

True Principles

The journal of The Pugin Society

vol iv no ii Winter 2010–11

Pugin, from Canada

SCHOLARS FROM MCGILL UNIVERSITY

WRITE ABOUT A.W.N. PUGIN

Andrew Saint:

St Peter's, Woolwich

VICTOR BELCHER • ALEX BREMNER • MARTIN BRESSANI

JAMES STEVENS CURL • MICHAEL FISHER • MARTIN HARRISON • EDWARD HOULE

RON JELACO • STEPHAN KOWAL • CAMERON MACDONELL • DAVID MEARA

RODERICK O'DONNELL • ANDREW RUDD • VICTOR SIMION • JULIA WEBSTER

True Principles

The journal of The Pugin Society

vol iv no ii Winter 2010–11

True principles is a peer review journal published by The Pugin Society

Editorial Board

Peter Blundell Jones, University of Sheffield; Mosette Broderick, New York University
Jan de Maeyer, KADOC, Leuven University; Graham Parry, University of York;
Andrew Saint, English Heritage; Alexandra Wedgwood, Patron of The Pugin Society

Edited by Timothy Brittain-Catlin

CREAte: Centre for Research in European Architecture
Kent School of Architecture, University of Kent, Marlowe Building, Canterbury CT2 7NR
Email: tjb33@kent.ac.uk

The Editor would like to thank Catriona Blaker, Michael Fisher, David Meara,
Rory O'Donnell, Andrew Saint and Alexandra Wedgwood for much valuable help during
the preparation of this number

Designed by Michael Pennamacoar

Email: michael@abgrundrisse.net Tel: 01304 617626

Printed by Thanet Press Ltd
Union Crescent, Margate, Kent CT9 1NU
www.thanet-press.co.uk

Published by The Pugin Society:

Patron: Alexandra Wedgwood

President: Mrs David Houle

Chairman: Nick Dermott DipArch IHBC

Members are reminded that the Editor will always welcome contributions on any aspect of Victorian or mediæval art and architecture from readers. 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.

Copy date for autumn 2011 issue: 1st April.

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.

All articles and reviews © the named authors 2010.

Other material © The Pugin Society 2010.

True Principles

The journal of The Pugin Society

vol iv no ii Winter 2010–11

Contents

Editorial

Bring back 'gothick'	108
New scholars from Canada	110

Articles

The Pugins in Woolwich <i>by Andrew Saint</i>	111
Remedies external and visible: Pugin's health and Pugin's Gothic <i>By Martin Bressani and Cameron Macdonell</i>	122
Five articles on A.W.N. Pugin by new Canadian scholars	
A.W.N. Pugin's St Marie's Grange <i>by Edward Houle</i>	134
Reason and faith: A.W.N. Pugin's apprehension of the mysteries <i>by Ron Jelaco</i>	150
Transcending rules: A.W.N. Pugin's St Giles' at Cheadle <i>by Stephan Kowal</i>	163
The baptism of British government: A.W.N. Pugin's Catholic hand in the New Houses of Parliament <i>by Victor Simion</i>	175
A.W.N. Pugin's Grange at Ramsgate: the moral Catholic house <i>by Julia Webster</i>	187
The monument to Lieutenant William Fisher in Salisbury cathedral, Wiltshire <i>by David Meara</i>	195

News and comment

from Roderick O'Donnell, Michael Fisher and David Meara	199
---	-----

Book reviews

<i>The stained glass of A.W.N. Pugin</i> reviewed by Martin Harrison	205
<i>George Myers: Pugin's builder</i> reviewed by Victor Belcher	206
<i>R.D. Chantrell (1873–1872) and the architecture of a lost generation</i> reviewed by Michael Fisher	208
<i>Essays in Scots and English architectural history: a festschrift in honour of John Frew</i> reviewed by Alex Bremner	210
<i>Gothic Romanticism: architecture, politics, and literary form</i> <i>Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill</i> both reviewed by Andrew Rudd	211
<i>Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian architects</i> reviewed by Timothy Brittain-Catlin	214
<i>Modern architectural theory: a historical survey, 1673–1968</i> reviewed by James Stevens Curl	214

Bibliography	217
---------------------	-----

New members since Autumn 2009	220
--------------------------------------	-----

Contributors to this number	inside back cover
------------------------------------	-------------------

BRING BACK 'GOTHICK'

Pugin Society members who read the *Guardian* newspaper or watch the Channel Four television news (and no doubt there are some) will have choked over their cornflakes or their supper to hear the preposterous announcement that Horace Walpole's alterations at Strawberry Hill, a *papier-mâché* concoction in Twickenham, heralded the start of the Gothic Revival. On the television version this message was soon developed into a more plausible story, that Walpole's mansion played a role in the development of 'Gothic literature'. And that of course gave the game away. Most people cannot cope with a history of ideas that is not primarily literary. For these, the only thing that matters is a text, preferably accompanied by impertinent accounts of episodes from the private life of a person. If Gothic literature started in the 1740s, then surely Gothic architecture must have done too.

That is nonsense. The visual arts are not subservient to the literary ones. Architecture is visual, experiential, visceral, and emotional: that is, as the young people would have it, you either get it or you don't. And, being expensive, it is 'generated', to use A.W.N. Pugin's word, not by architects alone but out of the particular social, economic, technological and political circumstances of the times. It was because England in the early nineteenth century was undergoing such profound changes in all these different ways that a new type of architecture was 'generated'. Architects began to understand better the buildings of the past, to a great extent thanks to John Britton and A.C. Pugin. They were under pressure to reform their profession, and to specify building materials accurately and scientifically. They were required to integrate new materials and components, including water closets, kitchen equipment and heating systems, into their houses. None of these things were derived from literature or from theories. And like the rest of the population architects of the time could not ignore the religious revival at either the evangelical or Tractarian end; nor could they escape from the way in which society in general, right across Britain and Europe, had come to expect information and the sciences to be much more accurately categorised and defined than ever before. This world had little in common with that of Horace Walpole. The point about A.W.N. Pugin – probably, the main point about him – was that he devised a coherent architectural language that enabled architects to face all of these challenges with commitment if not exhilaration.

So where does this idea come from – that Gothic architecture had been around all the time, perhaps continuously since the Stuart era, and that Pugin was merely another Gothic decorator? It is a symptom of a pernicious attitude that threatens all the arts – one that puts words first and reality afterwards. Anyone who has been involved in applying for public funding for any arts project over the last decade will know that support has been determined not by anything that relates to the appearance of a building, a painting or an installation, or by the quality of the sound of a piece of music, but by the number of boxes ticked that relate to political targets of one kind or another. Will the project attract, for example, the desired ethnic mix? Will children be able to 'access' it? We are told that this is to improve the accountability of the spending of public money, and yet it can lead to absurdities that

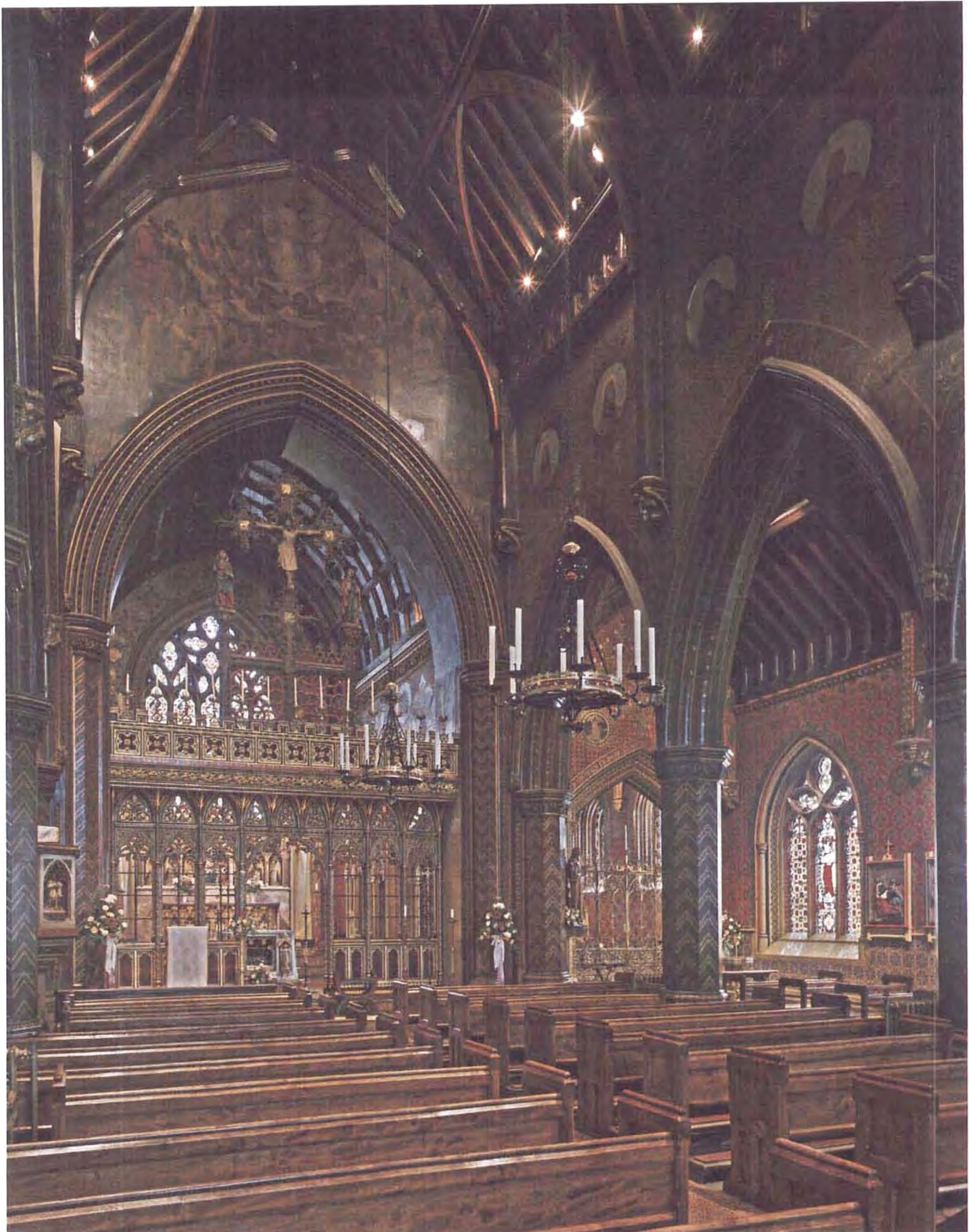


Figure 74: The nave and chancel of St Giles', Cheadle
photographed by Martin Charles in 1994.

do no one any good: as the architectural historian Miles Glendinning has written, in his new book *Architecture's evil empire*, the results have sometimes been 'a farrago of egoistic gestures', a ringing Puginesque phrase. A parallel system of appreciation of the arts has been constructed in which they are measured by things that have nothing to do with what they are actually like or for, a situation not in fact that different from that of the 1820s.

It is very clear from Pugin's writings that he saw himself as a leader in battle, as

a man who felt on his shoulders the whole weight of the responsibility for changing the way that people related to buildings. It is a bizarre idea that his whole life and work constituted some sort of slight shift in attitudes to decorating, but that is the implication from the literary people who make the rules that prevail. But style is not necessarily a box to tick, and not all styles are equal. Different ways of approaching the design of buildings and everything in them achieve different ends; a true style, as Pugin demonstrated, affects reality – not just the wallpaper.

So let us make it clear: Pugin's arrival changed everything. In the early 1820s most detached houses, for example, looked much the same; by 1850 nearly every one was different, and life inside them was different too. It is time to bring back the old-fashioned word 'gothick' to describe those plastered buildings with starved, pointed windows that characterise the pre-Pugin era. In fact 'gothick' is quite a good term to describe structures of any era that have an irrational and unhelpful layout, are ornamented with thin, mean and derivative decoration, and which are saved only by virtue of expensive furnishing arrangements (the Scottish parliament at Holyrood comes to mind). Use the word freely, as there are plenty of buildings about that suit it.

New scholars from Canada

The five texts published in this number of *True principles* that follow the article by Martin Bressani and Cameron Macdonell were produced in the context of a graduate seminar in the School of Architecture at McGill University in Montreal. The course focused upon the Gothic notion of the *sentient house*, a term referring generally to the haunted but which is specifically borrowed from Edgar Allan Poe's *The fall of the House of Usher*. The house so dramatically portrayed in Poe's short story is 'sentient' in the literal sense of being capable of holding and projecting feelings: 'the conditions of the sentience had been...fulfilled in the method of collation of [its] stones', and was made evident 'in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere'.

The seminar, led by Martin Bressani, investigated the life and work of A.W.N. Pugin, the most momentous figure in the history of the Gothic Revival in England. Pugin was not the first to 'practise' modern Gothic but he effected a profound change in the nature of the Revival, transforming neo-Gothic into a Revival proper: with Pugin, Gothic must be 'resurrected' in order to transform the whole of society. In many ways, Pugin's ideas about Gothic stand at the very opposite of literary Gothic: far from being a world teeming with irrational drives, ghosts or vampires, the mediæval world described by Pugin is constructed along the dream image of social unity, cohesion and devotion, qualities that he believed were embodied directly in mediæval architecture. Yet, paradoxically, his watershed idea that architecture is the 'moral' embodiment of a society establishes contact with the Gothic literary tradition: as he assumed that buildings have a mental influence over its inhabitants – replacing a visual approach with a moral one – he posited a principle of sentience. His goal of reviving only the 'purest' and 'truest' Gothic in order to save society from moral degradation assumes that architecture always risks being haunted, the revival of Gothic becoming an exorcism of the monster lurking within modernity. The seminar explored the existence of such paradoxes in Pugin's life and work. *Martin Bressani*

The Pugins in Woolwich

by Andrew Saint

The next volume in the Survey of London's parish series, due to appear in 2012, is going to be on Woolwich. Preparation for it has afforded the chance for a good look at one of the most conspicuous Puginian sites in London, the sequence of St Peter's Church, presbytery and schools in New Road, Woolwich [figure 75]. About A.W.N. Pugin's church of 1842–3 onwards, only a modicum of new information has emerged. But we have



Figure 75: St Peter's Church (centre), presbytery (left) and schools (right), New Road, Woolwich
English Heritage (Derek Kendall).

been able to correct some confusions about the presbytery building on one side of the church, and unearth the hair-raising story of E.W. Pugin's schools on the other. In addition, Andy Donald has surveyed the complex accurately for the first time on behalf of the Survey and English Heritage, and drawn up a handsome plan of the whole [figure 76]. By coincidence, research into another Woolwich church, the Anglican St Michael's, has also shed a sidelight on the activities of P.P. Pugin in New York.

St Peter's Church

The growth of a Roman Catholic community in Woolwich, like much else there, began with the expansion of the military presence locally from the time of the French wars in the 1790s. Catholics were at first served from a mission and chapel at Greenwich. After locals tried to start an unauthorised chapel, Father James Delaney was posted in 1816 as resident priest in Woolwich. Permanent premises were first found in a former Wesleyan chapel not far from the present site in New Road, a few hundred yards south of the Arsenal. In time the ministry of Delaney and his successors extended to a school. They also attended the 'hulks' or prison ships, and local hospitals.¹

In 1838 Cornelius Coles was appointed priest. Middlesex-born but almost certainly Irish by family like most of his congregation, he was then about 25 years of age.² Coles had hitherto served at Holy Trinity, Dockhead, Bermondsey, which then had a recent church by J.J. Scoles.³ The 'delapidated' state of his chapel plus a growing Catholic presence in Woolwich, estimated in 1841 at 3,000, no doubt stimulated his ambition to build. When at the start of that year Coles opened a subscription list for a new church, his plans must have been advanced, for the Board

1 Greenwich History Centre, Vincent Cuttings, 3, p 34; Dunn, pp 1–3; Clifton, pp 1–3.

2 Fitzgerald-Lombard 1993, p 113.

3 *Catholic directory, ecclesiastical register & almanac*, 1838, pp 13, 24, 56.

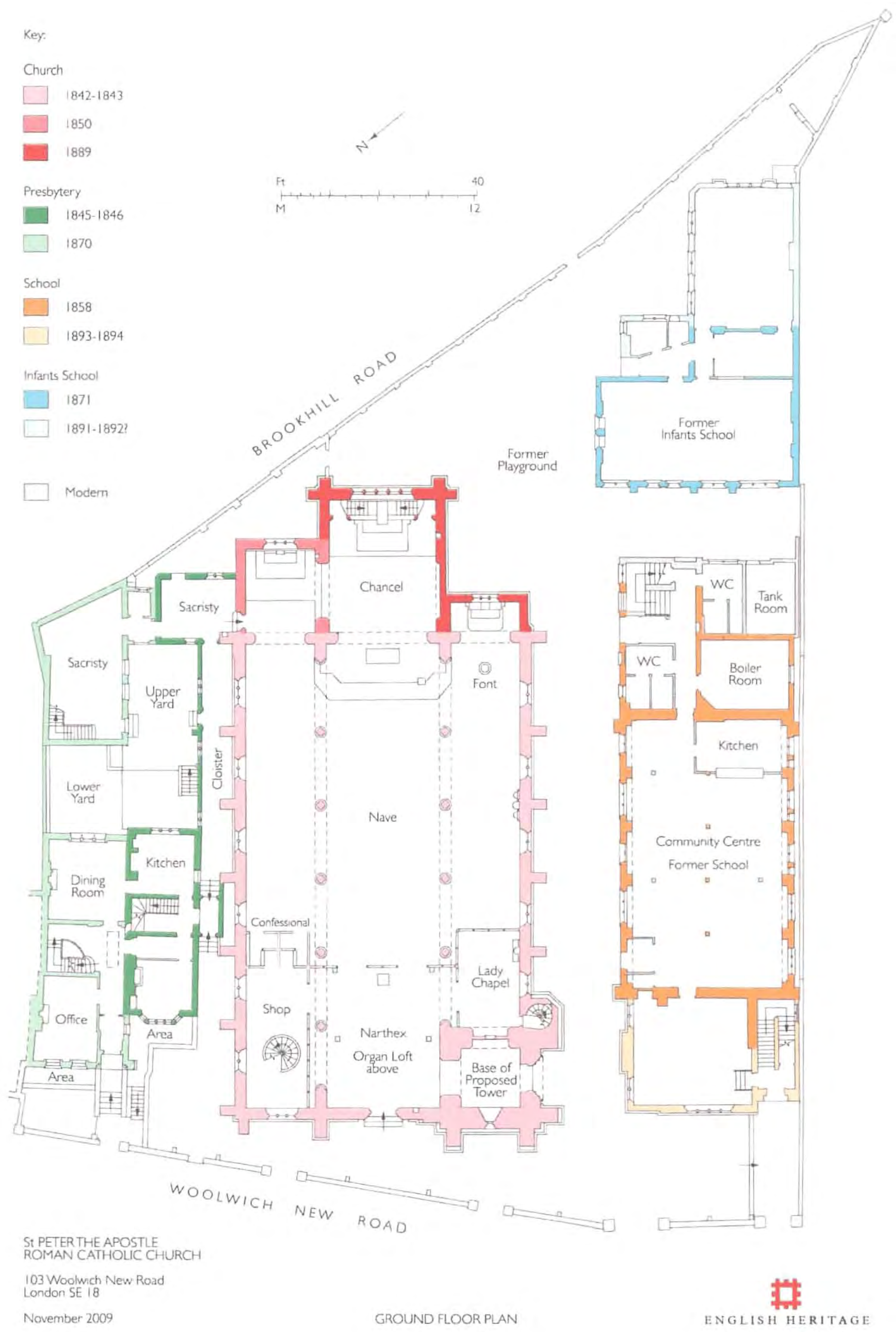


Figure 76: St Peter's: plan of church, presbytery and schools, with dates of the different phases
English Heritage (Andy Donald).

of Ordnance quickly made over to him without charge a site on the east side of New Road, next to a pub, The Gun.⁴ There was a precedent for this; the Board had recently assigned an adjacent site to the Presbyterians, believing no doubt that any religious influence on the soldiery was to be encouraged. T.L. Donaldson was the architect for the neighbouring Presbyterian church, a round-arched design which Pugin no doubt noted with scorn.

An announcement that Pugin would design the church came that September.⁵ Coles would have known his early convent for the Sisters of Mercy in Bermondsey (1838), next to the Dockhead church. Work had also recently begun on his future St George's Cathedral, Southwark, the grandest Catholic church in South London. A notebook dates completion of Pugin's drawings to April 1842.⁶ George Myers began work on the nave and aisles in September; the foundation stone was laid on 26 October 1842 and the church opened a year later to the day.⁷ The cost of about £4,000

was defrayed partly by a grant from the vicar apostolic of the London district, Thomas Griffiths, and partly by subscription; illustrations of the church design inside and out were displayed at Catholic booksellers to stimulate donations.⁸

Views of the exterior and interior were illustrated in successive issues of the *Orthodox journal* [figure 77].⁹ The exterior perspective is from the northwest and shows the west end dominated by a weighty but unexecuted southwest tower and steeple; the interior one shows a rood screen, likewise never erected. Another view of the complete design occurs in the famous frontispiece of the *Apology* (1843), where St Peter's stands in the foreground to the right of the Southwark design, confirming it as one of Pugin's

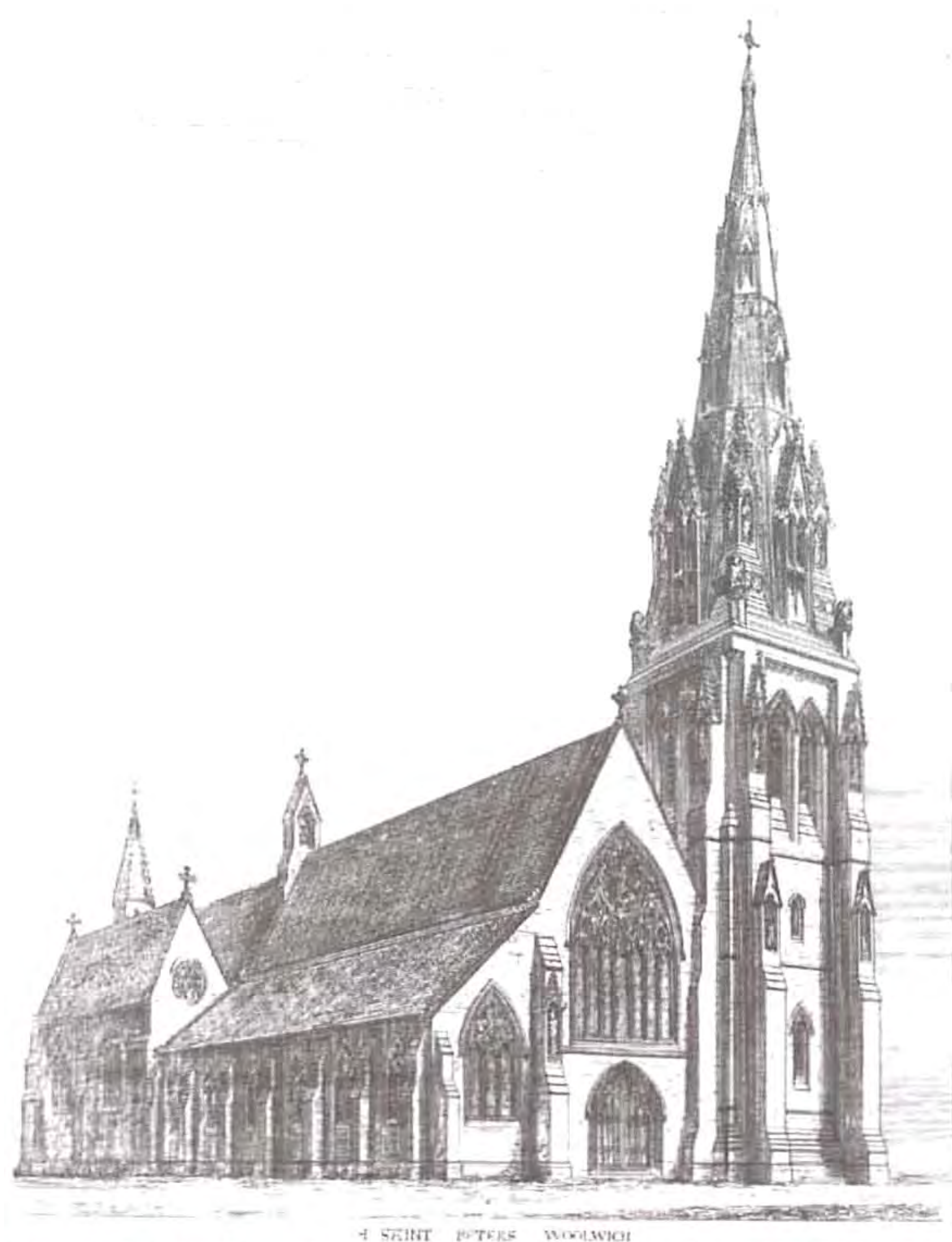


Figure 77: St Peter's: exterior perspective by AWN Pugin *Orthodox journal*, 21.1.1843.

4 Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark, Diocesan Archives, [SDA], Woolwich box; Dunn, p.3.

5 *Orthodox journal*, 24 Sept 1841.

6 Pugin's diary, 25.4.1842: 'Went to Woolwich with the drawings'. Wedgwood 1985, p 51.

7 Rory O'Donnell writes: 'The Myers family album has a fascinating (and I think unique) Pugin/Myers drawing of the layout of the site, platform, dais etc for the ceremony of laying the foundation stone.' There is also further information on the church and presbytery in Phoebe Stanton's file on Woolwich (Box 1072) in the RIBA Drawings Collection, Sandra Wedgwood kindly tells me.

8 *Orthodox journal*, 2.1842, pp 114–5; 5.1842, p 304; 9. 1842, p 204; 10.1842, pp 236, 252; 11.1842, p 300; 1.1843, pp 34, 48–50; 11.1843, pp 328–30; *Catholic directory* 1842, pp 13–4; 1843, p 152; *Illustrated London news*, 29.10.1842, p 395; *Tablet*, 28.10.1843, p 678; *Builder*, 4.11.1843, p 466.

9 *Orthodox journal*, 21.1.1843, exterior view; 28.1.1843, interior view.



Figure 78: St Peter's, Woolwich, nave looking east
English Heritage.



Figure 79: St Peter's, Woolwich, Lady Chapel
English Heritage (Derek Kendall).

major town churches to date. Nonetheless the Woolwich design was geared to economy, hinted at by the use of lean-to aisles without a clerestory. Only the six-bay nave and aisles could be built in 1842–3, leaving a stump for the tower over the south porch. The materials were yellow stock bricks, with sparing Bath stone dressings and slate roofs. External enrichment was limited to the south and west entrances, where copious ballflower and crocketing crept into the surrounds.

The style of the church was naturally 'Decorated' or, as Pugin preferred it, that of the reign of Edward I [figures 78 and 79].¹⁰ The nave has the sharply pointed profiles to roofs and arches he favoured in the early 1840s. The internal timberwork of the roofs is lean, with high scissor-bracing across the main nave space. The arcades themselves are regular, but the two-light windows along the aisles all differ slightly, while the final window on the north side breaks into three lights, perhaps anticipating the lady chapel, built later. The generous seven-light west window did most of the work in lighting the unclerestoried nave. But the present five-light east window was also executed as part of the contract, inserted in temporary brickwork within the chancel arch.¹¹ The high altar too is original; the five angels in relief under straight-sided canopies along its front resemble those on the altar in the lady chapel at St Giles's, Cheadle, close in date. An octagonal font, now at the end of the south aisle, was probably also there from the start.

The next phase consisted of the presbytery and sacristy, erected in 1845–6 and discussed below. They were followed by the lady chapel at the end of the north aisle. As built by Myers in 1850, this was abbreviated from the size suggested in the exterior sketch of 1842, and connected via a doorway to the sacristy. It contains the best-preserved decorative ensemble in the church, comprising altar, reredos and Hardman stained glass in the three-light window above. Minton tiles on the footpace complete the composition.

¹⁰ *Orthodox journal*, 1.1843, p 34.

¹¹ *Building news*, 16.8.1889, p 238.

Father Coles hoped to add the chancel and a chapel to its south in 1856. As Pugin was dead, Coles consulted his son Edward about the matter ('We are fearfully crowded on Sundays. Pugin is doing all he can for us').¹² Nothing came of this. Under Coles's successor, Jeremiah Cotter, schools and other parochial activities came before completing the church, though Cotter's architect John Crawley did produce detailed designs and a specification for the tower.¹³ Not until Father Seraph Fieu, a Belgian, took over in 1887 did the fabric get priority anew. Frederick A. Walters was now called in about a chancel; he advised that if the parish wished 'to follow the plans of old Pugean [Fieu's spelling] and to have only a small chapel at St Joseph's [south] side... the whole would probably cost about £800'.¹⁴ Accordingly the chancel built to Walters' design in 1889 was accompanied only by a very short termination to the south aisle. But Walters took care to build in a relieving arch on this side of the chancel, corresponding to his new opening to the lady chapel on the north, in case the south side should ever be lengthened. In other respects Walters faithfully followed Pugin's plans for a chancel, using plain stock brickwork for the exterior and reinstating the east window in its destined position. The panelled chancel roof with carved bosses is also in Pugin's spirit.¹⁵

St Peter's was now structurally as complete as it ever became; it never got its tower. The typical Catholic story of its subsequent embellishment and disembellishment has nothing to do with the Pugins. The present screen-reredos behind the high altar, probably incorporating portions of its more elaborate predecessor, was designed by Edward Walters, son of F.A. Walters, and executed in Maltese stone by local craftsmen in about 1943, an unusual date for such work.¹⁶

The current interior scheme dates mainly from the 1970s and 80s. The biggest change was the insertion of timber-and-glass partitioning screening off the west end of the nave and creating a gallery space above. Later the whole of the architecture was painted to lighten the church, and an ocean of shiny oak parquet flooring laid. This gives the interior a spick-and-span look, alien to Pugin's aesthetic. The Pugin fittings of high altar front and lady chapel and font have also been given licks of gaudy paint.

The presbytery and sacristy

Pugin's external perspective of St Peter's shows no presbytery, nor was one mentioned when the nave and aisles were built in 1842–3. But one must always have been intended, as the northernmost strip of the land granted in 1841 was left uncovered when the church was built. Sketches in the Myers collection of Pugin drawings show alternative designs for the house [figure 80].¹⁷ A set of plans and elevation perhaps requiring greater breadth than the site allowed and including a

12 SDA, Fr Coles to Bishop, 1.1.1856.

13 SDA, account of Crawley to Cotter, 8.1872.

14 SDA, Fr Fieu to Bishop, 16.12.1887. A wooden model of the church now kept in the sacristy shows the church complete with chancel, tower and spire. It has sometimes been attributed to Pugin, but it is not elegant and it seems more likely that it belongs to the years when Fieu was raising money to build the chancel. My thanks to Alexandra Wedgwood for advice about this.

15 *Building news*, 16.8.1889, p 238.

16 Dunn, p 22. Evinson 1998, p 107, seems to assume that the present reredos is the one erected in 1892.

17 A photo of the Myers album was kindly made available by Timothy McCann.

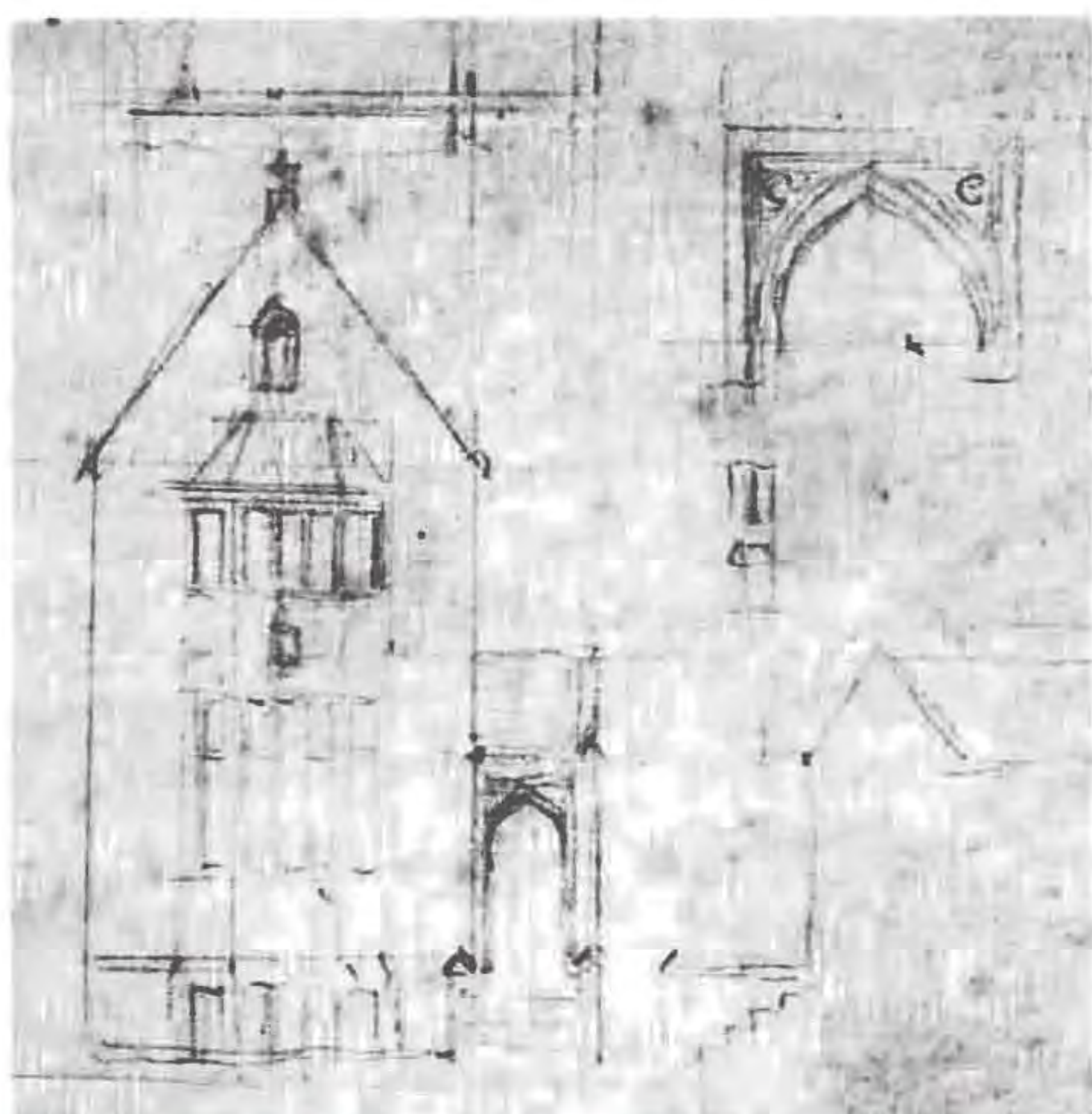


Figure 80: St Peter's presbytery: drawing by AWN Pugin, from Myers album
West Sussex Record Office, courtesy of Timothy McCann.

small oratory attached at the back may date from 1842. Two further sheets, smaller in scale, have sketch plans, elevations and sections of the house much as built by George Myers late in 1845. The date is fixed by the district surveyor's returns, which show also that Myers built additions in early 1846. These were the single-storey passage at the back and the sacristy to which it led. The sacristy, therefore, was built before the lady chapel.

This original presbytery is set back between the church on one side and the presbytery addition of 1870 on the other, to the extent of being almost swallowed up by them [figure 81]. The position was worse before 1870, when the neighbouring

building northwards actually overlapped the presbytery plot slightly at the front. Despite these drawbacks, the house is one of Pugin's best small brick secular buildings, plain but fetchingly proportioned.¹⁸ The front has bay windows running through three storeys, with stonework (now painted) stretching randomly into the brickwork. There are touches of simple ornament in the spandrels over the front door bearing the initials of Thomas Griffiths, as sketched in the Myers album. A panel with a bishop's mitre between the main storeys carries the same letters intertwined. The back elevation is similar but lacks bays or ornament. In plan the house conforms to an old London type, with the staircase (of timber, with stout rail and simply chamfered balusters) placed crosswise between front and back rooms. A few fireplaces and ceilings survive. Behind the porch, which is outside the body of the building, steps lead down to the narrow passage onwards to the sacristy, so that the priest could admit callers to the back of the church without taking them through his house. Jammed up against the church's north aisle, this passage is typical of Pugin in having its own minuscule pitched roof and two-light north-facing windows. It arrives at a squareish room with a roof pitched in the other direction, and small windows facing east and west. That was the extent of the original sacristy.

The main portion of the present presbytery, including the entrance, adjoins to the north and dates from 1870, as a plaque over the door attests. This blundering brick house is bigger in every way than Pugin's and stands well forward of it, like the building which it replaced. It has sometimes been misattributed to E.W. Pugin. In fact it was built for Jeremiah Cotter, the autocratic priest who succeeded Cornelius Coles, to designs by a minor Catholic architect, John Crawley. Cotter had inherited money, which he used to buy the next plot to the north and build this much larger house, annexing it to the older presbytery in the process. Crawley indented for a charge of 5% 'on new house and music room Woolwich' in 1872.¹⁹ By the music room is

18 Brittain-Catlin 2008, pp 144, 146.

19 Dunn, pp 6–8; SDA, account of Crawley to Cotter, 8.1872.

probably meant the large two-storey extension at the back of the garden. It is now attached to the sacristy, but the connection seems to have taken place later.

The schools (St Peter's Centre)

Immediately south of the church, on the opposite side from the presbytery, stands a two-storey building known today as the St Peter's Centre [figure 75]. Its core consists of the parish schools, erected to the designs of E.W. Pugin in 1858 but grievously altered inside and out. In particular their original appearance towards New Road has been obscured by a front added later by F.A. Walters to get in extra classrooms.

The genesis of the original schools is much better documented than the other buildings of the St Peter's ensemble, revealing how fraught and hand-to-mouth such enterprises could be. The main source is a series of letters to Bishop Thomas Grant of Southwark, mostly from Father Cornelius Coles.²⁰

By 1855 Coles was ready to build schools. Not only did he want to rehouse the 'unruly' children of the existing Catholic school, but he had been much concerned, he told the bishop, by the 'persecution' of 'our children' in the barrack schools, who had sometimes been forced to kneel down and read the protestant bible. A successful negotiation took place that year with the Board of Ordnance and the Treasury for the site south of the church, then occupied by the Gun public house. It took a long time to find new premises for the pub, but in June 1857 the site was conveyed to the Catholics, once again probably without charge.

Meanwhile in November 1855 Coles received plans and specifications from the 21-year-old E.W. Pugin, taking the place of his dead father [figures 83 and 84]. At £2,300 the design was too expensive despite a government grant, so Coles spent much time trying to whittle the cost down. This was difficult while Pugin junior was living in Birmingham, but by early 1857 he had moved to London. In the summer his



Figure 81: St Peter's presbytery: original building by A.W.N. Pugin, 1845, to right; addition by John Crawley, 1870, to left *English Heritage* (Derek Kendall).

²⁰ SDA, Woolwich box, 1853–9. Individual letters in the following account are not referenced.



Figure 82: St Peter's schools: perspective, signed Pugin and Murray, c1857. The date 1854 written on later is incorrect

Greenwich History Centre.

further emphatic protests from the Myers firm. Then, as work got under way, came signs that after 20 years in Woolwich Coles' nerves were fraying. Dealing with E.W. Pugin was bad enough ('When Mr P comes down it is for a few minutes. I waited all day yesterday for him. To day, I was absent for about half an hour, he came and was gone. Writing is useless. Calling in London, is the same.'), but Coles also became convinced that Gascoyne was cheating the mission, and building walls and roofs too thin. 'Revd R. North [rector of Greenwich] says that instead of the "bold Gothic, it will be in the factory style, with consumptive piers"', he wrote. As to the roof, 'Our school is wider than the church nave; the roof is heavier and needs reinforcement'; 'Mr Pugin (the father) was fearful of the roof of the nave of our church – the roof of the school is 24 ft [?] wider, with less side support'. Repeatedly Coles complained of poor supervision and scamped materials.

By September 1858 Bishop Grant was hinting that the sick priest should retire or at least take a holiday, but Coles was reluctant to do so, on the grounds that separation from 'my child' (meaning the church, not the school) would make him worse. 'Had the Father of Mr P been the architect, much anxiety would have been saved, and also *many pounds*.' North went to investigate. He reported back that Coles was on garlic, not opium, but 'bore the image of a dying man ... Woolwich has not been *improved* it has been *created* by him, in all its departments'.

By this time Gascoyne had almost finished the building work and the bishop was being harassed with his urgent requests for payment. In November 1858 Edward Pugin wrote to him: 'Gascoyne is in despair about Woolwich', adding: 'My Mother also begs me to ask when the Ramsgate offices are likely to be brought to a definite conclusion'. While paying Gascoyne off, Grant also felt compelled to oust Coles, by now erratic and paranoid. His tale ended sadly; he was dead by the end of 1859, aged only 46. It was Coles's assistant and then replacement, Jeremiah Cotter, who sorted out the muddle with North of Greenwich. As the latter told Grant, he had remarked to E.W. Pugin before a brick was laid that the school could not be built for the sum stated: 'he coughed at my simplicity and I was right. But it is a fine building with all

revised plans went to tender. George Myers estimated £2,200 still, but William Gascoyne of Leamington's figure was £1,736. Tension must have already been in the air, for Pugin wrote to Bishop Grant: 'I sincerely trust that this extraordinary job will at last be called into actual existence.'

With work about to start in February 1858, Myers got wind of the fact that Gascoyne had been allowed to add to his tender, and wrote off in fury to the bishop. He was allowed to submit a revised estimate, for £1,890, but so too was Gascoyne. In the end the job stayed with the latter despite

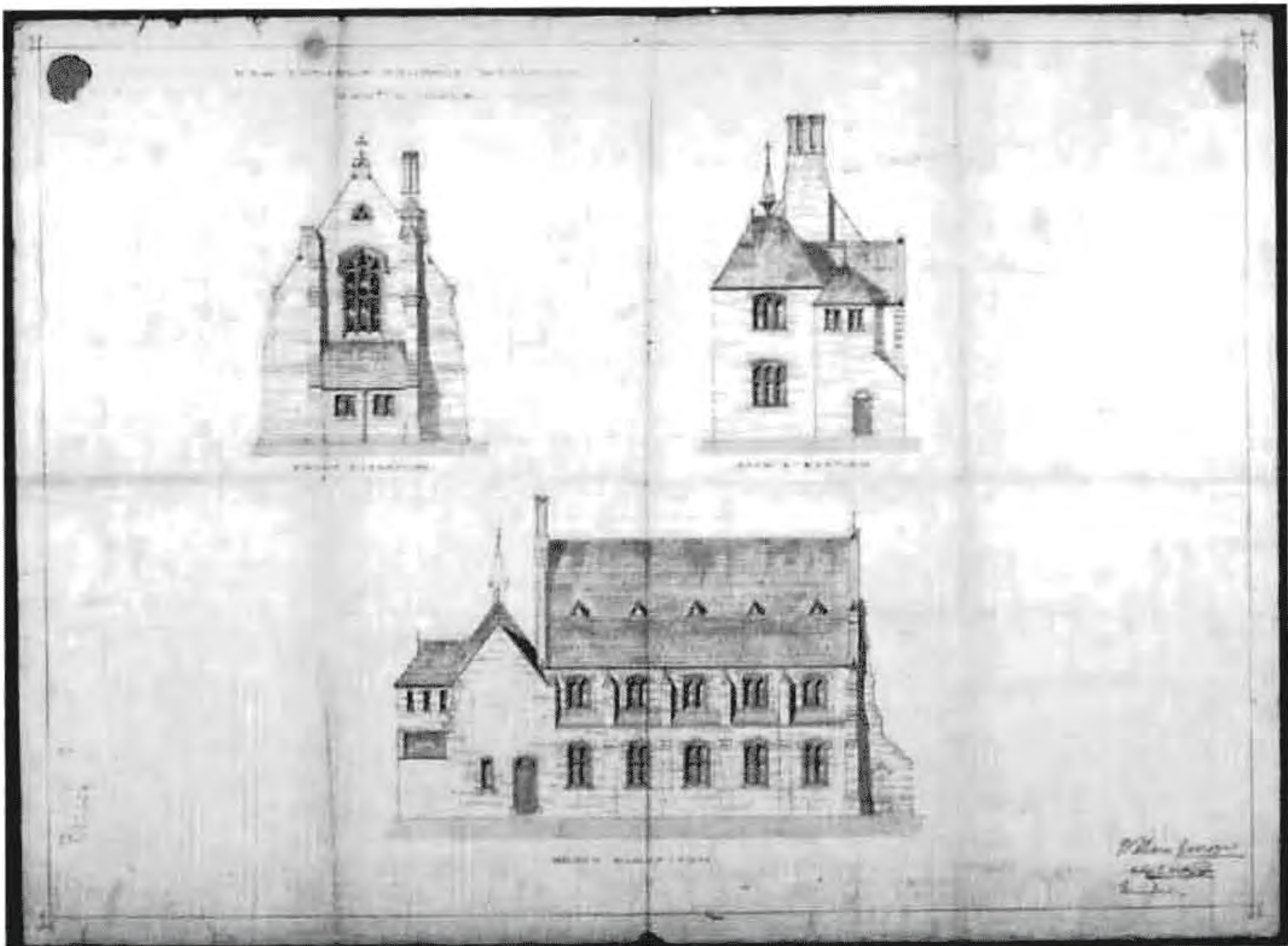


Figure 83: St Peter's schools: contract drawings (elevations) signed by EW Pugin and countersigned by the contractor William Gascoyne and Bishop Thomas Grant, 1858
London Metropolitan Archives, Y/SP/97/11.

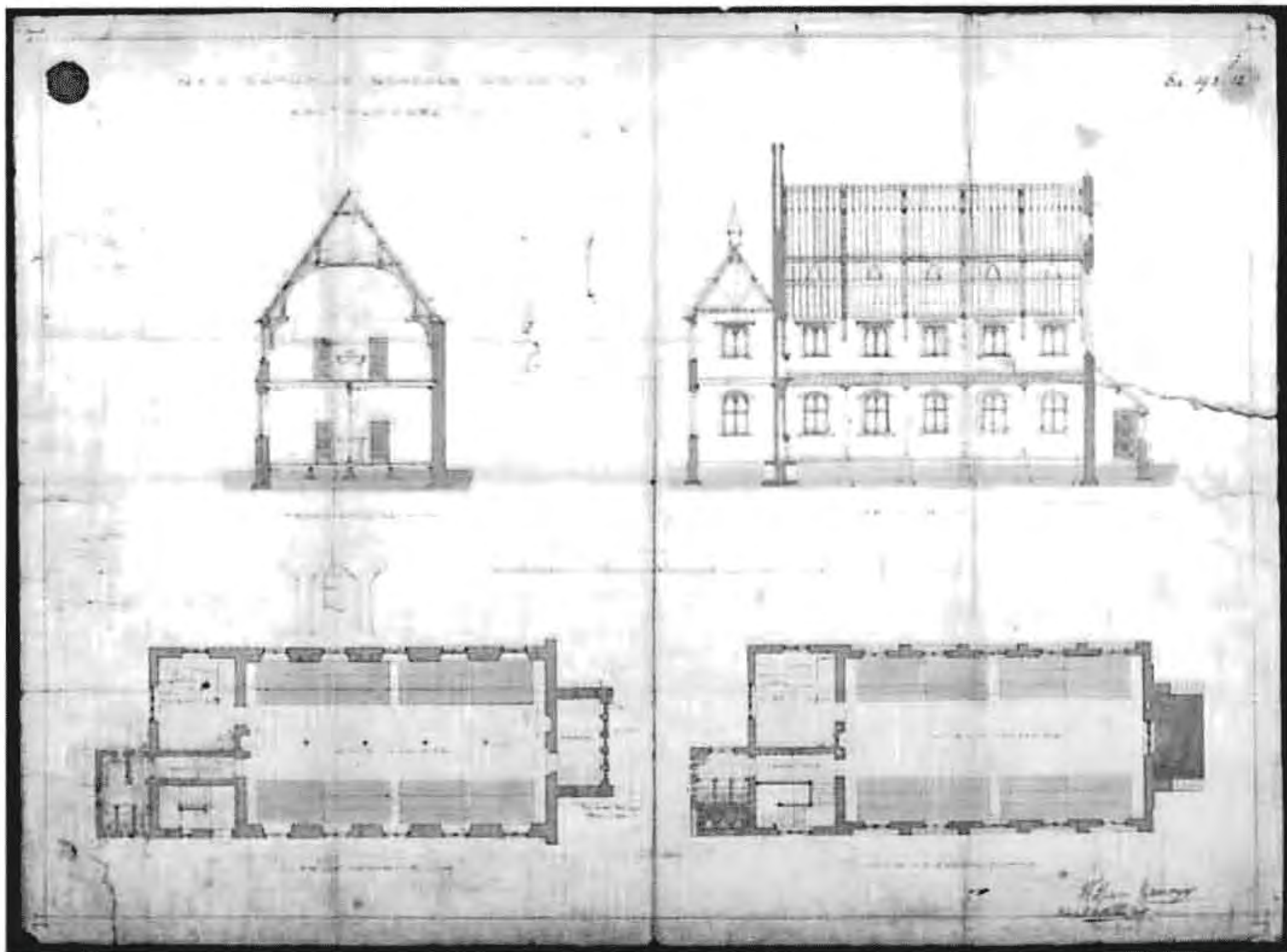


Figure 84: St Peter's schools: contract drawings (plans and sections) signed by EW Pugin and countersigned by the contractor William Gascoyne and Bishop Thomas Grant, 1858
London Metropolitan Archives, Y/SP/97/11.

its faults and I think well worth the money.' The disease of extravagance ran in the Pugin family, believed North. 'Dr Griffiths once said "Pugin (the older) is a fine architect but you must have a *fathomless pocket* if you engage him"'. The outcome of all this trouble was indeed a striking building, more original for its date than the church next door. The alterations which it has suffered make its qualities hard to read. As the plot was tight, E.W. Pugin (or the firm of Pugin and Murray, as named in the perspective drawing) designed a two-storey school and set

it parallel with the church.²¹ Girls came above and boys below, both (in conformity with government regulations) having a large schoolroom and a small square classroom at the back. The internal breadth which worried Coles was about 30 feet, spanned over the girls' classroom by a hammerbeam roof with queen-post trusses at the top (now hidden). The girls' floor was stiffened by four iron columns that ran down the centre of the boys' classroom below. Externally the architecture ventured into 'High Victorian' Gothic, advanced for 1858. The main show was on the short end towards New Road, where the centre was marked by a lean-to porch flanked by buttresses enclosing a three-light window to the boys' schoolroom; to avoid absolute symmetry, one of the buttresses carried up into a chimney. Along the flanks, the upper walls were cut back in thickness where buttressing was not needed for the roof trusses, so as to create two planes. At the east end, the classrooms and boys' stairs were expressed as a separate block, roofed in the other direction and equipped with a thin bellcote. This end has suffered from a series of alterations. The New Road front was extended by two classrooms in 1893–4 to F.A. Walters' design. Though in fair stylistic keeping, this addition concealed or destroyed E.W. Pugin's front and substituted the staid Gothic of the 1890s for the vigour of the 1850s. The building is now used as a parish centre, the school having moved away in the 1950s. It has almost no interior features left.

J.W. Walter and P.P. Pugin

Some way west of St Peter's, just above Woolwich Dockyard Station, stands the forlorn church of St Michael, at present in the throes of the redundancy process. After the Georgian parish church of St Mary's it is second in architectural status among Woolwich's Anglican churches. St Michael's was the initiative of a typical High Church urban priest, Hugh Ryves Baker. Its chancel dates from 1876–7 and was the work of J.W. Walter; the nave, added in 1888–9, is a late work of Butterfield's.

John William Walter, born in 1838 or 1839, was a competent if not notably original designer in the 'High Victorian' Gothic styles. Born in Cambridge, he was the son of a minor architect-surveyor there called James Walter who had a connection with William Wilkins and earns a few lines in Colvin's dictionary. He took articles under W.M. Teulon in London, and by 1871 had gravitated to Plumstead just east of Woolwich. Before the St Michael's chancel he had in 1870–1 already built a good set of schools to the north of the church, now demolished.²² His only other identified works in London are again schools: a similar set for another local Anglican church, St John's (1872–3), also demolished like so much in Woolwich; and a Gothic board school in Battersea, still in use and known today as Westbridge School, which Walter won in competition and built in 1873–4.

Walter's chancel at St Michael's, tall, costly but a little gaunt, was evidently a success. In the normal course of events he would have been asked to complete the church with the nave once there were promises of enough money, which Baker had by 1886. But that proved impossible. As Baker's principal supporter, Richard Foster,

21 London Metropolitan Archives, Y/SP/97/11/A–B; Greenwich History Centre, Vincent cuttings, 5, p 59.

22 Colvin 1995, p 1020; census, 1851, 1861, 1871: *Directory of British architects 1834–1914*, 2001, vol 2, p 906: *Architect*, 2.9.1871, p 118.

explained to the Incorporated Church-Building Society when applying for a grant, Walter had gone off to the United States to help a Roman Catholic architect, Mr Pugin, leaving his plans for St Michael's behind. Foster did not approve of that. Instead of finishing off the church according to Walter's designs he therefore brought in Butterfield – 'so the plans are sure to be all right', as he told the Society.²³

When did Walter go to America and what did he get up to there? The skeleton of an answer can be found in Dennis Steadman Francis's *Architects in practice in New York City* (1979). This reveals the firm of Pugin and Walter operating between 1881 and 1886 at 68 Wall Street and between 1885 and 1888 at 81 New Street. The practice then becomes Marshall and Walter and goes on in Manhattan and Brooklyn till after 1900.

The story of Pugin family commissions in North America is still fairly obscure. Gerard Hyland has traced half a dozen or more jobs there connected with E.W. Pugin, while in her contribution to *A.W.N. Pugin: master of Gothic revival*, Margaret Floyd discusses a number of commissions carried out by E.W. Pugin and his brother P.P. Pugin, mostly in the Boston area.²⁴ The Floyd article mentions Walter in passing, suggesting that E.W. Pugin set up a partnership with him at the chic Brevort House, Fifth Avenue, during the former's brief sojourn in New York, c1873–4. That cannot be right, because Walter was still firmly in London then. What seems to have happened is that Walter went over to New York at or around the time of P.P. Pugin's second visit to the USA, c1881 (his first appears to have been to help brother E.W. along, c1874), and stayed on there as his representative and partner.

In New York, as in London, Walter specialised in churches. Yet despite the Pugin connection, none of his known commissions was for Catholics. The job that seems to have kicked off the Pugin and Walter practice was the Memorial Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn (1881–2). Both the other works by Walter noted by Francis' directory are non-Catholic churches: St Luke's Lutheran Church, and St Mark's Episcopal Church, Brooklyn. Two further Walter jobs in Brooklyn are recorded. In 1885–6 he added the nave and chancel as the second stage of rebuilding St John's Episcopal Church, and he also made an unsuccessful competition design for St Luke's Episcopal Church. Some of these churches still exist, none seemingly of note, and with the possible exception of Memorial Presbyterian there is no reason to suppose that Peter Paul Pugin was in any practical way involved with them. No doubt Walter hoped that the Pugin name would have its uses in getting started in New York, but the connection soon faded. There is no hint of Walter's involvement with Peter Paul's work in the Boston area. His name disappears from directories shortly after 1900, and he presumably died in America.²⁵

23 Incorporated Church-Building Society file 7668, Lambeth Palace Library.

24 Hyland 2009, p 36; Floyd 1995, pp 208–12, 219–20.

25 Information in these paragraphs has come largely from emails from Mosette Broderick and James O'Gorman, to whom I'd like to record thanks.

Remedies external and visible: Pugin's health and Pugin's Gothic

by Martin Bressani and Cameron Macdonell

A W.N. Pugin's obituaries indicate that illness caused his premature death at the age of 40. Yet the circumstances and nature of his illness have remained elusive. In his appendix to Benjamin Ferrey's *Recollections*, Edmund Sheridan Purcell explains that Pugin's prodigious work as an architect, designer, and writer meant that his 'over-exerted brain gave way beneath the pressure of labour'.¹ Years later, writing from a devoutly Roman Catholic perspective, Michael Trappes-Lomax elaborated on Purcell's eulogy:

The enormous pressure of work went on, the terrible, selfless labour of those who believe, and have power to act up to their belief, that the greatest privilege possessed by man is to be allowed, while on earth, to contribute to the glory of God... There comes a breaking-point.²

In a similar vein, Kenneth Clark described how

The nervous strain of dealing with foolish or unsympathetic public bodies inflamed Pugin's mind... by summer [1852] he became definitely insane and was removed to Bedlam; on 14 September he died.³

For Clark, Pugin's death was a result not only of his 'furious industry' but also because it was impossible to 'calm his impatience.'⁴ David Meara has recently suggested that 'it was perhaps the pain of realizing that he had failed to persuade the Catholic community of the validity of his ideas that contributed to his mental decline'.⁵ Historians have thus ensconced Pugin in a holy trinity of fiery temperament, manic productivity, and the crushing nadir of depression.

Their observations on Pugin's personality cannot be disputed: he was indeed a fiery proponent of Gothic with a restless need to work, and prone to dire fits of despair. But these traits cannot have been the primary cause of his death since his final illness and insanity were the consequence of a recurring disease contracted early in the 1830s. In all likelihood, Pugin's illness, plaguing his entire adult life, was an impetus for his restlessness. He added the motto *en avant* to the family crest in 1835, expressing his fear of idleness. 'He had much to look forward to and, perhaps, a fear of looking back', wrote Rosemary Hill in her recent biography: 'For the rest of his life he worked like a man driven, or pursued'.⁶ Among Pugin's past pursuers, we surmise that the disease he contracted in the 1830s was the most tormenting.

Phoebe Stanton was the first to highlight the fact that Pugin was chronically ill. She wrote that Pugin, in 1835, aged 23, 'had experienced an attack of the debilitating and frightening disease of the eyes, probably iritis, which was to haunt him for the

1 In Ferrey 1861, p 453.

2 Trappes-Lomax 1932, p 301.

3 Clark 1964, p 112–13.

4 *Ibid*, p 112.

5 Meara 1995, p 59.

6 Hill 2007, p 138.

rest of his life and to contribute to his collapse and death'.⁷ The eye disease surely helps to explain Pugin's 1850 confession about the difficulty in designing the total liturgical space of a church, with its 'masonry, carpentry, wood and stone carving, painted glass, encaustic tiles, incised brasses, metal work... silk weaving, and brocades'.⁸ He went on to compare the requisite trial-and-error process of realising his Gothic vision to the work of 'Abernethy, the celebrated surgeon', who 'often told his pupils that it was necessary for a man to spoil a bushel of eyes, before he could become a skilful oculist; and the same parallel will hold good in the attainment of knowledge in ecclesiastical architecture and decoration'.⁹ Pugin eagerly sought the work of 'skilful oculists' – be they men who could restore the Catholic body of his visionary architecture or those who could restore vision to his own bodily architecture.

Stanton, however, ignored the fact that chronic iritis is often symptomatic of a much worse disease, a fact that Hill didn't miss in her 2007 biography. Carefully analysing all of Pugin's chronic symptoms – including joint pain, fever, and his final insanity – Hill diagnosed Pugin as syphilitic, ravaged by the granulomas that inflame the eyes, joints, and brain of the carrier.¹⁰ Even if stress, despair, and over-exertion were distal causes exacerbating what Pugin called his 'nervous fever,' it was the underlying cause of syphilis that set in motion the fatal events of 1852. Hill also deduced that Pugin contracted syphilis during 'his rackety days' in London's theatre world where 'venereal disease was endemic'.¹¹ Referring to Pugin's career as a stage-hand and set designer in the Covent Garden Theatre (c1830), she proposed that Pugin was infected during a liaison with a fellow theatre employee, and that the four or five-year lapse between that liaison and the first bout of temporary blindness was 'about the length of time it would take for the first symptoms of syphilis to appear'.¹²

Syphilis is a difficult diagnosis to ascribe posthumously but Hill amassed enough evidence to mount a convincing case.¹³ What is missing from her description, however, is a full account of the disease. Hill's description of the 'first symptoms of syphilis' is really a description of tertiary syphilis, which, as she noted, does not commonly appear until several years after infection. Syphilis has up to three stages of development: the initial chancre, which appears at the point of sexual contact a few weeks or months after infection, lasting several weeks; a secondary stage, which usually begins a few months later, having various symptoms, including an extensive

7 Stanton 1971, p 23. Concomitantly, Margaret Belcher argued that 'Pugin applied himself to composition with such intensity that his physical health suffered', implying that poor health was a problem throughout his career. See Belcher 1995, p 113. However, as with Purcell and Clark, Belcher would only articulate Pugin's poor health in the romantic terms of his 'intensity'.

8 Pugin 1850, p 15.

9 *Ibid.* Pugin was likely referring to the famed surgeon John Abernethy (1764–1831), who undoubtedly appealed to Pugin because of Abernethy's belief that science must not be divorced from religion. See Wallen 2004, p 103.

10 See Hill 2007, pp 151; 238; 254; 256–7; 264; 266; 278; 305; 345; 361–2; 444; 446; 450; 465; 469–70; 471; 476–8; 484–9; 492. See also Hill 1995, *passim*. On p 40, Hill notes that Pugin had been ill long before his final breakdown: 'The illness he had fought for years was beginning to get the better of him'. But at that point Hill was not ready to speculate as to 'what diagnosis modern medicine would offer'. Christabel Powell is another scholar who recently made the claim that Pugin suffered from syphilis. She stated that the symptoms were of 'congenital syphilis', but without providing evidence to that effect. See Powell 2006, p 9.

11 Hill 2007, pp 151; 80.

12 *Ibid.*, p 151

13 Hence, we also concur with the opinions of Sir Richard Baylis and Professor Ian McDonald, both of whom Hill consulted in pursuit of a syphilis diagnosis. See Hill 2007, n 1 p 578.

rash, lasting several months, sometimes years; and then latency, the syphilis either staying dormant for the rest of the person's life or progressing into tertiary syphilis often a few years after contact and sometimes, as with Pugin, leading to insanity or death. It is thus highly unlikely that Pugin would have noticed the symptoms only during the tertiary stage. We must rather assume that he knew he had contracted a venereal disease shortly after he was infected and all through the time leading up to its latency, only to have it re-emerge as tertiary syphilis late in 1835. In that year, he finally encountered symptoms that affected not only his private life but also, because of the temporary blindness, his career. This is probably why the symptoms of syphilis (never named as such) first appeared in Pugin's correspondence in 1835: only then did they directly threaten his artistic productivity, necessitating several plaintive and apologetic letters to friends, clients, colleagues, and artisans.

The implications of this diagnosis are myriad. Hill offered only a few passing comments to gloss the connection of Pugin's syphilis with his early career in the theatre:

Perhaps he had some suspicion of the cause of his illness. His exaggerated horror at anything 'theatrical' in a church, his insistence on the depravity of the opera singers hired to perform the Mass, his complicated dread of the past, might suggest that he had.¹⁴

We would further note Pugin's condemnation of classically-inspired drapery, describing the 'light and often indecent costume' of classicism as having no other purpose than 'to exhibit the human figure after the manner of an opera dancer'.¹⁵ For Pugin, the theatre had become synonymous with lasciviousness – an association in accord with the reality of London's theatre district at the time. As Hill observed, work in the theatres was 'as déclassé an occupation as Pugin could have found for himself within the law'; and part of the theatre's déclassé status was the threat of loose sexual morality.¹⁶ Hence the fact that venereal disease was endemic to the theatre. If Pugin was not the first theatre worker to contract syphilis, the incident acquired a decisive importance in his case because, to his mind, syphilis introduced a series of catastrophic events that would dramatically change his life.

The first disaster, though it hardly appeared as such at the time, was his affair with Anne Garnett in the summer of 1831. According to Hill, Anne was an obscure and penniless dancer at the Covent Garden Theatre.¹⁷ Realising Anne was pregnant, Pugin secretly married her in January 1832, without his parents' consent. Their daughter was born the following May with the tragic consequence of Anne dying in the aftermath of the delivery. The calamity brought Pugin to a state of near moral collapse, without doubt reflecting his sense of responsibility for the loss. His mother described how Pugin could no longer

be left alone at night, that is the dread hour. I have never left his bedside since the death of his wife, nor known what an unbroken night's rest was before last night. Wretched he will be, grieved to the soul.¹⁸

14 *Ibid*, p 492.

15 Pugin 1843b, p 44.

16 Hill 2007, p 80.

17 *Ibid*, p 91.

18 Ferrey 1861, n p 69.

Furthermore, if the loss of his wife had not been enough, the consecutive deaths of his father and mother immediately afterwards would have convinced a person even of less feverish temperament that divine wrath had indeed struck the family house. God was punishing him for his work in the theatre. His father died on 19 December 1832; his mother four months later, expiring from exhaustion and grief. Two months after the death of his father he wrote to Edward James Willson to say that ‘after mature consideration and Consulting my best friends I have resolved to give up my theatrical connection altogether and to devote *myself—entirely* to the pursuit of Gothic architecture’.¹⁹ His pursuit of Gothic architecture would thus be his penance for syphilis and the theatre.

That this series of events – initiated by his sinful behaviour at Covent Garden and marked on his body through the chancre of syphilis – would have been understood by Pugin as signs from heaven cannot be doubted. A prophetic imagination had been ingrained in his psyche by his mother who, all through his childhood, ‘fed his lively imagination by the relation of marvellous hair-breadth escapes and far-fetched tales’.²⁰ She dragged her poor son every week to hear the dramatic preaching of Edward Irving that at this time was convulsing London with apocalyptic visions. There are unmistakeable signs that Pugin deeply absorbed that spirit. By 1825 he had acquired an enduring fascination with disasters, recording in his diaries every boat wreck, bankruptcy and accidental event of note.²¹ Barely a year after his mother’s death, Pugin, with dead seriousness, related to his friend, William Osmond, two instances of divine wrath miraculously striking sinners:

an architectural Gentleman not Long scince at Durham (while Lamenting that Villain Wyatts alterations had not been carried into effect) was suddenly struck dumb and only recovered his speech by writing a recantation of his abominable opinions...

not Long scince during divine service at a small church that has been Lately disguised by some modern repairs—a person was struck by a flash of Lightning which was attracted by an iron head of tracery placed in a wood pannel immediatly behind him. the electric fluid then descended on the top of the seat where it Left the following extraordinary marks **carve**. During the same storm the house & shops of the founder himself were struck & 200 tons of 1 sort of tracery shivered to atoms.²²

Even though the faults triggering these divine retaliations were architectural rather than lustfully corporeal, for the Pugin who would later condemn the indecency of classical culture and the modern theatre, the one became synonymous with the other. Architectural and corporeal sins were part of the same social condition.

What interests us here is not simply to show how, following misfortunes in the early 1830s, architecture acquired a new moral tenor in Pugin’s mind – an aspect already well underscored in the historiography. We wish to demonstrate instead how such an understanding was organised around the themes of health, illness, and

19 26.2.1833: Belcher 2001, p 159.

20 Ferrey 1861, p 44.

21 Hill 2007, p 66.

22 5.1834?: Belcher 2001, p 35.

recovery. Pugin is justifiably famous for being the first theorist to insist upon the relationship between architecture and the society that produced it. It may then seem a paradox that, while holding the idea that architecture reflects society, Pugin was also the most zealous and passionate advocate for a return to mediæval Gothic. His goal, to use one of his favourite expressions, was '*the restoration of the real thing*'.²³ The '*real*' thing, however, had nothing to do with modern England: 'I seek *antiquity not novelty*. I strive to *revive not invent*'.²⁴ Such incongruity between realism and revivalism can only be resolved if we understand the relationship between architecture and society as a dynamic one, shifting from architecture as a passive reflection of society to architecture as a *remedy* for a society that has shown itself to be sickly in light of that reflection. Architecture is all at once a tool by which society is judged and a means by which society can be regenerated. For Pugin, the return to Gothic was a restoration of England's health and his own.

Pugin's belief that architecture could cure social ills was partly indebted to a picturesque tradition and its emphasis on architecture's power to generate strong subjective effects. Hill, for one, defined that tradition as a 'way of describing the relationship of interior mood to external stimulus, of understanding the effects of light and colour, in nature and in architecture, on human sensibility'.²⁵ But Pugin developed a very special understanding of the relationship between external stimuli and human receptivity. In February 1834, for instance, he gave curious medical advice to the temporarily indisposed Edward Willson:

do not Let your medical man make you swallow so much of his vile compositions or you will cerainly repent it. I have excellent health thank God—and my remedies are entirely external & visible ones.²⁶

Pugin then gave a sampling of his '*external & visible*' remedies, all except the first being architectural in nature:

1—on feeling the 1st Symptoms of a violent Cold: Read the sequestration of abbeys destruction of chauntries under Henry 8th. produces violent perspirations—wrap yourself up warm read Civil wars under Olver Cromwell treatment of Ecclesiastical Edifices by Puritans. produces Blood. heat. you rush out perfectly cured.

2 if feverish—& pulse high: a Quiet walk in Salisbury Norwich or Winchester Cloisters about sunset. in about an hour you will feel perfectly tranquil—pulse moderate.

3 For young person's inclined to stoop: The roofs of Kings Coll. St Georges chapel—henry 7th chapel & many others are recommended.

4 when the Stomach is overcharged with bile: an examination of the works of Batty Langley Wyatts Cathedral alterations Bernasconi's plaster works—Sir R Smirkes

23 Letter to Lord Shrewsbury, 5.1.1841: Belcher 2001, p 187.

24 Letter to JR Bloxam, 13.9 1840: Belcher 2001, p 144.

25 Hill 2007, p 18.

26 Letter of 28.2.1834: Belcher 2001, p 27. Pugin's claim to 'excellent health' probably meant that his syphilis had, by then, gone into latency, and thus, he hoped, never to progress into its tertiary stage. It is also possible that he was hiding his condition from others in the same way that he would blame his first bout of iritis on 'overwork and drawing by lamplight' (see Hill 2007, p 151).



Figure 85: Despoliated church with modern monument, from *Contrasts* Pugin 1836, 1841b.

Gothic churches. NB. some of the above are much too strong for a single dose particularly where a copious discharge is not required.

5 for Disorders produced by Violent Emotions: — an hour every afternoon at the choir door of York Looking towards the western Window under the effect of a Setting sun. here the various hues will be so modified as compleatly to compose the patient.

These are only a few excellent receipts for Various complaints only in administering the 4th be careful not to Let the patient see the whole of the county hall at once or the effect might be dangerous.²⁷

Aspects of Pugin's remedies were, of course, intended as an inside joke to amuse the ailing Willson. But, for a satirical moralist like Pugin, jokes always held a grain of truth; it was a

grain that came to fruition when Pugin converted to Roman Catholicism.

Pugin prescribed his remedies on the understanding that he and Willson were mutually sympathetic to Gothic architecture and its history. Among his list of prescriptions, the first would prove to be the most important because it was a declaration against protestantism as the destroyer of mediæval Gothic. Willson was a devout Roman Catholic, and Pugin converted on 6 June 1835. With his conversion, Pugin took his loose collection of picturesque remedies and organised them into one great restorative entity – the mediæval Catholic Church. He took it upon himself to show the Protestant majority of England that they were unknowingly ill, that the restoration of Gothic meant the restoration of their national health: 'Bad, paltry, miserable taste has overrun the externals of religion like a plague'.²⁸ But Pugin did not abandon the picturesque quality of his remedies when he converted to Catholicism. He sought to return the picturesque to its Catholic 'truth'. He insisted that, unlike the Georgian (and therefore protestant) picturesque of theatrical asymmetry, used for 'mere effect', the Catholic architects of the middle ages made their Gothic buildings 'essentially convenient and suitable to the required purpose, and decorated them afterwards'.²⁹ For Pugin, the true Catholic picturesque occurred when effect was achieved through purpose, and the purpose of Gothic architecture was 'the

27 Letter of 28.2.1834: Belcher 2001, pp 27–8.

28 Pugin 1851a, p 101.

29 Pugin 1843a, p 18.

faith of Christianity embodied – by which he meant the corporeal effect of Catholic faith.³⁰ In yet another letter to Willson, Pugin lauded his own work at St Chad's Catholic Cathedral in Birmingham:

I think you will be much pleased with it...though very plain outside [it] will produce a glorious internal effect purple with stained glass & rich with gilding...the solemnities of our holy religion are better performed there than anywhere on the continent at Least where I have been—and—it is wonderful to see the effect produced even on catholics when they see their religion in its antient & majestic garb.³¹

'Even' Roman Catholics were receptive to the effect, wrote Pugin. In other words, even individuals already participating in the true religion felt their faith enlivened – which implies that the primary recipients of Pugin's picturesque effects were English protestants who might then be moved by the Catholic faith and restored to the primacy of the Catholic Church.

Pugin would not rely on architecture alone to show protestant England that their society was sick. In his polemical texts, Pugin celebrated mediæval England as a place of Catholic Gothic architecture in healthful harmony with the natural body of England's countryside – a place to 'compose' oneself and 'feel perfectly tranquil'. Gothic England was, for Pugin, entirely other than its modern counterpart, the latter a place in which the '*violent emotions*' of his writing were necessary. In the *Apology* he particularly lamented the modern infestation of foreign styles, marring the natural balance of Gothic and England because 'the Turk and the Christian, the Egyptian and the Greek, the Swiss and the Hindoo, march side by side, and mingle together'.³² England had to be purged of these foreign styles and be restored to the purity of Gothic because the 'face of the country would be then no longer disfigured by the incongruous and eccentric erections, compounds of all styles and countries'.³³ So Pugin was prescribing Gothic architecture to cure the malady of foreign disfigurement. Furthermore, because Italianate classicism was the most threatening architectural malformation within the English nation, Pugin singled out the 'small Doric men' who 'infest the country with classical adaptations in Roman cement'.³⁴ In a later passage he commented

How painful is it to behold, in the centre of a fine old English park and vast domain, a square, unsightly mass of bastard Italian...! How contrary to the spirit of the ancient mansions, covered with ancestral badges and memorials, and harmonizing in beautiful irregularity with the face of nature!³⁵

Again, we find the threat of unsightly masses. Worst of all was a situation in which ugly Italian architecture infected the once-Catholic bodies of English Gothic churches. One of the most telling pieces of evidence demonstrating Pugin's association of architectural improprieties with bodily illness and deformity is found in a letter sent to Osmond on 20 September 1832, while the latter was working as a

30 Pugin 1841b, p 3.

31 Letter of 9.6.1839: Belcher 2001, p 116.

32 Pugin 1843b, p 2.

33 *Ibid*, p 21.

34 *Ibid*, p 20.

35 *Ibid*, p 38.

stonemason in Salisbury cathedral. Osmond had been carving memorial tablets in the neo-classical style, and Pugin sought to correct him, calling his tablets ‘blisters’ on the body of a Gothic church.³⁶ That Pugin called them blisters is telling of 1832, a time when he was likely suffering from or having just endured the effects of secondary syphilis and its persistent rashes. He was projecting the sin of his illness onto the body of modern English architecture. Thus, on the top of a letter to Osmond, Pugin drew a blister of a neo-classical funeral tablet, labelled 1832, and beside it a Gothic tomb of 1332.³⁷ These small thumbnail drawings formed the genesis of *Contrasts* – the first and greatest of his Catholic architectural polemics [figure 85].

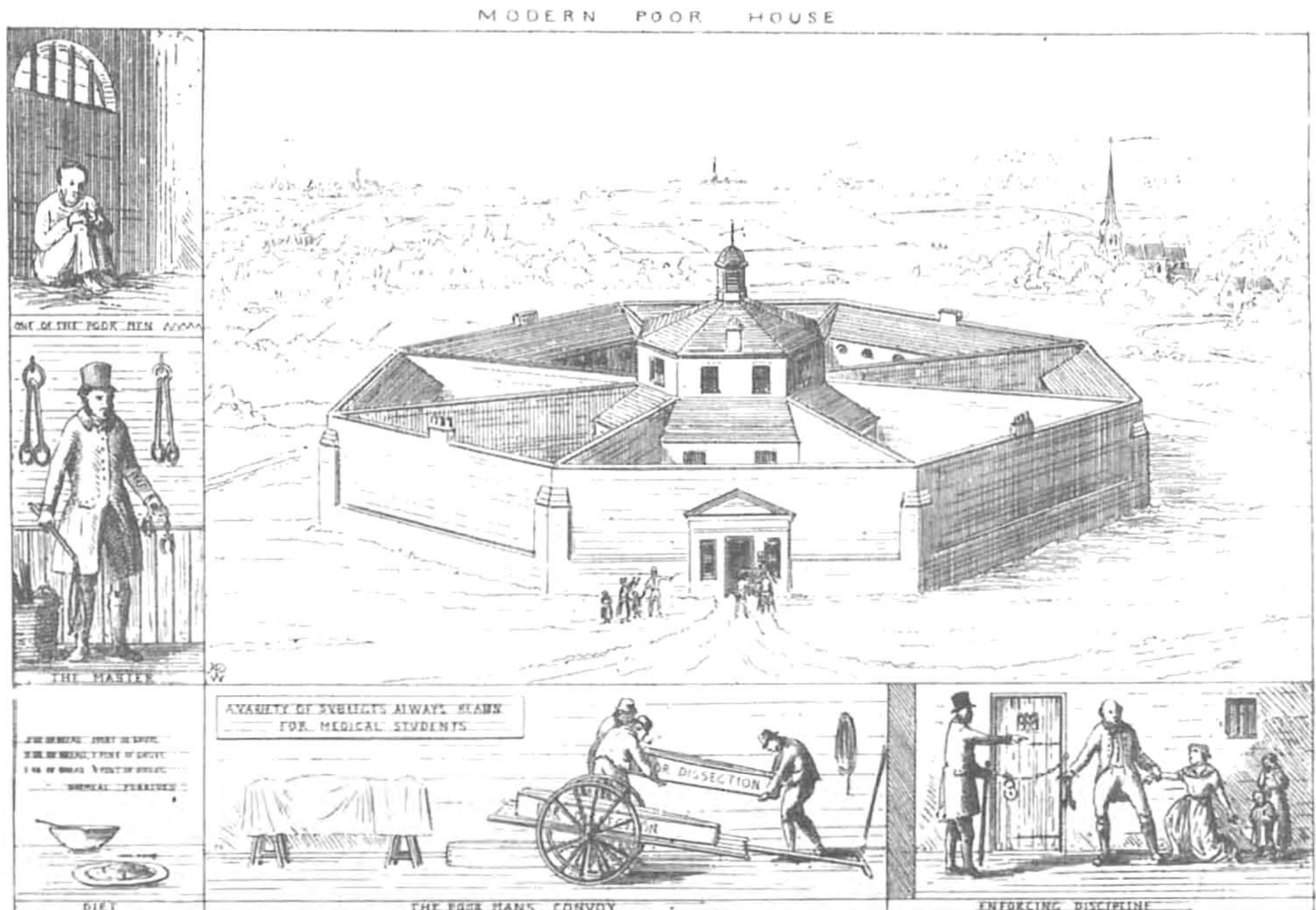


Figure 86: Pugin's ‘modern poor house’
Pugin 1841b.

From his initial drawings of 1832 to the publication of *Contrasts* in 1836, Pugin conceived of England's wretched state as the two-fold introduction of foreign parasites into the sixteenth-century English social body: paganism and protestantism. Hence his condemnation of pagan costume for inciting the lustfulness that would be his own undoing in the un-Catholic world of English theatre. He and mediæval England were both victims of the same infection. As Pugin continued to reflect on the relationship of architecture and society, however, he changed his mind about the sixteenth century. Paganism and protestantism were still foreign parasites infecting the English social body, but they had been allowed to infect that body because of ‘the decayed state of faith throughout Europe in the fifteenth century’.³⁸ The ‘self-denying Catholic principle’ governing mediæval England's social body was

36 See the article by David Meara in this number, pp 195–8.

37 Letter of 20.9.1832: Belcher 2001, pp 12–3.

38 Pugin 1841b, p iii.

then ‘in a most diseased state’.³⁹ With that assessment, Pugin transposed the moral and bodily consequences of his own self-indulgent lust enacted in the Covent Garden Theatre onto the development of British history as a whole. Consequently, the second edition of *Contrasts* distinguished not only between foreign paganism and national Gothic, but also between healthy and deformed phases of the Gothic.

It was John Milner who had largely influenced Pugin’s change of mind. Milner’s 1811 *Treatise on the ecclesiastical architecture of England, during the middle ages* not only created a period-based history of Gothic architecture, but also imbued that history with a moral dimension: the last phase of the mediæval Gothic, what we often call the ‘perpendicular’, was a period of decline. Pugin seized on this point in his 1841 rewriting of *Contrasts* and the concurrent publication of *The true principles*, in which he detailed the many ‘symptoms of decline apparent in the later works in the pointed style’.⁴⁰ For example, previously, in the third ‘external and visible’ remedy given to Willson, Pugin had suggested that young persons ‘inclined to stoop’ should view the perpendicular Gothic roofs of King’s College chapel and the like. With that prescription, the Pugin of 1834 felt that the stark verticality of perpendicular Gothic could cure stooping bodies, making them physically and morally upright. But with the further moral imperative he took from Milner, the Pugin of 1841 decided that the roofs of perpendicular vaulting were diseased because the simple, beautiful bosses of earlier Gothic keystones were perpendicularly deformed into carbuncular pendants. This ‘trick’ of the perpendicular had the opposite effect of his original prescription, making the body of a late Gothic church stoop like the diseased social body of fifteenth-century Catholics. Thus the Pugin of 1841 would condemn his own earlier work as part of the same diseased state of architecture and faith.

Pugin would go on to make his clearest declaration about the sickly state of England in *An earnest address, on the establishment of the hierarchy*, 1851. Written at a time when his health was definitely waning, Pugin’s earnest address was also his most explicit use of medical metaphors:

Protestantism, like all other evils, has its origin in corruption, and is an effect, not a primary cause; it is a sort of disease, or fungus, that has developed itself on the Catholic body, and as a skilful physician removes a tumour by treating the whole system, rather than by local application, so I conceive that if we turn from Protestantism and its excesses to the consideration of its primary causes from whence it sprung, we shall do much to heal, if not remove altogether, the sad, the sickened division that now afflicts this land.⁴¹

Here he left no doubt that protestantism was not to blame. It was an opportunistic infection, a disease that preyed upon the moral corruption within the corporate entity of the English Catholic Church. By 1851, Pugin would even mock his earlier utopian vision of the middle ages: ‘pleasant meadows, happy peasants, merry England—according to Cobbett—bread cheap and beef for nothing, all holy monks, all holy priests,—holy everybody’.⁴² But, his mockery only went so far as to lament the fact that ‘from the very beginning the pure Catholic faith was, in temporal

39 *Ibid.*

40 Pugin 1841a, n p 7.

41 Pugin 1875, p 16.

42 *Ibid.*, p 35.

matters, mixed up with barbarism'.⁴³ In the end, Pugin called for a Catholic Church entirely free from the state, a 'virgin hierarchy unpolluted and uncorrupted with State intrigue and diplomacy'.⁴⁴ Pugin wanted to belong to a Catholic body wholly unlike his mortal shell, rife with syphilis.

The 1832 letter to William Osmond and the genesis of Pugin's thinking about the diseased state of modern England also corresponded with the death of his first wife, when the tragic consequences of his lustful youth were becoming apparent. It was also a time when Pugin was preoccupied with her burial. He had gone to great pains and expense to insure a proper ceremony at Christchurch Priory in Hampshire, a considerable distance from London. Hill described how he did all he could to give some dignity to the event, organising matters exactly as he wished thanks to his influence with the clergy at Christchurch.⁴⁵ The ceremonious burial was clearly intended as a form of absolution, with many special measures provided, including the exceptional placement of her coffin in the centre of the choir instead of the nave. This placement of his wife's body at the sacred foci of the church foreshadowed the corporeal regeneration that would become integral to Pugin's understanding of Catholic liturgy. In the second edition of *Contrasts*, Pugin included his famous comparison of the treatment of the poor in 1840 and 1440. Among the various tableaux, the comparable treatment of the dead is most salient. Drawing upon the newly activated Anatomy Act of 1832, in which the state could donate the poor to be dissected in the anatomy theatres of England's medical schools, Pugin added the grim label 'A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS ALWAYS READY FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS' [figure 86].⁴⁶ Against this horrific scene of the impoverished dead helpless to stop the dissection of their bodies, Pugin illustrated a mediæval funeral in which every good Catholic, regardless of wealth, was afforded the full rites of burial. As a Catholic, the dissection of the dead was especially gruesome because it was a desecration of the body. Believing in the corporeal resurrection, the body needed to be preserved to rise from the grave at the call of earthly paradise. So, just as Pugin hated the 'blisters' of neo-classicism ruining the perfectly upright embodiment of Catholic communion, so too did he hate the state's disruption of a Catholic's body because its owner was too poor to afford the proper rites. The body of a Catholic and the body of his Church were supposed to be whole.

Nor did the wealthy fare any better than the poor in modern England. Pugin told the story of a man, 'stupefied with disease', who, having abandoned the true faith and having given nothing of his vast wealth, received nothing in return:

Unrepentant, unshriven, unanealed, his spirit has gone to judgment. No ministers of God, no rites of holy church, were there to exhort and strengthen the departing soul. There was not one of all those mighty consolations which the church has provided for dying Christians and their survivors. No stoled priests kneel around in prayer and supplication; no ardent lights show forth the glorious hope of resurrection...no solemn knell invites the departing prayer; the chamber of death is close and still: the Protestant undertaker encloses the festering corpse in costly

43 *Ibid*, p 36.

44 *Ibid*, p 45.

45 Hill 2007, p 100.

46 Anatomy Act: 2 & 3 Will IV c75.

coffins, hideous in form and covered with plated devices, but not one Christian emblem among them all; a huge pile of sable feathers, as if in mockery, surmounts the whole; and thus it stands, till, in a few days, it is committed to moulder in an old vault. Placed on the north side of an old parish church that had been built for Catholic rites, but now blocked up with unsightly pews and galleries of uncouth and rude construction, and denuded of every ancient decoration....⁴⁷

What is particularly fascinating in Pugin's ideas on correct burial is how the proper treatment of the body is necessary for the strengthening of the departed: the 'glorious hope of resurrection' is the expectation of the contrite body regenerated, cleansed of its illness and deformations along with its sins. This is why Pugin emphasised over and over again that 'pointed' architecture was above all an 'emblem of the resurrection':⁴⁸

The vertical line illustrative of the great mystery of the resurrection is the very foundation of Christian Architecture; every feature tends upwards, and runs into pyramids and points, arches, roofs, vaulting, pinnacles, turrets, and last, not least, towers. When the vertical principle was lost, Christian Architecture soon declined, and four-centered arches, flat roofs, and square-topped towers, came in.⁴⁹

Gothic churches were vessels for a future resurrection: they stood risen from the ground in anticipation of the glorious bodies of the Catholic dead. In contrast, once the 'vertical principle' was lost, the whole country underwent a process of degeneration.

Pugin could then take some comfort in the fact that he abandoned the theatre and eventually converted to Catholicism, dreaming of the end of days in which his body, saved from the dissector's knife, would be restored in a Catholic resurrection. But his restless drive toward the 'restoration of the real thing' was very much invested in the hope of living to see his own recovery, and his subsequent depressions were largely predicated on the perceived failure to restore either the Church or his body. He admitted: 'I have passed my life in thinking of fine things, studying fine things, designing fine things, and realising very poor ones'.⁵⁰ In more graphic language, he continued:

I can truly say that I have been compelled to commit absolute suicide with every building in which I have been engaged, and I have good proof that they are little better than ghosts of what they were designed; indeed, had I not been permitted by the providence of God to have risen the church at St. Augustine's, I must have appeared as a man whose principles and works were strangely at variance.⁵¹

Referring to the church he built opposite his house at Ramsgate, he achieved at St Augustine's some peace with his troubled past. In choosing the dedication of St Augustine, we are reminded not only of the Anglophile St Augustine of Canterbury, but of the greater St Augustine of Hippo. Augustus Pugin found in the selection of that second name-saint the figure of a man who confessed to the lustful sins of his wasted youth and was redeemed. In a way, Pugin also confessed his sinful past

47 Pugin 1851a, pp 115–6.

48 Pugin 1841b, p 3.

49 Letter to James Ingram, 25.5.1843, note e: Belcher 2003, p 57.

50 Pugin 1850, p 11.

51 *Ibid*, p 13.

through the thematic superimposition of health, sickness, and restoration onto England's social body. He died at Ramsgate, 14 September 1852, and his body awaits a restoration from beneath the pointed arches of the neighbouring St Augustine's Church.

A.W.N. Pugin's St Marie's Grange

by Edward Houle

St Marie's Grange, built in 1835–6 in Alderbury, Wiltshire, near Salisbury, was A.W.N. Pugin's own house, and his first realised building. Commentators have generally recognised the originality of this small Gothic tower, yet the majority have also identified flaws which they have typically attributed to Pugin's inexperience. For instance, Pugin's childhood friend and biographer, Benjamin Ferrey, asserted that

[i]t can scarcely be said that [Pugin] was successful in [St Marie's Grange]; there was nothing very inviting in the exterior design, and [there was] a great absence of modern comfort in the interior arrangement. The building tended rather to show the eccentricity of its owner than his superior skill in design; still it was not without merit, and undoubtedly formed a striking contrast to the class of modern suburban houses generally erected.¹

Later, in a 1945 essay in *The architectural review*, John Piper wrote that St Marie's Grange 'was a house of ideas rather than of vivid imagination', at least giving credit to the work's conceptual strength.² More recently, Timothy Brittain-Catlin has stated that '[i]n many ways this strange house is an architect's typical first home for himself, for it incorporates many strong ideas in their most literal way'.³ Pugin's most recent biographer Rosemary Hill reiterated the same opinion, claiming that St Marie's Grange 'was... very much a young man's building, trying to do too much at once'.⁴ Nonetheless, she adds, "[w]hile it remains to some extent a cul-de-sac in English architecture, it was prescient, not least in the elements of its design that seemed most scandalous to Georgian eyes' – such as the house's casement windows, exposed red brick walls, and pitched roof.⁵ But for Hill, St Marie's Grange was also an ideological 'manifesto' attesting to Pugin's faith, profession, and manner of living.⁶ Its prescience was therefore not only formal, since it articulated many social themes to be developed in later British domestic architecture.⁷ Befitting a house for one's self, St Marie's Grange was certainly highly personal, and attempting to understand the house through what we know of Pugin's ideas about his family and his faith can indeed help to understand its peculiarities. In turn, understanding the house's aggressive exterior along with its suffocating inwardness – and Pugin's eventual attempt to amend the design – sheds light on some of the problems of the nineteenth-century English house in general and its investment in ideals of family and community.

Significantly altered since Pugin lived in it, original and reconstructed drawings and images, photos of its present condition, and various written descriptions help to

1 Ferrey 1861, p 73.

2 Piper 1945, p 91.

3 Brittain-Catlin 2008, p 130.

4 Hill 2007, p 135.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*, p 133.

7 Hill 2003, p 148.



Figure 87: St Marie's Grange from the Salisbury road. The chapel is prominent at left, and Salisbury cathedral's spire is visible on the horizon
watercolour, AWN Pugin, c1835: RIBA Library Drawings Collection, AWN Pugin V2/106B.



Figure 88: St Marie's Grange: view from the south
watercolour, AWN Pugin, c1835: RIBA Library Drawings Collection, AWN Pugin V2/106A.

reconstruct St Marie's Grange in its original state. Exterior watercolour views by Pugin depict a fairly compact, red-brick house with articulated wings set into a

sloped site [figures 87 and 88]. A driveway curved around the house, while the picturesque roofline included towers, gilded *fleur-de-lis* along the ridge, and a bellcote above the chapel; distant Salisbury cathedral is sometimes visible on the horizon [figure 87]. The plan was three-storey and L-shaped, with a single spiral tower staircase. The ground floor was entirely for service use, while the first floor was entered from a working drawbridge directly to the stair landing, with the parlour and library facing Salisbury, and the chapel behind them [figure 89]. Two bed chambers were on the second floor, and a small lavatory 'tower' was attached to the

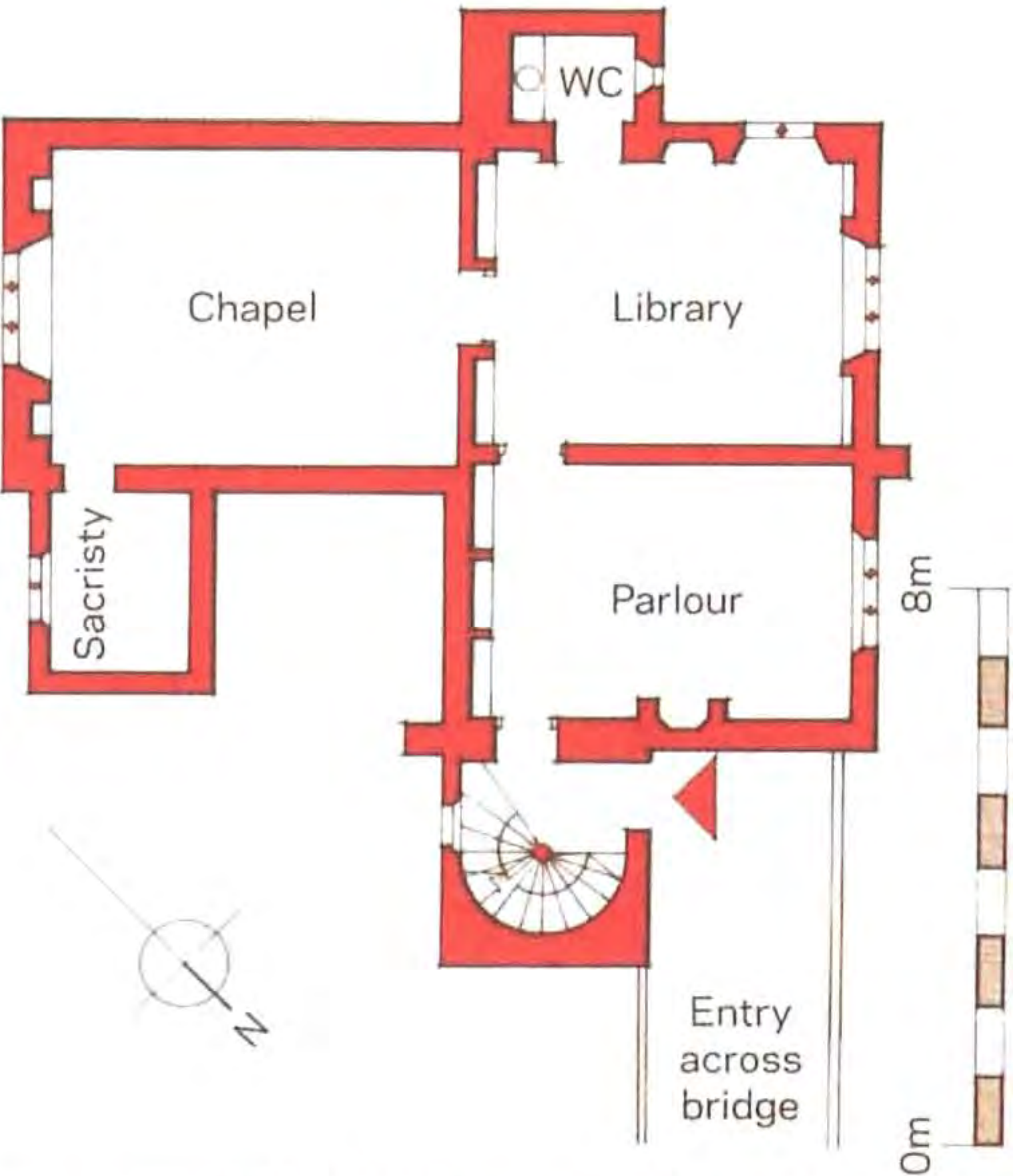


Figure 89: St Marie's Grange: first-floor plan (1835)
Brittain-Catlin 2008, fig 3.9 p 130.

house on its southwest side. The three-feet thick walls were often made even deeper with built-in shelves and closets. Strikingly for a family house, there were no corridors.

Reconstructed elevations show smallish, stone-mullioned windows, and a subtle bell cast to the main block's slate roof; they also suggest that Pugin's

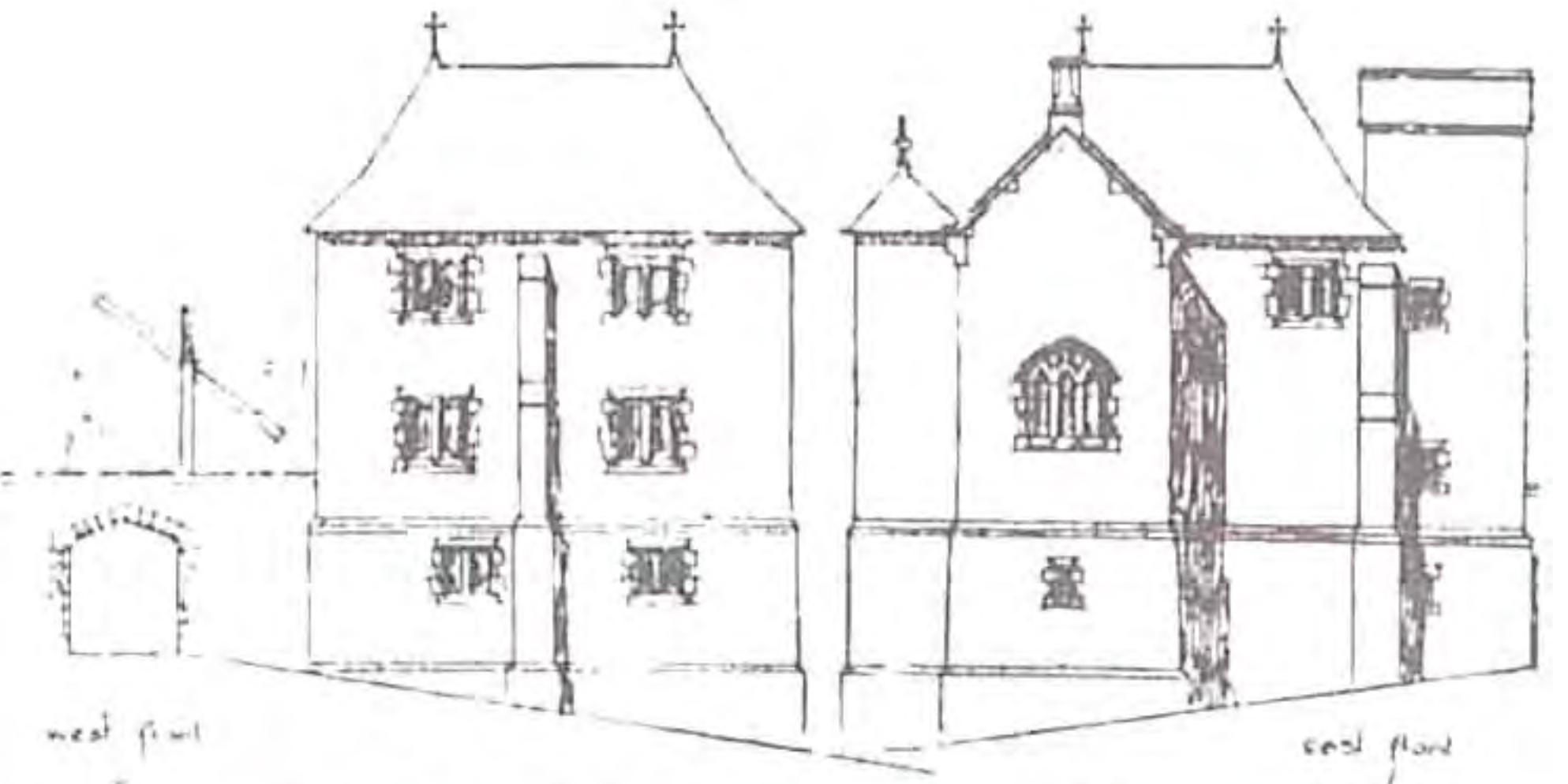


Figure 90: St Marie's Grange: northwest and southeast elevations
Architectural review, vol 4 (1897-8), p 160.

images exaggerated the height of the stair and lavatory towers [figure 90]. There were absolutely no windows on the northeast, road-facing elevation. Instead, the bare wall bore two inscriptions – *Laus Deo* [Praise the Lord] and *Hanc domum cum capella edificavit Augustus de Pugin 1835* [Augustus de Pugin built this house and chapel 1835] – and the letter M and a cross in dark brick. Five drawings preserved at the Winterthur Library in Delaware, and an interior watercolour (now lost), all by Pugin, tell us even more about the house and its design evolution, and I will refer to them later.

Pugin first wrote of his Alderbury property early in 1835 to his friend and collaborator, the architect and antiquarian E.J. Willson:

I have at Length made a purchase of my Land...it is a most beautiful peice of grounds close to salisbury comanding a magnificent view of the cathedral and city with the river avon winding through the beautiful valley. under me is Longford castle seat of Lord Radnor—with its turrets & chimney shafts rising among the venerable oaks & elms. the peice of grounds which is 370f Long by 280 wide is on a declivity bounded at bottom by the river avon at top by the southampton road by which passes the southampton & bath coaches 6 times a day. it has been only through great favour I could procure it as the Land belongs to a very rich man [Mr Staples] whose house will be very near mine & who would not have sold it had he not thought the appearance of my tower would be a great improvement to his view.⁸

In spite of his high hopes, his house's peculiarly Gothic design seems to have surprised the local population, and Pugin apparently heard such monickers as 'miniature bastile' during construction:⁹

the great thickness of the walls 3f. the approach over a drawbridge the chapel with its Little belfry—the antient Letters worked in bricks in the walls the gilt vanes on the roof—and the small windows all have astonished the people about here beyond measure.¹⁰

His neighbours were also likely astonished by the house's bizarre 'paraphernalia of defence', such as the drawbridge, the tower form, the blind wall, and the awkward entry sequence.¹¹ While the approach to the house was consistent with the prolonged routes typical of many of Pugin's later private commissions, the drawbridge, the stair tower and the blank walls obviously referred to mediæval castles.¹² In considering possible inspiration for St Marie's Grange, Rochester Castle in Kent stands out. Years earlier, the 14-year-old Pugin had surveyed this remarkable building whose 'commanding situation and grandeur of design at once riveted his attention'.¹³ His studies of this castle were indeed carried out with such reckless zeal that mishaps with collapsed shoring and a fallen scaffolding beam nearly killed him.¹⁴ The main view towards Rochester Castle does bear a striking resemblance to Pugin's 'First Sketch', the corner showing an exterior staircase leading up to the projecting entrance [fig-

8 1.1.1835: Belcher 2001, p 45.

9 Hill 2003, p 151.

10 Letter to EJ Willson, 17.7.1835: Belcher 2001, p 48.

11 Wedgwood 1994, p 44.

12 See Brittain-Catlin 2008, pp 137–44; 159–61.

13 Ferrey 1861, p 36.

14 *Ibid*, 36–7.

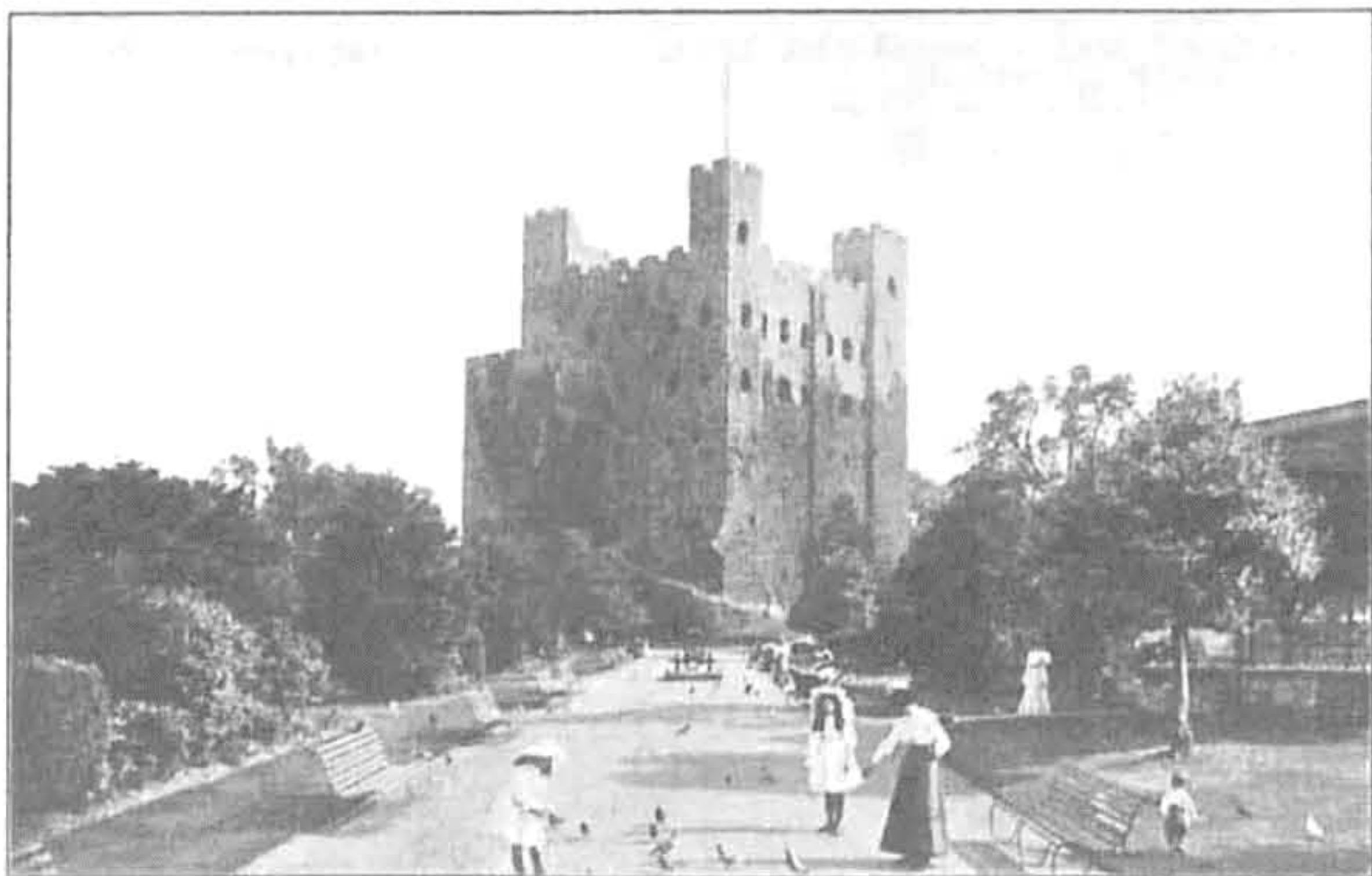


Figure 91: Rochester Castle, constructed 1087–9, seen in an Edwardian view
Shelley 1913, p 42.



Figure 92: 'First Sketch for St. Marie's Grange—by A. W. Pugin', c1835 from 'Pugin sketches of St Marie's Grange', courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, fol 189, 64X119 (Winterthur, Delaware (USA)).

of Rochester Castle's interior well, reputed to contain household treasures thrown down during attack; intent on retrieving them, Pugin – in vain – had himself lowered down into the shaft.¹⁵ Pugin nonetheless retained the experience of the well

15 *Idem.*

ures 91 and 92]. Benjamin Ferrey, likely personally unfamiliar with the built house, apparently used this drawing as the basis for his illustration of St Marie's Grange in his *Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin* [figure 93]. Rochester Castle's plan, too, resembles St Marie's Grange with its thick walls, bisected interior space, and two-storey chapel wing. Ferrey related the curious legend



Figure 93: Ferrey's depiction of St Marie's Grange
Ferrey 1861, p 72.



Figure 94: Neidpath Castle, Peebleshire, Scotland, c1654. View from the southeast
MacGibbon & Ross 1887–92, p 184.

itself, for he went on to build a similar internal well at St Marie's Grange, inaugurating the house as a place of self-sufficient secrecy, rooted into the site.

Rosemary Hill has noted the resemblance of St Marie's Grange to Scottish tower houses, defensive family farm dwellings built from the middle ages to the seventeenth century in the war and looting-prone border counties near England.¹⁶ This building type – also known as the *bastle-house* – had been surveyed in great detail in an 1814 illustrated book, *The border antiquities of England and Scotland*, with an introduction by no less than Walter Scott. In addition to this book, Pugin may also have seen *bastle-houses* during his regular travels to and from Edinburgh, where he moonlighted for architect James Gillespie Graham. Examples of these small 'castles' do recall the L-shaped plan, thick walls, tight organisation, and verticality of St Marie's Grange [figure 94].

Pugin may well have been attracted by the tower house's protection of rural families from hostile surroundings, but he was also certainly thinking of his own lineage when designing his house. Pugin had been made amply aware since early childhood of his family's presumed dual aristocratic heritage: his mother Catherine's family, the Welbys, supposedly belonged to Saxon nobility up to the Norman conquest of England; meanwhile, his father, the French-born Auguste Pugin, liked to advertise that he was descended from Swiss aristocracy of the region near Fribourg, whose noble titles may have been carried down as far as Auguste's father.¹⁷ The younger Pugin made numerous references to his noble continental background at St Marie's Grange, not the least being the French spelling of Marie, and altering his surname to de Pugin.¹⁸ Architecturally, the French renaissance roof, in both shape and ornament, may have alluded to his father's origins, even if the French and Norman references had nothing Swiss about them. After all, Pugin's father was born and raised in France, and the blurring of French Switzerland with France seems to have been taken as a matter of course in family discussions. The Norman references were of course crucial to A.C. Pugin's understanding of how Gothic architecture had been implanted into England with the Norman conquest, a history alluded to in his book, *Specimens of the architectural antiquities of Normandy of 1827–33*. His own flight to Britain to escape the French Revolution and his marrying a Saxon woman could also be said to have oddly replayed the eleventh-century conquest.¹⁹ If the hidden well anchored the house into its English soil, the French roofs capping St Marie's Grange called out to a far-off place and time, stylistically and personally, echoed in the here and now.

The use of castle references at St Marie's Grange would have been all the more appropriate, since what is a castle if not a noble's residence? Such pretention at nobility by a middle-class house owner may have struck his neighbours as impropriety. But the house's very name, St Marie's Grange, implied that Pugin himself sought a mixed status. A grange, after all, can refer to a collection of farm buildings, thus christening this house with something of the humble – even if a

16 Hill 2003, p 151.

17 Ferrey 1861, p 40.

18 Bressani 2010, *passim*.

19 *Ibid.*



Figure 95: St Marie's Grange from the south. Compare figure 88

photographed by the Editor in May 2002.

grange's farmer was often a yeoman or gentleman. Christabel Powell, however, claims that the original Pugins were related to the Grange family – so that the 'Grange' in the house's name was in fact, like the house itself, a merging of the high and low.²⁰ The exposed red brick with grey mortar likely agreed with Pugin's taste for intensely-patterned surfaces, but probably clashed with local taste still accustomed to Georgian smoothness [figure 95].

Red brick was often associated at the

time with cheap industrial buildings, in spite of more noble mediæval precedents.²¹ Phoebe Stanton pointed to noble houses such as sixteenth-century Beckley Park in Oxfordshire as resembling St Marie's Grange in its materiality.²² Maybe, then, Pugin thought that the formerly 'noble' red brick had only become common over time, but with St Marie's Grange would rise in status again – somewhat like Pugin himself.

Pugin wished to make St Marie's Grange a diminutive castle, visually prominent on its site. In his personal manners, however, Pugin was hardly pretentious, and never a snob; he was egocentric, but also generous and approachable. His apprentice and eventual son-in-law J.H. Powell insisted that Pugin's apparent 'egoism' was actually a drawback of his earnest enthusiasm.²³ Pugin was nevertheless not immune to the pressures of social status, and the mixing at St Marie's Grange of common and noble allusions (with a certain preference for the latter) did relate to the middle-class search for identity in nineteenth-century society. The newly-arrived often depended on noble standards of conduct for the social prestige matching their wealth; but they eventually also idealised the peasantry by way of incorporating vernacular forms alluding to their class origins and the value they placed on hard work.²⁴

St Marie's Grange's household chapel was an additional mark of nobility (household chapels being a traditional noble privilege), as well as yet another reference to the Pugin family, who were originally Catholics.²⁵ More crucially, of course, the chapel marked Pugin's decision to soon convert, making friends with nearby Salisbury's Roman Catholic community.²⁶ He was baptised during the summer of 1835, while preparing *Contrasts*, his famous tract in which protestant, commercial, modern England was condemned in favour of a Catholic, compassionate, mediæval England. The appeal of Salisbury, then, was especially strong: its cathedral church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, with its 123m tall

20 Powell 2006, p 51.

21 Hill 2007, pp 134–5, and Hill 2003, p 151.

22 Stanton 1950, p 120.

23 Wedgwood 2006, pp 28–9.

24 Girouard 1978, pp 268–70.

25 Powell 2006, pp 51–2.

26 Hill 2007, pp 151–2.

spire, enormous cloister, and largely intact thirteenth-century architecture (in spite of controversial early nineteenth-century restorations), was a most inspiring example of mediæval architecture.²⁷ Its historical connection to the Sarum Rite – the English mediæval rite for secular worship – made it particularly attractive to Pugin who was deeply involved in the restoration of original English Catholic liturgy.²⁸ It was all the more problematic, then, that Salisbury cathedral was Anglican, England's official denomination. Pugin longed for its return to the Catholic fold: 'I shall never rest satisfied till I follow the processional cross through the western doors of the cathedral—and see a sumptuous altar once more shine in the choir end'.²⁹

The design of St Marie's Grange found ways to express this longing since the library situated Pugin's working hours between the chapel – representing the faith only permitted in private – and the view towards Salisbury's spire – the distant past and future. Pugin made his appeal towards the road, too; the watercolour suggests that the house was sited momentarily to block the view of Salisbury to passing traffic, replacing the cathedral spire with the the chapel of St Marie's Grange [figure 87]. The M for Marie (recalling that Salisbury Cathedral is dedicated to the Virgin), dark-brick cross, and *Laus Deo* additionally hinted to passers-by – in the absence of windows – at the earnest Catholic inhabitant living within. That the chapel interior was deeply ensconced beyond the obstacle course entry and enfilade of living rooms nonetheless implies that Pugin's house was not entirely given over to public proselytising.

Pugin's own reaction to the controversy surrounding his house did little to abate it. Writing again to Willson:

I am here in the thick of Catholic controversy. the [Anglican] bishop publised a most infamous circular to his clergy denouncing us [Roman Catholics] as apostates idolaters and the all those charitable epithets which are so Liberally bestowed on us. (this was answered.)...

(I may thank the crosses on my house and th chapel attached thereto for that but what will they say when the great cross 15f. high is erected on the grass plot near my house. this is preparing and I expect I will draw down sermons without end but it is on my own freehold Land—and they cant prevent it.³⁰

This letter was accompanied by a sketch of a calvary cross, a praying suppliant at its base. It is one of no fewer than four surviving depictions by Pugin of this unrealised project. Another sketch suggests the cross was to be located between the house and the view of Salisbury, as though confronting the apostate cathedral [figure 96]. Meanwhile, the most detailed drawing depicts the cross bearing the crucified Christ and the madonna and child, a multiplication of the saviour, his beginning and end [figure 97]. No protestant abstraction or scripturalism there: To the Anglican written complaints of Roman Catholic idolatry, Pugin replied – with more imagery! With his house as with *Contrasts* and other publications – even with his religious conversion – Pugin aggressively rejected the majority only to find himself further marginalised. Little wonder he built himself a fortress.

27 <http://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk>

28 Hill 2007, p 139.

29 Letter to EJ Willson, 16.8.1835: Belcher 2001, pp 50-1.

30 *Ibid*, p 50.



Figure 96: Pugin's sketch, c1835, for a calvary cross at St Marie's Grange, with a perspective view of the exterior of the house

from 'Pugin sketches of St Marie's Grange', courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, fol 189, 64X119.

And little wonder he invoked his rights on his own freehold land. Around this portentous house, Pugin exerted his brand of the paternalism that was soon to become a characteristic Victorian value, when property was postulated as 'the single most important source of authority over others, and... the basis of political power'.³¹ For Pugin, the independence and status accorded by property also gave him imaginative licence to not only realise a private fantasy, but to develop a universal vision. That his hoped-for, inclusive ideals were in fact eccentric by the standards of his time, and that he often retreated into them privately, was an irony probably lost

on him even though he was later to write '[p]rivate judgment runs riot; every architect has a theory of his own, a beau ideal he has himself created; a disguise with which to invest the building he erects'.³²

The inner life at St Marie's Grange was no less conflicted than its posture to the outer world. The house's notorious lack of privacy is evident in the plan, the one tight stair being used by family, maid, and guests alike, and the lack of corridors was very unusual by contemporaneous standards of house design.³³ The fat walls and few smallish windows, whose thick stone mullions and deep splays were carefully drawn by Pugin in his plans, intensified a claustrophilic interior of heavy wood beam ceilings, rich upholstery and continental antiques [figures 98 and 99].³⁴ The frontispiece for *The true principles* of 1841 illustrates what was likely the intention at St Marie's Grange: all surfaces are patterned and dark, the room bound by text running below the moulding; the deep-set window is leaded and has interior shutters, and the closed door is half-concealed by a curtain [figure 100]. In such a well-wrapped cocoon, Pugin and his young family – his wife Louisa, his daughter Anne and son Edward Welby – were meant to live in intimacy; '[p]arents and children, work and love and worship, were all to be contained inside the Gothic fastness'.³⁵

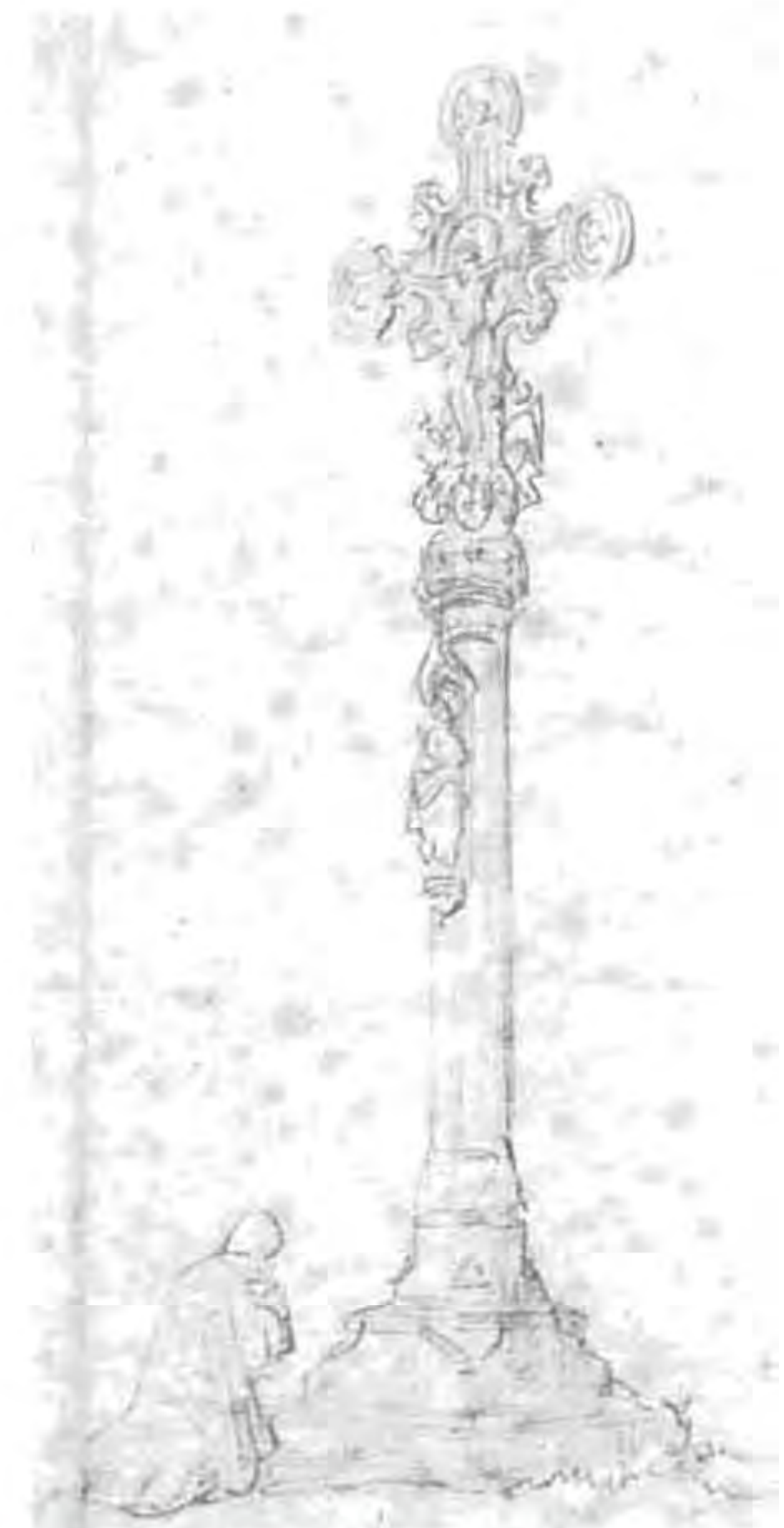


Figure 97: Pugin's sketch, c1835, for a calvary cross for St Marie's Grange

from 'Pugin sketches of St Marie's Grange', courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, fol 189, 64X119.

31 Roberts 1970, p 4.

32 Pugin 1843b, p 1.

33 Brittain-Catlin 2008, pp 16–7.

34 Referred to in letter to EJ Willson, 16.8.1835: Belcher 2001, p 49.

35 Hill 2007, p 134.

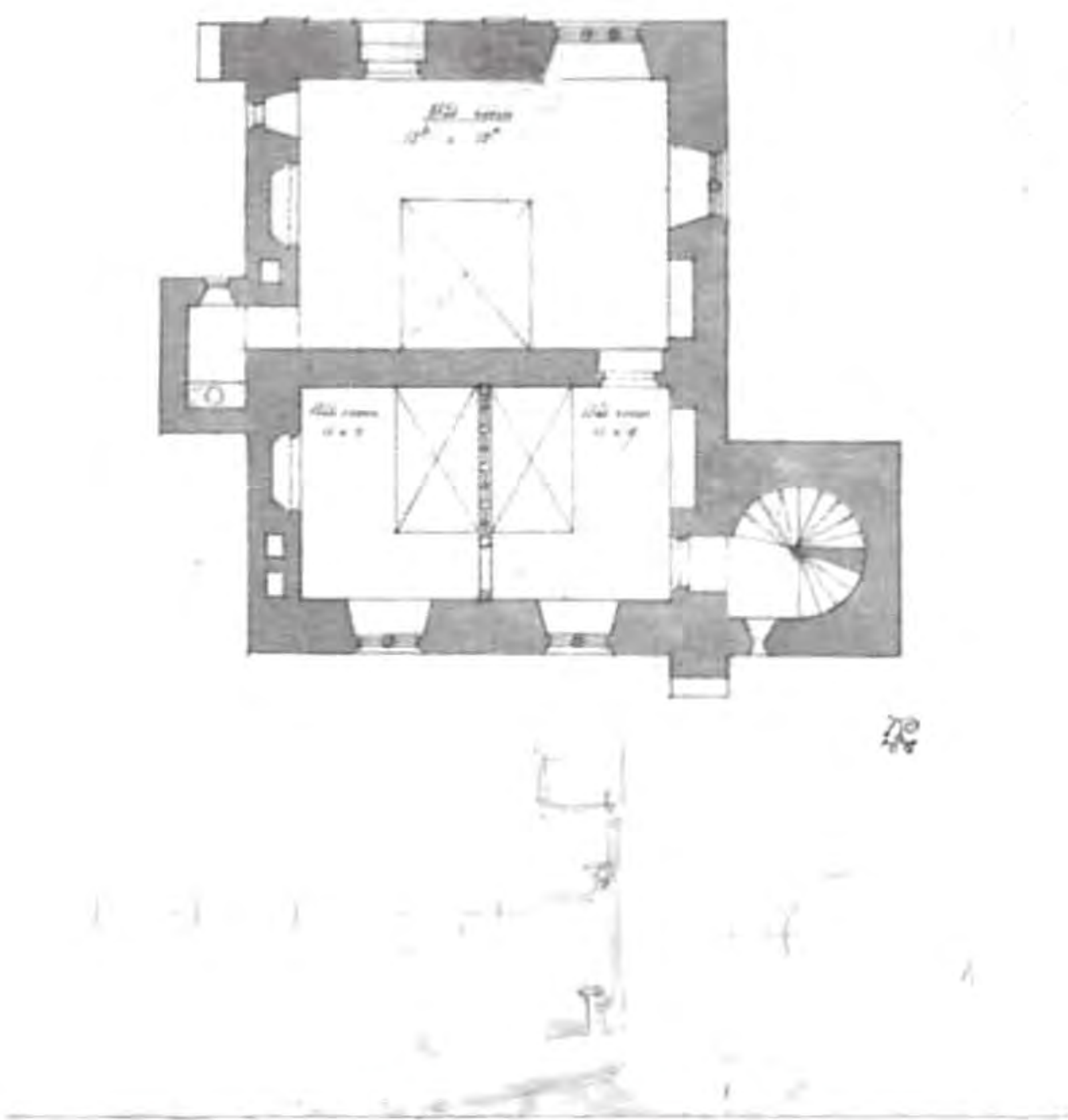


Figure 98: Pugin's drawing, c1835, for the second-floor plan of St Marie's Grange, including sketches of fireplace cross-section and elevation from 'Pugin sketches of St Marie's Grange', courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, fol 189, 64X119.

riage to Louisa Button following a brief courtship – and only a month after his mother's death – spoke volumes about his state of mind. Plagued by a lifelong fear of loneliness and propensity for nightmares, Pugin would have hoped that an intimate domestic interior would soothe him.³⁶

He was likely also drawn to Salisbury as a place of personal regeneration. Around the age of 13, Pugin spent some months with his mother in Christchurch and Salisbury recovering from a lengthy illness, where he first became enamoured with Christchurch Priory church and, of course, Salisbury cathedral.³⁷ Thus his early fascination with Catholic Gothic architecture coincided with a time of exclusive care from his mother.³⁸ Notably, Pugin's first attempt to build his own house was not at Alderbury, but near Christchurch before his wife Anne's death; frustrated in this project by his father's refusal of consent and financial assistance, Pugin

Like paternalism, idealised family closeness was to strongly mark nineteenth-century culture. Pugin's own childhood household was itself certainly close, he being a doted-over only child apprenticed to his father who ran a drawing school/studio in their house, where the boarded students slept and ate as well as worked. Pugin's desire to recapture something of this domestic atmosphere is all the more understandable given his recent, compounded loss: His first wife, Sarah Anne, died in 1832, shortly after the birth of his eldest daughter, Anne; his father died seven months later, with his mother soon after; and finally, his beloved aunt Selina Welby followed them in 1834. Suddenly, he was both orphan and widower, and his mar-

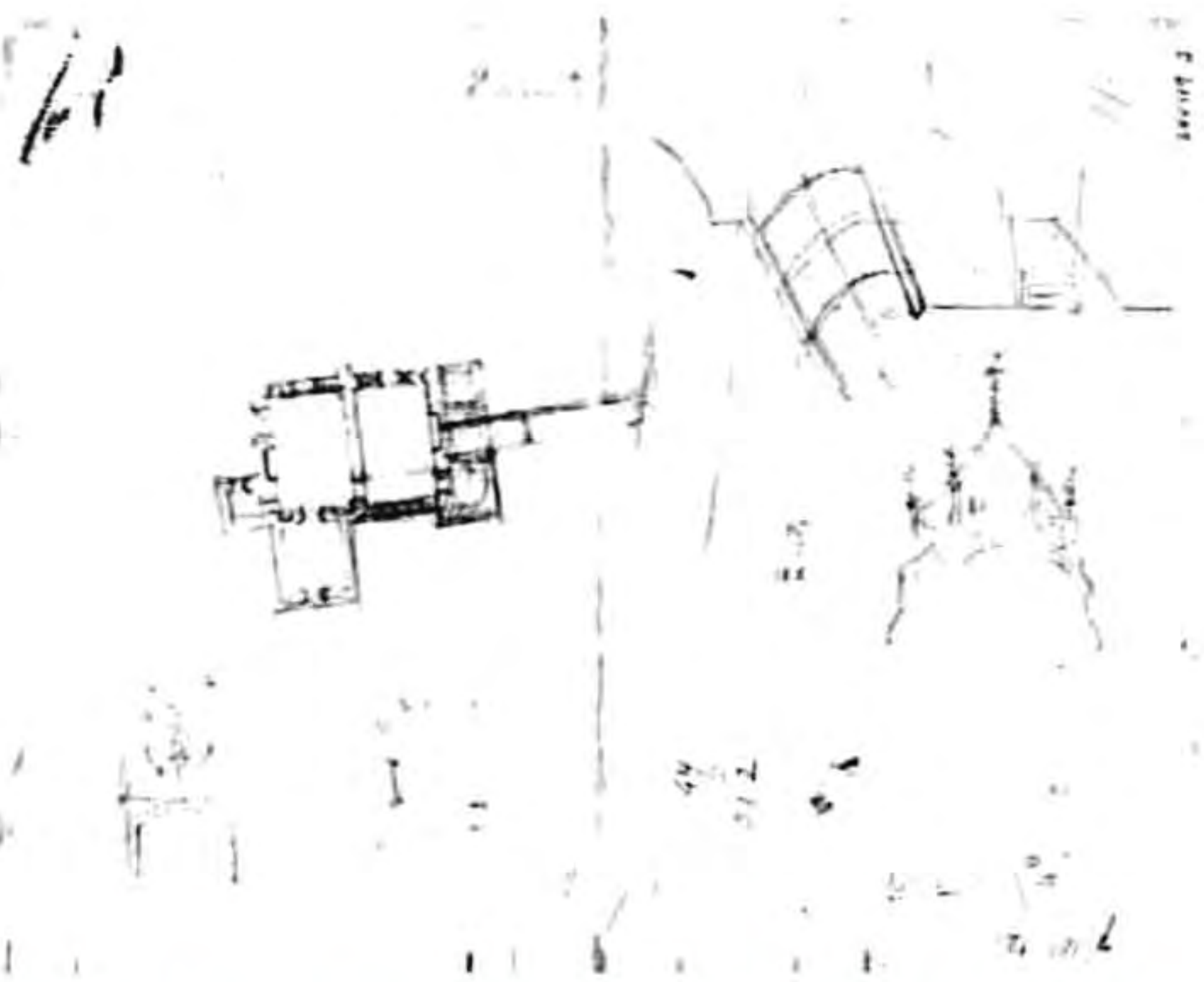


Figure 99: Pugin's sketch, c1835, for the plan of St Marie's Grange plan, chapel interior, lantern (?), etc. The plan perhaps indicates the moment when Pugin conceived the entry drawbridge instead of a staircase similar to the 'First Sketch' (figure 92 above) from 'Pugin sketches of St Marie's Grange', courtesy, The Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, fol 189, 64X119.

36 letter to EJ Willson, 16.8.1835: Belcher 2001, p 49.
37 Hill 2007, pp 69–70.
38 Freudian overtones may certainly be read here, too.



Figure 100: The frontispiece from *The true principles* Pugin 1841a.

out;...the cold, cheerless, and unvarying round of duty, though enlivened by the cheerful manner and kind attention of the elder Pugin, was wretched and discouraging.⁴⁰

J.H. Powell described Pugin’s own later domestic life as equally unvarying, its quasi-monastic schedules structured around meals and prayer times. Pugin’s disciplined orderliness, suggested in an interior watercolour of his house, presumably owed something to his avocation as a sailor – but Powell also insisted that Pugin displayed evident warmth towards his children.⁴¹ Clearly Pugin synthesised his mother’s kind of household with his father’s decency. Nonetheless, the life inside the house, just as the house itself, was decidedly his conception, for a paternalist always knows what is best for his dependents.⁴² The early second-floor plan [figure 98] demonstrates these intentions, the staircase giving directly onto the children’s bedroom that was divided by a mere screen permitting visual and aural contact; moreover, the children would have had to pass through their parents’ bedroom on the way to the latrine or to what might be an upper-floor oratory [figure 98].⁴³ The architecture was evidently intended to encourage constant intimacy as well as surveillance.

was, in the end, to bury Anne at the priory church there.³⁹ Salisbury can thus be understood as the remaining untarnished place where the young Pugin could establish his home once he had married Louisa and came into his inheritance.

His strong-willed mother Catherine was indeed a powerful influence on Pugin, in good part for her strict, ritualistic domestic routine. Ferrey, a student and boarder at the Pugins’, recalled with unconcealed displeasure the early-morning wake-up bells, meals eaten in collective silence, and mandatory bowing to Catherine Pugin:

a discipline was enforced in the social system of the establishment which owed its origin to Mrs. Pugin...Nothing could exceed the stern manner in which this routine was carried

39 Ferrey 1861, pp 68–71.
40 *Ibid*, pp 26–8.
41 Wedgwood 2006, pp 1–7.
42 Roberts 1970, p 5.
43 This presumed oratory was cut off from the drawing; I will return to it later.



Figure 101: *Knight, Death, and the Devil* (Engraving by Albrecht Dürer, 1513)

© Trustees of the British Museum.

Perhaps such frequent familial contact was also meant to shore up Pugin's own moral fortitude. The voluptuous offerings at Covent Garden, where he worked as a teenager, quite likely marked Pugin for the rest of his life. His marriage to Sarah Anne Garnett, whom he met in Covent Garden's circles, certainly did not precede her pregnancy, and Hill believes that Pugin likely also contracted syphilis in that society, whose various symptoms increasingly compromised his mental and physical condition until his death at the age of 40.⁴⁴ Aware of this, Pugin would have been haunted by the indiscretions of his past, giving much impetus for his adult piety; but with a passionate personality and enjoyment of female company, he may also have feared the constant risk of falling back into sin.⁴⁵ Like the steadfast warrior in

Albrecht Dürer's *Knight, Death, and the Devil*, which the adolescent Pugin copied with special fondness at the British Museum, the adult Pugin must have felt he was travelling alone, his mortality facing him all too closely and mockingly, and devilish temptation forever trying to pull him back [figure 101].⁴⁶ Or maybe the elaborate drawing of the calvary cross, with the double representation of Christ, was also a triple self-portrait of Pugin: Pugin the crucified sufferer; Pugin the nurtured infant – his lost innocence; and the guilty, repentant Pugin kneeling in prayer [figure 97]. And so the condemned, remorseful man enclosed himself in the armour of his bastle-house, submerged in his responsibilities: his profession, his faith, and most of all, his family, the bedrocks of middle-class respectability. Ferrey claimed that a window from Pugin's bedroom at St Marie's Grange gave onto a 'small oratory', 'so that in case of illness he might participate in the service going on at the altar'.⁴⁷ Just as Ferrey based his illustration of St Marie's Grange on Pugin's 'First Sketch', he may have partly based this description on the early second-floor plan where a threshold connects the master bedroom to the chapel wing [figure 98]; the final plan, too, might have accommodated the window that Ferrey described. Regardless, Ferrey confirmed with this comment Pugin's need for proximity to his faith. This is further reflected on the first floor, where the library had a direct view to the chapel's altar and window, and the text *Gloria in Excelsis* was scrolled out overhead. We can imagine a similar use of his family as ever-present reminders for moral discipline.

44 Hill 2007, p 93; 80–1; 492.

45 Bressani 2010; Hill 2007, pp 91–2.

46 Hill 2007, p 72.

47 Ferrey 1961, p 96.

If God, work, and the dependent family were still not enough to inspire Pugin's self-control – and if the intentions for St Marie's Grange were in any way harbingers of the Victorian – Pugin additionally would have had the idea of the wife as a specific moral inspiration. What was called 'woman worship' by the 1860s idealised female purity at the same time as it tended to isolate women, mainly into the domestic sphere.⁴⁸ John Ruskin's 1864 lecture, 'Lilies: of queens' gardens', classically articulated woman worship and its attendant domestic concept:

The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial:...But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no cause of error or offense. This is the true nature of home—it is the place of Peace;...In so far as it is not this, it is not home:...it is then only a part of that outer world which you have roofed over, and lighted a fire in. But so far as it is a sacred place, a vestal temple,...so far it vindicates the name, and fulfils the praise, of home. And wherever a true wife comes, this home is always round her...This, then I believe to be,—will you not admit it to be,—the woman's true place and power? But do not you see that to fulfil this, she must—as far as one can use such terms of a human creature—be incapable of error? So far as she rules, all must be right, or nothing is. She must be enduringly, incorruptibly good.⁴⁹

Almost undoubtedly, the double-edged notion of chivalry Ruskin expressed – man protective of woman, but in need of her moral 'rule' – applied to Pugin, for in the words of J. H. Powell, '[l]ike a sailor too, Pugin, was susceptible with regard to woman and emphatic on man's protecting duty'.⁵⁰ Such expressions of chivalry, much like the middle-class appropriation of mediæval architecture, would nonetheless have been manifestly 'bourgeois and domestic'.⁵¹

Recall that Pugin's house was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, whom sociologist Carol Engelhardt Herringer calls a 'dominant type of the feminine'.⁵² In parallel with the ascendance of idealised femininity across British society, the Virgin also experienced a revival of interest in Victorian Britain beginning in the 1830s. Though Herringer warns against directly correlating the Virgin Mary with Victorian idealised womanhood, she acknowledges that the nineteenth-century regard for Mary as a sinless, virgin, model mother who represented women's more spiritual nature by interceding between the faithful and God was not inconsistent with the Victorian feminine ideal.⁵³ St Marie's Grange surely incorporated such a synthesis. The house's references to Mary – the house's name, the brick M, even the gilded *fleur-de-lis* which symbolise not only France but also the Virgin's purity – spoke to the sacred, domestic feminine, in addition to the Catholic faith and to Salisbury cathedral.

The Virgin Mary is also of course the mother, again recalling Pugin's relationship with Catherine, and another of the house's themes that Pugin seems to have incorporated with some ambivalence. Pugin surely missed his dead mother, but his adolescent forays in Covent Garden suggested that he longed during his youth to

48 Houghton 1957, p 350.

49 Ruskin 1909–14, pp 68–69.

50 Wedgwood 2006, p 17.

51 Brooks 1999, p 196.

52 Herringer 2008, pp 19–20.

53 *Ibid*, pp 20, 52.

escape her moral domination. So while St Marie's Grange attempted to resuscitate his mother's style of household, the inscribed name 'Augustus de Pugin' isolated and aggrandised his father's name while suppressing 'Welby Northmore', respectively his mother's maiden name and her cousin's name. Could it even be that the very visible French-style roof advertised, as it were, Pugin's immigrant father at the expense of his mother's memory, since the well – the house's 'root' into the English ground perhaps corresponding with the English/Saxon Catherine – was concealed? That speculation might be excessive, but St Marie's Grange would have expressed to some degree whatever underlying anxieties Pugin felt about his mother's influence. Moreover, Herringer interestingly claims that Victorian-era Protestants were suspicious of the Catholic Virgin Mary in part for her alleged use of motherhood to usurp her son's role, in which case Pugin may also have felt a degree of unease about his references to the Virgin.⁵⁴

To whatever extent Pugin idealised the woman at St Marie's Grange, that ideal fell on his wife, Louisa, to live up to. Not much is known of her own feelings about life as Mrs Pugin, as there is little surviving record from or about her, though Hill has wondered if their marriage was troubled.⁵⁵ A letter written by Pugin to Willson indicated that Louisa was not entirely happy at their new house, if her husband could not entirely admit it:

I am quite settled in my new house w is nearly compleatled... it is very good and the only drawback is that Mrs. Pugin does not have good health here which I suppose is owing to her removal from the sea air.⁵⁶

Such a life as Pugin had created would not have been easy for anyone. On top of the expectation for this new mother to uphold her husband's strict vision – J. H. Powell remembered her wearing dresses likely designed by her husband – the Londoner Louisa had to move to the edge of a village, in a curious little tower house that was the laughing-stock of her new neighbours, with scant interior privacy, raised high above the mediæval-style garden seen only through small windows.⁵⁷ As she did not convert to her husband's faith until after they left Alderbury, this too must have caused tension. Worse, Pugin's architectural career experienced its early success at this time, frequently taking him away from Alderbury on business and leaving Louisa behind to maintain house until his return – just as the younger Pugin could depend on returning to his parents' house after an evening at Covent Garden. It is safe to assume that Louisa, with her 'poor health', did not find this interior as comforting as did her husband.

Timothy Brittain-Catlin has drawn parallels between St Marie's Grange and *Kenilworth*, the Walter Scott historical novel made into an 1831 ballet whose sets and costumes Pugin designed to great acclaim.⁵⁸ *Kenilworth's* tragic heroine, Amy Robsart, was first encountered in the novel in a series of sumptuously-decorated, subdued rooms at Cumnor Place where her husband, rising courtier Robert Dudley,

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p 23.

⁵⁵ Hill 2007, pp 187, 277–8.

⁵⁶ 4.1.1836: Belcher 2001, p 56.

⁵⁷ Hill 2007, pp 114; 145.

⁵⁸ Brittain-Catlin 2008, p 130; Ferrey 1861, pp 59–60.

1st Earl of Leicester, kept her in luxurious concealment.⁵⁹ This clearly bears some resemblance to how we can imagine Louisa in St Marie's Grange. But the Kenilworth stories, both the novel and the history which inspired it, may have further, darker parallels with Pugin's house. In the Scott novel, Amy died falling from a trick drawbridge at Cumnor Place before she could be rescued.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, the real Amy Robsart died falling down winding stairs at the real Cumnor Place while her husband was away at court, a death ruled accidental at the time, but about which rumours of murder or suicide persisted for centuries.⁶¹ In both stories, the lonely wife was killed by architectural contrivances redolent of the more peculiar features of St Marie's Grange. How conscious this similarity was on Pugin's part, I cannot say; but at least, this coincidence might hint at an underlying cultural cognisance of the dangers involved with the kind of vision Pugin and many after worked to implement. Both Robsart stories can be seen as warnings, if rather melodramatic ones, of the risks of interiorising idealised women and the limits of chivalry – although they could also be said to fetishise the wife's sacrifice. Moreover, the mortal threats of Cumnor Place represent the darkest side of architecture's sentience, the negative potential of the influential medium Pugin hoped to wield for moral and spiritual reform, and of which his own wife was an early casualty.

Fortunately, Louisa Pugin managed to survive life at St Marie's Grange. But with the birth of daughter Agnes in October 1836, Pugin's frequent business travel, and likely also Louisa's persistent unhappiness, St Marie's Grange finally proved to be unsuitable, and the family moved to rented lodgings in Chelsea in the autumn of 1837.⁶² Pugin held on to the Alderbury property for a few years more, though, hoping to rent out this house that had cost him so much to build.⁶³ This idea, too, was unsuccessful, and in 1841, Pugin placed the property up for auction, where it was bought back by the original landowner Mr Staples for £500; a great loss indeed, given that the house's construction alone cost £2,000.⁶⁴ Before this sale, though, it appears that Pugin altered the house to make it more conventional and hence, more marketable. Most significantly, the drawbridge was removed and the interior angle of the L-plan filled in, creating a new entrance hall at the ground floor with an angled stair circumventing the awkward spiral stair and enfilade. Later, in the words of Alexandra Wedgwood, '[s]uch a staircase hall became a favourite of Pugin'.⁶⁵

Pugin referred to the next Grange, his house built in 1843–4 at Ramsgate, as a 'folio Edition of [St Marie's] Grange much augmented & improved' in an 1844 letter, as though acknowledging the flaws and lessons of his first house.⁶⁶ And indeed, a similar staircase hall as that added to St Marie's Grange was incorporated at the very heart of Ramsgate, where it served as both a large foyer and central connecting volume for the living rooms and bedrooms. He repeated this device in several of his

59 Scott 1993, pp 45–8.

60 *Ibid*, pp 386–9.

61 Inman 2007.

62 Hill 2003, p 187.

63 Letter to Frederick Fisher, 29 or 30.6.1839: Belcher 2001, p 119.

64 Ferrey 1861, p 96.

65 Wedgwood 1994, p 45; Brittain-Catlin 2008, pp 132–3; Stanton 1950, p 121.

66 Letter to David Charles Read, 17.11.1844: Belcher 2003, p 281.

later house designs, and it was to become influential in Victorian, and especially Arts and Crafts domestic architecture.⁶⁷ This room was to some extent a modern version of the mediæval hall and thus well served the nineteenth-century desire for romantic domestic settings, though the modern stair hall acted rather more as a circulation space than did its mediæval precedent. In the early twentieth century, Hermann Muthesius generously praised the hall:

Of all the rooms in the English house, the hall is the one that we are accustomed to think of as the most English...Not only is the hall a centre of great memories of a proud past, but...the elaboration of a romantic chain of thought, weaves a special magic round this room.⁶⁸

Though Muthesius found various forms of the hall in his studies in England (and noted that they seldom contained staircases), it always acted as the ‘focal point of family life’, and often welcomed guests.⁶⁹ Thus, in attempting to address the problems of reception and privacy at St Marie’s Grange, Pugin happened upon the first iteration of a room type that was to emerge fully-formed at Ramsgate, and ultimately proved both characteristic and malleable enough to be developed by others. The stair hall was not only reasonably practical, but provided a space of family contact while allowing for individual privacy, and offered guests a gracious welcome to the house. At last, Pugin found a way to negotiate between his obsessions and the real world from which he had earlier retreated, with a synthetic rather than compromised solution.

The struggle at St Marie’s Grange to negotiate the intimate and the sociable echoed that of the suburban house it foreshadowed, and the hall can be understood as a representative solution to a paradox inherent in the reactionary intentions of nineteenth-century domestic architecture. I would say the hall was, primarily, more a triumph of representation than practicality; after all, many Victorian architects found the hall adjoining different rooms harmful to their strict programmatic zoning, and even Pugin sometimes complained that Ramsgate’s hall did not offer enough privacy.⁷⁰ But St Marie’s Grange bore, in its way, the ambition of the cosy, conservative suburban houses that came after to protect and revive the caring family and coherent community in the face of anxieties over rising individualism and mass society. At the same time, however, Pugin’s use of the site and house as a personal statement, his flaunting the licence of his long-sought ‘freehold Land’ in the service of his ‘private judgment’, was his version of the middle-class domestic celebration of property. And it was private property which, unconstrained of use and exchange in laissez-faire England, was one of the very causes of the social dissolution those same houses were meant to mitigate. David Roberts has argued that resolving the absolute respect for property with ethical responsibility was one of the primary challenges facing Victorian paternalism:

Property above all had to show it could handle the urgent and multitudinous problems of industrial England, for property was everywhere the dominant

⁶⁷ Hill 2003, pp 148, 165.

⁶⁸ Muthesius 1979, p 203.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp 90–1.

⁷⁰ Hill 2003, p 166; undated letter to J Hardman, c1846, quoted in Hill 2003, p 168.

institution in the realm. Property, not the government or the church, was England's sovereign institution, and on it thus fell the greatest role in the revival of paternalism.⁷¹

The house's hall was then at least one space where, within certain class contexts, the disturbing effects of the private – economic and personal – could find some balance in familial and neighbourly conviviality while still celebrating the very 'sovereign institution' fuelling the expanding middle class. Pugin's struggles with St Marie's Grange, then, were partly due to the very novelty of the difficult ideological enterprise he was undertaking, which like so much else concerning his first house, was rather less than more conscious on his part at the time. For all the eccentricity ascribed to him and his house, for all his petulance to his neighbours and thoughtlessness to his family, for all his nostalgia – Pugin was in fact very much of his own time and place.

I would like to thank Robin Middleton for his research assistance on this paper.

71 Roberts 1970, p 32.

Reason and faith: A.W.N. Pugin's apprehension of the mysteries

by Ron Jelaco

Pugin's haunted England

Born in 1812, Pugin entered a haunted world – occupied by spirits, ghosts, fairies, monsters, and demons. People were volunteering to be mesmerised, magnetised, and hypnotised, while others were in regular communication with the dead and undead. Ghosts roamed urban alleys and church cemeteries, and haunted country estates. Unseen spirits were dictating passages from the bible through people who were otherwise sound asleep. The people of Pugin's England were obsessed with the eerie and the supernatural. In the words of a recent survey, 'They delighted in ghost stories and fairy tales, and in legends of strange gods, demons and spirits; in pantomimes and extravaganzas full of supernatural machinery; in gothic yarns of reanimated corpses and vampires'.¹

But the terror was also accompanied by an intense fascination of it. Temptation was integral with the mystery and terror in the unknown: 'The supernatural was both fearful and terrible and ardently desired: it was a spooky sense that there was more to the world than the everyday, and an intimation that reality might be transfigured by something above and beyond'.² The eerie and otherworldly stories from books like *The Castle of Otranto*, and Ann Radcliffe's 'terrorising' tales had been in the British minds for several decades, and a new surge of spine-tingling literature – in fact Gothic fiction's creative high point – was just beginning. Before Pugin had reached his teenage years, Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Polidori's *The vampyre* not only became bestsellers, but two of the most well-known and influential writings of the century. The stories, images, ideas, legends, and beliefs of the supernatural assumed many forms and genres as it wound its way around all aspects of everyday life. 'The Supernatural was an important aspect of the Victorians' intellectual, spiritual, emotional and imaginative worlds, and took its place in the domestic centre of their daily lives'.³

The dread that tempted Victorian England was neither limited to their fiction nor can it be considered purely imaginary, as new technologies and inventions were rapidly collapsing traditional and familiar notions of reality. A sense of the uncanny permeated daily life: electricity induced movements from inanimate matter; the almost unfathomable speed of railways unleashed a new monstrous power that forever changed the sense of time and distance; disembodied thoughts, transmitted through telegraph wires, were received from far-off places; and the Daguerreotype stirred 'the weird sensation of looking at the ghostly face of a dead relative staring out of a photograph' [figure 102].⁴

1 Bown, Burdett & Thurschwell 2004, introduction.

2 *Ibid*, p 1.

3 *Ibid*, p 2.

4 *Idem*.



Figure 102: 'An old woman'; a quarter-plate from the David Hoffman collection reproduced from Newhall 1971.



Figure 103: Edward Irving contemporary portrait

This mixture of terror and desire, together with the sense of standing on the threshold of a new, modern world, were amongst the many phenomena that led to the strength of the premillennialist movement in the early Victorian era. Many English evangelists, and even some members of the Anglican Church, were anticipating Christ's return, and were therefore actively on the lookout for prophetic signs. The prominent liberal historian and essayist Thomas Macaulay observed in 1831 that in England, 'many Christians believe that the Messiah will shortly establish a kingdom on earth, and visibly reign over all its inhabitants', and the certainty of impending divine judgement was a commonly held belief and not limited to the underclasses. According to Macaulay, 'Many of those who hold it are distinguished by rank, wealth, and ability. It is preached from the pulpits, both of the Scottish and of the English church. Noblemen and members of Parliament have written in defence of it'.⁵

Pugin's fanatical world

The most vocal and influential voice of premillennial incitement was the Scottish preacher Edward Irving [figure 103]. Irving and his sermons were by all accounts nothing short of sensational. The devoted and the curious – often including royalty and the kingdom's preeminent intellectuals like Carlyle or Coleridge – 'rushed to his meeting houses as to a theatre', consistently filling them to overflowing. Irving's sermons were spectacular events, where it would be worth enduring 'a state of suffocation to see and hear him make his

defence from the Pulpit'.⁶ His orations, often three or more hours in length, contained rapturous, premillennial prophecies and warnings of imminent apocalypse. Calling on extensive biblical references he mesmerised his listeners, often inducing them into states of frenzy, hysteria, and glossolalia. 'I never took my eyes off this strange

⁵ Macaulay 1831, p 607.

⁶ Moodie 1985, p 57.

apparition. Methought some man had escaped from St. Lukes [lunatic asylum], and before he was restored of his right mind had taken possession of the Pulpit', wrote one amazed witness. Moved to hyperbole, she tried to describe the scene: 'Imagine a tall man with high aquiline features and a complexion darkly brilliant with long raven love locks hanging down to his waist, his sleeves so short as to show part of his naked arms – and you see Edward Irving – No posture master ever studied the grotesque more successfully than this extraordinary man. He is like the extravaganzas of the early romance writers and seems to belong to a bygone age'.⁷

The exhilarating atmosphere created by and around Irving was just the sort of world that would have attracted Pugin's mother, Catherine Welby Pugin. Mrs Pugin was very well-read, physically attractive, at times vain, and touchy about questions of social distinction. But above all, she was fuelled by an intense intellectual curiosity and religious zealotry. Mrs Pugin was described by her son's friend and biographer Benjamin Ferrey as 'a woman of extraordinary intellect', who was never very impressed by the clergy who preached in her own parish church. She routinely sought the polemic viewpoints of contemporary theology, 'frequently wandering to neighbouring churches to hear strange preachers'. As Ferrey writes, 'a moderately eloquent sermon would not satisfy her: she needed strong stimulants'.⁸ Ferrey claims that Mrs Pugin never missed an Irving sermon, and she never once attended without her son Augustus in tow, journeying across London to wedge herself and son into the Irving crowd.⁹ It is worth noting that Irving reached the height of his influence and popularity in the early 1820s – meaning that in the years before the age of 10 or 11, Pugin would have witnessed firsthand some of the most extreme presentations of apocalyptic foreboding and premillennial histrionics that could be imagined.¹⁰

Ferrey relates how Catherine's own version of Irving's evangelism continued within the walls of the Pugin home, where she watched over a fiercely evangelical household. 'Each day started with a prayer; thereafter, every minute was accounted for by her regime of strict discipline and sobriety. Every member of the household, including her son and the articulated pupils, was expected to conform or experience her fury'.¹¹ It is also related by Ferrey how Mrs. Pugin would routinely provide a mixture of unearthly stories and prophesy to her son and to her husband's pupils – layering eerie images of ghosts as well as immanent catastrophe in the minds of the boys.¹²

We see the tacit world of dread of Pugin's childhood in the background practices of his culture, and see it exaggerated and crystallised by his mother and others like Irving. However, what has not been discussed yet is the probable role that Pugin's father played in the haunting of their son. Auguste Charles Pugin first became acquainted with Rudolf Ackermann and his Repository of the Arts in 1805, and was routinely visiting and doing business with Ackermann and his art gallery before his

7 *Idem.*

8 Ferrey 1861, p 41.

9 *Ibid*, pp 43–4;

10 Irving's prophesying and rants grew so spectacular, and the reports of hysteria and glossolalia within the congregation drew so much attention in London that in March 1833 he was deposed from his ministry of the Church of Scotland and formally charged with heresy. He died a year later, at age 42.

11 Ferrey 1861, pp 45; 48.

12 *Ibid*, pp 44–6.

son was born.¹³ And, it is known that Auguste involved his son in nearly all of his numerous artistic enterprises, which among other things included the surveying, sketching, and documenting of many of the existing gothic churches in Europe. Consequently, it is not unreasonable to surmise that he would have wanted to share with his son the exciting artistic world that was unfolding at the Repository, which was a leading art gallery in London and a centre of artistic criticism and fashion at that time. At the Repository, both father and son would have therefore seen the dramatic mezzotints of the apocalyptic paintings made by John Martin, whose career



Figure 104: John Martin's *Pandaemonium*, 1841

was founded at the Repository.¹⁴ Accepting the likelihood that Mr Pugin took his son, then at a very young age, to Ackermann's to see this popular art concurrent with his weekly exposure to the Irving sermons, the young Pugin would have had close-up encounters with Martin's astonishing paintings of religious and apocalyptic scenes. Consequently, Pugin was not left only to imagine the world-ending events that were being prophesied by Irving and his mother. Martin's paintings vividly illustrated the very same catastrophic events that were being summoned into the minds of Irving's throngs – bringing any mental images of apocalypse one step closer to reality for Pugin. At the release of *Joshua commanding the sun to stand still*, Pugin would have been four years old; *The fall of Babylon*, five; *Belshazzar's feast*, eight; *The destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum*, ten; and *Pandaemonium* [figure 104], thirteen. There are many more Martin paintings exhibited during the time of Pugin's youth, all popular, nearly all representing terrifying scenes of divine retribution, and coinciding with Irving's popular highpoint. In a related note, it is impossible not to recognise Martin's

13 Also called Ackermann's Depository in some historical accounts. See Balston 1947.

14 See Hill 2007, p 36.

preoccupation with the depiction of classical architecture as the unique earthly site of God's fury and wrath being unleashed – or, in the case of Martin's *Pandaemonium*, classical architecture as the very dwelling place of Satan. It is interesting to wonder whether these paintings, as viewed in his youth, were but one more sign of evidence of the blasphemy of classical architecture for Pugin.

One thing that is certain is that Pugin was repeatedly confronted by Martin's paintings throughout his life. Pugin provided architectural work for Charles Scarisbrick at his castle, and Scarisbrick owned the largest grouping of Martin's paintings in the world – more than 20 of the apocalyptic scenes. And one of Pugin's architectural assignments was to design methods for displaying the Martin originals. Additionally, Pugin probably had another involvement with the Martin images – or in fact, their facsimiles – as a pre-teenager at his father's dioramas. Although Martin's paintings were not officially used for the dioramas, the paintings used by the diorama designers (Pugin's father was one) so closely resembled his own images that Martin filed an injunction to have them pulled down.¹⁵ Assuming that Pugin saw the dioramas – which would have been likely given his father was the initial London contact for Daguerre and designer of Daguerre's first London diorama – then Pugin undoubtedly again witnessed *Balthazzar's feast*, but this time as an eerie image more than 70 feet wide and 45 feet tall, and in the supernatural wonder of the diorama.¹⁶ It was, 'perhaps one of the most magnificent [scenes] that could have been selected from Scripture History', wrote one reviewer, '...and such is the extraordinary illusion with which it is painted, that the mind is led to contemplate it as a subject in reality'.¹⁷ So, if Pugin was indeed privately haunted by the Martin images as speculated here, it is painfully ironic that throughout his life he was repeatedly forced to encounter the same images that, I hold, likely terrified him as a boy.¹⁸

Pugin's apprehensions

If Pugin was haunted by Irving's prophesying and Martin's apocalyptic paintings, there is no direct record of him saying so. However, given his resolve to avoid talking to anyone about any of his fears, an admonition like that would have been impossible for Pugin. According to his employee, son-in-law, and biographer J.H. Powell, Pugin dreaded talking about anything that might be frightening or otherworldly. Powell wrote that Pugin, 'would never listen to indefinite or mysterious subjects, clairvoyance, apparitions, diabolical possessions, etc'. But, he pointed out, just because Pugin did not want to discuss his fears did not mean that they did not exist.

15 According to Gernsheim 1968, p. 45, 'an inimitable copy' of Martin's *Belshazzar's feast* was exhibited. Balston 1947, p. 61, locates the unauthorised reproduction at the Queen's Bazaar in Oxford Street. According to the diorama's advertisement, people paid a shilling to see 'Mr Martin's Grand Picture of Belshazzar's Feast painted with Dioramic Effect'. Very upset, Martin applied for an injunction to protect his copyright, but it was denied. It seems that Martin acquiesced, owing to the publicity that was generated by the affair. In fact, given his interest in exhibits merging art and science, Martin became sympathetic to the dioramas. See also Feaver 1975, p. 140.

16 Gernsheim 1968, p. 45.

17 Balston 1947, p. 61.

18 Martin's original oil paintings were displayed in various other galleries in London. It is certainly arguable that the Pugins would have been willing to travel across town to see the paintings, but no evidence of that has been found. Moreover, Martin's apocalyptic images arose in the Pugins' culture in other ways. As an example, Martin's images illustrated the 1823 edition of Milton's *Paradise lost*. Mrs Pugin was a devoted reader of that book and was able to quote passages from it. It is further arguable that the overlap of AC Pugin's interest in the art and his wife's interest in the literature would have led to them to have had a copy of that edition in their home. Again, no evidence yet supports this speculation.

He concealed fears and superstitions that forever disturbed him. 'Any reputed haunted room was a positive terror', wrote Powell. 'One night very late at Oscott College he was met in the long corridor with a candle in each hand and on being asked why not be content with one replied "Suppose it blew out!"'.¹⁹ He was frightened by the dark, but also by mirrors, sleepwalkers, and tolling bells – the kind of fears that might have been caused by the everyday obsessions of the supernatural and Gothic fiction as described above; or from being read to as a child.²⁰

As we now begin to understand Pugin's exposure to the extremes of nineteenth-century apocalyptic rhetoric and imagery, it is not difficult to agree with Christabel Powell, who writes that Irving's sensational orations describing the apocalypse and God's divine wrath must have served some effect on Pugin. Besides instilling in him 'an Evangelical-type enthusiasm' for English Roman Catholicism, she believes that, 'Irving's influence was expressed in Pugin's awareness of the supernatural, a concept of other-worldliness shared by those converts, such as Newman and Manning, who had also been touched in their youth by Evangelicalism'.²¹

According to Pugin's biographer Rosemary Hill, by 1825 Pugin, 'had acquired an enduring fascination with disasters: noting in his diaries every boat wreck, bankruptcies, or any other accidental events of any note'.²² Following the premature death of his first wife Anne in 1832, Hill described how Pugin lived from that point on 'with an undercurrent of fear, a dread of being alone that would haunt him for the rest of his life'.²³ And Christabel Powell also writes about the effects the deaths of his wife, mother, and father had on Pugin. He 'suffered a feeling of timor mortis', writes Powell 'which gave him an acute awareness of his own mortality'.²⁴ Powell quotes Pugin's biographer E.S. Purcell, who claimed that he had, 'a strange horror of death'.²⁵ And Pugin at times betrayed an apocalyptic preoccupation in his own writings. In the final lines of his *Contrasts*, he offered a warning from Daniel 5.27: 'They are weighed in the balance and are found wanting'; elsewhere, Pugin cited Romans 13.12: 'the night of sorrow is far spent, the brightness of returning glory is seen'.²⁶

For Pugin, the supernatural, prophetic world was hidden but ever-present, and in the following example we can see how he recognised it in his own architectural and Catholic aims. In a letter probably written in May 1834, he relates his fascination with two examples of God's hand at work. To his close friend William Osmond, he wrote

an architectural Gentleman not Long since at Durham (while Lamenting that Villain Wyatts alterations had not been carried into effect) was suddenly struck dumb and only recovered his speech by writing a recantation of his abominable opinions.

19 Wedgwood 2006, p 15.

20 From personal correspondence with Rosemary Hill.

21 Powell 2006, p 57.

22 Hill 2007, p 66.

23 *Ibid*, p 112.

24 Powell 2006, p 60.

25 *Idem*, quoting Purcell 1862 p 271.

26 For more, see Hill 1999.

And further on, he told Osmond of a second example of divine intervention:

not Long scince during divine service at a small church that has been Lately disguised by some modern repairs—a person was struck by a flash of Lightening which was attracted by an iron head of tracery placed in a wood pannel immediatly behind him. the electric fluid then descended on the top of the seat where it Left the following extraordinary marks **carve**. during the same storm the house & shops of the founder himself were struck & 200 tons of 1 sort of tracery shivered to atoms.²⁷

Here, Pugin recognised God's agency in an electric current – the same fluid that gave life to Frankenstein's creature – acting as a punitive critic in his supernatural world, expressing God's preference for traditional construction methods, and punishing those who even dare to speak in defence of non-Gothic architecture.

Unlike others in obsessed England, Pugin could not dismiss the supernatural as merely superstition. The distance between this world and the other world was very short for him. 'He accepted the great mysteries of his Faith like a man of the Middle Ages', wrote J.H. Powell, 'and with the same child-like awe of the Supernatural'.²⁸ And although it is generally held that the sensationalised world of Irving served only as a punishment for the boy longing to escape the drabness of the Scottish church in favour of the inspiration of the abbey of Westminster, from this point this paper follows a contrasting supposition: that is, that Irving did not repulse Pugin, but rather

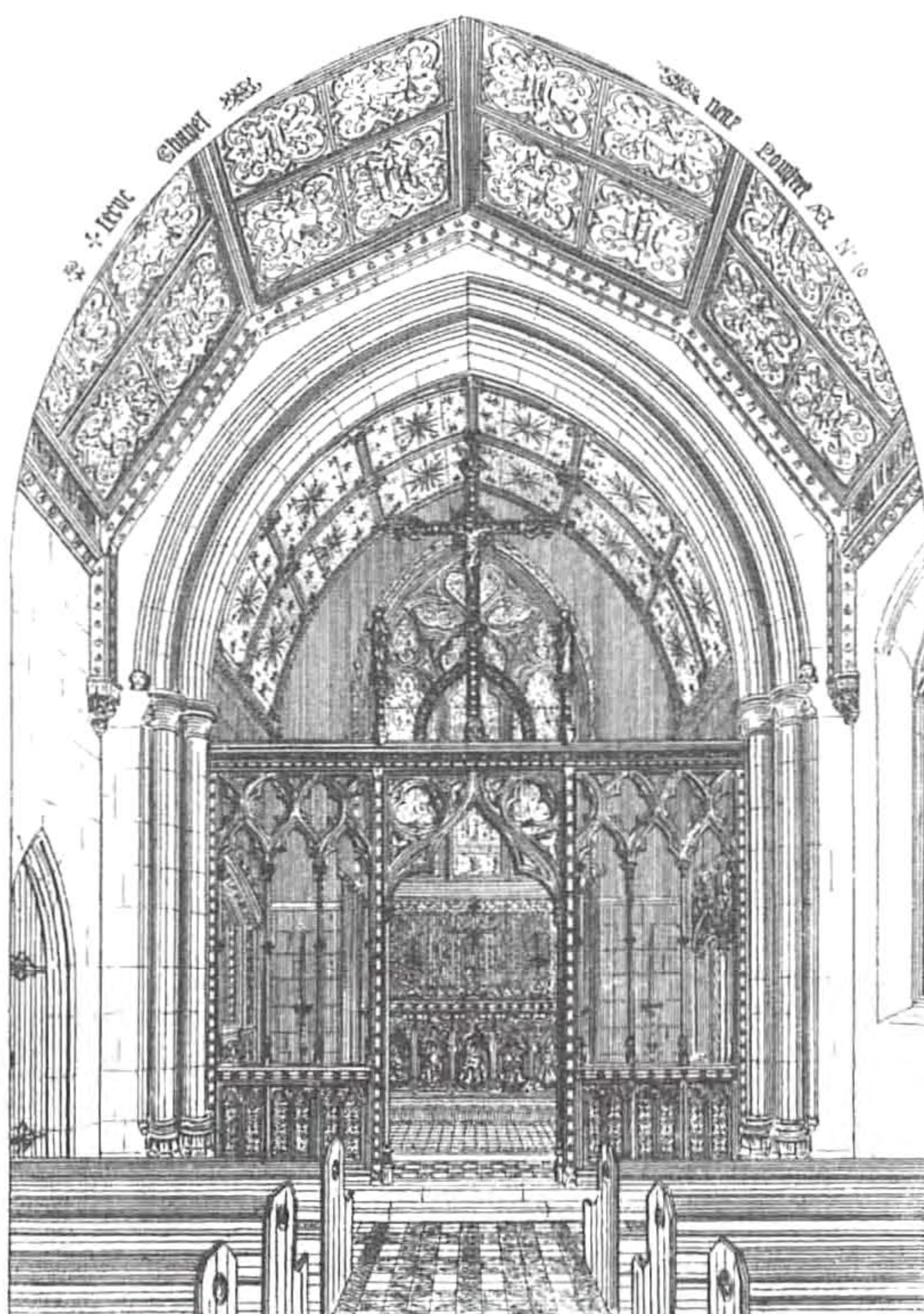


Figure 105: 'Jesus Chapel near Pomfret'
Pugin 1843a.

was instrumental in his move to Roman Catholicism.²⁹ I contend that Irving – imaginarily; in concert with Martin – graphically; planted within Pugin a deep fascination with disaster and the terror of the apocalypse; a similar, but much more exaggerated and radical fascination with the supernatural that was being experienced by his culture on the whole. And, it was that fascination – suspended between fear and mystery – that pulled Pugin into Catholicism.³⁰ It would appear that the rigorously doctrinaire and historically grounded realm of the Catholic liturgy was

²⁷ Belcher 2001, p 35.

²⁸ Wedgwood 2006, p 15.

²⁹ I am aware of the opinions to the contrary which includes, admittedly, Pugin's own testimony that Irving was 'boring'.

³⁰ Pugin's fear should not be thought of as a fear for his safety or his loss, but rather as an apprehension of the enormity of the context in which he had found himself. For related reading, see Otto 1923.

the most direct route for Pugin to get close to the terror in order to enjoy the wonderfulness of it. It was already in place in the scriptures of the Catholic Church. Consequently, Pugin's own 'holy grail' became seeking the dread, the understanding, and the seizing of those supernatural, 'great mysteries'. And to that end, he recognised that all aspects critical to the apprehension of the mysteries are embodied in the controversies of the chancel-screen.

'Chancel-screens happen to be the battlefield'

Pugin clearly understood the role that the chancel-screens played in protecting the mysteries of the Catholic mass, and he knew the problems they posed would be difficult to overcome. Opposition to any obstruction between the congregants and the worship was strong: modern Catholics expected to see and hear all that occurred on the altar. But it was a battle that he could not avoid waging. 'I cannot too strongly impress on the minds of my readers', wrote Pugin in his *Treatise on chancel screens and rood lofts* (1851), 'that the very vitals of Catholic architecture are assailed by the opponents of screens' [figure 105].³¹ He lost nearly every battle over their presence in his church designs – and sometimes saw them pulled from his projects even after he had solicited patrons to pay for them. He often found himself in frustrating disagreement with people who refused to accept his arguments – even where these were his strongest allies. He just could not make enough people understand why the chancel screen was so important. Obstructing in any way the view of the service from the congregates was just unreasonable for most Catholics. Polemic disagreements occurred on nearly every project and at times Pugin was overwhelmed with frustration due to his inability to make rational people understand something that was so important to him. Christabel Powell retells this story:

The differences [regarding chancel screens] again emerged at Nottingham where Pugin had built another cathedral – St. Barnabas' Cathedral...Pugin was proudly showing an Anglican friend around the cathedral and whispered that no one without holy orders should enter the sanctuary. 'Within' he said, 'is the Holy of Holies. The people remain outside. Never is the sanctuary entered by any save those in sacred orders'. As he was speaking a priest appeared in the sanctuary with two ladies. Pugin was indignant and asked the sacristan to order them out. He was greatly dismayed to be told that it was Bishop Wiseman conducting two lady friends over the new church. Pugin simply burst into tears.³²

Pugin worried about how deeply destructive the present thinking about church architecture and the objection to chancel screens was

I solemnly warn all men that the present objection is a mere feeler which appears on the surface to try the current of men's minds, and how far they dare proceed; beneath lies a system of deadly enmity to the very fundamentals of church architecture and Catholic art. It is a new version of the old fable of the Woodman, who asked the trees for a handle to his axe, and which once obtained he hewed down without mercy. *The Screens once gone, the chancels will follow, aisles, chapels, apse, all, and the Cathedral sinks into an assembly room.*³³

31 Pugin 1851a, p 6.

32 Ward 1897, p 359, quoted in Powell 2006, p 136.

33 Letter to the editor of the *Tablet*, between 30.7.1846–1.9.1846: Belcher 2009, p 546.

And in his *Treatise* Pugin offered a robust criticism of the Protestant ‘room-worship’, showing the breakdown of the sanctity of the Catholic chancel by tracing its degradation through history. In a letter to the editor of the *Tablet*, in September 1848, Pugin wrote in rebuttal to an earlier letter which promoted the removal of chancel and rood screens. He lamented that the modern church men could no longer tolerate a worship that required faith without proof, and he warned of the consequences. According to Pugin, the contemporary Catholic

would have everything *en evidence*, and in lieu of a *church* they would give us a *room*, hung about with gauze and calico, a *salle de spectacle* for a gazing congregation. *Let no man be deceived. The question at issue is between church or room worship...*for stript of its altar a modern Italian church is a mere room. It may be stuccoed, pilastered, gilt, frescoed, draped from cornice to pavement, but it is still a room, devoid of solemnity or devotion.³⁴

He was sure that such an arrangement could not but ‘lower the majesty of religion to the level of a common show, and degrade the sacrament before the people, giving occasion for scoffing and ridicule’.³⁵ Pugin warned that modifying the ancient liturgy just to turn it into a sensory experience for the congregants was wrong, and he tried to provide a historical account of how faith was lost to sense over time. He complained that

room-worship, and the all-seeing principles, is a perfect novelty. Those indeed who would make mass a *sight*, are only to be compared to the innovators of the 16th century, who made it essential to be *heard*; those who compiled the Book of Common Prayer converted the mass into all-hearing service; this was the great object of the vernacular change, that people might *hear* the priest; they were to be edified by what he *said*, more than what he *did*; the sacrificial act was merged into the audible recitation of prayers and exhortations.³⁶

By defending the chancel screen as he does, Pugin was trying to protect the mystery of the sacrament [figure 106]. For without the mystery, the terror – and simultaneously, the fascination with the terror – was lost to him and to everyone. I now believe that the deepening of his thinking and the noted move away from pragmatic prescription can be traced to his research into the history of early Christian liturgy. For that, he turned away from the prescriptive language of his early work, and toward more mystical French-language treatises written by liturgical historians

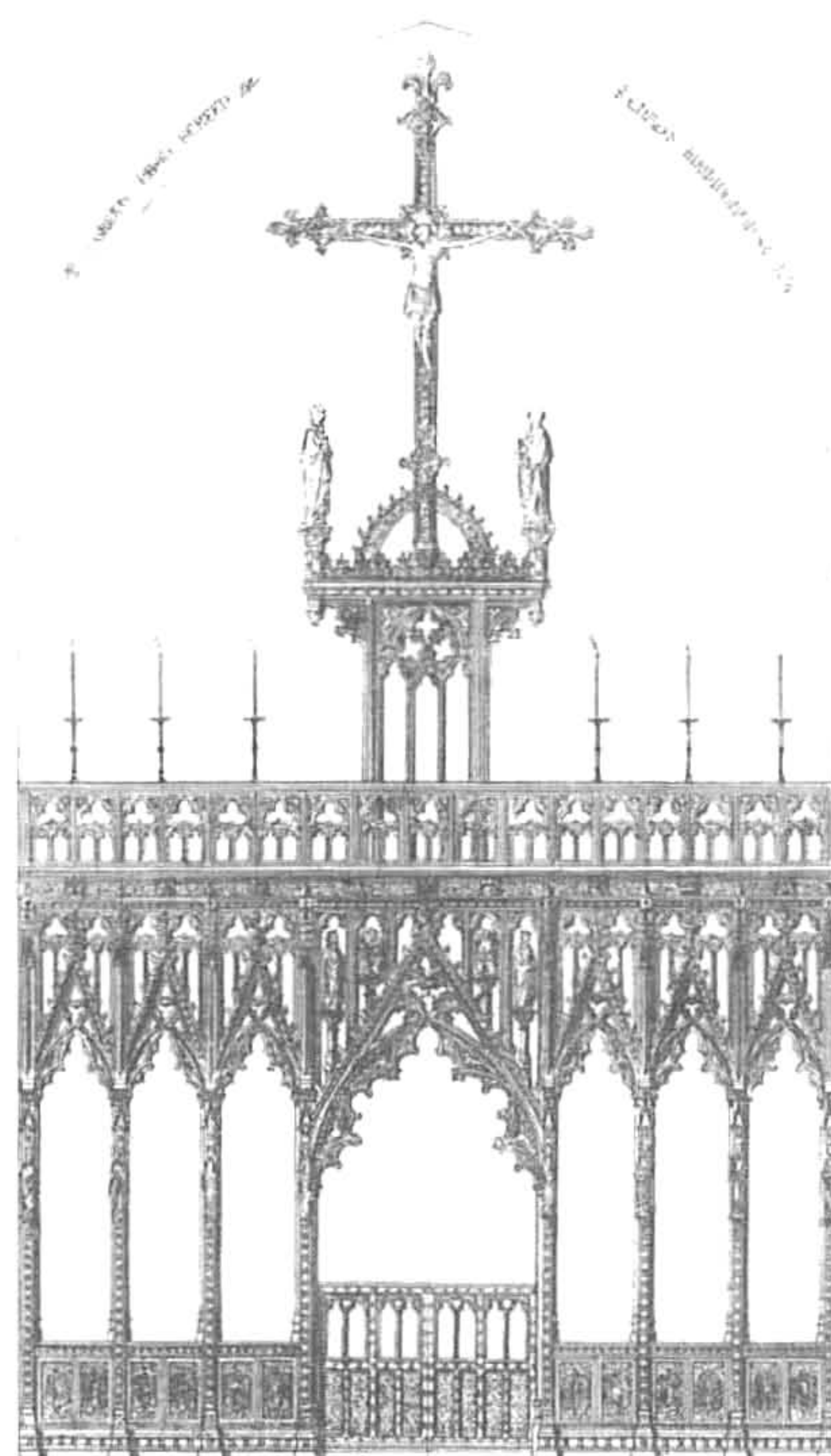


Figure 106: ‘Great rood screen, St Chad’s Birmingham’

Pugin 1843a.

34 *Idem*.

35 Pugin 1851a, p 107.

36 *Ibid*, p 4.

Jean-Baptiste Thiers, and La Brun de Marettes (pseudonym De Moleon), among others.³⁷ In these treatises Pugin found positions sympathetic to his own regarding the sanctity of the chancel and the role of mystery. Their influence was important in shaping his understanding of the liturgy, and in particular in how to conceptualise and explain the supernatural aspects that seemed to have stayed just beyond his grasp in his earlier work. For perhaps the first time, from Thiers, Pugin heard a description of the supernatural that he can claim and reiterate. As an example, in his treatise *Traité de l'exposition du St Sacrement de l'autel* Thiers posits that,

In the Early church the Eucharist was hidden from view because those in authority in the Church were cautious and fearful; they believed that it was a sin to look at the Sacrament because of its formidable and awesome nature. If Almighty God was present, who could look on God?³⁸

According to Thiers, the congregates of early Christianity – unlike the parishioners of nineteenth-century England – were in full harmony with the significance of the eucharist. And through their tradition in Christianity they had become attuned and compliant in their roles as participants in the celebration of the mass. While holding the highest respect for the authority of the clergy, they accepted without question that their participation in the eucharist was in essence naïve. And in that ingenuous state, they allowed themselves an openness to the supernatural and super-sensory. As Thiers explained

While there was nothing more familiar in the early Church than the celebration of the Eucharist – there was nothing that had more respect from Christians. But even this familiarity did not authorise them to view the Exposition of the Sacred Sacrament. The ancient Fathers believed that the sight of the consecrated Host required a state of grace, careful and grand arrangements regarding the celebration of the divine Mysteries, and, lastly, that it was offensive to God for sinners to view it.³⁹

It is likely that Pugin understood this in his earlier work but given his analytic, pragmatic way of working, he could only articulate it in reductive terms like ‘contrasts’, and ‘principles’. But beginning in *On the present state* (1843), and later in the *Treatise on chancel screens*, he is able to reframe Thiers’ observations into architectural solutions. As he writes, ‘Roodcreens and lofts are not to be regarded as mere architectural enrichments raised for effect, nor as enclosures for the sole purpose of protecting the chancel from improper intrusion; for although they contribute to both these ends, yet their real intention must be sought for on profound mystical reasons’.⁴⁰

Pugin seemed here to recognise that the problem he had in trying to explain his thinking about faith was as it orients around the screen as an architectural element, but he still struggled to explain it in terms outside his familiar architectural language. He wrote that, ‘it is not a mere question of architectural detail, respecting a few mullions and a transverse beam, but it involves great principles connected with

37 For more, see Powell 2006, p 203.

38 Thiers 1673, quoted and translated from 1777 edition by Powell 2006, p 330.

39 *Idem*.

40 Pugin 1843a, p 69.

discipline, and even faith.’⁴¹ And it was not until he turned his attention directly to the chancel screens and found the answers he sought in the history of the liturgy that he understood the problem: what he was asking for was the openness to the irrational.

It seems to me that in the *Treatise on chancel screens*, Pugin makes his newly articulated position hyper-clear. God is not present in symbol, or there in ‘spirit’. He is physically present in the altar. And given the unique wonderfulness of it all, we should not be surprised that we do not believe it. Moreover, we should expect neither an explanation nor an announcement of God's presence. We should just accept it without doubt. As Pugin wrote, ‘Though all this should fill us with admiration, there is nothing to excite surprise, when we reflect on the very sacred nature of the Christian mysteries – no sign typical and prophetic, as under the Mosaic law, but our blessed Lord truly present and abiding in the temple in the holy sacrament of the altar’.⁴²

Of course, it can be said that all Catholics believe in this presence in one way or another, and you could say that given the various definitions of what ‘presence’ might mean for the nineteenth-century Catholic, then presence can conceivably be reduced to symbolism. But Pugin's insistence on the establishment and protection of the mysteries, concealed and separated, especially considering his very pragmatic understanding of the historical significance of the physical presence of things, then he believes – and requires others to believe – in the embodiment of a terrifying and fascinating God, ‘present and abiding’ in the church. I think that Pugin saw himself as following a single set of divine instructions – as precisely handed down to him through his dedication to scholarship and the valourisation of history and tradition – to put the church and all the ‘ecclesiastical things’ in predestined order, and that is all he can do as a Christian architect. The ‘ecclesiastical things’ are then embodied with God through consecration, making them ‘real’. And he finds explaining all this unavoidable, yet reductive and repulsive. For the instant its idea is formed and comprehended, it is reduced to symbol. As Christabel Powell put it

Like Pusey, Pugin regarded this world as ‘a show’; reality was with God. This ‘other-worldly’ reality was to him a different dimension. One had to go ‘from the figure’ in order to come to the reality. In this understanding, this world was unreal since it only symbolized what was real. It could give only an imperfect representation of reality, which was beyond man’s abilities to comprehend or demonstrate other than completely superficially. ‘Who is there’, he asked, ‘that can set forth the glory of God, or add lustre to His majesty?’⁴³

This is Pugin’s dilemma – and from which there is no way out for him. He required from everyone the same naive, irrational state of faith into which he had worked himself. And it is that aporia, expecting rational people to be irrational – that generates such frustration in him that it eventually brought him to tears, and perhaps, insanity.

I now believe that Pugin’s thinking about the sacred went through a major transformation beginning in his *Apology* (1843) and was further developed in his

41 Pugin 1851, p 1.

42 *Ibid*, pp 7–8.

43 Powell 2006, p 57.

Treatise eight years later. Both books show him caught between being a practical architect/historian, and a meditative historian/liturgist. In the *Apology*, he wrote like a lecturer or an architect, and his pragmatic dealing with things that we know he holds as sacred is notable:

Sacred imagery is a noble field for the exercise of the highest powers of art; and painting and sculpture, when devoted to the service of the Church, are calculated to improve and elevate the religious feelings of a nation in a surprising degree.⁴⁴

This kind of language leads modern historians to reduce him to the proto-modern, as well as someone still on a moral crusade. But, in the later *Treatise*, his thinking demonstrated its deeper side. He tried to keep a place for the role of reason, but he also allowed for the possibility of losing all contact with representation:

and symbolically, [the screen ornaments] impress on the minds of the faithful the great sanctity of all connected with the sacrifice of the altar, and that, like the vicinity of the 'burning bush', the ground itself is holy...indeed, so sacred, so awful, so mysterious is the sacrifice of the mass, that if men were seriously to reflect on what it really consists – they would hasten to restore the reverential arrangement of Catholic antiquity, and instead of striving for front seats and first places, they would hardly feel worthy to occupy the remotest corner of the temple.⁴⁵

The symbol in the carvings of the chancel screen in this discussion was didactic: for Pugin, it said, 'stay away' or 'shield thy eyes'. But the role of the architecture behind the symbol is for Pugin more than that. It is no less than the concealment and an embodiment of the awful fascination of God.

Conclusion: apprehending the mysteries

The preoccupation of the Victorians to the supernatural and horror was not just a fad or an obsession: it was the tacit and fleeting remnants of a Judeo-Christian urge to believe in the unknowable. But on the other hand, technology, the protestant ethic, and all that goes with that, were showing them that such callings were just superstitions. Science and reason were positioned to clarify every potential unknown. And Pugin with, firstly, his hyper-zealous, hyper-sensitised, faith-based premillennialist background and, secondly, his analytical, measured, historically prescriptive world-view – was just stretched to the extremes in that world. His first writings, *Contrasts* and *The true principles*, were written from one side, where he was attempting to express his vision of a higher place for architecture by reasoned prescription. But in his last books, *On the present state* and the *Treatise on chancel*



Figure 107: AWN Pugin, from recollection, by Joseph Nash Ferrey 1861, frontispiece.

44 Thiers 1673, pp 206–7, quoted and translated from 1777 edition by Powell 2006, p 330.

45 *Ibid*, pp 12; 7.

screens, he was reaching back from a position of faith, imploring belief in an unknowable truth. He was not going to win from either side. He learned that he could not analyse and prescribe the holy, and conversely, he was not going to convince a reasonable culture wanting proof to follow him on faith. They rejected him and his pleas asking for their complete capitulation on nearly a daily basis. The culture around him was headed in the opposite direction. His first books were much better received by his culture – following his publications of *Contrasts* and *The true principles* came claims of genius. In his *Treatise on chancel screens*, he was accused – and still is – of being on the doorstep of insanity.

Pugin knew that God had flown from the ‘room worship’ of the English church because the mystery was unprotected and consequently was gone. And, it was not that somehow within the modern, humanist enlightenment of nineteenth-century England, the modern Catholic had become capable of cohabiting with God. He was admonishing that they were being fools. God is gone, and contemporary worship was ‘a show’ worthy of a theatre. Pugin, as architect and theologian, was trying to reestablish the fascination of the terror of God by luring him back into a realm of Mystery.

In the end, it seems that E.S. Purcell, in his appendix to Ferrey’s biography, may offer the best interpretation of the work of his friend [figure 107]. Purcell drew this conclusion about Pugin and his struggle with reason, faith, and with apprehending the mysteries:

With its stupendous mysteries Christianity introduced an architecture of its own, symbolical of the sublime doctrines of the Christian religion. It is not the mere beauty – which renders it so immeasurably superior – but the wonderful power it exhibits, in embodying and illustrating the faith and practices of Christianity.⁴⁶

With that, I think that a potential reading of Pugin can be this: First, it can be agreed that there were some deep aspects of Christianity and Christian architecture with which Pugin seems to have been in touch. And secondly, as Purcell summarises, the mysteries themselves make their own architecture. Pugin originally believed that access to the mysteries was obtainable by analysis and prescription, and arguable in principle. But eventually he began to adopt this open position: real architecture is mystical, and is not in the hands of the architect as creator. Of its own making, real architecture renders itself immeasurable. In other words, it was not so much that Pugin was reviving Gothic architecture (as he argued in his early work), or even Christian architecture (as he claimed later), but rather that he was attempting to revive the sense of the mysteries of the religious supernatural.

The author would like to thank Rosemary Hill for her openness in responding to the questions and conjecture of a first-time Pugin scholar.

⁴⁶ Ferrey 1861, p 317.

Transcending rules: A.W.N. Pugin's St Giles' at Cheadle

by Stephan Kowal

Perfect Cheadle' is widely recognised as A.W.N. Pugin's greatest achievement, notably providing the most complete interior ever realised by the architect. For Roderick O'Donnell 'it marked the climax of the archaeological phase of Gothic Revival church-building'.¹

Michael Fisher, author of *Pugin-Land* and *Perfect Cheadle*, considered the church to be Pugin's finest.² Though the architect himself coined the term 'Perfect Cheadle,' there was a time when he felt that his 'Perfect Cheadle' did not seem so *perfect* after all. In his 1850 article *Some remarks on the articles which have recently appeared in The Rambler*, he distanced himself from its highly decorative style: 'there is a great anomaly between the simplicity of its walls and mouldings and the intricacy of its detail'.³ Intent in reviving the most exacting Catholic rituals and their architectural *arrangement*, the meaning and symbolism of the ornamentation seemed jeopardised by its very excess. This paper addresses Pugin's ambiguous position pertaining to ornamentation, its signification and effect, in a quest to address the idea of *perfectness* attributed to the church. Is Cheadle really perfect, and in what manner?

All through the design and construction of the church in Cheadle, Pugin published a great number of books and articles that can document the evolution of his thoughts on church architecture in relation to his actual built work. In these writings, Pugin often adopts a pragmatic point of view, describing the principles of the architectural arrangements and the appropriate symbolism of its decoration. This paper argues that there is a tension between the highly coded principles and symbolism described by Pugin and the overwhelming effect generated by the church as a whole, once completed.

Perfect Cheadle

John Talbot, the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, Pugin's principal benefactor and friend, decided to commission the church of St Giles in Cheadle in the Spring of 1840. In a letter to Pugin apparently dated 28 March 1841, Lord Shrewsbury stated that it was to be 'as perfect a specimen as we can make it'.⁴ In another letter, he writes to Pugin 'I expect when finished it will be a text book for all good people'.⁵ The stakes for what Pugin described as 'a small parish church' would be high.⁶ In the years to come, and until the church's completion, Pugin often reaffirmed this ambition of *perfectness* for the church in Cheadle, especially in his letters to Lord Shrewsbury. On 5 January 1841 he wrote to the latter that 'Cheadle will be the best thing after all

1 O'Donnell 1994, p 73.

2 Fisher 2004, p 3.

3 Pugin 1850, p 9.

4 Cited in O'Donnell 1994, p 74 (House of Lords Record Office historical collection, Shrewsbury to Pugin, no 339).

5 House of Lords Record Office, Pugin letters 339, quoted in O'Donnell 1994, p 74.

6 Letter to Shrewsbury: Belcher 2001, p 187.



Figure 108: St Giles', Cheadle, from the southeast
photographed by Martin Charles in 1994.

because though small & simple it will be a perfect revival'.⁷ Three months later, on 31 March, he wrote: 'I will bestow every possible pains on its execution and the smallest detail shall be carefully carried out...It will be most satisfactory for your Lordship to have raised the first real church. There is nothing like it at present'.⁸

7 *Ibid*, p 189.

8 *Ibid*, p 227.

Then, on 28 August, he added: 'The building will be a Model in every respect'.⁹ Finally that year, on 24 December, he wrote: 'I hope when Cheadle is finished that it will then be compleated—it will be the most perfect thing in England'.¹⁰ In a letter in 1842, he wrote: 'I will not Let anything pass for Cheadle that is not the true thing. it must be perfection'.¹¹

The famous expression 'Perfect Cheadle' appeared in a letter to Shrewsbury dated Wednesday 9 March 1842: '*perfect cheadle. Cheadle my consolation in all afflictions*'.¹² It was an exclamation made in response to unwelcomed modifications proposed by his benefactor. As Denis Gwynn puts it in *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin and the Catholic revival* (1946), although Pugin had the chance to put his theories into practice thanks to Shrewsbury, some friction did occur between the two men.¹³ Several alterations were proposed by his patron who sometimes had divergent 'artistic tastes'.¹⁴ For example, Pugin rebuked Shrewsbury for his proposal to add canvases to the walls: he qualified the suggestion as barbarous, destroying 'all the solid effect of the building', adding 'I can decorate the walls so well that you Lordship will be perfectly satisfied'. Years later, in *Some remarks*, Pugin wrote, 'it was quite an afterthought of its noble founder to cover it [the church] with coloured enrichment'.¹⁵

In December 1840, Pugin wrote that 'the drawings for Cheadle are all Compleated. I have taken great pains with them'.¹⁶ A month later, he wrote to his friend John Rouse Bloxam, an antiquary and member of the Oxford Architectural Society, 'every detail of an *old english Parish church is restored with scrupulous fedelity*'.¹⁷ As a matter of fact, constant modifications were eventually made to the design until its opening in September 1846. According to Margaret Belcher's impeccable research, only one of the working drawings survives from this period, for the Easter sepulchre and the pulpit, dated 1840, now part of the RIBA British Architectural Library Drawings and Archives Collection.¹⁸ A general plan, an engraving of the front elevation of the church and two interior views were published in an article for the *Dublin review* in May 1841, reprinted in Pugin's later book *On the present state* in 1843. In this he cited St Giles' and exemplified his conception of church design through brisk descriptions.

Pugin's *The true principles*, published in 1841, opens with two famous rules for design: '1st, that there should be no features about a building which are not necessary for convenience, construction, or propriety; 2nd, that all ornament should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building'.¹⁹ Ornaments must not be considered 'merely for the sake of what is termed effect; the ornaments are *actually constructed*, instead of forming the decoration of *construction*, to which in good taste they should

9 *Ibid*, p 269.

10 *Ibid*, p 307.

11 23.2.1842 : *ibid*, p 325.

12 *Ibid*, p 328.

13 Gwynn 1946, p 35.

14 Fisher 2004, p 37.

15 Pugin 1850, p 9.

16 24.12.1840: Belcher 2001, p 178.

17 10.1.1841: *ibid*, p 191.

18 *Ibid*, p 136; See Wedgwood 1977, p 57.

19 Pugin, 1841a, p 1.

be always subservient'. He continued by stating that 'in pure architecture the smallest detail should *have meaning or serve a purpose*'.²⁰ These words were written exactly during the period when the planning and construction of the main spaces of St Giles' were being carried out. He referred to ornament in reference to construction, convenience, and architectural propriety, with three material distinctions – stone, timber and metal. Nothing was mentioned about the surface finishes – painting or gilding. He barely even mentioned issues of symbolism. Concerning the design of the sepulchre of St Giles', for instance, he merely described the mouldings and jambs in a generic fashion: meant as enrichments, they should be designed 'on the principle of light, shadow, and half tint' and 'carrying out the same principle that may be observed in vegetation'.²¹ Yet the sepulchre was richly adorned with paintings and gilding, on which he said nothing [figure 109].

In *On the present state*, published the same year as *The true principles*, Pugin emphasised the intrinsic meaning of the arrangement of architecture and objects as required by ancient mediæval rituals. He advocates 'a certain *regulated system*', one that would 'preserve uniformity and discipline', and the 'forming of a complete Catholic parish church for the due celebration of the divine office and administration of the sacraments, both as regards architectural arrangement and furniture'.²² He considered 'that the ceremonies of the church are *realities*, not *representations*; that they were instituted not to *dazzle the eye* but to *honour God*'.²³ On ornamentation, he wrote of the difficulty that may be encountered in ecclesiastical buildings, their purpose being 'to unite *richness* with *severity*, to produce *splendour* without *gaudiness*, and to erect a temple somewhat worthy of the holy sacrifice'.²⁴ Although he described a strict arrangement of parts and shapes, he also recognised that room is left for the inclusion of symbolical figures. He quoted the church antiquarian George Aycliffe Poole's description of decorations as emblematic representations.²⁵ St Giles' is often used to exemplify theoretical content in *On the present state*, claiming that 'it will be a perfect revival of an English parish church of the time of Edward I'.²⁶ Yet, the three interior views of the church published by Pugin at the time are still represented with barren walls, devoid of painting and gilding. Pugin wrote to Shrewsbury: 'I enclose the wood cuts of Chhead which have been executed for the Dublin Review & with which I feel assured your Lordship will be much pleased. you will now perceive the arrgmnt of Altar. I have not indicated the painting on the wall—for I was fearful that the wood engraver would spoil it'.²⁷ One could also consider that all decoration had not yet been designed.

Although Pugin liked to emphasise the necessity for symbolical decorations entirely at the service of liturgy, it is also possible to detect in some of his writings a great concern for the capacity for the whole to create an *effect*. For instance, Pugin explained that independently of 'mystical and pious reasons, the ancient and

20 *Idem*.

21 *Ibid*, pp 13–4.

22 Pugin, 1843a, pp 4; 5; 12.

23 *Ibid*, n p 40.

24 *Ibid*, p 41.

25 See *ibid*, p 63 ff.

26 Pugin, 1843a, p 30.

27 17.3.1841 : Belcher 2001, p 219. Pugin is referring to Pugin 1841c.

canonical position' of a church itself affects how the rays of the rising sun will stream through the eastern windows of the choir or chancel; how a setting sun will 'light up the nave with glowing tints, the rich effect being much increased by the partial obscurity of the choir end at the time'; and how the 'beautiful passage of light from sunrise to sunset, with all its striking and sublime effects is utterly lost in a church placed in any other than the ancient position'.²⁸ Additionally, in a footnote concerning the enrichments of the interior of a church, Pugin stressed the importance of effect through painting and gilding: 'The moment colour is introduced in the windows, the rest of the ornaments must correspond, —the ceiling, the floor, all must bear their part in the general effect'. He continued: 'In the old churches, the azure and gilt ceiling, the encrusted tiles of various colours, the frescoes on the walls, the heraldic charges, the costly hangings of the altars, the variegated glass, all harmonized together, and formed a splendid whole, which can only be produced by the combined effect of all these details; — omit any of them, and the unity of the design is destroyed'.²⁹

In December 1842, Pugin started work on a new book with Bernard Smith, a recently ordained clergyman and new friend, entitled *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament*, which was published in 1844, with a second extended edition in 1846.³⁰ With this book, it is evident that Pugin was researching authorities on completing the ornamentation at St Giles'. The short introduction pertains to the rightful definition of an ornament, which he related to 'the embellishment of what is in itself useful, in an appropriate manner', and was distinguished from a mere enrichment or unmeaning detail. Pugin stated that ornament must possess an appropriate meaning, 'and be introduced with an intelligent purpose, and on reasonable grounds'.³¹ The different terms of the glossary are then briefly defined and endorsed and exemplified by lengthy citations of selected ancient authorities. The issue of extrinsic meaning, pertaining to the symbolical realm, now overwhelms the text. 73 illustrated plates follow, mostly using chromolithography which gave the plates a peculiar vividness. Rosemary Hill has described the 'golds and crimsons, shocking pinks and grass greens that turned every ecclesiastical form into pattern. The figures of vested priests repeat until they become motifs; altars are flattened into mosaics'. She qualifies the effect as 'dazzling, almost hallucinogenic, conveying something of heightened intensity of Pugin's perception at the time'.³² If the definitions and lengthy authorities were of uttermost importance to Pugin, to establish their appropriateness and to providing an assurance of their meaningful explanation, it seems that it is actually the production of the plates that provides the 'effect' that he might had been looking for. Keeping Hill's comment in mind, it is as if embodied rituals had been collapsed into flat, yet vivid patterns.

28 Pugin 1843a, pp 14–5.

29 *Ibid.*, n p 26.

30 For Smith see Hill 2009, p 275.

31 Pugin 1846, p iii.

32 Hill 2009, p 286.

The fascination for details

'Not only is the plaster painted, but also the stone, alabaster and woodwork'.³³

As work progressed at St Giles', one can only imagine Pugin's ambitions for achieving perfection, by fully decorating the church in an 'appropriate' manner. He had researched all the relevant authorities concerning ornamentation, yet between the summers of 1843 and 1845 he made several trips to the continent in a quest for details. On 1 August 1843, he wrote to Shrewsbury from Antwerp: 'I shall find the most Beautiful authorities for painted details at Cheadle above all. I have got tracings of all the Orinal [?] patterns at Cologne where they are actually restoring the *painting on the pillars & vaulting*. I shall return quite rich in new / old / devices'.³⁴ On 25 April 1844, he wrote again, this time from England, about findings at Yarmouth: 'I am half frantic with delight. I have seen churches with *the painting & gilding nearly perfect!!!!* Such screens. exquisite painting. I shall have glorious authorities for Cheadle. I am delighted beyond measure to have seen these before we begin the decoration there—they are far beyond anything I thought we had in England'.³⁵ Two months later, he went to see the restoration of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris carried by a special team consisting of Félix Duban, Jean-Baptiste Lassus and Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. On 30 May 1844 he wrote to Shrewsbury: 'I never saw Images so exquisitely painted. I worked incessantly the whole time I was away & got most interesting sketches. I have also purchased a great many casts of the most beautiful character—which will be just the thing for the images in the spire at Cheadle & also for the *reredos & chancel*'.³⁶ In the summer of 1844, he returned to Cologne.³⁷ In the Spring of 1845 he wrote to Lord Shrewsbury: 'It would be far better to take *another year* to finish than leave out the details of Cheadle'.³⁸ On the 25 July 1845, he wrote again that he will be leaving for a short tour in Germany 'to get some sketches'.³⁹ The consecration of the church, which had been planned for September 1845, was indeed to be postponed for a whole year.⁴⁰ Pugin was frantically searching for the true revival of his decorated style, and finding 'nearly' perfect details. He was collecting various parts so as to create a beautiful whole. One wonders if these findings were related to the 'authorities' gathered in his *Glossary* or to the pursuit of an overall *effect*.

At the end of Summer 1846 St Giles' was finally completed; it was consecrated on 1 September. Numerous descriptions and accounts of the elaborate ceremony were published, many by Pugin himself. The version in the *Morning post* was reproduced in the October 1846 issue of *Dolman's magazine*, under the heading of 'Lord Shrewsbury's New Church of St. Giles, in Staffordshire', by Charles Dolman. The article included Pugin's own description, as well as a complete account 'of the memorable scene that was recently enacted at Cheadle'. Early on in the text Pugin mentioned 'the style is that which prevailed during the reigns of the Edwards,

33 O'Donnell 1994, p 76.

34 Belcher 2003, p 97.

35 *Ibid*, p 191.

36 *Ibid*, pp 200–1.

37 Hill 2009, p 305.

38 March 1845?: Belcher 2003, p 365.

39 *Ibid*, p 424.

40 Fisher 2004, p 42.



Figure 109: St Giles', Cheadle: the rood screen, chancel and Easter sepulchre photographed by Martin Charles in 1994.

commonly called decorated'. In the long process of finishing the church, he had expanded the period of reference, from Edward I, in *On the present state*, to the entire reign of the three Edwards and beyond, spanning three centuries.

In his description of the church itself, he spoke of the general configuration in a very pragmatic way, and of the ornamentations very generically. Dolman himself characterised the description as technical. His wording recalls *The true principles* or

On the present state. 'Beautiful effect' is linked to usefulness. For instance, in his description of the roof, he writes 'This cresting, which was anciently found on all roofs of ecclesiastical and important buildings, not only produces a rich and beautiful effect, but is actually useful in confining the lead, and securing it from violent storms of wind'.⁴¹ Describing the nave, he specifies that 'the ten arches are supported by eight detached, and four engaged, pillars, with richly-foliated caps, all of different design', and pursues with a generic description of the decoration: 'these pillars, as well as every portion of the roof, walls and arches, &c, are covered with gilding and painted enrichments'.⁴² It is as if Pugin has avoided explaining the intricacies of the decoration itself. It is interesting to note that the plate presented in the article ('Chancel of St. Giles', Cheadle'), is actually a reprint taken from *On the present state* (plate xiii) of 1841, which excluded much of the ornamentation. For that reason, Dolman feels obliged to mention that it 'gives by no means a complete idea of the inside of the church, of which the walls are now, not in the chancel alone, but in every part, decorated beyond the original intention, as well as beyond all the conceptions of liveliest imagination'.⁴³ The author of the article in the *Morning post* also had difficulty in expressing the interior decoration: 'It is not so easy to convey by words any idea of the general effect. Bright and glittering colours, gorgeous decorations, beautiful paintings, meet the eye on every side, till the senses become dazzled; and perhaps, if there be a fault, it is that the eye seeks in vain for repose from the splendour with which it is surrounded...The splendidly elaborate painting, pencilling, and gilding of the interior, the beautiful stained glass, the noble proportions, and the sumptuous fittings, combine towards an effect which is unequalled in any religious edifice of the present time'.⁴⁴

The December 1846 issue of the *Gentleman's magazine* also includes Pugin's description of the church in an article that appeared anonymously under the pseudonym Sylvanus Urban. It reuses much of the *Morning post's* article, but with expanded details: Pugin now engaged in a fuller description of the decoration and its symbolism. For example, the description of the baptismal font is finally worthy of the explanations furnished in the *Glossary*:

The font, which is alabaster, is fixed to the centre of this enclosure, and octagonal in form; four monsters or dragons are represented crushed under the pedestal, emblematic of sin destroyed by the sacrament of baptism. The bowl is surrounded by quatrefoils, containing emblems of the four evangelists, and angels bearing crowns. The cover is framed of oak, and forms a central canopy, supported by eight flying buttresses and pinnacles, and surmounted by a finial, to which the chains are attached for the convenient raising and lowering of the same. The baptistery window is divided into three lights; in the centre an image of St. John the Baptist, holding the Lamb; above, the Holy Spirit descending, surrounded by rays and seven stars. The side lights are divided into eight floriated quatrefoils, containing representations of virtues, such as Humility, Charity, Mercy, Modesty, &c. as females overcoming contrary vices under the form of animals.⁴⁵

41 Dolman 1846, p 342.

42 *Ibid*, p 345.

43 *Ibid*, p 338.

44 *Ibid*, p 347.

45 Urban 1846, p 629.

To get a fuller sense of the church itself, however, we need to turn to other contemporary accounts. Amongst these, that of Adolphe-Napoléon Didron, an archaeologist leader of the French neo-Gothic faction, provides by far the most complete. Didron had received an invitation to the opening ceremonies at Cheadle and indeed made the lengthy trip to see Pugin's masterpiece. He subsequently wrote a very detailed description of the church and consecration ceremonies in the pages of his journal, the *Annales archéologiques*. Although the text is based on Pugin's own description of St Giles', as published for the *Gentlemen's magazine*, sometimes even with literal translations of passages, it is valuable because of Didron's thorough archaeological knowledge of Gothic: not only does he give descriptions, but identifies the provenance or inspirations of certain details, and provides valuable critical assessments.⁴⁶

For example, Pugin associated St Giles' with the style that 'prevailed during the reigns of the Edwards, which spans from late 13th century to the 15th century, commonly called Decorated'.⁴⁷ Didron, however, states that Pugin adopted the floriated style of the fifteenth century, that which reigned in England under Edwards IV and V. Didron also mentions that, even if Pugin had told him that he had imitated the English national architecture, Cheadle reproduces many motifs of thirteenth-century French architecture. Didron greatly criticised this mixture of French thirteenth century with the fifteenth century. He 'especially' regretted Pugin's constant love of a floriated style. For example, he explains that the eastern extremity of the sanctuary is of the perpendicular style, following the English tradition, and not 'rounded' like in France.⁴⁸ He describes the whole as supported by two buttresses, pierced with niches containing the statues of St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist, and specifies that although these statues are of the sixteenth century, their supports pertain more to the fourteenth century, and their canopy, to the fifteenth.⁴⁹ Didron claims that for the trained eyes of an archaeologist these diverse and discordant periods are discernable.⁵⁰ He also criticises Pugin's abuse of inscriptions, explaining that although the mediæval period was very 'talkative', neither stones nor works of art had 'ever talked as much' as Pugin was supposing.⁵¹

Nevertheless, the general tone of the article is extremely positive. Didron emphasised that one could never reproach Pugin for an absence of thought, even in details. 'The symbolic thought of the architect is everywhere revealed, and nothing has been omitted in what can contribute to render more solemn the celebration of the divine offices'.⁵² More importantly, Didron offered a deeper reading of the revival; for him, Pugin had revived the whole mediæval period, 'body and soul...Everything comes to life in this building'.⁵³ 'All is covered with painted ornaments and gildings,

46 Although the article in the *Gentlemen's magazine* was published a month after Didron's article in the *Annales archéologiques*, it is likely that the description existed prior to its publication, and had been given to the latter by Pugin himself.

47 Urban 1846, p 629. According to Pevsner, the decorated style was used from the mid-13th to the mid-14th century.

48 Pevsner breaks the decorated period into two styles: the 'geometric', 1250–90, and the 'curvilinear' 1290–1350.

49 Didron 1846, p 294.

50 *Ibid*, pp 292–3.

51 *Ibid*, p 294.

52 *Ibid*, p 296–7.

53 *Ibid*, pp 293; 297.

the effect is truly magical'.⁵⁴ Acknowledging Pugin's symbolic world, despite its stylistic discrepancies, Didron sees the building as a whole come to life, revived through some magical effect, and gaining a soul. Didron goes further and writes: 'when one revives fabric, metals, stone and wood of the middle ages, one has to revive the chants, it is the soul speaking'.⁵⁵ Like Pugin himself, Didron was disappointed by the music played during the opening ceremony.

35 years later, in the *History of Cheadle in Staffordshire and neighbouring places*, Robert Plant offered a similar account:

The interior of the church is in the highest degree magnificent and impressive, for the pillars, walls and roofs are enriched and fretted in every part with colour and gilding; to the gorgeous effect of which the 'storied windows, rightly dight', add their many coloured charms, and, by diminishing the brilliancy of the daylight in the church, destroy that tendency to glare which so much decoration would otherwise produce, and render the whole exquisitely picturesque and beautiful...there is a completeness in the building which defies words to express, or representations to give an idea of. In the architectural portion of the building, the proportions and arrangements are most exact and skilful, whilst the decorative portion is equally to be admired, each symbol and enrichment having its peculiar reference to the portion of the church for which it was designed.⁵⁶

In *God's architect*, Rosemary Hill has written:

the effect [of St Giles] was spectacular and no 'mere revival'. There was never anything quite like Cheadle in the Middle Ages. It is a full-blown work of high romantic art. For Pugin it marked the point, perhaps the first, certainly the last, where his religious and aesthetic ideals were seen to be equally fulfilled...The effect of Cheadle was not to be realized by argument, it was to be understood in sublimation of the self, in surrendering 'the thoughts and feelings of the soul' to the overwhelming power of the totality.⁵⁷

Already in the September 1846 issue of the *Tablet*, Frederick Lucas believed that St Giles' demonstrated 'the indissoluble connection between Art and Faith; the external beauty and the inward principle from which it springs...the universality of the Catholic Church in both space and time'.⁵⁸

A complete work

Roderick O'Donnell, in his book *The Pugins and the Catholic Midlands*, finds that 'For foreigners the most striking aspect [of St Giles'] was perhaps what continental critics called a *Gesamtkunstwerk* or complete artwork, that is an example of the applied arts as the product of one controlling mind, as Wagner's operas were to be'.⁵⁹ The architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock had previously alluded to this when describing the harmonies and combination found at Cheadle: 'Every square inch of the interior is painted either with gold or with colour chiefly in repeating patterns – diapers, chevrons, and brocaded effects – which are infinitely various in design and

54 *Ibid*, p 296.

55 *Ibid*, p 303.

56 Plant 1881, p 121.

57 Hill 2007, p 360.

58 Quoted, *idem*.

59 O'Donnell 2002, p 22.

yet consistently harmonious in scale...The darkness tends to merge them in the total effect of subdued richness', which even reminds him of the orchestration of the great Romantic composers. He considers it 'a major monument of the Late Romanticism; for it recalls, among contemporary works in other arts ...that of Berlioz; it may even be compared not unjustly with the coloristic painting of Turner and Delacroix'.⁶⁰

The general feeling echoes some of the obsessions of the period. The idea of the total work of art – and the term *Gesamtkunstwerk* – was developed by Richard Wagner three years after Pugin completed St Giles' in his essay 'Art and revolution'. It is of course difficult to associate Pugin with Wagner's famous operatic argument, which reaches towards the Dionysian. Yet the premises for Wagner's idea of the total work of art had been laid in the German and French writings of the defenders of the revival of Christian art. David Meara, in *The Catholic context* (1995), mentions that Pugin was well acquainted with French and German artists and writers, and had his own extensive library that contained many French and German works on history, liturgy and Christian art.⁶¹ It is quite probable, for instance, that Pugin had been made aware of Félicité de Lamennais's *Esquisse d'une philosophie* dating from 1840. Lamennais was no orthodox Catholic like Pugin, but he was extremely influential for the defenders of *l'art chrétien* in France. Pugin was very close to that group as the second edition of *Contrasts* gives ample evidence. In his philosophical work Lamennais linked art, beauty and truth, and the sense of sight and hearing to light and sound, as the manifestation of form, whereas divine art tends to reproduce an infinite unity of form, or a primeval and absolute beauty – hence creation itself. He found in architecture the common matrix of all the arts.⁶² Similar to descriptions of the effect at St Giles, Lamennais writes about the sensory experience of the Catholic church:

Imagine yourself, at sunset, in the immense Christian cathedral...With the last glimmer of light, the night extinguishes the last sounds; a mysterious silence envelops you on all sides. Outside yourself, muted darkness; inside, the invisible breath of an unknown power that irresistibly penetrates and overtakes you. Deprived of any sensory stimulus, a strange labour takes place inside yourself; spirits pass before your internal eye, ghosts without bodies inhabit your imagination; time, no longer measurable, seems to have evaporated all of its own. Suddenly, in the distance, appears a luminous point, then another, and another again; you begin to distinguish the building mass, walls like the side of a steep mountain, the sharp ridge at the corners, the curvature of the arcs, the enormous pendentives. The light increases: on these harmonious masses appear plants, animals, and innumerable forms of beings coming forth out of their inexhaustibly fertile loins. Sparkling with thousands of colours whose reflections cross and fuse together, they bring to your senses a revelation of life...When, in the midst of this newborn world, suddenly vibrates the voice of the organ, in turn majestic, soft, severe, filling with its infinitely varied harmonies the quivering vaults, wouldn't we think that we are hearing the voice of all these beings whose creation we had just witnessed?⁶³

If, in 1850, Pugin felt St Giles' was imperfect due to its excessive decoration, when he finally returned to Cheadle in 1851 he changed his mind again; in a letter to Jane

60 Hitchcock 1954, p 83.

61 Meara 1995, pp 50–1.

62 Lamennais 1840, pp 126–46.

63 *Ibid*, pp 154–5 (translation by Martin Bressani).

Pugin, dated 26 August, he wrote: 'It looks magnificent...it is a very glorious building & stands capitally I assure you it quite astonished me'.⁶⁴ So is Cheadle 'perfect'? By definition, the adjective attests completeness in all respects. As an archaeological essay in the decorated style, it is not. Didron's comments attest to this. As an example of the principles and authorities Pugin stood by, probably not. In the six-year process of designing St Giles', and the endless pursuit of appropriate ornamentation, paralleled with the building of the core of his theory, Pugin was completing a whole. Kenneth Clark once wrote that for Pugin, 'Architecture was to be judged by two independent standards, an esthetic and a moral of which the second was more important'.⁶⁵ The true purpose, for which Pugin had set himself forth as an architect, was to revive the Catholic faith. Michael Fisher explains that 'when Pugin spoke of St Giles' as a 'revival' and 'the real thing', he was speaking not only about authentic architecture and design, but about the way in which the building was to be used'.⁶⁶ In the restoration of ancient rituals, Pugin was reviving a language, a setting for their embodiment. But in the process, it seems as if the church, or the building itself with its inert stones and flat ornaments, transcended liturgical rules and came to life into a *whole*. Cheadle – completed, seems to achieve equilibrium, *through* the real and the symbolic, awakening the senses, and rendering a certain consciousness – a sentience. *A sentient house of God*.

64 Quoted in Hill 2009, p 469.

65 Clark 1974, p 148.

66 Fisher 2004, p 20.

The baptism of British government: A.W.N. Pugin's Catholic hand in the New Houses of Parliament

by Victor Simion

A W.N. Pugin's work at the New Houses of Parliament has been discussed chiefly from the point of view of authorship, his role having been defined from that of simple draughtsman, to co-author, or even to that of main architect. As for his reactions towards the work, it has also been described with a similar range of feelings: condescending, indifferent or even impassioned. What has been consistently left out, however, is the role of Pugin's militant Catholicism in the design of the Parliament. It is a curious omission considering the inseparable nature of Pugin's Gothic Revivalism and his newly adopted religion. I thus propose to investigate, in a speculative vein, the possibility that Pugin's aim in the rebuilding of the Houses was to make amends for the schism precipitated by Henry VIII: in other words to Catholicise Parliament.

In 1834, the position of the Roman Catholic Church in England was improving but with much difficulty. It was only in 1829 that elected Catholics were to be allowed to sit in Parliament. The 1828 election of the Catholic Daniel O'Connell in Clare, Ireland, resulted in the decision of the Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, to lead Parliament to enact emancipation as he and many others were fearful of an Irish insurrection. Yet the bill was strongly opposed by the House of Lords and the King. This forced the Prime Minister to threaten resignation in order to secure royal assent. This strong opposition came despite a half-century of improvement in the legal status of Catholics. The Government had enacted in 1791 the Roman Catholic Relief Act, removing restrictions on the practice of professions such as law and professorship and allowing the creation of schools of Catholic vocation. Most restrictions were removed, with the notable exception of the Roman Catholic oath.¹ Yet the Catholic Church remained the target of popular repression, as when the Gordon Riots following the meagre relief brought by the 1778 Papists Act. In fact, Catholicism remained stigmatised throughout the Victorian era.²

It is perhaps fitting that shortly following this Great Reform Bill, on the night of 16 October 1834, a fire engulfed the Palace of Westminster. Pugin was a witness. He told E.J. Willson that 'there is nothing much to regret & a great deal to rejoice in. a vast quantity of Soanes mixtures & Wyatts heresies have been effectually consigned to oblivion'.³ Two years before publishing *Contrasts*, the young Pugin already had a clear picture of what the architecture of England should be and was already apprehensive at what could come of the reconstruction: 'I am afraid the rebuilding will be made a compleat job – as that execrable designer smirke has already being giving his opinions which May be reasonably supposed to be a prelude to his Selling

1 The Oath supporting protestant succession to the Crown and against transubstantiation was a condition in the Catholic Relief Act of 1791 for the cessation of prosecutions for being deemed a papist, and for an expansion of suffrage to include certain (wealthy) Roman Catholic land owners.

2 See, amongst many studies, Paz 1992.

3 Letter of 6.11.1834: Belcher 2001, p 42.

his diabolical plans & detestable details'.⁴ It was the first sign of his involvement in what would later be called the Great Work: 'if so I can contain myself no Longer but boldly to the attack ill write a few remarks on [Smirke's] past works'.⁵

The reason for Pugin's impassioned words became clear with the subsequent publication of *Contrasts* (1836), showing a young and perhaps naive architect equating Gothic architecture with Catholicism. He writes that 'I have now, I trust, shewn how intimately the fall of architectural art in this country, is connected with the rise of the established religion'.⁶ In his second lecture at St Mary's College (1838), Oscott, Pugin outlined his lifelong calling as a Catholic missionary through the arts: 'The object to which I hope to devote the labour of my future life is the restoration of Catholic art in this country, as I feel most thoroughly convinced that it is the handmaid of devotion, and will prove most important in the great work of England's reconversion'.⁷ This goal he would keep for the rest of his short life. In a letter to James Chadwick in 1847 following a visit in Rome, Pugin speaks of the 'imperative duty on every Catholic to defend true and Christian architecture with his whole energy'.⁸

According to Pugin, Gothic is born from 'Catholic' feelings: 'The external beauty of that earlier time is both index and guarantee of inner perfection: mediæval man built as he ought because he believed as he ought'.⁹ In *The true principles*, Pugin prescribes a functional argument where *truth* in construction was a necessity for a building devoted to the *true* faith.¹⁰ For this, he gives examples of buttresses, ribs, pinnacles and base mouldings, among others. Yet the 'severity of Christian architecture', as he often repeats, demands a transcendent justification so that the functional argument shifts to one that is symbolic and Christian: '[the pinnacles] should be regarded as answering a double intention, both mystical and natural: their mystical intention is, like other vertical lines and terminations of Christian architecture, to represent an emblem of the Resurrection'[figure 110].¹¹ He elaborated at length on symbolism in his thick volume *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament* (1844): 'The symbolical associations of each ornament must be understood and considered'.¹² Being true to mediæval builders, Pugin understands architecture and ornament as a form of liturgical text, which implies 'the conveyance of faith to the educated and uneducated'.¹³ For him, 'it was *the* [Catholic] liturgy in a liturgical context, which included liturgical art and architecture'.¹⁴ Bernard Ward quotes Pugin's address to the students of St Edmund's college announcing his liturgical calling: 'God has certainly permitted me to become an instrument in drawing attention to long-forgotten principles'.¹⁵

4 *Idem.*

5 *Idem.*

6 Pugin 1836, p 15.

7 Belcher 1987, p 38.

8 1.5.1847: Belcher 2009, p 239.

9 Belcher 1987, p xiv.

10 Pugin 1841a, p 4 ff.

11 *Ibid*, p 9.

12 Pugin 1844, p iii.

13 Powell, 2006, p 68.

14 *Idem.*

15 Ward 1915, vol i, pp 97; p 266.

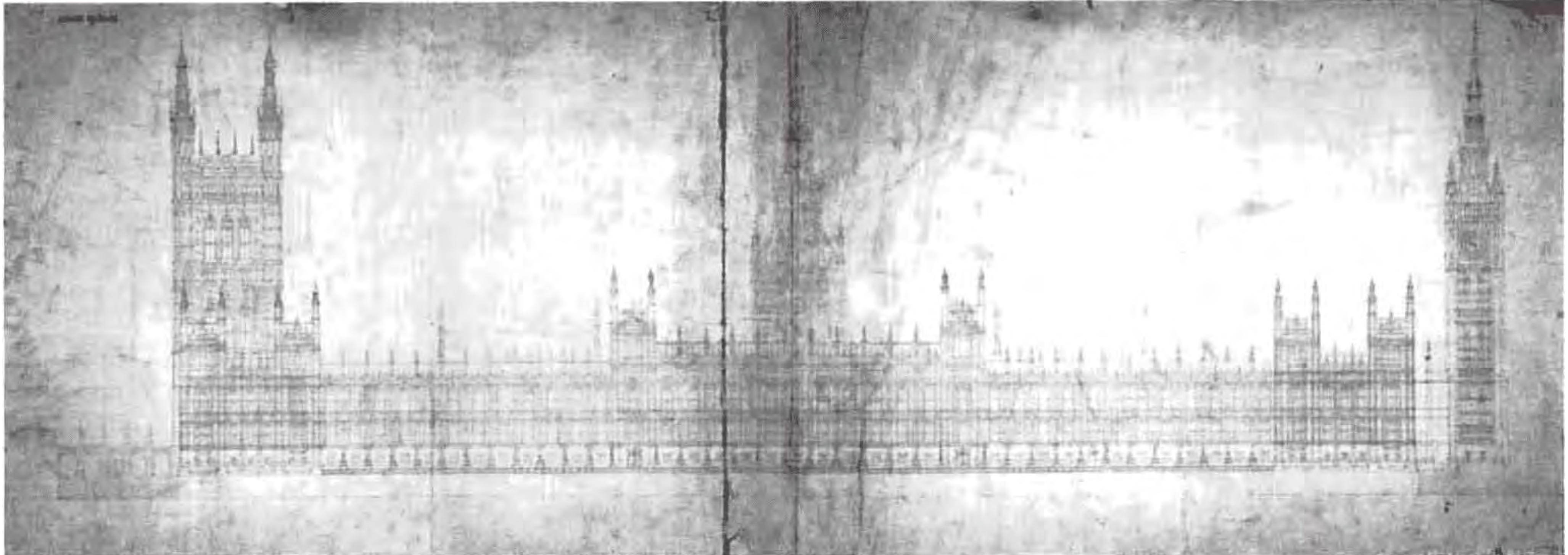


Figure 110: Barry's contract drawings of 1842: the design after the addition of a central tower for the purposes of Reid's ventilation scheme

National Archives, Work 29/3203.

This religious and architectural discourse is intertwined with political considerations. In the first edition of *Contrasts*, Pugin attributes the schism to Henry VIII, an invective which he repeats in *The true principles*, where the 'rapacious tyrant Henry' is blamed for the 'general wreck of faith and art at the period of his lamentable schism'.¹⁶ Yet in *Church and state* (1851), Pugin rewrites his story of the schism with a conciliatory tone towards Protestants in an attempt to justify the establishment of a Catholic hierarchy in England.¹⁷ He shifts the blame for the Anglican Reformation on 'the old ecclesiastical authorities', in consort with the Parliament of the time.¹⁸ Pugin then blames the schism and the three centuries of destruction of the 'True faith' and its buildings on the control Parliament exerted in religious matters.¹⁹ From Pugin's perspective 'men had been forced to believe and unbelieve by act of Parliament'.²⁰ What was therefore necessary was an end to the subjugation of the church to the state.²¹ In the eyes of a Catholic convert, the Parliament of the early nineteenth century still represented the same spirit of religious repression. At the time of publishing his *Church and state*, popular anti-Catholic feelings reached the point of 'hysteria'.²² Yet, for Pugin 'the Catholic is the national Church of England'.²³ It is therefore not unlikely that he would see the creation of a Gothic Parliament as a means to right a centuries-old wrong at its point of inception. For Pugin, the Gothic was 'not a matter of mere taste, but a change in soul,' and so must its revival.²⁴

The competition for the New Houses of Parliament involved the design of the cradle of the nation's soul, and Pugin was involved right from the beginning. Already in August 1835 he wrote a scathing reply to the pamphlet published by the architect Arthur C. Hakewill who advocated the Grecian style. Pugin mentions how the surviving structures, 'wondrous proof of the consummate skill of the builders of

16 Pugin 1836 p 6; Pugin 1841a, p 32.

17 Belcher 1987, p 117.

18 Pugin 1851b, p 20.

19 See *ibid*, pp 22; 24–6.

20 *Ibid*, p 24.

21 *Ibid*, p 26–7.

22 Belcher 1987, p 116.

23 Pugin 1838, p 196; Belcher 1987, p 33.

24 Pugin 1843b, p 7. See also the second Oscott lecture, Belcher 1987, p 38.

the ages', should not be 'disgraced by another of those half-English, half-Pagan erections'.²⁵ Pugin describes his pamphlet as '[having] been much read and will I trust be productive of Good'.²⁶ The debate, as is well known, was concluded in favour of Gothic, though Pugin's role in that choice was obviously negligible. The most illustrious architects were feverishly at work on their competition entries from 3 June 1835 to the extended deadline of 1 December 1835. For seven months, Pugin was working behind the scenes on two entries: one for his friend the Scottish architect Gillespie Graham and another for Charles Barry. The latter's winning scheme itself generated some controversy. The architect was called a 'Whig-Radical protégé' for whom 'the designs of real merit and excellence [were to] be sacrificed'.²⁷ In fact, little merit was sacrificed, for Barry's Parliament eventually became, in the eyes of many, the most successful Victorian building ever built. Pugin's hand was a crucial and early component to that success: he drafted all the winning scheme's drawings, save for the plans.²⁸

If Pugin's work for Barry was restrained by the architect's tight control, his work for Graham's competition entries was apparently unhindered.²⁹ These drawings received much praise during the exhibition for their 'genuine spirit of Gothic architecture' and the author was qualified as possessing 'intimate acquaintance with the style'.³⁰ In these drawings, Pugin's ideas about a connection between Gothic buildings and Roman Catholicism are clearly manifest. Most of the other competition drawings had something of a religious air, as most Gothic precedents were churches.³¹ Graham's entry, however, had specially been singled out as 'densely elaborate and very church-like'.³² Of particular note are the large pointed windows, borrowing a dramatic element from the ritualistic ensemble of Catholicism. Also, the seating for the peers, less luxurious than in the final design, resembles rows of pews. These drawings are often compared to Pugin's ideal scheme for St Marie's College – particularly because of a striking resemblance between the 'Great Hall' and the House of Lords drawings.³³ The naming of that scheme could also be a reference to St Mary's College, Oscott, the Roman Catholic seminary, which Pugin knew well at the time. These were probably also a key influence in the design of Barry's entry as well. Even if most of these competition drawings were lost, the reconstructed entry still bears 'a strong echo' of Pugin's St Marie's College drawings.³⁴ This has been attributed not only to Pugin's direct involvement but also to the possibility that Barry himself saw and drew from Pugin's early projects.³⁵ In any case, both New Houses of Parliament competition entries drafted by Pugin had, in different ways, the distinctive atmosphere of Gothic churches.

25 18.8.1835: Belcher 2001, p 54.

26 Letter to EJ Willson, 4.1.1836: Belcher 2001, p 56.

27 Rorabaugh 1973, p 169, quoting an anonymous letter-writer in the *Times*, 30.11.1835.

28 Port & Stanton 1976, p 82.

29 Stanton 1976a, pp 72; 67.

30 Ferrey 1861, n p 242, citing an article from the *Morning post*.

31 Port 1976b, p 40, citing: *Architectural magazine*, iii p 231; *Athenaeum*, 1836, pp. 224–5; *Times*, 27.4.1836.

32 Hill 2009, p 146.

33 Dell 1906, p 403. See also Stanton 1976a, pp 55–6.

34 Hill 2009, p 146.

35 Dell 1906, p 410.

A hidden hand

Pugin's involvement in the competition of 1835 was carried on from behind the scenes and he remained a silent partner throughout the process. There are a few early mentions in his correspondence about his role in the 'Great Work' and references in his later correspondence are mostly technical in nature. He also did surprisingly little to advertise coauthorship of the New Houses of Parliament in his public writing. In fact, at the time of completion, it was generally believed that Charles Barry had been the sole architect of the Houses. Pugin's role in the building was first brought to public attention through the public quarrel that arose between the architects' sons E.W. Pugin and Alfred Barry in 1867.³⁶ Later, in 1906, Robert Dell published an article reviewing the controversy and wrongly concluded that Pugin had been in fact the real architect of the Houses of Parliament.³⁷ A more definitive analysis was made by Michael Port and Phoebe Stanton in the former's *The Houses of Parliament* of 1976. This established that Pugin had a much greater role than merely being Barry's assistant during the competition, but that the latter nonetheless kept tight control. In 1836–7 Pugin had been entrusted with providing a full set of interior and exterior designs and details for the Estimates Drawings of the Houses of Parliament, including perspective drawings of both Houses.³⁸ He made detailed drawings 'of the exterior of the [Victoria] Tower, the return and corner towers, compartments of the river front and oriels and the higher central portion' and 'studies for the Clock Tower and the entrance to the House of Commons'.³⁹ All these designs were loosely based on Barry's original plans, but Pugin had a free hand in refining them.⁴⁰ In June 1844 Pugin again renewed his involvement in the project.⁴¹ His Estimates designs needed to be turned into construction drawings and the Lords' committee set the deadline for completion of the House of Lords to the following year. By then he was the leading architect of the Gothic Revival in England and Barry needed him to complete the project. Subsequent arrangements put Pugin in charge of details and ornament.⁴² He did so with assurance from Barry that there would be no alterations to his designs.⁴³ While this did not happen, evidence of Pugin's intent can be seen in his working drawings, as it will later be illustrated in the analysis of the throne of the House of Lords. In this way, he provided drawings for all the fittings, wood-carved ornament, stained glass, metal works, tiles and wallpaper for the completion of the work.⁴⁴ He also famously worked on the decoration of the Clock Tower, which Pugin mentioned in a letter to Hardman: 'tomorrow I render all the designs for finishing his bell tower & it is beautiful'.⁴⁵

Pugin is known as a flamboyant man often boastful of his work.⁴⁶ In the case of

36 E Pugin 1867; Barry 1868.

37 Dell 1906.

38 Port & Stanton 1976, pp 91–3.

39 *Ibid*, p 91.

40 *Ibid*, p 93.

41 Stanton 1976b, pp 122–3.

42 *Ibid*, p 137.

43 E Pugin 1867, p 29, in Port 1976, p 129.

44 E Pugin 1867, in Port 1976, p 131.

45 Letter to Hardman, 2.1852, House of Lords Record Office, PC 304/540, quoted in Hill 2009, p 482.

46 Port & Stanton 1976, p 80.

Parliament, however, he hid his role from the public despite having worked on it for no fewer than 11 years. There is little insight on his thoughts about the project in his correspondence. In an early letter regarding the competition to his friend E.J. Willson, he did not even care to mention that he had a role in it.⁴⁷ There is no mention in his diary of the announcement of Barry's scheme as the winner in 1836. The only unsolicited public mention of the project comes in his *Apology* (1843), in which he stated that 'the erection of the Parliament Houses in the national style is by far the greatest advance that has yet been gained in the right direction'.⁴⁸ In the footnote to this comment, Pugin remarked on the success of the 'interior decoration' where 'the absurdities of mythology [are] utterly rejected'. But he omits mentioning that he is the author of much of that decoration: he refers to 'the architect's design' in the third person. In fact, the first mention of Barry in the surviving correspondence only comes in June 1844, nine years after the competition.⁴⁹ When an article appeared in the *Builder* in 1845 attributing 'the arrangement' of the 'Decoration of the Houses of Parliament' to Pugin, he was quick to refute it publically.⁵⁰

This obstinate silence about a project on which, as we now know, he spent thousands of hours, is curious. It could be that he had no choice other than to keep his participation hidden. It has been said that 'Pugin's Catholicism effectively debarred him from holding an official post in the rebuilding of parliament'.⁵¹ While Charles Barry was an Anglican, rumours were circulating about the role the Roman Catholic Pugin played in the rebuilding.⁵² Even his detraction was received with scepticism.⁵³ His passionate writing on the schism and his association with the Tractarians shaped a controversial public image and further suspicion.⁵⁴ It was therefore in Pugin's interest to disavow his involvement should he want to maintain his role in the design.

Anglican reservation at Pugin's involvement in the New Houses of Parliament was not entirely misplaced. From the beginning, Pugin privately alluded to the importance this project meant to him and to the Roman Catholic revival. On 8 November 1835, while he was working with Barry on the competition drawings, Pugin revealed in his diary entry the despair he felt at the overruling of his design by his employer: 'The Present condition of architecture is deplorable. Truth reduced to the position of an interesting but rare and curious relic'.⁵⁵ This choice of words has either been left unexplained, or attributed to his authorship being usurped.⁵⁶ The 'truth' he was referring to, however, was most probably the 'true Christian architecture,' which would be seen by Barry, a neo-classicist, as merely a 'rare and curious relic'. What is more poignant is that the date of 5 November in his diary bears

47 *Idem*.

48 Pugin 1843b, p 10.

49 13.6.1844?: Belcher 2003, p 208.

50 'Decoration of the Houses of Parliament', *Builder*, 24.5.1845: Belcher 1987, p 250; letter, *Builder*, 6.9.1845: Belcher 2003, p 434; letter, *Ecclesiologist*, 31.1.1846: Belcher 2009, pp 11–5.

51 Quinault 1992, p 101.

52 Eastlake 1872, p 168: Quinault 1992, p 100.

53 Belcher 1987, p 237 (D238): 'Truths' finds Pugin's letter to the *Builder* 'ingeniously framed' and clearly doubts that Pugin really has the subordinate place he claims'.

54 Stanton 1976b, pp 125; 135.

55 Diary: Wedgwood 1985, p 33.

56 Stanton 1976a, p 67: 'Why he did so, we do not know'; Dell 1906, p 420.

the title 'Power Plot,' a reference to the Catholic plot to destroy Parliament in 1605. Barry's working visit to St Marie's Grange straddled this ominous date, one to which Pugin would later attribute much importance. He wrote 'Gunpowder plot' under the date of a letter to J.R. Bloxam in 1843.⁵⁷ In fact, he had mentioned the plot earlier in his correspondence to Bloxam, in reference to public fears of being seen with the Tractarians: 'I [Pugin] might be suspected of plotting some desperate sort of Guy Fawkes deed'.⁵⁸ But there was nothing desperate about Pugin's situation. He had already made similar arrangements, with Bloxam's support, to work anonymously on a project at Balliol.⁵⁹ The project meant much for Pugin's Catholic mission, yet public mention of his name would have brought much hindrance. He therefore wrote to his friend that he should 'make the best of it as it may be a great means by the blessing of God of reviving the real spirit of antient collegiate architecture'.⁶⁰ Pugin converted to Catholicism 'for the sake of glory...God's glory...not his own'.⁶¹ He was surely content with the position: like a martyr 'he was an instrument by which God was carrying out His purposes...in all humility and reverence'.⁶²

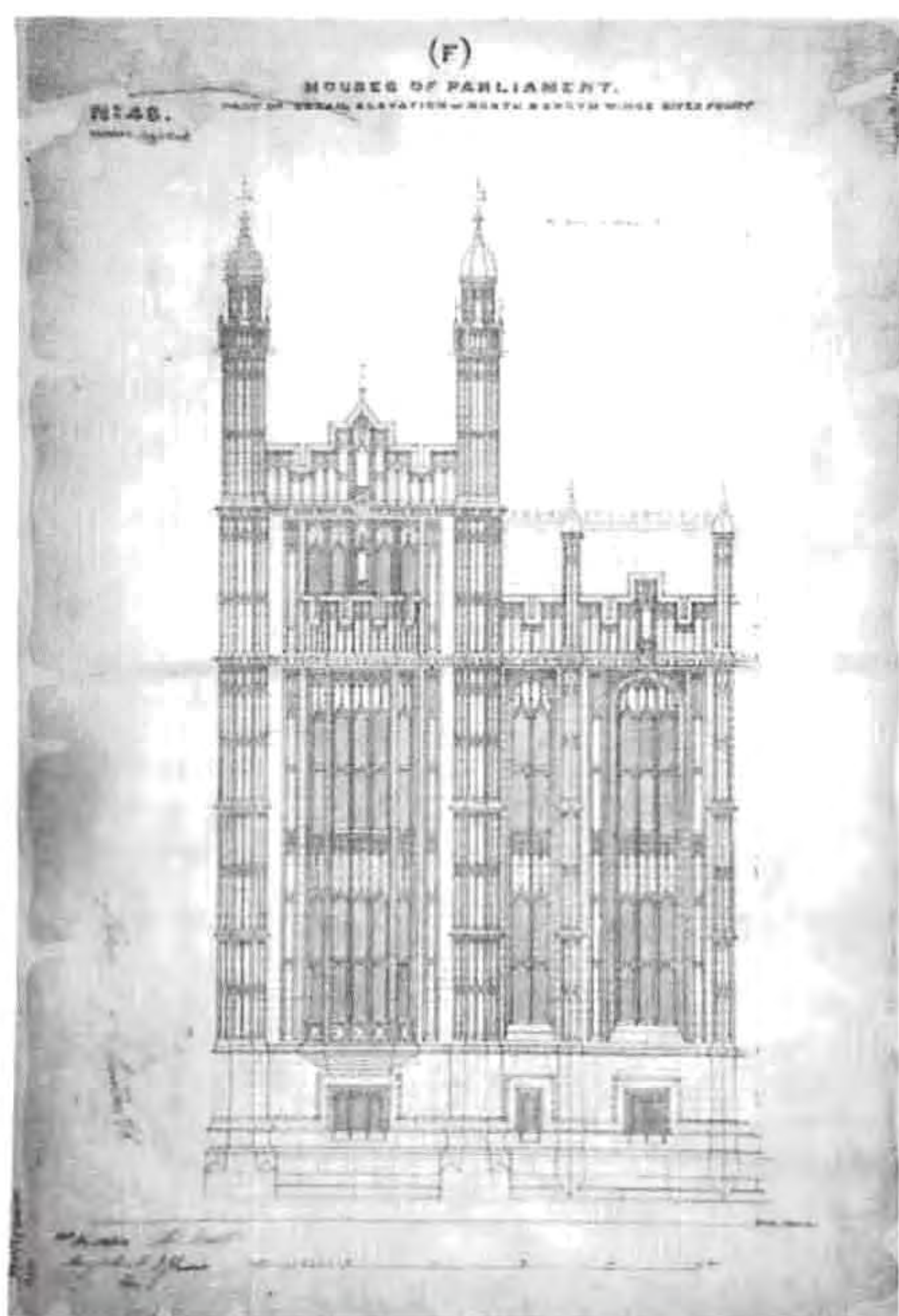


Figure 111: Charles Barry's contract drawings of 1840: part of detail of elevation of north and south wings of the river front *National Archives, Work 29/1846*.

True Christian architecture in the Houses of Parliament

It has been noted that the New Houses of Parliament are an example of how Pugin responded to the way in which Victorians 'were increasingly moving towards God and, consequently were building a Christian environment for a Christian people'.⁶³ Indeed Pugin thought 'a Catholic's belief should be legible in his secular buildings as well as his churches'.⁶⁴ The atmospheric effect of the building can be attributed at least in part to Pugin's Catholic view of architecture. Tsar Nicholas I spoke of the project as *un rêve en pierre* and Lassus, a French neo-Gothic architect, called it 'a fairy palace'.⁶⁵ The building carries a strong sense of verticality, one that had to be restrained by Barry. In 1841, the latter added more horizontal emphasis in the design [figure 111].⁶⁶ Yet the vertical pinnacles still strongly define the building's silhou-

57 5.11.1843: Belcher 2003, p 129.

58 19.12.1841: Belcher 2001, p 301.

59 Hill 2009, p 284.

60 7.3.1843: Belcher 2001, p 22.

61 Trappes-Lomax 1932, p 56, quoted in Powell 2006, p 20.

62 Trappes-Lomax, 1932, p 260.

63 Powell 2006, p 289.

64 Second Oscott lecture, in Belcher 1987, p 38.

65 Port & Stanton 1976, p 94.

66 Port 1976c, p 101.



Figure 112: Barry's preliminary study for the Houses of Parliament: north front, c 1836

RIBA Library Drawings Collection.

could therefore speculate on the possibility of Pugin's influence in such vertical prominence on the river facade.

What is more certain, however, is Pugin's pre-eminent role in the internal ornament and his great influence over the exterior ornament. It has generally been noted that the Parliament's iconographic programme does not convey a straightforward message; and that if it did have one, it would have to be characterised as regal in nature.⁶⁸ This lack of unity is obviously due to the importance of this work, where a multitude of interests are involved. This was further complicated by the impossibility for Barry or Pugin to have much control in the choice of the iconography. Generally, the direct heraldic or figurative references were chosen in reference to the monarchy. The Select Committee on the Fine Arts, headed by Prince Albert, took these decisions.⁶⁹ When Lord Shrewsbury was appointed to the Committee in 1841, Pugin attempted to acquire influence. After having rejoiced at Shrewsbury's appointment, he wrote an impassioned letter to him in 1845 expressing his distress at the 'monstrous' selection of statues of 'Wicliff John Knox! Bunyan! —John

ette. While typical of Gothic syntax, we know that, for Pugin, they were emblems of the Resurrection. And while their authorship remains somewhat uncertain, they appeared in the winning design of 1836 at the same time as the Clock Tower, the precedent for which has been attributed to Pugin's own Scarisbrick Hall [figure 112].⁶⁷ One

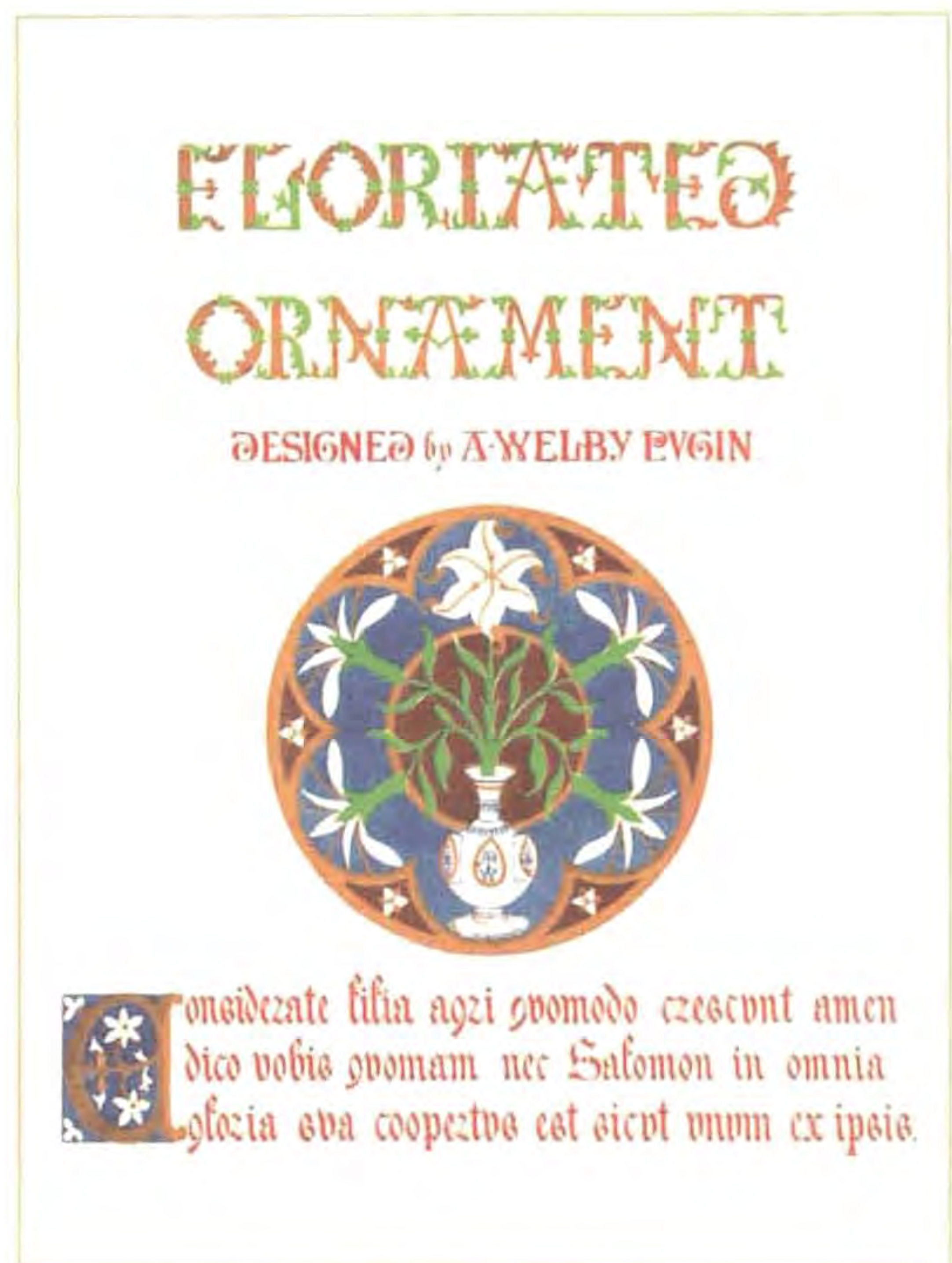


Figure 113: The cover of Pugin's *Floriated ornament* Pugin 1849.

⁶⁷ Port 1976d, p 159.

⁶⁸ Rorabaugh 1973, p 155; Quinault 1992, p 81.

⁶⁹ Quinault 1992, p 85.



Figure 114: Floriated ornament: frontispiece
Pugin 1849.

Westley', all reformers of the Church in England.⁷⁰ He implored Shrewsbury to 'pray think of this'. This private letter echoes his public one about the erection in Oxford of a memorial to three reformers seen as having established the Church of England, published on 26 January 1839.⁷¹ The letter to Shrewsbury at least shows that Pugin

70 24.12.1841: Belcher 2001, pp 308; 26.10.1845: Belcher 2003, p 465.

71 Pugin 1839. Cranmer is mentioned in Pugin 1836, p 12.



Figure 115: The mysteries of the rosary, from Pugin's Glossary Pugin 1844, pl 60.



Figure 116: Pugin's 'Gothic Lily' wallpaper

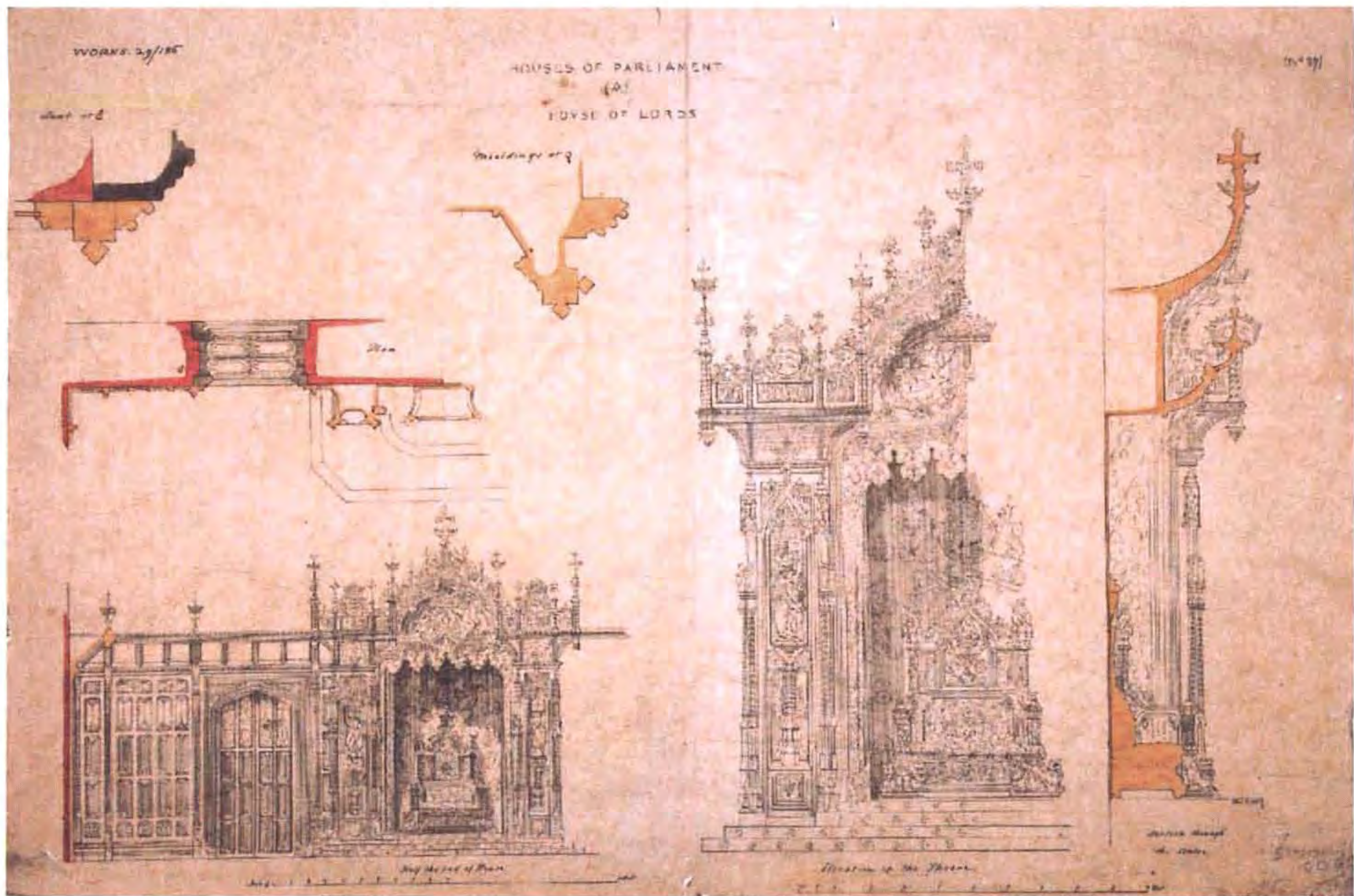


Figure 117: Pugin's design for the throne of the House of Lords: detail of tracing dated 'Dec 8/42' National Archives, Work 29/135.

cared about the iconography in the parliament buildings, hoping to keep it to a distinctly Catholic agenda.

The overwhelming use of ornament in the Houses of Parliament was commented upon at the time: 'the extent of florid architecture is too great; that it wearies the eye'.⁷² There is no doubt that Pugin was largely responsible for its design. We also know that he attributed very specific meanings to each of its features. Two key texts in this regard are his *Floriated ornament* (1849) and *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament* (1844). In the first, Pugin depicts a direct connection between natural ornament and Christianity, in line with earlier arguments on the propriety of ornament from *The true principles* where he had argued that the ancients 'never introduced any emblem without a mystical signification being attached to it'.⁷³ On the title page he quoted Matthew 6:28–9: 'Consider the lilies of the field...That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these' [figure 113]. The frontispiece shows a cross made of liana, accompanied by the text 'oh hail the cross' [figure 114].⁷⁴ At the bottom of this page, a Latin text in red reads: 'the vine garnishes and glitters the ornate king's robe'.⁷⁵ The lilies are symbols of the Virgin Mary, as mentioned in the *Glossary*.⁷⁶ In these two plates, Pugin links the Christian cross to the king through ornament derived from nature. A stronger symbol Pugin uses is the five-petal rose, a Catholic symbol of Christ's sufferings and a Christian symbol of the Virgin's compassion. This connection appears as early as the twelfth century with St Bernard.⁷⁷ This is echoed in a plate of Pugin's *Glossary* entitled 'The rosary', showing a five-petal rose, with each petal bearing a depiction of the 'Five Doleful Mysteries' [figure 115].⁷⁸ The wallpaper 'Gothic Lily' that Pugin designed for the House of Lords is a pattern combining lilies and red five-petal roses [figure 116].⁷⁹ This monochromatic rose is distinct from the Tudor rose, which has a row of white petals within red petals, used in the famous 'Rose and Portcullis' wallpaper.⁸⁰ But even this seemingly regal wallpaper was probably taken from 'a cope of gold cloth...said traditionally to have belonged to Westminster Abbey'.⁸¹ These powerful allusions to the Virgin Mary can be taken to mean a liturgical instrumentalisation of ornament in the Houses of Parliament.

The most interesting evidence of the attempted Catholicisation of the Houses of Parliament comes from the storeyed design of the throne of the House of Lords, a ceremonial seat for the monarchy during state openings in the chamber. Pugin worked on the throne for the competition entries for Gillespie Graham and for Barry. He then worked further for Barry's Estimates Drawings, followed by the final

72 Quoted in Port 1976c, p 98.

73 Pugin 1841a, pp 45–6.

74 In Latin: *O crux ave*.

75 *Arbor decora et fulgida ordata regis purpura*.

76 Pugin 1844, p 125: 'as the lily among the thorns so did our Blessed Lady flourish among the daughters of men'.

77 Touw 1982, p 76.

78 Pugin 1844, pl 60.

79 See Port 1976a, frontispiece.

80 'Several antient copes are still preserved, among which the following are particularly deserving of notice' (Pugin 1844, p 82). 'A cope of crimson velvet of the fifteenth century, embroidered with flowers, angels, &c. of English work, at Blackladies, Staffordshire. A cope of cloth of gold, at the Jesuits' College, Stonyhurst, said traditionally to have belonged to Westminster Abbey, covered with large roses and portcullises' (*ibid*, p 83).

81 Pugin 1844, p 83. Pugin describes such a robe, yet without making any connection to his own work.

contract carried jointly with Barry.⁸² When the throne appears in Graham's competition entry, it is dominated by a crown. But the working drawings he would later produce for Barry tell another story: a connection to the Church appears in them [figure 117]. G. Somers Clarke, who had access to them while employed at Barry's office, notes that 'the drawing in question exhibited a gorgeous piece of tabernacle work, partaking of the character of a bishop's stall in a cathedral'.⁸³ In fact, in both the Estimates Drawings and in these contract drawings, a Christian cross appears atop the arch of the canopy. It seems clear that Pugin wished to place the crown under the cross, rather than have the crown dominate the piece. But the scheme was turned down by Barry in order to be 'more in accordance with its present purpose'.⁸⁴ It has been argued that Barry's intent was to pay homage to the monarchy, even marking his competition entry with the castle emblem, the crowned portcullis.⁸⁵ In this case, the throne would be Barry's greatest symbol of reverence to the crown, and he had the final word in the design: the throne does not bear Pugin's crowning cross.

Pugin considered himself an instrument in the crusade to realise 'a holy and Christian environment specific to England [which] was in progress of creation'.⁸⁶ His role in the rebuilding of Parliament, however hidden, need not be conceived as separate from his religious quest. Even if his position did not afford him much control, Pugin succeeded in creating an overwhelming impression, remarkably similar to the fairy character of his ideal schemes with their density and verticality of ornaments. The patterns of roses and lilies and the missing cross crowning the throne of the House of Lords are a few discernable clues of Pugin's intent to Catholicise Parliament. To his eyes, even the pinnacles topping the facade acquired a Catholic symbolism. And while his attempts were diluted by Barry's controlling hand, the number of interveners and the sheer magnitude of the work, Pugin's intentions are still perceptible. It is perhaps as a metaphor of his veiled yet fundamental intention that Pugin wrote 'I am the whole mechanism of the clock'.⁸⁷

82 Wedgwood 1984, p 67.

83 Barry 1868, p 76.

84 Barry 1868, p 76.

85 Quinault 1992, p 81.

86 Powell 2006, p 289.

87 Letter to J Hardman, 2.1852: House of Lords Record Office, PC 304/540, quoted in Hill 2009, p 482.

A.W.N. Pugin's Grange at Ramsgate: the moral Catholic house

by Julia Webster

When A.W.N. Pugin died in 1852, his family compound at Ramsgate, later named 'The Grange', was not complete, construction on the church and cloister beside his house being still in progress. His magnificent 1849 watercolour of the ensemble thus remains the best means of understanding the overall conception of what probably constitutes Pugin's most important work [figure 118]. A dramatic southwestward bird's eye view dominates the drawing, with the

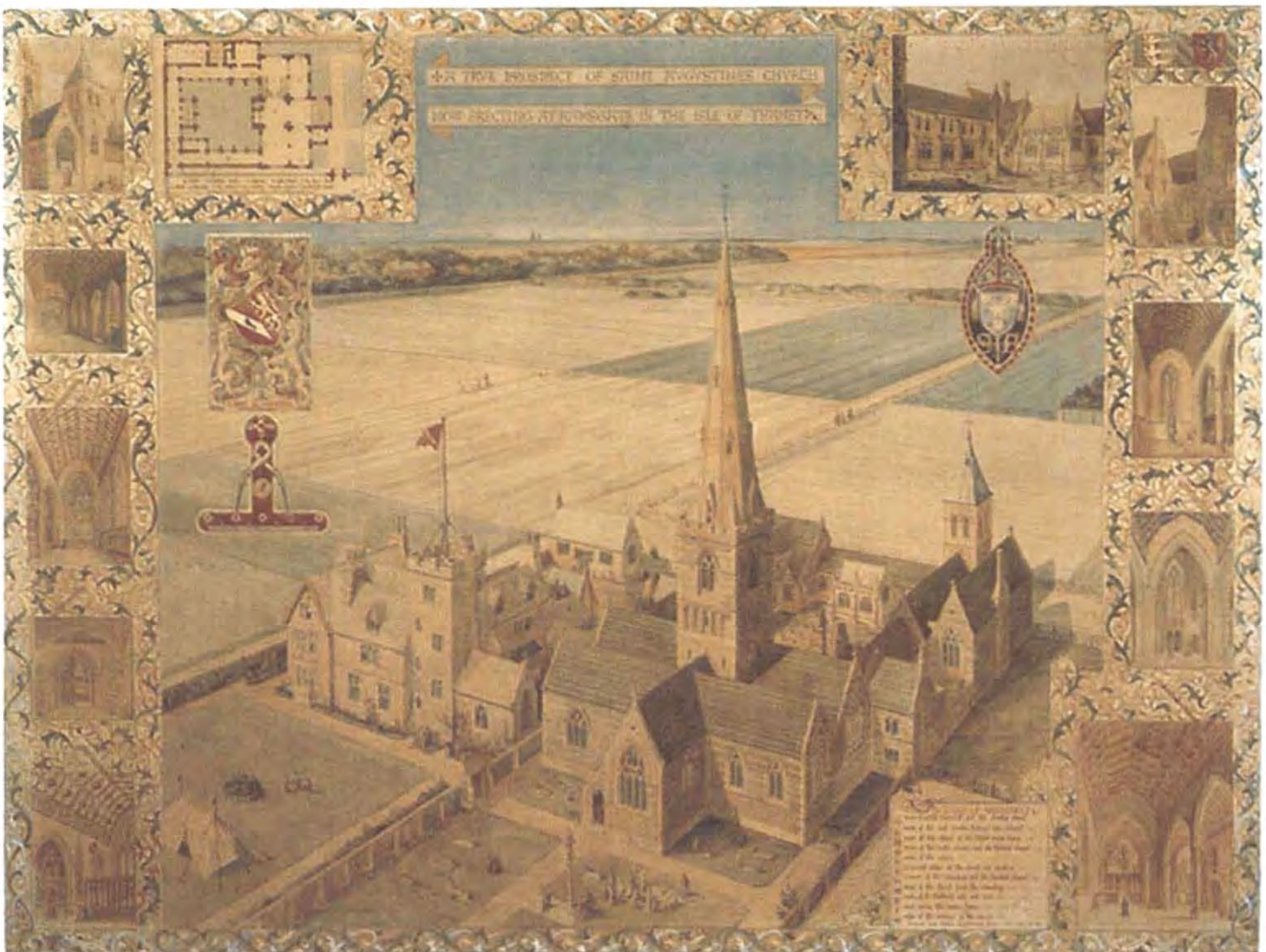


Figure 118: A.W.N. Pugin's 1849 perspective of his house and St Augustine's Church at Ramsgate
private collection.

flint church in the foreground, its central spire jutting high in the sky towards the horizon where we get a glimpse of the fertile Kentish landscape complete with farmers toiling in the fields. The church stands perfectly aligned with the more modest house to the west, the drawing correcting the slight skew between house and church in the real construction. The house and church come closest to each other at the level of the former's chapel, which appears almost as an extension of the church's side aisle. The two buildings, however, are sharply divided by a wall cutting through the whole property, separating the profane from the sacred realms. A rather ominous

series of tombstones dots the church-half of the site while a more festive scene – with its striped tent structure and children playing in the yard – animates the house side. Framing this spectacular aerial view are a series of small vignettes showing various interior views of church and cloister. A plan of the church is drawn on the left, below which is the emblem of St. Augustine, a royal coat of arms with the Pugin shield and the tools of the architect. According to Rosemary Hill, the watercolour represents the Grange in the manner of a Victorian book of hours, a collection of Christian prayers for recitation at different parts of the day, denoting the cycle of life and death amongst a Kentish landscape.

Pugin first visited Ramsgate in June of 1832, immediately following the death of his first wife, Sarah Anne Garnett. His beloved Aunt Selina, who had taken up residence at Rose Cottage in the town, offered him the most reassuring hospitality.¹ At the time Ramsgate was a small seaside resort, south of the mediæval village of St Lawrence, located in the Isle of Thanet in the county of Kent, a three-hour train ride from London. A directory for the Isle, published in 1796, describes Ramsgate as a town perched on a chalk cliff, laid out in the form of a cross and with a new harbour ‘intended as a place of security for ships in hard gales wind...when they are exposed to the utmost danger in the Downs’.² However much of a refuge Ramsgate may have been for sailors, it could not protect Aunt Selina from being struck by the fate that seemed to have fallen upon Pugin’s entire family in these years: after the successive deaths of his wife, father and mother, she too passed away in 1834.

Courageously attempting to rebuild a family for himself, Pugin remarried and designed a house for himself in 1835 with money inherited from Selina. But when St Marie’s Grange in Alderbury proved too impractical as a family residence in 1839, Pugin returned to Ramsgate, first setting up residence at Ellington Cottage, a short walk from Rose Cottage, and, in 1843, deciding to settle in the town permanently. Many aspects of Ramsgate made it attractive for Pugin, starting with its convenient port where he could keep a boat. Ramsgate also offered a delightful view of the Downs and even the coast of France, visible from the top of Pugin’s house tower.³ The Isle of Thanet, where Ramsgate was situated, was moreover of high symbolic value for Pugin: it was the legendary landing spot of St Augustine, sent by Pope Gregory I in 597 to convert King Ethelbert to Christianity.⁴ It is believed that Augustine landed in Ebbsfleet, a village less than four miles from the Grange. This fact was well known by Pugin who wrote, in a love letter, ‘think of those holy men who converted your country from Paganism—think of Canterburys antient Prelates—her saintly archbishops her monks of St Augustins. The first Christian king Ethelbert and Bertha’.⁵ On 17 November 1845, 12 days after breaking ground on the foundations of his church, he wrote to the Earl of Shrewsbury ‘It seems to me a

1 Hill 2007, p 101.

2 Hall 1796, pp 53–4.

3 *Ibid*, p 54.

4 Hasted 1803, p 159.

5 Letter to Helen Lumsdaine of 5.12.1847?: Belcher 2009, p 326. In a letter to Luigi Gentili of 16.4.1845 he wrote that ‘if I live but a few years I trust to erect a chgh in honour of Englands apostle St Augustin close to the spot where he Landed’: Belcher 2003, p 379. Pugin also designed the title page for *The life of St Augustine*, by Frederick Oakeley (1844).

disgrace to the Catholics of England that so famous a spot as the Isle of Thanet where St. Augustine himself landed should be left without a true Catholic church'.⁶

Right from the start, the building of the Grange was conceived by Pugin has a repetition of Augustine's apostolic mission, serving to expand the Catholic community of the Isle of Thanet. Even before his own Catholic church was completed, he held public Catholic mass on his house chapel. In a later letter to Shrewsbury he wrote

Deo gratias—My little chapel was crammed as well as the hall & passages. children who have *never been* to mass belonging to Catholic parents are delighted to come. in a few months after the school is open there will be a good congregation.⁷

Pugin had earlier expressed the wish that 'if I can get up the church I see every prospect of a fine congregation...I could make this a most Catholic spot. I have land for a school & everything—& with her [Mary Amherst's] cooperation I could do wonders'.⁸ Pugin's emphasis on the creation of a congregation, his delight at conversions, the use of his own home as a public place of worship, his emphasis on children attending mass and the choice of constructing the school before the church illustrate his agenda in fostering a Catholic environment. Pugin spoke of the Grange as the creation of a Catholic 'atmosphere': he wrote to James Chadwick that he 'will find the sea air & the atmosphere of a catholic residence very refreshing'.⁹ And again to John Hardman, 'we must give up our sanguine visions—& make ourselves as happy as we can by *creating an atmosphere*. you will have to come under the shadow of St Augustins yet. Mark my words'.¹⁰

The historical prestige of the site – and its associated mission – was compounded by a personal connection: Augustine was Pugin's own patron saint, as it had been that of his father. Not surprisingly, Pugin dedicated his church to St Augustine. Beyond this patronymic relation, however, one may wonder if Pugin's choice of Ramsgate was not motivated by some other, more personal family romance. Like St Augustine, Pugin's father had immigrated from the continent to England. Ramsgate, near Dover, was almost England's closest point to the continent and Pugin's house, affording views of the French coast, was a means of reconnecting with his father's French roots. If the latter had not been a missionary in the religious sense of the term, he had been a key instrument to the 'true' revival of Gothic through his series of lavish and exacting publications on mediæval architecture. Since for Pugin the revival of Gothic was concomitant with the revival of Catholicism, his father's could be said to have repeated, modestly, in modern times the historic mission of St Augustine, the founder of the English (Catholic) Church. So the connection to St Augustine, the Archbishop of Canterbury, can be played at multiple levels. It is through a detailed analysis of the architecture of the Grange that these family or dynastic relationships can be best fleshed out.

6 Belcher 2003, p 479.

7 Letter of about 5.11.1845?: *ibid*, p 471.

8 *Ibid*, p 282.

9 Mid 6.1848: Belcher 2009, p 521.

10 12.1848?: *ibid*, p 669.

Ramsgate: a collage

Pugin started building the Grange in 1843. One of Pugin's first references to it is made in a letter from September 1843 sent to John Rouse Bloxam:

you will be perhaps surprised to hear that I am just on the point of starting a house for myself. I have purchased a fine peice of Land about an acre facing the Sea at Ramsgate close to the spot where blessed Austin Landed. I shall not erect a *grecian villa* but a most substantial catholic house not very Large but convenient & solid & there is every prospect of a small church on the same ground which will be delightful. when this is finished I shall hope to induce you to come to me & enjoy what is so rarely to be attained—the delight of the sea with catholic architecture & a *Library* (not a *circulating* one).¹¹

Pugin appended a sketch of the Grange to his letter showing how, already at this early stage, its main configuration had been firmly established.

Timothy Brittain-Catlin has recently argued that the most distinctive feature of Pugin's house at the Grange was its use of a pinwheel plan, whereby each of the main rooms has its axis at right angles to the adjacent ones, forming a set of distinct wings.¹² The configuration ensures the expression of the inside in the outside: every room, or every functional part, is clearly differentiated by its own distinct volume. This observation was astute and of course important, given how the idea of planning 'from the inside out' was to have such crucial repercussion for the subsequent history of modernism. Yet the legibility of Pugin's radical planning strategy is only gained through reading the plan. The actual experience of the building does not easily convey that geometrical coherence, as forms appear to agglutinate rather than be part of an abstract system. Notwithstanding the modernity, and functionality, of his plan, I wish to argue that Pugin sought to embody his aristocratic-mediaeval lineage through a juxtaposition of types, borrowing recognisable features from the English country house, a mediaeval castle and the traditional English cottage.

Pugin's early sketchbooks constitute a good starting point for identifying the relevant architectural types that Pugin manipulated at the Grange. The sketchbooks have an array of drawings, some imaginative and some real, many drawn during trips to Hastings on the Sussex coast to the southwest of Ramsgate with his father or to other, unknown, locations.¹³ Most striking are his depictions of stone manors perched on cliffs by the ocean, great English country houses and his numerous sketches of cottages with gabled roofs and dormer windows, tucked away behind stone walls, in mediaeval villages. The idea of a walled, stone coastal home, yet keeping the comfort of a cottage, evidently appealed to Pugin. The main architectural elements of the Grange are clearly inspired by this ideal. The main house displays French-Norman influence in its tall vertical proportions, presumably inspired by plates in Nodier and Taylor's *Voyage romantiques en ancienne France* kept by his father.¹⁴ Otherwise, the axial stone chimney stacks and dormer windows matched those of the many stone cottages sketched by Pugin.¹⁵ The home appears as a

11 Letter of 26.9.1843?: Belcher 2003, p 110.

12 Brittain-Catlin 2008, p 148.

13 Wedgwood 1985, 102 p 123.

14 Brittain-Catlin 2008, p 165.

15 Batsford 1938, p 58.

compilation of French ancestry and the comfort of Selina's ancient Rose Cottage, or as Hill states, the regency villa and mediæval house.¹⁶

The Grange's aristocratic character is certainly its most unmistakable trait: the southeast tower with parapet and flag pole is a strong landmark, evocative of the stronghold of mediæval castles. Pugin may have decried useless fortifications in *The true principles*, but he found it appropriate for himself. Writing in a letter on 10 August 1848, Pugin describes coming home with his third wife, Jane Knill: 'the flag was hoisted on the tower on our arrival'.¹⁷ Raising a flag upon the master's return recalls the customs of mediæval noblemen. Pugin's domestic chapel was another costly and aristocratic feature, reminiscent of the private chapels found in wealthy aristocratic houses. The eventual construction of a church besides the house would transform the aristocratic estate into the creation of the nucleus for a future Catholic community.

A flint church

In 1844, as the interiors of his house were being finished, Pugin purchased the plot of land adjacent to his house to build the Church of St Augustine. On 12 November 1845, Pugin 'set out the ground for [his] Church at Ramsgate'.¹⁸ It would not be until August 1850 that Pugin would finally write 'St Augustine's blessed and mass sung'.¹⁹ In a letter to Thomas Griffiths, Pugin wrote

To erect a Parochial church similar to the annexed skech and a revival of the old Catholic Kentish churches stone & flint—and to place it in a plot of about 200 or more feet so as to afford room for a Priests house & a cemetery. the house to connect with the church by a cloister A. on the south side at B I purpose a chantry chapel serving at the time for that of our blessed Ladye which may be the burying place of my familly & to which I purpose removing the body of my Late dear wife as soon as compleated. The church will hold about 300 persons—and my intention is to compleat it with plate vestments & furniture of every description & then to transfer it in a legal manner to the Vicar apostolic of the London district & even should I died before my design is complete I have for the Land &c being made over to your Lordsip.²⁰

The knapped flints walls of the church were indeed in the tradition of the mediæval parish churches of Kent. Flint was not only a local material, but it had a rich history tied to mediæval Norman architecture. It naturally occurs in the chalklands of England, specifically in the Kentish North Downs.²¹ Flints are easily removed from chalk cliffs, through erosion, and become readily available on the beach. In a letter to John Hardman of around 5 November 1845 Pugin wrote that 'every low water I have 6 carts drawing flints'.²² When St Augustine built his monastery outside Canterbury, he built his walls in local flint. That mode of construction was later adopted by the Normans, using limestone for quoins, doorways and window

16 Hill 2003, p 165.

17 Pugin 1841a, p 58; letter to J Hardman: Belcher 2009, p 567.

18 *Ibid*, p 60.

19 *Ibid*, p 69.

20 Letter of 27.10.1844: Belcher 2003, pp 265–6.

21 Hart 2000, p 1.

22 Belcher 2003, p 472.

dressings, and flint for infill.²³ Pugin owned a copy of Edward Hasted's *The history and topographical survey of the County of Kent* of 1803, a book which offered a wealth of knowledge concerning the local architecture.²⁴ The dressings of Pugin's church of St. Augustine's are made of Caen stone, a limestone found in north-western France where Pugin had sketched as a boy. In a long letter to James Ingram defending the vertical proportions of mediæval architecture, he describes East Anglian churches with their 'huge towers, with flint and panel-work'.²⁵ Pugin also knew at first-hand, from his summer sketching trips, the various flint churches in the county of Kent.

Typically, where flint used in the construction of churches it is laid with a particular pattern in the mortar. At St Augustine's the flints are arranged in regular horizontal courses made up from stones of various shapes and sizes. These rows of flints are grouped and then are separated by gaps of mortar. This stratification is associated more with the late eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that is, after the Norman conquest.²⁶ Examples of this type of flint coursing can be seen in many Norman churches and in vernacular Kentish architecture. J.H. Powell, Pugin's assistant working at the Grange, wrote that 'St Augustine's is a thorough Thanet Church, a natural growth of the locality of flints from the chalk cliffs'.²⁷

Hill has argued that despite its obvious 'Kentishness,' the church of St Augustine was not entirely straightforward. She stressed that Pugin chose to use knapped flints, whereby the stones are cut in two, the severed faces exposing its core.²⁸ In mediæval churches flint was mostly uncut. Knapped flints were used only specific places, like chapels or chancels, because of the additional labour required for obtaining and setting the flints.²⁹ Yet at St Augustine's all the flint is cut. Pugin undoubtedly chose to knap all of the flints to show that the entire church was important. It was thus intended as a Catholic force upon the landscape and, as Powell wrote, it was 'all "napped" to look precious'.³⁰

Framing the family in a Catholic way

To understand further Pugin's conception at the Grange some internal features must also be examined. The house's pinwheel plan establishes a monastic atmosphere, a cloister-like dynamism with the chapel at its symbolic fulcrum.³¹ And indeed, judging from Powell's recollections, the house was run on a strict schedule with prayers, meal times and lights out with a regimented, almost monastic, timing.³² It was not only the spatial layout and Pugin's disciplined scheduling that emphasised this religious atmosphere, but also a series of striking details. Stained glass windows in the chapel depicted Pugin's family members, appearing with their patron saints.

23 Hart 2000, p 20.

24 Pugin owned a first edition of this book. It was lot 353 in the catalogue of the sale of his books after his death: Belcher 2003, p 64.

25 Letter of 25.5.1843: Belcher 2003, p 63.

26 Hart 2000, p 9.

27 Wedgwood 2006, p 36.

28 Hart 2000, p 18.

29 Hill 2007, p 320.

30 Wedgwood 2006, p 36.

31 Brittain-Catlin 2008, p 148.

32 Wedgwood 2006, pp 13, 16.

On the south chapel windows, Edward, Pugin's first son, is pictured underneath St Edward the Confessor.³³ The latter was the King of England at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066 and is said to have prophesied the revival of Catholicism in England.³⁴ Pugin's other son, Cuthbert, is depicted under Saint Cuthbert, a mediaeval saint who was an island hermit until recalled back by the king to fulfil his duty as Bishop of Hexham.³⁵ His second wife, Louisa, is depicted wearing a dress with the Pugin family martlet in the east window above the altar, together with her stepdaughter Anne and two other daughters Agnes and Katherine. They are framed underneath St Gregory, Pope Gregory I, who undertook the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and sent Augustine to Kent.³⁶ Pugin himself is depicted under his beloved St Augustine. Above Pugin and his family is St George with the dragon slain underneath, wearing the cross, one of the earliest emblems of England. All the windows in the house are framed with the cross of St George, often with Pugin's own coat of arms depicted next to it. Such use of religious and historical iconography allows Pugin's family to become part of the rich history of Catholic England.

Every room of the house has its special windows. In the drawing room, windows depict St Peter, a map of the Isle of Thanet and the virgin with child. In the dining room there are roundels containing the coats of arms of Pugin and his wife Jane. The shields are encased in Gothic lettering with the family mottos; the Pugin family arms read, *avant* ('onward'); the Welbys', *Per ignem* ('through fire') and the Knills', *Nil desperandum* ('never despair'). The shields are surrounded by lions, perhaps acknowledging Richard the Lion Heart, King of England from 1189–99, who lived in southwest France and served as the Duke of Normandy, a reference to Pugin's ancestry and true Gothic origins.³⁷ The windows of St Augustine's Church similarly portray religious icons with family references. The east window shows Christ with angels with, at its apex, an *agnus dei* and the flag of St George.³⁸ The rest of the church's windows depict Pugin's monogram, the *fleur de lis* and floriated gothic ornamentations.

A close relationship exists between the house and the church at the Grange. The eastern window of the house's chapel faces the western window of the aisle of the church. The two walls are close, barely a few feet apart, yet they are separated by a wall dividing the two halves of Pugin's property. No cloister connects the two buildings together, as was suggested in the letter of 1844 letter to Bishop Thomas Griffiths, quoted above; there is only a door on the southern side to allow a passage from the church cemetery to the garden of the house.³⁹ The dynamic tension between the two buildings could reflect a practical or a liturgical intention. According to canon law 'no opening may be made from the Church to the homes of laymen', so a

33 Edward the Confessor is identified because the Saint is depicted with the ring Edward gave to a beggar to help guide pilgrims to Jerusalem. See for example Owen 1880, p 13.

34 Owen 1880, p 13.

35 *Ibid*, p 150.

36 *Ibid*, p 136.

37 Pugin 1844, p 127.

38 Sheppard 2009, p 282.

39 Belcher 2003, p 265.

minimum distance had to be maintained.⁴⁰ It could also be due to the tightness of the site, Pugin being unable to orient his church properly without going outside the property line.⁴¹ Pugin spoke of this wall between his church and house only once in his correspondence: 'the walls of St Augustins inclose *our world*', he wrote to Helen Lumsdaine on 14 February 1848, '& we must rely on each other, for I hate worthless society and altgh I exercise every hospitality towards worthy people—I cannot bear much visiting, I have never seen any place I prefer to my own—& when I have you it will be a paradise'.⁴² Emphasising the dividing property of the wall, Pugin's attitude illustrates the importance he placed on separating Catholic and non-Catholic buildings and his adherence to canon law.

Pugin's more profound desire was to provide a safe Catholic environment. Ramsgate has a treacherous coastline. In the later years, before the church was consecrated, Pugin would often bury sailors who had drowned off the coast of his home; the earliest burial is recorded in 1847.⁴³ He would invite a bishop to consecrate each grave, as the Catholic liturgy dictates, and provide a solemn service. The graves that surround the house in his 1849 watercolour are probably those of sailors who had perished in the waves off the coast of his house. Pugin himself would be buried in what Powell describes as his 'Church-Tomb', surrounded by his family and men who represented his same ideals.⁴⁴ The painting depicts, as Hill suggests, the cycle of life and death, with Pugin as the clock maker, gently adjusting their coincidence. As Michael Trappes-Lomax mused, the biblical phrase from John 2:13-25, 'The zeal of thy house has eaten me up,' could just as easily been written on Pugin's tomb.⁴⁵

40 Canon laws 1162-78: Miller 1959, p 97.

41 Hill 2007, p 319.

42 Belcher 2009, p 438.

43 Referred to in a letter to Shrewsbury of 22.1.1846: *ibid*, p 170.

44 Wedgwood 2006, p 38.

45 Trappes-Lomax 1932, p 312.

The monument to Lieutenant William Fisher in Salisbury cathedral, Wiltshire

by David Meara

In the south transept of Salisbury cathedral, on the east wall, there is a memorial to Lt William Fisher, d 1845, which for many years was hidden behind a curtain. The Rev Ben Elliot has described its discovery in an article in *Catholics in Salisbury* (issue 6, 2008), and this paper gives further details of its design and erection.

The monument consists of a stone quatrefoil within a medallion with a stone cross in the middle from which hangs a sword, and a circular inscription and heraldic shield in brass, surrounded by an inner border of oak leaves. The inscription reads

In memory of Lieut Willm Fisher of the 10th Regt. Of Bengal Light Cavalry And Adjut to the Governor General of India's Body Guard who Fell at the Battle of Moodkee on the 18th day of December A.D. 1845 and in the 26th of his age. He was secnd son of the Venble John Fisher M.A. Archdn of Berks and Canon of this church: His brother officers have erected this memorial

The shield displays two reindeer rampant guardant.



Figure 119: The monument to Lieutenant William Fisher
photographed by Tom Beattie.

The inscription refers to the battle of Moodkee, at which Fisher died. This engagement was part of the First Sikh War and took place on 18 December 1845. The Sikh Wars fought between 1845 and 1849 led to the annexation of the Punjab by the British East India Company. The battle took place on the south bank of the Sutlej River in the Punjab in North West India, and involved Major General Sir Hugh Gough's 'army of the Sutlej' which included light cavalry regiments and regiments of foot. The battle was hard fought on a dusty flat plain in scorching heat and casualties were high. Hostilities were finally brought to an end with nightfall when the Sikhs withdrew into the jungle. Fisher was one of 872 British

casualties (killed and wounded), and his brother officers raised this memorial as a tribute to his memory.

Elliot says in his article that the monument has been covered and hidden from view for the last 50 years, but that there are references to it in Murray's *Handbook to the southern cathedrals*, first published in 1862 where the writer, R.J. King, ascribes it to A.W.N. Pugin; and in the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments volume on Salisbury cathedral which attributes it to William Osmond.¹

¹ Brown 1999, p 152.

This article will show that both attributions are correct and that the memorial was in fact made and placed in the south transept in 1849.

The Fishers were a Salisbury family. The surveyor and builder Frederick Fisher of High Street, Salisbury, eventually succeeded his father as clerk of works to Salisbury Cathedral, and William Fisher's father (the Rev John Fisher, d 1832), as his inscription states, was Archdeacon of Berkshire and canon of Salisbury cathedral. His monument lies in Osmington church, Dorset. The substantial monument to William's great uncle Bishop John Fisher (d 1825) is also in the south transept of Salisbury cathedral, near to William Fisher's own memorial.

A.W.N. Pugin clearly knew the family as there is a reference in his diary to Frederick Fisher. The entry for 21 June 1835 states:

Dined at Mr. F. Fisher's with Mrs. Pugin.

Benjamin Ferrey in his *Recollections of A.W.N. Pugin* (1861) refers to Fisher amongst Pugin's growing number of Salisbury friends who also included the stonemason William Osmond (1791–1875).² Osmond, with whom Pugin corresponded, was a stonemason and monumental sculptor for more than 50 years, and the firm he established survived into the 1880s under the direction of his son William Osmond II. In 1818 he was appointed mason to Salisbury cathedral where he also served as a lay preacher. In about 1820 he moved into premises at 13 St John Street, situated opposite the St Anne's Gate entrance to the cathedral close. Its elegant neo-classical facade still survives with his name over the door. During the early part of his career he specialised in funerary monuments in the classical style, many in the cathedral and in churches in Wiltshire and Dorset, but he was soon producing monuments in the Gothic style, such as that to Bishop John Fisher, dating from 1828 and based on fifteenth-century prototypes. Pugin in an undated letter to Osmond says 'Leave your blisters leave your Doric porticos leave all & follow me'.³ Ferrey explains in a footnote that the term blisters 'Frequently employed by Pugin, referred to the numerous tablets which Mr. Osmond was in the habit of affixing to the walls of churches as memorials'.

A full list of Osmond's funerary monuments is given by Ingrid Roscoe in her *Biographical dictionary of sculptors in Britain 1660–1851*.⁴ According to Roscoe, Pugin



Figure 120: The rubbing of the monument
David Meara.

² Ferrey 1861, pp 90–1; 94–6.

³ 5.1834?: Belcher 2001, p 35; Ferrey 1861, pp 90–1.

⁴ Roscoe 2009, pp 929–30.

lived at Osmond's house for a time before moving into St Marie's Grange outside Salisbury which he built with Osmond's assistance in 1835.⁵

Rupert Gunnis in his *Biographical dictionary of British sculptors* (1953) suggests that Osmond's adoption of the Gothic style may have been the result of Pugin's influence, and there is no doubt that Pugin would have urged him to forsake the classical style. Certainly the monument to William Fisher, which is signed by Osmond, is unashamedly Gothic in style.

Osmond, in fact, executed much stone carving for Pugin, and his workshop, close to St Osmund's Church which Pugin designed in 1847, is now incorporated in the King's Arms Hotel. Osmond died in 1875 and is commemorated by a tablet in the cathedral cloisters at Salisbury. Although Pugin's reputation as a somewhat polemical Roman Catholic apologist discouraged some potential clients from using his services, he had already designed a tomb and memorial brass at St John the Baptist Bishopstone, Wiltshire, in memory of the late rector, the Rev George Augustus Montgomery (d 1842).⁶

Osmond may well have had a hand in carving the elaborate stonework canopy and tomb-chest. The rector at the time was the Venerable Francis Lear, who then became Dean of Salisbury, and so would have felt more comfortable using Pugin for the Fisher monument. Moreover, as Ben Elliott explains in his article, other members of the Fisher family were known to Lear, including Fisher's uncle William who was a residentiary canon and whose daughter was to marry Lear's son in 1850.

The conclusive evidence for Pugin's involvement in this particular commission comes from the Hardman archive at the Central Library and the Museum in Birmingham. In the 'Index to monumental brasses' there is an entry as follows:

1849/2 Lt. William Fisher Salisbury, Wilts 5 arms and inscr. £10-0-0⁷

The figure '5' refers to the five plates which make up the inscription and the shield of arms. The measurements are given as 16.5 x 16.5 inches.

In one of Pugin's letters to John Hardman Pugin writes:

I send you a shield and a brass inscription for a tomb at Salisbury. You will see the inscription is in the four plates round a [?] Cross...and a shield for the centre

[Pugin illustrates this with a drawing]

When done to be sent to Mr Osmond, Stone Mason, Exeter Street, Salisbury, to be charged to the Rev. Osborne Fisher, Jesus College, Cambridge. The letters must be very easy to read⁸

[Pugin gives a sample alphabet]

Although Fisher died in battle in 1845 the monument was not commissioned until 1849. The Hardman Metalwork Daybook for 1845–9 contains an entry for 2 June 1849 which records:

5 E Pugin 1867 records that AWN Pugin lived there 'before moving into his own residence near Salisbury'.

6 See Meara 1994, pp 188–9.

7 Meara 1991, p 90.

8 House of Lords Record Office, Pugin-Hardman correspondence 81.

Rev. Osborne Fisher, Jesus college, Cambridge 4 brass circular inscription plates and 1 centre plate engraved with arms £10-0-0 to memory of Lieut. Fisher.

Sent to Mr. Osmond, Stone Mason, Exeter Street, Salisbury.⁹

This amplifies the entry in the Monumental Brass Index and corroborates Pugin's comments in his letter to Hardman. Finally in the Hardman archive in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery there is a rubbing taken from the newly engraved brass before it left the workshop in the five pieces, to be inserted in the stone memorial tablet.

The completed monument was then affixed to the east wall of the Chapel of St Lawrence in the south transept of Salisbury cathedral, where it remains today. It is a delightful example of the collaboration between Pugin, John Hardman and William Osmond.

Many thanks to the Rev Ben Elliot for drawing my attention to this memorial; to the Rev Michael Fisher for undertaking to follow up material in the Hardman Archive in Birmingham; and to Tom Beattie for the excellent photograph.

⁹ Hardman Archive 7.473.

News and comment

St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham

Members will be interested to hear that Martin Goalen of Academy Projects, architect for the exemplary restoration and reordering of this fine church by A.W.N. Pugin, has produced a small booklet to celebrate the completion last autumn of the five-year project. The booklet, entitled *Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham*, describes the project and illustrates it with excellent photographs by Richard Davies. The booklet will be available from www.blurb.com.

E.W. Pugin's drawings for the church of St Vincent de Paul Liverpool, 1856–7

from Roderick O'Donnell

A set of drawings signed 'EW Pugin architect' and dated 1856 and 1857 which have recently come to light are now deposited in the Archdiocese of Liverpool archives. They are entitled



Figure 121: EW Pugin's drawing of St Vincent de Paul, Liverpool: view from the west (liturgical northwest)

courtesy Michael O'Neill, Liverpool Community College.

attached octagonal baptistery, an unusual juxtaposition not proceeded with. Very characteristic of E.W. Pugin's emerging independent style is the height and attenuation of his proportions and the sharp angles of the many gables; the front onto St James Street has cross-gables fronting the aisles (which have lean-to roofs) and the east end chapels also have upstanding west-facing gables with roundel windows. Big 'geometric'-style tracery windows abound, especially the clerestory and massive west window, so that the church was to be very well lit. The east end arrangements can only be read on plan, and of the chancel only the arch is shown on the section. The church and integral presbytery are built right up to the plot-line, and in the church every square inch is accounted for; the benches are shown as mounted right up to the confessionals, the priests themselves having an external corridor to the single and double confessional rooms with fireplaces. This 'confessional aisle' (really a lean-to threaded in between the buttresses) also has stairs up to a meeting room over the boys' sacristy. The separate priests' sacristy is beyond and from here they could exit to follow on a line behind the side-altars and the reredos behind the high altar (which appears only on the dimensioned drawing) thus reaching a longitudinal corridor within the house. The reredos, a screen-like wall, appears only on a drawing in another hand which gives a scale and dimension. Statues are marked against the chancel arch piers, the position of the pulpit is handed round from that on the 'Revd O'Reilly' plan and a porch internal lobby is shown at the west (since that to the north was omitted). It shows the church as built and as intended to be used: thus this space under the organ gallery is also labelled as 'space for the poor' showing that even in this very poor dockside congregation that Fr O'Reilly catered for there were still to be some worse-off than others.

'St Vincent of [sic] Paul's church Liverpool in the diocese of Liverpool Revd B. O'Reilly'. The church is seen in the 'West elevation' (facing St James Street) and 'Side elevation' on Hardy Street; and in longitudinal and transverse cross-sections, which are untitled, but show the nave and chancel and the nave and aisles respectively. They evidently form a set for that priest to consider, giving him in two further drawings the plan of the church [figure 122] and the presbytery on one sheet and of the basement and second floor of the presbytery on another.

The church is drawn very much as built, except for the north porch and

In 1856–7 the 23 year-old E.W. Pugin was also at work building the nave at Belmont, and the cathedral at Shrewsbury, to which this church most closely relates. The style of the drawings is precise and painstaking. However a pen and ink three-quarter view, probably intended for engraving for fund-raising, is done with much greater freedom [figure 121]. It is probably the earliest in the series, generalising for example on the bellcote which in the 'Revd O Reilly' drawings is much better worked out (and happily still surviving). Early E.W. Pugin drawings are rare, and this set shows the young architect just about to burst from the chrysalis of boyhood tutelage to his father's style and to blossom out as his own man, notably in the style and innovative planning of his church at Our Lady of Salette, Liverpool (1858–9).

A memorial brass to the Rev Edward Bullock at St Peter's, Hambledon, Surrey

from David Meara

A memorial by A.W.N. Pugin has recently been identified in St Peter's Church, Hambledon, in Surrey. It consists of an arched tomb recess with a black marble tomb slab with inlaid memorial brass. On the back wall of the monument is a brass plate with an engraved image of the church upon it. Pugin was responsible for a number of commissions in the area, including Oxenford, Peper Harrow, and Albury so it is not surprising that he received the commission for this monument.

The memorial is dedicated to the memory of the Rev Edward Bullock who was rector of St Peter's from 1833–50 and was responsible for the repair and enlargement of the church between 1840–6. He was born in Dry Drayton, Cambridgeshire where his father was rector, and was the youngest of three sons. He went up to Christ Church, Oxford, in 1792, aged 17, took his BA in 1796 and was elected a fellow of Oriel College in 1797. He was ordained deacon at Christ Church Cathedral Oxford in 1799 and priested on 8 June 1800.

After various curacies he came to Hambledon in 1822 as curate, finally becoming rector in 1833. He remained at Hambledon for the rest of his ministry until his death on 11 January 1850 while staying in Brighton. It appears that he was buried at St Nicholas Brighton on 19 January 1850.

His will states that his estate was left to his cousin Edward Bullock, the Rev Henry Harvey, vicar of Bradford, and the Rev Stair Douglas of Ashling, Sussex, for the benefit of his wife, Sarah Bullock.

The will refers to freehold and copyhold land in Hambledon. During his lifetime Edward Bullock



Figure 122: St Vincent de Paul, Liverpool: ground-floor plan

EW Pugin 1857 courtesy Michael O'Neill, Liverpool Community College.



Figure 123: The memorial to the Rev Edward Bullock

David Meara.

had established a Sunday school and a day school for the education of the poor of the parish, and an indenture of 1852 between Sarah Bullock, the then rector, and the archdeacon conveyed this land in trust for the work to continue. The School still exists as a nursery school in 2010.

Edward Bullock was clearly a significant benefactor of both church and parish, and on his death it is not surprising that his family and parishioners should wish to erect a monument to his memory. One of his executors was the Rev Stair Douglas and in the Hardman archive in Birmingham Central Reference Library is a letter from a Mrs Douglas who refers to Edward Bullock as her brother. The letter is dated 4 March 1850, and is sent from 65 Eaton Place, Belgrave Square, London:

Mrs. Douglas has been requested by Mr. Chandler to communicate with Mr. Hardman on the subject of the monument to be placed in Hambledon Church to the memory of her brother.¹

In returning the sketch sent by Mr. Hardman which is in every respect approved there appears but one question to be answered viz whether the "Hand supporting a Church" is a device which can be with as much propriety placed on the monument of a restorer as of the founder of a church.

The Church of Hambledon was entirely rebuilt by Mr. Bullock and the whole expense (with the exception of less than the sixth part contributed by the Patron) was borne by him. Mrs. Douglas will be obliged to Mr. Hardman if he will let her have his opinion on that point. She would also be glad to know what length of inscription can be admitted around the edge of the slab.

Underneath and on the same page is a copy of Hardman's reply to Mrs Douglas, dated 10 April 1850:

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant to which I should have replied before but was absent from home. Under the circumstances you mention I do not think there would be the slightest impropriety in placing the device of the hand holding the church, which is represented in the drawing. The space around the edges of the slab will admit of about 90 letters. Awaiting your reply I remain yours faithfully

J. Hardman

Mrs Douglas must have had further communication with Hardman and agreed the details of the commission because in the Hardman Metal Order Book there is an entry for 18 April 1850:

Mrs. Douglas, 65 Eaton Place, London

A monument in stone carved to drawing ordered of Myers

A Monumental Brass, let into Black Marble Slab to memory of

1 "Sacred to the Memory of Edward Bullock, M.A., Rector of this Church². He rebuilt this Church A.D. 1874."

Inscription to be sent.

1 to come round in front of slab

2 on square plate at foot of Church [surely a mistake for cross]

The tomb, therefore, was made by George Myers (1804–75), the builder and stonemason based at Lambeth in London, who collaborated with Pugin on many of his building projects. It consists of a simple pointed arch supported on rounded columns and resting on the floor of the church with the tomb slab beneath, in which the brass is set. The brass consists of a floriated cross standing on three steps with an inscription beneath which reads:

Rebuilt this Church

Ano Dom Mdcccxivii

There is a fillet inscription along the front of the memorial which reads:

In memory of Edward Bullock. M.A. Rector of this church. Died January XIth A.D. MDCCCL.

On the back wall of the monument is the representation of a hand holding a church within a sextofoil. Much of the blue and red mastic colouring remains intact. In the Birmingham Museum there is a rubbing taken off the finished brass before it left the factory, which interestingly shows the inscription at the foot of the cross as one line, although the brass in situ has two lines.

Finally the entry in the Hardman Brass Order Book Catalogue shows:

1850 Rev. Edward Bullock Hambledon Cross,
inscr. Etc. Black Marble 4'0" x 1'3"
£24 – 0 – 0

There is no direct evidence for Pugin's involvement in the design of this brass but it reflects his design style. No doubt Pugin and Hardman were chosen because they had designed brasses at the nearby church of SS Peter and Paul, Albury. This is another example of Pugin being commissioned by an Anglican client, even though many in the Church of England, including the Ecclesiological Society, were wary of using such a polemical and controversial figure.

This monument has apparently remained relatively unnoticed for over 50 years, and its revelation has come as a surprise to the present church congregation. Hopefully Margaret Belcher's forthcoming volume of Pugin's *Letters* for the period covering this commission will throw further light on this delightful collaboration between Pugin, Myers and Hardman.

I would like to express my thanks to Audrey Monk, a resident of Hambledon, who has done much of the research into the Bullock family and who first drew this monument to my attention. She has told me that Margaret Belcher was the first to identify this monument as part of Pugin's corpus of work.

Note

- 1 Mr Chandler is the Rev John Chandler, vicar of Witley (an adjacent parish) who is named in the conveyance of 1852 with the current rector of Hambledon and the archdeacon of Surrey.

'Every bishop should have one':
A.W.N. Pugin's attempted revival of the Paxbrede

from Michael Fisher

A.W.N. Pugin's revival of what he was wont to call 'The Real Thing' included the reintroduction of mediæval ritual practices, ornaments and furnishings which had not generally been seen in Catholic churches since the mid-sixteenth century. Some of these were controversial, notably the ancient and very full forms of the chasuble and surplice, which some of the more conservative clergy viewed as unnecessary innovations and sought to have officially banned. Others were either welcomed or quietly accepted as enhancing the dignity of the post-Emancipation Catholic Church. As Professor of Ecclesiastical Antiquities at Oscott College Pugin was able to instil into rising generations of seminarians an appreciation and understanding of the 'Real Thing' which, it was hoped, they would eventually take into their parishes.

Pugin's Oscott lectures were complemented by a small museum which he equipped with genuine mediæval artefacts. Among these were three examples of a paxbrede, or pax, described by Pugin in his *Glossary* (1844) as 'A small plate of gold or silver, or copper gilt, enamelled...carried round, having been kissed by the Priest, after the agnus dei in the Mass, to communicate the Kiss of Peace'.¹ Generally circular in shape, with a handle at the back to enable it to be passed around, the paxbrede was normally adorned with the vernacle (face of Christ), or the virgin and child, or the Lamb of God. Pugin adds that in the title pages of the Sarum missals the pax is always shown on the altar. Well before Pugin's time, however, the passing of the peace had become a highly stylised piece of liturgical choreography involving the officiating clergy only, and no paxbrede was used. Not until the reforms of the Second Vatican Council was the peace reinstated as a part of the liturgy to be shared by the people in general, by means of a handshake, and of course without the paxbrede.

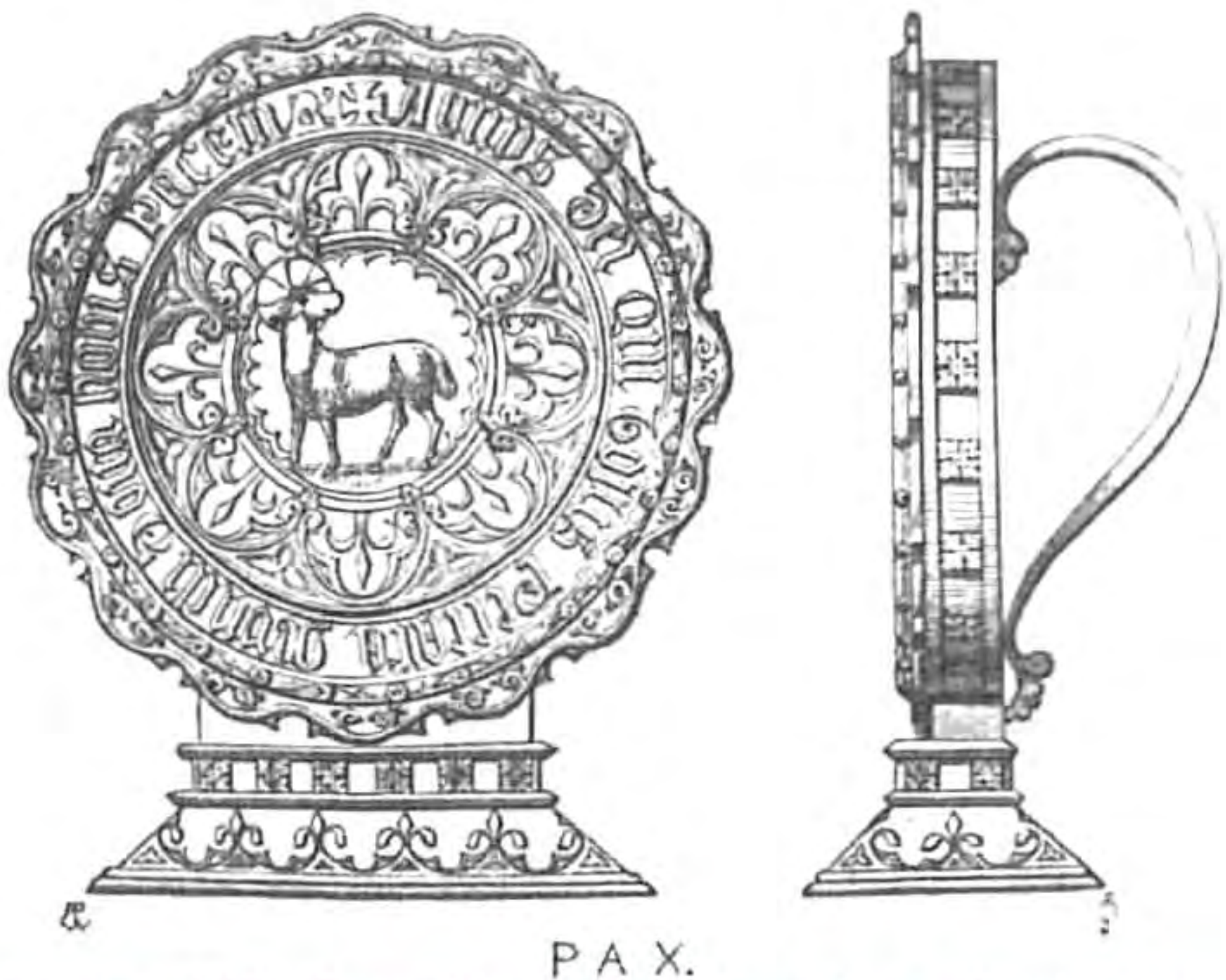


Figure 124: A mediæval paxbrede as depicted in Pugin's *Glossary* Pugin 1844.



Figure 125: front view of the paxbrede commissioned for Bishop Turner in 1851
photographed by Michael Fisher in 2010.



Figure 126: back view of the paxbrede
photographed by Michael Fisher in 2010.

Pugin was committed to the wholesale revival of the Sarum Rite, which would naturally include the use of a paxbrede. It is hardly surprising, therefore, to discover that some were actually made by John Hardman to Pugin's designs, and based on surviving mediæval examples in the museum at Oscott. One of these originals, made of silver gilt and of fifteenth-century date, had an inscription around the periphery, *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi Miserere nobis* ('Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world have mercy on us'), and Pugin includes an illustration of it in the *Glossary*. This appears to have provided the model for Pugin's revival of the paxbrede. Very few appear to have been made, however, and all appear to have been commissioned by, or for presentation to, bishops. Possibly the first paxbrede to be made to Pugin's design was that commissioned by Bishop Nicholas Wiseman (1809–65), coadjutor to Dr Thomas Walsh of Birmingham, just after he moved to the London District in 1847. As President of Oscott, Wiseman would no doubt have seen the mediæval originals. His paxbrede is entered into the Hardman metalwork ledger at 30 June 1848 as 'A richly Engraved & Parcel Gilt Pax, with large Enamel in Centre standing on Sawpierced Base' and priced at £35.²

In 1851 a silver-gilt paxbrede of similar design was commissioned for Thomas Grant, first Catholic Bishop of Southwark, by John and Elizabeth Knill, prominent benefactors of St George's Cathedral, and relatives of Pugin's third wife, Jane. The enamelled centre carries the image of the vernicle, it has the *agnus dei* text engraved around the periphery, and a finely-sawpierced base. It is illustrated in Atterbury & Wainwright's *Pugin, a Gothic passion*, p 173, and in Atterbury's *Pugin, master of Gothic revival*, p 291. In both cases the paxbrede is mistakenly labelled as a pyx, which is a vessel for the reservation of the blessed sacrament.

Early in 2010 six-year-old Freddie 'Spitfire' Phillips, son of Neil Phillips of Pugin, Hardman & Powell Ltd in Birmingham, made an exciting discovery on a visit to an antiques fair with his father. In a box of assorted brassware he spied an object which attracted him, and he persuaded Neil – who thought it might possibly be a Hardman piece – to buy it for his collection. It is indeed by Hardman to Pugin's design: a paxbrede almost identical to that commissioned for Southwark by the Knills, but a little smaller (height 170 mm, width 130 mm) and made of copper gilt rather than silver gilt. It has suffered some slight damage to the

base, and the handle is missing from the back, but it is nevertheless a fine object, and a rare one too. Being made of base metal, it carries no hallmark, but – as with the Knill paxbrede – episcopal insignia and a monogram are enamelled on the base. The initials of the bishop – WT – seemed to indicate William Turner (1799–1872), first Catholic Bishop of Salford. A trawl through the Hardman Metalwork Daybook for 1849–54 revealed an entry for a pax fitting this description and dated 11 December 1851: ‘A copper gilt pax with enamel in front & sawpierced’. It is priced at £10 and charged to James F. Furness, 28 St Ann’s Square, Manchester.³

A search in the Hardman letter-bundles for 1850–2 yielded more than twenty letters from James Furness to Hardman & Co.⁴ Furness was a Manchester silversmith, and a Catholic, who occasionally ordered Hardman items for resale through his business in St Ann’s Square. John Hardman spied an opportunity to establish some kind of agency in Manchester, and so suggested to Furness that he might consider selling Hardman goods on commission. The terms offered seem not to have been generous enough. In a letter dated 14 December 1850 Furness declined the offer on the grounds that ‘it would not repay me for the trouble etc. on the terms proposed’. Furness continued, however, to purchase single items from Hardman; then on 15 August 1851 he wrote on behalf of ‘a number of gentlemen’ who wished to present their new bishop with a crozier and other items, asking Hardman to provide sketches and prices. A postscript reads, ‘If you have any other article which it is usual for a bishop to take with him – send me word and the price’.

Written on the back of the letter in another hand, and in pencil, is a list of goods including a pectoral cross, episcopal rings and seal, a morse and a pax, most of which were subsequently ordered by Furness. He asked that the pectoral cross be made of gold, and ‘of the pattern of the one in Pugin’s *Glossary*.⁵ Another letter reveals that these items were indeed intended for William Turner, a priest at St Augustine’s, Manchester, who was appointed Bishop of the new Diocese of Salford on 16 June 1851 and consecrated on 25 July in the Cathedral of St John the Evangelist.⁶ Pugin had prepared plans for St John’s in 1842 but (typically), he ‘could not be induced to give way on some point of principle’ and so the commission was given to another Catholic architect, Matthew Hadfield (1812–85).⁷

It is not known whether or not bishops Turner, Grant and Wiseman ever used their paxbreds for the purpose Pugin intended. What is certain is that Pugin’s hope that the Sarum Rite in all its plenitude would be restored throughout England was never realised, and his remark to J.R. Bloxam in 1842 that ‘Dr Wiseman is now completely ad usum Sarum’ was, to say the least, premature.⁸ The new paxbrede was therefore a museum-piece even as it was being made. Pugin could not get his own way in everything, but that in no way lessens his overall success in restoring dignity and splendour to Catholic worship and its architectural setting.

Notes

1 Pugin 1844, p 97.

2 Birmingham Central Library: John Hardman Archive (JHA) – Metalwork Daybook 1849–54. Pugin refers to the drawing for the pax in two letters to John Hardman in February 1848. Belcher 2009, pp 458; 461.

3 Birmingham Central Library, JHA Metalwork Daybook, 1849–54.

4 Birmingham Central Library: JHA Metalwork Letters, bundle F, 1850–52.

5 J Furness to John Hardman, 21.8.1851, JHA Metalwork Letters; Pugin 1844, p 97.

6 J Furness to John Hardman, 15.10.1851, JHA Metalwork Letters.

7 Ferrey 1861, p 276.

8 Letter of 30.3.1842: Belcher 2001, p 338.

Book reviews

Sparkling

The stained glass of A.W.N. Pugin. By Stanley A. Shepherd. Reading: Spire Books, 2009. ISBN 978-1904965206. RRP £34.95

reviewed by Martin Harrison

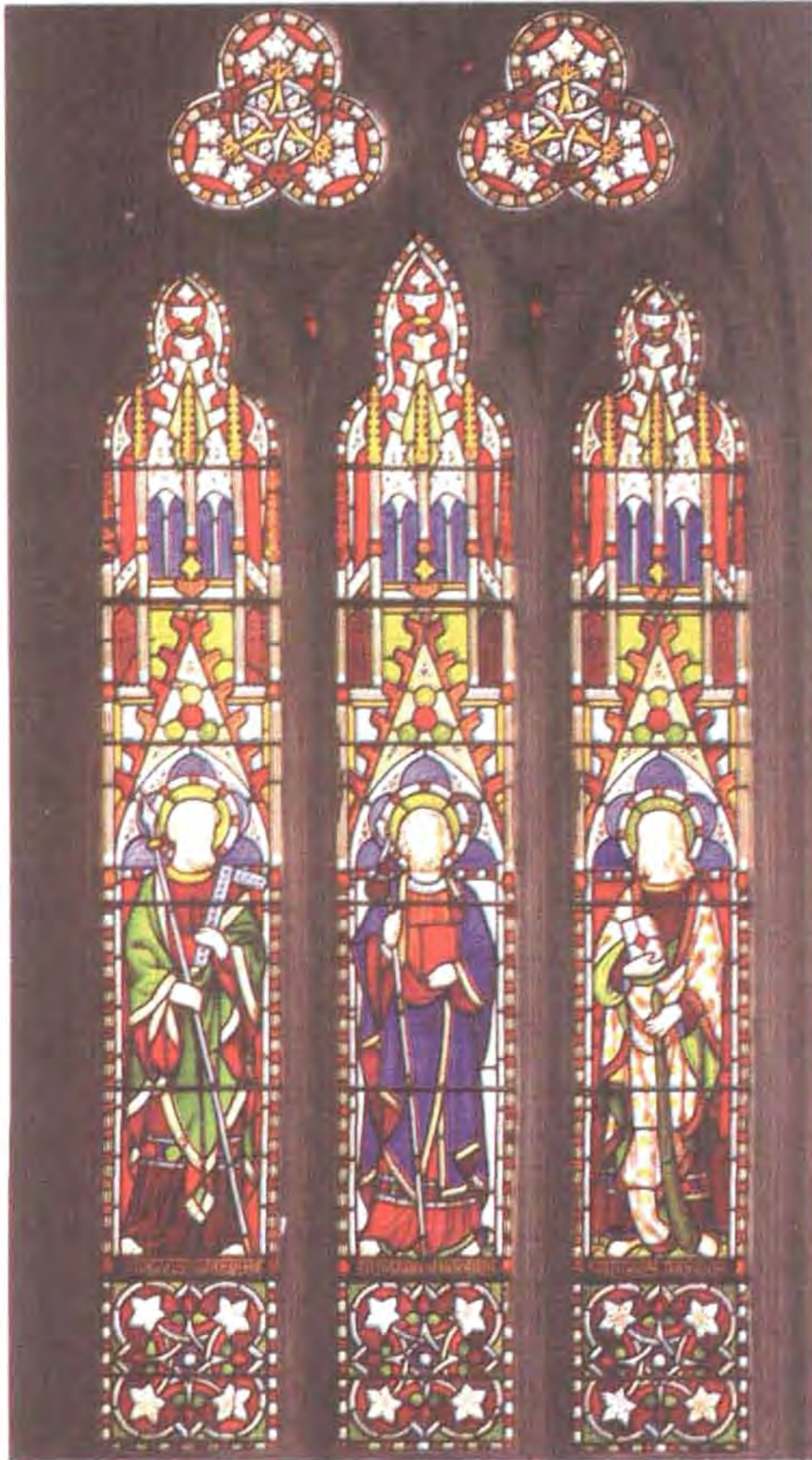


Figure 127: South chancel window, St Paul's, Brighton, by A.W.N. Pugin and Hardman (1849) from *The stained glass of A.W.N. Pugin*, by Stanley Sheppard.

Irrespective of the phenomenal level of interest in A.W.N. Pugin's life and work during the last 20 years, his stained glass has remained something of a black hole among scholars. Stanley Shepherd's eagerly-anticipated book, based partly on his doctoral thesis of 1997 and the result of nearly 20 years intensive archival research and fieldwork, amply fills a conspicuous gap in the Pugin literature.

The stained glass of A.W.N. Pugin is organised into nine thematic chapters, followed by a comprehensive gazetteer that occupies half the book and will be indispensable to Pugin Society members and many others: the book is generously illustrated with colour photographs taken by Alastair Carew-Cox. Dr Shepherd's first chapter deals with the period between 1837 and 1845, when Pugin's designs were executed by four more-or-less established stained glass workshops, those of William Warrington, Thomas Willement, William Wailes and Michael O'Connor. It was Pugin's dissatisfactions with these craftsmen that led him, in 1845, to persuade John Hardman, his metalworker (and friend), to set up a stained glass workshop exclusively to execute his designs. While documentation for the earlier period, in which Pugin forged his mature stained-glass aesthetic based on the English 'Middle Pointed' style, is patchy, for the chapter on 'The Hardman Glass Workshop' Shepherd was able to draw on the extensive archives of John Hardman & Co in framing his discussion of Pugin's workshop practice. He provides valuable insights into studio organisation

and the devolution of art and craft, as well as Pugin's stern guidance of the young men sent from Birmingham to his studio in Ramsgate to help draw up cartoons.

Although Pugin was not responsible for the nineteenth-century retrieval of the mediæval system of glass-painting – this had been achieved, if with less archaeological accuracy, in the 1820s – his best stained glass is superior to that of nearly all his mid-nineteenth-century rivals – from the 1837 altar window at St Mary's College, Oscott, to the impressively vigorous *Tree of Jesse* at the Cathedral of St Mary, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1844, or the architectonics and tonal subtlety of the west (former east) window of the chapel at St Cuthbert's College, Ushaw, 1846–7, to the west window of Sherborne Abbey, 1851. The removal of the unique Sherborne design was the most devastating loss to Pugin's stained glass corpus in recent times, and the tone of Stanley Shepherd's impeccably-documented account of this commission (*Journal of stained*

glass, vol 19 no 3, 1994–5, pp 315–22) is maintained in the coolly objective approach that distinguishes his new book. Yet even the windows produced in collaboration with Hardman were often deemed by Pugin to have failed in comparison with their fourteenth-century counterparts, and Shepherd importantly draws attention to Pugin's concerted efforts to rectify one of the principal causes of this perceived failure – the non-availability of raw glass with the density, variation or vibrancy of mediæval glass.

The chapters on iconography and client relationships – as Pugin began to supply stained glass to other architects and private clients these were often fractious – are particularly informative, as is 'Some aspects of the styles', which outlines the contemporary reception of Pugin's stained glass: if Anglo-Catholic ecclesiologists equivocated about Pugin's buildings, they unreservedly praised his glass. Dr Shepherd is also to be commended for the concluding section, 'After Pugin', which describes the abrupt change in direction in John Hardman & Co's design philosophy following Pugin's death, a change effected by his pupil and son-in-law J.H. Powell (1832–95), a talented artist who nonetheless rejected many of Pugin's 'true principles'. Powell's insistence on artistic autonomy was a paradigm of the challenge to the hegemony of architects, and set the agenda for the development of English stained glass in the decade after Pugin's death.

Shepherd's copious quotations from the correspondence are littered with clues to Pugin's artistic agenda that offer rich scope for further enquiry. From an art-historical perspective it is fascinating to read Pugin, in 1850, claiming that J.H. Powell 'will be a sterling example of what an artist can be without going through the academy process...' (pp 66–7). I would argue that this was probably Pugin's most overt anti-academy statement, his clearest declaration that he believed fluent stained glass design could be effectively absorbed by those with rudimentary drawing skills, untrained in life-drawing. However, between 1845 and 1850 Pugin was obliged to engage Francis Wilson Oliphant (1818–59) to design many of his figures (more, incidentally, might have been made of Oliphant's central role in the Pugin/Wailes windows made between 1841 and 1845). Oliphant was a freelance, academically-trained artist, who sent most of his cartoons down to Ramsgate from London; yet despite Pugin's reservations – Oliphant 'does them against his will' and loses 'all the spirit of the drawing' – he was the most accomplished figure draughtsman he employed: his beautiful Annunciation for St Catherine's Orphanage, Liverpool, 1846, (p 70), exhibits exactly the 'sweetness' and 'devotion' that Pugin so earnestly desired, with none of the awkwardness that sometimes militates against these qualities.

Pugin was not naive, and understood that the nineteenth-century's knowledge of anatomy precluded the possibility of reproducing the 'defects' of mediæval drawing, but his negotiation of the limits of conventionalism presented a dilemma he never entirely resolved. The issue came to a head towards the end of his life when, motivated partly by commercial expediency, he sought to grapple with the 'late styles': ironically, regarding the east window of Magdalene College chapel, Cambridge, 1850, he reluctantly admitted 'I have knocked one fine job out of Oliphant at last' (p 72). Pugin's views on art have attracted relatively little attention, but stained glass was the medium that brought the question of representing the human form into the sharpest focus. It is the lens through which his engagement with contemporary movements such as the Nazarenes and the Pre-Raphaelites, as well as mediæval and Renaissance art, can be most fruitfully examined. It is to be hoped that Dr Shepherd's painstaking groundwork in this splendid volume will encourage others to take up this neglected topic, which is certainly fertile territory for extended study.

Pugin's maelstrom

George Myers: Pugin's builder. By Patricia Spencer-Silver. Leominster: Gracewing, 2010. ISBN 978-085244-184-8. RRP £20.00

reviewed by Victor Belcher

Great architects become famous; good builders remain anonymous. There are exceptions. Thomas Cubitt's name is as well known as most architects, but this is in no small measure due to the extensive and pioneering biography of him written by Hermione Hobhouse, who contributed a foreword to the first edition of this work. Most other builders have received little such recognition.

It is to the great credit of Patricia Spencer-Silver that she has rescued a very good builder, George Myers, from obscurity. It has been to an extent a labour of love. The author is a great-granddaughter of Myers, who discovered largely by chance that she was descended from the builder and thereafter spent many years in indefatigable research to discover what she could about him. Her efforts have been prodigious because there were few family papers left, and much of the information she has accumulated has been derived from trawling through the lists of tenders in the *Builder* magazine, the archives of Myers' clients in public and private hands, and, last but not least, the well rehearsed body of records relating to A.W.N. Pugin, the architect for many of Myers' most important contracts.

The first edition of this book was published as a paperback by The University of Hull Press in 1993 under the title of *Pugin's builder: the life and work of George Myers*. This revised edition contains the results of further research and a good deal of rewriting including the better integration into the text of some material confined to the footnotes in the first edition. The illustrations are also better integrated with the text and some are new. It is a more considered and improved edition which has been given a new title.

In 1837 Myers was awarded the contract to build St Mary's Church, Derby, to Pugin's designs. The two may have met previously when Myers was working as a stonemason at Beverley minster, near his native city of Hull, but whatever the circumstances of their meeting, recounted as the stuff of legend in Benjamin Ferrey's biography of Pugin, it had a profound effect on the careers of both. Up to that moment, Myers' career as a builder had been largely confined to Hull and Beverley, but thereafter he branched out and soon moved to London, the epicentre for commissions for anyone wishing to be a large-scale contractor.

For Pugin, the building of St Mary's, Derby, was equally fateful. Thereafter Myers was his builder of choice, and such was his admiration for, and dependence on, the builder and his craftsmen, that it is likely that he would have used him on every commission if he could. His admiration was not unstinted. The refined and delicate Pugin was sometimes offended by the rough habits of the provincial stonemason. He wrote to Crace that 'There is no greater pig in Christendom than Myers when he takes it into his head nobody can do anything with him'. He sometimes had to travel with Myers to and from commissions and complained of his gargantuan appetite and eating habits: Myers was 'a maelstrom with which he, Pugin, was ashamed to travel' and caused 'a dearth of provisions wherever he went'. Such anecdotes help to build up the character of the builder, and the portrait photograph used as a frontispiece in the book conveys the image of a rough-and-ready, amply proportioned, prosperous man in somewhat ill-fitting clothes.

The reverse side of the coin was what engaged Pugin. He defended Myers to the hilt to prospective clients as the builder he wanted to execute his work, describing him as a man who 'perfectly understands my principles of work and drawings'. He wrote to another client asking that Myers 'who executes the greater part of my work' should be employed, and he gave him a glowing testimonial as a reference for another contract, stating that 'he has not only given me the greatest satisfaction as a skilful and practical builder but I entertain so high an opinion of his integrity that I would not undertake any great work without stipulating for his engagement to carry out the same, as a sure means of ensuring a satisfactory result.'

The ability to interpret his drawings was central to Pugin's admiration of Myers and his wish to employ him on every possible occasion. Often his drawings were only the merest sketches, but he could rely on Myers and the fine body of craftsmen he had built up in his employ to interpret these in the most refined manner possible and produce finished articles, particularly church fittings, of exquisite detail which faithfully embodied Pugin's intentions. There are a number of reproductions of Pugin's drawings in the book, showing their unfinished nature, and a particularly telling comparison on opposite pages of Pugin's sketch for a madonna and child with notes on how he wanted the carving carried out and the finished statue executed by Myers' craftsmen.

In the list of contracts carried out by Myers in an appendix at the end of the volume over 60 works are listed for which Pugin was the architect. These are mostly churches and church fittings, but also include some private houses and the highly influential and well received Mediæval Court at the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. The churches include such seminal buildings as St George's Cathedral, Southwark; St Chad's, Birmingham; St Mary's, Newcastle and St Augustine's, Ramsgate.

In many ways they were an ill-matched couple, but the extent of this cooperation between a particular architect and a particular builder is probably unique in British architectural history. Brian Andrews, in his foreword to this edition, expresses well the result: 'Dare I say that in a certain sense Pugin's works, particularly the details that we so admire, are not entirely his, but rather the result of an extraordinary symbiosis between a creative genius and Myers' remarkable craftsmen in whom he had such a huge trust'. This book does full justice to the remarkable collaboration between these two so different persons.

Both Pugin and Myers had to succumb to the dictates of the competitive tender. By no means all of Pugin's work was carried out by Myers, and in view of their close collaboration it is perhaps ironical that some of Pugin's best known work, at the Palace of Westminster, was executed by other builders and craftsmen because Myers failed to submit the lowest tender. Nevertheless, the author has found some evidence that Myers' craftsmen were involved in the work, and some of the furniture that Myers made for Pugin's house in Ramsgate is now in the Speaker's House in the Palace.

Of course, Myers' career continued after Pugin's untimely death in 1852 and the book examines his many other contracts, including the Colney Hatch Asylum at Friern Barnet; the complex of barracks and other buildings at Aldershot; Mentmore and other houses including a *chateau* near Paris for the Rothschilds; and innumerable churches, private houses and banks and other commercial buildings. He was a prolific contractor, and the estimable and very useful appendix in which his known contracts are collated lists 247 works. There are probably others because, in an act of careful scholarship, over 50 contracts for which he submitted the lowest tender but for which there is no other evidence of his involvement are omitted.

There are few things in the book that disappoint. There are innumerable illustrations dispersed throughout the text, but not so many as to overwhelm what is a scholarly account of Myers' career. Some of the reproductions are on the pale side, but this is a minor cavil: it is difficult to maintain consistency of reproduction when so many of the illustrations are old photographs.

Of greater importance, and a more serious failing in this reviewer's eyes, is that no attempt is made to quantify the extent to which Myers succeeded or failed from his lifetime's endeavours. Whether this is the result of family susceptibilities or for some other reason, it is an unfortunate omission. We are told that Myers 'was comfortably off, but his wealth did not compare with the fortunes accumulated by some of the other master builders of the day, such as Cubitt'. However, few details are given, not even the probate value of his estate at death. In fact, the book ends rather abruptly with his death, as if that's that, there's no more to be said.

Nevertheless, such minor misgivings aside, this is a well researched, well written and well presented book which does justice to its subject, and constitutes an excellent addition to the small but growing corpus of scholarly works about that most important of Victorian entrepreneurs, the building contractor, who translated the dreams and aspirations of innumerable architects and designers into the realities of bricks, stone and mortar.

Lost but now found

R.D. Chantrell (1873–1872) and the architecture of a lost generation. By Christopher Webster. Reading: Spire Books. ISBN 978-1-904965-22-0. RRP £30.00

reviewed by Michael Fisher

One of the myths propagated by the Cambridge Camden Society (and still believed by some) is that Oliver Cromwell and the seventeenth-century Puritans were responsible more than anyone else for the ransacking, ruining and desecration of English churches and cathedrals. In *The present state* (1843) Pugin dealt this myth a severe body-blow, and the Society did not thank him for it. By reference to a selection of primary sources, A.W.N. Pugin demonstrated that despite the Ecclesiologists' assertions that the Elizabethan Church was fundamentally 'Anglo-Catholic', the leaders of both the Edwardine and Elizabethan Church had been so zealously thorough in their destruction of allegedly 'popish' ornaments that – apart from later Laudian accretions – there was really little left for the seventeenth-century iconoclasts to purge. Another Camdenian myth, closely related to the first, was that Gothic church architecture worthy of the name had been put to sleep in the mid-sixteenth century to be awoken only

by the clarion-call of the Ecclesiologists themselves and Pugin 300 years later. As a contributor to, and joint editor of, the definitive study of the Camden Society (*A church as it should be* – Donington: Shaun Tyas 2000), and a contributor to Michael Port's *Six hundred new churches: The Church Building Commission 1818–1856* (Reading: Spire Books, 2006), Christopher Webster has already shattered this other myth, and the theme is developed in this revealing study of the Leeds-based architect, Robert Dennis Chantrell. Representative of what the title of the book calls a 'lost generation' of architects who – largely because of the negative attitude of the Ecclesiologists – have been confined to the shadow of ar-

chitecture history, Chantrell may, according to Webster, also be unique: 'Probably no other single career better reveals the evolution of church design in the period between the establishment of the 1818 Church Building Commission and the middle of the century' (p 215). The point is amplified through a series of well-produced illustrations which trace Chantrell's career from his first essay in Commissioners' Gothic (Christ Church, Leeds, 1821–6, through his contributions to the Norman Revival (eg, Shadwell near Leeds, 1839–42), to the convincingly 'perpendicular' St Andrew's, Keighley (1845–9). At the midpoint of Chantrell's career stands Leeds parish church, the biggest new church in England since Wren's St Paul's, and, as Webster judges it, 'a church of national importance' (p 198). We discover that Chantrell was the first English architect ever to work on a continental cathedral: the restoration of St Saviour's, Bruges, in 1839–47.

Whatever may have been the intentions of the authors and revisers of the *Book of common prayer* (and even Pugin declared that it was in places 'exceedingly Catholic'), it is a matter of historical fact that in the eighteenth century most parish churches became little more than 'preaching houses' with their structures and furnishing adapted accordingly. When church-building resumed – for example under the impetus of the 1818 Church Building Commission – the new churches quite naturally reflected this change. The Georgian church needed an auditorium, not spaces for liturgical drama, and with as many 'sittings' as could be provided. As far as architectural style was concerned, a church could be in any, and Chantrell's mentor Sir John Soane (1753–1837) produced for the Commissioners a large drawing in which a classical church is shown side-by-side with a Gothic and a vaguely Norman one, all identical in plan and basic structure, and different only in the form and detail of their entrances, windows and western turrets. A basic stone box with an eastern recess as an apology for a chancel, and arcades serving principally as supports for galleries, could be dressed in any guise, and it was this amongst other things which so incensed the Ecclesiologists and Pugin.

It was to Sir John Soane that Chantrell was apprenticed in 1807. Given Soane's status at the pinnacle of his profession, no one could have wished for better, but Soane was a dyed-in-the-wool classicist for whom Gothic was 'a style essentially to be side-stepped...an inconvenient interregnum between Rome and the Renaissance' (p 63). Yet, as Webster demonstrates in his opening chapter, post-Waterloo England was a time of change in which, for a variety of reasons, the Gothic alternative was rapidly gaining ground, especially for churches. Unlike classical, it appeared to lack well-defined principles, leaving architects whose clients wanted Gothic to select features from mediæval examples, often combining several sources into one building. It was against this background that Chantrell established his practice in Leeds in 1819, and it was not long before churches came his way on this rapidly expanding centre of the woollen industry. The prevailing mood was for Gothic, which brought Chantrell face-to-face with the limitations of his training. In Chapter Seven Webster explains how, through his first major church commission (Christ Church, Meadow Lane, 1821–6), Chantrell emerged as



Figure 128: A lithograph of 1841 by Richardson and Hawkins of Leeds parish church
From *RD Chantrell (1793–1872) and the architecture of a lost generation*, by Christopher Webster.

an architect 'exceptionally well acquainted with the unfamiliar demands of Gothic church design, and then proceed[ing] to produce a succession of churches...and very good ones at that'(p 190).

Many of the churches that follow fall into the category of 'Commissioners' Gothic' with their galleries and minimal chancels, but then comes the big surprise: Christ Church, Skipton (1835–9). Here, before the Camden Society came into being, Chantrell created a church which enshrined all their principles, with a spacious nave furnished with open benches and free sittings, a groined roof, a well defined baptistery, a long chancel raised on steps above the level of the nave, and a stone altar. True, Chantrell had Christopher Sidgwick – a kind of pre-Camdenian ecclesiologist – to guide him, but important lessons were learned here, and he went on to create other convincing revivals of a complete mediæval church that owed more to the Skipton model than it did to the Camden Society, which he joined only in 1843. Chantrell should therefore be seen, Webster argues, not merely as a follower of the slow drift towards Gothic, but as a pioneer who was actively helping to lead it, reinventing himself to become Yorkshire's leading Gothic exponent (p 11). Furthermore, in an age still dominated by the general architectural practitioner who could design anything from a church to a gin-palace – 'The Trade', as it was caricatured by Pugin in Plate 3 of *Contrasts* (1836) – Chantrell came close to the Pugin/Camdenian ideal of the Christian architect who devoted himself exclusively to church work. In Chapter Six we learn how forward-looking was Chantrell's professional practice and the organisation of his Leeds office. A scholar and an antiquary, Chantrell's researches led to the discovery of what he believed to be the system of proportions which had guided the builders of mediæval churches and cathedrals. It was a mathematical principle rather than a moral one of the kind perceived by Pugin to be the guiding force behind Gothic, but it was a principle nonetheless, which enabled Chantrell to produce exceptional buildings of his own, and which guided many architects who followed him.

Although Pugin's verdict on Chantrell's *chef d'oeuvre*, the rebuilding of Leeds parish church, is not recorded in this publication, members of The Pugin Society will be interested to know it. On the very day of its rededication – 2 September 1841 – Pugin was in Leeds in connection, no doubt, with the reredos and other furnishings he was designing for St Anne's Roman Catholic Church, itself a competent piece of Gothic (1837–8, demolished 1904) by another Leeds architect John Child. Pugin judged St Peter's, the parish church, to be 'A wretched attempt on a Large scale. it Looks much such a thing as the modern english Catholics would have built 8 or ten years ago...the details are monstrous – with *immense galleries* allaround 3 sides'.¹ The fundamental problem – which Webster readily acknowledges – was this: for all its restored grandeur, Leeds parish church represented an uneasy marriage of two distinct Anglican traditions, namely the old galleried preaching-box and the new sacramentally oriented church with this deep chancel, choir stalls and raised altar. Pugin was right: it was old-fashioned almost as soon as it opened, and the *Ecclesiologist* saw it 'only as an historical monument'. It reflects a Church in transition, and Chantrell, without any promptings from the Camden Society, was already assisting that transition. The rebuilding of St Peter's, and its significance, is the subject of a special study by Webster: *The rebuilding of Leeds parish church 1837–41 and its place in the gothic revival* (New Malden: The Ecclesiological Society, 1994).

Christopher Webster's masterly and enlightening chapters on Chantrell's life, career, and the environment in which he operated, are complemented by a catalogue of all of his known works, attributions, and inspections carried out for the Incorporated Church Building Society: over 160 in all. Each entry has detailed references, making this book an invaluable tool for further research. The design and presentation of the book live up to the very high standards that we have come to expect of Spire Books.

¹ Letter to JR Bloxam, 21.11.1841: Belcher 2001, p 288–9.

Meticulous vignettes

Essays in Scots and English architectural history: a festschrift in honour of John Frew. Edited by David Jones and Sam McKinstry. Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2009. ISBN 978-1-900289-948. RRP 39.95

reviewed by Alex Bremner

It is stated in the forward to this collection of essays that John Frew, in whose honour they are

compiled, is a meticulous, thorough, and concise scholar. These adjectives are carefully chosen. We are told that Frew's particular approach to architectural history is characterised by the 'good influence' of his respective tutors at Glasgow (Alan Tait) and Oxford (Howard Colvin), and that he is someone who 'made no concessions to short-lived art-historical fashion' during his career – in a word, or two, he is 'straightforward and unfussy.' It is also noted that Frew, as many will know, is a master of the microstudy, preferring to focus on the local detail and personalities that lie behind the design and construction of buildings rather than speculate on theory and metanarrative. After reading the foreword to this book, the reader will have a good idea of what lies in store – an equally meticulous and concise series of vignettes on specific episodes in the life of buildings in Scotland and south of the border.

These essays reflect very well the approach developed by Frew throughout his career and do credit to the fundamentals of architectural history, particularly as it has been practiced in the British Isles for the past half-century or so. I have great sympathy for this approach, as I believe it is the bedrock upon which all good architectural history is based. It may be very well to frame the study of architecture in relation to wider concerns regarding culture, society, theory, philosophy etc, but unless we get down to the business of analysing buildings then we are not doing architectural history. Buildings must be at the core of what we do and these essays are reassuring in that respect. The topics covered are as diverse as Robert Adam (Culzean Castle and Woodlands), G.G. Scott snr (designs for the University of Glasgow), William Burn (the Madras College, St Andrews), family patronage (the Yorkes in Herefordshire), the Macrae and Abercrombie plan for Edinburgh, sports stadia (Ibrox, Glasgow), and Fife boundary stones: 15 essays in all. It is also noteworthy that this collection contains the last published work by Howard Colvin, a short piece on the design by William Kent (along with Henry Flitcroft) for Shobdon church, Herefordshire (1750–5).

The sustained influence of teacher upon student across three generations is palpable in many of the essays contained here, which is heartening. It is only a shame that the book does not contain a full bibliography of Frew's published works.

An agonised fantasy

Gothic Romanticism: architecture, politics, and literary form. By Tom Duggett. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. ISBN 9780230615328. RRP £52.50

reviewed by Andrew Rudd

Readers of William Wordsworth's *The excursion* (1814) will be familiar with its preface's analogy of a Gothic church; or, to be precise, of *The excursion* as 'the ante-chapel' to the 'body of a Gothic church', which was to be the much longer and in the event unfinished epic *The recluse* – the great 'might have been' of Romantic literature. The preface goes on to describe Wordsworth's shorter poems as having 'such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.' In short, he intended his entire poetical oeuvre to be considered as fragmentary parts of a single yet coherent architectonic structure.

This is the starting point for Tom Duggett's book, which attempts to view the poet's shifting position in relation to Gothic culture as central not only to his poetic ideal but also his notion of what national literature should be. Wordsworth is the main focus of the book alongside consideration of other Romantic poets. Duggett uses the term 'Gothic' broadly as Wordsworth and his contemporaries would have understood it, that it is to say incorporating a wide sweep of sometimes contradictory meanings that could include Saxonism, constitutionalism, the old English liberty tradition, chivalric virtue, monasticism and, on more pejorative occasions, religious and political obscurantism. Duggett traces the existence of all these in Romantic period writing and argues that Wordsworth's political journey from radical to conservative was also a working through of his lifelong interest in the Gothic. Duggett concludes that, by the early nineteenth century, Wordsworth had successfully claimed Gothic as a patriotic English form, and so paved the way for the fully-fledged revival that was later to take place in literature under Tennyson and in architecture under Pugin.

Sometimes Duggett's readings of the poetry, whilst beautifully handled in the fine detail, tend to stretch brief references to Gothic buildings rather too far. Chapter Two, for instance, on Wordsworth's poem *Salisbury Plain* (completed in 1794 but only published in 1842), seizes

upon an early stanza when a traveller 'on the skirt of Sarum's plain' loses sight of the spire of Salisbury Cathedral in 'the gathering clouds... red with stormy fire', which Duggett interprets as an 'agonised fantasy' of Britain's vanished Gothic inheritance. More convincingly is the reading of Wordsworth's sonnets to liberty composed in 1802–3, in which England is envisaged as a Gothic hall standing firm against a French invasion. The most celebrated of these sonnets ('Milton! Thou shouldst be living at this hour') evokes the 'fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower' that the poet believes have 'forfeited their ancient English dower / Of inward happiness'.

Duggett also dedicates a chapter to Romantic poets and the Peninsular War, where he argues that Wordsworth's pamphlet *The Convention of Cintra* (1809) seeks to unite England and Spain as lands possessed of an ancient Gothic heritage. The salient image Wordsworth uses here is that of a castle with 'naked walls' clasped and mutually buttressed by 'ivy and wild plants', an organic alliance of man and nature. There might have been scope in this section to explore responses to the Peninsular War by other Romantics in greater depth. As Duggett mentions, R.W. Westall's illustrations to the 1824 edition of Southey's *Roderick, the last of the Goths* (originally published in 1814) use Gothic ruins to make the imaginative connections between the two nations explicit.

The most interesting material in the book by far concerns Wordsworth's search for a poetic ideal that, Duggett suggests, mirrored the simultaneous debate about the 'true' nature of Gothic. An article published in the *Gentleman's magazine* in 1739, for instance, praised the British 'Gothick Constitution' for its 'noble strength and Simplicity [...] which was well enough represented by the bold Arches and the solid Pillars of the Edifices of those Days'. This leads Duggett back towards Wordsworth's similarly purist definition of 'good poetry' as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' on the grounds that architecture and poetry here sought to revive the time-honoured values of simplicity of expression and emotional honesty.

Even more intriguing is the notion that Gothic architecture and Romantic poetry demand active imaginative input from the viewer or reader for their full effect to be realised. Duggett cites Samuel Johnson, who, in his *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* (1775), describes how he 'conjectured' the 'general form' of the ruined monastery of the Arbroath Abbey (Duggett follows Johnson in calling it the 'monastery of Aberbrothick') from a survey of the 'parts yet standing'. Duggett duly reminds us of Wordsworth's insistence in the preface of *The wanderer* that 'it is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system; it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself.' Duggett argues that, in both cases, 'the reader must make an effort of synthetic imagination that manifests his public spirit, and that therefore helps to instantiate the public realm'. His most audacious claim is that Wordsworth desired 'to construct his verse as the medieval churches had been built' and so can be seen as a forerunner of Pugin. This link between the two men is, again, not wholly persuasive, but the examination of their shared desire to uncover 'true principles' is important and original work and should generate further research in both disciplines.

Not there yet

Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill. By Michael Snodin. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0300125740. RRP £40.00

reviewed by Andrew Rudd

Horace Walpole's 'little Gothic castle' by the Thames, recently restored by the Strawberry Hill Trust, the Friends of Strawberry Hill and the architects Inskip and Jenkins, reopened its doors to visitors in autumn 2010. Until then, the clearest idea of Walpole's vision of 'a paper fabric and assemblage of curious trifles, made by an insignificant man', housed in a building that exhibited 'specimens of Gothic architecture... a small capricious house... built to please my own taste' was given by an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 'Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill'. The book under review, edited by Michael Snodin, aspires to be 'the standard work on Walpole and his collection' as well as the exhibition catalogue. The essays are of mixed quality, ranging from solid curatorial accounts of elements of the collections to



Figure 129: The Tribune at Strawberry Hill, c 1789, watercolour by John Carter

The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

Castle of Otranto) and Margaret K. Powell writes on the holdings of Walpole's library (Powell is Librarian of the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, where the majority of Walpole's collection are preserved and which has co-curated the exhibition).

The latter group, including Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, Ruth Mack and Stephen Bann, seek to explain what Walpole thought he was trying to achieve at Strawberry Hill and what significance, if any, his project holds for us today. Whilst some of their essays are wayward on fine detail (the 'journalist Harrison Ainsworth' would have more properly described as the 'novelist William Harrison Ainsworth', to take one minor example), what we might call Walpole's 'postmodern' qualities – his fondness for display; his love of special effects; and his valorisation of the historic fragment – arguably offer the most interesting route to understanding his mercurial (should one simply say 'camp'?) sensibility. Unfortunately, there is a good deal of overlap between these essays and, perhaps inevitably, the slippery Walpole evades any definitive interpretation.

In terms of architectural analysis, Kevin Rogers' chapter 'Walpole's Gothic: creating a fictive history' is something of a let-down. Rogers mentions the 'decorative' gothick of Batty and Thomas Langley, but tries to contrast this with what he confusingly describes as Walpole's own 'playfully decorative' style. If there is an argument to be made (and surely there is) for the seriousness of 'Strawberry Hill 'Gothic'', it is regrettably not to be found in these pages. Far more instructive is Michael Snodin's genial introductory chapter on visiting Strawberry Hill. Following the layout of the exhibition, Snodin guides us from room to room, pointing out the 'principal curiosities' such as Cardinal Wolsey's hat and a pair of gloves reputedly belonging to James I (which Walpole wore to greet visitors together with a carved wooden cravat by Grinling Gibbons).

Snodin also gives the best account of Strawberry Hill's building history. Walpole leased the house from Elizabeth Chevenix, a 'toywoman' of Charing Cross, in 1747. With his friends Richard Bentley, John Chute and the architect William Robinson, he convened a 'committee' to devise the expansion and decoration of the property, which expanded westwards from the original house by way of a long gallery towards the 'Great Round Tower', completed in 1766. To the north were new principal rooms, including the Holbein Chamber (built to display 33 tracings by George Vertue of the Holbein drawings of Henry VIII's court), a tribunal (or chapel, lit from above to produce a 'golden gloom') and the Great North Bedchamber, with a fireplace copied from the tomb of William Dudley, Bishop of Durham, in Westminster

somewhat tendentious interpretations of Walpole's place in cultural history.

'Disgusted' was Pugin's pithy response to his own visit to Strawberry Hill in 1842, when Walpole's collection of books, paintings, furniture, statues, miniatures, medallions, coins, ceramics, painted glass, arms and armour and curios of all kinds was dispersed at a general auction. Whether Pugin was referring to the objects or the building or both, his remark reminds us of the commonplace tendency to contrast Walpole's aesthetic ideas unfavourably with the 'true' Gothic revival taking place at the time of sale. As Stephen Clarke's essay on the auction makes clear, Walpole's cultural stock had sunk to a low ebb by the early nineteenth century, his endeavours regarded as frivolous, dilettantish, even profane. Several contributors write persuasively on Walpole's connoisseurship. Among them, Stephen Lloyd adds two sections on his collection of miniatures, Stuart W. Phyrre explores the assortment of arms and armour at Strawberry (which play a central role in Walpole's gothic novel, *The*

Abbey. Last to be added was the Beauclerk Tower (completed in 1776), a slender columnar appendage to the round tower designed by James Little. Here, Lady Diana Beauclerk's nine illustrations to Walpole's scandalous incest tragedy *The mysterious mother* were displayed to Walpole's inner circle of friends only.

The most sustained attempt to create an authentic mediæval atmosphere came in the more austere earlier parts of the house (completed in the 1750s). These included the staircase (lit by a single candle in a stained-glass lantern) and the 'armoury' (where the armour supposedly belonging to Francis I of France reputedly inspired Walpole's 1765 Gothic novel *The Castle of Otranto*). Thereafter, Walpole seems to have been prepared to compromise in the name of modern convenience and comfort. The *papier-mâché* crenellations and fan-vaulting, and trickery such as coloured glass that could be raised to improve the flow of light have not endeared Strawberry Hill to Gothic 'purists'. Yet it seems fatuous to produce a straightforward comparison of Walpole's creation with the productions of early nineteenth century. Walpole's energies were directed far more towards the imagination and the passions and so sought to generate effect rather than adhere to strict principles of design. He is no less an intriguing figure for all that, and this volume does not uniformly do Walpole justice.

Vibrant

Birmingham's Victorian and Edwardian architects. Edited by Phillada Ballard. Wetherby: Oblong, for the Birmingham and West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society, 2009. ISBN 978-0-9556576-2-7. RRP £41.00

reviewed by Timothy Brittain-Catlin

Pugin Society members will be interested in this authoritative, interesting and attractive volume in which specialists describe in detail the lives and works of several significant architects who worked in or near Birmingham, but who are sometimes overlooked in general surveys of the Gothic Revival. Subjects include Thomas Rickman (the 'Quaker quack', John Britton called him, and yet rather more appreciated in recent years), and J.A. Chatwin, architect for the rebuilding of St Martin in the Bull Ring, and of much else of interest. Other Goths here include John Henry Chamberlain and Frederick William Martin: photographs of red-brick buildings by the two, including the former's red-brick School of Art in Margaret Street, and the latter's Spring Hill Library in Icknield Street, will remind you what is meant by the word 'vibrant'. Chapters on arts-and-crafts architects such as W.H. Bidlake in the Edwardian section of the book will also be invaluable for those following the traces of Puginite architecture at the dawn of the twentieth century.

The photographs, design and production of this book are first rate and everyone associated with it must be proud of the result. It is very interesting that it has been published for a branch of the Victorian Society by Oblong, in effect a packaging company, rather than by a high minded academic publisher. I hope there will be more of this sort of thing in the future: for all their pretensions, conventional publishers have served architectural historians extremely badly in recent years. When looking for a publisher for my book on parsonages and before being approached by the admirable Spire, I spoke to an editor at what was once one of this country's long established and well regarded architectural publishers. He told me with regret that his company only published 'crap' nowadays. By 'crap' he meant platitudes about celebrity buildings. Phillada Ballard's excellent book suggests that a would-be author, who has of course managed to raise the cash necessary for a non-commercial production, might be well advised to give Oblong a ring.

Opaque, inaccurate, underwhelming

Modern architectural theory: a historical survey, 1673–1968. By Harry Francis Mallgrave. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-13048-6 paperback. RRP £29.99

reviewed by James Stevens Curl

This tome is an attempt to set out in one volume a comprehensive outline of architectural theory, mostly in Europe and America, over three centuries. Readers will probably be aware

of Professor Mallgrave's earlier work on Gottfried Semper, a theorist capable of massive obscurantism, whose writings are infuriatingly opaque. Architectural theory, indeed, is often manifest as an impenetrable jungle, and the 'theory' of Modernism is especially tricky: how does one construct a theory or theories around something lacking an alphabet, a vocabulary, a grammar, a syntax? After all, Summerson tried and failed: Mallgrave here, in a book first published in 2005 and reprinted in 2007 and 2009 attempts it, but his style itself lacks clarity, tautness, and economy, which does not well serve his task.

The late Sir Howard Colvin (1919–2007) provided us with an essay on Robert Morris (1703–54) in his *A biographical dictionary of British architects 1600–1840* where he described Morris as 'the most important British writer on architectural theory of the first half of the eighteenth century', something one would not gather by reading Mallgrave, who does not even mention Coventry Kersey Deighton Patmore (1823–96). Alone among English critics, Patmore saw that without an expression of security and permanence no building can be called 'architectural' (how he would have trounced exponents of Deconstructivism for their denial of gravitational control and response!).

It is not such omissions alone which cause alarm bells to ring when reading Mallgrave's book. It is extremely difficult to take seriously a work which lists 'Jean Bautista Villalpanda' for Juan Bautista Villalpando (1552–1608); 'Sanby' for Thomas Sandby (1721–98); 'Glasglow' for Glasgow; 'Goindoin' for Jacques Gondoin (1737–1818); 'Alexandre Théodor' for Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart (1739–1813); 'Ballie Scott' for Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott (1865–1945); 'Boisseree' for Sulpiz Melchior Dominicus (or Damaticus) Boissérée (1783–1854); 'Carrière' for John Mervin Carrère (1858–1911); 'Burchkardt' for Jakob (or Jacob) Christoph Burckhardt (1818–97); 'Brünig' for Heinrich Brüning (1885–1970); 'Riechsbank' for Reichsbank; 'Liebnecht' for Karl Liebknecht (1871–1919); 'Sterling' for Sir James Frazer Stirling (1926–92); 'Denkmar' for Dankmar Adler (1844–1900); 'von' for Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827); 'Beidermeier' for Biedermeier; 'Samuel' for Siegfried Bing (1838–1905); 'Gunner' for Gunnar Birkerts (born 1925); 'Carmichel' for Stokely Carmichael (1941–98); 'Dennis' for Denis Diderot (1713–84); 'Wilehm' for Wilhelm; 'Eugéne' for Eugène; 'Pöpplemann' for Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann (1662–1736); 'Prové' for Jean Prouvé (1901–84); 'Guiseppe' for Giuseppe Terragni (1904–43); 'Thronton' for William Thornton (1759–1828); and so on and so forth, in one of the most appallingly badly proof-read books this reviewer has ever seen. James Fergusson (1808–86), we are told, brought out his *History of the modern styles of architecture* in 1762, which is pretty good going by any standards; Mallgrave says that one of the tracts of Gottfried Semper (1803–79) published in 1834 included the word 'Bermerkungen' which does not exist, though Bemerkungen (observations or remarks) does; and Joseph Esherick is given as born in 1914, but not that he died in 1998, which ought to have been picked up. It is not an impressive performance, though the list of clangers is awe-inspiring.

Then there are the dismal, distorted, amateurish, and really unacceptable snapshots of buildings credited to 'the author': these should have been rejected out of hand and replaced by competently composed, undistorted, professional photographs. Mallgrave's holiday snaps lean right or lean left, have verticals not parallel, and do his book no favours whatsoever. What the denizens of Cambridge University Press could have been thinking about when they passed these many howlers and ugly pictures defies comprehension.

Apart from the rotten half-tones and the multitude of spelling errors, this is really a very tame book, regurgitating much that ought to have been questioned, elaborated upon, or dealt with in a more robust fashion. It is more satisfactory when dealing with the first couple of centuries, but follows 'received opinion' when attempting to cover matters from around 1900. Mallgrave mentions the curious fact that Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus heroes of international modernism never enquired into the problem of practicalities such as plumbing: it has always struck at least one observer that the sanitary fittings of the Villa Savoie, for example, seem of the same design vintage as the *Titanic*, so such problems were really beneath the dignity of those who pretended to understand the so-called 'machine aesthetic'. We have the usual deferential mention of the Smithsons and the Hunstanton School in Norfolk, which was praised to the skies and avidly photographed just after it was finished, yet it ignored problems such as solar-heat gain or other difficulties with large expanses of glazing instead of walls, and made life uncomfortable for those unfortunates who had to use it. Mallgrave does, though, notice that the 'Chicago-style' windows and other aspects of entries for the

Chicago Tribune Tower competition (1922) lauded by the misguided and over-rated high priest of the modernist cult, Sigfried Giedion (1888–1968), simply would not have worked. Mallgrave, too, is kind to Philip Cortelyou Johnson (1906–2005), especially regarding the latter's visit to Poland in 1939 in the wake of the German invasion, like some camp-follower. The whiff of self-serving opportunism is never far away from the believers in modernism, the antitheses of the European Enlightenment, for modernism was (and is) a secular cult, with all the intolerance associated with irrational religion. And, as any reader of Patmore would readily understand, the negation of an expression of gravity leads to anti-architecture. Water, after all, flows downhill. Deconstructivism is not a paradigm: it is non-architectural nonsense.

Mallgrave has attempted an overview of architectural theory, and his book contains much material, but it is badly marred by the matters alluded to above, and, more importantly even than those obvious flaws, his text is simply not sufficiently tough-minded: it is too respectful by half of the unrespectable. Terms need to be defined, slogans dissected, gnomic utterances examined and found wanting, and razor-sharp prose of Apollonian clarity written to expose a vast confidence-trick, a hoax that has made many cities and towns uninhabitable, dangerous, and thoroughly unpleasant. It all went haywire in the twentieth century: it is time we all woke up to that irrefutable fact and stopped brown-nosing knaves and unscrupulous totalitarians. Mallgrave had an opportunity here to give us a really whopping book, but his work is far too timid, and does not really convince, not least because the sloppiness of (presumably) proof-reading is overwhelming.

Bibliography

This is a list of publications or other articles referred to in this number. The list includes unpublished typescripts

- P. Atterbury 1995, [ed], *A.W.N. Pugin: master of Gothic revival*, New Haven & London.
- P. Atterbury & C. Wainwright 1994, [eds], *Pugin: a Gothic passion*, London & New Haven.
- T. Balston 1947, *John Martin, 1789–1854, his life and works*, London.
- A. Barry 1868, *The architect of the New Palace at Westminster: a reply to a pamphlet by E. Pugin entitled 'Who was the art-architect of the Houses of Parliament?'*, London.
- H. Batsford 1938, *The English cottage*, London.
- M. Belcher 1987, *A.W.N. Pugin, an annotated critical bibliography*, London & New York.
- M. Belcher 1994, 'Pugin writing', in Atterbury & Wainwright 1994, pp 105–16
- M. Belcher 2001, *The collected letters of A.W.N. Pugin; vol 1: 1830–42*, Oxford.
- M. Belcher 2003, *The collected letters of A.W.N. Pugin; vol 2: 1843–5*, Oxford.
- M. Belcher 2009, *The collected letters of A.W.N. Pugin; vol 3: 1846–8*, Oxford.
- M. Bressani 2010, 'Pugin: another reading', lecture no. 3, Arch 653B Architectural Theory Seminar II – Studies into architectural romanticism, McGill University, Montreal, 19.1.2010.
- T. Brittain-Catlin 2006, 'A.W.N. Pugin's English convent plans', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol 65 no 3 (September 2006), pp 356–77.
- T. Brittain-Catlin 2008, *The English parsonage in the early nineteenth century*, Reading.
- C. Brooks 1999, *The Gothic Revival*, London.
- S. Brown 1999, *Sumptuous and richly adorn'd: the decoration of Salisbury cathedral*, London.
- N. Bown, C. Burdett & P. Thurschwell 2004, [eds], *The Victorian supernatural*, Cambridge.
- K. Clark 1964, *The Gothic Revival*, 2nd ed, London.
- K. Clark 1974, *The Gothic Revival*, 3rd ed, London.
- M. Clifton [nd], *A short history of St Peter's Church Woolwich*.
- H. Colvin 1995, *A biographical dictionary of British architects 1600–1840*, 3rd ed, London & New Haven.
- B. Newhall 1971, [ed & trans], *Daguerre, an historical and descriptive account of the various processes of the daguerreotype and the diorama*, New York.
- R. Dell 1906, 'Who was the architect of the Houses of Parliament: new light on an old controversy', *Burlington magazine*, vol 8 no 36 (March 1906), pp 403–20.
- A.-N. Didron 1846, 'Promenade en Angleterre', *Annales archéologiques*, tome cinquième, Décembre 1846), Paris.
- C. Dolman 1846, 'Lord Shrewsbury's new church of St Giles, in Staffordshire', *Dolman's magazine and monthly miscellany of criticism*, vol iv no xx (October 1846).
- E. Dunn [nd], 'History of Woolwich Parish', typescript in Roman Catholic Diocese of Southwark, Diocesan Archives, Woolwich box.
- C. Eastlake 1872, *A History of the Gothic Revival*, London
- C. Eliot 1909–14, [ed], *The Harvard classics: essays: English and American*. New York.
- B. Elliot 2008, 'Found in Salisbury cathedral? A memorial by A.W.N. Pugin', *Catholics in Salisbury*, issue 6, p 27.
- D. Evinson 1998, *Catholic churches of London*, Sheffield.
- W. Feaver 1975, *The art of John Martin*, Oxford.
- B. Ferrey 1861, *Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin, and his father, Augustus Pugin*, London.
- M. Fisher 2004, *Perfect Cheadle: St Giles' Catholic church, Cheadle, Staffordshire*, Stafford.
- C. Fitzgerald-Lombard 1993, *English and Welsh Priests 1801–1914*, Downside.
- M. Floyd 1995, 'A.W. N. Pugin and the Gothic Movement in North America', in Atterbury 1995, pp 201–21.
- H & A. Gernsheim 1968, L. J. M. *Daguerre: the history of the Diorama and the Daguerreotype*, New York.
- M. Girouard 1978, *Life in the English country house: a social and architectural history*, New Haven & London.
- D. Gwynn 1946, *Lord Shrewsbury, Pugin and the Catholic revival*, London.
- J. Hall 1796, *A short description of the Isle of Thanet; being chiefly intended as a directory for the company resorting to Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs with a map of the island*, Margate.

- S. Hart 2000, *Flint architecture of East Anglia*, London.
- E. Hasted 1803, *The history and topographical survey of the County of Kent*, Canterbury.
- C. Herringer 2008, *Victorians and the Virgin Mary: religion and gender in England, 1830–85*. Manchester & New York.
- R. Hill 1995, 'Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin: a biographical sketch', in Atterbury 1995, pp 30–43.
- R. Hill 1999, 'Reformation to millennium: Pugin's *Contrasts* in the history of English thought', *Journal of Society of Architectural Historians*, vol 58 no 1 (March 1999), pp 26–40.
- R. Hill 2003, 'Pugin's small houses', *Architectural history*, vol 46.
- R. Hill 2007, *God's architect: Pugin and the building of romantic Britain*, London.
- R. Hill 2009 *God's architect: Pugin and the building of romantic Britain* [American edition], New Haven.
- H. R. Hitchcock 1954, *Early Victorian architecture in Britain*, New Haven.
- W. Houghton 1957, *The Victorian frame of mind, 1830–1870*, New Haven.
- G. Hyland 2009, 'The E.W. Pugin Gazetteer: part 3', *True principles*, vol 4 no1, (Autumn 2009), pp 25–50.
- P. Inman, 2007, 'Amy Robsart and Cumnor Place', Bodleian Library: <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/external/cumnor/articles/inman-robsart.htm>.
- F. Lamennais 1840, *Esquisse d'une philosophie*, Paris.
- T. Macaulay 1831, 'Civil disabilities of the Jews', in Macaulay 1882.
- T. Macaulay 1882, *Macaulay's miscellaneous writings*, vol 1, Boston (USA).
- D. MacGibbon & T. Ross, 1887–92, *The castellated and domestic architecture of Scotland*, Edinburgh.
- D. Meara 1991, A.W.N. Pugin and the revival of memorial brasses, London & New York.
- D. Meara 1994, 'Monuments and brasses' in Atterbury & Wainwright 1994, pp 185–94.
- D. Meara 1995, 'The Catholic context', in Paul Atterbury 1995, pp 45–61.
- J. Miller 1959, *Fundamentals of the liturgy*, Indiana.
- S. Moodie 1985, *Letters of a lifetime*, Toronto.
- J. Moore 1872, *Brown's stranger's handbook and illustrated guide to Salisbury cathedral being a full historical and descriptive account of the buildings and monuments*, Salisbury.
- H. Muthesius 1979, *The English house*, ed Dennis Sharp, trans Janet Seligman, New York.
- R. O'Donnell 1994, 'Pugin as a church architect', in Atterbury & Wainwright 1995, pp 63–89.
- R. O'Donnell 2002, *The Pugins and the Catholic Midlands*, Leominster.
- R. Otto 1923, *The idea of the holy* [translated from German], London.
- R. Owen 1880, *Sanctorale Catholicum; or, book of saints: with notes, critical, exegetical, and historical*, London.
- D. Paz 1992, *Popular anti-Catholicism in mid-Victorian England*, Stanford (USA).
- J. Piper 1945, 'St Marie's Grange', *The architectural review*, October 1945, pp 90–3.
- R. Plant 1881, *History of Cheadle, in Staffordshire, and neighbouring places*, Leek.
- M. Port 1976a, [ed], *The Houses of Parliament*, New Haven & London.
- M. Port 1976b, 'The Houses of Parliament competition', in Port 1976a, pp 20–52.
- M. Port 1976c, 'Problems of building in the 1840s', in Port 1976a, pp 97–121.
- M. Port 1976d, 'Barry's last years: the New Palace in the 1850s', pp 142–72.
- M. Port & P. Stanton 1976, 'Select committees and estimates: the collaboration', in Port 1976a, pp 73–96.
- C. Powell 2006, *Augustus Welby Pugin designer of the British Houses of Parliament. The Victorian quest for a liturgical architecture*, Lampeter.
- A. Pugin 1836, *Contrasts, or a parallel between the noble edifices of the middle ages and corresponding buildings of the present day*, London.
- A. Pugin 1838, 'Fire-place in the Abbey of St Amand, Rouen', *Orthodox journal* no 6 (31 March 1838), pp 193–6.
- A. Pugin 1839, 'To the subscribers to and promoters of the martyrs' memorial in Oxford', in Belcher 2001, pp 89–103, London.
- A. Pugin 1841a, *The true principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, London.
- A. Pugin 1841b, *Contrasts, or a parallel between the noble edifices of the middle ages and corresponding buildings of the present day*, 2nd ed, London.
- A. Pugin 1841c, 'On the present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England', *Dublin review*, vol x (May 1841), pp 301–48.

- A. Pugin 1843a, *On the present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* [earlier articles published in book form], London.
- A. Pugin 1843b, *An apology for the revival of Christian architecture in England*, London.
- A. Pugin 1844, *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament and costume: compiled and illustrated from ancient authorities and examples*, London.
- A. Pugin 1846, *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament and costume*, 2nd ed [B. Smith, ed], London.
- A. Pugin 1849, *Floriated ornament, a series of thirty-one designs*, London.
- A. Pugin 1850, *Some remarks on the articles which have recently appeared in The Rambler*, London.
- A. Pugin 1851a, *A treatise on chancel screens and rood lofts, their antiquity, use, and symbolic signification*, London.
- A. Pugin 1851b, *Church and state; or Christian liberty: an earnest address on the establishment of the hierarchy*, London.
- A. Pugin 1875, *Church and state; or Christian liberty: an earnest address on the establishment of the hierarchy*, 4th ed, with an introduction and notes by his son, London.
- A.C. Pugin 1827–33, *Specimens of the architectural antiquities of Normandy*, London.
- E. Pugin 1867, *Who was the art architect of the Houses of Parliament: a statement of facts, founded on the letters of Sir Charles Barry and the diaries of Augustus Welby Pugin*, London.
- E. Purcell 1862, 'Pugin and Turner', *The Dublin Review*, February 1862.
- R. Quinault 1992, 'Westminster and the Victorian constitution'. *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, vol 2 (1992), pp 79–104.
- D. Roberts 1979, *Paternalism in early Victorian England*, New Brunswick (USA).
- W. Rorabaugh 1973, 'Politics and the architectural competition for the Houses of Parliament, 1834–1837', *Victorian studies*, vol 17 no 2 (December 1973), pp 155–75.
- I. Roscoe 2009, *Biographical dictionary of sculptors in Britain 1660–1851*, New Haven & London.
- J. Ruskin 1909–14, 'Lilies: of queens' gardens', [from *Sesame and lilies*, 1865], in Eliot 1909–14, pp 51–83.
- W. Scott [et al] 1814, *The Border antiquities of England and Scotland*, 2 vols, London.
- W. Scott 1993, *Kenilworth: a romance* [first published 1821], Edinburgh.
- H. Shelley 1913, *Royal castles of England*, Boston (USA) [in private collection].
- S. Shepherd 2009, *The stained glass of A.W.N. Pugin*, Reading.
- P. Stanton 1950, 'Welby Pugin and the Gothic Revival', [PhD thesis], University of London.
- P. Stanton 1971, *Pugin*, London.
- P. Stanton 1976a, 'Barry and Pugin: a collaboration', in Port 1976a, pp 53–72.
- P. Stanton 1976b, 'The collaboration renewed: Barry and Pugin, 1844–52', in Port 1976a, pp 122–41.
- J-B Thiers 1673, *Traité de l'exposition du St Sacrement de l'autel*, Paris.
- M. Touw 1982, 'Roses in the middle ages', *Economic botany*, vol 36 no 1 (1982), pp. 71–83.
- M. Trappes-Lomax 1932, *Pugin: a mediæval Victorian*, London.
- S. Urban 1846, 'The Roman Catholic church of St Giles, at Cheadle', *Gentleman's magazine*, vol xxvi no 180 (November 1846).
- M. Wallen 2004, *City of health, fields of disease: revolutions in the poetry, medicine, and philosophy of romanticism*, Aldershot.
- B. Ward 1915, *The sequel to Catholic emancipation; the story of the English Catholics carried down to the re-establishment of their hierarchy in 1850*, 2 vols, London.
- W. Ward 1897, *The life and times of Cardinal Wiseman*, vol 1, London.
- A. Wedgwood 1977, *Catalogue of the drawings collection of the RIBA, the Pugin family*, Farnborough.
- A. Wedgwood 1984, 'The Throne in the House of Lords and its setting', *Architectural history*, vol 27 (1984), pp. 59–73.
- A. Wedgwood 1985, *Catalogue of the drawings in the Victoria & Albert Museum: A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin family*, London.
- A. Wedgwood 1994, 'Domestic architecture' in Atterbury & Wainwright 1994, pp 42–61.
- A. Wedgwood 2006, *Pugin in his home: two memoirs by John Hardman Powell*, Ramsgate.

Directory of British Architects 1834–1914, 2001

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

Michael J. M. Ackroyd, Martin Ainscough, Jasmine Allen, Alan R. Beckham, Leticia Bermejo de Rueda, Ewan E. & Lorna Byrne, Clarendo LLP, Colin Copley FRSA, Moira Creak, R. Anthony Davis, Stephanie J. Faroqui, Brian Flanigan, Andrew D. Fox, Avice Harms, Katherine Howard, Raymond J. Hunt, Ann Keppie, Ayla Lepine, D. Little, Marie & Paul Muscat-King, Michael O'Neill, Ian Forrester Roberts, Robin & Pat Sharpe, Jill Smith, Gerald Garth Turner, Patricia Ward.

All members are reminded that most back numbers of *True principles* are available for purchase. Please contact the Editor on tjb33@kent.ac.uk for details.

Contributors to this number

Victor Belcher is an architectural and building historian. He was formerly assistant editor of *The Survey of London* and was later head of the branch of the London Region of English Heritage responsible for building research and analysis.

Alex Bremner is lecturer in the history of architecture at the University of Edinburgh. He specialises in the history of British imperial and colonial architecture. His current research is for a book entitled *Imperial Gothic: architecture and high Anglican culture in the British Empire, 1840–70*.

Martin Bressani is an architect and architectural historian teaching at McGill University's School of Architecture in Montreal. His privilege area of research is French nineteenth-century architecture, currently completing a monograph on Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc to be published by Ashgate.

James Stevens Curl has held chairs in architectural history at two universities. He is the author of *The Oxford dictionary of architecture and landscape architecture* (2006), *Victorian architecture: diversity & invention* (2007), and many other substantial and scholarly works. Professor Stevens Curl is currently working on a major study of the Enlightenment.

Michael Fisher is the author of several definitive texts on the Gothic Revival in Staffordshire. His most recent book is *Hardman of Birmingham: goldsmith and glasspainter*.

Martin Harrison is engaged principally in editing the catalogue raisonné of the paintings of Francis Bacon, but remains fascinated by Pugin and his peers.

Edward Houle is a doctoral candidate in Architectural History and Theory at McGill University. His present research explores private space in the eighteenth-century French royal court.

Ron Jelaco is an architect and doctoral fellow at McGill University, where he teaches design and theory courses and is pursuing research on the relationship between architecture and the earth. His work is currently focusing on l'Observatoire de Paris.

Stephan Kowal received his Master of Architecture diploma from the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) in Los Angeles and is presently pursuing a PhD degree in architecture at the Université de Montréal where he has been teaching since 2003. He has also been a member of the editorial board of *ARQ – Architecture-Québec* since 2006.

Cameron Macdonell is a doctoral candidate at McGill University's School of Architecture. His research addresses, among other things, the implications of illness in the structural bodies of Gothic Revival churches.

David Meara, the author of *Modern memorial brasses 1880–2001* and other definitive texts on memorial design, is Archdeacon of London and Rector of St Bride's, Fleet Street.

Roderick O'Donnell published 'Inauguration of new mosaic in Westminster cathedral', *L'Osservatore Romano*, English Language edition, no 35, 1 September 2010, p 12, as his contribution to the State Visit of HH Pope Benedict XVI.

Andrew Rudd teaches English at the Open University.

Andrew Saint is the General Editor of the *Survey of London*.

Victor Simion is a recent professional graduate of McGill University's School of Architecture, and currently works in an architect's office in Montreal. His practice and research address, among other things, the question of authority in contemporary society and architectural practice.

Julia Webster is a graduate of McGill University's School of Architecture. She graduated from the History and Theory Masters programme in 2010 and is currently pursuing her Juris Doctor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

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.

Hon Secretary: Pam Cole

33 Montcalm House, Westferry Road, London E14 3SD. Tel: 020 7515 9474

Email: pamcole@madasafish.com

Hon Membership Secretary: Jack Kleinot

c/o 33 Montcalm House, Westferry Road, London E14 3SD. Tel: 020 7515 9474

Email: pamcole@madasafish.com

Hon Treasurer: Ralph Bowmaker MA FCSD

12 Holly Village, Highgate, London N6 6QJ

Events Organiser: Professor Julia Twigg

9 Nunnery Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3LS. Tel: 01227 766879

Email: j.m.twigg@ukc.ac.uk

The Pugin Society website:

www.pugin-society.org