

True Principles

The journal of The Pugin Society

vol iv no iii Spring 2012

Preparing for the bicentenary

Gerard Hyland:

The Pugins and J.H. Newman

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

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LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

This Journal has so many times celebrated the rise in interest and appreciation of the work of the Pugin family that to do so once again even on this special occasion would seem superfluous. At the time of writing The Society and many other organisations are planning celebrations, and A.W.N. Pugin himself has been commemorated on a Royal Mail stamp this year as part of their Britons of Distinction series. A new television documentary was broadcast on BBC4 this January, and radio programmes may follow. The thing is being done properly across the country, by national institutions and by amenity society members and local enthusiasts. The Pugin family are in the history books and they are here to stay.

For some reason most of the material that was submitted to this number of *True principles* is in fact about E.W. Pugin and not his father. It has been one of the triumphs of the Society that, building on the earlier invaluable scholarship of Roderick O'Donnell, the pioneer in the field of the junior Pugins, we have established E.W. as a major figure of Victorian architecture. The continuing work of Gerard Hyland has already become a resource of national interest, and Dr Hyland himself is now consulted by experienced architectural historians around the country. *True principles* has been proud to publish the gazetteer, which continues to be updated on the website, and we continue to welcome contributions on this fascinating series of buildings. It is now impossible to write a serious history of nineteenth-century architecture without him. Next stop Peter Paul.

Nevertheless, it is worth remembering why A.W.N. Pugin is such a significant figure and why The Society grew up to promote him. It is not because he was a remarkable person, although of course he was. It is because he changed western architecture, and in spite of this fact he was almost completely ignored in history books, a strange combination. He was the only architect whom the leading Gothic Revivalists referred to with any praise, and the only one who continued to be admired explicitly by arts and crafts designers up to the First World War (and beyond, in C.F.A. Voysey's case). And yet until Margaret Belcher and Alexandra Wedgwood began their researches there was very little about him in print that was accessible to the general reader apart from Phoebe Stanton's monograph of 1971. Most of what those who were thirsty for information could find was generally unreliable, or sentimental, or sometimes sarcastic or even rude. It was a very odd state of affairs. How did it happen? That question has not yet been answered.

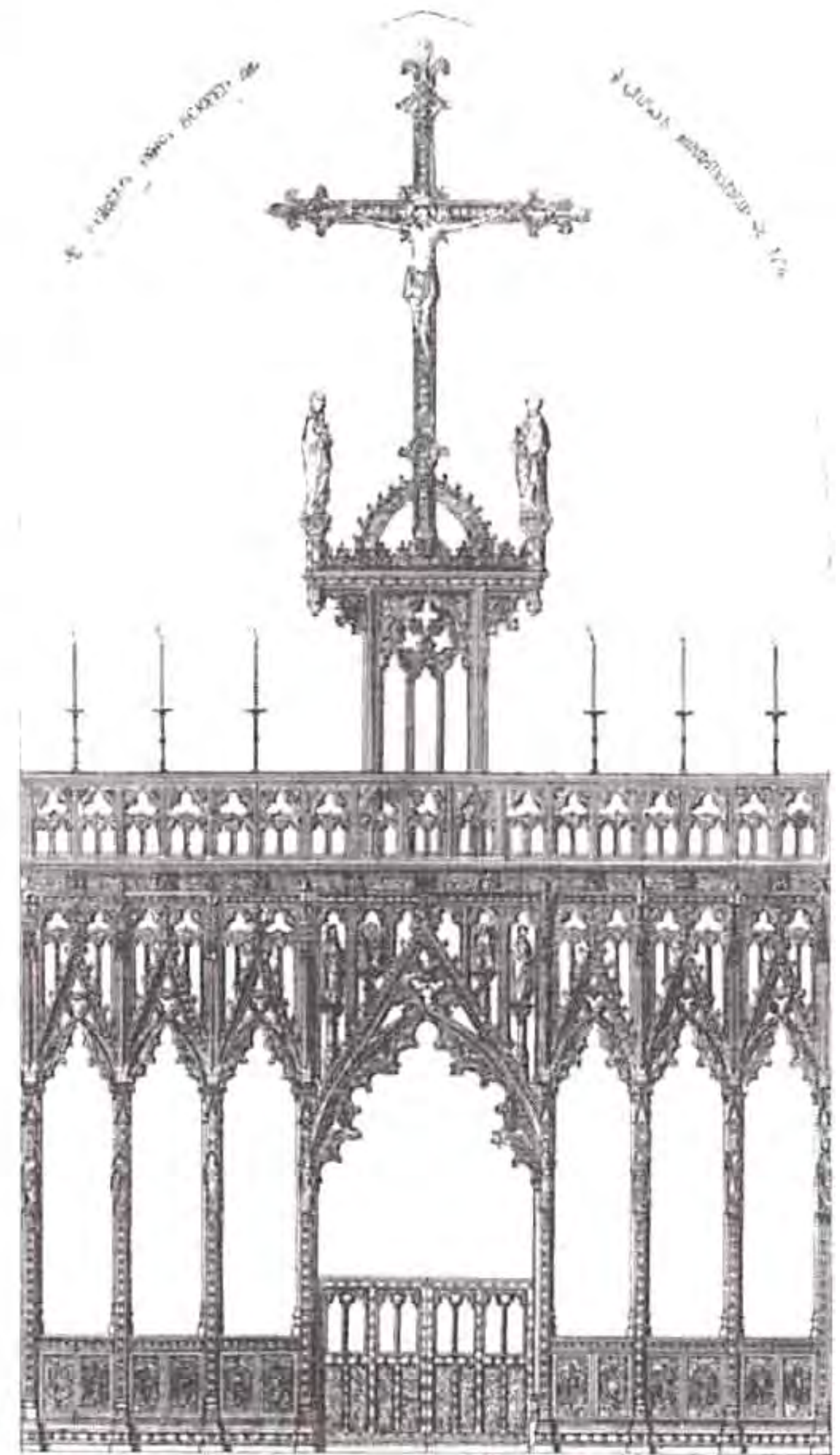


Figure 130: 'Great Rood Screen St Chad's Birmingham'
AWN Pugin 1841-2.

What this tells us of course is that visual culture is at a disadvantage, especially in perhaps in Britain. Gerard Hyland's article that leads this number of *True principles* demonstrates that J.H. Newman's entire criticism of A.W.N. Pugin's churches was based on the fact that the former failed to realise that buildings are primarily *buildings* - not political or religious statements, and that for the architect, the physical thing has precedence first and foremost. Words will always gain precedence over physical things. Smooth talking gets some people a long way. But architects, architectural historians and enthusiasts know that buildings – if protected of course – can last for hundreds of years. The building itself is the thing that speaks to architects and designers and will go on speaking in many different languages to many different people when all the chatterboxes and gossips have fallen silent. It is the only thing worth remembering.

The world comes to Thanet

This July, the Centre for Research in European Architecture at the Kent School of Architecture, University of Kent, will be welcoming scholars from around the world for a two-day conference that will mark A.W.N. Pugin's bicentenary. The conference will be the first ever that discusses the Gothic Revival across the whole of the world – not just in the Anglophone countries and Western Europe, but in places as diverse (and unusual, in these discussions) as South America, Central Africa, Israel, Croatia, and many more. The conference, which will be held from Thursday 12–Sunday 15 July 2012, will also offer delegates a chance to see not only St Augustine's (thanks to the parish priest, Fr Marcus Holding) and the Grange (by courtesy of the Landmark Trust), but also join in walks around Ramsgate which offered a home to some of the most remarkable people of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to Karl Marx, from James Tissot to Vincent van Gogh – and with two titans of the Victorian era, Pugin himself, and Sir Moses Montefiore, marking the limits of the town at the west and east. Pugin Society members who wish to attend the conference as observers should contact the Editor by email at the address given on the inside front cover of *True principles*.

Ramsgate is an astonishing place, and in spite of damage in both world wars, the town remains largely intact and in many places extremely picturesque. The whole of Thanet is in many ways one of the wonders of England, with some world-class sites of extreme peculiarity – in particular, the Margate Shell Grotto and the remaining fragments of Lord Holland's Kingsgate House and follies. It is often thought that both Pugin and Montefiore chose to live in Thanet because of their handy proximity to the continent. It seems possible however that there is more to it than that. Perhaps even in the early nineteenth century there was magic about the place.

Keep watching the Pugin Society website for further details of our celebrations, which will take place all over the country. There will be a commemorative mass at St Augustine's Ramsgate at midday on Thursday 1 March 2012, in celebration of the bicentennial day itself, followed by a drinks reception hosted by The Pugin Society and the Friends of St Augustine's. A toast will be given by Lord Deben. In a parallel event, Solemn Vespers will be celebrated at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham

followed by a champagne reception. The Barber Institute, Edgbaston will also open its exhibition on 1 March with a gallery talk, and displays running to the end of June. St Chad's has a programme of concerts through the year, and is having a musical soiree on 28th June to which Pugin Society members are invited. King Edward's School will not be open to the public in 2012 but has photographed its Pugin collection which can be seen on their website: www.kes.org.uk. The Pugin exhibition in the Pen Museum will open mid-March and run for at least 6 months. Many other events are planned in sites across the city of Birmingham, and those in Staffordshire will be organised by Urban Vision.

On Wednesday 21 March there will be an early evening reception in the River Room of the Palace of Westminster addressed by Dr Tristram Hunt MP. Details of tickets are on the website.

Further events are planned for Ramsgate, including a Pugin-based relief print and wallpaper-making workshop in May; a day excursion in June to look at Kent churches through the eyes of Pugin, and, in late summer, a play about Pugin, with educational outreach. The Grange will be open as usual on Wednesdays, with open days in Spring and Summer (see Landmark Trust website). St Augustine's church will also be open on Sunday and Wednesday afternoons (subject to possible restoration works). For all further details of Ramsgate events email: Catrona@tiscali.co.uk

The Pugin Foundation in Australia also has many events planned: see <http://www.puginfoundation.org/>

The Gothic Revival Worldwide conference will be launched with a talk by Rosemary Hill in Ramsgate on Thursday 12 July at 6pm. All members are very welcome – information about tickets will be published on the Society's website shortly.

Martin Charles: a tribute

The Pugin Society mourns the untimely death of Martin Charles, Britain's finest architectural photographer. Martin's work often adorned these pages, and he was responsible for the fine photography in Hilary J. Grainger's recent book on the architecture of Sir Ernest George, reviewed in this number by Andrew Saint. Martin excelled at capturing the spirit of many different types of building, old and new, but for some he was at his very best when working with the architecture of the early and mid nineteenth century. There was something about the crispness and directness of his vision, allied with his unparalleled professionalism, which conveyed the essence of these important structures in a way that no one else has ever equalled.

The Pugins, Newman, and the Tridentine liturgical rubrics

by Gerard Hyland

based on a talk given to the Wrexham Circle of the Newman Association on 29 April 2011

1 A.W.N. Pugin and John Henry Newman

In February 1875, E.W. Pugin received a letter from John Henry Newman thanking him for the copy of his father's *Earnest address on the establishment of the hierarchy*, which he had recently received from him.¹ First published in 1851 under the title *Church and state*, Edward had had it re-issued in January 1875 as a response to Gladstone's call upon the Catholics of England to reaffirm their allegiance to the Crown and to renounce spiritual tyranny.² Gladstone's 'fanatical appeal' (to use E.W.'s expression) was provoked by the decrees of the First Vatican Council (1869–70), in particular, that of 1870 defining papal infallibility, in consequence of which Gladstone believed Catholics had 'forfeited their moral and mental freedom'.³

Church and state was itself a response to the furore that followed the restoration of the English and Welsh Roman Catholic hierarchy in 1850, an act that had commonly been perceived as one of insolent and insidious 'Papal aggression'.⁴ Pugin's aim in *Church and state* was essentially 'to help restore reciprocal charity between us and our separated countrymen'.⁵ This he attempted to achieve by drawing attention to misconceptions on both sides, acknowledging that 'great abuses existed in the English Church long before the schism', and that it was not Protestants but Catholic bishops themselves who, in consequence of their corruption by State influence, had 'sacrificed the liberty of the English Church at one blow'.⁶ At the same time, in keeping with the 'High Church' view of the Reformation, he pointed out that many Anglicans had never considered their Church 'as a newly created body detached from the ancient Church, but as a strictly continuous succession of ancient men, deprived of much of their ancient dignity, and hampered by State Articles, but still representatives of the old system'.⁷ He went on to exhort the Catholic laity to

1 Newman to EWP 10.2.1875: Dessain 1962, vol 27, p 217.

2 Pugin 1875; Norman 1968, pp 212–21. Newman himself responded to Gladstone in 1875 in his famous 150-page *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk* (see <http://www.newmanreader.org/works/anglicans/volume2/gladstone/index.html>) in which he argued that conscience, which is supreme, is not in conflict with papal infallibility. He goes on to say (at the end of §5, dealing with 'Conscience'): 'Certainly, if I am obliged to bring religion into after-dinner toasts, (which indeed does not seem quite the thing) I shall drink—to the Pope, if you please — still, to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards.'

3 It should be noted that, prior to this, E.W. Pugin had been a keen political supporter of Gladstone, actively campaigning on his behalf during 1867 and prior to the general election of 1868 after which Gladstone became Liberal leader and prime minister.

4 The restoration of the hierarchy was announced to Catholics in England and Wales in Wiseman's pastoral letter 'From without the Flaminian Gate', which he issued from Rome on 7.10.1850. Its tactless pomposity caused such uproar in England, and generated so much anti-Catholic feeling, that Wiseman was obliged, in the interest of damage limitation, to issue his *Appeal to the reason and good feelings of the English people*. See Norman 1968, pp 52–79; 'insolent and insidious' were the adjectives used by Lord John Russell in his letter to the Bishop of Durham.

5 Pugin 1875, p 16.

6 *Ibid*, p 38; p 18.

7 *Ibid*, p 34.

support their new hierarchy, and to caution the hierarchy, lest they repeat the mistakes of the past, to remain ‘unpolluted and uncorrupted with State intrigue and diplomacy’.⁸

Newman recorded his pleasure on reading Pugin’s pamphlet – in which he must have detected a certain resonance with his own earlier ‘*via media*’ position (*vide infra*) – describing it as ‘an exposition of great and important principles, written in a frank, straightforward and forceful style’.⁹ He went on to say: ‘It was a satisfaction to see that he [Pugin] had used the word ‘breakwater’ of the Church of England before me as showing by the coincidence between us that this term was a natural and suitable description of its relation to the Catholic Church’.¹⁰ Whilst E.W. [figure 131] was understandably gratified by Newman’s approbation of his father’s last published work – describing it in his 1875 introduction as ‘the highest tribute yet paid to his memory’, and ‘a compensation for the cruel attacks he had to undergo on its first publication’ – A.W.N. himself [figure 132] would surely have been most surprised.¹¹ For although the two men had been on quite amicable terms whilst Newman [figure 133] was an Anglican, their relationship ironically had deteriorated following his conversion to Rome in 1845, until by 1848–9 both sides were trading insults.

Up to at least 1841, Newman believed that to realise the Oxford Movement’s aim of renewing the Church of England by returning it to its Catholic roots – by reemphasising its apostolic origin, its sacramental, sacerdotal and sacrificial nature, and reviving long-abandoned Catholic rituals – ‘nothing else is necessary but to take our Church in the Middle Ages’, when Gothic was, of course, the national architectural style.¹² This appeal to mediæval antiquity as the criterion of authenticity naturally appealed to A.W.N. Pugin, and he started to entertain ‘great hopes for the Oxford men’, via whom he (and his ally Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps) believed corporate union between the Anglican and Catholic Churches might be realised – the prevailing Tractarian view being that the Anglican Church was a *via media* between the extremes of Roman Catholicism and Calvinistic Protestantism.¹³ There is a parallel here between the liturgical aims of the Oxford Movement and Pugin’s own agenda, in that both were towards *revival*; indeed, in a letter to John Rouse Bloxam in 1842, Pugin described his forthcoming *An apology for the revival of Christian architecture*, which he was then writing, as ‘a sort of tract for the times’!¹⁴ More importantly, however, there was a symbiosis between the two revivals, which was brokered by the Cambridge Camden Society. This Society, later renamed the

8 *Ibid*, p 45.

9 Dessain 1962, vol 27, p 217.

10 *Idem*. Pugin had written of the Church of England that ‘it is a breakwater between the raging waves of infidelity and Catholic truth in this land; that it has held together so long together, under so many disadvantages and difficulties, must be a work of Divine Providence for some great end which remains to be developed’ (A Pugin 1875, p 31). Newman uses ‘breakwater’ in his *Apologia*: Newman 1994, p 304.

11 The ‘cruel attacks’ included a call by a Catholic priest for *Church and state* to be placed on the ‘Index of Prohibited Books’: *Rambler*, 7.1851, p 46.

12 Newman to JW Bowden, 4.4.1841: Mozley 1891, vol 2, p 308.

13 Around 1839, Pugin was probably the first Catholic (soon to be followed by Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps) to make contact, effectively as Wiseman’s intermediary, with the Tractarians, in the person of John Rouse Bloxam, Newman’s curate at Littlemore, near Oxford, with whom he developed a lasting friendship, visiting in Oxford regularly until 1844, and again in 1848. The hoped-for corporate union was actually undermined by the conversion to Rome of a number of the most influential members of the Oxford Movement (with the notable exceptions of Bloxam and Pusey), not least that of Newman himself in October 1845.

14 13.12.1842: Belcher 2001, pp 400–1.

Ecclesiological Society, was founded in 1839 with the aim of ensuring that church interiors were ordered as in the Catholic Middle Ages in order to enable the ritual practices that the Oxford Movement wished to promote to be correctly carried out (actually coining the word ‘ecclesiology’ to reflect this aim). Through its monthly journal, the *Ecclesiologist*, the Camden Society exerted a very profound influence on the internal ordering of Anglican parish churches to produce what is generally found today – in particular, a general absence of west galleries in favour of stalls in the chancel for a robed choir – and which, ironically, is much closer to Pugin’s vision than was ever generally realised in Catholic churches.

The tenability of the *via media* depended, however, on antiquity alone being the criterion of authenticity. Already by 1839, Newman had started to have doubts about this because it was apparent to him that ‘the mind of the Church’ changed over time.¹⁵ The final blow to the *via media* came later that year after Newman had read Wiseman’s essay ‘*Schism of the Donatists*’ in which he compared the Church of England with a schismatical group in North Africa, known as the Donatists after their leader Bishop Donatus Magnus, who had broken from Rome in the fourth century.¹⁶ The Donatists maintained that sacraments administered by those who, in their view, were deserving of excommunication, were invalid; by failing to excommunicate those concerned, the Church of Rome had ceased to be the true Church – which was instead constituted by them alone by virtue of their moral perfection. Clearly, however, if such a group were allowed to be the judge of its own authenticity, Catholic unity would necessarily be undermined. Accordingly, St Augustine argued that such groups must be subject to the collective judgment of the rest of the Church, summing it up in the following maxim that was to make such a life-changing impression on Newman: ‘*Quapropter securus judicat orbis terrarum, bonos non esse qui se dividunt ab orbe terrarum, in quacumque parte orbis terrarum*’ (my emphasis).¹⁷ ‘Here then’, Wiseman added, ‘is a general rule applicable not merely to the Donatist case, but to all future divisions of the Church’ – including that between the Anglican and Catholic Churches.

Newman realised that this maxim was a simpler and more secure criterion to decide ecclesiastical questions than was antiquity alone; indeed, given that Augustine was himself one of the prime oracles of antiquity, we here have, in Newman’s words, ‘antiquity deciding against itself’.¹⁸ Applying it to the Tractarian High-Church party (which, like the Donatists, claimed to be Catholic, rather than Protestant, and accepted the title of ‘Anglican Church’ in much the same way as the Donatists had accepted the title of the ‘African Church’), Newman immediately realised that ‘the theory of the *via media* was absolutely pulverised’.¹⁹

15 Newman 1839.

16 Wiseman 1839. In 1842, Pugin had himself entered into the *via media* debate in the conclusion of the second instalment of his article *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* (1843): ‘The *via media* is rapidly narrowing on those who tread that dangerous and deceptive road; it will soon be utterly impracticable...The hour is at hand when ambiguous expressions and subtle evasions will no longer shelter or conceal...’ (Pugin 1841–2; p 153 in book version of 1843). This should be compared with his much more conciliatory stance taken nine years later in *Church and state*, referred to in note 10 above.

17 ‘The whole world unhesitatingly declares them wrong who separate themselves from the whole world in whatsoever portion of the whole world’ (St Augustine, *Contra epistolam Parmeniani*).

18 Newman 1994, p 115.

19 *Ibid*, p 116.

Equally importantly, however, Newman realised that this added a new dimension permitting the possibility of a temporal development of doctrine, the elaboration of which was to occupy him for the next six years until the eve of his conversion to Rome in 1845 when his *Essay on the development of Christian doctrine* was published.²⁰ A corollary was the necessity of an accompanying development in *ritual*; this was later to play a crucial role in Newman's rejection of Pugin's insistence on English mediæval church ordering.

Newman first made Pugin's acquaintance in January 1840, and was at that time 'very much a friend of the revival', writing, in a letter to Thomas Mozley, that '*I cannot help liking him, though he is an immense talker*'.²¹ Up to the end of 1840 at least, he also shared Pugin's dislike of the buildings of renaissance Rome: 'Whom did you ever hear praise their architecture as beautiful or solemn? I never did,' wrote Newman.²² In 1843, Newman commissioned from Pugin some illustrations for *Lives of the English saints*, which he and his fellow Tractarians were writing, and, during the first half of the following year, he produced 11 of them. In May 1843, in a letter to his sister Jemima, Newman described Pugin's plans for Balliol College, Oxford, as those of a 'man of genius'.²³ Ten months after his conversion, Newman was present at the consecration of Pugin's church of St Giles in Cheadle, which he described in a letter to Elizabeth Bowden as 'the most splendid building I ever saw', and that 'the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament chapel is, on entering, a blaze of light – and I could not help saying to myself, "Porta coeli"'.²⁴

The following year (1847), however, marked the start of the rift between Pugin and Newman, which progressively deepened over the succeeding years and which was never healed during Pugin's lifetime. It occurred in Rome shortly after Newman's ordination as a Catholic priest, and just after he and his *confrères* had decided to become Oratorians – ie, members of the Congregation of the Oratory, a post-Reformation order founded in Rome by St Philip Neri in 1575. Each Oratory House is autonomous and comprises secular priests living together in community without vows; in England there are three oratories – in Birmingham, London and Oxford.

Pugin was in Rome at the time, having been presented with a gold medal by Pope Pius IX a few days earlier in recognition of his contribution to the revival of Catholicism in England.²⁵ Newman invited him to visit him with a view to outlining his requirements for an oratory in England in Gothic style. Pugin, however, found the concept anathema, given that such had no mediæval precedent, and told Newman that he would sooner design a mechanics' institute! Pugin's attitude here is at marked variance with his willingness to adapt the design of mediæval *enclosed* convents to the requirements of modern (unenclosed) orders, such as the Sisters of Mercy.

20 Newman 1845. In theology, development means that whilst divine revelation is complete, its expression changes in time (ie develops) as our understanding advances.

21 Patrick 1980–1, p 193.

22 Newman to F Rogers, 26.12.1840: Mozley 1891, vol 2, p 287.

23 10.5.1843: Dessain 1962, vol 9, p 333.

24 21.7.1846: Dessain 1962, vol 11, p 210.

25 Powell 2006, p 273; Ward 1915, vol 2, p 265; Ferrey 1861, p 228.

The next divisive incidents occurred the following year during May, June and July 1848, and centred on opposition to Pugin's cherished chancel screens, in particular those at St Wilfrid's, Cotton; St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham; and St George's, Southwark, respectively, in the vanguard of which opposition were the Oratorians and their circle.

For, to the Oratorians and particularly their *literary* circle, screens did not facilitate the fuller 'all seeing, all hearing' participation of the faithful that the counter-reformation Council of Trent (1545–63) wished to foster with its new codification of the Roman Rite of Mass, hereinafter referred to as the Tridentine Rite, and the eucharistic devotions it wished to promote, namely, benediction and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.²⁶ The Tridentine reforms of the liturgy not only attempted to address some of the issues that had been raised by the Protestant reformers, but also, and more importantly, were aimed at strengthening the Roman Rite against Protestant influence and corruption. This it did by reemphasising the centrality of those very aspects that the reformers had rejected – such as the sacrificial nature of the mass, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the centrality of the Blessed Sacrament, which was now to be revered by genuflection. By making the rite normative throughout the Western Latin Church, via the papal bull *Quo primum* of 1570, it disposed of the many local and national rites that had evolved over the preceding centuries, some of which contained elements that were of dubious validity, making them even more susceptible to Protestant subversion. The only exceptions were rites that could prove an existence of at least 200 years previously, such as the (non-Roman) Ambrosian Rite (of Milan); the Mozarabic Rite (of Toledo and Madrid); and those associated with some religious orders, such as the Dominicans and the Carmelites.

In addition, however, was the Sarum Rite – a variant of the (pre-Tridentine) Roman Rite, which had been normative in England for some 400 years prior to the Reformation.²⁷ Notwithstanding its eligibility for exemption (at least until 1737), the Sarum Rite was gradually displaced during the penal times by the Tridentine Rite, partly because of a reliance on missionary priests from the continent who had been trained only in the latter.²⁸ Another more practical factor in its favour was that it was easier to celebrate under recusant conditions because it involved considerably less ceremonial than Sarum. Even if the 1737 suppression of the Sarum Rite were to have been abrogated, its reintroduction in 1850 (as Pugin had hoped would be the case) was against the spirit of the time, on account of the ultramontanism of the reestablished hierarchy led by Wiseman who was totally imbued with the Roman spirit (*Romanità*), with the Oratorians as his natural allies.

26 Tridentum is the Latin name of Trento, the city in NE Italy, where the Council was convened. See Capes & Hadfield 1850.

27 Strictly speaking, this is not a rite (in the sense that the Ambrosian Rite, for example, is) but rather a 'Use'. The Use of Sarum originated in the Diocese of Salisbury, and eventually displaced most other local Uses (such as those of Hereford and Bangor, for example) throughout England and Wales. In what follows, however, the term Sarum Rite will continue to be used.

28 In 1737, *Propaganda* (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*) – the dicastery of the Roman Curia responsible for missionary work and with the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs in non-Catholic countries – issued a decree stipulating that only the Tridentine Rite was to be used in England (see Brown 2010). England remained under the jurisdiction of *Propaganda* until 1908 when Pope Pius X declared that England was no longer a missionary territory. It is open to speculation whether the Sarum Rite would have continued to be normative for England had it not been for the Reformation.

The term ultramontanism – literally meaning ‘beyond the mountains’, in the present context the Alps, beyond which lies Rome – denotes an absolute allegiance to the See of Rome as the universal centre of ecclesiastical authority in all matters spiritual and clerical, and the espousal of Roman liturgical practices and ritual to the exclusion of all others. Ultramontanism is essentially the opposite of ‘cisalpinism’ – literally ‘this side of the mountains’ – which stressed the *English* as well as the Roman dimension of the Catholic Church in England, particularly in connection with allegiance to the Crown, which was considered not to be incompatible with allegiance to the pope.²⁹

To Pugin, however, this rejection of the Sarum Rite was tantamount to a betrayal of England’s liturgical patrimony. For, although in communion with Rome in pre-Reformation days, the English Catholic church had maintained its distance and had developed its own distinct character and rites; this quasi-independence, or cisalpinism, had continued during penal times when Catholic aristocracy and landed gentry played a role in its governance, and indeed, were expected to so do. In those days, Catholics were usually known simply as Catholics, the adjective ‘Roman’ being rarely used (at least in England) until the advent of ultramontanism and the rise of ‘Anglo’-Catholicism.

Fundamental to the celebration of the Tridentine Rite, as subsequently codified in 1577 by St Charles Borromeo in his *Instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae*, was an *unimpeded view* of the high altar, in keeping with the council’s reaffirmation of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.³⁰ The Blessed Sacrament was, at least in parish churches, to be reserved in a centrally located, secure tabernacle.³¹ In addition, above the high altar, provision had to be made for a visually prominent throne from which the Blessed Sacrament (in the form of a consecrated host displayed in a monstrance) could be exposed in full view of the congregation for veneration during the services of benediction and particularly the *quarant’ ore*.³² These requirements were not fulfilled by the kind of high altar that had been used in the Middle Ages, and which Pugin would ideally have liked to have installed in his churches, but rarely succeeded in so doing. For these ‘English’ altars did not even have a central tabernacle, it being customary in the Middle Ages to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in either a pyx, sometimes enclosed in a dove of precious metal, suspended above the high altar, or in a towered *Sakramentshaus* affixed to the north wall of the chancel [see figure 143]. Alternatively, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in a tabernacle in the form of a tower located on the altar of a dedicated side chapel, such as Pugin provided in St John the Baptist, Alton (1840–2), St Barnabas, Nottingham (1842–

29 For further details of the evolution and development of ultramontanism, see Gilley 2000.

30 See Borromeo 1577. The documents of the Council of Trent themselves contain few specific directives regarding the design of post-Reformation Catholic churches. It was left to St Charles Borromeo, one of the council fathers, to produce this document, 14 years after the Council, which applied the decrees of the council to ecclesiastical buildings and their furnishing.

31 There were, however, pre-Trent precedents for this practice; see Lang 2009.

32 This is an exposition of the Blessed Sacrament lasting 40 hours. Newman had first witnessed it in Rome, whence it had been introduced by St Philip Neri around 1550, and the Oratorians were to introduce it at the London Oratory in 1849, when the sanctuary was adorned with 400 candles (Fathers 1963, p 10). The first reported *quarant’ ore* in England was in Leeds in Lent 1845, during a mission given by the Rosminian, Dr Gentili (Ward 1915, pp 25–6). Somewhat ironically, the first *quarant’ ore* to be held in London appears to have been in 1848, in Pugin’s St George’s, Southwark, which at the time still had its chancel screen (*ibid*, p 268)! This devotion naturally appealed to the (ultramontane) hierarchy, once reestablished in 1850, and it soon became very popular throughout England.

4), and later, at Lord Shrewsbury's instigation, in St Giles, Cheadle (1842–6), which had so impressed Newman in 1846. In most of Pugin's other churches, however, the tabernacle was located centrally on the high altar, in compliance with Tridentine practice, originally often in the form of a tower, but later replaced by one in the form of a box to facilitate the positioning on it of the monstrance during exposition, out of which later evolved the so-called 'benediction altar' (*vide infra*).

Shortly after the opening in 1848 of the church of St Thomas of Canterbury in Fulham, which Pugin had designed for Elizabeth Bowden, a friend of Newman who had preached at its opening, Newman, in a letter dated 6 June 1848 to his friend Maria Rosina Giberne, identified what he considered objectionable about Pugin's Gothic Revival churches:

In details, Pugin is perfect, but his altars are so small that you can't have a Pontifical High Mass at *them*, his tabernacles so low that you can scarce have exposition, his East windows so large that everything else is hidden in the glare, and his skreens [*sic*] so heavy that you might as well have the function in the sacristy, for the seeing of it by the congregation.³³

Newman nevertheless believed that Gothic could be adapted to contemporary Tridentine requirements, as is clear from a letter of 15 June 1848 to Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps, following an argument earlier that month at Cotton between Faber, Phillipps and Pugin concerning the chancel screen there:

We know that the Church, while one and the same in doctrine ever, is ever modifying, adapting, varying her discipline and ritual, according to the times. In these respects the Middle age was not what the First Centuries were, nor is the present age the Middle age. In order that any style of architecture should exactly suit the living ritual of the 19th Century – it should never have died – else, while the ritual has changed, the architecture has not kept pace with it. This defect is actually to be found in Gothic. Gothic is now like an old dress, which fitted a man well 20 years back but must be altered to fit him now. It was once the perfect expression of the Church's ritual in those places in which it was in use; it is not the perfect expression now. *It must be altered in detail* to become that expression. That is, it must be treated with a freedom that Mr Pugin will not allow.....not that we do not feel the greatest admiration of the Gothic style, but we will not allow details which were proper in England in the Middle Ages, to be points of faith now.....Now for Oratorians, the birth of the 16th century, to assume the architecture simply and unconditionally of the 13th, would be as absurd as their putting on them the cowl of the Dominicans or adopting the tonsure of the Carthusians. We do not want a cloister or a chapter room but an Oratory. I, for one, believe Gothic can be adapted, developed into the requisitions of an Oratory. Mr Pugin does not; he implied, in conversation with me in Rome that he would as soon build a mechanics institute....Now is it wonderful that I should prefer St

³³ 6.6.1848: Dessain 1962, vol 12, p 213. Although Pugin had provided for a screen at Fulham, where there is no distinct chancel, one was never erected owing to opposition from the benefactress of the church, Elizabeth Bowden. In fact, for a variety of reasons, only a minority of Pugin's churches were ever furnished with chancel screens.

Philip to Mr Pugin? and is it not wonderful that he should so relentlessly unite the *principles* of his great art with the *details*?..³⁴

The point Newman was making was that he was not against the Gothic style *per se*, but rather against its continued deployment in the arrangement required by a rite that had long been superseded, and in the service of which the style had fossilised in England – namely, that found in the mediæval exemplars that Pugin and the Camden Society were now using as the basis of their revival, which were geared to the Sarum Rite. Thus, the High Altar was situated at the east end of a narrow chancel, long enough to accommodate bilateral (inward-facing) choir stalls and beyond them, on the north wall, the easter sepulchre (for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament from Maundy Thursday until Easter Sunday morning). Towards the east end of the south wall, nearest the altar, was the sacrarium – a small niche containing a basin [piscina] for the washing of the sacred vessels, above which is a stone shelf [credence] for the altar cruets – see figure 150. Between the sacrarium and the choir stalls were the sedilia [stone seats for the clergy officiating at mass, arranged in order of rank]. The chancel itself was separated from the nave by a screen, surmounted by a rood loft, the purpose of the screen being two-fold: to demarcate the chancel as an area to which only ordained clergy had access, and to partially shield the high altar from the gaze of the unordained in order to protect the mystery of the Blessed Sacrament [see figures 134, 135].³⁵

Significantly, however, Pugin's first churches of 1838–9 – namely, those in Derby and Uttoxeter, both dedicated to St Mary – did not conform to this kind of arrangement, neither of them having screens; the rood, in each case, was supported on a high arched beam that in no way interferes with the visibility of the high altar.³⁶ Furthermore, the chancels are quite shallow, that at Derby terminating in a semi-octagonal apse lit by long traceried windows (as in St Chad's, Birmingham) that do not produce the same level of glare as does a large window in the east wall of an square-ended English chancel. An etching [figure 136] that Pugin produced for the opening of St Mary's, Derby, shows a sanctuary that is perfectly compatible with that required for the celebration of the Tridentine Rite, the high altar being furnished with a central tabernacle – above which there appears what could well be an exposition throne – and the requisite six candlesticks (the 'big six').³⁷ The chancel itself is separated from the nave, not by a screen, but only by altar rails, features that he would soon come to reject and condemn, but ones with which Newman could not have taken exception. Wiseman, who preached at its opening, certainly did not, describing it as '....a splendid church. It is without exception the most magnificent thing the Catholics have yet done in this country, and it is quite worthy of ancient

34 15.6.1848: Dessain 1963, vol 12, p 219. In 1836, Newman had had his Littlemore church built in the Gothic style, but, significantly as it turned out, ensured that it was so ordered that the altar was the visual focus of the interior, there being (originally) no chancel at all: see Howell 1983. Furthermore, in 1839, he had been a founder member of the Oxford Society for Promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture, but never joined the Camden Society, and was never supportive of ritualistic excesses, be they Anglican or Catholic.

35 In the Eastern Rite, it will be recalled, the clergy are actually behind the iconostasis – ie, out of sight of the congregation – for the most sacred parts of the liturgy.

36 The same arrangement featured in Pugin's unrealised (1839) scheme for St George's, Southwark.

37 The present high altar and reredos shown in figure 137 are not the original, but are later replacements (1854–5) by EW Pugin.

days. On the whole it would not have done dishonour to Rome' [for the interior as built, see figure 137].³⁸

From a letter to Bloxam, dated 24 October 1840, it is clear that his subsequent rejection of the 'open' arrangement at Derby, in favour of that required for the Sarum Rite, was due to the influence of Rev Dr Daniel Rock, chaplain to Lord Shrewsbury, and a leading Catholic ecclesiological authority and antiquary, whose acquaintance Pugin made towards end of the 1830s:

.....I am well aware that the church [St Mary's, Derby] is full of errors. I had not the influence which I now possess when I designed it & I was weak enough in some respects *to truckle to the times* but this will not happen again. animated by the exhortations of my respected friend Dr Rock I now stand firm for the whole truth the old English churches as they were. I will not compromise an inch the proper Depth of chancel nor give way in the smallest innovation. when I commenced Derby I nearly stood alone [my emphasis].³⁹

The following year, on the final page of his *True principles of pointed or Christian architecture*, he again acknowledged his debt to Rock, stating:

I feel it a bounden duty to make this public acknowledgment of the great benefit I have received from his advice. Captivated by the beauties of foreign pointed architecture, I was on the verge of departing from the severity of our English style, and engrafting portions of foreign detail and arrangement. This I feel convinced would have been a failure...⁴⁰

By 'truckling to the times', and 'foreign detail and arrangement', he could well have been referring to the shallow, apsidal, unscreened chancel separated from the nave by only altar rails, and the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in a central tabernacle on the high altar, as shown in his etching of the interior of the church in Derby [figure 136].

Earlier in the same letter to March Phillipps from which the above extract is taken, Newman, after fulsomely praising Pugin's genius and acknowledging the debt owed him by Catholics for his revival of Gothic architecture, continued 'But he has the great fault of a man of genius, as well as the merit. He is intolerant, and, if I might use a stronger word, a bigot'. The same charge was repeated two years later in a letter of 7 April 1850 to Mary Holmes, a former governess (1846–8) to Pugin's children, in which he again returned to the necessity of adapting Gothic to the requirements of the Tridentine Liturgy:

Now if the rites have changed, let the architecture develop – let it modify and improve itself to meet them. No says Mr Pugin, though the 13th century was changed into the 14th, and the 14th into the 15th, architecture shall stay – what it was then. The living spirit shall expand; the outward material case shall not; I will adore mullions of tracery more than the Blessed Sacrament....⁴¹

Newman refused to attend the opening of Pugin's St George's, Southwark, in July 1848, and by November was so concerned that he wrote in Latin to Mgr Palma at the

38 Gwynn 1946, p 73; interestingly, the subject of Wiseman's sermon, in which he anticipated Newman, was development of doctrine – the topic that Newman was later to make his own (Newman 1845).

39 Belcher 2001, pp 154–5. Rock: I am indebted to Michael Fisher for this observation; for more on Rock see Hill 2007.

40 Pugin 1841, p 67.

41 7.4.1850: Dessain 1963, vol 13, p 460.

Vatican in an attempt to procure the censure of the pope on Pugin whose activities he considered to have the potential to provoke schism, or at least a reversion to the kind of cisalpinism that had characterised the English Catholic Church prior to the restoration of the hierarchy, and which was diametrically opposed to the ultramontanistism that was then in the ascendant.⁴² There is no record of any response from the Vatican, which is perhaps not surprising given that within two weeks of the letter being sent Palma had been assassinated, whilst the pope himself was exiled one week later.⁴³ Back in England, Wiseman's initial support for Pugin, which had extended even to tolerating his chancel screen in St Chad's, Birmingham, in 1840, was now starting to wane in favour of the Oratorians on whose side he finally came down a few years later in a sermon at the London Oratory on St Philip's Day in 1851.⁴⁴ Here he stated that 'all things must give way to the exigencies of the rubrics of the Church, and to the spirit of modern devotions'.⁴⁵

In the meanwhile, the screen controversy fuelled many vitriolic articles in the Catholic press, in particular, the *Tablet* and the ultramontane periodical the *Rambler*, which had only recently been founded in 1848, and which in some quarters was regarded as the unofficial organ of the Oratorians, despite Newman's repeated pleas to its editor, J.M. Capes, not to implicate them. An editorial of April 1851 stated, *à la* Newman, that retention of the Gothic style was contingent on the remodelling of the plans and furniture of the interior to accommodate 'modern devotions and rubrics', the most important requirement being that a church should essentially be 'one vast open space' – a criterion that was later fulfilled by some of the designs of Pugin's eldest son, E.W. Pugin (*vide infra*). By 17 May 1851, even Frederick Lucas, the formerly supportive editor of the *Tablet*, had withdrawn his support for Pugin, siding with Newman and supporting the Roman practices of the Oratorians.

For Pugin, the final straw came in 1849 when the Oratorians opened the Lowther Rooms in King William St, London, as their Oratory [see figure 138], with F.W. Faber as Superior.⁴⁶ In a letter to Lord Shrewsbury, he fulminated against the Oratorians, whose behaviour he described in the following terms:

Has your Lordship heard that the Oratorians have opened the Lowther Rooms as a chapel!—a place for the vilest debauchery, masquerades, &c.—one night a MASKED BALL, next BENEDICTUS [sic – that is: benediction]. This appears to me perfectly monstrous, and I give the whole order up for ever. What a degradation for religion! Why, it is worse than the Socialists. What a place to celebrate the mysteries of religion in! I cannot conceive how it is allowed...It is the greatest blow we have had for a long time; no men have been so disappointing as these...Well may they cry out against screens or anything else. I always said they wanted

42 10.11.1848: Dessain 1963, vol 12, pp 324–8.

43 Powell 2006, p 291.

44 Having received a number of letters complaining about Pugin's *Earnest address*, Wiseman wrote to him in February 1851 informing him of these concerns. Pugin replied (Pugin 1875, p 65), offering to withdraw anything that might be considered heretical, and Wiseman did not pursue the matter any further – perhaps having received Pugin's assurance that he would not proceed with the publication of his (almost completed) sequel: *An apology for the separated Church of England since the reign of Henry VIII, showing the general decay of the ecclesiastical spirit and the corruptions of the fifteenth century* (see Ferrey 1861, pp 427–53).

45 Lucas 1851.

46 A two-storey building, the ground floor of which had previously been used as a gin/whisky store, and the upper storey as a dance hall.

rooms, not churches, and now they have got them. Sad times! I cannot imagine what the world will come to, if it goes on much longer.⁴⁷

The rift between Newman and Pugin, which had originated with Pugin's refusal to design a 'Gothic Oratory' – on the grounds that such had no mediæval precedent – had now deepened irrevocably. Newman, in a letter to Capes in October 1850 cautioned him that 'One must not notice such a madman', whilst Pugin, in a letter to Hardman, c1850, reiterated his detestation of the Oratorians of whom he said: 'I have never looked upon a Puritan with half the disgust'.⁴⁸ What he perceived as a *volte face* by Newman after his conversion remained an open wound that never healed:

The Oxford men have turned out the most disappointing people in the world. They were three times as Catholic in their ideas before they were reconciled with the Church. It is really quite lamentable. They have got the most disgusting place possible for an Oratory in London, and fitted up in a horrible manner, with a sort of Anglo-Roman altar.⁴⁹

In attempting to understand the ferocity of Pugin's hostility to the practices and architectural preferences of the Oratorians, it should be noted that the seeds of his objections had already been sown in *The present state of ecclesiastical architecture in England* published some years earlier in 1841–2. The Oratorians simply realised Pugin's worst fears, and his reaction to them was a consequence of being already 'self-primed' to be outraged – the more so, because earlier he had put so much store by the 'Oxford men', as is evident from a letter of February 1841 to Phillipps in which he wrote:

Rely on it these Oxford men are doing more to Catholicize England and to work the great *internal change of mind* than all our joint body. I consider them quite as raised up by God in the present emergency, for we seem to be sinking into utter degradation.⁵⁰

The 'convertitis' of the neophyte Oratorians – in particular, Faber, who, like Wiseman, flamboyantly strove to be 'more Roman than Rome', and for whom the adoption of Roman practices was almost a matter of principle (as was Gothic for Pugin) – was the subject of Pugin's 'The Modern Ambonoclast' in which he satired the way in which they arrange their Oratory so as to 'realise a somewhat Italian atmosphere in cold, cheerless England'.⁵¹ Given the profound influence that Oratorian devotional practices were to have throughout England, becoming almost the norm, it is perhaps difficult now to appreciate the revulsion of Pugin and his coterie (in particular, Lord Shrewsbury and March Phillipps) to the introduction of what they considered to be ritualistic excesses of a most profoundly un-English kind – a hostility paralleled within the Church of England to practices that the Tractarians introduced firstly in some of their London churches, and later elsewhere (for example, Oxford), with

47 Ferrey 1861, p 127.

48 Newman to Capes, 14.10.1850: Dessain 1963, vol 14, p 104; Pugin to Hardman, c 1850: Hill 2007, p 438.

49 Quoted in Gwynn 1946, p 125.

50 7.2.1841: Belcher 2001, p 206.

51 Pugin 1851 p 98.



Figure 131: EW Pugin, c1865
The Pugin Society Website.



Figure 132: AWN Pugin, c1840
The Pugin Society Website.



Figure 133: John Henry Newman in 1845
(courtesy of the Birmingham Oratory)



Figure 134: a thirteenth-century Sarum Rite chancel and fifteenth-century screen (with nineteenth-century restoration) at Ss Peter & Paul, Deddington
private collection.



Figure 135: an AWN Pugin chancel: St Alban's, Macclesfield
courtesy of Thames & Hudson.

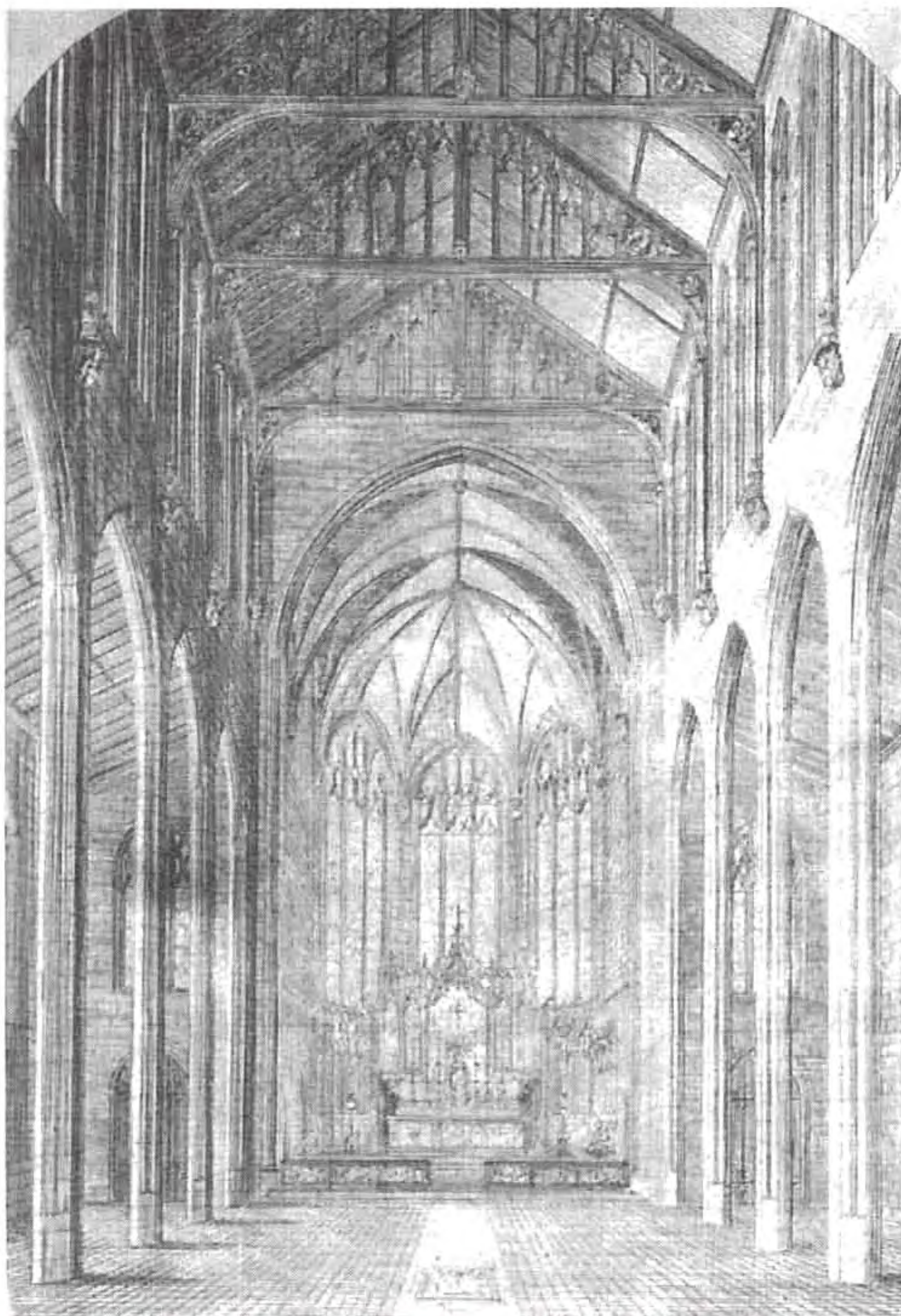


Figure 136: The interior of St Mary's, Derby: an etching by AWN Pugin
Catholic magazine, Sept 1839.



Figure 137: St Mary's, Derby as realised, showing the rood beam
courtesy of the parish priest.



Figure 138: The London Oratory, c1850, in the former Lowther Rooms
courtesy of the London Oratory.



Figure 139: Church of the Gesù, Rome – a typical Counter-Reformation Baroque church interior
Wikipedia commons (Tango 7174).



Figure 140: St Mary's, Liverpool
courtesy of Downside Abbey.



Figure 142: A late benediction altar by
AWN Pugin in St Augustine's, Ramsgate
courtesy of Ramsgate Abbey.

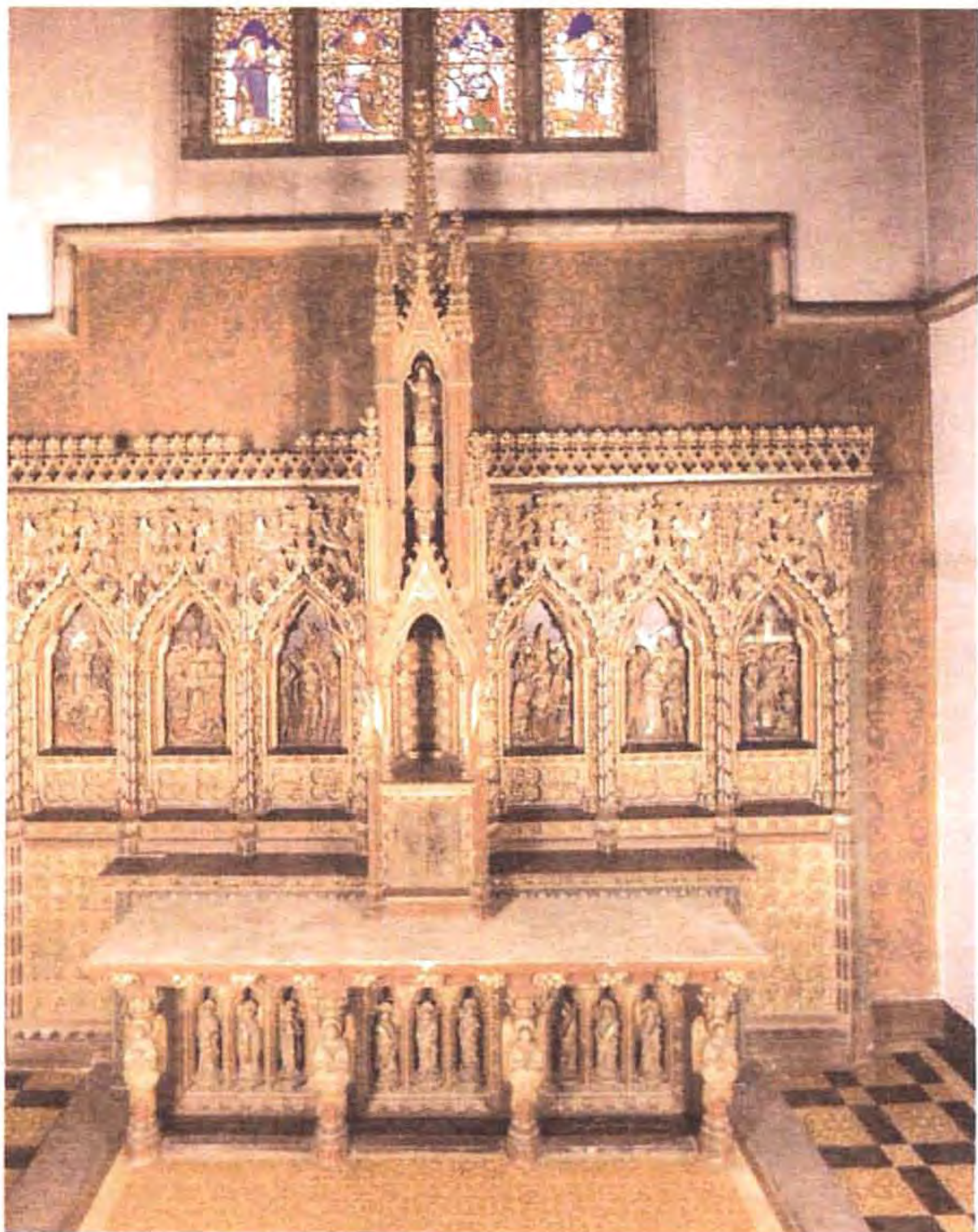


Figure 141: An early benediction altar by AWN Pugin from
his 1847 chapel of St Cuthbert at Ushaw College
courtesy of Ushaw College.

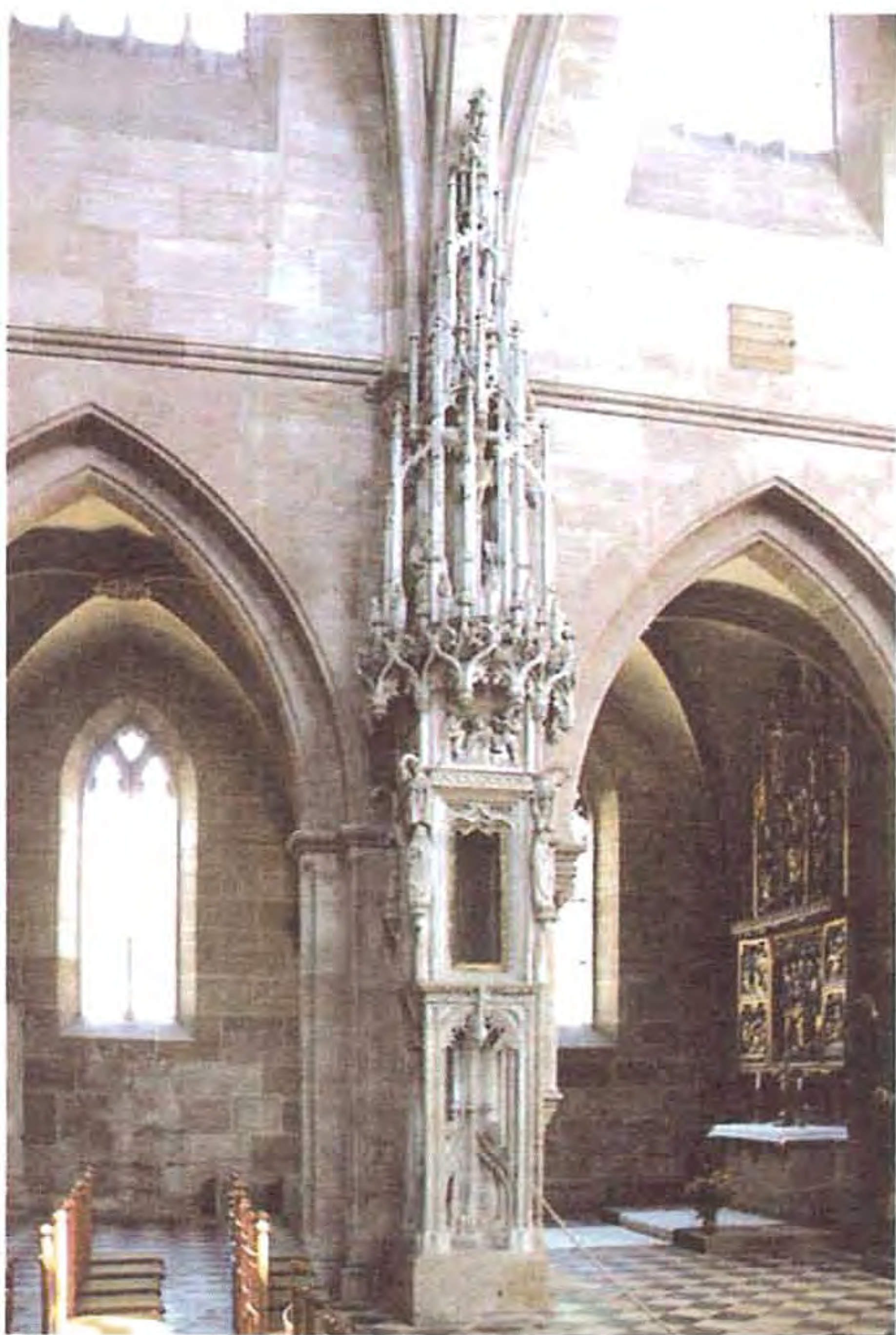


Figure 143: The Sakramentshaus in Ss Marien & Jakobus, Heilbron, Münster
courtesy of Andreas Praefke.



Figure 144: Example of a benediction altar by EW Pugin in the small church of St Gregory the Great, Stratford-upon-Avon
private collection.



Figure 145: Example of a benediction altar by EW Pugin in the large church of All Saints', Barton-on-Irwell
courtesy of 'Archiseek'.



Figure 146: Example of east-end fenestration involving grouped lancets at clerestory level in an apsidal sanctuary (Our Lady, Birkenhead)
private collection.



Figure 147: Example of east-end fenestration involving a rose window in a square-ended chancel (St Anne, Rock Ferry) *private collection.*

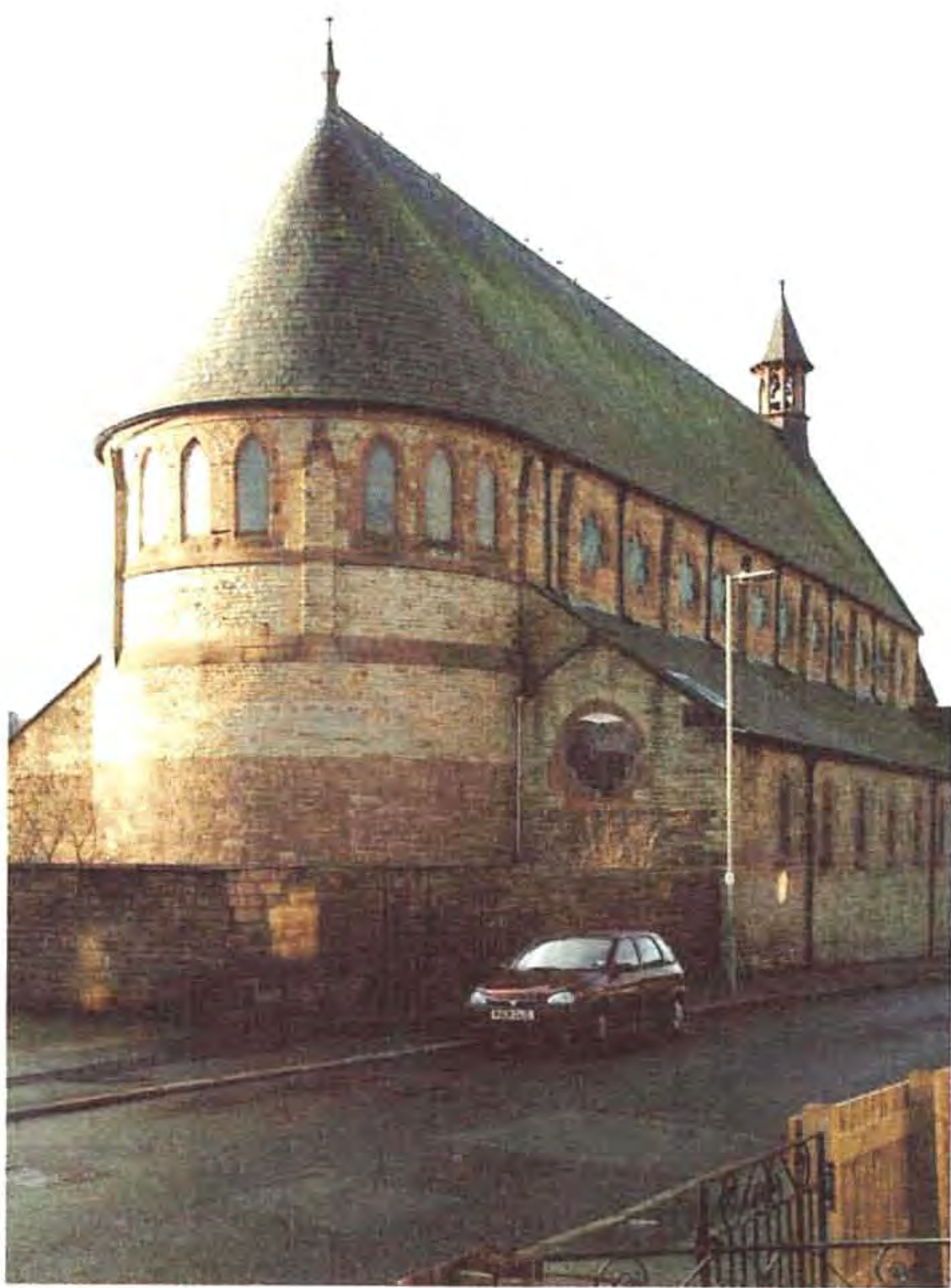


Figure 148: a typical EW Pugin 'vessel' church (exterior): Our Lady of Reconciliation de la Salette, Eldon St, Liverpool *courtesy of M O'Neill.*



Figure 149: a typical EW Pugin 'vessel' church (interior): the wide nave arcades and timber 'hull like' roof structure
courtesy of M O'Neill.



Figure 150: A typical EW Pugin sacrarium at St Anne, Rock Ferry
private collection.



Figure 151: A representative example of a church interior from EW Pugin's Phase I: St Vincent de Paul, Liverpool
courtesy of the parish priest.



Figure 152: A representative example of a church interior from EW Pugin's Phase II: St Mary of Furness, Barrow-in-Furness
courtesy of the parish priest.



Figure 153: A representative examples of a church interior from EW Pugin's Phase III: Our Lady, Star of the Sea & St Michael, Workington
courtesy of the parish priest.



Figure 154: An example of an assertive west front by EW Pugin incorporating a prominent bell-cote, at All Saints, Barton-on-Irwell
courtesy of 'Archiseek'.



Figure 155: An example of an assertive west front by EW Pugin incorporating a Franco-Flemish chisel spire, at Ss Augustine & John, Dublin
courtesy of Rev Dr D Kelly, OSA.

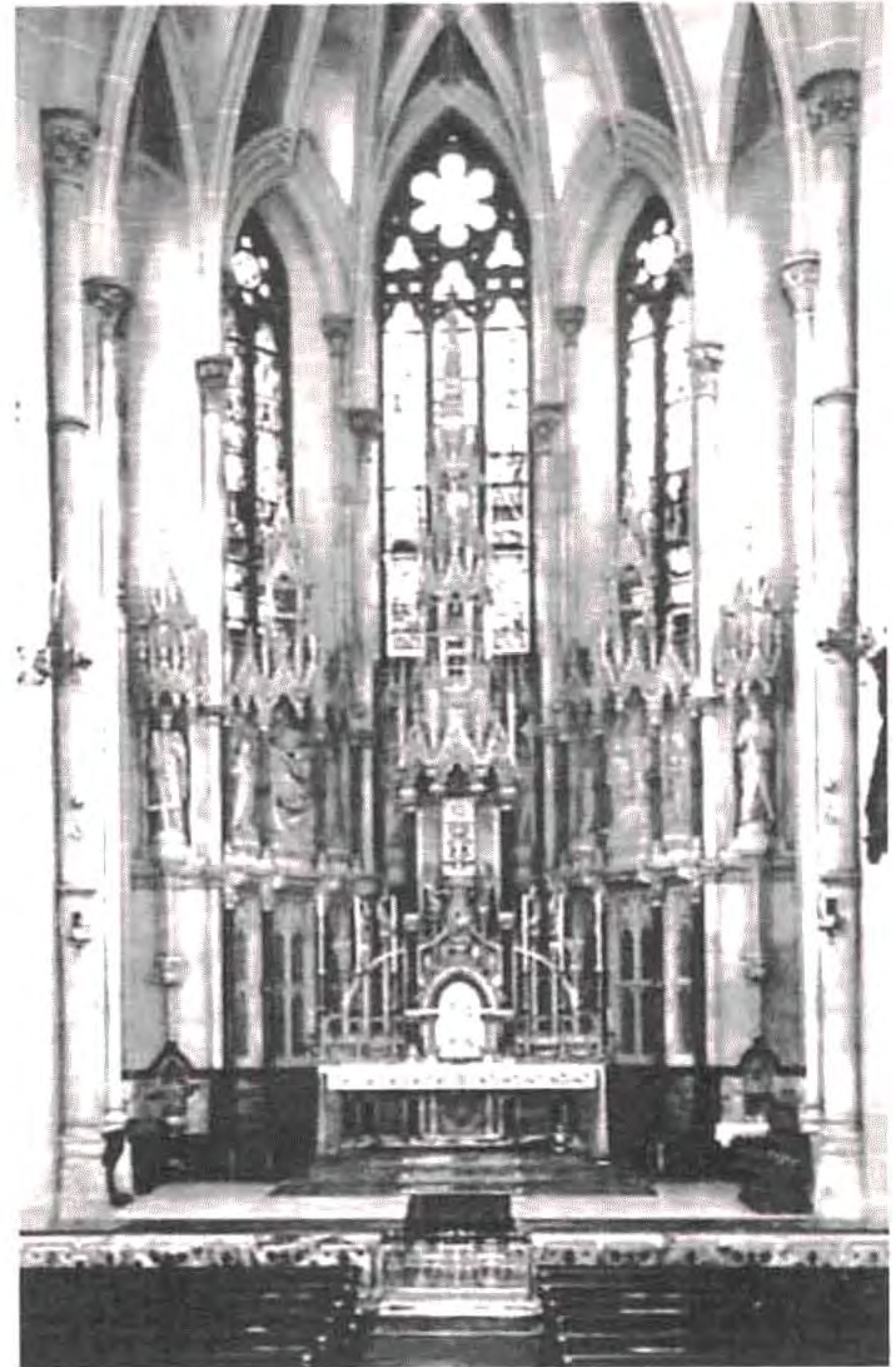


Figure 156: The sanctuary of Holy Cross church, Liverpool, showing the magnificent high altar and reredos of 1882, with its soaring spired canopy above the exposition throne, by Pugin & Pugin
private collection.

which Newman himself was always uneasy.⁵² Indeed, it would probably not be untrue to say that the distinct ritual character of the three English Oratories, which is of the highest order, and which persists to this day, is a legacy of the Tractarian background of the first English Oratorians, sustained by the continued inspiration of the founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, St Philip Neri (1515–95), who attached so much importance to dignified and edifying liturgy enriched by sacred music.

Whilst, as we have seen, Newman was in no way averse to Gothic – provided it was deployed in a way that permitted contemporary rubrics to be observed – neither did he believe that Gothic enjoyed an inevitable monopoly, as did Pugin for whom it was mandatory, being the only purely Christian inspired architecture, every feature of which was for him emblematic of some aspect of Christian belief.⁵³ Eventually Newman abandoned his earlier admitted preference for Gothic in favour of the post-Gothic renaissance and baroque styles, which, during his studies in Rome, he had seen deployed in the basilican design of counter-Reformation churches, and which he now considered to be much better suited to the Tridentine liturgy.⁵⁴ Even before reaching Rome, Newman had found himself impressed by the non-Gothic architectural style and associated ordering he had found in churches in Milan which ensured that the altar was the visual focus of the building (as he had ensured was the case in his own Gothic church in Littlemore of 1836): ‘The altar is so gracious and winning, standing out for all to see and approach...I fear I like that style of architecture more than some of our Oscott and Birmingham friends would approve...younger men have my leave to prefer Gothic, if they will [but] tolerate me in my weakness which requires Italian.’⁵⁵ Elsewhere he wrote ‘It is really most wonderful to see the Divine Presence looking out almost into the open streets from the various churches’ – something that would never have been possible with Pugin’s Sarum Rite arrangement, as Newman well appreciated.⁵⁶

In addition, however, these architectural styles were developments of the era of St Philip Neri, and as such exerted an undeniable attraction.⁵⁷ Above all, however, they were intrinsically *Roman*, and thus appealed to the prevailing ultramontane agenda that sought to distance itself from anything (such as English Gothic) that could be considered tainted with non-Roman (cisalpine) practices. Churches designed in these styles (the baroque, in particular) have wide naves, and certainly

52 The influence of the Oratorians – in particular, the promotion, in place of vespers, of popular evening services comprising prayers, hymns in the vernacular (many of which were written by Faber and his *confrère* Edward Caswall of the Birmingham Oratory), a sermon and the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament – was quite remarkable, if not somewhat surprising, given that there were then only two Oratories in the whole of the UK (in Birmingham and London), with probably less than two dozen Oratorians in total between them at any one time; the Oxford Oratory was not founded until 1990. Typical of the contemporary reaction was Lord Shrewsbury’s instruction to Pugin, after Faber and his *confrères* had left Cotton in 1848, ‘to turn out of St Wilfrid’s all the trash the Oratorians set up.’ (Pugin to Jane Pugin, 24.8.1851: Wedgwood 1985, p 120).

53 The verticality of Gothic, for example, was taken to be an emblem of the Resurrection.

54 As late as 1850, however, he was still maintaining ‘I still firmly admit, or rather maintain, that Gothic is on the whole a far more beautiful idea in architecture than Grecian – far more fruitful, elastic, and ready’ (letter to Mary Holmes, 7.4.1850: Dessain 1963, vol 13, p 460).

55 Newman to WG Penny, 24.9.1846: Dessain 1963, vol 11, p 248.

56 Quoted in Ker 1988, p 324.

57 This was perhaps instrumental in deflecting Newman away from his earlier proposal of a *circular* oratory church!: letter to A Hutchinson, 8.3.1850: Dessain 1963, vol 13, p 441.

no screens, in which the congregation has an *uninterrupted* view of the high altar, which is located well forward in a sanctuary that is essentially an extension of the nave [see figure 139].

In England, of course, no such Counter-Reformation developments in church architecture had been possible in consequence of the penal laws that until 1791 had prohibited the building of Catholic chapels. With the lifting of these restrictions, new Catholic chapels were deliberately designed to be externally very unostentatious, often more reminiscent of those of Nonconformists. After the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, there were brief flirtations with classical styles (sometimes with neo-baroque altars) and pastiche 'gothick', which persisted up to the late 1830s. By this time, however, Pugin had started to establish himself, attempting to promote what had been the *English* national style in pre-penal, mediæval times, namely, Gothic, finally settling on what he considered to be its purest form – the so-called 'Decorated' (or 'second pointed') style that flourished during the reigns of Kings Edward I, II and III, c1275–1375. Furthermore, and most importantly, after his contact with Rock, he insisted on the retention of the internal ordering that was required by the rubrics of that era, namely those of the Sarum Rite.

By the mid-nineteenth century, however, whether or not Pugin approved, the Sarum Rite had long been displaced by the Tridentine.⁵⁸ His refusal for many years to tolerate any adaptation of Gothic to the requirements of the reformed liturgy, as Newman had urged, made his position indefensible – an intransigence described as 'Puginism' by Newman, who saw that Pugin's appeal solely to antiquity to validate his adherence to Gothic as deployed in the Sarum Rite was flawed, again because the *mind* of the Church had changed – this time ritually. Pugin's intransigence in this is, however, strangely at odds with the statement in his own 'apologia' of 1843 – *An apology for the revival of Christian architecture* – that Catholicism 'clings to this land, and *developes* [sic] itself from time to time' [my emphasis].⁵⁹ For the Tridentine Rite was a development of the pre-existing Roman Rite, out of which Sarum Rite earlier had itself evolved; perhaps Pugin was prepared to admit only indigenous, English, developments, as opposed to those of foreign provenance, which the ultramontane hierarchy sought to impose.

With the exception of the writings of Rory O'Donnell and Rosemary Hill, it does not appear to have been sufficiently appreciated that, towards the end of his life, Pugin's views did undergo some considerable degree of development, leading him to revise his earlier stance on the internal ordering of Catholic churches.⁶⁰ Interestingly, this development was coupled with a contemporaneous attempt to distance himself from his earlier utopian view of the Middle Ages – as portrayed, for example, in *Contrasts* – 'pleasant meadows, happy peasants, merry England...bread cheap, beer for nothing, all holy monks, all holy priests – holy everybody, such

58 As already noted, on 17 December 1737, a decree from Propaganda stipulated that only the Roman missal, breviary and ritual were to be used in England, the need for such a decree implying that by this date the Use of Sarum had not completely disappeared (Brown 2010).

59 Pugin 1843, p 50.

60 O'Donnell 2003; O'Donnell 2005; Hill 2007, p 459.

charity, and hospitality, and such unity, when every man was a Catholic' – as an era to be emulated socio-religiously:

I once believed in Utopia myself, but when tested by stern facts and history, it melts away like a dream.⁶¹

In his *Treatise on chancel screens* published in 1851, he admitted that the design of his earlier churches was appropriate only in rural situations, now arguing that urban churches should be of much greater height than their rural counterparts in order that surrounding buildings do not block the light.⁶² Furthermore, he emphasised that in order to facilitate the access and egress of the much larger number of communicants in urban churches, the chancel needs to be adapted accordingly:

The chancels of all large town churches should be continued like apsidal choirs, or taken out of the body of the church with the aisles continuing eastward on either side, and terminating in chapels, thus permitting the free egress of those who have communicated without them having to return through the holy doors [presumably, the gates in the rood screen].⁶³

He had actually implemented some of these recommendations, in particular, the absence of a distinct chancel, separated from the nave by a chancel arch, considerably earlier – and long before Newman had articulated his criticisms – in St Mary's, Newcastle (1842–4), and St Marie's, Liverpool (1844–5), the latter being later described by Eastlake as 'an excellent example of a *town church*' [see figure 140].⁶⁴ Later examples include St Thomas of Canterbury, Fulham (1847–8, *vide sup*), and the church he designed for Bishop Gillis in Leith (1852), the realisation of which was left to his eldest son, E.W. Pugin, in collaboration with J.A. Hansom.

Towards the end of his *Treatise on chancel screens* he makes the following highly significant statement:

Our churches should now combine all the beauty and symbolism of antiquity with every convenience that modern discovery has suggested, or *altered ecclesiastical discipline requires*. The revival would then become a living monument and a true restoration of religion in the land [my emphasis].⁶⁵

He continues as follows:

I therefore most earnestly conjure all men who profess to revive true architecture to look to the wants and circumstances of the time [my emphasis], not to sacrifice principles, but to prove that the real principles can combine with any legitimate requirement of religion [emphasis in original]; let the bishops and clergy practically perceive that Christian architecture [ie, Gothic] fulfils perfectly all their wants [my emphasis].⁶⁶

61 Pugin 1875, p 35. See also Pugin 1850a, p 18.

62 Pugin 1851, p 120. A more general plea for height had already been made ten years earlier in *The true principles* (Pugin 1841, p 66).

63 Pugin 1851, p 120. The arrangement recommended here was precisely that which, shortly before his death, he proposed in his sketch for Shrewsbury cathedral: Shrewsbury Diocesan Archives – letter from AWN Pugin (c1852) to Bishop Brown (first Bishop of Shrewsbury).

64 Eastlake 1978, p 161, p <67> of the Appendix. It should be emphasised that the absence of a screen in St Marie's was against Pugin's wishes, and did not signify any relaxation of his attitude regarding its desirability, in principle (see O'Donnell 2005, p xi).

65 Pugin 1851, p 122.

66 *Ibid*, p 123.

Finally he concludes thus:

Above all, we must remember that everything old is not the object of imitation – everything new is not to be rejected. If we work on these golden principles, the revival would be a living monument, as it was in days of old.⁶⁷

These extracts reveal a significant retreat from the dogmatic position that Pugin had adopted in 1840, under the influence of Dr Rock, and a convergence towards Newman's position concerning the necessity and possibility of adapting Gothic to the Tridentine rituals of the Catholic Church in mid-nineteenth-century England. Indeed, he himself had already so done, prior to his contact with Rock, some 13 years earlier in his first large church of St Mary's, Derby, as is clear from his etching of its interior shown in figure 136. Apart from the almost universal provision of a fixed tabernacle centrally located on the high altar, the best example of Pugin's later compliance with what 'altered ecclesiastical discipline requires' was his pioneering development, during the mid to late 1840s, of the so-called 'benediction altar'.⁶⁸ He installed some of these in his chapels and churches, such as those at Ware (1848), Ushaw, (c1847 – see figure 141), and Ramsgate (c1852 – see figure 142), the soaring central spired open-work canopy of the latter being possibly motivated by those of the *Sakramentshäuser* [see figure 143] he had encountered during his visits to Germany.⁶⁹ Another particularly fine example is the high altar and reredos he designed in 1848 for the Jesuit church in Farm St, London, which was installed in time for the opening in 1849. The characterising feature of such an altar is the provision above the tabernacle of a prominent throne from which the Blessed Sacrament (in the form of a single, large consecrated host displayed in a monstrance) can be exposed in full view of the congregation for veneration during the services of Benediction and particularly the *quarant' ore*.⁷⁰

It was, however, to be left to his eldest son E.W. Pugin to implement fully his father's revised vision concerning the internal church ordering of Catholic churches – but not immediately, as will become apparent.⁷¹

2 E.W. Pugin, and his reconciliation of Gothic with the Tridentine rubrics

E.W. Pugin (1834–75) was only 18 years old when his father, A.W.N., died in 1852, but, having helped his father from the age of seven, he was well placed during his father's final illness in 1852 to assume responsibility for his practice, overseeing the completion of buildings he had left unfinished at the time of his death, and to realise, but to his own designs, some commissions of his father that had not been commenced, such as Shrewsbury cathedral.

Helped by the burgeoning in Catholic church building following the restoration of the hierarchy in England and Wales in 1850, Edward soon began to acquire an

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p 124.

⁶⁸ O'Donnell 1994a, p 88; O'Donnell 1998–9. Three notable exceptions to his general principle of placing the tabernacle on the high altar are at St John the Baptist, Alton; St Barnabas, Nottingham; and St Giles, Cheadle, where the tabernacle is centrally located on the altar of a dedicated Blessed Sacrament chapel, as already noted.

⁶⁹ Pugin 1841–2, p 38. The canopy at Ulm, which reaches a height of 26m. The spired canopy surmounting the exposition throne of PP Pugin's Benediction altar at Holy Cross church, Liverpool [figure 156], reached 12.8m.

⁷⁰ O'Donnell 1998–9.

⁷¹ Hyland 2010, *passim*.

increasing number of clients of his own, and in his relatively short working life of only 23 years established himself as one of the leading 'High Victorian' Catholic architects of his day, producing a vast amount of work, both ecclesiastical and secular, not only in the United Kingdom and Ireland, but also in Belgium.

Up to 1859 the design of E.W. Pugin's town churches was (with a few exceptions) similar to that which his father had eventually deemed appropriate only for *country* churches, namely, designs that provided for a distinct, separate square-ended chancel lit by a large east window – although his chancels were much shallower than his father's. In 1859, however, in collaboration with the Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev Alexander Goss, he developed a design for a new large diocesan church in Eldon St, Liverpool, which addressed all of the criticisms (of which he was probably unaware at the time) that Newman had made of his father's churches some ten years previously. In this way, E.W. Pugin initiated the final stage of fully reconciling Gothic with the requirements of the Tridentine liturgy and associated devotions, as first stressed by Rory O'Donnell.⁷²

It is instructive to reconsider, point-by-point, Newman's four objections to the design of A.W.N. Pugin's post-1839 churches, to see precisely how E.W. Pugin's Eldon St solution successfully resolved these objections, using illustrations of the interiors of some of his other post-1859 churches:

- *His altars are so small that you can't have a pontifical high mass at them*

E.W. Pugin ensured that the mensae of his high altars are adequately wide.

- *His tabernacles are so low that you can scarcely have exposition*

In his smaller churches, E.W. Pugin, following his father's lead [figure 141], positioned the exposition throne immediately above the tabernacle [figure 144], where it could be accessed directly from the top step of the altar [predella]. In the case of larger churches, however, in order that the exposition throne be visible to all parts of the church, it needed to be positioned much higher up, making it impossible for it to be accessed as before: an alternative had to be found. One solution devised by E.W. Pugin (which was later much developed and elaborated by his half-brother P.P. Pugin) was to position the reredos sufficiently far forward of the east wall of the chancel/apse so that there is enough space to accommodate a permanent staircase via which the monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament can be positioned on the elevated exposition throne from the *rear* [figure 145; see also figure 147].

- *His East windows are so large that every thing is hidden in the glare*

After 1859, the square-ended chancels with their huge east windows, which characterised E.W. Pugin's earlier churches, were generally abandoned in favour of apsidally terminated chancels, such as his father had pioneered for example in St Mary's, Derby; St Chad's, Birmingham; and Alton Castle chapel. These were now lit by groups of short lancets at clerestory level [see figure 146]. Not only did this reduce the glare (particularly when there were insufficient funds to install stained glass), but it also left the remainder of the apse wall free to accommodate a reredos without it obstructing the windows and interfering with the light. On the occasions when the design continued to feature a square-ended chancel, a rose window was often

72 O'Donnell 1994b, p 265; but see Epilogue below.

incorporated, but again situated sufficiently high up so as not to be obstructed by any reredos [see figure 147].

- *[His] Skreens [sic] are so heavy that you might as well have the function in the sacristy, for the seeing of it by the congregation*

There are *no* screens in any of E.W. Pugin's diocesan parish churches.⁷³ To further ensure that the majority of the congregation had good sightlines to the sanctuary he used wide nave arcades with slender pillars, and replaced the deep chancel of the displaced Sarum Rite by a quite shallow *apsidal* sanctuary that is essentially a continuation of the nave under the same roof-line, with no demarcation between them, either internally [figure 146] or externally; this was the formula pioneered in his large diocesan church in Eldon St, Liverpool, 1859–60 [figures 148, 149]. Externally, this results, in the absence of transept, in a kind of inverted 'vessel' church, within which the roof principals are reminiscent of the rib-cage frame of the hull of a wooden vessel; indeed, the term 'nave' comes from the Latin for ship/vessel/boat.

An important concomitant of the new sanctuary arrangements – and one that fitted in with the contemporary trend in Catholic church music away from the plainchant that A.W.N. Pugin strove to promote as being the only kind of church music that is compatible with Gothic – was the removal of the choir from its mediæval location in stalls in the chancel to a commodious west gallery.⁷⁴ One feature of his father's chancel fittings that he did invariably retain, however, was the sacrarium in the south wall of the chancel/sanctuary [see figure 150].⁷⁵

Reporting on the progress of the Eldon St church in Liverpool [figures 148, 149], the *Tablet* of 1 October 1859 described the result as follows:

This glorious church, majestic in its proportionsexemplifies a *new phase* in ecclesiastical architecture....if not effect a *complete revolution* in church building [my emphases].

The Eldon St formula was one that E.W. Pugin continued to develop and refine for the next ten years, until the end of the 1860s, after which he partially reverted to designs that incorporated a distinct, square-ended chancel. Three main phases of development can thus be discerned in E.W. Pugin's ecclesiastical oeuvre:

Phase I – 1852–59: essentially, variations on this father's country church design characterised by a distinct, square-ended, chancel (but now somewhat shallower and wider) and with a large east window [see figure 151]. Again, in keeping with his father's preferences, he often planned for a dedicated Blessed Sacrament chapel, which although built were never used as such, reservation being in a tabernacle on the high altar instead, in accordance with Tridentine practice.

Phase II – 1859–69: variations on the apsidal 'vessel' church formula [see figure 152] pioneered at Eldon St.

73 The only instances of screens in EW Pugin churches were in those for religious orders, specifically, the Benedictines and the Rosminians; these screens, in wrought-iron, were very open, and thus did not interfere with the visibility of the high altar. The only *parish* church in which he installed a screen (designed in collaboration with John Hardman Powell, and now removed) was in his father's church of St Mary in Derby, wherein it was positioned below the rood beam shown in figure 137.

74 Pugin 1850b.

75 In many instances, these appear not to have been used, a credence table being preferred.

Phase III – 1869–75: a partial reversion to Phase I [see figure 153].

Church commissions, many of which were realised through the munificence of Catholic landed gentry, such as the de Traffords, came from both diocesan clergy and religious orders, predominant amongst which were the Benedictines and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

No commission was too large or too small, and even for the most impoverished communities he invariably succeeded in providing a dignified place of worship, although often having to show what he could not do, rather than what he could. For very often features that he had wished to see produced had to be sacrificed simply for lack of means, the most frequent victims being towers and spires. Indeed in some cases, it is difficult to believe that the designs ever came from the pen of E.W. Pugin. Nevertheless, as Archbishop Downey of Liverpool once said:

These churches were built in the tradition of the cathedrals of old, in the spirit of sacrifice, to be temples with which to worship God [my emphasis].⁷⁶

E.W. Pugin's churches are distinguished by a persistent emphasis on the vertical element of the design (often reinforced by a prominent west-end bell-cote – (see figure 154) and the use of flamboyant Franco-Flemish elements (figure 155).

His ecclesiastical buildings (which constitute by far the majority of his output) include three cathedrals; nine conventual (abbey / friary / monastery) churches; 73 parish churches (including two for the Church of England); 35 chapels of various kinds (convent, cemetery / chantry / mortuary, private, college, institutional, dual purpose school-room); 13 convents and monasteries; nine institutional buildings (orphanages, almshouses, etc); at least 35 community houses and presbyteries; and 34 church schools. His 13 secular buildings include domestic residences of various kinds (often for Catholic landed gentry); a hotel (The Granville in Ramsgate); and other commercial buildings. He was also responsible for additions to 14 churches designed by other architects, and for at least 52 miscellaneous minor works, both ecclesiastical and secular. At least another 66 projects – such as a cathedral for Liverpool – were never realised.⁷⁷

3 Epilogue

This article has traced the development of the rift between Newman and A.W.N. Pugin concerning the deployment of Gothic architecture in Catholic churches of the day, and has shown how, by 1859, Pugin's eldest son, E.W. Pugin, finally succeeded in reconciling Gothic with the requirements of the Tridentine liturgy and associated devotions. The root of the original conflict was not the Gothic style *per se*, but rather Pugin's refusal for many years after 1839 years to sanction its use in the design of churches whose internal ordering differed in any way from that required for the celebration of the Sarum Rite – the Rite that was normative in England in the Middle Ages. There was, however, nothing sacrosanct about the Sarum Rite; it was an accident of history that the English Gothic style had developed during the era when this rite was normative, in the service of whose ritual requirements it had naturally

⁷⁶ Murray 1946.

⁷⁷ See Hyland 2010 for further details.

been deployed and developed. Had another rite been then normative, Gothic would have been deployed in a correspondingly different way. Pugin's mistake was to conflate style with ritual. For whilst *details* of the style (including internal ordering) reflect ritual requirements, its defining principles transcend them, as evidenced both by the fact that Gothic originated in France where the Sarum Rite was never in use, and by the successful deployment of Gothic in secular buildings.

Pugin's fixation with the ordering required for the Sarum Rite was undoubtedly due to the profound influence exerted, over a relatively short period, by Lord Shrewsbury's chaplain, Rev Dr Daniel Rock, and was further fuelled by the Oratorians' introduction of Italianate devotional practices that offended against the sensibilities of the 'Old Catholics', preeminent amongst whom was, of course, Lord Shrewsbury himself. Had Pugin not come under Rock's influence at such a relatively early stage in his programme of revival, its realisation might well have taken a quite different direction, perhaps closer to that pioneered and foreshadowed in his church in Derby – not so much in his use of the 'Perpendicular' style (which he later rejected in favour of 'Decorated'), but rather the 'open' way in which the chancel was configured [see figures 136, 137]. Although towards the end of his life Pugin did retreat somewhat from his earlier dogmatic position, and 'look to the wants and circumstances of the time' – thereby admitting the possibility of rehabilitating the Derby formula that, post-Rock, he had abandoned and almost disowned – it was a great tragedy that for so many years he persisted in attempting to defend the indefensible.⁷⁸ Like it or not, the rite had changed, and this did nothing to further the revival for which he so longed. Indeed, through the exertions of the Camden (later, Ecclesiological) Society, his programme of revival was realised to a much greater extent in Anglican churches than it ever was in Catholic places of worship.

Newman, by contrast, with his characteristic perspicacity, clearly separated the Gothic style from the particular mediæval ordering and arrangement of church interiors in the service of which the style had been deployed in the days of the Sarum Rite and had fossilised; he was convinced that the same style, of which he much approved, could be utilised in churches designed in compliance with the requirements of Tridentine ritual and rubrics. It is not impossible that Pugin's intransigence was to some extent instrumental in Newman's eventual rejection of Gothic in favour of the Renaissance and Baroque – styles that were automatically geared to the Counter-Reformation Tridentine Rite.⁷⁹

There is no evidence in any of the correspondence of Newman thus far published to suggest that he was ever aware of, firstly, 'pre-Rock' Pugin, as exemplified in the design of his churches at Derby and Uttoxeter, for example: at this time, however, Newman was still an Anglican and thus probably unaware of them; secondly, Pugin's pioneering development, before and during the rood screen controversy, of

78 Pugin 1851, p 123.

79 Not only ecclesiastically, but also secularly, for as late as 1872, he was writing, in a letter to RW Church, Dean of St Paul's, concerning the contentious plans for painting the interior of the cathedral: 'So you are in hot water about the decoration of St Paul's. It could not be otherwise. The Goths, beginning with Pugin, have been so intemperate and so triumphant, and that memorial to their gaucherie, so obtrusive and so ineffably costly, the Houses of Parliament, is such a pain to the eyes and heart, that one cannot protest against the taste of the 17th and 18th centuries without being popularly thought a confirmed mediævalist. Should paint come into St Paul's at all? Are not marbles and mosaics the right decorations?' (5.6.1872: Dessain 1963, vol 26, p 106).

the 'benediction altar' to facilitate exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; or, finally, how far by 1851 Pugin had mellowed to accommodate what 'altered ecclesiastical discipline requires', resulting in a partial convergence to Newman's own earlier conviction that is indeed possible to adapt Gothic to the requirements of the Tridentine Rite. The last mentioned point is particularly curious, given that it is clear, from a letter to Bishop Ullathorne of 18 April 1851, that Newman was aware of Pugin's *Treatise on chancel screens and rood lofts*, towards the end of which his shift of position was clearly articulated; it is, however, possible that Newman's attention was confined solely to the *earlier* section ('The Modern Ambonoclast') in which, without identifying them by name, Pugin had viciously satired the Oratorians and the style of devotions they promoted.⁸⁰

Newman's letter was in response to one from Ullathorne who, having read Pugin's *Treatise* (but evidently, like Newman, not its closing pages) considered its 'language is so unwarrantable against the opponents of screens...I think it high time that someone having authority should interfere. It only remains therefore for me to consider how that ought to be done...'.⁸¹ To Newman's disappointment, Ullathorne took no action.⁸²

The full reconciliation of Gothic with the requirements of the Tridentine Rite was left to E.W. Pugin who, by 1859 had addressed all of the concerns that Newman had first raised 11 years earlier about the suitability of the internal ordering of his father's post-1839 churches for the celebration of the Tridentine liturgy, and most probably in total ignorance of them. Unlike his father, E.W. Pugin seems to have had no qualms about complying with Tridentine rubrical requirements, but perhaps being ten years younger than his father had been at the start of his disputes with Newman made him more amenable to episcopal direction in this matter (even to the extent of overseeing the removal of the sedilia in St Chad's, Birmingham, only two years after his father's death). That is not to mention the possibility that, being eager to establish his reputation as an architect in his own right, he was also willing to comply with certain other contemporary requirements, not least the provision in his churches of commodious west galleries – capable, in the case of some of the larger ones, of accommodating not only the choir but also an accompanying orchestra, as is clear from press reports of their openings – of which his father would have much disapproved. One feature of his father's chancel furnishings that he *did* invariably retain, however, was the sacrarium in the south wall of the chancel or sanctuary [see figure 150]. In addition, he made significant developments of his father's quite modest pioneering essays in the design of the 'benediction altar', which developments reached their zenith in the hands of Pugin's youngest sons, Cuthbert and Peter Paul, and particularly Peter Paul alone after c1880, whose altars and reredoses [see figures 146, 147 and 156] were later installed in a number of Edward's churches after his death, wherein they complete their sanctuaries in perfect harmony

80 Dessain 1963, vol 14, p 258. It is evident from this letter that that Newman was aware also of Pugin's riposte to the critical articles in the *Rambler* (Pugin 1850a), and to his *Earnest appeal for the revival of antient plain song* (Pugin 1850b), wherein he is even more critical of the Oratorians, but without mentioning them by name, intimating at what he considered to be their heretical tendencies.

81 Dessain 1963, vol 14, p 258, fn 3.

82 Newman to JM Capes, 11.5.1851: Dessain 1963, vol 14, p 280.

with Edward's overall designs, and in perfect compliance with the requirements of the Tridentine liturgy.

Although the second part of this article has focused on the work of E.W. Pugin, it should be noted that, somewhat earlier, other Catholic architects had been exercised with reconciling Gothic with the rubrical requirements of the Tridentine liturgy. One of the earliest and most significant of these was J.J. Scoles (1798–1863) who did much work for the Jesuits, such as their churches in Liverpool and London of 1842–8 and 1844–9, respectively. The former had a shallow polygonal apse that is essentially an extension of the nave, a solution possibly inspired by the Counter-Reformation architectural ideology of his Jesuit patrons. Some of his other work, however, was less successful: Our Lady, Islington, for example, attracted savage criticism from Pugin.⁸³ Scoles was followed slightly later by the brothers J.A. Hansom (1803–82) and C.F. Hansom (1817–88), who, during the 1840s and early 1850s, produced designs that were essentially a gothicised basilican arrangement that anticipated the post-1859 work of E.W. Pugin. The task of these precursors of E.W. Pugin had, however, been somewhat easier and less traumatic in that, never having been so committed to A.W.N. Pugin's mediæval ideals, they did not have to sacrifice points of principle or an allegiance to a former rite in order to produce schemes that were compliant with the rubrical requirements of the Tridentine liturgy. Much closer to the original Puginian ideal was the early work of M.E. Hadfield (1812–85) and W.W. Wardell (1823–99).

It is significant that this early work predated the publication in 1857 of the first English (annotated) translation of St Charles Borromeo's *Instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae* by G.J. Wigley (1825–66), which, as already noted, set out in great detail the architectural requirements necessary to ensure compliance with Tridentine rubrics.⁸⁴ To what extent, if any, any of the above architects were familiar with these instructions from the Latin original of this work is unknown, but it is clear from his 1851 *Treatise on chancel screens and rood lofts* that Pugin was.⁸⁵ In the light of his acquaintance with the writings of St Charles, Wigley came to envisage 'the modern Roman Catholic church as a classically arranged building expressed in Gothic form', a view that parallels A.W.N. Pugin's comment to a friend concerning the new Houses of Parliament: 'All Grecian, sir; Tudor details on a classic body'.⁸⁶

Given the 'history' between his father and Newman, of which he must have been aware, being about 14 years old at the start of the rood-screen controversy, it remains to address the question why, in February 1875, Edward should ever have sent Newman a copy of his father's pamphlet *Church and state*. The first edition of Edward's re-issue of this publication is dated 1 January 1875, and thus predates the publication of Newman's *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk* on 14 January 1875.⁸⁷ Having possibly read this riposte to Gladstone's expostulation on the Vatican decrees, he might have thought that Newman would appreciate a copy of what his father had

83 Pugin 1841–2 (p 109 in book edition of 1843).

84 Wigley 1857.

85 Pugin 1851, pp 16; 21.

86 Wigley 1857, p 235; O'Reilly 1997, p 235; Ferrey 1861, p 248.

87 See n 2 above.

had to say some 25 years earlier when the restoration of the hierarchy had provoked a similar uproar: for the aim of both publications was essentially similar – namely, to allay suspicion and to attempt to resolve misunderstanding. More difficult to rationalise is Newman's enthusiastic approbation of Pugin's pamphlet, but perhaps it recalled his own Tractarian position on this matter prior to conversion; in any case, it is gratifying that he did not let his contempt for what, in his apparent unawareness of Pugin's relaxation of his earlier dogmatic position, he considered to be his intransigence over the way the Gothic style should be deployed in Catholic churches in mid-nineteenth century England to prejudice his appreciation of, and perhaps even concurrence with, Pugin's views on another matter of arguably greater importance.

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An E.W. Pugin altar in Dulwich

by Andrew Derrick

The Catholic church of St Thomas More in Lordship Lane, East Dulwich [figure 157] was built in 1927-9 from designs by Joseph Goldie. To outward appearance it is an unremarkable example of church building at the fag-end of the Gothic Revival. The revised 'Pevsner' entry could hardly be briefer: '1929 by J. Goldie. Restored after war damage 1953. Lady Chapel 1970. Stained glass by Patrick Pye'.¹ However, neither this bald description nor the date and outward appearance of the church tells the whole story.

The East Dulwich mission was established in 1879 by Franciscans from the E.W. Pugin church at Peckham, but in 1892 they handed the mission over to the Benedictines from Downside Abbey.

The present site was acquired on a long lease from the Estates Governors of Allyn's College of God's Gift in 1907, on condition that a presbytery would be built within one year and a church within five years. J.N. Comper (who had worked for the Benedictines at Downside) designed the presbytery, which was completed on schedule in 1908, but was destroyed by a



Figure 157: St Thomas More, Lordship Lane, East Dulwich, London
photographed by the author in June 2011.

World War II bomb and subsequently rebuilt to a different design. Comper also prepared designs for the church, but the intervention of the Great War put plans on hold, and no significant progress had been made by 1923, when the Benedictines relinquished the parish and handed it over to the Bishop of Southwark. Fr James O'Donoghue was appointed parish priest, and remained in post for 38 years. He appointed Joseph Goldie to prepare fresh plans for a new church. Goldie's first designs, said to have been based on Giles Gilbert Scott's church at Northfleet, was rejected as too ambitious and expensive; a modified scheme was agreed, and a grateful Goldie wrote to Fr O'Donoghue saying that the Dulwich scheme



Figure 158: The high altar in its present location
photographed by the author in June 2011.

had saved him from going out of business. Work started in the winter of 1927–8, and the church was opened in May 1929.

The high altar [figure 158] occupies the entire east wall and is of Caen stone, relieved with coloured marbles and mosaics. Figures of St Martha and St Mary Magdalen under canopied niches frame four panels also under Gothic canopies with figures of St Teresa, St Catherine of Ricci, St Mary Magdalen of Pazzi and St Juliana Falconieri (giving the hint that this was designed for a female religious community). The alabaster tabernacle [figure 159] incorporates a pelican in her piety and a jewelled and embossed brass door with the agnus dei.

The high altar is undeniably the chief glory of the church.

It came from the chapel at Hales Place, near Canterbury [figure 160], an old recusant stronghold which was



Figure 160: Hales Place, c1830, drawn by TM Baynes and engraved by H Wallis.

<http://machadoink.com/Hales%20Place.htm>

abandoned after 1863, when Miss Hales was released from her vows.

Miss Hales did not abandon her aspirations to establish a religious community at Hales Place. In 1876 Dunn and Hansom prepared plans for the re-use of Pugin's incomplete buildings in a new Benedictine abbey, but again this project foundered. After Miss Hales' death in 1885 Hales Place became a Jesuit school and seminary, known as St Mary's College. The Jesuits left in 1923, and the house was demolished five years later.

We know that E.W. Pugin worked at Hales Place, and on stylistic grounds the altar would appear to be his design, bearing comparison (for example) with his great



Figure 159: The tabernacle
photographed by the author in June 2011.

recusant stronghold which was rebuilt in the 1760s by Sir Edward Hales, fifth baronet. In 1837 the estate was inherited by Mary Hales, then just two years old. In 1858 Mary became a Carmelite nun in France, but she transferred to the English Carmelites in 1863, with the aim of building a convent on her estate. However, the progress of this venture was not smooth. Plans were prepared by E.W. Pugin and the foundations completed and walls built up to first floor level, but work was



Figure 161: The interior of St Mary's chapel at Hales Place
<http://machadoink.com/Hales%20Place.htm>

benediction altar at St Anne, Rock Ferry, a late work. Possibly intended for the convent chapel, the altar was placed in the family chapel at Hales Place. Its current configuration appears to be a twentieth-century creation; a photograph of the chapel interior on the Historic Canterbury website [figure 161], shows the canopied figures of Martha and Mary placed on the side walls of

the sanctuary rather than incorporated in the high altar as now.

When the chapel was about to be demolished in 1928, its high altar was acquired by the enterprising Fr O'Donoghue for his new church at East Dulwich. He paid £200 for it and had it carefully dismantled, transported and assembled in its present form by George Lee of Earp and Hobbs. It was illustrated in the opening handbook of 1929 [figure 162], where it was described by Fr O'Donoghue as 'typical of Pugin's genius at its best'.

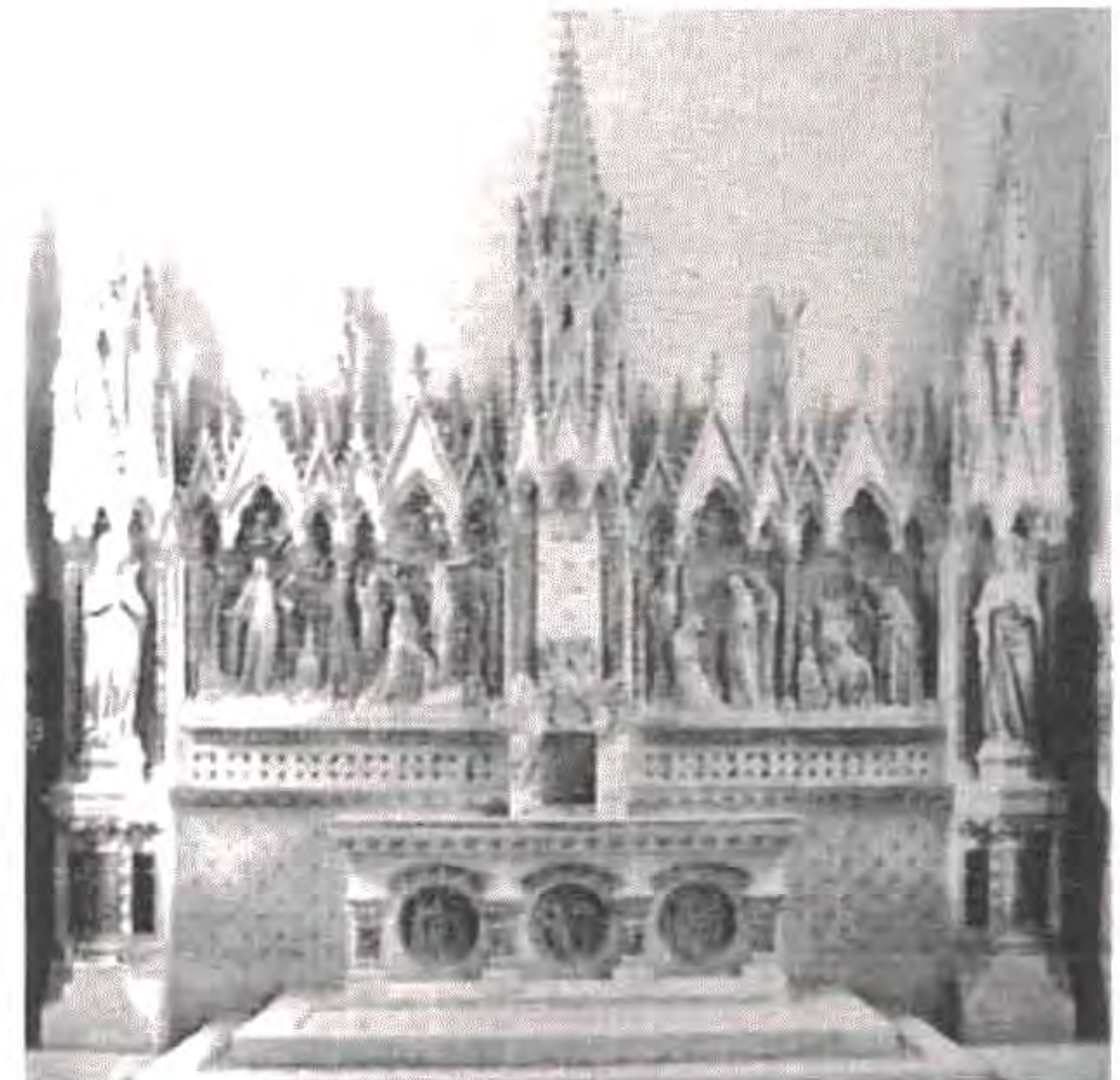


Figure 162: The high altar as installed in East Dulwich, from the opening programme, 1929

The altar was seen by the writer in the course of an architectural and historical review of the churches of the Archdiocese of Southwark, carried out by the Architectural History Practice on behalf of the Archdiocese and English Heritage. This is part of a rolling programme of reviews of Catholic dioceses called *Taking Stock*, which has been funded jointly by English Heritage and the dioceses and which has focused attention on the often under-regarded Catholic heritage of this country. Many churches have been identified as possible candidates for listing, including several by E.W. Pugin and Peter Paul Pugin. It has also been found that items of considerable artistic and historic interest often lurk in buildings which may in themselves be of no great significance, barely meriting a mention in Pevsner and almost certainly not candidates for listing. By drawing attention to such items, it may be hoped that the work of *Taking Stock* will ensure that they are not overlooked when reordering and closure are contemplated.

See also:

Smith 1973; *Lordship Lane Catholic Church, Dulwich, handbook of opening, May 20th 1929.*

The 'Fire Place in Great Hall Belmont', 1867: an E.W. Pugin proposal for Belmont House?

by Roderick O'Donnell

Belmont Abbey, to the south-west of Hereford, has one of the largest private collections of E.W. Pugin drawings. They range from sketches to full-scale working drawings and throw important light on the development of the abbey church from 1854 and the monastery from 1857.¹ But there is an imbalance here: the collection reflects not so much what was built as what was projected, especially sketches or more finished proposals for unexecuted work. There are many more drawings of the monastery, paid for by the local bishop and the Benedictines, than for the church, because the latter was not paid for by the monks but by a donor. The drawings run from sketches to fully finished drawings under E.W. Pugin's initials for discussion, and signed in full for agreed or contract drawings, a much more proficient and organised service than his father gave his clients. E.W. Pugin was a notable draughtsman, and his 1855 drawing of the church (untraced) was shown at the Royal Academy.² His drawing style developed from dependence on his father's style – a letter of 1852 refers to him 'having lived all his life among architectural drawings' – to something much freer and more personal.³ An example of his later drawing style

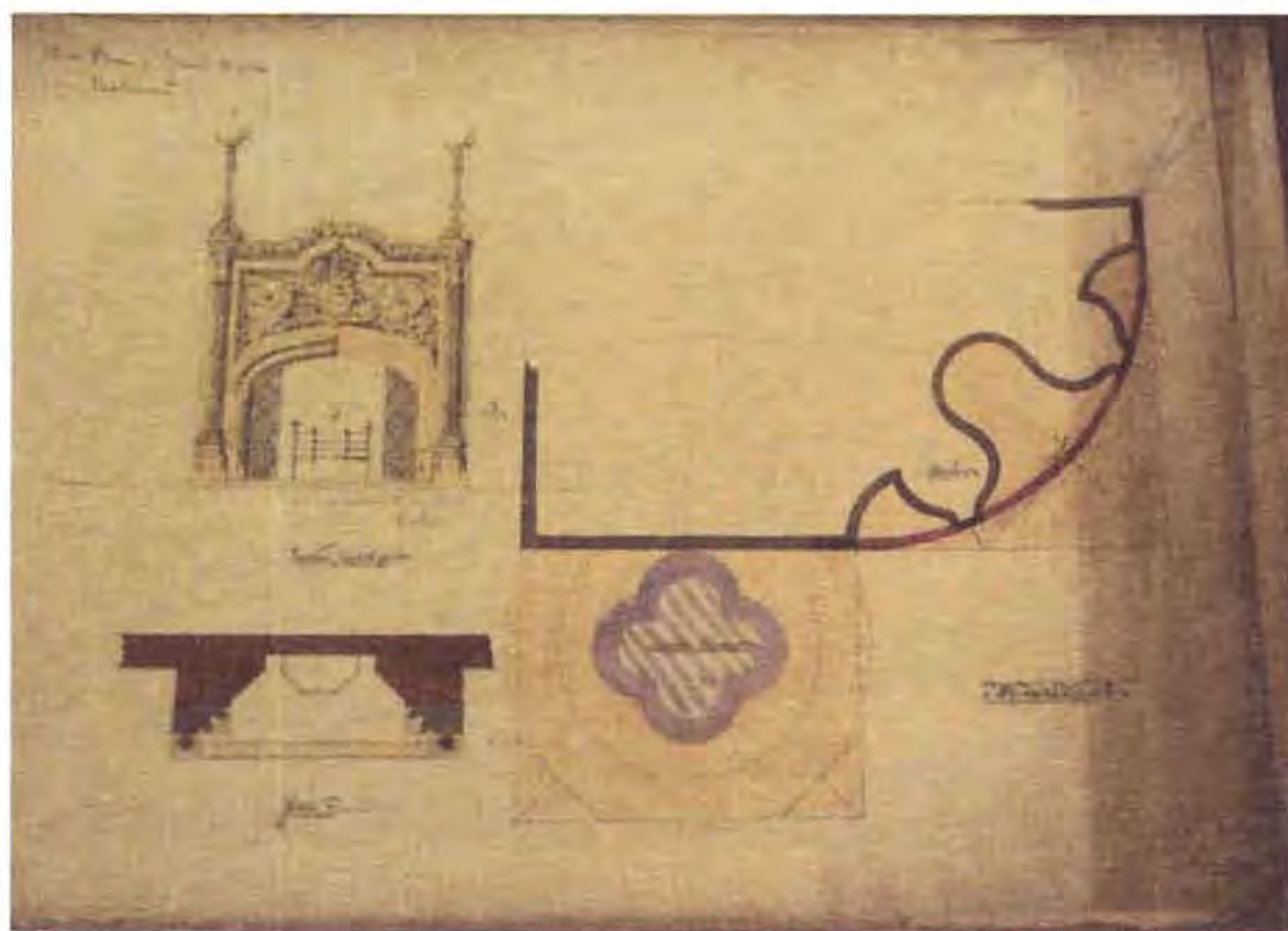


Figure 163: 'Fire place in Great Hall Belmont', 1867,
signed E Welby Pugin'

Belmont Abbey, photographed by the author.

is published here for the first time [figure 163] It is labelled 'Fire Place in Great Hall Belmont' (top left); 'Elevation' (centre, showing two versions of the arch); 'Plan' (lower left); 'Details' (being a section through) with 'marble column' 'arch' and 'jamb'. Gas standards are prominent. It is signed 'E Welby Pugin architect' [date] '1867 Ramsgate'.⁴ Its swagger and self-confidence are typical of his 'late' style drawings.

But is it for the monastery?

There is nothing like this fireplace surviving, although there are other drawings for other no-longer surviving monastery fireplaces. Its iconography of a knightly shield under a helm is laic rather than cleric. Perhaps 'Belmont' refers to Belmont House, the seat of F.R. Wegg-Prosser (1824–1916), on a site adjacent to the north-west? It was

1 O'Donnell 2012.

2 O'Donnell 2002, pp 54–7.

3 Belmont Abbey archives, undated letter to FR Wegg-Prosser beginning, 'My dear cousin...'

4 Belmont Abbey, uncatalogued collection of architectural drawings, handlisted by c 2000 by Dom Paul Eggleston OSB, then of Downside Abbey.



Figure 164: Belmont House, Herefordshire, previously attributed to EW Pugin, from the south east
photographed by the author.

ment or refashioning of 'Great Halls'. (His father's fireplaces at the Grange were similarly improved, regrettably subsequently reversed by the Landmark Trust).

Garendon is a close parallel, where E.W. Pugin inserted a two-storey great hall as part of the gothicisation of the Palladian house (and at least one fireplace was salvaged from its destruction c 1965 and remained with the de Lisle family).⁵ The eighteenth-century Belmont House was similarly gothicised with a mansard roof structure and a fine masonry skin [figure



Figure 165: Belmont Abbey, by EW Pugin, from the south west
photographed by the author.

164]. It has been attributed to E.W. Pugin who was after all working for Wegg-Prosser from 1852, but its architecture is very different from the 'Modern Gothic' E.W. Pugin spoke of, typified in the monastery [figure 165].⁶ Moreover, an internal inspection there I made with Michael Bellamy of English Heritage on 12 December 2011 revealed none of the characteristic E.W. Pugin forms or details, except for some minor work such six-panel doors and mantel-less fireplaces on the second floor of the chapel wing. On the major floors and circulation areas none of the fittings such as the fireplaces, the staircase, nor the woodwork are consistent with E.W. Pugin's hand. And while many fine eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century fireplaces sur-

he, who on becoming a Roman Catholic in 1852 started a Catholic mission, and from 1854 began to build the church given finally to the Benedictines in 1857. Other examples of what one might call 'knightly' fireplaces were provided by E.W. Pugin at Scarisbrick (c 1862) and at Garendon (c 1864), as part of the improve-

5 O'Donnell 2002, pp 87–8.

6 Reid 1980, pp 4–5 and <http://www.pugin-society.1to1.org/LL-gaz-J2.html#BelmontHouse>, in Hyland 2010.



Figure 166: Belmont House, the stairs-hall
photographed by the author.

vive, they are just what the mid-Victorians disliked. The entrance hall fireplace with its neo-classical style and details – fasces and axes, swords of office – would have been even more offensive. And it is surely the stairs-hall at Belmont which would qualify as a potential ‘Great Hall’ [figure 166]. This drawing would seem to be evidence of E.W. Pugin’s proposal of 1867 to adapt it as such. But it does not seem to have gone ahead. Did an undecided Wegg-Prosser perhaps send it to the monastery where E.W. Pugin was still very much engaged? The evidence of the visit, and of this ‘Belmont’ drawing at Belmont Abbey, means that we must revise the over-confident attribution to E.W. Pugin of the refacing of Belmont for Wegg-Prosser.

J.A. Hansom and E.W. Pugin at St Wilfred, Ripon: a division of labour?

by Penelope Harris

The short-lived and little-known partnership between J.A. Hansom (1803–82), and E.W. Pugin (1834–75), has recently attracted attention through the publications of this author about the former, and of Gerard Hyland about the latter.¹ It transpires that an overconfident attribution to E.W. Pugin of the church of St Wilfrid at Ripon in the North Riding of Yorkshire (1860–2), which discounted the role of J.A. Hansom as architect, was unduly swayed by Pugin's design of the altar and reredos.² This article sets out to redress any former misinterpretation.

Commissioned and largely paid for by Fr (later Canon) Philip Vavasour (1826–

1887), of Hazelwood Castle, and master-minded by J.A. Hansom, the appearance of the name of E.W. Pugin in records associated with St Wilfrid's understandably gives rise to some confusion. However, it also provides unique insight into the enigmatic and rather surprising relationship between Hansom and Pugin junior.³ Use of the word 'partnership' in this case is somewhat of an exaggeration – it was a very one-sided, selective arrangement, whereby Hansom could call upon Pugin's services as required, but Hansom was excluded from any of Pugin's work. Aside from their vocational desire to promote Catholicism through architecture, the only connection between them was a personal one – both had family members who married into the firm of J. Hardman and Company.⁴ But the arrangement between the two architects soon proved to be unsustainable and was ended abruptly by the younger participant when he published a damning and derogatory statement to that effect in the *Tablet*.⁵



Figure 167: St Wilfrid's, Coltsgate Hill, Ripon, from the north west photographed by the author in 2008.

1 Harris 2010; Hyland 2007–9; Hyland 2010.

2 O'Donnell 2007, p 25.

3 JA Hansom obituary, *Builder*, 8.7.1882, p 44; Gillow 1885, p 118.

4 Hansom's youngest daughter, Winifred Mary, was married to John Hardman junior's son George Edward; Pugin's half sister Anne was married to John Hardman Powell.

5 *Tablet*, 26.11.1864, p 763.

The first time they had collaborated had been some ten years prior to the partnership, when they built St Mary Star of the Sea, at Leith, near Edinburgh, designed in the first instance by A.W.N. Pugin. Hansom and E.W. Pugin jointly completed the work in 1852–4. Then, after a gap in their professional association, a formal partnership was established. In 1863, the small church of St Neot's was built at Liskeard in Cornwall. It was attributed to 'Mr Hansom, of the firm of Pugin and Hansom, of Ramsgate and London', suggesting that, as Hyland puts it, 'the two of them were [nevertheless] working independently'.⁶ An extract from the wording of Pugin's inflammatory statement of termination, 'brought in to assist him [Hansom] by my advice and designs', goes some way to explaining his presence at Ripon. Denis Evinson's theory was that whilst Hansom could design churches very well without Pugin's help, he needed someone to contribute elements of intricate design-work to compensate for the current absence of rood screens.⁷ That Pugin was only offered 'one half of remaining profits' (after clearing a fixed sum per annum), would probably not have suited him. Poor remuneration together with lack of prestige, undoubtedly contributed to the rift. The absence of Pugin's name amongst the very extensive catalogue of attendees when the church at Ripon was opened is also significant.⁸ Was his absence one of choice, or did he not wish to appear to be playing second fiddle to Hansom? Or was it even that his status was not sufficiently acknowledged to merit an invitation?

St Wilfrid's was a much larger project than St Neot's and completed nearly a year earlier. When reporting on the opening ceremony, the *Ripon and Richmond chronicle* referred to 'designs by Joseph A Hansom Esq., of St Augustine's, Ramsgate....[with] the splendid altar and reredos...by Mr Pugin'.⁹ No mention is made of any partnership, and whilst both building and reredos are described in some detail, Pugin's participation is simply noted along with other contractors, whereas that of Hansom is annotated with the word 'architect'.¹⁰ Other reports on the building and



Figure 168: St Wilfred's: the presbytery wing from the west. photographed by the author in 2008.

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6 *Building news*, 15.5.1863, p 380; Hyland 2010, Appendix I, One-time Patrons / Collaborators, JA Hansom, note*.

7 Evinson 1966, p 259.

8 *Ripon and Richmond chronicle*, 26.4.1862.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Builder*, 17.5.1862, p 356; *Ripon and Richmond chronicle*, loc cit; *The Ripon millenary record*, part 2, (1891), p 188.



Figure 169: St Wilfrid's: the high altar
photographed by the author in 2008.

design of the church are consistent in that they give no scope for any alternative interpretation to suggest that Pugin's input extended over and above the design of the altar and reredos.¹¹

The initial plan for Ripon was drawn up in 1859 during a previous partnership between J.A. Hansom and his younger brother Charles Francis, (1817–88), based at their Clifton office near Bristol. It provided for a church, presbytery and school, the final cost of which amounted to around £5,000.¹² The design as executed sees J.A. Hansom at his most eclectic, testimony to his inherent compulsion to work in 'rogue' style.¹³ St Wilfrid's is an example of his vivid imagination, a project he used as an opportunity to incorporate continental features, adapted in his own idiosyncratic

11 *Ripon and Richmond chronicle*, 19.4.1862; *Tablet*, 3.5.1862, p 277.

12 ST WILFREDE (sic) CATHOLIC CHURCH, RIPON, YORKSHIRE, Plan of new purchased site, shewing proposed site of church, presbytery, school, J&C Hansom, Architects, Clifton, October 5th, 1859: Chappell 1972, vol 2, fig 101.

13 An even more apt description in this case, deriving from the Goodhart-Rendel's term 'rogue architects', is given by J Mordaunt Crook, when he calls them 'stylistic eccentrics': Crook 1987, p 133.

way. In this case French, Italian and Germanic Gothic forms are used, along with English lancet windows, features taken from Ripon cathedral, and replication of the unconventional horizontal stonework found at nearby Markenfield Hall.¹⁴ Not only did Hansom incorporate a number of different styles, but he also experimented with a mix of colours, both within the stonework and with bands of different coloured slates on the roof. Struggling to define an overall dominant style, the *Builder* described St Wilfrid's as



Figure 170: St Wilfrid's: the reredos photographed by the author in 2008.

being in 'a kind of Lombardo-Early Decorated'.¹⁵ In Pevsner's view, the most outstanding feature is the tower-like octagonal chancel, much higher than the rest of the church.¹⁶ This was a ploy to compensate for the lack of a steeple, giving the appearance of height without threatening any nearby Protestant counterparts. The overall impression is of a bold, solid and squat structure, a foretaste of Hansom's larger Holy Name in Manchester (1869–72). Hipped roofs, a picturesque bell-cote and a massive two-storied porch all add to the drama of the irregular skyline. Carved angels, richly foliated column heads and the placement of mosaic medallions within the spandrels are by Salviati of Venice and London.¹⁷

So what could be Pugin's contribution in all this? Attention to detail and multiplicity of style were as varied internally as they were externally, but surely the most striking feature on entering the church is the altar and reredos. The altar, which is divided into three compartments, was made of Caen stone with pillars of coloured marble, perhaps a concession to Hansom's external polychromy.¹⁸ The intricate carving of the reredos was executed by Farmer, and included two large reliefs, one of St Wilfrid preaching at the dedication of his monastery at Ripon and another of his death at Oundle, Northamptonshire.¹⁹ These rise to a height of over six metres (20 feet), with a pinnacle-shaped canopy extending a further three metres above that, in a style reminiscent of the benediction altar and spire of A.W.N. Pugin's St Augustine's church at Ramsgate.²⁰ The reredos was not quite complete at the opening on 23 April 1862, the date having to fit the Bishop of Beverley who presided.

14 *Builder*, 17.5.1862, p 356.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Pevsner 1974, p 412.

17 *The Ripon millenary record*, p 188. Further Salviati medallions were added during later work by the Hansoms in 1875.

18 The foundation stone was made of Nidderdale marble, as used by the 'Monks of Fountain', *Ripon chronicle*, 17.11.1860.

19 W. Farmer, latterly of Farmer & Brindley, was the sculptor who was employed by both architects on many occasions.

20 Hyland 2010, Appendix VII, The Benediction Altar, (text below fig 78a).

Likewise, the organ had not been installed as the building had not dried out sufficiently.

Pugin's altar and reredos sit somewhat uncomfortably within the whole – perhaps because they are necessarily so large and in such a prominent position. Were they simply added as a final touch to Hansom's 'academic exercise'?²¹ Presumably not, because the shape and form of the exceptionally high chancel, with its backdrop of tall pairs of lights and geometrical tracery similar to those in Cologne cathedral, must surely have been designed very much with Pugin's artwork in mind.²² This suggests a considerable measure of collaboration in the early stages, but does not necessarily imply any greater input regarding the rest of the church, nor indeed is there anything to signify Pugin's involvement with the very substantial presbytery and priest's house which extends from the chancel at right-angles, nor the school buildings in the grounds, all of which were shown on Hansom's original plan.²³

The main contract was put out to tender in the *Leeds mercury* by Joseph A. Hansom and Son from their Clifton base, and given to the comparatively local Ralph Weatherley, whom Hansom had used for the building of both St George's Church at York (1849–50), and The Sacred Heart at Howden (1850–1).²⁴ Mr [James] Firth was the clerk of works who took over part-way through following the ill-health of the original postholder. Firth had worked for him previously and became a much-trusted employee, working extensively for Hansom during the latter part of his career.²⁵ The stained glass in the lady chapel was by Henry Mark Barnett (1833–88), and gifted by the Sparrow family of Ripon.²⁶ Typically, when not using Hardmans for stained glass, both Hansom and Pugin used Francis Barnett, but on this occasion it was his younger brother Henry, based at Newcastle-on-Tyne.²⁷ Hardman and Company were, however, used for the metal light fittings. A letter signed by Hansom and referring to Vavasour's requirements was sent to the firm on 11 November 1863, and illustrates Hansom's commanding role.²⁸

After Ripon, Hansom's attention was directed elsewhere, in particular his extensions for the Rt Rev Thomas Witham at Lartington Hall in Northumberland. However, he appears to have been staying at the Grange at this time as several letters were sent to Hardmans regarding Lartington, but quoting Ramsgate as his address.²⁹ Hansom's church-work dropped off after Ripon, and he worked on his own for several years, up until he formed a partnership with his youngest son Joseph Stanislaus Hansom (1845–1931) in 1869. In the interim J.A. Hansom was personally responsible for the design of the crown of thorns window, executed by Hardman,

21 Harris 2009, p 37.

22 *Builder*, 17.5.1862; Evinson 1966, p 236.

23 See fn 12 above.

24 *Leeds mercury*, 10.5.1859.

25 *Ripon and Richmond chronicle*, 26.4.1862.

26 *Ibid*; *Tablet*, 3.5.1862, p 277; *Builder*, 17.5.1862, p 356.

27 The Barnett dynasty of glassmakers was well-known to Hansom, both coming from long-established York tradesmen. John Joseph Barnett, (1786–1859), restored the mediæval windows after the fire at York minster. His eldest son, Francis, worked alongside Hansom and Pugin in Leith, and remained there afterwards. The younger son, Henry, went to work with Wailes in Newcastle and then set up his own business there.

28 Hansom to Hardman, 11.11.1863, Hardman Collection, Birmingham City Archives.

29 Hansom to Hardman, 21.5.1862; 27.8.1862; 4.10.1862; 7.10.1862, Hardman Collection, Birmingham City Archives; Ramsgate is listed as one of Hansom's residences in his biography: Gillow 1885, p 1196.

and the design of the high altar executed by Farmer and Brindley, both for the church of Our Lady of Help of Christians and St Denis in Marychurch, Torquay (1867–9).³⁰ After that it was J.S. Hansom who very ably designed internal fittings for his father, particularly those in the churches of the Holy Name at Manchester, St Philip Neri at Arundel and St Aloysius at Oxford. They returned to Ripon in 1875, when they decorated the lady chapel, providing a new altar ‘of simple and graceful design by Mr J Hansom and admirably executed by Messrs Farmer’.³¹ There are several letters from the Hansom firm to Hardmans at this time setting out requirements for both glass and metalwork.³² This additional undertaking was for Canon Vavasour and his friend the Marquess of Ripon, prompted by the conversion of the latter to Roman Catholicism.

Whilst there is now, therefore, overwhelming evidence to define the division of labour at Ripon – likewise the existence of the quasi partnership between Hansom and Pugin – the logic and reasoning behind their partnership remains a conundrum. The partnership model J.A. Hansom held with his younger brother C.F. Hansom seemed to have had very little bearing on their working lives, with an ongoing mix of collaboration, independency and occasional direct competition. C.F. was unsympathetic when J.A. took his own eldest son Henry John (1828–1904), into partnership and was only prepared to offer C.F.’s son Edward Joseph (1842–1900), a junior position.³³ E.J. Hansom had initially been trained by his father and subsequently worked with Waterhouse in London. He finally joined Archibald Mathias Dunn (1832–1917), one of his father’s former pupils based in Newcastle, and they formed the prolific Newcastle and London partnership of Dunn and Hansom.

Around this time J.A. Hansom made several changes in partnership in quick succession. The clue to his approach to Pugin might be more readily understood if the reason for the collapse of his partnership with H.J. Hansom was known. H.J. had been trained by his father, worked with him at Ushaw and had shown considerable ability in his design and execution of Ss Mary and James at Scorton in Lancashire (1860–61).³⁴ In May 1861 H.J. circulated a letter inviting business in his own right, quoting the family address in Clifton and also that of his wife’s parents in Preston, Lancashire. By now he had both proven talent and experience to offer. The elaborate illustration on his notepaper was very Puginesque in style and his career was poised to move forward, but instead he faded into comparative oblivion, with a mundane post as District Surveyor of North Battersea and only the occasional church to his name.³⁵ Had he left his father in the lurch when he attempted to set up on his own? Was this the underlying reason for J.A. Hansom turning to Pugin?

30 *Tablet*, 19.6.1875.

31 Hansom to Hardman, 3.6.1869; *Building news*, 27.8.1869, p 178.

32 Eight letters from the Hansom firm to Hardmans dated between January 1875 and November 1875: Hardman Collection, Birmingham.

33 E Hansom to Murphy, 5.12.1870; J Hansom to E Hansom, 9.12.1870; CF Hansom considered that Joseph was monopolising Catholic work, leaving him with only Board schools and more mundane work, largely in the Clifton and Bristol area.

34 Ushaw College Archives, NA/W/25. The young Joseph Gillow who was train bearer at the opening ceremony confirms that the work was entirely that of HJ Hansom: Catholic Record Society, *Records*, vol 20, p 227.

35 The last known work of HJ Hansom is St Mary’s Roman Catholic Church at Gosport: letter HJ Hansom to Hardmans, 9.10.1882.

A third, and less charitable perspective might be drawn from T.E. Muir's assessment of correspondence between the young and disgruntled E.J. Hansom and his former schoolfellow Bernard Murphy, who was later to become the Prior of Downside.³⁶ E.J. was of the opinion that J.A.'s interest in E.W. Pugin was related to a possible commission at Downside, which went to Dunn and Hansom at a later date, and that his uncle was 'stealing' work from his father.³⁷ Taken out of context, the Downside correspondence could appear somewhat discreditable, but Hansom was never short of work and, as we know, obtaining new commissions was not a function of the Pugin partnership. In his statement in the *Tablet* confirming the termination of the Hansom-Pugin partnership, Pugin claimed that he had received 'many and earnest importunities on the part of Mr Hansom' following which he 'consented to an agreement'.³⁸ Even if this was an exaggeration of the circumstances, discussion must have taken place and Pugin must have perceived some merit in the arrangement, otherwise why did it go ahead? Hansom was abroad when Pugin's letter was published and a response from his son-in-law, George Maycock, attempted to rebuff any adverse criticism.³⁹ No further mention of the partnership has been traced. As with the near-catastrophic outcome to his design of Birmingham Town Hall (1832–4), Hansom again found himself in a state of considerable turmoil.⁴⁰ It is not surprising that he then worked on his own for the following seven years.

36 Muir 1993.

37 CF Hanson built St Lawrence's church at Ampleforth. However it was at this point that something occurred at Ampleforth, the details of which are not clear, but it led to CF leaving the work unfinished, with his brother taking over the completion of the decoration and fittings. This could well have been what EJ was referring to when he said his uncle was stealing his father's work.

38 *Tablet*, 26.11.1864, p 763.

39 *Tablet*, 3.12.1864, p 779; George Bernard Maycock was married to Sophia Louisa Hansom and worked as a designer for Hardmans.

40 Hansom won the competition to build Birmingham Town Hall, but having unwisely agreed to be financial guarantor, his resources were overstretched and he was made bankrupt, Harris 2010, pp 25–36.

News and comment

Re-evaluating St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate

from David Garrard

Such is the fame of A.W.N. Pugin's cluster of buildings on the cliff-top at Ramsgate – principally his family house, the Grange (1843–4) and the noble church of St Augustine (1845–51) – that few visitors pay much attention to the more reticent group on the other side of the road. But the buildings of St Augustine's Abbey, begun by his eldest son E.W. Pugin in the early 1860s and later enlarged by various hands, have recently been brought to prominence by the decision of the dwindling Benedictine community to sell up after 150 years on the site, and to move to more compact and easily maintained accommodation near Guildford in Surrey.

With the imminent departure of the monks, new uses for the buildings must now be contemplated. Residential conversion is the most likely, although it is unclear to what extent this would allow the preservation of the key interiors and the distinctive corridor plan. Concerns such as these prompted a request to English Heritage that the abbey's Grade II listing be revised upwards to reflect both its intrinsic architectural quality and its close connection with the Grade I listed house and church across the road. A Grade II* listing for the abbey would, it was hoped, ensure a more stringently conservationist approach to its reuse.

The notion of the ideal Catholic community preoccupied the elder Pugin throughout his life, and he had various opportunities to realise it, both in print and on the ground – from the imagined 'Catholic town' and 'antient poor house' illustrated in *Contrasts* to the various convents, colleges and great houses he designed and built in the 1840s. Monasticism, the *ne plus ultra* of the Roman Catholic life, was never far from the heart of his ideal, and true enough his little fiefdom around the Grange was to include a Benedictine monastery, with St Augustine's as its conventual church. He died, however, before this part of his conception could be realised, leaving a plot of land for the monastic buildings but no plans for their construction.

Control of the church passed to Thomas Grant, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark, who in 1856 entrusted it to a group of British Benedictines from the abbey of Subiaco in Italy. A few years later, a gift from the wealthy Catholic convert Alfred Luck, Pugin's friend and fellow Ramsgate resident, allowed permanent accommodation to be built for the monks; this comprised the present south and west ranges, built to E.W.'s designs in 1860–1. In 1904 the community, by now an abbey, commissioned E.W.'s younger half-brother P.P. Pugin to build further accommodation, now the east wing; the short north wing was added in 1934–7 by Charles Canning Winmill, better known for his earlier work for the London County Council.¹ Meanwhile, in 1926, the Bergh Memorial Library was built to house the collection of books left by the bibliophile Abbot Bergh; the architect was E.W.'s nephew Charles Henry Purcell, a former pupil at the abbey school. (The school itself, also by E.W. Pugin, was demolished in 1973.)

The result of this convoluted history is an expansive cruciform group of buildings, whose sprawling plan contrasts strongly with the tight quadrangular layouts that the elder Pugin favoured for his monastic projects. At ground level, a long side-lit corridor runs the length of each wing, giving access to the principal rooms; these include a chapter-room and calefactory or common-room in the south wing, a wainscoted refectory in the west wing and, to the east, a small oratory with stalls and an abbot's throne. The upper floors contain the monks' cells. The buildings' construction, of knapped flint and brick with sparing use of stone, places them mid-way up the overall hierarchy of the site, between the brick-built Grange and the flint-and-stone church – to which they are connected via a tunnel beneath the road. The details of E.W.'s ranges, faithfully followed in P.P.'s east wing, belong to the forceful 'modern Gothic' idiom that marked his maturity as an architect: see, for example, the knobbly cogged-brick surrounds to the ground-floor windows, or the plate-glass sashes beneath beetling dormers at the upper level. The Bergh Library, originally separate from the main building but now linked to it by a corridor, is in a more restrained late-Gothic style.

The arguments over the matter of the listing grade are finely balanced. On the one hand, the site as a whole is of unique significance in the history of nineteenth-century architecture: the Ramsgate group was A.W.N. Pugin's most personal project, in which – being both client and architect – he had the opportunity to work unfettered by the difficult relationships and funding shortages that dogged the rest of his career, and where, in the Grange and St Augustine's church, he arguably brought both his domestic and his ecclesiastical architecture to their highest pitch. E.W. Pugin was of course a major architect in his own right, and his powerfully detailed Ramsgate buildings amply express his move beyond his father's painstaking archaeological revivalism towards a more self-consciously original, High Victorian approach to the Gothic.

On the other hand, as far as we know the abbey complex reflects no specific design intention of the elder Pugin's, nor does it rank among E.W.'s major works: leaving aside the fact that less than half of the existing structure was actually designed by him, it must be admitted that St Augustine's lacks the consistency and formal coherence of, say, his domestic ranges at Belmont and Gorton. Although P.P.'s extension follows the details of his half-brother's work assiduously, the same cannot be said of Winmill's awkward north range, nor of the attenuated late Gothic of Purcell's library block, and the combined whole makes up a rather awkward and straggling composition. The interiors, though interesting for their plan, are largely utilitarian in character. Furthermore, recent decades have not been especially kind to these buildings: the massive chimneystacks that once crowned the roof have been truncated at ridge level, and the timber sashes of the dormers have nearly all been replaced in UPVC. Although the abbey's 'group value' with its Grade I predecessors to the east is of great significance, the later buildings do read very much as a distinct entity: the line of St Augustine's Road clearly separates them from the church and house opposite, a division further accentuated by the high flint wall that encloses the precinct.

It is quite normal for different portions of an important architectural group to be listed at different grades. At Cheadle, for example, only A.W.N.'s great church of St Giles is Grade I, with his convent, school and churchyard cross at Grade II. The latter grade is an extremely broad category, one that includes over 90 per cent of all listed buildings nationwide. Given this, it was felt that to upgrade the abbey buildings to Grade II* would be to overstate their genuine (but not outstanding) architectural quality, and their essentially subsidiary place in the group as a whole. A much more detailed list description has been issued, highlighting the importance of the plan form and of the key interiors, and it is hoped that this will help to inform intelligent and respectful decision-making on the future of the site. The listing grade, however, remains as before.

Note

1 See Howell 2003.

The Gothic Revival in Gloucestershire

from Graham Parry

The Pugin Society summer trip this year headed for Gloucestershire. This is not a county one associates with A.W.N. Pugin, but he has a shadowy presence there, and his spirit informs a great deal of gothic building in the region, which is thick with Victorian churches. We began, as Pugin himself did, in a Regency world, for we stayed at the splendid Queen's Hotel at the end of The Promenade, built in the later 1830s, in the manner of John Nash. We were accompanied by Alan Brooks, who revised the Pevsner volume of Gloucestershire: the full extent of Alan's architectural expertise would become evident in the next few days.

We launched off on a grey day to that hidden masterpiece of early Victorian country house construction, Woodchester Park. It lies deep in a remote and picturesque valley, down a long sloping path some half-mile long. Woodchester has an authentic Pugin connection, for the owner of the estate, William Leigh, was a recent convert to Catholicism who commissioned Pugin to prepare designs for his intended mansion. That was in 1845. After a year, during which he produced the plans, Pugin asked to be relieved of the commission because of the pressure of work elsewhere. It took another decade before work began in earnest, this time with designs from the office of C.F. Hansom, where one of his assistants, Benjamin Bucknall, assumed control of the scheme. Bucknall was familiar with the stone-building traditions of



Figure 171: Graham Parry and Society President Sarah Houle estimate the height of the spire at Highnam. Current Hon Treasurer Ralph Bowmaker to the left, and his predecessor Oonagh Robertson on the far right

Julia Twigg.

the Cotswolds; he was also an admirer – and a translator – of Viollet-le-Duc, with whom he had friendly relations. As Alan Brooks explained to us, ‘at Woodchester, Bucknall attempted to build a house based on Viollet’s theories of Gothic as a rational system of building in stone. Everything was to be of stone, not just the walls, roofs and vaults, but the staircases, gutters, downpipes, even the bath’. The house remained unfinished, as work stopped towards the end of the 1860s, but the exterior is complete, and the abandoned state of the interior enables us to look at all the structural features that remain exposed to view. The dramatic vistas of resilient stone ribs arching across the great spaces of the rooms was truly exciting to all who are curious about how Victorian architects managed to lift vast weights into the air and hold them there with all the settled composure that their haut-bourgeois patrons required. The external masonry is of the highest quality I have met with in a Victorian mansion. Internally, amongst all the vast spaces, the beautiful, austere bathroom, with its bath made from a single block of stone, struck a chill into us as we imagined the penitential masochism of those who would use it.

The Leigh family signalled their devotion to Catholicism by making their chapel the central part of a triple segmented house. Here the family, whose great rooms lay on the south side, could meet with the servants, whose rooms were in the north wing, darkly close to the tree-covered side of the valley. The chapel is a lavish exercise in fourteenth-century French decorated gothic, tall, splendidly vaulted and richly carved. An elaborate rose window fills the west wall. Pugin would have approved of the siting of this chapel, and the style and execution of its stonework. A sanctuary now for bats rather than for a pious Midlands family, Woodchester had the air of something encountered in a Gothic dream, which might vanish when we turned our backs on it.

When William Leigh bought the Woodchester estate in 1845, he also commissioned a new church from Pugin: more than a church indeed, but buildings for a Catholic community of

Passionists. The Passionists or Discalced Friars, came to England in 1841, and were the first Catholic order to wear their habit in public. It was a Passionist, Fr Dominic Barberi, who received Newman into the Catholic Church. Pugin drew up plans, but fell out with Leigh when he wanted to scale down the church to a more modest size, a change which Pugin believed would result in 'a miserable job'. The new architect for the church of Our Lady of the Annunciation was C.F. Hansom, who was much influenced by Pugin's manner, for there are distinct recollections of St Giles, Cheshire, in the church that he built. Plenty of polychromatic decoration to delight the eye and raise the spirit, and a striking, though not awe-inspiring wallpainting of the Last Judgment over the chancel arch by Henry Doyle, in the manner of Dyce. Leigh chose to be buried in this church. His effigy shows him clad in the robes of a Knight of St Gregory, holding a model of his church. Nearby is the tomb chest of Francis Nicolson, the Carmelite Archbishop of Corfu, who died at Woodchester in 1855 while enjoying the hospitality of William Leigh. Both these memorials are in the Chapel of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, a dedication that intrigued me. I found that these martyrs were soldiers of the Legio XII Fulminata, The Thundering Legion, who suffered in the persecutions of the early fourth century by Constantine's co-Emperor Licinius at Sebaste in Armenia. These Christian soldiers were left naked on a frozen lake, with baths of hot water on the banks to tempt them to abandon their faith. Their legion already had a Christian history, for in the time of Marcus Aurelius the prayers of its Christian soldiers had produced a sudden rainstorm which saved the Roman army in a difficult battle, a miracle recorded by Eusebius, and discussed by Newman in his *Essay on miracles*. Edward Leigh's church was full of unusual associations which must have made the locals blink with bewilderment as a Catholic convert introduced cults and missions that must have seemed so exotic to English eyes. There were other interesting memorials in this church: a plaque of thanksgiving that Leigh's son had survived shipwreck in Kangaroo Bay, Australia, and a notice of a parishioner devoured by a tiger in Bengal. Here too was a First World War memorial to George Archer-Shee, the Winslow Boy whose cause célèbre was dramatised by Terence Rattigan. In the play he is a naval cadet, which was indeed the case, but he transferred from the navy to the army, and was killed on the Western Front, and lies buried at Ypres.

The Passionist community at Woodchester was replaced by Dominicans in 1850, and all the monastic buildings were demolished in 1971.

G.F. Bodley had a strong presence in our encounter with Gloucestershire Gothic. He designed All Saints, Selsey, early in his career, in 1858, and made a memorable job of it. The church sits on a steep slope overlooking the Severn valley. Externally simple, with a powerful western tower that culminates in a high-pitched saddleback gable, it has an architectural character that recalls churches in south-west France. Internally, the details are rather chunky: the heavy pillars of red-brown granite, the rounded alabaster pulpit like an ecclesiastical pill-box facing the congregation, the solid font and the powerfully carved choir stalls declare that this is a church built to resist time and change. The quality of the stonework at Selsey is superb. The particular appeal of the church is the stained glass, for Bodley gave Morris and Co the opportunity to execute the firm's first commission to produce glass for a church, in 1861. Philip Webb designed the overall scheme, and Morris, Rossetti, Madox Brown, Burne-Jones and Webb all contributed windows, with strong designs in deeply coloured glass. The Creation window by Morris and Webb stood out for its combination of abstract patterning and bold figures.

On to Uley, where the church of St Giles was rebuilt by S.S. Teulon in 1857–8. Situated high above a valley, it has a lovely position. Teulon's furnishings have a characteristically eccentric style: odd proportions to the arches, unconventional tracery, unusual wooden bracing to the roof, etc. There is much glass by Wailes in the church, along with some by Kempe. It turned out that Alan Brooks, our cicerone, has a particular interest in Victorian glass, and has gone to some lengths to identify the designers and makers of the windows in Gloucestershire churches. In this respect, he has corrected one of the weaknesses of Pevsner's county guides, for these have minimal details of Victorian stained glass; either Pevsner had relatively little interest in the medium, or more likely, did not have the time to find out about the commissions, given the pressured timetables of his visits. Alan brought a note of connoisseurship to our encounters with a wide range of Victorian artists in glass.

Another striking church by Teulon came next, at Huntley, built in 1862–3. Here he indulged in lavish Gothic decoration on all sides: ornately carved capitals, a pulpit that is an elaborately

carved stone enclosure, heavy perforated wooden arches in the chancel, Minton floor-tiles overall and banded stone walls. The area around the north chapel is almost Byzantine in character. At times it seemed as if Burges had got caught up in the commission as well.

If the profusion of detail at Huntley was hard to take in, then the final church on the day's itinerary was overwhelming in its richness. This was Highnam, where a perfect estate church stands in a large park. This is the church of the Holy Innocents, erected 1847–51 at the expense of the owner of the estate, Thomas Gambier Parry, and designed by Henry Woodyer, a pupil of Butterfield. It has a confident west tower and spire, and internally it is dimly glorious with polychromatic decoration. The conception and execution owe much to Pugin's St Giles' at Cheadle. Goodhart-Rendel thought it was 'the fulfilment of the Pugin ideal' (as if that hadn't already been realised at Cheadle) and the architectural enthusiasts within the Oxford Movement considered it as 'a very conspicuous landmark in the Ecclesiological revival'. Gambier Parry was a devoted Tractarian, and the church is his declaration of faith. The profusion of carving defeats description: here is a Ruskinian paradise where sculptors and carvers were able to express themselves freely and imaginatively on The Stones of Highnam. The overwhelming experience of the church is provided by the wall-paintings, designed and executed by Gambier Parry himself. He had studied the techniques of the Italian painters of the Quattrocento, and had invented the medium of 'spirit fresco', calculated to survive in the English climate. His paintings of the Last Judgment, with Christ presiding in a mandorla, on the chancel arch, have recently been most effectively restored, and they shine out with a pre-Raphaelite delight in strong Italian colours. The fanfaring angels are Fra Angelico translated to Gloucestershire. Many readers will know Gambier Parry's painted vault in the nave at Ely cathedral, but his work at Highnam church is, to my eyes, vastly more pleasing and inspiring.

Gambier Parry's inherited fortune came from the East India Company. He ran through it in his lifetime, by architectural works, residence in Italy, art patronage and collecting. His large collection of Italian mediæval and Renaissance painting eventually became part of the Courtauld Gallery. One of his sons was Hubert Parry, the composer, whose memorial brass is in the south chapel. In this same chapel is a most affecting neo-classical bust by William Theed of his first wife, Anna Maria, incongruously placed in a gothic frame. As we slowly circulated around the church, we became aware that we were in an exhibition hall of mid-Victorian glass. Windows designed by Pugin and executed by Hardman, an excellent run of windows by Wailes, works by Clayton & Bell, and Ward & Nixon, and O'Connor: a superb display.

On a shining Saturday we set off for Rodmarton Manor, one of the finest creations of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the Cotswolds. Its semi-circular gabled frontage looked perfect in the summer sun, which brought out all the varied textures of the stone. Begun in 1909 by Ernest Barnsley for Claud Biddulph, Rodmarton is still lived in by the family, so we were taken round by the son-in-law of the current owner, whose friendly and relaxed presentation made our visit such a pleasant experience. The furniture is a brief history of Cotswolds craftsmanship: work by Ernest Gimson, Peter Waals, and Ernest and Sidney Barnsley fills the house. Ceramics decorate most rooms, those by the De Morgans being notably fine. The spaciousness and airiness of the rooms enhance the setting for the simple woodwork and the colourful ceramics alike. Outside, the Old English gardens were a blur of colour and sound: blossoms, bees and birdsong. This was deepest Gloucestershire, and surely the nearest station was Adelstrop.

Tetbury next, prosperous Tetbury, where we looked over the late eighteenth-century church of St Mary's, a spacious airy hall church with vast windows and tall spindly columns that look forward to the cast iron pillars of the 1840s. The architect was Francis Hiorne of Warwick who worked in a simple Gothick style that seems derived more from engravings than from a study of church buildings. The box pews are entered from behind, as boxes in a theatre, for a passage goes three sides around the church following the walls. The large galleries, also on three sides, give a clear idea of the size of the congregation in the days when church-going was de rigueur. St Mary's possesses a set of plate by Pugin. Pevsner draws attention to a memorial inscription here: 'In a vault underneath / lie several of the Saunderses, / late of this parish: particulars / the Last Day will disclose.'

In mid-Victorian times, additional provision for Anglican worship was provided by St Saviour's, a small Tractarian church designed by S.W. Daukes which has survived more or

less unaltered. Built in 1846–8, its chancel roof was decorated by Hardman to designs by Pugin, who also appear to have collaborated on the reredos, pinnacled and richly carved. Hardman's large and elaborately wrought metal gasolier aroused much admiration, which then provoked an enquiry into this early introduction of gas into the church, for there were numerous gas fittings in evidence. Even the pulpit appeared to have been gas-lit. The church was full of agreeable detail.

We were now close to Cirencester, but there was still one pre-prandial church to be seen: Holy Trinity, Watermoor, by George Gilbert Scott, 1847–51, with additions by John Oldrid Scott at the end of the century. Handsome, heavy, with a pervasive dull gleam of coloured marbles, it is an imposing interior. Excellent windows by O'Connor, satisfactory windows by Hardman, sealed us into what I found was a somewhat oppressive atmosphere. Over-earnest perhaps, it did not lift my spirits in the way that St Saviour's had done in Tetbury.

Lunch in Cirencester was cut short, for many of us, by the desire to spend as much time as possible in the wonderful parish church, but since this is mostly a late-mediaeval structure, and not on our Victorian agenda, I pass by its glories in silence. Semi-restored by a rapid lunch, we were immediately fortified by the sight of our second Bodley church in two days, St John the Baptist at France Lynch. From the outside it has a barn-like appearance, but inside, the proportions are very fine. The stone-work here is exceptional, and there is much polychromy and marble inlay on display. The church is very well stocked with high-quality fittings: metalwork, woodwork, encaustic tiles, all in good order. The angel for this church was the Rev Thomas Keble, the brother of the hero of the Oxford Movement, John Keble.

Our next church was quite remarkable. St Michael's, Bussage, clings to a very steep hillside, a beautiful if precarious setting. It was built in 1844–6 by James Park Harrison, and once again, the man who commissioned it – in rather unusual circumstances – was Thomas Keble. One of the consequences of the Oxford Movement was a desire to bring the glories of High Anglican worship to the benighted and even pagan poor of Victorian England; this ambition frequently resulted in the building of splendidly furnished churches in the working class districts of big industrial cities. Bussage is the result of this missionary spirit being directed to the rural poor. In 1839, some 20 Oxford alumni began to raise money to build a church in what they deemed to be the poorest part of England. Being Oxford men, their experience was restricted to the Thames valley, and they were convinced that the depths of national poverty were to be sounded in rural Gloucestershire, where a squatter community of weavers eked out an existence in the Toadsmoor Valley. St Michael's Bussage was built for them. Harrison, an architect of modest experience, but a Christ Church man and a prominent member of the Oxford Architectural Society, did an admirable job. The *Ecclesiologist* approved, even if it had some reservations about the pitch of the roof. Bodley was co-opted in 1854 to build a south aisle, reserved for the inmates of the House of Mercy – fallen women, I imagine – at nearby Brownshill. Fresh from Gilbert Scott's office, Bodley delivered a lavish and vigorously decorated scheme, with a splendid reredos. The stained glass throughout the church was exceptional. We were welcomed on arrival by Fr John, the long-serving vicar, who was entirely at home in his liturgically rich church. It is not often that the Pugin Society is bidden to prayer, but we bowed our heads as Father John bade us remember Keble, Pusey, Froude and John Henry Newman. Froude must have been Hurrell Froude, one of the early losses of the Oxford Movement, and the Newman we were remembering was very likely the Anglican Newman. That at least was the impression I had. The prayers concluded with an Ave Maria. St Michael's was dense with the paraphernalia of Anglo-Catholic worship. The altar was crowded with candlesticks and burnished plate, with a prayer-book rest, a veiled container for the host, and cruets for wine and water. There was a sacring bell, and a fine statue of the Virgin. There was even a brass bell that could be rung to announce the arrival of the minister in Bodley's porch. A pleasant lingering scent of incense pervaded the church. The loyalty of Fr John to his High Church principles was patent, and I felt that here, in this unfrequented Gloucestershire valley, we had come across one of the surviving outposts of the Oxford Movement.

Moving on towards Stroud (and passing Slad, the home of Laurie Lee, author of *Cider with Rosie*), we stopped to see All Saints, Uplands, by Temple Moore (1908–10). Walking up the steep streets to this large church in pale stone was like being in a French hill town. The interior of All Saints had a French feel to it, as well. Spacious and high, with powerful bare stonework, and clear light from large windows, the effect created was one of profound harmony. We lingered here longer than expected because of the peculiar influence this church exerted over us.

Sunday was devoted to Cheltenham. First to Cheltenham College, formerly a boys' school, but now co-educational. The original buildings are from 1842–3 by James Wilson of Bath, a spare but not unattractive exercise in early Victorian 'Perpendicular', made particularly pleasing by the warm Cotswold stone. The present dining hall is the former chapel, which externally pays homage to King's College Chapel. Our attention focused primarily on the large new chapel, built in 1893–6 by Henry A. Prothero. This too owes much to Eton and King's, though the great stone reredos with numerous statues recollects New College and Winchester cathedral. The chapel is an exhibition hall of Late Victorian craftsmanship, in wood, stone, bronze and glass.

The mediæval parish church of Cheltenham, St Mary's, stands in a tree-filled space in the middle of this predominantly Georgian and Regency town. The hour we spent there was far from sufficient to read all the memorials of military men who retired here after campaigns that spanned the world, and of members of the quality who came to Cheltenham to recruit their health, but failed. There is an engaging memorial to the woman who kept the door to the Pump Room for some fifty years, and one to a gentleman who, having developed the therapeutic amenities of the spa, 'became a confirmed valetudinarian'.

Our final destination of the morning was the glorious church of All Saints, Pittville, the masterpiece of John Middleton, built in 1866–8, evidently at the height of Cheltenham's prosperity. The very large, sumptuous interior contains such richness of furnishing and splendour of art that the Victorian Society could spend an entire day there. Much of the decorative work is by H.A. Prothero, including the elaborate gilded ironwork font-cover, the organ-case, and the large yet delicate wrought-iron chancel screen. In the face of this treasury, our guide Alan Brooks, never short of information or knowledge of local detail, quoted us Goodhart-Rendel's description of All Saints: a marvellous example of 'what Gilbert Scott was always aiming at and never achieved . . . complete Gothic self-assurance with Victorian punch'. It is surely more than this, for the decorative scheme has delicacy as well as boldness, subtle colours as well as strong ones. John Middleton deserves to be a better known architect than he is.

The coda to the day's visits was St Gregory's, one of C.F. Hansom's best churches, begun in 1854. With its pleasing tower and spire, it stands very well. The fine, tall interior is filled with carving of a quality that reminds us that the Gothic Revival produced throughout England a new class of competent and inspired carvers and craftsmen, whose traditions continued up to the Second World War. Of particular note at St Gregory's is the exceptional glass by Hardman that fills the entire church.

These few days were a revelation of unknown and unfamiliar churches, and showed us an astonishing range of craftsmanship. Our profound thanks to Julia Twigg, who organised the whole event, and to Alan Brooks, whose knowledge added understanding and pleasure to every place we visited.

Designing a church for liturgy: G.H. Fellowes Prynne and St Martin's, Worcester

by Andrew Fisher

Come with me on a journey where we might stop and visit some of the finest Victorian and Edwardian church buildings. At Torquay, we might marvel at St John's perched over the edge of the harbour. At London we can see capital churches in our capital city. In Gloucester we might stop off at Highnam. At Cheadle, near Stoke-on-Trent, we find the master of neo-Gothic, A.W.N. Pugin, at work, his spire piercing the very heavens. At Manchester we rest awhile and gaze at the bulk of St Augustine's, Pendlebury, a standing sermon in sooty surroundings. And finally, we stop off at St Martin's, Worcester: a work of ecclesiastical, architectural brilliance. You might be wondering why a hospital chaplain is waxing lyrical about Victorian and Edwardian churches. Well, like me, let's have some patience (patients!) and I will explain.

Ever since I was a child I was fascinated by church architecture. My mum and dad weren't particularly religious, in fact my dad was quite anti-religious, but back where I lived in the Holy Land – Derbyshire – our local parish church had a particular attraction. The church, in a mining town called Alfreton, was the usual mediæval affair, built out of blackened mill



Figure 172: a recent view of St Martin's, Worcester, from the south west
 © Phil Draper www.churchcrawler.co.uk

stone. Set against its blackened tower face was a lovely black-and-white clock. And this clock used to fascinate me as I was being pushed around in my pushchair on the way to the nearby park. In fact, with me pointing up at the church tower and that lovely black and white clock, 'clock' was one of the first words that I learnt to say, much to the disappointment of mum and dad. That fascination of church architecture never left me. As a boy I devoured Ladybird books on what to look for inside a church and what to look for outside a church.

As a snotty teenager, I bored the pants off vicars and their churchwardens as they unlocked their, sadly, locked churches and let me look around.

As the title of my paper suggests, I want to talk about George Halford Fellowes Prynne, who designed St Martin's in Worcester. Just as importantly, however, I want to say something about why I think churches are special and I want us to think about what church buildings are for. But more about that later, because first of all I want us to go on another journey. Not across our green and pleasant land again, this time I want us to journey back in time; back to the very beginning of the great nineteenth century boom in church building.

The date is 1818, and the Church Building Society has just been set up. Parliament, which had a bit more money and a bit more faith in those days, voted a million pounds for the building of new churches and they set up a commission to deal with the matter. The government made another grant in 1824, and that was the last time that the Church of England received any such help from the State.

The new churches that were built were called Commissioners' churches, or Waterloo churches, because of the recent Napoleonic Wars. These were tumultuous times in Europe and the more well-to-do folk in England were worried that the plebs might revolt like they had done across the channel. The well-to-do Church of England was also worried because if the plebs were not yet plotting revolution, they were certainly becoming Baptist or Methodist or whatever, and leaving poor Mother Church behind. Both the Church of England and the government thought that in building more churches this tide could be stemmed and the public put back on a more even keel.

So the Commissioners' churches were built, and to advertise their presence in the growing towns and cities, many of the Commissioners' churches made a grand show with tall pinnacles and fancy towers. Many of the Commissioners' churches were deliberately built on hills. Here they could dominate their surroundings. Close to Worcester, some grand Commissioners' churches include St George's in Kidderminster and St James' in Dudley. Many of the parish churches in Stoke-on-Trent are Commissioners' churches. They were designed to seat as many folk as possible for the least amount of money. And to give an idea of what could be achieved, some of the Commissioners' churches in Stoke-on-Trent can comfortably seat a congregation of 2,000, many more than can be seated, say, in Lichfield cathedral.

The Commissioners' churches were designed in either the Greek or Gothic style. It didn't seem to matter which, although a Gothic church did not have to have great classical columns and pediments and so they were cheaper to build. Regardless of style, liturgically, Commissioners' churches were built as great barns for preaching in; the altar and any

sanctuary furniture were quite subsidiary. The parish choir, if churches had one, were tucked away into a gallery. The sermon was the important thing and preachers were exalted in their huge pulpits six, seven or even eight foot above contradiction.

The Commissioners' churches were the flagship buildings of the early Victorian Church of England, but as pieces of church design they had their drawbacks. They did their job as church buildings but even the very best of them, by the very best of church architects, have a papery feel about them. Their architecture is too regular, too taut, too nervous in handling. The details look stuck on, rather than an integral part of the building. The slender pinnacles might blow away in the faintest of breezes and the tapering towers might topple in the slightest of gales. I always get the feeling that St George's in Kidderminster could slip down the hill into the bypass at any given moment.

In the end it wasn't the papery architecture or the wind that did away with the Commissioners' churches. It was a trumpet blast from one man, and interestingly not a man from within the Church of England. That man was A.W.N. Pugin, and for church architecture and church architects, Pugin's vehemence and Pugin's pen were far mightier than any sword. It was far sharper and more pointed too! Pugin's polemic was as forceful and grand as his name suggests.

In May 1839 the Camden Society was formed as a club for Cambridge undergraduates who shared a common interest in Gothic church design. The Camden Society's first activity was to collect information about churches across the country. The Society amassed so much information about mediæval parish churches that it soon came to be seen as the authority on church buildings. This accolade was not misplaced and the Society's vigour in examining and defining every detail of the mediæval church was enormous. The Society's magazine, the *Ecclesiologist*, began to encourage and publish heated debates. Should churches be orientated true east or not? Which period of Gothic is the right style to use? What was the function of small openings called lychnoscopes? If you know, friends, answers on a postcard, please! Like Pugin, the Camden Society fostered the unshakeable belief that humanity could only regain the perceived piety of the Middle Ages by imitating them. 'We know that medieval Catholic ethics gave rise to Catholick architecture' wrote the *Ecclesiologist*, 'may we not hope that, by a kind of reversed process, association with Catholick architecture will give rise to Catholic ethics?'

In 1841, the same year that Pugin published *The true principles*, the Camden Society published a pamphlet entitled *A few words to church-builders*, laying down their own doctrines about what a church should be. The pamphlet reads a bit like a cookery book. The authors recommended an 'Early English' Gothic style for small chapels, but 'Decorated' or 'Perpendicular' Gothic for larger churches. Like the Camden Society, we will be relieved to know that St Martin's in Worcester is a 'Decorated' Gothic church. The two essential parts of a church were the nave, and a well-defined chancel not less than a third of the length of the nave. Aisles were recommended, because a tripartite church symbolised the Holy Trinity, but a single aisle was acceptable, if that was all funds permitted. A tower could be in any position, except over the altar: that would be sacrilege. But it was not essential. Stone should be used, preferably not brick, but flint was acceptable too. The chancel to be was strictly for the clergy. It should be raised at least two steps above the nave, and the altar should be raised higher still. The chancel and nave should be separated by a roodscreen, 'that most beautiful and Catholick appendage to a church' according to the authors. The authors also had a liking for sedilias and aumbries. The font must be in the nave, they said, and near a door. Seating should not be in closed pews, but open benches or chairs, and galleries were anathema.

The popularity of the Camden Society's handbook soon led some zealous church-wardens to seek advice on how to restore their dilapidated old buildings or their embarrassingly out of date Commissioners' churches. These solicitations were answered with equal enthusiasm and the Society's mission changed from mere antiquarianism to architectural consultation. As their mission changed, so did the *Ecclesiologist*, which soon began to publish architectural criticism, as vehement and sharp-tongued as ever Pugin was. In its heyday the *Ecclesiologist* reviewed over 1,000 churches and never hesitated to lambast both a building and its architect for anything inconsistent with its views. A write-up could literally make or break an architect.

Interestingly, the *Ecclesiologist's* verdict on an architect's work was determined as much by the architect's personal life as his building design. Although Pugin was the pioneer of the Gothic Revival and had similar tastes to those of the Camden Society, he was slammed for his

Roman Catholicism. Subsequently, Pugin fell out of favour and became seen as an eccentric. Likewise, the *Ecclesiologist* says of Thomas Rickman, a Quaker and architect of St James', Hartlebury, 'Many have really felt it a stumbling block that a person of Mr Rickman's religious persuasion should be regarded as a benefactor to Christian Art' and 'he did very little...and his churches are monuments of extreme ecclesiological ignorance'.

By now very self-assured, the Camden Society went on to publish books such as the *Hierugia Anglicana*, which sought to prove that mediæval Catholic ritual had lived on in the Church of England past the Reformation and was therefore the proper way to worship. One of its most important works was *The symbolism of churches and church ornaments*, also known by the name of the mediæval bishop who inspired it, Durandus. In this book, the authors argued that absolutely every architectural element of the mediæval church building was religiously symbolic. They sought to prove that Gothic churches represented a Christian piety and thought well above that of the nineteenth century: 'Is it possible', the authors asked, 'to conceive that the Church which invented so deeply symbolical a system of liturgy should have rested content with an unsymbolical building for its practice?' Their argument complete, the rest of the book goes on to give examples of symbolism:

- Symbols of the Holy Trinity
 1. The triple division of nave, chancel and sanctuary
 2. The arrangement of arcade, triforium and clerestory
 3. The altar steps
 4. The triple division of the windows, placed at the east of the church
 5. The numbers three and six
- The Atonement is symbolised by a cross-shaped plan and gable crosses
- The communion of saints is symbolised by monuments and a lady chapel
- Windows symbolise the light of the world
- A circle typifies the crown of the King of Kings
- A window of two lights represents the two natures of Christ, or the mission of the disciples two by two
- Doors symbolise Christ as the Door, and the entrance through much tribulation into the Kingdom of God
- Pointed arches represent the hands in prayer

The list goes on. At the close of the book the authors proclaimed that church architects must 'take a religious view of their profession' and that 'we do protest against the merely business-like spirit of the modern profession, and demand from them a more elevated and directly religious habit of mind'. And with that in mind we must think a little about the architect of St Martin's.

George Halford Fellowes Prynne was born on 2 April 1853 at Wyndham Square in Plymouth. George was the second son of the Rev George Rundle Prynne and Emily Fellowes. As well as his elder brother, Edward Alfred, he had a brother, Albert Bernard, and two sisters. His father was a well-known figure in religious circles of the time, being outspoken in his support of high churchmanship in the Anglican Church, and espousing the views of both the Oxford Movement and the Camden Society. We have very little information about George Fellowes Prynne's childhood. But he cannot have failed to be influenced by his father's constant striving and indomitable spirit. Prynne senior was heavily involved in education, ministry to the sick, supporting the poor and preaching the gospel.



Figure 173: a recent interior view of St Martin's, Worcester
© Phil Draper www.churchcrawler.co.uk

George junior was sent away to school, first of all to St Mary's College, Harlow. He went on to Chardstock College, and then to Eastman's Royal Naval Academy at Southsea. An impression of his life as a young man can be obtained from Fellowes Prynne's own notes, which were current on his 44th birthday in 1897. It is clear that architecture was not a profession that he had really thought about. Instead he had spent time studying privately with a tutor near Oxford, with a view to becoming ordained but, as Fellowes Prynne puts it, 'difficulties arose as to the expense of a University education'.

Fellowes Prynne only became interested in architecture when his brother Edward was aiming to enter the office of George Edmund Street, the famous London architect and designer of the grand church of St John's, Torquay. Little did Fellowes Prynne know at that time what an important influence that eminent architect was to have on his life. From his notes we can let him take up the story:

At the age of 18...an offer came from an uncle, to get me a berth with a nephew of his who had taken land, and was farming in the Western states of America. I started on my new life's career. The experience of Western farming life was both trying and severe, especially during the last nine months of the nearly 2 years spent in the then wild West. 26 years ago the states of Iowa and Nebraska presented a very different aspect to what they do at present...

It was in these parts that one got one's first experience in practical building, from log houses and barns, to a more respectable kind of brick and wooden house. It was here that I was initiated into the Mysteries of door and window-sash making – rough, but strong and practical.

Seeing the uselessness of throwing my life away in these parts, and that few Englishmen succeeded in making more than a bare living, and yet not wishing to return home like a bad penny, I started for Canada, landing at St. Catherines in winter of 1872, but I could obtain no employment. So I went on to Toronto, where I obtained temporary work in the office of an architect in the small way of business, but later on, through the introduction of the Rev. Darling upon whom I had called, I got a place of Junior Assistant in the office of one of the best known Toronto architects, R. C. Windyer, who was at the time carrying out new Custom House buildings for the government.

The terms of my employment were to work for what I was worth, and very little it must have been at the time, considering that my only credentials were my natural taste for drawing and my experience in the Wild West. But work I did for dear life...With the kindness and sympathy that it would be hard to exaggerate, Mr. Windyer helped forward my studies giving me the use of his library and drawings...

By January 1875 I had gained a senior position in the office, and it was shortly after that my father received an offer from the late George Edmund Street R.A., to take me into his office. I may here remark as a point of interest that my father gave Mr. Street his first church, and that he (Mr. Street) had often expressed his gratitude to him for giving him this start, as the immediate outcome was 3 other churches in Cornwall.

On my return from America I worked in Mr. Street's office during 1875 and 1876, in after years, working with Swinfern Harris, R.J. Withers, A. Waterhouse R.A., and at the London School Board offices. I was a student at the Royal Academy 1876 and 77–78.

Fellowes Prynne went on to set up in his own practice in 1880, stating that his first work 'of importance' was the building of his father's church, St Peter's in Plymouth. The sanctuary, which was already built, was by Street, and so the link between Street and Fellowes Prynne continued. Fellowes Prynne went on to design many parish churches in England, mostly in the South East and South West, but always Gothic and always on a grand scale. The foundation stone for St Martin's, was laid on Saturday 9 October 1909. Fellowes Prynne also did much restoration work. All in all he is said to have been involved in over 200 buildings!

Pugin and the Camden Society looked for good Christian men to design good Christian churches and George Fellowes Prynne was a deeply religious man. Family prayers were said daily for the whole household and I think it's fair to say his deep sense of faith is communicated in his buildings. Fellowes Prynne was also totally dedicated to his family, and his family life was not without tragedy. He never recovered from the loss of his sons, Edgar and Norman, in the First World War and serious injuries suffered by his other sons Aubrey and Harold. His work shifted following the war almost exclusively to war memorials, right up to his death on 7 May 1927. Sir Edward Clarke wrote Fellowes Prynne's obituary in the magazine of St Peter's in Staines. It says a lot about the man, his character and his work, and as we hear these words we might just take a moment to look around this church, created by the same genius:

In Memoriam

GEORGE FELLOWES PRYNNE

All who are, or at any time have been, interested in our beautiful Church, will have heard with regret of the death of its gifted architect. George Prynne was the eldest son of the revered and beloved Father Prynne, who was for fifty years vicar of St. Peter's, Plymouth. For twenty of those years he was my kind and faithful friend, and when the time came for the division of the Parish of Staines, and the building of a new Church, it seemed natural that the name of St. Peter should be used here, and that the son of my old friend, who had already at Plymouth and at Budleigh Salterton shown a special capacity for ecclesiastical architecture, should be entrusted with the duty of designing the new building and superintending its erection.

He performed that most congenial task with a skill that amounted to genius, and an untiring diligence in supervising every detail of the work, even the dorsal and frontal and the sanctuary kneelers and cushions were designed by him. And his success at Staines had not a little to do with him being afforded subsequent opportunities of showing his great qualities as an architect. At Roehampton, Dulwich, Bournemouth, Worcester and Ealing there are notable examples of his skill, at Columb [sic] there is a partially erected cathedral, which if completed according to his designs, will be a notable example of the expression in architecture of religious devotion.

His life and work were cruelly shadowed by the Great War. The building of beautiful churches appears for the time to have ceased. And two of his sons gave their lives for their country. Through it all he was a Christian gentleman; modest, kindly, diligent and patient. His brother, Edward, eminent in another form of devotional art, supplied the beautiful windows of our Church, and before his death, completed the designs for the windows still unfilled. And St. Peter's stands as a worthy monument to the two brothers.

George Fellowes Prynne was a model architect for his time, and he produced model churches. He was born into a time when Gothic had been heralded as the true architecture, as the true Christian architecture, and his beloved Church of England had seeded the country with spires and pinnacles, buttresses and pointed arches. George Fellowes Prynne was a good, Christian man and, as we can see here in St Martin's, he could design beautiful churches, wonderful settings for the liturgy.

But by means of a conclusion, I want to go back to the beginning of my talk, when I said a little about my childhood and my love of church buildings. As a teenager I continued to explore my fascination in church architecture. I became a little obsessive, as we might say Pugin did and the Cambridge Camden Society did. Once I had learned how to drive and bought my first cars I used to set off around the Holy Land – Derbyshire – and around Staffordshire where I was at polytechnic. I used to spend time between lectures, and occasionally instead of lectures, visiting grand Victorian and Edwardian churches for their architecture.

Out of all those churches, two stuck out in my mind. The first was Pugin's gem at Cheadle, which I mentioned at the beginning, just outside of Stoke, with its 200ft spire pointing to the heavens like a holy missile. The other was Holy Angels at Hoar Cross, designed by George Frederick Bodley, a contemporary of Fellowes Prynne. Sitting on a little hill next to Hall Cross Hall, Holy Angels is a vision of Gothic splendour in stone. Both are outstanding buildings, but there was something else about those places. Standing inside these buildings, the prayers of the faithful were almost tangible, the presence of God could be felt, and that made a profound impression on me. Those two churches brought me to faith, not because of their architecture, as stunning as it is, but because of what those churches were for, because of whom these churches were for, because of God.

There needs to be something more than having a world class architect design a church. There needs to be something more than whether our churches are Greek or Gothic in style, or are made out of brick or stone. They need to be prayed in, they need to be worshipped in. They need to invite us into presence of God and to bring us soonest to our knees. This is what we have at St Martin's, and this is what this building has witnessed to for a hundred years. As the good book says, and I don't necessarily mean *Contrasts* or *Durandus*, I mean the Bible, 'This is the house of God, this is the gate of heaven'.

Book Reviews

It is the building that matters

The architecture of Sir Ernest George. By Hilary J. Grainger. Reading: Spire Books, 2011. ISBN 978-1-904965-31-2. RRP £65.00

reviewed by Andrew Saint

What might Pugin have made of Ernest George? That is the one question this partial review of Hilary Grainger's sumptuous monograph seeks to address. To put it another way: what did Ernest George think about architecture?

Patently Pugin and his immediate inheritors thought about it a lot: they bullied their voluble way along as they built, hectoring, pamphleteering, making allies, enemies and not a bad living from the process. The best of the architectural generation born in the 1830s responded with silence. They declined to write or lecture; some even refused to vulgarise their work by publishing it in the burgeoning building press. The effusions of those few younger Goths, chiefly church architects, who continued to debate and propagandise after 1870 read wanly after the declamations of Pugin, Scott and Street. Sedding, for instance, like many Arts and Crafts writers, circumscribes his thoughts with so much nuance and sentiment that they have no grip. No one ever complained that Pugin was hard to grasp, least of all when he wrote cant.

The defence of the 1830s generation is that they cared about buildings, not words. Buildings are what architects are paid to be good at; when they spout theory, it is mostly self-interested tosh. That of course is an English point of view. So the leading domestic architects of the new generation, Philip Webb, Norman Shaw and Ernest George, all feel more English than Pugin – Shaw despite his Scots birth, and George despite his weakness for Hanseatic and Burgundian curlicues. None of them wrote for publication, save under provocation. When they did so, the result always disappoints.

That Webb, Shaw and George were practical architects who kept their mouths shut does not mean that they did not think. For the first two there is abundant evidence that they did; both were outstanding correspondents. In Webb's published letters the concise and wry expression of his views tallies with the spare perfectionism of his designs. The main characteristics of Shaw's letters are Dickensian bounce and animal spirits. He could be robust when roused, and he was almost too quick to detect humbug – he suspected it in Morris, for example. Nevertheless he lacked an overall architectural philosophy or mission, as he was honest enough to know and privately to admit. Mostly he disguised it in his buildings, but about the direction of architecture Shaw was, or became, a pessimist.

What then of Ernest George? Here the mystery remains. Amid the many beautiful buildings beautifully illustrated in this book, not a single statement by their designer goes an inch beyond conventionality. Can someone so deft with his pencil (George was a much better pure artist than Webb, Shaw or Pugin), so competent with clients, so good at creating and inspiring a great architectural office, have been an intellectual dullard?

Poor Hilary Grainger has had little to go on. The office drawings have been pulped, there are no sketchbooks, and where correspondence survives it is about later jobs when George was past his peak. One longs to know what he thought he was doing at Rousdon, his breakthrough house of the early 1870s; or how he went about Harrington and Collingham Gardens, as taut in layout and plan as they are profuse in elevation, and surely a conscious corrective to stale Victorian town-house terraces; or whether George believed in the coffee-house movement for which at Streatham and Newark he devised such happy rivals and rebukes to the gin palaces. About all this we hear very little, not through the author's fault. The information is wanting.

Paradoxically, George was among the most published architects of his day. Sketching for him was a compulsion. Besides the books of pretty travel etchings he put out, perspectives of his houses appeared yearly on the Royal Academy's walls, thence to be taken up by the building journals through the new art of photolithography. But the accompanying letterpress is usually a nullity; at most one gets the client's and builder's name.

George's relationship with the Gothic Revival is instructive. While Webb and Shaw were shaped in the office of Street the ideologue, then reacted in their own ways, George never

enjoyed daily contact with the zealots. A wholly self-made man, he was articled to Samuel Hewitt, and set up in business as successor to Frederick Hering, both figures of utter obscurity. Probably the closest he came to the architectural ferment of the 1850s was during his evenings in the Royal Academy schools, when he would have sat through the uncommitted lectures of C.R. Cockerell or his successor E.M. Barry and heard his fellow students' comments.

George indeed started out with Gothic, but of an inconsistent kind, hard to make head or tail of. A lost design by the faceless Hewitt for the Manchester Assize Courts competition may have been his work. There are a couple of unrewarding churches with a dash of Street to them, one (unfinished) at Herne Bay, another, better preserved, for the Congregationalists at



Figure 174: 6-7 St Mary at Hill, Eastcheap (1873),
by Ernest George
photographed by Martin Charles.

Streatham, his local stamping ground. His three secular buildings in London of the early 1870s were sharper. They included Sotheran's bookshop in Piccadilly, long demolished, and a house in Stratton Street, big-boned, warehouse-like, peppered with decoration. Towering above these in quality is a miraculously preserved small office block and boardroom in the City for Sir Henry Peek of Rousdon. The building sits on the slope of St Mary at Hill, quiet yet boldly lopsided, all blank brickwork on the left but with tiers of windows on the right, one set alone having pointed relieving arches. A single shy panel with sunflowers in a pot points to the aesthetic future. These offices were going up simultaneously with Shaw's New Zealand Chambers nearby. Which would Pugin have endorsed, George's reduced rationalism or Shaw's casual manifesto for Englishness within the Victorian City? Perhaps each would have appealed to different facets of the Pugin brain.

The ultimate accolade to George's capacity in Gothic is another job built for Peek at the same time as the St Mary at Hill offices. That is the little church at Rousdon,

slipped in demurely beside the biscuit manufacturer's mighty sea-cliff mansion. It is odd that this modest building (now converted into a house) was not picked out years since as one of the most original performances of the Gothic Revival. If its plate tracery and stumpy columns betray its style as High Victorian (school of Street, more or less), it also defies convention. The miniscule cloister; the rustic roof with alternating sequences of scalloped and straight tiles, topped off by a quaintly secular cupola; the low tower contradicted by a pencil belfry in one corner: all this is like nothing and nobody else.

There may just be a hint in this church of Devey, but you only have to compare this or almost any building by George with one by Devey to see how infinitely superior and more serious an architect the former was. What they share is the instinct that a building ought to be a picture, as the north front of Rousdon Church superlatively is. Here perhaps is the clue to what Ernest George was striving to 'say'. At his best he was the most picturesque of the great Victorian architects, not in some strained art-historical signification, but in the sense that he spoke through his pencil and palette, and conceived his buildings as the finished and practical outcome of his sketching.

The idea of English picturesque architecture is familiar enough, but it tends not to be taken all that seriously, at any rate after Pugin. It is a commonplace that in his secular buildings Pugin took the tricks (or principles: why not?) of picturesque composition worked up by Nash, Wyattville and others, then put them through the mill in order to come up with the kind of architecture he could justify 'rationally'. George, it may be suggested, began from the other end, starting from the Gothic established in the 1860s and softening it into something more

pleasant and picture-like, to suit the easier-going character of his times. Shaw did likewise, but there were other things also going on with him, not least a residual loyalty to ecclesiological ideals. George is the pure exponent of Victorian architecture developed from the pencil.

Hilary Grainger's book has hardly got going when the Rousdon Church and the St Mary at Hill offices were built in the early 1870s. At that time George was working with Thomas Vaughan, a figure as obscure as Hewitt and Hering before him. All his great houses belong to the next phase of his career, and to the famous partnership of Ernest George and Peto. It is for the suavity, the fun, and the sheer professionalism of these houses of the 1880s, Buchan Hill, Batsford Park, Glencot, Shiplake Court and Woolpits in the country and Harrington and Collingham Gardens in town, that George will always be remembered; Grainger and her nonpareil photographer, Martin Charles (whose death was sadly announced while this review was in press, depriving Britain of its leading architectural photographer), are right to give them pride of place. If you like Gothic, a few churches belong to this phase of George's career. The most conspicuous, St Andrew's, Streatham, was gutted by fire in the 1990s, though its first-class vicarage survives. There was also a church in the Swiss Engadin for English tourists, but that too seems to have gone.

George should indeed be judged by the remarkable built record of his maturity, and by his legacy to Lutyens and others of the Arts and Crafts generation. But I believe it can be argued that the phase of this enigmatic architectural career, now handsomely chronicled at last, which most rewards enquiry was the time before the polished and well-connected Harold Peto came on board to smooth the practice's path. In his early days Ernest George was indeed truly earnest. That is the portion of his career which might most have intrigued Pugin.

Not yet answered

British romanticism and the Catholic Question: religion, history and national identity, 1778–1829. By Michael Tomko. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. ISBN 9780230279513. RRP £50.00

reviewed by Andrew Rudd

“‘What would satisfy you?’ said not long ago a gentleman to a very clever R[oman]. C[atholic]. lady, whose husband by the bye is an Agent of the present Duke of Norfolk. “That Church” replied she, pointing to a large parish church in Sheffield where the conversation took place – This, at the bottom of their hearts, is the feeling of them all’. So William Wordsworth wrote in letters to the Bishops of London and Lowther, the repetition of the anecdote betraying the anxiety in his mind. Wordsworth was giving voice to fears that appeared to be widely shared in early nineteenth-century Britain. Across the spectrum of mainstream political opinion, from those who opposed the encroachments of popery tooth and nail to the most vocal advocates of Catholic emancipation, the nagging doubt remained that Britain's national character, and above all its national church, was somehow threatened by granting relief to religious minorities.

Michael Tomko's thoughtful study examines how various authors of the Romantic period, including the English Catholic Elizabeth Inchbald, the sceptics Wordsworth and Robert Southey, the pro-Irish Percy Bysshe Shelley and the more equivocal Walter Scott, engaged with the so-called ‘Catholic Question’. The book's two-fold contention is that the Catholic Question provided animating subject-matter within literature of the period, and that both poetry and fiction evolved what were often oblique methods of codifying and interrogating Catholicism as it manifested itself within British history and culture.

The book accordingly spans the turbulent years between the two Roman Catholic Relief Acts of 1778 and 1829, encompassing the 1800 Act of Union between Britain and Ireland; the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts in 1828; the controversy surrounding the election of the Irish nationalist Daniel O'Connell as member of parliament for County Clare; and the British Government's not unjustified fears of religious civil war in Ireland. Drawing on the thought of Frederic Jameson, Tomko sees literature as proffering ‘imaginative or formal solutions’ to the seemingly irresolvable social contradictions bound up in the debate. *British romanticism and the Catholic Question* treats the various texts under consideration as out-workings of sectarian tension, and attempts to imagine how the nation and its fraught religious communities might coexist, however imperfectly.

Elizabeth Inchbald's two-volume novel *A simple story* (1791), Tomko argues, pictures relations between Protestants and Catholics as an unhappy marriage, personified through Dorriforth, a sympathetic Catholic priest, and Miss Milner, whom he marries, but who scandalously leaves him after an adulterous affair (a plotline that shocked Inchbald's contemporaries). Later in the novel, Dorriforth inherits a title of Lord Elmwood and becomes a far sterner figure who, according to Tomko, intentionally recalls an older and more authoritarian form of Catholicism that is the worse for the lack of contact with modifying Protestantism. The pair reach an uneasy truce and relations between them are tentatively restored towards the end of the novel.

If Inchbald's dispiriting conclusion is 'the failure of the national marriage', Tomko sees Wordsworth as striving after a national religion based on the *via media* that was neither superstitiously supine nor rationalistically reductive; one that fuses the best of Catholicism and Protestantism. After a preliminary reading of Wordsworth's *Essays upon epitaphs* (1810), Tomko moves on to a detailed analysis of Book IV of the long poem *The excursion* (1814), in which the three principal characters, the wanderer, the solitary and the unnamed poet-narrator, journey through a visionary landscape discoursing on how a nation's religious past impacts on the landscape, creating places of memory such as burial mounds and sacred wells. Pleasingly for readers of this journal, the trio find refuge in a church, described as 'not raised in nice proportions... / But large and massy; for duration built; / With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld / By naked rafter intricately crossed, / Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood'. Here is Wordsworth's ideal place of worship that is grounded in national history through its ranked monuments to local worthies and (for better or worse) scars of the Reformation, yet is numinous through its richness of devotional imagery. Surprisingly, given its obvious relevance to his thesis, Tomko rather hurries over Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical sketches* (1822), which explore British church history in extended detail and might have furnished much interesting material for further discussion.

In other chapters, Tomko considers Shelley's lurid revenge tragedy, *The Cenci* (1819), in which the morality of using violence to address social ills is explored, and Scott's bestselling novel *Ivanhoe* (1820). In the latter, in what must be said is a slightly strained interpretation on Tomko's part, Saxons are made to stand for Catholics whilst the Normans play the roles of their Protestant oppressors. Scott was ambivalent towards the Catholic Question and Tomko suggests that, as a consequence, the novel seeks ways of regulating the excesses of either party so that some measure of harmonious conviviality can be achieved, rather than seeking to pit adherents of the 'old religion' and the new against each other. Interestingly, given the simultaneous process of Jewish emancipation in Britain, there is no place in the New England for the character of Isaac and his daughter Rebecca, who must seek happier fortunes in Spain.

Tomko concludes that 'the Catholic Question should be viewed not only as crucial to the complex religious and cultural politics in the Romantic period but also as foundational to the shaping the parameters of civil society, national memory and religious difference in nineteenth-century Britain and beyond'. It is difficult to disagree that Romantics were drawn to this urgent and tempestuous topic, and this study goes a long way towards setting out its literary significance and illustrating how the Romantic imagination responded.

Also busy

The architectural achievement of Joseph Aloysius Hansom (1803–1882), designer of the Hansom cab, Birmingham Town Hall, and churches of the Catholic Revival. By Penelope Harris. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0773438514. RRP £69.95

reviewed by Roderick O'Donnell

Joseph Aloysius Hansom (1803–82) has not yet received his due from a biographer. Architect of Birmingham Town Hall (1831–4), initial patentee of the Hansom cab (1834) and founding-editor of the *Builder* (1843), he was bankrupted by the first and lost control of both the others. Autodidact, socialist, friend of Robert Owen, architectural chameleon on the one hand, he was the founder of one of the major architect dynasties of the Catholic Revival, commissioned by the Jesuits and the Catholic elite on the other. Who was the real Joseph Aloysius Hansom?

The son of a York builder, his schooling finished at 13; apprenticeship was followed by architectural pupilships, resulting in the 'Hansom and Welch' partnership (1827–34). Two-

thirds of this book is about his career to 1837, especially well-handled in the Birmingham Town Hall saga (pp 17–53). This was won at competition, but its unscrupulous Gradgrind building committee rode the naive young architect hard and finally out of town. The recently restored magnificent Roman Corinthian peripteral temple raised on a podium is a striking architectural success, if ‘professional’ failure. Pugin’s caricature of ‘The Trade’ in the 1836 frontispiece to *Contrasts* sums up this phase of Hansom’s career with Commissioners’ churches, Nonconformist commissions, and a workhouse, with only one Catholic church (left undated and undiscussed). But there were to be many other partnerships, stops, starts, and removals: to Leicestershire (twice), Clifton (twice), London (twice) as well as Preston and Edinburgh. So a lot more work needs to be done post-1837, the very year he quite suddenly got three Catholic church commissions.

And what of his religious position? Brought up as a Roman Catholic -‘Aloysius’ suggest Jesuit links – he is however here described as ‘co-worshipper’ with the Clerk of the Hinckley Poor Law Union (hardly likely to be a Catholic) in 1837. He therefore entered into the lists with Pugin, and the purview of this society. But he was not a Puginite (unlike his prolific brother Charles Francis, in partnership 1855–9), as his St Walburge, Preston (1850–4) shows. Is it here, in this bizarre building, that we should see the real Hansom, as a ‘Rogue architect’? And what then of Holy Name, Manchester (1869–71) for the Jesuits, and Arundel cathedral (1868–73) for the Duke of Norfolk? Does their stylistic discontinuity with St Walburge’s not suggest that they should really be given to his youngest son Joseph Stanislaus (partner 1869–1880)? Generally, Harris is shaky on ‘style’ and has difficulty evaluating sources, relying too much on Denis Evinson’s Courtauld MA thesis of 1966. Is his jejune view that an untried construction idea of Hansom’s was a precursor of the skyscraper worth quoting (p 159)? Can crucial episodes such as Pugin’s attack on Scoles (in *On the present state*) and Hansom’s reply (in the *Builder*) (pp 129–30) be given merely as page references in the MA? For Ratcliffe College (pp 137–8) (where both J.A. and C.F. Hansom followed on Pugin) she falls back on a school history of 1947, thus confusing phases and roles, and writing out E.W. Pugin, while citing, in misnumbered footnotes, my *Pugin and the Catholic Midlands* (2002) where a quite different conclusions are reached. Despite its cost, the book is disappointingly produced and illustrated, and there is no list of works. Overall, Harris sees Hansom in a heroic, Samuel-Smiles-like role, and, as a collateral descendant, she has a story she wishes to tell.

At the centre of it all

Living for the Church before anything else: the Hardman family story. Written and published by Sr Barbara Jeffery, RSM. £6.50 plus £1.50 P & P. Available from Sr Barbara Jeffery, Convent of Mercy, Parkers Row, Bermondsey, London, SE1 2DQ

reviewed by Timothy Brittain-Catlin

Everyone engaged in researching the history of Victorian conventual monastic architecture in this country knows how invaluable first-hand accounts are: the *Annals of the Sisters of Mercy*, for example, provide much of the information we know about the foundations and use of A.W.N. Pugin’s convents. If the person who collects these first-hand accounts is herself a capable archivist so much the better – even more so in the case of the story of the Hardman family, which, with its many similarly named protagonists, is somewhat complicated anyhow.

Many readers will have corresponded with Sr Barbara Jeffery when trying to sort out some perplexing aspect of the Handsworth convent, where she lived for many years, and the Hardman family, and will have much to thank her for – aided as we all have been by her boundless assistance and enthusiasm for her adopted home and its rich history of benefaction. Her book *Living for the Church before anything else* is an invaluable guide to Hardman family members and their astonishing and varied devotion and generosity to the Roman Catholic Church through the roles they played in many religious orders across the whole country, and as far as Australia. Only a short while ago newcomers to Puginworld would confuse the John Hardmans, senior and junior, and have only a very general idea of the central part they and their wives and children played in the Gothic Revival. In fact their story provides an illustration of the way in which large and devoted families created the face of the Roman Catholic revival in whole regions of England. This little book will explain everything you need to know.

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

Frank Batt, David Beevers, Jennifer E. Bell, Blackader-Lauterman Library of Architecture and Art (McGill University), Canadian Centre for Architecture, Jim Fitzpatrick MP, Jane Gledhill, R.B. Hadley, Richard Hennessy, Vicky Joynson, Louise Kenyon, Gareth Kingston, David McLellan, Caroline McNamara, Robert Noel, Mr & Mrs Pendlebury, Mary Price, Andrew & Katherine Sharp, A.P. & N. P. Smith, David & Anne Symonds, Alexander Thomson, James M. Thunder, Eddie Tolcher, Marina Vaizey, Nicholas Williams, David Wright.

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

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Rev Andrew Fisher is Chaplain to the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch, Worcestershire, and before that ministered in parishes in the Birmingham and Derby dioceses. He is a member of the Ecclesiological Society. Since childhood he has had a love of church architecture that has never left him, and Pugin's gem, St Giles', Cheadle, was one of the church buildings that helped bring him to faith.

David Garrard works in the designation department at English Heritage. He was previously historic churches adviser at the Victorian Society.

Penelope Harris is a retired Fellow of the Institute of Administrative Management. She has researched the life and work of J.A. Hansom for several years, and has published a number of articles as well as the preliminary biography reviewed in this issue. She is currently researching intensively to produce a more comprehensive biography, concurrent with doctoral studies focusing on Hansom's patronage within a network of Catholic gentry.

Gerard Hyland is a theoretical physicist by profession, but has been interested in the architecture of E.W. Pugin – and his churches, in particular – for more than 50 years, having been baptised and married in one, and worshipping in many others in both the northwest of England and the Midlands. He has recently completed an illustrated chronological gazetteer of the architectural works of E.W. Pugin, which is available on The Society's website, and is currently compiling a gazetteer of the works of A.W.N. Pugin to coincide with the bicentenary this year of his birth.

Rory O'Donnell was an Inspector at English Heritage from 1982–2011 and has contributed 'The abbey church as first conceived and as first built: from Pugin to Dunn and Hansom' in Aidan Bellenger, [ed], *Downside Abbey, an architectural history*, London and New York: Merrell, 2011.

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The Pugin Society, Registered Charity No. 1074766, was founded in 1995. It exists, to quote its Constitution, to further 'the advancement of the public in the life and work of A.W.N. Pugin and 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.

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