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Welcome to the forty-ninth Friends Newsletter.

It is beautiful Spring here in Tasmania. Although there has been snow and sunshine, nevertheless the colour and perfume of our Spring is quite spectacular. The newly planted trees at Colebrook are flourishing and the first leaves are starting to appear on the poplars. There are blossoms on the fruit trees which we planted two years ago. We hope to have images in the November issue.

In this issue you will see images of the completed painting of St Patrick's Church Colebrook, although the painted colours do not really reflect the true original colour.

Recently the original tabernacle for the altar in Pugin's St Francis Xavier's Church, Berrima, was discovered. Friend of Pugin, Kathy Roche, to whom we are most grateful, alerted us to its present location and possible provenance. Brian Andrews has verified its provenance, but much work needs to be done to fully understand its pedigree. The bas-relief wood carving to its door is unquestionably of Pugin design in origin. We will have an article on this discovery in the December issue.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



Tim Wescombe, Works Manager of C.D.I Painting Services,, makes a final check of the re-painted interior of St Patrick's, Colebrook (Image: Brian Andrews)





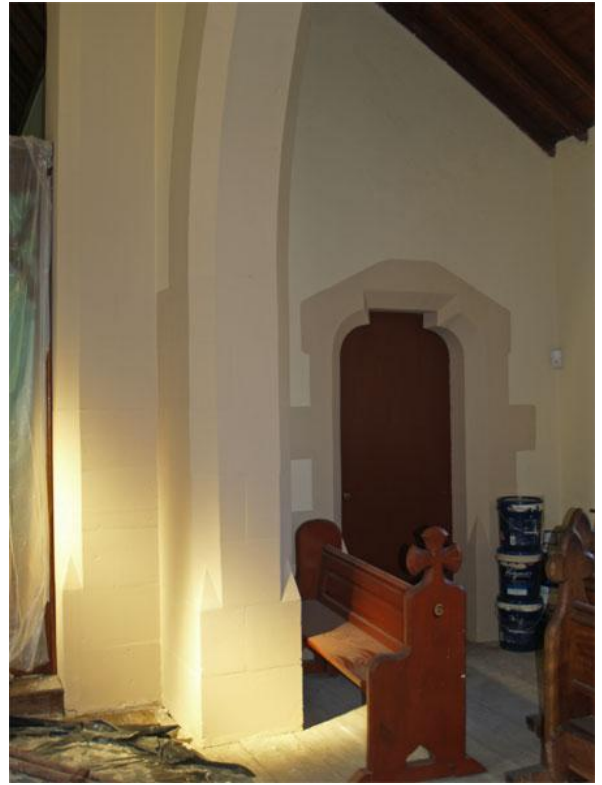
The Renaissance of St Patrick's, Colebrook

Re-plastering & Re-painting

The task of repairing plasterwork surfaces throughout the church has been achieved and the re-painting of the interior is also complete. Re-painting has followed the recommendations of a 2006 investigation, commissioned by the Foundation, into the historic paint finishes in the interior. We have returned the building to its original colour scheme, which is Magnolia for the plaster areas and Light Stone for the interior stonework (columns, arches, etc.). In fact, the stonework was originally unpainted, but, because it has had many coats over a century and a half, removal from the sandstone cannot be satisfactorily accomplished; hence the Light Stone paint application.

The results are excellent, imbuing the interior with a gentle warmth which admirably complements the serene simplicity of the interior architecture. We present images of the progress. Note that because of artefacts of the reproduction process the new colours as shown do not faithfully represent the finish in reality.



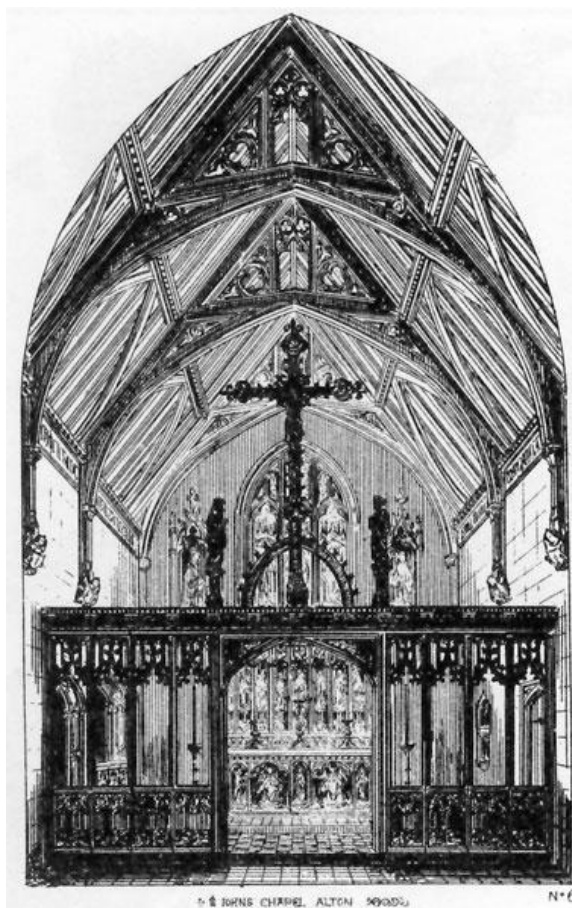


Pugin's Designs

Easter Sepulchres (Part 4)

One configuration which Pugin used several times for his Easter sepulchre designs consisted of a tomb chest set within an arched opening between the chancel north wall and an adjacent north chapel.

Perhaps the earliest of these was in the chapel of St John's Hospital, Alton, Staffordshire, designed in 1839 and completed in 1841. We have Pugin's own description of the sepulchre, which appeared in his February 1842 *Dublin Review* article 'The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', and accompanied by the illustration below.¹ Part of the sepulchre can just be seen at the east end of the chancel north wall.



Pugin's illustration of the interior of the St John's Hospital chapel (Source: Pugin's 'Present State')

¹ [A. Welby Pugin], 'The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, Vol. XXII, February 1842, p. 119 & Plate VI.

Pugin described the sepulchre and its location as follows:

On the gospel side of the chancel is a small chapel, containing an altar for the reservation of the most holy sacrament, which is placed within a gilt tower surmounted by a cross. This chapel communicates with the chancel by a richly moulded and paneled doorway, and also by an arched opening of the same description, containing a high tomb with tracery and emblems, to serve for the sepulchre at Easter.²

Miraculously, this setting survives as described, despite the depredations visited upon the chapel interior during the 1960s, and is shown below.



The tiny Blessed Sacrament chapel with the sepulchre at right (Image: Nicholas Callinan)

We will describe the altar in this image as part of a forthcoming series in our *Newsletter* which will investigate Pugin's many altar designs.

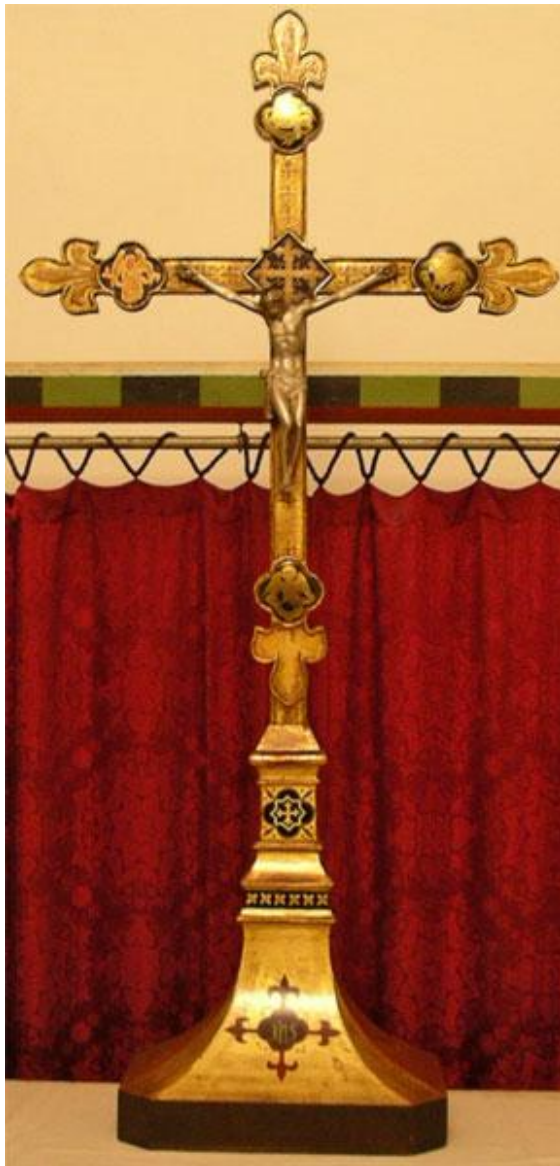
² *ibid.*

Bishop Willson's Residence

Ecclesiastical Contents (Part 6)

Crucifixes

There are two, perhaps three, crucifixes which can be identified as having been in Bishop Willson's Macquarie Street, Hobart, residence. We will commence with the earliest and most intensely personal of them.



Willson's painted wooden crucifix (Image: Nicholas Callinan)

It is wooden, painted and gilt, 107cm high and has a metal corpus, added subsequent to its manufacture. Three of the four quatrefoil medallions with emblems of the four Evangelists at the extremities of the arms are brass on black enamel ground with the names in Latin, whilst that of St Matthew is painted, with the English form of the name.

The cross has identical proportions to that of the head of a medieval processional cross from the collection of M. Sauvageot which Pugin had seen and sketched in Paris during the first week in July 1836.



*Pugin's 1836 sketch which includes the Sauvageot cross
(Source: The British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings)*

Willson brought the cross out to Hobart Town in 1844 and then took it back to England for repairs in 1847 and to have the brass corpus added (this latter not by Pugin). Hardmans' Metal Day Book for 1845–48, p. 260, records the work done:

'Rt Revd Bishop Willson Hobart Town December 6 [1847], A Brass Figure Cleaned & Mounted on Cross sent, & Cross repaired 11/-^{2,3} There is no doubting that the cross we are describing is the one referred to in the Hardman entry, as the repair strip to its back demonstrates.



*The back of Willson's crucifix, showing the repair strip
(Image: Brian Andrews)*

This crucifix must have held an immense personal significance for Willson because when he returned to England on what was intended to be his last journey home before retiring in Hobart, it was amongst the small number of treasured possessions which he took with him.⁴

But it wasn't to return to Australia. Nor did Willson, who died in Nottingham on 30 June 1866, having survived a severe stroke a few weeks out from Hobart on the ship in March 1865. Bishop Willson was buried in the crypt of St Barnabas'

³ Birmingham City Archives, Hardman Archive. The date given is, in accordance with Hardmans' procedures, the date upon which the work was completed.

⁴ Also included were his medieval chalice and paten, described in our Newsletter 46 and 47.

Cathedral, Nottingham, the great building Pugin had designed for him when he was in charge of the mission there.

His cherished crucifix was placed in the Cathedral, at first in the Lady Chapel. But more recently it has found a more appropriate—and more secure—home on the crypt altar close to the ledger stone marking his burial site.



A detail from a 1930s photograph of the St Barnabas' Cathedral Lady Chapel showing Willson's crucifix on the altar (Image: courtesy Nottingham Diocesan Archive)

We can only speculate about the reason for Willson's abiding attachment to this humble cross, and indeed about its authorship. However, given Pugin's frequent use as design inspiration of medieval buildings and objects which he had recently experienced, it is conceivable that the cross could date from c.1837. Was it a gift from Pugin? Could it have come to symbolize for Willson a deep and abiding friendship between two souls with a common vision? Might it perhaps have even been a thank offering for a part that Willson

might have played in Pugin's conversion to Catholicism in 1835?



Willson's crucifix on the crypt altar in St Barnabas' Cathedral, Nottingham (Image: Nick Callinan)

The second of Willson's crucifixes is in St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart, the building he commenced but which he was never to see completed.

Its corpus, or crucifix figure, is one of at least fourteen of differing sizes, all to the same design by Pugin, which he purchased during his first trip back to England in 1847. They constitute a remarkable set.⁵ Most were intended for rood screens,⁶ but there were several smaller ones of which this example is one, the figure being just 45cm high. Carved from White Pine (*Pinus Strobus*) by craftsmen in the employ of George Myers,

⁵ We will consider them in detail in a future *Newsletter*.

⁶ One such, at St Patrick's, Colebrook, was illustrated in our last *Newsletter*.

Pugin's favoured English builder, the figure was originally gessoed and polychromed.⁷

At some stage after the 1880 removal of Willson's effects to his successor Bishop (later Archbishop) Murphy's new episcopal residence in Barrack Street, Hobart, on the same city block as St Mary's Cathedral, it was transferred to the Cathedral. Some time before 1979, most likely at the direction of the then Archbishop of Hobart, Guilford Young, who saw himself as somewhat a patron of the arts, it was stripped of its polychromy and fastened to a new plain cross with nails of Tasmanian Blackwood.⁸ The polychromy removal was quite professionally done, probably by Allan Gelston, a Hobart artist much patronized by Young. The fashion for stripped bare wood was very much in accord with the spirit of the times.



The 1847 Pugin-designed corpus (Image: Brian Andrews)

⁷ Wood identified by Hobart antique furniture conservator Tony Colman.

⁸ Ditto.

There is no doubt that the corpus was originally polychromed, as traces of gesso and colour remain in the crevices.

Only the base of the third crucifix remains, but its provenance and trajectory into St Mary's Cathedral can only have been via the transfer of Bishop Willson's possessions from Macquarie Street. In the second half of the twentieth century it stood on the Lady Chapel altar in the Cathedral. Then, several decades ago, vandals broke into the building, removed the crucifix and then mangled it in a grating outside.⁹ The bent upper part was also retrieved but has since disappeared.



Remnant of the third crucifix (Image: Brian Andrews)

From the evidence of the remaining fragment it would have been a typical middle-of-the-range Hardman product, and likely formed part of a large

'sale or return' consignment of Hardman metalwork, to the value of £306-13-9, which was dispatched to Tasmania in September 1855.¹⁰

⁹ Information from Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett of Lismore, NSW, sometime Administrator, St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart.

¹⁰ Details of this consignment and how it came about are to be found in Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2002, pp. 109–14.