

# Pugin Society e-newsletter

Issue 19

January/February 2022

## Pugin at Christmas

In the last edition I asked for members to send in pictures of their local Pugin churches decorated for Christmas. The ones that we received follow.



This image was sent on behalf of Canon Hetherington.  
It shows the interior of the only A W Pugin Church in the Channel Islands.  
St Peter Port, Guernsey built in 1852. The reordering was by Smith and Roper of Bakewell in 1995

**The e-newsletter is edited, designed and typeset by Dr John Elliott  
Copy editing is undertaken by Catriona Blaker**

**All material for future editions, and comments on the current edition, should be sent to  
[jpelliott@btinternet.com](mailto:jpelliott@btinternet.com)**



This photo was taken at St John the Evangelist R.C. church, Banbury, on Boxing Day 2021. The chancel of approx. 1841 by Pugin finished the church built by Hickman and Derick, 1839. 'It looked good!' writes sender Barbara Bennett.



This is the Sebastian Pugin Powell church of St Mary and St Egwin, Evesham. Look on line for further information. (Sarah Houle)

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## The Westminster Metropolitan Cross Saga

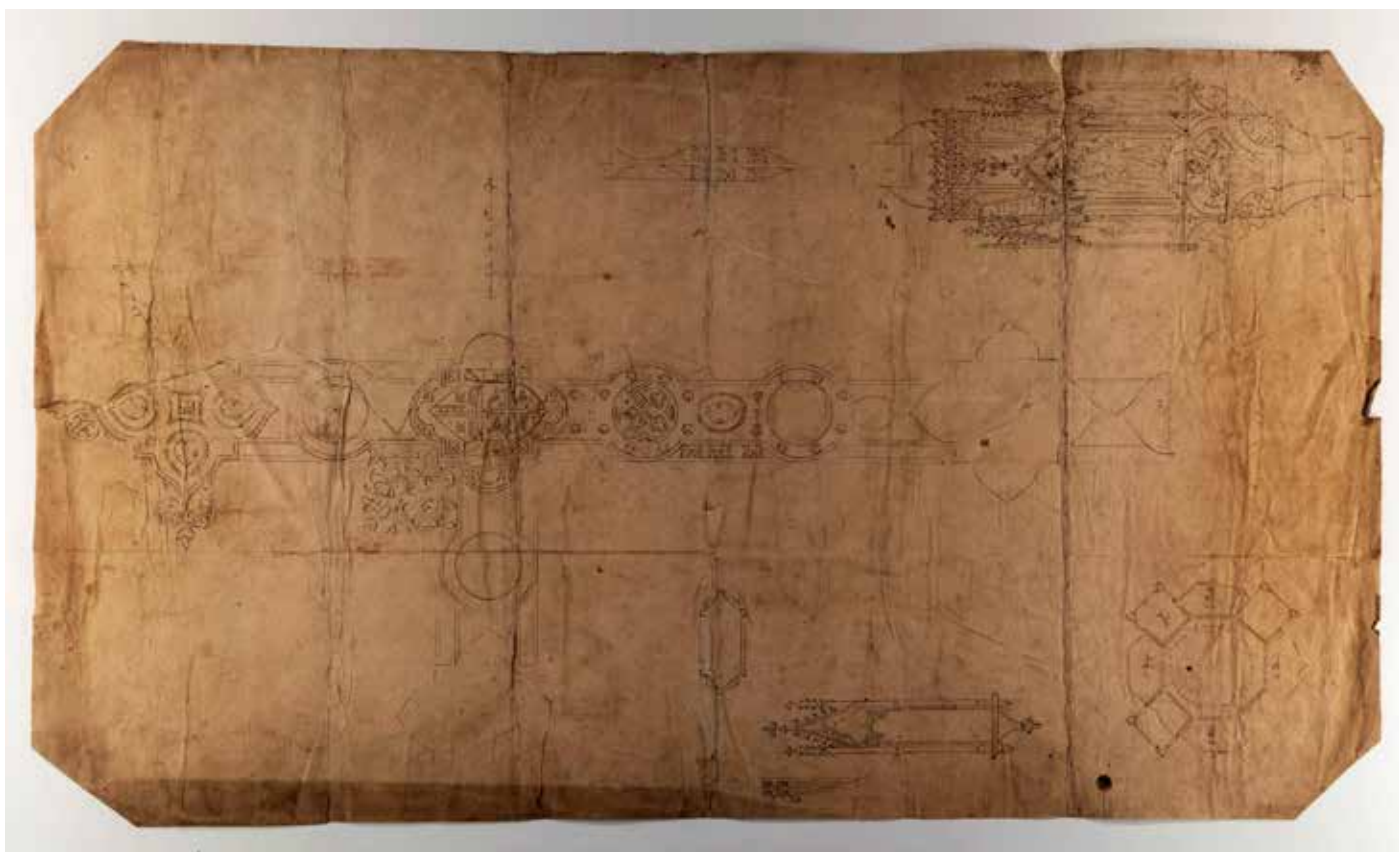
Nicholas Beveridge

In the Western Catholic Church, the metropolitan cross is the processional cross proper to a metropolitan Archbishop for use throughout his province. A peculiar feature is that the corpus figure is not on the front but on the back so that it is facing the prelate when carried immediately before him. It is sometimes referred to as an archiepiscopal cross (e.g., by Pugin) but this term is usually applied to the double transverse cross on the full coat of arms of an archbishop (whether of a province or not). To confuse things even further, the term archiepiscopal cross is sometimes given to the cross staff formerly carried by archbishops instead of the pastoral staff and more recently by popes. This is what Pugin called a 'crozier' (as opposed to the crook-shaped pastoral staff) and although it didn't have a corpus, those carried by recent popes often did.<sup>1</sup>

Although he didn't become Archbishop of Westminster (and Metropolitan of the Province of Westminster, which covered all of England and Wales) until the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1850, it was already assumed as early as December 1847 that Nicholas Wiseman, then coadjutor Vicar Apostolic of the London District, would be given the job.<sup>2</sup>

The sequence of correspondence on the subject of a crozier/archiepiscopal cross/processional cross in keeping with Wiseman's elevated status is somewhat convoluted and is set out in chronological order as follows.

The first known mention of a crozier for Wiseman is on 10 December 1847(?) when Pugin wrote to John



The Pugin design for the cross

Hardman ‘... there are a lot of seals and a crozier to make for Dr Wiseman which I will send you early in the week.’<sup>3</sup> Then, on 17 December 1847(?) Pugin wrote to Wiseman ‘I shall be delighted to make a knop with pinnacles Canopies & images, coronated [?] - for the cross. I was fearful of making too expensive a design – but it will be a great improvement & I shall most gladly adopt the suggestion.’<sup>4</sup>

On 15 February 1848(?) Pugin wrote again to Hardman ‘I send you the Archiepiscopal cross for Dr Wiseman according to his order... I think I have made a rather clever knop.’ And as a postscript: ‘The cross is to be made of silver parcel gilt with enamels &c.’<sup>5</sup>

The design drawing is preserved in a private collection and is shown below.<sup>6</sup> It shows the front with the Westminster arms under a mitre and above crossed keys, detail of the knop and other details, and includes the annotations: crucifix on other the syde (sic), amythist (sic) on the other side and enamel. A cross-section of the knop has the names of four canopied saints: Peter, Paul, George and Edward, alternating with an angel in a niche. No doubt Saints Peter and Edward are references to St Peter’s Abbey, Westminster, built by the Confessor who was buried in the abbey church, and Saint Paul to St Paul’s Cathedral. It is signed and dated AWP (in monogram) ugin 1848.

Nothing more seems to have happened until after Wiseman became Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster in 1850 when, in response to Pugin’s approach of 17 October 1850, he stated that ‘... I must be content with something plain from Belgium, though Pugin has made a splendid design...’<sup>7</sup>

Then on 7 January 1851(?) Pugin wrote to Hardman stating that ‘The Cardinal has written to me to ask if you ever commenced his archiepiscopal cross – what am I to say. I don’t think the drawing was ever sent to you.’<sup>8</sup> And on 10 January Pugin wrote ‘The Cardinal has again written to me about his Cross. will you send me the drawing to look at...’<sup>9</sup>



The back of the metropolitan cross, facing Cardinal Wiseman

Between 16 & 19 March 1851(?) Pugin wrote again

to Hardman ‘as the Cardinal appealed for a sketch of the archiepiscopal cross I send you one you can forward to him with an estimate for which purpose I return you the working drawing – but if it is done I shall simplify it a good deal especially in the knop. we understand constructing better now than we did & can simplify it in many places. you will have to send an estimate with the sketch. I don’t suppose it will come to anything but then I shall have done what I am ordered & it is off my mind so don’t neglect it.’<sup>10</sup> And on 18 March ‘I dont send the Second[?] the estimate to the Cardinal with the smallest expectation that he would have the cross made but then I have done what I was ordered to do & it cant be said I neglected the thing.’<sup>11</sup>

In the event, his ‘smallest expectation’ was fulfilled when, on 11 April 1851(?), Pugin to Hardman ‘I have got the order for the processional cross for the archbishop today...’ and on 14 April 1851(?) ‘you must send me back that drawing of the archiepiscopal cross for me to set out the knop &c on a better principle. I have got the order for £100 for it.’<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, in May 1851 Pugin received a letter from Amelia Scott Murray advising that she had ‘written to Mr Hardman requesting him to begin the Archiepiscopal Cross as soon as possible, I showed your last drawing to the Cardinal. He admires it extremely & the only alteration he wishes to have made is, this. The Archdiocese being placed under the Patronage of the Immaculate Conception his Eminence would like that subject represented on the Cross, perhaps in the place of either St. George or St Edward, but of course this you will arrange. The Cardinal also wishes to choose a figure for the Cross...’<sup>13</sup>

But this is not the end of it as on 11 November 1851(?) Pugin wrote to Hardman ‘I send you the evangelists for the cross and I hope to send you the rest tomorrow...’ and ‘is there not some difficulty about the Westminster arms. the Cardinal has not adopted them anywhere.’<sup>14</sup> Then also in November 1851 ‘I send you the details for the niellos at the back of the quatrefoils of the evangelists. it only remains to settle about the arms in the Centre. I rather doubt the propriety of having the Westminster arms & especially under the mitre. I think it would be better with the hat & private arms of the Cardinal but how will this be decided. only let me know what is considered best & you have it by return post.’<sup>15</sup>

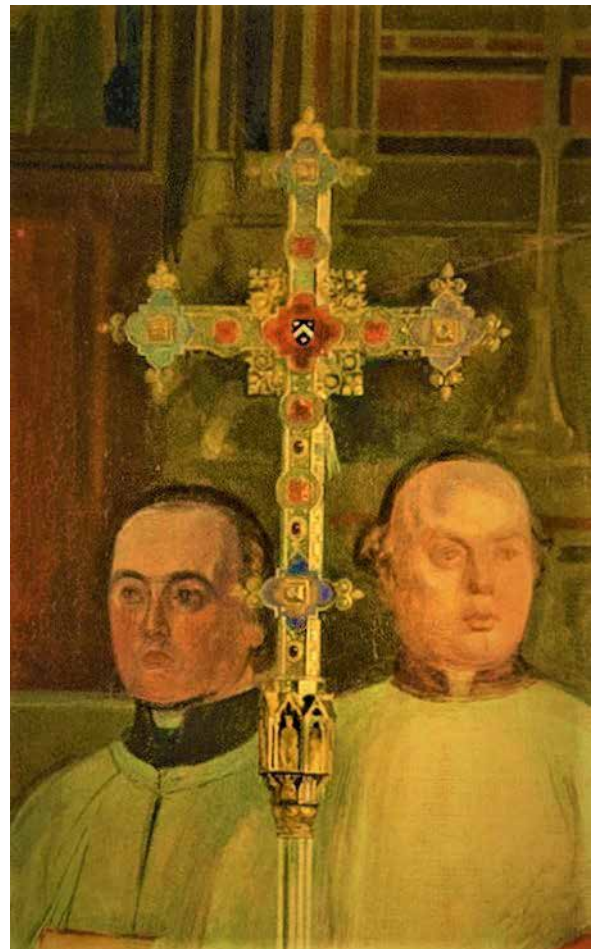
The commission was finally completed several months later and is entered to Mrs Scott Murray in the Hardman Metalwork Daybook at 17 May 1852: ‘An Archiepiscopal Cross – made to Drawing with enamelled Plates Set with Stones &c, richly engraved & with modelled Figures in Knop &c. Parcel gilt – Staff with beaten bulb: the price is £100.’<sup>16</sup>

The back of the metropolitan cross can be seen in the photograph on the previous page, facing Cardinal Wiseman.<sup>17</sup>

The cross was used at the First Provincial Synod of Westminster which was held at St Mary’s College, Oscott in July 1851 and is shown in the unfinished oil painting of the event by William Doyle.<sup>18</sup> Note the red and blue enamels as well as the semi-precious stones and, in accordance with Pugin’s suggestion, the personal arms of Wiseman (Sable a Chevron Ermine between three Coronels Argent) have been substituted for the Westminster arms.<sup>19</sup>

In conclusion, it would appear that Pugin’s use of the terms crozier, archiepiscopal cross and processional cross are referring to the one and the same metropolitan cross and that this is the only metropolitan cross known to have been designed by Pugin.

The cross is now kept in the private chapel at Archbishop’s House, Westminster.<sup>20</sup>



The cross from a painting of the First Provincial Synod of Westminster at Oscott in 1852

## Acknowledgement

Grateful thanks to Naomi Johnson, Museum Curator, Oscott College, for the image of the First Provincial Synod of Westminster painting.

## Sources

Andrews, Brian, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Hobart, 2002

Belcher, Margaret, *The Collected Letters of A. W. N. Pugin, vol. 3*, 1846-48, Oxford, 2009

Belcher, Margaret, *The Collected Letters of A. W. N. Pugin, vol. 5*, 1851-52, Oxford, 2015

De Redman, A.P.S., *The Heraldry of St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham*, 1988

Pugin, A Welby, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, compiled and illustrated from Antient Authorities and Examples*, London, 1846

Note that the punctuation in the Pugin quotes is verbatim.

## Notes

- 1 Pugin 1846, p. 107 & Plate 3 (An Archbishop vested for Mass)
- 2 Pugin to Helen Lumsdaine on 12 December 1847(?) in Belcher 2009, vol. 3, p. 341
- 3 *ibid.*, p. 333
- 4 *ibid.*, p. 351
- 5 *ibid.*, pp. 442-443
- 6 And formerly on loan as BMAG L205.84 (Belcher 2009, vol. 3, p. 397)
- 7 Andrews 2002, p. 165
- 8 Belcher 2015, vol. 5, pp. 11-12
- 9 *ibid.*, p. 30
- 10 *ibid.*, p. 153
- 11 *ibid.*, p. 154
- 12 *ibid.*, pp. 200 & 206
- 13 *ibid.*, p. 220
- 14 *ibid.*, p. 448
- 15 *ibid.*, p. 449
- 16 *ibid.*, p.220
- 17 Under licence from almay.com
- 18 Preserved at Oscott College
- 19 De Redman, figure 45, p. 24
- 20 An image exists but of poor quality

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## A Shrewsbury Commission Rediscovered

James Joll

The first of Pugin's many visits to what became Alton Towers was in September 1837. He was quick to see the possibilities there but much of Lord Shrewsbury's rebuilding scheme was already in progress. However, Pugin was able to persuade his most prominent and loyal patron that there was more to do. Besides adding the Talbot Gallery, thus extending the principal enfilade of the Towers to a total of 480 feet, he also designed the great Dining Hall. This was the last formal space to be tackled and Pugin and Lord Shrewsbury did not always see eye to eye on what should be done. As usual, Pugin substantially succeeded in convincing his client to approve his plans which involved two sideboards to be decorated with plate in the mediaeval way. There were to be fourteen magnificent dishes in all and, in a letter of 18<sup>th</sup> August 1850 to Hardman, Pugin records sending off the working drawing for the first pair of dishes for Alton. 'How do you purpose to make them? In thin brass or copper electro gilt. Some of them must be plated and parcel gilt,' he wrote.<sup>1</sup> Pugin remained anxious about the material. Five days later he wrote: 'I don't feel quite sure about the dishes at alton. Remember those at Bilton though debased in form look very rich and there are 2 sideboards. I thought of working one richer than the other(s). surely some of the lions beat up in brass would be very handsome and sparkling. I fear if we do them all in plated work they will be too costly.'<sup>2</sup>

In a further letter to Hardman he reports sending off the last dish in January 1851: 'I think it must be plated and parcel gilt- viz. the mass of the rims plated, crowns and edges gilt, Talbot silver Lions and engraving of shield, gilt coronet (?) top line. I have marked in yellow what I think should be gilt'.<sup>3</sup>



The charger before and after cleaning

An engraving in the *Illustrated London News* of part of the Mediaeval Court at the Great Exhibition shows a sideboard by Pugin's regular furniture maker Crace, (possibly the one for Abney Hall) with a total of eight of the dishes for Alton. A later photograph of the Alton Dining Hall, after the contents were sold by Christie's in 1857, shows a display of other dishes beneath the gallery with six tucked away at the base of the rather un-Puginian sideboard. Presumably all fourteen were delivered but no invoice was sent until 31<sup>st</sup> December 1853, after the deaths of both Pugin and Shrewsbury, as part of a big year-end catch up by Hardman. The bill to Lord Shrewsbury's executors was for £260.

A number of sketch designs for these dishes exist in the family collection of Pugin drawings currently being offered for private sale by Bonham's. They include one with three fishes at the centre, and one displaying a centre with Talbots supporting what appear to be the Shrewsbury arms. Another, cat.no. L 267, closely resembles a dish which recently came up in a sale at Mallam's in Oxford, including the Talbot T in the bosses round the rim. In the Hardman invoice the third most expensive dish is thus described:

'1 plated and parcel gilt dish, beaten with Lyon in centre and inscription round border. 24ins £33.'

All the dishes were included in the 1857 sale. This one was probably lot 1826, or possibly 1825. Curiously, there was no sign of the sideboards on which they sat. Until December 2021 none of the fourteen dishes had surfaced. Almost certainly they are sitting in private collections unnoticed or in the rooms of provincial dealers in oak and brass. It is striking that Mallam's, when describing this charger, accurately ascribed it to Pugin as the designer and Hardman as the maker, but failed to spot the Latin inscription listing the main titles of the Great Talbot or the Talbot lion at the centre.

The sources for these dishes are various examples made in Augsburg from the late sixteenth century onwards with which Pugin was evidently very familiar. It is only necessary to glance at the grand silver and enamel dish now in the Victoria and Albert museum, designed by him some three years earlier as a present for Henry Benson as thanks for his good offices in trying to save Pugin's engagement to Helen Lumsdaine, to see their influence. The fourteen dishes made for Shrewsbury ranged in size from 16 inches diameter to 18, 21 and 24 inches diameter, with the largest at 30 inches. Only two were purely in brass, the rest being plated and parcel gilt. There were six separate centres but the Talbot lion was the most popular, being on five dishes, including the Mallam's one.

Let us hope others will begin to appear.

I am grateful to Nicholas Williams for his help with this article.

## Notes

1 *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, ed. Margaret Belcher, 5 vols (Oxford University Press), 4, p.607. Note that in this article the author has not used Pugin's spelling verbatim, for clearer understanding.

2 Ibid, 4, p.611. 'Bilton' refers to Bilton Grange in Warwickshire, the home of Colonel Hibbert, where Pugin made additions and alterations 1844-51.

3 Ibid, 5, p.43.

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# Some Interesting Stained Glass Roundels

## George Grimes

On 10th May, 1941 505 Nazi Luftwaffe aircraft unleashed a cataclysmic assault over London that included the Houses of Parliament. The damage to the Westminster palace was extensive. The London Fire Brigade had a dilemma to either direct their resources on saving the House of Commons or the medieval Westminster Hall. Thankfully, they chose the latter. However, the Commons chamber was razed to the ground.

Shortly afterwards a tearful Sir Winston Churchill, along with his most trusted lobby correspondent Guy Eden of the Daily Express newspaper, made a tour of the bomb site. Churchill directed that the rubble (various types of stone, wood, lead and brass) should be made into objects to sell and aid the war effort. And so the London Stonecraft Company crafted ordinary household items such as bookends, ashtrays and much more from the remnants, which were sold on behalf of the Red Cross.







Shards of Pugin stained glass from St. Stephens Hall were collected by the House of Commons librarians. Churchill directed that these shards should be made into decorative shields. Twelve 9 inch shields were produced, Churchill receiving the two prime examples. These two shields were gifted by Churchill to Guy Eden, who then bequeathed them to his niece.

In the mid 1990s I began to collect London Stonecraft relics produced from the Houses of Parliament blitzed rubble. Following the advent of the Internet and online auctions the range of items available grew and I managed to amass quite a small distinctive collection. Then I noticed a stained glass shield included in an online auction that was described as having been once owned by Sir Winston Churchill, which I thought preposterous. The auction lot failed to sell, and I then began a dialogue with the owner, who it transpired was the niece of Guy Eden. After ascertaining facts, I researched and verified. I realised that the shield was bonafide. I negotiated a purchase and collected my shield, which I had specially framed in a gothic revival frame to protect it.

Some years later I managed to locate a second Pugin stained glass shield, which I bought. I was incredulous at my luck. Only twelve shields had been produced and I now owned two of them.

With such rewards for my diligent research scouting for the relics of 10th May, 1941 blitz on the Houses of Parliament, it is not surprising that earlier this year I came across two previously unknown Pugin stained glass roundels. The images on the auction site were very good and I was confident of their authenticity. I decided to “go short” for a month or two and win the auction lot, no matter what amount of money it took, and so I won the auction lot of roundels. Taking a day off work, I drove from London up to Malvern and back to collect them safely.

Having studied them, and the written inscriptions on the obverse, I am of the opinion that the twelve Pugin stained glass shields were probably produced in 1941 by John Hardman & Sons, the original stained glass manufacturers for the 1852 Pugin/Barry Houses of Parliament. My roundels, I suggest, are made from the remaining shards that were not utilised. Hardman & Co ceased trading in 2008. Then the previously unknown Pugin roundels appeared for the first time in 2021.

The Easter season is the premier Christian religious festival which combines the sadness of Good Friday and the joy of Easter Sunday. If your local church was designed by a member of the Pugin family could you take photographs of the church interior on these two days. We will publish them just as we published those of Christmas in this edition.

Send your photographs to [jpelliot@btinternet.com](mailto:jpelliot@btinternet.com)

# A Surprising Role For Eastnor Castle

Rosemary Hill

For Pugin Society members who are addicts of the Netflix series *Succession* the Season One finale had an added attraction. To recap for those who are not watching, *Succession* tells the story of the Roy family, an unpleasant clan whose pater familias, Logan Roy, is the head of a vast American media empire. As his two sons, and their more intelligent but equally unscrupulous sister Siobhan, scheme against one another to become their father's heir, he plays them off against each other. In a world of yachts, private jets and billions of dollars' worth of Manhattan real estate, *Succession* is an exquisitely filmed illustration of the American dream as nightmare and of Scott Fitzgerald's maxim that 'the rich are different'.

Logan has been long divorced from his children's mother, an upper-class English woman, played by Harriet Walter. She makes her first appearance at the end of series one when the whole ghastly clan come to England for Siobhan's wedding which takes place in her mother's ancestral home. This, it transpires, is none other than Eastnor Castle in Herefordshire, decorated by the Crace firm to designs by Pugin.



The lavish celebrations and the similarly extravagant rows, showdowns and catastrophes in this climactic episode therefore take place against a backdrop of Pugin door fittings, panelling, candlesticks and wallpaper, with a particularly tense final scene playing out against one of his most successful chimneypieces. However, this was not the only time that this particular fitting witnessed a scene of dissent.

Pugin worked on designs for Earl Somers at Eastnor in 1849-50. He never visited, however, and this was what caused the trouble. Imagining that it was a medieval castle he designed the chimney piece to fit into a massive stone wall. But Eastnor was in fact a work of 1812 by one of Pugin's bêtes noirs Robert Smirke. Possibly wisely neither Crace, nor George Myers, who was overseeing the work on site, had told Pugin this. Eastnor was exactly the kind of sham neo-Norman castle, no more solid than a regency villa, that he most disliked. However, when the fireplace design arrived Myers had to explain that the walls were too thin to take



A screen shot from the Netflix drama

it. He refused to make any alterations and so a new one had to be made. Pugin was furious with his builder, complaining to Crace that ‘there is not a greater pig in Christendom when he takes it into his head’.

For all of which the finished work is spectacularly beautiful. In recent years Eastnor has been carefully restored by its present owners the Hervey-Bathursts and location fees have no doubt been an important source of funding. Thus, the go-getting and unscrupulous Roys might be said to have done some good, in spite of themselves.

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## Help Needed

I would be most grateful for any input into a research project I have been asked to undertake which is rather out of my comfort zone. The piece concerned is a bookcase that, when sold at Christie’s in 2001, was catalogued as having been designed by Pugin for the Palace of Westminster and then moved to Claremont House in Surrey by 1866. I think Christie’s based their conclusions on the presence of the portcullis crest on the pediment of the piece but it is not crowned and so is perhaps more likely to refer to a private family instead? The other crest on the pediment is a fleur de lys and there are Tudor roses to either side. Any input would be welcomed thank you very much and it would be lovely to be able to prove the origins of the piece once and for all.

Christopher Coles

Please send any replies to the editor, who will send them on to Christopher



## e-newsletter Supplement

I am grateful to Timothy McCann for spotting the following piece in the *Times* Diary on Saturday 12 February 2022.

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*A reader on a bus in Penge overheard an old man telling his friend that "it's that bleeding Pugin what's caused all the trouble". My reader's ears pricked up at this since he is a fan of Victorian architecture. "How's that then?" the mate replied. "Well, he's sent all his troops to the border," the first said.*