

# Pugin Society e-newsletter

Issue 4

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## Four Pugin Etchings

Nearly forty years ago I came across these four etchings amongst some prints in a secondhand bookshop in London, and they caught my eye. When Margaret Belcher's *Annotated Critical Bibliography of AWN Pugin* came out in 1987 I was able to identify them as four prints from the set of six illustrations which Pugin drew for the *Missal for the Use of the Laity*, edited by Charles Husenbeth and published in 1838 by Booker and Dolman of 61, New Bond Street. Copies of the missal are rare, so these are almost certainly proof copies which were issued separately at the time. The subjects of my four copies are the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. Each etching is signed with Pugin's monogram in red at the bottom right hand side, and two of the plates have the monogram and the date worked into the inscription. The inscriptions, which are printed in red, read:-

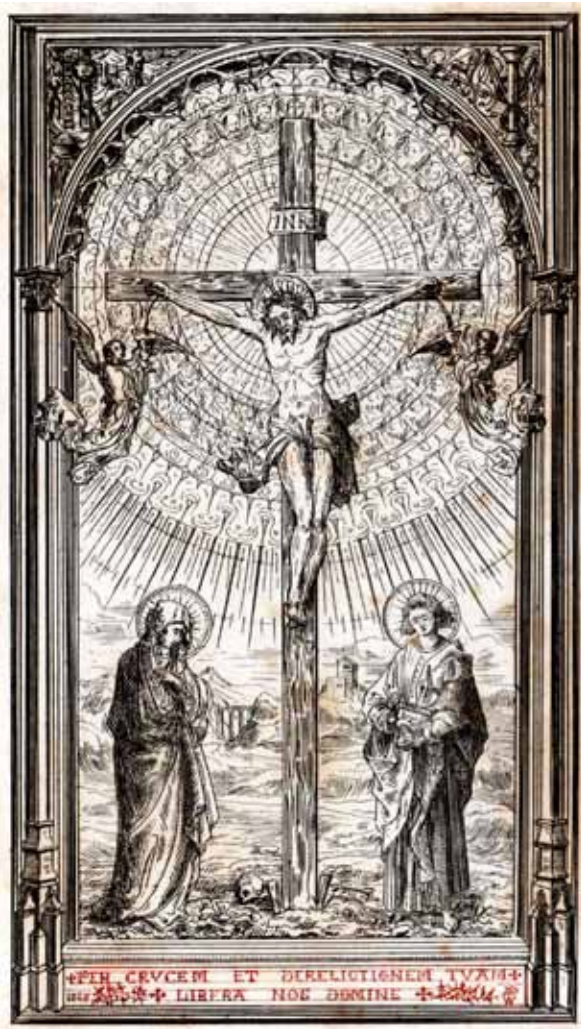
Annunciation: Ave Maria Gra Plena

Nativity: Verbum Caro Factum Est

Crucifixion: Per Crucem et Derelectionem Tuam Libera Nos Domine

Resurrection: Surrexit Sicut Dixit Alleluia





London, Printed for Archer & Dolman, 62, New Bond Street.



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The illustrations measure approx. 17:5 x 13:5 cms each, with slight variations.

The needling is fine and very detailed, and the designs appear to be based on the depictions of the Old Masters. They were clearly drawn in a careful and painstaking way, unlike Pugin's later more impressionistic style, suggesting that he took extra care in depicting these sacred subjects. According to Pugin's diary for 1838 he began work on the etchings on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and finished them on the 9<sup>th</sup> February. I thought Pugin Society members would be interested to see these rarely reproduced etchings which deserve closer study and a fuller write-up in due course.

David Meara, May 2020

## Pugin Hatchment or Something Else?

Following on from our May e-newsletter feature on this subject, and suggestions for comment, Alexandra Wedgwood writes:

*I do not think that this is a hatchment and I think that it is an early work of AWP ... among the correspondence by Catherine Welby Pugin that is held in Yale there is a letter from Paris sometime in the 1820s where she describes the 'family arms', newly returned to the Pugins after being hidden during the Revolution ... I suggest that the young Pugin, delighted with this new image, painted this bravado piece which is meant to be hung above a fireplace as in a medieval house, where it might be carved in wood or stone to give a sense of ownership. To me it has the feeling of the young Pugin.*

She goes on to say that she is certain that this is not the work of Edward Pugin, commenting that the crucial difference between father and son is the way they treat the martlet; in the hands of Augustus it is simple and clear cut, whereas Edward Pugin gives it a nervy, neurotic outline.

The conservators from Arte Conservation Ltd have now been down to Ramsgate and given the hatchment a close inspection. They suspect that it has been cut down, and it has certainly been relined, in a manner which has caused the paint to lift, neither is the canvas sufficiently stretched. There is doubt as to whether the frame is the original one. St Augustine's now await a report and a quote for work upon this unique item. More news anon.

## 25 Years and Beyond

When looking forward to this year's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Pugin Society the committee reflected on the first 25 years. As a relative newcomer to the Society it was interesting to hear the founding members asking whether the original aims of the society had been achieved and if so, if there was still an ongoing role for the Society. In the first constitution from 1997 the original aims were the advancement of education of the public in the life and work of Pugin and in the life and work of the other architects and designers in his family. Several objectives were set out to:

collate Pugin research and to build up in Ramsgate archives and information for the use of researchers and students.  
maintain good quality guiding round the Ramsgate sites and to produce a substantial guidebook to give information about these sites.

establish a newsletter, of a scholarly character, as a forum for research.

found, if possible, a visitor's centre containing suitable books and pamphlets, etc.

arrange excursions to relevant buildings and places.

organise an annual one-day event to include an AGM of the Society plus a talk or seminar for Pugin scholars and enthusiasts, and to invite experts to speak, etc.

liaise with other appropriate societies.

use influence as a pressure group as and when required.

It is extraordinary what has happened since then. As described by Paul Atterbury at our 2019 AGM the founding of the Pugin Society occurred at the same time as the excellent V&A exhibition on Pugin that he curated. The main sites in Ramsgate, including the shrine of St. Augustine, have undergone a major transformation. The church has been restored and an excellent visitors centre was opened in 2017. An archive room has also been established on site. The Landmark Trust has restored both the Grange and St. Edward's presbytery. Regular tours are held of St. Augustine's together with tours of the main sites in Ramsgate. Although these developments cannot be credited to the Pugin Society directly, but rather to Father Marcus Holden and team at St Augustine's and to the Landmark Trust, it is fair to say that the very existence of the Society highlighted the need for these wonderful projects, in both of which individual members were involved.

The Society has developed and published a high quality newsletter in the format of *Present State* together with its journal *True Principles*. Members of the society have made a major contribution to knowledge of the Pugin family with the biography of AWN. Pugin, *God's Architect* by Rosemary Hill. Other publications include the five volumes of Pugin's letters edited by Margaret Belcher, Gerard Hyland's gazetteer of AWN. Pugin's buildings and Michael Fisher's publications on Hardman of Birmingham and John Hardman Powell. Yet more publications include Rory O'Donnell's book on the Pugins and the Catholic Midlands and Stanley Shepherd's on the stained glass of AWN. Pugin, to name but a few. At a local level in Ramsgate publications include Catriona Blaker's account of Edward Pugin in Kent, Robin Fleet's booklet *Presenting Pugin*, for visitors to Ramsgate, and John Hardman Powell's *Pugin in his home*, edited by our Patron, Alexandra Wedgwood. Academic conferences have included The Gothic Revival Worldwide, looking at AWN. Pugin's influence, and organised at the Kent School of Architecture in 2012. Many educational events have been organised by the Society including the annual study tours and AGM with a lecture. So it would appear that all the original aims were achieved by this year. What is left to do?

One thing that has struck me in my time on the committee is the number of enquiries that we receive about Pugin buildings that are at risk. Of course, of these the one with the highest profile is the Palace of Westminster. What is also apparent to me is that as a result of the activities of the Society the role of the Pugin family in the architectural history of the UK is better understood. When a reference is made to a Pugin building it is becoming more widely known that there was more than one Pugin! So, what is the future role of the Society?

One of the original objectives was to develop an understanding of the importance of the architectural achievements of the Pugin family. Members will have received the recent edition of *True Principles* that focused on Edward Pugin, and Gerard Hyland is now in the process of publishing a book on the complete architectural works of Edward. The next academic project must surely be a review of the works of the firm Pugin and Pugin. Several members of the family were directors of the firm in its several different forms. In addition, members will continue to discover new aspects of the importance on the Pugin family and the Gothic revival. The Society will remain an important network for advice as buildings of this era evolve into new uses. This struck me as an important function, following my role as a volunteer at Ushaw when it reopened as an historic site and visitor attraction in 2015.

Mike Galloway

## Ushaw ring

While Pugin did design smaller items, such as upholstery nails, as a component of something else, rings for the finger seem to be among the smallest discreet items in his oeuvre. Of the rings he is known to have designed there are but a few extant examples that are attributable to him. One such is of a 'Doctor's ring' for Charles Newsham DD, President of Ushaw 1837-1863 and is referred to in a letter from Pugin to John Hardman in December 1846? (Belcher Vol. 3, p. 175): "I send you a letter of Mr. Cayleys about a ring for Dr Newsham – and with it a sketch of the sort of thing I think it should be .. in gold & enamel ...". This has an accompanying footnote that includes a reference to the Hardman metalwork daybook for 16 March 1847 of 'A Gold Ring Engraved & Set with Enamels for Revd Dr. Newsham' entered to G Caley Esq. of Saltwell, the 'Feast of St Cuthbert', 20 March 1847.

The ring is of 'pale old pure gold' as favoured by Pugin and has a quatrefoil with the Sacred Monogram surrounded by blue enamel and with a small cabochon gemstone (garnet or amethyst) on either shoulder. It is shown being worn by Monsignor Newsham in J R Herbert's 1853 portrait of him at Ushaw.



The image of the ring is reproduced with the permission of the Trustees of Ushaw.

Nick Beveridge

## An Enigmatic Vista

A curious but rather attractive postcard of the view towards the Lady Chapel in St Augustine's, Ramsgate. Has anyone seen this before? It is signed 'HPJ'; who was he, or she? Is the artist professional, perhaps a topographical illustrator of the time, or a thoughtful amateur? This view is lovingly and carefully executed. On the extreme right, just above the screen to the Pugin Chantry, a glimpse can be seen of what is presumably the Pugin funeral hatchment, referred to in our May issue, and still usually in this position. Note also the little hanging glass shades, what looks like quite lavish quantities of flowers on and below the Lady Chapel altar, and hints of what appears to be the radiator, which is still there, below and slightly to the left of the sculpture of Our Lady and the child Jesus. Below these figures can also be seen the fine Pugin standing candelabrum, which was displayed in the Mediaeval Court at the Great Exhibition in 1851, and which also remains in this position today. References do exist to central heating of a sort in the church prior to World War Two, so the presence of the radiator does not necessarily contradict the possibility that this image could date from the 1920s or 30s, a period to which one's instincts tend to incline. Further information, comments or thoughts welcome. Respond to [catrona@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:catrona@tiscali.co.uk)



Catriona Blaker