



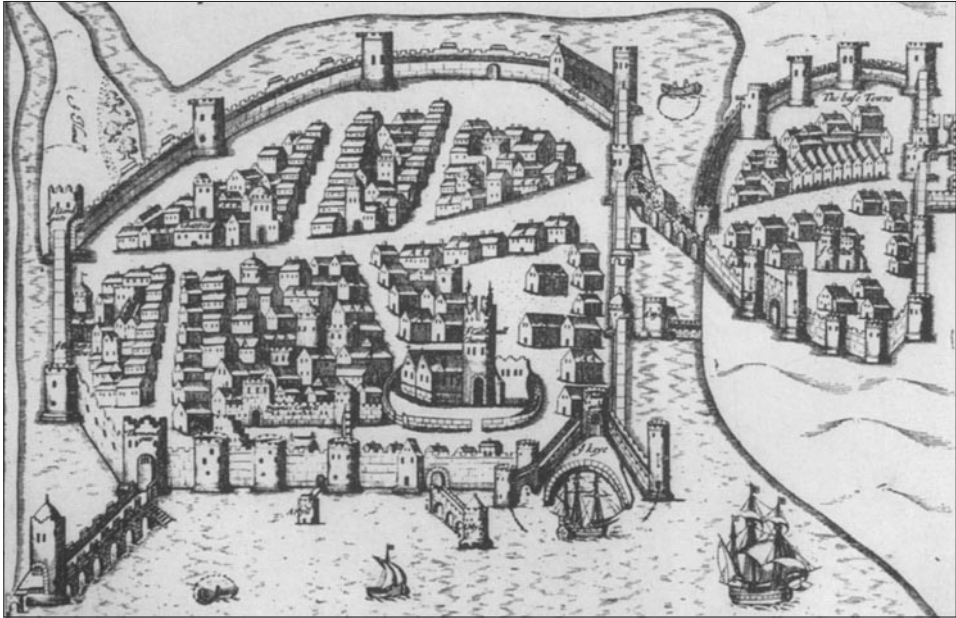
*1 – St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick: interior view facing west, with Slater's scheme for seating
(Lawrence Collection, courtesy National Library of Ireland)*

St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick: unpublished correspondence of the cathedral restoration in the nineteenth century

LYNDA MULVIN

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL, LIMERICK, IS SITED ON THE BROW OF KING'S ISLAND (formerly English Town), adjacent to St John's Castle which guards the entrance to the city from the River Shannon. The tower of the cathedral can be seen from a distance, and has always had a commanding presence over the city of Limerick. The earliest map of King's Island, dating from 1587, shows it to have been fortified with a castellated wall and, viewed from the west end, the cathedral to have been located at the centre of a grid plan of streets and houses (Plate 2).¹ Jobson's map in 1590 and Speed's map in 1610 also both plotted the houses and streets in some detail, with the cathedral tower prominent. Some houses were depicted with gardens. The boundaries of the cathedral were carefully delineated in Speed's map. It was enclosed by this time on the east side by a wall, on the west side by houses, and on the north side by Bow Lane. From 1221 the ecclesiastical college of the Minor Augustinian Canons was located on its north-west side.²

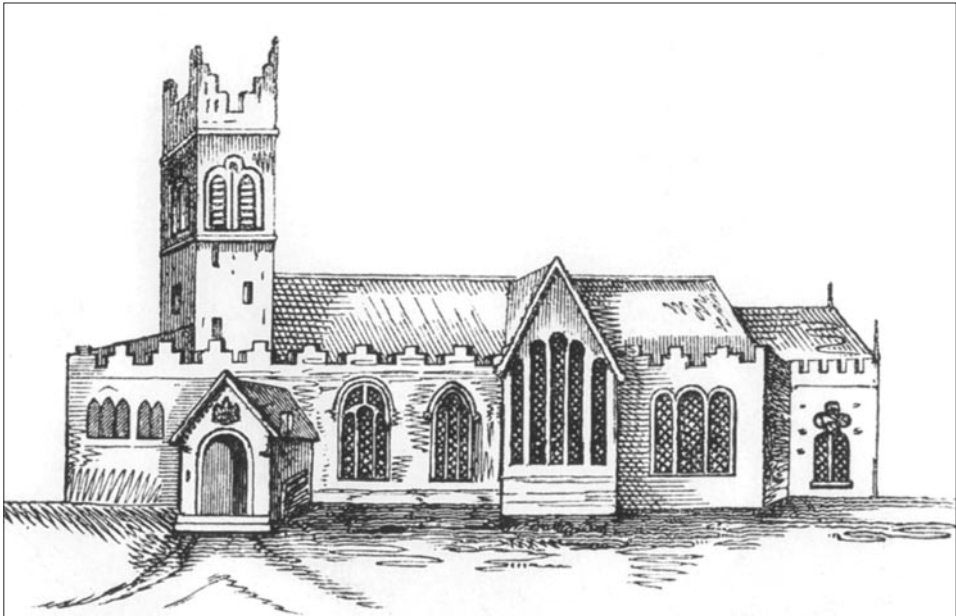
The cathedral building has caught the attention of antiquarian researchers in Ireland since the late-seventeenth century. In 1680 Sir Thomas Dineley presented one of the earliest views of the cathedral from the south side (Plate 3).³ Sir James Ware in 1705 and William Ferrar in 1786 also produced engravings from the same aspect (Plates 4, 5).⁴ Sir James Ware placed the foundation date of the cathedral at 'about the beginning of the thirteenth century'.⁵ He attributed it to Donagh [Donal] O'Brien, who, he said, founded the chapter. Ferrar, writing in 1787, suggested that the foundation date of the cathedral was about 1180.⁶ Samuel Lewis suggested that the cathedral was founded by Donagh [Donal] O'Brien and enlarged by Bishop Donat O'Brien in 1200.⁷ In all likelihood the present building dates to after 1179, following a grant of land by the ruling O'Brien clan, that of Donal Mor O'Brien, which was recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters*.⁸ Stylistically, the building is dated to about 1180. The plan is cruciform, with aisled nave, transept and flat-ended



2 – Map of Limerick (based on a 1587 map) from an 1820 edition of Thomas Stafford's *PACATA HIBERNIA* (courtesy National Library of Ireland)

Engravings of St Mary's Cathedral (courtesy National Library of Ireland)

3 – Sir Thomas Dineley, 1680 / opposite 4 – Sir James Ware, 1705 / 5 – William Ferrar, 1786

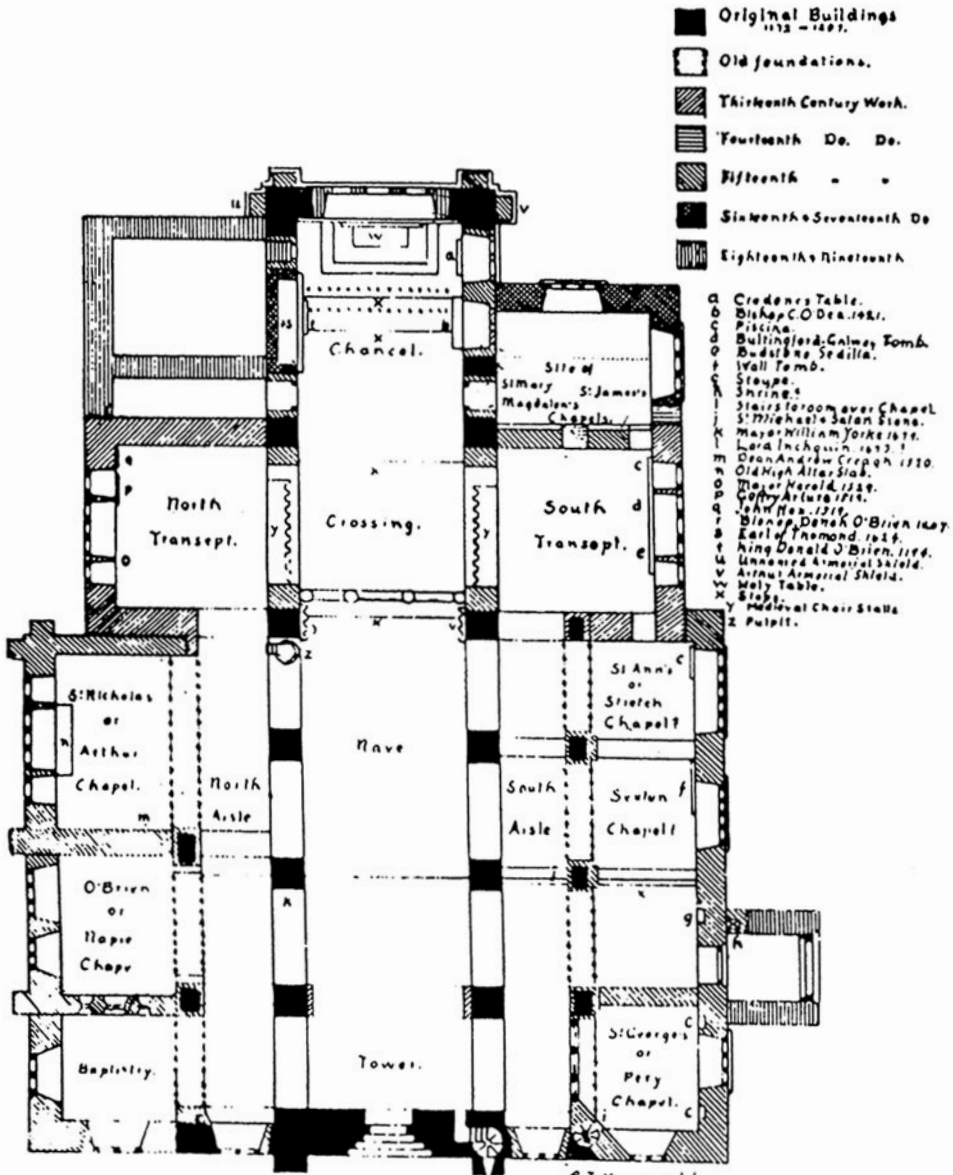


chancel, following closely the design of a Cistercian abbey.⁹ The chancel was completed by 1207 before the death of Bishop Donat O'Brien.¹⁰

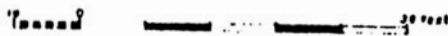
So many alterations have taken place over time to St Mary's Cathedral that the original cruciform plan form is not always evident at first glance (Plate 6).¹¹ Between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the transepts and the north and south aisles were extended to contain a tower-house, chapels for prayer, and family chapels.¹² During this period also, a tower was added over the west end and castellations increased the defensive appearance of the building. The extent of the original building can be traced along the line of the later openings for the baptistery, St Mark's chapel and the Jebb chapel on the north side, and the St George chapel, the Sexton chapel and consistorial court on the south side.¹³ The internal seating arrangements were altered in the late-seventeenth century with the addition of galleries to accommodate the congregation attending the new prayer services of the Church of Ireland. In the eighteenth century, further galleries were added which spanned the transepts.

It was in the nineteenth century, however, that a great sequence of works was to take place in an attempt to restore the building to its former condition, and it is with this important phase of construction that this article is principally concerned. In particular, it will be seen that very considerable care was taken by the nineteenth-century architects to ensure that the building and grounds were restored in the spirit of the great ecclesiastical restorers. Several notable architects, including Sir James Pain, William Bardwell, William Slater and George Edmund Street, worked on the cathedral during this period.¹⁴ In the course of this research, some new correspondence came to light in the form of letters to Dean Bunbury from the architect J. Franklin Fuller which throw an interesting light on some of the working practices of the day.¹⁵ These highlight the often difficult relationship between the local architect and architects such as Slater and Street whose offices were based in Dublin or in London.

The description of this sequence of previously unpublished letters also serves to highlight the central role played by the cathedral chapter in ensuring that the cathedral was at the centre of the Gothic revival movement in Ireland during the mid to late-nineteenth century. As with the introduction of galleries to the cathedral in the seventeenth century, the progressive nature of the cathedral chapter came to the fore in the nineteenth century. The invitation extended to William Slater and George Edmund Street, leading architects of the Gothic revival in London, to redesign the interior space of the cathedral was an important step for the introduction of the Gothic revival practices of the day. In addition, Slater was articulated to R.C. Carpenter, one of the leading figures of the Cambridge Camden Society, whose architecture reflected the Ecclesiological movement. This movement, originating at



St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.



6 - Plan of St Mary's Cathedral after Hewson

one time with A.W.N. Pugin, held out the principle that the adoption of the craft techniques of the original medieval church builders would lead, in turn, to a more true adherence by the congregation to religious faith and worship. Slater's most significant action was the removal of a recently installed perpendicular-style window for a more acceptable decorated-style window. The extra cost of such an intervention is a measure of the deep feeling of the unity of the principles of Gothic revival architecture and true religion.

The consideration of the designs of Slater and Street against the backdrop of the Ecclesiological movement and the Gothic revival also goes some way to explaining the difference in styles and approach to restoration. In particular, it is quite evident that Street placed a greater emphasis on function, whereas Slater's designs relied to a greater extent on the importance of ornament.

EARLY INTERVENTIONS FROM THE FOURTEENTH TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The plan of the cathedral was altered by the building of several chapels on the north and south sides. These interventions had the effect of extending the external walls of the building, and are detailed below.

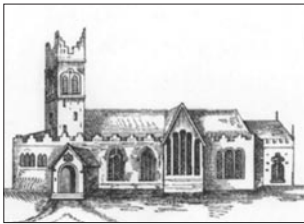
NORTH AISLE – The building of a two-storey defensive tower-house on the north side was the first in a series of changes.¹⁶ This double-height tower implied a serious need for strategic defence of the cathedral. Later, other chapels were added on either side of this tower, causing three external windows in the tower's west wall to become internal features.¹⁷ The subsequent construction of the Jebb chapel caused a bartizan, or look-out, in the east wall of the tower to become internal. This chapel is the loftiest in the cathedral as it assumes the space of the transept.¹⁸ These additional chapels have masonry details and hood-mouldings consistent with fifteenth or sixteenth-century building practices.

SOUTH AISLE – Like the north aisle, three chapels were added on the south side of the cathedral. At some time during the seventeenth century two of the three chapels on the south side were converted into one, and the south aisle came to contain the ecclesiastical offices of the bishop, the chapter house, and the consistorial court and deanery.¹⁹ A chapel dedicated to St George was added on the westernmost end of the south aisle, and contained a staircase to a first-floor room with domestic windows and a chimney.²⁰ This chamber could have acted as a temporary deanery in times of trouble. The small window at this level gave onto the nave and transept, which allowed the proceedings to be viewed from this place in relative security.²¹ In more

recent times this has been the site of the cathedral meeting room and archive. The remaining space of the aisle and transept was opened up and thereby transformed into a great hall with three great tracery windows, each of increasing size. This area could then have functioned as the consistorial court, with the bishop seated beneath the largest tracery window, emphasising his importance.²²

The perpendicular-style window on the south side was added at this time.²³ The south wall is slightly askew, which raises the question of the presence of a cloister on the south side of the cathedral. The Civil Survey of 1654 indicates the presence of a rectangular plot on this side, which is inconclusive but may account for less building on this side of the cathedral section.²⁴

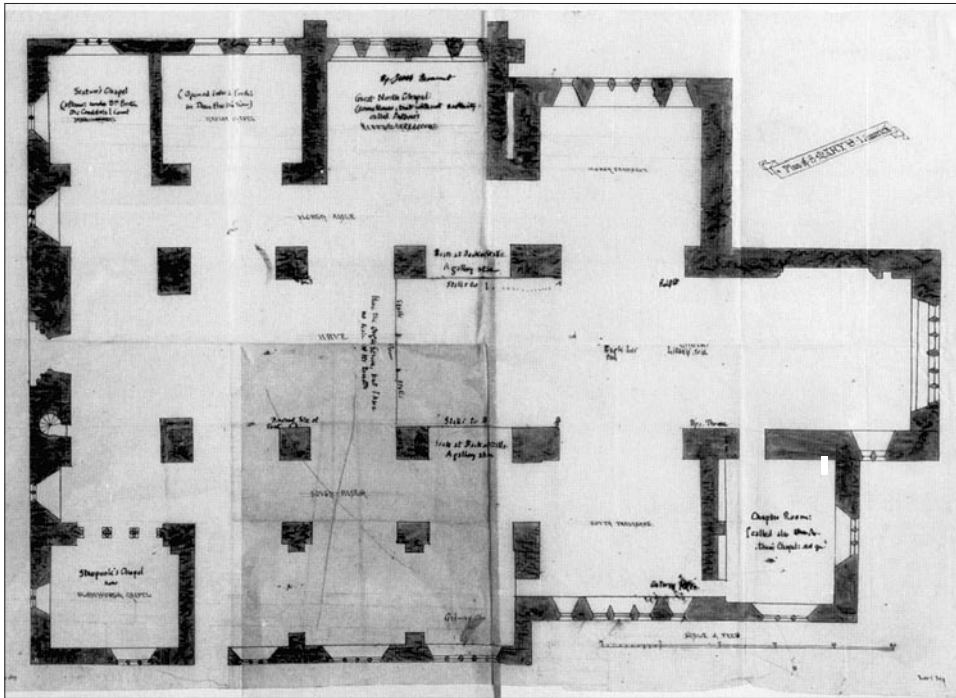
THE CATHEDRAL DURING THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES



Thomas Dineley's well-documented tour of Ireland in 1680 recorded many important sites and monuments on his sojourn.²⁵ His visit to St Mary's is significant, as he established a valuable record of some of the alterations and monuments that have since disappeared from the cathedral. His external view of the building, drawn from the south, shows the tower intact (Plate 3). This suggests that any damage sustained by the tower during the mid-century wars had been repaired before his visit.²⁶ As indicated above, the surviving earlier views of the cathedral (Jobson and Speed) record the west end as the main entrance or show it from the north side. Dineley's view from the south shows a castellated façade with a projecting porch and a variety of pointed lancet windows.

In the interior, Dineley records new works internally in the form of a gallery: '[There] is lately affixed a stair case to go up to the Gallery'. This was located 'on the outside of the right Isle going up to the Altar'.²⁷ The most likely position for the galleries were the transepts. Their location is confirmed by the description of a monument, which is identified as the Galwey family tablet in the south transept, obscured by the new construction: 'a very ancient Monument adjoining to the Wall'.²⁸

The construction of an upper-level gallery within the walls of the building was concurrent with design ideas of the new protestant churches constructed in this period.²⁹ The appearance of these galleries in St Mary's can be viewed as a response to a growing congregation. Other churches such as Kilfenora, Co Clare, and St Mary's Church, Youghal, Co Cork, introduce galleries at this time so as to extend the main space of the church.³⁰ The galleries were extended into the north aisle at the



7 – Plan of St Mary's Cathedral by Robert Bourke, 1855
 (courtesy National Library of Ireland)

end of the eighteenth century.³¹ A survey drawing of the cathedral by Robert Bourke survives from 1855, and shows the actual position of these gallery stalls, together with the organ loft, occupying the centre of the nave at the crossing dividing the nave from the chancel (Plate 7).³²

Ferrar describes the building of the south porch in 1680, which is concurrent with Dineley's drawing.³³ The cathedral sustained further damage during the siege of 1690-91. The tower was damaged and the sacristy on the north side was also destroyed. On completion of the tower repairs, Dineley describes a set of bells which was donated by Mr Perdue and W. York in 1673.³⁴

THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL

The rebuilding of the north side of the cathedral was completed in 1732 with the erection of the Blue Coat School. This was a charity school, supported by donations from the church, the congregation and the corporation. Listed in the Book of Charities made for Dean Maurice Crosbie, it was named the 'Charity Blue School'.³⁵

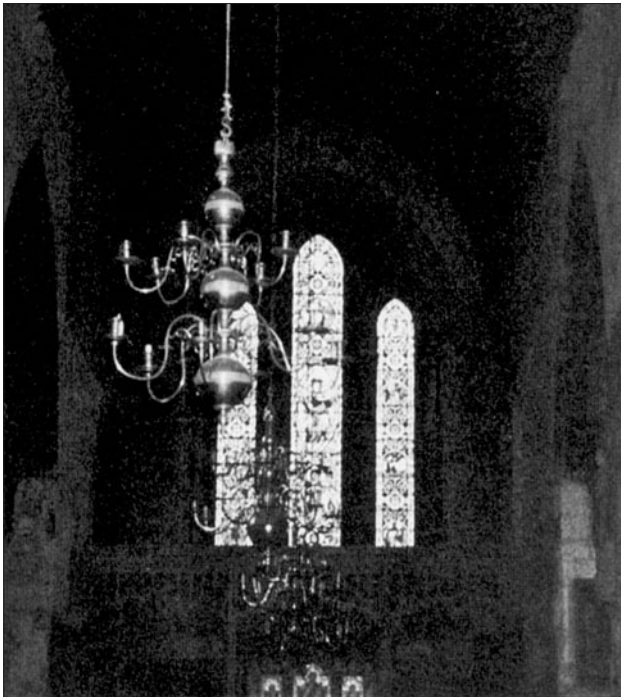
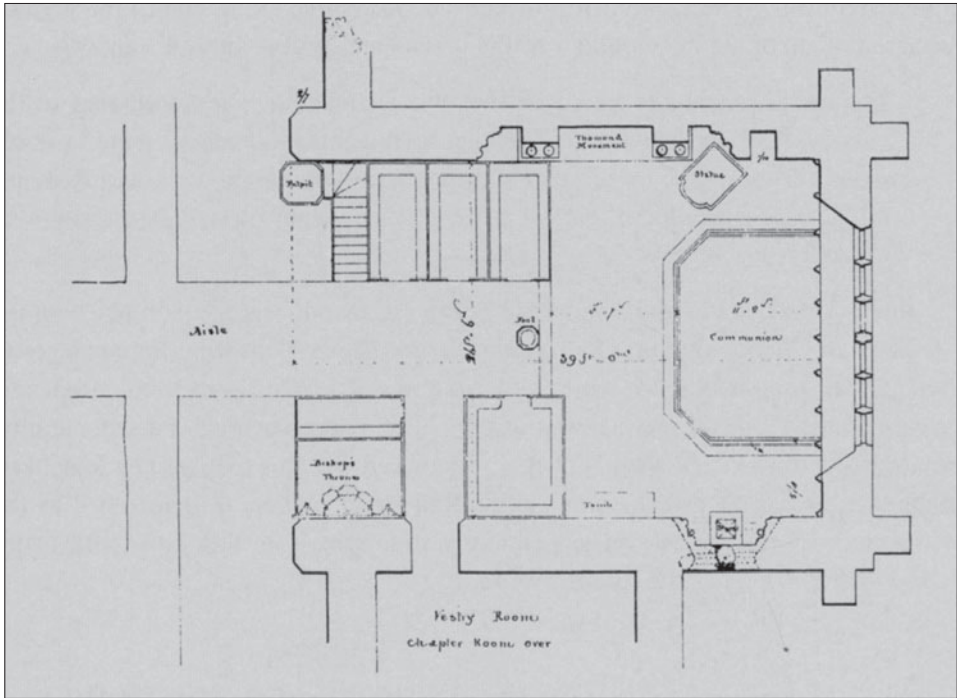
The children were uniformly dressed in blue. It was created by a woman called Mrs Craven, who:

About the year 1724 – as I believe executed a deed to the Bishop, Dean Mayor and recorder and their Successors, whereby she conveyed to them some houses in the City (the Rent of which then amounted to £40 a year) in trust for the Charity School – The Corporation paid £20 a year towards the support of that school and several persons subscribed considerable sums annually towards it.³⁶

The purpose of the school was to educate the poor boys of the locality and prepare them for ‘Apprentices to tradesmen in the City’.³⁷ It was recorded to have run smoothly until 1771 when, as demand began to exceed supply, other school houses in the area began to provide the service. It continued running as a Sunday school, and was still used for choir practice in the nineteenth century. The presence of the Blue Coat School was noted in a letter to Robert O’Brien during the restoration of the organ in 1861 when it was decided to reposition the organ in the north transept, dispensing with the Blue Coat School.³⁸

The 1750s saw prosperity in the city, met by the development of Newtown Pery, the Georgian city, with the Crescent as an inherent part of this plan. The Mathew Bridge was constructed, providing alternate access to King’s Island, and was to create a main thoroughfare of Quay Lane. The construction of a south porch in the cathedral to facilitate this route was noted in Dineley’s illustration. This entrance was altered, as illustrated by Ferrar, to cope with a larger influx of people from the new access point created by the increased use of Quay Lane as a main causeway.³⁹

Certain alterations were made to the interior, and in 1752, while travelling in Ireland, Richard Pococke was to comment on the interior of the cathedral, observing that ‘the Cathedral is a very mean heavy building, but the Quire is fitted up in a neat manner’.⁴⁰ Ferrar states that in 1759, £1,357 14s 8½d was expended on repairs and maintenance, with £100 raised by the sale of pews to parishioners. He also makes reference to a communion table in the choir. The cathedral was lit by ‘three elegant brass branches’ (Plate 9).⁴¹ If one regards the low-hanging ceiling in the chancel, shown in the survey drawing by James Pain, as a Georgian-styled intervention, it could have been imposed at this point (Plate 8). In 1759 the church was repaired by Dean Hoare, ‘whose knowledge of archaic and fine arts rendered him fit for such an undertaking’.⁴² Ferrar also recorded that modern sashes were installed in the choir.⁴³ These sashes were probably replacing those damaged during the wars of the previous century. He also described how the choir was considerably enlarged by the organ which was ‘removed 30 feet further from the Communion Table and two



St Mary's Cathedral

8 – *Ground plan by James Pain (courtesy St Mary's Cathedral)*

9 – *Brass candelabra, as seen by William Ferrar*

stops added to it'. The Dublin firm of Gibson was employed to add to the organ.⁴⁴ Ferrar is critical of the interventions of the seventeenth and eighteenth century:

The inside ornaments are not answerable to the venerable appearance of the outside. This introduction of Grecian architecture has ruined many a noble Gothic edifice. The pillars that surround the communion table and Bishop's throne, are Corinthian. It must be owing to a want of taste, that they ever found a place here.⁴⁵

The final changes made to the cathedral in the eighteenth century took place on the exterior, with the opening up of a passageway to the quay allowing for carriages to approach. The verger's house which had stood in the grounds close to the north side was taken down, and the passageway which had provided access to the cathedral on the north side through St Mark's chapel was closed up, thus placing new emphasis on the central axis of the cathedral and the Romanesque door, as approached by the new route up from the quay. The building was to remain in this form until major restoration took place in the following century.

DEVELOPMENTS AND RESTORATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, every available space in the north and south aisles of the cathedral had been opened up and extended. The work of the nineteenth-century architects did not essentially alter the overall form of the building; instead adjustments were made to change the aspect of the Cathedral inside and out. In 1812 the need to accommodate a larger congregation forced the dismantlement by Dean Preston of the consistorial court of the Bishop's Palace on the south side and the construction of a gallery in the vacant space. This matched a gallery in the north aisle, and was to accommodate the military.⁴⁶ In this connection, Sir Robert Bourke, writing about the cathedral in 1855, described that under Dean Preston the Creagh chapel on the north side was used as a consistorial court from 1809 to 1845. This was recorded on a ground plan of the cathedral dated to 1855 (Plate 7).⁴⁷

SURVEY CARRIED OUT BY SIR JAMES PAIN

In 1830 Sir James Pain was engaged in work for the city of Limerick.⁴⁸ He surveyed and repaired the Thomond Bridge, carried out repair work to St Munchin's church, and was involved in the Villiers Alms House project.⁴⁹ During this period, he produced some survey drawings of the cathedral and carried out certain interventions.

The cathedral archive has in its possession two drawings in the hand of Sir James Pain, dated March 1843. The first is a ground plan taken from the transepts to the east wall (Plate 8). The east window has six equidistant lights, suggesting a perpendicular-style window. The window in the south chancel wall is etched in, but blocked up. This is represented by the thick black line in the outer wall. There is an entrance into the vestry. Though the Thomond monument is clearly defined, there is no indication of the function of the room to the north of the chancel. The choir space is laid out with box pews and a pulpit on the north side, and a bishop's throne on the south side against the chancel wall. The vestry has been moved to the south side of the choir with the chapter room over it. The base of the statue of Bishop Jebb is situated to the north side of the altar. (This and the font were moved to their present position in the Jebb chapel in a later restoration phase.)

The second drawing is a transverse section looking east (Plate 10). The window fills the entire arched opening, and is in the perpendicular style. The theme of this rigid style is picked up in the reredos beneath. The top of the window is truncated by a low, flat ceiling. The truss system above is exposed, and when compared to the thirteenth-century example of Salisbury Cathedral, it would seem that this was the original scissors truss. The simple method of using cross beams and a collar rafter, with vertical purlins from which to hang a flat ceiling, has been executed in both cases. In the case of St Mary's, the low ceiling seems to be an eighteenth-century addition to the thirteenth-century frame.⁵⁰

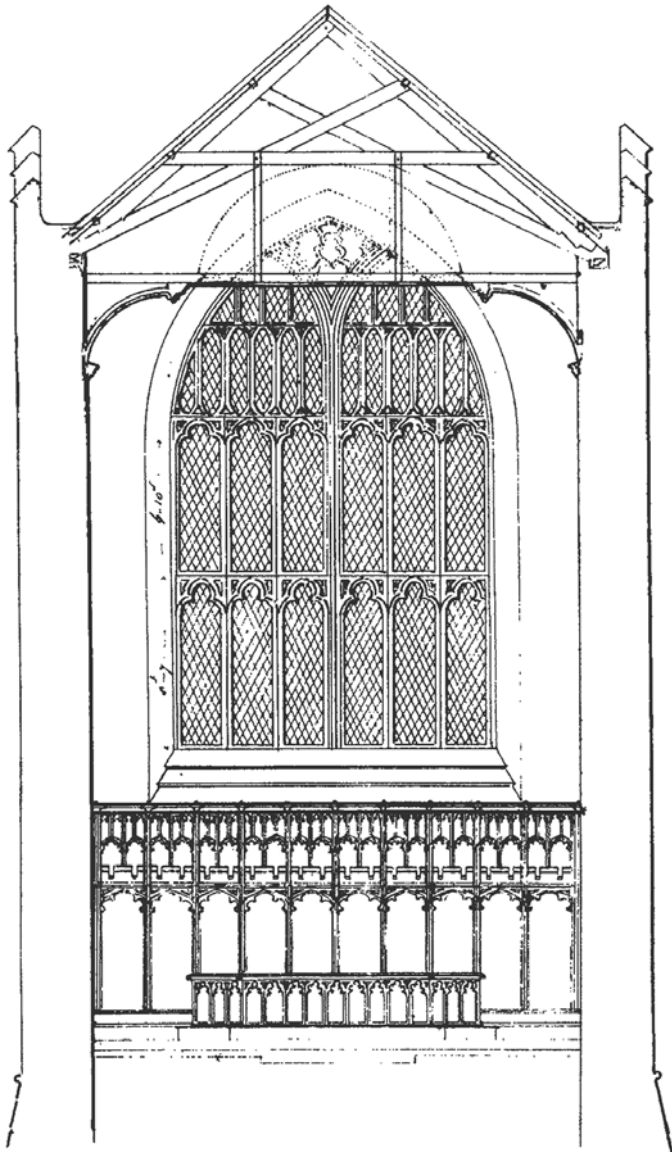
The extent of James Pain's plans for the restoration of the cathedral are not known. It would appear that the perpendicular window was installed by him. This is corroborated by the comments made by Sir Robert Bourke on the designs of William Bardwell. The window was removed in the 1860s by William Slater, and reinstated in St Michael's church, Limerick: 'Mr Slater reported that it would be necessary to remove the modern perpendicular window, which had not been many years in existence, and which was put up at very heavy cost, by Mr Payne, architect.'⁵¹

There was a serious need for work to be done. Little maintenance work was carried out in the building, with the exception of the erection of two monuments – a statue to Bishop John Jebb designed by Edward Baily in 1836, and the erection of the Maunsell memorial pulpit built under the direction of C.F. Anderson in 1841.⁵²

BARDWELL AND BOURKE

William Bardwell, initially commissioned to design a monument for Sir Mathew Barrington, undertook the design of a restoration proposal for the cathedral in 1842.⁵³ He also supervised the removal of a plaster layer which covered the west

10 – Section drawing of
perpendicular window
by James Pain
(courtesy St Mary's Cathedral)



doorway to reveal the Romanesque door surround.⁵⁴ The historian Lenihan, writing of this visit, makes interesting reading:

Mr Bardwell manifested much taste and cleverness in the suggested restorations, particularly of the exterior, which if carried out, would contribute to beautify the appearance of the Cathedral and take from it the heavy clumsy look which it still has.⁵⁵

A watercolour drawing of the proposal made by Bardwell exists in the cathedral.⁵⁶

It shows the chancel lined with stalls, the perpendicular-style east window has been filled with stained glass and the ceiling is painted in colour. The exterior was to be decorated with a variety of pinnacles with stone crosses and a completely new belfry, independent of the peal of bells already existing in the tower. However this restoration project was not carried out.⁵⁷

A critical assessment of the proposed design was written by Sir Robert Bourke in 1855.⁵⁸ Bourke disagreed with Bardwell's historical interpretation of the first cathedral building as a single-celled church. Bardwell considered that the church built by Donal Mor O'Brien was a much smaller building. He suggested that this structure was pulled down by Bishop Donat O'Brien to make way for the larger church. Bourke disagreed and proposed that the lancets in the transept, as illustrated by Thomas Dineley – that is, before restoration – were the original Romanesque style of round-headed lancets, proof enough that the cathedral was constructed with transepts. Bourke also queries Bardwell's design for the addition of a series of pinnacles to the outside of the cathedral: 'he was not aware of turrets and spires on the extremities – not in Ireland'.⁵⁹ He implied that Bardwell's conception of Irish architecture was misinformed and not fully understood. He points out that the design of a new crossing arch at the transepts was an unnecessary modern intervention. Finally, he felt that the perpendicular window in the chancel was 'barbarous and debased to the last degree', and he wished to see the original triplet rebuilt on the grounds that 'it undoubtedly was at first' such a structure.⁶⁰

Bourke had his own suggestions for the restoration. He makes a reference to the 'outrageous deformation' of Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin, in 1830, and he pleads that the whole plan and genius of the structure of St Mary's Cathedral be studied before great changes were made.⁶¹ He proposed specifications for the work which he felt were necessary to safeguard the structure. For the exterior, he wanted the pitch of the aisle roofs to be restored to their original design, and the porch which was covering the Romanesque doorway to be removed. The glazing in the windows, especially in the transepts, he wished to see changed, and the building to the north-east side of the presbytery (the Blue Coat School) either removed or brought more into line with the rest of the cathedral. For the interior, as the construction of the bell-ringers loft occurred after the rebuilding of the tower in the eighteenth century, Bourke proposed that the ringing loft, obscuring the top of the west-façade lancet windows, be raised. He proposed that the clerestory windows be restored, and that the nave, aisles and chapels should have either plain groined ceilings or open pitched roofs. Finally, he requested that the font be restored to its original place – that is, between one of the south piers of the nave.

As emerges from this lively and critical account, Bourke demonstrates an objective approach to the work of others, while retaining a sensitive outlook

towards restoration. However, these carefully considered design ideas were not acted upon. The plan attached to the manuscript is initialled D.M.R. and dated 1855 (Plate 7). This drawing is of crucial importance as it provided a record of the eighteenth-century seating arrangement, which were little changed until the 1860s during the next major phase of restoration.

WILLIAM SLATER

For a period of almost thirty years, proposals for the restoration of the building had been submitted, but little was done. It was not until the employment of the eminent London architect William Slater that great changes were made.⁶² He was consulted by Dean Kirwan and by the chapter to erect a memorial to Augustus O'Brien Stafford MP, who died in 1857. Slater was also commissioned at this time to propose a restoration scheme for the cathedral.

The works that Slater proposed fall directly in line with the principles of the Cambridge Camden Society, known from 1845 as the Ecclesiological Society.⁶³ The Ecclesiological Society set out to revive what it considered to be historically authentic Anglican worship and ceremonial, and, more importantly in relation to Limerick, to restore medieval churches. They established a model for future church building and stated that new churches should be in the Gothic style of the late-thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, stylistically the so-called Early English and decorated styles, that they should be honestly built of solid materials, and that they should be ornamented in such a way as to decorate the construction. The Society later came under the influence of the style of the Gothic churches of Italy and Germany, and were further influenced by the use of brick.⁶⁴

William Slater trained with R.C. Carpenter, who was very involved in the teachings and theory of this society.⁶⁵ Carpenter was also closely associated with A.W.N. Pugin, whose contribution to the Oxford Movement is central to understanding the architectural advances.⁶⁶ This friendship was considered significant in the development of the Gothic revival, as Pugin reintroduced painted glass and polychrome decoration to church architecture. Carpenter is considered to have been responsible for bringing Pugin's design innovations into the mainstream of Anglicanism. This is best represented by his stained-glass window design and church furniture. It is important to view Slater's work in relation to this level of detailing and decoration, as Slater assisted Carpenter towards the end of his life. Indeed, the window style chosen by Slater and the designs for benches discussed below are also decorated in accordance with the principles of the Ecclesiological Society.

SLATER'S PROPOSAL AND WORKS

Slater proposed to concentrate largely on the interior, with certain structural changes to the chancel roof and choir. He set about replacing the east perpendicular-style window with an Early English Gothic window. It may well be that the Cathedral Chapter was keen to adhere to the principles of the Ecclesiological Society, firstly by employing one of the leading architects of the day, and secondly by replacing a recently installed east window for a window more in keeping with the society's beliefs.

Slater rearranged the choir so that it occupied two thirds the length of the nave. This was in keeping with Tractarian requirements that the sacraments and the rite, represented by the chancel, should be stressed above the Word, represented by the pulpit.⁶⁷ To emphasise the importance of the chancel, the decoration became progressively richer towards the east and the sanctuary. This also may explain the reason for replacing the chancel roof using oak in an elaborate fashion.⁶⁸

Robert O'Brien, fourth son of Lord Inchiquin, co-ordinated the restoration works. A large body of correspondence survives from this period.⁶⁹ In a letter of 10 July 1858 (Plate 11), Slater discusses with O'Brien the circumstances of the restoration project:

I attended the Committee of the Stafford Memorial today and submitted the general drawings of the proposed new roof, window and reredos and a design for the glass was prepared by Messers Clayton and Bell (the artists appointed to do the window). My estimates included staining and fixing ditto reredos, roof, new windows and stone work to gable amounts to £1170. The Committee have authorised the working plans to be proceeded with – The roof I propose to be in oak. Can you kindly inform me what oak is to be obtained in Ireland and the names of builders you would recommend. I expect to be in Ireland in August – yours W. Slater.

This letter indicates a willingness to use local materials and labour for certain aspects of the work. It appears that at this time he preferred to call on the services of a London firm of stained glass artists, Clayton and Bell, for the more skilled work of the window glass.⁷⁰ His price included the reredos, the choir roof, new windows and stone work. The project then received the approval of the committee, according to a letter from Slater to O'Brien, dated to 20 August 1858, in which he records: 'I am very pleased that you approve of the plans and I am in hopes that you approve of the detail.'⁷¹ Work began in 1859, and was reported in the *Dublin Builder*: 'The main roof has been entirely renewed, a handsome east window erected, and the chancel and choir are being properly restored under the skillful directions of Mr. Slater.'⁷²

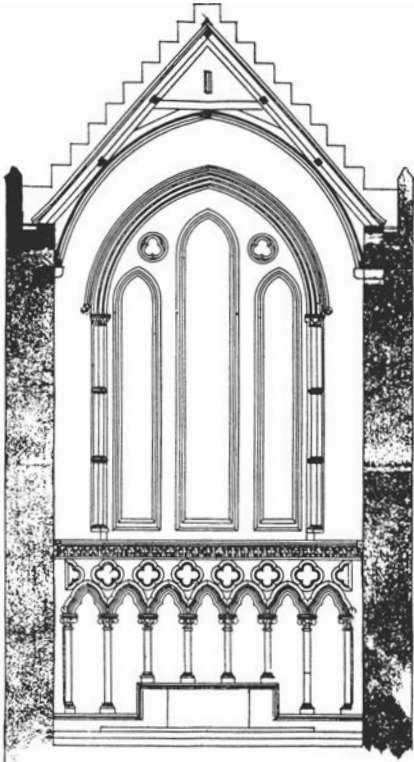
Slater entered into contracts with Messrs Ryan & Son for the chancel roof

11 – A letter by William Slater. The handwriting is to be compared with that at the top of Plate 13 (courtesy Limerick City Museum)

4 Carlton Chambers
Agent. S.W.
July 10 1858.
Limerick Cathedral
Dear Sir,
I attended the Committee
of the Stafford Memorial today
& submitted the ^{general} drawings
of the proposed new roof
window, Reredos - & a design
in the glass was prepared by
Messrs Clayton & Bell (the artists
appointed to do the window) —
see Estimates including the

and the new stone work in the window, and with Messrs Clayton & Bell for the stained glass of a new, triple-lancet, single-light window system which replaced the perpendicular window. According to the *Dublin Builder*, Mr Slater reported that it was necessary to remove the modern perpendicular window as it was out of character with the rest of the building.⁷³ He also reported that a portion of the eighteenth-century flat ceiling over the choir was much decayed and should be removed.⁷⁴ Both of these decisions were in keeping with the Ecclesiological Society's views.

A drawing was made of this window designed by Slater, signed and dated 1858 (Plate 12).⁷⁵ It was an Early English Gothic style window which comprised three single-pointed lancets, the centre lancet higher than the two sides (Plate 16). Above these side lancets were twin trilobes, and the window was surrounded by an archway, decorated by a series of roll-mouldings, supported by colonettes. Below the window there was a floriated string-course and a reredos (the Stafford Memorial) using the trilobe motif, repeated to create a band across the reredos arches. Similarly, the arches were trefoiled and had the same vegetal capitals as those on the colonettes. The drawing shows the section of the roof as a pointed, barrel-vaulted, roof-truss system. The original scissors-truss system shown in the James Pain draw-



12 – Scheme for east window by William Slater, St Mary’s Cathedral

(courtesy St Mary’s Cathedral)

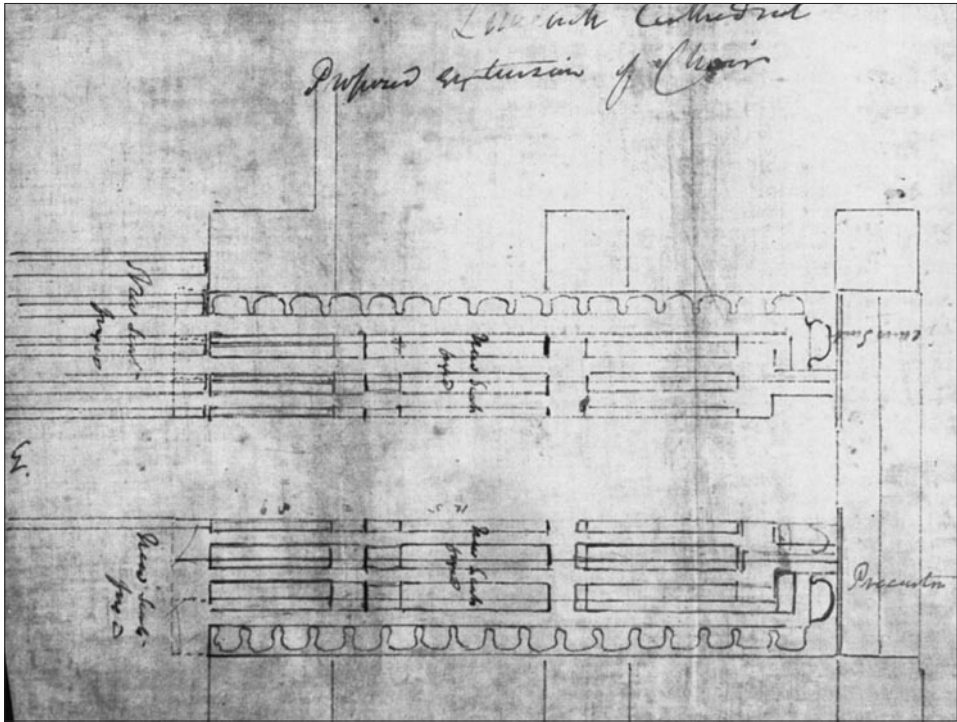
opposite

13 – Proposed alterations to choir, St Mary’s Cathedral; drawing probably by William Slater

(courtesy Limerick City Museum)

ing was destroyed for this intervention.⁷⁶ The cost of this work was £305 10s 7d, and new canopies were placed over the stalls and seats in the choir.

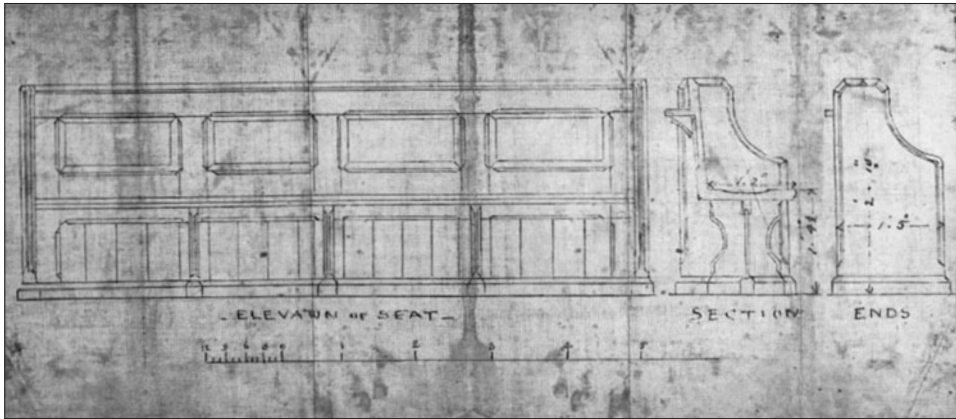
A circular letter was issued in August 1860 which served the purpose of fund-raising for the next phase of works.⁷⁷ It also provides an insight into the situation at that time. A new roof was in place over the choir, the clerestory windows had been repaired, the reredos was erected, new stalls were in preparation, and the floors had been replaced. Further evidence for these works survive in the form of sketch drawings which are a part of the O’Brien papers.⁷⁸ Although these drawings were unsigned, it is suggested here that they were, in fact, drawn by Slater, and that this was his proposal to reorganise the seating arrangements in the choir and transepts. This sketch drawing shows a new layout of the cathedral, with stalls placed facing each other in the nave arcade and in the transept, and projecting into the nave as far as the second arcade (Plate 13). The depth in the plan, effectively absorbing a large part of the nave, was consistent with the Tractarian requirement of the emphasis on the importance of the chancel. The plan suggests that the semicircular stalls were those of the misericords, which have a semicircular profile. The *Dublin Builder* recorded that Slater was responsible for the new seating arrangement and for the replacing of the pews with open benches: ‘Square pews have been everywhere



removed and are being replaced by open benches,'⁷⁹

Another drawing in the same hand details the elevation and section of an open bench (Plate 14).⁸⁰ The circular letter indicates that work had begun on the reorganising of the choir, but it also suggests that further funds were required to complete the works for 'the extension of the Stalls and Canopies'.⁸¹ There are several comparative examples of stalls that survive in the cathedral, and some are likely to have dated from this construction phase. Equally, photographs of views of the cathedral dated to the 1880s in the Lawrence Collection show choir stalls stretching into the nave (Plates 17, 18).⁸²

A letter dated to September 1860 from Slater to Robert O'Brien demonstrates that further funding was required: 'One of these roofs is of the old military gallery and is to be completed first. It is hoped that many officers quartered in the Church, and in all probability, have often sat in this gallery, will generously come forward.'⁸³ In this connection also, a Captain Brine R.E. advertised in the same circular letter that he undertook to collect a 'sufficient sum to case the two transept roofs to correspond with the nave'.⁸⁴ There is also a reference to the bishop, who promised fifty pounds for re-erecting the organ. In August 1860 the bishop consented that the organ gallery should be removed. In what was apparently a controversial decision,



*14 – Plan for church bench, probably by William Slater, St Mary’s Cathedral
(courtesy Limerick City Museum)*

this was followed by the taking down of all of the galleries, clearly marking the change in taste from the eighteenth-century formula:

The perverted taste of the last century, which erected a wooden screen in the Temple Church and defaced the interior of our noblest Cathedrals, sadly disfigured this one also. Most of the arches were filled up with brick or woodwork, one-third of the church was cut off by a huge glazed wooden screen, over which the organ was placed, galleries were erected in the transepts, and all that depraved taste and ignorance could do was done to change and disfigure its original beauty. These abominations have now happily been swept away...⁸⁵

Slater stressed that one third of the church was ‘cut off’ by the screen, organ and galleries. This again would have offended his Tractarian sensibilities. He was strengthening the argument for his proposal of a more open plan with a deeper choir. In an interesting aside, the proposed plans by the dean for the taking away of the organ from the nave and placing it in the transept was clearly not the most favoured solution. In a letter to O’Brien of 17 September 1860 from a firm of Dublin organ makers, Telford, the following details emerge:

The dean has removed all the galleries, and all the skreens including the brick work filling the high arches between the transepts and the choir. As he says the organ will again block up the aisles. He is about to break a large arch in the east wall of the north transept not far from the pulpit outside the cathedral in the angle behind the Thomond monument and north transept is the Blue Coat School. In this school he proposes to fit the apparatus part of the organ projecting into the transepts about 2 feet. Now this seems to be a very serious

matter breaking the exterior wall of the building – I feel unhappy about it and beg him to send for you. I enclose for you the ground plans the choir is to be extended as shown. I should suggest that the organ should be in the south side instead of the north for this side would less damage but I am sure you will agree with the dean's plan.⁸⁶

Obviously, from the following letter, the Telford's protests fell on deaf ears, and O'Brien's response is as follows: 'I am sorry that the dean will not consult and act on the advice of Mr Slater. In my opinion the best position for the organ is behind the stalls.'⁸⁷ The organ was positioned in the east wall of the north transept, and remains there today. As already observed above, what is also notable from this exchange is that the Blue Coat School was present in the north transept.⁸⁸

The floor was to prove the next problem facing Slater. On account of the many graves which had been dug into the earth beneath the church over the centuries, the floor in the aisles was damp. Water was discovered to be draining in from the street at the east end of the cathedral, creating damp under the chancel floor. This was raised up by a set of three steps, and the situation was remedied by covering the floor with brickwork and relaying it with Minton tiles set in cement. These polychrome tiles were also much in keeping with the Gothic revival style. The credence arch and the circular window to the right side of the altar were reopened, and a marble table/altar stone was installed, re-establishing the altar as the main feature in the service.

Slater's involvement continues into 1861 when a new south transept window was designed by him as a memorial to Mrs T. Westropp. In a letter dated 11 July 1861, written to Mr O'Brien by a committee member, the origin of the south transept window replacement becomes clear:

Mr Ralf Westropp is anxious to erect a memorial tablet for a relative in Limerick cathedral and has selected the south transept as the location in which to place it. And incidently he is prepared to put a new roof on that transept a stained glass window to replace the stonework when required.⁸⁹

The window that was designed by Slater was in the decorated style, with a series of five trefoiled headed lancets set into an embrasure (Plate 15). The stained glass was installed by Clayton and Bell, and the subject was from the Old Testament, depicting scenes from the lives of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon. The exterior gable was castellated as the east end. The wall is plain, with crow-stepping added in an attempt to merge the gable with the castellations of the elevation walls. Further correspondence exists between Mrs Westropp's nephew Ralph and O'Brien regarding the window and payment for the additional restoration of the south



transept, where he claims in 25 December 1860 that ‘I bind myself for the payment of the expenses of Mr Slater’.⁹⁰ Slater responds with an undertaking to carry out the new works in a letter written from London on 20 February 1861.⁹¹ He wrote again from London to O’Brien on 30 April 1861. The letter this time includes more design detail, cost and methods of transport of drawings. It also suggests that additional work was proposed.

My dear sir,

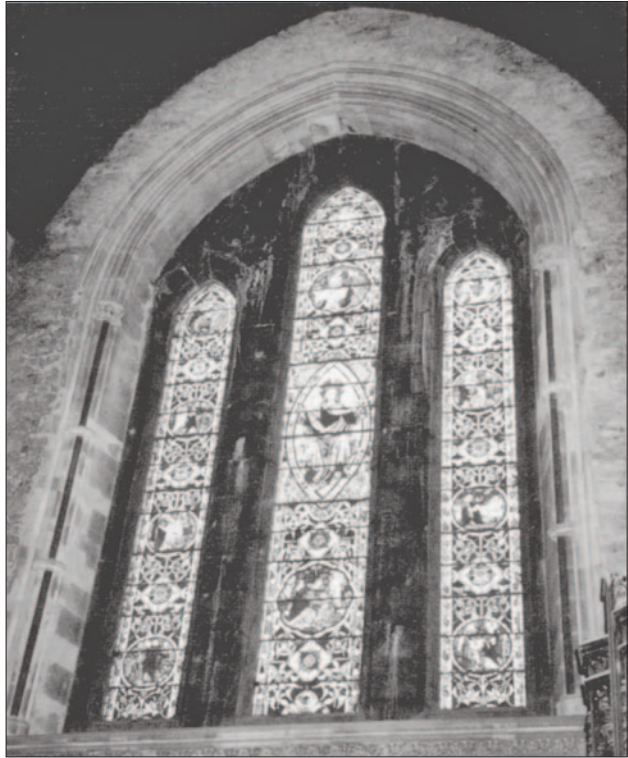
for the last fortnight or rather since my return I have been engaged about the design for the south transept and I am glad to say that they will be sent to Mr Westropp tomorrow night – the drawings are more formidable than expected that I have been obliged to send them by portfolio. I did not see how the monumental stained glass windows could be sent without injury by post. I have gone into the expenses and I hope that £3,000 will allow 2 of the chapels in the south aisle, chapel roofs being included – I have my own feeling that the Cathedral will be wonderful improved by the south transept restoration and the north transept will be allowed to be in its preservation – I have doubts about the wisdom of blocking up the monument of the south

*Windows by William Slater
in St Mary's Cathedral*

opposite

*15 – Westropp window in the
south transept*

16 – East window



wall of the south transept as a door could so easily be contrived at the south side of the vestry,

yours William Slater.

I have omitted to mention that a design for the pulpit for you will be sent to Mr Westropp's portfolio. I hope that you can obtain £150 for the pulpit so the very best shall be done for that sum. Messers Clayton and Bell plead hard for figures in medallions-I have sent their report.⁹²

In a letter of 20 October 1861 from the offices of Clayton and Bell at 311 Regent Street, London, the following difficulties regarding costs were outlined:

We have gone into the matter of our estimate for the Limerick Cathedral glass and find our belief as stated to you that the sum named for the work instead of being high was a very low one is fully corroborated. I should premise that the ordinary price of work of such extreme elaboration as is involved in this case is 42-per foot for the glass only. This would render the sum total cost there being a glass area of 300ft, £660 exclusive, you will note of the expenses in wrought ironwork and all other items.

We have gone into the work in a spirit quite con amore and had thought of begging to be allowed to exhibit the window at the exhibition next year.

Under the circumstances you will perceive that we cannot reduce our estimate even though we cancelled the work already done and recommend a modified plan.

John Clayton pro Clayton and Bell.⁹³

Clayton and Bell were a well-appointed glass house, much used by Gothic revival architects during the mid-nineteenth century. It is interesting to note the reference to the possibility of including their work in 'The Exhibition'. This is surely a reference to the 1862 International Exhibition in London.⁹⁴ It is unclear whether they did, in fact, finish in time to enter. However, the Westropp memorial tablet, which was sculpted by James Redfern of London with scenes of the Agony in the Garden and the Resurrection, was entered and won a medal at the International Exhibition, London 1862.⁹⁵

The work of this period is reported to have been finished in 1862, whereupon the church continued in service until a committee was formed for the restoration of Quay Lane and for the construction of a boundary wall on Merchants Quay. This involved the buying up of properties along the side of the cathedral that fronted onto the courthouse, and the conveyancing papers and contracts for the building works survive among the papers of the cathedral archive. According to correspondence that remains, William Corbett was responsible for the building of the boundary wall, and Robert O'Brien once again supervised the work. A sketch plan survives of the boundary wall which illustrates the additional space incorporated by the planned changes.⁹⁶

RESTORATION CARRIED OUT BY GEORGE EDMUND STREET WITH J.F. FULLER

The records which survive for the period 1876 to 1882 provide a fascinating account of professional practice at this time. The works were presided over by a specially appointed Cathedral Restoration Committee, which was charged with both monitoring the works and fund-raising. A letter of specification detailing the proposal for restoration from George Edmund Street, dated 10 November 1876, is held in the cathedral archive.⁹⁷ This presumably came about after he was approached by the Cathedral Restoration Committee to carry out a survey. As with the restoration programme from 1858 to 1861, the plan of works was then used as a vehicle of publicity for the cathedral. A fund-raising letter was circularised among the congre-

tion, and the responses to this survive. In a letter from Lord Devon to the bishop, he made available '£100 payable in two yearly installments the first of be paid at Midsummer '77 towards the restoration of the Cathedral'. The Knight of Glin pledged '£20 in four yearly installments', and Lord Limerick wrote very touchingly on 22 February 1877 that he 'will not promise any particular amount but will take some portion of the work as a memorial to my dear wife'. A little later, on 26 March 1877, he wrote from the south of France: 'I shall hope to be able to place the stained glass in the small window in the south wall near the Pery chapel.'

Meanwhile, the services of a local architect who would act as the go-between on a daily basis were also engaged. Certain correspondence survives, spanning a three-year period, between Dean Bunbury and the architect J.F. Fuller, who was the appointed local architect. The letters deal with the installation of a window in the Jebb chapel, a window in the north transept, and a heating system. The letters, though sequential, are by no means a full account of the works carried out.⁹⁸ They provide an insight into the tenders and contractors, and display the difficulty of working within a comparatively inadequate and time-consuming communication system operating between Limerick, Dublin and London. They illustrate the forgotten details which comprise a project of this nature. Furthermore, the tone of the work has changed. It is now clear that we are involved in the post-industrial age where commerce, technology and, indeed, travelling expenses are all important.

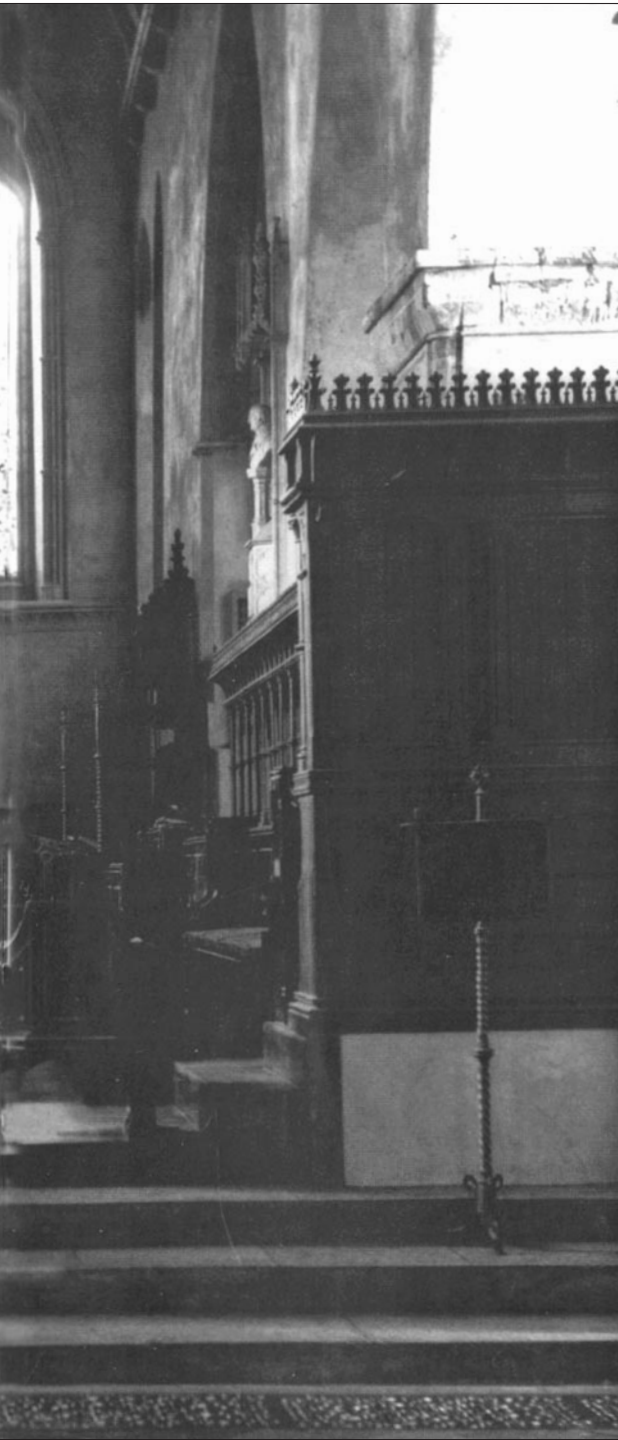
STREET'S PROPOSAL

George Edmund Street's proposal focused on the interior space of the cathedral. In a letter to the bishop, dated 10 November 1876, Street provided general suggestions for the 'improvement of the internal arrangements and effect of your Cathedral'. In accordance with the established form among the cathedral chapter for wanting the best practices, Street was consulted, as he understood, 'rather with regard to the artistic decoration and improvement of the interior than to works of substantial repair'. After viewing Slater's work of 1861, Street commented that the 'new roof which had been erected within a comparatively short space of time requires no alteration unless indeed means could be found for putting some coloured decorations upon it, by which effect might easily be much improved'.⁹⁹ Street's emphasis on colour and on the church interior seems to have been a revision of the Gothic revivalist theme as suggested by William Bardwell in 1844.

Street put forward the idea of re-roofing the aisles of the nave yet delaying the re-roofing of the chapel projections, as they were not in immediate use for the accommodation of worshippers, and not a financially viable suggestion at that time.



ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL LIMERICK. 660. W. L.



He proposed to clean off all the plaster from the main piers, and to begin 'cleaning and repairing of the wrought stonework of which they are part constructed'.¹⁰⁰ His seating arrangements, which were designed to accommodate up to four-hundred people, put the congregation facing the east on low, open pews. He suggested that initially the cathedral walls were plastered for decoration of 'representations of Scriptural subjects or personages'. It was thought that this would bring out the strong architectural lines of the building, and give it a warmth and artistic interest.¹⁰¹ He was also reducing the deep choir space that Slater had introduced. His was a more developed version of the Gothic revival style. His advice for the seating arrangements was not acted upon. The Lawrence photographs of 1880 show the choir stalls dating from Slater's works (Plates 17, 18).

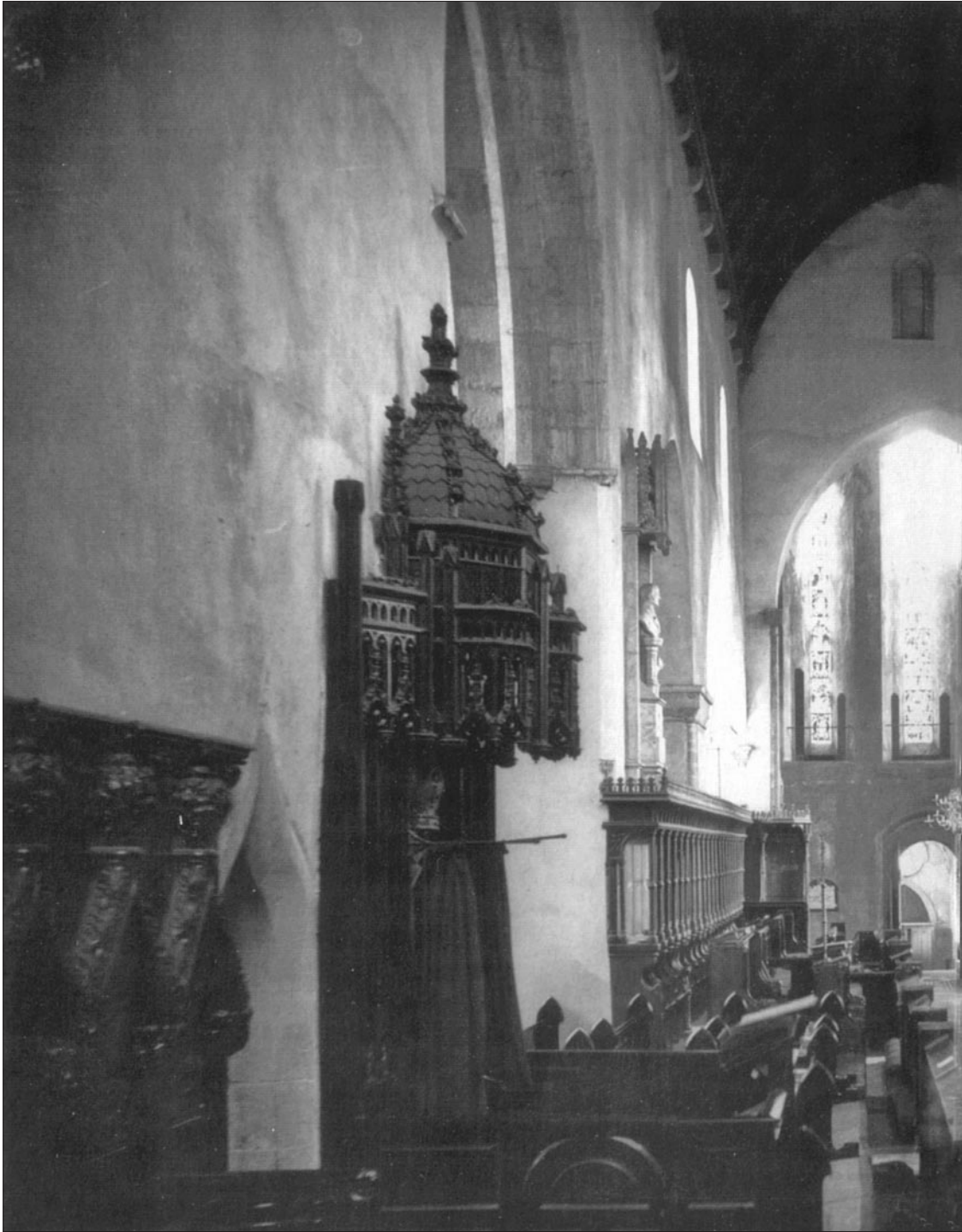
According to correspondence (held in the cathedral archive) between the Earl of Limerick and Dean Bunbury on 2 August 1877, it would appear that the restoration committee had decided to employ Street while using J.F. Fuller as an intermediate supervisor of works. It becomes apparent from the letter

17 – Interior view of St Mary's Cathedral facing east, with Slater's scheme for seating

overleaf

18 – Interior view facing west, with Slater's scheme for seating

(Lawrence Collection, courtesy National Library of Ireland)





below that relations between the two as they developed over the year were not entirely satisfactory. It seems that Street was difficult to contact:

Parknasilla, Kenmare
 Aug 2 1877

My dear Dean,

Mr Street has at last written. Please read his letter. There are statements in it which I think are inaccurate. It was originally posed to employ Mr Fuller as absolutely subordinate to Mr Street. It was not till we found that Mr Street could not be got to answer letters or to do anything at all, that we proposed to commit the repairs of the fabric to Mr Fuller and that this idea originated with Mr Street himself.

Mr Street speaks now of not knowing anything of Mr Fuller. He did not speak in those terms a year ago - I have thought over the matter maturely and am of the opinion that we had better act on the resolution of the Restoration Committee [and on the last paragraph of Mr Streets letter] and commit to Mr Fuller the sole charge of the works of repair and reconstruction of the fabric and roofs.

When all that is done it will be open to us to ask Mr Street to undertake the decoration and rearrangement of the interior - If he should refuse. We cant help it. I dare say we should find some other person very competent.

But I suspect he will not refuse: for I do not think it likely that Mr Fuller will do anything to the roofs and windows which wd in the least interfere with Mr Streets work on the interior- Mr Street has taken huff somewhat. This often happens when a man feels that he has given reason to others to take offence. Mr Street must be conscious that he has not treated you and me properly. He is therefore displeased with himself. I have not yet answered his letter. He may, in his turn, wait for a reply. But I am inclined to write him a very short letter in the following terms provided the Restoration Committee approves of my doing so.

Very faithfully, Limerick.

The restoration committee subsequently put Mr Fuller in sole charge of the repairs and reconstruction of the fabric and roofs during 1877. It was thought that on completion of Fuller's ground work, Street should be approached to reactivate his proposals for decorating the interior of the cathedral.

The cathedral archives hold a series of letters relating to Fuller's involvement in the restoration project (Plate 19). The correspondence from Fuller, addressed to Dean Bunbury, dates from 6 March 1877 to 29 March 1880. In style, Fuller is viva-

19 – A letter from Fuller to
Dean Bunbury
(courtesy St Mary's Cathedral)

May 24. 77

My dear Dean,
I wrote some time
ago to Heaton Buller
& Payne to say that
their window had been
selected. What about
the packing case?
Wales should get back
in sketch. Not a
word from Street!
Yours
J.F. Fuller

cious and rather bossy; for example, in his first letter of 6 March 1877 he details the installation of a window in the Jebb Chapel:

The design for the window was sent in to me yesterday by Early & Power. He has wired to Street the plans etc. The plans took a good deal of time as they had to be very carefully done showing everything. When I hear from Street I'll communicate with you at once. There are several other designs in stained glass to be got. After a good deal of pressure some first rate houses have promised to send in sketches on chance for £400 exclusive of fixing. Early & Power don't include the scaffolding. I don't think Street and the Bishop will have the window,
faithfully, J.F.Fuller

Fuller develops a relationship with the dean and occasionally tries to impress him. In a letter dated to 3 May 1877 he recommends a stone mason who is

the best man I know and who has the best limestone quarry in Ireland. He built Lord Ventry's place for me in Dingle cheaper than anybody else. He is building also for me in Cong £25,000 of work for Sir A.E. Guinness – you are not pledged to him in anyway as I distinctly told him so I don't want to get into the hands of a rogue or a pauper if possible.¹⁰²

Fuller then writes on 17 May 1877 with another recommendation of a builder who hailed from ‘Fermoy who has a quarry of his own with splendid limestone. He has a government contract and a yard.’

Certain difficulties arise over the specification of the window. Fuller indicates on 24 May 1877 that the window of Heaton, Butler and Bayne had been selected.¹⁰³ It appears he was trying to employ a local man to assist the London firm, and says on 26 July 1877: ‘I’m very sorry Newstead didn’t get the window as I don’t half like the rough and ready sort of man you have.’ He also suggests that the job should be delayed until the following year with the exception of the window: ‘I have come to the conclusion that it would be better to put off all the works except the window that the plans are made for till next spring. Everything will be done in a hurry and rush now and you’ll have the church uncovered at a very bad time of year.’ In the following letter to the dean, Fuller remonstrates with him and says: ‘I wish you would put a stop to all the speculation and give the work to Heaton Butler & Bayne whose window you may be sure will be A1 when up.’ Heaton, Butler and Bayne were, in fact, given the contract. They were a renowned glass house, often used by Street and other Gothic revivalist architects. The design depicted the Sermon on the Mount in five lights. They received payment of £436 1s for executing the work: ‘To executing in rich antique glass a five light window for St. Mary’s Cathedral in Limerick – Packing and use of case; Galvanised iron bars; Paid Mr Dooner for pointing window; Glaziers railway fare time and expenses fixing window; Carriage of glasses &c.’

In the next letter, dated 20 July 1877, Fuller claims that he will ‘turn up from somewhere or other at the cathedral at 10 o’clock sharp on Tuesday morning: ‘Probably I shall catch a train at Birdhill.’ The difficulties of time and travel must be taken into account when considering projects of this nature.

STREET AND FULLER

The recurring problem throughout the cathedral correspondence is the lack of response from Street on the restoration project. This may be explained by the fact that Street was at this time involved in the project for the designing of the New Law Courts in London.¹⁰⁴ The enormity of the New Law Courts project took its toll on Street and contributed to his death in 1881, such was the measure of his involvement. It may explain Street’s distance from the Limerick project, as he was, by reputation, a most conscientious architect. The appointment of a local architect like Fuller was perhaps his way of ensuring the work was carried out at a distance.

In the letters to Dean Bunbury, Fuller repeatedly complains about Street’s

silence. On 24 May 1877, 'Street has not answered my letters nor has he sent back the drawings I sent him.' Also in May, writing from Killarney on a Tuesday, he says, 'I have heard nothing from Street, and as the Bishop intimated to me that Street wished my plans to be submitted to him I am rather in a fix. I must throw the blame on you. Of course I have no objection to submitting the plans but we have delay enough as it is and no reply.' On 20 July 1877 he writes, 'Street has all my drawings, taken for preparing sections of a new roof, and he has never answered any of my letters or acknowledged the receipt of the drawings.' On 7 August 1877 again, 'It is a great pity that Street wouldn't go to the trouble of answering letters or returning plans sooner.' This problem was addressed by the restoration committee who, it seems, were not satisfied by the arrangement either. A letter was drafted to Street as follows:

On the whole we are of the opinion that fewest difficulties will arise if we employ Mr Fuller as our architect to plan and superintend the execution of all the works of repair to the fabric of the Cathedral including the reconstruction of the roofs. When these works have been completed, we may ask you to undertake the re-arrangement and decoration of the interior.

As soon as J.F. Fuller takes over in an official capacity, his mood changes and his writing style becomes even more vivacious; as early as 8 August 1877 he writes to the dean that, 'I am hard at the Cathedral but I don't think you have any idea of the amt of work there is to be done.' The next surviving letter is from Tralee, dated 7 February 1878, and the large gap in the correspondence makes it difficult to interpret precisely what actually had occurred. Obviously there was some difficulty, and Fuller challenges the dean this time with offering his profession as ransom:

The Limerick builder had the same chance that builders in Kerry, Dublin, Waterford Fermoy, Kells and other places and the time has expired for receiving tenders. On no account could I do what you ask should simply destroy my credit among tradesmen. No architect of any standing in his profession could sanction what you ask. The other builder went to the trouble most of them going to Dublin to see the plans. If you wish to get other proposals in I will send you the plans but I will withdraw and leave the works to be carried out under some other architect. It is a point of honour in the profession not to do what you ask.

truly dear Dean, yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

There is tension in this letter, but Fuller is obviously winning the battle as he writes again on 12 February 1878: 'You don't know how strong the feeling is about this sort of thing among builders.' The letter refers to the works which were to com-

mence in the north transept. Crosbie, the builder, was employed after much decision making. There remains a specification dated 6 December 1878 signed by Crosbie. In a written statement Crosbie proposes and agrees to restore the windows in the north transept gable. He writes that this will commence as soon as ‘the scaffolding is taken down from the gable of the Jebb chapel’. This helps to confirm that Heaton, Butler and Bayne glazed the window of the Jebb chapel, and that Crosbie then rebuilt the window and the roof of the north transept. In a letter dated 23 August 1878 Fuller encloses a certificate of payment of £150 for Crosbie.¹⁰⁵

Several letters by Fuller also are held among the O’Brien papers. In the first, dated 11 August 1878, Fuller says that some plans will be arriving from London.¹⁰⁶ Writing on 31 August 1878 he describes the difficulties he faces working for the cathedral’s committee:

I should like to go to Limerick very often to see what turns up and to watch the progress of so critical and interesting work. If I do so some members of the committee will say by that I have wasted money in travelling expenses. If I don’t go so often others will say I am neglecting to work.

The excuses are mindful of the difficulties facing any committee-and-builder relationship. Once again the old rivalry with Street is expressed:

extras are unavoidable for instance the two centre pieces of the Jebb Chapel window were found to be so out of plumb that I had to order them to be rebuilt. I suspected from certain indications that if search was made we’d find something interesting about the Jebb chapel – I felt convinced by hacking off the old plaster under the window stone shafts and bases would come to light.

This turned out the fact. The proper course would be to thoroughly explore the whole surface but then see what hot water I may get into if I do what I consider right. I know very well what Street would do he would simply give orders right left and centre regardless of cost so that professionally he would be safe as far as his architectural reputation went leaving the committee to settle the bill afterwards.

Fuller was also involved in the installation of a ‘hot water heating apparatus’ which was fitted to the cathedral. It was installed by Ross Murray & Co, Engineers, Dublin. Their specification is dated 25 July 1874, where they state that they will install ‘three uncovered pipes with ornamental cast iron box ends’. Their bills were settled in 1880.

When the works were concluded, Fuller entered into discussion about payments for work, and graciously refuses to take any repayment. He knows the dean is ‘uphill about the money’. In a letter dated 7 January 1880 he explained that it ‘is the

rule of the profession that 5 percent should be charged to the architect on all stained glass work but I am the one exception. I make no claim.' Fuller again waives his fees in a letter dated 29 March 1880: 'Don't trouble about me. I don't mean to charge you the uttermost farthing and [letter damaged] have purposefully kept no account of handling expenses and I'll wipe out my 5 percent on Ross & Murray's bills and on the glass bills from London.' So ends the colourful correspondence between Fuller and the dean which richly illustrates the pleasures and trials of co-ordinating restoration works from the point of view of the church.¹⁰⁷

After the Fuller episode, the records make reference to changes made to the cathedral precinct. The buildings of the Old Exchange were taken down, leaving only the façade, which faces onto High Street. Improvements also were made to the grounds surrounding the cathedral. A payment dated 9 April 1877 was made to William Abraham of Fort Prospect Nursery, Limerick, for the planting of the grounds. This was a substantial order of what was a representative range of typical Victorian planting:

100	Laurela Atherospermatatacae (laurels)	12	Viburnam Tinus
50	Aristolelia (green hedging shrubs)	12	Escallonia (hedging)
25	Ribes Sanguinem (Flowering currant)	2	Douglas fir
6	Taxus Baccata (yew)	2	Macrocarpa
6	Lauris Nobilis (Sweet Bay)	2	Juniper Chinensis
4	Quercus Coccifera (evergreen oak)	2	Pampas grass
6	Green Holly		

For some reason, a thousand forest trees were also ordered, which seems to have been an oversight as there is a credit note for 650 trees when the majority were returned. Some of the planting is still identifiable in the church grounds, with mature oak trees evident today (Plate 20).

Dean Thomas Bunbury was to remain solid in his support for the restoration works until the end of the century. This included the installation of a heating apparatus of pipes, a boiler and a boiler house in the cathedral. A weekly account of the labour and materials survives, dated from the week ending 31 October 1879 to 11 March 1880. This is a meticulous account of works, which involved laying pipes, retiling floors and replastering walls at a total cost of £217 8s 5d. This amount also included the wiring of the Jebb chapel window, presumably for support.

The dean gathered more funding, and in 1892 he instigated the re-roofing of the south side of the cathedral, as well as the addition of battlements to match those of the north side. The south transept wall was repointed. Robert Fogerty was employed as architect.¹⁰⁸ He also re-roofed the tower and had the Romanesque doorway at the west end of the cathedral repaired, removing the porch which had

obscured it for many years. The restoration of this doorway has been criticised for its ruthless nature. It is recorded that most of the original stonework was replaced, and the design altered out of recognition.¹⁰⁹

TWENTIETH-CENTURY ALTERATIONS

Rev L.H. O'Brien was the dean between 1905 and 1913, and he instigated further improvements to the cathedral. In a letter signed by him and dated 4 July 1907, he requests funding from the parishioners for a reredos: 'There still remains various improvements to be executed and in especial a beautiful reredos is required to take the place of the present one, which is both meagre and out of keeping with the design of the Cathedral.' He also had St Mark's chapel dedicated to Bishop Thomas Bunbury, and the baptistery was restored with railings placed at the entrance.¹¹⁰ In 1912 a lectern was presented to the cathedral, and the organ was modernised by a Scottish firm.¹¹¹ This work involved the changing of the action to pneumatic, and the addition of a new console with its position reversed so that the organist would face the west end of the building.

Between 1913 and 1923, alterations were made to the interior layout of the cathedral. The choir stalls, which W. Slater had installed *c.*1860, were removed, and the medieval misericords were moved from the nave to the position they now occupy in the choir (Plate 18). (The imposition of a screen across the choir actually excludes six of these ancient stalls from the chancel.) The designs for this restoration were carried out by Orpen, O'Brien and Dickinson.¹¹² There exists a drawing of one of their proposed schemes which suggests that the chapel of St James and St Mary Magdalene be reopened and become accessible through the south transept and the south chancel wall. Included within this scheme was the removal of the organ from its position in the north transept to the north chancel wall, effectively opening up the north transept and providing more seating space.¹¹³ This was not acted upon.

Much of the restoration work carried out between the 1920s and 1940s was carefully recorded by J. Haydn. Extensive repairs to roofs and gutters were made in 1936, and in 1937 bells and bell frames were renovated. In the following year the boundary wall of the graveyard was built, and the west wall of the cathedral was repointed. Since 1939 the cathedral has been subjected to constant repair and maintenance to the exterior and interior fabric of the building and to the roofs. Most recently, in the 1990s, the cathedral underwent a major project of conservation and repair led by the architect Paul Arnold, which was supported by detailed historical research and archaeological excavation.¹¹⁴



*20 – Exterior of St Mary's Cathedral
(Lawrence Collection, courtesy National Library of Ireland)*

CONCLUSION

St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, has been the subject of many varied building campaigns, alterations and repairs since the fourteenth century. The fabric of the building reads like a palimpsest, with the Cistercian plan form underpinning the many changes over time. The opening up of the aisles to create additional spaces for prayer, and incorporating the burial rights of some of the most powerful families in the region during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, emphasised the central role

played by the building in the lives of the citizens of Limerick. The presence of a secondary defence tower built into the structure also suggests the important defensive role the building played in Limerick. This is underlined by the representation of the cathedral as a focus at the centre of the sixteenth-century maps of the city.

The introduction of a new seating arrangement in the 1680s was in keeping with contemporary developments in the Church of England and Ireland. Dineley records the positioning of Grecian-style galleries in the transepts into the surrounding space, providing the congregation with equal views of the Communion table. More revealing is the criticism of this style of architecture a century later by Sir James Ware who would rather see Gothic in place over Grecian, reflecting the changing mood.

The Gothic revival dominates the nineteenth century, with the numerous attempts at repair and restoration. The importance of the cathedral once again is emphasised by the number of notable architects employed by the Vestry Committee, including William Bardwell, William Slater and George Edmund Street, who worked on various schemes for the building. Many plans were drawn up, with certain changes made. Most effective was the removal of the galleries, the replacing of the roof to reproduce a medieval timber roof, and the alterations to the east window (replaced twice during the century). The colourful descriptions of works in progress is provided by the correspondence between the architect J. Franklin Fuller and the dean during the 1870s, discovered during the course of this research. The survival of these letters and their description demonstrates the often forgotten details involved in works of this nature. These interventions have endured, and the cathedral remains today as a fascinating and faithful reflection of its original design.

APPENDIX: LETTERS BETWEEN J.F. FULLER AND DEAN THOMAS BUNBURY

These letters have been reproduced in full here for the first time. Please note that they have been copied directly and any spelling errors have not been corrected.

.....
 March 6. 77

Dear Dean,

The design for the window was sent in to me yesterday by Early & Power. He has wired to Street the plans etc. The plans took a good deal of time as they had to be very carefully done showing everything. When I hear from Street I'll communicate with you at once there are several other designs in stained glass to be got After a good deal of pressure some first rate houses have promised to send in sketches on chance for £400 exclusive of fixing. Early & Power don't include the scaffolding. I don't think Street and the bishop will have the window

faithfully, J.F. Fuller

.....
 May 3. 77

My Dr Dean,

The case goes off to you tomorrow. Take care of the drawings as we have to pay £20 or so for damage. I am going to get an estimate for cut stone fixing and all from the best man I know and who has the best limestone quarry in Ireland. He built Lord Ventry's place for me in Dingle cheaper than anybody else- He is building also for me in Cong £25,000 of work for Sir A.E. Guinness. He is set for such work as you require- but you are not pledged to him in anyway as I distinctly told him so I don't want to get into the hands of a rogue or a pauper if possible, well ask what this mans estimate is like before we take any step in the matter and of course I'll do nothing without authority. Mr George Woods Maunsell knows him,

yours very faithfully,
 J.F.Fuller

.....

.....
 May 17. 77

My Dear Dean

There is no specification required for the window everything is written on the tracings that is necessary, don't close with anybody. There is a first rate builder in Fermoy who has a quarry of his own with splendid limestone. He has a government contract and a yard. Limerick is anxious to put in for the window,

very faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

.....
 May 24. 77

My dear Dean,

I wrote some time ago to Heaton Butler and Bayne to say that their window had been selected. What about the packing case? Wales should get back his sketch. Not a word from Street,

yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

.....
 Killarney, Tuesday

My dear Dean,

I send herewith a tracing of the stonework of proposed new window for which you can obtain a local proposal. The Dublin man wants £200 for it fixed complete. The scaffolding could remain up and be paid for. It would be required by the stained glass man who will of course require it to get to his glass.

I have heard nothing from Street and as the Bishop intimated to me that Street wished my plans submitted to him I am rather in a fix. I must throw the blame on you. Of course I have no objection to submitting the plans but we have delay enough as it is and no reply to our letters,

very faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

.....

July 20. 77

My dear Dean,

I'll turn up from somewhere or other at the Cathedral at 10 o'clock sharp on Tuesday morning. You will see the Lord Bishop. I don't think I'll be able to stay as I must go to a place two miles beyond Newport to inspect the foundations of a Glebe house for Lord Bloomfield. The work cant begin till I see them. Probably I shall from there catch a train at Birdhill. Street has all my drawings taken for preparing sections of the new roof, and he never answered any of my letters or acknowledged the receipt of my drawings,
yours J.F. Fuller.

.....

July 26. 77

My dear Dean,

I find I cant send the man down to take the measurement on Saturday. I have come to the conclusion that it would be better to put off all the works except the window that the plans are made for till next spring. Everything will be done in a hurry and rush now and you'll have the church uncovered at a very bad time of year. I'll push matters on with as little delay as possible in any case so that you can follow with advice as you think best. I'm very sorry Newstead didn't get the window as I don't half like the rough and ready sort of man you have. However I have gone carefully into the measurements to day and prices and think it only fair to say that I don't believe the work could have been done at Newstead's price. He was evidently putting in at a low figure in advance to secure the work. He is a man whose hands we would have been safe.

yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

.....

Parknasilla, Kenmare

Aug 2. 1877

My Dear Dean,

Mr Street has at last written. Please read his letter. There are statements in it

which I think are inaccurate. It was originally posed to employ Mr Fuller as absolutely subordinate to Mr Street. It was not till we found that Mr Street could not be got to answer letters or to do anything at all, that we proposed to commit the repairs of the fabric to Mr Fuller and that this idea originated with Mr Street himself.

Mr Street speaks now of not knowing anything of Mr Fuller. He did not speak in those terms a year ago – I have thought over the matter maturely and am of the opinion that we had better act on the resolution of the Restoration Committee [and on the last paragraph of Mr Streets letter] and commit to Mr Fuller the sole charge of the works of repair and reconstruction of the fabric and roofs.

When all that is done it will be open to us to ask Mr Street to undertake the decoration and rearrangement of the interior – If he should refuse. We cant help it. I dare say we should find some other person very competent.

But I suspect he will not refuse: for I do not think it likely that Mr Fuller will do anything to the roofs and windows which wd in the least interfere with Mr Streets work on the interior – Mr Street has taken huff somewhat. This often happens when a man feels that he has given reason to others to take offence. Mr Street must be conscious that he has not treated you and me properly. He is therefore displeased with himself. I have not yet answered his letter. He may, in his turn, wait for a reply. But I am inclined to write him a very short letter in the following terms provided the Restoration Committee approves of my doing so.

Dear Mr Street

On the whole, we are of the opinion that fewest difficulties will arise if we employ Mr Fuller as our architect to plan and superintend the execution of all the works of repair to the fabric of the cathedral, including the

reconstruction of the roofs. When these works have been completed we shall/may ask you to undertake the re-arrangement and decoration of the interior. We hope that nothing will be done to alter the Status Quo in such a way as to interfere with the plans of improvement and ornamentation which you have conceived.

This is only paraphrase of the resolution passed at the last meeting of the Restoration Committee but it brings the matter to a point.

I suspect that Mr Street and Fuller wd not have been able to work together under the arrangement originally proposed. In any case there wd have been a great loss of time if Fuller had to wait for Streets approval of his plans. You will return Streets letter. I have not shd it to Fuller. But you might extract the passage in which Street gives his opinion about the roofs,

*Very faithfully,
Limerick.*

.....
Aug 7. 77

My dear Dean,

Your works are in hand but before anything can be done the plans of the existing building must be put on paper and that will take time. The thing must be done right. It is a great pity that Street wouldnt go to the trouble of answering letters or returning plans sooner.

yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

.....
Aug 8. 77

My dear Dean,

I am hard at the cathedral but I don't think you have any idea of the amount of work there is to be done. The fellow who is to do the window had better not begin till I send him the full drawings for the jambs etc. I think I'll probably go down again myself,

yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

Tralee, Feb 7. 78

My dear Dean,

The Limerick builder had the same chance that builders in Kerry, Dublin, Waterford, Fermoy, Kells and other places had and the time has expired for receiving tenders. On no account could I do what you ask should simply destroy my credit among tradesmen. No architect of any standing in his profession could sanction what you ask. The other builder went to the trouble most of them going to Dublin to see the plans. If you wish to get other proposals in I will send you the plans but I will withdraw and leave the works to be carried out under some other architect. It is a point of honour in the profession not to do what you ask.

truly dear Dean,
yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller.

I'll not send you the amount of the proposals till I hear from you. I intended to have done so by post. Send your reply to Dublin. If I sent you the proposals now and you got the other afterwards I'd be eaten alive.

.....
179 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin
Feb 12. 78

My dear Dean,

I am sending the plans some unfinished and some tracings by rail. You will have everything that the other builders had but the contract drawings cant be completed till I get all back again. Take care of all the documents and return them safe with as little delay as possible. I have told three of the builders whose proposals are in my hands and who have asked me the result that it is unlikely that other builders may be invited but that if the works are not given to one of the original men I will resign. I could not take any other course and preserve my credit. If I did not make a clean breast now I should be suspected of anything.

You don't know how strong the feel-

ing is about this sort of thing among builders
yours faithfully, J.F. Fuller

*12 drawings & rough specification sent
Quinn has a set of the quantities*

I sent two other sets all the items which must
be priced otherwise it would be impossible to
keep matters straight during the progress of
the work. There would be no end of trouble
about prices for expenses etc. The quantities
alone for any man on the spot should be
enough without plans at all to enable him to
make out his estimate as sketches are given of
everything.

.....
179 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin
April 12. 78

My dear Lord,

I send you herewith the Limerick
cathedral agreement which must be signed by
your lordship and others and witnessed of
course. I send you by rail all the drawings
those signed by Crosbie will have to be
signed and witnessed like the agreement and
it would be well to have all done on the same
day so that they may have the same date. I
send all the cathedral plans as it struck me
that perhaps you may wish to send them to
the Beresford fund people,

ever my dear Lord Bishop,
faithfully, J.F. Fuller

.....
Jan 7. 80

My dear Dean,

I suppose the enclosed should go to
you to be forwarded. It is the rule of the pro-
fession that 5 percent should be charged to
the architect on all stained glass work but I
am the one exception I make no claim,

faithfully, J.F. Fuller

.....
179 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin
March 29. 80

My dear Dean,

I enclose a bill from Crosbie and also

his letter to me from which you will see that
[letter damaged]

Kindly look over the bill and return it
to me with your remarks. I havent gone into it
all being very much pressed just now with a
set of plans for Mr Guinness that is why I
reversed the order of things and ask you to
look over the items first. I know you have up
hill work about the money. Don't trouble
about me I don't mean to charge you the
uttermost farthing and [damaged] have pur-
posefully kept no account of handling
expenses and I'll wipe out my 5 percent on
Ross & Murrays bills and on the glass bills
from London unless in this [damaged] case
you can get [damaged] fees from Mr
Maunsell [damaged] I wouldnt have you go
on your knees for it,

yours J.F.F.

.....
Apl 6. 80

My dear Dean,

I had Crosbie in town today and went
into the bill with him. He says that the return
of mens time and materials is as given by
Dooner and agreed on. He would rather
accept your offer to have the whole thing
measured up and gone into so that you may
so arrange if you wish. but I should advise
you against doing so. I told him Id let him
know in a few days what course would be
taken. My advice would be to take £50 off
and close matters. The fact of the whole busi-
ness is that Dooner has absorbed the main
profit. Dooner now writes to me asking me to
influence the Committee to make him a pre-
sent,

faithfully yours, J.F. Fuller

If you take the £50 off do not go into particu-
lars but simply say that you send amount as
certified by me. I'll be down soon I expect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Prof Michael McCarthy for his very helpful comments in the preparation of this article.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The drawing, by Francis Condell is reproduced from T. Stafford, *Pacata Hibernia or A History of the Wars in Ireland* (1633, reprinted Dublin 1810) 185.
- ² This building was constructed during the time of Bishop Hubert de Burgh (1221-51). See Rev. Treasurer Abbott, *St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, A Short Historical Sketch* (Limerick n.d.) 2-3.
- ³ T. Dineley, *Observations on a Voyage through the Kingdom of Ireland* (Dublin 1870) 114-20.
- ⁴ These views share the same aspect. See James Ware, *The Whole Works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland* (Dublin 1705) 501-13, and J. Ferrar, *The History of Limerick* (Limerick 1787) 151-72.
- ⁵ Ware, *Works of Sir James Ware*, 501-3. Also, H. Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings II* (Dundalk 1960) 46, says Donal Mor O'Brien built the present cathedral, 1172-1207
- ⁶ Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, 153, 171.
- ⁷ Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 2 vols (London 1837) ii, 273-4. He also describes in a succinct manner how 'the Cathedral was greatly adorned by Bishop Eustace Ewe in the fourteenth century, partly re-edified by citizens in 1490, much improved by Bishop Adams in the seventeenth century, carefully restored after the wars of the same century and improved at various subsequent periods.'
- ⁸ Two different historical references for the foundation of the cathedral survive. The first dates from the Synod of Rathbresil, 1110, when the boundaries of Limerick diocese were drawn up and the lands dedicated to the Virgin Mary: 'the temple of St. Mary is the Cathedral church'; see J. Begley, *The Diocese of Limerick, Ancient and Medieval* (Dublin 1906) 7. This first date may be tied to the survival of a Romanesque west end door. The presence and dating of pre-existing buildings has been examined recently by Brian Hodgkinson in his 'Summary Report on the Excavation of St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, xxxvii, 1996, 37-64: 37. This excavation was carried out as part of the recent conservation programme from 1989 to 1992, under the supervision of Paul Arnold, architect. See also T.J. Westropp, 'St. Mary's Cathedral, its plan and growth', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 1894, 112-21. The second date is later, about 1179, and is a reference in *The Black Book of Limerick* of a land donation titled *Charta Donaldi Regis Limericensis*: 'Dumnold king of Lumneach to all the faithful of God Know that I have given to Briccius, Bishop of Lumneach and to his successors and to the clergy of St. Mary's Lumneach in free and perpetual alms the lands of Imungan and the lands of Imalin and from the ford of Ceinu to the River Sinan', for which see Rev. McCaffrey, *The Black Book of Limerick* (Dublin 1907) 34.
- ⁹ This was during the so-called 'transitional period' in Irish architectural history when Romanesque forms overlapped with Gothic. Donal Mor O'Brien was also involved in the founding of the Cistercian abbeys of Manisternenagh (1161), Holy Cross (1180) and Corcomroe (1191). The Cistercian plan was first used in Ireland at Mellifont in 1141, for which see R.A. Stalley, *The Cistercians in Ireland* (Yale 1986) 56-63.

- ¹⁰ Bishop Donat O'Brien also established the Chapter of Limerick, 1203-1207; cf. M. Hewson, 'St. Mary's Cathedral', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, iv, 2, 1944, 55-65.
- ¹¹ Hodgkinson, 'Summary Report', 37-64. He disputes the existing plan form. In his recent excavation of the cathedral he discovered that the walls project beyond the existing transept walls, and he speculates that the building may have had longer transepts. Thanks are due to Brian Hodgkinson for his observations.
- ¹² The transept chapels were sponsored by Thomas Balbayne, who left the chapel of St James to Nicolas Stritch, and Margaret Budston, who founded the chapel of St. Mary Magdalene for John Budston. These were later blocked up by the Westropp tomb on the north side and the chapter room on the south side. See Westropp, 'St. Mary's Cathedral', 114, and R.F. Hewson, 'St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, Its Growth, Alterations and Renovations', *Friends of the Cathedral of St. Mary's, Limerick* (Limerick 1943) 14. Hewson corrects Westropp, who ascribes both chapels to Tomas Balbayne.
- ¹³ Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, 152. He provides a very important contemporary record of the use of these chapels in the side aisles as devotional chapels for families, and also for use by the clergy as a vestry, a chapter room and a consistorial court, although he is not specific as to which is which.
- ¹⁴ The work of William Bardwell is discussed in a document available in the National Library of Ireland, Dublin (NLI); see R. Bourke, *Notes on Mr Bardwell's designs for St. Mary's Cathedral*, unpublished Ms 3887, NLI, 1842, 1-49. About sixty letters relating to the restoration of the cathedral from William Slater addressed to Hon Robert O'Brien, fourth son of the Earl of Inchiquin, are currently held in a collection of the O'Brien papers in the Jim Kemmy City Museum, Limerick (later referred to as O'Brien Papers, Limerick). Thanks are due to the curator Larry Walsh for permission to consult the papers. Thanks are also due to Brian Hodgkinson who catalogued this series of letters, and for his many helpful suggestions regarding the letters.
- ¹⁵ The letters between J.F. Fuller and the dean form part of the cathedral archive, and they were made available by Dean J.M.G. Sirr for the purposes of researching the architectural history of the cathedral; see L. Mulvin, 'A History of St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick' (unpublished 1990) 1-85. This was a study carried out during the restoration programme of the 1990s, supervised by the architect Paul Arnold. Thanks are due to both Dear Sirr and Paul Arnold for their many helpful suggestions during the preparation of this study.
- ¹⁶ This represents a period of retraction which many of the monastic houses throughout Ireland underwent from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, reflecting the insecurity of the times.
- ¹⁷ This chapel was used as a baptistery. The Creagh family had burial rights here, and their coat of arms was painted over the entrance and recorded in a manuscript held in TCD, dated to 1583, for which see Hewson, 'St. Mary's Cathedral', 12.
- ¹⁸ Comparable bartizan features are found on Athlunkard Street, Limerick, and other medieval towers such as Cratloe Castle, Co Limerick. The Jebb chapel was also known as the Arthur chapel, as the resting place of the Arthur family. Nicholas Arthur was buried in 1450, which may suggest that the building works were complete on this side of the cathedral by this time; see M. Lenihan, 'The Tombstone of Geoffrey Arthur', *Kilkenny and South East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, series 2, v, part 1, 1864.
- ¹⁹ Hewson, 'St. Mary's Cathedral', 14. The deanery lay to the north of the cathedral and incorporated the chapter house, the divinity school and the consistorial court. At a certain stage the deanery was diverted from the original use, and space in the cathedral was used to house these

ecclesiastical functions.

- ²⁰ The Stackpoole family and the Roche family both had burial rights here; see J. Dowd, *History of St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick* (Killarney 1957 (revised)) 60.
- ²¹ These medieval domestic windows are compared to similar ones found at Quin abbey, Co Galway.
- ²² Thanks are due to Dr J. Olley, School of Architecture, University College Dublin, for making this observation.
- ²³ M. Lenihan, *Limerick, its History and Antiquities* (Dublin 1866) 547-77.
- ²⁴ Stationery Office, *The Civil Survey AD 1654-1656, County of Limerick 1654* (Dublin 1938) iv 418-39; 427, 428.
- ²⁵ Dineley, *Observations*, 120.
- ²⁶ A gun was mounted in the tower during the Confederate Wars and the building suffered certain war damage. The See was vacant between 1649 and 1661. The subsequent repairs were marked by the donation of a set of bells by a Mr Perdue in 1673. Lenihan, *Limerick, its History and Antiquities*, 584-5.
- ²⁷ Dineley, *Observations*, 120.
- ²⁸ The tomb had the following inscription: '*Lumina quae lector tua cernunt hisce johanni muris sculpta sacris quadrant insignia Gawe*' (Gawe: Galwey); translated as 'Reader what thy eyes behold graven on these sacred walls are the armorial bearings of John Galwey'.
- ²⁹ The new church architecture begins in the countries of the reformation. The churches erected after the great fire in London, from about 1670 to 1690 – for example, St Bride's, Fleet Street, designed by Sir Christopher Wren – were suitable for Protestant worship, using galleries above aisles resting on arcade piers; see M. Whinney, *Wren* (London 1971). The appearance of this style in Ireland at Limerick is actually quite advanced for its time.
- ³⁰ Dineley, *Observations*, 70. St Mary's, Youghal, had a rood loft and gallery recorded in situ by Dineley in 1680.
- ³¹ Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, 160.
- ³² Bourke, *Notes on Mr Bardwell's designs*.
- ³³ Dineley, *Observations*, 114, 116. The cathedral sustained a large amount of damage during the siege of 1690-91. A gun was mounted on the tower in an attempt to defend the island from a battery at Corbally. The level of rebuilding of the tower can be seen from the joins in the masonry at about window height. A set of bells was donated on completion of the tower.
- ³⁴ *ibid.*
- ³⁵ Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary*, ii, 274, describes how the Blue Coat Hospital was founded near the cathedral in 1717 by the Rev J. Moore.
- ³⁶ The Vestry Committee, *The State of the Several Charities and Charitable Institutions in the City of Limerick written for the Honorable Dean Maurice Crosbie* (Limerick 1771) 12.
- ³⁷ Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary*, 274, also describes Mrs Craven bequeathing several houses in Limerick for the same purposes. After having fallen into decay, it was revived in 1772 by the bishop and the dean.
- ³⁸ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4891.
- ³⁹ Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, 160.
- ⁴⁰ J. McVeagh (ed.), *Richard Pococke's Irish Tours* (Dublin 1995) 96. Thanks are due to Michael McCarthy for this reference.
- ⁴¹ Ferrar, *History of Limerick*, 160.

- ⁴² *ibid.*
- ⁴³ *ibid.*, 152.
- ⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 160.
- ⁴⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ Lenihan, *Limerick, its History and Antiquities*, 600.
- ⁴⁷ Bourke, *Notes on Mr Bardwell's designs*, fig. 1.
- ⁴⁸ James Pain (1779-1877), born in England, and was articled to John Nash. He came to Ireland in 1813 and had an extremely successful career. See *IAA Index of Irish Architects*, biography, PA, 1000 (Irish Architectural Archive, Dublin) and A.E. Richardson, *Monumental Classical Architecture in Great Britain and Ireland during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London 1914), 44. Thanks are due to A.M. Rowan of the Irish Architectural Archive for providing this additional information. See also H.M. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (New Haven and London 1995) 606.
- ⁴⁹ A survey drawing of Thomond Bridge is held in the Hunt Museum dated to 1814 (*IAA Index of Irish Architects*).
- ⁵⁰ 'The Restoration of St. Mary's Cathedral', *The Dublin Builder*, vol.2, no.24, 1 December 1860, 378, and *The Dublin Builder*, iii, 15 September 1861, 633-4.
- ⁵¹ Lenihan, *Limerick, its History and Antiquities*, 601.
- ⁵² Charles Frederick Anderson (1802-69) trained with Thomas Harrison of Chester, and worked for James and George Pain (*IAA Index of Irish Architects*, biography AND, 013). Thanks are again due to A.M. Rowan of the Irish Architectural Archive for providing this additional information.
- ⁵³ William Bardwell (1795-1890) was trained by George Wyatt and George Maddox, and also trained in Paris for two years: A. Felstead, J. Franklin, L. Pinfield, *Directory of British Architects 1834-1900* (London 1993) 48. He designed Glenstal Castle, Co Limerick. See *IAA Index of Irish Architects*, biography, BAR, 005. The *Index* also records that he was responsible for the construction of a prior chapel.
- ⁵⁴ Dowd, *History of St. Mary's Cathedral*, 33.
- ⁵⁵ Lenihan, *Limerick, its History and Antiquities*, 600-1.
- ⁵⁶ The drawing is held in the cathedral archive and is not reproduced here.
- ⁵⁷ See the ground plan in Bourke, *Notes on Mr Bardwell's designs*, and Plate 6.
- ⁵⁸ Bourke is not mentioned in the *Directory of British Architects*. As this is a very comprehensive record of registered architects, this may suggest he was an architectural historian rather than a registered architect.
- ⁵⁹ Bourke, *Notes on Mr Bardwell's designs*, 2.
- ⁶⁰ *ibid.*, 3.
- ⁶¹ Bourke is referring to the earlier intervention at Christchurch, Dublin, documented in Roger Stalley (ed.), *George Edmund Street and the Restoration of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin* (Dublin 2000). Street referred to the works in his publication, G.E. Street and E. Seymour, *The Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, commonly called Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin: an account of the restoration of the fabric* (London 1882). See also T. Drew, 'Street as a Restorer', *Dublin University Review*, ii/6, 1886, 518-31.
- ⁶² William Slater (1818/19-1872) was articled to R.C. Carpenter and took over the practice in 1855; see Felstead, Franklin, Pinfield, *Directory of British Architects*, 842.
- ⁶³ B.L.F. Clarke, *Church Builders of the Nineteenth Century* (London (1938) 1965) 72-106; 75.

- Benjamin Webb, J.M. Neale and Rev. T. Thorpe founded the Society for the Study of Gothic Architecture and of Ritual Arrangements. The object of the society was 'to promote the study of Ecclesiastical architecture and the restoration of mutilated remains'. It set out to examine the science of church architecture and furnishings, and was embraced by the High Church Party in the Church of England.
- ⁶⁴ S. Muthesius, *The High Victorian Movement in Architecture 1850-1870* (London and Boston 1972) 1-24.
- ⁶⁵ B.A. Chernow (ed.), *Macmillan Encyclopaedia of British Architects* (New York 1982) 386. R.C. Carpenter (1812-55) was a friend of A.W.N. Pugin, and was associated from the beginning with the Cambridge Camden Society. He was assisted by Slater towards the end of his life.
- ⁶⁶ For a discussion of the architecture see C. Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (London 1872; reprinted 1978) 226-94, and G.L. Hersey, *High Victorian Gothic, A Study in Associationism* (Maryland 1972) 93-134.
- ⁶⁷ The Tractarian Movement was established in 1833 and lasted until 1845. *Tracts for the Times* was the title of a series of pamphlets initiated by John Henry Newman and published at Oxford. The principal aim was to arrest the spread of liberalism in religious thought and revive the true concepts of the relationship of the Church of England and the Catholic Church. Indirectly, one of their aims was to resist legislative proposals to remove the status of the Anglican Church of Ireland in what was viewed as a primarily Roman Catholic country. The ninety tracts were mostly written by Newman. This movement was closely associated with the Oxford Movement. A distinction must be made between it and the Ecclesiological movement, which was more involved with the ritual decoration of churches. Both movements were closely associated, and looked back to the medieval period when it was believed the church met the needs of the parishioners both spiritually and aesthetically. For a wider discussion see O. Chadwick, *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement* (Cambridge 1990) 1-54.
- ⁶⁸ The Ecclesiological Society's model church, All Saints, Margaret Street, London (1849-59) by William Butterfield, was planned with the choir almost one third of the length of the church to the chancel. See R. Strong, *All Saints, Margaret Street* (London 1990) 4-7, and G. Stamp and C. Amery, *Victorian Buildings of London 1837-1887* (London 1980), 35.
- ⁶⁹ O'Brien Papers, Limerick; refer to note 14
- ⁷⁰ Clayton and Bell, *Stained Glass* (London, c.1910), 1-24; M. Harrison, *Victorian Stained Glass* (London 1989), 1-44.
- ⁷¹ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4967.
- ⁷² 'The Restoration of St. Mary's Cathedral', *The Dublin Builder*, 1861, 633-4.
- ⁷³ *ibid.*, 633.
- ⁷⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 634.
- ⁷⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁷ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4840.
- ⁷⁸ *ibid.*, LM 4878. This drawing was on silk and is described as 'Limerick Cathedral Proposal Extension of Choir'. When comparing the handwriting on another letter in Slater's hand, it appears that these are in the same hand.
- ⁷⁹ 'The Restoration of St. Mary's Cathedral', *The Dublin Builder*, 1861, 633-4.
- ⁸⁰ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4881.
- ⁸¹ *ibid.*, LM 4840.

- ⁸² The Lawrence photographs are taken on dry photographic plates, which dates them after 1880 when this technique was used. Thanks are due to the National Library Photographic Archive for this information.
- ⁸³ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4840.
- ⁸⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ 'The Restoration of St. Mary's Cathedral', *The Dublin Builder*, 1861, 633-4.
- ⁸⁶ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4891.
- ⁸⁷ *ibid.*, LM 4890.
- ⁸⁸ See the section above on the Blue Coat School.
- ⁸⁹ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 4876.
- ⁹⁰ *ibid.*, LM 4857.
- ⁹¹ *ibid.*, LM 4865. The address of Slater's London Office was 4 Carlton Chambers, Regents Street, SW1.
- ⁹² *ibid.*, LM 4875.
- ⁹³ *ibid.*, LM 4840. Clayton and Bell are mentioned in the records from the International Exhibition (1862) as producing some of the 'most remarkable windows in the stained glass gallery' of the exhibition, but the work from Limerick is not recorded; see W. MacKenzie, *Record of the International 1862 Exhibition* (Glasgow, Edinburgh, London 1862), 402-5.
- ⁹⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁵ Dowd, *History of St. Mary's Cathedral*, 56.
- ⁹⁶ This sketch belongs to the cathedral archive. It was drawn on silk and too fragile to reproduce here.
- ⁹⁷ Street's proposal was sent on 10 November 1876 from his offices at 14 Cavendish Place, London. The cathedral hold a copy of this specification letter as well as other letters. G.E. Street (1824-81) worked in the office of Sir G.G. Scott from 1844 to 1849; see Felstead, Franklin, Pinfield, *Directory of British Architects*, 884. He is credited with embracing a more eclectic attitude towards the Gothic revival of Pugin and moulding architectural style in the mid-nineteenth century. He set up his own offices in 1848, and worked in Oxford between 1850 and 1852. He then moved to London. See Chernow (ed.), *Macmillan Encyclopaedia of British Architects*, 137-9.
- ⁹⁸ These letters were discovered by the writer in the cathedral during the preparation of an architectural historical study commissioned by the cathedral vestry in 1990. They remain in the possession of the cathedral. Particular papers may be identified by reference to the information provided in the main text unless supplementary information indicates otherwise.
- ⁹⁹ Limerick, cathedral archive, circular.
- ¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰¹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰² J. Franklin Fuller (1835-1925) was the architect of Ashford Castle, Cong. Fuller was born in Co Kerry. He was articled to Frederick W. Porter, and during his career he was architect to the Church Representative Body, Ireland; see Felstead, Franklin and Pinfield, *Dictionary of British Architects*, 332. Fuller also became an authority on Hiberno-Romanesque, for which see his church at Clane, Co Kildare, referred to in J. Sheehey, *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: Celtic Revival 1830-1930* (London 1980) 128.
- ¹⁰³ Heaton, Butler and Bayne were as well known for stained glass as Clayton and Bell, and equally well established during both Slater's time at the cathedral in the 1860s, and also in Street's

- time there in the 1870s. For further details on these stained-glass houses see M. Galicki, *Victorian and Edwardian Stained Glass: the Work of Five London Studios, 1885-1910* (London 1987) 1-35.
- ¹⁰⁴ D.B. Brownlee, *The Law Courts: The Architecture of George Edmund Street* (Cambridge, MA 1984).
- ¹⁰⁵ O'Brien Papers, Limerick, LM 5086.
- ¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, LM 5084.
- ¹⁰⁷ For the purposes of this article, the Fuller-Dean Bunbury letters have been transcribed in an attached appendix.
- ¹⁰⁸ R. Fogerty (1843-1907) was an architect and engineer from Limerick; see *IAA Index of Irish Architects*, biography, FOG, 008.
- ¹⁰⁹ Fogerty trained as an engineer, which may account for the extensive structural repair work to the original stonework of the Romanesque doorway.
- ¹¹⁰ Dean T. Bunbury became bishop in 1899 and remained bishop until 1907; Dowd, *History of St. Mary's Cathedral*, 70-75. He was responsible for the general restoration of cathedral under Street and Fuller.
- ¹¹¹ B.A. Brislane, *St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, the Organ, A Short History with Specifications* (Limerick 1971) 8-10.
- ¹¹² J.D. Haydn, *Record of repair for the Cathedral* (Limerick 1937). The *Irish Architectural Archive Index of Irish Architects* identifies Dickinson as the designer of the proposed memorial chapel in the cathedral, and according to the *Index* there is a record of the design held in the RHA, 1920, no.380. Other plans by Dickinson survive among the O'Brien papers dated to this period.
- ¹¹³ Haydn, *Record of repair for the Cathedral*.
- ¹¹⁴ As part of the very comprehensive restoration project at St Mary's Cathedral by Paul Arnold, he invited expert assistance from historians, archaeologists and others (see also notes 8, 15).
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