

Winter 2014

Number 86

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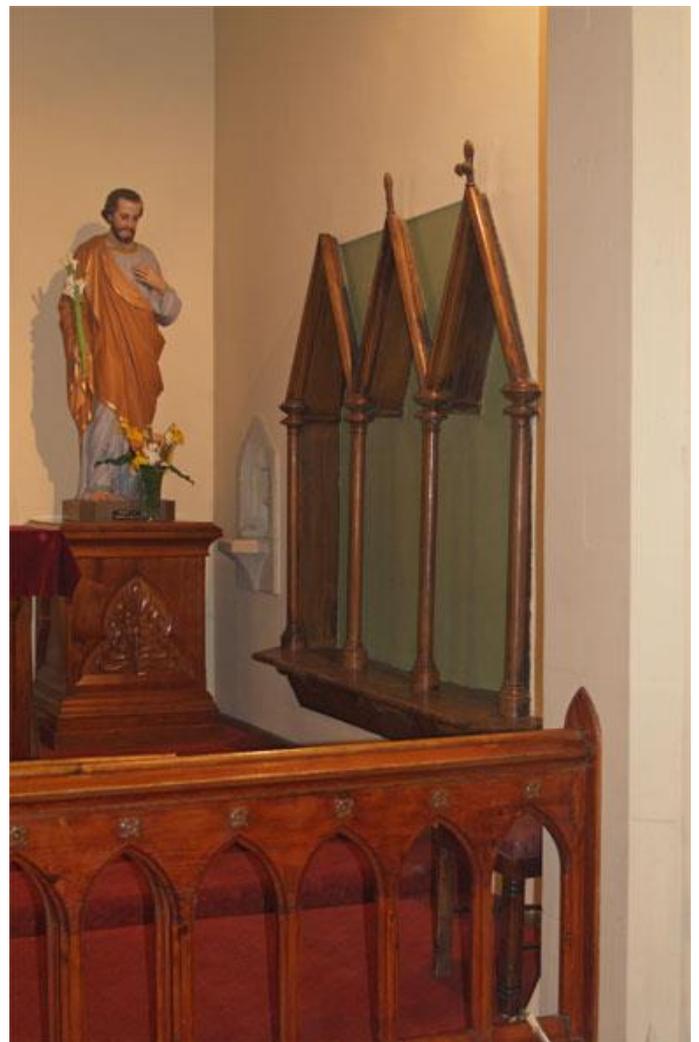
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Welcome to the eighty-sixth Friends Newsletter.

The recent re-painting of the nave, sacristy and porch of St John's Church, Richmond, has led to an interesting discovery. Tony Colman, the master craftsman and Friend of Pugin, who so splendidly restored the wooden furnishings in St Patrick's, Colebrook, was tasked with restoring the 1837 nave woodwork in St John's. This part of the building was to the design of the Bath architect Henry Edmund Goodridge, but the chancel, sacristy and steeple were adapted from one of Pugin's 1843 designs for Bishop Willson, although not constructed until 1858.

Out of curiosity Tony did two small paint scrapes on the chancel wall within Pugin's exceedingly simple 1858 sedilia and discovered the original paint still in place. Fr Terry Rush, the Parish priest and also a Friend of Pugin, gladly authorized the re-painting of the wall within the sedilia and between their gables in the original colour. The result has conferred a solid character on them where their appearance before this was decidedly spindly.

Now Tony is restoring the finials on the gables. We will bring you an image of the fully restored sedilia in a future issue.



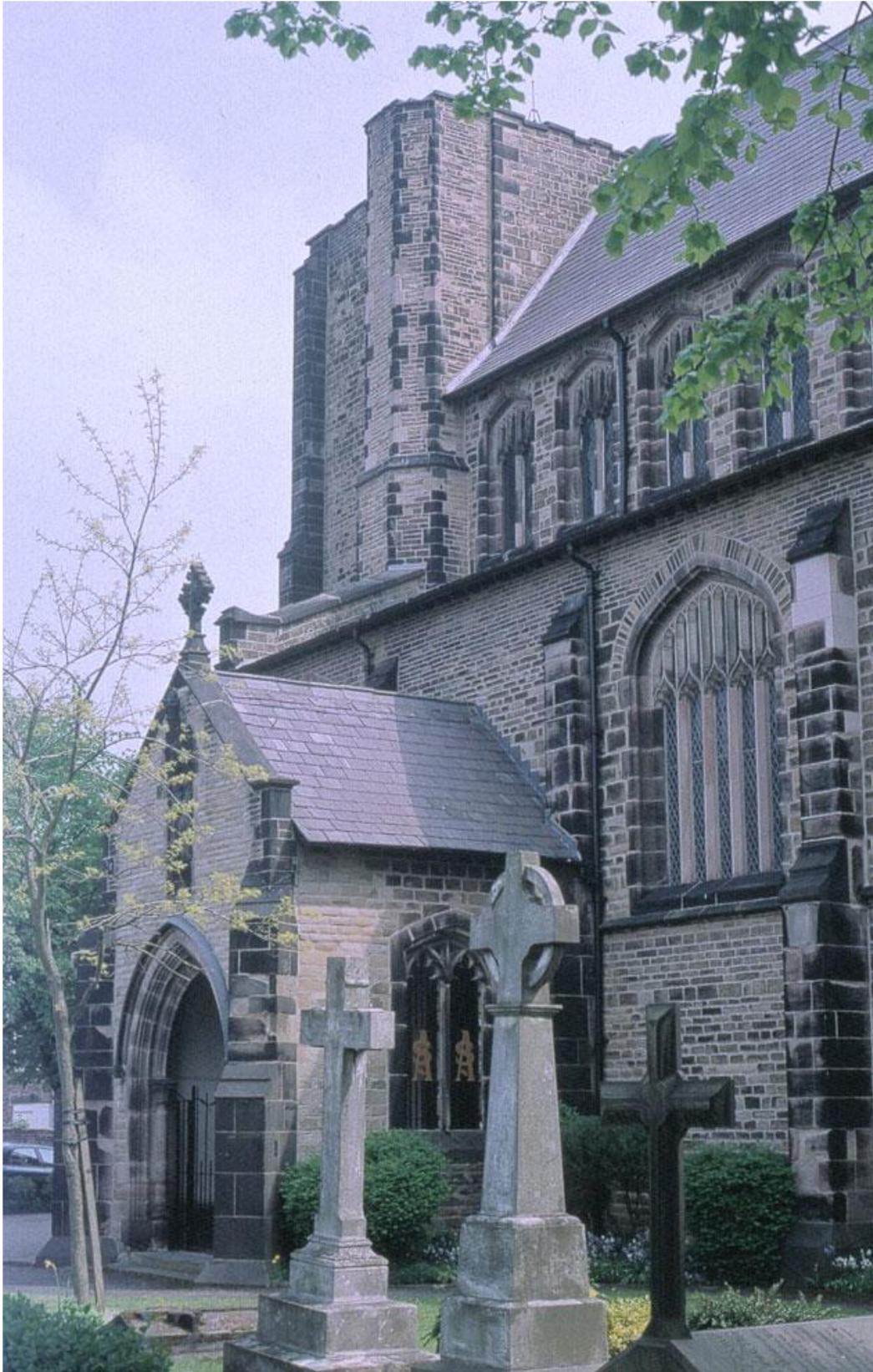
With kind regards,

Jude Andrews
Administrative Officer

The St John's, Richmond, sedilia with the original 1858 wall colour restored (Image: Brian Andrews)



St Alban's Macclesfield



This early Pugin church was designed in 1838 and constructed from 1839 to 1841. In a scholarly Perpendicular Gothic idiom, the building has a lofty clerestoried interior and is one of a mere handful of Pugin's churches with its rood screen intact. It was intended to have a massive central western tower but this was only completed to the height of the nave roof and lacks its belfry stage.



Metalwork Marvels

In this issue we bring you another exquisite example of Pugin's astonishing creativity in reviving the spirit of medieval metalwork. This plated ewer and basin engraved with the crest and motto of Charles Henry Davis OSB, consecrated as Bishop of Maitland, New South Wales and co-adjutor to Archbishop John Bede Polding OSB of Sydney, was completed by Hardmans on 20 July 1848 and cost £6-5-0. Davis acquired all his episcopal metalwork from Hardmans to Pugin's designs.





This lovely study is of the entrance porch to Charles Hansom's St George's Church, Buckland, Oxfordshire (formerly Berkshire), which is the subject of the latest instalment of our series on Hansom as a Pugin follower.



Charles Hansom, a Pugin Follower (Part 4)

St George's Church, Buckland, is a building whose fidelity to the architectural grammar and vocabulary of the English late Middle Ages as well as the liturgical furnishings of that period mark it as wholly and accurately in accordance with Pugin's hugely influential writings on those subjects. Whilst this judgment could fairly be applied to many of Hansom's churches, as we are seeing in this Series, there is an unique reason in the case of Buckland, and that is the influence of Dr Daniel Rock (1799–1871), Catholic priest, antiquarian, liturgical scholar and a friend of Pugin.

Background

Dr Rock's studies for the priesthood commenced at St Edmund's, Ware, followed by six years at the Venerable English College, Rome. It was during his years in Rome that he formed a friendship with Hon. John Talbot, afterwards the sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury. Rock was ordained in 1825. In 1827 his friend succeeded to the Shrewsbury peerage and the Earl got him removed from pastoral work at the Church of St Mary Moorfields, London, to serve as his domestic chaplain at Alton Towers.¹ Dr Rock's first contact with Pugin was via an introductory letter of 19 August 1836 wherein he praised Pugin's recently published *Designs for Gold & Silversmiths*,² describing the work as 'a most elegant and correct one: the designs are really beautiful'.³ Pugin responded promptly by sending Rock a copy of his *Contrasts* on 5 September 1836.⁴

¹ Bernard W. Kelly, 'Life of the Rev. Daniel Rock, D.D.', in Daniel Rock, D.D., *The Church of Our Fathers as seen in St. Osmund's Rite for the Cathedral of Salisbury*, 4 vols, John Murray, London, 1905, new edn (G.W. Hart & W.H. Frere eds), Vol. 1, p. xvii.

² *Designs for Gold & Silversmiths*, Ackermann & Co., London, published 4 April 1836.

³ Rock to Pugin, 19 August 1836, published in Benjamin Ferrey, *Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin and his father Augustus Pugin; with Notices of their Works*, Edward Stanford, London, 1861, p. 123.

⁴ Pugin's diary entry for 5 September 1836, in Alexandra Wedgwood, *A.W.N. Pugin and the Pugin Family*, Catalogue of Architectural Drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1985, p. 36.

Pugin had self-published the book earlier in that year.⁵

By the end of 1837 Pugin had begun work on a set of illustrations apparently for Rock's magnum opus, *The Church of Our Fathers*,⁶ eventually published in four volumes from 1849 to 1853 but not with Pugin's illustrations.⁷ This magisterial work, a copy of which was owned by Bishop Willson, was the first exhaustive treatise on the liturgical Use of Sarum, and was praised in August 1853 by *The Ecclesiologist* as 'the fullest and most complete account we possess of the religious observances and worship of our forefathers'.⁸ Inevitably, with a common interest in the religious beliefs and practices of the English Middle Ages, Pugin and Rock became firm friends from the outset. Rock's influence on the course of Pugin's design approach to architecture and furnishings was generously acknowledged in *True Principles*. In referring to internal altitude as a characteristic of foreign architecture Pugin wrote that its use would violate 'the principles of our own peculiar style of English Christian architecture, from which I would not depart in this country on any account. I once stood on the very edge of a precipice in this respect, from which I was rescued by the advice and arguments of my respected and revered friend Dr. Rock, to whose learned researches and observations on Christian antiquities I am highly indebted'.⁹

In the summer of 1840 Rock departed Alton Towers under a cloud and took up a position as domestic chaplain to Sir Robert George Throckmorton, eighth Baronet (1800–62), at his third country estate, Buckland Park, near

⁵ The Preface to this controversial work was signed by Pugin in May 1836: A. Welby Pugin, *Contrasts; or, A Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, and Similar Buildings of the Present Day; Showing the Present Decay of Taste*, Pugin, London, 1836.

⁶ Alexandra Wedgwood, *The Pugin Family*, Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Gregg International, Farnborough, 1977, pp. 52–3.

⁷ Daniel Rock, D.D., *The Church of Our Fathers as Seen in St. Osmund's Rite for the Cathedral of Salisbury, with Dissertations on the Belief and Ritual in England Before and After the Coming of the Normans*, C. Dolman, London, 1849–53.

⁸ Kelly, op. cit., p. xxii.

⁹ A. Welby Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, John Weale, London, 1841, pp. 75–6.

Faringdon in Berkshire.¹⁰ The Throckmortons were Catholic recusant gentry whose principal seat was Coughton Court, Warwickshire, which they had owned since 1409. They had owned the Buckland estate since 1690.

In 1840 Sir Robert Throckmorton decided to build a church on his estate, to be sited close to Buckland village. To this end, Charles Hansom was asked to provide plans. Given the long-standing friendship between Rock and Pugin and their shared ideals about church architecture and furnishings it would appear strange that Pugin was not given the task. We could speculate that the Berkshire church represented Rock's unique opportunity to construct and furnish a building fully in accord with his scholarly exertions, one where he had full control of the process. He would have most likely been aware of Pugin's reputation of intransigence on design matters, so the highly competent—and pliable—Hansom may perhaps have represented an excellent choice for Rock to realize his vision, the physical embodiment of his scholarship.

The design

The diminutive church had a three-bay aisleless nave forty-five feet by twenty, a separately-articulated two-bay chancel twenty feet long by fifteen, a south porch, a sacristy in the angle between the nave south-east corner and the chancel south wall, and a two-bay chantry chapel twenty feet long by twelve feet wide abutting the chancel north wall. This latter had its own entrance porch at the west end of its north wall. In the Decorated style 'of the purest period', the whole was 'a perfect restoration of a small village church of the beginning of the fourteenth century'.¹¹ The whole building was generously buttressed, giving it real presence despite its small size. This was particularly the case with the west front. Two massive oversized diagonal buttresses were set against the nave corners and a substantial angle buttress stood on the centre line of the façade, rising to terminate at the top of the gable against an elegant belfry. A statue niche with nodding ogee canopy was set into the buttress upper stage, housing a statue of St George, the saint in whose honour the church was dedicated.



The north-west elevation (Image: Brian Andrews)

¹⁰ Margaret Belcher quotes a late March 1840 letter from Shrewsbury to Pugin in which he cites his dissatisfaction with Rock as a chaplain. See Belcher, *The Collected Letters of A.W.N. Pugin*, vol. 1: 1830 to 1842, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 167.

¹¹ *The Tablet*, vol. VII, no. 339, 31 October 1846, p. 697.



The west elevation. Note that the statue of St George, visible in the image on page 6, disappeared from its niche some time between 1985 and 2005 (Image: Brian Andrews)

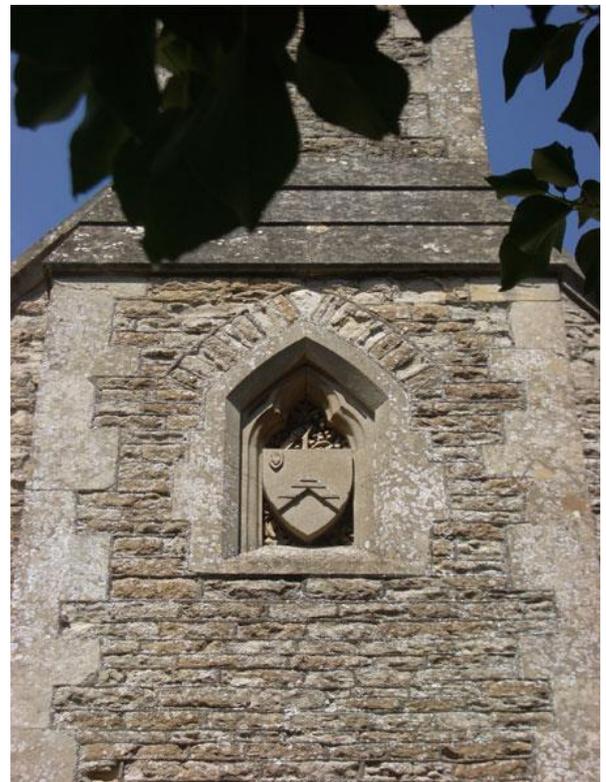


Above: The south-west elevation; below: the east end of the chancel (left) and chantry chapel (right) (Images: Brian Andrews)



The chantry chapel (Image: Brian Andrews)

A statue of the Virgin and Child stood in a niche over the south porch entrance (see page 3) and a carved panel set into the sacristy chimney displayed the Throckmorton arms.

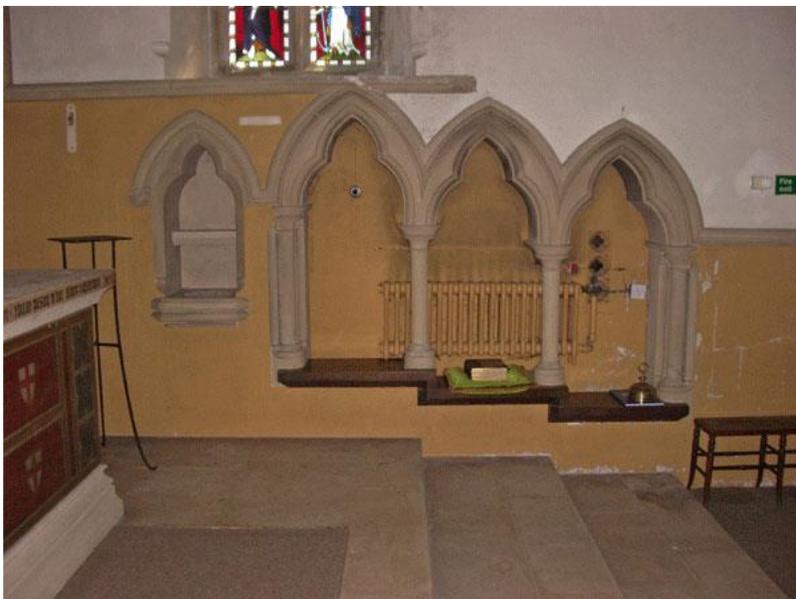


The Throckmorton arms (Image: Brian Andrews)





The furnishings of the church were those for the Use of Sarum, as Dr Rock would have inevitably specified. Thus, there was a rood screen with rood loft against the east face of the chancel arch, access to the loft being provided via a staircase in the sacristy. This also gave access to an elevated stone pulpit at the south-east corner of the nave.¹² Hansom cleverly provided a natural light source for the pulpit by inserting a small window next to it at the east end of the nave south wall. Stepped sedilia and a sacrarium were built into the chancel south wall.¹³ Again, Hansom inserted a small window, a quatrefoil light, in this instance at the back of the sub-deacon's place. This afforded a view into the chancel from the sacristy.



The sacrarium and sedilia (Image: Brian Andrews)

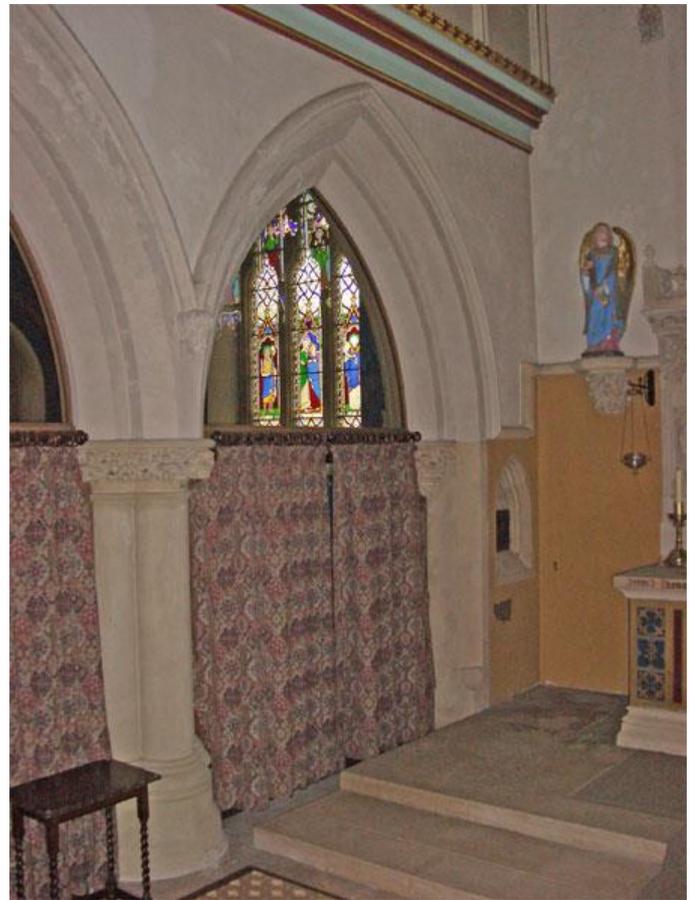
The building was also equipped with an Easter sepulchre, a furnishing unique to the Use of Sarum and not to be found in other Hansom churches—evidence of Rock's guiding hand. It was located in the north wall of the Throckmorton chantry chapel 'to commemorate in an especial manner to future generations the munificence of the founder'.¹⁴ This chantry chapel communicated with the chancel via

¹² Such elevated pulpits were a feature of several Pugin interiors, for example in Oscott College Chapel, Warwick Bridge, Southport, Dudley and Oatlands.

¹³ Stepped sedilia were proper to the Use of Sarum where the priest occupied the easternmost seat. In the Roman Rite the priest sat between the deacon and sub-deacon. Accordingly, if stepped sedilia were in use the priest would be below the level of the deacon.

¹⁴ *The Tablet*, loc. cit.

two moulded arches 'fitted with light [parclose] screens of oak from ancient examples'.¹⁵ The capitals of the columns and corbels supporting the arches were enriched with foliated carving.



The pair of arches dividing the chantry chapel, at left, from the chancel. Note that the curtains are a later addition, obscuring the parclose screens (Image: Brian Andrews)

A moulded stone compartment for Holy Oils was set into the wall just east of the parclose screens in the chancel north wall (see image above).

We now come to the design of the two altars. At the time of the laying of the foundation stone for the church in October 1846 a correspondent noted that: 'The construction of the altars is not after foreign, but true old English existing examples, and so formed as to receive a proportionate degree of splendor or simplicity according to the highness of the Feast-day and the spirit of the Rubrics.'¹⁶

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *ibid.* These words sound like they probably emanated from Rock himself.





Rock's knowledge of the construction and ornamentation of English altars was spelled out in his *Church of Our Fathers*: 'Whether of stone or of wood, the material itself with which those altars were raised was always worked quite plain, and they received their decoration, not from the ornaments and figures carved upon them, but more fittingly from movable ornaments such as splendid frontals and magnificent palls.'¹⁷ And again, 'the most common form of our English altars was an unbroken oblong square, cut out of plain unadorned stone, having a thick whole slab of stone, or, if possible, marble, on the upper or table part.'¹⁸ This was indeed the form of the Buckland High Altar, devoid of all carved ornament unlike the overwhelming majority of Pugin's altars and, indeed, Hansom's.

Grant (1816–70), first Bishop of Southwark. Grant was consecrated on 6 July 1851, so the inscription post-dates this.¹⁹

The altar had a richly-carved reredos with six adoring angels bearing lighted tapers and kneeling towards the tabernacle.



The High Altar (Image: Brian Andrews)

It had painted decoration to its face. One might surmise that this stood as a practical measure instead of textile frontals, the placement of which in accordance with the Feast of the day or the time of the church's liturgical year might realistically have been beyond the human resources of a small village church. The later inscription along the face of the mensa, the altar's top slab, relates to the placement of the relics of two Roman martyrs within it at the time of its consecration by Thomas



The reredos (Image: Brian Andrews)

Statues on highly original carved corbels stood on either side of the reredos.



The 'Eve' corbel (Image: Brian Andrews)

¹⁷ Rock, op. cit., 1905 edn, pp. 182–3.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁹ Dr Rock was named a canon of the newly-formed Diocese of Southwark in 1852

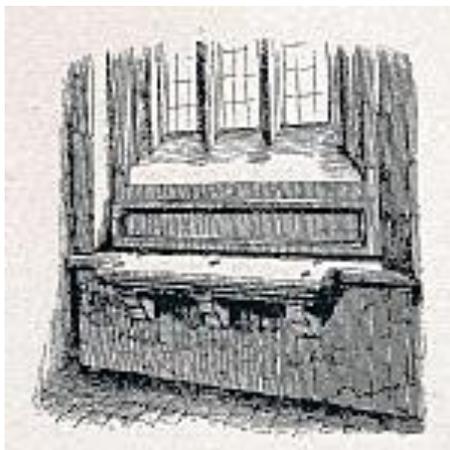


The corbel on the left had the apple tree in the Garden of Eden around which was entwined a serpent with the head of Eve. That on the right was an idealized medieval depiction of the church donor, Sir Robert Throckmorton, kneeling beneath an oak with his dog and with his manor on the right.



The 'Donor' corbel (Image: Brian Andrews)

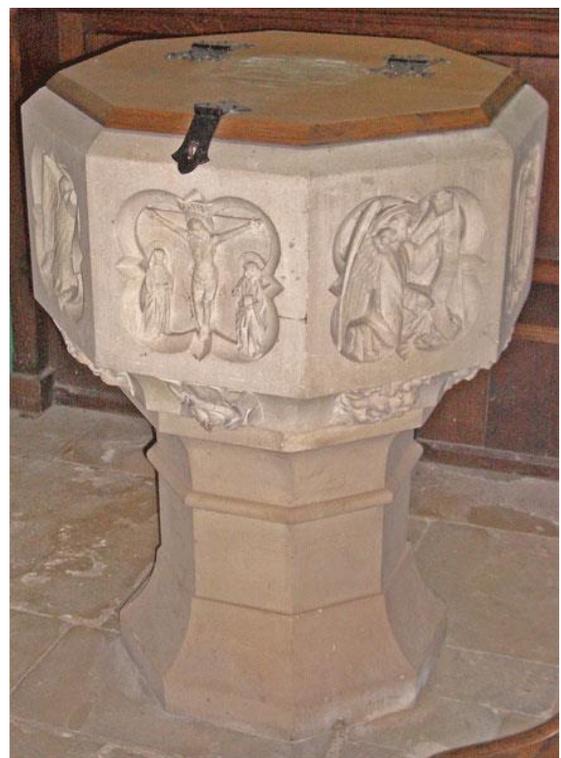
The altar in the chantry chapel was of a type described by Pugin in his *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume* (see Newsletter 85), but never used by him to our knowledge. An example is in Broughton Castle, Oxfordshire (see below). It consisted of the altar slab resting on corbels below the east window sill.



The chantry chapel altar (Image: Brian Andrews)

The Buckland altar was of precisely the same form as that at Broughton Castle. However, above the altar slab there were three carved panels with Marian themes of the Annunciation, namely, the Angel Gabriel, the Virgin Mary and a vase of lilies traditionally symbolic of purity.

Buckland's liturgical furnishings were completed with an elegantly carved baptismal font.



The baptismal font (Image: Brian Andrews)

Foundation stone

The foundation stone was laid on 26 October 1846. We can do no better to give a flavour of the occasion than to quote from a contemporary account of the event.

On Monday, the 26th instant, the first stone of a new church now being built at Buckland, Berks, by the pious munificence of Sir Robert Throckmorton, Bart., and to be dedicated to St. George, was solemnly blessed and laid by the Rev. Dr. Rock, who had first obtained the necessary faculty from the Lord Bishop of Olena,²⁰ authorising him to perform that function. Towards eleven o'clock, a.m., the procession moved from the house and proceeded through its beautiful gardens, at the end of which towards the village the new church is to stand, in a picturesque and well-chosen spot. The heir to the ancient house of Throckmorton, Mr Courtenay Throckmorton, headed the procession, bearing an old silver processional cross of the fourteenth century, and was followed by three of his brothers, of whom Master John carried the salt on a silver plate; Master Richard a beautiful silver holy water vat, a present to the church from Lady Throckmorton; and Master William the trowel and mallet. Then came the choristers in full flowing surplices of the true old English form, chanting the Psalms, *Laetatus sum,* and *"Nisi Dominus aedificavit ;"* and immediately behind the choir the Celebrant, then the architect, C. Hansom, Esq., bearing the plans of the new church, and robed in a becoming gown of rich black velvet. On arriving at the ground, where a large crowd had already collected, the ceremony prescribed by the Roman Pontifical was performed. After the first stone had been blessed and laid by the Reverend Celebrant, Sir Robert Throckmorton, Lady

Throckmorton, Mr. Courtenay, Miss Throckmorton, and Masters William, Richard, and John severally laid a stone. The ceremony was concluded by a discourse from Dr. Rock, explanatory of the sacred rite just finished. The touching and majestic strains of the Psalms, the Litany, and *"Veni Creator,"* poured forth on such a gladsome occasion, and in such a sweet spot, by a choir not to be surpassed in any country congregation for richness of voice, knowledge of music, and correct taste in chanting the services of the Church, produced a solemn effect.²¹

We particularly like the romantic scene of Hansom 'bearing the plans of the new church, and robed in a becoming gown of black velvet'.

Subsequent history

Figurative stained glass was progressively installed in the chancel and the chantry chapel.



Chantry chapel window (Image: Brian Andrews)

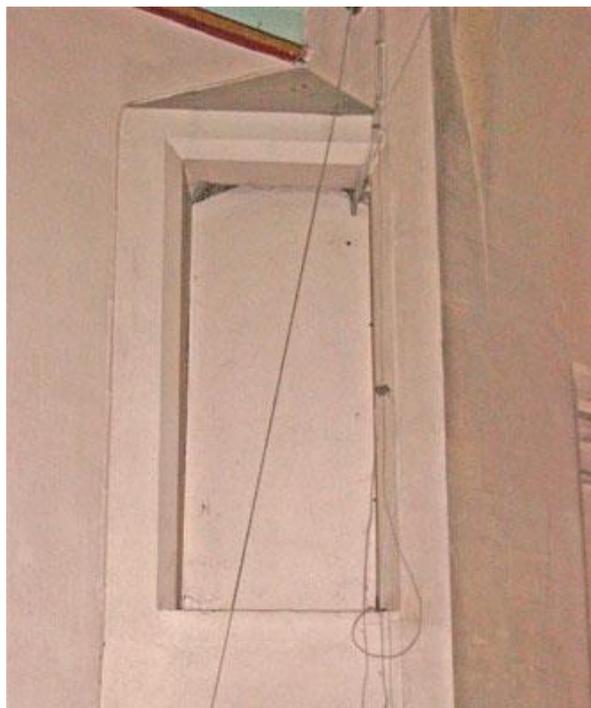
²⁰ This was Thomas Griffiths, Vicar Apostolic of the London District and titular Bishop of Oleno from 1833 to 1847. Before the restoration of the English Catholic hierarchy in 1850 the country was divided into mission territories, each governed by a bishop as Vicar Apostolic, having the title of a diocese that no longer functioned, in this case Oleno.

²¹ *The Tablet*, loc. cit.



The window illustrated above was erected in memory of Robert Charles Courtenay Throckmorton (1831–53). It depicts his patron saints, namely, St Robert of Molesme, a founding father of the Cistercian Order, wearing the white habit of the order and with young Robert kneeling at his feet, and St Charles Borromeo, Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, with his red cardinal’s hat. The glass has a Puginesque flavor, but we suspect from the drafting of the faces that it may have been made by William Wailes of Newcastle upon Tyne who made Pugin’s glass for some years until 1845.

The one major and deeply regrettable change to the interior was the destruction of the rood screen, most probably around the 1960s-70s period. Only the door from the sacristy into the loft remains as evidence.



The entrance door to the rood loft (Image: Brian Andrews)

Sadly, this delightful little church, the only concrete realisation of Dr Daniel Rock’s learned understanding of the liturgical and ceremonial practice of the English Middle Ages, was closed some years ago. The only church in use in the parish is a former Congregational chapel in nearby Faringdon. What a contrast!

Pugin’s Altars & Altarpieces (Part 2)

Pugin and late-medieval altars (continued)

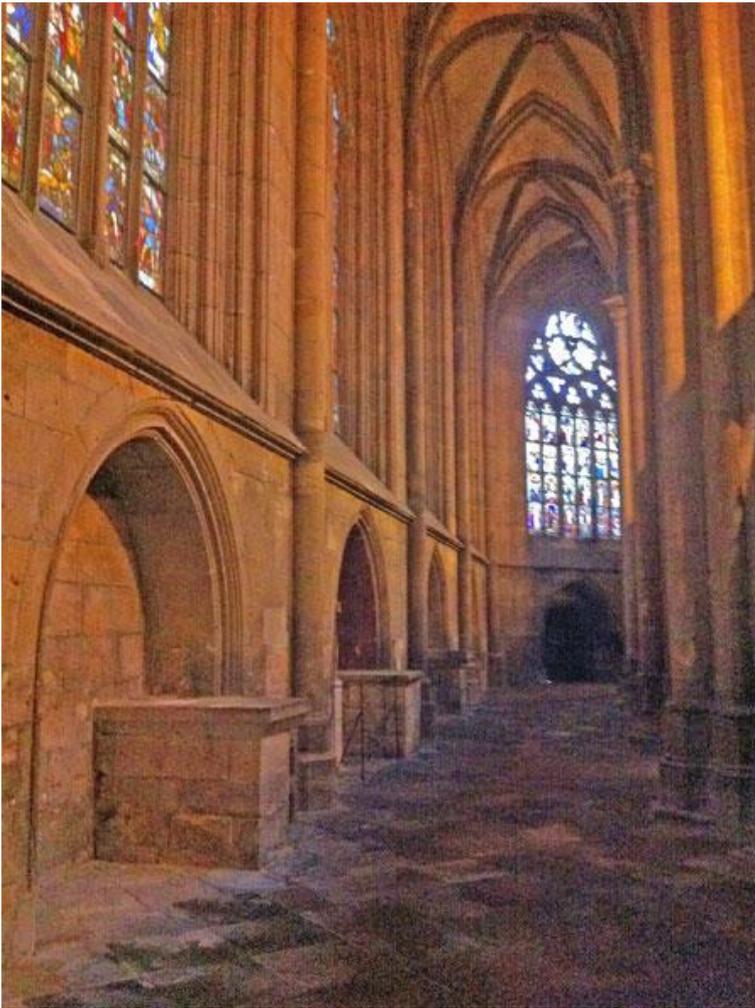
In his Central European travels Pugin would have seen and studied altars whose construction and form would have generally accorded with Dr Rock’s observations about English medieval altars (see the preceding article in this Newsletter). Thus, the altars were plain and oblong with moulded edges to the mensa and base. In the case of side or minor altars, these frequently had no moulding to the base.



The high altar in Halberstadt Dom, Germany, Lutheran since the Reformation, with its plain body and mouldings to the mensa and base. Disregard the later platform abutting it to the liturgical west (Image: Mary-Elizabeth Andrews)

Pugin would have also noted that the iconographic, structural and decorative elaboration was confined to the accompanying altarpieces. A great number of such late-medieval altarpieces were winged. In combination with their altars proper they were referred to as a *flügelaltar*, literally a winged altar. Such altarpieces had an influence on Pugin’s altar designs early in his career. **To be continued.**





Side altars in the Halberstadt north aisle. Note the absence of a base moulding (Image: Mary-Elizabeth Andrews)



Flügelaltars in Bardejov Church, Slovakia (Source: Justin E.A. Kroesen, Seitenaltäre in mittelalterlichen Kirchen, Schnell & Steiner, Regensburg, 2010)