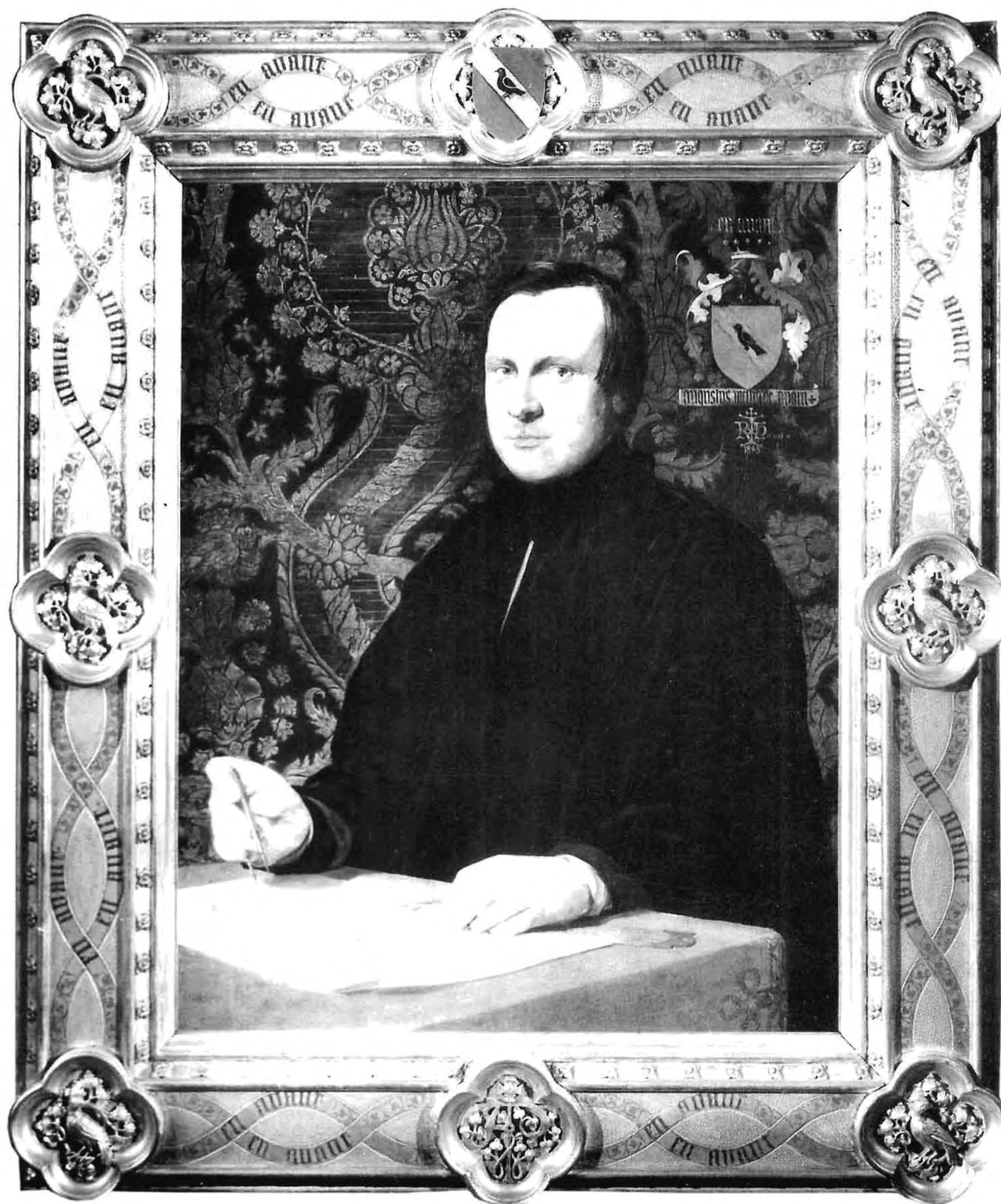


# TRUE PRINCIPLES

Summer 2002

The voice of the Pugin Society

Registered Charity No 1074766



A.W.N. PUGIN 1812–1852

150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY 2002

**SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE**

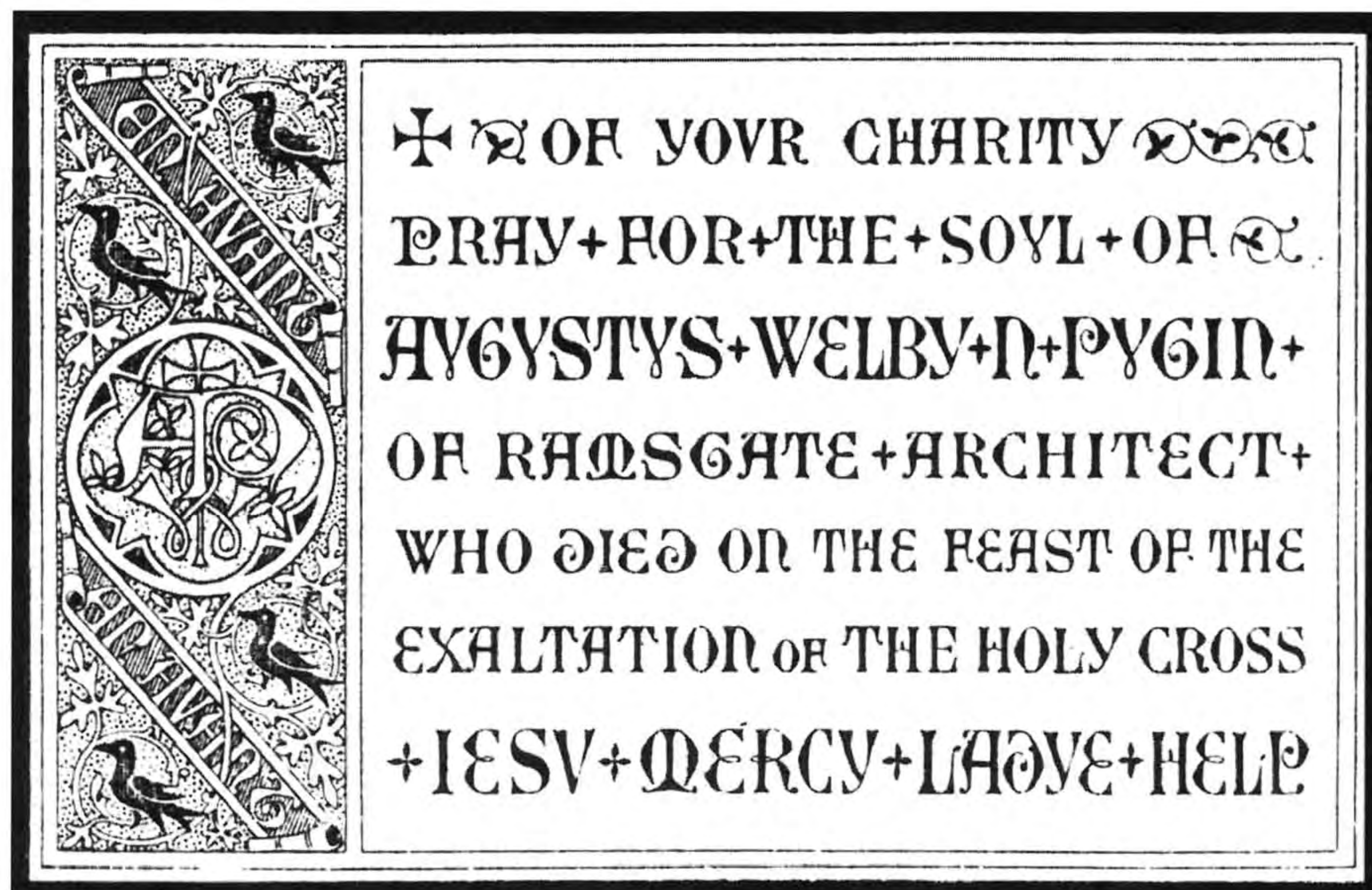
*Volume 2 Number Four*



## True Principles Special Issue: Prelude

Pugin's funeral, a Solemn High Mass of Requiem, took place at St Augustine's church, Ramsgate, on Tuesday, 21 September, 1852. The funeral oration was given by Dr Grant, Bishop of Southwark, and the text, from *Ecclesiasticus*, chapter 44, verse 6, was: 'Rich men in virtue, studying beautifulness: living at peace in their houses.' One of Dr Grant's comments, with regard to Pugin's achievements, was:

*A future age will look upon these monuments, and will ask how one man could have achieved so much, and posterity will envy to us the possession of a man who could accomplish undertakings in a few years that would have been wonderful if they had extended over many, and that were so various that they would have shed lustre over more than one, and seem incredible and almost fabulous in him. The explanation of the difficulty will be read in the words addressed by him to one of his friends, 'I have done the work of a hundred years in forty, and it has worn me out.'* (Quoted in Pugin, Michael Trappes-Lomax, London, 1933, p.312)



'If there is a crown for honesty and a crown for ardour, if there are wreaths for truth, simplicity, and toil, we can bring them, and lay them on his tomb.'

**Paul Waterhouse**, *The Life and Work of Welby Pugin*, *Architectural Review*, Vol 3, December 1897–May 1898, part 7, p164.

**Front cover:** A.W.N.Pugin, by John Rogers Herbert, oil on canvas, 1845.

*Both this portrait, and that of Jane Pugin (Knill) on our back cover, are set into magnificent carved gilt wood frames, designed as a pair by A.W.N.P., with the coat of arms respectively of Pugin and Knill on the top of each frame, and also displaying martlets – or footless birds – the emblem of the Pugin family, and 'En Avant', its motto.*

*Reproduced by permission of the Palace of Westminster.*

Photo: George Garbutt



True Principles Special Issue

# MAJESTY THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER



The monarch's throne in the House of Lords, and part of the lower section of the canopy behind; the sumptuous detailing and the outstanding craftsmanship of this great symbol of monarchy clearly show the masterly hand and influence of Pugin. Without Pugin's knowledge, creative genius and sheer industry, Barry, who was in overall control at Westminster, could not have proceeded.

*Photo George Garbutt*



True Principles Special Issue

# DELICACY STUDIES ABROAD



These beautifully observed and sensitive drawings, reproduced for the first time, demonstrate Pugin's never-ceasing enthusiasm for studying and learning from the largesse of Gothic buildings, glass and artefacts with which he became so familiar on his frequent visits to Northern Europe between the years 1833–1851. (Private collection)



True Principles Special Issue

# ENRICHMENT ALTON TOWERS CHAPEL



This watercolour, by Joseph Lynch in 1854, shows how Pugin successfully and effectively 'decorated a construction', although The Towers chapel itself was not built by him. The manner in which he transformed its interior to reflect his own taste and the Earl of Shrewsbury's position as leader and Grand Seigneur of the Catholic Revival, is the subject of Michael Fisher's article on page 28.

(Courtesy, Tussauds Group)

*Photo: Guy Evans*



True Principles Special Issue

# REPOSE

## THE TOMB AND EFFIGY, RAMSGATE



'It will be a proud satisfaction if my hand shall be permitted to place the last cypress-wreath on the grave of him who lies near the murmuring sea-shore in his own monumental church of St Augustine, awaiting in hope the glory of the final Resurrection.' E. Sheridan Purcell, 1861.

*Photo George Garbutt*



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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. Handwritten articles are not acceptable. 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. All material is copyright and may not be reproduced without permission.*

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# Editorial

Welcome to this special 2002 number of *True Principles*. This year, as we know, marks the 150th anniversary of the death of Augustus Pugin. As editor, I have tried in this issue to present you, the readers, with as rich, full and varied a diet as possible to mark this occasion fittingly. This feast – as I hope it will be – ranges from the interesting histories of the whereabouts of various Pugin items, through A.W.N.P. connections in New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania, to a German Gothic Revival artist whose work helped to furnish the Pugin chantry at Ramsgate, and to designs by Augustus for a choir school at Magdalen College, Oxford. We also commemorate ‘Good Earl John’, the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury – so essential a part of Pugin’s life, and who also died in 1852 – with an article which gives some remarkable insights into the management of Shrewsbury’s ‘State’ (as it were) funeral, and with an account of Pugin’s work for the Earl at Alton Towers chapel. We are happy also to feature Jane Pugin in this issue – ‘my little Queen’ as Pugin once called her – and there are other contributions besides, plus our first experiments with colour reproduction. One other point needs emphasising; please note that this is THE ONLY ISSUE of *True Principles* this year. The next one will appear in July 2003, although there will be an events mailing in early spring.

\* \* \*

It is extraordinary to think, when we hold our commemorative events for Pugin in Ramsgate on September 14th and 15th of this year, that thousands of miles away in Van Diemen’s Land our Patron, Alexandra Wedgwood, will be at the same time (more or less) opening Brian Andrew’s ground-breaking Pugin exhibition in Hobart. Brian’s achievement has been remarkable. In this global context one cannot help being slightly reminded of that sonorous and atmospheric

Victorian hymn (although not I hope at the risk of being disrespectful to any higher authority) which includes the verse:

The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren ‘neath the western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

Pugin’s wondrous doings are indeed everywhere.

This year’s events are usefully highlighting the Landmark Trust’s appeal for funding for The Grange. The greatest way the Society and all admirers of Pugin could hope to mark the 2002 anniversary would be by helping to ensure that work on Pugin’s own house starts as speedily as possible. The sooner funding targets have been reached the sooner this will occur. We draw your attention to this issue more clearly below, where we hope it will have maximum impact.

\* \* \*

Finally, but most importantly of all, Pugin has taught members of this Society (and also countless others) an incalculable amount. His genius, achievements and very persona are inspiring. His son-in-law wrote of him that he was so well known on the continent to vergers of churches that ‘to say you knew Pugin was always an “open Sesame”’. For me Pugin has been the ‘open Sesame’ to end all others. To study Pugin and his work is to enter, through his good offices, the magic world of the nineteenth century and of the Revival – a world of continual new discoveries, and of never-ending interest, dimensions, and cross-connections. Pugin holds the key to great tracts of this territory. Through the impact of his writing, designs, and buildings and by being a linchpin in the history of aesthetic and cultural development he has enriched our thinking and elevated our aspirations. In this year particularly we thank him.

Catriona Blaker

## THE GRANGE, RAMSGATE LANDMARK TRUST APPEAL

Please, if you are able, commemorate Pugin’s 150th anniversary by helping the Landmark Trust to find the shortfall of £700,000 still needed to save The Grange from further deterioration and give it a new and positive future as soon as possible. Donations can be sent to: **The Landmark Trust, Shottesbrooke, Maidenhead, Berks SL4 2AW**, or telephone 01628 825920 for further details.



# Pugin's Tabernacle in Southwark Cathedral

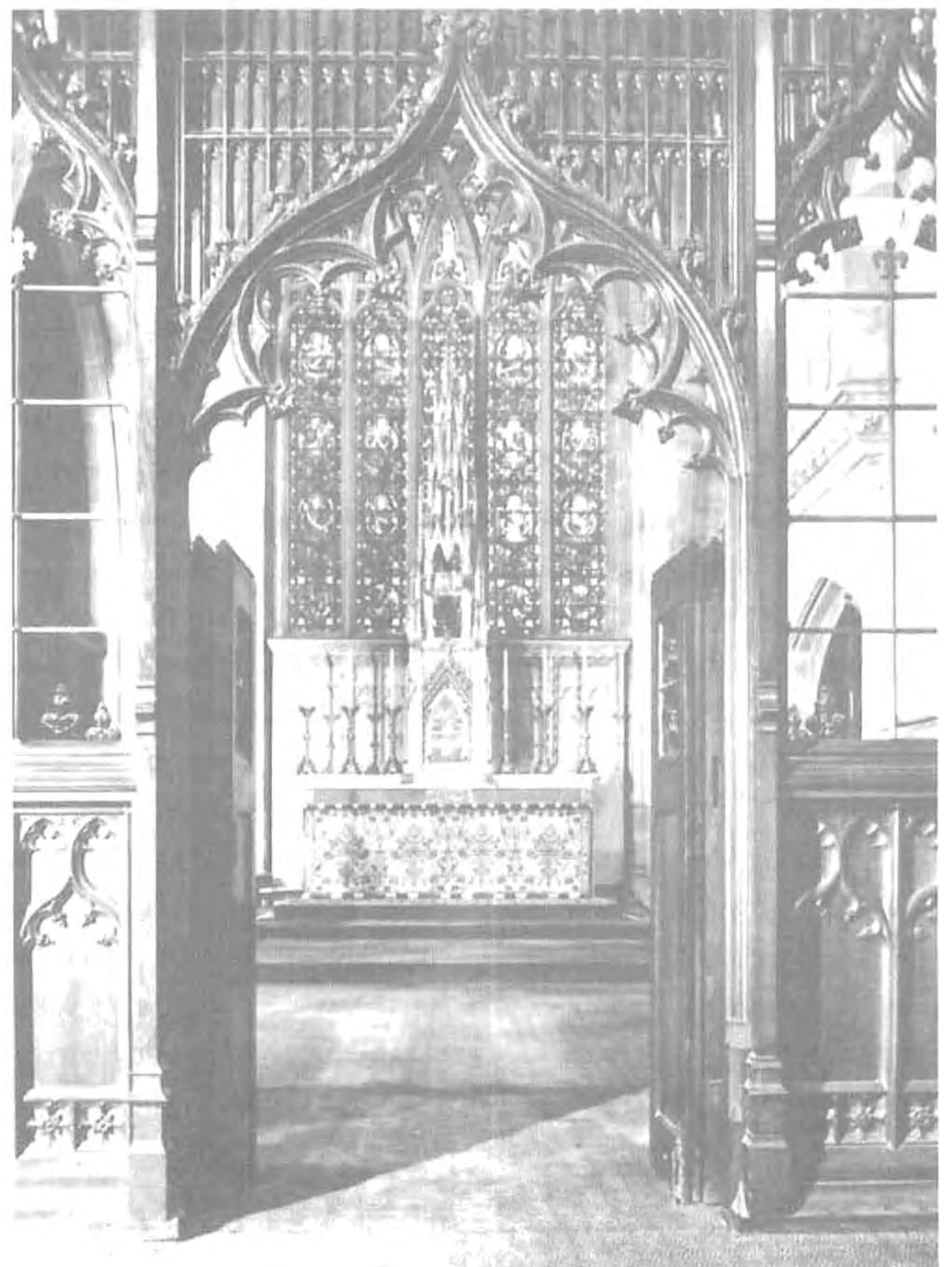
Alexandra Wedgwood investigates the history of an outstanding and much-debated Pugin item.

This beautiful object has been exhibited in two immensely influential places, the Medieval Court at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and also in the Victorian Church Art exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum from November 1971 to January 1972. Two major questions about it remain unsolved: first, did Pugin design it for his own church of St. Augustine, Ramsgate, and, secondly, how did it get to its present home in Southwark Cathedral?

The tabernacle was among those items in the Medieval Court that were executed by George Myers, and the stonework is of superlative craftsmanship. It must have been a striking object in that crowded space, with its height of 14 feet 6 inches above a base. It must also have been an object which was difficult for the general public to understand, such a tabernacle being unknown in the Church of England and very unusual in the English Catholic Church at that date. It was designed, moreover, to stand on an altar, not alone. Its original form, on an altar with a tabernacle box under a benediction throne and spire, presumably attached to a reredos (although it is carved on all four sides, no doubt because of its stand-alone position in the Exhibition) is now best understood by looking at the High Altar in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, designed by Pugin in 1848, or at that in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, in St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, also by Pugin, at about the same time. This type of altar was in fact a relatively new form for him to use. Most of his early altars were simple and free-standing, and he preferred the Blessed Sacrament to be kept in a small tabernacle on a separate side altar. The increasing popularity by the middle of the nineteenth century for the service of Benediction, during which the Sacrament was exposed, however, must eventually have influenced him, almost against his own inclinations, to develop this elaborate form. Perhaps by designing in this innovatory manner Pugin wished to emphasise the importance of the service, because in 1846 in the second edition of *The Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament* he had written:

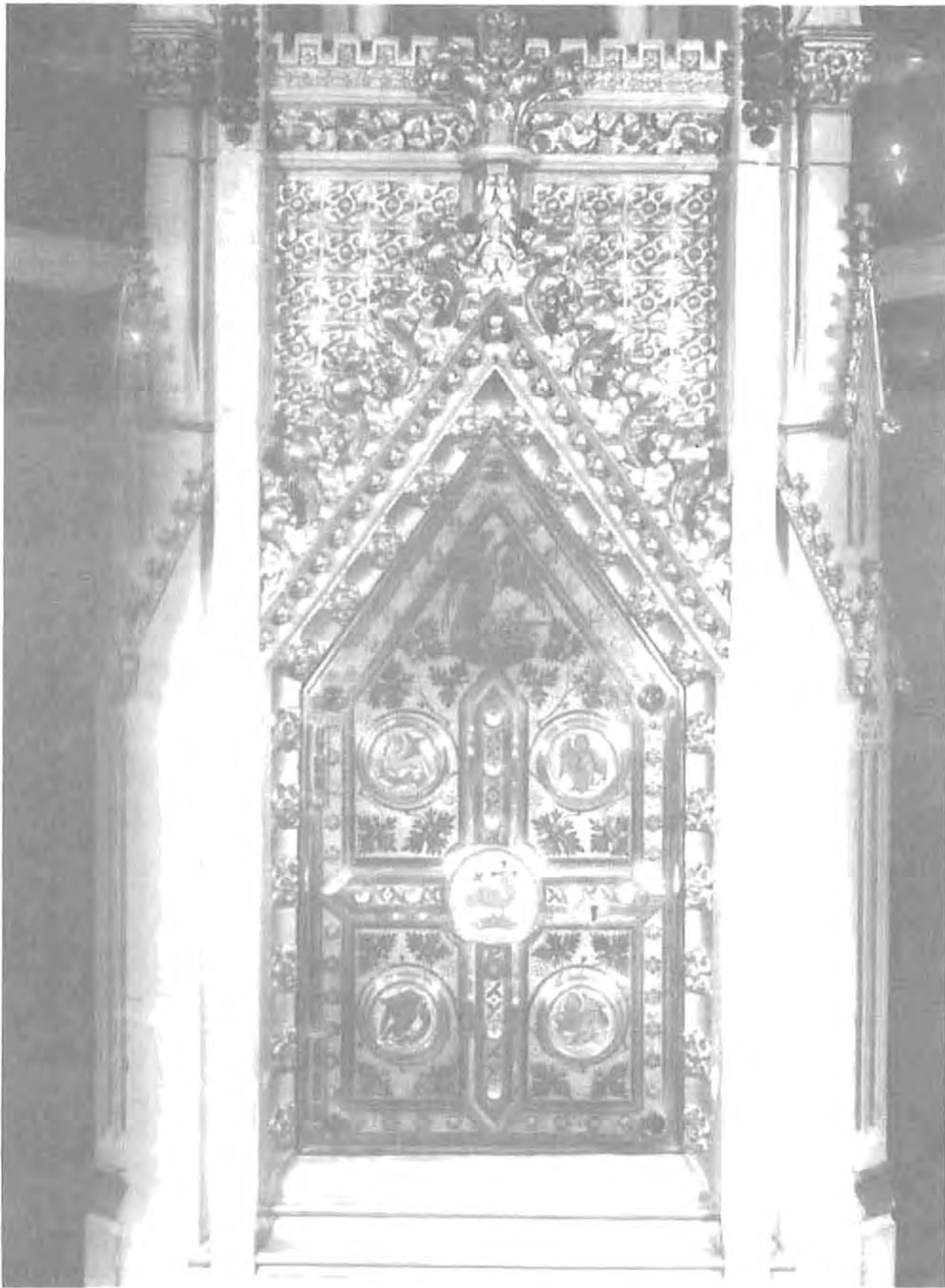
It must, however, be observed that the modern practice with respect to the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, has gone far beyond what the Church has sanctioned; and it has latterly become a matter of such ordinary occurrence, as greatly to diminish that external respect and veneration, which was the great intention of the Church to preserve, in instituting this rite.<sup>1</sup>

Exhibitions, of course, encourage extravagant objects, and this was true of many of the exhibits in the Medieval Court; it was also necessary to be able to finance such things, and wherever possible Pugin and his colleagues borrowed objects already in hand for their special clients, such as Lord Shrewsbury. Pugin himself lent extensively from his own church – items such as stained glass and the wooden screen from the Pugin chantry – and no doubt also commissioned 'exhibition pieces' specifically. One of these was the spectacular font and cover, also made by Myers. A font of a similar design, and in the position it has today, may be seen in one of the vignettes in the border of Pugin's great watercolour of his house and church exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1849, but unfortunately there is no illustration of the main altar which would allow an opinion of what kind of tabernacle was then intended.<sup>2</sup> Dr O'Donnell feels that the tabernacle is out of scale in comparison to the altar, suggesting that 'as an ensemble



The tabernacle, framed by Pugin's rood screen, at St Augustine's, Ramsgate, c.1960.





Close-up of the magnificent tabernacle door.  
(Courtesy, The Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art)

[it] may be a posthumous hybrid'.<sup>3</sup> In the present writer's opinion, though, it works well enough to suggest that Pugin meant it to be like that.

There are, however, some unusual features connected with this commission, if commission it was. Pugin had a deserved reputation for punctiliousness in paying his bills, but no entry could be found in the Hardman Metalwork Daybook for 1849–54 for the glorious brass tabernacle door, which is enriched with enamel and studded with amethysts and crystals, although there is a group of entries, dated November 1851, which relate to Great Exhibition items including those for Pugin and for Myers.<sup>4</sup> Presumably by November the Crystal Palace had been cleared of its contents, but it is not known at what date the Great Exhibition items arrived at Ramsgate, and of course by February 1852 Pugin's final illness had begun. It was clearly a very difficult time for the family, especially Jane Pugin. It seems that there was a considerable debt owing to Myers, probably in connection with the church, which is surprising given Pugin's carefulness with money.<sup>5</sup> An important letter of April 30th 1853 from John Lambert, Pugin's friend in Salisbury who seems to have been acting as executor for the estate, to

Mrs. Pugin survives, indicating that Myers has been difficult but that, although he regarded the cost of the tabernacle as due to Pugin, he was prepared to waive it.<sup>6</sup> 'I am sure you must have been pleased to hear that the accounts with Mr. Myers were finally closed. I called upon him on Tuesday and paid the balance due to him, after deducting the sums for the Font, Screen and Tabernacle. The original claim was for: £3015-18-0. Deduct Screen £92-15-5, Font £225-0-0, Tabernacle £110-0-0, £427-15-5 Balance paid £2588-2-7. Mr. Myers expresses his intention of writing to you to say that, notwithstanding the deductions he wishes you to consider the articles as your own.' It is also possible therefore that Hardman did not charge for the tabernacle door either.

That Myers was the true donor of the tabernacle, and also of the font, seems to have been generally recognised, certainly during Jane Pugin's lifetime, although both are 'considered too large for the church', as recorded in a guidebook of 1906.<sup>7</sup> It is therefore surprising to read the confident statement in Fr. Wilfrid Emery's lecture to the Ecclesiological Society in 1947: 'Like the font, it [the tabernacle] was meant for St. George's Southwark, and beside being too large for St. Augustine's is ill placed. Its position in the centre of the High Altar detracts very considerably from the East Window, while even its own excellence is lost because one sees it "silhouetted" against the light.'<sup>8</sup> There is no evidence for any connection between the tabernacle and St. George's, but the statement once made has proved hard to eradicate.

The remaining history of the tabernacle followed the re-ordering of the Chancel of St. Augustine's in 1969–70. During this operation the entire High Altar was removed and the tabernacle stored. Within a short time, in 1971, it was lent to the Victorian Church Art exhibition, and after that closed in 1972 the monks decided that they did not want it to be returned. By Christmas 1974, however, it had been installed in the newly furnished Harvard Chapel in Southwark Cathedral by G. G. Pace, the cathedral architect. It may be assumed that the go-between the Museum and the Cathedral was Mrs. Shirley Bury, who worked in the Department of Metalwork, led the organising committee of the exhibition and was a dedicated pioneer Victorian – and particularly Pugin – scholar.<sup>9</sup> She found a sympathetic architect in G.G.Pace, who wrote to the Victorian Society in 1974: 'Whilst it is always pleasant to restore and save fine examples of Victorian work it is especially so in this instance, that a very personal work of Pugin should have found an honoured place in the church about which he felt it





The tabernacle in the Harvard Chapel, Southwark Cathedral, in its pre-2001 state. (Courtesy, The Dean and Chapter)

necessary to write such fierce condemnation!’<sup>10</sup> In fact Pace’s arrangement of the tabernacle was rather odd; he placed it against the solid north wall of the chapel on a crude white stone base, which incorporated to either side sedilia and a credence table, in front of which was placed a modern free-standing altar. This arrangement never proved very satisfactory, and in 2001 the chapel was re-ordered to an eastward facing position using a

seventeenth-century communion table but leaving the tabernacle unmoved on the same base against the north wall.<sup>11</sup> It has probably received more gilding than Pugin would have given it, and a modern gilt statuette of Christ has recently been placed under the Benediction throne, but it is still used for the reservation of the Sacrament. It is indeed good to celebrate its survival in these changing times.

### Acknowledgements

I am most grateful for the help and advice of Catriona Blaker, Dr. M. Collins, Dr. R. O’Donnell, Peter Draper, Sarah Houle, Guy Rowston, Michael Snodin and Fr. Anthony Symondson SJ.

### NOTES

- 1 A.W.N.Pugin *The Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament*, 1846, p182
- 2 Dr. O’Donnell, however, suggests that the tabernacle can be seen: see his article ‘Pugin as a Church Architect’ in P.Atterbury and C.Wainwright eds., *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, 1994, p77
- 3 P.Atterbury and C.Wainwright eds., *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, 1994, p78
- 4 Birmingham Central Library, Hardman Collection, Metalwork Daybook for 1849–54, pp345,350 and 353. These entries include one for the cast iron candelabrum in St. Augustine’s.
- 5 Pugin had been keeping detailed accounts on the expenses of his church, see A. Wedgwood, *Catalogue of Architectural Drawings*, Victoria & Albert Museum, 1985, p121
- 6 I am indebted to Catriona Blaker for showing me a copy of this letter from the Monastery Archive, St Augustine’s.
- 7 *St. Augustine’s Ramsgate, the Churches, the Abbey and the College*, 1906, p32
- 8 I am indebted to Catriona Blaker for showing me a copy of Fr. Wilfrid’s talk (Monastery Archive).
- 9 Mrs. Bury’s papers have recently been deposited in the Museum, and the exhibition files should also be searched, in order to prove this assumption.
- 10 I am indebted to Catriona Blaker for showing me a copy of this letter. Pugin included a plate critical of ‘St Mary Overies Southwark’ in the second edition of his *Contrasts*, 1841.
- 11 Peter Draper tells me that there are proposals to move the tabernacle nearer the altar if funds allow.



# Ambonoclasm Redeemed

*'Some cleave, some pierce, some shout, and with one great crash it totters and falls' as Pugin wrote of a much earlier Rood screen. Happily, the consequences for his great screen at St Chad's, Birmingham have not been so dire – although it was a near thing – as Gavin Stamp's account describes.*

The Anglican church dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity in Baker Street, Reading, is not architecturally distinguished. Originally designed in the lancet style in the 1820s by the obscure E.W. Garbett – better known for the curious Early English church at nearby Theale – it was given a new stone façade and a higher pitched roof in 1846. Henry Fox Talbot bothered to make a calotype of the result but, after all, his studio was just down the road. Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, in writing up Berkshire for the *Buildings of England*, did not see any need to mention Holy Trinity, and it is essentially the sort of brick box with a tiny chancel that Pugin would have ridiculed. Go inside, however, and a surprise awaits. The (liturgical) south wall is dominated by a huge and elaborate classical pulpit, complete with sounding board, while the whole of the east wall is covered by a great gothic timber rood screen. The pulpit came from All Saints', Oxford, while the screen, of course, is Welby Pugin's, and once – with the original Rood – was the glory of St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham. Its translation to Reading was due to two remarkable individuals who died recently – Brian Brindley (1931–2001), then parish priest of Holy Trinity, and the architect Roderick Gradidge (1929–2000) – as well as to the members of the Victorian Society who rescued it from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Dr George Patrick Dwyer became Archbishop of Birmingham in 1965. He was determined both to brighten up his dowdy-looking cathedral and to implement what he interpreted as the requirements of the Second Vatican Council. Repairs had begun to Pugin's building the previous year, and in 1966 three schemes for reordering the sanctuary were prepared by Alfred G. Bullen of the Liverpool architects Weightman and Bullen, whose new churches Dwyer admired.<sup>1</sup> All envisaged a new forward altar, and leaving the existing sanctuary with the old High Altar to become a Blessed Sacrament chapel. By November 1966 rumours were current that the Rood screen was to be removed.<sup>2</sup> By March the following year, Canon Brian Withers, the Administrator at St Chad's, was wondering whether the Victoria & Albert Museum might be interested in it.<sup>3</sup> A proposal that it be installed in the Church of the Sacred Heart, Coleshill, was rejected on the advice of Canon Brooke, secretary of the (Anglican) Birmingham Diocesan Advisory Council on aesthetic grounds.<sup>4</sup>

Early in 1967 the West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society was launched, and it immediately took up the cause for Pugin (one of the earliest cases considered by the parent society after its foundation in 1958 had been the demolition of Pugin's Bishop's House for road widening). On May 4th, Professor Pevsner, as chairman of the national society, wrote to the Archdiocese's architects to argue that, while accepting the necessity for 'a freestanding unobserved altar, close to the congregation, an atmosphere of clarity throughout the Cathedral, and more light... the destroying of the essential aesthetic unity of the interior of the first Roman Catholic Cathedral built since the Reformation by the Catholic Church's most important single architect, can be avoided.'<sup>5</sup> He pointed out that the screen – 'a great work of art' – had been moved forward in 1854 to allow for a larger choir, and that if it was moved back to its original position, in the eastern bay of the crossing in front of the old high altar, it would provide 'a backing to the new altar and its ceremony'. The society also objected to the gratuitous removal of the canopies by Pugin over the Bishop's Throne and Stall, to the replacement of Minton tiles by marble or travertine after the installation of underfloor heating, and to the removal of memorial brasses from the nave walls.

Bullen wrote to Dwyer that 'I am afraid Dr. Pevsner overlooks the prime purpose of the Cathedral', but did not deign to reply until 24th May, when the work had already been begun – in haste and with little warning.<sup>6</sup> In his letter Bullen claimed that 'The central section of the Screen is being carefully lowered and preserved and consideration is being given to its re-erection in the original situation within the Chancel arch.' By this date the Victorian Society had succeeded in bringing the issue to the attention of the local and national press, and in a later published letter the chairman complained that 'Neither the architect nor the Cathedral authorities have fully replied to the reasons for the screen's retention which I gave in my letter to the architects. The only answer received is that it may restrict the space around the altar. The crossing is 25ft. square; the screen placed in its original position between the transept piers and up against the mediaeval choir stalls, would take up 7in. of that space, being itself 1ft. 2in. deep.'<sup>7</sup> In conclusion, Pevsner reiterated his belief that 'this is no longer a



matter of personal taste. This is a monument of 120 years' standing that must be regarded by the Church with the respect due to one of the greatest 19th century architects', but this was a point of view the Roman Catholic authorities were unable to comprehend.

On May 13th the Victorian Society visited Birmingham and took a last look at the screen. Outside the porch of St Chad's, in the rain, Nicholas Taylor – the organiser of the tour who had taken a leading role in the campaign – harangued the members, representatives of the press and the Administrator, explaining why it was unnecessary to remove it.<sup>8</sup> This event was followed up by a press release, written by Taylor, which made the important point – so often to be pressed over the following decades – that: 'What is disturbing about this case is not only that this building, although statutorily listed as a building of historic and architectural merit by the Ministry of Housing, is exempt as a church from the planning controls that affect secular listed buildings, but also that, unlike the Church of England, the Roman Catholics have no system of expert discussion and advice on such matters through central councils or diocesan advisory committees.'<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, a number of Roman Catholic laymen wrote to the Archbishop to protest about the removal of Pugin's work. Some were members of the Victorian Society; these included the Birmingham architect Remo Granelli and Peter Howell, who complained about the secrecy surrounding the project and expostulated that 'at Mass last Sunday a letter was read out from the Archbishop actually asking us to contribute to the work, without even telling us what was to be done.'<sup>10</sup> Others included two recognised experts on Catholic church architecture: Bryan Little and Denis Evinson. Most objectors were fobbed off with a letter from the Administrator; one was assured that the screen 'is not to be "wantonly destroyed". It is to be preserved. We are going to take trouble and considerable expense and time to experiment to see if it can be suitably used in a new position. In fact, the whole restoration work is aimed at preserving the Gothic character of St Chad's Cathedral.'<sup>11</sup> The Victorian Society was also told that 'a mock-up is to be placed in its original position.'<sup>12</sup> But this was



Pugin's screen in Holy Trinity Church, Reading, March 1999.

never done, or even attempted. Archbishop Dwyer was quite as determined and as ruthless an ambonoclast as any of those caricatured by Pugin in his *Treatise on Chancel Screens and Rood Lofts*.

The screen was winched down in sections, the late fifteenth-century German statues introduced by Pugin having been detached (they are still in store at

the Cathedral). On 13th June, the Hon. Sec. of the West Midlands Group, R. Temple Cox, wrote to the Archbishop that, as Bullen had informed him that the screen was down and that 'there can be no further use for it in the Cathedral... the local group of the Society would be most pleased to organise the careful removal and storage of the screen until some other use can be found.' His Grace accepted this offer.<sup>13</sup> The pieces of the screen were then taken out of St Chad's by Cox and Douglas Hickman, assisted by a group of students, and, with the cooperation of J.T. Lewis of Maddocks & Walford – the contractors undertaking the work at St Chad's – loaded onto a lorry and taken to the Public Works Yard. Owing to the good offices of the City Engineer, there the screen remained, in the open air, for a year, leaving the Victorian Society with the task of finding a new home for it.<sup>14</sup>

St Chad's Cathedral reopened in March 1968 and that same month Roderick Gradidge, a member of the committee, suggested that his old friend and fellow Stoic, Brian Brindley, should install its screen in his church in Reading.<sup>15</sup> They had already worked together decorating the screen (by Henry Woodyer) at St Andrew's, Clewer, where Brindley had been curate before becoming vicar of Holy Trinity in 1967. Pugin's exiled screen could now assist in the aim of making an Anglo-Catholic silk purse out of the architectural sow's ear in Brindley's care. On 29th March 1968, the Vicar-General in Birmingham, Mgr Joseph Gray, contacted Mrs Elizabeth Kenrick, chairman of the West Midlands Group, offering to relinquish all claim to the screen if a suitable home could be found for it and on 23rd May Brindley wrote to ask for ownership to be formally transferred to the parish, as without a clear and undisputed title a Faculty for its erection in Holy Trinity could not be granted. Mgr Gray agreed to this.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, the parish launched an appeal for £500 as 'it



will still be an expensive matter to move it from Birmingham, to unload and store it here, to make the necessary alterations to the church, and to re-erect and re-decorate the screen.' This appeal was supported on the leaflet by John Betjeman, the Revd Basil Clarke and by Pevsner, who described its removal from St Chad's as 'vandalism unmitigated.'<sup>17</sup>

The screen arrived in Reading on 25th June, and was stored outside the church under polythene sheets.<sup>18</sup> It was then found that the largest section had to be further cut up to enable it to go through the small doors into the church. A specification of works for repairing, adapting and enlarging the screen was prepared by W.H. Ryder & Sons Ltd, 'Architectural Woodmasters' of Reading, on 18th December 1968.<sup>19</sup> Gradidge's first plan was to place the screen in front of the chancel arch. In the event, he decided to enlarge it on either side with the lower three-bay side screens which also came from Birmingham. These were not by Pugin but were in the same style, and had been installed in St Chad's in 1854 when the main Rood screen was moved forward.<sup>20</sup> Finally, to enable the screen to fit across the full width of the aisle-less church in front of the east wall of the nave, an additional new bay with cornice and tracery panel was added at each end. A new section of gallery cornice also had to be added below the existing Rood and new decorative panels of gesso on the 'towers' framing the original Pugin screen were made by Anthony Ballantine.<sup>21</sup>

The work of installing the screen and Brindley's other acquisitions was carried out in 1969.<sup>22</sup> On 11th March 1969 the *Reading Evening Post* published a photograph of the screen being re-erected in Holy Trinity under the headline 'Saved from the flames'. But perhaps the last word should go to the Victorian Society, without whose efforts it might well have been destroyed. 'The screen will be used', it was reported to members, 'to form a background to the altar, the existing short chancel becoming a Blessed Sacrament chapel – ironically the very scheme that could and should have been accomplished at Birmingham.'<sup>23</sup> Quite.

### Acknowledgement

This account could not have been written without the kind assistance of the Revd John Sharp, Diocesan Archivist at Birmingham. I am also grateful to Barbara Shackley and Peter Howell for their help.

### NOTES

1 A.G.Bullen, agenda for consideration on 4th November 1966, 1st November 1966: 'Examine the alternative schemes for the High Altar and Sanctuary and the removal of the Rood Screen and Cross...' [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]

- 2 Vincent Alban Grant to Archbishop Dwyer, 14th & 24th November 1966 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 3 Patrick Feeny, John Hardman Studios, to Canon Brian Withers, 30th March 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 4 Canon W.Flint to Archbishop Dwyer, 6th April, 12th & 17th May 1967; Canon W.C.Brooke to Canon Flint, 17th May 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 5 N.B.L.Pevsner to Weightman & Bullen, 4th May 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 6 Alfred G.Bullen to G.P.Dwyer, 17th May 1967; Bullen to Professor Pevsner 24th May 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 7 *Birmingham Mail* 7th June 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]. An article appeared in *The Times* for 17th May 1967 and the *Sunday Times* 21st May 1967 reported that 'Many of the congregation are also annoyed'; A letter from Nicholas Taylor was published in the *Birmingham Post* 19th May 1967 [Victorian Society archives via Barbara Shackley].
- 8 The author was present on that occasion and recalls how Taylor positioned himself strategically by the door, so preventing members entering until he had finished his harangue. The tour notes pointed out that, if the screen was replaced in its original position, behind the new central altar, "The present furnishings of the sanctuary – Pugin's bishop's throne and choir stalls (incorporating C15 German carvings again, collected by Pugin and his patron the Earl of Shrewsbury) and the present altar – could be kept intact – and Pugin's beautiful hanging beam for the sanctuary, which was removed a few years ago to the crypt, could be restored to its rightful place. As far as clarity, light and cleanliness are concerned, the answer is to clean and restore..."
- 9 'The Victorian Society. Destruction of important furnishings by Pugin in Birmingham Catholic Cathedral starts next week. Victorian Society calls for urgent revision of proposals,' n.d. [Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives]
- 10 Peter Howell to Canon Withers, 25th May 1967; in one of three letters to the Archbishop, Howell complained of 'tiles being taken up, chipped, and thrown in a bucket'. The text which the Archbishop asked his parish priests to read out, dated 18th May 1967, stated that 'It is not proposed, of course, to change the character of the Cathedral. We shall take care to preserve all that can be saved. At the same time we will provide a free standing altar to meet the requirements of the reformed liturgy. The existing High Altar will remain in place as the Blessed Sacrament Altar. These sanctuary alterations will doubtless mean the removal of the rood screen.' [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 11 Canon Withers to E.I.Watkin, 25th May 1967 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 12 N.B.L.Pevsner, letter, *Birmingham Mail* 7th June 1967, *op.cit.*
- 13 R.Temple Cox to Archbishop Dwyer, 13th June 1967; Mgr Joseph Gray, Vicar General, to R.Temple Cox, 16th June 1967, copy letter [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]
- 14 'An Appeal for money from the Parish Priest and Churchwardens' of Holy Trinity, Reading, Trinity Sunday 1968 [the author]; *ex info* Barbara Shackley.
- 15 Correspondence in Holy Trinity Reading file: Box 8 of Roderick Gradidge papers now at the Royal Institute of British Architects.
- 16 Mgr Joseph Gray to Elizabeth Kenrick, 29th March 1968, copy letter; the Revd Brian Brindley to Mgr Gray, 23rd May 1968; Mgr Gray to Brindley, 27th May 1968 [Birmingham Diocesan Archives]. The Orthodox Ukrainian Bishop gracefully withdrew his offer for the screen as the Reading option would preserve it intact.
- 17 Appeal leaflet, May 1968, *op.cit.*
- 18 Gradidge, Holy Trinity Reading file, *op.cit.* [RIBA]. Rachel Waterhouse of the West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society wrote to Gradidge 9th May 1968 that 'Mrs Kenrick has heard from the City Surveyor that we may have a maximum extension in the Public Works Yard of three months...'
- 19 Gradidge, Holy Trinity Reading file, *op.cit.* [RIBA]
- 20 Gradidge to the Revd B.F.L.Clarke 8th May 1968, Holy Trinity Reading file, *op.cit.* [RIBA]: 'You will recall that at St Chad's, the screen was later brought forward, which meant that it had two 3-arched screens, not by Pugin but in exactly the same style, on either side of it. I am using one of the screens, one arch wide, to bring the main screen forward, and the other screen I am using to fill the arch to the Lady Chapel. I explain this, because you may wonder where I have got all the Gothic tracery from.'
- 21 Working drawing dated 31st October 1968, Holy Trinity Reading file, *op.cit.* [RIBA]
- 22 A dispute with Messrs Ryder over the cost of additional repairs to the woodwork was not resolved until October 1972 – Holy Trinity Reading file, *op.cit.* [RIBA]. Correspondence with St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, in April 1972, reveals that Brian Brindley also tried to acquire the Pugin tabernacle from Ramsgate but that his parish was not in a position to offer any money for it.
- 23 *The Victorian Society Annual 1968–9, 1969*, p25



# A Pugin Drawing?

*An unusual drawing prompts Rosemary Hill to ponder questions of attribution and to seek comment.*

The pen and ink drawing of two sections through a chantry chapel that appears here as Fig 1 has, so far as I am aware, never been published before. It is unsigned, there is no watermark in the paper and there was no clue to its origins when it was brought to my attention some eighteen months ago beyond a pencilled note in an unidentified hand that read, laconically enough, 'by Pugin'. Is it? If so, when might it have been made and for what purpose?

1840, when he rejected late Gothic in favour of 'middle-pointed', or mid thirteenth to early fourteenth-century, the style favoured by antiquaries and by the Cambridge Camden Society. The idiosyncratic baldacchino recalls the furnishings of the chapel at Heriot's Hospital, designed by Pugin for Gillespie Graham in 1835, with similar nodding ogee arches and soaring pinnacles. There is still a whiff of the Regency about it; it is so curved as to be almost a Brighton dome, while the

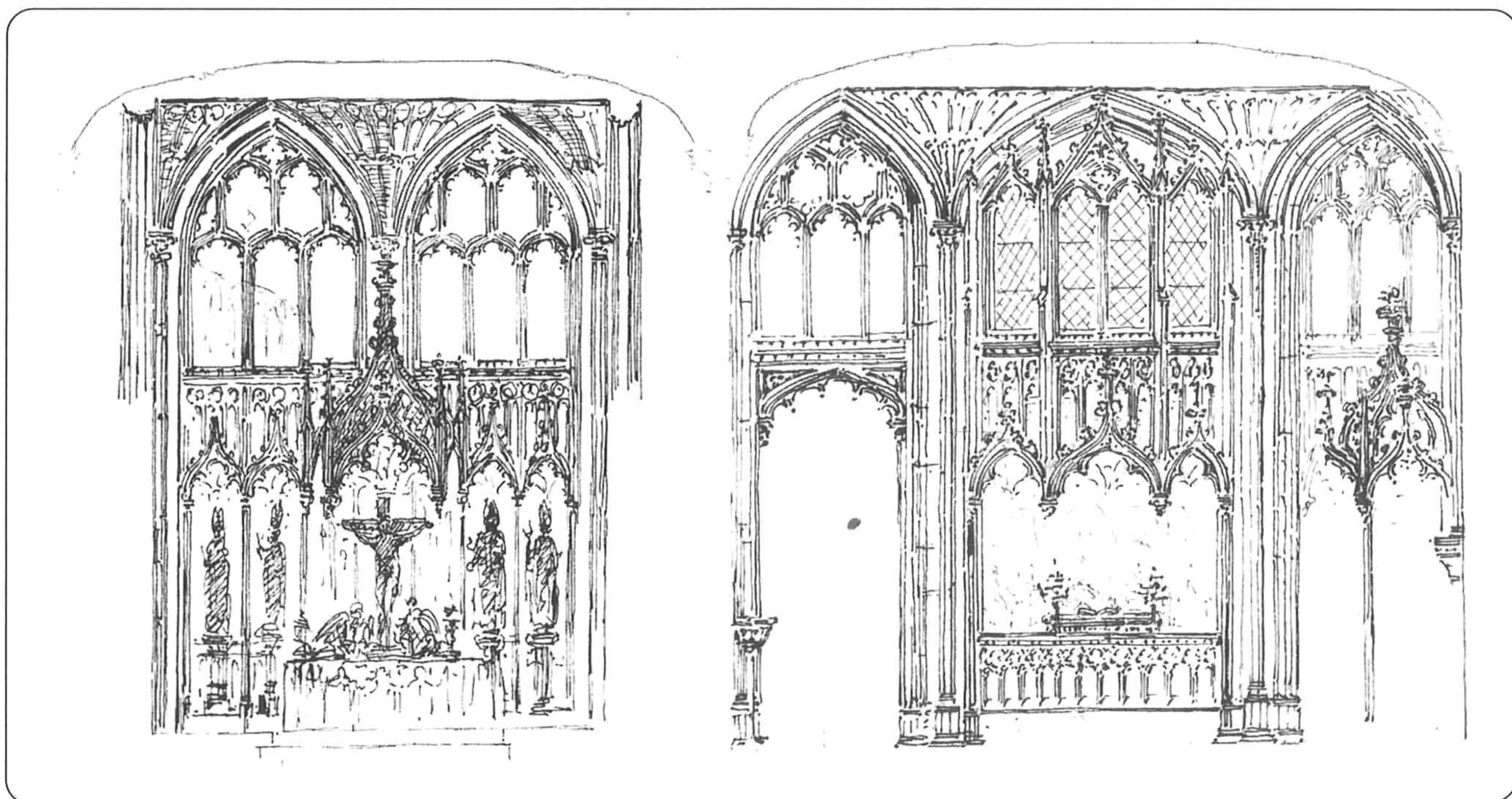


Fig 1

In this bumper edition of *True Principles* it seems worth setting out my thoughts in the hope of eliciting suggestions from other Society members.

The drawing, though sketchy, is reminiscent of Pugin's early work. There is a thickness of line, like that in the drawing for a fireplace for the Edward VI Grammar School, in the collection of the RIBA. This relative heaviness disappeared when he matured and found his characteristic light, rapid style. Not only the manner but the subject suggests comparisons with Pugin's work of the 1830s. The ideal schemes he drew in the early thirties included several such densely detailed miniature buildings, tombs and chantries. They were also, like this drawing, composed in a late Gothic style.

Here there is perpendicular tracery, fan vaulting and a bulbous ogee canopy that recall the preferences of his early drawings – and indeed his buildings – until

arrangement of the altar is far from what Pugin would later have considered 'correct'.

If this drawing is by Pugin then it must have been executed in the early or mid 1830s. The two sections are clearly his first thoughts. They are dotted down, not worked out, for they do not exactly tally. That it was a proposal for an actual scheme, rather than a fantasy, is suggested by the pencilled ceiling line (only just discernible) that precisely frames each section, compressing the arch on the right of the second. This was a chapel within, or attached to, a pre-existing building, and not a Gothic one, to judge from the gentle curve and the cornice. Was this a scheme to Gothicise in a Pagan house or church?

One telling feature is the reredos, which comprises standing figures of four bishops. This, and the general style of the drawing, recall Pugin's scheme for a chantry



(never built) for Bishop Milner at Oscott (Figs 2 and 3). The drawings for the Milner chapel are finer and more fully rendered. They date from 1839, by which time Pugin was closer to his more mature style and further from his ideal schemes than in this drawing. His admiration for Milner, however, was of a much older date.

Might Pugin have contemplated a chapel for the bishop before he was in a position to build one at Oscott? If so, might he have thought to attach it to what Pevsner calls the 'characteristically early Georgian'

Giffard House in Wolverhampton? This was the Catholic mission where Milner died and was buried and where he left money for a Gothic church to be built. The money was spent instead on a fine neo-classical church by Joseph Ireland (1825–27), built into the back of Giffard House. This was, just possibly, Pugin's attempt to carry out his hero's neglected wish.

At this point, however, I have passed into the realms of speculation, and it is time to turn the matter over to the membership. All suggestions welcome.

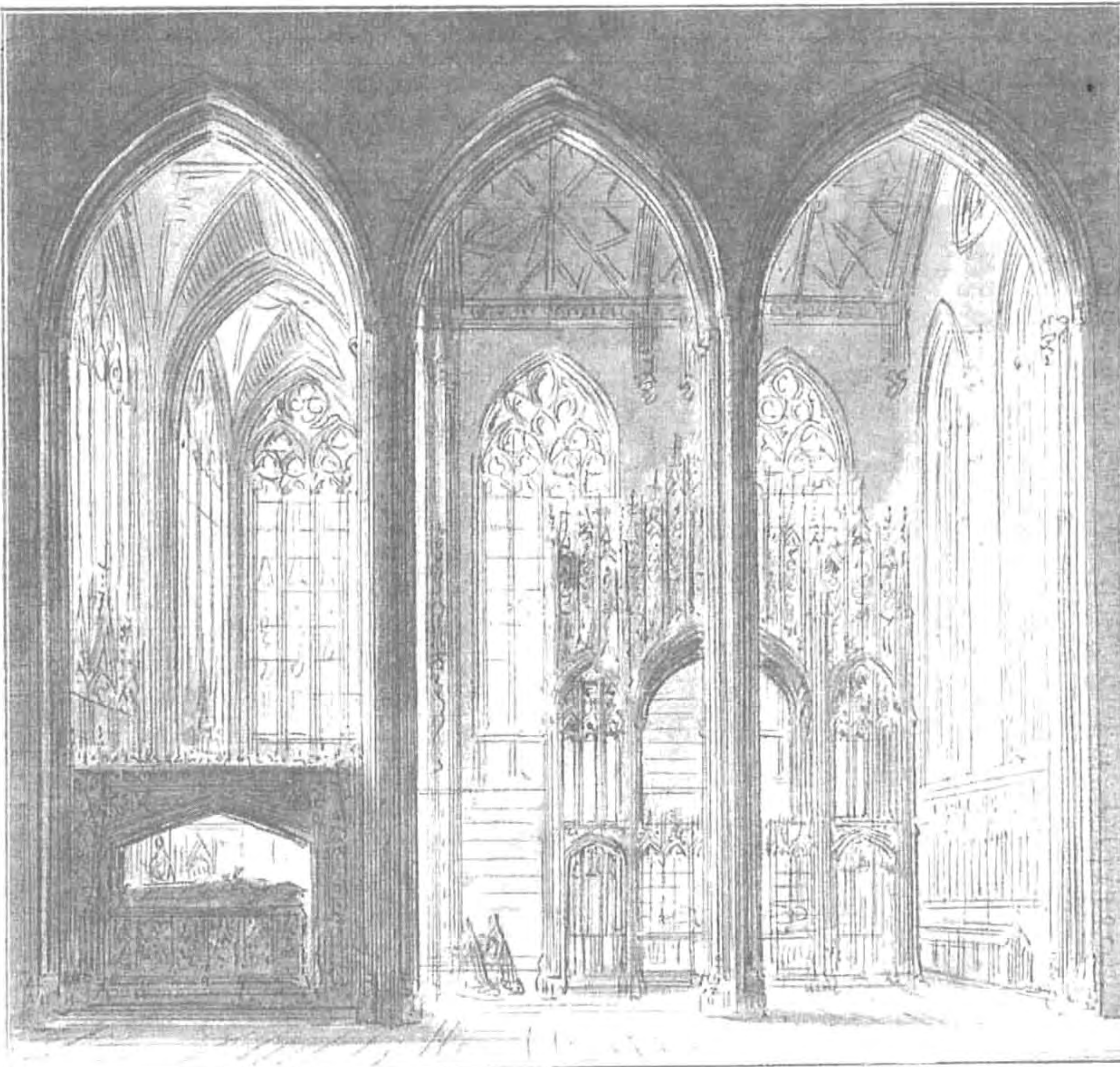


Fig 2 Design for Milner Chantry  
(Reproduced from article in Waterhouse, *The Life and Work of Welby Pugin*)  
Courtesy, Oscott College.

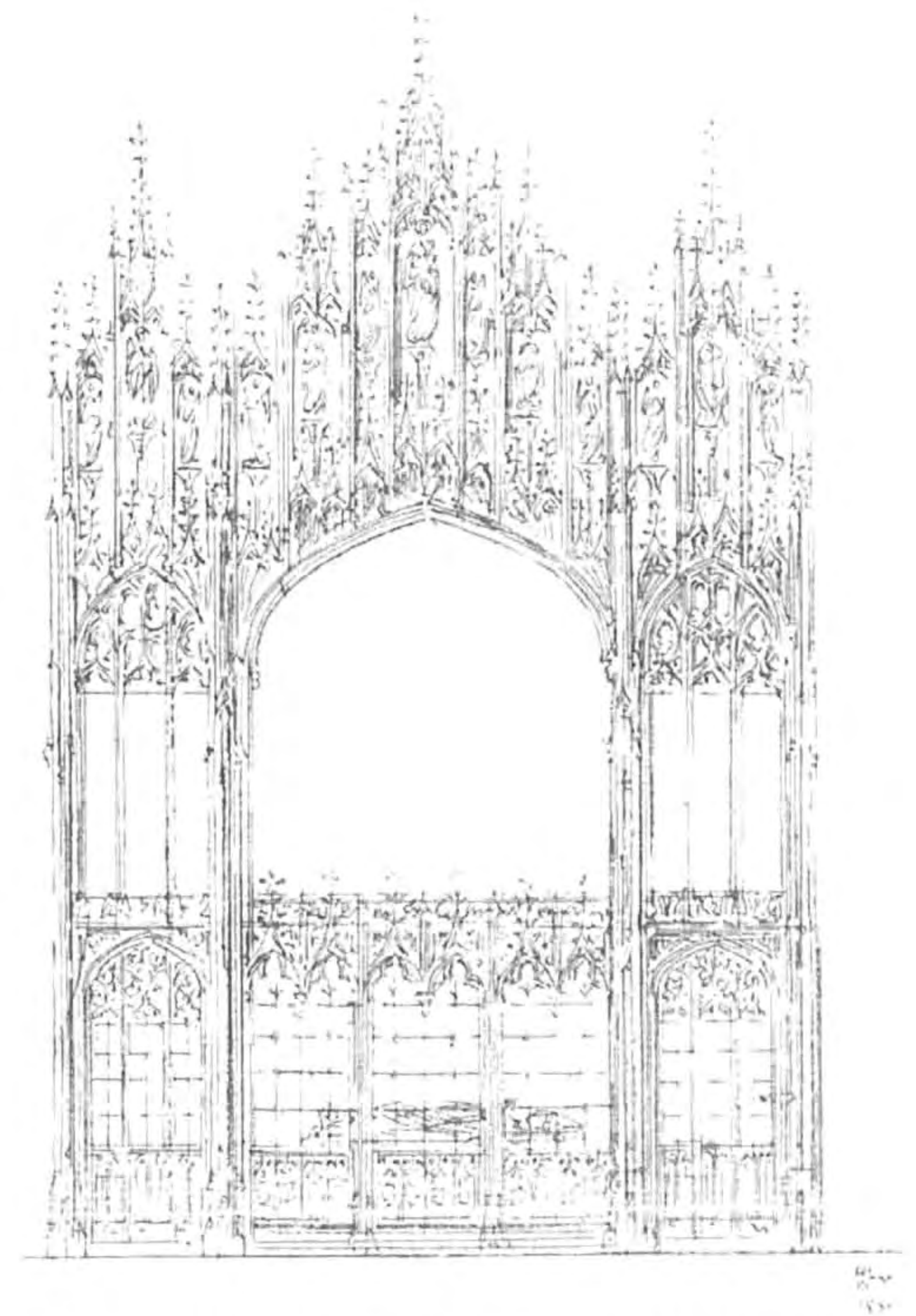


Fig 3 Design for elevation of Milner chantry  
(Reproduced Waterhouse, *Life and Work of Welby Pugin*)  
Courtesy, Oscott College.



# August Martin, 'the only man that makes Gothic living'<sup>1</sup>

**Antoine Jacobs** recounts the life of German Revivalist artist, August Martin, and solves a long-standing mystery in the Pugin Chantry, Ramsgate, a chantry particularly significant to us in this issue.

August Franz Konrad Martin was born in Groß-Umstadt (Hesse) on November 2nd, 1837.<sup>2</sup> His father, August Martin, was a family doctor, his mother, Margaretha Stock, a housewife. We know little about Martin's education. In June 1854 he entered the 'Städelsches Kunstinstitut' in Frankfurt, where he had lessons from the famous Nazarene painter Eduard von Steinle (1810–1886). From some time in 1855 until June 1857 he studied in Darmstadt, but returned to Frankfurt later in the same year. Von Steinle introduced his pupil to the eminent Roman Catholic politician, publicist and stimulator of the Gothic movement August Reichensperger (1808–1895), who was impressed by Martin's talent. So was the English baronet, Sir John Sutton of Norwood (1820–1873).<sup>3</sup> He became Martin's Maecenas. Sutton sent Martin in the winter of 1860–1861 to his friend Jean Baptiste Bethune in Bruges for further education.

On the continent Sutton had two bases: Bruges and Kiedrich, a small wine-village in the Rheingau. In Kiedrich Sutton had a house with a studio built for Martin. Between 1860 and 1872 Martin worked in Flanders (the castle of Loppem and the parish church of Vivenkapelle, both creations of Bethune) and in the Rheingau, especially in Kiedrich, where Sutton at his own expense restored the medieval Saint Valentine's church and Saint Michael's chapel. Martin painted several altars and the organ case in the church. He also executed wallpaintings. Sutton acted as his director. Sutton was impressed by Martin's 'primitive' style of painting. He imitated, without being just a copyist, the often nameless German painters of the fifteenth century. His work tends to be two-dimensional and he uses a limited palette. In an English letter to Canon Friedrich



August Martin, when he was about 30 years of age.  
(Collection, Mrs Wahn, Kiedrich)

Schneider Sutton wrote: '...he has *great talents* and if he will may make a very fine position for himself, he is the *only Real Gothic Painter* anywhere that I know, many copy Gothic pictures in a slavish manner, but he is the only man that makes *Gothic living*'.<sup>4</sup>

Although the relationship between Sutton and Martin deteriorated in the late sixties – as far as can be derived from several letters to Schneider – Sutton kept on helping him and his growing family. (In 1867 Martin married Sophie Van der Plaetsen, daughter of the Ghent professor of art Egidius Van der Plaetsen. The marriage was blessed with sixteen children). Sutton died in June 1873. At that moment Martin was perhaps already in contact with the Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers (1827–1921), who worked in Mainz as the cathedral architect. In Mainz he restored not only the cathedral but also several other churches. Cuypers made Martin his overseer in his workshop for religious art in Roermond. From 1873 until 1887 this provincial town in the south of the Netherlands, seat of the diocese of Roermond, became his new home. After 1879, when he left Cuypers – for what reason is still unknown – he worked as an independent artist. A whole range of altars, stations of the cross, wallpaintings and cartoons for stained glass for churches in the diocese of Roermond, in Liège and in Germany left his studio. In the Roman Catholic newspapers and in parish chronicles he was entitled as 'the talented', 'the well-known' and even 'the famous' painter. In 1884 Martin became a Dutch citizen. Obviously he must have thought that he was going to stay in the Netherlands for the rest of his life.

Surprisingly Martin decided to move back to Kiedrich in 1887. His motives for this decision are still



obscure. It might have been that the prospects for future assignments were better in Germany than in the Netherlands. In the late eighties and nineties Martin worked throughout the valley of the Rhine. His last great piece – so the family tradition says – was the painting of the Romanesque ‘Münster’ of Bonn (1891–1894). Martin died in Kiedrich, almost bankrupt, on March 22nd, 1901.

### The painting in Saint Augustine’s in Ramsgate

Between 1845 and 1850 Augustus Welby Pugin designed, built and furnished Saint Augustine’s in Ramsgate – a project in which not a single ‘true principle’ was broken, as he declared to his son Edward (1834–1875). In the south transept the family burial place and chantry were situated.<sup>5</sup> Already in 1864 John Sutton spoke about an altar for Ramsgate.<sup>6</sup> A few years later, in 1870, he declared that he had finished the chantry at his own expense, almost certainly to show his respect for his deceased friend Pugin. But something went wrong. Edward Pugin caused a row by publishing a letter in the *Westminster Gazette* in which he blamed Sutton, for the chantry not yet being finished. Sutton was furious about this attack, but he refused to react in public. It was not his practice to do so, whether the critique was positive, or negative for his reputation, so he explained to Schneider. Nevertheless he gave his view on the case:

E. Pugin is mad and may be at the bottom of it, though it *does not seem so* from what is written. I undertook to finish the chantry at my own expense *on the condition* that no subscriptions were to be received from any one. I bought the screen which was only partly finished from Myers the builder and ordered, the following part to be added at my own expense.

I also ordered E. Pugin to get the glass made at Hardmans. The altar tomb and in fact to finish the whole Chapel and it is Pugins fault alone that it is not finished, the only part that I am at fault about is the Altar, which is a picture with doors, the order of which I gave to Martin and the design is made, but is not began and the fault lies partly from his slowness in getting on with his work, and from my having given him other works to do. There is the whole business. I will write to my Agent Mr. Eyston and desire him to communicate with the Pugin family. I will not write to E. Pugin as I hear he is very cracked at present.<sup>7</sup>

In the further correspondence with Schneider the ‘Ramsgate affaire’ is not mentioned anymore until 1872. In his letter sent from Amélie-les-Bains (Sunday Nov. 1872) Sutton asks: ‘Is the altar for Pugins chapel at Ramsgate sent off to Bruges, Monsignore B. [Boone, AJ] told me to pack it carefully up and consign it to Mr.

Breitbach’s (of Diefenthal) care. It ought soon to be in England’.<sup>8</sup>

Between May 1870 and November 1872 Martin created this ‘altar’, which looks like a triptych. Martin, as so often, did not use his monogram, a combination of the letters A and M. Without his monogram his works are difficult to identify, unless one is familiar with his style. The picture measures 1981x1346mm and is painted on a single wood panel. The three parts are divided by two painted illusionary edges. So it is not ‘a picture with doors’. The ‘triptych’ is dominated by the pietà in the centre. Mary, all dressed in white, with her dead Son in her lap. Both Christ and Mary have golden halos. In the background the cross and seven persons, who witnessed the crucifixion, are visible. Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Mary Magdalene are flanking Mary; they lack halos, as do the others. The whole background, however, is golden.

On the left side, in a kind of niche, portrayed as a beardless young man, is Saint Augustine of Canterbury, with in his left hand his crosier and in his right the Holy



Saint Valentine. In the background St Valentine’s church in Kiedrich. (Collection, K.H.Niemann, Denklingen.)





Painting by August Martin, Pugin Chantry, St Augustine's, Ramsgate. The altar is from The Grange Chapel and on it are the Luck candlesticks and crucifix, designed by A.W.N.Pugin. (Courtesy, St Augustine's Monastery Archives)

Scriptures. He is dressed in a white alb and a bright red chasuble. On his head is a white mitre and around his head a golden halo. His pair on the left is Saint Michael. Martin painted him as a young knight in full armour. In his left hand Michael holds a golden sword. In his right hand he has a pair of scales for weighing the souls. The able-bodied archangel is dressed in a red cloak and his wings show a pattern of peacock feathers. The faces of the figures are typical of Martin. Therefore the picture is not just a copy from some medieval example, but a real piece of 'living Gothic'.

**Dr Antoine Jacobs** lives and works in the Netherlands. He is a secondary teacher in Sittard and has a Doctorate in Theology from the Catholic University of Nijmegen. He is a freelance historian, and has published on Gothic Revival art and architecture, places of pilgrimage and Roman Catholic clergy. Dr Jacobs writes: 'Although I don't have a single indication to this effect, it is quite possible that more work of August Martin, with or without his monogram, is extant in British churches or monasteries. If anyone can give me any further information on this artist's work in England I would greatly appreciate it. If you can help, please contact me at: Burgemeester Slanghenstraat 34, 6433 AV Hoensbroek, The Netherlands, email: antoine@cuci.nl

## NOTES

- 1 I would like to thank the Revd. W.H.Jacobs for correcting my article.
- 2 This article is a summary of my article, 'Leben und Wirken des Kirchenmalers August Martin 1837–1901 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Tätigkeit im Bistum Roermond (den Niederlande)', in: Jan De Maeyer & Luc Verpoest (ed.), *Gothic Revival. Religion, Architecture and Style in Western Europe 1815–1914* (KADOC Artes 5, Louvain, 2000) 151–167.
- 3 C.H.Davidson, *Sir John Sutton. A Study in True Principles* (Oxford, 1992).
- 4 Archive of the diocese of Mainz, Schneider correspondence, Sutton to Schneider, Kiedrich, May 14th 1870. That Martin did not make copies is not entirely true. Saint Gregory's Mass in the castle of Loppem and Saint John's altar in Saint Valentine's in Kiedrich are copies, made by him.
- 5 Roderick O'Donnell, 'Pugin as a church architect', in: Paul Attenbury & Clive Wainwright (ed.), *Pugin a Gothic Passion* (New Haven, London, 1994) 77–78.
- 6 Thanks to Catriona Blaker, who received this piece of information from Canon C.H.Davidson.
- 7 Archive of the diocese of Mainz, Schneidercorrespondence, Sutton to Schneider, Kiedrich, May 23rd 1870.
- 8 *Ibid*, Sutton to Schneider, Amélie-les-Baines, Nov. 1872. Tiefenthal (or Diefenthal) is a convent close to the village of Martinthal in the Rheingau.
- 9 Thanks to Catriona Blaker, who sent me this piece of information.



# Pugin: A Godly Man?

**James (Jim) Thunder**, a great great grandson of Augustus Pugin and Jane Knill, has presented us with an original and thought-provoking theme indeed – should Pugin be canonized? Because this is a long article, and this is a tightly packed issue, we are just giving you a taster of what is to come from James in our next number.

We of the Pugin Society who share an appreciation for Pugin's work cannot fail to have an interest in Pugin the man. Indeed, we would find it well nigh impossible to separate Pugin the artist and architect from Pugin the man; for we know that Pugin lived and breathed his work. Believers of every faith who learn of Pugin and his work may justifiably inquire whether a famous designer of the exterior and interior of six cathedrals and dozens of churches in England, Ireland, and Australia was what we might call a 'godly' man; if we, who appreciate Pugin, do not attempt to respond to this inquiry, no one else will.

Are we sufficiently distant in time to respond to this inquiry dispassionately? It would seem that the 150 years since his death in 1852 would have provided sufficient distance in time, yet the debate into which Pugin insinuated himself with such gusto continues unabated. Iconoclasm has a long history in Christianity, predating the Reformation by one thousand years and continuing among some Protestants and Catholics<sup>1</sup> to the present day. Is it possible for such believers as these<sup>2</sup> to regard Pugin's work, or Pugin the man, as godly any more than their co-religionists did when he was alive and well?

Perhaps some Christians must, like science fiction fans, suspend their disbelief – in Pugin's work – in order to evaluate the man. Given my background as Catholic, I cannot know if that is possible. If it is not possible, perhaps we simply cannot respond to the broad inquiry of whether Pugin was a godly man, but instead can only inquire whether Pugin would be an appropriate candidate for canonization by the Catholic Church to which he was a convert.

Pugin certainly meets the two most essential criteria for canonization by the Catholic Church: he was

Catholic<sup>3</sup> and he is dead.<sup>4</sup> Much more than baptism followed by death, however, is required for canonization. Aside from miracles (that serve to show God's viewpoint in the matter), there is the "voice of the people" that the candidate lived a personal daily life "not merely well, but at an heroic level of Christian faithfulness and integrity..."<sup>5</sup> Historically, most canonized saints have been martyrs or bishops, priests, or nuns. Pugin did not fit into any of these categories. The current pope, John Paul II, however, has actively solicited information about men and women who, like Pugin, were lay and married.

There are very practical reasons to explain the small numbers of lay, married candidates for canonization. The costs of pursuing canonization amount to £150,000. Such costs can more easily be borne over the course of time, even generations, by institutions such as religious orders seeking the canonization of their founders, than by family, friends and neighbours (and their descendants) of lay, married candidates. Furthermore, miracles cannot be attributed to deceased Catholics unless living Catholics pray to them. Living Catholics will not pray to a deceased Catholic unless they, one, know about the deceased Catholic and, two, fervently believe that the deceased lived a heroically Christian life. Again, it is easier for publicity to be given to founders of religious orders than to lay, married men and women. Due to the London Victoria and Albert Museum's exhibiton in 1994,<sup>6</sup> the New York exhibition by The Bard Graduate Centre for Studies in the Decorative Arts in 1995–96,<sup>7</sup> the Pugin Society, and various recently published books, Pugin is receiving publicity. But can we say Pugin lived a life of heroic Christian faithfulness? This article is intended to initiate a debate on this question.

## NOTES

1 In modern times, low church Catholics since Vatican Council II have constructed churches without, or have stripped existing churches of, stained glass, statuary, communion rails, central tabernacles, and Stations of the Cross. This viewpoint is not new among Catholics. St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) stated, in support of his Cistercian reform against Benedictines:

I say nothing about the enormous height of your churches, their unnecessary length and breadth, the elaborate carving and painting which catches the worshipper's eye and distracts his attention, and which seems to me a sort of revival of ancient Jewish rites. Let all this pass – say that it is done to the glory of God. But, as a monk, I ask this of my brother monks: Tell me, you "poor men," if poor you really are, what is all this gold doing in your sanctuary? The bishops have an excuse: *they* have to deal with the stupid as well as the wise, they cannot excite the devotion of ordinary people by spiritual things and are forced to do it by decoration and splendour. But *we*, who have cut ourselves off from the world, who have renounced its wealth and beauty for Christ's sake, who have counted everything pleasant to the senses as nothing but dung – whose devotion, pray, do we excite by such things? Ian Richards, *Abbeys of Europe* (Middlesex: Hamlyn Pub. Group, 1968), p67 (emphasis in original).

2 As well as Jews and Muslims who are also iconoclastic.

3 There are Catholics who favor canonizing some non-Catholics and even non-Christians. For example, Catholic priest-theologian Richard McBrien has recently included Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gandhi in his book on holiness. Rev. Richard P. McBrien, *Lives of the Saints: From Mary and St Francis to John XXIII and Mother Teresa* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001).

4 Historically, some people have been canonized by acclamation shortly after their death. The Catholic Church currently requires that five years must have passed from date of death to commence a formal cause for canonization. This rule was waived with respect to Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

5 Donald Attwater, *The Avenel Dictionary of Saints* (formerly *The Penguin Dictionary of Saints*) (New York: Avenel Books, 1965), p10

6 The catalogue for the exhibit was published as Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, ed., *Pugin: A Gothic Passion* (London: Yale University Press, 1994) (hereafter "London Catalogue").

7 The catalogue for the exhibit was published as Paul Atterbury, ed., *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival* (London: Yale University Press, 1995) (hereafter "New York Catalogue").



# 'The Good Style at the Antipodes'

Margaret Belcher explains how Pugin and his ideals influenced architecture and society in New Zealand.

'It is quite delightful to start in the good style at the antipodes.' Pugin was full of excitement when he wrote thus to Lord Shrewsbury, probably early in 1844. His old friend R.W. Willson was at last leaving England to take up his appointment as first Catholic bishop of Hobart. In his mind's eye Pugin must have pictured the colony as an open field, unchecked by the past and unconstrained by opposition, and he loaded the bishop's ship accordingly: '40 large chasubles!!! Several tombs 2 altars compleat, fonts &c. tiles – &c. & 3 models of small churches all to take to pieces with the roofs &c framed. Simple buildings that can be easily erected.' To other parts of Australia he had in the past sent various items, but singly, individually, like the organ case for Sydney; now Tasmania gave him the chance, if from a distance, to create in the new world complete settings for worship.

Across the Tasman Sea, although Pugin appears to have known nothing about it, attempts were being made to 'start in the good style' in the other country of the antipodes also – and just along Pugin's lines. In the far north, G.A. Selwyn (1809–78), a graduate of St John's College, Cambridge, a former tutor at Eton and a patron of the Cambridge Camden Society, was establishing himself as the first Anglican bishop of New Zealand. One of his most urgent needs was churches, and he set about designing them. Not later than September 1844, according to his chaplain's report, Mrs Selwyn looked into her husband's room one day, saw him busy drawing plans, 'admired – and turning to the frontispiece of one of Pugin's books, viz., an ecclesiastic in his study designing a building, said "There you are my dear"'. Selwyn had *An Apology for the Revival of Christian Architecture* with him, too, besides *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, and when the time came for erecting his church, he sent Pugin's books to the builders for their guidance.

Only a few years later, in 1850, the same two Pugin titles arrived in the South Island of New Zealand. They were brought by B.W. Mountfort (1825–98), a young architect from Birmingham, who had acquired *True Principles* and the *Apology for the Revival* in their respective years of publication. One of the first 'pilgrims' to come ashore to the new, conspicuously Anglican settlement of Canterbury, Mountfort went on to a distinguished career of ecclesiastical, public and domestic work that won him the title of 'architect of

Canterbury'; yet, in a tiny, far-flung but equally ironic parallel with Pugin at Westminster, what came to be the best known of the buildings with which he was associated was not constructed to Mountfort's design at all. The plans for the Anglican cathedral of the province were drawn by G.G. Scott in London; on the spot, Mountfort had the task of supervision, and perhaps it was this appointment, in 1873, which spurred him on to the purchase of the other Pugin book he owned, the third edition of the *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*, published in 1868.

Near the west door of that cathedral, a plaque lists the members of the Canterbury Association, which was formed in London in 1848 to oversee the founding of the settlement. A surprising number of them turn up in the Pugin story. Pugin met Edward Cust early in his connection with Westminster; he felt sympathy for W.F. Hook in his trials as parish priest in Leeds; he worked for the family of T. Somers Cocks at Eastnor. Robert Wilberforce sanctioned the repairs to St Mary's, Beverley, which Pugin undertook, and G.H. Vernon was also involved in those proceedings. The chapel of the Duke of Buccleuch was stocked with goods of Pugin's design; Sir Willoughby Jones ordered a brass plate in memory of his father; Sidney Herbert bespoke a chalice and other church plate; Edward Hulse commissioned candlesticks for the chapel of All Souls' College, Oxford. One of the four members of his family recorded on the plaque, J.D. Coleridge, who while still at Oxford had obtained a memorial brass from Hardman, acquired, through William Butterfield, windows designed by Pugin for the church at Ottery St Mary; and Lord Ellesmere's church of St Mark at Worsley also contained glass to Pugin's design.

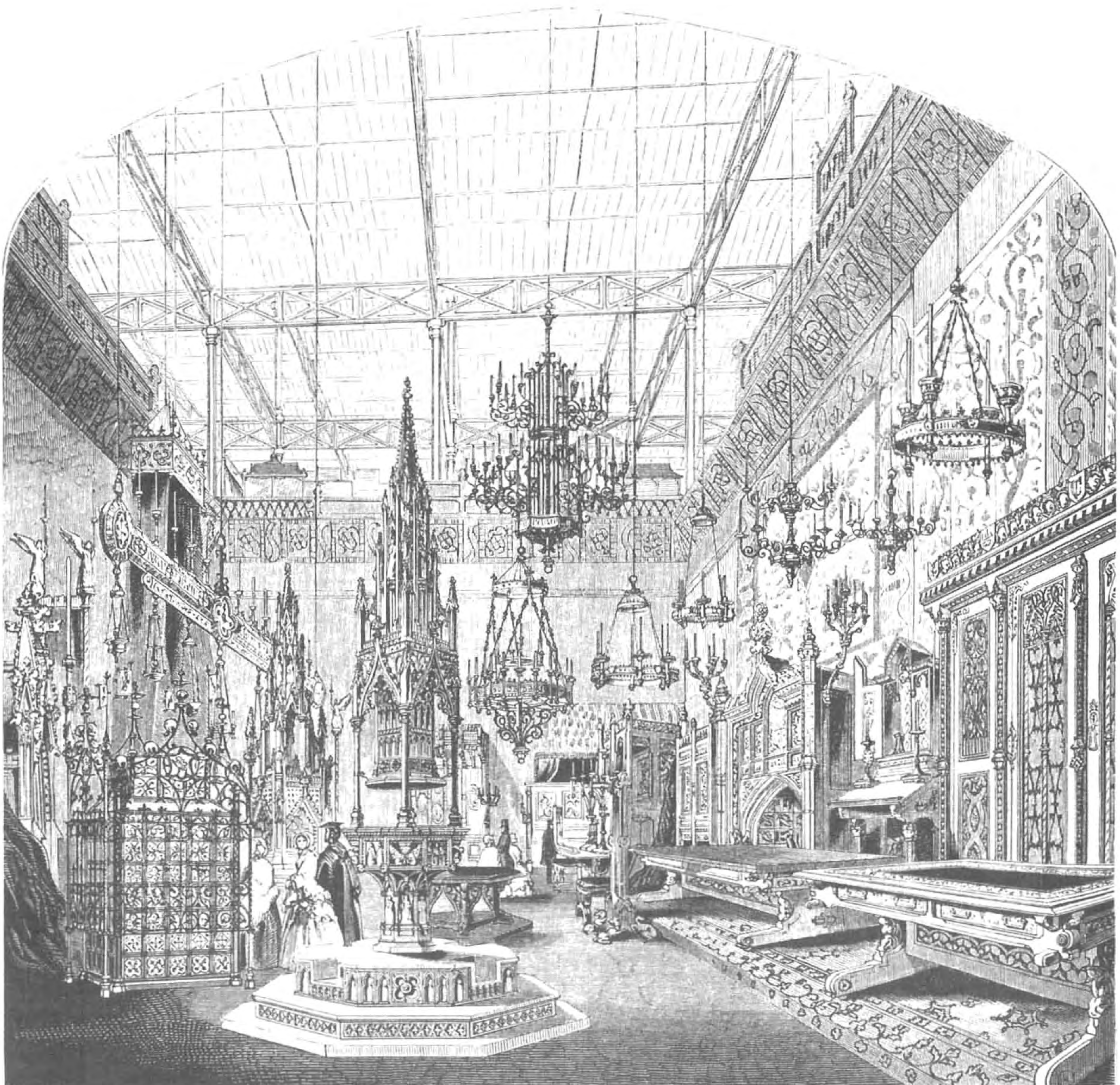
There is clear evidence of sympathy with Pugin's manner on the part of almost all these men, who collectively form a significant proportion of the membership. A still closer link with Pugin than exists in such intersections of individual biography is to be found in the impulse that moved the association as a whole. Turning its back on the evils of contemporary England, the Canterbury settlement was to be a model society: hierarchical, cooperative, beneficent and devout – the cathedral is situated right in the heart of the principal city. Baffled as much by human nature as any plan devised by Pugin ever was, the ideal to be realised was – except for the particular nature of its creed – the



same as that which Pugin formulated, and, just like his, the style of its expression, for administrative and educational as well as ecclesiastical buildings, was Gothic. The envisaged Canterbury settlement was the mediaevalist vision of Pugin's 'Contrasted towns', writ large.

Pugin never mentions New Zealand. These details from its history point, first, to the esteem in which he was held; giving a lead where others were keen to follow, his books were carried to the other side of the world at the earliest opportunity. The details are a reminder, too, of how often it was the Church of England which took up Pugin's ideas, rather than the

Catholic church which he had joined. Perhaps above all, the Canterbury tale sets Pugin in a thoroughly Victorian context, aligns him with others who, in reaction to the godless, materialistic, selfish, ugly world they saw around them, offered a temptingly beautiful and inspiring alternative and strove to improve the lot of humanity by implementing it. Whether Pugin would have deemed these other aspirations 'to start in the good style at the antipodes' to be 'quite delightful' is a matter of guesswork but they stand none the less as reason for remembering him now, one hundred and fifty years after his death, and in the future.



A magnificent Gothic showcase: Pugin's Mediaeval Court at the Great Exhibition, 1851. (Engraving from the *Art Journal* Exhibition catalogue)



# No 'maimed rites': the Funeral Obsequies of the 16th Earl of Shrewsbury

*For elaboration and expenditure there was clearly no comparison between the funerals of Ophelia – see Roderick O'Donnell's quote from Hamlet above – and that of the Earl of Shrewsbury, which he describes here.*

Pugin, as an artistic and liturgical reformer, was from the first a propagandist for the restoration of full funeral rites for Catholics, based, of course, on his understanding of late medieval precedent. He resented the slovenly approach of the clergy and the timidity of Catholics who until 1837 had been forced to bury with Anglican rites. He commented much on the practice of burials and memorials,<sup>1</sup> and published as one of his most magnificent lithographs a requiem mass with an altar and reredos vested, their structure and images hidden, the coffin on a hearse surrounded by mourners or 'bedesmen'.<sup>2</sup> He buried his second wife, Louisa, in the crypt at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, in 1844, which he had described as 'the first fully Catholic place sepulture to be revived'.<sup>3</sup> For her funeral he provided furniture, described as the "'Pugin catafalque", a large *chapelle ardente* for funerals [consisting of] four strong pillars 14ft high, supporting a triangular roof of black cloth for funeral of Mrs Pugin... presented by Mr Pugin'.<sup>4</sup> He gave it to the cathedral, in a typical blend of his piety, practicality and publicity, since it would now be used for requiems. His own funeral at St Augustine's, on 21 September 1852,<sup>5</sup> was followed by the gradual fitting out of the Pugin chantry, notably with his recumbent effigy monument, one of his eighteen-year old eldest son's first designs.<sup>6</sup>

## The designers

E.W.Pugin and J.H.Powell must have drawn on this background when they quite unexpectedly found themselves called upon to design the funeral of the XVIth Earl of Shrewsbury, particularly for the extraordinary *chapelle ardente* form. This article, based on the 'R.Scott Murray Esq. and A.L.Phillipps Esq. Funeral Ac[coun]t. of Late Earl of Shrewsbury' in the 1849–1854 Metalwork Daybook in the Hardman Archive, describes the furnishings and locates some of those which survive.<sup>7</sup>

The designers are identified by: 'To drawings and designs by E.W.Pugin and J.H.Powell', with the large payment of £40. Their roles were collaborative: E.W.Pugin, who was training with Hardman & Co when his father died, was involved primarily with metalwork, and Powell largely for stained glass. Their styles were at this stage difficult to distinguish, both being closely modelled as they were on that of

A.W.Pugin. Each later developed more personal and distinctive styles, but continued to cooperate, particularly on metalwork.<sup>8</sup> It is also significant that E.W.Pugin was already described, no doubt at his insistence, in the Hardman accounts as 'E.W.Pugin Esq. Architect Birmingham',<sup>9</sup> and we can imagine him insisting on this status in this scheme. Yet the Pugins, who took up John Hardman's invitation to move to Birmingham, were now under his wing, a position E.W.Pugin grew to resent. One poignant entry reads: 'Mrs Pugin, Frederick Street for curtains, plates etc £30.11s.2d',<sup>10</sup> referring to the setting up a new home for the family at No 44, just by the Hardman works (see also Michael Egan's article on page 22).

John Talbot, XVIth Earl of Shrewsbury (1791–1852), died at Naples on 9 November; his habit had been to summer abroad, which he calculated saved over £2,000 to devote to his church-building projects.<sup>11</sup> A solemn requiem, using the furnishings Pugin had given in 1844, was held at St Chad's.<sup>12</sup> Shrewsbury's body was received at St George's Cathedral Southwark on 29 November<sup>13</sup> and arrived at Alton Towers on 30 November. The lying-in-state took place in the Talbot Gallery, accompanied by the saying of many Masses;<sup>14</sup> on the evening of 13 December Mattins and Lauds of the Dead were sung in the chapel,<sup>15</sup> followed from 6am next morning by a continuous series of low Masses, culminating in the Solemn Requiem, sung by Ullathorne as Bishop of Birmingham, the absolution by the four bishops, with over one hundred and fifty clergy attending, the panegyric by Dr Weedall and then the burial at St John's Hospital.<sup>16</sup> The *Tablet*, unsure of the identity of E.W.Pugin, reported on the 'design of whole arrangement [by] G.W.Pugin, metalwork... Hardman & Co., the pall and embroidery [by] Mrs Powell and Miss Brown'.<sup>17</sup> The best visual record of the event was the description and engraving in the *Illustrated London News*.<sup>18</sup>

Shrewsbury's heir was his eighteen-year-old second cousin, Bertram Arthur Talbot.<sup>19</sup> Since the heir presumptive was a Protestant, the Earl nominated as executors and residuary heirs the Catholic converts C.R.Scott Murray<sup>20</sup> and A.L.Phillipps.<sup>21</sup> They paid the expenses of the funeral, at well over £2,000 in Hardman's account alone. Phillipps installed four



stained glass windows at Grace Dieu to commemorate the XVIth Earl,<sup>22</sup> but in a Freudian slip the Roman numeral inscription reads as 'XVII'. This plan unravelled as the XVIIth Earl died in 1856, and a Protestant succession took place.<sup>23</sup>

### Expenses

Probably with the help of Shrewsbury's chaplain Dr Winter,<sup>24</sup> who ordered the admission cards, an elaborate liturgical *coup d'oeil* was planned, such as Pugin had loved to orchestrate, and which reflected the approach favoured by Phillipps in his private chapel at Grace Dieu. The undertaker, as it were, was Hardman & Co, who clearly used the occasion, as Pugin did, as an advertisement for their work. No less than thirteen cases of material 'lent and returned' by Hardman went from Birmingham to Alton and back, at a surely nominal cost of £50. This was largely metalwork, including six large candlesticks, some described as 'Exhibition Candlestick', perhaps from the 1851 Great Exhibition?<sup>25</sup> Shrewsbury's coffin and fittings cost £78.15s., carried on

a 'Funeral Car' costing £12, decorated most probably by 'Two black cloth hangings etc' at £13.18s.6d. This ensemble must have made its way from Alton station to the Towers, and to Alton Hospital, and related expenses are noted against the date 24 December 1852 for 'Coaches, ostrich plumes' at £44.5s.6d., and 'Conveyance of coaches by special train' at £2.10s. A vast procession also followed the coffin from the Towers to Alton Hospital.

The largest bills were not for the coffin or the carriages but for the hanging of the interior of the chapel at Alton Towers so as to exclude natural light, and to vest the altar, reredos and clergy in black. Although 'Upholsterer's work' here and at Alton Hospital was charged at £21.3s.6d, the actual work and material at the large cost of over £540, was charged by Mrs [Lucy] Powell (Hardman's sister and J.H.Powell's mother), who had set up in 1842 as 'Mistress Powell and daughters') and later with the Misses (Lucy and Winefred) Brown.<sup>26</sup> The 'Hangings for chapel and altar'



The Shrewsbury pall; detail  
Photo: R.O'Donnell



cost £157, for the 'Talbot Gallery' £24.10s, and for 'St John's Chapel and School' £17.5s.9d. 'Miss Brown' [sic] also supplied the 'Two black cloth hangings etc...at £13.18s.6d'. By far the most important 'Work from Miss Browns' was the 'pall of Black Velvet with inscription' at £190. Its black velvet field is divided into four by a cross, which, like the labels round the edge, is white with gold braid inscriptions, 'Requiem Aeternam dona eis Domine' around the edges, and the big Talbot lion rampant at the centre. The Talbot motto 'Prest d'accomplir' appears, repeated on red diagonal labels, with the monogram 'IT' for John Talbot. The Misses Brown also supplied the 'Four black velvet copes, lace etc £64' worn by the bishops for the solemn absolutions, of which one, with the Talbot lion on its hood, survives at St Chad's.

Inside the chapel, the windows were blacked out and the apse screened off; a temporary altar was erected in front of it.<sup>27</sup> The darkness in which the ceremonies were held required candles at a cost of £41.8s.7d. The lighting of the hearse, or *chappelle ardente*, particularly caught the eye of the artist engraving the scene. This complex object was described as a 'Hearse and stand in centre of chapel', [and] 'Myers Bill for making do. £58.' identifies its maker, even though charged via the Hardman account. It was covered by the Misses Brown's hangings and festooned with metal work and heraldry, such as the Talbot dogs supporting candelabra, and 'large' and 'small hatchments', at £17.10s, and £7.10s, on the lateral and transverse gables of the canopy. 'Painting and Gilding Hearse and Shield' cost £43.18s.2d. The stunning contrasts of candlelight, black hangings, brass and gold, must have produced the 'solemn' liturgical effect that Pugin always sought.

The music of the services would no doubt have been conducted in Gregorian chant, as the attendance of the choir and organist of St Chad's would have ensured, at a cost of £49.2s.6d, suitably vested in 'surplices, with black caps etc', costing £8.7s.6d. 'The Rev. Mr Winter, Alton Towers' was charged for 'Printing 350 Dole cards, ditto 150 cards [of admission to] the Obsequies', and 150 cards admission to the lying-in-state, £4. There was also 12s. for funeral cards, presumably the death or 'obit' cards which the pious would then keep in their prayer books or missals, and which Hardman & Co printed in great numbers. The 'Dole' would have been for admission to a meal or other charity in the Earl's name; a final work of charity was the cost 'Medical attendance on sick boy injured by accident from horse, £2.11s.6d.'. For the more important mourners, there was refreshment in the Towers, since there is a bill for 'Knives, forks, plates at £6.19s,' This was probably in the

Great Hall, since the bill for 'two fire place backs, Dogs etc for dining at £100', was charged to the funeral, while other unfinished metalwork bills at the Earl's death are charged to the year-end account. The estate undertook certain work, as the bill – 'Mr Denny's work at Alton... carpenters and joiners. £18.6s.3d.' shows.

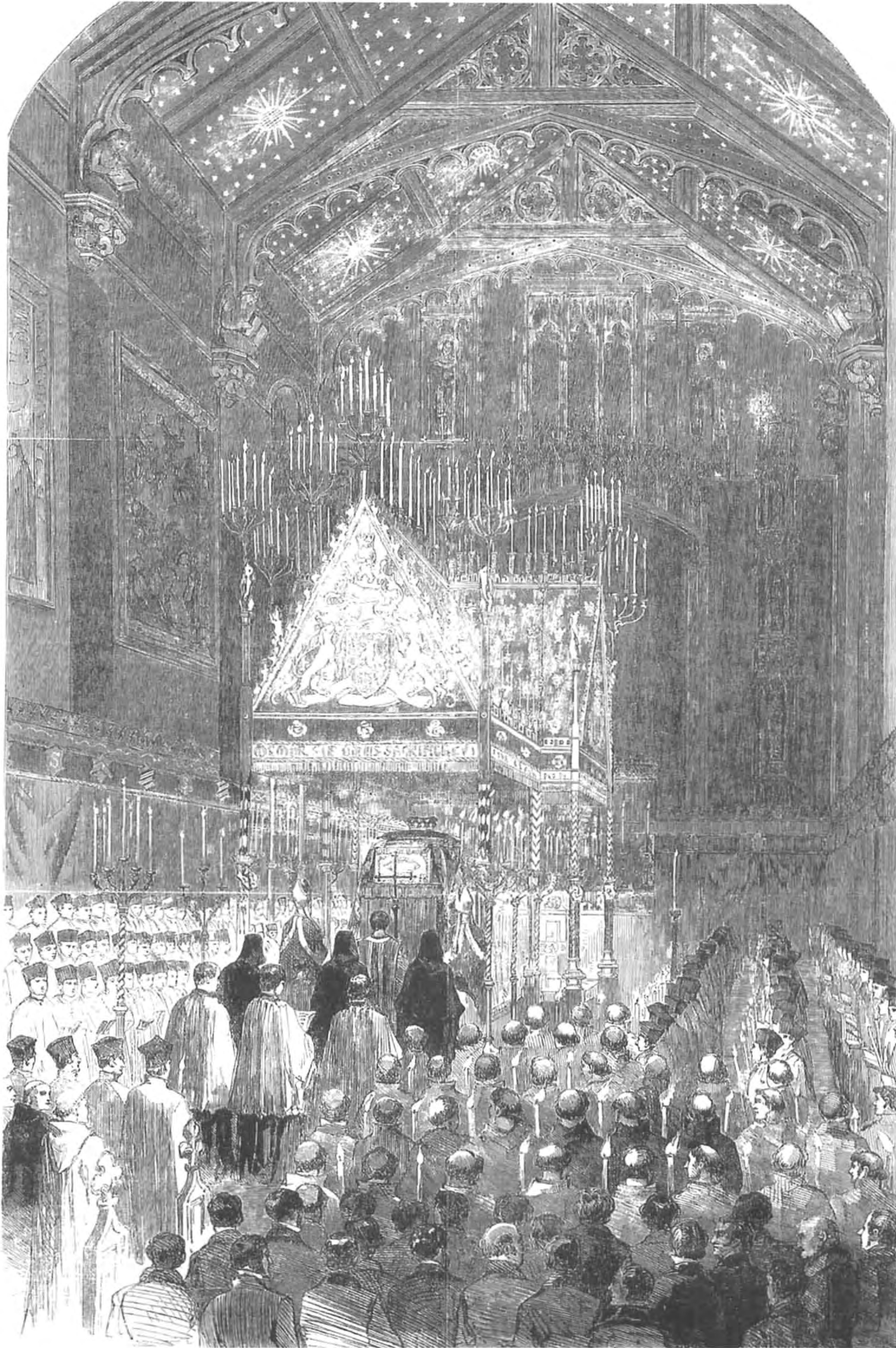
Although not named in the account, the estate painter and glazier Thomas Kearns was also involved.<sup>28</sup> Further costs are noted later at £260.<sup>29</sup> In the next volume, there is a charge for the fixing of the Hardman brass and ledger over the Earl's place of burial to the left, or gospel, side of the high altar in the chapel of St John at Alton Hospital – '25 April 1856 cost to the Earl of Shrewsbury... £14.15s.2d slab and brass.'<sup>30</sup> Alas, the Earl's coronet and hatchment remembered by Michael Fisher no longer hang there.<sup>31</sup>

By the time of the first anniversary of the Earl's death in 1853, the funeral furnishings had arrived at St Chad's, where they were reassembled for his Requiem.<sup>32</sup> (Prayers and Masses for the dead were made not merely at the death and funeral, but especially on the third, seventh and thirtieth days – 'the month's mind' – and the annual anniversary of the death; this tradition has, however, atrophied since the Second Vatican Council). They were described as 'designed by Edward Welby Pugin and made by Hardman & Co and the Misses Brown of Great Charles Street, Birmingham... afterwards presented to St Chad's Cathedral', and consisted of 'a very large catafalque with cloth cover and heraldic shields and branches supported by Talbots for candles, a Pall, Antependium, three copes, .... Tapestry, lateral curtains and reredos cover'.<sup>33</sup> They were thereafter used only for the grandest Requiems: Wiseman's in 1865, Pope Pius IX's, in 1878; and in 1889 on the death of Ullathorne. Today the pall and a single cope survive in use; some damaged metalwork, such as the Talbot dog candelabra elements, still exist, but other items cannot be traced.<sup>34</sup>

### Aftermath

The death of the Earl of Shrewsbury was a calamity for the Catholic Church in England in general, and the West and North Midlands in particular, because his support for the churches and other buildings ceased.<sup>35</sup> It occurred during the anti-Catholic hysteria which marked the public and political reaction to the arrival of Cardinal Wiseman<sup>36</sup> as Archbishop of Westminster, dubbed the 'Papal Aggression'.<sup>37</sup> The death of the Earl of Shrewsbury was truly the end of an era. His lay, aristocratic or 'seigneurial' leadership, and the 'English Catholic' model of the Church which he and Pugin had promoted, was now to be by-passed in favour of a largely Irish, clericalised and proletarian model, all of





The funeral of the Earl of Shrewsbury, *Illustrated London News*, 1852  
(Courtesy, The Revd. Michael Fisher)

which had implications for church architecture, which Edward Pugin was to address.<sup>38</sup> Pugin's own funeral, at St Augustine's, on 21 September 1852,<sup>39</sup> was liturgically 'correct' but modest, with 'costs to A.W.Pugin at St Augustine's at £1.16s,<sup>40</sup> and £14.20s for 'the coffin plate, handles, wax, incense etc'.<sup>41</sup> However, Pugin, who burst

on the Catholic community in 1838 with his masterminding of the liturgy at the consecration of Oscott, would surely have approved of the extraordinary cost and lavishness of Shrewsbury's funeral.



## NOTES

- 1 A.W.N.Pugin, *Contrasts* (1836) 'Contrasted sepulchral monuments'; *ibid* (1841) 'Contrasted residences of the poor' 'Contrasted episcopal monuments' *True Principles* (1843), pp19–21; *Apology for the Revival* (1843), pp11–12
- 2 Plate LXXXIII, 'An altar hung for a funeral mass' or 'The End', in A.W.Pugin and B.Smith, *A Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume* (1844); for his preparatory drawings pp171–3, nos 167–8, and for the 'Church of Our Fathers' project, p167, nos. 134,137,139, in A.Wedgwood, *A.W.N.Pugin and the Pugin family* (V&A, 1985)
- 3 A.W.Pugin, *Tablet*, (1841), p398
- 4 Archives of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, (BAA) 'St Chad's Cathedral Records, Volume 2... from ... 1850 to December 1880', (by W[illiam].G[reeney]), F30 and vol.1, (by Leith) p222, under 'woodwork'; B.Ferrey, *Pugin*, p90, 174. They can no longer be located.
- 5 *Tablet*, 25 September 1852; *Builder* (1852), pp605–6; *Illustrated London News*, (26?) 1852, p243
- 6 R.O'Donnell, 'The later Pugins' pp259–71, ref. p259, in P.Atterbury and C.Wainwright (eds.), *Pugin, a Gothic Passion* (1994).
- 7 Birmingham Central Library (BCL), Hardman Collection, Metalwork Daybook, 1849 – (December) 1854, 'R.Scott Murray Esq. and A.L.Phillipps Esq. Funeral Ac[coun]t. of Late Earl of Shrewsbury 'at FF.473–7,490. Quotations that follow are from it unless otherwise footnoted
- 8 R.O'Donnell 'Hardman metalwork folios from Birmingham' pp7–9 in *True Principles*, vol. 2 no.3, summer 2001.
- 9 'E.W.Pugin Esq. Architect ...for Danesfield church', BCL, Hardman Collection, Glass [Day] Book, 1849–[September] 1852, 31 August 1852.
- 10 BCL, Hardman Collection, Metalwork Daybook, 1849 – (December) 1854, F474.
- 11 E.S.Purcell, *Phillips*, I. Shrewsbury to Phillips 13 August 1841, p80
- 12 BAA, 'St Chad's Cathedral Records, Volume 2, F30, 9 November 1852: 'This day died [Earl of Shrewsbury] a Solemn Requiem Mass was sang in the cathedral'.
- 13 Margaret Pawley, *Faith & Family, the life and circle of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle* (1994), p266
- 14 *Tablet*, p756; 771;777–8.
- 15 Pawley, *Faith & Family*, p267, *op. cit.*
- 16 Omitted from the first edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* (but see *DNB, Missing persons*, C.S.Nicholl, ed. (1993), pp661–2,) he still lacks a biographer. Based on H.Weedall's *A funeral discourse for John Earl of Shrewsbury* (1852) and E.Pierce, 'Memoir of the late Earl of Shrewsbury' (*Catholic Directory*, (1854), pp141–61) the rumour of his giving £500,000 for churches arose.
- 17 *Tablet*, 1852, p778. He is next referred to [p803] simply as 'Mr Pugin'
- 18 *ILN*, (26), 1852, pp563–4
- 19 Bertram Arthur Talbot, (1832–1856).
- 20 C.R.Scott Murray, MP, Catholic convert 1844, for whom A.W.and E.W Pugin built the chapel at Danesfield, c.1848–1856. He also gave the Pugin church at Great Marlow (1845–8).
- 21 Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle (1809–72), converted in 1824–5. E.S.Purcell, *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle* (2 vols, 1900)
- 22 BCL, Hardman Collection, Glass Daybook, 1845–1853, 4 October 1853 at £145; Purcell, *Phillipps*, II, p290
- 23 Pawley, *Faith & Family*, pp262–78. M.J.Fisher, *Alton Towers, a Gothic Wonderland*, (1999) pp155, 157–60
- 24 After Dr Rock's departure, the chaplains lived at Alton Hospital; Shrewsbury left him £500.
- 25 Quotations below are taken from 'Account...', F.473–7,490.
- 26 Dom Bede Millard OSB, 'Textiles..' pp206–11 in Atterbury and Wainwright, *op.cit.* above note 6. They advertised in the *Catholic Directory*, 1851, and appear in Pugin's Diary in 1850.
- 27 Fisher, *Alton Towers*. p154
- 28 Fisher, *Ibid*, pp142, 154. Michael Fisher identifies the role of the painter Kearns, whose name does not appear in the Hardman Archive.
- 29 BCL, Hardman Collection Metalwork Daybook (1849–1854), F652
- 30 BCL, Hardman Collection Metalwork Daybook, (December 1854–1857) F 246. This small charge to the 17th Earl suggests that the brass was ordered during the lifetime of the 16th Earl. The brass which forms his memorial, would have cost been between £70 and £100.
- 31 M.Fisher, *Pugin-Land*, (2002), p9
- 32 Pawley, *Faith & Family*, p268, states that the executors tried unsuccessfully to present them in 1853.
- 33 BAA,[Greeney], 'St Chad's Cathedral Records, Volume 2'; he also pasted a copy of the ILN report; *ibid*, *A Guide to St Chad's Cathedral Church, Bath Street Birmingham* (1877).
- 34 *Ibid*, F162 – See also [anon] *St Chad's Cathedral ...* 1904, pp151–2
- 35 R.O'Donnell, *The Pugins and the Catholic Midlands*, (Gracewing, 2002), forthcoming.
- 36 [Dom.] Aidan Bellenger [OSB] and Stella Fletcher, *Princes of the Church: a History of English Cardinals* (Stroud, 2002)
- 37 For this and subsequent developments, see.V.A.McClelland and M.Hodgetts, 'From without the Flaminian Gate', *150 years of Roman Catholicism in England and Wales* (1999).
- 38 R.O'Donnell, 'The later Pugins', in Atterbury and Wainwright, *Pugin, a Gothic Passion*, pp266–7
- 39 *Tablet*, 25 September 1852; *Builder* (1852), pp605–6; *Illustrated London News*,(26?) 1852, p243
- 40 BCL, Hardman Collection, Metalwork Daybook, 1849–(December)1854, F457, 26 October 1852, 'costs to A.W.Pugin at St Augustine's'.
- 41 *Ibid*, F440, 18 September 1852.



# Mrs Jane Pugin and some London Relations

**Michael Egan** is the bearer of new information about Jane Pugin and Catholic society in the Greenwich area, and also describes the close interconnections between the Knills, the Pugins and the Powells. For a fine painting of Jane, see our back cover.

The Knills who are featured in this article all had ancestors from Herefordshire. Three of their number were very successful in the City of London – John Knill (1780–1854), his son Stuart (1824–1898) and Stuart's son John (1856–1934). The last two each achieved the distinction of being elected Lord Mayor of London, and became Baronets. Several other related Knills were also active in the City, as wharfingers or as fruit merchants.

Their kinswoman Jane Knill (1825–1909) was the third wife of Augustus Welby Pugin, and in 1882 John Knill junior married Mary Edith (1858–1944), a daughter of John Hardman Powell (1827–1895). Since Powell's wife Anne (1832–1897) was a daughter of Pugin, then their own daughter was granddaughter to Augustus, thus making the Knills doubly related to the Pugins. Their relationships with the Pugins extended to significant purchases of jewellery, church furnishings and other artefacts designed by Pugin or by his son Edward Welby.

## Jane Knill and her Family

The baptism of Jane, daughter of Thomas Knill (a Farmer) and Elizabeth Knill of Tipton Hall, appears in the registers of the parish of Tedstone Delamere on 24 June 1825. The village, near Bromyard, is about 20 miles due east of Knill Court, the medieval seat of the Herefordshire Knills. The ages given for her on her marriage certificate (23), and in the 1881 census (55), are consistent with her having been born in June 1825, but her birth year is often quoted as 1827. In her Journal for 1848–1852, Jane mentions that her birthday fell on 21 June,<sup>1</sup> and remarks that she had become a 26 year old 'grandmama' at the birth in 1851 of Mildred Powell, the first child of John and Anne Hardman Powell. Jane's father was the brother of John Knill senior (above), hence she was his niece.

The House of Lords Record Office also has a three-page biographical note solely about Pugin's three wives.<sup>2</sup> Jane is described as 'the niece and adopted daughter of Mr. John Knill'. Jane's father Thomas died in 1833, and her mother and some of the siblings are found in near-by Whitbourne from the late 1830s. Presumably they had had to leave the farm. By 1841, John Knill senior owned Tipton Hall with 238 acres, and had three tenant farmers. As he had a daughter of Jane's age, then Jane may have been informally adopted as a child by her uncle and aunt at Walworth House, Walworth, in London. Equally, she may have moved there as a

teenager, to widen her horizons, prior to meeting Pugin.

They had met by June 1848, becoming engaged on 22 July, and their marriage on 10 August 1848, at St George's, Southwark, was the first wedding to be celebrated in the church, which Augustus Pugin had, of course, designed.<sup>3</sup> On the marriage certificate, they both gave their 'Residence at Time of Marriage' as Walworth House. Presumably this gave Pugin an address in the parish for registration purposes, and suggests that Jane had been staying with her uncle John at least during her whirlwind courtship by Pugin. Mr. John Knill had chaired the committee which raised funds for the grand opening ceremony of St. George's,<sup>4</sup> and must have met Augustus in the process, presumably having a hand in introducing him (A.W.) to his niece.

Jane's Journal begins on the day of the ceremony, and names a surprisingly short list of guests:

I was married at St. George's Church by Dr. Doyle the head chaplain.<sup>5</sup> There were present my Husband, Uncle Knile(sic) and Aunt, Annie, Edward and Agnes Pugin, Mr. Herbert, R.A., the Rev. J. Telford..... (Tabot Cotte....; illegible).<sup>6</sup> After Mass at which we received the most Holy Communion, we returned to Walworth House at ½ past 9 and breakfasted. We left there for the Railway at ½ past 11 and arrived at Ramsgate at ½ past 3 o'clock. The flag was hoisted for the first time.

That day, she became the stepmother of the six Pugin children.

This retrospective account of her married life provides a charming insight into their relationship, concluding with a poignant description of Pugin's final months. Undecided where to live after his death, Jane makes it clear that John Hardman was against her moving the family to Birmingham, but that she insisted, wishing to provide a home together for all Pugin's eight children, and fearing that undue pressure might be put on her step-son Edward to marry one of Hardman's daughters. Her portrait, painted in 1859 by George Augustus Freezor, now hangs in the Pugin Room of the House of Commons. It is reproduced in *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival*, as well as a photograph of her taken in the 1890s.<sup>7</sup> Both suggest her kizndly but formidable personality, as reported by a living descendant.



## The Knills in London and Blackheath

Since Jane's cousin Stuart and his son John both became Lord Mayor, the Corporation of London Records Office has detailed fact sheets about them. John senior had established a thriving firm of wharfingers at Freshwharf, just to the east of London Bridge, and in due course his son and grandson followed him into the business. John and his niece Jane had both been baptised in the parish church of Tedstone, and Stuart was christened in the Anglican parish church of St. Giles, Camberwell. Before the Oxford Movement produced a large number of prominent converts to Catholicism, John Knill was baptised as a Catholic in 1842, and his own immediate family also changed their church.<sup>8</sup> This may have influenced Jane's religious beliefs, especially if she was living with them, before she met Pugin.

By the late 1840s, John and Stuart Knill were being mentioned as active in the community at St. George's, and are recorded as amongst the chief benefactors of the new church.<sup>9</sup> This included commissioning works from Augustus Pugin such as the Pax which was hallmarked in 1851.<sup>10</sup> After John's death in 1854, Stuart arranged for the construction of the Knill chantry,<sup>11</sup> in memory of his father, which was designed by Edward Pugin, paying the cost of £415 in 1856.<sup>12</sup>

Soon after Stuart's marriage at St. George's in 1850 (marked by a Lamp for the Lady Chapel from Hardman, presumably designed by Augustus Pugin,<sup>13</sup> he moved with his young wife to Blackheath, initially sharing a house there with his parents. By mid 1851, they had separate houses in the area, which was then within the Catholic 'mission' of Greenwich. The shell of the new church of Our Ladye Star of the Sea on Crooms Hill had been completed in November 1849, three years to the day after the first turf had been cut for the foundations.<sup>14</sup> The architect was William Wilkinson



Our Ladye, Star of the Sea: ceiling of Blessed Sacrament Chapel  
Photo: Michael Egan.

Wardell (1823–1899), who was much influenced by A.W.Pugin, and copies of his plans have been obtained from the Mitchell Library in Sydney. It was a very poor parish, largely comprised of Naval pensioners resident at the Royal Hospital, later the Royal Naval College. Fr. Richard North (1800–1860), the resident priest, wrote to *The Tablet* regretting that funds had run out, and specifying some of the many internal furnishings which were lacking.<sup>15</sup>

## Our Ladye Star of the Sea: interior and fittings

The arrival of the Knills in the locality must have seemed God sent. They clearly supported the fitting out of the church most generously. After a recent visit to the church, Lady Wedgwood believes that the decoration of the chancel and the

Blessed Sacrament chapel is entirely to the designs of A.W.Pugin, and executed by George Myers.<sup>16</sup> This includes all the carving in wood and stone, the Minton tiles, the iron screen in the north wall of the chapel and possibly its west gates, and the pulpit/lectern. These conclusions are confirmed by a volume in a private collection, which contains preliminary drawings by Pugin for the church. It includes his designs for the altar and tabernacle in the (south) chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rood cross, for temporary stained deal seats (benches) for clergy and altar servers, as well as tile plans for the chancel and the north (St. Joseph's) and the south chapels. The dimensioned sketch of the benches has a small layout plan of the chancel, with 'screen' written approximately in the position of the present rood screen.

The Hardman records kept in the Birmingham City Archives have several letters concerning the furnishing of the church, both from Fr. North and from Stuart Knill, some specifying the items that Augustus Pugin had designed.<sup>17</sup> Knill was primarily interested in the details of the objects and their cost; Fr. North was rather more concerned to persuade Hardman to get the stained glass windows in place before the rain spoiled Mr. Pugin's



Our Ladye, Star of the Sea: Statue of Our Lady, with glimpse of Lady Chapel beyond.  
Photo: Elizabeth Steward.



chapel altar. Hardman also executed the metal work. The priest begged for the services again of Mr. Early before the formal opening: 'I greatly lament his removal .... when there are so many little things to do (unspecified) which only he can do well'. Knill had also had his wedding cards planned by A.W.Pugin, as well as jewellery for his bride – perhaps the parure which is mentioned on page 171 in *A Gothic Passion*.

It seems that the Knills were financing much of the work that Augustus Pugin had designed for the interior of the church. They continued to do so, providing such items as a handsome, boat-shaped votive nef, to hang before the magnificent statue of Our Lady in its own niche, on the left of the chancel arch. It resembles those at Pantasaph and Ramsgate, also the work of Myers. The family contributed to the marble tombstone (designed by Edward Pugin) after Fr. Richard North's death, as well as other generous support for the decoration and upkeep of the church.<sup>18</sup> Lest it be thought perhaps that Augustus did not charge for work done 'for family', in his accounts for the last months of 1850, he recorded a charge of £5 for 'Altar for Greenwich' – presumably the chapel altar. Edward, however, waived his commission for the tombstone. Augustus's diaries mention several visits to Greenwich in 1850 and 1851.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the last site visit recorded in his diary for 3 December, 1851, before the onset of his serious illness, was 'Greenwich, London to Ramsgate. Taken ill'.<sup>20</sup> John and Stuart Knill were listed prominently among the laymen who attended his funeral services.

Stuart and Mary Anne Rosa Knill had two sons – John (1856–1934), and Elphege (1861–1865) – and three daughters, Mary, Rose and Anne. Since Elphege and Anne both died in 1865, they commissioned a small

Knill chantry chapel in Brockley Cemetery, with the family vault below ground level. The chapel was dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels, and was solemnly consecrated in May, 1868.<sup>21</sup> It was intended to serve as a graveyard chapel for Catholics of the district, as well as a burial place for members of the Knill family, and Catholic parish priests of the area. It may well have been designed by Edward Pugin, since Boulton and Earp each did some of the stone carving, and the stained glass is described as designed by Powell and manufactured by Hardman – all of whom were frequently used by Edward. Alas, this little jewel of a chapel, distinctly Puginian in style, was levelled after being bombed in 1944.

The marriage of John Knill junior to John Hardman Powell's daughter in 1882 has been mentioned, and the nuptial Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Newman in the Birmingham Oratory. Eventually, John Hardman Powell moved to Blackheath, seemingly to be near his married daughter, and spent his last seven years there, also close to other Knill in-laws, once his clients. John Knill's sister Mary married Capt. M.H.D.Thunder in 1878, and Jane Pugin's daughter Margaret (1849–84), her first child by A.W.P., married Major G.F.Thunder in the same year. He was, in fact, Margaret's second husband, after the death of Henry Francis Purcell in 1877, her first marriage having generated the Purcell branch of the Pugin dynasty.

Both Augustus and Jane rejoiced in their marriage, and their meeting was perhaps masterminded by Jane's Knill relations. All these connections were entirely characteristic of many Victorian families, where marriages, if not actually arranged, often occurred within an extended circle of acquaintance, frequently producing congenial and stable relationships.

## NOTES

- 1 House of Lords Record Office [HLRO]. Folder in boxed Historical Collection No. 339. Catriona Blaker kindly informed me of this item.
- 2 HLRO. *Ibid*, Pages numbered 350.
- 3 Alexandra Wedgwood, *A.W.N.Pugin and the Pugin Family*, 1985, p64
- 4 Archives of the Archdiocese of Southwark (AAS), Knill box file.
- 5 Thomas Doyle (1793–1879).
- 6 John Telford (1814–1865), then priest at Ryde, I.o.W., but in Southwark 1840–1845. The two illegible names may be Talbot and Costigan. Both Mgr. The Hon George Talbot (1818–1886) and Fr. Thomas Costigan (1788–1860) were prominent Catholic priests in the diocese of Southwark.
- 7 Paul Atterbury (ed.), *A.W.N.Pugin, Master of Gothic Revival*, 1995, pp225 and 41
- 8 Private collection. Short handwritten note.
- 9 Bernard Bogan, *The Great Link*, 1948, p241
- 10 P.Atterbury and C.Wainwright (eds.), *Pugin : A Gothic Passion*, 1994, p173

- 11 Bogan, *op.cit.*, p241
- 12 AAS, Knill box file.
- 13 Birmingham City Archives, Hardman Client Correspondence – Metal – 1850 Bundle 'K', Jan 2nd.
- 14 *The Tablet*, November 24, 1849, p737
- 15 *Ibid*.
- 16 Whose advice about this paper is gratefully acknowledged.
- 17 Birmingham City Archives, Hardman Client Correspondence – Metal – 1850–51, Bundles 'K' and 'N'.
- 18 Greenwich Local History Library, G.10B.21.12.
- 19 Wedgwood, p70, *op. cit*.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p72
- 21 Nathan Dews, *History of Deptford*, 2nd. edn. 1884, pp124–126; and in A.A.S. Deptford box file, brown paper backed, hand written, 'History of Deptford Catholic Church', c.1882.

**Michael Egan** worked in personnel management after graduating in chemistry. Since he has retired various historical essays by him, spanning the 10th to the 20th centuries, have been published. His interest in the Pugins results from the recent renovation of the church of Our Ladye Star of the Sea, in Greenwich.



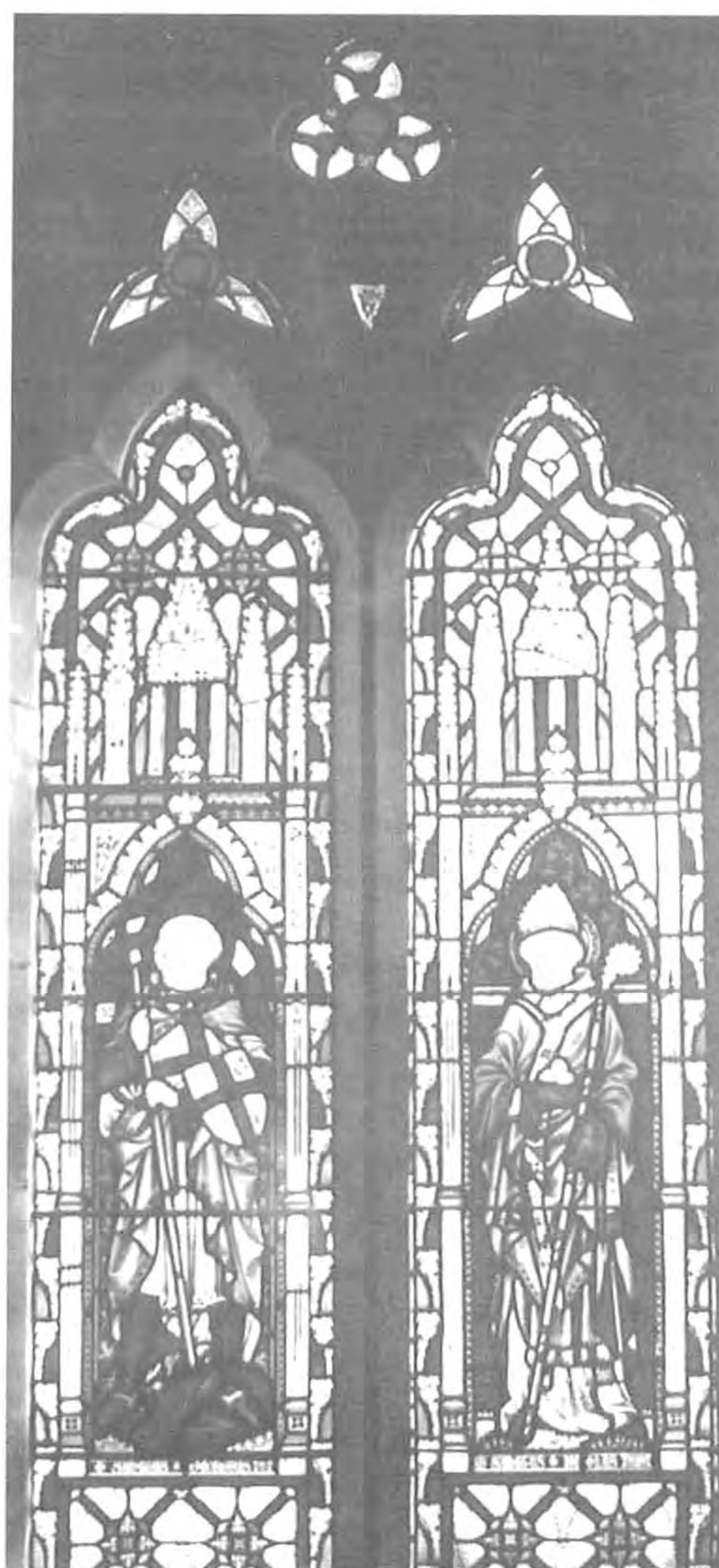
# Hardman's Stained Glass and the Transfer from Pugin to Powell

Stanley Shepherd looks at a period of transition at the firm of Hardman & Co.

When from late February 1852 until his death on September 14 in the same year, A.W.N. Pugin was too ill to continue participating in John Hardman's stained glass business, the task of creating designs for windows, and the responsibility for the production of cartoons, fell upon Hardman's twenty five year old nephew, John Hardman Powell. Powell had worked at Ramsgate from almost the start of the business in 1845, and was described by the latter as his only pupil.<sup>1</sup> From around mid 1852 he and the rest of the cartoon room staff relocated to Birmingham to produce the cartoons there in Hardman's workshop.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the windows made in 1852 – and a few in 1853 – had been ordered some months before Pugin's collapse. The correspondence suggests that items tended not to be included in the order book until agreement had been reached on the designs, so it is likely that all of these windows were conceived by Pugin. Also, because of the time-lapse between the receipt of the cartoons by Hardman in Birmingham and the completion of a window (as a rule not less than two or three months), it seems probable that Pugin supervised the drawing of the cartoons for those windows made in the early part of 1852. Examples at Bicton Mausoleum, S.S. Peter and Paul, Algarkirk, and S. Mary Magdalene, West Lavington, serve to make the point; all these windows were completed by early April 1852 and each exhibits the balanced designs and colour harmonies typical of stained glass made prior to Pugin's illness, while Pugin's letters to Hardman establish that he was indeed involved with the cartoons.

Even when Powell became accountable for the de-

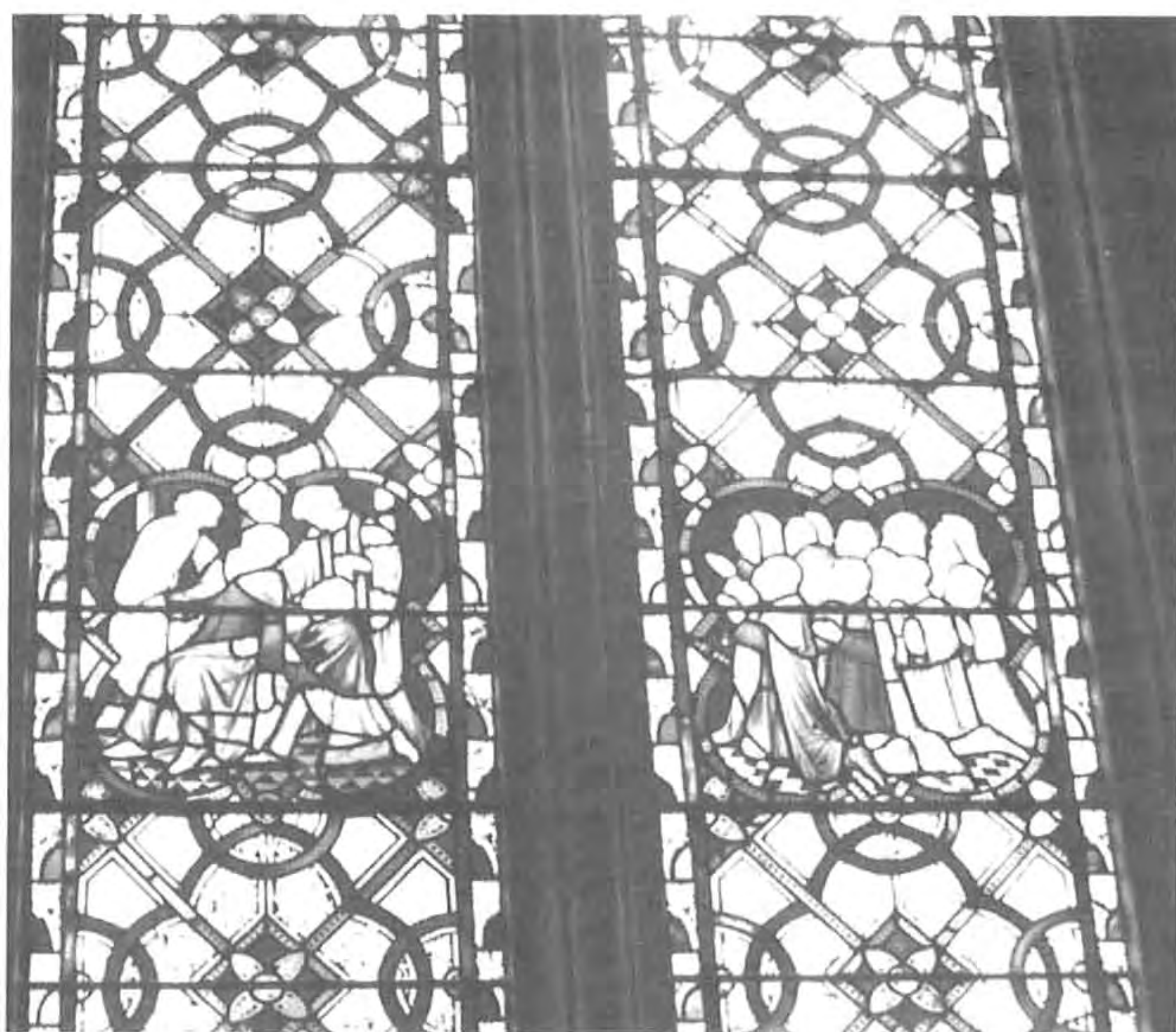


J.H. Powell: St Paul's, Brighton, north aisle, St George and St Nicholas.

signs, there were still good reasons to continue to produce works in the Pugin mode. One was continuity, for example the scheme of windows for St Paul, Brighton was still to be completed, and the windows remaining to be done needed to harmonise with those that had already been installed. Another was client pressure, as in the case of Thomas Thorp, Rector of St Nicholas, Kermerton, who, aware of Pugin's contribution, wrote: 'I meant to ask whether Mr Hardman has not got some cartoons of Mr Pugin's from which he Cd work so as to supply some of the windows in my church, now that poor Mr Pugin is [?] for work.'<sup>3</sup> and where clients may not have been aware of Pugin's role they could still have been reluctant to accept any change in what they had come to expect of a Hardman window, as is suggested by the Reverend William Wells of St John, Wigan, who, short of funds, requested: 'the lowest charge you cd make to complete such a window in a style that wd not detract from your well deserved laurels'.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, however closely he worked to Pugin's style, Powell was not Pugin, and differences can be observed. At Brighton for instance, the single figures of saints under canopies contained in the windows in the north aisle are very Puginesque, but the elongation of the figures and the sweetness, or charm, of the colours deviate from Pugin's natural proportions and subtle colour harmonies. Again, when it came to portraying figured scenes, Powell tended to be drawn towards distracting, albeit very appealing, narrative detail and lacked Pugin's skill in composing simple and harmonious arrangements that accorded with the geometrical shapes within which they were to be contained.





A.W.N. Pugin: St Chad's, Birmingham, south aisle, 'Wareing' window, detail.

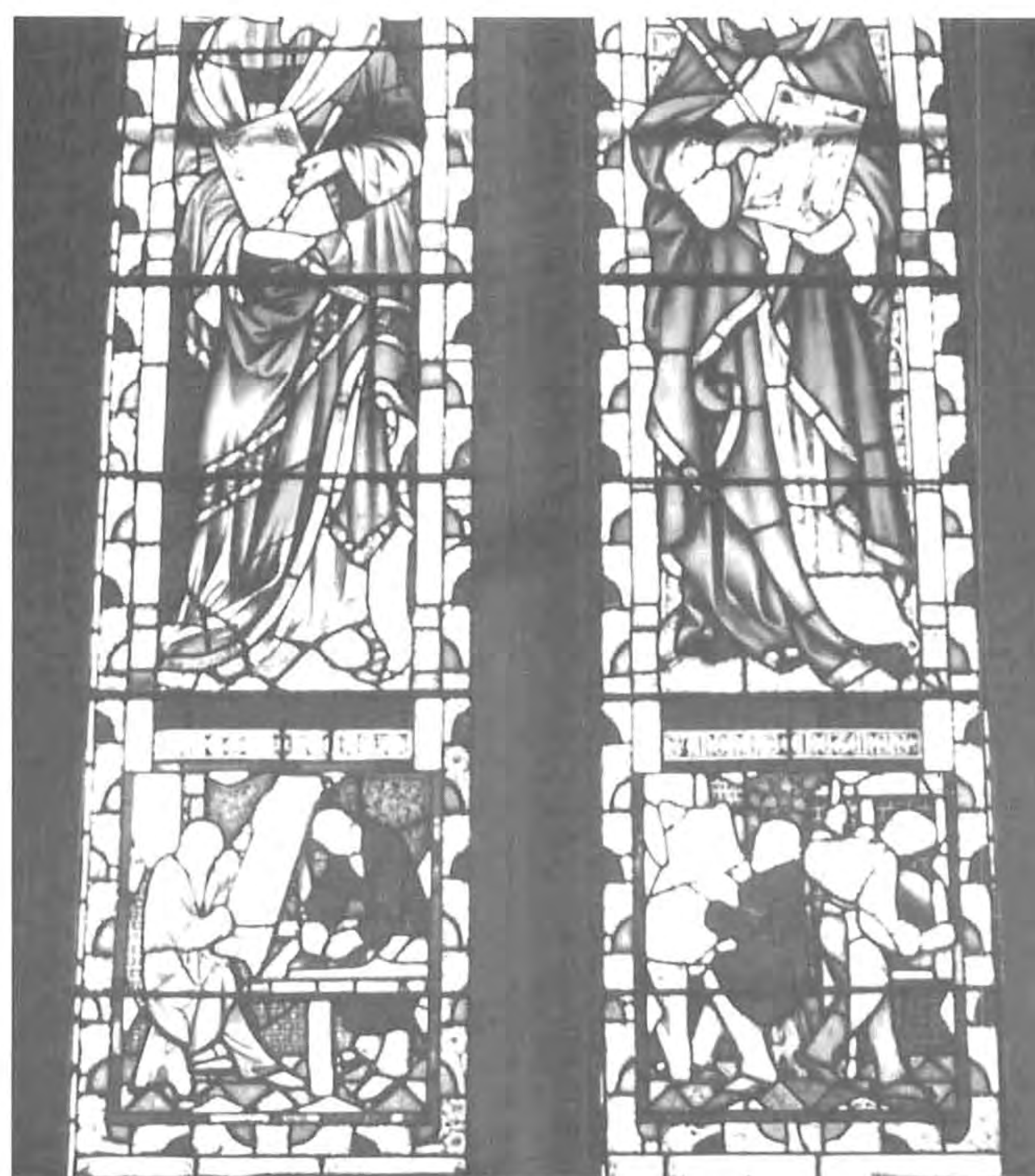
Pugin had noted this failing earlier in Powell's career, remarking in 1847, 'he is a competent man draws beautifully but does not find [?] the telling points of arrangement',<sup>5</sup> and in 1849, 'he makes beautiful drawings but thy don't fit [?] the places they are intended to fill'.<sup>6</sup> The lower panels of the lights of the two-light 'glassmakers' window, finished in late 1853 for the north aisle of St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, offer a good example of the different approaches of the two men. Pugin's design – no longer extant, but referred to in one of his letters to Hardman<sup>7</sup> – included scenes of the painters making the window and offering it, all enclosed in quatrefoils like those of the scenes in the 'Wareing' window opposite, (completed December 1850), which it was intended to complement. Powell's new design dispensed with the quatrefoils, thereby avoiding having to fit the composition within curved boundaries, and included beautifully drawn scenes that recounted the various tasks involved in making a window – drawing, cutting, painting and firing – but had no concluding depiction of the offering of the completed work. The awkwardness of Powell's designs, particularly in the panel containing illustrations of painting and firing, where the two main figures are placed back-to-back and effectively split the panel in two, compares unfavourably with Pugin's finely and simply composed scene within a quatrefoil – which shows George Wareing collapsing and dying while assisting at High Mass – in the 'Wareing' window.

Powell's attitude to figure-drawing differed from Pugin in ways other than the elongation of the forms. He put a different gloss on perceived imperfections in the work of the medieval draughtsmen. Whereas Pugin explained: 'When they failed in proportion and anatomy it was not a defect of principle, but of

execution',<sup>8</sup> Powell argued:

correct drawing, though necessary to a perfect work, is not so important as an expressive design ... So, even defective drawing receives in the old glass painting a sort of reverence, from its use in explaining grand religious ideas; not that the faulty part of it should be imitated now, merely because it is so inseparable from the talent of old masters ... The truth is, that our forefathers laid as much stress upon the intention of their work as we do upon our correct drawing – *they* on great conceptions and ideas, *we* on mere correct forms. But very much of this want of natural drawing is to be defended on true principles; that as perspective and foreshortening are not admissible, it follows that limbs must be displayed and flat – the feet shown in full or sideways – the eyes nearly full, hair painted by lines, fingers stretched out visibly; in fact, a sort of heraldic treatment throughout ... Glass drawing, however, actually requires exaggeration of action, and parts of the figure varying in strength according to the distance from the eye; thus, the meaning you could convey to a friend a few inches off by a look, requires at a few yards the movement of a finger, and at still greater distance the violent gesture of an arm. So in glass, according as the window is removed from the eye, an executioner swings his sword with more than the usual circle, and St John preaches with stronger movement than natural.<sup>9</sup>

So, while rejecting imitation of the so-called defects of the old masters, merely for 'antiquating' purposes,



J.H. Powell: St Chad's, Birmingham, north aisle, 'glassmakers' window', detail.



Powell nevertheless saw value in more expressive compositions than Pugin would have countenanced. The exaggerated gestures of many of the figures in his east window of the new chancel at St Mary, West Tofts, executed c.1855, could be taken as illustrations of his ideas.<sup>10</sup>

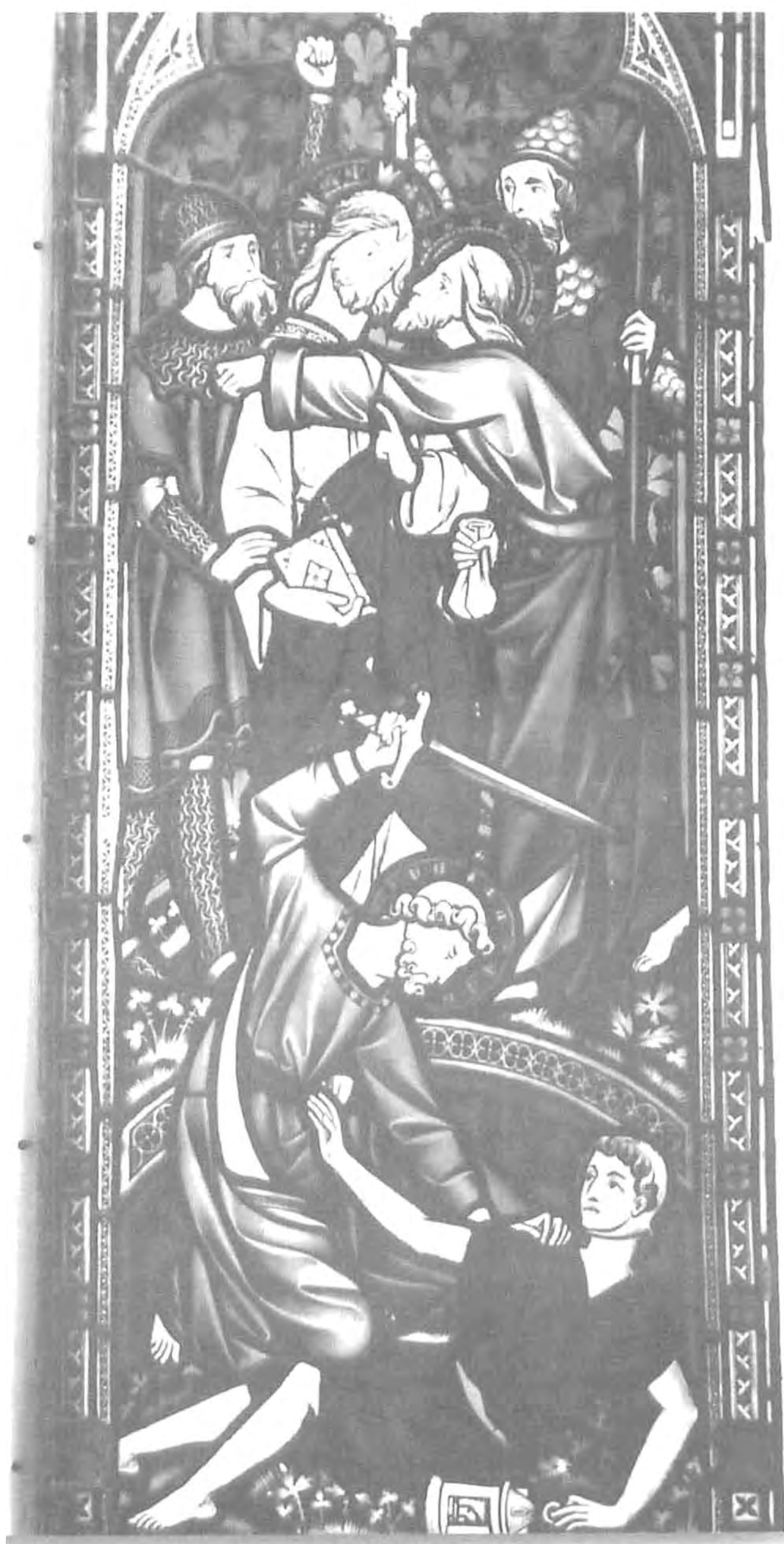
Hardman & Co continued to prosper in the years immediately following Pugin's death, indeed in 1858 the *Building News* commented: 'it [Hardman's] grew up under the auspices of Pugin, has advanced steadily and deservedly, and is now fairly and most justly established'.<sup>11</sup> The outstanding reputation the firm

acquired in Pugin's days when it was at the forefront of stained glass window making, was not, however, maintained through the 1860s, as is indicated in a letter of 1867 from the architect G.F.Bodley to the Dean of Jesus College, Cambridge regarding a window for the nave of the chapel. The letter also contains an interesting commentary on the standing of some of the notable stained glass firms operating at that time, as seen from the writer's perspective:

Heaton & Butler are not to be thought of – their glass is not worthy of a place in your Chapel. Hardman's glass is getting worse & worse – Pugin's influence started them well, but it is a great risk now what you get – the windows I have seen lately are terribly bad in *colour & drawing*. Clayton & Bell have so much to do they cannot give that attention to the work that glass demands. I still think you [had] better get a sketch from Morris.<sup>12</sup>

Morris & Co were to write the next chapter in the history of stained glass.

*All photographs are by Stanley Shepherd*



J.H.Powell: St Mary the Virgin, West Tofts. East window, detail. (Window in store, Stained Glass Museum, Ely Cathedral).

## NOTES

The information in this article has been taken from Chapter 7, 'After Pugin', of my Ph.D Thesis, *The Stained Glass of A.W.N.Pugin c.1835–52*, University of Birmingham 1997

## Abbreviations

HLRO 304: House of Lords Record Office Collection No 304 (numbered, microfilmed letters from A.W.N.Pugin to J.Hardman)

JHA: John Hardman Archive – held in Birmingham Central Reference Library

- 1 HLRO 304 Letter No.327
- 2 JHA, letter dated July 10th, 1852 from Hardman to Revd. William Wells of St John, Wigan: 'I have not got far with the window as yet because I have been moving the whole establishment from Ramsgate.'
- 3 JHA March 4th 1852
- 4 JHA May 8th 1852
- 5 HLRO 304 Letter No.5
- 6 HLRO 304 Letter No.738
- 7 HLRO 304 Letter No.476
- 8 *The Builder*, 1845, p367
- 9 *The Builder*, August 29th, 1857, p493
- 10 The window is held in store in The Stained Glass Museum, Ely Cathedral
- 11 *Building News*, April 2, 1858, p345
- 12 Quoted in D.Robinson and S.Wildman, *Morris & Company in Cambridge*, exhibition catalogue, Fitzwilliam Museum, 1980



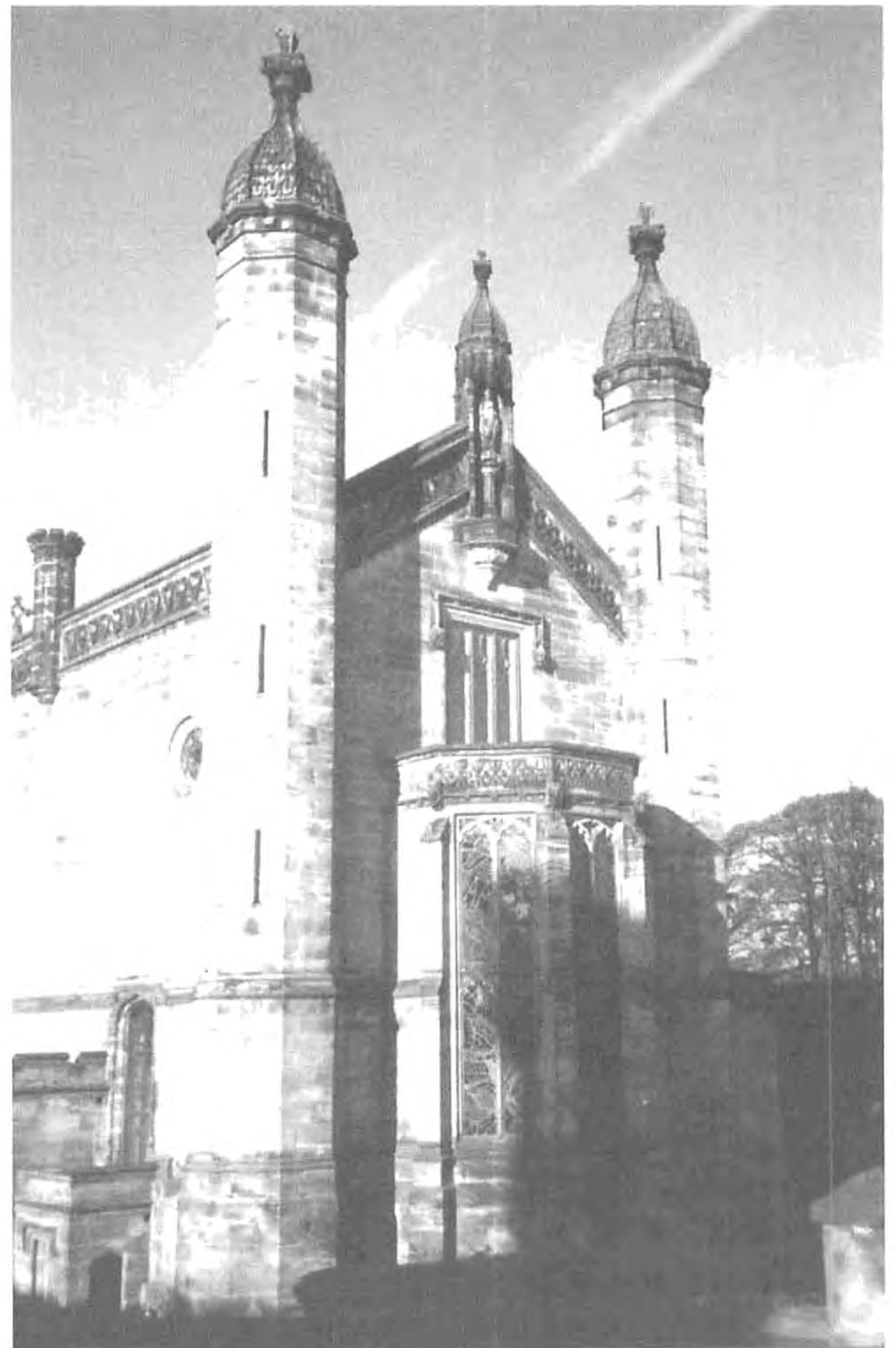
# St Peter's Chapel, Alton Towers

*How Pugin waved a magic wand over the Earl of Shrewsbury's early nineteenth-century Gothick chapel in Staffordshire is the subject of Michael Fisher's article for this issue of True Principles.*

The Bavarian Embassy Chapel where the Talbot family worshipped when in London, and where the funeral of the fifteenth Earl of Shrewsbury took place in 1827,<sup>1</sup> was to A.W.N. Pugin the epitome of everything that was detestable about the state of Catholic architecture, art, liturgy and music in the early nineteenth century. Rebuilt in 1788 by Joseph Bonomi (1739–1808) following the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots, the Warwick-Street Chapel was Italian in style, and it had all the features which infuriated Pugin, including a shallow apse instead of a proper chancel, and galleries on three sides.<sup>2</sup> If therefore Pugin referred to a church or chapel as 'a Warwickstreet' [sic], it indicated his strongest disapproval; for example the new Catholic churches he saw on a visit to Holland in 1841 were dismissed as 'Large Dutch Warwickstreets – with galleries &c. horrible'.<sup>3</sup>

When Pugin visited Alton Towers in the autumn of 1837 to begin work for the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, he would have seen for the first time the vast new chapel built on to the east end of the house in 1832–3, and how dearly one would love to know how he reacted to what was to all intents and purposes a Georgian-gothick 'Warwickstreet'; a cavernous building ninety feet long, thirty feet wide, and sixty feet high, with a shallow apse for the altar at the east end, a great gallery for the family at the west end, with another one above it for the organ and choir, and narrow side-galleries running part-way along the north and south walls. Gothic it was, as indeed it had to be, for that was the 'abbey style' of the early 1800s in which the house had been built; but it was far from 'True Principles' Gothic. There was also a profusion of architectural cast iron used in ways that to Pugin's mind were thoroughly bogus; as a substitute for stone in much of the window-tracery, as a substitute for timber for the screenwork of the gallery, and for various items of statuary. Finally, what appeared to be the panelled underside of the roof was in reality a quite separate ceiling, pitched several feet lower than the exterior roof, and supported by cast-iron corbels in the form of kneeling angels varnished to resemble stained oak. Even so, a contemporary observer expressed the view that as a domestic chapel it was 'not

surpassed in beauty and richness, we believe, by any other in England; perhaps not in Europe'.<sup>4</sup> Externally the principal features were a pair of tall ogee-capped turrets flanking the apse, and, at the south-west corner of the building, the grandest of the towers which collectively gave the entire mansion its name: over-decorated with panels and bands of Gothic ornament – too wildly for Pugin, as Pevsner remarked.<sup>5</sup> The dedication to S. Peter consciously echoed that of Alton's medieval parish church, and a statue of S. Peter was placed in a canopied niche at the apex of the east gable. The architects responsible for this curious building appear to have been Thomas Fradgley (1801–1883) of Uttoxeter, and Joseph Potter (1756–1842) of Lichfield who was appointed as architect at Oscott in 1834.<sup>6</sup> Lord Shrewsbury's domestic chaplain, Daniel Rock (1799–



East end of the Towers Chapel

Photo: Michael Fisher



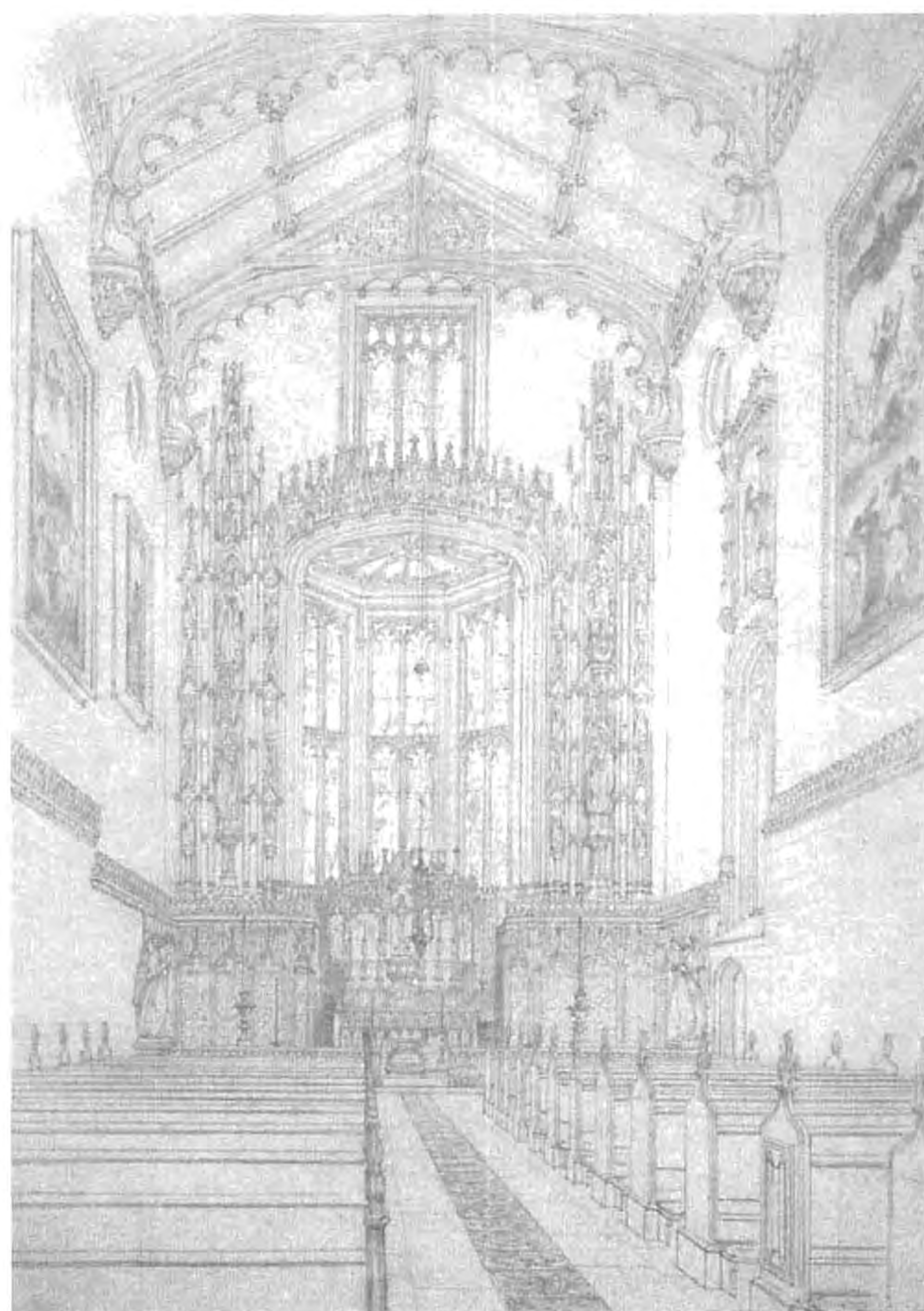
1876) was absent in Rome for most of the time that the chapel was under construction and so may have had little direct influence, but there is evidence that the earl himself took a leading part in the creation of what was doubtless intended as a dramatic statement on behalf of a newly-liberated Church in the wake of the Catholic Emancipation Act.<sup>7</sup> Unenlightened as he was in these pre-Pugin years, it is hardly surprising that the earl should have provided Alton Towers with a gothick 'Warwickstreet' with the galleries that were almost a *de rigueur* feature of Catholic chapels of the period, including those at Grafton Manor (Worcestershire) where he was born, and at Cresswell, which was the hub of the North Staffordshire Missions; or that he should have used cast-iron fittings and false ceilings which already featured prominently in other parts of the house. Structurally, the new Towers Chapel was very much a product of its age; and, short of pulling it down and starting afresh, there was nothing that Pugin could do to alter it.

Pugin's contributions to the Towers Chapel were therefore internal, and principally decorative; the transformation of a sombre oak-clad interior into something bright and vibrant; a worthy setting for the performance of the revived Sarum Rite which Dr. Rock was researching and reviving,<sup>8</sup> and which Pugin believed went hand-in-hand with 'Christian' (i.e. Gothic) architecture. First of all he set about disposing of items which he considered inappropriate and tasteless: a number of pictures and a set of four 'horrid' statues which stood on cast-iron brackets either side of the apse. Pugin was more than a little irritated when the statues turned up again in S. Wilfrid's, Hulme (Manchester). 'They pursue me like the Flying Dutchman', he wrote.<sup>9</sup> Two large figures of angels standing at floor-level, and probably made of cast iron, were suffered to remain.

Pugin's additions and alterations to the chapel were carried out in two stages; 1839–41 and 1849–50. They are brilliantly recorded in two pictures which perfectly complement the various written sources. First there is a finely-detailed pencil drawing of the chapel interior by Derby artist Samuel Rayner (1806–1879)<sup>10</sup> showing what had been done by the summer of 1840; then a watercolour of 1854 by Joseph Lynch depicting the completed scheme.<sup>11</sup> [see colour section] The first phase concerned the altar and its surroundings. Pugin retained the existing altar with its gilt-bronze frontal,<sup>12</sup> but equipped it with new missal, sanctuary lamp, candlesticks and a reliquary.<sup>13</sup> Over it he placed a new triptych reredos consisting of an elaborate frame of carved and gilded wood. A central niche contains the crucifix, and either side are painted panels – possibly by

J.R. Herbert (1810–1890) – depicting the earl and Countess in medieval dress.<sup>14</sup> The hinged side-panels have figures of S. Thomas Becket and S. Augustine of Canterbury. The reredos (now located at S. Peter's Church, Bromsgrove) stands on a predella containing seven painted panels including the Annunciation, the Nativity, and the Last Supper.

The windows in the apse, and one in the east wall above it, contained glass made in 1833 by Thomas Willement (1786–1871),<sup>15</sup> and on the lower parts of the walls either side of the apse there was a dado made of medieval panelling from the chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford.<sup>16</sup> It is not entirely clear whether or not these



Interior of the Towers Chapel after the first phase of Pugin's alterations. Pencil drawing by Samuel Rayner (1806–1879) c.1840. (Courtesy of the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent.) Photography: Guy Evans

panels were already in place when Pugin arrived at Alton. What is certain is that he had some matching ones made to flank a large crucifix which he placed on the north wall close to another feature which Pugin would have disliked, namely the cast-iron communion rails.<sup>17</sup>

The most spectacular of Pugin's additions at this



time was the Gothic screenwork covering the east wall around the apse, rising to a height of almost fifty feet. Designed to complement the ornamental woodwork of the reredos, it consisted of several tiers of gilded and painted tabernacle-work, with niches containing statues of English Saints: Edward the Confessor, Chad, Thomas of Canterbury, and George; and smaller figures of angels. In a letter to Lord Shrewsbury dated 22nd June 1840, Pugin states his intention to be at Alton to supervise the fixing of these figures.<sup>18</sup> Similar in concept to the fifteenth-century Durham altar-screen shown in *Contrasts* (1836), it was the most ambitious scheme of its kind that Pugin undertook, and he never repeated it on the same scale.

Rayner's drawing shows all of these features in place, with the exception of the large crucifix which was added a year later. Also clearly visible are copies of Raphael's *The Transfiguration* and Titian's *The Assumption*. The richness of the east end of the chapel, the gilding and the bright colours, would have stood out in sharp contrast to the dark-stained oak of the walls and ceiling. Its effect on visitors is well-documented, and in 1841 Pugin's decorative work at the Towers – both in the chapel and in the Talbot Gallery was cited before a Parliamentary Committee by Charles Barry as equally applicable to the interiors of the New Palace of Westminster.<sup>19</sup>

Joseph Lynch's watercolour clearly shows Pugin's second phase of decorative work, carried out in 1849–50. Drawings relating to these are in the Victoria & Albert Museum.<sup>20</sup> First there was the decoration of the ceiling. The rafters and braces were painted in blue and red, with gilding applied to the bosses and other ornamental features. The ceiling panels were coloured deep blue and adorned with gold stars. The cast-iron angel-corbels were also coloured and gilded. A frieze was painted on canvas panels which were fixed between the corbels.



Ceiling of the Towers Chapel as decorated by Pugin: one of the cast-iron angels, and part of the decorative frieze. National Monuments Record 1951. Crown Copyright RCHME

Each one had a sexfoiled circle containing the gilded letter M or some other symbol, and verses of Psalm 113 in impeccable black-letter. Two new pictures of saints in Gothic frames were placed either side of the east gable window, and new frames were designed for other pictures. The plain dado in the body of the chapel was decorated with coloured stencilling, and, rising from the dado beneath each of the angel-corbels, was a series of ten tall and very narrow panels with pointed tops, crockets and finials. These had the effect of dividing the side walls vertically into regular rectangles, corresponding with the principal divisions of the ceiling.

The net result of these additions and alterations left



the Towers chapel looking as rich and colourful as S. Giles', Cheadle; and although the basic structures remained the same, its internal appearance was radically different from what it had been when Pugin first saw it in 1837. 'Certainly the chapel is a wonderful improvement', he wrote to Jane Pugin, 'and altogether the work gives great satisfaction.'<sup>21</sup>

Until the opening of S. John's, Alton, in 1842, the Towers chapel served as the Catholic Mission for the villages of Alton and Farley, first under Dr. Rock, then under Dr Henry Winter who succeeded Rock in 1840. Pugin was clearly thrilled by its successful role in the Catholic Revival locally: 'The chapel at the Towers is literally crammed, and fresh converts are coming every day.'<sup>22</sup> High Mass according to the revived Sarum Rite appears to have been the norm, and there were some spectacular celebrations.<sup>23</sup> Even after the death of the

last Catholic earl – Bertram – in 1856, Low Mass continued to be celebrated until the house finally passed out of Catholic hands in 1859.<sup>24</sup> Apart from the altarpiece, which was removed to S. Peter's, Bromsgrove around this time, most of Pugin's fittings survived until 1952 when they were largely destroyed in the general asset-stripping carried out by the Towers' post-war owners. More recently (1993) the ceiling has been completely restored, along with one of its associated frieze-panels.<sup>25</sup> Significant fragments of the screenwork from the east wall still exist, and a scheme has been put forward for a full restoration. It is to be hoped that the current owners – the Tussauds Group – will see fit to continue the good work already begun in what was arguably one of Pugin's most spectacular interiors outside the Palace of Westminster. It would be a fitting local tribute in this 150th anniversary year.

## Notes

- 1 According to the *Annual Register* 1827 p241 the earl's funeral took place 'in a style of extraordinary pomp and splendour'.
- 2 J.F.Bentley (1839–1902) built the present apse in 1874, and carried out marble and mosaic decorations somewhat later.
- 3 Letter from Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, 17 August 1841; Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N.Pugin*, vol.1, 1830 to 1842, OUP 2001 (hereinafter referred to as Belcher 2001), p263
- 4 *Catholic Magazine and Review*, vol.5, 1834, p662
- 5 *Buildings of England: Staffordshire*, 1974, p57
- 6 Fradgley is known to have been builder-architect at Alton Towers between about 1830 and 1838, and in 1832 – significantly perhaps – a payment of £1,000 was made from the Alton estate accounts to 'Mr. Potter, Lichfield'; *Shrewsbury Papers*, Staffs. County Record Office D240/E/F/2/24 p14. See also M.J.Fisher, *Alton Towers: A Gothic Wonderland*, 1999, pp55, 87, 143
- 7 White's *Directory of Staffordshire*, 1834, p725, refers to the Towers Chapel as 'having been finished under the architectural directions of the present earl'. The old chapel, on the north front of the house, was converted into a drawing room.
- 8 Rock's *Hierurgia*, a detailed exposition of the Mass mainly for the benefit of Protestants, was written with Lord Shrewsbury's active support and encouragement. It was published in the year that the Towers Chapel was opened, and on the earl's birthday (18th March 1833).
- 9 Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, November 1847: *House of Lords Record Office, Historical Collection* 339/71; see also Alexandra Wedgwood, *A.W.N.Pugin and the Pugin Family*, V&A 1985, no.19. The statues are also referred to in the *Catholic Magazine* article, see above, n.4.
- 10 This drawing is one of a set of six of the Towers interiors done, it seems, around the time of Queen Adelaide's visit to Alton in the summer of 1840. They are now at the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. They have been reproduced in M.J.Fisher, *Alton Towers*, 1999, and *Pugin-Land*, 2002
- 11 The painting is owned by Tussauds Ltd., and is currently kept in the Chief Executive's offices at Alton Towers.
- 12 The altar is shown in Daniel Rock's *Hierurgia*, vol.II, 1833, p656
- 13 These items are mentioned in letters from Pugin to Daniel Rock, 3 April and 9 May 1839; Southwark Archdiocesan Archives T-R 179; Belcher 2001, pp113–115. Other metalwork commissions from Hardmans for the Towers Chapel are listed in Belcher 2001, p337
- 14 Herbert painted the panels for Pugin's reredos at Oscott (1837) which is similar in style to that for the Towers chapel.
- 15 Willement's work for Alton Towers is listed in British Library Add. MSS 5243, pp12–23
- 16 Magdalen College Chapel was restored in 1829–34 by L.N.Cottingham (1787–1847). The panels are referred to in *London & Dublin Orthodox Journal*, vol. XI, 1840, p112 as having come from Magdalen, so presumably they were removed by Cottingham.
- 17 In a letter to Lord Shrewsbury, 5 December 1841, Pugin refers to 'a canopy for the crucifix which fills up the vacant space beyond the communion rail in a very satisfactory manner. I have had 2 panels done narrow and carved to match the antient ones'; Belcher 2001, p297. The crucifix, dossal and canopy are discernible on the Joseph Lynch painting of 1854.
- 18 Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, Belcher 2001, p137
- 19 There is a detailed description of the chapel in 1840 in the *London & Dublin Orthodox Journal*; see n.16 above. Charles Barry's opinion of Pugin's work at Alton is recorded in the *Report of the Select Committee of Fine Arts*, House of Commons 1841, Minutes 120–121.
- 20 *Wedgwood* 1985, nos.179–185
- 21 Letter from Pugin to Jane Pugin, 1 May 1850, *Wedgwood* 1985, no.83
- 22 Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, 30 June 1841, Belcher 2001 p250
- 23 The elaborate liturgical arrangements for the reception of Louisa Pugin into the Catholic Church, which took place in the Towers chapel on 8 May 1839, are described in detail in *Catholic Magazine* vol. III 1839, pp498–99. See also M.J.Fisher, *Alton Towers*, pp151–2
- 24 A detailed account of a visit to the chapel in June 1859 is contained in *Mary Howitt: an Autobiography*, London 1889, volIII pp127–9
- 25 Fisher, *op.cit.*, pp155–6



# It All Melts Away: A.W.N. Pugin in Oxford

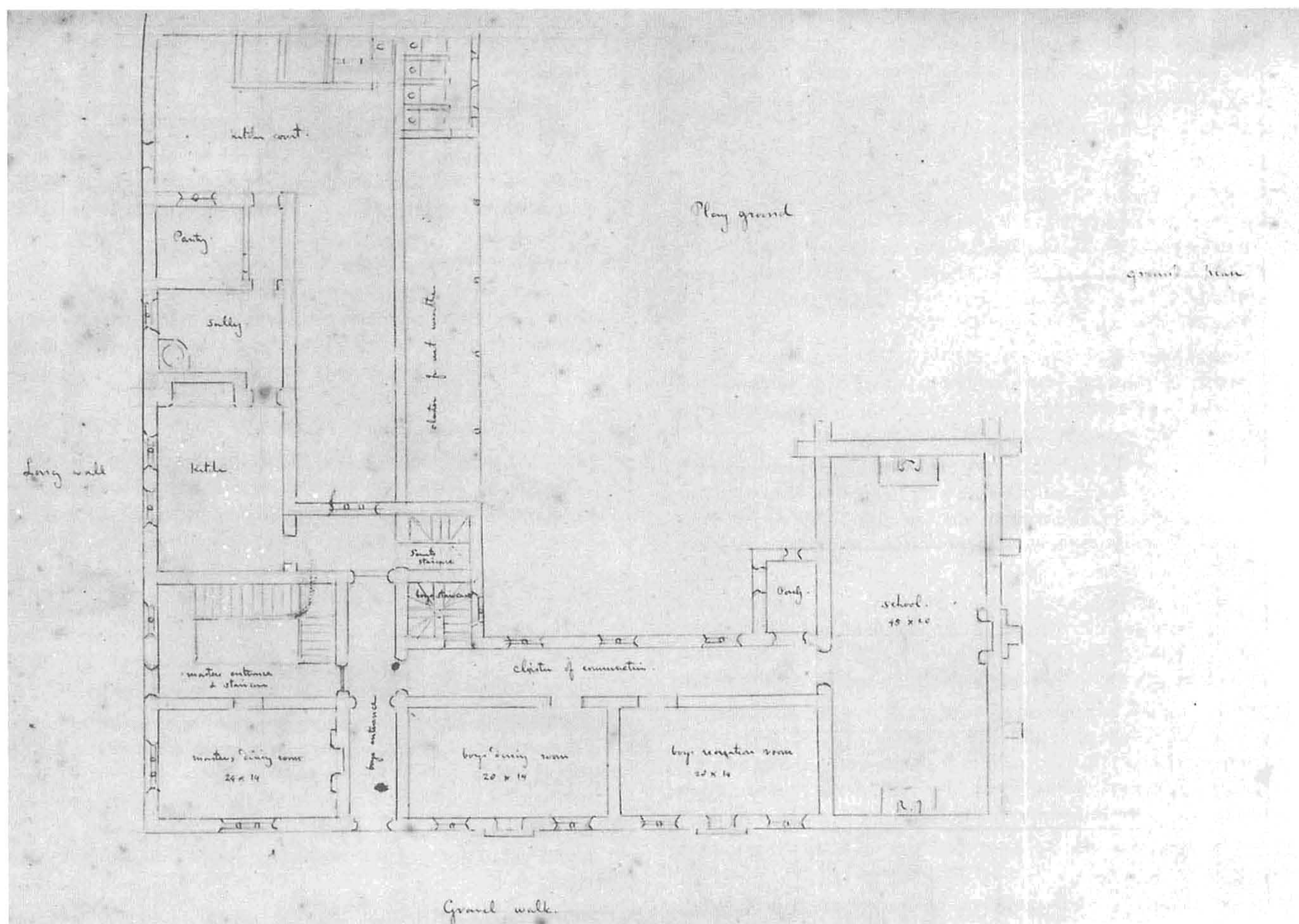
Timothy Brittain-Catlin looks at some A.W.N.P. proposals in Oxford, and wonders just how much of a functionalist Pugin really was.

One of A.W.N. Pugin's major projects to have escaped much critical notice is a series of ambitious schemes for Magdalen College School in Oxford. Between 1843 and 1848, he prepared at least six designs for this choristers' school, following its decision to rebuild.<sup>1</sup> Of the six proposals, the first three are schemes for a complete rebuilding on a site immediately to the west of the College; there then follow various alternatives for the school Hall alone. There is no record of any formal invitation to Pugin to submit designs – he spurned a proposed competition – and the impression is that he was bombarding a potential client with unsolicited work, fuelled by the sheer passion of design, and the feeling that the future of a Gothic Revival lay largely upon his own shoulders.

The first proposal is introduced with an undated letter to his friend, Magdalen fellow John Bloxam, as combining 'great convenience with a venerable Looking

exterior'.<sup>2</sup> In fact, it has an unnecessarily large amount of corridor, and a trick or two on the exterior: most notably, a projecting dining room facing the College styled as if it were a chapel. On the upper floor, the Master's bedroom is placed with its door at the junction of two imposing corridors; that leading directly away from the door runs between the sixteen sleeping cubicles of the choristers.

Pugin claimed in a subsequent letter to Bloxam that 'unless persons were well versed in the spirit of antient design they could not appreciate or understand a building such as I sketched'.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, this design seems to have been greeted with some confusion on the part of the College, for Pugin writes later to Bloxam to explain that they were 'mere sketches' and that he 'should not think of receiving any remuneration';<sup>4</sup> before long he writes again, however, requesting a site plan and to confirm various practical considerations.<sup>5</sup> The outcome

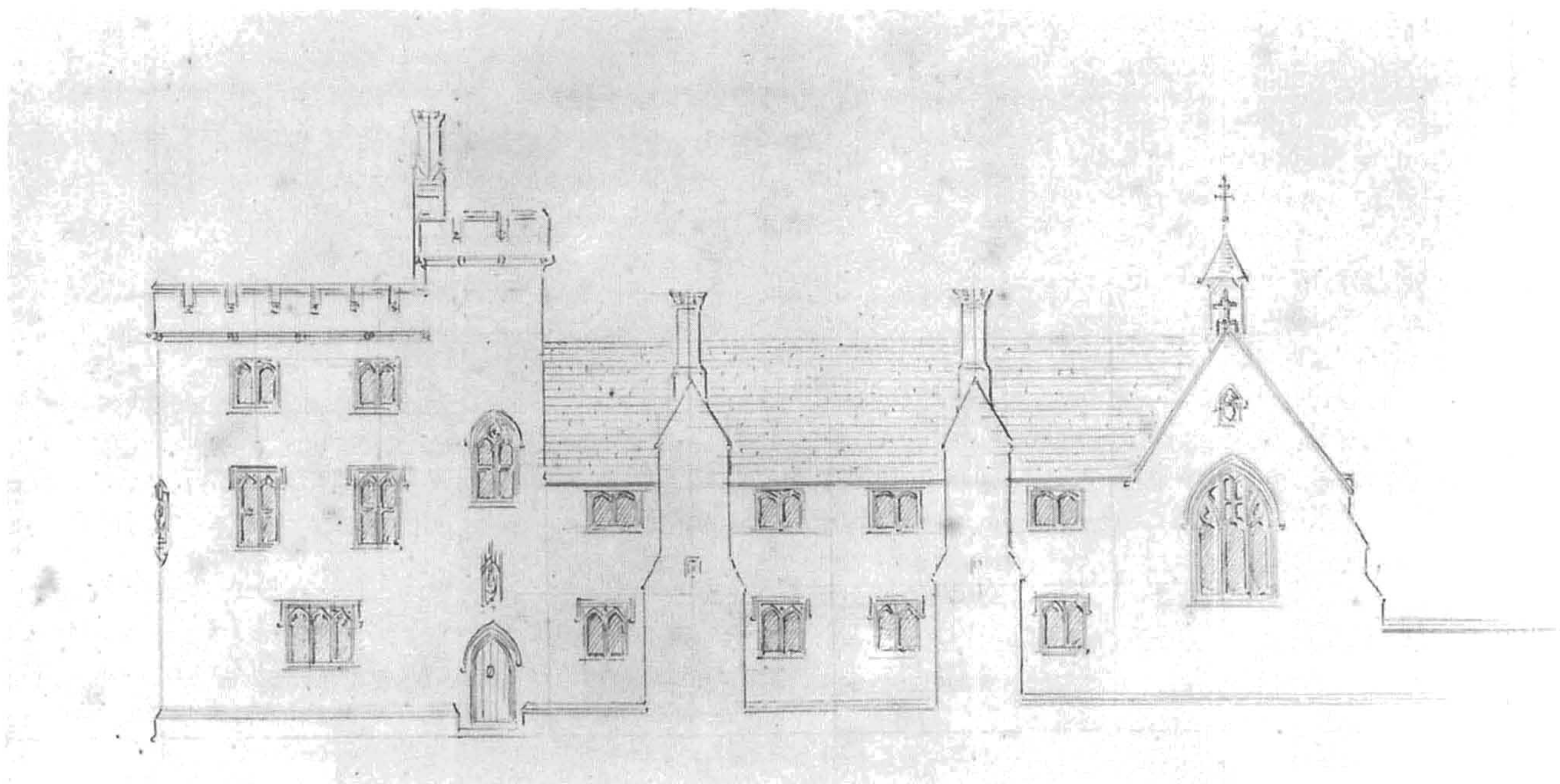


Ground plan of the second scheme for Magdalen College School (1844).



was the magnificent second scheme, and it provides evidence of Pugin's own method of planning at exactly the period when the new Palace of Westminster, the fruit of his collaboration with Barry, was at last taking shape above the ground.

north-south from the boys' entrance. At the opposite corners of the intersection there are staircases – a broad dog-leg for the Master and a winding one for the boys. The north-south corridor is terminated at a T-junction with further corridor, and this has a third staircase



High Street elevation of the second scheme (1844).

It often seems difficult to make Pugin's work at Westminster an integral part of the story of the rest of his career; Phoebe Stanton, for example, condensed his designs there into a couple of pages towards the end of her monograph, rather as if they had been done by some other person called Pugin. Indeed, the architect who carried out this unprecedentedly rich, magnificently creative and original work does not sound much like Pevsner's first functionalist.<sup>6</sup> How much of a 'functionalist' he was in the Pevsnerian sense can be judged by a thorough look at his Magdalen project, which was devised for his closest friend and was clearly important to him.

This is 1844, the year in which Pugin was being wooed by Barry to continue his work at Westminster. One might have expected his planning at this period to show that he was learning from Barry's skills in the organisation of spaces. Not a bit of it. The second Magdalen scheme is awash with theatrical and decorative devices. Reception and dining rooms for the boys link the Master's house (at the south-west corner) and the Hall (at the south-east), and a parallel east-west corridor provides dramatic *enfilade* effects right across the building. This corridor meets another, which runs

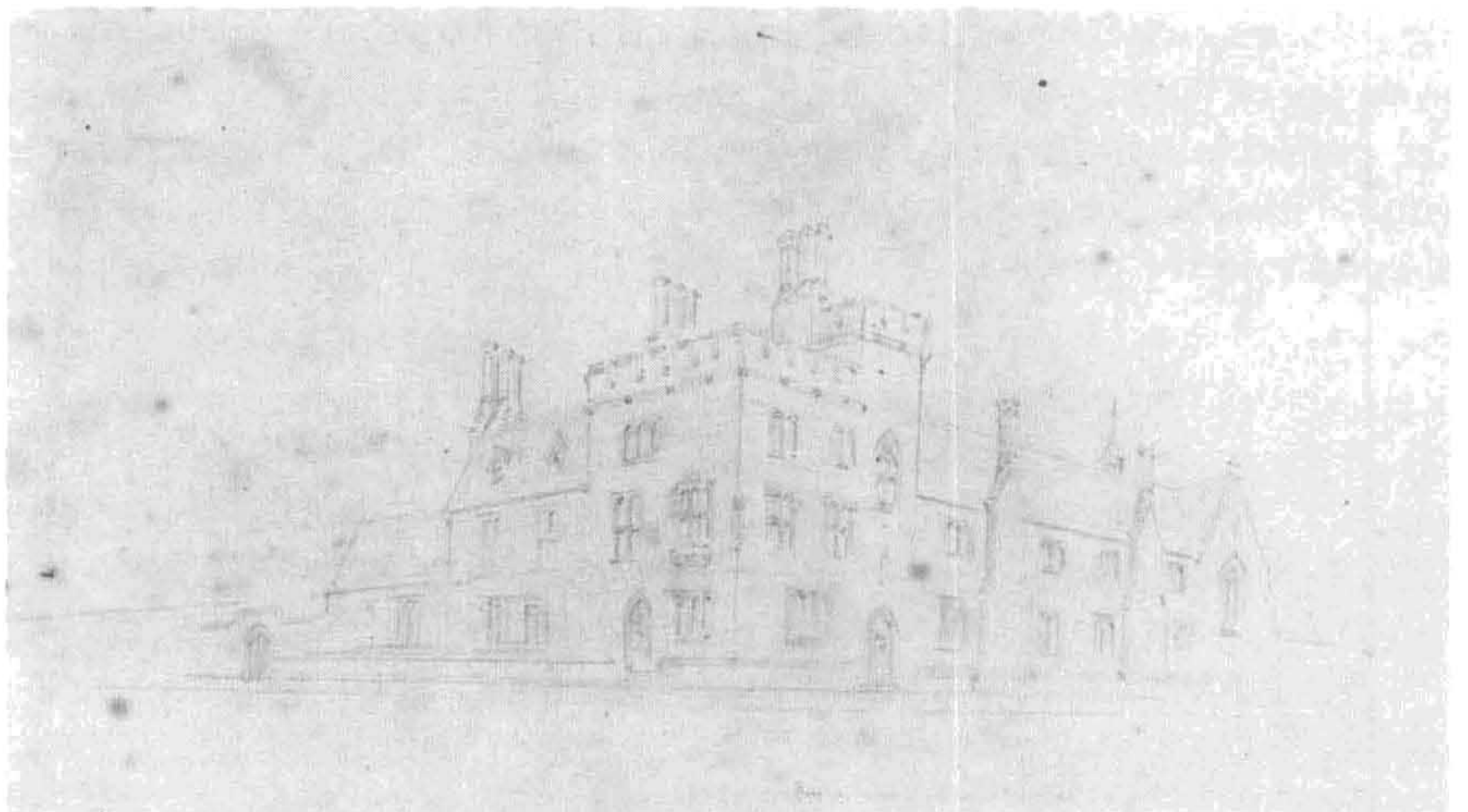
tucked into one corner, and an off-axis window into the yard. Beyond the kitchen there is a 'cloister for wet weather' which is perversely unreachable from the inside. On the floor above, the corridor at the centre of the boys' dormitory emerges off-centre onto a transverse landing which has no fewer than four staircases leading onto or off it. The perspective and elevation for this scheme show a compact mass, with a bold crenellated corner tower, not unlike the early seventeenth century one at Cotehele in Cornwall.<sup>7</sup>

A third scheme has a much looser composition; Pugin has evidently been persuaded by Bloxam to make the Hall roof an Oxford-type flat one, but otherwise it maintains the theme of interlocking corridors with multiple staircases at the interstices. One imagines the architect conjuring up a vision of Bloxam, who adored his choristers, standing begowned at one of these junctions watching approvingly as the boys with their candles marched up and through what were clearly a series of *proscenium* arches; the light striking the architecture, and the little faces, from various carefully orchestrated directions that had little to do with 'function'. In fact, from surviving correspondence it seems unlikely that there was or had ever been a request to design a Mas-



ter's house at all. In the event, a lawsuit brought against the College delayed all building plans, and when this was finally out of the way in 1849, Pugin was paid a fee of £5<sup>8</sup> and it was John Buckler who received, and executed, the commission for the new buildings.<sup>9</sup>

The contradictions between function and effect, and between serving an establishment and redefining it, are illustrated at Magdalen just as they are in Pugin's contemporary work at Westminster. Hinting at them, he wrote in *Some Remarks* that 'it is in dress as in architecture, whatever is superfluous or unnecessary is bad in taste. Enrichment must be confined to the decoration of that which is really useful in attire'; and that 'It should be remembered that the whole restoration [of Gothic] has been a series of experiments, everything had to be created from the employer to the artizan'.<sup>10</sup> These are significant comments. Pugin presumably did not consider the functionaries of the politicised Church and modern aristocracy to be 'really useful', and when he designed their parliament house, he must occasionally have had his tongue firmly in his cheek. In the case of Magdalen College, he tried perhaps similarly to 'create his employer': he ignored instructions, and he designed what was to some extent an architecture of the emotions, a conjuring-up for his dear friend Bloxam of a utopian vision of impossible antiquity and love. He was surely aware of these things in his last desperate years when he wrote bitterly of lost illusions: 'it all melts away like a dream'.<sup>11</sup> One



Perspective view (from the corner of Longwall Street and High Street) of the second scheme (1844).

imagines him by the light of a candle somewhere inside his unrealised Magdalen schemes, and looking along those impossibly theatrical corridors of his, and seeing the lights fading away, signalling, as it were, the end of the play.

*All unpublished correspondence between Pugin and Bloxam is quoted by kind permission of the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford. The illustrations are reproduced by kind permission of Magdalen College School.*

*All photographs are by John Gibbons.*

## NOTES

(MCO: the archives of Magdalen College, Oxford.)

- 1 On 15th November 1843. R.S.Stanier, *Magdalen School, A History of Magdalen College School Oxford*, Oxford, 1958, p151
- 2 MCO MS 528/72.
- 3 Dated 22/11/43 – a week after the decision to rebuild! MCO MS 528/73.
- 4 Undated. MCO MS 528/171.
- 5 Undated. MCO MS 528/164.
- 6 My gloss, derived from Nikolaus Pevsner, 'a short Pugin florilegium', *Architectural Review*, vol xciv (1943), pp 31–4, and the same author's *The Sources of Modern Architecture and Design*, London, 1968, p9
- 7 A blatant example of Pugin employing precisely the type of late Gothic that he claimed to despise. An illustrated book on Cotehele by the Rev J.Blundell had been published in 1839.
- 8 14/2/1849. MCO MS 528/165.
- 9 Stanier, *op.cit.*, p154
- 10 AWN Pugin, *Some Remarks on the articles which have recently appeared in the 'Rambler'*, London, 1850, p9; p15
- 11 AWN Pugin, *Church and State; or Christian Liberty. An Earnest Address on the Establishment of the Hierarchy* (1850), with introduction by E.W.Pugin, London, 1875, p25



Perspective view (from the corner of Longwall Street and High Street) of the third scheme (1844).



# The Right Thing at the Antipodes

Brian Andrews considers the approach to Puginian Gothic in Australia, finally focussing on an outstandingly 'pure' example of Pugin's work in Tasmania.

Nineteenth-century Australian society saw itself as British in all respects but geography. It is thus not surprising that its architects and their patrons embraced the Gothic Revival – in which Pugin played such a seminal role – every bit as enthusiastically as their counterparts in what they liked to call 'the home country'.

From Broome to Ballarat and Zetland to Zeehan this wide brown land is dotted with churches ranging from little wooden boxes with pointed doors and windows to splendid cathedrals larger than any attempted in nineteenth-century England.<sup>1</sup> All testify to that obstinately tenacious belief in the Gothic equals Christian equation so superficially derived from Pugin's writings. When, in heaping praise on the clumsy design for a new Catholic cathedral in Adelaide, a reporter for the *Mercury and Sporting Chronicle* referred in 1851 to its architect Richard Lambeth as the 'Pugin of South Australia',<sup>2</sup> he was both choosing the highest accolade he could find and testifying to the fact that Pugin's reputation was already widely known and accepted at the antipodes during his lifetime.

Yet for Pugin the revival of Gothic architecture was only a consequence – if a key one – of his single-minded crusade to bring about a comprehensive revivification of the physical, liturgical and devotional life of the medieval English church. The architectural and decorative underpinning of this ideal, although with romantic and aesthetic dimensions, was essentially theological, arising from Pugin's deep and passionate conviction of the truth of the Catholic Church and his conclusion that '*the excellence of art was only to be found in Catholicism ... in its own venerable garb ...*'<sup>3</sup> And this was so crucial because: 'If men could only be led to view Catholic truth, not as she appears at the present time, not as she is distorted by popular prejudice, but in her ancient solemn garb, what immense results might we not expect!'<sup>4</sup>

At the core of Pugin's belief about Catholicism and the efficacy, indeed absolute essentiality, of re-establishing the plenitude of its medieval nexus with architecture, art and liturgical practice, was the divine attribute of truth. 'I am the Way; I am Truth and Life.'<sup>5</sup> For Pugin, these Gothic forms were above all else sacramental; they were channels of grace. He believed that the 'revival or decline of true Ecclesiastical architecture is commensurate with that of the true faith. It is for these reasons that we labour for its restoration

and not as a mere abstract question of art.'<sup>6</sup>

Judged by these lofty standards the quest to uncover Pugin's Australian legacy becomes considerably more difficult. We are looking for churches that are *liturgically* planned and furnished in accordance with the detailed prescriptions contained in his 1841 *Dublin Review* article 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England'.<sup>7</sup> Further, it is clear from this article – and from the evidence of his own buildings – that the liturgy for which Pugin designed all his Catholic churches (except in the rare instances where he was pressured to do otherwise) was the late medieval English Sarum Use, a minor variant in non-essentials of the Roman Rite then prevailing throughout Western Christendom.

While local architects like Wardell and Denny built on their English experience to produce elegant churches in a scholarly idiom based on medieval precedent, most of Pugin's non-negotiable chancel furnishings (rood screen, sedilia, Easter sepulchre and standard candlesticks) were invariably omitted by them. Likewise, the church designs sent to Australian clients by Charles Hansom, one of Pugin's most faithful followers, were realised without these furnishings, despite evidence from his drawings that he intended to include at least some of them.

This leaves us with Pugin's own designs for Archbishop John Bede Polding of Sydney and Bishop Robert William Willson of Hobart.<sup>8</sup> In the former case the designs were mechanically reproduced with a full complement of furnishings, but there is no evidence that Polding held any brief for the resuscitation of the Use of Sarum. Sedilia gathered dust and Easter sepulchres remained incomprehensible alcoves in chancel walls.

Willson was different. He was one of Pugin's closest clerical friends and perhaps the only one who both fully subscribed to Pugin's vision and intended to make it happen, initially in Nottingham and then, as first Bishop of Hobart Town, across the length and breadth of Van Diemen's Land (later Tasmania). Writing in 1859 to a clerical colleague in Melbourne, he recalled Pugin's reaction – probably during an overnight visit to Nottingham on 3 September 1842<sup>9</sup> – to news of the confirmation of his episcopal appointment: 'Poor Pugin ... rubbed his hands, and smiling, said with great energy: "only think, the right thing will find its way at the antipodes"!'<sup>10</sup>





Interior of Pugin's St Paul's Church, Oatlands, Tasmania, c.1910. The church was designed in 1843 and built in 1850–51.  
(Courtesy, Tom Hazell)

We need go no further than the accompanying c.1910 rare archival photograph of the interior of Pugin's diminutive St Paul's Church, Oatlands, to see how earnestly Willson strove to achieve the 'right thing'. Beyond the shallow latter-day frippery on either side of the chancel arch and behind the rood screen is a near-perfect Sarum Use setting still in place some thirty-four years after Willson's death. The sedilia are on the right, and there are standard candlesticks, but the sepulchre in

the north wall has by now been filled in. The altar, by Willson's protégé architect Henry Hunter, is based on two illustrations in Pugin's *Glossary* and has been decorated and gilded by him.

Sadly, Pugin's total vision must be judged a failure by his own standards, for this little church, just like its infinitely more majestic English counterpart, St Giles', Cheadle, never saw the Sarum liturgy for which it was designed and furnished.

## NOTES

- 1 See my *Australian Gothic: The Gothic Revival in Australian Architecture from the 1840s to the 1950s*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2001.
- 2 *Mercury and Sporting Chronicle*, 26 April 1851, p871
- 3 A.Welby Pugin, *Contrasts*, 2nd edn, Charles Dolman, London, 1841, p15
- 4 Pugin, *loc.cit.*
- 5 Jn 14:6.
- 6 A.Welby Pugin, 'Catholic Church Architecture', *Tablet*, vol.IX, no.435, 2 September 1848, p563
- 7 A.Welby Pugin, 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, vol.X, May 1841, pp301–48.
- 8 Pugin's Australian oeuvre is comprehensively treated in my exhibition catalogue *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2002.
- 9 Pugin's diary for 1842, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, Pressmark 86 MM 61, L5163 1969.
- 10 Willson to Fitzpatrick, Shrove Tuesday [1859], Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission.



# As I Was Going To St Ives

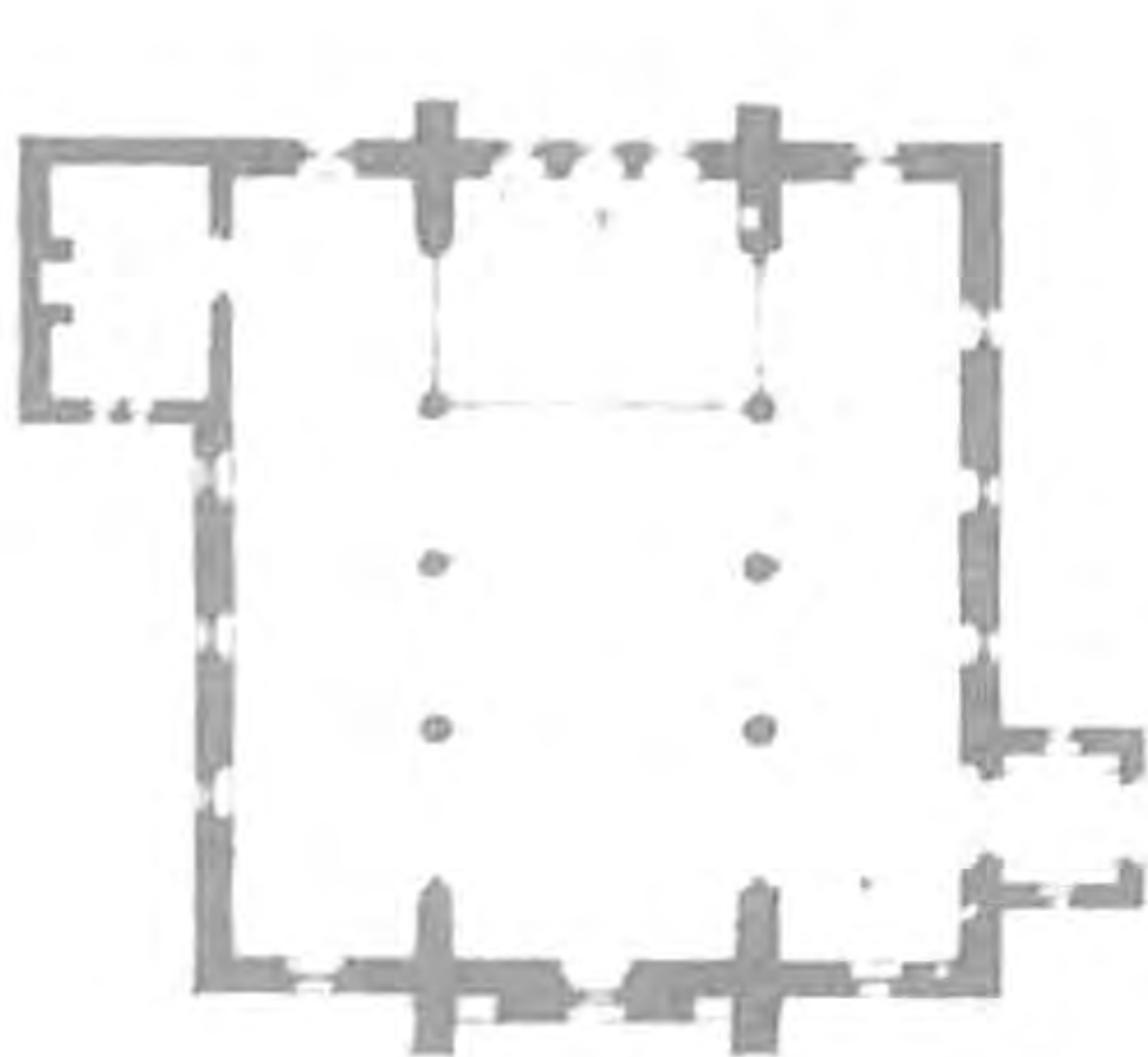
A report by **John Purkis** on the curious and somewhat puzzling history of an A.W.Pugin church, which began its life in Cambridge. Comment from members who know this church, or who intend to go and see it, would be welcome.

This year the Church of the Sacred Heart at St Ives, Cambridgeshire, celebrates its centenary. In the brochure obtainable at the church it is described as Pugin's 'little gem'; this attribution might make a devoted Puginian pause, for how could the master have worked here in 1902? In fact it is, in all essentials, none other than the church of St Andrew, which was built in Cambridge seven years after Pugin's conversion to Catholicism in 1835.

The church at Cambridge has a well-known history; it was designed in 1841 and erected in 1842. The *Cambridge Chronicle* reported the 'Opening of the New Romanist Chapel' on 4 December 1842: architectural comment is sparse, but we are told that it is 'a neat little building... after a design ... by Mr Pugin'. The illustration shows the original form of the church.

some reorientation was necessary. The whole church is skewed out of the traditional compass direction, so that the altar is now situated on the north-west side. The porch is now on the opposite side of the church to that shown in the plan, but in line with its original position. The font was re-positioned. On 12 July 1902, the *Huntingdonshire Post* contained a long article, headed 'The new Roman Catholic Church at St Ives: Opening Festival'. It was clearly described:

The building, which is of red brick with stone quoins, is nearly square in plan and has aisles divided off by arcades of four bays ... the customary ornaments have a massive appearance. The clerestory, a feature absent from the church formerly, gives a good light to the interior. The architects engaged have been Mr Morley of Cambridge and Mr Robb of St Ives.



*Design for the New Catholic Church of St Andrew, Cambridge*

Design for the New Catholic Church of St Andrew, Cambridge  
(Courtesy, Cambridgeshire Collection)

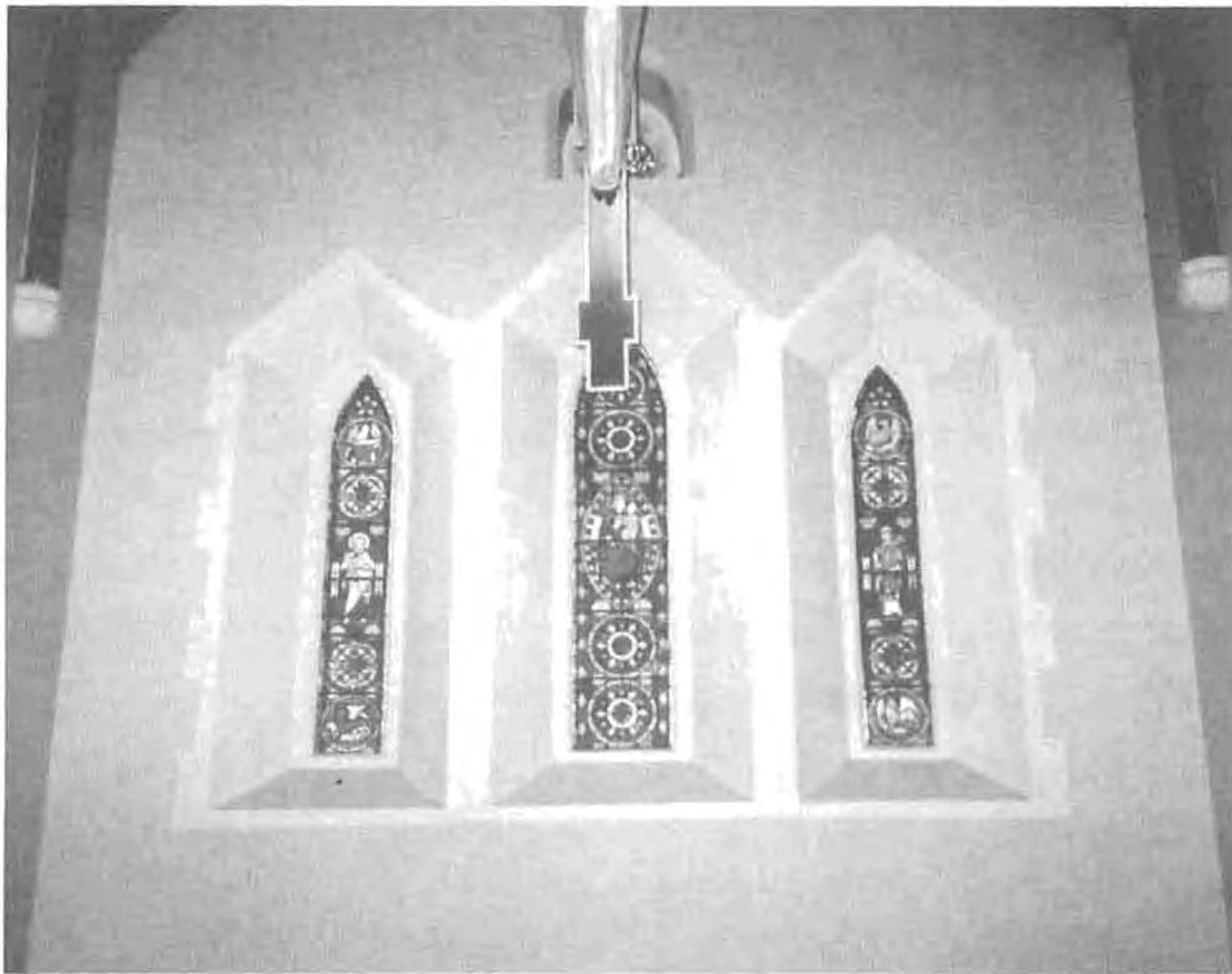
In 1890 the present Catholic Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs was constructed nearby. It is on a grand scale, and must have seemed overwhelming; Pugin's little church was no longer needed.

In 1902 the whole building (which had already undergone alteration in Cambridge) was dismantled, and the materials were taken by barge to St Ives, where the structure was needed for a congregation of some fifty persons. It was quickly re-built, with a few minor variations, in Needingworth Road. In the first place,

It was open to the public during the second weekend in September 2001, and I was able to look round. First impressions are favourable, until one realises that there is a startling void in what would normally be the south aisle. The puzzle is to sort out what is really Pugin, and to understand more clearly what has happened in the last hundred years. It is difficult to tell what is original among the fittings, for the church was attacked in 1906, windows were smashed, and some of the furniture has been destroyed. The lancets in the east wall have been



restored, and the glass appears to be the original work, by William Wailes.



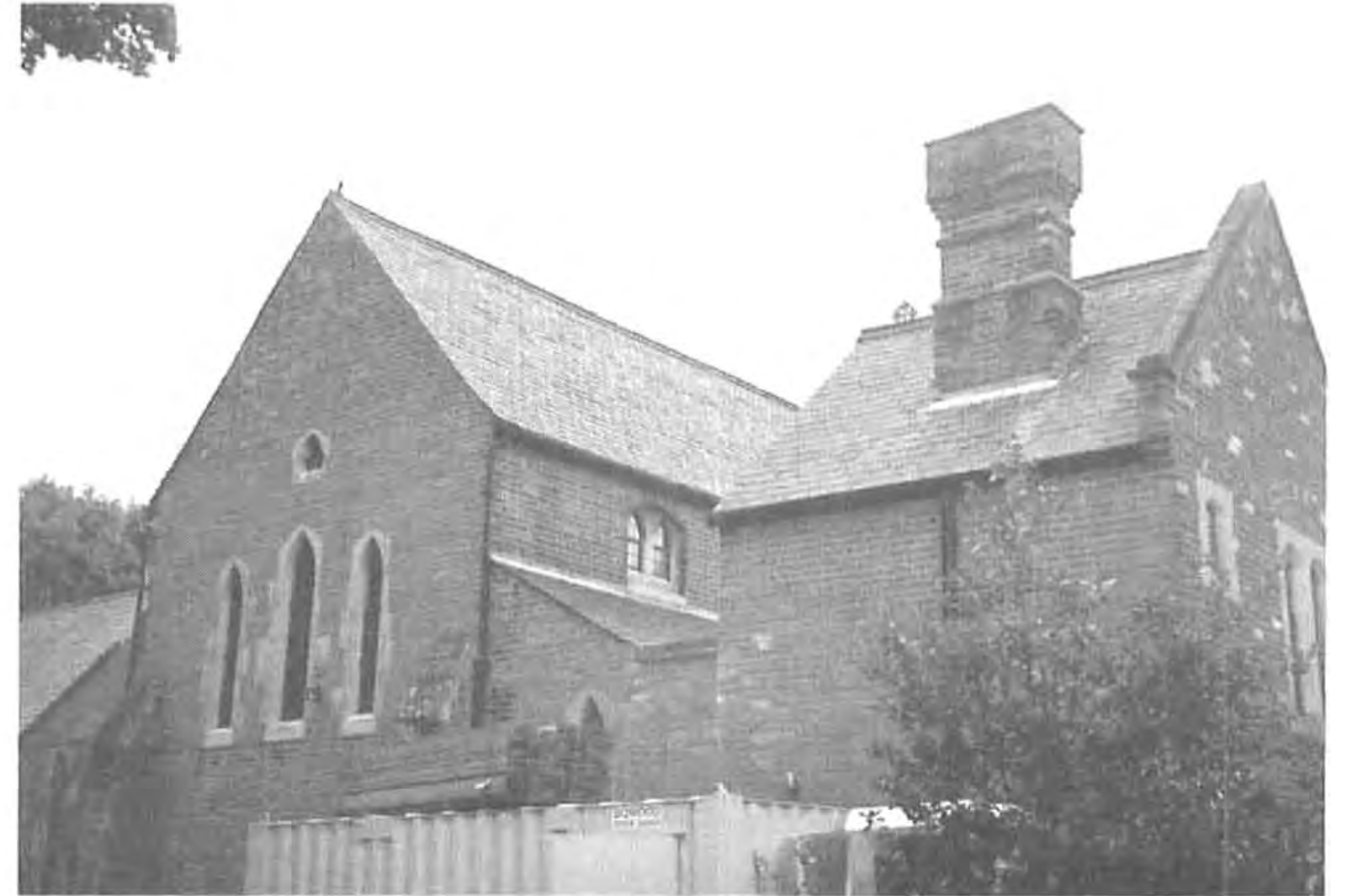
The lancet windows at the 'east' end (plus base of crucifix).

Photo: John Purkis

At a later date the main altar was moved, to complement a more contemporary liturgy, and in 1977 an extension was added by Julian Limentani, new pews were introduced and also a new stained glass window. The church therefore, at eye level, looks more recent than it really is; the curious extension is a surrealist capriccio, as most of the south wall has disappeared and seems to have been replaced by a rather featureless sitting area. Obviously a larger number of people can be present and can see what is going on; but the carefully

shaped and enclosed box that Pugin built has gone.

Further alterations to the entire area surrounding the church were being undertaken at the time of my visit, but it is still possible to see some of the features of the original building.

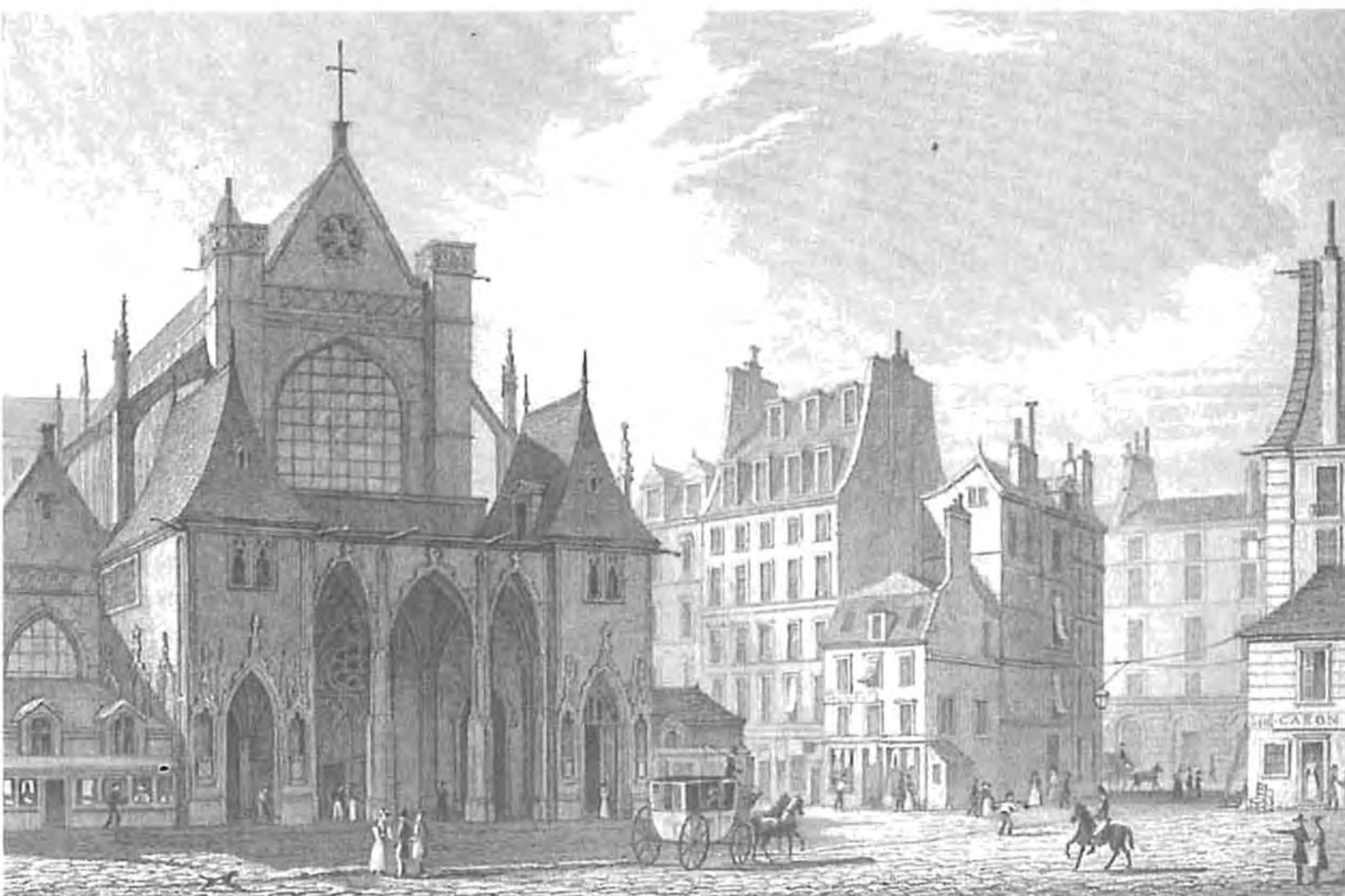


View showing the lancet windows of the east end; the building to the right is the presbytery, added in 1906.

Photo: John Purkis

I hope that the rather prominent accumulations of building materials will be removed in the near future, and that it will be possible to get closer to the outside of the church. Meanwhile we should be pleased that much of the original structure is still there, and that the building is well looked after, considering what has happened to some grander buildings in the rest of the country.

**John Purkis** has been interested in Pugin since encountering his work in the *Exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts* at the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1952. He is a former Hon. Secretary of the William Morris Society and gave a talk on Pugin and Morris to the Pugin Society in Ramsgate in 1997.



#### PUGIN IN PARIS

Engraving, from a watercolour, by the young Augustus of the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois in Paris, from the first volume of *Paris and its Environs* (1829), the publication by A.C.Pugin which included his son's and his pupils' work.



# Society Sorties

## THE PUGIN SOCIETY IN CATHOLIC AND GOTHIC BRUGGE: 25–28 OCTOBER 2001

Report by **John Irving** on the Society's first foray to the continent.

Belgium has seen a remarkable surge in the scholarship of the Gothic Revival and its context over the last fifteen years or so. This formed a rich background to a visit to Brugge last October by 25 members of the Society, led by Dr Rory O'Donnell, to study the impact of A.W.Pugin's ideas there, particularly as expressed through the works of his son, Edward (1834–75), and his disciple, Baron Jean-Baptiste Bethune (1821–94), leader of the Belgian "Neogotiek" movement.

On the Friday, we set out for **Vivenkapelle**, a seminal Gothic Revival ensemble of church and presbytery, schools for boys and girls, monastery and convent: 'a perfect Catholic Gothic world', in Rory's words. The Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Philip Neri was designed by Bethune in 1861. Rory pointed to the ideal of the 'urge to height' represented in this building, a characteristic of the Bethune school which Edward Pugin took up at Scarisbrick.

After lunch in the 'book town' of Damme, we were guided through **Brugge** by Mrs Lori van Biervliet, noted historian of its 19c English 'colony'. Lori took us first to the Chapel of the Holy Blood in the Burg, with painted decoration (1851–8) in the upper chapel by Bethune, W.C.Brangwyn, the father of Frank, and Thomas Harper King. The latter played an important role in the Revival; having arrived in Brugge in 1850, he published pirated and adapted, but enormously influential, French editions of Pugin's *True Principles* and *Present State*.

Then past the Town Hall (1376) to the Poortersloge (c1400), at Jan van Eyckplein, formerly an art college in which Ford Madox Brown received his first drawing lessons in 1832. In Sint Clorisstraat, we paused at the house of W.J.Weale (1832–1917), a bibliophile, art

historian and follower of Pugin, who came to visit and stayed 23 years, vigorously promoting the cause of monument preservation in Flanders.

As an extra treat, Lori had arranged access to the Rijksnormaalschool (1880–3 Louis Delacenserie), now a vast teacher training college in St Jorisstraat and not normally open to the public. Here Rory bravely dubbed the sports facilities 'the only late neo-Gothic gym in Europe'. Our walk ended in the former Church of the Sacred Heart (Louis Pavot 1879–85), in Vlamingstraat, now an events hall, where our party had a 'guilty' (to

quote our notes) drink.

Saturday morning was devoted to E.W. Pugin's major five-aisled church at **Dadizele**, near the French border. On the coach, Rory described the damage it had sustained in the First World War and subsequent restoration. 'Larger and duller' than Viven-kapelle, it had once offered more 'stained glass, furniture and gloom'. We con-

cluded that the beardless figure in an early twentieth-century window depicting the foundation ceremony of 1857 was surely a portrait of Edward Pugin. However, he was not responsible for the furnishings, some of which bore the hallmarks of the Bethune school.

Then to the Kasteel van Caloen-de Gourcy, **Loppem**, where our hostess, Baroness Véronique van Caloen, a distinguished art historian, kindly provided chervil soup and *une assiette anglaise* in the cellars. This E-plan house with forward gables and an off-centre tower, was designed by Edward Pugin between 1857 and 1863 with Bethune's participation. As Rosemary Hill pointed out, this was an urban house transplanted to the country. Not a château, but more a merchant's mansion, it obeyed an invisible street line rather than expanding out into the landscape. Rory noted the



Kasteel van Caloen-de Gourcy  
Photo: Jim Nancarrow



façades, with their intense and eclectic decorative mix: fleur-de-lys iron tie-plates on gables, an oriel from Scarisbrick, the wooden box-gutters of Vivenkapelle.

EWP's great book of presentation drawings remains at Loppem and it was most interesting to hear the discussion as each page was slowly turned by our generous hostess. The first drawing showed an English country house of broad proportions. Further projects introduced Italian detail. The design went through many changes, not all in one hand. One or two sheets may even have been by Bethune, acting perhaps as an executant architect experienced in interior decoration and furnishing, but less confident in construction. The final EWP pages showed basic details – doors, window bars – drawn with full command, evidence of the thorough training and advanced thinking of this youthful architect.

Next to the monastery of St Andrew at **Zevenkerken** (1904–35), just southwest of Brugge. The east end of the Chapter House contains 10 superb and intriguing windows (1938) in five groups of two by Frank Brangwyn, and, on the dado below, his huge lithographs of the Stations of the Cross. In the library, we were able to examine original publications by Pugin and his Belgium-based admirers, rare material on Brangwyn and fascinating relics of Bethune's Guild of St Luke, including a manual of drawings of Gothic details made easy for the 19c apprentice.

On Sunday, we walked round **St Salvator's Cathedral**, the tower of which had been designed by R.D.Chantrell, architect of Leeds Parish Church, after a

fire in 1839. Here Rory evoked the excitement of the first visit by Pugin, who, having come from an England where the Gothic chapels had fallen into a miserable state, would have been amazed by the side chapels and sacristies of Brugge, stuffed with furnishings and glorious vestments.

This was a fitting climax to the tour, in a town with a travel agent called *Ultra Montes*, a place where even the hotel butter bore the brand name *Nazareth*. Belgium's famous surreal aspects were not absent either. Much of the town was covered in plastic and scaffolding, a paradoxical prelude to its status as European City of Culture 2002. Near our hotel, two human-sized flower-pot men sat in a porch. The hall at Loppem housed a large stuffed bear holding a butler's tray, and, on the last day, as we returned in a coach under the Channel, the clocks went back twice.

Rory O'Donnell led us throughout with unfailing humour and brio, inexhaustible learning and a keen eye. Our thanks go to him for outstanding guiding and scene-setting talks on the coach.

Many thanks also to Julia Twigg for the excellent organisation, to Rosemary Hill for her illuminating comments, to Frank the driver and our many kind hosts in Belgium, especially Véronique van Caloen, Lori van Biervliet and Ambassador Felix Standaert. Despite some unusual obstacles for such a tour, it was a huge success, greatly enjoyed by all.



Kasteel van Caloen-de Gourcy: fireplace in the Charles Borromeo room.  
Photo: C. Blaker



# Letters and Comments

*In this issue we include here three contrasting items – fresh thoughts on Pugin and the Cambridge Camden Society, news from Oscott College, and (as a separate article) comment on Abbot Suger.*

**Rosemary Hill** opens our 'Letters and Comments':

I write in response to Anthony Symondson's stimulating review of *A Church as it Should Be: The Cambridge Camden Society and Its Influence*, (TP Vol 2 No. Three, p19), to suggest that the story of Pugin's relations with the Camdenians is more complex and less unhappy than he paints it.

The Society certainly was ambivalent towards Pugin, but it was not uniformly hostile. This is apparent, as Fr Symondson implies, in the decision not to make him a member yet to use as their emblem a seal that was, unmistakably, of his design. Perhaps the best account of their mixed feelings is given by Benjamin Webb and John Mason Neale in the introduction to their translation of the works of Durandus (1843), where, having referred to Pugin as 'that master mind', they go on to lament: 'cum talis sis, utinam noster esses!' (Being what you are, would you were of us!)

It is difficult to see in what sense the Camdenians 'stole' Pugin's ideas. As far as ecclesiology was concerned their principles, like his, were derived from common antiquarian sources, notably Durandus. When the Society was founded, in 1839, Pugin had yet to complete any churches with deep chancels or with encaustic tiles. Nor had he written anything on the subject. He was not particularly committed to English models in Gothic and preferred the Perpendicular to the Middle Pointed.

In the Society's first year its members surveyed and documented over 150 medieval churches. They had as vice presidents Robert Whillis and William Whewell, authors respectively of *Remarks on the Architecture of the Middle Ages* (1835) and *Architectural Notes on German Churches* (2nd edition 1835). Neither of them needed Pugin to tell them about the history or the construction of Gothic buildings. Willis indeed anticipated *True Principles* (1841) when he wrote in his *Remarks*:

The Romans attempted concealment and hence introduced discordance between the decoration and the mechanism of the structure. The Gothic builders in later times more wisely adapted their decoration to the exact direction of the resisting forces required by the vaulted structure. (pp17–18)

The reason that Pugin, as an individual, and the CCS, as an undergraduate society, had influence so vastly in excess of their numbers, was that theirs were ideas whose time had come, ideas that were arising simultaneously and independently in many minds. To ask 'who thought of it first' is not, perhaps, the right question. Ruskin was accused of plagiarising Pugin on the basis of ideas taken, with acknowledgment, from Willis. Pugin himself was attacked, both privately and publicly, for plagiarism. The attacks were unjust, but he was certainly

influenced in the development of his views between 1839 and 1843 by the Camdenians and (as he acknowledged) by articles in the Tractarian magazine, *The British Critic*. It was all part of that necessary exchange of ideas that constitutes any significant artistic or intellectual movement.

The suggestion that having taken up Pugin's ideas the Camden Society ignored him, in order to try and limit his influence, is not borne out by the evidence. The

Society's magazine, the *Ecclesiologist*, was generally sympathetic to him. When it suddenly attacked him in 1846 in an article on 'The Artistic merit of Mr Pugin', Pugin was astonished. The attack, part of a wider crisis in the Society, was not repeated.

The *Ecclesiologist* actively promoted the idea that Pugin should decorate the Palace of Westminster to redeem what they thought was a banal design by Barry. Of his *Glossary* a reviewer wrote: 'Never was there a more useful subject or one more practically treated: never – in modern days at least – were illuminations more exquisite in correct outline or more gorgeous in contrasted colours.' (August 1844). Successive contributors thought St Marie's, Rugby 'pretty' and 'laudable', the restoration of St Mary's, Wymeswold 'most judicious', and while compelled to criticise St George's Southwark, the Society's correspondent did so with regret, emphasising the difficulties under which Pugin had laboured.

Of course the ecclesiologists found fault with Pugin; they found fault with everyone. Had they really ignored him, he would have been an object of considerable envy among his fellow architects, few of whom escaped unscathed, and many of whom fared worse, despite their Anglican credentials. On the same page as the



St Mary's, Halstock, Dorset. Restored and largely re-built by Pugin in 1847 for the Camdenian Rector, the Rev. R.F.Meredith.



account of Wymeswold, we find this about Pugin's friend, Benjamin Ferrey, who was actually on the Society's list of approved architects:

S. Mary, West Lydford, Somersetshire. A small Perpendicular church has lately been taken down, and built again upon the old foundations and after the original design. Such a plan, if not ingenious, is at least safe. The architect employed was Mr Ferrey. How many cathedrals, churches, chapels, we wonder, would satiate a first-rate London architect? Or is his willingness to undertake jobs absolutely illimitable? There is need here of reform. (*Ecclesiologist*, new series, Vol 1, p286)

After 1845, as *A Church as it Should Be* explains, the Society's momentum began to decline, and Pugin had less to do with it. However, he reaped the fruits of its influence. Although he only built one completely new Anglican church (St Lawrence, Tubney) he was increasingly employed to restore or extend existing churches. Many of these commissions came, directly or indirectly, through Society members, and after 1845, when his Catholic practice declined, more than half of Pugin's church work (excluding stained glass) was for the established church: St Peter and St Paul, Albury; St Mary's, Beverley; St Leonard's, Blithfield; Jesus College, Cambridge; St Mary, Halstock; St Nicholas, Peper Harow; St Michael's, Rampisham; St Mary, West Tofts;

St Oswald's, Winwick; St Mary's, Wymeswold.

These commissions varied in scale, but many were substantial works and could never have been undertaken without the knowledge and consent of the Anglican authorities. Thus, though Pugin undoubtedly met with anti-Catholic prejudice from members of the Camden Society and others, it is doubtful whether it impeded him professionally. Pugin himself never complained of it. It was the architects who imitated him, notably Hansom and Wardell, and took work for the Catholic church, that he felt he should have had, whom he resented.

Personally Pugin was on excellent terms with several Camdenians, including Benjamin Webb. The latter was justified in his later claim, made during the 'Art-Architect' row between E.W.Pugin and the Barrys, that he had been an 'intimate' friend. In 1849, when he was curate at Brasted in Kent, Webb commissioned a window from Pugin and he supported him in his row with the *Rambler* magazine at a time, toward the end of his life, when Pugin was professionally and emotionally at a low ebb.

Pedantic, opinionated, self-righteous know-alls; the members of the Camden Society were, *en masse*, all these things. It would be a pity, however, as well as an injustice, to accuse them of anything worse with regard to Pugin to whom, all in all, they were more of a help than a hindrance.

Turning from ecclesiology to medieval sculpture, **Ted Cocking** brings us news of an exciting discovery from Oscott College. He writes as follows:

As recounted by Clive Wainwright (in *Pugin: a Gothic Passion*, p.101) the Museum which Pugin created at St Mary's College, Oscott, received objects from his collection after his death. Some of the objects were acquired by Pugin specifically for the College and others he gave from his own collection. As Professor of Ecclesiastical Antiquities at Oscott, Pugin amassed the objects particularly to illustrate his lectures. My visit to Oscott with the Pugin Society a few years ago aroused my interest in these various antiquities, and a chance meeting with Matthew Jakes (Editor of *The Oscotian*) alerted me to an exciting new discovery. His article in *The Oscotian* 2001 provides a translation of a German article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, following a recent exhibition in Maas-

tricht. The exhibition of seventy-three late Gothic sculptures included works by the Dutch sculptor Jan Van Steffeswert, who, by reason of his

signature, is the only Dutch wood-carver whose works can be identified with certainty. One of these late Gothic sculptures was a hitherto unidentified statuette lent by Oscott, carved from boxwood, and only a handspan high. This statuette was discovered to be by Steffeswert. Matthew Jakes confirms that it was bought to the College by Pugin and since kept, not in the Museum, but somewhat hidden away in the Episcopium (rooms of the Visiting Bishop).

*I am grateful to Matthew Jakes for this information and for the photograph of the Oscott Mother of God exhibited at Maastricht.*





## SUGER OF SAINT-DENIS: PATRON OF THE GOTHIC INCEPTION

*John Hardman Powell prompts a stimulating response from Society member Andrew Joynes.*

'Our medieval forefathers, being fired with religious enthusiasm, the most potent of all influences, produced works we may fairly call unequalled...' John Hardman Powell offered this fervent expression of romantic medievalism in his *Some Stray Notes on Art* (see the last two editions of *True Principles*), and went on to regret that so little was known of the artistic procedures involved in the creation of medieval architecture – 'We know so little of our great shrines and their wealth of art and craft...the thought lost is irreparable.'

Powell repeatedly urged his students to recognise and respond to the innate qualities of the materials they were using in their art. This advocacy of what we might term a kind of 'spiritual materialism' to underpin the moral engagement with the artistic process, which he and his fellow-Revivalists favoured, is reminiscent of a central theme in the memoirs of a twelfth-century churchman, Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis (1081–1151). Whether or not the Gothic Revivalists were aware of his writing (a complete edition of Suger's works was first published in Paris in 1865), Suger does indeed provide an insight into the thought of an influential medieval patron.

During the first part of the twelfth century, Suger presided over extensive building work at the abbey church of Saint-Denis in Paris. The architectural style which came to be known as Gothic, and which was associated to such charismatic effect with the French monarchy and its territorial heartland the Île-de-France, was strongly influenced by the modifications made at Saint-Denis under Suger's patronage. The essence of what might be called the 'Gothic Inception' – that medieval period which first saw the architectural achievements which the Revivalists of the nineteenth-century sought to emulate – was to be found in such features as the towered west front of Saint-Denis, with its innovative rose window; the entrance portals with their hierarchy of saints and prophets; and, above all, the extended choir and ambulatory, where slender columns permitted a suffusion of light from the stained glass windows above.

Suger was justifiably proud of the Saint-Denis renovations. Uniquely for a patron of the medieval period, he wrote his own accounts of the building and decorative work over which he presided. His *De Administratione* was the equivalent of a modern politician's memoirs, while the *De Consecratione* was a 'libellus', a promotional pamphlet, circulated to the dignitaries who attended the consecration of the new

choir at Saint-Denis in 1144. Suger's principal purpose in his writing was to promote the interests of his abbey and the cult of its patron St Denis, who was missionary to the Gauls (as St Augustine was to the Saxons of Southern England) and whose relics were kept in a shrine at the abbey. But Suger was also engagingly egocentric, so that a strong secondary theme is the depiction of himself as the instrument of God's will.

In Suger's Latin narrative he often uses the word *dux* – 'leader/chieftain' – to describe his role as patron. Suger is the entrepreneur who summons masons, carpenters, goldsmiths and painters to Saint-Denis, and the explorer who plunges into the forests in search of trees large enough to provide beams for the extended nave. He is also the negotiator who concludes favourable bargains – whether to secure a hoard of gemstones with which to decorate a new altar, or a flock of sheep to provide mutton for the consecration feast. It is clear Suger had no concerns about incorporating classical artefacts, the relics of pagan culture, into the fabric of Saint-Denis.[How different from Pugin – Ed.] One key passage in the *De Consecratione* describes how – before the providential discovery of a quarry in the Île-de-France which would provide a suitable stone – he planned to bring marble pillars from the ruined Baths of Diocletian in Rome to Paris, floating them on barges through the Mediterranean and up the rivers of France. At the end of the *De Administratione* he tells how he encouraged a goldsmith at Saint-Denis to convert a Roman porphyry vase into a liturgical vessel in the shape of a bird of prey (Suger's Eagle can now be seen in the Louvre in Paris).

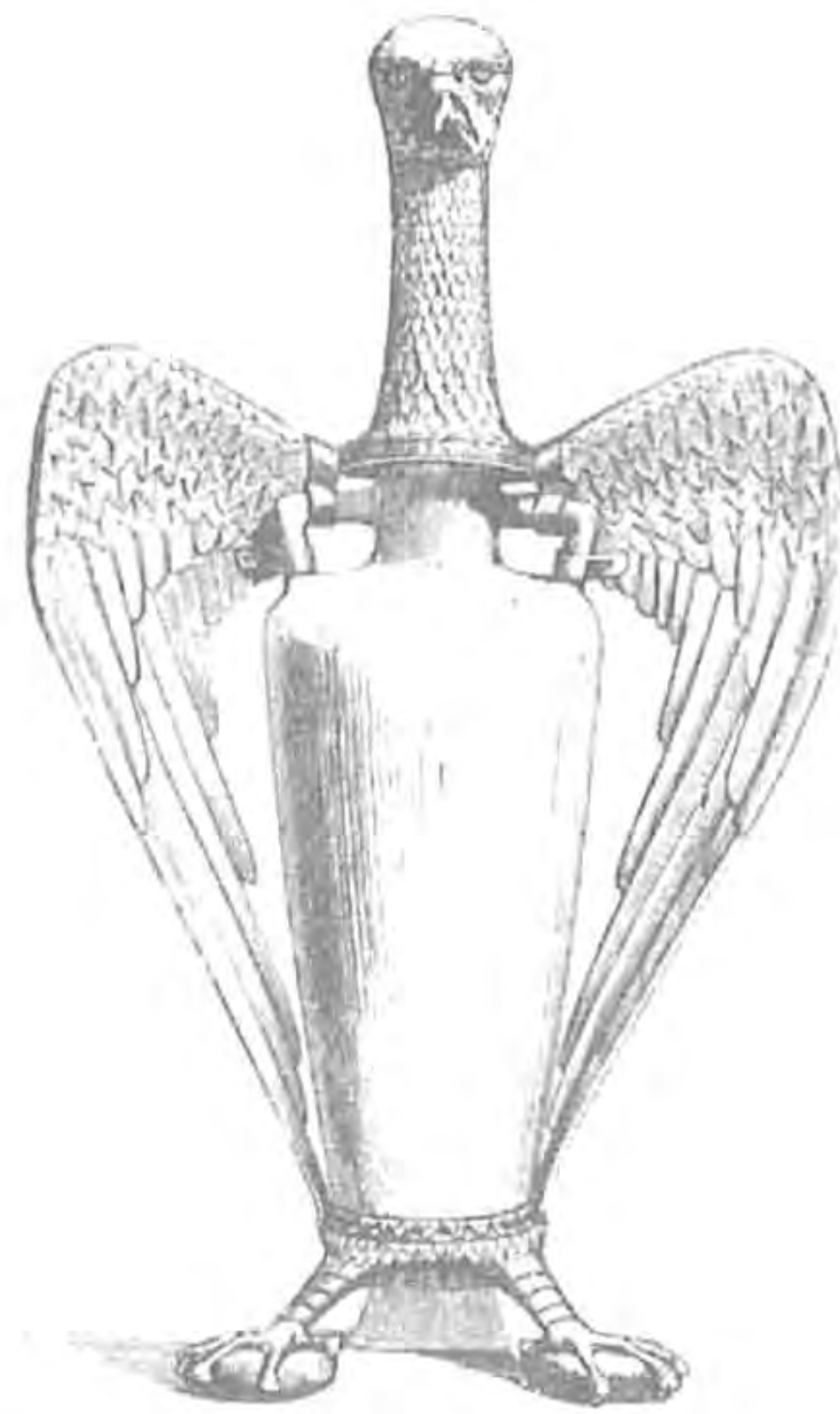
Most strikingly, Suger devotes entire chapters of his memoirs to lists of the precious artefacts with which he embellished Saint-Denis. His prose is heavy with descriptions of gold and gemstones. He records with satisfaction that 'forty two marks of gold' went into the altar fronting and that 'we searched everywhere for an abundance of pearls and gems, preparing a precious supply for so important an embellishment...' There is a gloating quality about Suger's emphasis upon the richness of material at Saint-Denis, which certainly does not square with a romantic view of the Middle Ages as a time of simple and unworldly faith.

In recent years, there has been much debate about whether that elusive concept, a Medieval Aesthetic, is to be found in Suger's writing. One theory suggests that, in his emphasis upon richness of materials, Suger was adopting a neo-Platonic theology. Under this



hierarchical view of creation, decoration using the costliest materials that earth contained would be entirely appropriate for a saint's shrine, since gold and gemstones are the 'highest' materials and consequently nearest to the precious substances of heaven itself.

Whatever the origins of Suger's 'spiritual materialism', it is clear that he regarded richness of decoration as a practical aid to devotion: 'the loveliness of the many-coloured gems has called me away from external cares, transforming that which is material into that which is immaterial...' And, although John Hardman Powell might not have required, as Suger seems to have done, that all the materials used from the outset of an artistic process should be costly and precious, he might well have found in the writing of this influential medieval forefather confirmation of his own theories about the transforming nature of



Suger's Eagle (engraving, courtesy Pepin Press)

craftsmanship. 'The work was equally admirable for its form as for its material', wrote Suger of the gold altar at Saint-Denis, 'so that it might be said by all who beheld it: 'The workmanship surpassed the material'...'

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**Andrew Joynes** is a writer with a particular interest in the twelfth century. He has recently published *Medieval Ghost Stories: an Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies* (Boydell and Brewer 2001), and is currently working on a book about the Image of the Saracen in Crusading Culture.

## Jane Pugin – An Apology

Michael Egan's exemplary research in his article on page 22 has proved that Jane Knill was born in June 1825. He did this by finding the record of her baptism, a primary source, the only infallible kind. Most historians depend from time to time (in fact often) on secondary sources. I did this in 1977 when I included the first published family tree of the Pugin family in my catalogue of the architectural drawings in the Royal Institute of British Architects, where my purpose was to illustrate the relationships of the architects and designers in this complicated family. My main achievement in this was to correct the birth date of A.C.Pugin, which had been wrongly given in Ferrey's biography and subsequently repeated. For the rest of the tree I relied entirely on information given by those family members known to me, Mrs Florence Mackey, Mr Purcell and Mrs Watts. Jane was thus given the dates 1827 to 1909. I went on to discover several mistakes in this material myself, particularly those concerning Louisa's children, and was able to correct Agnes' and Katherine's birth dates in my Victoria & Albert book but I still got Mary's wrong. There were other mistakes too, so it was unfortunate that my 1977 tree appeared in the Pugin Society's publication, *A Flint Seaside Church*, 2000. Thus is wrong information perpetuated!

To return to Jane, I think I know now how the mistake originated: Jane's death certificate gives her age as 82, which subtracted from 1909 would give a birth date of 1827. There are, however, two things wrong with this: Jane died in February and her birthday was in June and so, if she was 82, that would mean that she was born in 1826. I am certain that she gave her correct age at the time of her wedding and, as Mr Egan shows, in the census, but perhaps, in the way of some old ladies, she eventually 'lost' a year. In this respect it should be noted that both her children had predeceased her and perhaps her grandson, Cuthbert Purcell, who registered her death, did not know her exact age.

Sadly, the record of the dates of the wives of famous men is often neglected. The birth date of Pugin's first wife, Anne, is also unknown, though it is frequently given as 1814. I have, however, always been influenced by J.H.Powell's statement that she was older than him. I feel that, through his wife, he would have been told this as a fact. Could someone please search for her baptismal record?

I will try to ensure that the correct information gets into the *New DNB*.

**Alexandra Wedgwood**



# Buildings at Risk

## **St Mary's College, Oscott and St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw**

The Catholic Bishops Conference has announced the first findings of a report into the future of Catholic seminary education; they recommend the merging of these two northern colleges. The closure of either, with the threat to their historic integrity and function, and also to their buildings, furnishings and collections, would be a matter of grave concern to the Society, which will be expressing its opinion in the appropriate quarters.

Oscott is most familiar to members as the site of Pugin's great début on the national Catholic stage, through his furnishing and decoration of Joseph Potter's chapel for its consecration in May 1838, and also of the museum (see also article on page 43) and sacristies etc, all of which were meant to form part of the education of the new clergy. E.W.Pugin and P.P.Pugin made further additions to the chapel, and built the Northcote Hall. St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw, is a far less familiar building to most people, although recently visited by the Society during its July study tour. It is one of the two descendant colleges from the Catholic Seminary set up at Douai in Flanders in 1568 by the future Cardinal Allen. The staff and students of Douai, having fled the French Revolution, settled at Ushaw in the early nineteenth century. Pugin arrived there in 1840, with the same ambitions that he had entertained at Oscott. He built a complete church (replaced in the 1880s by Dunn and Hansom, but incorporating much Pugin material). Many side-chapels, shrines and a cloister survive, by A.W., E.W., and P.P. Pugin and others, as well as the complete (but currently unused) Junior Seminary of St Aloysius, by E.W.Pugin.

**R O'D**

## **The Church of the Sacred Heart, Henley**

The A.W. and E.W.Pugin altar ensemble reassembled in this 1930s church is currently subject to a proposal to be lowered, truncated at either end, and shortened at the back – a sort of 'short back and sides' arrangement which is a remarkable throwback to the way churches were re-ordered in the high days of liturgical experiment in the 1960s and 70s. The architect involved is Peter Brownhill of Brownhill Hayward and Brown. We have commented on this proposal before (see *True Principles*, Vol 2, No Two, p29), and now the representative of the National Amenity Societies on the Birmingham Archdiocese Historic Churches Committee (by whom, under Ecclesiastic Exemption, this scheme

must be determined) is opposing this alternative scheme. It would, as usual, be quite adequate to leave the altar alone and place the new permanent altar in front. This has been recently suggested, in emphatic terms, by the aforesaid National Amenity Societies representative on the B.A. Historic Churches Committee. The altar ensemble of 1850–56 is a joint father/son work, and must be E.W.P.'s most important surviving altar and reredos composition.

**R O'D**

## **The Monastery and Church of St Francis, Gorton**

The Monastery of St Francis and Gorton Trust announced in May that a solution for the future of the building had finally been agreed, and that, all things being equal, it is to re-open in late 2004 as 'The Pugin Centre'. To quote the press release: 'The Pugin Centre will be a unique hybrid scheme combining cultural heritage and exhibitions with a conference, training and enterprise centre. In the former church the High Altar and Private Chapel will be restored, providing a Holy Centre to the site recreating a spiritual sanctuary and providing a place for weddings, christenings and family occasions.' The Trust's proposals are to put the church back to ecclesiastical use and to convert – and possibly extend – the monastic buildings to provide a conference centre. Contained within the Centre will be the 'world's first ever permanent exhibition on Pugin'. The Pugin Society is taking a close interest in these proposals.

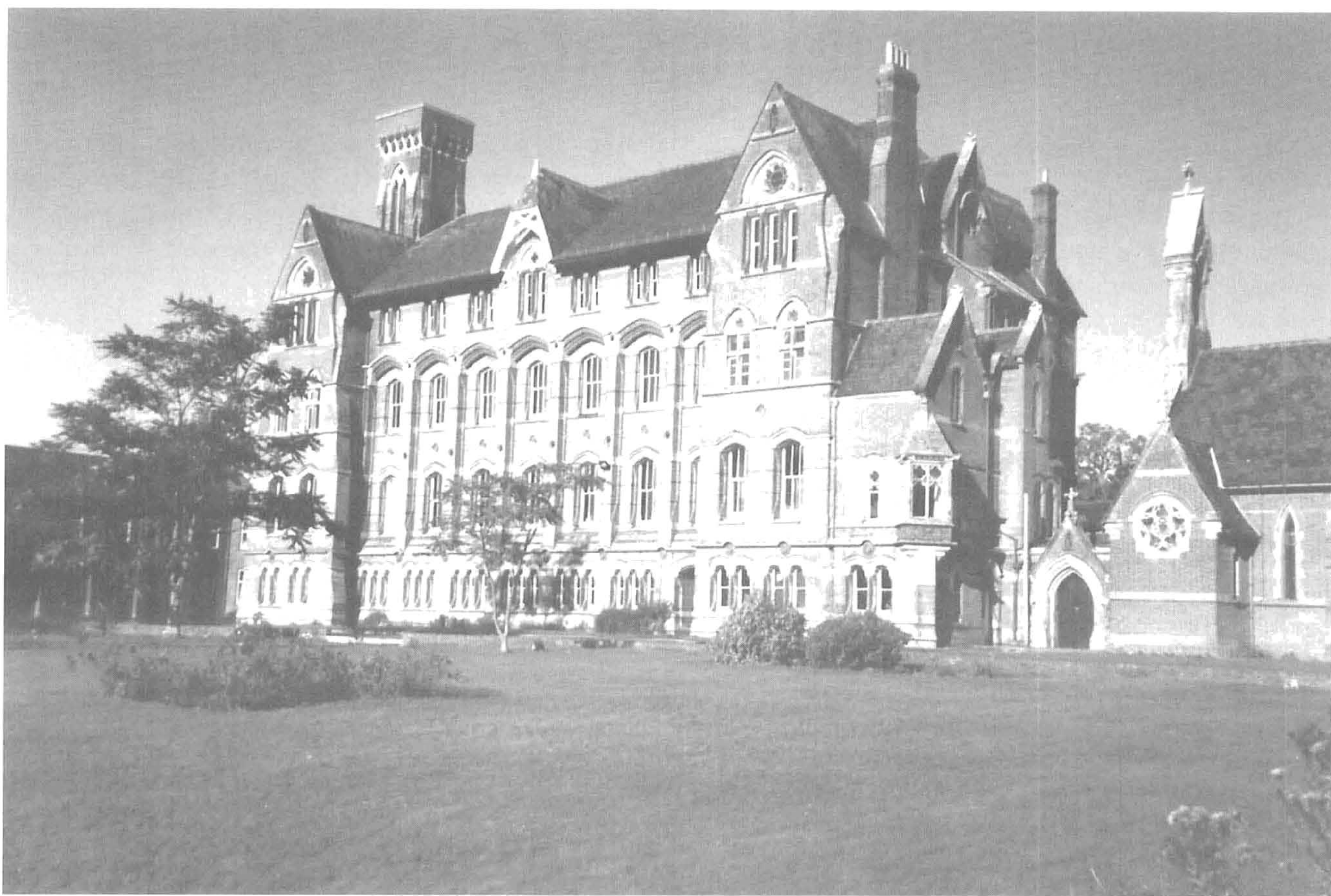
**ND**

## **Mayfield College, East Sussex**

This building is by Edward Pugin and dates from 1865. Originally a Catholic boys' orphanage, it expanded to become a boys' boarding school run by the Xaverian monastic order. At the same time, St Joseph's College – also by E.W.Pugin – a comparable building of similar scale, was built for girls on a site about four miles away. The benefactor for both buildings was the Duchess of Leeds. Planning applications have been made to Wealden District Council to convert Mayfield College into flats with some new-build housing in the grounds to fund the conversion. This seems like a last-ditch attempt to find a use for this impressive building, which has had a chequered recent history. The Pugin Society has made representations to Wealden DC. We have now heard, however, that the most recent application has been rejected. One possibility now which might help is to ensure the building's Listed status is upgraded to II\*. All other suggestions and comments which might help secure a future for this 'muscular' and authoritative example of Edward's functional Gothic are welcome.

**ND**





Mayfield College (Courtesy, Wealden District Council)

### And, finally ...

Pugin Society member Ted Cocking has recently been in touch with Father Michael Campion, Cathedral Administrator at A.W.N. Pugin's St Mary's, Newcastle, following an enjoyable visit to the cathedral. Here Ted

was well pleased to find attractively designed and informative display boards relating to Pugin and his connection with the building. These were made for the celebration of the cathedral's 150th anniversary in 2000, an occasion which has greatly increased local awareness

of the significance of both St Mary's and Pugin. However, there is always room for further improvements. Father Michael Campion says: 'For the past two years we have been trying to raise funds to carry out a programme of repairs ... We do not receive any subsidies and we do not have any capital reserves. If we can secure the funding – help please! – we will carry out a redecoration of the cathedral interior that will be more in sympathy with its neo-Gothic design. This will include the installation of a new lighting system and repairs to the floor tiles and stone work.' The work will probably commence this August.



Pugin screens at St Mary's.

Photo Fr. Michael Campion.



# Book Reviews

**Michael Fisher**, *Pugin-Land: A.W.N. Pugin, Lord Shrewsbury and the Gothic Revival in Staffordshire*, Michael J. Fisher (Publishing), ISBN 09526855 3 1, (available from: 35 Newland Avenue, Stafford, Staffs ST16 1NL Tel: 01785 245069), price: £14.95 + £2 (p&p)

'I look upon Pugin as the greatest acquisition for our body for an immense time past,' Lord Shrewsbury wrote to Ambrose Phillipps, 'He is the man to encourage.' John Talbot, 16th Earl of Shrewsbury, the Premier Earl of England, came from a recusant Catholic family. Phillipps, of Garendon Park and Grace-Dieu Manor, Leicestershire, was a convert. They and Pugin did more than any others to herald the Second Spring of English Catholicism before the submissions of Newman and the Oxford converts from 1845 onwards. All were romantics inspired by the dream of reviving the medieval Catholic Church in modern England, and North Staffordshire became the centre of their experiments.

Pevsner believed that 'nowhere can one study and understand Pugin better than in Staffordshire', and he described the area surrounding Cheadle as 'Pugin-land'. As a schoolboy of ten, Michael Fisher was enthralled by what he saw on his first visit to Alton Castle. It 'was like crossing the threshold of another world: the castle on the edge of the cliff, the coloured tiles of the chapel roof shimmering in the sunlight', and it sowed the seed of a passion for architecture. No better introduction to such a passion can be found than the power of direct response, and this compelling book is the harvest of Fisher's boyhood fervour.

Shrewsbury was a philanthropist and a builder of churches at great personal sacrifice to himself. He combined an external Gothic magnificence with an adopted life of extreme poverty. Many thought him a millionaire saint. Pugin became his architect, and he altered and added to the 'princely towers and enchanted gardens' at Alton Towers, as Cardinal Wiseman described them, and created interiors that rivalled the New Palace of Westminster. He restored Alton Castle and built St John's Hospital as an almonry for 'twelve poor brethren, a schoolmaster, and an unlimited number of poor scholars.'

None of this could have been accomplished independently of the projects initiated by Bishop Thomas Walsh, Vicar Apostolic of the Midlands District, and the medievalist liturgical scholarship of Dr Daniel Rock, Shrewsbury's chaplain. Shrewsbury built St Mary's, Breward, and St Winifred's, Cotton, and contributed to many other church-building ventures. The summit of his patronage is St Giles', Cheadle, a parish church built with unlimited funds. 'Even today', thought Peter Anson, 'one almost gasps at such a display of le luxe pour Dieu.' The Blessed Sacrament chapel there brought Newman to his knees.

Shrewsbury and Pugin died in 1852, and Pugin's practice was continued by his eldest son, Edward, who continued to build and furnish Gothic churches and houses in Staffordshire, all of which are included. But Pugin's ideals were brought to a more accomplished fulfilment in the late-Gothic Revival, and were anticipated in All Saints, Denstone, by G.E. Street, and achieved in All Saints, Leek, by Norman Shaw, and, above all, in Holy Angels, Hoar Cross, by G.F. Bodley. The Anglican dimension is embraced, but I am sorry that Sir Ninian Comper's restoration of St Mary and All Saints, Checkley, is overlooked because no church architect realised the Puginian ideal with corresponding artistry and liturgical knowledge better than him. Despite George Pace's claim to embody all who had preceded him, Puginism scarcely found, as Fisher claims, a final expression in his superficial and ugly chapel at Keele University.

Although this excellent book is very slightly marred by its format and production, it is fresh, well-researched, admirably written and makes valuable and illuminating connections. If you want to discover how great Pugin was, and how much the Gothic Revival owes to him, *Pugin-Land* is an essential study.

**Anthony Symondson SJ**

**John Thomas**, *Albi Cathedral and British Architecture* published by the Ecclesiological Society (2002), 69pp., 37 illus. £6.50 (Incl. postage) from the Ecclesiological Society, PO Box 287, New Malden, KT3 4YT.

A visit to Albi cathedral in south-west France is a stupendous experience. No wonder the building has long exerted a fascination upon architects and architectural historians and that aspects of its design should resurface in British churches as architects sought

new ideas to keep alive the Gothic revival. Of course, there is more to the story than just Albi as John Thomas points out. The cathedral is a unique building but it is part of a wider tradition that straddles what is now southern France and north-east Spain. This was thriving



before the heresy-scourging Bishop Bernard de Castenet began its construction in 1282 and the opening of the book therefore seems a little wayward: 'In the mid and later thirteenth century the design of churches evolved new and disparate forms, changing in a significant way, from the High Gothic architecture of northern central France'. In fact it was 'High Gothic' that was to displace the southern traditions after Languedoc was absorbed in stages into the French kingdom in the thirteenth century where its introduction may be read as a statement of French politicising.

But that is quibbling. This book provides a wide-ranging survey of how the ideas embodied in Languedocian-Catalonian church architecture permeated British church-building from the mid-nineteenth century. A further crucial building, as Thomas shows, was the now-destroyed Dominican church in Ghent. The resultant vocabulary for British architects encompassed the key elements of internal buttressing, wide naves, diaphragm arches, and (taken from Ghent) passage aisles. Selections from this menu were to help Bodley and Pearson produce two of the greatest masterpieces of the Gothic revival – the two churches dedicated to St Augustine in, respectively, Pendlebury (Lancs) and Kilburn (London).

There had been very occasional, earlier forays and Thomas usefully reproduces a picture of Henry Clutton's St Jude, Bethnal Green (London) with its passage aisles and transverse arches, dating, amazingly,

from as early as 1846. This church, like Street's great 1860s passage-aisled All Saints, Clifton (Bristol), has long gone. The other cases where the Albi and Albi-related influence are listed. Thomas draws in the Lady chapel at Giles Scott's Liverpool cathedral, his Charterhouse School chapel, Maufe's Guildford cathedral and much more. It is a shame St John the Baptist, Leicester is omitted. This is a masterly church of 1884–5 by local architects Goddard & Paget who came to Albi via Pearson's Kilburn church and of which they offer a very skilful reinterpretation. Thomas illustrates some intriguing sketches by Giles Scott of what might have become an Albi-derived church in north Norfolk but, unfortunately, the evidence does not seem to allow for any firm conclusions.

In terms of sheer numbers, Albi-related schemes were relatively few during the nineteenth century. While architects and patrons went for Italianate polychrome schemes and Continental apses in their hundreds it was not until the interwar period that passage aisles and diaphragm arches became standard devices for British churches.

This book contains plenty of illustrations and interesting information on an important aspect of the Gothic revival. It is most enterprising of the Ecclesiological Society to publish it (can they please provide an index to any such future venture?): it is good value and well worth getting.

**Geoffrey Brandwood**

*Saint Ethelbert and Saint Gertrude, Ramsgate 1902-2002*, edited **Roy Adsett** and **David Cliffe**, £5.00+£1.50 p&p, available from: Fr Augustine Kinnane, The Presbytery, St Ethelbert's Church, 72 Hereson Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 7DS.

This 96-page guide and history of 'the other' Pugin church in Ramsgate – designed by Peter Paul – has been published to celebrate its centenary. It contains a history and description of the church and its fittings, and conveys a vivid picture of the early twentieth-century growth of a Catholic community in what was considered to be the poorer part of Ramsgate. There are accounts of P.P. Pugin and his work – even a report of his funeral – and of W.W. Martin the builder, not to mention the generous benefactress and convert Miss Ellis (some of the other less accomplished churches that she endowed in the Southwark diocese were apparently referred to as 'Ellis boxes'). This book has been lovingly

and thoughtfully put together, obviously with considerable commitment on the part of the production team, and the standard of presentation and photography is high. It was specifically conceived with the people of its parish in mind, rather than for a general readership, so there are, as is inevitable, some sections relating to parish life which are not particularly relevant to those who do not attend the church or live in the area. That having been said, there is still much of Pugin and Catholic interest to be found here, and in a town where Augustus, and even Edward, P. tend – understandably – to dominate, it is particularly pleasing to see Peter Paul Pugin's work being given due credit.

**Catriona Blaker**



# 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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## **Pugin website**

An official Society website is currently in preparation; meanwhile some Society information can be found on:

[www.Pugin.com](http://www.Pugin.com)

**To join the Society, please contact the Hon. Membership Secretary (see above).**

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

Michael Ackroyd, Dr Claire Baker, Mr W.D.C. Barham, Mr R.Breau, Joan and Peter Blacklock, Andrew Boddington, Mr and Mrs Cadwallader, Mrs Maya Donelan, Dr Margaret Diamond, Louise Dandy and James Mackey, Michael Egan, Mr R.M. Fleet, Pat Gavan (Mount St Mary's Trust), Ann Grant, Councillors David and Elizabeth Green, A.L.Martin, Grace McCombie, Julie Westbury, Professor Jan Pahl, William Peri, Nial Pugin, Mr L.T.Rule, Sean Sirrs, Doris E.Turtle, Tony Yole Smith, Caroline Younger.

**Back cover:** Jane Pugin (née Knill), by George Augustus Freezor, oil on canvas, 1859.

(Collection, Mrs J.E.Franklin and Mrs J. Sherlicker)

Photo: George Garbutt



