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Welcome to the sixty-first Friends Newsletter.

A couple of weeks ago we received an exciting email from Friend of Pugin David Mort who owns a property outside Mudgee in the Central West of New South Wales. He had been leafing through an old family photo album dating from around 1880 and there to his surprise and delight was a photo of the interior of St Mark's Anglican Church, Darling Point, revealing the only known picture to date of the 1850 Pugin-designed window in the chancel. He attached a copy of it to his email. We gave a detailed account of this window, its unfortunate demise and its remarkable discovery in our Newsletter Number 37 of October 2009.

David has taken a great interest in the fate of the window, particularly since the remains were found a couple of years ago in a sealed space above the toilets in the church hall just metres from its original site. He is doing everything possible to facilitate its restoration and re-installation in the

church, and believes it would be particularly appropriate if this could be accomplished during 2012, Pugin's Bi-centenary year. David has a special connection with the church because his illustrious ancestor Thomas Sutcliffe Mort gave the land upon which the church was erected, and worshipped there.

We are most grateful to David for the image and for permission to reproduce it in this issue.

Best wishes from glorious Spring in Hobart.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



This interesting panorama of Colebrook village was photographed by Friend of Pugin John Miller on 12 November 2007 from the top of the scaffolding surrounding the newly reconstructed nave east gable bellcote on St Patrick's Church

Pugin's Window in St Mark's, Darling Point

Two years ago in our October 2009 Newsletter we described the window completed by Hardmans in August 1850 for St Mark's Church. We described the severely damaged remains of the window, but at that stage no image had been identified of it in situ. Here, we are delighted to present the image discovered by Friend of Pugin David Mort, along with an enlargement of the actual window and an image showing the window's state as found.





Historic image and enlarged detail courtesy David Mort

The Present State of Pugin's Ecclesiastical Architecture in Australia

(Part 3)

3. St Francis Xavier's, Berrima

This church is the only one of Pugin's Australian buildings the structural integrity of which has always remained intact.¹ In stating this we note that the intended rood screen was not constructed, so strictly speaking it has never been fully in accord with the plans sent out to Archbishop Polding late in 1842.



A quintessentially Australian rural scene with St Francis Xavier's Church on the outskirts of Berrima village around the turn of the twentieth century (Source: Private collection)

Of the original movable furnishings only the altar, shorn of its reredos, remains. It is now used as a forward altar, and there is compelling evidence to suggest that it was included in the Pugin drawings. This will be explored in a future series in the Newsletter.

¹ Although St Patrick's, Colebrook, is also structurally intact, this has only come about through the conservation activities of the Pugin Foundation, notably through the reconstruction of the triple bellcote which came down in a mini tornado in 1895.

The other furnishings, in an unsympathetic and crude carpenter's Gothic idiom, were installed from a closed church in the area and can be seen in the interior view below. We have been informed that the side altars have been removed since the image was taken, and it is our hope that the truly awful high altar will follow suite.



The interior c.1995 (Image: Ray Ryan)

The only change to the exterior, which does not affect the original structural integrity of the church, has been the addition of a disabled ramp for the north porch entrance. **To be continued.**



The exterior (Image: Jude Andrews)

The New High Altar, St Patrick's Church, Colebrook

(Part 1)

Introduction

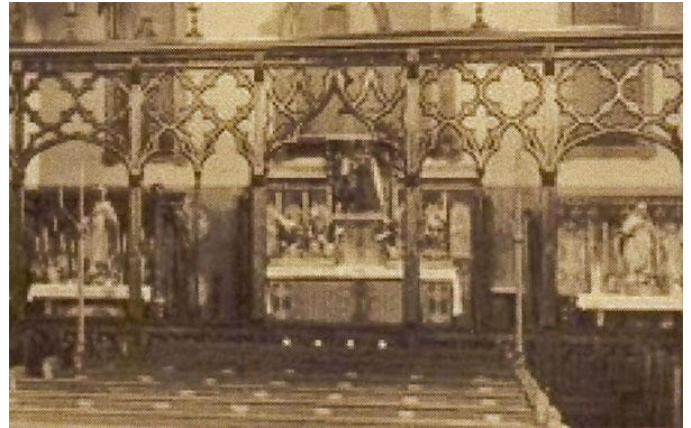
Through the generosity of Allan and Maria Myers the Pugin Foundation is currently engaged in the reinstatement of Pugin-designed chancel furnishings in readiness for the Bi-centenary of Pugin's birth on 1 March 1812 and the celebration of a solemn Mass in St Patrick's, Colebrook, on Sunday 4 March 2012 to mark that occasion.

The key furnishing to be reinstated, insofar as available historical evidence will permit, is a new high altar replacing the present one which dates from the 1930s. In this new series we will lead you through the at least three previous high altars in St Patrick's and then describe our choice of the new one and detail its construction, decoration and installation.

High Altar 1

After Pugin's death in 1852 Bishop Willson was heavily reliant on his protégé architect Henry Hunter to design churches and furnishings in the Pugin manner and, importantly, incorporating Pugin's and his shared beliefs on liturgical furnishings and their decoration. Following Willson's purchase of a new painted and gilded wooden high altar from Hardmans for St Joseph's, Hobart, his pro-cathedral, in March 1855,² it is clear from the scanty photographic and other evidence that this altar became almost exclusively the model for the painted and gilded wooden altars which Hunter designed—and on occasion painted and gilded himself—for around a quarter of a century.³ Decoration of these altars and their

reredoses was derived in large part from Pugin's highly influential *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*, a masterpiece of mid nineteenth-century chromolithography.⁴



The altars in St Joseph's, Hobart, in the late nineteenth century, showing the Hardman altar flanked by the Hunter altars (Image: Private collection)

Key attributes of the Hardman reredos replicated in those by Hunter were the raised central section and the division of the face into panels with tracery heads, along with the hanging of riddel curtains at each end of the reredos. Regrettably, Hunter's many wooden altars have not fared well, and none in their entirety complete with reredos.⁵ But details in two photographs of the interiors of Pugin's St Paul's, Oatlands, and Hunter's Holy Trinity, Westbury, prove the Hardman source of Hunter's altars.

The Oatlands altar dated from 1858, just two years after the installation of the Hardman altar in St Joseph's, and was painted and gilded by Hunter.⁶ It was still intact in the first decade of the twentieth century, and the detail overleaf has been extracted from a photograph of that era. It clearly shows the Hardman lineage and, significantly, the survival of two standard candlesticks as part of a typical Willson Sarum Use liturgical furnishing setup.

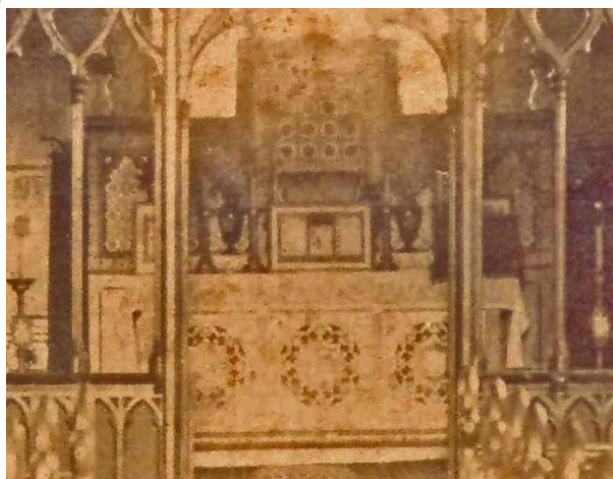
² See Newsletter Number 58, July 2011, for details of the altar purchase.

³ The major exceptions were the Lady Altar and St Joseph's Altar for St Joseph's, Hobart, where he used a different form for the reredos, most probably because of their close proximity to the Hardman High Altar. See Newsletter Number 57, June 2011, for details.

⁴ A. Welby Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*, Henry G. Bohn, London, 1844. Subsequent editions of 1846 and 1868, the latter published by Bernard Quaritch, also of London.

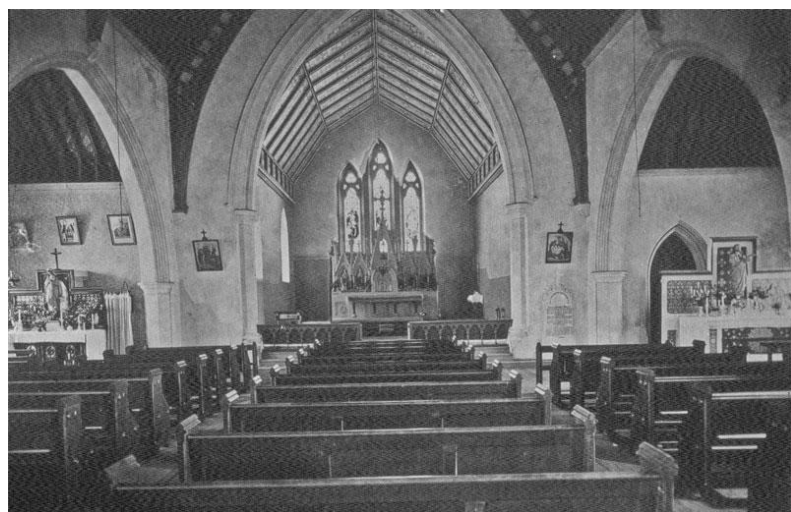
⁵ The remains are: the high altar and tabernacle from Holy Trinity, Westbury; the tabernacle from Immaculate Conception, Ouse; and the tabernacle from St Mary's, Swansea.

⁶ *The Hobart Town Daily Mercury*, 29 June 1858, p. 3.



A detail from an early twentieth-century photograph of the interior of Pugin's St Paul's, Oatlands, showing the Hunter altar and reredos through the rood screen (Image: Archdiocese of Hobart Archives)

Holy Trinity, Westbury, had three Hunter altars of this type, two of which are evident in the early twentieth-century image below, namely, the Lady and Sacred Heart altars.⁷



The interior of Holy Trinity, Westbury, showing the Hunter side altars with their Hardmanesque reredoses and the riddel curtains to the Lady Altar on the left (Image: courtesy Westbury Parish)

⁷ When this photo was taken the High Altar had already been replaced by a stone one designed by the Launceston Arts and Crafts architect Alexander North. The Hunter altar and tabernacle, minus the reredos, finished up in St Patrick's, Blessington, since closed, and the altar is now in the Archdiocesan Museum.

From the available evidence we can conclude that the first high altar in St Patrick's, Colebrook, was another of Hunter's wooden designs based on the Hardman example. It was probably manufactured in the late 1850s by Patrick Lynch who made the rood screen and the sedilia. We can also reasonably conclude that it would have been painted and gilded with detail from Pugin's *Glossary* and that it would have had riddel curtains as well as a pair of standard candlesticks standing before it.

This first high altar was destined for a short life, perhaps around a quarter of a century.

High Altar 2

In March 1883 the Jerusalem (later re-named Colebrook) correspondent for *The Tasmanian Catholic Standard* reported the installation of a new altar in St Patrick's Church:

A beautiful altar has been made and presented to the Church by Mr. Patrick Sheehy. He has been about three weeks in the district, and six months in the Colony, having but recently arrived from Hibernia's persecuted isle. The altar is of a new design in Tasmania; it stands about eleven feet high, and with its stained glasses of numberless designs, beautiful carvings and elaborate workmanship, is certainly a present that enhances the beauty of the church ...⁸

A further report in September 1883 described the altar as 'nearly 20ft. high, beautifully worked in Gothic style, and elaborately gilded'.⁹

Clearly this new altar had lots of what would be called in modern parlance 'bling', out-dazzling the earlier Hunter altar, although we think that the estimate of 20 feet height must have been somewhat over-enthusiastic. At this height it would have entirely covered the chancel east window.

The terrible mini-tornado which ripped through the centre of Colebrook in September 1895, bringing down the bellcote through the chancel

⁸ *The Tasmanian Catholic Standard*, March 1883, p. 428, c. 1.

⁹ *The Catholic Standard*, September 1883, p. 147, c. 1.

roof and smashing statues on either side of the altar, reportedly did little damage to the Sheehy altar. The local correspondent stated: 'Two very large statues (of the Blessed Virgin and St. Patrick) at either side of the altar were completely smashed. The altar, a very fine one by Mr. P. Sheehy, Hobart, escaped; and the rood screen, with its fine crucifix above, is also uninjured.'¹⁰ However, evidence found under the floor of the chancel several years ago suggests that the altar did not completely 'escape'. Along with fragments of the two statues there were small pieces of coloured glass and painted wood, clearly from the altar.¹¹

It seems that the damaged altar remained in situ until replaced in the mid 1930s.

High Altar 3

During the 1930s when Colebrook was a part of Oatlands parish the Parish Priest Fr Murphy undertook the refurbishment of St Paul's, Oatlands, and St Patrick's, Colebrook, including the installation of new altars in each church.



The 1930s altar (Image: Brian Andrews)

¹⁰ *The Monitor*, vol. 2, no. 25, Friday, 20 September 1895, Supplement, n.p., c.2–3.

¹¹ There must have been damage to the altar because the window immediately behind it was so badly damaged that it had to be replaced. Parts of the old window glass and lead calmes were also found under the floor.

The new altar for Colebrook was likely made by the Launceston, Tasmania, furniture firm of Coogans and was constructed of the local native timber Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*).¹² It was in a rather crude Gothic style, and certainly not up to the elegant standard of the Pugin interior. In September 2011 the altar was transferred to the Archdiocese of Hobart Museum. **To be continued.**

Wind Braces in Pugin's Churches (Part 5)

St Barnabas' Cathedral, Nottingham

The building was designed in 1841.



*An early 1930s image of the Nottingham Cathedral nave
(Source: Diocese of Nottingham Archives)*

¹² Information from antique furniture conservator Tony Colman.

Similar in size to Mount St Bernard's Abbey Church, it was furnished with wind braces in the chancel but not in the nave or transepts. Given the structural illogicality of this scheme, it must be concluded that Pugin included braces in the chancel for reasons of propriety.

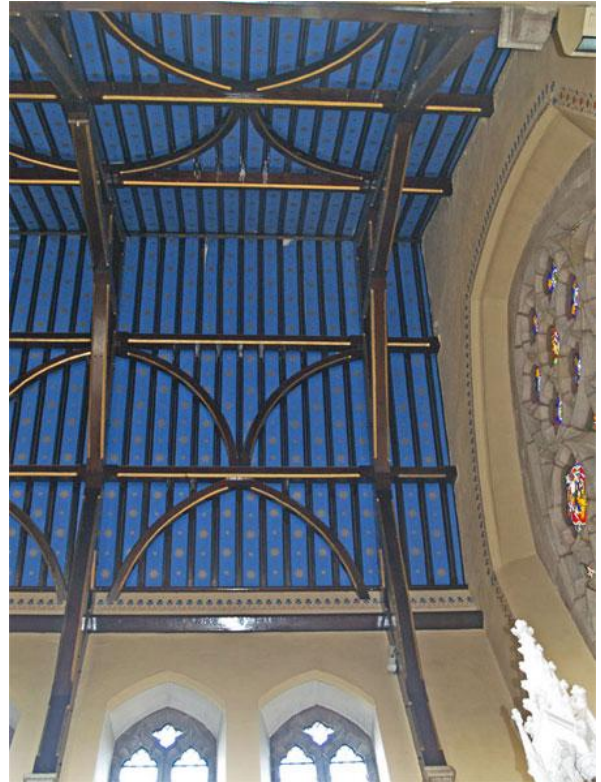


*An early 1930s images of the newly refurbished chancel of St Barnabas' Cathedral, showing wind braces in the roof
(Source: Diocese of Nottingham Archives)*

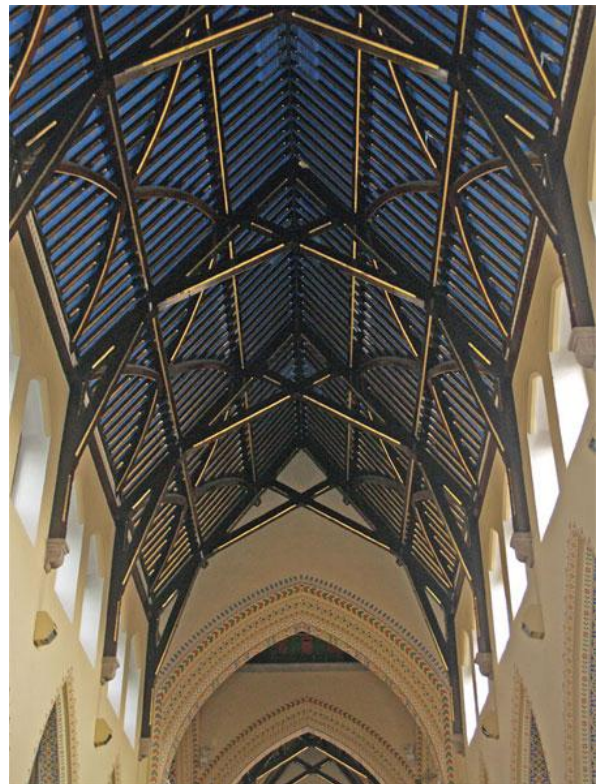
St Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy

Designed in 1843, St Aidan's Cathedral, the third large building with the same typology as Mount St Bernard's Abbey and St Barnabas' Cathedral, had arch braces to the nave, transepts and chancel. This cathedral seems to be a case where the bracing was included for structural reasons because the building itself is not particularly structurally elaborated. Indeed, Pugin's Irish churches were generally more rugged and sparing than his English designs.

Reviewing Pugin's large Irish church and cathedral designs up to this date—Wexford, Ramsgrange, Gorey, Enniscorthy—all with arch braces, it seems that Pugin was using the braces because of a perception of greater wind loadings in Ireland than in England.



Above: the Enniscorthy Cathedral chancel roof; below: the nave roof (Images: Brian Andrews)



There is no doubting the attractiveness of the arch-braced roofs in St Aidan's Cathedral.



A view into the north transept of St Aidan's Cathedral showing the arch-braced roof (Image: Brian Andrews)

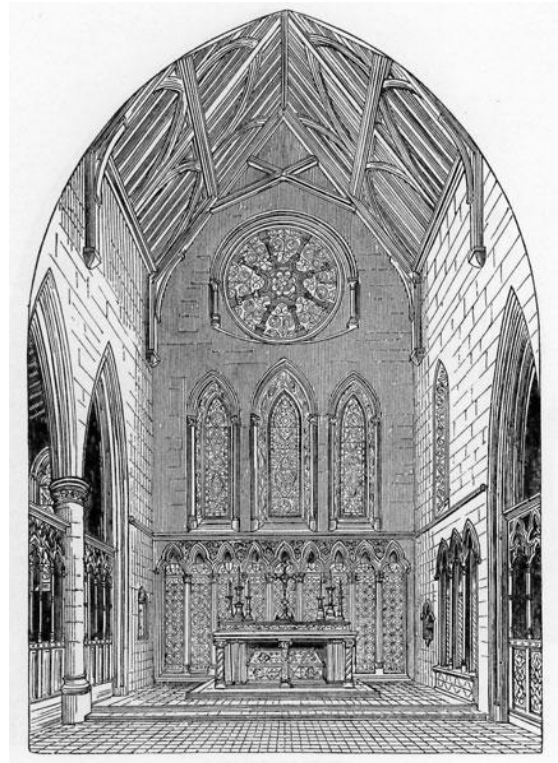
St Wilfrid's, Hulme

The chancel roof as constructed is shown below.



Hulme chancel roof detail (Image: Brian Andrews)

The church was opened in 1842, yet as late as May 1841 the image of the Hulme chancel in Pugin's 'Present State' article of that date showed elaborate wind bracing to the chancel roof. Given that the church had been designed in 1838 at a time when Pugin was using wind bracing for decorative purposes or for reasons of propriety, it would seem that by the early 1840s he had largely abandoned such practices. **To be continued.**



*St Wilfrid's chancel (Source: [A. Welby Pugin], 'On the Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England', *Dublin Review*, vol. X, May 1841, Plate XIV)*