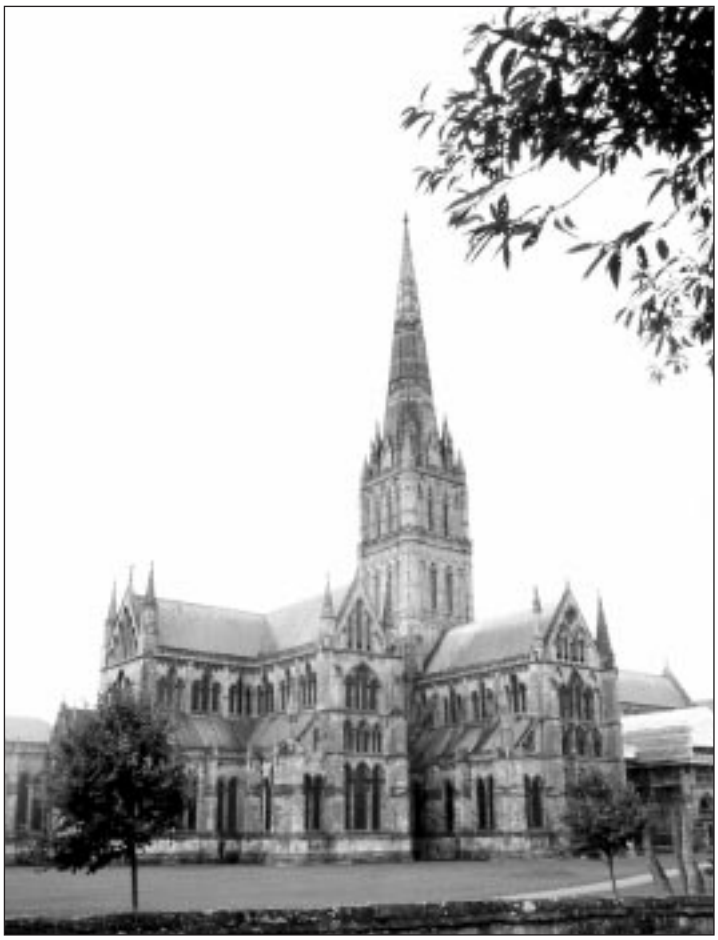
Ecclesiology Today



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Front cover illustration:
Salisbury cathedral, seen from the north-east.

Chairman's Letter

DEAR FELLOW MEMBER, first some important Society news, then a word about our book on Comper, and finally an update on some recent developments concerning the future of church buildings.

Editorship of Ecclesiology Today

If you have glanced ahead, you will already have seen that this is John Elliott's last issue as Editor of *Ecclesiology Today*. He took up the role in 1997, and over the last ten years has done a tremendous job, building it up to a periodical of which the Society can be proud.

For those of you who have joined since 1997 – and given the Society's rate of growth since the early 90s, this is a high proportion – it may be worth giving a potted history. In 1980 a newsletter was started. In 1993, under Professor Kenneth Murta's editorship, the contents were expanded and the publication was launched as *Ecclesiology Today*. At that stage the format was lo-tech, corner-stapled A4 with no facility for illustrations.

In 1997 John took over. He converted the format to A4-booklet, and introduced illustrations. Later he shrank the page size (and increased the number of pages) and recently the journal has undergone a complete redesign, to its present airy and spacious layout.

Fom the beginning, John was cajoling and persuading people to write articles, and where necessary filling in the gaps himself. It is not easy to grow a journal, but he managed to establish a virtuous circle, where the increasing quality of the contents attracted new contributors. Looking back to 1997, his first issue had three very short articles, and just one substantial one – and that from John's own pen! There were only five illustrations. Comparison of that issue with recent ones shows just how far he has taken us.

Until recently, John not only commissioned and copy-edited the contents, but also typeset them, a significant task but one which helped keep our costs down, and provided very good value for money to members.

As a thank you for his work over the years, members of Council volunteered to write the articles for his final issue. It was pleasing to discover that three of us had things to say about John's adopted city, Salisbury, and that all of the topics dealt with here are close to his heart. I do not know whether this falls within the formal definition of a *festschrift*, but the thought is the same. Thank you, John.

Whilst your Council considers whom to appoint as the next editor, we are inviting guest editors to look after each issue. Andrew Derrick has kindly agreed to be our first guest editor, and his edition will be concentrating on Catholic churches. As I have explained previously, we are moving to two editions of *Ecclesiology Today* per year (this is the second one for 2006), and the next issue (the first for 2007) should be out in Spring or early Summer.

Sir Ninian Comper

The Society published a book on the life and work of Sir Ninian Comper in September, and this was issued free to those who were members on 1 September. If you

were a member at that date, and did not receive a copy, could you drop a note to John Henman, whose address is on the inside rear cover.

Additional copies can be purchased from our co-publishers, Spire Books. Their phone number is 01189 471 525.

Keeping church buildings

As many of you will know, I have a particular interest in the future of church buildings, and thought a brief update may be of interest.

There has been a lot going on. In early 2006 the Select Committee of DCMS (the Department of Culture, Media and Sport) looked into the country's heritage (I was able to give both written and oral evidence regarding church buildings). The Committee had some interesting things to say in its report, but the response from the Department was, I fear, anodyne and disappointing. More positively, in October a report commissioned by DEFRA (the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) showed how important the life of the church is to rural communities – no surprises there, but government policy-making has been singularly blind to this in the past. And there is now an All Party Parliamentary Group on Historic Churches and Chapels which is meeting regularly.

Also in 2006, English Heritage launched its *Inspired!* campaign, and the Church of England issued a 'Next Steps' document, following its earlier *Building Faith in our Future.*

In November there was a conference on church tourism which attracted some high-powered speakers, and a strategy for encouraging such tourism has now been published. (And who could argue with the need for that? Surely, for example, our East Anglian parish churches should be as well known to the overseas tourist as French Romanesque ones are to us.)

In December, there was an informed debate in the House of Lords, in which the government was urged to consider the level of support it gives to church buildings. Later in the month, our Vice-President Sir Patrick Cormack, MP secured an adjournment debate in the Commons, and made some telling points to the relevant minister, David Lammy, who, it is good to see, has consistently shown himself to be interested in pursuing the issues.

There have been two particular pieces of good news. In the Spring, the scheme for recovering VAT for repairs to listed places of worship was extended by the Chancellor. And in December the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) announced that funding for places of worship will remain a priority, with a dedicated funding programme through to the year 2013. This is not the place for figures, but the HLF gives many millions of pounds per year to repair churches (far more than the government does through English Heritage), so the continuation of this at similar levels is very welcome news indeed.

You can find out more about these developments on our website.

With best wishes
Trevor Cooper
Chairman of Council

From the Editor

AFTER 10 YEARS EDITING *Ecclesiology Today* I have very mixed feelings about relinquishing the task, but as the walrus said 'the time has come for a change'. What started as a collection of A4 sheets held together with a staple has become a small printed book. I would also like to think that the contents have changed and become more learned without becoming acrid or boring. My great regret is that we never went to colour, but as the Treasurer will quickly point out, the annual subscriptions do not pay for the current *Ecclesiology Today* let alone a colour version; the changes which have been made being financed from special funds. I have done my best and it is now time to move on, and more importantly for *Ecclesiology Today* to move on, with a new Editor who will bring his or her own special flair to the task. If you liked what you have read then I am pleased, if you didn't then I am sorry.

After three score years and five I feel very fortunate to have *found myself* in Salisbury. The absence of an adjacent motorway means that life here is more civilised and somewhat slower than in many more *advanced* areas where it has been my misfortune to live. In addition, the Cathedral not only dominates the skyline, it also inspires the local culture, providing a rich source of musicians and learned clerics. The result is an abundance of local choirs and musical groups along with an equal abundance of excellent theological courses in the *born again* Salisbury Theological College which now caters for a secular audience of those with a faith which is seeking an understanding.

It has been a great honour to edit a final version of *Ecclesiology Today* that is largely devoted to Salisbury with articles exclusively contributed by members of the Society's Council. Work started on Salisbury Cathedral in 1220, it was consecrated in 1258 and work was largely completed by the 1330s. The result is an architectural gem that is stylistically largely of one piece. The succeeding centuries have extracted their toll as successive architects have *improved matters*, till in the 1860s G .G. Scott tried to undo some of the worst excesses and more recently Michael Drury has given the structure a much needed structural overhaul. The result is one of the wonders of British architecture and a machine for praying in that makes the process thoroughly enjoyable. One of the unsung wonders of Salisbury is an opportunity (available every day) to climb the internal staircases and roof spaces to the base of the spire. If all this were not enough the local Roman Catholic church was designed by Pugin and the major part of the ex-Theological College was designed by Butterfield.

Local history has often been ignored by the supposedly learned but it is through the local that many are able to come to terms with the wider scene. Uncovering the numbers who attended a specific church in Salisbury in 1851 makes more sense to many than national statistics. I am therefore particularly pleased that my last foray as Editor of *Ecclesiology Today* is largely concerned with local issues and I hope that it will encourage others to find out how things differed elsewhere.

John Elliott
December 2006

‘Worthy of the age in which we live’: churches and chapels in Salisbury

Trevor Cooper

Trevor Cooper makes his living in business. He is Chairman of Council of the Society, and has an especial interest in the future of church buildings.

AUTHOR’S NOTE: This is not an architectural study, but an attempt to look at Salisbury’s churches and chapels as a group – why were they built? how are they being used today? and what might this mean for their future? I have only scratched the surface of a long and complex story, but I hope it is not only of interest in itself, but provides more general food for thought, especially regarding the outlook for church and chapel buildings in urban areas.[1]

1. The early days

The original churches

Salisbury is a planned settlement.[2] It was founded by Bishop Richard Poore in 1220 on land owned by the church authorities, and laid out with the new cathedral to the south and a grid of streets to the north (Fig. 1). Its position on level ground at the confluence of the Rivers Nadder and Avon made the city an important junction, with two river crossings, one to the west at the village of Fisherton, and the other to the south where the road leads through Harnham. Both of these villages have become suburbs, Fisherton some centuries ago, Harnham much more recently.

From early days, three parish churches were provided. One was St Martin’s to the south-east, where an existing hamlet and its church were taken into the new settlement. In this area the original street pattern remains, and even now the church feels a little out of the way, describing itself as ‘Salisbury’s best kept secret’. This building, older than the cathedral, was enlarged in the mid fifteenth century, and given a smart spire (Fig. 2). In 1886 it was the first Anglican church in Salisbury to use vestments, and today it serves Anglo-Catholics from the city and beyond.[3]

Close to the market place is St Thomas’s. This was built in the city’s early years, and was the first church on the site. It was already a large building by 1447, when the chancel roof and part of a side chapel collapsed. During the rebuild the church was further enlarged, and modifications later in the century led to the fine building we see today (Fig. 3). The church is famous for its associations with the medieval wool-merchants who lived in Salisbury, and for its post-Reformation painting of the Doom or Last Judgement over the chancel arch.[4] It is the principal city church and the venue for many civic events.

The street pattern of the northern part of the city suggests this area may have been developed a few decades after the original

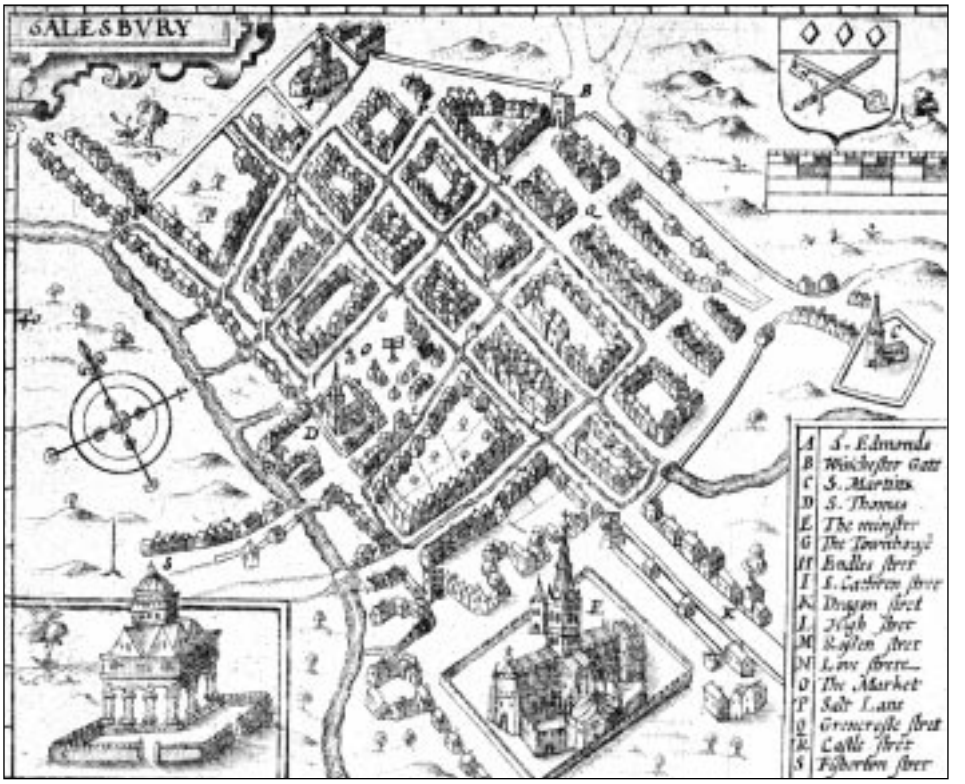

Fig. 1 John Speed's miniature map of Salisbury of about 1610, the first map of the city, here shown actual size. Note that north is diagonally upwards and to the left. The cathedral is to the south, with the spire of the medieval bell-tower (demolished 1789) visible adjacent to the north side of the cathedral. Due north is St Thomas's church, close to the market place with its stocks. At the north-east corner of the city is St Edmund's with its central tower, located in a large churchyard. Due east of the cathedral on the edge of the city is St Martin's.

Fig. 2 The church of St Martin in 1979. The building on the right was a school. This recently closed and is now used for community purposes.

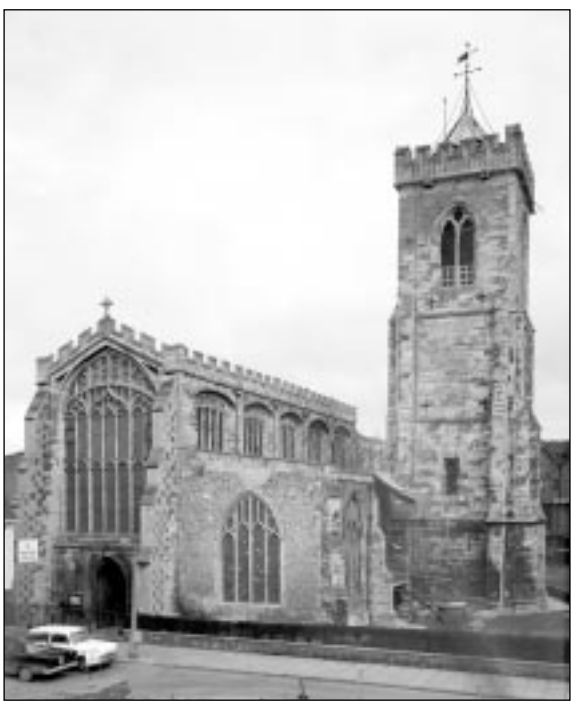

Fig. 3 The church of St Thomas in 1963, an unusual view made possible by demolition of an adjacent building.

Fig. 4 Left, the interior of St Edmund's before Scott's restoration of 1865–7. Note the tall central three-decker pulpit with canopy, the westward-facing gallery in the south aisle and the benches for the poor in the wide central aisle.
Below, in order:
Top, the interior in 1972 before the church was closed for worship.
Middle, recent view of the restaurant in the Arts Centre, occupying Scott's east end.
Bottom, exterior view from an old postcard, showing the tower of 1653 (photo of c.1906).

foundation as an expansion of the city northwards. Here was built the church of St Edmund, set up as a college for twelve priests – though in fact it rarely if ever had that number – some of whom served the parish. It was effectively two buildings, one for the parish, one for the college, and was of great size, its churchyard taking more than the width of one tenement block. This church too suffered an accident when in 1653 the tower fell down and destroyed the nave. The parish rebuilt the (clearly important) tower in the Gothic style, and replaced the bells, though raising the money for repairs was not without difficulty, and an extra churchwarden, a 'gentilman of honour and respect in the city', had to be drafted in as fund-raiser. The nave was not rebuilt. The building seen today is the early fifteenth-century chancel, with a Victorian eastward extension by Scott who also undertook a fairly thorough restoration of the rest of the fabric (Fig. 4).[5] The church was closed for worship in 1974 and is now an Arts Centre.

The cathedral need hardly figure in our discussion of church provision for the ordinary citizen of Salisbury. Its primary purpose has never been as a parish church, and until relatively recently it has drawn its congregation mainly from the five hundred or so people living in the Close. Lately, like many other cathedrals, it has seen increasing congregations, and today attracts about 250 people each Sunday.[6]

These days the cathedral is a major tourist attraction, said to have 500,000 visitors each year. But there seems to be little promotion of other church buildings as places of interest. Market research shows that visitors to Salisbury enjoy 'historic aspects of the city', so there is surely potential to encourage visits to the other churches, perhaps by marketing them from within the

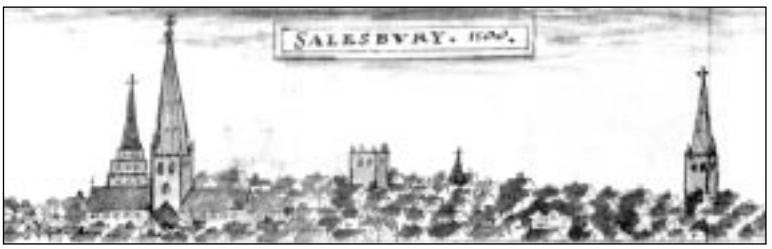

Fig. 5 William Smith's drawing of Salisbury in 1588. The bell-tower is immediately behind the cathedral, and St Thomas's is presumably hidden behind the cathedral.

cathedral, as at Lincoln. Experience elsewhere shows this can benefit all parties.[7]

This, then, is our first snapshot of church provision within Salisbury, showing it with just three parish churches. The earliest surviving drawing of the city, made in 1588, shows churches and cathedral dominating the skyline, a physical and institutional presence impossible to ignore, remaining so well into the following centuries (Fig. 5).[8] But was there enough room in the churches for everyone?

Fitting everyone in

By the late fourteenth century the three Salisbury parish churches served a population of about 5,000 people, and this had risen to around 7,000 by the time of the Reformation. At this time, both St Edmund's parish and St Thomas's parish are calculated each to have had about 1,700 adult communicants. Were these thousands of people able to fit into just three churches? (This assumes they wanted to go to church: we seem not to have much evidence for the frequency of church going in the late middle ages).[9]

An estimate based on the published plan of St Thomas's indicates that if everyone was standing, and the nave was entirely empty, then it would probably have just held the required 1,700 people. But not everyone was standing: another church, St Edmund's, is known to have had a number of pews for hire from at least 1456, and the same was probably true of all three churches in Salisbury. Nor was all the floor space available, some being taken up with chantry chapels. On the other hand, these two factors were probably more than balanced by the fact there was a choice of Masses to attend on Sunday morning (assuming parishioners did not feel obligated to attend the parish Mass celebrated at the high altar). With multiple masses the churches probably were large enough for everyone.[10]

But what happened after the Reformation, when there was probably just a single service on Sunday? Did the removal of chantry altars from the nave miraculously produce just enough additional space for everyone to squeeze into a single service? Possibly.[11]

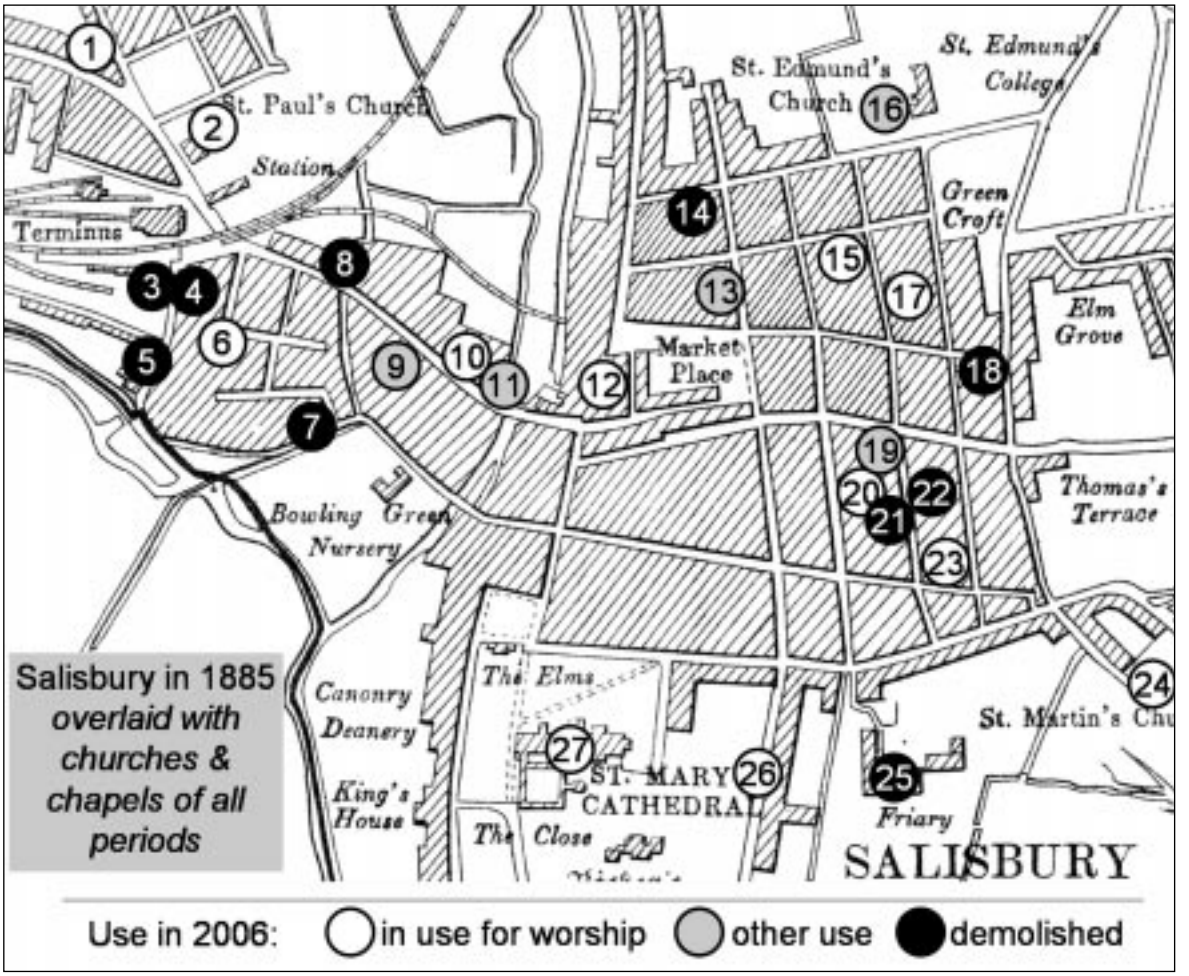

Fig 6 Salisbury and Fisherton from a map of 1885, showing churches and chapels of all periods. Fisherton with its railway terminus lies on the west. Comparison with John Speed's earlier map shows how little the centre has changed by this date. On this map buildings which no longer (2006) exist are shown in black, and buildings no longer used for religious purposes in grey.

Anglican and Catholic buildings with dedications:
Cathedral of St Mary, 27; St Clement, Fisherton, 5; St Edmund, 16; St Martin, 24; St Mary Magdalene (chapel of ease), 22; St Osmund (Roman Catholic), 26; St Paul, 2; St Thomas, 12.

Other buildings by alphabetical order of modern street name, showing original denomination:
Barnard Street (mission hall), 23; Brown Street (Baptist), 20; Cranebridge Road (Baptist), 7; Dews Road (Primitive Methodist), 6; Endless Street (Independent), 13; Fisherton Street from west to east: Primitive Methodist, 8; Primitive Methodist, 9; Congregational, 10; Maundrel Hall, 11; The Friary (mission chapel), 25; Gigant Street west side (Quaker), 21; Milford Street (Reformed Methodist), 19; Mill Road west side (Wesleyan Methodist), 3; Mill Road east side (Open Brethren), 4; St Edmund's Church Street (Wesleyan Methodist), 17; Salt Lane (Presbyterian), 15; Scots Lane (Independent), 14; Wilton Road (Wesleyan Methodist), 1; Winchester Street (mission chapel), 18.

However as seating became more common in the decades following the Reformation, galleries had to be introduced. St Thomas's put in a south gallery in 1615 – sensibly, children were not allowed in the front seats, to avoid annoying those sitting underneath – and St Martin's inserted one in 1632. Even St Edmund's, a very large church, planned a gallery in 1636 for

Fig. 7 The Salt Lane meeting house of 1702.
Top left, external view, the white gable of the building visible immediately behind the Salvation Army foyer entrance.
Top right, in use as a Sunday School when owned by the Methodists (photograph of about 1882). There is a gallery of 1737 on the short wall opposite the entrance, and two axial posts support the roof. No doubt the pulpit had originally been on one of the long walls.
Above, the same view today. There has been a new roof, so the central pillars have gone, as has the far gallery, and the windows at the far end have been blocked.

school children, 'principal inhabitants' and others. In the same year 'portable seats' were set up 'in the middle row and body of the church'.[12]

Space for seating was becoming more scarce, and it must be questionable whether there was enough room. For example, in 1715, by when additional galleries had been added, St Thomas's could only seat an estimated seven hundred people, with possibly a couple of hundred extra folk in the unpewed eastern chapels. This is nowhere near the required number.[13] It seems that the introduction of seating may have led to a problem of accommodation in the century after the Reformation, a period when dissenting congregations made up only a small percentage of the population and church attendance was expected of all.[14]

In fact, non-attendance was a problem commonly remarked upon by post-Reformation churchwardens. For example, in 1620 some 115 people in St Edmund's parish were named as having avoided Easter Communion, an occasion for which there was a three line-whip. A larger number are likely to have been absent on routine Sundays. Was this the time when the labouring classes began to absent themselves from Sunday church going?[15]

Not all services were on Sunday. Before the Reformation it was normal for town churches to hold masses on weekday mornings. For example, 'first Mass' or 'Jesus Mass' was said at St Edmund's at 6.00 a.m. each morning. Surprisingly, at this church the tradition continued: after the Reformation and until the 1640s, Morning Prayer was read at 6.00 a.m. every weekday. Attendance at this service may have been low, as the minister was happy for the Clerk to read the service.[16]

2. After the Reformation

Old Dissent

In late 1662 the bishop ordered a major rearrangement of the east end of St Edmund's church, demanding the removal of pews from under the east window and the placing there of a railed-in communion table. This symbolised a change in regime and a shift

in churchmanship, for earlier that year the puritan John Strickland had lost his job as minister. Along with some two thousand other clergymen across the country he had refused to accept the Act of Uniformity, imposing the modified Prayer Book.[17]

But Strickland stayed in the city, and continued to preach. He and others founded a Presbyterian meeting, worshipping in private houses with congregations of up to two hundred. With the 1689 Act of Toleration allowing the building of dissenting places of worship, a meeting house was erected in about 1702 in Salt Lane, set back from the street front (for location, see Fig. 6). This is the first purpose-built dissenting building in Salisbury, and is still there, in use today by the Salvation Army (Fig. 7).

As elsewhere, the Presbyterian cause in Salisbury dwindled, and it had disappeared by 1815, when the Methodists bought the disused Salt Lane meeting house for use as a school room. Particular damage to the Presbyterian meeting was done in 1757 when a group of members rejecting Unitarian theology broke away to form an Independent or Congregational church.[18] Ten years later the breakaway group built their own meeting room at the back of two houses which they had been given in Scots Lane. Sadly, in 1806, some fifty years after its foundation, this congregation also split, apparently unable to agree whether to call the extremely youthful Samuel Sleigh as pastor. The anti-Sleigh faction took themselves off and four years later built a new chapel

Fig. 8 The Baptist church in Brown Street, (1829, rebuilt 1882 by W. J. Stent of Warminster) after Sunday morning service, seen from the car park opposite. When erected there were buildings each side, and the chapel is intended to be seen more or less face on.

around the corner in Endless Street, fronting directly onto the road. However, Sleigh was a long-lasting success, and half a century later the congregations re-merged: but that part of the story comes later.[19]

The Quakers were the second dissenting group to build. They were meeting regularly in the city by the end of the seventeenth century, and they put up a meeting house in 1713, tucked away with its burial ground behind the street frontage on the west side of Gigant Street. A meeting continued in Salisbury until 1827. Their building had various subsequent uses, and it survived as part of a brewery until a few decades ago. Quakers have since returned to Salisbury, and are meeting in rented accommodation whilst they refurbish recently-purchased premises on the Wilton Road.[20]

The Baptists were next. Baptists of various persuasions worshipped in private houses in Salisbury through much of the seventeenth century, from 1626, if not before. Their first purpose-built chapel went up in Brown Street in 1719, and Baptists are still there today, representing continuous occupation of the site for nearly three hundred years, almost as long as medieval Catholic worship took place in the town's parish churches (Fig. 8). There have been many major changes since then – in 1795, 1829, 1882, 1935, and 1989. A history of significant rebuilding and extension is quite common for successful nonconformist congregations; not least, it seems likely that a fine new chapel helped draw congregations in.[21]

Thus in the first half of the eighteenth century, four new places of worship appeared, set up by congregations of the 'Old Dissent' – Presbyterians, Quakers, Baptists, and Independents.

The Methodists and Roman Catholics

What was later to become the 'New Dissent' arrived in June 1738 when John Wesley visited his mother in Fisherton, the momentous religious experience he had undergone in May still fresh in his mind. By this date, Fisherton was joined to the city by ribbon development along Fisherton Street. Wesley's brother-in-law, Westley Hall, was the curate in Fisherton, and he set up a Methodist group which met in the coach-house of a public house, the earliest meeting of Methodists in Salisbury. Methodists then regarded themselves as being activist members of the Anglican church, rather than a separate dissenting denomination. (There are groupings in the Church of England today which some would say have the potential to become separate denominations. Nothing changes.)

Although Westley Hall subsequently broke with him, Wesley was often in Salisbury and a Methodist meeting opened above a

shop in 1750, building a chapel in St Edmund's Church Street nine years later – Wesley called the chapel 'the most complete in England'. This was rebuilt in 1811, and enlarged in 1835; the Methodists are still there today, having worshiped on the same site for nearly 250 years (Fig. 9). Towards the end of the nineteenth century they acquired more land around their chapel, and put up a set of halls and meeting rooms, now hired by eighty different community organisations.[22]

The early nineteenth century saw a pair of competing Methodist chapels being built in Fisherton. In 1826 the Primitive Methodists opened a chapel on the south side of Fisherton Street, tucked away behind houses. It is still there, and still tucked away, though now converted to flats (Fig. 10).[23] The other new building was Wesleyan Methodist, erected six years later in what is now Mill Road, roughly where the station car park is.[24]

What of the Roman Catholics? For many years they had to be discreet and meet in private houses, often fitted up with purpose-built chapels. The first public Roman Catholic chapel in Salisbury was built in 1814, on the upper floor of a building near St Martin's church, and it was here in 1835 that Augustus Welby Pugin was received as a Catholic, and assisted at Mass the next day. This chapel closed in 1848 when Pugin's St Osmund's church was opened (Fig. 11), strategically placed directly opposite the (Anglican) cathedral, in which lies the shrine of St Osmund. The new church was largely paid for by John Lambert, a distinguished member of the congregation. Two years later the Roman Catholic hierarchy was restored to England and Wales, and, in Salisbury, effigies of the Pope, a Cardinal, and various Roman Catholic Bishops, dressed in vestments and labelled with their names, were paraded around the city to chants of 'No Popery' and then burnt one by one on a huge bonfire in front of a crowd of five hundred, whilst a band played the National Anthem. Four years later, John Lambert became mayor of the city.[25]

Fig. 9 The Methodist church in St Edmund's Church Street (1811; extended towards the road, 1835). Above left, the building before 1835. Above right, the building today, with its porch of 1889. Above, the large hall at the rear of the building, stretching to the other side of the block.

Fig. 10 The old Primitive Methodist chapel (1826, now private property). Its (modern) windows can just be glimpsed down the alleyway. The city's early nonconformist meeting houses were built behind the street frontage.

Fig. 11 The Roman Catholic church of St Osmund's (A. W. Pugin, 1848; north aisle, D. Webb, 1894).

It is now 1851. In the three and a half centuries since our previous snapshot, Salisbury has acquired one Catholic church, and four nonconformist chapels, during a period when its population increased from about 7,000 to approximately 9,000. Fisherton, becoming more and more an extension of the city, has gained a further two Methodist chapels.[26]

3. The second half of the nineteenth century

Census year

As discussed by John Elliott elsewhere in this issue, on Sunday 30 March 1851 a religious census was taken, recording both attendance and the number of seats in each church and chapel building.[27]

By today's standards, church attendance was extraordinarily high. On the morning of the census, almost 35% of the population of central Salisbury and Fisherton attended church. This proportion is four times higher than in Salisbury today, and is considerably higher than even the present-day percentage of Americans in church on a given Sunday. No wonder that when he published the results of the census, Horace Mann could say that 'regular church-attendance is now ranked amongst the recognised proprieties of life'.[28]

Even so the census underestimated general levels of churchgoing, because it took no account of those who attended church only once every few weeks and happened not to be in church that particular Sunday. One guess, made by Horace Mann in 1855, was that twice as many people attended church sometimes as were in church on any particular Sunday. (It is interesting that approximately the same correction applies today in England for Anglican churchgoers.) If Mann's estimate was broadly right, then church attendance in mid nineteenth-century England was much more widespread than is usually assumed.[29]

How full were the churches at their best-attended services? St Thomas's and St Edmund's were each about three-quarters full at their busiest times (74% and 79%). St Martin's, on the edge, was only half full even when most busy (53%). Of the nonconformists, the Endless Street Congregational church was more than three-quarters full (78%), whilst all the others were half full or less, with the Primitive Methodist chapel on the south of Fisherton Street being no more than one third occupied even at its fullest (33%).[30]

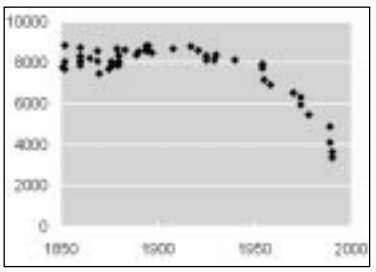

Fig. 12 Estimated number of church and chapel seats in central Salisbury and Fisherton, 1851 – present (excluding the cathedral). The geographical coverage is as shown in Fig 6; the figures exclude all churches in the suburbs. Many figures are estimated and liable to error, but the broad picture is likely to be correct. In 1851 there were 7,700 seats, roughly 700 seats per thousand population. Today there are half as many seats, about 3,800.

Fifty years of church extension

In 1851, then, many Salisbury churches and chapels were no more than half full on Sundays, even at their most popular services. Yet, as everywhere else, the next fifty years saw a flurry of church building in central Salisbury. Why was this?[31]

As John Elliott points out, this was a period of fast-growing population and urbanisation. The population of Salisbury grew by almost exactly 50% between 1850 and 1900. Not unreasonably, it must have seemed that new church buildings were required, and that there would always be people to fill new pews, even if they were half-empty to start with. Horace Mann himself set the national mood in his best-selling summary of the census by stating that 2,000 new churches were needed nationally, and referring to the situation as an 'emergency'. His starting point was the assumption that there needed to be 580 church seats per thousand population (in fact, Salisbury and Fisherton already had well over this number (Fig. 12), at around 700 seats per thousand population) and although he argued strongly for more church teachers, 'by whose persuasions the reluctant population might be won', there was little notion in his report that church seats should only be provided to the extent they were actually needed.[32]

Competition between denominations also led to church building. 'Even in religious matters,' it was said at the opening of one northern chapel in 1863, 'we are none of us the worse for a little wholesome and salutary competition'. Denominations kept an eye on their market share, and it was not unknown for them to move into an area to pre-empt potential competitors. Internal

Fig. 13 St Paul's church, built 1851–3 in the expanding suburb of Fisherton (T. H. Wyatt; north aisle added 1876).
Top right, the church in about 1860, standing next to the toll house.
Bottom right, the same view today.
Below, a poster in the railway station car park, advertising the church as being 'next to the roundabout'.

competition might also generate new buildings, with congregations splitting to go their seperate ways.[33]

However, all this was happening at a time when the *proportion* of the population attending church was starting to drop, perhaps coupled with less frequent attendance by individual churchgoers. For a few decades, population growth more than matched this decreasing proportion, so the total *number* of people in church each Sunday increased until (probably) the final decades of the nineteenth century, or perhaps a little later. The number of attendees then started to decline and this has continued ever since. (The Roman Catholic decline in absolute numbers attending started much later, probably in the 1960s.) The Victorians overdid their church building, and left us with a problem.[34]

Central Salisbury

We can see these general trends working themselves out in Salisbury. In 1852, the year after the census, the ancient parish church of St Clement's, Fisherton closed and was pulled down: it had become too small for the fast-growing suburb. A new church, St Paul's, was built (Fig. 13). This church became strongly evangelical in the 1860s, and remains so today, an example of continuity of churchmanship over 150 years.[35]

Fig. 14 Emmanuel church, Wilton Road. Built by the Wesleyan Methodists (1860). Left, the exterior, described by Pevsner as 'debased Italianate'. Note the school room projecting from the rear of the building. Below, the galleried interior.

In 1860 the Wesleyan Methodists in Mill Road close to the station built themselves a smart new chapel a few hundred yards away in Wilton Road (Fig. 14). This building retains its gallery. The Primitive Methodists nearby in Fisherton Street responded nine years later, crossing the street to erect their new building; this cost £1,700, half of which had been raised by the time the chapel was opened (Fig. 15). As so often, there was a wealthy patron, a Mr Yates, who had 'long been a liberal and valued friend of the body'. Described as 'a neat little building in the Italian style', it seated about four hundred people, and as usual had a hall and meeting room, and a place for 'boiling water for tea meetings'. Their first chapel had been hidden away; this new one was visible to all.[36]

The building was to have an interesting life. After use as a chapel for nearly fifty years, the Methodists decided to build themselves a new 450-seater Gothic chapel in Dews Road (Fig. 16). The Trustees of the old chapel sold it to a local cinema entrepreneur 'on the understanding that he is going to convert them [the premises] into a motor garage'. They were less than amused when the building was in fact converted to a 'Picture House' showing silent movies, the purchaser demolishing the original front of the chapel, and pushing a new and not entirely restrained frontage over the forecourt. Later, as the Playhouse, the building became the city's much-loved theatre, until replaced in 1976.[37]

To return to nineteenth-century Fisherton, also in 1860 a group of Christian Brethren opened a meeting house near the railway station (now gone). Then in 1875 a group of Baptists who had seceded from the Brown Street church built a chapel in what is now Cranebridge Road. Their cause faded away before the end

Fig. 15 The Primitive Methodist chapel of 1869, on the north side of Fisherton Street. This later became the Playhouse.

Fig. 16 The Elim church in Dews Road, built by the Primitive Methodists in 1915. The buildings to the right have recently been acquired by the church, and have been developed as a community centre, including a sports hall shown in the photograph below.

of the century, but the building, after reincarnation as a furniture repository, was not demolished until 1971.[38]

In central Salisbury the Wesleyan Methodists suffered a split in 1852, part of a national tearing apart. There were speeches and meetings, and the budding off of a separate congregation, who

Fig. 17 The Chapel Nightclub in Milford Street, built by the Reformed Methodists and later used by the Elim church (W. H. Dinsley, 1897).

proceeded to build a chapel in Milford Street. It held 800 people, but had poor lighting, poor acoustics and poor ventilation, so a new building was put up in 1897, holding 450 people, with a school hall and seven other rooms. This is now the Chapel Nightclub (Fig. 17).

In a reverse move, the two Congregational groups who had separated at the beginning of the century over Samuel Sleigh's calling re-merged in 1860. According to one account, the Endless Street congregation were facing difficulties, including an outstanding mortgage.[39] The combined congregations moved to the Endless Street building, which was refronted; their other chapel, in Scots lane, was kept on for the time being as Sunday School rooms, and later for use as a British Day School.

In 1879 this merged congregation built an impressive new chapel to seat 650 people in Fisherton Street. Later a lecture hall and school rooms were built. This was the first nonconformist building in Salisbury to be built in the Gothic style, and is of notably high quality, with a spire which dominates the entrance to the town from the railway station along Fisherton Street (Fig. 18).[40] Whether consciously or no, the Congregationalists announced their presence in a way which not only marked their position at the top of the nonconformist pecking order, but matched anything offered by the Anglicans.[40]

It took them some fourteen years to clear the debt. To help pay for the new building they quickly sold their Endless Street chapel, and this was later used as the first Salisbury Free Library, and probably lies behind the façade of the present Royal British Legion building.[41]

Fig. 18 The United Reformed church in Fisherton Street.
Margin top, built in 1879 (Tarring & Wilkinson), the building dominates the approach to the town along Fisherton Street.
Bottom left, the exterior in 1969 before a change to the entrance arrangements, shown in the lower margin illustation.
Bottom right, the interior in 1977 before the insertion of an upper storey.

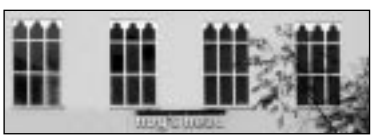

Fig. 19 Top, St Mary Magdalene, Gigant Street (1880) shortly before demolition in the 1990s. The porch is not original. There are few photographs of Salisbury's 'tin tabernacles'. Middle three, the Maundrel Hall (1880). Above the stage was an organ. The Hall is now the Hog's Head public house. The building behind the Hall was a Temperance Hotel. Bottom, Barnard Street church (1876). Note that all these buildings have 'gothic' windows.

Later their old Scots Lane meeting house was also sold, and this was acquired (complete with chairs, heating stoves and gas brackets) by Edward Ware, one of the leaders and effectively a patron of an Open Brethren group who until then had been worshipping in an iron mission hut in Guilder Lane. Looking ahead, although thirty years later the Brethren left the Scots Lane building and moved into rented accommodation, this old hall was to be used by one more church, for in 1932 the Elim Pentecostals, then relatively new to the city, took it over as the Elim Four Square Gospel Hall: new wine in an old wineskin. They moved out of the building in the late 1950s, and it was finally pulled down in 1960, after two centuries of intermittent use as a nonconformist meeting house.[42]

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century several working men's mission rooms were set up. St Edmund's erected an iron building at the east end of Winchester Street, where the bypass now is. St Martin's bought the iron building in Guilder Lane, and re-erected it at the southern end of the Friary, a rough area, and also put up a tin chapel-of-ease in Gigant Street, dedicated to St Mary Magdalene (Fig. 19). These three have now gone. In 1876 there was ecumenical co-operation when five of the free churches and St Paul's, Fisherton built a mission chapel in Barnard Street, mainly but not entirely for children. This building continues as a church today, having been bought in 1929 by the Open Brethren. St Paul's also built the Maundrel Hall alongside Fisherton Bridge, a building which is now open to the public as the Hog's Head public house. All of this represented a determined effort to reach out to the working class.[43]

Meanwhile, the Salvation Army arrived. It was in Salisbury market-place in 1879 that the drawing power of a brass band was first discovered – in this case, two cornets, a euphonium and a valve trombone, played by Charles Fry and his sons Fred, Ernest and Bert. The Army met considerable resistance: at one stage its street marches were pelted with eggs and tomatoes by a crowd of a thousand, organised by the Society for the Suppression of Street Parading (probably a front for the city's innkeepers). The city authorities forbade the Army to meet, and 60 special constables were appointed to deal with unrest. But the Army stuck to their guns, and in 1883 acquired the old Salt Lane meeting rooms (Fig. 7). As we have seen, this was the original eighteenth-century Presbyterian building, the first nonconformist building in Salisbury, which had later been acquired by the Methodists as a school room. The Army is still there today.[44]

Since our last snapshot in 1851, central Salisbury and its Fisherton suburb have seen the replacement of one parish church, and acquired one chapel-of-ease, four mission rooms, and a net

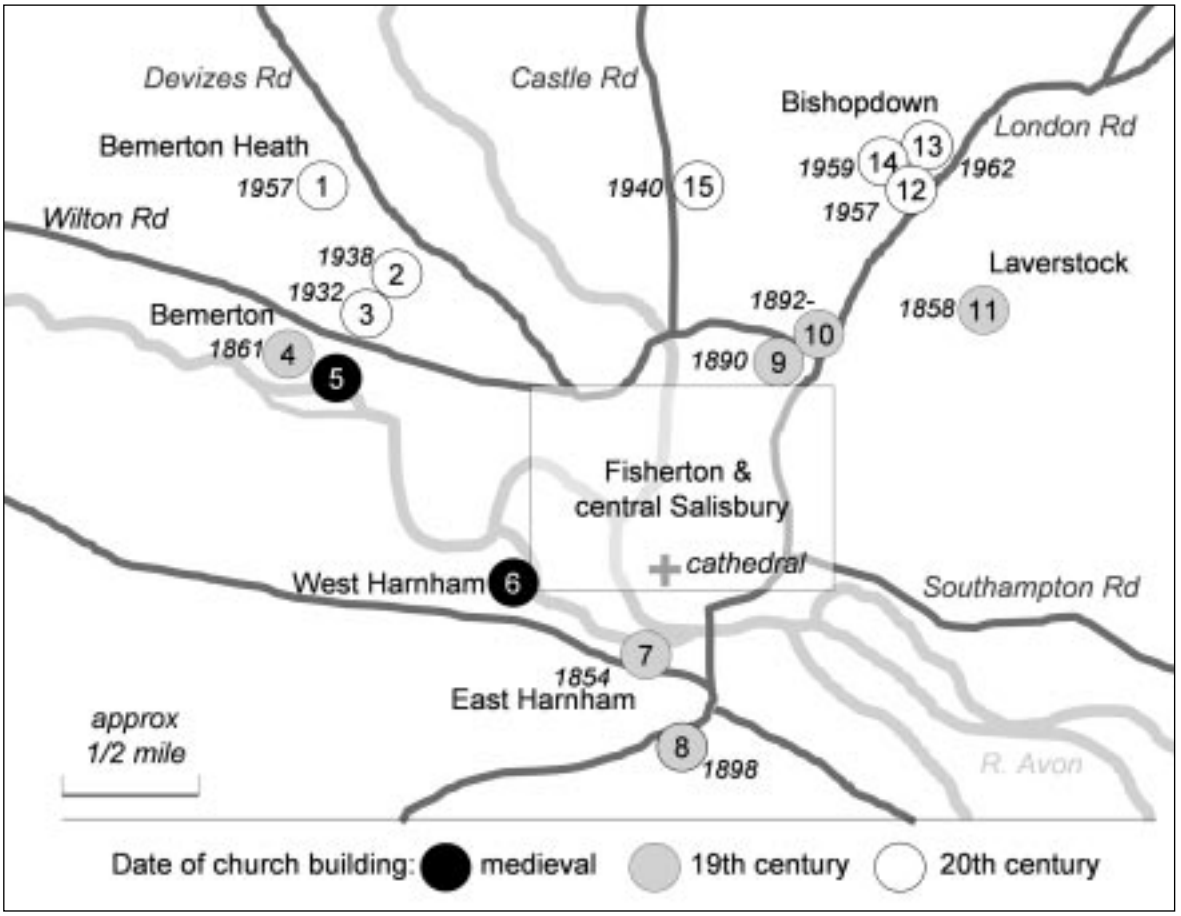

Fig. 20 Churches and chapels outside the centre of Salisbury. Those marked in black are medieval, those in grey nineteenth-century, those of the twentieth-century in white. The demolished Methodist church in Harnham is not shown.

Anglican and Catholic buildings with dedications:
All Saints, East Harnham, 7; The Most Holy Redeemer, Bishopdown, 13; St Andrew, Bemerton, 5; St Andrew, Laverstock, 11; St Francis, 15; St George, West Harnham, 6; St Gregory, Bemerton, 2; St John, Bemerton, 4; St Mark, 10; St Michael, Bemerton Heath, 1.

Other buildings, in numerical order:
Bemerton Methodist, 3; Harnham Free Church (in nineteenth-century workhouse chapel), 8; Primitive Methodist (now Kingdom Hall), 9; Barrington Centre (dual-purpose hall, run by St Mark's), 12; Bishopdown Baptist, 14.

increase of three nonconformist chapels (from four to seven). In addition, the Roman Catholics have expanded St Osmund's church by adding a north aisle and chapel. There has, however, been substantial loss of seating when the parish churches took down their galleries. During this period, the number of people who can be accommodated for worship in central Salisbury and Fisherton has increased by an estimated one thousand. This is the high-water mark of church provision in central Salisbury.[45]

Alongside space for Sunday worship was the provision of rooms and halls for Sunday Schools and other activities. To take one example, in 1882 the Brown Street Baptists had 24 rooms for

Fig. 21 Top, St Andrew's, Bemerton, one of George Herbert's churches. Bottom, the exterior and interior of St John's, Bemerton (T. H. Wyatt, 1860–61).

Sunday School pupils, with more than 400 on the roll. Typically such rooms and halls are attached to nonconformist chapels, but detached from Anglican ones.[46] They play an important role in contemporary life – more than a third of Salisbury's halls for hire belong to churches and chapels, and the proportion is higher in the centre of the city.[47]

The nearby villages

It was not until the twentieth century that Salisbury sprawled over the surrounding villages – Laverstock to the east, Harnham to the south, Bemerton to the west (Fig. 20). Yet in the 1850s, well before suburbanisation, there was extensive church building in these villages. At Laverstock the old church was pulled down and replaced by a larger building in 1858, and two Anglican churches were built on completely new sites, at East Harnham (1854) and Bemerton (1861). The architect for all three buildings was T. H. Wyatt. This raised the number of Anglican churches in these villages from three to five.[48]

The two latter buildings were both 'gift' churches, paid for by rich donors. Were they fulfilling a personal vision, rather than meeting an established need? Did they over-provide? It is noteworthy that the nonconformists, who had to finance themselves, seem not to have had free-standing chapels in these villages until mid twentieth-century suburbanisation.[49]

Bemerton village now has two churches (Fig. 21). St John's, the Victorian one, is of high quality, and is blessed with a nearby car park. But the church is large for today's needs. The medieval building, St Andrew's, is tiny and of no particular architectural value. But it is much visited for its association with George Herbert who was parish priest there for three years until his death in 1633. He is famous for his evocation of the role of the country parson, the shepherd of his flock and spiritual father to each member of his parish. However, this may have been easier for him than for a modern-day parson, as he had a mere 200 parishioners to care for and a curate to help.[50]

The city expands to the north

In 1871 Wyndham Park, to the immediate north of the city, was sold as green land for development and within twenty years 750 houses had been built. The Primitive Methodists responded by building a chapel to seat about 200 people. After later being taken over by Christian Scientists this is now a Kingdom Hall for Jehovah's Witnesses.[51]

St Martin's, in whose parish the area lay, also took action to meet the growing need. They set up a house meeting and followed this with an iron church. By 1890 a modest permanent

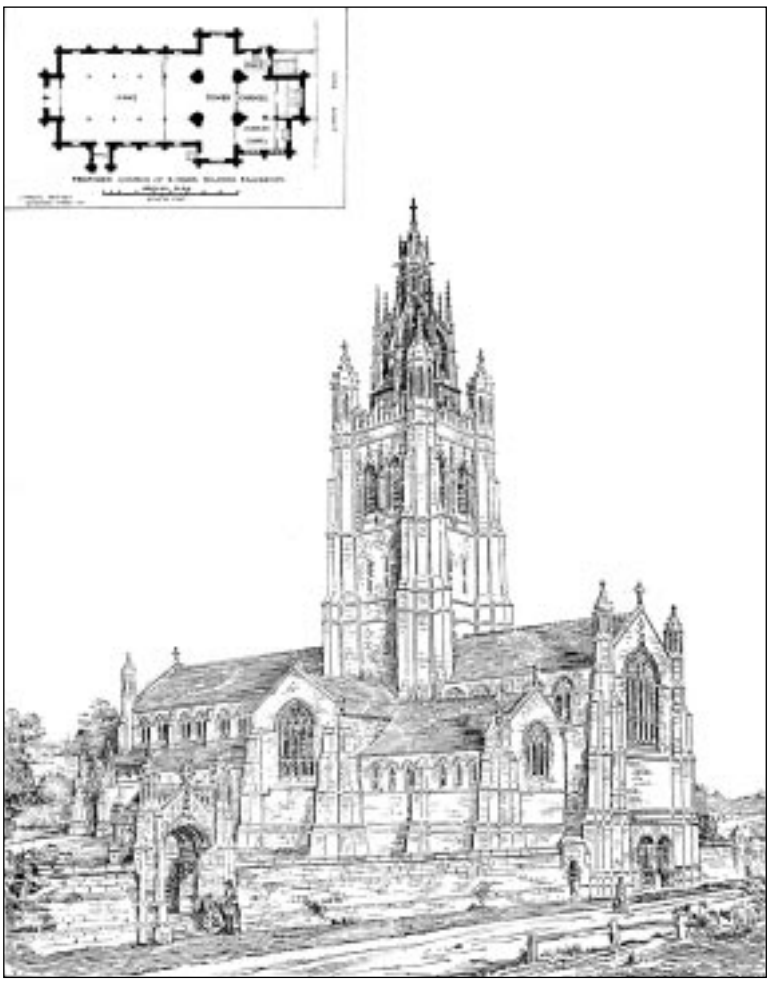

Fig. 22 The east end of St Mark's church as it was intended to be seen from the London Road (drawing of 1892; architect J. A. Reeve). The bishop wanted a 'magnificent' church.

church was being considered by a local committee, when Bishop Wordsworth, who 'wished to have a church erected worthy of the age in which we live', imposed himself as Chairman ('I ask to join the Building Committee ... the meeting will take place at the Bishop's Palace') and brought in important folk from outside the parish. He wanted 'a magnificent church at the London Road entry, which will rank architecturally with any of the fine churches in this Cathedral City'. Perhaps the Congregational church and its dominating spire in Fisherton Street had rankled. And there had been a long-running row with the nonconformists about schooling in the city, in which an ill-judged remark by the Bishop had recently been subject to press ridicule. The Bishop was also well aware that this was the first new Anglican church in the (expanding) city for more than 600 years.[52]

A 'magnificent' church was indeed commissioned (Fig. 22), though with some grumbling that it was too ambitious, and the dedication stone was laid by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The

Fig. 23 St Mark's church as built, without tower or spire. The nave was completed in 1915 after a two-phase building campaign (photograph of 1962).

grumblers had their day, as St Mark's eventually cost twice the estimated £7,000, and left the parish in debt for more than twenty years. Even so the dominating tower and spire were never built (Fig. 23). No doubt the Congregationalists in Fisherton Street, sitting in their splendid yet debt-free building with its landmark spire, were suitably sympathetic.[53]

St Mark's is a large building, the grand and formal architecture a reminder of how both the social order and approaches to worship have changed in the last century (Figs. 24, 25). Its size makes it expensive: the roof has recently needed work, and the replacement heating system has just cost the congregation nearly £80,000. Remarkably for a congregation of about one hundred people, they have also donated a similar amount to charities working in the Sudan, under their voluntary 'fifty-fifty' fund-raising scheme. Unfortunately, although Bishop Wordsworth foresaw that the city would be expanding even further northwards, he did not allow for the advent of the motor car, and his landmark church has no car park, a significant restriction in its use for large events.

After St Mark's, it was nearly forty years before any more new churches or chapels were planted in Salisbury. The church-building boom was over. The twentieth century was to be rather different.[54]

Fig. 24 St Mark's, looking east along the south aisle

Fig. 25 St Mark's church interior looking east, after Sunday morning service. The church was reordered in the 1980s, and an altar introduced under the tower.

4. The twentieth and twenty-first century

Suburbs and centre

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the population of the city much more than doubled as the suburbs spread, though parts of the centre saw some falling off in their population. On the other hand the proportion of people attending church was dropping. A further complicating factor is that the city is small enough to allow people with cars to travel in for worship to the church of their choice.[55]

The results are complex. In summary although the first half of the twentieth century saw the closure of the mission chapels in the centre of the city, there was enough confidence for new churches of some size to be erected in the suburbs. In contrast, the second half of the century saw a general drawing in of horns, especially from the 1960s (though this was not true of the Roman Catholics). During this period there was a sharp reduction in seating capacity in the centre, whilst in the suburbs the traditional method of church-planting – build a hall and follow it with a 'proper' church later – seems to have got stuck at stage one, and the most recent housing estate has no church buildings at all. On the other hand, a number of 'New Church' groups have started to meet in rented buildings, with no plan to possess their own building.[56]

In the 1930s there was extensive house-building on the high open ground above Bemerton. The newly-merged Methodists built a chapel there on a good-sized plot of land, and the Roman Catholics followed suit, with the church of St Gregory and the English Martyrs (Fig. 26). Despite the increase in population, this was the first new Catholic church in Salisbury for eighty years, reflecting the fact that Catholic buildings are worked hard, with many services per church. Indeed, although nationally the Roman Catholic Church has about the same number of worshippers as

Fig. 26 Top, the Methodist church at Bemerton (1932), on a large plot of land stretching through to the next road. Gothic remains the preferred style. Below, the Roman Catholic church of St Gregory and the English Martyrs, Bemerton(1938). 'Modernised Romanesque with a concrete roof' (VCH).

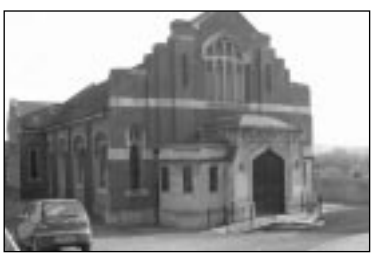

Fig. 27 The church of St Michael and All Angels, Bemerton Heath (Nugent Cachemaille-Day, 1957). Below, the Resurrection, by Kate Parbary, on the east end of the apse.

the Church of England, it only has about one fifth as many buildings.[57]

In 1933 the Church of England built a mission hall and later, on gifted land, put up a church by the noted architect Nugent Cachemaille-Day (St Michael and All Angels, 1957). Although relatively small, the church stands proudly on a hilltop, and internally creates an effective and intriguing space (Figs. 27, 28). The ground plan, however, is entirely conventional for its period, designed with a processional choir in mind. Times change: there is now no choir and no processing, but the top-lit chancel, with choir-stalls removed, makes an ideal platform for this informal family church. The church has a small car park, and a range of ancillary buildings, though most are now occupied by a local charity giving direct help to those in need.[58]

To the north, another fine Anglican building was erected in what had been more or less open fields. This is the church of St Francis, consecrated in 1940, the congregation following the traditional route of first meeting in a tin hut. Externally there is fine detailing (Fig. 29); internally some aspects of the planning are

Fig. 28 The interior of St Michael and All Angels, before Sunday morning service. A simple but effective interior. Below, looking upward and eastwards into the toplit tower. Behind the altar are boxes of toys collected for East European orphans. Bottom left, looking north-east across the open altar platform under the tower. Bottom right, looking west.

Fig. 29 The church of St Francis. (Robert Potter, 1936–9) Left, from the south-west, showing the apse, window-less aisles, and top-lit nave (Robert Potter, 1936–9). Below, a painting of the church imagined in its original surroundings, and detailing of the high-quality brick work where the nave joins the apse.

imaginative (Fig. 30). There is a car park, and a largish plot of land with various halls and meeting rooms, an important local facility. This congregation is at present (November 2006) spending four hundred thousand pounds to repair the roof, reorder the nave, and add a kitchen at the back of the church. At the same time they are donating ten percent of the money they have raised to build a a school in the Sudan.

In the 1950s and 1960s the city surged further north-east to Bishopdown. The Brown Street Baptists and St Mark's each built a dual-purpose hall, and the Roman Catholics put up a church and presbytery (Fig. 31), these three buildings facing each other from the corners of a triangular sports field (ecumenical cooperation in such matters then being in its infancy). It is notable that after a good start, the two halls have not led to more substantial buildings; perhaps the younger local worshippers in the area are prepared to drive to established churches of their choice. The Catholic building, the church of the Most Holy Redeemer (1962), was the last new church to be built in Salisbury; at this period and for the next thirty years the Catholic Church

Fig. 30 The interior of St Francis before the current reordering. Bottom left, looking east. Note the twin pulpits, and the unusual arrangement of the east end, with the Lady Chapel in the apse above the parish room. Bottom right, looking west, a split organ either side of the tall west window.

Fig. 31 The Roman Catholic church of the Most Holy Redeemer at Bishopdown (1962), seen across the playing field.

nationally was building quite extensively. Another housing estate has since been put up even further north at Bishopdown Farm, but there are no church buildings there.[59]

In the 1950s, the various Methodist congregations in the centre began a period of consolidation and centralisation, and by 1987 all of them had merged and were worshipping at St Edmund's Church Street.[60]

The Methodists thus vacated four buildings. That at Harnham was pulled down for redevelopment. The Wilton Road building was taken over by Emmanuel church, a Reformed Baptist congregation then meeting in a hall nearby. They have inserted a baptistery into the building.[61] The Milford Street chapel was taken over by the Elim Pentecostals, but they moved out a generation later, when the Dews Road building became available, and the Milford Street chapel then lay unused and mouldering for a number of years. There was a plan for it to be dismantled, and rebuilt at Pangbourne College as a memorial to those who died in the Falklands conflict, but this fell through and finally it was converted to the Chapel Nightclub.[62]

Following a report in 1972, the Anglican churches in the city also cut back, by closing St Edmund's church. It became a successful Arts Centre (Fig. 32), and the building was recently restored and enlarged. There was some dismay early in 2006 when the Local Authority threatened to cut its grant; although the proposal was later withdrawn, it is a reminder of the relatively uncertain future faced by some redundant church buildings. One proposal in the 1972 report which was not taken forward was to replace St Paul's by a smaller, possibly ecumenical, building. As St Paul's is now bursting at the seams, this does emphasise how hard it is to do strategic planning for churches.[63]

Fig. 32 A book of recipes, published soon after St Edmund's became an Arts Centre.

In the one hundred and ten years since our last snapshot (1895), the city has expanded its boundaries and has more than doubled its population, from 17,000 to about 40,000, an increase of 23,000 people. The centre has lost one Anglican church, three nonconformist meeting places, and all but one of its mission chapels. With the other changes discussed later, seating in the centre has dropped by much more than a half, down from an estimated 8,700 to less than 4,000 (Fig. 12).[64]

In the suburbs, the city has gained eight buildings: two Catholic churches, two Anglican churches, two nonconformist chapels, and two dual-purpose halls. These buildings, relatively modest in size and probably not seating more than 2,000 people between them, were built to provide for the spiritual needs of the additional 23,000 people. It is a far cry from Mann's certitudes of 1851, which would have demanded six of seven times this increase in seating space.

Although our focus is on buildings, we must not overlook the so-called 'New Churches', deliberately worshipping in hired premises. There are at least four in Salisbury, all of them part of national or international groupings. In fifty years time, will these churches have acquired their own buildings, fed up with restricted availability, the lack of storage space, and the need constantly to rearrange furniture? Maybe: they would be following an honourable tradition. Already they seem to be acquiring offices.[65] Or will we see the opposite? – old, established congregations leaving their listed buildings for others to worry about, and finding the freedom which comes with having no responsibility for historic fabric?

Fig. 33 The nave altar at St Thomas's, the carpet leading the eye to the high altar beyond.

The buildings in use today

In this final snapshot of the churches and chapels today, let us zoom in to some of the central churches. The Anglicans in the centre of the city are offering a range of choices. To the west is St Paul's, Fisherton, an open evangelical church. The building has been re-ordered in a style typical for this type of churchmanship, with chairs fanning out from a chancel platform (Fig. 34). In the centre, both metaphorically and physically, is St Thomas's, the 'city church'. This has a nave altar (Fig. 33) – a common arrangement for those of central churchmanship, befitting a church where worship is shaped by a historic but developing Anglican liturgy. To the east is St Martin's, with worship in the Anglo-Catholic

Fig. 34 St Paul's church, Fisherton, view from the roof showing reordered interior, with chairs fanning out from the platform.

Fig. 35 The medieval chancel of St Martin's, the 'oldest space' in Salisbury, showing the new marble altar and hanging pyx (designed by David Gazeley of Watts & Co., architect Anthony Feltham-King of Michael Drury Architects). The altar won the 2006 President's Award of the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association. The rood screen is of 1919, by C. E. Ponting.

tradition, where a new marble altar was dedicated in April 2006 (Fig. 35): surrounded by clear space in the chancel, with hanging pyx above, it makes a powerful statement about the meaning of the Eucharist for this worshipping community.

Many of the nonconformist groups in the centre have radically altered the interior of their buildings by partitioning them into smaller spaces. The United Reformed church was first, in 1978. They lowered the floor and inserted a new storey, providing a room for worship on the upper storey, and widely-used meeting rooms and a hall below.[66] It would be generous to describe the new interior as architecturally sensitive, but these days it is better understood how difficult it is to pull off this type of two-storey adaptation – indeed one denomination (the Methodist church) now actively discourages such changes to their chapels.[67]

The Baptist church has also put the worship space on the upper floor. In design terms, this is more successful, perhaps made easier by the lack of pillars or an 'east' window in the original building (Fig. 36). In line with Baptist principles, the apse has been used to provide defining space around the preacher, rather than highlight the communion table. The downstairs rooms include a café area, and are used for a range of purposes, including community counselling.

A second type of conversion is to introduce a vertical partition at the back of the church, to divide off space. Often the

Fig. 36 Two nonconformist interiors. Top left, Brown Street Baptist church before the changes of 1989 (date of photo unknown, but before 1935). Top right, the worship area in the same church today, in the upper storey. Note the baptismal pool in the far corner, the fourth on this site. Bottom left, the Methodist church in St Edmund's Church Street, as it was before reordering in the early 1990s (photograph of 1968). Note the open cast-iron front to the gallery, of 1870. Bottom right, the same space today. The tapestry is on the wall previously occupied by the organ. The organ is now in a 'west' gallery above the head of the photographer. The space is flexible, and a variety of layouts are used for different occasions.

partitioned area at the back will have a room above. An example is the Dew's Road Pentecostal church. Here the remaining worship area includes the shallow transepts, so that there is now a feeling of width in the congregational seating, with no-one too far from the front. The partitioned area provides offices upstairs, rented out to a local charity, and the space underneath is used as entrance and coffee lounge. This church is notable because it has been acquiring ancillary buildings, not disposing of them, and has recently converted a neighbouring warehouse to provide a modern sports hall and meeting rooms (Fig. 16).[68]

A third way to convert a chapel is to strip it out and start again, as in the Methodist church. Except for the gallery at the 'west', the old galleries have gone, though their panelled backs have been retained (Fig. 36). The worship area has been turned through ninety degrees, creating a room full of space and light. The area underneath the west gallery is screened off to provide a place for coffee, open to the public every morning. There are various meeting rooms and a hall, all recently refurbished and extensively used.

Overall, church buildings today present a more welcoming face, with glass doors and foyers. They are physically warmer than they used to be. Chairs have often replaced pews and benches. Distant east end altars have been disappearing from Anglican and





Fig. 37 Examples of refreshment facilities. From the top: St Thomas's (open to the public on Saturdays), St Martin's, St Mark's, St Michael's, the Methodist church (open to the public each morning).

Roman Catholic churches, and high and lofty pulpits from nonconformist ones. Pipe organs and choirs and hymn books have also been in retreat; and bands and singing groups and projection screens have been replacing them. Corporate worship is now followed with fellowship over coffee, and although this is not always easy to accommodate in old buildings designed for a different purpose, virtually every church in Salisbury has made a space for refreshments (Fig 37).

The churches today have had to adapt: they can no longer rely on regular church-attendance being 'amongst the recognised proprieties of life'. What, then, is the level of current attendance?

Attendance in 2006

About 4,000 people attended church in central Salisbury and Fisherton on Sunday morning in March 1851, from a population of approximately 11,500. Today, some one hundred and fifty years later, the total number going to church on a given Sunday over the whole city is a few hundred less, but is drawn from a population some three and a half times larger, at about 40,000.[69] Approximately 9% of the Salisbury population are in church, chapel or cathedral on any given Sunday. This is somewhat higher than the national average. (As discussed earlier, this understates commitment, because not all church-goers attend church every Sunday).[70]

On Sunday, the churches in the centre are (on average) about fifty percent full. This is much the same as in 1851 as capacity has been drastically cut since then. Many of them attract worshippers from the suburbs and further afield, so churches on the periphery tend not to be so full.

Over the past one hundred years, church attendance has been trending down, and if this were to continue it is unlikely that Salisbury would be immune. This would put some of Salisbury's church buildings under pressure. Perhaps some already are, though the general level of threat seems less acute than in some other urban areas. Would the loss of buildings matter? Who would mind if Salisbury's churches and chapel buildings disappeared?

5. Keeping what matters

We know that in general people do value their local church buildings, and for a variety of reasons.[71] But how – if at all – should this be translated into action?

As we have seen, the story of churches and chapels in central Salisbury is one of continual gain and loss (see Fig. 6). There are many ghosts in the city centre. Nonconformists have moved around. Anglicans have opened and closed buildings. There can be no point in time at which it is obvious that from then on, everything should be kept. Preservation means choice.

Fig. 38 How Milford Street chapel might have looked if it had been transported to Pangbourne College as the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel. In the event a brand new Memorial Chapel was built, of stunning design. (Oil painting by Penelope Douglas, private collection).

And here we hit the nub of the problem. Whose choice? What has any of this to do with the non-church-going Salisbury citizen, who may like the buildings, but does not pay for them? Why should the future of these buildings not be entirely driven by the volunteers (congregations) who put their hands in their pockets?

At the moment, public concern for the preservation of the buildings is spoken for mainly through the statutory 'listing' of the most important examples.[72] But listing is imperfect in its coverage, with large gaps, especially for nonconformist and Roman Catholic buildings.[73] And although listing does confer eligibility for VAT refunds on many repairs, and allows entry into an annual competition for grants for certain repairs, it does not of itself ensure that congregations are *able* to look after their churches or maintain them for public use.[74]

An example is the chapel in Milford Street (Fig. 17). The Grade II listing description refers to its 'fine interior'. But that did not prevent the building being closed for worship in the late 80s.

Fig. 39 Recent pictures of the interior of the Chapel nightclub in Milford Street. Considerable care has gone into preserving and restoring the interior. Bottom left, the organ and the pulpit. The pulpit is now the DJ's rostrum, and there are railed dancing podia on either side.

Bottom right, looking over the DJ's rostrum to the body of the building, showing gallery, pews and dance floor. The central area has been cleared of pews; the remaining pews have been alternately reversed, to provide seating areas.

Fig. 40 The Chapel Nightclub in use.

Fig. 41 Sign outside Emmanuel church, Wilton Road.

Fig. 42 Forthcoming events open to the public shown on the Methodist church notice board.

It then came close to being moved lock, stock and barrel to Pangbourne College as a war memorial chapel – a drastic form of preservation – but was finally put up for sale at open auction. Being listed provided protection, and the owner of what is now the Chapel Nightclub has taken considerable care to restore and maintain the interior, and the organ, pulpit, gallery and many of the pews remain in place (Figs. 38, 39). Dancing of an energetic character takes place many nights of the week in a cleared area in the centre of the chapel, the whole space being appropriately lit and decorated. The space is popular with customers. The venue is also used from time to time for quieter events, including training courses. Thus although no longer used for worship, the interior has been preserved, with an owner who cares about it, in a context which appears to be commercially sustainable. Does it matter that much of its current use might be thought to go against the grain of the building (Fig. 40)?[75]

Listing is not intended to capture all aspects of the value which the general public place on church buildings in towns. For example, the frontage of the nonconformist (Emmanuel) building in Wilton Road figures heavily in the listing description (Grade II), and rightly so (Fig. 14). Yet the church's public provision of a hall for a mothers and toddlers group and similar activities may also be worth preserving (Fig. 41).

Again, how much would St Michael's, Bemerton Heath (Figs. 27, 28) be missed for the sense of place it gives, high on a downland rise, probably valued even by those who have never been inside? Yet it is not listed. And which of the two other Bemerton churches are more important to the general public? – the tiny St Andrew's, with its Herbert associations, and steady flow of visitors? or the somewhat-too-large St John's, a fine building by a competent architect, and popular for weddings (Fig. 21). Both are listed at the same high grade (Grade B). St John's has needed expensive repairs in the recent past, and has in the past been considered for closure; and St Michael's has a long-standing problem with its brickwork, not yet fully sorted out. Whatever importance is notionally attached to these three Bemerton buildings by the general public, the fact remains that just ninety people have signed up to take full financial responsibility for them.[76]

We have to ask, what aspect of their churches and chapels is it that the citizens of Salisbury – and not just Salisbury, but town and city dwellers in general – might wish to act to preserve? Is it the contribution to the streetscape and the monumentality of the buildings? the embedded history? the sense of place? the community aspects of the work centred on the buildings? the public space? the values implied by the presence of religious

amongst secular buildings? the ability to enjoy fine architecture in its original state? rooms and halls for hire (Fig.42)? places for rites of passage and civic ceremonies and carol services? the signs of continuity? the tourism value (Fig. 43)?

Salisbury shows that we need a debate to clarify what is valued about urban church buildings, and how best to shape the future of those we set store by. Perhaps we will need fresh forms of local engagement between citizens and church congregations, defining shared responsibilities, and putting new partnerships in place. As patterns of church-going change, we must take care not to lose treasured buildings by accident. Surely we too must show ourselves to be 'worthy of the age in which we live'?

Fig. 43 Sign pointing to St Thomas's. What is it we value about our urban churches and chapels? How should this be translated into action? This church is currently spending some tens of thousands of pounds on a new roof for the south aisle. Who should pay?

Acknowledgments

The views expressed here are my own, not those of the Ecclesiological Society. The faults are mine also and I welcome corrections. I am grateful to Sarah Brown, Thomas Cocke, John Elliott, and Christopher Wakeling for discussions on various points in this paper, and for advice and help received from Anthony Hudson (previously Headmaster of Pangbourne College), Tony Whale of the Chapel Nightclub, Bruce Purvis of the Salisbury Reference Library, Paul Connell of the Wiltshire Local Studies Library, and Martyn Henderson and his colleagues in the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office. I have also received both information and kindness from members of many of the churches discussed here. Except where stated below, the photographs are my own.

I am grateful to the following for permission to reproduce illustrations (Fig. numbers shown in brackets): the British Library (5); the Chapel Nightclub (39a & b, 40); Elim church (Dews Road) (16b); Incorporated Church Building Society (22); Michael Drury Architects (35a); National Monuments Record (1, 3, 4b, 7b, 18b & c, 36a); St Edmund's Arts Centre (4c); St Francis's church (30a & b); St Martin's church (35b); St Paul's church, Fisherton (34); Salisbury Baptist church (Brown Street) (36a); Salisbury Museum (13); Salisbury Reference Library (9a, 15, 32); Swindon and Wiltshire Record Office (4a, 19a, b, & c, 29b); University of London (23); Wiltshire Local Studies Library (2, 4d, 11, 29a).

Notes

1 Constraints of time mean I have largely relied on secondary sources. There is significant primary material which I have not inspected, and I am also uneasily aware that I have not taken full account of relationships between the different denominations and congregations, the impact of individual clergy, the wider political and social context, the symbiosis between school and church, and the various ways in which church premises were used. I have excluded chapels in almshouses and other institutions, and have restricted discussion to those Christian denominations accepting the Trinitarian formula, thus excluding the Spiritualist Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Church of Christ, Scientist, the Swedenborgians, and the Christadelphians. Of the

other Abramic religions, there has never been a synagogue in Salisbury; there is a Muslim centre above a shop on Wilton Road. I have not explored the buildings of other world faiths. There seem not to be many comparable studies of the churches and chapels of a single urban area from the beginning to the present, but see the excellent account of Sheffield in E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (1957) (though Robin Gill, *The 'Empty' Church Revisited* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 24–5 and *passim* has challenged the general applicability of Wickham's thesis, that there was under-provision of church seating). English Heritage have studied (or are studying) the historic and current places of worship of all faiths in Liverpool, Leeds and Tower Hamlets and a short booklet is due to be published summarising the results for the first of these two; they plan to carry out a similar study in Coventry (personal communication). See also John Beever, *A History of Oldham Churches* (Manchester, 1996), and the relevant chapter in W. J. Lewis, *Born on a Perilous Rock: Aberystwyth Past and Present* (Aberystwyth, 1980) (not seen by me); I am grateful to Christopher Wakeling for the latter two references.

2 For non-contentious statements, and those easily found in the Victoria County History or the two works published by the RCHME listed below, I have not normally troubled to give detailed references. For a general history of Salisbury, I used (and very much enjoyed) John Chandler's excellent *Endless Street: a History of Salisbury and its People* (Salisbury, 1983); for religious and parish history two volumes of the *Victoria County History*: *A History of the County of Wiltshire* (henceforth *VCH*), volumes III (eds. R. B. Pugh and E. Crittall, 1956) pp. 28–149, 385–9, and VI (ed. E. Crittall, 1962), esp. pp. 37-50, 79–84, 144–68, 189–93 (the latter volume being fully and the former partly available online (Nov 2006) at <www.british-history.ac.uk/>); for architectural history, RCHME, *Ancient and Historical Monuments in the City of Salisbury: Volume I* (HMSO, 1980), esp. pp. i–x, 24–46 (henceforth *RCHME*); Christopher Stell, *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-houses in South-West England* (RCHME, 1991); and Nikolaus Pevsner (rev. Bridget Cherry), *The Buildings of England: Wiltshire* (Harmondsworth, 1975). The community history pages of Wiltshire County Council website have proved useful: <www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/>. I have used the following studies of individual buildings, all published in Salisbury; copies are held by the Salisbury Reference Library: Anon. [George Abel], *A History of the Presbyterian Congregational United Reformed Church in Salisbury, 1662–1978* (n.d. [1978]); Anon. [Davida Bull], *A Short History of Methodism in Salisbury* (n.d. [*c.*1988]); Anon. [Albert Dent], *Barnard Street Church, Barnard Street, Salisbury* (n.d. [*c.*1987]); Margaret King, *The Church and the Chequers* (n.d. [*c.*1974]), (dealing with St Edmund's); G. A. Moore & R. J. Huckle, *The Story of Salisbury Baptist Church* (2000) (not held by Salisbury Reference Library); Winifred Shuttleworth, *The People of God at St Mark's: a History of this Salisbury Parish, 1892-1992* (n.d. [*c.*1992]). The following websites of individual buildings were useful (November, 2006): the Bemerton parishes <www.churchmouse.org.uk/bemerton/>; St Edmund's (now the Salisbury Arts Centre) <www.salisburyartscentre.co.uk/>; St Francis's <www.st-francis.org.uk/>; St Martin's <www.sarumstmartin.org.uk/>; St Paul's, Fisherton <www.stpaulssalisbury.org/>; Bemerton Methodist <www.bemertonmethodist.org.uk/>; Bishopdown Baptist church <www.bishopdownbaptist church. org.uk/>; the Chapel Nightclub (in Milford Street) <www.thechapelnightclub.com/>; Elim Christian Centre, Salisbury <www.salisbury-elim.org/>; Emmanuel church <www.salisburyemmanuel.org.uk/>; Harnham Free church <www.harnhamfreechurch.org.uk/>; Salisbury Methodist church <http://website.lineone.net/~salisbury.methodist/index.htm>.

3 *VCH*, III, p. 83.

4 As well as *RCHME*, see Tim Tatton-Brown, 'The church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Salisbury', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, vol. 90 (1997), pp. 101–109.

5 H. J. F. Swayne, *Churchwardens' Accounts of S. Edmund & S. Thomas, Sarum 1443–1702, with Other Documents* (Wilts. Record Society, Salisbury, 1896).

6 Such congregational growth has been pursued by Salisbury Cathedral since at least 1971 (*Report of the Salisbury Churches Committee*, 1972, p. 4).

7 For cathedral visitor numbers, see *Faith in the Future: Our Vision*, available at <www.salisburycathedral.org.uk>; this gives a figure of 500,000 per year, which appears to be more than twice as high as that shown in Figure 4.1 of *The Economic and Social Impact of Cathedrals in England* (report commissioned by English Heritage and the Association of English Cathedrals, 2004 <www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritagecounts/2004_pdfs/CathedralsresearchHeritageCount2004.doc>); I am unable to account for the difference. For the profile of visitors to Salisbury, see the *Salisbury Destination Visitor Benchmarking Survey, 2004*, (available at <www.salisbury.gov.uk>) which suggests that only 9% of visitors are in organised groups (p. 19) but admits that the survey methodology undercounts coach parties (p. 6). Of the visitors interviewed, most of whom were independent, 32% had visited the Tourist Information Centre (p. 23). For the importance to tourists of 'historic aspects of the city', see pp. 61 and 63. See <www.visitlincolnshire.com> for details of the 'Church Tourism Cascade' from Lincoln Cathedral.

8 William Smith, *The Particular Description of England* (BL Sloane 2596 f.33).

9 Figures exclude the Cathedral Close. Communicant figures are for 1548 (Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 35–6; Swayne, *Accounts*, p. xxxvi).

10 My estimate of 1,700, was obtained by doubling the approximately 850 for whom pews were provided in a packed nave in 1838, on the basis that a standing person requires about half the space of a sitting one (1838 plan is held by the Incorporated Church Building Society, reference ICBS 01189, thumbnail viewable on <www.churchplansonline.org>). For pre-Reformation pews, see Swayne, *Accounts*, p. 357 and *passim*; Chandler, *Endless Street*, p. 199.

11 The 'single' service would have been Matins, the Litany, Ante-Communion.

12 Swayne, *Accounts*, frontispiece (reproduction of church seating plan) and pp. 205, 309, 325; T. H. Baker, *Notes on St Martin's Church and Parish* (Salisbury, 1906), p. 60.

13 Based on seating plan of St Thomas's of 1745 by John Lyons, frontispiece to Swayne, *Accounts*. I allowed eighteen inches of pew per person. The church was repewed in 1838 (ICBS 01189, viewable on <www.churchplansonline.org>).

14 It has been suggested that dissenters made up a mere 5% of the population as late as 1715 (Anthony Armstrong, *The Church of England, the Methodists and Society 1700-1850* (1973), p. 35).

15 Pamela Stewart, 'Parish life in 17th-century Salisbury', copy in Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office, 3476 serial 1/265/16.

16 Alternatively, the minister may have taken a low view of the service as no sermon was involved. See Swayne, *Accounts*, p. 153, and many entries for payment of the clerk annually until 1642 (p. 213). St Edmund's also maintained use of the houseling towel until at least 1618 and possibly 1640 (ibid., pp. 373–5). For a partisan and somewhat muddled discussion of weekday services during the post-Reformation period see C. Wordsworth, *Notes on Mediaeval Services in England* (1898), pp. 64–80; for other examples, chosen to make a point, see Vernon Staley, *Hierurgia Anglicana* (1904), vol. iii, pp. 229–42.

17 Swayne, *Accounts*, p. 238.

18 In crude terms, Unitarians reject the doctrines of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ. Many Presbyterian churches moved in the Unitarian direction during the eighteen century.

19 Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, *passim*. The remerger, which has some peculiar characteristics, was in 1860.

20 The position of the building and a crude plan is shown (as a 'Temperance Hall') on the 1881 1:500 Ordnance Survey map. Quakers returned to Salisbury in the 1920s, meeting in private, then rented, accommodation, then from 1962 in a house which they purchased in Harcourt Terrace. This has now been sold, and they presently meet at Sarum College. They have purchased and are refurbishing Kennet Lodge on the Wilton Road, which had previously been part of the old Mental Hospital (not shown on either Figs. 6 or 20 as it is not yet in use). *VCH*,

III, pp. 117–18, 126, 136; *VCH*, VI, pp. 157, 165; Baker, *St Martin's*, p. 152; J. H. Chandler (ed.), *Wiltshire Dissenters' Meeting House Certificates and Registrations 1689–1852* (Devizes, 1985), Wiltshire Record Society, Volume XL, p. 110 (entry 1149); Arnold Hare, 'The expanding city', p. 122, in H. Short (ed.), *City of Salisbury* (1957); Stell, *Chapels*, p. 235; <www.salisbury-quakers.co.uk/>.

21 There was a graveyard at the back, now gone. Baker, *St Martin's*, p. 152; Moore & Huckle, *Baptist Church*, pp. 19, 26, 28, 35, 47, 60–61, 82–5. For the impact of rebuilding see Edward Royle, *Nonconformity in Nineteenth-century York*, Borthwick Papers No. 68 (York, 1985), p. 9. *VCH*, VI, p. 157 suggests a rebuilding of 1750, but this is based on a misreading of the registration of the chapel (see Chandler, *Certificates*, p. 26, entry 306).

22 *VCH*, VI, p. 159; Bull, *Methodism in Salisbury*, (unpaginated, second page). The shop was in Greencroft Street.

23 Certified for worship 1835, built 1826 (*VCH*, VI, p. 193); *RCHME*, p. 157. Shown as a club-house on the 1:1250 1954 Ordnance Survey map, and referred to as such in Stell, *Chapels*, p. 235; see also *RCHME* p. 158 and map p. 156.

24 *VCH*, VI p. 193 says last registered for worship in 1889.

25 John Elliott, 'Pugin, St Osmund, and Salisbury', *Ecclesiology Today*, 22 (April 2000), pp. 2–8; King, *Church and the Chequers*, p. 24.

26 Population figures from the article by John Elliott in this issue, 'It's all a question of numbers: Salisbury and the Religious Census of 1851', *Ecclesiology Today*, 37 (December 2006). I am grateful to him for providing this information in advance of publication.

27 Recent research has confirmed the broad reliability of the religious census: K. D. M. Snell & P. S. Ell, *Rival Jerusalems: the Geography of Victorian Religion* (Cambridge, 2000), esp. chapter 1; C. D. Field, 'The 1851 Religious Census of Great Britain: a bibliographical guide for local and regional historians', *The Local Historian*, 27:4 (1997), pp. 194–217, *passim*; Gill, *'Empty' Church Revisited*, esp. pp. 16–23.

28 On census Sunday morning, about 4,000 people out of about 11,500 went to church in Salisbury and Fisherton (figures from Elliott, 'Salisbury Census 1851'). I have ignored the Swedenborgians, who anyway had a small congregation, and disappeared from Salisbury not long after 1851. For English data today, and for Salisbury today, see later in this paper. For America, see C. Kirk Hadaway and P. L. Marler, 'Did you really go to church this week? Behind the poll data', in *The Christian Century* (6 May 1998), pp. 472–5, available online at <www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=237>. In America, the level of churchgoing on any one Sunday is probably around 20%, though about 40% of Americans tell opinion pollsters they have been to church in the last seven days. As in the UK, people exaggerate the frequency of their church-going to pollsters. For Mann's quote, see the summary of the census published as *Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship in England and Wales, abridged from the Official Report made by Horace Mann, Esq., to George Graham, Esq., Registrar-General* (1854), p. 93.

29 Not even Roman Catholics attended Mass every Sunday (R. B. Walker, 'Religious changes in Liverpool in the 19th century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 19, no. 2 (1968), pp. 201–3; Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the Late Victorian City* (1975), pp. 34–5, and p. 40 notes 35 and 36). I have encountered little discussion in the literature of attendance in 1851 occurring less frequently than weekly, except John Wolffe, 'Elite and popular religion in the religious Census of 30 March 1851', in K. Cooper & Jeremy Gregory (eds.), *Elite and Popular Religion* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 360–71. For Mann's estimate, see Horace Mann, 'On the statistical position of the religious bodies in England and Wales', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, xviii (1855), pp. 152–3. For a recent summary of rates of historic churchgoing, see Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800–2000* (2001), pp. 147–51. The rough and ready factor of approximately two for the Church of England today is my own, based on various published evidence, summarised in Linda Barley, *Churchgoing Today* (Church House Publishing, 2006), pp. 23–6. Support is given by the fact that the

measure of Highest Sunday Attendance in a single sample month (October) is typically some 50% higher than the measure of Usual Sunday Attendance over the year (*Church Statistics 2003/4* (The Archbishops' Council, 2005), Tables 4 & 6). For fuller explanation of these statistics, see Trevor Cooper, *How do we keep our Parish Churches?* (2004), Appendix G (available at <www.ecclsoc.org>). For data for all denominations, see Peter Brierley's research; his figures suggest to me that across all denominations the multiplier should be perhaps 1.5, not 2, and his most recent data suggests that the multiplier may be dropping (see his *The Tide is Running Out* (2000), p. 73; as editor, his *Religious Trends 6* (2006), Fig 5.10 and Table 12.3.3; his *Pulling out of the Nosedive: a Contemporary Picture of Churchgoing. What the 2005 English Church Census Reveals* (2006), pp. 143–53, esp. p. 151; all published by Christian Research, Eltham, London).

30 Elliott, 'Salisbury Census 1851', Appendices III and IV, and table for Fisherton. Such variation between neighbouring churches is normal in the nineteenth century (Nigel Yates, 'Urban church attendance and the use of statistical evidence, 1850–1900' in Derek Baker (ed.), *The Church in Town and Countryside* (Oxford, 1979)).

31 For Wiltshire, see *VCH*, III, pp. 61, 85; for national figures, Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert & Lee Horsley, *Churches and Church-goers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700* (Oxford, 1977) p. 213; for discussion, Chris Miele, '"Their interest and habit": professionalism and the restoration of medieval churches, 1837–77' in Chris Brooks & Andrew Saint (eds.), *The Victorian Church: Architecture and Society* (Manchester, 1995), and Christopher Wakeling, 'The nonconformist traditions: chapels, change and continuity', in Brooks and Saint, *op. cit*. For the example of York, see Edward Royle, *The Victorian Church in York*, Borthwick Papers No. 64 (York, 1983) and *Nonconformity in Nineteenth-century York*, Borthwick Papers No. 68 (York, 1985), and chapter 9 of Gill, *'Empty' Church Revisited*; for the example of Reading, see Stephen Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organisations in Crisis* (1976), esp. chapter 5; for Sheffield, see Wickham, *Industrial City*, chapter 4.

32 Elliott, 'Salisbury Census 1851'; *Census Abridged*, pp. 57–9, 97, 102.

33 E. A. Rose, 'Ashton churches and chapels', p. 68, in Sylvia A. Harrop and E. A. Rose (eds.), *Victorian Ashton* (Tameside, 1974) (I am grateful to Christopher Wakeling for this reference); Gill, *'Empty' Church Revisited*, p. 56 and *passim*; Wakeling, 'Chapels', p. 89; Yeo, *Voluntary Organisations*, pp. 55, 139, 147–8.

34 Unfortunately, Salisbury was not one of those towns in which the local newspaper carried out a census of church attendance in 1881 (a list of such towns is provided in the appendix to Clive D. Field, 'Non-recurrent Christian Data', Reviews of United Kingdom Statistical Sources, vol. XX, *Religion* (Royal Statistical Society and Economic and Social Research Council, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1987), pp. 189–504), so changes during the century would have to be explored by looking at individual church records. For the national decline in attendance, see e.g. Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 162–4; Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920–1985* (1986), pp. 33–40; Robin Gill, 'Measuring church trends over time', p. 24 in Paul Avis (ed.), *Public Faith: the State of Religious Belief and Practice in Britain* (2003); Gill, *'Empty' Church Revisited*, pp. 61–5. For the excess number of Church of England churches see Cooper, *Parish Churches*, pp. 22–3.

35 *VCH*, VI, p. 190. The architect was T. H. Wyatt, who also restored St Martin's, and, as discussed below, built new churches at the adjacent villages of Laverstock, Bemerton and East Harnham.

36 John Bavin, *Heart of the City: the Story of Salisbury Playhouse* (Salisbury, n.d. [*c.*1976]), p. 7 (copy in Salisbury Reference Library). The chapel was built in 1869.

37 Bavin, *Salisbury Playhouse*, pp. 10–11, and *passim*; Bruce Purvis, *Salisbury: the Changing City* (Derby, 2003), pp. 114–5, 147. The chapel was sold by the Methodists in 1915.

38 Moore & Huckle, *Baptist Church*, pp. 37-8; *VCH*, VI, p. 93. The Fisherton Baptists, known as Harcourt Baptist Church, are said to have seceded from Brown Street in 1869, and continued until 1893. The OS map shows that the Baptist chapel was a little west of the junction with Harcourt Terrace, and the Brethren meeting

room was in Mill Road a few plots south of the Victoria Hotel. I am not sure when the Brethren hall was demolished: it was still in use in when *VCH*, VI was written (about 1960). Shortly before going to press, I was alerted to a Closed Brethren meeting house near Skew Bridge at Bemerton. I have not explored the history of this group, but it may be connected with the Fisherton Brethren discussed here.

39 Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, pp. 2–3, but this may be history written by the victors.

40 Rose, 'Ashton churches and chapels', p. 70; Wickham, *Industrial City*, pp. 131–9. I have noticed other Congregational churches of this period with dominant spires; was this denominational policy?

41 Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, pp. 3, 4 13.

42 Bavin, *Salisbury Playhouse*, p. 9; Dent, *Barnard Street Church*, pp. 3–5; King, *Church and Chequers*, pp. 41–2; *VCH*, VI, p. 85. The Brethren were at Guilders Lane from at least 1885. They started using the Scots Lane building in 1894, and left in 1917, possibly because of discomfort with the use of the building for secular purposes. The owners of the Scots Lane building renamed it 'City Hall'.

43 Winchester Street, built 1880; the Friary, 1895; Gigant Street, 1880; Maundrel Hall, 1880. See Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, p. 3; Dent, *Barnard Street Church*, pp. 2–3, 8–9 (which gives the date of the building as 1875); *VCH*, VI, pp. 146, 153; Baker, *St Martin's*, p. 98. For positions, see the relevant 1:2500 and 1:1250 Ordnance Survey maps. In *VCH*, VI, p. 146 and Baker, *St Martin's* p. 95, it is suggested the iron building in Gigant Street came from the Baptists; it is probably the same one owned by Edward Ware and used in the 1890s by the Brethren (Dent, *Barnard Street Church,* p. 3).

44 Peter Bale, 'Brass bands in the Salvation Army' (2006), at <www.brass-forum.co.uk>. There is a Salisbury Civic Society plaque to Charles Fry on the Army's building in Salt Lane.

45 St Osmund's expansion was in 1894. St Martin's and St Edmund's pulled their galleries down in 1860 and 1865 respectively.

46 *VCH*, VI, p. 158. The pattern of attachment and detachment is long-standing: in 1851, about two-thirds of Anglican Sunday Schools met in buildings separated from the church, the proportion for nonconformists being about half of this (that is, one-third). (Thomas Walter Laquer, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture 1780–1850* (1976), p. 64.)

47 Analysis of halls for hire based on *Halls for Hire* (January, 2006), published by Salisbury Council for Voluntary Service. For general discussion of the provision of meeting spaces by churches, see Cooper, *Parish Churches*, pp. 40–41. Over the country as whole and to some extent in Salisbury there are signs that church halls are being sold off for capital, thus reducing public amenity space. In Salisbury, St Mark's sold its hall when the ring road was built, and the school has closed; St Michael's has recently released most of its ancillary space; St Martin's may dispose of its parish hall, though has access to the premises of the adjacent now-closed school; the United Reformed Church relinquished their ancillary space when their church was refurbished and meeting space inserted in the revamped building and so did the Brown Street Baptists. On the other hand, the Elim church has recently invested heavily in additional ancillary space.

48 Laverstock still lies outside the city. In what follows (in addition to *Pevsner*, *VCH*, VI and *RCHME*) for Laverstock and brief discussion of the local work of T. H. Wyatt see RCHME, *Churches of South-East Wiltshire* (1987), pp. 69, 72, 156-7. All Saints, East Harnham was built at the expense of the widow of the Dean of Salisbury, with Lord Folkestone donating the land. St John's, the second church in Bemerton, was built in 1860–1, paid for by the Pembroke family from Wilton.

49 In the 1950s the Methodists planted a new chapel at East Harnham, which was closed in 1987 when the congregation merged with the Methodists in central Salisbury. Harnham has a Free Church. This was founded by local families in 1973, and first met in private homes until acquiring the old (1898) workhouse chapel in about 1980.

50 John Chandler, 'The country parson's flock: George Herbert's Bemerton in 1632', *Sarum Chronicle,* 6 (2006), pp 29–40; David Osborne, *The Country Vicar: Reshaping Rural Ministry* (2004), p. 67; *VCH*, VI, p. 47. Following the removal of its gallery in 1866, St Andrew's only holds about forty people.

51 Chapel built in 1890. For this and the following paragraphs see Baker, *St Martin's*, pp. 85, 98; Shuttleworth, *St Mark's*, pp. 1–19; C. N. Wyld, 'Notes on the history of St Mark's' (newspaper cutting in Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office, 3476 serial 1/265/18); *VCH*, III, pp. 76–7.

52 Chandler, *Endless Street*, pp. 188–90.

53 Building was done in two phases, the first phase being consecrated in 1899 (the Bishop refusing to consecrate until the initial debt was cleared). The second led to the nave being completed in 1915, but it was not then consecrated, as the parish still had outstading debt. The architect, J. A. Reeve, had built only one church previously, St Anne's, Roath, Cardiff. Reeve's sister was married to Bishop Wordsworth's brother, and he had previously carried out work on the Bishop's Palace. His design for St Mark's church was chosen in an anonymous competition. The church as built lacked the intended tower and spire, the grand west porch, the vaulting for the crossing and west gallery, and exterior carving (Peter Barrie, 'J Arthur Reeve and St Mark's church, Salisbury', *Sarum Chronicle*, 3 (2003), pp. 20–34).

54 This ignores the Railway Mission Hall put up in 1906 in Devizes Road (now known as Moose Hall, under the aegis of Moose International, the Family Fraternity).

55 For changes in the proportion attending church, see Gill, *'Empty' Church Revisited*, chapters 7 and 8; Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, pp. 165–9. The population of the centre of Salisbury is difficult to track because of ward boundary changes (I am grateful to Bruce Purvis for providing figures, and elucidating them). Using dates chosen to minimise the effect of boundary changes, the population of St Edmund ward fell from 2,941 in 1911 to 2,597 in 1991 (with an upward blip in the baby boom years); that of St Martin ward fell from 3,018 in 1911 to 2,076 in 1971, then rose over the next twenty years to 3,054; on the other hand, St Thomas ward saw its population grow, presumably on the west and north, from 2,842 in 1911 to 5,119 in 1971. Areas on the outskirts either saw their population rise (St Mark and Milford wards) or remain reasonably static (St Paul and Fisherton wards).

56 The Winchester Street mission shut in 1921, the Friary in about 1925, and St Mary Magdalene, the chapel-at-ease in Gigant Street, closed in 1940, though was not pulled down until the 1990s. The Maundrel Hall was sold in the 1950s. The Gigant Street building became the diocesan Deaf Centre until 1979 when this moved to a new building in nearby Love Lane; the new Deaf Centre is physically attached to the chapel built in 1909 by Sarum St Michael College for its new nonconformist students (the college divested itself of the chapel in 1938). An upper storey of the chapel is still set aside for worship. See Lucy Sandeman Taylor, *College in the Close: Sarum St Michael 1841–1978* (Avon n.d. [1988]), pp. 64–6, 109, 118 (copy in Salisbury Reference Library; I am grateful to Bruce Purvis for drawing this to my attention).

57 Methodist church built 1932, Catholic church in 1938. For national figures for Roman Catholics, see Trevor Cooper, 'Facing the future with facts', paper delivered to the Conference of the Historic Churches Committees of the Roman Catholic Church of England & Wales, 11 May, 2006, p. 5, available at <www.ecclsoc.org>.

58 The Trussell Trust, <www.trusselltrust.org/>.

59 St Mark's Barrington Centre, 1957; Baptist hall, 1959 (Moore & Huckle, *Baptist Church*, pp. 67-8; Shuttleworth, *St Mark's*, pp. 42–3). The St Mark's outpost now has only a small number of faithful attendees; about 25 attend the Baptist church. For Catholic building, see Cooper, 'Facing the future with facts', p. 9.

60 In 1958 the Milford Street congregation joined that in St Edmund's Church Street. In 1963 the Methodists in Wilton Road joined those in Dews Road, and

in 1987 this merged congregation, and those from Harnham, joined those in St Edmund's Church Street.

61 Personal communication, Emmanuel Church. They had previously been using the Railway Mission Hall of 1906, a few hundreds yards away.

62 Anthony Hudson, *Just to See His Name* (Falkand Islands Memorial Chapel Trust, Pangbourne, 2002), *passim*.

63 *Report of the Salisbury Churches Committee*, 1972, *passim*; Advisory Board for Redundant Churches, file for Salisbury, St Edmund's (with thanks to Dr Jeffrey West for his help); King, *Church and Chequer*s, pp. 14, 43–4; Pevsner, *Wiltshire*, p. 435. Other suggestions in the 1972 report included turning the centre of Salisbury into one large parish. It may have been at this time that there were tentative discussions about a union of the United Reformed congregation with the Brown Street Baptists or the St Thomas Anglicans, but these failed to proceed (Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, p. 8). Since then, other schemes of re-organisation have been proposed (see e.g. Shuttleworth, *St Mark's*, pp. 53, 57). For example, in the 1990s, consideration was given to closing St John's, Bemerton (personal communication, the church). There is currently a strategic review being carried out within the Salisbury deanery (i.e. the Anglican parishes within Salisbury), looking at various aspects of the Church's mission; it is not envisaged that buildings will be made redundant (personal communication, Revd Timothy Woods).

64 Based on information provided by the churches, the number of seats in each building in central Salisbury and Fisherton is as follows (where I have estimated the figure, it is shown in brackets). Anglican and Catholic: St Thomas's, 400; St Paul's, Fisherton, 480; St Martin's, 400. Nonconformist: Baptist (Brown Street), 200; Barnard Street Church, (200); Elim (Dews Road), 180; Emmanuel (Wilton Road), 350; Methodist (St Edmund's Church Street), 270; United Reformed (Fisherton Street), 180. Roman Catholic: St Osmund's, (300). Where comparable, modern figures for capacity do seem lower than their Victorian equivalents for the same seating. Perhaps the earlier figures were exaggerated, or the Victorians were prepared to pack people in more tightly.

65 The Assemblies of God, meeting at St Osmund's School (see <www.aogsalisbury.org.uk>); they are part of the Assemblies of God (about 600 churches across Britain; see <www.ago.org.uk>, Nov 2006). The City Gate, meeting at St Mark's School (see <www.citygate-salisbury.com/>); they are part of the Pioneer group of churches (about 75 churches across England; see <www.pioneer.org.uk/>, Oct, 2006). The King's Church, meeting at the South Wilts Grammar School (see <www.kingschurchsalisbury.co.uk/>); they are part of the Newfrontier family (more than 200 churches across England; see <www.newfrontiers.xtn.org >, Oct, 2006). The Vineyard, meeting at Salisbury High School, and Greentrees School (see <www.salisburyvineyard.co.uk/); they are part of the Vineyard group (nearly 90 English churches; see <www.vineyardchurchesuk.com/>, Oct, 2006). For a powerful evocation of the pressure to obtain premises see Yeo, *Voluntary Organisations*, pp. 131–40. The Vineyard have a permanent office in a shop, and the King's church are thinking of acquiring something similar. The Assemblies of God own and run a café in Endless Street ('The Endless Life'), and used to meet in the room above this, until it became too small.

66 There had earlier been an abortive attempt to sell both their church and hall for redevelopment and construct a new dual-purpose building. In the end the hall was sold for redevelopment in order to finance the work to the church (Abel, *Presbyterian Church*, pp. 9–10; personal communication from the church).

67 Discouraged by the Methodists because of the difficulties of accessing the upper floor and the risk of creating a gloomy space downstairs (personal communication, Ian Serjeant, Conservation Officer, the Methodist Church).

68 <www.salisbury-elim.org/>. The conversion of the worship space was carried out in the late 1990s. The new hall and meeting rooms were officially opened in March 2005 (personal communication from the church).

69 Population *ex info* John Elliott (excludes Laverstock). Attendance figures obtained by John Elliott (March, 2006) with additional ones (November, 2006) by Trevor Cooper. We are grateful to the churches for their co-operation in this exercise. Those shown as '00' are not known, and I have assumed a congregation of fifty in such cases. Anglican: Cathedral, 250; St Thomas's, 236; St Paul's, Fisherton, 440; St Martin's, 109; St Mark's, 132; Bemerton benefice (St Michael's and St John's and St Andrew's), 79; St Francis's, 159; Harnham benefice, (All Saints and St George's), 145; Nonconformist (central Salisbury first): Baptist (Brown Street), 128; Barnard Street Church, 00; Elim (Dews Road), 127; Emmanuel (Wilton Road), 115; Methodist (St Edmund's Church Street), 166; Quaker, 25; United Reformed (Fisherton Street), 70; Harnham Free Church, 67; Bemerton Methodist (Roman Road), 00; Bishopdown Baptist, 25; Bishopdown, Barrington Centre (St Mark's outpost), 00. Roman Catholic: St Osmund, 544; Holy Redeemer, 175; St Gregory, 181. New churches: Assemblies of God, 30; City Gate, 00; King's Church, 100; Vineyard, 110.

70 Average attendance on a given Sunday over England is thought to be about 6.3% of the population (2005 data, Brierley, *Religious Trends 6*, Table 12.2.1). See note 29 for discussion of the proportion of committed Sunday churchgoers not attending worship every week. In addition, others (perhaps one sixth of the Sunday total) will attend during the week, but not on Sunday (this is based on Church of England data, namely the difference between all age average attendance for Sunday and weekly attendance, i.e. in the course of a week, in *Church Statistics 2003/4*, Table 6).

71 e.g. see the survey reported at <www.cofe.anglican.org/info/statistics/orb2005churchfunding.pdf>.

72 The points made here apply to a large extent to conservation areas as well.

73 In the Roman Catholic diocese of Lancaster, where there are already 30 listed churches, a recent review identified 8 new strong candidates for listing, with a further 13 contenders of debatable quality (English Heritage, personal communication). This limited sample suggests that the number of listed Catholic churches should be increased by as much as 60%, and some would claim the figure is higher. Based on the Cornish experience, 15% of currently-listed nonconformist chapels should be upgraded, and an additional 10% added (Jeremy Lake et al, *Diversity and Vitality: the Methodist and Nonconformist Chapels of Cornwall* (English Heritage and the Methodist Property Office [copies from Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Station Road, Truro, TR1 3AY], n.d. [2001]), pp. 106, 110). Amongst Anglican churches perhaps some 10% of all parish churches are not listed and should be, or are at the wrong grade (Cooper, *Parish Churches*, Appendix B). The following churches and chapels in Salisbury are listed, with the grade shown in brackets. Note that Grades B and C are old categories, 'B' translating sometimes to Grade I, more usually to Grade II*, and 'C' sometimes to II*, more usually to II. Churches are given here in alphabetical order of dedication for churches with dedications, then nonconformist buildings by street name: the Cathedral (I); All Saints, East Harnham (II); St Andrew's, Bemerton (B); St Edmund's (listed but grade not known by English Heritage; point confirmed in correspondence March, 2006); St Francis's (II); St George's, West Harnham (B); St John's, Bemerton (B); St Mark's (C); St Martin's (B); St Osmund's (Roman Catholic) (II); St Paul's, Fisherton (II); St Thomas's (I); Fisherton Street, United Reformed (was Congregational) (II); Milford Street, Chapel Nightclub (built as Reformed Methodist, listed as Elim church) (II); St Edmund's Church Street, Methodist (II); Wilton Road, Emmanuel Church (was Wesleyan Methodist) (II). (Data from <http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk>, March, 2006.)

74 Listing allows society to impose obligations on those who care for churches and chapels. As a partial quid pro quo, the State provides some financial assistance: English Heritage sometimes helps pay for urgent repairs if the congregation cannot afford them, and the Heritage Lottery Fund also uses lottery money to help in this way (although many millions of pounds are disbursed in this way, the jointly-administered scheme for these repairs is significantly underfunded,

unpredictable in its allocation, has been falling in size, and may come under further pressure from the Olympics); VAT relief is also available for many repairs (Cooper, *Parish Churches*, pp. 30–32; House of Commons: Culture, Media and Sport Committee, *Protecting and Preserving our Heritage*, vol. II (Written Evidence), p. 113). Some would argue that the Ecclesiastical Exemption from secular planning controls is also a quid pro quo, though my view is that the opposite is true – the evidence is that the exempt denominations generally exercise a more rigorous degree of control than Local Authority based statutory planning processes (for which see Philip Grover, *Local Authority Conservation Provision in England: Research Project into Staffing, Casework and Resources* (Oxford Brookes University, sponsored by IHBC and EH, 2003); *Heritage under Pressure* (English Heritage, 2002); *Local Authority Conservation Provision, Summary* (DCMS with EH and IHBC, 2003)) and that Local Authorities are less effective at managing their own heritage assets than the exempt denominations (for the record of Local Authorities, see *The Disposal of Heritage Assets by Public Bodies* (The National Trust, 2006), chapter 4). In contrast, John Newman's review of the operation of the Ecclesiastical Exemption in 1997 gave it a relatively clean bill of health.

75 Except for the Church of England, it seems that charity law forces churches to sell their unwanted buildings, listed or unlisted, to the highest-value bidder regardless of the wishes of the trustees of the building. This may need looking at.

76 During the past year or so, more than six hundred thousand pounds has been spent on church buildings in Salisbury, none of it from public funds. There are ninety people on the electoral roll of the Bemerton Benefice (*The Sarum Diocesan Directory 2006* (published by the diocese), p. 164). The Friends of Bemerton, with some 70 members, provides a degree of support to St Andrew's church, but members of the Friends have no legal responsibility for the building (<www.churchmouse.org.uk/bemerton/friend.htm>). For Friends groups in general, see Cooper, *Parish Churches*, pp. 52–3. Although St Thomas's and St Martin's do not have Friends groups, there is at least one other Friends group in Salisbury, the recently-founded Friends of Harnham churches.

It's all a question of numbers: Salisbury and the Religious Census of 1851

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IT IS OFTEN THOUGHT that the census is a modern invention whereas its origins are much earlier. Regular national ten-yearly census surveys started being taken in 1801 and have continued ever since with the exception of 1941. These returns show that the population of England and Wales doubled in the first 50 years of the nineteenth century (8.9m to 17.9m) and then almost doubled again in the second half (to 32.5m).[1]

The census also charted the progression from an agricultural to an industrial state showing, in 1851, that for the first time more people lived in towns and cities than in the countryside; the places of greatest population growth being the newly emerging industrial cities.[2]

In contrast, Salisbury was not sucked into this great industrialising process in anything like the same manner and as a result population growth was less dramatic, though still significant. In 1801 the population of central Salisbury was 7,126 and this rose to 11,657 in 1851 and 17,117 in 1901[3].

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century religion tended to dominate the lives of most, though many suspected that there had been a decline in religious observance. Whether this was caused by a decline in faith or because of the breaking of old ties and customs which accompanied the urban migration has been a much debated subject.

The result was that the 1851 census did not just count population but a second census sought details on church accommodation and attendance. On Census Sunday, 30 March 1851, the officials of each church were asked to complete a return which showed the number of seats available; how many of these were 'free' and how many had been bought by the somewhat better off; plus a count of how many attended the morning, afternoon and evening services. The Cathedrals were excluded as their prime purpose was non-parochial. The logic behind the religious head count had several strands, and all were connected by a fear that religion had lost its dominant grip on the nation's allegiances.

From about 1750 there had been a great burst of nonconformist activity as 'chapels' were established at a rapid rate and the estimates of adherents to the various sects that comprised nonconformity show that this was not a minority form of religion. Nonconformity's gains were usually the Church of England's losses, though even nonconformity was most probably

suffering a decline in attendance by 1851 as many of the registered meeting houses in Wiltshire were no longer in use.[4]

Some also contended that the explanation for any decline in church attendance was a consequence of there being too few Anglican churches to cater for the growing population.[5] The 'Commission for Building New Churches in Populous Places' was set up as early as 1818 with £1m of Government funds, and on March 16 of that year the Chancellor of the Exchequer set the target that Anglican church accommodation should be provided for a third of the population. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, suggested that the £1m be enriched with private capital and used to build between 150 and 200 churches.

In the 1840s much the same fears existed, though now it was the enthusiasm which followed the Oxford Movement that was one of the motivators for change. New 'High Church' Missions were established in urban centres, partly to cater for the fallen but also as an alternative to the nonconformist presence. All too often there was an Anglican church at one end of the street and a nonconformist one at the other. For many the religious census would confirm whether there was a decline in attendance, whether there were sufficient churches and also quantify the threat posed by nonconformity.

For the Church of England the results could not have been worse, showing as they did, that almost half the population who were able to attend church did not bother doing so on Census Sunday, and of those that did, half went to one of the dreaded nonconformist chapels. The Church of England faced the reality that it was only the church of a minority.[8] The completed census returns still exist,[9] and provide a vivid insight of religious life in 1851. The 'raw' numbers for England & Wales and for central Salisbury (excluding Fisherton) are given in Appendix I. They show that some 58.12% of the total population of England and Wales attended church on Census Sunday (10,419,390 out of 17,927,609), 42.5% in the morning and with the rest split reasonably evenly between the afternoon and evening. Of those attending 47.4% went to the Church of England, 48.6% to one of the nonconformist chapels and 4% to one of the other denominations, including the Roman Catholics and Jews.[10]

However, the census figures were analysed and adjusted before publication; perhaps to make the facts align better with the expectations. It was argued that some people were unable to attend church because they were too old, too young, sick or working in an essential industry, and that the total population figure should be adjusted downwards by 30% to allow for such people and so improve the apparent percentage level of attendance! In addition, it was accepted that some would have

attended church more than once on Census Sunday and to compensate for this the afternoon attendances were reduced by a third and the evening numbers by two-thirds. Clearly some form of adjustment was needed for multiple attendance, though the adjusting factors used were not based on reliable sampling and tended to work in favour of the Church of England and against the nonconformists, the former tending to worship in the morning while the latter spread their services over the whole day.[11] The 'adjusted' figures for England & Wales and for the churches in the centre of Salisbury are given in Appendix II.

What emerges from the 'raw' and 'adjusted' figures is that church attendance in central Salisbury was significantly above the national average and more Church of England orientated than elsewhere. Nonconformity had made advances in the City but these were not as significant as in other places. Even before 'adjustment' the numbers attending church in central Salisbury come to more than the total population (presumably because of multiple attendance on Census Sunday), with 58.3% attending one of the Church of England churches. After 'adjustment' attendance levels were still above the adjusted population, and the Church of England dominance had been increased.

In 1851 the population of central Salisbury was 8,930 and there were three Anglican churches St Thomas, St Edmund and St Martin plus the Trinity Hospital Chapel. The nonconformists had a Wesleyan Chapel in St Edmund's Church Street, plus Independent chapels in Scot's Lane and Endless Street and a Baptist chapel in Brown Street. In addition, there was the newly-built St Osmund for the small Roman Catholic congregation and a Swedenborgian church in Castle Street.[12]

In total the Church of England had places for 3,507 worshippers, 1,400 at St Thomas,[13] 1,250 at St Edmund,[14] 827 at St Martin,[15] and 30 at the Trinity Hospital. Not far behind were the nonconformists with 3,291 seats and somewhat surprisingly only 930 of these were free.[16] The largest church was the Wesleyan Chapel in St Edmund's Church Street which could hold 1,061;[17] then came the Endless Street and Brown Street chapels, each with 800 seats,[18] the Scot's Lane chapel with 530 seats,[19] and finally the Swedenborgians had space for 100.[20] The Roman Catholic church dedicated to St Osmund had 250 seats all of which were free. Further details of the census results on church accommodation are provided in Appendix III.

The detailed unadjusted attendance figures for central Salisbury are shown at Appendix IV and suggest that some 5,424 people attended Church of England services, 3,562 went to the nonconformists with minor numbers of Roman Catholics attending St Osmund's church. In total, church attendance in the

centre of Salisbury amounted to 9,313, with the numbers being spread reasonably evenly throughout the day.[21]

The largest Anglican congregations were at St Thomas with 2,450 adults and 300 children attending the three services. St Edmund had no evening service but still there were 1,830 attending in the morning and afternoon. St Martin had the smallest congregation; again with no evening service, and a total congregation of 844. The largest nonconformist congregations were at the Endless Street Independent chapel where 1,075 people worshipped, 945 at the Wesleyan Chapel in St Edmund's Church Street, 913 at the Brown Street Baptist chapel and 564 at the Scot's Lane Independent alternative.

As mentioned earlier there is no return for the Cathedral and the population of the Close (525) has been excluded from all the population figures. Whether including the Cathedral would have increased or decreased the percentage levels of attendance is unclear.

So far we have only looked at the Census figures for the central part of Salisbury. However, if we add the returns for Fisherton (a westward working class extension of Salisbury which was part of the Alderbury Registration District) a somewhat different picture emerges.

In 1851 Fisherton had a population of 1,905 and three churches. The attendance figures were:

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Total
St Clement's[22]	147	147	-	294
Wesleyan Methodist	124	-	160	284
Primitive Methodists	87	167	162	416
Total	**358**	**314**	**322**	**994**

This gives an unadjusted attendance figure for Fisherton of 52%: much different from the central Salisbury number of 104.27%. Nonconformist attendance is also much higher and accounted for 70% of those attending church.

If we merge the Fisherton and central Salisbury numbers we get a more representative set of figures for the enlarged city, viz:

Unadjusted		
Population	11,657	
Church of England	5,718	55.47%
Nonconformists	4,262	41.36%
Others	327	3.17%
Total	**10,307**	**88.42%**
Adjusted		
Population	8,159	
Church of England	4,247	58.79%
Nonconformists	2,743	37.97%
Others	234	3.24%
Total	**7,224**	**88.54%**

In short, attendance is still above the national average, though overall attendance, both before and after adjustment, is down to 88%, while the Church of England is slightly less dominant.

While the figures for Salisbury are of interest in isolation it is only when they are compared with church attendance elsewhere that they become particularly instructive of mid-nineteenth century religiosity in Salisbury. As we have seen, Salisbury church attendance was greater than the national average and so was the Church of England dominance (see Appendices I and II). Salisbury also stands out as different when compared with the overall 'unadjusted' figures for Wiltshire. The higher level of church attendance is marked as is the somewhat less powerful nonconformist presence.

	Wiltshire		Salisbury (excl Fisherton)		Salisbury (incl Fisherton)	
Population	254,221		8,930		11,657	
Church of England	113,609	52.2%	5,424	58.3%	5,718	55.47%
Nonconformist	101,816	46.7%	3,562	38.2%	4,262	41.36%
Other	2,339	1.1%	327	3.5%	327	3.17%
Total	**217,764**	**85.6%**	**9,313**	**104.3%**	**10,307**	**88.42%**

Comparing Salisbury with the agricultural area and country towns of Wiltshire might be considered inappropriate. However, when the Salisbury figures are compared with those for the Registration Districts of other areas that contained a cathedral city the results are interesting.[23]

	Population	Total Attendance	Church of England	Non-conformists
Salisbury (incl Fisherton)	11,657	88.4%	55.5%	41.4%
Registration Districts:				
Durham	55,951	37.4%	33.7%	46.6%
Exeter	32,823	84.5%	63.6%	35.5%
Lichfield	25,279	56.0%	79.3%	16.8%
Wells	21,342	54.8%	65.0%	34.1%
Winchester	25,661	52.1%	76.8%	17.6%
York	57,116	58.3%	51.5%	41.4%

Salisbury's percentage overall attendance level still stands out, only Exeter coming near it while Durham shows a very strong trend towards non-attendance. The supposed Church of England strength in Salisbury is however put into context, with all but York and Durham having a higher Anglican figure. Uniquely Durham had a strong Roman Catholic presence (19.75% of the attending population) and nonconformists outnumbered the Anglicans (46.56% against 33.69%).

Clearly the level of church attendance in the centre of Salisbury was exceptional and it would be interesting to explore the reasons for this uniqueness in greater detail. In fact central Salisbury had the 16th largest proportionate level of church attendance in England & Wales, though once the Fisherton figures are added Salisbury drops out of the 'top 30.' Aberystwyth topped the attendance chart with 121.34% of the population attending church (using the unadjusted figures and so making no allowance for multiple attendance). Somewhat surprisingly Warminster was 5th in the table with an attendance level of 110.17%, and Fordingbridge (a small town just south of Salisbury) had 108.49% attendance and lay in 8th position. Just 30 Registration Districts in England & Wales had attendance levels over 100% (a full list of these is at Appendix V). Without any doubt the level of church attendance in central Salisbury seems to have been exceptional.

The difference between the long established county towns and the newly expanded industrial areas is nicely illustrated if the Salisbury figures are compared with those for the industrial centres of Manchester and Liverpool. Both had significant Roman Catholic populations in comparison to Salisbury which had almost no Roman Catholics; the Church of England had no historic presence to build upon as in long established cities like Salisbury; and their more 'working class' population would supposedly have encouraged the growth of nonconformity.

	Population	Attendance	Church of England	Non-conformists	Roman Catholics
Salisbury (incl Fisherton)	11,657	88.4%	55.5%	41.4%	3.2%
Manchester	228,433	35.0%	33.4%	38.9%	27.7%
Liverpool	258,236	41.4%	36.1%	26.1%	37.8%

By any modern standard the level of church attendance is impressive. However, no further national religious census was undertaken, largely because the church authorities feared the results,[24] though the 1851 results did fuel a bout of church building which lasted for 25 years, if not longer, as the Church of England and nonconformists both attempted to win the hearts and minds of the growing population. While a proportional decline may have continued, the increase in population most probably meant that the absolute numbers of church worshippers continued to rise.

Finally let us end with a note of caution. The Church of England complained that the census returns were not an accurate statement of reality, though as a retreating monopolist one could hardly have expected it to claim otherwise. Also, the manner in

which the total population was adjusted to compensate for those unable to attend church, and for multiple attendance, left much to be desired. In particular it took no notice of regional variations, of differences between large urban centres and more rural ones, or between the attendance patterns of nonconformists and Anglicans.[25]

Some of the Salisbury figures also raise suspicions. For instance, most counts end with a zero and often with two zeros. The temptation to exaggerate must have been a powerful one, and there was no shortage of excuses—the return for the Wesleyan church in St Edmund's Church Street claimed that attendance had been particularly low because 'a part of the usual congregation was attending a neighbouring chapel of Independents,' though no other nonconformist chapel admitted to having an excess of visitors![26]

Undoubtedly the census was far from accurate in its detail, though it is unlikely that its overall conclusions can be faulted. *The Times* concluded that 'the result, we have no doubt, may be taken as substantially accurate and trustworthy.'[27] It marks a point in the long but gradual decline in church attendance but it also provides a rare opportunity to observe a segment of Victorian life in some detail and to raise intriguing questions about religion in mid 19th-century Salisbury.

Appendix I
Religious Census 1851: Unadjusted Attendance Figures

	Engand & Wales		**Central Salisbury★**	
Population	17,927,609		8,930	
Attendance				
Church of England	4,939,514	47.4%	5,424	58.3%
Nonconformist	5,066,434	48.6%	3,562	38.2%
Other	413,442	4.0%	327	3.5%
Total	**10,419,390**	**58.12%**	**9,313**	**104.27%**

★ excluding Fisherton and the Close

The attendance figures split:		
Morning	4,428,338	42.50%
Afternoon	3,030,280	29.08%
Evening	2,960,772	28.42%

Appendix II
Religious Census 1851: 'Adjusted' Attendance Figures

	Engand & Wales		Central Salisbury*	
Population	12,549,326		6,251	
Attendance				
Church of England	3,815,874	51.3%	4,002	61.7%
Nonconformist	3,290,285	44.3%	2,246	34.7%
Other	329,291	4.4%	234	3.6%
Total	**7,485,450**	**59.25%**	**6,482**	**103.7%**

* excluding Fisherton and the Close

Appendix III
Religious Census 1851:
Salisbury Church Accommodation (Pop 8,930)

	Free	Other	Total	% Free
Church of England				
St Thomas	420	980	1,400	30.00
St Edmund			1,250	
Trinity Hospital	18	12	30	60.00
St Martin	640	187	827	77.39
sub-total	*1,078*	*1,179*	*3,507*	
Nonconformist				
Wesleyan Chapel, St Ed's Church Street	280	781	1,061	26.39
Scott's Lane Chapel (Independent)	150	380	530	28.30
Endless Street Chapel (Independent)	150	650	800	18.75
Brown Street Chapel (Baptist)	250	550	800	31.25
Swedenborgian Church, Castle Street	100	100		100.00
sub-total	*930*	*2,361*	*3,291*	*28.26*
Others				
Roman Catholics	250		250	100.00
Total	**2,258**	**3,540**	**7,048**	

Appendix IV
Religious Census 1851: Salisbury Church Attendance
(Pop 8,930)

		AM	PM	Eve	Total
Church of England					
St Thomas	adults	800	550	1,100	2,450
	children	150	150	-	300
	sub-total	*950*	*700*	*1,100*	*2,750*
St Edmund	adults	710	710	-	1,420
	children	200	210	-	410
	sub-total	*910*	*920*	-	*1,830*
Trinity Hospital			-	-	-
St Martin	adults	320	350	-	670
	children	83	91	-	174
	sub-total	*403*	*441*	-	*844*
Total Church of England		2,263	2,061	1,100	5,424
Nonconformist					
Wesleyan Chapel, Church St		370	150	425	945
Scott's Lane Chapel	adults	169	52	199	420
	children	62	82	-	144
	sub-total	*231*	*134*	*199*	*564*
Endless Street Chapel	adults	190	83	626	899
	children	115	61	-	176
	sub-total	*305*	*144*	*626*	*1,075*
Brown Street Chapel	adults	218	83	336	637
	children	134	142	-	276
	sub-total	*352*	*225*	*336*	*913*
Swedenborgian Church		-	10	55	65
Total nonconformist		1,258	663	1,641	3,562
Others					
Roman Catholics		145	97	85	327
Total		**3,666**	**2,821**	**2,826**	**9,313**

Appendix V

Religious Census 1851: Church Attendance over 100%
(of the population in Registration Districts using unadjusted census figures)

	%		%
1 Aberystwyth	121.34	16 Salisbury (excl Fisherton)	104.27
2 St Ives (Hunts)	116.37	17 Conway	103.81
3 Luton	115.16	18 Leighton Buzzard	103.78
4 Machynlleth	113.33	19 Cardigan	103.73
5 Warminster	110.17	20 Hardingstone	103.65
6 Dursley	109.44	21 Newcastle in Emlyn	102.58
7 Bedford	109.18	22 Amersham	102.40
8 Fordingbridge	108.49	23 Wellingborough	101.81
9 Bangor	108.34	24 Aberayron	101.73
10 Westbury	107.92	25 Risbridge	101.68
11 St Neots	107.02	25 Berkhampstead	101.68
12 Stow	106.78	27 Crickhowell	100.77
13 Scilly Isles	106.59	28 Dolgelly	100.53
14 Catherington	105.38	29 Whitchurch	100.50
15 Winslow	104.69	30 Towcester	100.50

Notes

1 Scotland's population also increased dramatically though slightly less so than in England and Wales (1.6m in 1801, 2.9m in 1851 and 4.5m in 1901). Only Ireland saw a rise followed by a fall, much of it stimulated by starvation and an unsympathetic land-owning class (5.2m in 1801, 6.5m in 1851 and 4.5m in 1901). See Chris Cook & John Stevenson, *The Longman Handbook of Modern British History 1714–1987,* p. 110.

2 By 1851 the economy of Britain had shifted from a rural-based agriculturally dominated one to an urban-based factory led system. This was trend that would continue. For instance, the population of Manchester grew from 75,000 in 1801 to 645,000 in 1901.

3 See *Victoria County History, Wilture,* 4, p. 356.

4 See J. H. Chandler (ed.), *Wiltshire Meeting House Certificates 1689–1852,* (1985), p. xxix.

5 The Church of England was strongest in the villages and county towns, much less so in the growing industrial centres.

6 This was provided through £1m of Exchequer bills which bore 2% interest. The Commissioners were free to use the interest, to withdraw the capital or some combination of the two H. M. Port, *Six Hundred New Churches,* (1961), p. 24.

7 Which would provide one hundred churches at £10,000 each.

8 Attendance tended to be lowest in the industrial cities and places where the largest number of working-class people lived. For instance, in the Radford Registration District (near Nottingham) just 25.76% of the population attended church (6,897 out of 26,776). There can have been few returns with lower attendance levels!

Samuel Wilberforce claimed that the nonconformists exaggerated the figures they submitted whereas the Church of England numbers were understated because many opposed the census and did not participate. In fact only 1,394 churches out of 34,467 refused to complete the returns of attendance and where this happened estimates based on average attendances were substituted. See K. S. Inglis, 'Patterns of Religious Worship in 1851' in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* ii, No 1 (1960), pp. 74–86.

9 At the National Archives (PRO), Kew. The results were published, and have since been republished in *British Parliamentary Papers: 1851 Census Great Britain Report and Tables on Religious Worship England & Wales* (1970).

10 The term nonconformist was used to cover a multitude of different sects, different forms of Baptists and Methodists, various Independent groups, sects such as the Lutherans and French Protestants who were grouped together with other similar sects and classified as FOREIGN, the Quakers, and Irish and Scottish Presbyterians.

11 For instance the national figures for Church of England attendance showed that about 2.5m people attended church in the morning with 0.86m attending in the evening. In contrast, the Wesleyan Methodists had 0.7m morning attendees and over 1m in the evening (see Horace Mann, 'On the Statistical Position of Religious Bodies in England and Wales' in *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* (1855), p. 150). The Times noted that for every 100 sittings in the Church of England, nonconformists provided 93 but the latter 'get more out of their buildings ... opening them invariably for evening service, at which period, in fact, they obtain the largest attendance.' (*The Times* 9 January 1854, p. 6).

12 A sect founded by a Swedish nobleman and philosopher who claimed he was divinely authorized to publish certain truths which had been passed to him by the angels, and to reveal certain truths which were concealed by hidden meanings within the scriptures.

13 Just 420 of which were free.

14 The census return does not split this number between free and allocated.

15 Of which 640 were free.

16 At that time it was common within the Church of England for the better-off worshippers to rent a pew, though there was a move to increase the number of free seats so as to encourage the less wealthy to attend church. It is often presumed that nonconformity was more open in welcoming the poor, and if so would have had a large portion of the accommodation as free seats. This does not appear to have been the case in Salisbury.

17 With 280 free seats.

18 150 free at the Endless Street chapel and 250 free in Brown Street.

19 150 free.

20 All free.

21 3,666 in the morning, 2,821 in the afternoon and 2,826 in the evening.

22 The church was closed shortly after the census and replaced by St Paul's church and complex.

23 The Salisbury population is that of the Salisbury Registration District (8,930) plus the population of Fisherton which was included as part of the Wilton Registration District. The population for Durham, Exeter etc is that of the whole Registration District.

24 Further census surveys were rejected by the Church of England because they feared that the results would show that half the nation attended nonconformist chapels. In place of a head-count of attendance they suggested a census of religious profession. This was rejected by the nonconformists. See K. S. Inglis, 'Patterns of Religious Worship in 1851' in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* ii, No 1 (1960), pp. 74–86.

25 Anglicans were generally presumed to worship earlier in the day than nonconformists.
26 See John Chandler, *Endless Street: A History of Salisbury & its People* (1983), pp. 207–10 for details of the various disputes which occurred within the nonconformist sects.
27 *The Times* 9 January 1854, p. 6.
28 No information was provided on the split between free and allocated sittings.
29 No service was conducted on Census Sunday.

Women stained glass artists in Victorian England: the case of Helen Matilda, Countess Dowager of Radnor (1846–1929)

Sarah Brown

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THE HISTORY OF WOMEN artists in the Victorian age is still being written. Thus far, however, scholars have largely concentrated on their involvement in the fine arts and reveal that having negotiated the obstacles in the way of a proper art training, many Victorian women practised their art in a predominantly female world.[1] The contribution of Victorian women to the applied arts has been less thoroughly charted and their contribution to the field of stained glass has been largely overlooked.

Only in the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement of the period *c.*1880–1914 has the contribution of women been adequately acknowledged.[2] In fact, there is considerable evidence, much of it fragmentary and anecdotal in character, of a significant number of women engaged in stained glass design and manufacture in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Perhaps not surprisingly, many of them were 'lady amateurs', the daughters or wives of clergymen, and their work was fired and glazed by professional studios. Miss Hobart, designer of the east window at Nocton in Leicestershire (*c.*1862), was the daughter of the Vicar, H. L. Hobart (1774–1846), dean of St George's Chapel Windsor. The window was made by Ward & Hughes of London. Miss Rickards, daughter of the Revd Thomas Ascough Rickards of Cosby, in the same county, made a window of St Luke and St John for her father's church in 1859. Mild eccentricity is implied in accounts of the work of Miss Sarah Yeatman of Bradlinch in Devon, who *c.*1850 designed and painted a window in her parents' memory, fired by Drake of Exeter, but was better remembered for fording the flooded River Culm on stilts![3]

A small number of women artists actually earned a living from stained glass from the later eighteenth century onwards. Mary Peckitt (*c.*1740–1826), wife of William, is said to have assisted him in his business and in 1796 'designed and erected' a window in his memory in the church of St Martin cum Gregory, although this is her only known independent work in stained glass.[4] More prolific was Eglington Margaret Pearson (bap. 1746, d.1823), daughter of an auctioneer and bookseller who in 1768 married Dublin-born glass-painter James Pearson. They collaborated on a number of works, but on her own account she was renowned for her copies of the old masters and her meticulously detailed

enamel-painted stained glass flowers and birds. She exhibited at the Society of Artists in the 1770s and her copies on glass of the Raphael cartoons (of which one survives at Bowood House in Wiltshire) were much admired. Of her celebrated 'Aurora' window for Arundel Castle, after Guido, nothing remains.[5] Harriet Ludlow Clarke (d.1886), daughter of a London solicitor, began her artistic career as a wood engraver and illustrator, supplying illustrations for her friend Mrs Louisa Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art* (London 1848). Determined to engage in the design and manufacture of stained glass, she is said to have studied the medium at home and abroad and took glass-painting lessons from leading Newcastle stained glass artist William Wailes. In about 1851 Daniel Finch commissioned a window from her for St Martin's church, Canterbury and in the early 1850s Henry Berens commissioned two windows from her for his new church at Sidcup. Her most important commission was for a large window depicting Thomas Becket for the north-west transept of Canterbury Cathedral, commissioned by Revd Robert Moore and installed in 1863. This window, like that at North Marston in Buckinghamshire, paid for by Queen Victoria (1852 or 1855), was made for her by Ward & Hughes.[6]

Those women who actually sought admission to the male-dominated stained glass workplace experienced considerable difficulties, especially from the middle years of the nineteenth century as stained glass centres of production evolved from the small scale craft studio to the increasingly industrialised workshop. Emma Cons (1838–1912), now better remembered as a social reformer and theatre manager, had received an artistic training at the art school run by Henry Holiday's mother. She was a friend of Ruskin. In the early 1860s she was the first female glass-painter employed by James Powell and Sons of Whitefriars, and painted Edward Burne Jones's 1861 window for Waltham Abbey. She is also said to have been involved in the restoration of the medieval stained glass of Merton College, Oxford. Until Arthur Powell intervened, it is said that her work was sabotaged by her male colleagues, and by 1865 she had left Powell's to work on social housing reform with her friend Octavia Hill. A dedicated temperance campaigner, in 1880 she opened the Royal Victoria Coffee Music Hall (better known today as the Old Vic) and in 1889 founded Morley College.[7]

The example of Helen Matilda, Countess-Dowager of Radnor (1846–1929), reveals the continued interest in the medium of the aristocratic lady amateur. Her windows show that this work could attain a remarkably high standard. Research into her career in stained glass was prompted by the preparation of a Royal Commission publication on the furnishings and decoration of

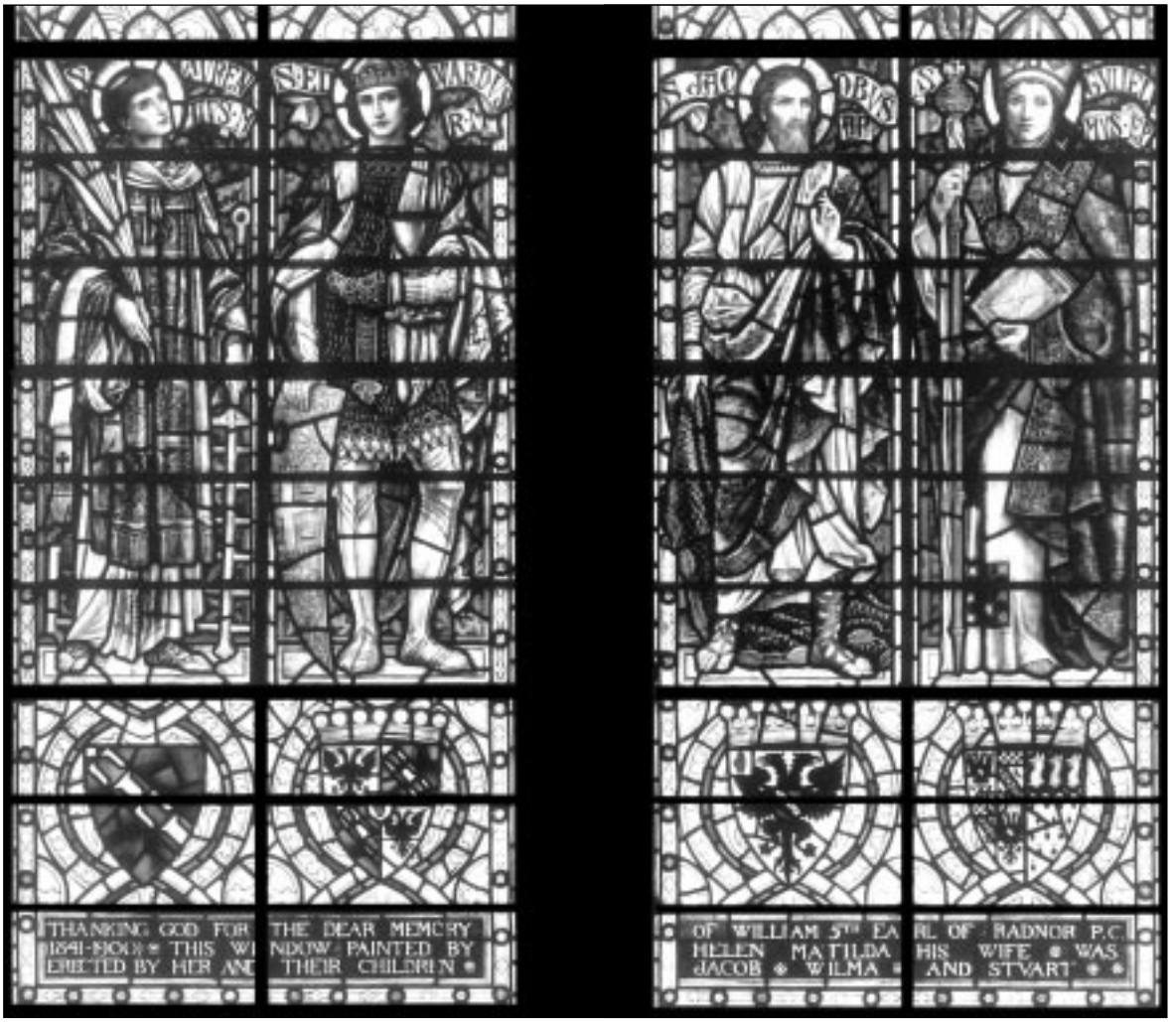


Fig. 1 Window in the north choir aisle of Salisbury Cathedral (n8), in memory of William, Fifth Earl of Radnor (d.1900), installed in 1902. Photo: © Crown Copyright, English Heritage

Salisbury Cathedral, where a large two-light window in the north choir aisle (Fig. 1) contains an inscription describing Helen Matilda as the painter of the window.[8] Despite this assertion, the earliest published guide to the cathedral's nineteenth-century glass, published within five years of her death, maintains that the window is only 'after a painting' by the Countess of Radnor.[9] Research in the archive of James Powell & Sons has corroborated the testimony of the Countess's autobiography and confirms that the inscription is absolutely correct.[10] Her three and possibly four forays into stained glass were all made in collaboration with James Powell & Company, from whom she purchased glass and materials, and took glass-painting lessons.

In 1866 the young and talented Helen Matilda Chaplin married William Pleydell-Bouverie (1841–1900), Viscount Folkestone and heir of the Earl of Radnor. The young couple moved in the most exalted social circles and counted the Prince

Fig. 2 Helen Matilda, Countess of Radnor, as conductor of her 'Ladies String Band and Chorus', photographed in 1896.

and Princess of Wales among their closest friends. Their wealth meant that Helen Matilda could pursue her artistic passions, of which her first love was undoubtedly music. She was an accomplished pianist and an extremely talented soprano who counted Sir Arthur Sullivan, Sir Hubert Parry, Charles Hallé, Percy Grainger, Sir Edward Elgar, Sir Thomas Beecham and the suffragist and composer Ethel Smyth among her friends. In 1873, mentored by Arthur Sullivan, she sang in the Royal Albert Hall and in 1881 she led her 'Ladies String Band and Chorus' in the first of their annual charity concerts (Fig. 2). Such was their success and popularity that the showman J. P. Barnum invited them to tour America, an invitation that she regretfully declined. In 1894 the Band premiered Hubert Parry's 'Suite for Strings

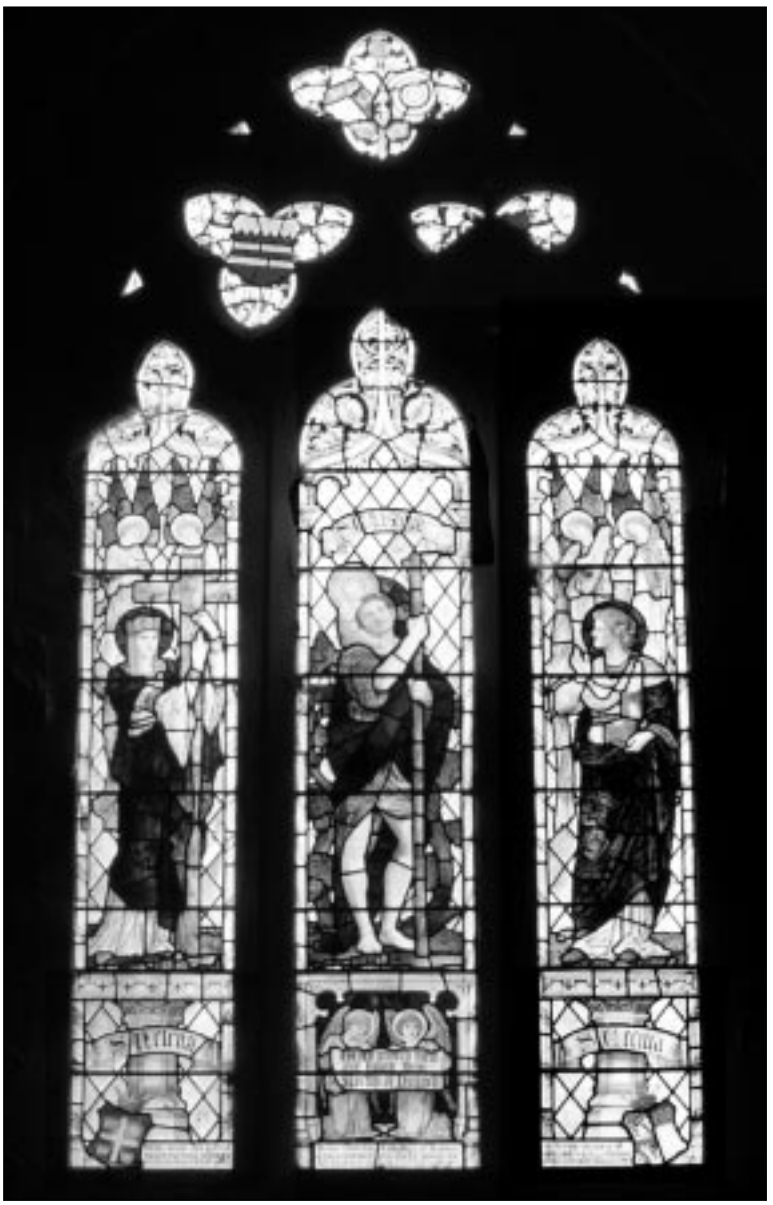
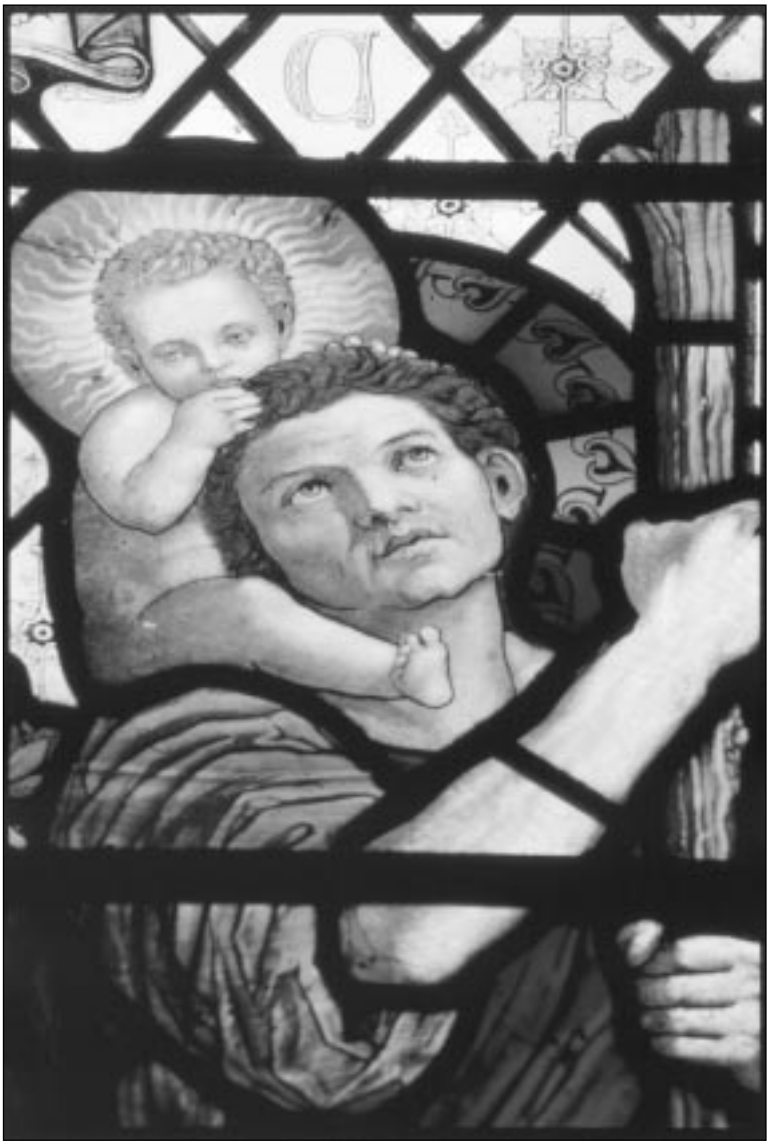


Fig. 3 Window in St Peter's, Britford painted by Lady Radnor in 1898. Photo: Sarah Brown.

in F', now always known as 'Lady Radnor's Suite'.[11] Of formal art training she makes no reference in her autobiography although from 1889 when she moved into Longford Castle as Countess of Radnor, she researched the picture collection. Her preliminary visitors' guide was expanded into a full catalogue and published in 1909.[12]

It was also as chatelaine of Longford Castle that Helen Matilda began her involvement in stained glass. In 1893 a new chapel was built, for which Lord Radnor executed the carving of the reredos. Lady Radnor embroidered altar cloths and in July and October 1898 she paid Powell's for sketches, cartoons, cutlines, glass and



Above left:
Fig. 5 Detail, St Cecilia. Photo: Sarah Brown.

Above right:
Fig. 4 Detail, St Christopher. Photo: Sarah Brown.

painting materials and six guineas for glass-painting lessons, and set about making grisaille windows in imitation of glass in Salisbury Cathedral.[13] Unfortunately, no photographic record of these windows *in situ* survives.

In December of the same year, encouraged by her experience, she embarked on a more ambitious project, a three-light window for St Peter's church, Britford, near Salisbury, the location of the Radnor family mausoleum (Fig. 3). The window depicts St Helen, St Cecilia and St Christopher (Fig. 4) and was begun in memory of her infant daughter Helen ('Nellie', d.1877) and her brother-in-law, Christopher. The order book makes it clear that Lady Radnor was to undertake the glass-painting herself, with the assistance of J. W. Brown.[14] It is an accomplished work, and in

terms of quality of execution is in no way inferior to the other work by Powell's in adjoining windows.[15] The figure of St Cecilia (Fig. 5) was drawn from a photograph of her musical daughter Wilma, fondly known as 'Queenie' and has a vivacity lacking in the other figures.[16]

Her most ambitious stained glass project followed the unexpected death of her husband William, in June 1900. Helen Matilda, now Countess-Dowager, vacated the Castle for a London house (12, Upper Brook Street), with a country retreat at Cookham on the Thames. She spent much of her time in Venice where she had another house, the Palazzo da Mula, and a garden on the Guidecca. In November 1900 she began work on a two-light window for Salisbury cathedral in William's memory, depicting the archangels Raphael, Gabriel, Michael and Uriel and the name saints of the male members of the family, Lawrence (Fig. 6), Edward, King and Martyr, James the Great and William of York (Fig. 7). While Britford was the place of private family interment, the Cathedral was the place of formal public commemoration for the Radnor family.

Above left:
Fig. 6 Salisbury Cathedral n8, detail of St Lawrence. Photo: Sarah Brown.

Above right:
Fig. 7 Salisbury Cathedral n8, detail of St William of York.

The Radnors had emerged as patrons of Salisbury Cathedral in the late eighteenth century. In 1778 Jacob, second Earl, had donated £200 to the restoration of the cathedral and the railings of the medieval chantry chapel of Walter, Lord Hungerford were translated from the nave to the south side of the choir, where they were re-erected under a 'Strawberry Hill Gothic' vault, to become the Radnor pew. The earl's gift of the east window of the choir clerestory, depicting Moses and the Brazen Serpent, made by James Pearson after a painting by J. H. Mortimer, was installed in 1781.[17] The first Radnor contact with the firm of James Powell and Sons seems to have been in 1879, when Jacob, fourth Earl, Helen Matilda's father-in-law, commissioned a 'Noli Me Tangere' designed by Powell's principal designer, Henry Holiday, for the east window of St Mary, Alderbury, in memory of his wife Mary.[18] In 1880 and 1890 Jacob's children gave two windows in the south choir aisle of the cathedral in memory of their parents, both made by Powell's and designed by Holiday in the classicising Italianate style of his maturity.[19]

Helen Matilda's window in memory of William is similar in format to the earlier windows, with figures of saints set against a thirteenth-century grisaille design, with the addition of family heraldry. It is clear from the Countess-Dowager's autobiography that despite the technical advice and support she received from the Powell's staff, she executed the bulk of the designing and glass-painting unaided, a fact that is acknowledged in the Powell's records.[20] Some of the glass-painting of subsidiary detail was done at 12 Upper Brook Street: [15 February, 1901] 'I went to Powell's in the morning, taking the last of the grisaille painting to be burnt'.[21] The painting of the more demanding figurative parts of the window were done under William Aikman's supervision in the Tudor Street studio 'as the shading etc, had to be done on a large glass easel in order that the light might be seen through the work'.[22] The window took eleven months to complete, no mean feat considering that part of her time was spent in Venice, and was installed to local acclaim in 1902.

In Venice the Countess-Dowager commissioned the construction of her own gondola decorated with badges and arms made in London by Powell's. She also kept a gondola at Cookham and one wonders what the residents of the Thames-side hamlets made of a very stout lady processing along the river in such an alien conveyance! The story of Lady Radnor's connection with Powell's has a Venetian postscript, for in April 1906 two memorial windows were dedicated in the Anglican church of St George in Venice, one of them in memory of Sir Henry Wootten, said to have been painted by Helen Matilda, the other in memory of Sir Henry Layard, husband of one of her closest Venice friends.[23]

Fig. 8 Helen Matilda, Countess Dowager of Radnor in 1927.

Declining health and the outbreak of the First World War drove the Countess home to England and no more is heard of her as a glass-painter (Fig. 8).

In many respects Helen Matilda is a footnote in the history of English stained glass, although her surviving windows are the equal of many produced by the established Victorian trade firms. And yet her short career as a designer and glass-painter, typifying as it does many of the shortcomings and limitations of women's participation in the arts in the nineteenth century, has something to say about the way in which their contribution has been overlooked, denigrated or denied.

Notes

1. See Pamela Gerrish Nunn, *Victorian Women Artists* (1987); Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women* (London 1993). Nunn selected Louisa Stuart, Marchioness of Waterford (1818–91) as the subject of a case study, yet includes no information about her involvement in stained glass, which extended to making as well as designing: between 1852 and 1865 she bought glass from James Powell and sons on at least five occasions.
2. See Anthea Callen, *Angel in the Studio: Women in the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London 1979) and Peter Cormack, *Women Stained Glass Artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement* (London 1985).
3. See Peter B G Binnall, 'Women Glass Painters', *Journal of the British Society of Master Glass Painters*, XVI (1979–80), 26–9.
4. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments of the City of York*, Volume III, South-West of the Ouse (London 1972), 24.
5. L. H Cust, revised Sarah Baylis, 'Pearson, James (*c.*1740–1838), glass painter', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford 2004–6), www.oxforddnb.com.
6. Lois Oliver, 'Clarke, Harriet Ludlow (d.1866), wood-engraver and stained glass artist', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford 2004–6), www.oxforddnb.com.
7. Judi Leighton, 'Conns, Emma (1838–1912), social reformer and theatre manager', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford 2004–6), www.oxforddnb.com.
8. Sarah Brown, *Sumptuous and Richly Adorn'd: The Decoration of Salisbury Cathedral* (London 1999), 100–102.
9. M. J. Fletcher, 'The Stained Glass in Salisbury Cathedral', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine,* XLV (1930–32), 235–53.
10. Helen Countess-Dowager of Radnor, *From a Great-Grand-Mother's Armchair* (London 1927).
11. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, chapter 5, 96–121; Parry greatly admired her energy and enthusiasm. C.L. Graves, *Hubert Parry, His Life and Works* (London 1926), Vol. 1, 345.
12. She was assisted in her work by George Scarff, former keeper of the National Gallery. The catalogue was edited by W. Barclay Squire of the British Museum.
13. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 154–5; Victoria & Albert Museum, Archive of Art & Design (AAD), Powell's Order Book 1898, p.2.
14. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 186; AAD, Powells' Order Book 1898, p.131.
15. Powell's were involved in glazing projects at Britford between 1895 and 1904.
16. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 193.
17. Brown 1999, 41–2.
18. AAD, Powell's Order Book, 1879, p.240; Cash Book 1880, p.363.
19. AAD, Powell's Order Book, 1880, p.385, Cash Book 1881, p.85; Order Book 1890, p.219, Cash Book 1891, p.163.
20. AAD, Powell's Order Book 1900, p.62.
21. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 188.
22. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 186.
23. *From a Great-Grandmother's Armchair*, 219; AAD Powell's Order Book 1905 p.108.

The restoration of Salisbury Cathedral by George Gilbert Scott, 1862–78

Suzanna Branfoot

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THE INVOLVEMENT OF George Gilbert Scott, (1811–1878) in the restoration of the cathedral was a major contribution to its present well-being, even though some of his work has not survived. He was asked to report on its state in 1858, and from 1862 to the end of his life in 1878 was involved in a programme of repairs and restoration of the building,[1] a programme that had been given added urgency in the minds of all concerned by the complete collapse of the tower and spire of Chichester Cathedral on February 21st, 1861. The refurnishing of the choir in memory of Bishop Hamilton was largely undoing the 'widespread destruction wrought by Wyatt'[2] and returning the space to something of its mediaeval original gothic, while enriching it with Victorian ecclesiastical splendour.

In 1862, the year the work started, Scott gave a lecture to the RIBA laying down his principles and urging that they be followed by all in the profession:

> 'The great principle to start upon is to preserve the greatest possible amount of ancient work intact; never to renew a feature without necessity, but to preserve everything which is not so decayed as to destroy its value as an exponent of the original design, never to add new work, except in strict conformity with the evidences of its original form, never to mask over or smarten up old work for the sake of making it conformable with new, never to 'restore' carved work or sculpture, but to leave it to speak for itselves and generally to deal with an ancient work as with an object on which we set the greatest value, and the integrity and authenticity of which are matters which we view as of paramount importance.'[3]

He took a poor view of some cathedral work '… often left in the hands of single member of the chapter whose idea of restoration is the renewal of every decayed stone, and the chipping down the rest to correspond with it.'[4]

Scott's own words in his *Personal and Professional Recollections* are the most useful source of general information as to what was done, given in his own voice; while the work was carried out according to his principles as far as possible, he particularly regretted the over-painting of part of the ceiling, which was done while he was ill:[5]

> 'I was appointed to this great work, I think, about 1859 … The first work undertaken was that of external repair. The stone, though generally in fair preservation, was partially decayed, and the whole building was

Above left:
Fig. 1 The basemould plinth, which is about 3 foot high, in places was buried almost to its top.

Above right:
Fig. 2 Scott's and Sheilds' iron ties with screw joints.

> gone through carefully and conservatively, replacing only such stones as were irrecoverably perished … The foundations were extensively examined all round the church, and underpinned or repaired where found necessary. They have been throughout defended by a mass of concrete surrounding them with a channel formed above it.'[6]

As in most churches, the soil of the churchyard close was above the original level and so covering the fine deep base mould. Therefore as well as the channel around the walls, the churchyard all around was lowered by two to three feet; the result, as one correspondent to the *Building News* remarked, was that 'it would be difficult to find a better or more attractive plinth.'[7] (Fig. 1). The *Builder* too considered that 'its architectural effect has been strikingly improved.'[8]

Scott again:

> 'Our next great work was the strengthening of the tower. The original thirteenth-century builders had erected a central tower, rising sufficiently high to receive the roofs of the four arms of the church. The storey against which these roofs abutted is a very light structure, and was intended to be visible from within. It is perforated by a triforium gallery, leaving externally a wall of little more than two feet in thickness … The corner turrets have each a staircase, rendering them mere shells.
>
> 'On this frail structure the fourteenth-century builders carried up the vast tower, some eighty feet high, with wall nearly six feet thick, and upon this a spire rising 180 feet more. It need not then be wondered that the older storey, so unduly loaded should have become shattered… when

> I examined it, [the crushing] had proceeded to very alarming lengths. I proposed to bond it together, (in addition to the numerous ties it already had) by diagonal iron ties, and then gradually to insert new stones in place of those which were shattered. The Chapter for further satisfaction, called in the aid of an engineer eminent for iron construction, Mr [Francis] Sheilds, whose opinion very much coincided with my own. [The ironwork] consists mainly of two heights of diagonal ties, branching out towards their ends and passing round the stair turrets, and so grasping them firmly through a height of several feet, in which space they are connected by vertical irons placed upon the exterior faces.'[9] (Fig. 2).
>
> 'Nearly all the steps of the four staircases were shattered, and had to be taken out and renewed, and the same was the case with a very great amount of the stonework. This was effected almost stone by stone, so that small parts only were disturbed at once, a very lengthy process but the only safe one. It spread over many months till at last every crushed stone had been replaced by one stronger than the old one had ever been …'

Scott had used this method, of substantial screwed tie-rods for the repair and prevention of further problems, in the tower of St Mary, Oxford in 1856. They were described as 'three sets of wrought-iron tie-bars fixed at three different levels in the tower, each set consisted of eight bars, two being used in one length flanged at their junction, and firmly drawn together by double-screwed connecting pieces.'[10]

At Salisbury again: 'Reparations of a minor kind were effected throughout the tower and even to the top of the spire, where I had the satisfaction of inspecting them up to the very vane.'

To climb up the last 40 feet through the weather door on the outside of the spire was an achievement for a man of his build, age and physical state. It was described by Archdeacon Lear as having 'iron cramps projecting from the spire by the means of which a man used to go to the top annually to oil the vane. He questioned whether they would ever find any person as ready and willing to go up as had been the man who formerly went'.[11]

Scott enlarged on further, more visible work, as so much of the expenditure until then had been on structural repairs:

> 'On the death of Bishop Hamilton in 1869 a fund was raised for the restoration of the interior of the choir as a memorial to him. …the stonework of the choir and its aisles has been thoroughly repaired, and the choir fittings brought back, as closely as possible to what may be supposed to have been their original state. All the desk-fronts were modern, and no traces of the old ones remained. The canopies were of modern deal. The reredos was the gift of Lord Beauchamp; the choir-screen of Mrs Lear.'[12]

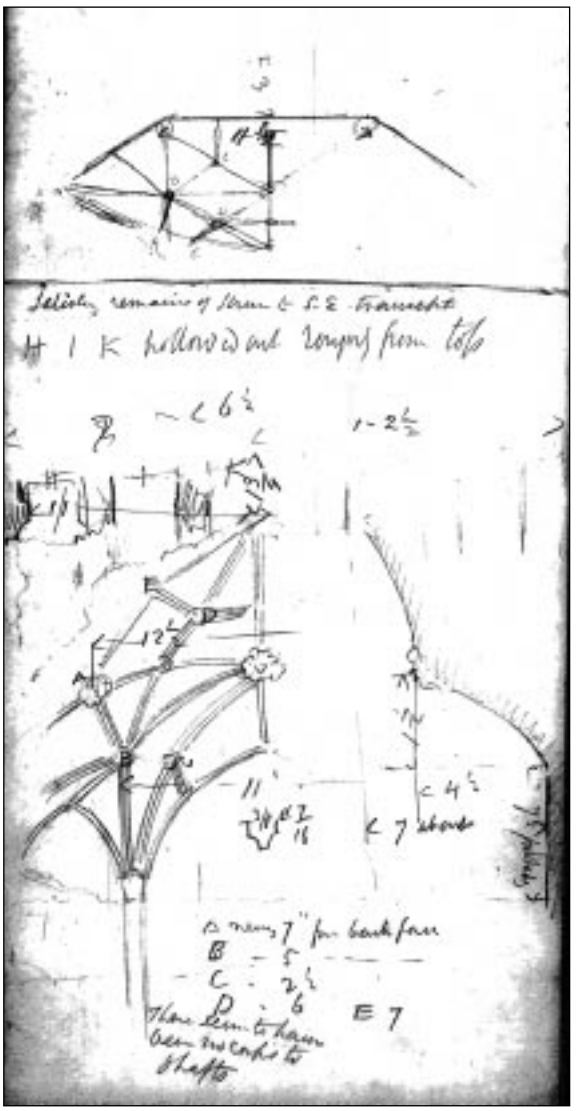
Scott placed his altar and reredos at the end of the high choir in front of the triple arched wall leaving the retrochoir as a processional way, and lady chapel (Trinity Chapel) as usual to the east:

> 'An interesting controversy arose [in 1876] respecting the true position of the high altar. It was started by the Rev. H.T. Armfield, an antiquarian, who laid great stress upon the falling off in dignity in the decorations of the vaulting after passing eastward of the crossing, as being inconsistent with the assumed position of the high altar eastward of that spot.'[13]

Armfield presented a paper to the Society of Antiquaries[14] on the roof-paintings which were being restored by Clayton and Bell. His argument was that there was 'a crescendo series of sacred subjects, Psalmists, Prophets, Evangelists leading up to a large Vesica with Our Lord in glory.' Therefore the high altar must have been directly under this, and not further east where the subjects were the secular Labours of the Months. This also fitted with the needs of the Sarum Rite with space all round the altar for censing.

Scott, who was at the meeting, replied that where he had placed the altar was the normal position for an English church in relation to the choir, citing the measurements of a number of English cathedrals, including Winchester, Canterbury, Lincoln and Gloucester. He also cited earlier documents as far as Leland in the sixteenth century which placed the altar in the eastern bay of the presbytery, with the consideration that under the crossing was a very impractical place since the historical alterations. There was considerable discussion, most supporting Scott, with argument from the Rev M.E.C. Walcott that the Labours of the Months could have a 'higher significance.'[15]

Some two years later Canon W.H. Jones followed this discussion with a paper of his own on the original position of the high altar.[16] He argued that while Scott's ideas were completely valid, and that the altar had been where it now was, it is possible that in ancient times it had been moved, possibly within the first hundred years in the fourteenth century, to that position. His theory agreed with Armfield as to the placing of the first high altar, and suggested that the whole eastern arm of the cathedral and the smaller transepts had been for the laity, on a level with the aisles, and there was a raised area with steps to the altar in the centre of the lesser crossing.' … the arrangement must have been very majestic, the whole congregation, priests and people, being thus assembled "in circuitu mensae Domini". At all events this theory gives some significance to those minor transepts which form such a characteristic feature of our Cathedral, and shews that they were constructed, not merely with regard to beauty, but also to real utility.'[17] Canon Jones goes on to consider why the altar might have been moved further east, and concludes that it may have been around 1330, i.e. after the building of the spire, when it was known that the building was in a dangerous state, and some of the north and south choir arcading, level with the lesser transepts gained inverted arches above and walling below for



added stability. This, of course, meant that the previous usage of the space was now compromised for the altar was less accessible. He quotes Scott saying it would have held "an impracticable position between the two doors". The altar therefore was moved east to a more natural position at the end of the structural choir with the reredos in the central arch, and the laity's space now became included in the liturgical sanctuary.

It can be seen therefore that all the participants in the discussion, the Rev. H.T. Armfield, Scott and others could be considered right in their views as to the association of the paintings with the first high altar, but the nineteenth-century revision probably restored the second original placing as Leland described it, and was more acceptable for Victorian ritual.[18]

Above left:
Fig. 3 Scott's sketch of the wall of the choir from Sketchbook 35, Jan 17th 1872. 'Screen wall across S.E. transept as recently opened out.' The mouldings show the C14 wall ornamentation with the EE doorway.

Above right:
Fig. 4 Scott's drawing of the canopy vault.

And so back to Scott in *Recollections,* referring to those fourteenth-century screen walls:

> 'I may mention two small works in which I took an especial interest. One of these was the restoration of the screens which part the smaller transepts from the choir. These had originally been plain walls with very high copings (as was the case with all the early surroundings of the choir and presbytery) and were each pierced by a good early english doorway [sic- no caps].'
>
> 'That on the south side had been enriched externally in the fourteenth century, at the time when the transept arches were strengthened, by a series of very elaborate niches. These niches had been built up solid, and the doorways so far destroyed that no trace remained of their original form. By removing modern work we found traces of the design, both of these doorways, and of the niche work, … and they have now been restored to their true forms.' (Figs. 3, 4).[19]

Scott's drawings and his comment show what he found with measurements and mouldings, and it can be seen that the old stones at the base and the vault appear to have been incorporated in the restored wall. However, the finished result does appear more elaborate, so must owe some of its design to fragments, knowledge and an appreciation of what was needed. The Early English doorway was also largely rebuilt from the design and mouldings of the uncovered remains (Figs. 5, 6).

He continues:

> 'The other was the restoration to its original place of the effigy attributed to Bishop Poore. This had occupied the position of a founder's tomb to the north of the high altar, under a part of the thick screen-wall, which was arcaded to receive it, as is shown by Carter, both in his architectural book, and by his sketch make in 1781, which was published by Dr Milner. Wyatt swept away the whole of this, and placed the effigy in the north-east transept upon a fifteenth century altar-tomb belonging to someone else. I have had the pleasure of retranslating it to its old position, and of re-erecting the arcaded screen-wall over; in doing which I was aided by some beautiful fragments recently discovered, which, though probably not part of the tomb, very much resemble Carter's sketch.
>
> 'Where Wyatt deposited the body found in the tomb no-one knows. As to the question whether this was or was not Bishop Poore's tomb, I would refer to a correspondence between myself and Canon Jones of Bradford,[20] as also to a letter addressed by me to the Sec. of the Society of Antiquaries in 1876, … Leland states that Bishop Poore was buried at Durham. Matthew Paris and document in the hands of Canon Jones, all say that the bishop was buried at Tarrant [Crawford]. Bishop Godwin says the same, but his editor stated that Poore desired to be there interred, but that the Salisbury people claimed his body and left only his heart at Tarrant. . A body was anyhow found by Wyatt in the tomb.'[21]

Top left:
Fig. 5 The base of the wall today, showing old and new stonework.

Bottom left:
Fig. 6 The rebuilt Early English doorway.

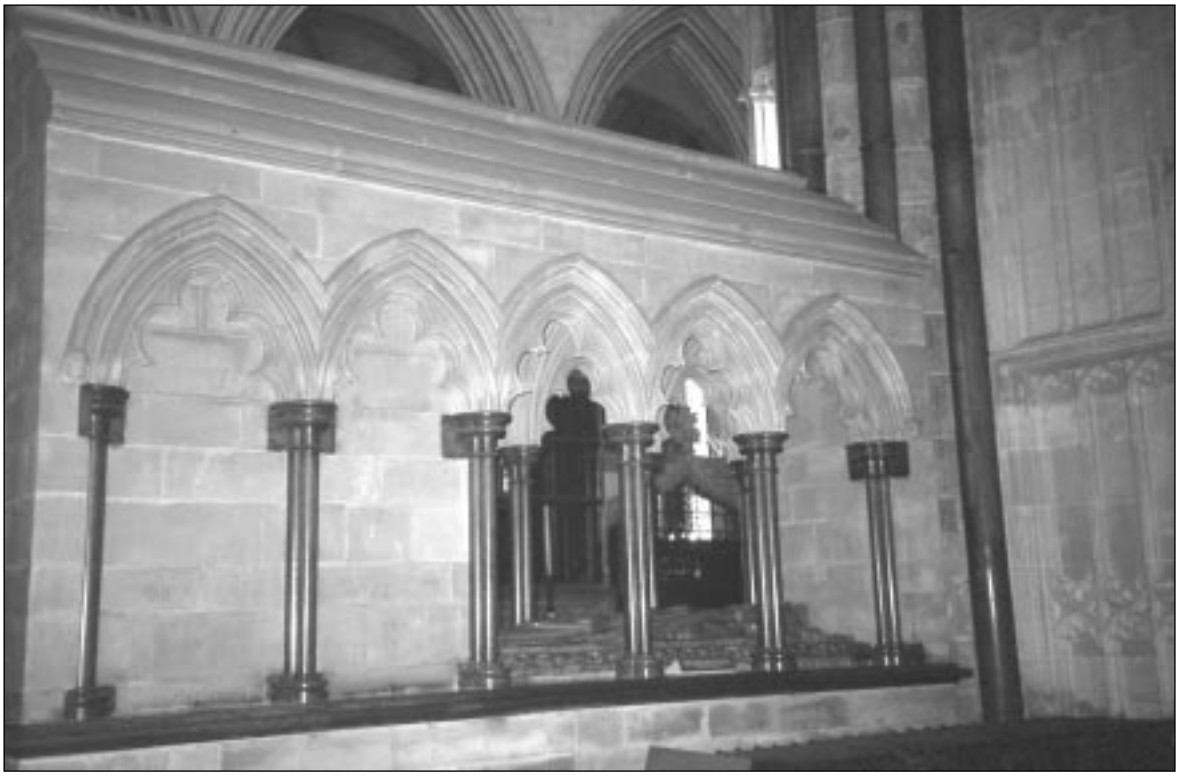


Fig. 7 Monument to Bishop Poore, with a mid c.13 effigy now thought to be Bishop Bingham. View from the north choir aisle.

This monument was recreated (Fig. 7), and it would have been appropriate that it belonged to Bishop Richard Poore (d.1237 at Durham) as the man responsible for the translation of the cathedral from Old Sarum to Salisbury and so effectively the founder. However, it is now considered to be Bishop Robert de Bingham, (d. 1246) his successor, an argument explored by Sarah Brown in her description of the figure's draperies and those of the angel in the aedicule above its head as being appropriate to *c.*1250.[22] Whatever the truth, it is clear that Scott wanted to honour the man he thought of as the cathedral's founder.

To complete this restoration of the choir, Scott designed the monument for Bishop Hamilton which is at the east end of the south side, opposite the one for Bishop Poore, (now Bingham.) In his notebooks, which are a major source for knowledge of how Scott worked, is a drawing of part of the original mid-thirteenth century choir screen which is clearly the basis for this monument (Fig. 8). The arcaded drip mould arches, with straight-sided gablets below carrying finials, over the trefoiled arches are almost a copy but without the sorrowing Christ and the angels. The triple shafts in polished black Purbeck marble, a Salisbury feature, carry the rich stiff-leaf capitals of different patterns as in the original, and rest on plinths with the same moulding as the drawing. It is entirely appropriate that the men responsible for the choir and for

Fig. 8 Scott's drawing of the old choir screen, now in the lesser north transept, showing the distinctive marble gablets with places for finials, and fine stiff-leaf capitals. S/b 38.

Fig. 9 Bishop Hamilton's tomb. View from the south choir aisle.

its restoration should balance each other with comparable memorials either side of the altar (Figs. 9, 10).

The pulpit of 1877 at the north-east corner of the main crossing, also by Scott, is in memory of Bishop William Hony (Fig. 11). It is a substantial structure on marble shafts, with an elaborate stair and railing by Skidmore. Scott again has used the old Salisbury screen as precedent, with the trefoiled niches, marble gablets over and demi-angels in between. These angels are holding a lute, a crown or with folded hands, again as on the old screen, but though derived from them are not precise copies. Here however there is a great richness of stiff-leaf, as on the screen, surrounding the figures who are in cinq-foiled recesses, Noah and the ark, Elijah and the raven, Jonah with a fourteenth-century ship, St John the Baptist and SS Peter and Paul.

Scott's other fittings, the reredos and the ironwork screen in memory of Dean Francis Lear from his wife, and the encaustic tiled floor have now gone, taken out in 1959. The tiles were copies of old ones from the cathedral made by Godwin and Co of Lugwardine, who made many tiles for Scott as their craftsmanship was more mediaeval in character than for example Mintons, who made the Chapter House tiles. Their removal has taken some of the building's history with them, for they preserved the old designs.

The screen was taken apart, but its gates survive as the entrance to the Victoria & Albert Museum shop, and the lower part as altar

Fig. 10 Bishop Hamilton's tomb, details.

rails in the church at Alderbury, a village just outside Salisbury. The quality and style of the screen, gorgeously coloured with enamels and polished brass, can be seen in Lichfield Cathedral, which preserves its Scott work and presents a fine setting especially when a nave altar is in use.

The repairs to the west front, and the addition of the numerous sculptures by J.F. Redfern, have been extensively considered in the well-illustrated recent book *Salisbury Cathedral – The West Front*.[23] Perhaps an appropriate concluding note is to draw attention to the lowest row to the north and the figure of Bishop Poore as founder holding an unfinished model of the cathedral; his

Fig. 11 Scott's pulpit, a memorial to Bishop William Hony, the design based on the old screen. Made by Farmer and Brindley 1877, with ironwork by Skidmore of Coventry.

monument having been lost in the interim, this extensive restoration hugely supported by Bishop Hamilton, gave Scott an opportunity to recreate a memorial for them both (Fig. 12).

Notes

1 The Chapter House restoration had been started in 1855 under Henry Clutton, taken further by William Burges when Clutton joined the Roman Catholic church, and then finished under Scott to 1861.

2 *Handbook to the Cathedrals of England, Southern Division,* London: John Murray 1861, p.89. Wyatt had cleared the choir of most of its monuments putting them in the nave or transepts, and putting the high altar at the far east end in the Lady Chapel. He had also renewed much of the woodwork of the stalls and canopies. This work was supported by Bishop Shute Barrington, also responsible, with Wyatt, at Durham.

3 G.G.Scott, *On the Conservation of ancient architectural Monuments and Remains. Builder* 20 (1862) p.24. Particularly pertinent when Wyatt had demolished two Perpendicular chantry chapels and the detached bell-tower.

Fig. 12. The figure of Bishop Poore holding an incomplete model of the cathedral. West front, lower north side. By James Redfern, 1868–9.

4 G.G. Scott, *The Restoration Question with reference to Cathedrals,* lecture, B.20 (1862), p.70.

5 Clayton & Bell were responsible for cleaning off Wyatt's yellow wash and restoring the painting. However, 'I do not think that it was very faithfully reproduced from the old remains.' (GGS) Scott had had a serious heart attack and was away from work for 3 months, and working less hard for a while after.

6 George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections,* ed. Gavin Stamp., pp. 300–303.

7 *Building News* 27, (1869), p. 251. Letter from 'G.M.G' with comments about the restoration. He felt much of it was too conservative.

8 *Builder* 27, (1869), p. 384. A leader article on the work so far.

9 *Recollections,* pp. 301–2.

10 *CEAJ* 19, (1856), p.358. This tower had a spectacular spire which had been made more top-heavy with elaborated pinnacles by J.C. Buckler during his restoration of 1848–52 and the resulting cracking of the late thirteenth-century tower represented a comparable problem to that found at Salisbury, that the walls were not built to support such a superstructure. The tower may also have been weakened by sewers being built nearby. Buckler's additions were removed by T.G. Jackson 1894–6.

11 *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society Magazine,* 17 (1877), p.22. This is a report on a visit to the cathedral to look at the restorations among other things, led by Archdeacon Lear.
12 *Recollections,* pp. 303–4. Unfortunately the £1000 given by Mrs Lear was insufficient, so Skidmore who made it probably lost money.
13 *Recollections,* p.305.
14 *The Society of Antiquaries Proceedings,* Series 2, 6 (1873–6), pp. 476–8.
15 S. of A. Proceedings, pp. 478–9.
16 *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine,* 17 (1878), pp. 136–46. Rev. Canon W.H. Jones, *On the original Position of the High Altar at Salisbury Cathedral.*
17 Canon Jones, ibid. p. 143.
18 This question of where the original altar was has been discussed recently by Matthew Reeve, *Architectural History,* 24, (1984), and Peter Kidson in *Salisbury Cathedral- Perspectives on the Architectural History*, Thomas Cocke and Peter Kidson, RCHME: London, HMSO 1993.
19 *Recollections,* p.307.
20 See also paper cited above. Rev. Canon W.H. Jones was also Vicar of Bradford-on-Avon. He stated that Leland noted a memorial tablet only in the Lady Chapel and not an effigy. *WANHM* 18, p.225.
21 *Recollections,* p.308
22 Sarah Brown, *Sumptuous and Richly adorn'd:…* p. 118.
23 *Salisbury Cathedral – The West Front*, ed. Tim Ayres, Chichester: Phillimore & Co Ltd, 2000.

Architects and clergy in early-Victorian Britain: a useful alliance or a threat to the profession?

Christopher Webster

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THE RAPID GROWTH in church building in the early nineteenth century – and especially from the beginning of Victoria's reign – presented the burgeoning architectural profession with an important source of employment. However, it also presented the profession with a significant challenge to its authority, an issue this paper seeks to explore.

The formation of the Institute of British Architects – later the RIBA – in 1834 was indisputably a milestone in the emergence of the architectural profession in this country. Some writers on the subject of the profession's development have interpreted the Institute's birth as a sign of maturity and independence: the architectural profession had finally come of age.[1] However, other writers have seen it as 'an expression of insecurity',[2] an attempt to protect architects from those in the allied occupations by emphasising the architect's special calling. Both standpoints are united in recognising that, in the 1830s, architects needed to demonstrate their skills were both independent from and superior to, on the one hand, the higher building craftsmen and, on the other, those engaged in land and building surveying, rent assessment and collecting, estate agency, building development, interior decoration, the supply of building materials, etc. The knowledge that, in the mind of the public, the architect's unique and intellectually superior role was not always recognised, and that much of his activity would have been willingly 'stolen' by the allied trades listed above did much to promote the profession's insecurity.

In this long list of allied occupations that, in the 1830s and '40, the profession believed would willingly have subsumed aspects of the architect's particular function, a further group might usefully be added, although one not hitherto identified by the various writers on this subject: members of the recently formed diocesan and county architectural societies, of which the clergy made up a substantial proportion. The writer of an article in *The Architect, Engineer and Surveyor* in 1843, calling for improvements in the state of architectural education, went so far as to refer to,

> the peculiar dangers to which the profession is exposed at the present time in this country. The Decorators on the one side, and the Church Architectural Societies on the other, are laying siege to its strongholds, and without some more adequate means of resistance than it now

> possesses, they will assume control over some part of its territory … The influence of these Societies … is most prejudicial to the profession, for their object is to establish a higher authority in architecture than the profession itself. [3]

The reality of this threat repays examination. While there was not, of course, any suggestion that the clerical and lay members of these societies were keen to take over the designing of market halls or warehouses, when it came to the design of Gothic churches, it was demonstrably true that, before the early 1840s, architects rarely approached such a commission with the confidence and authority that they displayed when designing (say) a Classical court house.

Crucial in the architects' insecurity were both the stylistic and functional imperatives in early-Victorian church design. On the issue of style, it could be claimed that rarely in the post-Reformation period had architects ever had anything but an uneasy relationship with Gothic, with just one or two notable exceptions. Most Georgian and early-Victorian architects preferred the Classical tradition, whether of the Palladian, Neo-classical, Greek Revival or Italian Renaissance sub-divisions. Classicism was the style architects knew and understood. 'Regency architects were natural classicists,'[4] Professor Crook concludes. Architectural education – such as it was – was concerned with Classicism. The various Professors of Architecture at the Royal Academy, i.e. those entrusted with delivering just about the only 'public' lectures in architecture, were committed Classicists. The best known of them, John Soane, Professor from 1806–37, barely mentioned Gothic in his annual lecture programme.[5] Following on from the long established and more prestigious academies in France and Italy was the belief that the highest form of architectural design was royal palaces or grandiose public buildings, and to design them in anything other than a Classical style was unthinkable.[6] But it wasn't just tradition or sentiment that kept mainstream architectural thought wedded to Classicism; Classicism was a style capable of being taught and discussed according to a set of widely understood rules. And by the same set of rules, architecture could be judged by informed clients. It was possible to compliment a good design and condemn a bad one using largely objective criteria. On the other hand, Gothic neither followed *these* rules nor did it seem to possess anything that could be identified as its *own* rules. To design in the Gothic style seemed to be intuitive and arbitrary. Critics had little problem agreeing that York Minster was a sublime building but they were largely incapable of justifying their opinions. The antiquary Thomas Kerrick summed up the situation succinctly in 1812: until 'the rules by which [medieval churches] were designed

… are discovered, all our attempts to build in the Gothic style must be unsuccessful.'[7] For at least the following quarter century, the rules continued to remain elusive.

Thus it was that, before the mid-1840s, many architects approached Gothic commissions with some trepidation; most neither appreciated nor understood the style. And this ambivalence was strengthened by the recent experience of the designers of the Gothic churches erected for the Commissioners of the 1818 Church Building Act; having laboured to satisfy local committees with little understanding of architectural or stylistic issues, and with only modest budgets, their products were, at best, half-heartedly acknowledged.

R. D. Chantrell, writing in *The Builder* in 1847, reflected on the problems he and his fellow architects had faced and, significantly, saw the clergy as the chief promoters of the increased demand for the Gothic style.

> The revival of the architecture of the middle ages within the last quarter of a century, in this country, may be fairly attributed to the clerical body, who, accustomed to meet in our cathedrals and ancient parish churches, gave preference to that style, then usually denominated Gothic; and where they had sufficient influence, induced local committees to adopt it for their new churches in all parts of the kingdom. The architects employed on these buildings, though generally well grounded in Greek and Roman architecture, found themselves called upon to erect buildings utterly at variance with Greek and Roman principles; and having no time to study or collect data, whereon to compose works in this (to them) new style, they were required at once to erect buildings equally at variance with its principles, in which the greatest number of sittings could be crowded into the smallest area and adapt the fragments of the various medieval styles to their utilitarian masses; thus by compulsion, producing works truly Gothic.[8]

The concentration on the Classical tradition by architects and upper-class taste in the form of the Society of Dilettanti was highlighted by John Britton, the prolific publisher and committed medievalist, in the 'Introduction' to *York Cathedral* of 1819 in his Cathedral Antiquities series.

> England contains many magnificent examples of [Gothic architecture] … one cannot refrain from wishing that Gothic Structures *were more considered, were better understood* and *in higher estimation* than they hitherto have been. Would our Dilettanti, instead of importing the gleanings of Greece; or our Antiquaries, instead of publishing loose, incoherent prints, encourage persons duly qualified to undertake a *correct, elegant publication of our cathedrals,* and other buildings called Gothic, before they totally fall to ruin, it would … preserve a remembrance of an *extraordinary Style of Building.*[9] [Britton's emphasis]

Of course, Britton was keen to promote his own publishing initiatives and could be seen to be partial. However, his theme that

Classical styles had hitherto received more scholarly attention from connoisseurs, gentlemen amateurs, the aristocracy and those who supplied their architectural needs was indisputable.[10]

From about 1840 the architect's difficulties were compounded. Not only were there the old stylistic uncertainties, but the move towards a 'higher' form of Anglican worship presented associated functional demands on church architects: internal arrangements of the type promoted by the Commissioners in the '20s and '30s, and quickly established as the norm, were no longer acceptable. Furthermore, the formation in 1839 of the Oxford Architectural Society and the Cambridge Camden Society – the latter an especially vocal thorn in the side of 'uneducated' architects – followed by the rapid growth of the county and diocesan architectural societies from the early 1840s, constituted a knowledgeable band of critics eager to condemn the solecisms of the unwitting designer. It was a battle for which most architects – and certainly most of the older, established ones – were ill prepared. *The Ecclesiologist's* savaging of Blore and Salvin in the 1840s – two architects at the very top of the profession – is instructive.[11] Most retreated, thoroughly bowed, from the mire of Gothic church work, leaving the clergy and lay ecclesiologists to exercise their new found architectural authority by pronouncing on restorations and new work – or meddling as the older architects would have seen it – and by promoting a younger generation of architects who shared their enthusiasms, such as R. C. Carpenter.[12]

The belief that the clergy should be in charge of, or at least oversee, ecclesiastical building projects was not a new one at the beginning of Victoria's reign. The Cambridge Camden Society certainly raised the stakes, but the seeds had been sown much earlier. As Rosemary Sweet has pointed out, 'The most numerous occupational grouping amongst antiquaries … consisted of clergymen … [They] represented between 10 and 15 per cent of the members of the Society of Antiquaries during the eighteenth century and they included some of the most active members.'[13] This group produced two presidents and three secretaries and, collectively, the clerical members contributed 'roughly one-third of the papers published in *Archaeologia* between 1770 and 1796.'[14] 'The interest in architectural antiquities [i.e. medieval structures] which gathered in strength over the course of the [eighteenth] century not unnaturally engaged the attention of many clerical antiquaries, given their professional familiarity with the ecclesiastical architecture under discussion and their responsibility for maintenance of the church fabric … Among the leading authorities on architectural antiquities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries James Bentham, William Gunn,

Thomas Kerrich, John Milner, John Haggitt, Robert Darley Waddilove and Richard Yates were all clergymen.'[15] Thomas Rickman in his seminal *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England* of 1817 sought to capitalise on this market by going one step further down the road of clerical involvement with building: 'The object of the present publication has been [to] … afford the guardians of ecclesiastical edifices such clear discriminative remarks on the buildings now existing, as may enable them to judge with considerable accuracy of the restorations necessary to be made in those venerable edifices that are under their peculiar care and also … to render them more capable of deciding on the various designs for churches in imitation of the English styles, which may be presented to their choice.'[16]

By way of response, the Vicar of Skipton in North Yorkshire, writing to the Incorporated Church Building Society in 1837 with estimates for a proposed new church in the town stated, after listing various sums for the different building tradesmen, 'Architect (I shall myself look to the proper building of the church so that we shall only have to pay for plans and the occasional visit) say £100.'[17]

Simon Bradley has identified a significant number of useful sources for those wishing to know more of the late-Georgian debate on the subject of clerical involvement with ecclesiastical architecture, including proposals that medieval architecture should form a part of the clerical curriculum and that the clergy might be called on to give a lead in church restoration and design.[18] From *c.*1840 such initiatives gathered momentum. Not surprisingly, the Cambridge Camden Society was in the vanguard.

The Society's first publication *A Few Hints in the Practical Study of Ecclesiastical Antiquities* was published in 1839 and ran to four editions.[19] It sought to bring 'the science' of ecclesiology to an ever wider audience and its modest price of 1/6d ensured its success. 'It is hoped that the following Hints will prove not altogether useless to those who, having acquired some little knowledge of Ecclesiastical Antiquities, are at a loss how to apply that knowledge to the examination and description of real buildings.'[20] So much for encouraging the study of Gothic churches, an un-contentious and predictably popular pastime for the Society's undergraduate and recently ordained membership. *A Few Words to Church Builders,* first published in 1841, takes the crusade for more correct church design one stage further.

> It is not supposed that all the decorations recommended in this tract can be adopted in every church, especially where the building is carried on under the control of a committee. But to describe a church such as it ought to be may perhaps have the advantage of shewing how very far

> below this model are most of the buildings to which we now by courtesy give that name. And here we may address ourselves to church-building committees, for whom … these words are written. The smaller these committees are, the better; and the whole superintendence should be vested in the Clergyman of the parish, the only man who, in most country villages, understands anything about these matters; and whose tastes, and feelings, and views are far more likely to be correct than those of any other person. Above all, if the Incorporated Society for building and enlarging Churches and Chapels be consulted, care must be taken that the beauty of the building be not sacrificed to the accommodation of worshippers, a fault into which that great Society is – I say with grief – too apt to fall.[21]

The increasing interest in Gothic architecture was reflected in the growing number of books on the subject that appeared in the second quarter of the nineteenth century; of relevance to this paper is the extent to which the clergy were becoming prominent in this area of architectural writing. Of the non-clerics, the writers Thomas Rickman, A. W. N. Pugin and M. H. Bloxam – the latter's works reached a huge audience – and the writer/publishers John Britton and John Henry Parker were undeniably important. On the other hand, often it was the clerical authors who set new standards of scholarship and interpretation. This very substantial group included Rev. James Dallaway,[22] Rev. John Milner,[23] Rev. G. D. Wittington,[24] Rev. W. Whewell,[25] Rev. Robert Willis,[26] Rev. J. L. Petit,[27] Rev. G. A. Poole.[28] The output of the C.C.S. (and its successor, the Ecclesiological Society) was dominated by Rev. B. Webb and Rev. J. M. Neale.[29]

But perhaps the most telling evidence of clerical involvement in church building and restoration is to be found in the make-up of the diocesan architectural societies that started – and very quickly grew – in the middle of the century: the Oxford and Cambridge societies – already mentioned – were both founded in 1839, followed by the Lichfield Society for the Encouragement of Ecclesiastical Architecture, the Bristol and West of England Architectural Society, the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society, the Durham Architectural Society (all founded in 1841), the Architectural Society for the County of York (1842), the Architectural Society of the County of Lincoln (1844) etc. By 1850 a further 14 societies had come into existence.

To take just three societies for the year 1850: the Architectural Society for the Archdeaconry of Northampton had a committee of 16 (excluding Presidents and Vice Presidents) of which 10 were clerics. Among its membership of 226, 141 were ordained. The Architectural Society for the County of York had a committee of 28 (excluding presidents and vice presidents) of which 16 were

members of the clergy. Its membership of 273 contained 113 clerics. The Lincolnshire Architectural Society had a membership of 111 of which 71 – almost two-thirds – were ordained. (No details of the composition of its committee are available.)[30]

Although the titles of these societies, for the most part, contain the stylistically neutral term 'Architectural,' their aims were very specific, as their Rules make clear and an examination of their meetings, libraries and published Proceedings confirms. While the precise wording differed from one Society to another, Rule 2 of the Northampton Architectural Society is typical: 'That the objects of the Society be, to promote the study of Ecclesiastical Architecture, Antiquities, and Design, and the restoration of mutilated Architectural Remains within the Archdeaconry; and to furnish suggestions, so far as may be within its province, for improving the character of Ecclesiastical Edifices hereafter to be erected.'[31]

Occasionally, a Society would initiate, finance and oversee a model restoration, as was the case with the 'Round' Church in Cambridge (1841–5), organised by the C.C.S.,[32] the Chantry Chapel in Wakefield, (1842–8) promoted by the Yorkshire Architectural Society[33] or St Peter's Northampton (from 1850) where the restoration was in the care of the Northampton Society.[34] But such instances were fairly rare. Much more numerous were examples of a Society taking an interest in, and offering advice to, a project organised by others. In this respect one might point to the case of the archaeological discoveries and restoration of the Norman church at Adel, near Leeds, which occupied the attention of the Yorkshire Society over many years,[35] or the Worcestershire Society's interest in the restoration of St Alban's, Worcester[36] both of which are entirely typical.

The growth of Anglicanism in the distant colonies, and the concomitant need for churches in remote parts of the world was a further opportunity for clerical involvement in architecture. 'A colonial bishop must be a church-builder'[37] *The Ecclesiologist* stated encouragingly; the publication of *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* by the Ecclesiological Society in 1847, various plans and elevations for churches that appeared in *The Ecclesiologist* and the numerous illustrated books on medieval architecture published in this period provided the colonial clergy with the basic tools for building. As an example, one could point to St John the Baptist, Prossers' Plains, Tasmania, designed by the Rev. F. H. Cox using these sources and copies of R. C. Carpenter's church at Cookham Dean, Berkshire. 'I have employed no architect', he stated, ' – for

architects here are anything but ecclesiastical; – nor contractor – for contractors here, or at least church contractors, are proverbially not trustworthy.'[38]

So far as England was concerned, despite all the foregoing examples of clergy being associated with church building and restoration, cases of 'hands on' involvement at the drawing board or building site are surprisingly rare. The Vicar of Skipton has already been mentioned and a little earlier, Rev. J. W. Whitaker designed Immanuel, Feniscowles, Livesey, Lancashire (1835–6).[39] Chris Miele notes the example of the incumbent of Sydling church in Dorset. The latter invited the Oxford Architectural Society to 'comment on his own design for a new nave roof, and wanted advice on how to repair the ancient chancel screen'[40] in the late 1840s. Pevsner acknowledges Rev. J. L. Petit as the 'designer of some churches'[41] and Rev. John Parker did much internal work, including pulpit, galleries and ceiling at St Llwchaiarn, Llanmerewig, Powys, where he was rector from 1827–44.[42] While vicar of St Michael, Llanyblodwel, Shropshire (1844–60), he rebuilt much of his church.[43] However, examples such as these are not numerous.

For the most part, the clerical involvement in practical architectural matters was limited to an advisory role, but one often undertaken with missionary enthusiasm and for the societies' members, the benefits seemed clear. The 1850 Report of the Yorkshire Architectural Society claimed that if some of the Society's meetings took place throughout the county, it would allow 'many [more] zealous ecclesiologists [to be active and thus] the Society['s] … influence might [be] exerted [more widely] with the happiest effect.'[44] Certainly, much of the business of the committees of these societies was spent in discussing plans for proposed restorations or new buildings, as their annual reports make clear.[45]

Quite how the architects saw this clerical interest in their professional activities is not always clear, but no doubt for many a 'second division' architect it was a demeaning and demoralising experience. At other times it could be abrasive. R. D. Chantrell – whom we encountered earlier – famously described *The Ecclesiologist* as 'a mischievous tissue of imbecility and fanaticism,'[46] but most architects were, at least in print, more guarded. The architectural publisher John Weale, a committed Classicist and low-church Anglican, similarly resented clerical interference.[47] Chantrell was keen not to allow control of archaeological research to pass to the clergy without a struggle: 'it is indisputable that architects should not only keep pace with the clerical members of

the local Architectural Societies, but be foremost in all antiquarian researches, and enquiries relative to the methods employed by our forefathers … in the construction of [cathedrals and churches].'[48]

L. N. Cottingham was, from the late 1820s, undertaking the sort of restoration that the ecclesiologists would later promote. 'At Armagh in 1834 and at Hereford in 1841 he met with some opposition to his plans to reintroduce the full imagery and symbolism of the Gothic church in the form of statues in niches and the reintroduction of rood screens. It was a measure of his authority as a medieval expert … that he was sometimes able to overrule his patrons,' i.e. the resident clergy.[49] More contentious was the case of the restoration of St Mary, Stafford in the early 1840s.[50] G. G. Scott was the architect, but there was much interference from Rev. Petit – already mentioned as a writer – who was the Secretary of the Lichfield Society for the Encouragement of Ecclesiastical Architecture. Petit took issue with Scott's restoration philosophy. 'For five months … letters crossed, until finally the disputants agreed to be bound by the decision of a committee of experts drawn from [the Oxford and Cambridge societies].'[51] This eventually found in Scott's favour, much to Petit's chagrin. Elsewhere, the relationship between architect and clerical advisor seems to have been more cordial. Generally, Scott enjoyed good relations with his cathedral employers, as was the case at Ely, from 1847, where Dean Peacock was a knowledgeable, enthusiastic and supportive patron,[52] later described by Scott as 'my dear friend … one of the noblest of men.'[53]

Despite the anxiety clearly felt by much of the architectural profession in the 1840s when issues of church design and restoration were raised, and the frequent resentment it felt at the interference generated by architectural societies and their members, it was hardly the serious threat to the profession that had been predicted by *The Architect, Engineer and Surveyor.*[54] Furthermore, within a generation the situation had, arguably, reversed from that which had been feared. Far from undermining the profession's authority, ecclesiastical work quickly produced two positive outcomes. Firstly, it must have been clear to the clergy that the more vigorously they sought to build or restore churches according to the new Camdenian creed, the greater was their need for professional assistance. A clergyman might well have his own vision of what he wanted to achieve, but problems were likely to arise when he attempted to communicate his ideas with tradesmen in the detail necessary so that estimates could be obtained, contracts prepared and a programme of works

scheduled. Secondly, the new demands brought forth new talent. Architects such as Butterfield, Woodyer and Street – and many lesser known men as well – were not only capable of supplying all the desires of the new ecclesiological caste of clergy and worshipper, but were so spectacularly accomplished at designing in the Gothic style that they took the reputation of church architects to a position where it was quite beyond the threat of the surveyors, rent collectors or interior decorators. Furthermore, by their scrupulous attention to their professional as well as artistic endeavours, and – for the most part[55] – their avoidance of the sort of unsavoury activities that bedevilled other sectors of architectural practice in the mid-nineteenth century, it was the church architects, who, more than any other sector of the profession, came to enjoy in the public's mind the sort of esteem, confidence, respectability and sometimes even fame that the founders of the Institute of British Architects could only have dreamed of in 1834.

The writer acknowledges with much gratitude helpful advice from Dr Geoff Brandwood and Dr Chris Miele in the preparation of this article.

Notes

1 For instance, H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840,* John Murray, 1995, p. 43.
2 J. M. Crook, 'The pre-Victorian architect: professionalism & patronage,' in *Architectural History,* 1969, vol. 12, pp. 62–78. The issue is also explored in A. Saint, *The Image of the Architect,* Yale U. P., 1983, p. 61.
3 *The Architect, Engineer and Surveyor,* 1843, vol. iv, p. 231.
4 J. M. Crook, *The Greek Revival,* RIBA, 1968, p. 13.
5 For precise details of the dates of the delivery of these lectures, and for the texts of the lectures, see D Watkin (ed.), *Sir John Soane The Royal Academy Lectures,* Cambridge U. P., 2000.
6 The rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament, following the fire of 1834, was an obvious and rare exception at this time.
7 The paper was published in *Archaeologia,* 1812, vol. xvi, p. 298. Kerrick described himself as 'Principal Librarian to the University of Cambridge.' See also N. Pevsner, *Some Architectural Writers of the Nineteenth Century,* Oxford U. P., 1972, p. 20.
8 *The Builder,* 1847, vol. v, p. 300.
9 J. Britton, *York Cathedral,* 1819, p. v.
10 Crook, *op. cit*. [note 4], p. 13.
11 See *The Ecclesiologist,* 1842, vol. i, p. 99; 1845, vol. iv (n.s. i), p. 186; 1847, vol. vii (n.s. iv), p. 117.
12 See J. Elliott, 'A Trusted Disciple: Richard Cromwell Carpenter,' in C. Webster & J. Elliott (eds), *'A Church as it should be': The Cambridge Camden Society and Its Influence,* Shaun Tyas, 2000, pp. 149–172.
13 M. Sweet, *Antiquaries: the Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain,* Hambledon, 2004, p. 49.
14 *Ibid*.
15 *Ibid.,* p. 52.
16 p. ix.

17 I. C. B. S., Skipton file.
18 S. Bradley, 'The Roots of Ecclesiology: Late-Hanovarian Attitudes to Medieval Churches' in Webster and Elliot, *op. cit.* [note 12], pp. 40–2.
19 Cambridge Camden Society, *A Few Hints on the Practical Study of Ecclesiastical Architecture and Antiquities,* Cambridge U. P., 1843, p. 20.
20 *Ibid.,* p.2. See also C. Webster (ed.), 'temples worthy of His presence': the early publications of the Cambridge Camden Society, Spire Books, 2003, pp. 63–6.
21 Cambridge Camden Society, *A Few Words to Church Builders,* Cambridge U. P., 1841, pp. 3–4.
22 *Observations on English Architecture,* 1806.
23 Milner was a Roman Catholic. His most important work was *A Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England,* 1811.
24 *An Historical Survey of the Ecclesiastical Antiquities of France,* 1811.
25 *Architectural Notes on German Churches, with Remarks on the Origins of Gothic Architecture,* 1830.
26 *Remarks on the Architecture of the Middle Ages, especially of Italy,* 1835.
27 *Remarks on Church Architecture,* 1841.
28 *A History of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England,* 1848.
29 However, the very earliest publications of the C.C.S. preceded the ordination of Neale (1841) and Webb (1842).
30 The statistics are compiled from *Associated Architectural Societies Reports and Papers,* vol. I, 1850.
31 *Ibid.,* Northamptonshire … Society, p. v.
32 See C. Miele, 'The Restoration of the Round Church, Cambridge, 1841–3,' in *Ecclesiology Today,* no. 19, 1999, pp. 2–7 and C. Miele, 'Re-Presenting the Church Militant: the Camden Society, Church Restoration and the Gothic Sign,' in Webster and Elliott, *op. cit.* [note 12], pp. 263–74.
33 *Leeds Intelligencer*, 11 Feb. 1843; and K. Taylor, 'A Pious Undertaking: the Retrieval of a Medieval Bridge Chantry,' in *Ecclesiology Today,* 1998, no. 16, pp. 8–11.
34 In 1850, Rev. Thomas James read a paper to the society 'On the Works now in Progress at St Peter's, Northampton,' published in *Associated Architectural Society Reports and Papers,* vol. 1, 1850, pp. 77–84.
35 The church was the subject of a number of papers read to the society, e.g. Rev. W. H. Lewthwaite 'Discovery of the Norman Roof at Adel' a paper read to the Y.A.S. on 23 April 1843; R. D. Chantrell 'Observations on the Ancient Church at Adel,' read to the Society, probably in 1845, and published by the Institute of British Architects in 1847; Rev. G. Lewthwaite, 'Adel: Its Norman Church,' in *Y.A.S. Papers*, 1867, pp. 202–19; Rev. G. Lewthwaite, 'Adel: The Restoration of the Church' in *Y.A.S. Papers*, probably 1887, although not dated, pp. 110–20.
36 *Associated Architectural Society Reports and Papers,* vol. 1, 1850, Worcestershire Society, p. 327.
37 *The Ecclesiologist,* 1847, vii, (n.s. iv), p. 18.
38 Elliot, *op. cit.* [note 12], p.164.
39 N. Pevsner, *North Lancashire*, Penguin, 1969, p. 169.
40 Miele, 'Re-Presenting,' *op. cit.* [note 32], p. 279.
41 Pevsner, *op. cit.* [note 7], p. 95, although he mentions only one, St Philip's, Caerdeon, Gwynedd, 1862. See P. Howell and I. Sutton (eds) *The Faber Guide to Victorian Churches,* Faber, 1989, p. 21.
42 R. Haslam, *Powys,* Peguin, 1979, p. 148.
43 Howell and Sutton, *op. cit.,* [note 41], p. 72.
44 *A.A.S. Reports and Papers, op. cit.* [note 35] Y.A.S., pp. xxix-xxx.
45 However, the Y.A.S. was moved to record in 1862 its regret 'that incumbents of Churches do not more frequently apply for advice, before permitting those interesting specimens of ancient art … to be demolished.' *Report,* 1862, pp. cxi.
46 Quoted in B. F. L. Clark, *Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century,* David and Charles, 1969, p. 100.
47 Webster, *op. cit.* [note 20], pp. 39–40.

48 R. D. Chantrell, 'Observations on the Ancient Roof of the Church at Adel,' in *Y.A.S. Papers*, probably 1887, although not dated, vol. 3, p.110.
49 J. Myles, *L. N. Cottingham 1787–1847 Architect of the Gothic Revival,* Lund Humphries, 1996, p. 37.
50 N. Pevsner, 'Scrape and Anti-scrape,' in J. Fawcett (ed), *The Future of the Past,* Thames and Hudson, 1976, pp. 44–6; Miele, 'Re-Presenting,' *op. cit*. [note 32], pp. 274–6.
51 *Ibid.,* p. 275.
52 G. Cobb, *English Cathedrals: the forgotten Centuries,* Thames and Hudson, 1980, pp. 80–1; G. G. Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections* (ed. G. Stamp), Paul Watkins, 1995, pp. 280–4.
53 *Ibid.,* p. 283.
54 [note 3]
55 Although Scott's conduct of the Foreign Office commission was hardly a creditable episode for the profession.

VIEWPOINT: The position of the traditional altar in contemporary liturgical practice

Paul Velluet

This VIEWPOINT *is the first in an occasional series, in which the author makes a case for something which he or she cares strongly about. It need hardly be said that these are the author's views, not necessarily those of the Society. We would welcome well-argued articles building on this one, or carrying an alternative or opposing view.*

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Introduction

Close by the side of the Thames in West London, set in an idyllic, semi-rural churchyard overlooking the river, there is an interesting church of the early 1960s (Fig. 1). With walls of warm, red, hand-made brickwork, the church was designed by the distinguished architect, the late Michael Blee and erected amidst the ruined outer walls of an early eighteenth-century church, destroyed by arson in 1943, leaving only the fifteenth-century tower intact. The rebuilt church, incorporating the outer walls and tower of the earlier church, possesses one of the most perfect, modern, liturgical spaces to be found in any church in the South-East - a tiny, octagonal chapel, approximately 15 feet across, projecting from the south side of the church towards the river - the Joshua Chapel.

The chapel contains accommodation for approximately twelve people, seated on simple pine benches lining six of the eight sides of the small building. The benches, with modest, pine, back-rests fixed directly to the un-plastered brick walls, face the centre of the octagon like a miniature chapter-house, and are arranged in two parts to each side of the central, north-south axis. The chapel is entered from the church through a doorway occupying the north side of the octagon leading directly to the raised level of the quarry-tiled floor within the chapel. Directly ahead, occupying the south side of the octagon, is a tall window comprising one, large, sheet of clear glass, set within deep, brick reveals, overlooking the Thames and the trees beyond, rising from the shallow, un-embanked shores on the far side of the river and of the eyot between.

The altar is set within the deep brick reveals of the window and comprises a thick oak top set on a 15-inch thick concrete lintel spanning between the reveals in front of the full-height window and built directly into the brickwork (Fig. 2). At the consecration of the Eucharistic elements, the presiding priest stands on a modest 'footpace' formed from a rescued and reset early eighteenth-century ledger-stone, and faces the altar, the river and the world beyond. The early morning sunlight pours through

Fig. 1 All Saints' Church, Isleworth (Architect, Michael Blee).

Fig. 2 The Joshua Chapel at All Saints' Church, Isleworth.

the window on to the altar and into the chapel beyond. The laity gathered in a circle close by, face in the same direction, and focus upon and share in that Eucharistic action to the fullest degree.

Eucharistic celebration from the far side of the altar 'facing the people' would be physically impossible, other than through major works for the partial demolition and reconstruction of the chapel. Yet the chapel is a perfect setting for the celebration of the Mass in the context of a small gathering, whether in accordance with the order in *Book of Common Prayer* or with the order provided in *Common Worship*. Although the plan of the chapel defies all the orthodoxy of current liturgical thinking, it works supremely well.

The process of liturgical change

It is now over forty years since the influence of the Liturgical Movement on the Continent in the inter-War and immediate post-War years and the liturgical reforms developed in the Roman Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council held between 1962 and 1965, began to significantly affect the ordering of churches; both old and new; both Anglican and Roman Catholic. The fundamental changes in churches and cathedrals across the country that have been brought about as a result of such liturgical reforms and by the increasing desire in Anglican churches to provide for diversity in the use of churches and for the creation of adaptable and flexible performance spaces at their heart, are no more clearly reflected than in the position of the altar and how the Eucharist is celebrated at that altar.

Of particular relevance to members of the Ecclesiological Society in addressing and assessing the changes in the ordering and reordering of churches over the last forty years is the way in which they have affected the liturgical arrangements and features shaped by the influence of our predecessors 150 years ago on the design and ordering of new churches and in the 'restoration' and reordering of existing churches.

It is clear that significant areas of the work conceived, planned and realised in accordance with the principles of mid-nineteenth-century ecclesiologists in churches, cathedrals and chapels up and down the land have been lost, compromised or otherwise altered; none more so than in relation to the altars devised during that period. Not only have the changes made an impact on the particular architectural and historical interest of the altars from an archaeological and art-historical perspective, but importantly, they have affected the coherence of the liturgical arrangements and features of which the altars formed an integral part. In many cases in the Anglican context, the changes have been as significant liturgically and architecturally as the radical and frequently destructive works effected at the Reformation and during the height of 'restorations' in the nineteenth century.

Liturgical change may well be justified. Indeed, many of us who value and delight in much of the work created through the influence of the ecclesiologists in the middle years of the nineteenth century may have an entirely open mind to the case for liturgical reform today. Thankfully, through the benign effects of enhanced controls over works to churches and cathedrals and the development of a more discerning approach to their implementation over the last twenty-five years, and increased awareness and understanding of the importance of the application of sound conservation principles in considering proposals for change, losses or adverse alterations of a scale and significance comparable to the tragic removal of Scott's extraordinarily fine ironwork choir screens from Salisbury and Hereford Cathedrals, in 1959 and 1967 respectively, or to the removal of the seventeenth-century panelling by Cornelius Austin, the Edwardian reredos and panelling by Detmar Blow and the levelling of the east end of King's College Chapel, Cambridge, to accommodate Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi* in 1964-8, are rarely seen. In the Anglican context, the radical reordering of St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, in the City of London, undertaken in 1993-5, which involved the complete transformation of Pearson's ecclesiologically-based, nineteenth-century ordering (Ecclesiological Society special visit, June, 1996), is a major exception of more recent years in the setting of a highly graded listed church.

However, changes of a lesser order in churches, cathedrals and chapels across the land are being increasingly effected, resulting cumulatively in the loss, compromising or alteration of liturgical arrangements and features created in accordance with the principles set forward and developed by ecclesiologists from the 1840s onwards.

This is not to suggest that ecclesiologists today should resist liturgical change *per se*, or seek to defend without good reason the frequently radical and destructive 'restorations' and reorderings encouraged or supported by ecclesiologists at the height of their influence in the nineteenth century. However, it is arguable that ecclesiologists of the present time should be encouraging a clearer and fuller understanding of the implications of reversing or negating the liturgical changes made in accordance with ecclesiological principles during the nineteenth century, and contributing to a more discerning and sensitive approach to reordering when change may threaten the integrity and coherence of those liturgical arrangements and features, conceived and realised in a different age.

The impact of change on the traditional altar

The potential to effect fundamental and radical change through reordering is no more clearly demonstrated than in

relation to the altar or holy table; and specifically, to the role and position of the altar in a church of architectural or historical significance which has served as the focus of Eucharistic celebration for a century or more.

The effect of such change may be considered in three distinct contexts. Firstly, in those situations where the existing altar is to be left in its original location and a new, free-standing altar introduced closer to or within the body of the church; secondly, in those situations where the existing altar is to be moved from its original location and relocated to a new position closer to or within the body of the church; and thirdly, in those situations where the existing altar is to be removed altogether and a new altar substituted in the same location or elsewhere. The second and third situations involve the most significant compromising of the principles on which the existing liturgical arrangements and features were originally conceived and realised.

In both Anglican and Roman Catholic churches across the country, reorderings are being effected in which an altar of traditional design, proportion and scale located at the east end of a chancel which has served as a valued focus for the pre-eminent liturgical action for a century or more has been detached from the reredos or retable, and gradine, or disengaged from its dossal or from its 'English Altar' setting of riddel curtains and posts, and shifted forward to varying degrees from its original, intended and carefully considered location and put to use as a free-standing altar facilitating exclusively 'westward facing' Eucharistic celebration. Such an approach to the realisation of liturgical change has left unfilled spaces where altars once stood; unresolved voids below surviving gradines; and the exposure of the rear faces of altars never intended for such treatment. All too rarely have such situations been resolved by appropriate mitigating measures.

In such cases, the fundamental design purpose of the altar has been compromised by its physical and visual dislocation from its original architectural and liturgical setting and by Eucharistic celebration from its far side, with the presiding priest separated physically and visually from the laity in the body of the church to the west. Too often, it would appear that such a change has been advanced as a gesture towards an 'inclusive' liturgy; avoiding for whatever reason, the need for a well considered but more radical response to the legitimate case for reordering; ideally, one based on sound liturgical principles and realised with care, conviction and confidence.

Too often also, it would appear that the modest shifting forward of an existing altar to facilitate celebration 'facing the people', leaving it perched precariously close to the edge of the footpace or *predella*, or of a lower step, has been undertaken as a misplaced concession towards the interests of conservation. That

the altar may be excessively high, deep or long, or all of these, in relation to the stature of the priest standing on the far side; that the legibility of the priest may be diminished by the presence of a large altar cross and two or six candle-sticks immediately beyond, perched uncomfortably on the surviving gradine; or that the Eucharistic action remains as distant physically or visually from the laity as it ever was; are all factors that must surely bring into serious question the merits of this response to liturgical reform (Figs. 3 & 4).

In this connection, the case of the high altar below Bentley's *baldachino* at the east end of Westminster Cathedral is of particular relevance. Thankfully, despite the granting of formal approval in 2002 of impeccably detailed, conservation-based proposals for moving forward the 12 ton, 12 feet long, 4 feet deep and 3 feet 5 inches high block of Cornish granite that comprises the altar by 25 inches to create a 50 inches deep space to permit celebration 'facing the people', the project remains unrealised. Whilst the implementation of the scheme would have offered the benefit of setting aside the unsatisfactory, carpeted, timber, 'temporary' dais and the free-standing altar, located at the centre of the sanctuary for the last twenty years or so, it would have delayed yet further the planning and design of a new and permanent altar addressing the liturgical needs of today with clarity and conviction; a prospect which need not have challenged the survival of the original altar below the *baldachino* or diminished its architectural significance.

Such observations are not to suggest in any way a questioning of the sound and justifiable liturgical reforms flowing from or influenced by the Liturgical Movement, the post-Conciliar instructions issued by the Roman Catholic Church, and the enhanced teaching on Eucharistic celebration and the participation of the laity in both Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, but rather, a questioning of how such reforms have been and are being implemented in many existing churches; particularly those of special architectural and historic interest.

The justification for such reordering which is so often invoked is that of the desirability of Eucharistic celebration *versus populum*, 'facing the people' - the celebration of dialogue; the implication being that the long established Anglican and Roman Catholic practice of celebration facing in the same direction as the people and from the same side of the altar as the people represents some kind of barrier to effective participation. It is the over-emphasis on the importance of 'westward' celebration across the altar from its far side *per se* and its unquestioning application that has led to so many unsatisfactory reorderings, resulting in alterations which have compromised so many nineteenth- and early twentieth-

Fig. 3 An 'English Altar' in its conventional position and use, showing Eucharistic celebration facing eastwards. (Drawing by Peter Anson from his 'Fashions in Church Furnishings, 1846-1940', Faith Press, 1960.)

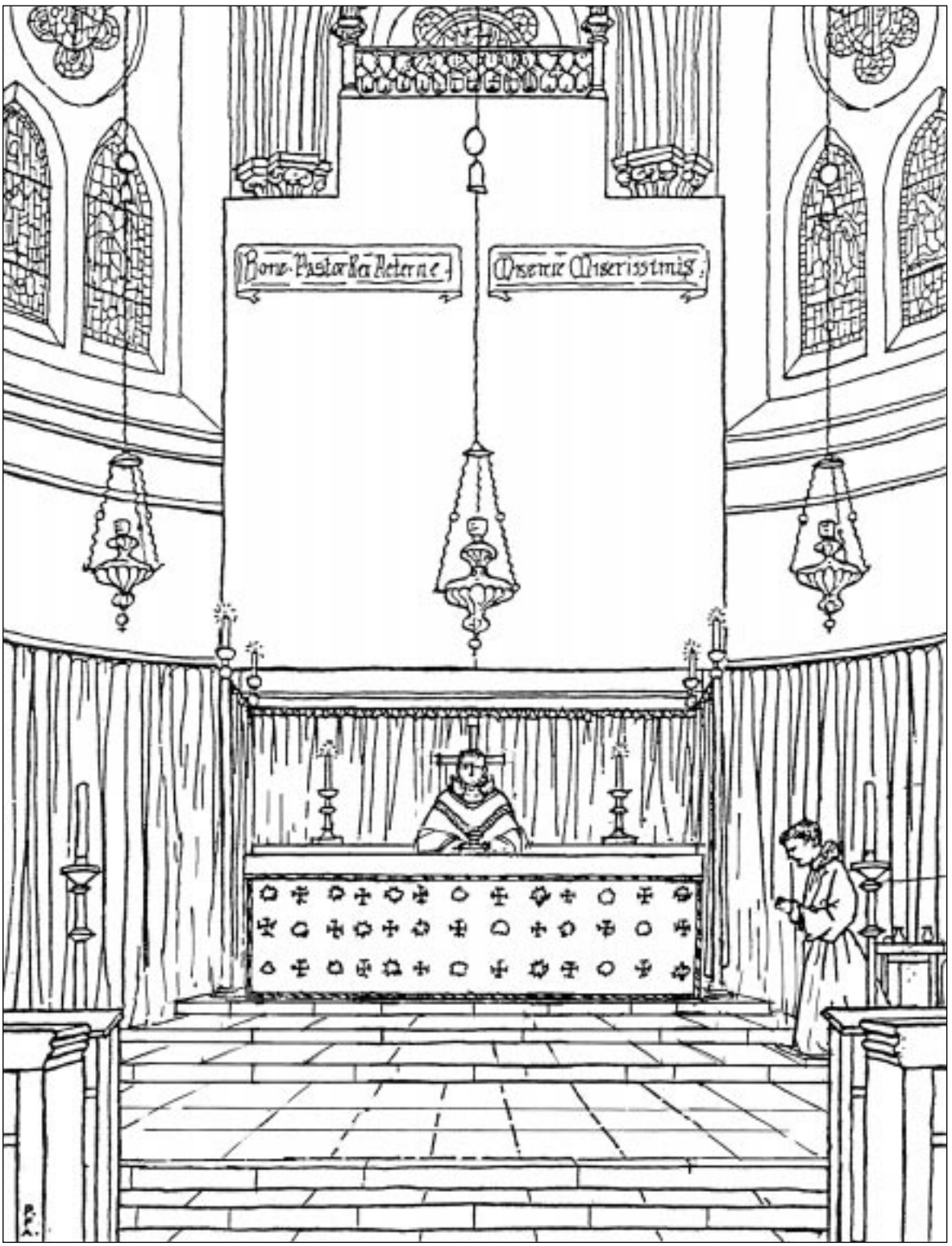


Fig. 4 An 'English Altar' moved forward to the edge of the footpace to facilitate Eucharistic celebration facing westwards. (Drawing adapted from that shown on the previous page).

century altars. Even in relation to the most traditional basis for worship, it is so rarely recognised today that celebration in accordance with the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer* has always required the priest to face the people during major parts of the service (as well as the use of a holy table standing 'in the body of the church' as an alternative to a location in the chancel). The *BCP* has neither required nor encouraged the priest to celebrate from the far side of the holy table; but rather 'at the north side' of the table, at a time when conventionally placed in an east-west alignment.

In the British context, the liturgical re-planning of diverse new churches and the reordering of many more over the last forty years has been significantly influenced by the insights and values first advanced coherently in Peter Hammond's *Towards a Church Architecture* (The Architectural Press, 1962). At their best, those insights and values have been reflected in new churches such as Robert Maguire and Keith Murray's St Paul's Bow Common, Stepney, and in work such as Michael Drury's reordering at Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral.

In recent years, the strongly critical analysis of the *status quo* and the radical agenda for change set forward by Richard Giles (now Dean of Philadelphia in the Diocese of Pennsylvania) in the several editions of his *Re-pitching the Tent: Reordering the church building for worship and mission* (Canterbury Press, 1996 onwards) have had a significant influence on promoting and shaping liturgical change. Importantly, too, liturgical change, and the moving forward of altars in particular, have been strongly influenced and justified by invoking a particular view of the practice of the Early Church and tradition of the pre-Mediaeval Church in Britain, and by reference to the Roman Catholic Church's *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (as published from the mid-'sixties onwards and currently the version published in April, 2005), and intended as the introductory material to the third edition of the *Roman Missal*, and to the principles set out by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in *The Parish Church: Principles of liturgical design and reordering* (first published in 1984).

In this respect, it is worth noting the actual words used in the *Instruction*:

> '*The altar should be built apart from the wall, in such a way that it is possible to walk around it easily and that Mass can be celebrated at it facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible.* The altar, moreover, should be in the place where it is truly the centre toward which the attention of the whole congregation of the faithful naturally turns…. In already existing churches…when the old altar is positioned so that it makes the people's participation difficult but cannot be moved without damage to its artistic

> value, another fixed altar, of artistic merit and duly dedicated, should be erected and sacred rites celebrated on it alone. In order not to distract the attention of the faithful from the new altar, the old altar should not be decorated in any special way.'
>
> (*GIRM*, sections 299 and 303, my emphasis.)

The literal interpretation of the values set forward in *Towards a Church Architecture* and *Re-pitching the Tent*, the provisions of earlier editions of the *General Instruction* and the principles in *The Parish Church*, have made a major impact on the ordering and reordering of both Roman Catholic and Anglican churches across the country over recent years, and, in particular, on the position and role of the altar, and, in the Anglican context, on the liturgical and architectural inheritance of the nineteenth-century ecclesiologists.

For all the radical and sometimes destructive impact of liturgical reordering over the last forty years, there has been surprisingly modest questioning outside conservation circles and the columns of specialist journals of some of the key principles on which such reordering has been based and their application to existing churches. However, commendably, Nigel Yates' article *Architectural formality and liturgical informality: The reordering of Victorian churches and chapels since 1945* (published in *The Victorian Society Annual, 1993*) and Dr Peter Doll's *Reordering the Congregation: Must we always 're-pitch the tent'* (*Church Building*, March/April, 1998), *Postmodernity and the reinterpretation of sacred space* (*Church Building*, November/December, 1998) and *Exodus, Christian pilgrimage and the geography of sacred space* (*Theology*, July/August, 1999) have provided intelligent and perceptive alternative views.

In the Roman Catholic context, the frequently unquestioning interpretation of formal direction and guidance, and the undue emphasis on celebration 'facing the people' has most recently been challenged in considerable depth by a young scholar and liturgist from the London Oratory, Dr. Uwe Michael Lang in his book *Turning towards the Lord - Orientation in Liturgical Prayer*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2004).

There is irony in that so rarely have major reorderings of recent years resulted in truly participatory liturgical solutions, with altars located in the *midst* and at the level of the people. In so many churches, cathedrals and chapels, the hierarchies and liturgical constraints that existed at the east end of the chancel or choir have simply been transposed westwards and reproduced at the east end of the nave; with oversized free-standing altars sitting on undersized, carpeted platforms, devised for maximum flexibility in use and mobility, approached up unnecessary flights of steep steps.

In *Re-pitching the Tent,* Richard Giles sets forward a clear view:

> '…the altar-table needs to be a strong simple structure of dignity and beauty of a size which will relate scale to the size of the area or room in which it stands. It should be square in shape (as indeed was the original altar of the Israelites: Exodus 27: 1) in order to emphasize that there is no 'back' or 'front' and that it is not a 'counter' across which the assembly is being 'served a meal' by a member of a priestly caste; all members of the priestly community participate in the offering and all have equal access…. To spell out the same point about equal access, the altar should stand on the floor, not on a platform, in the middle of the space. This level approach is a feature of the first altar of Moses (Exodus 20: 26)…'

In this context, and against the principles advanced by Richard Giles, it is interesting to observe that in the current, temporary, experimental reordering at Southwark Anglican Cathedral, the late George Pace's modestly elevated and sensitively scaled and detailed 'sanctuary' at the crossing, which provided one of the most satisfactory, modern liturgical arrangements in any Anglican cathedral in England, has been lost below a projection of the much higher level of the quire into the nave approached up a flight of large steps from the body of the church. Whilst such a change may be advanced on the basis of increased visibility of the altar and the new performance space for those at the west end of the nave, it has removed the altar and the Eucharistic action yet further from the midst and level of the congregation.

The well known monk, writer and artist, Peter Anson, spoke with enthusiasm about the altar in the midst of the people:

> 'The altar must be brought back again into the middle of our churches, in the middle of the congregation, surrounded by the people',
>
> (Quoted by Patrick Nuttgens in 'Peter Anson: a personal memoir', *Twentieth Century Architecture 3: The Twentieth Century Church*, The Twentieth Century Society, 1998).

Significantly, one of the most satisfactory centrally-placed altars is one of the earliest in the country, in Eric Gill's St Peter's Church at Gorleston-on-Sea, of 1938–9, which offers a continuing model of liturgical excellence, and reflects Gill's desire to place the altar in the midst of the congregation and away from 'the mystery mongering of obscure sanctuaries separated from the people' (quoted from Eric Gill, *Mass for the Masses*).

An alternative way forward

Two of the most successful schemes involving the creation of truly central altars in the midst of the people effected in recent years are to be found in Quinlan Terry's part-reconstruction and reordering of St Helen's Cathedral, Brentwood (Fig. 5), completed in 1991 (Ecclesiological Society special visit, July, 1993), and in Michael Drury's reordering of the eastern part of the Cathedral Church of St Thomas, Portsmouth, also completed in 1991 (Ecclesiological Society special visit, April, 2000).

Fig. 5 St. Helen's Cathedral, Brentwood. (Photo courtesy of Quinlan and Francis Terry Architects).

In the first case, a beautifully proportioned and classically detailed, open, marble *mensa* on a sensibly scaled marble dais of two steps in height has been placed in the very centre of the main body of the church. In the second case, an elegantly proportioned altar with a Laudian 'throw-over' damask cover has been placed on a generously scaled limestone dais of two steps in height placed at the heart of the body of the original church, whilst to the east, a modestly proportioned, open, limestone *mensa,* square on plan and Romanesque in character, has been located at the main floor level on the site of Nicholson's original high altar and below the surviving, richly coloured and gilded tester (Fig. 6).

It is regrettable that the continuing liturgical relevance of that most perfect expression of the Anglican tradition, the Laudian altar, set close to the level of the people, is not more fully recognised today.

Fig. 6 The new altars at Portsmouth Cathedral, looking east. (Architect, Michael Drury. Photograph by John Thompson from Portsmouth Cathedral: The Cathedral Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury).

Examples of truly central altars remain a rarity in most reorderings.

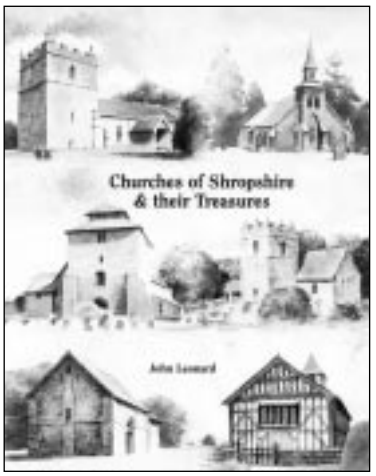
It is fitting that the reordering work of our late President, Stephen Dykes Bower, serves as a continuing exemplar of intelligent practice; an approach realised in diverse churches, chapels and cathedrals across the country, and characterised by the retention and restoration or enrichment of long established altars and furnishings, reflecting the principles of the mid-nineteenth-century ecclesiologists, located at the east ends of chancels or choirs, and the introduction of modestly scaled Laudian altars with simple damask covers in proximity to and close to the level of the worshipping community to the west. Dykes Bower's 'nave' altars and their well considered liturgical settings at St Nicholas' Parish Church, Great Yarmouth, and St John's Parish Church, Newcastle upon Tyne, remain as models of sensitivity to context and intelligent reordering.

Whilst few reorderings of recent years involving the creation of free-standing altars rise to the liturgical perfection and architectural excellence of such works as Ninian Comper's ordering of St Philip's, Cosham, Portsmouth of 1935-9, there are signs of the beginning of an increased understanding of the real principles that should underpin modern liturgical reform.

It is to be hoped that with care and discernment our nineteenth-century ecclesiological inheritance can be successfully reconciled with excellence in liturgical renewal.

Book Review

John Leonard:
Churches of Shropshire and their Treasures
(Logaston Press, Logaston, Herefordshire, 2004, 318 pp., 537 b&w illust., £12.95, pbk,
ISBN 1 904396 19 4)



Over the years Dr Leonard has been diligently pursuing and publishing studies of church architecture in London, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire and his native Shropshire. The present volume is a much-expanded version of *Shropshire Parish Churches* (1991 and 1994), again with good quality photographs but more detailed text covering over 300 buildings and their fittings. Introductory chapters trace the development of the type from Medieval to Modern, with individual studies on towers, roofs, architectural sculpture and monuments, stained glass and wall paintings, screens, lofts and furnishings. This is followed by a gazetteer arranged by districts, making it especially suitable for church crawls.

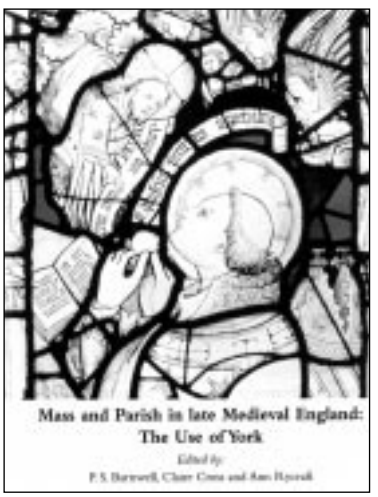
Shropshire, of course, is one of the great counties for churches of all ages. These range from the medieval wonders of Battlefield, Clun, St Lawrence at Ludlow, Tong and Shrewsbury Abbey; to odd Minsterley (1689), the first church in the county built on Classical lines (by William Taylor, who was obviously familiar with Wrenian developments in London); to a plethora of Georgian work, from the inept Moreton Say (where, however, Clive of India is buried) to the very pretty red-brick Quatt, as well as several specimens by T. F. Pritchard, the leading county architect of the period; to Victorian and twentieth century churches, most notably Holy Spirit, Harlescott (1961). Above all, there are the utterly memorable examples of Barker's Whitchurch (1711–12), Steuart's circular church of St Chad and Carline's Gothic St Alkmund, both in Shrewsbury and built later in the eighteenth century, the latter with Eginton's huge painted window in the chancel after Reni's *Assumption of the Virgin,* rightly described as having a stunning effect on sunny mornings. Its remarkable cast iron window frames have recently been restored. Telford's late-Georgian octagonal Madeley and All Saints, Wellington were subsequently much messed about internally, but the Classical temple-like St Mary Magdalene at Bridgenorth survives largely intact – it is, I feel, the Salopian church masterpiece.

The author does not often delve into the richly detailed parish documents deposited in the Shropshire Records and Research Centre in Shrewsbury. For this, enthusiasts might like to consult the late Eric Mercer's magisterial *English Architecture to 1900: the*

Shropshire Experience, (2003) – also published by Logaston – and the present reviewer's 'The Golden Age of Church Architecture in Shropshire', *Shropshire History and Archaeology,* vol. LXXI, 1996.

There is a list of mercifully only 13 churches closed through redundancy and either converted to private residences or demolished. Leonard expresses the hope that his book 'will help to preserve the remaining fabrics for generations to come.' No doubt it should help. His is the most comprehensive and best-illustrated study of the subject; it is well-priced and exceptionally good value. It is highly recommended.

Terry Friedman



Paul Barnwell, Claire Cross and Ann Rycraft (eds):
Mass and Parish in Late Medieval England
(Spire Books, Reading, 2005, 224 pp., 60 b&w plates, £24.95 pbk,
ISBN 1 904965 02 4)

Departing from the widely-accepted premise that the mass lay at the heart of late medieval religion, the contributors to this collection investigate how it was 'embedded' in a local community. Weaving editorial work, thematic essays and reconstruction efforts into a coherent whole, they convey an excellent impression of parochial worship on the eve of the Reformation.

The book's core consists of a text and translation of the mass according to the use of York (with the requisite adjustments for the celebration of a requiem). Purists might point out that this is not a new edition of a single source, but a collation of various manuscripts and printed copies – even supplementary rubrics taken from the use of Sarum – 'in order to produce a version which is both readily intelligible and practical for actual use' (page 140). Such sceptics, however, should be reminded that parish practice may well have followed a similar pattern, with priests drawing on personal experience, the physical environment and a certain amount of improvisation as well as the liturgical books placed in front of them. Through intricate formatting devices (distinguishing sections rehearsed by the celebrants, rubrics, scriptural passages, editorial instructions and levels of audibility) and ingenious cross-referencing between the translated text and photographs taken during a reconstruction in April 2002, Paul Barnwell, Allan Barton and Ann Rycraft render late medieval liturgy as tangible as possible short of supplying an audiovisual recording of the actual event (the latter perhaps an idea for a follow-on project destined for the world wide web?).

Six introductory essays contextualize the mass: Barnwell and Claire Cross open with a survey of York's ecclesiastical provision (where some 500 members of the clergy catered for a mere 10,000 inhabitants); Barton illuminates the visual setting by addressing much-neglected aspects like altar furnishings, related chancel decorations and vestments; Lisa Colton combines a discussion of the evidence for choral music with instructive remarks on performance techniques and a number of music examples taken mainly from the 'York Masses' collection of c. 1500; Barnwell proceeds to scrutinize 100 wills relating to All Saints', North Street, for provisions for the care of souls as well as the impact of mass foundations on the church's physical development; while Cross concludes the thematic section with two further contributions: first on the relationship between a clergyman, Thomas Worrall, and 'his' parish of St Michael Spurriergate, where he found various kinds of employment in the early sixteenth century (intriguingly also as the church's estate agent), and finally on the various stages of Reformation change, most dramatically the abolition of chantries and the introduction of two increasingly 'Protestant' Books of Common Prayer under Edward VI.

The overall impression is of an interdisciplinary project involving historians, archaeologists, musicologists, art historians and a member of the Guild of Clerks (John Hawes) willing to embark on a genuinely collaborative venture. The style of writing is crystal-clear and the text full of fascinating detail, e.g. on the elaborate precautions taken to avoid spillage of consecrated wine during mass. Readers also benefit from over sixty illustrations (ranging from church plans and medieval woodcuts to photographs of clerical dress), suggestions for further reading, a glossary and an index of names and places. The only weakness of the case study is archival, namely York's thin survival of churchwardens' accounts. The sole pre-Reformation example from Michael Spurriergate (now admirably edited by C. C. Webb) underlines how useful additional sets might have been for virtually all contributors, be it for information on obits or the musical repertory (Magnus Williamson's as yet unpublished list of over 150 English parish churches offering polyphonic services prior to the Reformation, for example, is largely based on parish accounts).

Authors, publisher and – not least – sponsors (the Marc Fitch Fund and the Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society) should be congratulated on producing such an attractive book at a very competitive price. It will no doubt be welcomed as an original and tightly focused contribution to the expanding field of late medieval parish studies.

Beat Kümin

Paul Jeffery:
The Collegiate Churches of England and Wales
(Robert Hale, London, 2004, 480 pp, numerous b&w illustrations, £60 hdbk,
ISBN 0 7090 7421 3)

This book is available to members of the Ecclesiological Society at a special discounted price of £40.00, including postage and packaging. To take advantage of this offer, members must contact Combined Book Services, 'phone no. 01892 837171 or email orders@combook.co.uk and mention the Ecclesiology Today offer.

The purpose of this handsome book as announced by the author (p. 9) is to provide both a general survey of medieval colleges for the general reader, and a handbook for prospective visitors to the churches (the domestic buildings associated with them are treated much more sketchily). The first aim is addressed in a 60-page introductory essay, the second largely through the county-based gazetteer which occupies three-quarters of the volume. Both principal elements of the book are supported by eight informative appendices, a glossary, a select bibliography and an index.

The introductory section begins by seeking to explain what a medieval college was and how the concept evolved during the middle ages. The subject is complicated, for there were many types of college ranging from a legacy of Anglo-Saxon forms of ecclesiastical organisation to chantry colleges, the colleges of vicars choral in the secular cathedrals, and the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities. The problem is where to pitch discussion, and the solution is unfortunate: the specialist will be unsatisfied (particularly as referencing is light), but the presentation is neither simple nor clear enough for the general reader and in places risks bewildering rather than enlightening. The later section on the Reformation period has a stronger narrative and is much more successful, though at the expense of disproportionate length. It is followed by a brief introduction to the nature of the buildings and the development of architectural style, where the general reader is again more obviously in mind.

The Gazetteer provides summaries of the origins, type and evolution of each collegiate church, together with a description of the main features of the buildings, their fixtures and fittings, and is supported by clear black-and-white photographs. Entries for places with which this reviewer is familiar are accurate. The extensive appendices list some categories of college, so that the gazetteer can to an extent be used thematically, and provide brief information on the buildings of some kinds of institution otherwise not covered (e.g., colleges of vicars choral).

It is, however, difficult to see who will use the book. Specialists will be frustrated by the lack of any kind of referencing for even the historical sections of the gazetteer entries (not even a list of principal secondary sources). On the other hand, the general reader visitor is not helped by the lack of any drawn illustrations: not a single plan (even a generic one for the labelling of parts), or simple guide to architectural forms. The latter is compounded by the nature of some glossary entries, which simply give the date range for architectural styles/periods, with neither actual definition nor cross-reference to the parts of the introduction in which they are discussed. At £60, and over 1kg. in weight, this is not a book likely to be taken on even car-borne visits, though the intended prospective visitor will have to be possessed of a good memory (or make extensive notes) not to miss things in the field. This is a pity, for a wealth of information is presented, and the idea of a handbook and gazetteer to this broad category of buildings is a good one, but both author and publisher should have worked harder to identify their market and to create a volume more fully adapted to it.

P S Barnwell

Shorter notices

Rodney Warrender and Michael Yelton:
Martin Travers 1886–1948 An Appreciation
(Unicorn Press, London, 2003, 343 pp., many b&w plates, £35.00 hdbk,
ISBN 0 906290 70 8)

The recent opening up of the first part of the twentieth century as 'respectable' territory for academic research and publishing is to be welcomed. Published accounts of, for instance, George Gilbert Scott junior, Comper, the Moores and now Travers, are as refreshing and revealing as the work of the previous generation of writers was on the Victorians.

Travers was one of the most versatile ecclesiastical artists of his generation; not only was he one of the foremost stained glass painters of his time, but he was also a notable church furnisher, a designer of buildings and a graphic artist.

This new and definitive study records the details of Travers' life, and looks in depth at his work, both actual and projected. It is lavishly illustrated with black and white plates, and contains a valuable and comprehensive catalogue and gazetteer.

The more diligent keeping of records by both artists and their patrons as we move into the era of the typewriter – often coupled with easier access to them for scholars – makes the compilation of

comprehensive catalogues somewhat easier, although the assembling of a catalogue such as this should never be taken for granted. However, it is often the contextualisation of the buildings, furnishings and other artistic products that is the most enlightening aspect of a book like this. Here the authors have much to say about the almost-forgotten Baroque Revival in Anglo-Catholicism, the various controversies about Ecclesiastical Discipline and the proselytising of The Society of SS. Peter and Paul, all of which enable us to set Travers' not inconsiderable output in context and provide a stimulating narrative.

Derek Keene, Arthur Burns and Andrew Saint (eds):
St Paul's, The Cathedral Church of London, 604–2004
(Yale UP, New Haven and London, 2004, 538 pp., 390 colour and b&w plates, £65.00 hdbk,
ISBN 0 300 09276 8)

Of the four or more great churches that have occupied the site, the last two have by their scale and architectural quality been fully equal to the significance of St Paul's as an institution. In particular, the familiar image of the present church and its dome has stood internationally for London and the nation. The masterpiece of Sir Christopher Wren, this is the only cathedral of world renown to have been designed by a single architect. By virtue of its situation in the capital, St Paul's has shaped the English church and state, and its connection to monarch and government give St Paul's its unique character among English cathedrals.

This wide-ranging and comprehensive account is based on the most recent research and thinking about St Paul's and London, as well as the church in England. Contributed by forty-two authors, the book unites specialised studies with a series of historical overviews. Topics covered include the clergy and lay people associated with St Paul's; their intellectual life, interests and responsibilities; liturgy and music; patterns of devotion and commemoration; architecture, decoration, furnishings and conservation; the endowment and income of the cathedral; its role as a landlord and as a patron of other churches; and the public role of St Paul's in both city and state.

The present diocese and the first cathedral of St Paul's were founded in 604 and this book marks their 1,400th anniversary. Lavishly illustrated and annotated, it is a major work of reference and a fascinating history of an institution that has represented England to the world for more than a millennium.

The Parish Church of St Mary of Charity, Faversham
A series of guide booklets dealing with specific aspects of the church, variously priced form £1.50 or £12.00 for the complete set. Available from Jo Richards, 01795 532592 or email anthonyoehring@aol.com

Faversham's parish church is certainly well worth visiting; its size, architectural splendour, glass and furniture all repay attention. However, the real value of this set of booklets – and the real purpose of this review – is as a model for others thinking of introducing or revising its material for visitors.

If your church is undertaking such an exercise, you really should take a look at this pack before you go any further. It is, quite simply, an exemplary set of publications, and includes booklets on the history, the bells, the organs, the misericords, the monuments etc. Each is attractive, full of colour illustrations, well researched and written, informative and easy to use. Each would succeed on a range of levels from the serious scholar to the school party; there is even a teachers' pack and material aimed at specific Key Stage age groups. And the means of funding the project is no less imaginative: one notes contributions from the Local Heritage Initiative, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Countryside Agency as well as business sponsorship.

This is a world away from the usual sort of guidebook available in parish churches. As a means of informing – possibly inspiring – visitors of all ages in this increasingly secular society, it would be hard to identify a more innovative and successful initiative than this one.

In flames

The extended period since the last issue has seen some devastating fires, both in the UK and beyond. Chief among these in the UK is the loss of **Holme Cultram Abbey**, or St Mary's Church in **Abbeytown** in West Cumbria in a fire on June 9th 2006. Founded in 1150 by monks from Melrose,

the Grade I listed parish church was the surviving section of the nave of the Cistercian abbey. The C17 roof, constructed after a previous fire, was completely destroyed, collapsing into the church where the fittings were destroyed and the church left a shell, although the stained glass in the east window has survived.Valuables lost include the current registers and the church silver as well as a cope donated by Princess Margaret. Shane Walker aged 17 pleaded guilty to stealing £5 from a collection box and recklessly starting the fire that destroyed the abbey. He had sneaked into the abbey earlier in the day and stolen the cash from a collection box. He then used this to buy a bottle of vodka from a local shop. Later he went back to the church, looking for communion wine. He hurled a fire extinguisher through a stained glass window and kicked in the vestry door before noticing a box of matches on a shelf which he used to set fire to a white tabard which he found in the vestry. Realising the fire was getting out of control, he tried to douse the flames with an extinguisher but fled in panic. Imposing four years youth custody, Judge Phillips said the offence was despicable and told Walker: "Not only have you destroyed a national treasure - you have also severely damaged an entire community." Restoration is likely to take three years and the total bill for the fire £2-£3 million.

On the day that Walker was sentenced another fire destroyed St Nicholas church in **Hetton-le-Hole**, Co. Durham. Dating from 1898–1901 (Stephen Piper), the Grade II listed church had been declared redundant but was due to be converted into a heritage centre. Following an anonymous donor putting up a reward for capture of the culprits, Hetton councillor Florence Anderson said "I think it's symptomatic of what the church meant to people in Hetton and shows how much people are in a sense grieving for the church. I don't go to church, I'm not religious in the slightest, but it was a beautiful building."

The story could have been as bad at St Mary in **Pinchbeck** at the end of March if the fire started deliberately near the altar

had not been spotted early. A member of the congregation was driving by and spotted smoke and called the fire brigade at 1.40 pm. The Revd Murray Harvey said "I would like to understand why someone would want to set fire to a church. I just hope they are caught so that question can be answered." Here the repair bill is a more modest £100,000. Similarly on 27th September the C12 church of St John in **Devizes**, Wiltshire, one of Simon Jenkins's top 100 churches, suffered extensive smoke damage and the whole interior will have to be cleaned, with

the cost of the repairs likely to run into hundreds of thousands of pounds. The fire started in the choir vestry and destroyed a medieval stall dating back to the 1400s, choir robes and music books and parts of a replacement organ. The heat also cracked a number of the window panes.

Speaking after the Holme Cultram fire, Chris Pitt, spokesman for Ecclesiastical Insurance, said: "Unfortunately arson to churches is common but our answer to that is to encourage the church not to shut its doors. The church needs its congregation now more than ever. The best way to combat anti-social behaviour is to make the church a busy place in the community."

❖ ❖ ❖

News from overseas

One of Finland's two surviving medieval cathedrals was also badly damaged by arson, which destroyed its vast tarred wood shingle roof at the end of May. Firefighters were called to **Porvoo Cathedral** 30 miles east of Helsinki at 2am and managed to save the fire from spreading to the interior although there was damage caused by water and smoke. The

cathedral dates from the C13-C15 and was where Tsar Alexander I opened the Diet of Porvoo in 1809, which sealed Finland's transfer to Russian rule after 700 years under the Swedish Crown, marking for many the

starting point for Finnish state history, the first step on a road which led to independence more than a century later.

Dramatic TV pictures were shown around Europe of a fire which destroyed one of the largest wooden domes in the world. Trinity Cathedral in **St Petersburg**, used as a warehouse 1938–90, was undergoing a major restoration and the dome was surrounded by wooden scaffolding. It is thought this blaze

was accidental, probably caused by workmen. The 260ft high main dome, which was painted blue with golden stars, collapsed and one of the smaller angle cupolas was also destroyed. The Russian Orthodox cathedral was completed in 1835. Most of the icons and treasures were rescued by staff and volunteers. Reconstruction is likely to take at least eighteen months.

The huge abbey church of **Cluny** has virtually been recreated. Visitors can 'attend' morning prayers in a high definition 9-minute long film shown on a 20ft-wide screen, and viewed with special 3D glasses. The 3-D tour is part of a major €20-million restoration project for the Benedictine abbey which in 2010 will celebrate its 1,100th birthday. Founded in 910, the church in

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central-eastern France was a major place of pilgrimage with the monastery becoming the most influential and prestigious in Europe from the 10th to 12th centuries. Its third church founded in the 12th century and measuring some 187m long was the largest in Christendom until building began on the new St Peter's Basilica in Rome in the 16th century. But after its long and glorious history the site was partially destroyed during the French Revolution, and then sold and used as a quarry until 1823. Today only part of the southern transept still exists.

Mtskheta, the ancient capital of Georgia, remains the country's spiritual centre. One of the greatest of its many chuches is the Jvari Monastery, standing on a hill above the old city. It consists of a collection of buildings, chief of which are the Small Church, built in 545, and the Great Church, a domed medieval masterpiece begun in 586. It is now clear that maintenance of the Jvari buildings has been very poor, and acid rain has eroded some of the stone. Inappropriate conservation work has also contributed to the damage. Part of the roof of the Small Church has collapsed, and the interior mosaics and frescoes have been largely destroyed by the elements. Since 1994 the city has been on the Unesco World Heritage List because of its churches, and Unesco is asking for a report on the situation by February 2007.

Vandalism and theft

If it isn't fire then it is mindless vandalism. The vast medieval Lincolnshire church of St Mary Magdalene at **Gedney**, had 29 windows smashed in mid March, including a 14th-century Jesse Window, and vestments and an altar cloth were set alight but luckily here the fire did not take hold. A 15-year-old and a 16-year-old were interviewed by police and admitted causing the damage.

The high price of copper has encouraged the theft of lightning conductors. In June thefts occurred at St James Church near Stockton and All Saints Church at Great Stainton near York. At All Saints, the entire lightning conductor was removed, from the top of the steeple to the ground. The Revd David Brooke, of All Saints, said the damage would cost around £8,000 to repair, and would put the church at risk in the meantime. (Story thanks to Gareth Foster.) At **Little Staughton** in Befordshire thieves set out to steal the church's copper lightning conductor at the end of October, but ended by pulling down the top eight feet of the spire, which crashed to the ground causing extensive damage. The attempt has left the spire looking decidedly worse for wear (our photo shows it before the damage). The church dates back to the 12th century; its spire is a well known landmark in the area, seen from miles around, particularly in the evenings when it is usually floodlit.

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Da Vinci code claims another victim

The Grade I listed 14th-centurychurch of St Luke at **Hodnet** in Shropshire has been attracting many visitors including tourists from overseas after its supposed links to the Holy Grail were featured in *The Chalice of Magdalene*, written by 'historical detective'

Graham Phillips. The church also appears on his website. A window in the church is linked by him to the Da Vinci Code because it contains a feminine-looking St John, one of the major themes of the best-selling novel by Dan Brown (although Hodnet is not mentioned in that book). Now Da Vinci enthusiasts have chiselled a number of holes into the stonework of the church by the window, in the nave, and near the choir vestry door. The Revd Beech said: "We are not sure what they were looking for. There is nothing really left to find at Hodnet Church, apart from God. We are fed up with it."

Saxon angel discovered in Lichfield

Preparatory work for the erection of a stage in the nave of Lichfield Cathedral enabled archaeologists to excavate part of the site and they unearthed a complete but broken statue of the Archangel Gabriel over 1200 years old. It even has traces of original colouring. "None of us imagined that the project would provide a priceless gem, with

the discovery of a carved stone angel that dates back to the original Saxon church that pre-dates the present Cathedral," said the Cathedral's Dean, Adrian Dorbar. The exquisitely carved limestone figure of the angel, one foot gracefully propped on a sinuous branch breaking into leaf, was found broken into three pieces, but missing only a fold of his robe. It may be the left panel of an Annunciation, but despite extensive excavation, no trace was found of a matching figure of the Virgin Mary. The sculpture went on display in the cathedral in February before being taken to Birmingham for expert study and conservation.

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City church tower in partial collapse

The six bells at one of Norwich's medieval churches will be silent for the foreseeable future after part of its tower collapsed, making it structurally unsafe. St George Colegate, one of only 10 medieval churches in the city that is still used for its original purpose, has been in need of restoration for some time. After a failed attempt at gaining funding, an initial sum for the work, estimated to cost about £125,000 in total, had been given by English Heritage to go towards architectural and engineering surveys on the tower, built in 1459. But at about 8.30am on 19th May, part of it came crashing to the ground - no one was hurt.

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St George's, Bloomsbury

After three years restoration at a cost of £8m the wraps began to be removed from St George's Church in Bloomsbury on 3rd May. Originally completed in 1731, it is one of

the masterpieces of English Baroque, a Hawksmoor church, with perhaps the strangest church tower in **London**, if not in Britain. Supposedly based on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus as described by Pliny, it features a stepped pyramid topped by the figure of King George. Around the base of the pyramid 150 feet above the streets were four large ten-feet high beasts, two lions and two unicorns, removed by the Victorians in 1871 for fear of them falling off. Now the heraldic animals are back, recreated by Tim Crawley

from Hawksmoor's original designs. The interior of the church too has been refurbished and the altar moved back to its original position on the east wall to allow for reinstatement of Hawksmoor's two galleries. The church was on the verge of redundancy a few years ago but a £4.5 million grant from the estate of Paul Mellon and a £2.5 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled this major restoration to begin.

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On-line magazine launched-Vidimus

A new monthly magazine devoted to **medieval stained glass** - *Vidimus* - has been launched on-line. It is linked with the CVMA (Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi) which has an on-line archive of some 15000 digital images (http://www.cvma.ac.uk/). Subscription is free and each issue will have a detailed examination of a window or panel of glass with detailed photography. There will also be features about other aspects of stained glass - preservation, techniques, artists and patrons for example. Edited by Tim Ayers it will also feature news items, exhibitions, book reviews, and web-site reviews and links. To see the first edition and to subscribe go to http://www.vidimus.org

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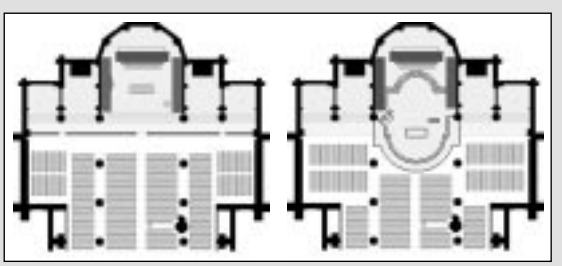
Cobh Cathedral

One of Ireland's great C19 Catholic cathedrals at **Cobh** (formerly Queenstown) is facing a drastic re-ordering of the kind seen at Armagh, Birmingham and at several places in the USA. The Friends of St Colman's Cathedral have set up a website to fight these plans for which planning permissions was submitted in 2005 and subsequently granted, despite over 212 objections lodged with the town council, including from the Cork County Council and almost every national preservation group in Ireland.
See http://www.foscc.com/home.html



Cobh east end: now, and as proposed

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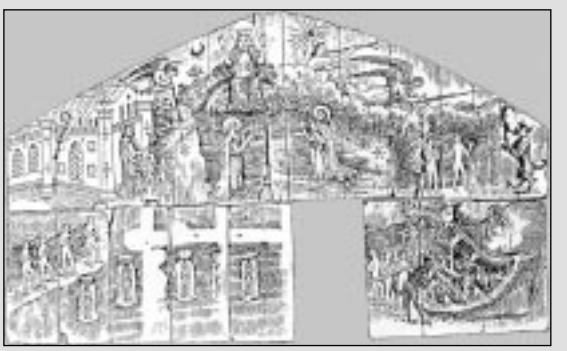
Tree ring dates

A number of ancient wooden church chests in **Suffolk** - at Mendlesham, Chevington and Earl Stonham - are being dated by dendrochronology, that is, using tree rings to establish the date at which the original tree grew, and thus the earliest date at which the object could have been constructed. The work is being carried out by the team at the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory who identified Britain's oldest door last year, at Westminster Abbey (see previous issue), and is being supported by the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History. The expectation is that the pieces will be shown to date from the 13th or 14th century.



The same technique has been used to date the doom painting at St James the Great, **Dauntsey**, Wiltshire. This is painted on boards, with God as Almighty Judge and, as the *Swindon Advertiser* put it, shows 'what happens to good and bad people after death'. The carpentry is crude and the painting best described as vernacular, but this

is a rare survival of something once very common. The results show that the trees used for the wooden boards were probably felled from local wood between about 1370 and 1400. Was Pevsner's art-historical judgement that it was early 16th century incorrect? or was it overpainted? His remark that it is 'of poor quality' may be true, but this is one of only five such survivals in the country, and to be treasured for that reason alone, whatever its lack of artistic merit.

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Closures

The following have been notified to me

Liverpool - After a somewhat acrimonious debate, the future of the Catholic church of St Mary of the Angels (1910, Italianate with an ornate marble interior), now seems more secure. It is set to become the rehearsal room for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. In the same city, St Thomas Wavertree (1909, R Wynn Own) is to be demolished and replaced by housing.

Widnes - St Marie's Catholic Church in Lugsdale Road (1864–65 by E.W.Pugin) is to be demolished, because it is too expensive to repair. The last Mass will be on the feast of the Epiphany, January 7, 2007.

Salford - St Ambrose CofE church (1910, rebuilt 1956) on Liverpool Street, Langworthy closed in April and is to be demolished to make way for a new £20m secondary school. Its congregation has joined with members of the Salford Methodist Community Church to create the Emmanuel Church. Andy Salmon, local councillor and former vicar at St Ambrose, said: "I have mixed feelings about there being a school on the site of St Ambrose. It is a huge building and was very expensive to maintain. Apparently it does not have any architectural value. But I also believe there is a need for family housing in this area."

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Update

Campaigners have lost a four-year fight to stop a historic village church being turned into flats. Councillors rejected plans to transform Mount Zion Church, in **Quarriers** Village, near Bridge of Weir, into luxury homes last year, but the decision has been overturned on appeal. The B-listed 19th-century church was built by William Quarrier and is the centrepiece of the picturesque village. It was agreed to sell the building to a developer in 2004 amid mounting repair bills.

And finally…

This column welcomes contributions from its readers. I can be contacted at churchcrawler@blueyonder.co.uk or by conventional means – Phil Draper, 10 Lambley Rd, St George, Bristol, BS5 8JQ. Any views expressed in this column are not necessarily those of the Ecclesiological Society.

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The Hon. Editor, who is supported by a small editorial committee, welcomes all suggestions and submissions for inclusion in *Ecclesiology Today*. He is always pleased to discuss ideas for articles before they are written. Material should conform to our style guide, a copy of which he can provide. Submissions should be provided in electronic form by email or diskette, although type-written material will also be considered. We regret that, except in exceptional circumstances, hand-written material cannot be accepted.

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