

Included in this edition:

- *Cheadle and Colebrook (Part 3)*
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Welcome to the fifty-fifth Friends Newsletter.

Friend of Pugin John Maidment has drawn our attention to the availability on line of Pugin's magnificent *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*. Its web address is:
<http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924020490383>. It can be downloaded as a pdf (28.9MB) or read online.

This book, regarded as one of the finest examples of nineteenth-century chromolithography, was a key source of decorative examples for designers working in the Gothic idiom, both in England and Australia. Tasmania's most prolific architect, Henry Hunter, the protégé of Bishop Willson, applied its details to altars, tabernacles and organ pipes.

As well as its 74 glorious chromolithographic plates the book has over 200 pages of text in which Pugin describes in considerable detail church furnishings, vestments, liturgical objects and symbolism, many entries accompanied by wood-engravings. This material is a mine of information on his design approach and its historical basis.

One criticism of the online version of the *Glossary* is that the colour rendition is not faithful to the original. For the true colours it is necessary to consult the 2005 Dover publications partial re-print, which reproduces 59 of the colour plates but no text, or the original which, as a rare volume, fetches upwards of \$600.

We take this opportunity to wish you a blessed Easter.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



The frontispiece of Pugin's Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume

Cheadle and Colebrook (Part 3)

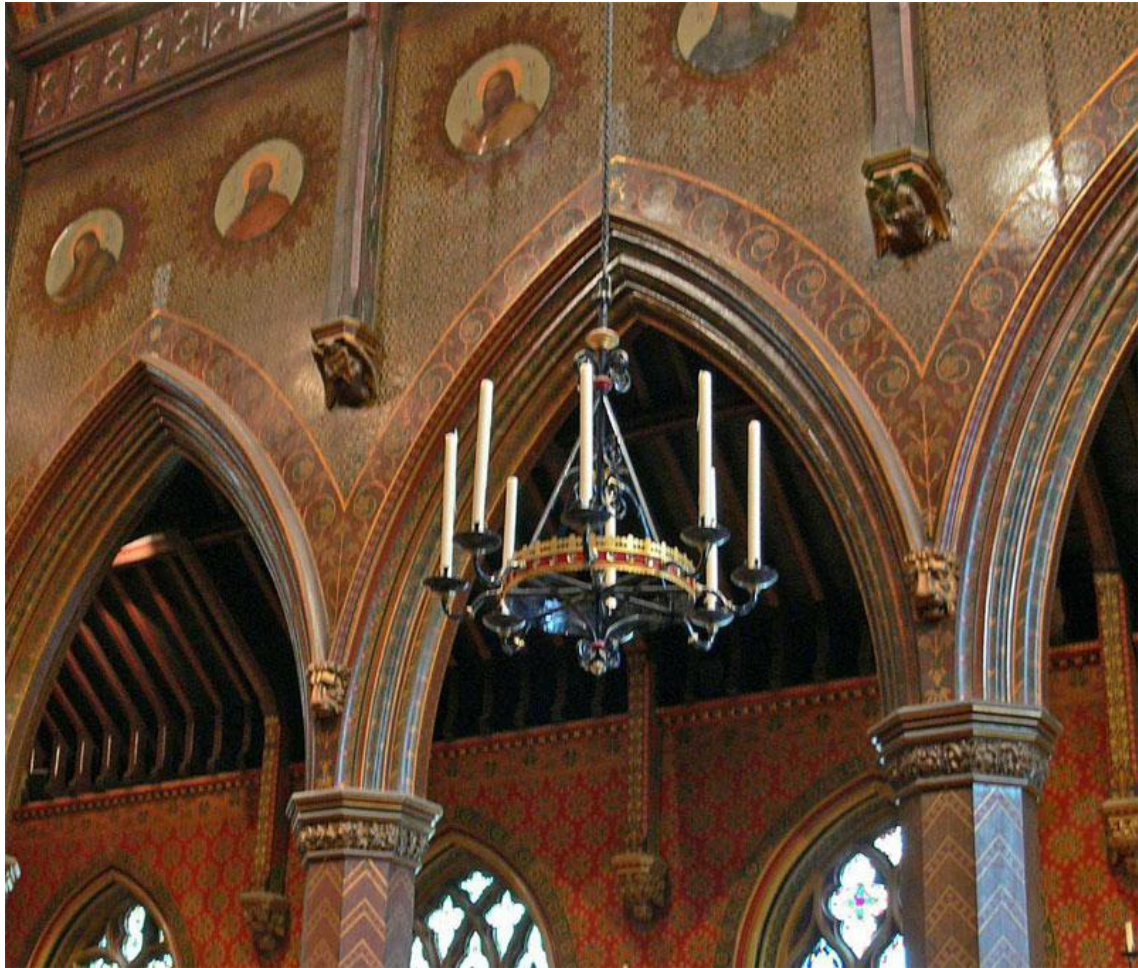
We continue our series of comparisons between the composition and details of St Giles', Cheadle, and St Patrick's, Colebrook.



St Giles' interior looking east (Image: Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett)



St Patrick's interior looking east (Image: Brian Andrews)



Nave arcades (upper image: John Maidment; lower image: Brian Andrews)

Bishop Willson's Hobart Pro-cathedral Renovations

(Part 1)

Introduction

As a follow up to our series on the ecclesiastical contents of Bishop Willson's Hobart residence we will examine the renovations which he carried out on his pro-cathedral of St Joseph, a couple of blocks to the east down Macquarie Street, between 1856 and 1859.

A highly detailed 1859 photograph of the renovated chancel affords us the opportunity to see just how comprehensively he sought to furnish a severely un-Puginian interior in accordance with Pugin's and his shared principles and beliefs. But firstly, we will look at the churches he had built in Nottingham in the years prior to his departure for Van Diemens Land in 1844.

Nottingham

William Willson was ordained to the Catholic priesthood in 1824 and sent to take charge of the mission in Nottingham. His flock had been worshipping in a compressed space some ten metres by six metres in King's Place, a blind alley,¹ for this was still some years before the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act.

This wretched chapel soon became too small for his ever-increasing congregation so he engaged his older brother, the architect Edward J. Willson, to design a much larger chapel, St John's, which was opened in 1828.² Out of consideration for the then still strong anti-Catholic sentiment prevailing, St John's, pictured below, had little to identify itself as

a Catholic church. In the pediment a subtle Latin cross can barely be discerned, worked by the placement of stones in the ashlar face.



Above: St John's Chapel, Nottingham; below: the subtle cross on the pediment (Images: Brian Andrews)



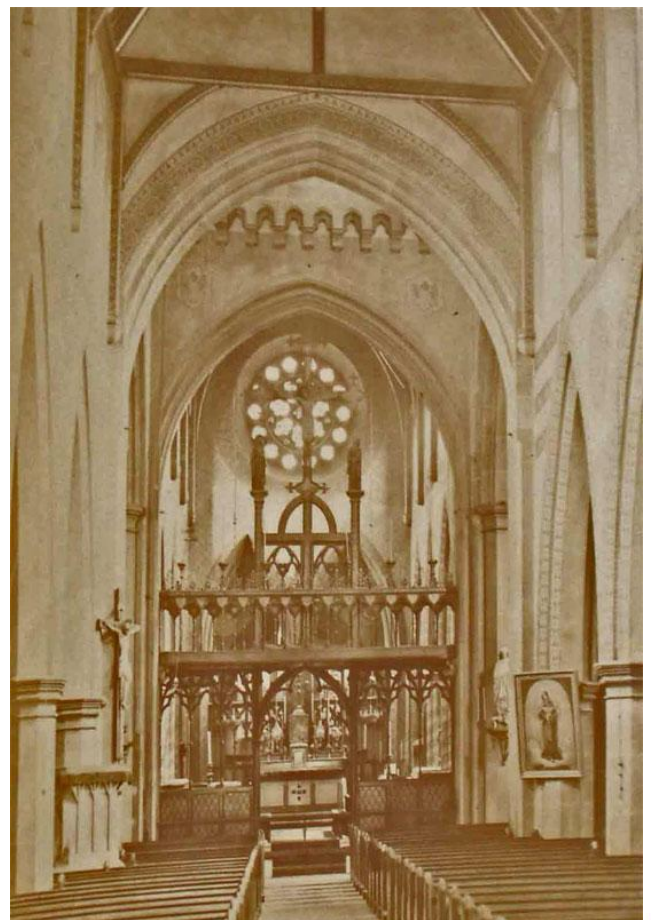
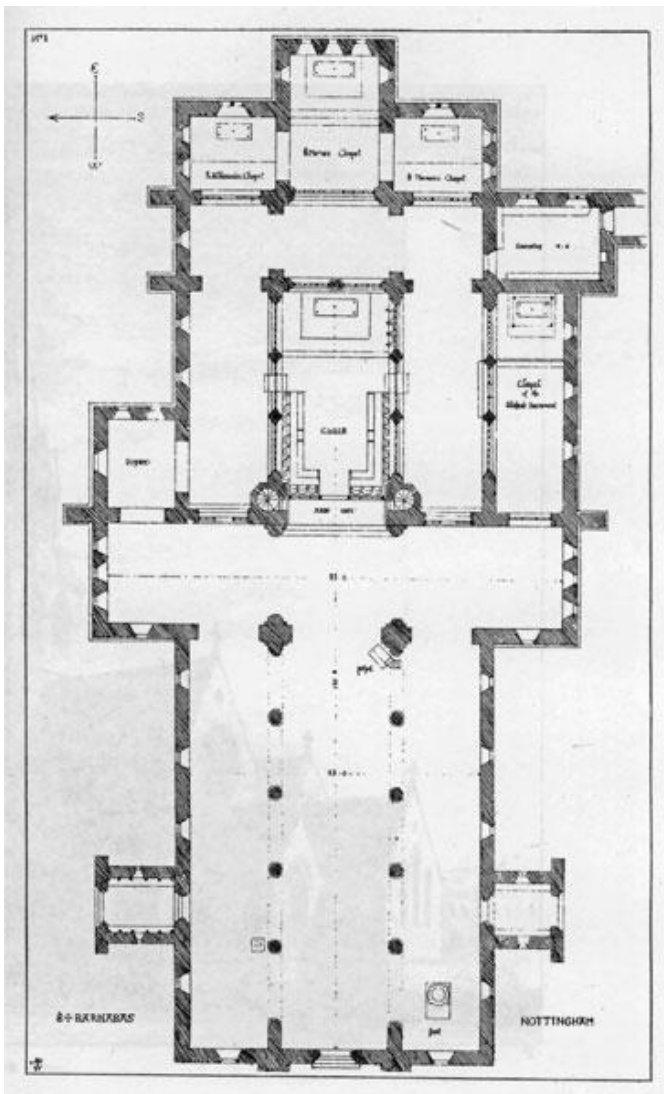
¹ Thomas Kelsh, *Personal Recollections of the Right Reverend Robert William Willson D.D. (First Bishop of Hobart Town)*, Hobart, 1882, p. 5.

² Edward Willson was the first of his family to become involved with the Pugins, supplying the text for a number of pattern books published by Pugin's father Auguste from 1821. These pattern books were publications containing accurate measured drawings of English medieval buildings and were much used by architects as a source for their Gothic Revival designs.

In a little over a decade Willson's labours had resulted in such a massive increase in Catholic numbers in Nottingham that he was obliged to embark on the erection of what was at the time the largest Catholic church to have been constructed in England since the Reformation. This was achieved through a splendid design by his friend Pugin and the munificence of the Earl of Shrewsbury. A magnificent aisled clerestoried building with transepts, a soaring crossing spire and a complex east end, St Barnabas', opened in 1844, would become a cathedral church following the restoration of the English Catholic hierarchy in 1850.



Above: a 1930s view of St Barnabas' Cathedral with attached presbytery also by Pugin; below: the interior as constructed with original rood screen (Images: Diocese of Nottingham Archives)



St Barnabas', Nottingham, ground plan (Source: Pugin's Present State)

Amongst the chapels at the east end of the church was the Lady Chapel, situated on the main axis of the building directly behind the chancel, and complete with parclose screens, stalls and sedilia. The statue of the virgin and Child stood on a corbel under a canopy behind the chancel, facing the Lady Chapel. Willson had a particularly strong devotion to the Mother of God.



Above: the Lady Chapel; below: the Virgin and Child Statue (Images: Diocese of Nottingham Archives)



All this splendid construction and furnishing was nearing completion when Willson departed for Van Diemens Land early in 1844. Indeed, 'his last official act in Nottingham was to ascend to the top of its spire, about 200 feet high, and bless the cross on its summit'.³

All this *summa* of Pugin's and his shared vision for church architecture and furnishing would stand in the starkest contrast with what would have to serve as his pro-cathedral in Hobart from 1844 until 1865 when he departed on his ill-fated last trip back to England.⁴ St Joseph's Church, Hobart, was a rectangular Gothick box with 'rocket' pinnacles, wooden window tracery and a western tower, designed by James Alexander Thompson and opened in 1841. An 1844 sketch by Thomas Chapman shows the building just as Willson found it upon his arrival in Hobart Town that same year.



An 1844 sketch by Thomas Chapman which includes St Joseph's, Hobart (Source: Allport Library and Museum, State Library of Tasmania)

The interior was a plain rectangular space with western and eastern galleries, the latter a music gallery. The space below the music gallery was enclosed by elaborate Gothick screenwork to form a lobby and two sacristies, in front of which was the principal altar. Its altarpiece, a painting of the *Resurrection* by the American-born artist Mather Brown—former court painter to the Duke of

³ Kelsh, op. cit., p. 10.

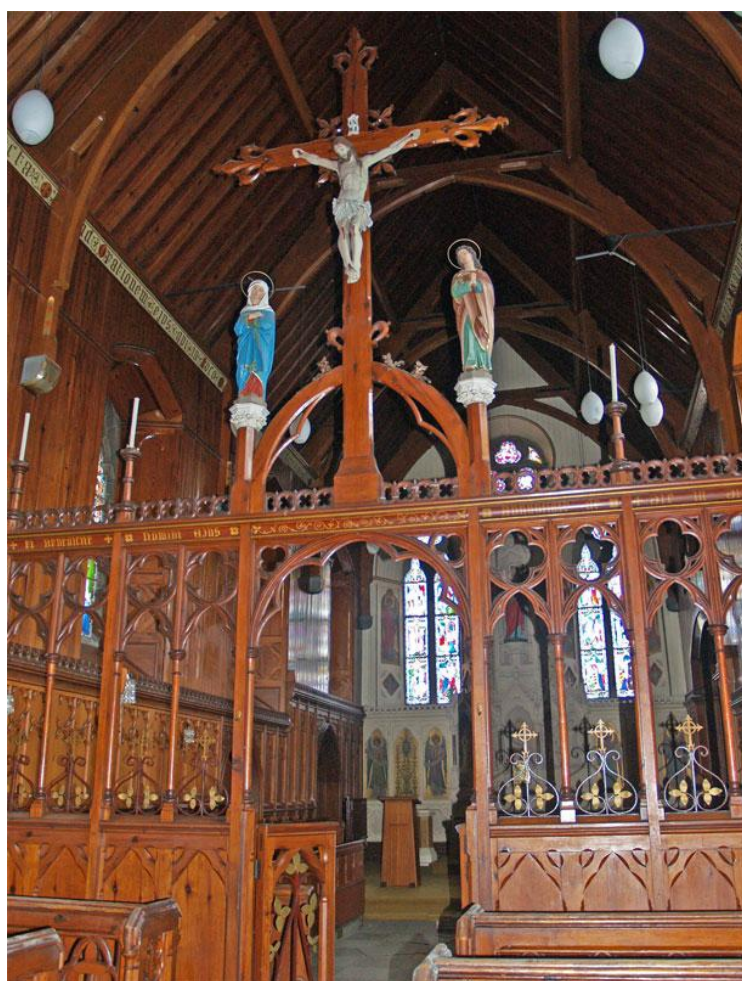
⁴ Lack of finances in his poor diocese would prevent Willson from making a start on a cathedral until 1860. The first section was not opened until 4 July 1866, just four days after his death in England.

York—was draped with rich crimson and gold drapery. How depressing it must have seemed to Willson as compared to the noble interior of St Barnabas'. **To be continued.**

Pugin's Designs

The 1847 Crucifix Figures (Part 5)

Other than the many Tasmanian figures and the two English examples, described in Part 4 of this series, we know of only one other carved from Pugin's 1847 design. It is in Ireland on the rood screen in the chapel of the former Presentation Convent, Waterford.



*The rood screen, former Presentation Convent, Waterford,
(Image: Brian Andrews)*

This fine convent building, amongst the best of Pugin's monastic structures, was designed in 1841 and the foundation stone laid on 10 June 1842.⁵ Construction was slow due to the effects of the famine and the sisters did not take possession of the site until 3 May 1848.⁶ Even at this stage the building was in a state of incompleteness, most notably the chapel, which was largely unfinished.

In 1861 a city-wide appeal for funds resulted inter alia in the completion of the chapel, which was blessed and consecrated on 3 May 1863.⁷

This later phase of the convent's completion was to the designs of Pugin's eldest son Edward Welby Pugin, and the chunky character of the chapel's altar, with its marble details, differs markedly from his father's genre. Whether the rood screen was also by E.W. Pugin, given the late date of its installation, or whether a design for it had already been prepared by his father as part of the original drawings remains to be investigated. What is indisputable is the fact that the rood crucifix corpus has all the unique characteristics of the others in the 1847 design, so it would have been carved, gessoed and polychromed by George Myers' men some time between 1847 and 1863. Beyond that we can't speculate.

Let us now return to the Tasmanian corpuses.

Because their Pugin design origin was not established until mid 2004 it is not surprising that many of them have suffered well-intentioned, if ignorant and unfortunate, modifications, principally in the form of partial or complete repainting, evidently by local amateurs. One, as pictured in our Newsletter Number 49, October 2010, was entirely stripped of all polychromy.

Of the six which were placed on rood screens only two remain in situ, mercifully, in the two complete Pugin churches. The other four, in churches designed or modified by Henry Hunter, have been

⁵ We propose to give a descriptive account of the convent in a future issue of our Newsletter.

⁶ 'Presentation Convent, Waterford, Conservation Report, dhh Architects, Waterford, December 2006, p. 9.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 10.

relocated following the destruction of the rood screens in those buildings.

Examples of the state of two corpuses which have been 'improved' by re-painting are given below. Enough said!



Others remain in original condition, a good example being that which was on the rood screen in Henry Hunter's St Michael's Church, Campbell Town. Following the destruction of the rood screen the rood cross with figure attached was affixed to a transverse beam installed on the east face of the chancel arch.⁸



The former rood screen crucifix in St Michael's Church, Campbell Town (Image: Jude Andrews)

The plug at the base of the cross seated in a notch in the screen top beam, and notches in the sides of the long arm of the cross housed the upper ends of the curved rood braces so typical of Pugin's screen designs. This corpus is particularly noteworthy being the only Tasmanian one to have retained its crown of thorns.

It will be noted that on all three corpuses illustrated here, the arm joints have opened up. **To be continued.**

⁸ The fluorescent tube on the other side of the transverse beam, to light the chancel, is an unhappy addition.



Summary of the 1847-designed Corpuses

Present Location	Height	Condition
St Joseph's Church, Hobart, Tas	Unknown	Re-painted
Passionist Monastery, Hobart, Tas	132 cm	Original
Corpus Christi Church, Bellerive, Tas	95 cm	Original
St Mary's College, Hobart, Tas	132 cm	Original
St Paul's Church, Oatlands, Tas	58 cm	Re-painted
St Patrick's Church, Colebrook, Tas	Unknown	Original
St Michael's Church, Campbell Town, Tas	Unknown	Original
St Mary's Church, Franklin, Tas	80 cm	Re-painted
Unknown, formerly in St John's Church, Glenorchy, Tas, demolished	Unknown	Unknown
Church Archives basement, North Hobart, Tas	132 cm	Re-painted
Sacred Heart Church, New Town, Tas	Unknown	Fire damaged
The Apostles Church, Launceston, Tas	108 cm	Part re-painted
St Francis Xavier's Church, South Hobart, Tas	26 cm	Bronze, painted
St Thomas of Canterbury's Church, Fulham, UK	Unknown	Original
St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart, Tas	45 cm	Stripped of polychromy
Presbytery, The Apostles Church, Launceston, Tas	26 cm	Bronze
Maryknoll Retreat Centre, Blackmans Bay, Tas	92 cm	Re-painted
Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Greenwich, UK	Unknown	Original
St Thomas' Church, Sorell, Tas	33 cm	Re-painted
Former Presentation Convent, Waterford, Ireland	Unknown	Original

New Friends of Pugin

We welcome:

Mr Jim Muldoon

Grafton, NSW

