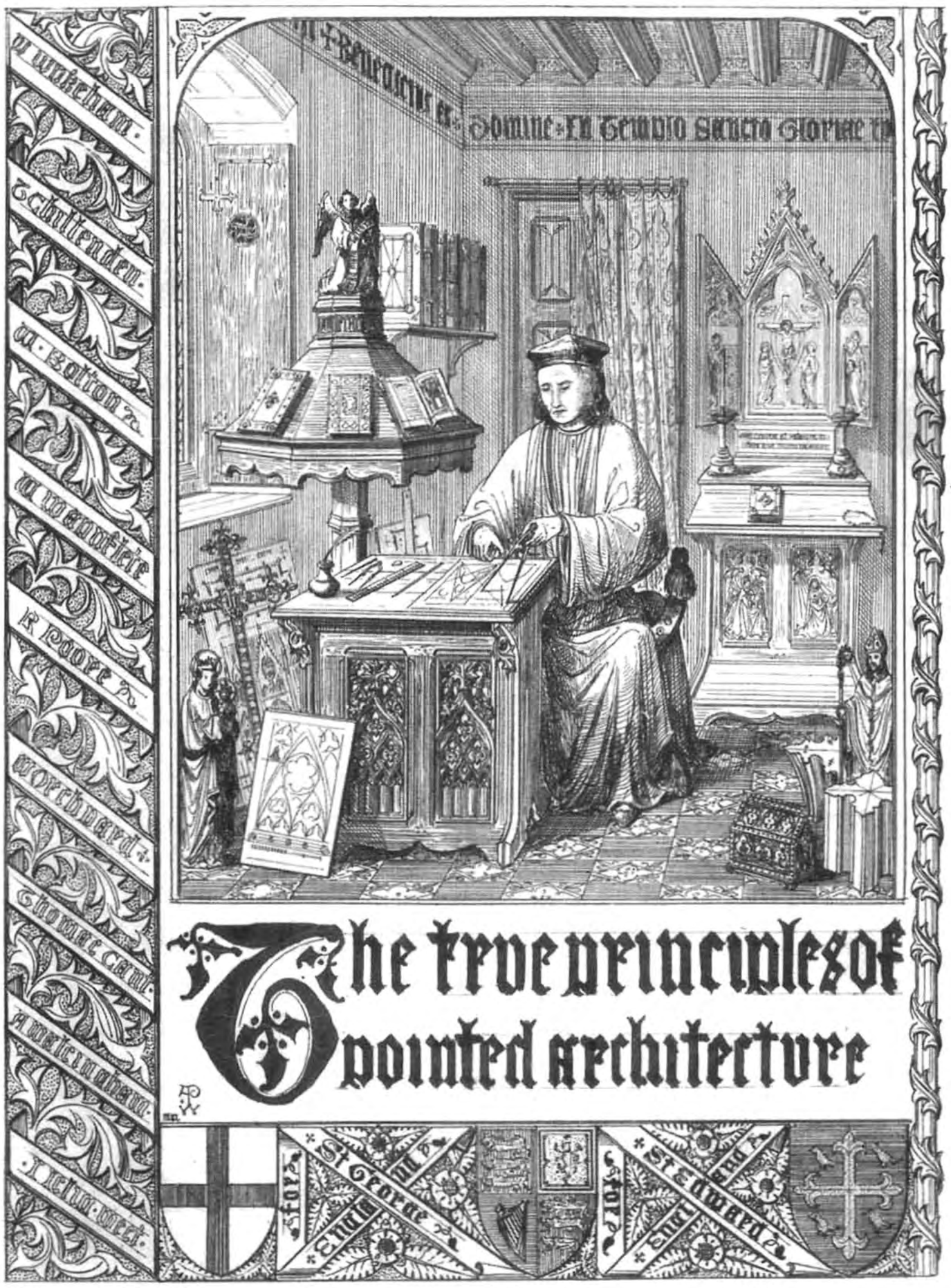
Winter 2000

True Principles

The Voice of the Pugin Society

Registered Charity No 1074766



in this issue:

and much more...

Volume 2 Number One

A.W.N.Pugin on the beauties of worship:

It is impossible adequately to describe the midnight mass at Christmas, when the Nativity of our Redeemer is announced by hymns and carols of praise, breaking through the stillness of that solemn hour; and how awfully vast do these temples appear, when the lights that blaze around the altar hardly reflect half up the towering shafts, whose still loftier vaults are lost in absolute obscurity. Then in Holy Week, during the solemn Office of the Tenebrae, when the tapers, emblematic of the prophets who appeared on earth before the coming of our Lord, have gradually been extinguished, as the successive Nocturns were sung, and total darkness, at the end of the 'Benedictus', reigns throughout the sacred edifice, how steals the plaintive chaunt of the 'Miserere' on the ears of the ravished worshippers, swelling gradually, till the soul seems already transported among the angelic choirs!

From:
An Apology for a Work entitled "Contrasts": being a defence of the assertions advanced in that publication, against the various attacks lately made upon it. Birmingham, 1837

Front cover: Frontispiece to the 1841 edition of *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture.* (Courtesy, The Monastery Library, St Augustine's, Ramsgate)

The Pugin Society

The Pugin Society, *Registered Charity No.1074766, was founded in 1995. It exists, to quote its Constitution, to further 'the advancement of the education of the public in the life and work of A.W.N.Pugin and the other architects and designers in his family', and to watch over, and if possible save, threatened buildings by members of the Pugin family, or near colleagues. The Society also aims to give advice on the conservation and restoration of relevant buildings or decorative schemes, and, in addition, organises events and outings to raise awareness of this great architect, designer and writer. It produces a bi-annual Newsletter* – True Principles – *and is open to anyone interested in A.W.N.Pugin, his family, those he influenced, and the Gothic Revival.*

Contents

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True Principles is published by The Pugin Society, printed by Sandwich Printing Company, and designed by SandwichDeSign [set in Palatino 10/13] (e-mail: pennamacoor@enterprise.net, Tel: 01304 617626).

Editorial

'Ha! Mr Editor, I have you on the hip. Look to yourself,' as Pugin wrote, defending himself in 1850 in answer to a critical article in the *Rambler*, revealing in a very immediate manner his vigorous tendency to engage with the press.

If there is one thing in particular that justifies the existence of *True Principles*, and of money spent on its publication, it is that we can use it as a powerful vehicle to promote the best interests of Pugin and of the Society. Also, we can hope to aim, perhaps, at reflecting something of his own zest for the written word, his impassioned and direct prose, and at making *True Principles* as sparkling and lively a forum for debate and new research as he would have wished. Indeed, the very name of our journal/newsletter is an abbreviated tribute to his own great *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* of 1841. Pugin himself – when in reasonable health, and not too cast down – relished the writing of his caustic and satirical pamphlets and articles, frequently producing what he would call 'a rouser', and enjoying the controversy which he well knew would follow. He lived, after all, in an age of rapidly burgeoning periodicals, particularly Catholic ones, and fully recognised the significance of the press, using it whenever he could to further his own beliefs, whilst at the same time frequently being the recipient of adverse criticism, as Margaret Belcher has pointed out in the excellent introduction to her *A.W.N.Pugin: an Annotated Critical Bibliography*, (London and New York 1987) – a particularly sympathetic and interesting analysis of Pugin and the written word.

Pugin the journalist, as it were, gives us a happy precedent for the publishing of *True Principles*. There is also, and most importantly, the question of Pugin the celebrated theorist and manifesto writer. 'My writings, much more than what I have been able to do, have revolutionized the taste of England,' he commented in 1851, making this statement with regret, rather than otherwise, not at the time fully foreseeing, perhaps, the immense influence that his buildings themselves, and his mastery of exquisite design and detail – in architecture and the applied arts – would have on future generations.

At the same time, though, he was correct about his writing. *Contrasts, True Principles, An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England, The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, to name but a very few, are texts which all Pugin enthusiasts and students should read. Unfortunately this is not, in terms of availability, an easy task. *Contrasts*, in particular, is a work of seminal importance, with resonances which connect it to all sorts of aspects of nineteenth-century historical, literary, religious and social issues. A student, glancing through the art and architectural history shelves in any – even quite good – bookshop will find plenty of affordable editions of Carlyle and Ruskin, for example, but none of Pugin. This is something that needs to change. A thought for readers – perhaps the Society, with a couple of publishing ventures successfully under its belt already, should apply for seriously substantial funding to produce Pugin in paperback, expertly edited by one of our top scholars.

Finally, I hope as Editor, to try to bring *True Principles* up to as high a standard as possible, so that we may see it with pride in shops, churches, and our own homes and show it to friends with pleasure. Part of this can only be achieved by your own excellent contributions, so please keep them coming – the more the better. Not more than 2,000 words and four illustrations, captions written and permissions cleared, disks and/or hard copy acceptable. The next copy date is 1st April for publication in July.

En Avant!

Catriona Blaker

Forget the Millennium, the Society is looking towards 2002

Chairman **Nick Dermott** *reports:*

Our AGM was held this year in London, culminating in a fine tour of Westminster Cathedral, led by Peter Howell. At the meeting members warmly welcomed Sarah Houle as our President in recognition of her work for, and support of, the Society since its inception. This meeting, our sixth AGM, also marked a major change with Catriona Blaker standing down as Honorary Secretary, her place being taken by Pam Cole. We all agreed that it was difficult to imagine the Society without Catriona whose drive and energy have so shaped the direction the Society has taken since its first meeting. She now takes on the role of Editor of *True Principles* and we welcome Pam as new Secretary. Incidentally, the other Honorary Officers were re-elected for another year.

Westminster Cathedral: detail from the tomb of Cardinal Wiseman (1802-65) designed by Edward Pugin. *Photo: C.Blaker*

It was agreed at the meeting, amongst other things, that we should move towards the establishment of a Society website, possibly called www.pugin-soc.org. The site would promote the Society, encourage recruitment, stimulate debate, sell our publications and generally spread the word. It is hoped that this can be set up in the next few months.

There was a useful discussion concerning what we should do to mark the year 2002, it being the 150th anniversary of the death of A.W.N.Pugin. Ted Cocking is still campaigning for the Post Office to issue a commemorative stamp and it is, of course, only appropriate that there should be a special service at St Augustine's, Ramsgate, and perhaps an additional event here as well. Other suggestions included a conference, possibly in Staffordshire, to commemorate not only A.W.N.P., but in addition the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, whose 150th anniversary it also is. Further suggestions on this important subject would be greatly appreciated.

'Except the Lord build the house their labour is but lost that build it.' Translation from Latin inscription, now in a serious state of disintegration, on the north front of The Grange. This is the opening sentence of Psalm CXXVII. *Photo: C.Blaker*

As at last year's AGM, The Grange was also discussed, and this year, at least, there has been some progress. The Landmark Trust has engaged the services of Paul Drury, ex- of English Heritage, as historical consultant. Paul has uncovered a huge amount of fascinating information about the history of the house, Cartoon Room and St Edward's, including the existence of a gatekeeper's lodge in the forecourt, which was discovered by a non-destructive archeological dig. A further dig is expected in the garden, which may perhaps reveal the long sought after underground room. His full report on The Grange is expected for the end of this year, and will of course be fully covered in *True Principles*. We understand that Stage One of the Landmark Trust's Lottery bid has been accepted and that Paul Drury's report will form the basis for consultation prior to any Listed Building Application being made.

In conclusion, I would like to send warm greetings to all members and wish everybody a happy Christmas and New Year.

Michael Trappes-Lomax

Anthony Symondson SJ *writes evocatively about a likeable and idiosyncratic personality and his excellent, but perhaps too little read, biography of A.W.Pugin.*

One of the surprising omissions from *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, edited by Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, published in 1994 to accompany an exhibition of the same name mounted at the Victoria & Albert Museum, was much attention given to *Pugin: A Mediæval Victorian*, by Michael Trappes-Lomax. The biography was brought out in 1932 when the author was thirty-two. It anticipated by many years the work of Phoebe Stanton, Shirley Bury, Alexandra Wedgwood, Roderick O'Donnell and Rosemary Hill and remains, for the time being, the best biography of Pugin. There are glancing allusions by Professor Wainwright and Dr O'Donnell to the book's value in correcting the balance of an early twentieth century dismissal of Pugin, but it was Professor Andrew Saint, in his essay, 'The Fate of Pugin's True Principles', who more generously recognized its enduring worth.

Trappes-Lomax is today an almost forgotten figure and perhaps it is time for members of the Pugin Society to know a little about him. I met him in 1965, two years before he left London and retired to the Norfolk village of Great Hockham, where the hall belonged to his nephew, David. Pugin often came into the conversation and when I asked him why he had written a biography at a time when Pugin was an unfashionable and neglected subject he said that as he could not find a book about him, apart from Benjamin Ferrey's *Recollections*, he decided to write one himself.

Born in 1900 at Sparth House, Clayton-le-Moors, Lancashire, the third of eight brothers, Trappes-Lomax was educated at Stonyhurst College in 1910-19 and from there went on to read history at New College, Oxford. Stonyhurst made an indelible impression on him (his family had been educated at the school since 1779) and he regularly paid an annual visit, concluded only on his death. It was while he was there that he was profoundly influenced by two Jesuits, Fr Martin D'Arcy and Fr Philip Watts. Like other gifted and responsive boys at the time, 'he burgeoned and flowered in the rays of the D'Arcy sun', as his obituary records, but it was Fr Watts who left a deeper impression.

Michael Trappes-Lomax, superbly apparelled as Somerset Herald. (Courtesy, John Trappes-Lomax)

Fr Watts was a great-grandson of Pugin on his mother's side and was thought to have inherited some of the more attractive characteristics of his forebear. He came to teach at Stonyhurst in 1919, the year that Trappes-Lomax left, but it was he who fired him with an interest in Pugin and reinforced his enthusiasm for the history of the school, its collections and libraries. Through the editorship of the *Stonyhurst Magazine*, Fr Watts recorded the connexions that Pugin, the Hardmans and the Powells had with Stonyhurst. When Trappes-Lomax started work on *Pugin: A Mediæval Victorian* Fr Watts introduced him to his mother, who lived with his brother, Humphrey, at Sion House, Hanley Swan, near Worcester, and to many Pugin descendants from whom he established an invaluable oral record and access to family papers, drawings and memorabilia.

Trappes-Lomax's biography of Pugin was only one of several books he wrote. The first was a novel, *One of These Days*, set in a villa in the South of France, of which he had had much experience in the company of his mother, a valetudinarian, who annually spent part of the year living in villas, accompanied by her doctor, for whom she took another nearby. He published a life of Bishop Challoner, compiled the official history of the

Scots Guards, a book on the early history of Burns and Oates, the Catholic publishers, and contributed articles to various periodicals. He sat on the council of the Catholic Record Society as assistant secretary, was on the editorial board of the *Tablet* and in the publishing firms of Sands and Longmans.

But it was with the College of Arms that Trappes-Lomax is principally associated. He continued a long line of Catholic heralds. In 1946 he was appointed as Rouge Dragon Pursuivant of Arms and five years later was created Somerset Herald. For twenty-one years he served the college, part of the time as librarian and house controller. Heraldry had long interested him and it is noticeable how learnedly it features in his life of Pugin. Resplendent in a tabard, he was on the Earl Marshal's Staff at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth and bore the Garter insignia on a cushion at the funeral of Sir Winston Churchill.

At the time I met him I was living in the Georgian rectory of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe in St Andrew's Hill. Opposite was a good early Victorian pub, the Three Castles (since re-named the Cockpit) favoured, as much for its food as its intimacy, by the journalists who worked for the *Times* and the *Observer*. The landlord was an obliging Irishman, Mr O'Callaghan, and his wife was an excellent cook who specialised in turkey and ham pie. I usually went there for dinner and so did the Revd William Atkins, a Minor Canon of St Paul's Cathedral, who lived in a flat in the Deanery. Mr Atkins was interested in Victorian architecture (although at heart he was a Georgian) and I mentioned that I had been given by Lance Wright, the deputy editor of the *Architectural Review*, a copy of *Pugin: A Mediæval Victorian* and was enjoying it immensely. 'Don't you know Michael Trappes-Lomax?', he asked. 'No', I said. 'I'm surprised, he comes here most evenings for dinner. I'll introduce you.'

Trappes-Lomax was the reverse of what I expected. For some time I had noticed a short, slightly portly, rather untidily dressed man, with a good voice but a pronounced stammer, grey hair, kind eyes, moustache and a pleasant face; the more he stammered the more he laughed. I thought he might be a sub-editor on the *Times*. The College of Arms was not far away in Queen Victoria Street and Trappes-Lomax was drawn to the Three Castles by the food and company. He was known to the landlord and regulars as Mr Trappes. Despite his stammer, he spoke with felicity, wit and huge enjoyment and, as he told his stories, swept his hearers along with him. He seemed delighted that somebody was reading his book after thirty years. However, he showed little enthusiasm for the burgeoning interest in the nineteenth century then gaining ground in the early years of the Victorian Society. But he was pleased that my interest in Pugin was as much religious as architectural, as the strength of the book lies in the seriousness with which Trappes-Lomax took Pugin's faith, and saw all that he accomplished within that context.

Not long before I met him, I had discovered in a book shop in Cecil Court a copy of *The Missal for the Use of the Laity*, published by Dolman in 1839 with subsequent editions in 1840 and 1843. This was a small missal in which Pugin, then Professor of Ecclesiastical Antiquities at St Mary's College, Oscott, took a great interest. He drew and engraved the illustrations but my copy was bound in dark green leather, die stamped, with gilt edges pounced and a silver clasp, also to Pugin's design. It is now in the Victoria & Albert Museum. By 1965 it had become of some rarity but was also in good condition, and Trappes-Lomax's eyes lit up when I showed it to him and resulted in an even greater display of stammering enthusiasm. A more significant result was an invitation to the College of Arms to see other Pugin items, details of which I am ashamed to say I do not remember, but I have not forgotten his rooms.

The College of Arms is an uncommon seventeenth-century survival of post-Great Fire London and had miraculously escaped serious bomb damage. Then, as now, it seemed untouched by the passage of time. Trappes-Lomax occupied a set of rooms on the first floor of the right hand side of the courtyard. They are fine rooms, but it was the force of personality of the occupant which made them memorable. Against the lofty, cream distempered, panelled walls stood big Georgian book cases of mahogany with glass doors, on the tops of which were arranged plates, decorated with pheasants and garlands of flowers with green borders, from one of Myott's dinner services, from Sparth House. The high fireplace was still used and had a tall fender, on one side of which were piled several weeks' copies of the *Times* in date order, and, on the other, Trappes-Lomax's slippers, being kept warm for his return. It was flanked by a pair of comfortable, if tumble-down, arm chairs. Most of the furniture was Georgian, and on the floor was a good, if worn, carpet.

The pictures were varied, mainly early nineteenth-century landscapes and topographical subjects in gilt frames, engravings, and some portraits and miniatures. Everywhere there was dust and muddle; surfaces were strewn with books, letters and papers, and a table was conspicuous for bottles and glasses. Edward Ardizzone would have done justice to it and its inhabitant. It was the room of a bachelor scholar, who enjoyed the highways and byways of English literature, whose chief

interest and delight was in history, but Catholic history in particular, and who was fascinated by the sidelights on the story of his country and its notable Catholic families. He invited me in from time to time to drink port.

In 1967 Trappes-Lomax left London, driven out, he said, by failing health, coupled with the noise, rush and fumes of the capital. But before he went he was invited to the private view at the Goldsmiths' Hall of *Copy or Creation*, an exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian church plate mounted by Shirley Bury, of the Victoria & Albert Museum. It was a good party and exhibition; Trappes-Lomax knew many there, but I have never forgotten seeing him and Patrick Feeny, the glasspainter, fall on each other's necks with schoolboy glee. Feeny was also an old Stonyhurst boy, though later than Trappes-Lomax. He was born in Birmingham and his family knew the Hardmans. For each of his years at the school he had won the Drawing Prize. Partly through Fr Watts's influence, he was in 1928 invited to join Hardman's Studios. Feeny went on to design two windows at Stonyhurst, but it was the Pugin connexion, as much as the Stonyhurst association, that forged their friendship. He was an apprentice glazier when Trappes-Lomax was writing his book, and that was when they met.

Trappes-Lomax died in Norfolk five years later, in 1972. I never saw him again after he left London. After his death letters poured into Stonyhurst, in which certain words constantly recurred: gentle, kind, courteous, modest, humble; friendly, gay, witty, humorous, good company. All of which I can vouch for from my slight acquaintance with him. His obituary in the *Stonyhurst Magazine* described him as a 'scion of old, Cisalpine Catholic stock' with a deep devotion to the Faith, 'keen and uncompromising'. That was the way the school, the Jesuits and his contemporaries saw him and they were not wrong.

And what of *Pugin: A Mediæval Victorian*? It has long been out of print; Trappes-Lomax had no desire to reissue it (I offered to broach the proposal with the Architectural Press, but he said the revision would take too much work) and it is scarce and expensive when it turns up in antiquarian book shops. To modern readers it might, perhaps, seem a little idiosyncratic, with Trappes-Lomax's identification of Pugin with the epic heroes and its chapter headings from *The Song of Roland* and *The Saga of Grettir the Strong*, but it is written in beautiful, stylized English. The instinctive empathy Trappes-Lomax had with Pugin and his period, reinforced by so much personal knowledge drawn from the architect's family, and the lack of condescension towards a topic that would have been regarded by most of his generation as absurd, added to the well-chosen illustrations, gives it perennial freshness. It is a highly intelligent study as well as a pleasure to handle.

This is how it concludes: 'In the long gallery of those who, in the last hundred years, have saved, and increased, and handed down whatever there is of artistic life in England, one picture has been badly hung. It deserves to be hung in a better light. It contains the figure of a tough little man, with dark hair, and flashing eyes, and a hearty laugh, dressed in semi-nautical clothes.' Well, Pugin's portrait now hangs in a better light (and Trappes-Lomax's pioneer work has helped to secure that); but, nevertheless, I hope that if members of the Pugin Society want to see it more clearly they will start a run in the public library.

NOTE: I am indebted to John Trappes-Lomax, Michael Trappes-Lomax's nephew, for providing me with family information, David Knight, the librarian of the More Library at Stonyhurst College and editor of the *Stonyhurst Magazine*, for making copies of Michael Trappes-Lomax's and Patrick Feeny's obituaries and for Fr Philip Watts SJ's obituary, published in *Letters and Notices*, the Revd Geoffrey Holt SJ and Dr John Martin Robinson for their help. A.S.

Fr Anthony Symondson SJ *is an architectural historian and writer. In 1988 he mounted the exhibition,* Sir Ninian Comper: The Last Gothic Revivalist, *at the RIBA Heinz Gallery, Portman Square. He taught at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, was Curator of the Collections, and is now an assistant priest at the Jesuit parish of Corpus Christi, Boscombe, Dorset.*

In the Shadow of Fonthill – Pugin's Early Years at Alton Towers

Is it possible that Pugin could have been influenced at the Towers by 'the villain Wyatt', as he refers to him?
Michael Fisher *investigates.*

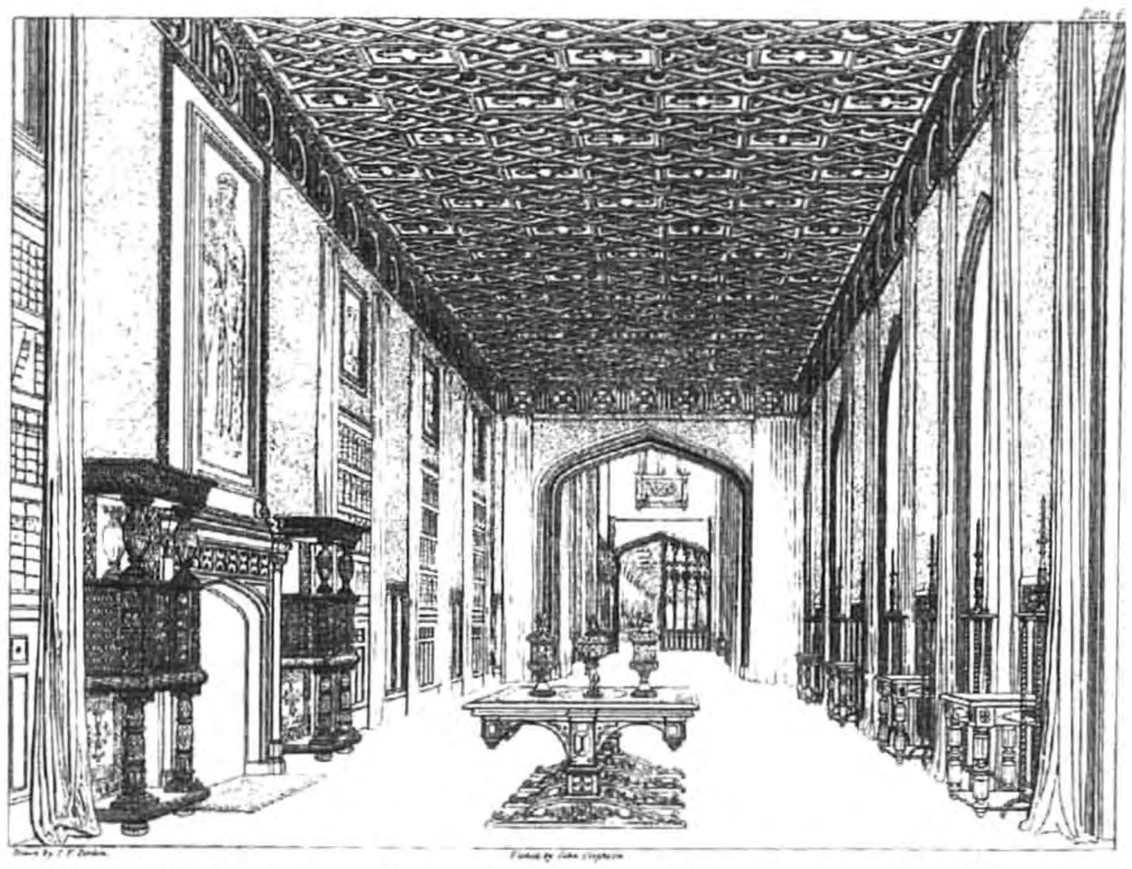
In 1952 – coincidentally the centenary of the death of A.W.N.Pugin – the interiors of Alton Towers were destroyed by their post-war owner in an asset-stripping exercise which deprived the nation of what, outside the Palace of Westminster, were arguably Pugin's greatest achievements in the field of interior design.

That Pugin should have carried out work at the home of his wealthiest and most influential patron – the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury – is hardly surprising. It is only recently, however, that the full extent of his contributions to this vast Gothic mansion has been perceived, surveyed and recorded.[1] They reveal Pugin the Romantic in his completion of the dramatic galleries, the ecclesiastical designer in his transformation of the chapel, the military engineer in his construction of the barbican and other defences,[2] and the man of *The True Principles* in his masterly creation of the great dining room. 'You will be greatly pleased with the works at Alton', he wrote to Ambrose Phillipps in 1851, 'which have improved the house amazingly';[3] and yet more was in hand at the time of his death.

One of the many extraordinary features of Alton Towers was the series of linked galleries on the south side of the house. Already in place when Pugin arrived[4] were a tall entrance tower, Armoury, Picture Gallery, Octagon Sculpture Gallery and House Conservatory. Together they formed the Grand Entrance by which visitors were conducted towards the State Rooms. As the names suggest, each gallery had a different theme, and they housed the Talbots' huge collections of armour and fine art.

No documentary evidence survives to prove that James Wyatt (1746-1813) had ever worked at Alton, and in any case the galleries were built after his death. Nevertheless, comparisons with Rutter's illustrations[5] reveal that their overall plan and design were strongly influenced by Wyatt's Fonthill Abbey, while Rutter's account of the gradual unfolding of the splendours of Fonthill before the eye of the visitor as he traversed the galleries could apply equally to Alton, which, when its galleries were begun, was called Alton Abbey.[6]

It is somewhat ironic that soon after his arrival at Alton Pugin should have been given the task of completing a set of rooms so reminiscent of Wyatt, whom he was wont to describe as 'the wretch', and 'this monster of architectural depravity'. Yet his work on the



Fonthill Abbey, King Edward's Gallery, looking towards the Octagon (John Rutter, *The Delineations of Fonthill*, 1823)

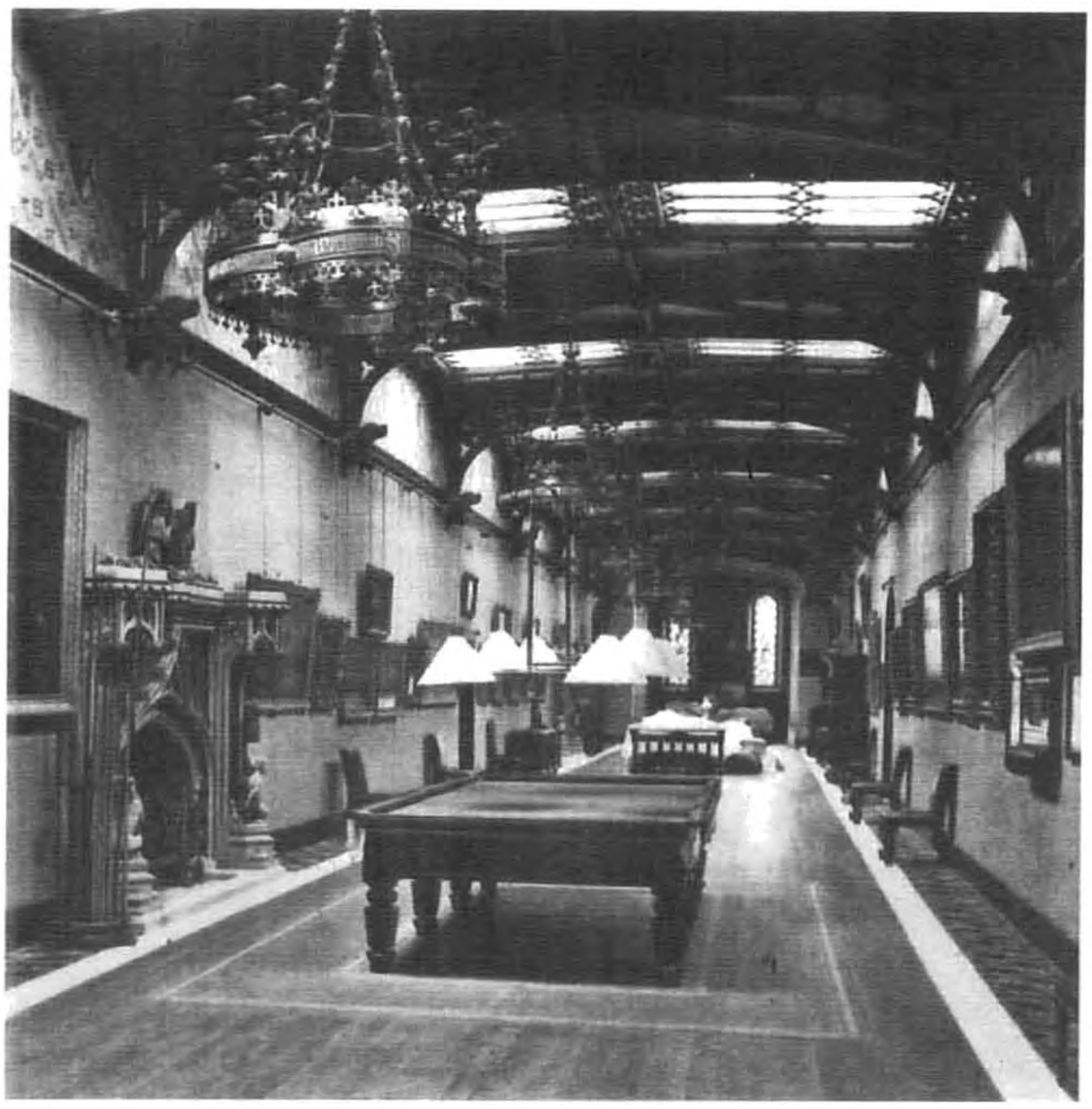
Alton galleries effected an even closer resemblance to Fonthill, principally through the addition of the Talbot Gallery (1839-40) to the west side of the Octagon, which thus became – as at Fonthill and as it was to be at the New Palace of Westminster – the central element of an axial system of linked chambers. A tall square tower was built at the west end to balance the entrance tower at the eastern extremity of the range.

The combined east-west length of the Alton Galleries and Octagon (480 feet) far exceeded that of the principal axis at Fonthill (280 feet). Every device of lighting, space, and rising levels was exploited to the full, and the view from the new Gallery through the entire range was breathtaking:

> ...When the reader recollects that the whole of this vista is filled with works of art of the noblest character, or with the remains of antiquity of the most interesting kind, he may have some idea of the magnificent *coup d'oeil* which presents itself, and of the difficulty we find in giving anything like an adequate description of it.[7]

The construction of the Talbot Gallery – built on a level higher than that of the existing buildings – involved raising the walls of the adjoining Octagon by several feet. The central column, which resembled that of the Chapter House at Wells, had also to be raised.[8] Since the walls were not strong enough to support a stone vault, Pugin had to agree to the reinstatement of a plaster vault worthy of 'the wretch' himself, and to the retention of cast-iron screenwork at the Picture-gallery entrance. He came into his own, however, with the

insertion of a five-light window resplendent with Willement glass depicting Talbot bishops, and a magnificent glazed timber screen at the entrance to the Talbot Gallery.



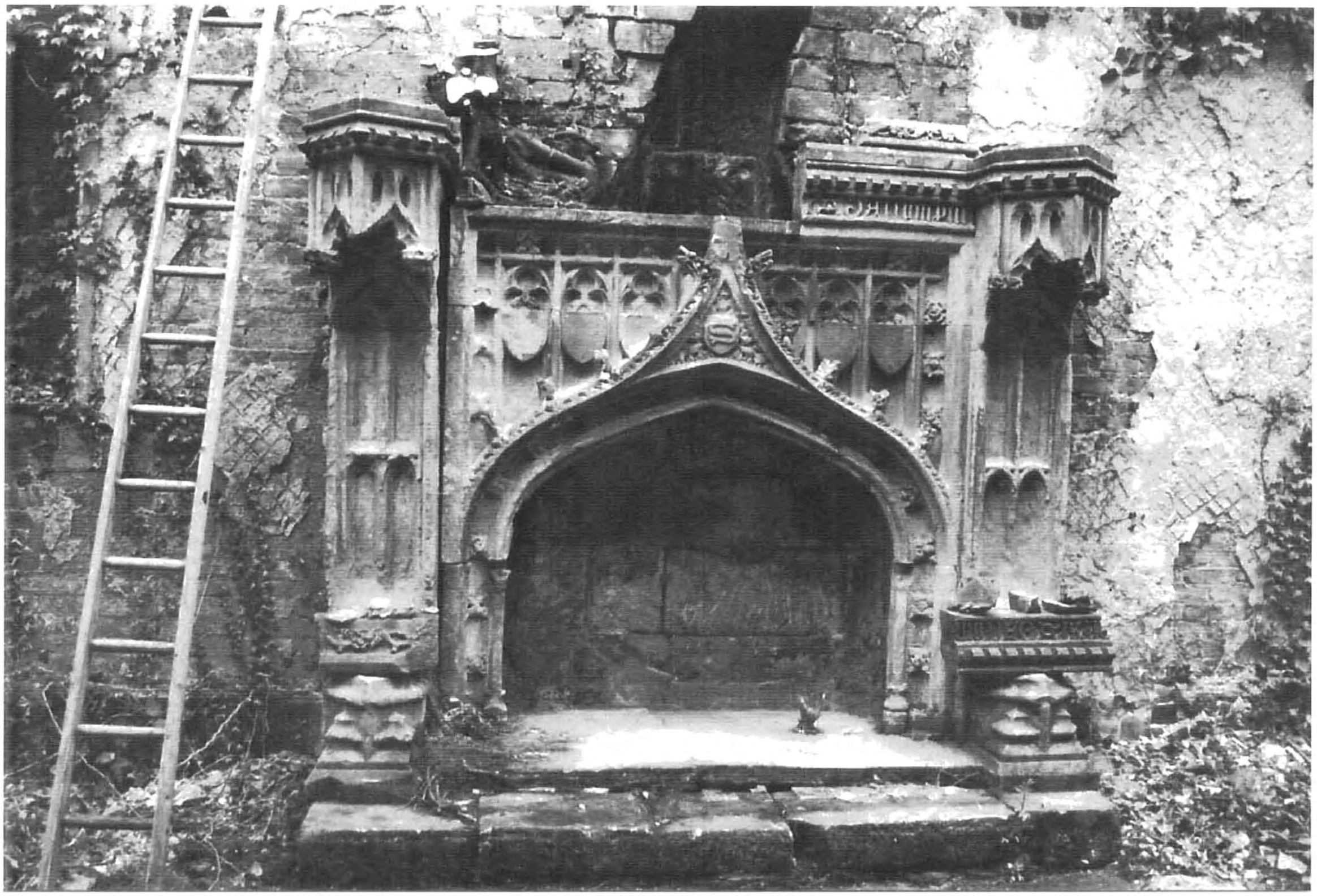
Alton Towers: The Talbot Gallery, photograph c.1890. The pictures and furnishings are not the original ones, but those introduced by the Chetwynd-Talbots after the Great Sale of 1857. The exceptions are the Pugin-Hardman *coronae lucis*.
Photo: Staffordshire County Museum, Shugborough

The new Gallery was furnished with two massive chimneypieces similar to the one in the Great Hall at Scarisbrick, and also surmounted by suits of armour. Willement painted over a hundred shields for the heraldic frieze, and Hardman supplied a set of eight sixteen-light *coronae* bearing the Talbot motto *Prest d'Accomplir*. It was the *pièce de résistance* of the entire house. Visitors arriving by the Grand Entrance would catch glimpses of it through Pugin's openwork screen as they passed through the Octagon to the House Conservatory. Only when they had completed the tour of the house would they return, via the West Wing, to enter – as the climax of their visit – what was described as 'the last and noblest of the halls in Alton Towers'.[9]

Even in the Talbot Gallery Pugin had to agree to install cast-iron skylights to match those of the 1820s Picture Gallery; elsewhere he was involved in the creation of replica Talbot tombs cast in plaster (for the Octagon), and much time and energy were expended in finding suitable armour and a horse for an equestrian figure of the first Earl ('The Grand Talbot') to stand in the Armoury.[10] It may be no coincidence that this work in the galleries was started in the year of the Eglinton Tournament. The compromises, and the restrictions under which Pugin had to work in his earlier years at Alton, help to account for the 'all-or-nothing' stance he adopted a decade later over the design of the new Dining Room, and which almost led to his dismissal; but that is another story.[11]

Alton Towers: view from the Octagon into the Talbot Gallery prior to the start of restoration work, 1999.
Photo: Michael Fisher

Long gone is most of the splendour of the Talbot Gallery, which for years stood roofless and forlorn. Yet it is not all bad news. The undergrowth has been cleared away, and the two chimneypieces have been cleaned and given some protection. The Octagon has been re-roofed, the central column rebuilt, and the Pugin screen restored. The Picture Gallery has also been re-roofed, and the Armoury windows have had their Pugin/Warrington glass cleaned, repaired and releaded at the Hardman Studios. These now form part of the public entrance to a new theme-park ride, planning approval for which was made conditional upon sensitive restoration work being undertaken. Though much of the damage committed in the 1950s cannot now be undone, the outlook for Alton Towers is promising. So is the future of the fine Pugin buildings in Alton village, but that too is another story!



Alton Towers: Pugin chimneypiece in the Talbot Gallery, 1999. *Photo: Michael Fisher*

NOTES

1 In 1997 the present writer was commissioned by the owners, Tussauds Ltd., to undertake a detailed structural and historical survey of the Towers buildings, and to submit a report along with recommendations for future conservation/restoration. The survey formed the basis of the published history of the building: M.J.Fisher, *Alton Towers: A Gothic Wonderland*, 1999.

2 It seems likely that Pugin's satire of 'castellated architecture' in *The True Principles*.... 1841, was inspired by what he found at Alton, including: '....a conservatory leading to the principal apartments through which a whole company of horsemen might penetrate at one smash into the very heart of the mansion!' (p.49). In addition to the barbican, Pugin built massive curtain-walls, and excavated a fosse along the north front.

3 Letter in a private collection; House of Lords Record Office (HLRO) 339/119, dated 6th June 1851.

4 Pugin visited Alton Towers for the first time in September 1837. His predecessors as architects to the Earls of Shrewsbury included Thomas Hopper (1776-1856), Thomas Allason (1790-1852), and a local builder-architect Thomas Fradgley (1801-1883). Entries in the estate accounts show that the Armoury and Picture Gallery date from 1829-30.

5 John Rutter, *Delineations of Fonthill and its Abbey*, London 1823.

6 The house was originally called Alton Lodge; it became Alton Abbey during the first phase of expansion (1812-1820), and was renamed Alton Towers in 1832.

7 William Adam, *The Gem of the Peak*, 5th edn., London 1851, p.267.

8 Several of Pugin's letters refer to 'the Octagon job', alterations to the column, and the Willement glass. See M.J.Fisher, op. cit., pp.108-114.

9 W.Adam, op. cit., p.266.

10 Pugin found a suitable horse at Edward Hull's in Wardour Street and went to the Tower of London to study equestrian armour but had difficulty in procuring a suit similar to that shown on the earl's tomb, and detailed discussions ensued. HLRO 339/38 & 91

11 M.J.Fisher, op. cit., pp.121-126.

Michael Fisher *is priest-in-charge of St. Chad's Church, Stafford, and a well-known Staffordshire historian and author. His book* Alton Towers: A Gothic Wonderland *(1999) won widespread critical acclaim (e.g. Margaret Belcher's review in* True Principles, *vol. 1 no. 8, Summer 1999). He continues to advise on conservation work at Alton Towers, maintains an active interest in other Pugin buildings in the area, and is pleased to arrange guided tours for interested parties – tel: 01785 245069. A further publication on Pugin in Staffordshire is planned for 2002.*

SOME STRAY NOTES ON ART

John Hardman Powell, *1827-1895, is known to many Pugin enthusiasts and scholars both for his apprenticeship, as it were, to A. W.N.Pugin, and for the fact that he married Pugin's daughter, Anne, in 1850. His affectionate and sympathetic portrayal of A.W.N.P., to whom he always acknowledged his great debt – 'Pugin in his home ' – has also become familiar to many. Less often discovered is* Some Stray Notes on Art, *published in 1889, his lectures to students at the Birmingham School of Art. Powell became chief designer for Hardman & Co in Birmingham after Pugin's death in 1852, producing, over a considerable period of time, beautiful stained glass, jewellery and metalwork; he therefore would have had much of value to impart to students. Whilst he had securely ingested all that his master had taught him, he gradually evolved an approach of his own to design, lighter and more attenuated than that of Pugin perhaps; in a sense less 'masculine', but attractively graceful and flowing.*

*In his writing, Powell talks to us very directly, and with a certain artlessness, if we may use that word in this context, which has a charm all its own; we have therefore reproduced the first lecture '*Art Practical*', verbatim, despite one or two comments in it which may seem unexpected in today's climate, and with its own rather startling paragraphing and punctuation. It is most interesting to note Pugin's influence on him – the Revival itself, truth to materials, honesty of structure, the use of symbolism in craft, or 'Conventionality' as Powell calls it, and, in particular, the structure of the medieval English parish church – all these and more are covered. There is much food for thought. Are there not also, perhaps, undertones of Ruskin here too?*

PREFACE

An old student of the Birmingham School of Art could not but feel gratified at the honour of being asked to talk to the young Art Students of his native town on the subject that so deeply interests all; so, casting diffidence aside, he has put together some few thoughts on Art and Art-Crafts; not such as he would, but what he could!

They may well be called "stray" ones, for they have been jotted down, during a brief holiday, on Lakes and Fells, the thread that binds them together, however slightly, being nevertheless an important one, viz.:— *Truth* with *Beauty*.

They are arranged in three divisions: (1) "Art Practical," (2) "Art Imitative," and (3) "Art Theoretic," one for each night, just to have some kind of programme, leading from that which is apparently lowest to the higher; but, in fact, they are all inter~woven, there being nothing that is not high in Art; except ignoble thought, or unworthy execution.

Art may be defined shortly as the representation of natural objects, and the expression of Thought in form, or colour, or both. It ranges from the mere depicting of things seen, through the gamut of intelligent Design up to its highest power, the making tangible to the mind subjects unseen.

John Hardman Powell, c.1865
(Private collection)

ART PRACTICAL

Under this term may be classed all the numerous branches of Art-handicraft, from a nail-head, to a golden shrine. Some have more of Art, and less of Craft; others the reverse but as all should satisfy the mind as well as please the eye in must come perforce, *Principles* and *Rules*.

The Great Master-Craftsman has filled His Work with Beauty and Harmony, based on system, order, number, so the Art-Craftsman must needs respond in his own small way; or risk failure.

Art-Craftsmen among primitive nations, even barbarous ones, had some instinct or pre-historic tradition guiding them beyond the simple intention of imitating nature, as we find in their work ornament subservient to construction, fitness of colouring, adaptation of form to utility, &c &c.

The Oriental races having been the earliest in civilization, show, as we should expect, a wonderful power and fertility of Design; in truth, they may be called the Fathers of Art, and with their natural advantages of small and flexible hands, keen sight, and patience united to the possession of perfect native materials, outstripped all others in craft.

Drawing from Hardman Powell's book of studies (No date, private collection)

Unhappily a fatal blight has fallen upon their Art judgment of those who have come into contact with the West.

Of Hebrew Art-Craft we know that the beginning was when Bezaleel and Aholiah with him were divinely inspired at Mount Sinai in "wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship," "to devise cunning works," "to work in gold and silver and in brass," "in cutting of stones and carving of timber," &c., in order that the Tabernacle, with its curtains, fittings, ark, candlestick, altars, laver and bowls, vestments, breastplate, &c., should be worthy of their sacred use.

That later, Jewish Art, when the Temple was completed from the instructions of David and Solomon, containing the whole Treasury of the Tabernacle, its masonry perfect, its wondrous eastern bronze pillars, with their pomegranates, its cherubimic curtains, &c. &c., was the admiration of the whole of Syria.

And if the exquisite fragments of the "Tombs of the Kings," and other remains, are truly, as stated by some, nearly if not quite as ancient as Solomon's times, they not only testify to the excellence of Jewish work, but form a strong presumption that it might rightly claim to be the parent of Grecian and Roman Art-Craft.

Our mediæval forefathers when the work of Byzantine Art-Craftsmen came to Italy, followed by themselves, picked up and perfected their.traditions, and being fired with religious enthusiasm (the most potent of all influences) produced works we may fairly call unequalled. They had no distinctions except costly and less costly, so, whether elaborate or simple, all was their best! Of course in a country like England, with its ungenial climate, our works were often less lofty and poetical than those in more sunny lands (and many of our finest perhaps by strangers), still, however domestic in character, they were *true* and *earnest*.

One of their vital Principles was that all Art-Craft should be honest, never pretending to be what it is not; fitted for its purpose, and showing that it is so.

Another was that each Craftsman should study the nature and capabilities of the material he worked in—marble or stone, ivory or wood, silver, iron or bronze, glass or clay, believing that the qualities and defects of all materials differ, each having its own; the finest craftsman being he who can turn their virtues and weaknesses to Art advantage, even to the final touch, and that so thoroughly, that a plaster cast of his work, when completed, could denote the material used, with its own peculiarities.

'Wise man's gift, all gold and jewels': drawing, with inscription, from J.H.P.'s book of studies, 1856. (Private collection)

On the contary, we Moderns too often make every effort to produce a delusion! —by working one material to look like some other, imitating iron in brass, wood in stone, &c., and the reverse: ignoring the fact that each has its own consistent beauty.

For instance, amongst the metals; copper is admirable for embossing, but impossible, if anything like pure, for castings. Iron, with its unique quality of welding and toughness under the hammer, for forging. A prickly thistle-leaf produced by blows and shears, is "a thing to see."

Tin, with no strength of its own, has wonderful ductibility for being spread over iron. Lead has its architectural and ornamental possibilities. Brass, noble in a massive lectern, is miserable in a pierced sheet. Bronze, in works of sheer weight, has a dignity of its own.

Silver, the Queen of metals, with her sensitive tenacity and purity of tone, is incomparable for all delicate work; except, King Gold himself, who outshines all in usefulness, as in colour, for every purpose which his costliness does not preclude.

The same holds good with all other materials and their use. Wax and clay for modelling with the stick; ivory with its amazing durability for delicate carving.

The Bell Founders seem to have mastered their work completely,—the right mixture of metals and the true process: of course, the harmony of tone has been mellowed, like stained glass, by time.

Wood is a whole army of resource in usefulness, and variety of texture and tone, to the true Craftsman.

The logical result of these Principles in practice is Conventionality, which may be roughly described as a non-natural treatment of a design or subject, allowed by "general consent," either to enforce the intention of the artist, or to mitigate the difficulties so often met with in the working of materials, or restriction to the natural scale of objects represented.

Not that Art can be independent of natural forms, for they must always be the basis of all design, but that instead of merely copying them, they are used by her for her own legitimate ends; some being even of necessity.

Conventionality may be divided into three parts, those relating to Idea, Treatment, and Form.

With regard to the first, there are many so commonly accepted, that but few people think of reasoning about them, such as giving wings to angels, to denote they are messengers; the apostles being represented with uncovered heads and bare feet! St. Peter's Keys, the Orb and Sceptre of Royalty, the Mace, the Signs of tbe Zodiac, Celestial crown, Pelican in her Piety,—and hundreds of others.

Conventionality of *Treatment* may be seen in the frequent use of geometric or floriated arrangement of design to meet exigencies of material, and is often begotten of the perplexities attendant on the introduction of true perspective, resulting in the production of enormous economy of space, and simplification of detail.

Conventionality of *Form* is found in the emphasizing peculiar qualities of the object represented, which we call *character*. Another fertile source was the facile working of the tool by the craftsman, especially in ornamental foliage.

For instance, consider the thirteenth century floriated bosses, caps and brackets; a trial with the hammer and chisel reveals its origin,—ease of craft united to beauty of line and form.

Another example is the well-known Fleur-de-lis. Take a real lily, bend down two of the petals, leaving the centre one up, flatten the sheath of the flower at base downwards, and there you have the conventional one in all its perfection.

Again, how easily is produced our national conventional flower the Rose. Cut a circle, notch it into five petals, hollow-chisel it round leaving centre up, which cross-hatch for seeds, and the result is as charming as the process is simple.

So with the Vine from the Promised Land, found so often filling the mouldings of our grand oak screens of tbe fifteenth century. If any one of the ten thousand different patterns is examined, it will be found that the perfect form and elaborate richness has been attained readily.

Witness also the Conventional Ball flower (really tbe Bell of the Jewish High Priest's Tunic) how simply carved, yet how exquisite as a repeated ornament!

But this subject might tempt us to stay too long.

Heraldry is simply one mass of conventionality, from its simplest lines of division to the fullest achievement, in its charges, devices, colours, and drawing. Look at the Martlet, how his speed is marked by his flying "bendy," with legs nearly hidden.

Or the Lion on the royal shields of Westminster, a thorough unmistakable lion, with energy, power, and stretched-out claws; but though based on the form of the real beast, he is no longer a slavish copy.

Again, the old Dragon of the City of London (not the Temple Bar Griffin) seen in old charters and stained

glass, though derived from some antediluvian monster, is a thorough conventionality of effective guardianship.

Or the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster, by the conjoined White and Red Roses.

The old sign-boards, when studied, are fertile in conventional thought and treatment.

Again, even the very wigs of our judges!

And in language also, our "Good Bye" is an example; and old Jacob, the town bellman, has only just stopped crying "O yes! O yes! O yes!"

The middle ages are no longer called "dark." Of a truth, the more we look at Mediævalists' knowledge of the nature of metals and methods of working them, the more surprised we become. The ancient brass and tin mixture named "latten," they used for monumental brasses, is a notable example of their mastery over the proper admixture of copper and tin. Its tenacious durability is a marvel, for after being walked over for five centuries, the engraved lines are not only not obliterated, but in many cases are as sharp as the day they were laid down.

It seems as if scientific machines can only reproduce cheaply, and shorten processes, without being able to better man's work of this kind. Where mathematical precision is required or enormous masses of material are to be dealt with, steam and machine power are imperative, for it is a giant; but like Samson, blind, and must be intelligently directed.

The *inventions* of man as help to his work at this day are wondrous, but the fact remains that man, at Art-Craft, can beat his own machines, as in most other things where the higher qualities are needed.

That common saying, "Looks as if it was made by a machine," applied by the prosaic-minded as praise, and by the Artistic-minded as defect, aptly reflects in each their opposite tenor of thought; the former only admiring exactitude and regularity, whilst the latter feels oppressed by a precision which fetters his imagination, and a finish that destroys the highest charm, the human touch. Compare two bits of masonry, one whose surface has been tooled by a machine, leaving its monotonously true lines, and the other left from the chisel of the mason, interesting alone from the individuality of the markings. If the contrast tells in a plain wall, how much more so with ornament, and still higher with figure carving.

The charm of irregularity is a singular one; it is not logical, but there it is in most minds irradically fixed; we all recognize it in what is called picturesque, in the veins and tints of marbles. If the Italian architect had been allowed to carry out his intention of putting straight the west front of St. Mark's, Venice, and levelling the Mosaic pavement, he would have been "reasonably" right, but cursed by all artists for generations to come.

To get a full idea of the result of working on true principles in Art-Crafts, it would be necessary to see them brought together without any disturbing element;

Another lively (and perhaps rather Pagan) drawing by J.H.P.
(No date, private collection)

so let us go in imagination to an old English Parish Church, say in this County, of about A.D. 1450, just before the period of neglect and demolition. We take a Church because it comprehends most, but the same would hold good of all secular buildings, from the palace to the hut.

From miles off we hear the bells; and in England, where alone a peal is rung a "triple-bob-major," it is a thing to hear, and the hanging of them in the tower a "thing to see." As we draw nearer, the golden cock above the tower, delicately balanced on the cardinal points and supported by the village smith's best craft, shines out.

Then we come to the Lich-gate (where the dead are received), chipped out of strong oak, perfect in construction, with its huge Roof to shelter the mourners, and carved texts to console them. Now the walk winds at an easy incline (as our Church is on a hill), up to the

South Porch; we pass the big graveyard Cross with its prayer-step shaft and holy-water stoup, ending with the Crucifix, all in some hard stone (and surrounded by hundreds of little ones), and reach the porch, of oak again, with seats on either side for the old Folk to rest in. The Church door is of stoutly framed strips of oak, belted together by the wrought-iron hinges that radiate stiffly from the butt for this purpose, with innumerable nail-studs; the handle of ingenious device, and easy to hold.

Before going in let us go round the Tower. This is the age in England of towers, when the builders were not afraid of masses of masonry ornamented only with the veins of the stone and the marks of the chisel, culminating in the bell sound windows and battlemented parapet. The western door is like the south, only richer in mouldings, and hinges more elaborate: above, in a niche sheltered by a canopy from the snow and rain, is a figure of the Patron Saint, in durable stone.

Look at the cunning way the base mould of the Church runs round the buttresses of the tower. The North Aisle windows are all alike, the mullions headed with cinquefoiled tracery, then divided by perpendicular and horizontal cusped bands. As we reach the east we come to a projecting chapel, still richer in mouldings and carving; this is the Lady Chapel; then round the east end, which is entirely filled with the glory of the Church, the east window.

Beyond on the south side, is the Mortuary Chapel of the Founder, covered with carved heraldic devices; and as we pass along we notice the leaden water-spouts richly impressed with pattern (and yet only by a stamp), coming down from the roll-jointed lead roof.

Let us enter by the south door. In the westernmost bay is the Font, a base, shaft and basin, carved with monsters typifying vice, and saints connected with baptism; it is crowned by an oak canopy going up to the roof. In the tower hang down the eight bell-ropes. As we turn eastward we see the whole Church is filled with stained glass, four-fifths of which is pearly white, (for people by this time had begun to take their Missals and Psalters to church), with belts of local Saints' lives in strong colour, sparkling like jewels; above in the clerestory is a row of Prophets with their testimony to the coming of the Messiah. Then the Rood-screen, deep and richly carved inside as well as out; and the Rood itself above.

The Altar is of plain masonry, with a splendid block of marble for the top; the one thing unenriched.

No reredos, but the east wall is covered with niches and figures; and every inch of plaster left both on chancel and nave walls is painted with subjects from the history of the Two Testaments, in simple brown outline shaded with colour. The Roof is in strong colour relieved with white and grey, changing in the Chancel to vermilion and gold. The whole pavement of native tesselated tiles in buff and brown clay counterchanged, being produced simply by impressing and filling. The Chancel of course is richest, and the patterns suitable to their position. The congregation itself is dressed quaintly in colour, consistently with their different stations in life. Then the metal furniture—the chalices, cruets, &c., the binding of the Missal, in fine, everything to the smallest detail is in *harmony*, all true, all honest and worthy of a Xtian Church, where the most captious critic could not find a peg without its purpose, or ornament without its moral; all integrity from top to base, and strong as if to last for ever; the fit expression of a people square-headed, as well as full of faith. There is nothing in other countries comparable, for truth of construction and appropriate Art-Craft skill, wedded to consistent and intelligent design.

The great Art-Craft works of Europe during the Middle Ages are wonderful beyond description.

Standing before the altar-piece at S. Mark's, Venice, the mind palls with the splendour of colour, drawing, and jewels in which the Gospel of S. Mark is illuminated, with amazing Art-Craft. No European hand could be delicate enough in touch to enamel figures a few inches high, yet having their eyes separate in colour from the face; the enamel being, of course, cloisonné.

See the shrine of St. Taurin at Evreux, with its luxury of architecture, figures, and embossed goldsmiths' work.

Or the Treasuries of Notre Dame, Paris, Aix, Cologne, St. Moritz, Namur, and a dozen or two of others (sadly pointing to our own losses in sacristy "silversmith" work!) ending with the Vatican Library, where the accumulated Art-Craft gifts to the Popes in all ages, are, especially to the goldsmith student, simply dazing.

Then the National Collections, which are quite properly putting in safe custody the remnants of the Art-Craft of all times and peoples they can get hold of, such as the Hôtel de Cluny, and South Kensington, are illustrated dictionaries of Art-Craft in themselves.

It is a melancholy thought that we know so little of our great shrines in England;—Canterbury, Lincoln, Durham, St. Albans,—and their wealth of Art-Craft. If the precious stones only had been taken, we Art-students could have laughed, as they could be replaced, but the *thought* lost is irreparable.

We have still left much to be grateful for. Let the ironsmith who believes in himself, go to Lichfield or Merton College, or spend half an hour before the

Eleanor Screen.

Or, if there should be any worker in brass who overestimates his own powers, let him quietly cogitate before the gates of Henry the Seventh's chapel for an hour.

Or a wood carver who thinks he knows and can do all possible in his craft, spend a few days in the Norfolk or Cornish churches.

For goldsmith's work the Cups of the Universities and City Guilds will suffice. But the very highest works of all in England left, no doubt, are the effigies in brass, or latten, the Black Prince, Edward III., Beauchamp, etc etc These simply dazzle any practical artist by their grandeur and difficult problems.

We are happy to be living at a time when there has been a revival of the true principles and methods of the Middle Ages. Whilst noting this return it would be ungrateful to the memory of Pugin to pass by the great work started in Birmingham by our townsman Hardman, who, catching his friend's enthusiasm, helped him to collect Mediæval examples, examined their methods of working in nearly all branches of Art-Craft, and then perfectly carried out that great master's designs.

It is simple enough now, when everything is known about it by everybody and all more or less interested in it, but in those days of total ignorance, it was a very difficult and arduous task to accomplish.

One of the greatest obstacles to this return to better things is the pressure of competition and its consequent cheapness of production; so, often, excellence is sacrificed to trade economy, and a skilled Art-Craftsman sometimes even finds it hard to get a *chance* of doing his best.

There can be little doubt that the Mediæval system, when master, men, and apprentices (having but one interest at heart) helped each other like bees in the production of fine honest works, was the most favourable one. Our modern divorce between capital and labour is fatal to any artistic result, however selfishly right both may be according to reason.

There is one peculiar difficulty in the way of modern Art-Craft which can hardly be left unnoticed—it is that of style.

Style may be described as a certain mannerism produced by generations of Artists working on traditional lines under one faith, or a distinct religious idea.

In our country we have a very marked Christian style nicknamed Gothic extending over four centuries at least, always progressing and developing, but with occasional rests, when, each phase being perfected, a transitional advance was made into the next; and the last stage of which resulted in a national style, which we call Perpendicular, from the profuse use of vertical lines, and is unlike any other in Europe.

About the advisability of adhering to any particular style, there is this dilemma grown out of the time we happen to be working in. By doing so the artist must fetter himself a little; but the result of not doing so is eclecticism, which brings together a jumble of incongruous ideas and forms, perplexing each other, just as a poem would do composed in different languages.

Of course in the restoration of ancient buildings it is of necessity that all that is new should harmonize with the old.

Style has nothing to do with art feeling and skill. Great men will produce great works when and wherever they may happen to live,

But another retarding difficulty is the lack of earnestness on the part of the workers, and this is all the more serious because it is an internal feebleness rather than an external pressure. No man can for long separate his work from his mental worth and character. They rise or fall together, and it is his whole individuality thrown into art and its crafts that is of real value, and has the "breath of life."

Materials can be appraised by anyone, but the power of art can make clay as precious as gold, by its magic impress.

It is a cheerful sign of the times that the guilds of the City of London have made a step in the right direction, and are returning to their old and admirable rules that nothing in their crafts and handicrafts shall be tolerated or encouraged but true and honest work. This is worthy of a capital city, whose example should have influence throughout the country.

These few thoughts, the earliest steps on the Mountain of Art, as we may call them, show us that we have to climb patiently, or perhaps even painfully, from crag to crag, only to reach part-way up; but, it may be to the top, encouraged by the thought that many a real advance seems failure at the time, and that difficulties, apparently insurmountable from a distance, have a knack of growing less and less formidable as they are approached with confidence.

'Art Practical' is reproduced by courtesy of Birmingham Library Services.

The Bergh Memorial Library

Father John Seddon OSB *records the development of the library at St Augustine's Monastery, Ramsgate.*

Abbot Bergh (1840-1924) governed St Augustine's from 1877 until 1906, consolidating the foundational work of Abbot Alcock (1831-1882). He held a doctorate in theology and built up, over the years, a large collection of books. He also had a great interest in mathematics, and his books on this subject still form a significant part of the present Library's science collection. In addition to Abbot Bergh's collection, the Community's books had been steadily increasing and had outgrown the room designed by Edward Pugin at the west end of the present monastic refectory. 'Overflows were to be found in the cases along the cloisters, on shelves in the community room and in stacks in one of the unused cells', records Abbot Parry in *Monastic Century* [see 'Sources'].

Abbot Bergh: 'He was a very generous sharer of his knowledge.' (Monastery Archives)

The architect

Therefore, in 1926, two years after Abbot Bergh's death, his successor Abbot Egan (1856-1939), built the Bergh Memorial Library. He employed as his designer Charles Purcell (1874-1958),[1] who worked for Pugin & Pugin, and who was the son of A.W.N.Pugin's daughter, Margaret Mary, and her husband Henry Francis Purcell. He had also studied at St Augustine's Abbey School. An article in the Abbey School magazine, by the unnamed Librarian of the time, speaks of Abbot Egan insisting on airiness, space and light. For safety, he wanted every book to be within arm's length, facilitated by the construction of galleries on two levels. Interestingly, the execution of these plans was not entrusted to contractors, but to the existing community of monks. The master builder of Buckfast Abbey Church, Brother Peter, was a guest at the time and, under his direction, the novices excavated, marked out and laid the foundations. Two or three bricklayers assisted in the early stages, but, 'as these did not stay it can be said that the whole structure was the work of our own carpenter assisted by a bricklayer who did the flint work'.[2] Given these facts, the structure is a remarkable achievement – 'wanting nothing in grace and solidity', as the then Librarian commented, with evident satisfaction.

The Library interior

However, for those who know the Library in its present state, the illustrations accompanying this article point to a mystery. They show Abbot Egan with invited guests, presumably at the inauguration of the building on the 4th May 1926, and also an open room, with books on three walls, and six bookcases on the ground floor arranged into alcoves, to provide areas of retreat for study. In the centre is a circular table in pine, of nine feet in diameter, according to Abbot Bernard Waldron.

A changing decor

The present Library presents a very different picture. The first floor gallery on the north side has been extended out into the centre of the room to accommodate a series of metal stacks, to increase the Library's capacity. It is not clear when this subsequent work was carried out. Abbot Bernard Waldron, despite being a boy at the Abbey School in the 1930s, never saw the inside of the Library until he entered the monastery in 1945, and the work had been executed by then. Perhaps Abbot Taylor, Abbot Egan's successor in 1934, who was seen by Abbot Parry as a modernising influence in every sphere of the monastery's life, is behind the military precision of those rather functional metal stacks, reflecting an Abbot who had been decorated with the MC in the First World War. The floor space of necessity then became rather cramped, and created the conditions for the demise of the circular table, which, sadly, was sold, at an uncertain date, although it still appears in photographs of the library in the 1960s.

Abbot Egan and guests: The Library, 1926 (Monastery Archives)

The Library remains a fitting tribute to a monk of whom Francis, Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, his friend and confidant, said in his eulogy of 1931: 'He never lost touch with his early studies; a wide reading, a very retentive memory, and a constant search after and acquisition of books relating to them, deepened this knowledge with every year of his life. And he was a very generous sharer of his knowledge.'

NOTES

1. See *St Augustine's Abbey School Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 11, Easter Term, 1926, p.251
2. Ibid.

The books

The Library contains a very catholic collection in every sense of the word. Of interest to Pugin enthusiasts would be copies of many of his major works, including *Contrasts, The Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, Specimens of Gothic Architecture* (A.C.Pugin), *Ornaments of the XVth and XVIth centuries, Treatise on Chancel Screens and Rood Lofts, Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture, Examples of Gothic Architecture* (A.C.Pugin), *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture, Floriated Ornament*, and *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture*. Of related interest might be J.H.Parker's *Introduction to Gothic Architecture*, Bloxam's *Gothic Architecture*, Britton's *Cathedral Churches*, T.H.King's *Study Book of Medieval Art and Architecture*, Bond and Camm's *Rood Screens and Rood Lofts*, W.E.Nesfield's *Specimens of Mediaeval Architecture*, Winkles' *English Cathedrals*, J.H.Parker's *Glossary of Gothic Architecture*, Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'Architecture* in ten volumes, and E.Hermitage Day's *Gothic Architecture in England*. This list is the result of a swift noting of titles on the shelves. Our wider Art and Architecture collection might also be of interest. These books can happily be made available to those who wish to study in the Library.

SOURCES

Parry, David, *Monastic Century: St Augustine 's Abbey Ramsgate (1861-1961)*, Fowler Wright Books, Ltd, 1965

The Thanet Catholic Review, Vol.1, No.2, October, 1931

The Library in the late 1920s; a most inviting looking place in which to study and read. (Monastery Archives)

Born in Bolton, **Fr John Seddon OSB**, *after taking his degree in English and History, read for a Librarianship diploma at the University College of Wales in 1980. After working with Surrey County Libraries he entered the monastery at Ramsgate in 1983 and was ordained in 1990. He has been monastic librarian and archivist since 1996.*

Buildings at Risk

The Pugin Society, with the aid of True Principles, *associated websites and other connections, is intending to devote as much time and attention as possible to this all important issue. It is hoped that* **Rory O'Donnell** *and* **Nick Dermott** *will, in particular, be working on conserving and protecting redundant and unloved Pugin buildings.*

St Colman's Cathedral, Cove, Co. Cork, Ireland

Following letters from Mary Broderick, of the Friends of St Colman's Cathedral, over a period of time dating back to February of this year, concerning the proposed reordering of the Sanctuary in this very important building by E.W.Pugin and G.C.Ashlin, the Pugin Society has been in communication with Dr Magee, Bishop of Cloyne and others. **Rory O'Donnell's** recent letter (main text below) to the Bishop illustrates how matters stand at the moment:

24th October 2000

The Pugin Society was delighted to receive your letter of 19 March in response to our offer to share our expertise with the team dealing with the Cathedral. Since that date we have heard nothing directly from you or from the diocese, but a local resident, and I think parishioner, Mrs Mary Broderick has sent us a brochure circulated by the diocese which clearly shows that considerable works of reordering are contemplated. The computer-generated image, while perhaps designed to allay local fears, does seem to establish that areas of altar rails are to be part truncated and part relocated, while the laying of a newly extended sanctuary and altar has implications for the existing floor levels and their current surfaces. We would wish to comment on detailed survey and proposal drawings which have no doubt been drawn up. We therefore reiterate our offer, which you seemed to accept, of putting us directly in touch with the professional team concerned, and with the Steering Committee.

We now await a response.

Convent of Mercy, Nottingham

The following useful report from **Alex van Spijk** outlines the current situation:

When the situation of Pugin's convent in Nottingham was last reported in True Principles *a planning application had recently been made for the complete conversion of the building into apartments. There is no fundamental problem with residential use within most of it, though the thoroughness and appropriateness of the proposals is an issue. I am a member of the Pugin Society but I also write as a representative of a Trust wishing to secure an appropriate re-use for the building.*

The current application seeks to create 24 self-contained warden-assisted apartments. This would be for development by a housing association. The owners of the building have continued to pursue this kind of re-use despite two unsuccessful attempts earlier this year. They possibly consider it to be the most socially responsible option for disposal.

Superficial inspection of the plans did not indicate a rapacious scheme. To my knowledge the Civic and Victorian Societies have both approved the proposals without any restrictive conditions. However, more profound inspection of all the documents gave considerably more concern. In brief, there is insufficient evidence within the application that the proposed conversion is possible without the destruction of the Convent's character. Furthermore, the measures to conserve, and where necessary replace, the features and fittings of this listed building are inadequately specified to guarantee compliance with its legal status. These issues were communicated in detail to the planning authority and it was reiterated that failure to place sufficient control on the quality of the application would undoubtedly lead to a serious degradation of the building's fabric and appearance. The letter requested that the applicant should reconsider the content of the application and resubmit it, paying special attention to those areas highlighted. It is my belief that a completely new application is necessary to avoid the repetition or masking of errors.

Good news was received recently from the planning officer in charge. He is paying particular attention to the issues raised by the Trust and the Pugin Society (Dr Rory O'Donnell submitted a letter on behalf of the Society). Despite his apparent quiet acquiescence early on, he has since voiced concerns regarding the application mirroring our own almost exactly. He will be telling the applicants to make a new proposal addressing conservation requirements, giving specific attention to the chapel and organ loft/sacristy. He confirmed that their fittings would have to remain in place and intact and that a long-term solution must be found which would facilitate their preservation.

The Trust has not pursued the acquisition of the whole building any further at this stage since it requires the co-operation of other organisations to go any further. The Trust can be contacted by phone or fax on 0115 9822766, e-mail: **van_spijk@msn.com** *or post at:* **Van Spijk Design, 16 Melton Road West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7NU.**

Bartestree, Herefordshire

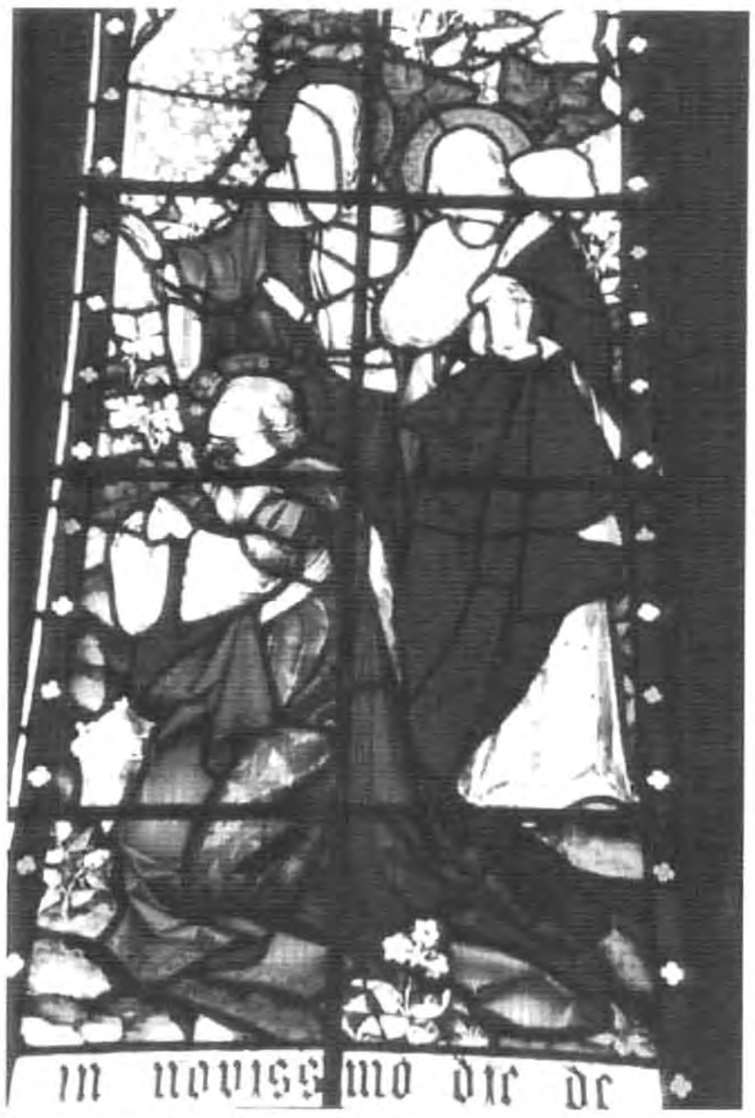
Following on from Nick Dermott's useful report in our last issue, **Rory O'Donnell** writes:

This important site has fallen foul of the planning system, firstly with the Order of Our Lady of Charity attempting to capitalise on their asset by selling on to a health care company who undertook to repair the buildings but proceeded with the 'enabling development' only – leaving both the site and the buildings in a worse state than beforehand – and secondly, because of the extraordinarily high-handed attitude of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff (which covers Herefordshire) in closing the public part of the church literally overnight, whilst still retaining ownership.

The large quadrangle layout of the convent is by E.W.P. (1862) with a later wing of 1885 by P.P.P. The site consisted of three parts: (1) the pre-Reformation chapel of Longworth, restored for Catholic worship by the Phillips family c.1850

Monument in the nuns' cemetery, Bartestree.
Photo: C. Blaker

(possibly by A.W.P.) but dismantled and re-erected here in 1860 (probably by E.W.P.). The furnishings here can be attributed to A.W.P./Hardman (the east window), and the high altar to E.W.P. This was the 'public' church, and has recently been re-listed at Grade II. Parallel to it (2) is another, much larger, nave and apsed church, that of the 'penitents', (ie, the women and girls whom the nuns looked after); and (3) at right angles to this, and looking into the shared sanctuary, was the nuns' choir; surprisingly, both these last turned out to be the work of Benjamin Bucknall. The altar, however, was a P.P.P. object, with an enormous 'benediction throne' opening.*



Right-hand light of Hardman Resurrection window, Longworth Chapel, Bartestree.
Photo: Jim Nancarrow.

The closure of both Bartestree and Nottingham Mercy Convent reminds us both of the now very rapid contraction of – in particular – religious orders for women, and also of their failure to acknowledge the importance of the buildings and collections to be disposed of. Similarly, the closure of the public chapel at Bartestree reflects on the failure of the Catholic Church to evolve a policy on redundancy which can be measured against not merely local diocesan, but also national, criteria.

Peter Howell, in a recent letter to the Victorian Society, reports that at Bartestree:

There is a complicated situation now, with two developers involved, but the idea is that the developers should give some money to the Chapels Trust as a 'dowry' for the medieval chapel, while the E.W.P. [now thought to be Bucknall] chapel is incorporated into the development. Efforts have been made to find a new home for the vast altar and reredos in the latter, but have proved unsuccessful. What we should do is, first try to persuade the Chapels Trust to take on the E.W.P. chapel too ... We must also make sure that the Local Authority notify us about any further LBAs [Listed Building Applications], and make it clear that we are opposed to any subdivision of the chapel for domestic purposes and that we consider the retention of the altar and reredos to be essential.

Locally, residents **Nigel Jefferies** and **Desmond Keohane** have long kept the flag flying for Bartestree. Mr Keohane can be contacted on 01432 850400.

SOCIETY SORTIES

Pugin Pastoral 2000

Michael Blaker *recalls our trip to the Shires*

On 13th July last the Pugin Society annual Gothic-plus tour commenced. We were lodged at Malvern College, in the somewhat spartan barracks of the girls' department, but were sumptuously fed, by contrast, in the refectory, known as The Grub. Armed with notes compiled by our leader, Rory O'Donnell, we set off the following morning (having already enjoyed on our previous evening a lecture by Headmaster Hugh Carson and a tour of Malvern by ex-master George Chesterton) to Benjamin Bucknall's nearby St Wulstan – with its blocked up wall to an east chancel that was never built – and then to Woodyer's Holy Innocents, Highnam: a kind of temple, or shrine, both to the work of Gambier Parry, the patron, and to his early deceased wife. Her image was displayed in an altar-like setting as if to a worshipped goddess. Gambier Parry's frescoes (fifteenth-century inspired) in his own invented technique – seemingly paint mixed with spirit and plaster – covered the walls with great authority and profusion (although the later ones in the nave seemed to have moved somewhat from Angelico to a post-Pre-Raphaelite style). We were kindly shown round by Gambier Parry descendant Tom Fenton, who lectured us in the dark, suddenly throwing on the lights, with impressive theatrical effect.

By one o-clock we were at Lethaby's Arts and Crafts church, All Saints, Brockhampton (1901-2). To quote Rory O'Donnell: 'Almost pagan in its embrace of the earth and vernacular', with the effect of organically emerging from the ground, as one of us observed. On to Charles Hansom's Our Lady and St Alphonsus, at Hanley Swan - amongst much else here, strangely barbaric dogtooth moulding; and elaborately and interestingly designed brasses with angels and inscriptions. We were also shown the Pugin Hornyold chalice and other pieces.

Saturday: to E.W.Pugin's Stanbrook Abbey. This had a rendered-over east end from which the high altar and reredos had most regrettably been removed, but excellent angel corbels in the nave, sculpted by Boulton: 'Boulton does angels like perfection' (Rory, quoting E.W.P.). We bought reproductions of some interesting wood engravings by D.Werburg Welch (1894-1990, no less) a sometime resident Benedictine nun and associate of Eric Gill, whose work she reflected rather happily. On to P.C.Hardwick's St Leonard's Newland, where we were addressed by David Annett, authority on the church and almshouses here. The walls were covered with splendid somewhat Gambier Parry type frescoes, by Clayton and Bell. They formed an amazing panorama of images whose iconography was at times, however, somewhat obscure: Clayton and Bell 'were scraping the bottom of the biblical barrel' (in David's words) for characters to portray. 'I'm sure you will all recollect from your schooldays the names of King David's three musical assistants,' he continued, teasingly. Few seemed to, but all enjoyed the visit and the peaceful garden precincts before proceeding to Frederick Preedy's St Mary's, Madresfield (Anglican) replacing an earlier church with which E.W.P. had been

Holy Innocents, Highnam, Glos. The Judgement, wall painting on chancel arch by T. Gambier Parry, 1859 (Courtesy, Tom Fenton) *Photo: Bob Train.*

closely involved. In contrast to the spectacular we next saw a tiny Catholic school at Spetchley by Augustus (certainly not a disdainer of the un-grandiose) and then on to Worcester Cathedral, where we attended Evensong, after a short tour.

Sunday saw us up early for Mass (if one wished) at Belmont Abbey (E.W.P., finished by Peter Paul). This was 'Modern Gothic', which in Rory's notes 'meant a somewhat rationalistic Gothic Revival, with big sash windows not poky casements, broad corridors and good ventilation, attenuated proportions and steep roofs. 'Say you've seen Modern Gothic and that it *works*,' Rory admonished us. Nearby was Belmont House, a 1788 villa by James Wyatt – 'French-Gothicised' (R.O'D.) by E.W.P. in 1867. We could only peer through the windows, as it was an unused part of a golf complex. On to Bartestree, former Convent of Our Lady of Charity – all a sad wreck, abandoned ten years ago and subject to increasing vandalism and theft, although in the private Longworth chapel (moved to Bartestree 1869-70) the E.W.P. altar and reredos still remain. We felt that at any moment some entry might be effected and all the artefacts carted off to disappear in some illegal antiques market. We were led in through

boarded and bricked up corridors that even then showed signs of being broken through by battering rams or sledge-hammers. Such is the incredible cupidity of thieves.

Our tour concluded with a visit to Eastnor Castle, with an impressive room decorated and furnished by A.W.P. and Crace. The castle and fittings have all been restored recently by the owners after falling into disuse over a long period. Consequently there was a somewhat Hammer-theatrical feeling about the place, which nonetheless is full of atmosphere, though a little contrived. It is only possible to recall in detail all the facets of this well-filled Society expedition with recourse to Rory O'Donnell's aforesaid comprehensive and informative notes and indeed by recollecting his inspiring leadership. We are also much indebted to Pam Cole and others for helping to get this event off the ground.

(The pen sketches are by the author)

SOCIETY SORTIES

Millennium Sketching Day

'Of the thousands upon thousands of sketches in pencil, ink, sepia and colour, from Churches and their "treasures", boats, landscapes, etc, there is not one has not the truth value of a Photograph with the art glamour of the man added.'
John Hardman Powell, on Pugin's watercolours and drawings, in: *'Pugin in his home'*, 1889

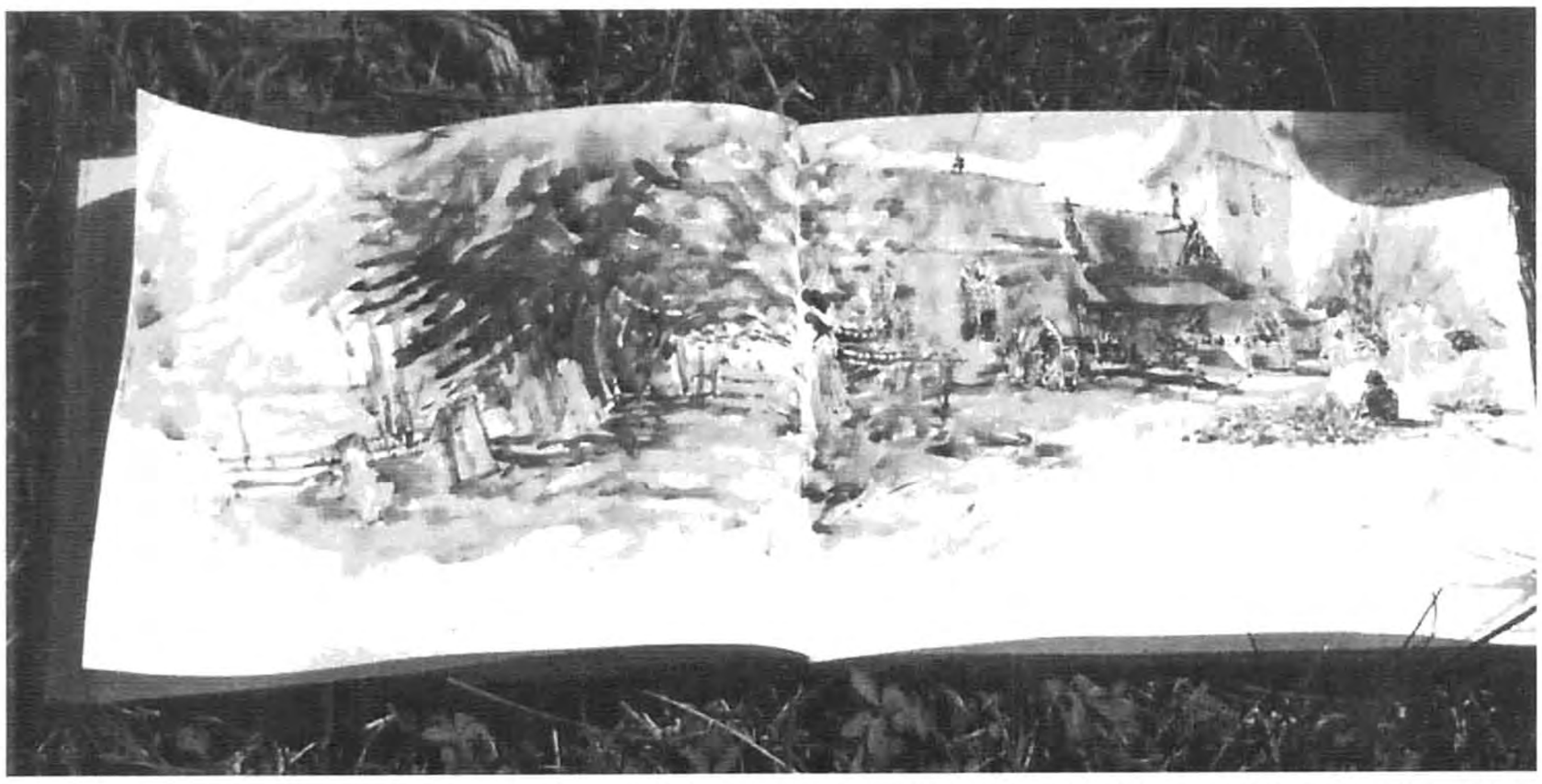
This year a small but determined group set out to sketch and photograph first, St Mildred's church, Preston, Early English and Decorated, with some unusual restoration by William White (1825-1900, and, amongst other things, an admirer of Pugin's), and then, after a pleasant pub lunch, All Saints, West Stourmouth, a pleasing, but simple, building with interestingly varied stylistic elements dating back to Saxon times, a picturesque box-pewed interior (something of which Pugin would not have approved) and an unusual weather–boarded and shingled small steeple. The weather was excellent, and special mention should be made of the kindness of the Vicar (of both churches, and also of St Mary the Virgin at Wingham), the Revd. Mark Griffin, who made us most welcome, and who remarked that he planned to mention us in his sermon that evening.

A sketcher at work at All Saints, West Stourmouth. *Photo: George Garbutt.*

As usual, this was a very pleasant occasion, although it must in all honesty be admitted that neither of these churches appear to have been drawn by Pugin; it seems more than probable, however, that he must have known them. We are sure, though, that he would have much approved such enjoyable, yet rigorous, exercise for hand and eye, and of artists still working in the figurative tradition, and all look forward to next year's outing, when perhaps we may go to Wye and Chilham, both of which are definitely known to have been on Pugin's sketching agenda.

C.B.

Mark Negin: Eagle lectern, St Mildred's, Preston. (Pastel and wash, 21x29cm).



Fred Fielder: watercolour sketch (51x20cm) of the north front of St Mildred's, Preston. *Photo: Catriona Blaker.*

Questions and Comment

Society letters, queries and feedback

Of the large mailbag received by the Society, we have this issue selected three interesting items for you: **one**, comment from Rory O'Donnell on last issue's article by Ted Furey on the Irish/American Catholic architect **Patrick Keely**, **two**, a communication from Alex van Spijk regarding the setting up of a **Catholic Guild**, and **three**, some excellent news and a request from the **Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust**.

1. Patrick Charles Keely

I was delighted to see the publicity given to the work of the Irish-American architect Keely in the Summer 2000 *True Principles*, Newsletter of the Pugin Society (volume 1 no.10). However whilst the story of Keely, and his devout Catholicism and family life is deeply moving, it surely needs to be said that he was not part of a Pugin school as it developed in England or Ireland. Edward Furey's photographs make it clear that Keely was an eclectic architect happy to work in a number of non-Gothic styles. If we are looking to award the title 'The American Pugin' we would be wrong to give it to Keely.

P.C.Keely (1816-1896) left Ireland in 1842. Despite the claim of a descendant that his involvement in the building of 'a college in Thurles, Ireland, for which Pugin was the architect' it is unlikely that Keely met Pugin. The 'College in Thurles' was presumably the Diocesan College of St Patrick, which is certainly not by Pugin, who was not working in this part of Ireland (the prosperous inland South Riding of County Tipperary) but on the coast at Wexford, at Waterford and at Killarney (see Roderick O'Donnell 'The Pugins in Ireland' pp.136-159, in *A.W.N.Pugin: Master of the Gothic Revival*, P.Atterbury [ed.] (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1995). Pugin's possible influence in the north-east coast of the United States has also been analysed by Phoebe Stanton in *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: an episode in taste 1840-1856* (Baltimore 1968) and by Margaret Floyd 'A.W.Pugin and the Gothic Movement in North America',) pp.201-223. in Atterbury (above). His influence was clearly on the well informed north-east coast Episcopalian (Anglican) community but mitigated through the publications of the Cambridge Camden Society which had many imitators in USA. The Catholic community, as characterised by Mr Furey, needed big elaborate and impressive churches for large urban congregations for which the medieval, rural models supplied by Pugin or the Camden Society were not adequate. Whilst some early Keely churches (the one I know best is St John the Evangelist, Providence, Rhode Island) have convincing Puginian passages, the overall feel of his buildings is totally different to those of A.W.Pugin. Indeed it could be argued that like certain other Irish Catholic architects – E.B.Moran and C.Bourke – and their English contemporaries – J.A.Hanson, or amongst Anglicans E.B.Lamb – their Gothic passed straight from the pre-Pugin Gothic to a vigorous post-Pugin High Victorian Gothic without experiencing an intervening road-to-Damascus-like conversion such as was experienced by G.G.Scott and the majority.

Keely is, however, a towering figure in mid-nineteenth century American architectural practice although largely ignored in the text books. He is clearly a major figure of the international (or should one say Anglo-Americano-Hiberno) High Victorian Gothic Movement. He also belongs to a version of Irish-American Catholic history which is now de-emphasised: he is not noticed in the recent *Encyclopaedia of the Irish Americans* (Notre Dame, Indiana, 2000, ed. Michael Glazier). Since the mid-1960s, the Irish Americans have largely abandoned the religion and way of life associated with these urban churches for the much vaguer and largely suburban post-Vatican II Catholicism. In so many of the eastern seaboard towns and cities where Keely built the major downtown Catholic churches, especially those served by the religious orders, face a very uncertain future; many of them are abandoned and some demolished. Certain churches (such as the church of St John the Baptist, Brooklyn, New York, 1870, pictured in the article) are hanging on by the skin of their teeth. Pugin Society members who visited the abandoned and vandalised St Francis, Gorton (E.W.Pugin 1862-1878; P.P.Pugin 1885) last summer will be familiar with this problem. In America this is unfortunately magnified ten – and one hundred – fold, particularly as there is no local or national system of grant giving to church buildings (unlike Great Britain or Ireland) and, even worse, no effective listing system, and terrifying inner city social problems. So the burden falls entirely on expert enthusiasts like Mr Furey, whose efforts, particularly his successful conference at Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston, should be welcomed and supported by the Pugin Society.

Rory O'Donnell

2. The Guild of Our Lady and St Luke

My name is Alex van Spijk, I became a member of the Pugin Society earlier this year when my involvement with the plight of an A.W.N.Pugin convent began. The same building also threw me into contact with others who had struggled to save heritage in recent years and also felt that an effort must be made to both conserve and promote Catholic cultural heritage. Therefore, in the spring of this year a positive decision was made to bring into existence a lay organisation that would work with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church to promote and preserve Catholic cultural heritage. People active in different spheres of the Church's mission have all been frustrated in their attempts to preserve buildings of value to Catholic heritage. Their involvement has often been reactive and isolated. This frustration is compounded by the apparent lack of artists and architects promoting work rooted either in the traditional forms of sacred art or the heroic vision of the Second Vatican Council.

We are speaking here of the need for a specifically local and Catholic response to the crisis. Much has been done concerning building conservation within the Church of England and in the secular sphere and through the efforts of organisations like the Pugin Society the future is not totally bleak. Much can also be learned from what has been achieved in other countries. However, it would appear that in this country the relevant committees of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference do not have access to the necessary support and funding. There are many people who wish to help, but at present they are isolated and uncoordinated.

The second half of the twentieth century was one of the greatest periods of iconoclasm in the history of Christian culture. Not since the Reformation have these islands experienced such systematic destruction of images – the removal of crucifixes and statues, the whitewashing of frescoes, the dismantling of altars, the burning of relics. The built heritage of Britain has also suffered horribly. Many Catholic churches were once havens of beauty in the urban landscape: now too many of them look like warehouses or factories. Moreover, in the course of the last thirty years, large numbers of significant Catholic buildings (not all of them architecturally distinguished, but many in important locations and with long histories) have passed from dioceses and religious orders into the hands of developers. The name of the Pugin family continually crops up among these buildings and whilst the Guild's role must necessarily be wider than that of this society, it is of no less concern to witness such appalling wastage. Along with these abandoned churches, convents and seminaries go many works of art, not to mention whole libraries.

This situation demands that there be an energetic and proactive response, and it is this we are seeking to provide. We want to help protect the Christian art of the past and support Christian artists in the present. The Guild operates as an autonomous, national, professional organization dedicated to the preservation and continuation of the Catholic heritage in art and architecture. It looks to work cooperatively with others that have similar or compatible aims and now that it is officially launched, it is my sincerest hope that the great collaboration and fellowship with people of the Pugin Society will continue as it has begun.

For information contact Alex van Spijk, The Guild of Our Lady and St Luke, 16 Melton Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7NU. Tel/Fax: (0115) 9822766) e-mail: van_spijk@msn.com (website address to be announced shortly).

3. The Monastery and Church of St Francis, Gorton

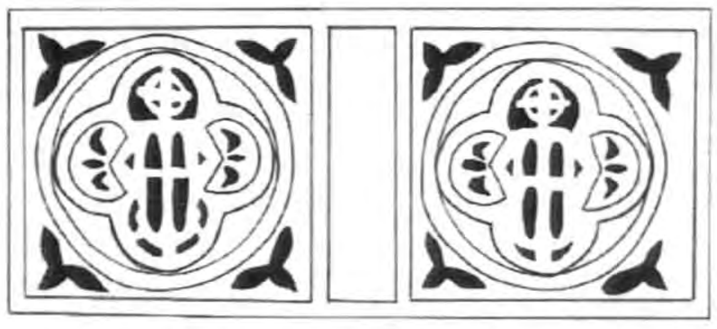
We are delighted to be able to include Gorton correspondence in this section of *True Principles*, and *not* in 'Buildings at Risk'. Kathryn Zather, of Kathryn Zather & Associates, Architectural Consultants, Altrincham, Cheshire, has sent us outstandingly good news about this site. To quote from *Update*, the Monastery Trust's newsletter: 'Almost £2.8 million of heritage funding has been promised to support the Trust's plans to create a unique Hotel, Conference and Meeting venue. The eight million pound scheme will provide sixty Franciscan-style bedrooms in the former friary. The former church will also be restored to create a stunning conference, meeting and events venue. Hotel operators, The Scotsman Group, will also be investing £3 million in the scheme if the remaining funding of £2 million can be found in time for work to begin during 2001. The Trust hopes that the Monastery site will be open to the public again in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2002.' Congratulations to all concerned. However, such results, as we know, are not achieved easily, and much work of course remains to be done.

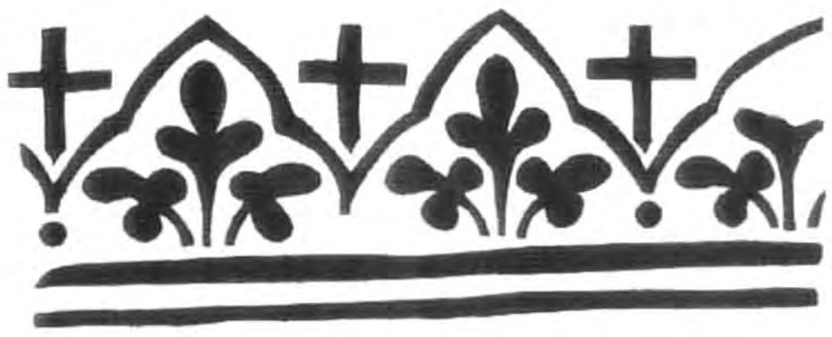
Kathryn herself writes:

I can confirm that we are currently at the development stage of the project having received a Stage One pass from the Heritage Lottery Fund. As part of the development process, I need to exhaust all possible sources of archival material for the Conservation Plan. I am particularly interested in locating similar stencil scheme designs that may exist in other Edward Welby Pugin buildings throughout the country. Would it be possible to target members of the Pugin Society ...

The team at Gorton would welcome any information members may be able to give regarding any E.W.Pugin stencils they may have seen or know, particularly if they are similar to these (i.e., the ones at Gorton, which have been sadly damaged).

These are the designs (or similar) members should be looking out for:





If you can help, please contact Kathryn Zather either at: 25 Oldfield Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA14 4EQ, Tel: 0161 941 1414 or by e-mail at: kathryn@pelmet.demon.co.uk

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Associated Pugin website
Victoria Farrow, at: www.pugin.com

Membership of The Pugin Society costs £10.00 (single) or £12.00 (joint) in the UK, and £14.00 (single) or £17.00 (double) overseas, and is renewable every 1st July. Payments from overseas must be made by Sterling Order, please. To join the Society, please contact the Hon. Membership Secretary (see above).

LIST OF NEW MEMBERS: (At the time of going to press)

Mrs Lisa Atkins, The Revd. Richard Barton, Sister Eleanor Bebb, Mary Broderick, Adrienne Day, Seamus Doherty, Edward H. Furey, Rosalind Graham-Hunt, David Haslum, Harry Hitchen, Dr James Johnston, K.F. Langford, D.A. Lester and C.D. Hollis, Mrs Vivien Lomax, A.P. Skyrme, Christopher and Malcolm Stokes, Michael G.L.Thomas, Rose Walsh (Pugin Committee, St Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy).


ΘΕΝ ΑΥΑΝΤΑ