

October 2007

Number 15

Included in this edition:

- *Pugin's Australian Built Heritage – St Patrick's, Colebrook (Part 2)*

STOP PRESS: Monday, 22 October 2007

St Patrick's bellcote has the two lower bell openings completed, as shown in the image below, and the upper sill of the top bell opening is being laid today.




**Welcome to the
fifteenth Friends
Newsletter.**

We have devoted this issue to the reinstatement of the bellcote on St Patrick's Church, Colebrook, so that we can bring you the story of its progress in words and images.

It is expected that all of the stones will have been laid by the end of this week (26 October) to replace the original bellcote which was blown down in September 1895.

*The two lower bell
openings completed,
19 October 2007
(Photo: Jude Andrews).*





Progress has been slowed down by the extreme windy conditions of the Roaring Forties that have battered Colebrook, making conditions for the crane driver and the stone masons virtually impossible, especially as they are working at the height of 12 metres above ground where construction is at present. You can appreciate our anxiety for the construction with the unrelenting and continuous gusts over the past few days. Fortunately, the weather is now much kinder, so good progress should be achieved.

Arrangements are being made for the steel reinforcing of the bellcote to be permanently grouted once Robert and Grattan have completed the laying of the stones. The triple gold-leafed gable cross, a donation from Robert Morris-Nunn and Julie Payne, is to be fixed and will form part of the lightning conductor. Arrangements are in place for Hervey Bagot from Adelaide to install the three bells, starting on 5 November.

Before the bells are installed they will be dressed in the traditional way with ribbons and flowers and blessed by Father Terry Rush, the Parish Priest. I will contact all Friends and those involved in the project when we know the exact date and time in the hope that many can share in this significant ceremony. For those of you who cannot be present we will post the images and—hopefully—video footage on our website.

ABC TV Hobart with Sally Glaetzer has been filming the stages of construction of the bellcote for the program *Stateline*, which is anticipated to be telecast throughout

Tasmania on **Friday 16 November at 7.30pm**. Undoubtedly this segment will be shown on the ABC nationally in 2007, but in any case you should be able to download it from the ABC *Stateline* website.

Your invitation to the first official ringing of the bells in the reinstated bellcote on **Sunday afternoon 18 November 2007 at 2pm**, celebrating the completion of a major milestone in the conservation of St Patrick's Church, Colebrook, is enclosed with this Newsletter. We sincerely hope that as many Friends as possible will be able to join us for this significant event.

It is a privilege to bring you this fifteenth Newsletter, outlining such an important milestone in the life of the Pugin Foundation.

With kind regards,
Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer

Colebrook Bellcote Construction

Because the historic reconstruction of the bellcote is moving apace now, and will be complete before the next Newsletter, we have decided to bring you a set of images documenting activities to date.

(Below L.) Pallets of sawn Tasmanian Linden sandstone blocks delivered to stonemason Robert Whitney's yard in Oatlands.

(Below R.) Robert scribes lines on a block in preparation for cutting it to shape (Photos: Brian Andrews).





(L.) The apex stone of the upper bell opening has been cut to shape and Robert punches a perimeter line with a flat chisel as the first step in draughting the margins.



(R.) Pallets of dressed stone with some faces combed and others pick-faced with draughted margins (Photos: Brian Andrews).

(R.) The first stage of the scaffolding erected around the nave east gable with the assistance of a jib crane (Photo: John Miller).



(Below) The nave east gable has been dismantled down to the level of the springing of the bellcote structure, exposing the interior of the nave. The spirit level is lying on the gable wall (Photo: Brian Andrews).



The dismantled gable section laid out in courses ready for putting back with the new bellcote stones (Photo: Brian Andrews).





Plastic sheeting is wrapped around the rood screen to protect it from falling debris during the bellcote construction (Photo: Brian Andrews).



Stainless steel reinforcement is lowered into a hole drilled down into the nave east wall (Photo: Brian Andrews).

The lower end of the reinforcement is pressure grouted into the hole. Stonework will be built around it and then further pressure grouting will anchor the steel into the stone construction (Photo: Brian Andrews).





A jib crane lowers one of two large anchor stones that will be set at each end of the bellcote base course (Photo: Brian Andrews).

Robert Whitney hammers level the first base course anchor stone (Photo: Brian Andrews).





A view in the nave showing the two base course anchor stones in place high up on the east gable (Photo: Simon Greener).



(Above Top) The first course and partly completed second course, showing new bellcote stones at the outer edges and original gable stones being replaced between them.

(Above) With three courses nearly completed the bellcote shape is beginning to appear (Photos: Brian Andrews).



With five courses completed as at 3 October, this view clearly shows the bellcote starting to rise out of the forest of scaffolding (Photo: Brian Andrews).

Pugin's Australian Built Heritage

This series deals in some detail with the surviving Australian buildings to Pugin's designs, describing their construction history and analysing them, including later additions and modifications. In this issue we continue our examination of St Patrick's, Colebrook.

St Patrick's, Colebrook (Part 2) *Background to the design*

Pugin's approach to the design of three churches for Bishop Willson in 1843 was circumscribed by three factors. Firstly, the poverty of the Catholics in Van Diemen's Land, over half of whom were convicts, precluded elaborate and expensive works simply because they would have been unaffordable. This was a not uncommon issue that Pugin had to face on a number of occasions in England, although many of his English churches—being funded fully or partly by wealthy patrons—were not so constrained.

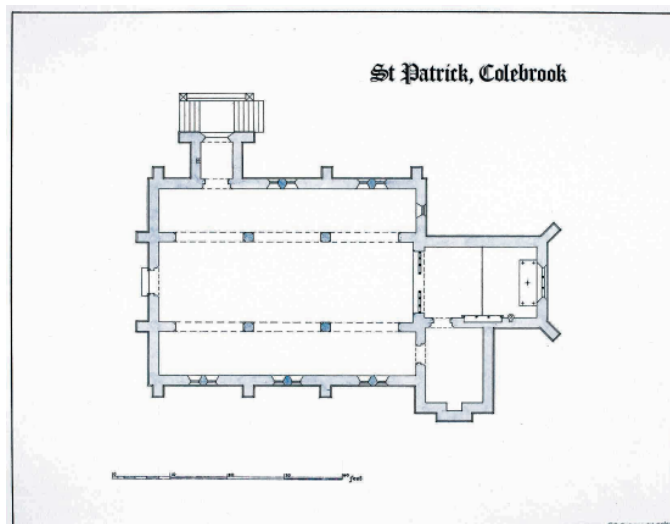
Secondly, because he would not be able to supervise the construction, as he did so comprehensively with his English churches, Pugin had to create designs that would, hopefully, not be compromised through being erected on an unknown site by an unknown architect. And finally, because of the perceived lack of craft and interpretive skills in Van Diemen's Land, the designs would have to be realised not in drawings but as detailed models, with minimal complex mouldings, carvings, etc. Where some more detailed carved work was called for—gable crosses, holy water stoups, piscinas—its proper execution was to be ensured through the provision of full-size stone exemplars for local copying.

All this added up to the need to design 'simple buildings that can be easily erected', ¹ as Pugin described them in a letter to his friend and munificent patron John Talbot, Sixteenth Earl of

Shrewsbury, just before Willson's departure from England for the antipodes, adding: 'It is quite delightful to start in the good style at the antipodes. It is quite an honour.'²

That only models were sent out with Bishop Willson is attested to in three separate pieces of documentary evidence. In the abovementioned letter, Pugin spoke to Shrewsbury of '3 models of small churches [Pugin's emphasis] all to take to pieces with the roofs &c framed'. ³ Willson himself, in summarising the extent and significance of Pugin's assistance to the embryonic diocese during an October 1844 address to his clergy 'on the state of church temporalities', mentioned 'models of churches constructed on proper scales'. ⁴ And again, a London newspaper report of 3 February 1844 about Willson's imminent departure mentioned 'models of churches of the most simple form' as being amongst the cargo of the *Bella Marina*. ⁵

The work of carving the exemplar stonework and constructing the church models was carried out by craftsmen in the employ of Pugin's favoured builder George Myers. The models must have been particularly well constructed and detailed because Myers' records reveal a total of 48 days' work for 'Making 3 churches'. ⁶ At a skilled wage rate of 5/- per day, and with Myers' 10% margin, the total cost of the models was £13-4-0. ⁷



Measured ground plan
(Brian Andrews).

The design

The model used for St Patrick's, Colebrook, was—like the other two—a scholarly and completely convincing, yet totally original, evocation of a small English medieval village church. The vocabulary of its elements establishes that it accurately reflected construction that would have originally been in vogue around the year 1320. In its plan form, composition and furnishings it conformed with Pugin's exposition of what constituted 'a complete Catholic parish church for the due celebration of the divine office and administration of the sacraments, both as regards architectural arrangement and furniture'.⁸

It comprised an aisled three-bay nave with antipodean north porch,⁹ a relatively deep separately expressed chancel,¹⁰ with a rood screen across the chancel arch, and a sacristy in the angle between the south aisle east wall and the chancel south wall. There was a west door for ceremonial usage, such as processions or the visit of a bishop, and the chancel, one step above the nave, was fitted with sedilia and a piscina in the south wall and—more than likely—an Easter sepulchre in the north wall opposite the sedilia.¹¹ It was thus liturgically furnished for the Use of Sarum, an English variant in non-essentials—one of a host of such variants—of the Roman Rite that prevailed throughout late medieval Western Christendom.

Except where specifically prevented from so doing, Pugin normally designed and furnished his churches for the Use of Sarum, a logical consequence of his passionately held belief that the social, moral and spiritual improvement of the English nation—and, by extension, its colonial possessions—was to be achieved by the resuscitation in its entirety of English medieval life, including liturgical practice. This was a view shared by a handful of people,¹² including Bishop Willson and



*Paired clerestory windows
(Photo: Brian Andrews).*

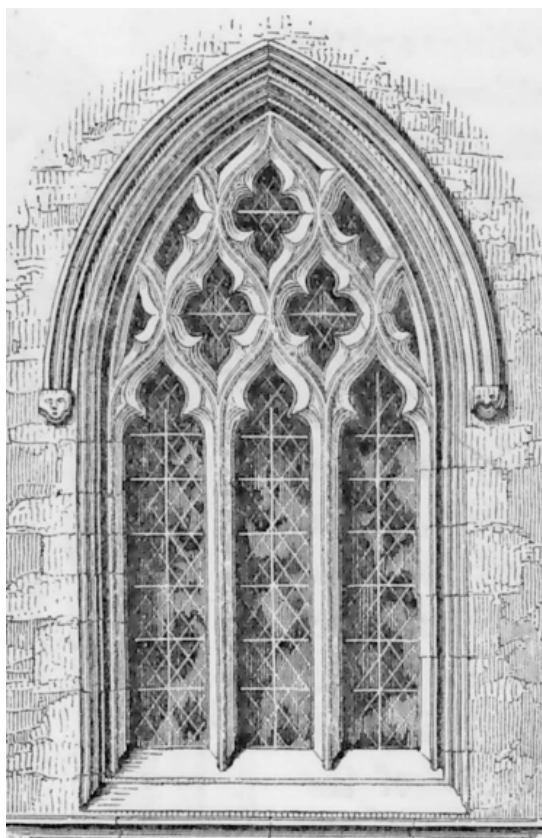
Pugin's and his mutual friend Dr Daniel Rock, priest, antiquary and liturgical scholar.¹³

The nave measured 44 ft (13.4 m) in length by 14 ft (4.3 m) wide,¹⁴ with aisles 44 ft 9 in. (13.6 m) long and 7 ft 6 in. (2.3 m) wide.¹⁵ These were comparable dimensions to those of small medieval churches like Ayston Church, Rutlandshire,¹⁶ and Duddington Church, Northamptonshire.¹⁷ The chancel was 19 ft 6 in. (5.9 m) long by 12 ft 4 in. (3.8 m) wide.

Pugin's imperative to provide Willson with 'simple buildings that can be easily erected' was realised in this design in its composition and detail. This building would be the most astringent, pared-back church he was ever to create, relying for the harmony of its interior on superb composition combined with pure line and form.¹⁸

The church had a clerestory with paired quatrefoil lights, of an external and internal form to be found singly—not in pairs—in Great Milton Church, Oxfordshire (1320), and the nave aisles were lit by paired trefoil-headed lights.

Like the west door and the other windows, with the exception of that in the chancel east wall,¹⁹ their moulding consisted of just a plain chamfer. The three-light Flowing Decorated window in the chancel east wall was the most elaborately developed element in the building's structure, and that for reasons of propriety. In *True Principles* Pugin had defined propriety as an essential attribute of a building, whereby 'the external and internal



Nave north aisle window, Great Milton Church, Oxfordshire (Source: John Henry Parker, ABC of Gothic Architecture, 8th edn, James Parker & Co., London, 1894, p. 139).



Chancel east window (Photo: Brian Andrews).

appearance of an edifice should be illustrative of, and in accordance with, the purpose for which it is destined'.²⁰ For churches this meant that the chancel should be the most highly elaborated part of the building because it was, in Pugin's view, the most solemn and sacred part of the edifice.

The chancel east window had reticulated—or net-like—tracery, a type much admired and very widely used in churches built around 1320. Despite the elegance of such windows there was always an awkward junction between the net cells and the edge of the window, resulting in a number of part cells, as in the accompanying illustration of a north aisle window in Great Milton Church, Oxfordshire. Pugin most elegantly solved the problem in this design by slightly distorting the net cells and setting them under what was effectively an ogree sub-arch, then filling the

space between the 'sub-arch' and the window edge with pairs of mouchettes, or dagger tracery, elements.

The nave east gable was surmounted by a tall elegant triple bellcote, a structure that by its size and position was the key element in completing the impressive balance and harmony of the building's simple external composition. In his 1841 *Dublin Review* article Pugin had described how: 'In very small churches, of exceedingly simple design, we occasionally find belfreys [sic], in the form of perforated gables, or turreted projections, carved up at the end walls, and surmounted by stone crosses.'²¹ These took the place of the bell towers that were a part of larger churches. Pugin generally placed them on the nave west gable,²² his handful of east gable essays being listed in the accompanying Table [Overleaf]

Pugin's nave east gable bellcote designs

Date	Place	Openings	Notes
1838	St Anne's, Keighley	3	Bellcote fell, 1839
1841	Jesus Chapel, Ackworth Grange	1	Chapel demolished
1841	St Austin's, Kenilworth	1	In situ
1843	Model church for Bishop Willson	3	Built at Colebrook

Footnotes

¹ Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, 30 January 1844, Victoria & Albert Museum, L.525-1965/20, in Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, vol. 2: 1843–1845, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003, p. 161.

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Draft of a speech by Bishop Willson, Hobart, 23 October 1844, Archdiocese of Hobart Museum and Archives, Willson Papers, CA.6/WIL.12.

⁵ *Tablet*, vol. V, no. 195, 3 February 1844, p. 69, c. 2.

⁶ The information is contained on a loose sheet, amongst the Myers Family Trust papers, headed 'Dr Willson / things / for Hobart / Town / Vandemansland [sic]', being an incomplete listing of items actually manufactured by Myers for Willson, along with their costs. Information kindly provided by Patricia Spencer-Silver.

⁷ These rates and other details such as Myers' margin are also set out in the sheet cited at footnote 6.

⁸ [A. Welby Pugin], 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, vol. X, May 1841, p. 312.

⁹ In medieval English churches the porch—the congregational entrance—was normally located on the south side of the nave, that is, the sheltered, warmer side facing the sun. English designers of Australian churches, logically applying the same reasons, placed their porches on the north side.

¹⁰ Although not as deep as most chancels of English medieval churches of this size, it was substantially more so than had been the practice generally in Catholic churches since the reforming Council of Trent (1545–1563).

¹¹ Evidence for this may lie beneath the plaster, but this too may have been obliterated by damage to the chancel north wall, and its subsequent rebuilding, as a result of the fall of the bellcote during a violent tornado on 8 September 1895 (*The Monitor*, vol. 2, no. 25, Friday, 20 September 1895, Supplement, n.p., c.2–3). St Paul's, Oatlands, built from the smallest of the three models, had an Easter Sepulchre, filled in at some indeterminate date. It was revealed when that church was ignorantly stripped of its plaster in 1959.

¹² A view that did not prevail. Pugin's Sarum-furnished churches were never used for that liturgy, only ever for the Tridentine Rite, the version of the Roman Rite approved and promulgated throughout Catholic Christendom by the Council of Trent. The Roman Rite has no use for sedilia or Easter sepulchres.

¹³ As evidenced by the Sarum Use arrangements in St George's Church, Buckland, Berkshire, built on the edge of their estate by the Throckmortons to an 1846 design by the Pugin follower Charles Francis Hansom. Rock was the Throckmorton's chaplain at the time. He wrote *The Church of Our Fathers*, 3 vols, 1849–53, a scholarly work on the English Church, including the first description and analysis of the Use of Sarum. Bishop Willson possessed a copy.

¹⁴ Dimensions are given according to the closest nominal value in Imperial measurement that would have pertained to the model, based on measured values on the building, as the metric figures in that respect are of little obvious meaning.

¹⁵ Widths are to column edges not column centres.

¹⁶ Now part of Leicestershire.

¹⁷ See Raphael and J. Arthur Brandon, *Parish Churches* (2 vols), W. Kent & Co., London, 1858, vol. 1, pp. 11–14.

¹⁸ Exactly as Pugin did in his 1847 inexpensive chalice design for Willson, and for the same reasons. See Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, pp. 108–9.

¹⁹ In this account the church is described as if it were oriented, that is, the altar (and chancel end wall) was at the east end of the building. In fact, because of the difficult sloping nature of the site, the 'east' end of the church in fact faces more south-easterly.

²⁰ Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, John Weale, London, 1841, p. 50.

²¹ [Pugin], 'Present State', *op. cit.*, p. 319.

²² At least sixteen of Pugin's designs had a nave west gable bellcote, including: St James', Reading; St Marie's on the Sands, Southport; St John's Hospital Chapel, Alton; Our Lady & St Wilfrid's, Warwick Bridge; St Francis Xavier's, Berrima; St Stephen's, Brisbane; St Paul's, Oatlands; St Lawrence's, Tubney; St Augustine's, Solihull; the Assumption, Bree; Our Blessed Lady & St Thomas of Canterbury's, Dudley; St Andrew's, Cambridge; St Winefride's, Shepshed; St Charles Borromeo's, Ryde; St Alphonsus', Barntown; St Peter's College Chapel, Wexford.

New Friends of Pugin

We welcome:

Abbot Placid Spearritt OSB & the New Norcia Abbey community

New Norcia, Western Australia