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The illustration on the cover is of the Protestant Cemetery, Rome.

Chairman's Letter

THIS HAS BEEN A COMPLICATED FEW MONTHS, during which we have mailed four items – both this and the January edition of *Ecclesiology Today*, our anniversary present of *Temples worthy of His presence*, and the booklet entitled *How do we keep our Parish Churches?* Everyone who is currently a member should have received all of these: but it is easy to get in a muddle, with joiners, leavers, re-joiners with late subscriptions (usually accompanied by letters of apology – thank you), and changes of address.

With the publication a year or two back of our books on Southwark churches and Albi Cathedral, it has been a rich haul. And looking forward, we are hoping for one more substantial publication, probably within the next twelve months.

One member expressed some astonishment at what we managed to produce for the subscription. I hope we do provide value for money. But I need to disillusion anyone who thinks that this level of largesse is the norm. To put it bluntly, we have been playing catch-up. In addition, the Southwark book was supported by a legacy left to us many years ago by R Harrison, for publications on London churches; and *Temples* was subsidised by a more recent legacy, from F R Goodger.

The norm is for three issues of *Ecclesiology Today* per year, the cost of which is approximately met by subscriptions, and, from time to time, a one-off publication, normally a booklet , typically paid for from our investment income or dedicated funds. The new format of *Ecclesiology Today* seemed to win general approval, but is more expensive to produce, so we may find ourselves producing fewer one-off publications in future. We will see.

Incidentally, the Society is always grateful to receive legacies. We are by no means needy. But capital gifts do allow us to undertake special projects, some of them outside the routine of our activities. As well as supporting the issue of *Temples*, the Goodger Fund helped finance the printing of a book on the stained glass of Frederick Preedy, underwrote the risk of production of the Society's tie (sales of which have been good, allowing the Fund to be paid back), and was used for the purchase of a part set of *The Ecclesiologist* for use by the Editor of *Ecclesiology Today*.

I and the other members of Council look forward to meeting you at our forthcoming events.

Trevor Cooper, Chairman of Council
April 2004

The Protestants in Rome

John Elliott

ROME, AND IN FACT MUCH OF ITALY, has always been attractive to those wishing to escape the cold and damp of northern Europe. Strangely it has also been popular with Americans.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was not just the weather of Rome that called but, in an age which looked to the

John Elliott teaches at the University of Reading, edits Ecclesiology Today *and is a director of Spire Books Ltd.*

St Paul Within the Walls, western exterior.

past for its inspiration, the Roman ruins were an almost overpowering fascination for those who could afford to travel that far. More practically the eternal city could also provide anonymity for illicit unions that would have spelt ruination at home.

However, many of the visitors were Protestants rather than Roman Catholics and when in Rome they certainly did not want to do what the Romans did. More problematically if illness struck them down on their travels they could not be buried in the graveyards under Roman Catholic control.

Some other arrangements were needed and today the results provide two wonderful interludes between the mandatory tourist visits to the Roman ruins and the Vatican.

Perhaps the most spectacular is St Paul's Within the Walls, the American Episcopal church which was designed by G.E.Street and built on the Via Nazionale, close to the Piazza della Repubblica and the Opera house. You won't find it listed in many of the tourist guides but it is well worth the trouble involved in locating it.

In 1859, Alonzo Potter, the Bishop of Pennsylvania, celebrated the Eucharist in a private house on Trinità dei Monti. This was the first time that such a "Protestant" service had been held in the Rome. A series of temporary homes were then used to provide services, until in 1866, an old granary outside the Porta del Popolo was renovated as a more permanent home which would hold 500.

In 1869 a new constitution gave Rome and its citizens a freedom of worship and non-Roman Catholic churches were permitted to be built within the walls of the city.

Just a few years later, in 1872, a plot of land was bought for $18,500. In November 1872 the foundations were started, and on the feast of St. Paul, 25th January 1873, the cornerstone was laid, *The Churchman* of 27 January 1873 reporting:

> Several of the Roman papers of yesterday or today give more or less detailed accounts of an event which must have awakened unwonted reflections in the mind of many a thoughtful Roman; the first stone has been freely, formally, and openly laid, of a church which is designed to rise toward heaven, a solemn witness, in this papal city, of a faith which is Catholic without being papal, and Protestant without ceasing to be

Above: stained glass by Clayton & Bell.
Below: Mosaics by Burne-Jones.

> Catholic. If the completed church arrests the attention of Italians in any proportion to the effect of this laying of its cornerstone, the Festival of St Paul, 1873, will be an epoch, not merely as a friend said to me, in the history of our Church, but in that of the Church of Italy as well.
>
> [*Fifty Years of St. Paul's American Church, Rome: some historical notes and descriptions by the Rector* (Walter Lowrie, Rome 1926)]

Street provided the design, writing:

> We are going to start for Rome tomorrow night. I am going to look at a church I have just built for the English at Geneva, and then to look at sites for two churches in Rome - one for the English, the other for the Yankee Episcopalians. By very odd coincidence they both came to me without knowing the other's intentions.
> (Letter from Street to F. G. Stephens, 25 February 1872).

The result is spectacular. Polychrome brick from Siena alternating with uneven courses of travertine from Tivoli and in a style that in London might be called Ruskinian Gothic. The western end and campanile can be seen from half a mile away, standing proud as a fusion of All Saints, Boyne Hill in Maidenhead; St James the Less, Pimlico and the Carey Street front of the Law Courts in the Strand. Wonderfully different from everything around it and so magnificently English in a foreign sort of way!

The inside is no less spectacular. There are seven bays, two aisles, a nave and elevated chancel, with extensive mosaics by Burne-Jones and some some super stained glass by Clayton & Bell. This should be a must for every visitor to Rome.

While the provision of a purpose-built place of worship had to wait until 1872, the "Protestants" of Rome made provision for those who died in the city as early as 1738 when a 25 year-old Oxford graduate named Langton was buried in land adjacent to the Cestius Pyramid.

The pyramid is a striking local landmark just off the via Aventino along which travellers from the Flumicino airport will pass on their way into the city. Supposedly built in the first century BC, the pyramid provides a dramatic beacon at one end of what must be one of the best preserved eighteenth and nineteenth-century graveyards anywhere in the world.

If you had to be buried this was the place to be, row upon row of tombs recording the tourist life of Rome while also being a *Who's Who* of north European and American society. This is the last resting place of Shelley (1792-1822), Keats (1795-1821) and August Goethe (1789-1830). Of Rosa Bathhurst (-1824), who drowned in the Tiber aged 16; Constance Fenimore Woolson (1845-89), American poet and writer; William Harding of Scarborough (-1821), an English gentleman; August Riedel (1799-1883), a German painter from Bayreuth; and William Shelley (1816-19), the son of Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft.

Another must on the itinerary.

[The American Episcopal Church of St Paul's Within the Walls is located at 58 Via Napoli adjacent to the Via Nazionale and close to the Repubblica Metro station (Tel: +39 06 4883339). It is open every day except Saturday. Their web site is at http://www.stpaulsrome.it/ There is an entrance to the Protestant Cemetery (Tel: +39 065741900) on the via Caio Cestio. It is close to Piramide Metro and Tram stations and is open every morning except Mondays. www.protestantcemetery.it]

Two Eastern-Christian Churches in London

Niall Finneran

Dr Niall Finneran teaches in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Southampton

OF THE SO-CALLED MONOPHYSITE CHURCH congregations currently active in London, two of the largest communities are represented by the Egyptian Copts and the Armenians. This contribution introduces two of the most important of their church buildings in our Capital, and finally considers how the physical nature and use of space of each building reflects the ritual and liturgical demands of each church, as well as the broader socio-economic concerns and identities of the eastern Christian diaspora communities who worship in them.

St Sarkis Armenian Church (Iverna Gardens, Kensington, London W8)

The Armenian nation is the oldest continually Christian country in the world, and although the history of the Armenian peoples is linked indelibly to the notion of a global diaspora set against the historical background of continual persecution, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted finally in the recreation of an independent Armenian homeland in the mountainous Caucasus region, and the reassertion of a proud sense of nationhood linked to a very distinct form of Christian belief of high antiquity and considerable liturgical and ecclesiastical artistic beauty. It is not known when the first Christian Armenians came to this country; undoubtedly many contacts were made via Byzantium and eastern Mediterranean trade in the late first millennium AD, and certainly during the first crusade in the late eleventh century; what is clear is that the anti-Chalcedonian views of the Armenians did not in any way preclude their acceptance into western Christian society. In 1863 an Armenian chapel in Romford Street, Manchester is reported, and in 1870, in London, the first Armenian church of the Holy Trinity (Kensington) was constructed; we certainly know from census records that by 1923 there were 500 Armenians in London. With such a growing congregation it was clear that a new and larger place of worship would need to be found, and in 1922 Calouste Gulbenkian -- the famous Armenian oil millionaire -- stepped in with a donation of £15000 to help construct a church to be dedicated to the memory of his parents.

The church of St Sarkis presents an odd contrast against the Victorian surrounds of Iverna Gardens; designed by the

Fig 1: External view of the newly-cleaned western frontage of the Armenian Church of St Sarkis, Iverna Gardens, London. The renovation works have been recently completed at the time of writing (January 2004).

architectural partnership of Mewès and Davis, it represents to all intents a piece of classical Armenian ecclesiastical architecture (Fig 1). The fundamental design recalls the bell tower of the monastery at Haghbad in Armenia; the ground-plan is in the standard shape of a Greek cross, with a seven-sided belfry in the centre, and the whole edifice is faced with Portland stone and has recently been cleaned and restored. The interior is also richly adorned; a baldacchino surmounts an alabaster altar inlaid with marble, onyx and lapis lazuli, and the seven-sided electrolier lamp is particularly ornate.

St Sarkis represents the essence of the individuality of Armenian ecclesiastical architecture. The geographical position of Armenia, on the fringes of the old Byzantine sphere of influence, has shaped this peculiar form of architecture. Although initially growing from simple basilican forms, eastern influences -- particularly from Persia -- have combined to form a very distinctive type of church building, seen to great effect here. Perhaps the most important Armenian contribution to western ecclesiastical architecture is the squinch/pendentive, a feature borrowed perhaps from Sassanid Persia, and representing a solution to the problem of placing a circular central dome -- a key feature of the Armenian church -- onto essentially a square sub-structure. The architectural focus is upon the centralised, square,

shape rather than on the longitudinal axis as is seen in 'western' church building down the centuries, essentially an inheritance of Roman civic architecture upon which the basilican form was based. As with other eastern churches, including the Greek and Russian Orthodox churches, rich interior paintings and decoration play their part in actively reflecting the cycle of the liturgy and the ritual year itself. St Sarkis embodies an ideal of the Armenian fashion of church building, and at the same time reflects the deep sense of national pride felt by the Capital's Armenian diaspora community, as well as contributing greatly to the rich heritage of London's church architecture.

St Mark's Coptic Cathedral (Allen Street, Kensington, London W8)

Situated just around the corner from St Sarkis, this church – one of the largest European Coptic churches and certainly the first dedicated Coptic church of its kind in Europe – is the centre of worship for the Capital's large Egyptian Christian community, yet as an architectural statement (externally at least) it differs considerably from the overtly Armenian version nearby. It is not known exactly when the first Egyptian Christians arrived in London *en masse*, but it is clear that after the Second World War there were sufficient numbers to warrant their own place of worship. From 1971, services were held in St Andrew's Church in Holborn, but it soon became clear that dedicated premises were required, and moves were made to acquire a church in London for the sole use of the Coptic community.

In 1976 the former Scottish Presbyterian church in Allen Street was purchased by the community with a view to conversion into a cathedral dedicated to St Mark, who is credited with introducing Christianity into Egypt. The external contrast with the purpose-built Armenian church could not be greater; this church is a solid and very utilitarian-looking building, no doubt betraying its origins as a place of worship for the Capital's Scottish Protestant community. Indeed, the only outward sign that this church building is something out of the ordinary is the sign outside, proclaiming, in both English and Coptic, that this is the headquarters of the Coptic Patriarchate of London (Fig 2). Built originally in 1863, and designed by the architect J. McCulloch, the building underwent alteration on two occasions in the late 19th century, with firstly the addition of a chancel arch and galleries, and latterly with the opening of the nave roof. These alterations would, unwittingly, prove ideal for the future creation of a Coptic ritual space albeit in a westernised ecclesiastical architectural setting.

Fig 2: The sign on the exterior of St Mark's Coptic Cathedral, Allen St, London. Note the bilingual sign in English and the ancient liturgical language Coptic.

The church was consecrated amid scenes of great celebration in the traditional Coptic manner by Pope Shenouda 3rd on the 27th January 1979 -- the Coptic ceremony of church dedication enacted here consisted of the placing of seven new jars in front of the iconostasis (altar screen) each containing: jasmine, basil, lemon, citron, shaddock, vine leaves and a piece of the tree of Mary. Although the exterior of the church does not betray an overt statement of Coptic ownership, the interior has been reshaped to accord to notions of Coptic ritual space. Of special note are the magnificent internal decorations – especially the glass (Fig 3) -- by the famed Egyptian Christian artist Issac Fanous Youssef, and the richly-decorated iconostasis, replete with colourful icons depicting scenes from the Holy Family's sojourn in Egypt as well as a cast of martyrs and biblical personalities. The iconography within the church refers back to the content of the ritual being played out within the space, and also reinforces the historical Coptic Christian identity through reference to saints and martyrs. The iconostasis separates the sacred and secular zones within the church; it is clear that in many cases the internal design of the Coptic church reflects distant pagan, pharaonic religious roots; some idiosyncrasies, unique to the Coptic ritual cycle and use of space are visible here. The usual gendered divisions are noted -- males to the left, females to the right -- and the distancing of the altar from the main nave, an emphasis here on the separation of transverse space, is achieved as in other Coptic churches elsewhere by the use of the iconostasis or heikal screen, a division further emphasised by retention of the original chancel arch. The original galleries may also be used to emphasise the division of gendered space on the longitudinal axis.

Fig 3: Stained glass, Egyptian style. A breathtaking and colourful window high on the western transept wall. The pose of the Blessed Virgin Mary with Jesus in her arm is especially interesting and a key example of iconographic symbolism. This pose owes more to the ancient Egyptian way of depicting Horus and Isis rather than the general scheme used elsewhere.

The two churches, whilst physically almost adjacent, and representing Christian communities of high antiquity and similar liturgical outlook, embody a number of different contrasts. Both churches are witness to a rich heritage of cultural syncretism within the religions they represent, albeit in differing ways. Outwardly the architecture of St Sarkis speaks of an amalgam of Christian and non-Christian eastern architectural forms; more nebulously it is the internal use and differentiation of liturgical and secular space in St Mark's that recalls the pharaonic temple heritage of the Coptic church. To me, the design of St Sarkis, so faithful to the Armenian archetype of a church building, makes a number of clear and unambiguous statements about the community who worship there. The decision to construct a church anew reflected a degree of economic wealth within the Armenian community of London as well as a good deal of overt ambition; the ability to conceive and construct such a building is

indicative of the recognition, post-World War One, of the recent sufferings of the Armenian peoples at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, and also, through this recognition, places their cultural achievement into a westernised rather than oriental culture-historical framework. The church makes a nationalistic statement, and serves as a totem and focus for a historically highly dispersed diaspora.

St Mark's makes no overt nationalistic statement in its outward appearance. The fact that the London Coptic community did not construct a church along the lines of an Egyptian Coptic church reflects a different communal history and – initially at least – a very different set of socio-economic circumstances within the diaspora community. Whilst being unable to reproduce externally in West London the facets of a Coptic church, new solutions have been attempted. What the Copts have been able to do successfully is reflect their traditional use of sacred space in a western Christian church building; they have spatially recast the pre-existing building to great effect to reflect liturgical concerns. This reuse of a western Christian church is not confined to London's Coptic community; a similar dilemma was faced by the Capital's Ethiopian community when they converted a Victorian Anglican church in Down Street Mayfair; here the western Christian emphasis on longitudinal ritual space was remodelled to admit the Ethiopian emphasis on ritual circularity. The majority of Ethiopian churches are based upon a concentric spatial design, emphasising gendered zones and differing grades of sacred space culminating in the central holy of holies where the Tabot – or Ark – is kept. Here – as with St Mark's – a new type of spatial use was negotiated within the confines of a pre-existing ecclesiastical building.

Aside from the different meanings embodied in the architecture and the use of space within each building, the churches themselves merit a visit for their rich and unusual decorative splendour and embellishments within. Each church bears witness to the rich heritage and the sheer tenacity of Christian communities who, at many times in their history, have been the subject of attack and persecution in their homelands and beyond. These buildings, testament to these great Christian survivors, also provide a rich addition to London's ecclesiastical architectural heritage as well as emphasising the cosmopolitan and dynamic nature of Christian congregations in contemporary multi-cultural London.

Notes

1 These are Churches that broke away from the rest of Christendom at the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451 over the debate of the nature of Christ's being. The

"Monophysites" (an inaccurate appellation; the term Meaphysite is now more commonly used, although itself having improper connotations) held that Christ embodied the human and divine natures in one body. These churches include: the Egyptian Copts, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church (formerly known as Jacobites), The Armenian Apostolic Church, and the Malankara Orthodox Churches (Syrian rite) of Kerala, southern India who trace the roots of their faith to a mission in the region by St. Thomas. For a full discussion of the history of these churches see Aziz Atiya (1980 reprint) *A History of Eastern Christianity* (Milwood, New York: Kraus); also useful are: J. Binns (2002) *An Introduction to the Christian Orthodox Churches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) and D. Winkler and K. Augustin (1999) *Die Ostkircher: Ein Leitfaden* (Graz: Schneider). Hypothetically, given their relative theological isolation and proud independence, it is notionally possible that the ecclesiastical art and architecture of these communities is much more overtly nationalistic in character, and perhaps more prone to borrowings of pre-Christian motifs. I would argue that it is in these churches that we see more fundamental forms of cultural syncretism, something that is often reflected in liturgy.

2 King Trdat 3rd's conversion in around AD 301 was marked by the mass conversion of pagan temples into churches (Atiya 1980: 317); a similar theme is noted in Western Europe and in Egypt (next section). This accounts for the architectural idiosyncrasies of Armenian ecclesiastical architecture which betrays many syncretic borrowings from the non-Christian east, especially Sassanid Persia.

3 K. Taverdi (1988-89) *A History of Armenians in Britai*n (unpublished ms.), published on web-site http://www. Caia.org.uk/content/armeniansinbritain.

Dom Paul Bellot OSB, Twentieth Century Monk Architect and Quarr Abbey, Isle of Wight

Stewart Abbott

Stewart Abbott is a PhD student at Southampton University researching residential buildings on the Isle of Wight.

QUARR ABBEY ON THE NORTH-EAST COAST OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT, has been a home to the Benedictine Community of St Pierre de Solesmes since they started construction of the new Abbey on this site in 1907. The reason for their residence on the Island[1] was political; they were forced into exile from France by the anti-clerical laws of 1901 and found temporary accommodation in the vacant Appuldurcombe House. Appuldurcombe,[2] a mostly eighteenth-century mansion in the centre of a large estate provided the seclusion needed for the monastic life if not the ideal building layout. A temporary prefabricated Iron Chapel was constructed to provide a suitable space for worship.

The lease on Appuldurcombe was short and the monks, realising that a return to France in the foreseeable future would not be possible, began a search for another less temporary home in exile. A suitable Island location on the north coast was found at Quarr. It had advantages of being available for immediate

Aerial view of Quarr Abbey. Photograph courtesy of the Abbot, Quarr Abbey

Entrance to the church. Photograph courtesy of the Abbot, Quarr Abbey

habitation on a long lease at an affordable rent with the possibility of later purchase.

The available accommodation at Quarr was a cottage in the grounds of the ruins of the pre-Reformation Cistercian Quarr Abbey.[3] It is tempting to think of the choice of site as providential, a re-use of a site of memory, but it can also be viewed as one of practicality with a significant coincidence in the re-use of a historic monastic site for the Community. The original Abbey, in ruins since the Reformation, dated back to 1132 and was located a couple of hundred yards away from the cottage that was to be the home to the community and site of the new Abbey built to the designs of Paul Bellot who had trained as an architect before joining the Order. The temporary Chapel at Appuldurcombe was moved to Quarr in 1907.

The new buildings, intended as home to the Community during its exile from France, were started in 1907 and by 1908 all but the church and guest house were ready for occupation. It was never the intention of the monks to remain on the Island; the eventual aim of the community was to return to Solesmes in France when the political conditions were favourable.

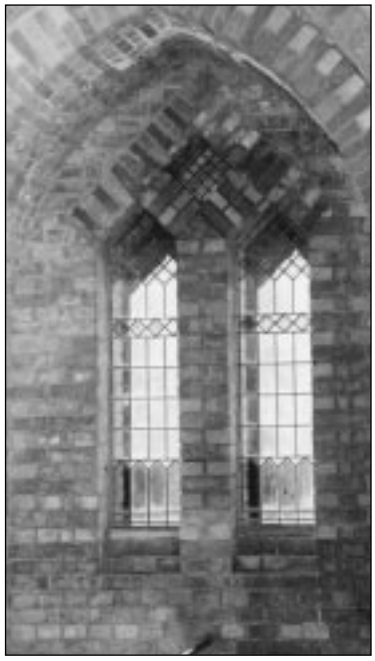
Nikolas Pevsner, whilst compiling the *Buildings of England* volume for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, recorded Quarr Abbey. In an article published in 1967 Pevsner remarked on the nature of the buildings at Quarr that "One can still discover

'Pioneers' buildings in England; i.e. buildings of about 1900 looking forwards, not backwards."[4] Since that time nothing more significant appears to have been published in Britain on the work of Bellot until 1996 when Peter Willis' *Dom Paul Bellot: Architect and Monk* was published in Newcastle upon Tyne. In the same year, Maurice Culot and Martin Mead's book *Dom Paul Bellot, Moine-Architecte 1870-1944* appeared, written in French and published in Paris.[5] These publications were followed in the same year with a lecture on Bellot's work given as part of a Victorian Society series and a review of Culot and Meade's book appeared in The Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain Newsletter.[6]

Pevsner's enthusiasm expressed in his 1967 article has not led to a wider knowledge of this impressive group of buildings, perhaps because the Abbey complex represents Bellot's sole group of buildings in this country, or rather on the Island. Willis' book deals with Bellot's writing about architecture and Culot and Meade focus on his corpus of works with a mainly descriptive text. Essential as these works are, they do not specifically further our understanding of one of the most interesting aspects of the Abbey, namely Bellot's dual function as a member of the Community and architect of the twentieth century Quarr.[7] Our knowledge of the Abbey and its construction has not significantly developed since Pevsner's detailed 1967 article. The purpose of this paper is to promote a wider interest in and knowledge of the work of Bellot at Quarr and examine his dual role as monk and architect.[8]

Dom Paul Bellot OSB, was born in Paris in 1876, the son of a surveyor. From 1899-1901 he studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris afterwards joining the Benedictine community of Solesmes. The ethos of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts shared common ideas with the Benedictine order, notably that the past can teach much that is relevant for the present and that freedom of spirit must be restrained by discipline. Bellot became a postulant in October 1902 and was ordained priest in June 1911 at Quarr which was still under construction.

The first key to our understanding of Bellot as an architect is the combination of his secular training with that of his Christian faith and devotion to the Benedictine Order and the way in which this informs his work. It is this potent mix of secular intellectual training as an architect combined with devotion to the teachings of the Order that gives his work its significance and durability. Willis' book title describes Bellot as 'Architect and Monk'; from Bellot's writings this hierarchy, I propose, is better reversed: he could more properly be described as 'Monk and



Church porch detail showing use of coloured brick and glass. Photograph by the author.

Architect'. His chosen life was as a member of the Benedictine Order and he owed obedience to God and the Order. There had been nineteenth-century architects with strong religious faith, for example Augustus Pugin, who constructed monastic buildings as part of their activity, but Bellot designed no secular buildings and all his work was executed when he was a member of the Benedictine Community of St Pierre de Solesmes. He, as all members of the Order, used his skills to the Glory of God, a mediaeval concept that was a component of all pre-Reformation monastic building. This link with the past gives him a special position as monk architect in the first half of the twentieth century.

Bellot's writings come from published transcripts of lectures he gave in Canada in 1934 and formed the basis of Willis' book. Bellot stresses his links with tradition and the past in the context of his faith; this is perhaps the most important aspect of his motivation and inspiration but has received least comment in context with Quarr; he never wrote solely as an architect; his faith underlay his thinking and designs. We have to look more closely at his writings to understand this link between his faith, his duty to the Order and his practice as an architect.

Bellot expressed his mix of faith, tradition and innovation. He wrote

> It is as we study and meditate on the art past that we shall have the means to recreate the tradition of real beauty, and then, as St. Benedict, the Patriach of the monks of the West, said 'God will be glorified in all things'.[9]

The mix of tradition and the influence of God in his work is the second key to our understanding. In England our Arts and Crafts practitioners were meditating on the past but Bellot in his meditations was looking to new forms to use rather than developing or updating past forms. He was concerned with recreating "the tradition of real beauty" rather than re-using the recognised past forms of beauty; it appears that his created associations were not always visual recreations but new forms that would act as signifiers of beauty. In this country in the early years of the twentieth century the recognised forms for religious buildings remained gothic with a very few exceptions, notably Lethaby's church at Brockhampton which is generally described as 'Arts and Crafts'. Neither Gothic nor Arts and Crafts were part of Bellot's thinking and practice. Certainly there are gothic details to be found at Quarr but the overall impression is not of gothic, but rather of a new structural and decorative form in a building for an international community; after all gothic had been international at an earlier period.

How powerful was the influence of gothic in religious buildings in Britain in the early years of the twentieth century? Lethaby's church at Brockhampton was a vernacular inspiration but does not appear to have started a started a trend in building style. There had been no new monastic buildings in England between the Reformation and the mid nineteenth century when the two-fold results of the emancipation of the Catholic Community and the emergence of the Oxford Movement resulted in a rebirth of monastic buildings to house the returning (Catholic) Orders and newly founded (Anglo-Catholic) communities. These coincided with the secular revival of Gothic forms in buildings. But even this is not the complete answer;

The Sanctuary from the chancel. Photograph courtesy of the Abbot, Quarr Abbey

ruined monastic buildings had captured the imagination of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century intellectuals. The greatest of these ruins in England were in gothic form. The ruined abbeys rich in association and cultural memory, inspired writers and artists; the Picturesque fed on such objects which, if they did not exist, were constructed in situations that fitted the aesthetic requirements of Picturesque theoretical writings. The Gothic novel further loaded the image of the gothic ruin with a range of meanings and histories; the link between gothic architecture and monastic buildings was strengthened to such an extent that it became the accepted *myth* that such buildings had to be gothic to be real and at the same time signifiers of the past with all the associated resonances.[10] This was a very English way of viewing things; the associative distinction between real and imagined monastic buildings was still culturally unclear in England when Bellot was working on the designs for Quarr; he may not even have been aware of it.

The influence on Bellot of St Benedict, who wrote little on architecture as such, combined with the architectural training he received in Paris are now considered; the synthesis of these

Upper tower space above the Sanctuary to show the rib vaulting. Photograph courtesy of the Abbot, Quarr Abbey

influences help us to understand the monk architect dialogue that is a constant theme in Bellot's writings and work. He cites the influences of four main architectural theorists: Viollet-le-Duc, Desiderius Lenz, Odilo Wolff and Le Corbusier; however he more often quotes the religious and philosophical writings of St Thomas Aquinas as interpreted by Jacques Maritain (1882-1914). Maritain was a great influence on Bellot and visited Quarr in 1907 and 1914.[11] From St Thomas he takes an understanding of order which was essential to beauty and that "art which proceeds from our innermost spirits becomes vital and creative."[12] From Odilo Wolff he takes the theory, published in Vienna in 1912, of the predominance of the hexagon and the 60 degree triangle that governed all ancient art. The 60 degree triangle can be seen to have mystical and religious significance. Willis says "There is little doubt that Bellot was committed practically to the use of the golden section as well as the hexagon: indeed, he had a set-square made which would provide him with the proportions of the golden section." [13] Bellot's overall practicality is expressed in his directive that "the architect must not superimpose the laws of the beautiful upon the laws of the useful, but must know how to derive beauty from the laws of the useful."[14]

With these influences in mind Bellot's writings and practice seem understandable from his position as monk architect. He shows the strong theological grounding and belief that underpins his work as architect in the following statement.

> That is where your professional and personal lives, as intellectuals and Christians, can, as necessary, come together and unite. Your work will then rise out of your whole being, will come from all the values within you, and will have the fullness and the vigour necessary to be of real use to society. [15]

However we must not view Bellot as isolated from the practices of other architects; he understood the writings and work of Le Corbusier and identified in them the lack of humanity that was alien to his own views which were imbued with the spirit of St Benedict. He did not have the social agenda of Le Corbusier and many other architects of his time. His principles were based on Christian faith and tradition. He had an almost simplistic sense of 'taste'.

> Taste is the experience of beauty and goodness; and so in order to be a man of taste, it is essential to distinguish between good and evil, beauty and ugliness. Taste is moreover the respect for truth.[16]

The contrast and significance of light and dark in Bellot's designs at Quarr are very important; Bellot sums up his use of light, noting these signifiers and significances.

> Architecture should evoke joy through light, recollection through shadow, rest through silence; in this way it is truly human. It can achieve this aim with the interplay of volume, space and lines, which, as they throw light into the shadows and shadows onto the light, balance our perceptions as they extend them.[17]

A visit to the Church at Quarr, the only interior space easily accessible to visitors, shows this drama in practice whatever the time of day or external lighting conditions.

The third key to our understanding Bellot's work is the dynamic between his membership of the Community, his role of architect and the Community of monks. Bellot's designs for Quarr were subject to approval of the monks of the community in Chapter; decisions were group-based and inspired by prayer. However the preliminary sketches for Quarr that are available, his designs seem to have been implemented without major change.

To the building of Quarr, Bellot was asked to provide accommodation for 100 monks following the traditional plan of a Benedictine monastery. The monks did not physically build the monastery at Quarr but 300 skilled local builders were employed. These men were used to building local cottages and other small scale buildings found on the Island; the challenges of the large scale nature of the structure must have been immense. Funds for building were limited and the time scale for completion of such a large group of buildings was short.

The original Quarr had been built of local stone but this was now exhausted. Bellot's favoured material for construction of the new Abbey was brick of varied colours. He used bricks of warm colours, pink, light red, pale yellow and a few of rich red. He was not content to use local materials but imported bricks from Belgium. His choice may seem strange as local brick was readily available but he chose the hard bricks produced in Belgium for their superior strength and durability, another international dimension to the building. Today these bricks show very little sign of weathering although there have been some issues of subsidence. At a time when new materials such as steel were coming to be used in new building Bellot relied on the tradition of brick; the Abbey is a traditional brick building with magical use of different coloured bricks and mortar to create patterns and define the internal spaces.[18]

The plan of the church may appear unusual to the observer today. The nave is very small in area with a low ceiling and is followed by a large high chancel and ends in a sanctuary with a high tower open to the roof with elaborate internal brick rib supports and narrow lancet windows. The play of light and shade here above the altar gives a mystic quality to the atmosphere of

The Cloisters.
Photograph courtesy of the Abbot, Quarr Abbey

the sanctuary. It must be remembered that the function of the church at Quarr was monastic rather than parocial; the small nave and large chancel and sanctuary fitted the tradition and requirements of the Order where Gregorian Chant forms a central part of religious practice. The hierarchy of space is reinforced by the volume of each area, from the sanctuary with the largest volume to the nave with the smallest volume. There was no need here for gothic detailing to denote hierarchy, since manipulation of volume, space and light produce the effect; spirituality and aspiration are sensed without elaborate decoration.

This absence of decoration in the nave gives way to a greater use of coloured bricks in the construction as one approaches the sanctuary. The arches rise without a break for capitals, a Spanish convention. The whole structure seems to have been elevated to make sense of the Gregorian Chant that is a core component of daily worship by the monks. It is possible to see the high altar and the enactment of the liturgy from the nave.

In 1967 Pevsner commented on the visual inspiration of Quarr as being Spanish and Belgian rather than English. This has not been a central aspect of this study but needs to be briefly examined. From what has been written here so far we would not expect to observe English influence. After all this was a

Community of French monks, who spoke French. Bellot was a Frenchman building from his experience of upbringing, faith and training. He used step gables found in northern France and Belgium and recorded a debt to Spanish decorative forms, seen for example in the round tower of the Church. In a 1920s Ward Lock & Co. guide book to the Island, the Abbey Church is described as being in "the Byzantine style, strikingly magnificent."[19] Attempt to describe the visual aspects are fraught with problems; we can best describe it as an eclectic building with its visual base firmly outside England.

Many questions remain. Perhaps the most intriguing is why such a large Abbey was built when it was envisaged that the residence of the Community at Quarr would be temporary; indeed the monks returned to Solesmes in 1922. There is a look of permanence in the scale and quality of the structure; perhaps a resonance of the permanence and durability of the Benedictine Order itself. Although the Community returned to France, twenty-five monks were allowed to remain at Quarr which was given the status of Priory in 1925 and raised to the rank of an Abbey in 1937, gradually transforming itself into an English speaking community within the Constituent house of the Solesmes Congregation.

The Abbey is a mix of old form with its plan determined by function, clothed in a forward-looking structure that reflects the Benedictine aims. It is the dynamic between old and new; tradition and innovation that were made possible by Bellot's dual role of monk and architect. Pevsner's perceptive comment made in 1967 still holds: "historically Quarr belongs … among the most daring and successful church buildings of the early twentieth century in England." [20]

Acknowledgement and grateful thanks are due to Eva Pirie, for the French translations of the quoted sections of Bellot's writing, and Abbot Cuthbert Johnson OSB, for permission to reproduce some of the images of Quarr.

Notes

1 The Island will now be used to denote the Isle of Wight

2 The Island has a long and distinguished history as offering places of retreat and refuge from unfavourable situations elsewhere.

3 In Island usage the term cottage was used for a retreat from the mainland. In this instance it was a substantial Victorian structure with magnificent sea views.

4 Nikolas Pevsner, 'Quarr and Bellot', *Architectural Review*, April 1967, p 307

5 Peter Willis, *Dom Paul Bellot: Architect and Monk*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1996. Maurice Culot and Martin Meade (eds) *Dom Bellot, Moine-Architecte 1870-1944*, Paris, 1996

6 In October 2003 as part of the Douai Abbey (Berkshire) Pastoral Programme at a Study Day organised jointly with the School of Continuing Education, University of Reading the author gave a presentation on Bellot and Quarr Abbey. In 2004 the Twentieth Century Society conducted a study tour including some of his buildings in mainland Europe.

7 Willis deals with the dynamic of Bellot's work in general and gives his architectural work primacy over his position as monk.

8 Discussion of Bellot's other works in relation to Quarr would make an interesting study.

9 Willis p 2

10 Myth is used here in the sense and usage of Roland Barthes.

11 Willis p 14

12 Willis p 15

13 Willis p 21

14 Quoted on the website of Quarr Abbey.

15 Willis p 15

16 Willis p 16

17 Willis p 22

18 There is a parallel here with the work of Kramer and Klerk who were designing buildings in the Netherlands using coloured hard bricks arranged in elaborate patterns. Bellot is more likely to have known of their work than of work by architects in Britain.

19 *The Isle of Wight,* Ward Lock & Co, Twenty-second edition, p 36

20 *Pevsner* p 309

Henry Woodyer and Wokingham

Peter Blacklock

THERE'S A CURIOUS SYMMETRY about the Henry Woodyer churches of the Berkshire commuter town of Wokingham. Both were largely built in 1862-4 and both now have a huge problem with their bells – eight each - and tower.

Yet one, St Paul's, is among his best work – the sort of building that radiates quality, art and warmth. The other, All Saints, is lumpen, uninspiring and cold. They explain why Woodyer is in the premiership, but not at the top. He's like my local football team, Southampton, who don't do much then suddenly reach the heights by beating Manchester United or Arsenal

All Saints has had a £50,000 appeal for its bells for some time. Problems at St Paul's began on the night of January 28 this year when a snowstorm was heralded by a spectacular display of lightning. That evening, the rector, Fr Roger Stillman, and a parishioner were about to say evening prayers in the lady chapel when there was a mighty thud in the tower area, the lights went out for only a minute, and houses nearby shuddered. However, nothing seemed amiss, prayers were said, and the two went home in the snow.

The town suffered a 20-minute power cut, but the choir arrived in church to practise as usual and went home with all apparently still well. But at 11 p.m., Fr Stillman heard one of the bells ringing and, fearing intruders, ran from the rectory to the church porch in the tower. But by now the bell was silent and he still could find nothing amiss. Off he went to get ready for bed. But, 20 minutes later, a late-night patron of the kebab stall opposite the church saw flames shooting up through the roof of the tower "like a rocket" and called help. By the time the rector arrived, firemen were fighting the flames.

The bells' metal frame crashed through its floor, then the ringing chamber floor and hit the ground 80ft below, bringing the bells with it. Two survived intact but the rest were badly cracked and one even began to melt in the intense heat. The louvres turned the tower into a gigantic chimney with the flames fed by the ready supply of oxygen.

The thud had been a lightning strike. Somehow a spark seems to have jumped over the lightning conductor and started a fire in the tower timbers that smouldered then burst into life. No other part of the building was affected and Fr Stillman was able to say his usual mass in the chapel the next morning, when workmen

moved in to make the tower safe. He is confident his insurers will meet the £250,000 bill, possibly half of it for renewing the bells.

He is heartened by an outpouring of support from the town – the church has 220 people on its electoral role, about 100 of whom attend the main service each Sunday. But still it's a setback for a rector who has spent much of his ten years there trying to protect Woodyer's brilliance and minimise the damage done in the early 1960s - when else?

Then, a stone-coloured wash was splashed over the east wall behind the altar and the magnificent vestry door from the chancel, leaving only a beautiful gilded stone angel and crockets over the door as reminders of what we have lost. Happily, the

St Paul, Wokingham

original paint is now starting to show through the wash. Curiously, there appear to be two patterns, one on top of the other, below the wash on the east wall. This was discovered by an Australian, a friend of a friend, who was called in when the church bought a 1900 organ and wanted to paint the pipes in a Victorian manner.

Woodyer's Fr Willis organ was "crumbling", according to the rector, when it was removed in 1996 and replaced by a Henry Jones organ from St Thomas's, Shepherd's Bush, which was being used by the Orthodox Church. The organ, bought for £1, exactly fitted the space left by the Willis organ, but the cost of Victorian-style paintwork was prohibitive. That was where the friend of a friend came in. He was flown from Australia, given a work permit by the British Government, and did the work – all for less than the British quotations.

The two patterns could be explained by the fact that Woodyer had two goes at St Paul's. His client was John Walter, owner of *The Times* newspaper, with whom he had been at Eton; another example of Woodyer commissions obtained through his network of friends, relatives and friends of friends.

In his first campaign, Woodyer built the church for 600 people. His four-stage tower with its elegant broach spire 170ft high is built into the northwest corner. The nave is 50ft high.

In his second campaign, in 1873, the whole place was enlarged for another 240 people, giving it, as Pevsner says, the "prosperous High Victorian" look it retains despite the modernisers, who nevertheless spared the Heaton Butler and Bayne murals on the chancel arch and the west end's blank arcade.

Fr Stillman has rescued the rich Minton tiles of the sanctuary from under a carpet and his aim is to refurbish the rickety Hardman windows. The east window has already been renovated - it is a stunning Moses and Christ at the Transfiguration.

Meanwhile, Woodyer's work at All Saints, the town's original church, was intended as a restoration and enlargement of a decayed 14th-century building with Saxon origins. At St Paul's, he used squared blue rubble and Bath stone. At All Saints, the town's original church, he had to deal with a medieval lacklustre dark brown conglomerate. He took down the galleries, raised the floor to allow for heating pipes, rebuilt and lengthened the chancel, rebuilt the vestry and added a second vestry and south chancel aisle, replaced some of the chalk pillars, and rebuilt the nave aisles. The resulting restoration, according to Sir John Betjeman in *Murray's Berkshire Architectural Guide* (1949) is "heavy handed" and has "lost all its ancient texture." Remember, it was Sir John, with John Piper, who in this guide gave perhaps the first

public recognition of Woodyer's genius since the 19th century. Even the Hardman glass doesn't rescue the building and neither does Sir Arthur Blomfield's excellent woodcarving.

But it is doubtful if Woodyer would have cared what Sir John thought, still less what I think. He was an old Etonian gentleman to his fingertips with a country estate near Guildford, his own coach and no hesitation in putting down a patron he felt deserved it. One good opinion he may well have valued, however, was that of his old teacher, William Butterfield. And, by more curious symmetry, Butterfield was also building a church in Wokingham in 1864, St Sebastian's, finished the next year. We do not know Butterfield's opinion of his former pupil's work

I am grateful for extensive help from the book Henry Woodyer Gentleman Architect*, edited by John Elliott and John Pritchard (University of Reading). I also consulted* William Butterfield *by Paul Thompson (Routledge & Keegan Paul).*

From the Editor

In this volume of *Ecclesiology Today*, the second in its new form, we have a range of articles which deal with different aspects of ecclesiology, including several which have an emphasis on overseas church architecture. This is a trend which will hopefully be repeated on other occasions.

In a time of Empire the Church of England saw it as its duty to replicate the mother church wherever Britain held sway. The results were often interesting as architects conditioned to keeping the rain and cold out and the heat in were faced with the task of reversing these priorities in tropical zones and tested more severely than they ever were at home in areas which were subject to large snowfalls and prolonged winters.

These buildings provide striking evidence of the enormous reach of Victorian British culture.

John Elliott
May 2004

Two Late Nineteenth-century Roman Catholic Churches in Toronto by Joseph Connolly: St Mary's, Bathurst Street and St Paul's, Power Street

Malcolm Thurlby

Professor Malcolm Thurlby teaches art and architectural history at York University, Toronto.

ST MARY'S, BATHURST STREET AT ADELAIDE STREET, and St Paul's, Power Street at Queen Street East (Figs 1-4, 8 and 9), are two Roman Catholic churches of the late 1880's in Toronto, designed by the eminent, Irish-trained architect, Joseph Connolly (1840-1904).[1] The difference in style between the two buildings is striking, the one Gothic, the other variously described as Italian Romanesque,[2] Italian Renaissance and Roman Renaissance. Why are they so different? What is significant about the choice of style? The aims of the patrons, the training of the architect, ethnic and religious associations, and the historical situation in the late nineteenth-century Roman Catholic church in Toronto help us understand.

Born in Limerick, Ireland, and trained in the Dublin office of James Joseph McCarthy (1817-81), Connolly advanced to become McCarthy's chief assistant in the late 1860s.[3] He subsequently made a study tour in Europe and in 1871 he was in practice for himself in Dublin but no records survive of any commissions.[4] By 13 August 1873 he had moved to Toronto where he entered into partnership with the engineer, surveyor, architect Silas James, an association that was dissolved by 23 April 1877, after which Connolly practised alone.[5] In all he was responsible for designing or remodelling twenty-eight Roman Catholic churches and chapels in the Gothic style in the province, plus the Roman Catholic cathedral in Sault-Sainte-Marie, Michigan (1881), and James Street Baptist church in Hamilton (1879). Moreover, his churches of Holy Cross at Kemptville (1887-89),[6] St John the Evangelist at Gananoque (1891),[7] and St Dismas at Portsmouth (1894-94),[8] were inspired by the round-arched Hiberno-Romanesque style introduced by Augustus Welby Pugin at St Michael's, Gorey (Co. Wexford) (1838-39).[9] This style was also adopted by J.J. McCarthy in St Laurence at Ballitore (Co. Kildare) (1860) and elsewhere, and enjoyed considerable popularity in late nineteenth-century Ireland.[10] Connolly also completed many other commissions for the Roman Catholics in Ontario, including convents, schools, orphanages and rectories, and two classicizing churches including St Paul's, Toronto. His last commission was in 1897 and he died of bronchial asthma in 1904.

Connolly has been designated the 'Irish-Canadian Pugin',[11] a label that at once reflects his association with J.J. McCarthy, the 'Irish Pugin', and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-52), the great champion of Pointed or Christian architecture.[12] Two of McCarthy's early churches, St Kevin at Glendalough (Co. Wicklow) (1846-49), and St Alphonsus Liguori, Kilskyre (Co. Meath) (1847-54), received the rare distinction of a positive review in *The Ecclesiologist*, not least because they 'imitate ancient models'.[13] McCarthy soon assimilated the rudiments of Irish medieval Gothic design and, in so doing, began to interpret, rather than simply imitate, his models. This is well illustrated in his 1853 design for St Patrick's, St John's, Newfoundland, in which he demonstrated both a command of Irish medieval sources and a thorough knowledge of A.W. Pugin's Irish churches.[14] By the

Fig. 1. Toronto, St Mary, Bathurst Street, exterior from W (E), Joseph Connolly (1884).

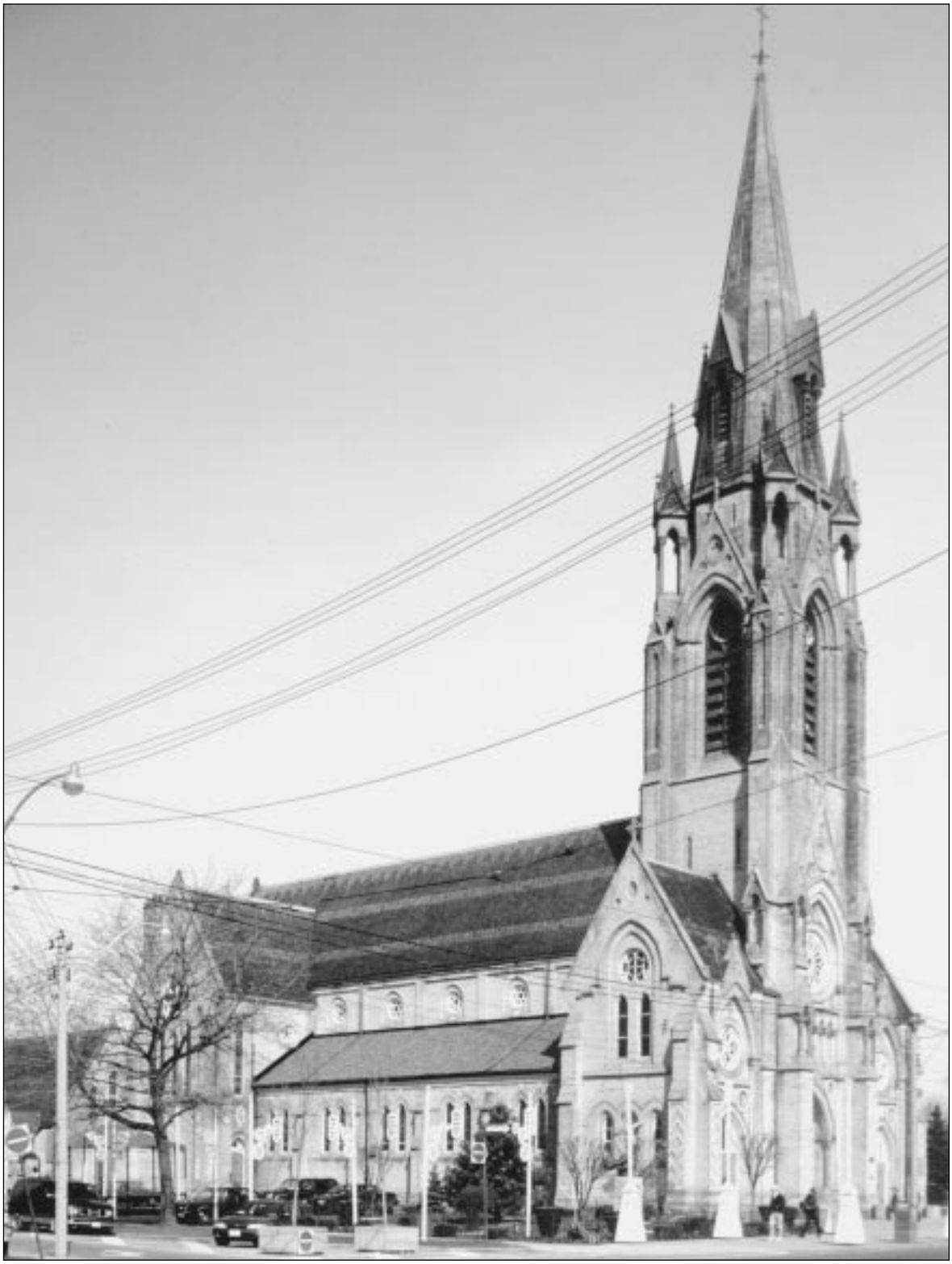


Fig. 2. Toronto, St Mary, Bathurst Street, exterior from NW (SE)

1860s, in keeping with contemporary progressive architects in England and Ireland, he was attracted by the early Gothic of northern France, and included such references in his work.[15] This was to have a profound impact on Connolly's Gothic churches.

ST MARY'S, BATHURST STREET, TORONTO.

The cornerstone of St Mary's, Toronto, was laid on 15 August 1884, and the dedication performed on 17 February 1889.[16] The spire was not completed until 1905 by Arthur Holmes, Connolly's former assistant in the 1880s, to the original design. The incumbent at the time was the Very Reverend Francis Patrick Rooney, Vicar-General of the Diocese of Toronto, who was appointed at St Mary's in 1870 and continued in office until his death on 27 December 1894.[17] The church served a largely working-class Irish Catholic community in the late nineteenth century.[18] It is this Irish heritage that is clearly reflected in the architecture.

St Mary's is a fine example of Connolly's Gothic church-design repertoire. The three-aisled basilican plan, with a polygonal apsidal sanctuary, transepts slightly lower than the nave, and a morning chapel to the liturgical north (geographical south), was used earlier by Connolly at St Patrick's in Hamilton (1875). The repertoire is inherited from McCarthy who incorporated a morning chapel at St Brigid's, Kilcullen (Co. Kildare) (1869), at the very time Connolly was chief assistant in McCarthy's office. The polygonal apse and lower transepts are adapted from St Macartan's cathedral, Monaghan (1861-83).[19] The tower at St Mary's is placed centrally in the façade, in contrast to most of Connolly's other large churches (Figs 1 and 2). He used twin towers at Our Lady at Guelph (1876) and St Peter's Basilica (1880), London, while single angle towers graced St Patrick's, Kinkora (1882); St Michael's, Belleville (1886); St Mary's, Grafton (1875); St Patrick's at Hamilton, and Sault-Sainte-Marie (MI) (1881).

The design of the St Mary's, Toronto, façade accords happily with the location of the church at the head of Adelaide Street (Fig. 1). The centrally placed tower aligns perfectly with Adelaide Street and stands proud as a monument to Roman Catholic achievement that is visible for many blocks along Adelaide. The basic concept of the central façade tower is allied to E.W Pugin and G. C. Ashlin's St Augustine's, Dublin (1862) (Fig. 5), where we also find a family resemblance in the low transept-like projections to either side of the tower. Connolly later adapted this arrangement for the façade of St Mary's Cathedral, Kingston (1889), where the details of the tower followed Bell Harry, the crossing tower of Canterbury Cathedral. On a much smaller scale,

Fig. 3. Toronto, St Mary, Bathurst Street, exterior from NE (SW)

Connolly provided St Joseph's, Macton (1886), with a central façade tower and there followed the rectangular plan of Pugin and Ashlin's St Augustine's tower.[20]

Connolly also seems to have adapted the idea of enclosing the side portals and windows at St Mary's, Toronto, within a giant arch, from the central arch of Pugin and Ashlin's St Augustine's Dublin (Figs 1 and 5). However, the majority of the façade detailing is inherited from J.J. McCarthy, in particular the south transept and west facades of Monaghan (Figs 1, 2 and 7). They all share a central rose window enclosed in a moulded pointed arch on columns and capitals, with recessed roundels above and below the rose. The blind arcade beneath the rose at St Mary's is a plain version of that on the south transept at Monaghan, while the gable with a roundel above the central doorway at St Mary's reflects the central west portal at Monaghan. The design of the spire with the corner niches is also related to Monaghan Cathedral (Figs 1, 2 and. 7), although the angled placement of the niches on Connolly's tower is closer to McCarthy's original scheme at Monaghan.[21] The gables that rise above the belfry openings between the angle turrets recall McCarthy's unexecuted design for the south-west tower of St Brigid's, Kilcullen, and other near-contemporary major churches in Ireland.[22] One may cite the south-west tower of Pugin and Ashlin's St Colman's cathedral,

Cobh (Co. Cork) (1869) and, most interestingly, the crossing tower of William Burges's St Fin Barre's cathedral at Cork (1865). Burges's design reveals an intimate knowledge of the early Gothic of Laon Cathedral, a building that supplies a precise analogue for Connolly's turrets.[23]

Inside St Mary's, Toronto, the two-storey elevation, larger arches to the transepts carried on piers rather than columns, the rich acanthus capitals of the main arcades, and the apse vault, all follow McCarthy's Monaghan Cathedral (Figs 4 and 6). In contrast to Monaghan, Connolly introduces polished granite shafts in the nave arcades at St Mary's and opts for simple, chamfered arches rather than repeating the mouldings from Monaghan. The proportions of the St Mary's elevation are squatter, we may say less cathedral-like than at Monaghan. In this regard they are more in keeping with McCarthy's parish church at Killorglin (Co. Kerry), where there are also polished grey granite shafts and rich acanthus capitals.

The precise parallels cited for St Mary's, Toronto, might lead to the accusation that Connolly was a somewhat uninspired architect. His design for St Paul's church, Toronto, will clearly demonstrate that this is not the case, so why does St Mary's seem so conservative? It makes sense that Connolly should have emulated McCarthy and Pugin and Ashlin, the most successful

Fig. 4. Toronto, St Mary, Bathurst Street, interior to E (W)

Fig. 5. Dublin, St Augustine, exterior from SSW, E.W. Pugin and G. Ashlin (1862).

Roman Catholic Church designers in Ireland during Connolly's time there. Connolly's Gothic also has much in common with the work of his contemporary architects in Ireland. William Hague (1840-1900), another pupil of J.J. McCarthy, perpetuated Gothic according to his mentor and, for example, in the Church of the Sacred Heart at Omagh (Tyrone) (1893-99), he used polished granite shafts and rich acanthus capitals in the arcade columns similar to those at St Mary's Toronto.[24] Nor was such detailing confined to McCarthy and his students in that O'Neill and Byrne used these very same motifs in the nave of St Patrick, Killygordon

Fig. 6. Monaghan, St Macartan's Cathedral, interior to E, J.J. McCarthy (1861).

(Donegal) (1893-95), in which the proportions of the nave elevation are close to St Mary's, Toronto.[25] Connolly's church was at once up to date and yet reflective of a well-established tradition of Irish Roman Catholic church building. It is this very Irish-ness that was so important for the Irish priest and his predominantly Irish congregation at St Mary's. While we have no record of the patron's demands at St Mary's, the building speaks clearly of its Irish heritage. Moreover, for McCarthy's St Patrick's in St John's, Newfoundland, and Connolly's St Patrick's, Hamilton, contemporary accounts specifically mention that the churches served as reminders of those in the homeland.[26]

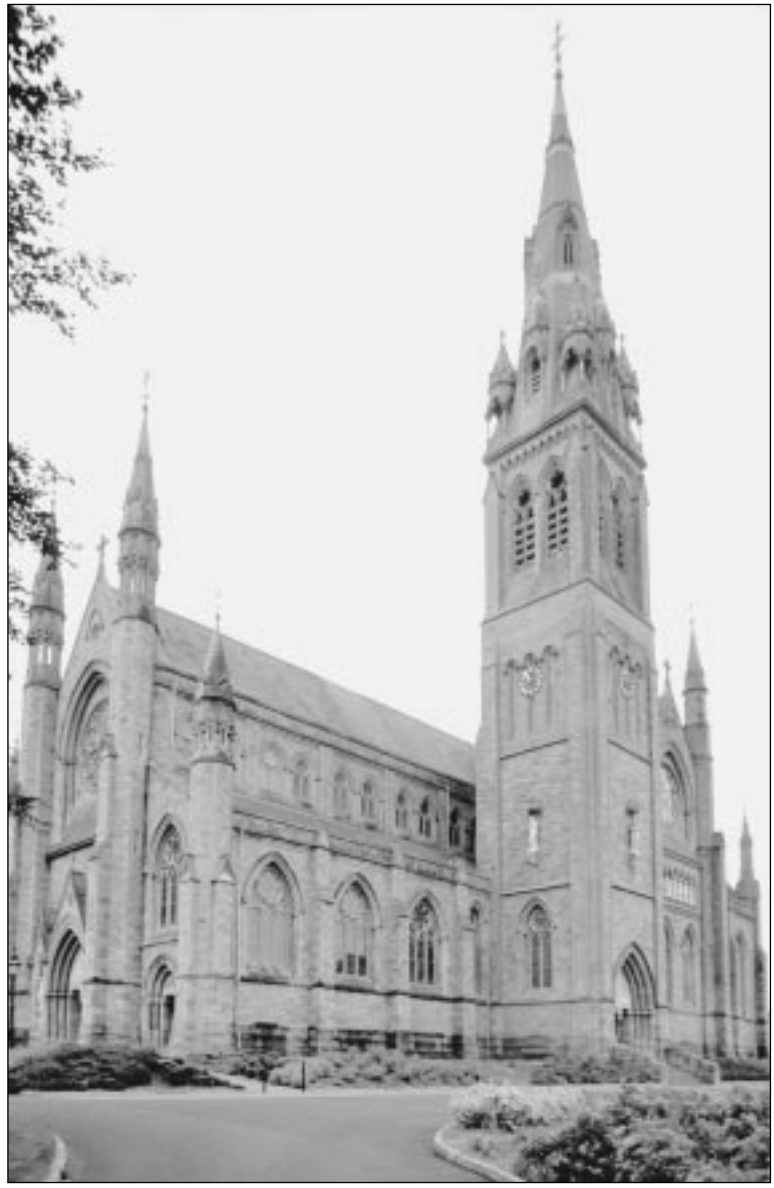


Fig. 7. Monaghan, St Macartan's Cathedral, exterior from SW.

ST PAUL'S, POWER STREET, TORONTO

At St Paul's, Toronto (Figs 8 and 9) the foundation stone was laid on 9 October 1887, and the dedication performed on 22 December 1889.[27] A contemporary account of St Joseph's at Chatham, virtually an architectural twin of St Paul's, Toronto, describes the church as being built in the 'Roman Renaissance' style. This label is derived from the second chapter of the third volume of John Ruskin's *The Stones of Venice*.[28] Ruskin initially discussed the Casa Grimani in Venice as an example of this style 'because it is founded, both in its principles of superimposition, and in the style of its ornament, upon the architecture of classic Rome at its best period'. He listed St Peter's Basilica in Rome as an example of the style 'in its purest and fullest form'. In its external form Ruskin observed that the Roman Renaissance style 'differs from Romanesque work in attaching great importance to the horizontal lintel or architrave above the arch'. This is used in Connolly's internal elevations above the main arcade, and on his façades, although in the Toronto façade vertical elements penetrate the entablature above the first storey.

The interior of St Paul's, Toronto (Fig. 8), has been convincingly compared with the great Roman basilica of St Paul's outside the Walls.[29] The association might also be extended to S. Clemente, Rome, the church of the Irish Dominicans in the city since 1667. However, both these Roman churches are wood-roofed and Connolly's churches are vaulted in the manner of Roman Baroque churches as in Carlo Maderno's extension to the nave of St Peter's Basilica (1606-1612). There, the two-storey elevation, in which the clerestory lunettes are cut into the high barrel vault, is derived from the nave of Il Gesù Rome, begun in 1568 by Vignola.[30] The massive, compound piers of Il Gesù and Roman Baroque churches were not suitable for Connolly's St Paul's where there needed to be greater openness between the nave and aisles. It is thus possible to read Connolly's churches as a fusion of the main arcades of an Early Christian basilica with the high barrel vault and clerestorey windows from the Roman Baroque tradition.

Be that as it may, Connolly's terms of reference were significantly broader. The immediate inspiration for the nave, the low transepts and the apse articulation, seems to have been St Mel's cathedral, Longford (1840-56), by J.B. Keane (Figs 8 and 9).[31] The churches share the same Ionic order for the main arcade columns and, in particular, the same arrangement of the low transepts, except that they are of three bays at Longford. At Longford the vault is based on Palladian principles, as in his churches of Il Redentore (1576-91) and San Giorgio Maggiore (1560-80), Venice, in which the clerestorey windows are cut into

the high barrel vault that springs from the entablature above the main arcade.[32] However, Connolly chose not to adopt this scheme, or that of most Roman Baroque churches, in which lunettes cut directly into the high barrel vault. Rather than springing the high vault immediately above the entablature, Connolly provided a more fully articulated upper storey in which the shallow pilasters that carry the transverse arches of the vault provide an illusion of height far greater than their actual scale. This is an arrangement encountered in eighteenth-century France in the churches of Contant d'Ivry, as in the nave of Saint-Vaast at Arras, begun in 1755, and in La Madeleine in Paris, begun in 1764.[33]

A Venetian association may be suggested for the east end of St Paul's where the three-apse east end is paralleled at Torcello Cathedral. Ruskin gives a plan of this church, which may be pertinent in that it has ten-bay arcades like St Paul's.[34] In this connection it is interesting that in Connolly's obituary in the *Canadian Architect and Builder*, St Pauls's is labelled as 'Italian Romanesque', an association that best fits aspects of the façade and the campanile.[35]

The façade of St Paul's (fig. 10) is an brilliant amalgam of the Tuscan Romanesque San Miniato al Monte in Florence and Venetian church façades of Andrea Palladio (1508-1580): San Giorgio Maggiore, Sant' Andrea della Vigne (1570) and Il Redentore.[36] The roundels in the spandrels of the façade also recall Venice and Ruskin - the Fondaco della Turchi and the Palazzo Dario[37] are good parallels - while the coloured marble insets may derive from the 'Decoration by Discs', on the Palazzo Badoari Particiazzi, illustrated in colour by Ruskin.[38] Be that as it may, the setting of the roundels adjacent to the capitals of the main pilasters recalls the Arch of Augustus at Rimini, which may also have supplied the inspiration for the continuation of the vertical articulation into the entablature. Alberti's façade of San Francesco, Rimini (1450), itself modelled on the Arch of Augustus, may also have been a point of reference here.[39] The superimposition of the Corinthian over the Ionic order follows Vitruvian principles as discussed in Joseph Gwilt's 1867 *Encyclopedia of Architecture*.[40] The bell tower is set off to the side in the tradition of the Italian Romanesque campanile, as at Santa Maria in Cosmedin, and San Giorgio in Velabro, in Rome, to cite just two examples.

J.J. McCarthy's Thurles cathedral (Co. Tipperary) (1865-72) may have played an intermediary role for the Italian Romanesque-style campanile offset to the left of the St Paul's, Toronto, façade.[41] The division of the ground floor of the Thurles façade is also related to St Paul's. In both, there are three round-

Fig. 8. Toronto, St Paul, Power Street, interior to E, Joseph Connolly (1887).

headed doorways with carved tympana, one in the centre to the nave and one each to the aisles, separated by slightly narrower blind arches. At Thurles, there is no clear separation between the nave and aisle façades whereas Connolly provided this with bold Ionic pilasters, a motif that he also used at the outside angles of the front. Moreover, Connolly incorporated a full entablature between the lower and upper sections of the façade, a feature entirely lacking at Thurles.

The architectural confessionals that project from the aisle walls in St Paul's, Toronto, are taken neither from a Roman, nor a classicizing, tradition but are adapted from A.W. Pugin and his followers. In an account of St George's, Lambeth (Southwark), *The Ecclesiologist* records that 'Mr Pugin has ingeniously met with the question of confessionals, which are indispensible to a modern Roman Catholic church, by making them constructional, and placing them between the buttresses, approached of course by a series of doors from the nave. This was an afterthought, but is more felicitous than architectural afterthoughts generally are'.[42] They are used by J.J. McCarthy at St Saviour, Dublin (1852-61),[43] and St Ignatius, Galway (1860),[44] and subsequently by Pugin and Ashlin in St Augustine's, Dublin, and Cobh Cathedral.[45] Connolly included them in a number of his Gothic churches, including the chapel of St John that he added to the north-east of St Michael's Cathedral, Toronto (1890). There, a small pointed

Fig. 9. Longford, St Mel's Cathedral, interior to E, J.B. Keane (1840).

gable is placed above the window in the middle of the confessional while at St Paul's the walls of the confessional are built somewhat higher and it is topped with a pediment in the tradition of a Greco-Roman temple.

For St Paul's, Toronto, the choice of style for the church concerns specific personalities, Archbishop Lynch and the Right Reverend Timothy O'Mahony, the pastor of St Paul's. O'Mahony was born in Ireland in 1825 and had completed his priestly training in Rome.[46] In 1879 he met Archbishop Lynch in Rome and he was invited to Canada to become Lynch's auxilliary. Bishop O'Mahony was made pastor of St Paul's and he determined to replace the small brick church of 1823.[47] As at St Mary's, Toronto, there is no written documentation that pertains to discussions between patron and architect at St Paul's. However, a letter from Kennedy, McVittie & Holland, Architects, Barrie, Ont., 9 May 1883, preserved in the Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, records that Archbishop Lynch preferred the 'Italian Style of Church Architecture'.[48] This architectural ultramontanism is further witnessed in Toronto in the church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Sherbourne Street (1885-1886), which was built for Archbishop Lynch by Commander F.C. Law.[49] Here, the narthex of the original façade recalls S. Lorenzo fuori le mura, Rome, while the articulation of the aisleless interior with a barrel vault carried on a full entablature and stepped Ionic pilasters, plus the ribbed dome on a drum and pendentives, proudly proclaim Roman Baroque connections. The entrance and transept facades adapted elements from classical temple façades, and like St Paul's, Toronto, a campanile projected to the left of the west (east) front.

Loretto abbey church, located on Wellington Street near Spadina, Toronto, built by Beaumont Jarvis in 1897 and demolished in 1961, continued this Romanizing theme.[50] It had a single-storey elevation with coffered barrel vaults over the chancel, transepts and nave, and a ribbed dome on pendentives over the crossing. The walls of the chancel and transepts were articulated with Corinthian pilasters. The lower, single-bay chapels in the angles of the transepts and chancel communicated with the main spaces through a trabeation on plain Ionic pilasters. The slim Ionic columns that separated the nave and aisles may have been inspired by Connolly's nave at St Paul's.

CHURCHES OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS IN LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY TORONTO

While Connolly's churches of St Mary and St Paul, Toronto, are stylistically quite different, they are both emphatically Catholic, the one emphasizing an Irish heritage, the other, an

Fig. 10. Toronto, St Paul, Power Street, W facade.

ultramontane link with Rome. The latter is obviously specific to the Roman Catholics but what of the Gothic of St Mary's? It is here that the Irish-ness of the design sets it apart from contemporary churches of other denominations in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario. Two Anglican churches, St Matthew and St John (1889) on First Avenue by Strickland and Symons, and St Thomas on Huron Street by Eden Smith (1892), conform to English High Victorian Gothic principles. In accordance with the liturgical tradition of the high church, they are both fitted with a rood screen, and a piscina and sedilia. The 1875 split in the Presbyterian congregation of St Andrew's, Toronto, resulted in the construction of two new churches; New Old St Andrew's by Langley, Langley and Burke, was Gothic, while New St Andrew's by William George Storm, was Romanesque.[51] This was not the contemporary Romanesque of Henry Hobson Richardson but Romanesque intended to reflect the style of Norman Scotland and thereby provide a geographical, if not a temporal, association with the home of Presbyterianism.[52] At the same time, the Baptist congregation of Jarvis Street adhered to the Gothic style for their new church by Langley, Langley and Burke (1874-5). However, the amphitheatrical seating plan in the sanctuary of their church was quite distinct from either Anglican or Catholic medieval-inspired basilicas, and was the first use of this plan in the city.[53] In 1886/7 Langley and Burke used a similar plan for the Sherbourne Street Methodist, Toronto, but on this occasion Gothic gave way to their interpretation of Richardsonian Romanesque. This stylistic choice eradicated any possible association between Methodism and either the 'Papists' or the Anglicans that might be implied by a Gothic church.[54]

CONCLUSION

With the heightening of stylistic self-consciousness in church design in Toronto and Ontario in the late nineteenth century, Joseph Connolly succeeded in providing his patrons with two quite specifically Catholic churches. The Irish association was emphatically articulated at St Mary's, while the ultramontane preferences of Archbishop Lynch and Bishop O'Mahony were boldly announced at St Paul's. In the design of St Paul's Connolly's eclectic use of sources comes as some surprise in the oeuvre of an architect so thoroughly grounded in Gothic. His selection and adaptation of motifs from Rome and Venice, Tuscan Romanesque, French neo-classicism and Irish Romanesque and Baroque revival styles, plus the adaptation of Gothic confessionals, show Connolly's impressive command of historical styles and his remarkable talent in fusing such diverse elements into an elegant new design

Notes

1 On Connolly, see *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 17, issue 12 (1904), p. 205; Malcolm Thurlby, 'The Irish-Canadian Pugin: Joseph Connolly', *Irish Arts Review*, 3, no. 1 (1986), pp. 16-21; Christopher A. Thomas, 'A High Sense of Calling: Joseph Connolly, A.W. Holmes, and their Buildings for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1885-1935', *RACAR*, XIII/2 (1986), pp. 97-120; Malcolm Thurlby, 'The Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception at Guelph: Puginian Principles in the Gothic Revival Architecture of Joseph Connolly', *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin*, 15 (1990), pp. 32-40; idem, 'Joseph Connolly's Roman Catholic Churches in Wellington County', *Historic Guelph*, XXXI (1992), pp. 4-31; idem, 'Joseph Connolly and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Macton', *Historic Guelph*, XXXII (1993), pp. 71-72.

2 *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 17, (1904), p. 205, gives Italian Romanesque. Italian Renaissance is used by Eric Arthur, *Toronto: No Mean City*, 3rd edition, revised by Stephen A. Otto (Toronto, 1986), p. 186. 'Roman Renaissance' is used to describe St Joseph's, Chatham, Ontario, virtually an architectural twin of St Paul's, Toronto, *Catholic Record* [London, ON], 30 Oct. 1886, p. 4, illus. & descrip.; 29 Oct. 1887, p. 5, illus. & descrip.).

3 *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 17, (1904), p. 205.

4 *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 17 (1904), p. 205. Joseph Connolly is listed as an architect in *Thom's Irish Almanac and Official Directory* for the year 1871, pp. 1596 and 1806.

5 An advertisement for the James and Connolly practice appears in *The Irish Canadian*, August 13, 1873, p. 5. A tender call in *The Globe*, April 23, 1877, p.7, names Connolly alone.

6 *Catholic Record*, 6 Oct., 1888, p. 1; Louis J. Flynn, *Built on a Rock: The Story of the Roman Catholic Church in Kingston 1826-1976*, (Kingston, ON, 1976), p. 256.

7 *Contract Record*, ii, 1 Aug. 1891, p. 2; Flynn, *Built On A Rock*, pp. 78, 266-68.

8 Flynn, *Built On A Rock*, pp. 322-24.

9 Phoebe Stanton, *Pugin*, (London, 1970), figs 36-41; Malcolm Thurlby, 'Nineteenth-Century Churches in Ontario: A Study in the Meaning of Style', *Historic Kingston*, 35 (1986), pp. 96-118 at 104; Thurlby, 'The Irish-Canadian Pugin: Joseph Connolly', pp. 20-21.

10 Jeanne Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy and the Gothic Revival in Ireland* (Belfast, 1977) p. 55; idem, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: the Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (London, 1980), p.131, pl. 107.

11 Thurlby, 'The Irish-Canadian Pugin: Joseph Connolly'.

12 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*; Douglas Scott Richardson, *Gothic Revival Architecture in Ireland*, 2 vols (New York, 1983), pp. 488-492. Stanton, *Pugin*; Roderick O'Donnell, 'The Pugins in Ireland', in *A.W.N. Pugin, Master of Gothic Revival*, ed. Paul Atterbury (New Haven and London, 1995), pp. 136-59. Also see remarks on Pugin in Malcolm Thurlby, 'St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, School and Convent in St John's, Newfoundland: J.J. McCarthy and Irish Gothic Revival in Newfoundland', *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, 28 no. 3 (2003), pp. 13-20.

13 *The Ecclesiologist*, VIII (1848), p. 62.

14 Thurlby, 'St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, School and Convent in St John's, Newfoundland', pp. 13-20.

15 J. Mordaunt Crook, 'Early French Gothic', in Sarah Macready and F.H. Thompson (ed.), *Influences in Victorian Art and Architecture, Society of Antiquaries of London Occasional Paper* (New Series), VII (London, 1985), pp. 49-58.

16 John Ross Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto*, iv (Toronto, 1904), p. 321.

17 Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto*, iv, pp. 322-323.

18 Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal and Kingston, 1999), pp. 26, 29.

19 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, ill. 51, from *The Builder*, 12 September 1868, p. 675.

20 Thurlby, 'Joseph Connolly's Roman Catholic Churches in Wellington County', pp. 4-31; idem, 'Joseph Connolly and St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Macton', pp. 71-72.

21 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, ill. 51.
22 Kilcullen is illustrated in Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, ill. 49.
23 Laon cathedral towers are illustrated in W. Eden Nesfield, *Specimens of Medieval Architecture chiefly selected from examples of the 12th and 13th Centuries in France and Italy* (London, 1862), pls 36 and 37.
24 Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland, North West Ulster* (Harmondsworth, 1979), pl. 122.
25 Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland, North West Ulster*, pl. 123.
26 Thurlby, 'St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, School and Convent in St John's, Newfoundland', pp. 13-14; *Irish Canadian*, 7 July 1875, p. 2, cols. 1-4 (from Hamilton Times, 28 June).
27 *Catholic Weekly Review* [Toronto], 15 Oct. 1887, pp. 410-11, illus. & descrip.; *Toronto World*, 25 Aug. 1888, p. 3, descrip.; *Catholic Record* [London, ON], 28 Dec. 1889, p. 5, descrip.; Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto*, iv, pp. 315-20, illus. & descrip.; Harold Kalman, *History of Canadian Architecture* (Toronto, 1994), pp. 587-8, illus. & descrip.). The building accounts are preserved in Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto.
28 John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, 3 vols (London, 1851).
29 Thomas, 'A High Sense of Calling', p. 102. The nave of St Paul's outside the walls is illustrated in Joseph Gwilt, *The Encyclopedia of Architecture, Historical, Theoretical, and Practical*, revised by Wyatt Papworth (London, 1867, reprinted New York, 1980), p. 110, fig. 142.
30 Peter Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (New York, 1963), fig. 137.
31 I owe this comparison to Eddie McParland.
32 James Ackerman, *Palladio* (Harmondsworth, 1966), ills 70, 72 and 73 (Il Redentore), and 84 and 85 (S. Giorgio Maggiore).
33 Wend von Kalnein, *Architecture in France in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven and London, 1995), pls 218 and 220.
34 Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, I, pl. I, opp. p.16.
35 *Canadian Architect and Builder*, 17, (1904), p. 205.
36 Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, 4th edn (London, 1973), pp. 89-97.
37 *The Builder* (1851), p. 202.
38 Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, I, pl. VI, opp. p. 250.
39 On S. Francesco, Rimini, see Murray, *Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 48-50.
40 Gwilt, *The Encyclopedia of Architecture*, pp. 850-853.
41 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, p. 63; Thomas, 'A High Sense of Calling', pp. 102-103.
42 *The Ecclesiologist*, IX (1849), p. 155.
43 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, pp. 43-44.
44 Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy*, pp. 55-56.
45 Douglas Scott Richardson, *Gothic Revival Architecture in Ireland*, 2 vols (New York, 1983), pp. 500-502; O'Donnell, 'The Pugins in Ireland', p. 155.
46 Thomas, 'A High Sense of Calling', pp. 101-102.
47 Thomas, 'A High Sense of Calling', p. 102.
48 Kennedy and Holland were supervising architects of St Ann's (formerly Martyr's) Memorial church in Penetanguishine, Ontario.
49 Robertson, *Landmarks*, iv, ill. opp. p. 330. Patricia McHugh, *Toronto Architecture: A City Guide* (Toronto, 1985) p. 159, illustrates the church before the remodelling of the church in 1910 when a nave was constructed to the liturgical north (geographical south) of the church by James P. Hynes.
50 Arthur, *Toronto: No Mean City*, ills 338 and 341.
51 William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario, Kingston and Montrea*l (1989), p. 132, figs 7-9; Janine Butler, 'St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto's "Cathedral of Presbyterianism"', *Ontario History*, LXXXIII, Number 3 (1991), pp. 170-92.
52 Specific mention is made of Kirkwall Cathedral although, other than both buildings being Romanesque, the link is far from obvious; see, Butler, 'St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto's "Cathedral of Presbyterianism"', pp. 173-75. On

Kirkwall Cathedral, see Malcolm Thurlby, 'Aspects of the architectural history of Kirkwall Cathedral', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 127 (1997), pp. 855-888.

53 Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto*, iv, pp. 42-43; William Westfall and Malcolm Thurlby, 'The Church in the Town: The Adaptation of Sacred Architecture to Urban Settings in Ontario', *Etudes Canadiennes/Canadian Studies* (Association Française d'Etudes Canadiennes), 20 (1986), pp. 49-59 at 53-54; William Westfall and Malcolm Thurlby, 'Church Architecture and Urban Space: The Development of Ecclesiastical Forms in Nineteenth-Century Ontario', in *Old Ontario: Essays in Honour of J.M.S. Careless*, ed. David Keene and Colin Read (Toronto and London, 1990), pp. 118-147 at pp. 128-29; Euthalia Lisa Panayotidis, 1991, 'Gothic and Romanesque: A Question of Style. The Arrangement of Protestant Churches and School Houses in 19th-Century Ontario: The Work of Henry Langley', unpublished MA thesis, York University, pp. 59-74; Angela Carr, *Toronto Architect, Edmund Burke* (Montreal and Kingston, 1995) pp. 26-29.

54 Carr, *Toronto Architect*, Edmund Burke, pp. 34-35, fig. 3.28.

‘It is barbaric art in that it is entirely uncomposed, but it is full of vitality and zest.’ Some thoughts on the Stoke Dry fragments.

Chris Tuckley

PEVSNER’S 1960 VERDICT on the two Romanesque responds of the chancel arch at Stoke Dry has certainly proved most persistent over the last four decades, and has coloured much of the subsequent material produced on the pieces. This has largely been in the form of brief remarks in guidebooks and local history journals, the kind of literature that naturally looks to Pevsner as a starting point for a discussion of Stoke Dry church as an historic building. In a church rich in local interest, not least in its long association with the Digby family and its excellent medieval wall paintings, the chancel arch is often overlooked. The blame for this must, in part at least, be attributed to Pevsner. Although his words in no way belittle the accomplishments of the Stoke Dry stonemasons or indicate any deficiency in aesthetic appreciation on Pevsner’s part, nevertheless the language he uses has certain consequences for the expectations of the prospective viewer. The dismissiveness of his tone discourages further speculation on the content or meaning of the carved images, which cover the two intricately decorated columns from top to bottom. His statement that the work is ‘entirely uncomposed’ implies a complete absence of coherence in the arrangement of the imagery; attempts to read the carvings or to decipher their symbolic content will inevitably result in frustration. As a consequence, local historians approaching the church via a reading of Pevsner have tended to pass over the richly ornamented columns as an indecipherable but pretty curiosity, before moving on to the more involving and rewarding issue of the Digby family intrigues, and in particular the Digby role in the Gunpowder plot.

Yet Pevsner should not be alone in shouldering the blame for the scholarly neglect suffered by Stoke Dry over the last half-century, and is not the only writer to adopt distinctly negative language to talk about the images on the chancel arch. In describing the ‘crudely carved’ bell-ringer on the south column, an earlier piece by Boase reaches the bizarre (and unsubstantiated) conclusion that the figure is a rare example of a genuine study ‘of the contemporary scene, without any apparent symbolic or narrative context…’ In Boase’s argument, the column decorations

seem contingent and devoid of meaning, failing to provide a context of any sort for the bell-ringer. Statements of this kind serve to dissuade a closer examination of the carvings, and have the unfortunate effect of obscuring their many complexities. Furthermore, his approach is illustrative of another of the shortcomings of the scholarly treatment received by the Stoke Dry carvings over the years; when faced by the baffling profusion of human figures, beasts and plants, many writers have seized on the figure of the bell-ringer (perhaps the most readily identifiable and distinct figure in the carvings) as key to the composition, or otherwise to be examined in isolation, removed from his confusing setting. In Boase the divorce between the bell-ringer and the rest of the composition is total, and the only context remaining to the figure is of Boase's own invention, an imagined 'contemporary scene.'

Figure 1

In an 1887 essay by J. Romilly Allen the separation between bell-ringer and overall scheme is not as explicit and, unlike Boase, Allen does not deny the figure a symbolic function. Allen is, however, entirely concerned with situating the figure within a catalogue of comparable, contemporary bell-ringers. He chooses to ignore the other details of the chancel arch carvings, and looks tentatively instead to contemporary texts to clarify the meaning and symbolic import of his group of related images. We are invited to consider the Stoke Dry figure and figures from the Hutton Cranswick and Belton fonts in the light of an extract from Alexander Neckham's late twelfth- century treatise *De Naturis Rerum*, a text which provides moral exempla based on the properties of the church bell.

Figure 2

Allen's approach is echoed in an article in the *Rutland Magazine*, at just over 300 words the most substantial piece ever written on the carvings, and far more adequate than Pevsner or Boase in its approach. Whilst admitting defeat in deciphering the significance of the images, the article grants them a 'symbolical meaning' and goes on to tell us that 'it has been suggested that the grovelling figure underneath the ringer is intended for Satan running away from the Sanctus bell.' The author of the article goes on to refer us to the thirteenth-century *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* of Durandus who, like Neckham, describes the moral lessons to be drawn from a meditation on the nature of bells.

It is unfortunate that we are not given any indication as to the source of the interpretation of one of the figures (Figure 1) as Satan; much of the writing on the columns is marred precisely because of a misguided tendency to attempt to name or categorise the figures. Pevsner, for example, identifies an entirely different figure on the same column (Figure 2) as 'the devil', without

providing any of the details of his thinking. In an eagerness to make sense of the carvings, modern writers have removed individual figures from the context of the complete decorative scheme and resorted to conventional terminology and arbitrary classifications to identify them. The cumulative effect has been a further muddling of an already complex piece; a full reappraisal of the two columns in their entirety, taking each and every individual figure into account, is long overdue.

By the application of a variety of more recent critical approaches I hope to offer some correctives to these traditional and conventional ways of seeing and thinking about the Stoke Dry pieces. At the very least, I hope to determine whether or not these new perspectives provide us with the future possibility of an alternative to the pessimistic verdicts of Pevsner and Boase: is today's viewer ultimately forced to accept their doctrine of despair, or can we establish a critical framework to facilitate an understanding of the Stoke Dry iconography? Any modern critical practice would insist, in the first instance, on a detailed description of the piece at hand, in terms of both its material substance and its pictorial content. I can only provide the briefest of descriptions within the space of this essay, and I cannot hope to overcome all of the technical difficulties posed by a written description or a flat, two-dimensional rendering of the columns as photographs or drawings, but by the application of text, linear sketches and photographs I hope to provide the most complete and coherent picture of the pieces produced to date.

As this essay is primarily concerned with issues of iconography, it seems appropriate to begin with a survey of the images. The nature of their arrangement, however, makes it difficult for the observer to organise them into fields; some figures sprawl across two thirds of the surface width of the columns, whereas others seem to occupy marginal space, sandwiched between their larger neighbours or pushed to the edges of the composition. The curved surface of the composition means that to see a column in its entirety the observer is obliged to adopt several vantage points; the viewer is always presented with a different combination of images, depending on his/her position in the church.

For the purposes of this description I have taken the decision to divide each column into two fields, extending along the entire vertical length and half the horizontal width of each of the structures, describing the images as they occur from bottom to top, and beginning with the South column, on the face closest to the sanctuary (East elevation). The description that follows is probably best consulted in situ, with reference to the columns themselves.

Thick, fleshy strands of foliage surround the base of the column. These issue, in part, from a frowning cat-like mask. The figure directly above (standing on his own pedestal) is human, wearing flared and ribbed trousers and a close-fitting, long-sleeved vest. Above his left arm there appears a small quadruped wearing a collar, and to his right is a crook-shaped item. This figure is apparently being attacked at his left elbow by a winged creature with a long, tapering body, which also grips the arm of the half-human, half-fish on the opposite face of the column. Above is an ill-defined dragon-like creature, apparently winged and possibly two-headed, with the larger of the two heads craning round to face backwards. Next is a bird, preening or pecking its own back, then a quadruped with a long, slender body, jumping or rearing on its hind legs, its human-like head presented face-on. A strand of foliage appears to issue from between its ribs. A winged human figure (apparently without legs) is next, holding a book in its right hand. Above is a rather plump-bodied bird with a ruff, perching on a book.

At the foot of the column on the other face (South column, West elevation) is a bird, possibly with a crest or coxcomb, its head turned towards its own back. Above is a merman or a siren, a creature whose upper body is human and lower body piscine. The creature has no distinguishable gender, but an absence of breasts and prominent ribs may make it male. The figure seems, at some time, to have held an article in its left hand, but this part of the carving is now unrecognisable. Its right arm is gripped by the hand of the long-bodied, winged beast already described. Its left elbow is bitten by a small, squat quadruped, also apparently wearing a collar. There appears to be a structure of some sort above the figure, made up of two thin strands of foliage which form an arch over the creature's head. A bird, seemingly in flight, pecks at these strands from above. A lion (as distinguished by its mane) follows, its trefoil tail passing between its hind legs before extending in front of its body and terminating above. Another bird, in an attitude almost identical to that of the bird preceding it, is next, then a quadruped, craning forward to shelter its head beneath its forepaws. Above is another bird, in flight but on this occasion following a downward trajectory. A man in a short tunic stands above, the renowned Stoke Dry bell-ringer. He holds a rope leading to a single bell, suspended in its own niche, within a structure that hovers free of the surrounding foliage. To the right and extending along the entire height of this structure is a serpent, its open maw reaching above the bell's housing. The capital of this column is plain, and apparently of a later date.

The column on the North side seems incomplete, its carved

fabric beginning at approximately one third of its height. A regular, two-strand interlace pattern forms a ring around the column. Beginning once more with the face closest to the sanctuary (North column, East elevation) we find a winged, dragon-like creature with a trefoil tail, its head turned backwards and its mouth open to emit the blast of its breath. Above is a lion, larger than its fellow on the South column. A strand of foliage issues from its open mouth, terminating in a trefoil pattern. Its tail vanishes between its back legs, to reappear crossing its hindquarters, reaching up to strangle a quadruped on the opposite face. To the right of the lion the foliage takes the form of a tree or tall plant. A serpent dangles from its leaves, the length of its body matching the lion in height. Above the lion a man sits cross-legged, suspended in the foliage. In his ribbed trousers and the neckline of his vest he resembles the man with the crook near the foot of the South column. He holds a strand of foliage in each hand. At his right knee we find another cat mask, this one having only one ear (its left). The foliage leaves its mouth in two strands, one travelling to the left, the other to the right. The right-hand branch forms one of the vertical tendrils held by the cross-legged man. Above the man is a bird, more like a raptor than the other Stoke Dry birds, with its well-defined talons and its strong, thick neck and beak. Both of its wings are raised, one on each side of its body. On the capital we encounter a winged figure, apparently in ecclesiastical garb, holding a book in his left hand. His left wing emerges from behind his shoulder, whereas his right is attached to the forward portion of his body. Above this wing is a small cross. Unlike the other Stoke Dry humans, this figure has a beard and clearly delineated ears that stand proud of his head. His feet are bare; the other men wear long, pointed boots. To the right of this figure is another tree-like formation, with long, wavy branches.

The first creature to occur in the other field (North column, West elevation) has a feline head, but with at least three pairs of legs it may possess two bodies. If this is the case then both bodies are presented in profile as mirror images, one above the other, linked by a spine that is dotted with small, circular depressions. Foliage leaves this creature's mouth in two directions, upwards and downwards. Above is the quadruped caught by the lion's tail. Its own tail divides into numerous strands (one of which ends in a trefoil shape). Next is a bird with a long, curved beak, pecking at a strand of foliage below. A human figure above wears a short tunic; he is gripping a yoke of some sort with both hands and supporting it on one shoulder. Suspended upside-down from this yoke is a small quadruped with pointed ears. The man's mouth is open to release a strand of foliage that terminates above in a trefoil

pattern. A dragon-like creature is next, its long body marked by the same circular depressions noted on the spine of the cat-headed creature below. It has wings and pointed ears, and its open mouth emits a flame or blast. Its tapering body becomes a long, curly tail that ends in a trefoil. It is difficult to make out certain details on the capital above, but a bird with a long, flared tail is recognizable, its neck twisted at an awkward angle. Two tiny lions can also be seen facing in opposite directions, their trefoil tails intertwined. The right-hand lion seems to be either incomplete or damaged; part of its face and the forward part of its body are missing, and the creature seems to dissolve into unrelated and ill-defined shapes.

My account of the Stoke Dry iconography is severely abbreviated, but I hope it serves, at the very least, to illustrate the richness and complexity of the imagery.

The length of this essay does not allow for as full a description of the material properties of the two columns, but a survey of this kind will, at some point, become a necessity if the Stoke Dry debate is to continue. Close examination of the North column and capital, for example, reveals flecks of red paint, probably of the sort applied as a base coat; these carvings were almost certainly fully painted at one time and the destruction of the painted surface has meant an immense loss of detail. Furthermore, it is generally assumed that the North column is incomplete; a newspaper article relates the tale of the vicar's wife who had the lower part of the column removed because she found it uncomfortable as she sat with it against her back. This may suggest that the iconographic scheme on the North side is hopelessly incomplete and made unreadable, yet the interlace pattern clearly forms one of the parameters of the pictorial field; we have no reason to assume that the lower part of the column was ever covered in figural carving like the upper two-thirds. It may have been carved with purely decorative motifs, or it may always have been plain. The same might be said of the capital on the South side, and it seems to me vitally important not to assume that material is missing.

Two large cracks in the South column, moreover, suggest that at some point in its life it was broken into three sections, possibly for ease of transport from its original architectural setting to a new position in a more recent chancel arch. Issues of this kind will remain a mystery until a thorough examination is undertaken. Until that time, the two columns should perhaps more properly be referred to as 'fragments' to avoid the danger of erroneous assumptions and associations.

In my own interpretation of the iconography I should like, at

first, to follow the example of Allen and the anonymous author of the *Rutland Magazine* article by examining a number of literary sources, roughly contemporary with the carvings, which may help to illuminate our interpretation of the images. The first is commonly cited in works on Romanesque art (most recently by Caroline Walker Bynum in her 2001 monograph *Metamorphosis and Identity*) and provides a precious insight into a peculiarly twelfth-century mode of viewing and thinking about the visual arts; it is, of course, the famous extract from Bernard of Clairvaux's *Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatem*, in which Bernard attacks the excesses of the ecclesiastical art of his day. It is interesting to note that of the fabulous creatures mentioned (and decried) by Bernard as present in the decorative scheme of the typical cloister, at least two make an appearance at Stoke Dry. Of the cloister creatures, Bernard demands to know '*Quid feri leones?*' and '*Quid semihomines?*' Lions are indubitably present at Stoke Dry, and the merman might be termed one of Bernard's 'semihomines.' Bernard goes on to tell us *'Videas sub uno capite multa corpora, et rursus in uno corpore capita multa*.' The strange and possibly bicorporate cat-creature on the North column (Figure 3) may be an example of many bodies under one head, and the dragon-creature on the South side (Figure 4) seems to possess a head at either end of its body. Furthermore, Bernard suffers the same problem as the modern-day viewer of the Stoke Dry carvings; he simply cannot find a name for a number of the beasts depicted. Those animals with no clear precedents in classical or Christian artwork remain nameless, and are instead rendered a collection of hybrid attributes. Bernard is forced, like us, to fall back on the generic term 'quadruped' to describe a number of these beasts. He tells us '*Cernitur hinc in quadrupede cauda serpentis*…', and his words have particular resonance when we consider the long-tailed quadruped throttled by the lion on the North shaft (Figure 5).

Figure 3

Figure 4

With special reference to this piece and to other works by Bernard of Clairvaux, Walker Bynum demonstrates that horror and fascination at the image of the monster or hybrid was a defining feature of the artwork and literature of the Romanesque period. Although not an exclusively twelfth-century phenomenon, a certain preoccupation with issues of mixture and hybridity seems to have been an essential component of the twelfth-century imagination. Far from being a symptom of barbarism, the hybrid became a recurring trope in literature and an important element of the scholarly discourses of the time, providing a means for the expression or discussion of particularly learned concepts and problems. Perhaps the Stoke Dry carvings, despite their provincial location, are best understood in the

Figure 5

context of the intellectual life of the twelfth century, with a profound symbolic meaning only to be recovered in the event of a reconstruction or re-evaluation of the most lively and learned debates of the day. A 1986 article by T.A. Heslop adds weight to this argument; his essay is an attempt to rehabilitate Romanesque imagery as an emphatically intellectual and symbolic art form, concluding with the words 'the desire to find serious content in symbolic imagery may have been as widespread among the population of the twelfth century as it is rare now.'

Another medieval text commonly applied in the examination of Romanesque imagery is the *Bestiary*, which features prominently in Malcolm Thurlby's survey of the corpus of work produced by the Herefordshire School . Thurlby interprets the School's iconography with special reference to this particular text, which appears to have been widely disseminated and at the height of its popularity during the twelfth century. His reading of both the south doorway and corbel table imagery at Kilpeck relies heavily on the testimony of the *Bestiary*; I do not suggest that the same text will provide us with as full an insight into the Stoke Dry carvings, but it may provide us with opportunities to understand better the presence and symbolic import of some of the more enigmatic creatures on the chancel arch. The *Bestiary* text is demonstrative of the currency and seriousness of animal symbolism in the twelfth century, and is helpful for our purposes in illustrating the ways in which the image of a single creature became a kind of shorthand for the expression of a series of sophisticated ideas. In the Bestiary a rich variety of associations stem from a meditation on the nature of any given beast. The lion (taken here as a particularly convenient example) serves several metaphorical functions, some of which do not at first seem entirely compatible. Much is made of its noble and temperate nature and of the characteristics it has in common with Christ, like its hidden and mysterious movements, its watchfulness and its powers of resurrection (as it breathes life into its dead cubs). At the same time, however, we are reminded of its ferocity, its haughtiness and its vulnerability to the attacks of various small creatures. The example of the lion suffices to give us an insight into the complexities and ambiguities of the animal-as-symbol in the Romanesque period; the *Bestiary* animal is an allegory, but its exact allegorical function or meaning is not easily grasped, being cryptic, problematic and multivalent in character, designed to stimulate further thought and to invite conflicting interpretations. The exact reasons for the twelfth-century creation of deliberately obscure or puzzling symbolism of this kind will be examined at a later point in the essay.

Thurlby used the *Bestiary* as a key in his reading of the Kilpeck symbols; a similar exercise in our examination of the Stoke Dry menagerie allows us to make some tentative identifications. The two-headed dragon creature on the South side may be the amphisbaena and the androgynous merman on the same column (Figure 6) may once have represented a siren (an unequivocally evil figure). Both of these creatures resemble manuscript illustrations of the same; in the images reproduced in Richard Barber's 1992 *Bestiary* (taken from a mid-thirteenth century manuscript) the siren, with its flat chest, hollow stomach and withered upper body is very much like the Stoke Dry 'semihomo', suggesting that the two images, although separated by a century, draw on an identical iconographic tradition.

Figure 6

The different species of birds at Stoke Dry are more difficult to identify, and several of the Stoke Dry examples (perhaps deprived of their original, colourful plumage) are quite anonymous. A bird on the North side has traditionally been called an eagle, and more specifically the eagle of St. John. I have no quarrel with this interpretation, but it is impossible to substantiate. Other birds, however, display enough distinctive characteristics to make a convincing identification a real possibility. The bird perching on a book at the top of the South column (Figure 7) may be a cock; it appears alongside the bell, perhaps to perform a similar function, by calling the faithful to prayer. The *Bestiary* makes explicit the connection between the cock and daybreak; the cock-crow signals the beginning of the Christian day. The bird's appearance in association with a book is perhaps explained by the line '*Hoc devotus affectus exilit ad precandum legendi quoque munus instaurat.*' The image is entirely positive in character, the cock's position on the book relating the bird directly to the book-bearing and winged figures below and on the North capital.

Figure 7

Some of the other Stoke dry birds are less obviously positive in their symbolic import; the crested bird at the foot of the South column (Figure 8) could be a hoopoe which, the Bestiary tells us, is an '*avis spurcissima et cristis exstantibus galeata, semper in sepulcris et humano stercore commorans*…' The hoopoe stands for evildoers and those who cling to filth and perversity. Its proximity to the siren suggests that the two share in a common nature or are thematically linked, and that this portion of the column is set aside for images of evil and error.

Figure 8

Strangely enough, no-one as yet has looked directly to the Bible to shed light on the peculiarities of the Stoke Dry imagery, or investigated the possibility that the carvings have a scriptural basis and constitute a transliteration of a particular Biblical passage or group of passages. The first scriptural link I should like to

Figure 9

Figure 10

Figure 11

investigate is a possible connection with Isaiah 13, his prophecy against Babylon, certain elements of which seem to accord well with features of the South column imagery. In describing the fate that will befall Sodom and Gomorrah, Isaiah tells us

> 'nec pastores requiescent ibi, sed requiescent ibi bestiae et replebuntur domus eorum draconibus et habitabunt ibi strutiones et pilosi saltabunt ibi, et respondebunt ululae in aedibus eius et sirenae in delubris voluptatis.' (lines 20-22)

The shepherds are in evidence on the South column in the shape of the human figure with a crook and a small, collared quadruped (Figure 9). I am baffled as to why this charming and rustic figure has attracted so little attention in the past, and has apparently never before been identified as a shepherd; he stands surrounded by the instruments of his trade, the dog and crook. The siren lurks nearby, a roof over its head, possibly that of one of the abandoned Babylonian palaces, and the dragons are accounted for by the amphisbaena-type creature and the animal snapping at the shepherd's left elbow. The *ululae* (or screech-owls) fly above. The hoopoe and a roaming lion complete the scene of ruin and dereliction; this part of the column has clearly been given over to the wilderness.

Further scriptural links become apparent in a consideration of lines from Psalm 90, which seems to have had a particularly strong hold on the early medieval imagination. Certain aspects of the psalm go some way towards explaining the composition on the North side of the arch. Line 13, '*super aspidem et basiliscum calcabis conculcabis leonem et draconem*' is most obviously applicable to our reading of the imagery. All four of these beasts may be present on the North shaft; a lion, a serpent (Figure 10) and a dragon-like creature (Figure 11) are easily picked out beneath the cross-legged man. It is more difficult, admittedly, to account for a basilisk. The winged, long-eared and long-tailed reptilian creature on the opposite face (Figure 12), however, appears elsewhere in English Romanesque sculpture, often twinned with a lion as on a capital at Ansley in Warwickshire (where it is strikingly like the Stoke Dry beast) and on the south doorway at Kilpeck. Malcolm Thurlby unhesitatingly describes this latter example as a basilisk . My identification of the dragon and basilisk figures may be interchangeable; the breath of both creatures is given special prominence, and the *Bestiary* advises us of the basilisk's ability to breathe fire. The man holding onto the vines (Figure 13) floats clear of three of these creatures, perhaps a beneficiary of the psalm's covenant of invulnerability.

Even if we are willing to accept the identification of these creatures as basically correct, the argument for a link with Psalm 90 may as yet seem rather unconvincing. It is lent added weight, however, when we consider lines 3 and 4, '*quia ipse liberabit te de laqueo venantium de morte insidiarum, in scapulis suis obumbrabit tibi et sub alis eius sperabis*.' The winged and vested capital figure (Figure 14) may be God the Father as described in line 4; with his prominent wings and elevated position he is well placed to provide shelter for those below. The tone of the imagery on the other face, with its scenes of ensnarement and entanglement, recalls the '*laqueo venantium*.' An animal is caught by the neck and strangled by the lion's tail. A hunter figure appears above, holding his prey aloft, upside-down and hog-tied (Figure 15). The bird with the twisted neck on the capital above (Figure 16) may have been ensnared or had its neck wrung. The imagery is distinctly menacing in tone and its cautionary character seems confirmed by Rita Wood's interpretation of similar motifs on a Romanesque doorway at Fishlake in Yorkshire, where a hunter is depicted holding a rabbit or leveret. For Wood these images speak of 'the imminent danger of death and hell.'

Figure 12

It is interesting to note that both Isaiah 13 and Psalm 90 are mentioned in the *Bestiary*; could it be that the Stoke Dry carvings represent the reconstruction of these Biblical episodes via a reading of the Bestiary? The argument for links with both the *Bestiary* and these particular passages seems to me most convincing and worth pursuing more thoroughly. A fuller investigation could incorporate a consideration of other factors in the translation of text into architectural sculpture; it has been established that nearby Peterborough was 'an early …centre of *Bestiary* use,' and further enquiries might be made into issues of patronage and the circulation and use of these texts in the region.

Figure 13

Although I am convinced that my identification of these texts as significant in our reconstruction of the meaning of the carvings is essentially correct, we must remain mindful of the weaknesses of a purely text-based approach. To insist on the connections between any single text and the Stoke Dry iconography means that certain elements must be amplified and others played down or suppressed. Our attempts to use the *Bestiary* to identify the creatures or to impute certain meanings to the carvings certainly amount to more than hollow speculation and the *Bestiary* clearly has a great deal to teach us about Romanesque depictions of animal and bird life, but we have no way of establishing it beyond doubt as the key to or inspiration for the Stoke Dry carvings.

Figure 14

Another strategy typically employed in the discussion of Romanesque sculpture in recent years has been the formation of

Figure 15

Figure 16

corpora, a tactic that edges slowly towards its natural conclusion in the development of the Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture in Britain and Ireland (the emphasis now is on inclusivity, but this has not always been the case). Given the preoccupation of recent critical writing on Romanesque art with issues of patronage and the identification of regional workshops or schools, it may seem surprising that no-one has made a serious attempt, as yet, to find a place for Stoke Dry in a regional corpus, or to relate it to any particular school of sculpture. Pevsner is the only writer to draw direct comparisons (in terms of style and composition) with other contemporary work. He tells us 'the whole is extremely rare in England, though occasionally met with in France. The source is clearly such metalwork as the Gloucester Candlestick.' The usefulness of the corpus as a means of discussing individual pieces of sculpture has recently been called into question, most notably by Fred Orton in his eloquent and memorable essay on the Ruthwell cross. Corpus scholarship has a tendency to become mired in the unhelpful pursuit of dominant, canonical stylistic currents, or the historical personalities behind them, sometimes to the detriment of an examination of the actual content or meaning of the artwork in question. The scholarly sensibilities that give rise to the creation of corpora are expressed at their most extreme and elitist in the words of Fritz Saxl, who brought a 1947 lecture to a close by telling his audience 'If one wants to understand what happened in this field during the twelfth century, one must not… take the same loving interest in the last bit of Romanesque sculpture in a village church as in the great tympanum at Lincoln, but select the few works which are the milestones on the main road. It is all very well for scholars to take more and more interest in the last recondite Elizabethan poet, but the turn of English poetry was after all decided by Shakespeare and Milton.'

One result of an approach of this sort is that those pieces not easily accommodated within any particular corpus are pushed to the margins. This has been the case with Stoke Dry and numerous other significant Romanesque remnants around the British Isles. This is not to say that a corpus of Romanesque art is entirely without value; as long as we bear the shortcomings of the corpus-based approach in mind, a catalogue of comparable works is always desirable, and can be stimulating and provocative.

There is no need, to my mind, to look in the first instance to metalwork of the Gloucester candlestick type to find material analogous with the Stoke Dry carvings. The columns share marked similarities with pieces attributed by Zarnecki to sculptors working under Alexander the Magnificent, Bishop of Lincoln , and as Stoke Dry falls within the boundaries of the medieval

diocese of Lincoln it is to these that we will first turn our attention.

In terms of both their shape and the arrangement of their imagery the Stoke Dry columns bear comparison with a feature of exterior, monumental Romanesque sculpture, namely the door shafts of the grandly decorated portal. Four of these, decorated with what Zarnecki terms 'inhabited scrolls…foliage containing climbing figures, birds and beasts,' occur at Lincoln cathedral. The Lincoln foliage is arranged in a more orderly pattern than that at Stoke Dry, with figures occurring at regular intervals, but a strikingly similar effect is achieved in both cases. The figures crowd in on the composition, engaged in a variety of lively activities, often in violent conflict.

Corpus scholarship would perhaps designate the Stoke Dry pieces the work of a provincial imitator who, in attempting to convey the same impressions as those achieved by his more accomplished Lincoln counterparts, has produced a sort of degenerate vine scroll, in which the treatment of the foliage is far less disciplined.

In terms of stylistic similarities the rather crowded, obscure imagery of the North capital finds its closest parallels in capital carvings at Melbourne, Derbyshire; here too we find a lion-like creature with a trefoil tail, its body presented in profile but its face in frontality. Other similarities occur at St. Peter's in Northampton; the flying birds carved on a capital are very much like two of the Stoke Dry specimens, with one wing visible and a downturned beak. Another image merits particularly close attention; the upper part of a human, male figure, closely resembling a number of the Stoke Dry humans in the articulation of his limbs. The work at all three churches could quite conceivably have been carved by the same hand. Further research into the links between these and other pieces could potentially result in the recognition of a regional school, of the type to have emerged within the last century in Herefordshire, to such lasting scholarly acclaim.

Leaving aside issues of provenance, these and other pieces can be useful for interpretative purposes. The human figure at Northampton, for example, holds a vertical strand of foliage in each hand, rather like the figure on the North shaft at Stoke Dry. At Northampton, however, the figure seems to emerge from the mouth of a monstrous face below , whereas at Stoke Dry the man's legs dangle free of the foliage. This figure seems to me of pivotal importance in the analysis of the iconographic scheme, encapsulating a number of the problems and the contradictions that have proved most pertinent in recent scholarship on

Figure 17

Figure 18

Romanesque art, and which seem to offer access to the very heart of the character of compositions of this kind. Recent work on the Romanesque and on still earlier Christian art has at last begun to credit even those pieces which appear most unusual or obscure to modern eyes with a serious symbolic aspect. Where once a piece was dismissed as frivolous or barbaric, or categorised under the catch-all heading of 'grotesque', now there is concentrated interrogation. Heslop applies an approach of this sort in a discussion of figures very much like the Stoke Dry man, caught up in foliage, entangled in or suspended by tendrils.

For Heslop, the connotations are entirely negative; these figures occur as naked or in contemporary, secular costume, so they are 'not holy, but examples of frail humanity striving to free themselves from the world of sensual temptation that besets their bodily existence.' According to this interpretation the foliage is decidedly negative in character; it serves to stifle and constrict the clambering and struggling figures. A recent essay by Rita Wood , although reaching a very different conclusion, is similarly instructive in the importance of paying close attention to the foliate component of any piece of Romanesque sculpture. For Wood, Romanesque foliage typically exhibits the signs of a dual symbolic function. When arranged in regular, well-ordered patterns it is emphatically positive in character, to be associated with concepts of renewal, redemption and rebirth. When disordered or unruly it represents death and the perversity of sin. The image of the man holding vertical strands of foliage as it occurs at Northampton seems to support this interpretation; the upright and symmetrical vines draw him away from the jaws of death below. Wood goes on to examine the peculiarly Anglo-Norman image of the cat-like mask emitting foliage, which occurs twice at Stoke Dry (Figures 17 and 18). It is her opinion that the image of a mask of this type, exhibiting 'features which are intuitively understood as evil' symbolises death, and the foliage issuing from its mouth represents 'the eternal life which may flow out of, or follow it.' According to the arguments of both Heslop and Wood, no aspect of twelfth-century artwork can be taken for granted or considered meaningless; the smallest details are imbued with meaning, and to ignore the exact arrangement and behaviour of these details is to imperil our understanding of the piece as a whole.

To conclude, I should like to return to one of my earlier themes, the issue of puzzling symbolism and its function in the church. The Stoke Dry carvings exhibit a variety of twelfth-century preoccupations (none of them 'barbaric' in the slightest) such as Biblical exegesis through pictures, a fascination with

hybrids and natural history (given a vernacular twist in the shape of the cat masks) and the desire to create visual conundrums. Heslop relates this latter impulse to the medieval monastic process of meditation on a text, a salutary exercise involving the exhaustive searching out of meaning. As a stimulus for meditation the twelfth-century image needed to be enigmatic, so that understanding could never be reached quickly or directly. The twelfth century was more acutely aware of the fallibility of human comprehension; if our understanding of a piece of artwork seems incomplete then this is a lesson in itself, in accordance with a wider, cosmic truth. Understanding can only be approached, never attained. It would be a terrible shame, however, to abandon our search for understanding, to give in and despairingly declare the Stoke Dry fragments 'barbaric'. The sculptures are designed to frustrate and puzzle. It is my dear hope that these eloquent and mysterious pieces of vernacular artwork will never again be allowed to fall silent.

Odds & Ends

New Web Site
We have just set up a website for St Peter, Bushey Heath. It is fully illustrated by me.

I hope you enjoy looking at it.

The URL is www.stpeterbusheyheath.org.uk
<http://www.stpeterbusheyheath.org.uk>

From: j.r.salmon@btinternet.com
Julie Spraggon: Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2003, 318 pp., 5 pls., £45.00, hdbk, ISBN 085115895 1)

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Church Monuments Society
Between Friday 23 and Sunday 25 July the Church Monuments Society will be holding a Silver Jubilee Symposium at the University of Lincoln. Places are available at £175 (fully inclusive) and details can be obtained from Mark Downing, 9 Kestrel Drive, Sundorne, Shrewsbury SY1 4TT (Tel: 01743 247977).

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Book Wanted
Michael Wilson is looking for any edition of *The Story of All Saints, London Colney* with a foreword by Sir John Betjeman, edited by Sister Agnes Hypere. It was published by Anthony Clarke on behalf of All Saints Pastoral Centre, Herts 1979 (revised 1988). Michael can be contacted at 01455 616867.

Book Reviews

Julie Spraggon:
Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War
(The Boydell Press, 2003, 318pp., 5 b&w pls, £45.00, ISBN 0 85115895 1)

Julie Spraggon's book is a welcome addition to the growing body of studies of iconoclasm during the Civil War period in England. Revolutionary from the time that the Commons wrested control over the iconoclastic process from churchmen who were now seen as themselves promoting idolatry, this was the critical climax of destructive reform. We have here an admirably full account of the legislative programme of progressive iconoclasm of the 1640s and the ways in which it was implemented. Its extremely thorough examination of the evidence for the destruction that took place during the 1640s and 50s will be of great interest both to historians and to anyone interested in church interiors and furnishings through the Reformation period.

Introductory chapters give the reader a whistle-stop tour of attitudes to images through the hundred years before the start of the Long Parliament, followed by a survey of the publications that argued the case for image reform after that moment, showing the build-up of concern in the early 1640s which was reflected in parliamentary fast sermons and the paper war over Cheapside Cross. There follows an account of the iconoclastic work of the Long Parliament, which explains the passage and content of its legislative enactments on this score and the scope of its officially accomplished work (at Lambeth, the Queen's chapels, Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral, Windsor, and the chapels of the royal palaces). The progressive nature of these legal enactments is made clear, as step by step between 1641 and 1644 more items were consigned to the condemned dustbin of objects that were to be 'taken away', 'defaced', 'abolished' and 'demolished'. These orders are printed in an appendix, though it may still be found helpful to consult the appendix of Trevor Cooper's edition of *The Journal of William Dowsing* where they are tabulated in way which makes it possible to see this confusing development at a glance, as plain crosses came to be proscribed as well as crucifixes, followed by the use of either as decoration of church plate, while a series of new items including organs, vestments, holy-water fonts and representations of angels, appeared for the first time on the forbidden list in 1644.

This lengthening reach of the iconoclastic arm, or extending ambition of the purifiers, was itself problematical as was seen at the time. In 1642 Simonds D'Ewes drew attention to the danger that churchwardens undertaking their responsibilities might have difficulty distinguishing 'what is a superstitious image and what not'.

That indeed bedevilled the entire process, and as Julie Spraggon shows, not only were the demands of the law confusing to churchwardens, willingly or unwillingly doing their best to conform with changing requirements, but there was the perennial difficulty (which existed long before 1640) that the purest of the purifiers were quite ready to anticipate official orders. This thorough examination of iconoclastic development shows how the initial popular tide of spontaneous resentment in 1640-41 against 'innovations' in the shape of rails and changes to communion tables, was followed by the peak of the radical iconoclastic enactments of 1643-44, in which the work of directed enforcement came to the fore as the struggle between king and parliament intensified the work of clearance. Perhaps this observed change of direction should be linked with the author's aside (p. 161) that maybe there was 'a difference in attitude towards the removal of an "innovation" compared to the removal of a traditional piece of church ornamentation'. One might well think that was critical. Parishioners who were affronted by liturgical changes associated with communion table, rails and east ends were by no means necessarily worried by the presence of items such as the crosses on their church steeples or the stained glass figures in their windows. It is possible to discern an important divide here between the active minority (long bothered about objects that became registered in the 1640s programme of destruction) and many of those now called upon by a purgative campaign to reject and act differently towards old things.

Something that emerges clearly from the book's survey of the enforcement of iconoclastic legislation is the extent to which personal initiative counted. Whether it was within the parish church or public monuments outside, a great deal depended on the commitment or fanaticism of the godly who prodded churchwardens or vestries into action, or themselves undertook destruction in ways that were not necessarily legal. Some of the most momentous and devastating destruction that was carried out in the 1640s owed more to individual commitment than the workings of officialdom. The iconoclasm in London, culminating in Westminster Abbey, was the work of the parliamentary Committee for the Demolition of Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry, headed by Sir Robert Harley who himself zealously broke images in the mantle of Old Testament models. He was the driving force behind the committee and it is suggested by Spraggon that tapering out of its activity may well be linked with Sir Robert's attention becoming focused elsewhere. And when we come to the East Anglian campaign obsessively recorded by William Dowsing, and the 'cleansing' of Canterbury Cathedral by the equally fanatical Richard Culmer, Spraggon sees it as probable that both men volunteered their services for these purifying missions. Within a parish too, one or two determined individuals could effectively see to the wholesale reform of a church. Such was the accomplishment of Michael Herring and Captain Richard Hunt, respectively churchwarden and prominent

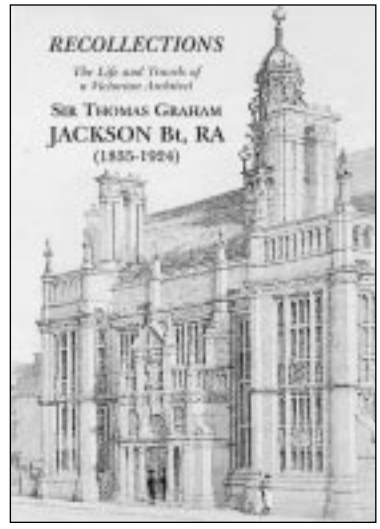
parishioner of St Mary Woolchurch in London, who between them scoured their church's brass inscriptions, plate, monuments, crosses and windows, despite opposition from parishioners who said actions were taken without warrant and that 'emblems of antiquity' had been attacked.

The core of the book is in the last three chapters. We learn here about the very differing fates of different cathedral churches, which for diehards were as anomalous as the existence of bishops in a reformed church, though the aim of levelling them to the ground proved too ambitious. A case is made for reassessing the role of the parliamentary soldiers who did so much damage to cathedrals as expressing, even through parodic gestures, some sense of a godly force combating papistry. There are rich findings from the author's research in the two chapters describing iconoclasm in London and in the universities. Comprehensive searching of London churchwardens' accounts yields a great deal of interest on the actions in different parishes, and this section also includes discussion of the Guildhall and Cheapside Cross. The probing account of the universities is specially significant for showing the extent to which Oxford as well as Cambridge felt the impact of iconoclastic reform, even if much less systematically. Here the author argues ingeniously and convincingly (by calculating from a glazier's bill the amount of glass involved) that Bemard van Linge's windows in Wadham College were probably taken down in 1649 (to be reinstated in 1663).

This is just one example of the many riches on offer, that shows how much there is to learn and reflect on in this ably researched book.

Margaret Aston

Thomas Graham Jackson:
***Recollections: the Life and Travels of a Victorian Architect* (Unicorn Press, London, 2003, 334pp., c.100 pls, 34 col. pls, £35.00 hdbk, ISBN 1 906290 72 4)**



T. G. Jackson was one of the most successful and distinguished architects of the late-Victorian period. He is best known for his work in Oxford where, over the course of his career he not only produced a significant number of outstanding buildings, but did so in a style unmistakably his own: 'Anglo-Jackson' as Betjeman was to christen it.

Jackson was the product of Scott's office – a fascinating account of which is one of the book's many high-lights – a near contemporary there of Bodley and Street. However, while the latter two went on to develop further the Gothic tradition of their master, Jackson adopted a more eclectic approach to design, and herein lay his importance. As he explains in his *Recollections* – and the following quotation is only one of many insightful comments in the book – even as a student, 'the Neo-Gothic school, of which I had been an ardent disciple, [began to] perplexed me and shook my convictions

… I began to doubt whether in [the Gothic tradition] there was any element of modern life, whether we modern Goths were not after all pseudo-Goths – not really living characters but masquerades dressing up in bygone costumes to play a part in an imaginary drama which we should have to leave behind us when we went out into the streets of real-life. There was no revival in this – no living again … Clearly the theories proposed by the prime movers have been to make Gothic architecture become once more a living vernacular style, to the exclusion of any other, but they have failed. They had got the old dead style on its legs and propped it up, but they could not make it walk.' Jackson's personal response to the problem was to adopt a more flexible attitude to the Gothic Revival and admit that, for instance, Flemish gables or English Early Renaissance idioms would produce a more useful and legitimate style for the age. Thus, through his accomplished designs such as the Oxford Examination Schools (1876-83), he made an important contribution to the lively stylistic debates of the late nineteenth century as well as emerging as a key figure in the moves towards a greater integration of the visual arts, architecture and craftsmanship.

As a result of such successes in the secular field, there is a danger that we overlook Jackson's not insignificant ecclesiastical output: a dozen Oxford churches and college chapels either built, repaired or enhanced; more than one hundred such commissions elsewhere in England including work at the cathedrals of Canterbury, Norwich, Ripon, Wells and Winchester. Despite the originality displayed in his secular work, the stylistic approach he adopted for his church designs was closer to the Gothic mainstream, and his restorations are characterised by sensitivity and respect for the past.

Jackson wrote his *Recollections* in his seventies and one suspects some of his 'memories' are tempered with hindsight. Nevertheless, they provide an informative account of the architectural scene which their writer inhabited. They were first published in 1950, edited by Jackson's son, Basil. Half a century later, his son, Nicholas, has produced a new edition, the fruit of twenty years' work with his grandfather's manuscript. The revisions are to be welcomed, and the result is both illuminating and eminently readable. Jackson has much to say about his foreign travels but alongside this there are interesting accounts of his patrons, competitions and fellow architects as well as insights into his design process. The text is complemented by the illustrations, the majority of which are Jackson watercolours or ink drawings. As a book, Jackson's *Recollections* are made all the more useful by the substantial introduction by James Bettley which successfully places Jackson in context and there is also a valuable Gazetteer listing all the known commissions, each with a comprehensive bibliography (also supplied by Bettley). This is a welcome addition to the literature of the period's architects and architecture.

Christopher Webster

Letters

From: John Baker

I have just seen your letter in *Ecclesiology Today* issue 32.

The sketch reproduced is, I am certain, of St Martin's church, Dorking, Surrey. This was demolished in 1835, except for the chancel, not visible in the sketch, which survived until 1866. The present church, designed by Henry Woodyer, was built during the 10 years following that date. A complete account (including the reproduction of an oil painting of *c.*1830 from a similar but not identical viewpoint) is published in *A History of St Martin's Dorking,* ed. Alexandra Wedgwood (Friends of St Martin's 1990, ISBN 0 9516097 0 X) which contains much other fascinating information.

9 Castlehythe,
Ely,
Cambs CB7 4BU

From: Alan F. Watson

Recently, on a day out from Bath, I visited Charterhouse-on-Mendip with it's church of St. Hugh.

I subsequently found out that the church was by W. D. Caröe and was built in 1908.

My question of our members is why was a church built in such a remote spot. It must have been more remote at the turn of the century and Arthur Mee in *King's England* pushes this point!

If you could make a request for information in the pages of *Ecclesiology Today* I would be most grateful. So often on returning from a day out there is a niggling question!

P.S. As a Church Crawler for many years I would like to say how much I enjoy the journal.

6 Wren Court,
85 Coombe Road,
Croydon,
Surrey CR0 5SP

From: Fr. Michael Fisher

The financial contribution given towards the Martyrs' Memorial by Jesse Watts Russell of Ilam Hall, Staffordshire, has been taken as an indication that he was opposed to the Tractarian movement (Phil Mottram, "The History of the Ilam Cross, Staffordshire" *ET* 31, May 2003, p31, & "John Macduff Derick: A Biographical Sketch", *ET* 32, January 2004, p.49). Yet the £50 which Watts Russell contributed to the Martyrs' Memorial Appeal is offset by the £5,000 which he gave in 1842 to restore the interior of St. Mary's Church, Stafford, which was done on thoroughly Camdenian lines. The only condition attached to the gift was that an equivalent sum for the restoration of the exterior should be raised from other sources. Watts Russell contributed to this too, as did A. J. Beresford Hope. This was Gilbert Scott's first major restoration scheme following his awakening to the "thunder" of A.W. N. Pugin's *Dublin Review* articles, and having joined the CCS in February 1842. Scott's scheme for the interior of St. Mary's was bold and - for the time - liturgically "advanced". The chancel was equipped with cathedral-like choir-stalls (St. Mary's had been collegiate until 1548), canopied sedilia, and an altar furnished with two tall candlesticks and a velvet frontal embroidered by Jesse Watts Russell's daughters. Encaustic tiles by Minton covered the floors and the dado behind the altar, the latter including the emblems of the Passion. Above the altar was a new east window by Ward & Nixon, with the Crucifixion in its central panel, paid for by Jesse Watts Russell. Pugin, whose journeys to Cheadle and Alton Towers often took him through Stafford, declared it to be "the best restoration which has been effected in modern times" (*Staffordshire Advertiser*, 21 December 1844). More than that, Pugin designed a magnificent chromolithograph as the frontispiece to the superb set of drawings of St. Mary's made in 1844 by John Masfen, and published in 1852 with an introduction by Gilbert Scott (J. Masfen, Jun., *Views of the Church of St. Mary at Stafford*, London 1852). I wonder, would Watts Russell have funded this restoration so generously if he had disagreed with its principles and objectives?

35 Newland Avenue,
Stafford ST16 1NL

Church Fires

In December 2003 people living in **Ebbw Vale** had to spend the night in a local leisure centre following fears that the church spire at Christ Church would collapse following a fire. For the previous six months restoration work had been underway to the steeple, and the tower was surrounded by scaffolding which the fire-fighters had to use in windy conditions to tackle the fire which was about 150 feet above ground. It took three to four hours to extinguish. An electrical fault was thought to be the cause. Following remedial work to make the spire safe people were allowed back to their homes the following day. Christ Church was built 1860-61 to the designs of John Norton. The spire was not completed until 1891 and is 175ft high.

Flames also ripped through St Paul's church in **Addlestone**, **Surrey** in the early hours of 12th December 2003. Most of the roof was destroyed as was the stained glass. The intensity of the fire prevented fire-fighters from entering the building and arson was suspected. The Revd Hay said that other congregations in the Addlestone area, such as St Augustus and the Salvation Army, have been rallying to help members of St Paul's. The church was built in 1836 to the designs of James Savage (who designed Chelsea St Luke). Website: http://www.stpauls.addlestone.org.uk

A bolt of lightning caused a devastating fire at St Paul's Church, **Wokingham**, which brought the bells crashing down to the ground. Fortunately, the three-inch thick wooden doors at the entrance to the church prevented the fire from spreading, and the inside of the church escaped with only some smoke damage. Following the fire it was possible to see right up into the spire from the floor.

Abroad, the Serbian Monastery of **Chilander** on **Mount Athos**, founded in 1197, was badly damaged by a fire in the early hours of 5th March 2004. One of the medieval churches alongside the tower of St Sava was badly damaged, its iconostasis destroyed as were its 17th- and 18th-century frescoes. The main church however was not damaged; it was also spared in another major fire which engulfed the monastery in 1772.

The latest unrest in **Kosovo** 17th - 19th March has also seen irreplaceable Serbian Orthodox churches damaged by arson, according to the Serbian press. Chief among them are said to be churches in **Prizren**, including St George's Cathedral (a 19th-century Renaissance structure) and the former 14th-century cathedral of the Holy Mother. KFOR troops are protecting several monasteries including the heritage sites of Decani and Gracanica, the latter now the seat since 1999 of the Orthodox bishop of Prizren. Early reports of the destruction of Dević monastery were denied by the UN who said French troops were on site; but pictures show the nunnery burnt and ransacked. In retaliation, crowds in Serbia burnt mosques in Nis and Belgrade.

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800 year-old church collapse kills 17

At least 17 people died in **Ethiopia**'s Gondar region when a church in which they were worshipping collapsed. The Mewa Tsadkan Gabriel church is 500 kilometres (310 miles) north-east of the capital Addis Ababa. The roof of the ancient church, carved out of rock, caved in as worshippers celebrated the annual feast of St Gabriel's on Monday 28th December. Twenty people had to be rescued from the rubble of the 800-year old structure. The dead were later stated to be mainly priests and deacons.

Most people were outside according to Tarekenge Emajnue, information officer for the Gondar region, who said "Witnesses said

Top: St Paul's, Addlestone, Surrey; middle: Chilander, Mount Athos; bottom: St George's, Prizren, Kosovo.

there were lots of people singing and dancing around the church, which may have caused it to collapse". The church was one of the earliest to be built by King Lalibela, who ruled the Horn of Africa nation from the late 12th century to the early 13th century. Ethiopia is home to dozens of churches carved out of rock hundreds of years ago, which draw tourists from around the world.

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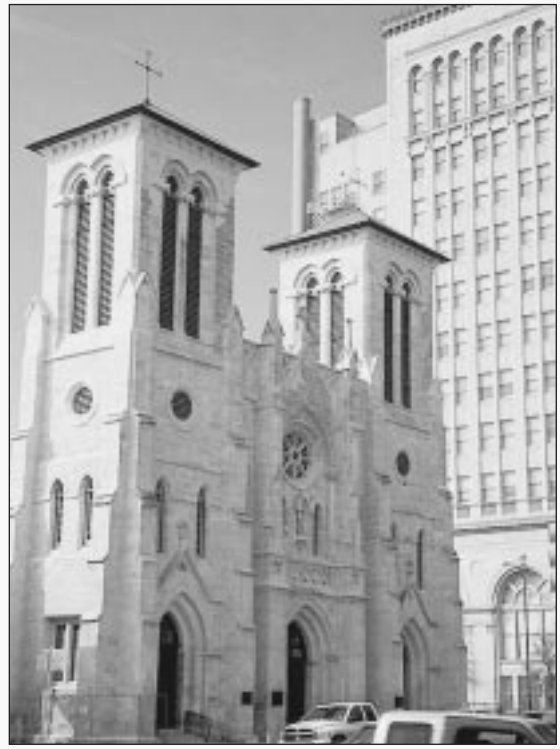
Rampage

Martin Miles, 49, pleaded guilty at Chelmsford Crown Court in December 2003 to a series of charges including damaging religious artefacts at **Waltham Abbe**y, which was the culmination of a 'frightening and horrifying rampage' which saw him enter the abbey with two axes, and cause damage to the tune of an estimated £100,000 - £200,000. He was sentenced to be detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act.



The Cathedral of San Fernando, Sat Antonio, Texas

In a similar attack in January 2004 a 38 year-old man went on a vandalism spree at the historic cathedral of San Fernando in **San Antonio**, Texas, smashing a row of statues in the sanctuary recently restored in a $5.8 million renovation of the cathedral last year. San Fernando Cathedral is the oldest Cathedral sanctuary in the United States. It was founded by Spanish missionaries in 1731 and the cornerstone of the existing building was laid in 1738, making it the oldest continuously-operated church in the country. A stone ossuary at the front of the Cathedral is said to hold the ashes of Davy Crockett, James Bowie, and other Alamo defenders.

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Vicar may be carpeted over tiles

A vicar will have to explain himself to a consistory court after being accused of laying carpet over historic Minton tiles in his church without permission. The Revd Nigel di Castiglione is also accused of moving the font at St Mary & All Saints parish church of **Trentham**, Staffs, to a less prominent position and repositioning the church pews, for which a faculty request two years ago was apparently refused. The grade II listed church was built in 1844 by Sir Charles Barry. The hearing before the Lichfield consistory court is scheduled to take place on July 10.

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Senseless vandalism

Historic Scotland has put security guards at **Lincluden** Collegiate Church in Dumfries and Galloway which is under threat from vandals. The building has already been damaged and covered with graffiti, and archaeologists fear the ruins could be entirely lost to future generations. One expert working there said: "To some of the kids, Lincluden is just an old pile of rocks. It was a real eye-opener to see the damage that has been done. Some parts have been spray-painted and the worrying thing is that they seem to be targeting the most interesting bits." These include the spectacular tomb of Princess Margaret, daughter of King Robert III and widow of the 4th Earl of Douglas, constructed after her death in 1450. The Collegiate Church was built around 1160, when a priory of Benedictine nuns was formed there. In 1389, Archibald, third Earl of Douglas, better known as Archibald the Grim of Threave Castle, replaced the priory with a college of canons. The building was greatly embellished throughout the 1400s.

The ruins of Lincluden Collegiate Church, Dumfries

In a perverse twist, a new centre planned to keep teenage vandals off the streets has been boarded up because of vandalism. Every pane of glass in the huge windows either side of the altar at St Peter's Church, **Chelston**, **Torquay**, have been shot out by air gun pellets. The four floor-to-ceiling window panels have now been boarded up at a cost of £460. The under-used church built in the

1960s at the bottom of Queensway was closed last year and there are plans for a conversion to a community centre which include a club for young people who are bored and have nowhere to go.

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Listed Kirk to be rebuilt - in Japan?

Trinity Church in **Irvine (Ayrshire)** was built 1861-3, the first church by Frank Pilkington, and is listed Grade-A. The tower and spire were completed in 1869. Hexagonal in plan, it was built for the Revd William Robertson, otherwise known as the "Poet Preacher" because of his lyrical sermons. After over a century of worship, the church was vacated in 1966 by its congregation. It was saved from demolition in 1976 and converted into a community centre. However it has stood empty since 1997 and a recent report has estimated that it would cost £1.8 million to restore.

Alan Moss, who is campaigning to save the church, said: "It is a Category A building and as such is among the country's most important architectural works. It would be a great shame if the building were lost to Irvine." Trinity Trust, the council-run charity, has held a year-long inquiry to determine other uses for the dilapidated building without success and has now asked Historic Scotland for permission to demolish it. There are however two rival bids from companies in Japan to demolish it brick by brick and re-erect it 6000 miles away in either Japan or China where it would be used for European-style weddings and funerals. The specialist demolition would cost an estimated £100,000 alone.

Bottom left and above: Two old photographs of Trinity Church, Irvine, Ayrshire

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Holy Trinity Doomed!

Some fifteen months after restoration started, a striking Doom painting at **Coventry**'s Holy Trinity Church can once again be appreciated by visitors. The wall painting dates from the 1430s, and has been hailed by critics as the best of its type in the country. The figure of Jesus at the Last Judgement is now clear to see - with people ready for Heaven on one side, and the damned on the other side, being cast down to Hell, hounded by demons. There are images of bodies rising from their graves, three ale-wives being dragged to their doom for selling watery liquor, and the 'mouth of hell'.

The Doom was whitewashed over in the 1560s and rediscovered by the Victorians. Layers of varnish, dirt and tar - applied in a nineteenth-century attempt to preserve the painting – are being removed by team of six conservators. Vicar Keith Sinclair said it was 'a hugely significant moment' for his church and for Coventry. "The painting is not only a part of a priceless heritage, but continues to speak of God's truth into the 21st century. We might use different imagery, but the truth of Jesus in Glory, coming as our Judge, remains a

core part of our faith about the real world." Website: http://www.holytrinitycoventry.org.uk/main.htm

Part of the doom at Holy Trinity, Coventry, one of the images available on the church website

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Other news and feedback in brief

In January there were calls to demolish the Churches Conservation Trust's St Botolph's Church in **Skidbrooke**, near Louth, on the grounds it may have been taken over by Satanists. The medieval church, in an isolated area, has not been used for regular Christian worship for some 30 years. The Rector of Louth, Canon Stephen Holdaway, says: "Satanists have been desecrating this church by painting pillars black and having animal sacrifices there. No-one has seen this happening because it is so isolated, but people have seen fires burning and odd activities going on. This sort of activity shows no respect for the people who are buried there." The CCT describes the church as 'a magnificent medieval marshland church with a special charm and character'.

The redundant church of St Botolph, Skidbrooke, Lincolnshire

A **Belfast** congregation is fighting to have its church re-opened. St Joseph's, Sailortown was closed in February 2001 after the Catholic Church said there was no longer a sustainable community in the docks area. Over a hundred people have mounted a sit-in at the church to highlight 'neglect' by the Catholic Church and the Department of the Environment and, in February, Mass was celebrated for the first time in three years. Website: http://www.sailortownbelfast.org/StJoseph's.htm

In **Liverpool** the owner of the former Grade II* St Andrews Church of Scotland in Rodney Street is to be given two months to preserve it - or risk the city council buying it from him. The church has remained derelict after a 1983 fire but was purchased by Dr Amoolyh Prasad, from Wolverhampton, in 1988 with plans to create offices and medical consulting rooms. Planning permission was granted in 1992 but the council says since then there has been 'no evidence of any meaningful progress'. Liverpool's planning manager Nigel Lee is now recommending the city serve further Repairs Notices on Dr Prasad and, if action is not taken within two months, to apply to the Secretary of State for a compulsory purchase order. The building is on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register.

EcclSoc member David Thornton has sent news of churches in **Bradford**, West Yorkshire. St Mary Magdalen, Wood Street, in Manningham, dating from 1878, is facing closure due to dwindling congregations and high repair bills. Fr. Jonathan Cooper says attendance at the church averages 20, and the surrounding area is now 80% Muslim. Meanwhile studies of the mosaics at St John, Clayton, suggest them to be by Gaetano Meo whose work can also be seen at London's St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

Documentation shows that Clayton mill owner and church benefactor Harrison Benn hired Meo to mastermind an entire marble floor in memory of his daughter Mabel and a series of mosaic panels.

David Bryant and Allan Barton have updated information from **York**. In September 2002 a number of church redundancies were recommended in a report to the Archbishop, but David reports that with one exception it has been decided to make no redundancies at the present time. The exception is St Martin-cum-Gregory, which despite having had no services for fifty years had never been declared formally redundant. This has now happened. It's a very fine building (grade I listed), but in need of a lot of work. Allan adds that apparently they have a new use in mind for St Martin-cum-Gregory, as a stained glass centre run by a local stained glass conservator: a workshop-cum-museum. An excellent use considering the fine glass the church contains.

Anne Willis comments on **Woolverton** church, N.E. Somerset, which featured in this column in September 2003, following its conversion to a house. "The two bells from Woolverton still summon people to worship. The treble bell is not far away at Holy Trinity, Bradford on Avon, where it is used as a service bell, and the second bell went to Buscot, Oxon, to form part of a new ring of bells." The transfers were done with the help of the Keltek Trust, which helps Christian churches worldwide to acquire second-hand bells. (Weblink - http://www.btinternet.com/~keltek/index.html)

Nigel Pitt writes about **St Mark's Silvertown**. "The Brick Lane Music Hall finally opened after lengthy delays on 9 January. I was at the second night and can report that the church makes an excellent venue for a music hall (at least it is in use and still standing). The body of the nave has become the dining/seating area (seating 200 diners) with a raised section at the west end to improve sight lines. The chancel arch has become the proscenium arch. The side aisles accommodate box office, bar and reception areas with toilets in the basement. The interior brickwork has been extensively cleaned and looks like new. It is said that the proprietor raised £1m to convert the building. This is the third home for the Brick Lane Music Hall as the previous landlords supposedly increased the rent to an unacceptable level. I hope that the proprietor, Vincent Hayes, makes a success of the venture but I agree with you, I am not sure that it is in the right area; but time will tell. Once the Jubilee Line extension is open to the City Airport (very close), it will however be more easily accessible."

Two medieval bells stolen from a Herefordshire church six years ago have turned up in an estate agents in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. They were displayed inside **Edvin Loach** church, near Bromyard, until they were taken in December 1997. The bells had been loaned to the shop by a local scrap metal dealer who was unaware of the 12-inch high bells' history. A local campanologist spotted them and used the internet to track down their origins. A third bell taken at the same time is still missing.

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And finally . . .

I could not write this article successfully without you, the members, keeping me informed of what is happening in your area. However the views expressed are often my own or those of contributors, not the Society's.

I can be contacted on email at churchcrawler@blueyonder.co.uk or by conventional means at 10 Lambley Road, St George, Bristol BS5 8JQ. Please send articles or newspaper clippings, preferably with photographs, together with a SAE for return if required. Please note that the former AOL Email address in previous editions is no longer functional.

Phil Draper

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Suzanna Branfoot, MA, 11 Darrell Road, Caversham,
Reading RG4 7AY.
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HON. EDITOR OF *ECCLESIOLOGY TODAY*
John Elliott, MA, PhD, South Barn, Old Standlynch
Farm, Downton, Salisbury SP5 3QR.
email: j.p.elliott@virgin.net

HON. DIRECTOR OF VISITS &
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The Schoolmaster's House, Aberford Road, Barwick in
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Back Lane, Hathersage, Derbyshire S30 1AR.

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Will members please address any correspondence to the officer concerned. This will normally be as follows (addresses above):

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NEWS REPORTER
Phil Draper, 10 Lambley Road, St George,
Bristol BS5 8JQ
email: phildraper@blueyonder.co.uk

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