

True Principles

The journal of The Pugin Society

vol iii no ii Summer 2005

‘REGEORGIANISATION’

PETER HOWELL

Robert Maxwell:
Phoenix at Hoxton

BRIAN ANDREWS • NICK BEVERIDGE • CATRIONA BLAKER
MARK COLLINS • MICHAEL EGAN • MICHAEL FISHER • DAVID MEARA
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From next year, contributions for the 'Articles' section of True principles will be peer-reviewed, and a distinguished editorial board has been established as part of The Pugin Society's campaign to maintain the standards of Pugin family scholarship at the highest level. Notwithstanding these new arrangements, members are reminded that the Editor will always welcome contributions on any aspect of Victorian or mediaeval art and architecture from readers.

It would be very helpful to the Editor if both a disc and hard copy could be provided. Handwritten articles are not acceptable. All illustrations must be 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 Editor or The Pugin Society, and that the Editor's decision is final. A style guide can be provided.

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Quotations from contemporary texts are rendered as they appear in the original, avoiding the frequent use of 'sic'. Transcriptions from A.W.N. Pugin's letters are always reproduced in the form in which they appear in Margaret Belcher's definitive Collected letters of A.W.N. Pugin.

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Contents

Editorial

'Regeorgianisation'	3
The uncertainty of human affairs	6

Articles

A.W.N. Pugin

A.W.N. Pugin and William Warrington at Oscott <i>by Alexandra Wedgwood</i>	7
---	---

Abney Hall, Cheshire, and the great sideboard mystery <i>by Michael Fisher</i>	18
---	----

'I don't think it matters who is a bishop': A.W.N. Pugin and the bishops <i>by David Meara</i>	26
--	----

E.W. Pugin

E.W. Pugin, Sclerder and Gorton <i>by Michael Egan</i>	41
---	----

Pulling out a few stops: E.W. Pugin and organ cases <i>by Catriona Blaker</i>	44
---	----

P.P. Pugin

'A pleasing old-time appearance': P.P. Pugin and St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide <i>by Brian Andrews</i>	47
--	----

Victorian art and architecture

Pugin, James Mabey, and the architectural models of the Palace of Westminster <i>by Mark Collins</i>	55
--	----

'From a Georgian monstrosity into a Constantinopolitan basilica' – and back again?: the current treatment of Victorian alterations to Georgian churches <i>by Peter Howell</i>	59
---	----

Critique	
After-life of a modest building: School conversion at Hoxton Square, London, by Buschow Henley <i>by Robert Maxell</i>	64
News and comment	
from Nick Beveridge; Alexandra Wedgwood; Mark Collins; and Andrew Saint	67
Building news	71
New Members 2004–5	73
Book reviews	
<i>The northern renaissance and From Flanders to Florence: the impact of Netherlandish painting</i> reviewed by Graham Parry	74
<i>The Victorian celebration of death</i> reviewed by Catriona Blaker	77
<i>Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction</i> reviewed by Andrew Rudd	78
<i>Perfect Cheadle: St Giles' Catholic Church, Cheadle, Staffordshire and The Pugins and the Hardmans</i> reviewed by Roderick O'Donnell	79
Bibliography	81
Articles on members of the Pugin family published this year	83
Contributors to this number	84

'REGEORGIANISATION'

The current exemplary restoration by the Landmark Trust of the Grange, A.W.N. Pugin's house in Ramsgate, has raised many of the searching questions that characterise an intelligent approach to conservation. The Pugin Society itself questioned the need to demolish additions to the building that were designed by E.W. Pugin and others, wanting to ensure that this outstanding monument continued to testify to the Pugin dynasty in its full richness. In the end, the painful decision to demolish most of these additions may have been influenced by the fact that they were not built to the same very high standard that A.W.N. Pugin had insisted on. Although all building work tells a story of some kind, it is only good, honest, workmanlike construction that has a value that lasts for generations.

Since the British are, generally, so demonstrably uninterested in the visual arts in general, and architecture in particular, a strange delusion has grown up amongst some that the best buildings of all styles are in some way equal in value to each other; and that what really counts is whether a building is 'beautiful' or not. It was precisely this idea of 'taste' that A.W.N. Pugin so deeply despised. There are at least three clear reasons why Victorian architecture and the applied arts that accompany it are more important historically than their eighteenth-century predecessors. The first is that they are uniquely British: they are not a second-rate British adaptation of a Continental style. Secondly, they testify explicitly to political, social, scientific and cultural ideas that had been brewing since the 1820s and 1830s, and which underlie the creation of everything that has happened here since; specifically, they are fully part of one of the most important social phenomena that Britain has ever seen, the evangelical church reform movement that brought literacy, sobriety and diligence to every parish. And thirdly, the actual quality of the artifacts is often amongst the highest ever achieved in the construction industry, an astonishing testament to human aspiration and skill. Of course some of this can be said too of the late nineteenth-century arts and crafts movement; and to some extent also of the two characteristically local post-Second World War styles, those memorably described by the great Puginite Peter Davey as the Romantic Pragmatic and the High-Tech. But it is simply not plausible to claim that, say, the original design of a church by Hawksmoor is more important than the Victorian artifacts within it. The former is a piece of scenery, fashionable for some; the latter is an engagement with the profundity of human spirituality. By and large, the eighteenth century damaged churches and church art; and the nineteenth century restored them.

As Peter Howell reports in this journal, the modern age damages churches too. Hardly a week goes by without another parson pushing a plan to build a 'worship space' – a carpeted raised platform made of who-knows-what – blocking the high altar, or a shanty-town at the west end of the nave for coffee mornings and water closets. Those familiar with the desecrations of the 1960s, in an interpretation of the rulings of the Second Vatican Council so misguided that only a profoundly philistine country could have come up with it, may not be aware that a similar process is continuing in the Church of England. This is sometimes accompanied by a self-



Figure 1: St Chad's, Dunloe Street, Haggerston
Building News, 25.2.1876; London Borough of Hackney, Hackney archives department

righteous plea to conservationists that the latter 'don't understand' the needs of the modern church. But it is those same parsons that do not realise that, in vandalising what were for many the most impressive and most beautiful architectural spaces that they could regularly inhabit, it is they themselves who do not understand the great emotions, the power and the passion that Victorian church builders have bequeathed to us.

Everyone has now heard about the recent campaign of flinging our money at Hawksmoor's Christ Church, Spitalfields, so that it can be used as a tasteful backdrop for public entertainments, or (very rarely) actually open to the public: the work of Ewan Christian, the great Victorian architect who made it a decent place of worship has been removed and forgotten. And yet one has only to look a little further north in the East End of London and one finds works of sublime architecture that, although every day in danger of decay, will never attract the attentive support of the Prince of Wales or the London *Evening standard*. Even if they are a little dusty and a little crumbling, the vast Gothic churches designed by James Brooks between Dalston and Shoreditch are as magnificent today as when they first soared like Solomon's Temple above the modest terraces of London's labourers. They are sturdily built of good honest brickwork and filled with beautiful craftsmanship that testifies to the heights that the artisan can reach: stained glass, carved stone, encaustic tiles, brass and iron work, everything imaginable. The vicar of one of these churches, St Chad's, Haggerston (1867–9), Fr James Westcott, has recently and with the help of English Heritage replaced all the damaged traceried windows in the clerestory of his church. He is now applying for a faculty to rip out the 'worship space' with its barbecue-like 1970s altar; and, if funds would allow it, he will demolish the shanty town at the west end too, and restore the nave to its full volume. Robert Maxwell describes here how, across the road from Haggerston, the architects Simon Henley and Ralph Buschow have taken one of E.W. Pugin's more modest school buildings and transformed it with imagination and care into a lively centre that includes a restaurant, a gym and garden, and a couple of flats, all designed with tremendous imagination and vitality. By a delightful coincidence, the young architects are almost exactly the same age that E.W. was when he originally designed it: they have a good deal of his youthful spirit.

And yet we go on spending our money on the wrong things. As Peter Howell testifies, there seems to be a limitless supply of public funds to denude our churches of pieces of workmanship of the highest quality in order to 'go back' to an imagined sense of Georgian 'taste'. The Puginite must look with horror at the desecrations visited on Victorian church art that result. And it is not only the famous Georgian churches that are treated like this. It is impossible to imagine a building plainer than the church of St John Downshire Hill, in Hampstead, which according to the new *Pevsner architectural guide* was probably got up in 1818–23 not by Soane, Wilkins or Nash but by a builder from Kennington called William Woods. It is a plastered box, and the only colour about it is the staring green of the emergency exit signs that is visible from without its plate-glass windows. It is a hopeless case, and fiddling about with it time and time again has failed to redeem it: first by Horace Field, in 1896; and then by that admirable late arts and crafts architect Edward Cullinan from 1964–71. Only recently they have been at it again, as it has evidently had an aircraft-carrier-

sized container of magnolia paint deposited all over its walls by its well-meaning and well-connected congregation. Pull it down! And ask Mr Cullinan, or Buschow Henley, or any of our many talented architects who understand the power of good design, to build a new one instead, something that will engage with our sense of shape and colour, and of mystery and wonder.

The uncertainty of human affairs

The industrious Michael Egan has come up with the astonishing information, reported here in detail by Alexandra Wedgwood, that contrary to everything we have known up to now, A.W.N. Pugin's first marriage was to a girl named Sarah, rather than Anne; she was then at 22 two and a half years older than him, rather than two years younger; she was four months pregnant with baby Anne; and the young couple were already living perhaps together in the same parish, which was not Bloomsbury but Whitechapel. All this reminds us that in spite of the fine new edition of what is now called the *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, with its first-rate summaries of A.W.N. Pugin by Alexandra Wedgwood and of E.W. Pugin by Roderick O'Donnell, none of us can ever really be certain of the strange facts of people's lives, and least of all of what their motives and aspirations truly are. Everyone who attempts to guess them must always be reminded, time and time again, that it is the buildings and the art they leave behind that are the only certain testimony of the brilliance of their exertions.

A.W.N. Pugin and William Warrington at Oscott

by Alexandra Wedgwood

A W.N. Pugin's interest in stained glass began very early and this paper seeks to document it to its first great expression in the chapel at Oscott College. He records on the first page of his incomplete autobiography that in France in 1823 'I first began to collect antiquities, purchased some tiles from the Ducal palace, Caen, and got some fragments of stained glass from the circular window at the end of the Hall'.¹ His experience with the theatre and stage design, particularly in 1831 when he painted scenes for the ballet *Kenilworth* in March, and even more when he did the same for Shakespeare's *King Henry VIII* in October, must have convinced him of the importance of coloured glass in creating the desired effect. Some model scenery and a painting have survived to allow us to judge this.²

Also in 1831 his drawings began to show a deep fascination with Roman Catholic ritual and the setting for the mass.³ Probably at the end of the same year (drawings are dated both 1831 and 1832) Pugin was working on designs for a 'Catholic Chapel' in an important sketchbook, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁴ The chapel shown is an extremely ornate building in the decorated style, loosely based on the Slipper Chapel, Houghton St Giles, Norfolk. He also illustrated a great east rose window with immensely complicated tracery, which he calls 'The Window of the Nativity' [figure 3]. Here Pugin seems to be mostly influenced by the rose windows he would have seen in the great Gothic cathedrals of northern France on his travels with his father. He surrounds his window with a complicated, and very impractical, carved frieze of angels.

1832, however, proved to be a period of great disruption for the young man: his wife died after the birth of a daughter and his father died at the end of the year. 1833 was not much better: his mother died in February but he married for a second time in June and moved to Ramsgate. He was at this period concentrating on training himself as an architect by closely studying medieval architecture and designing imaginary schemes, mostly for great religious buildings together with their contents. Then in the summer of 1834 he made a lengthy journey through Flanders and into Germany that was to have great significance for his artistic development. His reasons for his unusual choice of route are not recorded but perhaps he felt that he knew northern France well and his admiration for Dürer probably led him to Nuremberg which had marked the tercentenary of the painter's death in 1828 with great celebrations. He wrote enthusiastically to E. J. Willson on 22 August: 'I am just returned from the finest journey I ever took in my Life...such Glorious buildings. (*perfect.*) no revolution, not reformation, all remains in its original state of

I learnt about the Boisserée Collection and Pugin's use of it from Dr Elgin van Treeck-Vassen at the lecture she gave on 28.2.2005 at the conference 'Glass painting 1800–1900', organised by the British Society of Master Glass Painters. I am glad to record the help and kindness that I have received from Dr Judith Champ at Oscott College and Fr John Sharp and Margaret Harcourt Williams at the Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives.

1 'Autobiography': Wedgwood 1985, p 24.

2 Lambourne 1994, p 39; figs 73–4.

3 Wedgwood 1977, p 46.

4 Wedgwood 1985, cat no 104, pp 123–7.

Magnificence. only conceive entering a church at Nuremberg where I saw 13 Gothic Altars (even the Candlesticks original). a tabernacle for the holy Sacrament 50 feet high containing hundreds of images & all perfect...Splendid Brass chandeliers of the finest tabernacle work. the choir hung with needle work of the 15th Cent. & such Stained Glass as you cannot form an idea of so infinitely is it superior to any thing in our Country, when I first entered this church & the Grandeur of the interior burst on me I could have repeated the song of Simeon without profanation.⁵

Pugin at this date of course lacked opportunities to design any stained glass which would be made, but they soon began to occur. In 1835 he started to build his own house, St Marie's Grange, Alderbury, near Salisbury. In Salisbury he got to know 'Mr. Beare', who was probably John Beare, listed in Pigot's *Directory* of 1830 as painter and glazier. The relevant entries in Pugin's diary for 1835 read: 27 January 'went with Mr. Beare' and 28 January 'first painted glass'.⁶ He certainly placed some stained glass in his own house, and was probably responsible for the restoration of old and adding new stained glass which was placed in the late fifteenth-century house of John Halle, New Canal Street, Salisbury and which has been credited to Willement.⁷ Also from 1835 to 1836 Pugin was working for Charles Barry, designing internal fittings for the Edward VI Grammar School in Birmingham. The school was demolished in the 1930s but the vaulted first-floor corridor with its stained glass was moved to the new site at Edgbaston and reerected as the school chapel. This glass with its distinctive diagonal diaper patterns undoubtedly shows Pugin's designs but the maker is unknown.

During 1836 Pugin was busy with work for the Houses of Parliament and the publication of his book *Contrasts*. But by his twenty-fifth birthday in March 1837 he was ready to launch himself as an independent architect and make those critical introductions on which his future career depended. In that month he started out on a journey to Lancashire where he was due to visit Scarisbrick Hall, which became one of his first commissions. On the way there he stopped for the nights of 27 and 28 March at Oscott College, and then on his way back he arrived at Oscott on 4 April. The next entries in his diary read 5 April 'At Oscott all day. Earl Spencer.' and 6 April 'At Oscott saw the Bishop. Left for London.'⁸ Exactly what brought Pugin to Oscott is not known, and sadly no correspondence from him survives at the college, but it must be significant that a receipt for an ivory crucifix, giving Pugin's name, is dated 21 March.⁹ When Pugin arrived there, the new buildings for the school and seminary which Bishop Walsh of the Midland district had pressed for were nearly finished. In brick in a simple Tudor-Gothic style, they had been designed and built by the architect Joseph Potter (c1756–1842) of Lichfield. Pugin's reputation among Roman Catholics at this date must have largely rested on his book, *Contrasts*, but possibly Dr Weedall, the president of the college, was also looking for advice on suitable fittings for his empty buildings, particularly the chapel.

5 Belcher 2001, p 38.

6 'Diary': Wedgwood 1985, p 32.

7 *PAG Wiltshire*, p 453.

8 'Diary': Wedgwood 1985, p 37.

9 Oscott Archives, Box 1837, no 713. According to Roskell 1903, it was John Moore who first invited Pugin to Oscott: Belcher 2001, p 79 n 9.

Whatever the reasons for his presence, Pugin clearly made an immediate and lasting impact on both Bishop Walsh and Dr Weedall, convincing them of his ideas for splendid furniture and fittings which, with his knowledge of the London antique trade, he knew he could supply. His note, 'Earl Spencer', probably refers to the Hon George Spencer (1799–1864), the youngest son of the second Earl Spencer. He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 1824, but became a Roman Catholic in 1830, and at this time was a priest in West Bromwich. There is a college tradition that Spencer was responsible for the very substantial costs of fitting up the chapel,¹⁰ and so it would be important that he approved Pugin's expensive ideas. Pugin as usual lost no time and on 12 April wrote in his diary 'Sent drawing to Mr. Moore Dr. Weedall Mr. Hull.' John Moore (1807–1856) was a professor at Oscott and became a long-time supporter of Pugin; and Edward Hull was an antique dealer in Wardour Street with whom Pugin did a great deal of business when he was a young man. Pugin returned to Oscott on 24 May and stayed until 31 May, and during this visit he met for the first time John Hardman, who was to become his closest friend and colleague. By now his plans for the chapel were more or less finalised and on 19 June he wrote 'Began plate Oscott chapel' and on 21 June 'Finished plate'.¹¹

The etching [figure 2] shows the chapel largely as completed. In particular, the altar piece, the chancel rails and the stalls, all containing various continental pieces from the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are shown as installed. Also indicated is the stained glass in the apse windows, clearly a crucial element from the beginning. It has sometimes been suggested that Pugin added the apse to Potter's chapel,¹² but the fact that Pugin began to plan the glass from his exciting first visit makes this impossible to sustain. It may fairly be said that this glass, with its glorious colours and design, dominates the chapel. Pugin seems to have had no doubts as to who was to make the glass for this ambitious project and Warrington documents his first journey to Oscott when he stayed for three days in April 1837. He noted that he came from Elvaston,¹³ where he had been doing substantial work at Elvaston Castle.

William Warrington was born at New Romney in 1796 and possibly his father was also a glazier.¹⁴ He tells that he worked for the stained glass artist Thomas Willement, then the leading stained glass maker, and that in 1833 he restored a mediaeval window for Mr Pratt in Bond Street, London.¹⁵ It seems clear therefore that he learnt his craft chiefly from Willement and was working in the 1830s in the same milieu as Pugin among the craftsmen and antique dealers of Bond Street and Soho, but could in no way be called experienced. The stained glass at Oscott was, moreover, strikingly original, and its unusual character impressed observers from the first.¹⁶

The sources which Pugin used to create this masterpiece form an interesting illustration of his working methods at this time. On 10 June 1837 he described his

¹⁰ O'Donnell 1988, p 47.

¹¹ 'Diary': Wedgwood 1985, p 37. The plate was reissued for the consecration of the chapel in May 1838 and hence is sometimes dated 1838.

¹² Trappes-Lomax 1932, p 144.

¹³ Oscott Archives, Box 1837, no 789.

¹⁴ *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, 2004.

¹⁵ Warrington 1848, pp 33; 37.

¹⁶ *Orthodox journal*, vi, p 90.

reasoning for the design of Roman Catholic buildings in a letter accompanying drawings for a proposed church in Birmingham, an early scheme for St Chad's Cathedral, thus: 'I have adopted a foreign style of pointed architecture because it is both cheap and effective and Likewise because it is totally different from any *protestant* erection. any person would be aware that this was a catholic church at first sight.'¹⁷ It was the Reformation, not the renaissance, which Pugin then saw as the cause of the decline of Catholic art; and in particular the flamboyant fifteenth and sixteenth-century Germanic sources which he had admired on his journey of 1834 appealed to him. One must suppose that the programme for the glass was worked out by Pugin and Weedall: the central five-light window shows a crowned Virgin, holding a crowned Christ-child on one arm, and holding in her other hand a sceptre surmounted by the eastern star, standing on a crescent moon and surrounded by a great glory; on her right is St Catherine who is the patron of academic and theological study; and below her kneels St Gregory, the pope who was responsible for St Augustine's mission to England. On her left is St Cecilia, the patron of music, with, below her, St Thomas Becket, the most famous English martyr. The two three-light side windows each contain six figures of the twelve apostles, who are set on Gothic pedestals and under Gothic tabernacles, and two donor figures, a man and a woman in mediaeval dress, kneel to either side at the bottom of the central lights [figures 4-6].

The Virgin seems to be derived from a Dürer print such as figure 7, though there is no evidence that Pugin knew this one. He did, however, certainly know a similar one, the 'Virgin and Child on a crescent moon', c1499, which the Rev C. M. Cracherode had bequeathed to the British Museum in 1799. For the two female saints, however, Pugin gave Warrington an exact source to follow [figure 8].¹⁸ How Pugin discovered these lithographs from the Boisserée Collection, which fill two immense folios in the V and A Museum Library, is not known. He may have purchased them in Germany in 1834; but one must assume that a copy or, more likely individual lithographs, found their way into the London antique trade, where he bought them, seeing how they could be transformed for his purposes. The lithograph attributes the altarpiece to Lucas van Leyden; the painter is now called the Master of the St Bartholomew Altar and it is dated c1505.¹⁹ Pugin used the figure of St Bartholomew in his north apse window as one of the apostles. The original altarpiece had two side panels, which were also lithographed and show St John the Evangelist with St Margaret and St James the Less with St Christina. Pugin took the two male figures as models for the same apostles in the side windows. For sources for the remaining apostles he used other lithographs in the Boisserée Collection [figure 9]. These were four lithographs attributing the original panels to 'Meister Wilhelm von Köln' but they are now given to the Master of the Heisterbach altar and are dated c1445. They show two panels, each of which have four figures, St Benedict with Ss Philip, Matthew and James the Great; and St Bernard with Ss Bartholomew, Matthias and Simon. For the kneeling Ss Gregory and Thomas Becket and the groups of angels above their heads no close sources have yet been found, but their attitudes resemble

¹⁷ Pugin to Hardman, 10.6.1837: Belcher 2001, p 77.

¹⁸ For this identification I acknowledge a lecture by Dr Elgin van Treeck-Vassen on 28.2.2005 at the conference 'Glass painting 1800–1900', organised by the British Society of Master Glass Painters.

¹⁹ MacGregor 1994.

those of shepherds at a nativity scene;²⁰ the angels in particular have strong similarities with works by Dürer and his master Michael Wolgemut. The distinctive puffy clouds which surround the central group have close parallels with those which Dürer depicted in his woodcuts for the *Apocalypse* of 1496–7, or Wolgemut in his woodcut of God the Father enthroned in the frontispiece of the *Nuremberg chronicle* of 1493, a copy of which Pugin is known to have possessed. It is also notable that the pattern of the brocade curtain in the background of the St Bartholomew altarpiece is similar to that used to stencil the walls under the stained glass windows in the Oscott chapel.

It is impossible to know how much Pugin knew about the Boisserée Collection, some of the lithographs of which he had used as sources, but he would certainly have approved of its aims. Sulpiz Boisserée (1783–1854) and his brother Melchior (1783–1851), patriotic, rich and pious Roman Catholics, and their friend Johann Baptist Bertram (1776–1841) were natives of Cologne, growing up during the period of French occupation. From 1802 a programme of secularisation of religious institutions was started and many ecclesiastical possessions were being sold. In the same year of 1802 the friends went to Paris to see the Musée Napoléon, formed from works of art assembled from many places and exhibited in clearly defined schools of art. While there they met Friedrich and Dorothea Schlegel. This encounter provided the decisive impulse to form a collection of late Gothic paintings originating from Cologne. Sulpiz became principally the organiser and scholar, while Melchior tracked down works of art. (Sulpiz was also an important figure in the movement to complete the building of Cologne cathedral, which finally got underway from 1842.) In 1810 the Boisserée brothers went to Heidelberg, then the centre of German Romanticism. Their collection became well known and it was visited and described by Goethe. Their intention was always to sell the collection and the lithographs of it, published between 1821 and 1823, were a form of publicity. They first tried to find a home for it in Cologne, and then Frankfurt and Berlin, before achieving one in Munich, where the foundation stone of the Alte Pinakothek was laid in 1826. Thus in 1827 King Ludwig I of Bavaria bought the collection, consisting of 218 early Netherlandish and early German paintings, most of which have remained in the Alte Pinakothek, with some also in Nuremberg and Bamberg.²¹

Pugin's use of his sources was most original, dramatic even in the central window, where he has changed the original static saints (with St Agnes converted into St Catherine by a deft change of emblems) into a dynamic composition focussed on the Virgin to whom the college was dedicated. To Pugin must also be ascribed the splendid colours of the glass, because the lithographs showed only black and gold tints, and it is known from later work how particular he was in this matter. Their strength and richness must reflect his choices. Perhaps the wonderful purple puffy clouds and the surprising vivid green flashes of garments are his ideas too. It represents a brilliant fusion of the Gothic and the Renaissance, similar to those made by Dürer and Wolgemut. It should also be noted that the sources were openly acknowledged at the time. The lithographs were bought by the college from

²⁰ Jack Hinton in an email to the author, 5.2005.

²¹ Goldberg 1982.

Warrington, who also framed them. His bill of July 1838 includes '5 prints from German Masters £2 18s 0d'.²² They were still in the collection in 1880, when they were mentioned in Greaney's *Catalogue*, but they no longer survive.²³ This can be seen as part of Pugin's policy of combining the real Gothic with the Revival.

To Warrington must be due the superb technical quality and also the very fine draftsmanship [figure 10]. This excellent drawing applies whether or not Warrington had an exact model to work from. He also worked extremely fast, and the windows were fitted by the end of August 1837 when he submitted his bill. (Pugin also visited Oscott twice during August, between 17 and 19 and again from 26 to 28.) In his

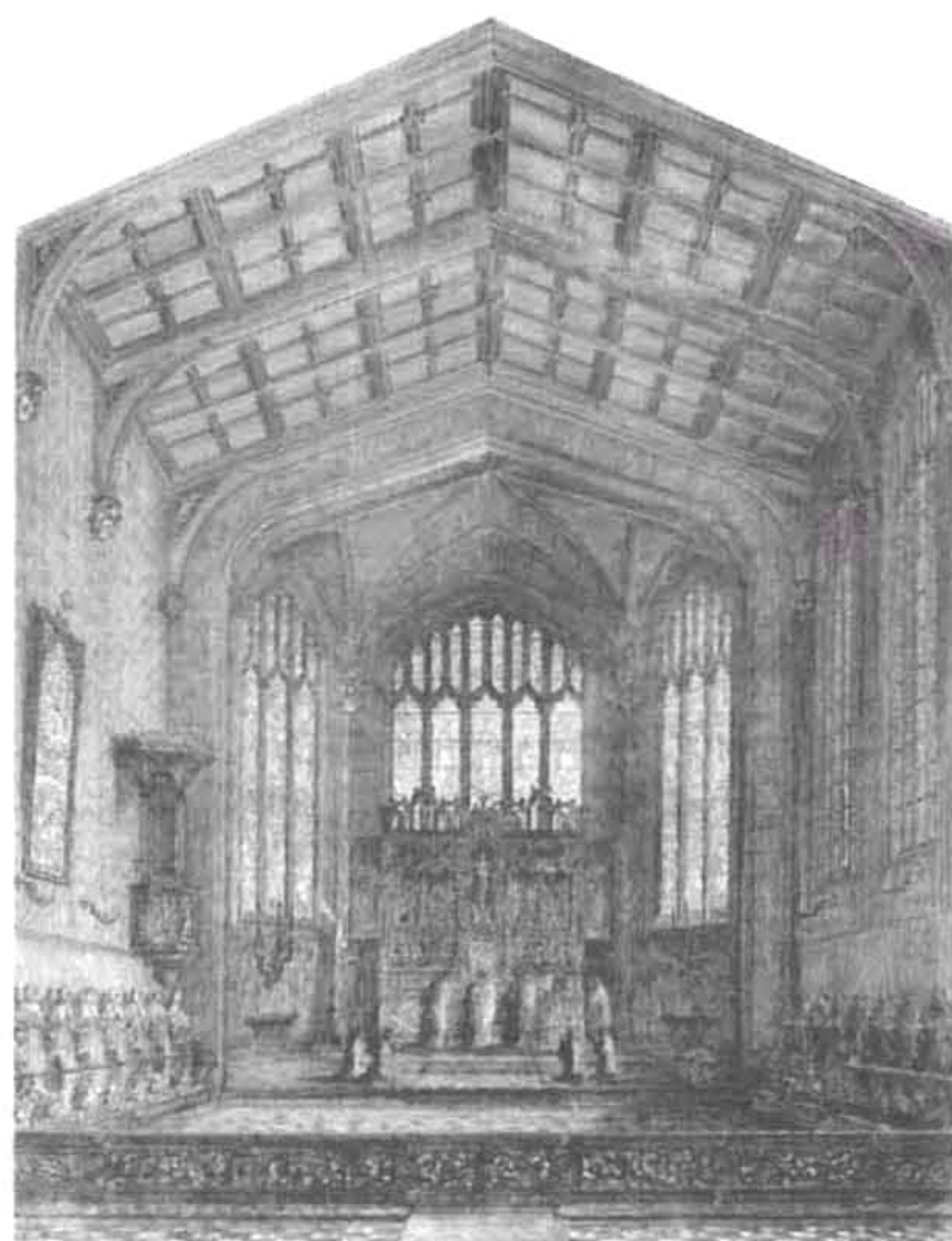


Figure 2: Pugin's etching of Oscott chapel, 1837

account Warrington states '3 Windows of Stained Glass for Chapel constituting about double the original Estimate. Including charge for 5 blank bottom parts of Altar Window } £300.0.0.'²⁴ This would seem to indicate that only the central window was planned at first, and that the reredos was found to screen a certain part at the bottom of that window, as indeed it does. There are donor figures, as has been noted, in the two side windows, which presumably indicate the separate commission for them, which followed soon after the project began. The donors are John Vincent Gandolfi and Teresa Hornyold, both identified by their coats of arms. There is some confusion whether it is John Vincent senior, who was Teresa's husband and died in 1818, or John Vincent junior, who had been educated at Oscott, took the name Hornyold in 1859 and is credited with the

commission in honour of his parents.²⁵ The figure certainly looks young [figure 11]. The Hornyold family had many connections with Oscott College.

The windows were received with enthusiasm. The *Orthodox journal* in January 1838, quoting from the *Birmingham journal*, called them 'one of the finest efforts of the art of staining on glass, which has been seen in this or probably any other country for a very long period.' It goes on to praise 'Mr. Pugin, an artist whose talents in the ecclesiastico-gothic style need only to be seen to be duly appreciated' and then Warrington 'an artist but little known' but who 'is likely to occupy a high station in public estimation to which we consider him eminently entitled.' The article then comments on the techniques of making stained glass and ends with a vivid description of the windows. Of the apostles in the side windows it says: 'twelve such figures are not to be met with in any examples to be found in ecclesiastical or cathedral windows at home or abroad; nor...do we expect to find anything superior

22 Oscott Archives, Box 1838, no 974.

23 Greaney 1880, p 24.

24 Oscott Archives, Box 1837, no 789.

25 Champ 2002, pp 10-1.

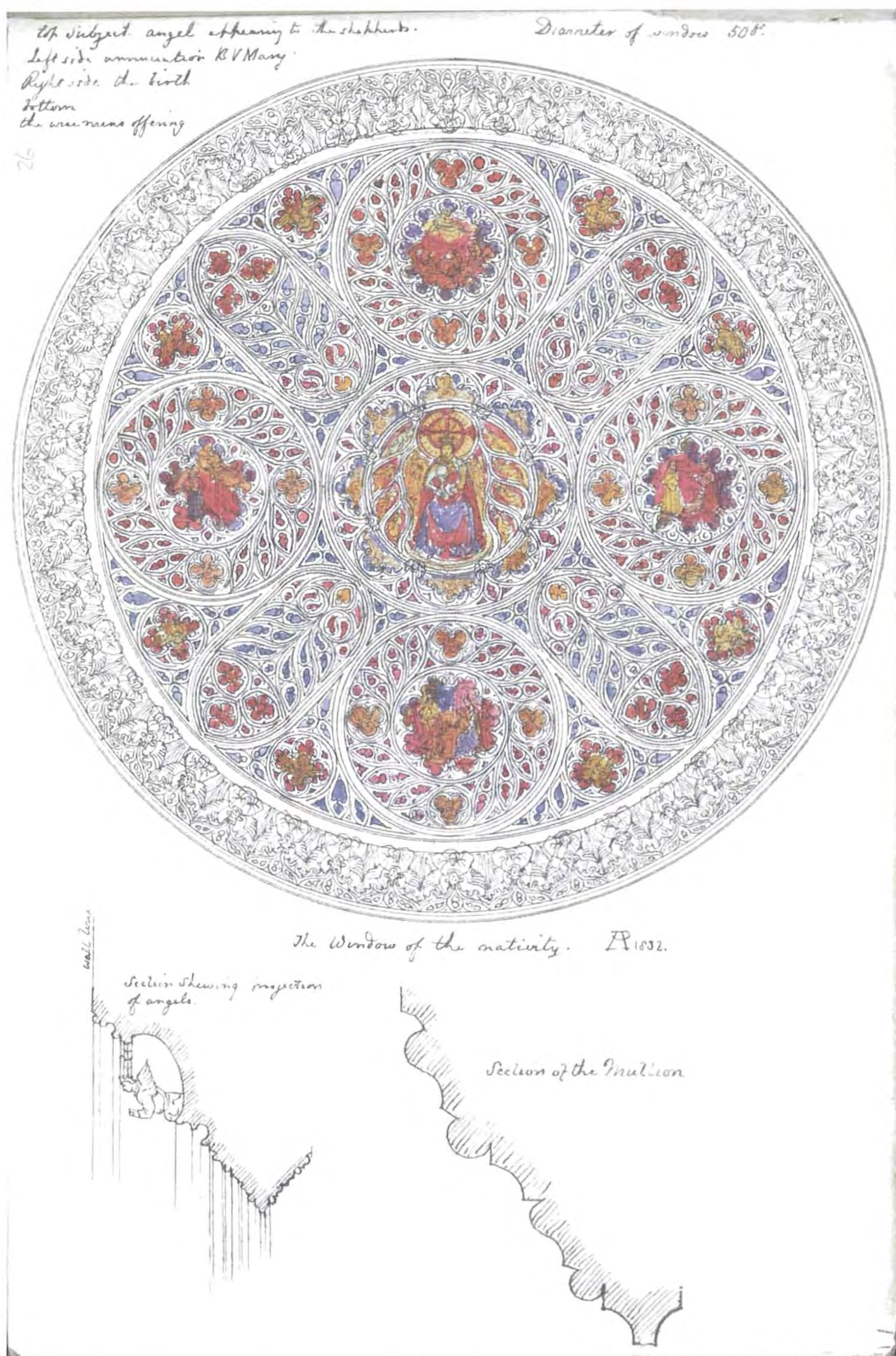


Figure 3: A window of the Nativity, page from a sketchbook by AWN Pugin, 1832
 V&A Picture Images/Victoria and Albert Museum: Wedgwood 1985, cat no 104, p 52.

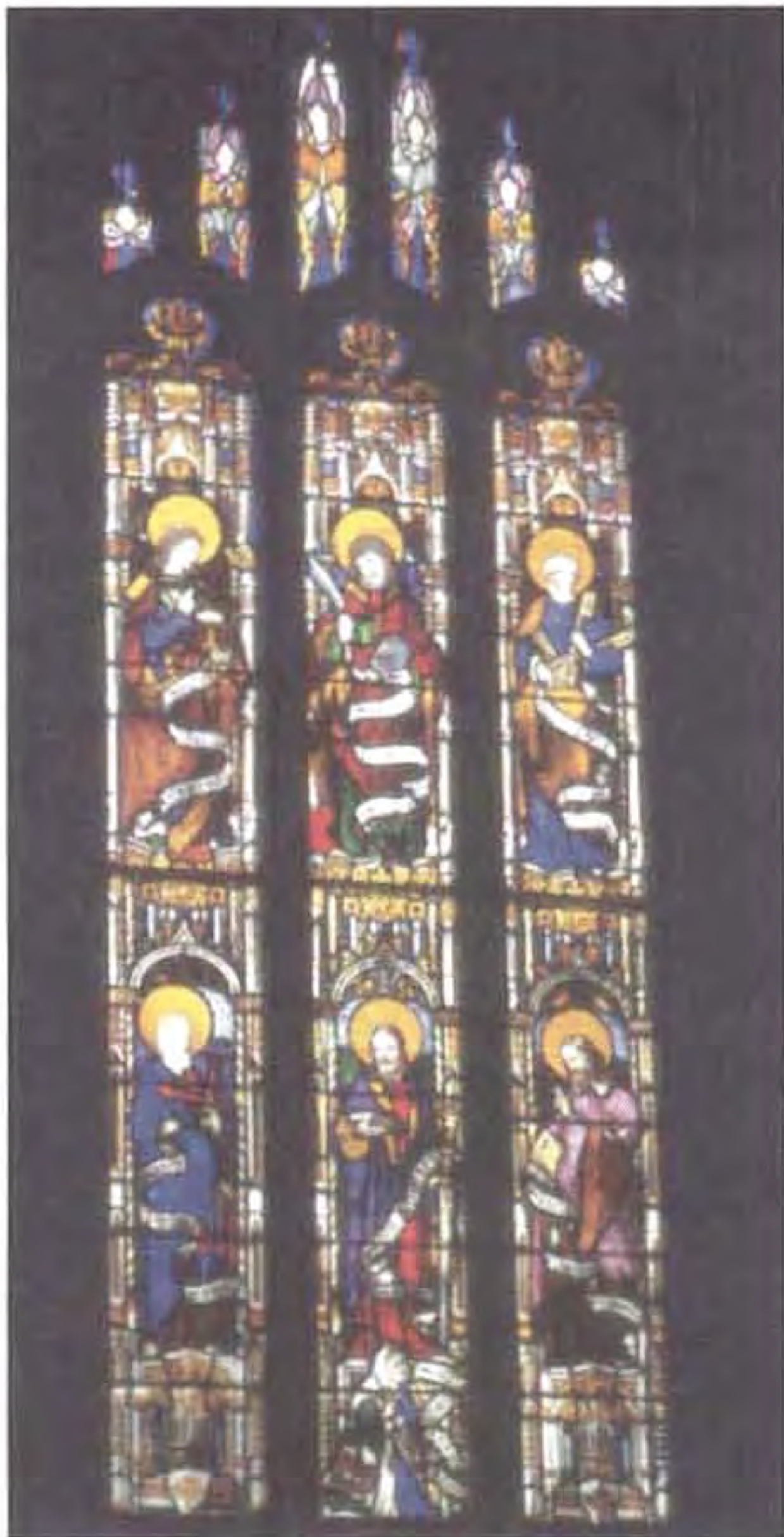


Figure 4: Oscott chapel, north apse window, 1837
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.

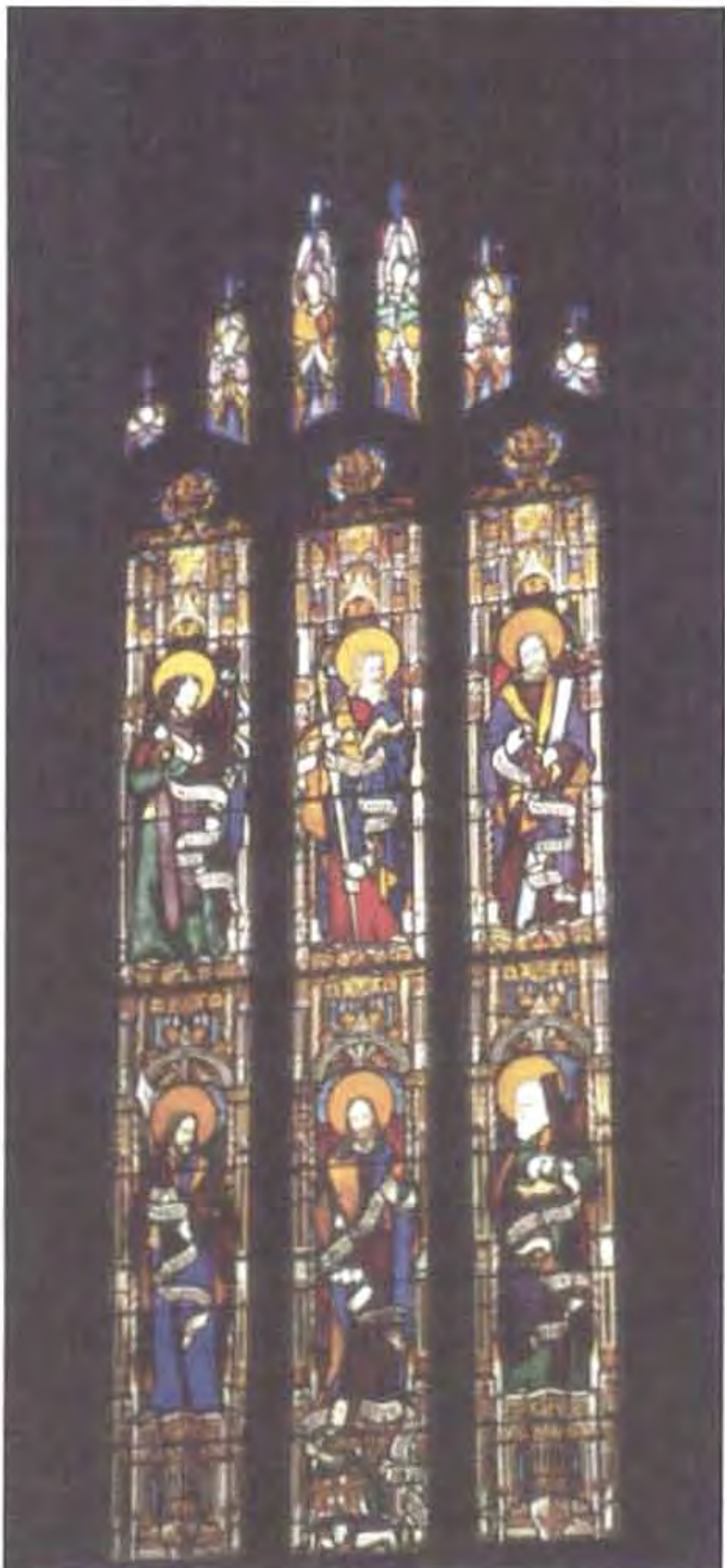


Figure 6: Oscott chapel, south apse window, 1837
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.



Figure 5: Oscott chapel, east apse window, 1837
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.



Figure 8: Sulpiz & Melchior Boisserie: Three saints, Agnes, Bartholomew & Cecilia, lithograph from Die Sammlung altnieder und ober deutscher Gemälde, 1821
V&A Picture Images/Victoria and Albert Museum: pressmark 110.D.66.



Figure 7: Durer: 'The Virgin on a crescent with a sceptre and crown of stars', 1516
Engraving on laid paper, 119x76mm.



Figure 9: Sulpiz & Melchior Boisserie: Two standing saints under canopies, lithograph from Die Sammlung altnieder und ober deutscher Gemälde, 1821
V&A Picture Images/Victoria and Albert Museum: pressmark 110.D.66.



Figure 10: Oscott chapel,
detail of north apse window, 1837
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.



Figure 11: Oscott chapel,
detail of south apse window, 1837
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.



Figure 12: Oscott chapel, detail of south-west
window (left-hand side), 1839
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.



Figure 13: Oscott chapel, detail of south-west
window (right-hand side), 1839
Photograph: Teresa Sladen.

in ancient or modern art.'²⁶ A very similar account appears in the *Gentleman's magazine*, where the stained glass is considered the equal of Quinten Metsys.²⁷

After this triumphant start it is not surprising that Pugin and Warrington were asked to continue their work. Information on this comes in a revealing letter from Warrington to Dr Weedall dated 13 July 1838.²⁸ It includes an account for the 'Spandrels of 3 windows, '2 openings Baptistry' and '3 Guest Room Windows'. These together with the expenses of copper wire work, journeys and lodgings came to £122.2s.9d. From this one learns that the tracery lights of the apse windows filled with angelic heads and wings were made after the main lights. The two charming windows in the now disused baptistery under the gallery in the chapel are in a sixteenth-century Netherlandish grisaille style, with one roundel of John the Baptist and another of the baptism of Christ, against a background of diamond diapers marked 'J' and 'B'. The guest room windows have not been identified but seem to have been of coats of arms.²⁹ Warrington goes on to write: 'Mr. Pugin has called on me this morning and we have finally arranged agreeable to your Plan respecting the Window of Side Chapel at Oscott. And I have promised him to go to Rouen in Normandy to see the Glass and other things there so that you will have the advantage of what Information I may gain there. Mr. Pugin has had an accident with his Foot but is better and goes to Germany very shortly.' There follows a humble request for money, which shows what a hand-to-mouth existence such craftsmen endured: 'I merely send [the account] being obliged much against my Will to request the Favor (I am always asking Favors of you) to let me have £40' because he has 'a large sum to Pay on Tuesday next.' Dr Weedall was obviously kind and on 17 July Warrington sent a receipt for £40.³⁰

Warrington sent the account for this final window in December 1839.³¹ It is described as '5 windows to Side Chapel £150.0.0'. The side chapel is the chapel of St George and St Patrick at the south-western end of the chapel, and presumably Warrington's '5 windows' means five lights. The only remaining Warrington window, which is prominently signed and dated by Warrington on a shield at the feet of St Agnes, is of four lights and is the south-western window of the main chapel [figures 12 and 13]. It shows figures of Ss Agnes, George, Michael and Ursula standing on a grassy base, with much heavy tabernacle work above them, and small complicated panels below. What seems to have happened is that in 1862 an opening was made in the south wall of the side chapel where the window presumably was, in order to build the Weedall chantry beyond. The stained glass was then moved to the south wall of the main chapel where the windows were of four lights, and so one light was lost. Perhaps the missing light depicted St Patrick. Even given the disruption of the moving of the glass and probably refitting the tracery lights, this window is a great disappointment after the brilliance of the apse windows. In

26 *Orthodox journal*, vi, 1838, pp 90–1.

27 *Gentleman's magazine*, 164 new series 10 (8.1838), p 171.

28 Oscott Archives, Box 1838, no 974.

29 The account of December 1839, Oscott Archives Box 1839, no 1296, mentions two coats of arms. Warrington's mss list in the V&A Library includes '1 in Guest Room'.

30 Oscott Archives, Box 1838, no 987.

31 Oscott Archives, Box 1839, no 1296.

particular Warrington's technical skill seems to have deserted him, both the colours and the painting being poor. The window is, however, of interest for what it demonstrates of Dr Weedall's plan. It is in fact a very early example of a 'memorial' window, a type which became so popular during the Victorian period. It is a memorial to the alumni of the 'Old College' with, in the small panels below the saints, figures of the deceased, including a benefactress, and their coats of arms.³² Warrington donated a '5th part' of this window,³³ and so it is sad that a fifth light was lost. The remaining windows in the chapel, all later and all by Hardman and Company, also commemorate former pupils.

Warrington's reputation was undoubtedly made by his work at Oscott. He went on to work with Pugin at St Chad's, Birmingham and St Mary, Derby using fourteenth-century English models, and at Alton Towers. But, as perhaps his showy signature in his final window demonstrates, Pugin soon tired of his pretensions. He approved of his work at St Chad's but wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury on 28 August 1841: 'the Glass painters will shorten my days. they are the greatest plagues I have. the reason I did not give warrington the windows at the hospital is this – he has become lately so conceited that he has got nearly as expensive as Willement.'³⁴ Warrington had learnt a great deal from Pugin about different styles and sources, which he put together in his handsome and unfairly criticised volume, *The history of stained glass*, 1848, illustrated with examples of his own work. Pugin moved on in stained glass and architecture and everything else, before settling firmly on a fourteenth-century English style.

At Oscott, Pugin and Warrington, both full of new ideas and enthusiasm and perhaps with beginners' luck, created stained glass of great force and beauty in a style which they never repeated.

32 Greaney 1880, p 25; Champ 2002, p 59.

33 Oscott Archives, Box 1839, no 1296.

34 Belcher 2001, p 269.

Abney Hall, Cheshire and the Great Sideboard Mystery

by Michael Fisher

Now used as a conference centre and offices by the construction firm of Alfred McAlpine, Abney Hall is set in attractive parkland on the outskirts of the Cheshire town of Cheadle.¹ The hall is full of interest. Built and extended between 1847 and 1893, it reflects many of the changes in architectural fashion which took place over those decades, from neo-Norman through 'Stockbroker's Tudor' and Puginesque Gothic to arts and crafts. It was one of the first houses in England to have gas lighting installed,² using innovative metalwork fittings by John Hardman, and it contains one of the biggest pieces of moveable furniture ever designed by A.W.N. Pugin: a huge sideboard standing fully 12 feet tall and measuring 10 feet wide. That Pugin, the Roman Catholic architect *par excellence*, and the archenemy of all things Protestant, should have produced designs for the home of a leading Manchester Dissenter and conventicle-builder gives a bizarre twist to the story.

It is indeed the Pugin contributions to Abney Hall which are the most interesting – and spectacular. Pugin is not very well represented in Cheshire. Apart from the humble little school church of St Winefride at Neston (Wirral) built in 1840–3,³ there is only St Alban's Church, Macclesfield, and the interior work at Abney Hall: but these are significant in that they represent both the beginning and the end of Pugin's career as an architect and designer. St Alban's is one of Pugin's earliest large churches (1839–41), still wholly perpendicular in style like his contemporary St Mary's, Derby. Abney Hall was his very last major commission. Undertaken just before the onset of his final illness, it reveals the increasingly dominant hand of John Gregory Crace (1809–1889) who was at this time interpreting Pugin's designs in a more free and florid manner than Pugin himself would have liked.⁴

Built in 1847 for cotton manufacturer Alfred Orrell, the Grove, as it was then called, was bought two years later by James Watts (1804–1878), a wholesale draper and later mayor of Manchester and high sheriff of the county of Lancaster. Watts engaged the local firm of Travis and Mangall to enlarge the house in the Tudor-Gothic style, and he renamed it Abney Hall. It is of red brick with stone trim; 'asymmetrical and sombre' says Pevsner, '– the sort of thing affluent businessmen built themselves in the villages of Cheshire which had been caught into the magnetic zone of Manchester'.⁵ In the grounds (which, unlike the house, are open to the public) stands a slender octagonal tower which served as a ventilating shaft for the conservatories. It has traceried openings at the top, a short spire and a large pierced

1 *le*, Cheadle near Manchester, not to be confused with the Staffordshire Cheadle where Pugin's St Giles' Church is located.

2 Girouard 1979, p 24.

3 It has been much altered since.

4 Pugin's other later commissions undertaken with Crace include the drawing room at Eastnor Castle, Herefordshire (1850); interior fittings and decoration at Lismore Castle, County Waterford (1850); and Leighton Hall, Powys. Work continued in these houses for several years after Pugin's death.

5 *PAG Cheshire*, p 126.

weathervane, and is commonly attributed to Pugin although there is no documentary evidence for this.

Towards the end of 1851 James Watts engaged Crace to undertake the furnishing and decorating of the new rooms, probably as the result of a visit to the Great Exhibition. Crace, apparently, sent his suggested scheme to Pugin who dismissed it as 'the worst... I ever saw since Wyatts time', and promised to produce detailed drawings of the 'true' kind: *'If you like, leave it to me and for £50 I will make every detail and moulding full size and all ornaments, grates, fireplace, paper and everything...let me have it and I'll beat the decorators together in a lump'*.⁶ Pugin was, as ever, true to his word, and in spite of the onset of his illness he continued to send drawings to Crace until February 1852 when Jane Pugin had to write on his behalf to explain the reasons for his delay in finishing them.⁷

Most of the drawings survive – 19 sheets of them – in the Victoria and Albert Museum Pugin collection. They relate to the principal ground-floor rooms: the dining room, drawing room and library, and include frieze panels, ceiling panels, stencil alphabets for the friezes, and a wallpaper pattern.⁸ Examination of what is actually in the house reveals how freely Crace adapted Pugin's designs – even the Gothic alphabets – and also how unashamedly he used materials which Pugin would have condemned as sham: for example, *carton pierre* and *papier mâché* in the mouldings of the ceilings and doorcases.

Crace's work at Abney continued well beyond Pugin's death until 1857. He brought in the tried and tested team of craftsmen and manufacturers who had worked to Pugin's designs in the great country houses and churches, and in the new Palace of Westminster: John Hardman (metalwork and stained glass), Herbert Minton (ceramics), and George Myers (stonecarving and woodcarving) whose contributions reveal a more disciplined handling of the Pugin style.

The main entrance to the house is through a richly carved neo-Norman portal on the north side [figure 14]: a survival from the original villa



Figure 14: Abney Hall: the neo-Norman north front

Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.



Figure 15: Abney Hall: Minton tiles in the entrance hall

Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.

6 Pugin to Crace, 12.1851: Royal Institute of British Architects British Architectural Library Drawings & Archives Collection (RIBA BAL DAC), Crace MSS PUG 9/2; Wedgwood 1985, p 189.

7 RIBA BAL DAC, Crace MSS PUG 9/5; Wedgwood 1985, p 189.

8 Wedgwood 1985, cat nos 251–69.

of 1847 and a reflection of the short-lived Norman revival which swept across the country in the 1840s. Once inside, the mood quickly changes to Gothic as one progresses into a broad corridor/entrance hall through a glazed timber screen with ogees, rich tracery, and coving reminiscent of a rood screen in some great church. There is a similar screen at the upper end of the hall, and between the two is a glorious pavement of patterned Minton tiles [figure 15]. This floor is both vast and surprisingly sumptuous, including patterns identical with some used at St Augustine's, Ramsgate, and at Westminster; but then James Watts was a highly successful businessman whose self-made wealth could afford to match anything that Pugin and Crace did in the homes of the aristocracy and landed gentry.⁹ As mayor of Manchester, he welcomed Prince Albert in May 1857 to the Exhibition of the Art Treasures of the World at Manchester's own version of the Crystal Palace, built at Stretford and decorated by Crace. A bedroom at Abney Hall, also decorated and furnished by Crace for the prince's overnight stay, was known thereafter as the Prince Consort's bedroom. When Queen Victoria visited Manchester a month later Watts was given a knighthood. Like John Naylor, the Liverpool banker whose new home – Leighton Hall, near Welshpool – was likewise furnished and decorated by Crace, Watts was typical of many mid-Victorian *nouveaux riches* who built country houses, aped the aristocracy, and were lampooned in Trollope's incisive social satire *The way we live now* (1875). He was also a leading Dissenter, and consciously renamed his new home after Sir Thomas Abney, a seventeenth-century Presbyterian mayor of London; he was also involved with the foundation of many Congregationalist chapels.¹⁰

On the left-hand side of the entrance corridor at Abney – which has a coffered ceiling with gilded bosses – a triple archway leads to a magnificent staircase with carved wooden balustrades of pierced work (probably by Myers), and a panelled ceiling carried on huge arched braces springing from the corners of the stairwell. There is a large window with stained glass by Hardman. Of four lights with a transom, it has coloured geometrical shapes and roundels set in quarries patterned with leaves, the initials JW, and the sacred monogram (surprising, perhaps, in the home of a Protestant Dissenter), and coloured geometrical borders

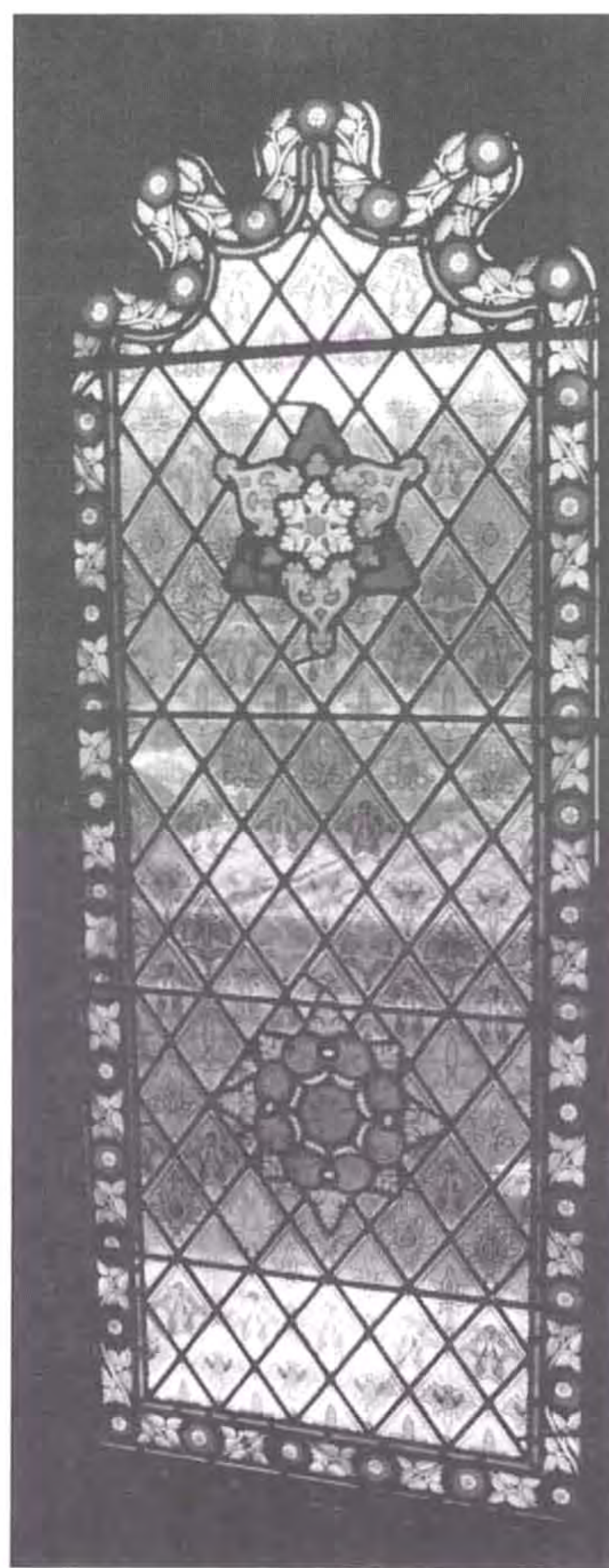


Figure 16: Abney Hall: part of the staircase window, with Hardman glass
Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.

⁹ Watts' huge Manchester warehouse in Portland Street, also designed by Travis and Mangell, is one of the most palatial and ornamented 19th century buildings of its kind. See *PAG Manchester*, pp 192–3.

¹⁰ The contents of Abney Hall, auctioned in 1958, included 27 silver trowels believed to have been connected with the laying of chapel foundation stones.

[figure 16]. Above the landing which leads to the principal bedrooms there is a vaulted ceiling with an octagonal lantern closely modelled on those of Ely cathedral and the central lobby of the Palace of Westminster: a *nouveau riche* statement if ever there was one.

On the ground floor, the most magnificent room is the former drawing room. The ceiling panels are ribbed, with a pendant – like those in the drawing room at Eastnor Castle – at the centre of each; and the spaces between the ribs are patterned with flowers and leaves on a blue ground. The frieze is one of the few Pugin designs that Crace did not alter significantly.¹¹ It consists of a series of rectangular panels with diagonal bands on which Latin and English mottoes such as *Industria vincit*, and *God is our strength* alternate with bands of flowers and the industrious honeybee taken from the Watts coat of arms. At the centre of each panel is a shield emblazoned with the arms of the guilds of the



Figure 18: Abney Hall: the moulded ceiling of the drawing room, and the Hardman gasolier
Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.



Figure 17: Abney Hall: Gothic door in the drawing room

Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.

City of London. The panels are headed by lines of a pious verse in large Gothic capitals:

The quiet friend / Ah one in word and deed
Great comfort is / Like ready gold at need
Wouldst have a friend / Wouldst know what
friend is best / Have God thy friend / He
passeth all the rest / A friend is he above all
other / Kinder and truer than a brother

Below the frieze, the walls are covered with a patterned fabric in green and gold. In the middle of the east wall there is a Gothic chimneypiece of white marble, and over it a big mirror in a gilt frame. The other principal features include three highly decorated doors [figure 17] set in equally ornate cases with gilded brattishing above the cornice, and there is a low dado of large moulded quatrefoils set in circles. Much of the moulded work is of *papier mâché*. The brass door furniture – lockplates, handles, fingerplates and hinges – is by Hardman, and of superb quality.¹²

¹¹ Wedgwood 1985, cat no 252. It is very similar in concept to the friezes Pugin designed for the Talbot Gallery at Alton Towers (1839), Alton Towers chapel (1850), and the dining room at Lismore Castle (1850).

¹² A large quantity of brass door furniture for Abney is entered in the Hardman Metalwork Daybook for 15.1.1853: Birmingham Central Archive, Birmingham Central Library (BCA).

By Hardman too is the central light fitting [figure 18]. It is made of polished brass, with characteristic scrollwork and Gothic details such as heraldic shields at the top of the stem, but it lacks the slender elegance of the chandeliers which Pugin designed at around the same time for the banqueting halls at Alton Towers and Lismore Castle, and for the drawing room at Eastnor. The main branches are thicker, and instead of being suspended on a chain, the fixture is attached to the ceiling by a length of pipe; but then it quickly becomes evident that this is not a chandelier at all, but a gasolier, and of early date, too (1853). The entry in the Hardman metalwork daybook refers to it as an 'experimental' item,¹³ so here at Abney is a prime example of the ingenuity of the Hardman firm in adapting Gothic design to a new method of illumination born of the industrial age. The experiment was successful. Gasoliers of the same pattern were installed in the adjoining rooms and on the staircase, and it was not long before the owners of other large houses were taking advantage of the new facility by ordering equally splendid gasoliers from Hardman's.¹⁴

In the two rooms adjacent to the drawing room the decoration is more restrained. The doors and doorcases have similar mouldings, but without the colouring and gilding. The panelled ceiling has diagonal bands with mottoes, and central quatrefoils containing family monograms. A photograph of c1912 reveals what the dining room looked like when Abney was still a family home and fully furnished.¹⁵ There was Pugin furniture such as a dining table and chairs, a Gothic folding screen, and a massive sideboard.

The south-eastern part of the house consists of large additions made in 1893 by G.F. Armitage of Altrincham for James Watts junior, who had inherited the house on the death of his father in 1878. Here the Gothic of the earlier period gives way very abruptly – even part way along the corridor – to arts and crafts. Instead of Hardman brass there is beaten copper furniture to the doors, which are otherwise quite plain. There is copperwork too on the chimneypiece of the former library. The music room has an inglenook chimneypiece, almost a room in itself with a massive outer structure of polished wood, and a stone hood to the fireplace.



Figure 19: Abney Hall: the great sideboard
Photograph: Michael Fisher, 2005.

13 BCA, Metalwork Daybook, 31.12.1853. It is noted that charges were to be made only for labour because metal from a chandelier made in 3.1853 was being reused.

14 A year later a very large two-tier gasolier was made by Hardman for Col Middleton Biddulph of Chirk Castle (Wrexham) where EW Pugin was completing extensive alterations and additions begun by his father. BCA, Metalwork Daybook, 8.12.1854.

15 Reproduced in Girouard 1979, p 393; see also Mostyn 1963b, p 911.

Not much original furniture survives in situ, but photographs taken from about 1912 onwards¹⁶ show what was there until about 1958, when Abney became the home of Cheadle and Gatley District Council. Most of the contents were then auctioned to make room for standard office furniture. Some pieces – including a large octagonal table – went to the V and A, but the rest ‘were only sold for a few pounds a time’.¹⁷ At Bramall Hall, just a few miles away, is the large extending table from the dining room bought in 1958 sale; also a glass-fronted cabinet and three writing tables, all by Crace.

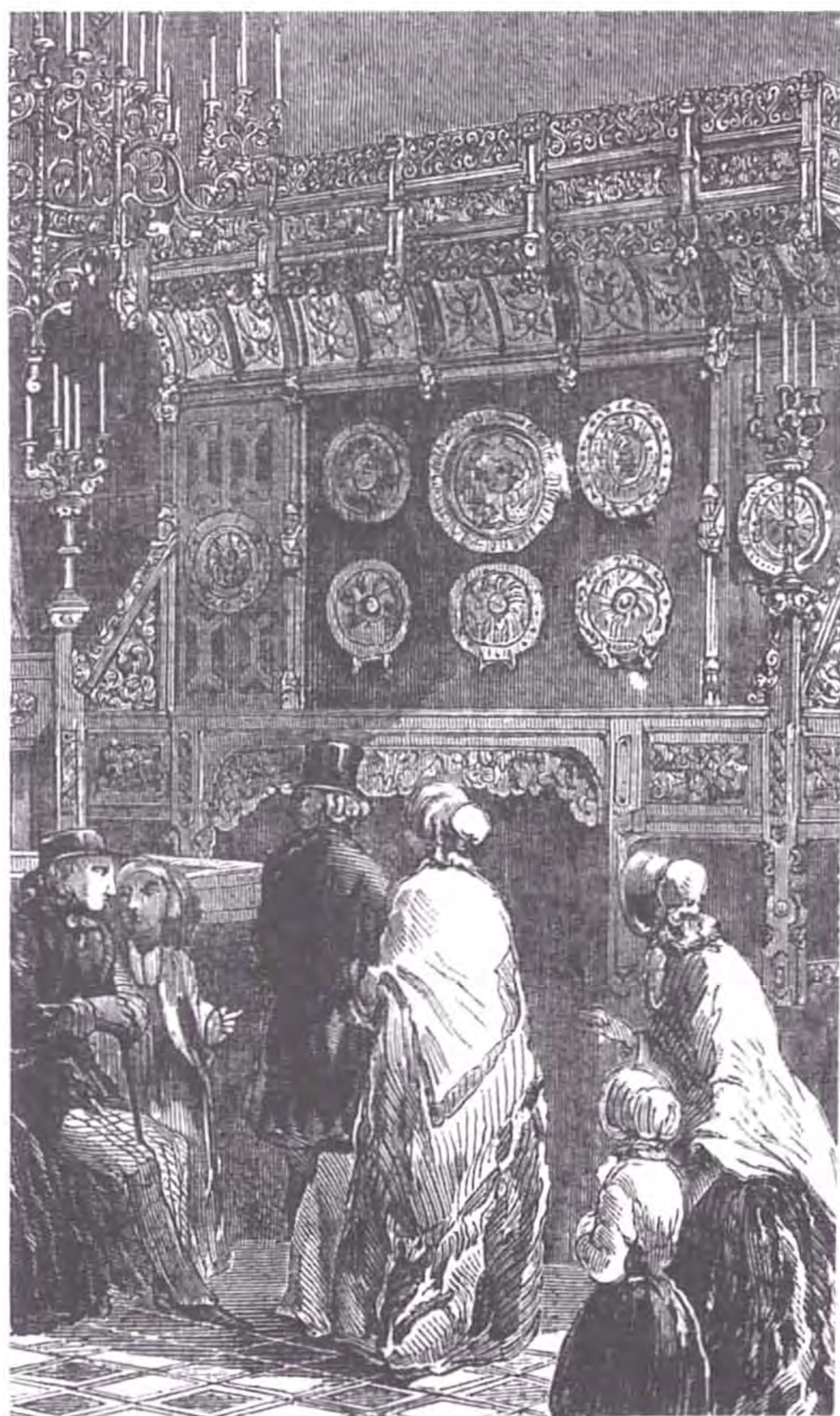


Figure 20: The Mediæval Court at the Great exhibition, showing the great sideboard intended for Alton Towers

Illustrated London News, 10.9.1851.

The cabinet and the writing tables are inlaid with marquetry including the Watts monogram and honeybee. Other items are more difficult to trace. The 1912 photograph of the drawing room shows a fine pair of candelabra standing on the marquetry cabinet. The Hardman metalwork daybook shows that they were made as late as 1857, and the description reveals that they were both magnificent and expensive:

2 brass candelabra for 10 lights each of octagon convex twisted foot set with beaten roses & crystals, twisted stem, chased bulbs set with enamels & crystals, diamond beaten branches with curling leaves, beaten roses, enamelled shields of arms & cut glass knops, loose pans etc. £50.¹⁸

What is left at Abney comprises two small buffets, a large bookcase in the former library, a hall bench with a finely carved back, and the great sideboard. All of these are characteristically Pugin/Crace, but represent only a fraction of what was once there.

The most significant survival is the great sideboard [figure 19] which at some point has been moved from

¹⁶ Mostyn 1963a and 1963b give several interior views taken in 1912 by James Watts, son of Sir James Watts, showing how they were furnished then; there are also some in the National Monuments Record. Unfortunately, according to Elfrida Mostyn, few written records relating to the family have survived, and none that refer to the building of the house. The Mostyn collection of photographs, acquired from a descendant of James Watts, are now in the V&A department of furniture: Mostyn-Crace Boxes i-v.

¹⁷ Seymour 1976, quoted in Belcher 1987 p 440; See also Aldrich 1990, pp 81–95, which includes pictures of individual pieces of furniture from Abney, some in colour, and interior views of the hall c1912 from the Mostyn Collection. I am most grateful to Alexandra Wedgwood for kindly supplying me with a copy of this, and also for her helpful comments on the draft of this article.

¹⁸ BCA, Metalwork Daybook, 30.4.1857.

the dining room to the drawing room. Its sheer size – 10 feet 6 inches wide, by 2 feet 8 inches deep and 12 feet tall – is probably the main reason for its having remained at Abney. The buffet itself has cupboards at either end, the doors of which are richly carved with hop foliage and birds. They are strikingly similar to a fifteenth-century cabinet door of French origin known to have been owned by Pugin and now in the V and A,¹⁹ and which was evidently used as a model. The sideboard stands on eight stout legs, the front ones carved with scrollwork bearing the motto *in vino veritas*, and those at the two front corners are carried upwards into stanchions supporting seven-branched candelabra by Hardman. The back section contains a huge mirror with carved panelling on either side, and it is surmounted by an overhanging canopy divided into arched panels by moulded ribs. Pugin's designs for a sideboard very similar to this are in the V and A drawings collection,²⁰ but just how many were made to this pattern: one or two?

An engraving of the Mediæval Court at the Great Exhibition of 1851 [figure 20] shows a massive sideboard identical in its construction and ornamentation to the one at Abney Hall.²¹ The engraving shows the sideboard laden with large ornamental dishes, and accompanying text states that these dishes were made by Hardman for the new dining hall at Alton Towers 'now erecting by the Earl of Shrewsbury'. From here it is natural to assume that the sideboard also was intended for Alton Towers, where Pugin had begun work on the new hall in 1849.²² Pugin indeed had insisted on a great sideboard as an integral part of his overall plan for the room,²³ but whatever may have been the intention in 1851, all the available evidence suggests that no such sideboard was ever delivered to Alton Towers and that the Exhibition sideboard must therefore have gone elsewhere.

In the first place, construction work on the Alton dining room was still in progress when the Great Exhibition closed in October 1851, and it was still unfinished – and unfurnished – several years later.²⁴ Even if the sideboard had been stored temporarily in some other part of the house pending the completion of the dining room, it would surely have been included in the comprehensive inventory compiled for the Alton Towers sale of 1857, especially as this inventory includes the set of metal-gilt sideboard dishes;²⁵ but the sideboard itself appears neither in the

19 It is illustrated in Atterbury 1995, p 280.

20 Wedgwood 1985, cat nos 760–3.

21 *Illustrated London news*, vol xix (20.9.1851), p 361.

22 See Fisher 2004, pp 121–9. Other items for the banqueting hall exhibited in the Mediæval Court included a great brass chandelier and sections of the south window, also by Hardman.

23 In July 1847 Pugin wrote to Lord Shrewsbury 'I have nailed my colours to the mast: a bay window, high open roof, lantern, 2 grand fire places, a great sideboard, screen, minstrel gallery, all or none'; Wedgwood 1985, cat no 52. A drawing of the dining room, showing how Pugin intended it to be – complete with minstrels' gallery and sideboard – was amongst some Crace papers sold at Christie's in 12.1988, and is reproduced in the catalogue (*Fine architectural and decorative drawings*, 13.12.1988, p 74).

24 The Alton estate accounts show that masons, carpenters and plasterers were working sporadically in the dining room until the summer of 1856: Staffordshire County Record Office (SCRO), Shrewsbury Papers, D240/E/F/25–6. The 1857 *Alton Towers sale catalogue* shows that the room was almost empty at this time; and a description of the interiors of 1869 refers to the still unfinished state of the room: Jewitt 1869.

25 *Catalogue of the magnificent contents of Alton Towers*, Christie & Manson, 7.1857. Bertram Arthur Talbot (1832–1856), 17th Earl of Shrewsbury, was the last in direct line to succeed to the earldom. The Shrewsbury peerage case, which was something of a *cause célèbre*, lasted for 2 years, and the contents of the Towers were sold to meet the legal costs. Finally, Henry Chetwynd Talbot of Ingestre Hall, Staffs, was declared to be the rightful heir and so became 18th Earl of Shrewsbury. The dispute over the estates continued until 1959. Fisher 2004, pp 157–60.

1857 sale catalogue nor in a further inventory of contents made in 1869.²⁶ A photograph of the hall taken in about 1890 shows a sideboard of sorts, but it bears no relation to the one exhibited in 1851.²⁷

What, then, is the solution to the mystery of the vanishing sideboard? It is at least possible that, given the slow progress on the dining room at Alton, the Exhibition sideboard was taken back to Crace's and put into storage pending the completion of the room. Building work at Alton slowed after the deaths of Pugin and the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury in the autumn of 1852, and in 1856 it stopped altogether after the death of the seventeenth earl whose executors proceeded to dispose of the entire contents of the house. Crace could therefore have had this huge sideboard on his hands just when he was decorating and furnishing Abney Hall, and – having come to some arrangement with the late earl's executors – he might have sold it to James Watts. It is a tempting theory, and one which is supported by some specific evidence on the sideboard itself as well as by its general appearance. Moreover, if such a prestigious piece as this had been custom-made for Abney, would it not have included Watts iconography such as the bee and the JW monogram which appear on other pieces including the smaller sideboard?²⁸

The Exhibition sideboard had been made to display the Shrewsbury metalwork dishes, as they are shown in the 1851 print. Since James Watts did not have such an array of plate, the big mirror at the centre of the Abney sideboard could represent a straightforward solution, replacing the original velvet-covered display board; but the most convincing clues are to be found on the side panels. At the centre of each of these – precisely where dishes are shown in the 1851 print – there are filled screw holes indicating the position of fixtures such as plate brackets which have been removed. These may be taken as evidence that an existing piece of furniture was modified for a new location, and that the Abney sideboards and the Exhibition sideboard may be one and the same.

Against this, however, there has to be set an entry in the Hardman metalwork daybook on 28 May 1853 for James Watts of Abney Hall: 'Brass stands for 7 lights each for the sideboard, of beaten pillars with bulb, foliage & twisted branches with glass bulbs & cut glass pans', suggesting that a big sideboard identical to the Exhibition one had either been delivered to Abney or had at least been ordered.²⁹ If the Exhibition sideboard and the Abney sideboard are not one and the same, then the puzzle of what happened to the first one still remains. On the other hand is the possibility that the most impressive piece of domestic furniture designed by Pugin for the home of England's most distinguished Roman Catholic nobleman was bought instead by a member of the rising industrial class, and a 'conventicle' man withal.

26 SCRO, Shrewsbury Papers, D240/9/4/1.

27 Photograph in Staffordshire County Museum, Shugborough Hall, and reproduced in Fisher 2004, p 125.

28 This of course raises the question of whether or not a sideboard intended for Alton Towers would have incorporated Talbot heraldry and monograms. The available evidence indicates that such iconography was applied mainly to interior decorations such as friezes and wallcoverings, and stained glass, rather than to individual pieces of furniture supplied to Lord Shrewsbury. As regards the sideboard, the dishes for it were decorated with Talbot heraldry and mottoes, thus rendering superfluous any iconography on the sideboard itself.

29 The description fits exactly the candelabra on the Abney sideboard and the ones shown on the print of the Exhibition sideboard, and the entry includes a pattern number. The candelabra form part of a consignment of metalwork items such as doorknobs and casement fittings to be sent under the name of the architects Travis and Mangall rather than Crace.

'I don't think it much matters who is a bishop': A.W.N. Pugin and the bishops

by David Meara

What was Pugin's understanding of the role of a bishop in the nineteenth-century church? Did he see bishops merely as useful ecclesiastical officers, when he wanted an architectural commission or the promotion of the Gothic style? Did he see them as signs of historical continuity and guarantors of orthodoxy? Or did he see them as spiritual and scholarly leaders, somewhat set apart from the ordinary business of church life, but nevertheless demanding of respect, and veneration?

One of the problems in answering these questions is that most of Pugin's comments on the episcopate are critical. In his first major published work, *Contrasts*, he comments on the degraded state of ecclesiastical buildings, illustrating them with a plate entitled 'Contrasted Episcopal Residences' showing Ely Palace, Holborn (1536), a substantial Gothic mansion with imposing chapel and great hall [figure 21]. Above it is Ely House, Dover Street (1836) – a Georgian building in the classical style:

...built with due regard to the modern style of episcopal establishments. All useless buildings such as chapel, hall or library have been omitted, and the whole is on a scale to combine economy with elegance!!



Figure 22: Contrasted episcopal monuments
From: Pugin 1841a.



Figure 21: Contrasted episcopal residences
From: Pugin 1836; Pugin 1841a.

In the second edition, a plate shows 'Contrasted Episcopal Monuments' in which a pudgy Georgian divine, John Clutterbuck, surrounded by busts of his wife and daughter, is contrasted with the memorial brass of an austere mediaeval prelate in full pontificals [figure 22]. From these two illustrations it is not difficult to see that Pugin is contrasting present worldliness with former spirituality. His ideal bishop is a man of piety, learn-

ing and hospitality, living in the world but somewhat apart from it, and very definitely unmarried.

This picture can be further filled out by reference to other writings and drawings. In the Victoria and Albert Museum is a collection of drawings made by Pugin in 1837 for a projected book on the ceremonies and customs of the medieval church. These have been shown to be drawings for *The church of our fathers* by Dr Daniel Rock, an antiquarian writer and chaplain to the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, although they were never included in Rock's published work.¹

This series of preliminary sketches forms one of the most important pictorial statements Pugin made of his idealised vision of medieval, religious life. Within the framework of Gothic architecture Pugin focuses not on the detail of the buildings but on the people. The buildings form the theatrical setting for the social comment he wishes to make. 'What he is illustrating is what in his opinion it felt like to be alive in the fourteenth century'.²

The church is at the centre of his picture, and he uses as illustrations the stages in the Christian life, from baptism and confirmation to extreme unction and requiem. In many of these drawings the bishop plays a central role in confirming children, ordaining monks, clothing nuns, performing the foot-washing on Maundy Thursday, going in procession through his cathedral. At death he is commemorated by a fitting monument where prayers are said for the repose of his soul.³ Pugin here sees faith as a unifying factor and the church as the agent of charity, teaching, guidance and cohesion, with the bishop as the chief exemplar of these values and the head of a hierarchical structure.

As Pugin implies in his plate in *Contrasts*, bishops should be housed appropriately. In *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* (1843), which originally appeared as articles in the *Dublin review*, he sets out his views in a section on Bishop's House, Birmingham, and provides a wonderful word-picture of the way clergy houses within the cathedral precincts have gradually been turned to worldly uses: he shows both an aesthetic and an ethical and social concern, to bring back bishops and clergy from the edge of the abyss of hedonism and worldliness to a sober and pious style of life [figure 23]. He concludes the piece by describing in detail the house he has designed, with its private chapel,

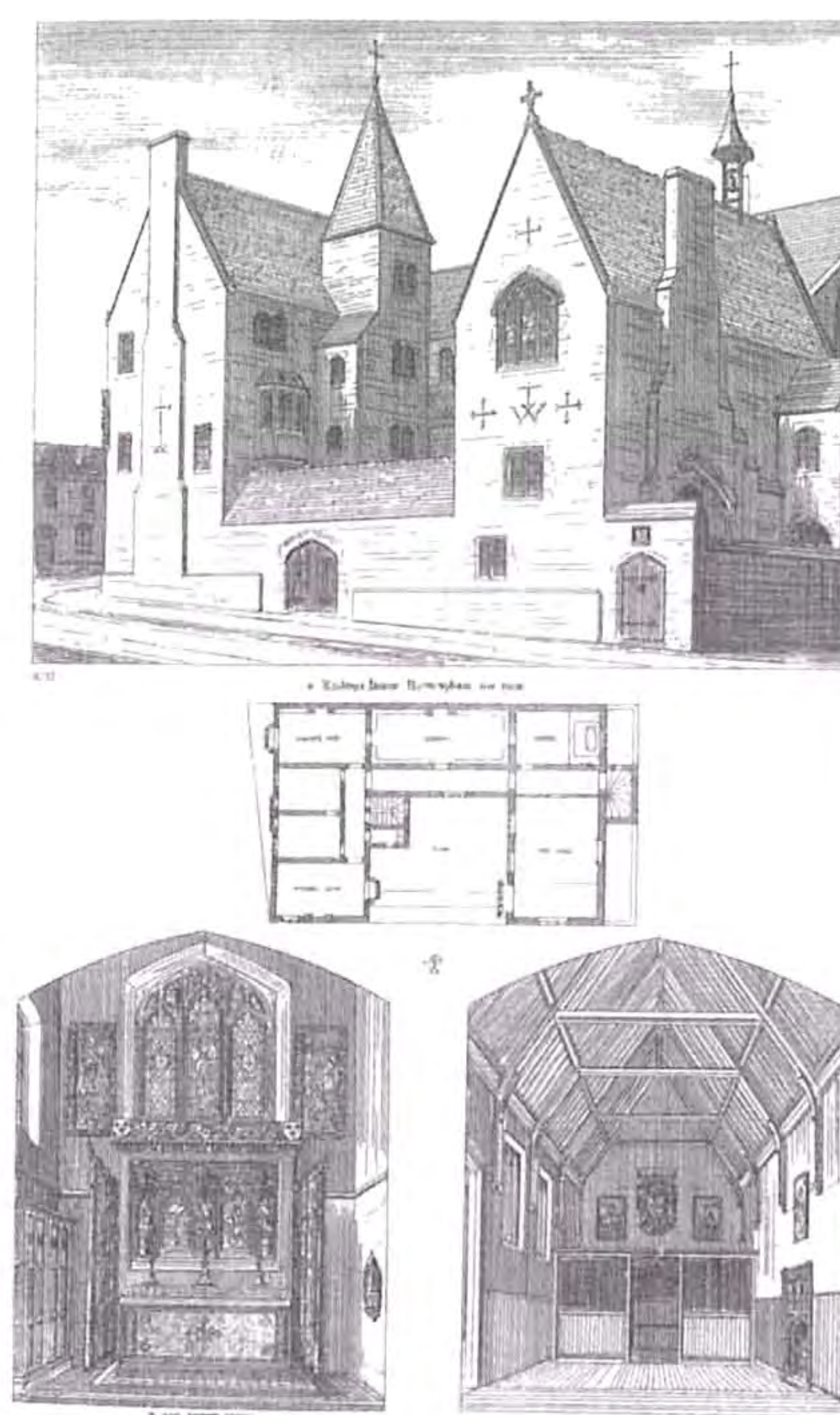


Figure 23: Bishop's House, Birmingham
From: Pugin 1842. pl xi.

1 Wedgwood 1985, cat nos 126–51; Belcher 1982, pp 321–33.

2 Belcher 1982, p 328.

3 In Pugin 1843 (*Apology*), pp 34–5, Pugin gives details in his section on sepulchral memorials of appropriate costume for representing bishops and other clergy.

common hall, chancery, library, audience rooms and bedrooms. The emphasis is all on austerity, fitness for use, and the creation of a house that was distinct and enclosed, set apart from the outside world, and yet able to dispense hospitality, spiritual comfort and ecclesiastical authority as required.

Pugin's idealised view of the episcopate was clearly at a variance with what he saw within the Church of England. But was the situation any better within the Roman Catholic church? To attempt an answer it will be necessary to trace Pugin's relations with the vicars apostolic with whom he had contact.

The first significant episcopal figure in Pugin's experience is Bishop John Milner. Born in 1752, he went to train for the priesthood at Sedgley Park and then Douai. In 1776 he was ordained priest and returned to England the following year to work under Bishop Challoner. He was very much influenced by Challoner's spirituality and pastoral care. In his funeral discourse on Challoner, Milner says that he would emphasise to his young priests their duty of preaching the gospel to the poor.⁴

From London Milner moved to take charge of the mission at Winchester, arriving in October 1779, where he remained for 24 years. His great achievement there was the publication of *The history civil and ecclesiastical, and survey of the antiquities of Winchester* published in two volumes in 1798. He used this account to correct the accepted view of the Reformation, and to show that it was a distortion to view the religious scene before that as unrelieved darkness and corruption. He also set out what came to be the generally accepted divisions of the periods of Gothic architecture, some years before Thomas Rickman's treatise appeared in 1817.⁵

Milner was also able to build a new church in Winchester, St Peter's, which put his principles into practice. Milner sketched the outline and John Carter (1748–1817) drew the plans. He concluded his *'Antiquities of Winchester'* with a chapter on his new church implying direct continuity with the glories of the Gothic buildings he had just been describing.

In 1803 Milner was appointed vicar apostolic of the Midland district. He refused to live as a country gentleman and went to reside at Gifford House in Wolverhampton. From here he travelled around his diocese and stamped his personality upon it. Above all he became embroiled in controversy over Roman Catholic emancipation and ecclesiastical government. He came into conflict with the committee set up in 1782 to push for further legislation to remove Roman Catholic disabilities, and to press Roman Catholic claims for relief.

Milner perceived the church to be under threat from Gallicanism, and felt that its leaders should be independent of the state. He used the columns of the recently published *Orthodox journal* to press home his attack on the Catholic Committee and especially its secretary Charles Butler, a Catholic convert, lawyer and scion of an old Northamptonshire family. Milner also attacked Dr William Poynter, (vicar apostolic of the London district from 1812–1827). Poynter attempted to balance the divergent interests of the different groups, and was moderate in his own opinions, so he was a match neither for Butler nor Milner.

Pugin found Milner's personality appealing. He liked his combative character

⁴ Milner 1781, pp 19 ff.

⁵ Rickman 1817.

as a fighter for the rights of the Roman Catholic church. One is tempted to add that Pugin felt an instinctive affinity with a man who spent so much of his episcopal career fighting battles with the hierarchy, just as Pugin himself did. He had read Milner's *Letters to a prebendary* by 1835, because in a letter to his friend E.J. Willson he says:

I have been much delighted lately by reading attentively Milner's Letters to a prebendary. what a triumphant publication & what a tremendous blow must that Letter of hoadlyism prove to the Liberal churchmen as they are called of the church of England. I never read a finer peice of reasoning in my Life and how galling must it be to the protestant prelates to have their principles defended against themselves by a catholick divine. can you inform me what his hist of Winchester is worth – as I should very much Like to possess it. he must have been a wonderfully clever man both as a churchman & historian.⁶

Pugin produced illustrations for an 1843 edition of Milner's *Letters to a prebendary*,⁷ and in his second lecture to the students at Oscott in 1838 he praises Milner's defence of the Roman Catholic faith and his researches into ecclesiastical architecture.

He admired Milner so much that he designed a chantry for him for Oscott College, which was never built. Instead Pugin designed his memorial brass, one of his finest compositions in that medium. It lies in the lady chapel of the college.⁸ The figure of Bishop Milner is copied from the mediaeval brass to Bishop John Trilleck in Hereford cathedral, 1360, thus likening Milner to one of the great prelates of the middle ages. Another memorial brass, which Pugin originally designed for the Great Exhibition of 1851, was adapted for Milner and is now in the Roman Catholic Church of St Peter and St Paul, Wolverhampton.

Milner died on 19 April 1826 having consecrated Thomas Walsh as his successor in the Midland district. When the other vicars apostolic met at Wolverhampton on 1 May 1825 for Walsh's consecration there was general relief that the provisions of the proposed Catholic Relief Bill were acceptable, even to Milner.

Government by vicars apostolic meant that papal power was in fact much more extensive than would have been the case under a hierarchy of titular bishops. Controversies and disagreement had to be settled by direct appeal to the Sacred Congregation in Rome, who were kept informed of English affairs by a papal agent. From 1828 Nicholas Wiseman was the agent, and at times this created tension and conflict.

Church government by the vicars apostolic was often made difficult by lack of internal communication, infrequent meetings and bitter dissensions. The missions were dependent on the rule of the vicars apostolic, but lay committees often came into conflict with episcopal control. Gradually over the period 1820–50 the vicars apostolic began to enforce their will and win the battle for control over the missions. In 1819 Cardinal Fontana, Prefect of Propaganda, expressed his opposition to lay patronage, saying that it had 'encroached upon the canonical rights of the bishops'.⁹

⁶ AWN Pugin to EJ Willson, 1.1.1835; Belcher 2001, p 46.

⁷ Belcher 1987, p 144.

⁸ Meara 1991, pp 51–5; fig 20.

⁹ Stoneyhurst Archives, Glovers Excerpts, iii, 191.

By 1844 Bishop Brown of the Lancashire district was able to publish a pastoral letter announcing the abolition of lay committees for the raising and administration of ecclesiastical funds. It was in fact *funding* that constituted the single most pressing problem for the bishops in the mid-nineteenth century, and one of the reasons why Pugin was looked upon so favourably by the hierarchy at first: he had the ability to draw funds from Roman Catholic landowners such as Lord Shrewsbury and Ambrose Phillipps for the building of new churches, a task which otherwise would have been impossible.

By the time of Pugin's conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1835 the vicars apostolic in charge of the four districts were as follows:

London district Thomas Griffiths, 1836–47

Midland district Thomas Walsh, 1826–48

Northern district John Briggs, 1836–40

Western district Peter Augustine Baines, 1829–43

Thomas Griffiths (1791–1847) had been president of St Edmund's College, Ware. Until 1836 he had never lived outside St Edmund's, and although a man of personal holiness, was unused to dealing with Propaganda, and was not always tactful or flexible enough. Because of his seclusion he was suspicious of new ways and ideas, and was critical of the lectures on the Roman Catholic church which Dr Wiseman gave at the Sardinian chapel in advent 1835. Wiseman's criticisms of clerical practices caused Griffiths great offence. Like his predecessor James Bramston, Griffiths was a convert. He attended St-George's-in-the-Fields as a boy and in 1805 entered St Edmund's College, Ware, being ordained priest in 1814.

John Briggs, a Lancashire man, had been president of Ushaw College from 1833–6 after a period at Chester, and from 1836 was vicar apostolic of the old Northern district. He was a loyal supporter of Bishop Baines and an enthusiastic advocate of the *Tablet*. He had known Wiseman for many years, but remained detached from his romanising tendencies. With Baines he remained sceptical about the hopes placed in the 'Oxford Men' and the imminent conversion of England, a scepticism which Baines went as far as to express openly in his 1840 lenten pastoral, thereby earning the censure of Propaganda.

In the Midland district Thomas Walsh had been in office since 1826 [figure 24]. 'That mitre which the learned Bishop Milner so long adorned with his wisdom and courage; that mitre which the meek Bishop Walsh bore with so much gentleness and generosity'. So wrote Bishop Ullathorne.

Thomas Walsh was born in London on 3 October 1776, his father a Roman Catholic, his mother an Anglican. On his father's death his uncle, Rev Thomas Walsh, persuaded Mrs Walsh to transfer her sixteen-year-old son to the Roman Catholic college for boys at St Omers in France, then under the presidency of Dr Gregory Stapleton.

He is said to have been a good student, but studies became somewhat disrupted by the outbreak of the French Revolution. In August 1793 soldiers broke into the

school, imprisoned the staff, and installed French teachers. The boys responded by rioting:

Some ran out of the study place, others remained idle, all was bustle and confusion. On recreation days the boys used to form into different parties and run all over the house; when the masters were at one end of the gallery, run to the other, and abuse them in the most insulting contemptuous language...As soon as we were expelled from the refectory we all ran together into the garden and formed into two ranks...whenever a Master turned his head he was kindly saluted with a stone or two.¹⁰

Imprisonment at Arras and Doullens followed. Strangely enough for Thomas Walsh these nine months of hardship and danger were the time of his conversion, and the beginning of his vocation to the priesthood. The upheaval lasted until 2 March 1795, when the staff and students arrived safely back in Dover.

He began his studies at St Edmund's, Ware, in August 1795, with Dr Gregory Stapleton as its first president. There he was baptised and confirmed in 1795; was received into the diaconate in 1800, and prepared to be ordained priest for the London district.

This was not to be. On 8 March 1801 Stapleton was consecrated vicar apostolic of the Midland district, moving to Longbitch, Staffordshire. He took with him Thomas Walsh as his secretary, and ordained him to the priesthood there on 19 September 1801. Following the sudden death of Stapleton, Bishop Milner retained Fr Walsh as his secretary for a year, before appointing him in 1804 vice-president of Sedgley Park School, near Wolverhampton.

The coming of Rev Thomas Walsh was an important event for the School, and was followed by a noticeable increase of devotion among the boys.... he instilled in them a spirit of fervour at Mass, and among the elder boys a love of meditation, and a habit of spiritual reading, such as would present ideals that would stand them in good stead throughout their lives.¹¹

In 1808 Bishop Milner took over the management of Oscott College, and appointed Walsh first vice-president, then president in 1818. There he was joined by Henry Weedall, and they became close friends for the rest of their lives. With the active encouragement of Milner this was a time of great growth and development at Oscott.

On 1 May 1825 Thomas Walsh was consecrated by Bishop Milner as his coadjutor, with the title 'Bishop of Cambysopolis'. He remained at Oscott until the death of Milner on 19 April in the following year, when he moved to Gifford House, Wolverhampton. Like his predecessor he was to remain vicar apostolic of the Midland district for the next 23 years. Bishop Milner had put it on the map: it was to fall to Bishop Walsh to lay its foundations. His district was a vast one, covering Shropshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. He was assisted by Bishop Wiseman from 1840 to 1847, but it was a large area – and the railways must have come as a great relief.

¹⁰ See Dennison.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

The start of his episcopate was marred by outbreaks of cholera that swept through the poorer parts of his district; the end of it was overshadowed by the famine that devastated Ireland. Bishop Walsh energetically raised funds to aid the sufferers and to provide for the needs of the immigrants. The years following Roman Catholic emancipation in 1829 were a time of growth and development for the church throughout England, and the bishop took an active role in building up his district.

Pugin was encouraged by Walsh's building plans but anxious that others might influence him in the wrong direction. Writing to Daniel Rock on 3 April 1839 he says:

I have every reason to believe that a desperate effort is about to be made by some persons filled with modern notions & narrow prejudice to dissuade our excellent bishop from proceeding in the glorious career of restoring antient Ecclesiastical antiquities. I beseech of you therefore not to fail attending at the *clergy Meeting* at the park which will take place I believe next week and refute the miserable arguments of those who would degrade the solem majesty of our antient ceremonies into a french caricature. your presence is of great important to strengthen the Bishop in his present good resolutions. everything depends on him. he is now quite zealous for the restoration of our national antiquities and if he can be preserved from *evil advisers* – he will bring great things to pass – but pray go to the meeting. your presence will do much good and perhaps intimidate the *innovators*.¹²

During Walsh's vicariate nearly fifty new churches were built and new religious orders were introduced. He promoted the building of a new seminary at Oscott in 1838, and St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham in 1841; not content with that, he then decided to erect St Barnabas', Nottingham, in 1844.

In fact, he seems to have immediately approved of any building scheme that was suggested to him; with the result that he was in constant debt, and had to write frequent appeals to save the district from disaster. Fortunately Lord Shrewsbury, the Hon George Spencer, and other benefactors rallied to his aid. He welcomed and encouraged Pugin, who said of him: 'Dr Walsh found the churches in his district



Figure 24: Thomas Walsh

From a portrait at Oscott College, reproduced in the Catholic directory.

¹² Belcher 2001, p 113.

worse than Barns; he will leave them sumptuous erections. The greater part of the vestments were filthy rags, and he has replaced them with silk and gold'.¹³

Walsh in turn was quick to come to Pugin's defence, even though he was afraid that Pugin's violent language and verbal attack against his opponents might

have excited a good deal of unpleasant feelings against his friends at Oscott & in the midland District & may I apprehend have lessened my influence with His Holiness & Propaganda.¹⁴

Walsh was a keen supporter of Pugin and his building programme. Others were less enthusiastic. 'I do not like St Chad's or any of Pugin's work', wrote Dr Bowden, president of Sedgley Park College. 'The Episcopal palace is the most gloomy place I ever saw'.¹⁵ Of Pugin's work at Oscott he said that 'the Bishop's and Doctor's rooms are more like state apartments....' He was probably typical of the older clergy in the Midlands, who felt that Walsh allowed himself to be unduly dominated by Pugin and others. They had no welcome for reformers, whether medievalists, or Italians, or Roman prelates; and they desired to continue undisturbed in their traditional lines, labouring with patience and industry in what they considered to be the most suitable method of consolidating the Church in a Protestant country.¹⁶

An even more vigorous opponent was bishop Peter Augustine Baines. Baines was born in 1787 and studied first at the Benedictine abbey of Lambspring in Germany and then at Ampleforth. In 1807 he was placed in charge of the Benedictine mission at Bath, later becoming vicar apostolic in 1829. He was an ambitious and combative man, anxious to secure the future of the church in the Western district. To this end he purchased Prior Park and made elaborate plans for a school and seminary, but was soon experiencing financial problems.

Baines shared the scepticism of the old Roman Catholics about the Oxford converts. He was also concerned not to be seen to attack the Church of England, wanting instead tolerance and mutual respect. In other words he sought a middle way between the quietism of recusant Roman Catholicism and the aggressive ultramontaniam which Wiseman seemed to be espousing.

Baines was a vigorous opponent of the Gothic, and a constant thorn in Pugin's side.¹⁷ In particular his opposition focussed on the introduction of new forms of ecclesiastical vestments. In England since the Reformation, the use of vestments had been illegal until the emancipation act of 1829. Only continental styles were in use because so few mediaeval examples had survived. For the dedication of the chapel at Oscott College in May 1838 Pugin had designed a set of cloth-of-gold vestments

¹³ Pugin to Phillipps, 1.12.1839: Belcher 2001, p 127.

¹⁴ Walsh to Wiseman : 4.12.1839: English College Archives 7- : 6/57.

¹⁵ Gwynn 1946, p 74.

¹⁶ Cotton Hall, near Cheadle, Staffs, was bought by Lord Shrewsbury in 1843 and given to Frederick William Faber for his brothers of the will of God for whom Pugin extended the hall and added a church (1846-9). In 1848 they merged with John Newman's Oratorians.

¹⁷ On Bishop Baines' death Pugin wrote to J Bloxam: 'I suppose you have seen the death of Dr Baines in the Tablet. he was privately a very good man but sadly mistaken in his views. he will be no Loss to the church. the only really pagan Bishop we had. many of the others have bad taste but he was a confirmed [?] Pagan'. 16.6.1843?: Belcher 2003, p 92.

decorated with raised embroidery,¹⁸ which followed the mediaeval shape. The same year he had written an article in the *Orthodox journal* pleading for an improvement in the quality of liturgical vestments, and drawing extensively on mediaeval precedent including an inventory of vestments formerly belonging to Lincoln cathedral.¹⁹ Referring to the shape of the garment he wrote:

The dignity of vestments depends principally on their form. Without flowing lines and grand easy folds no majestic appearance can be obtained. The old chasubles, unpinched in shape, fell gracefully from the shoulders and folded over the arms, pliant in material.²⁰

In fact Pugin had mistaken the method of construction of medieval chasubles, as Dom Bede Millard has shown.²¹ Nevertheless his vestments were nearer in shape to mediaeval prototypes than any other contemporary ones. They were in prominent use at the opening of his churches at Derby and Uttoxeter, and at the dedication of the chapel of Oscott College.

Those who were opposed to the rise of Gothic were able to use this as a rallying point in their battle against Pugin. According to Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle either the English Jesuits or Bishop Baines himself complained to Propaganda, and Propaganda censured the action of Bishop Walsh in allowing the new form of vestments to be used.

Two years later, when invited to the opening of St Chad's Cathedral, Bishop Baines replied to Bishop Walsh that his attendance was conditional on the use of vestments which did not exceed three-and-a-half feet in width. Fortunately the 'Shrewsbury Cloth of Gold' vestments had just been made and these had been cut approximately to this width while retaining the 'Gothic' shape. These were used at St Chad's instead of Bishop Walsh's own vestments from Oscott, and Bishop Baines duly attended. However, Bishop Baines' disquietude seems still to have remained. Dr Wiseman seems to have smoothed matters out by explaining at Rome that Dr Baines' representation somewhat exaggerated the true case. But a compromise seems to have been adopted whereby the original 'ample' design of 1838 was abandoned and the Oscott vestments cut down to the present shape.²²

No formal censure was promulgated, and the Gothic vestments were restored to use. But the issue was a more fundamental one than simply an aesthetic disagreement. It was a first attempt to limit the rising power and influence of Pugin and all he represented.

Although Nicholas Wiseman played a conciliatory role in this instance, his role in relation to the Gothic party was more ambiguous. Wiseman (1802–1865) was born in Spain, the son of James and Xaviera Wiseman, on 2 August 1802. When James died the family moved to Ireland and Nicholas went to school in Waterford, and then to Ushaw College in Durham.

Wiseman chose to enter the priesthood and in October 1818 went to the English College in Rome. He was priested on 10 March 1825 and because of his learning was

¹⁸ See Wainwright 1994.

¹⁹ 14.4.1838, pp 225–30.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p 227.

²¹ Millard 1994, p 208.

²² *Oscottian*, Whitsuntide 1931, vol i, no 2, p 70.

made vice-rector of the college in 1827, becoming rector in the following year. He entertained many guests including George Spencer, Newman and Hurrell Froude, whom he found sympathetic, but he still felt that reconciliation was impossible without submission. The contact however convinced him that the old prejudices were dying and that his fellow countrymen would receive a revived Roman Catholicism in a charitable manner. In 1831 he met the French leaders of the ultramontane revival, Lammenais, Lacordaire and Montalembert, and so heard first hand about the parallel revival on the Continent.

He felt that England too needed renewal and restoration, and talked of founding a Roman Catholic university and a literary journal. He left Rome for England in 1835, and established himself at Prior Park, then going on a fact-finding tour staying with 'such of the nobility or gentry of these realms as can sufficiently appreciate such an honour'.²³ He stayed with Bishop Walsh in Durham and Lord Shrewsbury at Alton Towers. On his return to London he took charge of the Sardinian Chapel, giving lectures on the 'Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church', to general approval. Through his lectures and writings he commended the Roman Catholic church and began to establish its credibility in the minds of many in the Church of England. He also established the *Dublin review*, which first appeared in May 1836, and in which Pugin published his two articles *On the present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* in 1841 and 1842.

Wiseman returned to Rome in September 1826 but intended returning to England and became increasingly frustrated by what he saw as the lack of enthusiasm of the English Roman Catholic community. This meant that he quickly became fascinated by the Tractarians and events at Oxford, and nurtured expectations about the imminent conversion of England which were wholly unrealistic. In 1839 he met new converts, preached at the opening of St Mary's, Derby in October of that year, and lectured extensively. He felt, as he noted when back in Rome, that 'England is in the most interesting condition, and calls for all the exertions of those that wish her well'.²⁴

Soon Wiseman was made coadjutor to Bishop Walsh and president of Oscott College, reaching Oscott in September 1840. His lavish style gave status and *éclat* to the College, but he was determined to make contact with the Tractarians and hoped by his hospitality and seriousness of purpose to win them over. Over the years 1840 to 1842 Wiseman and the Tractarians went through an elaborate ritual of courtship which can be likened to the lobster quadrille, in which Pugin played a considerable role.

At first Wiseman undoubtedly approved of Pugin's work, seeing him as a useful link with the Oxford men and an agent of church expansion. When he arrived in England in 1840 as coadjutor to Bishop Walsh and president of Oscott College, Pugin, Phillipps and Spencer looked to him as the one Roman Catholic of high standing who shared their own belief in the seriousness of the Oxford Movement. Wiseman was present at the laying of the foundation stone of St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, on 29 October 1839 and preached the sermon. Later he praised Pugin's

²³ Wiseman to Monckton Milnes, 9.1835, quoted in Ward 1897, p 215.

²⁴ Wiseman to Countes Gabrielli, 27.4.1839: Fothergill 1963, p 60.

‘grandeur of conception, accuracy of detail, and rapidity of execution’. Pugin replied enthusiastically and to loud cheering, that ‘never shall I rest satisfied till I see the cross raised high above every chimney in Birmingham, and hear the sound of St Chad’s bells drowning the steam whistle and the proving of gun barrels’.²⁵

However, this euphoria was short-lived. Wiseman preached at the consecration of St Chad’s, and spoke highly of Pugin’s talents at the celebration afterwards. But this did not stop him being critical of some of the internal detail of the building, especially the rood screen. Pugin describes his feelings of betrayal in a letter to Phillipps:

An affair has happened at Birmingham which has gone through me like a stab. We have had a tremendous blow aimed at us, and that from the centre of our camp. Dr. Wiseman has at last shown his real sentiments by attempting to abolish the great Rood-Screen after good Mr. Hardman has given £600 for its execution.²⁶

On that occasion Wiseman gave way, but Pugin wrote again to Phillipps in early 1841:

You will be grieved to hear that all the altar fittings that were made for Birgham. have been condemned by Dr. Wiseman because they are all in strict conformity with the antient solemn practices.

I have just given up now all hope of that church coming to anything *really good*: it will Look very well, *but it will not be the thing*.

Poor Hardman is quite disheartened since the attempt on the screen, and Mr. Moore is thwarted in every way by the endeavour to thrust Italian novelties and arrangements into the churches we were raising in the true old style. The bishop is cutting his most energetic assistants from under him.²⁷

Wiseman tended to adopt a more pragmatic approach to liturgy, art and architecture, and believed that, only if the new ideas were conducive to the advancement of the Roman Catholic cause should they be adopted.

In a sermon he preached in May 1851 he expressed what were his true feelings:

The question then is, what are we to do in this time of revival, when after centuries in the tomb the Church is again arisen and is striving to express her inward feelings in external forms? Shall we revert to the old examples of our ancestors, or shall we import the changed style of those countries where the Church has never slumbered? The Cardinal owned that he preferred the former, because of the English taste, because of the present popular movement in its favour – not among Catholics only but also among all sects of Englishmen – and partly because of his own personal predilections; but only on this condition, that it could be adapted to the changed spirit of modern times and the exigencies of modern devotion...If on Gothic principles a sanctuary could not be erected where every rubric of the modern church might be literally obeyed, then he would discard Gothic, for it is the modern Church that must save us...These externals must be reduced to what they are, a mere indifferent matter of taste: and all things must give way to the exigencies of the rubrics of the Church, and to the spirit of modern devotions.²⁸

²⁵ *Orthodox journal*, ix, p 320.

²⁶ 18.12.1840?: Belcher 2001, p 175.

²⁷ 7.2.1841: Belcher 2001, p 206.

²⁸ *Tablet*, 31.5.1851.

This summary of Wiseman's address is revealing in that it shows that his personal preference for Gothic was tempered by practical and ecclesiological considerations which led him to distrust Pugin's single-minded devotion to Gothic art and architecture. He feared that the restoration of pre-Reformation liturgical practices might lead to an attempt to over-emphasise the national character of English Roman Catholicism.

In the end, while they undoubtedly found common ground in the dream of converting England to Roman Catholicism, Pugin and Wiseman remained like the representatives of allied armies of different nations – working together for the common cause, but with strong differences of habit and tradition.²⁹

One bishop whose support Pugin could rely on was Robert William Willson (1794–1866).³⁰ Willson was born in Lincoln, the brother of E.J. Willson, Pugin's early confidant who was an antiquary and student of architecture. When he was about 20 he became a Roman Catholic, and under Bishop Milner's influence trained for the priesthood at Oscott College. He was ordained in December 1824, and soon afterwards appointed to Nottingham, where he distinguished himself by working tirelessly during the cholera epidemic of 1832 and was awarded the freedom of the city.

As there was only a small chapel he bought a piece of land and asked Pugin to provide him with plans for a church. Lord Shrewsbury gave £700 towards the cost and St Barnabas' was consecrated on 27 August 1844. On Bishop Ullathorne's return from Australia in 1840 he recommended Willson as the new Bishop of Hobart Town, Tasmania. Willson was consecrated Bishop on 28 October 1842 in St Chad's Cathedral, and Pugin designed his episcopal regalia – mitre, ring, pastoral staff and pectoral cross. Before he left for Tasmania Willson travelled to Rome to see Pope Pius IX, and also commissioned Pugin to provide him with all the ecclesiastical equipment he would need because he had been told it would be unobtainable in Tasmania.

Before he left England Willson spent a few days with Pugin at Ramsgate,³¹ and afterwards Pugin wrote excitedly to Lord Shrewsbury:

Bishop willson has gone down to Plymouth to join his ship. he takes out a great deal with him. 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. It is quite delightful to start in the good style at the antipodes. It is quite an honour.³²

Willson set sail from Plymouth in the *Bella Marina* and after 94 days reached his destination. His departure meant that he was from 1844 out of England, and so denied any influence in the controversy over liturgical and architectural styles.

During this period there was considerable agitation for a proper hierarchy both from the vicars apostolic who were often engaged in wearisome battles with the regulars, and from lay Roman Catholic gentry who wanted the rights of the clergy

²⁹ Ward 1897, vol i, p 359.

³⁰ See Ullathorne 1887.

³¹ Pugin's diary entry for 22 & 26.1.1844, in Wedgwood 1985.

³² Pugin to Shrewsbury, 30.1.1844?: Belcher 2003, p 161.

secured against what they saw as the increasing arbitrary power of the vicars apostolic.³³ The Northern clergy petitioned for their own rights to Propaganda in 1837, and in 1838 Dr Daniel Rock, chaplain at Alton Towers, joined other priests from the Midland district in agitating for a hierarchy. In 1839 a body of influential laity, including Lord Petre, petitioned the pope for equal electoral rights for the lower clergy.

The subdivision of episcopal districts in 1840 was in fact a response to this agitation, but discussions continued during the 1840s, and eventually Wiseman himself went to Rome with Bishop James Sharples, as representatives of the vicars apostolic, in July 1847.

Pugin, too, was in Rome that year. His diary shows that he arrived on 24 April and stayed until 4 May. Richard Simpson, a fellow Roman Catholic, wrote an account of Pugin's visit in the *Rambler*,³⁴ describing Pugin's disgust at most of the architecture, especially St Peter's. Simpson arranged for Pugin to meet Friedrich Overbeck, the leader of the Nazarene school of painting in Rome. Pugin also had an audience with the pope, at which he received the papal medal. It was 'the greatest day of his life.'³⁵

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons for Pugin's visit to Rome. Was it just a desire to see the city's architecture or was he hoping to influence the moves toward establishing the hierarchy and try to reassert the position of the landed gentry and the 'medieval party' in English Catholic life? It is impossible to tell from Simpson's brief article, and Pugin's diary is tantalisingly vague. He may have wanted to try to provide a counterbalance to the influence of Newman, who was in Rome at the time.

By the time the hierarchy was formally re-established in September 1850 Pugin's influence within church and architectural affairs had waned considerably, and his voice was becoming increasingly isolated and strident. His relations with the bishops were always uneasy. Because of his temperament he expected unwavering support for his work and his ideas, and was devastated when this was not forthcoming. In a letter to John Hardman he says:

Your news from Rome *if true* is very bad but it remains to be seen. I never allowed myself even to hope for Mr Moore's consecration. it was too good to happen. as regards myself I dont think it much matters who is bishop. I have not anything in the shape of a supporter amongst them – nor likely to have. I am certainly anxious to finish my church but beyond that my ambition is not great – and I dare say the Protestants will give me enough work to do that. Long live the *Establishment*.³⁶

Such cynical despair was to engulf Pugin often during his later years, but in the early 1840s he was in a much stronger position. He enjoyed the support of an influential network of friends, and patrons, and also dominated the media through which dialogue and controversy were conducted during the mid-nineteenth century – the published treatise, tract or pamphlet, and the specialist periodical. But there were inherent weaknesses in his position which made the bishops wary of him and which ultimately led to his isolation.

³³ Beck 1950, p 72.

³⁴ *Rambler* 3rd series, 5.9.1861, pp 394–402.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ House of Lords Record Office, PUG/1/26.

With at most two notable exceptions, Wiseman and Baines, the bishops did not see themselves as mediaeval prelates in the way Pugin would have liked. Many of them, like Bishop Walsh, were beset by financial problems, and had to spend much of their time administering their dioceses and travelling to visit the missions. As the ecclesiastical structures developed, so the power of the gentry and aristocracy waned, threatening the symbiotic relationship between church and gentry which Pugin saw as necessary for the hierarchical and paternalistic society he envisaged.

Pugin wanted to shut his bishops away in spiritual isolation behind the protective walls of their palaces, as is obvious from his designs for Bishop's House at Birmingham. But bishops increasingly needed to be mobile, in touch with their clergy and open and sympathetic to the needs of the whole Roman Catholic population. Pugin's vision of his bishops always in ecclesiastical settings, fully vested, as in his drawing for Rock's *Church of our fathers*, bore little relation to the day-to-day experience of hard-pressed clerics trying to balance often opposing interests and raise money for their impoverished vicariates.

Furthermore, Pugin's understanding of his own position could be perceived as an irritant or a threat to the bishops. He saw himself as a devout mason, and in two of his illustrations made the connection between priestly vocation and architectural practice. The frontispiece to the second, posthumous, volume of the elder Pugin's *Examples of Gothic architecture* (published in 1836, but drawn in 1834) shows 'an artist of the Fifteenth century seated in his study, amidst his books and drawings, making an architectural design.'

In the illustration the artist is wearing priestly clothes, and is seated in an ecclesiastical setting, but the books in the cupboards are clearly works by the older and younger Pugins. Similarly, Pugin's frontispiece to *The true principles*, published in 1841, shows a similar picture of the mediaeval architect at work in his study, which contains a small altar and triptych with breviary laid on the shelf.

The implication is clear. Pugin saw himself exercising a quasi-priestly role, offering his talents to God, and mediating to the population the God-given insights of his craft. He saw his role as prophetic too, to the church he had joined, in order to reclaim England for the Catholic faith. 'If the English Catholics were zealous and really set for their religion England might be regained: but under the present system, never'.³⁷

His clear enjoyment of the role showed itself at church consecrations when he attempted more than once to take over the proceedings and act as master of ceremonies: no doubt his commanding and bluff manner could be perceived as overbearing, and undoubtedly gave offence on more than one occasion. It was not by accident that he gained the nickname 'Archbishop Pugins'. There is a revealing anecdote about him told in connection with St George's Cathedral, Southwark:

No man in England appreciates Pugin more than Father Thomas [Doyle] does: but he is as wild, is Welby Pugin, as the wild winds that sweep over the cliffs of Pegwell; and, with all his whirlwinds and storms, Father Thomas fears him nought. Let him attend to his segments and circles, and be silent and humble on

³⁷ Purcell 1900, p 224.

matters of Church and Churchmen – say more prayers, hear Mass every day, go to Confession frequently, and leave the Church and Church matters to Churchmen.³⁸

Pugin's network of episcopal support gradually faded away through death, translation to foreign lands and lack of cohesion, as well as the inability of Wiseman wholeheartedly to back the Gothic style. But it was perhaps the attitude reflected in Fr Doyle's caustic put-down comment that caused clergy and the embryonic hierarchy to see Pugin as not just an anachronism, but as a threat to the increasing desire for centralised church government, and the right of the ordinary clergy to be ruled not by episcopal intuition or the whim of the Roman Catholic gentry but by the rule of law. To them Pugin represented the discredited paternalism of a bygone age, and that was a major cause of his gradual marginalisation by those in authority.

³⁸ Bogan 1948, p 199–200.

E.W. Pugin, Sclerder and Gorton

by Michael Egan

At the conclusion of the annual general meeting of the Pugin Society in October 2004, Mrs Elaine Griffiths spoke about progress with the Pugin Centre in the shell of Gorton Monastery. A questioner asked how E.W. Pugin became involved in the building of the friary and church in the 1860s.

The arrival of a Franciscan community in the Manchester district is well documented, both in the archives of the English Order of Friars Minor (OFM) province,¹ and in the records at the Sint Truiden museum of their Belgian province – since most of the initial community in Gorton were Belgian friars.² The Monastery Trust has copies of two histories, produced in 1938 and in 1961, covering the beginnings of their work in Manchester, and of the construction of the conventual buildings and of the handsome church, which became known as St Francis, Gorton, or Gorton Monastery.³ My great-grandfather worked as a volunteer on site.

Once the Franciscans had settled in Gorton their thoughts soon turned to erecting a friary, extending an existing school, and building a substantial church. They thought big, despite the poverty of the area. At any time, any ambitious planners of a new Roman Catholic religious house would have seriously considered E.W. Pugin as a possible architect for the project. Hence the answer to the question put to Elaine Griffiths might simply have been that the friars themselves decided to make an exploratory, ‘cold-calling’, approach to Pugin.

However it seems equally possible that Sir Humphrey de Trafford, Bt (1808–1886) of Trafford Park might have recommended Pugin for the scheme. He was one of the few rich landed Roman Catholics living in the Manchester area, and he was

then employing E.W. Pugin as the architect for All Saint’s Church at Barton-on-Irwell, which had been conceived in 1863 and was opened in 1868. A memorial register was begun by the friars to record the names of all the contributors, both modest and munificent, to the building costs of their grand church.⁴ Sir Humphrey and his wife Lady de Trafford (*née* Mary Annette Talbot) are listed in the register, although the amount of their gift is not known. The prominence of the family and their additional support



Figure 25: A view of the church and house at Sclerder, before the extensions of c1858

Photographed by Lewis Harding: by kind permission of Phillip Correll.

I am most grateful to Mr James Derriman, Mr Phillip Correll and Dr Rory O'Donnell for their invaluable help with this article.

1 Assistance from Fr Ninian Arbuckle OFM, provincial archivist, is also gratefully acknowledged.

2 This information is from Mme Kristina Anciaux:

Kristina.anciaux@museum-minderbroeders.be

of the museum, who kindly sent an informative email with details of this period.

3 Agnellus 2002; McLoughlin 1961.

4 When the writer inspected 2002 St Francis’ new church in Gorton, the register was held by the parish priest there.

suggest that they might well have proposed Pugin's involvement.

In both the 1938 and the 1961 histories of early Franciscan days in Gorton, mention is made of a precursor community which was established at Sclerder, near Looe in Cornwall. In the 1850s there were still four elderly British Franciscans alive, all of them born in the late eighteenth century, who were members of the province that had been reestablished after the Reformation. This province had slowly decreased in numbers, and the four remaining friars were anxious that it should be revived with the help from a sister province elsewhere. In 1858, a group of three Belgian friars were invited to take over the small house at Sclerder, which had been built using funds from the estate of the Rev Sir Harry Trelawney, Bt (1756–1834) of Trelawne.⁵

This priest had lived a most unusual life. After Oxford he became a Nonconformist minister, then was ordained in 1781 in the Anglican church, becoming a canon of Exeter cathedral in 1789. After being received into the Roman Catholic church by October 1806 (and retaining his prebend for a further four years!), he decided that he had a vocation to the priesthood. Not until he was widowed in 1822 was he able to begin his studies in Rome, and he was eventually ordained on Whit Sunday in 1830. A particular feature of his stay in Rome was the friendship he formed with Ambrose Phillipps, later Phillipps de Lisle (1809–1878), the influential convert to Roman Catholicism who was an enthusiastic friend and patron of A.W.N. Pugin.

Phillipps became a trustee of Trelawney's estate after the latter's death and in 1841 was involved in the purchase of two acres of Polyne farm, which was to become the site of Sclerder church, finally opened in October 1843. The church was 'probably designed from sketches by Pugin', according to *The bright field*, a history of the religious communities who subsequently occupied the house and church. The Belgian Franciscans were in occupation from 1858 until 1864. As the number of resident friars increased, so 'The house was too small...The architect [E.W.] Pugin was called in to adapt the house'.⁶ It appears that Phillipps may well have been the route through which the Belgians first came to know their architect.

Three early views of the church-cum-house are known to exist. One is shown here [figure 25];⁷ and another shows a larger building and is dated 'before 1871'.⁸ The earlier, 1843, premises may have been built using A.W.N. Pugin plans; the later expansion, attributed to E.W. Pugin, was designed around 1860. Interestingly, Pugin family bibliography does not seem to mention any Pugin activity at Sclerder, nor at Trelawne.

Although E.W. Pugin had an important reputation in Belgium, designing in collaboration with Baron Jean Baptiste Bethune the pilgrimage church (1859–1862) at Dadizeele, the Franciscan Museum was unable to find any link between that project and any of the Belgian friars who first came to Sclerder. But confirmation that E.W. Pugin did work for the Belgian Franciscans in Cornwall comes from Fr Justin McLoughlin OFM (1909–1993), the distinguished Franciscan historian, who wrote in

⁵ Derriman 1986.

⁶ Veronica 1988, pp 26–31.

⁷ The second view is similar, and reproduced in *ibid*, p 31.

⁸ This third view is in Derriman 1988, p 19.

his *Gorton monastery, 1861 to 1961*, in the section on 'Arrival at Fairfield 1861', that 'At Sclerder in 1858, Fr. Emmanuel Kenners had engaged as architect Edward Welby Pugin, at that time twenty-four years of age'. Fr Ninian Arbuckle OFM found that this information came from a longhand account of the restoration of the English province written around 1878.⁹

Fr Emmanuel had been the senior member of the initial group of three friars at Sclerder, and was to be the first superior of the Manchester community. Thus it seems safe to point to him – not forgetting Sir Harry Trelawney – as the person ultimately responsible for E.W. Pugin's involvement with St Francis, Gorton.

⁹ This document is in the provincial archives at Canterbury, entitled '*Brevis respectus restorationis provinciae*'.

Pulling out a few stops: E.W. Pugin and organ cases

by Catriona Blaker

In 2002 The Pugin Society travelled north with Rory O'Donnell for a study tour which having embraced St Mary's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Newcastle, Carlton Towers and Ushaw College amongst other sites, finally concluded at Edward Pugin's Meanwood Towers, on the outskirts of Leeds, one of many splendid later Victorian villas or small country houses of the period in which this area is so rich. This remarkable building, now flats, is characteristic of E.W. Pugin's work in its eccentricities, notable service wing with an attractive octagonal building – possibly a game larder – elaborate detailing, many very tall chimneys (originally), and its prickly asymmetrical outlines. It was built in 1866 for one Thomas Stuart Kennedy, partner in a successful engineering foundry later called Fairburn Lawson Limited in Leeds. It is perhaps a measure of the young Kennedy's success that at the age of only twenty-five he was able to commission such a house.¹

In 1865 Thomas Stuart Kennedy had married Clara Thornton, in Canterbury cathedral; and a Miss Lucy Thornton, also of Canterbury, had in 1867 been a bridesmaid to E.W. Pugin's sister, Mary, when she married George Coppinger Ashlin at Ramsgate in that year.² The Thorntons, a Kentish mill-owning family, are referred to by J.H. Powell in 'Pugin in his home' as being A.W.N. Pugin's 'earliest Ramsgate friends', and he also reports that 'their children played together'.³ It is my belief, therefore, that it may well have been through Clara, probably a childhood friend, that E.W. Pugin was asked to design Meanwood Towers, the fittings for which were apparently organised from Ramsgate, through E.W.P's own factory, the South-Eastern works, where items were constructed for dispatch not only to sites in Ramsgate but also to more distant places.⁴

At Meanwood there was not only a house, however, but something more. Not far distant from the mansion itself a substantial organ house was constructed, also designed by Edward. This centrally-heated organ house was described by Thomas Clifford Allbutt, Kennedy's friend, as 'a picturesque building in chalet style, large enough to seat some 800 people'. It was 'built mainly of wood framing, protected by slates and panelled within with fine white woods ...', and it contained a sensational organ, made and voiced by Edmund Schulze, of the famous German firm of J. F. Schulze and Sons, of Paulinzella, not far from Weimar in Thuringia.⁵ Most unfortunately no photograph has to date been found of what must have been a remarkable construction to accommodate this spectacular instrument, which was a present from T. S. Kennedy to his Clara. The organ was inaugurated with an opening recital by the celebrated Samuel Sebastian Wesley, organist of Gloucester cathedral,

1 See Johnstone 1985, a very thorough and detailed account.

2 *Thanet advertiser*, 3.11.1867.

3 Wedgwood 1988; p 191.

4 *Kent coast times*, 12.11.1874.

5 Johnstone 1985, p 17.

grandson of Charles Wesley, and previously the first organist of Leeds parish church. Although, as we shall see, the organ itself has indeed survived, the organ house, which was perhaps designed in consultation with Schulze, was regrettably demolished some time between 1940 and 1946. From the description given above, it would seem that E.W. Pugin's feeling for elaborate decorative woodwork was given full play here. Perhaps the building would have looked somewhat like the conservatories and vineries at Scarisbrick, designed by him at about the same time, and illustrated here two years ago.⁶

It was not clear to me who had designed the organ case itself at Meanwood and I was therefore most interested in a query raised as to the identity of a 'Mr Kennedy' by Sr Margaret Truran, archivist, and organist, of Stanbrook Abbey in Worcestershire, also the work of E.W. Pugin.⁷ In May 2004, following the desire of the Benedictine community of nuns at Stanbrook to move, a conservation plan by consultant Michael Hill was commissioned and Sr Margaret, commenting on the draft version of this excellent piece of work, wondered whether the organ at Stanbrook could perhaps have been slightly more emphasised. She quotes E.W. Pugin as saying 'The organ ought to be carried out from the design I made for Mr Kennedy it is really most beautiful the first thing of the kind done in modern times & being the 2nd it would no doubt be cheaper. Of course I would not charge you any commission. Kennedy's front cost £280 but your's is considerably smaller & considering all the circumstances I think I might get Farmer to do yours cost price, say about a £100'.⁸ Sister Margaret goes on to report that Pugin later wrote 'I wont leave your organ drawings until they are finished. So unless I get a fit of break down [an unfortunate reference to his ongoing poor health], you may count upon having them on Sunday Morning. I send no detail drawings as they are the same as Mr Kennedy's...'.⁹ Pugin was clearly pleased with his work at Meanwood. The organ case, which was indeed carved by Farmer and Brindley, was described in the *Times* of 7 September 1871 as 'an extremely fine piece of wood-carving, the squandrils [spandrels?] being filled with angels in the style of the Nuremberg work of the fifteenth-century'.¹⁰

It was a pleasure, having read Sister Margaret's comments and queries on the conservation plan, to be able at this point to make the connection between Meanwood and Stanbrook, and to communicate with her on the subject. The only sadness in this small discovery has been that although the great Schulze organ, known far and wide for the beauty of its range and tone, has after an unusual history finally been triumphantly installed and completely restored in the church of St Bartholomew, Armley, Leeds (and indeed is now known as 'The Armley Schulze organ'), it is no longer clad in its E.W.P. case. Regrettably, the music-loving Clara Thornton became ill in 1877 and the organ was sold from Meanwood. For a short time it was installed in St Peter's Church, Harrogate; but in 1879 when it went to St

⁶ Hill 2003, p 35.

⁷ I am most grateful to Sr Margaret Truran for her help and encouragement, and also for permission to quote from the Stanbrook Abbey archives.

⁸ Stanbrook Abbey archives, letter from EW Pugin, 21.12.1869. The costing for the organ was later raised considerably.

⁹ *Ibid*, letter from EW Pugin, 25.11.1870.

¹⁰ Information from Sr Margaret Truran.

Bartholomew's it was given for reasons which are not altogether clear a new case, designed by the architects of the church (consecrated 1877), Messrs Walker and Athron. An elevation of this case exists at Sheepscar, Leeds, in the West Yorkshire Archive collection, and an elaborate description of it is given in the very informative Armley Schulze website.¹¹ Whereas the organ itself has now come gloriously into its own, along with St Bartholomew's, the organ house at Meanwood and – it would appear – the original organ case – have gone. Or could parts of the case have been recycled? All we can surmise is that the organ case at Stanbrook must closely resemble the original one at Meanwood

It is interesting to think that E.W. Pugin was following in the footsteps of his father in these matters; we know that A.W.N. designed the organ case for Jesus Col-



Figure 26: Detail from 1893 Ordnance Survey map of Leeds, showing Meanwood Towers, then called Meanwood House, and the organ house [grey] in the grounds

Courtesy Leeds library and information service.

lege Chapel, Cambridge, and also for St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney (destroyed by fire in 1865);¹² and that he had an organ in his own small chapel at the Grange, which was ready for use by Easter Day 1845. 'I have a beautiful organ', he wrote at that time, and '... it sounds through the whole building.'¹³ There was also of course a further organ, in the church of St Augustine's; both were almost certainly made by Bevington. A.W.N. also constructed a beautiful stone organ gallery in St Augustine's, but whether the instrument in the Grange chapel was to his own design is uncertain. In 1886, in the *Musical times*, Henry Abram of Ramsgate offered an organ (presumably the same one) from the Grange for sale, for £40. An organ also features in a photograph of what became known as 'the billiard room' at

the Grange.¹⁴ Pugin also made designs for organ cases for his friend and patron Sir John Sutton's *A short account of organs built in England*.¹⁵

Altogether organs and organ cases played a not inconsiderable part in the life of E.W. and A.W.N. Pugin, and perhaps this subject, together with a broader look at music and the Pugins generally, is worthy of further exploration.

11 <http://www.armley-schulze.freereserve.co.uk/OrgHist.htm>. See also illustrations in Johnstone 1985.

12 See Andrews 2002, p 164.

13 A.W.N. Pugin to J. Hardman, 23.3.1845: Belcher 2003, p 367.

14 See Glancey 1994, pl facing p 32.

15 For much of the information in this paragraph and for more of interest see Tindall 2002; Tindall 2003. These can be found on line at <http://lehuray2.csi.cam.ac.uk/Reporter/apr02/h402.htm> and <http://lehuray2.csi.cam.ac.uk/Reporter/jul02/rn702.htm>.

‘A pleasing old-time appearance’: P.P. Pugin and St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral, Adelaide

by Brian Andrews

A W.N. Pugin’s remarkable and in many ways unique Australian heritage of buildings, stained glass, metalwork, textiles and carved stonework has only emerged in recent years from a century and a half of near total oblivion.¹ Paradoxically, it is the sole Australian work of his youngest son, Peter Paul, namely major additions to St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral, Adelaide, which has ever been associated here with the famous Pugin family name.

The reason for the existence of this utterly characteristic piece of P.P. Pugin architecture may be attributed to the taste and ambitions of Christopher Augustine Reynolds (1834–93), fourth Roman Catholic bishop and first archbishop of Adelaide. Reynolds enjoyed a reputation in Adelaide as a leading authority on art and antiques, and this knowledge was put to good effect in acquiring for the church in South Australia some splendid items of ecclesiastical plate and furnishings, ranging from mediaeval through renaissance to contemporary work. Typical of his acquisitions were a set of excellent baroque high altar candlesticks, a nineteenth-century French monstrance incorporating fragments of a late fourteenth-century tower reliquary and an 1874 chalice by the Prague silversmith E. Kautsch, a taut work ornamented with strapwork, *champlevé* enamel and semi-precious stones – a rare example in Australia of central European church plate. The strongest evidence for his interests in architecture lies in the fragment of his personal library that has survived sale and neglect. Reynolds owned A.W.N. Pugin’s *Apology*, A.C. Pugin’s *Examples* and Eastlake’s *History of the Gothic Revival*, as well as bound volumes of plates from the *Architect* and the *Building news* dating from the years 1875 to 1878.

Consecrated as Bishop of Adelaide in November 1873, Reynolds inherited a partly completed cathedral by the Pugin follower Charles Francis Hansom (1817–88) and a chronically poor diocese. To understand the nature of Reynolds’ attitude towards the building and Pugin’s consequent intervention, a foray into the development of the cathedral up to that point is useful.

The building had evolved in unanticipated – and unfortunate – ways from a design by Hansom, dating from the second half of 1845, for an early decorated aisled and clerestoried church with central western tower and spire. Designed as a parish church – of a type pioneered by A.W.N. Pugin in St Oswald’s, Liverpool, and St Giles’, Cheadle – it was intended to be a ‘model church for the new world’,² and as such would have had a full complement of screens, carved work, stained glass, tiles and so on. Its design had been arranged and financed by the recent Roman Catholic convert William Leigh of Leamington Spa, who had business interests in the newly established Colony of South Australia and who had just made a generous bequest to the struggling infant see of Adelaide. Leigh had initially suggested A.W.N.

1 See Andrews 1994; Andrews 2002.

2 *Catholic annual register*, 1850.

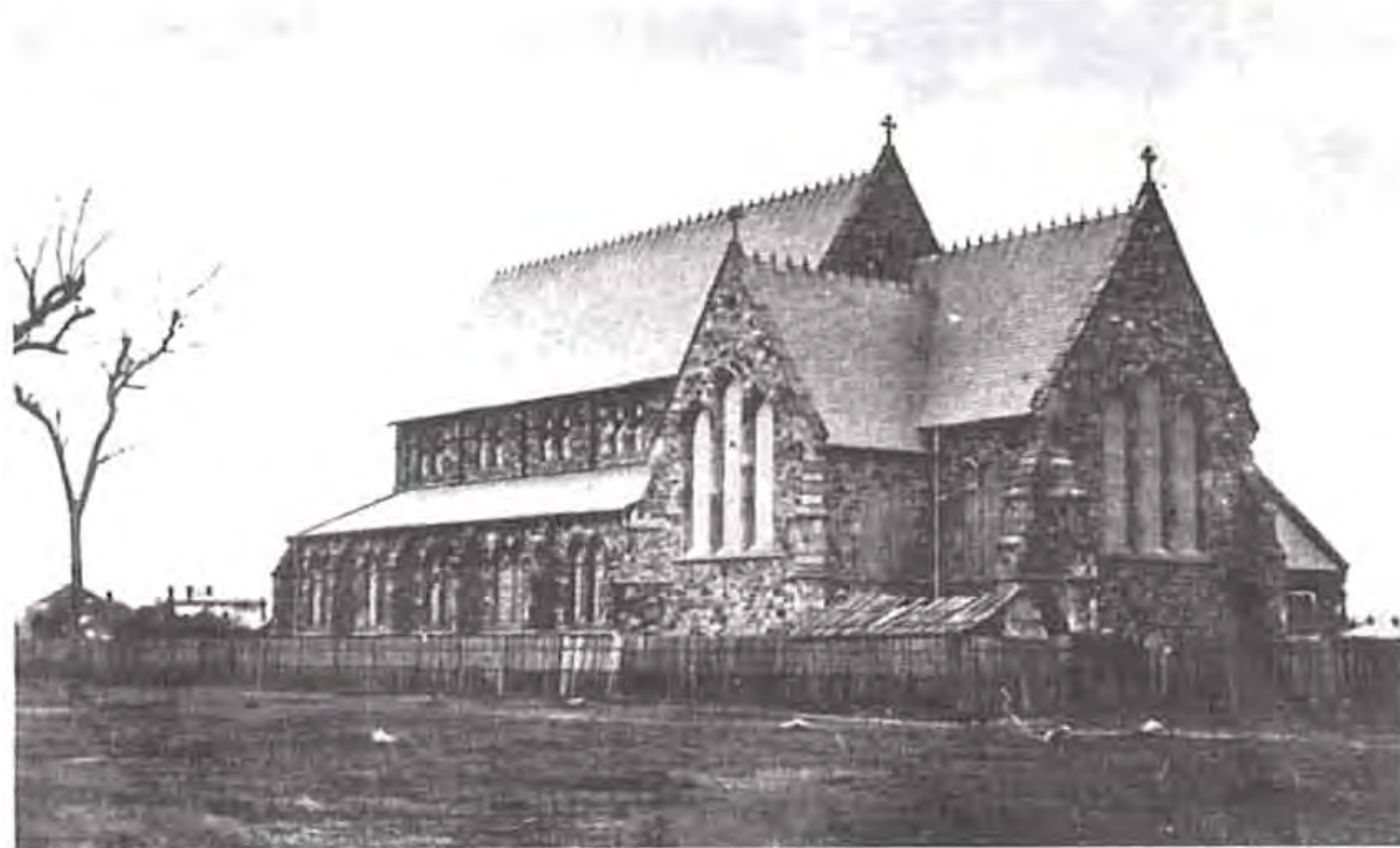


Figure 27: South-eastern view of Charles Francis Hansom's partly completed St Francis Xavier's Cathedral from Victoria Square, c1867

South Australian Archives, B2863.

Pugin as a suitable architect, but the influence of Hansom's champion, Fr William Bernard Ullathorne OSB, was to prevail.³

In a June 1845 letter to Fr Thomas Paulinus Heptonstall OSB, the Australian Roman Catholic hierarchy's London agent, Ullathorne had written:

Now to the point. Would you see Pugin, explain the circumstances and ask whether, under the circumstances, he would furnish a plan for a parish church, tower, spire and presbytery; Early

English or early Decorated at a moderate charge and at what charge. Call the outlay five thousand pounds ... nave and aisles to be built first if required. *Should Mr. Pugin's charge be heavy we must look elsewhere though you need not say that!*⁴

'Elsewhere' was code for Hansom. The plans, together with a model of the building, arrived in Adelaide in July 1847 with a returning Francis Murphy, first bishop of Adelaide. In truth, Adelaide's tiny impoverished Roman Catholic community could never have afforded to erect such a full-blown Gothic Revival church and it is doubtful whether the local craftsmen had the level of skills in the late 1840s to tackle the sophisticated stone cutting and carved work for such a building. Murphy quietly shelved the plans and model.

In 1850 Murphy held a competition for the design of a cathedral, won by local architect Richard Lambeth who was clearly very familiar with the 'model church' design. He had simply increased the number of nave bays from six to seven and pumped up the church design's major dimensions by a factor of one sixth to 'convert' it into a cathedral.⁵ So Hansom was the effective, if unwitting, author of the new cathedral's plan and topology, if not for the winning design's crude realisation. Leigh recognised this from afar and in a pointed letter to the *South Australian chronicle and mining register* dated 4 September 1852 stated that 'it appears to me evident that the cathedral lately erected in Adelaide has been built from these plans given by Mr. Hansom, with, however, some unfortunate curtailments and alterations to its details; the entire merit or demerit of which exclusively belongs to Mr. Lambeth'.⁶

In fact, only the foundations had been laid by the date of Leigh's letter. The discovery of gold in the neighbouring Colony of Victoria in 1851 had led to the

3 At that time Ullathorne was in charge of the Roman Catholic mission in Coventry where he was completing the building of St Osburg's by Hansom.

4 Downside Abbey Archives, L396, Ullathorne to Heptonstall, 16.6.1845.

5 Leigh finished up building a version of the 'model church' on his estate in Woodchester, Gloucestershire. In August 1846, a few days after attending the opening of Hansom's sumptuous new church for the Gandolfi Hornyolds at Blackmore Park, Worcestershire, he dropped Pugin as architect for his own church and evidently got Hansom to modify the Adelaide design for use as a monastic church. Its nave dimensions are precisely six sevenths of those in Adelaide.

6 *South Australian chronicle and mining register*, 4.9.1852, p 192.

wholesale exodus of the Adelaide workforce, including the architect Lambeth who would never return. By 1854 funds – and workmen – were available to resume the cathedral’s construction but Murphy had neither architect nor detail drawings to continue the task. In desperation he turned to Hansom, sending a copy of Lambeth’s foundation plans to England with instructions to make a new design to fit them.

Hansom’s design, which forms the core of the present cathedral, was in the purest, archaeologically correct, early English style, his largest essay in that idiom, a choice dictated by the necessity to keep costs to a minimum. His drawings show him in complete command of the early English vocabulary, with carefully correct moulding profiles and allusions to historical precedent as in the nave arcade with its general form and detached cluster columns echoing that at West Walton, Norfolk.⁷ He was obliged to add one more stage to the tower than was his custom, so that with its slender spire reaching a height of 227 feet it would compositionally balance the expanded length of the building dictated by Lambeth’s foundations. There was little he could do to convert the parish church profile into something more cathedralesque; however he did provide a transverse gable to the liturgical south-east chapel, giving it more the appearance of a transept.

The chronic poverty of Adelaide’s Roman Catholics meant that by 1860 only the liturgical east end and the easternmost five bays of the nave [figure 27] had been erected. This was still the extent of the building when Reynolds became bishop thirteen years later. The inflated incomplete ‘parish church’ in Wakefield Street, Adelaide, did not measure up to his ideas of a building consonant with his notions of episcopal importance. His sights were set on a huge new Gothic cathedral on a scale to rival those of his episcopal confreres in Melbourne and



Figure 28: P.P. Pugin’s thumbnail sketch showing the effect of placing a conventional gabled roof on his proposed widened north aisle, contained in his letter of 21.10.1881 to Reynolds

South Australian Catholic Archives.

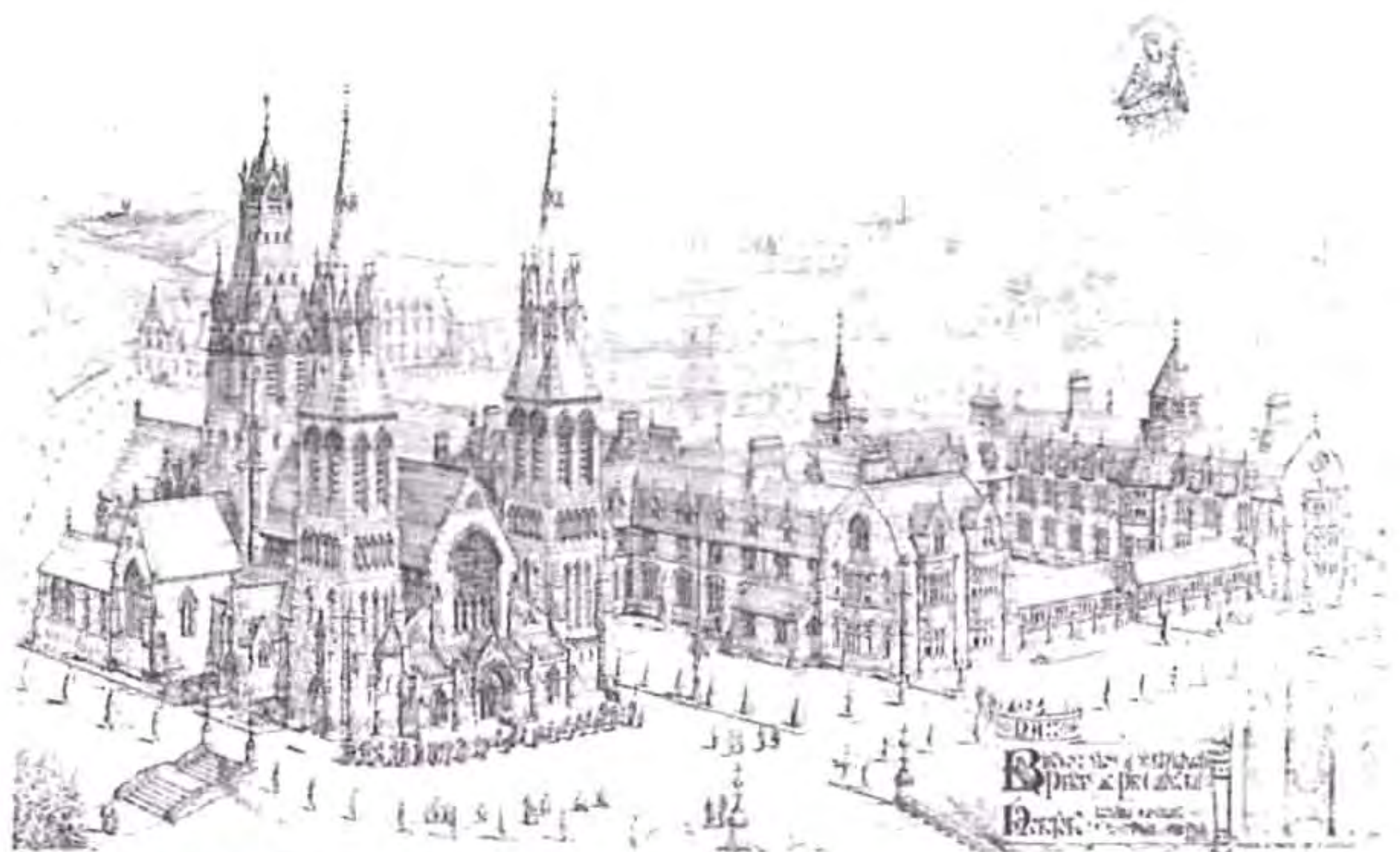


Figure 29: P.P. Pugin’s 1878 perspective view of his ambitious proposal for the completion of Belmont Priory, Herefordshire

Belmont Abbey Archives; photograph: John Dallwitz.

⁷ Perhaps Hansom had made measured drawings of West Walton. JK Colling, in his preface to the second volume of his pattern book (Colling 1856), acknowledged him amongst those who had provided examples appearing in the work. Measured drawings of West Walton had appeared in vol i.

Sydney. However, until such dreams could be realised – of necessity on a different site – he decided to abandon the remainder of Hansom’s by now rather old-fashioned design and seek a more palatable up to date solution to the completion of the existing cathedral, something more in line with the latest high Victorian churches illustrated in his volumes of the *Architect* and the *Building news*.

Between July 1879 and June 1881 Reynolds travelled to England, Ireland, France, Austria and Italy,⁸ taking with him Hansom’s eighth-scale



Figure 31: Part of a perspective view of Pugin’s design for the enlargement of St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral, drawn by Adelaide architect Edward John Woods c1886 (water damaged original) South Australian Catholic Archives.

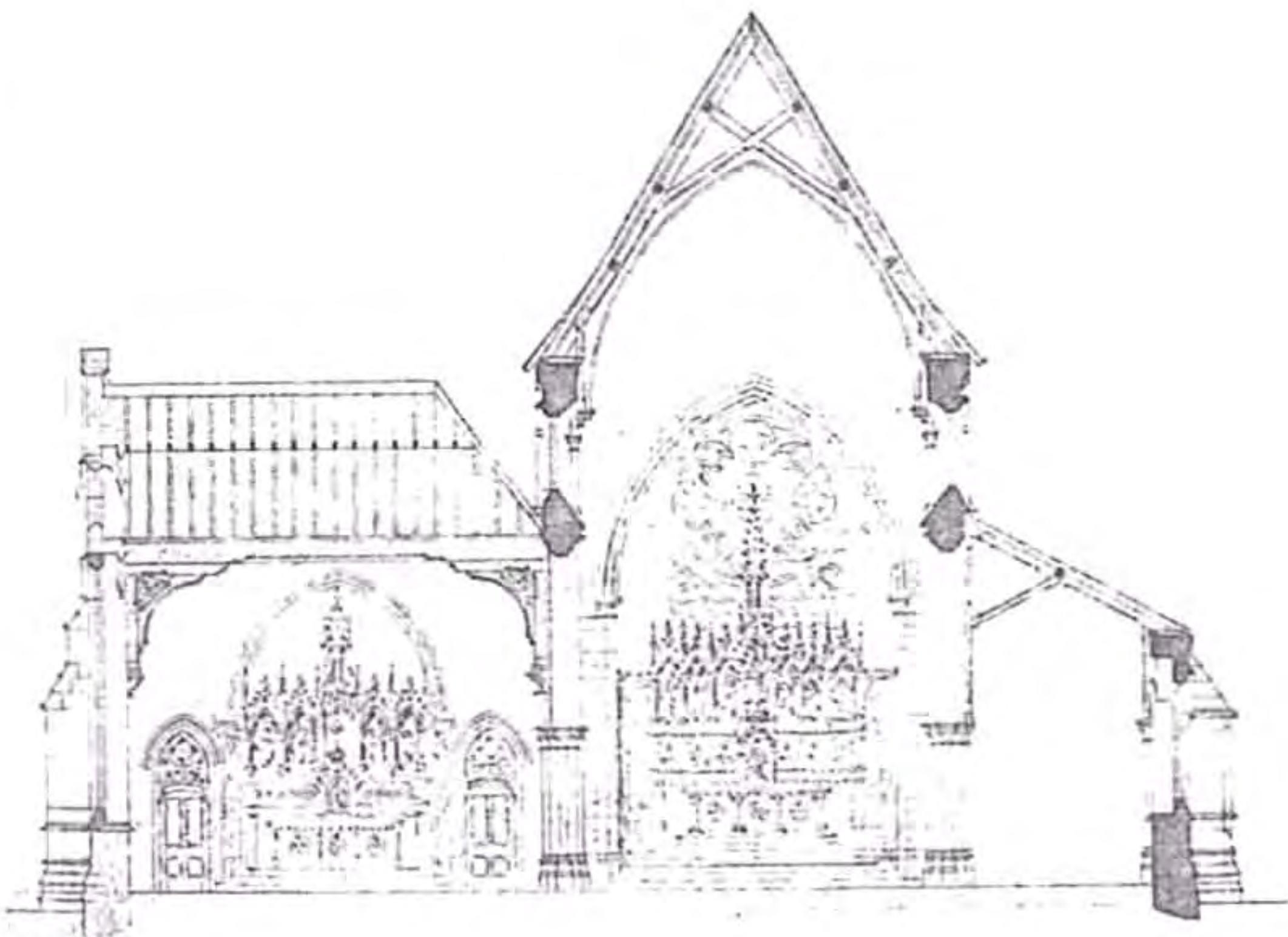


Figure 30: 1881 sectional elevation looking east showing Pugin’s altar designs, wide north aisle and chancel east window Woods Bagot Pty Ltd.

cathedral drawings.⁹ He took the opportunity whilst in London to visit the firm of Pugin and Pugin in Westminster to discuss the provision of plans for the enlargement and revised completion of St Francis Xavier’s. In view of his long-term goal of an entirely new cathedral on a grand scale –something he discussed with P.P. Pugin – and against the reality of diocesan finances, this would have to be a relatively low cost stop-gap measure, re-cycling existing materials wherever possible in the alterations and additions.

By 21 October 1881 Pugin was able to report to Reynolds that the drawings were complete and would leave for Australia on the *S.S. Orient* on the 27th.¹⁰ His task of enlarging the cathedral had proved difficult due to the constraints imposed by the site. Back in 1850 Bishop Murphy had only been able to afford to purchase a half-acre block, a good half a mile away from the centre of gravity of the embryonic township, and that only on time payment over eighteen months. Hansom’s existing building already reached close to the boundaries to its liturgical east and south, and its facade would, in due course, come right up to the edge of Wakefield

8 Press 1986, p 204.
9 Pugin’s initial ‘doodles’, in pencil, for design alterations are on the Hansom drawings.
10 South Australian Catholic Archives (SACA), Pugin to Reynolds, 21.10.1881.



Figure 32: A c1920 north-west view showing Pugin's partly executed wide north aisle abutting Charles Hansom's partly executed nave

South Australian Catholic Archives, B5528.

Street, the northern limit of the land.¹¹ The only spare land on the block was to the geographical east, so Pugin's sole option for enlargement was the substantial widening of the liturgical north aisle. He related this to Reynolds:

In enlarging the aisle I had a difficult task and after trying it in many ways I think the plan I have adopted is the right one. If I had put on a saddle-back roof the aisle would look much larger than the nave and would spoil the proportion of the church thus [thumbnail sketch, figure 28]. At the

same time there would have been a nasty valley by the clerestory windows which would have been dangerous in case of heavy rains. I hope your Lordship will like the way I have treated the church generally!¹²

Pugin then referred to Reynolds' ultimate scheme for an entirely new cathedral.¹³

Your Lordship mentioned to me about your future Cathedral although it may not be built for some time. I should like plenty of time to think about it. I think you contemplated building a Cathedral, Bishop's Palace and Convent on one site. It ought to make a most picturesque group. If I had a plan of the site, levels, points of compass and a few particulars as to requirements I could get out some ideas for it and have a big perspective view made of the whole thing.¹⁴

He concluded the letter by mentioning that: 'My mother begs me to remember her very kindly to your Lordship.'¹⁵

Reynolds' grand dreams always exceeded the realities of the financial position of the diocese, so this scheme never got beyond wishful thinking. But one can envisage the sort of ambitious complex Pugin that might have had in mind by referring to the 'big perspective view' [figure 29] of the likewise unrealised elaborate scheme he had got up for the Benedictines at Belmont Priory, Herefordshire, in 1878.

Pugin's eighth-scale drawings arrived in Adelaide late in 1881. They revealed a typical piece of work in his customary robust geometrical decorated idiom, cleverly integrated with Hansom's early English fragment and making maximum use of recycled cut stonework displaced by his additions and alterations.



Figure 33: Walter Hervey Bagot's proposed west elevation

Woods Bagot Pty Ltd.

11 Murphy was constrained by the small size of the rectangular block of land, with its longer axis running north-south, to align the main axis of the cathedral so that its liturgical west front in fact faced north.

12 SACA, Pugin to Reynolds, 21.10.1881.

13 This would most likely, in Reynolds' mind, have been erected on a site on West Terrace, at the edge of the city centre, where the archbishop's house, a primitive church and convent already existed.

14 SACA, Pugin to Reynolds, 21.10.1881.

15 *Ibid.*

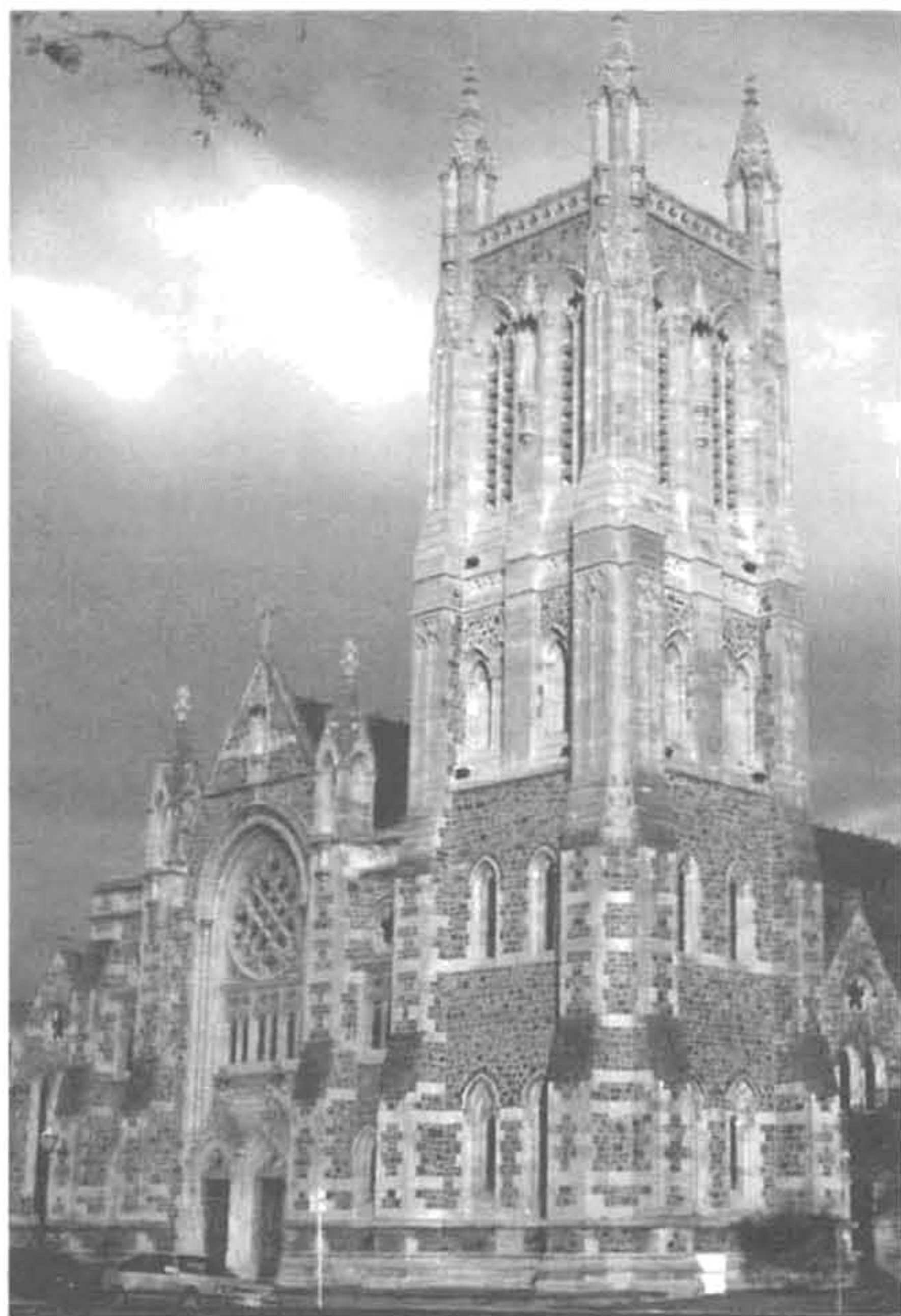


Figure 34: St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide, 1996

Photograph: Rick Martin.

The enlarged north aisle – wider than the nave itself – was covered by seven gabled transverse roofs, each bay having lengthened paired lancets salvaged from the demolished aisle north wall, surmounted by a cinquefoil light. The inner ends of the roofs were hipped so as not to obstruct light from entering the nave clerestory windows. Between the buttresses of alternate bays were confessionals behind wide segmental arches, a form to be found in other of Pugin's churches including St Anthony of Padua's, Forest Gate, London (1884–91) and the former Church of Our Lady & St Edmund, Great Malvern, Worcestershire (1904–05).

At the east end of this aisle and in the chancel Pugin had drawn a couple of his characteristic spiky ornate altars with their tall central pinnacled canopies [figure 30]. They bring to mind the assessment of P.P. Pugin's idiom so colourfully expressed in Peter Anson's witty and insightful 1960

work, *Fashions in church furnishings 1840–1940*:

Yet these churches deserve careful study, because their furnishings and decorations are fascinating examples of a sort of Rococo Gothic Revival. It is extraordinary to think that most of them were contemporary with Bodley's refined creations, or with the Glasgow School of Art and the interiors of Miss Cranston's restaurants in the same city. All that is in common between Charles Rennie Macintosh's delicately bizarre art *nouveau décor* and Peter Paul Pugin's highly stylized robust English Decorated Gothic, is that both are now curious period pieces.¹⁶

To provide a suitable backdrop for the planned new high altar Pugin had replaced the triple lancets in the chancel east wall with a new composition consisting of a rose window over five diagonally set quatrefoils, with trefoils in the spandrels. The lancets so displaced were relocated at the north end of the grand new facade.

Pugin had abandoned Hansom's central west steeple in favour of a powerfully massed 119 foot tower at the west end of the south aisle. Within a giant pointed arch reminiscent of Peterborough cathedral's facade arrangement, over a twin-gabled divided portal, he had placed a large tracery-filled window to flood the nave with light. Its upper section was a rose entirely composed of trefoils and quatrefoils within and around a diagonally set cross framework [figure 31]. Not only did this tracery scheme echo that of its opposite number in the chancel east wall, it also stood firmly in a design tradition developed by his elder brother. This precedent is to be seen *inter alia* in E.W. Pugin's north transept window arrangement for Our Lady of Dadizee,

¹⁶ Anson 1965, p 274.

Belgium (1859–92), and in his nave west window of St Colman's Cathedral, Cove, Ireland.¹⁷ Indeed, the whole facade composition of P.P. Pugin's Adelaide cathedral essay bears a strong, if much simplified, similarity to that of his brother's Cove design.

More generally, the use of rose windows, at times set within arches and combined with other tracery, would continue to be a favourite component of P.P. Pugin's design palette. Typical examples are the chancel east window of the aforementioned St Anthony of Padua's, Forest Gate; the nave west window of St Augustine's, Coatbridge (1894), on the eastern outskirts of Glasgow; and the rose window in the facade of St Alphonsus', London Road, Glasgow (1901).¹⁸ This last mentioned has the same diagonally set cross framework as Adelaide.

The tower's belfry stage design was nearly identical with the exactly contemporary first scheme by Pugin for the belfry stage of the crossing tower on Belmont Priory church.¹⁹ In the event a simpler alternative was chosen for Belmont and completed in 1882.

In August 1886 archbishop Reynolds asked leading Adelaide architect Edward John Woods (1837–1916) to investigate the feasibility and cost of proceeding with the Pugin plans in whole or in part. Woods' considered response was that the costs would be very high because 'the class of work is above the average'.²⁰ Accordingly, Reynolds decided to only proceed with the Pugin enlargement of the liturgical north aisle as far as the existing temporary west wall of Hansom's incomplete nave, and to have Woods enlarge the sacristies. This work was completed by 15 August 1887 [figure 32].

No further thought was given to completing the cathedral to Pugin's designs for over thirty years. Then in 1921, Archbishop Robert William Spence OP, another man with a big vision for his cathedral, wishing not merely to complete Pugin's design but substantially to enlarge it, engaged Walter Hervey Bagot (1880–1963), principal of the architectural firm founded by E.J. Woods, to investigate suitable schemes. By March 1922 Bagot had completed an ambitious plan which encompassed the duplication of Pugin's wide north aisle on the south side, a substantial narthex in place of Pugin's modest vestibule, the demolition of all Hansom's work east of the nave to permit its replacement by a huge new chancel flanked by four side chapels, and a two-storey range extending to the north of the chancel, containing new sacristies with chapter house above.

Bagot needed to increase the height of the building to balance compositionally the proposed extensions, so, in a remarkable display of his competence in assimilating the style of another architect, he designed a spire to top – and superbly match – Pugin's tower, for a total height of 192 feet [figure 33]. To further dress up the facade to match this work, he proposed to replace the Hansom trinity of lancets with a piece of virtuoso muscular decorated work which would have been utterly indistinguishable from Pugin's own oeuvre.

¹⁷ O'Donnell 1994, pp 262; 264–5.

¹⁸ The latter two are illustrated in Sanders 1997.

¹⁹ Belmont Abbey archives, uncatalogued plan,

²⁰ SACA, SAA 1421, Out Letter Book of EJ Woods, Woods to Reynolds, 23.8.1886.

On 1 September 1922 Bagot advised Spence that due to increasing cost estimates the facade details were being redesigned on 'conservative lines'.²¹ This meant the elimination of some of Pugin's and his own details and the simplification of others. Costs were yet again dictating compromise as they had for nearly seventy years. On 23 April 1923 a tender was let covering construction of the new wide south aisle, extending the cathedral to its final Wakefield Street facade and erecting the bottom three stages of the tower, capping it temporarily with a pyramidal roof. Plans to erect Bagot's new eastern parts of the building were shelved temporarily – permanently, as it transpired. So later generations can be thankful that insufficient funds were for once a blessing, resulting as they did in the saving of Hansom's noble east end for posterity.

Archbishop Spence laid the foundation stone of the extensions on 21 October 1923 and the official opening took place on 18 April 1926, the centrepiece of three days of celebrations.²² In the booklet put out to commemorate the occasion, the cathedral, with its new facade largely as Pugin had intended, was described as having 'a pleasing old-time appearance'.²³

Nearly seventy more years were to pass before the final work got under way to complete the cathedral, and this not without intensive behind-the-scenes lobbying to ensure that the tower belfry stage would be constructed in accordance with Pugin's 1881 design.²⁴

His great tower [figure 34] was completed in May 1996, 145 years almost to the day since workers had dug the first sod on half-acre number 338 to start Bishop Murphy's dream. During that time the centre of gravity of Adelaide's cityscape had moved half a mile south to Victoria Square – as the city's planner Col William Light had originally intended – a splendid public space flanked by the law courts, the general post office, treasury buildings and Murphy's humble patch of land, at last with its cathedral.

21 Woods Bagot Pty Ltd, File B70, Bagot to Spence, 1.9.1922, (1920s extensions to St Francis Xavier's Cathedral).

22 *St Francis Xavier's Cathedral 18th April 1926: Dies Magna et Memorabilis*, Cathedral Executive Committee, Adelaide, 1926, n.p.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Adelaide City Council heritage architect Paul Stark, South Australian building stones expert David Young and the author were successful in achieving this outcome.

Pugin, James Mabey, and the architectural models of the Palace of Westminster

by Mark Collins

The recently opened Architecture Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington displays two beautifully detailed nineteenth-century architectural models depicting the Victoria tower and the tower over central lobby at the Houses of Parliament. The plaster models were made by James Mabey, one of the leading craftsmen of such architectural representations during the early Victorian period, and they are on loan from the Palace of Westminster collection.

Architectural model-making in wood, cork, and plaster-of-Paris has been practised since the renaissance for three important reasons: for the creation of ornamental representations of architecture; as a method of displaying architects' proposals to their clients; and for help in visualising the completed building during the design process. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, wooden models provided a three-dimensional preview of a building before the art of the watercolour perspective became widespread. The best examples which survive in this country include Christopher Wren's 'Great Model' for St Paul's Cathedral of 1673, and the model for James Gibbs' church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, of 1721.

Whereas carpenters were employed to make early architectural models, craftsmen who specialised in moulding plaster-of-Paris came to prominence in the late eighteenth century. Two important practitioners of the plaster technique in the early nineteenth century were Jean-Pierre Fouquet (1752–1829) and his son, François Fouquet (1787–1870). The architects John Nash and John Soane both bought examples of their work which displayed reconstructions of ancient buildings, and placed them on show at their houses in London. Like Alberti in the fifteenth century, Soane also had wooden models made to display many of his own new buildings prior to their construction, and declared:

In my own work I have seldom failed to have a model of the work proposed... I must add that wherever the model has been dispensed with, I am afraid the building has suffered in consequence thereof, either in solidity or convenience, and perhaps both.

The tradition of employing moulded plaster was continued into the Victorian period by a small group of specialists, and notable amongst them was the Mabey family. James Mabey (1811–1871) was born at Langport, between Bridgwater and Yeovil in Somerset where his father Richard Mabey (1788–1864) had been 'engaged on Ornamental Plaster work and scale models', and it was as a member of this family business that the young James began his career. Perhaps an ancestor had been taught by one of the experts in stucco – most of them Italians – who had been undertaking the decoration of interiors in English country houses during the eighteenth century.

In about 1830, James Mabey moved to London, but it is not known with whom he worked until his association with the architect Charles Barry, who had won the competition to design the new Houses of Parliament following destruction of the old

buildings by fire. The superintendent of stone-carving, John Thomas (1813–1862), engaged Mabey to prepare the small-scale models of the exterior and interior of the Palace, including segments of the building, towers, portions of the facades, and whole interiors.¹ John Thomas himself retained control of figure modelling and carving both outside and inside the building. Later in his life, Mabey wrote that between the years 1842 and 1858, he was ‘immediately under the direction of Sir Charles Barry’ as the foreman of the modelling department.² Temporary accommodation for the work was set up at the site on the river terrace of the new building, and Barry would examine each model before making changes to create the final desired effect. Although Barry was assisted in the designs for the exterior by John Thomas, he relied for the interior detailing on the designs of A.W.N. Pugin. Pugin was made ‘Superintendent of wood-carving’, although he also produced beautiful designs for all kinds of fixtures and fittings in different materials, such as stained glass, metal grilles, encaustic tiles, curtains and wallpaper.

Mabey also made up full-size models from drawings to create a pattern for sections of carved stonework and woodwork, panelling and decorative bosses, brattishing and small sculpture such as lions, unicorns and angels. The models were sent to the Thames Bank Workshops at the southern end of Millbank to be carved full-scale by a large number of joiners, sculptors and masons. Between January 1845 and December 1859 Richard Bayne ran these vast workshops as ‘Practical Superintendent of the works’ in charge of woodwork and carving, and making patterns for ornamental metalwork. For speed of execution, the reproduction of identical lengths of wood-carving was partially mechanised at the workshops; joiners were employed to operate the Taylor, Williams and Jordan wood-carving machines, and to finish by hand the elaborate work where necessary.

To complement Mabey’s models, Pugin built up a collection of mediaeval woodwork, together with thousands of plaster casts taken from original wood and stone sculpture for the craftsmen to copy. The old carvings and the new work bear a remarkable similarity. Many of the mediaeval carved examples, together with the casts, are now in store at the Victoria and Albert Museum following a period of public display at the long vanished Royal Architectural Museum.

Hundreds of plaster models must have been made to help with the design of the new Palace, and a glimpse of the process may be gained from the following:

Sir Charles Barry, when building the Houses of Parliament, had almost every important part made out in model previous to its execution, while in some cases he had full-sized cartoons or representations “offered up” to the building so that the true effect of scale and proportion might be the better judged and determined upon.³

Barry’s close control of the detail, and the immediacy of the design process was described in James Mabey’s words:

1 One small-scale model of detailing survives, representing wooden panelling, and it is now displayed at the Museum of London.

2 Another member of the model-making team was JR Clayton (1827–1913) who went on to become the celebrated stained glass designer and mosaicist. The sculptor J Birnie Philip (1824–1875) was engaged by A.W.N. Pugin to work in the department; Birnie Philip later produced sculpture for the Albert Memorial and the government buildings in Whitehall (now the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

3 *Building news*, 3.4.1885, p 547.

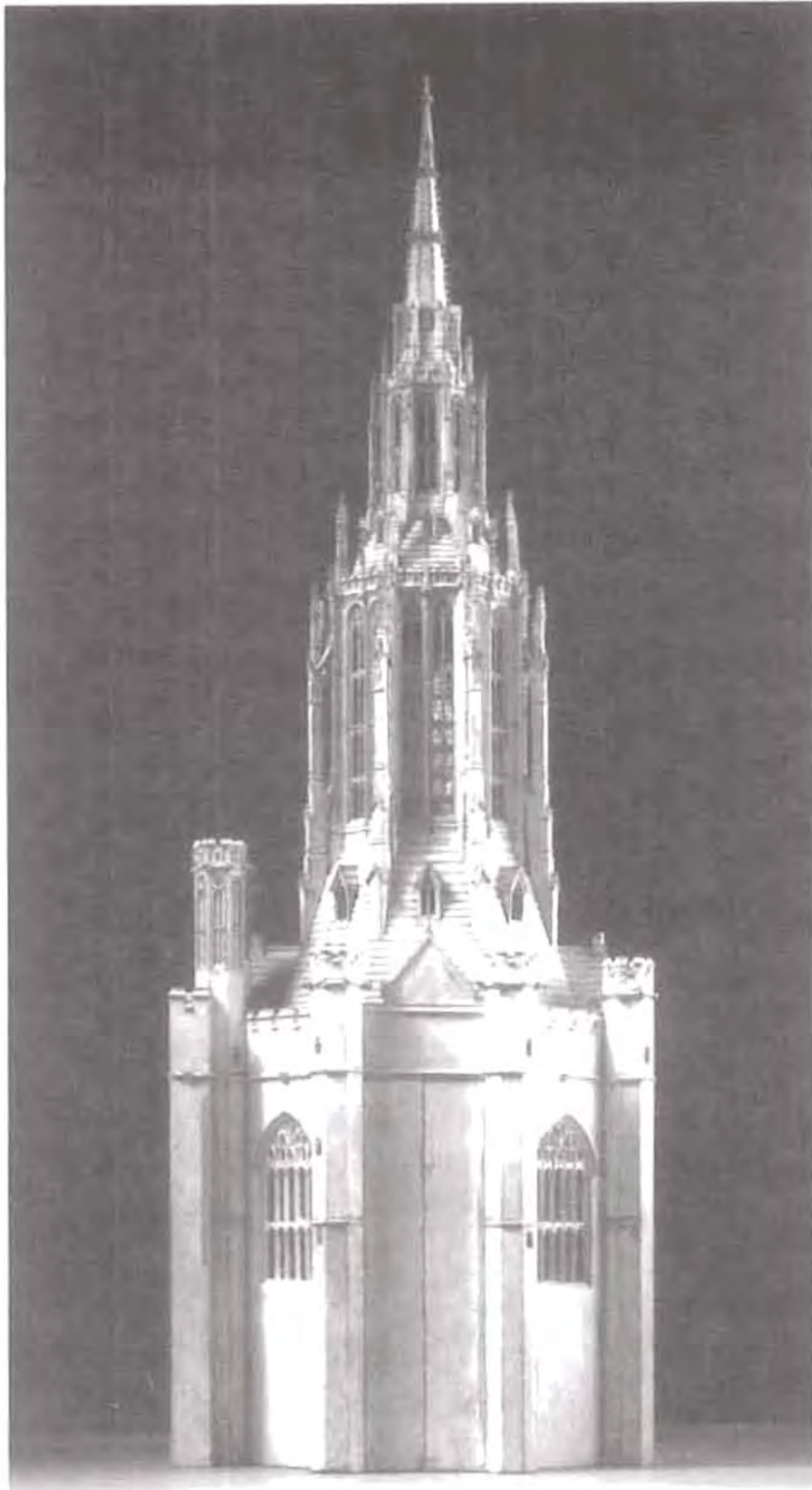


Figure 35: Scale model of the central tower at the Palace of Westminster by James Mabey, c1857

The Victoria and Albert Museum, Palace of Westminster collection, 2004.

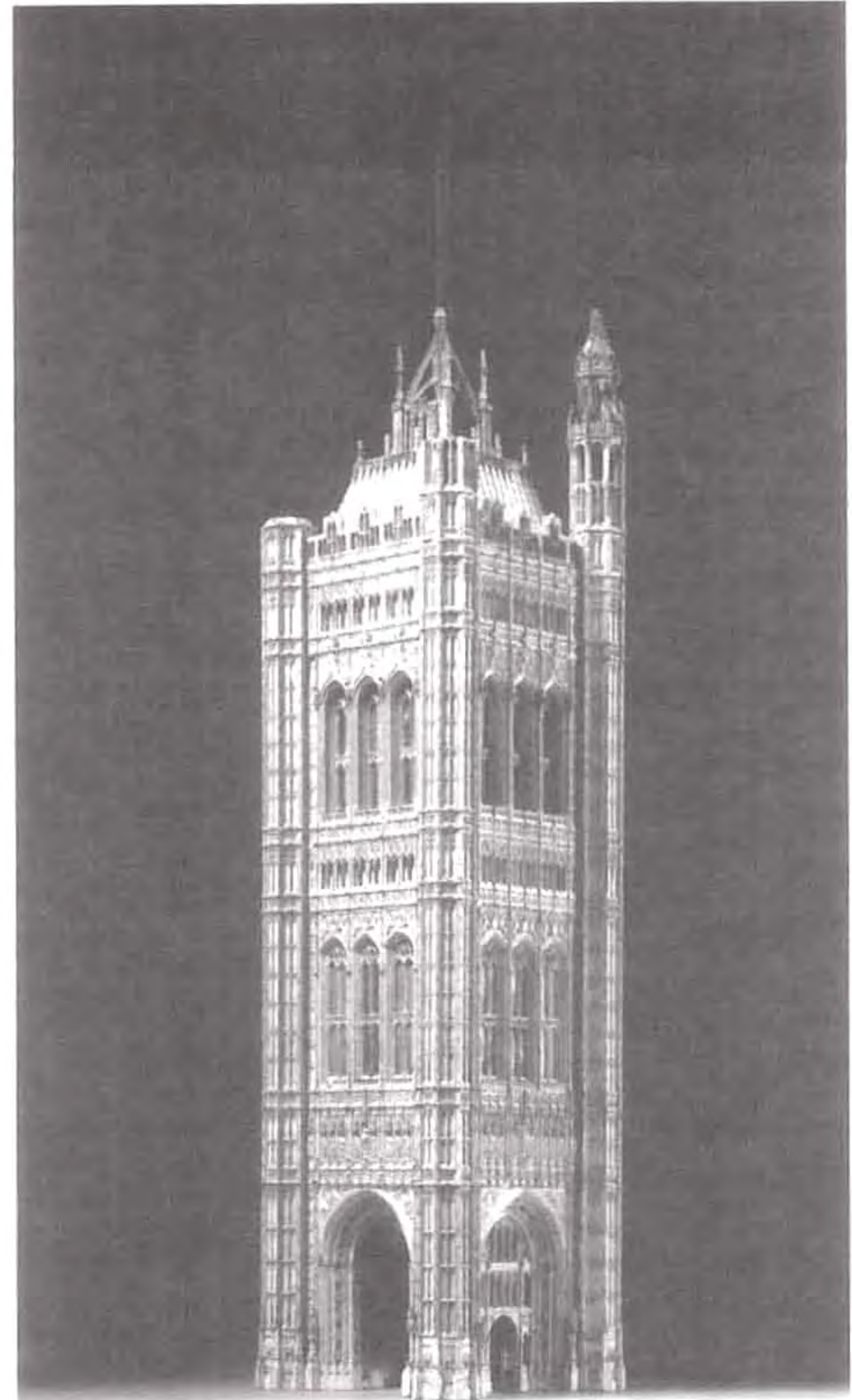


Figure 36: Scale model of the Victoria tower at the Palace of Westminster by James Mabey, c1857

The Victoria and Albert Museum, Palace of Westminster collection, 2004.

I was....occupied in making the small models...working them out in many cases from his dictation and sketches made upon the spot, diverging frequently so far from the original design as to constitute a new construction of entire masses and parts.⁴

Only three of these fine architectural models of the new palace are known still to exist: the Victoria tower, the central tower and the clock tower, all dating from about 1857, when construction was substantially complete. In February 1858, Barry's son Edward, also an architect, gave a lecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects on the building of the new palace, and used the models for illustration. Of the Victoria tower, at 1 to 120th scale and standing over three feet high, he said:

The carefully executed model on the table by Mr. Mabey, will give a better idea of its appearance than any description that I can write.⁵

Although no description survives as to their manufacture, the models were probably made by building a basic core for each tower from plaster-of-Paris and wood, with

⁴ A Barry 1868, p 91.

⁵ E Barry 1857–8, p 86.

grooves made on each facade to receive the repeated decorative elements. Each tiny element was then carved in plaster, and a gelatine mould was formed from it which could be used again and again to create multiple copies of a particular detail. These were then slotted and glued into the prepared grooves. Moulded zinc items were added in some areas to indicate cast iron ornament. Such meticulous attention to detail simulates superbly the lavish decoration which covers the actual building.

Upon completion of the construction work at the Houses of Parliament, Charles Barry asked Mabey to set up a studio near to his own office which stood at 1 Old Palace Yard. In 1857, Mabey found the premises and began business at Princes Street, Storeys Gate, situated on land now occupied by the Institution of Civil Engineers. In the census return of 1861, his occupation was listed as 'Modeller and plasterer', one of ten such businesses in London at the time, and he employed one man and one boy. His son, Charles Henry Mabey (1835–1912), who had also worked in the modelling department at the Houses of Parliament, assisted his father shortly after the new firm was set up. The Mabeys received commissions from architects such as T.H. Wyatt, Somers Clarke and Edward Barry, including the model for Barry's full-scale reproduction of the Eleanor Cross which still stands in the forecourt of Charing Cross Station in London. In 1866, the firm provided a model for Sydney Smirke to represent his new entrance for Burlington House on Piccadilly.

James Mabey continued work until about a year before his death at Hastings in April 1871, and his son, Charles, continued the business whilst expanding it to include:

Carving in Marble, Stone, Brick, Cement, Wood and Granite.

Inscriptions cut in any Material.

Chimney Pieces, Fonts, Tombs, Reredoses, Pulpits & Sun Dials.

Architectural & Engineering Models to Scale.

Fibrous Plaster Decorations supplied from Models in Stock for Ceilings, Cornices, &c.

Artificial Stone in various Tints.⁶

Examples of full-scale architectural carving are the ornamental stone decoration for the Town Hall at Todmorden in Yorkshire, and the Jacobean plaster-work at Crewe Hall in Cheshire. In the field of cast ironwork, George Vulliamy, as architect to the Metropolitan Board of Works, commissioned in 1870 a model of the 'dolphin' lamp standards for the new Thames Embankment. According to an unpublished memoir by his son, Charles Mabey himself carried out the design of the lamps, as well as making the full-scale model.⁷ Many of these lamp standards were cast by H. Young and Company, 'Art Founders' of the Ecclestone Iron Works, Pimlico, a firm which worked with the Mabeys on several projects. Vulliamy's designs for the two sphinxes at the base of Cleopatra's Needle were also modelled by Mabey, and cast in bronze in 1882 by H. Young and Co.

The firm continued until the retirement in 1933 of Charles Henry's son, Charles Henry Mabey junior (1867–1965), who worked with his father in the business as a model-maker, and also as a sculptor in stone and bronze.

⁶ CH Mabey trade literature, c1920. Copy at House of Lords Record Office.

⁷ Unpublished typescript by CH Mabey junior, dated 11.1950. Original held at North East Surrey College of Technology, Epsom; copy at Estates Archive, Palace of Westminster.

‘From a Georgian monstrosity into a Constantinopolitan basilica’ – and back again?: the current treatment of Victorian alterations to Georgian churches

by Peter Howell

Puginians do not need to be told that Georgian churches were generally regarded as unsuitable for Anglican worship as reformed in the nineteenth century. A.W.N. Pugin himself denounced them as pagan temples. Structural chancels were rare, and pulpits had undue prominence, while altar tables were often insignificant. Seating took the form of tall box pews, and galleries, at the west end and along either side, were the norm. Organs were placed in the west gallery, and choirs sang from there.

The inevitable result was that most of these churches were altered. The sanctuary was made more conspicuous, often with a new altar, and sometimes a reredos, raised on steps. Choir stalls were provided on either side, and the organ was moved alongside. The pulpit was often reduced in height, and moved aside. Galleries were often removed. Stained glass was inserted, and further decorative treatment supplied more colour. However, it needs to be emphasised that Victorian architects were usually at pains to retain whatever of quality could reasonably be retained, and often showed great skill and sympathy in remodelling earlier work, and in designing new work in sympathy with the old. It would be a gross misconception to suppose that they lacked respect for the original architects.

Sometimes a Georgian church was remodelled in a different, more ‘correct’, style. So, for example, Wren’s St Michael’s Cornhill in London was recast in a sort of ‘Franco-Italian Gothic’ by G.G. Scott; the peculiar situation here was that Hawksmoor’s tower of 1715–22 was Gothic. St George’s, Queen’s Square, also in London, of 1706, was similarly remodelled by S.S. Teulon in quirky Gothic. Here the Victorian Society had to fight to defend Teulon’s chancel, but his benches have gone – as at the same architect’s St Mary’s, Ealing, which was transformed by him, according to the archbishop of Canterbury at the time, ‘from a Georgian monstrosity into a Constantinopolitan basilica’. Teulon designed new galleries to replace the originals there.

There is at present a trend to restore Georgian churches to their original appearance. The reasons for this are various. They usually include, at least in part, a purist desire to strip the building back (the same motive which has – controversially – led the Landmark Trust to remove most of E.W. Pugin’s additions to the Grange at Ramsgate). This is at odds with the generally accepted principle that a building’s ‘history’ should be preserved. The impulse to ‘reorder’ is now common, and spreads like a disease. It can be done for liturgical reasons, but it is far more usual for the motivation to be the yearning for that weasel concept ‘flexibility’, designed to enable the church to be put to a variety of uses apart from worship.

Perhaps the greatest master of Victorian rearrangement was Sir Arthur Blomfield (1829–99). It is tragic that what was probably his best work in this field, St Peter's, Eaton Square, London, originally designed by Henry Hakewill in 1824–7, was destroyed by fire in 1987. In its breathtakingly naff reconstruction not even his magnificent iron screen, which had survived, was kept. St Mary's, Bryanston Square, also in London, by Sir Robert Smirke, 1821–3, has been recently reordered by Evangelicals, who have removed most of his fittings, including some which the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) – the committee that makes recommendations to the diocesan chancellor, the final decision maker – had insisted should remain; the chancellor has declined to take any action. At St Mary's, Banbury, by S.P. Cockerell, 1792–7, Blomfield's ingenious *cancellum* arrangement, with choir stalls surrounded by low walls projecting into the nave from the shallow chancel, has now been dismantled. At St James's, Clerkenwell, by James Carr, 1788–92, Blomfield's font has recently been removed. The future of St Mark's, North Audley Street, London, by J.P. Gandy Deering, 1825–8, has been in the balance since it closed in 1974. Its use by a Christian congregation might seem welcome, but the diocese of London is still desperate to find a solution more financially profitable to itself. Such a solution will inevitably mean substantial alteration.

In each of these cases, Blomfield had to keep the galleries, though he sometimes lightened them. The nineteenth century is often reproached for removing galleries from churches which were designed to have them, which makes it all the more deplorable that they were removed from John Barker's church of 1712–3 at Whitchurch, Shropshire, in about 1970.

The rest of this article will discuss four London churches where the removal of Victorian work has caused controversy. The earliest in date is St Edmund King and Martyr, Lombard Street, in the City. Built in 1670–4, it was probably designed by Robert Hooke. The principal Victorian rearrangement was carried out in 1864 by William Butterfield. Although the ceiling was destroyed by a bomb in 1917, the church was virtually unscathed in World War II. Butterfield ingeniously reused the woodwork of the pews to form open seats and choir stalls. As Paul Thompson writes, 'He would even preserve old woodwork, such as gallery fronts, where the new arrangements made it redundant, so that there was no permanent loss of any value'.¹ At Hawksmoor's St Mary Woolnoth nearby, Butterfield set gallery fronts back against the walls.

St Edmund's is now linked with St Mary, but has been allowed to stagnate: it was almost boasted that no communion service had been held for years. A scheme was devised to turn it into a 'Centre for Spirituality' (whatever that may be). The initial idea was to remove the seating from the nave and galleries, and build glazed 'rooms' at either side of the nave; the west galleries would also have been enclosed to form rooms. The architect was Giles Quarme, who is chairman of the Ancient Monuments Society. The proposal was later modified, omitting the 'rooms' in favour of movable screens, but it was still proposed to remove the seating. The DAC and English

The Editor would like to thank Charles Smith, outgoing churches officer of the Victorian Society, for his assistance in the preparation of this article.

¹ Thompson 1971, p 420.



Figure 37: View of St Martin-in-the-Fields from the north-west, as proposed
By kind permission of Eric Parry Architects & St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Heritage raised no objection, but the Victorian Society did, and the matter was decided by the chancellor, Nigel Seed QC, in October 2004. He reported that the Butterfield benches were not considered ‘unique’, or ‘a significant contribution to the church’s Grade I listing’. This reasoning would permit the removal of the great majority of fittings from any church. The result is that one of the few City churches not gutted in the War is threatened with despoliation by the diocese of London.

Christ Church, Spitalfields, is a masterpiece by Nicholas Hawksmoor from 1714–29. The major phase of its restoration, after long disuse, was completed last year: the architect was Red Mason. In 1866–73 the interior was remodelled by Ewan Christian, architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and a prolific restorer. He removed the side galleries and the box pews, and rebuilt the galleries at the west end in two tiers. The floor levels in the sanctuary were raised. The reredos of 1725–7 had already been removed in 1851, and sold; and a new one was erected: the date 1860 was discovered when it was dismantled. Made of Caen stone, it was sympathetic to the architecture, with carved heads of putti. In 1911 its decorative panels were replaced with gesso ones. At some stage in the nineteenth century the pulpit was removed, and the reading desk was adapted to serve as a replacement.

In the recent work, the side galleries have been replaced, vastly improving the church’s proportions; as T.F. Bumpus pointed out in 1908, after their removal ‘the interior...looks too tall for its length’. Most of Christian’s new seats, which incorporated original panels, disappeared long ago; those that remain have been put in the galleries. The stained glass in the east windows (1876, by Ward and Hughes) has been allowed to remain. Some wanted it to go, but it provides welcome colour, and the only Christian iconography in the church. Two oil paintings on canvas, attached to the walls high up in the sanctuary, survive, but are covered up. Christian

chamfered the upper corners of the tall column bases, but these are now covered with panelling as originally.

The only part of the works to which the Victorian Society objected was the removal of the nineteenth-century reredos. It was proposed to install a modified or approximated replica of the original wooden one, and there was insufficient space to leave the Victorian one in situ behind it. The decorative parts have been retained, and the intention is to reuse them in the chapel at the east end of the crypt.

Work at St George's, Bloomsbury, also by Hawksmoor (1716–31), is not yet complete. The church had undergone an unusually long and complicated series of alterations. The most drastic change took place as early as 1781, when the interior was reoriented so that the sanctuary was on the north side, opposite the entrance from the portico, instead of at the east end. The reredos was moved: the story that it came from Montagu House chapel is a myth. The north gallery was taken down. In 1871 work was carried out by George Edmund Street. He rearranged the sanctuary, putting in a floor of encaustic tiles, and iron screens on either side. The organ was moved from the south gallery to the north-west corner. The box pews were replaced by open seating, the backs formed from panels from the old galleries and pews. The pulpit was lowered. Stained glass windows, mostly by Clayton and Bell to 'a plan...approved by Mr Street', were installed. Street's arrangement was substantially altered c1930 by Sir Charles Nicholson, who removed the encaustic tiles and other Street furnishings, and put the organ back in the south gallery. Many of Street's benches disappeared, then or later, until only 16 were left.

The current works at St George's are being funded jointly by the World Monuments Fund (WMF) and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and the architect is Colin Kerr. The exterior is being cleaned up, and the extraordinary lions and unicorns, which were removed from the base of the spire by Street, are being put back. The garlands which he substituted will be used as benches. The 1875 vestry, on the north-east corner, and the vestry hall added in the 1870s by James Peacock at the north-west, will both remain.

Inside, the most notable change is the restoration of the original orientation, and consequent moving of the reredos back to the eastern apse, together with the rebuilding of the north gallery. There has been much anxiety over the fate of the benches, not helped by a degree of confusion: the vicar told me that their removal was demanded by the HLF, whereas a member of the DAC told me that it was demanded by the WMF. The two statements appear to be in contradiction. It has now been agreed that the remaining benches will be retained, partly in the galleries and partly against the walls, and that new moveable benches will be provided for the body of the church. The stained glass will remain, with some rearrangement. The organ by Gray and Davison, brought here in 1952 from Emmanuel, Maida Vale, will be replaced, and the south gallery returned to its original form. The principal cause for concern is the pair of iron screens which Street put either side of his sanctuary. It makes little sense to keep them there once the altar has gone, but they should be reused within the church – possibly in the crypt.

The situation at St Martin-in-the-Fields, by James Gibbs (1721–6), is much more contentious. This church has already lost one of its most important Victorian features.

In 1854 a new organ was built by Bevington and Sons, with a grand case designed by Thomas Allom in a style described by Nicholas Thistlethwaite, in *The making of the Victorian organ* (1998), as 'eclectic classicism'. This was removed in 1990, when a new organ was built, with a rather feeble pastiche case 'following the general outline' of the 1726 Schrider one, now at Wootton-under-Edge. The Victorian Society knew nothing about the decision to remove Allom's case until it was asked if it could find a new home for it.

The first phase of the currently proposed works, for which the architect is Eric Parry, is already under way. It involves the destruction of the bulk of the burial vaults which John Nash created around the church in 1829–31 to make up for those lost when Duncannon Street was created. The intention is to use this space for other purposes. Surprisingly, the Georgian Group did not object.

The interior of the church was altered at several stages in the nineteenth century. The box pews, which had been installed in 1799, were reduced in height in 1858 by Thomas Hayter Lewis (1818–98), a scholarly architect. In 1887 Blomfield took off the doors and gave them sloping backs. The gallery pews remain unaltered. At the same time, Lewis removed the tester and desk from the pulpit. In a subsequent campaign, in 1876, Lewis rearranged the sanctuary, providing choir stalls, a raised marble pavement, and a reredos consisting of five mosaic panels – three on the east wall now covered by curtains, and one on either side.

It is now proposed to remove the stalls and pavement, and to cover the mosaics with panelling. It is also proposed to return the altar rails to their original curving shape: they were straightened by Lewis. The Victorian Society objected, on the grounds of the quality of Lewis' work. The principal justification offered is that a level floor with movable choir stalls will provide more space for the concerts which are now so frequently held in the church; but the society argues that these concerts already take place with Lewis' fittings in situ. In the late nineteenth century upper rooms were provided above the gallery staircases at the west end. It is now proposed to remove them to allow in more light, but the Victorian Society argues that this is unnecessary. One question that does not arise at St Martin's is that of stained glass, since the 1867 east window by Clayton and Bell, and the other windows by the same firm and by Lavers and Westlake, were destroyed by enemy action in 1941. The chancellor proposed to hold a consistory court to deal with objections in March 2004, but then decided to see if matters could be resolved by negotiation. No decisions have yet been taken. It is quite clear that there cannot be any single answer to the question of how to restore a Georgian church; it is however quite certain that the idea of simply forcing it to revert to its supposed earlier appearance fails to do justice to the richness of its architectural heritage, and certainly threatens rare and valuable examples of Victorian ecclesiastical art.

CRITIQUE

After-life of a modest building:

School conversion at Hoxton Square, London, by Buschow Henley

by Robert Maxwell

The 'conversion', as we used to call it, of an old disused school into a multiple use centre has certainly put new wine into an old bottle. The new wine, quite heady stuff, has itself been put together by creative management, with the building being sold to a private developer who then cooperated with two charitable organisations engaged in retraining immigrants. This has produced an interesting mixture of functions: small office units, a restaurant and catering school, a gym specialising in the martial arts and a couple of apartments on top, the whole thing costing no more than some £1.5M. The social impetus behind the creation of this novel programme has resulted in a lively population, susceptible to the freshness of the initiative and appreciative of the good work of the architects in making the most of a tough but amiable building.

And the building itself comes through as welcoming the new life. It was designed in the later 1860s (Pevsner dates it from 1870) by E.W. Pugin, eldest son of the inventor of Gothic Revival architecture. It is an early example of the School Board

architecture which was to reach its apogee in the Queen Anne style of the 1890s. It doesn't have any of that exuberance, but betrays its dependence on limited funding (the Catholics were always penalised for not being the established church), and comes over as pretty bare utilitarian architecture, but with a certain authority arising from its very truth-to-function. The face to Hoxton Square consists of two bays, divided down the centre line by a single buttress, surmounted by a crucifix attached to a modest gable, itself surmounted by a smaller crucifix. That was all it had to establish its allegiance. One bay corresponds to the classroom wing that reaches back behind, the other to the school playground.



Figure 38: The former school, St Monica's Hoxton Square, following the recent conversion

Buschow Henley.

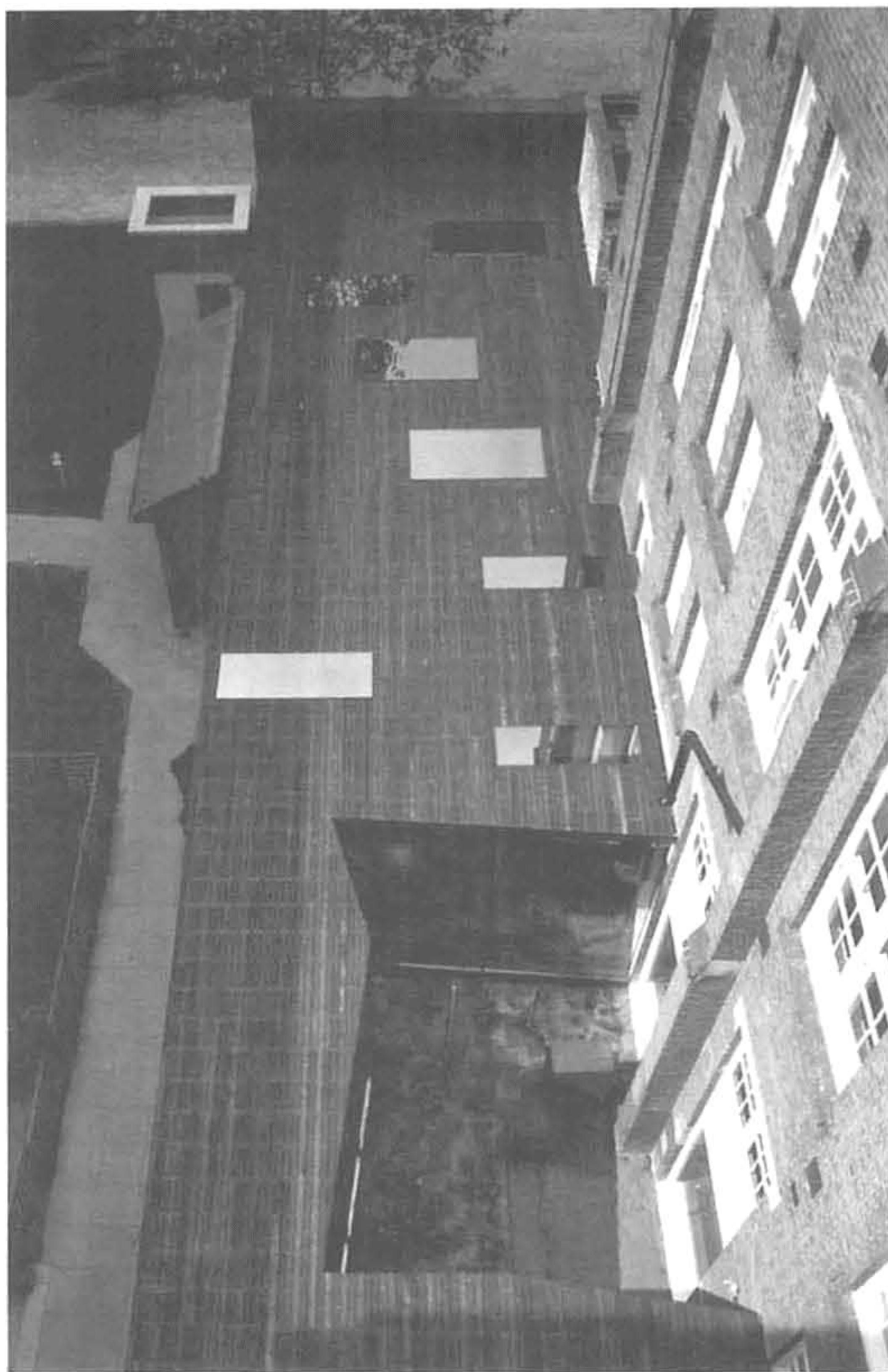


Figure 39: The new garden, St Monica's Hoxton Square

Buschow Henley.

That lone buttress speaks for the Gothic in the system, and relates it to the religious zeal that underlay it, and that is more apparent in the adjoining church of St. Monica's, also designed by E.W. Pugin, a little earlier. There is still a surprise in the height of the school relative to the nave of this modest church, which it almost overshadows. But E.W., in spite of his duties to his father's fame, knew how to cut his cloth to fit the realities of the day. He is credited with the reconciliation of the Gothic Revival style, replete with rood screens and religious mystery, with the then current Protestant demand for the altar to be visible from all points of the nave, and St Monica's exhibits this realism.

The first step for the architects was to ensure full use of the high classrooms: these are effectively two-storey spaces, and virtually all of them have been expanded through the addition of a mezzanine floor, kept back from intruding on the win-

dows, but still providing useful additional floor space, perfectly suitable for desks and computer stations. With their simple balustrades of white-painted boarding they are unpretentious and intimate.

The next step is to enclose the playground. The boundary wall is rebuilt in cavity construction and steel beams rest on the inner leaf. A regular rear wall of ventilators allows a throughput of fresh air in summer without disturbing the privacy of the gym. A series of openable roof lights admits more air, and sun, and a small courtyard contains a garden, and provides an outlook. The garden is planted with ferns; its vivid greenness comes from the *soleirolia soleirolii* which covers the ground and far exceeds the greenness of grass, and isn't intended for walking on. Its use here shows a thoughtfulness which goes far beyond native intelligence and begins to suggest devilish ingenuity.

Devilish ingenuity certainly comes through in the way the public circulation has been managed without gutting the structure of the building. The space occupied above by the escape stairs is used at ground level as a vestibule, communicating to a lobby which has a large window on to the new garden. The large panes of glass have a green colour, which adds to the vividness of the garden, and this is further accentuated by the use of red lighting, leading to the lift, which has doors on front

and back, making it clever on the upper levels.

More ingenuity has been employed to include the two apartments. One enjoys the whole Hoxton Square frontage on the top floor and is double storey in height; the other has been contrived on the roof, but has its bathroom with its entrance lobby, half a storey down. The upper flat has a spacious roof terrace, which ensures that its windows are set well back from the frontage and do not obtrude on the view of the building from the square.

The new roof over the upper flat, like the new roof over the ground floor gym, has been treated as a fifth facade, clad in black-stained timber boards and enlivened by an array of roof lights. The view down of the flat roof and into the courtyard garden takes on intermittently some of the qualities of a vertical wall, and this introduces a somewhat surreal note into the architecture. In combination with the clever planning of the access system and the clever grouping of the service elements, we have reached a level of sophistication far removed from the simple belief that sustained the original design.

Finally, the only material change to the appearance of the building is the enlargement of the ground floor windows, which become french doors opening the restaurant to its terrace in the sun. It's a compliment to the architects to say that this non-board-school feature brings the building into the modern age and makes it an effective part of trendy Hoxton, on a par with the many cafes and wine bars that line the western side of the square. Yet the overall appearance of the building retains its integrity, and it can still be enjoyed as an example of Gothic Revival architecture. The sculpted lettering that used to distinguish the boys' entrance from the girls' entrance is still in place, and acts as a kind of guarantee of the genuineness of the building, and even manages to suggest its approval of its new life.

Buschow Henley can be contacted on 020 7033 9700.

News and comment

Significant book find in New Zealand

from Nick Beveridge

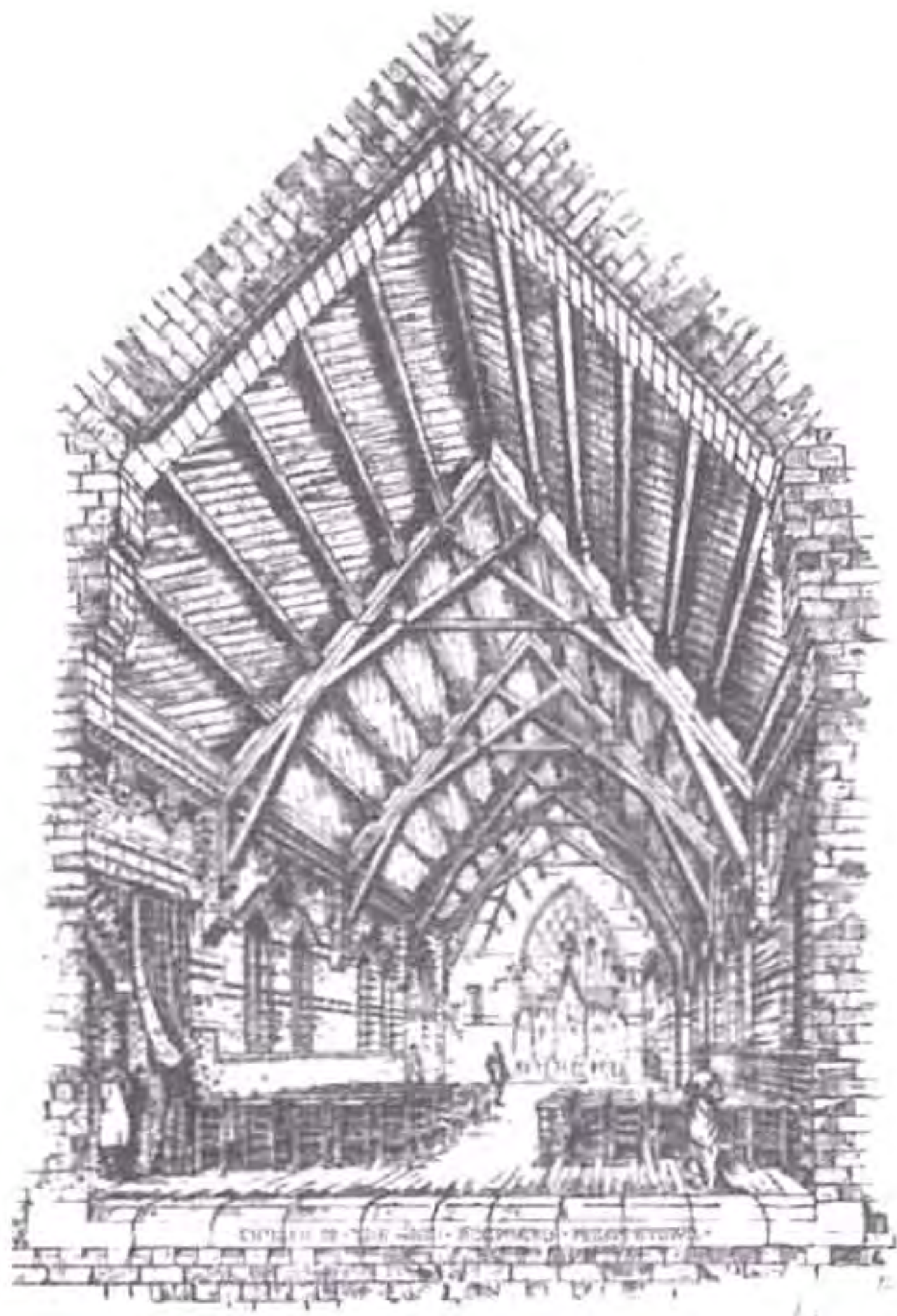


Figure 40: Church of the Good Shepherd, Phillipstown, Christchurch (1882–5): interior looking east, showing proposed rood screen that was never built
B.W. Mountfort. Ink on paper, 1884.
Canterbury Museum (Christchurch, NZ).

In late 2004 I acquired, for a mere \$80NZ (about £30), a first edition, 1851, copy of Pugin's *A treatise on chancel screens and rood lofts* at auction in Auckland, New Zealand. The book was no longer in mint condition, with some silverfish damage, and it had been rebound in leather, which was now falling apart at the spine. Nevertheless, Margaret Belcher, Pugin scholar and fellow New Zealand member of the Pugin Society, confirmed that it is the only original copy in New Zealand.

However, the book's most interesting aspect is the elegantly handwritten inscription which reads: 'B W Mountfort, Christchurch, 1879'. Mountfort's biographer, Ian Lochhead, has verified that the inscription is in Mountfort's own hand. Benjamin Woolfield Mountfort (1825–1898) was New Zealand's pre-eminent Gothic Revival architect.¹ He had been articled to R.C. Carpenter, who was a friend and disciple of Pugin, and was therefore part of the Puginian 'apostolic succession'. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1850 but his High Church inclinations initially did not endear him to the more broad-church attitudes of the colonial Church of England. He did, however, do some work for the predominantly French missionary Catholic church. His most notable building is the 1865 council chamber in the Canterbury provincial government buildings at Christchurch, New Zealand. The splendid interior is illustrated in Chris Brooks' *The Gothic Revival*.²

Previously, it was known that Mountfort owned three of Pugin's works: *The true principles*, *An apology* (both first editions acquired new) and the *Glossary* (third edition, 1868). With this latest discovery we now have first-hand evidence of his exposure to Pugin's ideas on the design of rood screens. Indeed, Mountfort is known to have designed four such screens in New Zealand, three of which were constructed. These were for the Anglican cathedrals at Napier (1886; building completely destroyed by the earthquake of 1931); Nelson (1886–7); and Christchurch (c1880: building designed by G.G. Scott, with modifications by Mountfort who was resident supervising architect). However, what is particularly exciting about this is the fact that they all seem to be post-1879 (the date of the inscription)! Unfortunately, none have survived but it is fortunate that what could be described as the inspiration for them does.

¹ *A dream of spires: Benjamin Mountfort and the Gothic Revival*, by Ian Lochhead (Canterbury University Press, 1999), was reviewed by Gavin Stamp in *True principles*, vol ii, no 2 (summer 2001), p 31.

² Brooks 1999, p 378.

Pugin's first and second wives

from Alexandra Wedgwood

Michael Egan, who, as you will remember, found the correct date of birth for Jane Knill, A.W.N. Pugin's third wife, has now found some fascinating new information about his first and second wives.¹

To start with his first wife: most of our knowledge about this problematic period of 1831–2 in Pugin's life has previously come from the biography of 1861 written by Benjamin Ferrey, who was at that time a close friend. He hints that all was not quite as it should be between

the young Pugin and Miss Garnett: 'After a very short courtship he was married to her in 1831. His choice was not pleasing to his father and mother, but they did not withhold their sanction to the match, fearing to thwart him in a matter of such delicate nature.'² Ferrey goes on then to emphasise what a good and affectionate wife she was to him.

In fact, Michael Egan has found in the London Metropolitan Archives the entry of their marriage in the parish of Saint Mary, Whitechapel, on 12 January, 1832. In the register, where they are called bachelor and spinster of that parish, they sign as 'Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin' and 'Sarah Ann Garnett'. The witnesses were Henry Chapman, who Michael thinks might be the verger, and William South(?) who made a mark. St Mary's Church no longer exists; it stood opposite Whitechapel Art Gallery.

As we know, their daughter Anne was born on 20 May 1832 in Pugin's parents' house in Great Russell Street and the young mother died on 27 May. The circumstances of her burial in the priory church at Christchurch, Hampshire are given in some detail by Ferrey whose family came from the town; these are largely corroborated by Michael's researches. According to Ferrey, Pugin had become enchanted with Christchurch on a visit there in 1828 (recorded in a sketchbook formerly in the Royal Institute of British Architects drawings collection), and had subsequently, perhaps in 1831, tried to buy a site for a house near the town but had failed to get his father's approval for it.³ Pugin himself in a letter to his father's friend, E.J. Willson, of 26 February 1833 says that it was his wife's dying wish to be buried there.⁴ Ferrey states: 'The funeral was remarkable. The interment did not take place till the 15th of June at 8 o'clock P.M., the remains being brought to the church on the 8th of June, and deposited during the interval in Prior Draper's Chapel. The service was read in the choir, the coffin being placed in the centre, an unusual practice.'⁵ This certainly reads as if Pugin choreographed the funeral and that his friend Ferrey was also present, though he seems to have mistaken the date by one day. The entry which Michael has found in the Hampshire Record Office in the Christchurch registers gives the date for the burial of 'Sarah Anne, wife of Augustus Welby Pugin' as 14 June. It also gives her age as 22 but the *Times*, of 29 May (p 4), records the death of Mrs Sarah Ann Pugin aged 21. Her true age has never before been established but Michael has now found in the registers of St George the Martyr, Queens Square, Holborn, an entry for the marriage of Joseph Garnett and Sarah Deays on 18 December 1806. Ferrey says that Anne was the niece of George Dayes. Michael then went on to find in the baptismal registers of the same church an entry for the baptism of Sarah Ann, daughter of Joseph and Sarah Garnett, which gives her date of birth as 26 August 1809.

She was buried in the north choir aisle, and the place is marked by a black marble slab with an inlaid brass plate 'Here lieth the Body of Anne, the first and beloved wife of Augustus Welby Northmore de Pugin, Architect. Who departed this life at London on the xxvii day of May in the year of our Lord Mdcccxxxii. R.I.P. Amen. Ferrey's transcription is full of slight mistakes.⁶ This plate was only put in place in 1850, the year in which Pugin's daughter Anne married J.H. Powell. But much earlier, in 1831 according to Ferrey, he had presented to the church a carved oak altar-table, a rare documented survival of his early woodwork, with the design for it existing in the RIBA drawings collection.

So we have got closer to Miss Garnett and to the young and impetuous Pugin in this great love affair. She was definitely older than him, older than anyone has suggested. She was a Londoner and her first name was Sarah though Pugin clearly called her Anne. Was the length of time she lay in the church due to the necessity of opening or forming a vault? Ferrey says 'A vault was there formed in the north aisle of the choir', and Pugin says in the letter to Willson already quoted 'at a most considerable expense.....her body was removed to the priory church of Christchurch in hampshire where in consideration of the altar and other gifts



Figure 41: Brass plate on the tomb of Sarah Ann Pugin, nee Garnett, at Christchurch

Photograph: Dennis Booth.

I had made to the church a very substantial vault in the North aisle of the choir had been presented to me where she now Lies in peace.⁷

Finally Michael turned his attention to Pugin's second wife and found the entry for their marriage in the parish of St Andrew, Holborn, in the Guildhall Library of the City of London. The date given is 4 June 1833, but the surprising thing is that Louisa's surname, always previously given as Burton, looks very, very, much like Button. Has history been tidied up again? In the census of June 1841 Louisa's age is given as 26 and so probably her date of birth was c1815, but beware! – the same census gives Pugin's age as 27 (he was 29).

Michael, you tell me that your discoveries are not in the realms of rocket science, but we are impressed and grateful. You say that you are now taking a sabbatical from Pugin studies. It is well earned. Enjoy!

1 See Egan 2002.

2 Ferrey 1861, p 68.

3 *Ibid*, pp 70–1.

4 Belcher 2001, p 15.

5 Ferrey 1861, p 70n.

6 *Idem*.

7 *Ibid*, p 69; Belcher 2001, p 15.

Repaired ceilings, and new furniture in the style of A.W.N. Pugin for the House of Commons Library

from Mark Collins

The northernmost suite of libraries on the principal floor of the Palace of Westminster is the busy hub of the research department for the House of Commons, as well as catering for book



Figure 42: New enquiries table in the Oriel Room of the House of Commons Library

Photograph: Richard Davies, 2004.

and document provision to members of parliament. Two works projects were undertaken in the library during the summer recess of 2004: the cleaning and repair of the ceilings, and the provision of a variety of new furniture.

The Oriel Room is the main reception room of the library, and it derives its name from the central bay of Charles Barry's magnificent east facade overlooking the River Thames. A pencil and wash design by A.W.N. Pugin, which survives in the Victoria and Albert Museum, shows a ceiling panel for the room displaying a central 'rose of England' pattern, surrounded by leaves and small flowers.¹ The design dates from early in 1851, at the time when the main rooms of the House of Commons were first being decorated. In common with the rest of the painted decoration and gilding at the Palace, the design was applied to the wooden ceiling in delicate colours by the firm belonging to Pugin's close colleague, J.G. Crace. The patterns had survived well, but years of grime and minor damage to the wooden

mouldings had left the ceilings looking tired. Under the auspices of the Palace's conservation architect, Adam Watrobski, both this ceiling and the similar one in the adjoining Reference Room were cleaned and repaired by the decorative arts' conservators Plowden & Smith, of London.

Until the summer of 2004, the Oriel Room contained furniture which was made during the 1980s, but it was no longer seen as appropriate. The oak was too pale for the richer honey-coloured tone of the nineteenth-century wall-mounted bookcases, and the style was of the old-fashioned public library kind: a high shelf which physically and psychologically separated the visitor from the librarian.

In order to incorporate new flat-screen computer monitors onto lower desks, and so as to bring the MPs and the librarians into closer communication, Mark Cruickshank from the furnishing branch of the Parliamentary Works Services Directorate designed a new 'C' shaped

1 Wedgwood 1985, cat no 454.

reception desk in the manner of Pugin. The new furniture was made by the firm of Archer and Smith Ltd of Chiseldon, near Swindon, and it was made from sustainable quarter-sawn English oak. The black stained pig-skin skivers which cover the top surfaces were provided with a hand-tooled border. The original material used by Pugin for the tops had been oil-cloth from America, but this had long since ceased production. For the borrowed-items area, an original oak desk designed by Pugin was brought out of store and carefully cleaned and polished. Together with the other early tables and chairs in the library, the desk had been made under contract by Gillows at the Lancaster branch some time between 1851 and 1854.

To accompany the desks, Mark also designed a free-standing book deposit-box with oak linenfold panelling in a matching style. Brass plates to indicate the purpose of the cabinet were made by Arrow Signs, Nottingham.

In the main library, hollow, raised wooden surtables were made to rest on top of the original Pugin oak reading tables in order to hold – and hide – the computers, and to keep the surfaces clear of cables. The computer monitors stand on top of the surtables, and are therefore at the correct height for comfortable viewing. Together with some newly refurbished late nineteenth-century armchairs in green leather, the new pieces have returned a sense of harmony to the furniture in these beautiful rooms.



Figure 43: Book-deposit box in the Oriel Room of the House of Commons Library
Photograph: Richard Davies, 2004.

St Chad's, Birmingham: not so very foreign?

from Andrew Saint

On a recent visit to an antique shop at Westgate-on-Sea, my eye was caught by an engraving of St Mary's Abbey Church, Reculver, the famous twin-towered landmark on the North Kent coast, as it was before the spires were taken down sometime after 1828. I was struck by the broad resemblance of the composition to the west front of Pugin's St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, which is normally referred to North German Gothic.

The Reculver spires were taken down some years after the body of the church was scandalously unroofed in 1809, and elicited objections. What could be likelier than that Pugin, passionate alike about the Kent coast and about the spread of Augustinian Christianity in England, should have taken note of this act of desecration and made them good in Birmingham?



Figure 44: The west front of St Mary's Abbey church, Reculver, in 1828
Engraved by H. Adlard, from a drawing by G. Shepherd.

Building news

Contributed by Catriona Blaker, Michael Fisher, Martin Goalen and James Jago

Alton Towers, Alton, Staffordshire (A.W.N. Pugin, 1839–52)

The recent purchase of the Alton Towers site by a Dubai-based company has not affected the restoration plans agreed in 2000. The east front has been stabilised and partly rebuilt. Work is now going on at the east entrance tower, and some historic glass is being restored by the John Hardman Studio. MF.

Cotton Hall, Cotton, Staffordshire (A.W.N. Pugin, 1846–9)

An agreement has been reached with the hall's new owners which seems likely to secure the historic buildings in this complex, which will now be converted into housing. The developers are carrying out essential maintenance, and the church is open for worship. The conservation officer for Staffordshire Moorlands district council has undertaken to keep a watchful eye on proceedings. MF.

Our Lady and St Hubert, Great Harwood, Lancashire (E.W. Pugin, 1859)

This is an especially fine example of E.W. Pugin's oeuvre, with detailed carving on its interior and exterior. The plan is an aisleless nave with an off-axis tower and spire, with a lady chapel and polygonal apse at the east end. The roof structure of the nave anticipates the development of exposed construction members noticeable in E.W.'s later, large urban churches. There is also a finely-carved high altar reredos and mensa, and a superb Hardman brass to the church's generous benefactor.

The chief glory of this church is its remarkable collection of Hardman windows, all installed at the time of construction and comprising an especially unified set; they represent Hardman and Company at the height of its powers as draughtsmen and colourists. The nave windows employ interesting grisaille patterns in rich tones, whilst those towards the east end set single-light figures of saints under canopies. These windows were removed to nearby Stoneyhurst College for safekeeping during the war, and when reinstalled numerous pieces for the tracery lights were misplaced. The unusual groupings of saints might also be the result of windows being reinserted in the wrong order.

The parish priest, Fr McLaughlin, is keen to see the windows sensitively cleaned and new tracery pieces designed in a sympathetic style to the main lights. The John Hardman Studio has been recommended as the most appropriate firm to undertake any conservation or newly-commissioned work. The E.W. presbytery adjoining the church was sold to raise funds to restore the church itself and is currently unoccupied; the parish is now served from another church. JJ.

Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham, London (A.W.N. Pugin, 1847–8)

This church is currently being redecorated and reordered by Martin Goalen Architects. Other than some bomb damage in the 1940s, Pugin's liturgical arrangements survived until the 1960s when the high altar, chancel stalls, communion rails and screens were removed. The present proposals place the tabernacle in its original – axial – position with a new carved and moulded reredos to match Pugin's originals. The revised liturgical arrangements are supported by a new decorative scheme with encaustic tiles and stencilled motifs; the decoration is at its simplest furthest from the altar but becomes more intense in the sanctuary; an articulation equivalent to Pugin's characteristic separation of chancel and nave.

English Heritage, the Victorian Society and the local authority were consulted as part of the procedure for the granting a faculty for the work. A coloured drawing of the sanctuary decoration was exhibited in the 2004 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. MG.

St Francis, Gorton, Manchester, Church and Monastery (E.W. Pugin)

We are delighted to report that following a rather uncertain period, the Monastery Trust has now received confirmation from the Heritage Lottery Fund that restoration of these outstanding E.W. Pugin buildings can go ahead.

Because of the difficulties consequent upon a two-year delay in securing funding for this £6M project, further deterioration had occurred on site and costs had started to increase. The trust therefore were obliged to produce a revised and reduced scheme appropriate to the

available budget, and also a new business plan, to demonstrate long-term sustainability and to prove that there would be many good and viable uses for the building when it opens in 2007. It was these proposals that the HLF needed to confirm. Funding can now be released and work should start in Gorton before the end of the year. This is a wonderful outcome for all the hard work of Elaine Griffiths and the trust, to whom congratulations. CB.

Roman Catholic Cathedral of St Mary, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (A.W.N. Pugin 1838–44)

Work at St Mary's is progressing under the direction of the cathedral architect, Kevin Doonan. Essential repair and conservation work to both the stonework and the 1840s Wailes glass (to Pugin's designs) of the eastern windows of the cathedral will commence shortly. This work should be completed by this summer. The four painted panels of northern saints, inserted into the high altar reredos in 1902, have been reinstated.

The designs for enhancing the Blessed Sacrament chapel and denoting it as a separate space within the cathedral will go before the Historic Churches Committee at their next meeting. A brass screen has been designed to go between the chapel and the north aisle. It is derived from Pugin's screen for the Blessed Sacrament chapel at St Giles', Cheadle. This replaces a marble screen designed by George Goldie, which was lost during reordering in the 1960s. A decorative stencilling programme for this chapel employs Pugin designs and also uses Cheadle as a precedent. The two Pugin memorial brasses in this chapel have been reinstated after a lengthy absence for conservation purposes. The cathedral dean, Fr Michael Campion, was keen to have the screen made locally by parishioners with a background in fine art. Alternative manufacturers are a company in nearby Washington and the John Hardman Studio. The attendant figures from the rood crucifix, originally positioned on the Goldie roodscreen (1853), have not been located for repositioning in the cathedral and may not have been retained following the screen's demolition. The rood itself survives suspended over the new altar, though the figure of the crucified Christ is a replacement. The most obvious position for reinstating these figures would be on the now empty corbels in the Blessed Sacrament chapel.

The proposal for the new paintwork scheme was shown to the Victorian Society, who pointed out that it did not recreate an original Pugin scheme from the 1840s and consequently regarded it as 'not sufficiently archaeological' (see the *Victorian*, no 18, p 23). Paint tests in the cathedral have found traces of original colour, but no evidence of a decorative scheme. Whilst being critical of the proposals, the Victorian Society was apparently reluctant to indicate how the design could be improved. There is at present no plan for an entire decorative paintwork scheme for the interior other than the body colour already applied to the walls. This consists of deep red for the central aisle and sanctuary, dark green for the aisle walls and gold for the eastern chapels. The angel corbels have been highlighted with gilt whilst the internal stonework remains unpainted. The only known elaborate paintwork at St Mary's was executed for the 50th anniversary of the cathedral's opening in 1892. This consisted of patterned borders running around the arches of the nave arcade and along the rooflines and swirling inscribed scrolls in the spandrels of the central aisle. Painted stations of the cross were positioned between the aisle windows. This scheme was of little artistic merit and far removed from a 'Puginian' approach. Its only surviving components are the inscribed tile dado under the aisle windows and the annunciation figures on either side of the east window.

A new window commemorating Pt Adam Wakenshaw VC, the only member of the armed forces from Tyneside to be awarded this accolade in the Second World War, has been installed in the south aisle. Made by Cate Watkinson, it is the first new window installed at the cathedral since the nineteenth century. Joseph Nuttgens is currently making two newly commissioned stained glass windows for the Blessed Sacrament chapel. One is to commemorate the work of the Sisters of Mercy in Newcastle whilst the other depicts events from the life of Christ. The first window is to be installed by early June, (the date approved for its dedication ceremony) and the second by August. The next major scheme for the interior is the replacement of the floor tiles with one consistent scheme derived from the few remaining original Pugin tiles still in situ at the eastern end of the cathedral. The present floor is a patchwork of various periods: most date from early twentieth century, and are of little intrinsic value.

Fr Campion, the dean of St Mary's, has provided much of the driving force behind the changes to the cathedral's appearance now, and to what it was like when the Pugin Society

visited in the summer of 2002. Reflecting on what has been achieved so far, and upon its effect to the cathedral's environment, he writes 'The redecoration of the church interior has been a very rewarding success. Although St Mary's always had a prayerful interior, the redecoration has made it much more so. Bland magnolia everywhere has given way to colours that lift the mind and heart to God. So the cathedral is, once more, a worthy place for celebrating the great liturgies of the church. The response from regular worshippers and the increasing number of visitors is the same: gratitude and delight in having such a beautiful spiritual environment to worship God and experience His loving presence. I am confident that the next stage of development, installing more stained glass windows and renewing the floor tiles, will give Pugin's major work in the north of England the prominence it richly deserves'. All that has been achieved at St Mary's, in such a small space of time, is truly remarkable and worthy of acclaim. The cathedral merits our gratitude for showing such eagerness for Pugin's ideology, and our support for their future plans to make the interior a vibrant liturgical space after Pugin's example. JJ.

The Grange, Ramsgate, Kent (A.W.N. Pugin, 1843)

A new listed building consent application has been made by the Landmark Trust for the replacement of some of the eroded exterior stone dressings with new Caen stone, and for the retention of some new Bath stone already in situ above eaves level. A further application will also shortly be made for the reversion of several of the fireplaces to their original A.W.N. Pugin form. Work is also in progress on the cartoon room. The two open days on 14 and 15 May 2005 were very well attended, and gave an opportunity to see, amongst other things, the striking change in proportions and size of the now reduced drawing room and kitchen. The Trust reports that the Grange will be ready to receive guests from late spring/early summer 2006. CB.

St Mary's Church, Wymeswold, Leicestershire (A.W.N. Pugin, 1844-50)

A number of windows have been repaired at the John Hardman Studio and have now been reinstated. Others will follow as resources permit. MF.

True principles would like to publish in future a detailed list of items of furniture or other examples of applied art designed by the Pugin family and which have changed hands at salerooms during the year. If you are interested in taking on the task of reporting such transactions, please contact the Editor.

We welcome new members of The Pugin Society who have joined since the last edition of *True principles* (at time of going to press):

John Archer, Harold Bagust, Maggie Bender, Kathryn L. Burton, John and Jean Buss, Rev Jonathan Collis, B.O. and H. Cripps, Alison and John Curtis, Grace Ellis, Barry Fangmann, Bernard and Rita Pugin Gauthier, Jean Gosling, Kate Hamlyn and Mark Samuel, Kathy Hammond, Cherry Hunt, Paul Johnson, Mr and Mrs Ingham, David Ormrod, Christopher Parkinson, Neil Phillips of the John Hardman Studio, Michael Penruddock, Davyd Power, A.J. Sherman and Sarah Whittingham

and our new corporate members, The Architectural Association, The Royal Institute of British Architects, and the University of York.

Book reviews

The continuing project

The northern renaissance. By Jeffrey Chipps Smith. London: Phaidon, 2004. ISBN 0-7148-3867-5. RRP £14.95.

From Flanders to Florence: the impact of Netherlandish painting, 1400–1500. By Paula Nuttall. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004. ISBN 0-300-10244-5. RRP £40.00.

reviewed by Graham Parry

Our sense of the relative cultural achievements of Italy and northern Europe has been largely shaped by two complementary and pervasively influential books, Jacob Burckhardt's *The civilization of the renaissance in Italy* (1860) and Johan Huizinga's *The waning of the middle ages* (1919). Their very titles evoke the flourishing of humanist Italy and the decline of the Gothic North. For most of the last century the cultural supremacy of Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has been taken for granted: these are the Italian centuries, even to the extent that we can think about them as the *quattrocento* and the *cinquecento*. But what if we have been lured into an uncritical acceptance of an established bias, compounded by the undeniable pleasures of holidays in Tuscany and Rome? Could we have overlooked the artistic and intellectual vitality of the Low Countries and Germany in our haste to be amongst the cypress-covered hills and the warm cloisters of the South? Why should we believe that Gothic means the fading irrelevance of mediaeval spirituality and the Roman arch the promise of everything new? Two new books offer a revision of established views, and make us want to reconsider the long acceptance of the Italian supremacy in the arts.

Jeffrey Chipps Smith's *The northern renaissance* succeeds in making a comprehensive presentation of northern European commercial and cultural activity in a way that excites admiration and arouses a desire to know more. Here is no death-beleaguered world haunted by apocalyptic fears and seeking refuge in religious consolations, as Huizinga was inclined to suggest, but a ceaselessly busy scene of trading communities who were creating wealth on an unprecedented scale and spending that wealth on secular luxuries and grand building schemes, but also balancing these worldly gratifications with donations to the church of art and architecture of an exceptionally rich kind. Commerce and religion vigorously coexisted, and the vast new prosperity expressed itself in the commissioning of art for aristocrats, burghers and churchmen alike. Gothic architecture attained ever more sophisticated or spectacular forms in the town halls and civic buildings of the Low Countries or in the cathedrals of Germany, without losing its grace or its power to stir the imagination. Gothic kept on evolving, with a seemingly endless power to invent new forms and adapt to every circumstance. Craftsmen working in gold and silver produced astoundingly beautiful works of art for ceremony and use. Woodwork attracted a succession of master carvers, culminating in the workshops of Michael Pacher and Tilman Riemenschneider in southern Germany. Tapestries of a hitherto unknown richness of colour and design made Flanders the international centre of manufacture. The wealth generated by weaving was immense, and the great centres of trade, Bruges and Antwerp, were cosmopolitan cities. Painting became a mirror of this teeming world of well-built towns and purposeful citizens, as the naturalistic techniques pioneered by Jan van Eyck delivered a medium for recording the scenes of this society in unprecedented detail.

Thanks largely to the discovery of oil-based paints, Flemish artists were able to register a highly particularised view of the material world bathed in a quite new quality of light that oil painting made possible. Under the guidance of van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden and Hugo van der Goes in two successive generations, a style of painting evolved that was the admiration of all Europe, Italy especially. It was an art focussed on attention to physical detail. Paintings such as van Eyck's 'Madonna of Chancellor Rolin' (Louvre), the 'Madonna of George van Paele' (Bruges), or the 'Madonna in a church' (Berlin) communicate an immense pleasure in the beauty of vestments, fabrics and jewellery, in the delightful townscapes either side of the river in the Rolin picture, in the enchanting Gothic interior of the Madonna's cathedral. Landscapes are recorded in convincing depth and with appropriate atmospheric

effects. The world is infinitely varied and beautiful, and gives a constant, deeply felt pleasure to these artists. Its inhabitants are all individuals: perhaps never before in history had individual features been delineated with such particularity, with such an appreciation of personality and expression. This naturalism is truly the humanism of the northern renaissance.

It is not just the visual arts that impress in the northern realms of Europe in the fifteenth century. Universities flourished; there is a curiosity about the world and its peoples, encouraged by trade and sea ventures. Shipbuilding required modern forms of technology; navigation required maps. In Germany in the 1460s printing is invented, and one of the early productions of the new science is the *Nuremberg chronicle* (1493), with its fascination with history and its woodcuts of towns all over Europe and the Middle East. The freedom of thought that commercial communities permit must have helped to create the conditions in which Martin Luther was able to articulate his dismay at the corruptions of the Catholic church, and printing spread his doctrine of reform further and faster than any news in the middle ages had done. In learning both secular and sacred, Erasmus was the glory of the North. In the arts, Dürer was the universal man. His technical skills allied to inventiveness, knowledge and understanding allowed him to command the respect and admiration of all Europe, and his prints circulating along the trading networks of the German commercial cities carried his art to the confines of the European world.

This view of the northern renaissance leaves France rather on the margins, and England nowhere. Chipps Smith does acknowledge the contribution of the court of the dukes of Burgundy to the diversity of artistic achievements in the North, but France was not modern in the way that the Low Countries and some German states were, possibly because of the selfcontainedness of the French economy, and it is not until the reign of Francis I that we have the sense of combined intellectual and artistic outreach to a larger world. Chipps Smith, however, manages to present a nicely integrated picture of the economic and cultural energies running through northern Europe, making it clear that there was a constantly evolving continuity from later mediaeval art that extended until the outbreaks of iconoclasm occasioned by the deplorable vigour of reformed religion in the mid-sixteenth century. His book stresses the uses and applications of art: how it served the needs and vanities of nobles and great merchants, how it was employed by towns and guilds, how churches elaborated their furnishings and how pious individuals used art to heighten devotion. Artistic careers and significant works of art are discussed in rewarding detail (and with gratifyingly fine illustrations), and virtually every page is filled with opinion and judgment and thought-provoking comment. This is contemporary art criticism at its best.

We can see how positively Italian artists and collectors responded to the artworks of the North in Paula Nuttall's revelatory book *From Flanders to Florence*, which aims to document the impact of Netherlandish painting on Italian artists of the earlier renaissance. She describes the many ways in which artistic contact between the two regions took place, and establishes the patterns of ownership of Flemish works of art in renaissance Italy. Her research makes it very clear that the art of northern Europe was much admired and sought after in Italy in the fifteenth century. This warmth of admiration comes as something of a surprise, but the numerous expressions of respect that Nuttall cites testify to the high regard in Italy for Netherlandish work. Time after time, it was Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden who were singled out for praise, for their skill in rendering the world so naturalistically, for their command of perspective and the effects of light, and for their expressive power. The technique of oil painting is almost always credited to van Eyck. The great lords of Italy competed to acquire works by the leading Flemish artists for their private collections. Nuttall points out that there was a large community of Italian merchants and bankers in Bruges in the fifteenth century, with the Florentines predominating in this commercial *entrepôt* which was the rival of Venice. These men were highly responsive to the merits of the art they encountered, with the result that there developed a steady southwards trade in paintings and tapestries for Italian consumption. Specific commissions gave certain artists a special prominence in Florence. Angelo Tani, the manager of the Medici bank in Bruges, commissioned the spectacular triptych of the 'Last judgment' from Hans Memling for the family chapel in the church of the Badia in Fiesole around 1469 (now in Gdansk); Tommaso Portinari, who succeeded Tani in Bruges, commissioned Hugo van der Goes to paint the great triptych of the 'Adoration of the shepherds' (Uffizi) for Santa Maria Nuova in 1483. Portinari also employed

Memling to produce the crowded 'Passion of Christ' (Turin) and the shrewd portraits of himself and his wife that are now in the Metropolitan. Not only were Flemish works readily visible in and around Florence: Nuttall makes a compelling case for the broad assimilation of Flemish characteristics into the work of Florentine painters in the later *quattrocento*. The detailed views beyond the window in many a portrait, the complex naturalistic landscapes, the increased expressionism of gesture, all seem to be derived from Netherlandish practice. Fillipino Lippi is singled out as the most responsive of the Florentines to the expressive qualities of Netherlandish painting, both in formal ways and in use of colour, closely followed by Ghirlandaio. Detailed illustration substantiates these claims. Scrutiny of works by Pollaiuolo, Verrocchio and Leonardo suggests an infusion of northern influence in their works, and Gozzoli seems to be the heir of Burgundian decorative schemes. Beyond Florence, even Perugino and the young Raphael show signs of incorporating Flemish features in their work.

This deference to the qualities of northern art began to change around the turn of the fifteenth century, as the rise of art theory emphasised values that were already firmly established in Italian art. *Disegno* or compositional power became paramount; form and intellectual structure came to matter more than naturalism or the play of light. Michelangelo could disparage the affective pietism of Flemish painting as something that 'would please the devout better than any painting of Italy, which will never cause him to shed a tear, whereas that of Flanders will cause him to shed many. It will appeal to women, especially the very old and the very young, and also to monks and nuns and to certain noblemen who have no sense of true harmony. In Flanders they paint, with a view to deceiving the eye . . . They paint draperies and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of trees, and rivers and bridges . . . all this, though it pleases some persons, is done without reason or art.'

'Without reason or art': Michelangelo's objection to the naturalistic paintings of the North was that they lacked *disegno*, and that they recorded particularity instead of ideal forms. The expressive but pinch-faced Madonnas of the van der Goes school or Memling, the emaciated Christs of Bouts or Grunewald or Dürer, were not acceptable as images of divine persons. Instead, the sweet, well-proportioned but bland Madonnas of Raphael, so carefully posed, were in fashion. Crucially, the reason for the decline in esteem of Flemish painting in Italy around 1500 was the growing dominance of the conviction that art should strive to recreate the forms of classical antiquity. Particularly in Florence and Rome, the idea that the Italian mission was a *rinascimento* of the ideal values of the antique in architecture, sculpture, painting and the other disciplines of classical humanism disadvantaged the art of the North. There the concepts of *disegno*, *bella figura*, proportion, harmony of colour and the shaping idea of a work of art did not prevail in the same measure as they did in Italy. The northern renaissance in the arts was not driven by notions of antique revival or conformity to ancient Roman models. Continuity with and development of late Gothic styles was the way art progressed in the North, but with an ever greater consciousness of the humanist ends of art.

The achievement of Italy has always compelled the attention of later generations. The grand tour and the long passion for Roman antiquities through the 18th and 19th centuries confirmed Italy's pre-eminence in the arts, and in any case, the idea of the renaissance, the revival of classical values, has always had a more rousing appeal than the continuity of Gothic. In addition, Italy had the writers on art that have been read down the centuries: Alberti's treatises, for example, and Vasari's *Lives*. Vasari in particular has preserved the personalities and struggles of the artists in such an engaging way, and there is no comparable record of the Northern artists. Carel van Mander's *Lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German painters* (1603–4) lacks Vasari's verve, and has never been widely read. Today, intensive visiting of towns and galleries in the Low Countries is out of fashion, and Germany, with so many widely scattered centres of art, does not attract great numbers of art enthusiasts. So it is refreshing to read these two new books that restore a parity between the renaissances of the North and the South. Both are very well written, very well illustrated, and highly informative. Chipps Smith's is broader and more general in scope: it manages to be scholarly whilst dispensing with footnotes, and it succeeds in making a diverse international cultural scene comprehensible and interconnected. Nuttall's book is patently a work of scholarship, with a thesis to propose and illustrate, and this it achieves convincingly while taking the reader on a clearly imagined and intellectually stimulating journey.

To bring this review around to A.W.N. Pugin, one can readily see that he would have

found the idea of a continuing Gothic renaissance most congenial. Indeed, his work was proof of the ability of Gothic to adapt itself to modern circumstances and provide a style that could imaginatively reshape any object. Gothic was the artistic language of the North, as well as of the Catholic faith, and like other languages, it could evolve yet still be understood. The etching of the scholar in his study at the beginning of *The true principles* is Pugin's High Gothic vision of the completely furnished interior where every object is beautiful and elaborate, yet functional. By extending the styles of the fourteen and fifteenth centuries into the 1840s and 1850s, using them for secular and sacred buildings alike, he demonstrated the enduring vitality of Gothic and its remarkable capacity to renew itself. He knew the northern renaissance was still in progress.

Where is thy sting?

The Victorian celebration of death. By James Stevens Curl. Stroud: Sutton Publishing Ltd, 2004 (first published hardback 2000). ISBN 0-7509-3873-0. RRP £12.99.

reviewed by Catriona Blaker

This book is a following on from, and expanding of, James Stevens Curl's work of the same title published in 1972 by David & Charles. At that time, along with John Morley's *Death, heaven and the Victorians* of 1971 and the exhibition of that name in Brighton the year before, it was a pioneering study indeed and since then Professor Curl has written prolifically on various aspects of a subject which has clearly always been close to his heart. Since 1972 interest in the nineteenth-century approach to death, burial and funerary rites has greatly increased, and Curl acknowledges this in the new edition of his book by referring to the work of such people as for example the late Chris Brooks, one-time chairman of the Victorian Society, whose *Mortal remains* of 1989 was a significant addition to the field. Indeed, the Victorian Society, responding forcefully to the ongoing and increasing problems which face cemeteries, funerary architecture, and the beauties and poetry thereof, gave these themes extensive coverage in a recent number of the Society magazine, the *Victorian*.

In *The Victorian celebration of death* Curl covers an impressively wide range of topics, masterfully controlling material which could well have become unwieldy. He does not spare us, and nor should he, since they are central to his theme, the almost unbelievable horrors of intramural burial (*ie*, interment actually inside a church or within the confined space of the churchyard outside) in the major cities in the first half of the century. Curl describes the drunken gravediggers, the recycling of burial space and the deliberate destruction of corpses in order to facilitate the ghastly cramming in of fresh bodies. He recounts too the tribulations of the families of those who died in the slums, and how the inefficient disposal of their bodies led to infection and cholera amongst those still living. Who can forget in *Bleak House*, the boy Jo's explaining to Lady Dedlock where her erstwhile lover had been buried: 'Among them piles of bones, and close to that kitchen winder! They put him very nigh the top. They was obliged to stamp upon it to git it in.' The health hazards were fearful. It was these conditions, and the sheer problems of numbers, which eventually, but slowly, led to reform. This was further assisted by the grim publications from 1841 to 1852 of such persons as Dr George Alfred 'Graveyard' Walker, and the visionary Edwin Chadwick, whose *On the results of a special inquiry into the practice of interment in towns* of 1843 made far-reaching proposals. It was not really though until after the passing of Burial Acts of 1852–7 that a system of public cemeteries (as opposed to the earlier joint-stock ones) was set up, with provision not only for the wealthy but also for the poorer classes.

Curl describes the rise of the cemetery movement against the background of the urban growth, high mortality rate and huge demographic changes of Britain in the nineteenth century. The history in Britain of the design of these wonderful repositories of art, natural beauty, outstanding sculpture and architecture in miniature is a remarkable one, partly deriving, surprisingly perhaps, from the creation of the great garden-cemetery of Père Lachaise in Paris which was in operation from 1804. Curl also discusses mausoleums, the stylistic derivation of which, he suggests, was perhaps partially influenced by the great mausoleums of Surat, which had impressed no less a person than Vanbrugh, who visited India in 1683. Curl also recounts the somewhat bizarre origins of cremation in the 1880s, writing with feeling about the aridity of most architecture of crematoria today. It is cremation,

in particular, and the sort of rites usually associated with it, that prompts him to comment: 'By a curious set of mechanisms, death has been removed from society, and now is almost beyond comprehension: it has become invisible and virtually meaningless. Death is shameful and unmentionable'.

The literary side of this huge subject is interestingly handled, starting with the 'gothick' sensibilities of the 'Graveyard' poets, such as Thomas Gray, Robert Blair and Young of *Night thoughts* fame, and ending with the nobly worded but deeply troubled expressions of religious doubt of Tennyson and Arnold. The quotations which introduce each chapter, and indeed those in the text too, are memorable and apposite, if at times strong stuff; in the preface, a gentler example may be found with Publilius Syrus's 'Death is fortunate for the child, bitter to the youth, far too late for the old', although even this has a disillusioned, if telling, resonance.

Curl goes much further, however, than merely recounting the growth of cemeteries; he examines the whole cult of death and bereavement, the trappings of funerals and the ephemera connected with them, and the cost of all these items. In the final analysis, *The Victorian celebration of death* also gives rise to many reflections and comparisons on the part of the reader about attitudes to death and bereavement, both then and now. Not least, it reminds us that the great legacy of the Victorian celebration of death is the cemeteries, so many of which remain, but which are often (even when individual monuments and sculptures are listed) vandalised, vulnerable, neglected and under-protected by law. It is up to us to try to change this situation and to help to find a meaningful solution as to how these great manifestations of an age of faith can best be protected, enjoyed and indeed still sometimes used for their original purpose.

In a review for *True principles*, one must surely ask the question what would Pugin have made of all this? We know how he satirised the eclectic architectural style of cemeteries and the monuments in them, and we know that for him memorials should be first and foremost 'Christian', displaying the cross, 'that great emblem of human redemption' (as he referred to it) and other appropriate symbols. We know too that he felt classical, or 'pagan' memorials to be an inappropriate travesty in Victorian Britain. He would surely be pleased therefore to have discovered that as the nineteenth century progressed Gothic became the dominant, and nearly always striking, language of the majority of cemetery buildings (although not necessarily of all their monuments) in this country. This was largely due to his influence. Perhaps too Pugin's mindset, whereby he saw life and death closely interconnected, with, as it were, only a wall dividing his garden from the graveyard at Ramsgate, and his family chantry waiting close at hand to receive him, all preplanned by himself, says something at a deeper level not only about his beliefs but also about the mid-Victorian acceptance of the transitoriness of life. Mortality was always just round the corner, as Pugin, from his early experiences, well knew. In conclusion, he would always have recognised and appreciated commitment and involvement, and that is what this book manifests.

Oedipus in the Vatican

Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction. By Susan M. Griffin. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. ISBN 0521833930. RRP £45.00.

reviewed by Andrew Rudd

What role did anti-Roman Catholic sentiment play in Victorian literature? This is the question Susan M. Griffin's study sets out to answer, examining the range of novels sporting 'eighteenth-century titles and seventeenth-century bigotry' published on both sides of the Atlantic between 1829, the year of the Catholic Emancipation Act, and 1900. Among the lesser-known works explored here are 'Maria Monk's *Awful disclosures of the Hotel Dieu nunnery of Montreal* (1836); Frances Trollope's *Father Eustace: a tale of the Jesuits* (1847); and Catherine Sinclair's *Beatrice; or, The unknown relatives* (1852). Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853), Charles Kingsley's *Westward ho!* (1855), Disraeli's *Lothair* (1870) and Henry James's *The American* (1877) are also mined for evidence of their participation in what Griffin discovers to be a surprisingly virulent anti-Roman Catholic literary tradition. Her argument revolves around the diversity of motives which led so many writers, for so long after the ghost of Romanism had apparently been laid to rest, to continue to people their fictions with such anti-Roman Catholic staples

as secret Jesuits, meddling priests and domineering mother superiors. In the face of ongoing, specific controversy – the publication of Newman's Tract 90, the Maynooth debate, and Pius IX's restoration of the Roman Catholic church hierarchy in 1850, the so-called 'Papal Aggression' – she argues that Victorian writers adapted anti-Roman Catholic tropes to meet a wide variety of ends.

For example, the escaped nuns' tales popular in North America in the 1840s and 50s (and republished in Britain) did not so much condemn Roman Catholicism as highlight the inadequacies of Protestant family life. Inquisitive Protestant women, these stories suggested, were drawn to Roman Catholic convents like the one on Mount Benedict in Charlestown, Massachusetts (burned down by the mob in 1834) because their parents were failing to engage them on intellectual and spiritual matters. Confessor-priests and nuns gradually displaced parents in what Griffin calls a Catholic culture of 'anti-domesticity'. In 1840s Oxford, it was the young men of England who were supposed to be at risk. The lapsed Tractarian William Sewall in his 1845 novel *Hawkstone* denounced 'those miserable men, who, under the name and garb of religion, are rending asunder, in this country, ties which God has joined, and tearing the children of this empire from their Father in the State and in the Church.' In Catherine Sinclair's *Beatrice; or, The unknown relatives* (1852), Irish Roman Catholic immigrants overrun a Scottish village, turning it into what Griffin insists is a scene from Britain's colonial fringe, overrun by the 'thugs of Christendom'. Attitudes to marriage, too, could be tested by Roman Catholic encroachments. The husband in Eliza Lynn Linton's *Under which Lord?* (1879) confronts his wife's Ritualist priest who, through the medium of confession, has seized control of the family estate.

Griffin imports various critical theories to support her findings, including Benedict Anderson's notion of the 'imagined community' and ideas of Roman Catholicism as the alien 'Other' familiar from Linda Colley's Britons. The theme of usurpation that unites many of these novels provides Griffin with an interpretation of anti-Roman Catholicism as an essentially Oedipal triangle: the Roman Catholic church was Protestantism's father to be slain, while the relationship between Protestant mothers and sons represented an ideal of sentimental hearth-and-home domesticity. This is ingenious as religious psychology, but it has the unfortunate effect of pushing genuine Victorian fears about Roman Catholicism into the background. 'Am I Queen of England or am I not?' asked an indignant Queen Victoria in 1850, on learning that part of her kingdom had been placed under the nominal control of the archbishop of Westminster. The Public Worship Regulation Act of 1874 sought to curb Ritualist practices such as auricular confession, enclosure and physical austerities, suggesting that the British public in fact took a deep interest in liturgical minutiae. Griffin makes the contentious claim that the widespread religiosity of mid-century began to ebb towards 1900, taking *The American's* use of Catholicism as emblematic of a mysterious and no longer accessible past as evidence. Even if this were true, it seems a distortion to present anti-Roman Catholicism as always signifying something other than the theological position it purported to be – not least, it suggests that religion was incapable of arousing strong emotions in its own right. What emerges in *Anti-Catholicism and nineteenth-century fiction* is a strange, secularised literary landscape, more interested in psyches than souls.

A text book for all good people

Perfect Cheadle: St Giles' Catholic Church, Cheadle, Staffordshire. By Michael Fisher. Stafford: M.J. Fisher Publishing. ISBN 0-9526855-4X. RRP £3.50.

The Pugins and the Hardmans. By Brian Doolan. Birmingham: The Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission. ISBN 1-871269-22-9. RRP £5.00.

reviewed by Roderick O'Donnell

It is surely right that St Giles', Cheadle, should now have a guide written by the Rev Michael Fisher, who might almost be described as the Staffordshire branch of The Pugin Society, so much does he accomplish for A.W.N. Pugin studies locally. This, the fifth guide to St Giles', is the first abreast of recent advances in Pugin studies, particularly the publication of the two volumes of letters, access to other Pugin correspondence in the House of Lords Record Office, and even more importantly a close familiarity with the Hardman archive in Birmingham – not only the historic archive, but the current John Hardman and Company collection. The end

paper of the guide is an advertisement for their present incarnation, the John Hardman Studio, and one has to pinch oneself to realise that it is not a work of the 1840s, but that Michael Fisher has drawn it in the twenty-first century!

The guide is divided into three chapters with 75 footnotes, and also includes a postscript by Fr Sandy Brown, parish priest since 2003; a small list of other local buildings by Pugin; suggestions for further reading; and the advertisement for Hardman's. The first chapter sets out the suggested route round the church, beginning with the exterior, and then the interior divided under 15 headings. The second chapter is "Perfect Cheadle": the Earl and his architect, and the third 'The history of St Giles'. Fisher is once again his own publisher and photographer, although unfortunately some of his colour photographs do not reproduce as well as those professionally taken.

The interior of St Giles' Church has quite rightly been compared to a mediaeval book of hours: it is a building which inspires a very intense, very personal devotion; or, in a modern sense, analysis of each of its remarkable passages in architecture and the applied arts. It is difficult therefore to grasp the whole in relation to the particular. The anti-clockwise guide round the church illustrates the problem: does one really grasp the character of the nave as one studies each particular furnishing, or through the narrative of the aisles? We understand, for example, that on plan the south, or 'epistle', aisle has a red colouring iconographically while the north, or 'gospel', aisle is blue; but what is the character in colour terms of the nave? In analysing each part, is the whole, or in this case the nave, forgotten? But such a pilgrimage or progress round the church is perhaps just what Pugin intended so as to instruct the faithful in their revived Roman Catholic religion and devotional practices, especially those which he wished to revive from the middle ages. And Michael Fisher now has to instruct post-Vatican II Roman Catholics, to whom many such devotions and their expression in the decorative arts, will be foreign. The guide also explains the changes in the church: the benches in the aisles were only installed after 1864; and the Pugin-Hardman brass coronas installed in 1845, missing since the 1930s, were replaced by simplified versions in the 1980s. These modern coronas were ridiculously prominent in photographs published in 1994, obscuring the majestic figure of the crucified Christ on his glorified cross, which for Pugin was a climax of the nave; as rephotographed by Michael Fisher, this can once again be appreciated. The current forward altar just within the rood screen comes from the church at Cotton and was installed in 1990.

The richest iconography, and in a sense the beating heart of the church, is the Blessed Sacrament chapel. Alas, the photograph is another of the 1994 series, with the candlesticks, no doubt selected by the photographer, actually belonging to the high altar. Oddly, apart from the magnificent brass screen here, none of the important Hardman and Company metalwork supplied in 1846 is itemised or illustrated. For some examples, see my 'Ecclesiastical work', nos 55-72, 74-6, and 82, in Paul Atterbury's *A.W.N. Pugin: master of the Gothic Revival*, published by The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts and Yale University Press, 1995. Perhaps there was a security problem.

The window iconography of the sleepless-eyed cherubim is compared with the hymn 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence'. However, this would have been unfamiliar to Pugin, as the prayer of the cherubic hymn in the liturgy of St James was only translated later in the nineteenth century into English by Gerald Moultrie, and the hymn was inserted in Anglican hymn books thereafter.

Fisher makes the claim – shared with Brian Andrews – that 'Pugin envisaged a wholesale return to the Sarum rite', as evidenced by the form of the Easter sepulchre (pp 11–2) and the sedilia (pp 10–1). He goes on, 'At the time of the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1850, the English bishops were given the option of reverting to the Sarum rite if they so wished' (pp 20–1). This is not, however, a position prominent in contemporary accounts, and, surely one which Pugin's opponents would have seized on if it had been; although it is important to stress the role of the 'English Catholic Church' party up to 1850, only a handful of priests would have been learned enough, or partisan enough, to support such a project. Is it significant that the most prominent of them, Dr Rock, had already split with the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1840 when he left the chaplaincy at Alton Towers?

The third chapter, 'History of St Giles', puts the church in the context of the Roman Catholic revival in Staffordshire. It begins with the ringing claim that 'in no other European country – with perhaps the exception of France during the Revolution – have Catholics been

subjected to the sustained levels of the state-sponsored persecution and discrimination as applied in England for the three-hundred years prior to the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829' (p 30); the previous guide (1997), part-written by a local Roman Catholic priest, had instead of this the following description: 'there was a certain amount of bloodshed on both sides'. Of course the dominance of the tower and spire of St Giles', its reuse of the dedication of the mediaeval parish, and the glory of the interior, now with Warwick Bridge the only two of Pugin's churches not to have been savaged by the iconoclasm unleashed since the Second Vatican Council, allows us to indulge in the fantasy that neither the Reformation nor 'Vatican II' have actually disturbed the tenor of Roman Catholic history or devotion. It is indicative that it takes an Anglican clergyman of Michael Fisher's expertise and scholarship to show us this fact. *Perfect Cheadle* should certainly supersede the 1997 guide.

Fr Brian Doolan's *The Pugins and the Hardmans*, in the Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission series, is not a work of research but of synthesis. While we are pretty clear on our Pugins, the later Hardmans have until now continued to confuse. The later designers and managers until the closure of the metalworks c1936 and the retirement of Patrick Feeney in 1974 after the fire in 1970 are sorted out. So this is an essential addition to the bookshelf.

The Hardmans were prolific dynasts: John Hardman senior had 13 children and his grandson John Bernard 12; by contrast two of A.W.N. Pugin's sons died unmarried, as did his grandson Sebastian Pugin Powell. It quite rightly locates the work and collaboration of both families as a Birmingham-via-Ramsgate phenomenon; much work is cited, though nothing on the Palace of Westminster. Apart from the fascinating watercolour (1847) by J.D. Swarbrick of the crossing of the St Chad's Cathedral used for the cover (oddly not highlighted in the text), the postage-stamp scale illustrations are disappointing. The historiography is traditional: the 'Restoration of the Hierarchy', the 'Second Spring', and the leading role of the clergy; by contrast, a Roman Catholic 'congregationalism', an 'English Catholic Church' and, apart from the active piety of the protagonists, the role of the laity, are not named; controversy is also avoided over post-Vatican II reorderings. Can we now look to Fr Doolan to produce a new guide to St Chad's, to replace the inadequate guide of 1987 which is still for sale at the back of the cathedral?

The John Hardman Studio has subsidised both publications.

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PAG – Pevsner architectural guides

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- PAG Manchester*: by C. Hartwell, 2002.

The Editor of *True principles* appeals to members to let him know details of new articles about the Pugin family and their work, or substantial references in new books, so that these can be included each year at the end of this bibliography section. This will provide a valuable resource for future scholars. This year we received details of the following:

- Timothy Brittain-Catlin**, 'A.W.N. Pugin's scheme for Hornby Castle, Yorkshire', in *The Burlington magazine*, vol cxlvi, no 1217 (8.2004), pp 550–3.
- Michael Fisher**, 'AWN Pugin and the restoration of St Mary's Church, Wymeswold, Leicestershire', in *Ecclesiology today*, no 34 (1.2005), pp 3–15.
- Paul Johnson**, 'Creative people can be sacred monsters or just plain monsters', in the *Spectator*, vol ccxcv, no 9180 (17.7.2004), p 27.
- Tristram Hunt's** book *Building Jerusalem: the rise and fall of the Victorian city* (London, 2004) contains considerable description of the work of A.W.N. Pugin in its broad historical context at pp 78–82 and elsewhere.

There have also been various well-illustrated references to the restoration work at the Grange in national and local newspapers since the beginning of 2004; these include:

- 'Home on the Grange' by Jonathan Glancey; *Guardian*, 19.1.2004, p 5.
- 'Inside the house that Pugin built', *Isle of Thanet gazette*, 6.2.2004, pp 8–9
- 'Pugin's Gothic grandeur', *Kent messenger, focus magazine*, 3.2004, pp 12–4.

Dan Cruikshank's programme, 'Britain's best buildings – Palace of Westminster', was broadcast on 10.5.2005 on BBC2.

Contributors to this number

Brian Andrews is an architectural historian specialising in nineteenth and early twentieth-century churches and their furnishings. He contributed to the Victoria and Albert Museum's exhibition 'Pugin: a gothic passion' in 1984 and was visiting curator for the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's 2002–03 touring exhibition 'Creating a Gothic paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes'.

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Michael Egan became interested in the Pugin family during building works at the Roman Catholic church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Greenwich, where A.W.N. and E.W. Pugin both contributed to the interior.

Michael Fisher is parish priest of St Chad's Church, Stafford, and archivist for the John Hardman Company in Birmingham. He is the author of several publications on Pugin in the Midlands, including *Alton Towers* and *Pugin-land*.

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If you would like to order a copy of **The Pugin Society's edition of *Contrasts & The true principles*** please send a cheque made payable to Spire Books Ltd to the value of £33.95 (including postage & packing within the UK). For all orders except from the US please contact Spire Books Ltd, PO Box 2336, Reading, RG4 5WJ, telephone: +44 (0)1189 471525, www.spirebooks.com

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Readers might like to know that **Michael Fisher's** books, which have been highly acclaimed by Pugin scholars including Margaret Belcher and Anthony Symondson SJ, are available directly from him as follows at 35 Newland Avenue, Stafford ST16 1NL, telephone 01785-245069:

Alton Towers: a Gothic wonderland, foreword by Clive Wainwright, revised edition 2004: £15.95 (£16.95 by post);

Pugin-Land: A.W.N. Pugin, Lord Shrewsbury, and the Gothic Revival in Staffordshire, foreword by Alexandra Wedgwood, 2002: £14.95 (£15.95 by post);

Perfect Cheadle: St Giles' Catholic Church, Cheadle, Staffordshire, reviewed in this issue of *True principles*, is available for £3.50 (£4.00 by post) from the above address.

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 an annual journal – *True principles* – and also a separate newsletter – *Present state* – and is open to anyone interested in A.W.N. Pugin, his family, those he influenced, and the Gothic Revival.

To join The Pugin Society, please contact the
Hon Membership Secretary (see inside front cover).