

A(II): Abbey churches

a) Realised (3):

1. **1853**(13 Jul)–**54**(24 Nov): **Oulton, ST15 8UP, Staffs – St Mary’s Abbey Church (OSB nuns, Figs.28a, 41):** in coursed grey sandstone (90ft × 47ft), comprising: 2-bay chancel under a lower roof than the 5-bay aisleless nave (which here serves as the nuns’ choir); extern chapel (with external porch) in N transept off the chancel; square tower (with embattled parapet and canted stair-turret to the S) abutting the S wall of the choir to accommodate the organ chamber at 1st floor level. A bell-cote originally surmounted the W gable (*vide infra*). The chancel roof is panelled in 4 (+ 2 vertical) planes; the nave roof is trefoiled, based on a central pointed barrel vault that springs from a deep coving (both with moulded ribs and stencilled plaster panels). Each side of the chancel arch, facing the choir, is a canopied statue above a small altar. The chancel is lit by a 5-light E window (with some Perpendicular tracery), and from the N & S, respectively, by one & two 2-light traceried windows at clerestory level; the choir is lit by a 6-light W window (with tracery similar to the E window), and from each side (above the level of the lean-to roof of the surrounding cloister – *vide infra*) by 3-light traceried windows at clerestory level (1 per bay, except in the S bay that accommodates the projecting stone organ-tribune supported on 5 carved corbels; the NE ‘transept’ chapel is lit from the E by 3 trefoils below a pointed hood-mould (similar to the clerestorey at Shrewsbury [A(Ia)-1]), and the cloister by 3 & 4-light square-headed windows with cusped lights. The choir/nave is configured in collegiate fashion with inward-facing stalls in oak along the N & S walls, the canopied Abbess’ & Prioress’ stalls being either side of the W door. The High altar is supported on 4 marble colonnettes between which are carved panels; above the tabernacle is an exposition throne (originally surmounted by an open-work spire), and, on each side, the reredos presents 2 carved pointed panels (above which is an overhanging stone-vaulted cornice), the outer panels being flanked by a niche containing a pedestalled statue beneath a canopy supported on marble shafts. E window (to the design of JH Powell) by *Hardman & Co* (1854), encaustic chancel tiles by *Minton & Co*, carving by *Lane & Lewis* of Birmingham, wrought-iron/brass screen in the chancel arch (and probably also the wooden screen between the chancel and the NE chapel) by JH Powell. External to the N, S & W walls of the choir is a cloister with a lean-to roof, hipped to the W, and accessed by bilateral doors at the E end of the choir/nave and by a door in the W wall.

Accommodation: 30 nuns and 16 lay-sisters.

This early commission most likely arose from AWN Pugin having been earlier consulted during the 1840s about a suitable chapel for the Community at its former convent at Caverswall Castle; after his death, and following their move to Oulton, his son was the natural choice, although then only 19 years old. The vaulting of the cornice over the panels of the reredos is similar to that (by his father) in St Edmund’s College chapel, at Ware W window is by *Hardman & Co* (1867); the E&W windows contain the only known instances within the EW Pugin canon of Perpendicular tracery – see Fig 28a. The abbey church now lacks its original W-gable bell-cote and open-work spire surmounting the exposition throne, the latter having been removed in 1954 when it became unsafe. The painting above the chancel arch, depicting the Coronation of the Virgin, is by JA Pippet (of *Hardman & Co*), and probably *post*-dates the opening of the church. Terracotta Stations of the Cross of 1886 by *Mayer & Co* of Munich were installed in the cloister that surrounds the exterior of the choired-nave. The convent itself pre-dates the church, and is not by EW Pugin, as neither are the Chapter House, presbytery and double sacristy, all of which are by AE Purdie, 1889-1892. Other minor works by EW Pugin include the Gatehouse (with a ‘turn’ for dispensing alms) and a Porteress’ Lodge.

Annals of the English Benedictines of Ghent[(1894) 127-142] **B**[(1875, 12 Jun) 522]

BN[(1875, 11 Jun) 670] **BoE**[Staffordshire (1974) 217] **O’Donnell**[(2002) 118]

<https://archive.org/stream/annalsofenglishb00slsniala#page/n7/mode/2up>

<https://taking-stock.org.uk/building/outlon-st-marys-abbey/>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1038978>

2. **1854**(15 Nov)–**60**(4 Sept): **Clehonger, HR2 9RX, Herefords – *St Michael & All Angels Priory Church* (OSB, Figs.44, 45):** cruciform, externally in Sargardine coursed reddish-grey sandstone with dressings of yellow sandstone from the Forest of Dean, and internally clad in Caen, Painswick & Bath stone. The building originally comprised: shallow square-ended chancel (10ft deep) with side-chapels, shallow transepts (all under a roof-line lower than the 3-bay nave), lean-to aisles, and S porch. The central section of the tripartite W front contains the principal entrance within a deeply recessed moulded arch below a large 5-light window with cruciform wheel tracery, above which in the gable are 3 small trefoils under a convex triangular hood-mould. The crossing is separated from the chancel and from the nave by lanceolated arches whose inner mouldings are supported on engaged semi-octagonal pillars; the 3-bay nave is separated from the aisles by an arcade of 3 arches on quatrefoil piers with shallow capitals carved by T Earp, the hood-moulds having naturalistically carved labels at their cusps¹; the aisles open into shallow transepts through stone arches. After it became a Benedictine priory church 1859, it was decided double the length of the chancel, but the work was unfinished (as also were the transepts) when the church was opened on 21 Nov 1859. In 1860, this (extended) chancel was replaced by monastic choir of 4 bays (of a height lower than the nave), bringing the overall length of the church to 150ft. The original E window was repositioned in the E wall of the extended choir, and a new marble altar installed. At the same time were added N & S choir aisles terminating in chapels (under pitched roofs of a height below that of the transepts), that to the S giving access to the monastery. St Benedict's chapel (for use by the novices, and accessed from the S choir aisle) was added E of the S transept in 1862. In 1863 the S porch was closed and converted into a chapel, lit by a 3-light traceried window, and a new, steeply gabled porch built off the central bay of the N aisle, its gable extending above the eaves. In 1865, the roof of the choir was raised by 8ft (bringing it up to the roof-line of the nave at 50ft) and a 2-bay, square-ended sanctuary (25ft deep) added to the E end beyond the line of the side-chapels, bringing the total length of the church to 175ft; at the same time, the marble High altar of 1860 was relocated in the new sanctuary, and a reredos sculpted by RL Boulton to EW Pugin's design, together with a new tabernacle by *Hardman & Co*, were installed the following year. The sanctuary, choir, choir aisles and transepts have panelled wagon roofs, the crossing is rib-vaulted in Caen stone, nave is open-timbered with arched principals (springing from long colonnettes extending half-way to the cusps of the arcades), strengthened with superior collars & wind-braces, and the aisles are boarded. The sanctuary is lit by the original 5-light E window (its 3rd repositioning since 1859), with glass by JH Powell of *Hardman & Co*, and from each side by two externally gabled 3-light traceried windows internally recessed within 2 arches separated by an un-engaged pillar composed of alternate blocks of Bath stone & brown marble (painted over in stone colour in 1931). The choir is lit from each side by a clerestory based on a pair of 3-light gabled wall-dormers, the choir aisles by 3-light traceried E windows, the transepts by 4-light traceried N & S windows, the N transept by a 2-light W window, the nave by the 5-light W window (with glass by *Hardman & Co*, 1882-89) and by a clerestory of two 2-light windows per bay, and the aisles by 3-light side, and 2-light W windows.

The church (in the form realised during EW Pugin's lifetime) was built through the munificence of FR Wegg-Prosser, MP, FRAS. It was originally designed as a rural parish church, but after the arrival of the Benedictines in 1859, it was extended progressively E in a number of building campaigns until 1863. In 1875, stone screens lateral to the choir were installed to the design of CW Pugin, together with altars in the side-chapels (Our Lady to the S, St Joseph to the N) and in St Benedict's Chapel. Through the munificence of the Marquis of Bute and Mrs Helen Brymer of Bath, the crossing tower was completed by *Pugin & Pugin* in 1882 by the addition of a belfry stage surmounted by an embattled parapet (in place of EW Pugin's intended broach spire). During 1882-85, *Pugin & Pugin*

¹ This is to be found also elsewhere, such as at *St Michael's*, Liverpool [A(IIIa)-35].

extended the N transept (adding a new W window) to create a chantry chapel for the 1st Bishop of Newport & Menevia, Rt Rev Thomas Brown OSB, whose canopied tomb is against the N wall; on the E wall, an altar to St David was installed. The church became the Abbey Church of an independent Benedictine Foundation in 1920, when it ceased to have the pro-Cathedral status it had enjoyed since 1860 (Newport & Menevia, 1860-1895, Newport, 1895-1916, Cardiff, 1916-20). A projected scheme of 1888 for the S transept² to accommodate the tomb of the Most Rev Dom Bede Vaughan³ OSB, Archbishop of Sydney, Australia (1873-83⁴) and Cathedral Prior of Belmont (1862-73) was never realised. The 20th century witnessed an orgy of destruction of internal furnishings: the High altar was removed 1965-66, the orientation of the church interior was reversed 1966-67, the lateral choir screens were removed in 1968, whilst, during 1969-70, St David's altar was removed on the grounds of over-ornateness, and replaced by one in wood, which was itself subsequently removed to make space for the tomb monument of Bishop Brown's successor, Rt Rev John Cuthbert Hedley OSB, upon its removal in 1978 from St Joseph's Chapel (to where it had been moved from the choir in 1934); also removed in 1978 was PP Pugin's open-work screen (Fig.45b) separating the N chantry transept from the crossing. In 1979, the original orientation of the interior was restored.

A[(1882, 4 Mar) 133 & plate] B[(1855, 19 May) 229: (1857, 18 Jul) 408: (1859, 12 Mar) 193: (1860, 13 Oct) 662] Berry (2012) BN[(1878, 12 Apr) 366 & plate: (1888, 31 Aug) 270 & plate]
 BoE[Herefordshire (2012) 98] *Dairies of Prior Raynal* (Belmont Archives) E[(1855, Jun, Vol XIII) 150]
Freeman's Journal[(1859) 23 Feb] *Hereford Times*[(1856) 29 Nov] O'Donnell[(1999a): (2002) 52: (2012a) Chapter 7] T[(1854, 25 Nov, 2 Dec) 748, 758: (1859, 11 Feb, 10 Dec) 101, 788: (1860, 8 Sept) 565: (1866, 12 May, 11 Aug) 293, 502] Warde[(2012) Chapter 3] Whelan (1959) Whitehead[(2020) 8]
<https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1099699>

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3. **1869(Spring)–71(6 Sep): Callow End, WR2 4TY, Worcs – Stanbrook Abbey Church of *Our Lady of Consolation* (OSB nuns, Figs.42, 43b,c):** in brick with limestone dressings, comprising: 2½ bay chancel under a lower roof⁵ than the 5-bay choir/nave from which it is separated by a moulded arch within which is a wrought-iron screen (by JH Powell) above which is suspended a Rood-ensemble; axial W tower with embattled parapet and prominent, conically roofed NW stair-turret in alternating bands of brick and ashlar; SE extern chapel that opens into the S side of the chancel; cross-gabled N transept accommodating the organ chamber, E of which is a small tribune above entrance into the adjacent convent; E end sacristies. The chancel & choir are vaulted with closely-set, transverse (almost semi-circular) ribs, and the extern chapel is vaulted beneath a flat roof supported by a central free-standing slender marble column. The chancel is lit from the E by a rose-window (based on 8 cinquefoils around a central octofoil, with glass by *Hardman & Co*), two large 3-light traceried N windows, and by 5 small circular S windows above the roof of the extern chapel; the choir/nave is lit from the W by three 2-light traceried windows (one each side of the tower and one in the 2nd stage of the tower itself, which opens *via* a tribune into the choir/nave) and from each side by 2-light traceried windows, 1 per bay; these latter windows are recessed⁶ within a 5-bay engaged arcade of almost semi-circular arches. The extern chapel is lit by a small E rose-window, and from the S by a large 3-light traceried window. The High altar is supported at each end by a pair of granite colonnettes; above the tabernacle

² Not N, as stated in the *Building News*[(1888, 31 Aug) 270].

³ A brother of Herbert, Cardinal Vaughan.

⁴ Vaughan died in Liverpool in 1883, and was at first buried at Ince Blundell, the seat of one branch of the Weld family to whom he was related – his great-uncle, Thomas Weld, being the first English cardinal since Catholic Emancipation, and his cousin, Sir Frederick Weld, Governor of W Australia & Tasmania. His remains were removed to Belmont in 1887, and re-buried in the churchyard where they remained until 1946 when they were returned to *St Mary's* Cathedral, Sydney (designed by WW Wardell), which Vaughan had dedicated in 1882.

⁵ The roofs are covered with Seddon tiles, based on Roman examples from Trier.

⁶ The same is to be found at the aisleless churches of *St Kevin* [A(IIIa)-65] & *St Anne* [A(IIIa)-77], where the arcading over the windows 'compensates' for the absence of a nave arcade.

is a canopied exposition throne⁷ (carved by Morley⁸, and reaching to just above the base of the rose-window), each side of which (under a triple gable supported by marble columns) is a high-relief sculptured panel of adoring angels, some with musical instruments. The extern chapel contains an ornate altar to the Sacred Heart carved by RL Boulton. The pavement throughout (to the design of EW Pugin & JH Powell) is in rich marbles interspersed by Minton encaustics. Kauri pine⁹ stalls carved by Morley, organ case¹⁰ and High altar carved by *Farmer & Brindley*; other stone carving by RL Boulton and HH Martyn (of *Boulton's*). Metalwork by *Hardman & Co*. The church is connected to existing conventual buildings by a *Via Crucis* cloister running from the W door, with Stations of the Cross [B(e)-3] carved by RL Boulton (who donated the 4th Station).

The commission (dating from 1868) was obtained on the strength of the Order's satisfaction with EW Pugin's early work at Oulton [A(IIa)-1], and on the recommendation of Dom W Alcock of Ramsgate. Apart from the tower, the realised design is the second made for the chapel by EW Pugin – the first [A(IIb)-1] is shown in Fig.43a. The present tower, a late addition insisted on by the chaplain Dom Laurence Shepherd OSB, replaces the originally intended W-end bell-cote, and its abutment to the W-end of the nave is less than satisfactory; EW Pugin much disapproved of its stair-turret (notwithstanding his provision of a similar one at the *Granville Hotel*, Ramsgate [G(IIa)-3]). The High altar & reredos were gilded & coloured in 1878; the reredos was simplified and reduced 1937–38, and completely removed in 1971, together with the High altar, the Sacred Heart altar in the extern chapel, and JH Powell's wrought-metal chancel-screen (now in Birmingham Museum); a hideous metal screen now separates the extern chapel from the chancel. Sanctuary wall paintings by *Clayton & Bell* of 1878 were obliterated *pre*-1950. The W-end was reordered in 1894 when an abbatial throne (by PP Pugin) was positioned in front of the W door that originally opened into the *Via Crucis* cloister [B(e)-3] that connects the Abbey Church to pre-existing conventual buildings. S off the E-most bay of the nave is a pitched-roofed Chapel of the Holy Thorn, by *Pugin & Pugin* (1885), with stained glass by JN Pearce; this chapel contains the tombs of Dom Laurence Shepherd OSB (carved by RL Boulton) and that of his co-worker Dame Dubois, Abbess, 1872-97. At some later date, the Extern Chapel was extended E under a pitched roof to link with the sacristy beyond. The W windows are by *Hardman & Co*, 1913. In Aug 2007, the entire property was put up for sale, and has now been converted into a hotel, but the Abbey Church remains intact (apart from the modern W-facing altar, which has now been removed).

B[(1871, 16 Sept, 23 Sept) 733, 754: (1878, 6 Apr) 350, 352 plate] BN[(1868, 2 Oct) 674]
 BoE[Worcestershire (1997) 246] Clergy Review [(1972, Vol LVII[3]) 240] Howell [(2007) 37]
 Moore[(2011) 7] O'Donnell[(2002) 116: (2006) 59] T[(1871) 9 Sept, 16 Sept) 342, 370]
<https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1098751>

b) Unrealised (1):

1. **1868: Callow End, Worcs – Stanbrook Abbey Church (OSB nuns, Fig.43a):** cruciform, comprising: apsidal chancel under the same roof line as the 7-bay choir/nave; 3-stage W tower that merges (at roof ridge level) into an octagonal belfry stage surmounted by a short spire; gabled extern chapel (with external access) projecting S below a rose-window of the S transept; a cloister from the W door links with earlier conventual buildings. The apse is lit by five 3-light traceried windows, the choir/nave by 2-light traceried windows (1 per bay), and the transepts by small rose-windows in the gable-ends.

(Continued)

⁷ Described by EW Pugin (*see* Howell [(2007) 37]) as 'A really grand thing.....a more magnificent canopy has never yet been executed all in one stone.' – Stanbrook Archives [Letter of 25 Nov from EW Pugin to Dom Laurence Shepherd OSB].

⁸ John Knight Morley was the manager of EW Pugin's *South-Eastern Works* in Ramsgate.

⁹ A New Zealand pine similar to satinwood.

¹⁰ The organ case is the same as that designed 2 years previously to contain the pipe-work of the organ at *Meanwood House*, Leeds [G(1a)-6] – *see* Blaker[(2005) 44].

A(II): Abbey Churches

This was EW Pugin's the first design (Fig.43a) for the Abbey Church. Apart from the W tower, there are a number of external features in common with PP Pugin's church of *Our Lady of the Angels* (1898-1901) for the Benedictine nuns at Princethorpe Priory, Warks (now Princethorpe College).

Howell[(2007) 37]
