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Welcome to the fifty-fourth Friends Newsletter.

Friend of Pugin and Parish Priest of Richmond, Tasmania, Fr Terry Rush, is planning to restore the Pugin designed churchyard cross as his gift to the Archdiocese of Hobart and to the Tasmanian Pugin heritage. The Pugin Foundation is assisting him with photographic and other resources.

We gave an account of this cross in the Friends Newsletter No. 10, April 2007. The base has survived but the capital at the top of the shaft and the cross itself have not. This is complicated by the fact that the capital was never carved and was only ever a 'blob' of stone atop of the shaft. Fortunately early photos show that the Richmond cross was the same as the one at St Paul's Church, Oatlands, and that the capital of this cross was identical with that on the cross at St Patrick's, Colebrook.

Although the Colebrook churchyard cross was destroyed in 1997 we still have all of the fragments, including the undamaged capital which can be copied for Richmond. The Foundation plans to restore the Colebrook cross in due course. We have been able to scan at high resolution an 1860s image of the Oatlands cross with sufficient detail to enable it to be used for carving the new cross for Richmond, work hopefully commencing later this year.

It was a joy to meet with Friend of Pugin Dom Christopher Power of New Norcia Benedictine Community in Hobart recently.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



Above: The Oatlands churchyard cross top; below: the Colebrook churchyard cross top (Image: Brian Andrews)

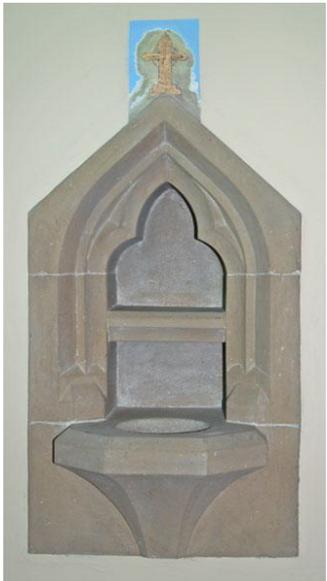
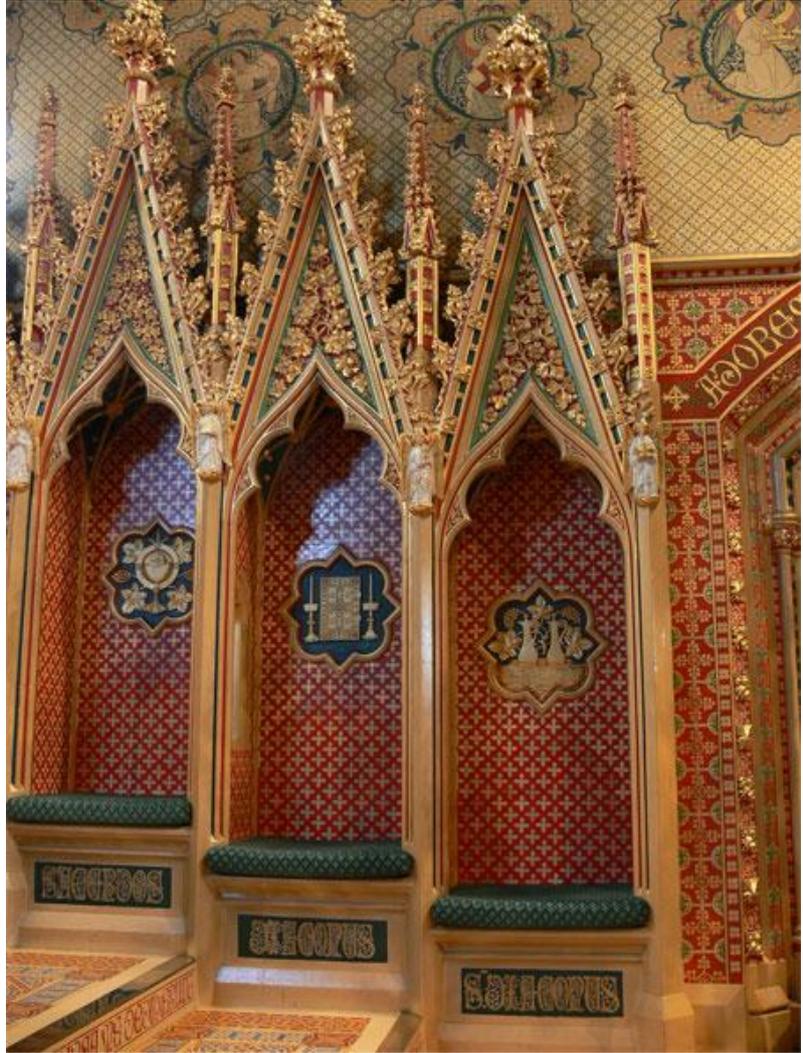


Cheadle and Colebrook (Part 2)

We continue our series of comparisons between the composition and details of St Giles', Cheadle, and St Patrick's, Colebrook.



The west doors and their flanking buttresses (Images: Brian Andrews)



*Cheadle sedilia (Image: John Maidment);
Colebrook piscina and sedilia, Cheadle
piscina (Images: Brian Andrews)*

Bishop Willson's Residence

Ecclesiastical Contents (Part 12)

Episcopal Items (continued)

In the last part of this series we discussed Willson's pectoral cross, a gift from Pugin for his episcopal consecration. The cross is depicted in a fine 1853 portrait of the Bishop by Tasmanian artist William Paul Dowling, a detail of which is given below.



There can be little doubt that his preaching stole was designed by Pugin, and it would have most likely been kept at his Macquarie Street residence.

Personal Items

Bishop Willson brought his personal pyx with him to Tasmania. Centuries older than the many Pugin-designed items in his residence, the silver pyx was

of Recusant Catholic origin and was manufactured in England around the middle of the seventeenth century. Its iconography—principally the Sacred Monogram IHS and a cross set within a glory of rays—and its style are characteristic of engravings on Recusant patens and pyxes of the period.¹



Willson's pyx (Image: Brian Andrews)

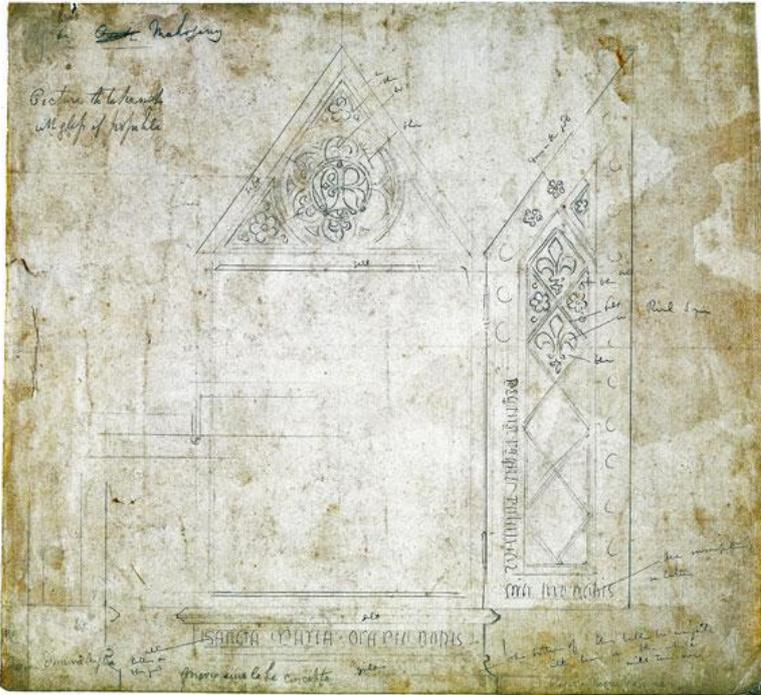
The back of the pyx is engraved with a scrolling monogram 'W' for Willson in the taste of the Regency era, coinciding with the start of his priestly ministry.

Bishop Willson had a strong devotion to the Mother of God, as evidenced by the inclusion of the Virgin and Child in the dexter field of his episcopal arms.



¹ See Charles Oman, *English Church Plate 597–1830*, Oxford University Press, London, 1957, Plates 167, 191.

Material evidence of this devotion once existed in the form of a small Pugin-designed Marian triptych, now sadly missing.²



Pugin's Marian triptych design (Image: courtesy Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery)

One such design, held in the Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, may be that which he made for Willson, particularly because its central panel was made to house a separately-painted image. The triptych was completed by Hardmans early in December 1847 at a price of £6-15-0 and the Day Book entry records a picture from Pugin for the triptych for which Willson was to pay £5-10-0.³

The oak triptych was painted blue and white with gilding, its Marian symbols including the MR (Maria Regina) monogram, fleurs de lis and roses. Its base bore the inscription 'Sancta Maria ora pro nobis' (Saint Mary pray for us) in white lettering on a blue ground. The central space for the Pugin image was just 13.0 x 10.2cm.

² Perhaps he took it with him on the return 1865 visit to England from which he never returned.

³ Birmingham City Archives, Hardman Archive, Metal Day Book 1845-49, 6 December 1847: 'Rt Revd Bishop Willson Hobart Town An Oak Triptick [sic] for Picture sent. Gilt & painted &c 6 15 0 Picture for do. from A.W. Pugin Esq 5 10 0'.

In the top left-hand corner of his drawing Pugin added a practical instruction regarding its manufacture: 'The bottom of this better be weighted with lead or the whole will turn over'.

With its diminutive Pugin painting at its centre this precious devotional item of Willson's must have had the feel of a jewel-like illumination from a medieval manuscript.

This concludes our description of the known ecclesiastical items in Bishop Willson's Hobart residence. Below is a list of the items we have treated in this series over the past 12 months:

- 1846 Roman Missal
- 1527 Sarum Missal
- c.1625-50 Recusant chalice
- c.1470-80 English chalice
- Post 1450 English paten
- 1854 chalice and paten
- Two c.1843 candlesticks
- Sacring bell, probably 1847
- Painted wooden crucifix (late 1830s?)
- 1847 polychromed wooden crucifix
- c.1854 brass altar crucifix
- 1847 stone Virgin and Child statue
- 1847 processional cross
- 1842 precious mitre
- 1854 episcopal ring
- 1854 metal morse
- 1847 bugia
- 1842 pastoral staff
- 1842 pectoral cross
- 1842 ewer
- Mid c.17 pyx
- 1847 Marian triptych

Had fate not frustrated Willson's intention of returning to Tasmania to live in retirement after his farewell trip to England, the ultimate destination of many of these items might have been much different. Of those still in Australia just five remain in liturgical and devotional use. As an aside, the story of Willson's provision for a retirement 'pension' in Tasmania is worth re-telling.



By late 1859, with his health deteriorating, Bishop Willson wrote to the Tasmanian Governor applying for a pension. His correspondence included letters from many prominent Tasmanians, including the former Commissary General and the attorney general, offering testimony to his outstanding work for convicts. They spoke of the regret which would be felt at his retirement by the whole community ‘to whom you have become endeared by active benevolence and shared humanity’.⁴ This application for a pension was not granted by the Lieutenant Governor.

Willson’s practical solution to the problem of a pension was a novel one, revealed in a light-hearted letter of 3 December 1860 to his good friend and episcopal colleague James Alipius Goold OSA, Bishop of Melbourne:

I have been making a purchase, and this very day paid for it; and wo and alas, it has literally taken all I possess, except home, furniture, &c. It is the “Duke of Leinster” public house! It stands close to our Church land & Now, my dear Lord, as the Duke of Newcastle won’t give me anything for my support, supposing I take down the sign (more of it anon) put up the Mitre, call it a tavern, could I not make a very decent living without being dependant of the people? [Willson continued, perhaps slightly tongue in cheek] If this arrangement should take place – nay soon if it do not, I shall have a most valuable painting, a correct likeness of that most patriotic nobleman, the prince of Ireland and Catholicity, the noble Duke of Leinster, in a beautiful green military uniform, to dispose of; and I turn instinctively to you my dear Lord, and to our good friend, Mr O’Shannessy,⁵ feeling sure you will vie with each other who shall be the possessor. Remember it combines two requisites, that of a work of art, and the

⁴ Correspondence relating to Willson’s pension, 21 October 1859 to 10 July 1860, Archdiocese of Hobart Archives, Willson Papers, CA.6/WIL.397–406.

⁵ Sir John O’Shannessy (1818–1883), politician and businessman, and a prominent member of the Victorian Catholic laity.

portrait of a Patriot and a good man. One hundred guineas is a beggarly price for it.⁶

Willson had successfully bid for the building at auction via a Catholic layman as intermediary so as to avoid giving scandal. It was situated on the corner of Brisbane and Harrington Streets, Hobart, diagonally across from the block of land on which he would build St Mary’s Cathedral. An image of the former pub is given below.



The former Duke of Leinster public house, Hobart (Image: Brian Andrews)

Pugin’s Designs

The 1847 Crucifix Figures

(Part 4)

We noted in our introduction to this series the remarkable number of figures of widely varying sizes carved from Pugin’s design for Bishop Willson in 1847. From that year until the end of his life Pugin was only involved with a handful of English churches. Just one of these, St Thomas of Canterbury’s, Fulham, received a corpus carved by George Myers’ men to Pugin’s 1847 design.

⁶ Willson to Goold, 3 December 1860, Archdiocese of Hobart Archives, Willson Papers, Goold Correspondence, CA.6/WIL.465.

We can reasonably assume that this figure was destined for the rood screen which he had designed for the church. However, the antipathy towards rood screens against which he had battled since the early 1840s had a concrete impact in St Thomas' Church.

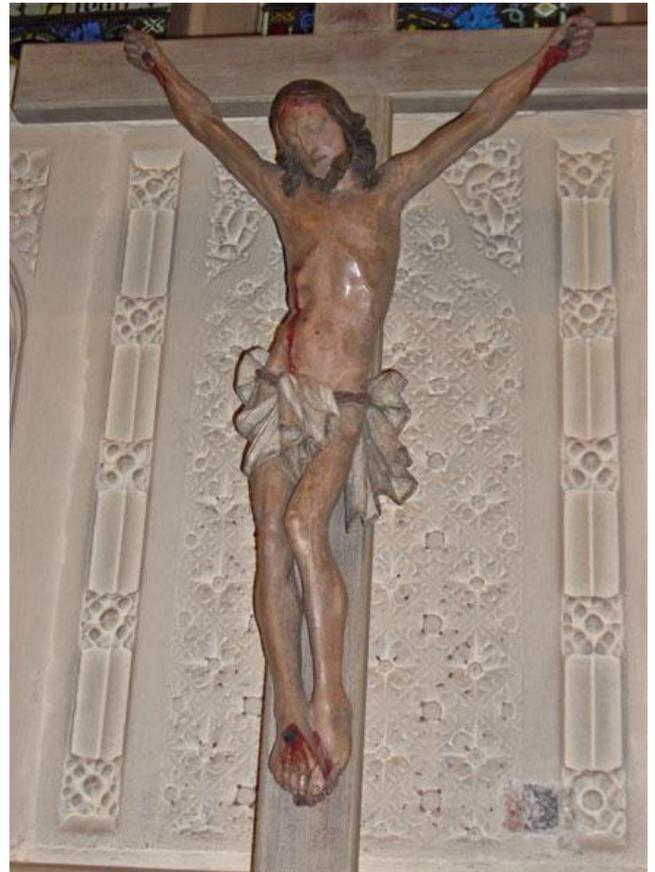
The building was entirely paid for by a Mrs Elizabeth Bowden in memory of her late husband. She was determined that it should not have a rood screen and told Pugin that from the beginning.⁷ Denis Evinson, in his history of the church, tells what happened:

When after two interviews she finally refused, he began putting up the screen without her leave. The lower part was actually made and fixed. This was taken down on Mrs Bowden's orders, and communion rails installed. So, as a result of this disagreement, Pugin did not make an appearance at the opening.

This consequence called forth a passionate response from Pugin, provoked by an account of the opening of the church on 30 May 1848 which appeared in *The Tablet*.⁸ In a letter to that publication he wrote:

As the architect of the church, I beg to state that the *light Communion rails* so highly commended in an article which appeared a short time since, *were not arranged by me*, the lower part of proper screens having been prepared, and actually fixed, and then removed, and the Protestant rails substituted, under a protest from me against the proceeding. So far from these miserable rails being an improvement upon the ancient screens, I do not hesitate to affirm that the interior effect of the chancels is ruined for want of screen-work, and a rood loft; and the assertion that six mullions, of two inches each, are a great obstruction to view in a space of eighteen feet, is a manifest absurdity.⁹

Pugin's corpus, attached to a cross, is visible in a photo of the interior dating from the early 1970s where it is to be seen suspended from a roof truss within the chancel. Later, an image from 2005 shows it on a plain cross planted against the former high altar reredos. A close-up of the head dispels any doubt that it is the 1847 design.



The Fulham corpus (Image: Brian Andrews)

⁷ Denis Evinson, *St Thomas's Fulham: A History of the Church and Mission*, London, 1998, p. 6.

⁸ *The Tablet*, Vol. IX, No. 422, 3 June 1848, pp. 355–6.

⁹ *The Tablet*, Vol. IX, No. 426, 1 July 1848, P. 419.



As part of the recent renovation of the church the corpus has been affixed to a new cross of contemporary design and again suspended over the chancel.

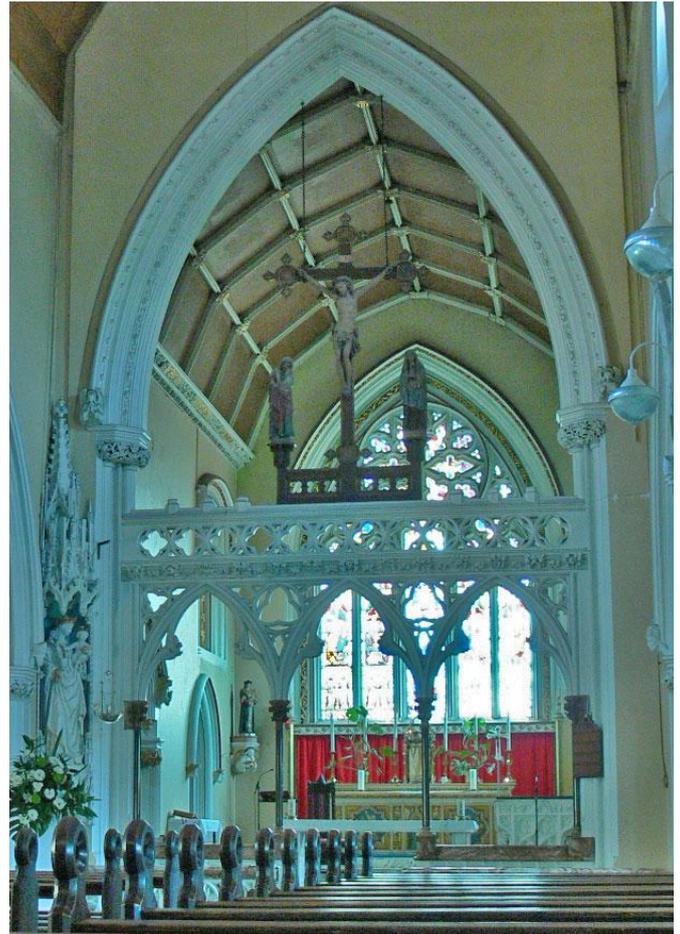


The Pugin corpus on its new cross, photographed in the Fulham presbytery prior being hung in the church (Image: Brian Andrews)

There is, to our knowledge, just one other corpus from the 1847 design in England. It is also in London but not in a Pugin-designed church. This figure is on the rood screen of the Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Greenwich, by the Pugin follower William Wilkinson Wardell, an architect who, after migrating to Australia for health reasons in 1858, was to design a number of buildings of major heritage significance.¹⁰

The Greenwich church was designed in 1846 and completed in 1851. At Wardell's request Pugin designed a number of the furnishings including, it would appear, the rood screen group.

¹⁰ They include: St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney; St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne; Government House, Melbourne; and the former ES&A Bank, Collins St, Melbourne.



A view of the chancel of Our Lady Star of the Sea, Greenwich, with the Pugin corpus visible on the rood screen group (Image: John Maidment)

The wooden beam pierced with diagonally set quatrefoils supporting the cross, Our Lady and St John the Beloved Disciple, is near identical with that designed by Pugin in 1847 for his St Osmund's Church, Salisbury.

Regrettably, we don't have an image of the corpus of suitable quality for publication, but a careful examination of digitally magnified images validates its membership of this fascinating family of Pugin corpuses. Interestingly, it still has its original separately-carved crown of thorns.¹¹ **To be continued.**

¹¹ Only one has survived in Tasmania, on the 1847 figure in St Michael's, Campbell Town, a church by Henry Hunter. The screen has been demolished but the figure on its original cross is suspended from the chancel arch.

