ECCLESIOLOGY TODAY

Ecclesiology Today • Issue 45 • January 2012

ECCLESIOLOGY TODAY

ECCLESIOLOGY TODAY

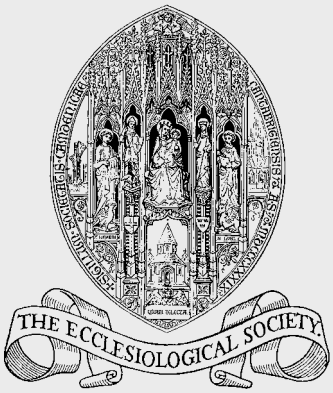
Ecclesiology Today • **Issue 45 • January 2012**

ISSN: 1460-4213

Published 2012 by the Ecclesiological Society
c/o The Society of Antiquaries of London
Burlington House
Piccadilly
London
WIV 0HS

The Ecclesiological Society is a registered charity.
Charity No. 210501.

www.ecclsoc.org



Journal of the Ecclesiological Society

Ecclesiology Today

Contents

Issue 45 for January 2012
published July 2012

Chairman's letter

Dear Fellow Member

This issue of *Ecclesiology Today* starts with Chris Webster describing the rebuilding of a church tower in Leeds in 1839, in the style of Sir Christopher Wren. This is one of those articles which make you speculate how things might have been *if* . . . in this case, *if* Wren's architecture – rather than Gothic – had become fashionable for churches in the mid nineteenth century.

Our second article, by James Bettley, charts the rise and fall of colour in Victorian churches, an issue which was discussed vigorously at the time in various journals, with thinking developing and changing as the century progressed. This article originated as a paper at our 2011 annual conference.

For our third item we are pleased to publish the Annual Lecture given at our 2011 AGM by Richard Halsey. This important and stimulating lecture first gives the background to the State's (limited) financial support for historic churches, and then discusses the future of Church of England parish churches in the light of the continuing pressures they face and the ways they are adapting.

In our last piece, Cameron Newham celebrates the first fifteen years of a project on which we originally reported more than twelve years ago. The aim of the project is to create a detailed photographic record of all the rural parish churches in England. The fifteen photographs shown here, one from each year of the project, give some idea of its scale and scope, and must surely also remind us of the extraordinary beauty and historical interest to be found in our parish churches.

Those of you who track these things will appreciate that we are still almost exactly one issue behind with *Ecclesiology Today*. We do have plans to catch up, but in the meantime I hope you will find something to enjoy in this edition's wide-ranging miscellany.

Finally, as those of you at the AGM will know, I am sorry to say that our Hon. Editor, the Revd Dr Lynne Broughton, decided some months ago to step down from the role. The Council is grateful to her for her work on *Ecclesiology Today*, and is pleased that she is willing to continue to serve as a member of Council, where her experience and knowledge is much valued.

Trevor Cooper
Chairman of Council

‘Diminishes sweetly by elegant degrees’: the tower of Holy Trinity, Leeds and an episode in the early-Victorian Wren Revival

Christopher Webster

Background

ON THE EVENING of 7 January 1839, Leeds was struck by a ‘hurricane’ and most prominent among the damaged buildings was a series of churches; several had pinnacles dislodged or parapets blown down.[1] At Holy Trinity, Boar Lane (Figs. 1–3), the situation was even more calamitous as the top of the spire was shattered – apparently ‘by electricity’[2] – and the lower parts were sufficiently damaged to create much alarm in the town. Whereas the other churches – all relatively recent and Gothic in style– were carefully restored to their original appearance, at Holy Trinity the damage generated an entirely new design, provided by Leeds’ leading architect of the day, Robert Dennis Chantrell (1793–1872).[3] The result is an astonishing addition – albeit modest in scale – elegant, certainly, but at least as interesting for what it

Christopher Webster is an architectural historian. He is a member of the Council of the Ecclesiological Society, and Reviews Editor of Ecclesiology Today

Fig. 1: ‘The South-East Prospect of Leeds in the County of York’ (detail), engraving by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, published 15 April 1745, showing Holy Trinity, Leeds, with tower and spire. (Courtesy of the Thoresby Society)

Fig. 2: Holy Trinity, Leeds, showing the tower and spire before the storm. (T. Allen, A New and Complete History of the County of York *(London, I. T. Hinton, 1831), opp. p.508. From a drawing by N. Wittock.)*

Fig. 3: Holy Trinity's tower as it would have looked with the spire removed. (Digitally manipulated version of Fig. 2, courtesy of Ruth Baumberg)

conveys to us about the stylistic possibilities of 1839, the date of the foundation of the Cambridge Camden Society and a moment now seen as one of seminal importance for the whole course of Victorian architecture – although largely by the Gothic Revival camp – a theme to which we will return.

Holy Trinity was Leeds' third town centre church, built in the then fashionable west side in 1722–7.[4] The architect was William Etty (*c.*1675–1734) from York, the county's most important architect of the period and a man who had already assisted Colen Campbell and John Vanburgh with their Yorkshire projects, and would later work with Nicholas Hawksmoor; despite his provincial base, he was certainly fully conversant with current metropolitan fashions and visited London on several occasions.[5]

Before we can enter into discussion of Chantrell's scheme, we need to establish the stylistic parameters of Etty's composition to which it was added. The latter produced a wooden model in 1723, now lost but engraved in 1724 (Fig. 4),[6] before construction commenced; by 1745 the tower had acquired an extra stage and a spire (Figs. 1–3).[7] It is not clear at what point between 1723 and 1745 these two features were added, and who was their designer,

but in the context of this article, the question need not detain us. The church as it appeared by 1745 is classified by Terry Friedman as one of a number of 'temple-form churches'[8] erected in the early eighteenth century, the most prominent and well known of which was James Gibbs' St Martin-in-the-Fields, London (1722–6), an accomplished, highly innovative juxtaposition of Baroque and Palladian idioms. The project was illustrated in no less than seventeen plates in Gibbs' *A Book of Architecture* of 1728, a volume to which Etty subscribed. Although Holy Trinity relies heavily on St Martin's, Etty's design is a more sober Palladian composition in which Gibbs' Baroque flourishes are largely absent, along with the portico that gives St Martin's much of its antique character. Holy Trinity's stone needle spire, although arguably incongruous on a pilastered tower, was a not uncommon amalgamation in the eighteenth century, a blending of Gothic and Classical that Horace Walpole referred to as the 'Bastard Breed'.[9]

Chantrell's design for the spire

On being asked to examine the crumbling spire and finding it quite beyond repair,[10] how was Chantrell to proceed? It is important to add that funds for restoration were extremely limited. With so many churches damaged within the vast Parish of Leeds, a series of fundraising 'Bazaars' were planned intended to raise money not only for the post-hurricane repairs, but also for the provision of a 'church' school for each of the parochial chapels in the town.[11] The latter was an initiative dear to the heart of the town's energetic new vicar, Dr Walter Farquhar Hook, perhaps spurred on by recent national debates about the benefits of secular education.[12] While he was known for his belief that churches should be kept in good order – 'a handsome church is a kind of standing sermon'[13] he had said in 1837 – he was not a man to squander scarce funds on an ostentatious tower if the alternative was better educational provision for the poor.

Fig. 4: Holy Trinity, Leeds, engraving based on William Etty's 'draught' of 1723. Compare the image in Figures 1 & 2, where the tower has an extra stage and a spire. (R. Thoresby, Vicaria Leodiensis *(Leeds, Joseph Smith, 1724), opp. p.24. Courtesy of the Thoresby Society, Leeds)*

Given this climate of austerity, what were Chantrell's options? An obvious one was simply to remove the damaged spire altogether (Fig. 3) and leave the tower in the spirit of Etty's initial design, although a stage higher than the 1724 published design with which, surely, Chantrell would have been familiar.[14] A number of early eighteenth-century churches, broadly similar to Holy Trinity, were built with towers like this, e.g. St Alkmund, Whitchurch, Shropshire, 1712–13. A second option was to rebuild the spire as it had been prior to the storm. However, while its stylistic incongruity seems to have raised few concerns at the beginning of the Georgian period, a hundred years later sensibilities among Leeds' citizens would have been more refined and certainly for an architect educated as Chantrell had been, it must have seemed a glaring solecism. A third alternative was to build a new design of diminishing stages using the Greek Revival repertoire that was still just about fashionable; several towers of this type had been built in the 1820s, for instance St John, Waterloo Road, London by Francis Bedford (1823–4) (Fig. 5) or St Thomas, Holloway Road, Birmingham by Rickman and Hutchinson (1827–9).

Chantrell did none of these, but instead produced a radical new design, highly original, yet sensitive to the earlier work, completed in December 1839. It followed the basic outline of the old spire – although it was about 16 feet taller[15] – and comprised three new storeys which rise in diminishing stages, very much in the manner of Wren and Gibbs (Figs. 6 and 7). Certainly it restored a degree of stylistic unity – the tower was now entirely within the Classical tradition – but whereas Etty's Palladianism avoided exuberance, Chantrell positively revelled in it. His first stage is a tactful development from 'Etty's' two, which comprised a Corinthian storey above an Ionic one: Chantrell's first incorporates single, Composite pilasters, with massive angled scrolls at their bases, semi-circular topped openings and a big entablature – 'enlarged to give effect as [an] ordinary cornice would at that height appear meagre' according to our architect[16] – topped with more urns. The next stage incorporates substantial, angled scrolls to ease the reduction of its size and imply a concave wall surface, while the top stage really is concave, crowned by 'a cupola … [topped by] a stone ball and cross', a feature 'much used by Wren, especially in his best London churches', to quote Chantrell again. This was Baroque as Borromini would have appreciated it and as Roman as anything that either Wren or Gibbs had dared to specify. Chantrell's work displays elements of Wren's St Bride's, Fleet Street – itself 'seriously injured by lightening' in 1764 and subsequently rebuilt[17] – as well as the numerous towers Gibbs illustrated in his *A Book of Architecture*

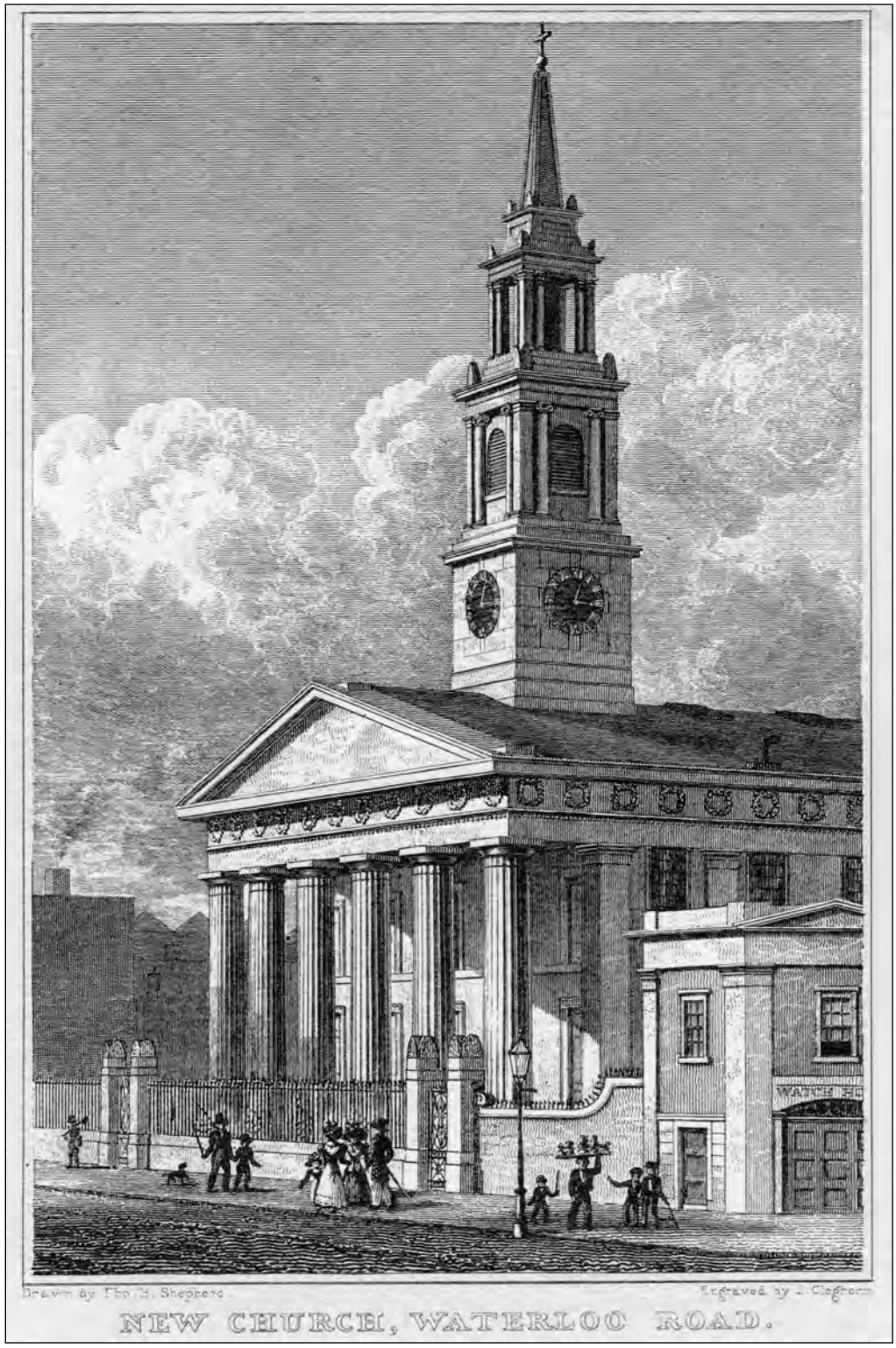


Fig. 5: London, St John, Waterloo Road, London (Francis Bedford, 1823–4). (T. Shepherd, Metropolitan Improvements or London in the Nineteenth Century *(London, Jones and Co, 1829), after p.162)*

Fig. 6: Leeds, Holy Trinity, with Chantrell's addition of the top three stages to the tower. (Author)

Fig. 7: Leeds, Holy Trinity, detail. (Ruth Baumberg)

(Fig. 8), the eighteenth century's most influential pattern book, especially for church builders, a book with which Chantrell would undoubtedly have been familiar, and one he probably owned.[18] Holy Trinity's tower also has elements of St Clement Danes in London, a particularly appropriate source since that tower was left unfinished by Wren and had its upper stages subsequently added by Gibbs (Fig. 9).[19] However, Chantrell's three stages defy precise sources;[20] ultimately his was an original composition, all the more remarkable as his first and only known essay in the Baroque.

This leads naturally to the next question: how on earth did the scheme come to be commissioned? It seems literally incredible that one of the churchwardens should have requested it; much

more logical is that the idea came from Chantrell and at a time when he carried all before him in the town – he was then at the mid point of the reconstruction of the medieval Leeds Parish Church, a project of both national importance as well as local pride – he had sufficient support to carry the day. However, when a plain, but substantial school could be built for £1,000, and a small one for a little under £400, the decision to spend very nearly £800 on Holy Trinity's new tower can hardly have been made without a compelling argument from the architect.[21]

The influence of Wren

Finally, what should anyone interested in the wider issue of the stylistic debates of *c.*1840 take from this project, modest though it is in terms of cost and scale? Significantly, how should it be seen in the context of claimed Ecclesiological hegemony: that, after more than two centuries of supremacy, the Classical Tradition had staggered to a depressing, unimaginative end and only a vibrant Gothic Revival saved English architecture from utter degradation? This writer suggests that, while the Goths eventually emerged as (temporary) victors, the Classicists were far from being a spent force at the opening of Victoria's reign. Chantrell's design is routed firmly in the broad Classical coalition that existed in the second quarter of the nineteenth century and which developed as an alternative to the earlier and better known Greek Revival. It included those promoting a revival of Roman idioms – arguably England's most accomplished designers at the beginning of Victoria's reign[22] – as well as those interested in the work of Wren. It is a phase of English architectural development now largely

Fig. 8: James Gibbs, 'Draughts of Steeples made for St Martin [in the Fields, London]'. (J. Gibbs, A Book of Architecture *(London, W. Innys et al., 1728), plate 31)*

Fig. 9: London, St Clement Danes, largely by Christopher Wren, 1668–85; upper four stages of tower added by James Gibbs, 1719–20 (T. Shepherd, London and its Environs in the Nineteenth Century *(London, Jones and Co, 1829), after p.66)*

marginalized, especially by those seeking to promote the dubious notion that the period's only significant stylistic innovations concerned Gothic.

The crucial influence in Chantrell's design is Wren rather than Gibbs, and is a manifestation of the renewed interest in the first half of the nineteenth century in St Paul's and its designer. Dallaway's *Anecdotes of the Arts in England* of 1800, Francesco Milizia's *The Lives of Celebrated Architects*, first published in an English translation in 1826, J. S. Memes' *History of Sculpture, Painting and Architecture* of 1829, along with various other works at this time, all praise Wren and his London cathedral. Inevitably, several make the comparison with St Peter's in Rome and despite the authors' best endeavours to the contrary, grudgingly admit St Paul's cannot quite claim the crown, but comes a respectable second. Of especial interest for this study is *Winkles's Architectural and Picturesque Illustrations of Cathedral Churches* of 1836; whereas Britton's sumptuous *Cathedral Antiquities* series (started in 1814) considered only England's 14 most interesting medieval

structures,[23] Winkles adds St Paul's to his selection. Soane, in his Royal Academy lectures,[24] delivered 1809–36 – although not annually – also praises Wren and in 1811 even sent young Chantrell, then his pupil, to draw the inside of St Paul's as well as St Stephen, Walbrook.[25]

However, it is with James Elmes (1782–1862) – a middle order architect, but prolific author – that the Wren Revival really moves up a gear. He first writes about Wren in his *Lectures in Architecture*, 1821, and enthusiastically discusses most of Wren's major London buildings in the richly illustrated *London … in the Nineteenth Century*, a collaboration with the artist Thomas Shepherd, of 1829. It was with his magisterial *Memoirs of the Life and Works of Sir Christopher Wren* of 1823 – the first biography of an English architect ever to be published – that Wren was really rediscovered by a new generation.[26] Among the converts was C. R. Cockerell (1788–1863). He was appointed Surveyor of the Fabric at St Paul's in 1819 and became 'an enthusiastic student … of Wren … In consequence, his own work is a unique synthesis of Neo-classical and Baroque'.[27] His vast, virtuoso watercolour 'A tribute to the Memory of Sir Christopher Wren' illustrated *every* building thought at the time to be by the architect; it was one of the wonders at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1838. Subsequently, as Professor of Architecture at the Academy, Cockerell's lectures (delivered 1841–56) had many enthusiastic references to Wren.

So far as Wren's direct influence is concerned, a number of commentators saw Wren's London churches – with their obvious Protestant credentials – as providing the ideal models for the church building boom that was heralded by the 1818 Church Building Act, especially from those with reservations about either the Grecian or Gothic alternatives.[28] A small number of architects appear to have agreed and the tower of John Walters' St Paul, Shadwell, Middlesex (1820-1), was an especially fine confection of Wrenian motifs. As an advocate of the style for modern churches, particularly important is William Bardwell,[29] a minor but interesting architect, who published *Temples, Ancient and Modern or, Notes on Church Architecture*, in 1837. In it the author claimed that the success of medieval Gothic was inextricably linked to the skills of stonemasons: [30]

> the chief defects of modern imitation arise not so much from a want of acquaintance with the style as from the necessity of adopting it to the littleness and poverty of a brick construction. … The superiority of the City churches over those recently erected is attributable mainly to the component substances of which they are constructed … the general style and the materials of SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN, are almost the perfect Protestant church building.

Later in the book, Bardwell – who was also interested in the issue of road widening in the centre of London to ease congestion – even illustrates how a typical Wren church might be removed from its cramped, City location and rebuilt, modified to reflect current notions of Classicism as well as late-Georgian ideas of seating, to provide much-needed accommodation in a populous district. His book was perfectly timed for Chantrell's project.

Lastly, Chantrell's initiative could draw on support from an unlikely source: William Hogarth's *The Analysis of Beauty* (1754), a text rediscovered in the nineteenth century with new editions in 1806, 1810, 1812 and 1820; crucially for this study, there were further ones in 1837 and 1838.[31]

> St Paul's cathedral is … [evidence] of the superior skill of Sir Christopher Wren, so justly esteem'd the prince of architects … There are many other churches of great beauty, the work of the same architect, which are hid in the heart of the city, whose steeples and spires are raised higher than ordinary, that they can be seen at a distance above the other buildings; and the great number of them dispers'd about the whole city, adorn the prospect of it, and give it an air of opulency and magnificence: on which account their shapes will be found to be particularly beautiful. Of these, and perhaps of any in Europe, St Mary-le-Bow is the most elegantly varied. St Bride's in Fleet-street diminishes sweetly by elegant degrees.[32]

The churchwardens at Holy Trinity might have been indifferent to current debates about architectural style, and were perhaps unmoved by the thought of a tower diminishing sweetly by elegant degrees, but in an age when, we are told, wardens desired to have their hard work remembered by posterity,[33] Hogarth's words would have brought a contented smile to their faces: 'adorn[ing the city] … opulency and magnificence'. It was the ultimate legacy; perhaps it was this that swung the discussion in Chantrell's direction.

Conclusion

Despite the best efforts of Elmes and Cockerell, the rising tide of Gothic was unstoppable in the 1840s and the Wren Revival did not become a major force in English architecture until the end of the nineteenth century.[34] Chantrell's work at Holy Trinity is thus a very rare and early example of the revival in practice, and a remarkably confident essay in a style at the very cutting edge of fashion.[35] However, it is a sobering thought that, without the staggeringly compelling efforts of the Gothic crusade, marshalled with bright-eyed enthusiasm by the Ecclesiologists, the proliferation of church building in Victorian Britain might just have taken a rather different course.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to record his gratitude to Terry Friedman for numerous helpful suggestions in the preparation of this article. Ruth Baumberg provided invaluable assistance with the illustrations.

Notes

1 *Leeds Intelligencer*, 12 January 1839. Other injured churches included Christ Church and St George. Matters were compounded by 'a gale' on the night of 30 January which caused further damage. (*Leeds Intelligencer*, 2 February 1839.)
2 *Leeds Mercury*, 14 December 1839.
3 Chantrell had trained with Soane and his early work shows he was a committed Classicist. However, in the mid-1820s, he made a radical shift to become a designer of Gothic churches, a subject in which he excelled. He rose to become one of the great church architects of his generation, but remained adept at using a variety of styles. For Chantrell, see C. Webster, *R. D. Chantrell (1793–1872) and the Architecture of a Lost Generation* (Reading, 2010).
4 The best account of the 1720s work comes in T. Friedman, *Church Architecture in Leeds 1700–1799* (The Thoresby Society, Leeds, 1997), 58–102. See also his *The Eighteenth-Century Church in Britain* (Yale U. P., 2011), 408–11. For information about Etty's work at Holy Trinity, this writer has drawn heavily on the 1997 publication.
5 On 23 April 1725, Etty visited London in 'Hopes to see something that might be newly fashioned' (University of Hull Archives DDHA14/25–26, quoted in Friedman, *Leeds*, 80).
6 It appeared in R. Thoresby, *Vicaria Leodiensis*, published in Leeds in 1724, the most famous eighteenth-century history of the town.
7 The tower in its pre-storm form is first shown in Samuel and Nathaniel Buck's 'The South-East Prospect of Leeds, in the County of York', published 15 April 1745. H. W. Thompson, *A Short Account of Holy Trinity Leeds* (Leeds, privately printed, 1927), 14, says of the spire: 'it was an early addition' to Etty's design. T. D. Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete* (Leeds, Robinson, Son and Holdsworth, 1816), p. 65, while praising the general design of the church, dismisses the spire: it was 'unquestionably one instance among many of private interference, by which the better judgement of real architects is often overruled, and for which they are unjustly considered as responsible'.
8 This is the title of the chapter in which it is discussed in Friedman, *Eighteenth-Century Church*, 393–422.
9 Quoted in Friedman, *Eighteenth-Century Church*, 296.
10 The *Intelligencer* of 2 February 1839 reported that the tower was 'seriously injured … but it has since been secured and strengthened in the inside under the superintendence of Mr Chantrell, the architect. He is of the opinion that the congregation and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood have no further cause for alarm, and the temporary repairs will secure the spire until the weather is favourable for taking it down'.
11 Fundraising received much coverage in the *Intelligencer*, e.g. 28 January 1839; 25 May 1839.
12 See W. R. W. Stephens (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook* (London, Richard Bentley, 1879), 443–4.
13 *Leeds Intelligencer*, 11 November 1837.
14 Thoresby, *Vicaria Leodiensis*. Even if Chantrell did not own a copy of the Thoresby book, a copy was available in the Leeds Library where he was 'a proprietor'. I am most grateful to Geoffrey Forster, the Librarian, for searching his *Leeds Library Catalogues* for this and other books.
15 171 feet to its tip in contrast to the old spire's 155 feet. The statistics come from *Leeds Mercury*, 14 December 1839.
16 *Leeds Mercury*, 14 December 1839.
17 G. Godwin, *London Churches* (London,1839), vol. II, p. 3 [but inconsistently paginated].

18 Copies of the second edition of 1738 were advertised in the *Leeds Mercury* (6 and 13 June 1738) and might well have been in circulation in the town one hundred years later (T. Friedman, *James Gibbs* (Yale U. P., 1984), 336).

19 The respective contributions of the two architects are revealed in J. Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture* (London, 1728), plate 28.

20 Although the three stages are decidedly Gibbsian, none of them conforms to anything Gibbs built or published. This writer's earlier assessment – 'a confection of various compositions published by Gibbs' (in *R. D. Chantrell*, 132) – now seems to lack diligence. It suggests that close scrutiny, even of iconic buildings, can sometimes be revealing.

21 A cost of £1000 was the initial estimate for the new school at Christ Church, Meadow Lane, Leeds, in 1839, although the finished building actually cost £2,100 (*Leeds Intelligencer*, 1 June 1839; West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, RDP 68/45). The cost of Chantrell's school in Skipton in 1840–41 was £317 4s 4d (C. Webster, 'The New Schoolroom for Ermysted's Grammar School, Skipton', in *Craven History*, 2 (2008), 28–32). For the cost of Holy Trinity's tower (£797 11s 6d), see West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds, RDP 35/35.

22 The most prominent of which were H. L. Elmes, George Basevi, C. R. Cockerell and William Tite. See Frank Salmon, *Building on Ruins: the Rediscovery of Rome and English Architecture* (Aldershot, 2000).

23 Although it should be noted that the J. and H. S. Storer's much more modest production, *History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Churches of Great Britain*, 4 vols., (Rivingtons, 1814–19), did include St Paul's.

24 For the lectures' texts and their place in architectural theory, see David Watkin, *Sir John Soane: Enlightenment Thought and the Royal Academy Lectures* (Cambridge U. P., 1996).

25 The Day Books (Sir John Soane's Museum) record that Chantrell took 'Views of St Stephen Walbrook, 24 July–7 August 1811' and 'Internal views of St Paul's dome, 12–20 December 1811'.

26 There was, of course, Stephen Wren's *Parentalia* of 1750, but this might reasonably be classed as 'Memoirs' of the Wren family rather than a biography of Sir Christopher.

27 H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects*, 1600–1840 (Yale U. P., 2008), p. 261.

28 In promoting his appropriateness, the writer of an article on the subject of 'The New Churches' concluded, 'Wren, the Aristo of architecture, brought [the Renaissance style] to the highest degree of excellence' (*Quarterly Review*, 27, 1822, 316).

29 For Bardwell, see Colvin, *Dictionary*, 95–6.

30 W. Bardwell, *Temples, Ancient and Modern* (London, privately printed,1837), pp. viii–ix.

31 If Chantrell didn't own his own copy, one was available in the Leeds Library by 1836 (see note 14).

32 William Hogarth's assessment of Wren's St Bride's, Fleet Street (W. Hogarth, *An Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Ronald Poulson (Yale U. P., 1997), p. 47). 'Hiram' [Batty Langley] had earlier used a similar form of words to describe it (*The Grub Street Journal*, 245, 5 September 1734, p. 1).

33 Hogarth uses the idea as part of his satire in Plate 5 of 'Marriage à la Mode' and many pre-Victorian churches still contain memorial boards listing repairs and 'beautifications' on which the names of the churchwardens who commissioned the works are prominently displayed. An example is illustrated in Friedman, *Eighteenth-Century Church*, p. v.

34 The best account is in A. E. Richardson, *Monumental Classic Architecture in Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1914), chapter 5.

35 As if to confirm his credentials for the avant-garde, just six months after the Leeds 'hurricane', and before Holy Trinity's tower was finished, he learnt of the fire at Bruges Cathedral where he went on to rebuild the upper part of its west tower. Although Romanesque rather than Baroque, the design was no less of a stylistic innovation.

‘All its glory is from within’: the importance of colour in church interiors, 1840–1903

James Bettley

James Bettley’s new volume of the Pevsner Architectural Guide to Essex was published in 2007; he is currently working on the Suffolk edition.

THE SUBJECT OF COLOUR was of the greatest importance to those engaged in designing and restoring churches in the Victorian age.★ As with so much else to do with churches during that period – whether it be the style of the building itself, or how it was furnished and equipped, or what went on within it in terms of liturgy and ritual, and what people wore and did – the question was approached from a variety of angles: aesthetic, historic, symbolic. The end of this episode in the history of taste can be precisely defined by a certain event that took place in 1903; the beginning is less easy to pin down.

Colour in churches: early discussions

One finds the germ of the idea in 1840, in one of the answers that E. B. Pusey gave to ‘a lady’ who wrote to ask him what was meant by ‘Puseyism’: ‘Regard for the visible part of devotion, such as the decoration of the house of God, which acts insensibly on the mind’.[1] The practical aspects of decoration were addressed in a book published in 1842, *The Appropriate Character of Church Architecture*, by the Revd George Ayliffe Poole, perpetual curate of St James’s, Leeds. Poole’s aim was to counter ‘the total neglect of all ecclesiastical character in churches, and of all appropriate design in their furniture and decorations’.[2] After general introductory chapters he worked his way through the church, beginning with the porch, and by page 100 had reached ‘The Walls’, and wall paintings:

> These paintings have, for the most part, been covered with the successive coats of whitewash and yellow ochre, with which churchwardens have literally daubed the interior as well as the exterior of churches; as if, to their eyes, whiteness and yellowness were the only two elements of beauty.[3]

He then moved on to windows:

> The painted windows with which our old churches are so profusely adorned are really a part of the design; and not, as they seem now to be considered, so many separate accidental additions.[4]

He went on to speak of the coloured decoration of the walls, roof, floor, pillars and windows of the medieval church as if it were

★ This article is based on a paper given at the Ecclesiological Society’s annual conference, ‘The Interior of the Victorian Church’, 1 October 2011. I am grateful to Dr Ayla Lepine for reading and commenting helpfully on a draft. For the source of ‘All its glory is from within’, see below, note 14.

taken for granted,[5] and even speculated (although here he knew himself to be on dangerous ground, open to accusations of idolatry and Romanism) about the reintroduction of paintings and statuary into English churches.[6]

In these respects, as in many others, Poole showed himself to be very much in touch with the wind of ecclesiological change that was then blowing, but was among the very first to draw attention to the question of colour; and it was a question that was to be debated at great length in the course of the following sixty years. From the start, the re-introduction of colour seems to have been accepted as essential, not an optional extra. J. M. Neale was characteristically unequivocal on this point in *Church Enlargement and Church Arrangement* (1843):

> A church is not as it should be, till *every* window is filled with stained glass, till every inch of floor is covered with encaustic tiles, till there is a Roodscreen glowing with the brightest tints and with gold, nay, if we would arrive at perfection, the roof and walls must be painted and frescoed. For it may safely be asserted that ancient churches in general were so adorned: and these decorations are the more appropriate, because they are chiefly and almost exclusively ecclesiastical.[7]

A complete colouring of the interior is essential, therefore, because that is what churches used to be like – although that unprovable assumption was not unchallenged, as others soon started to explore the historical background. J. G. Waller, better known for his study and production of monumental brasses, published an 'Historical account of painting as formerly used in churches' in the *Builder* in 1846,[8] and the following year the architect E. L. Blackburne published his more extensive *Sketches Graphic and Descriptive for a History of the Decorative Painting Applied to English Architecture during the Middle Ages*. (For an example of a colour scheme in which Blackburne was involved, see the front cover.)

This interest in medieval wall paintings was partly driven by the desire to reverse the trend of whitewashing that Poole referred to, but was also stimulated by what Waller reckoned was the 'daily occurrence' of the discovery of wall paintings in the process of church restoration. *The Ecclesiologist*, in 1847, published a helpful little article on 'How to remove whitewash': since its removal 'has become so cheap and so easy, it has become a sort of obligation'.[9] It recommended for the purpose something called 'Manchester card', 'a number of closely set bristling fine-drawn iron wires fixed on a strong web', used in the cloth-making industry for brushing up the nap – the modern equivalent of the traditional teazle. After a certain amount of use the card became too soft for its intended purpose but at that stage was of just the right flexibility to be used

for scraping off whitewash; 'there is no possibility of its injuring any stone, except clunch… and it is not strong enough to exterminate paint'. Gilbert James French, a linen draper of Bolton-le-Moors who 'developed a considerable trade in the textile industry, providing fabric for clergymen and general ecclesiastical uses',[10] was well placed to offer Manchester cards in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Articles of Church Decoration*. Indeed the cards were so easy to use, he claimed, that the work 'may be done by children'.[11] The last word on that particular topic should probably go to Thomas Gambier Parry, who, in the first of a series of letters under the title 'Whitewash and yellow dab' published in *The Ecclesiologist* in 1858–60, warned against the destruction of old decorations covered by whitewash (which had hitherto protected them) by over-zealous restorers who scraped back to bare stone.[12]

For the ecclesiologists there was, of course, a symbolic importance in not doing what their Protestant predecessors had done, whether it was whitewashing the walls or filling the nave with box pews and galleries. Then there was the higher symbolic significance of decoration, colourful and otherwise, starting – as with so much else – with William Durandus, and the translation of his work by J. M. Neale and Benjamin Webb published in 1843 as *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments*. Decoration has a higher purpose:

> on festivals curtains are hung up in churches, for the sake of the ornament they give; and that by visible, we may be led to invisible, beauty. These curtains are sometimes tinctured with various hues… so that by the diversity of the colours themselves we may be taught that man, who is the temple of GOD, should be ordained by the variety and diversity of virtues.[13]

The decorated interior is contrasted with the plain exterior:

> In that the church is gloriously adorned within and not without, it is thereby signified that ALL ITS GLORY IS FROM WITHIN. For although its outward appearance be despicable, the soul which is the seat of GOD is illuminated from within: according to that saying, I AM BLACK BUT COMELY.[14]

The symbolism of Durandus may be too obscure or fanciful for many. At a more accessible level, Gambier Parry wrote that the purpose of colour in architecture was 'to give order and dignity to public worship, to aid the weak mortal in his weakness, to give instruction to the ignorant, and expression to the devout'.[15] At its simplest, the argument was that it was quite simply right and proper for church interiors to be decorated. The whitewashing churchwardens' antipathy to colour, as perceived by the editors of *The Ecclesiologist* in a leading article of 1845, may have been based

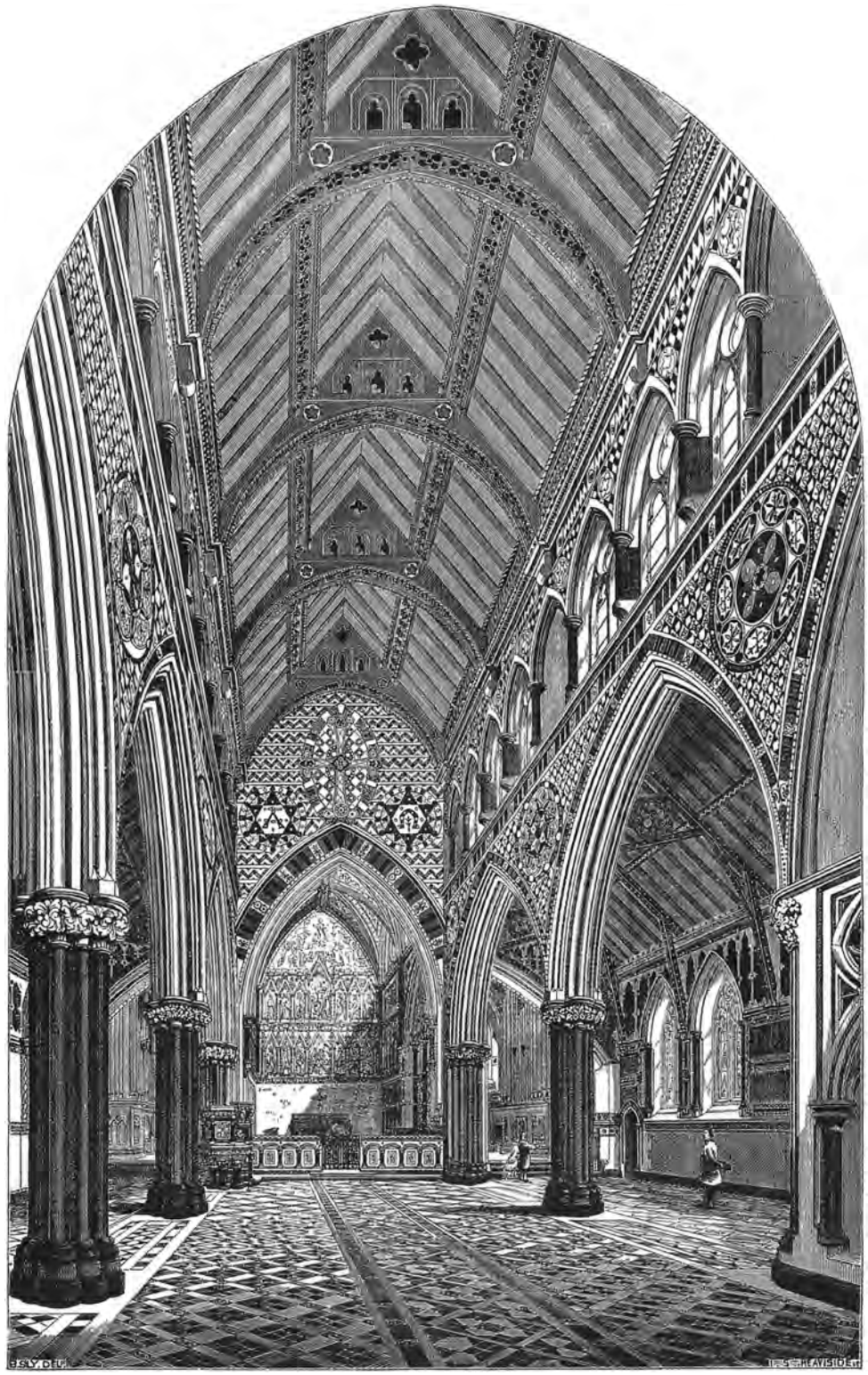


*Fig. 1: All Saints, Margaret Street, London: a view of the interior by B. Sly published in the year of its opening (*Builder*, 17 (1859), 377)*

on romantic notions of the beauty, solemnity, and appropriateness of grey stone and dark oak. But colour in itself is not bad (after all, stained glass is accepted); perhaps, they went on to say,

> the decorative painting to which we are accustomed is generally so wretched in itself, and so associated with every idea of human pomp and worldly luxury, that we feel as if by employing it we should give the House of GOD the appearance of a fashionable drawing room… We, who adorn our houses with colour, ought to have some very valid reason for denying it to the Temple of the Almighty.[16]

But already, in 1845, G. A. Poole was able to write, in a revised and enlarged edition of the work quoted from earlier, that he had noted

> some indications of a revival of the use of colour in the decoration of churches; and not only in the windows, but also in the roof, the floor, and the walls. The use of fresco is not without its advocates, and it will doubtless be employed again to a great extent. Subjects are numerous, without the smallest suspicion of an improper representation of divine things or persons.[17]

Arthur Billing, an architect who worked in Benjamin Ferrey's office, read a paper 'On mural painting and the decorations of churches generally' in 1851, mainly historical but ending with a plea for the increased use of painted decoration; by the time a revised edition of his paper was published in 1868, he was able to say that

> among the various ways in which the anxious desire for increased beauty… in our Churches has developed itself during this period, perhaps the most remarkable is the widely extended and daily increasing use of Painting and Colour Decoration as a means of ornamentation.[18]

The argument won

The Revd Richard Frederick Littledale, in his paper to the St Patrick's Ecclesiological Society, Dublin, in 1856, clearly felt that the argument was already won: 'It is unnecessary', he said, 'to enter into a defence of the employment of color for the adornment of our churches'.[19] Instead, he spoke about *how*, not *whether*, colour might be reintroduced. Stained glass windows, he felt, were the most important element of polychromatic decoration. Mural decoration he divided into three kinds: mosaic, fresco, and hangings of cloth, silk, or velvet. Fresco painting had enjoyed the most universal popularity, and recommended subjects were the Crucifixion, Resurrection, Last Judgement, and Our Lord in Majesty; as an example of the last, he referred to All Saints, Margaret Street (Fig. 1). Patterns, and scrolls with texts, were also

widely used; with texts, letters must be distinctly legible, and not 'of such intricate and obsolete forms that none but a professed antiquary can decipher them'.[20] For churches unable to afford fresco decoration, the use of paper-hangings, i.e. wallpaper, is suggested:

> No patterns should be employed but such as have been designed by a competent ecclesiologist, and under such restrictions I conceive that they might be made an abundant means of ornament. A deep crimson paper, for instance, divided into lozenges, by the intersection of gold bars, and with a silver fleur-de-lis in the centre of each lozenge would be a considerable improvement upon whitewash or yellow ochre.[21]

Cloth hangings are suitable for covering doors, or in place of a reredos. Flooring should be in harmony with the rest of the colouring. Mosaic is best, encaustic tiles the next best. He has a little to say about furniture; organ pipes should be painted in diaper. For vestments, the only deviation from white surplice and black stole should be the hoods of the various universities, except at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

> By following out these laws of coloring and decoration our churches may be transformed from their present mean and denuded aspect, into fitting temples for the celebration of Christian worship, and the exercise of Christian zeal.[22]

Others had also tried to introduce some system into coloured decoration. In 1849 G. J. French, who was in fact very much more than just a linen draper, published *Hints on the Arrangement of Colours in Ancient Decorative Art*. He here asserted that 'brilliant colours are less harmoniously arranged by the modern than they were by the mediaeval artisan', and also that 'British manufacturers are less tasteful in their combination of colours than their continental opponents'.[23] He identified certain rules, such as the separation of prominent colours by spaces or lines of yellow, white, or black: such rules, he said, had been widely followed by different cultures, and were also followed by heraldry.[24] 'The strength of the old decorator', according to French,

> in great measure arose from his close attention to the laws of nature in the combination of colours. In the most trifling and minute details he followed the perfect example of the great Creator of the universe, Who, when He had completed the mighty work, pronounced it to be VERY GOOD.[25]

Gambier Parry was a little more scientific in his analysis of colour theory. Having stressed that 'if church architecture is to be restored in its fulness, its decorative colour *must* be studied. If

churches are to be decorated, they must be done *properly* or *not at all*',[26] he went on to cite the works of colour theorists, including Michel Eugène Chevreul, David Ramsay Hay, George Field, and Owen Jones.[27] In other matters, he fell back on high-sounding principles, leaving the reader to decide how best to interpret his dogmatic statements: 'colour properly used in architecture must be entirely subservient to architectural effect; the moment it becomes obtrusive it is bad'.[28] 'If a painter works [in a church] he must *architecturalize* his work. He must work in the spirit of the architecture he adorns'. As for 'picture-making', 'Religion must be its object and its subject'.[29] But at least Gambier Parry was a practitioner, not just a theorist; one could go to Highnam and decide for oneself whether he was following his own precepts. One could also go to Ely Cathedral, where he completed the painted ceiling begun, under the direction of Sir Gilbert Scott, by another great amateur painter, Henry L'Estrange Styleman Le Strange.

Le Strange too contributed to the literature of the subject, with a paper 'On the application of colour to architecture' read to the Architectural Congress, Cambridge, in 1860. Colour was still viewed with distrust, he thought, 'partly on account of dissatisfaction produced by unsuccessful attempts, and partly on account of religious scruples'. He classified architectural painting as a creative art rather than an imitative art, not intended to deceive but to enhance. After discussing what he categorised as degrees, systems, and scales of colouring, he concluded:

> How desirable it appears to me that architects, who are themselves eminently concerned with creative art, should so study these matters that they might be themselves the artists to decorate their own works. If there be any truth in the indissoluble union of colour and architecture, if architecture itself be a creative art, and can only satisfy the aspirations of the mind in so far as it be subject to natural principles, it must follow that the architect and the artist should be one and the same person.[30]

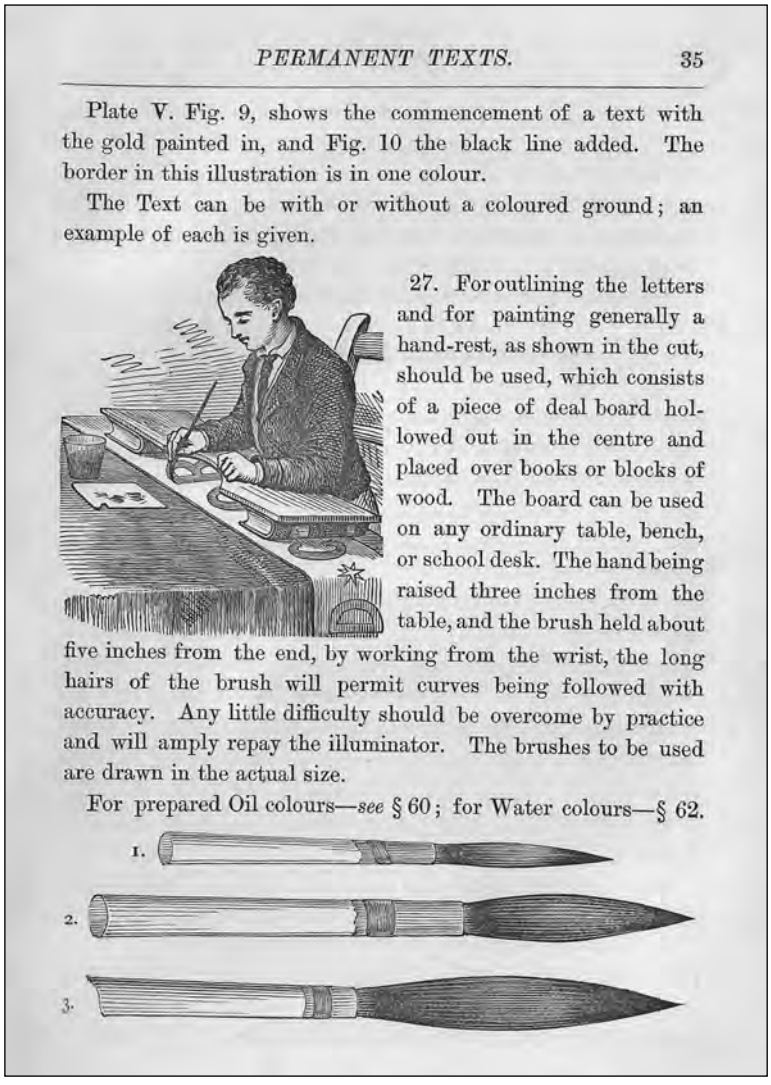
In fact architects have been noticeably silent so far, in a field dominated by clergymen and amateurs. G. E. Street, in a paper to the Ecclesiological Society 'On the future of art in England' in 1858, came out strongly in favour of mural paintings, reckoning that there was more available talent for this sort of work than there was for glass painting (he was encouraged to say this by the murals at the Oxford Union, then being painted by William Morris and his friends); although standards needed to be raised: 'none of us can be contented with what usually passes muster for painting among our church decorators'.[31] William White, not surprisingly,

followed Gambier Parry's line that colour is more than ornamentation, and both should remain subordinate to architecture, but otherwise he was irritatingly vague. Some sort of colour was necessary to produce Repose, he thought, and he spoke favourably of Le Strange's work at Ely.[32] A less well-known architect, William Lightly, reckoned that 'downright good subject painting is the very finest decoration we can employ; but if we cannot afford good subject painting, don't let us have bad, but let us content ourselves with good ornament'. He also cited George Field and Owen Jones.[33]

The shift in emphasis from whether to decorate, to how to decorate, and the general assumption that painting was to be the principle form of decoration, threw up the problem that good painting was hard to come by and expensive. Having won the battle for coloured decoration, the critics now found themselves having to fight against poor-quality work. The Revd John Charles Jackson, headmaster of Hackney Church of England School and a committee member of the Ecclesiological Society in the 1860s, had much to say on the subject. He was certainly strongly in favour of colour ('We may have beautiful forms and fine carvings; but unless there is colour as well, our buildings must be imperfect'), but acknowledged that 'the price and difficulty of getting first-rate designs will prevent a very extensive application of the art to any but cathedrals and the most important parish churches'.[34] But something must be done, in order to avoid what he called 'a very hideous practice which is coming more into fashion that it used to be, – of leaving rough rag walls unplaistered'. What worried him even more, though, was amateur work (Fig. 2).

> Let us hope that the days of amateur experimenters and young ladies' samplar work are over. Let all bits of tin or zinc of impossible shapes, with badly formed, illegible inscriptions, be utterly and for ever abolished. If we are to decorate with pigments, let us paint upon the walls themselves, and if we cannot get figure subjects *excellently* painted, let us be satisfied with less ambitious ornament, – none at all better than bad.[35]

The danger of not colouring the walls was that they would become dirty, and this would open the doors once more to whitewashing.[36] The matter of texts was one which had exercised the Revd Thomas Chamberlain in 1852: 'the painting of texts of Scripture is not at all worth consideration', he reckoned; 'indeed, on the stiff, formal, plate of zinc on which they are commonly illuminated, they are a positive dissight'. He also deplored the excessive use of sacred symbols or emblems: 'the church decorator of modern days has run riot with them'.[37]



PERMANENT TEXTS. 35

Plate V. Fig. 9, shows the commencement of a text with the gold painted in, and Fig. 10 the black line added. The border in this illustration is in one colour.

The Text can be with or without a coloured ground; an example of each is given.

27. For outlining the letters and for painting generally a hand-rest, as shown in the cut, should be used, which consists of a piece of deal board hollowed out in the centre and placed over books or blocks of wood. The board can be used on any ordinary table, bench, or school desk. The hand being raised three inches from the table, and the brush held about five inches from the end, by working from the wrist, the long hairs of the brush will permit curves being followed with accuracy. Any little difficulty should be overcome by practice and will amply repay the illuminator. The brushes to be used are drawn in the actual size.

For prepared Oil colours—*see* § 60; for Water colours—§ 62.

1.

2.

3.

Fig. 2: A page from Church Decoration: a practical manual of appropriate ornamentation *(1874), edited by 'a practical illuminator'. The editor is anonymous, but on internal evidence was a woman, assisted by 'a very experienced practical illuminator' (male).*

Colour through floral decoration

Jackson also had views on the matter of floral decorations. Church flowers were taken very seriously in the nineteenth century. They were, after all, 'one of the manifold gifts of GOD's creation, and [we] set them up in our holy places as offerings to Him of His own', in the words of the Revd Walter Augustus Gray,[38] and apart from anything else, they were a relatively cheap way of introducing colour when something more permanent could not be afforded. As early as 1846 *The Ecclesiologist* published an article 'On flowers as employed in the adornment of churches', with a list of colours ('revised by a good practical gardener') for the principal festivals.[39]

The degree to which floral decorations were taken seriously may be judged from the so-called 'Holy Flower Show in

Belgravia', when the Bishop of London had to decide on the legality of the flowers introduced by the Revd Robert Liddell at St Paul's, Knightsbridge in the face of opposition from one of the churchwardens, the famously Protestant Charles Westerton. The Bishop concluded that as 'floral decorations in a Church were not enjoined by any Canon', they must be considered non-essential; and that 'therefore, if a minority or even two or three persons in a Congregation objected to their use, they should not be persevered in'. A compromise was suggested: 'some simple bunches of flowers of one colour should be put up', but 'the wooden Crosses, upon which, as a frame work, the flowers were fastened, should be at once removed'. This was seen as a victory for the anti-Puseyites, who would rather have a 'few bunches of plain white flowers' than 'the extensive and gaudy display of former years, when the Church wore more the appearance of a hall decked out for festivity and merriment, than of a simple building set apart for devotion'.[40]

This smacks of dogma hiding behind aesthetics, but Jackson's concern was definitely all to do with taste. In 1858 he found that evergreen decorations at Christmas are 'now a regular part of ecclesiastical ornament' (Fig. 3; and see back cover), to the detriment of the building as a whole: 'bad taste and untruth in this temporary decoration will infallibly affect the general taste in permanent wall ornament, and we cannot afford this'.[41] By 1860, although still condemning the use of *artificial* flowers, he had detected some improvement:

> I cannot help congratulating you [the editor of *The Ecclesiologist*] upon the great improvement which is taking place in floral and evergreen decorations. I am most glad to see them at last used as an ornamental adjunct of architecture, and not as part of architecture itself... We do not now so often see vegetable arcades appearing to support stone work, or any such instances of untruth and false taste as was the case some years ago.[42]

But in 1864 he had cause to write to *The Ecclesiologist* yet again:

> Are not our floral decorations going beyond all reason? – are we not in some cases entirely destroying the dignity of the church and services, by allowing our young ladies to have it rather too exclusively in their hands?
> Surely such decoration should not override the architecture, Church services and furniture, as is now the case.

He queried the expense:

> How much better could this be spent upon painting, sculpture, and other ornaments of real art... Have flowers by all means, but do not make them the one prominent feature on our highest festivals. The whole thing then becomes undignified and secular. Let us, at any rate,

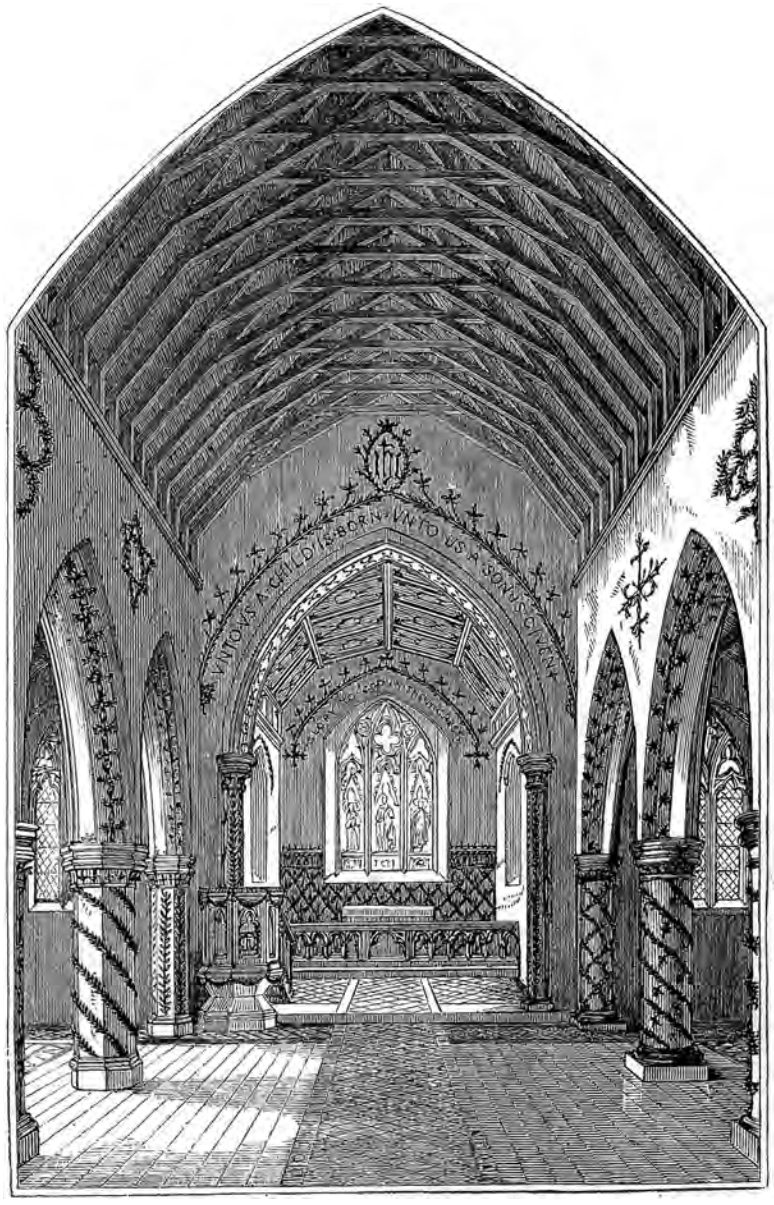


Fig. 3: Frontispiece to An Essay on the Christmas Decoration of Churches *by the Revd E. L. Cutts, 1859. The majority of the illustrations, and presumably this one, were provided by James Brooks.*

> encourage rather the adornment of our churches permanently and worthily. Above all, let us try to revive the taste for those splendid hangings in which the mediaeval Churchman rejoiced. What a beautiful decoration can be effected by means of hangings most of your readers know well. If the church walls were properly coloured, we should not require much floral or evergreen ornament at all.[43]

But there was no stopping the enthusiasm for church flowers, and 1865 saw the publication of *A Handbook of Floral Decoration for Churches* by E.W. Godwin. Published in the year that his wife died and he moved from Bristol to London, it is a work that does not seem to fit in with other aspects of Godwin's life and career,

which may indicate the extent to which ecclesiology was so intertwined with the practice of architecture.[44] Godwin's approach to the subject was predominantly architectural – in Chapter II he gives 'skeleton sections of typical Churches in various styles, shewing the general arrangements of floral decoration in reference to the architectural framework' – and he also included some very 'Aesthetic' designs for stands or pedestals for vases to contain flowering plants or trees.[45]

The emergence of doubts about colour

Godwin still felt that 'there are few things in connection with the revival of Ecclesiastical art which have been more neglected than interior coloured decoration' (Fig. 4).[46] Some wanted to go further – the Revd Edward Lewes Cutts, in a paper to the Architectural Association in 1867, 'ventured… to recommend young architects to take up painted decoration as a special subject of study, always remembering that if they were commissioned to adorn a church, they could never make it too beautiful for the holy uses to which it was to be dedicated'[47] – but others were expressing doubts.

A series of letters from an anonymous member of the Oxford Architectural Society appeared in *The Ecclesiologist* in 1858–61 under the heading 'A caution against polychrome': the writer questioned the presumption in favour of colour, asking whether it was just a reaction against whitewash; colour can distract from the architecture, and from the grandeur of a building.[48] Turning specifically to churches, he wrote that 'Colour must, if used in much profusion, create different feelings from those which ought to exist in an edifice dedicated to the worship of God'. Excessive polychrome was utterly wanting in the effect of repose (the quality William White had thought so important) and damaged appreciation of the building:

> When colour is so extensively introduced, it tends to confound the lines of demarcation which distinguish the various portions of a building. Visit the chancel of Highnam church, where everything has been done that the 'most perfect taste' in polychromy could achieve, and you will never for one moment busy yourself with the inquiry in what style the edifice was constructed. You are on 'polychromatic enchanted ground', – that is enough.[49]

The argument here is architectural, but also contains more than a hint of opposition to colour because of its association with High-Churchmanship and, increasingly, ritual. In 1870 Edmund Sharpe challenged many of the assumptions in favour of colour in a series of articles in the *Builder* on 'Colour and Architecture'.[50] 'This rage for colour in our churches', he wrote, 'is likely to lead to a reversion of the true principles of art as applied to building'.[51] He

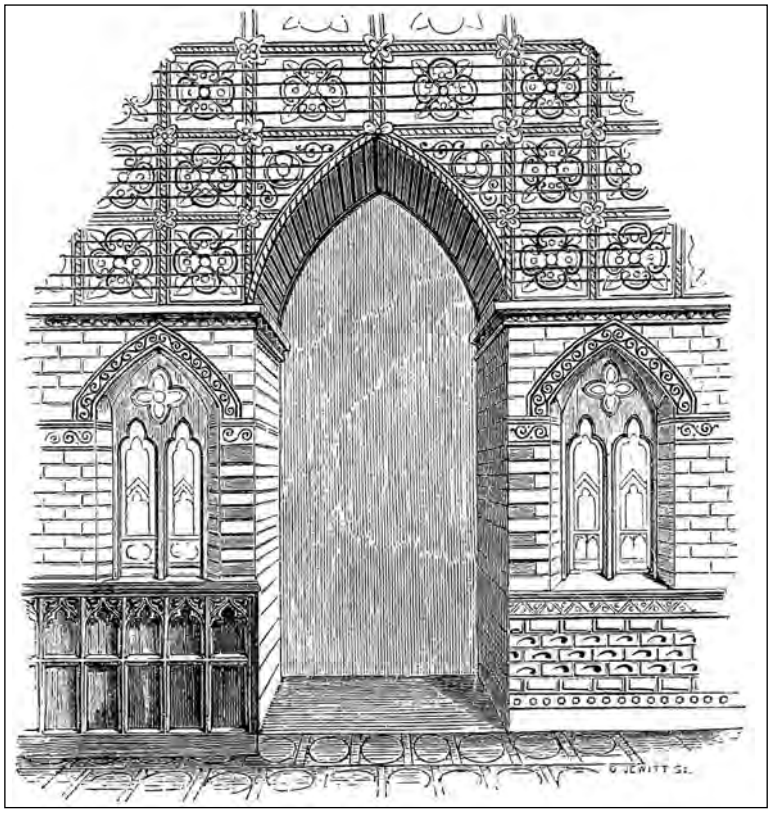


Fig. 4: 'Wall painting', from Walter Field, Stones of the Temple, or, lessons from the fabric and furniture of the church*, 1871 (new edition, 1882). As discussed in the text, from the early 1840s there was growing enthusiasm for decorating church walls with colour, although by the late 1860s some doubts were emerging.*

even went so far as to criticise the decorations at Ely, calling the colouring of the choir roof 'impertinent'. In his second letter he questioned 'the chief reasons which those who advocate the employment of colour in our church restorations offer for the universal adoption of the practice', namely

> 1. Because Gothic architects not only used colour in their Churches, but designed them to be painted.
> 2. Because the use of stained glass in windows, which was part only of an entire scheme of coloured decoration, necessitates the use of colour also on the walls, arches, and other parts of a building.

'They both depend on an assumption, of the correctness of which no proofs whatever have as yet been adduced'. Moreover,

> The church decorator is beginning to assert for himself a place among the handicraftsmen of the country... and it is impossible to say how much mischief Fashion, these new interests, and the combination of adequate means and misdirected zeal, may cause to our national monuments, unless this false taste, this hankering after the colour-pot and the gold leaf, be speedily corrected and suppressed, or diverted into other channels.[52]

In his final letter, Sharpe praised the Cistercians for banishing all decoration, colour, images, etc; by following their style of subdued

stained glass, 'were such a fashion to become prevalent, the argument in favour of extravagantly-coloured wall-decoration, based upon the present use of deeply-stained glass in our windows, would naturally fall to the ground'.[53]

The starting point for the letters was as a response to a paper by E. L. Cutts, who answered Sharpe by simply asking, 'If our modern attempts to colour Gothic churches are not very successful, is it not more likely that it is because we have not yet learnt how to do it, than because it cannot be done?'[54]

For a balanced view of the situation, as with so many aspects of church design, there is no one better to turn to than J. T. Micklethwaite, whose *Modern Parish Churches* appeared in 1874. He was very much in favour of colour, but advised caution at every stage. Colour, he wrote, 'far from being a matter of indifference, is a most important factor in design'. But

> by the ignorant use of it a good work may be entirely spoiled… The painting of a building may be postponed just as the steeple, or any other part of it, may be, but no interior should be considered finished, till all parts requiring it have been suitably coloured, and a pleasing harmony exists throughout.

The problem so often was that

> even now, the true place of colour in architecture is recognised by very few; at best, it is regarded as a permissible superfluity, whilst to some it savours of false doctrine, heresy, and schism. We do, indeed, now and then hear of a church being what they call 'polychromed', which generally means spattered over with stencilled devices of the most violent kind of pigments, but for an architect to be allowed to complete his design with decorative painting, is a thing almost unknown. What is done is almost entirely in the hands of the tailors, and of a kindred race, who call themselves 'ecclesiastical decorators'.[55]

The most familiar form of coloured decoration was painted glass, which

> is not a necessary of life, so none at all is better than bad. But really good glass may now be obtained, and it costs no more than the bad, though sometimes one may have to wait a little longer for it. The stained glass manufacturers are legion, the badness of their work varying, as a rule, in direct ratio with the impudence of their advertisements; whilst the real glass painters are few, but still there are some; and, of all the arts subsidiary to architecture, glass painting, I think, presents the most hopeful aspect.[56]

Paintings still had didactic value as the books of the unlearned, and a church was as suitable a place for the display of pictures as any other, but paintings should be confined to plain surfaces, and not carried round pillars or across angles. Attempts to

introduce figures on ceilings were liable to result in grotesque attitudes, for example at Ely Cathedral. The positioning of paintings was important, and figures should not be placed where they might be confused with the clergy and ministers, i.e. at floor level on the walls of the sanctuary. However, there were no 'correct' places. Even if there were formerly a code in such matters, there was no reason for following it in the present day:

> we build for ourselves and for posterity, not for our ancestors, and to bind ourselves to the observance of the half understood rules of an obsolete, as well as obscure and fanciful symbolism, is the most ridiculous of pedantries.[57]

But by 1874 the edifice of colour was beginning to show cracks; we have seen Micklethwaite's reference to 'false doctrine, heresy, and schism'.[58] The same year saw the publication of *Far from the Madding Crowd* by that well-known former church architect Thomas Hardy, in which Cain Ball returns from a visit to Bath and reports that 'there's two religions going on in the nation now – High Church and High Chapel… at High Church they pray singing, and believe in all the colours of the rainbow; and at High Chapel they pray preaching, and believe in drab and whitewash only'.[59] 1874 was also the year of the Public Worship Regulation Act, and in the growing controversy colour was firmly associated with ritualism. C. M. Davies, in his book *Orthodox London* (1873), found St Alban's, Holborn (Fig. 5) 'bright with colours, odours, flowers, and music… these were, of course, no foreign adjuncts supervening on the English system, but simply what the English ritual was and would have been had the Reformation never run riot into Puritanism';[60] it may be significant that he mentions colour first. Much of the colour in High Church services would have come from altar frontals and vestments, and there was a noticeable increase in interest among the more antiquarian ecclesiologists – men like J. Wickham Legg and Sir William St John Hope – in the matter of liturgical colours, as they attempted to show that the display of colour, far from being Romish, was authentically old English.[61]

Among some architects, surprisingly perhaps in the case of the younger generation, church decoration continued to be a matter of concern, although as one would expect this is accompanied by a certain amount of criticism of what had gone before. E. P. Warren, who had been articled to G. F. Bodley, gave a paper to the Architectural Association in 1889 in which he spoke of 'harsh spots of colour… the cruel, kaleidoscopic glare of bad stained glass, the hard outlines and harder tones of stencilled ornaments'.[62] Commenting on the paper, F. T. Baggallay said that 'it was gratifying to see that colour was coming much more into

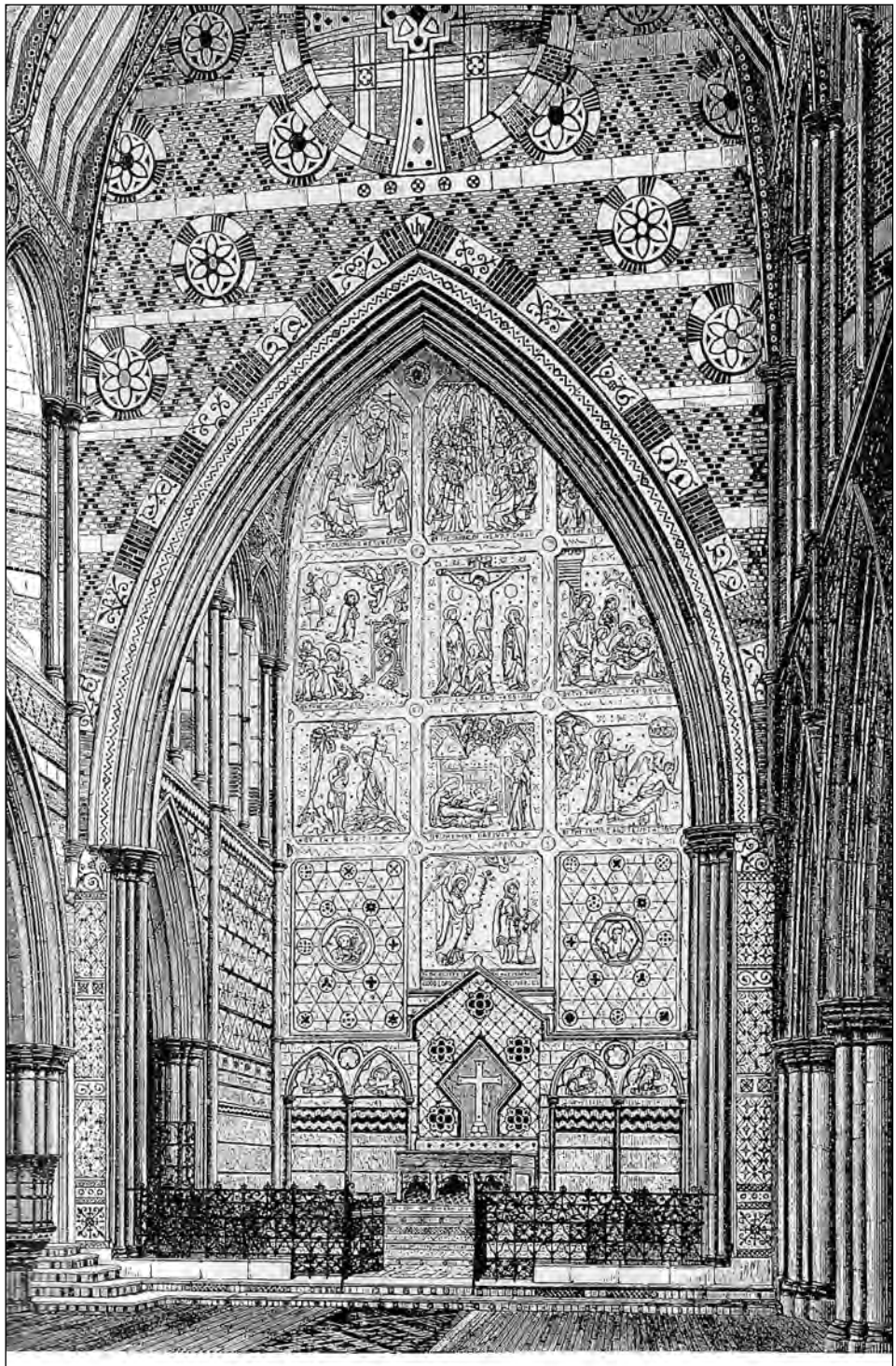


Fig. 5: Illustration from G. W. E. Russell, Saint Alban the Martyr, Holborn: a history of fifty years *(1916)*

use, especially as people were beginning to find out that a simple colour was not necessarily expensive'. The vote of thanks was proposed by William White, who referred back to a talk he had given at the Architectural Museum thirty years earlier, implying that nothing much had changed in the interim.[63]

H. C. Corlette made a study of 'the use and value of colour in architecture' for which he was awarded the RIBA's Silver Medal in 1899, and gave his thoughts also in a paper at the Architectural Association. Although in favour of colour, he is suggesting something very much more muted than what had gone before. For floors, he favoured wood over encaustic tiles; for walls, plain brick, plaster, and stone – structural rather than applied colour. In fact for him the ceiling was the best opportunity for simple decoration in colour – 'there is no need to make it always white'. The relationship between walls and windows was important:

> With little internal decoration we can dispense with clear glass in windows to a large extent, and make the glass itself, by its colour and design, serve as an important feature in the decorative scheme. But if there is much colour and design on the walls and roof inside a church, we require plenty of light by which to see it.[64]

The end of the supremacy of colour

Corlette's attitude was not far from that of Ninian Comper who, in a paper to the St Paul's Ecclesiological Society in 1893, developed a theme of St John Hope's, that the whitening of our churches, rather than being the work of the Puritans, was in fact medieval in origin: 'it is a tradition of a healthy sense of beauty, viz., the love of what is clean and fresh'.[65] According to Anthony Symondson, Comper's St Cyprian's, Clarence Gate 'came as a shock to an older generation of churchmen' when it opened in 1903, with 'its cool white interior, its spaciousness, restraint and the dazzling effect of the gilded screens and altar'. Colour there certainly was – for the consecration the church was filled with flowers, and clergy in glorious vestments – but it was not the colour of St Alban's, Holborn or All Saints, Margaret Street.[66]

The event in 1903 which brought an end to the supremacy of colour occurred not at St Cyprian's, however, but at St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill where three months earlier the Revd Percy Dearmer took the drastic step of whitewashing the red brick walls and stone vaulting of the sanctuary. It looks so commonplace now, but then it was an astonishing innovation,[67] and he promoted his aesthetic vision very effectively: through his *Parson's Handbook*, first published in 1899; through the series of little books *The Arts of the Church* that he edited (No. 8, by Harold C. King, *The Chancel and the Altar*, published in 1911, advocates colour when it comes to vesting the altar – 'The mistake we suffer from in many of our

churches is dinginess' – but likes white walls to set off the altar and dorsal and the stained glass of the east window);[68] and through the Warham Guild, founded by Dearmer in 1912 to supply vestments and ornaments of the type recommended in the *Parson's Handbook*. The Guild's Handbook first appeared in 1932 and promoted the 'Primrose Hill' look:

> White is the natural colour for walls and the best foil for colour decoration…The whitening brings out the lines of the architecture, and forms a beautiful setting for hangings, ornaments, and paintings. Altar frontals, riddels, reredoses, or dorsals should be richly coloured, but the interior of the church mainly should be white. Even stencil ornamentation is not recommended, unless used with the greatest care and reserve by a fully competent artist. The walls should be completely whitened right up to the glass of the windows, as also the tracery and arches; half the beauty is lost if the stonework round the arches is left uncovered with white. The distemper should always be bright and pure, avoiding both the blue and stone tints.[69]

This is the precise inverse of the coloured walls and plain vestments that R. F. Littledale had been advocating in 1865,[70] and all that is missing from the description of the Dearmer church interior is the green binding of the *English Hymnal*, first published in 1906 and for which he was also responsible.

The fashion today is to dispense with many of the richly coloured elements that the white was meant to set off, and what colour there is, more often than not, is provided by patterned carpets and random hassocks – something that would have pleased neither Dearmer nor the colour-loving clergymen and architects of the nineteenth century.

Notes

1 H. P. Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey* (1893), II, 140.
2 G. A. Poole, *The Appropriate Character of Church Architecture* (1842), 3.
3 Poole, *Appropriate Character*, 104.
4 Poole, *Appropriate Character*, 107.
5 Poole, *Appropriate Character*, 109.
6 Poole, *Appropriate Character*, 122–24.
7 J. M. Neale, *Church Enlargement and Church Arrangement* (1843), 12.
8 *Builder*, 4 (1846), 391–92.
9 *The Ecclesiologist*, 7 (1847), 41–42.
10 Emma Plaskitt, 'French, Gilbert James (1804–1866)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10163, accessed 1 Aug 2011].
11 *Descriptive Catalogue of Articles of Church Decoration, designed and manufactured exclusively by Gilbert J. French, Bolton-le-Moors, Lancashire* (19th edn, 1850), 34. *The Ecclesiologist* made a similar observation.
12 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 112–15, 372–76; 20 (1859), 232–38; 21 (1860), 36–40, 78–82. Gambier Parry's contributions to ecclesiastical decoration, both theoretical and practical, are outlined by Peter Burman in D. Farr (ed.), T*homas Gambier Parry 1816–1888 as Artist and Collector* (1993), 9–29.
13 W. Durandus, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments* (eds. J. M. Neale & B. Webb), 1843, 77.

14 Durandus, *Symbolism of Churches*, 78. The source of the phrase 'all its glory is from within' is given as Psalm xlv. 6, although this does not correspond to the Authorised Version nor to the Book of Common Prayer. The closest is verse 13: 'The king's daughter is all glorious within'. 'I am black but comely' is from the Song of Solomon i. 5.
15 *The Ecclesiologist*, 21 (1860), 36.
16 *The Ecclesiologist*, 4 (1845), 200.
17 G. A. Poole, *Churches; their Structure, Arrangement, and Decoration* (1845), 79–80. Poole's phrase 'improper representation' alludes to a problem observed also by Gambier Parry, of 'liberal-minded protestants, whose nose sniffs popery in the smell of paint' (*The Ecclesiologist*, 20 (1859), 234).
18 A. Billing, *On Mural Painting and the Decoration of Churches generally* (1868), 2 (pamphlet, reprinted from *Civil Engineer and Architect's Journal*, 14 (1851), 195–97, 205–09; reviewed favourably in *The Ecclesiologist*, 13 (1852), 124).
19 R. F. Littledale, *On the Application of Color to the Decoration of Churches* (1857), 3.
20 Littledale, Color, 12.
21 Littledale, Color, 16.
22 Littledale, Color, 15.
23 G. J. French, *Hints on the Arrangement of Colours in Ancient Decorative Art* (1849), 4.
24 Littledale made a similar observation about stained glass: 'the hues employed for this… purpose are regarded as gems, and not as pigments, and are subject to the laws of heraldic painting' (Littledale, *Color*, 7).
25 French, *Hints*, 2nd edn (1850), 32.
26 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 114.
27 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 373.
28 *The Ecclesiologist*, 20 (1859), 235.
29 *The Ecclesiologist*, 21 (1860), 79–80.
30 *The Ecclesiologist*, 21 (1860), 267–80.
31 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 232–40.
32 *The Ecclesiologist*, 22 (1861), 141–47 ('Colour in Sacred Art').
33 W. Lightly, 'On the principles to be observed and the processes observed in the decoration of churches', RIBA *Transactions*, 13 (1862–63), 243–60. Lightly is less well-known possibly because of his premature death in 1865, and not necessarily because of inferior talent.
34 *The Ecclesiologist*, 18 (1857), 86–87.
35 *The Ecclesiologist*, 25 (1864), 162–64.
36 *The Ecclesiologist*, 22 (1861), 140. He could not foresee the zeal with which the twentieth century would paint over the vast majority of nineteenth-century decorative schemes, nor how welcome would be the German bombs that enabled Victorian windows to be replaced with clear glass.
37 *The Ecclesiologist*, 13 (1852), 103–04.
38 W. A. Gray, *The Symbolism of Churches and their Ornaments* (1857), 17.
39 *The Ecclesiologist*, 6 (1846), 215–17.
40 *The Holy Flower Show in Belgravia: or Puseyism at a Discount* (1855), 4–5. By 'a parishioner of St Paul's, Knightsbridge', presumably Charles Westerton, who was the publisher.
41 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 37–38. 'Untruth' may refer to the practice of using temporary decorations as a substitute for permanent features, e.g. chancel screens and reredoses, as well as for permanent decorations such as wall paintings.
42 *The Ecclesiologist*, 21 (1860), 83.
43 *The Ecclesiologist*, 25 (1864), 205–06.
44 It receives only the briefest of mentions in S. W. Soros (ed.), *E. W. Godwin: Aesthetic Movement Architect and Designer* (New York, 2000).
45 E. W. Godwin, *A Handbook of Floral Decoration for Churches* (1865), 6, 9.
46 Godwin, *Handbook*, 5.
47 *Builder*, 25 (1867), 446.
48 *The Ecclesiologist*, 19 (1858), 312–14.
49 *The Ecclesiologist*, 22 (1861), 67–69 (third letter; the second appeared in *The Ecclesiologist*, 20 (1859), 9–11).
50 *Builder*, 28 (1870), 621–22, 742–43, 781–82, 821–22; reprinted as a pamphlet, *Four*

Letters on Colour in Churches, on Walls, and in Windows (1870, 2nd edn 1871), reviewed in *Builder*, 28 (1870), 980–81.

51 *Builder*, 28 (1870), 621.

52 *Builder*, 28 (1870), 742–43.

53 *Builder*, 28 (1870), 822.

54 *Builder*, 28 (1870), 690–91. Cutts' paper, 'On the desirability of restoring churches of the Italian style of architecture', was published in *RIBA Transactions*, 20 (1869–70), 130–43.

55 J. T. Micklethwaite, *Modern Parish Churches: their Plan, Design, and Furniture* (1874), 286–87.

56 Micklethwaite, *Modern Parish Churches*, 289–90.

57 Micklethwaite, *Modern Parish Churches*, 321.

58 Micklethwaite, *Modern Parish Churches*, 286.

59 T. Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), II, 40.

60 C. M. Davies, *Orthodox London: or, Phases of Religious Life in the Church of England* (1873), 32–33.

61 For example, J. Wickham Legg, 'Notes on the history of the liturgical colours', *Transactions of the St Paul's Ecclesiological Society*, 1 (1881–85), 95–134, and Sir W. H. St John Hope, 'On the English liturgical colours', *Transactions of the St Paul's Ecclesiological Society*, 2 (1886–90), 233–72.

62 *Builder*, 57 (1889), 407–09.

63 *Builder*, 57 (1889), 403–04.

64 *Builder*, 78 (1900), 310–16. His point about the relationship between walls and windows is the opposite of what Lightly was saying in 1862: 'where the walls are covered with subject painting, it will be absolutely necessary to fill the windows with colored glass, or to stop them up', or else the glare from the windows makes it hard to see the decoration (*RIBA Transactions*, 13 (1862), 259). Corlette's prize-winning essay was published in *RIBA Journal*, 6 (1899), 461–76, 489–504, 529–36.

65 *Transactions of the St Paul's Ecclesiological Society*, 3 (1891–95), 218.

66. A. Symondson, *Sir Ninian Comper: an Introduction to his Life and Work* (2006), 88–91.

67 Symondson, *Comper*, 36, 91–92, 210–11, discusses the extent to which Dearmer promoted and popularised ideas initiated by Comper.

68 H. C. King, *The Chancel and the Altar* (1911), 117, 161–62.

69 *The Warham Guild Handbook: Historical and Descriptive Notes on 'Ornaments of the Church and of the Ministers thereof'* (1932), 15. The same advice, with very little change to the wording, was given in the 2nd edition, 1963.

70 See above, note 22. I am grateful to Ayla Levine for pointing this out.

A beginning not the end for the parish church?

Richard Halsey

A talk given to the Ecclesiological Society at its Annual General Meeting, 26 May 2011

Until his recent retirement, Richard Halsey was Policy Director for Places of Worship at English Heritage. He is now actively engaged in considering the future of historic churches through other channels, including being a Trustee of the Friends for Friendless Churches and Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Historic Churches Trust.

THIS IS A LECTURE of three parts. I will begin by outlining the start of Government grants for places of worship; the second part will look at the adaptation of churches for twenty-first-century liturgy and worship, and other purposes; and in the third part I will make some suggestions on how the sustainability of these buildings might be assured, that go beyond just asking Government for more money.

I should make it clear now that I am referring to Church of England parish churches and most of what I have to say relates to securing a future for rural churches. The future is rosier for the urban and certainly suburban churches, though the uncertainties surrounding the use of concrete and the often inflexible interiors of churches built after the First World War are real enough. A subject for a future autumn conference, perhaps?

Government grants for places of worship

The urgency and extent of the problem of repairs to parochial churches must not be allowed to obscure the fact that in the last 30 years, the Church has carried through a vast amount of repairs in sounder and on more conservative lines than ever before and that the total of such work is a solid achievement. The primary cause of the present state of disrepair is the enforced postponement of repairs . . . from 1939 onwards.

Not the words from a recent speech, but Ivor Bulmer Thomas's June 1951 introduction to a Report on church repairs commissioned by the Church Assembly the previous year. It estimated that a total of £4 million 'extra parochial cost' was needed over the next ten years and that once in good repair, an annual expenditure of £750,000 was required. Any money from the State should be like Arts Council grants, 'unconditional', and new county trusts were considered 'suitable for attracting those who are not habitual churchgoers but are well disposed toward the cause of church fabric'. That same year, the Gowers Report recommended taxpayer's money should be given for essential repairs to outstanding historic buildings and in 1953, the Historic Buildings Council (HBC) was set up to advise ministers on the first historic building grants. The Church of England declined to become involved, fearing State control over freedom of worship – don't forget that the 1913 Ancient Monuments Bill had proposed scheduling medieval churches as ancient monuments and taking cathedrals into State ownership.

The repairs problem didn't go away of course though the 1968 Pastoral Measure brought some relief as dioceses were now able to shed their worst (and sometimes, their most lucratively sited) buildings. In 1971, the General Synod created a Working Party, chaired by David Say, Bishop of Rochester, to examine the possibilities for 'state aid for places of worship in use', to include those denominations represented by the Churches Main Committee. The Government wanted facts, and archdeaconries in Lincoln and Norwich diocese were examined in a project run by Peter Burman at the Council for Care of Churches. The minister, Lord Sandford then asked that it be extended to include urban areas, so Newcastle and Cheltenham were also investigated. The result was that '£1 million at 1973 prices' was considered the annual 'additional resource' needed to repair historic churches in England and Wales.

In January 1975, the Labour minister, Baroness Birk 'accepted in principle the case for some measure of State aid for historic churches and other ecclesiastical buildings in use', but not cathedrals, subject to agreement being reached on 'conditions, methods of repair and other matters'. Aid was 'not expected to exceed £1 million at 1973 prices'. However, 'in the present economic circumstances' no specific date for the start of a scheme could be given. It was only on 4 August 1977 that the Secretary of State, Peter Shore, announced the immediate start of a five year trial scheme as part of a package of works designed to stimulate the building industry. The sum of £350,000 was immediately available, with £750,000 for 1978–9 and £2 million the following year. In fact, in the remaining eight months of 1977–8, 450 applications were received, 65 offers made and just over £312,000 paid out. It was always said that on the 5 August 1977, someone from Long Melford turned up at the office in Savile Row for an application form and that Long Melford were offered the first grant. Another early recipient, Chesterfield was chosen for the front cover of the HBC report that listed those first grants.

There were three main criteria, much as today. The place of worship had to be of 'outstanding architectural and or historic interest' as required by the 1953 Act, the fabric works urgent and the financial need proven. As greenback listing had barely done more than the major towns and cities, a newly established Churches sub-Committee of the HBC determined outstandingness on the basis of submitted photos and a report from an Inspector of Ancient Monuments. First chaired by the architect John Brandon-Jones, it came to be chaired by the late Duke of Grafton and John Newman. The required standard was determined as 'mid-way in grade II*' and given that some

Fig. 1: St Andrew, Alwalton, Cambridgeshire has a 'tea cupboard' containing a sink and urn

meetings had to judge over 100 buildings, this precise point could wander. More than one uninspiring flinty pile in Suffolk got through because the chairman told us that 'the birds rise well there'.

The works to be supported were determined by a visit from a commissioned architect, that is someone in private practice and overseen by the principal in-house Department of the Environment architect – for many years Stella Eley, a staunch United Reformed Church lay reader who had been the project architect for the extension to the Natural History Museum.

I didn't join Richard Gem as the second churches inspector at the Department until Spring 1978, by which time there were huge piles of applications awaiting attention. Grants were initially offered at 50%, 'pound for pound' as the then Historic Churches Preservation Trust liked to say. But demand rapidly outstripped supply; no less than 367 of the 1977/8 applications were carried forward to 1978/9, to join the 625 new applications received in that year. With another 746 arriving in 1979–80, the scheme was suspended in November 1980, the normal offer reduced to 40% and priority given to increases needed to complete works already in hand. By 1981, 1400 grants for £8 million had been offered and £5.6 million spent. The HBC's report to Parliament that year drew attention to the fact that the 'need had been underestimated. The legitimate demands for help can be met fully only by a substantial increase in real terms in the funds provided for some years to come'. Part of the problem was that so many more places of worship were being declared outstanding than the Churches had predicted in 1973, including many non-conformist chapels.

Fig. 2: St Mary, Orton Waterville, Cambridgeshire. A 'pod' has been inserted at the west end of the north aisle with a kitchen area, storage and toilet

That same 1980 HBC report devoted a whole page to the need for maintenance and asked that dioceses consider setting up maintenance teams – a request repeated in following reports.

In 1981, at one of the regular Archdeacons Conferences hosted by the Synod's Working Party, the HBC Chairman, Jennifer Jenkins announced the introduction of grants in 1982 for the conservation of monuments and wall paintings, a scheme run with the Council for the Care of Churches for almost twelve years, during which time it came to cover stained glass and painted screens and ceilings too. From those conferences, two issues were constantly raised by the Church: the Department's insistence on using expensive traditional materials and the control the State had over future alterations. The latter was partly resolved by the so-called 'Gentleman's Agreement', a grant condition that ran:

No works of addition, alteration or redecoration or works not eligible for grant aid will be carried out at any time from the date of this letter, except for maintenance and minor repair works and works required for liturgical purposes which are compatible with the historic character and appearance of the building and which are reversible, without the prior written consent of the Department. This is in order that the Department may be satisfied that the works will not damage the fabric and fittings or impair the historic and architectural fabric of the building, for the maintenance of which the grant has been offered.

This recognised that with ecclesiastical exemption being examined at snail's pace by the Bishop of Chichester's Group, there was no listed building consent as protected secular grants

and until 1987, the Department and then English Heritage, had no right to comment on faculties or appear at a Consistory Court. Grants were only given under normal Treasury rules if there was a demonstrated need that could not be met from the applicant's own resources. Effectively then, there could be no financial redress for the Department if the grant conditions were not adhered to, as it could never claim the grant back from an impoverished congregation.

By the time English Heritage (EH) took over the scheme in 1984, over £4 million was being spent on churches grants, a great deal more than the £1 million at 1973 prices. The next major boost came in 1990 with £3m added by Government as some recompense for the payment of the Community Charge, but the really big leap came with the advent of the Lottery in 1995. By then, the nagging problem of ecclesiastical exemption had finally been resolved with the 1994 Order and in 1998, the so-called 'Gentleman's Agreement' was buried. A claw-back condition does still exist, but has not, to my knowledge, ever been activated.

In the early 1980s, the conservation lobby drew attention to two worrying impacts of the scheme, which if anything were aspirations being realised by both the Church and the building industry.

The first worry was over restoration and especially excessive stone replacement. Early casualties were the mid twelfth-century top stage of Iffley church in Oxford and the fourteenth-century roof of Great Livermere in Suffolk, the timber of which was rotten – though not so rotten that complete trusses could not be taken off with a huge mobile crane. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and the Council for British Archaeology led the charge, the latter (quite rightly) bemoaning the lack of properly funded archaeological recording. Money was diverted specifically to fund recording, but it was a cumbersome process and there was real difficulty finding people capable of recording church buildings, especially at short notice. Parishes complained of delays caused by such grant conditions, conveniently ignoring their own dilatoriness in pursuing Quinquennial Inspection recommendations for urgent work. Inflation was of course a major issue around the early 1980s (interest rates were at 15%) and costs were rising very rapidly, especially for lead, which the Russians were reportedly hoarding for nefarious purposes.

Large scale stonework replacement on big churches like Sherborne Abbey and Bridlington Priory was probably necessary, because little work had been done on them – especially at high level – since before the First World War. It was more questionable

with smaller projects, where thorough stone replacement remained the norm. The decline in the stone industry meant that some stones were hard to match – stones like clunch and Reigate, the ironstones of Northamptonshire and any colour of sandstone than mottled pink. Much French and German stone was imported and some inappropriate stones were used in default of the real thing. On balance, I think pressure from the grant scheme did encourage a few small quarries to expand and even to re-open and some bigger roadstone quarries were persuaded to provide the occasional blocks for building. It is also clear that the church grant scheme played a big part in encouraging craft and conservation skills; it revitalised many small traditional builders; and it promoted professional training for what we now call conservation accredited architects and surveyors. So it did achieve the original aims of Government to help the ailing building industry.

Fig. 3: St Andrew, Oakington, Cambridgeshire has filled up the base of the west tower with facilities

Fig. 4: St James, Stretham, Cambridgeshire. The church has used glass screening to create a meeting room in the north aisle and used the base of the tower for a kitchen and toilet

Adaptation of buildings

The second fear expressed *c.*1980 could now be seen as the unexpected bonus of the scheme. By removing the fabric threats and relieving the apparently impossible financial burden of fabric repair, congregations could concentrate on their core business of mission and worship. Parishes, pulled together by fund raising to match the 'pound for pound' offer from Government, began to want to use the building more and to improve the context of their worship; both involved changes and alterations that some of course found inimical to the qualities for which the State's money had been given. Nave altars are ubiquitous now and I think it was Gavin Stamp who coined the phrase 'the rite of coffee' in his Piloti articles in *Private Eye*, but such post service fellowship is now of course the norm. Three Ely diocese examples show the typical solutions that have been pursued. Alwalton (Fig. 1) has a 'tea cupboard' containing a sink and urn, Orton Waterville (Fig. 2) a 'pod' inserted at the west end of the north aisle with a kitchen area, storage and toilet and Oakington (Fig. 3) has filled up the base of the west tower with its 'new facilities'. Stretham (Fig. 4) has used glass screening to create a meeting room in the north aisle and filled up the base of the tower with a kitchen and toilet. Larger social areas were provided throughout the 1980s through new additions, most often in inappropriate octagons usually (and somewhat bizarrely) called a 'chapter house'. The first EH guidance on new works highlighted the drawbacks of such extensions, as did the booklet by the Council for the Care of Churches that followed. But it was Norman St John Stevas and his Royal Fine Art Commission that railed against such additions and

Fig. 5: St Peter, Peterchurch, Herefordshire. A new enclosed west-end gallery provides various facilities, and access to the tower which holds a library.

5a: The nave and new west end arrangements
5b: The library in the tower, the space also used by bell ringers

with the SPAB, vowed to stop them. They have succeeded by and large, though the ubiquity of pew clearance today for social gatherings is not perhaps what they intended.

So accelerated the move away from the sanctity of the worship space imposed by our predecessors in the Cambridge Camden Society. In 1843, they commanded churchwardens

Take care also to hinder parish meetings from being held in the vestry or in the church itself. The ways in which holy buildings are sometimes profaned by those who never go into them at other times is enough to make the very stones cry out.

In a Birmingham suburb in 1965, research to determine uses in a proposed multi–purpose church discovered that events like church socials, parish meals, films, whist drives and wedding breakfasts were still considered *un*suitable uses for a church by more than half the parishioners interviewed; concerts were only approved by 52% and children's activities by 58%.

Perhaps emboldened by the successful conversion of numerous urban redundant churches for new secular uses, congregations are today positively encouraged by the Church of England through its *Building Faith in the Future* initiative to engage with their wider 'community' and incorporate all sorts of uses and users to give their repaired historic building extended uses beyond worship.

This only follows one mantra of government guidance issued since the 1970s; historic buildings have to earn their living and it should be possible to adapt them for modern use without losing too much of the intrinsic character and significance that makes them worth keeping in the first place. That former bastion of the use-less, the Churches Conservation Trust, is now actively seeking community use for a number of its redundant churches and even the Friends of Friendless Churches (of which I am a trustee) can be more disposed to take on a building if it does have at least a couple of friends willing to engage with it and promote an occasional community event.

The most common approach is to create a meeting space (with adjacent disabled friendly toilet and facilities to make tea) which might be used independently of worship. Attempts at creating a village hall within a nave that is still regularly used for worship can lead to some odd looking interiors that are neither one thing nor another. More thoroughgoing projects create a new ambience, such as two Herefordshire projects.

Peterchurch (Fig. 5) is a recently opened, £450,000 scheme achieved with a combination of grants. It incorporates a community cafe, a Surestart programme, a peripatetic local authority advice centre and a library in the tower, mainly run and staffed by volunteers. The worship area in the eastern half of this four-cell, Romanesque, grade I church had yet to be finalised when I visited last autumn, but it will be possible to use the nave for worship.

Yarpole (Fig. 6) – opened last summer, cost £240,000 and was much more of a congregational initiative. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) worked closely with the village hall committee and the community to raise the £60,000 necessary to ensure grant funding for the remaining £200,000. The professional team then agreed to waive fees amounting to about £25,000 (around 10.5% of the conversion cost) so the cash sum needed from the

Fig. 6: St Leonard, Yarpole, Herefordshire (above and opposite). A new enclosed west-end gallery provides a café above a shop.

6a: The nave and new west end arrangements; the entrance to the shop can be seen under the gallery.

village was reduced to £35,000. Grants were secured from 13 different bodies including a £20,000 loan from the Village Retail Services Association. The largest single funder at £49,000 was Herefordshire Council through its 'Market Towns Initiative' funded by Advantage West Midlands (AWM). That sort of funding must now be in doubt, as AWM was the Regional Development Agency (now abolished) and this sort of local authority discretionary funding has been hit hard in the cuts. Once again, it is run by volunteers; as Richard Taylor observed when he visited another church community shop for his television programme, 'let's hope the volunteers still come forward in ten years time'.

Engaging non Church of England uses and users does of course tap into a much wider circle of support which, it is widely thought, will give the building greater relevance to the community it sits in and so guarantee its future. Signed up membership of most Christian denominations is falling, even if attendances at certain services like Christmas carols and harvest festivals – especially those in cathedrals – is rising. Just what are these people coming to church for? I am not qualified to delve

6b: The café, in the west gallery, with kitchen over the north aisle
6c: The shop, under the west gallery

into their spiritual or liturgical needs, but I feel sure that they are looking for the traditional and the comfort of familiarity expected in old churches. It is the rows of dark pews, stained glass windows, white walls and a somewhat distant priest and altar that they expect to find – the archetypal post Oxford Movement Victorian interior. But these occasional participants – which includes many brides and those who drop into churches when on a walk or killing time when visiting a place for other reasons – these occasional participants do not like finding fitted carpet, rows of chairs, drop down white screens and lots of electronic equipment.

Are these nave altars, electronic aids and west end facilities not just the twenty-first-century equivalent of the reforming zeal of an 1850 priest just down from Oxford or Cambridge, or the accommodating box pews of the late eighteenth century, the obliterations of a reforming Elizabethan protestant minister or even the interpolated chantry of a fourteenth-century local magnate? That is how they are often justified in statements of need. Any unease is dispelled by further specious arguments about naves functioning as church halls in the Middle Ages, conveniently ignoring all that superstitious stuff about saints, images and the rood altar. More honest is the belief that the Church as an institution is there to support and help all those who need it and so the use of its buildings to facilitate such Christian virtues is a perfectly logical next step. In that sense, I believe that today's community facilities are indeed successors to historical uses.

Most of the statutory participants in the faculty system today, though unwilling to express opposition to the principle of such changes for worship and mission, will work hard to ameliorate the potential damage to the traditional and/or historic character. The strongest opposition to change will usually come from local residents, as it always has of course. They will be dismissed by the PCC proponents as occasional attendees but will be grudgingly accounted for because they are precisely the wider community expected to financially support and to use the church in the immediate future.

Deep down, Anglicans may also harbour the hope that they can bring people back to Christ's Kingdom through the provision of drop in mid-week cafés and after school clubs. A parishioner at St Mary Cloughton in West Yorkshire in the write-up of their project on the *Churchcare* website says, 'We hope that maybe if people get used to coming into the building, they'd be more likely to pop in on Sundays'.

Time will tell.

I doubt that much of the electronic gear, the MDF cabinets or even the upholstered stacking chairs and carpets can survive more than a generation or so. However the Ely DAC is regularly seeing faculties now for the replacement of 1980s equipment with their current equivalents. And of course, once they are removed, traditional pipe organs, pews, stalls, lecterns and pulpits rarely come back; the pews removed and stored with such fuss following the landmark St Luke's Maidstone judgement were quietly (and legally) disposed of three years later.

There is consensus with the view that listed parish churches are part of the whole nation's heritage and so the nation (whatever that means) should make a financial contribution to their upkeep. A number of polls over the last few years have shown that the

general public think the State or the National Trust already has responsibility for historic church buildings. But is there a growing discrepancy between what the general public perceive as an old parish church worthy of their financial support through taxation and the needs of what the more energetic, expanding and thus viable Church of England congregations want to do inside that church in pursuit of their core purposes of worship, fellowship and community engagement? Might any dissatisfaction lead to unease about support from public funds for congregations that are destroying what is seen as traditional or even correct? Should a distinction be made between those buildings that embrace community use and lose their familiar Tractarian interior, and the traditionally furnished buildings, more readily seen as historic relics and worth supporting as effectively untouchable ancient monuments?

The emphasis during the last decade on 'high level work' means that in any case, the great majority of public money goes on repairing the external envelope and any internal work only comes as a consequence of repairing the roof or drainage. Further choices on what to support are already made by some funders on purely financial grounds – most obviously by the EH/Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) scheme where the more economically successful congregations don't get grants or are given small donations for specific work. Tiny congregations with little in the bank and not much prospect of raising tens of thousands are given large grants, to the puzzlement of some clergy who see these as unsuccessful, even failing, units in their benefice. There is indeed some illogicality in the funders' bias: if the long term sustainability of a church is only thought achievable by engaging greater community use, why give money to those who cannot guarantee such use? And that only begs the question, *when is a congregation not the community?* in small settlements? In my experience, the impetus to create community facilities usually comes from within the worshipping congregation, probably initiated by the incumbent even if the project is then managed by a lay person and engages external organisations.

The history of any parish church is bound into the whims and convictions of those who have used it and have been responsible for its care, good and bad. Individuals not bureaucracies have created these buildings and all their wonderful quirks that we cherish. Increased, and especially formal, third party, community engagement in an active parish church brings in others (such as the local authority) without such close ties. The Amendment Measure that allows sub-tenants in a consecrated building without invoking redundancy has helped create imaginative new uses, but I don't know how far it has been taken up since 2007 (particularly

in rural areas) and I am unaware how much it has helped or hindered congregations to manage their property better. In secular conservation, sub-division of ownership and responsibility – the breakup of an historic landscape or putting apartments into a country house – is usually seen as a recipe for disaster without an overarching management system. The faculty jurisdiction ought to do just that, though how many DACs and their secretaries feel they are properly equipped to determine the installation of a medical centre or a new arts facility in a parish church?

The prime aim of the Amendment Measure is of course to enable grant funding from 'secular' sources aimed at supporting or servicing a community which might incidentally help repair the fabric. Quite how much of that funding has survived the cuts in public expenditure and where it now lies remains to be seen, though application of 'Big Society' principles should presumably mean money is out there somewhere.

The sheer number of parish churches and the very different scale and potential needs of the surrounding populations make it impossible to provide such developed community facilities in every one; the population range is just not there. This is especially true for the rural areas with many small villages each with its parish church but few if any other communal places and without any public transport. What these congregations need to survive (if not prosper) is a toilet, somewhere to make tea and, most importantly of all, some affordable heating. No matter how uplifting the sermon and invigorating the sense of a few being gathered together against all adversity, a cold church is simply unattractive for much of the year and untenable for any use beyond short acts of worship.

But can small village populations actually resource such work? is there anyone in the congregation willing to pursue the building process, to fund raise and to fill in all those forms? Trevor Cooper drew our attention to the facts in 2004 and I don't suppose that the trends he spotted have changed. There are more people living in rural areas, but fewer and fewer are church members. Non-church people can be cajoled to donate and will usually rally round (especially if the church is threatened), but someone has to trigger a project and then doggedly keep it alive. Once achieved, can the heating be afforded, can the new works be maintained and managed by the small congregation, especially if the hoped for new users don't materialise? Even if the core congregation can get these works done, by projecting the present decline in membership we have to be pessimistic for the future of engaged Christianity on the present parochial model. Some admittedly limited research carried out by the charity *Living Stones* for English Heritage last year concluded;

Across the land the problem is the same. The system currently in place, a legacy of many generations of the faith-filled and the faithful dedicatedly caring for their place of worship, often making great sacrifices in order to do so, is coming to an end. The stark truth is that, in many cases, this would appear to be the last generation who will fulfil this function. In a very few years many fine buildings could have no-one left to care for them. Some of course do have a future, and evidence was seen of a promise of sustainability over the next few years, but these are a minority. Whilst interim measures can be put in place to help those who currently care for these buildings, now is the time to plan for when those people are no longer around to do so.

And General Synod was told last year that the average age of Church of England congregations is now 61 compared to the average age in the adult population of under 48 years.

How can these small, listed rural churches be kept as recognisable churches and not converted into houses? The corporate Church of England may have a strategy but it is not widely known and for those of us worried about the care of just the buildings, the fate of perhaps thousands of historic churches in the rural areas remains distinctly uncertain. Yet history tells us that they will survive and even in my short working lifetime with churches, the impossible has happened in lots of places. In my view, it is not as dire a position as was being faced before State Aid was introduced. The positives I think are:

1. After 34 years and hundreds of millions of pounds of public money, which has also been pump priming giving by others, both EH and the National Churches Trust can claim that 90% of church buildings are in good or fair condition – which my own experience bears out.
2. The general public are concerned for the fate of historic buildings and although there might not be the regular Christian or social commitment to the parish church that existed in the past, people do feel an association with their local church, they do want to have it available for their use (whatever that might be) and are willing to support it financially (but mostly on an occasional reactionary basis).
3. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is much more permissive of non-worship uses
4. After decades of increasing separation, the Church is beginning to accept that working with local authorities and government agencies is not a threat to its independence. The Established Church really does want to engage everyone and not be perceived as just the Tory Party at prayer. Even Mr Cameron (Eton, Oxford) told the Daily Telegraph last year 'Our churches are important to our communities and we must do all we can to preserve and maintain them'.

Sustainability

But how? There are two major issues to address: money; and organisation and culture.

There just has to be some public money, just as everywhere else in Europe, but the detail of how much and from where eludes us, mainly I suspect because neither national or local government understands who actually owns churches – both presume it is the national institution, 'the Church of England'.

Of course, at present public money is in short supply – but that shouldn't delay thinking about solutions. State Aid took over 25 years to arrive and if I have learnt nothing else, working with Church and State requires decades to get anything done. It is not all doom by any means. The HLF is to continue the 'state-aid scheme' at £25 million a year until 2013 and shows every intention of continuing to fund repairs to places of worship at that level. The Government's VAT refund scheme, the LPWGS is also guaranteed at £12 million per annum to 2016. No losses there, then.

The fabric at risk argument run in 1973 is a dead duck with surveys showing 90% of places of worship in good condition. But there is a strong argument to make about learning lessons from the past, protecting the investment of public money in a national resource and not allowing big problems to build up in the readily foreseeable future. The target to my mind should be State support for regular maintenance rather than major repair grants, building on the various schemes already in existence and by tapping into other people-based agendas for providing basic skills (or even community service?) (see Box 1). Giving 15,000 listed places of worship £500 a year would cost £7.5m annually – less than the sum EH has just withdrawn from the joint grant scheme with HLF. CADW's recent 'Maintenance Matters' discretionary grant scheme does just this and has been oversubscribed. The Church of

Box 1: Some considerations for a national maintenance scheme for churches

Basic maintenance for listed churches

- annual figure for agreed simple maintenance tasks paid from taxation to an organisation working on a diocese/county/region basis
- incorporate other buildings to make it more financially viable – non-listed churches, vicarages, schools, other denominations
- use of untrained labour, community service?
- once-a-year check for the parish, to complement the five-yearly architect's report

England's lack of corporate interest on this issue, despite years of prompting, is shameful but amply indicative of the lack of central interest in buildings.

Continuing to stress the value of using church buildings for the wider community is an astute argument to run, especially if it can bring in the Big Society and localism. But it will quickly run up against the religious aspect and supporting religion is where politicians and grant givers get very nervous, worrying about supporting one religion and not others or, indeed, helping any of them. Remember that whatever legal basis it gives for leasing to third parties, the emphasis of the 2006 Amendment Measure is that the church remains 'primarily in use for worship'. As I believe that most successful community functions are initiated by active congregations, these are precisely the people who will also have a parallel desire to modernise the context of their worship which as I have already argued, runs the risk of alienating the concerned non-Christian public with their expectations of a traditional interior. Just supporting maintenance of the historic envelope, with separate grants for external repairs should at least be non controversial.

But what about our numerous small listed rural churches, who might have a warm space, toilet and tea cupboard but no hope of more than occasional non-worship uses? Ironically, the parochial system that has kept them going over the centuries could become their biggest threat. They are now likely to be in a team or group benefice, sharing a priest who could have another paid job and with the sort of worship that forced Roy Strong to drive six miles every Sunday from his village to Hereford Cathedral. Pressure is building on the remaining churchwardens and PCCs, with their ever rising age profile. Big repair bills can focus minds but increases in insurance premiums, the diocesan share, running costs and funding clergy they hardly see, are all taking their toll on the decreasing number of committed church members. Pressure can also come from outside the parish, from the thriving urban and market town PCCs who feel that they are subsidising a lot of underused buildings and under-employed clergy scattered around their diocese, funding that they could use more effectively to further the Kingdom. The concept of an Established Church serving all the country equally is of little interest to such parishes.

But it is precisely Establishment or an historic view of it, which is the culture that has got to be changed at national and local level to give these buildings a future – and radical change may also allow the Church of England to survive too. Far too many congregations are inward looking and with a bunker mentality, reflected at national level by sloth in the reform of historic structures and positions. The recent suggestion to merge

three northern dioceses has not been as cataclysmic as it might have been, despite the assault on fierce local pride. Perhaps other mergers, often privately discussed, will now come out. Many congregations have finally got used to not having a resident priest, but they are still unfortunately perceived as lesser entities and there is an unspoken sense that only villages with a resident priest are really part of the corporate Church.

I am clear that it is vital that occasional formal acts of worship can still take place in churches that are no longer part of a benefice within the parochial system. It is not just an essential part of the significance of the building's character; it is what is expected to occur by those local non-worshippers who come forward to maintain the fabric. Occasional worship also happens to align well with another long established tenet for historic buildings, that the original use is the best use. If the Church of England remains Established, then national spiritual coverage has to be provided but by radically re-drawing the parish map. Perhaps we are already returning to the pre-Conquest minster system, with a group of priests centred on a major church but with responsibility for certain settlements. These already exist in some dioceses, with grouped benefices centred on a church actually renamed as a Minster. Most opposition will come from congregations hankering after their own parish priest and this is certainly an issue that the Church of England finds hard to address. But it must, as one thing everyone agrees is that the present muddle cannot continue.

Currently, the only long term legal options for unwanted buildings come via the 1983 Pastoral Measure. Aside from vesting for preservation, there are only two feasible alternatives for a rural church; the widely unpopular demolition, and house conversion, which the general population might find less disagreeable in principle but which is often fiercely opposed locally. A fourth option of vesting in the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) until a permanent use arrives, section 51(c), has either been used to deliberately ruin a building or as a device to hand it over immediately on long lease to a charitable trust (as in Norwich). Although the Measure has been decried as too rigid in its black and white approach (a church is in use or redundant) this fourth option does actually offer the prospect of the building being mothballed outside the parish system, but remaining within sight of the diocese (Box 2). The building can still be available for occasional worship until a use or users come along, which might include a new congregation.

No DBF has been prepared to take on such a role and none will without new money, knowing that the 'living' church simply cannot find extra funds for 'dead' churches. If a DBF was eligible

Box 2: Four options for caring for churches no longer needed for regular services

Diocesan Boards of Finance	Churches Conservation Trust
♦ experienced in the management of voluntary groups	♦ established, well known
♦ local	♦ has adequate legal powers
♦ already responsible for the maintenance of parsonages	♦ only for redundant CofE churches
♦ church remains in the orbit of the Church of England	♦ national charity
♦ can remain consecrated and controlled by the DAC	♦ can give grants to churches in the care of the DBF
♦ *no culture of funding repairs or maintenance of churches*	♦ *arm of government?*
♦ *would require new funding streams*	♦ *national vs regional?*
♦ *grant givers would need to recognise the new role*	♦ *different funding sources?*
♦ *not thought independent enough by locals?*	♦ *revolving or 'holding' trust?*
Friends of Friendless Churches	**Independent charitable trust(s)**
♦ established charity (43 churches)	♦ NCT, county historic churches trusts, and Friends groups already exist
♦ can take on any redundant Christian building	♦ 'Big Society'- friendly as voluntary?
♦ the CCT in Wales	♦ volunteer basis closer to Church ethos
♦ not attached to Government	♦ usually very local
♦ *currently dependant on legacies etc*	♦ more attractive to Lottery and charitable funding than national trusts?
♦ *revenue funding for staff?*	♦ *governance*
♦ *trustees self-appointing*	♦ *national standards*
	♦ *reliance on grants from Government?*
	♦ *volunteers*
	♦ *funding for revenue costs?*

for both maintenance grants and able to apply for one-off repair grants, then it would be no different to a parish church in use applying; it might even earn an income from whatever group comes along to use the building. But the culture is against this sort of intermediate state – which a former director of the (then) Redundant Churches Fund, Anthony Barnes, has unkindly termed 'Purgatory' – both within dioceses and also grant givers. As the legislation is there, I think it is another possibility that should be explored, because what it supplies is a corporate body capable of maintaining the fabric regardless of use and users, but within a legal system which is flexible enough to accommodate all those occasional uses and users that pop out of the woodwork, including worship.

I suspect that something like this actually already operates in some multi-church benefices, with some buildings being formally designated as 'chapels of ease' and so the financial responsibility of the larger parish they serve. Archdeacons (and bishops for that matter) are not looking to shut churches and have more important things to do than devise those top-down strategic exercises that

resulted in so many redundancies after 1968 – such as the diocese of Lincoln's *Into Tomorrow* document that shut so many churches in villages that have now expanded. These strategies are just not appropriate or acceptable in the more fluid and vociferous population that exists in England today. Formally designating churches as 'chapels of ease' will keep the lawyers happy, relieve incumbents and rural deans from the bureaucracy surrounding parochial status and keep the building recognisably within the fold – including the quinquennial system and faculty.

Though the Church Commissioners are duty bound to get the best deal they can, and dioceses are desperate to realise their historic assets, both are reluctantly realistic about how many rural churches can actually be converted into cash. That is why I think the redundancy rate continues at such a low level; the process will only be triggered when a congregation literally dies out (which with an average supporter age of 61, might become more common fairly soon) or be triggered when a struggling benefice or deanery decides in desperation that it cannot support so many lame ducks and presses to be rid of one or two. That could also become more frequent as greater financial burdens are put on shrinking congregations.

There will usually be people outside the Church who will want to keep 'their' threatened building in some sort of communal use, and who will be prepared to form a Friends Group. It is therefore vital to get a legal ownership system flexible enough to enable them to take on this responsibility quickly so that they can receive outside professional support as well as funding, but which retains a strong corporate body in the background. Vesting in the diocese keeps ownership local, within a church context and is probably the most flexible option.

The other existing options have their advantages and disadvantages (see Box 2).

The **Churches Conservation Trust** (CCT) is the statutory failsafe for important historic buildings and the Trust's current encouragement of community uses helps to dispel any lingering thoughts by Government or General Synod that these are just museums. The bar for acceptance has risen enormously though, as the Trust's funding has been cut by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and if its Trustees get too aggressive in pursuing community uses in competition with struggling active parish churches, they risk alienating Synod which is always queasy anyway about the Church of England's contribution to the CCT. If properly funded, the CCT could be a revolving trust for huge numbers of marginal churches, simply mothballing them until a congregation returns or another user comes along. Better funding might bring greater regional devolution on the National Trust

model, perhaps. The Trust could even become a division of a regionalised English Heritage – as more than one recent Secretary of State has suggested – but that raises the question of just how far the Church of England wants to continue to be involved in churches out of current use and unlikely to be wanted back.

A serious disincentive to local fund raising and charitable funding could be the (partial) State ownership this would imply – though I think we are wearily getting accustomed to the idea of public/private funding for public utilities. Although CCT churches remain consecrated for worship, this can only take place at the discretion of the bishop and local incumbent. As one diocesan bishop has already observed, some Trust churches hold more regular services than nearby parish churches, supposedly still 'in use'.

The other current main contender for beneficial preservation is the **Friends of Friendless Churches**, which has 22 former Church of England churches and one Baptist chapel in England and 20 former Church in Wales buildings. Its income comes from members, legacies and gifts and grants mainly from English Heritage and the HLF – mirroring the funding of parish churches in fact. A happy windfall of recent legacies is enabling the Friends to be much more pro-active, but the poverty of its first fifty years could very easily return. Once again, the churches have to be declared redundant from the parish system and are deconsecrated, though most retain altars and have occasional services at the discretion of the Trustees who always consult the local incumbent. This is a more flexible situation with regard to use than the CCT, but is financially much less secure and the governance of the Friends does not involve other organisations working in related areas – it appoints its own trustees – and the organisation is wholly London based.

There are **other trusts** looking after redundant churches, ranging from one-church trusts like the Melton Old Church Society near Woodbridge to the area trusts like those in Norfolk, Norwich and Ipswich. All are heavily dependent on volunteers and go through difficult times when at a low ebb – just like any parish church of course. Both the Norwich and Ipswich trusts hope to raise an income from letting their buildings for all sorts of uses, but these uses can be dependant on public subsidies and so insecure – despite heavy capital investment in conversion work. Such trusts might also meet the current localism criterion and their volunteer basis echoes their historic ownership too which might therefore be more attractive to Lottery and charitable funding. But these qualities have the same drawbacks as parish churches in their long term sustainability and inability to raise revenue funding for maintenance.

❖ ❖ ❖

To conclude. It would be best in my view for all listed places of worship that are not privately owned to be eligible for a basic annual subsidy from public funds to cover maintenance, which based on £500 per building will cost about £7.5 million pa. The money would be best administered through intermediaries who run maintenance schemes. Additionally, as now, there would be a discretionary grant scheme again funded by the tax payer and/or the Lottery, aimed mainly at major repairs to the external envelope, but possibly including some basic facilities and for getting some decent interpretation in to every church, that covers the function and meaning of the building and its contents as much as the fine details of its architecture and long dead alumni. I would also like to press for my pet priority, the conservation of works of art and other historic contents, which is what many visitors actually concentrate on looking at when they visit and want to know more about. The £25m per annum presently on offer is not enough, but with limited numbers of craftsmen and conservators available and with matching money a little harder to come by, I suggest that only a modest increase is required at the moment to maintain the present good condition of most churches.

A very large safe pair of hands is needed to take on the basic care of many small rural churches, a body that would be eligible for grants and capable of accommodating all the various local users and groups that will come forward to look after the building. In the present legislation, I would like to promote diocesan boards of finance as the most flexible and appropriate option but I fear that the required culture change is simply too great to achieve much in the near future.

There is a lot to celebrate in the current good state of repair of most listed places of worship and in the strength of many congregations and communities who are adapting their churches to modern liturgical and communal use – just as their predecessors did before the tidal wave of Ecclesiological correctness removed all but worshippers from the community's parish church. This is surely the beginning of a new chapter in the fifteen-century history of the English parish church, perhaps turning the circle rather than re-inventing the wheel. But having experienced at first hand how long it takes to adjust anything involving both Church and State, we need to begin working at planning for the future now, whilst the buildings are still standing.

The Society would welcome offers of further articles on the issues raised by Richard Halsey in this lecture.

Fifteen photographs from fifteen years of church recording

Cameron Newham

TWELVE YEARS AGO, in Issue 22 (April 2000) of *Ecclesiology Today* I wrote an article entitled 'Creating a digital atlas of English architecture' which described a project that I had embarked upon in 1997 to photographically record all of the rural parish churches in England. The editor has now invited me to provide an update, in the form of fifteen images, one from each year of the project.

My original aim was to record all of the buildings listed in Nikolaus Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series, photographing the secular buildings externally while for churches I would record both the interior and all items mentioned by Pevsner. I soon found that secular buildings behind high walls or hedges usually cannot be photographed, no matter how enthusiastic one may be in writing to the owners! – so several years ago I made the decision no longer to photograph these except where they are conveniently seen from churchyards. On the other hand, for many years I have been documenting inside churches much more than is described in the *Buildings of England* and other sources, as these books (even the most recent ones) do not necessarily record all there is of importance in a church (hatchments being one very prominent omission).

The other major change has been in technology, particularly in image resolution. The first camera I used took pictures with dimensions of 640 by 480 pixels (a mere 0.3 megapixels) and these first images, while serving as a useful record, are unsuitable for many uses. At the time I supplemented these with photographs taken with a traditional 35mm SLR film camera. Over the years the digital cameras have been upgraded and since 2004 I have been using top-of-the-range full frame 35mm DSLRs. The current camera has an image size of 21 megapixels and this, combined with perspective correction lenses, off camera lighting and several other pieces of specialised equipment ensure that the photographs are of the highest quality possible for such a detailed and broad-ranging project.

When I last wrote, I said that the total number of images stood at 35,000 in January 2000 and five counties had been completely covered, with just over 1000 churches recorded. Twelve years later, as of January 2012 the archive contains nearly 345,000 images covering nearly 7000 Anglican churches as well as over 5000 other buildings. It seems likely that once completed, the archive will contain over 500,000 images, making it one of the largest photographic libraries in England focussed on one topic, and almost certainly the largest photographic archive of ecclesiastical heritage in the world. Updates on progress and an illustrated blog of my recent visits may be found on the project website www.digiatlas.org

1997

St Mary, Longworth, Berkshire: stained glass showing Christ Crucified (artist: Heywood Sumner, 1899–1900)

The striking east window, showing a large Crucifixus, with the Cross constructed of vines and with vine trails to the left and right, is the work of Heywood Sumner. It was made by the firm of James Powell and Sons and was given by the Lux Mundi group.

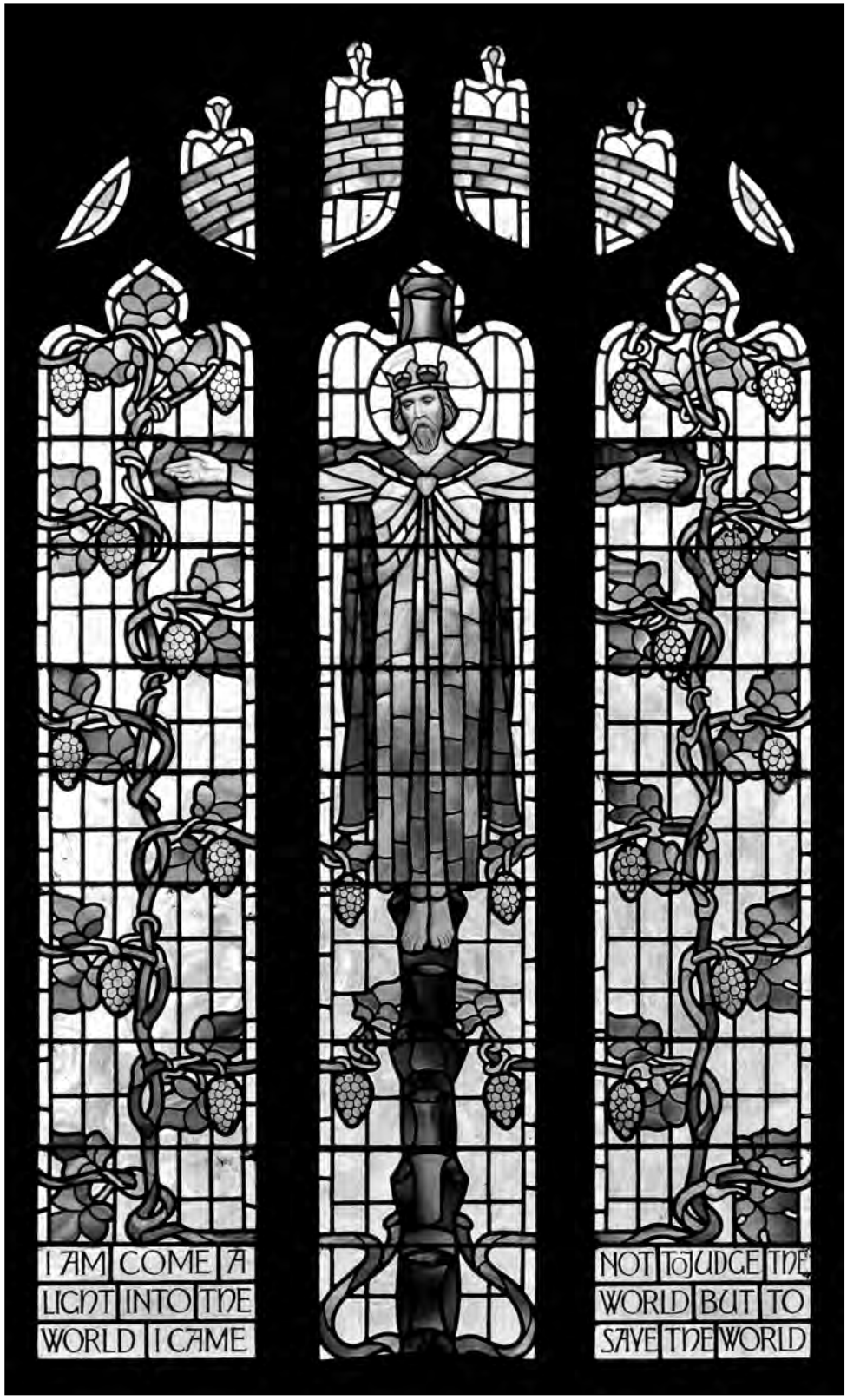
The artist was George Heywood Maunoir Sumner (1853–1940), who was born in Old Arlesford (Hampshire), the son of the Reverend George Henry Sumner and Mary Elizabeth. George was an Anglican clergyman and Mary was notable as the founder of the Mothers' Union.

Heywood Sumner attended Eton before going on to study at Christ Church, Oxford. In 1881 he qualified as a barrister at Lincoln's Inn, London, and in 1883 married Agnes Benson, the sister of his college friend William Arthur Smith Benson, an important designer within the Arts and Crafts movement. Due to his wife's poor health the Heywood Sumner family moved to Bournemouth in 1897, where, after acquiring land at Cuckoo Hill in 1902, he designed and built the family home. He lived there until his death in 1940.

It was through his friendship with Benson that Heywood was introduced to William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement. He went on to become a painter, illustrator and craftsman, as well as investigating and recording the archaeology, geology and folklore of the New Forest and Cranborne Chase.

The firm which made the glass, James Powell and Sons, was started by James Powell (1774–1840) when, in 1834, he purchased the Whitefriars Glass Company in London. In the late nineteenth century the firm became a major supplier to leading artists, designers and architects including many figures in the Arts and Crafts community.

The donors, Lux Mundi, were a group of liberal Anglo-Catholic theologians who studied together at Oxford and produced a collection of 12 essays, *Lux Mundi: A series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation*, edited by Charles Gore. One of their number was Dr John Illingworth, the rector of Longworth, who contributed two of the essays.


I AM COME A
LIGHT INTO THE
WORLD I CAME
NOT TO JUDGE THE
WORLD BUT TO
SAVE THE WORLD

1998

St Mary & St Thomas, Knebworth, Hertfordshire: monument to Sir William Lytton (artist Edward Stanton, after 1705)

The church of St Mary & St Thomas stands in the grounds of Knebworth House, home of the Lytton family since 1490. The church has a family chapel on the north side of the chancel which was rebuilt in *c.*1705 to house some new family monuments. Unfortunately the chapel is very small and the two largest monuments, to Sir William Lytton (d.1705) and Sir George Strode (d.1707), are not well presented, placed as they are facing one another in the cramped space with a narrow walkway between their original iron railings.

The monument to Sir William stands on the north side of the chapel and, along with the monument to Sir George, is by the sculptor Edward Stanton, who has signed it prominently on the bases of the front columns. William was the son of Sir Rowland Lytton and inherited the manor in 1674. He served as both a sheriff for Hertfordshire and as an MP for the county. He died on 14 of January 1704/5 without issue, when Knebworth passed to Lytton Strode, grandson of his sister Judith and son of George Strode and Mary Robinson.

The sculptor, Edward Stanton (*c.*1681–1734) was the last of the successful mason-sculptors of the family firm based in Holborn, London. He was the son of William Stanton and was apprenticed to his father in 1694, and on his fathers death in May 1705 took over the running of the workshop. The monument to Sir William Lytton is his earliest extant signed monument, although he was responsible for several earlier unsigned commissions. In it he closely follows the design of one of his father's later monuments, that to the first Earl of Coventry (d.1699) at Elmley Castle, Worcestershire.


MILES
FILIVS ET HÆRES, AB ANTIQVA
FAMILIA (QVÆ IN HAC VICINIA
A TEMPORE REGIS HENRICI SEPTIMI
FELICITER FLORVIT)
RECTA LINEA DEDVCTVS
HERTFORDENSI
VXOREM DVXIT PRIMAM, DEINDE
NATAM SINE PROLE

1999

All Saints, Churchill, Oxfordshire (James Plowman, 1826)

All Saints was built in 1826 by John Plowman of Oxford for the village squire James Haughton Langston (1796–1863). Langston held the living of Churchill & Sarsden and owned the Sarsden estate and most of Churchill.

The medieval church stood in the centre of the Churchill but a fire in 1684 destroyed many of the houses, and the village centre shifted further up the hill, leaving the church on its own. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the old church had fallen into disrepair and Langston had the church shown here built as a replacement, with the old church continuing in use as a mortuary chapel. The new church suffered a fire and underwent extensive restoration work in 2007 and 2008.

Plowman closely modelled the tower of the church on that of Magdelen College, Oxford, but reduced it by a third in size. The tower is in six stages with chamfered plinth and moulded string courses and hexagonal angle buttresses. It has a pierced embattled parapet with Perpendicular tracery patterns and many carved grotesque heads to the cornice and a band of blind quatrefoils below. The interior of the church contains a painted and panelled roof to the chancel with gilding of 1884 by the firm of Clayton and Bell.

Originally a foreman to Daniel Harris, John Plowman (*c.*1773–1843) later became a partner with Harris in the business. Plowman was responsible for the building or restoration of several buildings including St Martin's church at Carfax, Oxford (since demolished). He was the father of Thomas and John Jnr., both of whom became architects.


ALL SAINTS

2000

St Mary, Bottesford, Leicestershire: alabaster effigy of John, Lord Ros (d.1421)

John de Ros (or Roos) (1396–1421) was the eldest son of William de Ros, seventh Baron de Ros and his wife Margaret FitzAlan. He served under Henry V during the Hundred Years' War. He and his brother William were killed in France during the Battle of Baugé on 21 March 1421.

John married Margaret Despencer but the couple apparently had no children. He was succeeded in the title by his younger brother Thomas.

His body was returned to England and was buried at Belvoir Priory. The priory was closed in 1539 during the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the monuments to members of the family were moved to the nearby parish church at Bottesford.

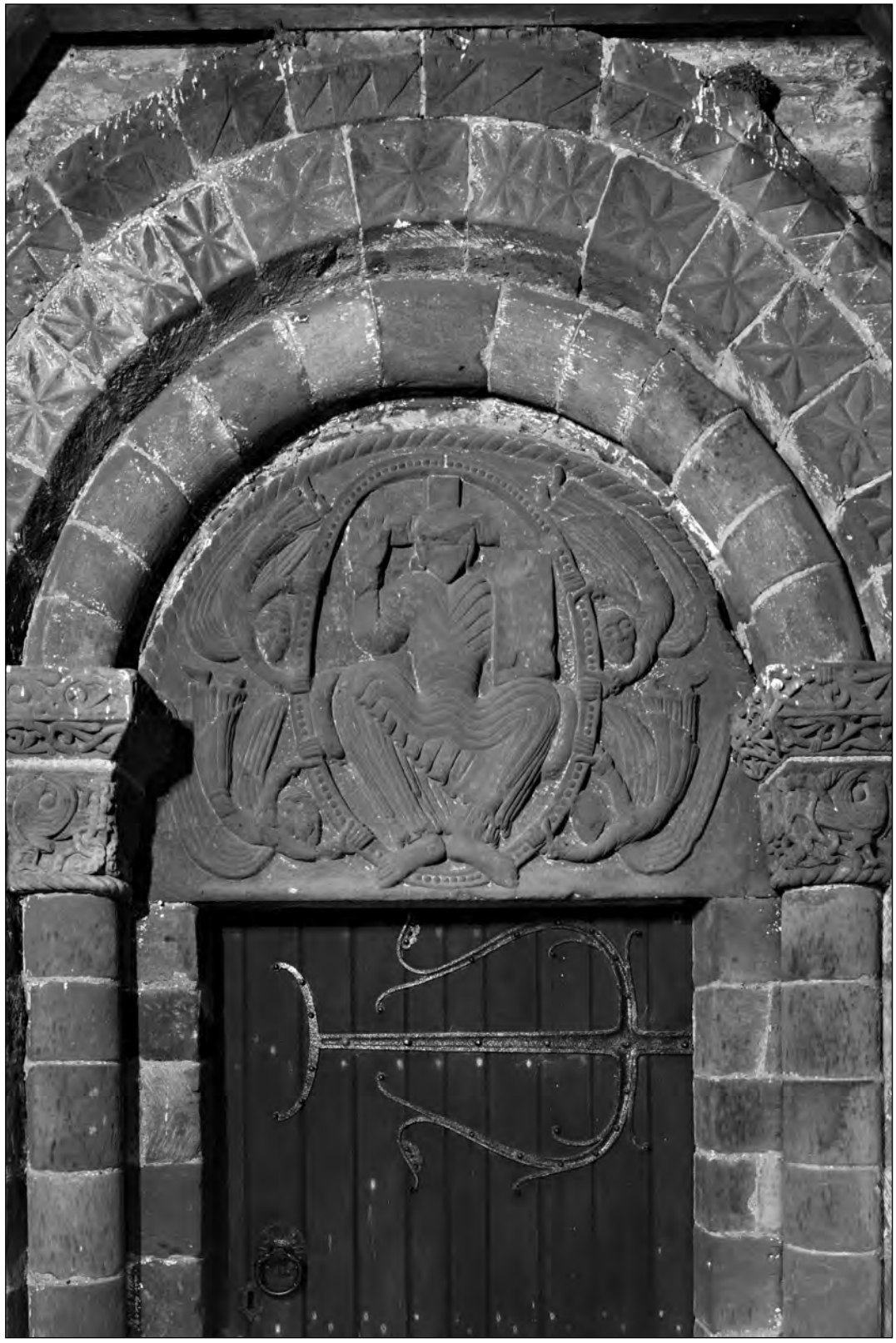
2001

St Peter, Rowlstone, Herefordshire: Romanesque tympanum (twelfth century)

The church of St Peter lies in the south-west corner of the county of Herefordshire, not far from the famous Romanesque church at Kilpeck. The church dates from the twelfth century and consists of an aisleless nave and a chancel with a sixteenth-century west tower. It is notable for two pieces of Romanesque work; the south doorway and the chancel arch.

The south doorway consists of an arch of two orders and a carved tympanum supported on one order of shafts with carved capitals and imposts. The capitals feature birds (presumably doves), foliage, and a male human head with curls of foliage issuing from its mouth.

The tympanum depicts the Ascension and shows Christ in an oval mandorla held by four flying angels, their bodies curving upwards to their feet. The face of Christ has been damaged (deliberately, and presumably by iconoclasts) but enough remains to show he was bearded and had short hair curling up at the shoulders. He sits with his feet together and his knees splayed wide, his left hand holding a large book and his right hand raised in the act of blessing.



2002

Church of St Peter, Melverley, Shropshire (fifteenth century and later)

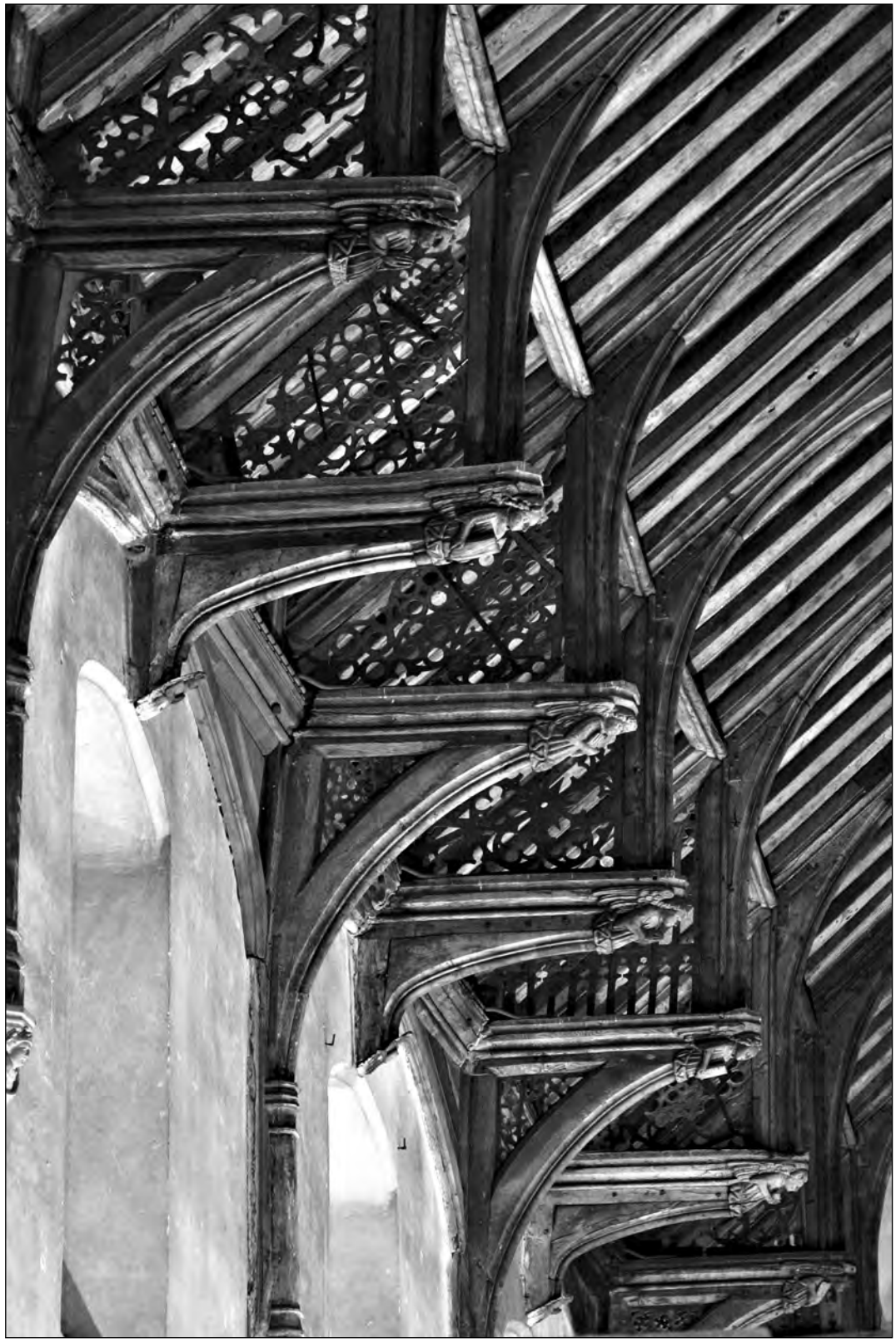
Situated next to the bank of the River Vyrnwy, the Church of St Peter is one of only two timber framed churches in Shropshire. The church itself probably dates from the fifteenth century, while its south porch is sixteenth-century. The bellcote dates from *c.*1718. The church has been restored twice; once in 1878 and again in 1924–5.

2003

St Botolph, Trunch, Norfolk: hammerbeam roof (fifteenth century)

The hammerbeam roof in the nave dates from the late fifteenth century (a bequest exists for it dated 1486). The hammerbeams are on arched braces, with every second one dropping to a wall post, the intermediates dropping to just above the clerestory windows and terminating in a small carved angel. The wall posts are enriched by capitals and bases and rest on stone angel corbels. The spandrels of the hammerposts and hammerbeams have pierced geometrical tracery patterns. The hammerbeams terminate in carved angels, integral with the beams, carrying shields, scrolls, and the Instruments of the Passion.

The roof was repaired in 1897 and again over the period 1976 to 1984. The roof at St Michael the Archangel's Church, Booton (Norfolk) is said to be modelled on that at Trunch.



2004

St Andrew, Isleham, Cambridgeshire: brass to Margaret Peyton (fifteenth century)

This brass is one of a group of three under a canopy. The centre figure is that of Thomas Peyton (d. 1484), and to his left and right are his two wives, both named Margaret.

Shown here is the figure on the left, Margaret Bernard Peyton, who was Thomas's first wife. She was the daughter of Sir John Bernard of Isleham, and it was by this marriage that Isleham came to the Peyton family. They had three children: Thomas, Margaret and Grace.

Margaret wears a gown of rich brocade with cuffs and turned down collar. Her hands are depicted in the *orans* posture. Her butterfly headdress has worked into it a prayer, *Lady Jhu mercy* (see below).

2005

St Mary, Redgrave, Suffolk: effigy of Anne Bacon (artist: Nicholas Stone, early 1620s)

The effigy of Anne (d.1616), wife of Nicholas Bacon (d.1624), lies next to her husband on the tomb made for both between 1616 and 1624. Nicholas was the eldest son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and Jane Fernley, and was half-brother of Sir Francis Bacon. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth at Norwich in 1578. In 1611 Sir Nicholas was created a baronet, of Redgrave in Suffolk, making him England's first baronet, the order having been established by King James I on the 22nd of May that year.

The white marble effigies are by Nicholas Stone (1586/7–1647), while tomb chest is by Bernard Janssen (fl. 1616, still living 1626–7). Part of the inscription reads: *They lived together 52 years, When Death makinge The Separation on Hir Part, He erected this Monument to Them Both. Ano Domini 1616.*

A recent article by Jeen Sheehan (*Redgrave Parish Magazine*, Feb 2011) quotes a copy of the contract for carving the effigies, and this has clarified the date of their creation. This agreement is dated February 1620, with work due for completion by February 1621 (that is, during the lifetime of Sir Nicholas). However it is known from other sources that Stone received his final payment after the death of Bacon in 1624, so possibly there was some delay.

The agreement which Sheehan quotes states that the effigies are 'to be laid upon the monument already [i.e. by February 1620] begun in Redgrave church', presumably referring to the tomb chest by Janssen. It is usually assumed that he completed this in 1616, the date of the inscription, but this may perhaps be poetic licence.

The monument lies in the north aisle of the church, which is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

2006

St Michael & All Angels, Great Badminton, Gloucestershire: monument to the second and third Dukes of Beaufort (artist: John Michael Rysbrack, 1754)

Signed and dated 1754 by Rysbrack, the monument to Henry second Duke of Beaufort, his wife Rachel and their son Henry, the third Duke, (died 1714, 1709, and 1745 respectively) is a novel composition. It shows the third Duke standing while his father reclines and holds a portrait medallion of his wife. Both are in Roman costume and stand against an obelisk of grey marble. The standing figure is balanced by asymmetrical drapery which hangs down over a sarcophagus on which the composition is placed. Above, two flying putti hold a coronet.

John Michael Rysbrack (1694–1770) was a Flemish sculptor who settled in London in 1720. After his arrival he quickly established himself and became much sought after, producing busts of many of the well-known figures of his time as well as many monuments.

2007

St Edmund, Dolton, Devon: Anglo-Saxon font

Re-use is a common feature of English parish churches. In the case of St Edmund's, Dalton, parts of one, or possibly two Anglo-Saxon crosses have been cut down and reassembled to serve as the font. The font is composed of two parts, the base being two blocks cemented together and the bowl on top formed from a third block that has been hollowed out. The decoration consists of intricate interlace patterns.

2008

St Mary, South Dalton, East Yorkshire (John Loughborough Pearson, 1858–61)

The spire of St Mary's rises to a height of 63 metres and provides a notable landmark in the surrounding countryside. The church was built by the third Lord Hotham for a cost of £25,000 from 1858 to 1861.

J. L. Pearson was the architect, having worked on the nearby church at Scorborough for Hotham's land agent, James Hall, in 1857. Pearson (1817–97) was born in Brussels, the son of an etcher from Durham. He studied architecture under Ignatius Bonomi and then Philip Hardwick. One of his best known works is Truro Cathedral where he incorporated part of the original mediaeval church into his new building. He was not only responsible for many new churches, but was also involved in the restoration of many existing ones.

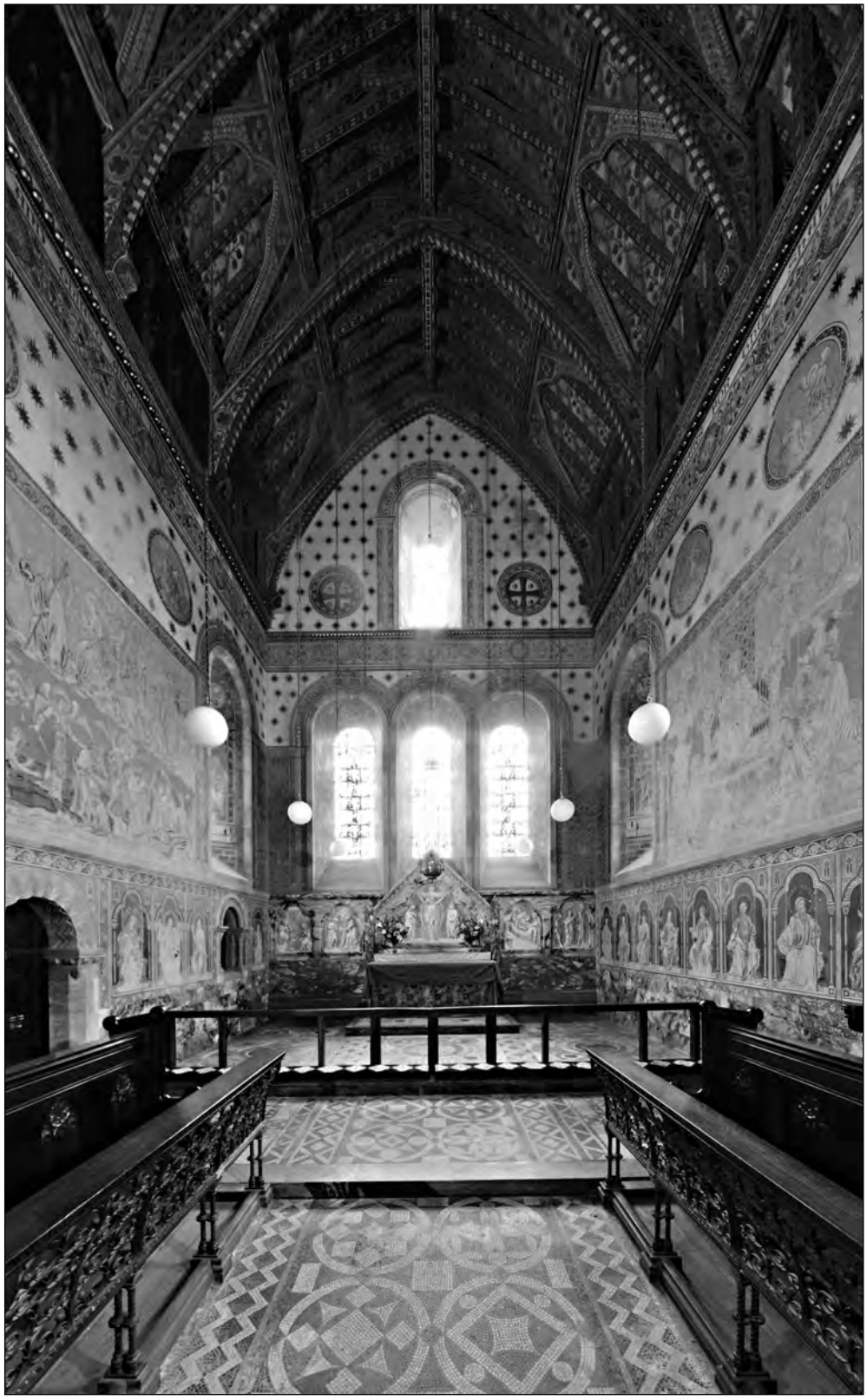
2009

St Michael and All Angels, Garton-on-the-Wolds, East Yorkshire: chancel decoration (Clayton and Bell, 1872–8)

In the mid to late nineteenth century the Tatton-Sykes family restored or substantially remodelled many of the churches in the area around their home, Sledmere House in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

The church of St Michael and All Angels dates from just after 1121. The church underwent restoration by the architect John Loughborough Pearson in 1856–7 and this was paid for by the Fourth Baronet. Later, from 1872 to 1878, his son, the Fifth Baronet, employed George Edmund Street (1824–81) to furnish the church. The firm of Clayton and Bell were brought in, providing highly coloured murals for the walls and stained glass for the windows (both depicting biblical scenes), with painted decoration for the roofs. The wall murals cost just over £3000.

In *The Buildings of England Yorkshire: York and the East Riding* published in 1972, Nikolaus Pevsner expressed concern for the state of the paintings. Between 1986 and 1991 the Pevsner Memorial Trust paid for the paintings to be cleaned, restored and conserved.



2010

All Saints, St Paul's Walden, Hertfordshire, chancel screen (probably 1727)

An oval plaque of the eastern side of the screen records THIS Chancel was First Repair'd & Beautifi'd by EDWARD GILBERT ESQ of the Bury in the Year of our Lord 1727' (The Bury is the local great house.)

The screen was probably erected at that time, though Nikolaus Pevsner in *The Buildings of England: Hertfordshire* felt that the work looked later. In recent times the screen has been repainted in green and white.


IHS
532
106
172
27

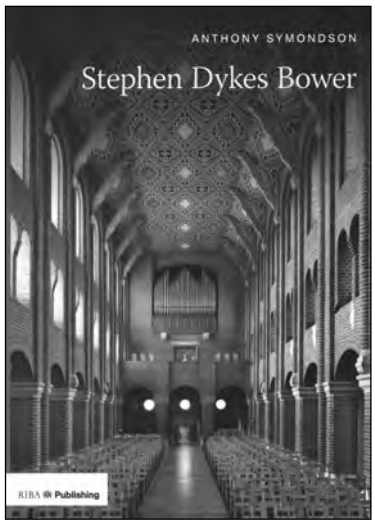
2011

Church of St Lawrence, Mereworth, Kent (architect unknown, 1744–6)

The church was built by the Earl of Westmorland in 1744–6 and replaced a mediaeval church which lay to the south-west. John Newman in *The Buildings of England: West Kent and the Weald* described it as 'the outstanding eighteenth-century church in the county, in scale, ambition and architectural interest'. Unfortunately the architect is not known but several prominent architects from the era have been suggested including Colen Campbell, James Gibbs and Henry Flitcroft. Indeed, Campbell had worked for the Earl at Mereworth Castle in the 1720s and although he died in 1729 it is possible he designed the church.

The church is constructed of blocks of Kentish ragstone. Wealden sandstone is used for the porch columns, the quoins and the tower. In plan the church is a simple box modelled on churches such as St Paul's, Covent Garden, London. The tower at the west end is surmounted by a spire and flanked by urns. The base of the tower is square and supports an octagonal upper section which is decorated with pediments, Ionic columns and a balustrade. It is similar in design to the church of St Giles in the Fields, Holborn, London. The semi-circular porch at the west end is carried on Tuscan columns and is similar to St Paul's, Deptford or St Mary-le-Strand, London.

The church was 'repaired and beautified' in 1770 and the spire rebuilt 100 years later. Major repairs were carried out to the tower in 1946–7 following bomb damage in the Second World War. Following a 2005 inspection the church underwent a major program of restoration.



Anthony Symondson, ***Stephen Dykes Bower***. RIBA Publishing, 2011, 186 pp., many col. and b&w pls, £20.00 pbk, ISBN 978 1859463987

The publication of a study of the life and work of the Society's late President, the distinguished cathedral and church architect, Stephen Dykes Bower, has been long overdue. The publication of this well written and beautifully illustrated monograph in the excellent series of reasonably priced, soft-back volumes on twentieth-century architects, published by the RIBA in conjunction with The Twentieth Century Society and English Heritage, is thus most welcome.

It is now almost eighteen years since Dykes Bower's death at the age of 91, and more than sufficient time has elapsed to be able to see his work objectively in the broad context of English ecclesiastical architecture and design through the twentieth century.

Few members of the Ecclesiological Society will need to be reminded of Dykes Bower's significant contribution in so many areas of interest to ecclesiologists. However, Fr Symondson has most usefully brought together an eminently readable account of the architect's life, work and values that provides a well rounded picture of a great architect and designer whose role and work were marginalised or disregarded altogether by many in his own profession and by architectural critics and journalists during the greater part of his career. Anomalously, it was only in the last ten or so years of Dykes Bower's life that the significance of his work began to be more broadly recognised and adequately appreciated beyond the circle of those with a particular interest and sympathy for a continuing traditional approach to English church architecture and design through the twentieth century. Sadly, however, save for his being awarded an honorary Lambeth DLitt in his ninetieth year by Archbishop George Carey, he never received the full and formal honour that he so clearly deserved.

Aspects of Dykes Bower's life and work have been explored in diverse articles published over the last thirty years by writers and critics including James Bentley, Alan Powers, Gavin Stamp and Anthony Symondson himself; in unpublished theses by Andrew Derrick in 1993 and by myself in 1981; in a day conference at the former Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies of York University in 1996, organised by Peter Burman; in an exhibition on 'The Twentieth Century Church' in 1997 at the RIBA's Heinz Gallery organised in association with the Twentieth Century Society; and in generous obituaries further to his death in November, 1994. In addition, detailed aspects of Dykes Bower's work at Westminster Abbey have been explored by the late Thomas Cocke in his *900 Years: The Restoration of Westminster Abbey* and by Warwick Rodwell in his T*he Lantern Tower of Westminster Abbey, 1060–2010*. However, the present volume represents the first comprehensive and adequately illustrated study of Dykes Bower and his work.

The architect's extensive and diverse work is generously illustrated in the volume; most significantly, in a considerable number of very fine, colour photographs specially commissioned from Steve Cole and James O. Davies of English Heritage, complemented by clear photographs of many drawings prepared by Dykes Bower and his assistants over the years and historic black-and-white photographs of buildings as first completed.

The book has been structured most sensibly. An informative and revealing first chapter on Dykes Bower's early life, education and pre-War practice is followed by individual chapters devoted to the architect's work at St Paul's Cathedral and St Vedast's in the City; at Westminster Abbey; and at the Cathedral Church of St James in Bury St Edmunds. In turn, these are followed by well illustrated chapters on Dykes Bower's new buildings and major alterations and his works of restoration, painted decoration and re-ordering; by a chapter providing fascinating insights into the workings of his office, drawn from the recollections of past assistants; and concluding with a final chapter offering a sensitive and sympathetic resume of the architect's immense contribution to twentieth-century English church architecture and design.

Most usefully, the book provides the most complete list of Dykes Bower's works available to date (in chronological order), remedying a number of significant omissions from my own detailed catalogue of works prepared in close collaboration with the architect himself and circulated back in 1981, particularly in relation to some pre-War church works, and a number of unsuccessful competition entries and unbuilt projects. In addition to a well-detailed bibliography, which lists not only the published articles about the architect, but also his own published essays and lectures, the editors have included the highly relevant obituaries published in *The Times and Churchscape* written by James Richards and Alan Rome respectively.

In discussing Dykes Bower's life and work in the pre-War years, Fr Symondson has rightly emphasized the significance of the architect's close friendship with the distinguished but relatively little known church architect F. C. Eden (1864–1944) and the considerable and continuing influence of his work on Dykes Bower's own work across the years – a relationship and influence about which the architect was largely silent in the extensive recorded conversations made in 1974–5.

Few readers who have known and delighted in Dykes Bower's work will find fault with Fr Symondson's positive and intelligent assessment of the architect's specific projects across the years, based on an extensive and thorough knowledge of the works and English church architecture and design through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As well as describing Dykes Bower's wholly new churches, his major church reconstructions, his works of alteration and improvement, and his works in the fields of furnishings, stained-glass and internal decoration, the author usefully sets the scene for each of the selected projects, identifying those involved, the challenges arising and the views of critics on the completed schemes.

Those same readers, however, may tend to the view that Fr Symondson overstates the adverse impact of architectural

'modernism' not only on Dykes Bower's professional career, but on the church as whole, and the extent to which the architect was isolated through his adherence to a traditional outlook. In this connection, it is reasonable to suggest that by comparison with many architects working in the middle and later years of the twentieth century, of either traditional or modern outlook, Dykes Bower not only had very substantial opportunities to realise his principles in his work, but importantly too, was able to work frequently without the tight constraints of cost and time that applied in most church-related projects then, as still today. It is reasonable also to question Fr Symondson's claims that 'The ruthless scrapping of tradition under the sway of Modernism made any form of associationism in architecture and design nefarious, so that work in the historical styles was seen to be immoral for appearing to ignore the social and scientific demands of the modern age…' (p.145) and that 'For decades, Dykes Bower stood completely alone as a worthy successor to the Victorian and Edwardian tradition into the late twentieth century…' (p. xvii).

Fr Symondson rightly draws attention to Dykes Bower's early and continuing interest in the provision and design of free-standing altars and specifically to his centrally planned altars at the crossing in the rebuilt parish church in Great Yarmouth (p. 93), at the crossing in the re-ordered church of St John the Baptist in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (pp. 106–107), and at the heart of his proposed but unbuilt church in South Redcar. Surprisingly, however, Fr Symondson makes no specific reference to Dykes Bower's most important central altar, namely that in the crossing in his new cathedral at Bury St Edmund's.

In referring to his nave altar in All Saints Church, Cuddesdon, designed in 1940, the author suggests that 'Here, 25 years before nave altars became customary, Dykes Bower showed that they could be accomplished with dignity and taste' (p. 18). However, anomalously, in a later chapter addressing the architect's work in the late-1950s, Fr Symondson suggests that 'The burgeoning influence of the Continental liturgical movement emphasized the centralised eucharistic space, radically changing settled church planning', that 'theologically, the national Church was moving towards Liberal Protestantism' and that 'these influences contributed further towards Dykes Bower's isolation' (p. 102). It is unclear how such a view is reconciled with Fr Symondson's earlier expressed view (in his excellent study of the work of Ninian Comper) that 'The Anglican liturgical movement was a provincial off-shoot of a more powerful Catholic force for change on the Continent' (p.226).

Whilst emphasizing the cases and circumstances in which Dykes Bower came under serious and public criticism, Fr Symondson tends to play down the significance and validity of that criticism in those relatively few cases in which the architect's judgement or consistency of principles might reasonably be questioned.

In conservation terms, whilst a full and balanced account of the case has yet to be published, the removal and disposal without adequate record of the surviving medieval roof carpentry above the nave of Westminster Abbey in the late 1950s and early 1960s remains a

controversial episode in Dykes Bower's career. Similarly, the architect's enthusiastic advocacy in the early 1960s of proposals to repave the entirety of the floors of the nave and aisles of the Abbey in Cosmati work – a project thankfully abandoned – seems strangely at odds with his expressed concern for reticence and understatement; as too, his support for and direct involvement with the installation of the wholly inappropriate and oversized chandeliers in the nave and transepts of the Abbey in the mid 1960s.

Such contradictions are picked up in only modest part when the author rightly observes in his conclusion that 'A building by Dykes Bower is immediately unmistakable despite his conscious avoidance of individualism'. Similarly, Fr Symondson touches only lightly upon the very significant conservation issues raised by Dykes Bower's self-assured approach to the alteration and reconstruction of historic buildings and their features. It is likely that the author might have some highly relevant views in this area when he suggests in his recent *Church Times* article on Dykes Bower that 'Traditional church architecture now languishes under the uncreative mantle of conservation' and that the architect 'was buffeted as much by the restrictions of strict conservationist principles as he was by modernism'.

Despite these reservations, Fr Symondson's study is to be keenly commended and will be enjoyed by all those who value and delight in our late President's work.

Paul Velluet

Libby Horner, ***Frank Brangwyn: Stained Glass: A Catalogue Raisonne.*** DVD, 2011, (consisting of 15 short films and 12 PDF files for MAC and PC, of which the latter only are also available in the following fully colour-illustrated printed form: Libby Horner, ***Frank Brangwyn; Stained Glass; A Catalogue Raisonne***, published by the author in Stanford, Kent, 2011, pp.112, ISBN 978-0-9560884-3-71). The printed version of the *Catalogue* costs £20.00 and the DVD costs £20.00, however if the book and DVD are ordered together the cost is £30. Contact the author at mail@frankbrangwyn. org for payment details.

This impressive multi-media production of Brangwyn's designs for both executed and unexecuted stained glass – in gloriously rich colours and to a contemporary musical accompaniment – represents the first fruits of Libby Horner's colossal project to catalogue all the artist's works (over 1200 and increasing!). It is itself an exemplary as well as a ground-breaking achievement and one looks forward to corresponding volumes on Brangwyn's murals and the mosaics at St Aidan's, Leeds, his furniture and applied arts, paintings and watercolours. The etchings and lithographs, being in black or sepia, may not be so amenable to this colourful DVD medium.

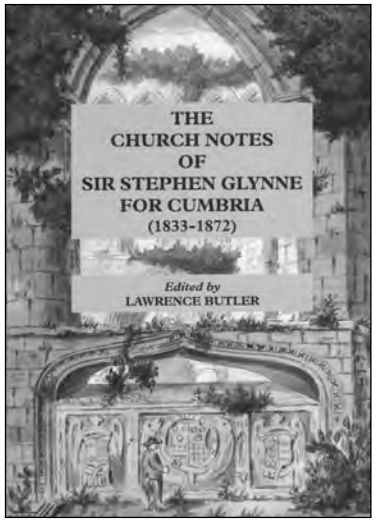
Mark Westbrook composed the music for the ladies' choir and other recitals are provided by a Dublin quartet and the schoolchildren of Elvedon, Suffolk, where the Iveagh memorial windows are to be seen. A recorded but apparently lost glass panel is remade from a reproduction of 'A girl with a bowl' by Gareth Morgan to demonstrate the stages of

stained glass manufacture. Brangwyn originally designed it for Siegried Bing to be made by the Tiffany workshop in the 1890s. In the short films a clutch of stained glass artists, historians and critics provide an illuminating and sometimes contradictory series of assessments of the style and effects of the completed windows with which may be compared the views of Brangwyn's contemporaries and others such as John Piper and Nikolaus Pevsner.

In addition to the author's introduction, brief biographies of those who made the glass from Brangwyn's designs, and an extensive bibliography that includes contemporary and subsequent press reports, critical accounts, and other relevant publications, each itemised entry comprises the following: – the current owner and placement of the stained glass; the title and subject matter; its date of execution; its medium, size and distribution e.g. 4 light window; the glass painter who made it; published literature referring to it; the publications in which it has been reproduced; related works which include elements of the design which may also be found in quite different works in any medium (Horner is sometimes exasperated by the extent of Brangwyn's 'recycling': like Handel he was not one to waste a good tune); studies for this particular work, sometimes in common with related works; and an often extensive and invaluable section of notes on how the work came to be commissioned, revisions in its design, the types of glass produced by its maker, and how it has subsequently been reviewed, etc.

Not only does this pair of publications provide a comprehensive account and record of Brangwyn's stained glass in superb colour, which evokes the particular qualities of the different glazing techniques used by Louis Comfort Tiffany of New York, Sylvester Sparrow of the R.C.A., the Frenchman Paul Turpin, and Alexander Stachan of Aberdeen, it also exemplifies the critical viewpoints of Arts and Crafts, more pictorial, and Modernist abstract commentators. It will stand alongside the monographs by Martin Harrison, Peter Cormack, etc on other stained glass artists, providing a much needed account and assessment of Frank Brangwyn's relatively small but significant contribution to this medium. He was a remarkably versatile creative polymath.

David M. Boswell, Kellogg College, Oxford



Lawrence Butler (ed.), ***The Church Notes of Sir Stephen Glynne for Cumbria (1833-1872)***. Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, 2011, 144 pp., 60 b&w pls., £18.00 post free, pbk, ISBN 978 1873124 52 9. (Available from 01228 544120)

Sir Stephen Glynne of Harwarden (1807–74) visited and wrote up over five thousand churches during the course of half a lifetime's 'roaming' and 'flying about' the country. His church notes are businesslike and methodical yet, despite membership of several learned societies, he seems to have been a true amateur. Church-bashing (I am thinking of my own mis-spent youth here, trying to get into engine sheds) was purely a private pastime. He was never persuaded to lecture, contribute to society outings, or publish. Nevertheless his encyclopaedic knowledge was prized in his lifetime and many of his notes have now been published.

Glynne's Cumbrian church notes are here gathered together and published for the first time. Lawrence Butler has amplified them with footnotes and a substantial introduction, and has assembled a valuable set of contemporary illustrations to go with them.

Glynne saw these churches at an interesting time, just before so many were brought into line with Victorian taste. However it is a pity from a modern perspective that he was only interested in the ancient, habitually deploring – or simply ignoring – the works of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. '...surpassing in ugliness from the lamentable alterations it has undergone' (Egremont); 'A large and curious church but by no means free from modern abominations' (Kirkby Lonsdale). The modern historian might wish that he had seen fit to record St Nicholas of 1693 at Whitehaven, where we know he stayed on several occasions, or Salvin's St John at Keswick, where he attended the evening service in August 1858, before it was given aisles and a longer chancel. I wonder too how much influence his commentaries had on the restorers. Of Dearham church we read 'The pues are hideous and the general appearance of the interior rendered as unecclesiastical as possible', and in the Revd W. S. Calverley's own antiquarian notes 'In 1882 we commenced to restore, improve and enlarge the parish church of Dearham'. But Calverley, like Glynne, neglected to give us any details. Surprisingly, however, there are a few unecclesiastical interiors still lurking here and there. At St Bees he notes the east end 'in a manner desecrated, being cut off from the rest of the church and used as divinity lecture room'. It is still like this.

As with a diary, it is sometimes the commonplace that is of particular interest today. 'Whitewashed within and without' (Crosthwaite); 'the whole is whitewashed within and without' (Bowness on Windermere). Now that the whitewash has gone, we can only imagine the way these churches shone like beacons in the landscape.

Matthew Hyde

Christine Reynolds (ed.), ***Surveyors of the Fabric of Westminster Abbey, 1827–1906: Reports and Letters***. Boydell Press, 2011, 218 pp., £50.00 hdbk, ISBN 978 1 84383 657 5

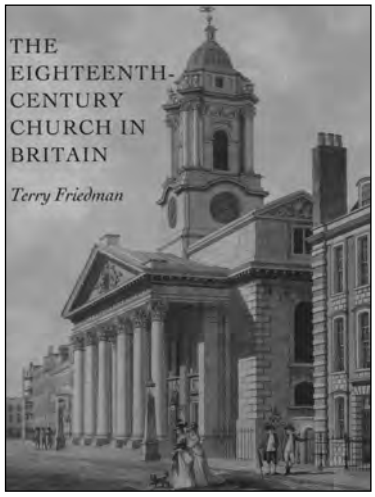
This publication is the fifth in a series under the general title of 'Westminster Abbey Records' drawing on the varied and extensive contents of the Abbey Muniment Room and Library. Whereas scholars such as Jocelyn Perkins and more recently Dr Barbara Harvey have dealt with the medieval period, even now there has not been a definitive and full architectural history of the fabric of the Abbey. This meticulously researched and edited collection of letters and reports, by Christine Reynolds, must surely form the basis of understanding better what happened in the nineteenth century. An excellent introductory essay by Richard Halsey covers the period of the Surveyorships of five major holders of the office – Edwin Blore, Sir George Gilbert Scott, Oldrid Scott, J. L. Pearson and J. T. Micklethwaite; the writings and letters of each of course have their own flavour, from the late Georgian period through the rise of more serious medieval scholarship and into the early

twentieth century and the creeping blight of what is today referred to under the fashionable umbrella of 'conservation'.

Each of the five Surveyors is and was a person to be taken seriously – they were leading architects of their day. Their correspondence and comments throw fascinating light on the attitudes they had as well as the opinions expressed about what they said and did. The rumblings about Pearson's treatment of the north transept figure prominently, but besides the big issues there is much discussion about choices of building stone and it seems to be to Micklethwaite, more than any other, that we owe the decision to use Portland stone for repairs from the late nineteenth century onwards – still the preferred material today. This detail and much more can be picked over and enjoyed in this fascinating compilation which throws valuable new light on important aspects of the Gothic Revival.

As a latter-day holder of the office of Surveyor myself (1988–99), and all too aware of the responsibilities that were entailed, I am relieved to think that my own reports, snugly preserved in the Muniment Room, are not likely to be published in my life time: judgements are best left to history!

Donald Buttress, Surveyor Emeritus, Westminster Abbey



Terry Friedman, ***The Eighteenth-Century Church in Britain***. Yale University Press, 790pp., many colour and b&w pls., £60.00 hdbk, ISBN 978 0 300 15908 0

The eighteenth century was the period of church building in England *par excellence*. Together with the country house, the church was the building type that most defined the architectural and spiritual hopes and fears of the nation. From Hawksmoor's unorthodox St George's, Bloomsbury, to Gibbs's refined St Martin-in-the-Fields, English churches came in all shapes and sizes. Terry Friedman's new book explores this diversity, as well as identifying some important constants. Two recurring, if contrasting, design models in particular stand out in Friedman's narrative, namely Inigo Jones's little church in Covent Garden and Wren's mighty Cathedral, both dedicated to St Paul. Both evidently set the tone for Anglican simplicity, on the one hand, and magnificence, on the other.

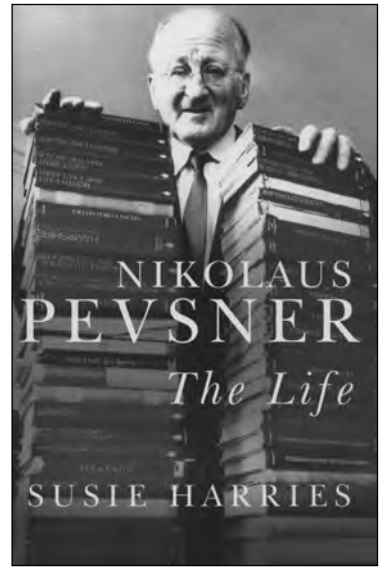
Friedman's book is a tour-de-force, with its astonishing seven hundred and thirty-nine illustrations, attached CD-Rom of important source documents, and beautiful layout by Yale University Press. His approach is to focus not so much on the meaning of architectural ornament and form, but rather on their sources in antiquity and in more recent continental church models. All the familiar-enough conflicts in church design are here, for example in choosing what decoration to use where, and in how best to unite towers and steeples with antique temple-forms. There is also much that is new, as but one example Hawksmoor's previously unpublished drawing for St George's, Bloomsbury, showing a west elevation and unexecuted double-tier Corinthian portico on the north side. We are reminded of Hawksmoor's ability to match the mood of his church architecture to fit its location.

Friedman's discussion of what Walpole called the 'bastard breed', namely the tendency towards a stylistic mix of Gothic and Classic, is important and ground breaking.

The arrangement of the book is by theme (from the role of the church in city planning, through stylistic battles between Gothic and Classic, to a final chapter on churches in America) and to a lesser extent by chronology (from the cultivation of primitive Christian antiquity, through the rise of Neoclassism, to 'the final decades'). This produces some oddities, however. Wren is not given a chapter to himself, nor, as one might expect, are the Queen Anne Churches. Hawksmoor's contribution is therefore considered in separate parts of different chapters, resulting in some overlap and a degree of arbitrary thematic division. This makes the decision to give the Greenwich Hospital Chapel a (very brief) chapter of its own seem slightly bizarre, since it is the only chapter in the book to be given over to a single building (why not one to St Paul's?). Nevertheless Friedman has produced a monumental work that it will be impossible for historians of eighteenth-century architecture, of whatever building type, to ignore.

Vaughan Hart, University of Bath

Susie Harries, ***Nikolaus Pevsner: The Life***. Chatto and Windus, 2011, 866 pp., 47 b&w pls., £30.00 hdbk, ISBN 978 0701168391



Nikolaus Pevsner's great achievement was his series of volumes on the *Buildings of England*. As a result a large population looked at buildings and, at the same time, developed an appetite for valuing the building environment. Underlying his ambitious workload was a belief that recognizing, understanding and appreciating buildings made people feel better. His great achievement was to start, in his late 40's, to visit, list and describe *all* the buildings of architectural interest in England! By 1974, some 23 years later and, having covered 40 counties in 46 volumes, the job appeared to be completed. Pevsner, although he had become a household name, did not see it that way. No one was more conscious than he of his shortcomings and the value of reader feedback; he specifically asked, in each volume, for readers to point out errors and omissions. The publishers, and Pevsner himself, underlined the importance of the revision process. Hence new editors, with expanded space and a wider remit, were able to pay tribute to Pevsner's founding beliefs.

As a good many authorities have recognized, the above task was not an endeavour that cautious historians would have taken on board and Pevsner seems to have agreed, when he said that the series was unlikely to be replaced in a hurry: 'There won't be another madman so soon'.

He thought nothing of surveying thousands of churches at a rate of almost 15 per day, with the support of his wife as driver, and a supply of sandwiches pre-packed days ahead. Work was always his own panacea throughout life, so too a diligent commitment to meticulous descriptions likely to interest an intelligent layman became his staple diet. His perambulations could set the church tower or spire in context, the basic structure could be summarized and dated, the contents could

be reviewed and significant tombs, as well as stained glass and decoration, all appropriately highlighted. Scurrying around England to complete two volumes a year was a labour of love.

Susie Harris's book places this central commitment in a wonderfully rich context. She establishes a clear picture of Pevsner's prolific output and unrivalled work ethic. The book endorses Pevsner's description of himself, which remains true throughout his life. In short, he saw himself as 'austere, proper, pedantic, diligent, serious-minded, indifferent to comfort, preferring to have a goal to strive towards'. Despite this self-deprecation, in the hands of the author the narrative is never dull and continually enthralling.

Harris's twenty years' research is very well-illustrated in her 800 pages. From many aspects it is an engaging narrative. From Pevsner's German background, with his Jewish ancestry forcing an early exit from Germany due to the Nazi machine, through to his internment in England as an enemy alien, the ground is well covered. Happily for us he found a variety of jobs in England, and slowly but surely built himself a world-wide reputation for his knowledge of English art and architecture. He generated an astonishing range of material, well illustrated by his *Pioneers of the Modern Movement and An Outline of European Architecture*.

Of course, his crowning achievement was his series on the *Buildings of England*. Set alongside his 60 volumes of Pelican History and 76 King Penguins he had no fear of spreading himself too thinly. Harris underlines the generosity of the initial commitment of Allen Lane of Penguin Books, as well as the support of generous benefactors such as ABC Television, Guinness, Leverhulme and, latterly, The Buildings Book Trust. This Trust was established in 1994 to promote the appreciation and understanding of architecture by supporting and financing the research needed to sustain new and revised volumes in the series. Thanks to numerous collaborators and editors the series moves from strength to strength, with the wholehearted endorsement of the new publisher, Yale University Press. The latest edition on Oxfordshire became a best seller and had to be re-printed almost immediately! Significantly the series has now extended its coverage to the Buildings of Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Pevsner's phenomenal hard work and outstanding publishing track-record was well rewarded by honorary degrees, distinguished professorships and international accolades. Yet throughout his career, despite his prodigious output, he was quick to see himself as a 'jobbing educator', always indebted to an army of indispensable assistants and collaborators. His exceptionally organized life as well as his eye for detail is wonderfully covered by Harris. She presents a fascinating story, always packed with incident and rich in background detail. It is an intriguing career and a thoroughly engrossing narrative compiled with exceptional sensitivity.

Despite Pevsner's almost international 'canonisation' the text does cover abrasive challenges to his reputation. Authorities such as Betjeman and Lancaster have not always been kind to their contemporary. Former students, such as Professors Banham and Watkin were not afraid to be negative, despite their indebtedness to the great man. Oddly Pevsner's

65th birthday *Festshrift* from the great and good allowed Banham and Furnaux Jordan space to be highly critical. On the whole, however, the biography covers the considerable amount of admiration and gratitude of many associated with a long and productive life.

The workaholic image, with an encyclopaedic commitment to chronicling his environment, is also, at times, challenged. For example, he did, occasionally, find time to relax and enjoy himself as history was being made at his feet. The farewell dinner for Gropius, who was leaving for America, was a case in point:

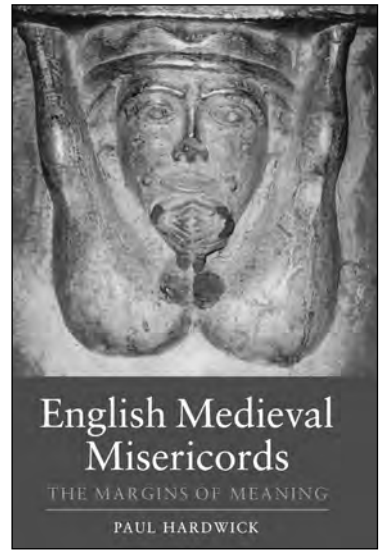
> Held at the Trocadero in Piccadilly on 9 March, 1937, the dinner represented a roll call of the progressive design establishment and its supporters. Pevsner found himself sitting with Julian Huxley, Henry Moore, H. G. Wells, Ove Arup, Sigfried Giedson and Gordon Russell. The menu's cover had been designed by Laszlo Mohholy Nagry.

At the end of such a productive life it seems a particularly fitting Pevsner memorial that £100,000 was raised to restore Clayton and Bell's wall paintings in a little known and isolated church. The Norman church of St Michael and All Angels at Garton-on-the-Wold, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, provides a very appropriate home for remembering a modest, yet colourful, teacher and a low profile patron and campaigner.

Susie Harris's authoritative and lucid biography is a joy throughout. It is to be hoped that this magnificent, definitive work will bring renewed interest in the Pevsner guides and, in turn, our architectural heritage. The book is a splendid tribute to one man's outstanding commitment and monumental ability.

John L. Taylor, Higher Education International

Paul Hardwick, ***English Medieval Misericords: The Margins of Meaning.*** The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2011, 189 pp., 32 b&w pls., £45/$80 hdbk, ISBN 978 1 84383 659 9



Paul Hardwick, Professor of English at Leeds Trinity College, presents a unique and interesting analysis of that most fascinating of medieval church fixtures, the misericord – in this case, in its uniquely English form. Dr Hardwick is certainly no stranger to the serious study of misericords as he has written an impressive number of important papers, articles and book chapters dealing with this subject. *English Medieval Misericords* represents his first book about these seldom seen fixtures as sole author.

As one might expect, Dr Hardwick necessarily explores already well-travelled misericord territory, regularly referencing the important scholarly contributions of such luminaries in this field of study as Christa Grössinger, Elaine Block and M. D. Anderson. The underlying purpose of his examination of earlier misericord studies, however, is not merely to revisit past theories regarding the intended meanings of the carvings. Rather, the author's intention is to present new insights regarding not only the interpretation of the carved iconography on misericords, but also a fresh analysis of the spiritual and artistic motivations of the patrons, clerics and carvers that influenced the creation of these often enigmatic

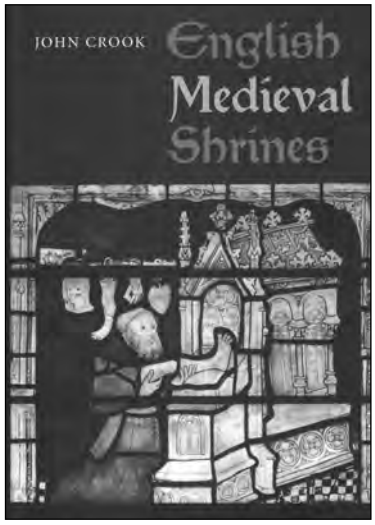
carvings. More specifically, the author proposes the intriguing and potentially controversial argument that the subject matter of *all* misericord carvings, even those that are seemingly mundane or frivolous, has at its core an explicit religious connotation due entirely to both the specific location of misericords in the holiest region of the church and their exclusively clerical audience.

Dr Harwick's line of reasoning, bolstered by frequent references to passages from secular and religious literature of the period, represents a rather bold departure from many other scholarly interpretations regarding the symbolic meanings of the carvings that adorn these otherwise lowly furnishings. It is, in fact, the author's stated intention to 'relocate the study of misericords firmly within the profoundly Christian context in which they were designed, made and initially viewed, and from which they have so often been separated in modern scholarship'. Dr Hardwick's thought-provoking line of reasoning, which implies that the clerical hierarchy exerted far more control over the creative processes of the misericord carvers than previously imagined, is certain to generate significant scholarly discussion.

The book's introduction offers much of the standard fare found in many other books dealing with misericords, including information on their purpose, decorative motifs, etc, as well as the author's general beliefs about their significance. The main body of the book is divided into six thematic chapters. These chapters deal with such subject matter as the carved depiction of everyday life, Christian doctrinal imagery, speculation on the decision-making processes that directed the creation and installation of misericord carvings, a speculative discussion of a deliberate agenda promoting an overarching theme of masculine dominance that influenced the carvings and their meanings, and two final chapters presenting an exploration of the symbolic nature of both the exemplary animals and the monstrous creatures so often depicted in misericord carvings. The book concludes with a brief annotated gazetteer of selected surviving misericord sets listed by place-name rather than county, the majority of them in England, which the author considers particularly noteworthy. The 32 black-and-white photographs interspersed throughout the book are generally of good quality, though a number of the photographs are far too small to show any useful detail. There is also an extensive bibliography and a brief index.

All in all, Dr Hardwick has produced a well-researched, superbly written and certainly thought-provoking examination of the English misericord, offering readers a refreshingly challenging interpretation of misericord iconography upon which to reflect. The book is highly recommended for academic and special libraries that have extensive collections dealing with the visual arts, architecture or medieval studies.

Robert A. Faleer, Central Michigan University



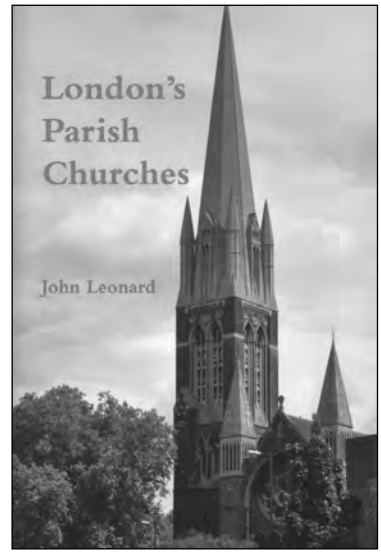
John Crook, ***English Medieval Shrines***. Boydell Press, 2011, 342 pp., 57 b&w pls, £39.95 hdbk, ISBN 978 1 84383 682 7

This comprehensive and authoritative book demonstrates once again John Crook's pre-eminent position as a scholar of the material history of

the cult of the saints in the Medieval West. This time, rather than considering the wider European context for shrines and their settings as in *The Architectural setting of the Cult of Saints in the Early Christian West*, he focuses on shrines in England, discussing not only their developing design through the period but also the housing of the relics in relation to the attentions and devotional practices of their devotees. The chronological range too is broader than in the earlier book, extending from the early Anglo-Saxons to the Reformation, with an interesting codicil on the after-life of relic cults in the Anglican period. This book does not indulge in broad sweeps but considers meticulously saints' cults from the most famous to the most obscure, exploring their changing fortunes over the centuries and the way a single relic may be presented to the pious in many different ways as devotional trends developed. The scholarship is cautious and focused, rarely indulging in speculating on the reasons for these developments in terms of the wider context. In a number of places in the text, this careful scrutiny of the evidence is revelatory, correcting or at least fine-tuning broad claims in earlier writing which have become accepted tropes for the subject. Without underestimating the impact of Becket's dramatic martyrdom (a whole chapter is given to his legacy), he shows for example that the taste for local cults in the post Conquest period in fact predates the death of the saint who is often cited as having ignited that trend. Though dense, the writing is laced with a wry wit, and is interpolated with useful illustrations and plans. Perhaps further illustrative material would have assisted the more spatially challenged reader. There are many written descriptions of the topography of shrines and their sacred locations, and more plans would have made this information easier to assimilate, especially those which showed developments on one site. A notoriously difficult subject to illustrate given the ravages of widespread iconoclasm, it is inevitable that some illustrations could only give an impression of what a destroyed reliquary might have looked like, though in a couple of instances perhaps closer approximations could have been found than the ones supplied. Nevertheless these are minor details put firmly into the shade by a book which through scrupulous analysis of a remarkably extensive body of material shines a searchlight on this elusive but important subject.

Catherine Oakes, Kellogg College, Oxford

John Leonard, ***London's Parish Churches***. Spire Books, 2011, 352 pp., 200 col. pls, £39.95 hdbk, ISBN 978 1 904965 33 6



The publication of Dr John Leonard's significantly revised and wholly redesigned study of a discerning selection of London's parish churches is most welcome. Whilst the period since the publication of the original edition of this work in 1997, which I reviewed in the January 1998 issue of *Ecclesiology Today*, has seen the publication of a number of works covering London's churches in greater or lesser part, including the three final volumes covering London in the *Buildings of England series – London 4*: North, in 1998, *London 6: Westminster*, in 2003 and London 5: East in 2005, Dr Leonard's work, now illustrated with over two hundred

new colour photographs and vastly improved in format, continues to provide an essential and very readable complement to earlier and generally better known works on the subject.

Dr Leonard is a retired medical consultant from Manchester, a member of the Society, and the author of studies on the churches of Derbyshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire. In the Foreword to the original edition as reproduced in this new edition, Bishops Richard Chartres and Roy Williamson of London and Southwark warmly commended the volume as 'a companionable guide which will make London's heritage more accessible to the visitor and those who have the privilege of living in its midst'. In his original introduction Dr Leonard suggested that the book may be used in two ways: firstly, as a narrative account of the building of the capital's churches over a period of one thousand years; and secondly, as a reference book for some one hundred and twenty two churches. This two-fold purpose remains unchanged.

On the issue of selection, Dr Leonard admits to limiting his study to Anglican churches, and to those which are or have been parish churches. He has also restricted his study to churches located in the old LCC (Inner London) area; only venturing further afield in his search for good modern churches. Despite these constraints, Dr Leonard and his publishers have provided a 350-page volume with a generous bibliography, a useful glossary and a detailed index. As with the original edition, the absence of a map is regrettable. However, unlike, the original edition, the individual churches are helpfully located with precise street and post-code addresses. An interesting addition to the new edition is that of 'Michelin' star-ratings for the churches.

As in the original edition, Dr Leonard groups his churches within a sensible framework covering the mediaeval legacy, the age of Inigo Jones, the churches of Wren, the churches by the successors to Wren, the churches of the Greek and early Gothic Revivals, the churches of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and the churches built or reconstructed during the remainder of the twentieth century. The particular grouping he adopts to embrace the churches built between 1840 and 1908 is particularly revealing, and Dr Leonard's selection of the churches of the period 1908 to 2000 is broad and generous.

Specific entries for some twelve churches included in the original edition have been omitted from the new edition. Surprisingly these include The Grosvenor Chapel, St Barnabas, Addison Road, and The Ascension, Lavender Hill. However, these omissions have been balanced by eleven new additions, including St Ethelburga, Bishopsgate, St Peter ad Vincula in The Tower, All Saints, Poplar, St Peter's, Eaton Square, The Russian Orthodox Cathedral, All Saints Church, Ennismore Gardens, and St Barnabas, Ealing. In addition and importantly, a number of the entries have been updated to reflect recent changes.

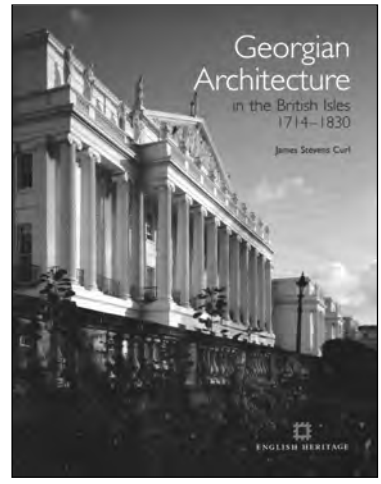
The greatest gain in the new edition is that of the transformation of the book by the inclusion of the two hundred, entirely new and very fine colour photographs in place of the multitude of generally less than satisfactory black-and-white photographs contained in the original edition, and the complete redesign of the book to provide for supreme clarity and elegance on every page. The only criticism on matters of

presentation relates to the significant omission from the thirteen, otherwise very clear, scaled plans of Wren's churches of the reflected ceiling plans and the key liturgical features; both of which are so important in understanding and appreciating the respective buildings.

Dr Leonard and his publishers are to be commended on the new edition of *London's Parish Churches* – a book which will be much enjoyed by all those who value and delight in London's churches, both old and new.

Paul Velluet

James Stevens Curl, ***Georgian Architecture in the British Isles*** 1714–1830. English Heritage, 2011, 444 pp., many col. and b&w pls, £50.00 hdbk, ISBN 978 1 84802 086 3



This new edition of a work first published in 1993 is now extensively revised and most generously illustrated. It covers the architecture of the British Isles during the reigns of the first four Georges (1714–1830).

Once again James Stevens Curl has done the Georgians proud and one must be profoundly grateful that the author has continued honing his highly readable text with such commitment and undoubted flair. In many ways it is a 'tour de force, making Georgian architecture highly accessible to a wide readership. It is a book with ambitious scope, written with a lively and often provocative panache. Above all it very much satisfies the author's objective of providing the general reader with a succinct, well-structured overview, copiously illustrated and with very informative captions.

The book is a celebration of many of the main themes of the time and one is left with a profound admiration for not only an array of talented architects but for the commitment of enlightened and often very indulgent clients! The energy and invention of all concerned is a joy for discerning eyes.

Happily almost everything is presented in a clear well-structured format. The Georgian period is located within a comprehensive historical context. Its evolution and major determinants, in relation to the concern for beauty, the picturesque and the sublime, are handsomely covered. Building types receive a separate treatment, as well as being sewn together in a particularly good narrative on the planning of villages and towns.

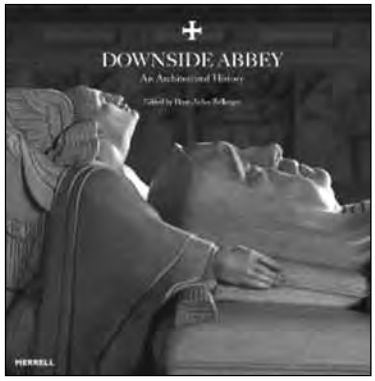
The proliferation of architectural pattern books is duly credited, and how, through them, draughtsmen throughout the land were made aware of the major elements of the architectural vocabulary of Classicism. Curl underlines how even unschooled provincials could generate reasonably competent designs and allowing some sort of visual harmony and coherence to prevail. In short, much of the Georgian architecture presented is viewed as significant, and particularly so when recognised for its visually harmonious settings.

For readers of this journal one of the largest sections of the book provides much that is interesting in well-worn religious territory. Its strength is its balance and wide range of illustrations. Plans, elevations and sections are set alongside good, well chosen photographs of

exteriors, interiors and valued architectural details. The rich legacy of the period is conveyed by the selection of many exemplars of good practice. Considerable variety is impressively presented with an overwhelming feeling of elegance. Throughout the text the selected images are supported by useful references and an extensive biography.

Without doubt this is a beautiful book, delightfully produced. It helps the reader appreciate the achievements of an army of artisans working alongside architects of outstanding ability. The amply supply of literature on Classicism was understood and well used. As a consequence basic rules and templates, even in the hands of provincial practitioners, achieved a degree of design harmony deserving of wider recognition.

John L. Taylor, Higher Education International



Dom Aidan Bellenger OSB (ed.), ***Downside Abbey: an Architectural History***, Merrell, 2011, 224 pp., 240 pls. most col., £45, hdbk, ISBN 978 1 8589 4542 2

There are few nineteenth-century ecclesiastical buildings in Britain that deserve a detailed study more than Downside Abbey and School in Somerset. There, in one place, one finds a representation of the Gothic Revival in its entirety, from the Gothick of Henry Goodridge to the work of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in the twentieth century. To this should be added the school buildings by Leonard Stokes and the Modernist work of Francis Pollen embodied in the monastic library, refectory and guest quarters. Each phase is comprehensively described in a book characterised by exemplary scholarship to which leading architectural historians in the field have contributed.

Dom Aidan Bellenger OSB, the current Abbot who brought this book into being, writes of the models of monasticism embraced in the unfolding development of the churches and chapels that constitute St Gregory's from its foundation in Douai in 1605 to its arrival in England in 1794. Peter Howell, an Old Gregorian, includes generally the school and monastic buildings, while Amy Frost deals with Goodridge and the first buildings at Downside.

The mature Gothic Revival enters with Roderick O'Donnell's essay on the abbey church as first imagined and as first built, covering the period from Pugin, whose plans were never realised, to the mid-Victorian architects Dunn & Hansom, whose were, if only in part. Michael Hall deals in a masterly fashion with the surprising choice of Thomas Garner as the designer of the choir of the abbey church. Dom Aidan returns with a chapter on the work of Sir Ninian Comper and Frederick Walters, both of whom contributed significantly to the English character of the church. The building of the nave, tower and some school buildings designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott is described by Gavin Stamp and the work of Francis Pollen, another Old Gregorian, by Alan Powers.

Some visitors to Downside comment on how Anglican it looks. The furniture of the church embodies good taste as it used to be found in the Church of England. While the Abbey has enjoyed good relations with

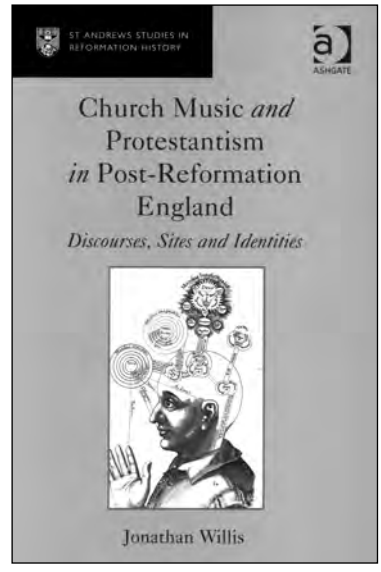
individual Anglicans – notably with Dean Armytage Robinson of Westminster Abbey and Wells Cathedral – what we find is not refined Anglicanism but English Catholicism. Ironically, this strand is attributable to the young Comper who was commissioned by Arthur Stapylton Barnes, a learned convert and man of taste, to design a Gothic altar for Dunn & Hansom's Lady Chapel in 1896 when such altars were rare. Comper noted that it was 'one of the first unchallenged acceptances of 'the English Altar' while Shane Leslie said of Garner's choir, it seemed 'as though Glastonbury were restored, and rebuilt for England'. The quality and finish of Comper's work established a standard for the future and as time passed every altar in the church was touched by his influence, directly and otherwise.

No other Gothic Revival church was more akin to the accretive growth of medieval Gothic than Downside. The work of so many hands in one building does not lie in jagged confusion but results in seamless harmony. Garner's choir resolved the chaos of Dunn & Hansom's partly finished transepts and a chevet of chapels and conditioned the design of Scott's nave. All that was done since was subordinate to it. Pevsner visited Downside in the mid-1950s and thought that 'with its commanding tower it is Pugin's dream of the future of English Catholicism at last come true'. Some would claim that the abbey church is the finest achievement of the Gothic Revival.

The essays that comprise this beautifully illustrated book invariably go beyond the immediate subjects and not only shed light on the history of Downside as a monastic community but on the wider work of the architects included. Much of this is new research on the final phase of the Gothic Revival and in that sense is a pioneer venture. It will do much to reinforce the old view that the best work of the revival was accomplished after the death of Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1878. The late Gothic Revival was the culmination of all that had preceded it and what flowed into Downside is emblematic of the phase as a whole.

Anthony Symondson SJ

Jonathan Willis, ***Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England: Discourses, Sites and Identities***, St Andrews Studies in Reformation History, Ashgate 2010, 294pp, £65.00 hdbk (or £58.50 from the publisher's website www.ashgate.com), ISBN 9781409 400714



This is a truly exciting, ground-breaking book that discusses church music in the post-Reformation period in the round. It explores classical and religious theories regarding music and its desired effects in religious settings, investigates practice in cathedrals and parishes, and finally considers how music might have helped to shape the Protestant realm. Jonathan Willis displays amazing erudition whilst also providing a compelling read. Like the music in question, the aim is for balance and harmony and this is surely achieved. Good music is found to be justified in the works of Plato and Aristotle, then in the writings of the Christian Fathers, and thankfully the support of Archbishops Parker and Whitgift in particular ensured that it survived in churches under Elizabeth. Hooker then provided his imprimatur at the end of the reign.

The section on sites is very enterprising, for here Willis employs evidence provided by churchwardens' accounts to argue that old theories about musical decline under Elizabeth cannot be sustained. References to organs, musical instruments and pricksong abound in the accounts, even if references to the latter tail off after 1580. And money was still being paid for choral singing. The vague nature of the Elizabethan injunctions of 1559, and likewise the *Book of Common Prayer,* afforded space for quite a variety of musical activities to continue in parish churches throughout the religious turmoil of the sixteenth century. Building on the work of Ian Payne and a large number of recent studies of cathedrals, Willis moves to integrate them into his general story, showing more interconnections between parish and cathedral experience than hitherto supposed, yet also separate trajectories. This is in keeping with recent work by Ian Atherton that stresses the complexity of cathedral life and warns against over-simplistic thinking about models.

The final section tackles how music contributed towards a broad religious education. Ballads and psalms alike played their part in pedagogy and propaganda; music was important in devotional practice and provided solace and comfort to all believers. Finally, Willis points to ways in which musical harmony assisted social harmony, a common feature of many communal activities and celebrations, even if it could also be used to express social discord as in the practice of 'rough music'. This is thus a fascinating book that sheds light on many aspects of life in early modern England, far more than one might suppose from the title.

Andrew Foster, University of Kent

Other publications received

Brian L. Harris, ***Harris's Guide to Churches and Cathedrals***, Ebury Press, 2006, 482 pp., over 200 col. and b&w pls, £25.00 hdbk, ISBN 0091912512

This encyclopaedic volume is the product of 40 years of diligent research and church visiting. Over 500 buildings are included with locations arranged alphabetically. Each church or cathedral is accompanied by a short list of key features for the visitor to observe so that nothing of importance is missed. In addition, there are many topic boxes dealing with, for instance, lead fonts, bells and cresset stones. This is an attractively produced book and a useful companion for the church enthusiast.

Caroline Shaw, ***Our Lady and St Alphege, Bath***. St Alphege, 2012, 120 pp., 200 col. pls, £9.99 pbk, ISBN 978 0 957160 0 8. For copies telephone 01225 424894.

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott described the Catholic church of Our Lady and St Alphege as one of his favourite works, and it is not hard to see why. This small Romanesque building is a notable example of Scott's versatility and attention to detail: he designed everything from the roof beams to the entrance doors, and from the patterned flooring to the decorative light fittings. The genius of Scott's scheme gives the church a wonderful completeness and harmony. This new history of St Alphege's

tells the story of how a suburb of Bath, built largely for railway and factory workers in the late nineteenth century, came to have a Catholic church built by one of the greatest architects of the twentieth century. It draws upon previously unpublished documents, most notably Scott's correspondence and that of the Benedictines of Downside who commissioned the building. The book contains numerous illustrations, including many of Scott's plans and drawings dating from the church's inception in 1927 to its completion in 1956.

Stephen Savage, ***The Church of The Holy Spirit, Beeston Hill, Leeds***. Anglo-Catholic History Society, 2012, 78 pp., many col. pls., £7.50 pbk. Available from www.achs.org.uk

This is the latest publication from Stephen Savage, well known for his research on High Church worship in nineteenth and twentieth century Leeds. In it, the origins, clergy, worship, community and architecture of this recently closed church are carefully considered. This fine building, begun in 1903 to a design by Prothero and Phillott of Cheltenham, still contains woodwork of the first quality and its future, along with that of the building, is a matter of concern. The Church of the Holy Spirit is just one of so many churches that were established with such high expectations, but which are now deemed to have no viable future; the book, however, certainly has a future as a valuable record of parish life.

John Kinross, ***Houses with Private Chapels in the Heart of England***. Fineleaf, 2012, 112 pp., many b&w pls., £9.95 pbk, ISBN 978 1 907741 08 1

In this book, the author shares his enthusiasm for the region's finest private chapels – grand and simple alike. From the sumptuous interiors of Madresfield and Great Witney to the isolated chapels at Rotherwas and Heath, a total of 34 chapels are described in the this well illustrated book, which includes a wide range of photographs and pen and ink drawings.

Malcolm Parsons (ed.), ***The Pugin Windows of Bolton Priory***. Pitkin Guides 2009, 22pp., 38 col. pls., £3.95 pbk, ISBN 978 1 84165 288 7

The Priory Church of Bolton Abbey in Yorkshire contains a set of six stained glass windows depicting 36 scenes from the life of Christ. Pugin was paid £100 for his work and windows were installed in 1853, a gift from the 6th Duke of Devonshire, the abbey's patron. The value of the booklet comes from the 38 photographs, taken and reproduced to the highest standards, each accompanied by a brief account of the subject with biblical references. There is also a short essay on Pugin's working methods and his links to the Hardman workshop.

Roy Tricker, ***The Church of Saint Laurence in the City of Norwich***, privately printed, 2010, 44 pp., 23 b&w pls, £7.00, ISBN 978 0 9536035 1 0. Copies from the author at 329, Felixtowe Road, Ipswich 1P3 9BU

St Laurence is one of the few Norwich churches to have been the subject of a thorough monograph. This glorious fifteenth-century church, declared redundant by the 1969 Brook Commission, is now in the care of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust. The booklet gives details of the building, worship, furniture and its nineteenth and twentieth-century clergy.

Nigel Walter, ***The gate of heaven: how church buildings speak of God***. Grove Books, 28pp., £3.95 pbk, ISBN 978 1 85174 802 0

The author discusses how and of what church buildings speak – not just to those who see themselves as part of the worshipping community, but to a wider audience. From this he draws out lessons for the future, grounding the whole discussion in short case studies. This is a short but rich book.

Tim Rushton, ***Chapels***. Y Lolfa in collaboration with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, 2012, no pagination but approx 140pp., approx 120 full page col. pls., £ 14.95, ISBN 978 1 84771 465 7

This is a book of colour photographs of Welsh chapels. There is a short introduction, but the bulk of the book consists of full page photographs, one per chapel, all taken from the outside, often face on. Sometimes the urban or rural context is shown, but for the most part these are photographs of the front facade of each building, with the building identified but no descriptive text. The reader soon realises that chapels on facing pages have been carefully selected to draw the attention to interesting points of similarity.

The Ecclesiological Society

The Ecclesiological Society is for all those who love churches, and are interested in their fabric, furnishings and use. The Society was founded in 1879, as a successor to the Cambridge Camden Society of 1839. It has a lively programme, including various lectures, an annual conference, and visits to churches at a range of locations in the UK. Members receive the Society's periodical, *Ecclesiology Today*, twice a year.

Membership is open to all. For further details, see the Society's website at www.ecclsoc.org, or write to the Hon. Membership Secretary at the address given overleaf.

Contributions to *Ecclesiology Today*

The Editor is always pleased to receive articles for consideration for publication in *Ecclesiology Today*, or suggestions for proposed contributions, whether fully worked out or at an early stage in development. The Society wishes to encourage less-experienced authors, and the Editor is happy to provide informal support and guidance to those in this position.

In furtherance of the Society's aims, articles should promote 'the study of the arts, architecture and liturgy of the Christian Church'. They may be historical in nature, or reflect contemporary matters. They need not be restricted in time, place or denomination, and although in practice a significant number deal with Church of England churches, in recent years a wider range of material has been covered, a trend which it is wished to encourage. Articles dealing with individual buildings are welcome, although the Editor will expect the discussion to highlight matters of wider significance. The Society's interests cover a very wide field, and it is therefore important that articles should be written in a way which can be understood by anyone with a general interest in churches.

Most articles are objective and factual, but there is the opportunity for well-argued personal views on matters of general interest to be put forward in the occasional 'Viewpoint' series.

Prospective authors are invited to communicate with the Editor at the earliest possible stage. There is no formal process of refereeing, but articles will usually be sent to one or more readers for an independent opinion before acceptance for publication, and eventual publication may be dependent upon the author making such modifications as the Editor, in consultation with the readers, may recommend.

Proposed contributions should preferably be submitted by email. They should be prepared in accordance with the style guide, available on the Society's website or by application to the Editor. Authors are reminded that they are responsible for any fees and permissions required for the reproduction of illustrations.

Books for review should be sent to the Reviews Editor. Material for *Church Crawler* should be sent to the News Editor.

The Ecclesiological Society

Correspondence

Where an address is not given, members of Council can be reached at the Society's administrative address, PO Box 287, New Malden, KT3 4YT, or email admin@ecclsoc.org

Ecclesiology Today	Trevor Cooper
Books for review	Christopher Webster
Church Crawler	Phil Draper
Membership	Valerie Hitchman
Subscriptions	Valerie Hitchman
Conference	Valerie Hitchman
Visits	Ruth Watkinson
All other matters	Trevor Cooper

Charity registration

The Society is a registered charity, number 210501. Its registered address, which should *not* be used for general correspondence, is c/o the Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0HS

Membership subscriptions

Life Member (UK only)	£300.00
Annual Member (UK)	£17.50
Concessionary rate (UK)	£14.00
Extra family member at same address	£3.50

Overseas membership: please enquire

Society website: www.ecclsoc.org

The front and back covers illustrate an article exploring the colouring of churches in the Victorian period. On the front cover is a photograph by James Bettley of the roof of the nave of St Mary's, Huntingfield, Suffolk, painted by Mildred Holland, wife of the rector, in 1863–6, with the advice of E. L. Blackburne. She had already painted the chancel roof, 1859–60. The roof was cleaned and conserved in 2005–6 by Tom Organ of the Wall Paintings Workshop, Faversham, Kent. Above is an illustration from E.Y. Cox, *The Art of Garnishing Churches at Christmas and Other Festivals*, second edition (1869).

Published by
THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL SOCIETY
ISSN: 1460-4213