

June 2012

Number 69

Included in this edition:

- *Pugin's Book Illustrations (Part 4)*
- *Pugin's Present State (Part 9)*
- *Convent of the Presentation, Waterford (Part 4)*

Welcome to the sixty-ninth Friends Newsletter.

In our April Newsletter, when recounting the wonderful events with which we celebrated the Pugin Bi-centenary, we mentioned that material filmed during the Festival was being put together by ABC Television for its *Compass* religious program and that this would likely be put to air in September. We have just been informed that the date for the program has been brought forward to this month.

Entitled *Tasmanian Gothic*, the half-hour *Compass* program on Pugin will be broadcast on Sunday evening **24 June at 6.30pm on ABC1**. It will be repeated on the same channel at 1.30pm on Tuesday 26 June. We understand that the program will still be able to be watched on ABC iview for

fourteen days from the original broadcast. This latter may be of particular interest to our Friends overseas. Check the ABC website.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



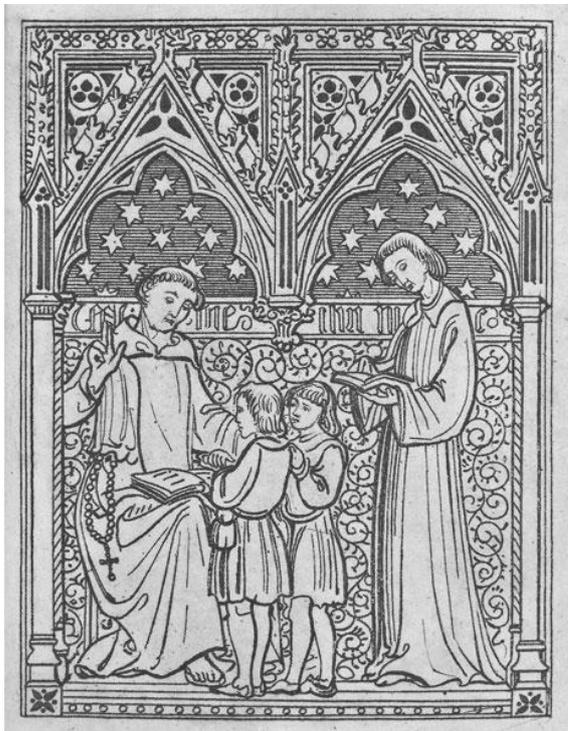
Above and at left: The ABC television camera and sound team filming at St Patrick's, Colebrook, for the forthcoming Compass program based around the Pugin bi-centenary celebrations in Tasmania early in March 2012 (Images: copyright Mishka Gora)

Pugin's Book Illustrations

(Part 4)

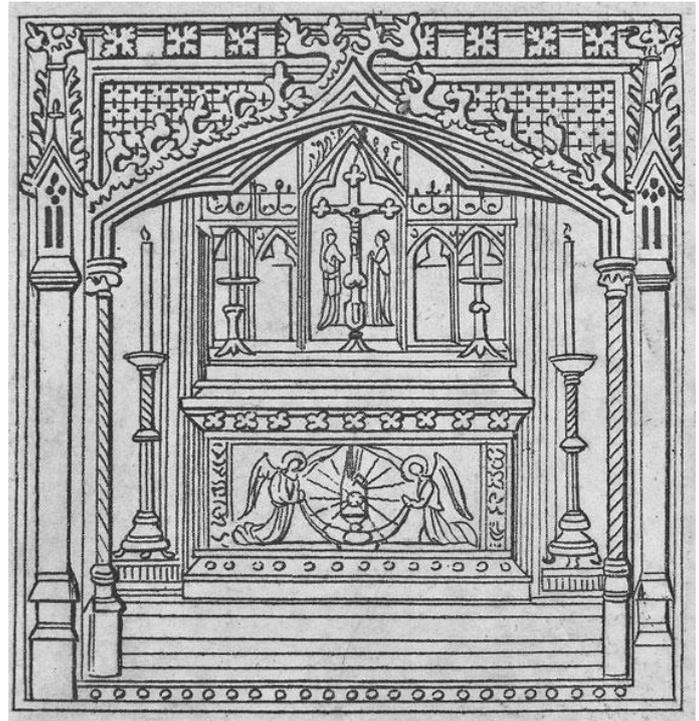
The Catholic Christian

Thomas Richardson & Son of Derby re-printed a number of works by Bishop Richard Challoner (1691–1781) for the Catholic Book Society. Challoner was a man whose name was said to be 'held in veneration by every English-speaking Catholic',¹ and whose writings formed the staple of English Catholic devotional life for well over a century. In 1843 Richardson published his work, *The Catholic Christian instructed in the Sacraments, Sacrifice, Ceremonies and Observances of the Church, by way of Question and Answer*, and—appropriately—a copy was provided to Thomas Champney, 'R.C. Religious Instructor', by Bishop Willson in 1845 for use with Catholic convicts at the Darlington Probation Station, Maria Island.



The frontispiece

The frontispiece situates a group within a Decorated Gothic framework in which a seated Dominican friar is instructing two young children. Balancing this composition is the standing figure of a cleric, a typical example of Pugin's unerring eye for visual harmony, even in a simple cheap book illustration.



The half-title page illustration

The half-title page illustration depicts an altar setting as viewed through a Decorated Gothic archway (or is it through a rood screen opening?). The altar furnishings, including riddel curtains on either side of the reredos and standard candlesticks, indicate that the setting is for the English late-medieval Sarum Use liturgy, as was normal for Pugin both in his illustrations and in his actual church designs.²

On the face of the altar itself two angels kneel in adoration before a monstrance containing a Host consecrated at Mass.

¹ Mabel Quin (ed.), *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Virtue & Company Ltd, London, 1965, vol. 1, p. 206.

² With very few exceptions, most of which occurred late in his career, most notably in his own St Augustine's Church, Ramsgate.

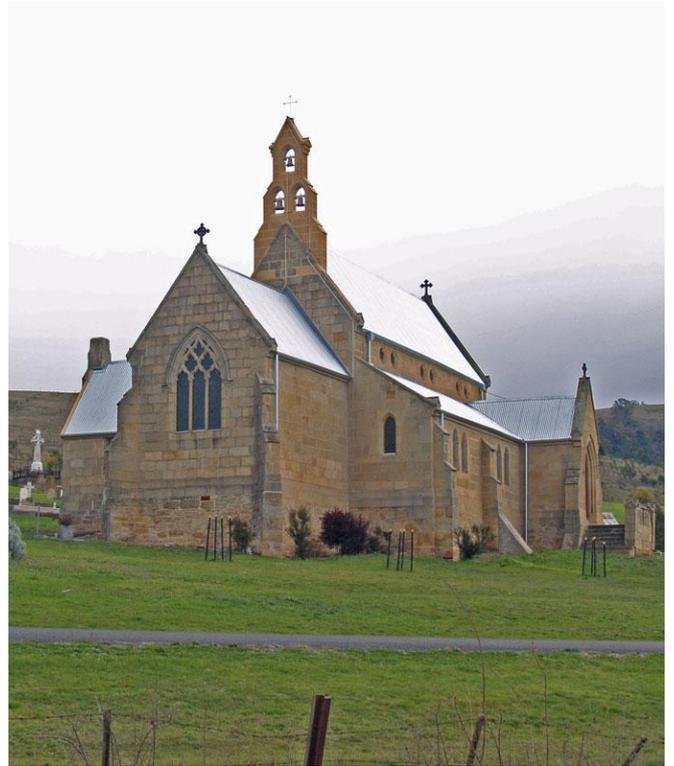


The Present State of Pugin's Ecclesiastical Architecture in Australia

(Part 9)

8. St Patrick's, Colebrook, Tasmania

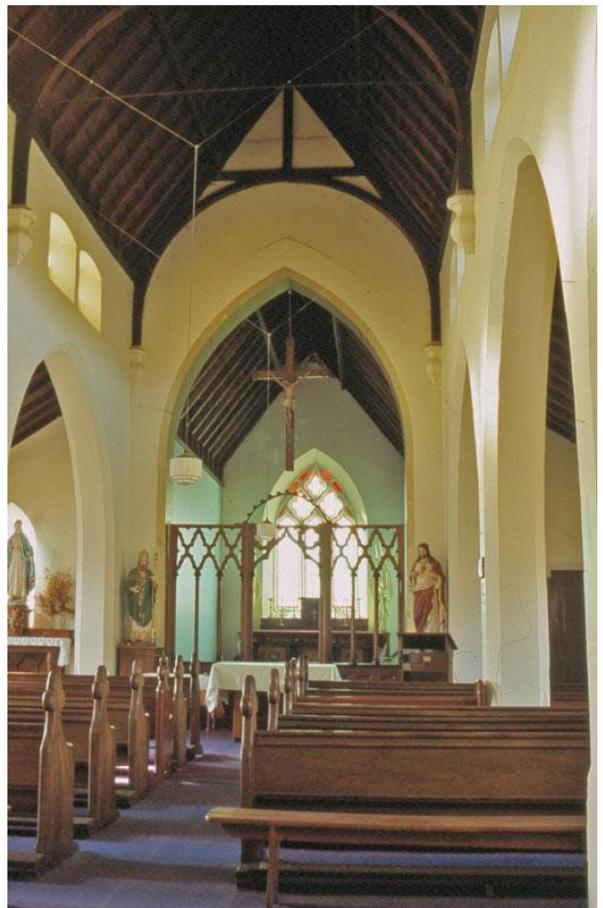
Little needs to be said about this church, designed in 1843 and constructed in 1855–57. As the flagship of the Pugin Foundation's conservation work the building has been extensively documented in the pages of our Newsletter over the past six years. Although further conservation is required, subject as always to ongoing donations, St Patrick's already stands as the most comprehensive example of the letter and spirit of Pugin's intentions for his Australian church designs, both for Archbishop Polding of Sydney and Bishop Willson of Hobart Town. We therefore offer you pairs of images of the church from before 2006 and at present to show progress. **To be continued.**



Exterior in 2011 (Image: Brian Andrews)



Exterior before 2006 (Image: Brian Andrews)



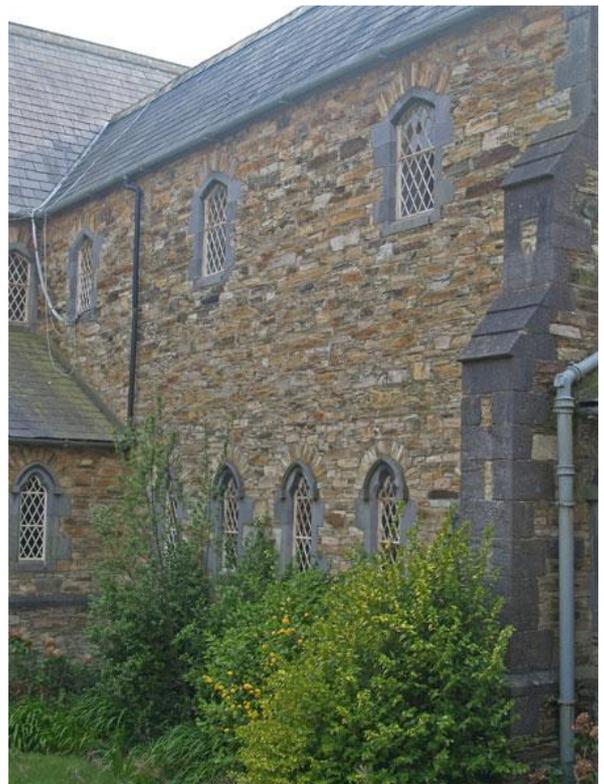
Interior before 2006 (Image: Brian Andrews)



Interior in 2012 (Image: Brian Andrews)



Above: the south-east angle of the cloister; below: the south-west angle, showing first-floor rooms constructed over the cloister (Images: Brian Andrews)



Pugin's Irish Works

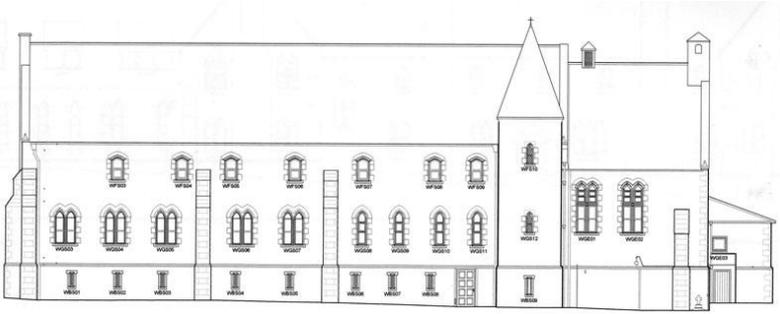
Convent of the Presentation, Waterford Part 4

The design (continued)

The first floor of the convent occupied the west, south and east ranges and was largely given over to accommodation for the community. These ranges were set back behind the cloister walk with the exception of the south end of the west range. Here, Pugin added a first-floor section with three rooms above the west cloister, making for a picturesque variation, breaking up the regularity of the internal composition of the convent building.

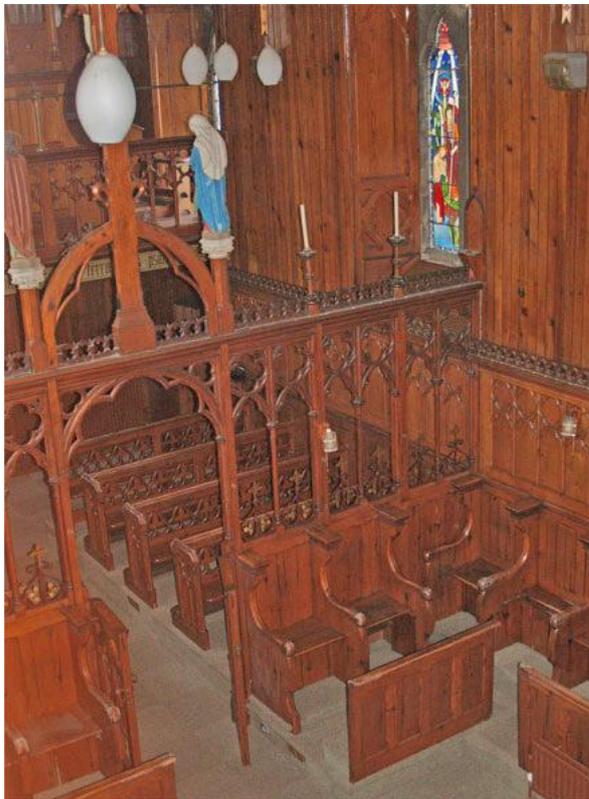
Access to the first floor was via a staircase at the north end of the west range and a spiral staircase within the round tower adjacent to the kitchen at the east end of the south range. An interesting aspect of the design was Pugin's solution to connecting the south and east corridors of the first floor. Because the lofty kitchen at the south-east

corner of the convent was nearly two storeys high internally (see below), he jettied out a connecting balcony high up on the kitchen's west wall.



The convent south range with its tall kitchen at the east end. Note the basement under this range (Courtesy: dbb Architects, Waterford)

Pugin situated the convent infirmary room at the north end of the east range, immediately adjacent to the chapel, and furnished it with two openings giving onto the chapel interior. This gave ill sisters some connection with the daily round of prayer in the chapel.



A view into the chapel from the infirmary (Image: Brian Andrews)

With his two-storey quadrangular design in a sparse thirteenth-century idiom for the Waterford convent Pugin had produced a design which would somehow look entirely right for its Irish setting, yet in most respects—composition, details and eventually walling construction—would parallel his earlier design for the Cistercian monastery of St Bernard, Leicestershire.



Above: part of the west range of the Waterford convent (Image: Brian Andrews); below: part of the south range of Mount St Bernard Abbey, Leicestershire, pre-1939 (Courtesy: Mount St Bernard Abbey)





Construction

Pugin was in Waterford for the laying of the foundation stone of the convent on 10 June 1842.³ He was to visit Waterford again in May 1845, and it is more than likely that he would have been to the building site on that occasion.⁴

As for so many of his Irish works Pugin entrusted the supervision of the Waterford convent construction to Richard Pierce of Wexford. Pierce's works for Pugin included St Peter's College Chapel, Wexford, St Michael's, Gorey, St Aidan's Cathedral, Enniscorthy, St Mary's, Tagoat, St Alphonsus', Barntown, and buildings for Lord Middleton at Middleton, County Cork. A measure of Pugin's confidence in Pierce's ability is given in a letter to Lord Middleton of 20 June 1843 (within the time period when Pierce was working on the convent construction):

he is an invaluable man for Irish business. he perfectly understands all the materials manners & prices of the country & my drawings as well so that in any difficulty he can referred to with perfect certainty—it would indeed be quite impossibly for me to carry out the work in Ireland without such a person.⁵

In the summer of 1842, soon after work on the building got underway, there were 26 labourers and 25 masons employed on site.⁶ The random rubble walls were being constructed of local brown shale with a pleasing colour variation, and the dressed stone for window surrounds, doors, buttress cappings and so on was grey limestone, 'a common local stone, traditionally being brought along the

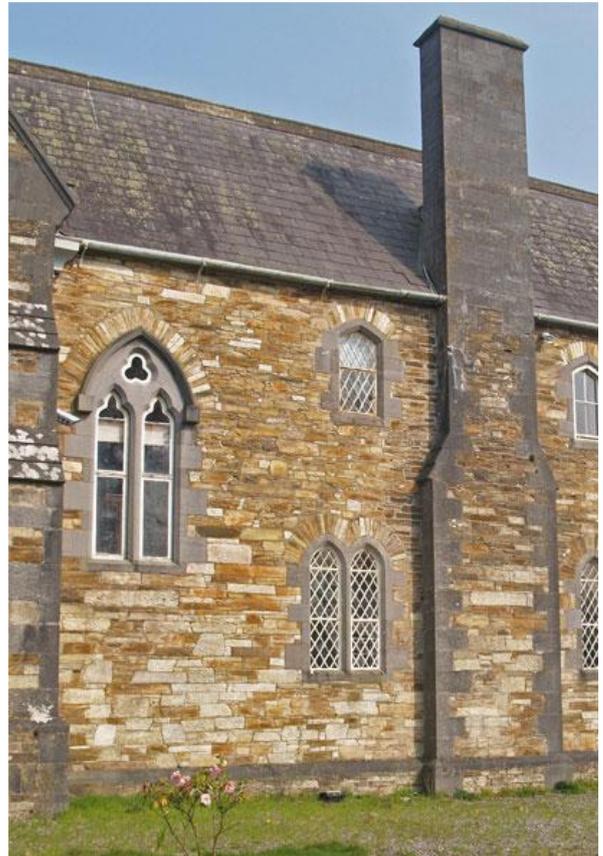
³ '1st stone Convent laid.' Pugin's diary for 1842, 10 June, in Alexandra Wedgwood, *A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin Family*, Catalogues of Architectural Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1985, p. 52.

⁴ This visit to Waterford was from 24 to 27 May, an unusually long stay in one place for Pugin. It is perhaps more likely that the principal object of this visit was in relation to work for Thomas Wyse of St John's Manor, Waterford.

⁵ Pugin to Lord Middleton, 20 June 1843, in Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, Volume 2 1843–1845, OUP, Oxford, 2003, p. 77.

⁶ [Sr Assumpta O'Neill], *Waterford's Presentation Community: A Bicentenary Record 1798–1998*, Waterford, 1998, p. 22.

Nore, Barrow and Suir river system from as far away as Co. Carlow.⁷ **To be continued.**



The pleasant modulation in colour of the local brown shale walling material is evident in this detail of the convent west front (Image: Brian Andrews)

Bi-centenary Organ Appeal

We thank the following for their generous donations:

- Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett
- John Maidment
- Jane Walker

⁷ 'Presentation Convent, Waterford, by A.W.N. Pugin and Pugin & Ashlin, A Protected Structure', Conservation Report, December 2006, p. 26.

