

*This Church is of my Invention for Leeds in Yorkshire.*

1 – William Halfpenny, design for a church in Leeds, Yorkshire (1723?, unexecuted)  
engraving in *The Art of Sound Building* (London, 1725)

# William Halfpenny's designs for an 'Early Christian' cathedral at Waterford

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TERRY FRIEDMAN

**B**OUND IN A MANUSCRIPT ALBUM DECEPTIVELY ENTITLED *Miscellaneous Antique Prints 1737*, in the Royal Institute of British Architects Drawings Collection, is a precious set of nine presentation drawings associated with an ambitious project for a new Protestant cathedral at Waterford City in 1739.<sup>1</sup> They represent an approach to cathedral design in the eighteenth century, in itself a rare occurrence, dominated by the classical language of architecture which would have made such a building, had it been realised, unique in Britain in its day, and of an austerity uncommon even by Protestant standards. Moreover, a majority of the drawings incorporate the unprecedented and astonishing feature of a separate baptismal building attached to the west end of the nave. They were drawn by William Halfpenny (?-1755), an interesting minor figure in the mid-Georgian building world, whose career as a practising architect is shrouded in mystery and who seems to have enjoyed only tenuous connections with Ireland. Nor is anything recorded about the circumstances surrounding the new cathedral commission itself, so that any reconstruction of the event must be a matter of some speculation. In this article I suggest that these designs went beyond both Halfpenny's own architectural experience and the parochial visions of much contemporary British ecclesiastical architecture; that they represent ideas based on the liturgy and layout of the early Christian church on the Continent, and so help place Irish church building of the early Georgian period in the wider arena of western architecture and the revival of Antiquity (in the way that Irish domestic building at the same time was stimulated by Richard Castle, an other interloper); and that this unconventional, cosmopolitan experiment was promoted by an Irish clerical triumvirate in a unique position to recall the distant past in such an extraordinary way.<sup>2</sup> This complex story, as I imagine it might have unfolded, therefore, is best begun at the beginning.

Of Halfpenny's birth date and place, and his private life, we know nothing. He sometimes used the alias Michael Hoare. By 1725 he was describing himself as an 'Architect and Carpenter'.<sup>3</sup> He is recorded working in Leeds, London, Bristol,

and on two occasions in Ireland, but during a long career apparently succeeded in erecting few buildings. Perhaps his finest extant work is Cooper's Hall (1743-44) in Bristol.<sup>4</sup> A small body of carefully rendered architectural drawings also survive, among which those for Waterford are arguably the most important. Halfpenny was also an accomplished topographical artist, as is revealed in a perspective view, dated 1742, of Redland Chapel, Bristol (1740-43), on which he completed the construction after the death in 1740 of its architect, John Strahan.<sup>5</sup> However, Halfpenny's reputation during and after his lifetime rested on the eighteen architectural manuals published between 1724 and 1757, sometimes in collaboration with Timothy Lightoler, Robert Morris and a relative named John Halfpenny.<sup>6</sup> These deal in buildings in a variety of fashionable and often bizarre styles,

With angles, curves, and zigzag lines,  
From *Half-penny's* exact designs<sup>7</sup>

They are almost entirely domestic in type. Churches appear to have played a very minor role in his career, yet it is significant that the first thing we know about him is in connection with church work.

On 8 May 1723, Halfpenny received £1 11s 6d as payment for drawings for a proposed new church at Leeds in Yorkshire; though rejected, he published a perspective of the design two years later (Plate 1).<sup>8</sup> This was one of the earliest reflections in northern England of current metropolitan thinking on advanced classical church design, in particular the treatment of the rectangular body as a modified Antique temple. Modern churches adopting ancient forms (of which James Gibbs's St Martin-in-the-Fields in London (1720-26) was then the outstanding example),<sup>9</sup> and also the conversion of pagan temples to Christian worship, were enormously attractive ideas among architects and churchmen alike. These ideas were given historical authority by modern commentators on the early Church, who believed that such transformed buildings 'became another thing from what they were in former ages, that is, more noble and stately edifices, more rich and beautiful'.<sup>10</sup> An equivalent architectural authority had long been established in the beautiful example of the Temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome (second century BC), which became the church of St Mary the Egyptian in the ninth century, and was well represented in Andrea Palladio's *I Quattro Libri* (Venice 1570) and in its most recent English edition published in 1715-20.<sup>11</sup> Robert Morris, Halfpenny's sometime collaborator, advanced the notion that buildings alone contain the 'sacred Deity' and that

It is this which has set Men at work on Temples and publick Places of Worship, not only that they might, by the Magnificence of the Building, invite the Deity to reside within it [but because it] opens the Mind to vast Conceptions, and fits it to converse with the Divine of the Place; for every

thing that is majestick, imprints an Awfulness and Reverence on the Mind of the Beholder, and strikes it with the natural Greatness of the Soul.

Palladio is praised for his

indefatigable Care and Industry [in collecting] the never-dying Remains of [Antiquity's] endless Glories ... How great is his Manner, how elevated his Ideas, and how bold in the Execution, is best discovered in those noble Productions he left as Examples for our Imitation... In them we see the lively Images of Antiquity rising from Heaps of Ruins, where all the Lustre of Beauty and Art conspire to raise our Sentiments and Ideas to that height, that we may easily perceive the immense difference between those ancient beautiful Productions, and the lame and disorder'd Performances of our Moderns.<sup>12</sup>

Equivalent critical comparisons were made by the architectural writer, James Ralph, who measured Nicholas Hawksmoor's churches, which 'are not to be looked at without displeasure. They are mere Gothique heaps of stone, without form or order, and meet with contempt from the best and worst tastes alike', against Inigo Jones's Tuscan temple-form church of St Paul, Covent Garden, which 'is, without a rival, one of the most perfect pieces of architecture that the art of man can produce'.<sup>13</sup> Halfpenny cites St Paul's in his first publication, *Practical Architecture* (London 1724) as a demonstration of the correct use of the classical order, and his own subsequent architectural programme relied heavily on Palladio and the English Palladians.<sup>14</sup>

This, then, is the general architectural background of the Waterford Cathedral commission. The specific sources of Halfpenny's designs are a veritable minefield since it is unlikely that he travelled abroad and no record exists of his library or the architectural and travel books he may have consulted, though as an architectural writer some such items were undoubtedly available to him. However, there can be little doubt that he was guided in his selection of models by Thomas Milles (1671-1740), the Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, and his two Grand Touring nephews – Jeremiah Milles (1714-84), the precentor of Waterford between 1737 and 1744 (later Dean of Exeter and President of the Society of Antiquaries of London), and Richard Pococke (1704-65), the vice-general of the Waterford and Lismore diocese between 1734 and 1744 (later Bishop of Ossory and Meath).<sup>15</sup> Though little is known about the bishop's architectural interests – he was a subscriber to Gibbs's *A Book of Architecture* (London 1728) – it is significant that he had been Regius professor of Greek at Oxford in 1705-6 and published an edition of the works of the early Christian St Cyril of Jerusalem, *S. Patris nostri Cyrilli* (London 1703).

More enlightening for us are the observations made by Jeremiah Milles dur-

ing an English building tour in 1735. He was particularly curious about the condition and treatment of old cathedrals and churches. At Cambridge he found the Gothic St Mary-the-Great ‘a very handsome church on ye outside, but ... very slovenly within’, and condemned the practice where the congregation stood in the nave ‘promiscuously’. The majestic chapel at King’s was ‘one of ye finest Gothic buildings in ye world ... ye inside exceeds ye outside’, and only the ‘meanness’ of the altarpiece, ‘a little wooden screne with two or three strips of silk put upon it ... takes of very much from ye beauty’. Norwich Cathedral was ‘a stately, & very Beautiful Gothic building on ye outside [but] ye inside ... is dark, & not at all answerable’. At Peterborough the choir ‘is now repairing, & new seating; and a new organ putting up; so yt. it will be very beautiful when it is finished’.<sup>16</sup> Another visitor to Peterborough in 1735 reported in more detail that the authorities ‘are laying out large Sums in repairing and adorning... The Throne, Stalls and Pews are just made new, of deal painted, they are very plain and decent’, and that the choir ‘is really very elegant, more than can truly be said of any other part of the Church’,<sup>17</sup> while a contemporary poem entitled ‘On the Dean and Chapter beautifying the Inside of the Cathedral Church of Peterborough’ stressed that it was

Embellished outwardly with stately shew,  
But left to be adorned within by you.<sup>18</sup>

Bishop Milles may have entertained a similar rehabilitation of the medieval fabric at Waterford. Since the Reformation, ecclesiastical buildings throughout Ireland had suffered terrible iconoclasm and destruction; by the mid-eighteenth century twenty-two of the thirty-one churches in the Protestant diocese of Waterford still remained ruinous.<sup>19</sup> Irish churchmen bitten by building fever would have found, like Eusebius, the fourth-century bishop of Caesarea and author of the celebrated *History of the Church*, an ‘inexpressible joy and a kind of celestial gladness’ in proclaiming those churches which had been restored from the ruins wrought by the ‘Irreligion of the Tyrants’, and perhaps even associated themselves with Eusebius’s famous panegyric oration on Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, who, having restored his cathedral to ‘the stateliest Fabrick amongst all the Churches within the Country of Phoenicia’, was called ‘a new Besellel, the Architect of the holy Tabernacle; or another Solomon, King of a new, and far more excellent Jerusalem ... in regard You have added a far greater splendour to the Temple of God, than it had before’.<sup>20</sup>

Among the drawings in the RIBA album is ‘A General Plan of Christ Church Waterford’, signed ‘Wm. Halfpenny 1739’,<sup>21</sup> and an identical engraving inscribed ‘The Ichnography of the Cathedral Church of the Holy and undivided Trinity in Waterford’, while three related perspective drawings, signed ‘William Halfpenny 1739’ and dedicated to Bishop Milles, are in the National Library of Ireland,

Dublin.<sup>22</sup> They appear to be a record of the medieval building made in anticipation of a major restoration. But within the year, Milles had decided to build anew.

Why and how Halfpenny was chosen for this important enterprise remains a mystery. Bristol, where he had settled probably already by 1731, and Waterford were mutual trading ports across St George's Channel,<sup>23</sup> and news of his activities, particularly in connection with the proposed Bristol Exchange and Market, the most prestigious public building in the town, may have reached Bishop Milles's ears.<sup>24</sup> But Halfpenny was already known in Ireland. In 1732 he had designed a Horse Barrack for the 1st Viscount Hillsborough at Hillsborough, Co Down,<sup>25</sup> and a small group of prospects of Irish cathedrals in the RIBA album, similar to those for Waterford, mentioned above, bear the initials W.H. and dates of 1738 and 1739.<sup>26</sup> The album also contains six drawings for stately Palladian town mansions, each with a plan and elevation presented, like the Waterford Cathedral drawings, in pattern book fashion, complete with ruled scales; one is annotated 'This Building may be Executed for 850 pounds', another 'This Design may be Executed for 1400 pounds' and signed 'Wm. Halfpenny delin 1739'. These are most likely proposals for a new bishop's palace to be built next to the cathedral.<sup>27</sup> So, Halfpenny was involved in several different but connected ecclesiastical enterprises, any one of which might have brought him to the city in the last years of the 1730s.

Of the nine sheets in the album devoted to designs for new churches, seven (ff. 1-3, 6-8 and 14) form a homogeneous group of alternative schemes which are probably correctly associated with the proposed cathedral. They are for structures measuring overall from 84 by 140 feet (ff. 1-2) to 75 by 176 feet (f 8) to 105 by 166 feet (f 7), comparable in size to the royal parish church of St Martin-in-the-Fields (80 by 170 feet). In all but Plate 7, the vestries are semi-detached blocks placed outside the nave walls in order to maximise the congregational seating space, which is accommodated in from twenty-four to thirty-three double rows of box pews. In Plates 9-11 these are arranged in the form of a Greek cross, with the central area rising into a flattened or saucer dome.<sup>28</sup> These pew-packed spaces bring to mind Joseph Bingham's description of early Christian churches as 'the peoples' oratory, because the people chiefly filled this place, having their different stations or apartments in it, according to the difference of age, or sex, or quality, or state and condition'.<sup>29</sup> Several of the designs (Plates 6, 8, 10) feature prominent enclosures towards or in the north-east corners of the nave, which I take to designate the bishop's throne. Finally, all the drawings in this group have separate baptismal buildings, the salient idea of the episcopal project. Since at some later date these drawings were evidently rearranged and bound arbitrarily, for purposes of the present discussion a more appropriate sequence has been adopted: folio 14 (which is the simplest of the designs and the only sheet bearing the architect's signature and 1739 date), followed

by folios 3, 8, 1-2, 7 and 6. Two other drawings (ff. 4-5) previously associated with the cathedral I am inclined to consider as schemes apart. The letter designations on the plan in Plate 3 relate to an accompanying key which cannot now be traced, and suggests that the set is incomplete. All but one of the drawings (f 1, a less detailed copy of the plan in f 2) are reproduced in this article, most for the first time.<sup>30</sup>

There are good reasons to treat folios 4 and 5 independently (Plates 2, 3). They are for smaller, modest buildings, measuring 114 by 63 feet and 80 by 34 feet, respectively, and containing no more than thirteen rows of pews, hardly of cathedral stature. Instead of the prerequisite baptismal building they have a tower at the west end. The short octagonal steeple rising from a slender porch in Plate 2 particularly has the look of a parochial church.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps they relate to another of Thomas Milles's building enterprises. Charles Smith, writing between 1744 and 1746, records that St Olave, Waterford, consecrated on 29 July 1734, was rebuilt by the bishop so that the inhabitants 'might have a convenient and decent place to offer up their morning and evening devotions to God', and described it as

quite plain on the outside, except a handsome Door Case, over which is a Pediment. The inside is very neat, the Floor ... paved with black and white Marble; that of the Chancel is handsomely inlaid with Wood in several geometrical Figures. The Altar-Piece consists of four fluted Pillars of the *Corinthian Order*, two on each side of the East Window; over which is an handsome carved Freeze and Cornice. The Bishop's Throne and Pulpit are of Oak, and the Carving of both well executed. The Seats are so disposed, as that the whole Congregation can only face the East ... The Seats of the Windows are of black Marble, as are also the Steps leading to the Chancel.<sup>32</sup>

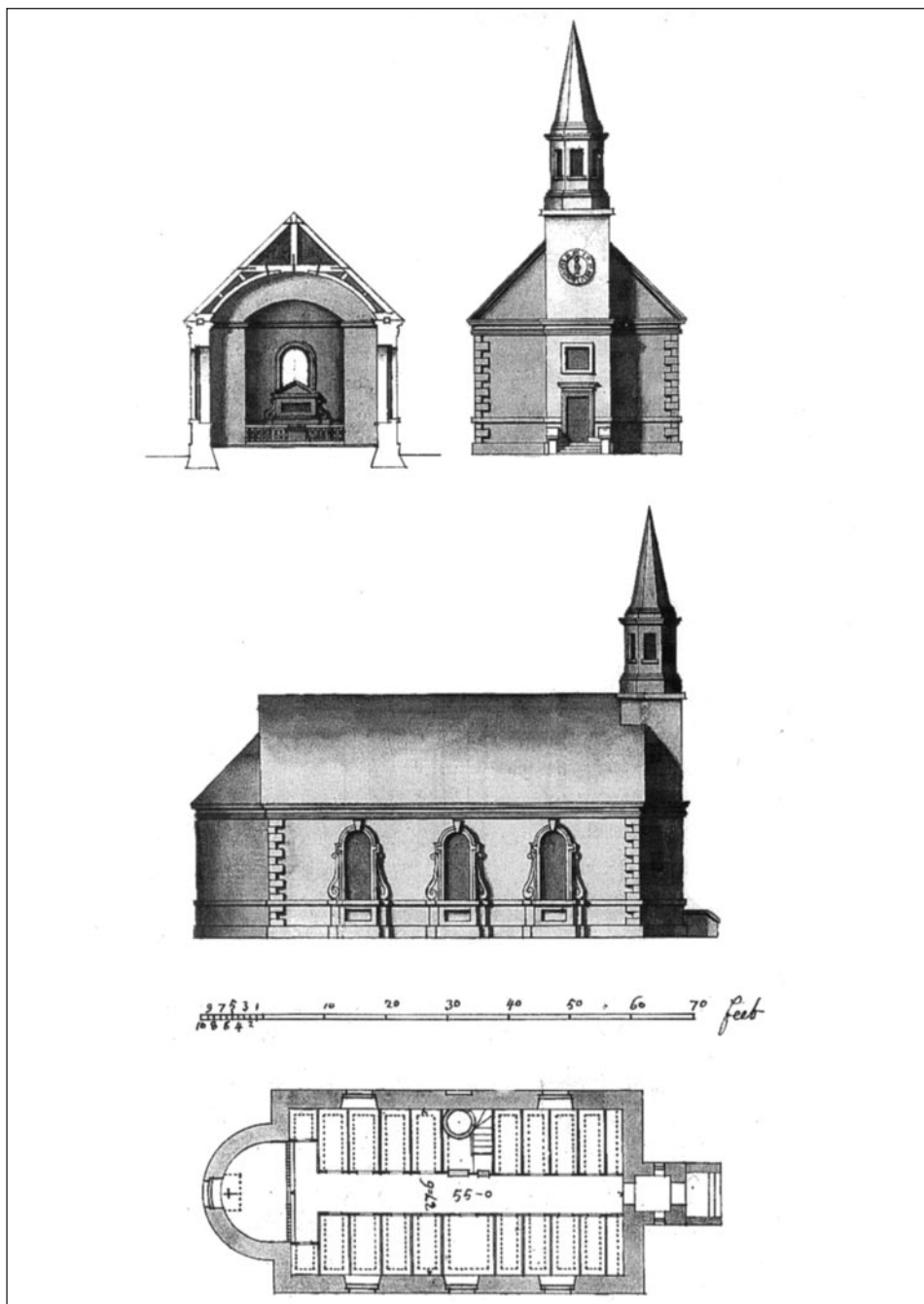
Richard Pococke reported that Milles also rebuilt nearby St Patrick's.<sup>33</sup> Smith described it as

a plain building ... The inside is well pewed, and the seats disposed in the same manner as at St. *Olave's* ... The floor is layed with marble. There is a handsome Altar-Piece, on which is a painted Glory by *Vander-Egan's* well performed.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, Youghal church, Co Cork, was 'roofed & covered by Bishop Milles, but all the Protestant inhabitants leaving the Parish it was not finished'.<sup>35</sup>

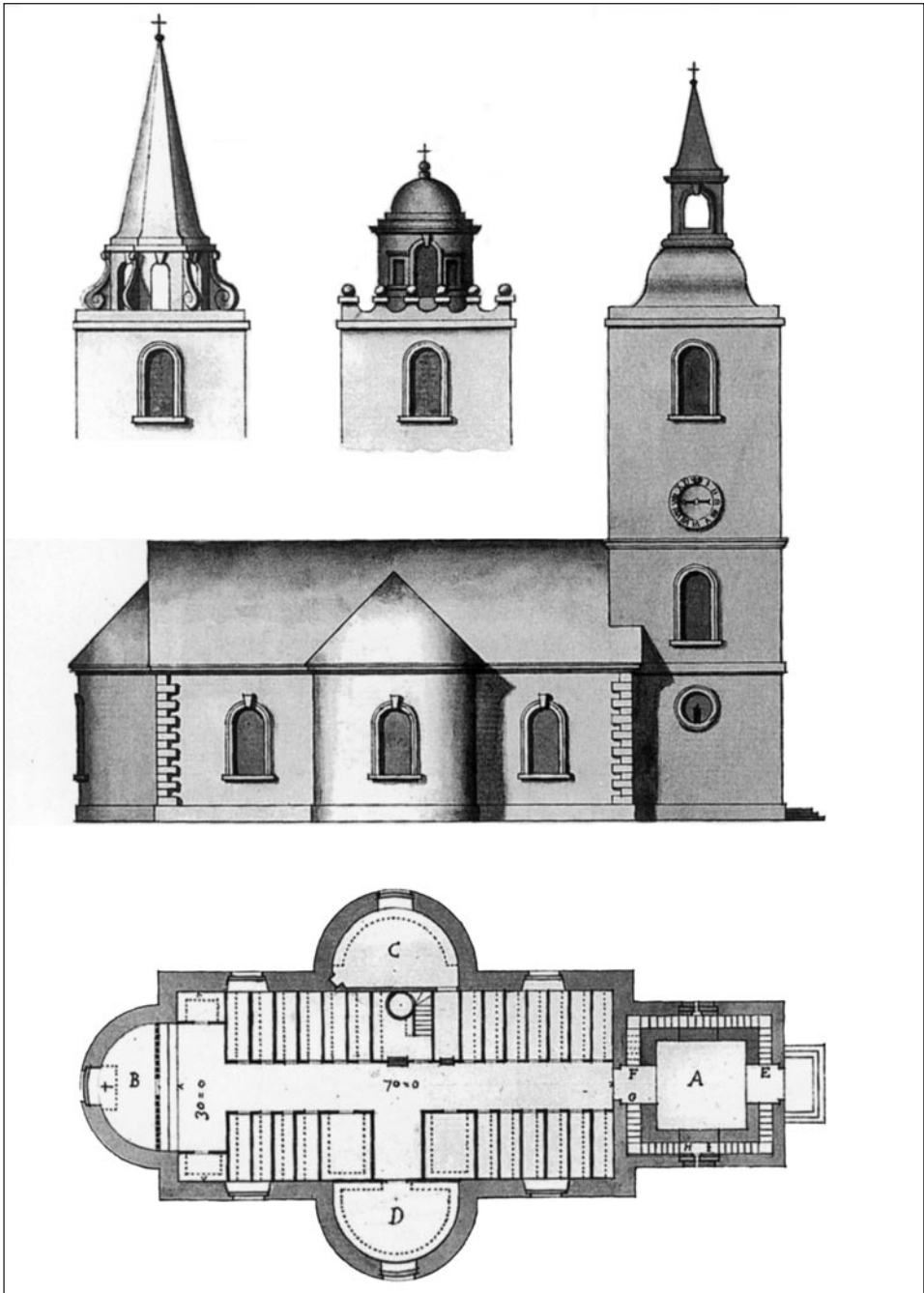
In Plate 2 the windows enriched with shouldered architraves and scrolled frames (motifs also found in Plates 10, 11) recall the treatment of the chancel window of St Mary's, Dublin (1701-3, designed by Sir William Robinson); another work by the same architect, the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham (1680-87), may have been the model for the Y-traceried windows in several of the Waterford cathedral





2 – William Halfpenny, design for a church (1739?, unexecuted)  
(The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, Shelf B3, f 5)

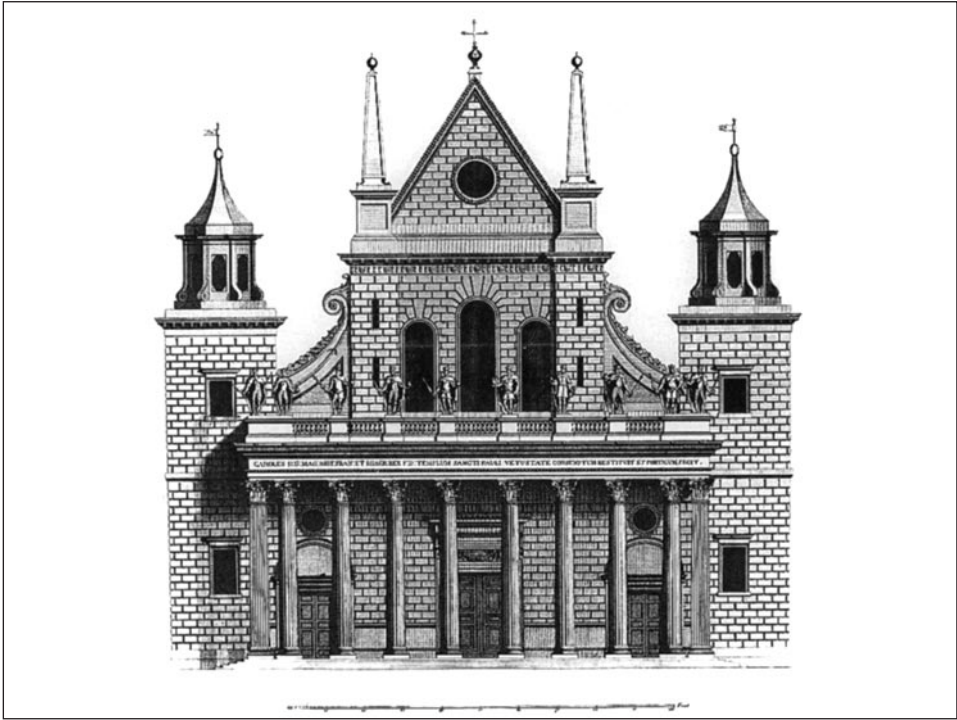




3 – William Halfpenny, design for a church (1739?, unexecuted)  
(The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 4)

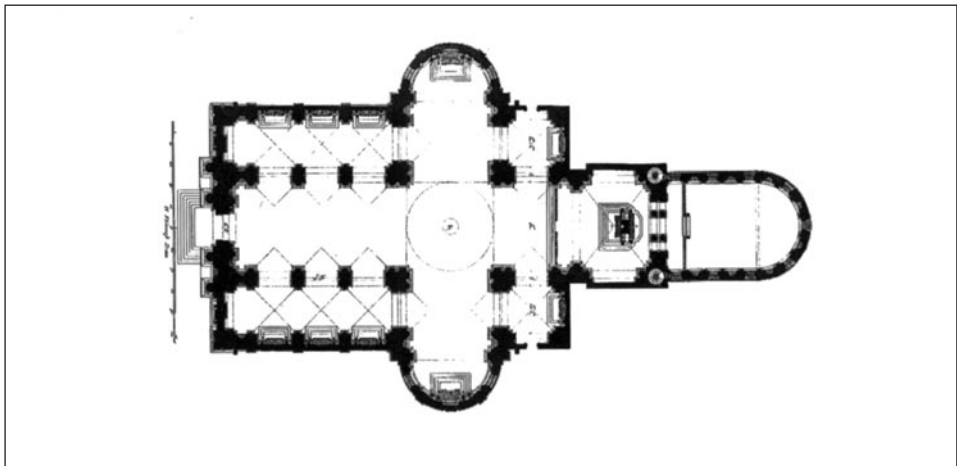
designs. These features hint at the possibility that Halfpenny self-consciously introduced such anachronisms in order to give a familiar Irishness to his designs.<sup>36</sup>

Plate 3 is a more heroic classical concept. Of the three alternative designs for the steeple, one has a miniature Venetian window fortified by Venetian ball-crenelation, motifs recently popularised by Lord Burlington at his Villa at Chiswick (c 1725-29),<sup>37</sup> and another is crowned by an octagonal, scroll-bracketed spire based on a detail of an engraving published in William Kent's *The Designs of Inigo Jones* (London, 1727) of the west front (1633-42) of the pre-fire St Paul's Cathedral (Plate 4). Halfpenny's window surrounds also probably derive from this print. His commitment here to a Palladian vocabulary is powerfully expressed in the trilobed plan, where the semicircular shape of the chancel (marked B) is repeated as projecting vestry-rooms (C and D) in the middle of the side elevations, an arrangement reminiscent of Palladio's S Giorgio Maggiore in Venice (begun 1566), the only one of his churches to appear in Kent's publication (Plate 5). The derivative nature of Halfpenny's scheme should not, however, mitigate its originality. Though the advertisement in the *Designs* praised St Giorgio as 'so deservedly admired by all good Architects', it found few Protestant advocates, and Halfpenny appears to have been the only Briton to have used it in this particular way. Yet it hardly seems coincidental that Palladio's own description of St Giorgio as a 'laudable' example of 'strength and perpetuity', qualities sought in church buildings 'since they are dedicated to the omnipotent and supreme God', should be quoted in Isaac Ware's *The Four Books of Andrea Palladio's Architecture*, which appeared fortuitously in 1738.<sup>38</sup> Halfpenny translated this into an austere geometry in which not only ornament but the classical order played no part. While this treatment may have been dictated by financial constraints, it was, too, an ideal of the Anglo-Palladian church: recall Ralph's evocation a few years earlier of Jones's St Paul, Covent Garden where 'nothing can possibly be imagined more simple'.<sup>39</sup> The Waterford churchmen, perhaps alert to the close proximity of Lord Burlington's estate at Lismore, within sight of its cathedral,<sup>40</sup> were also admirers of this advanced architecture. For example, in 1734 Jeremiah Milles wrote to his uncle from northern Italy about the 'great number of very agreeable country houses ... most of which are in Palladio's taste, & some I believe built by him', particularly along the Brenta, where he saw 'a great number of very beautiful country houses of Palladio's architecture'.<sup>41</sup> In the following year, back in England, Jeremiah described the newly built Palladian-style parish church of Blandford Forum in Dorset as being in a 'very genteel taste ... there are few in England exceed it'.<sup>42</sup> Not surprisingly, Palladian features crop-up in some of the Waterford Cathedral drawings: the Diocletian windows in the pediments and bell turret of Plate 11, and the blocked-architrave (or Gibbs-surround) windows and doors of Plate 9. The latter features prominently in Gibbs's *A Book of Architecture*



4 – Inigo Jones, *St Paul's Cathedral, London (1633-42), west front*  
(in William Kent, *The Designs of Inigo Jones (London, 1727), ii, pl. 55*)

5 – Andrea Palladio, *S Giorgio Maggiore, Venice (begun 1566), plan*  
(in William Kent, *The Designs of Inigo Jones (London, 1727), ii, pl. 57*)

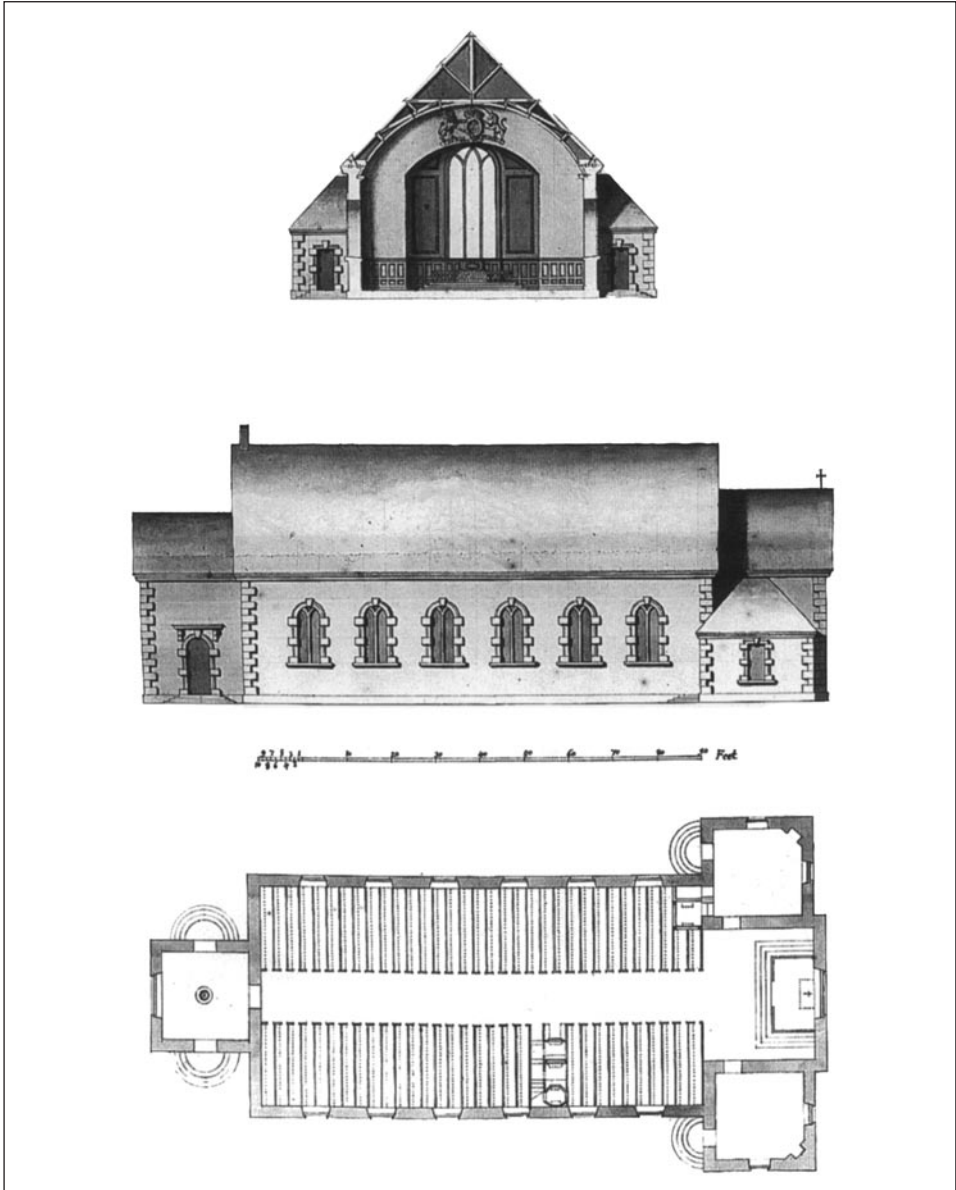


(1728), a copy of which Bishop Milles owned, but it is interesting that Halfpenny had already in 1724 identified the motif as 'A Rustic Door from Palladio, much used by the Modern Architects'.<sup>43</sup> Generally, however, the plain and at times primitive appearance of the Waterford designs is due to other and more unexpected but equally potent classicising traditions of the past, represented above all by the religious architecture of early Christianity.

Jeremiah Milles and Richard Pococke, his travelling companion in Italy in 1734, visited a remarkably well preserved group of fourth and fifth centuries ecclesiastical buildings in Ravenna, which had been the western capitol of the early Christian emperors. There they saw the tomb of Galla Placidia (c 425) and two rectangular churches with simple, apsidal-shaped chancels: S Apollinare Nuova (c 490), Theodoric's palace church, 'remarkable for ye Mosaich all along each side of [the] nave above ye pillars', and S Apollinare at Classe (532-49), where the nave 'is supported by 24 Composite marble pillars, with Gothick Capitals'.<sup>44</sup> By the 1730s, a rich and varied literature existed in the English language devoted to these 'first churches', as they were called by Joseph Bingham in *Origines Ecclesiasticae: or, the Antiquities of the Christian Church* (London, 1711).<sup>45</sup> They were 'simple and plain' buildings, according to Bingham, and he quoted the passage concerning Isidore of Pelusium's desire

to have lived in those days, when there were no such beautiful temples, but yet the Church was crowded with divine and heavenly graces, than in these days, when temples are adorned with all kinds of marbles, but the Church is deprived of all those spiritual gifts.<sup>46</sup>

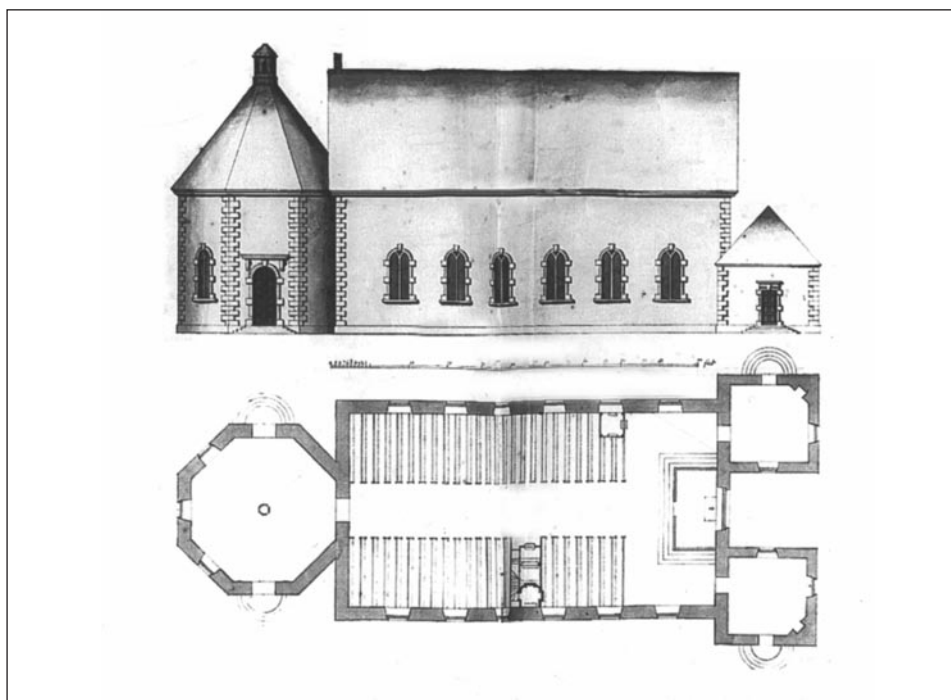
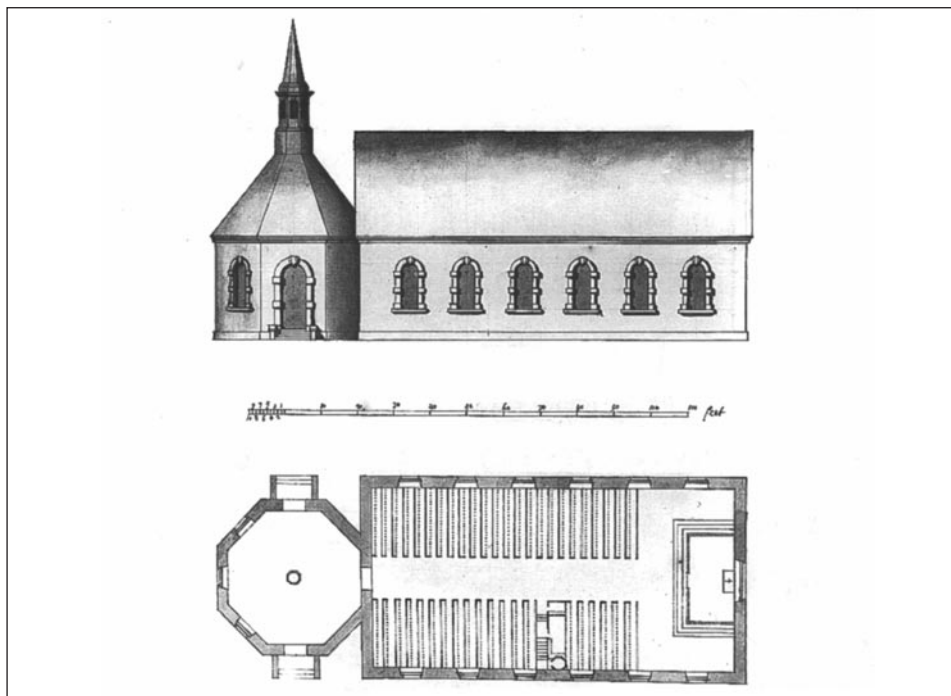
Architectural austerity was seen as an essential condition for observing 'the simplicity of the primitive Christian-worship'.<sup>47</sup> In Hawksmoor's unrealised design for a 'Basilica after the Primitive Christians', proposed in 1711-12 for Bethnal Green in London, which he described as in the 'Manner of Building the Church – as it was in ye fourth Century in ye purest times of Christianity', the 'place for the font for ye Converts' (the baptistery) is located in a square 'Porch' attached to the west end of the nave.<sup>48</sup> This corresponds to its location in the western narthex of churches built in the 'sixth ages' of Christendom, as described by Bingham.<sup>49</sup> This is the formula Halfpenny followed in what I take to be his inaugural Waterford cathedral offering (Plate 6). The subsequent drawings (Plates 7-11), however, favoured the more powerful geometry of a monumental octagon in which rays of light from a cupola crowning the steeply-pitched roof would funnel dramatically on to a centralised font (Plate 11).<sup>50</sup> Halfpenny introduced a similar shape as the centrepiece in one of his designs for Bishop Milles's palace at Waterford, suggesting that the two adjacent buildings were to be thought of as an ensemble.<sup>51</sup>



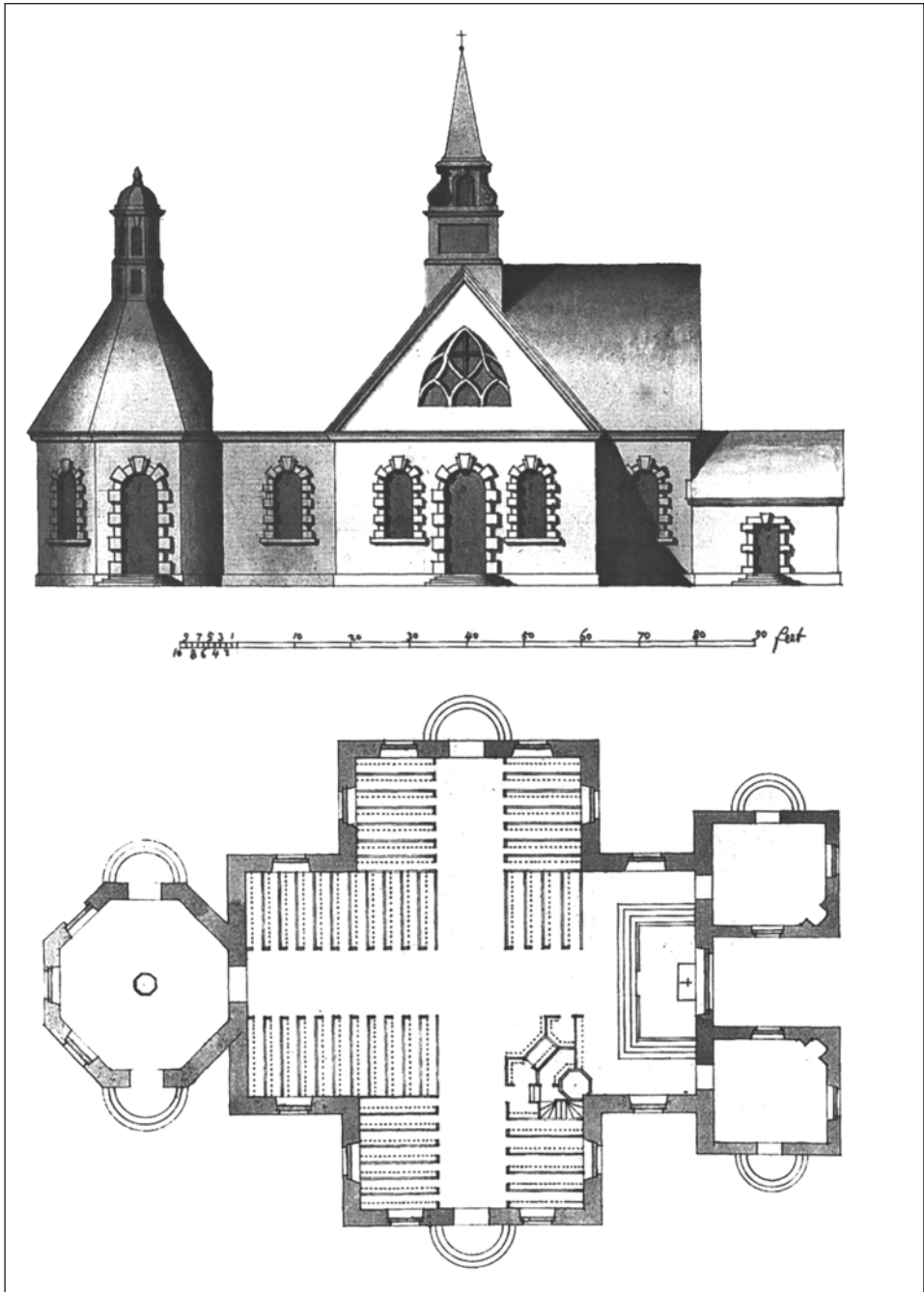
6 – William Halfpenny, design for Waterford Cathedral (1739, unexecuted)  
(*The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 14*)

*opposite*

7-8 – William Halfpenny, designs for Waterford Cathedral (1739?, unexecuted)  
(*The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 3 (top), f 8 (bottom)*)

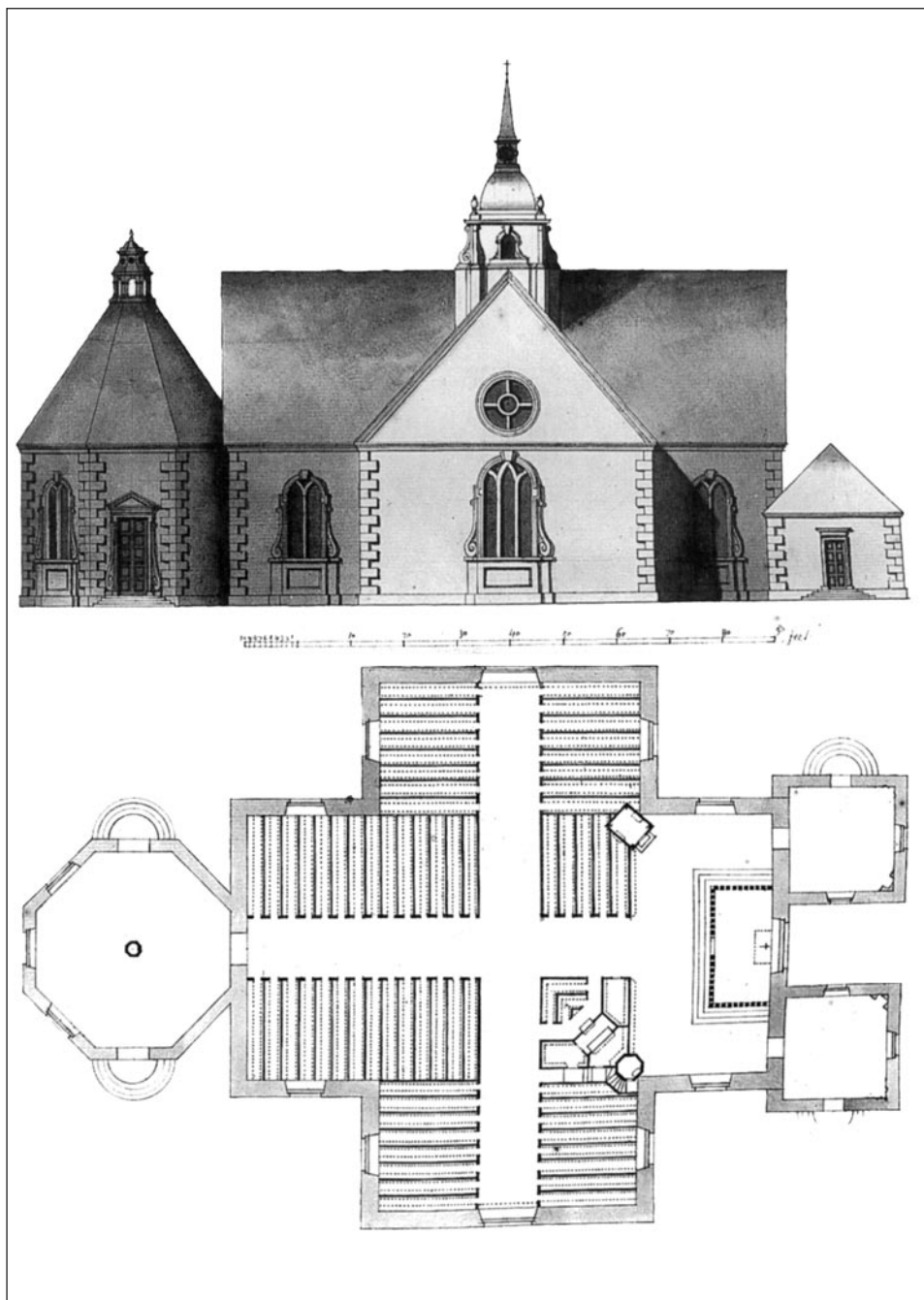




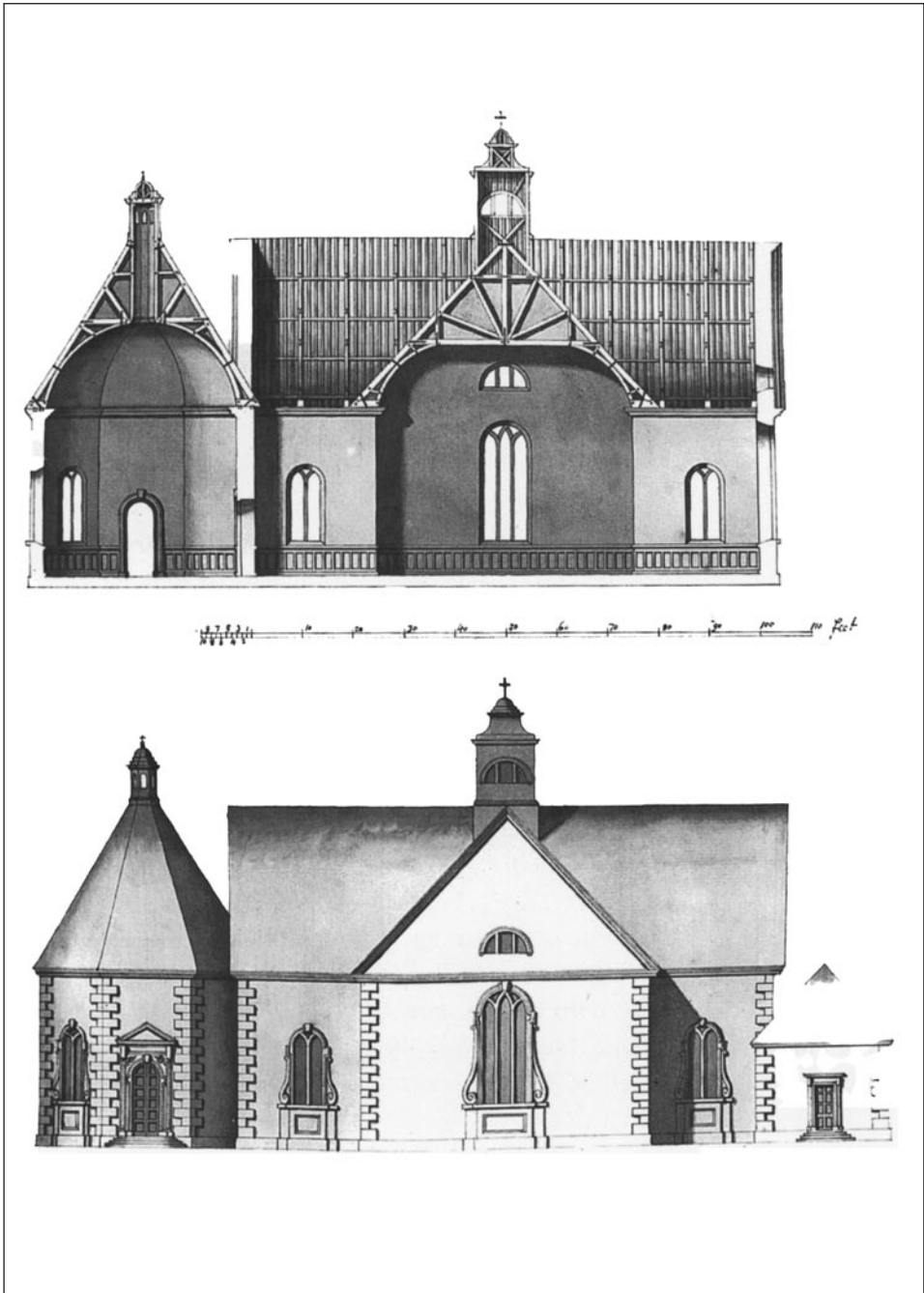


9 – William Halfpenny, design for Waterford Cathedral (1739?, unexecuted)  
(The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 2)





10 – William Halfpenny, design for Waterford Cathedral (1739?, unexecuted)  
(The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 7)

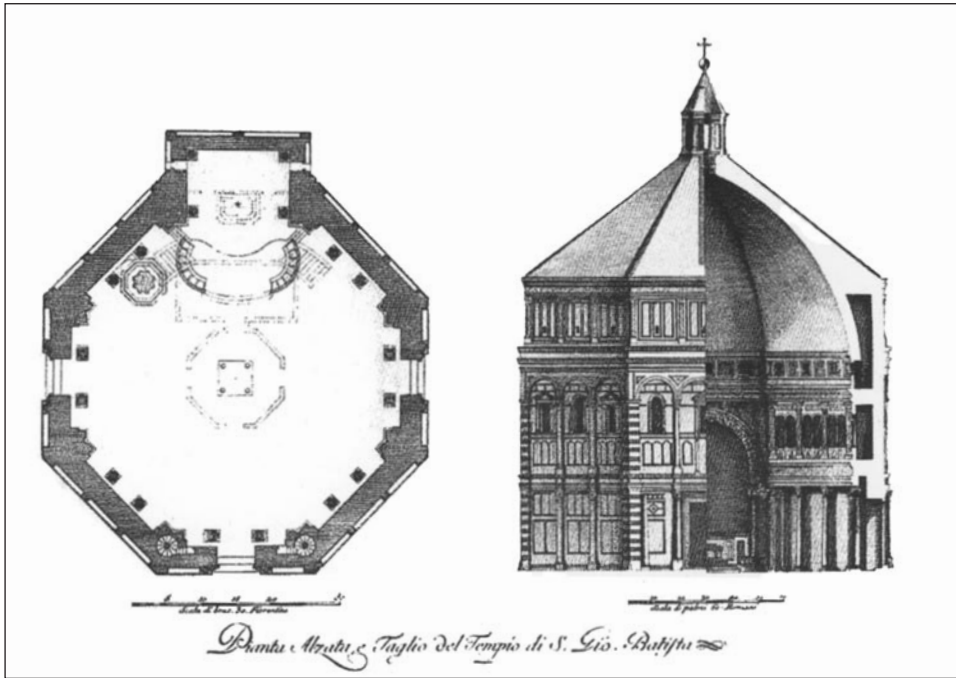


11 – William Halfpenny, design for Waterford Cathedral (1739?, unexecuted)  
(The British Architectural Library, RIBA, London, f 6)

This was an unprecedented use in Georgian church architecture of octagonal baptisteries. However, the form is commonly found in much earlier churches on the Continent, and examples had been noted by British travellers, particularly architects. James Gibbs, who was training in Rome between 1703 and 1709, wrote of S Giovanni in Laterano's Constantinian baptistery (c 315 and c 432-40, restored in the seventeenth century) that it was 'a most elegant peece of building, and much admired by all who see it ... Paladio has given a draught of it'.<sup>52</sup> John Talman made a number of detailed drawings of the Baptistery of the Orthodox at Ravenna (c 400-500) between 1713 and 1716.<sup>53</sup> Milles and Pococke must also have seen this building in 1734, though it is not mentioned in the correspondence. However, on that occasion they did visit S Vitale (546-48), which Milles considered 'by much ye most beautiful [church] in ye city. It is an Octagon', and the Mausoleum of Theodoric (c 526), 'an octagon figure without, & round within'; interestingly, Milles imposed a Christian connotation on the building by identifying the pierced spurs round the perimeter of the dome as '12 Pedestals on which stood ye statues of 12 Apostles'.<sup>54</sup> Undoubtedly the two travellers saw the famous Romanesque octagonal baptistery of S Giovanni during their stay in Florence in December-January 1733-34 (Plate 12); Pococke noted it on his second visit to the city in 1737.<sup>55</sup> The similarities to Halfpenny's treatment of the roof and cupola at Waterford may not be coincidental. However, in this and other Italian examples the octagonal structure is located at the west end of the church yet detached from it, or when attached is done so to the east end of the chancel. An arrangement specifically comparable to Halfpenny's designs seems only to have been found in the early eighteenth century beyond Italy and out of reach to most British travellers. This is where Richard Pococke made a crucial contribution.

After his Italian tour of 1733-34, he returned with his cousin to England. In May of 1736 he set off alone on a journey through Germany, Austria and Italy. Then, in September 1737, he crossed the Mediterranean to Alexandria, and during the next three years explored the ancient, early Christian and Islamic architecture of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, Crete, Asia Minor and Greece, finally returning to England in 1741. This extraordinary expedition is recorded in *A Description of the East, and Some other Countries* in two magnificently illustrated volumes published in London in 1743 and 1745.<sup>56</sup> Among the many buildings which especially interested Pococke, and which he illustrated in a plan and elevation 'took ... by the eye', was the Dome of the Rock (begun 688) at Jerusalem (Plate 13), about which he wrote:

the Christians built a church on this spot, which the Saracens, under Omar, converted into a mosque; and when Jerusalem was taken in the holy wars, it



12 – Baptistery, Florence  
(11-12th centuries)

(engraving in G.B.C. Nelli, *Studio di Architettura Civile (Florence, 1755)*,  
2nd ed., iv, pl. xvii)

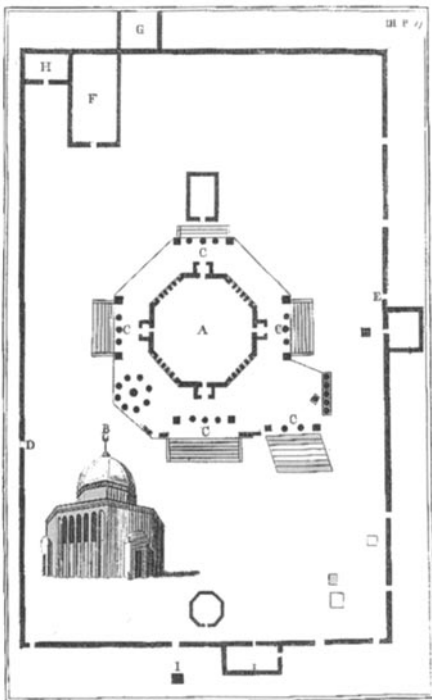
13 – Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem  
(begun 688)

(in R. Pococke, *A Description of the East*,  
London (1745) ii, part i, pl. iii.)

opposite

14 – Cathedral, Parenzo

(modern Porec), Istria (c 550), plan  
(based on R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and  
Byzantine Architecture (1965) fig. 242*)



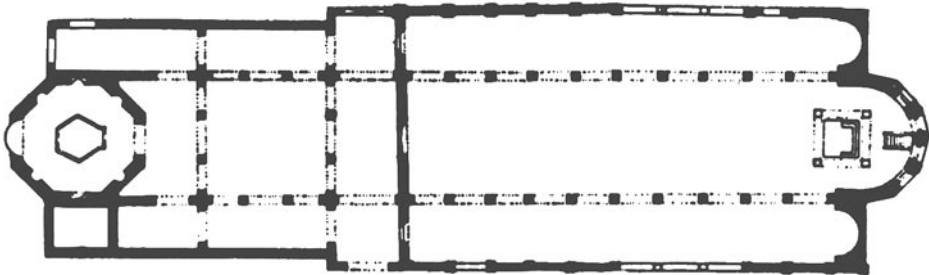
was again made a place of Christian worship. At present there is a beautiful octagon mosque in the middle of the court, covered with a dome [which] has a beautiful appearance.<sup>57</sup>

He also published a plan of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem (between 503-604), whose trilobed arrangement is a reminder of one of Halfpenny's church designs (Plate 3),<sup>58</sup> and mentioned several other early Christian churches with simple, apsidal east ends, as in Plates 2 and 3.<sup>59</sup> At the Great Mosque of Damascus, 'one of the finest things that the zeal of the first Christians produced', which was remodelled by Islam in 706-15, he shows 'an octagonal baptistery built on eight pillars' standing in the main courtyard. At Kalat Siman in Syria, the Martyrium of St Simon Stylites (c 480-90) was 'very magnificent, and ... built in [the] form of a Greek cross; under the middle of an octagonal dome'.<sup>60</sup> Such was Pococke's fascination with these early church forms.

Most importantly, arriving at Trieste in August 1737, Pococke travelled along the Istrian coast to Parenzo (ancient Parentium, modern Porec). The *Description* mentions the foundations of the 'famous ... temple of Neptune' but the cathedral (c 550) only in passing.<sup>61</sup> Additional information comes from a letter to his mother in England, dated 25 August:

The Arch Presbyter of ye Cathedral came to us, & told us hed show us some antiquities, he had us to his house, showed a MSS Accot he had writ of ye City ... went to ye Cathedral built by ye Emperor Otho 1st out of ye ruins of a temple to Neptune, & is a very curious church ... for Gothic antiquities.<sup>62</sup>

A more germane reference appears in Pococke's personal travel diary: 'The Cathedral a very antient building ... Before the entrance is a Hexagon Baptistery now uncovered, and not made use of, but there are some antient pillars in it'.<sup>63</sup> In fact, an octagonal shaped baptistery (not an hexagonal one, as mistakenly described by Pococke) is attached to the west end of the atrium of a rectangular church with pedimented ends and a semicircular chancel, an original arrangement preserved intact even to this day (Plate 14).<sup>64</sup>



An earlier Pococke diary, dealing with the period immediately preceding his visit to Parenzo in 1737, bears a later note in his father's hand: 'part of my sons travels Copied for Mr. Jer. Milles'.<sup>65</sup> It is, therefore, very likely around 1737, when cousin Jeremiah was serving as cathedral precentor at Waterford, and in an excellent position to influence the course of architectural events there, that he was made aware of this obscure and unusual early Christian church and that he subsequently alerted Halfpenny to its dramatic potential as a model for a modern cathedral. Bishop Milles's untimely death on 12 May 1740 prevented the project coming to fruition.<sup>66</sup> This we can now see was a tragedy for the burgeoning classical style church in Georgian Irish architecture.<sup>67</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Shelf B3 (Jill Lever, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, vol. G-K (Farnborough 1973) 82-83, fig. 50), purchased 1965 from H.M. Colvin. The title derives from the first item, an engraved page referring to Thomas Hearne's *Ectypa Varia* (1737).
- <sup>2</sup> This is not the only such example. A poem in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (December 1738) 652, entitled 'To the Hon. Mrs Conolly, occasioned by the Monument she hath erected in Cellbridge, to the Memory of her late Husband, the Right Hon. William Conolly Esq; deceased', likened the deed to that performed in Antiquity by Queen Artemisia in building the tomb to her husband, Mausoleus, King of Caria, at Halicarnassus: 'Such were the thoughts which Caria's queen possess'd, / And such the anguish labour'd in her breast. / Not that, to tell posterity her woes, / Wonder of earth, the Mausoleum rose.' See Homan Potterton, *Irish Church Monuments 1570-1880* (Ulster 1975) 39, fig. 17.
- <sup>3</sup> On the title page of *The Art of Sound Building* (London 1725). Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (New Haven and London 1995) 446-48.
- <sup>4</sup> Timothy Mowl, *To Build the Second City Architects and craftsmen of Georgian Bristol* (Bristol 1991) 58, who attributes other local work to him.
- <sup>5</sup> Katherine Eustace, *Michael Rysbrack Sculptor 1694-1770* (Bristol 1982) 91-92, pl. 22.



- Halfpenny also designed the altarpiece (Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, 447, 931-32; Mowl, *To Build the Second City*, 19, 37-38, 46-47, 57).
- <sup>6</sup> Eileen Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers 1556-1785* (Cambridge 1990) 218-28.
  - <sup>7</sup> 'The Cit's Country Box', *The Gentleman's Magazine* (September 1756) 445.
  - <sup>8</sup> William Halfpenny, *The Art of Sound Building* (London 1725) inscribed 'This Church is of my Invention for Leeds in Yorkshire'. For details of this episode see Terry Friedman, *Church Architecture in Leeds 1700-1799*, Publications of the Thoresby Society, Second Series, vol. 7 (1997) 73-78, fig. 16.
  - <sup>9</sup> Terry Friedman, *James Gibbs* (New Haven and London 1984) 57-70, pl. 27. Zacharia Pearce's *A Sermon Preached at the New Parish Church of St. Martin in the Fields* (London 1727) includes 'An Essay on the Origin and Progress of Temples'.
  - <sup>10</sup> Joseph Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae: or, the Antiquities of the Christian Church* (London 1708-22), quoting from Robert Bingham, ed., *The Works of The Rev. Joseph Bingham, M.A.* (Oxford 1855) iii, 49-50, 'Contents of the Eight Nine, and Tenth Books of The Antiquities of the Christian Church', first published in 1711.
  - <sup>11</sup> Giacomo Leoni, *The Architecture of A. Palladio; In Four Books* (London 1715-20) book 4, chapter 8.
  - <sup>12</sup> *An Essay In Defence of Ancient Architecture; or A Parallel of the Ancient Buildings with the Modern: shewing The Beauty and Harmony of the Former, and the Irregularity of the Latter* (London 1728) 2, 20, 23 and xiii, respectively. Morris's 'great Protectors of Antiquity' were Palladio, Lord Burlington and Sir Andrew Fountaine (the dedicatee of Halfpenny's *The Art of Sound Building* (London 1725)). For links between Morris and Halfpenny see Harris, *British Architectural Books and Writers*, 219-22, 317.
  - <sup>13</sup> James Ralph, *A Critical Review of the Publick Buildings, Statues and Ornaments, In, and about London and Westminster* (London 1734) 6, 9.
  - <sup>14</sup> *Practical Architecture* illustrates doors and windows taken from Palladio and Vitruvius; *Magnum in Parvo: or The Marrow of Architecture* (London 1728) demonstrates 'how to draw a Column ... According to the Proportions laid down by the most celebrated PALLADIO'; *The Builder's Pocket-Companion* (London 1731) includes the orders 'taken from the Immortal Andrew Palladio, and laid down after Will. Halfpenny's Practical Method', and so on.
  - <sup>15</sup> Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, eds, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, xiii (Oxford 1921-22) 432-33, 436; xvi (Oxford 1967-68) 12-14.
  - <sup>16</sup> British Library, Add. MSS 15776, ff. 27-31, 55-56, 73. The Ms. carries Milles's bookplate. Peterborough choir was surveyed in 1734 by Robert Wright, the surveyor to the Dean and Chapter (Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, 1098).
  - <sup>17</sup> Sarah Markham, *John Loveday of Caversham 1711-1789, The Life and Tours of an Eighteenth-Century Onlooker* (Wilton 1984) 203.
  - <sup>18</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine* (June 1735) 325.
  - <sup>19</sup> Brian de Breffny and George Mott, *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland* (London 1976) 105-8, 136.
  - <sup>20</sup> Eusebius, *The History of the Church* (London 1709) subtitled *Made English from the Edition of these Histories, which Valesius published at Paris in the Years 1659, 1668 and 1673*, Lib. X, chap. iv, 184-85.
  - <sup>21</sup> Lever, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection*, 83; f 8.



- <sup>22</sup> Prints and Drawings 7.x.1977. I am grateful to David Griffin of the Irish Architectural Archive, Dublin, for drawing my attention to these latter items (letter to the author, February 1996). One view is reproduced in Breffny and Mott, *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland*, 75. Charles Smith, *The Antient and Present State of the County and City of Waterford* (Dublin 1746) 175-76, describes the building briefly. Christ Church was the common dedication of the cathedral.
- <sup>23</sup> John Mannion, 'Vessels, Masters and Seafaring: Patterns of Voyages in Waterford Commerce, 1766-1771', in William Noland and Thomas P. Power, eds, *Waterford History & Society* (Dublin 1992) 373-98.
- <sup>24</sup> Halfpenny's drawings for the Exchange are datable 1738-40 (Walter Ison, *The Georgian Buildings of Bristol* (London 1952) 96, pl. 15; Mowl, *To Build the Second City*, 42). He had published an earlier design for the Exchange in *Perspective Made Easy* (London 1731) (Mowl, *To Build the Second City*, 49). The Exchange and Market was built 1741-43 to the design of John Wood Sr.
- <sup>25</sup> Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, 447.
- <sup>26</sup> 'The South Prospect of the Cathedral Church of St. Flannan in Killaloe', Co Clare, inscribed 'I. Blaymires delin. L. Dempsey Sc.' is initialled 'W.H. A.D. 1738'; 'Ecclesiae Cathedralis Armachanae Facies Australis' and a view of St Carthag, Lismore, Co Waterford, are initialled 'W.H.'; 'The North West Prospect of the Church at Clonmacnoise', Co Offaly, and views of the cathedrals at Kildare and Derry are both dated 1738, and St Mary, Limerick, dated 1739; 'The Ground Plan of ye Cathedral Church of St Canice in Kilkenny' and St Coleman, Cloyne, Co Cork, both neither signed nor dated. There is also a miscellany of views of Saxon and Gothic churches from John Leland's *Itinerary Collectanea* and 'The Ichnography or Plan, of Glastonbury Abby' with an elevation of the octagonal Kitchen.
- <sup>27</sup> Folios 1a to 6a (Lever, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection*, 82-83; John Harris, *The Palladians* (London 1981) 100, pls 103-04). Bishop Milles's successor, Charles Estes, rebuilt the palace from 1741 to a design attributed to Richard Castle (Mark Girouard, 'The Noblest Quay in Europe', *Town and Country* (New Haven and London 1992) 155-56, pl. 133).
- <sup>28</sup> This plan, with the diagonally placed pulpit and desk attached at the angle, the steeply pitched roofs crowned at the crossing by bell turrets, and the odd tracery of the pediment window in Plate 9, are features commonly found in seventeenth-century Dutch churches, for example, the Noorderkerk, Amsterdam (1620-22), illustrated in Hendrick de Keyser, *Architectura Moderna* (1631) (W. Kuyper, *Dutch Classicist Architecture, A Survey of Dutch Architecture, Gardens and Anglo-Dutch Architectural Relations from 1625 to 1700* (Delft 1980) fig. 3, pls 28-30, 31, 42, 44). This leads me to think that Halfpenny was aware of this Netherlandish tradition. Of course, Waterford city enjoyed close trade links with Holland (Mannion, *Vessels, Masters and Seafaring*, 316, 374, 376, 395).
- <sup>29</sup> Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae* (1711) iii, 65.
- <sup>30</sup> Folio 4 is illustrated in Harris, *The Palladians*, 99, cat. no. 102, and Lever, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection*, fig. 50; f 2 in Mowl, *To Build the Second City*, 52.
- <sup>31</sup> Compare Plate 2 to Richard Castle's design, now in the Irish Architectural Archive, probably for rebuilding, 1743, Maynooth church, Co Kildare, previously said to be for the similar Newton Breda church, 1737, Co Down (*Quarterly Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*, xi (April September 1968) 23). I am grateful to David Griffin for drawing my attention to this new attribution.

- <sup>32</sup> Smith, *The Ancient and Present State*, 80. See Lord Killanin and Michael V. Duignan, *The Shell Guide to Ireland* (London 1989) 303, and Girouard, 'The Noblest Quay in Europe', pl. 134.
- <sup>33</sup> John McVeagh, ed., *Richard Pococke's Irish Tours* (Dublin 1995) 108: 'These Churches were order'd in this manner & adorned under the care of Dr Thomas Milles.'
- <sup>34</sup> Smith, *The Ancient and Present State*, 181, also recording Milles's legacy (1740) to the city which involved 'repairing and rebuilding churches' (190). William Ven der Hagen (fl.1720-45) painted a view of Waterford (Homan Potterton, *Irish art and architecture* (London 1978) 166; *Irish Houses and Landscapes* (Belfast 1963) 17, no. 24.
- <sup>35</sup> McVeagh, *Richard Pococke's Irish Tours*, 112. See Killanin and Duignan, *The Shell Guide to Ireland*, 308.
- <sup>36</sup> Rolf Loeber, 'Early Classicism in Ireland: Architecture Before the Georgian Era', *Architectural History*, 22 (1979) 60, pl. 11a; Jacqueline O'Brien and Desmond Guinness, *Dublin, A Grand Tour* (London 1994) 37. Robinson rebuilt (1679 onward) St Carthage's Cathedral, Lismore (Rolf Loeber, *A Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Ireland 1600-1720* (London 1981) 90, 95; Smith, *The Ancient and Present State*, 53).
- <sup>37</sup> Richard Hewlings, 'Chiswick House and Garden: Appearance and Meaning', in Toby Barnard and Jane Clark, eds, *Lord Burlington Architecture, Art and Life* (London 1995) figs 8a, 41.
- <sup>38</sup> Fourth Book, chapter II, 'Of the forms of Temples', 82, where, however, S Giorgio is not illustrated.
- <sup>39</sup> Ralph, *A Critical Review*, 29.
- <sup>40</sup> Smith, *The Antient and Present State*, opposite 52.
- <sup>41</sup> Gloucestershire Record Office, D2663/28, letter to Bishop Milles, 13-24 May 1734.
- <sup>42</sup> British Library, Add. MSS 15776, f 110. SS Peter and Paul was built 1735-39 to the design of John and William Bastard (*Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Dorset*, iii, pt. 1 (London 1970) 19-21, frontispiece, pl. 98). Milles described the chapel of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, which was beautified in 1735 by the local Palladian architect, Sir James Burrough, as 'very neat' (f 36; Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary*, 194). Milles thought the Baroque style of St Alkmund, Whitchurch, Shropshire, designed and built 1711-13 by John Barker and William Smith, 'a very handsome modern church' (British Library, Add. MS 15,776, f 166, dated 1743). Bishop Milles had subscribed £2 2s 6d in c 1711 towards its construction (K. and B. Barnard, *Monumental Inscriptions of St Alkmund's Church Whitchurch Shropshire* (1987) typescript in church, CH7).
- <sup>43</sup> Halfpenny, *Practical Architecture*, 26. See also *The Art of Sound Building*, pl. 14, fig. 76. A second edition of *A Book of Architecture* was published in 1739. This feature appeared with increasing frequency in Irish churches after 1740 (Alistair Rowan, *The Buildings of Ireland: North West Ulster* (Harmondsworth 1979) 123-24, 191-92, pls 63-64, John Aheron, *A General Treatise of Architecture, In Five Books* (Dublin 1754) in Marcus Whiffen, *Stuart and Georgian Churches* (London 1948) 34.
- <sup>44</sup> Gloucestershire Record Office, D2663/28, letter to Bishop Milles, 15-26 May 1734. They also visited Ravenna Cathedral (built before 425 and demolished in 1748), 'an old Dark, & disagreeable building' with the nave 'supported by 56 marble pillars' and the 'Tribune ... all mosaick', which 'They are at present repainting ... & digging up ye pavement', and S Spirito. See Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (London 1989) 181-83, 185-87, 277-78, 481-82 note 35, pls 144-46, 149, 239-40. Another letter from Milles to the

- bishop, dated 30 May-10 June 1734, reveals that the travellers had been in contact with the French scholar, Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741): at Modena ‘We were recommended here by father mountfaucon to one Muratori a very learned man & Library keeper to ye Duke. He shew’d us ye Library.’ Montfaucon was author of *L’Antiquité Expliquée* (1719; English edition 1721-22), a massive compilation of illustrations of classical artifacts from early Greek to Theodosius II, including octagonal structures. Among the engravings in the RIBA album is a seventeenth century view of the east exterior of St Bartholomeo de Insula on Tiber Island, Rome, with its austere, apsidal chancel, built in the tenth century on the ruins of the Temple of Aesculapius, and later much altered; see Emile Mâle, *The Early Churches of Rome* (London 1960) 103-7).
- <sup>45</sup> See Samantha Mussells, ‘Architects, Travellers and the Revival of the Early Christian Basilica’ in Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, ed., *Architects Books & Libraries* (Kingston, Ontario 1995) 9-15, citing Rev Sir George Wheler, *An Account of the Churches and Places of Assembly of the Primitive Christians* (London 1689) and Henry Maundrel, *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem* (Oxford 1703) illustrated by Nicholas Hawksmoor.
- <sup>46</sup> Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae*, iii (1711) 42, 39-40, respectively.
- <sup>47</sup> Quoting from Bingham, as in note 46. An untitled tract dated 14 June 1678 condemned ‘the sumptuousness and magnificence of Churches [as] not at all suitable to the times of the Gospels’ (British Library, 816.m.9, *Tracts Relating to London*, item 92).
- <sup>48</sup> Kerry Downes, *Hawksmoor* (London 1959) 162-63, pl. 52a; Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, ‘Hawksmoor’s “Basilica after the Primitive Christians”: Architecture and Theory’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, xlviii, no. 2 (June 1989) 38-52, fig. 1, item marked B. At St Anne, Limehouse (1714-31) the baptistery is a semi-projecting, domed rotunda at the west end (Downes, *Hawksmoor*, 171-73, fig. 33, pl. 55a).
- <sup>49</sup> Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae*, iii (1711) 117, 119.
- <sup>50</sup> The auditory advantages of this form is the subject of Robert Morris’s design for an ‘octangular Chapel’ (*Rural Architecture* (London 1750) 5, pls xxxi-xxxii): ‘It has been objected to, that the inner Part should have been a Circle in the Plan, and the Roof spherical, that the Sound striking in the Angles, will render it confused, and reverberate from a Roof Octangular in the Plan, very unintelligible to the Audience; but as the Angles are small, and nearly approaching to a Circle, I think the Objection of little Weight.’ ‘Mr. William Halfpenny, Surveyor’ is listed (p ii) as a subscriber to this publication.
- <sup>51</sup> RIBA album, f 6a.
- <sup>52</sup> Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, MSS ‘A Manuscri by Mr. Gibbs Memorandums, &c.’, 20, referring to *I Quattro Libri*, book four (Venice 1570) chapter xvi, 61-62, which also appears in Ware, *The Four Books*, fourth book (London 1738) 96-97, pl. xlii.
- <sup>53</sup> Graham Parry, ‘The John Talman Letter-Book’, *Walpole Society*, lix (1997) 23-5, 47; John Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800* (New Haven and London 1997) 924-25; drawings in Victoria and Albert Museum. See Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 176, figs 141-42.
- <sup>54</sup> Gloucestershire Record Office, D2663/28, letter of 15-26 May 1734, adding that the statues ‘are transported to Venice. There are ye names of them wrote on ye pedes.’ See Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 232-7, 269-73, pls 187-92, 234.
- <sup>55</sup> ‘I saw the Cathedral Baptistery’ (British Library, Add. MSS 22994, f 168). Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers*, 662, 779-80; Kenneth John Conant, *Carolingian*

- and Romanesque Architecture 800-1200* (Harmondsworth, 1966) 373-75, figs 287-88.
- <sup>56</sup> Michael McCarthy, "'The dullest man that ever travelled'"? A re-assessment of Richard Pococke and of his portrait by J.-E. Liotard', *Apollo*, 143 (May 1996) 25-29.
- <sup>57</sup> Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East, and Some other Countries*, ii (London 1745) part i, 14-15, pl. iii.
- <sup>58</sup> Pococke, *A Description of the East*, ii, part i, 39, plan following page 18, similar to Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, fig. 227.
- <sup>59</sup> For example, the 'large church' at Caesarea, Palestine, 'which probably was the cathedral of the archbishop [and] seems to have been built in the style of the Syrian churches, with three naves, which ended to the east in semicircles, where they had their principal altars', and the similarly planned cathedral at Tyre (Pococke, *A Description of the East*, ii, part i, 59, 82). The latter is described in Eusebius, *The History of the Church*, Lib. X (London 1709) chapter iv, 189.
- <sup>60</sup> Pococke, *A Description of the East*, ii, part i, 120, 170, pls xxi, xxxiv, respectively. See Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 144-51, figs 100, 102-04.
- <sup>61</sup> Pococke, *A Description of the East*, ii, part iii, 263, 276.
- <sup>62</sup> British Library, Add. MSS 19939, f 74, recording a journey between 14-25 August 1737, repeated in Add. MSS 22997, ff. 66v-67. For 'Gothick' read 'Goth'.
- <sup>63</sup> British Library, Add. MSS 22994, f 47.
- <sup>64</sup> Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 278-80, figs 241-42.
- <sup>65</sup> British Library, Add. MSS 19940, first page, covering May-June 1737.
- <sup>66</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine* (May 1740) 262, of 'stone in bladder'.
- <sup>67</sup> Pococke reported in 1752 that Waterford's medieval 'Quire has lately been much ornamented if intermixture of Grecian with Gothick Architecture can be called an Ornament by a Corinthian Altar piece, which is the gift of Mrs. Susannah Mason & cost £200;- by a very handsome Canopy over the seat of the Mayor & Aldermen, & by the same over the galleries, & the seats of the families of the Bishop & Dignitaries, by making a Gallery to the north for the Soldiers, to the west over the Organ for the Charity boys, – by adorning the Galleries with handsome Ballustrades, & New seating the Church & paving it with black & white marble, to which besides the white marble The Revd. Dr. Jeremiah Milles, Chantor of the Cathedral of Exeter as he was likewise formerly of this Church & Treasurer of Lismore, gave the sum of fifty pounds' (McVeagh, *Richard Pococke's Irish Tours*, 108). This was undertaken by Charles Este, Bishop Milles's successor in 1740. The medieval cathedral was demolished and rebuilt between 1774 and 1792 in a handsome Palladian manner to the design of John Roberts, a local architect (Girouard, 'The Noblest Quay in Europe', 159-60, pl. 13).