

Pugin Society

e-newsletter

Issue 18

November/December 2021

We wish you a Happy Christmas

The committee of the Pugin Society wish you all a very happy Christmas and an exciting New Year. May you be free to celebrate this great Christian festival with your family and friends and to enter 2022 with renewed energy.

Pugin's diaries say little about the 25th December, and make no mention of him attending Mass. However, they hint that the period was one where his friends gathered with him, especially the painter John Herbert. In several years he notes how the weather was bad and often with heavy snow.

If any of you are able to take some photographs of any Pugin, or Pugin related, church celebrating Christmas in any way please send the photographs to jpelliott@btinternet.com and as many as possible will appear in the January/February edition of the e-newsletter.

Letter to the Editor

Jayne Evelyn, a member of the Pugin Society and a Tour Guide at St Augustine's Shrine Church, Ramsgate writes:

I wondered who from the Pugin Society might have been as dissatisfied as myself by the recent Channel 4 TV programme (shown at 7-8pm, evening prime time, on Sunday 3rd October) on the restoration and renovation of the iconic 'Big Ben' Clocktower. Below are my comments to several fellow Puginistas of my personal acquaintance.

Dear Fellow Puginistas

This programme focused mainly on technical aspects and the massive challenges of renovation. However, towards the end it told us that Barry was the architect of HOP and designed the clockface. Pugin was absent from the entire story. Written out of history again!

Yesterday's programme gave false information and omitted Pugin's name and contribution. Certainly, the older Barry was the lead architect of the building, but the youthful Pugin was its artistic creator, giving us all the beautiful details and the magnificent exterior and interior appearance of the entire edifice, including the iconic Clock tower - his final design in February 1852 before his complete physical and mental breakdown.

After the programme I checked Rosemary Hill's comments towards the end of her biography. Barry destroyed some vital letters and drawings, according to Hill. He effectively stole the brilliant designs and cudos of the young man he had engaged as his collaborator, whose untimely and sudden demise removed him from the public eye leaving Barry to claim sole ownership. What a shameful course of action!

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Paul Atterburys painstakingly researched, magnificently presented Pugin Exhibition at the V&A and the subsequent creation of the Pugin Society have sought to enlighten the general public on AWP's genius and immeasurable contribution to the HOP and the 19C Gothic Revival in Architecture and Design.

En avant

A Floriated Ornament

Nick Beveridge

In a letter to the painter J.R. Herbert dated July 1845(?) regarding 'the School of Design controversy', A.W.N. Pugin writes: "The real source of all art is *nature*, the best artists of every nation and period have taken it as their standard... I am now preparing a work on vegetable and floral ornament, in which, by disposing natural leaves and flowers in geometrical forms, the most exquisite forms are produced..." This became his *Floriated Ornament: A Series of Thirty-one Designs* published in 1849.

In his introduction Pugin states: "As regards the nomenclature of the plants, &c. selected, I have taken it from a very curious and beautiful old botanical work, entitled 'Tabernae montanus eicones Plantarum,' printed at Francfort in 1590."

'Tabernaemontanus' was in fact the name by which the author - Jacobus Theodorus (1525 - August 1590) - was known and is a compressed form of the Latinized name *Tabernae Montanae* of his hometown of Bergzabern in Germany. He was a physician and an early botanist and herbalist, one of the fathers of German botany.

Eicones Plantarum... can be translated as: "Pictures of plants, trees, herbs, fruits, and roots that are native to Germany and foreign countries, which are used for medicinal purposes, for apothecary students, and divided into three parts with the addition of a double index". It contained 2255 woodcuts of plants. According to the Victorian Web Pugin owned a copy.

Clive Wainwright in *Pugin: A Gothic Passion* (YUP 1994) opined that Pugin took more from it than Latin names and while he did not precisely copy the woodcuts his designs were quite closely based on them. However, Pugin was probably unaware that some of the taxonomic nomenclature used had since been revised and was now out of date.

Pugin also states that: "the patterns are principally intended for stencilling...". An example found online of one of the designs being adapted for use on vestments can be seen in the embroidery on a chalice veil. This seems to be based on Plate 25 - 3. *Fumaria bulbosa*, which is in the centre and one of the three designs on this



Chalice veil ornament

plate labelled as such, even though design 2 (upper right) looks distinctly different from the other two. The design is cruciform in shape and ideally suited to being adapted to represent a cross as traditionally applied to a chalice veil and to be displayed when arranged over the chalice.

In comparing the embroidery with Pugin's design, the latter is in the 'natural' colours of green and red. The

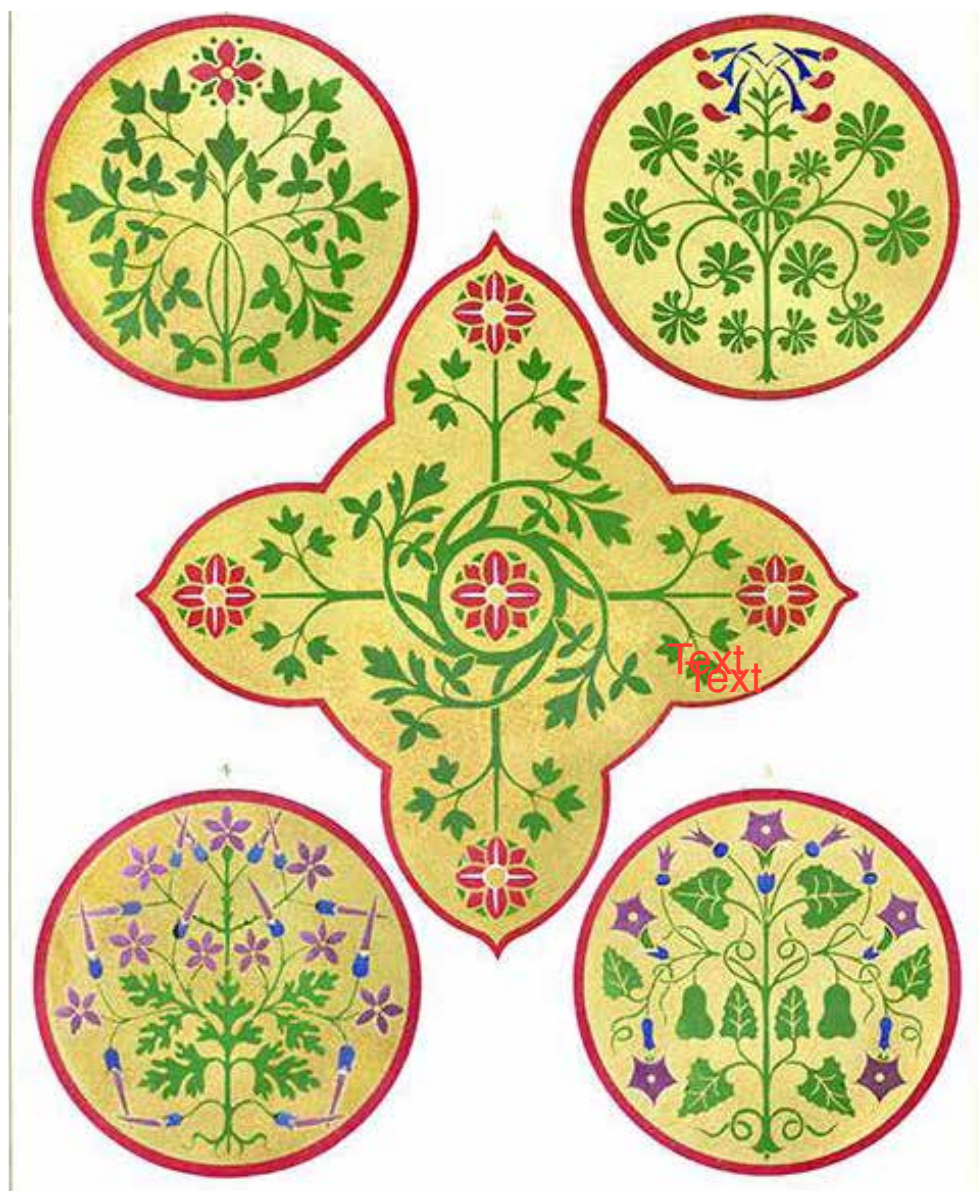


Plate 25 from Floriated Ornament

embroidery, on the other hand, is in satin stitch of silver silk highlighted with some gold silk on the flowers, which is appropriate as Pugin specified either white or silver for the ornamentation of black vestments.

Another obvious point of difference (apart from the central sacred monogram IHS) is the flower detail. Pugin has included a symmetrical stylised flower at the centre as well as one at the termination of each of the two axes, whereas the embroidery flowers, being terminal only, are arranged in a lateral rather than dorsal plane.

Interestingly, neither Pugin's design nor the embroidery has flowers in keeping with the foliage. This can be seen relative to the actual plant which was named originally by Linnaeus in 1753 but reclassified as *F. solida* by Philip Miller in 1771. Its assignment to the genus *Corydalis* was made by Joseph Philippe de Claireville in 1811 and it is now known as *Corydalis solida* (L.) Clairv., the genus *Corydalis* being generally that for 'fumeworts'.

Without having access to *Eicones Plantarum* and therefore to the inspiration for Pugin's design, one might speculate that he was using artistic licence to achieve an effect rather than strict adherence to botanical accuracy. Curiously, design 2 has flowers that are more in keeping but the foliage is different!

As to the provenance of the chalice veil, although obtained from the United States, based on the overall condition and the ground fabric pattern, I suspect that it might be of a relatively late date and originate from Belgium where, through firms such as Grossé in Bruges, Pugin's influence extended well into the 20th century.

In conclusion it is worth noting that Phoebe Stanton in her *Pugin* (Viking 1971) states that of his publications



Corydalis solida

Floriated Ornament was "... the one which presages the direction he would surely have taken had his career continued."

Notes

- 1 Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N.Pugin*, Vol. 2 1843-45, (2003), p. 418
- 2 There are 31 plates, each of one page with one or more designs
- 3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacobus_Theodorus_Tabernaemontanus
- 4 <https://blog.biodiversitylibrary.org/2018/09/tabernaemontanus.html>
- 5 Victorianweb.org/art/design/jewellery/gere/9.html
- 6 Part of a Requiem Mass set that also would have included chasuble, stole, maniple and burse
- 7 Design 3 on Plate 13 is also labelled as such
- 8 Belcher, *Letters*, Vol. 4 1849-50, p. 719
- 9 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corydalis_solida
- 10 Mary Shooser, *The Watts Book of Embroidery: English Church Embroidery 1833-1953*, (1988), p. 92

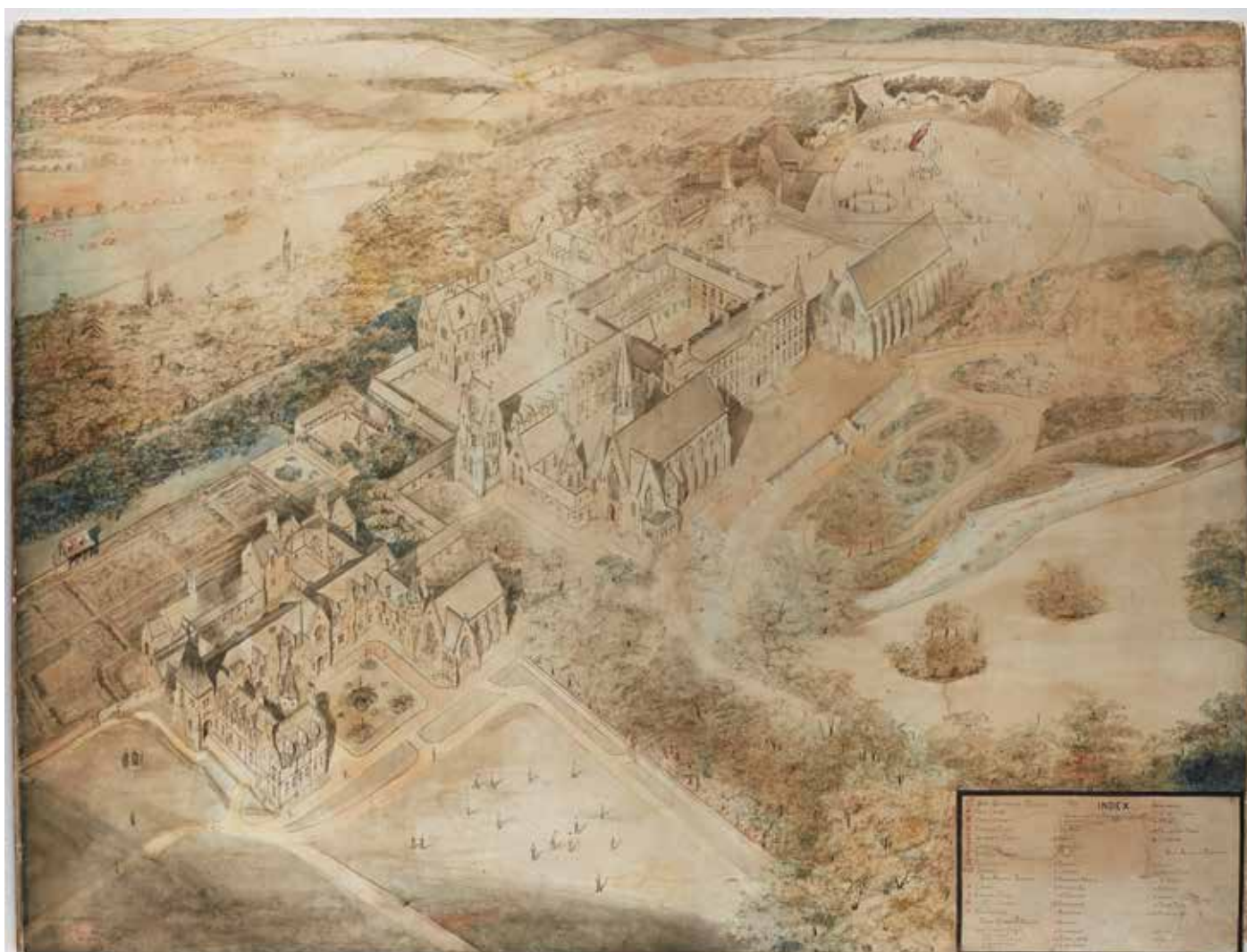
St Cuthbert's College Ushaw co Durham: the 1858 bird's eye water colour by H W Brewer

Rory O'Donnell

Ushaw College was the Catholic seminary for the North of England from 1808 to 2011. Access to one of the most important Catholic collections for the whole country is now provided by Ushaw Historic House, Chapel and Gardens. A bird's eye watercolour drawing of the site as it existed in 1858 has been restored, relined, and reframed by Art Works Conservation, Harrogate, at the cost £2,373. The Decorative Arts Society (London) awarded it an 'Access' grant of £1874 and the Pugin Society a grant of £500. Signed in monogram HWB, the artist was identified as Henry W Brewer (1836-1903) by Rory O'Donnell and Grace McCombie (Newcastle) in 2007. (See RO'Donnell 'EW Pugin's Junior Seminary at Ushaw (1857-9) and HW Brewer's bird's eye view 1858' in *True Principles, Journal of the Pugin Society*, vol iii Nov (Autumn 2008) pp.32-50).

The enormous watercolour (110x143cm) shows top right the original Georgian ranges by James Taylor architect, flanked by the chapel (R) by Pugin and the library (L) by J&C Hansom. These are balanced bottom left by Edward W Pugin's Junior seminary (1856-9). A key bottom right identifies the buildings, including AWN Pugin's chapel (1841-44) - since replaced - from which many furnishings survive. Brewer was one of the many Catholic converts inspired by Pugin and probably in EW Pugin's office. The precision and intensity of this early work establish Brewer as a master in this specialist mode of architectural presentation, with later examples certainly taken from balloon flights.

Both grant applications were made by Dr Roderick O'Donnell, FSA (London). [RO'D]
[5xi2021]



As restored & delivered back to Ushaw May 2021 (photo Art Works Conservation)

Geoffrey K Brandwood (1945-2021)

It was a great shock for many to learn that Geoff had died suddenly in November aged just 76.

Like me, Geoff worked in the steel industry - he in Corby and I in Scunthorpe and Sheffield. We both retired early and started studying art and architectural history. Geoff gained his PhD researching Leicestershire churches while still working for what became British Steel. Early retirement gave him the opportunity to undertake further research into the work of later Gothic Revival church architect Temple Lushington Moore and to become heavily involved with various societies, including the Victorian Society, of which he was chairman for several years. At the time of his death he was a Council member of the Ecclesiological Society. For many years he had been a good friend of the Pugin Society.



His personal life was not without its difficulties. He married Janet in 1969. She died in 2007 after a very long illness which had a major impact upon Geoff. He is survived by his children Simon, Tim and Sarah, and his partner Jean. His funeral will be in Mortlake Crematorium on 20th December.

In 2002 Geoff and I both joined up with Linda Hone, Chris Webster and Trevor Cooper to form the publishing company Spire Books. Eventually the latter two left, but Geoff, Linda and I continued for quite a number of years producing some magnificent books, mostly on architecture or ecclesiology. Geoff's role was to deal with the authors and their text; a role which enabled him to demonstrate his superb copy-editing skills.

Despite this time consuming involvement Geoff was extensively published. Not only did he produce the first biography of Temple Moore in 1997, but later produced an updated and enlarged version in 2019. He wrote much of *A Church as it Should be* which Chris Webster and I edited, as well as at least nine books on historic pubs, including the magnificent *Licensed to Sell*.

From his PhD studies he published at least five books on Leicestershire churches plus the particularly really important book - *Bringing them to their Knees: Church-building and Restoration in Leicestershire and Rutland 1800-1914* which appeared in 2002.

However, Geoff's interests were extensive in both geographic and subject terms. He wrote *The Architecture of Sharpe, Paley and Austin* in 2012, was a major contributor to *Seven Church Architects, 1830-1930* which was published by the Ecclesiological Society, authored one of the first books published by Spire Books; *Ruskin and Architecture* with Rebecca Daniels in 2003, and edited *Living, Leisure and Law*, another Spire Books publication, in 2010.

In more recent years he became a serious photographer, especially of churches. Shortly before his death he was working on the photographs for two books which will be published by John Hudson Publishing in 2022 - *Late Georgian Churches: Anglican Architecture, patronage and church-going in England 1790-1840* by Christopher Webster and *English Victorian Churches: Architecture, Faith and Revival* by James Stevens Curl. In addition he was researching, and had almost finished, and had almost finished the works of George Edmund Street, and his legacy must surely be that we collectively find a way of publishing this work.

Perhaps most importantly he was such an outstandingly nice man and will be much missed by many.

John Elliott

A Pugin Brass in St. Faith's Church, Havant

Timothy McCann

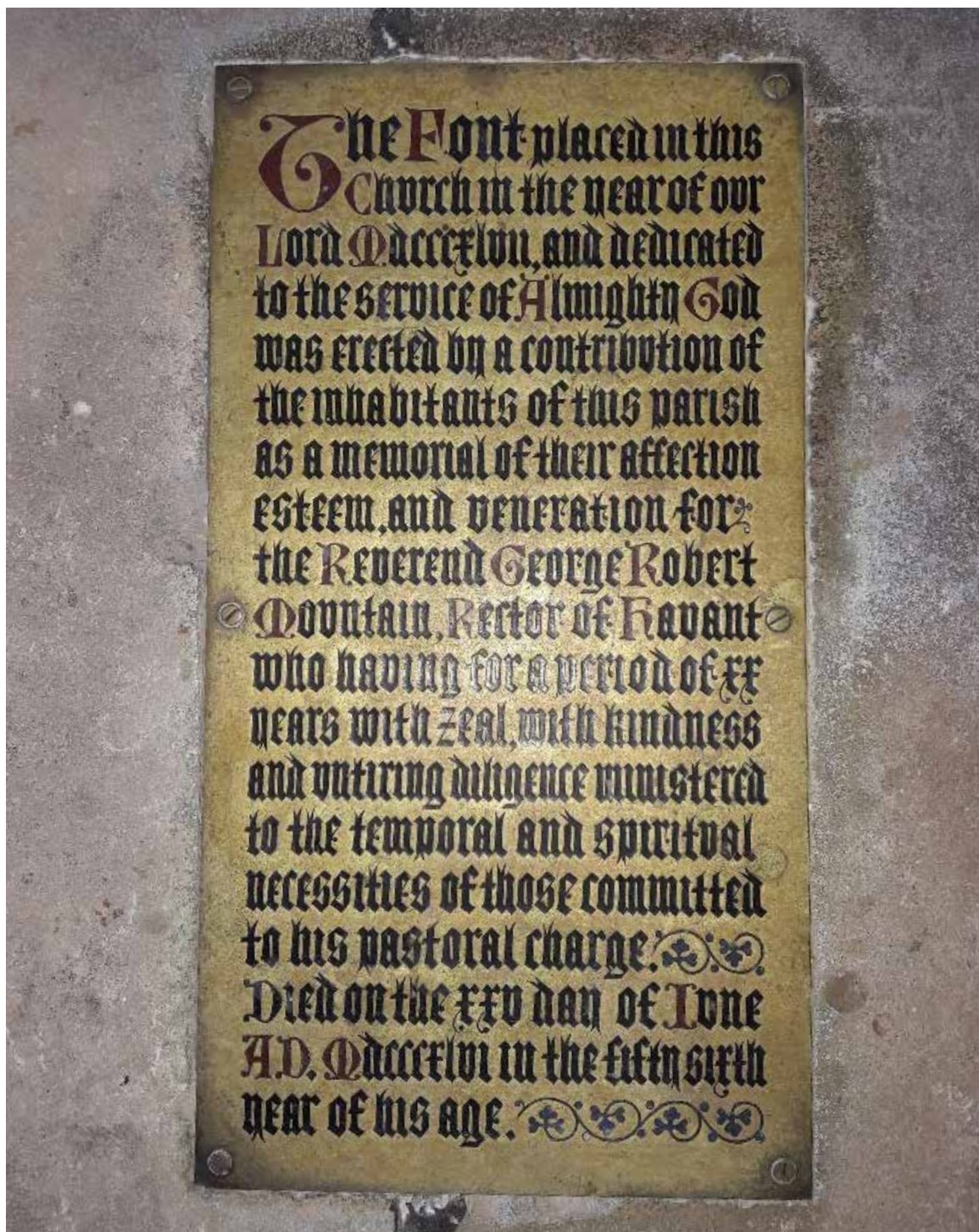
The font in St. Faith's church in Havant is surmounted by a brass plate designed by A.W.N. Pugin. The plate is not mentioned in the latest edition of Pevsner Guide to Hampshire-South¹ nor in the latest edition of the church guide², but is listed and numbered 1848/11 by the Birmingham Museum in David Mears's, catalogue of Pugin's memorial brasses³

St. Faith's Church stands in the south-west quarter of the cross-roads on the old Roman road at the very centre of Havant. The church [Fig. 1] itself is a mixture of sections from the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries with a west aisle built in 1831 and a substantially rebuilt nave. The font is said to date from 1847 and is a memorial to the Rev. George Robert Mountain.

George Robert Mountain was born in 1791 at Buckden in Huntingdonshire into a distinguished clerical family. He was one of the sons of Jacob Mountain, the first Anglican Bishop of Quebec and the builder of the Cathedral there. There is a monument memorialising his wife Elizabeth Mildred Wade Mountain on the west wall of St. Faith's Church. His elder brother George, who was born in Norwich in 1789, was successively Archdeacon of Lower Canada from 1821 and the 3rd Bishop of Quebec from 1850. He was the first principal of McGill University from 1824 to 1825 and founded Bishops University at Lennoxville, Quebec and the grammar school there. He died in 1863. George Robert joined the 75th Regiment and served in the Peninsula War. He resigned in 1819 in order to become a clergyman and was vicar of North Kelsey from 1820 to 1828. He was inducted as Rector of Havant on 24 September 1825 and served there for twenty years and his grateful parishioners raised the present font in his memory, as well as a stained glass window in the Lady Chapel to him and his family.⁴

Clearly he was a devoted pastor and Charles John Longcroft, the historian of Havant, paid him this fine tribute.





‘In his time and by his exertions the church was renewed, the tower repaired, and the nave rebuilt. The parish and infant schools were built and subscriptions raised for their maintenance, the church at Red Hill was built and endowed, the organ at Havant was purchased, and the weekly services increased. Clothing clubs and other parochial institutions were established under his immediate care, and he contributed in every good work alike by his personal influence and attendance. No man ever lived more respected or died more beloved’.⁵

George Robert Mountain died at Kidbrook Lodge in Blackheath Park on 16 June 1846 in his fifty sixth year.⁶ His grateful parishioners raised money for the installation of a font, which originally stood in the centre of the church and was erected in 1847, but has now been moved to the back of the church. The brass is an inscription engraved in plate brass in gothic script affixed as a font plate [Fig. 2] and reads:

The Font placed in this
Church in the year of Our
Lord MDCCCXLVII, and dedicated

To the service of Almighty God
Was erected by a contribution of
The inhabitants of this parish
As a memorial of their affection
Esteem and veneration for
The Reverend George Robert
Mountain, Rector of Havant
Who having for a period of
Years with zeal, with kindness
And untiring diligence ministered
To the temporal and spiritual
Necessities of those committed
To his pastoral charge.
Died on the xxv day of June
AD mdccclvi in the fifty sixth
Year of his age

Notes

1. Charles O'Brien, Bruce Bailey, David W. Lloyd and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Hampshire South* (2018).
2. *The Parish Church of St. Faith Havant* (2014)
3. David Meara, *A.W.N. Pugin and the Revival of Memorial Brasses* (Mansell: 1991), 88
4. *Hampshire Advertiser*, 30 October 1847.
5. Charles John Longcroft, *A Topographical Account of the Hundred of Bosmere in the County of Southampton* (1857), 58.
6. *Buckinghamshire Herald*, 11 July 1846.

Alton Towers

You may be interested in the following press release that has been issued by Alton Towers. A world -famous stained-glass window of significant historic importance, designed by notable architect Pugin for one of the UK's most recognisable stately homes, Alton Towers, is being reinstated this week after years of specialist restoration work.

At roughly 10m tall by 6m wide, the Banqueting Hall Bay Window at the former home of the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury, more recognisable today as 'Alton Towers', is the largest stained-glass window ever installed in a private house. After several years of painstaking work by highly skilled craftsmen, the restored window will now sit proud at the centre of the theme park Resort 170 years after it was originally installed.

Removed in 2010 so restoration work could be undertaken, the vast three-storey window with 36 panels is heraldic in design and celebrates the lineage of the Earls of Shrewsbury dating back to the Norman conquest of 1066. Its central window showcases the coat of arms of the Earls of Shrewsbury, above which is the coats of arms of the Talbot family, dating back to 1442. The surrounding windows symbolise notable connections to the family including King William, King Donald, the Verdun's and Fournivals, who were the first Earls of Shrewsbury, as well as the houses of Doria and Borghese that are European nobility that the family married into.

During the construction of Alton Towers, Pugin, famous for his gothic revival style of architecture with works including Big Ben and Palace of Westminster, commissioned notable glassmakers Hardmans of Birmingham to bring his window design to life in the 1850s. After a decade of searching by the heritage team at Alton Towers Resort, two of Hardman's former craftsmen, David Williams and Stephen Byrne of Williams & Byrne, based in Ludlow, were located and commissioned to restore the window due to the expertise required to restore the masterpiece back to its former glory. The restoration project has taken more than 2 years to complete.

Now concluded, the impressive window will once again sit at the heart of the Alton Towers, more commonly recognised as the centre piece of the Alton Towers Resort theme park.

Completed 170 years ago, the Alton Towers gothic mansion took 50 years to build and once complete became the largest private residence in the whole of Europe, the stained-glass window being the jewel in the crown of its architecture.

Expensive inheritance battles, as well as a changing financial and social climate, led to much of the estate's land and house contents being sold in the 1900s (a fate that befell many stately homes).

Warren Critchley, project lead and Alton Towers Resort Heritage Committee member, said:

“Most people when they think about Alton Towers they think about rollercoasters, but 130 years before it became a theme park it was home to the Earls of Shrewsbury. Alton Towers itself is a massive gothic mansion that took over 50 years to build and the most significant part of the completed mansion was the grand Banqueting Hall and the jewel in the crown was this fantastic three storey high window.

In 2010 the window went into storage until we could find the specialist skills needed to renovate the window and give it the true artistry it needed to bring it to life. It is the largest stained-glass window ever installed in a private home.

The window is the latest project in a series of multi-million heritage projects carried out over the last few the years here at the Resort. As custodians of Alton Towers we want to invest in and undertake these projects ensure we preserve these iconic buildings and features for future generations to come.”

David Williams, said:

“These are some of the finest heraldic stained-glass window in Britain, possibly Europe. The level of detail and care in its design, everything fits so beautifully into place. It is absolutely unique and the scale of it is unique, it isn't wanting in anything. It's been a real joy to work on, hard work but an absolute joy to work on. Pugin pulled out all the stops on this window. About 50 per cent of all the windows were taken apart and put back together using the conventional method of leading and soldering, but much of the paint had faded or disappeared entirely so we had to reinstate nearly all of it. We have brought it back to what it would have been back in 1850s.”

Following successful installation of the window, scaffolding will now be removed to reveal the new window in place for guests to admire.

En Avant

**The Committee of the Pugin Society wish you
a happy and holy Christmas and a good New
Year.**