



TRUE PRINCIPLES

The Newsletter of the Pugin Society

Penny Ward

SUMMER 1998



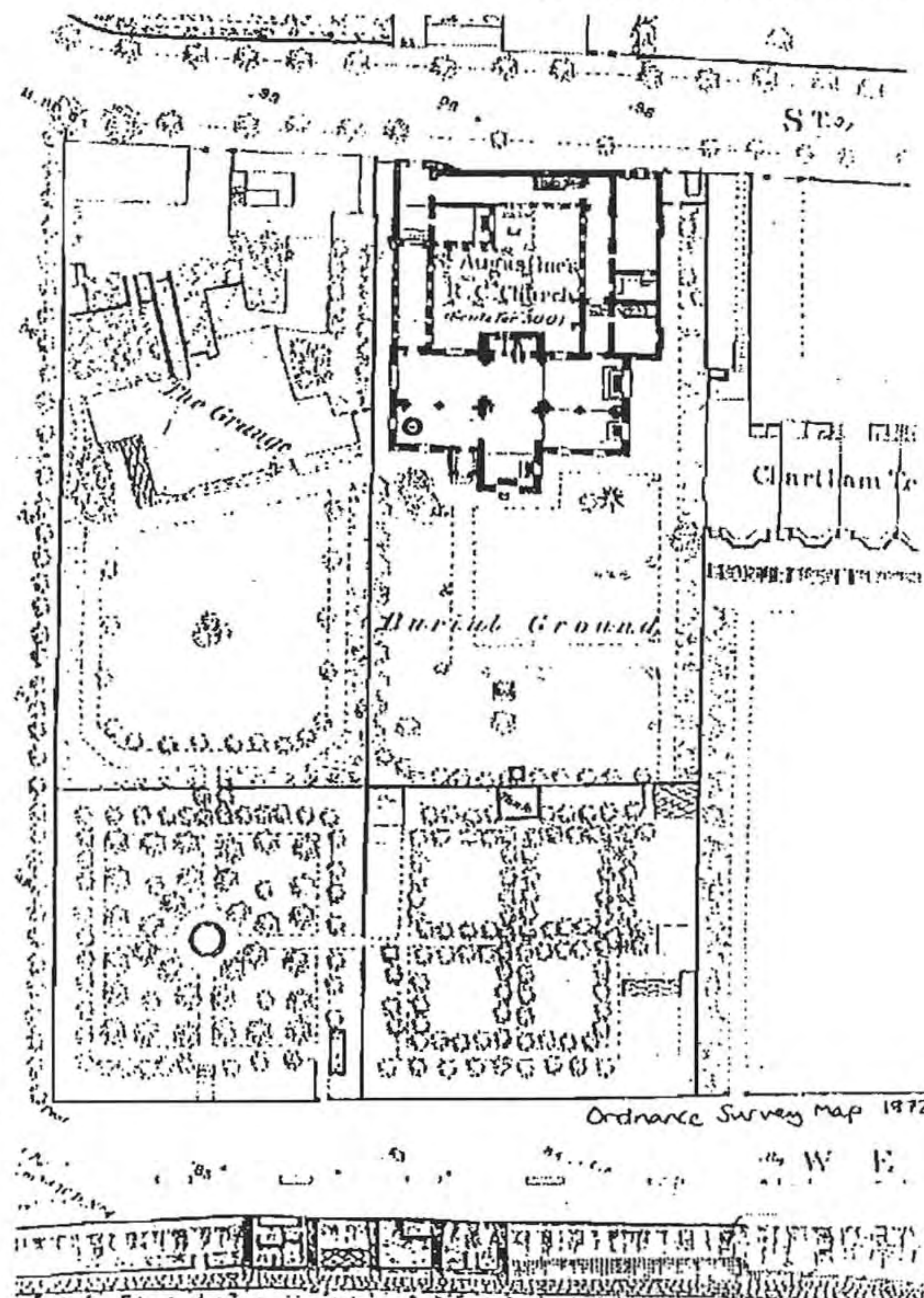
It was with shock and sadness that we learnt at Easter of the death of Penny Ward at the age of 52.

In talking to her colleagues and friends, however, it was her irreverent sense of fun and ability to inspire and motivate people that endures most. She is greatly missed both as

Local Studies Librarian and committee member.

Penny was a founder member of this Society and a driving force in its creation. She was a linguist, and by inclination a traveller, who for the past 20 years had worked for Kent County Council as a librarian. Born in Ramsgate she tirelessly extolled the virtues of Thanet and its rich cultural history through a period when such matters were at best ignored if not seen as an impedance to progress.

It was largely due to her work that the profile of the Pugin family's connection with Ramsgate was raised locally and hence nationally.



It is intended to hold the A.G.M. in London and Ramsgate on alternate years. This year it is the turn of Ramsgate in October and all members are urged to attend to exchange views and help direct the future course of the Society. I look forward to seeing you then.

Finally, please pay your subs!

With best wishes,

NICK DERMOTT
Chairman

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to all our wellwishers, supporters, new members and a very big thank-you in particular to our contributors, who write us such wonderful articles. Especial thanks also to Alexandra Wedgwood, who always has time for us!



The Lord Chancellor's Apartment: a personal view

An exclusive for True Principles readers by **ALEXANDRA WEDGWOOD**



he ceaseless press coverage on the subject of the redecoration of the Lord Chancellor's apartment at the Palace of Westminster has probably given Pugin's name the greatest prominence to the general public that it has ever had, and for this the Pugin Society is very grateful. A great number of important issues, like the use of public money and conservation policies, are involved in this matter, but here I would like to put down something of my understanding of the history of the apartment and my reaction to the results of the recent work. I must emphasise that this is a *personal* view.

The first thing to realise is that the Lord Chancellor's apartment is not a historic residence and, above all, is not to be compared with the Speaker's House. That House, at the Commons end of the building, but in a similar position in the end pavilion by the Thames, has always been the largest and most important residence in the Palace, with State Rooms, to which there is some public access, on the Principal Floor and (now) a private flat on the First Floor, which was originally the bedroom floor. The pavilion at the Lords' end was divided vertically into two residences, those of Black Rod and the House of Lords Librarian. The present Lord Chancellor's apartment was made in the 1920s by amalgamating horizontally on the first floor the bedrooms of Black Rod's house with the drawing room of the Librarian's, the only large reception room in the new apartment being the River Room. By giving some public access to his apartment the Lord Chancellor has therefore merged the usual division between State and Private rooms. The second point to note is that all these residences were originally decorated and furnished after Pugin's death and therefore were always in a 'Puginesque' style, rather than by Pugin. The results therefore should not be called 'restoration' or 'conservation', but are rather a late 20th century creation of something new, using some original Pugin patterns for wallpapers and curtains, some original Puginesque furniture, some modern reproductions or new Gothic furniture, plus a remarkable collection of mostly early 20th century British paintings and 19th century sculpture chosen by the Lord Chancellor himself and borrowed from major British institutions.

The much discussed Pugin wallpaper is in my opinion one of the major successes of the redecoration. Pugin made a great many designs for wallpaper and many of the original blocks survive in an Islington factory, where they are hand-printed with the greatest care and expertise. Moreover a pattern book exists in the Victoria & Albert Museum, which gives many details of where in the Palace which patterns were used. Here this has meant that in the River Room, the wallpaper is that which was put there in the late 1850s, and truly magnificent it is, based on a wonderful 15th century velvet pattern and printed in double flopped greens. All the wallpapers used are original Pugin designs, all splendid in their way but, for me, some in more successful and appropriate colourways than others. Such wallpaper incidentally is used throughout the building and, inevitably, it is expensive. The criticism of the

cost was least justified in this respect.

The furniture, as I indicated, is a mixed bag but, again for me, the Puginesque 19th century pieces stand out, with several nice little chests, tables and settees. There is a very good simple new 'Pugin' dining table and some good new Gothic mirrors which are not too derivative. Pugin textiles are always more difficult to handle because few originals have survived and his designs, particularly for carpets, are often incomplete and difficult to follow. For most of the upholstery, fabrics to Pugin's designs currently manufactured by Watts have been used. I feel, however, that the colourways chosen are all unfortunate and out of keeping. The worst mistakes have been made with the carpets, most particularly and sadly that in the River Room. Here a small-scale dense Pugin design has been used, taken from an original watercolour in the Victoria & Albert Museum. Pugin meant it, I am sure, to be used in corridors, and indeed it has been so used in the Committee corridor just outside this room. Here, however, the same design has been expanded to fill a large rectangle. Pugin designed his patterns very clearly with different sized rooms in mind and he would never have used this small one for such a large space. But here the situation is made much worse by using too many and incorrect colours. The carpet in the Committee corridor used exactly the colours of the Pugin watercolour, which work well enough, though I suspect he merely coloured it that way for clarity. The usual mistake with late 20th century interpretations of Pugin patterns is to use too many colours.

The final and most interesting ingredient of the apartment is the selection of pictures and sculpture, and these have been the personal choices of Lord and Lady Irvine, both of whom are considerable and knowledgeable connoisseurs. In the River Room two magnificent marine paintings by Samuel Scott dominate. There is also a delightful portrait by Landseer of the neo-classical sculptor, John Gibson, whose white marble statue of Narcissus is placed below. There are two other white marble statues in the room and, because of their weight, they all stand on large ungainly bases, and give a feeling of unease to the room. (Since writing this, I have learnt that this feeling must be general, and the largest statue is to be repositioned on the ground floor, and the bases of the other two altered.) In the dining room there is a splendid canvas by William Orpen and another by Frank Brangwyn, and in the master bedroom two lovely William McTaggart landscapes. Elsewhere there are a number of good Laverys, 18th century engravings and casts of classical busts. It should be emphasised that these works of art have all been loaned to the Lord Chancellor and probably will not remain after his tenure of office has ended, and perhaps not so long. It is very rare to have any art-loving ministers or officials in the Palace of Westminster and so there are many reasons to rejoice at this one. He has created a most unusual, fascinating and thought-provoking apartment. I am delighted that the Pugin Society will have the opportunity to see it; I do urge you to go there and make up your own mind.



The Grange, Ramsgate

The following has been submitted by Donald Insall Associates, Architects acting for the Landmark Trust at The Grange.



In 14th February 1998, members of The Pugin Society were allowed, by kind permission of the Landmark Trust, to see inside The Grange. Those who attended may have been saddened by the condition of the property, which has suffered many years of neglect. It is to be hoped that the Landmark Trust, as the new owners, can be supported and encouraged in their plans to repair the fabric and convert the house to a Landmark property, so that others can experience this historic and important building for many years to come.

Some of AWN Pugin's descendants will have remembered certain parts of the house as it now stands, from visits during their childhood, or recognised features from family photographs. English Heritage and the Landmark Trust's architects, Donald Insall Associates, have carried out extensive research into the building's history to ensure that as much as possible is understood about the nature and authorship of the fabric before repairs or alterations are undertaken. The following sequence of events has now been established:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1841 | AWN Pugin buys the land at Ramsgate |
| 1843-44 | 'The Grange' is constructed to drawings and written instructions received from AWN Pugin. |
| 1846-1850 | Improvements to the 'best rooms' (panelling, new stained glass, ceilings, redecorations) carried out by Augustus in anticipation of his third marriage. |
| 1852-1862 | Augustus Pugin dies + family move to Birmingham. 'The Grange' let to family friends. No alterations recorded. |
| 1862 | Edward Pugin returns to 'The Grange' to work on the monastery and church (cloisters). |
| 1868 | Peter Paul's sketch of the West side of the house shows window canopies, original casement in the tower and original dormer to the South-facing attic. |
| By 1872/73 | The flat-roofed extension is built by Edward with the original window resited in its West elevation and South-facing glazed doors; conservatory against West wall of library/AWNP's study.
The following alterations were also carried out by Edward: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opening up of dining room (insertion of four-centred arch to form servery area).• Glazed entrance way to North elevation.• First floor bathroom extension to North elevation (over entrance).• Extension to kitchen, bedrooms above + new dormers.• Entrance gates and piers.• Cartoon room: roof alterations, fenestration alterations. Edward may possibly have been responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sacristy and covered way outside the kitchen.• Dog house.• Internal 4-centred arches (dining room/servery, drawing room/library. library/new extension).• Insertion of blank arch in entrance hall.• Additional mantel shelves to fire surrounds. |
| 1875 | Edward Pugin dies.
Cuthbert Pugin + Peter Paul Pugin form partnership ('Pugin & Pugin'). |
| 1904 | Peter Paul Pugin dies.
June 1904: fire – Cuthbert Pugin probably responsible for reformation of roof and some rebuilding of the tower. (May have built a summer house in the garden and balconies in the cliff face). |
| 1928 | Cuthbert Pugin dies. |
| 1951 | Change of use of 'The Grange' to school + provision of toilets. (Presumably first floor over Sacristy). |

It is apparent, from these findings and from close examination of the details of the house, that AWN Pugin's original concept has been much obscured by these later alterations and additions.

The Landmark Trust and their architects are now in consultation with English Heritage and other parties over the level and amount of reinstatement of the original design that can be achieved.



A THRILLING FIND

Some remarkable family news from **SARAH HOULE**

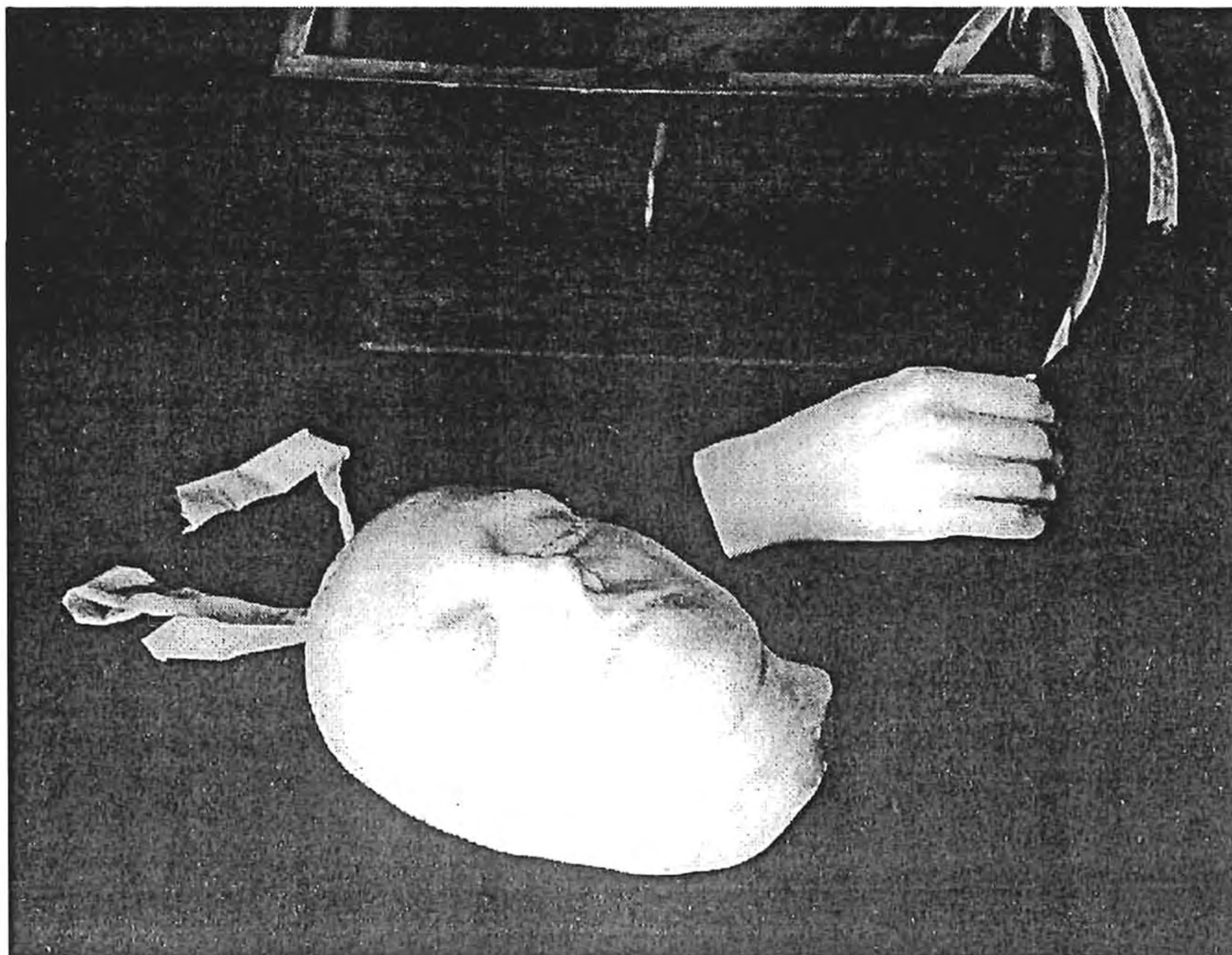


his discovery came about because I was trying to find some portrait of Anne Garnet, Pugin's first wife and my great-great grandmother, who so tragically died a week after giving birth to Anne, Pugin's first child. Alexandra Wedgwood had already told me that she knew of a death mask and cast of a hand, which Pugin had ordered to be taken after Anne's demise. This had been kept in a large packing-case in Pugin's studio, and no-one was allowed to touch it. There is a marvellous description of this in the Trappes-Lomax biography – "After Pugin's death, it was opened and there was a rosewood work-box from which the tray had been removed and in which was a death-mask of his first wife, a cast of one her hands, and a piece of unfinished needlework, a garment intended for her child. It appeared that she had been small and of a delicate beauty. She was eighteen when she died. (Information of Mrs W.H. Watts)."

Mrs Watts was my grandmother and Anne's grand-daughter, so I felt that somewhere in my house there might be something. All I could think of was a rosewood box which had always been around: we had never found the key, and, as so often happens, had not got any further. This time I could wait no longer, and had arranged for a locksmith to undo it. However, my husband David had discovered a box of old keys in an outhouse including one rather ornate one; he decided to have a go, and with both of us standing there with baited breath, tried the key – it turned, and the box was open.

There, in a crimson velvet lined interior, was the mask and the hand wrapped in rather antiquated tissue paper – it was an amazing sensation, almost macabre. Underneath a velvet shelf was the piece of material, like coarse muslin, with a tiny piece of ribbon in which was a pin, not even rusty. There was also a box of small packets of hair of Pugin, John and Anne Hardman Powell. I don't think it had been opened for about a hundred years, and everything was in perfect condition.

NOTE: Society member, artist Michael Blaker, comments: "The cast is very well made, and suggests highly professional piecemoulding. One wonders who was employed? In c.1830 the sculptor William Behnes and his two brothers had studios in first Dean and then Osnaburgh Street. (ie, not far from Great Russell Street, where the Pugins were living, and where Anne died. Their father was a piano maker who shared a house with a French sculptor (who may himself of course have taken the moulds for the casts). Is it possible that the Frenchman could have been an acquaintance of the elder Pugin and either been asked to do the work, or give a recommendation? Of course, this is, at present, only surmise."



PUGIN'S MINIATURES

DAVID MEARA explores a more intimate aspect of A.W.N.P's work



Pugin saw himself as an artist as much as an architect. The frontispiece of his volume *St Marie's College*, an imaginary scheme of 1834¹ shows a medieval illuminator sitting at a desk marked 'A. Pugin' in a Gothic room. Pugin's design for the frontispiece to the second volume of *Examples of Gothic Architecture*, 1836, shows a similar scene. In his preface to the book Pugin states that this "represents an artist of the fifteenth century seated in his study amidst his books". His readers would not have failed to make the connection between these idealised representations of medieval artists and the author himself.

From the trouble he took over such work it is clear that Pugin enjoyed the small-scale drawings that decorate his title-pages. Indeed most of his drawings were small-scale works, which suggests that he felt at home within the confined space of his little sketchbooks, perhaps consciously echoing the enclosed world of the prints of Hollar, Durer and other sixteenth and seventeenth-century Flemish and German artists whose work he had studied in the British Museum.

Paul Waterhouse in his articles on Pugin in the *Architectural Review* commented on his style when referring to drawings for Pugin's *Treatise on Chancel Screens*:

The minuteness of the execution is partly explained by the fact that in all such work Pugin used a lens like a watchmaker's glass, held in the eye.

*Clearly, most of the sketches were first of all 'set out with guiding lines of pencil, and this first process must have been followed up by ruling in the principal vertical and horizontal lines, and by turning in with a 'pen bow' the more important curves. The final process was the freehand addition of the ornament. No appreciative draughtsman can fail to admire the latitude and power with which delicate tracery, fine carvings, mouldings, and figures are indicated by the master hand that has travelled laboriously, but with exceeding rapidity, over the drawings before us.'*²

Pugin's designs for small-scale book illustrations and



Fig 1

letterheads are amongst some of his most charming compositions but they are not as well known as his large illustrations for *Contrasts* and his other architectural works. This is probably because they often appear as illustrations in works by other authors. An example is the delightful frontispiece to

Letters to a Prebendary by Dr John Milner, 1843 edition. Pugin had read the book, and been delighted by it, as he relates in a letter of 1835 to his friend E.J. Willson. Milner had been a pugnacious champion of Catholic rights and duties after his own heart. The frontispiece shows a bishop seated in his gothic panelled study with reading desks and bookshelves, wearing cope and mitre.³

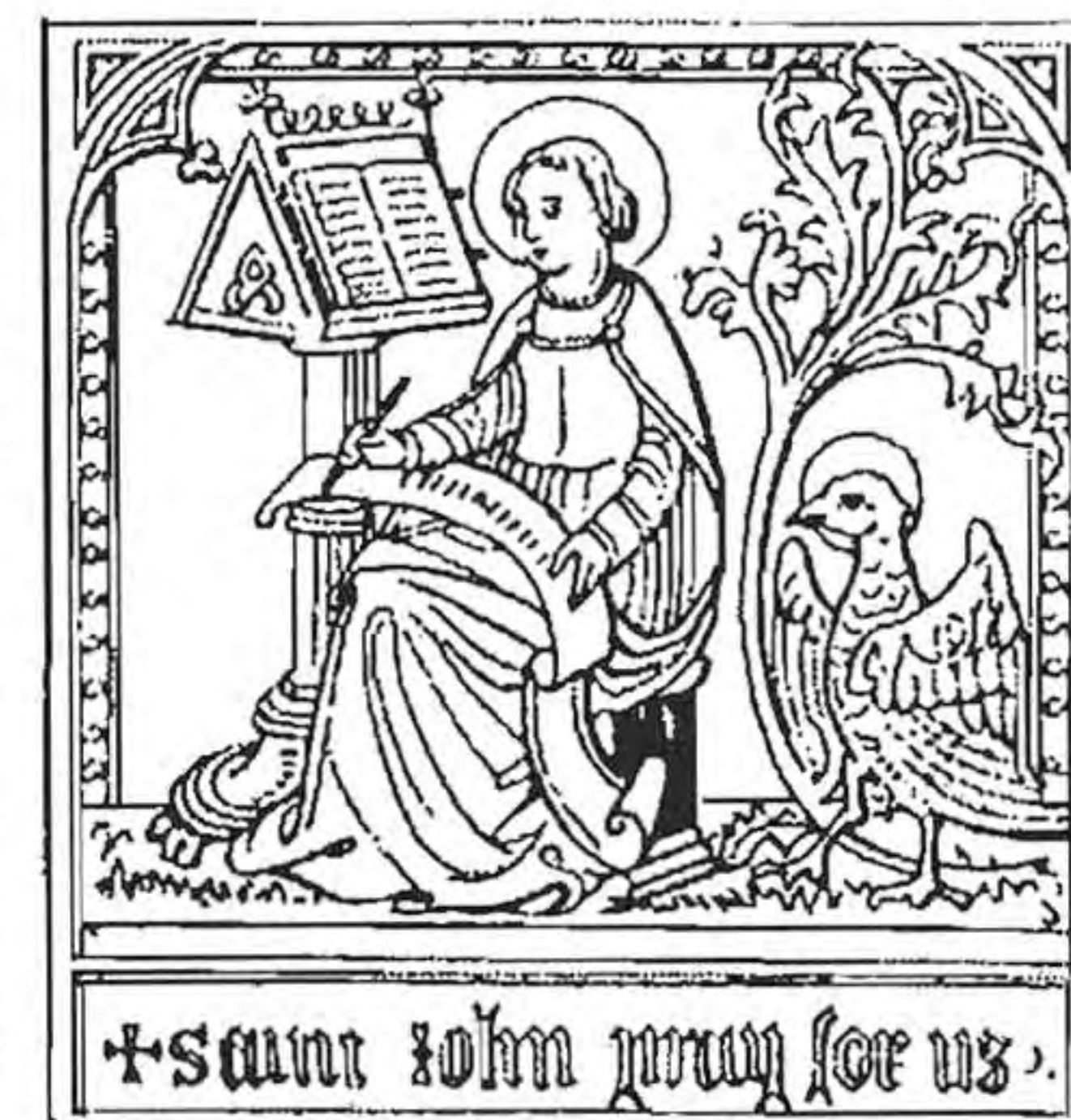


Fig 2

Pugin produced similar miniature illustrations for the series of *Lives of the Saints* by Alban Butler, published by Thomas Richardson between 1842-6. Each volume contains a frontispiece and ornamental title-page designed by Pugin. As an example Volume IV has an illustration of the Te Deum showing figures from all walks of society clustered round a church whilst angels float above. (Fig 1) Volume XII illustrates John the Evangelist writing his gospel, while the eagle looks on. (Fig 2)

Pugin also collaborated with John Henry Newman to provide illustrations for his *Lives of the Saints* published in 1844-5. Pugin supplied eleven illustrations for this work.⁴ Amongst the best are St German, showing him ordaining a priest, (Fig 3) and St Edmund, which looks like a miniature design for a memorial brass.



Fig 3

Pugin also designed numerous letter-heads for clients which were executed by Hardmans of Birmingham. The example illustrated here is from a letter of 1844 and is a delightful composition. (Fig 4) These miniature illustrations show Pugin's assurance when working on this scale, and prove Paul Waterhouse's point that:



it remains a marvel that any instrument so pin pointed as Pugin's pen must have been, should be capable of keeping up an effect of decorative ensemble among work every particle of which is so intricately miniscule.

J.H. Powell in his memoir *Pugin in his Home* describes how Pugin "reserved extraneous drawings such as the illustrations for the lives of the English Saints, books of prayer, etc. for candlelight. 'It is so pleasant to make an extra guinea or two at the end of the day.'"

There must be more of these delightful little illustrations waiting to be discovered. Does anyone know of any others?

FOOTNOTES:

- 1 See A.Wedgwood: *A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin Family*: Victoria & Albert Museum 1985: pp.147ff.158
- 2 Paul Waterhouse: 'The Life and Work of A. Welby Pugin: *Architectural Review*: December 1897-November 1898: Vol IV:1898 pp. 68-9
- 3 M. Belcher A. W.N. *Pugin: an Annotated Critical Bibliography*: Mansell 1987: B4 and B22
- 4 For details of both Butler's and Newman's work see Margaret Belcher A.W.N. *Pugin: an Annotated Critical Bibliography*: B4 and B22
- 5 Alexandra Wedgwood: 'Pugin in his Home': *Architectural History* 31: 1988

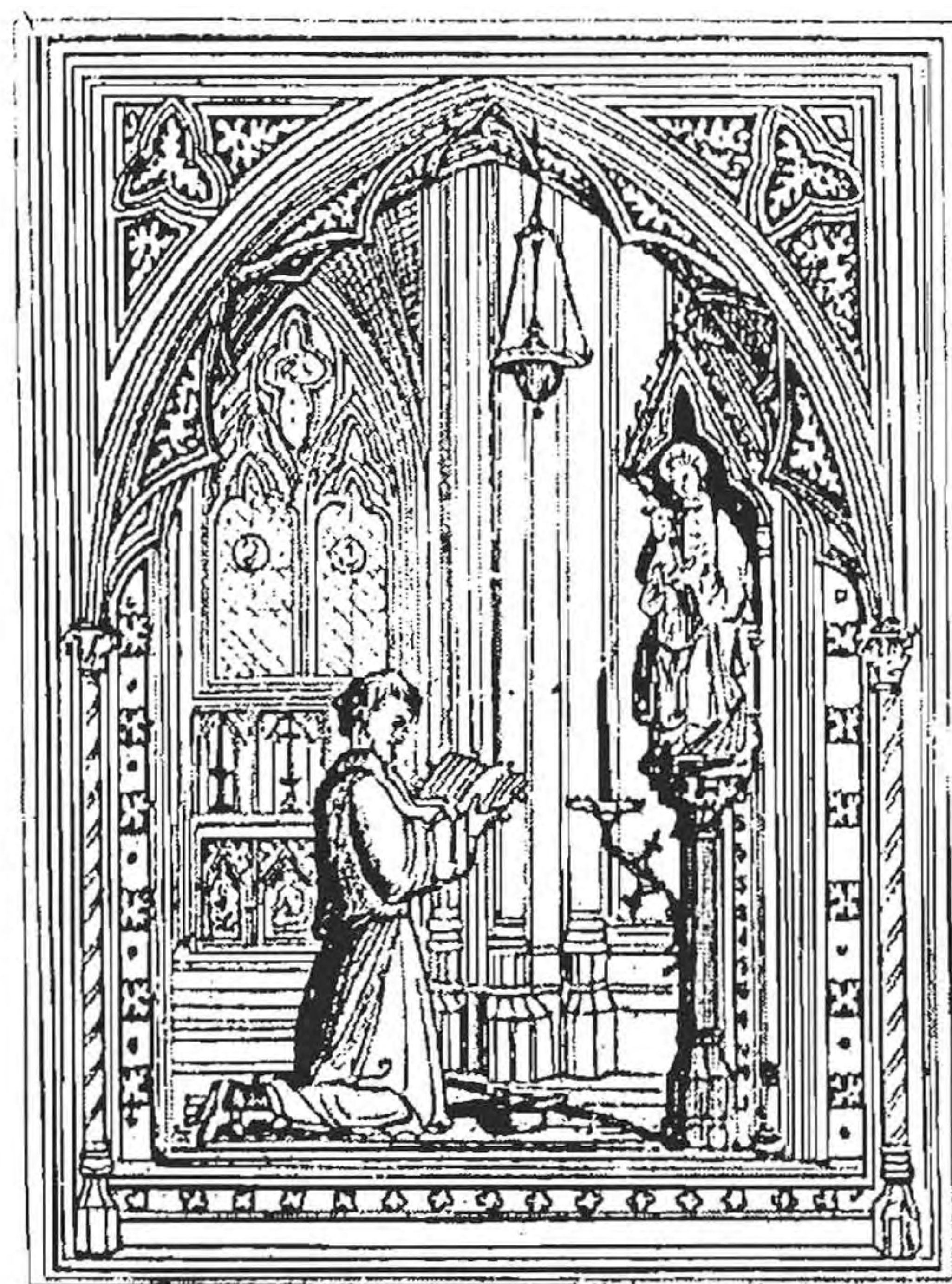


Fig 4

Forthcoming Events

SATURDAY AUGUST 22ND SOCIETY SKETCHING DAY

Meet at 11am outside The Grange (park in Royal Esplanade) for a day out drawing and painting in the Kent countryside, following in the tradition of A.W.N. Pugin – a tradition of which he would heartily approve, we feel. Non participants welcome also. Bring a picnic. An appropriate itinerary will be arranged beforehand. No charge.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR'S RESIDENCE

TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST; THURSDAY 20TH AUGUST; TUESDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER; THURSDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER; TUESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER

all at 10.30am. This is a unique opportunity for members to view the Residence, and it will be a great privilege to do so. Numbers are limited to TWENTY per tour, and must be composed STRICTLY of members only. PLEASE STATE BEFORE MONDAY 20TH JULY IF YOU WISH TO COME. ONE OF THESE DATES, WHICH WILL BE FINAL AND UNALTERABLE, WILL THEN BE ASSIGNED TO YOU BY US, AND WE WILL WORK ON A BASIS OF FIRST COME – FIRST SERVED. There is no charge. It is important to reply PROMPTLY, (a) to be sure of a place, and (b) because lists of all names for all tours must be sent to the Lord Chancellor's Office at least five working days before the first tour (ie, 11th August). We are sorry if we seem inflexible over dates, but the very special nature of the operation makes this inevitable. The meeting place for all dates is Black Rod's entrance, in Victoria Tower Gardens, to the right of the Victoria Tower, at 10.20am prompt. There will be more opportunities next year to view, also (13th May, 3rd June and 17th June). REPLY TO: HON SEC, 122 GRANGE ROAD, RAMSGATE, KENT CT11 9PT

NB: No photography.

SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER. AGM, BUFFET LUNCH AND TALK, RAMSGATE, COURT STAIRS COUNTRY CLUB

From 11.00am. Court Stairs is an architecturally interesting – even startling – late 19thC building pleasantly situated near Pegwell. The day will include coffee, AGM, buffet lunch, glass of wine, and at 3.00pm a lecture in St Augustine's Church by sculptor and stone carver **Tim Crawley**, entitled 'A Gothic Carver in the 1990s'. Tim has worked on the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey, amongst other places, so this is a must. Please support the day, and contribute your valuable ideas on how we can best build and shape the future of the Society. Price: £15.00. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE COMING BY 1ST AUGUST, AND SEND CHEQUE. ALL REPLIES TO HON. SEC. (ADDRESS AS ABOVE)

SUNDAY 10TH JANUARY 1999. NEW YEAR BUFFET LUNCH AND TALK: 'A GOTHIC PASSION: THE MAKING OF THE 1994 V&A PUGIN EXHIBITION' AT FALKNER HOUSE, KENSINGTON BY KIND PERMISSION OF MRS JACINA BIRD

We are delighted that Mrs Bird, a descendant of Augustus Pugin, is prepared to host us at her home in London, and we are also particularly pleased that Pugin expert and celebrity **Paul Atterbury** has agreed to give us what is bound to be an extremely interesting and entertaining account of how a great exhibition is created. For those who would like to do so, there is also the possibility of attending Mass at A.W.N. Pugin's St Thomas's Fulham in the morning. We envisage a suitably Puginesque style of lunch. Price: £12.00 per person. PLEASE WRITE, WITH CHEQUE, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO COME, BY 1ST NOVEMBER, TO HON. SEC. (ADDRESS AS ABOVE)



RAMSGATE CEMETERY CHAPEL

Homage to Pugin? GAVIN STAMP throws fresh light on Ramsgate Cemetery Chapel.

"In ecclesiology... we must raise the cry of Back to Pugin," wrote Dr John Wickham Legg, the liturgiologist, in 1887, "to the principles which Pugin advocated..."¹ And this cry – *Back to Pugin* – can serve to characterise the direction English architecture took after the experimental High Victorian Gothic phase. In the years around 1870, a number of architects rejected that desperate search for originality which manifested itself in the profligate use of motifs from France and Italy. Instead, they advocated a return to English models and to later styles of Mediæval architecture, as well as to "refinement" rather than "vigour" – to the sort of thing, in fact, that Pugin had been designing some thirty years earlier. In this reaction, the leader was George Frederick Bodley, but he was closely followed by George Gilbert Scott junior, the brilliant, wayward son of Sir Gilbert Scott, one of whose earliest essays in Englishness is actually to be found in Ramsgate – at the new Victorian cemetery opened in 1871.

this little known and unpublished building is very important both in his career and in the change of direction of the Gothic Revival. So now, thanks to the late Penny Ward, who so kindly assisted me with my further research, I can add a little to the architectural history of Ramsgate.

The principal building in the centre of Ramsgate's new cemetery is this remarkable double chapel dominated by a central tower which terminates the axis from the arched entrance lodge – itself an interesting building which combines Gothic with elements from the new 'Old English' style: half-timbering, tall brick chimneys and dormer windows. This lodge and superintendent's residence, "built after the Belgian model," is an early instance of Scott's being "a master and a leader in the 'Queen Anne' revival," as E.W. Godwin put it in 1878.² But it is the chapel which may well be a landmark in the history of Victorian architecture.

Here, there is not a trace of the Continental Gothic influence so fashionable in the 1850s and 1860s. Rather, the style is pure English and – by mid-Victorian standards – dangerously *late*. Built of flint with Bath stone dressings, the double-chapel is in Flowing Decorated Gothic and several of the windows are square-headed – a feature which later provoked particular outrage when the design for Scott's (demolished) London masterpiece, St Agnes', Kennington Park, was published in 1875.³ Either side of the central tower, the chapels – Anglican to the right, or east, (and still intact, with all its original fittings) and Nonconformist to the left (since converted into a waiting room) – are of equal height and length, but deliberately contrasting in



The Chapel seen from the entrance lodge.

In writing my Ph.D. thesis twenty years ago on poor Scott (who, some thirty years after Pugin, also spent some time in the Bethlehem Hospital), I had not grasped the significance of his designs for Ramsgate Cemetery Chapel. Scott lost everything in a fire in 1870, and the only surviving drawings for Ramsgate are for the small 'lych house' or mortuary next to the boundary wall (now disused and overgrown). To my shame, therefore, only recently did I realise that Scott was also responsible for the large chapel in the centre of the cemetery, and that



"Indeed, the Ramsgate Cemetery Chapel ... looks like a country church in its churchyard."



the disposition of doors and windows. Complete axial symmetry evidently remained anathema. The tower itself, with its square corner stair turret, has a small pitched roof set within a battlemented parapet and seems (externally) like the crossing tower of a Kentish mediæval church.

Indeed, the Ramsgate Cemetery Chapel is quite unlike the usual spiky mid-Victorian cemetery architecture; rather, it looks like a country church in its churchyard. What, above all, comes across is its discreet Englishness in contrast to contemporary High Victorian Gothic. And in this it was surely most unusual at the time. Now the pioneer in the profound reaction against Continental Gothic which took place around 1870 is usually taken to be the church of All Saints, Jesus Lane, Cambridge, designed by Scott's old friend G.F. Bodley, who later criticized what he called the "Victorian Style"... that shallow, conceited and futile attempt to outdo the works of the past by coarseness and what is vulgarly called 'go' in design.⁵ Michael Hall discussed the importance of this Cambridge church in *Architectural History* in 1993. Other landmarks in this development were St Salvador's Episcopal church in Dundee, designed in 1865, and St John's, Tue Brook, Liverpool, designed in 1868 shortly before Bodley entered into partnership with Scott's friend and contemporary, Thomas Garner. And, very shortly afterwards, Scott designed his Ramsgate chapel.

The site of the new cemetery was on rising ground to the north of the town. The minutes of the Ramsgate Burial Board reveal that Scott was first approached in August, 1869, that his plans were delivered in November and that Henry Bell Wilson's tender of £1,882 to erect the chapels was accepted in January 1870.⁶ The cemetery was consecrated by the Bishop Suffragan of Dover in March, 1871.⁷ The total cost may have been near £6,000.⁸ G.T. Nesfield, 'the eminent landscape engineer,' laid out the ground (a relation of William Andrews Nesfield, the landscape designer?) while Scott designed the enclosing boundary wall, of flint and red brick. Why Scott was appointed architect is not clear, but as his father had built Christ Church – whose parish was involved with the new cemetery – in 1846–48, he may have been approached only to pass the job on to his eldest son.

This was a momentous commission for Scott junior in that the chairman of the burial board from its inception in February 1869 was the Vicar of Ramsgate, the Revd Charles Carus Wilson, who would move to Leamington in 1872 and then commission him to design his finest surviving church: St Mark's, New Milverton. In 1874 Carus Wilson was irritated that Scott's perspective of his second design for the Leamington church was exhibited at the Royal Academy and published in the *Building News*.⁹ His family had earlier experienced exposure in the public press, for he was the son of the Revd William Carus Wilson who, following the publication of *Jane Eyre* in 1847, had gained notoriety as the proprietor of the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge

where the Brontë sisters had been so unhappy. It is possible, therefore, that Carus Wilson may well have disliked publicity and that this may account for the fact that Scott's Ramsgate chapel was not noticed in the contemporary building press.

There is one last aspect of this commission which deserves comment – particularly here. To any Victorian Goth, Ramsgate was associated with the great Pugin, and Scott often referred to him – "Pugin somewhere lays it down that the man who says he likes Gothic architecture and does not approve of high screens is simply a liar," he wrote in 1873. "The expression is forcible, but true."¹⁰ Now if a remarkable aspect of Scott's chapel design is its asymmetry within an overall symmetry, this could well have been inspired by Pugin's nearby church, for St Augustine's is also built of local flint (although knapped rather than whole) and the elevation towards the sea is symmetrically massed around the crossing tower and projecting south transept. Asymmetry, however, was achieved by Pugin by the differing fenestration of nave and chancel and by the porch placed to the west of the transept. To compare the symmetrical/asymmetrical elevations of these two beautiful flint buildings, one by Pugin, the other by Scott, is very instructive.

'Do you know I have become a great admirer of late work, and perpendicular,' Scott had written to his father's assistant, J.T. Irvine, in 1865; 'you will be pleased to hear this, I know, you are fond of it. I believe intensely in English of all sorts, and let French go to the dogs.'¹¹ Now, four years later, Scott was at last able to express this shift in taste in a complete new building. The reaction against Continental Gothic and the return to English and to late Gothic precedents is often characterised as a move back to the tastes and ideals of Pugin, and Scott's double-chapel at Ramsgate would seem to be an early expression of this: a design of great sophistication and beauty which was a conscious tribute to the master who had died in his house on the West Cliff two decades earlier. It is now clear to me that it is one of Scott's best buildings, and certainly the one which marks his embracing of English Late Gothic. And it is also a monument to the enduring influence of Augustus Welby Pugin.

The author's study of the life and work of George Gilbert Scott junior is to be published by the Cambridge University Press.

REFERENCES

- 1 J. Wickham Legg, 'On Some Ancient Liturgical Customs now falling into Disuse', read before the St Paul's Ecclesiological Society, 27th October 1887, and printed in *Essays on Ceremonial*, vol. iv of V. Stanley, ed., *Library of Liturgiology and Ecclesiology for English Readers*, 1904, p. 84.
- 2 *The Thanet Advertiser*, 11th March 1871; obituary of Sir Gilbert Scott by 'E.W.G.' in the *British Architect*, ix, 5th April 1878, p. 156.
- 3 *Building News*, xxix, 16th July 1875, and correspondence in subsequent weeks.
- 4 See Michael Hall, 'The rise of refinement: G.F. Bodley's All Saints, Cambridge, and the return to English models in Gothic architecture of the 1860s', in *Architectural History*, xxxvi, 1993, pp. 103–126.



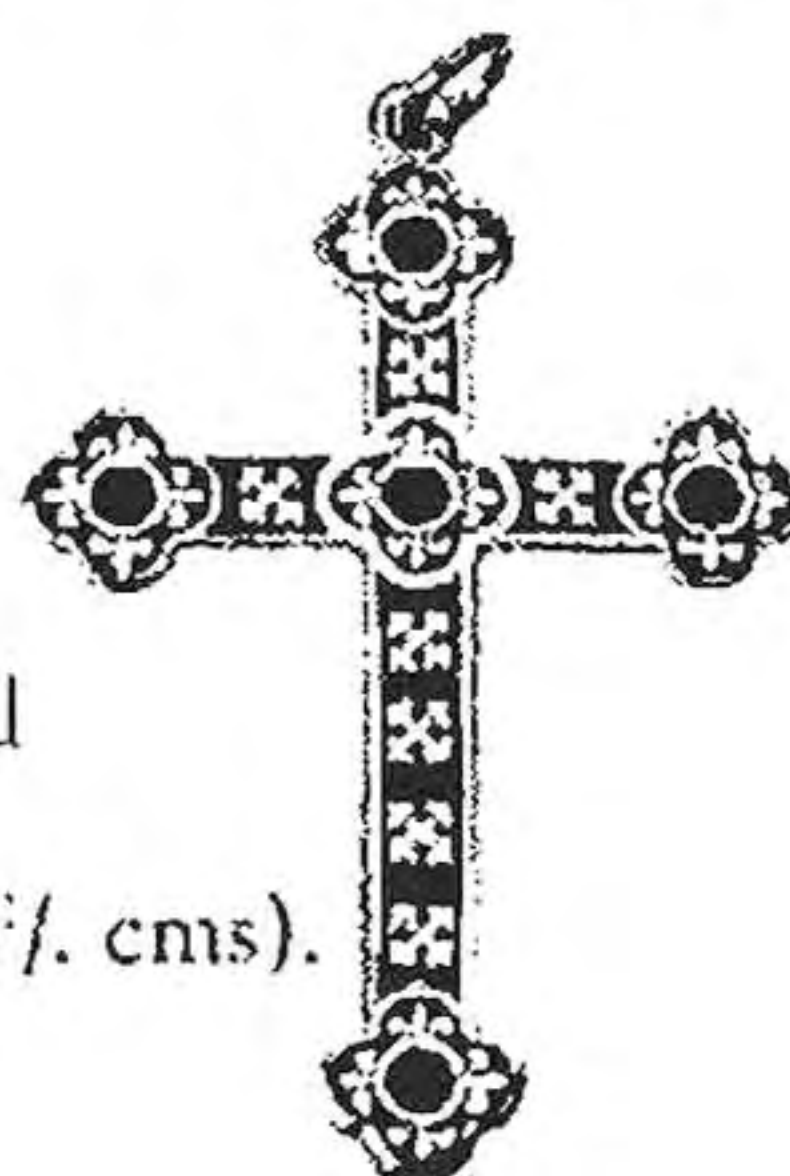
- 5 G.F.Bodley, 'On some Principles and Characteristics of Ancient Architecture, and their application to the Modern Practice of the Art', in the *Builder*, xlviii, 1885, p.295.
- 6 Thanet Branch Archive Collection, Ramsgate Library.
- 7 *The Thanet Advertiser*, 11th March 1871.
- 8 Scott's account book cites £4,258 but records of payments earlier than September 1870 may have been lost. In the list of Victorian cemeteries in Kent in Roger Homan, 'Municipal Cemeteries and Parish Overflows,' *Bygone Kent*, vol.x, no.1, January 1989, pp.2-9, the estimated cost is given as £6,000.
- 9 *Building News*, xxvii, 11th September 1874, pp.310 & 319; C. Carus Wilson to Scott, 26th September 1874 [British Architectural Library].
- 10 G.G.Scott jun., *Modern Village Churches: a paper read before the Lincoln Diocesan Architectural Society*, 1873, p.23.
- 11 G.G.Scott junior to J.T.Irvine, 18th February 1865 [Royal Commission for the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh].

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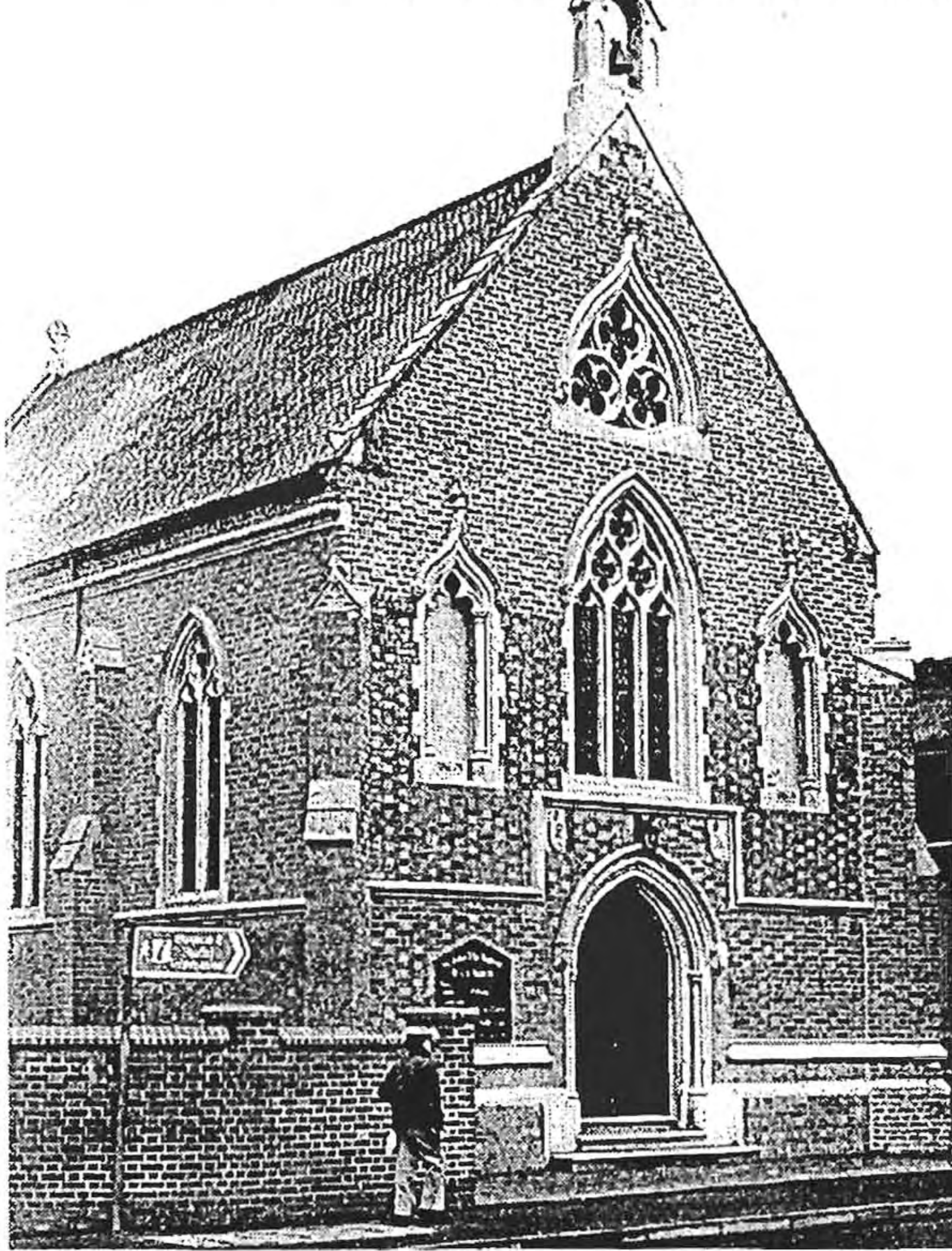


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ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, MELTON MOWBRAY

GRAHAM HULME and BRIAN BUCHANAN discuss a Leicestershire Church with interesting Pugin links



St John's The Baptist RC Church, Melton
photograph by courtesy of the Leicester Mercury



his Roman Catholic church in Thorpe End was built between 1840 and 1842 with funds provided by John Exton, who managed the Eastwell estate north of Melton for the Duke of Rutland. Rutland had bought Eastwell in 1797 from the executors of Thomas Eyre, the last of that important Catholic family to own it. Under the Eyres Eastwell had attracted their co-religionists – in 1829 there were only three Catholics in the whole of Melton, but Eastwell had 35. Exton had already paid for a church in Grantham designed by E. J. Willson (1787–1854), the Catholic architect from Lincoln (he designed the spiky organ case in Lincoln Cathedral, and as County Surveyor restored Lincoln Castle), and now used the same architect for St John's.

Willson was a friend of the famous architect and theorist of the Gothic Revival A.W.N. Pugin (1812–1852), who collaborated with Sir Charles Barry on the design of the new Houses of Parliament and whose Leicestershire buildings include Mount St Bernard Abbey and Ratcliffe College, as well as work at Grace Dieu, Wymeswold church and elsewhere. Pugin's conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1835 may have been influenced by Willson: the two men certainly corresponded about it. As Willson wrote the text for two

illustrated works on Gothic architecture by Pugin's father he may also have affected Pugin's attitude towards that architectural style.

The Willson connection was very important to Pugin's career. Willson's younger brother R.W. Willson was a priest, and in charge of the mission in Nottingham. He paid for a small mission church in that town, and then commissioned Pugin to design Nottingham's RC cathedral, St Barnabas (built with the financial help of the Earl of Shrewsbury). After Willson's consecration as the first RC Bishop of Hobart in 1842 Pugin designed his episcopal regalia, vestments, church linen and church plate. He also provided the Bishop with actual fonts, altars and tombs to take with him; and three models of simple churches, so that the buildings could be constructed in his new diocese without the need for trained architects (one of the builders was a convict working as a clerk). Pugin later made a design for Hobart Cathedral although it was never carried out. Most of Pugin's Australian buildings are naturally in Tasmania, but he also provided designs for churches in Sydney, Brisbane and elsewhere.

Shortly after St John's was completed it began to be said that Pugin was its architect, but there is no reason to believe that he did more than contribute some details to his friend's work, and the furnishings. It is difficult to find clear evidence of Pugin design in the fabric of the building; the building material is brick which Pugin did not normally use; and besides Willson, not Pugin, was John Exton's architect. At the restoration of the church in 1985 the opportunity was taken to remove Pugin's furniture and, in line with the changes which followed from the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), his rood screen. These have been lost. It must be said that the modern furniture is not an adequate replacement for Pugin's designs. The elaborately carved stone font, which may have been Pugin's work, was also dismantled and removed to the Melton Carnegie Museum, where it is in store.

St John the Baptist is a small rectangular building, with a chancel which is lower and narrower than the body of the church. North of the chancel is the vestry, with a new sacristy added in 1985, to the south is a new kitchen. An adjacent presbytery and hall were demolished during the restoration. Orange brick is the main building material, but stone is used for windows, doors and other important accents. The architectural style is Decorated Gothic.

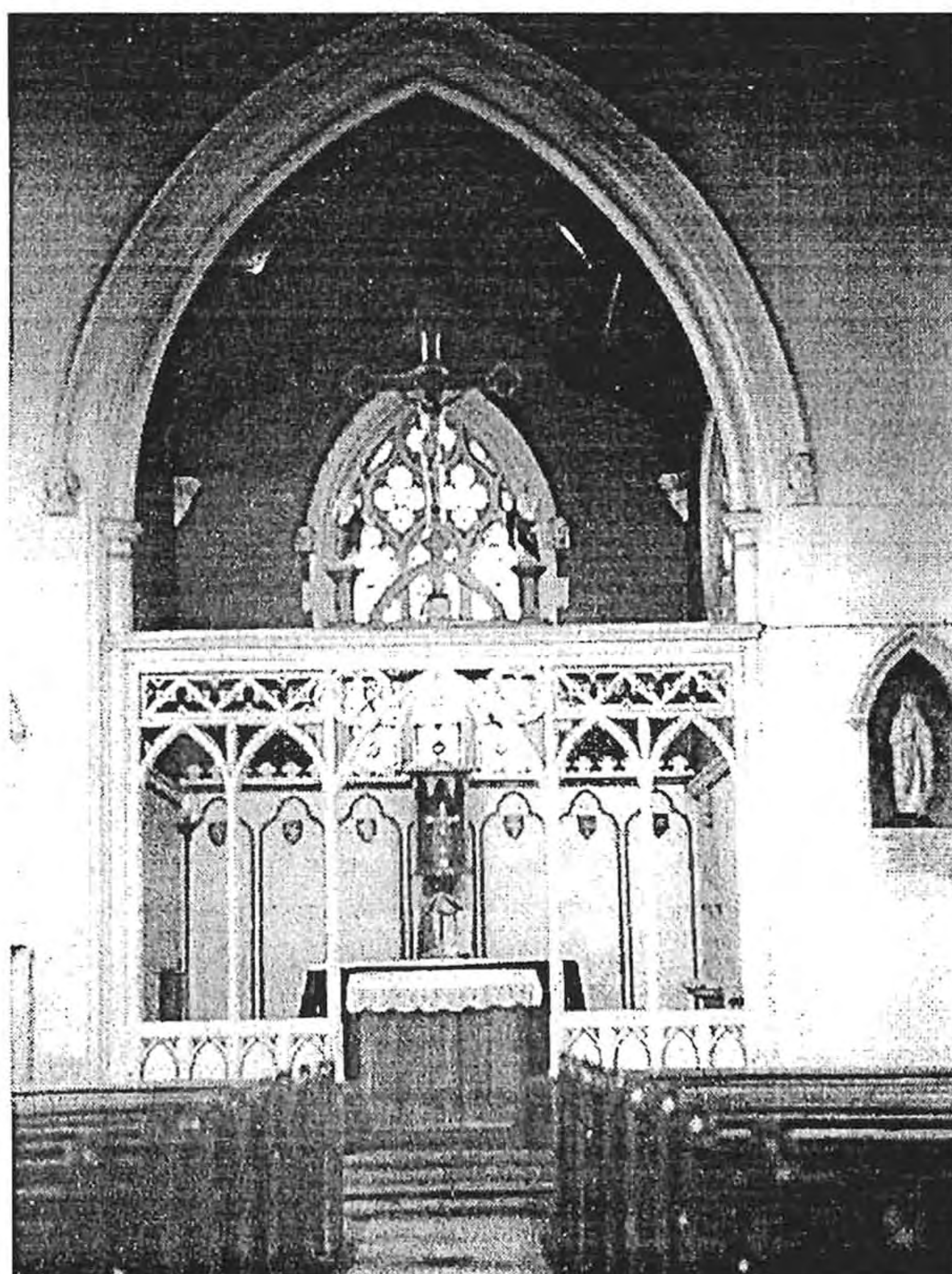
The west front is flanked by diagonal buttresses, stepped and capped – the upper cap has cusped decoration, and each buttress is topped by a cross. The stone doorway has keeled colonettes in the jambs, with foliated capitals; its arch has roll and concave mouldings, and a hoodmould whose stops are in the form of the heads of a bearded king and a bishop. A



string course around the building rises over the arch to form a label; in the label's corners are stone shields hanging from rings, the left bearing the letters AM, and the right IHS. The three-light west window has reticulated tracery; like the other windows it is edged with quoins, and its hoodmould rests on stops in the form of heads. Two empty image niches with quoins flank the window. Their colonettes have bell capitals, and support cusped ogee arches. The niches culminate in hoodmoulds with ogee arches and floriated finials. In the gable above is a most odd window, a spherical triangle whose left and right sides form another ogee arch terminating in a floriated finial. Its tracery consists of three quatrefoils, the lower pair circular while the upper is elliptical to fit the arch. The gable is crowned by a simple bellcote with a cross.

The sides of the church are identical, with three tall stone windows between buttresses (similar to the corner buttresses but with less elaborate top caps). Each window has two lights with cusped heads and an elongated quatrefoil above. The vestry window is straightheaded with a label; it is of three lights with a line of quatrefoils.

Inside, the three-bayed nave is aisleless. Its open roof is supported by king-posts with extra struts, all cusped. The tie beams which support the king-posts rest on large corbels in the form of busts in panels; it seems likely that the busts are portraits. The windows have hoodmoulds, which are of course unnecessary inside a building; like the exterior



The interior of St John's in 1984, showing rood screen
photograph by Mrs Anne Kirkby, parishioner

hoodmoulds they rest on small heads. The space below the west gallery was filled in in 1985, to provide two confessional boxes and other accommodation.

The chancel arch has roll mouldings, and shafts with bell capitals. The chancel's roof support is more elaborate than the nave's, being an approximation to hammerbeam. Behind the modern altar is a reredos of simple cusped arches, said to reflect the design of Pugin's rood screen. There is a piscina whose arch is yet again an ogee with a hoodmould resting on two heads, and with a floriated finial.

The windows in the chancel have the only stained glass in the church. In the south wall is a large circular multifoil window. Its central circle has four red hearts with the legend INRI curved across them; outside the circle is a design of vines, with leaves, tendrils and grapes. This window is covered outside by the lean-to roof of the kitchen, which has been provided with a skylight to let daylight in.

Like the west window, the east window is of three lights with reticulated tracery above. Its stained glass may have been designed by Pugin himself. In the reticulation are the instruments of the Passion. Below, the principal lights have a decorative background of oak branches with acorns. In the central light is the figure of the patron saint – his camelskin clothes can be seen beneath his heavenly blue robe. The saint is holding the Lamb. This light is edged with the initials of the donor, J and E. In the outer lights two figures kneel before the saint. The right hand figure is dressed in mediæval clothes, but is obviously intended to be John Exton. In the left light is a more problematical figure; he is wearing clerical dress, and so cannot be Exton's brother Thomas, who is sometimes mistakenly said to be the joint donor (only John is mentioned in documentary sources as donor, and only his initials appear on the window). There is a strong likelihood that the priest is R. W. Willson – the features in the stained glass portrait are very like those of Willson in his painted portrait at Oscott College. His inclusion may indicate that he promoted the church, although he was not a donor, or it may be because of his general missionary work: the fact that he was the architect's brother and the friend and patron of Pugin would hardly be a sufficient reason.

There is an odd mistake in the east window: the texts – the name of the Baptist beneath his figure, and the words issuing from the two kneeling figures on scrolls – have been put in the wrong way round, as though they were meant to be read from outside the church. This is not likely to have been intended, especially as the window would not have been seen by many people from the exterior, and certainly not by any casual passer. It is also worth noting that the other letters in the window – the donor's initials are inserted so as to be read normally from inside the church.

St John's is a little church, but it has considerable interest both as a building and for its associations with Pugin and the friends who were so important in his life and career.



“PREST D’ACCOMPLIR”

Pugin and the Earl of Shrewsbury

A unique relationship discussed by **MICHAEL FISHER**



rest d’Accomplir – “ready to accomplish – was the Talbot family motto which along with the rampant lion was repeated time and again in the wallcoverings, cornices, ceilings, windows, metalwork and other items designed by Pugin for Alton Towers, Lord Shrewsbury’s vast Gothic mansion on the edge of the North Staffordshire moorlands. Pugin paid his first visit to the Towers in September 1837 and stayed for four days. A month later he wrote in his diary “Began Lord Shrewsbury”. Thus began a working relationship between Pugin and the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury that was to last for the rest of their lives, though at the time neither of them could have had any idea where this small beginning was to lead. Prest d’Accomplir though he may have been it was Pugin’s battlecry *En Avant!* which impelled the earl to accomplish far more than he sometimes considered desirable or affordable. The results of this intriguing partnership are to be seen in the unique cluster of buildings which Pevsner calls “Pugin-land”: Cheadle and nearby Alton and Cotton.

“If a cheese is sold for 2½d a pound, how much will a rood screen cost?” Pugin demanded when in the interests of economy Lord Shrewsbury proposed letting a local carpenter loose on the magnificent screen at S. Giles’ rather than replace the expert woodcarver who had left it unfinished. To hammer home his view that the earl was penny-pinching Pugin illustrated his letter with cartoons of a rood-screen and a cheese.¹

That a young architect should have been able to address a senior earl in such a manner and get away with it suggests a relationship somewhat deeper than the purely professional one of architect and patron. Their correspondence ranged over many subjects such as the Irish Question, Chartism, the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy, and family matters too. They consoled each other in bereavement as for example when the earl and countess lost their younger daughter aged only 23 and when Louisa Pugin – for whom the earl had a high regard – died in 1844. When Pugin plunged into a pit of black despair – following the frustration of his plan to marry Mary Amherst – whose mother had put her in a nunnery – it was to Lord Shrewsbury that he poured out his heart and not merely because Mary was related to the Talbots. “*I cannot eat, I cannot work*”, he wrote in April 1846. “*I propose quitting England and giving my profession... I am a broken man, and it is no use trying to go on.*”² It was in fact work and S. Giles’ Cheadle in particular that came to his rescue. A few days later he wrote “*I was at Alton and Cheadle Thursday & Friday; the sight of that glorious spire somewhat revives me.*”³

There was much at Alton Towers to irritate Pugin: a veritable

catalogue of transgressions committed by his unenlightened predecessors including wooden pillars painted to look like stone, cast-iron roof-supports painted to look like wood, rib-vaulting made of plaster and – horror of horrors – *trompe l’oeil* wallpaper. In spite of these idiosyncrasies – which he did his best to iron out – there is no doubt that Pugin was thoroughly at home at the Towers. The diaries record frequent visits some spread over several days and in November 1845 he wrote to Lord Shrewsbury, “*I expect to be at Alton next week.... I am sure I do not need much inducement to stay for I am nowhere so happy.*”⁴ The Towers held fond memories of his beloved Louisa who in 1839 had been received into the church in a glittering ceremony stage-managed by Pugin in the great chapel which he was gradually transforming from the sombre wainscot-lined chamber created by Potter Fradgley into so gloriously rich a setting for the celebration of Catholic rites as to rival even S. Giles’ itself. Pugin was ecstatic about the spiritual fruits harvested by means of his buildings, “*Nobody now dies a protestant at Alton,*” he quipped, “*if they do not all live catholics.*”⁵

Not just the Towers chapel but the domestic quarters too, became a vast showroom in which Pugin displayed the combined talents of Crace, Hardman, Minton and Myers in executing his designs. From as early as 1839 the principal rooms were open to view and distinguished visitors included Sir Robert Peel and Sir Charles Barry. Addressing a Parliamentary Committee in 1841, Barry expressed his view that Pugin’s decorative work at Alton Towers would apply equally well to the New Palace of Westminster.⁶ Items from the Towers were displayed in the Mediæval Court at the Great Exhibition, although Lord Shrewsbury who did not share Pugin’s enthusiasm for displaying his work in the “glass palace”, warned him that he would be liable for any damage incurred when it blew down, as he believed it surely would.⁷ Nor was the earl entirely convinced of the need to destroy completely his elegant plastervaulted dining-room at Alton to make way for Pugin’s great hall with its open timber roof, huge fireplaces, minstrels’ gallery, and oriel window filled with Hardman glass. Pugin however pressed *en avant* to the extent of running the very serious risk of dismissal, but, as in the case of the “Cheadle Cheese”, he proved his point and the hall is one of the most complete survivals of Pugin’s work to be seen at the Towers today.⁸

For a good deal of the time that Pugin was working at Alton the Earl and Countess resided abroad either with their son-in-law and daughter, the Prince and Princess Doria Pamphili in Naples, or at the Villa Belmonte in Palermo. The Doria Rooms created at Alton by Pugin specially for the Prince and



Princess were little used, likewise the newly-decorated State Rooms crammed with fine furniture and works of art. Shrewsbury calculated that by staying away from Alton for the summer he would save at least £2,000 a year which could be diverted into church-building. "Of course we must come sometimes but I hope not often."⁹ But for his encounter with Pugin it is doubtful whether the thought of such costly sacrifices would ever have entered the earl's mind.

Concerned about Pugin's health Shrewsbury wrote in March 1852 urging him to spend a few months with them in Palermo, and assuring him that all the things that he liked, such as the sea and ships, would be there to delight him and in a climate far healthier than that of Ramsgate. ".....We have built a wooden Gallery, for shade and shelter, *Grecian style* looking on the sea with the prospect of every ship that comes and goes, and every boat that hoists."¹⁰ Pugin had never been convinced that Sicily was a healthy place to live; he wondered how the earl could stand the summer heat in Palermo, and believed that the gardens at Belmonte were full of huge snakes and lizards.¹¹ In spite of Pugin's temporary recovery in March 1852, news of which clearly delighted the Shrewsburys, it was too late. Earl and architect never saw each other again. In November Earl John returned to England in a coffin having succumbed – as Pugin feared he might – to fatal illness, by which time Pugin himself had lain several weeks in his vault at Ramsgate.¹² So ended that amazing partnership of *En Avant* and *Prest d'Accomplir*; the echoes of which still resound across the Churnet valley from where "Good Earl John" rests in his sanctuary, to the great house of which Pugin wrote "I am nowhere so happy".



John Talbot, 16th Earl of Shrewsbury
Posthumous engraving by Joseph Lynch from original portrait by Carl Baas, and dedicated to Bertram, 17th Earl of Shrewsbury

Notes

- 1 House of Lords Record Office Historical Collection 339/1/47
- 2 *Ibid.*, 3.39/1/3
- 3 *Ibid.*, 339/1/2
- 4 Letter transcribed by Phoebe Stanton, *A.W. Pugin and the Gothic Revival*, London University Ph.D. thesis 1950, Appendix VIII p 17.
- 5 HLRO 339/1/17
- 6 Report from the Select Committee on Fine Arts in connection with Rebuilding the Houses of Parliament, 18th June 1841, quoted by Phoebe Stanton, "Some Comments on the Life and Work of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin", *R.I.B.A. Journal*, December 1952, p.47
- 7 HLRO 339/1/100
- 8 The famous letter quoted by Ferrey (*Recollections* pp 119–20; original letter at V&A Museum L525–1965 no.52) in which Pugin appears to be giving Lord Shrewsbury an ultimatum needs to be read in conjunction with other correspondence (e.g. HLRO 339/1/29 & 49) which shows that Pugin played a somewhat dangerous game by appearing to bow to the earl's wishes while at the same time forging ahead with his own plans for the hall.
- 9 Denis Gwynn *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin and the Catholic Revival*, 1946, p.68, quoting letters from Lord Shrewsbury to Ambrose Phillips.
- 10 HLRO 339/1/111 & 112
- 11 *Ibid.*, 339/1/291
- 12 Shrewsbury was urged by Pugin to keep away from plague-infested parts of south Italy. He contracted malaria and died in Naples on 9th November 1852

Michael Fisher is a non-stipendiary priest based at the twelfth-century church of S. Chad, Stafford. A former Research Scholar at Keele University, he has a lifelong interest in the history of his home county of Staffordshire, and in the Pugin buildings at Alton. His publications include *A Vision of Splendour* (Gothic Revival in Staffordshire), 1995. Having written a guidebook for Alton Towers, he is now working on a comprehensive historical and architectural survey of the Towers buildings to assist future conservation work, and hopes to publish a definitive history of Alton Towers in the near future.



Book Review

*Frederick O'Dwyer, The Architecture of Deane & Woodward, 1997, Cork University Press, 650pp,
312 black and white illustrations, £60.00*



his monumental book is the result of over twenty-five years of research by its author. It recounts in great detail the architectural practice of the Cork builder and architect Sir Thomas Deane (1792–1871), his son Thomas Newenham Deane (1828–1899) and their silent and somewhat enigmatic partner, Benjamin Woodward (1816–1861). They made an odd threesome: 'One won't talk (Woodward), one can't talk (T. N. Deane), one never stops talking (Sir Thomas)', said the Oxford vice-chancellor Dr. Francis Jeune (p.208). (T. N. Deane apparently stammered.)

After Woodward's death the practice was continued in Dublin by T. N. Deane under his own name, but the really important period for the firm was the ten years between 1851 when Woodward became a partner and 1861 when he died. It is during this time that the outstanding buildings, the Museum Building, Trinity College, Dublin (1853–1857) and the Oxford Museum (from 1854) belong. Moreover the two significant buildings before this period, Queen's College, Cork (1846–1849) and Killarney Lunatic Asylum (1847–1852) were begun just as Woodward joined the practice in 1846. Dr. O'Dwyer has established that Woodward was articled to the Dublin civil engineer William Stokes (1793–1884), and that Dr. William Stokes (1804–1878), a cousin of his namesake, and Regius Professor of Medicine at Trinity College Dublin, was Woodward's great friend and patron. In view of the strong Puginian influence on Woodward it is particularly disappointing that Dr. O'Dwyer's painstaking research has revealed so little else about his early life and work, interests and contacts. Not much is known about the detail of Pugin's extensive Irish commissions and how they were executed. Pugin visited Ireland regularly between 1838 and 1851 to oversee his projects but he could not supervise them closely. Surely Woodward must have studied most of his major Irish churches and convents, and Maynooth College. It might be worth searching for Woodward among all Pugin Irish sources, particularly those at Adare Manor where there is a substantial archive, and also among the correspondence files in the Hardman archive in Birmingham Central Library, because Hardman produced fire-dogs for Queen's College, Cork, which is perhaps the closest connection found to date.

The real substance of the book, however, is Dr. O'Dwyer's account of the history of the design, building and decorating of the Oxford Museum, and here he has discovered much

important new material. He discusses the complicated story with both clarity and detail, giving the roles of Dr. H. W. Acland, who was Professor of Clinical Medicine at Oxford, a friend of Dr. Stokes and a prime mover of the project, and the Delegacy (in effect a building committee) of Convocation, the governing body of the University, who commissioned the building and tried to keep tight control of the finances. Along the way he explores the fascinating contributions of Ruskin, the O'Shea brothers, the PreRaphaelites, and what happened to the iron roof and the court paving. Besides this major account Dr. O'Dwyer gives full references to every commission that he has been able to find. Among the more interesting of these are the Kildare Street Club, Dublin (1858–1861) and the country house Clontra, Co. Dublin (1858–1859).

The scholarship is most impressive throughout this long book, but Dr. O'Dwyer seems to have been unable to omit any fact that he has found. Do we really need to know the reference for a passport (p.316)? Or careful details about characters who have no place in the story (for example p.131)? Dr. O'Dwyer transcribes many fascinating letters, but it is rather disconcerting when one can compare the transcription and the original (pp.240 and 241), to discover mistakes, even if they are minor ones. Also the detail has obscured the wider picture: it would surely have been of interest to a wider audience to know more of the social, political and religious background into which the practice fitted. Why, for instance, in a church building age did they build so very few churches? There is very little visual information. It would have been worthwhile to have had more of Dr. O'Dwyer's own opinions, rather than somewhat dry descriptions. The illustrations are all in black and white and have been chosen with great intelligence. They include many contemporary drawings and engravings, plus many early photographs and some reconstructions by the author, and they add considerably to the value of the book.

Benjamin Woodward is an intriguing figure in the evolution of High Victorian architecture in both Ireland and England, and in his short life left us some important Gothic Revival buildings, which often had Venetian overtones. This volume will stand as a definitive source book and a most useful quarry for Irish research in this brief period.

ALEXANDRA WEDGWOOD



A Remarkable Pugin Tombstone

BRIAN ANDREWS, *our man in Australia, tells a curious tale...*



n 28 October 1842, Robert William Willson, the priest in charge of the Roman Catholic mission at Nottingham, was consecrated as first Bishop of Hobart Town in St. Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham.¹

Willson was solicitous that every Christian need in his new diocese should be met by designs from his close friend Pugin, from baptism in a Pugin font through attendance at Mass in a Pugin church filled with Pugin furnishings and celebrated using Pugin altar vessels by a priest robed in Pugin vestments right up to burial in a grave with a Pugin tombstone. To this latter end – amongst an astoundingly comprehensive cargo of requisites to equip a new diocese – Willson brought out to Tasmania on the *Bella Marina* in May 1844 four exemplar tombstones. These had been carved in the workshops of George Myers, Pugin's favoured builder.²

Three of the four tombstones were of simple design so as to be within the means of his extremely poor flock, and one was carved with a splendid figurative – and costly – composition. Numerous copies of the simple exemplars were indeed made by Hobart stonemason John Gillon and can be seen in early Catholic cemeteries from Richmond to the north of Hobart to Franklin in the south. A copy of the elaborate tombstone was not made until 1880 by another Hobart stonemason Bryan Molloy, long after Willson's death, bearing out his observation in a letter to a priestly colleague in Rome in 1863 that "We have no rich Catholics – literally so" (Willson's emphasis).³ Then in 1887, with no prospect of the need for further copies, the exemplar tombstone itself was inscribed and used. (see photograph)

This figurative tombstone is already remarkable enough given its fine Flowing Decorated blind tracery and its complex iconography incorporating the crucified Christ attended by his Mother and St. John, St. Henry II, Holy Roman Emperor, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and two children kneeling in an attitude of prayer. However, the story of its design origins is even more fascinating.

The tombstone was clearly a good choice for Pugin to provide for Willson, its iconography covering the death of a male; female or children, but he had in fact produced the

design several years earlier, and to meet a specific requirement. The original memorial was for two infant children in Grand Coteau, Louisiana and is thought to be the only Pugin designed item to go to the USA.⁴ Their christian names were John Henry Marie Louis and Marie Magdalene Elizabeth Julia and they were the children of a celebrated couple,

Pierce and Cornelia Connelly, whose remarkable story which fanned the flames of religious bigotry in the middle of the nineteenth century is worth briefly re-counting.

Pierce, an Episcopalian clergyman, and Cornelia converted to Catholicism in 1835. About five years later Pierce decided to become a priest and in order to overcome the obstacles of Canon Law convinced (pressured) his wife to become a nun. Cornelia founded in England – under the direction of Bishop Wiseman – a new religious women's Congregation, the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, which still exists. Some nine years later Pierce reverted to Episcopalianism and endeavoured to convince (pressure) Cornelia to return to the married state. When this failed, he sued for restitution of conjugal rights in the Church of England Court of Arches and won.

However this was overturned on appeal in the Privy Council.⁵

The original Connelly children's tombstone has long since been destroyed, so the only tangible evidence of it is its exact copy standing out in its white English limestone amongst the golden Tasmanian sandstone tombstones – in, of all places, Hobart's main cemetery at *Cornelian Bay*!



Notes

- 1 Willson had been responsible for the erection of St. Barnabas' Church, Nottingham, to Pugin's designs and with the generous benefaction of some £10,000 from his friend the Earl of Shrewsbury. He acted as clerk of works, and it is recorded that his last official act before leaving was to ascend the great spire of the almost complete church and bless the cross at its summit.
- 2 I am grateful to Patricia Spencer-Silver for providing copies of documents in the Myers Family Trust.
- 3 Willson to Dom Bernard Smith OSB, 22 December 1863, Archives of the Monastery of St. Paul's Outside-the-Walls, Rome.
- 4 David Meara kindly provided copies of documentation regarding the Connelly tombstone.
- 5 The Connelly story is explored in Juliana Wadham, *The Case of Cornelia Connelly*, Collins, London, 1954.



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CORRESPONDENCE

Member **PAT MCVICKER** writes:

Dear Editor: In his interesting article 'The Pugins and the de Lisles' the Squire de Lisle suggests that perhaps Edward Pugin may have been born in Salisbury. However, the census return for Ramsgate, 30th March 1851, when the Pugins were living at The Grange, gives Edward's place of birth as St Lawrence, Kent. This is repeated in the return for April 1871, when Edward, Jane, Peter Paul and Cuthbert were living at The Grange.

The baptismal register for St Lawrence Church, Ramsgate, shows that Edward was christened there on June 15th 1834 by the curate, W.Elwyn.

I obtained this information with the invaluable help of the late Penny Ward, whose knowledge of local archives was truly encyclopaedic.

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The next newsletter will be published in December 1998, copy date 1st October 1998.

