

Summer 2013–14

Number 84

Included in this edition:

- *St Thomas of Canterbury's, Fulham*
- *Henry Hunter & Pugin's Pattern Stonework*
- *Colebrook Organ Progress*
- *John Bunn Denny in Australia*

Welcome to the eighty-fourth Friends Newsletter.

Once again, our apologies for the late publication of your Newsletter. We hope to catch up over the next couple of months.

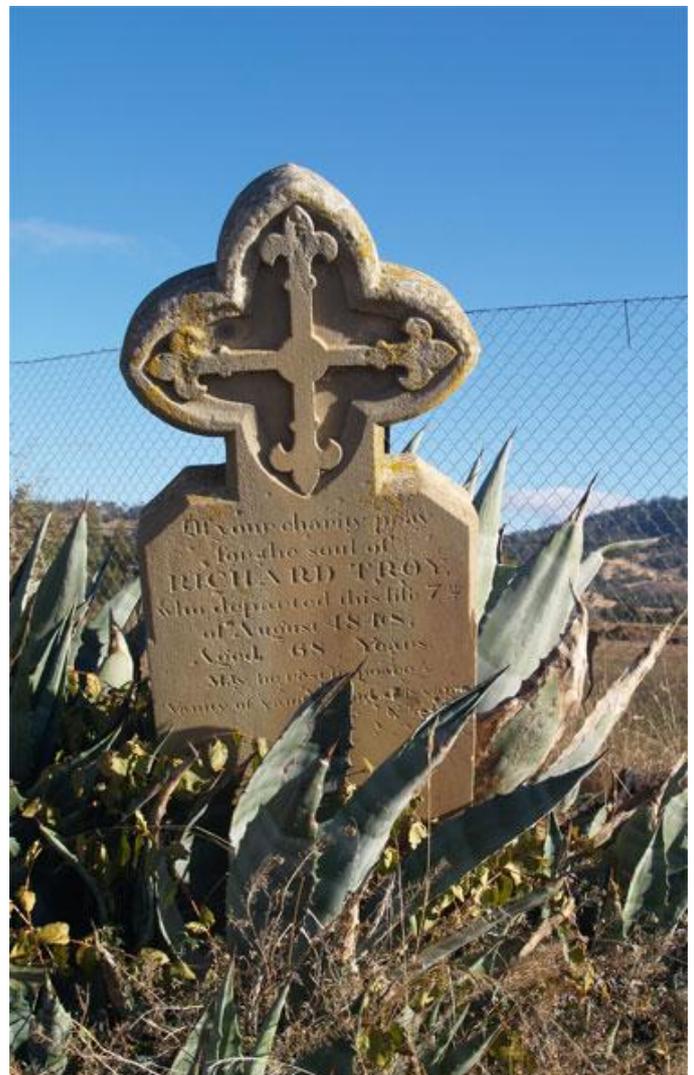
We wish to draw your attention to two excellent UK websites concerned with Pugin and his legacy. You may already be familiar with the first one which is the website of our sister organisation the Pugin Society. In recent times the site has been substantially upgraded and contains much of interest. If you have not visited recently we recommend it at:

<http://www.thepuginsociety.co.uk/>. The second website we recommend is that of the Friends of Pugin's own St Augustine's, Ramsgate. Again with much interesting content it can be accessed at: <http://augustinefriends.co.uk/>.

Finally we would like you to know about a recently published book by Gerald Hyland. Entitled *The Architectural Works of A.W.N. Pugin: a Catalogue*, it is published by Spire Books and details an astounding 295 executed works and 84 unexecuted designs by the master. This work of painstaking scholarship is an invaluable addition to the canon of Pugin-related publications. We thoroughly recommend it.

With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer



An early Pugin headstone in the St John's, Richmond, cemetery, sited high up on the top of the Coal River left bank (Image: Brian Andrews)



St Thomas of Canterbury's, Fulham



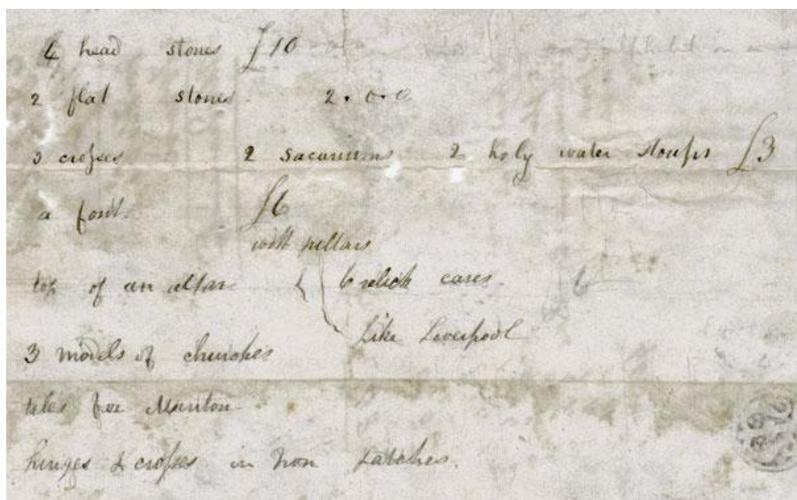
Here is a rather different view of St Thomas of Canterbury's, Fulham, as seen from Rylston Road in this early Spring 2007 portrait. The more familiar one is that from the west over the cemetery. Abutting the north-east corner of the church is the two-storey sacristy with, to its right, Pugin's presbytery, constituting a lovely group



Henry Hunter & Pugin's Pattern Stonework

In our series on Pugin's unexecuted design for St Mary's Church, Hobart (Newsletters 73–75 of October through December 2012), we noted the copying of pattern stonework sent out for it in 1848 by the Hobart architect Henry Hunter. It provided elements for churches he designed in the 1850s and '60s. As Bishop Willson's protégé architect, tasked by him with the design of Puginesque churches from 1855, Hunter had access to all the pattern stonework dating from 1843 and 1847. His re-use of two pattern sacrariums serves to illustrate how beneficial such furnishings were in fulfilling Willson's requirements.

Pugin's list of items for Willson to be made in 1843 by his builder George Myers included two sacrariums, as can be seen in the image below.



Pugin and Myers' list of items to be sent to Van Diemen's Land in 1844 (Image: Courtesy Myers Family Trust)

A sacrarium was one of those elements which Pugin regarded as essential in 'forming a complete Catholic parish church for the due celebration of

the divine office and administration of the sacraments'.¹ He wrote:

Between the sedilia and the eastern wall of the chancel, a small niche was built, in the bottom of which a basin was hollowed out of the stone, with a pipe leading into the ground; over this was a small projecting shelf for the altar cruets.²

One of the pattern sacrariums was copied for Pugin's St Paul's, Oatlands, the construction of which was supervised by the Hobart architect Frederick Thomas. The stonemason involved was most probably John Gillon (1821–1900) who had a flourishing business on the corner of Macquarie and Harrington Streets, Hobart. He made many of the early copies of Pugin pattern headstones to be found throughout southern Tasmania.



The Oatlands sacrarium, 1851 (Image: Brian Andrews)

¹ A. Welby Pugin, *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, Charles Dolman, London, 1843, p. 12.

² *ibid.*, p. 34.



This particular pattern was then used by Henry Hunter for three churches he designed in the mid 1960s: St Thomas', Sorell (1864), St Augustine's, Longford (1866), and St Matthew's, Pontville (1866). For these, the foliated carving on the lip of the credence shelf was omitted, perhaps out of deference to the capabilities of the stonemason.



The Sorell sacarium, 1864 (Image: Brian Andrews)

It is interesting to reflect once again on the uniqueness of Pugin's approach to providing achievable buildings and furnishings for Bishop Willson by means of models and pattern stonework. Thus, one design would find multiple uses, by contrast with his English and Irish work where a particular design (building or furnishing) would be used just once. We will encounter another Australian example of re-use in a future issue of the Newsletter when we examine the work of Sydney architect William Munro. But in this instance the process was plagiarism rather than a consequence of Pugin's intentions.



The Longford sacarium, 1866 (Image: Brian Andrews)



The Pontville sacarium, 1866 (Image: Brian Andrews)

It should be mentioned that none of Pugin's sacariums in Tasmania have had a liturgical use since well back into the nineteenth century, if even then, yet another example of Pugin's medievalising intentions withering on the post Council of Trent (1545–63) vine.

The second pattern sacrarium was copied first in 1856 for Pugin's St Patrick's, Colebrook, where Frederick Thomas was again supervising architect, and again in 1858 for Thomas' additions to St John the Evangelist's, Richmond, these adapted from the third of Pugin's model churches. The stonemason was most probably Gillon.

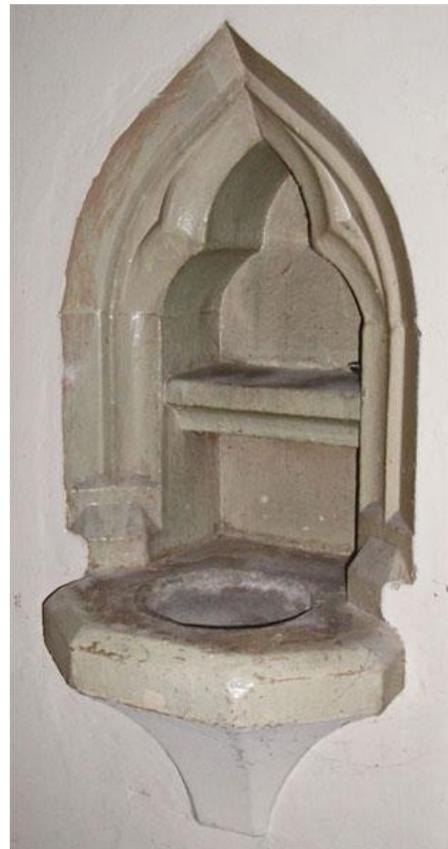


The Colebrook sacrarium, 1856 (Image: Brian Andrews)

Two further copies were made of this sacrarium, namely, in 1865 for William Wardell's St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart, of which Hunter was supervising architect, and lastly for his Sacred Heart, New Town, in 1882. For these the stonemason was possibly Bryan Molloy (1821–1913), also known as Brian, Bernard and 'Old Molloy'. He arrived in Hobart from Ireland as a free settler in 1854 and established himself in Harrington Street premises where he gained a reputation as a skilled stone carver, executing Henry Hunter's design for the High Altar in St Mary's Cathedral, Hobart, in 1880.



The Richmond sacrarium, 1858 (Image: Brian Andrews)



The St Mary's Cathedral sacrarium, 1865 (Image: Brian Andrews)



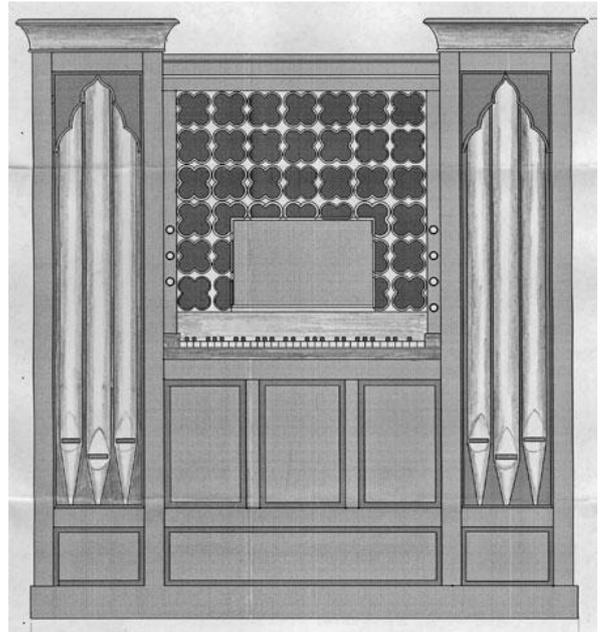
The New Town sacralium, 1882 (Image: Brian Andrews)

This last example illustrates the fact that Hunter was delving into Pugin pattern stonework until very late in his Tasmanian career. He departed for Brisbane in April 1888.

Colebrook Organ Progress

A number of our Friends of Pugin gave generously to our Pugin Bi-centenary Organ Appeal which was launched at the luncheon following the Bi-centenary Mass celebrated in St Patrick's, Colebrook, on 4 March 2012 to mark the two-hundredth anniversary of Pugin's birth. Last December we were successful in obtaining a grant of \$29,000 from the Tasmanian Community Fund towards the construction of the organ, and work started on it in late January of this year.

The builder is Hans Meijer of Launceston, Tasmania, and the instrument will incorporate a number of native Tasmanian timbers. His concept drawing for the organ is reproduced below.



Hans Meijer's organ design

Hans is making excellent progress on its construction and has sent us images of the work to date, two of which are given here along with an explanation provided by Friend of Pugin and Organ Historical Trust of Australia Chairman John Maidment. John prepared the specification for the organ.



His description of the above image is as follows. 'This shows the windchest close to completion. The pallet valves are shown at the front – these open when the keys are depressed to admit wind to the pipes. The pallets will be covered over with a solid faceboard. The five ranks of pipes stand over the countersunk holes shown on the top of the windchest (and will be supported by wooden rackboards) and the strips shown to the left are the



sliders which link to the drawstops at the console and enable individual stops to be turned on and off.’



The following is John’s description of the above image. ‘This shows a close-up of the pallet valves that admit wind to the pipes. These are made from pine and are held closed by metal springs and located in place by metal pins.’

I know you will be gratified to read John’s comments to Hans Meijer about the work to date. He wrote: ‘I thought that the standard of workmanship is exceptional and offer you my congratulations on such a well designed and superbly finished result. I was very pleased to see that you are making the metal pipes yourself too – now that’s the sign of a first rate craftsman.’

John Bunn Denny in Australia

Over the past eight years we have dealt with many aspects of Pugin’s Australian heritage. All such works have proceeded directly from the master’s hand, even though in some instances—unique to Australia—they have been copied locally from pattern stonework or models designed by him. In addition to Pugin’s direct legacy there exist in the State of Victoria several fascinating buildings, some

details of which, we submit, have also been derived from design drawings by Pugin. In these instances they came indirectly via John Bunn Denny (1810–92) who from 1839 to 1856 was master of works at Alton Towers the seat of Pugin’s munificent patron John Talbot (1791–1852), the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury.³

Denny’s position at Alton Towers where Pugin was involved with alterations and additions resulted in his role encompassing other Shrewsbury/Pugin initiatives in the local Staffordshire area including St Mary’s Uttoxeter, Alton Castle, St John’s Hospital, Alton, and St Giles’, Cheadle. On the occasion of the opening of Pugin’s masterpiece at Cheadle on 1 September 1846 the *Morning Post* had this to say:

It may be added, in completing a notice of this building, that the designs of Mr. Pugin were ably seconded by the skill of Mr. Denny, resident master of works at Alton Towers, whose admiration of the Gothic style of architecture, and acquaintance with its minutest details, has made the erection of this building a labour of love.⁴

Pugin himself was in no doubt about Denny’s worth. Writing to Shrewsbury early in 1841 in relation to the work on St Giles’ he declared:

Denny is constantly on the ground looking after the men. He is indefatigable. I cannot speak for his conduct too highly. His heart is set on the work and I can thoroughly rely on him.⁵

Pugin and Lord Shrewsbury both died in 1852, followed in 1856 by the twenty-three-year-old Bertram Talbot, seventeenth Earl of Shrewsbury,

³ Michael Fisher, ‘Gothic For Ever’: *A.W.N Pugin, Lord Shrewsbury, and the Rebuilding of Catholic England*, Spire Books, Reading, 2012, p. 20. This fine work of scholarship gives the best and most detailed account of Denny’s work for Pugin in Staffordshire and of the relationship between the two men.

⁴ Quoted in the pamphlet *Lord Shrewsbury’s New Church of St. Giles in Staffordshire: being a Description of the Edifice and an Account of the Consecration and Opening*, by the editor of *Dolman’s Magazine*, Charles Dolman, London, 1846, p. 13.

⁵ Pugin to Lord Shrewsbury, 31 March 1841?, in Margaret Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, volume 1 1830 to 1842, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001. P. 226.



the last of the senior line of the Talbot family.⁶ Despite the sixteenth and seventeenth earls having laid plans in the hope of keeping the inheritance in Catholic hands, the estates and the title of eighteenth Earl of Shrewsbury passed to Henry Chetwynd Talbot—of the solidly Protestant Talbot line—in June 1858 after legal proceedings settled in his favour by the House of Lords.⁷ The administration of the Alton estate continued for a while in the hands of the resident agent, ‘assisted by loyal servants such as John Denny’.⁸ Then in 1860 came an opportunity for Denny to continue in the work for which he had been so highly praised, this time assisting the talented and early Pugin follower William Wilkinson Wardell (1823–99) who had migrated to Australia for health reasons in 1858.

In February 1859 the Melbourne-based Wardell had accepted an offer to design St John’s [Catholic] College within the University of Sydney and proposed to the Building Committee that ‘Mr Denny should come from England as Resident Clerk of Works’.⁹ Payment procedures and other issues caused relations between the College Council and Wardell to deteriorate rapidly with the result that he resigned in May 1860 and a local architect Edmund Thomas Blacket was engaged to complete the works.¹⁰ By this time Denny had already emigrated, but Wardell saw that his services could readily be employed to advantage in the Diocese of Melbourne where he (Wardell) had recently designed the vast St Patrick’s Cathedral. Denny was therefore appointed to superintend the construction of Wardell’s buildings for Bishop Goold. He was also to prepare detail plans and specifications for the bishop. Wardell was clearly aware of Denny’s ideal apprenticeship under Pugin and doubtless suggested this arrangement to Goold’s right-hand man, Dean John Fitzpatrick, as a mutually satisfactory way of ensuring that his designs, particularly St Patrick’s Cathedral, would

be executed according to both the letter and the spirit.¹¹ This Denny accomplished with his usual skill.

In his activities as clerk of works on Pugin and Wardell buildings Denny used the design drawings of both men and the evidence points to his having retained them after he commenced practice as an architect in his own right. Although Denny designed a number of churches of his own, in addition to supervising the execution of Wardell designs, this article will concentrate on three of his churches where it seems clear that he used Pugin design drawings for some of the elements.

The first building we will consider is the priests’ mortuary chapel in the Melbourne General Cemetery, which was solemnly blessed by Bishop James Alipius Goold OSA on Sunday 10 September 1871 in the presence of an immense crowd estimated to be within 10,000 and 15,000 persons.¹²



*The priests’ mortuary chapel, Melbourne General Cemetery
(Image: Brian Andrews)*

The chapel, constructed from bluestone with Tasmanian Kangaroo Point sandstone dressings, was a creditable essay in the Decorated Gothic style. It had a western public porch, a sacristy abutting the nave north wall east end, an apsidal

⁶ Michael Fisher, *A.W.N. Pugin, Lord Shrewsbury, and the Gothic Revival in Staffordshire*, Michael J. Fisher (Publishing), Stafford, 2002, pp. 153–4.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Fisher, *Gothic For Ever*, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

⁹ Ursula M. De Jong, *William Wilkinson Wardell his Life and Work: 1823-1899*, Department of Visual Arts, Monash University, Clayton, 1983, exhibition catalogue, pp. 31–3.

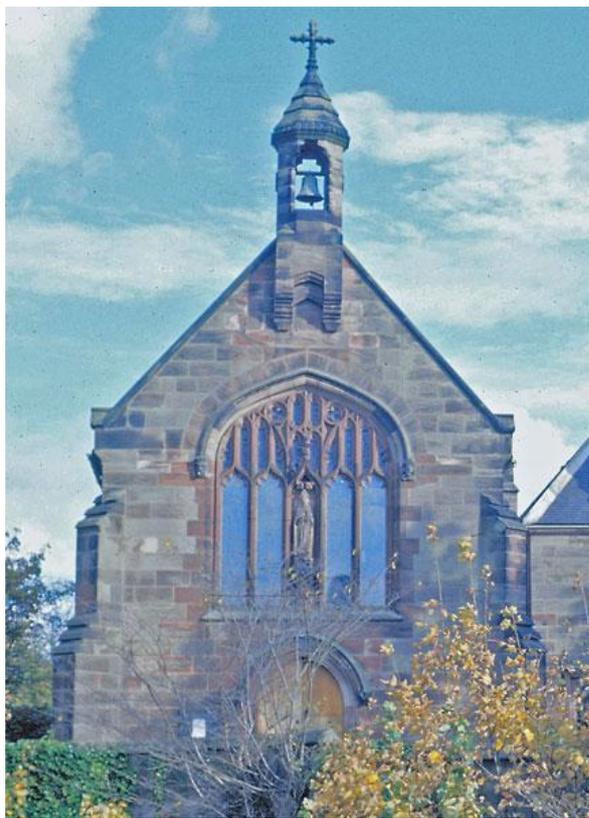
¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 33.

¹¹ In the Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission records is a Memorandum of Agreement between Denny and Goold dated 25 August 1860 and witnessed by Wardell in which Denny is engaged by the bishop to superintend Wardell’s buildings and to prepare detailed plans and specifications.

¹² *The Argus*, Monday 11 September 1871, p. 4.

chancel and a large porch against the nave south wall east end, the latter being the entrance for coffins en route to the two crypts beneath the chapel floor. The crypts were calculated to hold '60 to 100 coffins placed in tiers'.¹³

Of particular interest as a pointer to some of Denny's detail vocabulary for the building is the chapel's gabled façade which was crowned by a bellcote and had two statue niches. The bellcote, singular in form, was near identical with that on the façade of the chapel of Pugin's St John's Hospital, Alton, upon the construction of which Denny was engaged as clerk of works. Minor differences between the two bellcotes may be attributable inter alia to the typical rough finish of Pugin's working drawings, and the fact that Denny would have adjusted proportions to suit his design.

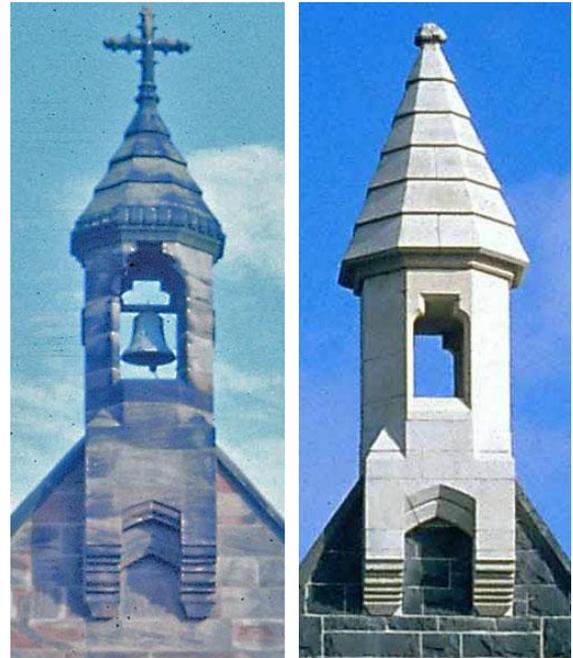


The St John's Hospital chapel, Alton, façade (Image: Brian Andrews)

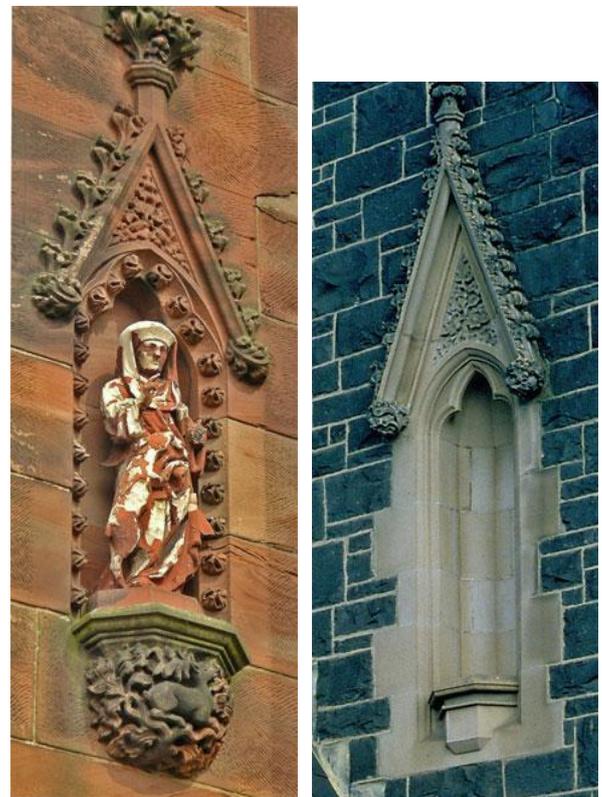
Likewise, it seems that Denny developed his statue niche design from a Pugin working drawing, but here for a different building, namely, St Giles',

¹³ *ibid.*

Cheadle. He drastically reduced the amount of detail carving but the source seems clear.

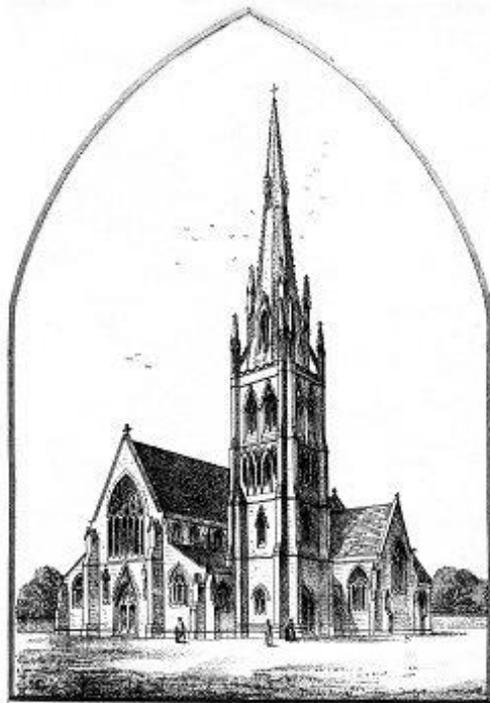


Above: The bellcotes at Alton (left) and the mortuary chapel (right) (Images: Brian Andrews); below: The statue niches at Cheadle (Image: Nicholas Callinan) and the mortuary chapel (Image: Brian Andrews)



We will now consider Denny's involvement with St Patrick's Church (later Cathedral), Ballarat, the original design of which was by the Pugin follower Charles Hansom. An introduction to Hansom's life and work was given in Newsletters 72 of September 2012 and 76 of January 2013. Hansom furnished church designs for Archbishop Polding of Sydney, Bishop Murphy of Adelaide and Bishop Goold of Melbourne, in the latter case five in number c.1852.¹⁴

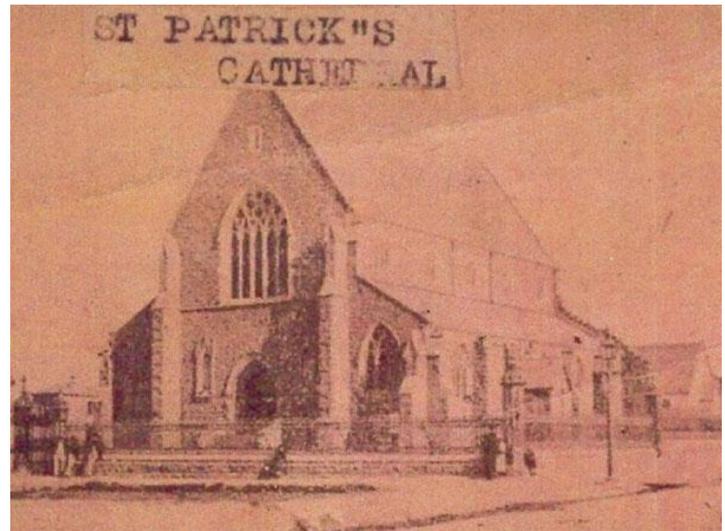
The largest of the designs for Goold was an elaborate aisled clerestoried church with transepts, eastern chapels and a tall steeple. He chose it for construction in Ballarat, a Victorian goldfields town which had expanded rapidly in the wake of the gold rush. Like many of Hansom's Australian designs the Ballarat church was a version of one of his English works, in this case Ss Mary and John's Church, Wolverhampton, with the same composition but with simpler detailing.



Hansom's design for Ss Mary & John's Church, Wolverhampton

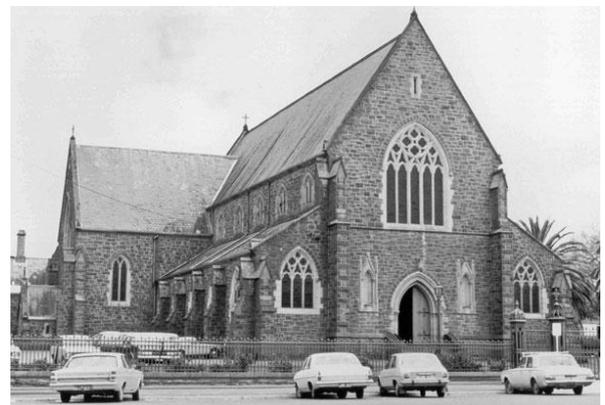
¹⁴ See Brian Andrews, 'The English Benedictine Connection: The Works of Charles Hansom in Australia', *Fabrications*, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, No. 1, December 1989, pp. 33-55.

Hansom's plans were copied by the Melbourne architectural firm of Dowden and Ross and the first stage (nave and aisles) was constructed between 1858 and 1863, the work being supervised by Denny. A photo, below, from the 1860s shows the position for the intended spire at the second bay of the south aisle, with a small temporary porch giving access to the interior there.



The first stage of Hansom's St Patrick's, Ballarat, showing a temporary porch against the south aisle

When work on the building was recommenced in 1869 the design for the eastern parts was by Denny. He retained Hansom's composition but changed certain window and other details as well as adding porches to the transepts. The Hansom spire was retained but not constructed, yet another porch being added in place of the spire.



The Cathedral as completed in 1871 without its intended spire (Image: Brian Andrews)

Denny produced a splendid—and very Puginesque—perspective drawing of his modified design, including a presbytery which was never constructed. What an ornament the church would have been to this proud Victorian provincial city had it been fully realised according to the Hansom/Denny vision!

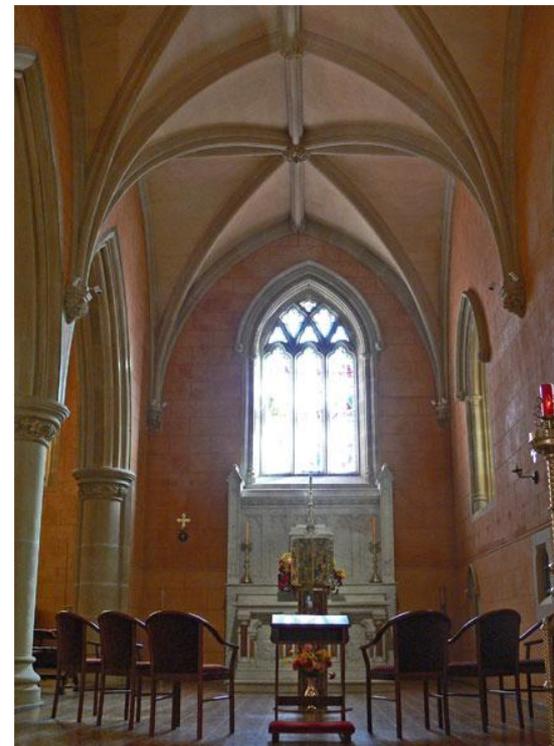
six-light transept windows in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. There were echoes of Pugin too. His great Flowing Decorated five-light chancel window in St Giles', Cheadle, re-appeared in a simplified four-light version in the north transept at Ballarat. Denny's deep setting of the side windows in the south-east chapel at Ballarat, with the use of wave mouldings on the external splays, derived from

Pugin's treatment of his aisle windows at Cheadle. The east and one of the south windows in this chapel had identical tracery to two of the south aisle windows in Cheadle. But perhaps the most remarkable use by Denny of Pugin's Cheadle working drawings was his slight adaptation of the stone-vaulted ceiling in the Blessed Sacrament chapel for the ceiling in the south-east chapel of St Patrick's, Ballarat, this chapel being in the same position in the overall ground plan as was that in Cheadle.

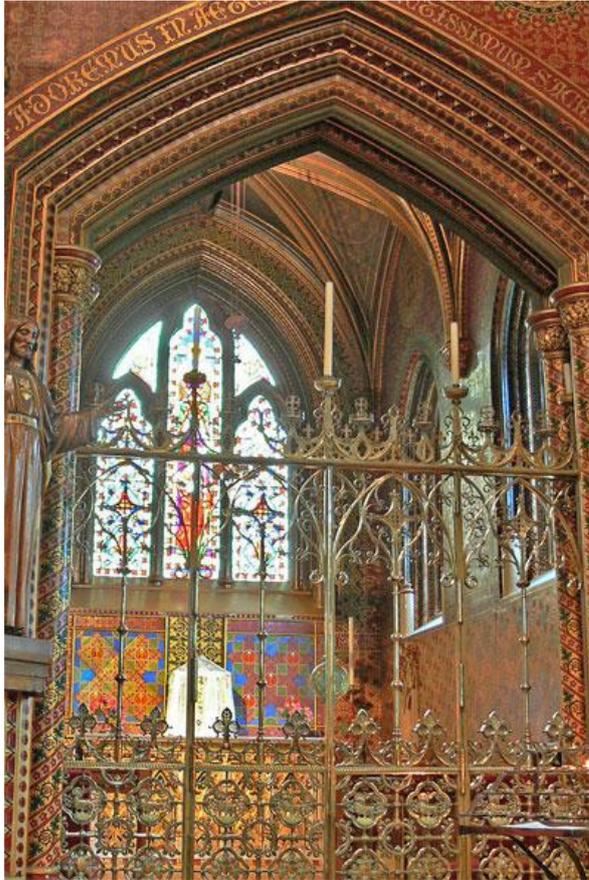


*Denny's design for the completion of Hansom's church
(Source: John Maidment)*

Remarkably, as completed the church was an amalgam of elements from the designs of Pugin and two of his most accomplished followers, namely, Hansom and Wardell. In his work for Bishop Goold supervising the construction of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, Denny was using Wardell's drawings and these became yet another quarry for his Ballarat design. The whole building was nicely integrated with no obvious signs that it was the handiwork of two architects. The chancel east window was a four-light version of Wardell's



The stone-vaulted ceiling in the south-east chapel of St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat (Image: John Maidment)



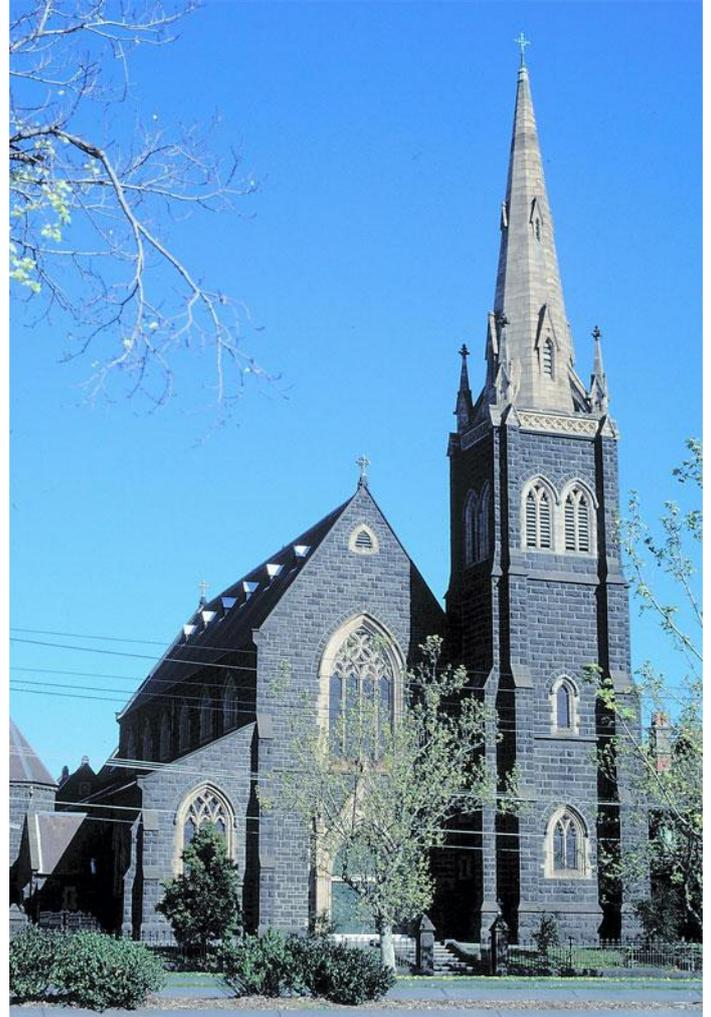
The stone-vaulted ceiling of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, St Giles', Cheadle (Image: John Maidment)

It should be noted that stone vaulting was decidedly rare in nineteenth-century Australian church designs.

Finally we turn to Denny's St John the Baptist's, Clifton Hill, a big Decorated bluestone clerestoried town church with a six-bay nave, separately expressed chancel, eastern chapels, sacristy and tall south-west steeple. Standing on a prominent elevated site in Melbourne's inner north-east, it was constructed in stages between 1876 and 1902, with a later addition against the north aisle by the Melbourne architect William Brittain Tappin.¹⁵

Again, like Ballarat, the design of this building was an amalgam of influences and details from Pugin, Wardell and Hansom, but achieved with grace and harmony making it one of Melbourne's outstanding

churches, mainly because Denny got the spatial and compositional aspects right. It has a richness of detail and furnishing including Minton tiles, Hardman stained glass and much carved stonework.



St John the Baptist's, Clifton Hill (Image: Brian Andrews)

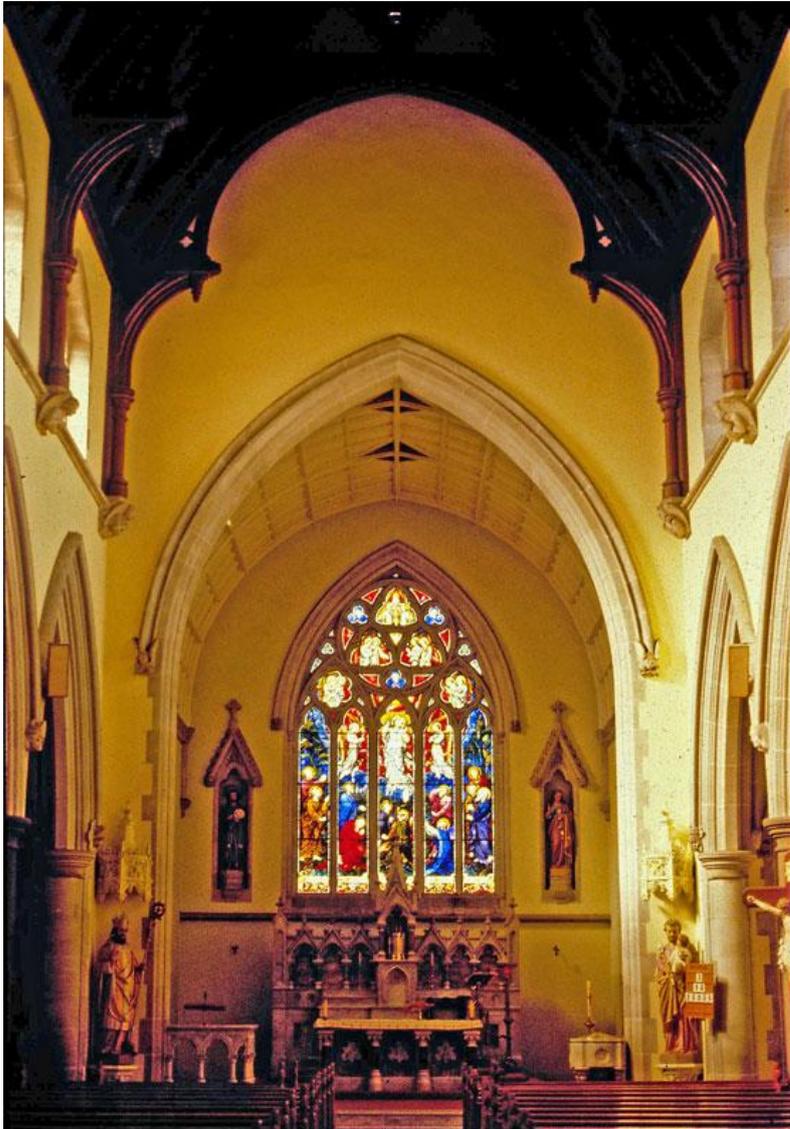
To Hansom's Ballarat design some of the window tracery can be attributed. But the building's principal debt to Hansom is the steeple, particularly the belfry stage and the spire which are simplified versions of the noble Ballarat example, regrettably never constructed.¹⁶

The Clifton Hill chancel east window tracery is a five-light version of Wardell's six-light transept windows in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne.

¹⁵ For Tappin's career see Brian Andrews, 'A Plea for the Rehabilitation of William Brittain Tappin', *Australian Journal of Art*, Vol. 3, 1983, pp. 78–89.

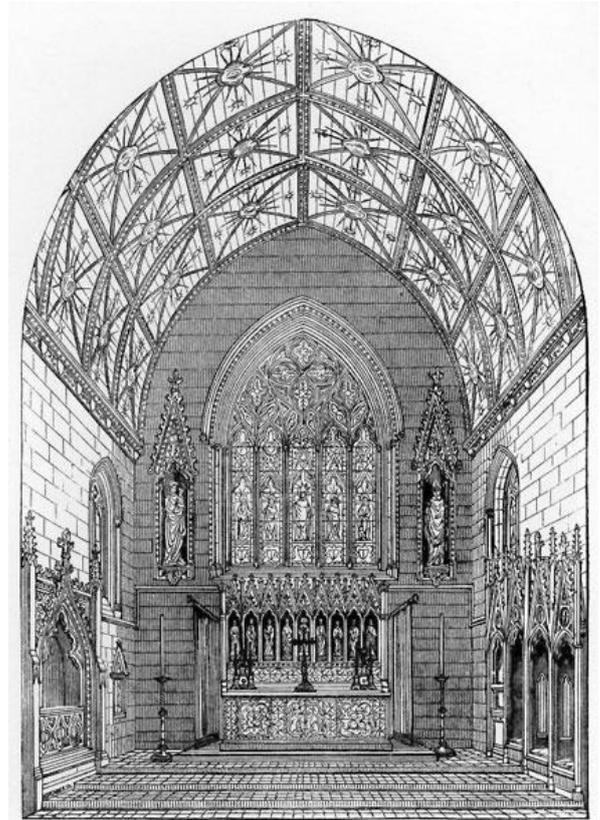
¹⁶ I am indebted to friend of Pugin John Maidment for this perceptive observation.

It is in the building's interior that Denny's indebtedness to Pugin courtesy of the Cheadle working drawings is strongly evident.



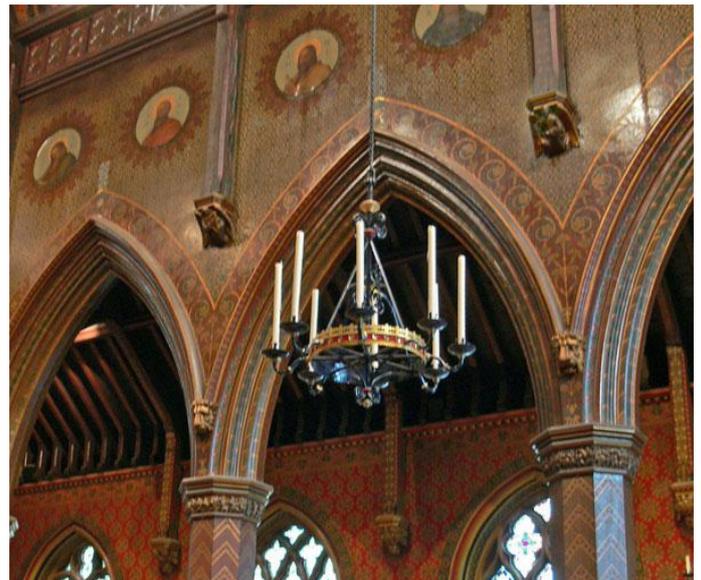
The Clifton Hill interior looking east (Image: Brian Andrews)

We immediately note the statue niches with their crocketed canopies on either side of the chancel east window. This is precisely as is found at Cheadle where the niches contain images of St Giles, the patron saint of the church, and St Chad, the patron saint of the diocese. An early Pugin drawing for the Cheadle chancel is illustrated below, clearly showing the statue niches flanking the east window.

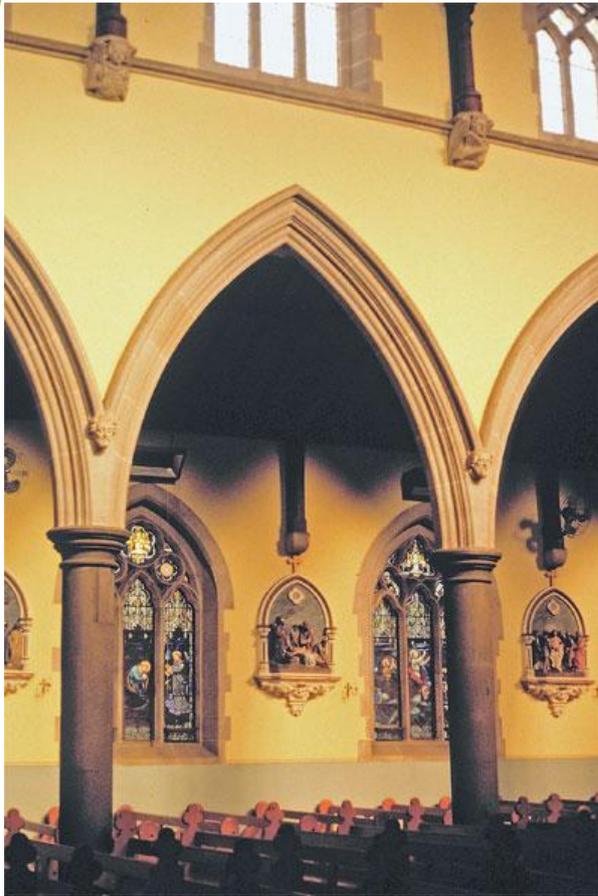


The Cheadle chancel (Source: Pugin's Present State, Plate XVI)

We note small details like the angel corbels supporting the wall posts of the roof trusses, to be seen in the Cheadle and Clifton Hill images below.



Angel corbels at Cheadle (Image: John Maidment)

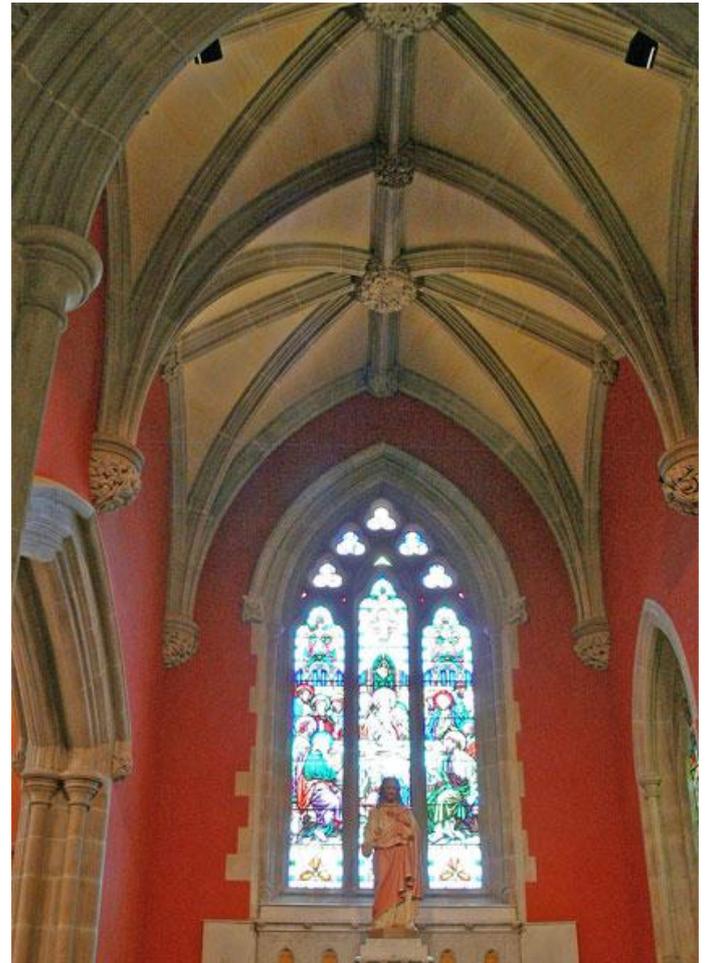


Angel corbels at Clifton Hill (Image: Brian Andrews)

The presence of such detail, with each angel bearing a different device as at Cheadle, leads us to conclude that it is likely Denny brought to Australia pretty much a full set of Cheadle working drawings as a quarry for his own buildings.

Another significant borrowing from Cheadle occurs, as at Ballarat, in the vaulted south-east chapel. But here it is much more elaborate, in concert with the greater overall richness of the Clifton Hill carved stonework. To be noted in this chapel is the double segmental arch opening into the chancel and resting on a pair of engaged columns. This singular arrangement is also to be seen at Cheadle between the south-east chapel and the south aisle (see p. 12).

Small wonder that a number of Denny's Australian churches betray in many instances the hand of a master now that we realise how indebted they were to Pugin's working drawings, plus of course those of Pugin's talented followers Charles Hansom and William Wardell.



The vaulted south-east chapel (Image: John Maidment)

Donations

Our thanks to Mark Tuckett for his kind donation.