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2007
Prize

NEWFOUNDLAND GOTHIC

PETER COFFMAN

ÉDITIONS
MULTIMONDES

Collection Cahiers de l'Institut du patrimoine de l'UQAM

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Dans le monde entier, le patrimoine, les constructions et les représentations patrimoniales occupent aujourd'hui une place de choix dans la recherche universitaire. Les *Cahiers* de l'Institut du patrimoine de l'UQAM font écho, depuis Montréal, aux questionnements et aux explorations que ce vaste domaine soulève, dans le but de mieux comprendre les mécanismes qui engendrent les ancrages identitaires et qui pavent la voie aux constructions mémorielles.

Études et analyses sur les objets, les traces, les usages, les savoir-faire, mais aussi sur les représentations et sur les mémoires concourent ici à une définition élargie de la notion de patrimoine qui échappe aux cloisonnements disciplinaires; le patrimoine apparaît ici comme outil sociétal de projection dans l'avenir plutôt que comme l'encensoir d'un passé glorifié.

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Titres parus

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3. *Le temps de l'espace public urbain: construction, transformation et utilisation*, sous la direction de Yona Jébrak et Barbara Julien, 2008, 216 pages.
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Chaque année, l'Institut du patrimoine de l'UQAM décerne le Prix Phyllis-Lambert à un(e) candidat(e) qui a soumis la meilleure thèse de doctorat ou le meilleur mémoire de maîtrise portant sur l'étude et l'histoire de l'architecture au Canada, selon l'évaluation qui en est faite par un jury indépendant.

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Each year, the Phyllis Lambert Prize is awarded by UQAM's Institut du patrimoine to a candidate who has submitted the best doctoral dissertation or best master's thesis on the subject of architecture and architectural history in Canada, based on the assessment of an independent jury.

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The Phyllis Lambert Prize consists of a certificate of recognition that comes with a \$1500 scholarship, awarded by the Fondation UQAM. In addition, the Institut du patrimoine offers assistance for the publication of the prize-winning text, either in one of its collections or with an independent publisher. The cover page of the publication bears the mention "Phyllis-Lambert Prize". The prize will be awarded during a special ceremony included in the program of the annual conference of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada (SSAC) – held in turn in various cities throughout Canada.

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St. James, Battle Harbour, Labrador, from the south-east

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“North”, “south”, “east”, and “west” in captions refer to liturgical directions rather than compass points.

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To Diane



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Prologue

The Church of England has a long history of self-diagnosing its crises, and prescribing church-building campaigns as a cure. One such period of high activity was the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹ This was an era of considerable religious energy, that witnessed the founding of both the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG). These vigorous and vigilant Societies were not signs of a Church at peace. Internally, the Church was divided and in turmoil.² The Church was split into High and Low factions, which generally corresponded to Tory and Whig political ideologies respectively.³ Moreover, the Church was – or at least was convinced that it was – threatened by external forces that were gaining momentum. Dissenters were spreading through the rapidly expanding suburbs, aided by the speed and cheapness with which they could erect their meeting-houses. One estimate claimed that $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population of London's suburbs – some 100,000 people – were dissenters.⁴ Even more worrying was the belief that Papists were trolling for converts among the masses whose spiritual needs were not being addressed by the cumbersome, inflexible bureaucratic machinery of the Established Church. In such an uncontrolled environment, atheism and licentiousness were all too easily born.

1. See M.H. Port, Ed., *The Commissions for Building Fifty New Churches*, London: 1986; also Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, *Hawkmoor's London Churches*, Chicago and London: 2000, in particular chapter two, "Hawkmoor and the Divines", pp. 47-80.

2. Port, p. x.

3. du Prey, p. 50. "High Church" referred to "those who opposed any accommodation with the Dissenters", while those of the "Low Church" advocated Protestant reconciliation.

4. Port, p. ix.

In 1711, Parliament responded to what it termed “the late excessive growth of infidelity, heresy and profaneness.”⁵ A committee of the Houses of Commons and Lords recommended that the press and the theatre be rigorously censored, that non-attendance at church be punished by law, and that new churches be built. Of these, only the last became government policy. On April 6, 1711, a recommendation for the building of fifty new churches was adopted.⁶ Intended to serve London, Westminster, and their suburbs, these churches were to be built from funds taken from the coal tax, which had served to re-build London's churches after the great fire of 1666.⁷

Shortly before the first Commission's mandate expired in 1715, it reported that approximately £40,000 had been paid to workmen, with a further £23,000 in accounts payable to them.⁸ In total, roughly £80,000 had been spent. Seven churches were underway. It was estimated that the total amount of money available for the project would likely amount to half what was needed.⁹ Subsequent Commissions carried on in a more frugal manner. By 1726, £249,000 had been spent on twelve churches, three of which had been completed.¹⁰ By 1733, the funding was exhausted, and building activity ceased. In total, twelve churches had been built by the Commission, five churches had been subsidized by their funds, one church had been bought and altered by the Commission, and one further church was bought without alteration.

Less than one century later, in the early nineteenth century, crisis loomed again for the Established Church.¹¹ The Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars had increased the pace of industrialization in England, resulting in a larger and poorer working class. To the Established Church, the ignorant and uneducated masses were easy prey for Methodism, atheism, or even Popery. Moreover, they were ripe targets for revolutionary agitation. One defense against this danger was the Anglican Church.

In response to this threat, a National Church Society was appointed. That Society found a church infrastructure that was emphatically not up to the job in hand, particularly (although not exclusively) in predominantly urban areas where industrialization had

5. Port, p. x.

6. Port, p. xii.

7. du Prey, pp. 49-50.

8. Port, p. xxv.

9. Port, p. xxvi.

10. Port, p. xxxi.

11. On the Commissioners Churches, see Michael Port, *Six Hundred New Churches*, London: SPCK, 1961. See also Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste*, London: 1928, chapter V.

resulted in dramatic population increases. In Sheffield, for instance, Anglican Church capacity was 6,280 in a community of 55,000. Anglican Churches in Manchester could seat 11,000 of the 80,000 inhabitants; the largest parish church in Bath could accommodate 4,870 of 20,560. London itself was scarcely doing better: Marylebone, with a population of 76,624, had a capacity of only 8,700. In total, it was estimated that England and Wales needed an additional 2,528,505 places for Anglican worshippers.¹²

Given the potentially volatile social, political, and economic conditions, this situation was seen as a threat to the nation, and only the nation – that is, Parliament – could address it. In 1818, the government duly appointed an independent commission of churchmen – the “Church Building Commission” – and voted them the extraordinary sum of £1,000,000 for new churches.¹³ Two hundred and fourteen new churches resulted, in what was possibly the most ambitious, systematic nation-wide church-building campaign since the Norman re-building of Anglo-Saxon England.¹⁴

About a quarter of a century later, on remote, rocky, windswept Newfoundland in the North Atlantic, the Church of England again found itself in a state of crisis.¹⁵ In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the Church in Newfoundland was a somewhat ramshackle affair, serving tiny fishing villages (known as “outports”), accessible only by water from a distant diocesan seat in Halifax (which itself represented an improvement over the island’s earlier status as a part of the Diocese of London). A hopelessly inadequate number of clergy ministered from an even smaller number of churches. Enemies of the Established Church – decadence, dissent, and above all Romanism – were everywhere, ready to prey on the unschooled and spiritually unsupervised masses. Wesleyan Methodists and Roman Catholics were all too ready to fill the many voids left by the inattention of the Church of England. Once again, the Established Church found itself in a life-and-death struggle for survival and souls. And once again the solution, at least in part, was to build churches.

Those churches could not be of just any style. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Gothic had become inextricably identified with the English nation and its Established Church. Arguably since as far back as the seventeenth century, English Gothic had been

12. Port (1961), p. 5.

13. Port (1961), pp. 13-14.

14. On the Norman building campaign, see Eric Fernie, *The Architecture of Norman England*, Oxford: 2000.

15. For a far-reaching analysis of the complex relationship between the Church and Newfoundland society and politics, see John P. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855*, Montreal and Kingston: 1999.



interpreted by some as the progeny and symbol of ancient English political principles of liberty.¹⁶ During the reign of Queen Victoria, the Church of England proclaimed itself to be the one true, ancient Church and Gothic to be its native architectural style.¹⁷ If architecture were to be an effective tool in the struggle against the spiritual debasement of England's oldest colony, only Gothic architecture would do.

16. This issue will be discussed more fully in Chapter Two.

17. Unlikely as this statement may seem, it is specifically argued in 1841 by Newfoundland's Anglican Archdeacon Thomas Bridge, in his sermon "The Two Religions; or, the Question settled, Which Is the Oldest Church, the Anglican or the Romish?" See discussion in Chapter Two.



CHAPTER ONE

Newfoundland Gothic Before Ecclesiology

The Gothic Revival, as a church style, had two distinct phases in the first half of the nineteenth century. Its most famous and celebrated manifestation was as the moral exemplar of the Established (i.e., Anglican) Church. Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-52) had been the first to establish Gothic as a “serious” stylistic option, in his book *Contrasts: or, a Parallel Between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day; Shewing the Present Decay of Taste, Accompanied by Appropriate Text* (first published in 1836). In it, Pugin argued that Gothic architecture was not only aesthetically, but morally superior to the Classical style, just as Christianity (the historical root of Gothic) was superior to Paganism (the historical root of Classicism). John Ruskin (1818-1900) took this further, arguing in *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53) that Gothic was indicative of a more just society than Classical, and that it was also the only rational style of architecture.¹

As a Roman Catholic convert, Pugin was somewhat marginalized professionally, but his architectural principles were eagerly adopted by a group of undergraduates from Cambridge known as the Cambridge Camden Society. Founded in 1839 by High Church sympathizers, and re-named the “Ecclesiological Society” in 1845, the Society vigorously and effectively promoted Gothic as the only suitable style for Anglican churches on liturgical, historical, ethical and aesthetic grounds. Led originally by Cambridge undergraduates Benjamin Webb, John Mason Neale, and A.J.B. Beresford Hope, they put forward their views primarily (although not exclusively) in their periodical *The Ecclesiologist*. In this journal and a number of influential pamphlets (such as “A Few Words to Church Builders” of 1841, or “A Few Words to Churchwardens” of the same

1. See in particular Ruskin's chapter “The Nature of Gothic.”



year²), they defined the principles of “Ecclesiology”, or the study of church architecture – hence the other name by which they are frequently known, “Ecclesiologists”. Their architectural doctrines were vividly realized by their most favoured architects, William Butterfield (1814-1900) and R.C. Carpenter (1812-55). It is not an exaggeration to claim that the Cambridge Camden/Ecclesiological Society brought about a revolution in Anglican church architecture throughout the British Empire and even beyond. In the opinion of J. Mordaunt Crook, Ecclesiology was, by 1867, an incontestable success; unlikely as it may seem, “a group of Cambridge undergraduates had succeeded in transforming the appearance of every Anglican church in the world.”³ More about the Cambridge Camden Society, their ideals, and their influence will be said in Chapter Two.

Well before Pugin, Ruskin, and the ecclesiologists, however, Gothic had found favour with a group in England known as the Church Commissioners. This early, archaeologically imprecise and comparatively un-scholarly phase of Gothic had a significant impact on Newfoundland architecture.⁴

The first Church Building Act was passed in 1818, in the wake of a particularly unsettling series of events.⁵ As England fought for her survival against Napoleon and against revolutionary fervour in America, industrialization accelerated and the plight of the working poor worsened. Addressing this situation was not merely a matter of morality – as recent events in France had demonstrated, a downtrodden underclass was a dangerous thing. The Established Church was looked to as part of the solution, for it was generally understood that ignorant and impoverished masses were prone to both atheism and Dissent, and either could all too easily lead to revolution. With the massive increase in population in industrial towns, however, the Church infrastructure was clearly not up to the job; hence the 1818 Church Building Act.

The Commissioners’ Churches, also known as the “Million Churches” on account of the amount of their overall funding, have not fared well in subsequent critical or scholarly

2. These pamphlets have been recently re-published. See Christopher Webster, ed., *Temples . . . Worthy of His Presence: the Early Publications of the Cambridge Camden Society*, Reading: 2003.

3. J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*, London: 1987, p. 63.

4. On the Commissioners Churches, see Michael Port, *Six Hundred New Churches*, London: SPCK, 1961. See also Rhodri Windsor Liscombe, “Economy, Character and Durability: Specimen Designs for the Church Commissioners, 1818”, *Architectural History*, volume 13, 1979, pp. 43-57; Gerald Carr, “Soane’s Specimen Church Designs of 1818: A Reconsideration”, *Architectural History*, volume 16, 1973, pp. 37-54; Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste*, London: 1928, chapter V.

5. See Port, chapter 1, “The Church Building Movement, 1810-18”, pp. 1-20.

literature. Indeed, as John Summerson has pointed out, the Million Churches are the least studied and least valued of the three enormous church-building campaigns of post-medieval England (the others being the post-fire reconstruction of London by Wren, the Fifty New Churches of 1711, and the High Anglican building campaign that peaked in the 1870s), notwithstanding that it is the largest of these campaigns by a considerable degree.⁶ Its impact, however, is undeniable, and it could reasonably be credited with laying the intellectual foundation for Pugin and Ecclesiology. The most prolific Commissioners' architect, Thomas Rickman (1776-1841), was praised by the architect, designer and writer Charles Eastlake (1836-1906) as a theorist and practitioner who arguably did "greater service to the [Gothic] cause than either his learned contemporaries [Robert Willis and William Whewell] or his enthusiastic disciple [Pugin]."⁷ The prodigious output of Rickman underlines the often overlooked contribution that the Commissioners Churches made to scholarship on English medieval architecture. Almost two centuries later, Rickman's categories of Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular remain as indispensable to students of English Gothic as they were to the nineteenth-century Ecclesiologists who despised his architecture.⁸

Unlike the Ecclesiologists a few decades later, the Church Commissioners saw no inherent ethical advantages to the use of Gothic, nor did they overtly identify the Gothic style with the history of the English Church or nation. Gothic was, however, held by some to be less expensive than the competing Classical alternative.⁹ A Classical church, the argument went, required a portico; moreover, it required a tower (a difficult feature to incorporate with a Classically-inspired church, as can be seen in James Gibbs' St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London) in order to be distinguished from a meeting-house. Gothic, on the other hand (or so the argument went), required only a belfry in order to be sufficiently church-like. Gothic could also be made entirely from brick, whereas a Classical portico needed to be of stone.

Notwithstanding these arguments, Michael Port has questioned the belief that Gothic churches were cheaper to build. According to Port, style was primarily a matter of the architects' and patrons' tastes, with Classical (specifically Grecian) dominating in

6. Port, pp. xi-xii.

7. Charles Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival*, originally published 1872, republished Watkins Glen, N.Y.: American Life Foundation, 1975, p. 122.

8. Thomas Rickman, *An attempt to discriminate the styles of architecture in England, from the conquest to the Reformation*, London: J.H. Parker, 1818.

9. Port, pp. 61-2.

London and other major cities, and Gothic more common in country churches.¹⁰ Port also finds age to be a factor, with younger architects more likely to choose Gothic. Moreover, Port suggests that Gothic was already seen as a “national” style, and was thus gaining broad public support.¹¹ Whatever the reasons – and there was likely a complex mix of reasons – the Church Commission established Gothic as a viable and even desirable style for modern church-building, with the result that new Gothic architecture became a common sight throughout England.

According to Kenneth Clark, 174 of the 214 churches resulting from the 1818 Act were Gothic.¹² Very far in spirit from the later Gothic of Pugin and the Ecclesiological Society, the Gothic of the Church Commissioners presents an eclectic and uneven muddle of features and materials. Holy Trinity, Cloudesley Square, London (1826-28), by Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860), is a study in Perpendicular (i.e., late English) Gothic clearly modeled after King’s College Chapel in Cambridge; at St. Mary, Leeds (1823-25), Thomas Taylor built a quadripartite rib-vault out of plaster; at St. George, Birmingham (1819-21), Rickman constructed a flat wooden ceiling that would have horrified the Ecclesiologists; at St. George, Barnsley (1821-22) and St. Barnabas, Erdington (1822-23) the same architect installed windows of identical flowing Decorated tracery – in cast iron. All these breaches of truth to style and materials would have been inconceivable just two or three decades later, but it is probably this very lack of formal dogmatism that helped Gothic proliferate so broadly and to remote and seemingly unlikely sites, such as Newfoundland.

One of the earliest instances of such proliferation, although no longer extant, is also one of the best documented. The town of Trinity is located on a peninsula that juts into Trinity Harbour. The superb quality of that harbour – called “the best and largest harbour in all the land” by Sir Richard Whitbourne in 1620¹³ – made it a major centre for the fishery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. St. Paul’s Church at Trinity (forerunner to the 1892 church that will be discussed in Chapter Six) is known from photographs and documentary evidence. According to an inscription on a ground plan of the church dating from around the

10. Port, pp. 79-82.

11. Port, p. 81. Unfortunately he does not cite any primary sources that would support this argument. While the issue of nationalism comes very much to the foreground later in the nineteenth century, its importance to the Church Commissioners is uncertain.

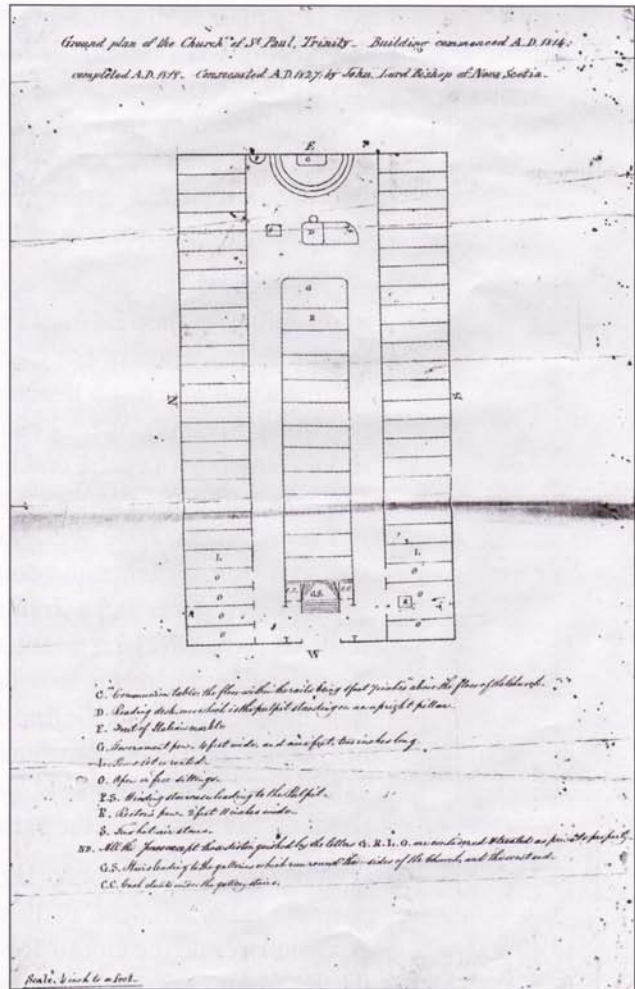
12. Clark, p. 95.

13. From Sir Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land, with Many Reasons to Prove how Worthy and Beneficall Plantation May There Be Made, after a Better Manner than It Was, Together with the Laying Open of Certain Enormities and Abuses Committed by some that Trade to that Countrey, and the Meanes Laid down for Reformation thereof*; quoted in Gordon Handcock, *The Story of Trinity*, Trinity: 1997, p. 5.

middle of the nineteenth century, building was begun in 1814, completed in 1818, and Nova Scotia Bishop John Inglis consecrated the church in 1827.¹⁴ The plan (figure 1-1) shows a conventional Protestant layout, with three rows of seats running longitudinally through an oblong, with the first two rows of the central section reserved for the “Governor” and the “Rector” (or presumably his family, assuming he is conducting the service) respectively. The status of the governor is acknowledged in the dimensions of his pew, which is four feet deep, compared to two feet eleven inches for the rector.

The entrance was at the west end. Upon entering, one was face to face with the staircase that, the inscription tells us, led to the “galleries which run round the sides of the church, and the west end.” Flanking the staircase were two closets (for coal, not coats). While the great majority of the pews were rented, the last four rows on the north and the south were free – an issue that would become an urgent one among Tractarians and Ecclesiologists later in the century. Shoehorned in among the free seats on the south side was a stove, ensuring that a few of the poor would at least be warm as well as cramped.

At the centre of the east wall stood the communion table, elevated four feet four inches above floor level by a semicircular platform of three steps (just as the 1711 Commissioners had stipulated¹⁵). Just to the north, off the platform, stood the font. Neither, however, was the visual focus of the space; that role was reserved for the pulpit, which stood above the reading desk directly in front of the Governor’s pew (indeed, the governor would not even have been able to see the communion table, such was the domination of the reading desk and pulpit). According to the inscription, the pulpit was “standing on an upright pillar”. Beside the pulpit was another stove, providing warmth for the preacher and governor.



1-1 – St. Paul’s Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, plan of 1818 church. Trinity Historical Society Archives, St. Paul’s Church, Series 10: Plans and blueprints.

14. Trinity Historical Society Archives, St. Paul’s Church, series 10: Plans and Blueprints.

15. du Prey, p. 59.

This plan is illuminating not only because it shows a quintessential Protestant “preaching box”, but because it illustrates social hierarchy. Central to the liturgy was the Word, which came from the pulpit. Nearest the Word were the governor’s and rector’s pews, followed by the pews rented by those citizens wealthy enough to pay. Furthest from Grace were the poor. It is precisely this arrangement that would be attacked by later Church leaders such as John Medley, first Anglican Bishop of Fredericton, who declared it both immoral and illegal.¹⁶

From the Anglican perspective, Trinity experienced something of a decline around mid-century. Bishop Edward Feild visited the town in 1846, and reported to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) that, unlike a year earlier, there was no priest, no deacon, no services and no schooling. This must have been particularly dismaying for Feild given that the demographics of Trinity suggested that it should have been a centre of Anglican strength: the 1845 census reported that the Trinity Bay area had 4,753 Protestant Episcopalians (i.e., Anglicans), 1,283 Roman Catholics, 11 Presbyterians, 2,752 Wesleyans and 2 Congregationalists.¹⁷ Feild reported that there was, however, a “large and commodious [Anglican] church”, and, more ominously, a Methodist minister and a Romish priest. The people, Feild reported, were “longing for a Minister” – by which he meant, of course, an Anglican one.¹⁸ The difficulties faced by the Anglican Church in Newfoundland, and the manner in which the SPG and Ecclesiology, with its accompanying Gothic doctrine, rose to the challenge will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two. The completely new church which these forces ultimately created in Trinity will be discussed in Chapter Six. In the meantime, it is appropriate to consider the alterations made to the existing church which lasted until its re-building in 1892.

The light of Ecclesiology seems to have begun shining on Trinity in 1865, thanks in part to a leaky window. By this time, Bishop Edward Feild had arrived, and with him Ecclesiology and the Gothic Revival (see Chapters Three and Four). In February of 1865, the “Committee for the Repair of St. Paul’s Church” reported that the east window, which was chronically leaky and in need of immediate attention, should be taken out altogether and replaced by a chancel.¹⁹ By October of that year, a Mr. D.B. Grant was paid £16.80

16. See, for example, John Medley, *The Advantages of Open Seats*, Oxford, 1843. This is referred to approvingly in *The Ecclesiologist*, volume III, 1844, pp. 148-9, in which it is said that Medley “demolishes the arguments in Mr. Scobell’s *Few Thoughts*, &c.”

17. *Abstract Census Return of the Population of Newfoundland*, 1845.

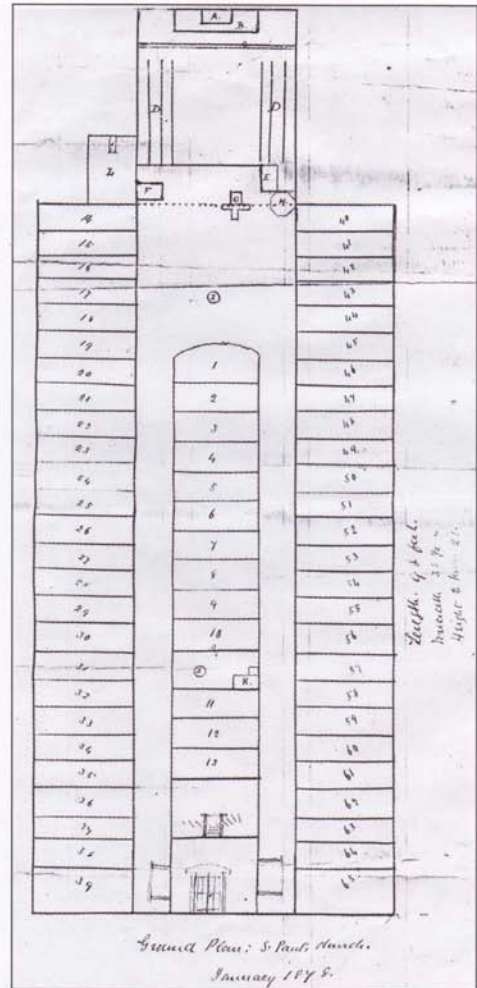
18. Bishop Feild to Ernest Hawkins of the SPG, 14th July 1846. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, “G” Series, Letters read before the Society, reel 249.

19. Trinity Historical Society Archives, St. Paul’s Church, series 1: Minutes of Vestry 1.02, February 16, 1865, p. 74.

“for building chancel, making windows, frames, facings.”²⁰ The work done by Grant is visible in a plan dated 1878, which shows a deep chancel at the east end (figure 1-2).²¹ The altar (“A”), again apparently elevated, stands against the east wall of the chancel, this time with views unobstructed by the pulpit (“H”), which has been moved to the extreme south-east corner of the chancel. The reading desk has been replaced with a more open (and off-centre) lectern (“G”). Choir seats flank the north and south sides of the chancel (“D”), and the altar is separated from the rest of the chancel by an altar rail (“C”). The font (“J”) has been moved to a space in the central aisle between rows ten and eleven (“J”), next to an apparently tiny vestry (“K”). A plan of the upper story shows the galleries still intact, while a list of pew holders indicates that seating was still mainly rented. This plan also gives us the dimensions of the church: ninety-eight feet long, thirty-eight and one half feet wide, and twenty-one feet high.

It is evidently the post-1865 church that is shown in a photograph from the archives of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies (figure 1-3).²² The photograph is undated, except that it obviously predates the 1892 construction of the current building. The church is decidedly in the “Gibbsian Preaching Box” tradition – consisting of a box with a western tower – with some Gothicizing elements. The south wall has two tiers of windows, corresponding to the main floor and gallery levels. The upper level windows are round-headed and decidedly Classical in character, with radial mullions in the semi-circle. The lower level windows are rectilinear, a combination which recalls (in much simpler form, it must be stressed) the elevation of Gibbs’ St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London.

What Gothic elements are present are concentrated on the west façade. Very simple tracery surmounts the door beneath a shallow gable. Above the door, at gallery level, are three identical pointed-arch windows with tracery similar to that above the door. On the tower above the level of the roof are pointed openings, probably surrounding a bell. On each corner of the tower is a slender pinnacle.



1-2 – St. Paul's Church,
Trinity, Newfoundland,
plan of 1865 church.

Trinity Historical Society
Archives, St. Paul's Church, Series
10: Plans and blueprints.

20. Minutes of Vestry, October 11, 1865.

21. Trinity Historical Society Archives, St. Paul's Church, series 10: Plans and Blueprints.

22. Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Photograph Collection, 11.005.06.



1-3 – St. Paul's Church, Trinity,
Newfoundland, pre-1892.
Centre for Newfoundland Studies,
Coll – 137, 11.05.006.
See <<http://www.library.mun.ca/geii/cns/photos/geogfindaid.php#Arrange>>

west end. Even the chancel, of course, now seems unambitious in comparison to the church that now stands in its place – an Ecclesiological tour-de-force begun in 1892 (see Chapter Six).

Trinity also provides one of the more curious footnotes to the Early Gothic Revival in Newfoundland. Close to St. Paul's is Holy Trinity Church, begun in 1833. Holy Trinity is a very reasonable facsimile of a Commissioners' Church – but it is a Roman Catholic Church.²³ Holy Trinity must have been one of the first Catholic churches built after Catholic Emancipation came to Newfoundland in 1829²⁴, and, notwithstanding its small scale, it seems to announce its newly found status with considerable vitality.

Holy Trinity (figure 1-4) is a small wooden church with three pointed-arch windows in the nave and a west tower. That tower is capped by a concave spire and a circular (miniature rose) window above a pointed one, with a pointed-arch doorway below. The corners of the tower have wooden buttresses – obviously an evocation of Gothic rather than a structural necessity. The interior (figure 1-5) is an oblong with galleries along

23. This date is according to both the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Parks Canada's Canadian Register of Historic Places. Neither cites a primary source, although there is nothing in the fabric of the church that would render this date unlikely.

24. On Catholic emancipation in Newfoundland see Greene, chapter 2.

the (liturgical) north, west and south sides. These galleries are supported on delicately fluted square piers, with square, moulded capitals above. A moulded cornice runs all the way along the bottom of the galleries, and the whole is rather expertly finished. The configuration could easily be mistaken for a Commissioners' Church, save for the prominent altar rail and raised platform for the altar at the (liturgical) east end. The elaborate Gothic reredos is not in perfect harmony with the rest of the interior, and is probably of a somewhat later date.

Subsequent to the construction of J.J. McCarthy's St. Patrick's Church in St. John's (begun 1855), Gothic – or at least one particular sub-style of it, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters – would become a viable (if not common) style for Newfoundland Roman Catholics.²⁵ Holy Trinity, however, remains an anomaly – it is unusually early for Romanist Gothic, and is the 'wrong' style of Gothic to be any later. One possible explanation is that it was made by local builders in the style that local builders understood to be the right one for a church – which, based on the models surrounding them, would have been Gothic. Another possible explanation might be some familiarity on the part of Newfoundland's Roman Catholic clergy with recent architectural



1-4 (A) – Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, exterior.

1-5 (B) – Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, interior.



25. On St. Patrick's Church, see Malcolm Thurlby, "St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, School and Convent in St. John's: J.J. McCarthy and Irish Gothic Revival in Newfoundland", *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, volume 28, numbers 3, 4 (2003), pp. 13-20.

developments in another Catholic stronghold of British North America: Montreal. Notre-Dame Church in Montreal, built 1823-29, is one of the earliest examples of Gothic Revival architecture in what is now Canada.²⁶ It was designed by James O'Donnell, an Irish Protestant based in New York. The earliest Roman Catholic bishops of Newfoundland – James O Donel (no relation to the architect), Patrick Lambert and Thomas Scallon – corresponded frequently with the Bishop of Quebec, Joseph Octave Plessis.²⁷ They and their successor, Michael Anthony Fleming, may have remained in touch with developments (including architectural developments) in British North America's other Catholic diocese after Plessis' death in 1825. While the main axis of influence on Roman Catholic architecture in Newfoundland was certainly between St. John's and Ireland, the possibility of influences from other parts of British North America cannot be ruled out.

The earliest Gothic Anglican church still extant in Newfoundland is also one of the very few stone ones ever constructed: St. Paul's, Harbour Grace. Harbour Grace had been a successful fishing community as far back as the mid-sixteenth century, and by the middle of the nineteenth century it was among the busiest communities on the island, with a permanent population of over 5,000.²⁸ According to L.C. Davis,²⁹ the first Anglican church in Harbour Grace was built in 1764 and enlarged in 1816 at a cost of over £200. That church was destroyed, allegedly by arsons, in the same year. Its successor, begun in 1817, was apparently blown down almost immediately (no one who has been to Newfoundland need doubt the likelihood of this). It was replaced with a church "having ten windows on each side and a tower with minarets" [sic]³⁰, which, it may be supposed, was not unlike its near contemporary at Trinity. This church, having been built at a cost of £3,870, was destroyed by fire in 1832. The cornerstone for its successor was laid in 1835. The ceremony, according to reports taken by Davis from the Harbour Grace Standard, took place in the presence of the Anglican Archdeacon, Rev. Thomas Bridge.

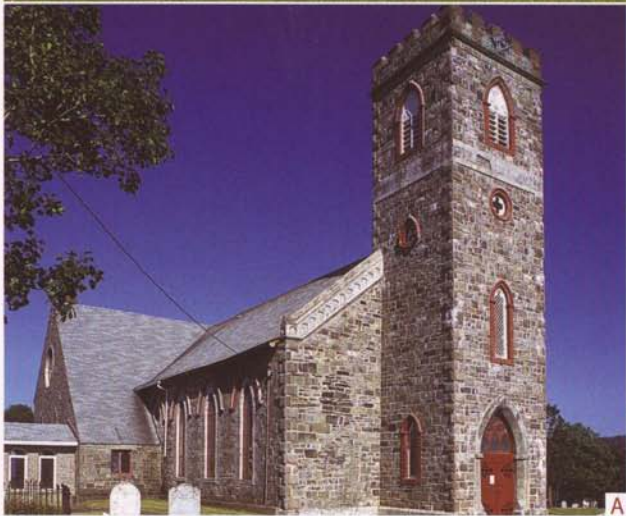
26. On Notre-Dame in Montreal see Franklin Toker, *The Church of Notre-Dame in Montreal: an architectural history*, Montréal: 1970. Also Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture*, Toronto: 1994, volume 1, pp. 264-68.

27. These correspondences have been published in Cyril J. Byrne, ed., *Gentleman-Bishops and Faction Fighters: The Letters of Bishops O Donel, Lambert, Scallon and Other Irish Missionaries*, St. John's: 1984.

28. *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, volume two, pp. 807-23.

29. L.C. Grace, "A History of St. Paul's Church, Harbour Grace", *Newfoundland Churchman*, January, 1968, pp. 5-6, 13. Grace states that she used "notes from the book of Thomas G. Ford", published in 1935, and also notes from Rev. Canon J. M. Noel, contributor to the Diocesan Magazine "several years ago."

30. Davis, p. 6. Minarets, strictly speaking, are a feature of Islamic architecture; "pinnacles" is likely a more accurate term.



1-6 (A) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, exterior from north-west.
1-7 (B) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, exterior from south-east.
1-8 (C) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, interior of nave.

That church, with substantial additions made 1859-60, still stands (figures 1-6 to 1-8). In both the exterior and interior, it is necessary to disregard the transepts and chancel in order to form an impression of the 1835 church. On the exterior (figure 1-6), the basic configuration is not unlike Trinity, with a western tower attached to an oblong nave (this time projecting from that nave rather than simply protruding above it as at Trinity). By this date, however, the taste for Gothic among the Church Commissioners is much more established, and the detailing at Harbour Grace is considerably more assured than that at Trinity. The entrance is a pointed doorway with wooden plate tracery in the form of three trefoils above three cusped lancets. The whole is encased within a robust, chamfered arch in ashlar. On the north and south faces of the tower, at ground level, are lancet windows with a cusped wooden panel within and faced, unusually, with red brick without. The same motif, on a larger scale, appears above the west door. Higher yet are trefoil and quatrefoil openings, in a rounded triangle and circle respectively, also articulated in brick. The upper level of the tower, separated by a wide ashlar string course, contains louvred, pointed-arch openings with a facsimile of tracery in low relief in the tympana. The tower is topped by crenellations rather more in keeping with the robust proportions of the tower than the "minarets" at Trinity. The north and south nave walls (figure 1-7) contain large lancet windows with Y-tracery, faced in ashlar and topped with substantial stone hood-moulds.

Aside from the large pointed windows, the interior of St. Paul's has few features that evoke Gothic (figure 1-8). It shares a conventional plan of three aisles of seating with Trinity, along with galleries on the north, south and west sides. The galleries sit on wooden supports which, if they can be given any stylistic classification at all, are more like a simplified, rectilinear Doric than anything medieval. A flat, wooden ceiling curves downward to meet the top of the gallery, giving the interior a cross-section not unlike a train tunnel.

This general configuration, or variations on it, is not unusual in Commissioners' Churches. Among the rather few such buildings that have received scholarly attention is St. Matthew, Brixton (Charles Ferdinand Porden, 1822-24), where rows of closed pews and a U-shaped gallery sit below a flat wooden roof.³¹ The same pattern effortlessly adapts to a more upscale setting at Holy Trinity, Marylebone, built by Sir John Soane (1753-1837) in 1826-27.³² The Gothic box with a west tower appears at St. Stephen, Lindley (Joan Oates, 1828-29),³³ St. Stephen, Kirkstall (Robert Dennis Chantrell, 1828-29),³⁴ St. Paul,

31. Port, plate IVa.

32. Port, plate IVb.

33. Port, plate VIIa.

34. Port, plate VIIIb.

Shipleigh (Oates, 1823-25);³⁵ St. Saviour, Bath (John Pinch, 1829-31);³⁶ St. Matthew, Camp Field, Manchester (Charles Barry, 1822-25);³⁷ St. George, Hulme (Francis Goodwin, 1826-28);³⁸ and St. Matthew, Stretton (Philip Hardwick, 1826-27).³⁹ The list could be extended considerably, but that early Newfoundland Gothic has ample precedent among Commissioners' Churches is clear.

Gothic came to the capital, St. John's, in 1836. The city's first Gothic church was a direct result of lobbying by the Anglican Archdeacon, Edward Wix, whose efforts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. Until the construction of the Gothic St. Thomas' Church, St. John's had but one Anglican establishment, on the site of the present cathedral. The history of St. Thomas' was documented in some detail on the occasion of its centennial in 1936, with subsequent revisions.⁴⁰ The SPG had recognized the need for a second church in St. John's, and recommended its construction, as early as 1827. Land was acquired by the governor, Sir Gaspar le Marchand, and a contract was signed with the builder Patrick Kough in the fall of 1835, and services began the following year.

The church that Kough built survives, with some subsequent alterations, and its original form is shown in two early drawings. A sketch by W.N. Gosse (figure 1-9), dating between 1838-41,⁴¹ shows a Gothic box, with three tall, pointed-arch windows on the side, and a west tower with a west porch (with a large, Y-traceried window), a pointed, Y-traceried window above the porch, two small Gothic windows one each face at the top, and a broad, bold spire. A later painting (figure 1-10)⁴² shows exactly the same features rendered with somewhat more painstaking draughtsmanship. The one difference is the presence of dormer openings on the spire in the later illustration. These were presumably subsequent additions to the church, and could be part of what Bishop

35. Port, plate VIIc.

36. Port, plate VIId.

37. Port, plate VIIIA.

38. Port, plate VIIIB.

39. Port, plate Xa & Xb.

40. *History of St. Thomas' Church, 1836-1961, Based upon "The History of St. Thomas' and its Rectors: by the late H. W. LeMessurier, C.M.G., published in 1928. As amended and added to by the Centenary Historical Committee, R. G. MacDonald, Chairman (1936). This edition has been brought up to date by P. B. Rendell, a former People's Warden, and E. E. Knight, People's Warden, to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of the opening of the Church.*

41. W.N. Gosse, *Sketches in Conception Bay Newfoundland 1838-41*. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, T.B. Browning Collection, P6/A/1.

42. City of St. John's Archives, photo #2.03.034, Location #A1160.



1-9 (A) – St. Thomas', St. John's, Newfoundland.

Sketch by William Gosse. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, T.B. Brown Collection, P6/A/1 File #3.

1-10 (B) – St. Thomas' Church, the Narrows Etc. from Government House. City of St. John's Archive 2.03.034.

1-11 (C) – St. Thomas', St. John's, Newfoundland, exterior from west.

1-12 (D) – St. Thomas', St. John's, Newfoundland, exterior from south.



Spencer meant when he wrote, upon his departure from Newfoundland in 1839, that he was “happy in having been able to complete and embellish the building...”⁴³

The present church retains the 1836 core, but is also a product of a rather eventful subsequent history. On September 19, 1846, a “terrific gale of wind” shifted the whole church six inches from its original position.⁴⁴ The tower remains virtually unchanged (figure 1-11), while aisles have been added to north and south sides (figure 1-12). According to LeMessurier, these were added shortly after the 1846 gale in order to increase lateral stability, although they may equally be an adaptation to newly-introduced ecclesiological taste. The nave was lengthened in 1874, at which time a chancel was added, the latter being enlarged in 1882-83. Galleries originally extended around the church, but were removed, doubtless to accommodate Ecclesiological doctrine, in 1874.



1-13 – St. Thomas', St. John's, Newfoundland, nave interior.

It is not difficult, upon entering St. Thomas' today (figure 1-13), to mentally strip away the subsequent alterations and imagine the church as Archdeacon Wix would have known it in 1836. With no chancel, and galleries at the level of the current aisle roofs, St. Thomas' would have conformed perfectly to the conventions of the Commissioners' Churches. Indeed, it would have looked like a somewhat smaller version of the church at Twillingate, in the north of Newfoundland.

St. Peter's Church, in Twillingate, is one of the largest and best-preserved examples of pre-Ecclesiological Gothic in Newfoundland. Historically referred to as “the capital of the north”,⁴⁵ Twillingate was a major centre of activity for the northern fishery. Like Trinity Bay (and unlike most of the rest of Newfoundland), the area was, by the middle of the nineteenth century, one of considerable Anglican numerical strength. According to the 1845 census, Twillingate and Fogo held 5,017 Protestant Episcopalians, 1,128 Roman

43. Quoted in *History of St. Thomas' Church*, p. 14.

44. While it bears some of the hallmarks of an urban legend, the event of the gale is well documented, and it is reported in some detail in the *History of St. Thomas' Church*. It is also referred to by William Grey in his article “The Ecclesiology of Newfoundland” in *The Ecclesiologist*, new series, volume XI, 1853, p. 156-61.

45. *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, volume 5, p. 440.

Catholics, 2 Presbyterians, and 597 Wesleyans.⁴⁶ Although the parish records burned along with the parsonage in a 1915 fire, the early history of the church was pieced together, largely from SPG records, by Edith Manuel in 1970.⁴⁷ According to Manuel, the SPG sent John Leigh to be the first permanent resident Anglican minister in Twillingate in 1814. The SPG also furnished Leigh with books and school supplies to further facilitate his moral instruction of “the young and the old in favour of morality and religion.”⁴⁸ By 1819, just in time for Leigh’s departure from Twillingate, the church building and parsonage were finished. Little is known of this church, except that Leigh’s successor, J.G. Laughorne, reported in 1822 that it was crowded to excess in spite of its seating capacity of 550.⁴⁹ The building was consecrated by Bishop Inglis in 1827, who reported that the church and parsonage were “large, ill-built and in debt to the amount of £1,500 which will never be repaid.”⁵⁰ He also observed that “people seemed uncouth and wild with little devotion and much apathy,” although he was hopeful that improvement in this regard was forthcoming after a series of serious conversations with principal persons in the community.⁵¹

Exactly when and why it was decided to build a new church is not recorded, although Laughorne’s comments about crowding in the church seem to provide adequate incentive. Construction of this (the present church) began on November 6, 1839, and the first service in the still unfinished church was held on December 11, 1842. Construction was complete by the end of 1844.⁵²

Edward Feild, who had arrived as bishop in 1844, consecrated the church during his first visitation in 1845. He reported that:

*A very substantial, capacious, and handsome church, eighty feet by forty-five, with a lofty and characteristic tower at the western end, has lately been erected here, and the inhabitants were anxiously desiring the Bishop’s presence that the fabric might duly be set apart and consecrated to God’s honour and service with prayer and blessings.*⁵³

46. *Abstract Census Return of the Population of Newfoundland, 1845.*

47. Edith Manuel, *St. Peter’s Anglican Church Twillingate: One hundred and Twenty-five year History 1845-1970, and in Addition Early History of The Church from 1813.* No place of publication is named, but it may safely be presumed to be Twillingate.

48. Manuel, p. 3.

49. Manuel, p. 4.

50. Manuel, p. 5.

51. Manuel, p. 5-6.

52. Manuel, p. 6-7.

53. From Feild’s Visitation Journal, quoted in Manuel, p. 7.

Feild's praise of the church is somewhat surprising, as he was to prove considerably less patient with the species of Commissioners Gothic that was planned for his cathedral in St. John's. Perhaps he applied less rigorous standards to the outports than the Episcopal city, or perhaps his own Ecclesiological convictions – and resulting Gothic architectural tastes – were less well-formed in 1845 than they were later to become. Either way, he records that he duly consecrated the church on a Thursday morning at 11:00 o'clock, in the presence of a large congregation.

According to Feild, the church had been paid for by a combination of volunteer labour, £50 each from the SPCK and the SPG, and £10 from the Church Society of Newfoundland, with the remainder of the £1,000 cost being covered by donations from local merchants and planters.⁵⁴ Foremost among the merchants was one R. Slade of Poole, Dorset, who also donated a silver cup and paten at the consecration.⁵⁵ The Slades' connection with Twillingate had begun with John Slade (1719-92), who, having bought his first ship in 1753, went on to amass what the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* terms a "respectable fortune" (in fact, an extremely "respectable" £7,000 at least by the time of John Slade's death) from the migratory fishery.⁵⁶ The Slades remained based in Poole, but their Newfoundland venture operated out of Twillingate (and to a lesser extent Fogo and Tilting), from which base they exercised "considerable cultural and economic influence."⁵⁷

This being so, it is not surprising to find certain similarities between the churches at Twillingate and Poole. St. James, Poole (figures 1-14 & 1-15), was built in 1820 by John Kent of Southampton and Joseph Hannaford of Christchurch, for £5,600.⁵⁸ While not technically a Commissioners Church in that it was not paid for by the Commission, St. James was clearly influenced by the Commissioners' brand of Gothic, and indeed Joseph Hannaford had been hired by the Commission to design the Church at Bransgrove (Hampshire).⁵⁹ The exterior is a two-story Gothic preaching box, with a crenellated, shallow-pitched roof and a west tower. The exterior stories correspond to interior galleries, supported by tall, wooden

54. 'Planters' were a middle class of fisherman, between the impoverished small-boat fishermen and the wealthy fish merchants. See John P. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855*, Montreal and Kingston: 1999, p. 28.

55. Manuel, p. 8.

56. W. Gordon Handcock, "Slade, John", *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?Bioid=36292&query=slade>. See also *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, volume 5, pp. 440-45.

57. *Ibid.*

58. On St. James, Poole, see John Newman and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Dorset*, Harmondsworth: 1972, pp. 318-19.

59. Port, p. 182.

quatrefoil piers that lead to a plaster quadripartite rib-vault. According to Newman and Pevsner's *Buildings of England* volume on Dorset, "local tradition" claims that these piers are made from Newfoundland pine – a by no means unlikely possibility.⁶⁰

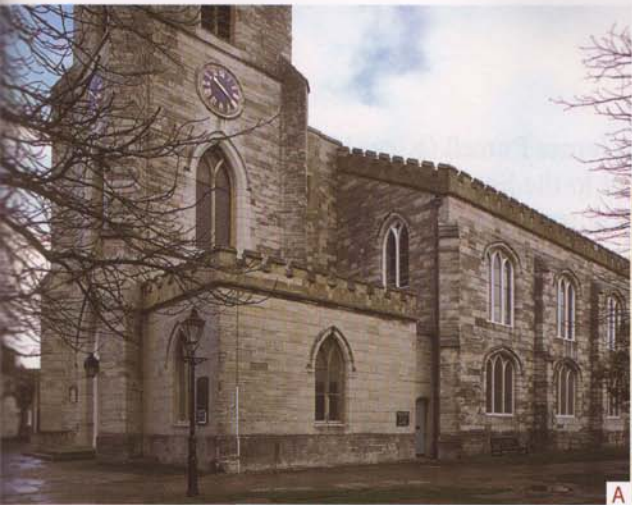
The church at Twillingate fits this general description, albeit in a simplified form. The exterior (wooden rather than stone) is a shallow-roofed box with a single tier of narrow, pointed windows and a west tower (figure 1-16). The tower is crenellated with a short spire and sharply pointed corner pinnacles. The chancel, which disrupts the otherwise Commissioner-like massing, was added in the 1880s.⁶¹

The interior (figure 1-17) is, as Feild observed, "substantial, capacious, and handsome". It shares the general configuration of nave and galleries with Poole, although it must be added that it shares this configuration with countless other Commissioners Churches, and in its simple detailing and tunnel-like ceiling appears more closely related to its Newfoundland predecessors such as Harbour Grace. Compared to Poole, the interior is notably lacking in Gothic detailing, which is probably a reflection of both economics and the availability of craftsmen. The most Poole-like feature is undoubtedly the pulpit (figure 1-18), a tremendously monumental piece of furniture raised high above the floor, reached from behind by a straight staircase and decorated with quatrefoils and a cusped Gothic arch. The appearance of its Poole predecessor, no longer extant, is preserved in a nineteenth-century painting in the church (figure 1-19).

Quidi Vidi is a small and exquisitely picturesque fishing village, now part of St. John's. Like the adjacent capital, it was, in the mid-nineteenth century, dominated (numerically, if certainly not socially or economically) by non-Anglicans. The 1836 census reports that St. John's and Quidi Vidi contain, between them, 2,623 Protestant Episcopalians, 772 Protestant Dissenters, and 11,551 Roman Catholics. This numerical imbalance would have far-reaching repercussions for church-building, as will be seen in subsequent chapters. Christ Church, Quidi Vidi was originally built in 1832 to serve the Anglican, Congregationalist, and Methodist communities of Quidi Vidi. According to the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, the Anglicans took sole possession of

60. Newman and Pevsner, p. 318.

61. A brass plaque in the chancel reads, "This chancel stands as a memorial of the late Edwin Duder, a merchant of this place who died February 20, 1881, aged 58. He was firm in his religious principles, diligent in his business, generous to the church, kind to the poor. Many found in him a friend and all miss him. Erected by his only surviving son."



1-14 (A) – St. James, Poole, Dorset, exterior from south-west.

Photograph by Malcolm Thuriby.

1-15 (B) – St. James, Poole, Dorset, interior to west.

Photograph by Malcolm Thuriby.

1-16 (C) – St. Peter's Twillingate, Newfoundland, exterior from north.

1-17 (D) – St. Peter's Twillingate, Newfoundland, interior to east.

1-18 (E) – St. Peter's Twillingate, Newfoundland, pulpit.

1-19 (F) – St. James, Poole, Dorset, unattributed oil painting of interior, ca. 1825.

the church in 1842, and hired Cork native James Purcell (b. ca. 1804, d. after 1858)⁶² to alter the building. However a report sent to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts sent in 1842 by Aubrey George Spencer, the first Bishop of Newfoundland, strongly suggests that Purcell designed a wholly new church for the Anglicans at Quidi Vidi:

*Visit to Quidi Vidi, where we are founding a new church, the old one being in decayed state, and moreover the property of all denominations of Protestants. This settlement contains about 200 inhabitants, who have been for a long time Wesleyan Methodists, but a considerable portion of whom, through the great exertions of the Rev. Mr. Bridge and Mr. Brett... have been fully recovered to the Church.*⁶³

Christ Church Quidi Vidi is something of a design oddity (figure 1-20). Clearly Gothic in style, it is roughly cruciform in plan, and resembles neither the Commissioners' Churches nor their Ecclesiological descendents. The proportions resemble those of a cottage or house more than a church, with only the pointed windows revealing the ecclesiastical function. The tower and spire, added by 1890 (at which date a bell was installed), enhance the picturesque quality, if not the lucidity, of the building. James Purcell would go on to build the Colonial Building in St. John's (1846-50) and submit the first design (ultimately unused) for the Anglican cathedral.

The town of Fogo, on the north-west corner of Fogo Island, was also economically dominated by Slade and Company. The current Anglican church, which was built in 1915, falls outside the parameters of this study. Little is known about its predecessor apart from the fact that it was built in 1845 (and is thus almost exactly contemporary with Twillingate), and, as usual, subsequently proved too small. However, a photograph in the collection of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies classified under "Churches, Unidentified" is claimed by what Pevsner would term "local tradition" to be the earlier church at Fogo (figure 1-21).⁶⁴ Careful inspection of the topography around the building shows the tradition to be correct. The photograph (taken from the liturgical north-west) shows a very Twillingate-like wooden church with a crenellated west tower, with a short,

62. *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, volume 1, pp. 429-30. The subsequent history of this curious building is of some note. It was used extensively as a set for the 1931 Hollywood film *The Viking*, and later fell into decay through non-use. In 1965 the Anglican Synod of Newfoundland decided to demolish the church, and it was in opposition to that decision that the Newfoundland Historic Trust Society was formed. The building, long since deconsecrated, is now a private home, lovingly maintained.

63. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1842*. London: 1842, p. CXIV.

64. Memorial University Library, The Geography Collection, Image 28.01.001.

sharp spire and sharply pointed corner pinnacles. The nave is a broad oblong, with four pointed lights, covered by a single, sweeping roof. There appears to be no chancel. A room projecting from the north-east corner may be a vestry. Another projection from the west wall of the church, not obviously distinct in style or materials and therefore probably contemporary with the rest of the fabric, is of uncertain use. It may be a baptistery, although this would be an unusual placement of the font before the influence of Ecclesiology.⁶⁵ There is no record of the interior arrangement, but it may safely be assumed to have resembled that at Twillingate.

All of the surviving examples, and the admittedly scanty documentary evidence, suggests that these earliest Gothic churches in Newfoundland conformed to a very standard formula of nave, entrance tower, and interior galleries on the (liturgical) north, west, and south. This configuration quite certainly derives from a familiarity with recent Commissioners' Churches in the mother country, which were relatively simple to build, inexpensive, and adaptable to different materials (most importantly, wood).

In spite of the prolificacy and adaptability of Commissioners' Gothic, its architectural and aesthetic reputation barely lasted a single generation. Leading the charge against Commissioners' Gothic was Pugin. The frontispiece of *Contrasts* was a merciless satire of the Church Commission (figure 1-22).⁶⁶ Designed to resemble a page of advertisements from an architectural journal, it includes an announcement of an architectural competition for a new church, aimed at "youthful unemployed and aspiring architects", for a church in the Gothic or Elizabethan style, to contain 8,000 sittings and cost no more than



1-20 – Christ Church, Quidi Vidi, Newfoundland, exterior.



1-21 – St. Andrew's, Fogo, Newfoundland, exterior from the north-west, pre-1915.

Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Coll – 137, 28.01.01. See <<http://www.library.mun.ca/geii/cns/photos/geogfindaid.php#Arrange>>

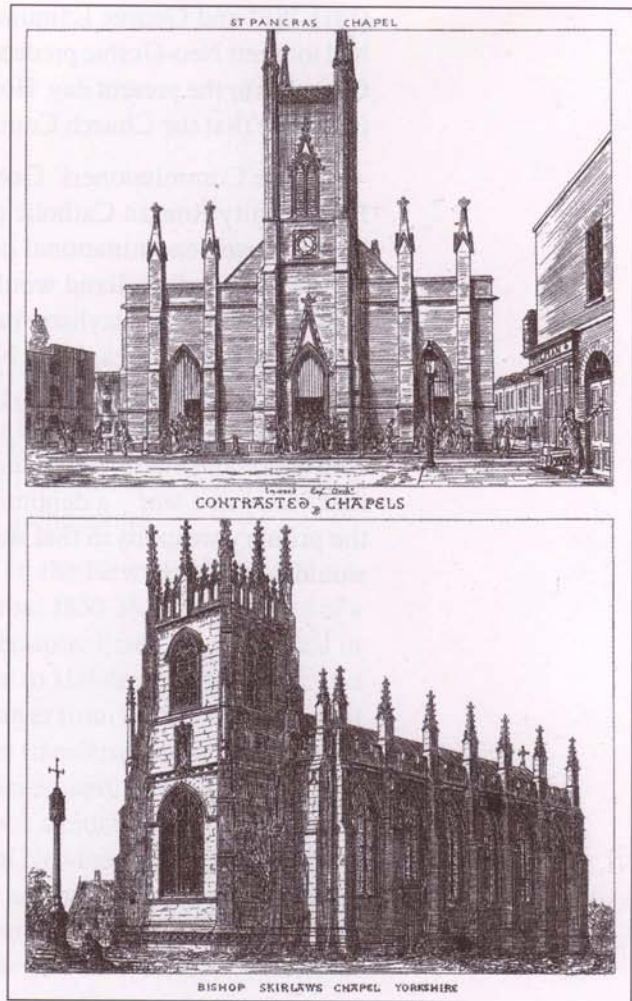
65. See, for example, the movement of the font shown in the floor plans of the earlier church at Trinity.

66. This frontispiece is included in the most recent reprint of *Contrasts*. See the Spire Books volume, *Contrasts and The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, London: 2003.

£1,500. Elsewhere are ads for “elegant terminations cheap”, and Gothic design taught in six easy lessons. Designs wanted include a Moorish fish market and a Dissenting Chapel in a plain style, “to serve occasionally for a lecture or a reading room.” The caption reads, “This illustration of the practise of architecture in the 19 century on new improved and cheap principles is dedicated without permission to The Trade.” The page sums up the contempt Pugin had for the architecture of his age, which he considered vulgar, mercenary, superficial and morally vacuous.

Pugin takes more precise aim at Commissioners’ Gothic in his plate from *Contrasts* entitled “Contrasted Chapels” (figure 1-23). In it, the medieval Bishop Skirlaws Chapel in Yorkshire is contrasted to a building identified as “St. Pancras Chapel.” The latter is in fact St. Mary, Somers Town, in the St. Pancras district of London, designed by W. and H.W. Inwood, and built between 1822-24 at a cost of £13,629.67 The contrast is striking – which is precisely what Pugin had intended. The medieval chapel is robust, muscular, and substantial; the Commissioners’ building appears flimsy, two-dimensional, and, at least by Gothic standards, ill-proportioned. The Inwoods’ church has the appearance of a thin Gothic veneer applied to a body that completely misunderstands its great medieval prototypes. The lack of archaeological accuracy and apparent flimsiness made Commissioners’ Gothic an easy target for Pugin, whose understanding of medieval Gothic design, spatial, structural and liturgical principles greatly exceeded that of any of his predecessors.

The insubstantial, “pasteboard” Gothic of the Church Commission would soon be replaced by the muscular, robust Gothic – or “Pointed”, as the Victorians frequently called it – of Pugin himself, William Butterfield (1814-1900),⁶⁸ George Gilbert Scott



1-23 – Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, *Contrasts*. . ., “Contrasted Chapels.”

67. Port (1961), p. 136.

68. On William Butterfield, see Paul Thompson, *William Butterfield*, London: 1971.

(1811-78)⁶⁹ and George Edmund Street (1824-81).⁷⁰ The contempt that these architects had for their Neo-Gothic predecessors has coloured the reputation of the Commissioners' Churches to the present day. However, there can be no denying the immense impact and influence that the Church Commission had on architecture at home and abroad.

While Commissioners' Gothic was clearly an Anglican inheritance, its use at the Holy Trinity Roman Catholic church in Trinity demonstrates that Gothic did not yet have precise denominational or liturgical meaning. This was about to change. Soon, Gothic in Newfoundland would be brimming with political meaning, and its shapes would conform to a stylistic prescription as rigorous as the strictest Neo-Classicism. In just a few short years, the Newfoundland brand of Commissioners' Gothic would look false, unconvincing, even grotesque. The key building was St. Thomas' Church, in St. John's. Its significance lies not in its form – which, as originally built, was entirely conventional – but in the circumstances surrounding its creation. St. Thomas' was the first volley in a war – a denominational war for the souls of Newfoundlanders. One of the primary weapons in that war would be architecture. And the shape of that weapon would be Pointed.

69. The best chronicle of Scott's conversion to "proper" Gothic form is his own. See George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and professional Recollections*, reprinted Stamford: 1995.

70. On Street, see David Brownlee, *The Law Courts: the Architecture of George Edmund Street*, New York: 1984.



CHAPTER TWO

Crisis in the Colonial Church

- The transformation of Newfoundland Gothic alluded to at the close of the previous chapter came about as a result of a crisis – or at least a perceived crisis – in the state of the colony’s Established Church. The goal of this chapter is to examine that crisis, how it was framed for an English audience, and the organizations that were to act
- as agents for change in the colonial Church and its architecture.

The first key figure in the identification of a ‘crisis’ in the Newfoundland Church was Edward Wix (1802-66), the Anglican Archdeacon from 1830-38.¹ Wix, the son of a clergyman of the High Church party, was born in Faulkbourne, Essex, and educated in London and Oxford. He was ordained in 1825, and came to Halifax, Nova Scotia, as a missionary in 1826. He returned to England in 1828 to recover from typhus, and acquired his MA at Oxford before returning to Halifax. He was then transferred to Newfoundland, where he became Archdeacon in 1830. That year he visited several missions outside St. John’s and on Trinity Bay. Five years later, he undertook a much more ambitious six-month tour of the eastern, southern, and western shores of Newfoundland. His record of that journey was published in England the following year as *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary’s Journal*.² He returned to England in rather mysterious and possibly unsavoury circumstances in 1838.³ Upon returning to England, he served a variety of pastoral postings before continued ill health forced him to seek more clement, foreign climes.

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1. Biographical data from “Wix, Edward”, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=38902&query=>
 2. Edward Wix, *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary’s Journal from February to August, 1835*, London: 1836.
 3. According to the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, Wix left St. John’s in considerable debt (£1,300) after being seen in the company of a prostitute. One wonders at the accuracy of these reports; for reasons that will become obvious, Wix would certainly have made numerous enemies in Newfoundland, but the *Dictionary* quotes the Rev. Thomas Bridge – who certainly would not have been one of those enemies – as writing that the circumstances of Wix’s departure “both surprised and appalled members of the Church.”

He returned to England in 1864, and died in 1866 after settling in his son's parish on the Isle of Wight.

Wix's *Journal* was published in the hope that, as he put it, "the sympathy of a Christian public may be enlisted in the behalf of the people of Newfoundland."⁴ Specifically, his aim was to generate support in England for the Newfoundland mission in general, and for the building of a second Anglican church in St. John's in particular. It is a vivid, colourful, and precisely targeted statement of the challenges and threats facing the Established Church in its oldest colony. In particular, Wix set out to encourage curiosity about the land itself, sympathy for the colonists and their missionaries, and concern, even outrage, over forces that he believed were undermining the Church's teachings and interests.

Wix set out in 1835, at what would seem to be the most inauspicious time of year imaginable for such a journey – February. The land he traversed was a wild, sublime landscape of rugged but compelling beauty. Arising shortly after dawn near the cliffs of Norman's Cove, he wrote:

*No description can convey an idea of the beauty of the overfalling stalactites of ice, some white through, some transparent, which hung down from the rugged cliffs on the side of this fine arm of the sea, till they nearly touched the water.*⁵

Later, on Placentia Bay, he described the sparkling appearance of every branch and blade of grass after an extended period of freezing rain:

*The splendour of the spectacle which was presented by woods, shrubs, and under-brush, thus brilliantly illuminated in a morning of unclouded sunshine, was greater than any effort of art could come near to imitate.*⁶

Around Bay D'Espair, Wix described navigating past a pair of waterfalls:

*...one so fine that we rested upon our oars, for some minutes, to look at its unceasing flow of water, in an unbroken perpendicular fall of at least sixty feet.*⁷

As William Grey would do in his drawings of Newfoundland and Labrador two decades later⁸, Wix was seeing and representing the colony through eyes accustomed

4. Wix, p. 229.

5. Wix, p. 25.

6. Wix, p. 27.

7. Wix, p. 82.

8. William Grey's *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, published in 1857, will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Five.

to the conventions of English landscape painting, and its love of the Sublime. While this was fairly certain to resonate and generate curiosity with an English readership, it is probably an unconscious reflection of shared cultural norms rather than a deliberate effort on Wix's part to manipulate his audience's reaction. Perhaps more calculated to touch his readers' sentiments were Wix's descriptions of the people of Newfoundland, whom he portrays (with some important exceptions) as both desirous and deserving of spiritual guidance from the Mother Country.

With great pathos, Wix described the extreme poverty of many Newfoundlanders. On the Isle of Valen, he told of "married females literally almost in a state of nudity" – not through immodesty, but because they literally had next to nothing to wear.⁹ Wix baptized three children of such women in their homes, as their mothers did not have sufficient clothing to venture outside during the winter. One home he visited measured twelve feet by ten, and housed fifteen family members of three generations.¹⁰ As well as being poor, many Newfoundlanders lived lives of exceptional hardship. Joining a fishing boat expedition in Fortune Bay, Wix reported that the cod, upon being pulled from the water into the cold air in which the fishermen are working, freeze solid and die immediately.¹¹

Newfoundlanders' material impoverishment was matched, in some cases, by their spiritual impoverishment. In Bay d'Este, Wix met a woman of age eighty-six, a native of Placentia Bay, who had never seen a clergyman in her life.¹² One James Miles, originally from Shaftesbury, Dorset, had lived fifty-six years in Newfoundland without laying eyes on an Anglican clergyman; some of his children had been reduced to intermarrying with Roman Catholics, "to his grief."¹³ An isolated planter had lost track of the calendar, and consistently marked the Sabbath on Saturdays or Mondays by mistake.¹⁴ At Bonne Bay, Wix enjoyed the hospitality of one who had lived for thirty-three years in Newfoundland, and had never in that time seen a minister of any denomination.¹⁵

Amidst this poverty and hardship Wix eagerly reported a great spiritual hunger among the people. One woman from Placentia Bay broke down in tears as she told the story of how, after her marriage, she was unable to take her prayerbook to her new home.

9. Wix, p. 53.

10. Wix, p. 54.

11. Wix, p. 70.

12. Wix, p. 69.

13. Wix, p. 69.

14. Wix, p. 86.

15. Wix, p. 118.

It was, she said, the greatest calamity of her life apart from the death of her father.¹⁶ A man at Bay d'Este asked Wix for a supply of simple sermons – “not too high learnt” – for he often wept on Sundays when thinking of the church back home in England, so much did he long to hear church prayers.¹⁷ At Long Island Harbour, Wix found one Mr. Strickland reading from a prayer book to his own and his neighbour's family:

*“We never saw a church,” said he, “or were where a church was, or got any schooling, for reading is hard to be got in these parts; but we taught ourselves, and go through the prayers alternate (he and his brother, he meant) morning and evening, each Sunday.”*¹⁸

At Chaleur Bay, the reading of a biblical passage so moved Wix's audience that they were soon wiping tears from their “sunburnt cheeks,” remarking “It is very feeling, Sir!”¹⁹ He reported hearing, after going to bed, the voices of children straining to “an unnatural pitch” as they attempted to learn and recite the Ten Commandments.²⁰ Clearly, the people of Newfoundland would handsomely repay any investment that Wix's readers might make in their salvation. Or, as Wix himself assured his audience, “You will not be casting pearls before swine.”²¹

Some of the readers' sympathy would certainly have been reserved for Wix himself, who presented himself as cheerfully – or at least stoically – determined to do God's work in the teeth of considerable adversity. Some of this adversity was rather comical, at other times it created considerable discomfort or even danger. Wix described his first attempts to learn to walk in snowshoes, which, becoming wet and heavy, “occasioned me many falls and disasters.”²² He described how his frozen sealskin boots cut into his feet, and the danger of frostbite was ever present.²³ Diarrhea was a common problem, which he attributed to a diet of too much venison.²⁴ He became, by necessity, intimately acquainted with the relative virtues of wooden vs. iron snow shovels.²⁵ Moving inland from Bay St. George, Wix and his two native guides were struck by snow-blindness

16. Wix, p. 75.

17. Wix, p. 67.

18. Wix, p. 115.

19. Wix, p. 131.

20. Wix, p. 139.

21. Wix, p. 252.

22. Wix, pp. 89-91.

23. Wix, p. 66.

24. Wix, p. 77.

25. Wix, p. 91.

which increased to the point where “the blind was leader to the blind.”²⁶ Their troubles were made more acute by a severe shortage of food, and only retracing their steps for several days (itself not a simple task) saved their lives. These examples of his tenacity and dedication are no less important to his appeal than his descriptions of the needs of Newfoundlanders. The colonial clergy had, apparently, been under attack from certain sources. Although Wix did not name those sources, he spent considerable time refuting them, quoting at some length the response of Nova Scotia Bishop John Inglis (in whose diocese Newfoundland, at this time, fell).²⁷

Endearing and entertaining as all this was and was surely meant to be for its English audience, it lacked the sense of urgency necessary for a major fundraising drive. That sense of urgency was provided by a darker, more ominous side to life in Newfoundland, which Wix chronicled with equal vividness and commitment. Hints of decadence, of behaviour in need of correction, appear in many communities. In Furby’s Cove, a community full of adherents to “the good old English religion”, Wix was disturbed to note “the too general prevalence of spirit-drinking even among the females...”²⁸ At Fachieu Harbour, Wix found people either living in idleness, or working on the Sabbath.²⁹ A “heathenish man” in Muddy Hole “did not think prayers of any use!”³⁰ At Cape La Hune Harbour, Wix found some of the people “uncouth and rude in their manners, and some of the females particularly coarse in their language.”³¹ Around the Bay of Islands, on the west coast (near present-day Corner Brook), the depravity reached stunning new heights:

One woman was pointed out to me here, who, in her haste to attack a quantity of rum, which she had brought on shore with her from a trading vessel... left an infant of six months old upon the landwash, and forgot there her sucking child, till the body of it was discovered the next morning, drowned by the returning tide! The father, immediately after the discovery of the awful disaster, went on board, un-warned, and apparently unaffected, for another gallon of the poison for the wake...³²

26. Wix, p. 102.

27. Wix, pp. 204-213.

28. Wix, p. 81

29. Wix, p. 120.

30. Wix, p. 121.

31. Wix, p. 136.

32. Wix, pp. 170-71.

That woman, Wix reported, had also rolled over and smothered another child in bed while in a drunken stupor, and was now co-habiting with her own nephew. The habitual conversation of the people here was, he reported, disgusting; the local dialect was profanity, children swore at and frequently struck their parents.³³ “I met with more feminine delicacy,” he recorded with dismay, “in the wigwams of the Micmac and Canokok Indians than in the tilts of many of our own people.”³⁴

If the outports were bad, the capital city was worse. In dedicating his *Journal* to his wife, Wix observed:

*...you were living in a town, which, for the lawlessness of a large portion of its inhabitants, who are excited to frequent breaches of the peace by a most seditious Romish priesthood, is as little desirable a place of residence as many of the disturbed townships of Ireland.*³⁵

The reference to the “seditious Romish priesthood” is key. As noted in the discussion of Quidi Vidi in Chapter One, the population of the St. John’s area was predominantly Roman Catholic. Their spiritual leader was the charismatic and formidable Bishop Michael Fleming. Fleming remains one of the most controversial figures in Newfoundland history to this day. To his biographer J. B. Darcy, he was a champion – indeed, the only champion – of the poor and downtrodden of Newfoundland.³⁶ To historian Patrick O’Flaherty, he was an agitator who had almost single-handedly imported the grievances of Ireland to Newfoundland, regardless of whether they belonged there or not.³⁷ Both views can be supported – the distinction is really one of emphasis rather than of fact – but it can be said with some certainty that Wix would only have acknowledged the latter position.

To Wix, Fleming and his clergy were dreaded spiritual predators. Inter-marriages between Catholics and Protestants were, he observed, “lamentably frequent”, and the Romanist clergy used “every means in their power to encourage the natural superstition of the people...”³⁸ They spared no effort in their attempts to gain converts:

*A nunnery has been established, where a variety of fancy work is taught, to induce the Protestant children to attend the school attached to the establishment; and no scheme of allurement or intimidation is omitted to ensnare the poor and ignorant into the trap laid for them.*³⁹

33. Wix, p. 171.

34. Wix, p. 173.

35. Wix, p. 6.

36. J.B. Darcy, *Fire upon the Earth: The Life and Times of Bishop Michael Anthony Fleming, O.S.F.*, St. John’s: 2003.

37. Patrick O’Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland*, St. John’s: 1999.

38. Wix, p. X.

39. Wix, p. X.

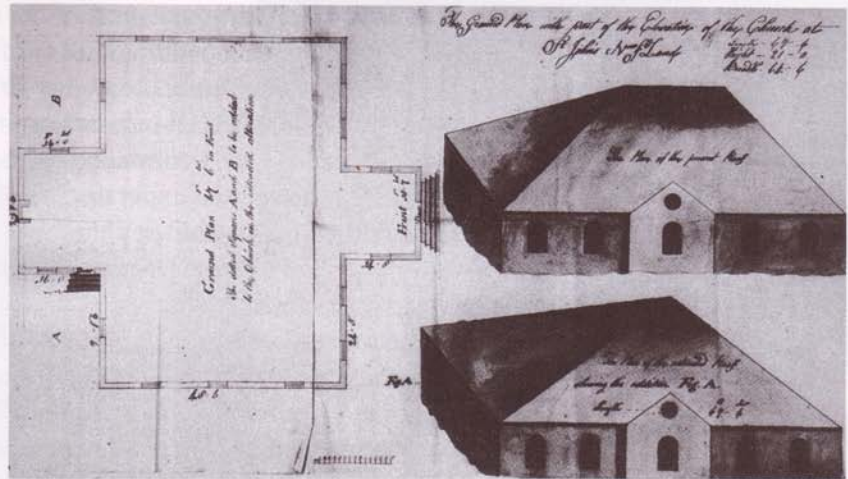
Moreover, in the battle for the souls of St. John's, the Romanists seemed to be winning – and winning in the most visible, public way possible: architecturally. In the preface to his *Journal*, Wix noted:

...a second Popish chapel is soon to be erected in our capital – and this in a colony where the state of society equals, if it do not exceed, in ignorance, superstition, and insubordination, the worse parts of Ireland.⁴⁰

Later, Wix referred to a letter from a parishioner, which warns that Fleming has been raising considerable funds for his church, and that it is to be “one of the finest buildings in any of the provinces.”⁴¹ With two dissenting chapels already active, the people of St. John's would soon be left with no choice “between apostasy and infidelity.”⁴²

The lone church-building that the Anglicans could offer as an architectural rebuttal to Dissent and Romanism was a wooden church on the site of the present cathedral that *The Ecclesiologist* (the periodical of the Ecclesiological Society) would later describe as “a wooden shed of the most monstrous description.”⁴³ While the Ecclesiologists were notorious for their lack of tolerance for dissenting architectural taste, it is hard to deny that the church in question was neither a handsome nor a sophisticated building (figure 2-1).

Fleming's church, on the other hand, was to be quite formidable. The origins of the design are murky – it may have been designed by John Philpot Jones, an Irishman, or by a rather mysterious M. Schmidt, who was likely German.⁴⁴ After several years of gathering funds and materials, Fleming began building in May of 1840.⁴⁵ Fleming's church, now generally referred to as “the Basilica”, still stands today, having escaped damage from



2-1 – Anglican Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, St. John's, Newfoundland, pre-1846.

From C. Francis Rowe,
In Fields Afar, St. John's: 1989.

40. Wix, p. IX.

41. Wix, p. 234.

42. Wix, p. 236.

43. “Colonial Church Architecture, Chapter VI: St. John's Cathedral, Newfoundland”, *The Ecclesiologist*, number 65 (April 1848) new series number 29, p. 275.

44. See Paul O'Neill, “Who Designed the Roman Catholic Basilica?” *Newfoundland Quarterly*, volume LXXXVIII, No. 1, 1993, pp. 7-13.

45. Darcy, p. 165.

two later fires that destroyed most of the rest of St. John's (in 1846 and 1892). It was indeed "one of the finest buildings in any of the provinces", and in fact totally dominated the skyline of St. John's until the twenty-first century (figure 2-2).⁴⁶ Situated well up the hill north of St. John's Harbour, its twin-towered liturgical west end faces south and the harbour, immediately commanding the attention of anyone arriving in the city by water (which in the period under discussion, of course, was everyone). Following in the tradition of the Roman Church unbroken since the Renaissance, the church is Classical in style (figure 2-3).⁴⁷ The exterior, while relatively austere decoratively (undoubtedly due to the extremes of weather experienced in St. John's) is immensely impressive. The façade has a triple portal below triple round-arched windows, between monumental towers with emphasized quoins that are rusticated at the lower level. The nave and transepts are ringed by large round-arched windows at the upper level, and smaller windows with shallow, segmented-arch windows at the lower (aisle) level (figure 2-4). The interior is richly adorned with a massive, flat, coffered ceiling above an elaborate cornice supported by a variation on the Corinthian order (figure 2-5). In its style and monumentality it is linked to some of the most important churches in the Roman Catholic world, such as St. Peter's and the Lateran Basilica in Rome (the latter, like Fleming's church, uses a giant order in the interior), two churches with some of the deepest, oldest roots in the Roman Catholic tradition. Monumental and majestic, loudly announcing its affiliation to Rome, and towering above everything else in the city, the Basilica would have seemed to Wix and his contemporaries the very embodiment of the Catholic menace.

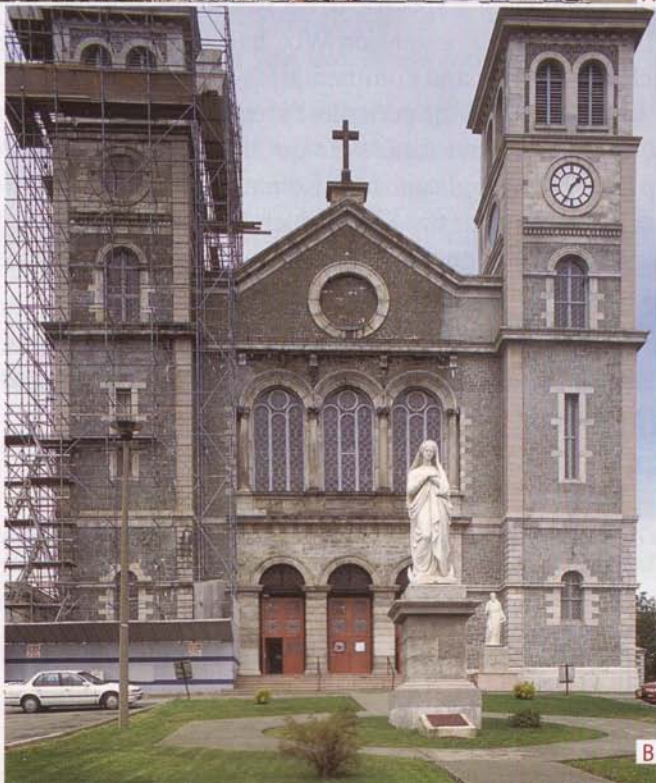
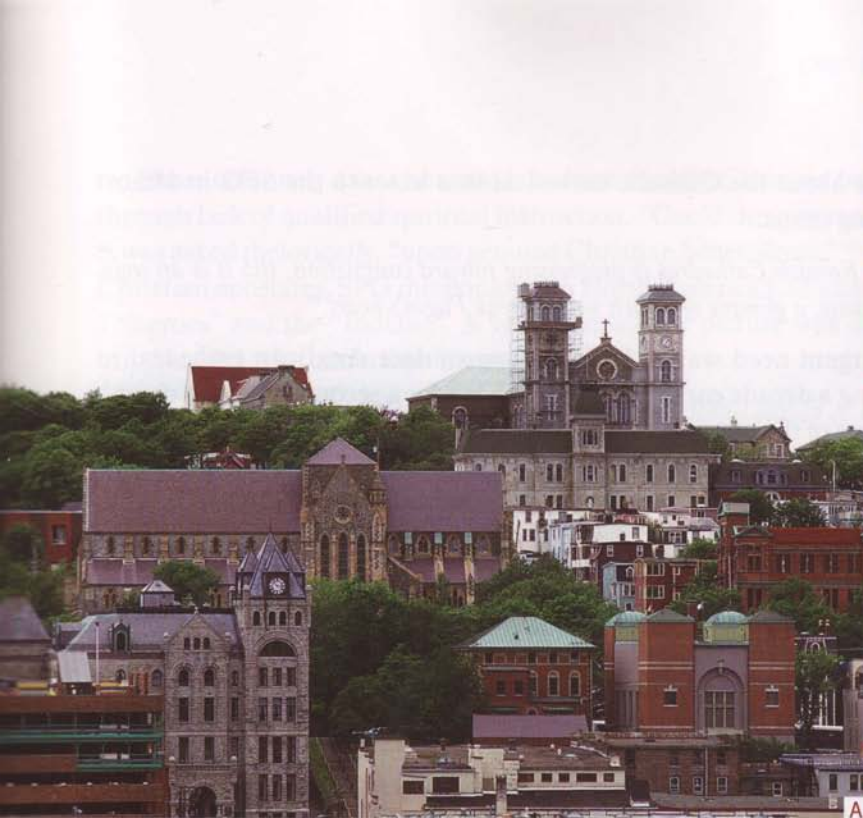
The anxiety among Newfoundland's Anglican clergy over what Fleming was building was not limited to Wix. In the preface to a sermon published in England in 1841, Wix's successor as Archdeacon of Newfoundland, Thomas Bridge, wrote of the necessity of building a new Anglican church in St. John's (one which, by that time, would have to serve as a cathedral). In Newfoundland, he reported, religious error was "fearfully present", and:

*...the Romish Bishop is about to build a so-called cathedral, an Episcopal residence, nunnery, &c., on a vast scale, and at a cost, it is said, of 40,000 or 50,000 pounds...*⁴⁸

46. It now shares that distinction with "The Rooms", a combined provincial art gallery, museum, and archives.

47. The building, erroneously in the present author's view, has also been labeled "Romanesque Revival". See Shannon Ricketts, Leslie Maitland and Jacqueline Hucker, *A Guide to Canadian Architectural Styles*, second edition, Peterborough: 2003, p. 94.

48. Thomas Bridge, "The Two Religions; or, the Question Settled, which is the oldest Church, the Anglican or the Romish?" London: 1841, p. vi.



- 2-2 (A) – St. John's, Newfoundland, from the south.
 2-3 (B) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's, Newfoundland, exterior from west.
 2-4 (C) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's, Newfoundland, exterior from south.
 2-5 (D) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's, Newfoundland, interior to east.

Bridge later wrote about the Catholic cathedral in a letter to the SPG in almost desperately disparaging terms:

*The exterior of the Romish Cathedral is progressing toward completion, tho it is an ugly, unecclesiastical structure, a glimpse of which would break Pugin's heart.*⁴⁹

For Bridge, the urgent need was to build an appropriate Anglican cathedral in St. John's. Wix, writing a decade earlier, could only hope for a second Anglican church building to relieve some of the pressure on the "monstrous wooden shed" that served as the Anglican place of worship on the site of the present cathedral. Wix concluded his *Journal* by explicitly throwing down the gauntlet to his affluent English audience:

*You will, at least, contribute your mite towards the erection of a second church in the capital of this island, where, taking his stand upon the world to come, the Christian missionary may effect a moral, a spiritual movement, in the mass of ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and various wickedness by which he is surrounded.*⁵⁰

Wix did not indeed cast his pearls before swine. Foremost among those who embraced his cause was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel – in spite of the fact that it was the SPG that had suppressed Wix's campaign for a new church in St. John's a few years earlier, for fear that such a specific drive would undermine their broader fundraising efforts.⁵¹ The SPG, and by extension Wix, had a close ally in the periodical *The British Critic*, which ran articles and commentaries of increasingly High Church sympathies from 1827 to 1843 (among the periodical's regular contributors was the Rev. John Henry Newman, who would later scandalize the High Church by making the not altogether illogical leap from High Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism). *The British Critic* was well established as a platform for the SPG, which had already in 1831 identified the colonies as a place of particular concern regarding the health of the Church. British North America, it was said, had a deplorable history, where:

*Whole settlements were living without public worship, without the administration of the Sacraments, without spiritual instruction of any kind; in short, both speculatively and practically, almost 'without God in the world.'*⁵²

49. Thomas Bridge to Ernest Hawkins of the SPG, August 24 1846. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, "G" Series, Letters read before the Society, reel 249.

50. Wix, p. 257.

51. Wix, pp. 237-38.

52. "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel", *British Critic*, volume X, number XIX, 1831, p. 200.

Other colonists, it was lamented, were nominally Christian but had fallen into error through lack of qualified spiritual instruction. "Could there be more pitiable claimants", it was asked rhetorically, "upon genuine Christian benevolence?"⁵³ As well as reclaiming Christian apostates, SPG missionaries in North America had undertaken to convert the "Negroes" and the "Indians". A very sympathetic picture was drawn of the Anglican missionaries who undertook these duties:

*Nor would it be difficult to draw an affecting, yet a faithful picture of the toils and dangers, the privations and sufferings, to which its missionaries were exposed, in prosecuting the apostolic work to which they had devoted themselves.*⁵⁴

This was, clearly, fertile ground in which Wix could plant the seeds of his appeal. Moreover, *The British Critic* and Edward Wix were clearly of one mind on the subject of Roman Catholicism, particularly the Irish variety. In a profoundly sympathetic review of "Genius of the Church of Rome: Ireland. Popery and Priestcraft the Cause of Misery and Crime" (a very revealing title) by J.C. Colquhoun, the *Critic* finds itself in complete agreement with the author's view that the "disorders of Ireland are miserably aggravated by the influence of Roman Catholic agitators and priests."⁵⁵ They were particularly suspicious of the Roman Catholic clergy in the colonies, noting that:

*...in our colonies the Roman Catholic priest is often one of the lowest of his order, a mere adventurer, or perhaps outcast from some foreign colony...*⁵⁶

Judging from the similarity between these comments and Wix's assessment of the Irish Catholic clergy in St. John's, this was not an uncommon English attitude towards the Irish.

In 1836, *The British Critic* published the SPG's annual report for 1834-35, which included a lengthy and laudatory discussion of Wix's *Journal*.⁵⁷ The appeal for funds was reiterated, and both the SPG and the publishers of *The British Critic* were authorized to collect money. The appeals were successful, and the result was the building of St. Thomas' Church in St. John's (discussed on pages 22-24, above). Just over a decade later, in 1848, a more

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid, p. 201.

55. *The British Critic*, volume XX, number XXXIX, p. 4.

56. "The Church in the West Indies", *The British Critic*, volume XXIX, number LVIII, p. 267.

57. "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Society's Report for 1834-35", *The British Critic*, volume XIX, number XXXVII, 1836, pp. 348-54. This report also repeats Wix's story that the SPG itself had thwarted his earlier attempts to raise funds for a second church in St. John's.

archaeologically literate generation of Gothic Revivalists would say that “the intention [of St. Thomas’] was certainly better than the effect.”⁵⁸ Notwithstanding this lukewarm endorsement, St. Thomas’ was the first sign that people of influence and affluence in England were in fact taking the “crisis” in the Newfoundland Church seriously.

Presumably hoping to build on this momentum, the SPG used its 1838 annual meeting to shine a bright spotlight on the woes of the colonial Church.⁵⁹ They began their “Report of the Proceedings” by stating their conviction that “a state of crisis has occurred in the religious affairs of the British Colonies.”⁶⁰ Great Britain, it was pointed out, had planted colonies in places as remote as America, Australia and India, but while enjoying the fruits of her success:

*...she seems almost to have forgotten that she was a Christian nation; that the emigrants whom she sent out were children of Christian parents, and had need of instruction in God’s Holy Word... [and] that by the acquisition of authority over heathen tribes she contracted a sacred obligation to impart unto them the saving truths of the Gospel.*⁶¹

Particularly discouraging was the situation in the Canadas, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and, most desolate of all, Newfoundland. The report made reference to the “dreadful conditions” of many of the inhabitants there, and to the documentation of those conditions by Wix. Nova Scotia Bishop John Inglis (whose diocese, it must be remembered, still included Newfoundland as well as his own province, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Bermuda) then gave a speech in which he described the sorrows of the many in his see who did not have adequate access to clergy. He reported on one occasion being followed from port to port by a small boat, whose crew attended every service he gave, so desperate were they for instruction and blessing.⁶² In Inglis’ twelve years as Bishop, he had consecrated nearly a hundred churches, but found that the erection of every new church speedily provided evidence that yet another was needed nearby.⁶³

58. “Colonial Church Architecture, Chapter VI: St. John’s Cathedral, Newfoundland”, *The Ecclesiologist*, number 65 (April 1848) new series number 29, p. 274.

59. See *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts for the year 1838*, London: 1838.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

His greatest concern, however, was reserved for Newfoundland, where he found “a destitution most deplorable, and most difficult of full relief.”⁶⁴ In some parts, he noted, poverty was so great that people were in frequent danger of starvation. Less impoverished areas, however, could hope to support a clergyman, with adequate assistance. While means were lacking, the spirit was, he assured his audience, more than willing:

*But there is no part of the British dominions where the services of devoted Clergymen are more affectionately welcomed, and no place where such services appear to be more eminently blessed. I have seen boat after boat follow the visiting Missionary from settlement to settlement, and it is impossible to behold a more becoming and cordial regard for the ministers and ordinances of the Church than is manifested by this warm-hearted people. It is most deplorable, therefore, that large numbers of them should be left entirely destitute of the spiritual instruction which they desire above all things. Thousands of them remain for years, for ten, twenty years, without seeing a Clergyman, and without the consolation of the Church of Christ.*⁶⁵

As far as the SPG was concerned, a critical mass had been reached. Evidence mounted upon evidence, and the time to act had clearly come:

*...there is a strong and growing conviction that something must be done; that things must not be suffered to remain where they are; that this country will be deeply sinful before God if it permits the dependencies of the empire to grow up in practical atheism, and in all the wickedness necessarily resulting from such a state...*⁶⁶

The SPG was a consequential Society, wielding considerable influence and funds. As both Wix and Inglis had indicated, however, one of the most pressing issues in Newfoundland was the urgent need to build more churches, and church architecture was not an area where the SPG could claim any special expertise or authority. Their cause, however, would soon receive enthusiastic support from another group whose main concern and expertise was architectural: the Cambridge Camden Society. And the Cambridge Camden Society was more than willing to specify precisely what form new Church of England buildings in the colonies should take.⁶⁷

64. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-4.

67. There is considerable literature on the Cambridge Camden Society. For general introductions, see Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival*, London: 1928; Chris Brooks, *The Gothic Revival*, London: 1999; Michael Lewis, *The Gothic Revival*, New York: 2002. For up to date scholarship on more specific themes, see John Elliott, ed., *A Church as it Should Be: the Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence*, Stamford: 2000.

As noted in Chapter One, the Cambridge Camden Society was formed by a group of Cambridge undergraduates in 1839. Their aim was to promote precise, “scientific” study of English Gothic church architecture in order to facilitate the creation of worship spaces that would be appropriate to the High Church liturgy advocated by the members of the Oxford Movement (also known as “Tractarians”): While the Tractarians advocated a return to an essentially medieval liturgy, the Cambridge Camden Society provided a parallel architectural movement, promoting the creation and restoration of medieval worship spaces. According to the Cambridge Camden Society, the Church of England was the true, holy “catholic” Church (by which they meant “universal”, as originally intended; thus the frequent references to Roman Catholics as “Romanists” or “Papists”, rather than “Catholics”). Gothic – which was understood to be the native English style – was its natural and correct architectural expression.

These ideas were not unique to the Cambridge Camden Society. The identification of Gothic with the English nation and its history goes back at least as far as the eighteenth century, and possibly even a century earlier. Chris Brooks has compellingly argued that much that is typically classified as “Gothic Survival”, such as the Great Staircase at Christ Church, Oxford (ca. 1640), is in fact “Gothic Revival.”⁶⁸ The distinction is an important one. “Survival” suggests a non-reflective habit; a builder and patron using Gothic because no more “modern” idea had occurred to them. As Brooks argues, it is highly unlikely that patrons at Oxford University in the seventeenth century had never heard of the Renaissance. The use of Gothic in such settings, according to Brooks, is in fact a deliberate, conscious affirmation of continuity with the medieval past, undertaken by individuals or institutions whose authority is historically rooted in that past.

The political meaning of Gothic acquired more layers during the English Civil War. For the Parliamentarians, Gothic was seen as the visible, architectural symbol of a constitutional history in which the authority of the King was legitimately limited by Parliament. According to this view, Gothic was the architecture of an ancient, freedom-loving, Northern European race that valued liberty and rejected all forms of tyranny – from invading Roman colonizers to absolute, unfettered monarchs. Thus, when Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham, commissioned James Gibbs to design his Temple of Liberty in 1741, the style was Gothic.⁶⁹

Later still in the eighteenth century, Gothic came to be seen as an affirmation of the continuity of English history in the face of the threat posed by revolution – specifically,

68. See Brooks, chapter 1.

69. Brooks, chapter 3.

the French Revolution. One of the key figures here was the architectural draughtsman, illustrator and polemicist John Carter.⁷⁰ Carter's rightful place in the history of the Gothic Revival has been restored through the research of J. Mordaunt Crook.⁷¹ Crook demonstrates that it was Carter – not Pugin – who first condemned the “heathen” associations of Classical architecture. And it was Carter who, possibly echoing Gibbs' Temple of Liberty, made the connection between architecture and the continuity of English history when he embraced Gothic as a refuge from the modernism and “improvement” epitomized by the horrors of the French Revolution.⁷²

The Church of England had parallel concerns. As Brooks points out, the Church constantly irritated its opponents by claiming that it was simultaneously both “Reformed” and “Catholic” – in other words, that it had broken with the corrupting influence of Popery, but still retained the privileged status and moral authority of the ancient, original, Catholic Church.⁷³ These debates were unfolding not only in the rarified atmosphere of the theological schools. They were being preached to the people in the parishes of the Established Church – possibly even in Newfoundland. On the evening of Sunday, January 3, 1841, Newfoundland Archdeacon Thomas Bridge visited his former parish of St. Thomas, Dudley, in England. The incumbent being ill, Bridge delivered the sermon, and his chosen theme was, “The Two Religions; or, The Question Settled, Which Is the Oldest Church, the Anglican or the Romish?”⁷⁴ Given everything discussed in this chapter thus far, the answer Bridge's sermon will provide is perhaps self evident; the intellectual route he will take to get there is rather more uncertain. Bridge begins by explaining what it is to be a “Reformed” church: the term itself implies that the Church had, over the course of the Romanist centuries, strayed from its roots and had to be restored then – literally – “re-formed”. Moreover, according to Bridge, the Anglican Church rests its moral authority on Scripture itself, whereas the Romanists' authority rests on centuries of intervention and mediation by human agents (i.e., Popes). Thus, it is the Anglican Church that is the old one, the one closest to the church's “primitive purity”.⁷⁵

70. See J.M. Frew, “Gothic is English: John Carter and the Revival of Gothic as England's National Style”, *Art Bulletin*, volume 64, 1982, pp. 315-19.

71. J. Mordaunt Crook, *John Carter and the Mind of the Gothic Revival*, London: W.S. Maney & Son in association with the Society of Antiquaries of London, 1995.

72. On the topic of Gothic and English nationalism, see also Simon Bradley, “The Englishness of Gothic: Theories and interpretations from William Gilpin to J.H. Parker”, *Architectural History*, volume 45, 2002, pp. 325-46.

73. Brooks, pp. 24-25.

74. Subsequently published as “The Two Religions; or, The Question Settled, Which Is the Oldest Church, the Anglican or the Romish?” London: 1841.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Connecting these ideas to ones already established about the ancientness and Englishness of Gothic is not difficult. Religion and architecture are seen as complementary streams in a historical progression that affirms the legitimacy of the English nation, its Established Church, its native architecture, and their apparent date with destiny. The perceived main obstacle, inevitably, is Romanism. In his preface, Bridge cited Newfoundland as a colony “where the errors combated in these pages are fearfully prevalent”, and, citing the progress made on the Catholic cathedral discussed above,⁷⁶ published his sermon in the hope of raising money for the erection of an Anglican cathedral in St. John’s.⁷⁷ His appeal was aimed at “those pious and benevolent persons who wish to strengthen the Church against her active and powerful enemy.”⁷⁸

The contribution of the Cambridge Camden Society to this situation was to define, in a more systematic and explicit way than had yet been attempted, just what the architectural face of the Church of England should look like – and to enforce that definition as rigorously and relentlessly as possible. Their goal was to initiate a “science of church architecture and church arrangement... the rules of which ought to be followed as strictly as those of any other science.”⁷⁹ The Society launched its periodical, *The Ecclesiologist*, in 1841, in order to:

...point out defects in church-building, and infringements of religious reverence or ecclesiastical propriety, with the object of putting a timely stop to errors which, if unchecked, would probably multiply, and with the full disposition to attribute them to an inconsiderate following of custom, and the long disuse of an adequate study of sound principles and models.⁸⁰

With these words began one of the most influential publications in the history of church architecture. Such was the rise of the journal’s star that by the beginning of 1844, the Society could confidently publish a list of “architects approved” (which included, unsurprisingly, their favourites William Butterfield and R.C. Carpenter), and “architects condemned” (which included Sir Charles Barry, co-designer of the Parliament Building at Westminster).⁸¹ Those affiliated to the High Church movement were their natural allies, including *The British Critic*, which noted approvingly in 1843 that *The Ecclesiologist* was proceeding “with increasing spirit and ability”, and that the periodical was providing

76. See pp. 44-5 above.

77. Bridge, pp. v-vi.

78. Bridge, p. vi.

79. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, p. 145.

80. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 1, number 1, November, 1841, p. iv.

81. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume III, April 1844.

an invaluable service by “collecting and analyzing facts... and [supplying] judicious criticisms.”⁸²

This is not to say that the Cambridge Camden Society’s views went unopposed. Viewing their extraordinary success in hindsight (as Crook said, they had some impact on the appearance of virtually every Anglican church in the world), it is easy to neglect the fact that their views were vigorously contested by Anglicans who were not High Church supporters. One vehicle for the views of those who contested them – the Low Church equivalent to *The British Critic* – was the periodical *The Record*. The High Church Tractarians, according to *The Record*, were attempting to separate the Church of England from its heroic reformers, and “to unite us to the dead bodies of the Greek and Romish Churches.”⁸³ As for the Cambridge Camden Society, they were an enemy of the Church whose unmasking could not come soon enough. *The Record*’s views are summarized with admirable clarity in a biting letter published in 1843, entitled “Doings of the Camden Society”:

*...I think it desirable that the Christian public should be aware of its real aims... It is composed of a number of assiduous young gentlemen, chiefly in statu pupillari, who occupy their vacations in measuring church windows and chancel-arch mouldings with leaden tape, and then in Term time issuing instructions to the churchwardens of an empire... these young adepts at church architecture are somewhat systematically seeking to aid the Oxford [Tractarian] movement in favour of the old superstitions; and in the midst of a great deal of trash there is much also that is really mischievous...*⁸⁴

To drive the point home, the letter is signed simply with the provocative pseudonym “Latimer”, after the Protestant martyr burned at Oxford (along with Ridley and Cranmer) in 1555.

As the above quotations suggest, the most serious accusation against the Cambridge Camden Society was that it was too close to Popery (i.e., Roman Catholicism). This issue was brought to a head in 1845, when John Henry Newman, one of the founders of the Oxford Tractarian movement, was received into the Roman Catholic Church after an agonizing period of indecision (he had resigned his Anglican vicarage in 1843). The effect of Newman’s flirtation with and eventual defection to Roman Catholicism on the Cambridge Camden Society was electric. *The Ecclesiologist* continued publication, but, in theory at least, formally separated itself from the Cambridge Camden Society. “It was

82. *The British Critic*, volume XXXIV, number LXVIII, October, 1843, p. 522.

83. *The Record*, January 5, 1843, number 1, p. 578.

84. *The Record*, January 9, 1843, number 1, p. 579.

found to be a most difficult, if not impossible, task”, they explained with impressively cool-headed evasiveness, to “fairly and fully represent the views of a numerous and fluctuating Committee...”⁸⁵ In the Report on the forty-first meeting of the Society, in March 1845, it was recorded that the Bishops of Exeter and Lincoln had resigned from the Cambridge Camden Society, and that the former had publicly repudiated it.⁸⁶ In consequence, the Committee recommended that the Cambridge Camden Society be dissolved.⁸⁷ Dissolved the Society duly was. It was subsequently re-branded the Ecclesiological Society, moved its headquarters from Cambridge to London, re-established its connection with its briefly orphaned publication *The Ecclesiologist*, and essentially carried on as before.

One of the next steps was for the Ecclesiologists to distance themselves from Pugin. As a Roman Catholic convert, Pugin had always had an uneasy relationship with the High Anglican Church, their total adoption of his architectural principles notwithstanding. *The British Critic* held his architecture in the highest esteem. In a review of several new church buildings in 1840, they noted with regret that the only one with great merit was a Roman Catholic chapel in Derby by Pugin:

*To a member of the Church of England this is indeed a painfully beautiful structure. We introduce it into our pages with the intention of communicating to others the pain we feel ourselves, and of proving also that it is not, as many appear to think, in some sort physically impossible to build real churches in the nineteenth century.*⁸⁸

The ideas underlying Pugin’s architecture were another matter entirely. In a scathing review of *Contrasts*, they praised the attractiveness of the drawing, conceded that Pugin was the finest Gothic architect of the age. The arguments in his text, however, were condemned as childish, inappropriate (in deliberate contradiction of Pugin’s title, “...accompanied by appropriate text”), and “scarcely worth reading.” “Mr. Pugin ought never to write,” they concluded, “when he can draw so infinitely better... Homer was blind, and Mr. Pugin cannot argue.”⁸⁹

For the Ecclesiological Society, the Newman crisis made the clarification (perhaps “adjustment” is a more appropriate word) of their relationship with Pugin a pressing political necessity. They did so in an article published in 1846, entitled “The Artistic

85. *The Ecclesiologist*, new series volume I, 1845, p. 2.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

88. *The British Critic*, volume XXVIII, October, 1840, pp. 512-13.

89. *The British Critic*, volume XXV, number L, 1839, p. 480.

Merit of Mr. Pugin.”⁹⁰ They had, they emphasized, great respect for Pugin, but he had sadly and singularly failed to live up to his potential. No one would be happier than the Society, they assured their readers, if Pugin could prove himself to be the architect they had once believed him to be, rather than the one his recent works revealed him to be. In short, Pugin had been valuable to them, but had outlived his usefulness. Just a few years later, in 1852, Pugin conveniently died at the age of forty.

Although the Society had apparently dodged a bullet, opponents such as *The Record* always suspected it of Popery. These suspicions would even follow it to the colonies. Amid the chaos and acrimony of the fateful forty-first meeting, it was also reported that two men had been admitted by acclamation as patrons of the Cambridge Camden Society: The Lord Bishop of New Brunswick, John Medley, and the Lord Bishop of Newfoundland, Edward Feild.⁹¹

Having publicly cleared their conscience of too close a relationship with Pugin, the Ecclesiological Society could pursue other weighty matters – one of which was establishing appropriate guidelines for the building of churches in the colonies. They began the systematic tackling of this issue with a series of articles in *The Ecclesiologist* entitled “Colonial Church Architecture”, published between 1847 and 1850. The series began in response to a request from the Bishop of Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), for aid in adapting Gothic for a cathedral in a tropical climate. In addition to Ceylon⁹², articles in the sporadic fourteen-part series discussed churches proposed, planned and built in Tasmania⁹³, Adelaide⁹⁴, Guiana⁹⁵, Calcutta⁹⁶, Sydney⁹⁷, Newfoundland⁹⁸, Fredericton⁹⁹ and Cape Town¹⁰⁰. The articles are a series of ad hoc case studies rather than a systematic exploration of the topic, but certain general principles do emerge. That the style must be Gothic is a premise, rather than a point of argument. “Middle Pointed” (Decorated) is preferred, although “First Pointed” (Early English) is certainly acceptable if that is

90. “The Artistic Merit of Mr. Pugin”, *The Ecclesiologist*, volume V, number 7, January 1846, pp. 10-16.

91. *The Ecclesiologist*, March 1845, p. 71.

92. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 7, 1847, pp. 168-171; volume 8, 1847, pp. 88-92.

93. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, pp. 86-8.

94. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, pp. 141-2.

95. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, pp. 142-147; volume 9, 1848, pp. 181-7; volume 10, 1849, pp. 193-4.

96. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 265-71; volume 10, 1849, p. 193.

97. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 271-4; volume 10, 1850, pp. 327-30.

98. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 274-9; volume 9, 1849, pp. 215-17.

99. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 361-3; volume 10, 1849, pp. 192-3.

100. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 10, 1849, pp. 101-02.

all that funds will allow. While English Gothic models must be adhered to as strictly as possible, allowances can and indeed should be made for local climatic conditions (especially in extreme instances like Colombo) and the availability (or lack thereof) of local building expertise and craftsmen. Stone is the preferred material, but alternatives such as brick or even wood can be used when necessary. If local building traditions offer any useful lessons in building for local circumstances, these lessons should be adopted. This willingness to adapt to local circumstances represents a slow shift in the thinking of the Ecclesiological Society. Their earlier writings were rigidly prescriptive on matters of design – medieval models were to be followed as closely as humanly possible. For example, *A Few Words to Churchbuilders* (1841) contains an eighteen-page appendix listing “fonts, windows and roodscreens intended to serve as models.”¹⁰¹ At the opposite extreme of Ecclesiological thought, both conceptually and chronologically, is *The English Cathedral of the Nineteenth Century*, written by one of the founding members of the Society, A.J.B. Beresford Hope, in 1861. In it, Hope declares:

*We have outgrown the literal reproduction of the particular phase of Gothic which prevailed in England between 1250 and 1370, but we need not have outgrown making that our point of departure, if it is in itself worthy of the selection. We need not be afraid of adopting it as the platform upon which we are to construct our own superior style...*¹⁰²

These words would have been unthinkable in 1841. The commentaries on colonial church-building in *The Ecclesiologist* fall between these extremes. On the one hand, English Gothic – particularly Decorated, or “Second Pointed” – is unquestionably the ultimate exemplar and the perfect embodiment of architectural and moral virtue. On the other hand, Butterfield’s (unexecuted) design for Adelaide Cathedral is praised for “just the individuality which we admire in our ancient churches,”¹⁰³ and a year later George Gilbert Scott would be criticized for a lack of originality in Newfoundland.¹⁰⁴ The precise formula for pleasing the Ecclesiologists remained a moving target.

With the developments discussed in this chapter, most of the necessary pieces were in place for Gothic to come to Newfoundland. Edward Wix and John Inglis provided the necessary sense of urgency, while the SPG (with support from allies like *The British Critic*)

101. This hugely influential pamphlet, long out of print and very rare, was recently re-published by Spire Books. See Christopher Webster, ed., *Temples... Worthy of His Presence: the Early Publications of the Cambridge Camden Society*, Reading: 2003. *A Few Words to Churchbuilders* is reproduced in facsimile, pp. 133-92; the appendix referred to is pp. 169-92.

102. A.J.B. Beresford Hope, *The English Cathedral of the Nineteenth Century*, London: 1861, pp. 32-3.

103. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, p. 141.

104. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 277.

provided aggressive moral support, influence in the Mother Country, and even some funds. The intellectual framework and design parameters for the colonial Gothic came from the Cambridge Camden/Ecclesiological Society, drawing on a well established body of ideas circulating around architecture and Englishness. It remained for the Church of England itself to seize the reins and act.



CHAPTER THREE

The Established Church Responds

At the time when Archdeacon Wix wrote his Journal, Newfoundland was in the diocese of Nova Scotia, which also included New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Bermuda. This in fact represented a reduction in the size of the diocese, which had also included Upper and Lower Canada until 1793.¹ After raising the alarm so vigorously in 1838, the SPG announced with great satisfaction the following year “the formation of the provinces of Upper Canada and Newfoundland into separate dioceses.”² The Rev. Dr. John Strachan (1778-1867), Archdeacon of Toronto, and the Rev. Dr. Aubrey George Spencer (1795-1872), Archdeacon of Bermuda (which was now part of the new diocese of Newfoundland), were to be their respective bishops. The diocese of Nova Scotia remained, however, somewhat unwieldy. In 1843, the SPG was “compelled to acknowledge that little has been done for New Brunswick.”³ They were more pleased to report some progress in a proposal to create a new diocese of New Brunswick, and by 1845 were able to report:

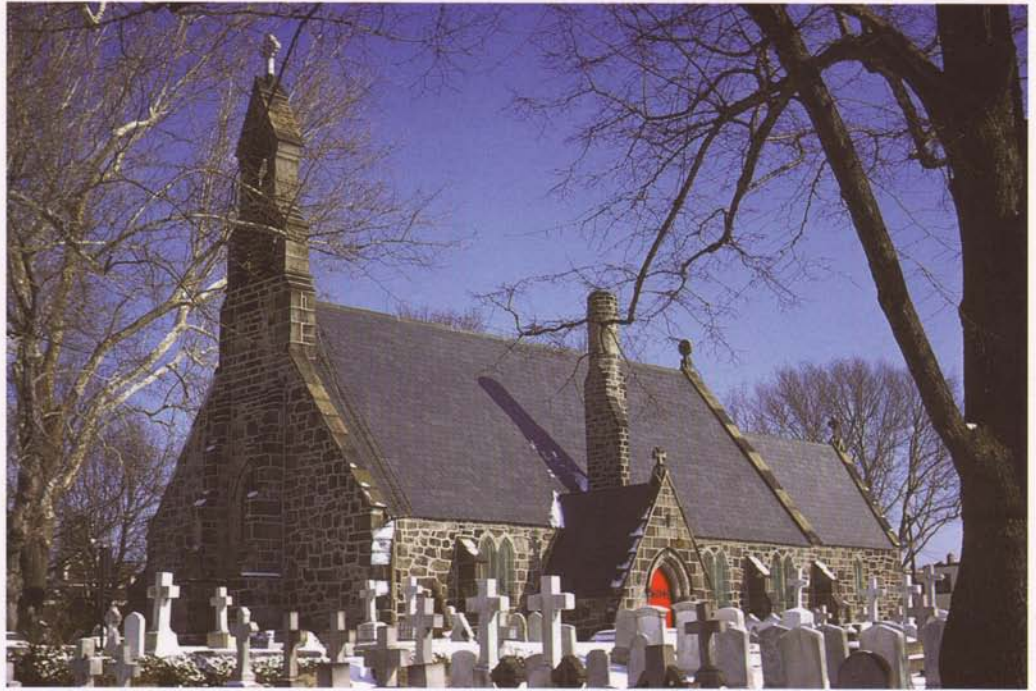
*...the great event of the year is, of course, the separation of New Brunswick from the diocese of Nova Scotia, and its erection into an independent See, under the title of the Bishopric of Fredericton.*⁴

1. For a useful factual history of the dioceses of what is now Canada before 1928, see Owsley Robert Rowley, *The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland*, Milwaukee and London: 1928.
2. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1839*, London: 1839, p. 28.
3. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1843*, London: 1843, p. XXX.
4. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1845*, London: 1845, p. L-LI.



3-1 – St. James the Less,
Philadelphia,
from the south-west.

Photograph by
Pierre du Prey.



On Sunday, May 4, 1845, The Rev. John Medley D.D. (1804-92) was consecrated Bishop of Fredericton in Lambeth Palace Chapel, and left for New Brunswick two weeks later.⁵

Although the diocese of Newfoundland had a six-year head start, it was in New Brunswick, under the leadership of John Medley, that Ecclesiological Gothic got its first foothold in British North America. Indeed, in all of North America, the only Ecclesiologically correct contemporary with the earliest of Medley's work was the Church of St. James the Less, Philadelphia (built 1846-49) (figure 3-1).⁶ It was John Medley, along with architect Frank Wills, who established the architectural path that Newfoundland would very soon after follow. Their work marks the beginning of the architectural response to the crisis in the colonial Church in the Atlantic Provinces. Thus, it is important background to – and sometimes an interesting contrast with – subsequent developments in Newfoundland.

5. Ibid, p. LI.

6. On St. James the Less, see Phoebe Stanton, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: an Episode in Taste 1840-1856*, Baltimore and London: 1968, pp. 91-127.

The position of the Anglican Church in New Brunswick was in some important respects analogous to its position in Newfoundland, in that although it was the established Church of the Mother Country, it was a minority in the colony itself. Gregg Finley has pointed out that it was not just Romanism, but vigorous Protestantism that threatened the position of the Anglican Church in New Brunswick:

...[The Anglican] Church was fractured into "high" and "low" camps, did not enjoy very close Episcopal supervision, and was swamped by the more effective ministries of the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists whose numbers rapidly increases throughout the province during this period.⁷

As Medley himself put it in 1847 (in terms that create a striking contrast with the tone of Edward Wix):

Let us remember that though we have truth, we have not numbers on our side in this province: it becomes us therefore to be "modest and humble in our ministration," not speaking of other bodies of Christians with a bitterness which will do us no good, and the Church all possible harm: but letting them see that we respect their zeal, and honour their piety, though we believe our own system to be truer and more effectual for good.⁸

Years later, in a letter to William Ewart Gladstone, Medley compared the situation of the Anglicans in New Brunswick to that of its sister Church in Ireland:

Our Church in N. Brunswick is, in one respect, in the same position with the Irish, that it forms a small fraction of the population, and that the Irish and French are a majority of our people.⁹

Nevertheless, great expectations were attached to Medley's appointment. In 1847, in an otherwise gloomy article lamenting the lack of architectural expertise among colonial clergy, *The Ecclesiologist* saw one ray of hope:

...one Prelate, the Bishop of Fredericton, has both knowledge and will, and will doubtless do a great deal in his diocese.¹⁰

7. Alan Gregg Finley, *New Brunswick's Gothic Revival: John Medley and the Aesthetics of Anglican Worship*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1989, p. 48. Much of the material from this enormously valuable study was included in a subsequent published work by Finley: *On Earth as It Is In Heaven: Gothic Revival Churches of Victorian New Brunswick*, Fredericton: 1995.

8. *A Charge delivered at his primary visitation held in Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, August 24, 1847. By John, Bishop of Fredericton*, Fredericton: 1847, p. 29.

9. John Medley to William Ewart Gladstone, April 15, 1869, British Library Manuscripts add. 44420 f.120.

10. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 7, 1847, p. 16.

Medley had come to the attention of the Society several years earlier. In the debut issue of *The Ecclesiologist*, they drew attention to the tract “Elementary Remarks on Church Architecture”, which Medley (then Secretary of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society, as well as vicar of St. Thomas, Exeter) had written and the Ecclesiologists could “most safely recommend.”¹¹ The “remarks” are indeed, it must be said, “elementary” – the publication is really little more than a brief (thirty-nine page) synopsis of the styles of English medieval architecture.¹² One of the most intriguing comments is at the very beginning of the book. “In the Middle Ages,” Medley wrote, “the Clergy were frequently the architects as well as the guardians of the Church...”¹³ Historically inaccurate as this may be, it assigns considerable architectural authority and responsibility to the clergy. Although Medley never attempted to design his own architecture, he was a singularly learned and discriminating architectural patron. The combined job of clergyman/architect would in fact be filled by his son, Edward Medley (1838-1910) – as well as two very significant counterparts in Newfoundland, who will be discussed in Chapter Five.

On May 9, 1848, John Medley gave an address to the Ecclesiological Society in which he outlined precisely what was wrong with the church architecture that he found upon his arrival as bishop three years earlier.¹⁴ Until very recently, Medley said, there were no “correct” (by which he meant Ecclesiologically correct) churches to be found in North America, let alone New Brunswick. The typical church building, apparently “borrowed from the buildings erected by the Puritans”,¹⁵ consisted of a rectangular box often forty by twenty-eight feet, often without a chancel, with a flat roof and no exposed timbers on the ceiling inside. The tower, which was “poor and thin”, often terminated in a spire. The pulpit usually occupied the place of the altar, obscuring the latter from view. The windows might be square, round-arched or pointed, and were often covered with “green Venetian blinds to keep out light and heat.” There were usually two stoves, which “sent their long arms throughout the entire building, meeting in the centre and going up through the roof.” The pews were usually square, and sold by auction to the highest bidder. The sacramental plate was cheap and, according to Medley, ugly.

Apart from the flat roof, this description would fit most of the churches discussed in Chapter One. Their one redeeming feature, in Medley’s eyes, was that they were mostly made of wood, and therefore unlikely to last long. In his Charge of 1847, he stated that it

11. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 1, p. 15.

12. John Medley, *Elementary Remarks on Church Architecture*, Exeter: 1841.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

14. “Colonial Church Architecture. Chapter IX.” *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 361-3.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 361.

had been his aim to “raise the general standard of reverential feeling... by building a new Cathedral.”¹⁶ That project was still incomplete, but he also expressed his thankfulness for the chapel that had been built in Fredericton, which had “been the means of leading persons to attend our services who were systematically excluded from them.”¹⁷ The chapel referred to is St. Anne’s Chapel, Fredericton, which was the first piece of architecture completed in North America to conform to the principles of the Ecclesiological Society.¹⁸ The “Report on the Quarterly Meeting of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society” (of which Medley had been founder and first Secretary¹⁹) reported on a perspective drawing of the chapel that they had received, characterizing the chapel as “a very chaste example”, and “probably the first church finished in America exhibiting a satisfactory knowledge of the Pointed style.”²⁰ The Ecclesiological Society was, unsurprisingly, ecstatic:

*...for the first time, the inhabitants of New Brunswick have... the opportunity of learning what was the intention and true spirit of those venerable services which they have inherited from their Mother Church of England.*²¹

That chapel, which the Ecclesiologists considered a turning point in North American architecture, is still extant and remarkably intact. The architect was Frank Wills, an Exeter native brought by Medley to New Brunswick, who went on to become one of the most important Gothic Revival architects in the United States (and an influential Member of the New York Ecclesiological Society²²) before his premature death at age thirty-four in 1857. The cornerstone was laid on May 30, 1846, and the consecration took place on March 18, 1847.²³ St. Anne’s is a two-cell chapel consisting of nave and

16. Edward Medley, *A Charge Delivered at his Primary Visitation held in Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, August 24, 1847*, Fredericton: 1845, p. 35.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 34. Those “who were systematically excluded” refers to the practice of selling or auctioning pews, to which Medley was vehemently opposed. His strong and well-argued position on this drew great praise from Ecclesiologists. In 1844, before Medley’s accession as Bishop, *The Ecclesiologist* makes mention of “Mr. Medley’s strong argument against pews... [in which] he demolishes the arguments in Mr. Scobell’s *Few Thoughts &c.*”, volume 3, 1844, pp. 148-9.

18. In the Preface to his 1966 M.A. thesis, Douglas Richardson makes it very clear that St. Anne’s, rather than any work by Richard Upjohn, was the first “complete example of Ecclesiological work in North America.” See Douglas Scott Richardson, *Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick*, unpublished M.A. thesis, Yale University: 1966, p. v.

19. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 9, 1848, p. 59.

20. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, p. 103.

21. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, p. 378.

22. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 9, 1849, p. 331.

23. See William Quintard Ketchum, “Chapter VIII: St. Anne’s Chapel – Laying Foundation Stone – Consecration of Chapel – Bishop’s Sermon”, *The Life and Work of the Most Reverend John Medley, D.D., First Bishop of Fredericton and metropolitan of Canada*, Saint John: 1893.



3-2 – St. Anne's Chapel,
Fredericton, New Brunswick,
exterior from south.

chancel (figure 3-2). Broadly speaking, it resembles St. Michael's, Long Stanton (figure 3-3) – a church cited by the Ecclesiologists as an appropriate model for the colonies – except that all windows are lancets (i.e., Early English Gothic rather than Decorated). The west (figure 3-4) front has five graduated lancet windows flanked by corner buttresses. A string course at sill level runs around all sides of the building. The steep pitch of the graduated lancets is matched exactly by the pitch of the roof. At the apex of the façade is an open belfry with three bells. At the east end, the chancel is a distinctly separate unit – an important Ecclesiological principle – narrower in width than the nave and with a lower roofline. The south side has four lancet windows (with the string course at sill level) and a steeply gabled porch, which is the main entrance. The porch has a trefoil pattern (possibly symbolizing the Trinity) in the gable and an impeccable Early English Gothic doorway (figure 3-5), with attached shafts, moulded capitals, and faultlessly reproduced dogtooth ornament in the arch. Every detail is meticulously authentic, from the label stops at the end of the hood mould, to the elaborate curvilinear ironwork on the door itself. The material, according to Medley, is:

*...hard grey sandstone, hammer-dressed, and the weatherings and bell-gable are of hard freestone of the country.*²⁴

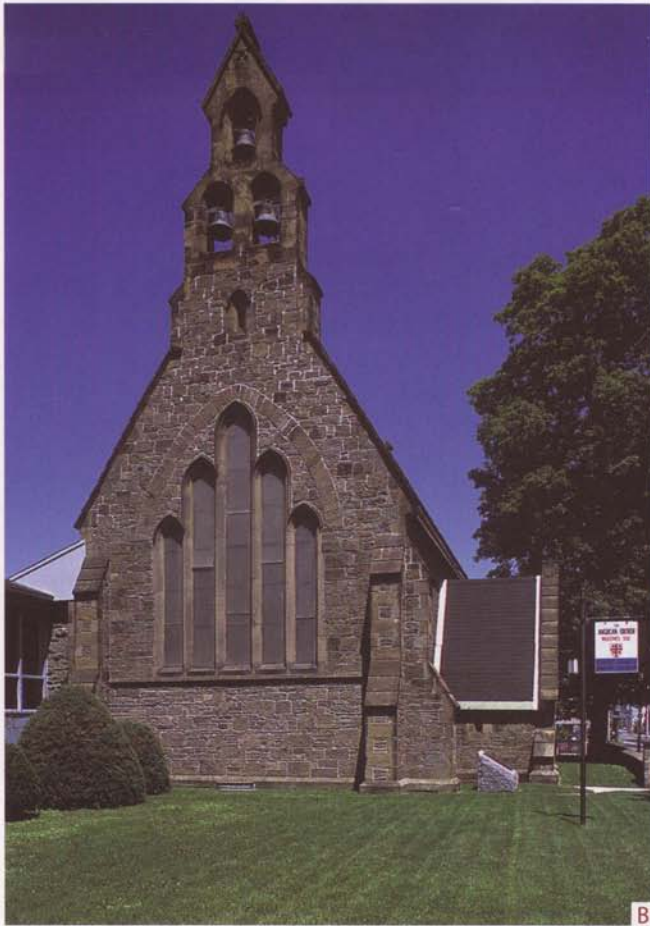
The dimensions are forty-two feet in height, twenty-one in width, and seventy-seven feet in length, including a twenty-foot chancel.²⁵

The interior of St. Anne's does no less justice to its medieval models and to Ecclesiological doctrine (figure 3-6). The nave is topped by a steeply pitched, open timber ceiling, contrasting sharply with the “flat roofs and no exposed timbers” that Medley had decried in earlier New Brunswick churches.²⁶ The nave is separated from the chancel by

24. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 362.

25. *Ibid*, p. 362.

26. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 361-2.



B



A

3-3 (A) – St. Michael's, Long Stanton,
from the north-west.

Photograph by Malcolm Thurlby.

3-4 (B) – St. Anne's Chapel,
Fredericton, New Brunswick,
exterior from west.

3-5 (C) – St. Anne's Chapel,
Fredericton, New Brunswick,
south door.

3-6 (D) – St. Anne's Chapel,
Fredericton, New Brunswick,
interior to east.



D

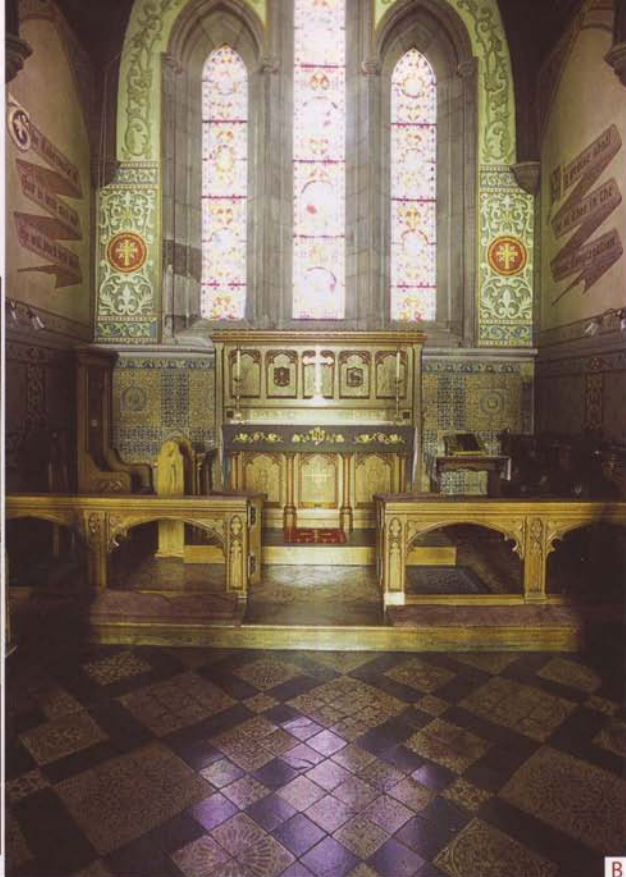


C





A



B



C

3-7 (A) – St. Anne's Chapel, Fredericton, New Brunswick, chancel screen.

3-8 (B) – St. Anne's Chapel, Fredericton, New Brunswick, chancel.

3-9 (C) – *The Green at Fredericton*, by James Charles Armytage after William Henry Bartlett, 1842.

Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, Miscellaneous photographs, P37-463-1.

a tall chancel arch and an open, intricately carved wooden chancel screen (figure 3-7) that announces the importance of the space beyond, but does not obstruct the view. The roof, seats, altar screen, altar and sedilia are of butternut. The ends of the seats display sixteen varieties of tracery pattern.²⁷ The pulpit stands discreetly to the north of the chancel arch, maintaining the visual focus on the altar beyond. The chancel's slightly raised floor surface (two steps) is decorated with patterned Minton²⁸ tiles, as is the dado of the east wall (figure 3-8). Elaborate stenciling on the east wall surrounds the graduated triple lancet widows. In keeping with Ecclesiological principles, the decoration of the chancel is noticeably more elaborate than that in the nave.

This is a truly revolutionary building for British North America. Gone are the flat ceilings and stove pipes found elsewhere by Medley, the boxy wooden galleries of the early Gothic Revival in Newfoundland, and the flimsy, insubstantial appearance of Commissioners' Gothic everywhere. St. Anne's is Gothic not just in its detailing, but in its proportions, massing, monumentality (its modest size notwithstanding), use of materials, and liturgical arrangement. Considered in the context of Medley's description of New Brunswick churches, and of every church discussed in Chapter One, it is an extraordinarily convincing performance. It remained a key piece in its architect's portfolio, and was given pride of place in his book *Ancient English Architecture and its Principles*.²⁹ St. Anne's is a tangible affirmation of Medley's belief that the church ought to be a "separate place, marked out by special dedication."³⁰ In his sermon at the dedication of the chapel, he expressed the wish:

*In this place may many a sluggish soul be quickened to a sense of duty, many a wanderer be recalled, many a consistent Christian be edified, many a mourner wipe away his tears.*³¹

Whether or not Medley got his wish is not known; what is known is that many a church building followed in St. Anne's Ecclesiological footsteps. Even before St. Anne's had begun, work had started on Medley's Cathedral in Fredericton. On arriving in Fredericton, Medley inherited a church that would have fit in all too well with those he described to the Ecclesiological Society (figure 3-9). "The Green at Fredericton",

27. These details are from Medley's description of St. Anne's in *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 362.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 362. Minton was no stranger to Gothic Revival architecture: see Paul Atterbury, "Ceramics", Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright, eds., *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, New Haven and London: 1994, pp. 143-52.

29. Frank Wills, *Ancient English Architecture and its Principles, Applied to the Wants of the Church, at the Present Day*, New York: 1850. The appendix, which is a series of illustrations of Wills' works, includes a drawing and extended discussion of St. Anne's.

30. John Medley, *The Staff of Beauty and the Staff of Bands: A Sermon Preached in St. Anne's Chapel, Fredericton, on the Day of its Consecration, March 18, 1847, by John, Bishop of Fredericton*, Saint John: 1847, p. 6.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

a painting by James-Charles Armytage (ca. 1820-97) after William Henry Bartlett (1809-54),³² shows on the right a very box-like structure in the pattern of James Gibbs' St. Martin-in-the-Fields, with a low-pitched roof, a pediment above the west door, rusticated window jambs, emphasized quoins, and a tower with a needle-like spire joined to slender corner pinnacles by arms that bear a curious resemblance to flying buttresses. Notwithstanding its Classical decorative details, it is very similar in massing and configuration to the Newfoundland Commissioners' Gothic discussed in Chapter One, and can be assumed to be similarly arranged on the inside.



3-10 – Christ Church Cathedral,
Fredericton, New Brunswick.
From the *Illustrated London News*,
No. 359, Vol. XIV, Feb. 24 1849.

The building that Medley commissioned as a replacement has been well documented by Douglas Richardson and Gregg Finley.³³ The model was St. Mary's Church in Snettisham, a large, fourteenth-century parish church in Norfolk, which Wills had visited in the winter of 1844-5.³⁴ The east end, however, presented a problem: the usual parish church arrangement, where the chancel is articulated by a lower roofline, was not considered sufficiently dignified for a church of cathedral status. Several solutions to the crossing and east end were entertained. A curious version with transeptal towers and spires (figure 3-10), presumably inspired by Exeter Cathedral, was shown in the *Illustrated London News* in 1849 and attributed to the patronage of "The Rev. Dr. Mabley" (sic).³⁵ Medley appealed directly to the Ecclesiological Society both for architectural advice and for funding.³⁶ The result was the "kind and gratuitous superintendence of W. Butterfield, Esq.," who supplied a sketch for a tower and east end. That design was "sent out to many places," and was "universally approved."³⁷ This was adopted, along with a very grand east window with flowing tracery copied from the medieval one at Selby Abbey in Yorkshire.

The result drew great praise in Ecclesiological circles. As late as 1861, it was still spoken of in glowing terms by A.J.B. Beresford Hope:

Fredericton... the capital of New Brunswick, possesses a cathedral, which, although of small size, is yet of a thoroughly appropriate character in its architecture, and still more in

32. Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, PS-217.

33. Richardson, *Christ Church Cathedral*. . .; Finley, *New Brunswick's Gothic Revival & On Earth as It Is In Heaven*.

34. Richardson, *Christ Church Cathedral*. . ., p. 41, cites *The Courier*, June 28, 1845 as the source for this information.

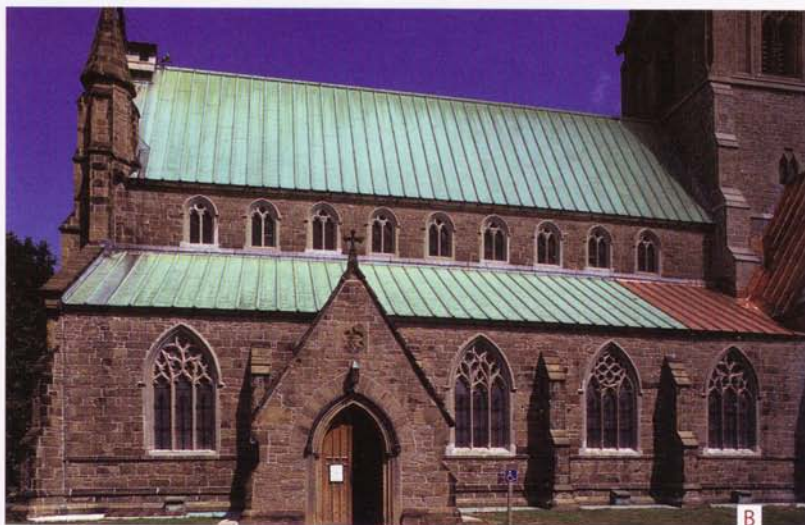
35. "The Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, North America", *The Illustrated London News*, number 368, volume XIV, April 28 1849, p. 276.

36. "Colonial Church Architecture. Chapter IX." *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 361-3.

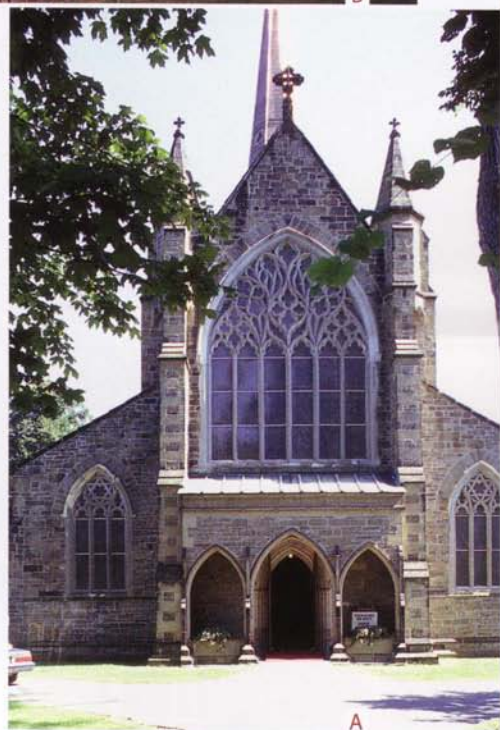
37. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 362; also Richardson, chapter 5: "Modern Gothic and the Completion of the Cathedral".

*its services... The building... is very small, and is destitute of transepts. Still, from the concurrent testimony of all who have seen it, it unmistakably possesses the cathedral character, while the arrangements for diocesan gatherings are very ample in proportion to the general dimensions.*³⁸

Medley's cathedral is not an advance over St. Anne's in terms of adherence to Ecclesiological principles (in that respect, St. Anne's is nearly perfect), but it is certainly an advance in richness and sophistication. The west façade (figure 3-11), with its triple-arched porch and magnificent window of flowing tracery, is a close copy of Snettisham. The aisles of the five-bay nave (figure 3-12) also have generous windows of flowing tracery in pairs that match north to south, but vary as one moves from west to east. This love of variation is a very English feature, and not restricted to Decorated Gothic.³⁹ The second bay of the south side of the nave is taken up with a porch. The central tower rises above a chapel (to the south) and organ loft (to the north) that read externally as transepts (figure 3-13). The current spire, a very slender Salisbury-like design, replaced the original broach-spire (figure 3-14) after a fire in 1911. The small choir (three short bays) includes vestries that read externally as aisles, with small, round openings at clerestory level that, curiously, are not visible inside. The east end (figure 3-15) is dominated by the spectacular Selby-inspired window, which now presides above Medley's grave. Like St. Anne's, the exterior of Christ Church Cathedral is a convincing evocation of Gothic, greatly enriched by the variety of tracery patterns. The complex, picturesque massing is brought into taut, vertical focus by the central tower and spire (if perhaps slightly more harmoniously by the less slender original spire).

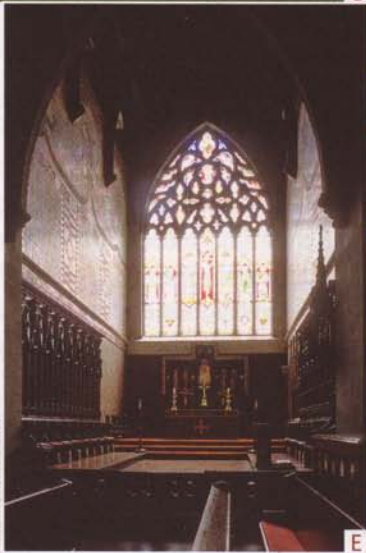
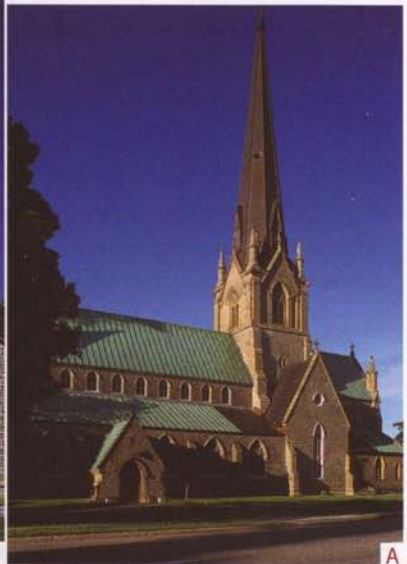
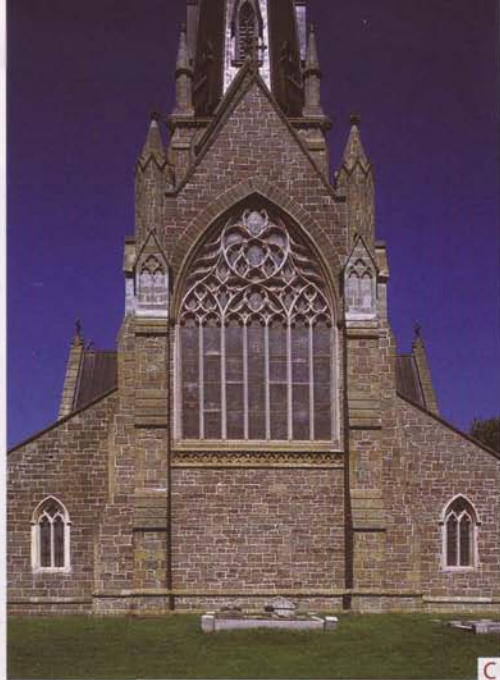
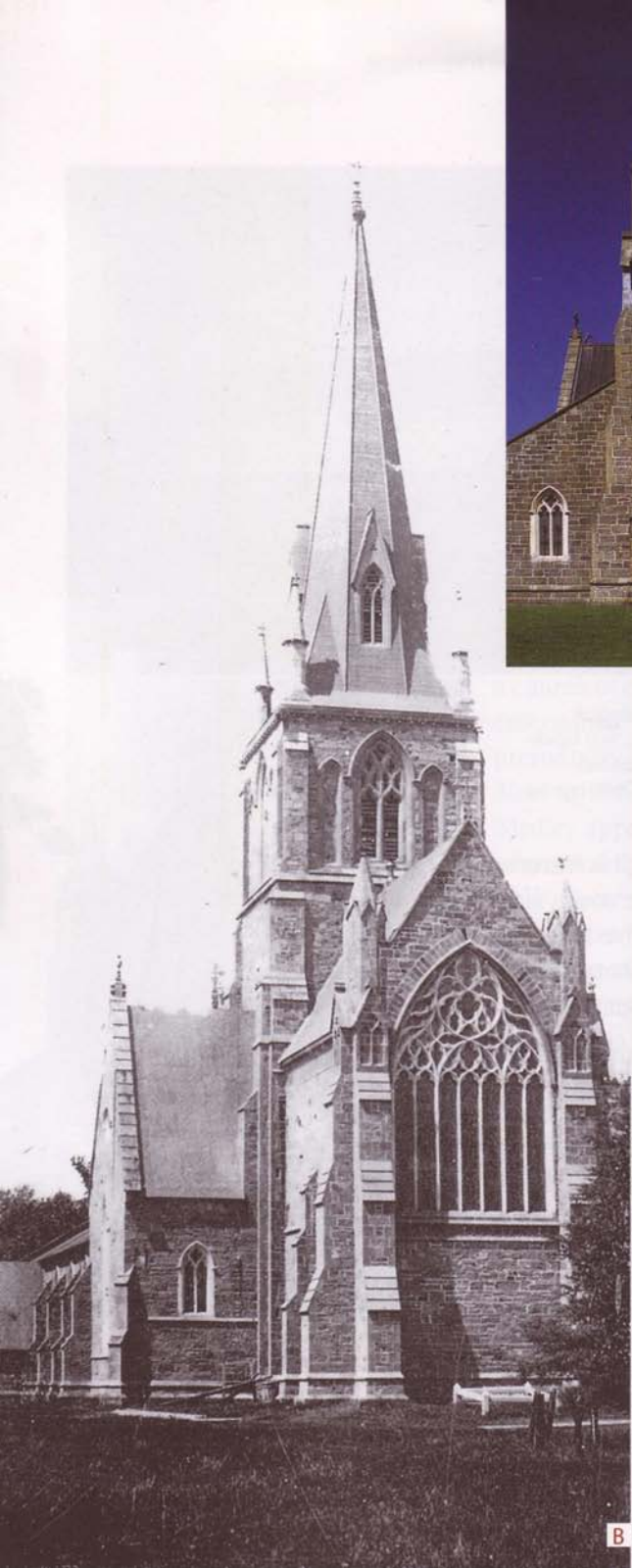


3-11 (A) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, west façade.
3-12 (B) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, nave exterior from the south.



38. A.J.B. Beresford Hope, *The English cathedral of the Nineteenth Century*, London: 1861, p. 96.

39. For example, see Malcolm Thurlby and Yoshio Kusaba, "The Nave of Saint Andrew at Steyning: A Study of Variety in Design in Twelfth-Century Architecture in Britain", *Gesta*, volume XXX/2, 1991, pp. 163-75.



3-13 (A) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, exterior from south.
3-14 (B) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, historical photograph showing original spire.

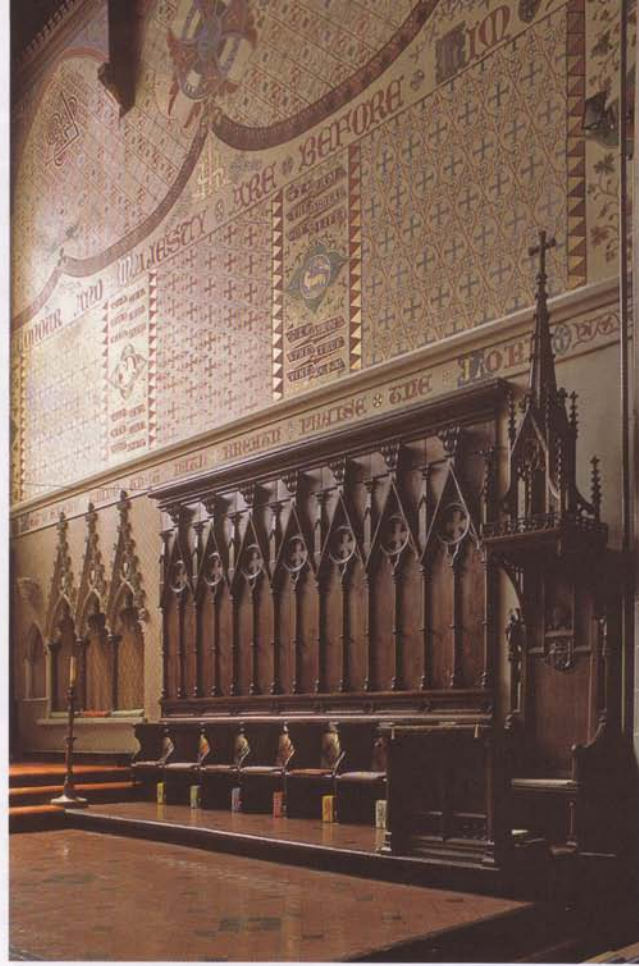
Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, George Taylor photographs, P5-217.

3-15 (C) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, exterior from east.
3-16 (D) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, nave interior to east.
3-17 (E) – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, choir interior to east.

The interior is a fairly intimate space – as Beresford Hope pointed out, this is not a large building – but not without a sense of monumentality. The tall arcade (there is no middle story, so the arcade reaches up to the bottom of the clerestory level) rests on alternating round and octagonal piers (figure 3-16). The clerestory fits nine windows into five bays, an unusual arrangement which does have the dual benefit of letting in more light and avoiding the broad expanses of blank wall that would have resulted from having only five windows (the consequent lack of vertical continuity would look strange in a French Gothic building, but not at all out of place in an English one). The nave is covered by a steeply pitched hammerbeam roof – a feature of English Gothic that Wills admired enormously.⁴⁰

The choir is entered by climbing three steps at the east end of the nave (figure 3-17). Beyond is the altar rail, three more steps to the sedilia, and finally three more to the altar. The choir's colourful, cliff-like walls (figure 3-18) seem to anticipate Butterfield's All Saints, Margaret Street, of 1850-59 (although the polychrome here is stenciled, rather than permanent – no donor with the means of a Beresford Hope was available in Fredericton). The very tight, concentrated spatial effect, completely focused on the very opulent east window, is also very Butterfield-like. It also illustrates the Ecclesiological principle that the area around the altar should proclaim its liturgical importance in visible, architectural terms.

Throughout the interior of Christ Church Cathedral, canny use of detail – such as the thickness of the window tracery, the massive roof beams, and the severe yet opulent sheer walls of the choir – gives the building a sense of monumentality that belies its relatively modest size. Like St. Anne's Chapel, Christ Church showcases Wills' understanding of a spatial and structural language, as well as a decorative one. With these two buildings, Ecclesiology acquired a significant and influential foothold in the Atlantic colonies of British North America.



3-18 – Christ Church Cathedral, Fredericton, New Brunswick, south choir wall.

40. See Wills, *Ancient English Architecture*, p. 43.

The spread of Ecclesiologically influenced churches throughout New Brunswick has also been examined by Finley and Richardson.⁴¹ According to Finley, the United Empire Loyalists entering New Brunswick in the late eighteenth century established a small but influential core of Anglicans, who, despite their modest numbers, constituted a disproportionate share of the influential professional and business class.⁴² For this Loyalist elite, the Church of England was a “bulwark against the cultivation of anti-British tendencies in the northern wilderness.”⁴³ The parallel with Newfoundland is striking. Although the situation in New Brunswick does not seem to have had the same urgency

– there is no New Brunswick equivalent to the sectarian rhetoric of Edward Wix – in both colonies a small but influential elite coalesced around a shared religious affiliation in opposition to perceived threats to the values and social structures of the Mother Country. The Church of England was seen as the guardian of those English, middle class, Loyalist values. With the arrival of Medley, those values had a distinct and unmistakable visual identity in New Brunswick: Gothic. Medley’s Gothic buildings in New Brunswick, and those that would follow in Newfoundland, were to express, in the words of New Brunswick’s Lieutenant Governor in 1845, “the genius, the piety, and the glory of England.”⁴⁴

Three examples will suffice to show how that “genius”, and the Ecclesiological forms that were understood to be inextricable from it, spread through New Brunswick. The Church of St. James, Long Reach, was begun in the early 1840s and consecrated on October 30, 1845.⁴⁵ Although consecrated by Medley, it was begun before his arrival in New Brunswick, and clearly has much more in common with the Commissioners’ Gothic of its Newfoundland contemporaries than with St. Anne’s Chapel. The exterior (figure 3-19) is a simple aisle-less box with three pointed-arch windows on the sides and a pointed door beneath a pointed



3-19 – St. James, Long Reach, New Brunswick, exterior from south-east.

41. Finley, *New Brunswick's Gothic Revival and On Earth as It Is In Heaven*. See also Douglas Scott Richardson, “Hyperborean Gothic: or, wilderness Ecclesiology and the wood Churches of Edward Medley”, *Architecture* volume 2, 1972, pp. 42-74.

42. Finley *New Brunswick's Gothic Revival*, chapter three, “John Medley and the Religious Geography of Georgian New Brunswick”, pp. 99-150.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

44. Ketchum, *The Life and Work of the Most Reverend John Medley...*, p. 71.

45. Finley, *On Earth as It Is In Heaven*, p. 76.



3-20 – St. James, Long Reach, New Brunswick, interior.

3-21 – St. James, Long Reach, New Brunswick, pulpit.

window on the (liturgical) west end. The roof angle, while not as shallow as that on a Classical temple, falls far short of the shape needed to invoke Gothic verticality. The tower and spire provide some vertical accent to a massing that is otherwise decidedly earthbound. There is no chancel. According to Finley (whose source is the vestry minutes), the original appearance would have been even less Gothic than what we see today, with a lower pitched roof and square windows.⁴⁶

The interior (figure 3-20) is analogous to contemporaries such as St. Peter's, Twillingate. The barely curved, closed ceiling is similar to those at Twillingate, St. Thomas (St. John's), and St. Paul's (Harbour Grace). A gallery sits above the main entrance of the building, and may possibly have originally run along the sides as well.⁴⁷ The dominant feature of the interior is the colossal pulpit at the east end (figure 3-21). The detailing is entirely Classical, with Ionic columns, an Ionic pilaster, and dentiled cornices. Towering above its surroundings, the pulpit is entered by climbing two short flights of steps (the second one winding) and squeezing through a tiny, hinged doorway into what feels more like a cockpit than a pulpit. From there the minister could survey

46. The mild "Gothicization" took place in 1887. Finley, *On Earth as It Is In Heaven*, p. 76.

47. A gallery that ran around three sides was by far the more common configuration at this time, and would also account for the otherwise unnecessary arcade piers and extraordinary height of the pulpit – which would be roughly level with full galleries, making visual and oral communication easier. Such galleries, which were particularly disliked by Ecclesiologists, could have been removed in the 1887 renovations.

his flock, spread out beneath him like passengers in a spiritual vessel of which he – not the altar, nor the Eucharist – was in command. This piece of furniture speaks volumes about the sermon-based, Low Church liturgy that it was clearly designed for, as opposed to the ritual-based, High Church liturgy brought by Medley.

By the time All Saints, McKeen's Corner, was built in 1861, much had changed. Bishop Medley had arrived, and with him the High Church and Ecclesiological Gothic. All Saints was designed by his son, Edward Medley, a clergyman who had had the benefit of architectural training from William Butterfield.⁴⁸ McKeen's Corner was his first church. Although modest in scale, and clearly not the product of abundant financial resources, it is a concise and even ingenious application of Ecclesiological principles. The exterior (figure 3-22) is a rectangular box not altogether unlike Long Reach, although longer in relation to its width and with a much more steeply pitched roof – in other words, properly Gothic in its proportions. Its comparative verticality is emphasized by Medley's use of vertical wooden paneling on the exterior. Gothic windows of two lights below a trefoil opening adorn the sides. An open belfry with a pointed spire is raised above the roof near the entry porch. The chancel is not articulated by a separate wall or roofline (this would undoubtedly have been more costly), but is marked by a distinctive quatrefoil window on the side and the building's only three-light window on the east end (figure 3-23). The interior consists of a single, continuous space beneath a steeply pitched, open timber roof (figure 3-24). The font sits near the entrance under a canopy that also doubles as structural support for the belfry. Two steps lead to the level of the short choir, with the pulpit discreetly off to the north side, and a third step leads to the altar rail and altar beyond (figure 3-25). Although in a somewhat mangled state, patterned medievalist tiles – possibly by Minton, judging from their resemblance to those at St. Anne's chapel – decorate the floor near the altar. The altar, simple reredos, and three-light east window directly above, are the dominant interior features. Like St. Anne's, All Saints is a small chapel; but in the latter's case neither stone, nor money, nor Frank Wills was available. Nevertheless, Medley has managed to create a satisfying facsimile of Ecclesiological values, using entirely local materials and workmanship.

All Saints was Edward Medley's first church, but his most ambitious by far was his own parish church of Christ Church, St. Stephen, which was consecrated by his father on September 28, 1864.⁴⁹ Like All Saints, Christ Church is made entirely of wood, with vertical board and batten panels, although Christ Church boasts far more elaborate

48. Richardson, "Hyperborean Gothic . . .", pp. 48-9.

49. Finley, *On Earth as It Is In Heaven* p. 207. See also Richardson, "Hyperborean Gothic . . .", pp. 66-71.



A



B



C



D

- 3-22 (A) – All Saints, McKeen's Corner,
New Brunswick, exterior from north-west.
3-23 (B) – All Saints, McKeen's Corner,
New Brunswick, exterior from north-east.
3-24 (C) – All Saints, McKeen's Corner,
New Brunswick, interior to west.
3-25 (D) – All Saints, McKeen's Corner,
New Brunswick, interior to east.





3-26 – Christ Church,
St. Stephen, New Brunswick,
exterior from north-west.

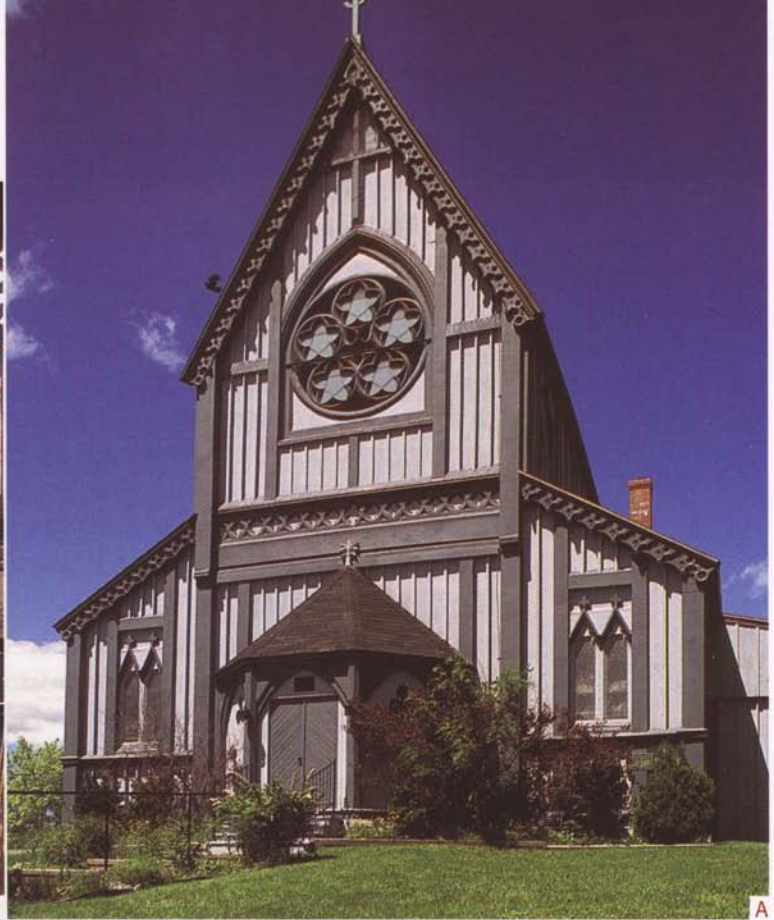
carpentry. The exterior of Christ Church is a large but unified nave of six bays, with aisles, and a chancel (figure 3-26). A tower on the south side of the church was blown down in a gale in 1869.⁵⁰ A steeply pitched roof rises above a very tall clerestory. As Richardson has pointed out, the tall, compact volumes recall the work of Medley's teacher, William Butterfield, at churches such as All Saints, Margaret Street. The polychromatic paint scheme, in which a darker colour is used for the framing elements and a lighter grey for the board and batten panels, also recalls Butterfield's polychromy, although of course here it is an expression of structure rather than a reflection of the materials. Entry is through a polygonal west porch beneath a large rose window (figure 3-27).

The interior is a remarkable “medley” of Gothic forms realized in woods of gently differing hues. The nave (figure 3-28) consists of a lofty main arcade with trefoil openings in the spandrels beneath very large star-shaped clerestory windows. The roof beams are massive and bold, their triangulation injecting an emphatic verticality into the space. A massive arch with open work rosettes in the spandrels separates the nave and choir; a similar arch with a more elaborate rose window pattern in relief separates the choir from the chancel. Between them, rising from a floor level three steps above the nave and occupying the space equivalent to one nave bay, is a pointed arch sub-divided by two remarkably slender shafts with moulded capitals and delicately moulded arches beneath two quatrefoil lights (figure 3-29). The chancel is marked by a more ornate roof structure of cusped arches, and a singularly elaborate east window of five lights with flowing tracery (figure 3-30). No individual detail is unrecognizable to anyone familiar with English medieval architecture. Yet the ensemble is wholly original, not least because of the material. Less than a quarter of a century after St. James, Long Reach, was begun, New Brunswick could boast Gothic of maturity and originality, while still remaining true to Ecclesiological teachings.

By this time, the battle for the High Church and Gothic style in New Brunswick had, evidently, already been won. As early as 1852, Medley had reported to the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society that “the prejudices which had naturally existed, in reference to a new style of architecture, had almost disappeared.”⁵¹ Buoyed by the triumphs of St. Anne's Chapel and his Cathedral, and aided by supporters such as the Rev. James

50. Richardson, “Hyperborean Gothic. . .”, p. 67. Figure 21, on p. 68, shows the church before the tower blew down.

51. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 13, 1852, p. 292.



- 3-27 (A) – Christ Church, St. Stephen,
New Brunswick, west façade.
3-28 (B) – Christ Church, St. Stephen,
New Brunswick, interior of nave to east.
3-29 (C) – Christ Church, St. Stephen,
New Brunswick, interior view into chancel.
3-30 (D) – Christ Church, St. Stephen,
New Brunswick, chancel.

Hudson,⁵² a clergyman/architect who was busily “Gothicizing” the Miramichi Valley, Medley’s achievements and momentum were “warmly applauded” by the Society.⁵³

By comparison to the triumphant march of Gothic through New Brunswick, architectural progress in the six-years-older diocese of Newfoundland seemed rather slow. Several factors could account for this. New Brunswick is considerably smaller than Newfoundland, and interior communication is greatly facilitated by the location of settlements along major rivers such as the Saint John and the Miramichi. By comparison, Newfoundland is full of exceptionally remote – and impoverished – communities, spread over a prohibitively large area. The Newfoundland climate also presents a formidable obstacle. But even in Newfoundland’s capital, St. John’s, significant building was slow to start. The most likely explanation is that the first Bishop, Aubrey George Spencer, was no match for John Medley as either a connoisseur or patron of architecture.

Aubrey Spencer was born in London in 1795.⁵⁴ His background was aristocratic: he was a great-great-grandson of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, and the oldest son of the Honourable William Spencer and Susan Jennison, Countess of the Holy Roman Empire. In spite of his high birth, he chose the life of a missionary, and was ordained in 1818. The SPG appointed him missionary for Ferryland (Newfoundland) the following year, and he was transferred to Trinity Bay in 1820. The Newfoundland winters, however, proved rather taxing, and after some recuperation in England he requested a transfer to Bermuda. In 1821, firmly ensconced in Bermuda, he informed the SPG that he would not be returning to Newfoundland. He was made Archdeacon of Bermuda by Nova Scotia Bishop John Inglis, in whose diocese Bermuda fell. Inglis attempted to lure Spencer back to Newfoundland in 1829 with the promise of the Archdeaconry there, but Spencer replied that the spiritual and educational needs of the black Bermudians remained his first commitment. The offer to become Newfoundland’s first bishop proved a different matter: Spencer managed to put aside his concern for the Bermudian poor and apprehension of the Newfoundland climate, and was consecrated by Archbishop of Canterbury William Howley in Lambeth Palace Chapel on August 4, 1839.

52. On James Hudson, see *Ibid.*, p. 294; also volume 12, 1851, pp. 23-4; see also Finley, *On Earth as It Is In Heaven*, chapter six, “The Miramichi Valley: A Case Study of Style and Sensibility in Worship”, pp. 236-79.

53. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 13, 1852, p. 296.

54. “Spencer, Aubrey George”, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online* <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?Bioid=39397&query=>

In an article of 1836, it was argued in the pages of *The British Critic* that:

*...in old times, when the Gospel was sent to any country, its ministers were a bishop with his clergy; and the first employment of their funds was to build a Cathedral.*⁵⁵

The urgent duty to fashion an appropriate episcopal church was also evident to Spencer. Shortly after his arrival in Newfoundland, Spencer reported to the SPG that his church building, which was over forty years old and made of very frail materials, was in such a dilapidated state that repairing it would prove more costly than erecting a new church.⁵⁶ Given that he was “surrounded by a Roman-Catholic population numerically superior, and of a most proselytizing spirit”, Spencer thought it advisable that any new church “partake of a cathedral character” in order to project the right image to the public.⁵⁷ Such a building, he believed, could be built for around £4,000, a quarter of which the colony might be expected to raise itself. As the church of St. Thomas had absorbed some of the numbers formerly trying to fit into the original church, Spencer recommended that a smaller building constructed from durable materials (i.e., stone) would be preferable to a bigger one that would be vulnerable to fire and “the deleterious qualities of these hyperborean climates.”⁵⁸

The SPG *Report* of the following year (1841) recorded a gift of £500 “for a new church at St. John’s.”⁵⁹ In January of that same year, Newfoundland Archdeacon Thomas Bridge delivered his sermon, “The Two Religions...” (discussed in Chapter Two). Proceeds from sales of the publication were to support the building of Spencer’s church, and Bridge’s “Notice” at the beginning of the publication reported:

*This opportunity is embraced for informing those into whose hands this discourse may come, that the author’s diocesan, the Lord Bishop of Newfoundland, is anxious to erect a cathedral, to serve also for the parish church, (the present one, not only affording insufficient accommodation, especially for the poor, but, from having been built of WOOD more than forty years ago, being in a state of decay,) in the capital of that Colony...*⁶⁰

55. *The British Critic*, volume XIX, number XXXVII, p. 420.

56. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1840*. London: 1840, pp. LXIX-LXX.

57. *Ibid.*, p. LXX.

58. *Ibid.*, p. LXXI.

59. *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Report for the Year 1841*. London: 1841, p. XXXIII.

60. Thomas Bridge, “The Two Religions...”, p. v.

Bridge goes on to cite the danger of the Romanist errors, and the impending presence of a new Romanist chapel, cited in Chapter Two. To set the appeal in a sufficiently urgent context, it is mentioned that the sermon was preached “the Sunday after the opening of a new Romish chapel, dedicated to ‘Our Lady and St. Thomas a Becket.’”⁶¹

Spencer himself launched a further initiative through the publication of another sermon, *The Church of God*, in 1842.⁶² “To those who call themselves Christians,” wrote Spencer in his preface, “the constitution, privileges, and the duties of the visible Church of Christ, can never be considered as a topic of inferior interest...” Foremost among those duties at the time of writing, of course, was the building of a new church. The scriptural passage chosen for the sermon was Acts 20:28: “Feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.” Both the Church and the act of feeding being encouraged were far from metaphorical. Lest anyone miss the point, Spencer began his sermon with references to “these failing walls” in which they had gathered, “the dim and dilapidated building” in which he was addressing his audience, and to his looking “forward with confidence to a nobler structure.”⁶³ At the conclusion of the sermon, Spencer reiterated:

...the necessity of erecting a new and more commodious Parish Church within this town, and of vesting it with the Cathedral character which our ecclesiastical position seems now to require.⁶⁴

The issue of the new cathedral was addressed even more explicitly in an appended address to the members of the Church of England in Newfoundland. In it, Spencer again referred to the “dilapidated state” of the existing church, and its “total unfitness for the metropolitan Church of a populous and extensive See.”⁶⁵ Indeed, the church was “so deplorable as to divest the service of religion of much of [its] veneration and dignity.”⁶⁶ Progress, however, had been made. The SPG and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) had, between them, pledged £1,000.⁶⁷ Donations from the Queen Dowager, the Archbishop, and Bishops in England had come to £200, and “several hundreds” of pounds had been raised through the efforts of Thomas Bridge, “after sermons

61. *Ibid.*, p. vii.

62. Aubrey George Spencer, *The Church of God: a sermon on Acts XX. 28, preached in the Parish Church of St. John's, Newfoundland, on Good Friday, 1842, by Aubrey George, Lord Bishop of Newfoundland, St. John's: 1842.*

63. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

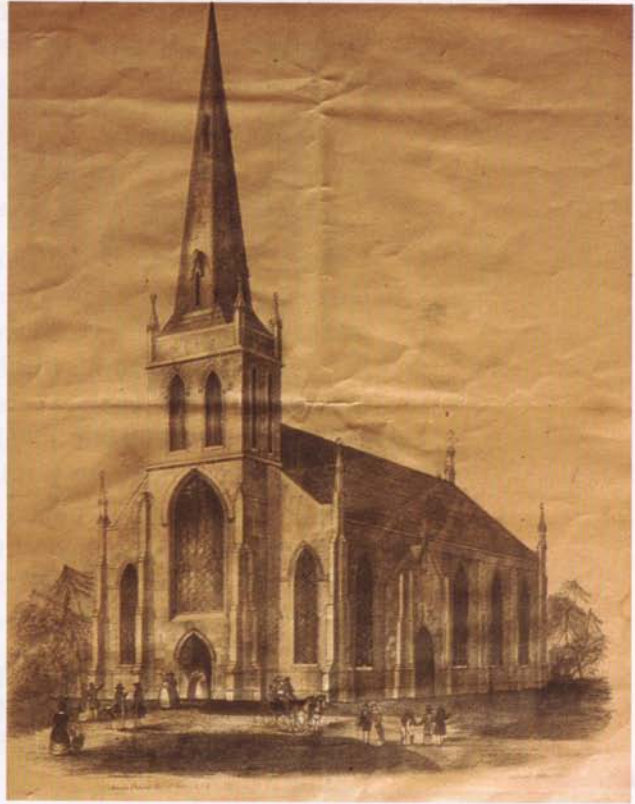
66. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

67. This and the statistics that follow are from Spencer, *The Church of God* . . . , pp. 25-6.

preached by him in various Churches of the Realm” (of which his *The Two Religions* was presumably one). Newfoundland Governor Sir John Harvey had given £100 out of his own means, as had Spencer himself. A building committee was formed, consisting of eleven members, with final decision-making authority held by the Bishop.⁶⁸ The search for an appropriate cathedral for Newfoundland had begun.

The architect chosen was James Purcell, whom we have encountered already in connection with Christ Church at Quidi Vidi. Purcell, an Irish stonemason and architect from Cork, would soon (1846) be commissioned to build the Colonial Building, which was to serve as the seat of the Newfoundland government.⁶⁹ A two-story Classical building with a giant order temple façade, the Colonial Building does not necessarily recommend its architect as an appropriate choice for the Anglican Church in the dawning years of Ecclesiology. Nor, for that matter, does Purcell’s earlier work at Christ Church, Quidi Vidi. The design Purcell produced for Spencer’s cathedral does nothing to ease these reservations.

Purcell’s design (figure 3-31) is a rectangular box, with no chancel, no aisles, and a medium-pitched roof. The windows are all pointed. A tower and tall, pointed spire mark the entrance at the west end. Spindly pinnacled corner buttresses flank the tower and four corners of the church, while equally flimsy wall buttresses nominally divide the box into aisles. The formula is familiar enough, but it belongs not to the emerging generation of the Ecclesiologists and John Medley, but to the previous generation of Commissioners’ Gothic churches discussed in Chapter One. John Keble had launched the Oxford Movement in 1833. The Cambridge Camden Society had been formed in 1839, and began publishing *The Ecclesiologist* by the beginning of 1842. Yet this growing movement, which represented the future of Anglican liturgy and architecture world wide, seemed to have passed by Purcell, Spencer, and their new cathedral.



3-31 – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John’s, Newfoundland, unexecuted design by James Purcell.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

69. On James Purcell and the Colonial Building, see Harold Kalman, *A History of Canadian Architecture: volume 1*, Toronto: 1994, pp. 102-3; also the Newfoundland Historic Trust, *A Gift of Heritage*, St. John’s: 1998, pp. 50-1.

The explanation likely lies less in ignorance of the new movement than in Spencer's lack of enthusiasm for it. In the preface of *The Church of God*, he remarks:

*...I could hardly avoid some allusion to a certain party in the Anglican Church, whose writings, however characterized by an ardent piety, a depth of learning, and a fervour of Charity, which I could wish to see more generally adopted, have, at least in one late publication, tended to a reconnection with some of the equivocal usages of the Church of Rome.*⁷⁰

Clearly not of the High Church persuasion, Spencer was perhaps a curious choice to be the first bishop of a new see in a Church where the Tractarian movement, while by no means ubiquitous, clearly had great momentum. In fact Spencer had already informed the SPG eighteen years earlier that he never intended to return to Newfoundland. Moreover, as a builder of churches, Spencer was not an outstanding success. Purcell's design was selected in 1842. In 1843, 1,800 tons of cut limestone were shipped from Cork.⁷¹ Later that year, the cornerstone was laid, and that was as close as Spencer's cathedral would come to being built. The project languished, and so too, apparently, did Spencer. In 1843, his health again poor, Spencer was offered, and accepted, the bishopric of Jamaica. He remained in Jamaica until 1855, when he returned to England, again due to ill health. He died in 1872, in his seventy-eighth year.⁷²

Finding a replacement for Spencer as bishop in what *The Ecclesiologist* would shortly call "one of the most cheerless of [the Church of England's] seats"⁷³ would not be a simple matter. According to Spencer himself, who was in a position to know, the job would require a man with:

*...strength of constitution to support him under a climate as rigorous as Iceland, a stomach insensible to the attacks of sea-sickness; pedestrian powers beyond those of an Irish Gossoon, and an ability to rest occasionally on the bed of a fisherman or the hard boards in a woodman's tilt. With these physical capabilities he must combine a patient temper, an energetic spirit, a facility to adapt his speech to the lowest grade of intellect... and a thorough preparation for controversy with the Romanist...*⁷⁴

70. Spencer, p. 4.

71. Newfoundland Historic Trust, p. 66.

72. See Owsley Robert Rowley, *The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland*, pp. 214-5; also "Spencer, Aubrey George, *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*.

73. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 278.

74. Quoted in H. W. Tucker, *Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of Edward Feild, D.D. Bishop of Newfoundland 1844-1876*, London: 1877, p. 29. "Gossoon" is the Irish term for what in England would be called a "lad."

The man eventually selected for the job was the Rev. Edward Feild (1801-76). Born in Worcester, Feild had received his B.A. and M.A. from Oxford,⁷⁵ the birthplace of the Tractarian ideals of the Oxford Movement. That movement, and its architectural equivalent, the Cambridge Camden Society, had had a profound impact on Feild – and they were about to have a profound impact on Newfoundland.

75. Rowley, p. 217.



CHAPTER FOUR

Edward Feild and His Cathedral

Edward Feild, his biographer tells us, had an unremarkable childhood. He was, however, an excellent student, and won a Latin composition prize while at Rugby, the well-known English Public School.¹ After his ordination around Christmas of 1827, he became the Rector at Kidlington, Oxfordshire. He quickly acquired a glowing reputation for his concern for children, and as a founder of schools. This was the time of the “Swing Riots”, when agricultural workers, fearful that farm machinery was taking away their livelihood, rioted and destroyed many of those machines.² Calm in the face of the crisis, Feild delivered and subsequently published a lecture arguing against the rioters.³ He began by appealing to the people’s patriotism, pointing out that in a civilized country such as England men must not live in fear of their lives and property. Moreover, Feild argued, destruction of property would only increase the people’s distress:

*You say liberty! liberty! and I say liberty! liberty! But what liberty is that when a man may not keep his own property, or use his own machines, or enrich himself by his own inventions?*⁴

The machine, he argued, would in fact ultimately benefit the poor, by making manufactured goods cheaper and therefore more accessible. There are, of course, counter arguments to this, but the fact is there were no riots in Kidlington.

In 1834, Feild became Vicar of English Bicknor, in Gloucestershire. He stayed there for ten years, and further enhanced his reputation in the field of education. According to the Rev. J. Burdon, one of Feild’s successors as vicar of English Bicknor:

1. Tucker, p. 2.
2. Tucker, p. 5-6.
3. Tucker, p. 6.
4. Tucker, p. 7.



*His great influence was through schools, which he built at a time when nobody troubled themselves about such things, and he exercised wonderful influence over the children, though strict even to severity in his management of the school. They were afraid of him, yet they liked him very much.*⁵

When Spencer left Newfoundland in 1843 – his departure was “welcomed as a relief from a burden under which he was evidently sinking”⁶ according to Feild’s biographer – the Church took over a year to select and send a replacement. As Spencer himself had warned, this was not a job for the faint of heart. It is not known who first recommended the vicar in the small town of English Bicknor – a man renowned for bringing education to the ignorant, and for talking down rebellious rabble through sheer strength of reason. Feild must have seemed ideal for Newfoundland. He was consecrated at Lambeth Palace Chapel on April 28, 1844. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Richard Davies, Rector of Staunton. His text, rather ominously, was Revelation 8:10: “Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”⁷

Feild left from Liverpool on June 4, 1844.⁸ He traveled to Newfoundland via Halifax, from which he departed for St. John’s on July 1, 1844.⁹ Very early in his episcopate, Feild resumed activity in the area of education, opening up a school for the upper classes to “prevent the establishment or mitigate the evil of a public academy on liberal principles.”¹⁰ Education, of course, requires books, and these were in short supply in St. John’s. While still in Halifax, he thanked his friend and fellow-clergyman Cecil Wray, of Liverpool, for “books provided”¹¹, and very soon after arriving in St. John’s made numerous appeals in his letters for more books.¹²

5. Tucker, p. 12.

6. Tucker, p. 29.

7. Tucker, p. 32.

8. Tucker, p. 33.

9. Letters of Edward Feild to Rev. Cecil Wray, 1844-67, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 1604. This letter was written on July 1, 1844, on the occasion of the birthday of Wray’s young daughter, which would indicate a fairly close friendship between the two clergymen. He thanked Wray for his support during “that great trial of separation from all that is near and dear to me in this world”, and mentioned that he was due to leave for St. John’s at 3:00 PM that afternoon.

10. Tucker, p. 35.

11. Feild to Wray, July 1, 1844.

12. For example, Feild to Wray, August 6, 1844 and October 31, 1844. On at least one occasion, he expressed his gratitude with a gift of Newfoundland fish, which “should be kept in water three or four days before it is cooked; three days if it be baked may suffice, but four days if it be fried – and the water should be changed every day.” (Feild to Wray, January 26, 1847).

He may not have found many books in St. John's, but he did find two churches. One was his titular cathedral – the “wooden shed of the most monstrous description” described in *The Ecclesiologist*. The other was the church that Wix built, St. Thomas'. Feild's response to St. Thomas' was summarized by his biographer, H.W. Tucker, in 1877:

*In St. Thomas' Church there was no font; and pulpit, desk, and clerk's desk occupied the centre of the church, obscuring the altar: as a visitation of the clergy and an Ordination were to be held in this church in September, the bishop determined at once to make such alterations as might “exhibit to the clergy the proper arrangements for a church.”*¹³

In fact, architecture was on Feild's mind even before he arrived in St. John's. While still in Halifax, he wrote to his close friend and fellow clergyman William Scott, Vicar of Christ Church, Hoxton:

*I shall very much want plans of churches for I find the Cathedral in St. John's is not yet begun... You would do me a very great kindness if you would procure for me all useful modern ecclesiastical books of architecture... especially any good designs of wooden churches.*¹⁴

“Good designs of wooden churches” could, evidently, include Norwegian Stave Churches, drawings and designs of which had been promised to Feild by a Mrs. Penmore of Rugby.¹⁵ These drawings never reached Newfoundland, but the problem of wooden churches remained a pressing and fascinating one, which will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

Very early in his episcopacy, Feild expressed a desire to transform St. Thomas' into a more Ecclesiologically acceptable configuration. “If I had any means,” he wrote to William Scott in August of 1844, “I would certainly add a chancel... and take away the gallery now over the altar.”¹⁶ In October of that year, he considered the possibility of having a prefabricated wooden chancel sent to St. John's, based on a design that he had “lately seen in the English Newspapers... in the Parish of St. Pancras.”¹⁷ The design Feild referred to was made by Peter Thompson for a “temporary” wooden church, which was discussed in *The Builder* in 1844 and *The Church Builder* as late as 1865 (figure 4-1) (see also Chapter Five).¹⁸

13. Tucker, pp. 34-5.

14. Letters of Bishop Edward Feild to the Reverend William Scott, Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, 100.43 Box 2, File 4. Transcribed by Tim Power under the direction of Shane O'Dea. Letter dated July 1, 1844.

15. Ibid.

16. Feild to William Scott, August (undated), 1844.

17. Feild to William Scott, October 24, 1844.

18. *The Builder*, volume II, 1844, p. 470-1; “The St. Pancras Church Extension Fund: a Retrospect”, *The Church Builder*, No. XVI, 1865, pp. 152-163.



TEMPORARY CHURCH, KENTISH TOWN.

4-1 – “Temporary
Wooden Church”
Illustrated London News,
Vol. V, 1844.

Feild’s most urgent architectural problem, however, was his cathedral – or rather, his lack of one. “With respect to our Cathedral,” he wrote to Scott, “the prospects are dark and disheartening.”¹⁹ The main problem, unsurprisingly, was money. A considerable sum had already been spent by Bishop Spencer on materials. According to Feild, £3,764.14.3 had been paid for cut stone, with a further £500 still owing on the last instalment.²⁰ This stone – already cut into windows, doors, pinnacles and buttresses according to James Purcell’s design – had been imported from Ireland.²¹ At this stage, Purcell was still under contract as cathedral architect, a position that he maintained until October of 1844.²² By this time, both money and will seem to have evaporated. “The fact is there are no more means to complete or proceed with it,” Feild wrote to Scott, “and I can see no disposition on the part of the people to come forward with additional subscriptions at all adequate to the object.”²³ Or, as Feild put it rather more colourfully to the SPG:

*Our projected Cathedral seems to have died a natural or unnatural death through want of funds, and of love. The subject now is never raised even in talk.*²⁴

While Feild doubtless regretted the want of funds, he wholeheartedly shared in the want of love. As a High Churchman and supporter of the Cambridge Camden Society, Feild found Purcell’s design to be completely inadequate and lamented to his friend Scott:

*No pillars are contemplated, but a flat roof of 100 ft. by 50! no chancel or choir, no font, no tracery in any windows.*²⁵

19. Feild to William Scott, July 11, 1844.

20. Feild to William Scott, August 22, 1844.

21. Feild to William Scott, August (no date) 1844.

22. Thomas Bridge to Ernest Hawkins, Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, “G” Series: letters Read before the Society: reel 249. Letter dated August 24, 1846.

23. Feild to William Scott, August (no date) 1844.

24. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 19, 1845.

25. Feild to William Scott, August (no date) 1844.

What Feild described was essentially a stone-clad version of the Commissioners' Gothic already familiar in places such as Harbour Grace, Twillingate, and St. John's itself (St. Thomas'). Indeed, only in its facing material and apparent lack of stove pipes was it significantly superior to many of the examples deplored by John Medley in New Brunswick.

With optimism that suggests more enthusiasm than experience, Feild sought advice on how to modify the plan so as to make use of the existing materials in a more Ecclesiologically acceptable church, at no additional cost and with no loss of interior space.²⁶ Economy was of course of the greatest importance. Nothing overly elaborate could be contemplated, and Feild suggested that the Cathedral Church of St. Magnus, Kirkwall (Scotland), might be an appropriate model due to its "solidity and simplicity."²⁷ Feild struggled mightily and sometimes ingeniously with the problem of how to convert his present assets into an acceptable cathedral, suggesting that the windows be shortened and the tower omitted so that the materials thus saved could be made into a stone choir and a wooden chancel.²⁸ Even this, however, might prove prohibitively expensive. Executing Purcell's design, even without the "improvements" about which Feild clearly felt so strongly, would probably cost "at least £5,000", and Feild had "not much above 1,000 promised." "Here is a pretty colonial mess," he wrote to Scott, "out of which at present I cannot see how to escape."²⁹

In the meantime, the Roman Catholic cathedral was, to Feild's dismay, progressing fairly rapidly. It was, Feild reported to William Scott, "to be an immense building of the cruciform shape."³⁰ Unlike Feild, the Roman Catholic Bishop, Michael Fleming, seemed to have virtually unlimited financial resources placed at his disposal whenever needed:

*Dr. Fleming their bishop is not here, but is expected shortly, and will no doubt come well supplied with money. Indeed he seems to command sums for any purpose he pleases... Their cathedral will cost full £50,000 when completed and fitted up.*³¹

26. Feild to William Scott, August (undated) 1844.

27. Feild to William Scott, August (undated) 1844. On Kirkwall, see Malcolm Thurlby, "Aspects of the Architectural History of Kirkwall Cathedral", *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, volume 127, 1997, pp. 855-88.

28. Feild to William Scott, August 22, 1844.

29. Feild to William Scott, August 22, 1844.

30. Feild to William Scott, August (undated) 1844.

31. Feild to William Scott, August (undated) 1844.

The ever-present Romanist threat was made all the more alarming by the high profile flirtations with Romanism (or outright defections) of prominent Anglicans like John Henry Newman. "Here all our difficulty is with Romanists who steal away our flocks by all methods and means," Feild wrote to William Scott. "And what can we say or do when we are told that some of our best and most devoted men write, speak and act for them."³²

Feild appealed directly to the Cambridge Camden Society for architectural advice, sending them drawings of Purcell's design in 1845. Their response is now lost, but the crux of it is clear enough from this letter from Feild to William Scott:

*I have now to beg you to convey my respectful and earnest thanks to the Committee of ye Camden Society, who made and forwarded the report on the drawings of our Cathedral by Mr. Purcell. I of course anticipated ye sentence. No one who had ever seen a decent church could tolerate such an abortion.*³³

Purcell's drawings had apparently been assessed by Benjamin Webb himself, one of the founding members of the Cambridge Camden Society.³⁴ Instead of pursuing Purcell's design, Webb suggested that Feild adopt the church of St. Michael, Long Stanton, as a model. As indicated in Chapter Three, this church was very much a standard recommendation of the Camdenians when faced with the question of churches in the colonies. Feild doubted that they could even afford to emulate this modest model, and expressed increasing frustration at the Society's inability to assist on the question of how to make use of the existing building materials in a more Ecclesiologically acceptable church:

*The information which I received from the Camden Society was nothing more than I myself knew before I consulted them – viz that the plans were in every respect abominable. This was the sum and substance of all ye information I got – and this I needed not; but what I might do or attempt with the materials (which I desired to know) on this point I got no information or advice at all.*³⁵

By all indications, Feild was making every attempt to follow the prescriptions of the Cambridge Camden Society. His letters record receipt of books from the Society, including the first volume of *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*.³⁶ This useful pattern book of designs for liturgical instruments had its genesis in 1842, when William Butterfield wrote a letter to *The Ecclesiologist* expressing his wish that somebody would supply goldsmiths with suitable

32. Feild to William Scott, September 18, 1845.

33. Feild to William Scott, May 20, 1845.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Feild to William Scott, March 10, 1846.

36. Feild to William Scott, October 24, 1844.

designs for liturgical vessels.³⁷ By April of the following year, the Society announced that it had commissioned, unsurprisingly, William Butterfield to produce these designs.³⁸ The resulting volume was reviewed – very favourably, it may be added – by *The Ecclesiologist* in May of 1844.³⁹ Just three months later, a copy was in Feild's hands.

Notwithstanding all of Feild's efforts, progress was worse than slow. In addition to the lack of funds, there was a lack of skilled workmanship. Moreover, not the least of Feild's obstacles was that his High Church vision, and its Gothic architectural manifestation, were meeting with considerable resistance in the colony of Newfoundland. Indeed, Feild met with resistance practically from the moment he arrived in Newfoundland – and some of that resistance was from his own clergy. In his first Charge to the Clergy of his new diocese – delivered in 1844 and aptly titled *Order and Uniformity in the Public Services of the Church, According to the Use of the United Church of England and Ireland* – Feild gave explicit instructions regarding both the liturgy and placement of crucial furnishings such as the pulpit and altar. The previous month (this Charge was delivered on the feast day of St. Matthew, which is September 21), Feild had already complained to William Scott about the arrangement of the typical Newfoundland church:

*The fitting up is generally execrable. And besides the galleries which run to the very east end (there being no chancel) we have narrow high pews, running up also to the East end, and anchoring the rails of the altar, the pulpit, reading desk and clerks seat standing in the middle aisle, not small by degrees and beautifully less – but rising from a high clerks desk to the preachers towering eminence... All of these of course are immediately in front of ye altar and east window.*⁴⁰

Although Feild had not yet been to Twillingate, his description – particularly the “towering eminence” – fits perfectly. His preferred arrangement, of course, followed that of the Oxford Movement and Cambridge Camden Society, who privileged the ritual around the altar over the man in the pulpit. In his first Charge, he carefully explained the “error” of the typical Newfoundland arrangement:

*A short time before this Charge was delivered, the Pulpit, Reading Pew and Clerk's Desk had stood in the middle passage; and, being a large and lofty pile, very much obstructed the view towards the east, and threw all the Services of the Holy Table into the shade.*⁴¹

37. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 2, 1842, p. 25.

38. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 2, 1843, p. 117.

39. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 3, 1844, p. 107.

40. Feild to William Scott, August (undated), 1844.

41. Edward Feild, “Order and Uniformity in the Public Services of the Church, According to the Use of the United Church of England and Ireland: the substance of a Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Newfoundland”, St. John's: 1844, p. 8.

The situation, at least in St. John's, had been somewhat rectified by the enlargement of the space within the communion rails, the re-positioning of the reading desk and pulpit, and other adjustments that Feild was also clearly expecting his clergy to adopt.

Feild did not deliver another Charge to his clergy until 1847. From this text it is clear that neither his clergy nor their flocks embraced Feild's reforms wholeheartedly. Feild reiterated his beliefs concerning liturgy and liturgical arrangements – "opinions... not lightly formed, or hastily propounded" – but struck a slightly more conciliatory note that reveals both the incomplete success that he had met and his frustration with his clergy:

*It is very true that the few changes I recommended, in order to bring our practice into nearer conformity to our rules, were not so generally accepted by the Clergy as I desired; and, partly in consequence of this want of concurrence, did not, where attempted, succeed in gaining on the part of the congregations general approval.*⁴²

Had the clergy done as they were told, Feild went on to explain, their congregations would most likely have done so as well. Although his feelings on the matter were clearly quite strong, losing clergymen was one thing Feild could emphatically not afford to do. Indeed, finding sufficient clergymen to fill his huge and remote diocese was already an impossible task – "Can you by any possibility find any men", he wrote to Cecil Wray in 1845, "who, for love of souls and Christ's sake, will come over and help us in this most forlorn and forsaken colony?"⁴³ Unable to risk alienating the meager clergy that he did have at his disposal, Feild struggled to strike the diplomatic note that evidently did not come particularly naturally to him:

*I pray not to be interpreted as hinting any condemnation or censure of such among you, as did not adopt my recommendations or wishes; for they were but wishes and recommendations – nothing more.*⁴⁴

Considering the resistance met by Feild's High Church position even among his own clergy, one can imagine the electric impact of the news of his appointment as a Patron of the Cambridge Camden Society (see page 60-1 above). Feild could imagine it too, and the thought filled him with horror – particularly in light of the fact that this appointment had come without his consent or even knowledge. *The Ecclesiologist* had broken the news in March of 1844; that same month, an otherwise preoccupied Feild had a hasty letter sent on his behalf to William Scott:

42. Edward Feild, "A Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Newfoundland, by the Bishop, at his Second Visitation, on the Feast day of St. Matthew, 1847", St. John's, 1847, p. 7.

43. Feild to Cecil Wray, September 26, 1845.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

*...his Lordship has heard with much surprise and regret that he has been appointed or nominated a Patron or Vice patron of the Cambridge Camden Society. As he has never intimated to any one the least wish or desire to be so appointed or nominated he hopes you will be kind enough to contradict any report which may have been spread abroad to the contrary, and also state that he has no intention of accepting any such honour.*⁴⁵

Feild, who was on a visitation at the time, managed to write to Scott himself that same day, and again expressed his “surprise and regret” at the news.⁴⁶ Scott evidently took the matter straight to Benjamin Webb himself, who wrote in response that he had objected to the appointment of a Bishop whose wishes were not known, but had been overruled by the President.⁴⁷ In the same letter, Webb discussed the deepening crisis in the Cambridge Camden Society, which had had seven recent secessions, with more expected. In May, Feild explained to Scott in more detail why he needed to keep a safe distance (at least in public) from the Cambridge Camden Society:

*You can easily understand what suspicions and jealousies would be excited in this country if I were reported as vicepatron or Member (newly elected) of the Cambridge Camden Society. You know how shamefully and perseveringly that Society is attacked in the Newspapers which are ye authorities here, and do all ye mischief... I hear that I have been attacked in the Record Newspaper for having a regular Tractarian Curate... and that charge alone would alienate I know how many of these ignorant and excited fishmongers from me and ye Church.*⁴⁸

Indeed the “wicked newspapers”⁴⁹ had stirred up such feelings among the fishmongers that Feild feared that contributions to the building would soon pass from inadequate to non-existent. A month later Feild was still deeply preoccupied with the matter, explaining to Scott that his connection to the Cambridge Camden Society would “create all sorts of fears and suspicions and jealousies in this place.”⁵⁰ He was duty-bound, he explained, to think and feel not for himself, but for his flock and charge:

*We are dealing remember here with cold, coarse, calculating, covetous colonists – a race of men not seen or understood in England.*⁵¹

45. Henry Tuckwell to William Scott, March 26, 1845.

46. Feild to William Scott, March 26, 1845.

47. Benjamin Webb to William Scott, May 15, 1845.

48. Feild to William Scott, May 20, 1845.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Feild to William Scott, June 5, 1845.

51. *Ibid.*

With or without the taint of the Cambridge Camden Society, Feild was facing an uphill struggle in his attempt to mould Newfoundland to his High Church will. The congregation in St. John's requested a return to Low Church services, which Feild, naturally, denied.⁵² The strain was showing. Even Feild's stalwart Archdeacon, Thomas Bridge – affectionately referred to by his grateful Bishop as “iron” Bridge – was beginning to “sink.”⁵³ In a comment that strikes at the very heart of the political side of the colonial bishopric, Feild wrote to Scott:

*Perhaps I ought not to be surprised or offended that the people here are not yet prepared for a Bishop – and the proximity to America gives them notions of interference and resistance, which do not or did not find much encouragement in England.*⁵⁴

By October of 1845, Feild reported to the SPG that the feelings in St. John's were so negative towards the Church and himself that the only viable option seemed to be temporary withdrawal to that most remote (at least from Newfoundland) part of his diocese, Bermuda.⁵⁵ Although Feild found the Governor of Bermuda uncooperative, he had had enough of the opposite problem in Newfoundland:

*Here the Governor is my warmest friend and the people generally despise or dislike me.*⁵⁶

By the beginning of 1846, any dream of an Ecclesiologically correct Anglican cathedral in St. John's must have seemed hopeless to Feild. Many among his own clergy were his ideological opponents, and those who were not were near the point of exhaustion. Congregations, apparently dangerously empowered by American-style notions of resistance, were recalcitrant. The existing building materials for the cathedral were ill-suited to the job, no viable alternative design existed, and in any case Feild had no money with which to build. Feild's fundraising potential was severely limited by his enormous unpopularity. The organization most able to assist with architectural advice, the Cambridge Camden Society, was one with which Feild dared make no public admission of affiliation. All the while, the Romanist cathedral progressed day by day, with what seemed to Feild to be unlimited financial resources. Never in the colony's history had a potent symbol of English and Anglican power and authority been more needed – and never had the possibility seemed more remote. It was indeed, as Feild had said, “a pretty colonial mess”, with no end in sight.

52. Feild to William Scott, May 20, 1845.

53. Ibid.

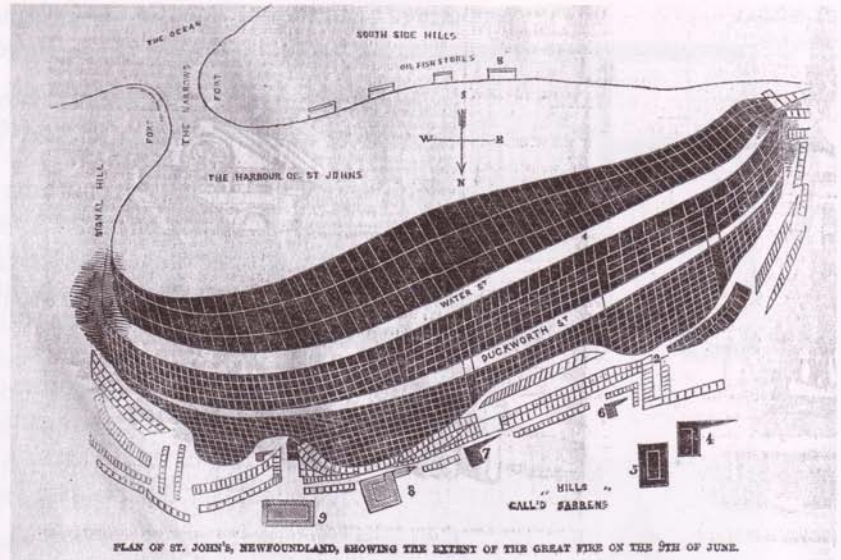
54. Feild to William Scott, May 20, 1845.

55. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, October 9, 1845.

56. Ibid.

In an extraordinary plot twist, Feild's opportunity arrived by stealth, cloaked in a social, economic, and material disaster unparalleled in the history of Newfoundland. On June 9, 1846, at approximately 8:00 a.m., a fire was started by an overflowing glue pot in the shop of one Hamlin the cabinet-maker, on George Street.⁵⁷ The fire quickly spread to Queen Street, where the wooden buildings served as ready kindling. A brisk west wind spread the flames to "Bennett's and Stewart's oil vats"⁵⁸, at which point it was realized that virtual annihilation of the city was inevitable. Attempts to create fire-breaks by blowing up buildings were unsuccessful. By nightfall, the city of St. John's was largely destroyed (figure 4-2), although coincidentally neither the Roman Catholic Cathedral nor Wix's Church of St. Thomas was damaged. Remarkably, the only deaths were one artilleryman and two civilians who perished attempting to blow up a house as a fire-break. The human toll was otherwise colossal; it is estimated that 12,000 people were left homeless, and forced to huddle together out of doors on the Barrens until temporary shelters could be erected. Fortunately, the weather was warm.

Governor John Harvey was quick to act. On June 10, he wrote to Prime Minister W.E. Gladstone, reporting that an estimated 2,000 houses, with 12,000 inhabitants, had been destroyed, and that total losses were estimated to be between £600,000 and £1,000,000.⁵⁹ Gladstone immediately released £5,000, and appealed to the other colonies of British North America to give generously. From Montreal, Earl Cathcart, Commander-in-Chief of the Forces of British North America, advanced £2,000 from the Canadian treasury. Governor W.M.G. Colebrook of Fredericton pledged to raise money by subscription, as did Governor Sir H.V. Huntley of Prince Edward Island.⁶⁰ Earl Grey, the recently



4-2 – Area destroyed by fire in St. John's, Newfoundland
Illustrated London News, No. 218,
Vol. IX, July 4 1846.

57. D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, originally published St. John's: 1895; re-published Portugal Cove: 2002, p. 458.

58. This account is taken from the *Newfoundlander* of June 18, 1846; quoted in Prowse, pp. 458-9.

59. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 1, p. 1.

60. *Ibid.*

appointed Secretary of State for the Colonies, announced a further grant of £25,000 on July 18.⁶¹ Sympathy was widespread. *The Record* reported that:

*Unless the powerful arm of the parent Government is mercifully and bountifully stretched forth to support her eldest born colonial offspring, its fate will be deplorable...*⁶²

Initially at least, Feild felt the enormity of this calamity as strongly as anybody. "Is it a judgement for our sins?" he asked Scott. "Alas! how well deserved."⁶³ Both Feild's wooden cathedral and the building materials for Purcell's cathedral were totally lost in the fire. Inept and inadequate as both seemed to Feild, they were an embarrassment of riches compared to what was left.

The silver lining for Feild was that he could, at least, start planning a new church unencumbered by his predecessor's intentions. To do so, of course, would cost money, and considering the scale of the destitution in St. John's, there was no reason to believe that there would be much available. Feild set his sights correspondingly low:

*What I mean to attempt is a mere oblong building (without tower, or bell turret) from 120 to 125 ft. long and from 58 to 60 wide inside – a clerestory and two aisles: with a large arch in ye East end for a chancel at some future time. I think the Church of St. Wilfrid in Pugin's book is nearly what I should attempt – minus the tower, chancel, etc.*⁶⁴

Remarkable as it may be that he should have been familiar with it, the book by Pugin to which Feild refers is *The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, published in 1843 and containing three illustrations of St. Wilfrid's, which Pugin was building at Hulme, near Manchester.⁶⁵ Feild also made reference to St. Wilfrid's in correspondence with the SPG, stating that its ground plan and elevation seemed to him "the best adapted to our purpose of any I know."⁶⁶ St. Wilfrid's (figures 4-3 & 4-4) is a modest but meticulously correct Gothic parish church with nave, aisles, clerestory, chancel, and a tower on the north-west corner. The style is Early English Gothic. While not at all cathedral-like, St. Wilfrid's did have the virtue of being built, according to Pugin, for only £5,000. Feild estimated that, due to the scarcity of skilled labour and materials in

61. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 11. p. 20.

62. "Destruction of St. John's, Newfoundland, by Fire", *The Record*, July 2, 1846, number 1,962.

63. Feild to William Scott, June 23, 1846.

64. *Ibid.*

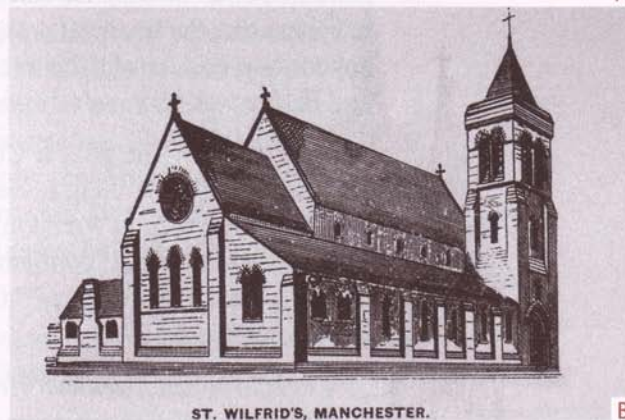
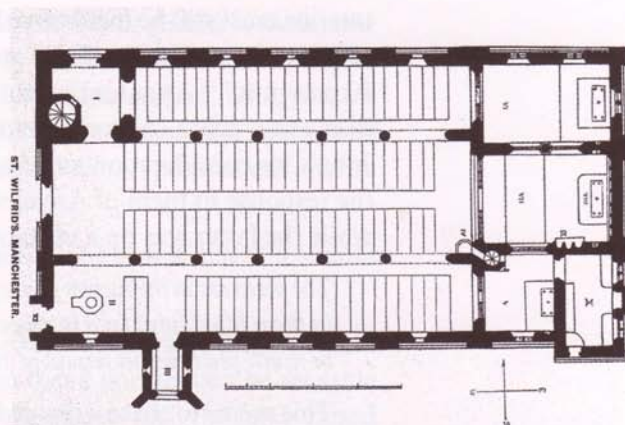
65. A.W.N. Pugin, *On The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, London: 1843. St. Wilfrid's is illustrated in plates III, VII & XIV.

66. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 12, 1846.

Newfoundland, costs would be double what they were in England.⁶⁷ Considering Feild's immediate plan was to build a version of St. Wilfrid's without a tower or chancel, his fundraising expectations were obviously (and understandably) quite modest.

Some help, however, was forthcoming. *The Record* (not, it may be recalled, in any respect an enthusiastic supporter of Feild) reprinted a letter from Feild to the SPG in which he speculated that at least £8,000 would be necessary to build a plain church in stone. It was announced that the SPG had, in response, opened a "Special Fund for the rebuilding of the parish church of St. John" (sic).⁶⁸ It was subsequently announced that the Standing Committee of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge had placed £2,000 at Feild's disposal for the re-building of his church, the one condition being that at least one third of the seats in the new church be set aside for the poor "in such a manner as the Bishop may deem most expedient."⁶⁹ The Archbishop of Canterbury, William Howley, also made a "most liberal donation" towards the building of new church.⁷⁰

With these modestly encouraging developments, Feild continued to consider the question of how the new cathedral ought to be built. He appealed to the SPG for "an experienced, honest architect or builder, who can understand our difficulties, modify plans, and adapt our materials."⁷¹ For the funds available, which was expected to be less than £10,000, Feild envisaged being able to create "a plain oblong building, 50 or 60 feet by 120 or 100."⁷² The exterior, he concluded, would have to be "of a simple and severe character", but the



4-3 (A) – St. Wilfrid's, Hulme, plan, from A.W.N. Pugin, *On The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, London: 1843, plate III.

4-4 (B) – St. Wilfrid's, Hulme, exterior, from A.W.N. Pugin, *On The Present State of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England*, London: 1843, plate VII.

67. Feild to William Scott, June 23, 1846.

68. *The Record*, July 13, 1846, number 1,965.

69. *The Record*, August 13, 1834, number 1,972.

70. *Report of the Incorporated Society for the propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, for the year 1838*, London: 1848. Feild was offering this recollection as a tribute to the recently deceased Howley.

71. Feild to Hawkins, June 12, 1846.

72. *Ibid.*

interior must still be meticulously adapted for the High Church liturgy.⁷³ Looking closer to home for assistance, Feild wondered, “Could brother Fredericton spare Mr. Wills? I know not.”⁷⁴ Apparently brother Fredericton could not, as Wills never entered the discussion again. At some point in the summer of 1846, the SPG sent drawings to St. John’s for consideration as designs for the cathedral. The drawings do not survive, but the response to them of Archdeacon Thomas Bridge, who was acting on Feild’s behalf while the latter was on a visitation, does:

*The plans are in themselves pretty, but, if I may give an opinion, the style of the churches represented in them is too rural for a metropolis (and such St. John’s is) which may reasonably be expected to be much improved in respect of the character of church buildings, on its being restored.*⁷⁵

This seems to strike a discordant note with the modesty of Feild’s expectations, which consisted of an incomplete version of Pugin’s St. Wilfrid’s. Bridge had, however, reason to believe that the financial prospects of the project might be brighter than he, or Feild, or anyone else, had dared to believe. Rumours of a financial windfall had reached St. John’s, and Bridge was very cannily positioning the Church such that they might catch it.

Shortly after the fire, a Committee for the Relief of the Sufferers at the Late Conflagration at St. John’s, Newfoundland, had been formed in London, headed by the Lord Mayor John Johnson. On July 27, the Committee sent a petition to Queen Victoria, asking her to “command that a collection be made in all churches and chapels for the relief of the sufferers.”⁷⁶ On September 3, Earl Grey wrote to the Government of Newfoundland:

*I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty has been pleased to issue Her Royal Letters to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, authorizing their Graces to adopt proper measures for promoting subscriptions in their respective provinces for the relief of the sufferers by the recent fires at St. John’s, Newfoundland.*⁷⁷

Word of this reached Newfoundland while Feild was on a visitation. The initial response came from Bridge, in the letter cited above to the SPG. His argument touches a nerve apparently still as raw as it had been in the time of Edward Wix:

73. Feild to Hawkins, August 7, 1846.

74. *Ibid.*

75. Bridge to Ernest Hawkins, August 24, 1846.

76. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 54, p. 59.

77. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 30, p. 43.

It is believed here that there is to be a Queen's Letter... I hope it may be possible to make some arrangements for the disposal of the Collections under it, by which a portion of them may be applied to the restoration of the church. That, I think, would be right and just, seeing that the great bulk of those who will share in the Relief supplied for those who have suffered temporal loss by the late fire, will not belong to our Communion, whilst all the contributions under a Queen's Letter will, of course, come from members of it.⁷⁸

In short, this was Anglican money, and there was a limit to how much of it should go to Roman Catholics, however destitute.

One month later, Bridge wrote again to the SPG to express his disappointment that the Queen's Letter had been issued without a stipulation that a portion of it be set aside for the rebuilding of the church. He reiterated his main argument – that the funds raised would be entirely contributed by members of the Church of England, while the vast majority of the St. John's residents who stood to benefit from them would be Roman Catholics.⁷⁹ Moreover, Bridge pointed out, the Board of Commissioners appointed in St. John's to dispense relief money could not be counted on, as they consisted of two Romanists, one Presbyterian, and three Congregationalists. Even if they were so disposed to do what Bridge considered the right thing by the Anglican Church, they would be equally inclined to appropriate an equivalent sum for the rebuilding of the Roman Catholic convent, which was the only other religious building destroyed in the fire. On this point there could be no doubt:

I presume it would not be agreeable to our Brethren at home, and I confess it would not be to me, that any portion of a Collection made exclusively in our Churches should be so applied.⁸⁰

Bridge concluded:

Would it be possible since the Queen's Letter has been issued, without the stipulation in it which is so desirable, for some steps to be taken, before the Collections get into the hands of the "Philistines" here, that a portion of them shall be appropriated to the restoration of our church? The Romanists among us suppose that the Queen's Letter is to be altogether for the Church; many have said so to me.⁸¹

78. Bridge to Ernest Hawkins, August 24, 1846.

79. Bridge to Hawkins, September 7, 1846.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

Feild, meanwhile, had returned to St. John's, and, having doubtless been informed by Bridge of the magnitude and urgency of the opportunity, decided to travel to England.⁸² While still in St. John's, Feild drew up a memorial to be sent to Earl Grey, in which it was argued that the only place of worship destroyed in the fire was the Anglican church (technically true, if one does not consider a convent a "place of worship"), that the subsequent destitution of the Anglican community in St. John's made it impossible for them to fund a replacement building themselves, that the special appeal made in England on behalf of the church was undermined by the larger appeal being made on behalf of those who had suffered temporal loss, and finally (but perhaps most importantly of all):

*...the collections to be made under the authority of the Queen's Letter will be gathered wholly from members of the Church of England, whilst a very large majority of those to whose benefit they will be applied here will not be of that communion.*⁸³

Promising news had already reached Bridge. In October he reported to Hawkins that he had received "cheering intelligence" regarding the Queen's Letter contributions.⁸⁴ By mid-December, Bridge was rejoicing that Lord Grey had determined that a portion of the Queen's Letter funds should go toward the church, and that while he would leave it to the government in Newfoundland to determine the amount, he would recommend that a portion not exceeding one third of the total be so used.⁸⁵

The final deal was struck during Feild's trip to England. No official record of the meeting between Feild and Grey exists, but a letter of December 21 informed Feild that, while Lord Grey was "very much engaged" that day, he would be happy to meet with him at 3:00 p.m. the following afternoon.⁸⁶ A subsequent letter from Grey to Feild, dated December 22, states:

*...under the circumstances, as I am aware that the parties who applied for the Queen's Letter did mention the rebuilding of the church as one of the objects for which the collection was desired, and also that it was one particularly referred to by many Clergymen in their Sermons preceding the Collections, I shall think it right to direct the Governor to reserve for this purpose one half of the total amount of the Collections.*⁸⁷

82. Bridge to Hawkins, September 10, 1846.

83. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 35 enclosure, p. 45.

84. Bridge to Hawkins, October 26, 1846.

85. Bridge to Hawkins, December 16, 1846.

86. Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #668, box 4, file 4, letter 9.

87. *Ibid*, letter 10.

It is difficult to assess to what degree the arguments given may be taken at face value. It is clear from Bridge's letters that the Queen's Letter itself contained no stipulation regarding the rebuilding of the church. Indeed, the one surviving transcription of the original petition to the Queen by the Lord Mayor's Committee does state that the Collection was needed "for the relief of the sufferers, and for rebuilding the Episcopal church."⁸⁸ That would seem unequivocal, but the issue is muddied by the fact that that petition is inserted into the *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c* not in its proper chronological place, which would be July 1846, but in November of that year – immediately *after* the memorial to Grey that pointed out the non-Anglican affiliations of the majority of the fire sufferers. This is not to say that the original petition was tampered with retroactively in order to support an argument that had suddenly grown heated, but it would be reassuring to have earlier corroborative evidence on record. As for the claim that many of the clergymen who raised the funds had mentioned the rebuilding of the church in their sermons, it is impossible with existing documents to get to the truth of that matter. One wonders how much closer Feild and Grey came to that truth from inside the latter's London office.

One thing that can be ascertained for certain is that some citizens of St. John's did not find these arguments convincing. Among the first to voice his displeasure was the Roman Catholic Bishop, Michael Fleming. In a letter to a Mr. J. O'Connell, which was subsequently forwarded to Lord Grey, Fleming pointed out that the Anglican building that had burned was to be replaced anyway, and that it "was not intrinsically worth £200." In return, Feild was to be given half of the Queen's Letter funds, which at that point (May 1847) totaled £29,000 and was still climbing (thus making Feild's share £14,500).⁸⁹ Lord Grey instructed the Governor of Newfoundland (by this time Sir Gaspar Le Marchant) "to ascertain... to what extent the information received by Bishop Fleming... is accurate or erroneous", and to "afford the Bishop of Newfoundland [i.e., Feild] every necessary opportunity for controverting or correcting Bishop Fleming's statements."⁹⁰ Feild replied that, while it was true that a new church had been planned, the fire had wiped out the means of those whose subscriptions would have built it. Moreover, Feild argued:

*It is not true that our old church was not worth £200. This statement is very far indeed from being a correct one. To prove that it is not correct, it may suffice to say that the church was accommodated with decent and sufficient pew sittings for 800 persons, and was supplied with all usual and necessary appendages and furniture.*⁹¹

88. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 54, p. 59.

89. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 59, p. 63.

90. *Ibid.*

91. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXaXVI, number 76, pp. 84-5.

It is a mystery why Feild failed to make the potentially more compelling argument that the building materials from the planned church could not have survived the fire, and thus all the project's assets were effectively wiped out. However, his remarks seem to have satisfied Lord Grey, who raised no further objections.

The Relief Committee in St. John's, however, still had objections. It was "with feelings of much regret" that Governor Le Marchant was required to forward to Lord Grey another objection to the appropriation, which he then proceeded to undermine by explaining that only eleven of forty members of the Committee had been present to draft it, and only nine of those eleven had supported the petition, and all of those nine were either Romanists or Dissenters.⁹² The petition attempted to argue that the Queen's Letter moneys would be better spent on those made destitute by the fire, and that a "building in every way adequate may be erected for a reasonable sum" of £5,000-£6,000.⁹³ Grey's perfunctory reply was that he found no argument that "requires or would justify a change in the decision which I have already communicated to you..."⁹⁴

The Committee tried one more time, sending a memorial to Lord Grey that seethed with indignation. Entitled "The memorial of certain of the Middle Class in St. John's, Sufferers by the Conflagration of 9th June", the precision and vigour with which it presents its objections merit quotation at length:

... Your memorialists now have the unpleasant task of remarking upon the extraordinary procedure of the Episcopal Bishop of St. John's, in reference to the monies raised under the Queen's Letter... [T]hat the replacing of an old wooden building overvalued at 500 l., which was to have been taken down within a year or two, by a stone cathedral, the foundation-stone of which was laid nearly three years before the fire, at which time Bishop Spencer returned thanks to the Almighty for inclining the hearts of his church to contribute the means for its erection, the materials of which were paid for and on the spot; that Bishop Feild, should, under these circumstances, have placed the distress of 12,000 persons in equal balance with the object of his ambition, is a matter of surprise to all, of injustice to many of his own denomination, and of serious injury to the cause of religion he is sworn to protect.⁹⁵

92. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 79, p. 88.

93. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, enclosure 1, number 70, p. 95.

94. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 80, p. 96.

95. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, enclosure 2, number 81.

Lord Grey politely acknowledged receipt of the memorial, saying that he had laid the petition before the Queen, but for reasons previously stated, was not able to advise her Majesty to comply with it.⁹⁶

Doubtless, the issue was beyond argument by this time. The final decision had been made almost a year earlier, during a private meeting between Lord Grey and the Bishop, in the first dark afternoon following the winter solstice. All subsequent dialogue was diplomatic showmanship. Where all else had failed, fire would at last succeed. Edward Feild would get his cathedral.

Having procured funding for a reasonably ambitious building, Feild needed an at least equally ambitious architect. He found one in George Gilbert Scott (1811-78). How Feild made the acquaintance of Scott is not known (he was no relation to William Scott⁹⁷), but it was probably through mutual contacts at the Cambridge Camden Society, which at this time viewed Scott as an architect of considerable promise. George Gilbert Scott opened his independent architectural practice in 1835.⁹⁸ Much of his early work, including St. John's Cathedral, was done in partnership with William Moffat, whose expertise was primarily in planning and building rather than architectural design. The firm enjoyed fair success as builders of workhouses, although Scott – the son, grandson, nephew, brother, cousin, and uncle of clergymen – became increasingly attracted to ecclesiastical commissions. His first church commission was for a parish church in Lincoln, about which he would later observe, “I cannot say anything in its favour, excepting that it was better than many then erected.”⁹⁹ It was built in 1839, the same year that the Cambridge Camden Society was founded, leading Scott to reflect “I only wish I had known its founders at the time.”¹⁰⁰ Six more church commissions followed – “all agreed... in the meagerness of their construction”, Scott later confessed – before he was stirred to a more serious contemplation of Gothic by the work of the Cambridge Camden Society and the writings of Pugin. A meeting with Benjamin Webb, occasioned by Scott's rage over

96. Ibid.

97. The architect had a brother, also named William Scott, also a clergyman. The two William Scotts are, however, different people – George Gilbert's brother was vicar of Abthorpe, while Feild's friend and colleague was vicar of Christ Church, Hoxton.

98. Strangely, no recent, comprehensive monograph has been written on Scott. The standard reference is David Cole, *The Work of Sir Gilbert Scott*, London: 1980. Basic data on Scott and his descendents can be found in Geoffrey Fisher, Gavin Stamp & others, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects: The Scott Family*, pp. 13-16. As Gavin Stamp has said, the best biography on Scott remains the architect's own: George Gilbert Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections*, first published London: 1879; new edition Stamford: 1995.

99. Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections*, p. 85.

100. Ibid, p. 86.

the projected demolition of the medieval St. Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, resulted in an impromptu lecture on the necessity of chancels. Scott found himself in complete agreement, and immediately became an avid reader of *The Ecclesiologist*.¹⁰¹ Pugin's writing stirred him even more:

*Pugin's articles excited me almost to a fury, and I suddenly found myself like a person awakened from a long feverish dream, which had rendered him unconscious of what was going on about him.*¹⁰²

Scott used his crusade for St. Stephen's as an excuse to write to Pugin, and to his great delight was invited to call:

*He was tremendously jolly, and showed almost too much bonhomie to accord with my romantic expectations. I very rarely saw him again, though I became a devoted reader of his written, and visitor of his erected works, and a greedy recipient of every tale about him, and report of what he said or did.*¹⁰³

Scott's newly learned devotion to Gothic brought him the commission for the Martyr's Memorial in Oxford (1842-44), resulting in a design that Scott later found imperfect, but still believed "was better than any one but Pugin would then have procured."¹⁰⁴ In the same years Scott built what he considered to be his first truly good church: St. Giles, Camberwell (figure 4-5). A lithograph of the design was sent to the Cambridge Camden Society, which deemed it (in *The Ecclesiologist*) a "magnificent" design.¹⁰⁵ Their praise was not unqualified: they objected to the shortness of the chancel, remained unconvinced of the appropriateness of the hexagonal apse (Lichfield being the only English medieval precedent), and objected to the placement of the transept doors, the size of the windows in the north porch, the pitch of the roof, the pinnacles at the base of the spire, the arrangement of the spire lights, the belfry windows, and the



4-5 – St. Giles, Camberwell, London, exterior from the north.

101. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-8.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

105. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 1, number 4, 1942, p. 68.

placement of the flying buttresses. By the standards of *The Ecclesiologist*, however, this was a glowing review.

Scott's reputation as a Gothic designer was consolidated by his triumph in the competition for the Nikolai-Kirche in Hamburg (1844). It established him as the foremost Gothic architect of the day (save for Pugin), but it also got him into trouble in *The Ecclesiologist*:

*...Now this building, as designed for the worship of one of the worst sections of an heretical sect... hardly comes under our notice. Mr. Scott's lithograph presents a north-west view, and we are bound to confess that the spire is beautiful, and well managed... But the question arises, how must we characterize the spirit that prostitutes Christian architecture to such an use?*¹⁰⁶

This stinging rebuke – entirely on ideological grounds, not architectural ones – introduced a note of tension between Scott and the Ecclesiological Society that never disappeared. In fact, as Gavin Stamp has observed,¹⁰⁷ Scott was held in particularly high regard by the Society, but he was always hypersensitive to criticism – and there was also some truth to Scott's complaint that the Ecclesiologists represented an uneasy mix of constantly shifting ideals and unshakable belief in their own infallibility. In spite of the fact that they frequently changed their minds in matters of taste and propriety, they were always equally convinced that they were right. "There was no class of men", Scott wrote, "whom the Cambridge Camden Society held in such scorn, as those who adhered to their own last opinion but one."¹⁰⁸

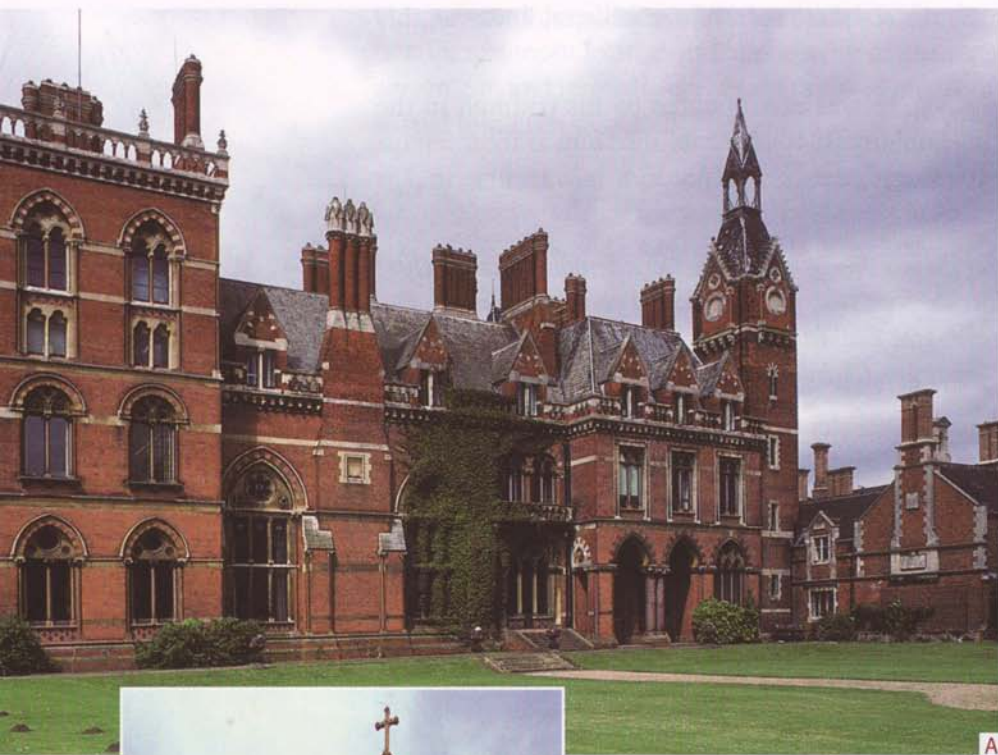
The middle of the 1840s found Scott in the early bloom of a career that would rise to spectacular heights, and end in burial in Westminster Abbey upon his death in 1878. In between, professional highlights would include Exeter College Chapel, Oxford (1857); Kelham Hall, Nottinghamshire (1858-62) (figure 4-6); the Albert Memorial, London (1864-68) (figure 4-7); the Midland Grand Hotel at St. Pancras, London (1869-72) (figure 4-8); and the restoration of countless medieval cathedrals (including an appointment as Surveyor of Westminster Abbey in 1849). He also rose to the rank of Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy.

Scott's views on the national and denominational meanings of Gothic were ideally suited to the situation in Newfoundland. What that colony needed was an emphatic visual

106. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 4, 1845, p. 184.

107. Gavin Stamp, "George Gilbert Scott and the Cambridge Camden Society", in *A Church as it Should Be: The Cambridge Camden Society and its Influence*, Donnington: 2001.

108. Scott, *Personal and Professional Recollections*, p. 206.



4-6 (A) – Kelham Hall, Nottinghamshire, exterior.

4-7 (B) – Albert Memorial, London.

4-8 (C) – Great Midland Hotel, St. Pancras Station, London, exterior.



statement of England and its Established Church, and for Scott, that was precisely what Gothic provided. Scott was a prolific writer throughout his career, and his encyclopedic knowledge of medieval architecture left him in no doubt that England, primarily through the Church, had developed its own distinct Gothic idiom, and that this idiom was the national style. “England produced a style of her own”, wrote Scott (quoting E.A. Freeman), “inferior to none in purity of Gothic principle, and surpassing every other in the matchless beauty of its detail.”¹⁰⁹ Indeed Gothic was, for Scott, “the only [style] which we can, as Christians or as Englishmen, call our own...”¹¹⁰ In *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture* (1857), Scott observed that the Gothic Revival was “the revival of our own national architecture”,¹¹¹ and that it had brought church architecture “back to our true national type”,¹¹² and was “*essentially national*” (his italics).¹¹³ Of particular interest is an essay called “On the claims of Romanists (as such) upon Pointed Architecture.”¹¹⁴ Published in 1850, it must have been written some time in the late 1840s, making it exactly contemporary with the construction of Scott’s cathedral in St. John’s. Thus, it is a reflection of Scott’s ideas at the very moment his first cathedral was being built. In it, Scott argued that, contrary to the impression that may be formed by the superficial observer, Gothic was not the style of the Roman Church. Admittedly, Gothic arose during the Roman Church’s greatest period of domination, but Scott was “not... shaken in my conviction that it arose rather in spite of, rather than as a consequence of, that usurped domination and its accompanying errors.”¹¹⁵ Gothic, after all, was a product of countries north of the Alps, and it was Rome herself that set up a “Pagan standard before the eyes of the world”¹¹⁶ by replacing Old St. Peter’s Basilica, an act which completed the “unchristianizing” of art begun in the Renaissance. In England, by contrast, this “paganization” of art was much slower to take hold, and:

...we accordingly find, at Oxford and elsewhere, buildings designed in medieval taste dating down to the Great Rebellion... clearly showing that it was still held by many to be the architecture of our own church...¹¹⁷

109. George Gilbert Scott, “On the Question of the selection of a single variety of Pointed Architecture for modern use, and of which variety has the strongest claims on such selection”, *A Plea for the Faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches... to which are added some Miscellaneous Remarks on other subjects...*, London: 1850, pp. 95-6.

110. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-13.

111. George Gilbert Scott, *Remarks on Secular and Domestic Architecture*, London: 1857, p. 10.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

114. Scott, *A Plea for the Faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches... to which are added some Miscellaneous Remarks on other Subjects...*, London: 1850, pp. 39-51.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

116. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

117. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

Finally, Scott concluded:

I think, then, it can hardly be denied, that the influence of Rome had no concern in the rise of pointed architecture; that the increasing corruption of the Roman Church was accompanied by a decline in the purity of our Northern architecture; and that its final extinction was brought about directly by the example and influence of Rome herself.¹¹⁸

As a piece of polemics, this is not perfectly convincing. Indeed, one merely has to disentangle Scott's apparently willful conflation of "Rome" as the geographical seat of the Popes and "Rome" as an ideologically unified belief system, and the whole argument begins to unravel. In the tortured ingenuity of its arguments, not to mention the sheer unlikelihood of its premise, Scott's essay parallels Archdeacon Bridge's sermon, *The Two Religions; or, The Question Settled, Which Is the Oldest Church, the Anglican or the Romish?* This similarity of outlook is one of the things that made him the perfect architect for Feild's Cathedral. Whereas Bridge staked the Anglican claim for authority based on venerability, Scott staked its claim on the venerable Gothic style. Gothic, in short, was *not* the architecture of Rome: it was the architecture of England and of the English Church, and had stood historically in direct opposition to Rome. This is precisely the statement that needed to be made, in visual, architectural terms, by the Anglican Cathedral in St. John's – particularly in light of the lengthening shadow of the Classical, "pagan" Romanist cathedral that continued construction, unscathed by the fire of 1846.

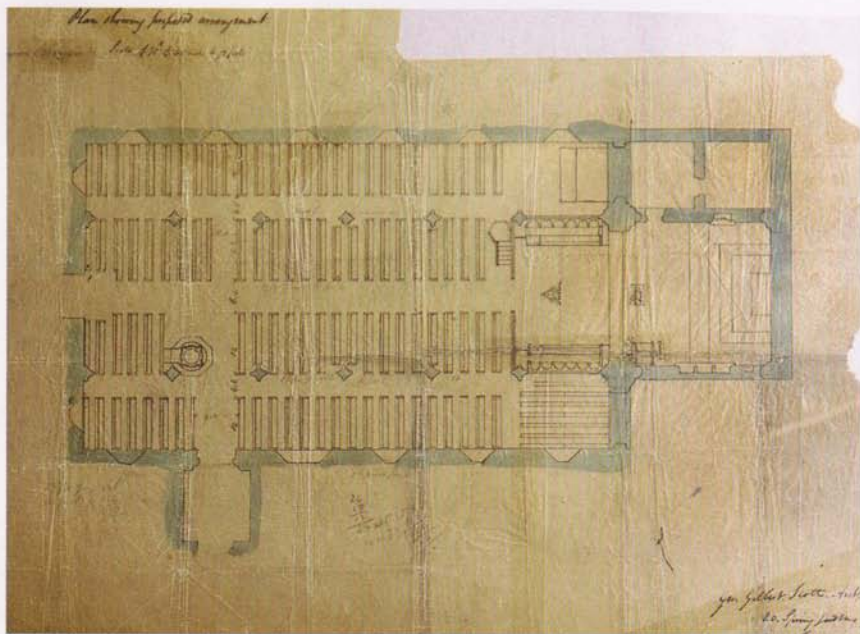
Analysis of Scott's design for St. John's Cathedral is made more difficult by the building's complicated history of building and re-building campaigns. Construction was begun in 1847, and the nave, which was to serve for thirty years as the entire church, was consecrated in 1850. There was no further activity until 1880, by which time both Feild and Scott were dead. By 1885, the crossing, transepts and choir had been completed under the direction of George Gilbert Scott Jr., the original architect's son. The younger Scott's work appears to have followed his father's plans quite closely (see Chapter Six). The nave, meanwhile, was destroyed in a fire of 1892, eventually to be re-built by C.P. Hopson of Toronto in 1902-03. Once again, Sir Gilbert Scott's original plan seems to have been followed quite closely, although not, as we shall see, in every detail. Thus, the cathedral as it stands today is very much a building in the spirit of Sir George Gilbert Scott, but to gain a better understanding of the letter of his intentions, it is necessary to examine some of his surviving drawings of the building.

118. Ibid, p. 44.

What may be one of Scott's earliest designs for the cathedral in St. John's is shown on a floor plan labeled "Newfoundland. Plan showing proposed arrangement" (figure 4-9). It is signed "Geo. Gilbert Scott. Architect. 20 Spring Gardens, London." Undated, it is a modest oblong with aisles, chancel, vestry and south porch. Its strong resemblance to Pugin's St. Wilfrid's suggests that this model was still in Feild's mind – which, in turn, suggests that this drawing may date from before December 22, 1846 (the date of Feild's momentous meeting with Lord Grey). It is probably safe to assume that the aisles, chancel and vestry would have been clearly articulated on the exterior, as the Ecclesiologists would have demanded, and as they are at St. Wilfrid's. There appears to be little in the way of elaborate articulation. The nave piers consist of round cores with four attached shafts. The most intriguing feature of the drawing is the relatively massive compound piers of the chancel arch. Immensely bigger than the nave piers, they would seem to be intended as support for a tower, although there are no corresponding piers at the opposite corners of the chancel, and in any event this would be a very odd location for a tower, completely without medieval authority. Most likely, these piers reflect the plan explained in Feild's letter quoted on page 106 above:

What I mean to attempt is a mere oblong building (without tower, or bell turret) from 120 to 125 ft. long and from 58 to 60 wide inside – a clerestory and two aisles: with a large arch in ye East end for a chancel at some future time.¹¹⁹

The main function of the massive piers is probably not to support the chancel arch, but to become the western crossing piers of a future eastern arm.



4-9 – "Newfoundland. Plan showing proposed arrangement."

Drawing by George Gilbert Scott, Cathedral Archives, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, 600.02 – ARCH 002.

119. Feild to William Scott, June 23, 1846.



4-10 – “St. John’s Newfoundland. First Design for Church,” by George Gilbert Scott.

RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 1.

buttresses articulate the bays and corners of the building. The style throughout is Early English Gothic.

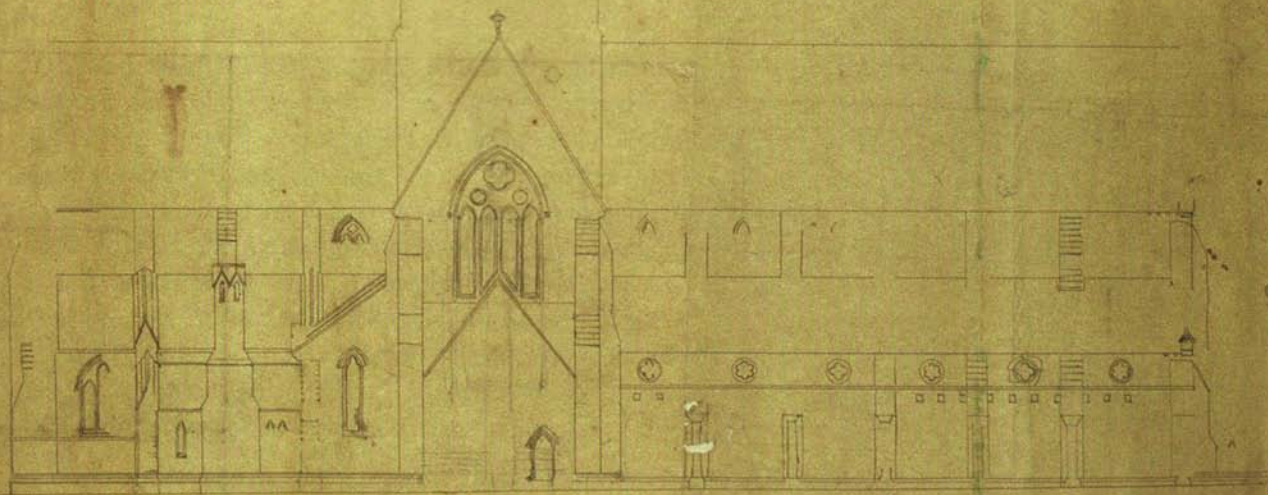
Additional drawings show some of the details that Scott planned for the cathedral. Figure 4-11 is an exterior elevation of the north side. Details are suggested rather than explicitly rendered, and were evidently still in the process of being worked out. The choir is substantially more elaborate than the nave (this is in strict observance of Ecclesiological principles), with cusped and multi-light windows as opposed to the latter’s lancets. The transept façade boasts a four-light window with three quatrefoils above – very Decorated (that is, dating from the middle phase of English Gothic) in conception but still using plate tracery.

A similarly imprecise drawing (figure 4-12) shows Scott’s intention for the choir, which was a two-story elevation with the second story sub-divided so as to suggest a third. Two-story elevations, while rare in English medieval Gothic, can be seen at Pershore Abbey and Southwell Cathedral. This basic configuration was adopted by George Gilbert Jr. in the 1880s, and can still be seen in the choir today.

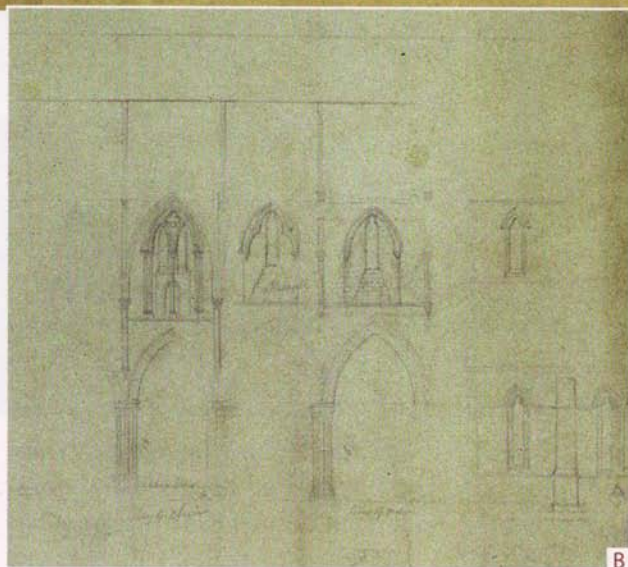
In a much more precisely rendered drawing of the nave piers (figure 4-13), it is possible to get a clearer idea of exactly what Scott’s building was to look like. The most striking characteristic of these piers is their unmistakable Englishness. The capitals are moulded, which Scott considered to be one of the great features of English Gothic.¹²⁰ More interestingly, each capital’s profile is subtly different from every other, in a textbook display of the love of variety so often seen in English medieval design.¹²¹ The same is true

120. See George Gilbert Scott, *Lectures on the Rise and Development of Gothic Architecture*, London: 1878, pp. 157-8.

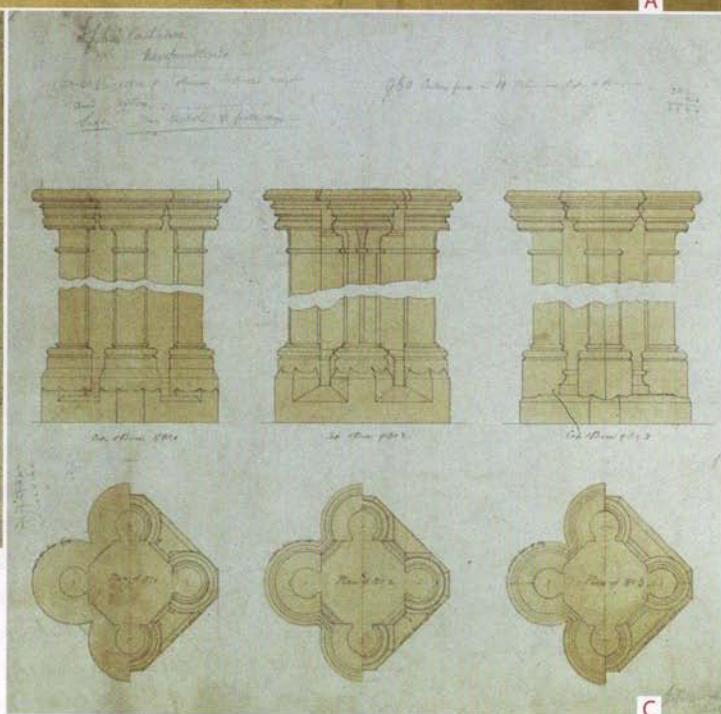
121. See chapter three, p. 72, note 38.



A



B



C

4-11 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Exterior of north elevation, by George Gilbert Scott.
RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 4.

4-12 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Interior of choir elevation, by George Gilbert Scott.
RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 3.

4-13 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Nave piers elevation and section, by George Gilbert Scott.
RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 12.

of the piers themselves. The basic configuration – an octagonal core, with four attached shafts – is common enough, but the real ingenuity lies in the variety of forms, one pier having round shafts, the next filleted ones, and the third nibbed. The filleted shaft is interesting too in that the fillet runs not only up the shaft but through the necking of the capital and the lower part of the moulded capital itself. This is another quotation from Early English Gothic, but the geographical range is narrowing: this feature is most likely to be found from Lincolnshire northward, and is ubiquitous at, for example, the choir of Southwell Minster (begun ca. 1234) (figure 4-14). These piers demonstrate an exquisitely precise grasp of Early English Gothic, both in overall conception and in detail. While not all of these refinements have been incorporated into the present nave, photographs taken before the 1892 fire show that Scott's nave as built followed this drawing (figure 4-15).

The surviving photographs of the interior of Scott's nave (figures 4-15 & 4-16) reinforce the sense of the "Englishness" of the design. The proportions are low and broad, rather than high and upright. There is no continuous vertical articulation: the shafts of the piers end at the capitals, and the shafts marking the bays of the clerestory are corbelled out. The main arcade is thick and richly moulded. Fortunately, all of these features are retained exactly in Hopson's 1902 re-building, so the present nave is as decidedly English a space as its predecessor.

This strongly English quality is equally evident on the exterior of Scott's design (figures 4-17 & 4-19). The east end (not built until after Scott's death) is a sheer, cliff-like mass, reminiscent of northern models such as Lincoln and York Minster. The graduated lancets of the west end recall northern English prototypes such as the famous "Five Sisters" windows in the north transept of York Minster (figure 4-18). The deeply recessed but relatively diminutive west door is also an English type, seen at such places as the Cathedrals of Wells, Ripon, and York Minster.

The Englishness of the design needs emphasizing for two reasons. First, it is precisely the solution required by the situation that so troubled Wix and other Newfoundland clergymen who found themselves isolated in a sea of Popery. The Roman Catholic cathedral might have been rising longer and higher, but at last the established Church had a strong public symbol and identity – a visual brand, if you will – that was demonstrably English and Anglican. Second, St. John's Cathedral stands at the tail end of a phase of Ecclesiology that was heavily antiquarian – copyist, in the language of the day – rather than innovative. Scott's nave was finished in 1850, the same year that William Butterfield would begin work on All Saints, Margaret Street, a building that would vastly enlarge the formal palette of the Ecclesiological Society and the Church of England. Both Italian and Early French

4-16 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Nave interior, pre-1880.

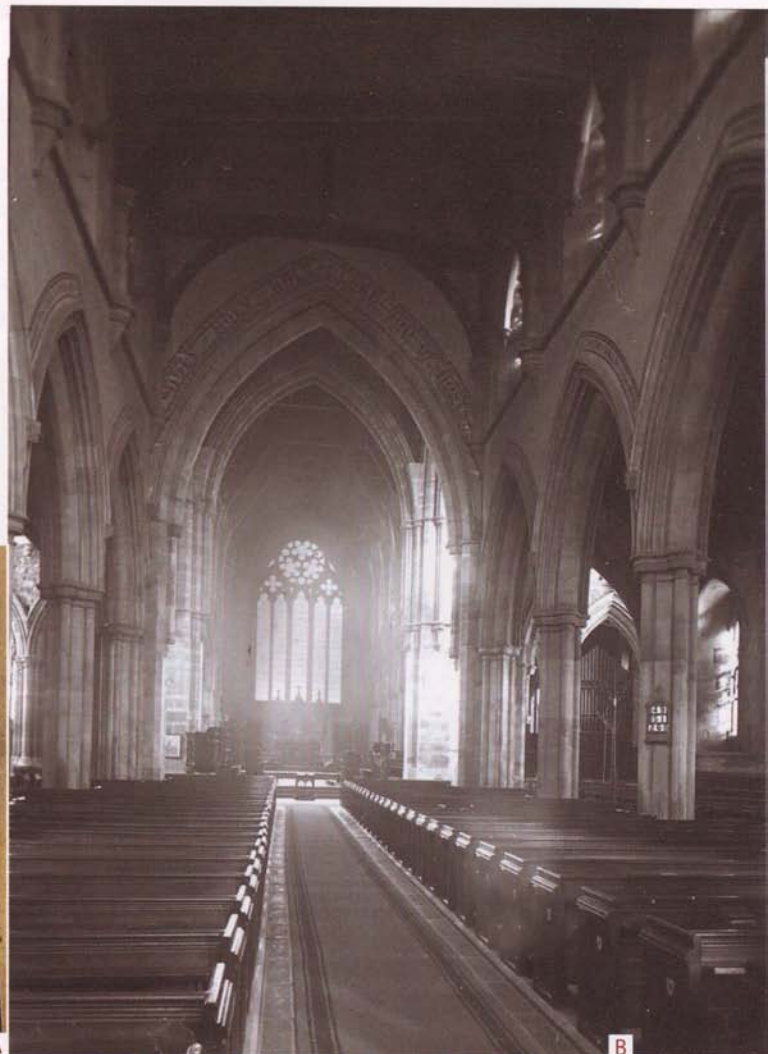
Cathedral Archives, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist,
CA 1/1.161 Location A133 (photographer unknown).

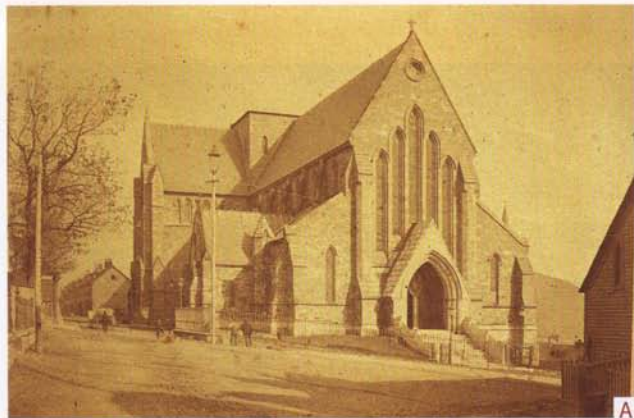
4-15 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist,
St. John's Newfoundland. Photograph of nave, pre-1892.

Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Coll – 137, 2.02.012.

See <http://www.library.mun.ca/qeii/cns/photos/geogfindaid.php#Arrange>

4-14 (C) – Southwell Minster, detail of capitals
of choir pier six, south arcade.





A



B



C

4-17 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Exterior, pre-1892.

Cathedral Archives, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, CA 1/1.39. Loc. A039 (photographer unknown).

4-18 (B) – York Minster, York, exterior of north transept, "The Five Sisters."

4-19 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. *Illustrated London News*, Vol. XIV, 1849.

Gothic would soon leave a strong mark in the designs of such Gothic Revival architects as Butterfield, George Edmund Street,¹²² and even Scott himself.¹²³ Indeed, in one of the very few scholarly references to St. John's Cathedral, David Brownlee has referred to the "French spirit" of Scott's design.¹²⁴ Such a characterization, however, can only be rooted in a very imperfect knowledge of the medieval models upon which the building is based, and of the social, religious and political circumstances that caused it to be introduced into Newfoundland. Scott was confused about neither. According to him, adaptability was a hallmark of Gothic, but it should never lose its national and spiritual essence:

*Our architecture should everywhere be both English and Christian, but should have in it that intrinsic principle of life which would admit of its ready adaptation to the climate of the torrid or the frozen zone, to the scorched plantations of Jamaica or the icy rocks of Labrador. The style should be essentially one, but it should possess an elasticity which would render it suitable to the most varied external conditions.*¹²⁵

Scott apparently regarded St. John's Cathedral as something of a showpiece in his portfolio. It was displayed in the Architecture Room at the exhibition of the Royal Academy in 1848,¹²⁶ exhibited again at the Free Architectural Exhibition in 1849,¹²⁷ and also appeared in the *Illustrated London News* on June 23, 1849 (figure 4-19). That illustration is perhaps the best surviving impression remaining of Scott's plans for the whole cathedral. The pure Early English of the earlier drawing, while perhaps appropriate for the rugged, hyperborean environment of Newfoundland, had been transformed into a more complex arrangement of tall lancet windows (the definitive characteristic of Early English) and more expansive windows in the east end inspired by Decorated Gothic models such as the east window of Lincoln Cathedral. Scott's design, admittedly, is not "pure" Decorated: the tracery is of the heavy "plate" type rather than the more slender "bar" variety – possibly a concession to the rigours of the Newfoundland climate.

122. On G.E. Street, and on the influence of early French Gothic on the English Gothic Revival more generally, see David Brownlee, *The Law Courts: the architecture of George Edmund Street*, New York, Cambridge, Mass.: 1984.

123. At, for example, the polychrome stone and brick Midland Grand Hotel at St. Pancras.

124. David Brownlee, "Victorian Office Practice and Victorian Architecture: The Case of Sir Gilbert Scott," *The Artist's Workshop: Studies in the History of Art* 38, Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1993, pp. 156-73.

125. G.G. Scott, "On the Question of the selection of a single variety of Pointed architecture. . .", p. 115.

126. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 360, comments, "We cannot conceive why the hanging committee should have placed this design in the highest row, while so many works of far inferior merit and interest occupy advantageous positions."

127. This was apparently an exhibition set up by and for architects in response to the exhibition of the Royal Academy, which was widely considered by the profession not to do architecture justice. See *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 9, 1849, p. 303.

In 1848, Scott's design was the subject of a lengthy article in *The Ecclesiologist*.¹²⁸ The article began with a brief summary of the history of Anglican church buildings in St. John's. The original church, which had become the cathedral in 1839, had been "a wooden shed of the most monstrous description."¹²⁹ Archdeacon Wix had been responsible for the building of another wooden church (St. Thomas'), "of somewhat better form... though the intention was certainly better than the effect."¹³⁰ After the creation of the Diocese of Newfoundland, a cathedral was commissioned, "piously, we own, rather than decorously, by Bishop Spencer."¹³¹ It was, unfortunately, "a sham Gothic conventicle a few degrees worse than the church in... S. Pancras"¹³² illustrated in Pugin's *Contrasts* and discussed on page 27 above. The far superior church under construction in the aftermath of the fire of 1846 was "a remarkable illustration of the actual value of severe temporal visitations."¹³³ After the fire, half of the money from the Queen's Letter had been "quite properly" apportioned by Lord Grey for the cathedral, "yet not without sundry reclamations, especially from the noisy Hiberno-Romanists, who form the majority of the Newfoundland colonists."¹³⁴

The Ecclesiologist then proceeded to analyze and comment upon the design itself. "The style", they noted, "is First-Pointed [Early English] of the latest phase in the nave and transepts: transitional towards Middle-Pointed [Decorated] in the choir."¹³⁵ This stylistic combination had, in fact, come about initially at the urging of William Scott, as G.G. Scott explained in a letter to Feild written in 1847:

*Subsequent to your Lordship's departure some little discussion arose as to the style, Mr. William Scott thinking that a somewhat more advanced period of Gothic Architecture might with some modification have been preferable, and I was led to take more trouble in designing the architectural features of the choir from a wish to shew how a progression in point of ornamental character might be obtained in the parts not now undertaken, and that though the present portion of the work might be more simple and less developed than could be wished, this object might be avoided in proceeding eastward.*¹³⁶

128. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 272-9.

129. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

130. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

131. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

132. *Ibid.*, p. 274.

133. *Ibid.*, p. 271.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

135. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

136. G.G. Scott to Feild, August 3, 1847.

For Scott (i.e., the architect, not the clergyman), this blend of Early English and Decorated probably represented an ideal synthesis rather than a compromise. While he considered Decorated the apogee of Gothic (as indeed did Pugin and the Ecclesiological Society), Early English was, in his view, a style that “may well be the pride of Englishmen.”¹³⁷ Thus, Scott concluded, “it may be reasonable to wed the grandeur of one with the elegance of the other.”¹³⁸ Scott would also have been well aware that an earlier medieval nave joined to a later east end was by no means an unusual arrangement in English cathedrals, Lincoln being perhaps the most notable example (in addition to the one closest in design to Scott’s cathedral at St. John’s).

The review in *The Ecclesiologist* was generally favourable, although they expressed disappointment in the design’s lack of originality – a criticism that would have been unimaginable just a few years earlier while the Ecclesiologists still favoured copyism over innovation (Scott’s complaint of the Society’s contempt for anyone who “adhered to their own last opinion but one” evidently had some justification). The Society concluded:

*The walls are of immense thickness: and the church by its durability and solid size, as well as by its unmistakable English and authenticated character, will, when it is completed according to the present designs, fully and very creditably represent our Church in one of the most cheerless of its seats.*¹³⁹

Be that as it may, completing the cathedral to Scott’s designs was never going to be an easy matter. Scott himself never set foot in Newfoundland. To act as Clerk of Works, he sent the Scotsman William Hay (1818-88), who had trained under John Henderson in Edinburgh. Hay would remain for several years in British North America, and have a very successful career that would include work in Newfoundland, Ontario, Bermuda, and his native Scotland.¹⁴⁰ He was also a committed Gothicist who would contribute a heartfelt obituary of Pugin to the *Anglo-American Magazine* in 1853.¹⁴¹ Feild reported to the SPG in 1847 that Hay had arrived in St. John’s, “but single handed except for his wife – no mason or labourer.”¹⁴² Hay and Feild seemed to maintain a good working

137. G.G. Scott, “On the Questions...”, p. 96.

138. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

139. *Ibid.*, p. 278.

140. On some of Hay’s work in Ontario, see Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, *Hallowed Walls: Church architecture of Upper Canada*, Toronto: 1975. On his work in Bermuda, see Barry Magrill, “‘Development’ and Ecclesiology in the Outposts of the British Empire: William Hay’s Gothic Solutions for Church Building in Tropical Climates (1840-1890)”, *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, volume 29, numbers 1 & 2, 2004, pp. 15-26.

141. William Hay, “The Late Mr. Pugin and the Revival of Christian Architecture”, *Anglo-American Magazine*, January-July 1853, pp. 70-3.

142. Feild to Hawkins, May 10, 1847.

relationship throughout the building campaign. “His ambition, I believe”, wrote Feild, “is to do the work well.”¹⁴³

Although Scott produced drawings for the whole cathedral, the intention from the start was to complete the nave only and leave the rest to another generation.¹⁴⁴ That the cathedral was thus “commenced in faith” was warmly praised by *The Ecclesiologist*.¹⁴⁵ Even on the nave, however, progress was halting. By January of 1848, Feild reported to Cecil Wray that the south aisle walls, although they had been built to a height of some fifteen feet, still only reached the level of the nave floor due to the steep southward slope of the site.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the climate was proving a formidable challenge:

*I am sorry to say that the frost has already done considerable damage by splitting many stones, which it seemed impossible could eveaar break or split... The builder who is a clever sensible Scotch man would not be persuaded the frost would have the power and effect which he now witnesses and deplors.*¹⁴⁷

By the spring of 1849, money was running out. Feild believed that the day would soon come when he would have to dispense with William Hay’s services, “merely because I cannot pay him.”¹⁴⁸ He was, however, hopeful that Hay’s place might be taken by the newly arrived Rev. William Grey, a clergyman with considerable architectural expertise and talent.¹⁴⁹ By late 1849, Feild reported to Ernest Hawkins that the walls were complete, the aisle roofs finished, and that the nave roof would be done “in about three weeks.”¹⁵⁰ Money remained a problem, and more fundraising was needed:

*I have told Mr. W. Scott I should try to send you a sketch; will not our walled up aisles, and boarded tower arch, and no more money awake sympathy?*¹⁵¹

By this time, the entire share of the Queen’s Letter money (in excess of £16,000), as well as donations from numerous sources such as the SPG and SPCK (and very possibly several others whose records are lost) had produced not a cathedral but a nave – and

143. Feild to Hawkins, July 25, 1848.

144. A certain amount of confusion seemed to occur over this, but was cleared up in a letter from G.G. Scott to Feild on August 3, 1847.

145. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 278.

146. Feild to Wray, January 26, 1848.

147. *Ibid.*

148. Feild to Hawkins, May 21, 1849.

149. *Ibid.*

150. Feild to Hawkins, October 17, 1849.

151. Feild to Hawkins, November 15, 1849.

an incomplete one at that. Here perhaps was “the patience and the faith of the saints”, alluded to in the sermon delivered at Feild’s ordination as Bishop.

In June of 1850, *The Ecclesiologist* triumphantly reported:

*We are happy to be able to announce the great forwardness of the cathedral of Fredericton, and the nave of S. John’s cathedral, Newfoundland, which is to be fitted with a temporary choir at its east end for immediate use.*¹⁵²

Finally, in October of 1850, Feild was able to report to Lord Grey that the cathedral in St. John’s (or more precisely, its nave) had been consecrated on St. Matthew’s Day (September 21, the sixth anniversary of Feild’s “Order and Uniformity” Charge to his clergy), and was now “in constant use.”¹⁵³ The cost had been great, and indeed Feild had only been able to complete the task thanks to recent donations of considerable sums by private friends and the SPCK. Feild assured Lord Grey that all the funds had been “faithfully (I dare not say in every case wisely) spent”.¹⁵⁴ He enclosed an account of the consecration from *The Times*, which boasted that, were the church ever to be completed according to its architect’s plans, “no ecclesiastical edifice in British North America could rival it.”¹⁵⁵ In reply, Lord Grey declared that it afforded him “much satisfaction to learn that the cathedral church at St. John’s has been consecrated, and that the building, though not completed, is now in constant use.”¹⁵⁶

Officially satisfied Lord Grey may have been, but unofficial opinion in the office of the Secretary of State for the Colonies appears to have been less than universally impressed with the process by which Feild established his Gothic foothold in Newfoundland. In January of 1850, Newfoundland Governor Le Marchant sent a letter to Lord Grey accompanying Feild’s report on the nearly complete, yet still cash-strapped cathedral. Included was a report from William Hay, detailing £1,446 worth of work remaining to be done.¹⁵⁷ On the back of Marchant’s letter is a hand-written internal memo from Arthur Blackwood, Senior Clerk, to H. Merivale, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. It reads:

152. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 11, 1850, p. 54.

153. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, enclosure in number 101.

154. *Ibid.*

155. *The Times and General Commercial Gazette*, Saturday, September 28, 1850, number 78.

156. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 102.

157. *House of Commons Papers, Reports &c*, volume XXXVI, number 99.

Mr. Merivale

It would seem that the £16000 which has been spent on the Cathedral is insufficient to complete the Building, & that the Bishop does not know where the rest of the money is to be found to finish the interior & make it serviceable. Two good Stone Churches might have been built for that money.

Acknowledge?

AB^d 23/1/50¹⁵⁸

To a civil servant comfortably ensconced in Victorian London, the job of building a thirteenth-century English cathedral on a rocky, remote, windswept, impoverished north Atlantic island must have looked fairly easy. It is to be hoped that this chapter has demonstrated otherwise.

158. Public Records Office, Colonial Office Correspondence, number 548, January 3, 1850, "Erection of New Cathedral".



CHAPTER FIVE

Gothic on a Mission and Missionaries of Gothic: The Spread of Gothic During Feild's Episcopate

A number of singular circumstances – its status as seat of the diocese, the direct influence and intervention of Feild, the fire of 1846, the Queen's Letter – converged to make the building of a Gothic church in St. John's possible. It was largely through tales of the outports, however, that Wix had originally raised the battle cry, and they remained a formidable battlefield. The outports were (and indeed remain) far from the centres of wealth and power, sparsely populated, inaccessible, and impoverished. Spreading the Anglican brand through Gothic church-building would be an enormous challenge.

Several obstacles stood in the way of the spread of Ecclesiology to the outports. First and most obviously, there was lack of money. Funds could be raised through organizations such as the SPG, but Outport churches would always have to be very economical affairs. There was also a need to adapt Ecclesiological Gothic to a different building material from what had been used in the cathedral. There is plenty of rock along the coast of Newfoundland, but with no affordable way of extracting it, focus would have to shift to the other available building material, which was wood. In addition, lack of architectural expertise, particularly in the principles of Ecclesiology, presented an additional obstacle.

The Ecclesiologist began to grapple with these problems in 1847. In a discussion of the Visitation Journal of the Bishop of Australia, it was pointed out that while the Society could theorize from the Mother Country, it was ultimately up to those who were actually in the colonies to create acceptable church architecture.¹ "What is wanted," they decided, "is that our Colonial fellow-Churchmen should learn Ecclesiology."² The colonial Bishop

1. "Church-Building in the Colonies. – The Bishop of Australia's Visitation Journal", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 7, 1847, pp. 15-19.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

would also have to be a church-builder, and as a church-builder, study of the science of Ecclesiology was part of his duty.³ There was, of course, a limit to how much a Bishop would also be able to function as an architect, which made it desirable for him to have something like an architectural deputy:

*It would be most desirable if each colonial diocese had some qualified person to whom the Bishop might entrust the very important function of making religious structures conform to the ascertained proprieties of church-architecture.*⁴

In the meantime, the Society urged all those connected with the colonies to circulate accurate drawings of Ecclesiologically correct churches and church furnishings.

The need to adapt Ecclesiological principles to wooden building in the colonies was first raised in *The Ecclesiologist* with reference to Guiana in 1847. While no specific solution was considered, it was decided that the creation of acceptable designs for wooden churches would be beneficial.⁵ John Medley's address to the Ecclesiological Society delivered on May 9, 1848, raised the issue again:

*[The Society] might... aid me much by small plain wooden models for wooden churches in the country. In many places it is absolutely impossible to build of stone, from the frightful expense of materials and workmen... And most of the men being carpenters in some sort, they easily get out the frames of our churches.*⁶

The Society responded quickly. Just one month later, on the evening of June 7, Bishop Feild's close friend, colleague, and sympathizer, William Scott, read a paper to the Society called "On Wooden Churches." Published in volume 9 of *The Ecclesiologist*, it is a seminal theoretical text for the adaptation of Gothic to wood.⁷

Scott began his discussion by affirming the symbolic importance of wood as a construction material in the history of the Church (particularly the English Church). Old Testament law, he reminded the Society, was contained in a wooden chest (the Ark of the Covenant). The emblem of the Church was the ship – a wooden vessel whose very structure was mirrored in the "inverted hull" of wooden church ceilings. Moreover, the image of the ship was meant to recall that most important of ships – "that great hold of Christian souls – Noah's Ark".⁸ Thus, Scott concluded, "it would be thoughtless in

3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

5. "Colonial Church Architecture: Chapter V. Guiana", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1847, pp. 142-7.

6. "Colonial Church Architecture: Chapter IX", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, pp. 362-3.

7. William Scott, "On Wooden Churches", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 9, 1848, pp. 14-27.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

ourselves to conclude that [the] material of wood were not invested with some peculiar claims upon Christian consideration.”⁹

Apart from these symbolic considerations, Scott, in true Ecclesiological style, was at pains to construct an archaeological (or “scientific”, as he called it) argument for the use of wood in church-building. While he wished to establish a respectable pedigree for wood in the context of medieval architecture, he was careful to distance himself from the “pretty and sentimental theory”, particularly espoused by Sir James Hall, that Gothic was “only a kind of fossilized basket-work”, derived directly and immediately from the forest setting of primitive Christian worshippers.¹⁰ There was, however, plenty of solid archaeological evidence for the venerability of wood as a building material, and moreover a building material of some



5-1 (A) – All Saints, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire, west tower.

5-2 (B) – St. Peter's, Barton-on-Humber, Lincolnshire, west tower.

importance in the Middle Ages. Gothic architecture was, after all, descended from Romanesque, which was itself a descendent of the Roman Basilica, which followed the ancient temple – which, in such stylized features as triglyphs and guttae, were (and still are) seen to reflect long lost wooden prototypes. For the Ecclesiological Society, however, the ultimate source of architectural authority was not to be found in Classical Antiquity, but in the Middle Ages – particularly the English Middle Ages. Fortunately, there was ample evidence (and indeed survival) of the use of wood there too. Scott cited the long and short work (quoining consisting of alternating long and short stones) and the triangular-headed windows and doorways of Anglo-Saxon buildings as examples of “stone carpentry,” analogous to the petrified beams and pegs of the Classical entablature. These features can be seen on the west towers of Earls Barton and Barton-on-Humber (figures 5-1 & 5-2). Whether or not their ultimate formal source is wooden has been debated, but the current scholarly

9. Ibid, p. 14.

10. Ibid, p. 15. On James Hall, see also Joseph Rykwert, *On Adam's House in Paradise*, Cambridge, Mass.: 1972, pp. 82-8. Hall's ideas were originally published in Sir James Hall, *Essays on the Origins, History and Principles of Gothic Architecture*, London: 1813.



5-3 – Holy Trinity,
Blythburgh, interior.

consensus has returned to the opinion held by Scott in the aftermath of Meyer Schapiro's essay on the topic, originally published in 1959.¹¹ In addition to long and short work, Scott praised the open wooden ceilings of medieval churches, particularly the "Suffolk open timber roof" (such as the one at Blythburgh, figure 5-3) as a form that "competes, and some think not unsuccessfully, with vaulting itself in pictorial effect."¹² He might have added that wooden ribbed vaults were in fact quite common in medieval England, and were often considered a viable alternative to stone vaulting even among patrons of considerable prestige.¹³

Wood, then, was dignified both by symbolic associations and by its being "unquestionably the primitive element of all practical construction."¹⁴ While he plainly did not attempt to argue for the supremacy of wooden churches (quite the opposite, in fact), Scott did assert that a "stone church implies and assumes the wooden idea."¹⁵ Therefore:

...if we would build wooden churches properly, we must proceed by analyzing our existing stone churches, and endeavour by successively throwing off the accidents, the long array of elaborate beauties and ever-varying combinations which are peculiar to a stone construction, to arrive at last to the archetypal plan, which seems wooden.¹⁶

Although they may have been the archetype, Scott also argued that wooden churches were always the exception rather than the rule, that stone was used whenever possible, and that throughout the English Middle Ages (including the Saxon period) wooden churches arose:

...in poorer places, deficient in materials, quarries and roads, just as they are required in Canadian forests, or at Newfoundland fishing-stations.¹⁷

11. Re-printed in Meyer Schapiro, "A Note on the Wall Strips of Saxon Churches", *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art*, New York: 1979, pp. 243-8.

12. Scott, p. 15.

13. See M.F. Hearn and Malcolm Thurlby, "Previously Undetected Wooden Ribbed Vaults in Medieval England", *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Cl 1997, pp. 48-58.

14. Scott, pp. 15-16.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 18.



5-4 – St. Andrew's
Cullompton, Devon,
chancel screen.

Examples of such wooden churches remained relatively easy to find, and spanned a wide chronological and stylistic range of English medieval building. Scott cited Greensted, Essex, and Nether (now “Lower”) Peover, Cheshire, as examples from Anglo-Saxon and Decorated (“Middle Pointed”, as he called it) examples. As Decorated was considered by Ecclesiologists to be the “perfection of Christian art,”¹⁸ the latter was particularly useful as a model for new wooden churches.

According to Scott, the first principle of wooden architecture had to be that its forms be intrinsic to the material, rather than imitations of forms that are unique to stone. There were few forms, however, that Scott believed lay exclusively in the domain of stone, and medieval precedents provided him with wooden models for nearly every form necessary to church building. Roofs survived in abundance; patterns for piers and arches were to be found in lychgates, the wooden “rows” at Chester, and in even old barns; Greensted, Nether Peover, and Norwegian Stave Churches furnished examples of wall construction. Medieval rood screens (as, for example, the one at Cullompton, Devon; see figure 5-4) demonstrated the degree to which even a very intricate decorative

18. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

vocabulary was suitable to both materials. Wooden belfries and campaniles also appear in Hampshire, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex. Collectively, these features seem nearly to exhaust the forms and features needed for an acceptable church. Even flowing window tracery, although lacking in precise medieval precedent, would be allowable unless one were happy to disregard the many models of such work in wooden medieval screens.

Although almost anything was possible in wood, and the United States and British North America had abundant examples of wooden Gothic, Scott conceded that “their chief value to us will be in the way of a warning, since they practically exemplify almost every error which is possible.”¹⁹ This comment was followed by a lengthy description quoted from Feild, in which the typical wooden Newfoundland church was described in much the same way Medley had done for New Brunswick. The description is largely taken from a letter of August 1844, and, although presented as a verbatim transcript, is in fact a composite assembled from several sources (one of which seems to have been Scott himself). The many inadequacies that Medley had cited in New Brunswick were also described by Feild, including the lack of chancels, low-pitched roofs, covered ceilings, and ubiquitous galleries (although the last, Feild pointed out, did have the benefit of bracing the structure of the church against the Newfoundland gales). Scott then described the “Log Church” of Canada, which he said was based on “the old heathen temples of the Canadian Indians.”²⁰

In addition to the many obvious shortcomings of the buildings described was the fundamental problem of the predominant horizontality of both clapboard and log constructions. Scott recommended log churches as best suited to the climates of Canada and Newfoundland, and described an ingenious, insulated double-wall system of vertical logs that he believed would be effective, affordable, and respectful of the need for verticality in Christian architecture. Although considerable adaptations were made due to climate, the inspiration was the Anglo-Saxon church at Greensted, the nave wall of which consists of a series of short, vertically placed logs. Even if planks were to be used instead of logs, Scott argued that the churches of Norway provided models for their vertical disposition, concluding “there seems to be no reason for the horizontal arrangement which prevails in America.”²¹

19. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Scott then outlined what he considered to be the “chief requisites for a good wooden church.”²² As in the Stave Churches, the pitch of the roof should be steep – a particularly important feature, Scott pointed out, in a climate where snow could cause the collapse of a flat roof. Wooden buttresses were possibly acceptable, based on a reference from The Venerable Bede (ca. 673-735) that seemed to indicate their presence on a wooden church.²³ Window tracery was deemed appropriate, with the caveat that not all kinds of wood were equally amenable to intricate carving. Overly large windows, however, which tend to take on a life of their own rather than remaining subordinate to the architecture (the huge east window at Gloucester Cathedral is singled out as an offender), were to be discouraged. Indeed, the common arrangement in Italian Gothic churches and modern Canadian ones – small, high windows that keep out the weather, hot or cold – was seen as a useful pattern to emulate. Chancels were of course to be distinct, and bell towers should be anchored securely to the nave floor lest they collect the wind and shift (as did, Scott reminded the Society, the whole of St. Thomas’ Church in 1846; see Chapter One). Cruciform plans were thought to be too complex and to present too many constructional difficulties to be practical in a wooden church. In sum, the exterior of the wooden church was to be modest and simple, relying upon good massing and proportion for its dignity.

For the interior, the wooden church at Nether Peover was again cited as an exemplar, with its piers and arches “not too ambitious either in span or height” (figure 5-5).²⁴ The piers could also be decorated with robust carvings like their counterparts in Stave Churches, particularly in regions like New Zealand, where “great powers of wood carving seem natural to the people.”²⁵

Clearly, Scott’s remarks were made with a close eye on his friend’s diocese in Newfoundland. The theme of wooden churches came up regularly in their letters, and Feild first solicited Scott’s advice on



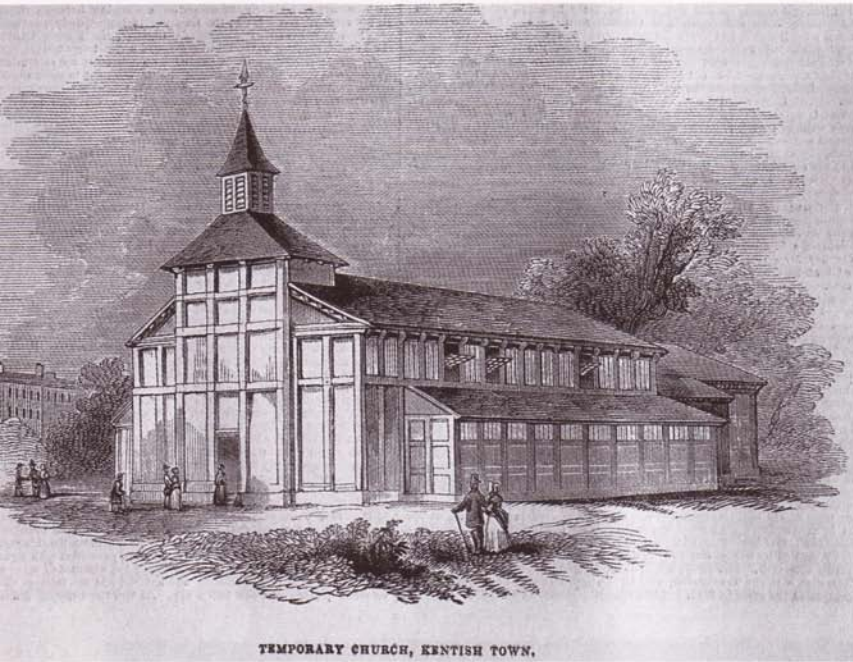
5-5 – St. Oswald, Nether Peover, interior.
Photograph by Malcolm Thurlby.

22. Ibid, p. 20.

23. Ibid, p. 24.

24. Ibid, p. 26.

25. Ibid, p. 27.



TEMPORARY CHURCH, KENTISH TOWN.

5-6 – Temporary wooden church by Peter Thompson.
Illustrated London News,
 Vol. V, 1844.

Thompson, “had advertised Wooden Churches among other buildings prepared for exportation to the Colonies for the use of emigrants.”³¹ In May of 1845, Feild mentioned having received some drawings of wooden churches from the Oxford Architectural Society, but added that they would not be suitable models for Newfoundland.³² In a later letter, he told Scott that he would be glad to pay for some drawings of wooden churches, but that they would be of no use unless prepared by someone familiar with the “means and methods” of the Newfoundland Church.³³

the matter within two months of arriving in St. John’s.²⁶ Feild even suggested having a wooden church, or parts of one, constructed in England and shipped to Newfoundland in order to serve as a model.²⁷ Feild also enquired about “the person [who] makes wooden churches for exportation and... has just put one up at Kentish Town in the parish of St. Pancras.”²⁸ This is certainly a reference to Peter Thompson, whose temporary church for the congregation of Kentish Town Chapel appeared in the *Illustrated London News* in 1844²⁹ (figure 5-6), as well as in the architectural periodical, *The Builder*, in the same year, along with a plan and cross section (figure 5-7).³⁰ Having evidently created considerable interest, Thompson’s church appeared much later in *The Church Builder*, which reported that

26. Feild to William Scott, August 22, 1844.

27. Feild to William Scott, August (undated) 1844.

28. Feild to William Scott, October 24, 1844.

29. *The Illustrated London News*, volume V, 1844, p. 156.

30. “Temporary Churches”, *The Builder*, volume II, number 84, September 14, 1844, p. 470.

31. “The St. Pancras Church Extension Fund: A Retrospective”, *The Church Builder*, number XVI, 1865, p. 154.

32. Feild to William Scott, May 20, 1845.

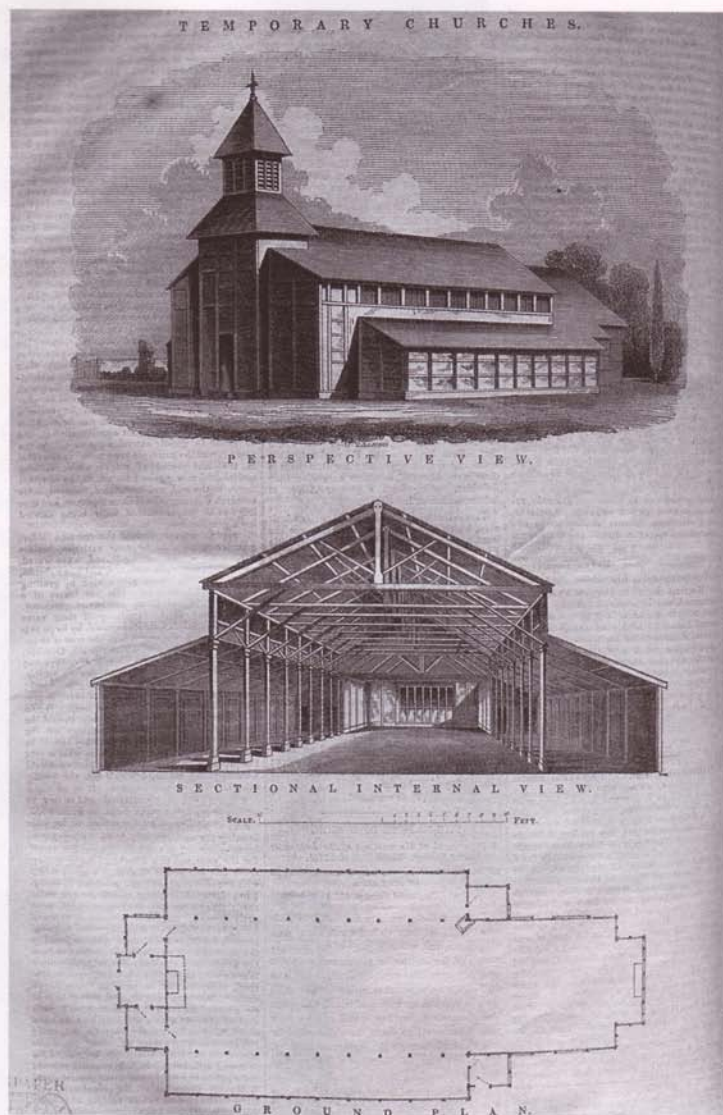
33. Feild to William Scott, September 18, 1845.

On the same night that William Scott read his paper to the Ecclesiological Society, it was reported that:

*The Sub-Committee appointed at the request of the Bishop of Fredericton, to consider the subject of wooden churches, have been able, by Mr. Butterfield's aid, to promise some drawings early in August.*³⁴

August duly arrived, but the promised drawings did not. For reasons that remain mysterious, Butterfield never produced the drawings, and *The Ecclesiologist* never mentioned them again. The project finally seems to have been consummated two years later, not by Butterfield, but by Richard Cromwell Carpenter (1812-55), another favourite architect of the Ecclesiologists.³⁵ In 1850, *The Ecclesiologist* announced that Carpenter had completed designs for a wooden church on the south Atlantic island of Tristan da Cunha.³⁶ The drawings were "so much approved" by the Society that it was decided to publish them in the next volume of *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, the Society's series of pattern books of correct liturgical designs. That volume was published in 1851, and Carpenter's designs were subsequently included in the second compilation volume of *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* in 1856.³⁷ The set of drawings included a ground plan; west, east and south elevations; a longitudinal section; two transverse sections; an exterior perspective view from the south-west; and several details.

The plan of this model wooden church (figure 5-8) shows a three-bay nave, with flanking aisles and entry porches to the north and south, a deep chancel, and a



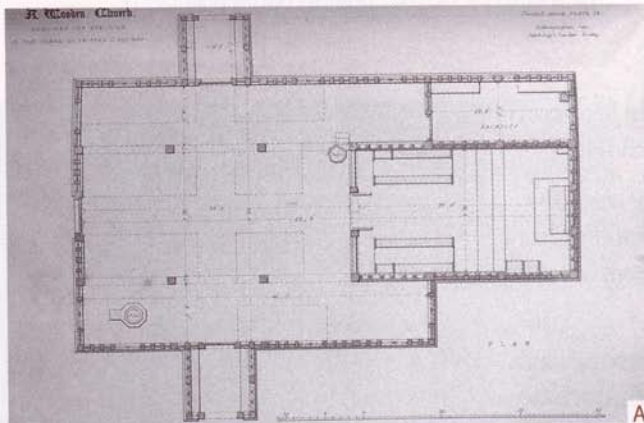
5-7 – Temporary wooden church by Peter Thompson. *The Builder*, Vol. II, No. 84, September 14, 1844.

34. "Ecclesiological late Cambridge Camden Society", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 10, 1848, p. 49.

35. A comprehensive monograph on this important but neglected architect has not yet been published, but may be expected soon from John Elliott.

36. "Ecclesiological late Cambridge Camden Society", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 11, 1850, pp. 248-52.

37. *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, second series, London: 1856.



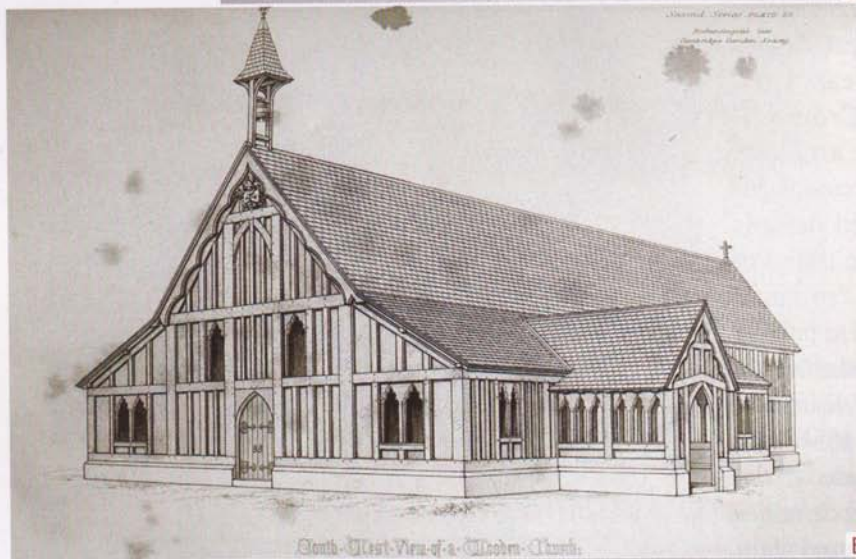
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5-8 (A) – Wooden Church, Ground Plan, *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, second series, London: 1856, plate XIX.

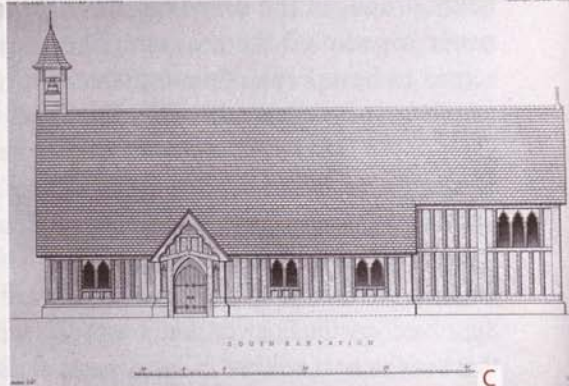
5-9 (B) – Wooden Church, Perspective View, from the South-West, *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, second series, London: 1856, plate XXVI.

5-10 (C) – Wooden Church, South Elevation, *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, second series, London: 1856, plate XX.

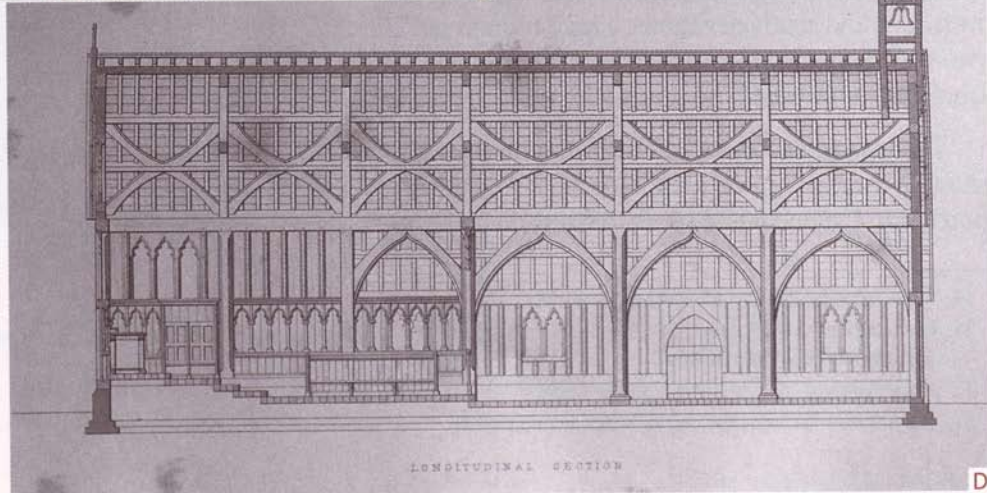
5-11 (D) – Wooden Church, Longitudinal Section, *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, second series, London: 1856, plate XXIII.



B



C



D

sacristy on the north side of the chancel. The most striking characteristic of the exterior (figure 5-9) is the vertical boarding, which puts William Scott's theory into practice. This clearly had considerable influence on Edward Medley in New Brunswick (see Chapter Three), but would have little impact in Newfoundland. No window tracery is attempted, but the widows and wall arcades on the north and south porches employ cusped arches that add a strong decorative accent. The roofline is uniform, which is presumably simpler and less expensive to build than the Ecclesiologically approved norm of separate rooflines. The Society, however, would have preferred that the division between nave and chancel be marked externally by the placement of the belfry at that point in the roof.³⁸ The chancel is, at least, identified externally by the end of the aisles and consequent increase in wall height (figure 5-10).

The interior arrangement is best seen in the longitudinal cross section (figure 5-11). The nave is separated from the chancel by a one step increase in height and what appears to be a chancel arch with a rich and complex profile. The nave arcades are, as Scott had recommended, not too ambitious either in span or height. In their proportions and open spandrels, they are strongly reminiscent of those at Nether Peover. The relative liturgical importance of the chancel is acknowledged by cusped blind arcading on the wall, while the altar itself is raised (as usual) three additional steps above the chancel.

Even before these drawings had been published, some of the Ecclesiological Society's ideas about wooden churches were already being put into practice in Newfoundland, with varying degrees of success. Early in 1849, *The Ecclesiologist* published an account of two new wooden churches in Newfoundland that had originally appeared in the Times (of Newfoundland) on December 6, 1848.³⁹ The article was prefaced with a brief comment on the importance of the topic:

*The appreciation of the necessity of realizing a national style of wooden Christian architecture, and the attempt to meet it, of which the second church affords the proof, are peculiarly important facts. We should be very glad to be in possession of more detailed information on this head.*⁴⁰

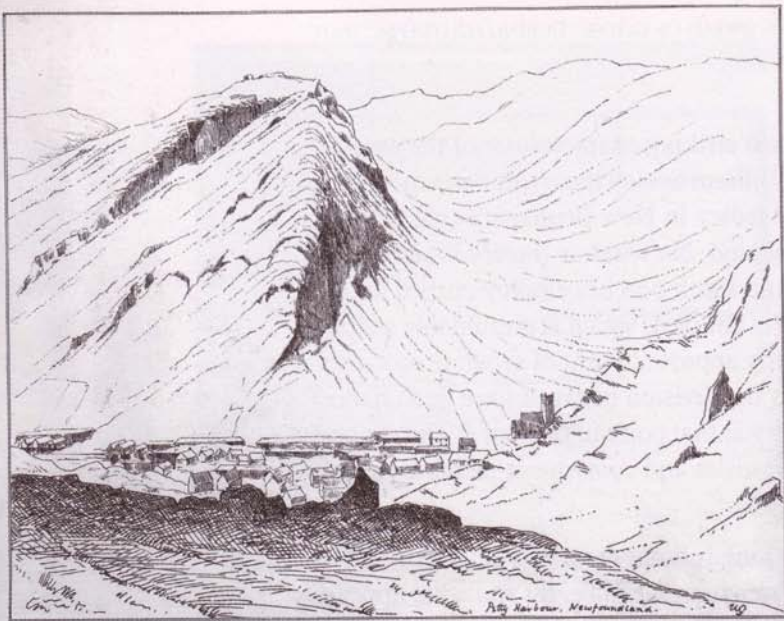
The first of the two churches, at Petty Harbour (the dedication is not given), was praised for its chancel, "a new feature in the churches of this diocese, and one which, we trust, will be copied and adopted in every possible case."⁴¹ The church does not survive, although some sense of its appearance can be gleaned from a drawing done in the summer

38. Ibid, plate XIX.

39. "Colonial Church Architecture. Chapter XI. — Newfoundland." *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 9, 1849, pp. 215-17.

40. Ibid, p. 215.

41. Ibid, p. 215.



5-12 – Petty Harbour,
by William Grey,
from *Sketches of
Newfoundland and
Labrador*, Ipswich: 1857.

of 1857 by the English-born clergyman and architect, William Grey (figure 5-12).⁴² The church in this drawing has a west tower and distinct chancel, although little else can be discerned about its appearance. The church and indeed the town are dwarfed by a monumental landscape.

The greatest praise is reserved for the second church, St. Thomas, Pouch Cove. Again, the building does not survive, but the description tells of a “new and beautiful” church in which:

*Some attempts have been made ... to return to the original character of wooden buildings, by introducing narrow windows with pointed angular heads, instead of arches... The pitch of the roof is also very sharp, the effect of which inside... is strikingly grand.*⁴³

The writer went on to praise the “commodious chancel”, which was much more in proportion to the rest of the building than that at Petty Harbour. The major flaw of the building was the external height, which, due to a departure from the original plans, was “unreasonably, we might almost say painfully, exaggerated.” Nevertheless, the writer concluded that “S. Thomas of Pouch Cove [is] the best pattern... for wooden churches, which has yet been exhibited in this diocese.” The architect is not named. The furnishings, however, were all designed by William Hay, and considering the dearth of Ecclesiological expertise in Newfoundland in 1848, it is highly unlikely that the church could have been designed by anybody else.

The question of who authored the article in the *Times* is an intriguing one. It demonstrates a strong grasp of Ecclesiology – indeed it would have to, or *The Ecclesiologist* would not have reprinted it. That fact alone narrows the list of possible candidates. It could have been Hay himself, although his presence at the consecration would not be automatic. Moreover, Hay would have been unlikely to belabour the building’s main aesthetic shortcoming, which was the unsatisfactory exterior proportions. The other possible (and probably more likely) candidate was a recent arrival in Newfoundland who

42. William Grey, *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Ipswich: 1858, plate V.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

was about to take a leading role in the spread of Gothic architecture through the colony: the Reverend William Grey.

William Grey (1819-72), an Oxford graduate ordained by the Bishop of Salisbury in 1843, arrived in Newfoundland in 1848 as Feild's domestic chaplain.⁴⁴ Apparently preferring missionary work, Grey offered to go to Labrador in 1849. Feild refused, however, noting that Grey had qualities that would be "eminently serviceable" in St. John's, and that he could even replace William Hay as Clerk of the Cathedral Works if and when, as seemed inevitable, the day came when Feild could no longer pay the Scotsman.⁴⁵ Instead, Feild made Grey principal of Queen's Theological College in St. John's, and Diocesan architect. In the latter capacity, Grey designed several Gothic churches and contributed a fascinating written 'snapshot' of the state of ecclesiology in Newfoundland⁴⁶ before returning to England in 1853 due to his wife's ill health.⁴⁷ On a return visit in 1857, he made a series of sketches that remain one of the most valuable and beautiful records of mid nineteenth-century Newfoundland, published the following year as *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*.⁴⁸

After returning to England, Grey settled for a time in Allington, Dorset, where, according to his acquaintance the Rev. T. Mozley, he served as curate while lodging with "an old farmer and his wife."⁴⁹ His lifestyle was exceedingly modest for one of his social class, a fact which Grey's sister, visiting from an opulent estate in India, frequently pointed out.⁵⁰ Grey re-built the church of St. Swithun at Allington according to Ecclesiological principles, resulting in a church that was, according to Mozley (himself no Ecclesiologist), "as dark, and dull, and cheerless as before".⁵¹ From Allington Grey returned to Exeter, where ill health forced him to retire. After lingering for a considerable time he died of a throat ailment – probably cancer – which Mozley attributed to the scraping, dusting and painting involved in his renovation of Exeter's St. Mary-Steps church.

44. *DCB Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=39132&query=>.

45. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, May 21, 1849.

46. "The Ecclesiology of Newfoundland", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 14, 1853, pp. 156-61.

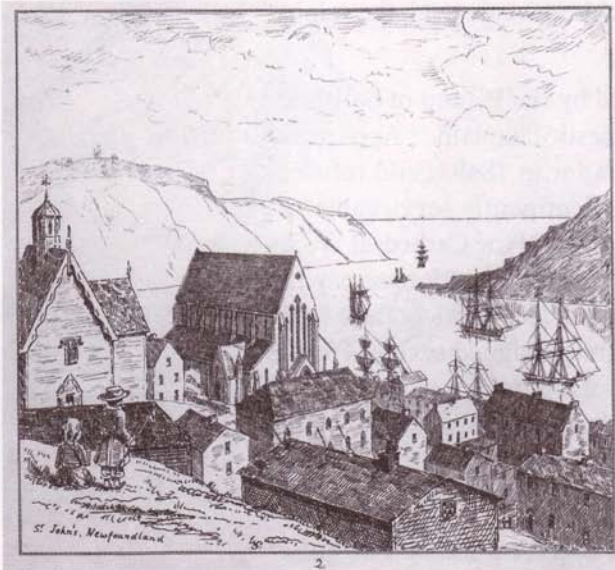
47. Feild to Hawkins, August 3, 1853.

48. Grey, *Sketches*.

49. Rev. T. Mozley, *Reminiscences, Chiefly of Towns, Villages and Schools*, volume II, second edition, London: 1885, pp. 344-46.

50. *Ibid*, p. 344.

51. *Ibid*, p. 345.



5-13 – City of St. John's,
by William Grey,
from *Sketches of
Newfoundland and
Labrador*, Ipswich: 1857.

“The Ecclesiology of Newfoundland” was originally a letter written by Grey to the Secretary of the Oxford Architectural Society, and was subsequently printed as an article in *The Ecclesiologist* in 1853.⁵² In it, Grey followed the well-established tradition set by Medley and Feild of bemoaning the current state of church architecture in the colony. Decent church-building, he lamented, began and so far ended with works done under the authority of Bishop Feild. Even his master-work, the cathedral, went almost entirely unappreciated by the people at large: “they see no beauty in it, because it is not finished” (figure 5-13).⁵³ Other than the cathedral, according to Grey, the most promising church building project of the recent past was Pouch Cove, a church “in many respects very pleasing”, although the walls were too high (the very criticism made by the anonymous writer in the *Times*) because “too many cooks spoiled the broth.”⁵⁴ Apparently, if the designer was Hay, he did not have a completely free hand. Hope for the future lay not in the arrival of a great church architect – Grey knew that Newfoundland would be one of the last corners of the empire to attract such a person – nor in the supplying of designs by architectural stars in England, who, however skilled and noble in their intentions, would not be sufficiently aware of the conditions of climate and materials under which the Newfoundland church builder laboured (for this very reason, Grey dismissed the use of Stave Churches as useful models – “we have no such timber as that of Norway.”⁵⁵ Rather, the way to improve the state of Ecclesiology in Newfoundland was for the clergy themselves to be the church architects, as Grey himself had done. In this, he was echoing the sentiments of the Ecclesiologists, when they said that colonial church-builders would have to learn Ecclesiology.⁵⁶ The Society had expressed the desirability of every colonial Bishop having “some qualified person” to consult on architectural matters; Grey became that person in Newfoundland. Feild appointed him Diocesan Architect,

52. The original letter was written from Grey's parish of Portugal Cove, dated January 13, 1853.

53. Grey, p. 156.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

56. “Church-Building in the Colonies”, *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 7, 1847, p. 18.

and Grey did everything possible to spread his architectural expertise by lecturing on architecture twice per week to theological students of Queen's College.⁵⁷ The only way he saw to further the cause of correct Anglican architecture in Newfoundland was for "junior members of our University to qualify themselves for Holy Orders by a practical knowledge of architecture."⁵⁸

In his capacity as Diocesan Architect, Grey reported that he had designed eight entire churches, one of which was in Nova Scotia and two of which were in Labrador.⁵⁹ None of these churches was identified explicitly, nor did he distinguish between what was designed and what was actually built. Due to the stresses of frost, thaw, wind and poor materials, these churches were necessarily fairly simple affairs. Indeed, the elaborate battlements, pinnacles, etc., that were common in England would be "either ludicrous, or dangerous, or both together" in Newfoundland.⁶⁰

On the subject of materials, Grey was of the opinion that stone could perhaps be used more often than was presently the case, although the only stone churches that preceded Feild's cathedral were St. Paul's in Harbour Grace and the Roman Catholic cathedral in St. John's. While conceding that those stone buildings had experienced considerable difficulties with the crumbling of mortar in the Newfoundland climate, Grey believed that Roman Cement would survive the test of time. As for wood, he advocated a more ornamental approach than had hitherto been tried in the colony, including both the horizontal and diagonal placement of clapboard.⁶¹

In the summer of 1845, Feild wrote to the SPG in the hope of determining whether or not Labrador was part of his diocese.⁶² Having discovered that it was, Feild made it the target of his first major missionary effort. He visited Labrador in the autumn of 1848. As far as the Church was concerned, it was virgin territory. "The thing most resembling a Church," he wrote to the SPG, "is a beautiful iceberg, with a beautiful tower, and buttresses, and pinnacles complete."⁶³ Although there were no churches, there were plenty of people: Feild reported finding nearly one hundred ships at Battle Harbour. He provided

57. Grey, p. 159.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

62. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 6, 1845.

63. *Church in the Colonies. No. XIX. A Visit to Labrador in the Autumn of MDCCCXLVIII. By the Lord Bishop of Newfoundland*, London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1849, p. 4.

for these people as well as circumstances would permit, holding services in general stores at Forteau and Battle Harbour, reporting at the latter that three hundred people were accommodated, although many more had to be turned away for lack of space.⁶⁴ Neither Battle Harbour nor St. Francis Harbour (on the Labrador mainland, north of Battle Harbour) had ever been visited by an Anglican clergyman before. At Battle Harbour, a local merchant named Blendell asked Feild why, if Moravian missionaries could be content to toil in the harsher climate of northern Labrador, an Anglican clergyman could not be found to minister at Battle Harbour. Feild had no answer, but resolved to work towards the establishment of a Labrador mission, observing that “it will be a sore trial if it all end with the parade of a Bishop’s visitation.”⁶⁵

Feild turned to the SPG for support, framing the request in familiar terms:

*I have every reason to believe, that if a Roman Catholic priest had come along the shore before me this summer, many would have sought baptism, at least for their children, at his hands, (not from preference, but having no prospect of other religious provision), and have been joined to the Romish Church. And this danger is always imminent; and the only way it can be prevented is by placing three Clergymen of our Church immediately on the shore.*⁶⁶

Feild urged the establishment of clergymen at Forteau, Battle Harbour, and Sandwich Bay, expressing his confidence that an annual grant of £200 from the SPG would suffice to maintain them. The SPG duly resolved to provide the funds on November 17, 1848.⁶⁷

In reality, this was but the beginning of Feild’s struggle to establish an Anglican presence in Labrador. The remote and exceedingly rugged conditions in Labrador would be a stern test of mettle, and filling the posts proved exceedingly difficult. By the spring of 1850, the remote Sandwich Bay had been given up as a lost cause, Feild deciding to leave the “Esquimaux” to the Moravians. No progress had yet been made in finding a clergyman for Battle Harbour either, although a missionary had been found for Forteau – Algernon Gifford, whom Feild described as “an exemplary young deacon.”⁶⁸ Exemplary he may have been, but Feild felt more than a twinge of concern, even guilt, after depositing Gifford in the wilds of Labrador on August 18, 1849:

64. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

68. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, April 18, 1850.

*Poor Gifford was sent on shore... about seven o'clock, now at length to taste the realities of missionary life and service... I feel deeply that it is hard, not to say unjust, to him, and I might add to his flock, to place him, young and without experience, in such a difficult post, without help or countenance.*⁶⁹

Battle Harbour, according to Feild, would prove no less a challenge, requiring a man with nearly superhuman fortitude and determination, as well as a wide range of abilities:

*He must be prepared in winter to drive his own dog sleigh... and in summer to handle a boat with but little assistance. He should have some experience of fishermen, and their ways and manner of life, and possess some knowledge of building in wood.*⁷⁰

Lest it be forgotten, this person also had to be a qualified Anglican clergyman. The man eventually chosen was the Rev. H.P. Disney, who in the summer of 1850 was sent to St. Francis Harbour to oversee the erection of a chapel that would, for the time being, be the centre of the Battle Harbour mission.⁷¹

Disney proved not to be up to the job, and was replaced in 1853 by the Rev. George Hutchinson. His introduction to Labrador included a friendly snowball fight – in June – with Gifford⁷², but the realities of the remote missionary life proved less playful. Five years later, Feild reported to the SPG:

*On the Labrador there seems a likelihood of complete abandonment. I do not know whether Mr. Hutchinson is dead or alive; and if the latter, whether in England or on the Labrador. Wherever he is, he is out of his mind; and the misery I endure about his mission, in my ignorance of the state of things, is greater than I can describe.*⁷³

Later that year, Feild reported that Gifford was desperate to leave Labrador “on account of his family”.⁷⁴ Remarkably, the presumably repentant Hutchinson returned and was sent to Battle Harbour in 1859; although he had already proven himself ill-suited to

69. *Church in the Colonies*. No. XXV. *Journal of a Voyage of Visitation in the “Hawk” Church Ship, on the Coast of Labrador, and Round the Whole Island of Newfoundland, in the year 1849*. London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1850, p. 72.

70. *Ibid.*

71. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 4, 1850.

72. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, August 3, 1853.

73. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, August 4, 1858.

74. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, November 11, 1858.

the rigours of Labrador, he was, according to Feild, “better than nothing.”⁷⁵ By the spring of 1861, Hutchinson was reportedly “begging” to be relieved from Battle Harbour. Feild decided to send him to Ferryland, his main qualification being his “strong antipathy to Romanism.”⁷⁶

Astonishingly, through all the chaos, churches did get built. Indeed, by the time Hutchinson returned to Labrador, three Ecclesiologically correct churches had been constructed in Labrador. In the summer of 1853 Feild reported to the SPG from St. Francis Harbour:

*...on July 10 the first Church on the Labrador was consecrated by me in the name of St. John the Baptist. The church has been built under great disadvantages in consequence of the little attention which Disney would give to the work.*⁷⁷

Of that church, which was designed by William Hay, nothing survives except a description in *The Ecclesiologist*. As that description is the sole source for information about this important building, it merits quotation in full:

*S. Francis Harbour, Labrador. – It is with much pleasure that we have seen a rough lithographic view of this proposed wooden church, which will be the first church of our communion on the Labrador coast. Our readers will remember the Bishop of Newfoundland’s account of his journey to that part of his diocese, and the spiritual destitution of the whole region. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has already sent a missionary, and this is the church intended to be built. It is designed by the skillful and intelligent clerk of the works in the new cathedral, Mr. Hay, and he has got hold of the right idea of a wooden fabric, not disregarding (as we have learned) a paper of our own on the subject, which was put into his hands. It appears to embrace, under one broadly pointed roof, chancel, nave, and aisles. The chancel is marked by a small rude bell-cote; a sacristy is formed on the south side of the chancel, the roof being extended over it in a lean-to. There is a south-western porch. The boarding is vertical, and is not improved by horizontal tables. The windows are rightly formed: adjacent plain lights, grouped in twos and threes, in the aisles, and trefoil-headed lights in the chancel. The east window is a triplet, and there is a small circular window above it.*⁷⁸

The chancel, its differentiation from the nave by a bell-cote, and the vertical boarding had all been specifically recommended by the Ecclesiologists. This description was

75. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, November 11, 1858.

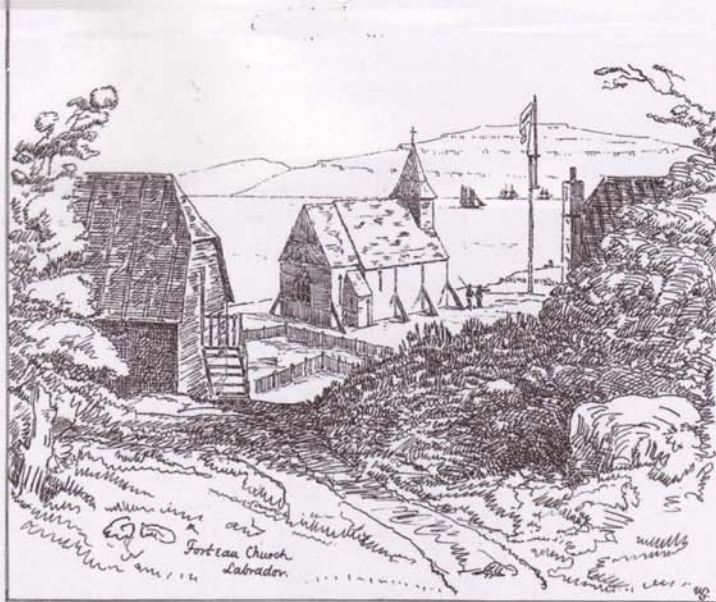
76. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, May 3, 1861.

77. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, August 3, 1853.

78. “New Churches”, *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 11, 1850, pp. 201-202.

based on a lithograph sent to the Society three years before the church was finally consecrated, and unfortunately there is no way at present to determine how closely the built church followed Hay's design.

As cited above (page 147), Grey stated in *The Ecclesiologist* that he had designed two churches in Labrador. Of one of these, in Forteau, we have scant but extremely useful records. The oldest comes from Grey himself, who sketched it while accompanying Feild on a visitation during the summer of 1857, and included it in



*Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*⁷⁹ (figure 5-14). The exact date of its construction is unknown, but it was consecrated by Feild on August 9, 1857.⁸⁰ Grey's sketch, drawn from the north-east, shows a simple nave with a short western tower and spire, a chancel with a separate, lower roofline, and a vestry or sacristy on the north side of the chancel. The east end has a triangular-headed window with fairly ambitious tracery, in keeping with William Scott's discussion of wooden churches. Grey also appears to have followed his own advice by mixing a lively variety of clapboard patterns: vertical under the gable, diagonal below that, followed by horizontal and vertical zones. The most curious feature is the series of diagonal struts, four per side, which extend to the ground from just below the mid-point of the north and south walls. Looking somewhat like a cross between flying buttresses and tent-pegs, they are presumably inspired by the former but perform the function of the latter; i.e., they secure the structure against the wind. All of these features are clearly visible in what is possibly the only extant photograph of the church (figure 5-15), which is part of an album of photos made during the visitation of Feild's successor as Bishop of Newfoundland, Llewellyn Jones (1840-1918) in 1902.⁸¹ Taken from the south-west, it shows that the north and south nave walls also used a combination of horizontal and diagonal

5-14 – Forteau, Labrador, by William Grey, from *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Ipswich: 1857.

79. Grey, plate XII. Grey presents a striking portrait of Labrador in his preface: "Like its neighbour coast, the seaboard of Labrador presents its worst side outside. It is constantly beset by icebergs, and the islands and headlands which are opposed to the ocean are, at first sight, as bare as they can well be. But if you ascend the deep inlets, or thread your way between the innermost of the numberless islands which lie off the mainland, you find a warmer atmosphere, fine timber, luxuriant vegetation, abundance of wild fruits, and (what is less advantageous) thousands of musquitoes."

80. Grey, plate XII.

81. Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #306, Box 2, File 9.



A

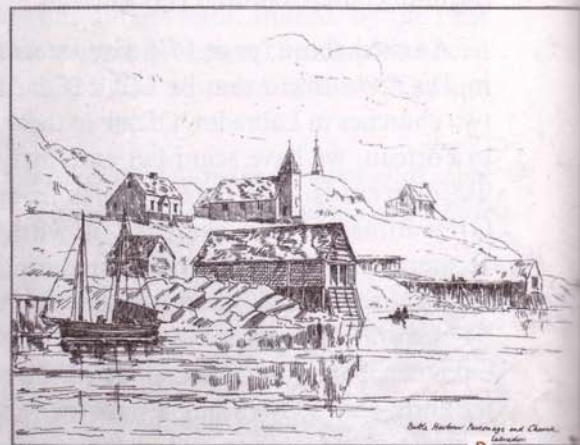
5-15 (A) – Forteau, Labrador, Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #306, Box 2, File 9.

5-16 (B) – Battle Harbour, Labrador, by William Grey, from *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Ipswich: 1857.

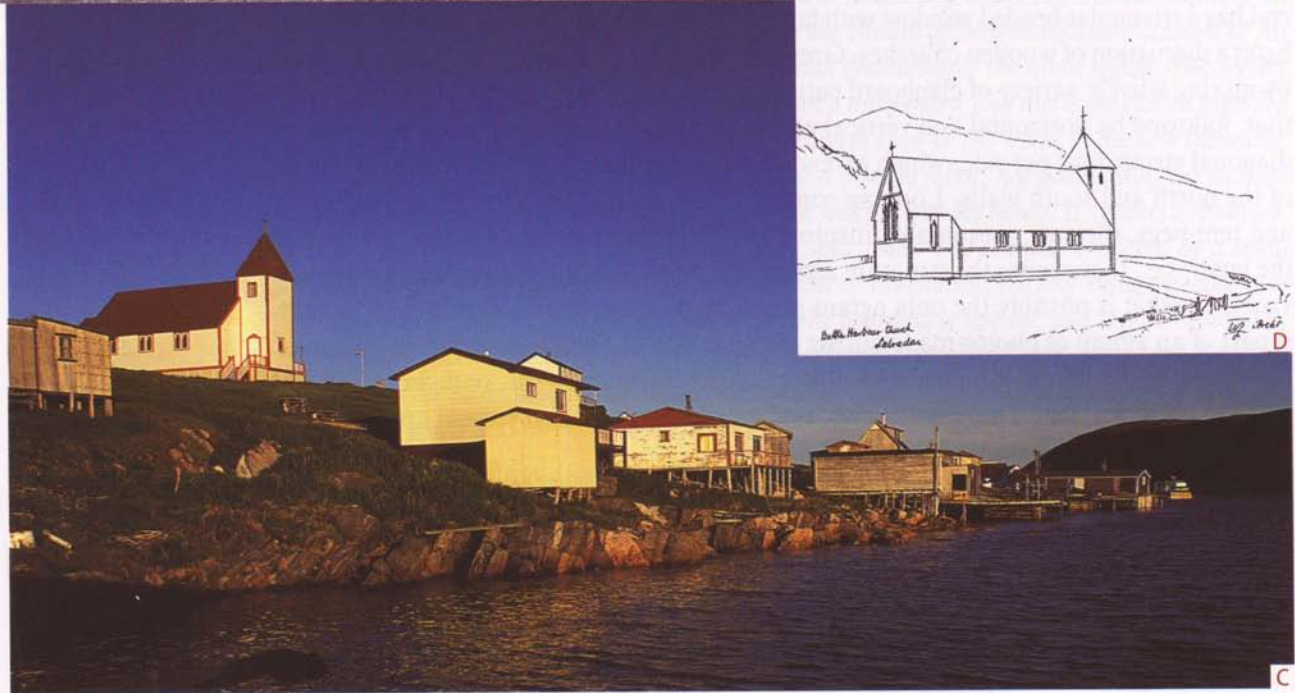
5-17 (C) – Battle Harbour, Labrador.

5-18 (D) – St. James, Battle Harbour, Labrador, drawing by William Grey.

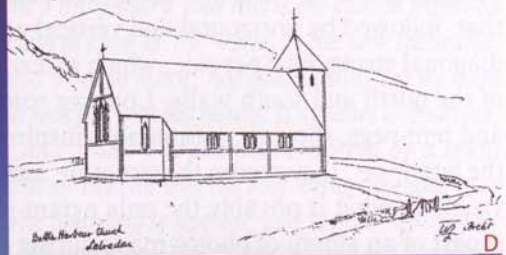
RIBA Library Drawing Collection [PB 195/3] Battle Harbour.



B



C



D

clapboard (the same may be true of the chancel walls, although it is not clear from the photograph). Also visible is a south porch, which was the only entrance to the building. The windows are cusped trefoils. Although the church was not yet fifty years old when the photograph was made, it shows signs of wind damage in the nave and porch roofs and the west window that fully justify Grey's peculiar, earthbound "flying" buttresses.

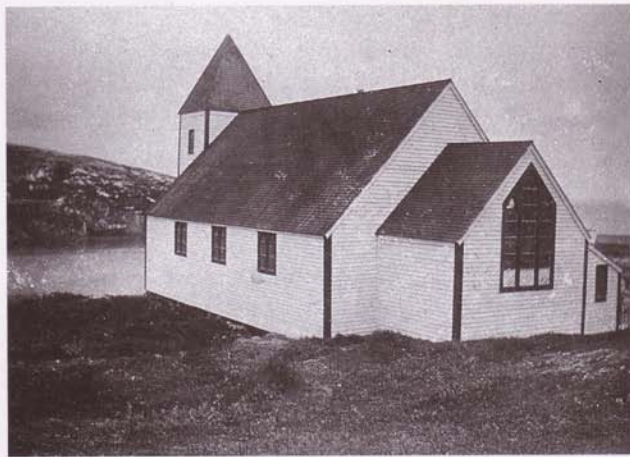
Grey's church at Forteau represents the most elaborate attempt Newfoundland had yet seen to incorporate the principles of Ecclesiology with the colony's unique climatic and constructional conditions in order to create "a national style of wooden Christian architecture." Grey's other Labrador church, St. James' at Battle Harbour, is slightly less ambitious, but has the advantage of being still extant (figures 5-16 & 5-17). In 1853, Feild reported to the SPG not only that he had consecrated the church at Forteau, but that a beginning had been made on a church in Battle Harbour, and that "means of finishing it" were at hand.⁸² According to Grey, it was consecrated on July 5, 1857.⁸³ Shane O'Dea has cited a drawing in the Royal Institute of British Architects that shows a design for the church at Battle Harbour that varies slightly from what was built, with a single roofline, a chancel differentiated only by a narrowing of the width, and some slight vertical articulation on the sides of the church (figure 5-18).⁸⁴ Grey's 1857 drawing (figure 5-16) shows the church as built, with a lower chancel roofline and no vertical articulation. Whether the alterations were made by Grey or the builder is not known. The more distinctly articulated chancel would have been seen as an Ecclesiological improvement, although the removal of all vertical emphasis (save the west tower) would have been criticized.

The church was heavily restored in the early 1990s, and the degree to which that work was faithful to its original form has been a matter of some speculation. Pre-restoration photographs show that, by the late twentieth century, the nave windows, which appear in Grey's 1857 drawing to have been paired arches, had been replaced with simple rectangular ones. O'Dea speculated that the original windows may have been cusped, like those at Forteau, some of which survive in the current church there. O'Dea also concluded that the east window had been altered, although from what original form he was unable

82. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, August 3, 1853.

83. Grey, plate 16. The consecration took place during Feild's Visitation, at which Grey was present and during which the drawing was made. Grey comments that when the church was consecrated, Feild also gave confirmation to five "Eskimaux", which Grey claims were the first of their people to enter the Church of England. Grey also mentions that "Eskimaux" is a misnomer, and that their proper name is "Innuits" – making him possibly the first European to adopt the term that is now in current use.

84. Shane O'Dea, "St. James Church Battle Harbour: An Architectural Evaluation and Restoration Plan". Unpublished report prepared for the Labrador Institute for Northern Studies, 1990, p. 5, figure 4.



5-19 – St. James, Battle Harbour, Labrador, exterior.
 Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador,
 #306, Box 2, File 9.

to say.⁸⁵ In fact, both questions are settled by another photograph in Bishop Llewellyn Jones' album, which shows the church from the north-east as it appeared in 1902 (figure 5-19). The exterior appears exactly as Grey had drawn it in 1857, although much more detail is visible. The nave windows were indeed cusped like those at Forteau, while the east window consisted of three cusped lancets, graduated to parallel the line of the chancel gable and set within a frame painted in a dark but obviously indeterminate colour. As can be seen by comparing photographs of 1902 and 2005 (figures 5-19 & 5-20), the current restoration matches the original in most details and entirely in spirit.

The same can be said of the interior, which is also illustrated in Bishop Jones' album (figure 5-21). The photograph is badly faded, and, having been taken before the days of sophisticated lens coatings, must always have suffered from an excess of lens flare. However, it can be seen that the essential arrangement is unchanged. A nave of open seats leads to a broad chancel arch, beneath a triangulated, open-frame roof that would have met hearty Ecclesiological approval. The chancel is raised three steps above the nave, and appears to be separated by a simple altar rail. The only difference from the current arrangement (figure 5-22) is that the pulpit has been moved from the south to the north side of the chancel arch.

In its clear spatial arrangements, honest use of materials, and simple but effective evocation of Gothic, St. James' manages to be faithful both to Ecclesiological principles and its remote outpost location. Set upon a hill high above the extraordinarily rugged coastline of Battle Island (figure 5-23), it evokes the pioneer spirit of Feild's Labrador mission like no other place.

St. James' is the only one of William Grey's churches to survive, but some picture can be constructed of at least three of his others. Around Christmas in 1850, Feild appointed Grey to the mission of Portugal Cove, about ten miles west of St. John's.⁸⁶ One of Grey's last acts before his return to England in 1853 was to raise funds for the building of a new church there. In 1854, Grey's successor at Portugal Cove, George Johnson, reported to the SPG that "the event of the year" had been the erection of a new church. Arrangements,

85. O'Dea, "St. James Church Battle Harbour...", p. 6.

86. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 4, 1851.



- 5-20 (A) – St. James, Battle Harbour,
Labrador, from the north-east.
- 5-21 (B) – St. James, Battle Harbour,
Labrador, interior.
- Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and
Labrador, #306, Box 2, File 9.
- 5-22 (C) – St. James, Battle Harbour,
Labrador, interior.
- 5-23 (D) – St. James, Battle Harbour,
Labrador, from the south-east.



he reported, had been made by Grey, who had raised money among his English friends and secured a significant donation from the Bishop.⁸⁷ The report was accompanied by a drawing of the church (figure 5-24). Drawn from the south-east, it shows a nave with aisles and a steeply pitched roof, a western tower with a sharply pointed spire, a chancel differentiated externally by the termination of the aisles, and a large and ambitiously traceried four-light east window with a triangular head (possibly similar to the one at Forteau, although apparently larger). These features are consistent with Grey's own drawing (figure 5-25), published in *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, in which he gave the church an idyllic pastoral setting both pictorially and verbally:

*The descent to it from the Eastward is one of the most beautiful scenes in the neighbourhood. You wind down a long hill, having a river full of cascades on the right, and lofty heights on both sides, whose slopes are partly covered with forest, and partly broken into cliffs. About halfway down the descent, on a sudden turn you catch sight of the church standing on its own hill overlooking the river, which washes its base.*⁸⁸

Like Forteau, Portugal Cove is an example of the adaptation of Ecclesiology to Newfoundland wood. Even earlier than this, however, Grey made his first foray into stone building, the viability of which he had argued in *The Ecclesiologist*. St. Saviour's Church, Hermitage (southern Newfoundland, on Hermitage Bay), was begun around the year 1850, finished in 1854, consecrated in August of 1855⁸⁹ and demolished around 1900 (figure 5-26).⁹⁰ According to George Henry Bishop, who was rector there for thirty-seven years, "the stone, stone masons, bricks, mortar, slate and even every piece of timber was brought from England."⁹¹ This curious particular, if true, might account for the fact that the Rev. Bishop – writing before 1900 – reported "many signs of decay."⁹² As William Hay had discovered before him at the Cathedral, the Newfoundland frost was capable of a remarkable degree of destruction totally outside the experience of British builders. Moreover, the workmanship of the building was apparently poor. "The masonry", wrote

87. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, "E" Series: Reports from Missionaries, Reel A-222.

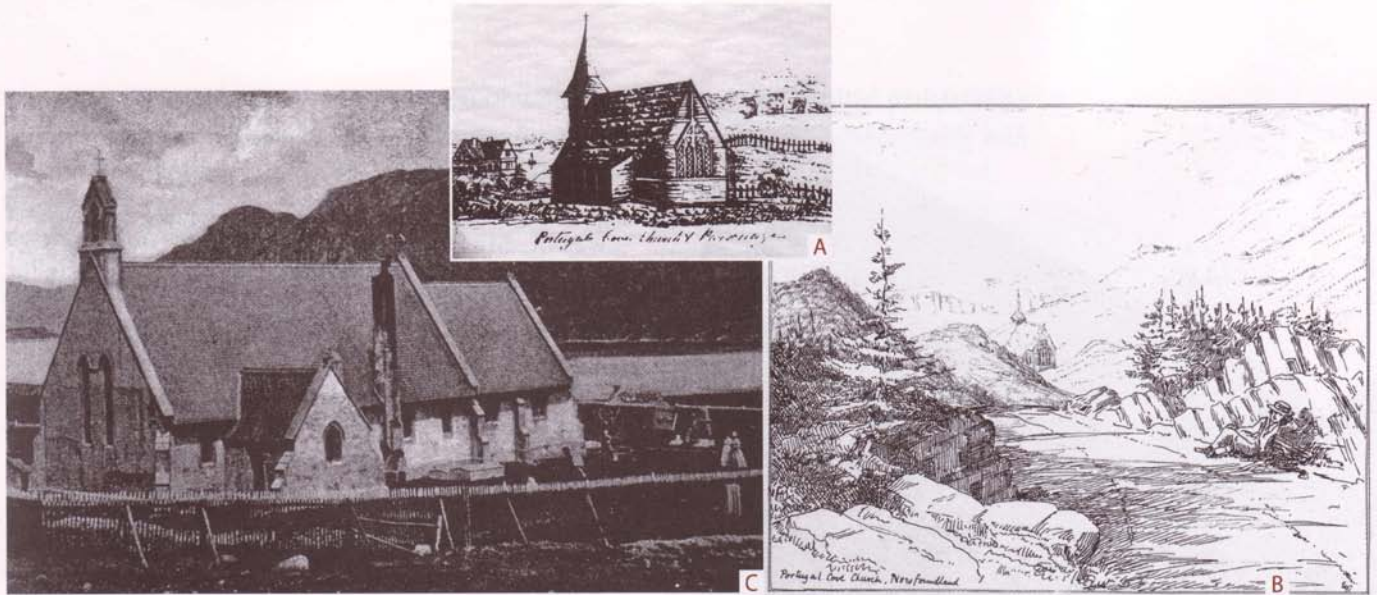
88. Grey, plate VI.

89. Walter Simms, "Canon George Henry Bishop", *Newfoundland Churchman*, May 1989, volume 35, number 5, p. 7. This article, although under the heading of "Biography", is in fact not a biography but a reprint of an article about St. Saviour's written at an unknown date by Canon Bishop, who was rector there for thirty-seven years.

90. Shane O'Dea, "Rev. William Grey and the Shaping of Newfoundland Gothic Revival". Unpublished conference paper read at the Conference of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, 2003.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.



Bishop, “was never meant to last; the work was carelessly done; the plaster crumbles continuously, and the mortar in the massive walls has never set hard.”⁹³ By the time Bishop’s article was written, the congregation had outgrown the church, and the prospect of enlarging a fundamentally unsound structure was “a problem to which we cannot find a solution.” That being the case, its demolition was inevitable.

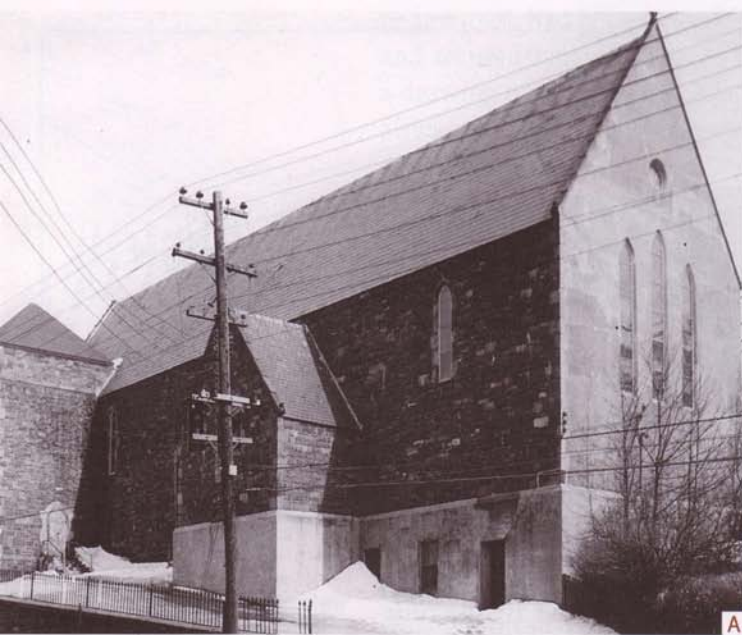
Unfortunately, the shoddy workmanship ultimately deprived Newfoundland of what should have been one of its most fascinating Gothic Revival buildings. St. Saviour was clearly in the tradition of St. Michael, Long Stanton, and St. Anne’s Chapel. Early English in style, it was a two-celled church with a south porch and western bellcote. The chancel was narrower than the nave, and had a lower roofline. Very solid stepped angle buttresses supported the corners of the nave, chancel, and porch. Stepped buttresses also divided the nave and chancel into bays. Single lancets lit the nave; shorter, twinned lancets the chancel; a pair of tall lancets lit the west and at the east end were three graduated lancets. The interior had an ornamental rood screen of English oak, as well as an oak prayer desk, lectern, and pulpit. In its proportions, planning, and detailing, it was a thoroughly convincing example of rural Early English Gothic and would have looked at home in scores of English villages. Parachuted into Newfoundland by workers who were ignorant of local conditions, the climate soon consumed it.

5-24 (A) – St. Lawrence, Portugal Cove, Newfoundland, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, “E” Series: Reports from Missionaries, Reel A-222.

5-25 (B) – St. Lawrence, Portugal Cove, Newfoundland, by William Grey, *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Ipswich: 1857.

5-26 (C) – St. Saviour, Hermitage Bay, Newfoundland, from D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, St. John’s, 1895.

93. Ibid.



5-27 (A) – St. Mary's Church,
St. John's, Newfoundland.
City of St. John's Archives,
2.03.009 n-072.

5-28 (B) – St. Mary's Church,
St. John's, Newfoundland.
City of St. John's Archives,
2.03.010 c-023.

establishing a missionary at Sandwich Bay, Feild suggested to the SPG that the money intended for that mission could instead be directed to another location in equally dire spiritual need:

St. Saviour's was only the third Anglican church to have been built with stone (the first two being St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, and Feild's cathedral). The fourth – and last built during Feild's episcopate – was St. Mary's Church, in St. John's (figures 5-27 & 5-28). Designed by Grey, St. Mary's was built in 1869 and, with grim symmetry, demolished exactly one hundred years later.⁹⁴ A formidable piece of masonry construction, St. Mary's was altogether more monumental and severe than St. Saviour's. The style is again Early English. To the nave were added a north porch and, further to the east off the north side, a tower. The tower, very disproportionately broad relative to its height and capped by a shallow, pyramidal spire, was possibly never carried to its originally intended height. The chancel was once again narrower and lower than the nave. No external buttresses interrupted the sheer wall surfaces, and the windows – all single lancets, except for the triple lancets of the west façade – formed conspicuously small apertures in otherwise massive walls. The result was, it must be admitted, a rather ominous looking building, with none of the idyllic charm of St. Saviour's. Perhaps this was exactly what was intended; St. John's was, after all, the heartland of Romanist unrest.

After taming the Labrador coast, Feild set his sights on another remote, western fringe of Newfoundland: the Bay of Islands and Bonne Bay (near present-day Corner Brook, and northward into what is now Gros Morne National Park). After abandoning all hope of

94. O'Dea (2003), p. 4.

...the more wretched, more forsaken settlement and neighbourhood of the Bay of Islands, and a real missionary could be found to undertake the charge equally arduous and disheartening with any on the Labrador or elsewhere.⁹⁵

Lest this job description prove insufficiently enticing, Feild added that the natural beauty and climate of the Bay of Islands were greatly in its favour. The weather notwithstanding, however, Feild realized that filling the post could prove difficult. Although he was confident of being able to obtain a modest financial maintenance, he would have to find the right man for the job – a man of faith, courage, prudence, and experience:

*But where is such a man to be found? Where is the man willing to make the venture? And who, being willing, has the necessary qualifications? And who, being willing and having the high qualifications, will be content with a bare maintenance?*⁹⁶

The “right man” turned out to be Ulric Rule, who had arrived at Queen’s (Theological) College in St. John’s in 1863. A star student, Rule gained missionary experience by joining Hutchinson in Labrador for a time before being sent to the Bay of Islands. He made Birchy Cove (now Curling, just outside of Corner Brook) his headquarters, and by the spring of 1870 had erected a church there. Nothing is known of the appearance of this building, but much more can be said of its subsequent remodeling by Rule’s successor at the Bay of Islands, the Rev. Joseph James Curling.

J.J. Curling was born in England in 1844.⁹⁷ A military man with a background in engineering, Curling met Feild in Bermuda during the winter of 1869-70.⁹⁸ Finding himself in complete agreement with the Bishop “in matters spiritual, ecclesiastical, and nautical”, Curling decided to devote his considerable energy, ability and resources to church work in Newfoundland. He donated his yacht, the *Lavrock*, to Feild in 1871 as a replacement for the former church ship, which had been lost at sea.⁹⁹ In 1873, he was ordained a deacon and sent to the Bay of Islands; the following year he was ordained a priest. His engineering expertise, along with his experience with shipbuilding and repair

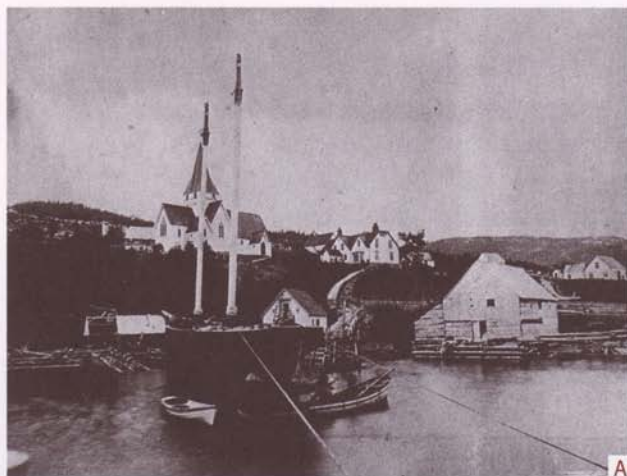
95. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, April 18, 1850.

96. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, April 21, 1864.

97. The most comprehensive source on Curling is a biography written shortly after his death by his friend R.H. Jelf, *Life of Joseph James Curling, Soldier and Priest*, Oxford: 1910. He is also discussed in W. Pilot, “The Church of England in Newfoundland”, a supplement to the 1895 edition of Prowse’s *A History of Newfoundland*, London: 1895, pp. 1-25.

98. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 11.



A



B

5-29 (A) – St. Mary the Virgin, Birchy Cove (now Curling), Newfoundland.

Corner Brook Museum and Archives, Dr. Noel F. Murphy Fonds/A999-009/Pm 010.

5-30 (B) – St. Mary the Virgin, Birchy Cove (now Curling), Newfoundland.

Corner Brook Museum and Archives, Dave Ledrew Fonds/A000-122/Gm 380.

and his more recently acquired knowledge of matters Ecclesiological, combined to produce an ecclesiastical architect of some note. Around the beginning of the 1880s, he began enlarging the Church of St. Mary at the Bay of Islands. According to his friend and biographer, R.H. Jelf, Curling drew all the plans himself for a very ambitious wooden church with a central tower, spire, and transepts.¹⁰⁰ That church is long gone, but several exterior photographs of it survive, as well as an interior drawing by Curling himself.

Exterior photographs (figures 5-29 & 5-30) show a building of considerable size and elaboration. A nave with porches to the north and south leads to a full crossing (or at least what would have been a full crossing had the north transept ever been finished, as Jelf assures us was intended), a crossing tower with a broach spire, and a chancel with a roofline slightly lower than the nave and transepts (likely an acknowledgement of the building's parochial, rather than cathedral, status). All roofs are steeply pitched. Windows are triangular-headed, with simple tracery in the transept facades and east end. A formidable triangular buttress on the north side of the chancel is doubtless a wind-brace (rendered unnecessary on the south due to the presence of a vestry). The ubiquitous wind may also explain the otherwise unaccountable decision to build both a north and a south porch.

The interior of St. Mary (figure 5-31) showed precisely the kind of honest, open timber construction favoured by the Ecclesiologists. Its tall proportions, steep roof, open arcades, and varied trusses demonstrate a familiarity with Ecclesiological theory and medieval originals ranging from Nether Peover to hammerbeam roofs. The east window contained stained glass depicting the nativity, made by Powell's in England.¹⁰¹

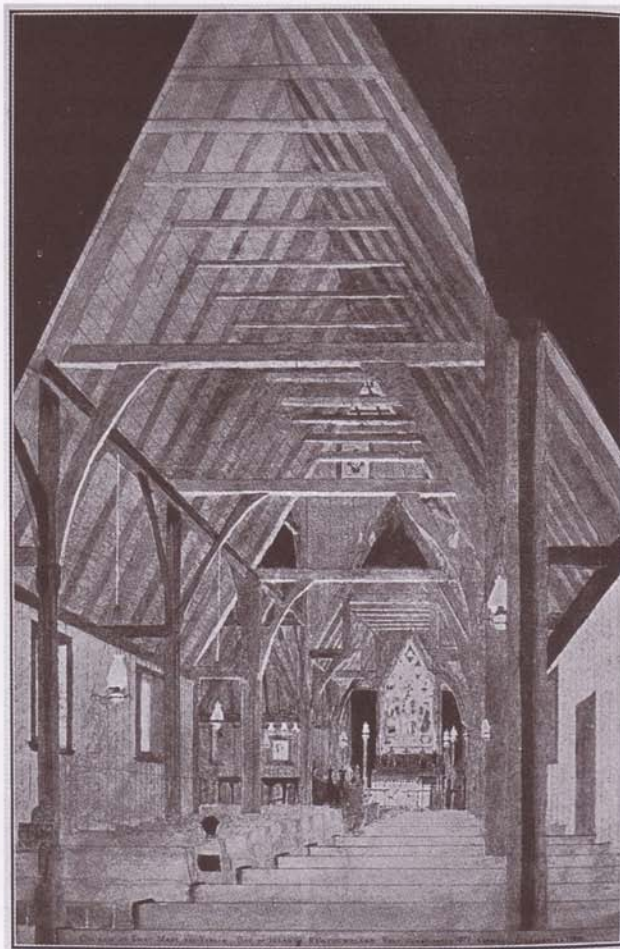
100. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8.

101. Jelf, pp. 39-40.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Curling designed and built “a number of churches and schools on the west coast.”¹⁰² Surviving documents, unfortunately, provide little evidence about the location and appearance of these buildings. To one of them (in Woody Point, on Bonne Bay), we will return at the end of this chapter. Even his church in Birchy Cove alone, however, establishes Curling’s expertise and importance as a “missionary” of Ecclesiological Gothic in one of the most remote parts of the diocese.

Labrador and the Bay of Islands were missionary frontiers, and an integral part of their spiritual colonization was the building of correct Anglican churches. As we have already seen through the work of William Grey, however, church-building was not restricted to new missions. A comprehensive corpus of church-building during Feild’s episcopate would require a study of considerably greater length than the present one, as well as a lengthy search for documentation that, in all probability, no longer exists. Nevertheless, a modest cross-section of Gothic Revival churches built during Edward Feild’s episcopate will amply demonstrate the range and adaptability of Ecclesiological Gothic in Newfoundland during the 1850s, ‘60s and ‘70s.

Born in London, the Rev Julian Moreton (1825-1900) arrived at Queen’s College in St. John’s in 1848.¹⁰³ He was ordained deacon in 1849, and priest the following year. From 1849 to 1860, he served as missionary in Greenspond, on an Island in Bonavista Bay in northern Newfoundland. Moreton’s time in Greenspond appears to have been a profound trial. The winters in particular were an unremitting nightmare, an ice-cold counterpart to Dante’s *Inferno*. Stories of Moreton’s



5-31 – St. Mary the Virgin, Birchy Cove (now Curling), Newfoundland, interior drawing by J.J. Curling, from R.H. Jelf, *Life of Joseph James Curling, Soldier and Priest*, Oxford: 1910.

102. *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, volume 1, p. 274.

103. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40434&query=moreton>.

hardships ranged from the moderately humorous (nose pain due to large icicles dangling from the nostrils) to the horrific (assisting in the amputation of two legs, eight fingers, and one thumb from a frostbitten seaman).¹⁰⁴ Through it all, however, he did manage to build a fascinating church in Greenspond, which survives intact to the present day.¹⁰⁵

Moreton's church was a replacement for one built near the beginning of the nineteenth century by the people of Greenspond, even before they had a clergyman. According to Moreton, their sense of denominational affiliation was somewhat elastic; after building the church, they held a vote to determine whether they should try to get a Methodist or an Anglican minister – or, as Moreton picturesquely put it, a “Methodist Teacher or a Clergyman of the Church.”¹⁰⁶ During his time at Queen's, Moreton would have attended William Grey's lectures on architecture, and he was able to put the expertise thus gained to practical use in Greenspond. On the exterior (figure 5-32), his St. Stephen's is not dissimilar to Grey's slightly earlier church at Portugal Cove, with a west tower and short broach spire, and triangular-headed windows. The chancel is a distinctly separate space with a lower roofline, as at Grey's churches in Battle Harbour, Forteau, and St. John's (St. Mary's). The east window (visible in figure 5-33), with three cusped lights under a triangular head, is again somewhat reminiscent of Portugal Cove.

The interior (figures 5-33, 5-34 & 5-35) is a curious hybrid. According to Shane O'Dea, the church as built did not follow precisely Moreton's original plan.¹⁰⁷ Assuming this to be the case, it is not difficult to see what the changes to Moreton's plan must have been. The deep, low chancel with its large window; the open work arcade in the nave; and the open, structurally naked roof trussing would all have been warmly praised by the Ecclesiologists, Feild, Grey, and Moreton himself. The incongruous note is the presence of galleries along the north, west and south sides – a feature of the Preaching Box and of Commissioners' Gothic that no knowledgeable Church of England designer would have willingly used by this time. Perhaps the spirituality of the Greenspond flock (on whose intellectual simplicity and pertinacity Moreton often commented) still drifted uncertainly between the poles of Methodism and Anglicanism.

104. Julian Moreton, *Life and Work in Newfoundland. Reminiscences of Thirteen Years Spent there*, London: 1863.

105. On the town of Greenspond, see George Kapelos and Douglas Richardson, “Greenspond”, *Canadian Collector*, volume 10/number 2, 1975, pp. 24-9.

106. Moreton, p. 104.

107. O'Dea (1990), p. 4.



- 5-32 (A) – St. Stephen, Greenspond, Newfoundland, exterior.
5-33 (B) – St. Stephen, Greenspond, Newfoundland, interior of chancel.
5-34 (C) – St. Stephen, Greenspond, Newfoundland, interior to east.
5-35 (D) – St. Stephen, Greenspond, Newfoundland, interior to west.



Very soon after Greenspond, a church was built in Topsail, near St. John's, which came closer than the former to fulfilling Ecclesiological ideals. On June 18, 1861, Feild wrote to Ernest Hawkins of the SPG that he had "just returned" from the consecration of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Topsail, which had been paid for by the liberality of a Mr. Johnson.¹⁰⁸ The clergyman at Topsail at the time was Charles Palairret, who Feild says "brought to completion" the church at Topsail.¹⁰⁹ Whether this also means designing the church is not clear; Palairret, who had been at Topsail during William Grey's time in Newfoundland, is perhaps as likely a candidate as any. A carpenter names James Harvey has been identified (not with complete certainty) as the builder.¹¹⁰ The exterior of Topsail is a simple, economical application of Ecclesiological principles (figure 5-36). A nave with simple, oblong windows terminates in a narrow chancel adorned with lancet windows on the side and a triangular headed window in the east end. The west tower with its short broach spire – by now a familiar feature of the Newfoundland landscape – may be a later addition.¹¹¹ No more "honest" an application of materials can be imagined than the interior of Topsail, the woodwork of which has never been painted (figure 5-37). The deep chancel (which, with its large window is the emphatic visual focal point of the interior), the timber roof, and the open work nave arcade all demonstrate that Grey had been an effective architectural teacher before his departure for England.

Contemporary with the new churches at Greenspond and Topsail were additions made to St. Paul's in Harbour Grace, the earlier fabric of which was examined in Chapter One. The additions represent both a substantial enlargement of the building and the introduction of Ecclesiological principles to a Commissioners' Gothic church. On the exterior (figure 5-38), the additions take the form of a very broad transept and chancel which, as they are made from the same materials as the nave and tower, blend quite seamlessly with the older fabric. On the interior, however (figures 5-39 & 5-40), the contrast is extremely striking. The tunnel-like nave abruptly opens out into the massive lateral space of the transepts. An enormous, web-like open work timber roof embraces the transepts and polygonal apse. The additions are not Ecclesiologically perfect –

108. Feild to Ernest Hawkins, June 18, 1861.

109. *Ibid.*

110. Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, unnumbered Property File: St. John the Evangelist Church, Topsail. James Harvey is identified as the builder in the Registered Heritage Structure Application, but unfortunately the primary documentation that is presumably the source of this information is not cited. An appended history of the church by the "Old Church Preservation Committee" states that Harvey was engaged on February 13, 1860; the precision of the information strongly suggests a primary documentary source, but again it is not identified.

111. *Ibid.* Once again, the report of the "Old Church Preservation Committee" states that this is the case, but does not cite a source.



- 5-36 (A) – St. John the Evangelist, Topsail, Newfoundland, exterior.
 5-37 (B) – St. John the Evangelist, Topsail, Newfoundland, interior.
 5-38 (C) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, exterior from south-east.
 5-39 (D) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, interior to west.
 5-40 (E) – St. Paul's, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, interior across transepts.

the continuation of the nave galleries, the shortness of the chancel, and the polygonal apse (a rare form in medieval England) would probably all have been criticized by a knowledgeable Ecclesiologist. However, to stand at the end of the nave of St. Paul's and look backwards and forwards is to grasp in an instant the immense difference between Newfoundland Gothic before and after the arrival of Edward Feild.

The church of St. James, Carbonear, begun in 1860 and consecrated in 1864,¹¹² is a very spacious church with a roof both broad and steep, a tower at the south-west corner, twinned lancet windows lighting the nave, and a low, deep chancel (figure 5-41). The transept-like projection to the south – in fact a chapel – is thought to have been an addition of the 1880s.¹¹³ The interior (figure 5-42) is singular in having no arcade or other internal divisions. Instead, the massive open timber roof – starting just above the nave windows and climbing steeply to a very considerable height – dominates the whole of the interior space. The unusualness of this was acknowledged at the time the church was new, the *Daily News* commenting that it was an arrangement “that many persons will admire as causing no interruption to sight or sound.”¹¹⁴ Sight and sound, of course, were not valued as highly by the Ecclesiological Society as mystery and solemnity, although the sheer proportions of the massive roof provide what may have been deemed a satisfactory measure of the latter. The deep, low chancel is lit by a very large triple lancet window with three roundels, all enclosed within a pointed arch.

The Church of St. Andrew, Brooklyn (begun 1867), is in stark contrast to the Anglican church at Carbonear. While the latter depends upon scale and grand spatial effects for impact, St. Andrew is modest in size and filled with meticulous, detailed craftsmanship. The builder was Caleb Marshall, whose work will be encountered again in Chapter Six.¹¹⁵ The exterior (figure 5-43) is a complex arrangement of nave, aisles, south porch, and chancel. An elaborate tower with a tall, needle-like spire sits on the south side of the junction between nave and chancel. Windows throughout are cusped lancets, with a graduated set of three in the west wall. All of the gables display exceptionally fine craftsmanship, with tracery-like, trefoiled borders (figure 5-44). This level of craftsmanship is continued on the interior, where familiar features such as the open arcade are embellished by details such as the lathed corbels at the point of springing (figure 5-45). The enclosed,

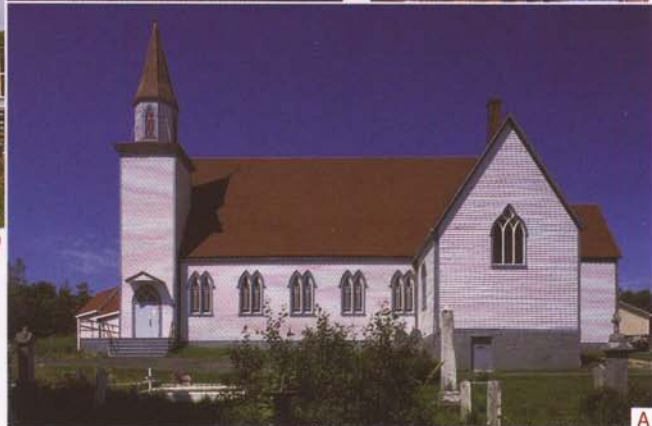
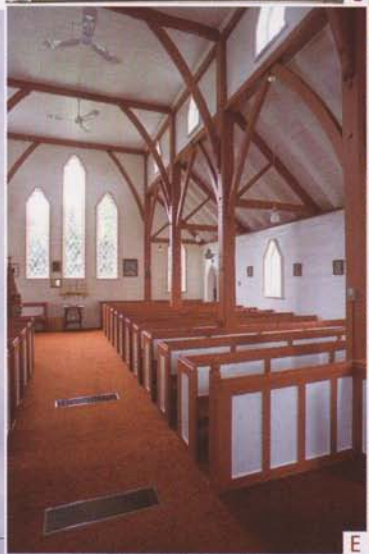
112. Duncan Howell, “A Brief History of St. James’ Church and the Parish of Carbonear”, unpublished typescript, 1994. In Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador unnumbered Property File: St. James Church, Carbonear.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

114. *The [Carbonear] Daily News*, November 21, 1864.

115. Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador unnumbered Property File: St. Andrew, Brooklyn.

- 5-41 (A) – St. James, Carbonear, Newfoundland, exterior.
 5-42 (B) – St. James, Carbonear, Newfoundland, interior.
 5-44 (C) – St. Andrew, Brooklyn, Newfoundland, detail of east gable.
 5-43 (D) – St. Andrew, Brooklyn, Newfoundland, exterior.
 5-45 (E) – St. Andrew, Brooklyn, Newfoundland, interior.



flat nave ceiling, while doubtless a boon to heating during winter, was possibly not part of Marshall's design.¹¹⁶ The ceiling timbers are fully revealed in the chancel, where the decorative highlight is a dado arcade of great delicacy (figure 5-46). Although small in scale, Brooklyn's excellent carpentry gives it a jewel-like quality.

In the year of Edward Feild's death, 1876, probably the most architecturally ambitious wooden church yet attempted in Newfoundland was built in Brigus, on Conception Bay. The construction is attributed to builder George C. Jerrett.¹¹⁷

Dramatically set atop a steep incline overlooking the sea (figure 5-47), St. George's is a full cruciform church, with nave, aisles, full-height transepts, and a polygonal apse. The nave aisles have lancet windows, sub-divided into two cusped lancets, with quatrefoil windows in the clerestory. The transept facades have large traceried windows below roundels in the gable. The apse has three cusped lancet windows, as does the west wall. The interior is particularly ambitious (figure 5-48). The nave and aisles are separated not by the usual open-work arcade, but by an arcade with opaque spandrels supported by complex, compound wooden piers (figure 5-49), which themselves support richly moulded arches on elaborate capitals. The open timber ceiling is monumental in conception and elaborate in detailing. The chancel is raised by four steps, the altar rail by an additional one, and the altar itself sits on a low pedestal. The chancel arch is a monumental cusped arch, echoing the window forms. When compared with buildings such as St. Thomas' in St. John's, or St. Peter's in Twillingate, St. George's graphically illustrates the progress made by Ecclesiological Gothic during the episcopate of Edward Feild.

During the first decade of Feild's stay in Newfoundland, the architectural battle lines between Anglican and Roman Catholic were clearly drawn. As the Catholic cathedral, "based on a Roman Basilica"¹¹⁸ neared completion high above the city, Feild's Pointed English Gothic Cathedral raced to provide a visual foil to it. Taking their cue from the cathedral, a generation of Anglican churchmen made Gothic an integral part of the

116. The file in the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador states that the interior is "extremely fine and in original condition", but in a church otherwise so sensitive to Ecclesiological values, the flat ceiling would be an unaccountable anomaly. It also renders the exquisite quatrefoil window in the west gable invisible from the interior. It would be extremely interesting to examine the design and finish of the trussing above the current ceiling, which may possibly determine if it was originally meant to be exposed.

117. John Fitzgerald, "St. George's Anglican Church, Brigus, Newfoundland", Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador unnumbered Property File: St. George's Church, Brigus; Registered Heritage Status Application Table 2. As is usually the case with these files, the primary source is not cited. The attribution to Jerrett is repeated in Shane O'Dea, "The Design of God's Place", on-site interpretive poster, 2004.

118. Bishop John Mullock, *An Account of the Consecration of the cathedral of St. John's, Newfoundland*, Dublin: 1856, p. 1.



B



A



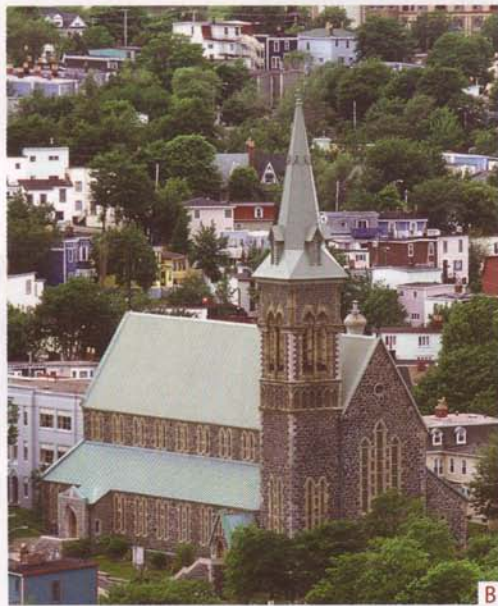
D

- 5-46 (A) – St. Andrew, Brooklyn, Newfoundland, interior detail of chancel.
 5-47 (B) – St. George, Brigus, Newfoundland, exterior.
 5-48 (C) – St. George, Brigus, Newfoundland, interior to east.
 5-49 (D) – St. George, Brigus, Newfoundland, interior to west.





A



B

5-50 (A) – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Brigus, Newfoundland, exterior from the west.

5-51 (B) – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, St. John's, Newfoundland, exterior from the north-west.

Anglican message to be spread across the colony. By the time the nave of Feild's cathedral was complete, however, the stylistic identities of Romanist and Anglican had become, if not muddled, then at least rather more nuanced. For, in spite of the carefully constructed arguments of the Anglican clergy, the Ecclesiologists, and George Gilbert Scott, Roman Catholics began building in Gothic as well.

Unlike the Anglicans, Roman Catholics in Newfoundland never wholly embraced Gothic. The Classical style continued to be used even into the twentieth century, as at St. Patrick's in Brigus (1935) (figure 5-50). There were, however, good reasons for Catholics to build in Gothic. First of all, notwithstanding G.G. Scott's brave attempt to prove otherwise, Gothic was indeed a style that evolved in the Middle Ages to serve the liturgical and symbolic needs of the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, the first great nineteenth-century champion of the Gothic Revival was a Roman Catholic, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin. Thanks to Pugin, whose main patron was of course the Roman Church, the most up-to-date new Catholic churches being built in the British Isles were Gothic.

This movement was first felt in Newfoundland in 1853. In April of that year, the English architectural periodical *The Builder* announced that a new Roman Catholic church, convent and school house were to be erected in St. John's. The architect was to be J.J. McCarthy, of Dublin, and the style of all three was to be Early English Gothic.¹¹⁹ The new church, St. Patrick's (figure 5-51), was not, however, a faithful essay in Early English Gothic in the way that George Gilbert Scott's cathedral nave had been. Indeed, Scott's design was, among other things, a truly first-rate piece of architectural archaeology; McCarthy's on the other hand, could

be termed "Early English" only by virtue of its preference for lancet windows over tracery. There was, of course, no imaginable reason why the "Hiberno-Romanists" of St. John's would wish to build a church that evoked those of either medieval England or the Ecclesiological Society. The Catholics of St. John's were just as interested in history and tradition as the Ecclesiologists, but as Malcolm Thurlby has shown, it was their own

119. *The Builder*, volume XI, number 531, April 9 1853, p. 238.

traditions – i.e., those of medieval, Catholic Ireland – that they wished to evoke in their new Gothic church.¹²⁰

The Irish allusions at St. Patrick's are as striking and as purposeful as the English ones made by Scott, but for the present purpose it will suffice to note the ways in which McCarthy's church was not, and could never have been mistaken for, an Anglican one. First, the English detailing is gone, replaced naturally enough with Irish features from such buildings as St. Mary, New Ross (Wexford), and Kilkenny Cathedral.¹²¹ Also, the clear interior and exterior division of spaces, so highly valued by the Ecclesiological Society, is altogether absent. The roofline is continuous, and the aisles continue right to the east end, giving no exterior clue about where the chancel begins. Inside (figure 5-52), pier forms, roof structure, and decorative articulation remain consistent from one end of the church to the other. Even an audience that had never seen English or Irish Gothic firsthand would have no trouble recognizing that this building did not look like the Anglican Cathedral.

Newfoundland's first Gothic Cathedral, at Harbour Grace, moves even further away from the English/Anglican idiom established by Feild and Scott. The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception replaced an earlier cathedral on that site – a domed Classical basilica (figure 5-53) clearly modeled on St. Peter's in Rome – after a fire in 1889.¹²² The twin-towered façade, with tall, thin spires, and polygonal east end (figures 5-54 & 5-55), are features that, while not unheard of in medieval England, are very far from typical. The multiple gables of the east end have no English precedent. Inside, the non-English character is even more striking (figures 5-56). With aisles nearly as tall as the nave, the elevation is one story. The arcades spring from very tall, slender quatrefoil piers. As at St. Patrick's, the interior



5-52 – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, St. John's, Newfoundland, interior to the east.

120. Malcolm Thurlby, "St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, School, and Convent: J.J. McCarthy and Irish Gothic Revival in Newfoundland", *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, volume 28, numbers 3 & 4, 2003, pp. 13-20.

121. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19.

122. M.F. Howley, "The Roman Catholic Church in Newfoundland", supplement to D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, London: 1895, p. 34.



5-53 (A) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, from D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, St. John's, 1895.

5-54 (B) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, exterior from west.

5-55 (C) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, exterior from north-east.

5-56 (D) – Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, interior to east.



FIRST ROMAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, HARBOUR A.C.E.





5-57 (A) – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Carbonear, Newfoundland, exterior from west.
 5-58 (B) – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Carbonear, Newfoundland, interior of nave.

articulation does not change as one progresses west to east until the altar is reached, at which point the floor level rises. The whole interior is covered by a plaster rib-vault that the Ecclesiologists would have despised.

Similar features are seen at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Patrick, in Carbonear, begun in 1888.¹²³ The west front (figure 5-57) is a massive block with a single central tower topped by a tall, slender spire. The interior is two story (arcade and clerestory) with quatrefoil piers unmistakably similar to those at Harbour Grace (figure 5-58). As at Harbour Grace, the most striking (and emphatically least Anglican) feature is the

123. James M. Fleming, *St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Parish and the Early People of Carbonear Newfoundland*, Carbonear: 2002, pp. 27-8.

vault – a massive plaster canopy with, currently, a particularly strident paint scheme. The nave has a variation of a quadripartite vault, while the aisle ribs (figure 5-59) follow a decorative, curvilinear pattern that is decidedly non-architectonic.

It is worth noting that “sham” (i.e., wooden, not stone) vaulted Roman Catholic basilicas are by no means uncommon in North America during the nineteenth century. One, Notre Dame in Montreal, was already mentioned in Chapter One. St. Basil’s Church in Toronto, begun by William Hay in 1856, is another example; the Church of Our Lady, Guelph, Ontario (Joseph Connolly, 1876-88), also follows this pattern. What model there could be for this – medieval or otherwise – is not obvious. Possibly Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome (late thirteenth century, restored in the nineteenth century) – a rare example of a vaulted, Gothic Roman basilica – may have served as a model.¹²⁴ The architectural parentage of these wood and plaster vaulted Gothic churches awaits serious study. One thing that is abundantly clear, however, is that these churches would be utterly alien to Anglican Ecclesiologists – and that fact alone may in part explain their appearance in Newfoundland and elsewhere.

The contrast between the denominational dialects of Gothic comes into sharp focus in a very small town on Bonne Bay: Woody Point, in the heart of what is now Gros Morne National Park (figure 5-60). An Anglican church, of which only a photograph survives (figure 5-61), was built by about 1884.¹²⁵ By default, it can safely be assumed that the designer was the clergyman – none other than J.J. Curling – who was the only one for many miles who could have possessed sufficient architectural expertise. The photograph shows a simple clapboard church, with a small western tower, triangular-headed windows, and a clearly differentiated chancel. No records exist of the interior, but it may safely be assumed to be a simpler, scaled down version of Curling’s church at Birchy Cove (figure 5-31).

In emphatic contrast to this is the Roman Catholic Church of St. Patrick, built in 1875 by master builders Joseph Breau from Nova Scotia and Peter Jackman from Newfoundland.¹²⁶ Originally built in nearby Balley’s Point, it was sawn into three pieces and moved across the ice to its present location in the late nineteenth century.¹²⁷ From the outside (figure 5-62),

124. My thanks to Malcolm Thurlby for suggesting this.

125. Ella Manuel, “Woody Point 1800-1900”, an unpublished typescript, is the only history of the town. Judging from the precision of dates and quotations, she seems to have drawn extensively from primary documents, although these are unfortunately not identified.

126. Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador unnumbered Property File: St. Patrick’s Church, Woody Point.

127. *Ibid.* Unlikely as the sawing may sound, the three seams are still clearly visible in the fabric of the church.



B



C

5-59 (A) – St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, Carbonear, Newfoundland, interior of aisle.

5-60 (B) – Woody Point, Newfoundland, from across Bonne Bay.

5-61 (C) – Church of the Epiphany, Woody Point, Newfoundland.

Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Coll – 137, 14.01.001. See <<http://www.library.mun.ca/qeii/cns/photos/geogfindaid.php#Arrange>>

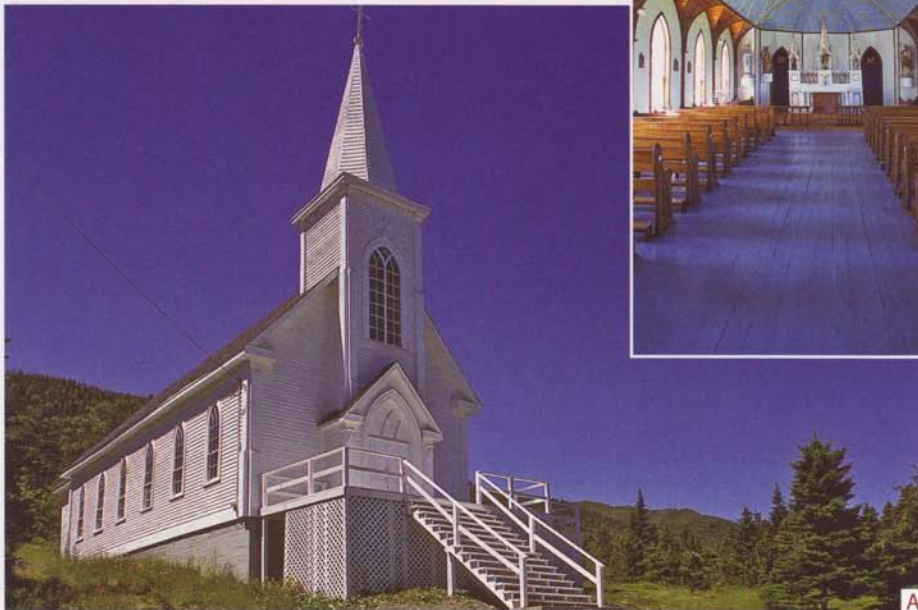


A



St. Patrick's could almost be mistaken for an Anglican church (particularly if one misreads the vestry on the east end as a chancel). One look at the interior, however (figure 5-63), disabuses one of that error. No one even remotely familiar with Ecclesiology could mistake this for an Anglican church – indeed, it is highly original by any standard. Original it may be, but not unprecedented. The single, continuous interior space is reminiscent of the Catholic Gothic churches in St. John's, Harbour Grace, and Carbonear. The preference for the covered ceiling over the open timber roof recalls Harbour Grace and Carbonear. Indeed the extraordinary patterns of the wooden strips on the ceiling seem not altogether unlike the aisle vaults at Carbonear in decorative sensibility, although admittedly the “ribs” at Woody Point are idiosyncratic in the extreme. The collective similarities of these four Roman Catholic Gothic churches are unmistakable, and serve both to bind them together and distinguish them from the Gothic dialect of the competing denomination. Woody Point's two churches, while both nominally Gothic, seem to stand back to back, their gazes apparently fixed in opposite directions. Nowhere in all of Newfoundland – not even in St. John's, with its Roman Basilica and Early English Cathedral – are the two religious and architectural solitudes more clearly expressed.

5-62 (A) – St. Patrick's
Roman Catholic
Church, Woody Point,
Newfoundland, exterior.
5-63 (B) – St. Patrick's
Roman Catholic
Church, Woody Point,
Newfoundland, interior.





CHAPTER SIX

Newfoundland Gothic in the Later Nineteenth Century

After Edward Feild's death in 1876, James Kelly (1832-1907), who had been Coadjutor Bishop of Newfoundland since 1867, succeeded to the see for one year.¹ His replacement was Llewellyn Jones (1840-1918), who remained as Bishop for thirty-eight years.² Jones' episcopate, unlike Feild's, was not notable for any revolutionary changes to the architectural landscape of the diocese; rather, he continued on his predecessor's course and in so doing presided over the building of some of the most remarkable Gothic Revival monuments of late Victorian Newfoundland.

In their article on St. John's Cathedral of 1848, *The Ecclesiologist* had praised the building for having been "commenced in faith," by which they meant that Feild had built the nave in the faith that subsequent generations would one day undertake completion of the rest of the building.³ As *The Ecclesiologist* noted, this was a common medieval practice; one example is York Minster, where Walter de Gray re-built the transepts in the thirteenth century on a colossal scale, which his successors eventually adopted for the choir and nave. Some time in the late 1870s, George Gilbert Scott was apparently contacted about the completion of the work. A drawing of a floor plan in the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) collection (figure 6-1), entitled "St. John's Cathedral: Newfoundland", clearly delineates which parts were complete (the nave), which parts were proposed (the crossing and transepts), which parts were proposed as temporary (an east wall for the transepts and temporary chancel), and which parts were projected for a later building campaign (the choir and final east end). The date of this drawing is uncertain, but as it is signed "Sir George Gilbert Scott, R.A.", it must date from between the architect's knighthood (1872) and death (1878). Nothing came of this plan until both Scott and Feild were dead.

1. Rowley, *The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland*, pp. 219-20.

2. Rowley, p. 223.

3. *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 278.

Efforts to complete the cathedral gained momentum in 1875, when a synod resolved that the nave was too small for current needs, and that fundraising should begin for the completion of the cathedral.⁴ Fundraising continued after Feild's death the following year, and early in 1880 the decision was made to proceed with the work, both to alleviate the shortage of space and as a "fitting memorial of the noble life and unselfish labors" of the late Bishop.⁵ A building committee was selected, and fundraising continued for what became known as the "Bishop Feild Memorial."

At the time these measures were announced on February 28, 1880,⁶ dialogue had continued with George Gilbert Scott Jr. (1839-97), who had taken over his late father's practice after the latter's death.⁷ Four days earlier, a letter from Scott had been read to the committee, in which he recommended the appointment of James Wills as Clerk of the Works.⁸ Work began in 1880, and both construction and fundraising continued at a formidable pace as money and building materials were solicited from every possible source, including the outports.⁹ The completion of a cathedral designed by the person who was, by then, arguably the most famous architect of the era, attracted some attention in the English press. Early in 1881, the architectural periodical *The Builder* published a plan and perspective drawing of the cathedral (figures 6-2 & 6-3), credited to "The late Sir G.G. Scott, and Mr. Gilbert Scott". The plan is identical to that in the RIBA collection – even to the point of showing a south porch that, owing to the sharp downward incline on that part of the site, had been changed to a north porch nearly four decades earlier in the design process. The elevation drawing was clearly based on the one that had been published in *The Illustrated London News* in 1849, with only minor differences in the scenery.¹⁰ The accompanying article reported that "the most conspicuous edifice in St. John's... is the Roman Catholic Cathedral", but added that the Anglican cathedral, when finished, would be "one of the grandest on that side of the Atlantic."¹¹

4. "Bishop Feild Memorial. St. John's, Newfoundland. 28th February, 1880." Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #668, Box 1, file 9.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

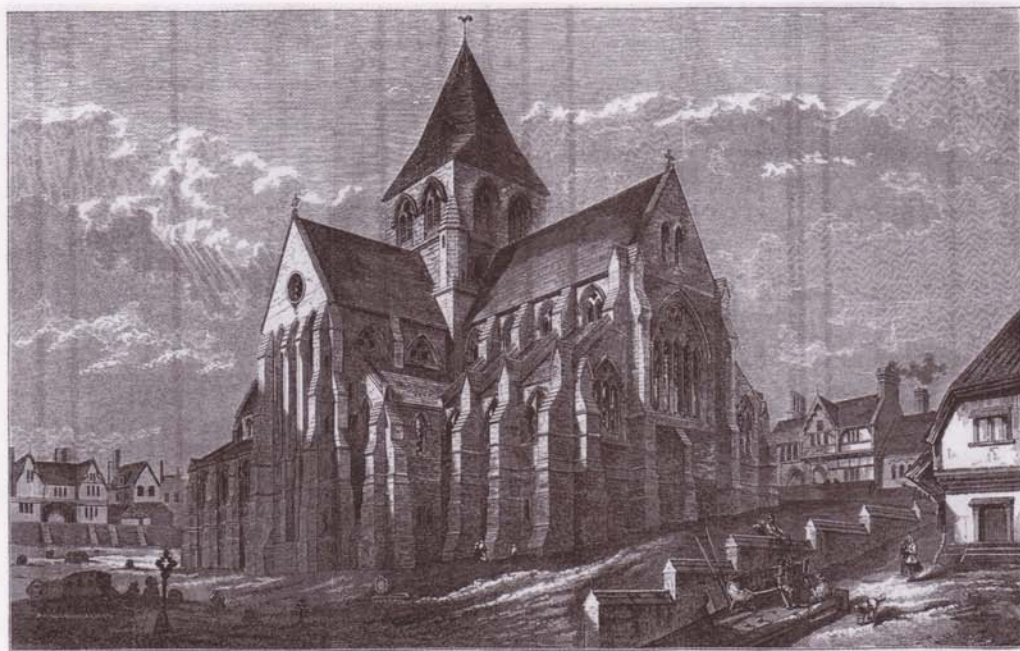
7. On the career of George Gilbert Scott Jr., see Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise*, Donnington: 2002.

8. Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #668, Box 4, File 4, Letter 10.

9. "Report of Select Committee of the Synod on Bishop Feild Memorial (Cathedral Completion)", 1881, suggests that every clergyman in the colony be instructed to solicit donations, and that donations of scaffold poles, twenty-five to thirty feet long, are as useful and welcome as cash. Diocesan Archives of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, #668, Box 1, file 9.

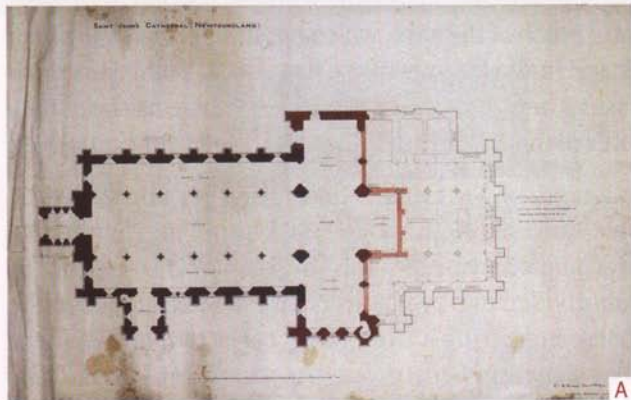
10. *The Builder*, January 22, 1881, p. 101. *The Illustrated London News*, June 23, 1849, p. 429.

11. *The Builder*, January 22, 1881, p. 99.

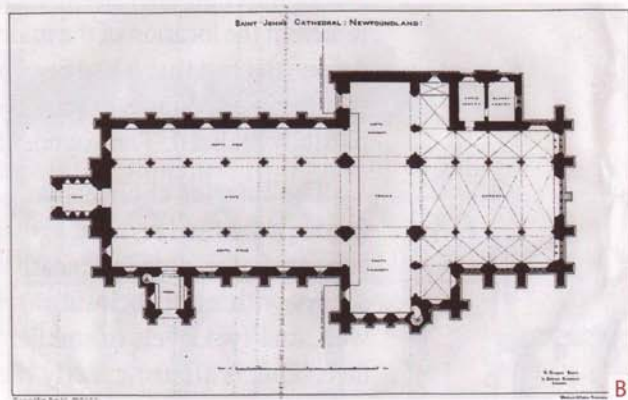


ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, NEWFOUNDLAND.—THE LATE SIR G. G. SCOTT, AND MR. GILBERT SCOTT, ARCHITECTS

C



A



B

6-1 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Proposed plan for completion of the Cathedral, ca. 1875.

RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 12.

6-2 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Plan from *The Builder*, January 22, 1881.

6-3 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Perspective drawing from *The Builder*, January 22, 1881.



The Cathedral was sufficiently complete for consecration on September 1, 1885,¹² and later the same month *The Building News* published a plan and north elevation of the completed building (figure 6-4) – indeed, the drawing is more complete than the building, for it shows the crossing tower and spire that were never built.¹³ Soon after, *The Building News* also published a south elevation and longitudinal cross section (figure 6-5).¹⁴

A difficult issue to disentangle is to what degree George Gilbert Scott Jr.'s executed cathedral followed his father's design. *The Building News* reported that Scott was "entrusted with the completion of his father's design with such modifications as he might judge desirable," adding, "While the general scheme of the original design has been adhered to, many modifications have been introduced, especially as regards the design of the tower."¹⁵ One month later, it was reported that Scott had been "entrusted with the completion of his father's designs, which were, however, in several respects considerably modified."¹⁶ The surviving evidence, however, suggests that the modifications were not all that considerable, and that the cathedral as built (which of course does not include the tower and spire) is very close in spirit, and even in many details, to what Sir Gilbert Scott had proposed to Bishop Feild. A comparison of the plan prepared by the elder Scott in the 1870s¹⁷ with that reproduced in *The Building News* (figure 6-6) shows very little change from the original configuration, except for the omission of the choir vestry and clergy vestry from the north side of the choir (and the abandonment of any attempt by the younger Scott to accurately represent the location of the main entry porch of the nave, which has disappeared altogether despite the fact that it had been built and in use for over thirty-five years). Both plans show that the intention was to vault the eastern arm of the building, which to date has been only partially realized. The younger Scott's plan adds an ambitious star vault in the crossing.

The interior choir elevation planned by Sir Gilbert Scott, one version of which (perhaps the final version, perhaps not) can be seen in another RIBA drawing (figure 6-7), consisted of an arcade beneath what could be termed a "two-in-one" upper story; that is, a story with a tall enclosing arch sub-divided into two lancets on the interior face of the wall, and two levels of smaller arches, suggesting a three-story elevation, on the outer face. This is almost exactly the plan shown in Scott Jr.'s cross-section in *The Building*

12. H.W. Wood and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, "Reports on the Anglican Cathedral", 1938.

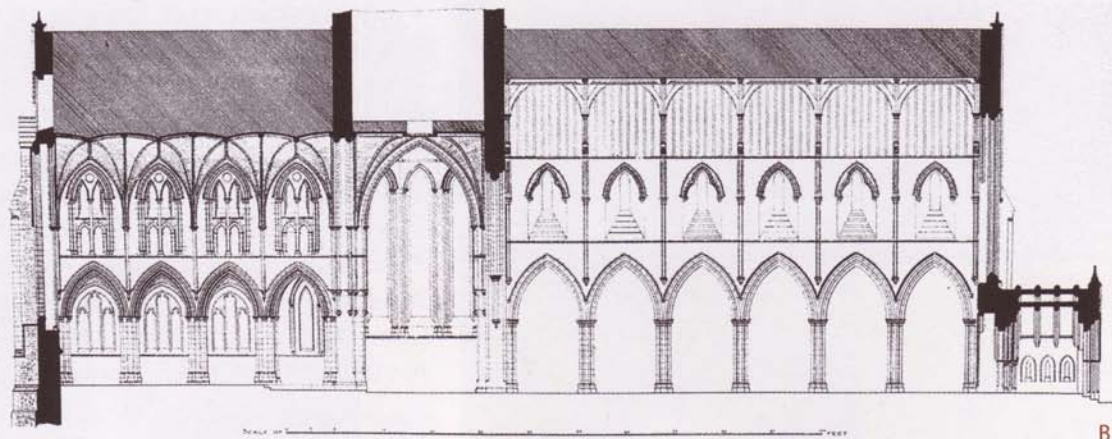
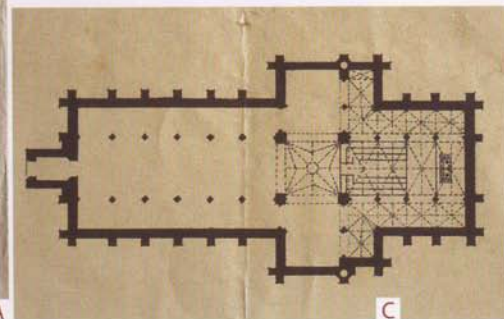
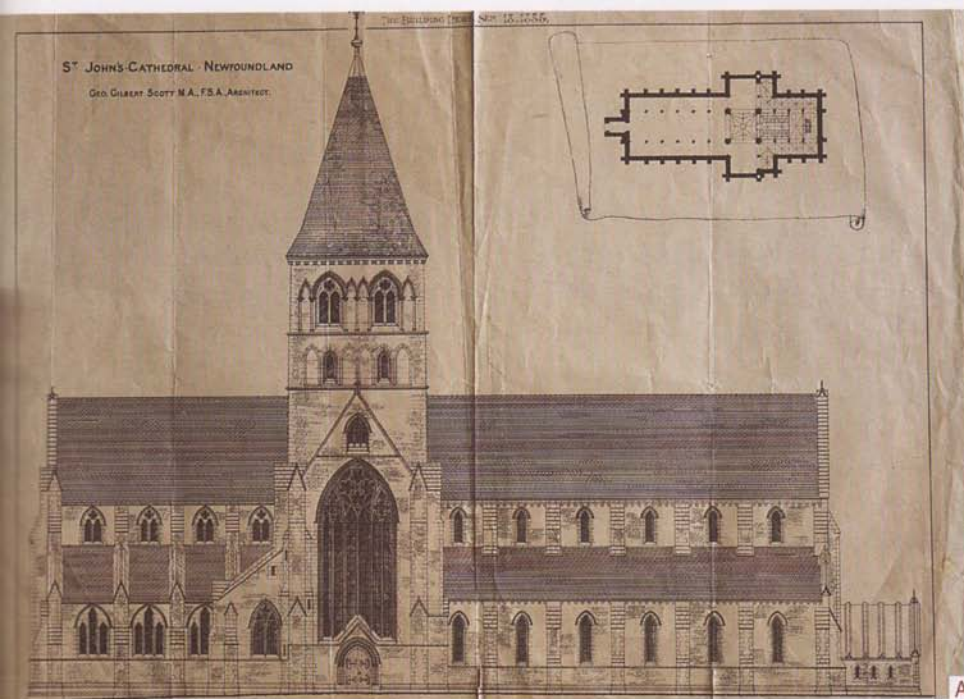
13. *The Building News*, volume XLIX, number 1602, September 18, 1885, illustration accompanying p. 446.

14. *The Building News*, volume XLIX, number 1608, October 18, 1885, illustration accompanying p. 668.

15. *The Building News*, volume XLIX, number 1602, September 18, 1885, p. 446.

16. *The Building News*, October 9, 1885, p. 590.

17. The September article in *The Building News* states that the question of the completion of the cathedral "was mooted in 1876"; this, then, may be the exact date of Sir George Gilbert Scott's plan shown in figure 6-1.



6-4 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, north elevation and plan.

The Building News, No. 1602, Vol. XLIX, September 18, 1885.

6-5 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, longitudinal cross section.

The Building News, No. 1608, Vol. XLIX, October 18, 1885.

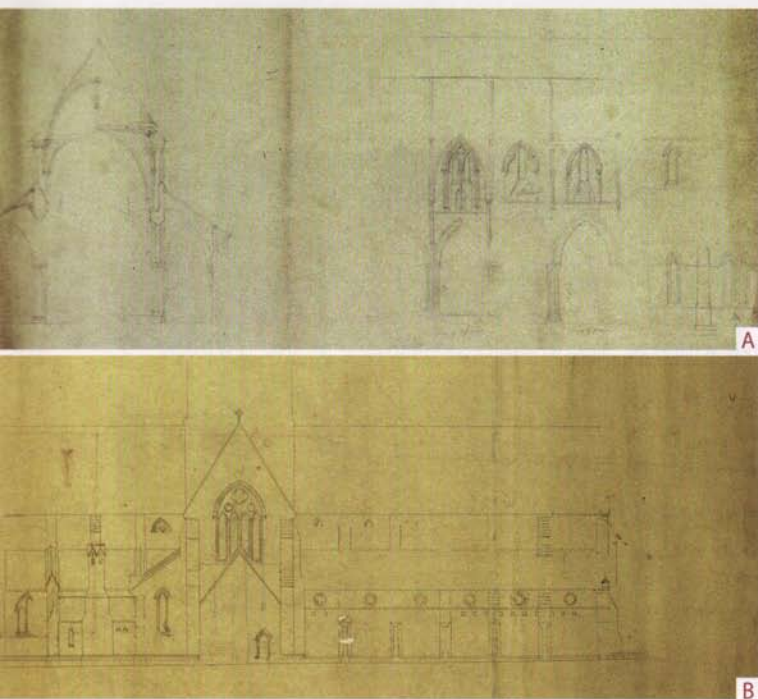
6-6 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, plan (detail from 6-4).

The Building News, No. 1602, Vol. XLIX, September 18, 1885.

News, the main difference being that in the later design the lower arch of the outer face of the wall (the quasi-second story of the elevation) has been turned into a pair of lancets.

The exterior elevation of the original design can be seen in a RIBA drawing that is scarcely more than a sketch (figure 6-8), but it clearly shows an intention to use more elaborate windows in the choir than the nave, an idea solidly within Ecclesiological tradition, since the choir, as the more sacred space, merits richer decoration. The clerestory windows were to consist of paired cusped lancets beneath a quatrefoil light, while the aisles were to be fenestrated with graduated triple lancets. With the slight modification of making the aisle lancets cusped (visible in *The Building News* cross-section and the built fabric), this was the design adopted by the younger Scott. The exterior of the north transept is given a huge window consisting of four lancets between two roundels and a quatrefoil in the RIBA drawing. In the end, Scott Jr. elected to build a more complex version of this with six lancets, two roundels, and a crowning roundel of nearly rose window proportions (obliquely visible in figure 6-9), all with bar tracery rather than the originally planned plate tracery. This switch to bar tracery can also be seen in the east window as built (figure 6-10), when compared with the illustration that originally appeared in *The Illustrated London News* (and subsequently in *The Builder*, figure 6-3).

While Sir George Gilbert Scott's intentions for the eastern arm must be tentatively pieced together from a very incomplete set of surviving drawings, his son's executed design is what still stands on Gower Street today. Although a fire of 1892 gutted the interior of the choir (and destroyed all but the aisle walls of the nave; see figure 6-11), the stonework remained largely intact and forms the core of the present cathedral. From the south (figure 6-12), the exterior does not differ in any major way from *The Illustrated London News* perspective view of 1848 or the cross section from *The Building News* of 1885. The south transept has three very tall lancets, beneath a cusped roundel



6-7 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Proposed choir elevation, by George Gilbert Scott, ca. 1846.

RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 3.

6-8 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland. Proposed exterior choir elevation, by George Gilbert Scott, ca. 1846.

RIBA Library Drawing Collection, SCGGS [119] 4.



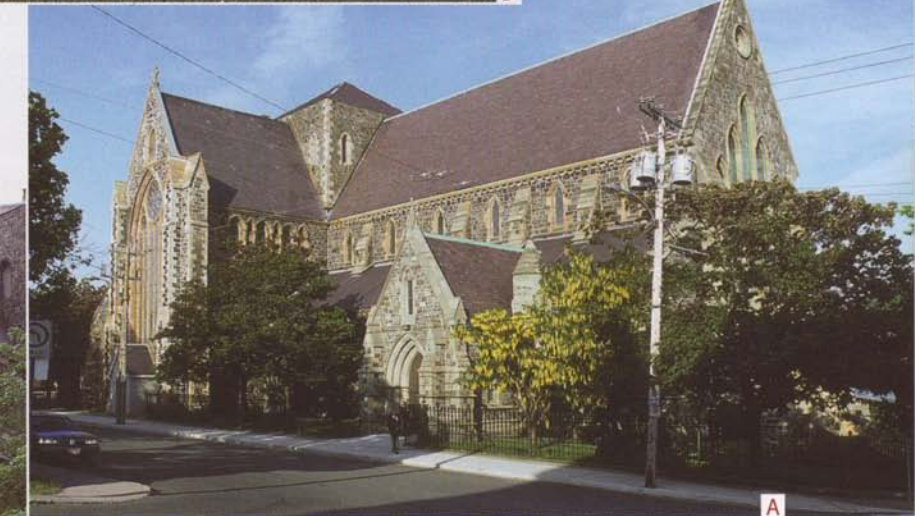
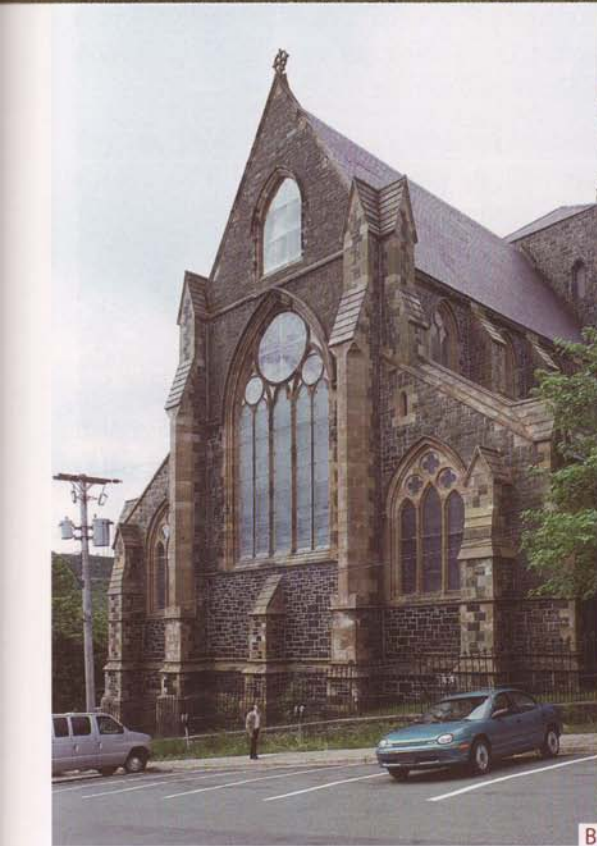
6-9 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, exterior from northwest.

6-10 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, east façade.

6-11 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, ruined nave after fire of 1892.

Cathedral archives, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, CA 1/1.39. Loc. A039 (Photographer unknown).

6-12 (D) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, exterior from south.



D

A

B

C



in the gable. There are massive corner buttresses, with more slender buttresses between the lancets; both differ slightly from the version in the *Illustrated London News*. The east aisle of the transept is set back slightly from the south façade of the transept. The choir aisle is divided into bays by deep buttresses that are continued along the aisle roof and up the clerestory wall. The configuration of the east façade (figure 6-10) as built is also extremely similar to the drawing of the 1840s. A tall, cliff-like central space, with massive corner buttresses, is flanked by aisles that also have boldly projecting corner buttresses. A shorter buttress runs up the middle of the façade to the sill level of the east window. The only notable difference between the designs is in the main east window which, as stated, uses bar rather than plate tracery. The window of the gable, which appears in the original design as a pair of lancets, was built as a set of three lancets. The east windows of the aisles consist of three lancets beneath three quatrefoils, all in plate tracery; they differ from Sir Gilbert's design only in that the central lancet has been made slightly taller than its neighbours. While the precise design of the exterior of the north side of the eastern arm is impossible to know fully, the major change, as discussed above, seems to be the expansion of the transept window in to a bar-traceried, Decorated tour-de-force.



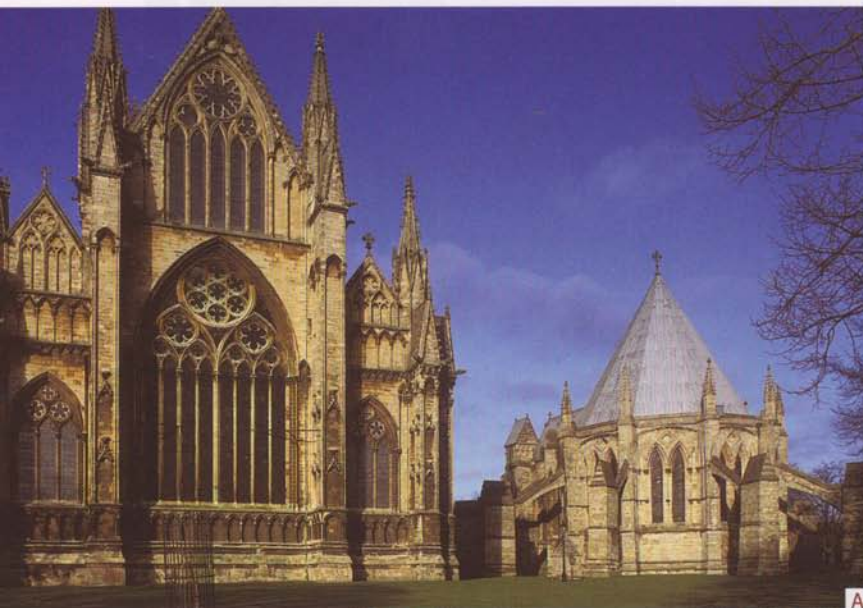
6-13 – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, detail of crossing capitals.

Apart from the general outlines of the plan, elevation, and vaulting already discussed, no evidence of Sir Gilbert Scott's plans for the inside of the eastern arm survives. However, insofar as Scott's original plan was for the whole cathedral to be in a decidedly and emphatically English idiom, his intention was, once again, scrupulously followed by his son. The monumental crossing piers (figure 6-13), with elaborately moulded capitals, some with fillets and some without, are larger versions of those in the original nave. Distinctly English (specifically, Early English Gothic) features of the transept interiors (figures 6-14 & 6-15) include rich compound piers, moulded capitals, and delicately moulded arches. Also strongly English is the lack of continuous vertical articulation: not only are the vaulting shafts (from which no vaults yet spring) corbelled out at the level of the string course immediately above the main arcade, but the three-light clerestory does not align with the two-bay arcade. The choir elevation (figures 6-16 & 6-17) has similar piers, capitals, and arcades, while the vault responds (once again for vaults never built; like the crossing

Page 165:

- 6-14 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, east wall of north transept.
- 6-15 (B) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, east wall of south transept.
- 6-16 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, choir to the south-east.
- 6-17 (D) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, north choir elevation.



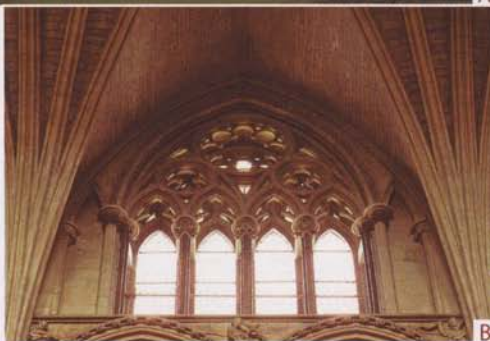


A



D

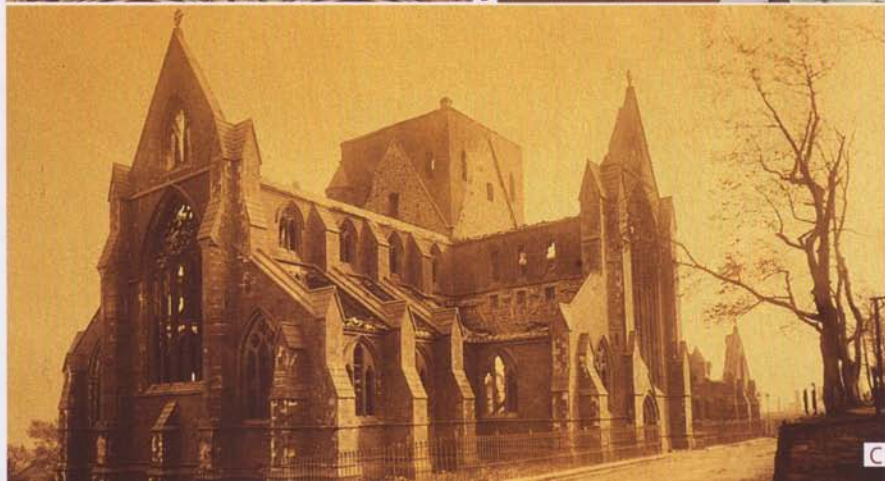
- 6-18 (A) – Lincoln Cathedral, Lincolnshire, exterior of east end.
 6-19 (B) – Angel Choir, Lincoln Cathedral, Lincolnshire, north clerestory window.
 6-20 (C) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, east arm after 1892 fire.



B

Cathedral archives, Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, CA 1/1.39. Loc. A039 (Photographer unknown).

- 6-21 (D) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, nave interior to east.



C



tower, they await, perhaps, another Queen's Letter) are corbelled out at the bottom of the spandrels. The east window (partially visible from the interior in figure 6-16; visible in its entirety from the exterior in 6-10), with its remarkably richly moulded enclosing arch and mullions, is a scaled-down version of the Geometrical Decorated window in the east end of Lincoln Cathedral (figure 6-18). One of the most striking – and English – characteristics of all is the double layer of window tracery in the east terminations of the choir aisles (just visible to the right of centre in figure 6-16). An unglazed screen on the inner plane of the wall mirrors the glazed tracery of the outer plane, an idea first seen in the clerestory of the Angel Choir of Lincoln Cathedral (figure 6-19), dating from the 1250s.¹⁸ Unlikely as it may seem, the Gothic expertise and connoisseurship of two generations of Scotts combined to create a quintessentially English building of the thirteenth century in Victorian Newfoundland. St. John's Cathedral is considerably more architecturally ambitious than Medley's counterpart in Fredericton, as well as being in an even more remote and impoverished location. Considering the difficulties involved in producing such a building in such a place, it was a prodigious achievement.

The subsequent building history of the cathedral, while by no means without interest or incident, can be briefly summarized here. As mentioned earlier, another fire destroyed much of St. John's in July of 1892, including the roofs and woodwork of the whole cathedral, and the arches, columns and clerestory of the nave (figure 6-20). Restoration began in January of 1893, overseen by George Gilbert Scott, probably assisted by John Oldrid Scott, with James Wills again supervising the work.¹⁹ The eastern arm was re-consecrated on June 28, 1895. Restoration work on the nave, which had been covered with a flat roof and used as a workshop during the restoration of the eastern arm, began on June 24, 1902. The architect was C.P. Hopson of Toronto (figure 6-21).²⁰ The cathedral remains today in much the same state as before the 1892 fire, i.e., complete except for the crossing tower and choir vault.

Like Edward Feild and Sir George Gilbert Scott, *The Ecclesiologist* did not live to see the completion of the cathedral in which it had taken such an early interest. It ceased publication in 1868, citing "the growing pre-occupations of those whose pens have for so long chiefly kept it alive."²¹ Their words (quoted in Chapter Four) proved prophetic, however: the cathedral, by virtue of its "durability and solid size, as well as its

18. On the Angel Choir, see Nicola Coldstream, *The Decorated Style: Architecture and Ornament 1240-1360*, London: 1994, pp. 28-31.

19. Wood and Scott, p. 2.

20. Ibid.

21. "To Our Readers", *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 26, 1868, p. 315.

unmistakable English and authenticated character” continues to represent the Church of England “very creditably” (figure 6-22).²²

The completion of the Cathedral in St. John’s seemed to set the tone for a number of more than usually ambitious Anglican church buildings in the late nineteenth century. One of the most original is the Church of the Holy Redeemer, Spaniard’s Bay. In 1888, the St. John’s newspaper *The Evening Mercury* reported that construction of a new church was about to begin, and that contributions were being solicited.²³

Holy Redeemer is far from a typical wooden Anglican church in several respects. The west front boasts a twin-towered façade – the only Anglican church of the nineteenth century in Newfoundland to do so (figure 6-23). There is ample English medieval precedent for this (Lincoln, Cathedral, York Minster, Beverley Minster, and many others), but Holy Redeemer also has spires on the towers, for which English models are rather rare (Lichfield Cathedral). The placement of the towers forward of the plane of the façade is also unusual, as are the round clerestory windows in a building otherwise fenestrated with lancets (three tall lancets in the apse, paired lancets elsewhere). Notwithstanding these unusual features, the influence of Ecclesiology is evident in the clear separation of nave, aisles, and chancel on the exterior (the last differentiated by the termination of the aisles), and the monumental open timber roof on the interior (figure 6-24). The spandrels of the nave arcade are not open timber but solid wall, a feature that Holy Redeemer shares with Brigus and very few other Newfoundland Anglican churches. The adaptability and elasticity of English Christian architecture that so impressed Sir George Gilbert Scott (see Chapter Four) are in abundant evidence at Spaniard’s Bay.

St. Luke’s Church in Newtown, south-east of Greenspond on Blackhead Bay on the Bonavista Peninsula, was begun in 1892.²⁴ Previously, the congregation had met in a small school-chapel, but by the 1890s, according to the *Diocesan Magazine*, this was proving hopelessly cramped.²⁵ The cornerstone of the current church was laid on December 29, 1892. As the men constructing the church were fishermen, not full time carpenters, construction could only take place during the winter before the spring seal

22. “Colonial Church Architecture. Chapter VI. S. John’s Cathedral, Newfoundland”, *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 278.

23. *The Evening Mercury*, volume VII, number 197, August 25, 1888.

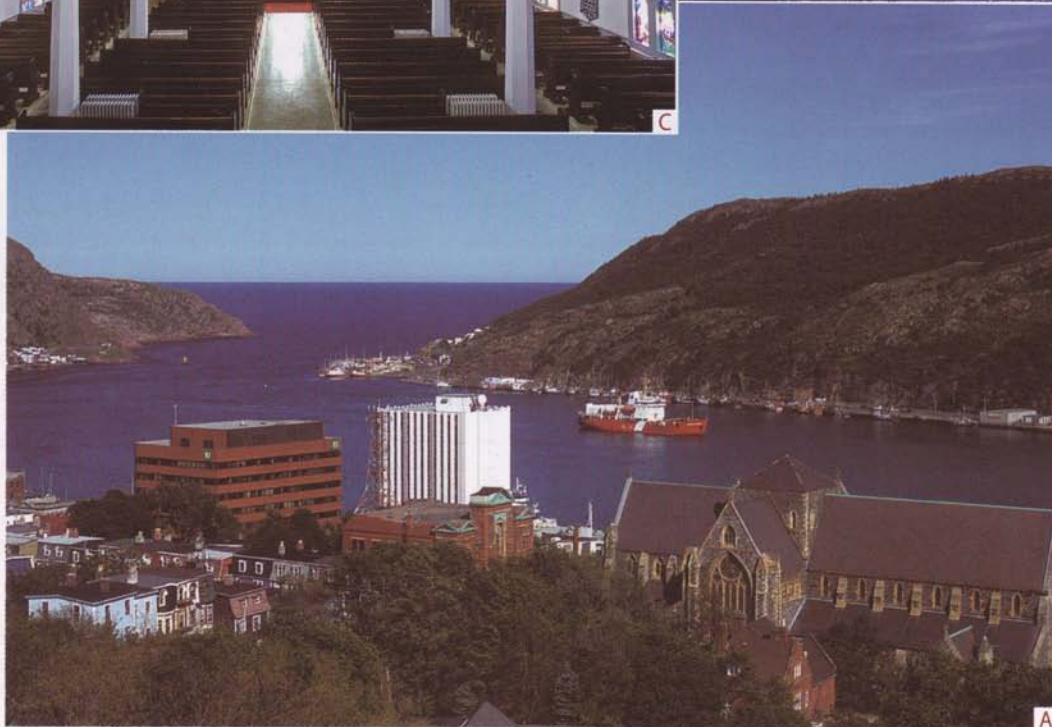
24. Historical information on the church at Newtown is taken from Peter G. Hall, *History of St. Luke’s Anglican Church Newtown 1895-1995*. Written to mark the hundredth anniversary of the church’s consecration, it draws from a number of primary sources, in particular the *Diocesan Magazine* and the minutes of congregational and vestry meetings.

25. Hall, p. 2.

6-22 (A) – Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, St. John's Newfoundland, view of cathedral and narrows beyond.

6-23 (B) – Holy Redeemer, Spaniard's Bay, Newfoundland, exterior from south-west.

6-24 (C) – Holy Redeemer, Spaniard's Bay, Newfoundland, interior to east.



hunt, and in late spring, between the end of the seal hunt and the beginning of the summer cod fishery. All of the labour was voluntary save for one professional builder (appointed as building foreman) named Thomas Granger.²⁶ Thus squeezed between the harvesting of seals and cod, the building season amounted to a total of about two months per year.²⁷ The church was consecrated by Llewellyn Jones on August 7, 1895.²⁸ The church was finally completed (save for some interior fittings and the bell) in 1900 – “as fine and imposing a church as any in the diocese”, according to the *Diocesan Magazine*.²⁹ The original tower was replaced with a replica first in 1937, and again in 1985. The roof was replaced in 1943. In 1981, the clapboard siding (by then eighty-six years old) was replaced – happily with identical six-inch clapboard, synthetic substitutes having been considered and rejected.³⁰

“Fine and imposing” the church remains, its silhouette providing a strikingly crisp, geometric foil to the rugged, irregular landscape. The visual impression from a distance is of a pyramidal assembly of massed mounting upward, terminating in a slender, pointed spire (figure 6-25). In good Ecclesiological tradition, the nave, aisles, and west tower all form distinctly separate parts of the pyramid. The chancel is marked externally by the end of the aisles and the use of tall lancet windows (figure 6-26). The windows on the aisles and tower are all lancet, with curved, triangular windows in the clerestory. The interior of the nave is dominated by a slender skeleton of carpentry, the extremities of which are marked by solid aisle and clerestory walls (figure 6-27). The chamfered square nave piers and open timber of the nave arcade and ceiling (figure 6-28) also follow Ecclesiological doctrine, as well as abundant Newfoundland precedent (as seen in Chapter Five). St. Luke’s is a testament to the enduring influence of Ecclesiology in Newfoundland.

The Church of St. James, King’s Cove (figure 6-29), was begun in December of 1896.³¹ It replaced an earlier church, begun in 1815, which had become too small for the congregation. According to the *Diocesan Magazine*, the incumbent, William Kirby, drove in the first nail of the foundation. As at Newtown, the majority of the labour was

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid, p. 3, quoted from the *Diocesan Magazine*.

28. Ibid, p. 4.

29. Ibid, p. 6.

30. Ibid, p. 10.

31. Historical information on St. James is taken from Roger K. Brown, *St. James Anglican Church, King’s Cove, Newfoundland*, 1998, published to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of the consecration of the church. As with Peter Hall’s research on Newtown, Brown has drawn extensively from primary documents surviving in the Rectory (p. 11).



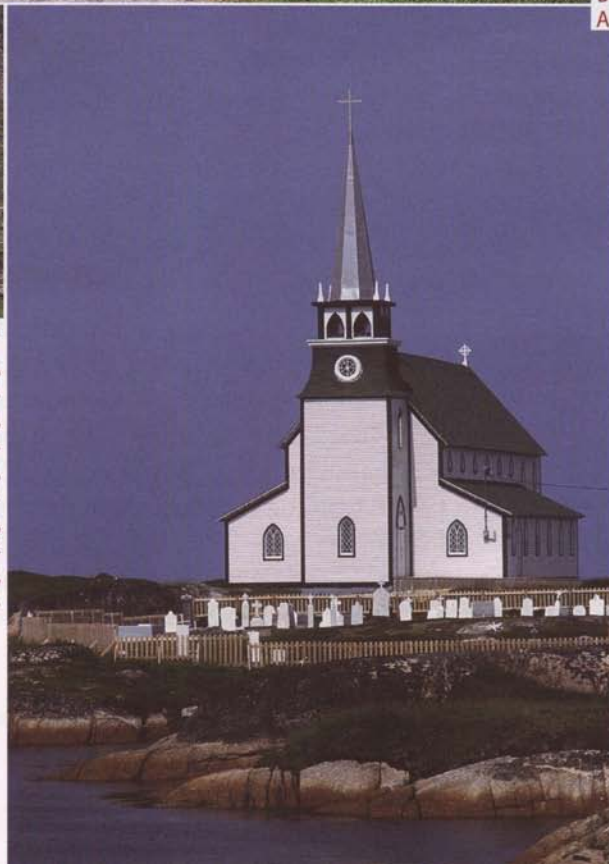
B
A



C
D



E



- 6-25 (A) – St. Luke's, Newtown, Newfoundland, exterior from west.
 6-26 (B) – St. Luke's, Newtown, Newfoundland, exterior from south.
 6-27 (C) – St. Luke's, Newtown, Newfoundland, interior to east.
 6-28 (D) – St. Luke's, Newtown, Newfoundland, detail of nave roof.
 6-29 (E) – King's Cove, Newfoundland, from the south-west.



provided free by local men between fishery seasons. The professional builder in charge was Caleb Marshall, builder of St. Andrew, Brooklyn (discussed in Chapter Five). The old church was demolished after the Easter service in 1897, and the new one consecrated on September 15, 1898.

St. James consists of a nave with aisles, south porch, and chancel (figure 6-30). The tower is placed at the corner created by the junction of the chancel and south aisle – an unusual arrangement, but the same one that Marshall had used in Brooklyn. According to Roger Brown, the design for the church was the responsibility of William Kirby, the clergyman.³² This is not particularly unlikely, considering the examples set by William Grey and J.J. Curling, but the placement of the tower suggests that Marshall himself had considerable impact on the design. Perhaps the most likely arrangement, here and elsewhere in Newfoundland, was a collaboration between a clergyman who knew Ecclesiological principles from books (and possibly other buildings) and a carpenter who knew them from having built Anglican churches elsewhere. The direct or indirect influence of William Grey can be detected in the triangular-headed windows, the mixing of horizontal and diagonal clapboarding, and the strip work articulating the bay divisions of the aisles and clerestory, a feature which can be seen at Forteau and Portugal Cove.

The interior of St. James (figures 6-31, 6-32 & 6-33) is a faithful Ecclesiological structure of open timber arcading and roofing, without the flat ceiling currently imposed upon Marshall's earlier work at Brooklyn. Once again, echoes of Ecclesiology, *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, and *Nether Peover* abound – although by this time it is likely more accurate to say that the immediate sources of inspiration are earlier Anglican churches in Newfoundland, rather than the more distant English models and theoretical guidelines.

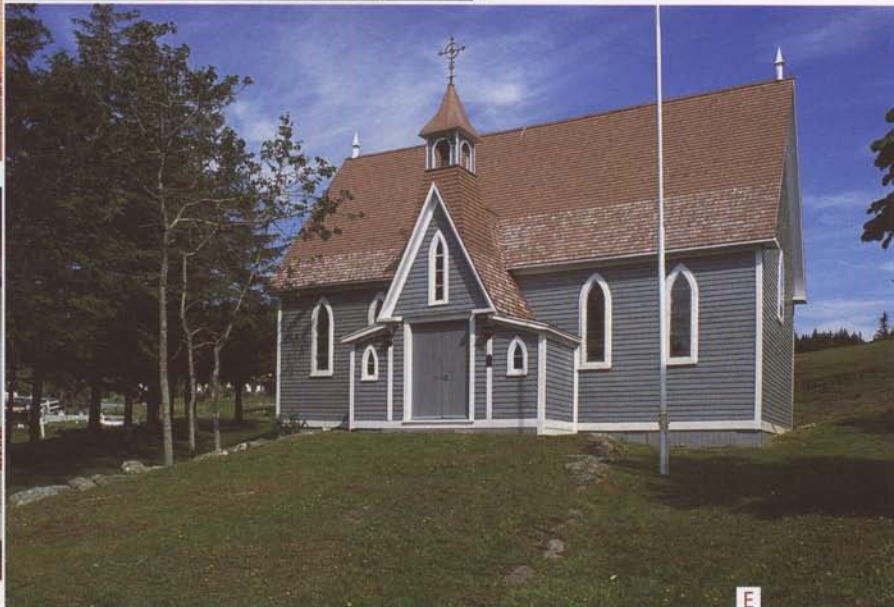
Not all of the Anglican church-building in Newfoundland at this time was on the monumental scale of Spaniard's Bay, Newtown, and King's Cove. In the town of Trinity is the oldest of only two surviving examples of what was a new building type in late nineteenth-century Newfoundland: the mortuary chapel. Intended specifically for funeral services rather than regular Sunday ones, the Church of England Mortuary Chapel was built in 1880.³³ Nothing is known about the designer or builder, but whoever was responsible for this building was clearly familiar with Ecclesiological principles. The exterior (figure 6-34) is a simple wooden Gothic box, with lancet windows, a steeply pitched roof, and a centrally placed south entrance porch. A simple, pointed belfry

32. Brown, p. 19.

33. Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador Property Designation File M-038-008, Trinity – Mortuary Chapel.



A



E



D



B

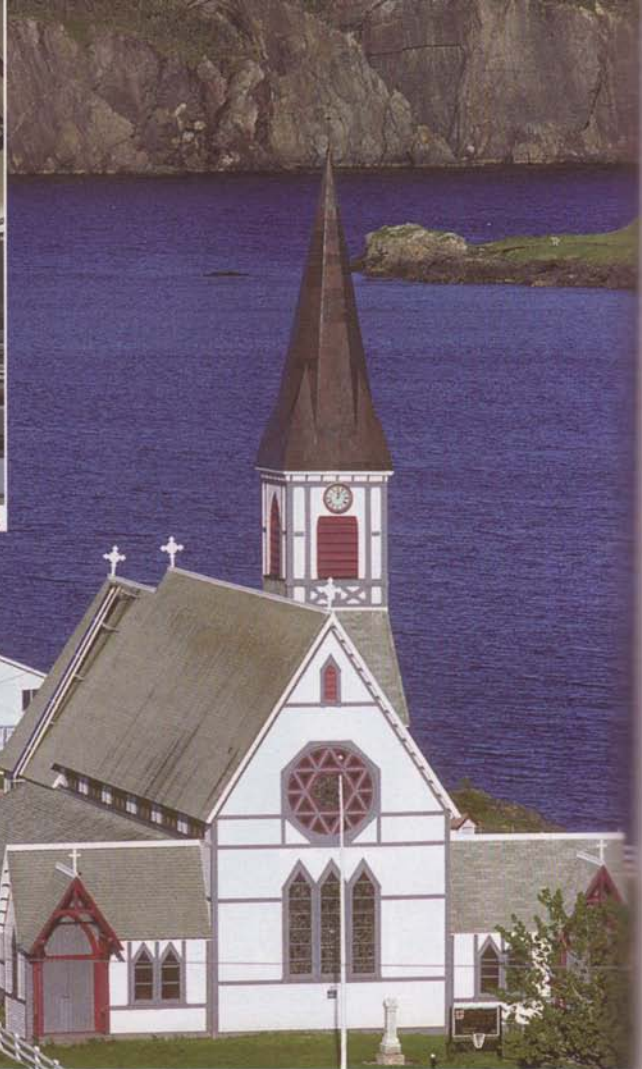


C

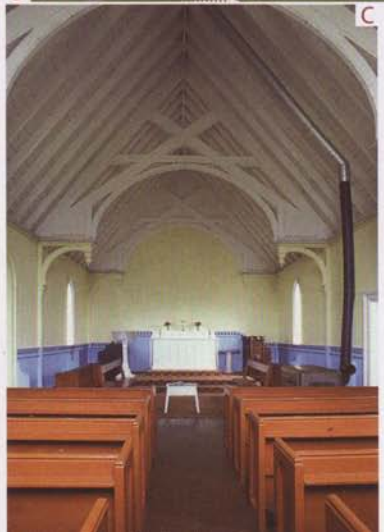
- 6-30 (A) – St. James, King's Cove,
Newfoundland, from the south-east.
6-31 (B) – St. James, King's Cove,
Newfoundland, interior to east.
6-32 (C) – St. James, King's Cove,
Newfoundland, detail of arcading.
6-33 (D) – St. James, King's Cove,
Newfoundland, chancel.
6-34 (E) – Church of England Mortuary
Chapel, Trinity, Newfoundland, exterior.



A



B D



C

6-35 (A) – Church of England Mortuary Chapel, Trinity, Newfoundland, interior.

6-36 (B) – The Alexander Chapel of All Souls Mortuary Chapel, Bonavista, Newfoundland, exterior.

6-37 (C) – The Alexander Chapel of All Souls Mortuary Chapel, Bonavista, Newfoundland, interior.

6-38 (D) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, exterior from west.



rises above the gable of the porch. The interior (figure 6-35) is a completely convincing Ecclesiological church in miniature, with an open timber roof, separate seating areas for congregation and choir, raised chancel and altar, and simple altar rail.

The Alexander Chapel of All Souls Mortuary Chapel, in the Church of England Cemetery in Bonavista, was begun in 1896.³⁴ The chapel is named after William Alexander, a local merchant who was the chapel's benefactor. The builder was a local craftsman named Ronald Strathie, whose pay was fifteen cents per hour. The exterior of Alexander Chapel (figure 6-36) is similar in plan to the mortuary chapel in Trinity, being a Gothic oblong with a central entrance porch (this time on the north). The west window, however, is a much more ambitious affair, with graduated triple lancets beneath three roundels, the whole enclosed by a pointed hood-mould with decorative label stops. A bellcote rises above the pinnacle of the west gable; strangely, there is no sign of a bell. The interior of Alexander Chapel (figure 6-37) is an intimate but remarkably ambitious space. The spatial configuration is the same as Trinity, with separate areas for seating, choir, and chancel. There is no chancel rail, although that area is raised on two steps with the altar raised on an additional step. Transverse arches in the roof, which are continued by responds running down the wall to the floor, create a regular, bay-like rhythm. The pattern of the roof trusses is repeated against the east wall. The most extraordinary feature of the interior – and it is assuredly extraordinary in a chapel of so modest a size – is the hammerbeam roof. This form, which is associated with some of the most sumptuous medieval interiors (most notably Westminster Hall), was given particular praise by Frank Wills, in his analysis of English medieval architecture and its application to modern (i.e., mid-nineteenth century) needs.³⁵ Though rarely used in Newfoundland (presumably due to the expense and the high level of carpentry skill required), no form could announce a building's affiliation with the English Middle Ages more eloquently.

This study began with an examination of St. Paul's Church at Trinity, built 1814-18, so it is perhaps fitting that it should end by exploring that building's successor, begun in 1892 (figure 6-38). "New" St. Paul's is arguably the most architecturally ambitious – and certainly the best-documented discovered so far – of the late nineteenth-century wooden Gothic churches of Newfoundland. The seeds of its birth were planted in the report of a Building Committee that had been formed on February 7, 1883, to report on "the dilapidated state

34. Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, File # A-017-021, Bonavista – Alexander Chapel of All Souls Mortuary Chapel.

35. Frank Wills, *Ancient English Architecture and its Principles, Applied to the Wants of the Church, at the Present Day*, New York: 1850, p. 43.

of the fabric of St. Paul's Church."³⁶ St. Paul's, it will be remembered from Chapter One, was essentially a galleried preaching box completed in 1818, to which a chancel had been added in 1865. This building had been allowed to fall into a state of considerable disrepair, and by 1883 it was reported that the roof, window frames, clapboard, tower, and interior plastering all needed extensive work. Consequently, during a meeting held on January 28, 1884, the Committee "deemed it advisable to build a new church."³⁷

For reasons that are not clear, virtually nothing happened for the next four years, save for the discussion of how the rights of pewholders would be preserved in the new church.³⁸ Finally, in 1888, a meeting of the congregation was held to discuss plans for the new building.³⁹ No architect was hired. Instead, "after a considerable amount of discussion", it was proposed that the Committee adopt a design obtained from the Rev. John Ambrose, of Digby, Nova Scotia, which had already been used for the church there. It was proposed that the Rev. Ambrose be paid the sum of fifty dollars for the use of these plans, which were evidently already in the hands of the Committee.

Progress remained excruciatingly slow. In 1888, a Building Committee was appointed to oversee the construction.⁴⁰ In 1889, the Bishop's approval was sought and obtained. Shortly after, plans were made to mobilize labour for the transporting of stone for the foundation from Salmon Cove (now Champneys East) to Trinity, and the Committee noted with alarm that "some people wanted to be paid." It was decided to accept help from outside the community, since "that might tend to shame interested parties and make them come forward and do the work for free."⁴¹

The next step was to find a builder. The Committee's first choice, not unreasonably, was D.B. Grant, who had built the chancel of the old church in 1865 and was still, apparently, in active practice. The chairman of the Committee was asked to write to Grant in November of 1891; by the following weekly meeting no reply had been received, although the Committee remained confident that he would accept the work. By the week after that, it was announced that Grant had declined the job.⁴² No reason was given. A Mr. Pittman was approached next,

36. Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church. series 1: Minutes of Vestry 1.02.

37. Minutes of Vestry, January 28, 1884.

38. Minutes of Vestry, February 4, 1884.

39. Minutes of Vestry, March 21, 1888.

40. Minutes of Vestry, March 22, 1888.

41. Minutes of Vestry, June 13, 1889. The Committee's resolve to obtain volunteer labour is perhaps not as unreasonable as it appears to modern eyes, considering the apparently ready and willing supply of it at Newtown and King's Cove.

42. Minutes of Vestry, November 5, 12 & 19, 1891.

who was at that time foreman of a building project at Ireland's Eye, on the north-west side of Trinity Bay. Mr. Pittman "did not appear anxious to undertake work in Trinity", and stated that "he could not undertake the work for less than \$1.20 per day."⁴³ More seriously, as far as the Committee was concerned, Pittman insisted on being engaged throughout the whole winter, a demand which resulted in his being eliminated from consideration.⁴⁴ St. Paul's may have been the grandest Anglican church in Newfoundland since the cathedral, but nearly eight years after the decision had been made to build it, the Committee had not yet found anyone willing to undertake the work.

Notwithstanding the Committee's inability to get the project launched, fundraising was proceeding at an impressive pace. In April of 1890, the Committee reported that the "Ladies of St. Paul's Church Committee" had raised the formidable sum of \$1,313.26. The Vestry meeting, however, "heard with surprise" that the ladies' money was to be withheld until the exterior of the building was complete.⁴⁵ The Committee asked the ladies to reconsider. They did so – slowly – and in April of the following year a letter to the Committee from one Isabel Cole confirmed the transfer of \$1,401.15 (interest had accumulated) to the New Church Building Fund. Isabel Coles letter suggests that the transfer was not achieved without some acrimony:

*...it is not... any intimidation or threats that induced [in] us this conclusion but simply and entirely [a desire] for peace and quietness and with a hope that now, by our assistance, the men will no longer find any pretext for not doing their part.*⁴⁶

By the end of the year, a breakthrough had, at long last, been made. Just before the New Year, the Committee reported having carried the motion:

*...that Mr. Caleb Marshall be engaged to erect the new church at the rate of \$38.00 per month, the work to be pushed forward as speedily as possible after the 1st of March so long as money and lumber permit.*⁴⁷

Marshall, as builder of the church at Brooklyn (and soon the one at King's Cove), was eminently qualified for the job. It was further carried that Marshall's son, David Marshall, be engaged as Second Carpenter at the rate of \$1.00 per day.

43. Minutes of Vestry, November 26, 1891.

44. Minutes of Vestry, November 30, 1891.

45. Minutes of Vestry, April 21, 1890.

46. Minutes of Vestry, April 15, 1891.

47. Minutes of Vestry, December 30, 1891.

March 1 duly arrived, and the project's bad luck continued: Caleb Marshall was ill and in quarantine.⁴⁸ By late April, however, Marshall was well enough to attend Committee meetings, and work was underway. The following spring, work was evidently proceeding satisfactorily enough that a motion was carried "that Caleb Marshall & Son be kept at work as long as there is work to do and money to pay wages."⁴⁹ The first service had already been held in the incomplete church the previous Christmas. The finished church was consecrated on November 13, 1894.⁵⁰

It is not known whether the architect of St. Paul's, Stephen C. Earle (1839-1913), ever knew that his design for Digby (which had already been re-used at Windsor, Nova Scotia) was re-used in Newfoundland. According to the *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects*, Earle was based in Worcester, Massachusetts, and built churches and other public buildings over the course of his career. Among his major works were the Church of All Saints and the St. Matthias Episcopal Church, both in Worcester; and Grace Episcopal Church, Boston. According to Curtis Dahl, author of the architect's unpublished biography, Earle was born a Quaker and became a convert to Episcopalianism, a fact which would help to explain his close professional ties to that denomination.⁵¹ His design for the Anglican church in Digby was produced in time for that building to be completed by 1878 and consecrated two years later.⁵² After their purchase from the Rev. Ambrose in Digby, and subsequent use by Caleb Marshall in Trinity, Earle's original drawings for the church disappeared from view until a more than usually thorough cleaning effort in the 1990s uncovered them in the upper levels of the tower.⁵³ Today they are in the Trinity Historical Society Archives – signed by the architect, and clearly labeled "Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia."



6-39 – St. Paul's Church,
Trinity, Newfoundland,
from the south-west.

48. Minutes of Vestry, March 17, 1892.

49. Minutes of Vestry, April 20, 1893.

50. *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Consecration of St. Paul's Church, Trinity, 1894-1944*, Jubilee program, Trinity Historical Society Archives, Miscellaneous File 1.69, St. Paul's Church.

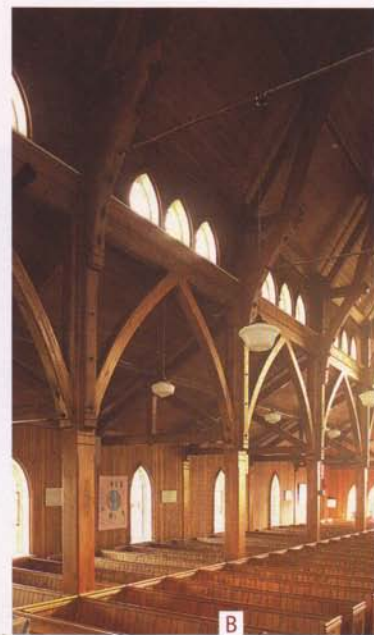
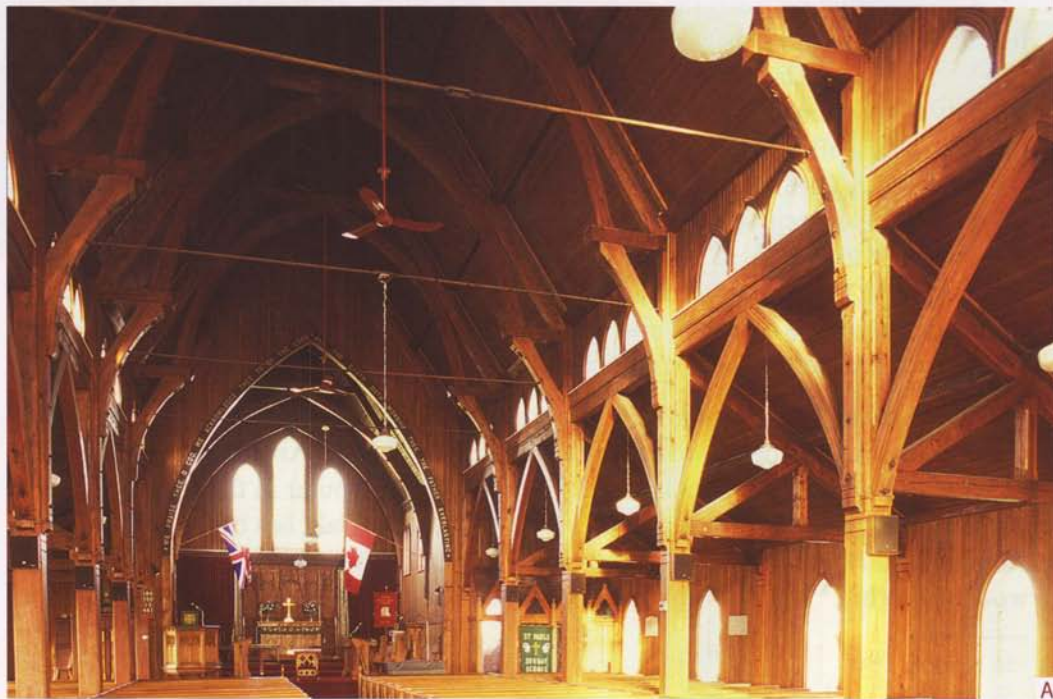
51. A typescript of Earle's biography is held in the Trinity Historical Society Archives, Miscellaneous File 1.69, St. Paul's Church.

52. Leslie Maitland, "Significant Examples of the Gothic Revival Style in Canadian Architecture", Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada Agenda Paper (Supplementary), 1990.

53. Personal communication with James Miller, Archivist, Trinity Historical Society Archives, July 2005.

The church as built (figure 6-39) consists of a nave with flanking aisles, two entrance porches at the west end of the nave, and a steeply pitched nave roof above somewhat shallower aisle roofs, with a small clerestory squeezed in between. The chancel, flanked by a vestry, has a separate, lower roofline. The tower is positioned at the south junction between the chancel and nave – just as at Marshall's earlier church at Brooklyn and his later one at King's Cove. Horizontal and vertical stripwork, painted in a darker colour, articulates architecturally significant divisions such as sill levels, the point of springing of the façade lancets, and bay divisions in the aisles. Most of the fenestration consists of lancets within triangular frames. A large rose window incorporating a six-pointed star occupies the west façade above triple lancets.

The interior of St. Paul's (figures 6-40 & 6-41) has the familiar open timber arcade, this time inflated to a monumental scale, with clerestory and hammerbeam roof. The main arcades, requiring beams far too thick to be easily bent into the shape of an arch, are constructed with the ingenious expedient of laminating several thin – and therefore pliable – boards together (figure 6-42). Among the most impressive interior details are the doors to the west porches (figure 6-43), which beautifully adapt the Early English Gothic conventions of attached shaft, moulded capital, and moulded arch to wood.



6-40 (A) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, nave interior.

6-41 (B) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, nave arcade.

6-42 (A) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, nave arcade detail.
6-43 (B) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, detail of door to north-west porch.

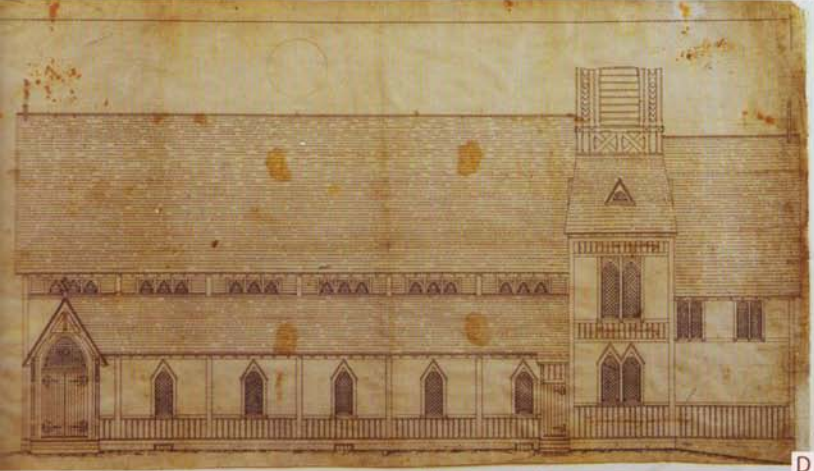
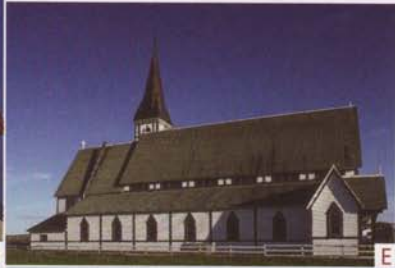


A comparison between the drawings and the church as built shows that Marshall followed Earle's plan closely, but not exactly (figures 6-44, 6-45 & 6-46). Marshall has added an additional lateral porch on the north side of the façade, and placed his entrances laterally (i.e., on the west side). Both use a mix of horizontal and diagonal clapboarding, although Marshall does not use vertical boarding in the lower wall. The south elevations (figures 6-47 & 6-48) are virtually identical, save for the alterations in the porch and Marshall's use of exclusively horizontal boarding. The details of the tower (figures 6-49 & 6-50) are also faithful to Earle's design. Earle's longitudinal and transverse sections (figures 6-51 & 6-52) were also followed closely by Marshall (figures 6-40 & 6-41), except for the slightly more elaborate east end intended by Earle. Marshall's clever expedient for the nave arcades seems to have been his own.

Taking the architect's nationality as a cue, the small amount of unpublished scholarly commentary on this design has tended to place it within an American context. Leslie Maitland⁵⁴ has looked for its origins in the Stick Style popular in the United States in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, while Curtis Dahl has called it "a carefully studied, highly sophisticated, and graceful design in the best tradition of American wooden Gothic."⁵⁵ The thin stripwork supports the connection to the Stick Style, as

54. Maitland, 1990.

55. Dahl, p. 55.



6-44 (A) – Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia, drawing of west façade by Stephen Earle.

Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church, Series 10: plans and drawings.

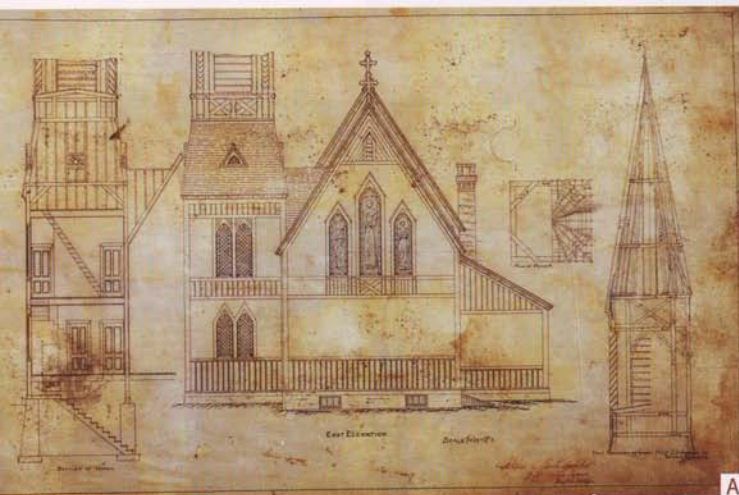
6-45 (B) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, west façade.

6-46 (C) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, from the south.

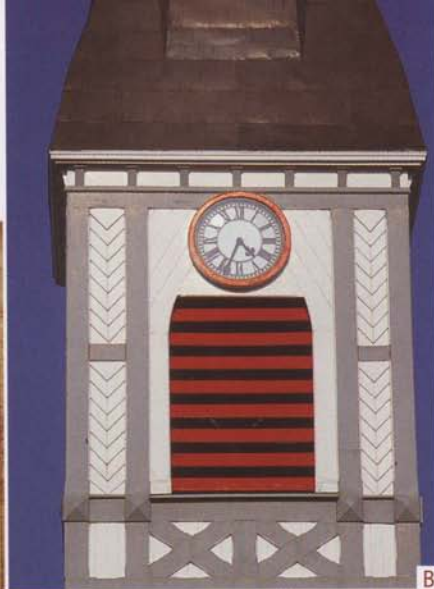
6-47 (D) – Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia, drawing of south elevation by Stephen Earle.

Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church, Series 10: plans and drawings.

6-48 (E) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, from the north.



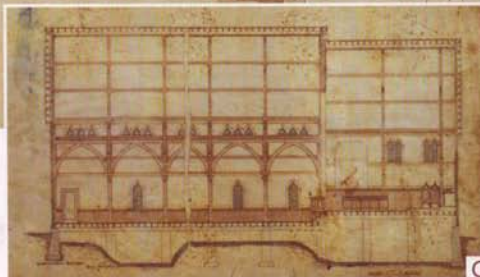
A



B



D



C

6-49 (A) – Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia, drawing of east façade and tower by Stephen Earle.

Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church, Series 10: plans and drawings.

6-50 (B) – St. Paul's Church, Trinity, Newfoundland, detail of tower.

6-51 (C) – Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia, drawing of longitudinal section by Stephen Earle.

Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church, Series 10: plans and drawings.

6-52 (D) – Trinity Church, Digby, Nova Scotia, drawing of transverse section by Stephen Earle.

Trinity Historical Society Archives: St. Paul's Church, Series 10: plans and drawings.

does the pseudo-timber frame appearance of the tower. Dahl points to Grace Episcopal Church, Boston, as a particular influence, citing features such as the flat exterior surfaces given texture by clapboard, the triangular headed windows, and the tall tower with a broach spire. In addition to the American context, however, it is crucial to appreciate the Anglican, Ecclesiological context that had already been present in Newfoundland for nearly half a century. In fact, every feature cited by Dahl has Ecclesiological precedent. The broad, flat wall surfaces enlivened by varied clapboarding are, arguably, a wooden equivalent to the High Victorian designs of William Butterfield – and were already used in Newfoundland by William Grey in the early 1850s at Forteau and Portugal Cove. The triangular-headed windows were also frequently used by Grey, and remained in use in Newfoundland long after his departure. A tall tower with a broach spire was planned for George Gilbert Scott's cathedral, and although it was never built, the form was dispersed as far as Greenspond and Birchy Cove. Moreover, Earle himself, both as an Episcopalian convert and an architect of Episcopalian churches, would have been fully aware of Ecclesiological principles that had been circulated by The New York Ecclesiological Society (of which Frank Wills, designer of Christ Church Cathedral and St. Anne's Chapel in Fredericton, was a founding member) and their periodical, *The New York Ecclesiologist*.⁵⁶ While St. Paul's may share some features with the Stick Style, its affinity with Ecclesiology – both the English theory and Newfoundland practice – were arguably more meaningful to its Newfoundland patrons.

Looking at the 1818 and 1892 versions of St. Paul's in Trinity (figures 1-3 & 6-39), the contrast between these two Anglican churches speaks volumes about the progress of the Gothic Revival in Newfoundland during what amounted to no more than the span of a single lifetime. J. Mordaunt Crook's claim – that by 1867 the Ecclesiologists had altered the appearance of every Anglican church in the world – may have been a bit premature for Newfoundland.⁵⁷ As William Grey had pointed out in *The Ecclesiologist*, the latest fashions always came a little late to the colony.⁵⁸ By the time Trinity's new St. Paul's was consecrated in 1894, however, this distant and difficult island – “the most inhospitable upon which the Caucasian race has permanently settled”, according to *The Ecclesiologist*⁵⁹ – seemed to have caught up.

56. On the spread of Ecclesiology in the United States, see Phoebe B. Stanton, *The Gothic Revival & American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste 1840-1856*, Baltimore and London: 1968.

57. J. Mordaunt Crook, *The Dilemma of Style*, London: 1987, p. 63.

58. Grey, “The Ecclesiology of Newfoundland.”

59. “Colonial Church Architecture. Chapter VI [sic.] S. John's Cathedral, Newfoundland.” *The Ecclesiologist*, volume 8, 1848, p. 279.



Conclusion

From the simple, historically inaccurate Gothic of Twillingate to the sophisticated assurance of the second (1892) church at Trinity, Newfoundland Gothic followed a trajectory that, to a point, mirrored developments in England. The buildings discussed in Chapter One (Harbour Grace, St. Thomas' in St. John's, Twillingate, Quidi Vidi, and the now demolished churches at Trinity and Fogo) were nominally Gothic in style, but Gothic in a superficial, historically uninformed sense. Like contemporary Commissioners' Gothic churches in England, they displayed no understanding of medieval Gothic as a structural or spatial system; in this early version of the Revival, Gothic is conceived merely as a decorative layer of pointed arches, pinnacles, and crenellations that may be applied to any architectural body. In England, this phase of the Gothic Revival ended with the arrival of Augustus Welby Pugin and the Ecclesiological Society in the second half of the 1830s. From that point on, Gothic was fueled by a firm belief in its moral superiority and founded on a sophisticated understanding of medieval prototypes.

This new understanding of Gothic arrived in Newfoundland with Bishop Edward Feild in 1844. Feild arrived as the Church of England was attempting to address a crisis in its colonial affairs, particularly in Newfoundland. Surrounded (as he believed) by ignorance, decadence, and Romanism, Feild needed to assert the presence and values of the Church of England in what was seen as an increasingly hostile environment. Supported intellectually by the Ecclesiological Society, and financially by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, Feild used architecture as one of his weapons in the fight against the moral debasement of Newfoundland. The disastrous fire of 1846, and the unexpected windfall of relief money diverted to the cathedral building fund, gave Feild the opportunity he needed to build a lasting and very public testament to Anglican High Church values. In George Gilbert Scott, he found the ideal architect for the cathedral. Scott was both completely fluent in the visual language of Gothic and fully committed to the principle that it was England's national style. Scott's cathedral, which despite numerous setbacks still stands largely as its architect intended, firmly established

the language of Ecclesiological Gothic in Newfoundland. Like its architectural and ecclesiastical cousin, Bishop John Medley's cathedral in Fredericton, New Brunswick, it was acknowledged by *The Ecclesiologist* to be a fully satisfactory embodiment of current architectural theories, and a worthy representation of the Mother Country and her established Church in the remote colony of Newfoundland.

Driven by a deep-seated fear of the colony's large Roman Catholic majority and their proactive, proselytizing priesthood (in particular Bishop Michael Fleming), Feild conducted a slow but determined campaign to spread Anglican influence by peppering his huge diocese with Anglican clergymen and Gothic churches. One of the first areas to be affected was the extremely remote geographical and spiritual frontier of Labrador, where William Hay's church at St. Francis Harbour was followed by William Grey's buildings at Forteau and Battle Harbour. Of these, only one (Battle Harbour) survives, one (Forteau) is known only from a single nineteenth-century drawing and an early twentieth-century photograph, and virtually nothing is known of the third except what can be inferred from the good reputation and expertise of its architect. Even from these fragments, however, it is clear that the latest Ecclesiological theory, as put forward in *The Ecclesiologist* and the pattern book *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica*, was being carefully studied and rigorously applied, as far as means and materials available allowed. An unmistakably English, Anglican presence was being systematically spread to some of the remotest parts of the colony. That St. James' at Battle Harbour looks very little like Scott's cathedral in St. John's – and even less like Canterbury Cathedral – is beside the point. It is the entire interconnected web of buildings, theories, drawings, and Ecclesiological ideology that make St. James' every bit as English and Gothic as, for example, the medieval church of St. Michael, Long Stanton.

Gothic churches continued to proliferate throughout Feild's episcopate, which Shane O'Dea has called “the great era of Newfoundland Anglicanism.”¹ Some, like St. Andrew's at Brooklyn, were small but exquisitely detailed; others, like St. George's at Brigus, were relatively large and architecturally ambitious. Still others, like St. John the Evangelist in Topsail, were simple, unassuming, honest examples of unsophisticated but sound carpentry. The stamp of Ecclesiology is nevertheless unmistakably on all of them. Like their English counterparts, Newfoundland builders had learned to adapt what were believed to be the essentials of their medieval prototypes to modern needs and abilities.

Having done so, English Gothic Revival architects continually sought to enlarge their palette of forms. Newfoundland Gothic, however, settled into a more familiar

1. “The Design of God's Place: St. George's Anglican Church, Brigus”, interpretive text panel on-site at St. George's.

pattern. For all its sophistication, the fundamental architectural elements of the church built at Trinity in 1892 (Ecclesiologically correct planning, massing, and details; the use of both horizontal and diagonal clapboarding; triangular-headed windows) had all been used in the small and remote church at Forteau, Labrador, forty years earlier. Inspired by the writings of A.J.B. Beresford Hope and the buildings of architects such as Butterfield, Street, and William Burges, High Victorian Gothic of the later nineteenth century in England became increasingly eclectic, experimental, and, relative to its earlier, more imitative phase, unrecognizable. By contrast, Newfoundland Gothic evolved only gradually and slightly to a greater sophistication and scale in using essentially the stylistic vocabulary developed by William Grey in the 1850s.

This should not come as a surprise. High Victorian architecture in England carried the immense burden of being expected to create a distinctive and definitive nineteenth-century style. As the century drew to a close, architects and critics such as George Aitchison (1825-1910) despaired over what they considered to be the era's failure to match the achievement of great civilizations of the past – that is, the creation of its own unique architectural style.² While this seems slightly absurd to modern eyes – no one who is architecturally literate could ever mistake Butterfield's All Saints, Margaret Street, or Scott's St. Pancras Hotel, for anything built in any era but the Victorian – it reflects the profound intellectual and artistic restlessness of the Victorian architectural community. No such restlessness existed in Newfoundland, where Gothic had a far easier job to do. The objective in Newfoundland was to assimilate the principles of Ecclesiology, adapt them as necessary to the locally available material (wood) and to the skill level of local craftsmen, and to produce buildings that would be clear and vivid statements of the principles they embodied. Those principles were initially established by Bishop Feild's magnificent stone cathedral by 1850. The adaptations required by local circumstances were largely worked out by William Grey (with help from the Ecclesiological Society) by the end of the 1850s, both by positive example (the wooden churches at Forteau, Portugal Cove, and Battle Harbour) and negative example (the short-lived stone church at Hermitage Bay). Having arrived at a solution to the problem of creating a "national" style of architecture in wood (see Chapter Five), later Newfoundland Gothic would include increased elaboration and scale, as well as adaptation to a slightly different building type in the mortuary chapel, but little stylistic innovation. This is not a criticism; it merely reflects the fact that much (possibly most) architecture simply expands to fill the space created by its patron's needs, no less and no more.

2. On Aitchison's commentaries, see J. Mordaunt Crook "Groping in the Dark: George Aitchison and the Burden of History", in *The Architect's Secret: Victorian Critics and the Image of Gravity*, London: 2003, 11-34.

That does not mean, however, that later Gothic churches in Newfoundland are rote repetitions of a formula learned from the Ecclesiological Society. No stylistic prescription can fully account for the shape of the tower at King's Cove, or the dado arcade in the chancel at Brooklyn, the wooden door at Trinity, or the dramatically crisp massing of the façade that rises above the rocks and gravestones at Newtown. Indeed, the very method of construction at many Newfoundland churches, in which a paid professional foreman oversaw a team of local volunteers (see Chapter Six), virtually guaranteed that no two buildings would look exactly alike. They are a blend of imported doctrine and local sensibilities and circumstances – as *The Ecclesiologist*, in calling for adaptation of Gothic to local needs in the colonies, acknowledged they would have to be.³

Along with increased scale and sophistication, there was a change in the professional and social environments of later Newfoundland Gothic. Gone were the days when, as *The Ecclesiologist* and William Grey had declared, the clergyman would have to be his own architect. Trinity was designed by an experienced professional architect who could produce a complete set of working drawings. Its builder was an accomplished craftsman and church-builder in mid-career. The image of J.J. Curling, bravely grafting Ecclesiology onto the hyperborean wilderness in the teeth of adversity, seems by this time out of date. There was a change in the religious climate within the Anglican community as well. Edward Feild had had to hide his sympathies for the Cambridge Camden Society, as if they were a criminal organization. The year after Trinity was completed, D.W. Prowse reported that Low Church clergymen, ubiquitous in the time of Bishop Spencer, had become rare in the diocese.⁴ The sense of adversity and struggle that seemed to accompany every aspect of church-building in Feild's time had abated. Ecclesiology had won the day.

Any study such as the present one follows certain avenues of enquiry, and in so doing encounters tantalizing opportunities for alternative paths which may be acknowledged, but cannot be pursued. Perhaps the most compelling of these in the present case is the tradition of Roman Catholic architecture which grew up in Newfoundland alongside the Anglican one. In a sense, one of the most important buildings in the present study is the Roman Catholic Cathedral (now Basilica) in St. John's. The spectre of this building had alarmed Archdeacon Wix even before a single stone was laid; its growing shadow filled Archdeacon Bridge with concern and contempt; its relatively rapid and apparently effortless progress dismayed Bishop Feild as he struggled to erect a comparably

3. The major exception is Trinity, the one instance in which a design from elsewhere was imported and executed with very few changes.

4. Prowse, p. 443.

monumental Anglican rebuttal. Once complete, it stood as a mighty public symbol of the presence of the Roman Catholic community in Newfoundland, as indeed it still does.⁵ As discussed briefly in Chapter Five, Newfoundland's Roman Catholic architecture forged its own distinctive identity, sometimes by following the Classical lead of the Basilica (as at the first cathedral at Harbour Grace or the parish church at Brigus), sometimes by adopting its own unique and unmistakable Gothic idiom (at the current cathedral at Harbour Grace and at St. Patrick's in Carbonear). Clearly, architecture was just as potent a symbol of identity for Roman Catholics as it was for Anglicans. A detailed understanding of the aspirations and sources of Catholic church-building in Newfoundland awaits a close study of archival, periodical, and architectural evidence that is doubtless spread across Newfoundland, Ireland, and Rome. Such an investigation would certainly yield rich rewards, and provide a fascinating and illuminating counterpoint to the Anglican story told here.

Similarly, Newfoundland is but one of many case studies that could be undertaken in the proliferation of Gothic throughout the British Empire. R.C. Carpenter's model wooden church in *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* was drawn not for Newfoundland or even New Brunswick (where its influence was more strongly felt), but for Tristan da Cunha; the series of articles on colonial church architecture in *The Ecclesiologist* included discussions of Australia and Calcutta as well as Newfoundland and New Brunswick. The underlying rationale for all colonial Gothic was presumably the same: Gothic was a visual language that was recognizably and demonstrably both Christian and English, to use George Gilbert Scott's words (see Chapter Four). Yet the local circumstances of patronage, economics, and craftsmanship, as well as the hugely varied social contexts into which colonial Gothic was introduced, have been explored in almost none of these places. The sun may finally have set on the British Empire, but to this day it never sets on English Gothic. Many undoubtedly extraordinary stories wait to be told.

Newfoundland Gothic is thus but one chapter in the much broader history of how a particular architectural style was spread and adapted around the world in the service of a mighty imperial power and its Established Church. Thanks to unique geographical, climatic, social, and economic challenges, the Newfoundland chapter is a tale full of sound and fury (although I hope this book has affirmed the inapplicability of the rest of Macbeth's famous line). It is a story still told by the pointed arches and spires that rise above the arid rocks and turbulent waters of Newfoundland.

5. Anecdotally, there are Roman Catholics in St. John's today who maintain that The Rooms – the enormous provincial archives/museum/art gallery that now dominates the city's skyline – were sited in their present location specifically to diminish the visual impact and presence of the Basilica.



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