Winter 2001

True Principles

The voice of the Pugin Society

Registered Charity No 1074766

in this issue:

- Pugin and Normandy
- The Spirit of Excelsior
- Joseph Aloysius Pippet: Decorator and Craftsman
- Who was Thomas Larkins Walker?

and much more...

Volume 2 Number Three

A.W.N.Pugin, on getting on with committees:

If the committee do not Like me I cannot help it. I am well aware that modern architects of smooth tongue & dashing exterior who handle the wine decanter & the snuff box better than the compass & pencil are more Likely to stand in the estimation of committees than those who devote their time to actual work and think more of carrying out details & ornaments, than of polite assurances.

I know that by the manner I am conducting this building [St Georges, Southwark] I am deserving of both the confidence and respect of the committee & if I have neither the fault does not Lie with myself

From: Letter to Thomas Doyle, 1841, in: *The Collected Letters of A.W.N.Pugin, Vol.1 1830-1842*, edited by Margaret Belcher, Oxford University Press, 2001

Front cover: Title-page from *Contrasts; or, A Parallel Between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and similar Buildings of the Present Day; Shewing the Present Decay of Taste: Accompanied by Appropriate Text*, 1836 (second edition, 1841)

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/ Journal* – True Principles – *and is open to anyone interested in A.W.N.Pugin, his family, those he influenced, and the Gothic Revival.*

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We are always happy to read and consider articles for True Principles. *It would be very helpful to the editor and staff if a disk, in particular, and also hard copy could be provided. Articles should be 2,500 words at the most, and accompanied by not more than four illustrations, preferably of a reasonably crisp and tonally fairly contrasting nature. All illustrations must be clearly captioned and all credits and permissions to reproduce must be cleared by the writer. It should be remembered that the views expressed in* True Principles *are not necessarily those of the editorial staff and also that the editor's decision is final.*

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Editorial

In Pugin's beautifully illuminated letter (see page 22 of this number of *True Principles*) to the students of St Edmund's College, Ware, of 3rd December 1842, in which he warmly and graciously thanks them for their testimonial to him, he remarks, amongst other things – and we use his punctuation and spelling –

> Architectural Fame belongs rather to the Colloseum than the Cathedral. it would be a fearful and presumptuous attempt in any man to Exalt himself by means of the temples of God. It is a priviledge & a blessing to work in the Sanctuary. the majesty of the vast churches of antiquity is owing to the sublime mysteries of the christian faith & the solemnity of its rites. The antient builders felt this. They knew the small share they could claim in the Glories they produced & their humility far exceeded their skill. how unbecoming then would it be for any man at the present time to exult whose works are after all but faint copies of antient excellence. God has certainly permitted me to become an instrument in drawing attention to Long forgotten principles but the merit of these belong to older and better days.

These comments give a significant insight into Pugin's approach to his work, and illustrate particularly his sense of himself as an inheritor, and trustee almost, of a tradition and style greater and older than himself, but of which he was a link, and the latest begetter. His words have the humility of a true artist, and these sentiments do not occur only in this letter. The Pugin whom we feel we know so well, satirical, volatile, sometimes didactic and often dogmatic, was yet always great enough to acknowledge self-doubt, and to be continually aspiring to further knowledge and higher standards – a quest he never gave up on. In these times of political strife, warfare, and unease, one is reminded particularly, perhaps, of how strongly his values and work reflect, and indeed to a certain extent have shaped, something of the ethos of Western culture and spirituality, and how deeply worthy of cherishing they are. The Grange – for which we desire so much, and the future of which is so very important – St Augustine's church, and the monastery at Ramsgate, notably enshrine these values; let us hope that 2002 sees, in particular, progress at The Grange.

Talking of St Edmund's College, Ware, reminds your editor of Roger Turner's excellent day out in Essex earlier this year, looking at St Edmund's; the chapel there, a rich compound of the work of Augustus and Edward Pugin, was memorable, and we were also fortunate in additionally being shown some wonderful archival material, including indeed, the letter from which we quote above. On this occasion we also saw a church by W.E.Nesfield, (who had, incidentally, come down to Ramsgate by chance on the very day of Pugin's funeral, together with Norman Shaw), plus the work of Burges and Burne-Jones at Waltham Abbey, and also C.H.Townsend's unique church of 1904 at Great Warley. It is hard to know what Pugin would have made of this last, stylistically, but he would surely have appreciated the attention to detail, the craftsmanship of the rich Arts and Crafts, almost Art Nouveau, fittings and the harmonious working together of all of these within this externally self-effacing, rough-cast covered church.

Turning now to *True Principles* itself, do not be surprised, or feel let down, when you find that your copy next year does not appear until late August. The intention is to publish ONE BUMPER COMMEMORATIVE number in 2002, to appear in time for all the events of September 14th and thereabouts, from Brian Andrews' Pugin exhibition in Tasmania to our own activities here. The 150th anniversary of Augustus Pugin's death is a big occasion, and we want to produce a worthy *True Principles* – a collector's item – to mark it.

It was good to hear that architectural historian John Newman's retirement from the Courtauld Institute has been marked by a tribute in the form of a festschrift, ie, Volume 44 of *Architectural History*, published by the Society of Architectural Historians. John gave our first AGM lecture, on 'St Augustine's, Ramsgate, as a Kentish Church', in 1995. We shall always remember this, and it certainly got the Society off to an impressive, and truly scholarly, start.

Finally, thank you so much to those contributors who have honoured *True Principles*, often voluntarily, and always without remuneration, with their work. It is indeed a compliment to the Society that so many who are involved with Pugin should be happy to publish with us, and, as editor, I am particularly grateful for these contributions, which all help to give the magazine the sort of standard and tone to which the Society should be aspiring.

Catriona Blaker

A.W.N. Pugin and Nodier's Normandy

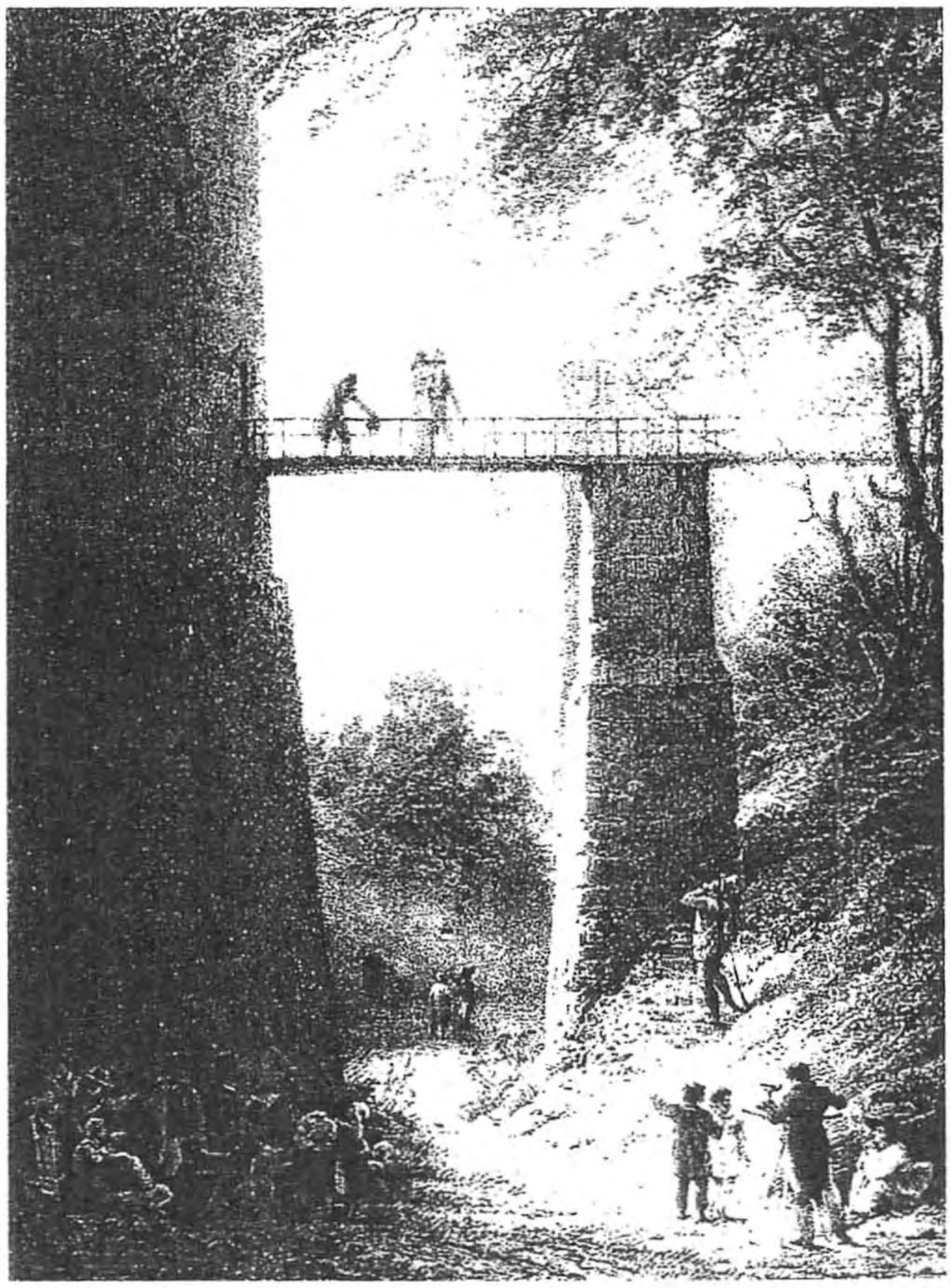
Timothy Brittain-Catlin *gives new and stimulating insight into some hitherto unconsidered influences – architectural, literary and pyschological – on the young Pugin*

It was when I saw an illustration of the narrow bridge leading into a round tower at Château d'Harcourt, in Lillebonne in Normandy, in the first volume of Charles Nodier's *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France* of 1820,[1] that I realised that A.W.N. Pugin's debt to the Norman architecture he saw in his youth must have been much greater than has so far been supposed. The engraving shows a narrow bridge leading across a moat into a tall thin tower: it looks very much as if it was the inspiration for the drawbridge that leads, most unexpectedly, into the road-side former front door at St Marie's Grange.

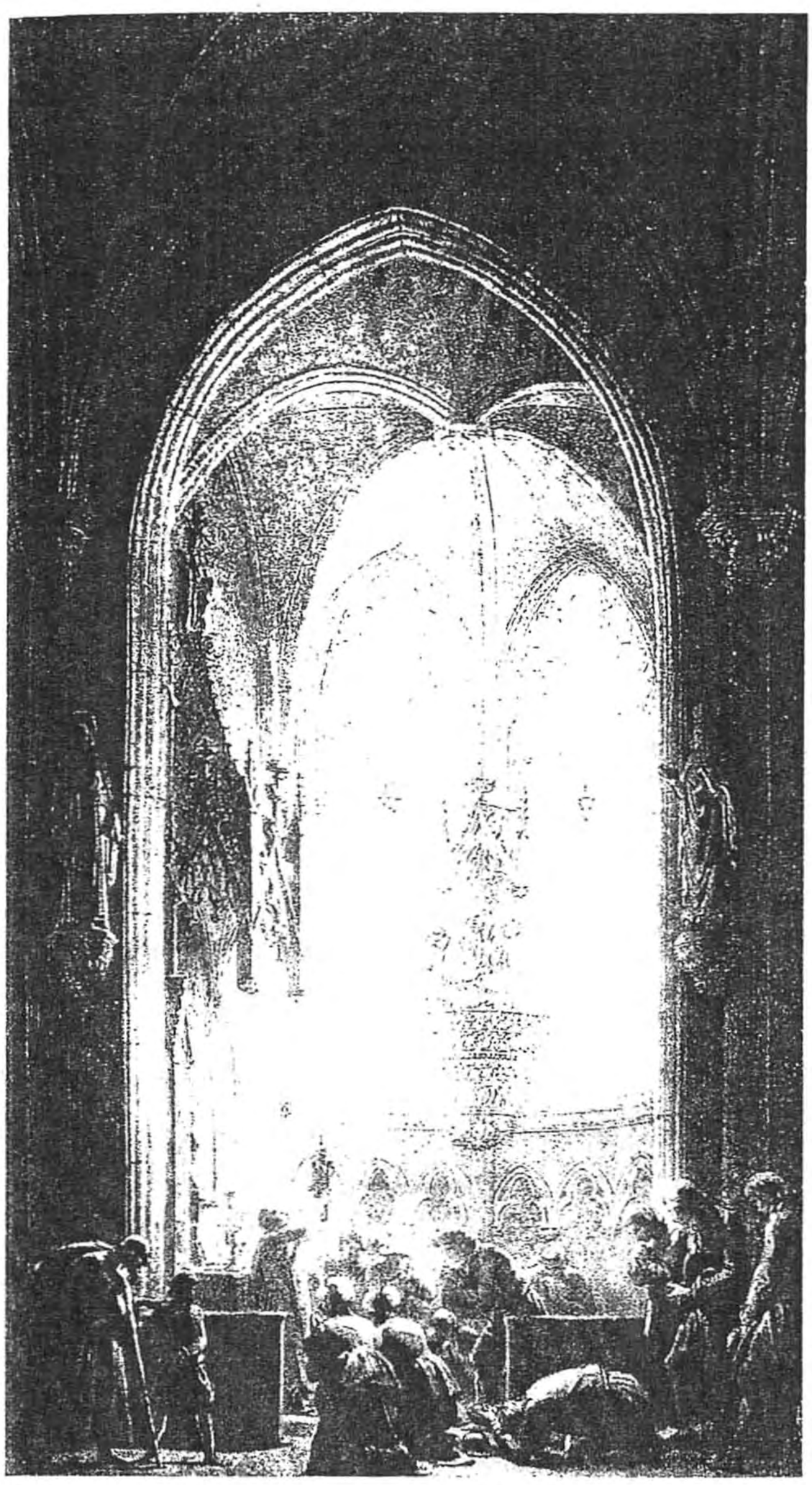
My experience of architects – and I am one – has long been that we do not always know where we got our ideas from: there are some famous examples of architects who claimed quite different qualities for their work from those identified by their critics. Some aspects of Pugin's work have long been recognised as having German forbears: Ferrey wrote, after all, of his particular delight with the architecture of Nuremberg,[2] and in St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham there is, it appears, an anglicised version of North German gothic. What does seem to be underestimated today is the extent to which architects and writers of the early nineteenth century were interested in French Norman mediæval architecture. A writer in the *Quarterly Review* in 1821, during a discussion of some seven books on Norman architecture, remarked 'that it is quite certain, that in Normandy an Englishman feels himself as much within the pale of English history as if he were in Yorkshire... it is in Normandy that the first pages of the architectural annals of this country are to be read'. Since England had such fine topographers, 'the task of illustrating the ancient monuments of France has thus devolved upon us'.[3]

Indeed it had. Not long afterwards, the English topographic writer and editor John Britton commissioned a work on the architectural antiquities of Normandy from A.C. Pugin and John Le Keux, the latter the engraver who prepared drawings from the Pugin studio for print. Britton could not find sufficient local antiquarians to provide a basis for his own publication; Nodier's book, with its knights, monks and maidens (and highly inaccurate representations of buildings) would not have been to his taste, so he relied instead on the *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, by John Sell Cotman, with a text by Dawson Turner.[4] A.C. Pugin had, however, a further source: this was Nodier's *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques*, to which, as the late Clive Wainwright pointed out, he was one of a very few British subscribers.[5]

I suspect that young A.W.N. Pugin became very familiar with that volume. In the early 1820s he accompanied his father to Normandy to prepare drawings for the new book,[6] but Nodier must have been with him at every lonely moment at home, for certain elements of its almost savage illustrations of ruined monasteries and fantastical tales of knights, friars, maidens and shipwrecks make incidental appearances in his own life. In Nodier's book one sees clear examples of graphic devices later used by Pugin himself. The engraving, based on a drawing by Alexandre-Evariste Fragonard, which Nodier uses to illustrate the chapel of St Sepulchre at Caudebec, for example, makes the religious ceremony depicted appear as if it were a performance enacted beyond a proscenium arch;[7] Pugin used this device quite considerably, most famously in



The drawbridge, Château d'Harcourt, Lillebonne.
From a drawing by L.Atthalin, 1821, *Voyages Pittoresques*.



A view into the church of St Sepulchre, Caudebec.
From a drawing by Alexandre-Evariste Fragonard, *Voyages Pittoresques.*

his watercolour view of the chapel from the library at St Marie's Grange.[8] A similar device is used in Nodier, in the illustration, by his co-editor Isidore-Justin-Séverin Taylor, of the tomb of Agnès Sorel at Jumièges: here a shadowed, ruined Gothic arch frames a view of the rest of the abbey church.[9] The Pugins' frontispiece to their work on Normandy uses a view of spires framed by a Gothic window, and the layout and style of the plate is such that I suspect that it was the young A.W.N. who thought of it. Looking at the use of characters in the drawings Nodier used, I can see a harbinger of the device Pugin liked to use, of illustrating (as he does in *Contrasts*) an ancient building's venerability by providing a religious procession in the foreground. In fact, Nodier's text is illustrated with vignettes of various devotional or romantic scenes, as well as full-page plates, and one often sees traces of these in Pugin's early work; scenes include a knight by a wayside Celtic cross,[10] women praying at a cross by a church tower,[11] and a woman praying by a tomb in Dieppe;[12] these reappear in the margins of scenes such as that of Bishop Skirlaw's chapel in *Contrasts.*[13]

Pugin believed that modern domestic architecture had no useful mediæval precedent;[14] like all architects, he seems to have built up in his mind a collection of architectural elements that could be used where necessary. Since the time he spent on his domestic and residential projects was so limited – as the apparent lack of much contemporary documentation of the subject suggests – he found it useful to dig around in his memory for the right type of feature. His use of specific historical models from Europe in his major projects is of course well documented, but in the case of his domestic design work, I suspect that he was relying to a greater extent on the strongest visual memories of his youth. What is interesting is the fact that the illustrations he had seen in Nodier's book appear to have had as much influence on him as the buildings those same drawings depicted. Visiting the priory at Graville, outside Le Havre, one is struck by the fact that Pugin designed several churches (in particular St Wilfred's, Manchester, but also to some extent St Peter's, Marlow and St Peter's, Woolwich) with west fronts more similar to the way Nodier illustrated this building than to how it actually appears; Fragonard's drawing does not express the way in which the tower front is well forward from the nave.[15] Similarly, the spiky features of Alton Castle are perhaps borrowing something from Nodier's Château de Tancarville, an assembly of intensely vertical towers high up on a hill facing the Seine, or of the Château d'Arques; both of these are shown as far more vertical than they actually are.[16]

On the other hand, there are features in other French Norman churches that Pugin more probably borrowed directly from the architectural source itself. The saddleback roofs he used are a feature of churches around Caen, although they make only a limited appearance in contemporary topographical literature: Cotman illustrates one at Biéville-sur-Orne which still exists,[17] and there are some fine other ones, mentioned by Dawson Turner in Cotman's book (but not illustrated), at Potigny and Saumont St-Quentin, between Caen and Falaise.

There must be many general aspects of France and French architecture which Pugin saw in his youth and which remained with him: the fact that French late

Gothic carried no connotations of Reformation; the verticality of low residential buildings emphasized by regular buttressing; its homogeneity of material. The twin-towered west fronts of Norman cathedrals such as Jumièges, or that drawn by the Pugins at Caen, must surely be one of the elements in the lineage of St Chad's in Birmingham. If there were no apparent precedents for small-scale domestic architecture in England, Nodier does provide a French candidate in the form of the Templars' House at Louviers;[18] it is a Gothic house proper, and maybe the house and shop building in *An Apology* owe something to it.[19] Pugin, in any case, must surely have seen the similar thirteenth-century Templars' House in Caudebec, where his father's team drew the church. Nodier included two bird's eye views of towns: that of Harfleur, outside Le Havre, shows industrial mills vying with church spires for the supremacy of the skyline:[20] it is a significant precedent for the view of the town of 1840 in the second edition of *Contrasts*.

The Château d'Harcourt in Lillebonne is all but invisible today. The narrow drawbridge was evidently its most famous feature, because in a tiny view of the building, in a poster-like publication of 71 castles in France of about 1840, it is most distinct.[21] Curiously, however, there is a second Château d'Harcourt, about twenty miles southwest of Rouen, where one can see something of a similar effect: a narrow footbridge leading into a pair of towers. I wondered, when I saw this château, whether Pugin had been here too: it has a pair of Maynooth-like towers (with proportions not much seen in England); a barbican building with something of the Oxenford farm buildings about it; and perhaps there is even something of Alton Castle in the general disposition of the main block of the castle.

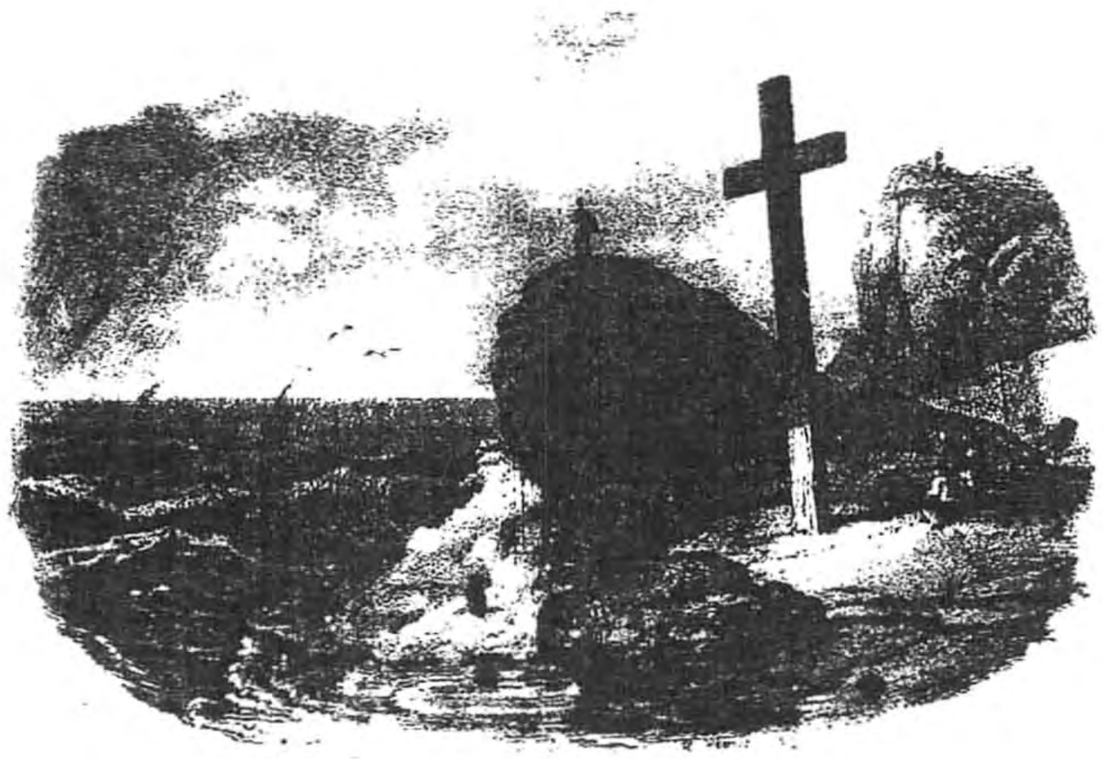
There are certainly other elements of French culture that played their part: the frontispiece to the first edition of Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*, which Rosemary Hill tells me was a book Pugin enjoyed, is of a Gothic aedicule (from a drawing by Célestin Nanteuil) decorated with priests and grotesques. It appeared in 1833, and it must surely be an ancestor of Pugin's Gothic title-page to *Contrasts* so soon afterwards. When I visited the Victor Hugo museum at Villequier, outside Caudebec, and saw this engraving, I also came across various early nineteenth-century views of Normandy including a useful one of 1818 by C. Bourgeois, one of Nodier's illustrators. This depicted the residential part of the priory at Graville which was, according to Dawson Turner, 'comparatively modern'; that could mean almost anything, but I found myself wondering whether Pugin had seen this too, since it bore a remarkable resemblance to certain of the residential parts of Mount St Bernard's Abbey. I also found, however, something else of great interest apparently unconnected to Pugin: a newspaper account of the death by drowning of Hugo's daughter and son-in-law in the river Seine, close to Villequier, in 1843.

If Pugin had read this at the time (and, as a Hugo admirer he might well have done), I suspect it would have made him shudder. The drowning incident took place somewhere between Villequier and Caudebec, near the sailors' church of Barre-y-va. One of the most memorable of Nodier's vignettes, also by Bourgeois, shows this church perched on the side of the hill above the Seine, with sailors, girls and boats in the foreground.[22] It is one of the places that sailors would give thanks to God for delivering them from the dangers of the sea. In fact, much of Nodier's text and illustrations are concerned with the perils faced by seamen and the distress of widows: one particularly memorable example, by Fragonard, shows a young widow hurling herself onto the rocks above the foam, whilst a looming 'ombre plaintive' carries her off to be united with her drowned husband.[23] In the concluding

Grand escalier de l'Eglise de Graville.
From a drawing by Alexandre-Evariste Fragonard, 1821, *Voyages Pittoresques*.

chapter of his great volume, Nodier describes the devotions of sailors at the foot of a huge cross on the harbour at Dieppe – a modern version of it still exists – 'qui leur annonce de loin la patrie'.[24] Elsewhere, an illustration by Horace Vernet makes a similar appeal to God, youth, terror, and shipwrecks: his vignette shows them all together.[25]

I suspect that the young Pugin was very heavily influenced by all this: God, the sea, and Gothic – as he himself said, did he live for anything else? Maybe he needed the excitement and the drama of the sea, the feeling that his life was in danger, in order to stimulate his own creativity. In other words, far from being surprising that he was *able* to work on his own in a boat in mid-ocean, it may actually have been a prerequisite. For the great significance of discovering the link between Nodier's illustrations and descriptions with the young designer is not only that it may well point to precise architectural sources and quotations, but also that it gives a suggestion of Pugin's own vision of the world he was trying to build, and which he himself was not necessarily able to put into words as an adult. When one comes across a great monument of Gothic France, perhaps even more or less unchanged since Pugin's time – for example, the tiny church of Thaon, north of Caen, still lonely and mutilated in its hidden glade – one can picture that excited, precocious young child he had been. Taken away for a moment from the dank regular sameness of Bloomsbury, the bleak whitewash and the hectoring of Irving's Hatton Garden meeting house, and the London rain, he creates for a moment (fed by his imaginary playmates from Nodier's fantasies, 'ces ruines vivantes qui serviront de témoins au christianisme',[26] by the sun, and by the French chatter of his father's friends) a world of childish dreams and of terror.



A vignette by Horace Vernet, 1820, *Voyages Pittoresques.*

My visit to Normandy was made possible by a generous grant from the Rouse Ball Research Fund, Trinity College, Cambridge.

NOTES

1 Charles Nodier, I. Taylor, Alph. de Cailleux, *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, Vol I, Paris, 1820, plate 32.

2 Benjamin Ferrey, *Recollections of A.W.N. Pugin and his father Augustus Pugin* (London, 1861), with introduction and index by Clive and Jane Wainwright, London, 1978, p225.

3 Normandy Architecture of the Middle Ages, *Quarterly Review*, Vol XXV, April 1821, pp112–147; quotations at pp114; 117; 147.

4 John Sell Cotman and Dawson Turner, *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy, by John Sell Cotman; accompanied by historical and descriptive notices by Dawson Turner FR and AS*, London and Yarmouth, 1822.

5 See Clive Wainwright, A.W.N. Pugin and France, in Paul Atterbury (ed), *A. W. N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival*, New Haven and London, 1995.

6 John Britton, A.C. Pugin, John and Henry Le Keux, *Historical and Descriptive Essays accompanying a series of Engraved Specimens of the Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, London, 1825-8.

7 Nodier, *op.cit.*, plate 19.

8 That reproduced in S. Ayling, *Photographs from Sketches by A.W.N.Pugin*, London, 1865.

9 Nodier, *op.cit.*, plate 17.

10 *ibid*, p15.

11 *ibid*, plate 49.

12 *ibid*, plate 75.

13 A.W.N.Pugin, *Contrasts: or, A Parallel Between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and similar Buildings of the Present Day; showing the Present Decay of Taste: Accompanied by appropriate Text*, Salisbury, 1836; 2nd edition, London, 1841, plate Contrasted Chapels.

14 See, for example, A.W.N.Pugin, *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture in England*, London, 1843, p 38.

15 Nodier, *op.cit.*, plate 53.

16 *ibid*, plates 37 and 79 respectively.

17 Cotman, *op.cit.*, Vol II, plate 58 and pp63–4.

18 Nodier, *op.cit.*, plate 1.

19 Pugin, *An Apology*, plate vii.

20 Nodier, *op.cit.*, plate 43.

21 *Châteaux Historiques de la France*, item no 22 in an unnumbered sequence in the Whewell Archive, item ix.1.15, in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge; undated but between 1837–1848.

22 Nodier, *op.cit.*, p59.

23 *ibid*, p95.

24 *ibid*, pp115; 117.

25 *ibid*, p111.

26 *ibid*, p47.

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Hardman Metalwork Folios from Birmingham

Roderick ODonnell *describes some remarkable archival material*

A collection of random sheets, removed from their fire-damaged settings when the Hardman & Co works in Newhall Hill, Birmingham was burnt out in 1970, was recently inspected in London.[1] Some of the most interesting to this writer are described and illustrated here; others have been identified and commented on by Lady Wedgwood, for whose insights I am, as usual, most grateful.

The seventy drawings, both for church and secular metalwork, can be dated c1850–1900. Very few are signed, but a number can be attributed to various artists. Most of the sheets, which are for one-off, or command commissions, rather than the run-of-the-mill metalwork illustrated in Hardman's catalogues, therefore have labels identifying those who commissioned them. A much fuller manuscript example of a church plate catalogue, formerly in the collection of the architectural photographer Gordon Barnes, was bought by the RIBA Drawings Collection in 1996.[2] Its finished ink drawings show the final stage of presentation, while the part-finished sketches in this collection show the beginning. The Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (which bought much of the Hardman archive in 1970) has a complete run of metalwork Daybooks and ledger books from September 1858 to July 1914, (as well as some earlier ones), which have many individual drawings pasted-in as records of individual commissions. This collection would seem to have been removed from such ledgers.

Some of the earliest sheets, in Lady Wedgwood's opinion, were designed by A.W.Pugin and drawn by J.H.Powell. One sheet shows designs for seals for Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman, who was appointed Archbishop of Westminster in September 1850. The design at the top left (Fig.1) is in the gothic mandorla shape, with Saint Peter and St Edward the Confessor, flanked by angels with their shields, atop the Westminster Abbey coat of arms; another is for the diocese with the same coat under a mitre. The two smaller sketches are for Wiseman's personal coat of arms, quartered with those of the diocese, labelled seal for letters, and another with the initial N under a mitre. The high quality and small scale of these drawings show Pugin's great abilities as a decorative arts designer, and are an example of his attempts to raise everyday standards in the life of the Catholic Church in England. These examples may form part of the generous offer Pugin made to design all the episcopal accoutrements Wiseman needed, to be presented by the Catholics of England. In October 1850, Wiseman referred to the offer of 'an archiepiscopal cross... (but I must be content with something plain from Belgium, though Pugin has made a splendid design) ...'.[3] The commission does not appear to have been proceeded with. Another sheet shows a pendant cross, 'cross for Rev Mr Chadwick'. This too may be by Pugin, and is close to some of his jewellery designs, and a further one still shows the metalwork and the stonework for a fireplace, arranged as a complete architectural elevation, such as might have been sent to a client, or to Myers.

Fig. 1

Lady Wedgwood has identified, with Malcolm Hay, curator of works of art at the Palace of Westminster, three full-size animal drawings, most probably in the hand of J.H.Powell, for metal panels in the gates under the Victoria Tower, for which Pugin's quick original sketches also survive. She comments that such drawings are probably finished re-workings by J.H.Powell from Pugin's own sketches.

These drawings, therefore, shed light particularly on the role and status of John Hardman Powell (1827–1895), who was trained by Pugin from 1844 and became his only pupil. Lady Wedgwood characterises his role thus: 'Powell absorbed the Pugin style so completely that in the period 1845–1851 it is very difficult to tell the work of the two apart... the more carefully drawn a design is, the more likely it is to be by J.H.Powell. At this period Pugin did not have the time to do this. Powell also seems to have modelled his writing on that of his master. Once on his own, Powell, in a manner similar to E.W.Pugin, quickly developed an individual style in both stained glass and metalwork; his handwriting changed also.'

Powell, who married Anne Pugin in 1850, returned to Birmingham, where he became chief designer to Hardman & Co, on Pugin's death in 1852. Although he

perpetuated the Pugin style, in stained glass he elongated the figures and used paler colours, and in metalwork, in collaboration with E.W.Pugin, he struck out yet more on his own. This can also be seen in a series of sketchbooks of Powell's in another private collection in the West Midlands. Some of his most distinctive work is in base metalwork, such as the Lady chapel screen at St Augustine's Ramsgate (1862) and the one at Stanbrook Abbey (1870), both probably to E.W.Pugin's design. The Stanbrook screen was demolished in 1970, when parts of it were sold to the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, where they may be seen.

The majority of the sheets are for Catholic Church plate, such as chalices, ciboriums and monstrances. Here Powell expanded beyond Pugin's favoured fourteenth-century Decorated repertoire, to include an earlier, stiff-leaf style, and a later, Perpendicular, style: here, and in the RIBA example, the labels used are C13, C14 and C15. Examples of Hardman metalwork in just such contrasted styles – broadly 'Early', 'Decorated' and 'Perpendicular', as they would have been classified – can be seen in the cabinets of the Percy Cox metalwork collection at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. An unusual example here is a circular *pax* (Fig.2) on a stand with a bishop's coat of arms, which should be identifiable. It has in Gothic letters the scroll referring to the Blessed Virgin: *'Diffusa est Gratia in labiis tuis, propterea benedixit Deus in aeternum...'*, surrounding a half-length of the Virgin and Child. The pax is a medallion which was kissed at the pax vobiscum ceremony of the High Mass, hence the reference to 'lips' ('labiis'). The drawing, in pencil, partly inked over, notes the various materials such as enamel for the medallion, silver parcel-gilt. In a later hand is the title 'silver sundries', possibly the title of the volume from which this appears to be a sheet, and the number 769.[4]

Fig. 3

Another 'silver sundries' drawing is in pencil, inked over, showing the central roundel as the centrepiece of a ceremonial trowel. It shows Saint Leonard dressed in deacon's vestments, evidently based on the top left hand detail (Fig.3) – probably of a mediæval exemplar – and was for the laying of the foundation stone for St Leonard's, Scorborough, East Yorkshire (1857–9), an Anglican church, in an 'Early' style, by the architect J.LPearson. In comparison with Pearson's own drawings, as illustrated in Anthony Quiney's *Pearson* monograph (1979), the very precise style suggests J.H.Powell once again, an example of the early, or thirteenth-century, style. It reminds us of the substantial number of Anglican commissions on which Hardman relied.

A roundel drawing, either for a book plate or a seal or other metalwork, connects these later folios with the beginning of Pugin's career (Fig.4). It shows as founder the seated boy-King Edward VI, against the Tudor Gothic background of the King Edward VI Grammar School Birmingham (1833–7), which Barry designed, and for which Pugin supplied details for interior fittings. The king is flanked by two kneeling schoolboys in nineteenth-century dress, one holding the book labelled 'Grammar'. The style is Perpendicular.

The best-labelled pair of sheets, one dated *'Febr 25th '89'*, are for a medal recording the foundation of the 'Confraternity of the most holy sacrament in the Church of Our Ladye, Star of the Sea, Greenwich 1852'. The reverse of the medal shows Our Lady as the Star of the Sea, hovering over the waves. The obverse shows a chalice and host with a cross behind; four roundels have the detached hands and

Fig. 2

Fig. 4

feet of Christ, from which the precious blood flows, and another roundel with the Sacred Heart similarly. The medal combines the almost heraldic iconography of the mediæval 'Five Wounds' devotion with that of the Baroque devotion to the Sacred Heart, of which Pugin disapproved. It also takes us back to Pugin as the wellspring of the Hardman metalwork business.

The Catholic parish church of Greenwich was supported by the Knill family, the cousins of Pugin's third wife.The church (1848–1852) was built by the architect W.W.Wardell. Pugin partly furnished and decorated the Blessed Sacrament side chapel.[5]

The setting up of 'sodalities' or 'confraternities' in parishes, which Pugin would have called by their mediæval title, 'guilds', was an example of heightened mid-nineteenth-century Catholic devotion and commitment. Pugin himself was involved with designs for their rituals at Birmingham, Halifax and elsewhere. This development and others like it, have been analysed in Mary Heimann, *Catholic Devotion in Victorian England* (Oxford, 1995), although she cites no artistic evidence of this sort.

The second drawing has working notes referring to the client, a member of the Knill family, referred to as 'alderman', and records his various comments on the design[6]. Other notes are between those involved in its design and manufacture; another label, *'Mr J.H.P.'*, is for John Hardman Powell.

The sketch is signed in monogram by Joseph Aloysius Pippet, 1840–1903, [see also William Covington's article on page 11]. He was the leading figure in the Hardman & Co business after Powell, and the next most important artist. He worked not only in stained glass and metalwork, but most notably as a decorative painter for E.W.Pugin at Barton-on-Irwell (1868) for P.P.Pugin at Princethorpe priory church (1901) and elsewhere. For the Anglican architect Henry Woodyer, he did decorative schemes at Clewer Convent chapel (after 1881) and also elaborate work (c1890) at Hascombe church, Surrey, which Pugin Society members saw last summer. The collection has more examples of such medals, all illustrating the successful mediævalising of the devotional objects of nineteenth-century British Catholicism, and, moreover, of a quality far higher than the run-of-the-mill imports from Belgium, France and Italy.

NOTES

1 Inspected courtesy of Rachel Moss.

2 Brought to my attention by Tim Knox, then of the RIBA.

3 Wiseman to Bagshaw, 17 October 1850, Wilfrid Ward, *The Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman* (2 vols, 1897), I, p.532.

4 Another example of a Pugin-designed Pax at St George's Cathedral, Southwark was given by the Knill family in 1850, see catalogue 61 (by this writer, but mistitled as a 'pyx') in P. Atterbury, *A.W.N.Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival* (Yale University Press, 1995) p.291

5 See R.O'Donnell *Pugin and Catholic London; an early divorce?*, I, in *True Principles*, Vol 1, No7, Winter 1998.

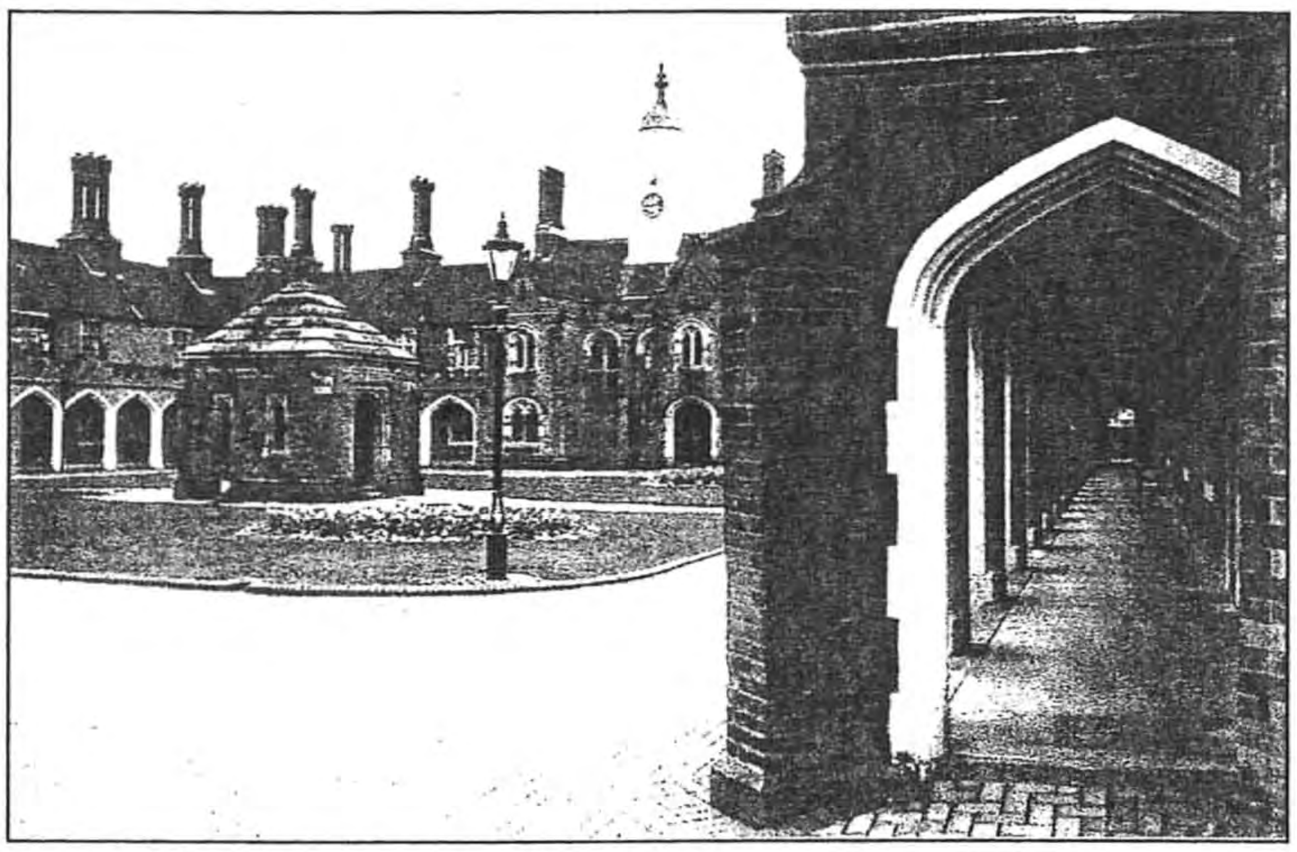
6 Michael Egan, of Blackheath, has kindly sent me biographical details which would identify alderman Knill as Sir John Knill, 2nd Baronet (1856–1934), Lord Mayor of London 1909. His father Stuart Knill (1824–1898) who was Jane Pugin's cousin and a Catholic convert of 1842, was made a baronet during his mayoralty in 1893.

Thomas Larkins Walker

The Chamberlaine Almshouses, Bedworth, Warwickshire

A promising early work by a pupil of Auguste Charles Pugin attracts the attention of **Rosemary Hill**

When Nikolaus Pevsner visited Bedworth in Warwickshire he did not find much to admire. 'A depressing small town', he called it. Only two individual buildings merited notice. One was the church, by Bodley and Garner, which he thought 'too good' for Bedworth, and the other the Chamberlaine almshouses: 'said to have been built in 1840, but looking decidedly later'. Pevsner's scepticism is surprising, given that the date 1840 is prominent on the stone tablet commemorating the building's completion. Yet so acute was his eye that even his occasional mistakes are revealing. What is revealed in this case is how advanced a training was offered by A.C.Pugin's architectural school. For the alms-houses, which do indeed look as if they belong to a later, more sophisticated phase of the Gothic Revival, are the work of Thomas Larkins Walker, a pupil, if not a star pupil, at Great Russell Street.



Larkins Walker's almshouses at Bedworth.

A Scotsman, born in Fife in 1811, Walker came to study with Auguste Pugin in about 1827. He seems to have been a steady young man, for when A.C.Pugin, his master and friend, died in 1832, he left Walker, rather than the young Augustus, as co-executor of his will. Walker went into partnership with Benjamin Ferrey for the next five years. He took over the publication and completion of A.C.Pugin's *Examples of Gothic Architecture* from [A.W.N.] Pugin, who later sold him the rights, and embarked on a career as an architect.

Walker became a fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1838, and the Bedworth almshouses were designed the following year. Drawing on his studies with A.C.Pugin, he took careful account of precedents. He chose the Tudor style, red brick with stone dressings, and arranged the buildings round three sides of a courtyard. Each dwelling is of two storeys with two rooms on each floor. In the middle is a cheerful square pumphouse. At the centre of the almshouses stands the Governors' Dining Hall, with its imposing, but not over-scaled, clock tower. The hall resembles, in miniature, Walker explained, a fifteenth-century great hall. Indeed it did, complete with a screens passage.

The result, as Pevsner saw, has that much-prized virtue, 'reality'. Walker had broken away from the Regency; there is no stucco, and nothing coyly picturesque. The broad cloisters are practical and every detail is carefully thought out. The casement windows have stone mullions and are glazed in gothic quarries. Overall, the effect is domestic, but dignified. In 1841, the designs for the almshouses were published in detail by Walker in *Architectural Precedents*, a periodical edited by Christopher Davy, who had moved into 136 Great Russell Street after Walker and Ferrey left.

Precocious as Augustus Pugin himself was, he was also well trained. His father's less talented pupils, with the advantages of that same training, could get their careers off to an equally early and almost equally promising start. Unlike Ferrey, however, Walker was not able to keep the momentum. Exactly what happened to the hard-working young man of 1840 is unclear, but something went badly wrong. He built several churches, none of them distinguished, and his membership of the RIBA lapsed in 1846. Few buildings and no publications by him are known after that date. He was in partnership in Leicester with Robert Johnson Goodacre from 1851 until 1856, when, perhaps as a result of money troubles, he emigrated in order to start a new life. In 1860 the *Gentleman's Magazine* recorded his death in Hong Kong.

The Chamberlaine almshouses, however, continue to flourish, well used and well loved at the centre of Bedworth (which is not, in this writer's opinion, at all a depressing town). They are Walker's modestly impressive memorial.

J.A. Pippet and Hardman, Powell & Company

William Covington *takes a closer look at a hitherto neglected figure*

Almost a century has passed since the death of Joseph Aloysius Pippet (1841-1903). His career as designer and decorator with Hardman, Powell & Company of Birmingham has been, to a great extent, overlooked. Pippet practised design and craftsmanship within the tradition that Pugin had inaugurated, and as such he was merely one of a long line of company craftsmen emerging since 1838. Their comparatively lowly status within the working hierarchy at Birmingham initiated by Pugin and John Hardman Junior (1812–1867) has had the effect of consigning to obscurity practically all the craftsmen who subsequently worked for Hardman, Powell & Company. This article, therefore, attempts to shed some light on the work of J.A.Pippet himself.

Pippet as patriarch: J.A.Pippet, his wife, Juliet and their family, Lode Lane, Solihull, Warwickshire, c.1885
(Private collection)

Early days

Charles Lines suggests that Pippet's ancestors were French Protestants.[1] There may well be some truth in this. William Pippet, however, Joseph's father, wrote in his diary concerning the precise moment of his conversion to the Catholic faith – this occurred after coming into contact with the monks of Downside College.[2] Joseph and his brothers, William and Henry Dipon, attended the College during 1852. At the time the Pippet family were living at 'Glen View', Stratton on the Fosse, a large house a mile south of Stratton overlooking Nettlebridge, the village where Joseph was born on 23rd August 1841. Joseph left Downside in 1852/3 and the Pippet family moved to Leamington, because William Pippet then became the land agent to the Throckmorton family, leading Catholics in Warwickshire. It seems likely that it was through William Pippet's employment as an agent that his son Joseph came to the attention of John Hardman Powell, whose work as chief designer for Hardman, Powell & Co brought him into contact with – amongst others – many prominent local Catholics. Joseph's artistic ability must have been apparent at an early age, and in 1852, the year of the Pippet family move to Leamington, he would have been eleven years old. At the age of thirteen, it is probable that Joseph was taken on as an apprentice by J.H.Powell, since the Hardman Archive in Birmingham City Library holds the 'Wage Books' for apprentices for ages thirteen to twenty-one years.

J.A.Pippet: decorative design, part completed; subject unidentified
(Private collection)

Work

Roderick O'Donnell refers to Pippet as 'one of the chief draughtsmen and decorators at Hardman's in succession to J.H.Powell'.[4] As such, Pippet would be expected to have a thorough knowledge of Pugin's style, both as a designer and practitioner. Pippet was a prolific artist, and during his career he completed many decorative schemes for Hardman, Powell & Company, including work in the following: St Mark's church, New Milverton, Warwickshire (1882); Pensnett church, Dudley, Warwickshire (1882); St Joseph's Catholic church, Roehampton (1883); Christchurch, St Leonard's on Sea, Sussex (1883); St John's church, Lockerley (1892); Christchurch, Shamley Green, Surrey (1892); Asthall church, Oxfordshire (1892): Archbishop of Canterbury's Private Chapel at Addington (1883); Prudhoe Hall

Chapel (1884); Conventual Chapel, House of Mercy, Clewer, Windsor (1887); Salford Cathedral (1885); and, finally, the Catholic Cathedral, Shrewsbury (1885).

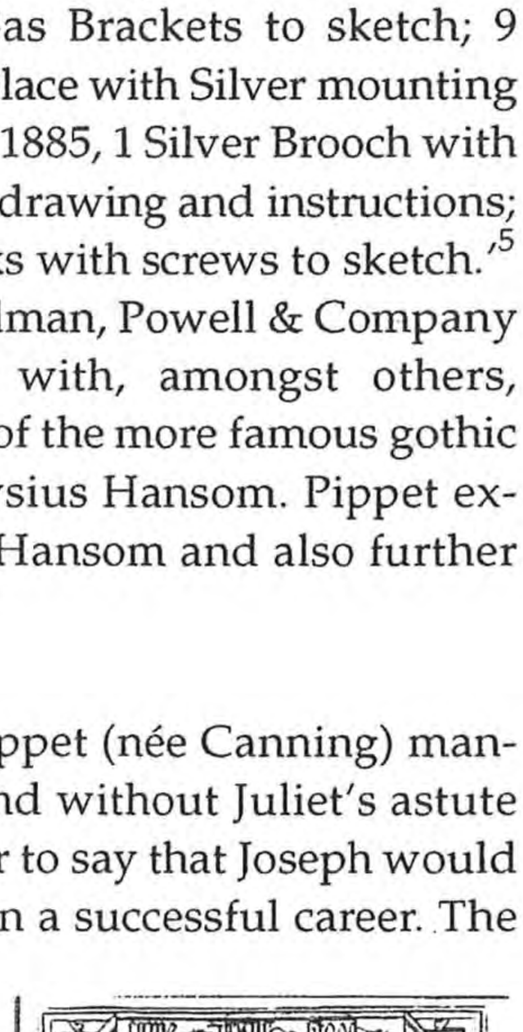
Pippet was equally skilled as a designer of altar cloths, illuminated addresses and stained glass as the following examples will show: Surrey County school, Cranleigh 1885, (altarcloth); illuminated addresses for the Most Noble Marquess of Ripon (1885); for Mrs Rayer, Holcombe Court (1893); for Pope Leo XIII (1893); and for Canon Evans (1894); and stained glass in: Studley church (1873); Catholic church, Solihull (1877); Catholic church, Warrington (1877) and Catherine De Barnes school, Solihull.

The Brass order books in the Hardman archive show Pippet sending in to J.H.Powell orders for all kinds of metalwork items, for which he (Pippet) made designs and received commission. For example, the Brass order book of 1885 shows Pippet sending orders to Birmingham from various locations for: '26 August 1885, 1 Brass & Baywood Banner pole to sketch; 26 October 1885, 2 Brass 3lt Gas Brackets to sketch; 9 November 1885, 1 Coral Necklace with Silver mounting as design No.2; 17 November 1885, 1 Silver Brooch with Gold Stars as per Mr Pippet's drawing and instructions; 2 December 1885, 2 Iron hooks with screws to sketch.'[5]

Pippet's career with Hardman, Powell & Company brought him into contact with, amongst others, E.J.Hansom (1842–1900), son of the more famous gothic revival architect Joseph Aloysius Hansom. Pippet executed two sketches[6] for E.J.Hansom and also further drawings and stencil plates.[7]

Family

Joseph's wife, Juliet Mary Pippet (née Canning) managed all Joseph's finances, and without Juliet's astute managerial mind I think it fair to say that Joseph would not have been able to carry on a successful career. The correspondence between Juliet Pippet and J.H.Powell shows that Juliet was a person who could account for every single penny coming in, and going out of, Joseph's bank account. It was Juliet who arranged payments to Joseph's team of scaffolders in various parts of the country. She was meticulous in her recording of the money sent to her from Hardman, Powell & Company, and a letter sent from Juliet to



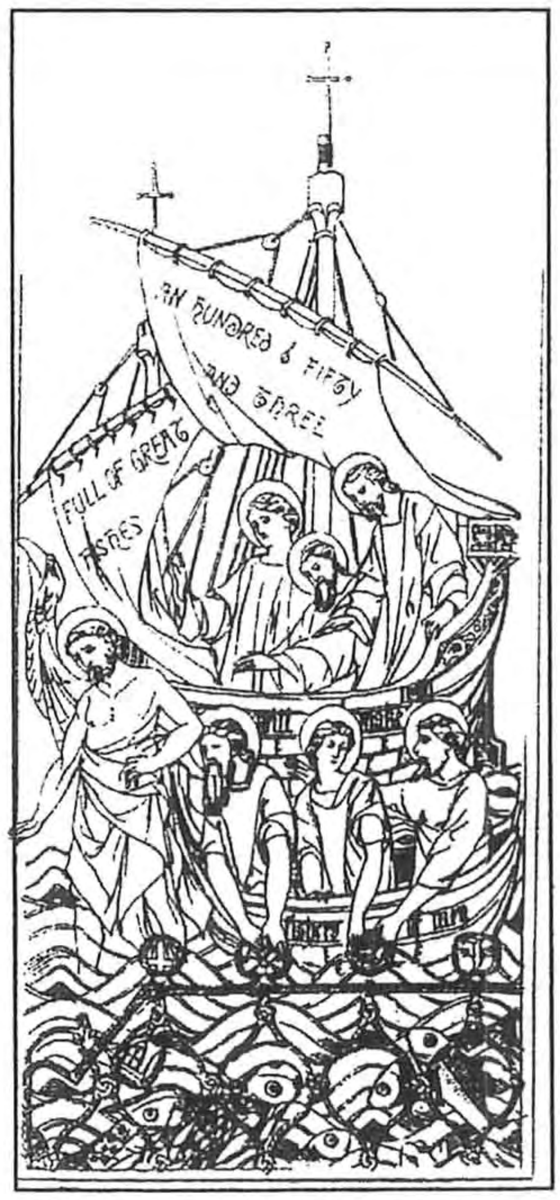
J.H.Powell, c.1882: design for pulpit panel, St Peter's, Hascombe.
(Courtesy, The Revd C. McKenna)

J.A.Pippet: finished painting on the Hascombe pulpit.
Photo: Bill Covington

J.H.Powell records: 'Received 4 March 1884, Four Bank notes 81/M/06819 to 06822 for mens' wages.'[8] Juliet also received payment from customers for work that Joseph completed: 'Dear Mr Powell, I send you a cheque from Edmund Tonks of Packwood Grange, Knowle, in payment of work done for him by Mr Pippet.'[9] Juliet's talent for business acumen was matched by her talent as a superb embroiderer, and her work can be seen in St Peter's church, Hascombe, Surrey, where the altar cloth bears Juliet's unmistakable monogram 'JMP'. Juliet's achievement in managing the financial side of Joseph's life is even more remarkable since she also organised a family of sixteen children for long periods on her own.

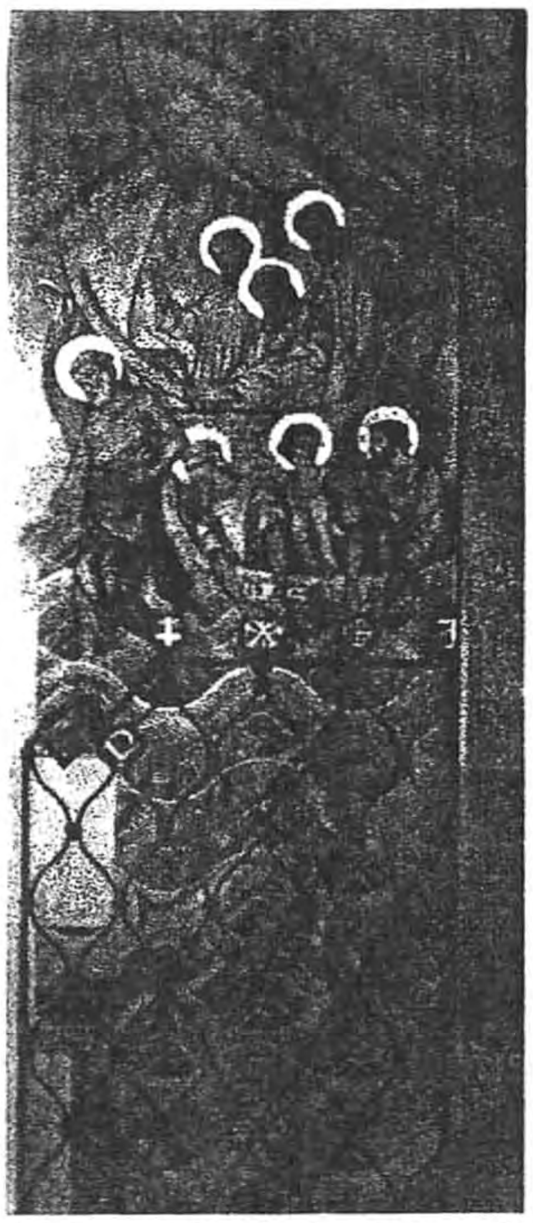
Role in the firm

How far was Pippet responsible for the quality of the work produced by Hardman, Powell & Company during his career? I would suggest that Pippet's relationship to J.H.Powell was mainly that of reliable designer and co-ordinator of design practice to an exacting master and keeper of the Pugin flame. Always mindful of the need to stay true to Pugin's original design concepts, both J.H.Powell and John Bernard Hardman (1843–1903), the grandson of John Hardman Senior (1767–1844), were swift to reprimand Pippet should he suggest the slightest deviation from Pugin. This happened, for example, when Pippet suggested to Dr Ackton of Oscott College that something different might be tried in the decoration of the College. On receiving notice of Pippet's suggestion to Ackton, Bernard Hardman issued a stinging rebuke to Pippet: 'I understand that Mr Pippet suggests departures from the old lines. A difficult thing



J.H.Powell, c.1882–3: design for east wall, St Peter's Hascombe.
(Courtesy, The Revd C. McKenna)

is it not to improve on old Pugin in matters of decoration?...Nothing must be done at Oscott in the way of alteration until Mr Powell has approved of them.'[10] In 1883, J.H.Powell criticised Pippet over his 'bad' design for a stained glass window for Catherine De Barnes School, Solihull. An indignant Pippet replied to Powell, 'As the drawing is so very bad you had better send it back to me with remarks for alteration.'[11] Powell maintained strict quality control over every design that Pippet executed, and, by doing so, ensured that the reputation of the firm was always upheld. At times, Pippet felt that he had been singled out for especial criticism. However, with regard to the Oscott College job, Powell did write to Pippet, 'I fear that you will think that I am your unjust persecutor.'[12]



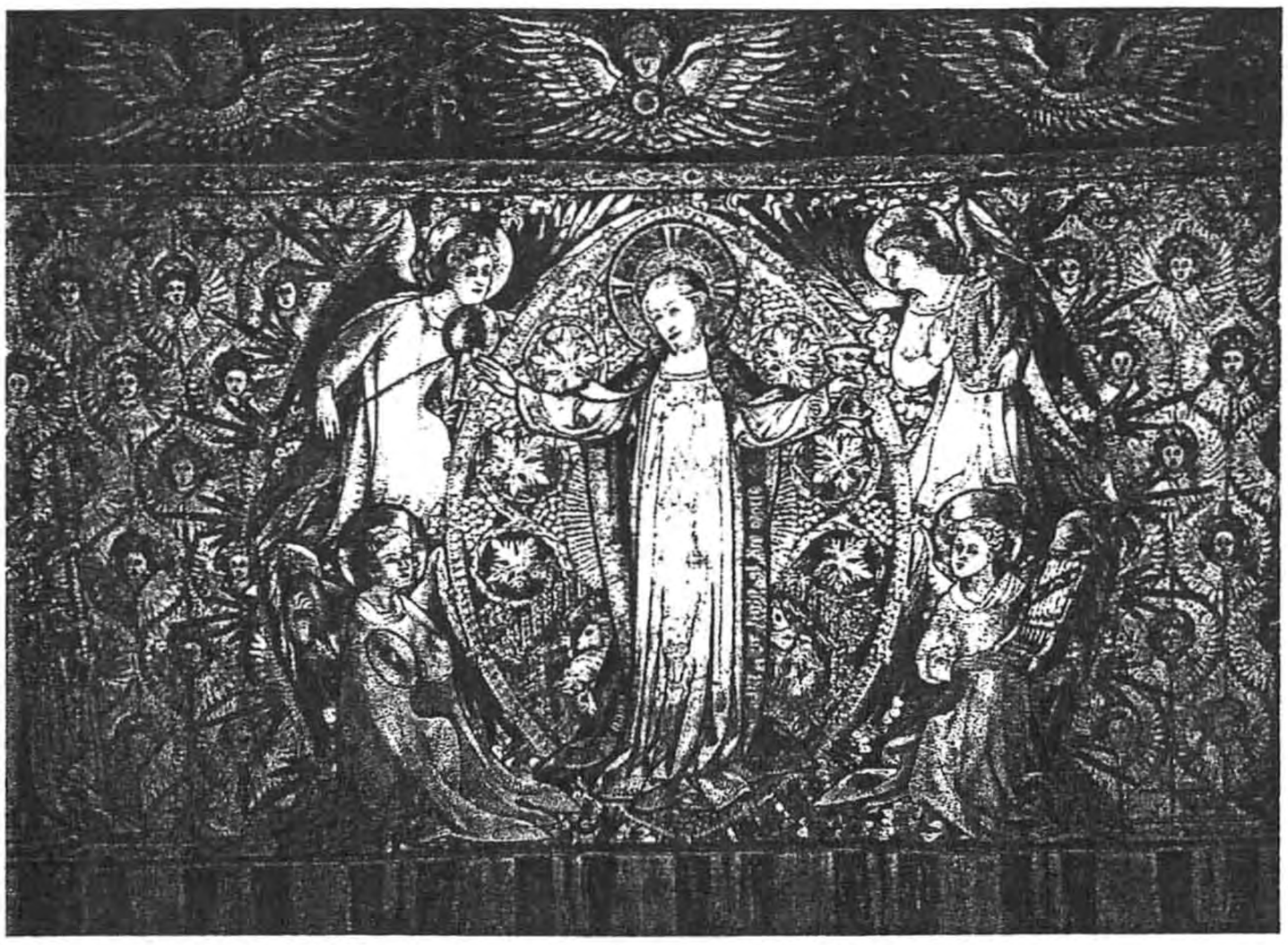
J.A.Pippet: finished painting of east wall design, Hascombe, completed 1884.
Photo: Bill Covington

Hascombe

Pippet's most complete decorative work can be seen at St Peter's church, Hascombe, Surrey. All the designs for the wall paintings are J.H.Powell's, the only exception being the stencil work which is from the hand of J.A.Pippet. From the chancel arch wall and rood screen through to the east window, every available surface has been richly decorated. Pippet's letter to J.B.Hardman in May 1883 clearly states that the designs for Hascombe church had been completed and that he was 'to begin the work in about three weeks time'. In fact, Pippet began the decoration of St Peter's church in mid-august 1883, as a letter in the Hardman Archives, Birmingham, gives Pippet's address at the time of writing as 'Hascombe rectory'.[14] John Hardman Powell had prepared drawings for St Peter's church, Hascombe in 1882, and Pippet requested them in December of that year.[15] Henry Woodyer (1816–1896), had redesigned St Peter's in 1864, and was called upon to advise Powell regarding the proposed decorative scheme. Pippet wrote to Powell that 'Mr Woodyer has been here today and we gave him a regular settling of ideas and colour.'[16] In November 1883 Pippet had begun 'Decorating the window splays, arch and St Peter's Net.'[17] The chancel arch on its west side is surrounded by the largest of all the wall paintings 'Our Lord in Majesty'. The entry in the Glass Day book for 1885 describes the work as a 'Fresco', for which Hardman, Powell & Company received £200.[18] For painting the soffit of the chancel arch with 'angels & many small sundries; the nine choirs of angels; gilding bosses on roof; carving and gilding cross & angels on altar; painting candle blocks', Hardman, Powell & Company received £100.[19] For 'decorating dado on Nave on North and west sides – St Peter's Net with Fish', Pippet was paid £40 and H. P. & Co received £50.[20]

All the paintings, with the exception of the net of fishes on the walls of the nave, were paid for by the rector, Vernon Musgrave. Regarding the designs for the paintings, J.H.Powell arranged payment for them from Vernon Musgrave. Pippet wrote to J.B.Hardman concerning the designs for St Peter's, Hascombe: 'Respecting the Majesty I have never had anything to do with the Canon about the price.'[21] However, Pippet wrote to J.H.Powell: 'In our making up of the account we had £300 to deal with, this was for the Chancel. Mr

J.A.Pippet: figure of Joseph, St Peter's, Hascombe. Joseph's plane is signed 'J.A.P. 1898' – Joseph the carpenter and Joseph the decorator, perhaps.
Photo: Bill Covington



Altar frontal, St Peter's Hascombe, embroidered by Juliet Pippet
Photo: Catriona Blaker

Hardman asked if Mr John Powell has made the drawings, and I answered that he had, so this price would include the firm's price, Mr John's and mine.'[22]
By December 1885, the first phase in the decoration of St Peter's was completed.

By 1887 the work of decoration and ornament was almost complete, and most of the new adornments were relatively small – altar frontals, a banner, for example. But there were some outstanding additions. A processional cross, containing ninety-nine precious and polished stones – amethyst, carbuncle, topaz, agate and others. This was followed by a beautiful silver-gilt chalice, set with pearls and three hundred precious stones. Both were designed by J.A.Pippet. In 1898–9 the chancel screen was decorated, the figures in the lower panels representing devoted husbands and wives from scriptural sources.[23] One other interesting addition to church furniture was a faldstool, or litany desk. The Hascombe faldstool was made of several rare woods and it stands on two blocks of oak saved from the old church. On the desk are the arms of Jerusalem carved out of olive wood, brought from Jerusalem in 1868 by Vernon Musgrave. The design of the faldstool bears the monogram of J.A.Pippet and the date 1901. Presumably this was to be Pippet's last design, as he died on the 8th September 1903 in Abbey House, Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

NOTES

1 Charles Lines, *Gabriel Pippet: Master of Mosaic* (Warwickshire and Worcestershire Life) October, 1986, p.30

2 Diary of William Pippet (private collection)

3 History of William Pippet (private collection)

4 Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, *Pugin: a Gothic Passion*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1994, p.33

5 Brass Order Book 1885-1886, Hardman Archive (hereafter HA) Birmingham City Library

6 (1) a sketch for a tabernacle, letter to J.H.Powell, August 27th 1882; (2) a sketch for paper dies, letter to J.H.Powell, October 14th 1882, HA.

7 Drawings and stencil plates for decoration of Prudhoe Hall, Tyneside. Cost £2.00, Glass Day Book 1884, p.610. HA.

8 Juliet Pippet to J.H.Powell, 4th March 1884, HA.

9 *Ibid*, 9th March 1884.

10 J.B.Hardman to J.A.Pippet, 14th August 1882, *Decoration letter book*, 1882,p.251, HA.

11 J.A.Pippet's letter to J.H.Powell, 3rd July 1883, HA.

12 J.H.Powell to J.A.Pippet, 19th August 1882, *Decoration letter book*, 1882,p.251HA Birmingham.

13 J.A.Pippet to J.B.Hardman, 2nd May 1883, HA.

14 J.A.Pippet to J.H.Powell, 10th August 1883, HA.

15 *Ibid*, 19th December 1882.

16 *Ibid*, 13th August 1883.

17 J.A.Pippet to J.B.Hardman, 10th November, 1883, HA.

18 Decoration entry in *Glass Day-book*, 1885, June 30th, p.629, HA.

19 *Ibid*

20 Decoration entry in *Glass Day-book*, 1884, December 26th p.619, HA.

21 J.A.Pippet to J.B.Hardman, 2nd November 1884.

22 J.A.Pippet to J.H.Powell, 4th November, 1884.

23 *Decoration Day-book*, 1892-1920, order no. 299, October 1898: 'For Hascombe church-panels for screen painted with figures.'

William (Bill) Covington *was born in Plymouth, Devonshire, in 1947. He is a graduate of Nottingham University, and whilst subsequently at Warwick University submitted a prize-winning research paper on the stained glass of William Morris. His interest in the work of J.A.Pippet came about through a work experience placement at Birmingham City Archives in 1991/2, when he became involved with the Hardman Archive. His current ambition is to produce a catalogue of the work of J.A.Pippet, which could be useful, he feels, to researchers and societies.*

Some Stray Notes on Art

In this issue we publish part two of **John Hardman Powell's** *second lecture,* **'Art Imitative'**, *and join him as he gradually climbs with us – to use his own metaphor – from the foothills of art and craft towards the high peaks, where 'the air is fuller of noble and ascetic thought'. As usual, we would remind readers that grammar, punctuation and spelling are J.H.P's own, and we have also added a few endnotes.*

Illuminated manuscripts

Illuminated manuscripts are a fertile source of instruction to students in many ways—in composition of grouping, and expression, as well as in colour; for though there is only one in a thousand left of them after fires and the profane uses to which they were often put for (illegitimate) practical purposes, they still form a faithful Art record of the battles, processions, councils, &c. &c., of their day, with portraits of the men and women, from the Pope to the Ploughboy, their costumes and customs, their science so far as their knowledge reached, architecture, geography, zoology, botany, &c. &c.

The ancient Irish books were of very fine penmanship, and the initials were filled in with interlacings of coloured bands, curves and foliage, with occasional heads of men, birds and beasts; but though intricate to the point of giddiness, out of thousands not a mistake can be found,— a prodigy of ingenious drawing.

Through the quality of the parchment used and the precise care of preparation, these MSS. remain in all their brilliant hues and exquisite manipulation by pen and brush, a marvel of artistic skill never to be revived.

Nearly all the great mediæval painters took part in these works, so that many of them are absolutely priceless.

Sculpture

Of the sculpture of the middle ages left us in England, the splendid work at Wells, Lincoln, Westminster, and much of the finest right up to Aberdeen, has apparently the energy of a Norman chisel marked upon it; but that known to be by our native sculptors, though quieter in character, is always good architecturally, and with an appropriate religious feeling invaluable.

The "find" of alabaster on the surface "readyweathered" for use, was seized upon with delight by our carvers, and wrought into the magnificent tombs that exist in such numbers. Happily their secular purpose protected them from the Iconoclast, whilst the altar-pieces suffered almost to obliteration, and we can only guess what superb works they were from the few mutilated fragments unearthed occasionally. One grand head was lately found at Winchester, wantonly mutilated, which is thought to have belonged to the great altar.

Small alabaster panels in relief seem to have been a favourite mode of decoration in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, from the numbers found in collections throughout the country.

Ivory tablets, used as portable oratories, are an inexhaustible fund of instruction in composition, and the ingenuity in crowding together subjects and figures without crowding, leaving all intelligible, is the height of cunning. The way the artists bent their figures to get the most out of the precious tusk, adapted the lines of the drapery, clipped off corners of their composition, and squeezed in interest, is almost amusing.

Now, sculpture in England, after suffering much from the absurd distinction of "High" and "Low" Art, and a long slumber, is awakened to a fair promise of a future. At present too much is portraiture, but even here, despite all difficulties of material, costume, &c., our sculptors have broken classical fetters and their ingenuity gained a freer ground. The Wellington Monument, of course, has marked an epoch.[1]

Landscape

The older masters used landscape as an adjunct to their figure pictures subserviently to help their expression, as in gloom, or joyfulness, or to give local interest or distance, but rarely if ever as subject by itself.

Gradually, both in religious and secular Art, the landscape began to increase and the figures to decrease, until they were only just observable.

For a time some made their subject, what is called "Composition," a mixture of their nature studies put together for picturesque effect, old ruins, peasants, waterfalls, cattle, trees, &c., and it is almost funny to see the same studies doing duty in many galleries, simply rearranged.

No country exists more favoured than our own in effects of land and sea-scape for the student, endless in variety, from Cornwall to Skye, mountains, lakes, moors, rivers, coasts with tides, rocks, castles, fields full of grain or garnered forests of stately trees, and flowers

Practise as you preach: an on-the-spot sketch by J.H.Powell (Private collection)

"all the year round" literally; with morning mists and clouds, and the full changes of all seasons from a hot summer, to a frozen-up winter. (Fog effects and the blackening of streams ought not to count, as they are only man's last touches to nature, and not intended, nor necessarily permanent.)

It is significant that until three centuries ago these great resources of Art were not considered sufficient of themselves for picture subject, but in these days of specialities painters devote their lives to close watching of natural effects and their perpetual changes. The rush of the ocean, the ebb and flow of tides, each fantastic mimicry of the clouds, the mystic silver veil of the morning, all are caught in form as in colour and laid on the canvas with photographic reality.

Still Life

The least interesting of all branches of Imitative Art is the one we call "Still Life." It requires a carefully acquired knowledge of technique, true perspective, correct observation of all objects, harmony of colouring, and, most of all, unbounded patience.

The Dutch so excelling in all these qualities, we are not astonished to see amongst their work interiors of churches up which the spectator can almost walk! We can make out by the light of one candle now and again, altars with the subject of their triptych pictures, count the pipes of the organs, and get to know the worshippers in the photographic literalism, and all subdued down to a consistent harmonious tone. Today it is rare that a painter confines himself within such narrow limits.

There is a twin branch of this Art which may fairly be called "Still Death,"—the representation of once animated things after life has gone. It would be expected that to an artist the most melancholy subjects would be animals or birds without motion, fish after their dying hues have faded; (they always try to retain the bloom of flowers and fruit). Perhaps the painters who devoted their great talent to these and even slaughter-house subjects, had a low and commonplace ideality.

Sketching and Etching

This is the great age of sketches. In past times these were only made by artists as a part process of their work, or first idea—single figures wanted for groups, a tree to be used, a castle, monastery, or a farm to be worked into, some future picture. But since the advent of water-colours our exhibitions are often almost filled with them, as complete works, and the custom is good both for artist and collector, as giving the former immediate money resource, and the latter frequently a more vivid impression from the mind than would be after a deliberate re-drawing at leisure.

The late revival of Etching has been of invaluable service to Imitative Art. Line engraving, requiring months in place of minutes, appeared to have killed it for a short period, but the more sympathetic process has mastered its older rival now.

Photographic help, however skilful and ingenious, is a source of danger to the artist who wishes to make the "scratch of the needle" immortal, like Rembrandt. It is the poetic enthusiastic touch at last, which is invaluable in Art, whether known or not to the artist himself, paid for or not paid for, recognized by others or no; it is the *life* of his work; and the etching-needle reveals idiosyncrasy clearest after the brush.

Art and Journalism

Journalistic Art[2] is the youngest of all the branches of Art; not yet fifty years old, it is grown to full maturity, bidding fair to be a great "power in the land," like the Press itself. Indeed, hand in hand with it, helped with its opportunities for photography, its travelled knowledge, and monied resource, and urged on by competitive zeal, there is no war, or catastrophe, or tragic incident, or peaceful triumph however distant, that we cannot sympathize with by eye as well as ear, within a week of its occurrence; and we can keep a faithful illustrated chronicle, not only of events, but of the actors themselves.

Humour

Even these few "stray thoughts" about Art should have some notice of the humorous.

At all times the maxim that "the bow always bent was bad for the bow" has been acknowledged.

We have all felt, at some time or other, the humility of smiling when we should not, at some slight provocation,— a surrender to a sense of mirth in a grave place when we wish to be serious, and that the relaxation of the muscles is a real relief.

Of course, in the Mediæval Palaces and Courts, the Jester's role was a profession; and the stone and wood carvers took possession of all the less dignified or hidden parts of architecture, sometimes even in churches, to introduce funny conceits, satires upon secular or regular clerics, old exploded jokes about the supremacy of woman [!], familiar household troubles, grotesque inventions, &c. &c.

It is pleasant to note that this gift of comic presentment of a witty or absurd thought, and the appreciation of it, has not yet died out, and in these days of high mental pressure, we all feel grateful for a hearty laugh to those artists who have devoted their great talent, which must include a combination of genuine humour, keen observation, and a ready pencil, to our amusement.

It is curious that if such drawings are too academically correct, this quality seems to detract from the fun.

The Pre-Raphaelites

About a quarter of a century ago, seven young artists, it is said, under the influence of Rossetti, revolutionized Art in England. They were called Pre-Raphaelite, because they went back to the mediæval habit of thought, tone of colouring, and minute study of detail aided by the camera.

Previous, however, to this, Blake may be said to have idealized it. Hogarth to have moralized it, Wilkie domesticated it, and, when Walter Scott had permeated the country through and through with the Romanticism of the middle ages, such a revival was welcomed gladly after the unsympathetic Classicism that had so long held possession of artists' minds[3] (not a little influenced by the genius of Flaxman). Herbert and Paul de la Roche had succeeded in their insistence that the customs and costume of the time of Abraham were to be seen still in Palestine, and that Old Testament history should consistently be represented with the real people, as well as the scenery of the Holy Land.

For the previous two centuries the prevailing conceptions and interpretation of colour had been somewhat chilly in tone, however subtle in harmony, so when once the new school had broken through the chains of Paganism, they revelled in the sunshine of colours deep and bright, and in the interest of minute study of the detail and beauty of nature, the alpine flower as well as the mountain peak.

'The poetic enthusiastic touch' – *A Water Meadow* is very much the sort of print to which Powell is referring. This lyrical plate is by Sir Francis Seymour Haden PRE (1818–1910), a leading figure of the etching revival of the second half of the nineteenth century.
(Information: Michael Blaker)

Art Today

Art is a Big Thing! with far-stretching influence, not only in the present but in an unknown future. It is a pleasure to the learned, knowledge to the unlearned, and amusement for both. It can be (and is, in many ways) an aid to patriotism, can soothe the suffering in hospitals, and be a blessing to children. Ask anyone who has witnessed its effect in the children's hospital in our own town![4]

To the artist it is a world of its own. And it is paramount everywhere, except over some few scientific inventions such as ironclads, which, as far as we have got, seem impossible to beautify; even a train, happily, has a flexible grace in its motion; and the Swiss, perfect engineers as they are for their own country, design bridges that do not interfere more with the landscape than a gigantic spider-web. But a "tubular" bridge is entirely hideous and unrepresentable: these difficulties await the advent of a combined engineer and artist. Is it a new clothing for the scientific bones that is wanted? or a new skeleton?

This age is the Paradise of artists; not only do great works command fabulous prices, but good of any kind in any branch of every material gets fair recognition, even down to Christmas cards. An unknown artist can become known by one work. They have, too, opportunities for study that would have seemed impossible a generation ago. Putting aside the national European collections and galleries, and our own in London, which from being the smallest has become one of the most complete, local collections have grown up in every town of importance, and Art schools everywhere.

Contrast the chance of the Art student in Birmingham now, where every important work of the time comes to be seen, to what it was thirty years ago![5]

But the gain to the student is, after all, a mixed benefit to the matured painter, for success in exhibiting carries with it the danger of repeating successes, until his pictures become nothing but what actors call "hits:" a strong warning of the true saying that the day an artist gives up study that same day he begins to deteriorate.

Another danger lies in his giving himself up too exclusively to a speciality. Of course anyone who has a love of animals and a gift of painting them must run the risk of a narrower field. But the greatest artists have all been what cricketers call "all-round men."

Conclusion

We are now two thirds on our way. The next climb leads to the summit. So far we have considered those lines of Art whose excellence depends more on intellectual effort than intense feeling; and though (as we have noted) the same qualities are necessary, from base to pinnacle, for the achievement of good work, we shall see as we advance increased opportunity for bringing out the highest and deepest powers of man in his Art, that the air is fuller of noble and ascetic thought, the springs cooler than in the valley, and the spirit of excelsior as we climb, is everywhere surrounding and invigorating him.

NOTES

1 This is the memorial by Alfred Stevens in St Paul's Cathedral.

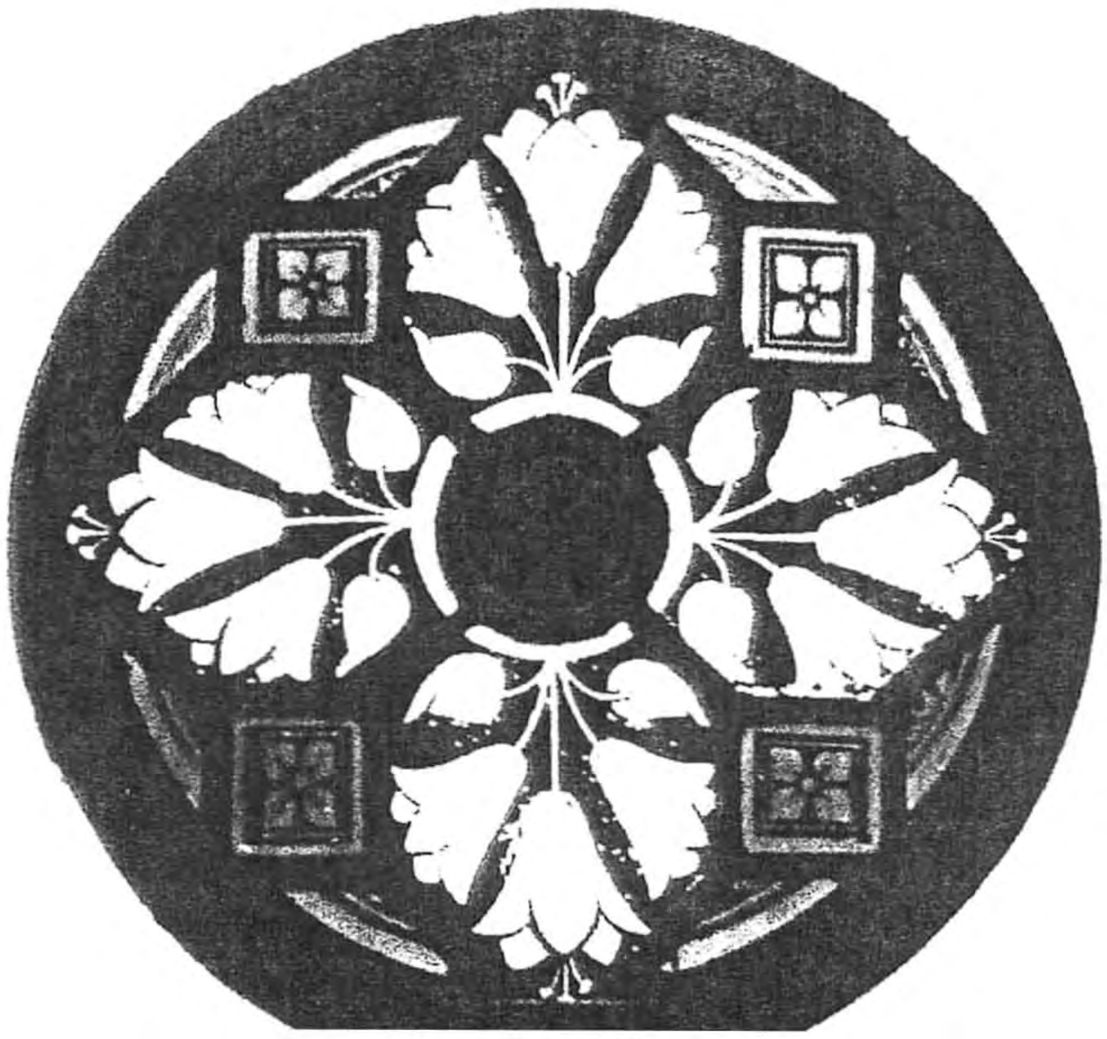
2 Art as reportage, in other words.

3 Sir Walter Scott receives due tribute here as the prime influence on Medievalism (and hence as one of those who underpinned the Gothic Revival). See also 'Pugin in his home', op.cit., p.13.

4 The main children's hospital in Birmingham in 1880 was the Birmingham and Midland Free Hospital for Sick Children (in-patients department). It is still there, on the corner of Sheepcote Street and Broad Street and is now a pub. (Information courtesy Local Studies and History Service, Birmingham Central Library).

5 This passage is usefully commented on by Roy Hartnell in his *Pre-Raphaelite Birmingham*, Studley, Warwickshire, 1996, p.85

'Art Imitative' is published courtesy Birmingham Library Services.



Detail of window in west cloister,
St Augustine's, Ramsgate
(Society archives)

Book Reviews

'A Church as It Should Be': The Cambridge Camden Sociey and Its Influence **edited by Christopher Webster and John Elliott, Shaun Tyas/Paul Watkins Publishing, ISBN 1 900289 38 5**

The Cambridge Camden Society was founded in 1839 by two High Anglican undergraduates – John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb – for the study of ecclesiastical art. Its aims were to measure and restore churches in accordance with Anglican rubrics and canons and later to establish correct ceremonial. It greatly stimulated interest in church architecture and traditional Catholic worship, and assisted the liturgical and ceremonial revival in the Church of England in the nineteenth century. Treatises were published setting out its aims and in 1841 it began to publish a monthly periodical, *The Ecclesiologist*, which continued until 1868. This powerful journal chronicled some of the most creative years of the Gothic Revival, had immense influence, and made or broke architectural and scholarly reputations. The climax of its sway was in the 1850s. The Society expressed the doctrinal tenets of the Oxford Movement in architectural form.

A thorn in its side was A.W.N.Pugin. Roderick O'Donnell sets out the depressing tale of the Society's deliberate policy of ignoring him. Although designing its seal, Pugin was denied membership not because of his architectural principles but because of his religion. But the Society and the Gothic Revival could not have done without him and would not have developed as they did. The Society stole his ideas and made them its own. From Pugin it took long chancels, banished galleries and box pews, built churches with high pitched roofs on liturgical plans and furnished and decorated them with stained glass, inlaid encaustic tiles, rood screens and stencilled walls. Deprived of Pugin's experiments none of this would have been possible. He looms as a spectre at the feast.

There are fifteen essays in this book in which attitudes to the Late Georgian Church are studied, Ecclesiology's roots in Hanoverian attitudes examined, the Society's membership analysed, early Victorian worship shakily investigated, the unequal relationship between Butterfield and A.J.Beresford Hope described in terms of the class struggle, Carpenter's plagiarism of Pugin defended, Scott's uneasy relationship with the Society set forth, Ruskin, Webb and Street seen in the context of Venice, Pearson's obscurity enlightened, Wightwick's annoying powers recounted, church restoration presented in semiotic terms, Scotland's chilly embrace of ecclesiological principles recorded, Nonconformity's frail adoption of them set forth, and the Anglican revival of church music fluted.

There are some excellent contributions in this book – notably by Dr O'Donnell, Gavin Stamp, Chris Miele and Chris Brooks, and there is a useful list of members of the Society painstakingly compiled by Geoffrey K. Brandwood. There is, however, some absence of serious consideration of the theological, liturgical and doctrinal ideals that made the Gothic Revival possible. Without understanding these, there is a danger of the subject being reduced merely to social analysis, stylistic development and anecdote. But read it if you want to know why the majority of churches in these islands look as they do.

Anthony Symondson SJ

Brian Andrews *Australian Gothic: The Gothic Revival in Australian Architecture from the 1840s to the 1950s*, **The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Press (distributed in UK by Eurospan) ISBN 0 522 84931 8**

The name of Brian Andrews is a familiar one to readers of *True Principles*. He is the historian who has, single-handedly, opened up the subject of Pugin's work in Australia. Since his essay in *Pugin: a Gothic Passion* (1994), he has pursued the subject and broadened it, adding not only to our knowledge of Pugin's design work in total, especially his metalwork, but also to the whole Australian Gothic Revival. This was never, he argues, more than an offshoot of the English movement. In America, Gothic took on a life of its own. At the antipodes it was either imported wholesale, like Pugin's model church, sent with Bishop Willson to Tasmania, or copied directly from northern sources.

Among those who took the Gothic to Australia were two architects directly and personally inspired by Pugin. They were William Wardell (1823–1899) and John Bun Denny (1810–1892). Wardell, a Catholic convert, was an ardent and open admirer of Pugin. By the time Wardell's career was under way however, Pugin's was in decline.

In their working relations Pugin took a subordinate role, providing furnishings for two of his admirer's London churches, Our Lady of Victories, Clapham, and Our Lady Star of the Sea, Greenwich. In such circumstances it would have required superhuman generosity for Pugin to praise Wardell. He was unfairly dismissive of him and harsh about the almost ludicrous

Clapham church. No wonder it was sometimes said that Wardell was driven to emigrate in order to escape his unwilling mentor. In fact, he left England for the sake of his health in 1858, six years after Pugin's death. As Andrews points out, his style remains suspended in time, for ever on the brink of the High Victorian, but his work in Australia was of a quality to bear out the promise of the early years. His masterpiece was St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, which is well illustrated here. His other work included St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, and Government House, Melbourne.

Denny had been the Earl of Shrewsbury's clerk of works at Alton since 1839, where he supervised Pugin's work. He also oversaw the building of St Giles, Cheadle. He was, like Myers, an able second in command, anxious to follow Pugin's lead. In Australia, however, where he emigrated after the seventeenth earl's death, he not only worked for Wardell, but blossomed as an architect in his own right. Andrews illustrates his church of St John the Baptist, Clifton Hill, and his completion of Hansom's St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat.

To follow the threads of Pugin's legacy is, however, only one of the pleasures offered by *Australian Gothic*. Others include the lesser known (in this hemisphere) works of major architects, Scott and Butterfield in particular. There is also, despite Andrews' thesis, a significant number of buildings that could only have come about in Australia. Some, like the cheap Adelaide church, designed with buttresses as add-on extras, reveal how much of the essence of Gothic could be lost in translation. Others, like William Pitt's Melbourne Safe deposit, in boom-style Gothic, express the confidence of an emerging nation, while in the smaller, humbler churches of the early settlements there is all the poignance of a new world whose tentative beginnings were full of backward glances to the old.

Note: There seems to be some doubt about the spelling of Denny's name and his dates. Andrews offers Bun and 1810–1892, while Michael Fisher, in *Alton Towers: a Gothic Wonderland*, has Bunn and 1800–1892. *True Principles* would be glad to have clarification from the authors, or anyone else.

Rosemary Hill

Rosemary Hill has just published an article on Pugin and Ruskin in the current number of the British Art Journal.

Michael Kerney *The Stained Glass of Frederick Preedy (1820–1898): A Catalogue of Designs*, **The Ecclesiological Society 2001; 159pp.ISBN 1 902653 38 6**

This catalogue of the RIBA holding of Preedy designs has been amplified to give us a monograph on his work as architect and stained glass artist. Monographs on nineteenth and twentieth-century stained-glass artists are rarities, and we are fortunate indeed that Dr Kerney has added Preedy to the literature and in so doing has effectively replaced a slighter work by Gordon Barnes. Here we have a comprehensive list of Preedy's stained-glass drawings, with an introductory essay placing him in his contemporary context in the Gothic Revival.

Some years ago, a collection of drawings by Preedy for stained glass came to light and, having bought a small selection, and not being able to interpret the inscription 'Church of St Michael, College Hill City', I had approached Michael Kerney. Ever generous with help, a very prompt reply came: 'St Michael's Paternoster Royal, in the City of London'. His interest was immediately aroused because of the written comments on the drawing, which he recognised as the hand of Butterfield, whose work he was then researching. He had long suspected that William Butterfield had been the architect involved with that church in the 1860s and 1870s; now he had proof. His researches eventually resulted in his essay 'The Stained Glass commissioned by William Butterfield', in the *Journal of Stained Glass*, Vol XX, No 1, 1996.

Michael Kerney's realisation of the Preedy collection's historical importance has led to its being photographed for the NMR [National Monuments Record] and acquired by the RIBA. It now forms the basis for this book. Preedy, a church architect of the Gothic Revival, was, as Dr Kerney points out, the only one to combine this profession with designing and making stained glass. Working, firstly in Worcester, and then in London, his work reflects the view expressed by Street that 'architects should... draw their own cartoons'. As architect, his windows could be shaped with the future stained glass already in his mind, and his control over the whole manufacture was truer to the principles of Arts and Crafts glass at the end of the nineteenth century than to the approach of the studios and workshops of his contemporaries. His finest and most beautifully-coloured glass belongs to the 1850s and 1860s; his High Victorian Gothic style is aesthetically agreeable and particularly appropriate, as might be expected in his own buildings, and results in some vigorous, witty designs, such as 'The Life of Lot' and 'Jonah and the Whale'. His commissions include work for Worcester, Ely and Gloucester Cathedrals; Michael Kerney lists Storridge (1856); St Stephen's, Worcester (1862) and Hunstanton (1867) amongst his finest work.

There are 353 designs now at the RIBA that are numbered consecutively for known locations, with some twenty numbered designs known to have been dispersed. A small number are unlocated, and an unknown further quantity dispersed. These designs are

clearly catalogued, happily using Birkin Haward's notation for the position of a window in a church.

This monograph is delightfully produced, with a good selection of illustrations in colour as well as black and white (those of us who have attended lectures by Michael Kerney are well aware of his photographic skills), a pleasure to handle, and a wonderful role-model for future monographs, the detailed analysis of each design being both accurate and apposite. All students of Victorian stained glass will benefit from adding this to their libraries.

Rachel Moss

Going Full Tilt

Alexandra Wedgwood discusses *The Collected Letters of A.W.N.Pugin, volume I, 1830-1842*, edited by Margaret Belcher, Oxford University Press, 2001, ISBN 0 19817391 1

The publication at the end of May this year of the first volume of these letters is a ***GLORIOUS EVENT*** and of the greatest significance for all members of the Pugin Society, and indeed for everyone interested in nineteenth-century culture. Bold italic capital letters in Dr Belcher's meticulous editorial procedure are the equivalent of six lines scored below the words by Pugin, and 'glorious' is his favourite word of happy approval. (The opposite of 'glorious' is 'detestable', and many things in Pugin's life qualified for that adjective too.) In this edition we can have confidence that all the letters have been found, dated and also correctly transcribed, and this is no mean feat in itself. Pugin clearly wrote, as he did everything else, very fast, and his handwriting became increasingly difficult to read, but, more than that, because the normal tendency is to see what you expect to see, it was not until I read Dr Belcher's edition that I realised just how idiosyncratic was his spelling; possibly the result of his unusual education. It must have been a mammoth task to make out the actual letters of each word from Pugin's quick lines and squiggles. He was also quite indifferent to the usual rules of capitalisation. But Dr Belcher's method of minimum intervention means that Pugin's spontaneity, passion and eloquence are preserved. The letters draw us very close to the man.

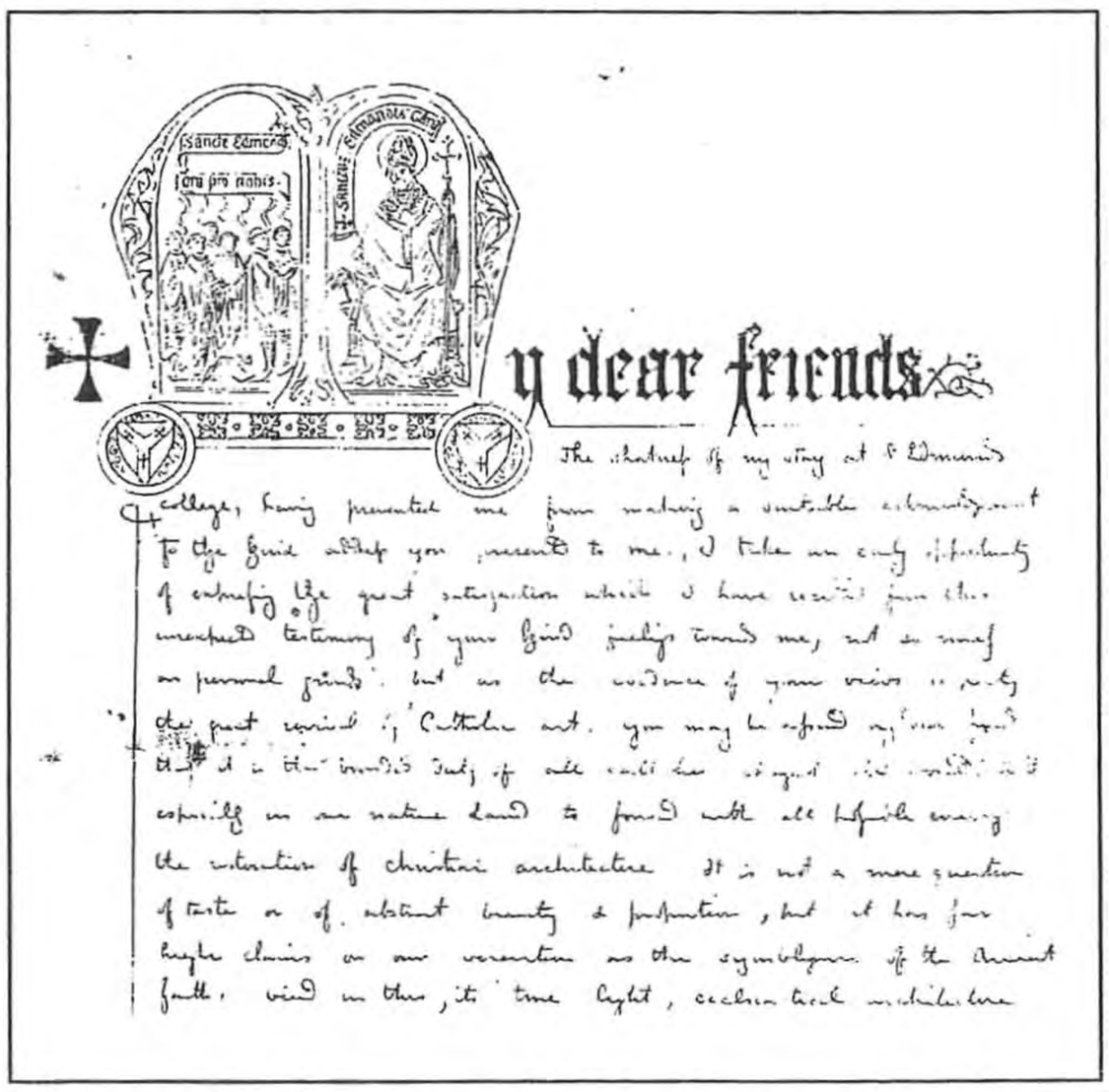
So who is the Pugin presented to us here? We meet him first in June 1830, a youth of eighteen, struggling to establish his own furniture-making business but obviously impressing his client sufficiently for her to preserve his letters carefully: 'The utmost care and attention has been bestowed on the design and execution of these articles and I feel confident with meeting with you approbation.' Pugin continued to inspire his friends, his patrons and his family to keep his letters, and a large number have thus survived, though sadly these must be only a fraction of those he wrote. The next group in the book shows us Pugin in 1834 writing enthusiastically to a friend about his journeys studying medieval buildings: 'My Dear Sir, if you want to be delighted, if you want to be astonished, if you want to be half as mad as I at present am, for Gods sake come over to wells,' and also badgering E.J.Willson, a Catholic architect in Lincoln and a collaborator with Pugin's father in the publication of books on Gothic architecture: 'it is of the most *vital importance* to the interest of the work as well as my own that part 4 with the Letter-press should appear in May next – to insure which no exertions on my part shall be Wanting and I scincerely entreat you as a friend to use your utmost endeavours - to Let me have the Letter press in time.'

We then follow Pugin, the new Catholic convert, as in August 1836 he combatively launches his important statement of his beliefs in his book *Contrasts*: 'there is a vast deal of rage excited among certain parties by the publication of this work and I am a marked man here at Salisbury.' The letters for the next three years are disappointingly few, but we see Pugin, with incredible suddenness, established as a leading Catholic architect, who writes to such luminaries as Dr Wiseman, the future Cardinal, then Rector of the English College in Rome, and to Dr Rock, Lord Shrewsbury's chaplain. He has also made two important new friends, John Hardman, the Birmingham metal manufacture, and Ambrose Lisle Phillipps, the Leicestershire landowner and Catholic convert.

The remaining three years of this volume, 1840 to 1842, contain two-thirds of the letters. A strong theme emerges in 1840 when Pugin meets J.R.Bloxam, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford: 'delighted shall I be to avail myself of your kind invitation and to visit you within the venerable walls of Magdalene raised by the pious and munificent Waynflete.' Bloxam was a keen student of the liturgy and ecclesiastical antiquities, who knew all the leading figures of the Oxford Movement. Pugin believed that these were the people who would lead the Church of England back into union with the Catholic Church: 'all I wish is that you could effect as

rapid a return to the old feelings as we are doing - but the Glorious spirit you posess must have been raised up to some Great End for the feelings which you set forth belong to days of antient faith and Piety.' Pugin met his greatest patron, John Talbot, the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, by 1837, and their letters survive from June 1840. They are written in the same immediate style, sharing all the news about their common interests in the revival of Gothic architecture and the growth of the Catholic Church in England: 'I will send your Lorship a full account of my deligtful visit to oxford. I feel *perfectly* satisfied that these are the men who will catholicise England. they are indeed admirable men & their progress is astonishing. I am grieved to inform you that the Priest there Mr. Newsham has saved £2000 which he contemplates enlarging his *wretched* chapel with next Year.'

Inevitably, for anyone as passionate and as opinionated as Pugin, things did not always go his way and he often had to fight his corner fiercely. Here he is writing to Lord Shrewsbury in August 1841 about the plans for the church of St Giles, Cheadle, which they both wanted to be a model Catholic building: 'surely your Lordshi must recollect that so far from doing away with the chapel in the north aisle I pointed out the absolute necessity of it to *fill up the space under the circular window* [Sketch of circular window in wall]. I consider it most important I hope & trust your Lordsip will not cut this out. it will be dreadful, spoil the whole interior, it will Look Like *an aile sacked by the calvinists* I entreat of your Lordship not to alter this or I shall be in despair.'



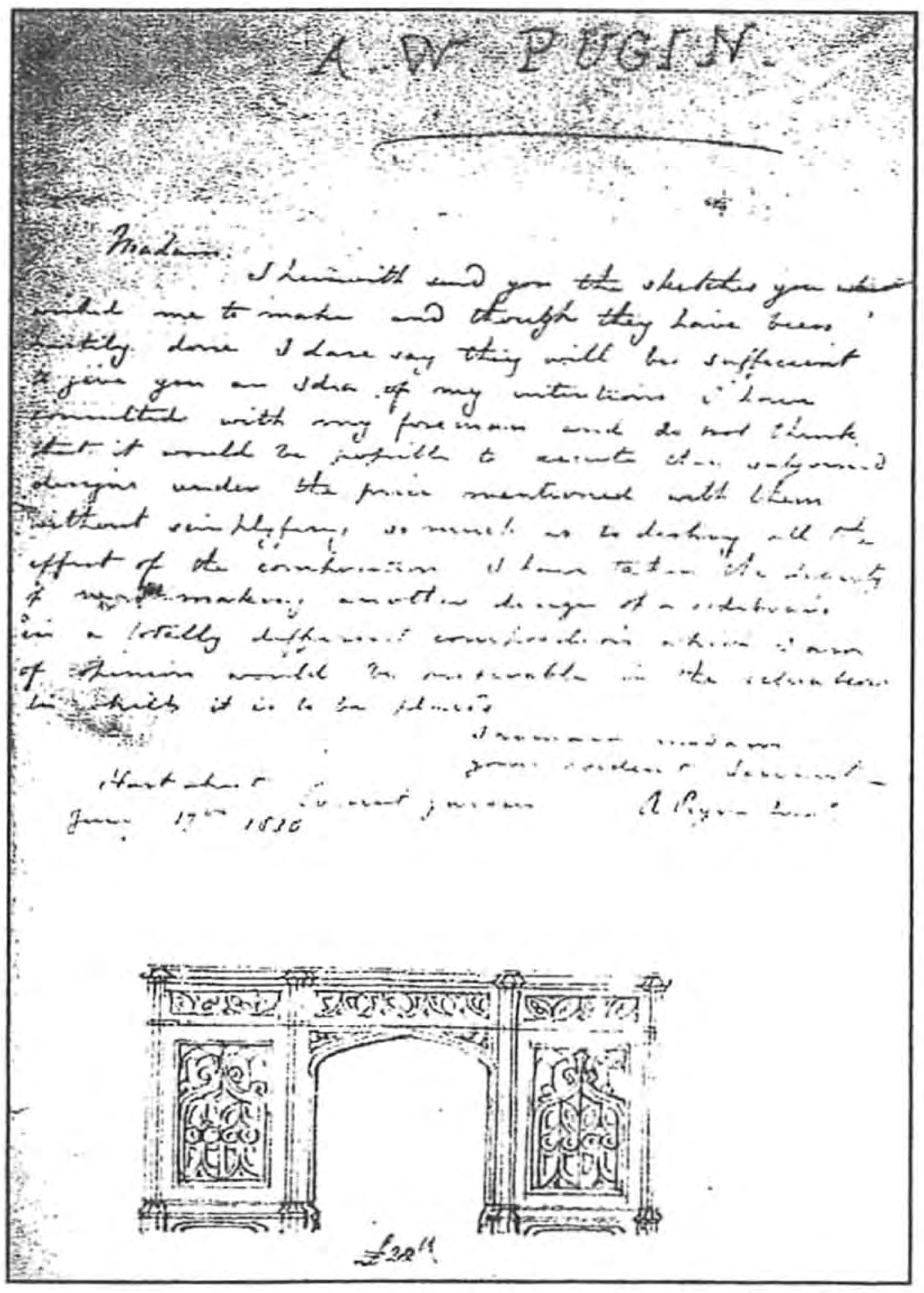
Pugin's letter to the students of St Edmund's College, 3rd Dec, 1842 (Courtesy, St Edmund's College, Ware)

By the end of this volume Pugin is still going full tilt, living in London with a growing family, designing buildings and their fittings, constantly travelling both to visit sites and to make study tours, receiving new commissions all the time, somehow finding time to write didactic books and endless letters, and doing it all by himself without the help of any clerks. One feels quite dizzy contemplating all this activity. Pugin called himself 'a Locomotive being always flyin about.' It comes almost as a relief to find that even he, whom J.H.Powell called a tidy genius, could lose things: 'I will rumage among my papers for the inventory but my things through press of business have got into great confusion', he tells Bloxam in July 1842.

My own particular interest lies with Pugin as an architect, and there is much to discover about his methods from these letters. He never had any formal training but learnt entirely from his attentive observation of mediæval buildings. In his early letters we see him looking at both structure and decoration and he became a practical architect. He understood about foundations, and could explain the requirements for them to the local building committee for St Marys Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He also told the same committee about the necessity for having access to the roof gutters, (which is possible at my local church of the 1870s, by Woodyer, only with expensive scaffolding). He seems to have a good knowledge of local stones when talking to Lord Midleton or Lord Shrewsbury. He told the priest at St George's Southwark that 'having a clerk of the works at all [is] quite a useless expense'. Of course this building, as were the majority of his works, was being built by George Myers, but quite how he organised his men I do not know. Pugin, however, relied on him greatly; he writes to John Hardman: 'I keep the working drawing [for an organ and choir gallery with a screen below at St Chads Birmingham] for I do not think that anybody but Myers would understand it.' Myers was the first of four close colleagues who understood his drawings, and he was soon joined by John Hardman. It is the letters to Hardman which will become a principal feature of all subsequent volumes. Pugin was eventually to pay a heavy price with his health for the absence of an office, but the benefit was the individuality of all his work.

We also learn something about his attitude to styles. In 1837 he writes to Hardman about his designs for St Chad: 'I have adopted a foreign style of pointed architecture because it is both cheap and effective and Likewise because it is totally different from any protestant errection it will have a majestic appearance from its Lofty proportions and will be readilly

distinguished at a distance.'[1] Pugin soon changed his mind, however, and wrote to Dr Rock in 1840 after a tour of Norfolk churches: 'I have seen some glorious things & belive me I have profited by them. I will never perpratrate anything foreign in England again.' He also argues brilliantly for his solutions to the designs of St Barnabas, Nottingham and St Mary's, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and gets his way both times.


A. W. PUGIN.

Pugin's first known letter, 12th June, 1830
(Courtesy, Victoria & Albert Museum)

Information that was new to me which I have learnt from this book includes the fact that Dr Rock remained a close friend and advisor of Pugin even after Lord Shrewsbury had dismissed him from his service, and that Pugin was already in touch with J.G.Crace, the interior decorator, by August 1841. The date of their first meeting has been much debated. There is also the revelation of a strange mystery, that some of Pugin's letters to Lord Shrewsbury seem to have gone missing since 1950, when Professor Stanton used them in her thesis. I believe, however, that she may have transcribed them, and so their full texts will probably become known one day.

All this Dr Belcher gives us with wonderful clarity, but she does much more, and adds immeasurably to the texts with full footnotes. As an academic of English literature she is particularly helpful in identifying the many books, journals and pamphlets referred to. It is daunting to think how much she had to read! It is also interesting to have contemporary accounts of the impression Pugin made, especially at Oxford. The description of Bloxam's room at Magdalen College makes me long to have seen it. She has used the extensive and uncatalogued Hardman archive to very good effect.

My criticisms are few and minor. I find it irritating that Dr Belcher does not mark in the text where there is a tear in the paper, but leaves it to a footnote. I feel that she ought to include the dates that Professor Stanton gave in her thesis to those letters which cannot now be found. I would also appreciate some more comment on architectural matters. I think that a word of explanation to indicate why Pugin was so critical of James Wyatt, Sir Robert Smirke and Sir John Soane could be helpful; for example, what Wyatt and Soane did at the Palace of Westminster, and what were Smirke's diabolical plans after the fire there. A simple reference to the *King's Works*, VI, is all that is needed. Perhaps Michael Fisher's splendid book, *Alton Towers*, had not been published in time for her to use it to help with the confusing accounts in the letters and explain, for example, just what was happening in the octagon hall from 1840, when Pugin added the Talbot Gallery. The absence of direct references to the Talbot Gallery in the letters has led to a mistaken interpretation of Pugin's work at Alton Towers by all previous scholars until Michael Fisher's work. Dr Belcher partly makes up for this, however, by her excellent index, so that the 'octagon hall' is at least easy to find.

One of the joys of Pugin's letters is their actual appearance, and so for illustrations I myself would perhaps have concentrated on the hand-writing, plus the charming incidental sketches that he included; the two go together and complement each other, and I would not have isolated the sketches, as has been done sometimes here. The figures reproduce well in the text, almost better than the plates, and OUP has produced a handsome, well set out book.

The next volume covers 1843 to 1845, is far advanced and, Dr Belcher tells me, will be longer than the 428 pages of volume I. Volume III includes 1846–8, volume IV 1849 and 1850 and volume V 1851 to the end. I recommend them to you for a fascinating and rewarding read, whether your purpose is pleasure or research. We have had a ***GLORIOUS*** beginning and we look forward eagerly to all the others.

NOTE

1 It is fascinating to compare this attitude with that in 1845 of Beresford Hope, then chairman of the Ecclesiological Society, who wrote to Benjamin Webb, the secretary, describing a new breed of urban Anglican churches: [they] must have a foreign character, lofty and apsidal, and domineer by their elevation over the haughty and Protestantised shopocracy of their respective towns. I found this quote in an excellent new book, *A Church as it should be: The Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence*, edited by Christopher Webster and John Elliott, Shaun Tyas, Stamford 2000.

Society Sorties

Ramsgate: A.W.N.P. *Letters* Launch

In early June Pugin Society members and others gathered at St Augustine's monastery by kind permission of Abbot Laurence O'Keeffe. Margaret Belcher's book was displayed, and Nick Dermott, Society chairman, proposed the toast and made a speech regarding her tremendous – and ongoing – achievement. Following on the subsequent refreshments, ably organised (as was the event itself) by Julia Twigg, many of the party descended into the monks' tunnel, emerging in the east cloister of the church, where Rory O'Donnell conducted a short tour.

Margaret Belcher in Ramsgate.
Photo (detail): George Garbutt

At two oclock, we made our way to the coach waiting outside for Nick Dermott's annual architectural mystery tour. Aided by the chairman's excellent notes, we drove along through Margate towards Birchington. The general type of buildings hereabouts mirrored the seasonal aspects of seaside residence, families renting for the summer and moving in their own furniture for that period. Here, we were able to see the remarkable Tower Bungalows, 1881–1882 by J.P.Seddon, of innovatory design, with decorative sgraffito panels running round the first storey of the stable and coach house, now dwellings in their own right. The panels, attributed to Sir George Frampton (sculptor of Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens), mainly represent children playing games. We were able to go into the gardens and observe the sea elevation of the bungalows. Each property ran down to the cliff edge, and one of them, White Cliff, had been owned by the portrait painter Solomon J. Solomon. Descending into the derelict studio below the garden and built into the cliff face, we could still see the parquet flooring and the large brick fireplace, and appreciate the fine light that would have been reflected from the sea. These were the first bungalows to be built in England and their design followed those in the colonies, where the weather was warmer; they were therefore (as originally built) suited to a midsummer temperature, as Nick said, and the open air was able to permeate the balconies and decorative verandas.

Part of the Tower Bungalows complex, Birchington.
Photo: M.Blaker

We returned through nearby Westgate – all built in twenty years and intended for exclusive and upper class residents. No alcohol was allowed in the hotels, and tripper trains from London were not permitted to stop at the station. There were gates also, to prevent the wrong element from entering by road. It had its own water and gas works, and was, our leader said, "almost a toy town". The shops were mainly, as today, in one parade, under a covered iron veranda.

We concluded at East Court, Ramsgate (George and Peto 1889). Here we were given a sustaining tea by Pugin Society member Dr Rosemary Scott, who runs the building as a school for dyslexic children – a reassuring and airy place on the east cliff, originally built for H.O.Wills, cigarette magnate. **Michael Blaker**

London: Pugin and Comper

James Jago recalls a memorable day

The Society's excursion, and my first, to West London on 23 June, to discover the links between the work of Pugin and Comper, began with an introductory presentation by our guide Fr. Anthony Symondson SJ in the Parish Room of Farm Street Church. His lecture gave an in-depth and erudite approach to the evolution of the late Gothic Revival, illustrated with slides of churches by such names as Bodley and George Gilbert Scott the younger. The progress made by architects in their approaches to Gothic, as well as the continuity of the Pugin ideology, were also illuminated. This progress reached its zenith in the works of Sir Ninian Comper. After being given thus much food for thought, our party progressed through London towards St James', Spanish Place, with a stop for a refreshing lunch nearby.

Designed by Edward Goldie, St James' is reminiscent externally of Westminster Abbey. Fr. Symondson gave a brief talk on its provenance and on the numerous architects who had furnished it. Since the

nave was double-aisled, it was possible to appreciate various Gothic vistas of the numerous chapels. The most imposing of these, the Lady Chapel, contains a truly masterful reredos by J.F.Bentley, consisting of a predella of Old Testament patriarchs, beneath Gothic tracery intertwined with grapevines. Above these are angelic musicians, no doubt singing a Magnificat to a copy of Murillo's painting of the Immaculate Conception within the reredos. The whole shimmered with gilt. Other notable features include Thomas Garner's red and gilt tester over the High Altar, and the alabaster Stations of the Cross by Geoffrey Webb in the War Memorial chapel.

We then journeyed to St Cyprian, Clarence Gate, designed and furnished by Comper. Our party had the good fortune to visit this church at 3 o'clock, when the light fell in the way that Comper himself felt showed the church to its best advantage. The interior is dominated by the polychrome rood screen, derived from a mediæval example at Attleborough. The great east window, containing Comper's richly coloured glass, gives the effect of a reredos rising from behind the altar, over which is suspended a notable gilt tester with a delicately drawn figure of Christ Pantocrator, derived from Byzantine mosaics in Sicily.

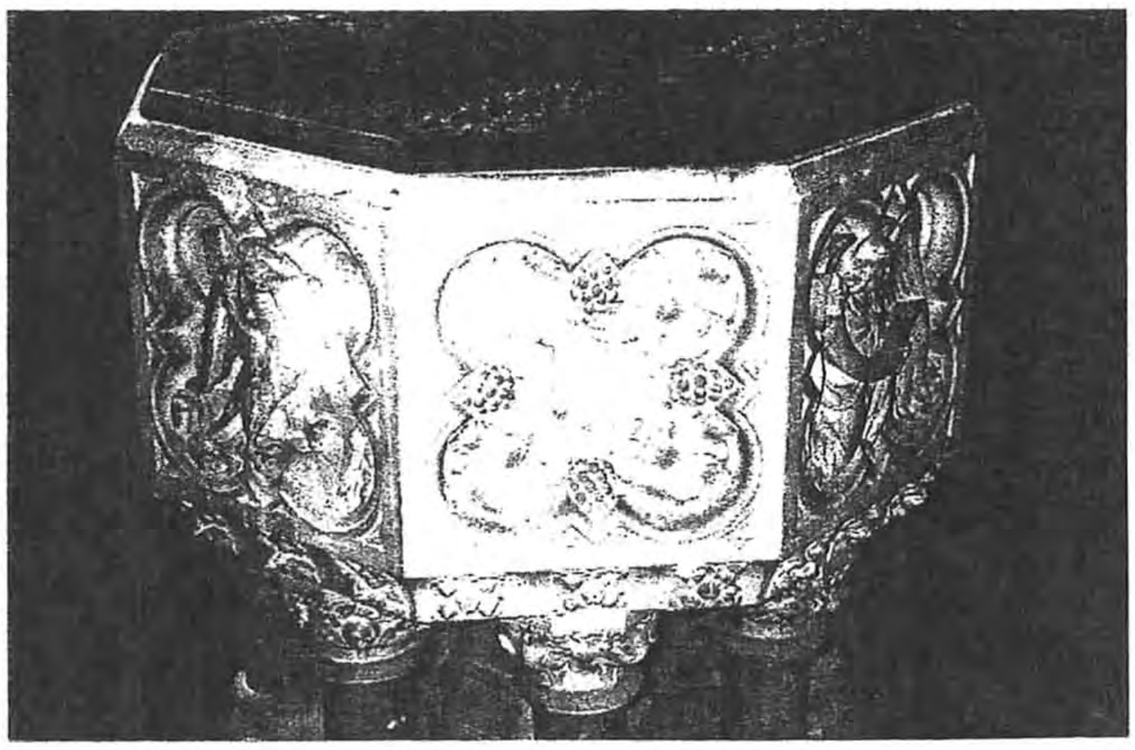
For our final visit of the day we returned to the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street. Among its main features are the Pugin high altar and reredos, and the marble polychrome statues of saints in the nave. Of all the side altars and chapels in this church, the Sacred Heart chapel holds pride of place, with its wonderful altar inlaid with a variety of marbles and coloured stones. Above this is a large mural by the Rhineland painter Moliter, showing various saints connected with devotions to the Sacred Heart. The whole of this chapel (in my opinion) culminates in the marble arcade of trefoil arches, with sculpted angels in their spandrels. This richly embellished chapel was a fitting climax to a truly inspiring day.

James Jago *is our youngest member, and we are delighted that he has joined us. James is currently at King Edward VII School in Lytham St Annes, Lancashire, and has recently finished his GCSE exams. He first became interested in the Gothic Revival after visiting St Giles, Cheadle, last year.*

Buildings at Risk

St David's RC Church, Pantasaph, Flintshire

Bernard Taylor, of Pantasaph Franciscan Friary, tells us that St David's church and Friary (Grade II* listed) will have become, by 2002, the home of the Franciscan Capuchin friars at Pantasaph for 150 years. The church, of interest to the Society particularly on account its Pugin fittings, was opened in 1852 and has remained in daily use ever since. In recent years a great deal of work has been needed to keep it in good repair. Not long ago £20,000 was spent in removing and replacing the interior plaster. This was effected using the correct, original mixture – lime and horsehair, etc – and the plaster is now being repainted, in the original Pugin colours and design, copied before the old plaster was removed. Unfortunately it has now been discovered that urgent repairs are needed to the roof and stonework in the north-east corner, due to wet rot and fungal attack. Because of the position of the problems – above the chancel – work needs to be authorised immediately, and another £12,000 is needed. It is very hard for a small Community and their parishioners to find this money unaided, and the Friars are struggling to complete the work in the church authentically and well.



Pugin font, Pantasaph (Courtesy, Franciscan Friary)
Photo: Brother Loarne, OFM Cap.

A.W.N.Pugin: Virgin and Child, Pantasaph.
(Courtesy, Franciscan Friary)
Photo: Brother Loarne, OFM Cap.

If any members feel they can help, please contact: The Parish Priest, Holywell, Flintshire, Franciscan

Friary, Flintshire, Pantasaph, North Wales CH8 8PE, Tel: 01352 711053/15030
e-mail: kay.pantasaph@dial.pipex.com
Note: *Although these two photographs do not illustrate the problems of restoration with which the church has been involved, we include them for their obvious interest. Those members who are familiar with the statue of the Virgin and child at St Augustine's, Ramsgate, will find it enlightening to see its prototype, which was exhibited in the Mediaeval Court at the Great Exhibition in 1851.*

St Wulstan's RC church, Little Malvern,Worcs
We included a mention of the difficulties of conservation at St Wulstan's (Benjamin Bucknall) in our last issue. Lt.Col.Sweetman, of St Wulstan's, writes: *Apart from contributions to our restoration fund (always welcome) one other way members of your Society may well be able to help us is to support, in writing, our request to English Heritage/TheLottery for funding. If you are agreeable, when I have details of what is required may I write and ask your members to write in to wherever is the appropriate place.*
Anyone wishing to make a donation to St Wulstan's Restoration Appeal can contact Lt.Col.Sweetman, Appeal Co-ordinator, at: Zourka, Cowleigh Park, Malvern, Worcs, WR13 5HJ.

St Mary of the Angels, Fox Street, Liverpool
Member James Jago has taken to heart our exhortation in the last issue to photograph and record this church while still possible. Some of his findings, and a photograph, are included in our *Letters and Comments* page.

Ramsgate Cemetery – A Furious Footnote

Gavin Stamp *on contentious matters in Edward Pugin's Ramsgate*

In *True Principles* vol.1 no.6 [Summer 1998], I discussed the double chapel in Ramsgate Cemetery, that most remarkable design by George Gilbert Scott junior which paid subtle tribute to Pugin. The date of this commission from the Revd Charles Carus Wilson, Vicar of Ramsgate and chairman of the Ramsgate Burial Board, had been obscure; now, thanks to the kindness of Catriona Blaker in telling me of her researches, I can again confirm that it was 1869. This date is revealed by correspondence in *The Kent Coast Times* for Thursday, 23rd September of that year; but what also emerges is another and less happy connection with Pugin, or, rather, with his irascible and contentious son, Edward.
An editorial in the paper suggests that the choice of a London architect for the job was controversial, as 'there were several gentlemen in the Isle of Thanet who could with equal ability and energy have performed the task of drawing plans for the Cemetery buildings, and plotting out the grounds. We cannot understand it. Has Mr. WELBY PUGIN been asked to undertake the work, and declined to do so? [I]t must not be surprising if outsiders say that an intentional and undeserved slight has been cast upon Mr. PUGIN, to whom we think the inhabitants, and especially the public men, of Ramsgate owe better things.'
That 'an act of unkindness' had been perpetrated by the Burial Board in passing over the claims of E.W.Pugin was confirmed by a barrage of letters apparently received by the paper. 'A Constitutional Working Man' considered this slight to be 'a breach of true Conservative principles' while 'A Townsman' called attention to 'the many enterprises [E.W.Pugin] has carried out, by which labour has found constant employment; and he, with no niggardly hand, has subscribed to every undertaking that has been for the improvement of the town. Carping critics and jealous townsmen have with malicious envy endeavoured to poison the merit he certainly deserves' – for such selfless acts as building a road along the East Cliff.
Why Carus Wilson chose the elder son of Sir Gilbert Scott in preference to the elder son of Pugin is not recorded. Possibly it was partly owing to the latter's religion, or, perhaps, to his increasingly difficult character, but the Vicar of Ramsgate was evidently pleased with the result as he again employed Scott to design both his home and a magnificent new church when he moved to New Milverton, Leamington Spa. Besides, the fact that a third correspondent, one 'H', also argued that 'an architect like E. Welby Pugin, Esq., who has expended in the town of Ramsgate, either personally or through his clients, an immense sum of money, and who is without doubt, the first authority of Gothic architecture in the Kingdom, ought to have a prior claim to this *small* appointment,' suggests that all these pseudonymous letters were inspired by the growing sense of grievance of but one pugnacious individual who, just a few years later, was to face bankruptcy.

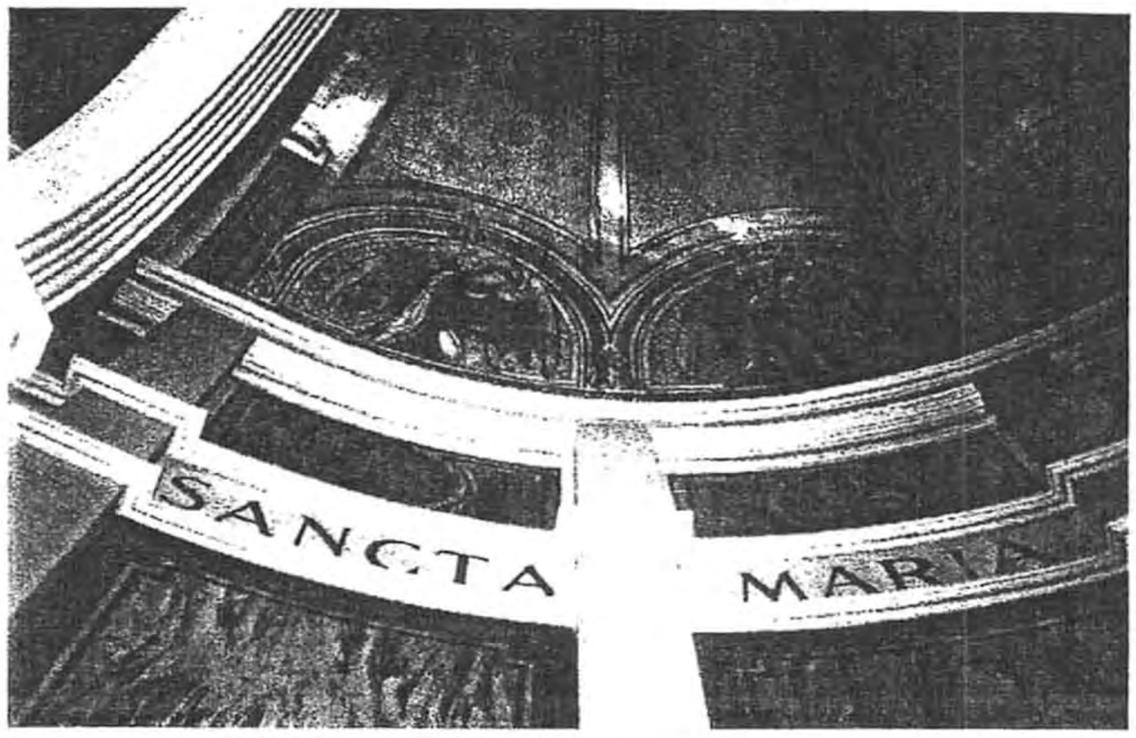
Letters and Comment

'A Pugin Rediscovered', Anthony Barnes's intriguing article in our last issue, on possible Pugin redistribution in Norfolk, has led to the following helpful comments from our man in Australia, **Brian Andrews**. Brian writes:

> *I thoroughly enjoyed the detective work that Anthony Barnes put into his article, 'A Pugin Rediscovered', about the possible Pugin provenance of the chancel at All Saints, Sänton.*
>
> *Looking at the illustration of the church, I couldn't help noticing other elements, possibly also re-cycled, that may add further weight to the Pugin theory. The crosses on the nave east and west gables, plausibly added at the same time as the chancel, are both types widely used by Pugin. That on the east gable is similar to one he designed for St Mary's, Newcastle upon Tyne (see the illustration facing p.52 of Patricia Spencer-Silver's excellent biography of George Myers). It is also nearly identical with several gable and churchyard crosses he designed for Tasmania in 1843. The cross on the west gable is almost identical with that on the nave west gable of St Bamabas' Cathedral, Nottingham. As with the other cross, it is also very similar to gable crosses on Pugin's Tasmanian churches of St Paul's Oatlands, St Patrick's, Colebrook, and the additions to St John's, Richmond. Conceivably, the crosses on the Santon nave gables might have come from the east and west gables of the West Tofts chantry.*

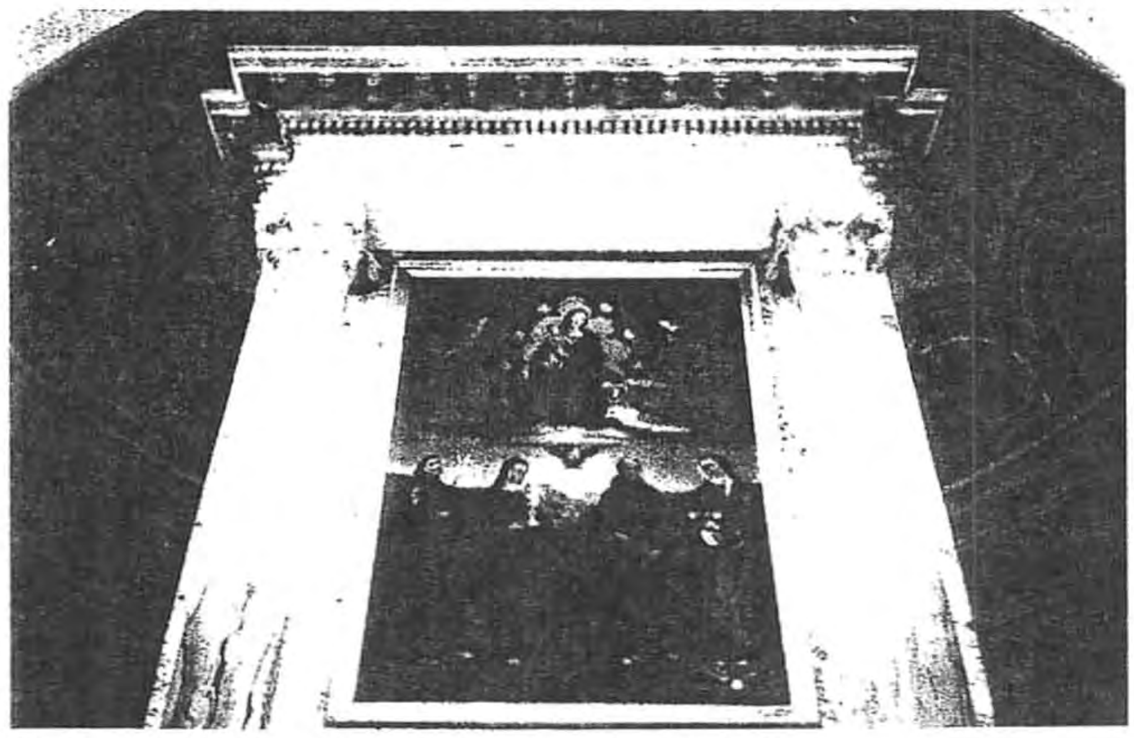
Leaving Norfolk, and travelling now to Liverpool, we can report that new member **James Jago** (as we mention on page 26) has copiously photographed the church of St Mary of the Angels, Fox street, Liverpool, and written it up for us. Although, as James points out, 'Classicism is not the Society's forte', we feel that because this church is a Pugin & Pugin building, it has a particular interest of its own. James's close observation is praiseworthy, and therefore we are publishing his letter almost in toto. He describes the interior of St Mary's thus:

> *I had the good fortune to be able to visit the church of St Mary of the Angels, Fox Street. Liverpool, which was mentioned as a 'Building at Risk' in the last issue of* True Principles. *My Dad and I found the time to drive to Liverpool and attend the service there last Sunday. The church is built of red brick externally, with decorative features, (such as banding and a tympanum), in red sandstone. It is reminiscent of the churches in Ravenna. There is a small but overgrown garden on the north side of the church, planted with roses. The parochial house adjoining the church, known as 'The Friary', is built to the south-east of the church, out of the same materials, and has a massiveness in its appearance.*
>
> *On entering the church through a small narthex, your eye is met by the brown marble piers which support moulded capitals which seem to be tinged with a gothic sense of proportion. The inlaid marble pulpit, now the nave altar, is fabled to have been preached in by St Philip Neri amongst other saints. We were informed by one parishioner that it originally had a metalwork staircase leading up to it, which was not retained after its regrettable conversion into an altar in the 1970s. I expect it stood on marble or metalwork pillars originally, as surviving Italian pulpits do, but this is only speculation, and there is no visible evidence of this.*



St Mary of the Angels: painted angels in the apse, north side.
Photo: James Jago

> *The beige carpet which covers the nave floor conceals the marble inlay with which the whole church is paved, the only exposed pieces of this are in the sanctuary; yellow marble squares dissected by white marble lines. The high altar I was told came from Bologna, and the painting it incorporates is worthy of note. The four Franciscan saints were added to the landscape at the request of the church's benefactor, but the Madonna and Child in the*



St Mary of the Angels: painting over the high altar.
Photo: James Jago

mandorla with cherubs is original. As for date I do not have the expertise to say, but the latter detail is drawn in the manner of Raphael, although the technical skill of the painting itself is not of the first rate, even from a distance. If I am correct in this assertion, then the painting must date from the first half of the sixteenth century, and the reredos which holds it would fit this date on stylistic grounds certainly. As to whether the four saints were added to an empty landscape, or were overpainted onto other saints, I cannot say.

If the landscape was previously empty, I suppose it would imply that this part of the painting was not easily visible, as it may have been obscured either by a sizeable monstrance which has since been lost, or a series of candlesticks holding tapers and a crucifix. Either, or perhaps both of these, would most surely conceal any figures painted here, if they were of unusual height. The altar in the north transept holds a much dirtied painting of St Francis, either at prayer or receiving the stigmata. The altar and reredos again are carved from various marbles, as is the slightly more imposing altar in the south transept, which holds a statue of the Madonna and Child with attendant angels, standing in an imposing Renaissance architectural niche. In the curved pediment is a coat of arms, with a cardinal's hat as its crest. Another coat of arms, without a cardinal's hat, appears on the base of the St Francis altar. This would no doubt be a great aid to anyone wishing to research the provenance of these altars and their original location. The latter coat of arms consists of two lances crossed in saltire fashion, with a six-pointed star in three of the quarters, (I am only guessing that they are lances). The cardinal's arms seem to contain a cross above two crossed arms.

There are also several angels bearing symbols of the Passion in the spandrels of the apse, and an Annunciation, not photographed, over the sanctuary arch. These paintings have survived in a good condition, and may have been cleaned a few decades ago. They are all painted and drawn in the same manner, which is mirrored by the west roundel, showing St Francis being received into heaven by Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. On stylistic grounds, they are contemporary with each other, and were possibly executed either just before or just after the Great War. The Stations of the Cross, in

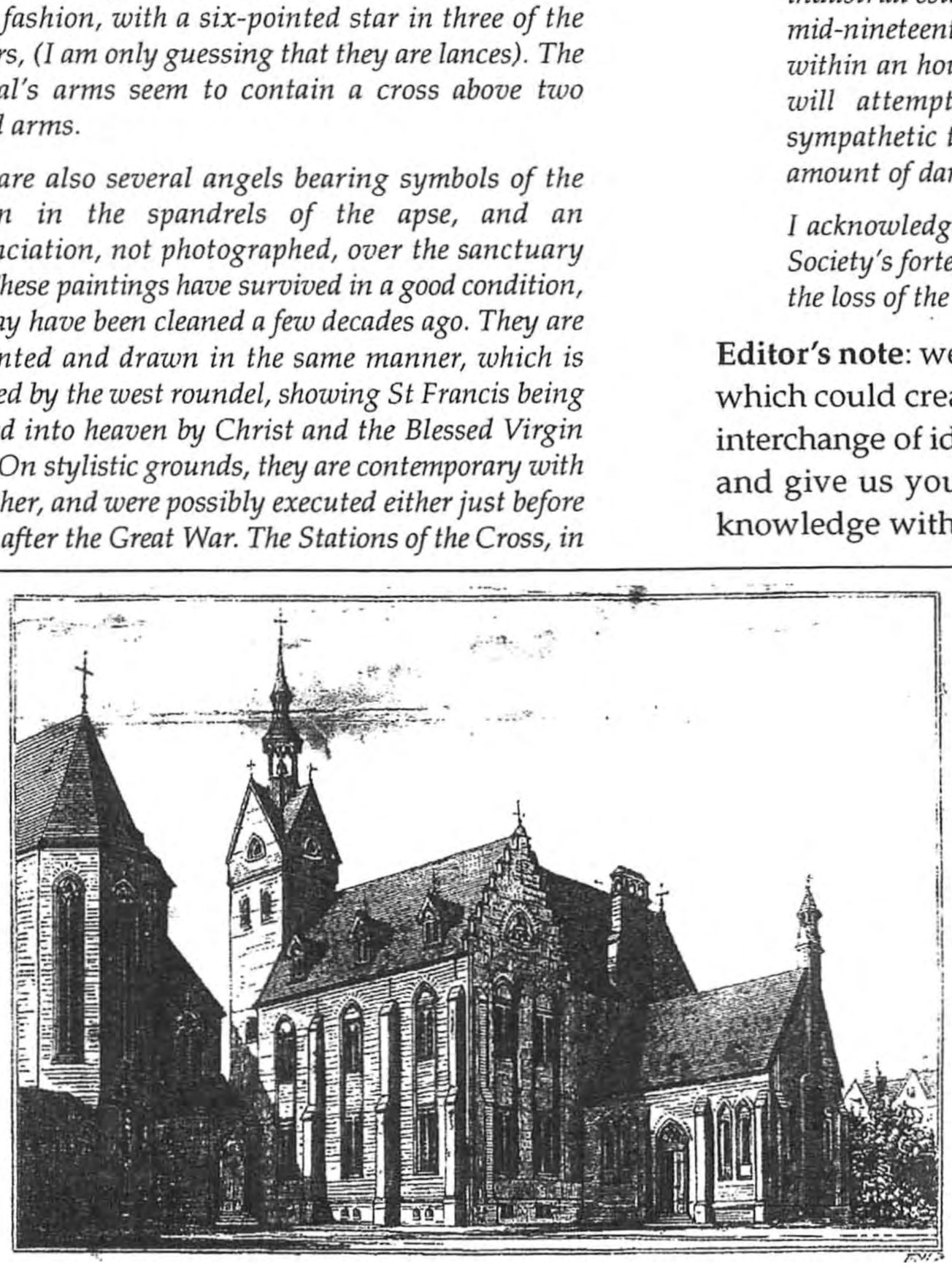
St Mary of the Angels: west window and nave from the chancel steps.
Photo: James Jago

my opinion, may be Italian, and could date from the mid-eighteenth century.

I must apologise if I have gone into too much detail on this church, but if it is either to be demolished, which has not been stated by the Diocesan authorities, or converted into a film studio, (which Fr. McCurtin the parish priest, told us was a possibility), all these furnishings listed will either be removed or destroyed. This church closes in December this year, and it is vital for any preservation of the fabric that any new owner moves immediately. This is due to the church's situation in an industrial estate, built to replace Irish tenements of the mid-nineteenth century. Fr. McCurtin also told us that within an hour of leaving the Friary, the local youths will attempt to break the windows, so anyone sympathetic to the preservation of art will realise the amount of damage that could be done to the church.

I acknowledge that any vein of Classicism is not the Society's forte, but I am sure all members will condemn the loss of the spiritual environment these items create.

Editor's note: we want to continue to build up this page, which could create a valuable forum for discussion and interchange of ideas, so please do not hesitate to write in and give us your valuable comments and share your knowledge with us.



Wood engraving from the *Catholic Directory*, 1839, from a drawing by A.W.N.Pugin of his Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Bermondsey. Was Pugin influenced by his trip to Flanders in 1837 when he started to design this building in October 1838?
(Editorial collection)

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

Norma Welby Brown, Colin Fernandez, Sheila Goldberg, Mrs Hilary Groves, David Cecil Haslum, Dr and Mrs J.Hinton, Mr and Mrs A.Holliday, Dr Michael Kerney, The Revd Gordon O'Loughlin, Gilly Marklew and Philip Wilson, Mrs Susan Rainbow, Veronica Spong and Ron Barnard, Mr and Mrs H.Taylor, Dr John Ransford Watts


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