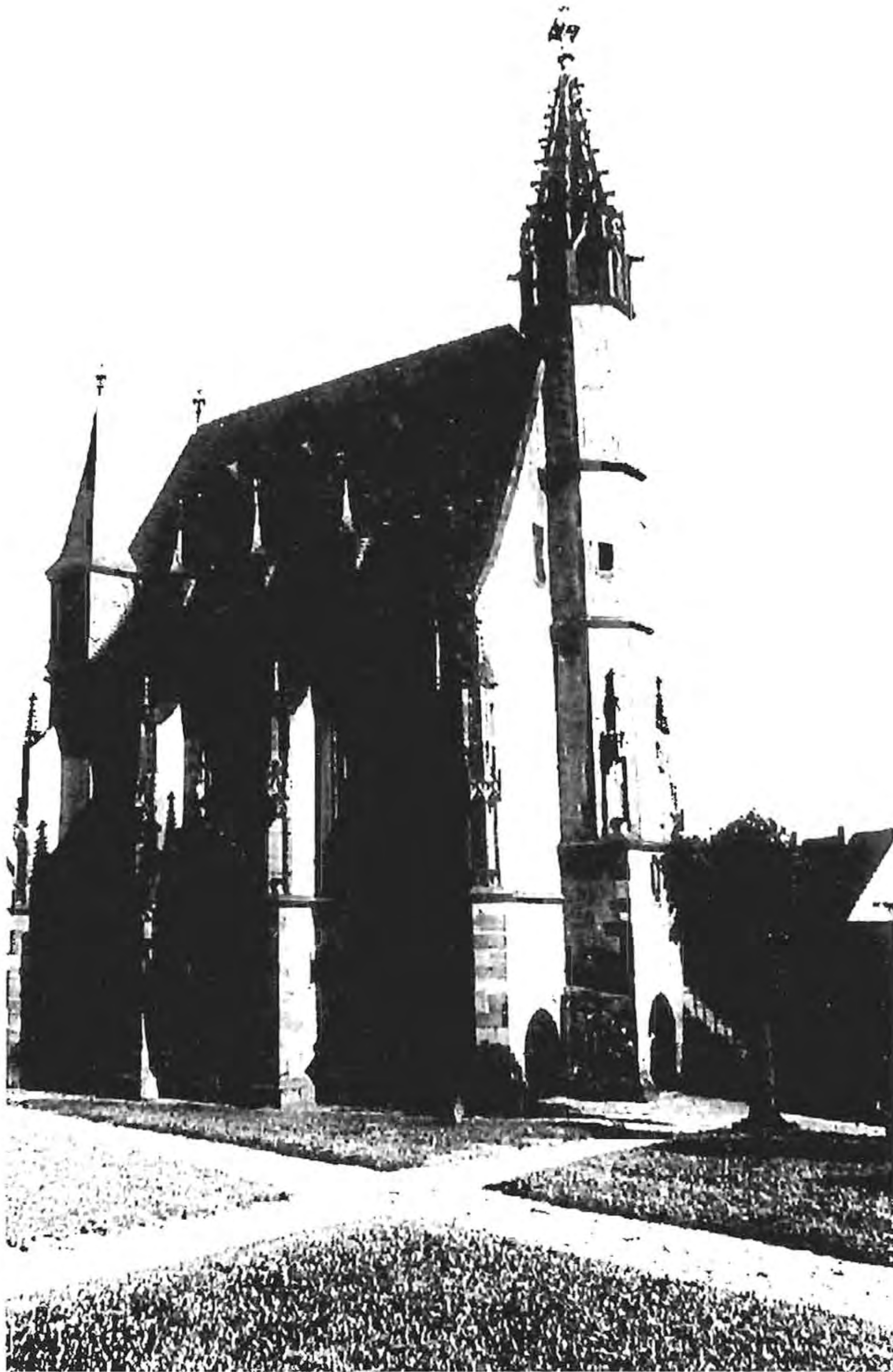
Anglican priest engaged on biographical work for the Sutton family. Determined that "our Baron" should be brought back to them, the Kiedrichers started long, often frustrating negotiations with the Belgian authorities. At last, permission for the exhumation was given. On 22 October, 1974, 101 years after his death, Sir John came back to the Rheingau. On the stroke of 7 pm. the parish priest, his altar-boys and his parishioners issued from the church and waited by candle light in the drizzle. A hearse jolted over the cobbles, entering the courtyard gate of the adjoining choir school. Ten sturdy choristers in cassocks and surplices unloaded the heavy triple coffin and placed it on trestles indoors. Since the original massive oak coffin had rotted away in two feet of Bruges water, the inner lead and wood coffins had been re-housed in a new oak coffin of daunting weight, its lid carved by a local sculptor. The crowd surged in, anthems

were sung, and Sir John was left to rest for the next few days among the medieval manuscripts and the relics of his own life in Kiedrich. November 1, All Saints' Day, arrived. At 7 p.m. Mass was read in the church for the parish and its friends. Guests of honour had arrived: Mrs. Joyce Sutton representing the family, dignitaries from Bruges, local notables and, by no means least, Hilary Davidson, welcomed both as an Anglican priest and as an authority on Sir John. Mass was followed by a magnificent wine tasting in the new Choir School, while Sir John (one should perhaps say "Sir John's mortal remains") slept on those trestles in the old choir school downstairs. Seated at long tables the village notables and their guests then sampled some 25 varieties of the finest local vintages. Kiedrich wines, let it be said, rank among the best in Germany. These joys allowed for speeches, presentation and a lecture in good German by Hilary on the early life of Sir John. At a respectable hour the gathering floated off to its respective lodgings, for the main event was to take place next morning.

The normal liturgical colour for November 2, All Souls' Day is black. But this year colour blazed at St. Valentin's. The Suffragan Bishop of Limburg celebrated Pontifical High Mass for the packed congregation. The great oak coffin lay among the lights and flowers. Hilary in his Anglican robes stood in the chancel with the Catholic clergy. Sutton's organ pealed to the best of its venerable ability, and the surpliced choir sang, not only from the Kiedrich Graduale, but also Palestrina, Bach and other anthems. A moving moment was when a brief life of Sir John was read out, then rolled up and inserted into a leaden cylinder, which was sealed. Then the heavy lid of the outer coffin was lifted long enough for the cylinder to be laid beside the old, blackened lead coffin within.

After Mass and various prayers of blessing the coffin was carried out in cortège to the churchyard, where a local mason had dug and lined a large grave. This is in alignment with a stained glass window in the chancel, commissioned by Sir John himself towards the end of his life, depicting him kneeling, in ermine robes, with his arms and those of his wife.

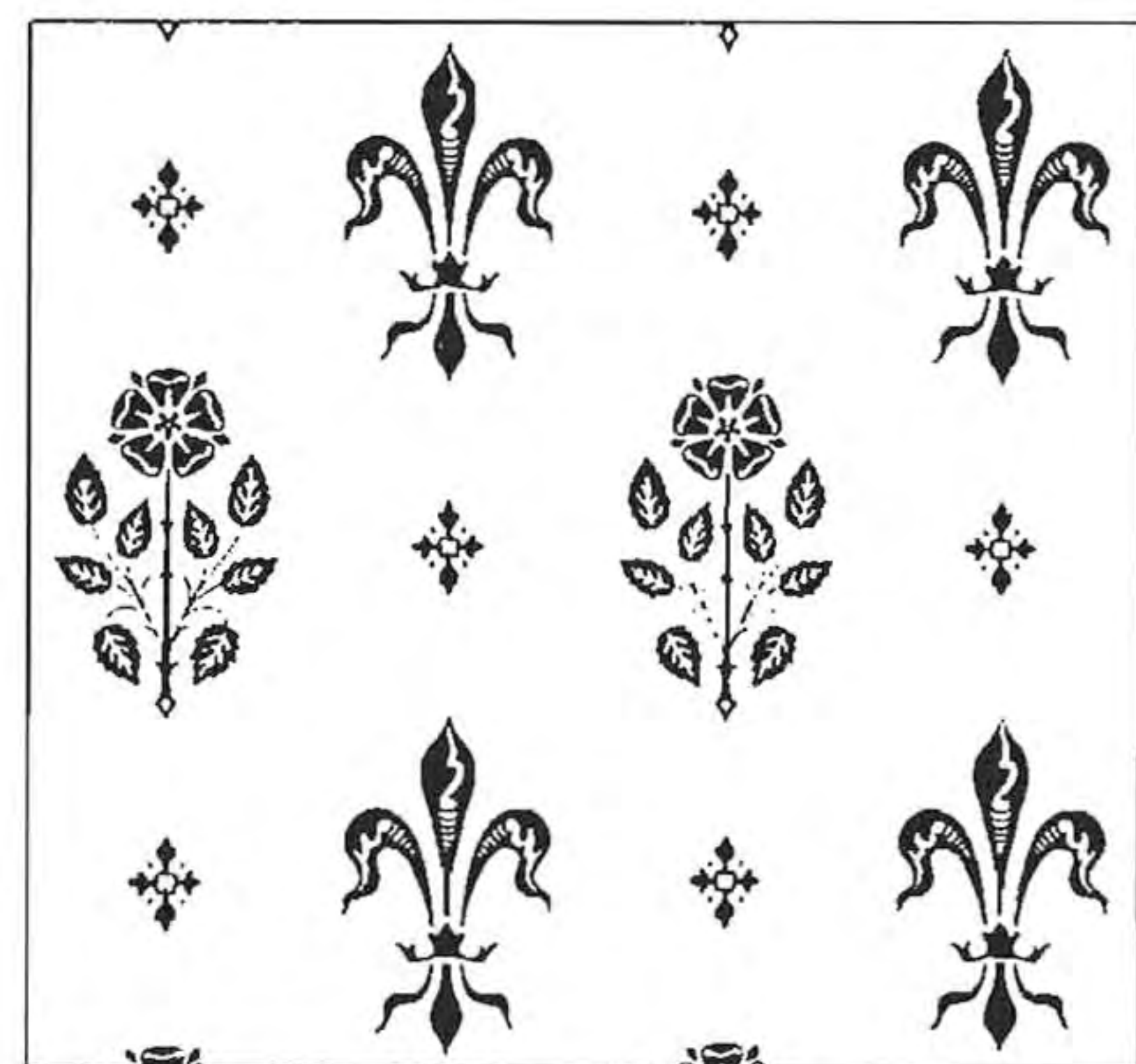




St Michael's Chapel. This was the former charnel-house for the main church. The style is an exquisite high Gothic.

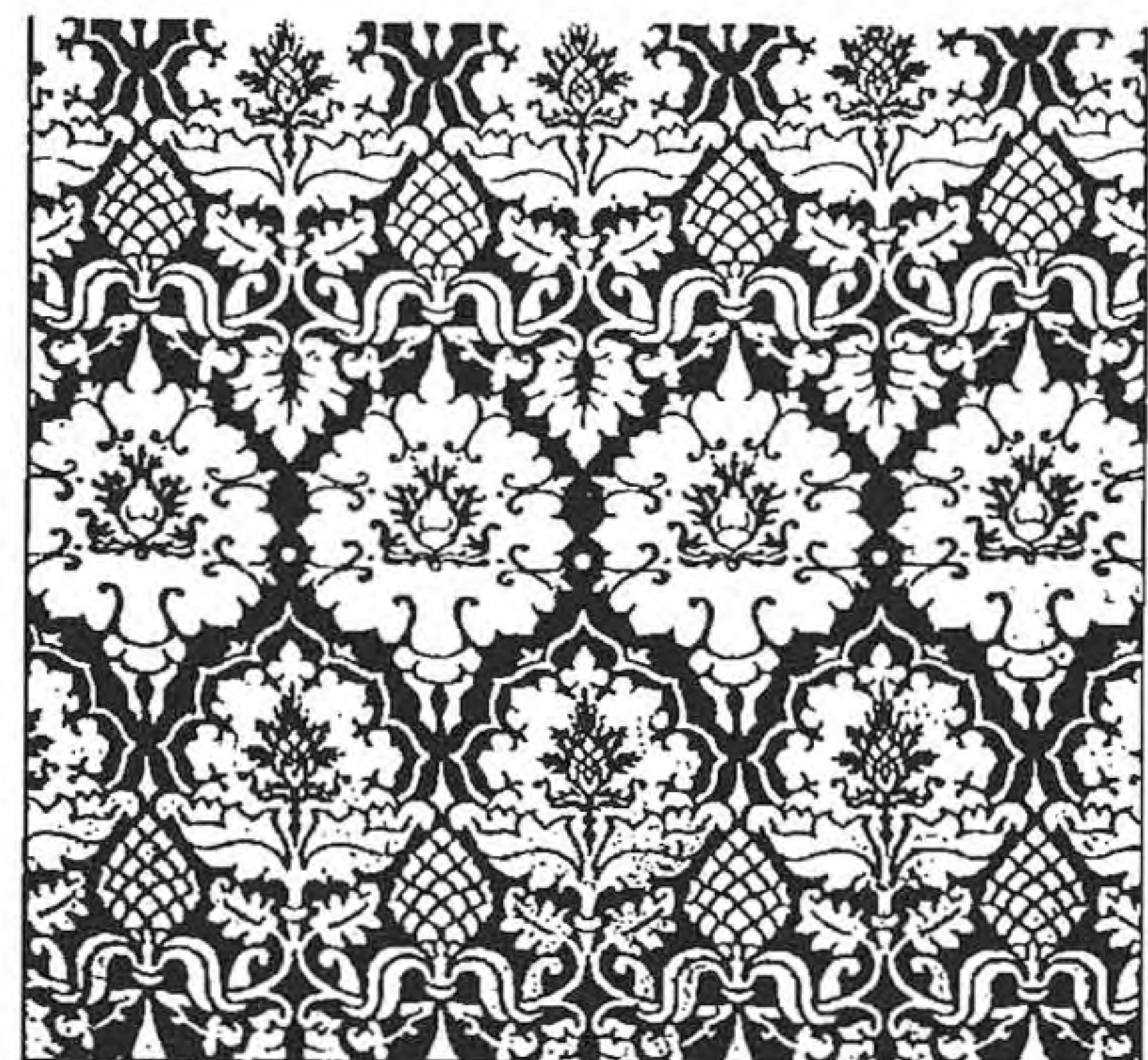
Under dull grey skies, and in a sharp wind, the remains were lowered to the sound of prayers and yet more choral singing. The imposing cross and other stonework from the Bruges grave designed by Sutton's friend, that faithful Belgian interpreter of Pugin's principles, Jean de Béthune, had already been re-erected. The inscription reads: "Pray for the soul of Sir John Sutton, Bart of Norwood Notts. England: who full of good works died on June 5th 1873, aged 53. On whose soul and all Xtian souls may God have mercy. Amen." Fittingly, the cross is carved with a design of grapes. So the solemnities were over, and for the rest of the day the whole village and its many friends turned to celebrating, mainly inside the various hostelries, the homecoming of "Our Baron". By next morning the grave had been sealed. And, much to the point, the departing delegates from Bruges had admitted that, as St. Kruis churchyard was due to vanish under a new road, the exhumation had been timely.

The description of the events in Kiedrich in 1974 is based on my own memories and records. But Pugin scholars will know that the biographical account is – with apologies – only the bare bones of Sutton's story. That summary has been based – with his kind permission – on Hilary Davidson's erudite book Sir John Sutton – a Study in True Principles, (Positif Press, Oxford 1992), which documents in rich detail why the memory of this remarkable Victorian deserves to live on.



ROSE AND FLEUR DE LYS

This was included in the portfolio submitted by A.W.N. Pugin for the decoration of the Palace of Westminster, and has recently been used at The Belfry Club, Belgravia, Floors Castle, Roxburgshire and the Randolph Hotel, Oxford.



BELLINI

This was designed by Pugin for Crace as part of their collaboration, and the origin of the design has been traced to a textile in the painting "Medici Madonna and the Saints" by Roger van der Weyden (State Institute, Frankfurt). It is to be seen in the drawing room of Abney Hall, Cheshire, where it was used as a wallcovering, and also on the wall of Hertford House.



This pleasantly leisured piece follows on from the extract in our last issue, and is all part of The Catholic Fireside, a turn of the century publication.

St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate

by Dudley Baxter

Ramsgate Abbey stands upon "the white cliffs of old England", to the west of the town. Seen from a distance with its cluster of pinnacles, the group of buildings form an impressive and picturesque *ensemble*. The minster is separated from the monastery by a main road, with electric trams galore; but there is an underground passage, savouring of "walled-up" myths, for the monks' convenience. This spot is commonly called "the Pope's corner" by Ramsgate people and one may here note how singularly influential the Catholic community is in this town.

The plain central tower of the church was to have been surmounted by a spire: but as the marine authorities objected to another landmark, it remains incomplete. A smaller tower with a Norman spirelet gives a picturesque touch to the group. On the right stands Pugin's former residence, "The Grange", with its dwarf tower (at present to let) and in front of it is the former presbytery, now occupied by his widow, Mrs Augustus Welby Pugin. Opposite are both monastery and college, occupying several acres of land.

Above the main entrance door to the minster, there is a statue of St Augustine of Canterbury, the patron saint, in full pontificals and holding a model of his church: on either side are angels supporting shields, carved with the historic pallium and the Benedictine *pax* encircled by its crown of thorns. One must confess that Pugin's doors here, though skilfully devised as a protection from Ramsgate's marine draughts, are most uncomfortable – not to say aggravating. A small portion only is opened as a rule, beneath which one has to stoop down and not infrequently bang one's head en passant! However, it is pointed out that these proceedings entail the virtue of humility. The church cloister is beautiful and very unique: to the left there is a long corridor with a fine stone altar-piece to the Sacred Heart at its extremity. To the right of this opens out a small but elaborate Chapel of St Joseph: its altar was the gift of the Dowager Viscountess Southwell, a sister of Bishop Mostyn, who now resides at

Ramsgate. The small windows here are filled with very good stained glass and a niche contains a devotional statuette of St Winifride of Wales. All along the northern wall of this corridor hang a famous set of Stations of the Cross, exquisitely moulded in terracotta and mediæval in composition – indeed, perhaps unrivalled throughout England. Every week, the Way of the Cross is recited in procession. Underneath are placed a gleaming series of brass tablets to the memory of departed monks of St Augustine's Abbey. In the centre of the eastern pavement is a fine brass portraying Abbot Wilfrid Alcock, in cope and mitre, with various coats-of-arms inlaid in enamel and a suitable inscription. His paternity, however, died in New Zealand, where his body is interred. Passing along the principal cloister, on the left is the "Digby chantry" – a small chapel dedicated to St John the Evangelist and well-decorated. The relics from Rome's catacombs of the boy Martyr, St Benignus, rest beneath its altar; at Christmas tide, an effective Crib was arranged here. The grassy interior of the adjacent little "cloister-garth", with its quaint stone gargoyles, is very picturesque but at present, unfortunately, it is practically disused. Here rest the bodies of several victims of the sea, and other poor people, thus laid to rest through Pugin's kindness. Just before entering the church, one passes over the tomb of the monastery's founder – the Reverend Alfred Luck. After his wife's death, this pious merchant received Holy Orders and eventually the priesthood. Moreover, all their sons became priests and their daughters nuns: the eldest son, Monsignor Luck, is still alive, while one of the two Benedictines died Bishop of Auckland in New Zealand. The brass represents Father Luck in his Eucharistic vestments and he particularly wished to be buried here, both out of self-abasement and so as to obtain more prayers for his soul – R.I.P. Another "humiliating" doorway, and one is inside the Abbey Minster itself – "Pugin's gem", greatest of praise, and that well merited.



Architects have, in the past, often perhaps received more plaudits than their builders. The partnership of Pugin and Myers, however, was a very special one. Patricia Spencer-Silver explains why.

GEORGE MYERS

by Patricia Spencer-Silver

George Myers, Pugin's Builder, also known as the Great Builder. What was he like, this "strange rough mason from Hull"¹ on whom Pugin depended above all others?

By the time his portrait was painted, by an unknown artist, in the late 1850s, Myers was no longer "a strange rough mason". This picture was on view at the Pugin Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1993, together with portraits of Crace, Hardman and Minton, but it was Myers, with his bushy red beard and scowl, looking every inch the Master Mason, who immediately attracted the visitor's eye.

When he was exasperated, Pugin said harsh things of Myers, but their relationship was one of complete trust and understanding. Myers had spent his early years working in two beautiful Medieval Gothic Churches, he was a truly "Gothic" builder.

Never once in his many letters to Hardman did Myers complain of Pugin, in fact his concern and love for Pugin are evident in this correspondence. On one occasion Myers reported with great satisfaction that "The Governor" had returned from abroad "as fat as a seal"² and, in October 1852, a few weeks after Pugin's death, when he was discussing accounts with John Hardman, Myers explained that he wanted to get everything settled as soon as possible as "...every line brings up Poor Mr Pugin to my feelings".³ In the spring before he died, at the suggestion of his doctor, Pugin spent a few days in London, at 9 Laurie Terrace, with the Myers family, to see if a "change of thought might do him good".⁴ It must have been a dreadful squash in the three bed-roomed house with seven children, three adults and a maid or

two. Surely a sign of great friendship between the families and generosity on the part of the Myers?

As to Myers' relationship with the other members of the team, his letters to John Hardman, now in the Birmingham City Library, demonstrate that their relationship was very friendly. With Minton, it was just a question of taking delivery of vast numbers of tiles. But Crace's disapproval of Myers can still be sensed after more than a century. There was the unfortunate episode of the arrangement of the furniture at the Great Exhibition of 1851, when Pugin felt obliged to write a long conciliatory letter and Crace, in his reply thanked Pugin for "his kindly expressed notes in reference to Mr Myers of whom he had hoped better things".⁵ (It is worth pointing out that Crace had "hoped better things"; he had not expected them).

Perhaps it is just as well that Myers never put in writing what he thought of John Gregory Crace.

Myers on his best behaviour, was equal to any situation. Despite Pugin's nervousness, he and the Reverend Mr Bloxam pegged out the site of St. Lawrence Church Tubney⁶ quite amicably, and on at least two occasions Myers undertook the same task in conjunction with Prince Albert. (The Royal Pavilion, Aldershot and the Prince Consort's Library also at Aldershot).⁷

If anyone should doubt Myers' true artistry and his great love of Pugin, they should gaze upon the Pugin chantry in St Augustine's Church, Ramsgate, undoubtedly carved by him.⁸

He was indeed "Pugin's Builder".

REFERENCES

- 1 Scott, Sir G G, *Recollections Personal & Professional*, 1879.
- 2 Hardman Letters, Birmingham City Library.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Powell, J H, *Pugin in His Home*.
- 5 Spencer-Silver, Patricia, *Pugin's Builder, the Life and Work of George Myers*, Hull, 1993. pp 42-44.
- 6 Pugin Ms 528 Magdalen College, Oxford.
- 7 Spencer-Silver, Patricia, *Pugin's Builder, the Life and Work of George Myers*, Hull, 1993.
- 8 Letter from Sir John Lambert to Jane Pugin in St Augustine's Archives, Ramsgate.



In this issue Robin Craig gives us a precision account of the history of the celebrated *Caroline*, both during and after Pugin's lifetime. What happened to her after 1870? Maybe we shall never know.

Pugin's *Caroline*

by Robin Craig



As a postscript or footnote to David Meara's interesting article about Pugin's lugger (True Principles Vol.1, No.2), perhaps it will be of some slight interest to add something about Caroline.

Caroline was, in January 1841, a 21 84/94 tons lugger, which had been built at Deal in 1824. She was at first officially registered at Sandwich, the registry port for Ramsgate, in May 1824 when launched, and was later registered de novo on 26 January 1841 (number three), when she was described as a three masted lugger, with one deck, running bowsprit, square stern, and clench built, with measurements 40'4" x 13' x 6'9". Her owners were William Sewell, Thomas Denne, John Sanders, John Bayley, Richard Cooper, all mariners, Robert Grant, fishmonger, and William Miller, mariner, all being citizens of Ramsgate. Each owner was described as owning 9 shares in the vessel, and since registry law then (as now) divided the ownership of vessels into 64th parts, there was one 'fractional' part of 1/64th which was nominally allocated to William Miller, in the official registration document.

Under a Bill of Sale dated 7 March 1849, 54/64ths of Caroline was transferred in "equal moieties" to Pugin, described as architect of St Augustine's Ramsgate, and Alfred Luck, gentleman, also of Ramsgate. Thus, in law, Miller still had his shares in the vessel.

On 16 March 1849, as a consequence of the change in ownership, Caroline was registered anew at Sandwich with the same description and rig, with Samuel Stokes still designated as master as he had been under the previous registration. However, Pugin himself was named as master on 31 March, though it is not known if he actually took the vessel to sea himself. In the same month, because Miller had died, his executors, who were William Miller, shipwright, and Thomas Spain, tailor, both of Ramsgate, sold their 9/64ths to Pugin and Luck.

The next transaction occurred on 2 July 1849, when Luck sold his 31/64ths to Pugin, and, by another Bill of Sale dated 13 February 1852, Caroline was sold to George Leffin, mariner of Ramsgate, who became sole owner. On re-registration as a result of this transaction,

Caroline was remeasured under the terms of the 1835 Registry Act, which brought her dimensions and tonnage to conformity with the new regulations for measuring vessels. In 1852, therefore, her tonnage was calculated as 17 2942/3500 tons, on dimensions 38.5' x 12.1' x 6.3'. Under these regulations, dimensions were recorded as feet and tenths in place of the earlier measurement of feet and inches.

Subsequently, under the terms of the 1854 Merchant Shipping Act, she was allocated an official number 19906, and she was, thereafter, sold to owners in Lowestoft, and disappears from records in about 1870.

From the foregoing, we can see that Pugin sold Caroline as his health was seriously deteriorating, and sadly, the very sparse entries in the diary transcribed by Alexandra Wedgwood in A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin Family (London 1985) give us few clues as to how Caroline was employed during the very busy years in Pugin's life when he spent so little time in Ramsgate. However, we can identify most of the wrecks and maritime disasters mentioned by Pugin in his diary, and, in particular, can throw some light on one episode when his lugger was involved in rescuing material from a wrecked vessel in March 1849. This was Floridian, Captain Whitmore, bound from Antwerp to New York which was wrecked with much loss of life. Much of the cargo was landed at Ramsgate and Margate, with the help of Caroline, whilst other parts of the cargo were brought ashore at Whitstable and Harwich. There was a Receiver of Wreck report dated 8 March 1849, which I have yet to trace.

In the same month, Pugin records the loss of a galliot. This was Eppin, Potjewyd master, of Pekala, bound from Amsterdam to Liverpool; the Deal pilot on her was drowned. Another wreck Pugin refers to as having occurred on 30 March 1850: this was a major maritime disaster, when the steamer Royal Adelaide was lost on the Tongue Sands off Margate, with the loss of hundreds of lives. Perhaps, one day, we will recover more information about Pugin's earlier life as a seafarer, and maybe someone will identify his first experiences as mariner and shipowner.



PORT: RAMSGATE, port of SANDWICH	NO: 3	DATE: 26 Jan. 1841	NAME: CAROLINE
DETAILS OF BUILD: Deal, 1824			OFFICIAL NUMBER: —
SURVEYING OFFICER: James Anderson Tide Surveyor, Ramsgate		PREVIOUS REGISTER: Ramsgate, port of Sandwich 12 May 1824	
Length: 40'4"	Decks: 1	Stern: Square	
Breadth: 13'0"	Masts: 1	Build: Cleach	
Height: 6'9"	Rig: Lugger	Galleries: —	
Depth: ↓	Bowsprit: running	Head: —	
Tonnage: 27 ⁸¹ / ₉₄ tons, old measurement		Material: Wood	
Changes:			
IF STEAM:			
OWNERS: William Sewell Mariner, Ramsgate 9/64ths Thomas Denne " " " John Sanders " " " John Bayley " " " Richard Cooper " " " Robert Grant fishmonger " " " William Muller Mariner " " " & "fraction" = 1/64th			
Bill of Sale dated 7 March 1849, under which, Sewell, now described as "shopkeeper, Beer" (? in Devon), Denne, Sanders, and executors of John Bayley, deceased, namely Robert Grant & Robert King, Richard Cooper & Grant sold 54/64ths to Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, architect, St Augustine & Alfred Luck, Gentleman, Ramsgate, in equal moieties [So Muller still had his shares]			
MASTERS: William Sewell Ramsgate, 2 Mar. 1849 Samuel Stokes			
FATE: Registered de novo Ramsgate No. 6, 16.3.1849			
CERTIFICATE CANCELLED: —		REGISTRY CLOSED: —	

Pugin, in his diary says that he bought CAROLINE with "Mr Lucke" (in £ 70:21 Feb. 49 see A. Wedgwood, *AWN Pugin & the Pugin Family* (V. 3A. 1985) p. 66.

The Dutch galliot mentioned in Pugin's Diary "at back of pier 28 Feb 49" was EPPIN, Potjewyd master, of Pekala, bound Amsterdam for Liverpool.

The Deal pilot on board was drowned.

The CAROLINE in March '49 helped save cargo from FLORIDIAN, Captain Whitmore, from Antwerp to New York. Much cargo was landed at Margate, Ramsgate and some at Whitstable and Harwich. There was a report from Receiver of Wreck 8 March 1849. Did Pugin obtain any artefacts of value from this wreck?

Editor's note:

In the museum of local history items in Ramsgate Public Library there is a Victorian photograph of a lifeboatman, and beside it a telescope. The caption describing these objects reads: "This telescope... was presented in the year 1872 to Simon Cooper by Captain Berkley, RN, as a small recognition of his brave and useful services in saving upwards of 200 lives from perishing on the Goodwin Sands. Simon Cooper and the crew of the lugger Caroline, together with two other lugger skippers, bore the brunt of rescuing the crews of vessels wrecked on the Goodwin Sands during the period prior to 1866, when little is known of the three lifeboats stationed at Ramsgate from 1802". The man in the photograph – Simon Cooper – may well therefore, in his earlier days, have known Pugin. What tales he could tell!



In this perceptive and sensitive article the Revd. David Meara discusses the ill-health and psychological problems which dogged Pugin throughout his life.

THE DEATH OF AYN PUGIN

by David Meara

The picture of Pugin that emerges from John Hardman Powell's memoir¹ is one of strength, confidence, openness and humour. Not only is he physically strong, but Powell says that he had an excellent memory and sight like a hawk's. He was full of generosity, and wit, a man of action whose spirit never flagged.

After such a robust portrait it comes as a shock to learn that Pugin died enfeebled and insane. His death raises a number of questions. What was the nature of Pugin's insanity? Can we trace its origins to earlier events in his life? Was his personality of a kind that from his earliest days was susceptible to attacks of mental instability or psychological disturbance? To try to answer these questions I shall first briefly examine aspects of his life which caused him stress, and then look at the events leading up to his death.

HIS CHILDHOOD

Ferrey says that Pugin was a solitary child, who attended Christ's Hospital, but was probably overprotected by his mother. A portrait of him aged seven poised in the act of digging the garden with a spade shows him to have had delicate, almost feminine features, with wide-apart eyes, a very determined look, and the suggestion of energy and impatience about his stance. When he was on a tour of France in 1827, aged 15, an incident occurred which is significant in view of his later illness. Ferrey describes it as follows:

*He seems even at this time to have overworked himself, as we find Mrs. Pugin writing to her sister thus: "My poor Augustus has latterly been very unwell, and on Thursday last alarmed us much: he went before breakfast to draw in Notre Dame when suddenly (as he describes the sensation) the whole building on every side seemed breaking and tumbling to pieces, and the pavement so agitated he could not stand: fortunately Mr. Nash was drawing with him, and got him into a coach and brought him home pale as death".*²

MONEY WORRIES

All his life Pugin was worried about money. It preyed on his mind, and his letters are full of his financial problems. Even aged 14 he seemed obsessed with the fear of bankruptcy. In his notes for an uncompleted autobiography he simply lists the numbers of bankrupts between January and April 1826.

His own furniture-making business failed in 1831, and in the summer of that year Ferrey records that he was seized for non-payment of rent and placed in a sponging house near Chancery Lane. Fortunately his father's friends secured his release, but the experience was traumatic.

Such worries surfaced regularly in Pugin's correspondence. In a letter to Hardman he complains:

*I was forced to give up my lodging; all my things were seized for Rent. I found the house empty and everything sold. I was furious ...*³

And towards the end of his life he complains of his expenses, says he fears poverty, and has agreed with Jane to discharge all but two of the servants. He adds that she is quite willing to sell her jewels.

Such constant financial anxiety must eventually have taken its toll.

TRIALS OF FAITH

On the whole Pugin's Catholic faith brought him satisfaction and consolation. But there were bitter moments too. Apart from the constant frustrations of building churches that were not used properly and dealing with people who were not in full sympathy with his views, Pugin experienced two major traumatic incidents which directly related to his faith.

The first was the failure of his plans to rebuild the front quadrangle of Balliol College, Oxford, in the Gothic style. Two Tractarian Fellows, W.G. Ward and Frederick Oakley, had approached Pugin privately after George Basevi's plans were rejected. The Master and Fellows agreed to ask Pugin to furnish plans, 'but at the same time resolved that under the present

1 A. Wedgwood (Ed): Pugin in his home: *Architectural History* vol. 31 1988 p. 174

2 Ferrey: Recollections of A. Welby Pugin 1861 *op. cit.* p. 39

3 Pugin/Hardman Correspondence: HLRO 38



circumstances of the case, even if Mr. Pugin's plans should be eventually approved and be thought worthy of being carried into effect, he himself be not employed in the execution of the work'. (March 6 : 1843). Such was the sensitivity of Oxford Senior Common Rooms to employing a Roman Catholic architect who had criticised the Martyr's Memorial project. Pugin lavished great care on his designs, producing them in a fortnight, and making up a special velvet bound volume of drawings for presentation. He wrote to his friend J. R. Bloxam:

You have no idea how I have worked at these designs. I never exerted myself so before... While I was arranging the Plan I got excited beyond my strength and could neither eat nor sleep, but I am now better.

Pugin had invested a huge amount of himself in this project, and when the Master of Balliol finally vetoed his involvement in the rebuilding he was devastated, especially because it was a further blow to his hopes of bringing the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches closer together. It is difficult to overestimate the effect that this humiliating rejection had on Pugin, at a time when he was already beginning to have doubts about the 'Oxford Men'. He had had high hopes that they would be a catalyst for liturgical and architectural change within the Roman Catholic Church, and the rejection of his Balliol plans was the beginning of disillusion and despair.

The second major blow was the Screens controversy, which began in 1848. There had been considerable adverse comment about the rood-screen in St. George's, Southwark, on the grounds that it blocked the worshippers' view of the altar. Pugin goes on the attack in a long article in *The Tablet*:

I solemnly warn all men that the present objection is a mere feeler which appears on the surface to try the current of men's minds, and how far they dare proceed; beneath lies a system of deadly enmity to the very fundamentals of church architecture and Catholic art. The Screen once gone, the chancels will follow, aisles, chapels, apse, all, and the Cathedral sinks into an assembly room.⁴

Because Pugin felt that this was a fundamental challenge to his Gothic beliefs, he determined to answer it with something weighty; and in 1851 *A Treatise on Chancel Screens and Rood Lofts* duly appeared. He clearly felt that he had produced an irrefutable case for 'the ancient inclosures', as letters to Hardman reveal:

... I go to bed happy. All the mist lies cleared away. I have the whole Essence of the Question into 6 pages... Laus deo... My Modern Ambonoclast is finished.⁵

In spite of Pugin's elation, this was to be his last shot in his battle against the Ambonoclasts. He acknowledged in letters to friends that the work 'may do little good', and realised that he had become a prophet without honour in his own country. The bitterness engendered by this comes out particularly in his letters to Hardman, and ate away at his mind during his last twelve months of sanity.

RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

The period 1831–3 was an intensely sad one for Pugin, with the loss of his first wife Anne, and his parents, and these periods of traumatic loss were to recur. During 1843–4 he suffered the rejection of his designs for Balliol College, a blow that went very deep; and in August 1844 his second wife, Louisa, died. She had been ill for a long time, but her death was unexpected.

It is possible that during her last months Pugin fell in love with another woman of his acquaintance, Mary Amherst, daughter of Mrs. Amherst of Kenilworth, a cousin of the Earl of Shrewsbury. Pugin had known her for some years and had become a close friend as they shared common tastes. Now, in his loneliness he turned to her for sympathy and company. Not long after Louisa's death Pugin proposed to Mary, who at first accepted. However, on the advice of her parents and Lord Shrewsbury she broke off the engagement and in due course entered the religious life. This literally drove Pugin to the brink of suicide. From extant correspondence between Father Gentili, Pugin and the Shrewsburys it is clear that he was very ill indeed.⁶

Further distress was to follow. He 'began to console himself with an interest in a Miss Greeve',⁷ which clearly came to nothing, and then formed a strong attachment to a Miss Helen Lumsdaine whom he had met in Ramsgate in 1846. They eventually became engaged in January 1848, and Pugin even designed a parure of wedding jewellery for her.⁸ Again, however, the affair ended in disaster because of her parents' opposition to her becoming a Catholic. Ferrey gives a detailed account of events, and quotes in full the lengthy 'Statement of Facts' which Pugin in his grief and fury felt obliged to publish.⁹

The affair put Pugin under considerable strain during 1847 and 48. In his diary for April 1848 the word 'Hardres' appears against twelve dates April 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 18.

⁴ *Tablet*, 9: 2nd September 1848: p. 563

⁵ HLRO: Historical Collection no 304/127: 757

⁶ See Claude Leetham: Luigi Gentili, A Sower for the Second Spring: London: 1965: Chapter 11 *passim*.

⁷ Leetham: *op. cit.* p. 232

⁸ S. Bury: Pugin's Marriage Jewellery: V & A Year Book 1: 5: 1969: pp 85-96

⁹ Ferrey: *op. cit.* pp 193-222



Almost no other journeys were undertaken that month. This suggests either that Pugin visited Upper Hardres, where Helen's father was the Rector, day after day in a desperate final bid to obtain leave to marry her, or that he had written the word repeatedly in a fit of mental distress and confusion. In a letter to Lord Shrewsbury dated the same month, he says:

*I am far worse in mind than body. I have suffered more distress in the 3 weeks than in all my life put together.*¹⁰

His friend Talbot Bury comments in a review of Ferrey's biography that Pugin's mind was 'shattered' at the time when he circulated the statement, and Bury persuaded him to destroy all the copies he could get hold of.¹¹

Pugin's need for the closeness of a supportive marital relationship, and for a wife to take charge of his family and home affairs, became a source both of fulfilment and emotional stress. The deaths and rejections he suffered periodically throughout his adult life placed additional strain on a constitution already weakened by bouts of illness.

ILLNESSES

The following table, taken from Pugin's diaries¹² reveals the extent of the illnesses he suffered during the period from 1835 to 1852. The first entry is the first recorded attack of the recurrent eye inflammation which plagued Pugin throughout his life. It seems that during the years up to 1841 he suffered regular bouts of illness, usually at the beginning or end of the year, with two particularly serious attacks in 1841. Then, if we disregard the influenza of 1842 and the continental fever of June 1847, the diaries only record one serious bout of illness (in February 1847) until 1851, although it is clear from his letters that from the time of Louisa's death he had repeated bouts of illness. He complained of sleeplessness, depression and bodily pain. In 1845 he was examined by the eminent physician Sir Arnold Knight. After the diagnosis he wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury:

*I am overworked and he urged less application. He traces the pain that I suffer to indigestion produced by anxiety and this I believe, for when I am much agitated the pain increases.*¹³

His third marriage, to Jane Knill, in 1848 provided Pugin with happiness and stability and because of this his health improved. But towards the end of 1851 there was a recurrence of illness, and from then his health began to break down dramatically.

1835	November	6	Ill all day. Sight very bad
1836	January	12	Taken ill in evening
		13	Ill all day
		14	Better
	September	24	Ill all day
1838	April	25	Leeds to Nottingham very ill
		26	Nottingham to Derby very ill
	November	7	Taken evening ill
		8	Very ill all day
1839	January	8	Very ill
1841	February	22	Oxford to Birmingham felt ill
1841	February	23	Birmingham to Mr. Phillips ill
		24	At Mr. Phillips very ill
		25	At Mr. Phillips very ill
		26	To London very ill
		28	At Ramsgate, better but very weak
	September	3	Arrive (London) almost blind
		4	Very ill
		5	Very ill
		6	Very ill
		7	Very ill, rather better
		8	Better
		9	Better
		10	Much better. Up all day
		11	Came downstairs
		12	Dined downstairs
			(Pugin did not leave London until 20th)

During the serious bout of illness in 1841 Pugin nearly lost his sight. He had been heavily dosed with mercury:



10 A. Wedgwood: A W N Pugin and the Pugin Family: V & A: 1985: p 111

11 Talbot Bury: Building News, 7: 4th October 1861: p 808

12 A. Wedgwood: op. cit. pp 32-73

13 Quoted in P. Stanton: Some Comments on the Life and Work of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin: RIBA Journal, 1952, Vol 55: p50

*I have been obliged to take 3 grains of mercury every 4 hours for some time to drive out the inflammation... and I have great pains in all my limbs.*¹⁴

14 Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury
Sept. 29th 1841

1842	July	14	At Alton ill influenza
		15	At Alton ill
		18	Home again
1847	January	18	Birmingham to Rugby very ill
	February	2	Very ill
		3	Quite blind
		4	very ill ditto
		5	very ill ditto
		6	Rather better
	June	11	Troyes very ill with fever
		12	Troyes to Chalons very ill
		13	Chalons to Rheims better

LAST ILLNESS

1851	December	3	Greenwich to Ramsgate – Taken ill
		4	Very ill
		5	Very ill, but rather better
		6	Better
		7	Much better, but still weak
		8	Better, but very weak
		25	Very unwell (?)

*I have been so dreadfully ill, so ill that it was at one time doubtful if I could ever recover – the medical men recommend perfect rest till the advanced time of spring...*¹⁵

15 Ferrey: op. cit. p. 252

1851 January – February

*I believe I have been too hurried so soon after such an illness. I cannot get my bodily strength up at all, and I perspire intensely, to that degree as to be obliged to put on five or six shirts a day...*¹⁶

16 Ferrey: op. cit. p. 253

*You have no conception of the dreadful agony which I still suffer, the least thing agitates me: I feel trembling and my eyesight is dimmed. I am obliged to bathe my eyes with sea water, and to drink the coldest water to bring my sight again.*¹⁷

17 Ferrey: op. cit. p. 253

At the end of 1851 Pugin's physical condition deteriorated alarmingly, as the above-table shows. He also complained that he was suffering from a return of a kidney ailment:

*The drowsiness still continues... I have been obliged to sleep four times today ... My head becomes heavy, my hand shakes and I am obliged to stop.*¹⁸

18 P. Stanton: Pugin: London
1971: p. 189

Powell in his memoir says:

*Some of his family had been warned by his doctor, Daniels, [sic] that there must be the inevitable end of such a long mind-strain...*¹⁹

19 A. Wedgwood: op. cit. p. 914

indicating that years of stress and overwork had already taken their toll. Pugin himself, when ill, was aware of the risks he was running. Writing to Hardman he says:

*All Daniel's comfort is that I am an example of a man who has lived 60 years in 40 and is now suffering for it.*²⁰

20 Pugin/Hardman Correspondence: HLRO 651 Dr. James Daniel was the family doctor and a friend of Pugin.

Pugin may even have sensed that he did not have much longer to live, because there is a report of 'the edifying preparation which Pugin made for his death.'²¹ Ferrey mentions 'premonitory symptoms which had shown themselves during the last few years and had been noticed by his friends...'²² These included mind strain, hallucinations, increasing signs of self-pity which appear in his letters to Hardman, and 'exaggerations of some of his natural characteristics', such as giving money to beggars.

21 E.S. Purcell: in The Dublin Review 51: February 1862: pp 257-273

22 Ferrey: op. cit. p.266

The period of real insanity began in February 1852, when his doctor removed him from Ramsgate to London. He spent two or three days staying at the Golden Cross Hotel in the Strand with his friend George Myers, seeing the sites of medieval London. Talbot Bury, a friend, stated in his obituary notice, that:

His (Pugin's) impression during the whole of the day was, we are told, that he was affecting the



union of the Roman and the Anglican Church.²³

Ferrey also mentions these grandiose, manic delusions. While at the Golden Cross:

*one night he became much excited and attacked Mr. Myers, but was ultimately calmed; and the latter, in order to turn his attention to a subject of interest, reproached him for keeping the scaffolding up at Beverley as they were waiting for drawings. "Give me a pencil", said Pugin, and on the back of a large envelope he designed an elegant vane, clear and precise, which has since been placed on the corner pinnacle of St. Mary's at Beverley.*²⁴

Pugin's son Edward takes up the story in a public letter he wrote to set the record straight:

On the first outbreak of my father's malady at the Golden Cross Hotel, Dr. Tweedie was called in by the late Sir Charles Barry, who at once advised his being placed under the care of Dr. Phelp [sic] of Kensington house; but finding his state of mind did not improve, after anxious deliberation on the part of his friends, some of whom were desirous he should be entrusted to the care of Dr. Forbes Winslow, it was finally decided in favour of Bethlehem. The reason adduced for this decision was, that a professional man, personally known to my father's friends, had just left that institution, after a short confinement, perfectly restored; and all agreed that he would there receive the best professional treatment, and be at the same time under the constant care of his old friend, Dr. Doyle, of St. George's. So far, again, from his removal from this institution being stealthily effected, or caused by an outraged public opinion, I can only say that my father's removal was solely at the instance of his wife, who in conjunction with the Rev. Mr. Glennie,²⁵ acted in opposition to the wishes of his other friends (who were satisfied with his treatment and progress whilst at Bethlehem), and removed him to the Grove, Hammersmith, where they remained in constant attendance upon him. Dr. Dickson was called in, under whose care he remained during six weeks, during which time my father had so far recovered as to be able to return to his house at Ramsgate, where, two days after his arrival, he was seized with an epileptic fit, from which he never rallied.

The records of the Bethlehem Royal Hospital show that his first 'attack' took place on 25th February 1852, and he was admitted to Bethlehem on 21st June. The notes made on his condition comment on his mental confusion, and violent and restless behaviour, under the heading of Mania.²⁶ He was discharged into the care of the Glennies on July 30th.

Because of some slight improvement in his condition he was taken home to Ramsgate on September 11th, where 'he appeared to enter into the delights of his old home, visiting with great delight all portions of his buildings'.²⁷ But the remission was brief. During the night of 13th September he was seized with strong convulsions, and died on the following day. On his death certificate the cause of death is given as: "Insane 6 months: Convulsions followed by Coma Certified."²⁸

CONCLUSIONS

I have shown that in his adult life Pugin was subject to extreme and persistent spells of mental and emotional stress. On top of this, he suffered from bouts of physical illness, and there are occasional suggestions of mental disorder. Together, these led to the breakdown which preceded his death.

Pugin progressed, during a period of some seven months, from depressive and manic states, with some intermissions, to convulsions and death. This could indicate that he was suffering from General Paralysis of the Insane, the final stage of a syphilitic infection contracted in earlier life.²⁹ Pugin was given frequent doses of mercury, which was used at that time as a treatment for syphilis, and the repeated fits he suffered during the period before his death might indicate that this was the cerebral disease that killed him. However, mercury was also prescribed at the time for non-syphilitic eye inflammations, and while it is conceivable that early promiscuity during his youthful period in the theatre world could have led to venereal infection, it is perhaps unlikely.

It is more likely that the inherent weaknesses of his personality, aggravated by years of acute stress, illness and overwork eventually caused the breakdown which became both physical and mental. He was undoubtedly what is known as a cyclothymic personality, someone subject to frequent mood swings from elation, hyperactivity and immense productivity, to depressive spells, characterised by lassitude and diminished productivity.

This personality type is frequently found in people who in their forties or fifties, after some minor depressions, begin to suffer from psychotic states of melancholia and sometimes also of mania (Bipolar Affective Psychoses). However, they do not die abruptly after convulsions. It may be that before returning to Ramsgate, Pugin had been heavily sedated and that a sudden cessation of medication had caused withdrawal convulsions, after which he had died of a

23 The Builder: Sept. 25th 1852

24 Ferrey: op. cit. p 271

25 John Melville Glennie (1816-78) was a convert to Catholicism who entered the priesthood in 1851. He was a lifelong friend of Pugin.

26 M. Belcher: Annotated Critical Bibliography of A W N Pugin: Mansell: 1987: pp 318-9. The clinical report on Pugin gives as the cause of his insanity 'over labour and study in his profession.' Bethlehem Archives, Beckenham, Kent CB/56: Male: Morison (1852) p 23.

27 Ferrey: op. cit. p 269

28 Belcher: op. cit.

29 General Paralysis of the insane (GPI) is the last stage of syphilitic infection, where the organism, the spirochete, has reached the tissues of the brain. Before the use of penicillin it was invariably fatal. It was characterised by various paralyses, as well as memory and other intellectual decline, and in the early stages often by euphoria or depression. This stage is reached between 15 and 25 years after the original infection.



mishap, e.g. choking on vomit. On the other hand, his kidney trouble may have led to severe arterial hypertension causing psychotic symptoms and finally a cerebral haemorrhage. No post-mortem seems to have been performed, and it is impossible to arrive at a firm diagnosis, or to exclude some other less common conditions.³⁰

Modern studies have shown that there is often a link between intense creativity/genius and psychological disorder. For some people periods of psychosis are almost the necessary prerequisite for periods of superlative function and high achievement. Studies of the backgrounds of prolific writers such as John Ruskin have revealed threads of madness and creativity running through their family histories. The most likely explanation is that the genes which are coded for creativity are also coded for madness, and that the tendency to one is inherited along with the other.³¹

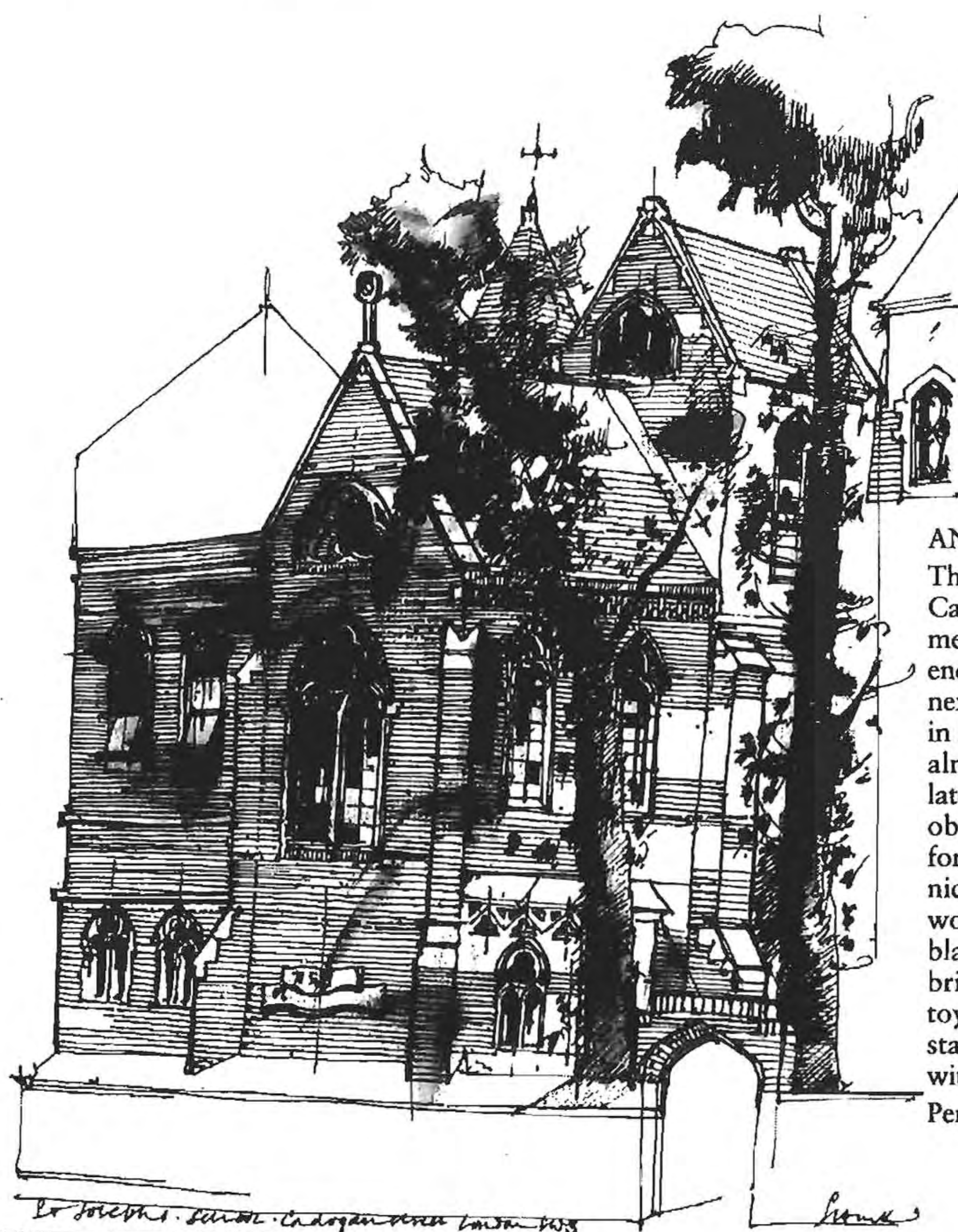
Pugin may well have inherited a tendency towards mental instability, which first manifested itself in childhood, and was periodically aggravated both by the stresses he suffered during his adult life, and by the innate contradictions of his own character. He was a mixture of assertiveness and independence, of self-effacement and self-advertisement. He craved attention and respect, and yet exhibited a paradoxical lack of empathy for the feeling of others. He lacked a protective sense of proportion because he was preoccupied with his own vision and doctrines and could not cope when they received a harsh reception or made no apparent mark on society. He needed to win victories, but he relished being 'Pugin contra mundum'. He was a hyperactive polemicist, who nevertheless needed the stability and security of his home, which he achieved with the building of The Grange, at Ramsgate. The contradictions must have generated acute mental tension and perhaps account for the 'driven' nature of his personality. ('I am like a locomotive always flying about').

But beyond all these paradoxes – Contrasts, one might almost call them – Pugin was an immensely likeable and captivating man, scintillating, assertive and appealing. Whatever the roots of his final insanity were, they never obscured a fundamentally attractive personality, which Paul Waterhouse summed up with the one word 'naïveté'. He was simple, with the strong, ingenuous simplicity of a child or a genius.³² A man whose personality drove him both to depths of despair and to immense and brilliant creativity, whose undoubted genius was tinged with madness, and whose very intensity of living and feeling precipitated his dramatic and untimely death.

30 I am most grateful to Dr. Felix Post, Emeritus Physician at the Bethlem Royal and Maudsley Hospitals in London, for his help with this part of the paper. Dr. Post has made an extensive study of the psychopathology of famous individuals using a modern psychiatric diagnostic framework and applying it to the lives of 291 famous scientists, composers, politicians, artists and writers of the past. He had discovered that severe personality deviations and functional disorders such as depression and alcoholism were significantly more prevalent amongst artists and writers and amongst scientists. His results suggest that men of genius are more prone to psychological problems, and that certain psychological personality characteristics are casually linked to some kinds of valuable creativity (see Dr. Felix Post: *Creativity and Psychopathology: British Journal of Psychiatry* (1994): 165: pp 22-34)

31 See Gwen Watkins, Gordon Clarridge and Ruth Pryor: *Sounds from the Bell Jar: Macmillan: a study of the links between psychosis and creativity in 10 literary figures.*

32 Paul Waterhouse: *The Life and Work of Welby Pugin: Parts 1-7, Architectural Review* 1897, 1898: November 1898 p 162.



AN AWN PUGIN SCHOOL, 1841

This drawing of St Joseph's School, Cadogan Street, is the work of architect member Stephen Howell, who says "I enclose a small ink drawing of the school next to the church in Cadogan Street. It is in fact quite an extensive work including alms houses restored, as Pevsner notes, later in the century. The mature trees now obscure the collection of towers which form the spikey skyline. The place is very nice as it is still used as a school and works well. The rather sombre grey and black brick and stone is offset by the bright colours of childrens' playground toys. I also like the main door into the staircase tower – very well articulated with mouldings."

Pen and wash, 28 x 21cm.



A few comments from Michael Blaker on the Society's never-to-be-forgotten trip to Cheadle

THE EXPEDITION TO CHEADLE

by Michael Blaker

Cheadle was Cheadle, perfect Cheadle – and perfect was the Pugin Society tour there. As we walked down Grange Road to St. Augustine's at 9.30am on the 28th, it seemed more like a morning in February than flaming June. The rain swept up as, swathed in plastic and hoods, we huddled in the Master's porch. You would hardly have supposed he was encouraging us to set off on a tour of his favoured jewel.... Ah! here came the minibus, brand new, with reassuring driver. We arrived in Staffordshire on a wintry four o'clock and were shown to our own house of residence in Denstone College. We then enjoyed, in our lecturer Rory O'Donnell's words "a meat tea" in the great refectory.

We were soon in the minibus again riding through a landscape of high hedges and small fields to Alton Towers, where Rory commenced his tour. The dull and rainy weather romantically suited the gauntness of the buildings. Back at our lodgings, we enjoyed a party with wine and cheese and meat saved from our earlier meal: "It's all yours," we had been told "take it with you for a midnight snack."

The next morning, Saturday, before visiting Alton Castle, we gathered in the church of St. John's. Rory addressed us from the pulpit, aided by Father Bede of Cheadle, who was doing so much to make us welcome. He told us of the Chaplain to the Earl of Shrewsbury, an American, who had a wife and family, but, wishing to become a Catholic priest, put his wife in a nunnery and his children in boarding schools. Some time later, however, he felt the "need for the comfort of a wife" and knocked at the nunnery doors for her. She had now taken to the cloistered life, however, to the extent of founding her own order and indignantly repulsed him.

Rory then took us up to the high battlements of the Castle, built by the Earl, possibly for his mother-in-law. After a packed lunch in the Cheadle parish room, with wine provided by Father Bede, we at last entered the magical St. Giles, to the amazement of those who had not been there before – the sombre exterior giving no hint of the decoration within. Rory gave us an enlightening disquisition. Father Bede added to this with amusing asides. Someone commented on how impressed the congregation must be with the splendour of the church. Bede: "They don't look at the decorations – They're so mesmerised by the priest". He told us the story of the carpet which the parish subscribed to some forty years ago to cover the then despised Minton tiles in the chancel: "I thought it a good idea, when I arrived, to remove this, but there were still some of the original subscribers living. I thought it rather unfair to pray for their demise, so I suggested to them I should in exchange pray for their extended lives. This proved acceptable, and the carpet was removed, with the splendid effect you now see..."

Rory told us that Pugin never signed anything. One could not help imagining Pugin saying: "Signed, Powell? It's signed all over!" Indeed it was – all bore the stamp of his intense and vibrating enthusiasm. Some of our party thought the much later Stations too assertive – fitted over the window frames in the way (in fact) satirised by Pugin in his etchings. They had once been removed, but people kept saying "Where are they?" So back they came. Father Bede pointed out that officials of the church had in fact said to him: "You know, Pugin wasn't God, Father...."

On Sunday morning, having enjoyed an extensive lecture at Denstone from Rory the previous evening, we attended High Mass at St Giles. Here we had the most spectacular setting for a service ever – enough to convert the most dedicated atheist among us: the chancel a blaze of light reflecting off every gilded surface. The swinging of the censers (irreverently termed by choirboys "smoke boxes") filled the chancel with a misty ambience framed by the multivarious Pugin décor of the nave. Afterwards we took photos in the brilliance of the lighting and were even able to walk across the top of the screen – surprisingly solid, in fact. Some of the hymns in the service had been by Father Faber of local celebrity, who had been so fat that the altar had a semi-circle sawed out to accommodate him.....

Before lunch – provided by the Cheadle parishioners for us in the parish rooms – and of a generous and sumptuous kind – we visited St Wilfrid's at nearby Cotton. A very long nave here, and a Pugin window with vivid toybox colours contrasted with a later Powell window, High Victorian, beautifully and sensitively drawn. Rory said it was sentimental, soft and weak compared to Pugin, but "I love it." This was the kind of window apologised for by Vicars in their guidebooks before the swing in taste. "The clergy again," as Rory would say. It was notable that Father Bede took such shots well and replied in amiable but pointed kind to such ripostes. He indeed entertained us with many anecdotes. I commented to him that his two little girl supporters standing to attention in the Mass had started to misbehave a little with wriggles and subdued chatter, but had been subdued by a side glance...

"I gave them the Bede eye," he said. "It's the girls who are the worst. I looked round once to see a little girl doing a ballet position" – he imitated this for us – "the boys are much easier. One glance and they go bright scarlet and turn into a pillar of salt."

Our long trek home followed upon lunch. An excellent excursion, despite the rain and cold. Certainly, we thought, there are English Puginites a-bred who will rue the day they were not with us at Cheadle.



LIST OF NEW MEMBERS

Dr Brian Baird; Bates, Stewart J; Bird, Jacina; Daniel, Valerie; Davis, Stephen; de Vere Cole, Diana; Diestelkamp, Edward; Father Michael Fisher; Hemming, Mrs Matilda; KADOC(Dr de Maeyer, Director, The Catholic Documentation and Research Centre of the Catholic University of Louvain); Dr James Macaulay; Morecroft, Pamela; Dr Andrew T Nadell; Parisien, Irene Pugin; Pugin, Lucille; Pugin, Richard; Ryle, Mrs C A; Dr Rosemary Scott; Sherry, Veronica; Winkley, Austin; Wyatt, John S; Young, Victoria.

Dates for your Diary

► 21-28th April 1997

Dr Roderick O'Donnell, Inspector of Historic Buildings, English Heritage, and Ms Maggi Morris MA, will be leading a study tour to Ireland, entitled Masters of the Gothic Revival; the Pugins in Ireland. This tour is organised by the University of Liverpool, but Pugin Society members are of course particularly welcome to attend. All those who came to Cheadle with Dr O'Donnell will know that it would be a sadness indeed to miss this forthcoming trip. Approx. cost £550.00. All details from: Mrs Lesley Crombie, Centre for Continuing Education, The University of Liverpool, 19 Abercromby Square, Liverpool L69 7ZG. Book early to avoid disappointment.



Our first lecture next year will be timed to coincide with the Ramsgate Spring Festival, when many enjoyable events will be occurring, and will be entitled 'Pugin and Morris'. It will be given by John Purkis, (for details of whom see 'Our Contributors'), and will take place on Thursday 22nd May at 8pm in Ramsgate Public Library.



In the last week of June (dates to be consolidated later) we envisage a trip of around three days to "that most detestable of all detestable places, Birmingham, where Greek buildings and smoking chimneys, Radicals and Dissenters, are blended together", as A.W.N. succinctly puts it(!) Be that as it may, there are a great many very worthwhile aspects of Pugin, and those influenced by him, to be studied in Birmingham and its vicinity. More on this anon.



On October 11th of next year we hope to hold our AGM, not in Ramsgate, enjoyable though that was, but at St George's Southwark, where there will be many interesting Pugin lines to pursue. Details later.



It should be noted that because of the arrival of St Augustine 1400 years ago in Thanet there will be special celebrations in Ramsgate this year. On Sunday 25th May there will be Mass in the grounds of St Augustine's Monastery, to be celebrated by Cardinal Basil Hume at 10.30am. Pilgrims from Rome will re-enact the original landing of St Augustine and arrive at Pegwell Bay at 3pm, also on 25th May. On 28th at 11am there will be a special Mass in St Augustine's Church, and at 7.30pm, also on that day, an ecumenical service, with Gospel choir, again in St Augustine's. The church will also be hosting a commemorative concert ('classical', for want of a more suitable description) to be organised by Ramsgate Spring Festival. Details for this last can be obtained nearer the time. The Pugin Society will be taking visitors round the church on the afternoons of Thursday 29th and Saturday 31st May.



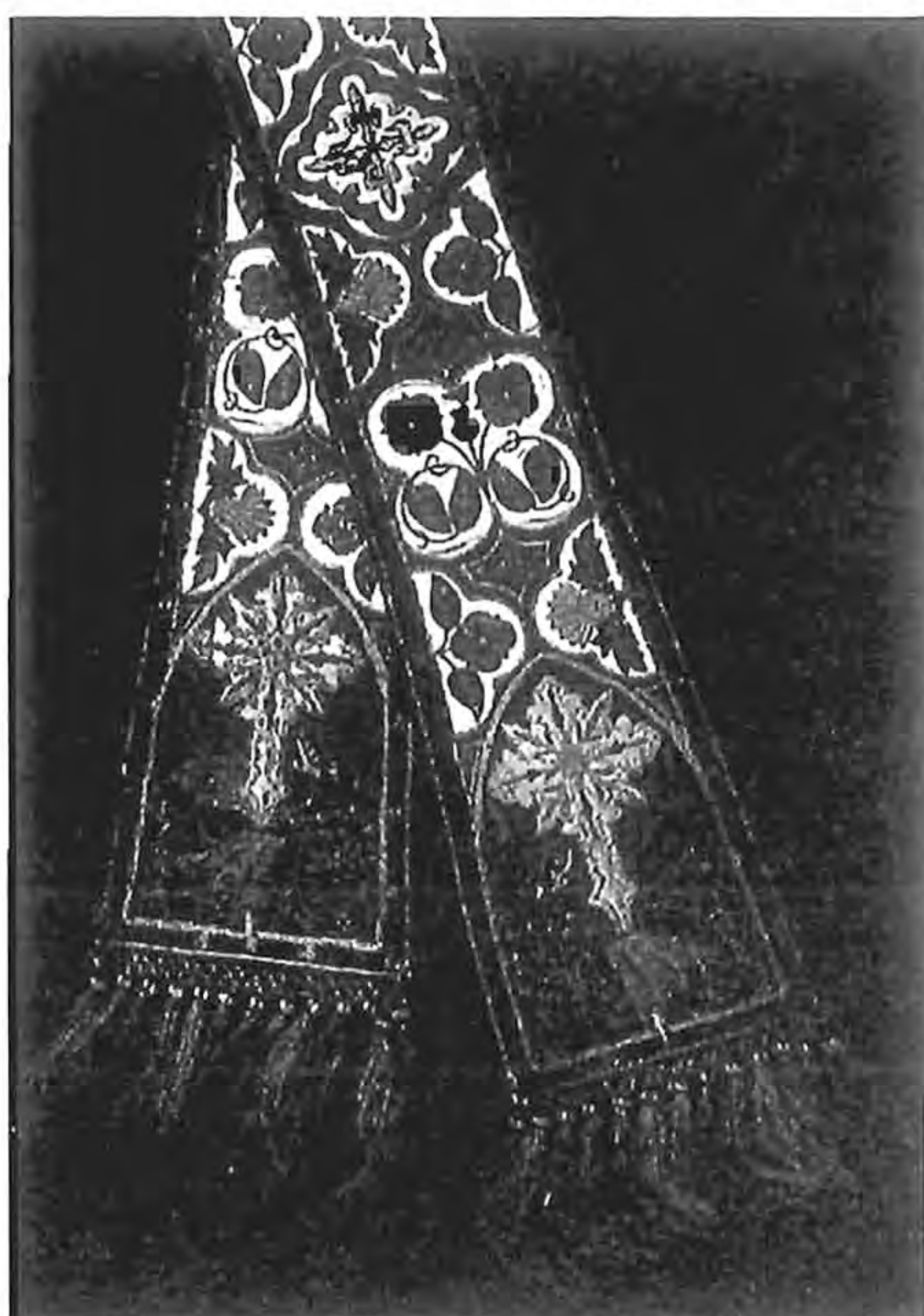
WATTS & CO

Watts & Co. is one of the most remarkable survivals of the Gothic Revival of the nineteenth century: a firm founded in 1874 by three leading late-Victorian church architects, George Frederick Bodley, Thomas Garner and Gilbert Scott, the Younger, to produce furniture, textiles and needlework in a style distinctively their own.

Bodley and his partners were of the generation that rediscovered the beauty of late gothic art, principally that of Germany and the Low Countries. It was from looking at minute details of textiles in gothic paintings that they worked up designs not only for diapers and wallpapers but also for fabrics and painted decoration.

However, the founders of Watts & Co. could not have designed such convincing wallpapers and textiles if it had not been for the earlier initiative of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-52). They owed their life-long devotion to romantic Gothic to him. The Victorian revival of Gothic design in all fields of the applied arts owes more to Pugin than to any other architect. His best known

wallpapers were produced for the Houses of Parliament but others were designed for domestic use and they were manufactured for Pugin by Scott, Cuthbertson & Co. of Chelsea. A collection of these designs, thought to be lost, were rediscovered in 1975 and include some of his most successful work. The best have been added to the Watts' collection.



A stole designed by Pugin is part of the Elizabeth Hoare Collection at Liverpool Cathedral. A permanent exhibition of embroidery celebrating ecclesiastical embroidery of the nineteenth century and showing the continuing role of the Church as the patron of exquisite embroidery.

Designed by Pugin c 1840 and embroidered in silks and gold passing, purl, plaiting and spangles.

Since 1874 Watts & Co. have been renowned for their embroidery and needlework and some of the most famous altar frontals and vestments designed in the last hundred years were made in their workrooms. Bodley's designs may appear elaborate, but they are characterised by simplicity, strength and restraint, for in his studio lay open Pugin's Glossary of Ornament.

The all-pervasive influence of Pugin is well demonstrated in the Collection: in 1843 he had attacked modern embroideries which "covered as they are with hearts, rosebuds and doves stand forth in their prettiness like valentines on a large scale ...the only hope of reviving the perfect style is by strictly adhering to ancient authorities".

Membership

Annual Membership: £7.50 U.K. or £9 Overseas
Cheques/Money orders (Sterling only, please)
payable to: The Pugin Society.

Subscriptions should be sent to:
Catriona Blaker (Hon. Sec)
122 Grange Road
Ramsgate
Kent CT11 9PT

Chairman: Nick Dermott Dip. Arch.
Vice-Chairman: Judith Elland Crocker
Hon. Treasurer: Oonagh Robertson.

Your subscription covers the possibility of arranged tours, the receipt of a twice-yearly newsletter, participation at the annual conference in Ramsgate, and also assures you of a warm personal welcome from the officers of the Society should you wish at any time to come and see, and be shown around, the Ramsgate sites.

Credits

The Pugin Society Newsletter is edited by Catriona Blaker, Nick Dermott and Judith Crocker and published at 122 Grange Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9PT

Design is by SandwichDeSign (☎ 01304-617626
e-mail: pennamacoor@enterprise.net) and Nick Dermott.

Printing is by S.S. Press, Margate, Kent
(☎ 01843-299923).

We welcome articles, letters and graphic material. The next newsletter will be published in January 1997, copy date 1st May 1997.

