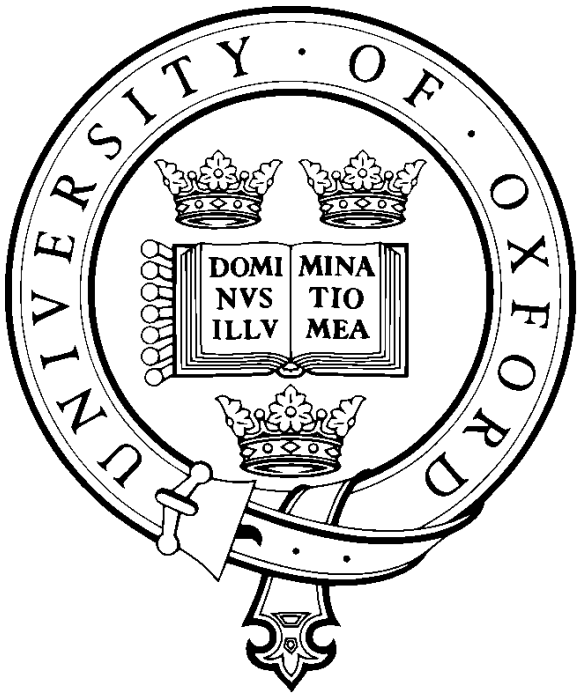
Modernising Tradition: The Architectural Thought of Giles Gilbert Scott, 1880-1960

Volume I



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Abstract: The architect Giles Gilbert Scott (1880 – 1960) designed the red telephone kiosk, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, Battersea Power Station, and the House of Commons Chamber amongst other major projects. Yet this thesis is the first scholarly study of his work as a theorist and practitioner. Scott's ideas provide a window into how architects, critics, and clients of his generation thought about architecture, helping us to understand the design of the interwar period in a way that the backward projection of our own intellectual frameworks cannot do. Often relegated to a minor place in architectural histories, in his time Scott was one of the best known architects in the world, author of numerous iconic structures and widely influential. By returning him to a prominent place in the narrative, the thesis reveals a world in which so-called traditionalists and modernists were concerned with the exploration of common themes – the social role of the architect, the psychological effect of buildings, the nature of construction and tradition. The first two chapters explore Scott's ideas about history and architectural context by investigating his work at Oxford and Cambridge. The third chapter focuses on his church work as a way of understanding his ideas about tradition and the role of psychology in architecture. The fourth chapter explores the ways that he gave meaning to his designs using rhetoric and planning. Set against the backdrop of the

postwar decline of his reputation, the final chapter examines the legacy of his architectural theories. By returning Scott to the historical narrative, our understanding of interwar architecture is greatly broadened. And by expanding our knowledge of the least understood era of twentieth century architecture, we come to better understand how modern architecture as we know it was forged.

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Long Abstract: This thesis examines the architectural theories of Giles Gilbert Scott, designer of the red telephone box, Battersea Power Station, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral, and the House of Commons Chamber, amongst other major projects. Scott's philosophy of building design was extremely influential during the interwar period, when he became one of the first truly international celebrity architects. His work, of which this thesis is the first scholarly study, thus provides an ideal window into the evolution of British architectural thought during the interwar period, particularly in terms of its relationship to the concept of modernity. Scott's work raises questions about national and religious expression in architecture, the role of technological change, and the notion of architectural style in the modern world.

In addition to the buildings themselves, the thesis is the first to use the vast amount of Scott's surviving correspondence, office papers, and drawings, as well as the large number of published writings and interviews, to gain an understanding of his architectural theories. An extensive study of primary and secondary sources relating to other architectural theorists of the period, especially those who were in close contact with Scott, helps to place his work in the appropriate context.

The thesis is divided into an introduction, five chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction tells the story of Scott's practice in order to lay the necessary groundwork for the discussion of his architectural thought that forms the subject of the body of the thesis. The introduction summarises existing scholarship on Scott and introduces my own methodology and sources. It then provides the essential historical and personal background to Scott's career: covering his early life and education, his working methods, his personality, his faith, his clients, and his place within the Scott architectural dynasty.

The first chapter addresses Scott's ideas about the nature of history, as expressed in his university work. At the Memorial Court of Clare College, Cambridge, Scott was given a rare design challenge: the creation of structures that would at once shape the future and memorialise the past. The purpose of the Clare Memorial Court, its donor declared, was "to turn out men who will play worthy parts for England." How could architectural forms be tasked with stirring emotion and transmitting patriotic ideology? The answer, Scott believed, lay largely in the choice of architectural style. The chapter explores the ways that Scott's interest in the associational nature of historical style shaped the choice of iconography for his buildings in the 1920s.

The principle of 'architectural good manners,' of respecting the scale, material, and spirit of a building's context, was a key idea in Scott's work throughout his career. In the 1920s, Scott believed that architectural style was a key element of this contextualism: the architect should to choose a style with historical connotations

appropriate to the place and to the message that a building was meant to convey. Scott's work at Lady Margaret Hall and Magdalen College, Oxford, are discussed, along with more in-depth studies of the Memorial Court at Clare College and the Cambridge University Library. In the process, the chapter investigate the sources of Scott's ideas and the ways that architectural critics such as C H Reilly assigned meaning to historical styles in the 1920s.

The second chapter demonstrates that by the mid-1930s Scott's ideas about architectural context had moved away from a concern with historic style, to a more holistic concern with expressing architectural manners through form. Form had always been a concern in his work, but he came to believe that form and materials were the key to creating architecture that was both truly modern and sympathetic to its surroundings. The chapter primarily focuses on analysing his work at the New Bodleian Library, presenting Scott's own arguments for its much derided style, and revealing how rather than a mere failed attempt to hybridise Modernist and Neo-Georgian fashions, the Library is in reality one of the boldest architectural experiments of interwar Britain. Rooted in formalism and a belief in the evolutionary nature of art, the New Bodleian is an attempt to lay the groundwork of a richer ornamental vocabulary for modern architecture, thus creating a modern style worthy to stand amongst the great buildings of the past.

The third chapter addresses Scott's ideas about the social role of architecture in the form of his theory of tradition—a concept that closely linked architectural design

with community cohesion and individual psychology. Giles Gilbert Scott and his mentor Charles Reilly defined tradition as the evolutionary process that produced architectural style. Forms dictated by tradition, Reilly explained, allowed a viewer to 'read' a building, to recognise its function. Tradition was a social concept as much an architectural one, and Scott believed its cultural cues encouraged certain behaviours. This chapter explores the way this concept of tradition informed Scott's church designs, and how innovation in church planning, furnishings, and even liturgy were driven by a desire to reinforce a sense of community that Scott feared was being fractured by suburbia and mass transit.

Scott believed tradition could be used to repair damaged communities. This idea was rooted in the Victorian ideas emanating from the Gothic Revival, but also from religious and cultural sources, particularly those of Cardinal John Newman. In the interwar period, architects such as Scott took this Victorian intellectual framework and reclad it in the language of modern psychology and sociology. Scott wanted to create churches that inspired people to worship. The chapter explains how the meeting of these two concepts of tradition and psychology undergirded his most influential church designs.

Scott's major ecclesiastical projects are covered, tracing the full arc of his church designs from his romantic early work at St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool (1910), and Our Lady, Northfleet (1916), through the focus of his interwar churches on experimental plans and the associational effects of form, to his postwar attempts to

develop a ‘concrete’ Gothic that would use popular modernist expression to inspire reverence in worshippers. Scott’s masterpiece, the Anglican Cathedral of Christ at Liverpool, perhaps the most influential British church of the interwar period, is placed within the context of his ecclesiastical design philosophy. Emphasizing liturgical experiment as a response to social change, the chapter shows that, for Scott, tradition was a creative force that could yield new results as well as old.

The fourth chapter deals with Scott’s ideas about the way that architecture is infused with meaning via the use of rhetoric and planning. The chapter investigates Scott’s office buildings, power stations, bridges and telephone kiosks. At first glance, the various types of building that fall into this chapter may seem like a heterogeneous collection. The hidden link —the point where they all come together — is in Scott’s theories about urban planning. Through his façade designs and through his creation of important bits of urban infrastructure such as power stations and phone kiosks, Scott saw his work as playing a larger role in the life of the city. The centrality of the concept of planning to Scott’s designs is demonstrated through his involvement in the modernisation of Britain’s communications, transportation, and energy infrastructure. Scott aimed to prove that new technologies and building types that could be harnessed to create a uniquely English modernity. Projects covered in this chapter include Battersea Power Station, the red telephone kiosk, Waterloo Bridge, and Scott’s work as chairman of the Royal Academy committee tasked with replanning London after the Blitz. He approached

all of these projects with broader urban goals in mind. They were all rooted in his attempt to create meaning on the largest scale.

The concluding chapter examines the way that Scott's architectural theories were superseded after World War II and the subsequent decline of his reputation, taking the large and important projects at the Palace of Westminster and Coventry Cathedral as case studies. The widespread derision of both projects in the architectural press, despite their popular appeal, led to Scott's ousting from Coventry. The chapter, as much an epilogue as a conclusion, explores the way that later British architectural theorists were indebted to the ideas promulgated by Scott, while nonetheless choosing to reject his vision for modern Britain. His concern with formalism and the associational role of historic detail went out of fashion, but his concept that tradition had community value and his stress on learning from the past would remain important factors in British modernism.

A brief conclusion summarises salient points, and an appendix lists executed projects mentioned in the text of the thesis, giving dates of Scott's involvement and the relevant references in Pevsner's *Buildings of England*.

Ultimately, the thesis pinpoints the ideas behind the work of an architect who aimed to modernise tradition. By presenting Scott's architectural theories as part of an international network of architectural thought, it draws out the connections

between so-called traditionalists and modernists. It helps us to better understand the ideas and concerns of interwar architects in Britain by demonstrating that architectural theory of all stripes was concerned with the exploration of common themes – the social role of the architect, the psychological effect of buildings, and the nature of construction and tradition. By returning Scott to the historical narrative, our understanding of interwar architecture is greatly broadened. And by expanding our knowledge of the least understood era of twentieth-century architecture, we come to better understand how modern architecture was forged.

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I would like to thank the numerous people who opened their churches to me — a complete stranger — often taking time out of their day specially to do so. They retrieved dusty archival materials, sometimes provided tea and sandwiches, told stories about the church communities that use these buildings, and generally went out of their way to make me feel welcome. I would particularly like to thank Rev Emma Williams at St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool, Fr Marcus Brisley at the Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth, and Vince Rogriguez at St Alban's, Golders Green.

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Abbreviations

AJ – *Architects' Journal*
AR – *The Architectural Review*
BA – Bodleian Archives, Library Records
BSP – Liverpool Cathedral Archives, Bodley, Scott, Pittaway Correspondence
CHR – Liverpool University Archives, C H Reilly Papers
CUP – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
DIA – Design & Industries Association
JRIBA – *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*
LMH – Lady Margaret Hall Archives
OUP – Oxford: Oxford University Press
RA – Royal Academy
RFAC – Royal Fine Arts Commission
RIBA – Royal Institute of British Architects
SD – RIBA Drawings Collection, Giles Gilbert Scott Drawings
SP – RIBA Archives, Giles Gilbert Scott Papers
UL – Cambridge University Library, Library Records
YUP – London and New Haven: Yale University Press

A Note on Dates: Unless noted, the date given for a building is the year of its completion. In the case of buildings constructed in phases, the date given is the date of completion of the first phase.

Introduction

Imagine yourself suspended a mile or so above London. The year is 1928, and below you the winding ribbon of the Thames shimmers through a wispy layer of smoke. The dome of St Paul's rises near the geographic centre of the metropolis, the tallest thing on the skyline by a significant margin. The one exception to its unbroken dominance is the skeleton of 55 Broadway, an office building with the profile — though not the scale — of an American skyscraper, that has begun to rise by St James Park. From here, the Underground railways that form the heartbeat of the metropolis will be administered. All around St James are the Portland stone bureaucratic palaces of Whitehall, most not yet blackened by soot, having been built within the last twenty or thirty years. Not far off, the southern end of Regent Street has been reconstructed in stone to Beaux-Arts designs by Reginald Blomfield, and stone-clad megastores are beginning to appear along the more northerly part of the street. In Mayfair and Oxford Street, the old Georgian terraces are being pulled down and replaced with large blocks of flats. In Park Lane, there are grand new hotels with higher standards of luxury and larger numbers of bathrooms. The new flats and hotels look out over traffic-choked streets.[1]

New 'commercial palaces' dot the landscape of the central city —
They are massive and broad; their open floorplates are filled with clanking typewriters. In the evenings they disgorge their armies of clerks, who commute back

[1] This opening is inspired by the first pages of John Summerson's *Georgian London,* (London: Pleiades, 1945), in which he describes the Georgian city from the air.

to their homes in residential neighbourhoods or growing suburbs. The edges of the city are hard to find, as strands of suburban development have bloomed along the arterial roads like uncontrollable algae. In contrast with much of the rest of the nation, London's industries are booming, and the new factories making consumer goods like hoovers and tyres and beer also have to house their workers. The new suburban districts are connected via Frank Pick's modern transport network, and within a few years, the brick drums of Holden's Underground stations will dominate the throngs of Neo-Tudor gables like pyramids over a Mayan city.

Specks of red on the footpaths turn out to be telephone kiosks, which have been recently deployed across London, enabling telephone communication to reach a large portion of the metropolitan population for the first time. Many other changes will follow on their heels. Next year, the vast Battersea Power Station will begin construction— the visible manifestation of London's now centralised electricity network. Electric traffic lights will proliferate across the city, and as much as possible roads will be widened to help with the traffic. Maybe they will even build a new bridge at Charing Cross. In the more Bohemian districts, such as Hampstead, Modernist flats and villas will begin to appear in small numbers, their stark white forms bold and alien amongst the hipped slate roofs and leafy gardens.

As the sun begins to set and the commuters fill up the buses and trains, gas street lamps flicker to life around the capital. If we look very closely, we can see the young John Summerson, in a wide-brimmed hat, strolling out of Gray's Inn to High Holborn

as he leaves work at the office of Giles Gilbert Scott.[2] If he looks very serious for someone who has just left work, that is because he is thinking hard about the problems of modern architecture.

What does it mean to be modern? In architecture, this question has consumed architects' attention since at least the seventeenth century, when Blondel and Perrault launched the 'Ancients vs Moderns' debate in the French academies. The question remained at the forefront of architectural thought over the next several hundred years; however, there were few times in history when it was held to be more important than during the 1920s and '30s. In a society in which the devastation of war had created a radical break with the past and in which rapid social and technological change were transforming people's experiences, it is no wonder that the nature of modernity was a pressing concern. Can architecture be at once traditional and modern? Or are they opposite poles on a linear scale? Are tradition and modernity active processes of thought, or collections of ideas that are tapped during the design process? Can tradition be modernised?

It is all, of course, a matter of definitions. All twentieth century architects have played the game of theory in both words and built form. Every move an architect made could be seen as declaring an allegiance to some theoretical camp. In an age of mass media and an educated public, architects had to explain the ideas behind their buildings. Every choice of form or detail came with a panoply of associations. Had

[2] According to Summerson, black hats were a symbol of Modernism. *AJ,* vol 186, July 1987, p. 21.

the architect chosen to include classical columns? An unornamented blank wall? What did he or she mean by it?

One architect who was publically tackling such questions during the interwar period was Giles Gilbert Scott (Fig. i.1). He was the author of some of the most internationally prominent buildings of the era, many of which were located in or around London and thus easily publicised in the architectural press. Scott is an interesting case because despite his importance during the period – he was the most decorated architect in Britain and the youngest member of the Royal Academy since Turner—he has been almost completely left out of architectural histories produced since the Second World War.

The reasons for this have to do with the way that architectural history was written in the second half of the twentieth century. Interwar architectural history tends to be framed in terms of competing schools. Nikolaus Pevsner, John Summerson, and Henry-Russell Hitchcock, for instance, who authored some of the best-known architectural histories of the twentieth century, presented architectural history as a battle between traditionalists and modernists. The architects who did not fall clearly into either camp were often cast aside as unfathomable products of interwar confusion. Pevsner, for example, dismissed much of Scott's work as a bad attempt at hybridisation, "Neither one thing nor the other, " and William J. R. Curtis's *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (third edition, 1996— a text widely used in architectural history courses), did not mention Scott or Holden at all, despite having a chapter

devoted to the development of modern architecture in 1930s Britain.[3] The resulting vacuum of facts and analysis relating to Scott's work has led Alan Powers to call him "one of the great mysteries of English culture." [4] To begin to unravel this mystery, we must try not to approach Giles Gilbert Scott in the terms of our own time, but on the terms of his.

The purpose of this thesis is to return Scott's ideas about architecture to their historical context and to see what can be learned about British architecture by doing so. This amounts to a major shift in historiography, restoring an important thinker of the so-called 'middle line' school to a place in the narrative of twentieth century architectural history.[5] By looking to see exactly what Scott's ideas were, how they were constructed, and whether or not they formed a consistent body of theory, we can understand considerably more about the way that architecture of all types and styles was conceptualised in this period. By broadening the range of sources examined to include correspondence and critical essays, it gives us a window not only into the design process, but also into the ideas of clients and critics. It provides a new angle on interwar design.

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[3] Nikolaus Pevsner, *Oxfordshire,* London: Penguin, 1970, p. 263 and William J R Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900,* London: Phaidon, 1996.
[4] Alan Powers, "Preview of Trans Mittere, Cathedral Culture," *Building Design,* April 2004, reproduced online at www. forster-heighes.org.uk.
[5] Gavin Stamp was the first historian to interpret Scott as belonging, along with Charles Holden and others, to a school of thought that attempted to exist between the poles of modernism and traditionalism. See Gavin Stamp "Giles Gilbert Scott: The Problem of Modernism," *Architectural Design,* 1979, n.10-11, pp. 72-83.

Sources and Literature Review

It is possible to reconstruct Scott's ideas (as well as contemporary reactions to them), because he was a cultural celebrity in an era of media scrutiny. As a celebrity architect, Scott left numerous writings and interviews. These published records of his ideas, which are especially numerous in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, are an essential source for understanding Scott. Despite bomb damage to Gray's Inn during World War II, his office papers survived intact, and over seven hundred boxes of them are held by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Major caches of correspondence and drawings also exist at Liverpool Cathedral, the University of Cambridge, and the University of Oxford. Smaller archives for specific projects also exist at their respective sites (see Bibliography). Many of these include correspondence, drawings, and photographs. His buildings, relatively expensive and well constructed, still stand — with the one major exception of the Guinness Factory at London's Park Royal.

Drawings survive for many of Scott's projects, including some preliminary designs worked out on trace. A more limited number of Scott's sketchbooks are available in public collections, and most of these date from the Edwardian period.[6] Only two include material created during the interwar period. RIBA holds six Edwardian sketchbooks and one postwar sketchbook that includes a small amount of material

[6] SP, SKB/302/1, SKB/303/1-5, SKB 304/3. As of May 2015, the Bodleian had been loaned an additional Edwardian sketchbook, which has not yet been catalogued, dating from 1901.

at the front from circa 1937 relating to Oxford's New Bodleian Library.[7] The other interwar sketchbook is held by the Cambridge University Library and relates to his design of that building.[8]

The most important recent scholarship on Giles Gilbert Scott is undoubtedly that of Gavin Stamp. His 1979 article, "Giles Gilbert Scott: The Problem of 'Modernism,'" established the standard interpretation of Scott as striking a 'middle line' between modernism and traditionalism.[9] Stamp rightly identified Scott's skill in compromising between traditionalists and modernists as one of his greatest architectural strengths. He wrote that Scott was in the nearly unique position of allowing his clients to have a building that was at once cutting-edge aesthetically and technologically, yet built with traditional forms and materials. This thesis will allow greater nuance to be added to that interpretation, showing that Scott was no proponent of a mild, watered-down middle-ground, but in fact something more akin to Chesterton's 'two opposite flames burning brightly.' If Scott's architecture were in fact moderate, it would recede and blend in. Instead, the stones of his work cry out, catching the eye and proclaiming a distinct difference from other interwar designs. The middle line was mere rhetoric. Instead, as we will see, Scott aimed to be everything at once – modern, traditional, abstract and archaeological – driving forward architectural progress all the while. Stamp's other articles help to tell the

[7] SP, SKB/304/4.
[8] Cambridge University Library, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, GBR/0012/MS Add.9247.
[9] Gavin Stamp, "Giles Gilbert Scott: The Problem of Modernism," *Architectural Design,* 1979, n.10-11, pp. 72-83.

story of some of Scott's most important secular commissions. The particularly perceptive one on the House of Commons Chamber traced the reasoning behind Scott's choice of the Gothic style, examining the theme of history and identity in Scott's work — a theme that will be explored at greater length in this thesis.[10] A recent article in *Twentieth Century Architecture* focuses on his works at Oxford and Cambridge, arguing that Scott's university designs were mainly driven by pragmatism and a respect for context.[11]

Little other scholarly literature on Scott exists outside Stamp's writings. For the Oxford projects and an understanding of the architectural atmosphere at the ancient universities, the authoritative reference is Geoffrey Tyack's *Oxford: An Architectural Guide.*[12] A fascinating analysis of the Liverpool Cathedral Lady Chapel by John Thomas is limited by its painstaking minutiae, but is helpful in understanding Scott's approach to the role of art and craft in ecclesiastical design.[13] Michael Hall's forthcoming book on G F Bodley will have a chapter on Bodley's involvement with the design of Liverpool Cathedral, which contains the richest scholarly account of the early stages of the Cathedral design. The remaining vast literature on Liverpool Cathedral, especially the books of Peter Kennerley and Vere Cotton, is generally non-scholarly, but rich in detail and often beautifully written.[14]

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[10] Gavin Stamp, "We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us," in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament*, London: Merrell, 2000, pp.149-162.
[11] Gavin Stamp, "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in Oxbridge," *Twentieth Century Architecture 11: Oxford and Cambridge*, 2013, pp. 30-51.
[12] Geoffrey Tyack, *Oxford: An Architectural Guide,* OUP, 1998.
[13] John Thomas, "The 'Beginnings of a Noble Pile': Liverpool Cathedral's Lady Chapel (1904 – 1910)," *Architectural History,* vol 48, 2005, pp. 257 – 290.
[14] Peter Kennerley, *The Building of Liverpool Cathedral,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2008.

Before all else, Scott was a church architect. For understanding church architecture of the period, The Twentieth Century Society's 1998 volume, *The Twentieth Century Church*, is indispensible, as are classics such as *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship* and Peter Anson's *Fashions in Church Furnishings*.[15] Such books cannot avoid mentioning Scott, but even here he remains peripheral. Books on Scott's contemporaries, particularly Anthony Symondson's book on Ninian Comper are also extremely helpful in that regard, as are articles by Ayla Lepine.[16]

For Scott's postwar career, important information can be gleaned from Louise Campbell's books on Coventry Cathedral and Basil Spence, as well as from Gavin Stamp's "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and Bankside Power Station," both of which give hints about the reasons for the postwar decline of his reputation and the shifts in architectural fashion that precipitated it.[17] This thesis will provide a richer context for these postwar projects by tying them into the broader realm of Scott's career and architectural thought.

Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly (1881-1957)*, Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004.
Vere Cotton, *The Book of Liverpool Cathedral,* Liverpool: Liverpool University, 1964.

[15] Twentieth Century Society, *The Twentieth Century Church, Twentieth Century Architecture 3,* 1998.
G W O Addleshaw and Frederick Etchells, *The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship,* London: Faber & Faber, 1948.
Peter Anson, *Fashions in Church Furnishings, 1840-1940,* London: Faith Press, 1960.

[16] Anthony Symondson, *Sir Ninian Comper: An Introduction to his Life and Works,* Reading: Spire, 2006.
Ayla Lepine, "The Persistence of Medievalism: Kenneth Clark and the Modern Gothic World," *Architectural History,* vol 57, 2014, forthcoming.

[17] Louise Campbell, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects,* London: RIBA, 2012.
Louise, Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art & Architecture in Post-war Britain*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
Gavin Stamp, "Giles Gilbert Scott and Bankside Power Station," in Rowan Moore and Raymond Ryan, eds, *Building Tate Modern,* London: Tate Gallery, 2000, pp. 177-190.

For understanding Scott's important role in the American Gothic Revival, Richard Oliver's monograph on Scott's friend Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Michael Clark's *The American Discovery of Tradition*, and Barksdale Maynard's *Princeton: America's Campus* are particularly helpful.[18] Oliver's book examines Goodhue's friendship with Scott directly, but briefly, and the other two help to establish the context of the movement with a particular focus on trans-Atlantic exchanges. As will be shown, trans-Atlantic influence was extremely important for the development of Scott's design ideas, particularly in his secular practice.

For British interwar architectural theory in general, David Watkin's *The Rise of Architectural History* gives an excellent overview of the major thinkers of the period, without the usual pro-Modernist bias (although with perhaps a bit of a slant in the opposite direction).[19] He recognises the towering importance of Lethaby for the period, as well as the later influence of Goodhart-Rendel, and significantly, he traces many of the origins of the era's ideas about abstract issues such as community, tradition, style, and modernity. It is not in the nature of his work, however, to attempt to tie together this network of architectural thought in order to draw broader conclusions. The Continental theory of the period that influenced Scott's work is well summarized in Harry Francis Mallgrave's *Modern Architectural Theory*, but he does not directly trace the influence of such work in Britain.[20] For

[18] Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1983.
Michael D Clark, *The American Discovery of Tradition,* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State, 2005.
Barksdale Maynard, *Princeton: America's Campus,* State College, Penn: Pennsylvania State, 2012.
[19] David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983.
[20] Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory,* CUP, 2005.

understanding construction methods of the era, and the philosophies behind them, see Edward Ford's *The Details of Modern Architecture*.[21] Ford's explanations of the ways that architectural theory played out in actual construction helps us to understand Scott's approach to the fabrication of his designs. The off-the-cuff assumption in the recent Pevsner guides to London that Scott's buildings are concrete frames veneered with brick (they are in fact load-bearing masonry), shows that this is an area that could use greater understanding amongst architectural historians. For the role of rhetoric and language in the shaping of modern architecture, a key theme of Chapter 4 of this thesis, Adrian Forty's *Words and Buildings* is useful, giving insight into the word games of Scott and his contemporaries as well as tracing the way the meanings given to architectural terms shifted over time.[22]

The Battle of Modernism vs Traditionalism

Most historical literature identifies the conflict between traditionalists and modernists as the defining cultural debate of the interwar era.[23] Perhaps, though, it is better to frame the period in terms of the struggle between abstraction and historicism, and if possible, to present them less oppositionally. Interwar architects explored shared concerns in different ways, constantly giving and taking from one

[21] Edward R Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture, vol 1,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 2003.
[22] Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture,* London: Thames & Hudson, 2000.
[23] Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory,* CUP, 2007, pp. 11-12.

another, and through their various solutions collaboratively forged architectural modernity.

There has been much talk in recent years about 'alternative modernisms,' and architectural modernism has been held to be a broadly catholic body of theory, incorporating architects of widely different philosophies. In a ground-breaking 2005 article on the subject, Sarah Williams Goldhagen suggested that modernism is perhaps best thought of as a discourse—a group of various individual positions "loosely structured" by shared concerns and themes.[24] Harry Francis Mallgrave similarly adopted a broad definition in his *Modern Architectural Theory,* and Alexandra Harris and Michael Saler have applied this framework to British art and architecture of the interwar period.[25] Frank Lloyd Wright, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Hermann Muthesius, Adolf Loos, and Erich Mendelsohn have all been labelled modernist. If taken to mean any architect who wished to develop architectural forms for contemporary life and to incorporate new technologies, then the term could be applied to almost any architect of the twentieth century. That is, in fact, the sense that the word was given in the interwar period, when it was applied to Giles Gilbert Scott and Berthold Lubetkin alike. Even Victorians such as George Gilbert Scott Sr and William Butterfield were described as 'modernists'

[24] Sarah Williams Goldhagen, "Something to Talk About: Modernism, Discourse, Style," *JSAH,* vol 64, no. 2, Jun 2005, p. 145.
[25] See further discussion of Harris's and Saler's work below.

because they sought an architectural expression, using modern materials, that was unique to Victorian industrial society.[26]

That is the sense in which I have used the term here. The narrower sense of 'Modernism' (perhaps best written with a capital M) as the set of dogma espoused by Le Corbusier, van der Rohe, Gropius, and, in England, the MARS Group (and even these architects did not espouse a monolithic or consistent philosophy), does not seem to have entered general parlance until the 1930s, from which point onward it has confusingly vied with the broader sense of the word.[27] This state of affairs has seeded many misimpressions amongst students of architecture. Although Frank Lloyd Wright should certainly be labelled a modernist in the first sense, he was adamant to point out that he was not a Modernist of the second sort.[28] When referring to this more constricted camp of Modernists, I have often used the term International Modernist, a term that is in many ways unsatisfactory, but at least helps to draw the distinction (and underlines their claim to universality). That being said, there are places where the borders of modernism, in both senses, become hazy. As Giles Gilbert Scott knew well, it is the nature of such categories to be imprecise. The very imprecision of the term, I believe, left intellectual room for many different ideas about modern architecture to be forged within it during the interwar period.

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[26] H S Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of Temple Moore," *JRIBA,* vol 35, no 14, 26 May 1928, p. 492.

[27] Sarah Williams Goldhagen's "Something to Talk About: Modernism, Discourse, Style," *JSAH,* vol 64, no. 2, Jun 2005, pp. 144-167, deconstructs the tactics that early proponents of a paradigm of homogenous modernism used to falsely imply a uniformity of ideas amongst the movement's leading figures.

[28] Bruce Brooks Pfieffer, ed, *Frank Lloyd Wright Collected Writings*, vol 3, New York, 1994.

As for the words modern and modernistic, the meanings applied to them then, as now, were quite scattershot. Some critics made attempts to give specific meanings to modernistic, particularly as meaning architecture with fashionable trappings of Modernism but none of the underlying concern with plan and form.[29] This definition never caught on and the adjective continued to be indiscriminately used to mean 'modern-looking.' I have used modern and modernistic in the sense of the simple dictionary definition, when I have needed a word that was not 'modernist.'

A few scholars have begun to try to create architectural histories that explore the breadth of alternative modernisms: Michael Saler's *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England* is one of the more wide-ranging studies of the influence of Ruskin, Morris, and the Victorian Gothic Revival on British interwar design and coined the phrase 'medieval modernism' to describe the fusion of medievalist ideals, modern technology, and formalism found in the work of architects such as Charles Holden and artists such as Eric Gill and Jacob Epstein.[30] In the same vein, Alexandra Harris's *Romantic Moderns* is helpful for understanding the way the artistic climate of the period aligns with social and cultural history.[31]

It is, however, indicative of Scott's marginalisation that even in books aiming to redress the pro-modernist bias of the existing literature, neither writer mentions Scott. That is perhaps because his position on traditionalism is complex and little

[29] See Alan Powers *Modern: The Modern Movement in Britain,* London: Merrell, 2005, p. 16.
[30] Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP, 1999.
[31] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns,* London: Thames & Hudson, 2010.

known. Alan Powers's book *Modern: The Modern Movement in Britain* and Elizabeth Darling's works, contribute to an understanding of the Modern Movement in Britain.[32] Alan Powers is one of the scholars who has been best at moving away from the competing-schools model, whose histories of the Modern Movement in Britain are quick to acknowledge the influence of a wide range of architectural thinkers. Architects of the interwar period were much more collaborative than such histories given them credit for. William Whyte's essay, "The Englishness of English Architecture," explores the issue of national expression in modern British architecture that is a key feature of interwar concerns about community and tradition.[33] It examines the way that architectural ideas and concepts previously linked to traditionalist work were incorporated in the creation of a uniquely British iteration of the International Style. As the work of these scholars demonstrates, to write out traditionalists is to limit our understanding of modernists, and vice versa.

The Fallacy of Scott's Victorian Descent

Besides labelling him as unfathomably occupying a place between traditionalism and Modernism, the other great mistake regarding Scott's work is to label him as a relic of the Victorian Gothic Revival. Scott's grandfather was George Gilbert Scott Sr, champion of the High Victorian Gothic Revival and designer of the Albert Memorial

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[32] Alan Powers, *Modern: The Modern Movement in Britain,* London: Merrell, 2005.
Elizabeth Darling, *Re-forming Britain: Narratives of Modernity Before Reconstruction,* London: Routledge, 2007.
[33] William Whyte, "The Englishness of English Architecture: Modernism and the Making of a National International Style, 1927 – 1957," *Journal of British Studies,* 48, April 2009, pp. 441 – 465.

and St Pancras Station. His father was George Gilbert Scott Jr, an influential church architect who was one of the founders of the ecclesiastical decoration firm, Watts & Co.[34] His most important works included the now-destroyed St Agnes, Kennington, and ranges of student rooms at St John's College, Oxford, and Pembroke College, Cambridge. As part of a major architectural dynasty, Giles Gilbert Scott is often grouped with his father and grandfather and portrayed as a sort of curious survival of Victorian approaches to design.[35] There is a saying amongst architects of the generation that was educated in the 1960s and 1970s that the order of the Scott dynasty was "Great Scott, Mad Scott, Bad Scott."[36] This labelling of Giles Gilbert Scott as 'the bad one' is partly the result of the postwar decline of his reputation, a consequence of impolitic decisions and changing fashions that will be discussed in Chapter 5. But it is also the result of an attempt to understand his architectural motives as a continuation of those of his father and grandfather. Cast in that light, Scott's work looks strange and eccentric, as if he had badly misunderstood the principles of the Victorian Gothic Revival and descended into a stylistically chaotic historicism tempered by fashionable Art Deco. This was not at all the case. As we will see, Scott's theories of architectural design were completely his own and of his time. His design theories, cast in the light of twentieth century concerns, represent a consistent body of ideology far removed from that of his ancestors.

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[34] For a study of George Gilbert Scott Jr, see Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002.
[35] See, for instance, Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 30.
[36] I do not recall ever having seen this idea in print, but I have had it repeated to me on numerous occasions by scholars and architects that I have met at conferences and have had my supervisors ask how I intended to address it. The idea seems to exist exclusively in the oral tradition of British architectural history.

Gavin Stamp's *An Architect of Promise* examines the career of Scott's father, and is helpful for understanding the intellectual tradition that shaped Scott's early training.[37] Although Scott would immediately move towards developing his own ideas, the inspiration of his father's generation is still to be found at the foundation of Scott's thought. Michael Hall's "What Do Victorian Churches Mean?" lays out the key questions of the late Gothic Revival and divides late-Victorian Gothic Revival design into two strands of thought – Archaeological and Abstract.[38] This proves a surprisingly useful framework for examining the interwar period, as the issues were very similar, although the terms of questioning had changed. Roger Fry's formalism, first set out in his famous essay 'On Aesthetics,' became a key text for the interwar strand of abstraction.[39] 'Archaeology' became a question of the associational nature of ornament, the power of historical forms to transmit 'cultural values' by calling up stories of the national past. It was also portrayed as a way to respond to local conditions. Unlike the Victorians, architects of the interwar period did not necessarily see a dichotomy between abstraction and archaeology; they were seeking ways to unite the two strands of thought.

The differences between Giles Scott and his father were largely the result of conscious choice and careful self-fashioning. Each Scott had refashioned the family ideal, updating it for the current generation. His father, as is explored in *An Architect of Promise,* abandoned the 'vigour and go' of George Gilbert Scott Sr's High Victorian

[37] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002.
[38] Michael Hall, "What Do Victorian Churches Mean? Symbolism and Sacramentalism in Anglican Church Architecture, 1850-1870," *JSAH,* vol 59, no 1, Mar 2000, pp. 78 – 95.
[39] Roger Fry, *Vision and Design,* London: Chatto & Windus, 1920.

generation in favour of a more aesthetic, elegant Gothic: "Instead of a deliberate heaviness and striving after originality, [Scott Jr's works] manifest refinement; instead of self-conscious experimentation, they proclaimed the paramount necessity of beauty…Rather than striving to create modernity through the development of often exotic precedents, Scott [Jr] — like Bodley and Garner — reinterpreted and reinvigorated historical forms with great sophistication."[40] Giles returned to the characteristics of his grandfather in all of these regards — experimentation, deliberate massiveness, and a striving for originality became key elements of his design process.[41] Giles harnessed exotic precedents from the late Spanish Gothic to the ziggurats of the ancient Near East. In line with the general technological optimism of the early twentieth century, he returned to a belief in architectural progress. And like his grandfather, he became a pragmatic and client-pleasing architect, beloved by governmental, ecclesiastical, and educational institutions.

A return to some of the broader principles of his grandfather, however, did not make Scott a Victorian. The technologies he was responding to were different; the aesthetic theories of formalist abstraction and sensitive contextualisation resulted in a very different grammar of design; the precedents he was calling on were ones his father and grandfather would have rejected.[42] Although the heir to some Gothic Revival theories, such as a Puginian notion that the Gothic could heal industrial

[40] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p. 7.
[41] See Chapter 1.
[42] His grandfather's close contemporary G E Street, for instance, saw late Spanish Gothic as particularly 'degraded,' and pagan precedents such as ziggurats would have been unfathomable. G E Street, *Some Account of Gothic Architecture in Spain,* London: Dent, 1914.

society, Scott and his contemporaries reinterpreted the old theories and, as we will see, added their own ideas, in order to create a new mode of architectural practice that could in no way still be labelled a part of the Victorian movement.

Education and Faith

Giles Gilbert Scott's father had been declared of unsound mind when Giles was four years old, and he had died when Giles was sixteen.[43] Giles and his brother Adrian were raised both in London and in the Sussex countryside by their mother, Ellen. She determined that they would follow in their father's footsteps as architects, and took them on sketching expeditions to Sussex churches.[44] The children saw little of their father, and had no opportunity for absorbing a 'dynastic' way of working directly from him. Unlike their father, who had studied at Eton and Cambridge, Adrian and Giles were sent to Roman Catholic boarding school, and in 1898 Giles would go straight into architectural pupillage with his father's assistant Temple Moore, rather than attending university. Although his mother's intent had been for him to learn his father's design philosophy through the pupillage, Scott later insisted that he saw so little of Moore that learning from him was impossible.[45]

What Scott did inherit from his father was his faith. The Scott family came from a Low, Broad Church background. Giles Scott's great-grandfather had been an

[43] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p. 1.
[44] Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott: His Son's View,* London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011, p. 3.
[45] See Chapter 3.

Anglican minister in Buckinghamshire, and his grandfather was devoted to the same tradition. His father, however, had shocked the family by converting to Roman Catholicism after an encounter with John Newman in the 1880s, and from that point forward, his branch of the Scott family remained devout Catholics.[46] Scott's, however, was not the conservative, Ultramontane strand of some British Catholics, but the liberal, bohemian Catholicism of Hampstead intellectuals such as Coventry Patmore. Giles Scott was thus in an unusual position. He was at once very English and very Catholic, but he was not a member of the Catholic establishment. He did not come from a traditionally Catholic family, and he did not attend an elite Catholic boarding school like Ampleforth or Downside. Instead, Scott attended Beaumont College, a small Jesuit school near Windsor. The Jesuits were the most liberal of the orders; they had many contacts with the Liberal Anglicans and some of their leaders were involved in the movement for Christian reunion.[47] According to historian of Roman Catholicism Kester Aspden, interwar English Catholics had been encouraged to collaborate since Cardinal Manning's time with those of other religious affiliations on social and political action. This trend accelerated after World War I.[48] Giles Scott was deeply devoted to confronting social issues from a Christian angle. A Liberal Catholic in every sense, he married a Protestant, Louise Wallbank Hughes, a highly controversial move at the time.[49]

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[46] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p. 148.
[47] Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church,* Leominster, Herts: Gracewing, 2002, p. 128.
[48] Ibid, pp. 7-9.
[49] Ibid, p. 8. Scott's mother objected to the match on religious grounds. Gavin Stamp, "Scott, Sir Giles Gilbert (1880-1960)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2011.

Many of Scott's clerical associates shared his liberal outlook. Such liberalism was common amongst Roman Catholic artists, with the influential sculptor Eric Gill actively addressing social issues in his writings and lectures and the aesthetic philosopher Maritain urging cooperation with the rest of society in the face of the growing threat of totalitarianism.[50] The Athenaeum, Scott's club, was a hotbed of Liberal Anglican and Catholic interaction. Roman Catholic Bishop David Matthew met regularly with Anglican Bishop of Chichester G K A Bell there and devised many interwar and postwar schemes for Catholic and Protestant collaboration.[51] Matthew, who was involved in the British Roman Catholic mission in Africa, may have had something to do with Giles Scott's work for the Cathedral of Madagascar and Adrian Scott's appointment to design the Cathedral of Port Sudan. Cardinal Francis Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, where Scott often attended services, was also a member of the Athenaeum, and cautiously encouraged Roman Catholic participation in the Liberal Anglican Archbishop William Temple's COPEC, an inter-denominational council founded in 1920 and devoted to addressing areas of social concern.[52] Bourne was also a leader of the Temperance Council of Christian Churches of England and Wales alongside Scott's client, the Salvation Army leader William Booth.[53] Cardinal Francis Neil Gasquet, whose tomb at Downside Abbey Scott would consider one of his greatest works, also felt that Catholics should be "broad-minded" on social questions and shared Scott's zealous English patriotism.[54] Scott's

[50] Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church,* Leominster, Herts: Gracewing, 2002, p. 238.
[51] Ibid, p. 235.
[52] He served as archbishop from 1903-1935. Ibid, p. 127.
[53] Ibid, p. 127.
[54] Ibid, p. 42.

liberalism must have made him more agreeable to his Anglican clients. He was the sort of Roman Catholic architect whom the Oxford and Cambridge colleges found acceptable. Scott would also make close friends amongst the Anglican clergy, who became his clients at Liverpool Cathedral and in churches across England.

Scott's faith would profoundly shape his approach to architecture and design. On some level, Scott did not have a theory of architecture; he had a theology of architecture. He believed that the development of the ordering of man's environment through architecture was all part of the gradual development of God's purpose. He sought to move toward this veiled ideal. More than anything else, he believed that the purpose of architecture was to serve people.

Scott's Office

Scott cultivated a politeness and gentlemanly professionalism that made him popular with clients. He was known for being charming and friendly. The reasons for Scott's aversion to discord may have been rooted in his father's madness and the subsequent collapse of his professional practice as well as his own weathering of controversy at the beginning of the Liverpool Cathedral project and his insecure position as a Roman Catholic in a country with a predominantly Protestant elite. John Summerson, who became an assistant in the Scott office in the late 1920s, would express surprise "that the creator of so passionate a piece of architecture as Liverpool Cathedral could be so unimpassioned in person." Although C H Reilly

stated proudly that Scott was "the best golfer in the profession," younger architects who considered themselves to be socially radical did not see this as a necessarily admirable trait.[55]

In 1903, Giles Scott began his independent career with his spectacular victory in the Liverpool Cathedral Competition, aged only 22, a turn of events which meant that like his father and grandfather, he became best known as a church architect. His ecclesiastical clients were usually Roman Catholic and High Church Anglicans (the most prominent exception being William Booth, who commissioned a training college on Denmark Hill, London, for the evangelical Methodist organisation the Salvation Army). He would always say that his great love was designing churches, and these designs were his most radical and influential works.[56] After the First World War, he also established specialities in industrial design and university buildings. Amongst the creations of his firm were Battersea Power Station (1930-1932), the London Guinness Factory (1933-1935), the red telephone booth (1924 and 1935), Waterloo Bridge (1932-1947), Bankside Power Station (1947-1960), and the House of Commons Chamber (1945-1951). Unlike many architects with Edwardian roots, his non-ecclesiastical work was primarily urban and institutional; he did hardly any domestic work at all.

[55] C H Reilly, *Representative British Architects of the Present Day,* London: Batsford, 1931, p. 142 and John Summerson, "John Summerson: Life & Work," Typescript Memoirs, c.1984, IV.11, Archives of St John's College, Oxford.
[56] See Chapter 3.

The popular legend, especially in the mid-twentieth century when his reputation was at its low-point, was that George Gilbert Scott Sr had such a large office and delegated so much design to assistants that he often did not recognise the work of his own firm. Perhaps mindful of his grandfather's reputation, Giles Gilbert Scott insisted on designing nearly everything himself. Drawing full-size details was one of his favourite activities, so he did not even delegate the design of details to his assistants. Summerson recalled, "Scott was too fastidious to allow his staff any design scope. Every line, down to the last profile or eaves section came from his own hand."[57] Whereas his grandfather had employed dozens of assistants at the height of his practice in the 1860s, Giles Scott never employed more than eight.[58]

Scott felt that above all the architect must be a "gentleman,"[59] and he ran his practice accordingly. Even by the standards of the era of 'gentleman architects,' his office was regarded as a particularly congenial place to work. Lunch breaks were long for an architecture office — a full hour[60] — and the office went into hibernation every August, when Scott took a month off to sketch churches and play golf on the Continent. During one such holiday in the United States, Scott was amazed to discover that American architects worked during August.[61]

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[57] John Summerson, "John Summerson: Life & Work," Typescript Memoirs, c.1984, IV.12, Archives of St John's College, Oxford.
[58] Andrew Saint discusses the trend towards small offices amongst 'gentleman architects' of the interwar period in "The Architect as Gentleman" in his book *The Image of the Architect,* YUP, 1983, pp. 96-114.
[59] Giles Gilbert Scott, "An Address to Students," *JRIBA*, vol 41, no. 6, 27 January 1934, p. 268.
[60] John Summerson, "John Summerson: Life & Work," Typescript Memoirs, c.1984, IV.11, Archives of St John's College, Oxford.
[61] Giles Scott, "Cass Gilbert, obituary," *JRIBA*, 2 June 1934, p.770.

Scott's draftsmen were loyal, and his lead clerks stayed on for decades. Besides John Summerson, young assistants who began their careers in Scott's office included Herbert Baker's son, Alfred.[62] In his unpublished memoirs, Summerson would recall that Scott's office was "homely and leisured…Scott himself I found to be a calm and tolerant man, with blue eyes and a boyish way of expressing himself. His main interest seemed to be golf."[63] Summerson's description of the office is one of the few that exist, so it is worth quoting at length:

> Scott's staff consisted of about six men and a secretary, the latter a frail, thin, cat-loving lady of great charm, Miss Meredith. She was receptionist and typist and made the tea. Then there was Mr A G Crimp, the office manager, whose clipped military accent failed to disguise the fact that he was the friendliest and most good-natured of men, as well as an architect who submerged his own abilities in his intense loyalty to Scott. The chief draftsman was F G Thomas, who had, I think, worked his way up from office boy level and was an able and amiable example of his kind. But much of the drawing was done by young men who had come to Scott as articled pupils and stayed on as paid assistants.[64]

Summerson was only twenty-three when he joined Scott's office in the late 1920s, and his stay was brief. He left two years later to teach at the Edinburgh College of Art, where one of his students was Basil Spence, an architect who would play an important but indirect role in the final stage of Scott's career.[65] Summerson would learn that not all gentlemen architects were the same when he returned to London to work for Clough Williams-Ellis. Summerson was left alone in Williams-Ellis's

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[62] Alfred Baker was sent to Scott's office for summer work experience in 1947. Letter, A.T. Scott (Baker Office) to Giles Scott, 3 July 1947, SP, ScGG/261/4.
[63] John Summerson, "John Summerson: Life & Work," Typescript Memoirs, c.1984, IV.11, Archives of St John's College, Oxford.
[64] Ibid IV.12.
[65] See Chapter 4. Ibid V.1.

Hampstead House, the sole member of the 'London office,' with a telephone for calling Williams-Ellis in Wales if any business came up.[66]

Although in later years their architectural ideals diverged rapidly when Summerson joined the MARS Group, Scott and Summerson stayed on good terms. It was partly due to Scott's influence as Senior Trustee that Summerson became curator of the Soane Museum, and Summerson would subsequently dedicate his volume in the Pelican History of Art, *English Architecture 1530-1830,* in Scott's honour. Both Crimp and Thomas, whom Summerson mentions, would stay with Scott for the rest of his career, as trusted assistants he would often send them to job sites or to meet with clients in his stead. But even Crimp, when answering Scott's office correspondence while he was away, was not authorised to make basic design decisions.

Scott's brother Adrian ran his own office in the same building at Gray's Inn, and was frequently brought in to assist with Giles's projects.[67] The brothers designed in a very similar style, and the separation of the two offices was essentially a formality, allowing them to maintain independent identities. It is often hard to tell which of the brothers designed what, and it is impossible to determine the extent of the one's influence on the other, but judging from the designs executed individually, Giles was the more original designer and the wellspring of the firm's aesthetic. Summerson, at

[66] Ibid V.12.
[67] Letter, Scott to Rev Coghlan, 17 October 1938, SP, ScGG/259/1.

least, regarded Adrian as part of Giles's office.[68] Other members of the Scott family were also involved in the profession, and Scott even occasionally referred church restoration work to his cousin C M O Scott (son of John Oldrid Scott).[69]

Scott's Working Methods

Scott's commissions were often the result of his social contacts. His reputation as a gentleman architect meant that he was seen as someone who shared the values of his clients. He was both an artist of high regard and a pragmatic designer. Unlike Lutyens, who had a reputation for going over budget and for disregarding clients' wishes, Scott got on well with committees and was generally happy to compromise. While this brought him many prominent institutional commissions in his early career, it may have hurt him later, as he became a frequent choice for controversial projects. Bringing in Scott to design a façade for controversial building proposals became a standard plan of action for London contractors between the wars and in the immediate postwar period. Thus he became a designer of controversial power stations and office blocks, factories, and public projects whose site or scale made them a subject of contention.[70]

Once a project was in hand, Scott would begin sketching ideas. Sometimes he jotted his first ideas in sketchbooks (which were occasionally gridded like Lutyens's), but

[68] John Summerson, "John Summerson: Life & Work," Typescript Memoirs, c.1984, V.11, Archives of St John's College, Oxford.
[69] Letter, Scott to Rev Clayton (St John, Coventry), 8 May 1939, SP, ScGG/259/1.
[70] See Chapters 3 & 4.

he seems to have moved fairly quickly to designing on large sheets of paper. Many of his design-stage measured sketches survive amongst his papers at the Royal Institute of British Architects, with ideas for facades or details surrounded by scribbled calculations and doodles of racecars.[71] Scott experimented broadly with possible forms early in the design process. Several alternative and widely different designs survive for the churches at Luton (where he considered two small west towers instead of the massive single one);[72] Golders Green (where he experimented with numerous radical layouts including two naves meeting at a right angle);[73] Liverpool Derby Lane (where his first design was somewhat akin to a miniature Liverpool Cathedral),[74] and the Huyton Girls School Chapel (where he experimented with a Gothic design before ultimately creating a Byzantine one).[75] With a very few exceptions, Scott did not present alternatives to clients, but chose one option to work up and present.[76] Although he was pragmatic and happy to modify his work to suit clients' wishes, he also knew the importance of keeping control of the design process.

[71] The use of calculations and ratios, though considerable, is not as extensive as that of Lutyens. As befits a Gothic architect, Scott does not seem to have been as strict in his method of proportioning, often working from sight. For racecar doodles and ratios see, for instance, the working drawings for All Saints, Wallasey, SD, ScGG [161] 20.
[72] SD, ScGG[116]2
[73] SD, ScGG[78]1-47
[74] SD, SCOTT RAN 7 ScGG[68]2
[75] SD, SCOTT RAN 7 ScGG[69] 2-7
[76] Although Scott never offered alternative plans, exceptions were made when Scott wanted to offer two alternative styles, for instance, offering a choice of Gothic or Grecian for the Preston War Memorial (SD ScGG[142]1-22), or offering Art Deco or Neo-Georgian for the Cropthorne Court flats in Maida Vale (SD ScGG[99]1-2). One can often infer Scott's personal preference from the degree to which he has elaborated the drawings. At both the Preston War Memorial and Maida Vale, Scott fully rendered one option, adding details such as plants and clouds, and only plainly rendered the other. In both cases, the clients chose the option that Scott was less excited about— the Neo-Grec memorial for Preston and the Neo-Georgian flats (with Greek detailing) for Maida Vale.

When a project was ready to show to clients, Scott would present the drawings in person. He seems to have always done the presentation himself, explaining the drawings and applying his famous tact. With secular projects, he often presented the plans for approval first, and then returned to his office to finalise the elevations. Once the elevations were complete, he would return to the client to approve the completed preliminary design. If he felt the client was likely to be a particularly difficult one, or the commission was particularly important, he would have a watercolour rendering made. He seldom rendered drawings in-house, although some coloured renderings from Scott's office survive, for instance watercolour interior perspectives of the London Guildhall roof,[77] the nave of Huyton School for Girls Chapel,[78] and alternative designs for the Preston War Memorial.[79] Such drawings were generally produced for specific meetings with tough clients. The Guildhall roof drawings and the Preston War Memorial drawing, for instance, were intended to help clients visualise alternative options. The renderings he executed for the Huyton School for Girls Chapel were perhaps meant to inspire the client to pursue a project that he perhaps always sensed was unlikely to go forward (it remained unexecuted). If Scott felt that there was a chance the image would be published, he nearly always commissioned a watercolour from a professional artist such as Cyril Farey.

[77] SD, SCOTT RAN 8 [96] 38
[78] SD, SCOTT RAN 7 ScGG[69] 2-7
[79] SD, ScGG[142]1-22

Once the preliminary design was approved, Scott's office would draw up an official description of the building explaining the aesthetic and practical motives behind the design. Never more than one page in length, these descriptions would become the official press releases and were often reproduced verbatim in newspapers and magazines. A copy of the description would be filed at his office, and thus many remain amongst his papers at the RIBA. These have proved very important texts for understanding Scott's design philosophy. For many projects, these descriptions contain the only record of Scott's ideas about the project. In this thesis, I often cite the author of such papers as 'Giles Gilbert Scott.' It is impossible to tell to what extent these items were actually written by members of Scott's office, but they were certainly carefully edited, approved, and signed by Scott, so they are taken to correspond with his ideas.

Issues to be Examined

Scott's body of ideas provides an ideal window into the evolution of British architectural thought during the interwar period, particularly in terms of its relationship to the concept of modernity. It raises questions about national and religious expression in architecture, the role of technological change, and the notion of architectural style in the modern world. This thesis will explore all of those themes over the course of a career.

The first and second chapters, titled "The First University Buildings: History as Style" and "The Later University Buildings: History as Form," will explore the evolution of Scott's thoughts on historicism in design. By examining his work at Oxford and Cambridge, two particularly sensitive historic townscapes, we will see how Scott incorporated ideas about history and style into his design practice, and how those ideas changed over time. The first chapter takes his design for the Memorial Court at Clare College, Cambridge, as its starting point, demonstrating the way that Scott's earliest university designs looked to historic styles as a way of textualising a building and demonstrating respect for local context. The second chapter, which focuses on a case study of Oxford's New Bodleian Library, shows how Scott's ideas about local context had changed by the mid-1930s. His concern for 'architectural good manners' manifested itself in a more abstract concern for mass, form and appropriate materials, and led him to a way of linking history and modern architecture that he hoped would be a stepping-stone towards the development of a new wholly modern architecture in which history was expressed by completely formal means.

The third chapter, titled "The Church Designs: Tradition in the Modern Age," uses Scott's church designs to explore his ideas about the nature of tradition and community. Scott sought to abstract the forms of his churches as a way of connecting to the unconscious mind, while at the same time believing specific and concrete elements, such as pointed arches and stone tracery, should be retained for their associational value. This chapter explains how Scott conceived of his strategy

of abstraction as a way of addressing social issues through architecture. He feared that the traditional fabric of British communities was being torn apart by the growing anonymity of urban life. His churches attempted to stitch back together the fabric of the communities they served, from relatively small seaside congregations at Bournemouth, Plymouth, and Oban, to large population served by his masterpiece, the vast metropolitan cathedral at Liverpool.

The fourth chapter, titled "Town Planning and Commercial Buildings: Artistic Duty in the Civic Realm," examines the way that Scott translated his social concerns to the scale of the modern metropolis and the way that he tried to communicate his goals to the wider public. Focusing on his urban planning and large-scale London projects, the chapter demonstrates the way that Scott's projects were designed to address larger civic goals, thus speaking to a broader community than merely that of private owners and users.

Chapter 5, titled "Postwar Projects: A Legacy of Architectural Ideas," addresses Scott's legacy of architectural synthesis and its reception in the postwar world. Scott had hoped to create the best possible modern architecture by designing buildings that bridged the gap between archaeology and abstraction by expressing both at once. The critical strain placed on his work as priorities shifted after the war forced Scott 's ideas into sharper relief through contrast. He had always hoped that his ideas would be part of the 'development' of modern architecture, moving it forward

towards an ultimate, universal ideal. Although his personal style did not survive, his concepts did have an impact on the architecture of the postwar world.

Lastly, a brief conclusion sums up Giles Gilbert Scott's main ideas, and underlines the relevance of this often-ignored architect, who sought to shape British society by modernising tradition.

By returning Scott to the historical narrative, our understanding of interwar architecture is greatly broadened. The existing literature has focused so much on International Modernism that our understanding of the interwar period is greatly distorted. Although International Modernists were undeniably important at the time and exerted great influence on the development of later architecture, how can a focus on buildings so far outside the mainstream, on buildings that make up only an infinitesimally tiny proportion of built works, create a clear picture of the period? How can this be an accurate picture when the most celebrated architect of the age, whose landmark works are so essential to the fabric of modern British institutions, remains a historiographical aside? It cannot. The existing literature only gives us an understanding of International Modernism. It is built around the writings of midcentury critics with an interest in promoting a particular school. Despite the hopeful appearance of monographs on individual architects, a much broader global picture must be painted. The overarching narrative of interwar architecture has not been sufficiently written. It is the least understood era of twentieth-century architecture, and it is the era in which modern architecture as we know it was

forged. To truly understand today's built environment, we must develop a better understanding of how people thought about architecture during the interwar era. We must return to the buildings that were most influential and most popular. Most of all, we must take the historiography beyond limited national narratives, and we must examine the ways that architects of all schools shared ideas. Returning Scott to the narrative is a foundational step in that direction. Let us hope that more will follow.

1. Scott's First University Buildings: History as Style

Scott's first major secular project was the Memorial Court of Clare College, Cambridge (Figs. 1.1 - 1.4). Commissioned in 1922, it was to contain staircase accommodation for students and fellows as well as a monumental feature that commemorated the men of Clare who had served in World War I. The site was across Queen's Road from the college gardens and represented the first significant intrusion of the colleges beyond the Backs.

In April 1922, Col Arthur Barham, a man whose son, a graduate of Clare, had been killed in the War, offered £10,000 towards the new building. He declared that the building's primary purpose was "to turn out men who will play worthy parts for England."[1] Scott was thereby given a rare design challenge: the creation of a structure that would at once shape the future and memorialise the past. How could architectural forms be tasked with stirring emotion and transmitting patriotic ideology?

Scott's solution to this challenge lay in his choice of architectural style.
The style of Memorial Court could be broadly termed Neo-Grec — a term that was used to refer to any classical design of the interwar period with Greek ornamental details. However, more specifically, the style was Neo-Regency, a sub-category of

[1] Letter, Arthur Barham to Master of Clare, 22 April 1922, SP, ScGG/77/3. Clare College Archives seems to hold no correspondence relating to the project.

Neo-Grec in which Greek ornamental details were applied to what was essentially a Neo-Georgian body. As a sub-style, Neo-Regency had its own set of associated meanings and was surprisingly heavily theorised during the period.[2] Most of these meanings revolved around the fact that it was a domestic rather than monumental way of using Greek detailing. Scott's choice of the style is therefore somewhat unusual for a memorial, which would tend to be expressed in a monumental mode. He therefore bolstered its memorial symbolism with flaming cinerary urns and rooftop sarcophagi.

His decision to use the Neo-Regency style at Clare –his first major secular commission – would also mark his first use of a classical style on a high-profile habitable building. From a career point of view, the choice of style would help him break free of the stereotype of being solely a Gothic church architect. But how did this choice of style relate to the challenge of the building's programme?

The selection of Neo-Regency was ultimately rooted in the belief, put forward in William Lethaby's 1922 book *Form in Civilization,* that architecture was a medium through which the lessons of history were transmitted. Lethaby wrote that history

[2] A note on terminology: Scott's contemporaries referred to his domestic work as Neo-Grec, and he himself tended to simply call the work "of Greek character." (See for instance, Letter, Scott to Mr N Hitch, carver, 17 May 1923, SP, ScGG/78/2). Since Scott and his contemporaries chose to label the work in this way, they clearly considered it to be part of a coherent category of architectural design. As discussed later, the category was deeply rooted in German modernist belief that Greek ornament was more reflective of structure than other styles of ornament.

The term Neo-Regency seems to have been created by later scholars. Gavin Stamp and Alan Powers both use the term, and it is used to describe Scott's works in the RIBA Catalogue. As Alan Powers has established in his article, "CH Reilly: Regency, Englishness, and Modernism," *The Journal of Architecture*, 5:1, Neo-Regency represented a coherent body of design with its own architectural theories, and existed where Neo-Grec detailing intersected with broadly Neo-Georgian forms.

was a "strong and stimulating soul-food" [3] that contained the spirit of a nation. Therefore, the use of specifically national, historical form was necessary in memorials in order to animate patriotism. Historicist style was meant to remind viewers of the lessons of the English past,[4] and thus to transmit cultural identity and ideology. According to Lethaby, history should be used to shape architecture, so that architecture could in turn shape the character of those who dwelt within it: "Man builds the towns so that the towns will build his sons."[5]

The need to reassert English identity was felt to be particularly pressing after World War I, when the fabric of the community was seriously damaged by widespread death at the front.[6] As the historian of war memorials, Stefan Goebel has written, there was a "sense of radical discontinuity between the past and present,"[7] and one way that memorial artists dealt with the rift was by asserting the historical continuity of English culture. The argument for specifically English historical styles as transmitters of 'English' values was not unique to Lethaby, but became particularly common in the period. Herbert Baker wrote that the purpose of war memorials was "to express the unbroken history and beauty of England which the sacrifices of our soldiers have kept inviolate."[8] Scott took up the idea

[3] William Lethaby, *Form in Civilization,* OUP, 1920, p. 5.
[4] The word English was often used in this period to mean British, but there were many exceptions. A study of the rhetoric of English/British identity in interwar architecture can be found in William Whyte, "The Englishness of Modern Architecture: Modernism and the Making of a National International Style, 1927-1957," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 48, April 2009, pp. 441-465.
[5] William Lethaby, *Form in Civilization,* OUP, 1920, p. 1.
[6] 1 in 8 men had died, with the greatest death toll amongst the younger generations. Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory,* CUP, 2007, p. 1.
[7] Ibid, p. 28.
[8] Quoted in Ibid, p. 1.

enthusiastically, using traditional English Gothic forms like the churchyard cross or the Eleanor cross (as, for example in his 1925 War Memorial at Wigan (Fig. 1.5)), and styles that had connotations of Englishness, like the Neo-Grec, which recalled the British monumental Greek Revival tradition and which Scott used for memorials in places he felt required a more classical treatment, such as Preston (Fig. 1.6), Beaumont College (Fig. 1.7), and Clare.

Lethaby had written in 1891, "If you would know the new, you must search the old."[9] A better summary of Giles Gilbert Scott's philosophy about modernity in architecture could not be found. Scott regarded architecture as evolutionary. For Scott, architectural style was developed by members of a community working with similar ideas over a long period of time – in other words, good architecture was the product of a particular nation and was the sign of a healthy community.[10] This idea of an evolutionary tradition in architecture will be discussed more in the third chapter. The important aspect of this theory in respect to Scott's ideas about history is that, for Scott, the built environment was a medium encoded with cultural values. Architecture enabled those values by serving to constantly condition the psychology of community members with reminders of their heritage.

Although there is no direct evidence that Scott read Lethaby, his ideas would have been hard to avoid in the architectural circles of Edwardian London; Godfrey

[9] William Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*, London: Architectural Press, 1974 (originally published 1891), p. xxii.
[10] Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA,* vol XLI, 11 November 1933, p. 9.

Rubens has argued that Lethaby had as much influence on architectural thought as Ruskin or William Morris.[11] Lethaby's idea that historical expression in architecture transmitted cultural values and reinforced community was widely espoused by British architects of Scott's generation. Other expressions of the idea in memorials include Reginald Blomfield's 1921 Menin Gate at Ypres (Fig 1.8), where monumental Roman classicism was given connotations of modern-day military heroism, or Herbert Baker's 1926 Rhodes House at Oxford (Fig 1.9), where like Scott's work at Clare, a vernacular domestic style served a memorial function overlaid with imperial ideology. Baker explained, "it becomes all the more necessary, if there is to be any thought or meaning at all in the ornament that we use, to have some pure ore by means of the symbolical expression of ideas."[12] The 'lessons of history' in Clare Memorial Court would be less triumphalist — the Court was designed in a more quiet and mournful style than Rhodes House or the Menin Gate, and Colonel Barham wrote that the building should form the setting for an annual remembrance service featuring Kipling's "Recessional." [13]

Scott's commitment to the expression of national and historical characteristics in architecture, led to his strong belief that new buildings should respect the *genius loci*, that they should share the local materials, scale, and features of their context. This was a common thread in architectural discourse between the wars, which critic

[11] Godfrey Rubens, "Introduction," W R Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth,* London: Architectural Press, 1974, p. v.
[12] Herbert Baker, "Foreword," Arthur Whittick, *Symbols for Designers,* London: Crosby Lockwood, 1935, p. ii.
[13] Letter, Arthur Barham to Master of Clare, 22 April 1922, SP, ScGG/77/3.

Arthur Trystan Edwards called "architectural good manners."[14] Evolving ultimately from Ruskin, who believed that art should show "local characteristics and historical memory," it was an ideal that had formed the foundation of the Arts & Crafts Movement.[15]

But this ideal did not manifest itself in pure historicism or in the direct copying of historic detail. Such practices were anathema to Scott. Instead, Scott wanted to move towards the purely formal concerns of Roger Fry, who believed that the composition of abstract elements such as mass, line, and space created true artistic quality. He wanted to design in a way that was concerned with abstract principles, but maintained the essence of historical meaning without directly quoting historical form. This was possible, because Scott and many other architects of the period believed in a sort of universal essence in architectural form. As Scott put it, "the same fine fundamental qualities can be found in all styles."[16]

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[14] Arthur Trystan Edwards, *Good and Bad Manners in Architecture,* London: P Allan, 1924. Scott and Edwards's common ideas about architectural manners perhaps came from both having the same mentor, C H Reilly. Edwards had been a student of Reilly's at the Liverpool School of Architecture. Edwards and Scott do not seem to have been well acquainted. The one letter from Edwards that survives in the Scott Papers at RIBA dates from 1945 (ScGG/268/2), and opened with the presumption that Scott would not know who Edwards was. The letter asked Scott to join the Hundred New Towns Association, which supported a policy of mass migration that Scott had repeatedly publically objected to in his capacity as Chairman of the Royal Academy Planning Committee. Edwards also moved in social circles, such as that of Mansfield Forbes, that Scott found distasteful. (see below and Elizabeth Darling, "Finella, Mansfield Forbes, Raymond McGrath, and Modernist Architecture in Britain," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 50, 1, January 2011, p. 135).
[15] Elizabeth McKellar has traced the effect of Arts & Crafts ideas on Neo-Georgian taste in "Representing the Georgian," *Jorunal of Design History,* vol 20, no 4, pp. 325-344. Ruskin is quoted in Michael Hall, "What Do Victorian Churches Mean? Symbolism and Sacramentalism in Anglican Church Architecture, 1850-1870," *JSAH,* vol 59, no 1, Mar 2000, p. 81.
[16] Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA,* vol XLI, 11 November 1933, p. 9.

This idea of a 'universal architecture,' the idea that the styles of the world represented varying aspects of the same essence and that as civilization advanced, architectural design was converging towards a pure expression of that essence, was passed on to Scott via the Gothic Revivalists, who believed that the Gothic style, infused with the values of Christian civilization, would evolve into something uniquely suited to modern industrial society.[17] This new architecture would maintain that Christian spirit but would not necessarily look Gothic in detail. The origin of the idea, however, lay deeper in architectural history, for as architectural historian Joseph Rykwert has pointed out, men such as Nicholas Hawksmoor, Fischer von Erlach, and François Blondel were espousing similar ideas in the late seventeenth century.[18] By the 1920s, Anglo-American architectural theorists tended to regard 'Universal Architecture' as being most nearly expressed in stripped-down monumental classicism. Scott's mentor and promoter, Liverpool School of Architecture professor C H Reilly, wrote that universal architecture was best expressed in the work of American architects McKim, Mead, and White, whose buildings, he felt, reflected the dignity and efficiency of modern democratic society, while simplifying and intensifying the classical tradition that was the international heritage of European civilization.[19] Scott's architecture, he said, also did this, giving "new flesh" to the "old bones" of English Gothic.[20] Thus the expression of history and

[17] This idea, first cogently expressed by Pugin, was espoused by High Victorians such as George Gilbert Scott Sr and William Butterfield.
[18] Joseph Rykwert, *The First Moderns*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 1980, p. 80.
[19] C H Reilly, *Masters of Architecture: McKim, Mead, and White*, London: Ernest Benn, 1924, p. 17.
[20] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, pp. 53-54.

national identity in architecture became not merely a matter of copying 'national' ornamental details, but an issue of both formalism and psychology.

One of the great conundra of interwar architectural history was thus created: how could architecture become more abstract and less literally historicist without losing its psychological impact? This question would become one of the key puzzles of Scott's career.

Scott would explore this puzzle most directly at Oxford and Cambridge. It is easy to see why the two university towns with their picturesque clusters of medieval and Renaissance buildings were seen as needing modern buildings that were particularly sensitive to the historic townscape. Especially in Oxford, the preservation lobby was increasingly calling for sympathetic building and buying up tracts of surrounding countryside in an attempt to staunch the rapid change instigated by Lord Nuffield's booming car factory in the southern suburbs of the city.[21] The art critic Charles Marriott felt that the ancient university cities were so limited by their historic context that truly modern architecture was impossible. Despite his particular admiration for Giles Scott's work – many of whose best buildings were at Oxbridge – Marriott chose to leave Oxford and Cambridge out of his 1924 volume on modern English architecture because "it was felt on reflection

[21] The Oxford Preservation Trust was founded in 1926, and a common theme in literature of the period is the transformation of Oxford from a sleepy university town into a bustling commercial centre. See for example, Betjeman's lamentation of Oxford's new high street shops in *An Oxford University Chest,* OUP, 1938, pp. 8-12.

that work which, even when new, is so intimately adjusted to the architecture of the past, did not really come into the province of this book."[22]

Beginning with the 1922 Memorial Court at Clare College, itself a fairly straightforward reflection of Lethaby and Reilly's theories about historical expression, this chapter will trace the development of Scott's ideas about the expression of history in architecture by examining his work at the ancient universities during the 1920s and early 1930s. The following chapter will examine his later works at Oxford and Cambridge, demonstrating a decisive shift towards formalism in the balance between historicism and formalism in his work. It will conclude with a detailed examination of Oxford's New Bodleian Library, which from a theoretical perspective, proved to be one of the bolder and more original responses to historical context that was built in Britain between the wars.

Clare College Memorial Court

Clare brought in Scott on the heels of Lutyens, whom the college had originally consulted about the designs of their new buildings. Lutyens's designs (sketches of which exist in the RIBA) had proven too expensive, and Scott was commissioned to produce a more simply detailed scheme.[23] Whereas Lutyens had produced a 'Wrenaissance' interpretation of Old Court, Scott designed a U-shaped block in a Neo-Regency style entered through a central Memorial Arch housing a porter's

[22] Charles Marriott, *Modern English Architecture,* London: Chapman & Hall, 1924, p. 211.
[23] Edwin Lutyens, Sketches of Clare College designs, RIBA Drawings Collection, PA1600/Lut [25] 1.

lodge and a tablet with names of the Fallen. Scott's plan was innovative in that it managed to squeeze more accommodation than usual into each staircase, by enlarging each landing into what really amounted to a small corridor. Built of 2" pink brick with Portland stone trim, the block retained Lutyens-inspired features such as a tall hipped roof and concealed gutters. The building was officially opened on Armistice Day, 1924.

An appropriately dignified domestic style was not the sole requirement of the building. It had to not only memorialise, but to look forward. The Neo-Regency style was perhaps surprisingly, considered to do this. Scott's mentor, C H Reilly saw Regency as suitable for modern public and domestic buildings (Fig. 1.10). Featuring clean lines and sparse ornament, Regency architecture was light-filled and less bound by proportional rules. He felt that it was better able to respond to the demands of function than stricter Palladian classicism.[24] Because of these traits, it was easily adapted to 1920s fashions for austerity and Scandinavian Free Classicism. The style fitted into the idea of universal architecture, because, as Alan Powers phrases it, "the abstract totality could be clothed in the particulars of historic detailing"[25] and thus a 'universal' building could be given a specifically national character. Neo-Regency in Reilly's formulation thus made the building at once timeless and also specifically British – thus matching it to Lethaby's key requirement for a war memorial. Reilly also believed that Georgian and Regency

[24] See C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," February 1927, Typescripts, CHR, D207/27.
[25] Alan Powers, "CH Reilly: Regency, Englishness, and Modernism," *The Journal of Architecture*, vol 5, no 1, 1 Mar 2000, p. 49.

classicism were inherently more democratic, declaring that in the later 18th century, the Prime Minister William Pitt, Gainsborough, and Dr Oliver all lived in houses looking exactly alike in Bath's Circus, "just as they walked about in clothes of very much the same cut."[26] For Reilly, the style spoke of Britain's civic rectitude and just governance. This was a widespread attitude towards eighteenth century design (of which the Regency was considered to be the final phase); even arch-Modernist Maxwell Fry referred to "the success with which the Georgians housed the various classes of society."[27] While suited to a war memorial, the Neo-Regency was inherently less showy: it was a polite style, and while no imitation of Clare's existing buildings, it was quiet and dignified enough to easily establish a dialogue with the seventeenth-century classical Old Court.

Around 1910, Hermann Muthesius had written that the two authentic historic styles were Greek and Gothic. [28] Drawing from earlier German realist theory and particularly from the work of Gottfried Semper, he had explained that in both of these styles ornament grew naturally out of structure. The development of this structurally-derived ornamental detail over hundreds of years gave Greek and Gothic architecture a higher level of aesthetic refinement that any other architectural styles. This idea became an accepted truth in modernist histories of architecture, and was the reason for the ascendancy of these styles during the

[26] C H Reilly. *Broadcast Talks.* February 1927. Typescripts. CHR, D207/27.
[27] Quoted in William Whyte, "The Englishness of Modern Architecture: Modernism and the Making of a National International Style, 1927-1957," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 48, April 2009, p. 452.
[28] Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory,* CUP, 1998, p. 228. Scott had particular reason to be sympathetic to Muthesius, who had promoted his father's church work in *Die neure kirchliche Baukunst in England* (1901).

interwar period.[29] Even Le Corbusier subscribed to the notion of the evolutionary refinement of Greek architecture, famously illustrating an automobile beside the Parthenon, to quote art historian Alina Payne's explanation, as examples of "objects that had reached a high standard of perfection through constant refinement of type."[30] Scott and Reilly thus fell into a traditional assumption of modernism, and with it came a tendency to view certain styles as intellectually superior – a view that fit well with the Gothic Revival principles that underlay the theory of Universal Architecture. The Greek detailing of the Neo-Regency was thus seen as better suited to modern life by occupying a higher position in the evolution of form.

Amongst British architects, Scott and Reilly were by no means alone in considering the Neo-Regency style modern. An appreciation of Soane was on the cusp of architectural fashion. Professor Albert Richardson's *Monumental Classic Architecture in Great Britain and Ireland During the 18th and 19th Centuries* had rekindled an appreciation of nineteenth century classicists when it was published in 1914.[31] In 1921, just a year earlier than Scott began Memorial Court, Roger Fry had given a lecture at the RIBA extolling Soane's virtues and bringing his work back into the public eye.[32] The Bank of England focused attention on its Soane building by beginning to demolish it in 1925 (Fig. 1.11). The idea was current in the 1920s, promoted in books like that of Harry Birstingl, that Soane's focus on formal principles and ornamental reticence made him the first 'truly modern' English

[29] Ibid, p. 228.
[30] Alina Payne, *From Ornament to Object: Genealogies of Architectural Modernism,* YUP, 2012, p. 224.
[31] David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 120.
[32] "Ugly Buildings: Mr Fry on Useless Ornament," *The Times*, 23 May 1921, p. 7.

architect.[33] Another book of the period portrayed Soane as showing supreme "skill as a constructive artist" and "not content to adopt any one style."[34] Such books cast Soane in the light of contemporary architectural theory: rather than being bound by historical quotation, Soane too sought the universal in architecture through an exploration of formal principle. If Scott could not be claimed to have been at the helm of the Neo-Regency Movement, he was at least one of its commanding officers. He took a particular interest in Soane's work from the beginning. He would become a trustee of the Soane Museum, and famously used Soane's tomb as the inspiration for the 1924 K2 Telephone kiosk (Fig. 1.12).[35] By adopting the style at Clare, Scott was not only ahead of fashion, but affirming the most 'modern' architectural ideas.

Many intellectual and artistic figures would follow Scott to the Neo-Regency cause over the course of the decade: around the time of Memorial Court's completion, the editor of the *Architectural Review*, Hubert de Cronin Hastings, was suggesting parallels between Soane and Modernism, with P Morton Shand and John Betjeman continuing the trend through the rest of the interwar period.[36] Arthur Bolton, the Curator of the Soane Museum from 1917 – 1945 (a period which included much of Scott's long tenure on the board of trustees), went to great lengths to rehabilitate the reputation of Regency architects both through his scholarly projects and

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[33] H J Birnstingl. *Sir John Soane*, London: Benn, 1925, p. 30.

[34] Steele & Yerbury, *The Old Bank of England, London*, London: 1930, p. 26. See Edward R Ford, *Details of Modern Architecture*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1995, p. 207 for a further discussion of the belief, inherited from Semper, that Greek ornament was inherently expressive of structure.

[35] For a more detailed discussion of Scott's telephone kiosk designs, see Chapter 3.

[36] Alan Powers, "CH Reilly: Regency, Englishness, and Modernism," *The Journal of Architecture*, vol 5, 1, p. 59.

through his adoption of the Neo-Regency style for his own architectural designs.[37] Arthur Trystan Edwards would claim, somewhat dubiously, that his own writings had inspired a "Regency cult" amongst English architects of the 1920s.[38]

Internationally, responding to Muthesius's promotion of the Greek, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret promoted the Empire Style in 1920s France, and in Germany, architects designing in a Biedermeier Revival style included Peter Behrens, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe.[39] In the 1930s, Scott's former pupil John Summerson would describe the architecture of Regency London as anticipating Modernism.[40] He would go on, with Scott's support, to become Curator of the Soane Museum in 1945. Summerson's admiration of Regency design would only grow in the postwar period, with his 1952 work on Soane particularly stressing Soane's adventurous use of space.[41] Pevsner too would crown Soane as a proto-modernist in *An Outline of European Architecture*.[42]

On the whole, English architectural theorists were surprisingly accepting of the Neo-Regency style as a manifestation of the modern. C H Reilly admitted well into the 1940s that historical styles could be very successful in the right hands.[43] The

[37] David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 126.
[38] Ibid, p. 130.
[39] Alan Powers, "CH Reilly: Regency, Englishness, and Modernism," *The Journal of Architecture*, vol 5, 1, pp. 51-52.
[40] Ibid, p. 60. Elizabeth McKellar has traced Summerson's evolving attitude to Georgian and Regency classicism in "Populism versus professionalism," Barbara Arciszewska and Elizabeth McKellar, eds, *Articulating British Classicism,* London: Ashgate, 2004.
[41] John Summerson, *Sir John Soane,* London: Art & Technics, 1952.
[42] Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture,* London: Harmondsworth, 1942.
[43] C H Reilly. *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 140.

modernity of Neo-Regency was not Scott's sole consideration in its selection for Memorial Court, however. There were many modern styles. He chose Neo-Regency because it was at once contextual and domestic. In fact, for that reason, Scott tended to choose Neo-Regency for all of his domestic projects.

As a follower of Pugin, Giles Scott's grandfather had designed vicarages and country houses in the Gothic style. In the following generation, Scott's father had helped to set the fashion for brighter and lighter Queen Anne style residences. By Giles Scott's own generation, the modern Gothic home was highly unfashionable, except in the related guise of 'Stockbroker Tudor'— a style that was nonetheless not considered by many critics to be within the realm of serious architecture because it tended to be more concerned with quaint historicist detail than with questions of significant form.[44] Scott felt that experimental 'modernistic' styles were not appropriate for housing because they neglected the occupants' psychological need for associative form. He felt that the stripped-down machine aesthetic of Lubetkin's 1935 Highpoint Flats (Fig. 1.13) disregarded the "human element."[45] Homes should have history; they should remind occupants of their past homes and reflect the traditions of the community. On aesthetic grounds, it was felt that the ornament and massing of Gothic and modernistic buildings did not lend themselves to smaller structures anyway. C H Reilly announced flatly in a 1927 radio broadcast that "the best of the smaller buildings are those which follow in general outline and proportion their

[44] See Osbert Lancaster, *Homes, Sweet Homes,* London: Murray, 1939, and Andrew Ballantyne's recent reassessment of the style, *Tudoresque*, London: Reaktion, 2011.
[45] Scott contrasted this "human element" with the machine aesthetic. See letter to C H Reilly, Letter, Scott to Reilly, 19 August 1944, CHR, D207/4/6.

Georgian forbearers."[46] With Gothic and 'modernistic' styles thus out of the question, only the domesticated Greek remained for those subscribing to generally Muthesian principles. Thus with the reassurance of modernist theory, the alignment with the Queen Anne Revival theories of his architectural education, and the encouragement of fashion, it is no surprise that Scott chose to use the Neo-Regency style for anything with domestic overtones. His house designs, of which his own Chester House is a good surviving specimen, are nearly always Neo-Regency (Fig. 1.14). Even his design for the telephone kiosk is Neo-Regency because of its domestic connotations – it was initially intended as a way of providing telephone service to the residents of central London's largely Georgian and Regency neighbourhoods.[47]

Scott chose the Neo-Regency style for Clare, partly because as a residence for students and tutors, it too served a domestic purpose. The new Court was meant to impress its residents with a sober reminder of the war amidst an atmosphere of luxurious austerity. In a peculiar paradox, the buildings were stark, but fitted out to the highest standard. The fellows insisted that Scott produce an economical design, but then constantly surprised him by increasing the expense of the fittings – specifying oak instead of deal where possible, and insisting that he increase the generosity of the built-in cupboard space in each bedroom.[48] Despite the arguments of some of the older dons who felt that 'over-provision' of baths was a corrupting

[46] C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," February 1927, Typescripts, CHR, D207/27.
[47] See Chapter 3.
[48] The Fellows' rooms had oak joinery; the undergraduates had joinery in British Columbia pine or fir. "British Columbia Timbers [advertisement]," *AJ*, 7 Jan 1925, p. xi.

waste, it was ultimately decided to provide baths so liberally that the original estimates had to be revised upwards to account for a larger water-heating apparatus.[49] The college even proposed central heating, but Scott, usually a supporter of any new technology, argued that since each sitting room would have a fireplace additional heating would be an unnecessary expense.[50]

Scott was, in fact, engaged in an overall program of amenity improvement for the college. At the same time Memorial Court was being constructed, he also added bathrooms in the basement of Old Court and extended the old garden path between Memorial Court and Old Court, widening it into a paved axis lit with electric lanterns on concrete standards. (Fig. 1.15). With the future development of the land beyond the Backs already planned, Scott knew that what was formerly a minor back entrance leading towards the countryside would become a major spine for pedestrian traffic. The construction of Memorial Court was part of a broader programme of modernisation and re-planning at Clare. Scott's task was thus not only to introduce a suitably historical modernism at Memorial Court, but to modernise history in the other parts of the college. The whole idea of the Memorial Court was bound up with the creation of a new master plan for the college. A footpath running from Old Court to the new court would not only provide a new orientation for the college, but would create an axis along which the surrounding

[49] Adolf Loos (and also Hermann Muthesius) considered the relatively high provision of bathtubs in early 20th century Britain to be proof of its modernity and, Loos believed, cultural superiority. Adolf Loos, "The Plumbers," Michael Troy, trans, *Creating Your Home With Style,* Metroverlag, 2013, pp. 65-75.
[50] Letter, Scott to Clare College Bursar, 23 February 1922, SP, ScGG/77/3.

land could be developed by the University. Scott was giving order to the landscape. With the addition of the University Library in the following decade, Scott would establish a development pattern for what would later become the Sidgwick Site – the home of perhaps as many Cambridge University departments as the city centre.[51] Aware of the broader implications of his designs, Scott would try to link them as closely as possible to the existing urban order of Cambridge, although a 1923 plan to align the new University Library with King's College Chapel was thwarted by the Fellows' unwillingness to relocate their tennis court.[52]

The impetus for a 'modern' style at Clare did not come from Scott alone. The sudden appearance on the scene of Mansfield Forbes in 1925 presented both an encouraging voice and an alternative view of what 'modern' could mean. A Fellow of English at Clare, Forbes was part of a set of Cambridge dons who promoted modern art. Clough Williams-Ellis would refer to him as a modernist "propagandist."[53]

Forbes believed that the era after the Great War would usher in "a new outlook on life and humanity."[54] Trained as an historian and involved in the reconfiguring of the Cambridge English tripos to focus on cultural rather than linguistic aspects of

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[51] Alistair Fair, "The Ideal Campus: The Sidgwick Site, Cambridge," *Twentieth Century Architecture 11: Oxford and Cambridge*, 2013, pp. 102-121.
[52] Christopher Brooke, "The University Library and its Buildings," Peter Fox, ed, *Cambridge University Library: The Great Collections,* CUP, 1998, pp. 216-217.
[53] Technically, in a transferred epithet, Williams-Ellis called Forbes's house "propogandist." Quoted in Elizabeth Darling, "Finella, Mansfield Forbes, Raymond McGrath, and Modernist Architecture in Britain," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 50, 1, January 2011, p. 127.
[54] Elizabeth Darling, "Finella, Mansfield Forbes, Raymond McGrath, and Modernist Architecture in Britain," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 50, 1, January 2011, p. 133.

literature,[55] he would have understood what Scott was trying to do at Memorial Court. Scott's vision of the postwar world drew heavily on the values and traditions of the old, and whether or not Forbes would have sympathised with this is unclear. He would, though, have understood Scott's attempt to communicate cultural values through art.

Forbes cultivated the friendships of many modern artists and architects, including Arthur Trystan Edwards.[56] He is best known for his patronage of the young Australian architect Raymond McGrath, who created what is often regarded as England's first set of unified modernist interiors at Forbes's Cambridge villa, Finella, in 1929.[57] When Scott was given the Clare job, Forbes immediately began trying to make his acquaintance. For his part, Scott seems to have found Forbes's company distasteful and went to great lengths to decline his numerous invitations. (Forbes and his circle seem to have liked Modernism for much the same reasons that Horace Walpole liked Gothic).[58] Forbes would, however, be the source of a number of interesting ideas for the Memorial Court project, and Scott's reactions to these ideas give some insight into his theories about the nature of modernity.

[55] Ibid p. 134.
[56] Ibid p.135.
[57] Ibid, pp. 125-155.
[58] Matthew Reeve, "Dickie Bateman and The Gothicization of Old Windsor: Gothic Architecture and Sexuality in the Circle of Horace Walpole," in *Architectural History,* vol 56, 2013, pp. 97-132.

In 1925, Forbes proposed commissioning the sculptor Frank Dobson to create figures for the entablature of the Memorial Arch.[59] An early printed perspective of the Memorial Arch showed sculpted figures over the columns,[60] so it must have been Scott's intention to include sculpture from the beginning. Dobson's art was primitivist enough for him to be a loose affiliate of the Cornwall circle of Ben Nicholson, but figurative enough to appeal to the circle of Osbert Sitwell. Roger Fry wrote that Dobson was one of the first English sculptors to approach sculpture as a composition of abstract forms.[61] Scott was intrigued enough by Forbes's suggestion to contact Dobson. However, Dobson's estimate of 500 pounds for the two small figures was, in Scott's opinion, inordinately expensive, and ultimately proved more than the college was willing to spend.[62]

Scott often talked about commissioning work from relatively avant-garde artists to adorn his buildings – Stanley Spencer murals were considered for the Cambridge University Library and his patronage of the sculptor Carter Preston at Liverpool Cathedral is well known (Fig. 1.16).[63] Clients were seldom willing to pay for such expensive and controversial adornments. Dobson sculptures would have changed the feel of the building. Like Holden's Epstein sculptures at the British Medical Association Building and 55 Broadway, if Scott had succeeded in such a commission it might have completely transformed the general perception of his architecture at

[59] These were intended for the tops of the columns within the recess of the arch. Letter, Mansfield Forbes to Scott, 12 June 1925, SP, ScGG/79/2.
[60] Lithograph, c 1922. SP, ScGG/77/2.
[61] Neville Jason, "Frank Dobson," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2013.
[62] Letter, Scott to Dobson, 6 July 1925, SP, ScGG/79/2.
[63] For a further discussion of Scott's work with artists, see Chapter 2. For the proposed Spencer murals, see Letter, Scott to Mrs Raverat, 27 November 1933, UL, ULIB 9/4/9.

the early stages of his career. It might have also have altered the assessment of later scholars who have tended to label him as more of a traditionalist than Holden.[64]

In the 1920s, Clare wanted something modern, and Scott was seen to provide it. However, it is also useful to consider what Scott was not doing. Forbes and Scott ultimately proved to have very different visions for modern architecture. In 1928, as the second phase of Memorial Court was being constructed, Forbes wrote a long letter to Scott filled with enthusiasm for a new idea. He had been to the Ideal Home Exhibition with the young architect Raymond McGrath (whom he introduced in this letter), where they had seen a "very exciting material" – a new type of painted glass wall cladding available in pink 'quasi-marble' and 'green jade.' Forbes proposed that this material could be used to clad the interiors of the new wing in Memorial Court, not just in bathrooms as the manufacturer suggested, but "Drawing-rooms, e.g. so rendered, and with great glass vases spouting leaves and flowers, mirrors judiciously placed, etc., might be marvelously exhilarating – and proof against the dirt of cities."[65] He then went on to suggest that:

> We could supply you with a most competent intermediary here, on the spot, in one Raymond Mc Grath, the architect referred to over ["an architect researching on modern architectural conditions and décor"]. McGrath is the best architectural student Australia has ever produced, and 1 ¼ years ago had just arrived in London with a fat three years' studentship grant from Sydney University. Myself and Mr R E Priestley, one of our Fellows, were so taken with him and had heard such reports of his unusual ability, that we got the College to increase his grant, on condition that he should become a Clare man and research student of the Faculty of Architecture here. He has a genius

[64] See for instance, Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007, p. 397.
[65] Letter, Forbes to Scott, 4 April 1928, SP, ScGG/80/1.

> for décor, particularly, and though only 24 years old, has already distinguished himself … I am confident that if there is anything in this Venning business from our point of view, you would find McGrath a first rate aide-de-camp … The fact is one or two of us are working hard to get substantial "modern" ideas tried out in Cambridge, and we can't help thinking this is one of them.[66]

Scott duly ordered more information and samples of the material, to see "whether I think it suitable for using in the bathrooms, etc."[67] However, he wrote to McGrath after he received the samples that not only was it expensive, but as panels of glass fixed to wooden battens, it was at high risk of breakage in undergraduate accommodation. [68]

What is significant about the exchange is not that Scott turned Forbes down, which is hardly surprising considering the bizarre unsuitability of the proposal, but that Forbes thought Scott was likely to be interested in the first place. Here we have the meeting of two very significant interwar architects, often portrayed as being in very different camps, and yet, in the moment itself, they were perceived to have no significant difference between them. Both Scott and McGrath were considered, and considered themselves to be, moderns. Forbes expected Scott to be highly sympathetic to "substantial modern" ideas. To some extent he was.

Walls of pink glass and mirrors were the exact opposite of the climate of masculine austerity that Scott was aiming to evoke, and for a building designed with the aim of

[66] Ibid.
[67] Letter, Scott to Forbes, 11 April 1928, SP, ScGG/80/1.
[68] Letter, Scott to Forbes, 16 April 1928, SP, ScGG/80/1.

shaping the psychology of its occupants, perhaps did not encourage the characteristics Scott was looking for. It was completely empty of the connotations of English heritage that were key to Scott's design intentions. Pink glass could not recall the lessons of history because it had no historical precedent.

The difference between the modernism of Scott and that of Forbes and McGrath was ultimately located in their view of history. Reacting to the anxieties of a rapidly changing world, Scott and his clients wanted buildings that would build on old identities rather than sacrificing them. Forbes saw himself as a reformer, calling for an entirely different postwar world symbolised by an architectural aesthetic utilising new materials such as vitrolite and chrome. Forbes's modernism, as manifested in the mirror-vaulted hall at Finella, was largely decorative. The vitrolite's planar surface divided by chrome strips represented the kind of modernist aesthetic that annoyed Scott – the sort that had "yet to evolve a decorative system of its own." Vitrolite paneling was an appliqué, hardly the slowly evolved, structurally integral ornament championed by Muthesius. Scott felt that sculpting the wall plane through articulation and mouldings was a key component of good architecture because it helped to articulate formal characteristics such as mass and line. Scott's vision for a modern architecture that achieved this articulation would be expressed in his next Cambridge project, the Cambridge University Library.

Cambridge University Library

Scott made his first design for the Cambridge University Library late in 1923 while he was finishing up work on the first stage of Memorial Court.[69] He used the same Neo-Regency style and the same palette of materials. The plan and some perspectives by Cyril Farley were ready for circulation amongst patrons by December 1924 (Figs. 1.17 - 1.19). A colonnade of four giant-order stone columns gave the building a public dignity that was lacking in the more domestic Memorial Court, and rows of brick pilasters flanked tall, vertical windows on either side. The corners were emphasised with an original device of wide pilaster-like projections divided by a tall, very thin window, and topped by a flattened pediment that transformed the entablature into a Soanian sarcophagus. The interior of the building showed a clearer Scandinavian influence (this was the year that Stockholm City Hall opened) with painted, beamed ceilings and semi-circular arches cut into walls of plain white plaster (Fig. 1.18). Although the tall, narrow bands of glazing were derived from American libraries of the period (and would have lit the American steel-stacks behind), the overall effect would have been quite original, not only for its treatment of the classical orders but also in the use of stack windows on the primary façade, a feature as yet unseen in large libraries.[70]

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[69] Minutes of the Cambridge University Library Building Committee, 5 December 1923, UL, ULIB 9/4/1.

[70] L Stanley Jast, "The Planning of a Great Library," Pamphlet, London: Libraco, 1927, pp. 14-17. In 1927, possibly inspired by Scott's designs, the Head Librarian of the Manchester Public Library, L Stanley Jast, gave a paper calling for the development of a distinctive modern library architecture. A library, he believed, should be instantly recognisable not merely as a civic or university building, but specifically as a library. He declared that stacks were the key to such a new style, "a Heaven-sent feature, capable of impressive aesthetic treatment." Besides Jast's pamphlet, Walter A Briscoe's

The choice of Neo-Grec ornament, as well as the overall composition – with narrow, ornament-crowned side bays defining the edges of the central volume – may have been inspired by C R Cockerell's 1836 design for the old University Library. Cockerell's work would have attracted Scott's attention as the sort of early-nineteenth-century Greek-inspired design that he admired. Measured drawings were readily available in Albert Richardson's *Monumental Classic Architecture.*[71] The narrow lateral terminations of the kind found in Scott's first University Library design were particularly characteristic of Cockerell's work.[72] Thus Scott was using a specific precedent to form a link to the history of Cambridge. Scott's design would nod to the historic building it superseded and memorialise the traditions of the University Library in its ornament.

Although Cockerell had originally planned a grand porticoed centerpiece facing the Senate House Lawn, (a gesture that would have been one of the boldest architectural statements in Cambridge),[73] his library was only partially executed and tucked behind the Senate House beside a narrow lane. This modest site may have inspired the modesty of Scott's own design. Scott explained that "The aim has

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Library Planning, London: Grafton, 1927, was the only other British publication on library planning in print at the time Scott was designing the University Library. Scott owned at least one book on library planning, which he said he was "constantly having to refer to it with reference to the new Library at Cambridge," (Letter, Scott to Frank Pick, 4 February 1931, SP, ScGG/89/2). Briscoe's book would hardly have been useful to Scott, as it primarily contained plans and descriptions of provincial Edwardian branch libraries, hopelessly out of date for Scott's purposes, and dealt with few technical matters. Jast's pamphlet is merely a transcript of a short speech, with only a few rough diagrams as illustrations. I think the book Scott owned must have been an American publication.

[71] Albert Richardson, *Monumental Classic Architecture of Great Britain and Ireland During the 18th and 19th Centuries,* London, 1914.

[72] David Watkin, *The Life and Work of C R Cockerell*, London: Zwemmer, 1974, p. 218.

[73] Ibid, p. 218.

been to produce a quiet, dignified building, relying for its effect upon its main lines rather than upon elaboration of detail. This character seems to strike the right note for the library of an old University, and the anxiety to avoid any self-assertiveness has led to the omission of any prominent feature, such as tower or dome."[74]

However, the Syndicate rejected Scott's design. He had jumped to conclusions in assuming the University wanted a "quiet, dignified" expression of architectural good manners. A F Scholfield, the University Librarian, wrote to Scott to break the news:

> One may then generally say that the façade was thought not to be sufficiently imposing, if regard were paid to the character, to the ultimate size of the building, and to its importance to the University. Not that there is any want of dignity, but it is self-effacing, austere, and with no trace of richness. And it was partly its modesty, so to speak, partly its austerity that made it appear to our critics that this new Library was alien in spirit … Evidently [when asking for economy and simplicity] they were too timid … Perhaps I might add that the need for economy appears less pressing.[75]

Scott's reaction to this challenge was a key event in his architectural development. He turned away from Regency sources to austere ziggurat-like masses and wide planes of brick. His redesign of Cambridge University Library (Figs. 1.20 – 1.23), culminating in the library as built, would be the first manifestation of what Gavin Stamp has called Scott's modernistic manner – his own stylistically unique attempt at the stripped classicism of 'universal architecture.'[76]

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[74] Giles Scott, "New U.L., Cambridge," Typescript, nd (1924?), UL, ULIB 9/4/1.
[75] Letter, Scholfield to Scott, 27 April 1927, UL, ULIB 9/4/1.
[76] Gavin Stamp, "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in Oxbridge," *Twentieth Century Architecture,* 11, 2013, p. 31.

The most striking difference between the first design and the second was the addition of a brooding, foursquare tower, containing bookstacks and featuring tall vertical strips of fenestration. The tower dominated the surrounding landscape like no other structure in Cambridge. The essence of the plan was largely unchanged, but the detailing and materials of the building were radically transformed. Few vestiges of Greek decoration remained. The unusual corner treatments that distinguished the first design had their pediments stripped away. Pilaster and column were replaced with the narrow walls of brick that alternate with tall windows to define the building's rhythm. The dark and imposing nature of the result – a building that gave C S Lewis nightmares[77] – is not entirely Scott's fault. He would have preferred to build in the same pale brick he had used at Clare, but the University mandated a darker, redder brick that they felt was more akin to the brick used in older Cambridge colleges such as St John's, Trinity, and Jesus. The features of Scott's 'modernistic' style, as it would develop in later commercial and industrial projects, were all there from the start – vertical strip windows, buttresses, stepped massing, and sparse ornamentation on brick surfaces.

The ultimate source for the strange new style of the Cambridge University Library was the work of American architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue. Ironically, some dons were particularly concerned that they would end up with an American Collegiate Gothic style building like the new Sterling Memorial Library at Yale (Fig. 1.24), for which Goodhue had developed the primary architectural concept. "I hope

[77] Neal Shasore, "Buildings for Broadcasts and Books," Lecture, St John's College, Oxford, 12 November 2012.

future generations will not extend the New Library in the style of the Yale Tower; known in America, I believe, as 'Collegiate Gothic.' It is horrible!" wrote H C Marshall, the Secretary of the University of Cambridge Buildings Syndicate, "I do admire Scott's tower as an ornament, & I almost think it worth building as an ornament although I am convinced it is not at all an economical way of providing bookspace … Beyond the name tower it has no link with the Yale monstrosity – please don't say you think it has."[78] Marshall was particularly scornful of what some considered the fake history that Collegiate Gothic created for American universities. Scott had initially considered Gothic for the tower,[79] and the thinking behind such buildings was not so different from that of Clare's Memorial Court – the Collegiate Gothic was also meant to use the associations of that history to shape its occupants.[80] The difference, however, was that the American Collegiate Gothic did not reference a local tradition, but rather a notion of cultural lineage – imbuing the idea of Oxbridge with the presumed Christian and democratic values of English-speaking society. Scott's design, by contrast, would invoke history via its respect for context, adopting the materials of the surrounding historic buildings with none of the historicist detail that was essential to the American style.

The Cambridge University Library tower did however have a link to the Yale library, although that link had nothing to do with style. The idea of a stacks tower serviced by lifts was ultimately Goodhue's invention, pioneered in his 1920 design for the

[78] Letter, H C Marshall to A F Scholfield, 22 June 1928, UL, ULIB 9/4/4.
[79] Giles Scott, Preliminary design sketches, Sketchbook c.1928, UL, MS Add. 9247.
[80] Alex Duke, *Importing Oxbridge,* YUP, 1996, p. 49.

Nebraska State Capitol and refined in his designs for the Los Angeles Central Library (designed 1921, Figs. 1.25 – 1.26) and Yale's Sterling Library (designed 1924). The use of standardised metal stacks, of combined electric and natural light, and of elevators and tramways to carry books had been pioneered thirty years earlier in buildings such as Princeton's 1897 Pyne Library,[81] but it was Goodhue who compressed the stacks into a central tower above a distribution point and introduced further technologies such as pneumatic tubes, artificial ventilation, and stacks exclusively lit by electric light. Scott and Goodhue were friends and had corresponded about Goodhue's ideas for the Yale library.[82] Scott decided to try the idea at his own library in Cambridge, though he was also careful to stress the changes that he made to Goodhue's basic plan.[83] The idea of using long vertical windows on the primary façade and the particular stacked, planar, not overtly classical approach to massing with sculptural enrichment in the corners also derived from Goodhue.[84]

Goodhue and Scott both sought the universal and elemental in architecture. This was an unusual vision for the modern, interpreting tradition in terms of 'ideal types' and formalised systems of massing and application of ornament. Goodhue himself

[81] Barksdale Maynard, *Princeton: America's Campus,* University Park, Pennsylvania: Penn State, 2012, pp. 68-69.
[82] Avery Library. Scott would have later seen fuller explication of the ideas in the British architectural press. Scott helped to organise a London retrospective of Goodhue's work after his death in 1924. See Giles Scott, "Exhibition on the Work of the Late Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue: Opening Ceremony," *Architectural Association Journal,* vol XLI, n.470, April 1926, pp. 203-206.
[83] See Scott's *Architectural Review* article on the Cambridge University Library, which explicitly illustrates the Yale Library as a related design. The changes Scott made to Goodhue's plan were generally felt to have created inefficiencies, and at Oxford's New Bodleian he reverted to a plan much closer to Goodhue's original concept. Giles Scott, "University Library," *AR,* vol LXXVI, number 456, November 1934, p. 168.
[84] See for instance, Goodhue's 1926 Los Angeles Central Library.

was steeped in Lethaby and looked mostly to England for ideas.[85] Scott was already reflecting Lethaby's ideas in his Clare work. Now, Goodhue, who explicitly cited both Lethaby and Scott as major sources of his architectural ideas, was feeding English theory back to Scott from across the ocean. Goodhue was seeking to give concrete aesthetic vocabulary to Lethaby's ideal of a non-historic, yet heritage-nourished architecture.

For Scott and Goodhue, as for Wren before them, style was (to borrow a phrase from Kerry Downes), "the alternative clothing of basic forms."[86] By the mid-1920s, Scott and Goodhue were seeking to minimise the clothing – to create the architectural equivalent of the ideal nude. However, Scott was not seeking something entirely universal in the sense of being anonymous or international. He was seeking something specifically British. Scott sought universal form – encouraged by C H Reilly and given concrete ideas by Goodhue – clad in materials and ornament that made it 'English.' Scott was keen to stress that the building was not American in plan, but carefully fit to the programmatic needs of a uniquely English university. Thus the building became at once global and English. Another dichotomy was resolved.

Although austere, the style that Scott introduced at Cambridge University Library was not about eliminating ornament. Scott cared very much about ornamental detail – to some extent it was his *forte*. It was his "new flesh for old bones" at Liverpool

[85] Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1989, p. 28.
[86] Kerry Downes, *Hawksmoor,* London: Zwemmer, 1979, p. 146.

that so impressed Reilly, and Scott was often brought in as an artistic consultant on commercial projects for the almost surreal task of redesigning the mouldings.[87]

Interestingly, after such a drastic redesign, Scott continued to use much the same language that he had used to explain the original library design. The redesigned library was "a quiet, dignified building, relying on lines rather than upon elaboration of detail." He had used the exact same words to describe the original 1923 design. In fact, he repeated almost everything that he had written in his original typescript description of 1924 in the description he wrote for the new design in 1934. He simply modified the sentences that needed changing to accommodate the new design. For example, whereas he had originally stressed that Cambridge buildings generally did not distinguish themselves with domes or towers, and thus the new library would not either; he now wrote that whereas Cambridge buildings did not generally distinguish themselves with domes or towers, the new library was a natural exception because of its need to assert its presence on an undistinguished site.[88] The lack of change in his rhetoric underlines the consistency of Scott's architectural theory despite drastically different stylistic expressions. He clearly felt that the universal principles and formal concerns driving his designs transcended mere architectural style.

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[87] Among numerous consulting projects, Scott redesigned the cresting of the New Adelphi and the mouldings of the London County Hall extension.

[88] Cambridge University Library Opening Programme, 1934. UL, ULIB 9/4/18. Scott had repeatedly described Memorial Court with similar wording: "As regards style, elaboration of detail has been avoided, and an attempt has been made to produce a quiet and dignified building." The phrase first appeared in Letter, Scott to Clare College Bursar, 23 February 1922, SP, ScGG/77/3.

Lady Margaret Hall

Work at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, began in 1931.[89] Here, Scott further developed the ideas that he had begun to explore at Cambridge University Library. The existing college buildings, set in a garden-like site beside the River Cherwell, had been designed by Reginald Blomfield before the First World War.[90] Scott designed a new wing of accommodation and offices, a new hall, and a chapel that together doubled the size of the college and created a new public face to Benson Place, a small road (now closed) that had come to serve as the primary way for automobiles to access the college. The brick Chapel was Romanesque with round arches and an octagonal lantern roofed in pantiles (Figs. 1.27 – 130), and the Deneke Building (Figs. 1.31 – 1.32) was unmistakably a kind of Neo-Regency. In material and scale, the Deneke Building harmonised with Reginald Blomfield's existing work. However, it featured experimental details such as strange, very horizontal windows created by flanking sashes in the central block with sidelights.[91] It felt as if the façade had somehow been stretched taut across the frame. Scott designed the windows without architraves and nearly flush with the exterior wall surface, which prompted Edith

[89] Geoffrey Tyack, *Oxford: An Architectural Guide*, OUP, 1998, p. 289.
[90] Bloomfield was the college's architect from 1896 to 1930; however, by the time of Scott's appointment, he had not built any major structures there since 1915. Geoffrey Tyack, *Oxford: An Architectural Guide,* OUP, 1998, pp. 279-280
[91] The window design may have been in response to the client's constant requests for bigger and more numerous windows. For example, see "Suggestions to Make to Sir Giles Scott," Typescript, n.d., LMH, Archival Folders: New Buildings I.

Argyles to remark to Helena Deneke, "My dear, it has no eyebrows!"[92] The emphasis on horizontality continued in the hall, where the usual vertical orientation of classical moulded wooden paneling was replaced with wide horizontal panels (Fig. 1.33). As the current chaplain, Alan Doig, has noted, it made it difficult to hang portraits.[93] Modernistic detail was thus grafted onto historical forms in unusual ways.

The strongest piece of the ensemble was the chapel. The chapel featured some of the same sort of flattened, bleached wood detailing seen in the Cambridge University Library. Pevsner attributed such detail to fashions from "Østberg and the Paris Exposition of 1925,"[94] and as an ultimate source this must be right. This attenuated 'Scandinavian' ornament contrasted starkly with the heavier, nearly Neo-Romanesque ornament that Scott used in other Romanesque schemes such as the chapel at Whitelands College (1931, Fig. 1.34) and the Worship Space at the Salvation Army's William Booth College (1928, Fig. 1.35), both of which were roughly contemporary to his work at Lady Margaret Hall. Many British architects saw the Scandinavian style as a step forward in the search for a universal, timeless classicism, and its elegant details found their way into the light and witty Neo-Regency designs of Rex Whistler and Clough Williams-Ellis. In a 1927 book in which the architect Kay Fisker and the photographer F R Yerbury introduced British audiences to Danish architecture, they wrote,"[Danish architecture] may be

[92] Stephen Robinson, "The Listed College Buildings," John Martin Robinson, ed, *Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford,* Historic Buildings Consultants, bound typescript, LMH, no call number.
[93] Interview with Dr Alan Doig, 2011. Notes in author's possession.
[94] Nikolaus Pevsner, The Buildings of England: *Oxfordshire*, London: Penguin, 1974, p. 232.

characterised as the search for the natural, simple and constructive, and a desire to emulate those earlier men whose genius, while allowing them to appreciate the full value of the historical tradition, emancipated them from its tyranny."[95] The palette of materials in such work was one that mirrored Scott's own – light-coloured bricks, Italian roof tiles, and sparing use of stone ornament on exteriors, and bleached wood, pastel and 'oatmeal' colours inside.

Goodhart–Rendel called Scott "an architect exceptionally sensitive to the tastes and aspirations of his contemporaries."[96] However, it would be a mistake to assume that Scott was swept along by the tide of fashion. The rapid mutation of his architecture was more the result of a willingness to try new ideas in the search for universal architecture. As new architectural ideas came into vogue, he would take the forms he found most compatible with his own ideas and throw them into the mix, like adding chocolate chips to an existing recipe for cookie dough. As the years progressed, he would not hesitate to tweak the recipe, discarding ideas that he felt were unsuccessful and keeping those that he felt improved the flavour. Thus, what critics have frequently seen as the irreconcilable variety of Scott's designs, was in fact the result of a controlled process of experimentation that was in keeping with modernist ideas about refinement. This process of design by experimentation made Scott's methods seem highly modern, evoking scientific methods in a way that was similar to the International Modernists. *The Architect & Building News* noted, in

[95] Fisker, Kay, and Yerbury, eds. *Modern Danish Architecture,* London: Ernest Benn, 1927, p. 14.
[96] Quoted in Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: The Scott Family,* Amersham, Bucks: Avebury, 1981, p.172.

relation to the Lady Margaret Hall chapel, that Scott's "continued experiments" might "evolve a church form that would become as stablished as those of earlier epochs."[97] The magazine felt that Scott was driving architectural evolution forward despite the "justifiable criticism," that his designs "adhere too closely to traditional forms."[98] Scott felt that architectural history should be the result of "evolution, not revolution," and at the micro-scale of his own design, he practised what he preached. As he wrote to Christopher Hussey in 1944, discussing why Georgian residential architecture was so good, "The past was always used as a foundation and slowly developed and improved to meet contemporary needs. This evolutionary system produced such wonderful results and was in such universal use, both through the ages and throughout the world, that it seems to have proved itself conclusively to be the right method."[99]

Scandinavian classicism itself was seen as an experimental style, within which architects struggled to reinvent classicism for the modern era. In 1932, Reilly wrote "What seems certain is that, but for the inventiveness controlled by good taste such as [Lutyens] and certain modern Swedish architects … have shown, the steel or reinforced concrete substructure would by now have everywhere broken through and mastered the appearance of the bigger buildings, as it is already beginning to do in Germany and America."[100] Reinforced concrete nearly broke through at Lady Margaret Hall, in fact, as Scott designed a reinforced concrete dome and left it visible

[97] "Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford," *The Architect & Building News,* 27 January 1933, p.129.
[98] Ibid p. 129.
[99] Letter, Scott to Hussey, 12 December 1944, SP, ScGG/267/3.
[100] CH Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 99.

from the interior of the chapel – thus proclaiming the modern nature of the worship space to congregants below. In an ironic twist of fate, as it was one of the very few times that Scott used exposed concrete anywhere, the chapel acoustics proved bad, and the dome had to be covered with an absorbent asbestos spray and painted like plaster not long after the chapel opened. Construction photos still testify to Scott's futuristic concrete dome, however, showing its insect-like shell perched atop the structural masonry walls of the incomplete building (Fig. 1.36).

In the essentials of the Lady Margaret Hall chapel, Scott was recycling an unexecuted 1919 design for a chapel at the Huyton School for Girls. Intended as a war memorial, Scott had designed a chapel with the same octagonal drum, brick walls, and tile roof found at Lady Margaret Hall. The plan was similar, but the interior of the Huyton chapel had been designed in a Florentine Renaissance style influenced by Brunelleschi (Fig. 1.37). Reilly thought that this unexecuted chapel was one of Scott's greatest designs calling it a chapel "broad, simple, and somewhat Byzantine in feeling, which is as elegant and reserved as the finest American work."[101] At Lady Margaret Hall, Scott replaced the Della Robia busts, round arches, and bulls-eye windows of the Huyton chapel with a simpler interior that showed more of a Scandinavian influence than an Italian Renaissance one and lacked the airiness of its predecessor's screens of aisle columns and large east window. Although often referred to as Byzantine because of its dome and baldachino, the Huyton plans suggest that Scott had Italian Renaissance sources in mind as opposed to eastern

[101] C H Reilly, "The Work of Giles Gilbert Scott, RA," *AJ,* 7 January 1925, p. 13.

ones. It was meant as a piece of universal classicism. That also helps to explain the choice of style in a strongly Neo-Georgian college – it is not a random exotic insertion, but intended as a bit of sympathetic classical design.

Scott designed a number of projects for women's colleges between the World Wars. However, this was not because Scott was considered to be particularly in touch with the needs of educational institutions for women. On the contrary, during the design phase of the new buildings for Lady Margaret Hall, the Bursar and Principal repeatedly admonished Scott that the kitchens and dining rooms were too small and the interior finishes too austere for the needs of female occupants.[102] The reason that the women's colleges chose Scott was that they wanted to assert their position as modern institutions. Although the client networks of the women's colleges were often interconnected –the Principal of Lady Margaret Hall for instance, wrote to Scott that "my friend Miss Marion has told us much of your plans for Whitelands" and encouraged her eagerness to secure his services for Lady Margaret Hall[103] — it was Scott's work on the university libraries that was usually cited as his qualification.[104]

The clients at Lady Margaret Hall wanted to express their modernity not only through modern technology, but also through a modern artistic sensibility. One of the driving forces behind the new buildings was the Principal, Lynda Grier, who at

[102] "Suggestions to Make to Sir Giles Scott," Typescript, n.d. (c1930), LMH, Archival Folders: New Buildings I.
[103] Letter, Lynda Grier (Principal) to Scott, 5 March 1929, LMH, Archival Folders: New Buildings I.
[104] *The Ship* (The Society of Oxford Home Students Alumnae Magazine), Number 28, 1938, p.23.

the same time was actively obtaining a collection of modern British painting for the college, including a number of important works by Stanley Spencer. These would eventually hang in Scott's modern buildings, thus the college, it was hoped, would educate the women's aesthetic tastes as well.[105]

Lady Margaret Hall and The Society for Home Students (which also commissioned a building from Scott and would become St Anne's College in 1952) not only wished to express their modernity, but to assert their position within the university. They wanted to signal that the days of being cloistered into Queen Anne Revival environments in residential neighbourhoods were over. Both asked for their new buildings to contain the traditional architectural spaces that defined an Oxford college. The adoption of a set of traditional historic forms would signal their belonging within the community.

The Council of Lady Margaret Hall was upset when Scott experimented with an asymmetrical dining hall with tables placed laterally across its width and a row of pillars down one side. They wrote to him explaining that they wanted a hall in the style of other Oxford colleges: "a lofty parallelogram, with level floor, without columns, and with a high table which should face down the true centre of the room."[106] They were willing to increase the expenditure on the hall by up to £4000 in order to have an exposed timber roof – an increase of almost 5% on the entire

[105] John M Robinson, "Historic Building Consultants: Report … on Lady Margaret Hall," Oxford, 2006, bound typescript, LMH, "Chapel I" folder.
[106] Letter, Grier to Scott, 12 February 1930, LMH, Archival Folders: New Buildings I.

cost of the new buildings. When the sketch of the redesigned hall arrived, the Principal wrote that it made the fellows feel "magnificent."[107] After the completion of their own new Scott building in 1937, The Society of Home Students' alumnae magazine rhapsodised that they now had "a real porter's lodge to make us feel as much as anything else that we are 'a real Oxford college.'"[108] The Society of Home Students particularly stressed the modernity of their building (Fig. 1.38), writing that they now had "one of the most efficient and comfortable as well as one of the most beautiful modern buildings in Oxford,"[109] and that in contrast to the converted houses they had previously occupied, the "lines [of the new building] expressed its function with dignity and strength." The characteristics of Scott's work that the Home Students praised were not its feminine characteristics, but its "dignity and strength." They knew that if they looked like a college, it would be harder to deny that they were a college.[110]

Magdalen College Longwall Quad

In the development of Scott's ideas about history, Longwall Quad (1929) at Magdalen College, Oxford, may at first seem like a diversion (Figs. 1.39 – 1.42). Scott's brooding masses and modernistic details disappear in favour of the modern

[107] Letter, Grier to Scott, 9 May 1931, LMH, Archival Folders: New Buildings II.
[108] *The Ship* Number 27, December 1937, p. 18.
[109] *The Ship*, Number 28, 1938, p. 13.
[110] As the new Centre for Islamic Studies has recently demonstrated, the same might be said to hold true in Oxford today.

Gothic style he had first developed in the Edwardian era.[111] The reason was context. Here, the artistic and historic context overrode the right to experiment. Magdalen was considered one of the greatest works of the English Perpendicular Gothic – a site held in reverence by the art historical canon.

Magdalen initiated the project for Longwall Quad in 1928. Their plans necessitated the removal of Magdalen College School to a new site across the river, so that their old hall could be converted into an undergraduate library and the school's other buildings cleared to make room for undergraduate accommodation, both of which were pressing needs for the college.[112] Scott was the natural choice of architect. He had experience designing student accommodation and libraries, and as the designer of Liverpool Cathedral he was the country's premier Gothicist, making him perhaps the best-qualified man in the nation to design a sympathetic extension of G F Bodley and Thomas Garner's 1885 St Swithun's Quadrangle.

The new range of student rooms contained 23 undergraduate sets, six fellow's sets, a Lecture Room, kitchens and baths. The standard of accommodation was to be even higher than that at Clare. All of the rooms were to have fireplaces (in contrast with only the studies at Clare), and there were to be two bathrooms to every three bedrooms.[113] The level of luxury was in keeping with Magdalen's identity as a college that attracted wealthy students of high social caliber: the new rooms were to

[111] Longwall Quad was the first application of the attenuated, sharply profiled canopies and niches that Scott had developed for his church architecture in places such as Sheringham and Liverpool.
[112] LWB Brockliss, ed, *Magdalen College Oxford: A History*, Oxford: Magdalen College, 2008, p. 689.
[113] Giles Scott, Plans, Magdalen College Archives, MC: FA21/1/1C/1 and MC: FA21/1/1AD/2-8.

be reserved for Magdalen's most socially prominent undergraduates. There was considerable concern about the smell the new boiler was making in Autumn 1934, because, the Bursar wrote in a nervous memorandum, Prince Hohenlohe was meant to be coming into residence.[114] The budget was correspondingly large, with the building and furnishing of Longwall Quad costing approximately £70,000.[115] The Prince of Wales, himself a Magdalen alumnus, opened the new buildings on 9 November 1932.

Like Clare Memorial Court, the planning of Longwall Quad was a modified version of the traditional Oxford staircase plan with several rooms opening off of each landing. Although the façade was broadly picturesque with its many window types and asymmetrical placement of entrances, the planning was highly rational. The programmatic requirements for shaping the England of the next generation turned out to be very similar for both Clare and Magdalen. Little argument could be made for the progressive nature of a Gothic style that was really no different from the American Collegiate Gothic so reviled at Cambridge. However, it says something about English society at the time that no argument needed to be made. The Longwall Quad was just as celebrated as Clare's Memorial Court had been a few years earlier. The Gothic style was seen to be excused, in fact necessitated, by its context. And somehow perhaps, the Gothic style was still considered more suitable for the upper echelons of society. In *A Handful of Dust* (1934), Evelyn Waugh made the 'sham' mid-

[114] Letter, Estates Bursar to Home Bursar, 6 October 1934, Magdalen College Archives, ACC 00/111/5/No.1.
[115] Minutes, Buildings Committee, 26 September 1930, Magdalen College Archives, ACC 00/111/5/No.1.

nineteenth-century Gothic of Tony Last's house analogous to the sham chivalry of his character.[116] For many English people of the period including Waugh, true chivalry, though out of the reach of most modern men, was still attainable by aristocrats living amongst true Gothic and dwelling in a sort of timeless traditional England. Longwall Quad was acceptable because it was an extension of something that was actually ancient, one of the greatest works of authentic medieval Gothic. True Gothic was revered by everyone – modernist and anti-modernist alike.[117]

Scott's design was carefully contextual. Although the detailing was his own, he matched the colour and massing of the Bodley building, even echoing the width of the gables and the design of the chimneystacks.[118] The squared ashlar walls were laid in random sizes, a pattern of walling that was popular in the 1920s United States, so that although the colour and finish of the stone was the same as Bodley's, his wing had a distinctive surface. The detailing of the aedicules and doorways was in Scott's own unique brand of Gothic, and differences were introduced in the fenestration.

In fact, Scott's detailing was so distinctive that some Fellows found it disturbing. The stone lilies that Scott had had carved above the Longwall Gate were deemed so odd that, despite Scott's protests, the Fellows ordered them to be hacked off and

[116] Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust,* London: Chapman and Hall, 1934.
[117] See Chapter 3 and also Muthesius's 1901 essay "New Ornament and New Art," summarised in Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory,* CUP, 1998, p. 228.
[118] Elevations. Magdalen College Archives. MC: FA21/1/1AD/9.

replaced with the college arms in low relief.[119] The Fellows then rejected Scott's design for the college arms and ordered him to simply copy an existing carving.[120] Rather than seeking a modernity that was sensitive to history, Magdalen was seeking history plain and simple.

Although they had no desire for a modern aesthetic, the Fellows did ask Scott to modernise their facilities. Scott's conversion of J C Buckler's mid-nineteenth-century school hall into a modern undergraduate library divided the soaring space into two levels (Figs. 1.43 – 1.45). He inserted a concrete floor, placing his favourite Roneo steel bookstacks underneath to create a utilitarian ground floor. The upper space became a grand reading room, with Buckler's exposed roof timbers preserved. Scott designed paneling and shelving for this space in a vaguely Jacobean style, with strapwork that doubled as supporting arms for the electric lights. The new library was open daily for undergraduate use – a vast improvement on Magdalen's previous arrangements, under which undergraduates were allowed to access the college library stacks for two hours per day and did not have access to the Bodleian.[121] When the Fellows requested that the steel bookcases on the ground floor be disguised with oak, Scott refused to hide their modernity.[122] "There is no reason why steel ends need be at all unsightly," he wrote.[123]

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[119] Letter, Scott to Arnold Foster, Estates Bursar, 9 October 1931. Magdalen College Archives. A CC 00/111/ 1/No.4
[120] Letter, Scott to Foster, 5 November 1931. Magdalen College Archives. A CC 00/111/ 1/No.4
[121] LWB Brockliss, ed. *Magdalen College Oxford: A History*, Oxford: Magdalen College, 2008. p. 496.
[122] Letter, Foster to Scott, 17 January 1931, Magdalen College Archives, ACC 00/111/5/No.1.
[123] Letter, Scott to Foster, 20 January 1931, Magdalen College Archives, ACC 00/111/5/No.1.

The resulting library with its electric light, central heating, and steel bookstacks was one of the most up-to-date facilities in Oxford, and considerably more technologically advanced than the Bodleian itself, which had yet to install electric light in its reading rooms. There was something of the feeling of Cambridge University Library *in parvo* here, with readers emerging from a brightly lit mechanical underbelly of steel stacks into a dim and highly-finished reading room with wooden shelves, wooden desks, and a hammerbeam ceiling. Scott would have considered the result the height of functionalism: the function of reading best served by a space akin to a comfortable drawing room, and the function of storage best served by a space that was brightly lit and highly efficient. To today's reader, however, the library can feel like something out of science fiction: a dim historicist stage-set suspended in a spare, uniformly lit matrix of pipes and shelves. Here, the symbiosis of science and tradition that marks Scott's work is given a somewhat uncomfortable reality.[124]

As at Clare, the college fellows asked Scott to undertake a general programme of modernisation. These small modifications included the renovation of the squash courts, a new Longwall porter's lodge, a garden gate for the President (unexecuted), a wine store, and a crenellated boiler house. They also commissioned the design of a new High Street gate (Fig. 1.46). Designed to stand across the front quadrangle from the Chapel in approximately the same location that Pugin's gate had once occupied, in a classic Scott move, it would have created a more comfortable driveway for

[124] Scott's reading room survives at the time of writing. However, Magdalen has proposed to gut the Scott library in the near future.

automobiles turning in and out of the High Street. The design for the new gate was tremendously elaborate,[125] almost like one of Scott's stone reredoses. Pinnacles clustered around octagonal shafts on either side of the gateway. Panels of tracery and carved angels bearing the Magdalen arms crowned a three-cusped arch over the gate. Save for the gatehouse under Tom Tower at Christ Church, it would have been the most elaborate entrance at Oxford. The gate was always considered a project that could be postponed, however, and in the event the budget was never found to build it.

The most unusual design that Scott completed for Magdalen at this time was for Magdalen College School. The school was somewhat disgruntled at having been forced off its ancient site and physically separated from the college. When they first found out that the College had commissioned Scott to design buildings for their land by the River Cherwell, where they already had a stone building by Arthur Blomfield, they were delighted.[126] However, their initial pleasure faded away when, after having agreed to move, it became clear that they were expected to pay for the buildings themselves.[127] In the end, they commissioned a cheaper architect of their own choosing.[128]

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[125] Giles Scott, Plan and elevation, c. 1930, Magdalen College Archives, MC: FA 21/1/1AD/2-8.
[126] The Blomfield building is still occupied by the school today. See Nikolaus Pevsner, *Oxfordshire,* London: Penguin, 1974, p. 304.
[127] WB Brockliss, ed. *Magdalen College Oxford: A History*, Oxford: Magdalen College, 2008, p. 721.
[128] These buildings, if they were built, were not mentioned by Pevsner. Nikolaus Pevsner, *Oxfordshire,* London: Penguin, 1974, p. 304.

Scott's designs remain in the Magdalen archives, however, and could be described as a modernistic interpretation of the Scottish vernacular (Fig. 1.47). An assembly hall, a Chapel capable of seating 200, plus a gymnasium, science lab, and classrooms were set around a u-shaped courtyard. The buildings were to be rendered in stucco with stone quoins at the corners and around the windows. Elements such as bell-shaped roofs, Flemish gables, and rusticated arches were mixed with continuous horizontal bands of low windows and narrow towers were contrasted with bulky horizontal masses. It would have been unlike anything else Scott had designed. Perhaps the earliest seeds of the style he would develop for the New Bodleian were here, with parapet balustrades, unusual massing, and the mixing of modernistic and Jacobean elements. However, the design itself was something quite different from the New Bodleian, and was, in its comparative simplicity, more aesthetically unified. Scott would normally have had an Oxford precedent to justify such a design within his code of contextual good manners, however, it is hard to say what such a precedent could have been. He may have already been developing the idea of creating a transitional architecture between the modern and classical traditions, a concept that he would use to justify the style of the New Bodleian. His approach to historical reference in architecture was beginning to change.

2. Scott's Later University Buildings: History as Form

Edmund Craster became Bodley's Librarian on 24 October 1931 (Fig. 2.1). A shy and retiring scholar, he found himself at the helm of a library in crisis. The Bodleian was literally full to capacity. Books were squeezed into every imaginable space. The rooms of the seventeenth-century Old Schools were so full that the library staff shared between them less than one thousand square feet of office space. Most of the staff were seated in rows of desks in Duke Humfrey's Library, where they got in the way of the readers.[1] An underground store had been built in 1912 between the Radcliffe Camera and the Old Schools, but this was now full. The other side of the Camera had proved unsuitable for further underground storage. Books were crammed into the seventeenth-century cellars of the Sheldonian and the Old Ashmolean, neither of which had electric light. The shelves in these dark cellars were placed so closely together that librarians could barely squeeze between them while carrying a stack of books (Fig. 2.2). In the Old Schools, where bookshelves reached to the high ceilings, staff had to scramble up and down precarious wooden ladders to retrieve books. Although they did not yet realise it, many of the ceiling beams were rotten and the weight of some upper floors was supported entirely by the floor-to-ceiling bookcases below.[2] The conditions of the library were not only cramped and inconvenient, but frankly hazardous.

[1] H H E Craster, "Bodleian Library Extension," *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937, p. 24.
[2] H H E Craster. *History of the Bodleian Library, 1845-1945*. OUP, 1981, p. 340.

The coming crisis had been apparent for some time, but the University had been slow to act. By 1925, it was clear the underground storage facilities would soon be full. Several options were considered for creating more storage capacity, including roofing over the Bodleian quadrangle and gutting the Clarendon Building to provide more stack space. The idea of an off-site book storage facility, where infrequently consulted titles could be kept and driven in when needed was rejected as impractical. Ultimately, it was decided that the best options were either to build an entirely new library on the edge of the University Parks, or to build a new book storage facility at the corner of Broad Street and Parks Road. A pamphlet was published outlining the options, and within a month, John D. Rockefeller, III, contacted the Bodleian and offered to give half a million pounds towards the cost of the new library. Spurred on by the promise of the donation, the governing bodies of the University debated both schemes carefully, and officially rejected both in 1928. In 1929, they appointed a special joint committee of the Bodleian Librarians and the Hebdomadal Council to study the issue, under the leadership of Sir Henry Miers, who would later serve as head of the Library Association of Great Britain.[3] The committee studied the problem in depth and published the results of their inquiries in 1931. Returning from a tour of European and American libraries, the commission declared that "the inconvenience and congestion of the Bodleian book-store have no parallel."[4] Stating that to move the Bodleian to a new site would be "a pillage of man's ancient heart," the joint committee declared their support for a storage

[3] Most of the information in this paragraph is taken from Brian Harrision, ed. *The History of the University of Oxford,* Vol. VIII, OUP, 1994, p. 474.
[4] *Birmingham Post*. 26 June 1937, Press clipping, BA, c.619/5-6.

facility on Broad Street.[5] Although the Broad Street scheme still had many vocal opponents, the pressing need for storage space and the time-limit on Rockefeller's offer of funding forced the University's hand, and the Broad Street plan was approved in May 1931, not long before Craster's election.

Craster, quite rightly, realised that the library would be full before the new Broad Street building could be completed, and opted for emergency measures. The decision was made immediately to expand the Radcliffe Science Library, a 1901 T G Jackson building next to the University Museum that itself was overfilled and had been sending its overflow books to the main Bodleian. Hubert Worthington was appointed architect, construction began in 1933, and the Bodleian's complete scientific collections were transferred there during the summer of 1934, just months before the Bodleian was expected to have reached saturation point (Fig. 2.3). [6]

Having bought some time, the Librarian now turned his attention to the new library building. As the current library was both inadequate and outdated, the most important consideration for the Bodleian was that it build a completely modern facility. Craster somewhat understated the state of affairs when he wrote in his *History of the Bodleian Library* that "a growing number of the younger Oxford tutors were becoming impressed with the advantages that were to be had in America, where, in libraries built on modern lines and lit throughout with electric light,

[5] Brian Harrision, ed, *The History of the University of Oxford,* Vol. VIII, OUP, 1994, p. 474.
[6] H H E Craster. *History of the Bodleian Library, 1845-1945*, OUP, 1981, p. 326.

readers had access to the shelves and could work in or near the stacks."[7] The Bodleian Curators settled on a plan to build a new library and then to modernise the old buildings. The first step in the process was to select an architect.

A sense of the architectural taste of the Bodleian Curators can be gleaned from the short list of six architects that were interviewed as potential designers of the Radcliffe Science Library Extension in 1932, two years before an architect was chosen for the New Bodleian itself. The list consisted of Herbert Baker, Charles Holden, A S G Butler, T H Hughes, A Dunbar Smith, and Hubert Worthington. Herbert Baker was seriously considered. The reason cited in the minutes was his work at Rhodes House across the street from the science library site. Unspoken, but surely a factor weighing heavily in the assessors' minds, was his reputation for getting along with clients and coming in close to budget. This characteristic of Baker's was maligned by Lutyens, who described him as "a committee man through and through." However, it is telling that Giles Scott was compared to Baker in this regard and that both architects executed major commissions for the university in this period. Scott's reputation for getting along with committees would be cited as an important factor when he was later chosen to design the New Bodleian.[8] Lutyens himself did not make the shortlist, presumably because he was thought of as an expensive architect and the Radcliffe Extension necessarily had to be quickly and economically built. Hubert Worthington, an architect who had served as Slade Professor in 1929, was ultimately chosen, according to the Building Committee

[7] Ibid, pp. 320-321.
[8] See Letter, M E Sadler to H H E Craster, 21 May 1934, BA, c.610.

minutes, largely because the Curators assumed he would be less busy than other London architects, and thus more likely to give his full attention to the work.[9]

Two years later, the Curators approached the task of selecting an architect for the New Bodleian with a similar set of priorities, although they were slightly more concerned that a major building at the heart of the University should be a commendable work of art. They showed a similar taste in architects. At their first meeting they made a provisional list of twenty-three potential candidates. The names ranged from Lutyens and the elderly Reginald Blomfield to middle-aged, 'middle-line' architects such as Charles Holden. A handwritten note later added two younger architects, Edward Maufe, the favourite architect of St. John's College, and, surprisingly, Giles Gilbert Scott's distant cousin, Elisabeth Scott, designer of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford (Fig. 2.4).[10] Most architects considered were either London-based or had experience working at Oxford. Although they were beginning to appear in Britain by this time, the only International Modernist on the list was Elisabeth Scott.[11] This is somewhat surprising as Michael Sadler, the Master of University College, was on the Building Committee. Famous as a promoter of "the social function of art," Sadler had almost single-handedly helped to make Leeds a centre for modern art during the interwar period.[12] An early collector of Kandinsky, and greatly admired by Roger Fry and Herbert Read, he was as surprising a figure as

[9] Building Committee Minutes, n.d (c.1934), BA, c.610.
[10] Handwritten note, n.d. (c.1934), BA, c.610.
[11] Interestingly, Edmund Craster served on the 1937 committee that commissioned an international modernist, Maxwell Fry, to design an extension to All Souls College. Craster objected to this decision, but he seems not to have proposed including Scott on the short list. Alan Powers, '1938: An Architectural Crisis at All Souls,' Chichele Lecture, All Souls College, Oxford, 24 May 2012.
[12] Michael T Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England*, OUP, 1999, pp. 52-53.

Mansfield Forbes to be involved in the selection of Scott.[13] Knowledgeable about architecture, he had conducted formal discussions with H S Goodhart-Rendel in 1925 – 1926 about the possibility of establishing a School of Architecture at Oxford.[14] His support of Scott, as well as of arch-classicist A S G Butler, whom he retained as the official architect to University College, shows that radical 'modernist' art and radical 'modernist' architecture were not necessarily seen as going hand-in-hand.

Sadler was the only member of the Building Committee with any evident artistic interests. Made up of librarians and Oxford fellows of various disciplines, the committee contained no one with a professional understanding of matters related to building. In some respect, they were ill equipped to make this sort of decision.

When the Building Committee reconvened to discuss the list, over the course of the meeting every name except two was crossed out: that of Charles Holden and that of Giles Gilbert Scott. The primary concern of the committee was to select an architect with library building experience, so the selection of these two architects is not surprising. They were both in the process of building important university libraries – Scott at Cambridge and Holden at the University of London (Fig. 2.5). With library design increasingly regarded as a science, an understanding of their programmatic needs and specialist equipment gave architects an edge in securing such

[13] Although later replaced, he was involved in the selection of Scott and the early stages of design, and he hosted Scott at the University College Master's Lodgings for the first official meeting after his appointment as architect. Letter, ME Sadler to Giles Scott, 18 May 1934, BA, c.610.
[14] Michael Sadlier, *Michael Earnest Sadler,* London: Constable, 1949, p. 342.

commissions. As the Bodleian Curators explained it, "The technique of library building is not yet so well established that the problem is merely one of fitting a building constructed in accordance with certain principles on a given site."[15]

Scott was well known in Oxford; he had already done significant work for Lady Margaret Hall and Magdalen College, both projects that included library work. Holden had favorably impressed the building committee when they had interviewed him for the Radcliffe Science Library project. Seen as the preeminent British experts in library building, Holden and Scott were often rivals for the same major projects, as they had been for the London University Senate House commission a few years previously.[16] Neither Holden nor Scott were die-hard International Modernists or straightforward traditionalists, and the Bodleian knew they could depend upon both architects to provide a facility that at once declared its modernity and deferred to its context.

Holden had considerably less experience designing university buildings than Scott. The London library was Holden's first work for a university. The first important public work of Holden's career had been the 1906 Bristol Central Library (Fig. 2.6), so like Scott his experience with library design ran deeper than a single commission. He was also involved in work at the National Library of Wales, where he had taken over the project from Sidney Greenslade. By contrast, however, Scott's academic

[15] Letter, Bodleian Curators to Hebdomadal Council, 7 May 1937, BA.
[16] Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden,* Amersham, Lincs: Shaun Tyas, 2007, p. 397. The University of London chose its architect in 1931, and the Senate House opened in 1936.

commissions were considerably more numerous. Outside of Oxford and Cambridge, where Scott had been employed by six colleges in the last decade alone,[17] he had designed new buildings for Whitelands College, Putney (Fig. 2.7); William Booth College, Denmark Hill (Fig. 2.8); and buildings for public schools including Downside, Charterhouse, and Ampleforth. Scott was a recognised expert in library design, and he was asked to suggest an architect for the Scottish National Library (Fig. 2.9) the same year that he was chosen to design the Bodleian.[18] He would soon be a consultant in the design of the Southampton University Library (1935), allowing the architect Gutteridge & Gutteridge to use his signature tall narrow windows (Fig. 2.10).[19] The building committee jotted a list of works next to Scott's name that they felt qualified him for work in Oxford: "Cambridge University Library [Fig. 2.11], Liverpool Cathedral, Abbey and Cathedral work, Magdalen College Additions, Lady Margaret Hall." [20] It is interesting that they considered Scott's church work relevant; perhaps they felt it would make him particularly sensitive to Oxford's Gothic context. Holden, by contrast, had only Bristol Central Library and London University listed next to his name.

In the end, Scott was a safe choice for the Bodleian because there were very few at Oxford or amongst the broader public who would consider his appointment controversial. Holden, by contrast, had nearly caused a riot in 1929 by placing

[17] Magdalen, Oxford; Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford; Clare, Cambridge; Trinity Hall, Cambridge; King's Cambridge; Society of Homes Students, Oxford.
[18] Dr Reginald Fairlie was chosen at Scott's recommendation. Charles McKean, *The Scottish Thirties,* Glasgow: RIAS, 1987, p. 108.
[19] Scott visited campus to discuss the library designs in 1935. Letters, Gutteridge to Scott, 1935 and 1937, SP, ScGG/257/2.
[20] Bodleian Building Committee, Provisional List of Architects, 26 February 1934, BA, c.610.

Epstein statues that some people considered obscene on the Headquarters of London Transport. Holden's personal life was also a source of concern for many people, as he was a politically-radical Quaker who had only a common law marriage to his wife.[21] Scott rigorously avoided any potential social impropriety. Always mild mannered and agreeable,[22] he came from a long line of famous architects and was regarded as thoroughly English and 'of the right sort.' The Bodleian had consulted his grandfather on the same issue of overcrowding in 1855.[23] George Gilbert Scott, Sr had suggested roofing over the quadrangle and filling it with books as well as building a new quadrangle connecting the Old Schools and the Clarendon.[24] Although neither suggestion was carried out for lack of funds, the Scott family was seen as having a legacy of involvement with the Bodleian fabric.[25] Giles Scott was knighted. He was very happy working on committees and designing facades that respected their surroundings (even for other architects' buildings – as at Battersea Power Station (1932), the London County Council offices (1935), and the Guinness Factory (1935)). Also, Scott and Craster both happened to belong to the Athenaeum, and they met there for their first official meeting on the Bodleian project. Scott's reputation as "the best golfer in the profession," may not have been irrelevant, as Building Committee member Sir Farquhar Buzzard was himself an avid golfer. [26]

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[21] Eitan Karol, *Charles Holden,* Amersham, Lincs: Shaun Tyas, 2007, p. 433.
[22] Pevsner called him "a modest, entirely unpompous man." Nikolaus Pevsner. "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," obituary, *AR,* June 1960, p. 426.
[23] HHE Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library: 1845-1945*, OUP, 1981, p. 320.
[24] Ibid, p. 120.
[25] Ibid, p. 320.
[26] C H Reilly *Representative British Architects of the Present Day,* London: BT Batsford, 1931, p. 142, and Frank Honigsbaum, "Farquahar Buzzard," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Online, 2013.

Having decided on Scott, the Building Committee invited the architect to lunch at University College to probe his interest. If his busy London practice proved unable to give sufficient time to the project, then they would commission Worthington.[27] Scott reassured them that he would give them an ample amount of his own personal attention, and the commission was made official on 1 June 1934.

As a client, the Bodleian Curators were demanding and knew that they would need a patient and flexible architect, because they felt it was the University's duty to be deeply involved in the planning process. [28] The library was expected to serve the University in perpetuity: it was important that they get the building right.

Unlike the Cambridge librarians, who claimed to have given the architect no formal programme, [29] the Bodleian Curators deliberated carefully and drew up a ten-page booklet entitled "Instructions to the Architect." The booklet, which was a contractual document, laid out the form of the new library in extensive detail.[30] The general form of a stack tower surrounded by a ring of auxiliary spaces was established. The idea that the auxiliary spaces should be easily convertible into stack space as the need arose came not from Scott, but from the librarians. They stipulated the location of most major rooms – with staff workrooms on the west face and the main reading room on the north face overlooking Trinity College gardens. They specified floor

[27] Letter, Craster to University Registrar, 5 May 1934, BA, c.610.
[28] They decided that such a competition "would be an abrogation of responsibility which should fall on the University itself." Letter. Craster to the University Registrar. 5 May 1935, BA, c. 610.
[29] Letter. E. Ansell to Hill, 3 April 1935, BA, c.616: 'The Librarian tells me that the original form of specification for this building was some rough notes scribbled on half a sheet of notepaper by one of the present Assistants!"
[30] "Instructions to the Architect," Pamphlet, Oxford, 1935, BA, c.616.

heights of the stacks and even the 4' 6" width between bookcases, noting that the bookcases should run north to south. They even suggested that for aesthetic reasons, it was desirable for the Broad Street façade to project outward on its lower levels and follow the curve of the street. (This last instruction, as will be seen, was one of the few that Scott chose to disregard). Although the document makes it sound as if the librarians essentially mandated the plan, the basic ideas must have been worked out in the meetings between Scott and Craster before the specifications were drawn up. This is not to downplay the fact, however, that the flexibility of the design process was curtailed by this document.

The plan of the New Bodleian featured an artificially lit and ventilated stack tower surrounded by a ring of auxiliary, naturally lit services (Figs. 2.12 – 2.13). The stacks were to contain five million books, [31] an enormous number for a site as small as the one on Broad Street.[32] By contrast, Holden's skyscraper library at the University of London was designed to hold less than one million volumes. [33] At the Bodleian, a large proportion of the books would end up underground, but Scott was trapped between an eighty-foot height restriction imposed by the city and a high water table. The ring of auxiliary services was to provide generous staff accommodation with a bindery and fumigating room, as well as experimental spaces that could be allotted as study rooms for specific disciplines.

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[31] Ibid.
[32] The Broad Street site was approximately one acre in size, and was acquired by the university from various college owners, primarily Trinity: H H E Craster, *History of the Bodleian Library: 1845-1945*, OUP, 1981, p. 330.
[33] "University of London Library," *Library Association Record,* April 1936, p. 163.

The precedents for a library dominated by a central stack tower were American. Indeed, library planning was an area where American architects were acknowledged to excel, and the number of enormous projects constructed there since the beginning of the twentieth century greatly outnumbered those undertaken in Europe. The libraries of McKim, Mead, and White, were particularly well known in Britain, with C H Reilly writing rapturously in 1924 that "we [the British] have no great library block like the splendid Columbia Library … but we all should feel very proud if some English architect had the opportunity and produced a similar result."[34] Columbia University's Low Library (1897, Fig. 2.14), with its domed reading room dominating the surrounding campus, eventually spawned several imitations in Britain, most notably H V Lanchester's Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds (1936). The same was true on the Continent. Even Gunnar Asplund, designer of the widely-celebrated Stockholm Public Library (1928, Fig. 2.15), had studied library planning in the United States as part of the design process.[35]

Between the architect, the librarian, and the university committees, Bodleian authorities undertook no less than five separate tours of European and American libraries before beginning the work.[36] Immediately after Scott's selection as

[34] C H Reilly, *Masters of Architecture: McKim, Mead, & White,* London: Ernest Benn, 1924, p. 17.
[35] Stuart Wrede, *The Architecture of Erik Gunnar Asplund* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1980, p. 100.
[36] The Rockefeller Foundation funded all of these tours. In 1929/30 The Library Building Committee made two trips to Continental Europe and one to the USA and Canada. Summer 1934: Craster and Scott tour Europe. October 1934: Craster and Hill tour the United States. April 1935: Craster to Vatican Library. "The New Bodleian," *Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, p. 179.

architect, Craster and Scott had set off on a tour of Continental Libraries. Craster and the Bodleian Secretary had then gone on an extensive tour of libraries in the United States. Scott did not attend, having recently toured American libraries in preparation for designing the Cambridge University Library. On his return at the end of the Long Vacation, Craster reported that American libraries were facing the same issues as the Bodleian. He said that the greatest lesson he had learned was the importance of flexibility of arrangements, noting the problems faced by American libraries that had failed to make provision for the future needs as well as those that built too lavishly before the onset of the Depression.[37]

Throughout the Bodleian design process, pamphlets on American libraries were collected and passed back and forth between the Bodleian Curators and Scott.[38] Craster would also correspond throughout the project with librarians at American universities, particularly Ann Arbor, Northwestern, and Yale.[39]

From Craster and Scott's careful study of American designs, two libraries emerged as the primary models for the New Bodleian.[40] These were the Sterling Memorial Library at Yale (1931, Fig. 1.25) and the new Annex at the Library of Congress (under construction at the time, completed 1938, Fig. 2.16). The basic plan of a core of stacks surrounded by a ring of services was used at the Library of Congress

[37] "Librarian's Reports," Pamphlet, 27 October 1934, BA, c.626.
[38] A number of these pamphlets, as well as copies of letters requesting them, remain in the Bodleian Library Records: Eg. c.620/1.
[39] Fragments of this correspondence are preserved in the Bodleian Library Records: Eg. c.620/1-2, c.625.
[40] H H E Craster, History of the Bodleian, 1845-1945. OUP, 1981, p. 330.

Annex, but originally came from Yale. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Scott's friend, the American architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, had initially designed the Yale Library in 1923.[41] Goodhue's concept was a central tower of stacks, fenestrated with thin vertical strips, located over a block of services. A mechanical conveyor system would speedily transfer books out of the stacks tower.[42] Thus, the library became a sort of skyscraper. It was this idea, which Goodhue had enthusiastically described to Scott in his letters,[43] that would provide the inspiration for the tower at the Cambridge University Library and later for the New Bodleian.

Goodhue unfortunately had died before construction could begin at Sterling Memorial Library, and Yale's campus architect, James Gamble Rogers, redesigned the building. He kept the basic plan of Goodhue's design, but applied his own version of the collegiate Gothic style, calling the library "as near to modern Gothic as we dared make it" [44] — a phrase that echoes Scott's own concerns when building in the Gothic style. Curiously, Rogers did not call the building 'modern Gothic,' merely 'near' to it. Despite its radical planning, the historicist details of the Yale building perhaps made him feel that he had not quite achieved true modernity, and such doubts were shared by the Cambridge Syndicate and other British critics of the

[41] Correspondence between Scott and Goodhue is preserved at the Avery Library, Columbia University, New York, New York.
[42] Architectural Drawings, Yale University Archives. Digital images, "Building a University: 1919-1940," Yale University, Sterling Memorial Library, Online, www.library.yale.edu/msssa/exhibits/building/part3/page1.htm, February 2011.
[43] Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1983, p. 224.
[44] "Building a University: 1919-1940," Yale University, Sterling Memorial Library, Online, www.library.yale.edu/msssa/exhibits/building/part3/page1.htm, February 2011.

American Collegiate Gothic. Both Scott and Craster visited Sterling Memorial Library soon after completion, and were particularly impressed by the library's efficiency.[45]

Craster was also excited to discover important similarities between the Library of Congress project and the New Bodleian (Fig. 2.17).[46] As Craster explained to the Bodleian staff upon his return to the United Kingdom, both were copyright deposit libraries that had outgrown their historic original buildings. For both, sentimental and historical reasons prevented the complete abandonment of their old building. Faced with similar problems, they had come to similar solutions. The new building for the Library of Congress, although it contained reading rooms, was primarily for book storage, and was connected to the original building via an underground tunnel. Books were transferred between the two via pneumatic tube. The new Bodleian would mimic this arrangement, devoting as much space as possible to book storage and connecting this new storage space to the old reading rooms via a tunnel. Scott would advocate, to no avail, that a similar system of pneumatic tubes be installed in the Bodleian.[47] The Library of Congress Annex was proof that a storage building near an historic library was viable and that the Bodleian Curators had not set themselves an impossible task.

[45] Craster's visit is confirmed, amongst other places, in "Librarian's Reports," Pamphlet, 27 October 1934, BA, c.626. Craster's enthusiasm is evidenced by correspondence with the Yale Librarian, particularly enquiring about specifics of how the Sterling Library dealt with various logistical issues: Letter. Yale Librarian to Craster. 5 April 1933. BA, c.620/1.
[46] "Librarian's Reports," 27 October 1934, Pamphlet, BA, c.626.
[47] Letter, Craster to Hill, 27 September 1935, BA, c.620/1.

Scott initially objected to using the American core and ring plan at the Bodleian because he felt it did not provide pleasant-enough working space within the stack itself.[48] He tried to overcome this difficulty at Cambridge by using what he called a ribbon plan (Fig. 1.22).[49] Instead of sitting at the edge of a vast, dark cave of books, readers sat in a naturally lit corridor of book stacks, with carrels placed, as in American libraries, by the windows at the edge. They thus had easy access to neighbouring courtyards and "delightful views of grass and trees."[50] The problem with Cambridge, as American librarian John R. Russell would stress in a letter warning the Bodleian Secretary against adopting such a plan, was that the resulting library was too scattered.[51] Readers often had to trudge through seemingly endless corridors to reach their books, and items from closed stacks were often slow to appear.

Despite his objections to the central, artificially lit stack-block, Scott could see no alternative but to use this plan at Oxford because of the small size of the site relative to the enormous number of books to be accommodated. Unlike Cambridge, which was meant to serve all readers in the university library, the new Bodleian was primarily a book stack: service rooms were built with 14-foot ceilings, non-structural partitions, and floors designed to take the higher loads so that if a room

[48] The plan was for the New Bodleian to experiment with allowing stack access. HHE Craster. *History of the Bodleian Library: 1845-1945.* OUP, 1981, p. 334.
[49] Giles Gilbert Scott. "The New Bodleian Building." *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937. p. 27.
[50] Ibid, p. 27.
[51] Letter, Russell to Hill, 2 June 1935, BA, c.620/1. "[W]ith half of the collection on closed shelves, it would seem advisable to have a speedy carrier system and a less scattered plan in general."

were ever needed for storage space, it could be easily converted into an extension of the stacks beside it.[52]

Scott designed the library to be a massive block because he needed all the volume that the small site could provide. He surrounded the central core with a corridor that also gave easy access to the service rooms wrapped around it. The ultimate flaw of this plan, as pointed out in the *Architect & Building News,* was it lacked the usual architectural cues necessary to guide users around the building.[53] The main Reading Room (Fig. 2.18), a key feature of any library, was not given special prominence in the plan, nor was it clearly brought to attention by exterior architectural decoration. Where decoration did create emphasis, it often did not reflect actual use. For instance, a door in the main lobby that is surmounted by a stone Pegasus clock (Fig. 2.19), in a great anti-climax, merely opens into the stacks, just like the unmarked doors on either side. Scott, thinking of the library as a specialised warehouse,[54] designed the building in a way he hoped would maximise efficiency. He clearly thought that, just as in a warehouse, the more doors that opened directly into the central storage space, the more efficiently the library would operate. The result was corridors with long rows of numbered identical doors, which when opened, surreally all led to the same place.

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[52] No such rooms were ever converted; the Bodleian decided that it needed the service space more. Conversion would not have met the Bodleian's storage needs anyway, as the number of books continued to balloon in the second half of the twentieth century, and the library opted to build off-site storage facilities. The service space did prove flexible and met the library's changing needs until the building was shut for renovation in 2011. Interview with Dr. Robert Ovenden, Bodleian Library Curator of Western Manuscripts, 14 January 2011, Notes in author's possession.

[53] "The New Bodleian," *Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, p. 182.

[54] Scott repeatedly referred to the New Bodleian as "primarily a book store." Eg, Giles Gilbert Scott. "The New Bodleian Building." *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937, p. 27.

The rows of doors leading into the stacks may have proved efficient if the Bodleian had actually adopted an open stacks policy. The Curators were genuinely considering this experiment, and were strongly encouraged by the Rockefeller Foundation, who wanted to promote ease of access for visiting scholars.[55] Scott's explained that the Reading Room was only to be secondary; he designed under the assumption that a majority of readers would have direct stack access.[56] The reality turned out to be very different. Despite their enthusiasm during the planning stage, the librarians could never bring themselves to institute direct stack access. Only a dozen carrels were ever installed in the stack, in contrast to the hundred or so planned.[57] Again encouraged by the Rockefeller Foundation,[58] the idea was even considered of giving faculty members and some visiting scholars 24-hour keyed access via the ceremonial Broad Street door (Fig. 2.20). The scheme was never implemented, and the elliptical lobby behind the door soon came to be used merely as a broom cupboard.[59]

This scholar's door was particularly criticised because its strange small lobby served no clear purpose.[60] Its placement was an act of urbanism, aligning with the ceremonial axis leading from Radcliffe Square through the Schools Quadrangle and

[55] H H E Craster. *History of the Bodleian Library: 1845-1945,* OUP, 1981, p. 334.
[56] "Instructions to the Architect," Pamphlet, Oxford, 1935, BA, c.616.
[57] H H E Craster. *History of the Bodleian Library: 1845-1945,* OUP, 1981, p. 334.
[58] Interview with John Duffy, Bodleian Staff, 2 November 2010, Notes in author's possession. Craster notes the eagerness of the Rockefeller Foundation that the new library support the needs of visiting scholars in his *History of the Bodleian Library*.
[59] Interview with John Duffy, 2 November 2010, Notes in author's possession.
[60] The New Bodleian," *Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, p. 182. This view was substantiated by present-day Bodleian officials: Interviews with Ovenden and Duffy.

the Clarendon Building. However, it bore little relation to the functional concerns of the library, besides giving easy access to the Broad Street staircase. The door was an act of architectural manners, a response to the broader urban context rather than the library's intrinsic needs.

Scott was defensive of his placement of the entrances with no clear relation to the reading room. Again he repeated that the Reading Room was only a subsidiary feature of the New Bodleian, the primary purpose of which was book storage. The Curators, of course, had mandated that the reading room face north over the Trinity College gardens, so it was necessarily at the rear of the building. He could have placed the entrance so that it opened directly into the stairhall at the northeast corner; however, an asymmetrical placement would have reduced the entrance's prominence and prioritised the reading room over the stacks. Critics did not think that Scott's plan was rational, [61] but they failed to acknowledge its prioritising of book storage and transport over the needs of its limited number of readers.

The suggestion that some of the limitations of the New Bodleian were a result of Scott's lack of experience with complex plans can be refuted by the number of complex schemes his office had executed in the previous decade. It is true that for many of the large buildings credited to Scott in the press – Battersea Power Station (1934) and the London Guinness Factory (1935) to name two examples – Scott had merely acted as a consulting architect, designing the façade and public spaces for

[61] The New Bodleian," *Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, p.182, and Murus [pseudonym]. *National Builder,* "The New Bodleian." February 1941, pp. 134-135.

plans created by more specialist firms.[62] However, Scott's office had in fact planned a number of large complex schemes, including Cambridge University Library (1928-34), Whitelands College (1929-1931), Cropthorne Court (1928), and an unexecuted scheme for an exhibition hall and flats on the site of the Foundling Hospital. Scott would increasingly devote his time to issues of urban planning in London, and claimed that planning was one of his greatest interests, so the criticism of the New Bodleian would have been particularly hurtful. As a result, he felt it necessary to defend himself at greater length in the press and in his correspondence, and this defense gives great insight into his architectural thinking in the late 1930s.

Scott was trying something new in British library design, and he repeatedly stressed in his own defense that an ideal resolution was very difficult considering the limitations of the small site and the prescriptive instructions of the client.[63] The librarians perhaps did not have an architect's insight into the obstacles of such a site, and by mandating ideal relationships, such as a north-facing reading room, they may have prevented the flexibility and compromise that would have led to more user-friendly spaces. The design of the stacks core was largely dictated by the requirements of contractors working with standardised systems, from the steel engineers, Redpath Brown and Co,[64] to the precast 'Bison Floors' supplied by

[62] Battersea Power Station: Gavin Stamp. "Giles Gilbert Scott & Bankside Power Station." pp. 177-190. *Building Tate Modern,* London: Tate, 2000; Electricity House: Joanna Heseltine, ed. *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: The Scott Family*, Amersham, Bucks: Avebury Publishing, 1981, p.168; Guinness Factory: *Builder*. Vol. CLXXII, 27 June 1947, p. 637.
[63] Giles Gilbert Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937, p. 28.
[64] *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937, Back matter.

Concrete Limited,[65] to the Roneo steel bookcases that the whole building was designed to house.[66] Over the course of the project, there was very little evolution of the design: the preliminary designs sent for Hebdomadal Council approval in 1935 were essentially what was built two years later. Once Scott had found a solution to the client's complicated requirements, plan and decoration stayed the same.[67]

In a broader university context, the New Bodleian was undertaken under the umbrella of 'the Oxford Appeal,' the largest fund-raising drive in the university's history, linking the project, at least financially, to the expansion of the Science Estate and expansion of the Radcliffe Hospital.[68] All of these changes were regarded as part of a general drive toward modernisation, creating the most technologically cutting-edge and flexible facilities possible, so that they could serve the university's needs far into the foreseeable future. Scientific analogies were deeply embedded in language used to describe the building: the library wanted space for 'experiment.'[69] For his part, Scott talked of frenetic technology-driven pace of modern life and made science-fiction-like predictions to the press. When the building was completed, the architect confidently declared that the building would serve the needs of the library for two hundred years.[70] But what would the needs of a library be in two hundred years, he wondered, "Perhaps libraries, as we know them, will by then have ceased

[65] Ibid.
[66] Ample correspondence with Roneo is preserved in the Bodleian Library Records.
[67] No significant changes are evident between the 1935 (BA H109) plans exhibited to the Hebdomadal Council with the final 1937 plans (BA H108), and also the early 1936 perspective (BA c.618 p. 2) and the library as built.
[68] "Oxford University Appeal," *The Oxford Magazine,* 13 May 1937, p. 608.
[69] "Instructions to the Architect," Pamphlet, c.1934, BA, c.616.
[70] *Oxford Times*, 25 June 1937, Press Clipping, BA, c.619/5-6.

to exist," he mused, "and a central television station will wireless visions of books to readers' homes and they will turn pages by pressing a button! Let us leave these nightmare speculations…"[71] The creation of such technocratic mythology was part of the identity making process for many of Scott's major institutional facilities in the 1930s. At the opening of the Cambridge University Library, for instance, the King had called it "a power-house and a testing station of educational activities,"[72] and the Cambridge University Library, too, was undertaken in tandem with the expansion of the university's science facilities.

Modern technology did, in fact, make the New Bodleian possible. Its artificially lit and ventilated central stacks would have been inconceivable only a few years earlier, and a traditional plan with light wells would not have fitted on the Broad Street site. Such language, however, meant that the expectations of what the architect could provide were dangerously high. The style was meant to transcend the notion of style, and the space was meant to be so flexible that it was easily adapted to the unknowable technologies of the future. The New Bodleian declared itself to be a building barely of the present time, with one foot already in the silvery unknown.

Such claims were only rhetoric, of course. Scott and Craster knew that it was impossible to predict the future, but by trying, they were able to create a building that functioned well for several decades and laid the groundwork for the Bodleian's

[71] Giles Gilbert Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford* [Magazine], February 1937, pp. 28-29.
[72] "Royal Visit to Cambridge," *The Times,* 23 October 1934, Times Online Archive.

rebirth as a modern institution. Rather than lasting two hundred years, however, it was filled to capacity within forty.[73] The Bodleian faced great unanticipated change in those years, with the numbers of users growing enormously from a few graduate-level students and faculty in the 1930s to the entire university and a much larger number of visiting scholars. As Scott had intended, the reading rooms and services around the stacks were easily reconfigured, but the stacks themselves, with every component welded together from solid steel, proved impossible to change. As the stacks in the New Bodleian transitioned into being largely a repository for archival material, shelves designed for books proved inadequate. Boxes of papers stuck out into the aisles and were bumped by trolleys. Its technological amenities aged quickly. The librarians had opted for a mechanical conveyor belt to carry books through the tunnel because it could handle a wider range of item sizes (Fig. 2.21). The machine was so maintenance-intensive, however, that the Bodleian had to keep a blacksmith on staff. Changing levels several times as it descended into the tunnel under Broad Street and ascended to the Old Schools reading rooms, it caused wear on the books.

As he often did with large projects, Scott thought about the Bodleian commission in relation to its urban context and took advantage of the commission to make small interventions related not to the client's needs, but to the needs of the broader community. Scott chose not to align the massing of the building with the line of Broad Street. This was because he wanted to create a more spacious setting for the

[73] The information in this paragraph comes from an interview with Richard Ovendon, Deputy to Bodley's Library, 14 January 2011. Notes in author's possession.

Clarendon Building.[74] By setting the New Bodleian back from the corner, he created a greater sense of space at that end of Broad Street, relieving what he felt had been an overly cramped setting for the Hawksmoor masterpiece (Figs. 2.22 – 2.23). It would also provide clearer sightlines for motorists at the junction. City planning was one of his greatest delights, and he would later seek to impose a similar order on London as chairman of the Royal Academy Planning Commission.[75] His planning philosophy reflected a Europe-wide phenomenon of cutting wide boulevards into medieval street plans in order to improve vehicular access and of seeking to increase the sense of dignity and order in urban spaces. The most obvious comparison to the Bodleian scheme in this regard is Rome's nearly contemporary Via della Conciliazione (1936, Fig. 2.24). Scott particularly admired the "amazing boldness of conception" of the "marvelous work which has been achieved in Rome by the Italian Government."[76] As with the Via della Conciliazione and St. Peter's, Scott's change to the layout of Broad Street reduced the striking contrast of the huge scale of a baroque monument placed tightly against comparatively tiny houses.[77] However, unlike the Roman boulevard, which contradicted Bernini's original

[74] Scott explained the rationale behind his decision about the building's massing in an address (presumably to the Building Committee) in October 1935. "Statement of the Architect's Preliminary Plans," Typescript, BA, c.624.
[75]See Chapter 4.
[76] In the same statement, however, Scott gently hinted that in the Italian case he did not agree with the political ideology behind it, stating that it was lucky for the Italy-controlled island of Rhodes that a Governor "with almost autocratic powers … happens to be a man of sense and judgement." Giles Scott, reply to Guido Calza,"The Via Dell'Imperio and the Imperial Fora," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 24 March 1934, p. 508.
[77] The Italians referred to such interventions as 'the liberation (liberazione)' of a monument. See Sapori, *Architettura in Roma: 1901-1950,* Angelo Belardetti Editore, n.d. for numerous examples.

intention to create a sense of surprise, Scott's work at least may have been more in keeping with Hawksmoor's original intention to create a grand University Forum.[78]

When Scott's preliminary plans were shown in 1935, such a modification to the setting of the Hawksmoor building created an outcry amongst some members of the university, as it was a requirement of the "Instructions to the Architect," that the street line of Broad Street be maintained.[79] Many members of the Congregation felt that breaking the line of the street front in this way would greatly alter the character of the area. Scott's half-hearted way of fulfilling this requirement had been to place a terrace on the Broad Street façade, topped by a wall that marked the old street front. Craster wrote to Scott, explaining their objections and asking what could be done. He noted that a few members of the Congregation had suggested that perhaps a row of pillars could be placed along the edge of the proposed terrace to create a sort of portico.[80] Scott flatly rejected the recommendation. He replied that a row of pillars would ruin the desired effect, and stressed that the stone wall proposed for the edge of the terrace would recall the old massing by rising above the eye level of passers-by. Craster and the Congregation deferred to the architect's judgment, but the implication was that the wall should be as emphatic as possible. It must have been plain to all parties, however, that the perfunctory nature of the compromise was not satisfactory, and in a 1937 after the controversy had been allowed to die

[78] Vaughan Hart. *Nicholas Hawksmoor: Rebuilding Ancient Wonders*, YUP, 2008 p. 194.
[79] Letter, Craster to Scott, 8 November 1935, BA, c.621.
[80] Ibid.

down, the Bodleian conceded the point in a private letter to the architect and allowed him to do whatever he wished.[81] In the end, the wall was abolished.

The initial outcry over the design of the New Bodleian was not limited to a critique of Scott's design. There was a small uproar when it was revealed that the Bodleian would be demolishing historic properties. The houses on the site were typical of central Oxford – mostly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century timber houses, with some older portions. They included a significant Tudor wall-painting of the Dance of Death, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century paneling, and an important Victorian wing by Deane and Woodward (Fig. 2.25). This was apparently of little interest to Scott. As evidenced by his service as a trustee of the Soane Museum, his knowledge of architectural history, and his overarching concern with context, Scott believed in the value of old buildings. He saw his new library as enhancing the setting of a great historical work, Hawksmoor's Clarendon Building. However, like his grandfather, he believed that sometimes modernisation was necessary. Instead of blindly idolising all historic buildings, he felt that if a modern monument such as the new Bodleian were needed, it could replace historic buildings of lesser importance. In the context of the urban fabric, he was sometimes perfectly willing to rip out old work and replace it with new. If an argument could be made for 'progress' necessitating the destruction of a monument, Scott tended to support replacing it with something new. Early in his career, he summarised his preservation philosophy in a letter to

[81] The exchange of pleasantries was carefully political: the Bodleian Secretary wrote to Scott asking if the terrace wall could be lowered, as it seemed to serve no purpose. Scott replied, that the Secretary was quite right, thanked him for pointing it out, and agreed to do away with the wall altogether. Letters, Hill to Scott, 4 June 1936, and Scott to Hill, 5 June 1936, BA, c.620/1.

the editor of *The British Architect* after the collapse of St Mark's Campanile in Venice. He wrote, "The ideal would be to have a fine new design, should the condition of modern architecture allow of it."[82]

Scott would later play a key role in the rebuilding of Waterloo Bridge and the creation of Bankside Power Station, and a minor role in the replacement of Adelphi Terrace (see Chapter 4). Was he trying to mitigate the impact of such developments by becoming involved with them? Or was he merely caught up in his zeal for modernising London, thus lending legitimacy to the desecrations of developers and government departments? There is no clear answer, but for the more severe critics of his work, such questions open Scott up to charges of hypocrisy. Ultimately, he agreed to assess the historic houses on the New Bodleian site to see if anything could be reused in the new library. He must have realised that bits of old paneling would undermine his claim to be creating a strictly modern building, and evidently took no further action in relation to the old houses.[83] In the end, the Librarians and the Ashmolean had to step in to salvage features of historic interest, distributing them to interested colleges.[84]

Whatever Scott's reputation as a preservationist, he undeniably felt that new work must respect the context of the site, and it was this sensitivity to the surroundings that had helped to recommend him in the first place. *The Oxford Mail* had crowed at

[82] Letter, Scott to Editor of *The British Architect*, 8 October 1902, BSP, 11.
[83] Letter, Scott to Craster, 6 February 1935, BA, c.617.
[84] Some of the paneling, for instance, ended up in nearby Trinity College. Memoranda, n.d. (c1935), BA. c.617.

the news of Scott's commission, "No architect could harmonise it with such incongruous neighbors … but confidence will be felt that Sir Giles Scott will make the most of his opportunities."[85] Located facing the main ceremonial heart of the ancient university, the new library would be clearly visible from the greatest ensemble of historic university buildings in Britain. At the time of his appointment, Scott declared:

> My problem is to get a building which will blend with the old ones in the neighbourhood, but will undoubtedly be of our time … [the library] will be modern without being modernistic. By this I mean tradition will not be completely ignored as is the fashion at the moment. One cannot ignore tradition in such cities as Oxford and Cambridge, but at the same time we have modern men imbued with modern thought to consider. [86]

Scott would attempt to defer to the surroundings in a number of ways, ranging from style and materials to issues of massing and height. By placing the primary entrance on Parks Road, Scott kept the Broad Street façade quieter, thus drawing less attention away from the Sheldonian and Clarendon across the street. He made sure that the main range of the New Bodleian was fourteen feet lower than the Clarendon Building and the tower of the stacks slightly shorter than the Sheldonian cupola and the Tower of the Five Orders (Fig. 2.26).[87] He set the stacks tower back from the main façade, so that it would not be visible from the pavement in front of the

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[85] *The Oxford Mail,* 8 June 1934, Press clipping, BA c.610.
[86] "The New Bodleian Library: Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's Ideas," *The Observer,* 8 July 1934, Press clipping, BA, c.610.
[87] Comparative Heights: New Bodleian outer range: 45' Clarendon: 59' Sheldonian 52' Stack Tower 78' Sheldonian Cupola: 82.5' Tower of the Five Orders: 93' Camera Dome: 116' and the Spire of St. Mary's: approximately 200.' "Statement of the Architect's Preliminary Plans," 1935, Typescript, BA c.624.

Clarendon Building.[88] The creation of visual unity was a key principle throughout Scott's work, whether suggesting a consistent palette of materials for the rebuilding of London or banning monument tablets from Liverpool Cathedral.[89]

Scott chose to wrap the mass of his building in Bladon rubble.[90] He felt very strongly that there was no choice but to use stone in Oxford.[91] The use of coarse-surfaced Bladon stone had entered the Oxford canon when Herbert Baker had specified it for Rhodes House in 1926.[92] Practically all interwar Oxford buildings followed suit. However, Scott had perfectly good reasons for choosing a stone whose rough texture did not corrode as easily as Oxford's traditional Headington ashlar. The old stone surfaces of many historic Oxford buildings were at that time badly pockmarked and blackened. A large-scale program of repair, which restored the smooth ashlar surfaces evident on so many Oxford buildings today, would not be instituted until well after World War II.[93] The Bladon stone was chosen because it was less friable, and created a consistent texture that, despite its roughness, was more regular than the decayed ashlar (Fig. 2.27). Scott's selection of Bladon stone made Rhodes House and Radcliffe Science Library the newest buildings to be

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[88] *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, 3rd Quarter 1935, Vol. VIII, No. 87, p. 106. Holden had used a similar strategy in the massing of 55 Broadway (1929) in order to make the tower seem more in scale with the surrounding London streets.
[89] Vere Cotton, *Liverpool Cathedral Handbook*, 8th ed, Liverpool: Daily Post, 1932, p. 29.
[90] For an explanation of the types of stone used in Oxford buildings, see W J Arkell, *Oxford Stone,* OUP, 1947.
[91] "Stone-faced walls seem essential." Giles Scott, *Oxford* Magazine, February 1937, p. 29. Besides, the use of stone was stipulated in "Instructions to the Architect."
[92] Geoffrey Tyack, *Oxford: An Architectural Guide,* OUP, 1998, p. 285.
[93] W J Arkell, *Oxford Stone,* OUP, 1947.

included in Scott's search for precedent. By their very concentration on Parks Road, they created a new standard of their own.

In an almost obsessive regard for context, Scott even quietly echoed the demolished houses on the Parks Road side in the symmetrical composition of the new façade. A classical house called Ripon Hall in the centre of the site, which had once housed St. Stephen's House,[94] was recalled in the design of the new front, whose dominant central feature, cornice line, and fenestration recalled the Georgian street it replaced (Fig. 2.28). By contrast, the Broad Street façade featured an asymmetrical treatment and rounded corners. The resulting nearly Moderne flavour[95] can be most clearly seen in a construction photograph, in which the building is shown before the application of stone veneer and carved ornament (Fig. 2.29). Even the detailing of the two façades is significantly different. For example, the parapet of the Parks Road façade features a stone balustrade, whereas the Broad Street façade, in keeping with its 'contemporary' styling features a parapet wall. This inconsistency infuriated several dons, who felt it was an example of the illogical and overly hybridised nature of Scott's design.[96] Perhaps Scott felt that the most public façade had to convey the image of modernity that the Bodleian sought to project. Perhaps he saw this façade as his generation's contribution to the idea of the University Forum. There was no

[94] More information on Ripon Hall is available in W A Pantin, "The Recently Demolished Houses in Broad Street, Oxford," *Oxoniensia,* Vol. II, 1937.
[95] The Moderne style of architecture, primarily an American phenomenon, was characterised by its rounded corners, 'streamlined' detail, strong horizontal lines, stepped massing, and flat roofs. It particularly drew inspiration from the mannerisms of industrial design.
[96] Letter, Craster to Scott, 8 November 1935, BA, c.624.

equivalent of Ripon Hall on the Broad Street frontage, only a jumble of vernacular cottages. The new Broad Street façade only echoed them in its asymmetry.

Scott's solution to the problem of finding a modern style that blended in with the Oxford context was to fuse classical ornament executed in stone onto modernistic massing. Critics have often called this application of classical ornament to modernistic forms naïve, and yet it has its own logic. The original Bodleian itself featured the fusion of Classical ornament onto Gothic forms, at a time when a fully Classical British architecture had yet to develop. Thus, the New Bodleian featured classical ornament fused onto *modernistic* forms, at a time when Scott felt a fully *modern* British architecture had yet to develop. He saw his architecture as a bridge to the future. Neither one thing nor the other, it was meant to exist in a realm beyond style, anticipating the British Modernism that would come later in the same way the full-fledged Renaissance had come to Britain with Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren. "It must be remembered … that Wren did not suddenly impose this Renaissance upon the Gothic;" Scott wrote in analogy to his own building, "there was an interesting period of transition from Gothic to Renaissance lasting 100 years before Wren came on the scene." [97]

Thus, Scott saw his Bodleian project as an attempt to lay the groundwork for the future of modern architecture. He had long discussed this project with C H Reilly. Scott's main objection to International Modernism as it was developing, was its

[97] Letter, Scott to Craster, 17 March 1941, BA, c.620/3.

machine aesthetic and resultant lack of good detailing. In the opinion of both Scott and Reilly, international modernism had yet to evolve a satisfactory decorative system. Whether this idea first came from Scott or Reilly is not clear, for they often repeat it to each other in their correspondence. In 1942, for instance, Reilly wrote to Scott, "I wish you had been born 10 years later though you would have missed your Liverpool Cathedral. You would have been the ideal person to lead the modern movement out of its crudities & find some form of decorative expression which hasn't been found yet"[98]Scott wrote to Reilly at Christmas 1943, that he thought the worst British modernism was the "hysterical and harsh extremist type of work which seems to shout a lot with very little to say, and a very small vocabulary to say it with. Still we are starting to see something and lets hope it is the beginning of a tradition that will develop into something fine."[99] Although these letters post-date the New Bodleian, Reilly's broadcast talks and Scott's earlier writings confirm that the sentiment was germinating in the thought of each at a much earlier date. Reilly had put it in writing as early as 1932, declaring that the stripping away of traditional decoration by modernists would allow a new vocabulary of ornament to develop,[100] and in 1933, Scott had given his speech advocating a 'middle line' at the RIBA, stating the necessity of restrained ornament: "I want to see [Modernism's] best features and characteristics retained and grafted at first onto the architecture of the past and then gradually developed."[101]

[98] Letter, Reilly to Scott, 20 December 1942, BA, ScGG/282/2.
[99] Letter, Scott to Reilly, n.d. (c.1943), CHR, D207/40/123.
[100] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, pp. 88-89.
[101] Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 11 November 1933, p. 11.

Scott and Reilly both felt that International Modernism was not appropriate in historic contexts. Reilly declared in a broadcast talk that "[Erich] Mendelsohn's strange concrete structures need not alarm us … [but] let us hope they will be built in garden cities or other isolated places … Even one or two of them would destroy any ordinary town."[102] He may have changed his attitude to Mendelsohn somewhat by the time he got around to assisting with the design of the Peter Jones department store in Sloane Square in 1939 (Fig. 2.30), however, the idea of 'good manners' in planning and design, regardless of style, would remain key to Reilly's thought throughout his career. In his letters to Reilly, Giles Gilbert Scott repeatedly declared his hope for Modernism. Writing in support of Mendelsohn in 1933, whom Reilly and Scott were attempting to help get a visa to stay in the UK, Scott explained that "the great value of men like Mendelsohn is not so much what they do themselves, but what they make other people do – they act as yeast in the dough!"[103] In 1944 Scott expressed wonder at the technological wizardry of Lubetkin's Highgate Flats (Fig. 1.13).[104] He went on to bemoan the building's disregard for the human element and to declare the flats unlivable. He felt that the details of such Modernism were crude, the materials exposed to the weather without protection, the response to light lacking in nuance. And yet, those opinions did not stop him from taking the ideas that he felt had potential and experimenting with them in his own work. Seeking to create an architecture that was modern-feeling and technology-driven,

[102] C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," February 1927 [and later], Typescripts, CHR, D207/27.
[103] It is interesting to note that Mendelsohn was in the audience at Scott's RIBA 'middle line' address and that Scott apologised to him afterwards for there not being time for Mendelsohn to give a public reply. (Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 11 November 1933, p. 14). Letter, Scott to Reilly, 30 August 1933, CHR, D207/40/121.
[104] Letter, Scott to Reilly, 19 August 1944, CHR, D207/4/6.

but also ornamentally rich, at the New Bodleian Scott decided to try something new. He would try a style as experimental as his plan. If the problem with modern architecture was its detailing, then why not create a hybrid phase in which traditional ornament was fused onto Modernist form? With the New Bodleian style, he hoped that he could pave the way to a more subtle Modernism by demonstrating the appeal of Modernist form with quality detailing.

Scott explained his current thinking to Christopher Hussey in 1944:

> I am afraid we waste a lot of time arguing about style; it used to be Gothic v. Renaissance and now it is Modernism v. Traditionalism; when will people learn that style is only a means to an end and that it is what is done with a style that matters, not the style itself … Some of us who are more sensitive to quality feel that a gradual evolution from traditionalism to modernism is the right way to bring about the change of course, the last hundred years, with the attempted reproduction of many past styles, [are] all dead as mutton, and having nothing new to say, really brought about the inevitable reaction and caused the pendulum to swing over too violently into a real revolution. Natural laws, however, prevent extremes lasting any length of time and inevitable reactions arise to level things out again. This is already beginning to happen with modernism.[105]

If Scott's goal was not explicitly to create an astylar building, it was to shunt the question of style aside. At the 1938 garden party opening his only other executed work in the style of the New Bodleian, Hartland House at the Oxford Society of Home Students (later St Anne's College)," Sir Giles defied anyone to say what style the building was in."[106] By throwing in a little bit of everything, Scott hoped to jam the stylistic radar and force viewers to evaluate the building in terms of formal

[105] "Extracts from Letter From GGS," Typescript, c.1944, enclosed in Letter, Scott to Christopher Hussey, 12 December 1944, SP, ScGG/267/3.
[106] *The Ship* [Oxford Society of Home Students Alumnae Magazine], Number 28, 1938, p. 24.

elements and appropriateness to function and context (Figs. 2.31 – 2.33). He thus hoped to give the building aesthetic legitimacy via an appeal to 'universal architecture.' His way of doing this was novel in the extreme. At Hartland House, "There was perhaps a touch of Gothic in the battlemented towers and the Renaissance in the overdoor;" he explained, "the building itself certainly had a sound English character in that it was made of good English stone – not of concrete, chromium, and plate glass."[107] Here and at the New Bodleian was a fresh attempt at answering the International Modernists. Here was a building at once English, universal, and modern. The New Bodleian style was thus one of his greatest experiments in architectural theory, and one of the boldest actions in the interwar search for a distinctly English modern architecture. The guests at the Oxford Society of Home Students garden party were delighted.

When the New Bodleian itself was unveiled, however, the critical reaction was not what Scott had hoped. The critics were baffled, unable to see what Scott was trying to do. Many were able only to see a horrible mish-mash: a modern building disguising itself as traditional, or vice versa. John Betjeman called it one of the " half-hearted attempts to blend the ancient with the modern," contrasting it with what he characterised as the boldness of the Radcliffe Camera.[108] The Rev S E Cottam, a Fellow of Exeter, wrote, "As a student of architecture & a lover of beauty I am aghast at such ugliness … The ground floor is like a vast shop front … divided by meaningless pilasters, and supporting equally meaningless urns … The top story is

[107] Ibid, p. 24.
[108] John Betjeman, *An Oxford University Chest,* London: John Miles, 1938, p. 170.

even worse than the ground floor, being just like a factory… If it is put up, which God forbid, it will be a disgrace to the city."[109] The initial criticisms would become quickly enshrined as the standard interpretation of the New Bodleian. From the anonymous critic in the *Architect & Building News* down to Pevsner's round condemnation decades later, many felt that instead of achieving the blend of traditional and modern that he sought, Scott had achieved a sort of schizophrenia.[110] A writer in *The Architect and Building News* compared the building's ornament and design to putting ridges on the spines of books even though cords were no longer used in binding.[111] Howard Colvin would quip in the 1980s that the building was ludicrous, "like a dinner jacket made out of Harris tweed."[112]

Scott must have been severely disappointed. He would be heard to declare more and more often over the following decades that by trying to please everyone, he had pleased no one.[113] Although criticism had swirled around the early stages of Liverpool Cathedral, the concerns had been about religion and experience, the design itself had quickly rocketed to wide critical acclaim. The response to the completion of the New Bodleian was the first time that a major Scott project had been subjected to widespread negative criticism, and foreshadowed the increasingly

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[109] Letter, Rev S E Cottam to Hill, 24 January 1936, BA, c.625.
[110] Nikolaus Pevsner, *Oxfordshire,* London: Penguin, 1974, p. 263. For the review in *Architect & Building News,* see below.
[111] "The New Bodleian," *Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, p. 182.
[112] The recent cleaning has revealed that the new building would have had a light and uniform colour, and that the subsequent 'tweediness' of the surface was the result of later staining. Howard Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford*, YUP, 1983, p. 179.
[113] "The New Coventry Cathedral: Sir Giles Scott Resigns." *The Builder*, CLXXII, 17 January 1947. p. 73.

widespread critical ridicule to which his designs would be subjected after the Second World War.

Thus, Scott's usually impeccable manners failed when Craster mailed him a copy of an article from *The National Builder* in 1941. The article claimed that a truly great architect would have disregarded his clients' wishes and built a strictly Modernist library. The anonymous author sneered, "The chief elevation of the Bodleian shows a curious mixture of architectural styles – an attempt, it would appear, to achieve some sort of contemporary expression."[114] The author had no regard for Scott's ideas about evolutionary architecture. Scott ranted to Craster:

> Modernism is entirely revolutionary and has no roots in the past, and it has had no time to develop quality… [Wren was not revolutionary; he] was only carrying on the evolution of a very old traditional style with its roots deeply planted in the past. In view of this, is it likely, as 'Murus' [the anonymous author] suggests, that Wren would "have brought on his head the criticism of the scholars"? On the contrary… Oxford would have welcomed so scholarly an architect, who was using the same language in building that they were using in their studies and literature. Can one compare this state of affairs with the introduction of modernism into present-day Oxford? I think not, unless the professors of Oxford have gone Red and thrown all the past overboard, in which case I imagine Esperanto is the language of their studies and literature![115]

The critical reaction was not entirely disastrous, however. Many critics were trying very hard to like Scott's building. He was a well-respected architect, and the Bodleian was a well-respected institution. Regardless of whether critics thought it was entirely successful, *The Manchester Guardian* stressed that by its very nature it

[114] Murus [pseudonym], "The Bodleian Library," *The National Builder,* February 1941, p. 134.
[115] Letter, Scott to Craster, 17 March 1941, BA, c.620/3.

was a building of international significance.[116] *The Architect & Building News* began their review with effusive praise, but they could not get around the feeling that the building was poorly planned.[117] His clients, however, professed themselves satisfied. Craster, for one, was confident that people would come to accept the building in the end. Everyone had hated the Taylorian when it was built, he declared, and eventually "even Ruskin lectured in it."[118] He also noted with satisfaction that the New Bodleian had come in almost exactly on budget.[119] Other allies came from the expected quarters, with the Oxford Society of Home Students declaring its fierce loyalty to Scott: "The Home-Students feel that … if this generation has something to contribute to Oxford architecture, [it] is a matter for congratulation rather than regret," trumpeted the pages of the alumnae magazine in 1939.[120]

Scott had replied to his early critics in a 1937 article in *Oxford* magazine, writing that International Modernism on Broad Street would have been "as dreadful as a jazz band in Westminster Abbey."[121] He repeated that he favoured a modern building that paid respect to tradition. He gave a recipe for such a building: the key ingredients were a palette of materials that fit into the existing urban fabric (in this case walls should be stone-faced), fenestration and massing that expressed the modernity of the building, and sparingly applied ornament in key locations. This

[116] *Manchester Guardian.* 25 June 1937, press clipping, BA c.619/5-6.
[117] "The New Bodliean," *The Architect & Building News*, 15 May 1936, pp. 179-182.
[118] H H E Craster, *History of the Bodleian, 1845-1945*, OUP, 1981, p. 332.
[119] Ibid, p. 337.
[120] *The Ship*, Number 29, 1939, p. 12.
[121] Giles Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford Magazine*, February 1937, p. 29

was as close as Scott came to explaining the logic of the building's design in the press.

Scott wrote in *Oxford Magazine* that ornament should "emphasise the arrangement of structural features, such as window openings," and should, "only [be] used where it serves a definite aesthetic purpose."[122] He explained that he felt that a key purpose of ornament was to create contrast between highly detailed surfaces and areas of blank wall. This was manifested at the New Bodleian with the placement of urns and coats of arms against areas of blank rubble walling (Figs. 2.35 – 2.36). His focus on formal concerns was also expressed in the alternating bands of vertical and horizontal window shapes – an element that Scott felt gave vitality to the composition.[123] Ornament served primarily as a formal counterpoint, not a narrative tool.[124]

Scott wrote that he objected to the associative meanings that had been taken on by period styles, particularly the notion that Tudor, for instance, was more English than other styles.[125] Scott was treading very close to self-contradiction here, for he very much stressed the important of the associative meanings of Gothic in creating the desired psychological effect in his church work and the same concept had been key to his university work a decade earlier at Clare College.[126] Perhaps it was only the association with Englishness that he objected to in Tudor, for as he had said at the

[122] Ibid, p. 29.
[123] Ibid, p. 30.
[124] Ibid, p. 29.
[125] Ibid, p. 30.
[126] See Chapter 2.

Society for Home Students, he felt that Englishness was largely a product of workmanship and the choice of material.[127] Despite such apparent claims to the contrary, there is no denying that for Scott, stylistic vocabulary was a sort of branding tool, that could be manipulated to create an identity for a building and which depended on the message one was trying to convey. What was his theory of architectural manners, after all, if it is not a statement about the associative meanings of style and material? For these reasons, Scott felt that a range of modern styles from Scandinavian-influenced classicism to modernised Gothic could work equally well in contemporary Britain.[128] Style was not his main concern –he felt that it was the elements of form and function that made a building a great work of art[129] — but he definitely used style along with symbolic ornament as another way of giving a building an identity.

The comment about disliking associative meanings, whether it was true to his practice or not, served a specific need in his argument. As usual, Scott was trying to shift the discussion to formal principles and to cast style aside, but by refusing to discuss the mixed nature of the New Bodleian details themselves, he failed to address his critics' question as to why the details featured such disorderly stylistic variety.

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[127] *The Ship*, Number 28, 1938, p. 24.
[128] As shown by his resounding support of such architects while serving as President of the RIBA, particularly in the competition for the new RIBA Headquarters at 66 Portland Place: Margaret Richardson. "66 Portland Place," *AD Profiles 24: Britain in the Thirties*, London, 1980.
[129] Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA, vol 41,* 11 November 1933, pp. 5-14.

Scott's ideal architecture was a reaction against what he felt was the over-emphasis on ornament in Victorian buildings. He believed that for Victorian builders of his grandfather's generation, ornament had served a didactic or narrative purpose: they had felt that ornament was symbolic and existed to be read. Ruskin declared in *The Stones of Venice* that we should "[read] a building as we would read Milton or Dante."[130] This was the sort of impulse that led architects to put cornucopias and allegorical statues of Thrift on the façade of banks. The result of this sort of ornament, Scott declared, was "too much superficial style and too little real architectural building."[131] Scott wanted to banish that sort of ornament completely. In this respect, he agreed with the International Modernists. He explained, "the modern movement against all ornament was a violent reaction against the senseless 'plastering on' of features serving no practical or aesthetic purpose that characterised a great deal of '*period*' architecture of Victorian and later times; in this respect it was a healthy reaction and undoubtedly good."[132]

However, he felt that the International Modernists were going too far. He elaborated: "I am not one of those who like to think that buildings are machines and that ornament upon them should be abandoned because ornament upon machinery is ridiculous … the baldness and crudeness resulting from this self-denying ordinance has become tiresome, even to its most enthusiastic adherents, and we see signs of reaction in the adoption of mechanistic ornament, usually fins, disks, or

[130] John Ruskin, *The Works of John* Ruskin, Library Edition, Online Resource, Vol. 10: The *Stones of Venice:* II, p. 206.
[131] Giles Scott, "Inaugural Address," *JRIBA,* vol 41, 11November 1933, p. 6.
[132] Giles Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford Magazine*, February 1937, p. 30.

rods, and other devices inspired by the working parts of machines." Ironically, this machine aesthetic is exactly what traditionalist opponents such as S E Cottam disliked in the New Bodleian. By trying to please everyone, Scott had pleased very few. Far from being a skilled act of diplomacy, such compromises were undermining his career.

Scott's desire to replace the narrative reading of ornament with more abstract artistic concepts of composition, material, and form was common to the most prominent architects of his day, including Holden and Lutyens.[133] The architects of the Arts & Crafts movement, who had trained Scott's generation, had expressed this same goal – architecture in which the application of mere stylistic vocabularies is sublimated in favour of texture, material, and form.[134] The idea was not to eradicate symbol, but to use it more forcefully and in partnership with what they considered to be deeper aesthetic truths.[135] Thus, despite their claims, they were not fully abandoning the Victorian concept of 'building as text,' but seeking to make that text less narrative. Holden and Scott desired to tap into the archetypal just as much as Lethaby had. As Reilly phrased it, the best contemporary architects sought architecture "watered at the roots of human civilization."[136] This search for

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[133] See Christopher Hussey's description of Lutyens's ideal of 'elemental' classicism in *The Life of Sir Edwin Lutyens*, London: Country Life, 1950. For Holden's use of elemental geometry in the design process, see Eitan Karol. *Charles Holden*, Amersham, Lincs: Shaun Tyas, 2007.
[134] Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture,* OUP, 1977, p. 21 Lethaby particularly stressed a desire to break with 'pure historical styles.'
[135] This focus on the 'elemental' is verbalised in the work of Christopher Hussey and A S G Butler, but perhaps has its roots in the work of Geoffrey Scott, who urged architects of Scott's generation to move away from the 'Victorian narrative fallacy' into an understanding of architecture based on purely aesthetic principles.
[136] C H Reilly, *Masters of Architecture: McKim, Mead, and White*, London: Ernest Benn, 1924, p. 17.

universal ornament for their universal architecture had led them to details that were chosen not for narrative message but for perceived psychological effect.

The New Bodleian Style Outside Oxford

Perhaps because of the harsh criticism it received, Scott's New Bodleian style had a short life, and Scott made no new designs in the style after the New Bodleian was unveiled in 1939. Thus, Scott designed a grand total of four such buildings – the New Bodleian and Hartland House in Oxford, a town hall in Dolgelly, Wales, and a vast expansion of the London Guildhall. Because of the outbreak of the Second World War, the latter two projects were never executed, meaning that Scott had no other opportunities to demonstrate the potential of his ideas.

Scott had designed a Town Hall for Dolgelly in 1938.[137] Set against a backdrop of the hills of north Wales, it would have been faced with stone and capped with a hipped tile roof. It featured a fenestration pattern similar to that of the New Bodleian. Designed with an unusual V-shaped plan, the point of the V would have been dominated by a low gabled tower topped with a lookout and flagpole.[138] The design demonstrated that Scott felt the style was universally applicable to institutional buildings in Britain regardless of whether they were set in surroundings dense with historical monuments. It is interesting that in this context, however, he omitted

[137] The town is now also known as Dolgellau.
[138] Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott His Son's View,* London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011, p. 17, image, p. 71.

Classical and Gothic details in favour of traditional British municipal heraldry and details derived from American Art Deco (for instance he divided the windows of the upper story with stone rods reminiscent of the vertical ornament on some recent New York skyscrapers, as he had also done at the New Bodleian).

The project that would have been the clearest statement of the style's intentions, however, was that for the Guildhall in London. In 1935, Scott had been called on to modernise and expand the London Guildhall – a project that was ultimately carried out to a different design by Scott after the war. In addition to a new entrance and office block, the Guildhall project was to have included expanding the library from 1500 to 4500 square feet and building a new art gallery. The project was exactly contemporary with the design of the New Bodleian.[139] He perhaps saw the style as suitable because the Guildhall too was an ancient institution wishing to modernise facilities set within an accretion of Gothic and Classical buildings. Scott designed a courtyard for arriving automobiles, embraced by a new entrance block set in front of George Dance's 1787 Indo-Gothick façade. The towering mass of the actual medieval great hall stood behind.[140] Here Scott's ideas about architectural history would have been manifested as a coherent narrative, with a chronological juxtaposition of façades from the modern through to the medieval Gothic. The whole would have been a manifesto for architectural evolution, with the entrance block showing its grounding in past ages through its ornament, but declaring its modernity in its fenestration and massing.

[139] "Guildhall Queries, 14 March 1935," Manuscript, SP, ScGG/282/1.
[140] See drawings in the RIBA Drawings Collections, SCOTT RAN 8 [96] 20-30.

Conclusion

By the time he designed the New Bodleian, Scott's theories had evolved beyond a narrower concept of history, drawn from Lethaby, into broader ideas about context. Over the course of the interwar period, his ideas about history had become increasingly abstract, depending less and less on meanings attached to historical styles. Scott had come to believe that combined with the inspiration of Nature (the broader context of all building), the inspiration of local history could create buildings in harmony with their surroundings. Architecture could thus enhance the unique character of a place.

Dolgelly Town Hall was an example of how this idea of history became a broader one of context. Dolgelly did not have many great architectural monuments for Scott to respond to, yet he insisted on the Bodleian style. This decision could be explained by what it did have — a grand natural setting — and Scott felt it therefore required the same combination of universalism and local reference as a way of blending in. Scott explicitly linked history and nature, writing that "past, artists have always drawn their inspiration from Nature."[141] Thus, the notion of history became a deeper idea of the nation itself – its natural and manmade settings, a part of a broader 'this scepter'd isle' concept of Englishness.

[141] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA. Held in Glasgow, 1935," Manuscript, SP, ScGG/279/3.

Scott contrasted this mode of design with that of the International Modernists: "an ideal inspired by man's admiration for his own mechanical creations can never inspire his efforts in art to anything like the same extent as God's own work expressed in Nature."[142] Throughout his career, Scott maintained a belief in the psychological importance of historical reference. He was afraid that if modern architecture stripped away all recognisable form, rather than merely clarifying and abstracting it, it would create a sort of cultural amnesia. Scott wrote that his primary objection to Modernism was that "it throws over the past and starts anew… from nothing."[143]

An interest in the specific narrative of history thus developed into an interest in the way the past could be used to call up cultural identity via association. Architectural form was a reminder of broader concepts such as democracy or religion as they evolved within the history of a nation, and these concepts were called up by seeing forms that embodied them. This embodiment was the product of a community's gradually built up body of architectural knowledge, i.e. tradition. Tradition was thus about the coding of architectural form with meaning in a way that was less specific than linking a building to a precise historical period such as the Middle Ages or the Regency. The Gothic style of a church might prompt the historical memory of the viewer to recall the virtues or vices of the Reformation, but tradition was what let the viewer recognise that the building was a church. The next chapter will address

[142] Ibid.
[143] Giles Scott, Introduction to C H Reilly, "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944, p. 3.

tradition, and many of the concepts introduced here will be given nuance by the further exploration of Scott's theories.

3.The Church Designs: Tradition in the Modern Age

Giles Gilbert Scott and his mentor Charles Reilly defined tradition as the evolutionary process that produced architectural style. Tradition was not a synonym for historicism, which they felt was static antiquarianism "dead as mutton." Tradition was development by increments. It was a social concept as much as an architectural one, closely linking community cohesion to architectural production. This chapter explores the way this concept of tradition informed Scott's church designs, and how innovation in church planning, furnishings, and even liturgy were driven by a desire to reinforce a sense of community that Scott feared was being fractured by suburbia and mass transit. It was the tension between tradition and modernity in Scott's work that produced his greatest buildings.

Scott made constant reference to the idea of tradition, as did most critics of the period, but it was a somewhat nebulous concept. What exactly did he mean by it? Primarily, tradition meant the built up body of architectural knowledge. C H Reilly wrote in 1932 that

> Tradition in building has been described as crystallised reasoning. Such tradition, such reasoning, that is to say, may or may not be logical and valid to-day. To discover this one must consider a little how the traditional forms came about and what were the desires and ideals to which they answered. Some of the needs, spiritual or physical, to which past architecture answered may not exist today, but whether that is so or not, the methods by which they were expressed have value.[1]

[1] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 14.

Scott echoed Reilly in his own writing, stressing repeatedly over the course of his career that architectural tradition was the evolutionary product of a long development of architectural ideas by a healthy community.[2] As the product of many minds and long evolution, it was naturally superior to the "mere stunts" of Victorian and International Modernist individualists.[3] The true individual genius, he wrote, such as Michelangelo, was always a product of a tradition, drawing out and accentuating its best features to create superior quality art.[4]

Scott's thesis on individual genius seems to have come straight from the Arts & Crafts architect E S Prior's 1900 book, *A History of Gothic Art in England.* "The first symptom of decline," Prior wrote, "is the birth of artistic individuality … the making of art a personal rather than a collective ambition."[5] It was an ideal descended, as historian David Watkin has rightly noted, from the romantic socialism of Ruskin and Morris.[6]

Such ideas were not limited to Scott and Reilly, although their interpretations had a unique flavour. The art critic Charles Marriott wrote in 1924:

> Architecture is a traditional art, proceeding by evolution. That is to say, the architecture of any place at any period is not a simple sum in addition of the preceding styles and characteristics, but a consequence of them; the net

[2] 'Healthy community' seemed to imply a community with shared values, a non-totalitarian state, and widespread religious devotion, but neither Reilly nor Scott ever clearly defined the phrase.
[3] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA. Held in Glasgow, 1935," Manuscript, SP, ScGG/279/3.
[4] Giles Scott, "The Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, Vol XLI, 11 November 1933, p. 14
[5] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 107.
[6] Ibid, p.107.

> result of influences which may or may not be apparent in the existing form; and modern English architecture can only be explained with general reference to the whole history of architecture and particular reference to the Greek and Gothic revivals of the nineteenth century.[7]

Beyond the mere aesthetic quality that tradition produced, it also played a key cultural role. Forms dictated by tradition, Reilly explained, allowed a viewer to 'read' a building, to recognise its function. The passerby recognized a steeple as denoting a church or a stone portico as denoting a public building because other English churches and public buildings had those features. In this sense, it was a culturally-endowed concept.[8]

If this concept of architectural tradition was somewhat sketchy, using terms like knowledge and reasoning interchangeably and relying on a linear concept of history, the notion that gave it shape and momentum was the idea that tradition only arose from organic community. Scott wrote that the existence of a tradition, "means that a large group of individuals, such as a nation, … agree to aim at the same ideals."[9] For Scott, the idea that tradition reinforced community was its most important element. As we will see, one of the primary aims of Scott's churches was to reinforce the sense of community in Britain. "The establishment of a strong communal element in the Arts is one of the crying needs of our time; all the fine art of the world throughout the ages has been produced under the influence of traditional styles, which means that a large group of individuals, such as a nation or continent, had a

[7] Charles Marriott, *Modern English Architecture*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1924, p. 71.
[8] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Victor Gollancz, 1932, p. 87.
[9] Letter, Scott to Provost Howard (Coventry), 10 June 1941, SP, ScGG/87/2 (1).

common line of thought, and developed this through a long period by a slow process of evolution," he wrote.[10]

Community was an omnipresent concern in interwar Britain. Cultural historian Matthew Grimley's study of the subject has shown that 'community' was used as a buzzword by town planners to express horror at the spread of poorly-planned suburbs, by politicians of all parties to show broad class sympathies, and by the Anglican clergy as a rhetoric "which could unite the nation against class consciousness, poverty, and the threat of Hitler."[11] The relationship between community and the state was helpfully imprecise; community could be framed as natural society occurring outside the realm of government or as social cohesion nurtured by the state. As a term it suggested shared values and civic responsibility; it had connotations of harmony and caring.[12]

The concept of community, of course, was just as malleable as the concept of tradition. It was sometimes used to mean local community, sometimes England, sometimes 'The West' or 'Christendom,' and sometimes all at once. Scott used the term in all of these senses. H G Wells recognised the slipperiness of the term, writing in his autobiography, "we did not say what we meant by the 'community' because none of us knew."[13]

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[10] Giles Scott, Introduction to Charles Reilly, "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944, p. 3.
[11] Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars,* OUP, 2004, p.i [Abstract].
[12] Ibid, p. 3.
[13] Ibid, p. 3

One thing that was constant, however, was that the concept of community in interwar British thought was indelibly rooted in an ideal of the country village. The countryside and its traditions were widely celebrated in interwar culture and art, and it was during this period that consensus developed about the importance of rural preservation.[14] Cultural historians have called this ruralist ideal 'deep England.' Historian John Stevenson has written that from the 1880s there was an "emerging exaltation of the rural way of life as the epitome of Englishness."[15] This celebration of pastoral themes in the face of urbanisation and industrialisation reached a peak in the Edwardian era and peaked again in the interwar decades.

Thus, the village became an ideal symbol of community, not only at a local level, but also as a synecdoche of England. "The landscape and the village," Stevenson wrote, "were perhaps the most commonly evoked symbols of national identity."[16] And the symbol of the village was its church. All national and religious identity could thus be focused on the parish church. Here, according to much interwar thought, was the ultimate heart of English community.

This pastoral imagery is particularly important to understanding the church designs of Giles Scott. Although Scott's life and architectural practice were distinctly urban, Scott reveled in the countryside. He had a country house at Denham in

[14] John Stevenson, "The Countryside, Planning, and Civil Society in Britain, 1926 – 1947," in José Harris, ed, *Civil Society in British History: Ideas, Identities, Institutions,* OUP, 2003, p. 191.
[15] Ibid, p.192.
[16] Ibid, p. 192.

Buckinghamshire (Fig. 3.1), to which he escaped to play golf, and his holidays were usually to rural or seaside locations. In October1944, he and Lady Scott were staying in a cottage near St Ives (Fig. 3.2), rambling across the landscape to examine the remains of prehistoric huts and marveling at the lack of urban amenities such as good notepaper. ("[This paper] looks like I pinched it from the WC!" he wrote).[17] Besides Cornwall, his holiday destinations included Totnes, and frequently Buckinghamshire and Surrey. Scott was an active participant in the fad for rural holidays. He loved motoring out into the countryside, and he loved picturesque rural buildings.[18]

Since the interwar rhetoric of community was not simply rural, but also particularly associated with the Church, an essential element was the ideal of a deeply Christian Britain. The religious devotion of the nation was seen as a key issue by all denominations, and as representatives of the official national church, it was Church of England leaders who took this concern to a national stage. As sociologist David Martin put it, the Church of England became "a generalised symbol of religious presence in the state…The imposing west front of religion."[19] Although himself a Roman Catholic, Scott knew (and supported) Anglican leaders such as Frederick Dwelly, who spoke on behalf of this ideal of the Christian nation. Grimley has shown that this rhetoric was key to the Church's contribution to political thought of the

[17] Letters, Scott to Reilly, 1 and 4 Nov 1944, CHR, D207/4/6.
[18] In converting a barn into a church for Downside Abbey, he had sought to preserve the barn character over the protest of the monks. At Totnes he had lobbied to save a row of old cottages. See Gavin Stamp, "Downside Abbey and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," in Dom Aidan Bellenger, ed, *Downside Abbey, An Architectural History,* London: Merrell, 2011, p.178.
[19] Quoted in Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars,* OUP, 2004, p.10.

period. He writes that the defining beliefs of what he terms Liberal Anglicans were "an organic national community presided over by a comprehensive church and an active state, and saw the development of the nation as part of a providential plan. They opposed both economic competition and class conflict as undermining national unity, and sought to counter them with the integrating force of education."[20] I argue that this concept was also key to the architectural rhetoric surrounding church building and had a direct impact on the Church's physical manifestation.

Few architects more directly incorporated this 'Liberal Anglican' rhetoric into their design philosophy than Giles Gilbert Scott. He designed his churches around the notion of community. He opened up sightlines, brought people closer to the altar, created welcoming entrances, and designed churches meant to dominate their often suburban locations like the village churches of old.

In architectural terms, Scott was not merely a supporter of the Liberal Anglican community ideal; he was the creator of its primary interwar visual vocabulary. This ideal was embodied in his Cathedral at Liverpool. With a prominent place in the international spotlight, Liberal Anglican leader William Temple's close allies, including the Dean, Frederick Dwelly, directed the development of the Cathedral's activity. Conceived, in a sense, as a giant village church for a giant village, the Cathedral dominated the city from its peak and aimed to serve the spiritual needs of

[20] Ibid, pp. 6-7.

the entire urban area. Liverpool Cathedral was a manifesto of what the modern Anglican Church could be — ecumenical and welcoming, at once theatrical and participatory, occasionally taking a national or international stage to preach community values through new broadcasting technologies. As we will see, this required the development of new liturgies and a new kind of physical space. Scott was involved in the creation of both.

The Cathedral thereby represented a moderate, democratic ideal for Britain that socially-minded architectural figures such as Charles Reilly could support wholeheartedly. Like William Temple, Reilly believed in what he termed 'socialism,' really an intense concern with issues such as class division and commercialism.[21] These ideals fitted well with Scott's own. Like Temple, Scott was a public-school-trained gentleman professional and a devoted forger of compromise and seeker of the middle ground.[22] Scott's ideals, as will be explained below, were deeply rooted in Roman Catholic thought of the nineteenth century, particularly Cardinal John Henry Newman's rhetoric of Christian community. But so was the thought of interwar Liberal Anglican leaders, who were increasingly influenced by the growing Anglo-Catholic strain within the Church, and thus increasingly aligned with Tractarian and Roman Catholic thought. The Catholic strain of William Temple's thought, for instance, had become increasingly prominent after his appointment as

[21] Simon Pepper and Peter Richmond, "Reilly, Sir Charles Herbert," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* 2014, Online. Church historian E R Norman has noted that during this period "Much of the language used to describe this movement of social opinion was very loose: the terms used by both the upholders and the detractors of the new social orthodoxies confused 'socialism' and 'social concern' pretty freely." E R Norman, *Church and Society in England, 1770-1970: A Historical Study,* Oxford: Clarendon, 1976, p.221

[22] Adrian Hastings, "Temple, William," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* 2014, Online.

Archbishop of York in 1929.[23] Thus the Liberal Anglican thought of the interwar era was a complement to Scott's Roman Catholic grounding. It provided a way to link his Christianity to contemporary political discourse and social concerns. It also defined a cross-denominational concern with a spiritualised, Christian, and essentially pastoral view of English national identity.

Scott's church practice was enormous, and his written works on church design are correspondingly numerous. During the interwar period, Scott was the most widely-known church architect of the British Empire — an international celebrity— and he built his practice around these commissions. Church work was genuinely the occupation that he was most passionate about. At a dinner celebrating the opening of St Alban's, Golders Green, in 1933 Scott declared that "the great joy of all his work was designing churches."[24]

Whereas his secular works were often merely artistic and clever façade work, or drew their most unusual planning ideas from other architects such as Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, in churches Scott was completely innovative and a designer of international influence. During the interwar decades, commissions and requests for consultations came via post from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Madagascar, and Sri Lanka. In Australia, the Melbourne church-architect Thomas Payne built in the Scott style (Fig. 3.3). In New Zealand, the architect Richard Toy practised the Scott

[23] Ibid.
[24] Summary of a speech by Giles Scott, *St Alban's Parish Magazine,* 25 March 1933, Golders Green Parish Church Archives, p. 8.

style (Fig. 3.4). Even the great American church architects Cram, Ferguson, and Goodhue looked to Scott, citing him as the greatest living architect.[25] Using a design vocabulary extrapolated from the Gothic tradition, he created previously unseen church layouts designed to compliment new liturgies; he experimented with the ways technology could enhance worship; and he strove for new aesthetic effects that he hoped would inspire reverence in contemporary congregations. Admiration of Scott's work was not simply a matter of aesthetic preference, other architects recognised that his innovations in planning and design were the product of a concern with community values.

Scott's earliest church commissions had quickly followed his 1903 victory in the Liverpool Cathedral Competition, and he soon demonstrated that his church designs would be every bit as interesting as his cathedral work. The church at Bournemouth (1905, Fig. 3.5), with its cyclopean bellcote and stacked masses is the best example of his early, romantic approach to Gothic design, which will be described later in this chapter. At St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool, (1910, Fig. 3.6), he began to work out some of his ideas about how to incorporate spaces for private devotion into a straightforward church plan alongside a clear view to the altar for communal worship. The culmination of this period was his radical church of Our Lady, Northfleet, (1913, Fig. 3.7), which with its massive grooved plinth and experimental

[25] Bertram Goodhue to Percy Newton, 1 May 1913, Goodhue Papers, Avery Library, Columbia University, quoted in Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1983, p. 130. Also, Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture,* Boston: Little Brown, 1936, p. 39.

masonry walling with a poured concrete core, is as striking as anything of the period by Mackintosh or Wright. It deserves to be better known.

Scott's interwar churches showed an increasing concern with psychology, which for Scott was the medium through which tradition spoke to the individual or collective mind. The ways that a church space could encourage reverence became one of his primary concerns. He introduced a number of radical church plans during this era, all designed to encourage a sense of community in the worshipper. Scott declared that architects must know that "they are more than architects, they are social reformers."[26] His best-known churches of the period were for the London suburbs and towns in the Home Counties: St Andrews, Luton, (1931, Fig. 3.8); St Francis, High Wycombe, (1928, Fig. 3.9); St Albans, Golders Green (1930, Fig. 3.10); and Ashford, Middlesex [now Surrey] (1927, Fig. 3.11). These churches reflected the zenith of his fame as a church architect and his most innovative planning ideas. At Ampleforth Abbey, he designed a two-sided central altar; at Golders Green he proposed two naves at a right angle to each other; at Charterhouse Chapel (1927, Fig. 3.12) he created a rhythmic reinterpretation of an Anglican college chapel, which incidentally would serve as the largest war memorial in the country.

The final phase of his church design practice, after World War II, reflected a shift in approach. In order to keep abreast of changing trends, Scott's office developed what is perhaps best called their 'catenary style' in which concrete catenary arches

[26] Giles Scott, reply to Charles Marriott, "Contemporary London Buildings," *JRIBA,* vol 41, 9 December 1933, p.125.

replaced the traditional round or pointed stone arches of his previous work, and churches such as Our Lady, Kensington (1954, Fig. 3.13) and St Anthony's, Preston (1954, Fig. 3.14) became something akin to an A-frame with tiny clerestories of factory-produced windows atop transverse concrete arches. This phase of design culminated in his striking design for Coventry Cathedral with its liturgically radical central altar (Fig. 3.14, discussed in Chapter 5); however, the ultimate rejection of this plan encapsulated the declining fashionability of Scott's church work amongst the triumphant International Modernism of the postwar period. These late churches were designed to appeal to popular taste for Modernist forms, encouraging community by making church spaces trendy.

This chapter will begin by exploring the idea of tradition in Scott's church work, both his own place within a larger Gothic Revival tradition and also the way he believed that the Gothic tradition, broadly defined, could be used to encourage a sense of community. It will then proceed to a series of case studies that trace the development of his church practice from his first parish church at Bournemouth (1905) to his final church at Plymouth (1960). The case studies will demonstrate the way that Scott used his understanding of psychology to achieve the atmosphere of 'reverence' that he felt was key to encouraging worship. An integral part of his theory of church design, he believed that it was by bringing people together to fulfill the primary function of worship that churches could fulfill the corollary function of forging community. The joining of the two strands, tradition and psychology, in

order to achieve this, formed the intellectual basis of Scott's theory of ecclesiastical design.

The Idea of the Gothic Spirit

In his 1932 book, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture*, C H Reilly wrote that although the Gothic Revival had been an aesthetic dead end, "the Gothic spirit" lived on in contemporary architects who strove to explore the capabilities of modern construction. For Reilly (like Muthesius), there were two eternal threads that ran through architectural history, that of the Classical and that of the Gothic. "Every architect to-day," he wrote, "is born either a little Classicist or a little Gothicist; either, that is to say, he feels in his bones that form, order, and proportion in the abstract are the essence of architectural design or he feels that form and proportion, not in the abstract but proceeding from construction and materials, are the real thing."[27] The emerging phase of modern architecture was Gothic in spirit: "dynamic and aspiring." Gothic he declared was native to Northern Europe, where he felt individualism and democracy were more respected. Thus he rooted architectural design in democracy and national identity. Reilly went on to apply this concept to the work of one of his favourite modern architects, Giles Gilbert Scott:

> With Sir Giles Scott's cathedral at Liverpool, which is still building, it is possible that a new chapter in Gothic architecture is already opening, for in it he has managed to combine not only the balance and symmetry of the classical ideal with Gothic construction but has so broadened the Gothic detail that he may be said to have clothed with new flesh the old bones of a

[27] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 50.

> style in which bores generally show a great deal. It is certain that when construction is so loved that it provides the mainspring of design and is the chief basis for the articulation of the building, the Gothic spirit will live and express itself afresh, whether in an American skyscraper or in a German ferro-concrete concert hall. [28]

Reilly's feelings about "the Gothic spirit," if not necessarily his feelings about the work of Giles Scott, were widely shared by British and American commentators of the period ranging from Kenneth Clark to Henry-Russell Hitchcock. They believed that the mid-Victorian Gothic Revival had largely failed to live up to its potential, producing gritty, spiky public houses clad in coloured brick and cheap tiles ("What a wilderness of deplorable architecture!"[29] wrote Kenneth Clark in 1928). The pens of Geoffrey Scott and Arthur Trystan Edwards attacked what they believed to be the travesty of Ruskin's aesthetic theories, with Edwards parodying Ruskin's *Seven Lamps* as "The Seven Lamps of Vulgarity."[30] Fashion turned so vehemently against the dusky stained glass and chunky masonry of the Victorian Gothic Revival style, that Clark claimed Oxford undergraduates in the 1920s would take strolls to laugh at Keble College (which they believed to have been built by Ruskin),[31] and Merton College would knock a story off of Butterfield's Grove Buildings and disguise the remainder with a cladding of Cotswold stone (Fig. 3.14). Max Beerbohm wrote in the Winter 1934 issue of *Oxford* that he "felt very proud" of Merton for doing away with the unfashionable Butterfield buildings, but also, he noted, for not replacing them with the "would-be-American erections" and "monstrous robot-warrens" that

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[28] *Ibid*. pp. 53-54.
[29] Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Episode in the History of Taste,* London, 1928, Reprint, 1962, p. 214.
[30] Arthur Trystan Edwards, *Good and Bad Manners in Architecture,* London: Philip Allan, 1924, p. 242.
[31] Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Episode in the History of Taste,* London, 1928, Reprint, 1962, p.2.

"modernistic architects" were threatening to construct in Oxford.[32] Evelyn Waugh would use a Gothic mansion of the 1860s as an analogy for sham chivalry and righteous morality in his 1934 novel *Handful of Dust*.[33] And yet the idea of 'the moral Gothic' remained, not as part of some tenacious conservative underground, but in the mainstream of English thought. The moralising tenets of Ruskin survived, though often modified, in the writings of the era's most important educators, Lethaby and Reilly. As Kenneth Clark pointed out, the cornerstone principle of the International Style – the idea that the expression of sound construction was beautiful – was taken straight from Pugin.[34]

The key to the interwar concept of "the Gothic spirit" was that it was divorced from architectural style. Theorists such as Frank Pick and Michael Sadlier[35] (who later encouraged the reprinting of Kenneth Clark's *Gothic Revival*), declared in their writings that art must be functional and modern, while retaining Ruskinian ideals of handicraft and artwork integrated with the built environment. This was a characteristic unique to British modernism. The emphasis on construction techniques bearing the spirit of the new architecture was widespread on the Continent and in the USA, but the insistence on persistently tying this idea to "the Gothic spirit" was uniquely British.[36] The style was tied not only to notions of

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[32] Max Beerbohm, "A Sight that Gladdened Me," *Oxford,* No. 2 Vol. 1, Winter 1934, p. 28.
[33] Evelyn Waugh, *A Handful of Dust,* London: Chapman and Hall, 1934.
[34] Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Episode in the History of Taste,* London: Constable, 1928, Reprint, London: Penguin, 1962, p.222.
[35] The son of influential art scholar and Scott client Michael Sadler. He added an i to his surname.
[36] Although it did occasionally occur in the USA. See Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, *The International Style,* New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932, Reprint, New York: Norton, 1995, p.33 "The light and airy systems of construction of the Gothic cathedrals, the freedom and slenderness of

structural exploration, but also to an idealised vision of the medieval community spirit. The idea that the Gothic style had spiritual significance beyond its forms had deep roots in British architectural thought. E S Prior had written in 1900 that "It is hard to justify any special admiration for Gothic architecture, if its forms be separated from the great truth of Gothic life … We conclude that the art of the medieval ages was not architectural dress, but something underneath it."[37] The historian Michael Saler has given the interwar manifestation of this ideal the apt name medieval modernism, and he has noted that the interwar generation in Britain was as influenced by Ruskin as any since the mid-nineteenth century.[38] One of the most influential writers and teachers of the era, William Lethaby, called Ruskin "a prophet" whose ideas had been so absorbed into the culture that for most people it was "hardly to be understood how anyone might have believed otherwise,"[39] and Scott himself occasionally quoted Ruskin as an authority in his writing.[40]

So although they reviled the products of the Gothic Revival, many architects considered it to have laid the theoretical groundwork on which modern architecture would be developed. Charles Marriott wrote of the improvements to architectural

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their supporting skeleton, afford, as it were, a presage of a style that began to develop in the nineteenth century, that of metallic architecture."

[37]Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 108.

[38] Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP, 1999, pp.vii – viii.

[39] W R Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation,* OUP, 1922, p. 183.

[40] For example, his first public speech in 1903, Giles Scott, sketchbook, n.d. [c.1903], SP, SKB/304/3. What Scott liked in Ruskin was his advocacy of nature as the inspiration for all good design and particularly the religious justification of taking God's designs as examples, rather than the designs of man. [See 1935 Glasgow Address for his longest treatment of this theme]. The idea of architectural manners as Scott conceived it — a major component of which was the use of local materials in traditional local ways — was an idea that developed largely from Ruskin via the Arts & Crafts movement. This reflected a major difference between Scott and Trystan Edwards, whose Neo-Georgian taste seemed to despise anything Gothic, and whose concerns were more about scale and reserve than tradition *per se*.

theory in the nineteenth century, "that the gain is permanent nobody can doubt who looks round at modern architecture, and it is equally certain that we owe it to the Gothic Revival."[41] For his part, in his 1932 book that helped to establish the canonical theories of International Modernism, *The International Style*, Henry-Russell Hitchcock wrote of the "splendid theories and stupid practice of the Gothic Revival."[42] Even Frank Lloyd Wright wrote in "The Disappearing City" in 1932 that Gothic was an important inspiration for modern architects because "the medieval spirit was nearest the communal, democratic spirit of anything we know."[43]

No architect more directly encapsulated this concept than Giles Gilbert Scott. Seeking the communal, he embraced both the spirit and the style of Gothic, capitalising on the ambiguous relationship between the two.[44] Finding the archaeological forms of the mid-nineteenth century anathema, Scott did not think of his own work as belonging to the Gothic Revival, but as part of a new phase.[45] He wrote, "The traditions of Gothic have been destroyed, and we cannot get much further if we merely attempt to carry on the style from where the medievalists broke off. We can only study the style, and having grasped its spirit, we can then

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[41] Charles Marriott, *Modern English Architecture*, London: Chapman and Hall, 1924, p. 70.
[42] Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. *The International Style.* New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932, Reprint, New York: Norton, 1995,p. 43.
[43] Frank Lloyd Wright, "The Disappearing City," 1932, reprinted in Harry Francis Mallgrave, ed, *Architectural Theory, Volume 2: An Anthology from 1871-2005,* Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p. 258.
[44] In 1904, Scott wrote, "Liverpool will have a Gothic cathedral, but of a quite different type to our medieval cathedrals; in fact, there is no Gothic building in the world to which it can be compared." Quoted in Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 27.
[45] As evidenced by his reference to the "hard, mechanical, and soulless" nature that make the works of the Revival so inferior to the mediaeval, whose spirit dry archaeological work fails to capture. Giles Scott, "Sydney Cathedral Assessor's Report," 1937, SP, ScGG/257/3.

impart our own personality."[46] Scott sought an evolutionary mutation of the Gothic that would bring it in line with functional concerns, theories of significant form, and the liturgical needs of contemporary congregations. Thus he could scorn the Victorian Revival over and over again in his writings without seeing himself as hypocritical.[47] And thus critics could praise the virtues of his search for a modern Gothic. In a talk broadcast on the BBC in the late 1920s, C H Reilly trumpeted "[Scott] has not attempted to rival the old work under modern conditions. Instead he has made modern work which has new qualities of its own."[48]

Scott 's creation of a "modern Gothic" was something that was not only compatible with, but tied to the very essence of, the search for a uniquely British form of modernism. For not only Scott, but for so many of the critics and architects in England, the machine aesthetic was an abomination that dehumanised buildings, and modern architecture, regardless of its stylistic form, was still about the quest to get the Gothic right.

Although he viewed it as a past phenomenon, the Victorian Gothic Revival was the tradition out of which Scott felt his work had developed. He believed that with its expression of structure and functional plan and with its embedded cultural meanings, it was the tradition from which modern architecture would be born. [49] He hoped that the lessons and abstractions of formalism — so often the exclusive

[46] Quoted in Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 32.
[47] Giles Scott, "The Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 11 November 1933, p.6.
[48] C.H. Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," Bound typescript, February 1927, CHR, D207/27.
[49] Giles Scott, "Sydney Cathedral Assessor's Report," 1937, SP, ScGG/257/3.

province of classicism — could also be used to draw out the higher qualities of the Gothic system. Thus, C H Reilly believed that Scott's 'modern Gothic' was one more step towards universal architecture: if the best elements of the classical tradition could be fused with the Gothic, it would move architecture much closer to the ultimate convergence of all styles into a universal singularity.[50] In Reilly's eyes, Scott was the culmination of the Muthesian scheme to unite Greek and Gothic into a truly modern architecture that was at once both and neither. [51]

For Scott, however, the implications of this quest went far beyond mere aesthetic satisfaction. By creating a modern Gothic, Scott was hoping to demonstrate that fears about mechanisation and social strife would prove unfounded if modern technology and modern art could be united to encourage Christian brotherhood and improve quality of life. Scott's modern Gothic quest was an endeavour to heal society.

Scott's place in the lineage of the Gothic Revival

Scott ultimately took very little from Temple Moore, the church architect with whom he did his apprenticeship. Moore had been a pupil of Scott's father and had taken over the office during Gilbert Scott Jr's madness and after his death. By placing the young Giles in his office sometime around 1898, Scott's mother hoped that some of

[50] C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," Bound typescript, February 1927, CHR, D207/27.
[51] C H Reilly, "The Work of Giles Gilbert Scott, RA," *The Architect's Journal,* 7 January 1925, p.13. For further treatment of Muthesius scheme for 'universal architecture' see Chapter 1.

his father's legacy could be passed on to him.[52] Moore had inherited the drawings of the Scott office, from which the young Scott could be trained.[53] The reality was that Scott saw very little of Moore, whom he recalled "lived almost a hermit's life at Hampstead."[54] Although Scott's time in the office must have greatly improved his fluency in the Gothic vocabulary, his planning and his detailing were always very different from those of his master. The most prominent commonality in their designs, the fact that Moore, like Scott, disliked chancel arches and often chose to create no structural distinction between the nave and the chancel,[55] was a practice that had originated in the work of G F Bodley, not with Moore himself.[56] In contrast to Giles Scott, Moore commonly included large chapels with prominent windows behind the main altar to create a sense of space continuing beyond. He did not hesitate to interrupt the congregation's view if he felt it enhanced the sense of mystery. Pusey House (1911, Fig. 3.15) is a prime example, where a solid stone wall screens the congregation's view of the High Altar beyond. This is a standard monastic plan, in which the space for the resident clergy's daily services is separated from the space for Sunday congregations. When Scott designed for monastic settings, however, he threw the spaces wide-open – both Ampleforth (1931, Fig. 3.16) and Downside (nave, 1925, Fig. 3.17) have no screen between the monk's choir and the congregation. Also, in direct contrast to Giles Scott's dim and

[52] Geoffrey K Brandwood, *Temple Moore,* Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1997, p. 36.
[53] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p.358.
[54] HS Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of Temple Moore," *RIBA Journal,* 26 May 1928, Vol 35, No 14, p.487.
[55] Geoffrey K Brandwood, *Temple Moore,* Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1997, pp. 49-50.
[56] Elain Harwood, "Liturgy and Architecture," *Twentieth Century Architecture 3: The Twentieth Century Church.* Twentieth Century Society, London, 1998, p.56.

moody lighting, Moore and Scott Jr, as well as Bodley and Sedding, had flooded their churches with light from large windows.[57]

This difference is brought into relief when one looks at the work of another Moore pupil, T Harold Gibbons, who joined the office around the time of Scott's departure in 1902. Gibbons, although he only spent two years with Moore,[58] absorbed his vocabulary of Gothic as a series of partially-revealed views through pillars and screens. Moore's and Gibbons's churches, featuring many aisles and different levels, were spaces to be explored (Fig. 3.18). They were spaces that revealed themselves slowly. From the beginning, Giles Scott rejected this approach to planning and instead focused on single volumes for his churches, reflecting the 'rational planning' taking hold amongst Roman Catholic church designers in Northern Europe at this time, for instance in the work of Domenikus Böhm (Fig. 3.19). The vocabulary of Scott's style may have been similar to Moore's, but his spirit was very different.

Scott perhaps always intended to distance himself from Moore and from his father's work in order to create a unique professional identity for himself. Whereas his brother Adrian chose to settle in Hampstead, where he had grown up and where both Moore and their father had had their offices, Giles Scott moved into the heart of the city, and eventually built his house near Hyde Park. Indeed, when reflecting on his time in Moore's office during the discussion that followed H S Goodhart-Rendel's 1928 paper on Moore at the RIBA, Scott was eager to stress that he had not been

[57] Geoffrey K Brandwood, *Temple Moore,* Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1997, p.60
[58] Twentieth Century Society, Notes for T Harold Gibbons Study Day, 13 October 2012.

under the direct supervision of Temple Moore, but had worked in an office overseen by his father's former assistant P B Freeman to which Temple Moore outsourced his drafting work. Moore only came into the office rarely. Scott explained:

> Mr Freeman was helping Temple Moore with the working drawings for some of his jobs, and it was on these drawings that I was employed. Temple Moore only visited Staple Inn periodically, so my knowledge of him was not immediate and close as it might have been if the arrangement had been a normal one and I had been entirely under his personal supervision. Nevertheless, it was a very fortunate situation for me, as I not only had Temple Moore's work to deal with, but was also surrounded by other architects all discussing their own problems, and it was an extraordinarily valuable and instructive period of pupilage.[59]

While typically being carefully polite, Scott implied that he learned more by not being under Moore's direct supervision and stressed the fact that he could hardly be said to be a product of Moore's office. Scott went on to distance himself further by claiming to be unfamiliar with most of Moore's work: "Temple Moore did an extraordinarily large amount of work, but I myself have not actually seen a large portion of it," although, of course, he said that he was sure that it must be very good.[60] In fact, he said that he thought Moore's work was amongst "the finest done in the Gothic Revival."[61] Scott, however, did not consider himself to be a part of the Gothic Revival,[62] and by linking Moore with a term he associated with the Victorians, he was stressing the philosophical difference between his own work and Moore's.

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[59] H S Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of Temple Moore," *RIBA Journal,* 26 May 1928, Vol 35, No 14, p.487.
[60] Ibid, p.488.
[61] Ibid, p.488.
[62] Giles Scott, "The Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 11 November 1933, p.6, and Giles Scott, "Sydney Cathedral Assessor's Report," 1937, SP, ScGG/257/3.

The differences between Scott's and Goodhart-Rendel's evaluation of Moore's work is instructive. Scott related Moore's work to contemporary taste and peppered the discussion with architectural buzzwords in a way that Goodhart-Rendel did not. The characteristics of Moore's work that Scott thought worthy of admiration were "simplicity," "strength," and "austerity," – all characteristics to be found in his own work, although he admitted that Moore's austerity "may have been dictated by the question of expense."[63] By tying Moore to the Gothic Revival and by condemning other aspects of his work through omission, Scott both grasped at whatever straws of proto-modernity he could find in his master's work and distanced himself from its less-admired aspects. It was central to Goodhart-Rendel's argument, by contrast, that Moore's work should be admired as art, regardless of current fashion.

By the end of the 1920s, the reluctant appreciation of the Victorians reflected in Kenneth Clark's *Gothic Revival* had begun to take wider hold amongst artists. The opinion of Giles Scott's fellow architects of the architecture of the previous two generations was complex but increasingly grudgingly favourable, as evidenced by the 1928 discussion of Temple Moore's work at the RIBA. Like many architects before and since, Goodhart-Rendel felt that the middle Scott had been a genius, "a man of rare talent … To him more than any other church architect is due the break-up of Victorian Gothic convention that his father had had so large a role in establishing."[64] However, this opinion was not shared by Beresford Pite and Charles

[63] H S Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of Temple Moore," *RIBA Journal,* 26 May 1928, Vol 35, No 14, p.488.
[64] Ibid, p.472.

Nicholson, who felt that Gilbert Scott Jr, had instead, as Pite put it, led the Gothic Revival "back five centuries into the Middle Ages."[65] They felt that it was the elder Scott along with Butterfield and Waterhouse who were prepared for "making a move into a new world," and that Scott Jr and his contemporaries had squandered the progress of a radical architectural movement, plunging the Gothic Revival into a ideology of romantic nostalgia. Goodhart-Rendel conceded the point, praising the "candid modernism" of the Butterfield generation, although he protested that such concerns had little to do with artistic merit.[66] Scott, notably, did not stand up in defence of his grandfather.

It was in direct lineage from his grandfather and father, however, that Scott received his idea of architectural development. For George Gilbert Scott Sr's generation, the Gothic Revival was seen as evolving towards a new Gothic that would not look like medieval Gothic, but would be something entirely new and entirely modern. This ideal began to be explored in the muscular churches of G E Street and the polychromatic brick buildings of Butterfield. If Giles Scott's grandfather's generation had approached Gothic with a mid-Victorian pragmatism and optimism, and his father's generation had imbued it with the poetry and mysticism of the Aesthetic Movement, Giles Scott's own generation swung the pendulum strongly back towards pragmatism and the evolution of new forms for what was once again perceived to be a world being rapidly transformed by technology. Giles Scott himself stood firmly in this camp, and although he admired his father's work and disliked mid-Victorian

[65] Ibid, p.489.
[66] Ibid, p.492.

design, it was his grandfather's ideals (and ultimately his grandfather's success) that he would unconsciously emulate. All three generations, however, believed in the development of Gothic.

Scott's particular conception of architectural tradition as developmental owed a significant amount to his Roman Catholic intellectual circle. The word 'development' had special meaning for British Catholics. John Henry Newman defined it in his 1878 *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* as the process by which Christian Doctrine is elaborated and becomes richer and more specific over the years without becoming any less true. In this sense, 'development' is a sort of growth or blossoming of an idea. In 1936, G K Chesterton explained, "evolution [is] the unfolding of what is not there. I have since, in a special sense, come to believe in development; which means the unfolding of what is there."[67] It was in this sense of the meaning of the word that the High Victorian theorists of the Gothic Revival had used it — development in that context meant the elaboration of the perceived spiritual and structural principles of the Gothic style to create a new architecture. It was presumably with the implications of this sense that Giles Scott himself chose to use the word. In parallel to Scott's ideas about architectural tradition, Newman stressed that Christian doctrine was a matter of common belief, not the product of individual judgment. The tendency of the individual mind to err was corrected by the application of many minds past and present.[68] Scott's unique formulation of the

[67] G K Chesterton, *Autobiography,* London: Hutchinson, 1969 (originally 1936), pp. 51-52.
[68] John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,* London: Longmans, Green, and Co, 1909 (originally 1878), Online, www.newmanreader.org, revised September 2001, pp.36-38.

theory of architectural tradition thus shared with Newman the idea of community creation in which individual geniuses worked within the communal tradition to create superlative works that reinforced the validity of the overall idea. Newman explained how the rapid and sometimes destabilising change of life on earth is part of the Divine Plan.[69] Scott felt the same was true with architecture, that its apparent constant change was the reflection of the development of an essential underlying unity. The unifying truth underlying architecture as posited in the theory of universal architecture could be seen as paralleling the universal and unifying single Truth underlying Christianity, and thereby fit well with a Roman Catholic worldview. The nuance of Scott's argument is significant, for whereas other ecclesiastical Gothicists took this as an argument for an unchanging Gothic style, Scott took it as a defence of change and fused it to the idea of converging styles.

These Newman-inspired ideas came to Scott directly from his father, who had been part of a circle of prominent Roman Catholic intellectuals living at Hampstead in the second half of the nineteenth century, and who had known Newman personally. Newman had been an influential figure in his father's conversion to Roman Catholicism and was directly or indirectly responsible for some of his architectural commissions.[70] The developmental nature of church design was the primary thesis of George Gilbert Scott Jr's *Essay on the History of Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from the Roman Obedience.* The title even echoes Newman's title. For Scott Jr, all Christian art was part of one vast stream, unified by underlying

[69] Ibid, p.40.
[70] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p. 148.

essentials without being uniform.[71] Just as in the Muthesian scheme, in George Gilbert Scott Jr's essay, ideal architecture came from the unification of classical and Gothic motives into a single essential style – a process that in his estimation began with the Romanesque.[72] Like his son, he believed that style was the product of a community group and that national characteristics would always assert themselves in the best architecture.[73]

If this sounds like much architectural theory of the early 20th century, that is because Scott's *Essay on the History of Church Architecture* was widely influential. Giles Scott was therefore hearing the same ideas from a number of quarters – both from the broader world of architectural criticism and directly from the work of his father. In a typical act of diplomacy, Scott united the two streams to create his unique architectural theory of tradition – a theory that would underlie most of his architectural thinking.

George Gilbert Scott Jr, had bemoaned the mid-Victorian failure to develop a form of Gothic that completely rejected historical forms, and admitted that he himself did not know how to do it: "[There is] nowhere with any genuine power of creating new forms of beauty united to new requirements. Indeed, it is difficult to see how, when tradition is broken up, or has exhausted itself, a new genuine architecture is to be

[71] George Gilbert Scott, Jr, An *Essay on the History of Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from the Roman Obedience,* London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co, 1881, p. i.
[72] Ibid, p. 95.
[73] Ibid, p. 130.

originated."[74] He felt that the Gothic had reached its apogee in the English Perpendicular, and could be developed no further without complete transformation into something new: "The fourth-pointed style must be regarded as the latest and most advanced phase, which mediaeval art anywhere assumed, and in it, as we cannot doubt, the capabilities of the style are finally exhausted. It is the glory of the English school of architecture that in England alone did the gothic style receive its final and complete development."[75] So although the architects gathered at RIBA Headquarters in 1928 did not think of George Gilbert Scott, Jr, as a modernist searching for new forms, he had promoted the idea of Gothic development in his writings, even if he himself had failed to achieve it. His son would make this search for a completely transformed and ahistorical Gothic style one of the key tenets of his own work, taking this transformation from the merely theoretical realm of his father, back into the practical realm of his grandfather.

Giles Scott did not feel that he had to make the leap entirely away from the Gothic style in order to be successful; he merely had to drive its evolution forward. In fact, Scott considered the maintenance of vestigial Gothic forms to have a psychological advantage. Tradition had the sanction of history, and during the evolution of the style, it was important that historical associations be maintained. Repeating a dogma that had been essential to the English Gothic Revival since his grandfather's generation, what mattered to Giles was the essential idea of Gothic, not its

[74] Ibid, p. 2.
[75] Ibid, p. 186.

traditional details.[76] When asked in 1921 whether his new Charterhouse Chapel would fit in with the existing buildings, Giles Scott replied that the existing school buildings were "very Gothic in form, but utterly lacking in Gothic feeling. I have endeavoured to catch the real spirit of the old Gothic with as little use of expensive detail as possible and I think I can claim to have succeeded."[77] The Victorian idea that it was the spiritual properties of Gothic that mattered— the Christian and English characteristics that it was held to embody – was alive and well in interwar Britain. The key, Scott stressed, was that such spirit was not embodied in elaborate historically-inspired ornament, but in formal principles such as loftiness, in the solidity of massive stone walls, and in soaring leaded lights. It was as if William Butterfield had read Roger Fry. He was inflecting High Victorian ideals with the aesthetic theories of the present day. This was what Reilly meant by "the Gothic spirit," and it reflects just how deeply Puginian notions about Gothic superiority were rooted in English architectural thought even at this late date.

Just as he had taken little from Temple Moore, so Giles Scott would take little from the actual characteristics of his father's churches. In his essay on church architecture, George Gilbert Scott Jr, listed five essential characteristics of British churches: a single tower in the centre of the west front, the principal entrance via a south porch rather than a western portal, high chancel screens to break up the view,

[76] I do not think that Scott got this idea directly from the writings of Victorian architects, rather from the writing of Edwardian and interwar theorists such as Roger Fry and William Lethaby. However, I believe that these ideas essentially came into interwar theory by lineal descent from Gothic Revival theory. They had never really gone away.
[77] Letter, Scott to Fletcher, 1 October 1921, Charterhouse Archives, ACC 0322/1/146-298.

transepts lower than the nave, and the square-ended chancel.[78] The only one of the five elements that is a common feature of Giles Scott's church designs is a side entrance. He completely rejected chancel screens; sometimes built apsidal east ends, as at St Alphege's, Bath (1925, Fig. 3.20), and Charterhouse Chapel (1927); and he often made the transepts as high as the nave, as in his early parish church at Sheringham (1907) and in his dramatic work at Northfleet (1913, Fig. 3.21).

That is not to say that Scott was not influenced by his father's work. He was. "I always think my father was a genius," he wrote, "He was certainly the best of the group that broke away from dead archaeology and began to feel instead of think … He was a far better architect than my grandfather and yet look at the reputation of the two men!"[79] Scott's time in Moore's office had, after all, been more about learning his father's ideas than Moore's.[80] There were definite affinities in the work of father and son (Fig. 3.22). Goodhart-Rendel's description of Scott Jr's work could have been used to describe Giles Scott's own work: "the angular multi-foiled tracery, the mysterious but unmistakable smell of Renaissance that hung about his most Gothic details, the challenging bleakness of some of his outlines."[81] Hubert Worthington recalled that Scott had said, "Grandfather was the successful practical

[78] George Gilbert Scott, Jr, *An Essay on the History of English Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from Roman Obedience.* London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co, 1881, p. 50.
[79] Letter, Giles Scott to John Betjeman, 19 December 1938, McPherson Library, University of Victoria, Canada, quoted in Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p.361.
[80] Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p. 186.
[81] H S Goodhart-Rendel, "The Work of Temple Moore," *JRIBA,* 26 May 1928, Vol 35, No 14, p.478.

man, and a phenomenal scholar in Gothic precedent, but Father was the artist."[82] Giles Scott, to some extent, tried to be all three.

The idea that an atmospheric nature and artistic conception were an essential part of a church's programme meant that Scott's lineage was as much Romantic as it was rational. In that sense, Scott was an heir not only of his grandfather's pragmatism, but of his father's romantic philosophy as well. In a 1907 letter to GF Bodley, summarizing his approach to Gothic design, Giles Scott confessed his belief in the poetic nature of design: "If a man sincerely expresses his feelings so that others experience those feelings, that man is an artist."[83]

Another contemporary who shared Giles Gilbert Scott and Goodhart-Rendel's belief that George Gilbert Scott Jr was a great genius was John Ninian Comper. Contrasting Comper's ideas with Giles Scott's is instructive. Comper not only admired the aesthetic effect of Scott Jr's architecture, but also the philosophical ideas underlying it. He considered Scott Jr's *Essay on the History of English Church Architecture Prior to the Separation from Roman Obedience* to be the best book ever published about church architecture.[84] From Gilbert Scott Jr's idea that Christian art is universal, and that English architecture is only a part of a universal church, Comper would formulate his own idea of "unity by inclusion," stating that elements from all ages of

[82] Hubert Worthington, "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (obituary)" *JRIBA,* April 1960, p. 193, quoted in Gavin Stamp, *An Architect of Promise,* Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2002, p.361.
[83] Letter, Scott to GF Bodley, 14 October 1907, BSP, 48.
[84] Anthony Symondson, "Unity by Inclusion," *The Twentieth Century Church,* London: Twentieth Century Society, 1998, p. 27.

Christian art could be mixed at will in sacred design.[85] Like Comper, Giles Scott also brought together a variety of sources, but the philosophical roots of these superficially similar approaches were very different. Scott sought to give classical balance to Gothic design and chose his details out of regard for compatibility of form. Drawing widely from architectural history, Scott took inspiration as equally from the architecture of ancient Mesopotamia as from the Gothic churches of Catholic Spain.[86] Scott did not explain how he rationalised the use of Mesopotamian precedent; his eclectic sources of inspiration and his own stress on the importance of formal principles make it evident that his primary concerns in this regard were aesthetic.[87] While Comper was clearly also concerned with aesthetic harmony, his choices were shaped by a desire to create the analogy of a united Christian world.

Giles Scott and Comper were contemporaries and to some extent rivals, although Scott often admired Comper's work. When Comper was knighted in 1950, Scott provided one of the testimonials.[88] Like Scott, Comper was at the forefront of innovative planning in British church architecture, bringing an altar into direct communication with the nave as early as 1912 at the Grosvenor Chapel, Westminster (Fig. 3.23),[89] earlier even than Scott, and being a vocal proponent of

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[85] Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, pp.105-6.
[86] Giles Scott, Sketchbook, SP, SKB/304/3 and Vere Cotton, *The Book of Liverpool Cathedral,* Liverpool: Liverpool University, 1964, p. 28.
[87] Scott especially emphasises the importance of formal principles as a way of explaining the design of the New Bodleian, Giles Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford Magazine*, February 1937, p.30.
[88] Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p.186.
[89] Admittedly, the Grosvenor Chapel was a special circumstance, as Comper was converting an 18th century church in which the altar would have been in communication with the nave anyway, and

the baldachino, (which he insisted on calling a ciborium, a term he felt was more correct). Like Scott, he would also adopt plans inspired by early Christian basilicas with choirs removed to rear galleries, and he went on to experiment with centralised plans in his design for the 1943 reconstruction of St John of Jerusalem, Clerkenwell (Fig. 3.24), around the same time that Scott designed his own first truly centralized plan for Coventry Cathedral. Both architects stressed the importance of provoking a psychological response in the worshiper; a church, Comper believed should, "bring a man to his knees."[90]

In contrast with Scott, Comper brought the altar forward at the Grosvenor Chapel in response to medieval precedent and the constraints of the existing space[91] and continued to use chancel screens throughout his career.[92] Scott brought altars forward out of a concern for creating a greater sense of community and even omitted chancel arches in his drive not to separate the congregation from the action of the Eucharist. Both worked primarily for High Church Anglican and Roman Catholic clients, and both sought to express Englishness in their church designs. [93]

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adding a screen behind to transform the existing sanctuary into a Lady Chapel. Comper tended to place altars behind screens and had a generally Puginian approach to church planning that cannot, ultimately, be considered as innovative as Scott's.

[90] Ninian Comper, "On the Atmosphere of a Church," 1939, reprinted in Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p.201.

[91] Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p.35 and p.110. George Gilbert Scott Jr cites the precedent for such arrangements and notes that they are particularly British. George Gilbert Scott, Jr, *An Essay on the History of English Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from Roman Obedience.* London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co, 1881, p.4.

[92] George Gilbert Scott cited the use of chancel screens as a key feature of the English Church. George Gilbert Scott, Jr, *An Essay on the History of English Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from Roman Obedience.* London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co, 1881, p.50.

[93] Comper's projects were primarily Anglican, whereas Scott had a much larger number of Roman Catholic commissions than Comper did.

But Comper's particular brand of Englishness was deeply rooted in George Gilbert Scott Jr's essay and, unlike Giles Scott's, was grounded in a scholarly study of theology and careful examination of medieval and Victorian English liturgies.[94] Rather than reviving historical liturgies, Giles Scott believed in developing new ones.[95]

Comper began his career as a staunch medievalist of the Bodley mould, believing that church architecture of the Middle Ages was inherently perfect and existed outside of time, so that evolving it for 'modern conditions' in the sense that Scott proposed was, if not a heresy, then at least nonsense. Scott, in turn, felt that such medievalism was taking things too far:

> The fact is that extreme purist ideas are all very well in theory, but in practice they must not be carried too far … [as we] would be debarred from taking advantage of many of our modern resources, such as reinforced concrete … art, like everything else, must go with the times and must reflect the ideas, inventions, and resources of its own generation.[96]

Whereas Scott often ordered pastel leaded glass for his churches from a commercial supplier, Comper came to use medieval recipes for his glass, with sand and seaweed flux in clay pots.[97] Scott designed modern vestments, created for new liturgies, while Comper recreated late medieval chasubles from the evidence in 15th century

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[94] Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p.19.
[95] As was demonstrated in his designs for Liverpool Cathedral and Coventry Cathedral, Scott was very interested in the ways that architectural space could be used to enhance experimental contemporary liturgies. See section on Liverpool Cathedral below and see Chapter 5.
[96] Letter, Scott to Frederick Radcliffe, 31 July 1916, BSP, 66.
[97] Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p. 51.

paintings.[98] Outside their differing opinions on medievalism, there were artistic differences as well. Comper's work was rich in colour and gilding and he flooded his churches with light, whereas Scott avoided these things. Scott often admired Comper's reredos designs, but, as at Downside Abbey, he expressed his objection to Comper's use of what he considered "fleshy" images.[99] Although, next to Scott, Comper was perhaps the most fluent Gothic designer of the period and although he did eventually become less dogmatic about using medieval methods during the interwar period, there is no denying a vast difference in artistic philosophy between the two men.

The root of their artistic differences lay in their attitudes to the idea of community and tradition. They both had a functional approach to church design. They both saw churches as buildings for the enactment of liturgies as well as private prayer. But whereas Scott promoted a Liberal Anglican ideal of democratic community in which the congregant's involvement in the act of worship served as a model for civil society, Comper was less concerned with addressing social concerns directly. He believed such concerns would be addressed by the nature of the Sacraments themselves. He dreamed of a world in which thurifers filled screened chancels with incense while the congregation came together to receive Communion— their mystic union with Christ naturally resulting in a union with one another. Comper saw architectural tradition as a set of eternally unchanging forms that responded to

[98] Ibid, p. 56.
[99] Gavin Stamp, "Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and Downside Abbey" in Dom Aidan Bellenger, ed, *Downside Abbey,* London: Merrell, 2011, p. 190.

eternally unchanging human needs. Variety was created by emphasising different elements of the continuous universal. For Scott, architectural tradition was something that could be modernised — as at the New Bodleian — ever developing and changing to meet the changing needs of modern communities.

Ironically, it was Comper's very medievalism that made him popular in the supposed era of postwar High Modernism. There was nostalgia for English tradition in a society that had nearly seen its destruction in the war.[100] This nostalgia was so deeply rooted that critics such as John Summerson, whose relationship to Scott is discussed in the introduction, could not help but praise Comper's reflection of 'English tradition' on the one hand, while promoting International Modernism for a new Britain on the other. In the postwar era, Giles Scott fell between two stools, as English tradition was seen as a lost cause worthy of romantic celebration, not something to be modernised.[101] Summerson recalled the first time he saw Comper's reredos at Wymondham (Fig. 3.25): "I had no idea that such lovely work could be created in the twentieth century…Pugin, Bodley, and Comper have always had for me the same sort of magic – a genius for making late English Gothic come alive…I must confess I have never been much attracted by Comper's Renaissance

[100] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns,* London: Thames & Hudson, 2010, p.11.
[101] If such romantic celebration of tradition was considered to be the 'function' of a church, then perhaps in Summerson's eyes, Comper was a Modernist. However, in that case, it is hard to see how Scott, who was also deeply understanding of the liturgical function of spaces, would not also be granted the functionalist label. It may have simply been a matter of spiritual sympathies. Comper represented what could be called a more hard-line conservative strain of Anglo-Catholicism than Scott, infused with a heavy measure of aestheticism, for which Scott's experiments with social psychology and technology would be considered irrelevant or inessential. It seems hypocritical that artists such as John Piper, Graham Sutherland, and Eric Ravilious could be celebrated in the arts for bringing an aesthetic of abstraction and modernisation to English subject matter, whereas Scott's attempts to do the same in church architecture were dismissed.

work…Neither Giles Scott nor Tapper quite have it. Pugin, of course, was something of a saint. Beside him, Comper was a bit of a prig, Bodley an amiable school-master, Tapper a bore and Scott a thoroughly nice man who, next to designing churches, enjoyed a round of golf."[102] Pevsner too, praised Comper's work, suggesting that his pupils see St Mary's, Wellingborough (Fig. 3.26).[103]

Another figure who shared many of Scott's philosophies and who, although he was slightly older, was active through the 1920s, was Henry Wilson. A comparison with Wilson helps to bring out the Edwardian influence in Scott's work. Always a figure in danger of being dismissed as marginal and lost to the half-shadows of architectural history, Wilson articulated a philosophy much more similar to Scott's own that any other figure of his generation, and was active in many of the same church decoration circles – both men, for instance, did decorative work at St Bartholemew's, Brighton (Fig. 3.27). Wilson had worked with J D Sedding, so his lineage was not that far removed from Scott's own. Both Scott and Wilson were dedicated to exploring the possibilities of a free modern Gothic. Like Scott, Wilson sought a Gothic spirit free of "deadening" archaeological detail.[104]Like Scott, the American architects Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson considered Wilson to be a leading British practitioner. They even hired him to produce ecclesiastical art. Wilson designed the font cover at St James, Roxbury, Massachusetts, and also the great West bronze doors of the

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[102] Quoted in Anthony Symondson and Stephen Arthur Bucknall, *Sir Ninian Comper,* Reading: The Ecclesiological Society, 2006, p.142. The reredos was completed in 1919.
[103] Ibid, p. 197. Begun in 1906, the fabric of St Mary's Wellingborough was complete by 1931, although Comper continued to add to its decoration until his death in 1960. The church is widely considered to be Comper's masterpiece.
[104] Cyndy Manton, *Henry Wilson: Practical Idealist,* Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2009, p. 42.

Cathedral of St John the Divine (installed 1936, Fig. 3.28), making him a key decorative artist alongside Louis Comfort Tiffany and Lee Lawrie in this important work of the American Gothic Revival. Although of an older generation, his independent church design career did not really take off until the beginning of the twentieth century and he continued working as an ecclesiastical artist until the 1920s, thus aligning chronologically with Scott's early career.

Wilson's church architecture paralleled Scott both in its use of wide arches and massive buttresses, and in the theory behind them. He too believed in the psychological effect of Gothic tradition and drew heavily from William Lethaby's 1891 *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*. He articulated this theory even more clearly than Scott did, stating, "inspiration in design is actually a rush of unconscious memory, "…since we are so strongly linked to our spiritual ancestors, certain types of architecture appeal spontaneously, triggering "an instinctive organic recognition, dim … remembrances reaching down to the lower levels of mental life."[105] As the Wilson scholar Cyndy Manton perceptively stated, this idea "was to be developed most fully later in Jung's concept of the collective unconscious."[106] But in the Edwardian moment, it was a theory particularly associated with Gothic architecture, most famously appearing in Wilhelm Worringer's 1910 *Formprobleme der Gotik.*[107]

[105] Ibid, pp. 40-41.
[106] Ibid, pp. 40-41.
[107] Worringer's book was translated into English by 1920 as *Form Problems of Gothic* (New York: Stechert), with a British version following in 1927. The English text would have a profound effect on Lethaby, who would cite it as his reasons for returning to the themes of *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*. See David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 88.

The Psychology of the Church

One of Scott's key contributions to the development of the Gothic Revival was his consideration of modern psychology in relation to church design. Scott only had a popular understanding of the discipline and used its ideas in the broadest terms, but the application of these ideas to Gothic Revival architecture is nonetheless highly significant.

The independent discipline of psychology first emerged out of philosophy in the late nineteenth century.[108] The beginning of the psychological profession in Britain is often dated to the founding of the British Psychological Society in 1901, and popular interest in psychology surged after the Great War.[109] The emergence of academic psychology thus coincided with the emergence of modern architecture, and the two are sometimes linked.[110] Yet during the first half of the twentieth century, psychology was an extremely important concept in the work of architects whom we do not usually think of as modern. Giles Scott was a particularly interesting architect in this regard with a surprising interest in the psychological effect of architecture on corporate worship. Scott is not unique in this concern, but he

[108] This is a simplification of a more complex intellectual reality, but sufficient for the purposes of this essay. For a fuller exploration of the intellectual evolution of psychology in the nineteenth century, see Edward Reed's *From Soul to Mind,* YUP, 1997.
[109] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p.183.
[110] See for instance, Alan Powers, *Britain*, London: Reaktion, 2007, in which the second chapter is largely devoted to issues of social psychology.

represented a particular movement towards the application of popular psychology to architecture.[111]

There is a longstanding sense in architectural theory that architecture and the mind are bound up together. What is Uvedale Price's theory of the picturesque if not psychological? The idea that one's social environment (including the built environment) shapes character was the basis of Robert Owen's A *New View of Society: Essays on the Formation of Character* (1813-14).[112] A few decades later, A W N Pugin was obsessed with the effects of built environment on society. What was new in the early twentieth century was the updating of this tradition to incorporate the terminology and theory of academic psychology. The frequent use of terms such as subconscious by architectural critics like C H Reilly and the sudden interest of figures such as town planner Patrick Geddes in the scientific study of environmental factors on mental life, represented a new chapter in the tradition of architecture and the mind. [113]

[111] Scott was not a professional psychologist, and his interest in psychology, like that of many other interwar cultural figures, was not grounded in a true scientific understanding of a particular psychological model, but was based in a popular understanding of the discipline. The terms of scientific psychology and a more scientific understanding of the discipline filtered into British intellectual culture during the Edwardian period and had become a popular enthusiasm by the interwar era. Psychological vocabulary was in widespread popular use in the period, and speculating about the psychological roots of things seemed to be almost a national pastime. For a cultural history of both psychology in the interwar period see L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964.

[112] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p.108.

[113] Geddes was one of the founders of the UK's first sociological body, The Institute of Sociology in 1903. He was also a biologist, and developed "the conceptual scheme of bio-psychosis (the influence of biological and environmental factors on mental life)" Ibid, p.112.

This new relationship between psychology and architectural criticism was at first particularly tied to religious architecture. One of the earliest places that such ideas appeared was in works of Anglo-Catholic mysticism. Such works were inevitably concerned with the role of religious art in spiritual experience. The Anglican mystic Evelyn Underhill wrote extensively about the influence of environment on worship. The poet and essayist Coventry Patmore, himself involved in Roman Catholic mysticism, wrote about the emotional effects of religious architecture. Psychology was on the curriculum at Stonyhurst, and Fr Michael Maher's 1890 textbook *Psychology* was probably taught at Scott's school, Beaumont College.[114] Underhill's Roman Catholic mentor, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, who like Scott had links with Downside Abbey,[115]wrote books that explored mysticism and psychology, and Coventry Patmore was, like Scott's father, a prominent convert in amongst the London literati. Giles Scott's interest in the psychological effect of architecture therefore may very well have developed from his defining interest in church design.

One of the most influential late-nineteenth-century books to deal with the psychological impact of architecture was William Lethaby's 1891 *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth.*[116] In his introduction, Lethaby wrote that architecture is 'thought behind form, embodied and realised for the purpose of its manifestation and transmission.'[117] He went on to explore the implications of symbol and form as

[114] Who else would have used a series of textbooks specifically aimed at English Roman Catholic boarding schools? Ibid, p.123.
[115] R J Schoeck, "Friedrich von Hugel," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2013.
[116] Godfrey Rubens, "Introduction," W R Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth,* London: Architectural Press, 1974, p. viii.
[117] W R Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth,* London, Architectural Press, 1974, p.1.

vehicles of cultural meaning. When he returned to this theme in a 1928 series of articles for *The Builder,* titled "Architecture, Nature, and Magic," Lethaby would describe his theme as "arts and human psychology."[118] Although there is no direct evidence that Scott read Lethaby, his ideas would have been hard to avoid in the architectural circles of Edwardian London; Godfrey Rubens has argued that Lethaby had as much influence on architectural thought as Ruskin or William Morris.[119] Besides, Scott and Lethaby had a number of friends in common (Bertram Goodhue and Cecil Brewer, for instance) and Scott was especially well read.[120]

Coventry Patmore shared Lethaby's interest in architectural symbolism and crafted a psychological justification for the eternal validity of Gothic that would have appealed to Scott. Patmore argued that the soaring construction of Gothic represented the lofty aspirations of Christianity itself. He believed that emotion and architecture were directly connected, writing that 'if a Gothic spire did not symbolise a sentiment, then what on earth was it for?'[121]

Architectural tradition and psychology also came together in the unlikely place of Reginald Blomfield's two volume *History of Renaissance Architecture in England,*

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[118] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 88.
[119] Godfrey Rubens, "Introduction," W R Lethaby, *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth,* London: Architectural Press, 1974, p. v.
[120] Scott was a member of the Foreign Architectural Book Society (FABS) as well as a trustee of the Soane Museum, and was respected by his colleagues for the breadth of his architectural knowledge, which ranged from Neolithic huts to modern skyscrapers. See Ian Horton, *The Foreign Architectural Books Society and Architectural Elitism,* PhD Thesis, Open University, January 2000.
[121] J Mordaunt-Crook, "Coventry Patmore and the Aesthetics of Architecture," *Victorian Poetry,* vol 34, 4, Winter 1996, p. 531. Patmore himself commissioned a Gothic church in Hastings from Basil Champneys.

1500-1800, which would remain the standard work on post-medieval English architecture from the time of its publication in 1897 until the 1953 publication of John Summerson's *Architecture in Britain, 1530 – 1830*. Scott, who was on friendly professional terms with Blomfield, almost certainly would have encountered it. The second volume declared that it was possible to "define tradition as an inherited psychological standpoint in regard to art."[122]

Religious psychology books poured off the presses in the first decades of the twentieth century and psychology became increasingly important to religious thought, just as it would be to architecture. Frank Russell Barry, who may have known Scott's brother Adrian through his military service in Egypt, wrote that 'psychology is an ally, but a dangerous ally, to the Christian thinker.'[123] The 1920 Lambeth Conference recommended that ordinands should have basic training in psychology.[124] Of these religious writers, one whose ideas particularly aligned with Scott's own was Evelyn Underhill. Underhill's writing would tie the idea of the psychological content of religious architecture directly to the needs of the modern church, expressing concerns about the social role of religion that, as we will see, echoed Scott's own. Underhill was a leading Anglo-Catholic thinker of the period. Her books were widely read and she gave talks on the BBC. She shared Scott's interest in liturgical reform.[125] In her 1922 book, which expanded on ideas she had

[122] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 98.
[123] Matthew Grimley, "(Frank) Russell Barry," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2013. L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p.294.
[124] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p.294.
[125] Raymond Chapman, ed, *The Practical Mystic,* Norwich: Canterbury, 2012, p. 10.

first presented in 1911, Underhill explained that 'the transforming work of the spirit must be done through man's ordinary psychic machinery … During the whole of our conscious lives for good or evil we are at the mercy of hetero-suggestions, which are being made to us at every moment by our environment; and they form … a dominant factor in corporate religious exercises.'[126] The worship space, or the activity in the worship space, Underhill explained, thus should suggest the appropriate religious ideas to the congregant, although for such suggestions to become actual belief, the conscious mind of the worshiper would have to weigh and accept them.

Scott himself saw the psychological element of architecture as a way of addressing concerns about declining religious observance in Britain. In his writing, Scott reiterated several times that he had two primary goals in church design: firstly, to create an architectural space that made people want to pray. And secondly, to encourage the sense of community that he believed was becoming fractured in Britain as people moved to suburbs and cities.[127] The explanations of his church designs given at the height of his celebrity in the early 1920s explained the thinking behind his Edwardian buildings. At that time, he similarly decried what he considered to be the increasing materialism of British society and liked to

[126] Evelyn Underhill, *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day,* 1922, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1994, p.103.
[127] For instance, Giles Scott, "Assessor's Report," Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 6 March 1947, SP, ScGG/280/2.
Also on the social consciousness of the architect, Scott's reply to Charles Marriott, "Contemporary London Buildings," *JRIBA*, 9 December 1933, p.125.

characterise his designs as reactions to the 'hectic, one might even say hysterical, times in which we live.'[128]

What were the characteristics of these designs? Wide naves and open chancels fitted into a rectangular ground plan (Figs. 3.29-3.31). Uninterrupted congregational spaces had been a feature of British church architecture since at least the mid-nineteenth century, and Scott's justification for such spaces was in many ways similar to that of G E Street and G F Bodley.[129] Scott explained in a letter about Liverpool Cathedral that such plans were meant to encourage a sense of community by giving the congregation clear views to the altar and bringing them into closer physical proximity to the rituals of worship.[130] Thus he hoped to inspire a sense of corporate participation rather than mere spectatorship. The difference from Victorian ideas lay only in his Liberal Anglican definition of community. In his first 1910 design for St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool, and in his contemporaneous redesign of Liverpool Cathedral, Scott created a large crossing in which the congregation would be seated, thus reducing the traditional empty space dividing congregation and chancel. In Scott churches, aisles tended to be narrow – they were

[128] Giles Scott, "Assessor's Report." Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Colombo, Sri Lanka. 6 March 1947. RIBA Scott Papers. ScGG/280/2.

[129] Philip Aspin has pointed out that such opening up of views began in the Gothic design of the late Georgian period. I mention Street and Bodley here because of their more direct link to Scott's own architectural thought. Philip Aspin, "Our Ancient Architecture: Contesting Cathedrals in Late Georgian England," *Architectural History,* vol 54, 2011, pp. 213 – 232.

[130] Memo, Giles Gilbert Scott, 8 May 1931, BSP, c. 81.

not intended for seating. Instead, the entire congregation was fitted into the central nave and crossing in order to maintain clear views.[131]

Scott was not the only church architect to do this. Northern European architects, particularly Dominikus Böhm in Germany, used similar rectangular volumes for the pragmatic purpose of opening up sightlines to the altar. This method of designing churches was encouraged by the Liturgical Movement. A primarily Roman Catholic movement launched by the writings of Belgian monk Dom Lambert Beaudin in 1909, adherents believed that the way to spark spiritual revival was via the liturgy.[132] Inspired by the study of early Christianity and Scripture, the Liturgical Movement's enhanced appreciation of the community aspect of corporate worship led architects to experiment with unifying the chancel and nave into a single unbroken space, removing choirs from chancels in order to bring the altar closer to the congregation, and creating more prominent altars. It also led to a fad for churches whose style was inspired by early Christian basilicas, of which Scott's 1929 St Alphege's, Bath, is an example. The forward altar, rear choir gallery, and basilican plan of St Alphege's were meant to forge a closer relationship between priest and congregation and to encourage the laity to participate more actively in worship. Theological concerns were thus addressed via psychological means with the reorganisation of space intended to provoke certain behaviours and feelings amongst the congregation. Although hints of these ideas appear in Scott's work as

131 Herbert Trundle, *St Albans Parish Magazine*, February 1933, Golders Green Parish Church Archives.

[132] Louise Campbell provides a good summary of the movement and the relation of its ideas to architecture in Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral,* Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, p. 197.

early as 1910, the adoption of Liturgical Movement ideas was more widespread in Continental Europe than it was in Britain.

However, Scott managed to solve a problem that Continental architects did not – the problem of how to provide spaces for private devotion within a plan designed to encourage corporate worship. He did this generally by sculpting the space above the plan: the alternating cross-gables and massive piers of Derby Lane create alcoves for private devotion (Fig. 3.32). In smaller churches, Scott would carve out a niche-like side chapel, often too shallow to contain seats, which could serve as a focus for private prayer or smaller services. Circulation space could be converted into seating space for these intimate nooks when the main aisles were not in use. Scott would write in the 1940s that being able to deal with such needs in a church represented 'a type of functionalism with which the functionalist is unfamiliar.'[133] Scott understood the commodious and utilitarian bell-tower as landmark and source of music; the well-lit raised chancel as a theatre for the Eucharist; the gloomy, screened aisle chapel as a place for private prayer. A more functionalist approach to church design could not be imagined.

If Scott hoped to encourage a sense of community with his plans, he hoped to instill a sense of reverence with the style and massing of his churches (Figs. 3.33-3.36). He first began to lay out this idea in a 1907 letter to G F Bodley, in which he explained the aesthetic power of a sense of massiveness. True art, he went on to declare, was

[133] Giles Scott, "Assessor's Report." Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 6 March 1947, SP, ScGG/280/2.

not beauty, as Bodley believed, but 'the expression of a man's feelings in such a way that other people experience those same feelings.'[134] By 1910, he had added lighting to his list of elements that helped to create a properly moving effect within a church.[135] The effect of massive form and dramatic lighting on the worshipper would be the two pillars of his mature church design philosophy.

In 1913, Peter Behrens wrote in English that solid walls and the formation of space were the defining characteristics of modernism.[136] The critic Geoffrey Scott expressed a similar idea in his 1914 *Architecture of Humanism,* declaring that success in the shaping of space was the primary criterion of good architecture.[137] Scott frequently told visitors to Liverpool Cathedral, "Don't look at my arches, or the tracery of the windows, or the carved ornamentation; look at my spaces."[138] The striking stacked cubic geometry of Giles Scott's Edwardian church designs were what made his Liverpool Cathedral competition entry stand out, and what contemporaries most celebrated. As Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue observed from the United States, the stripping away of pinnacles and the use of flat parapets and low roofs to create sharply defined masses in Scott's work was a revelation.[139] Scott

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[134] Letter. Scott to Bodley, 14 October 1907, BSP, 48. For more of Scott's writing on lighting effects, see Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 33 and Letter, Scott to Donald Martin, Bishop of Oban, 12 August 1930, SP, ScGG/73/3.
[135] Letter. Scott to William Forwood. Letter. 28 September 1910. BSP, 54.
[136] The horizontally grooved brickwork plinth of Scott's 1913 church at Northfleet was not dissimilar to the grooved brickwork used by Peter Behrens at his AEG Turbine Factory, Berlin (1909-10). Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory,* CUP, 1998, p.232.
[137] Geoffrey Scott, *The Architecture of Humanism,* London: Constable, 1935 [orig. 1914], p. 210.
[138] Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 34.
[139] Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1983, p.128.

himself felt that spread of such simplified masses was "one of the most hopeful signs in modern architecture."[140]

Scott pursued a progressively increasing level of abstraction throughout the Edwardian period, emphasizing repetition of forms, playing with the inversion of solid and void (at Derby Lane, what appear to be gargantuan piers on the interior are revealed to be hollows in the façade on the exterior), and abstracting traditional Gothic mouldings into planar surfaces expressed in brick (Fig. 3.37). Geoffrey Scott had linked the abstract element of architecture to psychology, declaring that in architecture "the moods of the spirit took visible shape … power and laughter, strength and terror and calm," and adding in the 1924 edition of *The Architecture of Humanism* that good architecture took a "purely psychological approach to the problem of design."[141] C H Reilly held that the abstract form of Scott's churches spoke directly to the spirit and unconscious mind, and trumpeted that this abstraction made Scott, with the possible exception of Augustus John, the only genius in contemporary British art.[142]

In Scott's hands the church became a sort of abstract, geometrical sculpture at once creating formal interest outside and spatial drama inside. At his first church, the 1905 Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth, Scott bent the traditional Gothic

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[140] Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 32.
[141] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, pp. 116 and 118.
[142] Augustus John was presumably also felt to be exploring the psychological power of abstraction. C H Reilly, "The Work of Giles Gilbert Scott, RA," *AJ,* 7 January 1925, p.13.

vocabulary into something capable of exploring a cubic aesthetic, before any significant English publication of Frank Lloyd Wright's work and even before the publication of Roger Fry's 1909 'An essay in aesthetics.'

Where then did Scott's blocky aesthetic come from? A possible source is the language of rectilinear mass and foursquare architecture found in William Lethaby's *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth*. The themes of *Architecture, Mysticism, and Myth* reflect interests that Scott would express in his writings including psychology, the role of architecture in community, and the nature of history and tradition.[143] That Scott also shared Lethaby's interest in ancient Near Eastern architecture was shown in his sketchbooks, where he wrote in 1903 that no other buildings came so close to the 'grandeur and simplicity' that should form the basis of an ideal modern style than the ziggurats and palaces of ancient Assyria.[144]

Another possible source is the criticism of Coventry Patmore, which as we have seen operated on much the same lines as Lethaby in its association of architecture and mysticism. His belief that true architecture was 'the expression of gravitational thrust' could find reflection in the weighty pyramidal massing of Scott's early churches.[145]

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[143]Ibid, p. viii.
[144] Giles Scott, sketchbook, n.d. [c.1903], SP, SKB/304/3.
[145] J Mordaunt Crook, "Coventry Patmore and the Aesthetics of Architecture," *Victorian Poetry,* vol 34, 4, Winter 1996, pp. 519-20. Crook's later book, *The Architect's Secret,* London: John Murray, 2003, also treats Patmore, but not at the same level of detail as the article cited above.

The search for the universal qualities of the human mind by anthropologists such as E B Tylor and James George Frazer paralleled the quest for 'universal architecture' promoted by architectural thinkers such as C H Reilly. Frazer's widely-read treatise on the origins of human religion, *The Golden Bough*, was published in 1890. In 1908, Frazer was appointed to the first British chair of social anthropology, at Reilly's own institution, the University of Liverpool.[146]

The way that the universal qualities of mind were most often linked to architecture was through abstraction. Abstraction was held to tap into the essential forms of architecture, to express architectural truths unmodified by the application of learned cultural behaviour. Roger Fry's formalism is the product of this growing interest in the psychology of abstraction, as is Lutyens's 'elemental mode,' as are Scott's Edwardian churches.

Yet despite the supposed abstraction of his work, Scott clung to the details of the Gothic style, even if only in its most vestigial form. Because of this supposed anachronism, he was never one of Pevsner's 'pioneers of modern design,' and the more radical aspects of his churches have often gone unacknowledged. The explanation that Scott gave for this decision was psychological. He believed that Gothic forms triggered cultural memory and thereby helped encourage people to reverence.[147] Tradition created this trigger. In this regard, he was once again in line

[146] Robert Ackerman, "James George Frazer," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2013.
[147] This idea behind Scott's work is most clearly explained by C H Reilly in *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: 1932, pp.50-54. However, it is perhaps to be regretted by scholars that Scott

with Lethaby and Underhill's thinking. For Scott, the Gothic vocabulary was seen to hold symbolic value. This symbolism explains the strand of Romanticism in Scott's early church designs.

A. Stuart Gray has suggested that Scott's first church designs were influenced by pictorial romantic painters, such as James Pryde, Frank Brangwyn, and, I would add, print-makers such as F L Griggs.[148] His early churches seem to share their interest in massive masonry, contrasts of scale, and dramatic shadows. A watercolour rendering of the Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth, which Scott exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1906 and a rendering of Liverpool Cathedral completed in 1912 (Figs. 3.38-3.39), echo the low vantage points, bold chiaroscuro, soaring arches and lofty towers of works such as Pryde's *Venetian Bridge* (1911-12, Fig. 3.40), Brangwyn's *The Bridge, Barnard Castle* (1907, Fig. 3.41), and Griggs's *Maur's Farm* (1913, Fig. 3.42). This interest in Piranesian space was reflected in the Church of the Annunciation, which featured a small bedroom for the priest above the Sacristy, with an iron bridge over the altar that connected this bedroom via triforium passages to a washroom on the other side (Fig. 3.43).[149] The galleries and triforia of the church were thus no mere backdrops, but enlivened by the priest who traversed them, Quasimodo-like, in his separate, shadowy realm. Giving use to

himself never set forth such ideas in a more straightforward way, tending instead toward ramblings about tradition, Englishness, and community. That such ideas were current in the Edwardian era can be seen in the writings of Henry Wilson and Lethaby, with whom Scott's own ideas and practice show a clear relationship.

[148] A Stuart Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary,* London: Wordsworth, 1988, p. 42.

[149] Presumably the priest originally had a way to access this bedroom other than the rope ladder that now provides the only access to the room. "The History of The Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth," author not stated, *Boscombe Catholics,* Online, www.boscombecatholics.net.

these spaces was thus paradoxically both more functional and more Romantic. Similarly, at the Church of the Annunciation, the bells intended for the bellcote could only have been rung from a small platform reached by walking across the roof of the nave. At St Maughold's, Ramsay, Isle of Man (1909), small iron balconies at the corner of the slab-like tower provide perches for seagulls and platforms for looking out to sea. There too, the priest's accommodation, although more capacious and domestic than that at Bournemouth, is built into the side of the church, with which it shares a small walled garden beside the crashing waves. This was a conceit worthy of Burne-Jones, whose work, incidentally, Scott admired.[150] The huge chimneys, thick walls, and wide-arched porch of St Maughold's spoke of comfort and shelter from cold, gray sea gales. The interior of the church had no aisles for draughts to whip through. Instead it was a homely, four-square brick box – the continuity of its walls only interrupted by a hearth-like Lady Chapel, a sort of fireless inglenook reached via a wide-low arch (Fig. 3.44). The church community became a family gathered together in a domestic space. Similarly Romance-laden sketches reveal Scott's initial thoughts for the church at Sheringham, and show a soaring, round-buttressed church inspired by Albi with traceried round nave windows.[151]

[150] Scott complimented the Burne-Jones triptych at Lady Margaret Hall, calling it a "lovely little picture" and felt it more suitable for the space than some other art that had been donated to the chapel. At Whitelands he incorporated the Burne-Jones glass from the old chapel prominently in the new one, a notable sign of respect for the artist, as he generally encouraged clients with old glass to discard it, or, at their insistence, incorporated it into obscure corners of the new structure, cf the narthex at Lady Margaret Hall.

[151] These sketches are labeled "Cromer." The Sheringham church borders Cromer and also catered to Roman Catholics on holiday there. Sketchbook, n.d. [c.1908], SP, SKB/302/6.

Underhill and Lethaby both held that symbol was the key to mystical experience, and although Scott did not plaster his churches with peacocks and ostrich eggs, believing as he did in the more general symbolic value of the Gothic style to invoke a sort of cultural memory, he did make more overt symbolism a focus of contemplation in his churches through the use of the reredos. Scott was renowned as a designer of church furnishings, and he had a strong preference for a reredos as the termination of the visual axis of a church. His reredoses served another specific function in the worship space – they provided a contemplative focus, attracting the eye to their imagery through the contrast of their strong colour and pattern with Scott's generally plain plastered walls.

Evelyn Underhill explained that 'when [religious art] is genuine, [it] is a symbolic picture of the experiences of faith, and in those minds attuned to it may evoke again the memory of very presence of those experiences.'[152] She declared that 'the symbolic world of traditional piety with its angels and demons, its friendly saints, its spatial heaven, may conserve and communicate spiritual values far better than the more sophisticated universe of religious philosophy. We may be sure that both are more characteristic of the image-making and structure-building tendencies of the mind, than they are of the ultimate and for us unknowable reality of things.'[153]
In keeping with this idea of the workings of symbol on the mind, Scott used traditional religious symbols in his reredos designs. However, he infused them with

[152] Evelyn Underhill, *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day,* 1922, Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse, 1994, p.100.
[153] Ibid, p.101.

the flavour of contemporary mysticism. He gave his figures the Byzantine settings so beloved of Lethaby-inspired romantics, and he filled them with more arcane symbolism than was usually found in the reredos designs of his father or G F Bodley. On the 1906 Bournemouth altar, Christ is portrayed hanging on a Y-shaped cross, set on a compass wheel, and the reredos above was meant to have contained a crucifix with the edges dissolving into stars (Fig. 3.45).[154] In Scott's Edwardian work, figures on rood and triptych were entwined with winding, spiky vines like something out of Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose* series. The figures on the 1907 rood at Sheringham, for instance, perch on a spiky tree that grows to form the cross of Christ (Fig. 3.46). These symbolic foci of Scott's churches, although their main subjects were easily readable and traditional, were laced with the more arcane and mysterious in order to leave room for explorative contemplation.

In his Edwardian churches, Scott developed a unity and clarity of design arising from a concern for function. As Scott understood, in churches, function was partly psychologically driven. In his Edwardian designs, he created the fusion of clarity of plan with the emotional appeal through dramatic space that would form the groundwork of his increasingly experimental church designs during the interwar period. And he did all of this as an attempt to create an architectural counterweight to the perceived decline in religious observance in the British Isles.

[154] See watercolour of the reredos elevation in possession of the priest, Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth.

There was a consuming concern between the wars that suburban and urban England was becoming rootless, with no grounding in past or place. Many, including Scott, feared that traditional values were being washed away in a tide of internationalism, traditional village life destroyed by ribbon development, and individual identity subsumed to a faceless suburbia.[155] Architects from Hope Bagenal to H S Goodhart-Rendel to C H Reilly decried the suburban swell not only for its ugliness but for the perceived erosion of community such ugliness was felt to represent. They often tied such concerns to the decline of religion. T S Eliot wrote in 1934, "There is no life that is not community/ And no community not lived in the presence of GOD/… And now you have dispersed on ribbon roads/ And no man knows or cares who is his neighbour."[156] Books ranging from Clough Williams-Ellis's *England and the Octopus* (1928) to George Orwell's *Coming Up for Air* (1939) reflected the widespread nature of such worries.[157] Scott's personal letters often record his disenchantment with what he felt was a rising tide of materialism and irreligiousness. At times he was the optimistic creator of new forms. At other times he led a sort of personal crusade, bemoaning 'the tendency of modern thought, being directed towards material values and practical efficiency, with a consequent neglect of spiritual and moral values.'[158] In a Christmas letter to C H Reilly, he referenced Spengler's *Decline of the West*: "Not an easy book to read in parts, but an interesting theory that makes one think, and if you agree with him makes you realise the rotten

[155] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2010, pp.174-175.
[156] Quoted in Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars,* OUP, 2004, p. 2.
[157] Clough Williams-Ellis, England and the Octopus, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1928, and George Orwell, *Coming Up for Air,* London: Gollancz, 1939.
[158] Giles Scott, "Assessor's Report." Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Colombo, Sri Lanka. 6 March 1947. SP, ScGG/280/2.

state we are in and from which there is no escape!"[159] This concern was widespread amongst members of the British public in the 1930s. Hope Bagenal, the acoustic engineer whom Scott consulted at Charterhouse and Lady Margaret Hall, wrote to the RIBA Journal in 1933 to stress that it was particularly important that people be able to hear the words of the Bible in this age of "Christless cities and the comfort-ridden suburbs that surround them."[160] C H Reilly, however, was more optimistic about the state of Christianity in Britain, declaring that this age talks little about religion, but "if one may judge from its best religious buildings, feels it all the more deeply."[161] Alexandra Harris has suggested that, in contrast to perceptions, the 1930s was a time of religious revival, when parish church attendance was high. [162] The data supports this interpretation — Easter Day communicants at Anglican churches rose from 2, 097,000 in 1916 to 2,245,000 in 1939, and in 1926, more children than ever before were baptised Anglican (714 out of every 1000 live births).[163]

Scott hoped his ecclesiastical designs would help to keep the Christian Church relevant to contemporary society. He sought to make spaces "with a solemn and

[159] In *Modern Architectural Theory* (Cambridge, 1998), Mallgrave presents early twentieth-century thought as divided into Taylorist and Spenglerist camps. But Scott was, in a way, both—trying to counter a social decline that he feared was all too real, while demonstrating a belief in technological and social progress to improve society in his industrial and university designs. Scott to Reilly. Letter, n.d. (probably 1943), CHR, D207/40/123.
[160] Hope Bagenal, "Churches and Cheap Acoustics," *JRIBA,* vol 40, 15, 11 March 1933, p. 373.
[161] C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," Bound typescript, February 1927, CHR, D207/27.
[162] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns,* London: Thames & Hudson, 2010, p.193.
[163] Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England: Liberal Anglican Theories of the State Between the Wars,* OUP, 2004, p.11.

devotional effect," in other words spaces that made people want to pray."[164] Adolf Loos had written that modern architecture was about awakening sentiment via formalism. Scott, although working in Muthesius's 'structurally expressive' styles, was more concerned with the message of forms than in expressive construction. He did not hesitate to use false structure when he felt it furthered his purposes— at Derby Lane, the concrete slab ceilings of the pierced 'piers' were hidden by quadripartite vaults executed in lightweight wood and plaster.

Starting with his early sketchbooks, one of Scott's primary concerns was the creation of tasteful churches, not cluttered, as he felt many Victorian churches were, with what he considered tacky decoration.[165] Far from being a petty concern, he wanted to infuse the church with dignity in order to reinforce its appeal in modern life. He also wanted to assert its importance through the monumental physical presence of its buildings. This aspect of his work was particularly drawn out in his interwar work.

Scott's Church of St Alban stands on a corner near the Golders Green Underground Station. Forming the transition between a row of shops and a row of houses in an unremarkable suburban avenue, its roofs sweep down towards the ground and its walls are roughly in a line with the buildings nearby (Fig. 3.47). For people who do not know where to look, the church is not immediately obvious; the steeple is low

[164] Article from *Morning Post*, 19 July 1924, quoted in Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004, p.77.
[165] Giles Scott, Sketchbook, c1903, SP, SKB/302/3.

and is built of the same muddy bricks as the rest of the street. Most of Scott's parish churches are in similarly unremarkable suburban locations. The tower of Derby Lane rises above a long tree-lined row of brick houses and shops (Fig. 3.48). St Francis, Terriers (1929), is set in a spacious wooded lot near the ridge of one of High Wycombe's many villa-covered hills. Our Lady, Broadstairs (1931, Fig. 3.49), is several blocks inland from the seafront, visible as the termination of a vista from the classical Maxwell-Fry-designed railway station, but quickly disappearing from view if one wanders into the surrounding blocks of semi-detached houses. Although always of a generous scale, Scott's churches seldom dominate the landscape. Their colours are brown and grey like the streets around them. Their towers are just tall enough to be plainly visible for a few blocks in most directions, high enough so that their presence does not look accidental, but not visible for miles around. In the case of Golders Green, this is deliberately so. The vicar, Herbert Trundle, perhaps inspired by the nearby Lutyens churches at Hampstead Garden Suburb, had asked for a church that would blend into the surrounding neighbourhood. The idea was to create a form that people would find welcoming and familiar – to make the Church seem a natural part of their lives.

In his Edwardian days, Scott may have dreamed of soaring campaniles, but by the interwar period, the restrictions imposed by limited budgets[166] meant that he had incorporated such modesty into his design philosophy. Once again, the basis of this

[166] Although Scott worked with the most consistently generous parish budgets of any interwar church architect, he did not have the grand Victorian patrons of a Pugin or a Burges. Incorporated Church Building Society, *New Churches Illustrated,* London, 1936.

ideal was psychological, and addressed the anxieties of his client congregations. The church at Golders Green was meant to be welcoming, with its gateless grounds thrown open to the public at Scott's suggestion and wide shallow steps leading from the street corner to the porch.[167] Its plan was designed to gather the congregation close to the altar in a central crossing similar to that of Derby Lane (Fig. 3.50). Yet the exterior of the church is paradoxically fortress-like.

Scott asserted the importance of the Church through the monumental physical presence of its buildings. Perhaps there is a little bit of a feeling of the 'church under siege' in Scott's desire for massiveness. With their sheer planes of brick and stone, Scott's churches harked back to a Romanesque concept of the church as a fortress in which the faithful could barricade themselves against the sea of unbelievers outside.[168] The early congregants at St Alban's, Golders Green, who had asked for a welcoming church, celebrated the fact that their new church building was also 'literally defiant in strength.'[169] The paradox of imposing welcome was one that Scott was particularly good at embracing.

Scott's use of new technology in his churches stemmed from his desire to move the Gothic tradition forward into the next step of its modern development. Although he was broadly flexible in the stylistic expression he felt good churches could take,

[167] St Albans Parish Magazine, February 1933. p. 8. Golders Green Parish Church Archives.
[168] Reilly too felt that new town churches should provide escape from the town outside: "thick walls and high, half-hidden windows seem to afford this." C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," Bound typescript, February 1927, CHR, D207/27. Such ideas may be linked to the Edwardian and interwar admiration of Albi Cathedral.
[169] St Albans Parish Magazine, 25 March 1933, Consecration Supplement, Golders Green Parish Church Archives.

Scott believed the 'Gothic spirit' was essential. He admired the technological wonders of Lubetkin's Highgate flats in London (Fig. 1.13), but he expressed fears that their brand of mechanical architecture was psychologically oppressive and entirely neglected 'the human element.'[170] Scott was intensely romantic in his approach to architecture, believing strongly in its spiritual qualities. He feared that there was a deeply nihilistic core at the root of International Modernist dogma. Scott did, however, embrace technology, seeking to harness its power in support of his architectural goals. He simply did not believe that it was a justification in itself.

The monumental scale of Scott's churches was made possible by modern construction technology. Scott's buildings were generally built with concrete slab floors and roofs spanning the distance between load-bearing masonry walls, and his churches were no exception. Structural steel was added as necessary, with complete steel frames fitted inside the load-bearing masonry walls of larger secular buildings, as at the Cambridge University Library (Fig. 3.51). When it came to construction techniques, Scott was no romantic medievalist: whereas Ralph Adams Cram in the United States was committed to the Ruskinian ideal of handicraft and eschewed the 'spiritually corrupting' use of steel and concrete, Scott's pragmatic approach to modern Gothic embraced the possibilities of current building systems. Almost all of Scott's churches were built with concrete slabs, and all of them, including Liverpool Cathedral, were built of brick masonry with a surface veneer of stone. Clients steeped in Ruskin's theories about structural honesty, especially in the first two

[170] In the letter, Scott does not distinguish between Highpoint I and Highpoint II. Scott to Reilly, Letter, 19 August 1944, CHR, D207/4/6.

decades of the century, sometimes dreamed of churches using minimal modern techniques, and Scott had to convince them that there was nothing to be gained, for instance, by the use of solid stone walls. Scott wrote to a Liverpool woman, who had chastised him for not using solid masonry walls at the cathedral, explaining that the standard medieval practice was to build a stone shell and fill it with rubble. His own walls were therefore equally as 'honest' and much more solidly built.[171] Beginning at Derby Lane, Liverpool, in 1910, Scott even experimented with pouring solid concrete into a shell of stone-veneered brick masonry to create the walls.[172] When Charterhouse Chapel was completed in 1927, the school magazine declared proudly that the only steel in the building was in the roof ties. This was not, however, the feat of romantic handicraft that they implied; no additional steel was needed in a structure of that scale. Scott chose his methods of construction based on economy and durability.

[171] Letter, Scott to Frederick Radcliffe, 31 July 1916, BSP, 66.
[172] Interview with vicar and examination of building, 28 March 2012, also "Specification of Works," Northfleet, Kent, Typescript, December 1913, SP, ScGG/254/4. Scott's fondness for creating very solid walls by pouring concrete directly into the cavity between the masonry has resulted in severe maintenance problems for churches built with that technique. His sketchbooks record with dismay that Derby Lane had "Patterns of damp in a good many places" at an early stage (SKB/303/3, n.d. [c.1912]). The concrete-core walls necessitated the restoration and repointing of the brickwork, and led to the current dilapidation of the interior of that church. The same damp and lack of expansion joints led to a large reconstruction effort at Northfleet in 2010, the most expensive church renovation ever funded by English Heritage in the southeast region. Scott consulted an engineer about the practice in 1926, after he made the decision to start using it at Liverpool Cathedral. He was horrified by the engineer's assessment that this method would lead to severe problems and wrote hastily to Liverpool to order an immediate stop to the practice there. Scott to Pittaway. Letters. 29 January and 8 December 1926. BSP, 69 and 186.

Despite attempts by recent scholars to compare his more austere brick churches to his factories,[173] Scott was strongly opposed to a machine aesthetic. Drawings reveal that the exposed concrete roof beams in the porches at Liverpool Cathedral were intended to be covered with applied stone carving (Fig. 3.52)[174] and the masonry and reinforced-concrete transverse arches at Luton, although arguably clearly expressed, are covered in plaster (Fig. 3.53-3.54).

Modern construction techniques were by their nature layered — panels were attached to frames, flooring surfaces were laid onto concrete slabs — rather than monolithic systems in which thick masonry walls formed interior and exterior surfaces or planks and beams of timber created self-supporting floors. As Eric Gill explained in a 1928 lecture, there could be no architectural equivalent to direct carving: in architecture, he declared, "construction, putting different things together is essential; in sculpture it is not."[175] Scott noted that the unattainable desire for monolithic structure in much "ordinary white box type" modernism led to exteriors being covered over with a surface layer of plaster in order to imply that they had monolithic concrete walls even when their architects knew that was not the case. Scott saw the irony in an essentially Puginian ideal of 'honesty' driving architects to adopt the methods of John Nash. As he pointed out in a lecture to architecture students during his term as President of the RIBA, "there is an exasperating

[173] Gavin Stamp, "Giles Gilbert Scott: The Problem of Modernism," *Architectural Design,* 1979, n.10-11, p.73.
[174] Drawings of Rankin Porch, Liverpool Cathedral Archives, Architectural Drawings, 376.
[175] "Architecture as Sculpture, An Address to Liverpool Architectural Association," published in Eric Gill, *Beauty Looks After Herself,* London: Sheed & Ward, 1933, p. 66.

tendency for monolithic materials to crack and craze and weather badly," and for this reason reinforced concrete was not suitable to exterior walls. [176] He explained that the use of materials should reflect structural logic. It is important to note that he said "reflect structural logic." He believed that as long as the stone veneer reflected the logic of the brick masonry it was covering, then it was artistically appropriate (Fig. 3.55). Edward Ford has called this philosophy of construction the "analogous system of construction."[177] A common approach amongst early twentieth-century architects seeking to reconcile practical construction with a philosophy of structural expression, Scott's approach was thus not merely identical to Lutyens's, but essentially the same as that of Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie houses, in which thin strips of wood attached to hanging ceilings mirror the location of structural beams behind.[178]

The dangling exposed electric bulbs of Scott's Edwardian church fittings had been strikingly modern for their time, and were emphasised in the published images of the churches. At Northfleet, critics also commented on the exposed concrete lintels.[179] Yet Scott's architecture could hardly be described as high-tech. The first British church to use reinforced concrete was probably J D Sedding's Holy Trinity, Sloane Square, which was built in 1888.[180] Scott's combination of load-bearing

[176] Giles Scott, "An Address to Students," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 6, 27 January 1934, p.266.
[177] Edward R Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture*, vol 1, MIT Press, 2003,pp.1-13.
[178] All information in this paragraph from Edward Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture,* Vol I, Cambridge, Mass: MIT, 1983.
[179] *The Builder* was pleased that, in keeping with the structural forces in the material, the lintels were "accordingly square headed, instead of being of arched form." "New Catholic Church, Northfleet," *The Builder,* 21 September 1924, p. 394.
[180] Cyndy Manton, *Henry Wilson: Practical Idealist,* Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2009, p.22.

masonry and concrete slab floors had been the standard mode of constructing large buildings for decades.[181] It was true that Scott did not hide technology. He did not disguise radiators with Gothic covers, for instance; but he did place them out of the way and paint them an inconspicuous colour. He believed that the artistic elements of the church should be allowed to transport the mind without distraction.[182]

At St Albans, Golders Green, with Herbert Trundle's encouragement, Scott incorporated a host of technological innovations: Trundle wrote during the building process that, 'in this Church the deaf will hear (Radio-Aid), the blind (those seated behind pillars as in so many churches) will see, the lame (through cold feet and ankles) will walk, and the poor will have the Gospel preached to them from an open air pulpit.'[183] Even the form of the tower was influenced by the dictates of a complex under-floor heating system. A boiler under the vestries forced heated water into the top of the tower, which then travelled down pipes in the piers, forcing the heated water into closely spaced under-floor pipes via gravity. The system worked so well that when compelled to install a modern replacement recently, the church found it to be less effective.[184] Thus the Gothic tower served a technological as well as symbolic purpose.

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[181] Edward R Ford, *The Details of Modern Architecture*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2003, pp.1-13.
[182] Ibid, p. 9.
[183] Herbert Trundle, *St Albans Parish Magazine*, February 1933, Golders Green Parish Church Archives.
[184] Interview with Vicar, Golders Green Parish Church, 22 May 2012, notes in possession of the author.

Herbert Trundle and Giles Scott were particularly in sympathy with one another in their ideas about the use of technology in relation to the social role of the Church. Trundle was known for buzzing around London on a motorbike and had Scott build the outdoor pulpit so that he could preach towards the crowds coming out of the underground station.[185] He later placed a loudspeaker in that pulpit, so that the sermons he preached inside the church on Sunday could be broadcast to people going up and down the road outside.[186]

Scott remained concerned with symbol during the interwar period, but his church designs lost their mystical Pre-Raphaelitism. Instead, Scott adopted a new approach, grounding his symbolism in the taste for primitivism that had come to dominate modern art. This new belief that symbol communicated with the most primal regions of the brain was encapsulated in the writing of British critic Arthur Whittick, who declared that architectural symbols were 'particularly in accordance with those of psychoanalysis.'[187] Herbert Baker, always an enthusiastic proponent of symbolism in architectural decoration, wrote that symbols spoke to a region of the mind from an age 'before the invention of writing.'[188] Symbol came from the most ancient traditions of all. Whittick and Baker's rhetoric echoed that of the special Aesthetics section of the British Psychological Society, a unique committee that

[185] Interview with Archivist, Golders Green Parish Church, 22 May 2012, notes in possession of the author.
[186] *St Albans Parish Magazine*, 1937, Golders Green Parish Church Archives.
[187] Whittick asked Scott to write a preface for his book on symbolism, but Scott declined. (Letter, Whittick to Scott, c1935 (?). SP, ScGG261/4.) Whittick, *Symbols for Designers*, London, 1935, p. 18.
[188] Ibid, p. ii.

functioned from 1922-1937.[189] The aesthetic studies of the committee often sought to link the dream symbols of psychoanalysis with artistic symbols, tying together artistic creativity and "the spontaneous fecundity of the unconscious mind."[190]

Scott's embrace of primitivism is reflected in a letter to the sculptor who was carving a crucifix for St Maughold's Ramsey, in 1936, in which he wrote that the sculptor should avoid the 'dull and naturalistic,' seeking instead 'the vigour of early sculpture' (Fig. 3.56).[191] The term primitive was loosely applied to any form of art seen as archaic and unrefined, in Scott's case, (and also, as we will see in John Piper's), being taken to be just as relevant to Romanesque sculpture as to African and Polynesian tribal art. The notion that the primitive was essentially universal arose, like many architectural ideas about abstraction, from the anthropological writings of Frazer and Tylor. The primitive was seen as the product of human psychology without the filter of civilization, the direct projection of the self.[192] Symbol in this formulation, although at its heart a global phenomenon unlinked to the most basic levels of the human psyche, was expressed via a cultural filter. Since it was cultural associations that gave symbol meaning, it could thus fit with Scott's theory of tradition. He does not seem to have been too worried about the subtle contradictions, and his mentions of primitive art are mostly limited to expressions of enthusiasm. At Liverpool, Scott expressed disappointment with the sentimental, realist feeling (and in some cases, he felt, poor execution) of the Lady Chapel

[189] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p. 230.
[190] Ibid, p. 229.
[191] Letter Scott to Messrs Gough. Regarding sculpture in gable of Ramsey church. 13 July 1936. SP.
[192] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p. 116.

carvings,[193] but in the expressive elongation and simplification of Carter Preston, he felt he had found one of the great truly modern sculptors (Figs. 3.57-3.58). He considered his collaboration with Preston on Cardinal Gasquet's tomb at Downside to be one of his greatest works.[194] In 1939, Eric Gill and Scott collaborated to design decorations for St George's Chapel at Westminster Cathedral, exchanging ideas about ways the sculpture and architecture could fit together. Scott wrote of Gill's reredos panel (which was eventually installed without his architectural framework, Fig. 3.59), 'I am most favourably impressed and think it really excellent!'[195] Unfortunately Scott's letter explaining his own architectural scheme is lost, so the incident can only be cited as another example of Scott's enthusiasm for 'primitivist' sculpture.

As artists such as John Piper also came to realise in the 1930s, Scott knew that primitive intensity could be harnessed in service to Christianity.[196] Scott did not wish to abstract away all association, because association created the psychological triggers of worship. When designing the Liverpool Cathedral War Memorial Chapel, for instance, instead of going with the pure abstraction championed by Lutyens for such monuments, he decided that the Cenotaph should have 'lions at each corner to make it more imposing.'[197] By the mid-1930s, not only Scott and Piper, but also many other modern British artists were starting to feel the same way. In his 1935

[193] M A Bampton, *Craftsman and Client: The official commissions of Edward Carter Preston,* PhD Thesis, Liverpool, 2007, p. 130.
[194] Gavin Stamp, "Downside Abbey and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," Dom Adrian Bellenger, ed, *Downside Abbey: An Architectural History,* London: Merrell, 2011, p. 190.
[195] Letter, Scott to Gill, 21 October 1938, SP, ScGG/259/2.
[196] Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2010, p. 3.
[197] Letter, Scott to Radcliffe, 7 December 1917, BSP, 66.

book, *The Destructive Element,* Stephen Spender argued that the subject mattered, for it was only through the presence of a subject that the artist could address social issues.[198]

Thus Scott sought to address the perceived decline of community and religious values not only through his plans, but also through applied religious art. For Scott's father, the Church was the wellspring of a community, 'the home of the great Christian family … not a mere place of worship, but the meeting place of the Christian society.'[199] Scott felt the same way. He very much wanted to find a way to help the modern city and suburb support and celebrate community traditions rather than destroy them.

This attempt to reinforce the sense of community was in line with the particular interest that British psychologists of the period showed in social psychology.[200] Social psychologists believed that if the forces that affected society were better understood, those forces could be influenced for the good of the community. Mass Observation was founded in 1937 to counter the threat of movements such as fascism and communism through the application of psychology.[201] Scott hoped to do the same through architecture. Scott's interest in tradition could be tied to this framework of social psychology. M Ginsberg echoed Scott when he wrote in *The*

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[198] Stephen Spender, *The Destructive Element,* London, 1935, as discussed in Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns,* London: Thames & Hudson, 2010, p. 104.
[199] George Gilbert Scott, Jr, *An Essay on the History of English Church Architecture Prior to the Separation of England from Roman Obedience.* London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co, 1881, p. 8, also see p. iii and p. 2.
[200] L S Hearnshaw, *A Short History of British Psychology,* London: Methuen, 1964, p. 208.
[201] Ibid, p. 237.

Psychology of Society (1921) that group behaviour was 'shaped by custom and tradition.'[202] Reilly and Scott would take this idea as part of the groundwork for their 1944 pamphlet "Architecture as a Communal Art."[203] Tradition was a tool through which the architect could shape society, and it was for this reason above all that it was a defining concept of Scott's design philosophy.

The sculptural programme of the Rankin Porch at Liverpool Cathedral portrayed people of various twentieth century 'trades' from the builder to the housewife, with the hope that members of the congregation would see themselves represented there as members of the church community. But one programme in particular shows Scott marshalling art and architecture in support of a social cause: Charterhouse Chapel. Scott was appointed to design a new chapel for Charterhouse School in October 1920.[204] The building was to be a memorial to the men of Charterhouse who had died in the Great War and would be the largest war memorial in Britain. The Archbishop of Canterbury laid the foundation stone on 17 June 1922. He opened and dedicated the building five years later on 18 June 1927.

At Charterhouse, Scott was given a design challenge akin to the one he had undertaken at Clare College, Cambridge: the creation of a structure that would at once shape the future and memorialise the past. Once again, he had to task

[202] Ibid, p. 244.
[203] Charles Reilly, "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944. (Introduction by Scott).
[204] Letter, Frank Fletcher (headmaster) to Scott, 6 October 1920, Charterhouse Archives, ACC 0322/1/146-298.

architectural forms with stirring emotion and transmitting patriotic ideology. The expression of history was still key; however, his work at Charterhouse was more powerfully psychological in its use of associational form not tied to period characteristics, and its goal was the forging of a group of boys and teachers into a cohesive community with a shared set of values. The chapel of a public school was held to be the most important space for moulding the behaviour and character of the boys. As architectural historian William Whyte has written, "It was here that the headmaster preached; here that the pupils were welcomed and dismissed each year; here — most significantly — that old boys and masters were memorialized."[205]

Scott ultimately achieved his aim through the emotional appeal of shared memory. Through the symbolism of the chapel, the boys of Charterhouse were called to deeds of heroic martyrdom in the defence of England's interests. The chapel was not, however, a site of self-confident pageantry. Its militaristic iconography and plain, fortress-like massing – with corner turrets, battlements, narrow windows, and sheer planes of wall rising from a steep citadel-like site – resurrected an essentially Victorian vocabulary of muscular Christianity (Fig. 3.60-3.61). It carried forward the efflorescence of Gothic imagery that had appeared in British public schools around 1900, teaching the boys its values of chivalry and empire, so that those values might live on. [206] In contrast with the missionary, crusading zeal of 'muscular Christianity,'

[205] William Whyte, "Building a Public School Community, 1860-1910" *History of Education,* vol 32, no 6, 2003, p. 614 Whyte quotes Henry Newbolt's poem, "Clifton Chapel," which sums up the role such spaces were seen to play in school life: "Today and here the fight's begun,/ Of the great fellowship you're free;/ Henceforth the School and you are one,/ And what you are, the race shall be." (p. 615).
[206] On such imagery in twentieth-century public schools, see Mark Girouard, *Return to Camelot,* YUP, 1981, p. 171.

however, when combined with Liberal Anglican rhetoric, it did this with the same defensive posture as St Alban's, Golders Green, shoring itself against the perceived growth of irreligiousness outside.

In the Memorial Chapel, the Old Carthusians who had died in the Great War were portrayed as martyrs of empire. The militaristic imagery fit into an existing broader iconography of imperial martyrdom that had found expression during the Edwardian era, for instance in the prints of the self-sacrificing death of Lawrence Oates that were hung in British schools.[207] The iconography of Charterhouse Chapel was meant to inspire English youth with the same heroic masculine valour. With inscriptions such as 'Like Men Be Strong,' the walls themselves exhorted the boys to bravery and sacrifice in the name of Christian civilization (Fig. 3.62). Initially, Scott had found it 'very difficult to express in the actual building the fact that the Chapel is a War Memorial,'[208] but he ultimately found a solution. He aimed to capture some of the martial feeling of 'the old Crusader-type of church with early detail, a wide span, and simple vaults, without ribs' (Fig. 3.63).[209] Crusader imagery was a common allegory for the Edwardian imperial project.[210] Here Scott was choosing detail in an almost theatrical way, calling on the associational power of certain forms to create the necessarily solemn but also military atmosphere. When asked, he refused to clarify what he meant by Crusader-type churches, insisting that there was no

[207] Kirsty Dootson, "Antarctic Empire: Herbert Ponting's Footage from the British Antarctic Expedition, 1910-1912," Paper delivered at Yale Center for British Art, *Art Anxiety, and Protest in the Edwardian Belle Époque Symposium,* 2 March 2013.
[208] Letter, Scott to Fletcher, 12 January 1921, Charterhouse Archives, ACC 0322/1/146-298.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Imogen Hart, "History Painting, Spectacle, and Performance," in Angus Trumble and Andrea Wolk Rager, eds, *Edwardian Opulence,* YUP, 2013, p. 113.

specific precedent.[211] One gets the impression that these were the Crusader churches of Scott's imagination – inspired by the medieval churches of Rhodes and Jerusalem in a vague storybook kind of way. The Charterhouse administration, however, seized on the familiar Crusader imagery as indicative of the sort of spirit they wanted the new chapel to convey.

The same alignment of chivalry and masculinity found at Charterhouse was called up in Scott's other medievalising war memorials. Scott's memorial designs, with the exception of Beaumont College and Preston, were Gothic in style, although many of these Gothic memorials incorporated a classical cenotaph of his own design. The cenotaph was in the form of a sarcophagus supported on brackets on which two angels, carved in relief, held aloft a laurel wreath. This feature was repeated in many of his memorials, allowing him to bring imperial Roman symbolism celebrating individual heroic sacrifice into a Gothic framework that evoked ideals of Christian community. Thus, just as his church plans had united public and private devotion, his memorials celebrated both the individual and communal sacrifice of those who died in the Great War. Significantly for the themes of this chapter, when both classical and Gothic styles were combined in this way, as they were at Charterhouse, the Gothic style was always chosen to represent the communal. At Charterhouse, individual boys were commemorated by names carved in Roman script on the west screen and in individual memorial plaques in the porches (Fig. 3.64). These commemorations of individuals are set within a broader Gothic chapel structure

[211] Letter, Scott to Fletcher, 8 July 1922, Charterhouse Archives, ACC 0322/1/146-298.

that memorialises the common sacrifice. A variation on the cenotaph is set into a reredos in the form of a Gothic triumphal arch (Fig. 3.65), and above the altar, providing the primary hint of colour in the chapel and thus irresistibly drawing the eye, a large east window by Powell & Sons shows a kneeling knight crowned by an allegorical angel (Fig. 3.66). The inscription, calling the boys to communal sacrifice in the name of shared national values, asks in Gothic letters, 'Who dies if England live.'

Charterhouse Chapel was designed primarily as a place for communal ceremony rather than individual contemplation. Scott had urged the school to use a site on the eastern side of the grounds because of its steep slope, allowing the chapel to rise up above the road below, providing 'a fine and dignified approach' from the direction of Godalming.[212] The adoption of inward-facing 'collegiate' pews was Scott's idea, another reminder of the communal nature of their worship (Fig. 3.67). He explained that he was placing entrances at the four corners so that the boys could reach their seats without unseemly crowding and a central western portal so that they could file out, two by two, at the end of the service.[213] A large porch covered each entrance, so that the boys waiting to enter chapel could be sheltered from the rain. Instead of moving as individuals, the whole plan was constructed so the boys would move in procession as a single body, active participants in a unique Charterhouse worship service.

[212] Letter, Scott to Fletcher, 12 January 1921, Charterhouse Archives, ACC 0322/1/146-298.
[213] The school administration had proposed forward-facing pews. Ibid.

Liverpool Cathedral

Scott had first learned how architecture could orchestrate liturgy through his work at Liverpool Cathedral. All of Scott's key ideas about ecclesiastical design are embodied in the Cathedral, instilled there over the course of a long career.[214] And his biggest idea was that of community expressed via tradition. Here at Liverpool, the community was at once local, national, and global. Designed to represent the moderate democratic ideal of Liberal Anglicanism, the cathedral was intended to serve as a spiritual resource for the entire city. Canon Charles Raven declared at the Consecration, "The conception of the cathedral, as embodying the Godward aspiration of our civic life, should control its future use."[215] In this spirit, non-Anglicans would be welcomed. Much was made in the early Cathedral publicity of a Jewish man who donated toward the Cathedral building because he considered it to be an important social service, and in 1933 a Unitarian was controversially invited to preach from the cathedral pulpit.[216] The Cathedral embodied the same principles of community as Scott's other churches, but whereas parish churches had limited scope for the expression of this ideal, here Scott was able to shout those principles

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[214] Liverpool Cathedral has been extensively dealt with in secondary literature, and thus I do not repeat the story of its design and construction here. Key sources include Vere Cotton, *The Book of Liverpool Cathedral,* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1964, and Vere Cotton's *Official Handbook to Liverpool Cathedral,* published by the Liverpool Daily Post and of which fifty thousand copies were printed in 1924 alone. Extracts from important primary sources in the Cathedral Archives are reproduced and organised in the books of Peter Kennerley, particularly *The Building of Liverpool Cathedral,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2008, and *Frederick Dean Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004. Most books dealing broadly with Edwardian Architecture in Britain treat the subject of the Liverpool Cathedral Competition, and Michael Hall's forthcoming book on G F Bodley promises to have an authoritative chapter on Scott's collaboration with Bodley in the early stages of the Cathedral's design.

[215] Quoted in Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 108.

[216] Peter Kennerley, *The Building of Liverpool Cathedral,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2008, p. 29, and Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 104.

from the rooftop, not only through the vast scale of the project, but through its wide-ranging publicity.

At Liverpool, the rather short nave is screened from the rest of the cathedral beyond by an arched bridge, and the massive crossing which opens into the transepts and chancel, is the primary seating space for the congregation (Fig. 3.68).[217] Mirroring the natural rise of the ground, each portion of the space – nave, crossing, and chancel has a higher floor level and is more brightly lit than the space that precedes it, creating a clear progression from entrance to altar. It was Scott's first great triumph as an innovative ecclesiastical planner. He explained the concept in a 1931 letter:

> My idea is that entering from the west end, the nave portion should form, as it were, an introduction to the vast space beyond … The arrangement proposed is exactly opposite to that found in medieval cathedrals, where coming in from the west end, one enters straight into the main body of the building, and in the distance is seen a smaller portion, screened off; the result is rather an anti-climax![218]

The plan came from the same impulse that drove his other ecclesiastical designs – that of reinforcing a sense of community by bringing the congregation into a space unified with the action of the liturgy.

The genius behind the new liturgy at Liverpool was the cathedral's first dean, Frederick William Dwelly. Scott and Dwelly would work closely together throughout

[217] The Cathedral proposed creating a unique name for the crossing, as they considered it an entirely new kind of space in liturgical planning. Proposals included the Naos and the Middlerood. Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 55.
[218] Memo, Giles Gilbert Scott, 8 May 1931, BSP, c. 81.

their careers, with Scott creating aesthetic and spatial solutions that informed the development of the cathedral ceremonies.[219] Liverpool was the first Anglican cathedral in England to be built on a new site since the Reformation,[220] and the creation of a new cathedral liturgy was a major demonstration of the forms that such services could take in order to reflect the concerns of the twentieth-century English church. The Cathedral were very lucky in this regard to have Scott as an architect, because he was able to build around their social concerns. Just like Scott, one of their primary concerns was the creation of a sense of community involvement. The Second Dean of Liverpool, Frederick Dillistone, explained the relationship between the architecture and the cathedral liturgy:

> It was Dwelly who saw the possibilities for dramatic movement provided by the aisles and open spaces…What may at first sight seem an undue proportion of the total floor-space has been kept open for free movement: the absence of fixed pews has made it possible to relate movements to the particular character of whatever service is being solemnised…the neo-Gothic design made movements possible in a way they never could have been in a traditional Gothic interior. The absence of pillars and a screened division between the choir and the rest of the building helped: the siting of the Lady Chapel apart from the main axis of the Cathedral also helped: in particular the provision of substantial arches on either side of the High Altar made it possible for the processions form the eastern retro-Choir to enter the Cathedral through the Sanctuary in full view of an assembled congregation.[221]

Liverpool Cathedral increased lay involvement in services through the creation of new roles such as the Cross Guild for former choristers, along with a plethora of mace-bearers and vergers. Everything was visually coordinated, with the specific

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[219] Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004, p. 269.
[220] Truro Cathedral, begun in 1880 and substantially complete by 1910, incorporates fragments of a medieval parish church, St Mary's, that already existed on the site.
[221] Frederick Dillistone, quoted in Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004, pp. 214-215.

hues of the vestments chosen to harmonise with elements of Scott's architecture (Fig. 3.69).[222] The focus on liturgy was in keeping with the interwar interest in pageantry and spectacle. Designed for newsreels and radio broadcasts, the Cathedral ceremonies were infused with cinematic drama. In a sense, Scott's churches were stage sets, designed for clear views, grand scenery, and dramatic lighting. However, they were not designed for passive spectators, every design decision was intended to excite an interest in participation and a feeling of inclusion. The clergy, at least, felt that the building was unusually successful in this. Bishop Stuart Blanch wrote that because of the design of the space, "to share in a service [at the Cathedral] was to feel oneself totally involved and warmly supported," and Dean Edward Patey wrote that "Many of the experiments regarding community and worship and liturgy, which we were operating at Coventry, [Dwelly] had already pioneered. I discovered the sheer opportunity of space here [at Liverpool Cathedral] … This has enormous potential which I don't think any other cathedral has."[223]

Dwelly's signature processions involved vast numbers of people winding their way amongst the congregation to the accompaniment of an organ with a vast range – its deepest pipes were capable of filling the cathedral with a booming thunder that shook the very air of the crossing. The services often involved a ritualised acting out of Gospel stories. The Palm Sunday procession, for instance, began in the nave,

[222] Rust-coloured cassocks with unbleached linen surplices for the choristers to compliment the red sandstone walls, dull green for some of the lay processors, white and black for the clergy. Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004, p.113.
[223] Stuart Blanch quoted in Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. xi, and Edward Patey quoted on p. 8.

where the arch of the great bridge became the gate of Jerusalem. The congregation itself was then called on to play the part of the mob during Jesus's trial by Pilate, crying out in unison, 'Crucify him! Crucify him!' Thus, through architecture and liturgy, a direct analogy was created between present-day congregants and the participants in the Gospel stories.

Dwelly believed in liturgy as 'a creative art;'[224] he saw the church service as a sacred drama to be scripted around artistic concerns rather than as a purely intellectual exercise to be constructed from academic precedent. For Dwelly, the power of the liturgy was in its emotional and psychological effect. All was coordinated; even the service leaflets were specially designed by Carter Preston to compliment the architecture and vestments (Fig. 3.70). Liverpool Cathedral was thus a total work of art in a way that was rare for twentieth-century British cathedrals. Whereas Westminster Cathedral was created as a shell to be decorated by later artists in varying styles, Liverpool from the beginning featured a team of artists designing not merely every fitting and vestment, but even choreographing the movement of people within it, all under the supervising eye of the architect. Perhaps no church since Pugin's St Augustine, Ramsgate, had been so carefully controlled — with the architect influencing not only the decoration but the very liturgy itself. It set the precedent that Coventry Cathedral would later follow.

[224] Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly,* Lancaster: Carnegie, 2004, p.128.

In the late 1920s, C H Reilly declared in a broadcast about religious architecture, that the two greatest modern churches in England were Westminster Cathedral (begun 1895, Fig. 3.71) and Liverpool Cathedral (Fig. 3.72). At Westminster, he explained 'Nothing is allowed to deflect the spectator from its main purpose. The side windows are set back from the nave, so that they are felt and not seen. The great walls shut out the world.' Reilly felt that the cathedral's architect, J F Bentley, had been more successful than the Greeks, Byzantines, or Venetians in achieving clarity of purpose. At Liverpool Cathedral, Reilly continued, '[Scott has] aimed at and achieved much the same result. His is a building with as much directness and symmetry of plan as Westminster – more, indeed, in the finished building, for externally it aims at monumental qualities which Westminster does not – in which everything is again centred on the main effect.' Entering Liverpool, one has the

> feeling of a great blow upon the imagination … In spite of the richness of detail, there is the same almost dramatic simplicity. The piers and arches rise all around to a great height; there is the complication of Gothic vaulting in place of the serene dome at Westminster, and there are views across aisles and down transepts. Nevertheless, it is the broad pathway to the altar which holds you … As at Westminster, the side windows are all set back, so as not to conflict with the main effect. There is simplicity and directness in spite of a style full of detail and multiplicity of lines. Indeed, it is one of the architect's greatest achievements that he has given to that style a new breadth which is a new life to it. We know how dead modern Gothic had become by trying to copy the old work without the skill of the old workmen to put into it the loving care and fertile idea which made it live.[225]

The 'fertile idea' that Reilly identified at Liverpool was that of function combined with psychology. Reilly had pinpointed the psychological effect of the interior on the congregants as well as some of the means used to achieve it.

[225] C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," Bound typescript, February 1927, CHR, D207/27.

Reilly also recognised that the same interest in the psychological effect of the interior had been projected onto the exterior. The homeliness of the parish churches was answered here with massing and enormous scale designed to dominate the landscape (Fig. 3.73). At Liverpool, Scott had to create a symbol that would command a city of over one million inhabitants: 'a very different problem,' Reilly noted, 'to that which faced the builders of any of the old cathedrals.'[226] The obvious metropolitan precedent was St Paul's, but it was set within an older and lower cityscape. For his purpose, Scott had to find a more dominating shape than a dome. The crossing tower of the Cathedral, hugely tall, was Scott's solution, creating a single focal point that, like St Paul's, could define the skyline. Fortunately the ground drops off around the site, helping to create the high position necessary for such a conception.

In his sketchbook, Scott compared the way the Cathedral would dominate Liverpool to the way urban Continental churches dominated their towns. Liverpool Cathedral was to be a unifying feature of the community. The cityscape itself was to become an architectural composition with a message. More than a passive reminder, the Cathedral was intended to be an active transmitter of Christian values. It was meant to mould the community by creating an emotional response in the viewers below. As Bishop Chavasse wrote in 1911, "[The Cathedral] will help to spiritualize the life of a

[226] Ibid.

great community."[227] Those arriving at the port would see it, as would those working at the docks, and the city streets would frame vistas for pedestrians of Gothic arches high above. It was a Romantic conception, but a self-conscious one, with an eye always to the results of such a gesture.

Goodhart-Rendel's comment on Liverpool Cathedral, although often taken to be derogatory, is thus not far off the mark. He wrote that 'it is either a great engine of emotion or it is nothing.'[228] The 1910 redesign of Liverpool Cathedral, in which Scott gave it the new unfolding plan and central beacon tower, was really a product of his interest in psychology. With this redesign, he created the engine of emotion. It was his psychological masterstroke and the ultimate expression of his architectural philosophy.

Liverpool Cathedral would set an example for church designers across Britain and the British Empire. The largest church in Great Britain, and the largest work of the Gothic Revival, it would become one of the best known buildings of the twentieth century, and its influence in church planning and design would echo across the globe. An understanding of Liverpool Cathedral in some senses makes up for Scott's

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[227] Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 52.
[228] H S Goodhart-Rendel, *English Architecture Since the Regency,* London: Constable, 1953, p.252. Although *English Architecture Since the Regency* was not published until 1953, Goodhart-Rendel had originally written the text in 1934 (Watkin, p. 168), so the remark may date from then. I tend to think that the remark was meant to be complimentary, as Goodhart-Rendel's 1924 book on Hawksmoor asserted that "Hawksmoor's great superiority over his contemporaries, then, lies in his greater consciousness than theirs of the emotional value of architectural forms," a comment written, perhaps not insignificantly, in the year when coverage of the consecration of Liverpool Cathedral dominated the British architectural press and in which Goodhart-Rendel converted to Roman Catholicism. Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 128.

lack of theoretical writing. It not only helps us understand his thinking, but how he influenced others who knowingly or unknowingly absorbed his approach.

Postwar Churches

For someone who only knew Scott's church designs before 1940, the 1957 Church of St Anthony at Preston would not look like a Scott church at all. A relatively small brick church with banks of identical windows, it had minimal ornament and a simple belfry (Fig. 3.74). Inside, the space was striking – wide arches spanned the nave, repeating every few yards, and a narrow clerestory of small windows, only about half the width of the nave below, was carried on a plaster-clad steel beam (Fig. 3.75). An angular gold cross hung behind the altar on a blank plaster wall.

The design was undoubtedly the product of the midcentury. However, with its repeating walls of massive concrete and atmospheric light from the small clerestory, it was very different from the popular Festival of Britain style. There were no walls of glass here, no attempts to dissolve structure. Heavy arches rose overhead, and views to side altars were hidden by massive piers. At the Church of Our Lady on Kensington Church Street in London (1959) and at St Anthony's, Preston, the side aisles were so narrow that only a single person could pass through them at a time (Fig. 3.76). Consisting of a series of holes in the edges of the concrete arches, each roughly the size of a normal door, the passage became a spiritual journey through a tunnel-like space for those seeking private prayer.

The final stage of Scott's church design practice seems to have been a reaction to his experience at Coventry Cathedral (discussed in Chapter 5). The rejection of his Coventry designs had exposed the need to make the message of his modern Gothic more legible to postwar congregations and critics. The result of that experience was a series of designs that aimed to infuse fashionable modernity with psychological effect. Although completely different from his previous work, Scott was clearly still interested in exploring the psychological possibilities of space through formal means and was once again attempting to push the Gothic tradition into the modern world. Remarkably, he was able to create an entirely new vocabulary for doing this in his sixties and seventies.

His late manner can seem an affectation, and Scott abandoned it in favour of his interwar mode when sympathetic clients would allow it (as in his last church at Plymouth). But he really did have an interest in the aesthetic and psychological possibilities of concrete catenary arches and enjoyed investigating them. At Preston, catenary arches mark the chancel and west end, and at St Leonards-on-Sea, Hastings (1954, Fig. 3.77), a large catenary arch shelters the entrance portals and the chancel.[229] His brother, Adrian, was particularly enthusiastic about the new mode, using it in his churches at Kensington High Street (1959), St Joseph's, Upton (1953, Fig. 3.78), and St Mary and St Joseph on the Lansbury Estate in London (1951, Fig.

[229] The church is not far from the Roman Catholic church that Coventry Patmore built in memory of his wife, St Mary-Star-of-the-Sea by Basil Champneys (1883) and also from the Church of St John the Evangelist, built in a modern Gothic style by H S Goodhart-Rendel in 1952, like the Scott church down the hill, a rebuilding of a church destroyed by wartime bombing.

3.79), built as part of a showplace estate for the Festival of Britain. Whereas Giles Scott would sometimes make the wide concrete arches pointed (as at Our Lady, Kensington Church Street), Adrian stuck to the pure structural expression of the catenary.

The catenary arch is a form beloved of civil engineers because it can precisely express the structural forces acting on it, thus making it highly efficient. Scott, however, used the form decoratively, further evidence that his primary concerns were with association and form. His catenary arches appear to have sometimes still been built from load-bearing masonry rather than concrete, and instead of purely expressing their structural forces, were often cut off at the bottom, intercepted by straight walls. In some ways, this was in keeping with Gothic practice, creating straight walls that responded to the human scale of the worshiper with arches branching off above. Like a concrete-shell *porte cochere* on a Las Vegas Hotel, the catenary chancel arch at St Anthony's, Preston, was only a symbol of modernity applied ornamentally. Scott's use of narrative symbol thus became nearly post-modern. Only a few years before Venturi first published his theory of the decorated shed, Scott was de-historicizing a historic style — or even more complexly, he was reassigning its historical connotations, moving Gothic from the Middle Ages to the Modern, by labeling the building as belonging to the mid-twentieth century through the use of a form associated with advanced structural engineering.

In some respects, this was an inversion of his usual approach. Instead of using Gothic forms in a modern way, he was now using Modernist forms in a Gothic way. It was a game born out of his bitter experience at Coventry. He was still exploring form and space, psychology and tradition, but he was dressing it in a way designed to appease critics who could not see beyond mere stylisms.

Although they would be little noticed in the press, the formal aspect of these churches was new. [230] The interiors of Our Lady, Kensington Church Street and St Anthony's, Preston, were defined by repeating flat planes. Nave-spanning arches repeated one after the other (Fig. 3.80). As at Luton (1931, Figs. 3.53-3.54), repeating diaphragm arches defined the structure, but unlike Luton, the tiny clerestories floated overhead on a steel beam rather than being supported by a sidewall. Aisles were created by punching simple rectangular openings through the sides of the arch walls. The result was churches that felt like they had been slotted together from pieces of thick cardboard.

Yet, as already mentioned, this new style did not become Scott's exclusive mode of church design. At Plymouth (1960, Fig. 3.81) and Toronto (1953, Fig. 3.82), Scott designed traditional pointed arches in stone. This raises the question as to whether the catenary style was Scott's own creation or the work of a younger member of the office. The evidence seems to imply that it was Scott's own creation. He was, after all, only in his sixties, prime time for creativity in the 'old man's game' of

[230] Although some architectural journals carried photographs of Scott's late churches, none provided any text beyond the captions.

architecture. One piece of evidence that the style was Scott's own creation is a drawing at the RIBA for a monument to British-American cooperation in World War II.[231] Since only one small perspective exists, the design was probably speculative: the working out of an interesting architectural problem, rather than the representation of a real commission. The drawing shows a catenary arch bridging a reflecting pool and fountain, terminating in large blocky abutments on either side of the pool. The arch was enriched with sculpture, including airplanes and clouds at the apex and sculptural groups representing the workers of Britain and the USA on plinths atop their respective abutments. In addition to an explanation of the sculptural symbolism, the drawing bore the inscription: "British Memorial in Washington, Commemorating America's help to Britain and the Union of the two great English Speaking nations."[232] It was signed with Scott's initials and dated December 1948. It is a problematic design in several respects. Firstly, it is very different than anything else Scott did. And secondly, he drew it right after Eero Saarinen's winning design for Gateway Arch in St Louis was published (Fig. 3.83). Scott had taken Saarinen's concept and created his own interpretation of it.[233] Thus, it is a very interesting piece of late Scott – in his own hand, with his signature in the bottom, it shows his willingness to experiment, and reveals that the catenary form

[231] Giles Scott, Sketch of British Memorial, Washington DC, SD, SCOTT RAN 9, [162] 1.
[232] Ibid.
[233] The contemporary Italian architect Adalberto Libera had also experimented with designs for a giant catenary arch. This unexecuted 1942 design for the Esposizione Universale, like Scott's arch spanned a body of water.

was particularly on his mind. It also shows an interest in one of America's leading Modernist architects.[234]

Another bit of evidence that the catenary style was Giles Scott's own creation is that his son, Richard Gilbert Scott, devised a different form of modernist Gothic after Scott's death. If the style had been his own, he presumably would have continued to use it. Following the family tradition, Richard developed his own individual style, evoking Gothic through a brutalist vocabulary of heavy angular masses and concrete shades (Figs. 3.84-3.85).[235] The catenary style may have been evolved partly as preparation for passing the torch to the next generation; however, it was clearly created, as everything in Scott's small office, with his close personal involvement.

Despite going to the trouble of creating a new mode of working postwar, Scott still seems to have preferred the mode of Gothic design that he had first developed in his earliest churches and evolved during the interwar period. He continued to use it when clients would allow. This was Scott's 'mature Gothic style,' featuring concentrated ornament surrounded by unadorned masses of masonry, spiky tracery derived from natural forms, vast arches, and the simplified masses and planar surfaces which had so astounded the young Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue in the early 1910s.[236] He had refined this style over the years at Liverpool (Fig. 3.86), but

[234] Although it seems to have been Saarinen's arch that first got Scott thinking about the catenary form, when Scott began to apply the catenary to his churches, it was in a way very different than Saarninen. Saarinen never used catenary arches in flat walls, but in keeping with Modernist principles, in a way more expressive of the structural forces of reinforced concrete.
[235] First fully expressed at the Church of Our Lady, Tile Cross, Birmingham (1966-1967).
[236] Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue,* MIT, 1983, p.128.

its essential features were unchanged from his first work at Bournemouth. This was the one area of Scott's practice untouched by radical experiment. Instead, he left his critically acclaimed Gothic style essentially alone, only making small refinements throughout his career. His design for the west façade of Liverpool, completed in 1944 was in that style – maintaining the unity of the Cathedral design. Scott's 1944 design was rugged and massive, and would have given the Cathedral a greater sense of scale, in keeping with the site (Fig. 3.87). Looking as if it grew right out of the rock, it would have featured a massive west porch built into the side of the slope and only one small rose window set high in the cliff of masonry. The design ultimately went unexecuted, however, because the west front ultimately proved too expensive for the 1970s committee charged with completing it, and Scott's assistant Roger Pinckney, who was proficient in the office style, created a new, cheaper design.

In contrast to the dark, brooding Gothic of the Liverpool west end, Scott's postwar masterpiece, the 1953 Chapel of Trinity College, Toronto (Figs. 3.88-3.89), seemed to dissolve into light. Even at the end of his career, Scott was continuing to refine his designs. In contrast with his usual dark, moody churches, he designed huge clear glass windows that flooded the interior with light. All architectural surfaces – floor, walls, vaults – were in a palette of white and cream. The chapel was a Whistlerian exploration of a monochromatic colour scheme – a Gothic symphony in white. Scott explained to the Toronto newspaper that he was particularly interested to see the

results, because the design was not in keeping with his usual practice: "I have never before used so much glass."[237]

The choice of white reflected a mid-century modernist taste for light colours. The same taste is reflected in other Gothic Revival churches of the period, such as Francis Palmer Smith's roughly contemporary St Philip's Episcopal Cathedral in Atlanta (Fig. 3.90). However, Scott took the aesthetic farther, specifying clear glass for the nave windows, with mixed grisailles of grey, blue, and clear for the apse. His chapel shone with reflected light. Apart from this cursory gesture at contemporary taste, however, Toronto contained none of Scott's usual social and liturgical experiment. For whatever reason, at this late stage in his career, he laid aside the experiments that so provoked English critics, to focus on the pleasure of aesthetic play with sympathetic clients. The chapel's plan was typical of his interwar churches: east-facing pews and a forward altar with reredos behind, brought close to the congregation by removing the choir to a gallery at the rear, all set within an open volume for clear views.

The Trustees of Trinity College, University of Toronto, had commissioned Scott to design a Gothic college chapel in 1948, and Canadian bishops dedicated the chapel in 1953. The trustees and the Anglophile donor[238] wanted a Gothic style that would harmonise both with their existing 1920s Collegiate Gothic buildings and with their

[237] Giles Scott quoted in Pearl McCarthy, "Architect Visits His Handiwork for First Time," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 28 October 1955, p. 9.
[238] Gerald Larkin, founder of the Salada Tea Company

staunchly High Church form of Anglican worship, which they felt was threatened by secularizing forces within the university. They were proud that the chapel was to be built entirely of load-bearing masonry, and as at Charterhouse Chapel, the only steel was to be in the roof. Despite their boasts, the building could hardly be considered a model of Ruskinian 'honesty.' Scott was still more concerned with effect than with structural expression — the stuccoed wire mesh of the vaults, visible from the chapel attic, has led current University of Toronto affiliates to refer to the chapel as 'chicken coop Gothic.'[239]

Gothic had thrived in interwar North America in a way that it had not in Britain, and it continued to be popular after World War II. Scott sailed in to examine the chapel in 1953, and gave the local paper an interview filled with his usual rhetoric about the modern Gothic: "Style should mean the way in which a man expresses his intent. A copy can be dead: the intent of a living man, never."[240] The Canadian media resounded with praise for the structure. G F Bodley's prophecy that modern Gothic would find more fertile soil in North America than it had in Britain to some extent had proven true. Princeton's Firestone Library had been completed in 1948 – its Gothic Revival skin over a hypermodern interior reflected a Scott-like theory of architectural manners (Fig. 3.91). A stone from the fire-bombed House of Commons was even donated by the British Ambassador and set into its façade, symbolically linking the greatest work of the first Gothic Revival with the twilight of its later

[239] Interview with Ross McKean, University of Toronto Alumnus, 9 April 2013, Notes in author's possession.
[240] Giles Scott quoted in Pearl McCarthy, "Architect Visits His Handiwork for First Time," *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 28 October 1955, p. 9.

phase.[241] Princeton's campus was particularly evocative of the modern Gothic style that Scott had been so influential in shaping earlier in the century. Although propagated in the United States by architects such as Ralph Adams Cram, Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, Day & Klauder, and Milton Medary, they had all looked to Scott, and particularly to Liverpool, for inspiration. It was somehow fitting that now the father of the modern Gothic style was designing his only complete North American project as a sort of seal on the final stages of the movement. It would also be Scott's own swansong – the last project executed during his lifetime in his mature Gothic style, built on the continent that loved it best.

In 1938 Scott had written down the characteristics he felt were essential to good modern Gothic, when he served as an assessor for a competition to extend St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney: "a real feeling for mediaeval Gothic, without the harsh soullessness of Revival Gothic, originality without eccentricity, and a fine plan."[242] It was the combination of the latter two characteristics — the active experimentation in Scott's churches — that was the most striking feature of Scott's ecclesiastical design practice. Throughout his career, he was constantly experimenting with plan. At Ampleforth Abbey, rather than having separate altars for the monks and the congregation, as was standard practice, Scott designed one grand central altar between the monks' choir and the nave to be shared by both parties – an inventive

[241] Barksdale Maynard, *Princeton: America's Campus,* University Park, Pennsylvania: Penn State, 2013, p. 162.
[242] Giles Scott, "Sydney Cathedral Assessor's Report," 1937, SP, ScGG/257/3.

gesture stressing the common aim and communal nature of worship (Fig. 3.92).[243] It was in a sense a reversible altar, with one face being used for nave services and the other face being used for services in the choir. In an unexecuted plan for Golders Green, he created a church with two naves at right angles to each other that shared a single sanctuary with an altar in the crook of the L.[244] As already mentioned, he developed the crossing as a space for seating – an idea which first appeared as early as 1910 in preliminary designs for St Paul's, Derby Lane.[245] He introduced true forward altars earlier than any other architect in Britain (St Alphege's, Bath, for instance, as Elain Harwood has noted, had a forward altar from the time of its opening in 1929, Fig. 3.20).[246] This conscious striving for innovation was a key component of Scott's definition of tradition. Essentially socially progressive, his design method was meant to modernise tradition by forcing it to adopt new forms.

The worst thing that could happen to a tradition, Scott believed, was stagnation. Since he believed that a vital tradition was proof of a healthy community, a recipe for architectural vitality could help to keep English community alive. His method of design by experiment was meant to be that recipe. It was what today's designers would call prototyping — the rapid, instinctive creation of multiple alternatives rather than the laboured refinement of an initial concept toward a predefined ideal. When Scott designed a church he produced numerous alternatives, then picked the

[243] Giles Scott, Designs for Ampleforth Abbey, SD, PA2074/ScGG[3]1-67. Also "Ampleforth Reredos and Main Altar," *AJ,* 16 December 1931, Supplement.
[244] Giles Scott, Preliminary Plans, Elevation, and Interior Perspective for St Alban's, Golders Green, c. 1925, SD, SCOTT RAN 8, [78] 4 & 5.
[245] Giles Scott, Sketch Elevation, Plan, and Section, c. 1909, SD, SCOTT RAN 7, [68] 2.
[246] Elain Harwood, "Liturgy and Architecture," *The Twentieth Century Church,* London: Twentieth Century Society, 1998, p. 56.

best features from the emergent designs to develop into the final church. Scott hoped that by using this design method, the hidden principles of architecture would be revealed by successful experiments, not by deep preliminary thought. If his unconscious mind suddenly suggested that the west front of St Andrew's, Luton, might have two small towers, he would draw it out and analyze the result, rather than creating a theoretical justification for the action beforehand.[247] T G Jackson had written in 1923 that great art must be "unfettered by formal rules and unchecked by premeditation. It must flow from us unconsciously."[248] Scott seems to have shared that feeling precisely.

The use of words such as 'experiment' and 'innovation' to describe Scott's design process and results created an analogy with scientific methods that made his design concept seem particularly modern and up to date. Architecture, Scott was frequently heard to remark, was both an art and a science.[249] The products of the imagination were his experimental results, and only after they were created was logic to be applied to the selection of elements for further development. But the scientific analogy was in a sense a distortion of the fact that his designs were the result of an instinctive process rather than a philosophical one. It was not nearly so scientific as he and his critics implied. Scott was attempting, paradoxically perhaps, to adapt what David Watkin has called the "frankly unsystematic and unintellectual"[250]

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[247] Sketch elevations of St Andrew's Luton, c.1931, SD, SCOTT RAN 8 ScGG [116] 2.
[248] T G Jackson, *The Renaissance of Roman Architecture,* vol ii, CUP 1923, Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 102.
[249] See Chapter 4.
[250] David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 102.

tradition of the late-Victorian gentleman architect to the popular scientific vocabulary of the interwar period. The scientific analogy was, in this case, merely a rhetorical device.

Scott's avoidance of dogma was not the product of a curmudgeonly anti-intellectualism. Scott hoped that this way his design activity would be able to avoid the philosophical pitfalls that had stranded Victorians like his father, who had despaired that theory alone provided no clear route for architectural development. Ultimately, Scott realised that there were different kinds of knowing. Architecture was not the sort of thing, he felt, that should be defined by theories. It was not a problem that you solved once and for all with a theory and then applied this over-arching knowledge to have the perfect answer from then on. There were considerations of functions and site that were different for each building, and those required a pragmatic rather than theoretical response. Architecture was a creative process, learned, like playing the cello, from practice. It was the result of developed skill, not applied knowledge. Scott adopted the sort of creative versus intellectual approach that Charles Marriott believed was essential to progress in modern architecture. Pure intellectualism was a trap — Formal theories taken to their logical conclusion led to buildings that were nothing but projected light.[251] Architecture, as a pragmatic and functional art, had to preserve a connection to the practical by acknowledging its material nature. Marriott too felt that theorists in

[251] Charles Marriott, *Modern English Architecture,* London: Chapman & Hall, 1924, p. 214.

ivory towers were likely to carry architecture into fallacies that had rhetorical logic, but lost sight of the material realities and functional requirements of building.

Scott's experimental design method was his most original contribution to the theory of tradition and the most celebrated aspect of his work. Critics rejoiced in the chapel of Lady Margaret Hall, despite its ostensibly conservative Byzantine style, because it represented another iteration of Scott's experimental approach — its plan and decoration, its mollusk-like concrete dome, were all unlike anything Scott had done before.[252]

But the risk of this approach was that it incorporated failure as part of the process. Many of his most exciting designs — the double-nave at St Alban's, Golders Green, for instance — would go unbuilt and unpublished. Some built designs would be so strange that critics rejected them. We have already seen that the New Bodleian was widely regarded as ugly; many people found the Cambridge University Library and William Booth College intimidating; and the exteriors of some late Scott churches such as St Anthony's, Preston, were industrial in a less dignified way than Scott's power stations, with ranks of standardised parts and dumpy proportions. No doubt there were lessons to be learned from these designs, but critics tended to be unforgiving of what they perceived as aesthetic failure. Scott seldom experimented in a way that would harm the practicality of a building. Clients would have their functional needs met. Even if a plan was experimental, as say St Alban's, Golders

[252] Press Clipping, *Architect & Building News,* 27 January 1933, p.129, LMH, Chapel I.

Green, Scott always made sure he had the enthusiastic support of the client. Formal experiments, however, were another matter, and, as at the New Bodleian, critics and the public could be uncomprehending. The critical silence that met his late church designs could perhaps be taken as evidence of this lack of comprehension of his methods. Where Scott saw an experiment in mixing parts to create a whole that was greater, critics saw a confused attempt at hybridisation.

In an age of media scrutiny, architects were expected to be able to explain their ideas. Scott was always ready to repeat one of his maxims like "Evolution not revolution," or to decry the inhuman nature of Modernism, but he often did not explain his design ideas very clearly. The experimental nature of the designs perhaps meant that he himself did not always immediately comprehend their full implications, but the truth was that he was not well equipped for a rhetorical defence of his work. He relied on explaining his work via a collection of architectural proverbs about tradition and modernity, spirit and style. They aimed at capturing truth, but were not a complete philosophical system. Art History was a new discipline in interwar England. The first art historian to apply the standards of the academic discipline as it had developed in Germany was Roger Fry, and the discipline had no scholarly home until the founding of the Courtauld Institute of Art in 1932 and the Warburg Institute's move to London in 1933.[253] Scott had no training in its methods of argument, he had only a high school education (although undoubtedly a good one), and on some level he was not interested —he was after all

[253] David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 145.

a practising architect and designer, not an academic writer. At Cambridge University Library, for instance, the design, with its stark masses and rhythmic repetition of narrow windows, could have used explanation. Magazines such as *Country Life* could not begin to comprehend the inspirations behind such a design, and Scott could not begin to explain it.[254] An understanding of his motives only begins to emerge from a wide-ranging study of his writings and designs.

It was not the verbal description of a building that Scott felt gave it meaning. The aesthetic element and by extension the sculptural form of the building were the province of the architect as artist and spoke to a different sense. In terms of intellectual meaning, Scott felt, it was the plan that truly mattered: it contained the order underlying the design. It was the vessel of the key ideas. Through plan he brought congregation closer to the altar, or drew in pedestrians via a convenient entrance at the street corner. The next chapter will explore the way Scott used both plans and words (ie the verbal and written expression) to give intellectual justification to his designs. We will also see how Scott's ideas about community translated into ideas about civic duty on the larger scale of the urban metropolis.

[254] Arthur Oswald, "The New University Library, Cambridge," *Country Life,* 27 October 1934, p.442.

4. Town Planning and Commercial Buildings: Artistic Duty in the Civic Realm

According to Giles Gilbert Scott, words and planning were characteristic of modern architecture. Both planning and theory gave intellectual justification to architectural design. The presentation of this drive for meaning as characteristically 'modern' was linked on some level to the professionalisation of architecture – the couching of architectural design in technical language lent legitimacy to the notion that the architect was something more than a mere fine artist. The interwar period was a particularly active one for architectural theory. Architects took to the newspapers and the airwaves to present their ideas about what it meant to be modern. Scott called it "the modern craze for talking."[1] He went on:

> I sometimes wonder why our modern times are characterised so much by the written and spoken word – is it cheap printing and broadcasting? Whatever it is, words seem to rule us; nations are swayed and driven crazy by words, and in art, one cannot but be amazed at the amount of written or spoken comment that appears.[2]

Lutyens, who felt that his lack of a public school education made him bad with words, quipped, "Talking too much about architecture makes the ears grow until they cover the eyes." Scott agreed. He despaired at the preponderance of words, missing the "days when men talked less and did better."[3] He felt that the work should speak for itself. He worried that words were not the architect's medium, nor did the public have sufficient education to sort the truth from what they were

[1] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA," Typescript, 1935, SP, ScGG/279/3.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

hearing – texts applied to works of architecture could make them seem to have artistic characteristics or even political meanings that they did not in reality possess. Radio was a particularly risky in this regard, as the speaker had to use rhetorical force rather than visual material to convey an architectural argument.[4] However, unlike Lutyens, Scott accepted this state of affairs and shouldered the burden of 'hard propaganda work,' particularly in his role as President of RIBA.[5] Although he did not like public speaking, Scott had a sufficient fluency with words, perhaps the result of his public school education. He had been in the public eye since the beginning of his career, and his familiarity with the media and his careful tact must have made him popular with editors. He also had the example of his mentor, C H Reilly, whose fluent use of media had played a large role in the creation of Scott's international reputation.[6] Over the course of his career, Scott would give numerous speeches and radio broadcasts[7] and write articles for publications ranging from the architectural press to the popular magazine, *John Bull* (Fig. 4.1). Scott generally used his public prominence to call for better aesthetic education, to fight stylistic dogmatism, and above all to promote planning, particularly of the sort executed by architects.

[4] For an analysis of British architectural broadcasts in the early days of the BBC, see Shundana Yusaf, *Wireless Sites*, PhD Dissertation, Princeton, April 2011.
[5] Letter, Scott to C H Reilly, 27 October 1942, SP, ScGG/276/3.
[6] Reilly's first radio broadcast was in 1927, the year that the BBC began operation. He would use the platform to promote Liverpool Cathedral at every opportunity.
[7] Typescripts of many of Scott's speeches survive in the RIBA Archives, and are often contain significant differences from the published summaries that sometimes appeared in the press. I have found many references to the fact that Scott made BBC broadcasts, (see Yusaf, p. 224, RIBA RA Planning Committee files, and the website of Forster & Heighes) however, I have not been able to locate transcripts or recordings.

At first glance, the various types of building that fall under the heading of this chapter may seem like a heterogeneous collection. Scott's office buildings, power stations, bridges and telephone kiosks may generally fit into the theme of infrastructure improvement, and they may all be projects in which Scott provided aesthetic adjustment to the work of specialist contractors, but that hardly seems to reveal much about the nature of Scott's architectural thought. The point where they all come together — the hidden link — is in Scott's theories about urban planning. Through his façade designs and through his creation of important bits of urban infrastructure, Scott was able to play a larger role in the life of the city. As we have also found in Scott's other work, what may at first seem an irreconcilable variety, in fact has an underlying logic: he designed these projects with broader urban goals in mind, responding to concerns about civic grandeur, urban welfare, and improved speed of transit. As with his other projects, his ultimate goal was to address social concerns. These projects aim to knit the community together at the urban scale.

Office Buildings, Clubs, and Apartment Blocks

In 1938, Scott designed a flagship office building and showroom for the Bristol Electric Company on a prominent site in central Bristol directly opposite the new War Memorial (Fig. 4.2). It was to be the only office building built between the wars with both a plan and a façade designed by Scott. The shell of the building was complete by the end of 1939, when interior work was halted, to be completed after

the war.[8] Scott had hoped to adorn the building with a sculptural programme of his own design. Drawings survive for bronze tympana grills and stone panels adorned with sun goddesses, figures grasping thunderbolts, and zigzag motifs.[9] Like Scott's contemporary designs for the New Bodleian, the figures borrowed motifs from American Art Deco. On a side elevation a figure similar to the statues of the four winds on Holden's 55 Broadway (1929) has been sketched in with soft graphite.[10] Charged with the energy of an Epstein, it recalled Scott's admiration of avant-garde British sculptors. As executed, however, perhaps owing to the interruption of the war, the building was fairly unadorned – a smooth mass set on a classical plinth – giving the building a *moderne* flavour that would be reinforced by the use of tubular steel furniture and Art Deco lanterns in the showroom.[11]

Like his industrial work, the Bristol Electric Company headquarters was not strikingly original. The round Portland stone corner turret at the 'prow' of the island site recalled Burnet, Tait, and Lorne's design for the headquarters of the Newcastle upon Tyne Electric Supply Company, built roughly a decade earlier (Fig. 4.3).[12] Both buildings featured plate- glass showroom windows, a public corner entrance rotunda, and a rectilinear block of offices in a stripped-classical style behind.

[8] Letter, Scott to Secretary of the Building Industries National Council, 1 December 1939, SP, ScGG/259/1
[9] Elevation of Bronze Grill, 1938, SD, ScGG [19] 15.
[10] Elevation, Bristol Electric Company, 1938, SD, ScGG [19] 14.
[11] Perspective, Bristol Electric Company, 1938, SD, ScGG [19] 31.
[12] The building, known as Carliol House, was built 1924-28. Gracie McCombie, *Pevsner Architectural Guides: Newcastle and Gateshead,* YUP, 2009, p. 143.

Scott's willingness to borrow the essentials of the building's plan directly from Burnet, Tait, and Lorne gives insight into the way he understood the planning of large urban buildings. He copied the essentials of the Newcastle building because it felt it was a right solution for this particular typology of building on a prominent urban site. Precedent, as Scott explained in an interview, was about looking at the way other architects had solved similar problems.[13] That he was talking about medieval precedent in this particular case is not important; his point was that this approach applied to all precedent, whether historic or contemporary. In Scott's view of architecture as evolutionary, all architects were involved in working out solutions to modern problems, and the forms created by others were part of an ever-improving library of solutions. The architect was a planner and problem-solver, and precedent was about solving architectural and urban problems.

But this approach is curiously opposite to the experimental and innovative planning that he promoted in his church work. There is no explanation for this inconsistency in Scott's thought, except perhaps the one that his son Richard gave — he simply did not enjoy office planning.[14] It was hard to address social issues through office design.

In fact, Scott planned very few large urban buildings. His name was associated with larger numbers of them because he did a very large number of façade designs between the wars, and he was a consultant on even more. His role in consulting

[13] Giles Scott, "The New Bodleian Building," *Oxford Magazine,* February 1937, p. 30.
[14] Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott: His Son's View*, London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011, p. 17.

projects was to critique and tweak existing designs, and sometimes it can be difficult to disentangle exactly what was Scott's work and what was merely designed in the Scott style. Scott façade designs or consultations included new offices for the London County Council (Fig. 4.4, 1935), the entrance façade of the Phoenix Theatre (Fig 4.5, 1930), a Gothic-style office block for Parliament Square (1935), William Booth College on Denmark Hill (Fig. 4.6**,** 1928), a vast club on Finsbury Square called City Gate House (now the London headquarters of Bloomberg) (Fig. 4.7**,** 1929), Fountain House on Park Lane (1936), and the cresting on the new Adelphi Building (c.1937).[15] In almost all of those cases, Scott was brought in late in the design process to create a new façade that would mollify some controversy over a building otherwise too ugly for a site of such prominence. The Grosvenor Estate brought him in on Fountain House because the developer's designs (by Val Meyer) did not meet the Estate's standards. For the Parliament Square office block, Scott was brought in to redesign the façade after the press decried the desecration of the ceremonial heart of the nation with a large commercial office block.[16] Scott also did numerous unexecuted façade projects, often for very large schemes – a massive complex of flats and a convention hall for the site of the Foundling Hospital, a Wembley Factory for Standard Telephones and Cables, an office block in Piccadilly, a handful of power stations.[17] They were all cases of bringing in Scott to make a building better fit into a perceived urban whole.

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[15] For details on these commissions, see Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family*, London: Gregg, 1981, pp. 178-9.
[16] Chris Miele, ed, *The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom,* London: Merrell, 2010, p. 59.
[17] Drawings for these schemes are in the RIBA Drawings Collection, see Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family*, London: Gregg, 1981, pp. 178-9.

A striking feature of Scott's commercial façade designs is that they are very often in a Neo-Grec style. The style carried connotations of utility particularly suitable for commercial buildings, as the forms of the ornament were seen to reflect structural realities (see discussion of Semper and Muthesius below). Unlike the domestic Neo-Regency style of Memorial Court and Scott's house designs, the full-fledged Neo-Grec of Scott's commercial designs was properly monumental. This choice of style is a further indication that Scott conceived these office buildings as interventions at an urban scale – such monumental classicism was the style that his contemporaries associated with grand civic planning.

In addition to his interest in Gothic, Scott clearly also had a fascination with classical design. His sketchbooks feature a surprising amount of classical design and detail. He had a habit of making sketches of vast classical fantasies, which he sometimes exhibited, and which his family referred to as 'Dad's Drunks' (Fig. 4.8).[18] His, Gothic training, however, influenced his interpretation of the classical. Like his Gothic designs, Scott's classical designs were about modelled masses, about carving away from a single monolithic form. They have the same feeling of cliff-like massiveness, the same hints of Hugh Ferriss's *City of Tomorrow* that have led critics like Owen Hatherley to use the word "Gotham" when describing Scott's work.[19] But that does not fully explain the peculiar nature of Scott's classical compositions. In contrast to

[18] For example, "The Founder's Tomb" exhibited in 1923 at the AA. "Architectural Phantasies," *Architectural Review,* vol 53, Feb 1923, p.66. For more on these drawings see Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott, His Son's View,* London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011.
[19] Owen Hatherley, *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain,* London: Verso, 2011, p. 224.

the expectations created by their Greek detailing, they feature long horizontal spans over recesses, the occasional use of a round arch as a central feature, the concentration of ornament at entrances, and sometimes even the use of battlemented parapets. These features seem to derive from Scott's interest in Assyrian architecture. A glance at the illustrations of 'West Asiatic Architecture' in contemporary editions of Bannister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method* will support this argument (Fig. 4. 9).[20] His classical designs feel strange because they really were global in their sources – as in his Gothic work, he saw any precedent as fair game for deriving architectural solutions.

In order to compose buildings in the modernistic mode that he developed in the later 1920s and which featured in Cambridge University Library and the Guinness Factory, Scott had abstracted away much of the detail of his classical designs and exaggerated their massing. Many of the signature design elements that had marked Scott's Neo-Grec work remained: the narrow horizontal balconies and rectangular recesses at central points in the symmetrical composition; the rows of narrow vertical slits flanking the central feature; and the essentially Palladian A-B-C-B-A massing. 'Dad's Drunks' demonstrate the underlying similarity of the compositions of Scott's Neo-Grec and his modernistic mode.[21] His Neo-Grec designs show a taste for carving into monumental mass and for strong towers that clearly derives from

[20] For a discussion of Scott's views on Assyrian architecture, see chapter 2. The illustrations referred to can be found on pp. 47-48 and 51-52 in the 1946 edition of Bannister Fletcher's *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, London: B T Batsford.
[21] This point is particularly shown in the drawing reproduced on p. 33 of Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott His Son's View*, London, Lyndhurst Road, 2011.

his Gothic training, and they show a particular abstract rhythm of strongly symmetrical vertical and rectangular recesses that were peculiarly Scott's own. Reilly felt that the Greek and Gothic were both intimately related, because he shared Semper's belief that Greek ornament was a reflection of structure. Perhaps this explains the strongly trabeated nature of Scott's designs. That Scott felt the best modernism came from abstracted classicism is reflected in a letter he wrote to C H Reilly: "I think the best modernists are those you trained at Liverpool in the Classic tradition and then went on to modern expression."[22]

Guinness Factory

In 1936, Frank Pick feared that there was a growing divide between art and manufacture. Quoting Herbert Read, he explained that "one reason why modern art falls into cubism and other strange errors is that it finds no outlet for itself in modern industry."[23] The idea that industry is uplifted by art was rooted not just in the idea that artistic buildings attracted good publicity or that well-designed products were more saleable, but also in a belief that art had an inherently deeper, more spiritual value: good design brought joy to both makers and users. In a fairly typical bit of rhetoric, Pick once described London life as requiring "faith in the transport that alone unites and vivifies, much like the faith that moves mountains."[24] And in this regard he was not alone. Herbert Read, Michael Sadler, Roger Fry, and

[22] Letter, Scott to Reilly, n.d. (1943), CHR, D207/40/123.
[23] Frank Pick, "The Creative Impulse in the College of Art," Pamphlet, Leicester College of Arts and Crafts, 1936, p. 15.
[24] Ibid, p. 5.

William Lethaby all wrote that, as historian Michael Saler explains it, art could vitalise commerce and bring the material world in line with "the eternal rhythms and universal forms underlying existence."[25] Pick and Lethaby shared a philosophy that "Art is life done well."[26] For those who were troubled by modern commercialism, either because of their socialism or their gentlemanly values, art was presented as a way of legitimising the otherwise tainted pursuit of commerce.

The preponderance of factories with expensive architect-designed masonry facades from this period does not mean that factory owners necessarily bought into this talk about spiritualising commerce. Pick and Lethaby's language was an extreme manifestation of a more widespread rhetoric in which artistic façades were portrayed as a civic duty. Such façades were believed to enhance worker morale by providing more permanent and uplifting surroundings, to bring good publicity, and to contribute to London's dignity as imperial capital, providing an impression of prosperity and cultural acumen. It was this combination of factors that led factory owners to hire "art architect" façade consultants.

The most prominent organisation in the drive for art in industry was the Design & Industries Association (DIA). To some extent the artistic factory façade was the mission of the DIA writ large. They believed that other nations, particularly Germany and the United States, were gaining a commercial advantage through the

[25] Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP, 1999, p. 9.
[26] Frank Pick, "The Creative Impulse in the College of Art," Pamphlet, Leicester College of Arts and Crafts, 1936, p. 11.

design quality of their products. The DIA thus encouraged British manufacturers to hire creative designers to improve both the function and aesthetic of their merchandise. Reflecting the social concerns of their Arts & Crafts roots, they also believed that improving the quality of the applied arts would bring joy into the life of everyday people. They believed that well-designed factories would further this mission by bringing art into the life of the worker, who in turn created artistic products to disseminate via commerce.[27]

By the time Scott built his first industrial building in the late 1920s, the DIA had been evangelising to British industry for over a decade. Their message, summed up in the motto "fitness for purpose," was widely accepted. Books such as The Studio's 1939 *Industrial Architecture* and Herbert Read's 1934 *Art and Industry* and journals such as *The Studio*, *The Architectural Review,* and the DIA's own magazine, demonstrated the way that good factory design could contribute to efficiency and worker welfare. The acceptance of DIA ideas was particularly coupled with the widespread adoption of Taylorism – the drive to improve working conditions as well as practical efficiency along American models exemplified by the Ford Corporation. Scott, as we have seen, was eager to embrace the social purpose of art.[28] For him, Lethaby's social-artistic dictum "Art is thoughtful workmanship" [29] applied equally to the art of architecture, in which spatial and social planning were joined.

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[27] Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP 1999, pp. 72-73.
[28] See Chapter 2.
[29] Lethaby, "Art in Workmanship," p. 11, quoted in Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP, 1999, p. 81.

The trend towards particularly elaborate masonry façades for British factories, which by this time had already given way to less opulent and often more modernistic designs in the USA and Germany, was not simply the product of DIA propaganda, however, but also of unique aspects of the British cultural scene, particularly a strong stream of medievalism and notions of imperial civic duty.

The chivalrous, medievalist culture of the British public schools that Scott had engaged with so directly at Charterhouse also defined the mannerisms of interwar British commerce. Many leading industrialists had attended public schools, and those who were not themselves public school men needed to imitate their manners in order to mix in the higher levels of British society. The executives of Guinness and their colleagues were men reared in the particular Late Victorian tradition of chivalry that prevailed in the years after 1900.[30] The interwar period was the culmination of what economic historians P J Cain and A G Hopkins have termed 'gentlemanly capitalism': a phenomenon in which declining agricultural prices drove the old landed interests out of farming and into London's corporate boardrooms.[31] For those in business, it was important to show that they were still gentlemen, to express a commitment both to culture and to civic duty. A commitment to art also helped to diffuse any anti-industrial bias that lingered amongst figures raised on the

[30] For an study of this ideal and its effects on British cultural history in the 19th and 20th centuries, see Mark Girouard, *Return to Camelot,* YUP, 1981.
[31] P J Cain and A G Hopkins, "Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas II: New Imperialism, 1850 – 1945," *The Economic History Review,* New Series, Vol 40, 1, February 1987, p. 6.

ideals of the Arts & Crafts Movement.[32] This encouraged many firms to go beyond mere economy in the construction of their facilities by patronising gentlemen architects.

Critics and architects of the period constantly emphasised the importance of building for posterity.[33] In a speech at the 1935 RIBA Conference, Scott himself called on "those great Captains of Industry and great Merchants of the city, who in a spirit of good citizenship can so greatly influence their fellow citizens," to patronise architecture with a strong civic presence.[34] Radio broadcasts by C H Reilly and Clough Williams-Ellis promoted the idea that architecture existed for civic improvement and was the natural product of a healthy democracy.[35] Even the King weighed in, stressing that it was the architect's public duty to create attractive buildings within a well-planned setting and that it was the private client's duty to pay for them.[36]

To this end, George V sanctioned the creation of the Royal Fine Arts Commission in 1924. It was charged with advising public and private bodies on matters of

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[32] Michael Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England,* OUP, 1999, p. 62.
[33] See Giles Scott, "The Ugly House Outrage," *John Bull,* 13 April 1935, p.9 and "Our Skyscrapers Called Enduring: Sir Edwin Lutyens's opinion on corrosion said to be disproved by evidence," *The New York Times,* 11 December 1927, p. N1, in which the architect declares that American skyscrapers are built with economic rather than civic motives and will therefore not prove lasting; Clough Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1928, and countless others.
[34] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA," SP, ScGG/279/3.
[35] Shundana Yusaf, *Wireless Sites*, PhD Dissertation, Princeton, April 2011, pp. 78-9. Later in his career when he became more radical, Reilly would cease encouraging commercial interests to lead by example, writing that it was commerce, "with its concomitant of competing individualism," that was keeping society from achieving a universal style of architecture. "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944, p. 12.
[36] Copy of Letter, R Goodburn Lovell, President of SE Society of Architects to Mayor of Hastings, 2 February 1935, quoting the King's recent speech, SP, ScGG/279/3.

aesthetics. The Royal Fine Arts Commission was based on the Commission of Fine Arts that the United States Congress had created in 1910 to oversee the artistic aspect of the grand civic replanning of Washington DC.[37] The difference between the US commission and the British one was that the British commission was national in scope and was encouraged to advise on important private projects. The political purpose of encouraging monumental architecture was not always mentioned, but was a constant subtext – the interwar rhetoric of monumentality reflected concerns that the physical fabric of London needed to better reflect its role as Imperial Capital.[38] Thus patrons' sense of civic duty led them to demand the expensive stone and brick façades that characterise the early twentieth century London office building, warehouse, and factory.

In the profession of architecture, this same chivalrous ideal was responsible for the creation of the culture of the gentleman architect that held sway in British architecture between the wars, delaying the introduction of larger, more efficiently organised offices already prevalent in the United States.[39] Scott's office was famously small, with all design work executed by Scott himself. Even in the 1940s, when the office was handling the rebuilding of the House of Commons, work on two cathedrals, and a number of other commissions, the staff never grew larger than eight. [40] The medievalist culture of the chivalrous gentleman could be said to be at

[37] Wolfgang Sonne, *Representing the State,* Munich: Prestel, 2003, p. 82.
[38] For a summary of such arguments in early twentieth-century London, see Wolfgang Sonne, *Representing the State,* Munich: Prestel, 2003, pp. 190-199.
[39] Andrew Saint, *The Image of the Architect,* YUP, 1983, p. 68.
[40] See Introduction.

the very heart of Scott's 'modern Gothic.' Girouard wrote that "the Burne-Jones mixture of Greek and Gothic romance," was a defining feature of turn-of-the – century public school culture.[41] As we have seen in Chapter 1, the mix of Greek and Gothic was also a defining feature of turn-of-the-century modernist architecture.[42] Scott designed almost exclusively in Gothic or a heavily Greek classicism, both highly romanticised, and, as already mentioned, he was a great fan of Burne-Jones.[43] In a 1934 lecture to architecture students Scott declared that "above all things, the architect must be a gentleman."[44]

Scott and his Guinness Brewery clients were therefore products of the same ideals. When writing to request that the masonry walls of one of the factory buildings be battered and reinforced with internal pilasters, rather than built 22½ inches thick from top to bottom (as Scott had designed), the engineers stressed that the request was only assuming that "there were no objections from your point of view … Our clients would not however wish you to infer that the question is one to be settled solely on the score of cost."[45]

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[41] Mark Girouard, *Return to Camelot,* YUP, 1981, p. 213.
[42] Growing out of the writings of Muthesius, the idea that these two styles represented the purest historical forms became a standard trope in modernist histories of architecture. Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory,* CUP, 2009, p. 228.
[43] See Chap 1, discussion of Lady Margaret Hall, and Chapter 2, discussion of stained glass, for Scott's love of Burne-Jones. He was also involved in the campaign to preserve Red House, Bexleyheath, for the nation, "Appeal for the Preservation of Red House, Home of William Morris," Flier, SP, ScGG/279/3.
[44] Giles Scott, "An Address to Students," *JRIBA*, vol 41, 6, 27 January 1934, p. 266.
[45] Letter, Alexander Gibb and Partner, Engineers, to Scott, 11 December 1933, SP, ScGG/99/1.

The Guinness family were famous as patrons of the arts and for their concern with workers' welfare. When the company went public around the turn of the century, the family retained a controlling interest and made sure that these concerns remained a dominant part of company culture.[46] Welfare provisions for Guinness employees extended to various pensions and medical coverage.[47] Reflecting the same spirit of philanthropy, Edward Cecil Guinness had filled the Robert-Adam-designed Kenwood House with his personal collection of Old Masters and eighteenth-century British art and had opened the house to the public in 1925 (Fig. 4.10).

Before the English brewery was opened at Park Royal (an industrial estate alongside a main road leading out of London) in 1936 (Fig. 4.11), all Guinness was manufactured at the company's Dublin brewery. Growing English demand for Guinness and a threatened tariff on imported beers prompted the move to establish a second brewery on English soil.[48] A large area of land was purchased, so that the company could control the setting of their campus, and after it became clear how much land they would need for their own purposes, Guinness allowed seven other factories to be built and leased on the edge of their estate.[49] Like the other buildings on the site, Scott oversaw the design of these factories. In practice, however, Scott's involvement was limited, although at least one such factory, the premises of Messrs

[46] R G Wilson, "Guinness, Edward Cecil (1847 – 1927)," Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Online.
[47] Ibid.
[48] John Armstrong, "The Development of the Park Royal Industrial Estate in the Interwar Period," *London Journal*, 21 (1), 1996, p. 74.
[49] Ibid, p. 76.

Johnsteads, manufacturers of motor vehicle components, was vetted by Scott and served as an example for later development.[50]

Guinness was particularly eager to create an image of quality and purity for their product – hence purchasing much more land than was needed and creating a large campus rather than shoehorning the factory into the dense conglomeration of industrial buildings that already existed at Park Royal (Fig. 4.12).[51] On some level, the company aimed to fit into a British tradition of model industrial premises, such as Cadbury's Bourneville, that promoted worker welfare and quality production in artistic surroundings. Like Bourneville, the Guinness campus would include sports grounds and model housing. Bringing in Scott to design the London factory was a natural fit for the company. He represented the strand of gentlemanly British art that Guinness patronised. Having a famous architect supervise the designs of their factory campus and workers' houses, rather than following a cheap, standardised plan, complemented their reputation for employee welfare. The mahogany-panelled executive boardrooms that Scott designed were hung with 18th-century English portraits, landscapes and sporting pictures, thus proclaiming the executives' status as 'country gentlemen' and recalling the Guinness family's personal collection at Kenwood House (Fig. 4.13).[52]

[50] A drawing of a factory façade labelled "Standard Telephones and Cables Ltd, Wembley," may have also been for the Guinness Estate, SP, ScGG[112]2.
[51] John Armstrong, "The Development of the Park Royal Industrial Estate in the Interwar Period," *London Journal*, 21 (1), 1996, p. 76.
[52] "Guinness Brewery," *The Builder,* CLXXII, 27 June 1947, p. 637.

The surviving correspondence about the Guinness project provides a good case study for Scott's role in such projects. When he agreed to take on the work, the engineers summarised his role:

> Technical and engineering considerations fix the siting, orientation, size, and height of buildings, within these limits Sir Giles Scott would advise on the architectural treatment of the complete range of buildings, materials to be used, colour, emphasis, ornament, etc. He would deal with the front elevations as a whole, and with the front and side elevations of all the main buildings in the front line. It would be necessary to take into consideration portions of the buildings at the back which come into the front view… Sir Giles will supply drawings of the whole elevation, and such detail drawings on a larger scale as are necessary.[53]

To some extent his role was a matter of details – the engineers wrote seeking permission to add six inches to the mouldings when the actual size of the metal windows turned out to be slightly different than expected; Scott complained about the choice of street lamp standards and the possibility of using wire fencing onsite; and he wrote letters about the importance of getting the colour right on the door fittings for the Director's Lavatory.[54] He designed the Administration Building almost in its entirety, including the interiors and the sun terrace on the roof. But he played a considerably smaller role in the design of the factory building themselves, drawing up designs for the primary elevations of major buildings only. The engineers, Alexander Gibb and Partners, designed the interiors of these buildings. For more minor structures on the site, he was asked to approve plans and facades that had been completed by other designers. A typical response would be to send a suggestion, for instance, that the parapet be carried around the whole façade

[53] Letter, Alexander Gibb and Partner, Engineers, to Scott, 30 October 1933, SP, ScGG/99/1.
[54] Letters, Beaver (Alexander Gibb and Partner, Engineers) to Scott, 20 December 1934; Scott to Beaver, 16 June 1936; SP, ScGG/99/1.

because he believed that it would be visible from the train. He was also asked to comment on the designs for floodlighting and landscape that had already been produced by other parties.[55]

Scott officially concluded his involvement with Guinness in October1934,[56] by which point the design work had been completed. But the Guinness executives were still writing to him for advice on aesthetic matters as late as the1940s, when he received a letter asking what brand of electric fireplace would be most appropriate for the Director's office.[57] Despite a complete irrelevance to the primary function of the buildings — the production and sale of stout — both the clients and Scott himself clearly saw his role as highly significant, to the point that they maintained the relationship for well over a decade past the completion of the factory. Scott's role was ultimately about Guinness's place in the community. It was about doing their civic duty in addition to their commercial one and presenting a good face to the wider city.

Urban Planning

[55] Letters, Beaver to Scott, 20 December 1934, SP, ScGG/99/1.
[56] Letter, Scott to Beaver, 15 October 1934, SP, ScGG/99/1.
[57] Letter, Guinness to Scott, 3 October 1946, SP, ScGG/99/1.

Except in the realm of churches, Scott himself was not a very inventive planner. He was, however, a skilful practitioner of what he called the "science of planning."[58] For Scott, planning was the key to everything – the very essence of the architectural endeavour was to give orderly expression to function. He felt that all types of planning were the same essential thing – city planning was simply architectural planning writ large. Architects, Scott stressed, were planning professionals, and this skill made them relevant to all aspects of modern urban life. They were uniquely positioned to solve problems from a human angle. Whereas engineers might tend to seek merely technical solutions, architects could help find better solutions by looking at the bigger picture. In 1906, Scott had written to Bodley that the architect was first and foremost an artist.[59] By 1930, however, he was lambasting the "mistaken idea … that architects are primarily dreaming artists."[60] He wrote, "Architects are essentially planners; their work consists very largely of planning, and by means of their education and constant practice in this important branch of their work they achieve a proficiency in solving complex problems possessed by no other profession."[61] The involvement of a top-rate architect on the London Underground, Scott believed, was the reason for the system's success. To Scott, the contemporary Underground's mastermind, Frank Pick, was a modern hero.[62]

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[58] See for example, Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA," SP, ScGG/279/3.
[59] Letter, Scott to Bodley, 14 October 1907, Liverpool Cathedral Archives; Bodley, Scott, Pittaway Correspondence, 48.
[60] Giles Gilbert Scott, "The Architectural Mind," *The Times*, 13 May 1930.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Scott wrote, "The first tube stations, planned by engineers, were appallingly planned; Frank Pick did a great work when he employed an architect, Charles Holden, to do this work; the improvement not only in appearance but in practical planning efficiency was immediate and remarkable." Letter,

Along with William Lethaby, Frank Pick had been promoting scientific planning for decades. For Pick, art and planning were both about creating order. He wrote in 1936 "The neo-technic epoch is just opening … It appears in our town planning and housing … [through it] we may look to bring security into uncertainty, by good government; to bring order into disorder by good discipline, to bring beauty into drabness by good art."[63] Lethaby wrote more clearly in 1922: "Modern Architects need to deal with very complex and technical matters, the building on congested sites of great hotels, railway stations, factories, business premises, and the like, and for this it is clear to me there must be highly scientific training."[64] This belief in planning as professional problem solving threaded Scott's commercial, industrial, and city planning projects together. Scott wrote in 1944 that "practical efficiency need not be divorced from orderly and tidy planning, and that such planning helps and encourages the design of fine buildings."[65] Scott was a city planner in an updated Renaissance tradition. For him, city planning was about solving problems by giving geometrical order to the urban landscape. The vistas and avenues dreamt of by Wren were updated for the motorcar, and individual buildings, he hoped, would contribute to a uniform whole. Such choices were governed not only by a desire for aesthetic harmony, but by the complex relationship of parts that made the city function. C H Reilly wrote in 1932 "Perhaps the greatest of all the gifts the

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Scott to Robert Holland Martin (railway expert), 3 January 1944, SP, ScGG/276/2. Also see Giles Scott's reply to Charles Marriott, "Contemporary London Buildings," *JRIBA,* 9 December 1933, p. 125.
[63] Frank Pick, "The Creative Impulse in the College of Art," Pamphlet, Leicester College of Arts and Crafts, 1936, pp. 17-18.
[64] William Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation,* OUP 1922, p. 124.
[65] Giles Gilbert Scott, "Foreword," *Road, Rail, and River in London,* London: Country Life, 1944, p. 3.

Italian Renaissance gave to architecture was this civic sense which has made it possible to conceive a town … which is not only an organism with its separate parts and individual buildings expressing their separate functions, but one in which all such parts and structures have a hierarchic relation."[66] City planning was a matter of cutting traffic arteries, creating plazas, roundabouts, and axes, and tweaking the organic development of the city to increase clarity and economic efficiency.

In an unexpected way, it was the planning obsession of Scott's era that led to his commercial and industrial commissions. Firms specialising in office or factory design created the plans, engineers designed the structures, and Scott was brought in to make sure that the building presented a respectable face to the city. Scott's job was to make these highly specialised buildings artistic. Scott was not the only architect to do façade consultations — Lutyens, for instance, did nearly as many as he did[67] and even such a highly-specialised building as the BBC headquarters at Broadcasting House brought in George Val Myer to design the exterior — as we have seen above, the concept of the 'art architect' façade consultant was surprisingly important in the development of interwar London.

In parallel to the teachings of Lethaby and the Design & Industries Association, Scott felt that every element from boulevard to building to traffic signs, benches, and

[66] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 61. Reilly was no always consistent, however, and he would say the exact opposite – that the individualism of the Renaissance broke up the harmony of the medieval town in C H Reilly, "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944, p. 5.
[67] Ranging from the Reuters Headquarters on Fleet Street to the Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane.

phone boxes should help to draw out the general order of the place. He opposed the clutter of advertisements and advocated for the simplification of traffic signs.[68] Each element should be in itself a work of art, but to be a good work of art, it had to respond to its context. The highest form of function occurred when an object was not only functional in and of itself, but in tune with its surroundings. Scott's philosophy was precisely in line with the Design & Industries Association motto of "fitness for purpose." His red telephone boxes (Fig. 4.14) were not only designed to fit into the predominately classical lines of London's neighbourhoods, but were carefully placed in response to their specific setting – symmetrically framing a wall behind, or aligned with major architectural elements of neighbouring buildings.[69]

In 1924, Scott won a limited competition to design a telephone kiosk for the General Post Office.[70] His design, known as Kiosk Number 2 (K2), was designed specifically for the streets of central London. The provision of phone boxes in most neighbourhoods greatly improved London's communications infrastructure in a period when few people had telephones in their homes. The Post Office had initially proposed a fairly utilitarian kiosk, similar to a gardener's shed, with large plate glass panes set in wooden doors under a pyramidal roof (Fig. 4.15). The Metropolitan Boroughs had objected to this design, asking for something more artistic – a simply utilitarian design was not seen to meet the needs of a great metropolis as it lacked

[68] Giles Scott, "The City and the River," Typescript, 1942, SP, ScGG/276/1.

[69] Gavin Stamp, *Telephone Boxes*, London: Chatto & Windis, 1989, p. 10.

[70] The details of the different types of telephone booths and the story of their design has been covered in great depth by Gavin Stamp in *Telephone Boxes*, London: Chatto & Windis, 1989, and much of the information in this paragraph has been taken from that book. The Thirties Society report on telephone booths also covers the subject in detail, particularly the process of manufacture.

both a relationship to its surroundings and the monumentality that suggested permanence. The Royal Fine Arts Commission was called in to oversee a competition for a new design, and they awarded the commission to Scott. Of all of the entries, Scott's was the most aesthetically sympathetic, capturing the monumental classicism of much urban design of the era and thus not only complementing existing buildings but also most other street furniture being produced, from bronze traffic signs to subtly classical park benches and iron railings (Fig. 4.16). It was also the most pragmatic of the designs – its decorative elements were inherent to the production method rather than applied elements that could be stolen or broken, and it had few projecting mouldings to catch water. Scott recommended that his design be painted silver with blue glass lettering and green interiors.[71] The Post Office instead decided to go with red for visibility. Over the next decade, the demand for telephone boxes expanded, and in 1935, the year of George V's Jubilee, Scott was called in to design a new smaller kiosk. For the K6 or Jubilee Kiosk, as it was known, Scott simplified the detailing and designed more *moderne* fenestration, thus easing production and updating the look for a kiosk that was to be distributed across the entire United Kingdom. The K6 was designed for use in both urban and rural locations. By the time of Scott's death in 1960, over 60,000 Scott-designed kiosks of all types had been produced.[72] They peppered the country, becoming a defining feature of the British landscape.

[71] Gavin Stamp, *Telephone Boxes*, London: Chatto & Windis, 1989, p. 6.
[72] Ibid, p. 17.

As a result of the telephone box designs, Scott developed a reputation as an industrial designer, and he was frequently brought in to domesticate new technologies destined for a London setting. He designed power stations at Battersea (1932, Fig. 4.16) and Bankside (1958, Fig. 4.17) and he designed a set of electrically illuminated traffic signs (Fig. 4.18), creating a suitably English aesthetic for novel technologies. Battersea was clad in 'human-scaled' brick and crowned with smokestacks like fluted columns. This hulking behemoth thus successfully echoes the brick houses trimmed with Classical details across the river in Chelsea.[73] To the same effect, the phone boxes were given glazing proportioned like sash windows, fluted mouldings, a dome, and even a decorative heraldic crown. They were sympathetic to their neighbours, nodding to the proportions of London's Georgian and Regency squares, while using the Georgian strategy of modest simplicity to compliment neighbouring buildings regardless of style. The kiosks have strong architectural character, but are never dominant. Gavin Stamp has linked them to the tradition of garden pavilions.[74]

The phone box is nonetheless strikingly modern. It is a clever piece of industrial design, cast in metal, resistant to weather, graffiti, and wear; shielding its contents from damage (Fig. 4.19). Clough Williams-Ellis cited them in 1928 as a prime example of the standardised mass-production of art.[75] Williams-Ellis's assertion gets

[73] Scott was initially brought into the Battersea project because Chelsea was up in arms about the idea of a power station dominating their view across the river. Gavin Stamp, "Battersea Power Station," Lecture at the 20th Century Society, 8 March 2011.
[74] Gavin Stamp, *Telephone Boxes*, London: Chatto & Windis, 1989, p. 2.
[75] Clough Williams-Ellis, *England and the Octopus,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1928, p. 176.

to the heart of the matter: through his telephone boxes, Scott became part of a broader movement to improve British industrial design, the same movement that was reflected in the Charles Holden Underground stations that Scott so admired (Fig. 4.20). Like the Underground stations, Scott's power stations were custom pieces of high-tech infrastructure. The phone booths, however, went a step further toward fulfilling the Design and Industries Association ideal – They were genuinely mass-produced works of industrial art.

More than anything else, Scott's urban planning work sought to create unity and order for London. There was tremendous impetus to replan large areas of London during the first decades of the twentieth century. The city was plagued with traffic problems and the modest scale of many of its buildings in comparison with other world capitals was viewed with increasing embarrassment. Great swathes of the central city such as the Mall and Regent Street were rebuilt on an 'imperial' scale. Globally, it was an age of grand urban planning, with monumental, highly ordered cities rising in Washington DC, New Delhi, and Canberra, and large-scale planning interventions being carried out in cities such as Berlin, Manila, and Rome. As urban planning scholar Wolfgang Sonne puts it, "the pervasiveness of capital city planning initiatives around the world gradually contributed to an international standard, which London was increasingly hard pressed to ignore."[76]

[76] Wolfgang Sonne, *Representing the State,* Munich: Prestel, 2003, p. 199.

Both C H Reilly and the authors of *The American Vitruvius* agreed that the ultimate examples of city planning were New Delhi (Fig. 4.27) and Washington DC (Fig. 4.28).[77] New Delhi, with its highly geometrical plan and striking vistas, was the widely admired by architects and the public. The Royal Academy London Planning Committee lent credence to the work by making Edwin Lutyens, the principal author of New Delhi, the chairman of its London work.

The design of New Delhi had been largely inspired by the plan of Washington DC. The engineer Pierre L'Enfant had designed Washington in the 18th-century French tradition, and the McMillan Commission had updated the city along grand classical lines at the beginning of the twentieth century. It featured the liberal mix of radial, diagonal, and gridiron planning that was considered "an unquestioned ideal."[78] This mixture of street layouts provided orderly business and residential districts together with emphasis and variety for important public features. Together, Lutyens's New Delhi and McMillan's Washington represented the culmination of a trans-Atlantic school of monumental planning, and the Royal Academy Planning Committee hoped to infuse London with some of the same stateliness and efficiency of these two capitals.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, formal planning appeared across Britain at Lutyens's Hampstead Garden Suburb, Cardiff's new civic centre,

[77] C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 62.
[78] Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, *The American Vitruvius: An Architect's Handbook of Civic Art,* first published New York: Architectural Book Publishing 1922, republished Mineola, New York: Dover, 2010, p. 285.

Letchworth, Port Sunlight, and countless other developments. Far from being merely a fad, this approach to urban planning was given a theoretical basis that would have greatly appealed to Scott. As Daniel Burnham had announced when he presented his plan for Washington DC to great acclaim at the 1910 Town Planning Conference in London, monumental planning was the urbanism of democracy. He explained that beauty would awaken pride and civic participation in a city's citizens. Great monumental schemes with their attendant convenience and efficiency could be most naturally created in democracies where if the people wanted better civic environments, they could have them, "for a democracy has full power over men, lands, and goods, and it can always make its laws fit its purpose."[79] Stanley Davenport Adshead, C H Reilly's companion at the Liverpool School of Architecture and the world's first professor to hold an endowed chair of civic design, echoed Burnham's ideas, writing that democratic cities should strive for a "rhythmical continuity or a composition that is symmetrical."[80] The order and precision of this architecture thus became a metaphor for the British state. For Adshead, formality in planning reflected a strong sense of community. "Formality in urban composition," he wrote, "suggests to me that the tenants who occupy its units are knit together from outside by something stronger than kindred feeling."[81] Reilly echoed this rhetoric in his radio lectures, claiming that Britain's Georgian and Regency terraces reflected a particularly healthy and democratic community.[82] Scott's eagerness to

[79] Burnham quoted in Wolfgang Sonne, *Representing the State,* Munich: Prestel, 2003, p. 65 and p. 76.
[80] Adshead quoted in Ibid, p. 193.
[81] Ibid, p. 193.
[82] See C H Reilly, "Broadcast Talks," February 1927, Typescripts, CHR, D207/27.

encourage both community and 'Englishness,' therefore, may help to explain his enthusiasm for formal planning.

Like other planners of his era, Scott sought aesthetic unity through the creation of visual axes, the coordination of building masses, and through a unified palette of materials. The latter cause was a particular interest, and throughout the 1940s and '50s, he advocated rebuilding London in pale brick. As so often with Scott, his justification was psychological. He had picked up the idea that pale brick was 'cheerier' from Scandinavian architecture, and he hoped to create a unified palette for the metropolis that would help to counter its general darkness and sootiness.[83] He wrote in a 1943 memo to the RA Planning Committee, "The general colour of the materials should be light, such as stone, or stone with light-coloured bricks of fawn, light russet, yellow, or grey, but not red, which is too dark for London."[84] His choice of brick hues was in keeping with his general aesthetic preference – even when forced to use 'red' bricks, as at Cambridge University Library, he chose a mellower brown hue – but he genuinely did believe that such a palette would enhance the amenity of the urban fabric. He would later use the media attention garnered by his Bankside scheme to once again advocate for light-coloured bricks.[85]

As an urban planner, Scott was loath to let very much organic development get in the way of his schemes. He felt that the picturesque jumbles admired by the

[83] The Bankside Power Station: Sir Giles Scott explains," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 23 May 1947, p. 493.
[84] Giles Scott, "Traffic Circuses and Garages, Private & Confidential," Memo, 18 October 1943, SP, ScGG/276/3.
[85] The Bankside Power Station: Sir Giles Scott explains," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 23 May 1947, p. 493.

Victorians (and later by Pevsner) had no place in the modern city, and he had very little regard for existing buildings on a site. He did not hesitate to sweep everything away in favour of geometry, because he believed that by doing so he was creating something inherently of a higher order and better related to the broader city. As the popular interwar city planning manual *American Vitruvius* declared, a primary goal of such planning was "to sweep away the Gothic maze at every opportunity."[86] With the 1939 George V Memorial at Old Palace Yard (Fig. 4.21), for instance, Scott demanded that a house believed to have been designed by the great eighteenth-century Palladian William Kent be demolished because it trespassed over the edge of his new plaza.[87] He wrote that if the government felt an attachment to the building for historical reasons, then perhaps the main elements of the façade could be salvaged and affixed to a planned new parliamentary office building. As far as he was concerned, however, there was no question that it had to be removed. At the New Bodleian, a mandate from the clients that he preserve the old street line had been roundly ignored in order to square up the plaza in front of the Clarendon Building.[88]

Scott's 1939 designs for the George V Memorial featured a 45-foot high Gothic canopy in the middle of a new square (Fig. 4.22). The monument was to be aligned

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[86] Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets, *The American Vitruvius: An Architect's Handbook of Civic Art,* first published New York: Architectural Book Publishing 1922, republished Mineola, New York: Dover, 2010, p. 226.
[87] Letter, Scott to Arthur Hersee, 19 February 1948, SP, ScGG/101/1.
32 Abingdon Street on the corner of Old Palace Yard was a townhouse 5-bays wide with a segmental pediment and rusticated doorcase. Built in 1723, it was not actually by Kent, but was in his style. See Philip Davies, *Lost London: 1870-1945,* London: English Heritage, 2009, p. 182.
[88] See Chapter 1.

with the Westminster Abbey Chapter House, so that its buttresses would frame the statue. Scott intended to create a monument worthy of the ceremonial heart of government. Although Gothic in style, it seized on the motives of monumental imperial architecture. Imperial monumental architecture of the period, as practised by Herbert Baker, Edwin Lutyens, and Austen Harrison, tended to mix local references with the 'universal classicism' that came to stand as a symbol of western government and civilization. Scott applied this logic to London with the George V Memorial – creating a monumental stone architecture that incorporates references to its Gothic context and perceived medieval roots. The design had strong resonances with Lutyens's 1938 canopied monument to the same King-Emperor in New Delhi. There too, George V, founder of the Royal Fine Arts Commission, was set as the lynchpin in a highly ordered urban geometry (Fig. 4.23).

Scott imagined a London of straight axes and monumental vistas – a city that gave dignified expression to its role as the seat of an imperial democracy and whose ease of navigation by motorcar and electric underground train belied its large metropolitan population. He thus fitted into a London planning tradition that went back at least as far as the Victorian Metropolitan Board of Works and continued to his own day with the creation of Kingsway and the Great West Road. He also thus fitted into an Anglo-American and European movement towards monumental Beaux-Arts planning that had been celebrated in the 1910 RIBA Town Planning

Conference[89] and by the interwar period had spread across Europe. The ideas of his contemporaries were increasingly bold. He may not have agreed with Mussolini's politics, but he felt that the bold planning gestures of his government in Rome were exactly what was needed, and he wished that they could be imitated in London.[90] With the Royal Academy Plan, Scott got to do just that, or at least to dream of doing it.

The Royal Academy Plan was created early in World War II, after the extent of bombing in London made it clear that large-scale rebuilding would be required. A key member of the committee from the start, Scott took over as chairman after the death of Edwin Lutyens in 1944. Although the plan was the work of a large committee, it sat comfortably with the ideas that Scott had been proposing to fix London's traffic problems since his first involvement with the proposed rebuilding of Charing Cross Bridge in 1930.[91]

Despite his general dislike of 'talking,' the 1940s found Scott in a surprising new role: passionate advocate of urban design. Scott swung all of his weight as a public figure behind the RA Plan. He peppered the press with letters and articles, gave lectures in person and on the radio; he campaigned for the plan in numerous private letters and luncheons. He declared that "Town planning and civic design are not just

[89] William Whyte, "The 1910 Royal Institute of British Architects' Conference," *Urban History,* Vol 39, Issue 1, February 2012, p. 150.
[90] Response by Giles Scott to Guido Calza, "The Via Dell'Imperio and the Imperial Fora," *JRIBA,* 24 March 1934, p. 508.
[91] See below.

fantastic dreams of long-haired gentlemen … foresight and planning ahead on big lines is not only more economical in the long run, but is becoming more and more of a necessity, if we are to avoid making confusion worse confounded."[92] In 1942, he even had a falling out with C H Reilly, whose criticism of the plan in print, Scott felt, undermined much of Scott's "hard propaganda work."[93]

Scott had long been an enthusiastic motorist, and his role on the RA Planning Committee seems to have been especially concerned with traffic.[94] Between the wars, his architectural designs had often included proposals for tweaking traffic arrangements. At the New Bodleian, for instance, his enlarged plaza in front of the Clarendon Building was partly to improve visibility for traffic, and at the London County Council offices, when called in to advise on moulding profiles in 1935, he took the opportunity to also propose a new roundabout by County Hall (his proposal was ignored).[95] His drawings contain numerous designs for roundabouts and motorway junctions and even a car park under St James Square.[96] Besides the aesthetic and psychological aspects of good planning, adapting the city to the motorcar saved "wasted time and petrol."[97]

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[92] Scott himself could not be accused of having long hair. Giles Scott quoted in "The Royal Gold Medal: H V Lanchester," *JRIBA*, 14 April 1934, p. 550.
[93] Letter, Scott to Reilly, 27 October 1942, SP, ScGG/276/3.
[94] C H Reilly for one, alluded to Scott's involvement in designing the London ring road as well as his enjoyment of traffic planning, wishing him "several more Cathedrals and any number of Ring Roads," Letter, Reilly to Scott, 18 October 1944, SP, ScGG/276/2.
[95] Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, *Survey of London Monograph 17: County Hall*, London: Athlone, 1991, p. 106.
[96] Car parks under urban squares were popular in the United States, for instance, the roughly contemporary Union Square car park in San Francisco. For Scott's designs for St James Square, see SD, SCOTT RAN [107].
[97] Giles Scott, "The City and the River," Typescript, 1942, SP, ScGG/276/1.

Major features of the Royal Academy plan included improving traffic flow by creating a ring road around central London – an asphalt necklace studded with roundabouts (Fig. 4.24).[98] Scott had long been an enthusiastic promoter of roundabouts as a way of addressing London's traffic[99] and the ring road plan was much in keeping with his ideas. He wrote to Hubert Worthington:

> It's been great fun – Roads, Roundabouts, Garages, Railways … I want to put the R.A. on the map as an up-to-date, practical planning body … The Ministry of Transport have already accepted my main proposals for the Ring Road, but the roundabouts are the most revolutionary and may have an effect on Town Planning in cities generally.[100]

The idea of a ring road was not new in city planning; similar ring roads had been created in Europe and America. An early example is the Vienna Ringstraße, which was designed in the mid-nineteenth century to ease carriage congestion in the central city. With the new London plan as first published in 1942, all mainline railway stations were to be located along the ring road; those that were not already in appropriate locations were to be demolished. Euston, St Pancras, and Kings Cross, for instance, were to be destroyed and amalgamated into a single new station. The provision of parkland in the East End and the South Bank was to be greatly increased, with a large new circular park encircled by a roundabout forming the centrepiece of an entirely reconstructed Southwark. Canals were to be lined with

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[98] The description of the plan contained in this paragraph comes from The Royal Academy Planning Committee, *London Replanned,* London: Country Life, 1942.
[99] See for instance his 1935 plans for the LCC offices, in which he was brought in to advise on façade massing and mouldings, but he ended by proposing a large roundabout next to the new offices to relieve traffic on Westminster Bridge Road. Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England, Survey of London Monograph 17: *County Hall,* London: Athlone Press, 1991, p. 106.
[100] Letter, Scott to Worthington, 3 April 1944, SP, ScGG/267/4.

parkland and "treated as amenities as well as means of transport."[101] This emphasis on a system of parks, and particularly the lining of transportation arteries with parkland, reflected American city planning trends. Existing landmarks were to form the centrepieces of vast new plazas and existing parks and squares were to be 'squared up.' Covent Garden Market was to be demolished, returning the square to something more akin to its original form (Fig. 4.25); Piccadilly Circus was to be completely swept away and rebuilt as a rectangular forum, with a screen of columns along one side demarcating a new pedestrian plaza. In another drastic intervention, a 'suitably dignified' approach to the University of London was to be created by carving a vast boulevard and plaza in front of the British Museum. Of the existing nearby buildings, only Hawksmoor's St George's Church would be allowed to survive as a sort of pavilion on one side of the new plaza. If the illustration published in 1942 is any guide, the result – a vast area of pavement lined by Greek Revival monuments – would have felt something like Berlin (Fig. 4.26). Buildings along new boulevards leading to public monuments were to be rebuilt with unified facades. And as London planners had dreamed of doing for centuries, Scott had the opportunity to help design an elliptical plaza around St Paul's, giving it the dignified setting that Wren had originally intended.[102]

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[101] The Royal Academy Planning Committee, *London Replanned,* London: Country Life, 1942, p. 5.
[102] Scott's particular involvement in the redesign of the St Paul's precincts (not to be confused with his later 1957 proposal) is noted in a letter from Lutyens's office, "Sir Edwin thinks it very good," Lutyens to Scott, 15 April 1942, SP, ScGG/276/3. Many of these ideas resurfaced as proposed 'urban renewal' projects in the 1960s.

Rival plans were proposed by those who felt the Royal Academy Plan was too classical, too grandiose, and too redolent of authoritarianism.[103] The text that had accompanied the published Royal Academy plans had not helped its public reception. With its frequent calls for greater government control and lines such as "If the practice of art can be freed from the vanities and irregularities with which it has so often been debased through ignorance, fashion, or selfish advertisement, the true spirit of English civic architecture will be revived … with intelligent provision for the social needs of the future,"[104] it often read like a politer version of one of the manifestos by Mussolini's decorator, Roberto Papini.[105] Controversy was ignited in the press, (with the flames fanned by C H Reilly). The MARS Group weighed in with a radical plan for rebuilding London on Corbusian lines, but public support was mostly divided between the Royal Academy plan, which treated the city as a monumental Beaux-Arts capital, and the Abercrombie Plan, published in 1944, which took a more ostensibly sociological approach, dividing the city into community groups of roughly equal population, which would each have its own school and other services (Fig. 4.29).

The Royal Academy Planning Committee soldiered on, undeterred. When he became Chairman after Lutyens's death, Scott shifted the focus of the plan from an emphasis on "beauty … to the practical details of one of the most important features of any

[103] This ultimately came to fruition in the 'Abercrombie Plan' of 1944, commissioned by the London County Council, which sowed the seeds of the New Town system. See J H Forshaw and Patrick Abercrombie, *County of London Plan,* London: Macmillan, 1943, and Patrick Abercrombie, *Greater London Plan,* London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1945.
[104] The Royal Academy Planning Committee, *London Replanned,* London: Country Life, 1942, p. 27.
[105] Ie Roberto Papini, *Le Arti d'Oggi,* Italy: 1930, English Translation: Lara Fabiano, trans, *Arts in the Twenties: Architecture & Decorative Arts in Europe,* London: Verbavolant, 2005.

town plan — Communications, both Road and Rail."[106] Elaborating the ring-road scheme, Scott proposed a sunken arterial road flanked by banks of trees with bridges for pedestrians and existing roads passing over it at ground level and enormous flyover roundabouts at important junctions. The images of the proposals by A C Webb are almost Futurist in appearance (Fig. 4.30), and look surprisingly like Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse (Fig. 4.31). Scott's big idea was that the ring-road's mega-roundabouts could serve as retail centres.[107] Planted with central parks and with shops tucked under the elevated roadway and into the lower levels of the high apartment towers that would be allowed to cluster around the new junctions, these new 'modern marketplaces' would be accessible via pedestrian passages under the roads, so that no pedestrian would have to risk crossing traffic (Fig. 4.32). As far as the appeal of shopping and socialising in an island in London's busiest traffic artery, the second RA Report reassured readers that "The ordinary shopper still likes to be in the centre of things, with plenty going on around him — an effect he certainly gets in traffic roundabouts."[108] In fact, the committee believed so wholeheartedly in Scott's idea, that in order to not isolate the central city from the new liveliness of motor-traffic that was to benefit the ring road, it was proposed to put Piccadilly Circus (Fig. 4.33), St Paul's Cathedral (Fig. 4.34), and the Tower of London inside giant roundabouts as well.

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[106]Giles Gilbert Scott, "Foreword," *Road, Rail, and River in London,* London: Country Life, 1944, p. 3.
[107] That the idea was indeed Scott's, we know from the survival of a typescript in his papers at the RIBA, marked 'Private & Confidential,' in which he first proposes the idea. It also reveals that Scott wrote much of the text of the 1944 Report. Giles Scott, typescript, 18 October 1943, SP, ScGG /276/3.
[108] Royal Academy Planning Committee, *Road, Rail, and River in London,* London: Country Life, 1944, p. 12.

In response to critics of the Beaux-Arts tone of the 1942 Report, the second Report, published in 1944 was slick and futuristic.[109] The front cover featured a model of one of Scott's mega-roundabouts, the surrounding buildings shown merely as featureless, modernistic wooden blocks (Fig. 3.35). Scott's "Foreword" warned readers that the proposals therein were shockingly "revolutionary," but told them not to worry, that they were merely "new methods of obtaining the objectives recommended in the London County Council County of London Plan."[110] Scott was spinning out propaganda as much as he could, pursuing his usual compromise activity by emphasising the ways that the Royal Academy Plan could work in concert with the County of London Plan, which he brazenly labelled the more conservative option. Strangely, Patrick Abercrombie was also on the Executive Committee of the Royal Academy Plan, so perhaps the idea of collaboration was not as unlikely as it seemed.[111]

In addition to mega-roundabouts and multi-level flyovers, the 1944 Royal Academy plan made other surprising changes to the 1942 proposals. The Committee had decided that a continuous strip of gardens along the South Bank would be 'monotonous,' so they had decided to allow industrial development between Blackfriars and London Bridge.[112] "Many have come to associate commerce with ugliness, and assume one cannot exist without the other. This is by no means true,"

[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid, p. 3.
[111] Ibid, p. i.
[112] Royal Academy Planning Committee, *Road, Rail, and River in London,* London: Country Life, 1944, p. 10.

the Report declared in a passage that foreshadowed Scott's postwar defence of Bankside Power Station, "Commercial buildings, well designed in mass and pleasant in colour can be extremely attractive, especially when seen with the water coming right up to them."[113]Other proposals included electric commuter trains diving into tunnels under the ring-road so that they could drop passengers directly in Underground stations, municipal parking structures under elevated roadways, and a new Charing Cross Bridge that was illustrated in the Report as matching Scott's Waterloo Bridge.[114]

Not a bit of either the Royal Academy Plan or the County of London Plan was ever carried out, however. Detractors of both plans claimed that enough of London had already been destroyed. The seeming disagreement of planners also contributed to undermining the public confidence necessary for such a large undertaking, and the opportunity to replan London was missed, just as it had been in 1666.

However, the legacy of the 1944 Royal Academy Plan would reappear in postwar urban development. The Royal Academy Plan had more concrete suggestions about how to execute flyovers and pedestrian tunnels than the County of London Plan did, and the bit of elevated motorway installed near Paddington Station in the 1960s was meant to be the beginnings of a ring road. Roundabouts with sunken pedestrian centres, sometimes even with shops tucked under roadways, became common features in English postwar planning, found from Coventry to Milton Keynes to

[113] Ibid, pp. 10-11.
[114] Ibid, p. 21 and pp. 26-27.

Newcastle. These were not exactly in keeping with Scott's vision, which had called for engineering works on a larger scale than anything executed postwar, with space for planting to sufficiently soften the impact of so much concrete and so that roundabouts could contain sufficient room to gather comfortably. Sensing the danger that such planning could present if more brutally expressed, the 1944 Report declared somewhat optimistically, "Public opinion now recognises that beauty must be the inseparable companion of convenience: no longer is the merely structural or engineering solution to be accepted as sufficient."[115]

An irreconcilable difference between the Royal Academy Plan and the Abercrombie Plan, and one place where the Royal Academy Plan definitively failed to influence postwar planning, was its treatment of housing. Whereas the Abercrombie Plan called for the removal of people from central London to the suburbs, the Royal Academy Plan called for an increased residential population in the city centre. One of the stated goals of the Royal Academy plan was to clear "away the oppressive congestion of businesses in the city centre to make room for the good domestic life to once again flourish."[116] Reflecting the 'gentlemanly' values of the planning committee, commerce was portrayed as an enemy that had the City of London in a chokehold. The planners hoped to forcibly weed it out, so that the perceived residential character of pre-Victorian London could be restored. At the same time, the "older parts" of the East End and South Bank were to be cleared of their courts,

[115] Ibid, p. 6.
[116] The Royal Academy Planning Committee, *London Replanned,* London: Country Life, 1942, p.16.

alleys, and slum housing and replaced with something new.[117] Scott was flatly opposed to the idea of depopulating central London and disliked the New Towns concept.[118] As previously mentioned, he felt that the spread of suburbs was a major factor in the decline of community spirit.

Although Scott designed comparatively few domestic buildings (especially when compared to the country-house-driven firms of so many of his competitors), much of his advocacy outside the realm of the Royal Academy Plan would be devoted to the better planning of residential neighbourhoods. As he repeatedly emphasised, architects should be "social reformers," and the call for decent housing for all people was an important part of the Liberal Anglican (and Liberal Catholic) social mission.[119] Ribbon development was the scourge of the age. During the interwar years, vast legions of contractor-designed houses were built, spilling out of the towns along arterial roads in ribbons of development. By 1934, two-hundred thousand houses were being built every year.[120] In 1936, the planner Thomas Sharp wrote urgently that "only rigourous planning could save England or English identity."[121] Scott lamented "the shoddy ruin which is being made of the landscape," but rather than throw his weight behind the countryside preservation movement, he believed that careful planning was the answer.

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[117] Ibid, p. 25.
[118] Letter, Scott to Arthur Trystan Edwards, December 1945, SP, ScGG/268/2.
[119] Ie Giles Scott's reply to Charles Marriott, "Contemporary London Buildings," *JRIBA,* 9 December 1933, p.125. For the Liberal Anglican concern with housing see Kester Aspden, *Fortress Church,* Leominster, Herts: Gracewing, 2002, p. 251.
[120] Giles Scott, "The Ugly House Outrage," *John Bull,* 13 April 1935, p. 9.
[121] Quoted in William Whyte, "The Englishness of Modern Architecture: Modernism and the Making of a National International Style, 1927-1957," *Journal of British Studies,* vol 48, April 2009, p. 455.

In 1935, in an attempt to reach the general public, Scott wrote an article for the London-based tabloid, *John Bull,* which was given the sensationalist title "The Ugly House Outrage" and printed alongside a photograph of Scott seated at his desk, fountain pen in hand (Fig. 4.1). He wrote:

> Are we to continue along the way we have so far followed, allowing leagues of jerry-built ugliness to spread, without giving intelligent thought to road planning, to the creation of parks and playing fields and to the appearance of the houses that passers-by are forced to see? Are we to leave our grandchildren a monument of our mean muddle-headedness, of our failure to think ahead?[122]

The solution to bad planning, Scott believed, was a combination of public education and government involvement. Public education, he hoped, would create the strength of opinion necessary to support government planning restrictions. Greater government control in building design, he declared, was not a violation of the English tradition of property rights, but a paternalistic way to reinforce community rights – "the preservation of private rights has in this matter created public wrongs, notably the evil of ribbon development."[123] Increased government regulation was one of the tenets of his planning ideas, both in London and the suburbs. His commitment to government intervention was perhaps encouraged by C H Reilly, who wrote that if the instinct to a communal style of design was not forthcoming from the people themselves, then the government should impose it.[124]

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[122] Ibid, p. 9.
[123] Ibid, p. 9.
[124] C H Reilly, "Architecture as a Communal Art," Pamphlet, London: B T Batsford, 1944, p. 7.

Ostensibly to help builders, in his *John Bull* article Scott set out principles for planning an ideal house:[125] first, it should be designed to ease the work of the housewife. Second, "it should be of the twentieth century and not aping some bygone architectural style." Third, it should have a character appropriate to its urban or rural location. Fourth, it should be so situated that children are not endangered by motor traffic. And fifth, it should have reasonable access to recreation, sunshine, and fresh air. What may at first seems like a list of planning clichés gives some insight into Scott's ideas about urban planning. Scott clearly felt that urban planning was equally a matter of both function and aesthetics. Efficiency was paramount for the sake of economy. Visual aspects helped to tell what sort of a place was being aimed at – just as in Scott's churches, aesthetic signposts contained cues about use and also about cultural values. Thus the social system of a place, the very fabric of community, was enabled by the urban plan. Planning was a sort of encoding of the built environment to optimise and encourage specific social systems.

Scott had the opportunity to enact these planning principles when he was commissioned to design an entire resort town on an undeveloped site in 1922. The town, St. Andre-sur-mer, was to be a British resort colony on the Belgian coast with a beachfront promenade and a golf course. During the interwar period, Scott often spent August golfing in Belgium, and he was a member of the golf club that

[125] Giles Scott, "The Ugly House Outrage," *John Bull,* 13 April 1935, p. 9.

commissioned the scheme.[126] The whole plan of the town was centred on the golf club, framed like a viceroy's palace at the end of a boulevard rising up from the beach.[127] In keeping with the standard arrangement of British beach resorts, the beachfront promenade was lined with shops and terraced houses, a square in the centre of the promenade contained a hotel and opened onto a raised platform on the beach, with provisions for a band and dancing. Stuccoed villas made a nod to local tradition by including Flemish gables and painted shutters. They featured verandas and sleeping porches and fireplaces of black Flemish marble; their details were Neo-Grec. The villas were set in the dunes between the terraces and the golf course. A secondary axis terminated in a church overlooking the open country. At the small scale of a seaside development, the bird's eye view of Scott's neat and orderly town looked as if it could have been drawn a century before as a development in Regent's Park or fifty years later as a New Urbanist resort in Florida.

Here was Scott's ideal: a small English seaside town given a defining order, built with a unified palette of materials and forms, set in the open country landscape, with shopping arcades, a Gothic church, roof terraces, swimming, dancing, and golf. It was a reflection of how deeply his ideals were ultimately rooted in an ideal notion of English village life. Lethaby had written in 1922 that town planning should be undertaken in the spirit of "Simple well-off housekeeping in the country, with tea in

[126] This area of Belgium was particularly fashionable with British golfers at the time, even attracting Royal visitors. See Richard Gilbert Scott's reference to these Belgian holidays in *Giles Gilbert Scott: His Son's View,* London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011, p. 8.
[127] Design drawings for the town, including a plan, birds-eye view, and perspectives of roughly seven villas are kept at the RIBA. The descriptions in this paragraph are all taken from here, as no significant correspondence about the project survived amongst Scott's office files. Drawings not dated (c.1930). SP, ScGG[150].

the garden; Boy Scouting, and tennis in flannels. These four seem to me our best forms of modern civilisation."[128] Despite his involvement in the planning of brooding industrial behemoths, electric traffic signs, phone kiosks, and tangles of concrete flyovers, Scott's true ideal was still the English Garden City of shady lanes and floral teapots. St. Andre-sur-mer would have been his Portmeirion – an example of urban planning less picturesque, but equally neat and cheerful.

Driven by the combination of his Christian social mission and pastoral 'deep England' ideal, Scott applied the same concern for greenery, light, and air to the Metropolis. As already mentioned, he was not a proponent of decentralisation, but he believed that the city could remain dense while providing better conditions for its citizens. Organisation, 'tidiness' as it was called, was the key to better spaces at higher densities. The city devoid of nature horrified Scott. At Maida Vale's Cropthorne Court, his only apartment building, he set the units behind an unusual zigzag façade that gave the residents access to light without the need for lightwells (Fig. 4.36). As consultant architect to the British Medical Association, he issued a suggestion that all new flats should have balconies so that babies who lived in them could have access to sun and fresh air.[129] Scott advocated for wide landscaping around motorways, designing high-speed streets surrounded by greenery just like the American suburban parkways. His small-scale urban design work at Oxford and Old Palace Yard was about reducing crowding. This principle was also, surprisingly enough, visible in his design of power stations. Battersea in particular was designed

[128] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 95.
[129] Giles Scott, "Balconies for Babies in Flats," *British Medical Journal,* vol 1, no 3861, 5 Jan 1935, p. 27.

to reduce coal smoke and gas light by providing the centralised electricity generation that would result in cleaner air. Battersea's gleaming white chimneys were meant to symbolise a sanitised metropolis. Despite Battersea Power Station's frequent portrayal in popular culture as a manifestation of a dark, mega-scaled, industrial urban world, Scott's ideal modern city was not at all a brooding Gotham. Scott's vision for London may have been densely populated, but it was also spacious and green. Ultimately, Scott loved modern transportation technologies such as motorcars because he believed that they would allow people to live in well-planned, relatively-dense urban environments all with easy access to the countryside. The ideal modern metropolis was one that embraced nature and allowed for an easy route of escape from the problems of urban life.

Road Bridges in London

By the mid 1920s, the issue of motor traffic crossing the Thames was becoming pressing. The old infrastructure of mostly 19th-century bridges was insufficient for the vastly increased volume of traffic crossing the river. Lutyens was consulted in 1925 as to whether Waterloo Bridge could be expanded, but he felt that it could not be widened without destroying its architectural character.[130] Waterloo Bridge, designed by John Rennie and opened in 1817, was widely considered a masterpiece of classical design (Fig. 4.37). Its graceful stone arches were scaled in such a way that they aligned with the terrace of Somerset House, and the whole composition

[130] House of Commons, "London C.C. (Money) Bill, In House of Commons Session 1931-32. Revise – 22-4-32," SP, ScGG/89/3.

was often cited by architects as an ideal piece of urbanism – one that respected the human scale, improved interconnectivity, and created a pleasing composition.[131] Scott wrote to *The Times* in defence of the old bridge, calling it "the only bridge that London can well be proud of" and calling "for the most serious consideration by experts" before any drastic decisions were made.[132] The LCC decided to pursue a new bridge at Charing Cross instead, which would include the construction of a new railway station. An advisory committee of architects and planners was created, and Scott joined the committee in 1930.[133] In the meantime, however, a temporary span had to be built alongside Waterloo Bridge to ease the traffic.[134]

Scott's papers contain studies showing options for the new Charing Cross Bridge, but they are more quick sketches of bridge types than worked out designs – one shows a bridge with elliptical arches, another an arched truss.[135] Scott seems to have been far more interested in the urban planning problem presented by the bridge than the form of its engineering – he wanted to work out where it would meet the riverbanks and how traffic would be redirected to accommodate the approach to the new station. Like most of the architects and planners on the committee, Scott considered it essential that overhead railway bridges be removed because they overshadowed neighbouring building sites and cluttered views down

[131] Ie C H Reilly, *The Theory and Practice of Architecture,* London: Gollancz, 1932, p. 82, and Letter, Blomfield to Scott, 10 March 1932, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[132] Giles Scott, "Waterloo Bridge," Letter to the Editor, *The Times,* 25 February 1925.
[133] This was the LCC's Charing Cross Bridge Advisory Committee. Scott would also sit on the Royal Commission for Cross-River Traffic. Letter, Scott to David Lindsay, 7 July 1930, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[134] "Old and New Waterloo Bridge," Newsreel, 1925, British Pathé, Online.
[135] Sketches of bridge elevations, SD, ScGG [74]

the Thames.[136] His own design, however, garnered little support in the committee.[137] A scheme was adopted to move the station to the South Bank and redevelop the site of the old station. Waterloo Bridge would be shored up and retained, and a six-lane road bridge built at Charing Cross. Government support for the scheme flagged with the deepening financial crisis, however, and the Charing Cross project was axed in 1931.[138]

The problem of traffic crossing the river had not been solved, and by the following year the rebuilding of Waterloo Bridge was being considered once again. The old Waterloo Bridge could support a maximum of two lanes of traffic. Scott was asked to prepare a design for its replacement, but the project was abandoned before it could progress beyond the drawings stage.[139] When Herbert Morrison became Leader of the London County Council in 1934, he was particularly eager to get a new bridge that would not only support six lanes of traffic, but that could also carry LCC trams linking the South Bank to the city centre.[140] Designs for its rebuilding were officially commissioned that year and the funding was secured; building began in 1937.

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[136] "The idea of bringing suburban traffic to terminal stations above ground seems to me fundamentally wrong." Letter, Scott to A G Waller, 4 June 1936, SP, ScGG/89/2. For a history of the project and images of the official proposals, see Arthur Keen, *Charing Cross Bridge,* London: Ernest Benn, 1930.
[137] Various Scott Letters, 1930, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[138] Letter, Giles Scott to Cloudesley Brereton, 10 March 1932, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[139] Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family*, London: Gregg, 1981, p. 179.
[140] Stephen Humphries and Gavin Weightman, *The Making of Modern London: 1914-1939*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1984, p. 166.

The bridge project would prove to be a controversial one for Scott, foreshadowing issues that he would face at Bankside a decade later. With the new proposal to demolish the bridge in 1932, Scott's name had appeared in *The Times* once again alongside the names of other prominent architects in support of preservation. But things were not as they at first seemed. Scott was already negotiating to design the new bridge.[141] Reginald Blomfield had written the most recent letter to *The Times*, which appeared with Scott's name in the list of signatories. Blomfield had gathered signatures testifying to the value of the bridge at an assembly of the Royal Academy on 16 February 1932. Scott had signed. However, *The Times* had announced only the day before that Scott was probably going to be asked to design the new bridge.[142]

The statement that Blomfield published in *The Times* was not the one that Scott had signed. Scott had agreed to the statement that the bridge was a great landmark. He had not agreed, however, to the published letter's claim that it should not be demolished. He wrote a letter of protest to Blomfield. The letter in *The Times* had made him look like a hypocrite. He was thus at risk of losing the commission or alienating the other signatories. Blomfield replied, "How you can reconcile a wish to preserve the Bridge with your readiness to destroy it, as a plain man I simply don't understand"[143]

[141] "Waterloo Bridge: Reconstruction Scheme," *The Times,* 15 February 1932.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Blomfield himself had been implicated in a similar situation in the destruction of Nash's Regent Street ten years earlier. Letter, Bloomfield to Scott, 10 March 1932, SP, ScGG/89/2.

The explanation Scott gave was that he had come to the conclusion that demolition of the old bridge was inevitable.[144] Circumstances had changed since Scott had written the letter protesting the bridge's proposed demolition in 1925. The old stone bridge had been shown to have engineering faults: under the weight and vibration of modern motor traffic, it had begun to subside.[145] It had also become clear that the government was not going to fund the Charing Cross scheme, and the traffic problem was becoming increasingly pressing.

Thus Scott agreed to take on the scheme. He was appointed architect without a competition, the LCC committee explained, "to save time."[146] Scott, as has been noted in Chapter 2, always championed modern infrastructure over architectural history, although he was devoted to both. His love of architectural history and its relationship to precedent and context were key to his design philosophy; however, his main goal was always development. Just as Scott felt that concerns about preservation were trumped at the New Bodleian by the need for improved modern facilities, so he felt they were also trumped at Waterloo Bridge. After all, precedents did not have to still exist in order to function as precedents.

When Scott's design was unveiled, Pevsner recalled being pleasantly surprised by its modernity (Fig. 4.38).[147] Even the abstract sculptor Barbara Hepworth would

[144] Letter, Scott to Blomfield, 11 March 1932, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[145] "Waterloo Bridge: Reconstruction Scheme," *The Times,* 15 February 1932.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Nikolaus Pevsner, "Obituary: Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," *Architectural Review,* June 1960, p.426. (Also see Pevsner, *London II*, London: Penguin, 1952, p. 279).

congratulate Scott for designing "such a wonderful bridge."[148] As at Battersea Power Station a decade earlier, Scott had produced a structure that delighted advocates of Modernist architecture. It bore no trace of the classical ornament that had adorned the bridge designs of the Charing Cross Committee less than a decade earlier. Instead, five shallow arches of reinforced concrete sprang from boldly buttressed concrete piers. The sides of the bridge were clad in thin vertical strips of Portland stone that made no allusion to traditional masonry, and the concrete at the bottom of each arch was left exposed. The whole was sleekly horizontal, clean-lined, and low to the water. It is unclear from the surviving correspondence how directly Scott was involved in specifying the engineering system of the bridge and how much was the work of the engineers Rendell, Palmer, & Tritton, but the impression is that he was very actively involved in seeking a system that would attain this particular effect. It is clear that he thoroughly understood the structural aspects and was involved in the selection of concrete type and finishes.[149]

The Highways Committee commended the design, writing that "High, relatively flat arches, which seem to skim the tops of the piers, give a very light and delicate effect to the bridge … The springing of the initial arch from the northern shore would open up the embankment in an extraordinary manner."[150] Others complimented Scott's decision to set the deck of the bridge at the level of the terrace of Somerset House,

[148] Although admittedly, this was in the context of accepting an invitation to participate in a sculpture competition in which Scott was the primary assessor. Letter, Hepworth to Scott, 9 February 1947, quoted in, Alun Graves, "Barbara Hepworth's designs for sculpture on Waterloo Bridge," *Burlington Magazine,* vol 141, no. 1161, Dec 1999, p. 755.
[149] Letters, Scott to Rendell, Palmer, & Tritton, c.1939, SP, ScGG/91/3.
[150] Memo, Highways Committee, "Report of the Highways Committee: Waterloo Bridge," n.d. (c.1933), SP, ScGG/89/2.

thus creating an urban composition that had some of the old bridge's sensitivity to context.[151] Arch-classicists like Blomfield, however, cannot have been pleased. Supporters of preservation may have been especially disgruntled that the new bridge was championed by Herbert Morrison, who personally removed the first stone in the destruction of the old bridge, presenting the demolition as a triumph of socialist pragmatism over reactionary conservativism.[152]

Despite his enthusiasm, Pevsner realised that elements of the bridge's 'modernity' were partly accidental. There may have been pressure on Scott to design a bridge that celebrated its concrete design, as the engineer Owen Williams had made the very public offer to rebuild Waterloo Bridge in concrete for half the cost.[153] The decoration of the pedestrian level of the bridge deck was also curtailed. The onset of the war meant that the white bronze railings and light standards designed by Scott could not be fabricated, and 'temporary' lights and rails of steel tubing were installed. They have remained there ever since; Pevsner thought this an improvement.[154] And despite the modern lines of the bridge, as late as 1940, the engineers were considering the strikingly anachronistic move of lighting it with gas lanterns.[155]

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[151] For example, Letter, Harry Barnes (Surveyor) to Scott, 15 October 1934, SP, ScGG/89/3.
[152] Stephen Humphries and Gavin Weightman, *The Making of Modern London: 1914-1939*, London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1984, p.166 and Gavin Stamp in Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family*, London: Gregg, 1981, p. 179.
[153] "Waterloo Bridge: Sir Owen Williams's Scheme: Use of Reinforced Concrete," *The Times,* 7 April 1932. Online.
[154] Nikolaus Pevsner, "Obituary: Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," *AR,* June 1960, p. 426. (Also see Pevsner, *London II*, London: Penguin, 1952, p. 279).
[155] Messrs Rendell, Palmer, and Tritton, Civil Engineers, to River Superintendent, PLA, 6 January 1940, SP, ScGG/91/3.

Scott had intended sculptural decoration to adorn the corners of the bridge (as requested by the client), and Portland stone pedestals were installed to receive it.[156] The sculpture was to "be low in keeping with the lines of the bridge, caps to the masonry rather than free-standing groups." As is told elsewhere in greater detail by Alun Graves and Sarah Crellin, Scott could not bring himself to award the commission to any of the abstract sculptors he was pressured to invite, and even Charles Wheeler's statues of the four winds, developed in consultation with Scott the previous year failed to meet his approval at the maquette stage.[157]

The Waterloo Bridge project left Scott seeming contradictory. He could hardly both defend the *genius loci* and take a pragmatic approach to modernisation. In the realm of words, Scott's attempts to appease all sides without compromising his fundamental design values left him increasingly tongue-tied. For the first time, he was trapped in a paradox of his own making, but the surprisingly positive critical response saved him from any serious immediate consequences.

Scott's Power Plants

Of all Scott's buildings, the most roundly praised have been his power plants. Even modernists loved them. On the completion of Battersea Power Station's first phase

[156] The pedestals still stand on the bridge. Letter, LCC to Scott, 18 February 1937, SP, ScGG/89/2.
[157] Alun Graves, "Barbara Hepworth's Designs for Sculpture on Waterloo Bridge," *Burlington Magazine,* vol 141, no 1161, December 1999, pp.753-56 and Sarah Crellin, *The Sculpture of Charles Wheeler,* London: Lund Humphries, 2012, pp. 85-86 and p. 162.

in 1933, it was lauded by critics as pointing the way to a new style for modern British architecture. Pevsner later rhapsodised over it – if only British architecture had followed its cues! If only its architect hadn't been so inconsistent as to also design Gothic churches![158] Its powerful masses and undeniable monumental presence continue to make it a much-loved London landmark, appearing on everything from t-shirts to cross-stitching kits (Fig. 4.39). Battersea is an iconic building.

It was in defence of his power stations also, that Scott came closest to sounding like an International Modernist. Defending Bankside Power Station, Scott declared that power stations too could be great works of art and that there was no reason that this monument of modern London could not be a bold and appropriate answer to St Paul's across the river. Modernist purists cheered. Here was the elderly Scott slamming down a 'temple of power' in opposition to degenerate classical Baroque.

But it was not so simple. As previous chapters have shown, Scott was no International Modernist. And although his design was celebrated as particularly original and pointing the way to a uniquely English modernism, as Pevsner perhaps realised, Scott's 'cathedral of power' style was borrowed from Germany. It is worth briefly exploring the ideas behind this style, as its use was key to Scott's attempt to make the plants fit into a larger urban context. The vocabulary of rhythmic masses of brick grouped into rectilinear tower-like forms and broken up by ranks of tall,

[158] Pevsner recalled the excitement generated by Battersea in the 1920s in "Obituary: Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," *AR,* June 1960, p. 426.

narrow metal windows was borrowed from the German industrial architect Werner Issel. Issel's Kraftwerk Klingenberg in Berlin, completed in 1925-6, was the largest, most-modern power plant in Europe (Fig. 4.40).[159] Scott must have looked to the most prominent European precedent in order to find a vocabulary for his own plants.

However, the critics' praise of Battersea's innovative design did not ring entirely false. Battersea Power Station was arguably more powerful than anything Issel had done – with its strong symmetrical massing, the building was undeniably an innovation. Scott's masterstroke was the design of the chimneystacks. Issel had not developed a new vocabulary for chimneys; he left the construction of traditional stacks to engineers. At Battersea, Scott famously created a fluted stack, complete with entasis. These great pillars were like classical columns without capitals, and for that reason, Scott's 'modernistic mode' of design may be assumed to arise from an abstracted classicism. However, if Issel's work is taken as his precedent, that was not exclusively the case. Issel saw his industrial style as arising from the Gothic and even incorporated pointed arches into the brick border walls surrounding Kraftwerk Klingenberg (Fig. 4.41). Thus, the style would have first caught Scott's attention as a modern interpretation of his beloved Gothic, which could then be abstracted using the same 'classical' symmetry and concern with formal order that regulated his church designs.

[159] Website of the City Government of Berlin. www.berlin.de. Accessed May 2013.

As urban gestures, the white monoliths rising above the Battersea rooftops were not only redolent of the monumental classicism that has been a focus of this chapter, but such classical monoliths raised into the air on plinths were already accepted features of London's city fabric – most notably in Hawksmoor's churches of St John, Horselydown and St Luke, Old Street. Scott thus put the industrial chimneystack on par with a church steeple – the traditional defining feature of the London skyline. And by painting the chimneys white, he not only classicised them, but also made them seem clean and hygienic – dirty industry was superseded by clean modern technology (Fig. 4.42). Thus Scott's 'artistic façade' was a rhetorical triumph. He took an unpopular power station and reversing all objections to it, made it one of the most popular modern buildings in Britain.[160] It was this triumph of publicity via art that Scott and his clients hoped to repeat in all of his later façade projects.

The success and prominence of Battersea meant that Scott instantly became a leading light in British industrial design. The striking massing of Scott's industrial work caught the imagination of other architects, who began to imitate the 'brick cathedral' style. As demonstrated by Robert Atkinson's Croydon Power Station (Fig. 4.43), T Cecil Howitt's Staythorpe Power Station (Fig. 4.44), and Herbert Rowse's

[160] The 1930s enthusiasm for Battersea Power Station is hard to overstate. In 1933, W. Ormsby-Gore, the First Commissioner of Works, said "I really do think that the Battersea Power Station is one of the most excellent buildings that have ever been built by man, and if rather more of our Modernism were like that, I do not think many bricks would be thrown at it." (Published Response to "The Inaugural Address," *JRIBA*, Vol XLI, 11 November 1933, p. 12). A 1939 survey of celebrities' favourite modern buildings conducted by the *Architects' Journal* (and published 25 May) showed that even at the end of the decade, Battersea was the second most popular modern building in the country (after Peter Jones). Among the celebrities listing Battersea as the best modern London building was Kenneth Clark. Quoted in Gavin Stamp, "Battersea Power Station," Lecture to the 20th Century Society, London, 8 March 2011.

ventilation towers for the Queensway Tunnel in Liverpool, it remained a standard industrial style in Britain through the mid-century.

The secret to such buildings, Scott explained in one of his sketchbooks, was a balanced composition. He wrote:

> The planning requirements come first and suggest general character … If a symmetrical arrangement is suggested, it is better not to be too exactly symmetrical. A little variation adds piquancy. See road block of Guinness Brewery. An asymmetrical arrangement can be attractive see – Dutch school … The masses need grouping, however, to have an unbalanced balance.[161]

The success of Battersea meant that Scott was called on for more power station projects, particularly ones in sensitive settings, where it was hoped that Scott could mitigate the aesthetic impact. Scott could elevate the discussion of a power station into an artistic matter. By presenting the building as a contribution to the public realm, as a building that responded to its surroundings and matched them in artistic quality, developers attempted to buy acceptance for the project.

Such was the case when a new power plant was proposed for a site facing Durham Cathedral in 1943. The new power plant was to have been located at Keiper, on the river below the cathedral. The proposal immediately provoked outrage, and even a Scott design rendered in watercolour by Raymond Myerscough-Walker did not succeed in getting it past the necessary planning authorities. Scott himself balked, stressing that he did not feel that it was an appropriate location for a power station, and that he might be forced to resign if the size and elaboration of the power station

[161] Giles Scott, Sketchbook, c.1935-55, SP, SKB 304/4.

could not be restrained.[162] "The setting and design of Durham Cathedral render it, in my opinion, the finest Cathedral in England," he wrote, "I should naturally prefer that such a necessary product of Industrialism should be kept out of sight of the Cathedral altogether."[163]

Scott believed that the impact of power stations on the landscape could be minimised by good design, yet he was increasingly concerned by the size of cooling towers proposed for post-war British power stations. As sketches of buttressed cooling towers in his office files reveal, he found it difficult to tame their bulk by applying his signature aesthetic.[164] He had demanded that such cooling towers be left out of the Keiper proposals, and he wrote to power station engineers Merz & McLellan to state that he was looking into ways that such towers could be reduced in size.[165] Scott's only nuclear station, the Berkeley Atomic Power Station in Gloucestershire (1956-61), would ultimately be built without massive cooling towers.[166]

The Northeast Electric Supply Company, who had commissioned Scott to design the Keiper Station, retained him to design a plant at North Tees as a sort of consolation when the Keiper project fell through (Fig. 4.45).[167] Scott must have been relieved at

[162] Letter, Scott to James Beard, 15 September 1944, SP, ScGG/261/2.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Giles Scott, sketches, SP, ScGG/261/2.
[165] Letters, Scott to James Beard, 15 September 1944; Scott to Merz & McLellan, Engineers, 7 July 1947, SP, ScGG/261/2.
[166] Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family*, London: Gregg, 1981, p. 167.
[167] Letter, Merz & McLellan, Engineers, to Scott, 29 October 1945, SP, ScGG/261/2.

this outcome. The client was keen to stress that despite the fact that North Tees was a remote industrial site, they were still committed to creating a suitably artistic effect. Scott replied that the main way to achieve a good effect was through careful selection of good bricks and mortar and ordered that sample panels of brick walling be built on site for his inspection, in order to make sure the colouring was correct for the site.[168] He reassured them that nothing more expensive would be necessary for such a location.[169]

The ultimate sensitive site for a power station was Bankside in London, and defending the design of this station would be one of the hardest battles of Scott's career.[170] The massive station was to be located on the south bank of the Thames, directly across from St Paul's. A power station had been on the site since 1891, but a key element of both the County of London and Royal Academy plans for London was the removal of most heavy industry from the city centre.[171] When the new station was proposed in 1947, there was instant concern that it would conflict with St Paul's dome on the skyline and that the smoke from its chimneys would corrode the architectural treasures of central London, especially the Cathedral itself (Fig. 4.46).

[168] Letter, Scott to Merz & McLellan, 10 March 1947, SP, ScGG/261/2.
[169] The North Tees Power Plant, now demolished, is not listed in the RIBA Catalogue, one of very few projects to be omitted from what is otherwise a comprehensive list. Letter, Scott to Merz & McLellan, 10 March 1947, SP, ScGG/261/2.
[170] Bankside is now the Tate Modern gallery.
[171] Gavin Stamp, "Giles Gilbert Scott and Bankside Power Station," in Rowan Moore and Raymond Ryan, eds, *Building Tate Modern,* London: Tate Gallery, 2000, p. 178.

The power station was to be built on an area of the South Bank that had been earmarked as a mixed-use district in Scott's own Royal Academy Plan.[172] Scott's old friend Charles Holden and town-planner Patrick Abercrombie both testified against the scheme, and objections to the power station were lodged by the London County Council, Southwark Borough Council, the Corporation of the City of London, St Paul's Cathedral, and "the representatives of aesthetic interests." [173] Even Anthony Eden, then a Conservative MP and Opposition Leader, expressed concern.[174] Scott was put into the awkward position of having to fight against many of his usual allies, and indeed, one suspects that the electric company may have brought Scott onboard in an attempt to win them over. Scott was hired for his rhetorical abilities – his ability to frame a project in language acceptable to art critics and intellectuals – as much as for his aesthetic sensibilities.

In keeping with his primary post-war preoccupation, Scott framed Bankside as an urban planning problem. London required new power stations, and he claimed that for the sake of efficiency such stations needed to be on the riverfront and as near to central London as possible. He explained that:

> town planning cannot ignore these fundamental facts but must grapple with the problem and solve it within the limits laid down by the factors. It is curious that in spite of the large number of power stations required for London and the fact that many of them must be on the Thames in London itself – no serious attempt appears to have been made to evolve a solution to

[172] "Bankside: A Test Case in Town Planning," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 16 May 1947, p. 463.
[173] Ibid, p.463.
[174] "The Bankside Power Station: Sir Giles Scott explains," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 23 May 1947, p. 492.

> this important problem … [he later added with a different pen] Is controlled opportunism bad?[175]

The implication that his opponents were unrealistic and stood in the way of progress was not typical of Scott. It both revealed his frustration and put him, at least in this case, in the same camp as the International Modernists. It also showed the growing weakness in his theoretical stance. Scott had spent his career defending the 'human element' against the machine aesthetic, especially in London, yet here was advocating a massive industrial structure at London's heart. This came only months after he resigned his position as architect of Coventry Cathedral because of irreconcilable differences with Modernist clients.[176] Trying to work through the incongruity, he diagrammed some decidedly un-Modernist logic in his sketchbook:

> Rural Approach (nature, earth works, woods & rough texture finish)
> Urban Approach (machines smooth shiny hard & precise)

Scott had always maintained the essentially Victorian idea that there were different ways of building appropriate to the city and to the country.[177] In 1932, for instance, he had applauded his distant cousin Elisabeth Scott's design for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, while expressing the criticism that it was "rather too urban in character for such rural surroundings."[178] In 1935, he had said that "a shining motorcar looks better in the streets of a town than on the grass of a country meadow," but went on to say that good architects in both city and country aim "at

[175] Giles Scott, Sketchbook, c.1950, SP, SKB 304/4.
[176] "The New Coventry Cathedral: Sir Giles Scott Resigns," *The Builder*, CLXXII, 17 January 1947, p. 73.
[177] See Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House,* London: Penguin, 1978, for the development of this idea in British architecture, Chapter 8, pp. 214-266.
[178] Letter, Scott to James Cook (granite merchant), 29 April 1932, SP, ScGG/73/1.

blending their work with Nature."[179] Yet at Bankside, although he used the rural-urban divide as a defence, he seemed to abandon his usual belief that the urban scale should be tempered by the "human element." He had seldom before advocated the "shiny hard & precise." He carried his doctrine that art could redeem the machine much farther than he had ever taken it before, and, critics accused him of opportunism. After all, just four years earlier, he had taken it for granted that the "products of Industrialism" were not appropriate for Durham. Why then were they appropriate for St Paul's? Did the metropolitan nature of London mean that it played by different architectural rules? Was there something here about the nature of the modern and its link to the city? Scott never satisfactorily resolved those questions. His opponents cried out that the station went against the very principles of planning that Scott had fought so hard for – an anonymous author in *The Builder* declared that it was not merely an aesthetic issue, but an attempt to "perpetuate the policy of *laissez faire*."[180] Here the contradictions of his theories came to an unsolvable head. Modernity clashed with architectural manners. Here was the ultimate test of Scott's abilities as mediator, as master of the Middle Line. But he found as always, that an attempt to resolve the issue in words only led to rhetorical games. Instead, he aimed to prove that modernity of any sort could be tamed by Art.

The problem thus became an aesthetic one. In his sketchbook, next to his faltering attempts to work out a written justification for the power station (full of crossed out

[179] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA. Held in Glasgow, 1935," Manuscript, SP, ScGG/279/3.
[180] Bankside: A Test Case in Town Planning," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 16 May 1947, p. 463.

lines and rephrased sentences— his usual proverbs about 'evolution not revolution' and respecting the sense of place did not seem to do the trick here), Scott sketched designs for brick coping motifs. The project grew to take up a much larger proportion of his sketchbook than was usually given to a single project. He experimented with designs for two smokestacks and for smokestacks with a starburst plan. Ultimately, he took the Cathedral of power metaphor one step further, gathering the flues of the station into a single 'campanile.'[181] It was a powerful aesthetic gesture. Here he was creating a monolithic landmark, just as he had at Liverpool.

Ultimately, however, no display of artistic virtuosity could convince the opponents of the scheme that it was 'Architectural Good Manners.' They worried that it would overshadow St Paul's. Scott countered that it was much lower than St Paul's and the massing of the main block in keeping with the office buildings proposed by the Royal Academy Plan.[182] He demonstrated this with a large model, in which the projected office blocks on either side of the station were shown taller than the station itself. He even went so far as to claim that the station would create a deeper swathe of public riverside gardens; though how he expected supplies of oil to be unloaded in these public gardens was not clear, and of course the ultimate reality was that the forecourt was paved and walled off from public access.[183] "Why power

[181] The Bankside Power Station: Sir Giles Scott explains," *The Builder,* vol CLXXII, 23 May 1947, p. 493.
[182] Ibid, p. 492.
[183] Ibid, pp. 492-3.

stations should be considered 'untouchables' I cannot say," he declared, "Power stations can be fine buildings, but it must be demonstrated."[184]

In the end, the plant was built, but at the cost of great damage to Scott's reputation amongst some of his most natural supporters. The Bankside fiasco may have been a key element in undermining Scott's late reputation. At the time, it was unclear to critics whether he had won a great victory or betrayed his own side.

Conclusion

Scott discovered in the last decades of his career that the "modern craze for talking" came with a corollary: the architect was expected to be able to explain himself. As the press and radio poured forth architectural theory, clients and committees began to have stronger opinions and biases, and they often conflicted. At the New Bodleian, Waterloo Bridge, Bankside Power Station, and Coventry Cathedral, Scott found that he could not successfully mediate between competing interests. Someone was always publicly disgruntled in the end.

The number of parties having input on an architectural design had increased since the Edwardian era. Scott had spent his career calling for greater government regulation of design and planning decisions. In a democracy, government involvement meant public involvement, and he reached out to the public via the

[184] Ibid, p. 493.

media. He tried to bridge the differences between different architectural parties and turned his famous diplomacy towards the pursuit of a "Middle Line." He said that public involvement would shift control of designs into the hands of design professionals and away from *laissez-faire* developers. But what he found was that increased public involvement also had a corollary. If the design of a building was not merely a matter between client and architect, then there was much more room for critical comment. As mentioned above, even the King weighed in on matters of design. One cannot imagine Queen Victoria making a statement that would be taken to apply to a new row of fish shops in Hastings.[185] The phenomenon of façade consultation, on which Scott built a large portion of his business, was equally a product of this critical trend. Architectural patrons wanted their buildings to fare well in the face of public opinion, so they put on an especially grand public face.

Architects during the interwar period tried to counter this trend to criticism by an insistent call for architectural manners. The tide of increased media scrutiny, however, was too strong to be tamed. Lethaby, who was ironically one of the ones doing the most talking, protested "Too much writing about art, over-splashed with purple and dazzling with paradox, seems to have entirely confused ordinary people … Beauty, like breathing, is solved by doing it, not by this everlasting

[185] See copy of Letter, R Goodburn Lovell, President of SE Society of Architects to Mayor of Hastings, 2 February 1935, quoting the King's recent speech, SP, ScGG/279/3.

argument."[186]Lutyens summed up what many architects felt more succinctly when he made an analogy between the critic and the Devil.[187]

As Scott's career progressed, there was an increasing gap between what he said and what he did. One gets the sense that he came to view words and theory simply as tools for appeasing clients.[188] Scott was not the only architect to encounter this dilemma. Architectural historian Vincent Scully has asserted that the same thing happened to Frank Lloyd Wright during the postwar period.[189] Scully realised that architects do not share the historian's detachment, but often say things for personal and professional reasons. Therefore they sometimes say things that do not reflect the realities of their work and can be unknowingly unrealistic when attacking alternative methods of design or in trying to make their work appear to be aligned with some current fashion. Scott's statements always contained the theoretical explanations of his designs – the kernel of his design principles was always there, an unchanging and passionate philosophy – however, the way that he presented these statements was increasingly padded with attempts to mollify clients and critics. Part of Scott's philosophy had always been pragmatism, but pragmatism as much for his clients as for himself. Scott believed that his clients should get the building that they wanted. He was not Lutyens, willing to overrun the budget for the sake of art, or willing to impose a marble staircase on a client who had specifically asked for an

[186] William Lethaby, *Form in Civilisation,* OUP, 1922, p. 144-5.
[187] Edwin Lutyens, Introduction to A S G Butler, *The Substance of Architecture*, London: Constable, 1932, front matter.
[188] This argument is backed up by the text describing Cambridge University Library, discussed in Chapter 1, that did not change even when the design was radically retooled.
[189] Vincent Scully, "Wright vs the International Style," *Art News* 53 (March 1954), pp. 32-35, 64-66.

oak one. To Scott, such an act would have been a serious breach not only of the respect due between gentlemen, but of the principle of function. The building existed to serve the client's needs, and if the design did not align with those needs then it was time for a new design. Appeasing clients became a part of the function itself. It was a theoretical knot — he had to both express artistic truth and express what people wanted to hear. His interviews were peppered with popular buzzwords such as 'scientific,' 'experiment,' and 'innovation.' Even the word 'planning' was occasionally a tool to appeal to critical sentiment rather than a term deeply laden with meaning.

Paradoxically, Scott's rhetoric of appeasement and prevarication grew out of a highly original and deeply held design philosophy. Scott truly believed in modernising tradition, and as previous chapters have shown, had well worked out ideas about how this could be achieved. However, there was an extent to which his approach became a way for clients to have their cake and eat it too. Scott claimed that he could provide buildings that were at once thoroughly modern and traditional. Clients who wanted traditional buildings could count on him to appease modern critics. Clients who simply wanted planning approval could count on him to appease the planning authorities. Scott's reputation was that of an architectural diplomat. The game in some ways became all about words and their relationship to artistic practice, and he built his career on them. This was certainly the case for commercial clients, but it was even the case for the religious authorities who commissioned his churches — they wanted to appear both relevantly modern and

rooted in the past. Scott was seen as an architect who could resolve the paradoxes and uncertainties of modern life. But in the postwar world, these resolutions were increasingly regarded as unsatisfactory.

The story of Scott's postwar career, as will be told in the final chapter this thesis, was very much affected by the "modern craze for talking." In his final theoretical battle, Giles Gilbert Scott, the Last Medievalist, would face his architectural Morte D'Arthur.

5. Postwar Projects:
A Legacy of Architectural Ideas

The war and its aftermath would be a bittersweet time in Scott's professional life. When the war ended he had in hand probably the two most prominent architectural commissions of the immediate postwar period: the rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral and the House of Commons Chamber. Yet the design of both projects would be the subject of biting critical attacks. Despite its highly positive public reception, the 'modern Gothic' style of the House of Commons was decried by prominent architectural critics, who called for alternatives ranging from an exact reconstruction of the Victorian chamber to the insertion of a concrete modernist saucer within the old palace walls.[1] Pevsner felt that Scott's design set a bad example.[2] Robert Lutyens disliked "the Gothicism which renders its appearance so ridiculous."[3] Even E H Gombrich felt it appropriate to deride the design. In his landmark 1950 textbook, *The Story of Art,* he cited the Commons Chamber as a late example of the Victorian attitude toward design which "nearly killed" architecture.[4] Gombrich's book went on to become one of the most influential art history textbooks of all time, selling over seven million copies, and the derogatory reference to Scott's work (one of the very few negative remarks in the book) has remained in the text through all sixteen editions. Scott fought his last battles bravely, but the

[1] Gavin Stamp, "We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us," in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament*, London: Merrell, 2000, pp. 150-151.
[2] Louise Campbell, "Towards a New Cathedral," *Architectural History*, vol 35, 1992, p. 209.
[3] Robert Lutyens, quoted in Gavin Stamp, "'We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us,'" in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament,* London: Merrell, 2000, p. 157
[4] E H Gombrich, *The Story of Art*, 16th ed, London: Phaidon, 2010, pp. 499-500.

odds were overwhelmingly against him. Combined with the backlash at Bankside and Coventry, Scott's reputation would be so utterly ruined in the postwar decades that he would be left to nearly disappear from architectural history. But what was Scott's legacy? He had had a tremendous influence on a generation of architects, and although his body of work may have fallen from grace, his ideas left a definite mark on the history of architectural thought.

World War II and the Guildhall

During World War II, Scott served in the Royal Corps of Engineers, ordering anti-tank barriers from Concrete Ltd, the firm that had previously supplied his concrete floors,[5] and designing air raid shelters for the Home Office.[6] He also designed chapels for the armed services. He created a rhythmic composition of corrugated metal and industrial windows that infused a prefabricated Hertford Hut with the necessary dignity for use as a Roman Catholic chapel at the Manchester Aerodrome.[7] At the request of Dean Frederick Dwelly, he designed the fittings of the chapel aboard the HMS Barham, whose chaplains were under the patronage of Liverpool Cathedral.[8] With limited staff remaining in his office, Scott did a lot of the drawing himself.[9] He also did his best to help preserve what he could of Britain's built environment. In 1940, he wrote a worried letter to *The Times*, reminding people not

[5] Letter, Concrete Ltd to Scott, 6 May 1941, SP, ScGG/259/1.
[6] Letter, Scott to Alexander Rowse, 28 January 1941, SP, ScGG/259/4.
[7] Elevations and plans, SD, SCOTT RAN 7 [119].
[8] Telegram, Dwelly to Scott, 30 May 1940, SP, ScGG/259/2.
[9] Letter, Scott to Provost Howard (Coventry), 2 March 1942, SP, ScGG[87]2(1).

to destroy the priceless antique railings of London's squares in the search for scrap metal.[10]

The repeated bombing of London would set the stage for almost all of his major postwar projects — Coventry Cathedral and the House of Commons Chamber were important symbols of national survival and reconstruction. As Louise Campbell has pointed out, so was Liverpool Cathedral, which attracted the nickname, "the parish church of the Western Approaches." The Cathedral tower stood high above the damaged city and its walls continued to rise throughout the conflict, a visible symbol of hope for the people below (Fig. 5.1).[11] As part of his war service, Scott spent a few days sleeping in the cathedral on fire-watching duty with Dean Dwelly.[12] Even Bankside Power Station was ultimately a product of the wartime replanning efforts.

Besides the House of Commons, Scott's most important London reconstruction project was for the Guildhall (1953, Fig. 5.2). As the architect of the new office building that the London Guildhall had been planning at the outbreak of war in 1939 (see Chapter 2), Scott was now given the commission to rebuild the destroyed roof of the medieval Guildhall itself. As at the House of Commons, the commission would stir up controversy. Many wished to recreate the destroyed Victorian hammer-beam roof, but Scott – pitting himself against the preservationists as he had at Bankside,

[10] Giles Scott, "Iron Railings: Distinguishing good from bad," Letter to the Editor, *The Times,* 8 May 1940, Times Archive, Online.
[11] Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art & Architecture in Post-war Britain,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 243
[12] Peter Kennerley, *Frederick William Dwelly*, Liverpool: Carnegie, 2004, p. 200.

the New Bodleian, Waterloo Bridge, and Fountains Abbey[13] – insisted on making a new design, "on the lines originally intended when the walls were built."[14] He convincingly cited the use of colonettes rather than corbels as evidence that the original roof would have been supported by stone arches as opposed to the timber hammer-beams of the Victorian design.[15] He proceeded to design a 'stripped Gothic' roof made possible by timber-veneered concrete beams set on stone arches.[16] It equally could not have been what the medieval builders intended, but Scott insisted that the design was in the appropriate 'Gothic spirit,' and at least a step closer to the original design, whose particulars there was no way to know. A number of members of the City Lands Committee objected and abstained from signing the committee report advocating the design.[17] Architectural scholar Banister Fletcher even went so far as to lodge a public complaint against the 'dishonesty' of the way Scott's roof structure was engineered.[18] When the question was finally put to vote, the Court of Common Council nearly failed to approve Scott's design – with 58 votes in favour and 52 against.[19]

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[13] In a controversy that must have further riled preservationists, Scott said that the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Building should wait to examine the architect's proposals before condemning a plan to 'restore' Fountains Abbey. Giles Scott, "Fountains Abbey," Letter to the Editor, *The Times,* 28 October 1946. It is important to be reminded at this stage that if Scott gave the impression of being broadly anti-preservation, this impression was false. He was involved in projects as small as a SPAB campaign to save three old cottages at Totnes, and also let his name be used on the circular calling for preservation of William Morris's Red House, Letter, MacAlister to Scott, 29 July 1935, SP, ScGG/279/2.

[14] "Plan for Guildhall Roof Approved," *The Times,* 23 January 1953, Times Archive, Online.

[15] Richard Gilbert Scott, *Giles Gilbert Scott: His Son's View,* London: Lyndhurst Road, 2011, p. 21. For an up-to-date take on the archaeology of London's medieval buildings, see John Schofield, *London 1100-1600,* Oakfield, Connecticut: Equinox, 2011.

[16] See detail drawing, SP, SCOTT RAN 8 [96] 38.

[17] "Plan for Guildhall Roof Approved," *The Times,* 23 January 1953, Times Archive, Online.

[18] Ibid and Giles "Site Meeting Register," 1935-1957, entry for 23 January 1952, SP, ScGG/282/1.

[19] Ibid.

The controversy at the Guildhall was small, however, and the design was generally lauded as an improvement over what many considered to have been the overly ornamental and cluttered Victorian design. The commission to rebuild the House of Commons, however, was a different matter.

House of Commons Chamber

Many postwar critics saw the Commons Chamber as the greatest architectural failure of the age — an embarrassing sign of the low standard of British public taste. The opportunity for a modernist Coventry Cathedral after Scott's resignation was portrayed as atoning for this, and the two were frequently presented in opposition to each other in the press. The editorial debate in *The Times,* which surrounded the opening of the Commons Chamber in 1950, for instance, discussed the two projects in tandem. Scott was thus presented as the ultimate perpetrator of architectural sins against modernity both by building a non-Modernist Commons Chamber and by threatening to build a non-Modernist Coventry Cathedral. Suddenly he was the figurehead of an old order. The negative tone of most critics, however, was at odds with the general public rejoicing that greeted the healing of the British built environment's greatest physical scars.

The circumstances leading up to Scott's commission to design the new House of Commons Chamber are covered in detail in Gavin Stamp's "We Shape Our Buildings,

And Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us."[20] In brief, the plan to rebuild was set in motion by Winston Churchill before the end of the war, and the choice of the Gothic style was largely his.[21] He believed strongly that the design of the old chamber had played an important role in shaping British parliamentary democracy. The intimate scale had encouraged a more spontaneous form of debate; the ranks of seats on either side of the rectangular chamber had formed the perfect incubator for a two-party system.[22] With a mandate for a Gothic government building thus in hand, the clear architect to turn to was Giles Gilbert Scott.

Although the decision to build a Gothic chamber and the decision to commission Scott passed through Parliament with few objections, a hint of things to come occurred after the war, when Clement Attlee agreed to abide by the wartime government's wish for a Gothic chamber, despite intimating that the Labour government would have preferred an International Modernist one.[23]

The resulting chamber maintained the exact shape and size of the old debating floor, as mandated by Parliament, but greatly increased accommodation in the galleries, especially for the media (Fig. 5.3). The plan was more efficient than the old chamber, with MPs flowing directly into lobbies and committee rooms or travelling to offices

[20] Gavin Stamp, "We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us," in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament*, London: Merrell, 2000.
[21] Somerset de Chair, "New House of Commons," Editorial, *The Times,* 24 October 1950, Times Archive Online.
[22] Gavin Stamp, "We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us," in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament*, London: Merrell, 2000, pp. 149-150.
[23] Ibid, p. 152.

and meeting rooms via lifts.[24] Scott intended the new chamber to be "more domestic and less ecclesiastical"[25] in design, presumably out of a concern for making the chamber more psychologically comfortable, as well as to emphasise the secular nature of modern British democracy.

It was necessary to fit much more accommodation into the space that had been occupied by the old chamber, yet without altering the skyline of the Palace or filling in the large courtyards that abutted the site. Scott thus dug down to add accommodation underground, as he had at the New Bodleian, and added a floor of office accommodation above the chamber, hidden behind the parapet. The ingenious planning was evidently worked out by Scott's brother, Adrian, who assisted him on the project.[26] Scott described the design as "the most complex problem he had ever had to deal with ... the interior was rather like that of a battleship"[27] The battleship analogy was apt. As with Scott's high-tech library designs, the Chamber was wrapped with a service world of plain white corridors filled with piping and machinery (Fig. 5.4). An operator in a kiosk under the floor observed the chamber

[24] The MPs remarked on the great improvement in this regard, see Tom Driberg, "Client's Eye View," *The Architectural Review,* CVIII, October 1950, p. 181.
[25] Giles Scott, quoted in "Rebuilding the House of Commons: The Select Committee's Report," *The Builder,* CLXVII, 10 November 1944, pp. 369.
[26] Adrian Scott undoubtedly played a large role in the project; much of the correspondence relating to the project in the RIBA Archives bears his signature. SP, ScGG [139]1-2. The correspondence that survives in the RIBA is entirely related to technical and financial matters. Testimony that the planning was largely by Adrian appears in Stamp and in John S. Easton, "The Work of Giles Gilbert Scott," RIBA Thesis, April1957, RIBA Archives, XMS/72.036.4, p. 71. Easton's work, although poorly fact-checked and peppered with incorrect information, was partially based on an interview with Giles Scott.
[27] The House of Commons Archive contains little information about the design of the Chamber, and most of the relevant Parliamentary Papers were reprinted in the architectural press, see for instance, "Rebuilding of the House of Commons: The Select Committee's Report," *The Builder,* CLXVII, 10 November 1944, pp. 367-372. This quotation is from Oscar Faber, "The New House of Commons," *Architect & Building News,* CXCV, 18 March 1949, p. 254.

via periscope, a Wizard of Oz who adjusted dials and switches to control ventilation and sound amplification as the number of members in the chamber fluctuated.[28] On the floor above the chamber, Gothic detailing broke out only occasionally in what was otherwise a standard set of midcentury corridor offices: Florescent tubes on the ceilings were wrapped in bronze fret-work, windows were framed in stone, and the curtains were Scott's 'damask' pattern.[29] It was as if the Gothic Revival Palace had grown into the new office block, wrapping itself around and punching through the walls like tough old ivy.

Scott was particularly excited about the technology of the new Chamber. The climate control system was state-of-the-art, designed by Oscar Faber, a knighted ventilation expert. Scott launched the discussion after one of Faber's ventilation lectures by pointing out that Faber had forgotten to mention the machine-operated sunblinds.[30] Unlike the New Bodleian a decade earlier, Parliament allowed Scott to install a pneumatic tube system between the press gallery and the post office. Direct telephones and teleprinters linked the chamber to press bureaus across the United Kingdom. Lighting was via dimmable fluorescent tubes, with a system of artificial daylight illuminating the white glass ceiling of the Chamber.[31]

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[28] "The House of Commons," *Architect & Building News,* CXCVIII, 27 October 1950, p. 473.
[29] Personal tour of House of Commons, Department for Chamber and Committee Services, 10 October 2012, Notes in Author's Possession.
[30] Oscar Faber, "The New House of Commons," *Architect & Building News,* CXCV, 18 March 1949, p. 254.
[31] "The House of Commons," *Architect & Building News,* CXCVIII, 27 October 1950, p. 468.

As one of the nation's leading Gothicists, Scott had encountered the Palace of Westminster over and over again in the course of his career, so by the time he came to design the Commons Chamber, he was already thoroughly familiar with the building. His first visit to the site seems to have been circa 1905, when he recorded his impressions of the interior in his sketchbook:

> There is far too much gilding and varnish … The effect produced upon me one of abject depression, with the exception of Westminster Hall and the paintings in the Prince's Chamber … [As regards the Victorian interiors,] as they stand no painting could make them look well … [the two main faults] are the lack of refinement and the lack of concentration [of ornament]. There is far too much gilding and varnish.[32]

His opinion of Pugin's detailing would not change in later years. While designing the Commons Chamber in the 1940s, he would declare "The Gothic detail of the old Chamber was lifeless and uninteresting, and the richness was spread evenly over the whole area without relief or contrasts. It has been our endeavour to remedy this."[33]

Scott's first attempt to design for the Houses of Parliament had come right after World War I, when he was invited to design a War Memorial for the House of Lords. At the relatively small scale of a war memorial, he had to make the 'modern Gothic' look at home in the most venerable structure of the Victorian Gothic Revival. The design was never executed, and only a few rough drawings preserve Scott's thoughts.

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[32] Giles Scott, Sketchbook, c.1905, SP, SKB/302/2.
[33] Giles Scott quoted in Joanna Heseltine, ed, *Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the RIBA: Scott Family,* London: Gregg, 1981, p. 180.

Scott's reaction to Barry and Pugin's Gothic was two alternative designs for richly carved, but monochromatic memorials set in a recess under a pointed arch.[34] In the first design, a figure of St George is set in a Gothic niche with the usual name panels and Scott's trademark cantilevered cenotaph.[35] The second design is bolder with a larger figure of St George projecting forward in a central aedicule surrounded by an elaborate composition of spiky tracery and miniaturised architectural elements. The design is similar to motifs found in the Liverpool Cathedral transepts and crossing.[36] He mirrored the richness of the decoration, but concentrated the ornament, using duller colours and sharper forms.

The sharpness of Scott's detailing created an intentional contrast with the softer carving of the nineteenth century work (Fig. 5.5). Even such a minor aesthetic difference reflected Scott's theory of the 'modern Gothic.' Like the Lords War Memorial, the later carvings of the House of Commons Chamber were emphatically *not* softened by the passage of time. Despite containing much the same imagery as Victorian and medieval carvings – Tudor Roses, crowns, heraldic crests – they were plainly a product of the modern world. R B Vardy, who was in charge of the woodcarving for Scott's Commons Chamber, explained that Scott had asked for a special carving technique to enhance the clarity and sharpness of the ornament.[37]

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[34] The drawings file contains a measured survey drawing of a recess under a pointed arch labelled "Lords Library," but I have been unable to determine the intended location of the memorial. The drawings are not dated. SD, SCOTT RAN 8 [120] 1.
[35] Sketch elevation, SD, SCOTT RAN 8 [120] 3.
[36] Drawings, SD, SCOTT RAN 8 [120] 4-5.
[37] "Oak for House of Commons: Artistry in Wood," *The Times,* 31 January 1948, Times Archive, Online.

This crispness gave Scott's detail an air of mechanical precision, but ironically could only be achieved with a specially developed method of hand carving. The grey colour of the oak preferred by Scott was achieved via an industrial chemical process, in which the wood was sprayed with iron sulfate, thus permanently staining the surface and reducing natural fading.[38] The opposite of the false aging applied to much twentieth-century American Gothic Revival, here tradition was meant to look permanently new. The crisp ornament signalled that it was here that the business of modern government took place, just as Liverpool Cathedral was devoted to modern worship.

After his Lords War Memorial came to naught, Scott's next two interactions with the Palace of Westminster would be with its exterior. While the Lords Memorial had been designed for an essentially private interior space, Scott's next designs had to respond to a public face saturated with symbolism. When a controversial new private office block was mooted for the west side of Parliament Square in 1934, in an attempt to staunch public uproar, Scott was brought in to design the exterior.[39] Calling on a tried and true strategy of interwar London developers, the block's promoters hoped that Scott's association with the project would help it pass planning permission. Scott first designed a Neo-Grec block that responded to the classicism of nearby Whitehall,[40] but after public outcry, he Gothicised the block to

[38] Ibid.
[39] The information in this paragraph comes from Chris Miele, ed, *The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom,* London: Merrell, 2010, pp. 59-60.
[40] For images of Scott's Neo-Grec proposal, see "Westminster House, Parliament Square," *The Builder,* CXCVIII, 1935, pp. 139-40. The RIBA has misplaced their copies of the drawings.

complement the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. The change failed to satisfy the public or the occupants of government buildings that faced the square. The 85-foot high block would have largely obscured Middlesex Guildhall from view,[41] and Middlesex Council campaigned against the proposal saying that a gargantuan office block, no matter how stylish its façade, was not appropriate to Parliament Square. The developer backed down as the Government sought the funds to purchase the site, but the deal would not go through until after the war.

The regularisation of Parliament Square and the clearing away of private buildings to create a grander centre of government was a process that greatly accelerated in the 20th century. As discussed in Chapter 4, Scott's next project for the area, commissioned in 1937, was in the vein of enhancing the ceremonial setting and axial dignity of the square – the creation of a memorial to George V at Old Palace Yard. Foreshadowing the reaction to his House of Commons design five years later, the Gothic nature of the memorial proposal came under fire from prominent architectural figures when it was first published in 1939. Frank Pick, whom Scott admired, wrote to *The Times* that the memorial was not "functionalism in stone," as good Gothic should be, but "merely wears Gothic trimmings ... The past ceases to be a lesson, to become a snare."[42] How a canopy that protected a stone statue from the elements was not functional, Pick failed to explain. He added the polite suggestion that the Gothic style was probably imposed on Scott by the client. Herbert Baker, too, publicly objected to the design. He was worried, on grounds of a sort of imperial

[41] "Westminster House, Parliament Square," *The Builder,* CXCVIII, 1935, pp. 139-40.
[42] Frank Pick, "George V Memorial," Editorial, *The Times,* 20 January 1939, p. 8, Times Archive Online.

feng shui, that the parapet wall would block views of the base of the Abbey Chapter House from the Houses of Parliament, and that the canopy was too boldly designed for the front of Parliament and the Abbey.[43] He suggested Romanesque. Although some architects, including Thomas Tait,[44] wrote to Scott privately to express support, the public denunciations continued for several weeks. The memorial was no better than Victorian design, one MP cried, why didn't Scott gild it and place it atop the Albert Memorial?[45] Rumours even circulated that Scott proposed to build the canopy out of white Carrara marble. Scott was horrified at this slight to his taste, explaining that his intention had always been to execute the canopy in Portland stone and pale neutral colours.[46]

The idea of taste always to some degree reflects contemporary fashion. The claim that Scott's Gothic designs were Victorian in taste as well as style, and the implication that the Memorial was likely to be garishly coloured and gilded, was equivalent to slander as far as Scott was concerned. Scott had always rejected the polychromatic stencilling of predecessors such as Bodley, carefully concentrating the use of bright colour. Opinion had turned so violently against the 'modern Gothic,' that even those who had long been Scott's sympathetic colleagues were eager to fling mud.

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[43] Herbert Baker, "George V Memorial," Editorial, *The Times,* 21 January 1939, p. 13, Times Archive Online.
[44] Letter, Tait to Scott, 14 March 1939, SP, ScGG/102/3.
[45] Dennis Wardleworth, *William Reid Dick, Sculptor*, London: Ashgate, 2013, p. 121.
[46] Letter, Scott to MacMillan, 26 February 1939, SP, ScGG/102/3.

The colours of Scott's House of Commons Chamber therefore would duly evoke mid-century taste. The only non-neutral colour admitted was traditional Commons green. A white linen-union fabric for the curtains was printed with a green pattern of crowns, portcullises and oak leaves (Fig. 5.6). The design was meant to complement Pugin's damasks, but with a fashionably rough texture and off-white colour. Although Scott attempted to infuse the Chamber with timeless modernity, the colour scheme of grey wood, bronze fixtures, and white and green upholstery, along with the presence of artefacts such as the chunky audio speakers (Fig. 5.7), shallow ash trays, and Gothic lanterns with exposed fluorescent tubing (Fig. 5.8), gave the Chamber a distinctly mid-century feel and earned it the appellation "Neon-Gothic."[47]

When the Chamber opened in October 1950, the architectural press was ominously silent. Feeling that it was inappropriate to give a negative review to a national monument designed by one of the most prominent members of the profession, without exception, they dismissed the style in a sentence or two as having been mandated by Parliament, and went on to focus on the history and technological aspects of the design. Critic G Maxwell Aylwin emphasised that he was speaking personally and not keeping with the editorial policy of *The Builder* when he wrote that the new House of Commons "lacked vitality" and that "one feels that here a great designer is in chains forged by circumstance and popular sentiment."[48] This

[47] Gavin Stamp, "We Shape Our Buildings and Afterwards Our Buildings Shape Us," in Christine and Jacqueline Riding, eds, *The Houses of Parliament*, London: Merrell, 2000, p. 159.
[48] G Maxwell Aylwin, "Architecture at the Royal Academy," *The Builder,* CLXVIII, 1945, p. 372.

was to ignore the fact that Scott would have surely created a similar Gothic design had he not been 'chained.' *The Architect & Building News* declared that although a great opportunity for contemporary architecture had been lost, it was not the architect's fault, so criticism was inappropriate.[49] No editorials attacking the design were published by the major journals, and the subsequent debate was channelled through the newspapers.

The Architectural Review, considered a progressive, modernist organ, took the most unusual approach. They published twenty pages on the new design – a vast amount of coverage – but focused almost entirely on the history of the structure's antecedents. The whole production took on a didactic tone that was too drily sincere to be a definite mockery of Scott's scholarly emphasis on precedent. "The best approach to the new chamber is to regard it as a chimera – a fascinating monstrosity, but one with a *raison d'être,"* the article explained, before launching into an art historical argument for the 15th-century St Stephen's Chapel as the probable birthplace of the Perpendicular Style.[50] The shape of the chamber might have "no logical justification," but it had a historical one, a role in "moulding the two party system."[51] The journal then went on to provide a "Client's Eye View" written by Tom Driberg, Labour MP and former Communist.[52] Driberg did not have a high opinion of Scott, and he wrote, "Pure 'modernism' would, no doubt, have looked

[49] "The House of Commons," *Architect & Building News,* CXCVIII, 27 October 1950, p. 467.
[50] A clue to the article's mocking intent may be found in the author calling himself "J.M. Hastings" for the segment on the Palace history, as opposed to simply "Maurice Hastings" in the other segments. Maurice Hastings, "House of Commons," *AR,* CVIII, October 1950, p. 176.
[51] Ibid, p. 161.
[52] Scott's feeling that Modernism was the style of morally degenerate Communists in this case proved true. See Letter, Scott to Craster, 1941, BA.

uncouth in the middle of the Barry building – like a single ivory tooth in a denture of gold. I confess that I personally found some of the architect's views, and his expression of them, distasteful."[53] Driberg's picturesque metaphor manages to equate Scott's architecture with tooth decay, giving new vividness to the rhetorical trope of associating Modernism with hygiene. Driberg continued, however, "yet I must confess that the moment I set foot in the Chamber … I was greatly pleased and impressed. Even then it had a serenity, a robustness, and a certain homeliness – all in combination peculiarly English, peculiarly Parliamentary."[54] Scott had succeeded, as he always did, in making an architecture that contemporaries felt to be particularly English. The difference, however, was that despite its array of state-of-the-art technology, many contemporaries no longer felt Scott's architecture to be particularly modern. In a final, considered jab at the design, *The Architectural Review* followed the House of Commons article with illustrations of the new modernist Parliament Building at Bonn (Fig. 5.9).[55]

The editorials published in *The Times* did not take the gentlemanly tone of the architectural press. Robert Lutyens, son of Edwin Lutyens, led the charge by attacking both the new Chamber and Scott's design for Coventry. The call for new Coventry designs should expressly forbid Gothic designs, he wrote, "It is bad enough to be saddled with a fake new House of Commons."[56] Laurence Whistler, architectural writer and artist, denounced the provision that the Coventry design

[53] Tom Driberg, "Client's Eye View," *AR,* CVIII, October 1950, p. 178.
[54] Ibid, p. 178.
[55] "The Parliament Building at Bonn," *AR,* CVIII, October 1950, pp. 182-186.
[56] Robert Lutyens, "Coventry Cathedral," Editorial, *The Times,* 3 October 1950, Times Archives, online.

respect its neighbours. "Living Architecture is not produced in this way," he wrote, "Inigo Jones's part of Wilton, Wren's part of Hampton Court, and Vanbrugh's part of Grimsthorpe are among the splendours of English architecture, yet they could hardly show less "good manners" to the excellent Tudor work adjoining them."[57] Architectural manners, that great touchstone of interwar design, was now subject to derision. In another sign of changing times, Whistler's letter contained praise for Butterfield's buildings at Keble College, which he said, unlike Scott's work at Oxbridge at least had the courage to be original.[58] The letters that followed echoed Whistler's sentiments, with four students from the Architectural Association writing that Scott represented

> a school of thought to which style is a visual quality associated with architecture quite unrelated to the spirit and techniques of the time, and in which it is perfectly possible to design power house chimneys in the manner of Greek temple columns, telephone kiosks with the fenestration of eighteenth-century villas, and a new Parliament building as a Tudor manor house … In any great period architecture evolves out of contemporary thought and method of building, fulfilling the needs of the time and creating its own forms. It must do the same to-day even if some members of the profession are content to mark time.[59]

As Laurence Whistler's Keble comment showed, even the Victorians were accorded more respect than Scott — an insult sure to prickle a generation that reviled High Victorian work. Although the reprint of Kenneth Clark's *The Gothic Revival* in 1950 and again in 1962 marked an increasing appreciation of the products of the High Victorian revivalists, it was, like Summerson's appreciation of Comper, essentially

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[57] Laurence Whistler, "Architectural Styles," Editorial, *The Times,* 13 October 1950, p. 5, Times Archives Online.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Michael Brawne, Alan Graham, Robert Maguire, and Peter Matthews, "Architectural Styles," Editorial, *The Times,* 13 October 1950, p. 5, Times Archives Online.

nostalgic.[60] It did not signal a willingness to accept the Gothic Revival as a living tradition. For Clark, Summerson, Pevsner, Hitchcock, and even Betjeman, modern art had no place for 'modern Gothic.' They may have become connoisseurs and analysts of the Gothic Revival, but they were no more proponents of it than they were proponents of a return to the lifestyles of the Renaissance. The movement's legacy was "to be found not in buildings, but in a body of principles and ideals" passed on to modern architecture.[61] Marked by a rising tide of ironic Victoriana, the spirit of the immediate post-war period was captured when Betjeman and Cecil Beaton showed up at Watts & Co unannounced in 1951, demanding to design a Victorian-style wallpaper to decorate Beaton's loo. (They adapted an existing Bodley design in a pink colourway, Fig. 5.10).[62]

Thus with Scott's death in 1960, some obituarists were quick to declare the end of the Gothic Revival. As admirable as Pevsner felt some of Scott's works had been in their time, he seemed to have no doubt that Scott belonged to "the last generation of historicists and semi-historicists."[63] This idea that the Gothic Revival died out in the postwar world has survived to our own time. In a 2007 study of medievalism in World War I memorials, for instance, Stefan Goebel wrote that "Medievalism was the ultimate casualty of the Second World War."[64] Yet in the 1920s, critics had also

[60] See discussion of Summerson and Comper, Chapter 2. The increased interest in Victoriana was also reflected in popular introductions to the style such as Hugh Casson's 1948 *An Introduction to Victorian Architecture*, London: Art & Technics, 1948.
[61] Kenneth Clark, The Gothic Revival, London: John Murray, 1962, p. 219.
[62] Anthony Symondson, "Wallpapers from Watts & Company," *Connoisseur*, vol 204, no 820, June 1980, pp. 114 – 121.
[63] Nikolaus Pevsner, "Obituary: Sir Giles Gilbert Scott," *AR,* June 1960, p. 425.
[64] Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory,* Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 13.

been quick to declare the Gothic Revival dead, even with Liverpool Cathedral rising in their midst – as Clark did in the first edition of his book. However, as Goodhart-Rendel pointed out at the time, "That the Gothic style in England has ever become a corpse I will not allow."[65] The Gothic Revival had never really died. Neither did it die with Scott in 1960. Liverpool Cathedral continued to rise, as did Gothic churches around the English-speaking world.[66] Most prominently, Stephen Dykes Bowers would continue designing in the Gothic mode right into the new millennium. His Gothic crossing tower for the cathedral at Bury St Edmunds was completed in 2003.[67] Scott's son Richard Gilbert Scott developed a Brutalist and then a Post-Modern interpretation of the Gothic style, carrying on his father's legacy of the 'modern Gothic' with commissions at Charterhouse (1970s, Fig. 5.11) and the London Guildhall (He designed the new Guildhall Art Gallery in 1989, Fig. 5.12). Although immediately post-war Gothic constructions were hidden in the shadow of an ascendant Modernism, there has definitely been a case of Gothic Revival Survival – the tradition within which Scott worked has lived on.

Seriously-committed International Modernists had denigrated Scott's work since the late 1920s; the first published slight to Scott's work came from the USA in 1927 when Henry Russell-Hitchcock, then a Harvard undergraduate, had cited Liverpool

[65] H S Goodhart-Rendel, "English Gothic Architecture of the Nineteenth Century," J*RIBA*, Vol 31, 5 April 1924, p. 321.Thanks to Ayla Lepine for drawing my attention to this material.
[66] For example, St Francis, Atlanta, and Grace Cathedral, San Francisco. See Chapter 3.
[67] At which point some critics were once again quick to declare the style dead, see *The Guardian*. St Edmundsbury Cathedral tower was by no means the only major national project in the style. Magdalen College, Oxford, built a Gothic range near Scott's own work in that college in 2000. The Church and universities continue to be major patrons of Gothic design.

Cathedral as proof of the decline of the West.[68] Perhaps such Modernists particularly targeted Scott because with his media presence, public appeal, and institutional support; his alternative theories presented the greatest threat to their claim that there was only one legitimate modern architecture. Yet pre-war attacks on Scott were always qualified with admiration for some element of his work.[69] To some extent his enemies had not yet organised. At the time of Hitchcock's remark in the late 1920s, Nikolaus Pevsner thought Battersea Power Station strikingly modern, and Maxwell Fry was still designing in a Neo-Georgian mode.[70] For International Modernists in Britain, the thirties was a decade devoted to impassioned architectural propaganda, and by the end of the decade they had succeeded, despite Scott's best efforts, in cleaving the profession into opposing camps. Modernist critics often referred to the "battle" for architecture and would only settle for complete obliteration of opposition – they looked zealously forward to the "triumph of Modernism."[71] Scott's work was not included in the 1937 English Modern Architecture exhibition at the New York Museum of Modern Art, a sign that attitudes in some corners were changing.[72] The 1937 exhibition was rooted in an appreciation of Gothic Revival theory, which its curator, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, believed underlay the Modern Movement. But although it reflected a turning tide in

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[68] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Hound and Horn,* 1927, quoted in Alan Powers, "Exhibition 58: Modern Architecture in England, Museum of Modern Art, 1937," *Architectural History*, vol 56, 2013, p. 278.
[69] Hitchcock, for example, referred to Liverpool Cathedral's 'vast technical perfection.' Ibid, p. 278.
[70] See earlier Pevsner reference, and see Margate-Ramsgate stations by Fry, Isle of Thanet, Kent. Fry did not design his first building in a modern mode until 1934. (Alan Powers, "Maxwell Fry at All Souls, Chichele Lecture, All Souls College, Oxford, 24 May 2012).
[71] See for instance, J M Richards, quoted in Alan Powers, "Exhibition 58: Modern Architecture in England, Museum of Modern Art, 1937," *Architectural History*, vol 56, 2013, p. 292.
[72] Hitchcock curated the exhibition. Alan Powers, "Exhibition 58: Modern Architecture in England, Museum of Modern Art, 1937," *Architectural History*, vol 56, 2013, p. 283.

the appreciation of High Victorian architects, as with Clark and Summerson, it in no way signalled a willingness to accept their direct modern successors.

Many so-called traditionalists equally disliked Scott's attempt to modernise traditional styles, and they had become more vocal by the late 1930s. In March 1937, A S G Butler, an architectural writer who would author the architectural volumes of the *Lutyens Memorial*, wrote to Geoffrey Faber at All Souls College, Oxford, mapping out modern British architecture in a diagram. His family tree of British architecture shows Scott descended from "the Mechanical Fallacy" and linked him to German moderns along with Baker and Blomfield.[73] Butler represented a strand of increasingly disgruntled traditionalists who felt that Scott was no longer on their side — he had compromised too much.

Although Scott was careful to maintain a veneer of gentlemanly tact, his frustration with his treatment by critics and his irritation with certain International Modernist ideas, occasionally boiled over. His frustrated private letter to Edmund Craster at the Bodleian, in which Scott called International Modernists Esperanto-speaking Communists, was a typical example.[74] He only once really denounced them in a calculated public way – his 1935 speech at the RIBA Glasgow Convention. In contrast with the diplomacy of his 'middle line' inaugural address at the RIBA — a

[73] Alan Powers, Lecture on Maxwell Fry's Design for All Souls, All Souls College, 24 May 2012. Butler's term 'Mechanical Fallacy' is taken from Chapter 4 of Geoffrey Scott's *Architecture of Humanism* (London: Constable, 1914), in which Scott questions the idea that good architecture 'honestly' expresses its construction.
[74] Letter, Scott to Craster, 1941, BA. See Chapter 1.

speech in which Scott called for moderation and cooperation between modernists and traditionalists — Scott took the stage at Glasgow with the intention of attacking International Modernist dogma. He called International Modernists un-English villains who would "like to chisel and enamel the chalk cliffs of England to make them smooth and shiny." He called them self-worshiping materialists, who took their inspiration from "man's admiration for his own mechanical creations rather than God's own work expressed in Nature." He said that they neglected the psychological need for comfort and beauty. He dismissed the focus on verbal theory as distorting artistic judgement.[75] Throwing all tact to the wind, he ended the speech by calling the host city of Glasgow ugly and poorly planned. As a rant, it was parallel to Alfred Munnings's 1949 speech at the Royal Academy in which Munnings attacked Modernism in a live radio broadcast on the BBC.[76] Munnings did not help his cause with the violence of his rant, or the fact that he apparently sounded slightly drunk. He simply played into the Modernist caricature of traditionalists as out-of-touch, grumpy old men. Scott's speech was more nuanced than Munnings's, and he meant it as a serious critique of Modernist dogma. He was especially concerned about the proliferation of impractical construction methods (He pointed out that external walls of reinforced concrete were not waterproof, cracked easily, and were poorly insulated).[77] His strident attacks on the machine aesthetic reflected a genuine concern about its lack of respect for nature or human psychological needs.

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[75] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA," Typescript, 1935, SP, ScGG/279/3.
[76] Scott was a fan of Munnings's art, and Munnings had been Scott's initial choice to paint his presidential portrait for RIBA. "Sir Alfred James Munnings," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* Online, 2013.
[77] Giles Scott, "Presidential Address to the XVth Annual Conference of the RIBA," Typescript, 1935, SP, ScGG/279/3.

Although he could not retract the speech, the RIBA secretary, mindful of the reputation of Scott and the Institute, was fast to eradicate all references to it. Instead of publishing the usual summary transcript in the *RIBA Journal*, only a brief mention of the speech was made and its subject glossed over in preference to a sub-theme. It was around this time that Scott began to be the target of stepped-up written attacks from Modernist-leaning critics, although how much was the result of the speech and how much of broader changes in taste is hard to say. The vitriol of their attacks would reach its peak at Coventry Cathedral.

Coventry Cathedral

St Michael's, the Cathedral Church of Coventry, was destroyed in heavy bombing on the night of 14 November 1940 (Fig. 5.13). The bombardment of the city lasted for eleven hours, and Coventry was the first British city outside metropolitan London to suffer such an attack.[78] As a sign of faith in the future, the rebuilding of the Cathedral was immediately announced, and in 1942 Provost Richard Howard gave the commission for the project to Britain's leading ecclesiastical architect, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott.[79] Howard had long admired Liverpool Cathedral, and was a good friend of Frederick Dwelly, so Scott seemed the ideal choice.[80] He also liked that

[78] Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art & Architecture in Post-war Britain,* Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, p. 7.
[79] Howard particularly admired Liverpool Cathedral. Louise Campbell, "Towards a New Cathedral," *Architectural History*, vol 35, 1992, p.208, and Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 72.
[80] Letter, Provost Howard to Scott, 10 June 1941, SP, ScGG[87]2(1). He would later write of Liverpool: "I simply have no words to tell you how utterly beautiful & glorious & worshipful it seems to me to be

Scott had experience building for industry, as he wanted to the new Cathedral to have chapels linked to the city's industries and felt that Scott could both win the loyalty and express the spirit of the city's commercial interests.[81]

Scott settled on a working design by the beginning of 1944. The design retained the spire of the old cathedral, which had survived the bombs, as a freestanding bell tower and placed the new Cathedral with a north-south orientation across the body of the old cathedral (Figs. 5.14 – 5.15). It incorporated the surviving aisle walls into a cloister and the apse of the old cathedral as a raised transept.[82] An outdoor pulpit in the cloister would have allowed for memorial and other services to be held within the bombed out walls of the old cathedral. A central altar, placed at the true centre of the building under a lantern and baldachino in a spindly, crystalline Gothic, would have been the first central altar in a British cathedral. It also would have allowed Scott to concentrate the architectural effect on the sanctuary, as the altar would be located at the crossing. The symmetry that Scott had gestured towards at Liverpool would here be realised in a subtle way that would avoid the inconveniences of bending the liturgy to fit a radial layout: The rectilinear form would still allow for processions. The altar was even designed to be moveable, so that if the congregation was only seated in one of the naves, it could be turned north or south to face them.

… I feel all the more thankful that you are to rebuild our cathedral." Letter, Provost Howard to Scott, 9 June 1942, SP, ScGG[87]2(1).

[81] Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art & Architecture in Post-war Britain,* Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, p. 24.

[82] These descriptions are based on Scott's own description of the design, as published in *The Times:* Giles Scott, "New Cathedral Features," 9 February 1944, Times Archive, Online, and on drawings reproduced in Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art & Architecture in Post-war Britain,* Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. (The RIBA only holds reproductions of some of the presentation drawings).

However, if worshipers were seated on either side of the altar, the altar could be turned to face east, giving worshipers in both naves a side view.[83] Four pulpits, one at each corner of the crossing, would allow for the development of new forms of service.[84] Floor levels were carefully manipulated to maintain clear views for all congregants, as well as a sense of appropriate drama – Coventry, like Liverpool, was designed to be an 'engine of emotion.' The floor of the naves was to have been divided by banks of steps leading down toward the raised altar, and the choir was to have been placed in the old apse, which was to have become a gallery located a full story above the floor level of the new cathedral.

Reflecting Scott's principles of community building, the congregation would have been as close to the altar and with as clear a view as possible, surrounding the sanctuary as one "family"[85] rather than occupying a distinct space. The Cathedral was to form a symbolic and actual centre for community life in Coventry. As Scott explained,

> The purpose of a cathedral to form a spiritual centre for the city, to bring it into the everyday life of the people, and to emphasise the dominance of spiritual values over the material, can only be satisfactorily expressed architecturally if the cathedral forms the centre and climax of the city's plan. It should be centrally placed on the main axis of the new plan, so that it stands at the centre of the main approach.[86]

[83] "Coventry Cathedral: Sir Giles Scott on his plan," *The Times,* 5 May 1945, Times Archive, Online.
[84] Ibid.
[85] "Draft of the Main Appeal Booklet," Coventry Cathedral, Typescript, 13 September 1945, Scott Archives, Scott Papers, ScGG [87] 1.
[86] Giles Scott, "New Cathedral Features," *The Times,* 9 February 1944, Times Archive, Online.

At Coventry, Scott had the opportunity to plan the cathedral at the scale of the urban plan, linking the arteries of the reconstructed city to its metaphorical heart. Like his belief in the social role of architecture, Scott's belief in the importance of planning would also find its apotheosis here, creating an urban order that was both symbolic and functional. Here too, history and tradition would be preserved, the new cathedral honouring the remains of the old in both its Gothic style and its use of a pale red sandstone that complemented the city's surviving medieval churches. Following the theory of architectural manners, the design would respect and enhance the existing sense of place in the same way that his university projects did.

The design was highly innovative – it would have been the most liturgically-radical cathedral Britain had yet seen. In a neat symmetry, Scott would have both begun and ended his career with a great Cathedral. C H Reilly wrote to Scott expressing his excitement, "I think the interior with the simplicity of its lines and the interest of the different levels even beats the interior of Liverpool. It is the finest thing you have done."[87]

Yet the new power of the International Modernists would soon manifest itself, seriously disrupting Scott's career for the first time. A new bishop, Neville Gorton had been appointed in 1942. The initial suggestion for the central altar had come from him. However, the Bishop had also asked that Scott to design a cathedral that

[87] It should be noted that Reilly was reacting to Scott's initial Gothic designs, not the revised ones that I describe in the following paragraph. Letter, Reilly to Scott, 18 October 1944, SP, ScGG/282/2.

captured the simple and spacious spirit of Coventry's factories.[88] Responding to the bishop's request, Scott created a strikingly austere design. The proposed exterior was austere and boxy, even by Scott's standards, with buttresses formed of acute angles rather than the stepped rectangular buttresses usually found on Gothic churches (Fig. 5.16). The shadows of the sharp buttress forms, combined with the spiky parapet crenellations would have created jagged shadows that seemed to dematerialise the cathedral's smooth, boxy form. This unexpected contrast, like the inversion of solid and void at Derby Lane or the exploration of transparency at Liverpool Cathedral decades earlier, showed that Scott could play the game of formal innovation rooted in an intellectual concept as well as other modern artists. But the combination of formal and liturgical innovation, which had always rescued his work in the past, failed to win approval for the design at Coventry. He was baffled that it did not. The aesthetic was new, and like much Scott captured some of the flavour of current fashion – in this case light colours and austere boxy forms. But the concerns of modern architecture had changed. The age of Roger Fry had passed. As much as the proponents of a Modernist cathedral must have appreciated these elements of Scott's design, they were also concerned to have a cathedral that would look modern to a national and international audience – the cathedral had to represent a new post-war world. And Gothic, as demonstrated by the writings of Clark, Pevsner, Summerson and Hitchcock, simply could not be made to fit with the opinions of leading critics as to what constituted modern art.

[88] Letter, Bishop Gorton to Scott, 21 December 1944, SP, ScGG[87]1.

Even Scott's notion of tradition was under attack. John Summerson had written in 1941:

> This loose bondage to the past is called 'tradition.' It is architectural Toryism. It is the Royal Academy point of view . . . defended, like other Tory lines, by platitudes, catch-phrases, and every form of easy lip-service — everything but clear thought . . . The architecture of today must be the architecture not of class but of community itself. The need for parade vanishes.[89]

Suddenly, tradition was being portrayed not as a source of community but as its destroyer, and Scott and his colleagues were being labelled a league of architectural villains. It was the very reverse of what Scott had always preached and believed.

When perspectives of Scott's designs arrived in Coventry in early1944, the bishop was horrified. He found the designs squat, ugly, and unlikely to inspire public support. He wrote to Scott and suggested that he resign. The cathedral design was "heavy pseudo-Modernist," and as bad as Hubert Worthington, the bishop said. He predicted uproar in the press: "This will get no support in Coventry. The bitterness here and the spiritual damage it is doing you cannot exaggerate, and the present plans you send will be acceptable to nobody." If Scott would not resign, then the Cathedral must be completely redesigned. Near the end of the letter, the Bishop expressed his bitter disappointment: "We have been keyed up to believe that here was Sir Giles Scott who was going to use all the powers he had to combine a modern

[89] Quoted in David Watkin, *The Rise of Architectural History,* London: Architectural Press, 1983, p. 135.

statement with grace and lightness, and a new cathedral of new form and character. And the designs give us no assurance of this, in fact it is the exact opposite."[90]

Scott was so upset by the letter that he was unable to reply for two weeks. As far as Scott was concerned, the Bishop's suggestion that the new Cathedral should have a simple glassy elegance was missing the whole point. A cathedral that looked like a factory was not fit for purpose: "I use modernistic ideas for power stations, breweries, and factories," Scott replied, "where extremely plain forms are appropriate, but cathedrals, even if very plain, require contrasts by means of well placed "fuss" [ornament] … no single individual can suddenly evolve an entirely new type of good decoration; it has never been done, for good ornament like good architecture, can only be evolved gradually."[91] Scott ended his letter with a steely warning not to cater to young Modernists: "you will find that it is not the extremists (who are always more vocal) who will decide the amount of financial support, but the older people who have more money and are not revolutionary extremists."[92]

The Bishop backed down, and Scott created a new design for the interior, "more modernistic, though not as extreme as you [the bishop] would like it, for I should blend a not too archaeological type of Gothic decoration with modernist ideas."[93] The new interior featured high vaults arched with a form akin to a pointed parabola (Fig. 5.17). Not only was the result liturgically innovative, with a true central altar

[90] Letter, Bishop Gorton to Scott, 10 November 1944, SP, ScGG[87]1.
[91] Letter, Scott to Bishop Gorton, 28 November 1944, SP, ScGG[87]1.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

and a north-south orientation, but it was something new aesthetically. The vaults and arches were highly sculptural and expressive, the closest Scott would ever come to Gaudi. They sprang directly from a stone dado, and as Scott explained to *The Times*, were of such a form that they could only be built in reinforced concrete.[94] The cathedral would have been even darker and more atmospheric than Liverpool, with only a tiny pinprick round window in the north wall and a few single lancets to illuminate the naves. Scott, however, refused to remove the vestiges of Gothic style from the exterior, asserting that they were necessary for the new work to blend with the remains of the old cathedral.[95] He also refused the bishop's request for large areas of glass.

The new interior design caught the bishop and provost off guard, for it was unlike anything they had ever seen and was just as dark and gloomy as the old design. However, the Provost wrote to Scott that both he and the Bishop had grown to like it.[96] To some extent they were simply trying to placate their architect, as the Provost later admitted that he did not like the baldachino,[97] and he and the bishop both stressed that they found Alonzo C Webb's perspective drawings unacceptable. The Webb drawings were dark, and drawn from a perspective that failed to give the cathedral a sense of soaring scale.[98] The drawings were not the artistic masterpieces

[94] "Coventry Cathedral: Sir Giles Scott on his plan," *The Times,* 5 May 1945, Times Archive, Online.
[95] Letter, Scott to Bishop Gorton, 28 November 1944, SP, ScGG[87]1.
[96] Letter, Provost to Scott, 5 February 1945, SP, ScGG[87]2(3).
[97] Letter, Provost to Scott, 12 July 1945, SP, ScGG[87]2(3).
[98] The American-born artist Alonzo C Webb did a number of perspective renderings for Scott during the 1940s and 50s, including very attractive renderings of the West End of Liverpool Cathedral (1944) and Bankside Power Station (1950), (both reproduced in Gavin Stamp, "Giles Gilbert Scott and Bankside Power Station," in Rowan Moore and Raymond Ryan, eds, *Building Tate Modern,*

that the bishop felt Scott's unusual design would need to win over the public, and the bishop and provost both pleaded with Scott to have etchings done by Muirhead Bone.[99] Scott refused.

When the design was published, Scott received several letters of congratulations.[100] However, the condemnations were more numerous and vocal than usual. Many members of the public were outraged either by the Cathedral's perceived modernity or by its perceived anti-modernism. Scott received hate mail from as far away as New Zealand, with one Auckland man writing that the interior was "hideously ugly," and the exterior, "suggests a coffin … England as we dream of it will be lost to us forever if we are inflicted with the nightmares of these modern buildings everywhere."[101] A reviewer in *The Builder* wrote that he was "seriously disturbed by Sir Giles Scott's design … I felt actually chilled at this deliberate abandonment of English tradition."[102] The unease of the client was perhaps a bigger issue. The Bishop and Provost heard directly from the people of Coventry. And although the Provost reported that even "the younger generation admire it as much as any,"[103] the Bishop wrote that people were "bewildered and … angry."[104]

London: Tate Gallery, 2000, pp. 184-185). It is unclear why Webb's renderings of Coventry Cathedral were not more artistically successful.

[99] Letter, Provost to Scott, 6 March 1945, SP, ScGG[87]2(3) and Bishop to Scott, 7 July 1945, SP, ScGG[87]1.

[100] SP, ScGG[87]2(3).

[101] Letter, N Aston to Scott, 2 September 1945, SP, ScGG [87] 1.

[102] G Maxwell Aylwin, "Architecture at the Royal Academy," *The Builder,* CLXVIII, 11 May 1945, p.372.

[103] Letter, Provost Howard to Scott, 12 January 1945, SP, ScGG[87]2(3).

[104] Bishop to Scott, 7 July 1945, SP, ScGG[87]1.

It was not ultimately the clients, however, who put an end to the Scott project. On 19 December 1946, The Royal Fine Arts Commission refused to approve the design. The Commission, which included Scott's old friend, Edward Maufe,[105] felt that the design was schizophrenic, with a historicist exterior and a Modernist interior. They said they could not approve of a building that was one thing on the outside and another on the inside. Their objections sounded similar to criticisms that had been levelled at the New Bodleian – Once again Scott's attempt to create a transitional style had been deemed a failure.[106]

In response to the Royal Fine Arts Commission's letter, Scott resigned. The official pretence for his resignation was old age; the Cathedral stated that there was concern that with another delay in the design process, Scott would be too old to oversee the building works by the time the Cathedral finally got started.[107] But it was a pretence lightly worn. Scott's statement of resignation, published in the architectural press, went straight to the real heart of the matter:

> These differences of opinion [about the appropriate style and design for the Cathedral], and the formation of numerous societies, committees and commissions, etc., to give them expression, are characteristic of our time; they harass the unfortunate artist and hamper the production of the work.[108]

The Cathedral Council, the governing body of clergy, wanted a Gothic cathedral, and this preference was echoed by the Harlech Commission, which was set up to

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[105] Louise Campbell, "Towards a New Cathedral," *Architectural History*, vol 35, 1992, p. 210.
[106] In his resignation letter, Scott refers to the Cathedral as a 'transitional design' on the path to modernism – a similar rhetoric to that he employed at the New Bodleian, see Chapter 1 and "The New Coventry Cathedral, Sir Giles Scott Resigns," *The Builder,* CLXXII, 17 January 1947, p. 73.
[107] "The New Coventry Cathedral, Sir Giles Scott Resigns," *The Builder,* CLXXII, 17 January 1947, p. 73.
[108] Ibid, p. 73.

examine the situation after Scott's resignation.[109] The new bishop, the city architect, and many London-based critics wanted an International Modernist one. Scott's repeated attempts to find a compromise had all been thwarted. The final straw was the Royal Fine Arts Commission's decision. Scott's 'middle line' had officially been declared unacceptable.

The architectural press reacted with furor. "When an architect has been appointed, it is his right, the problem having been made clear, to be allowed to work out the solution along the lines of his own convictions and experience," *The Builder* declared in a leading editorial.[110] The issue announcing Scott's Coventry resignation was turned into a spontaneous Scott tribute issue, with an article lauding the 'innovative' foundations at the House of Commons and a photo essay on the New Bodleian.[111]

Scott said that he thought the Cathedral's behaviour disgraceful, but as far as he saw, the conflicting instructions of the client bodies had created an impasse that he could not bridge. He felt that his resignation at least cleared the field for them to start over.[112] He was right. The Cathedral Council, the bishop, the Reconstruction Committee, and the RIBA would argue for five years before choosing a new architect, and the Cathedral Council and Reconstruction Committee stood by their

[109] Louise Campbell, "Towards a New Cathedral," *Architectural History*, vol 35, 1992, p.208 and Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 74.
[110] "The New Coventry Cathedral, Sir Giles Scott Resigns," *The Builder,* CLXXII, 17 January 1947, p. 73.
[111] *The Builder,* CLXXII, 17 January 1947.
[112] "The New Coventry Cathedral, Sir Giles Scott Resigns," *The Builder,* CLXXII, 17 January 1947, p. 73.

stipulation for a Gothic Cathedral until assessors for a new architectural competition were chosen in 1950.[113]

Despite *The Builder's* rally to Scott's defence, his defeat at Coventry marked an indelible shift in his fortunes. He was no longer an unquestioned leader of the architectural profession. Modernist office blocks designed by what would have previously been called 'commercial firms' began to rise in London. In 1953, having commissioned an office block from a specialist commercial firm, Messrs Campbell-Jones and Sons, for a prominent site next to St Stephen's, Walbrook, the Legenland Property Company were surprised when it passed planning permission. *The Times* ran an article showing an image of the gridded façade (Fig. 5.18), and reporting that with the unexpected approval of the design, "A proposal to call in Sir Giles Scott as consultant, with a view to his giving the building a weightier and more formal appearance, was thereupon dropped."[114] The balance of power had shifted quietly and unexpectedly away from Scott's camp. The whole process of building in London was thereby transformed. Scott's façade consulting business immediately ceased to exist – he would never again design a London façade.

Meanwhile, the commission for Coventry Cathedral was given to Basil Spence.[115] On the surface, Spence's Cathedral looked very different from Scott's (Fig. 5.19). There

[113] Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 74.
[114] "Final Discussion on Office Block: Permission Sought for Bucklersbury House," *The Times*, 19 November 1953, Times Archive, Online.
[115] For a description of the competition entries and the deliberation process, see Louise Campbell, "Towards a New Cathedral," *Architectural History*, vol 35, 1992, pp. 208 - 234.

were no traces of Gothic detail, although the broader forms of the design, such as the mullions and the vaults alluded to Gothic types. Of the artists brought in to decorate the Cathedral, only Jacob Epstein (still a controversial choice in the mid-1950s) represented Scott's generation (Fig. 5.20). The rest were Spence's age or younger and worked in abstract modes that would have been alien to Scott. Spence retained Scott's north-south orientation, but rather than straddling the ruins of the old cathedral, he moved the new cathedral outside of the old walls and connected it to the ruins by a large overhanging porch. Screens of transparent glass, exposed concrete and relatively flat rooflines declared its allegiance to the aesthetic of International Modernism. This was not strictly the boxy modernism of purist pioneers, but was enlivened with the playfulness of the midcentury. Whereas Kenneth Clarke could not bring himself to praise a work like Scott's, he was highly complimentary of the Spence designs for Coventry and especially of his choice of artists and craftsmen.[116]

When aesthetic differences are put aside, however, the Scott and Spence cathedrals begin to show some similarities. Spence was looking to many of the same precedents that had inspired Scott. Both men admired the work of Eero Saarinen.[117] Spence venerated Albi Cathedral, appreciating its combination of simplicity and drama,[118] just as the church architects of Scott's generation had done. He also looked

[116] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 106.
[117] As discussed in Chapter 3, Scott emulated Saarinen's St Louis Arch in his design for a Memorial to Anglo-American Cooperation (SD, SCOTT RAN 9 [162] 1), and Spence called Saarinen "one of America's most distinguished architects," *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 80.
[118] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 11

to the Byzantine churches of Ravenna[119] – a precedent that had been popular both with Arts & Crafts architects and with the interwar followers of William Lethaby and Roger Fry. Spence also owed a tremendous debt to the work of Dominikus Böhm. Böhm and Giles Scott had developed ideas about rectangular church plans and forward altars simultaneously in the 1920s,[120] but Spence owed a greater and more direct debt to Böhm's ideas. Coventry was a roughly box-shaped hall church, a typology that had first been translated into a modernist vocabulary by Böhm. Spence explained that the Coventry Cathedral plan had come to him in a vision induced by a dental anaesthetic,[121] but its ultimate source, although perhaps unconsciously, was Böhm's 1927 church at Neu-Ulm, which had the same 'zigzag' walls that made the stained glass only visible from the altar and the same round pavilion chapels attached to the side of the church by short passages (Fig. 5.21).[122]

Despite the ostentatiously 'modern' nature of the exposed concrete piers and glazing tie rods, Spence built Coventry Cathedral using the same basic construction method that Scott would have used – load-bearing masonry walls with concrete floors and roofs.[123] A result of market forces as much as preference, he also used many of the same suppliers and craftspeople that Scott used, including Crittal for the vast west window and Harrison & Harrison for the organ.[124] No wonder Henry-

[119] Ibid, p.11
[120] See Chapter 2.
[121] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, pp. 12-13.
[122] Campbell pp. 79-80. For reproductions of Böhm's plans see Gesine Stalling, *Studien zu Dominikus Böhm,* Bern: Lang, 1974, pls. 16 & 19.
[123] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 13.
[124] Ibid, pp. 47 & 50.

Russell Hitchcock felt that Coventry Cathedral was "the sort of thing that would have been exciting in 1925" but was hardly avant-garde in the 1960s.[125]

The relationship to Scott's work, however, goes much deeper when we examine the ideas behind Spence's design. The parallels between Scott and Spence's rhetoric are evidence of the legacy of Scott's ideas, or at the very least of the ideas about church building that Scott and other architects shared during the interwar period. Spence gave hundreds of lectures on Coventry and produced numerous written works as part of what Scott would have called the 'hard propaganda work' of convincing the public to accept what was judged to be a controversial and radical design.[126] The most prominent bit of apologetics was Spence's best-selling book, *Phoenix at Coventry*, published in time for the consecration in 1962.

The book goes to extremes to demonstrate the Cathedral architecture's roots in tradition and history. Its 'middle line' nature as a design that developed tradition for the modern world was a more emphatic assertion of Scott's principles than Scott himself ever made. The book opened with a passage from Bartok that began "Only a fool will build in defiance of the past." In the first three pages of text, a foreword by Bishop Cuthbert Bardsley laid out the key characteristics of the architecture. They could have all been taken directly from Scott. The Bishop stressed the evolutionary nature of Spence's design as a modern cathedral rooted in tradition; he said it was

[125] Quoted in Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 84.
[126] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, pp. 21-22.

the duty of a cathedral building to encourage community by providing community spaces and clear views to the altar; and he declared that the function of a cathedral is worship.[127] Spence himself wrote, "That elusive thing called atmosphere is a functional thing in a church," and "A cathedral should not arouse excitement, but a deep emotion, and it must express the canons of the Christian faith."[128] These were not mere buzzwords, but ideas that the Cathedral clergy passionately felt to be essential to the modern church, just as the clergy at Liverpool Cathedral had felt a few decades earlier. These ideas about the nature of the twentieth century British cathedral were forged and tested at Liverpool, and it was Giles Scott who first worked out how to express them in architecture and who first described the nature of that expression in the press. Whether consciously or not, Spence was building on Scott's ideas and borrowing Scott's words.

In *Phoenix at Coventry,* Spence explained that he believed contemporary English architecture was the product of a Gothic "tradition of vitality and integrity."[129] He not only expressed the idea that modern architecture was rooted in Gothic ideas but he advocated a specifically English, rather than an international, modern architecture. Here was a devoted Modernist advocating the High Victorian ideal of an architecture that is Gothic in spirit but not in detail. Here also was a proponent of architectural manners, emphasising that the Cathedral was built of red sandstone

[127] Ibid, pp. vii-viii.
[128] Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, pp. 84 and 110.
[129] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 8.

out of respect for the context of the site and declaring the importance of preserving historic buildings.[130]

As Spence scholar Louise Campbell has shown, Spence's choice of language – including, I would add, his borrowing of Scott's vocabulary of developmental traditionalism – was partly in response to the public mood.[131] His rhetoric was designed to appease the British public's scepticism over the design and to affirm the survival of British traditions into the postwar world. This public demand for a 'middle line' narrative just goes to show Scott's legacy all the more.

There were many parallels in Scott and Spence's training. Spence spent his student years sketching Gothic churches, particularly in southern England.[132] Both architects also believed strongly in the importance of architecture as an art. "I believe the architect should also be an artist. If he is not an artist, then he should not call himself an architect," Spence declared in 1958, in parallel to Scott's early letters to G F Bodley.[133]

In many respects, Spence would take Scott's place in the British architectural establishment. He became an instant celebrity when he won a cathedral design competition and was immediately exposed to a high level of controversy and press

[130] Ibid, pp. 10 and 24.
[131] Campbell does not make the direct link to Scott, but references the general desire for an affirmation of tradition, Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 84.
[132] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, p. 8
[133] Quoted in Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, 16.

scrutiny.[134] He would develop a specialty in churches and educational buildings. Louise Campbell has called him the best-known architect of 1960s Britain.[135] In 1960, the year of Scott's death, Spence was President of the RIBA. He was knighted and became a Royal Academician that year.[136] A gentleman architect favoured by the establishment for his moderate line and distinct aesthetic, he would carry out many designs for the British government, including the Embassy in Rome (opened 1971, Fig. 5.22), the British Pavilion at the 1967 Montreal Expo, and even a nuclear power station. His design approach would fall out of critical favour by the 1970s, leaving him to retire in relative obscurity. In an almost eerie parallel, his last major project would be a controversial legislative chamber, the 'Beehive' extension of the New Zealand Parliament building in Auckland (Fig. 5.23).[137]

Although their influence was unacknowledged, Giles Scott's ideas survived into the postwar period, and continued to have a strong effect on the development of British modernism. Banished from purist narratives, they nevertheless influenced moderate Modernists such as Spence, and their moderate nature gave them broad public appeal. Many of the concepts so dear to Scott and his colleagues – architectural manners, the social role of architecture, and the importance of human-scale planning – would resurface in the theory of Post-Modernists, New Urbanists,

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[134] Basil Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry,* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962, for example pp. 21-22; pp. 77-78; p. 85.
[135] Louise Campbell, Miles Glendinning, and Jane Thomas, ed, *Basil Spence: Buildings and Projects*, London: RIBA, 2012, p. 8.
[136] Ibid, p. 99.
[137] Spence was became involved with the project in 1964, and the extension opened in 1977, the year after his death. Philip Long and Jane Thomas, eds, *Basil Spence Architect,* Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2007, p. 122.

Neo-Traditionalists, and even in the contextual, socially-oriented 'High-Tech' Modernism of Richard Rogers and Norman Foster. Although Scott's body of work had fallen from grace, or become merely regarded as a collection of amusing period pieces, his architectural thought survived to form his legacy in the profession.

Conclusion

In early 1960, Giles Gilbert Scott lay dying in a hospital bed in wintry London. He was at work on drawings for a Jesuit church overlooking the sea in Plymouth (Figs. c.1 - c.2). Too ill to work with large sheets, he made measured drawings on construction paper using a straightedge. The office had produced a design with catenary arches in Scott's contemporary mode, but an alternative with traditional pointed arches was also to be offered. This was the design that the Jesuits chose. Built of smooth brick with a campanile and gabled bellcote, the details were carved in limestone. Inside, an arcade of stone arches led to a sanctuary with a blank east wall, lit from the side by concealed windows. Scott used a variation of the tracery he had developed for Coventry — a palisade of pointed stone bars joined near the top by a single thin crossbar. Differing from his other churches in its fusion of smooth brick planes with new forms of carved detail and with its gabled body joined to a flat-roofed narthex porch, it nonetheless felt as if it could have been built between the wars, another iteration of Scott's experiments in church form. And that of course was exactly what it was. Scott felt that the approach was sound, and with sympathetic clients as he had found in Plymouth and Toronto, he could continue his exploration of the 'modern Gothic' form.

His final drawing was for the pointed stone arches in the nave. The drawing was removed from his bedside after his death and reverently labelled, "This was the last drawing from the hand of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, OM."[1]

Scott's primary interest, right until the end, was in the social role of architecture, and he drew pointed arches for Plymouth for the same reason he had always drawn them, because he believed that by calling on both abstract and concrete forms that people already associated with churches, he would encourage them to worship. Scott held a strong belief in artistic design as a civic duty, as a way of enhancing the lives of everyday people. He believed that his large projects should respond to their local context and, in the city, to the metropolis as a whole. Even his idea of tradition as a developmental process was rooted in his concern for community building. He believed that tradition bound society together. This study has shown that Giles Gilbert Scott, so often portrayed as a mere opportunist in his approach to architectural style, in fact built his practice on a unified body of architectural ideas. Unexpectedly for those raised on postwar assessments of his work, he proved to be both an interesting and influential figure, a nexus in a trans-Atlantic chain of architects who had a considerable influence on the shape of modern architectural theory.

Scott was not an incredibly original thinker — the ideas he gathered and combined were already in circulation — but then neither was Pugin. It was his way of

[1] Measured sketches, SD, SCOTT RAN 8 ScGG [138] 3-5. The alternative catenary scheme is shown in SCOTT RAN 8 ScGG [138] 1-20.

combining and enacting other men's ideas, as well as his skill as an artist, that made him influential. But whereas Pugin died young and his popularity would only grow in the succeeding decades, Scott lived to see his theories disparaged and his popularity eclipsed. Although no mere relic of the Gothic Revival and always emphatic about his modernity, in some ways, Scott was the heir of a Puginian way of thinking about architecture. He believed that the Gothic could heal the problems of industrial society. He shared his Victorian predecessors' insistence that he was seeking the 'Gothic Spirit' rather than the literal 'Gothic Style.' He emphatically did not consider himself to be part of the Gothic Revival, but that did not mean that he could not borrow and update their more useful concepts. In the tradition of the Victorian Gothic Revival, the point of Gothic is textual — it is about conveying ideas.[2] Scott 's architecture was equally about conveying ideas, but he changed the conception of *how* those ideas were transmitted, bringing in formalism and psychology as ways of explaining the intent behind the architecture.

It was the changes to the Victorian Gothic Revival schema that revealed the differences in the way that Scott's generation thought about architecture: Scott wanted to unite what Michael Hall defines as the two essential strands of late Victorian design. He went in for both Archaeology and Abstraction, seeking to create associational elements and formal expression within the same structure. Archaeology — the reference to precedent and the use of historic detail — was an important element of Scott's work, helping to call up communal memories and to

[2] William Whyte explains this well in his forthcoming chapter for *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medieval Revivalism* (OUP).

perpetuate tradition. To the befuddlement of International Modernists, his designs featured mouldings, niches, and tracery. Yet at the same time he sought to combine this work with timeless universal forms, creating a cubic aesthetic stripped of unnecessary detail and favouring an emphasis on mass. He saw Archaeology as influencing the user's conscious mind and Abstraction as striving to reach the unconscious. His combination of machine and hand labour came from the same impulse. Within single designs, such as Oban Cathedral (1934, Figs. c.3 - c.4), he provided evidence of hand craftsmanship (the doors were roughly adzed at Scott's instructions, the ashlar blocks of the exterior walls finished by hand), but he also sought the abstract perfection of machined production, (flat concrete slabs and steel beams in the masonry helped the pursuit of a 'pure' cubic mass, and factory-produced glass filled the windows).[3] Doing away with the Victorians' main vehicle for narrative — figurative stained glass — he sought other, subtler ways of expressing meaning via emotion-inducing lighting effects or the provision of a stone font whose design recalled fonts found in parish churches across the British Isles.

The subtle joining of the abstract and the subjective was a key idea in interwar British art. Eric Gill wrote in 1933,

> If the thing [one is making] is to be a crucifix, the nature of the crucifix must be treated with extreme respect. If it is to be a stone crucifix, the nature of the stone must be treated with extreme respect. The two extremes must be combined: That is the golden rule.[4]

[3] Letter, Giles Scott to D & J MacDougall, Contractors, 18 July 1932, SP, ScGG/73/4.
[4] Eric Gill, *Beauty Looks After Herself,* London: Sheed & Ward, 1933, p. 79.

Scott always respected both extremes. He treated the nature of a church or library with respect — he was nothing if not concerned with pragmatism and function— but he also treated the nature of the space with respect, paying special attention to the formal and aesthetic elements of building.

Scott's overarching aesthetic concern was with the sculpting of space. Scott liked to refer to Liverpool Cathedral as 'Space Gothic,' a term originally coined by an American visitor, because it rightly implied that spatial effect was a primary concern.[5] Architects like Giles Scott carried G F Bodley's abstracting ethos into the twentieth century and passed it along to the Modern Movement. Reilly could thus ascribe the same artistic motives to Scott and Augustus John — he believed that they were both tapping into the spiritual and psychological elements of art via abstraction.[6] At the same time, Reilly could celebrate Scott's use of associational detail for social purposes.

The very fact that Scott had taken on the herculean theoretical task of uniting the abstract and narrative strands of architectural thought (on some level an impossible challenge), made him hugely inspiring to a worldwide legion of architects. They piled him with trophies and laurels. He was striving to answer the biggest questions in architecture, and in a way that was unyieldingly bold — by affirming everything. Scott's work was at once abstract and historical, Platonic yet local, Gothic yet Classical, traditional yet modern. Here was no watered-down middle line. Instead of

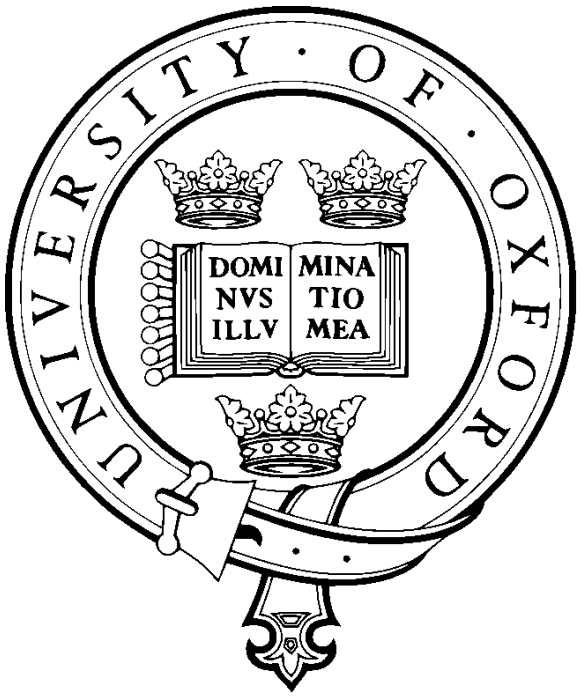
[5] Joe Riley, *Today's Cathedral,* London: SPCK, 1978, p. 34.
[6] C H Reilly, "The Work of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, RA," *AJ,* 7 Jan 1925, p. 13.

mixing red and green to find a muddy neutral, like the contemporary pointillism of Paul Klee he presented both colours at once, each shining its brightest from the contrast. It was an architecture of paradox, not an architecture of compromise.

Scott's whole body of architectural thought was developed to prove this synthesis possible. Here was architectural diplomacy at a global level, a Federalism of architectural theory, the search for the Universal by uniting everything. Scott's ideas about architecture were deeply founded on his Christian faith. On some level, Scott did not have a theory of architecture; he had a theology of architecture. He sought to move toward a veiled ideal. Charles Reilly had hoped that his dream of architectural pluralism drawn together into unity was coming true. But much of this unity proved to be merely rhetorical. Scott's postwar experience revealed that his work was not in fact going to imminently reveal the 'solution' to Western architecture or unveil architectural truths hidden since the beginning of time. His imperfection did not concern him much; he knew that he must do things as perfectly as he could. He believed that it was all part of the gradual development of God's purpose. Such an aim involved putting himself out of the way — more than anything else, he believed that the purpose of architecture was to serve people.

Modernising Tradition: The Architectural Thought of Giles Gilbert Scott, 1880-1960

Volume II



David Frazer Lewis
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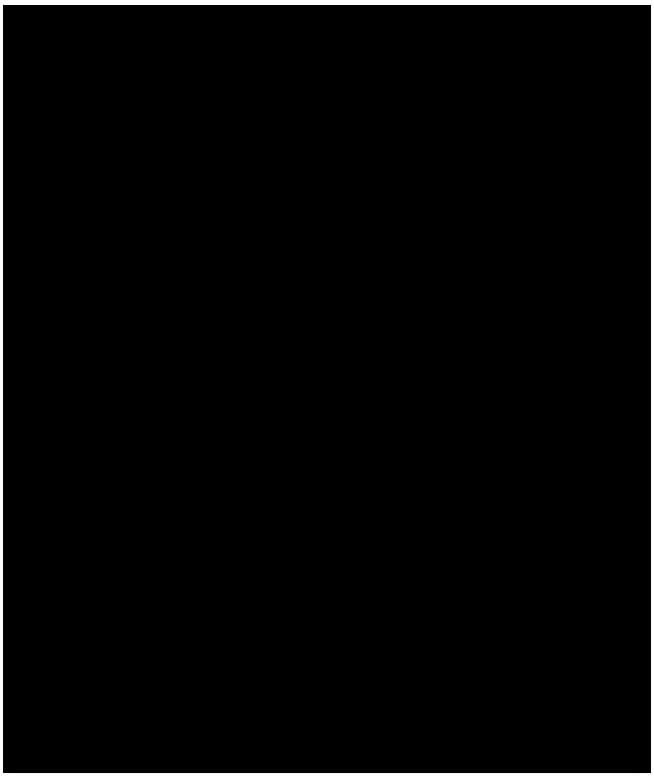

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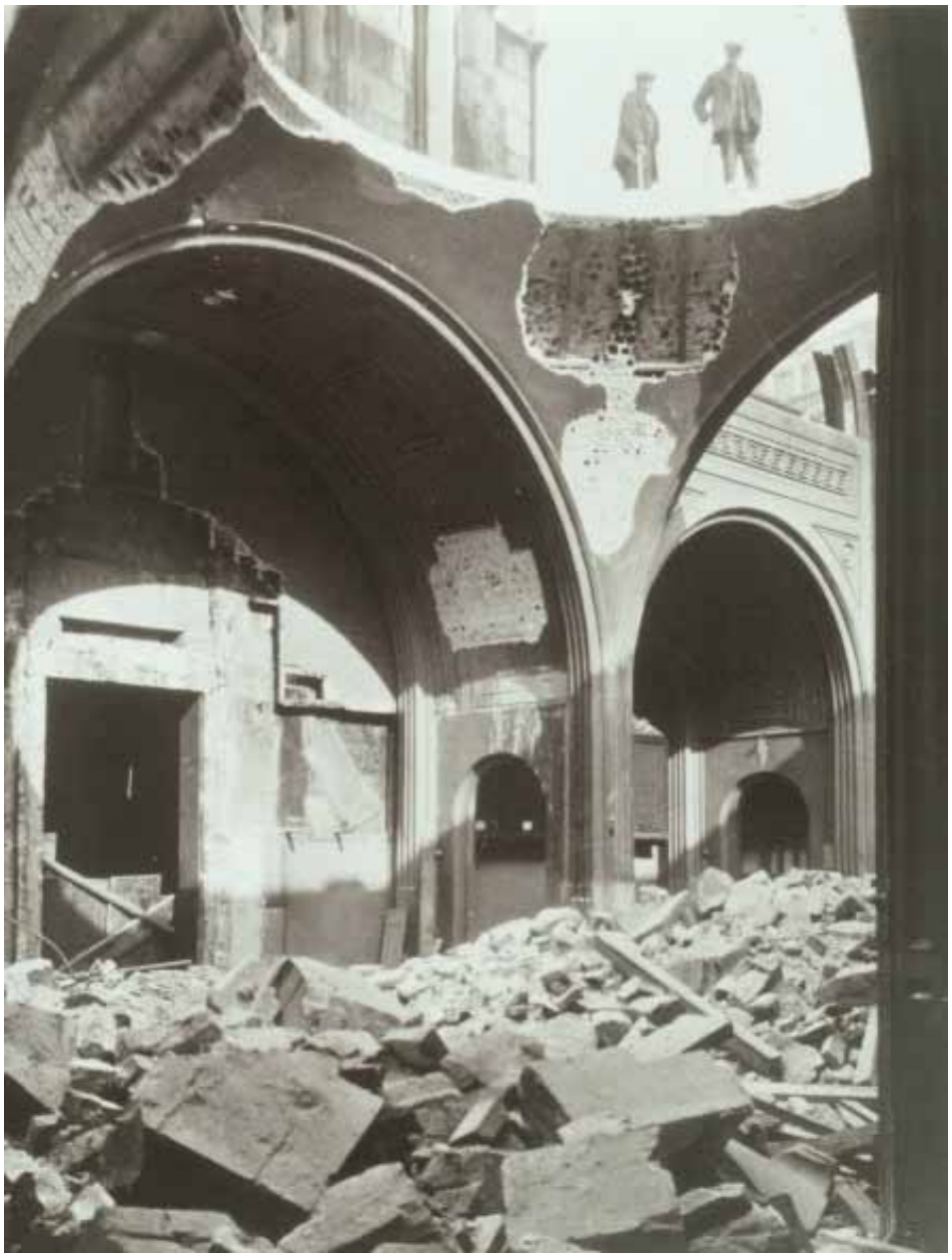

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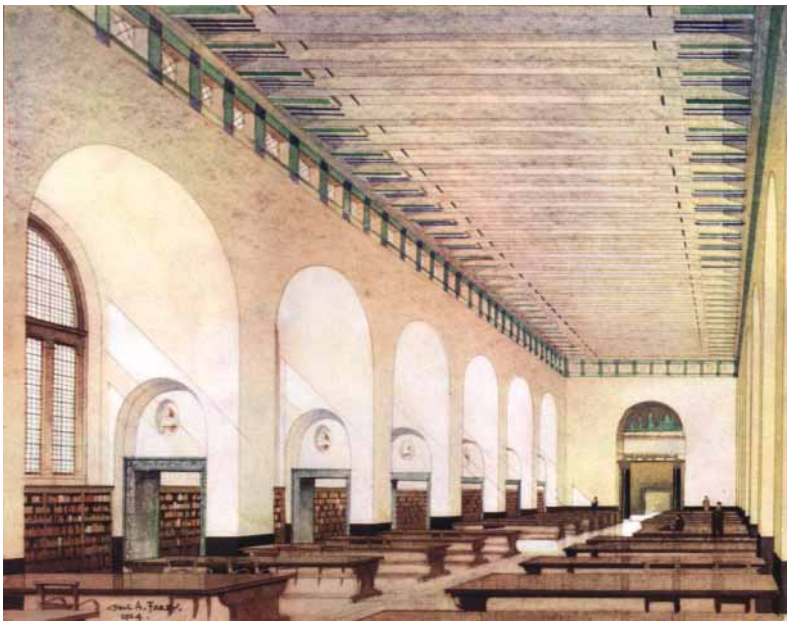

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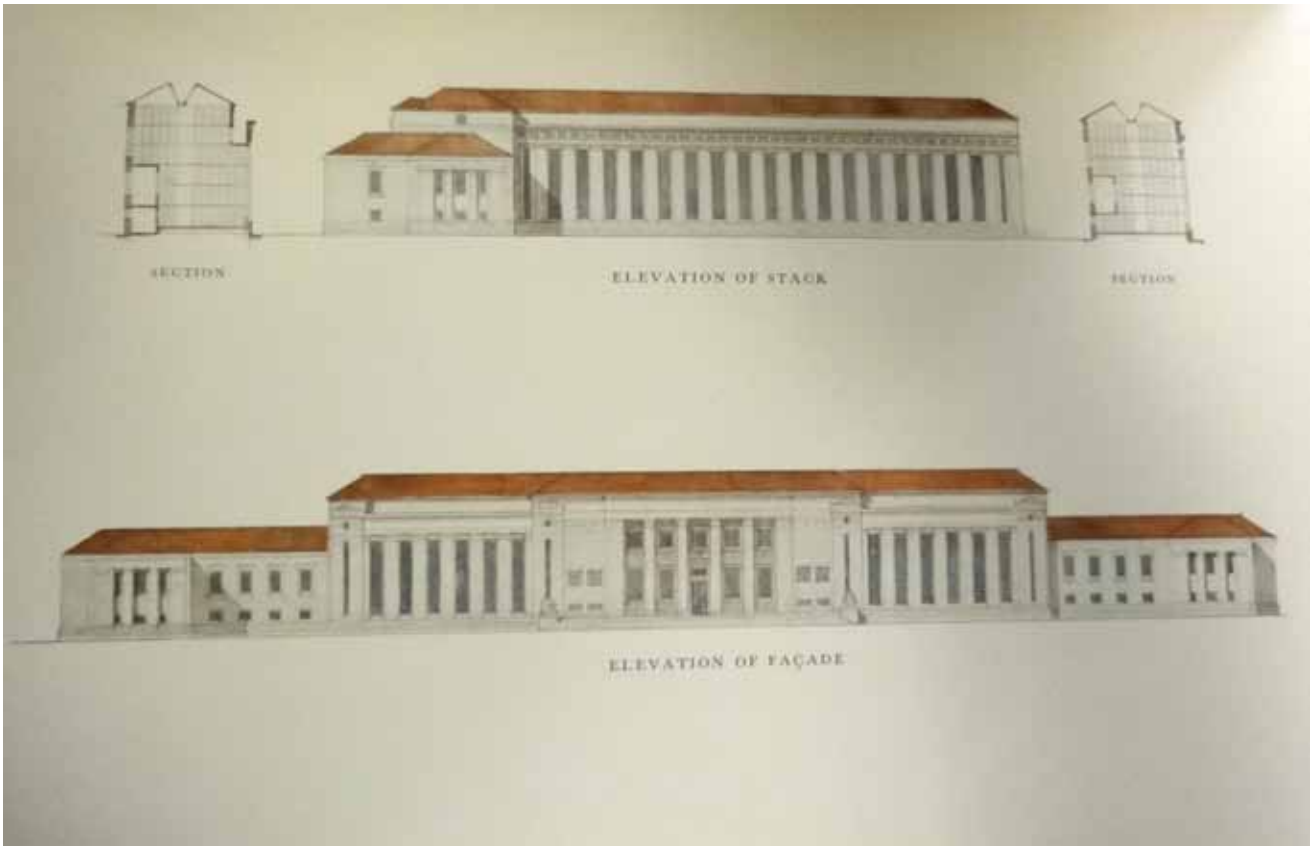

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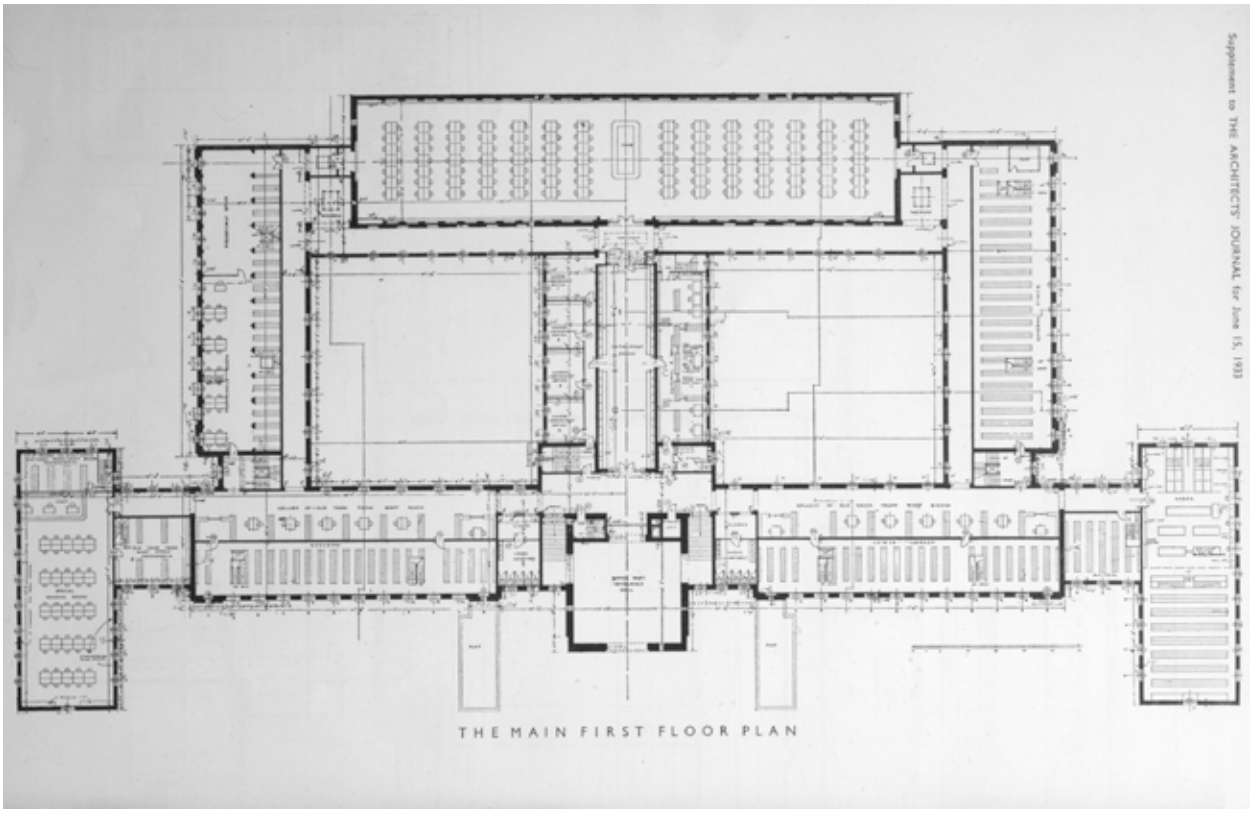

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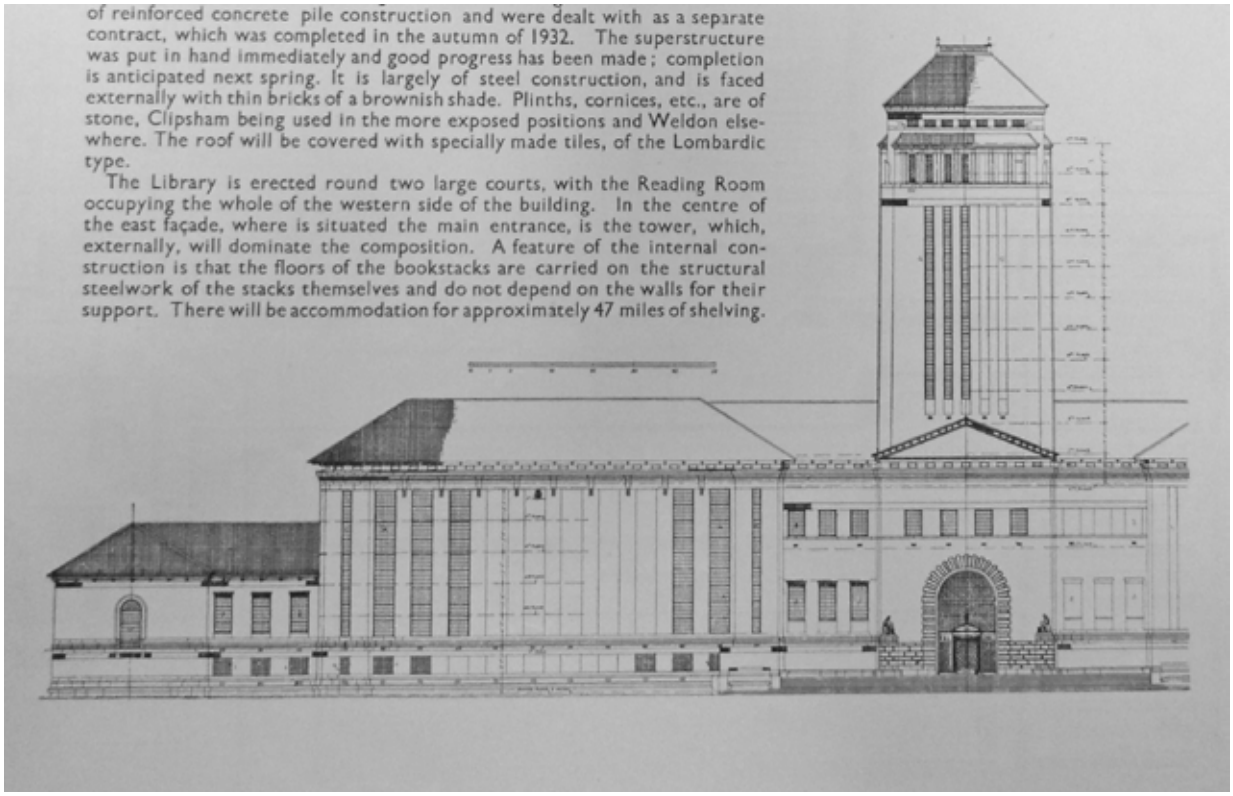

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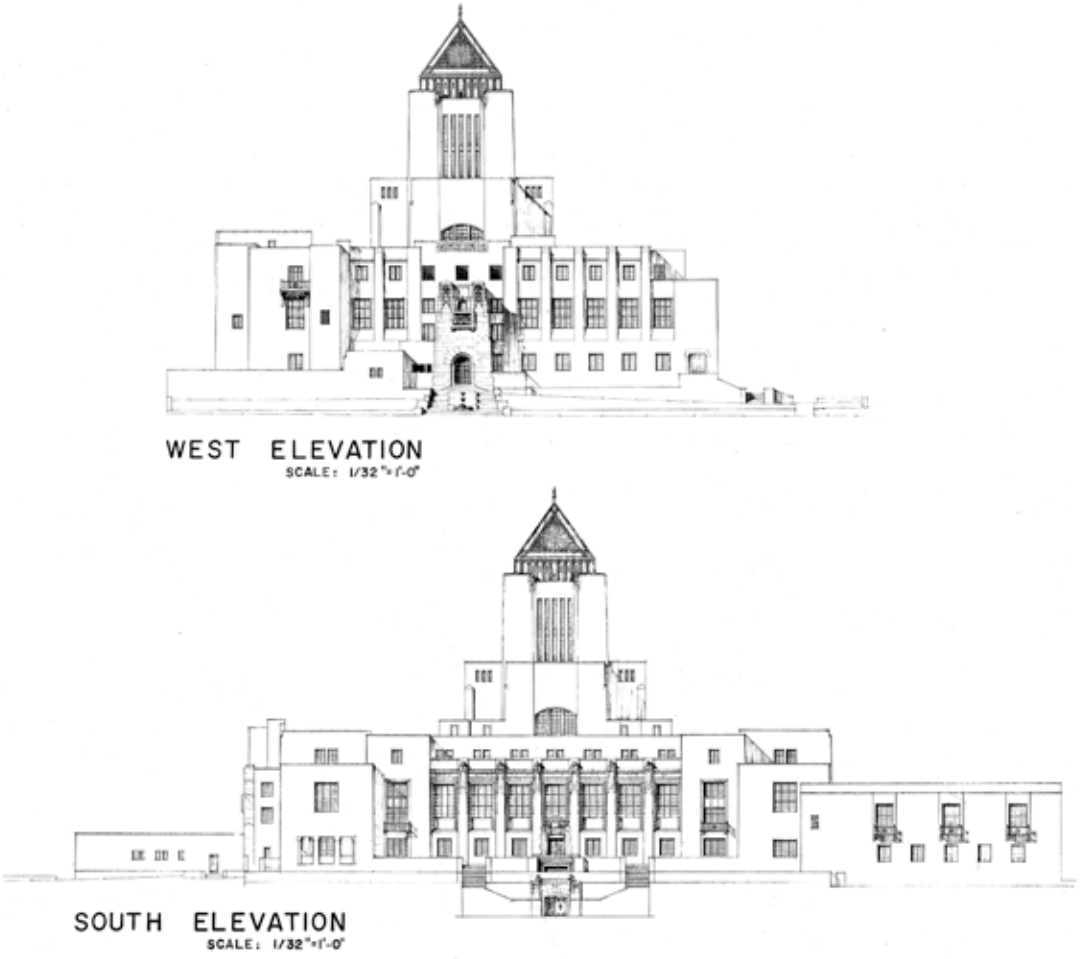

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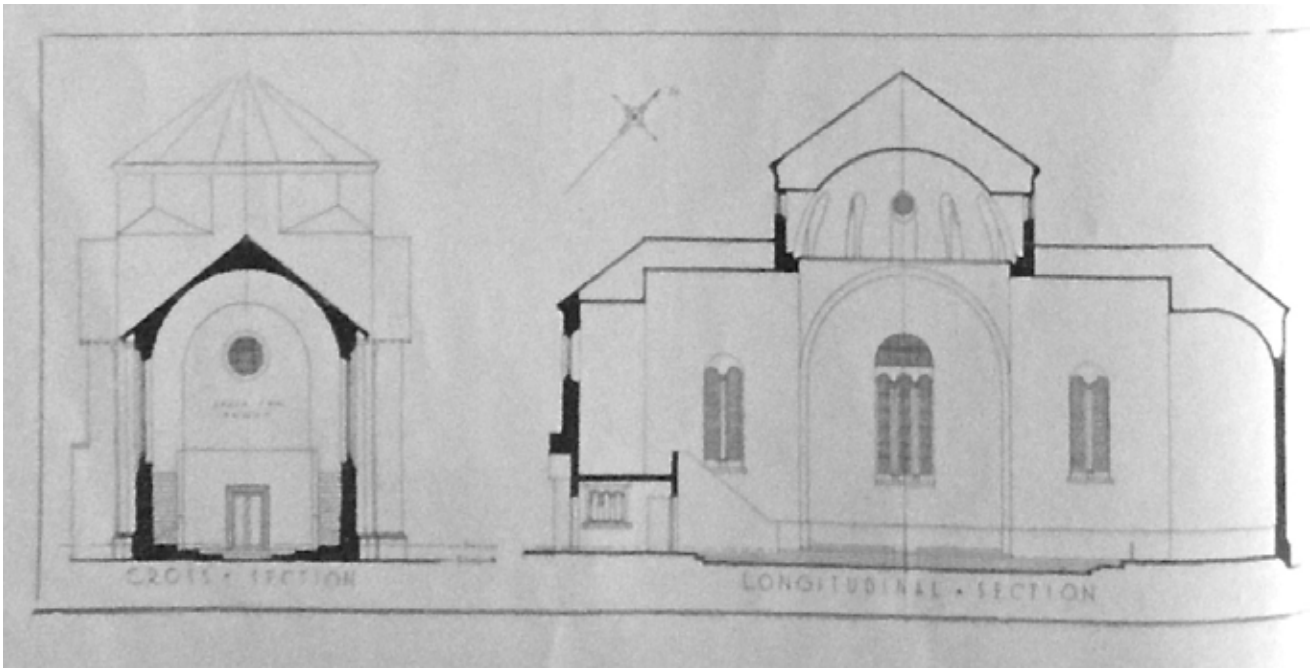

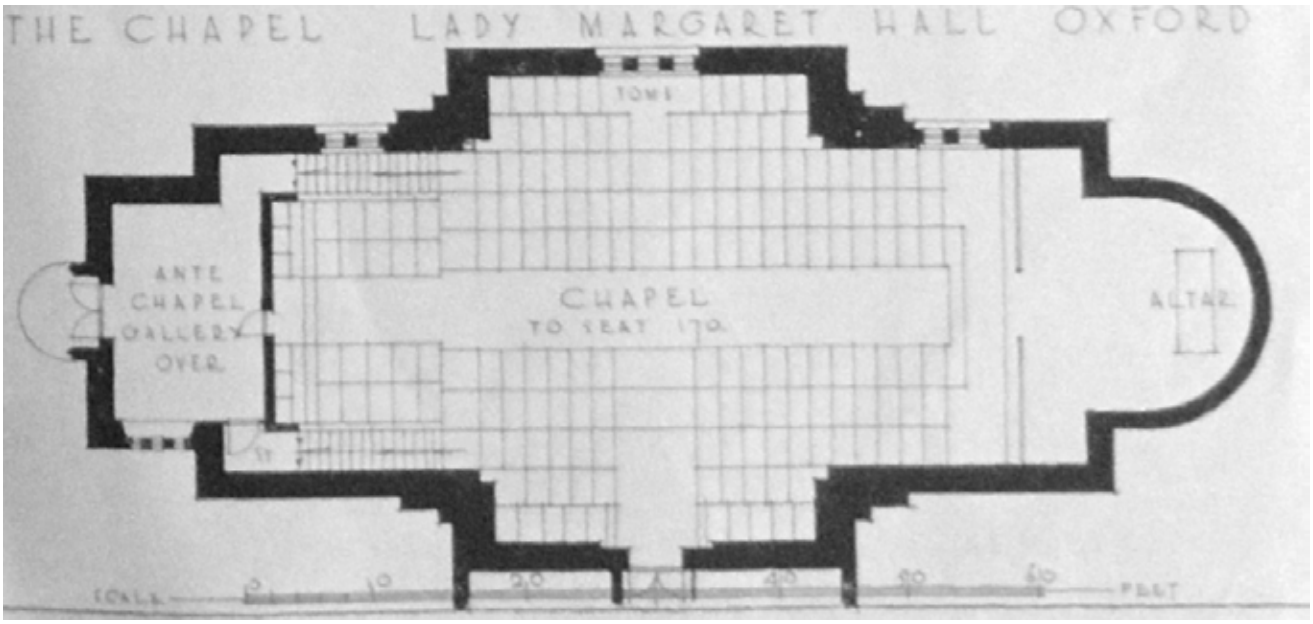

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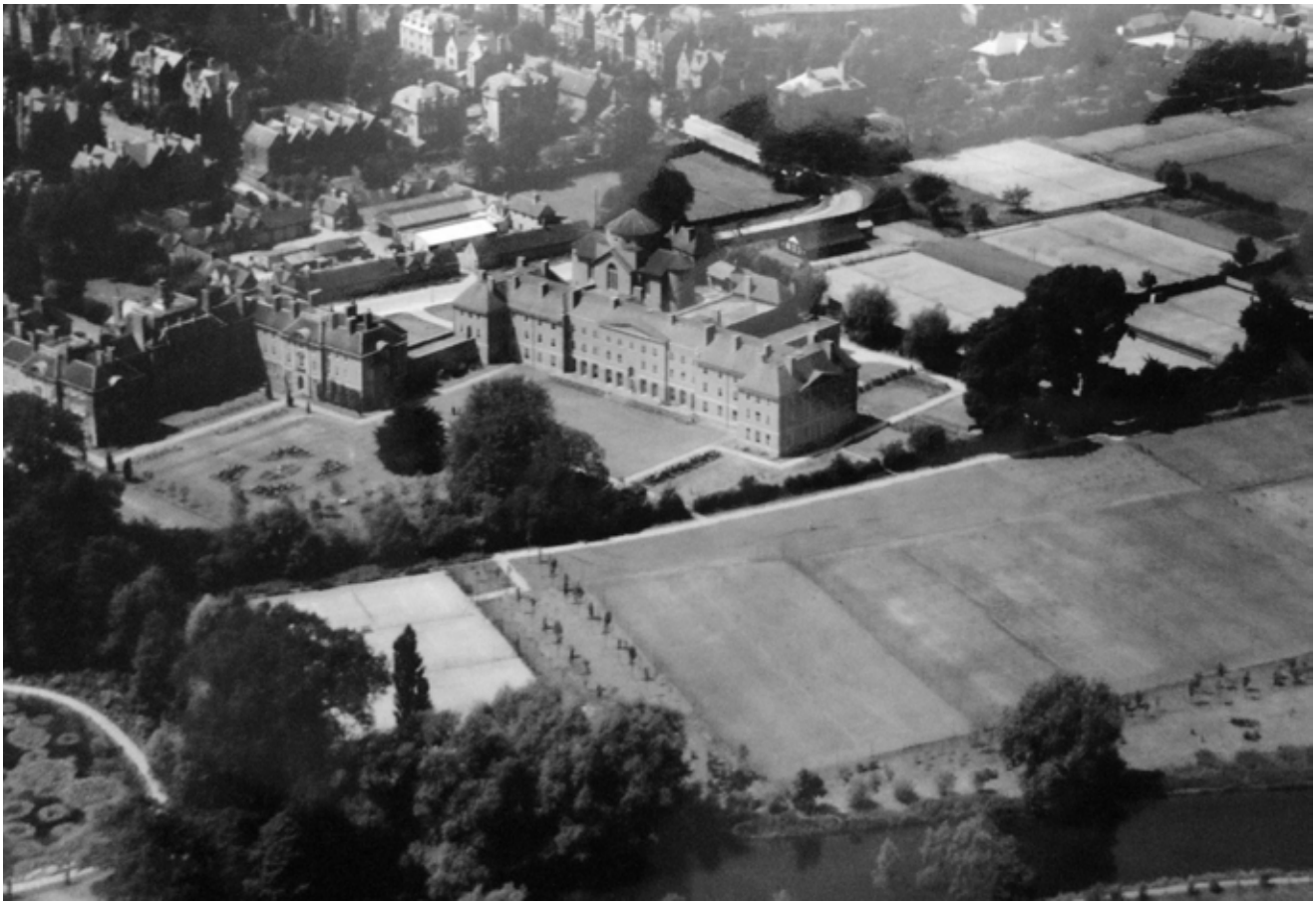

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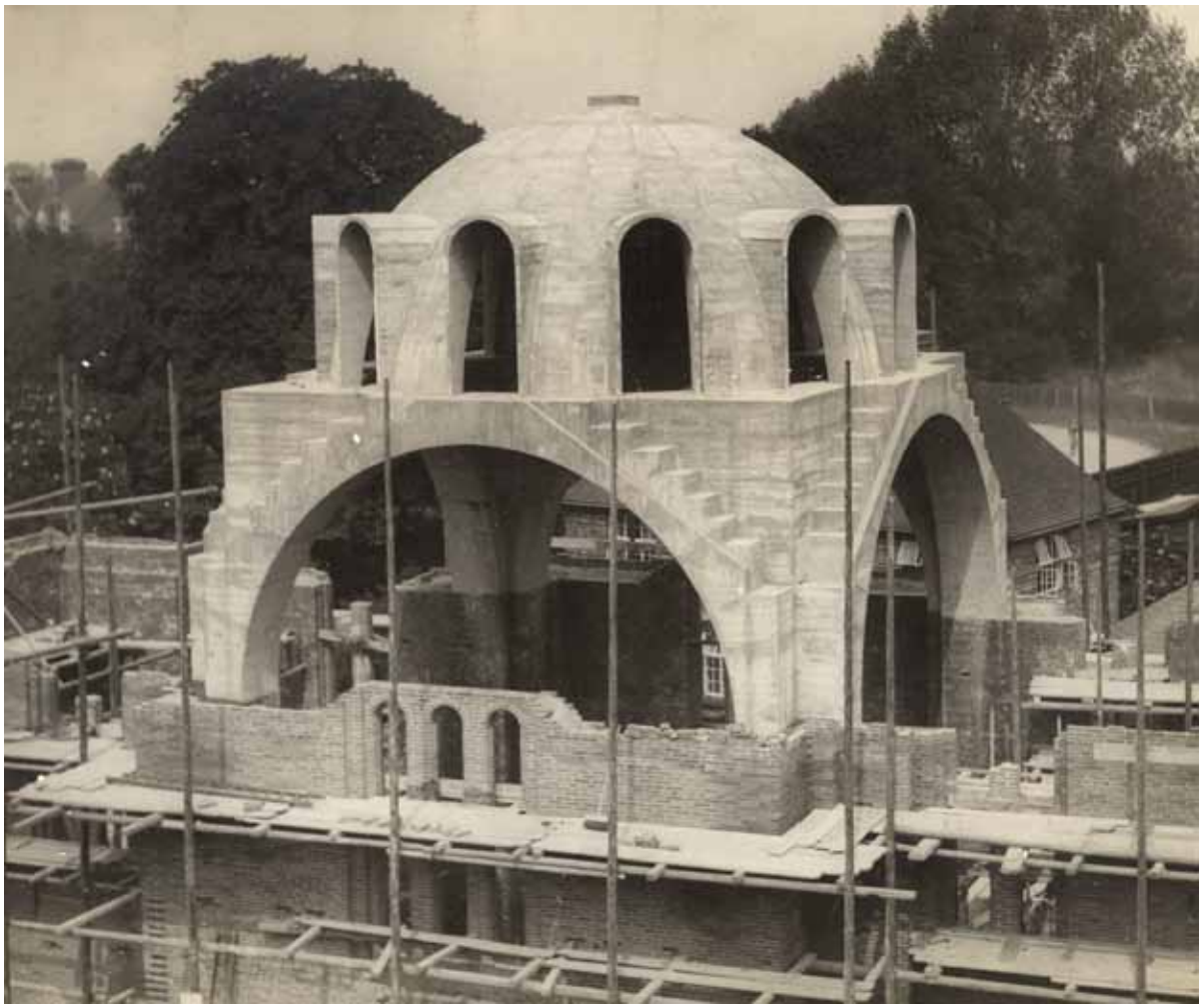

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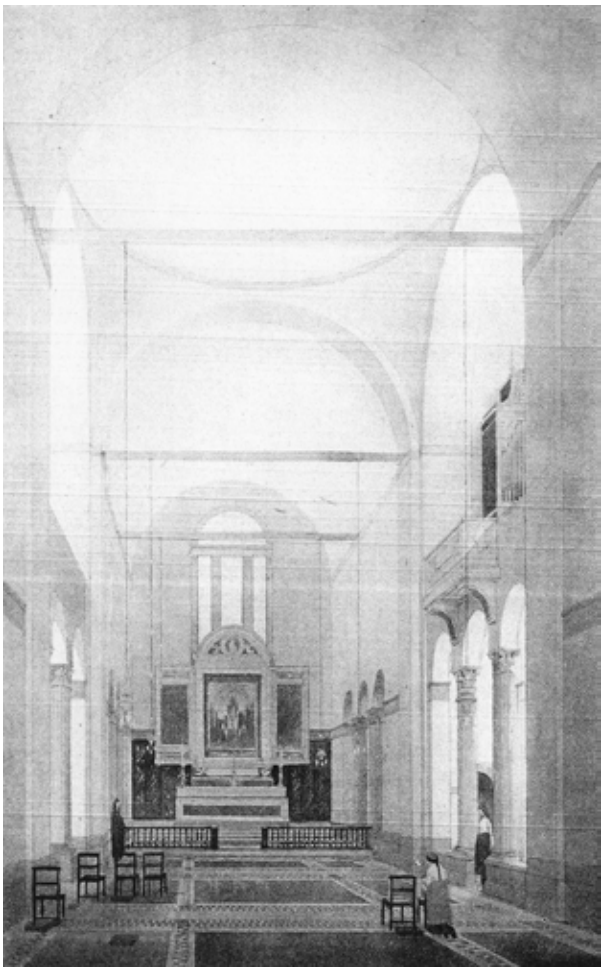

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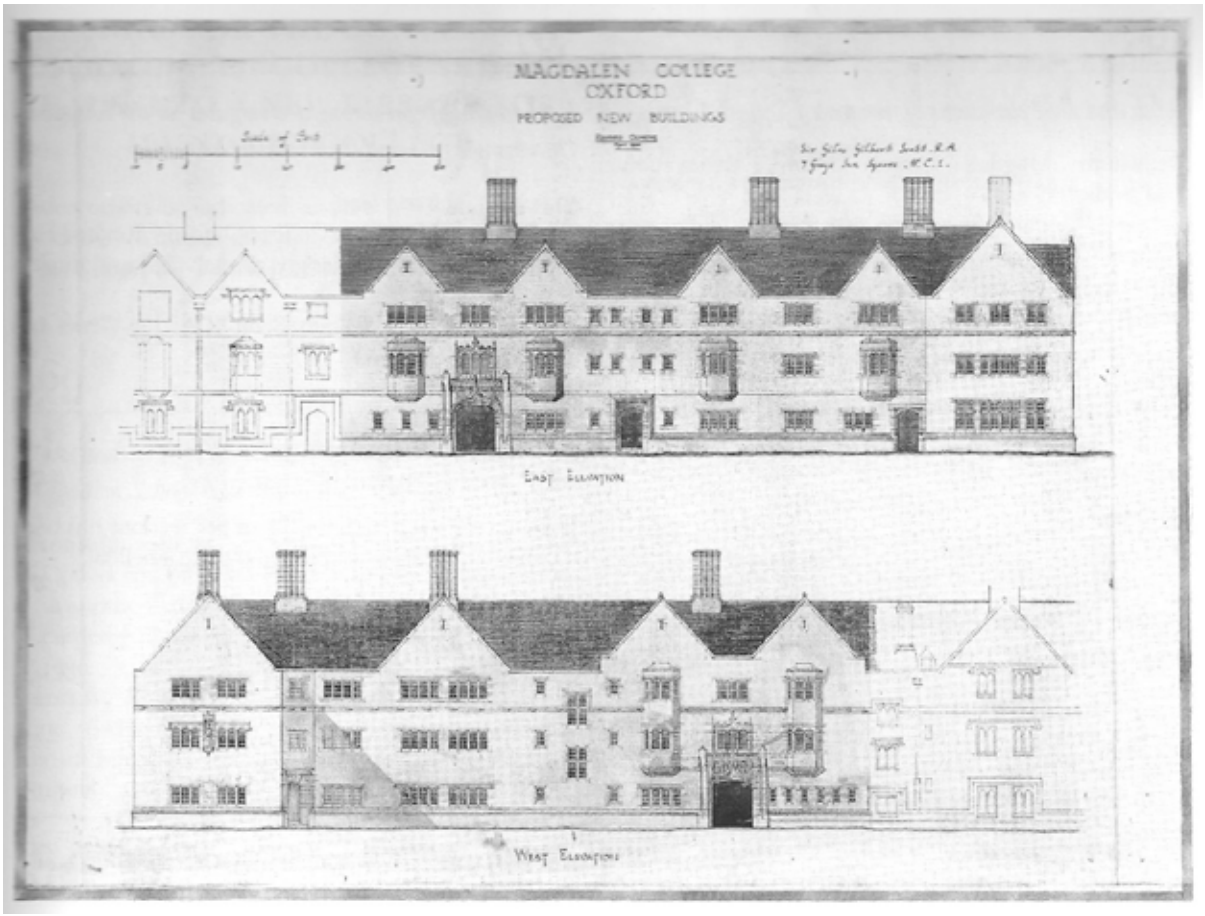

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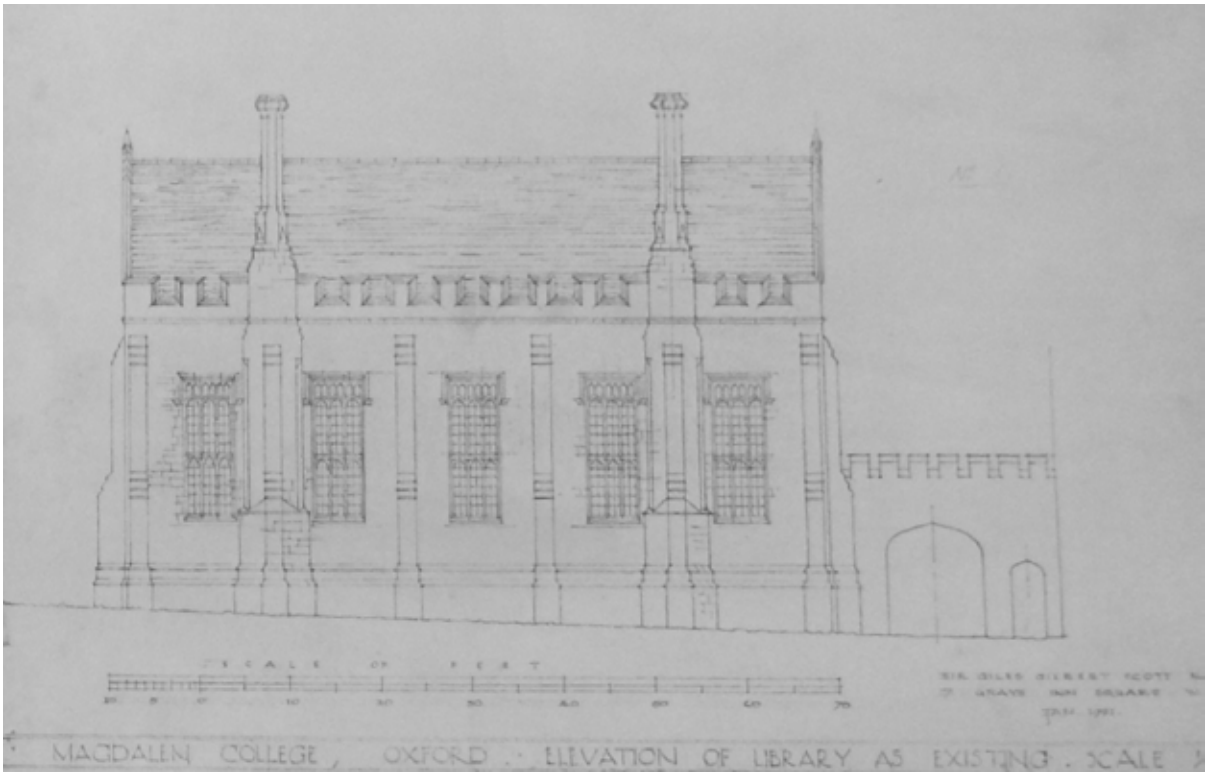

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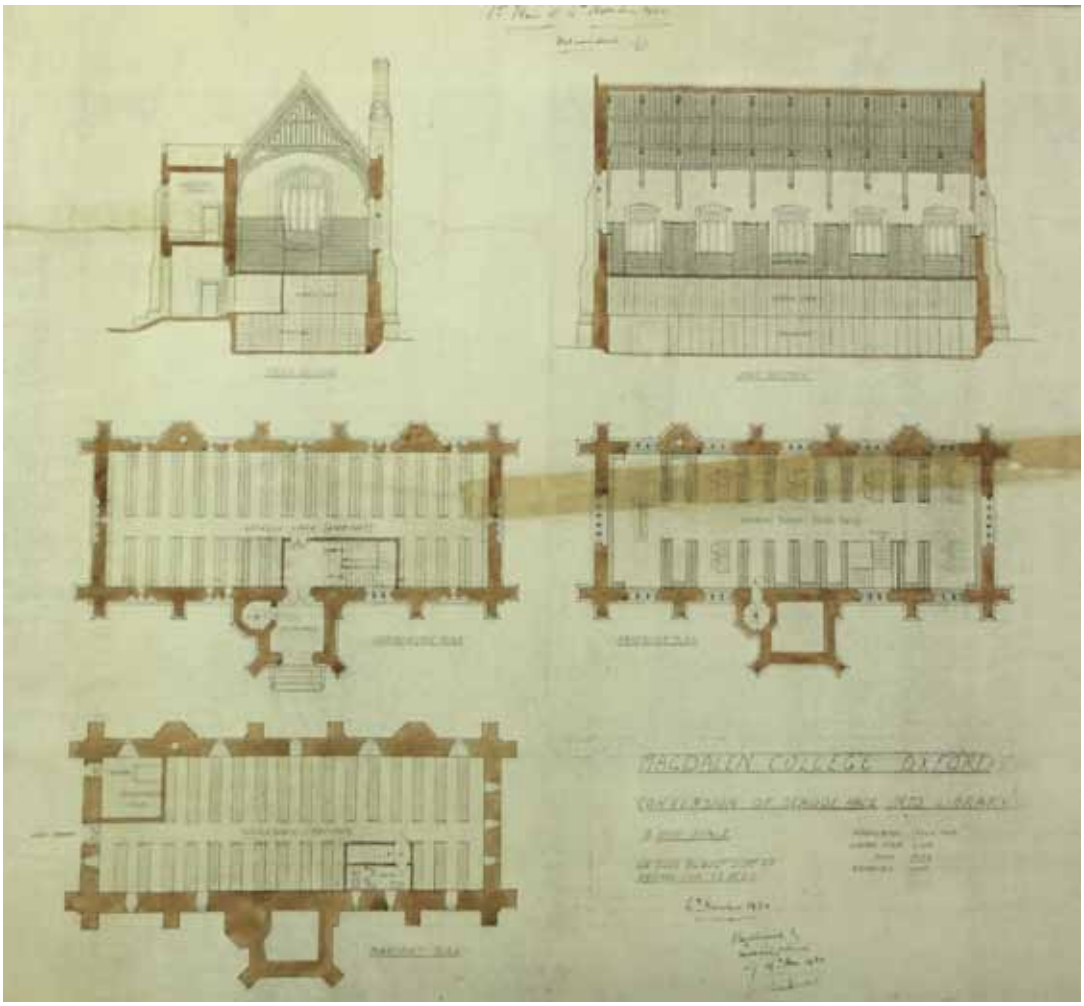

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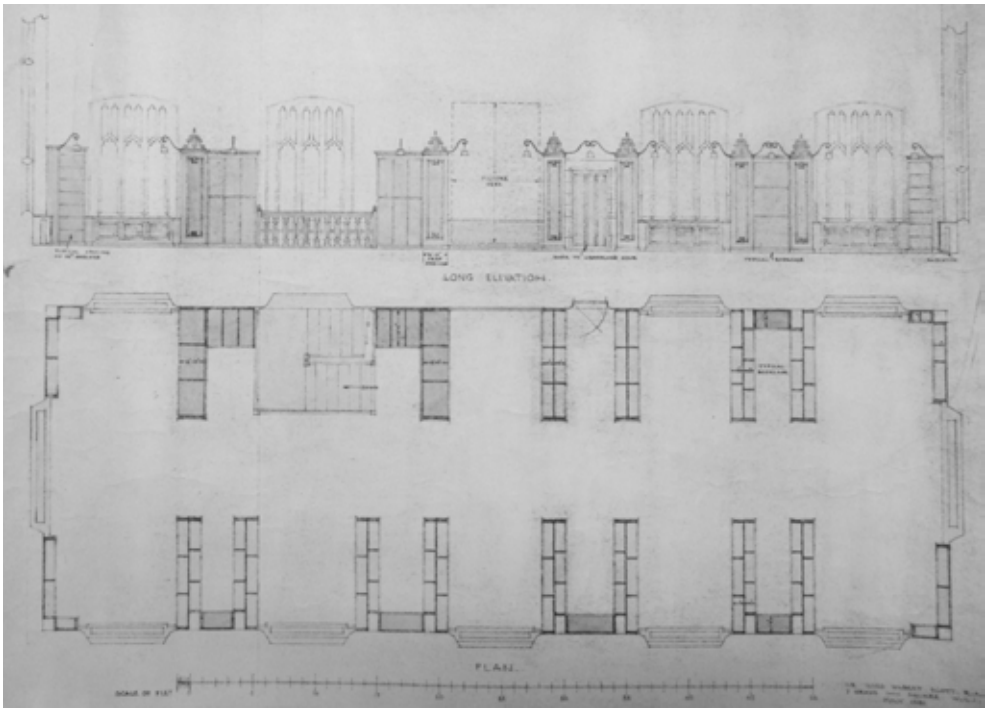

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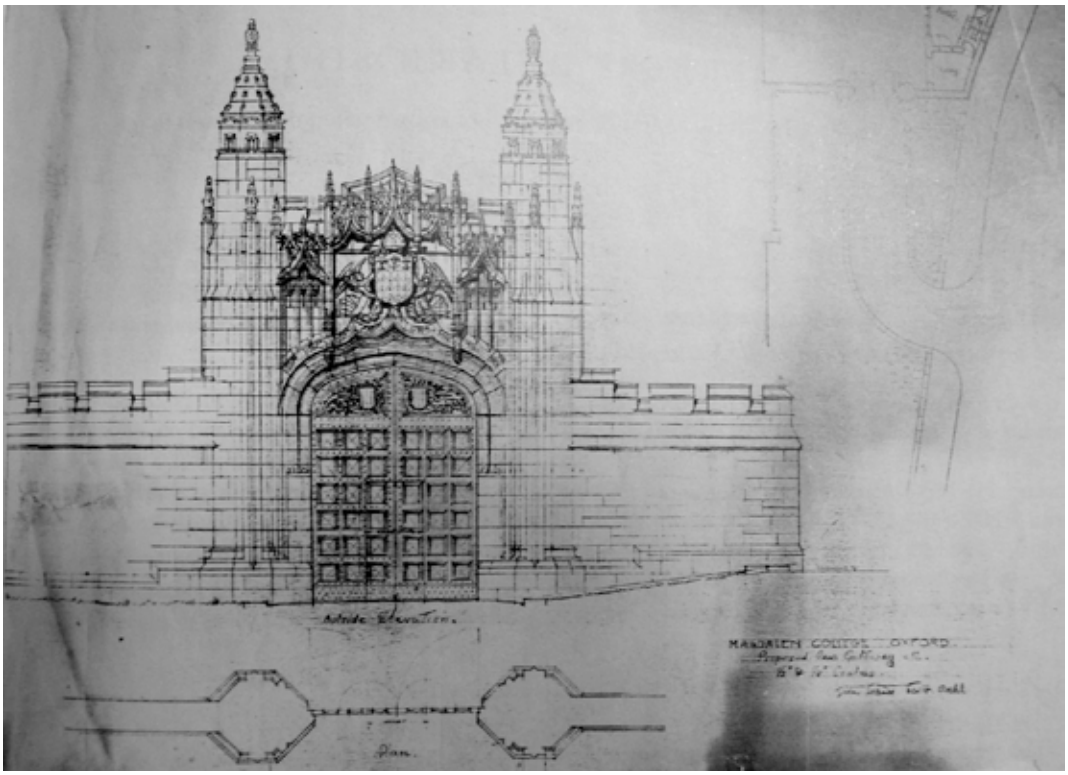

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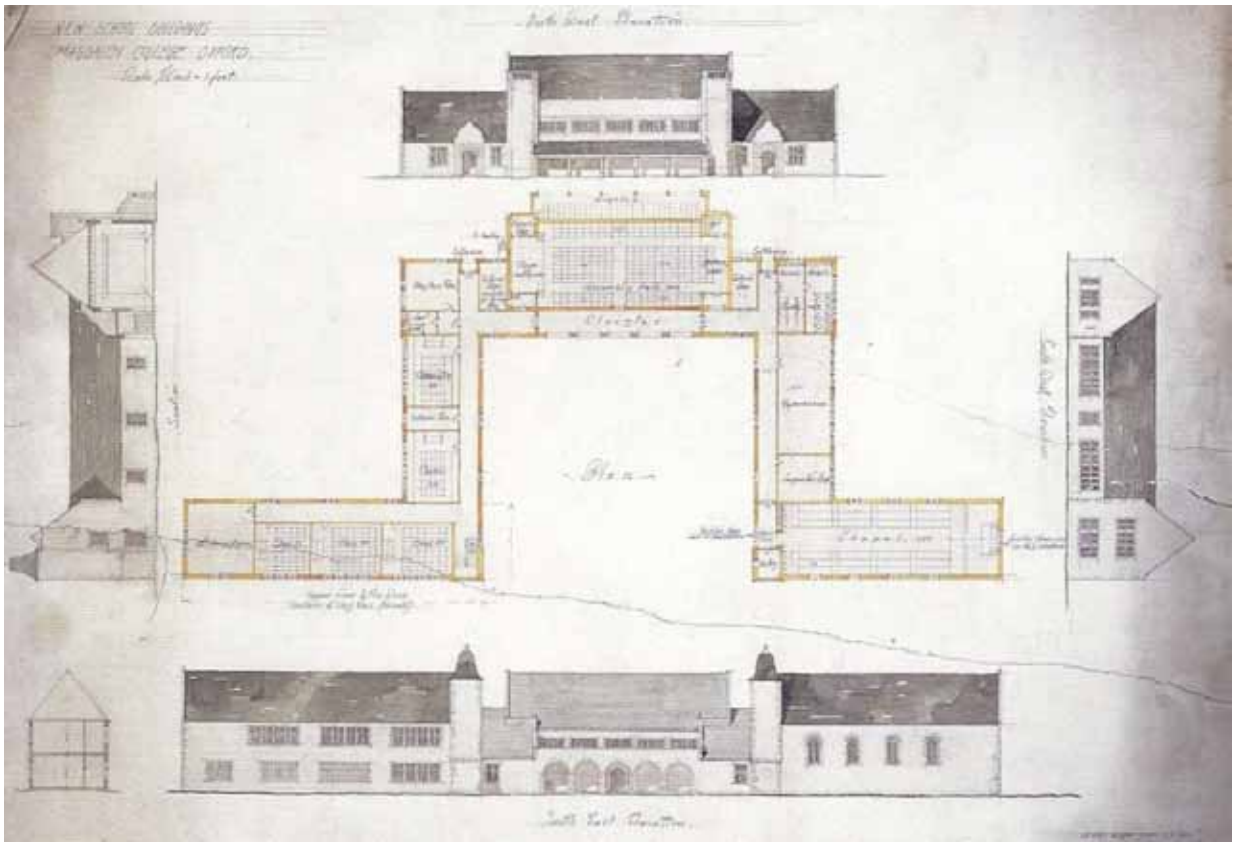

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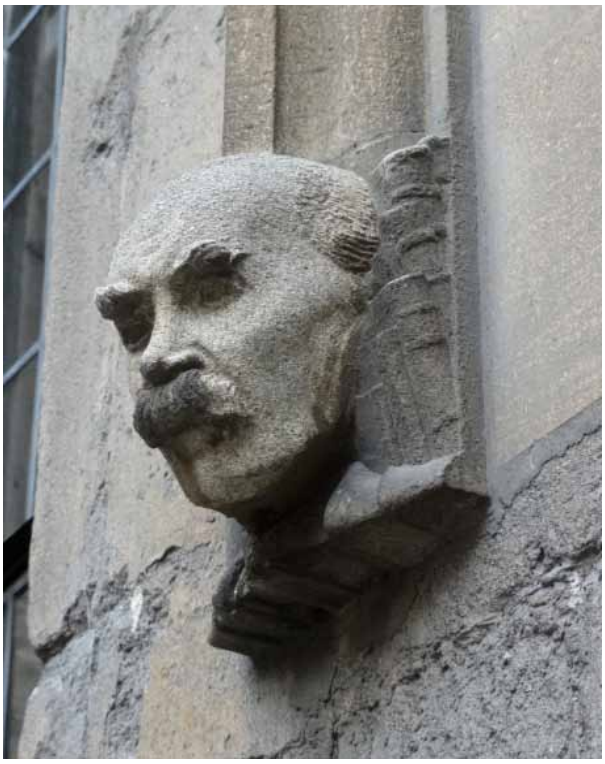

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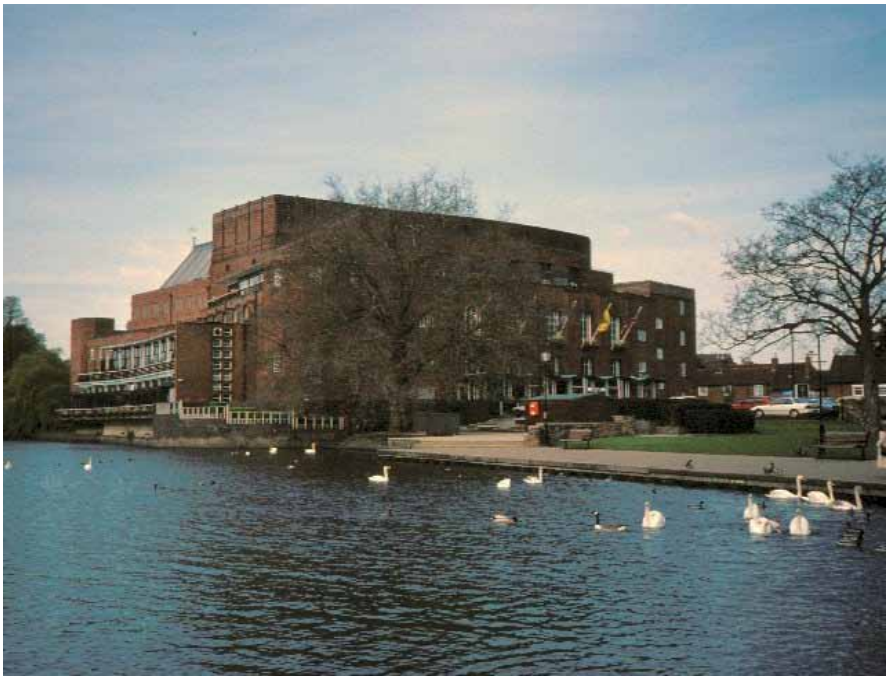

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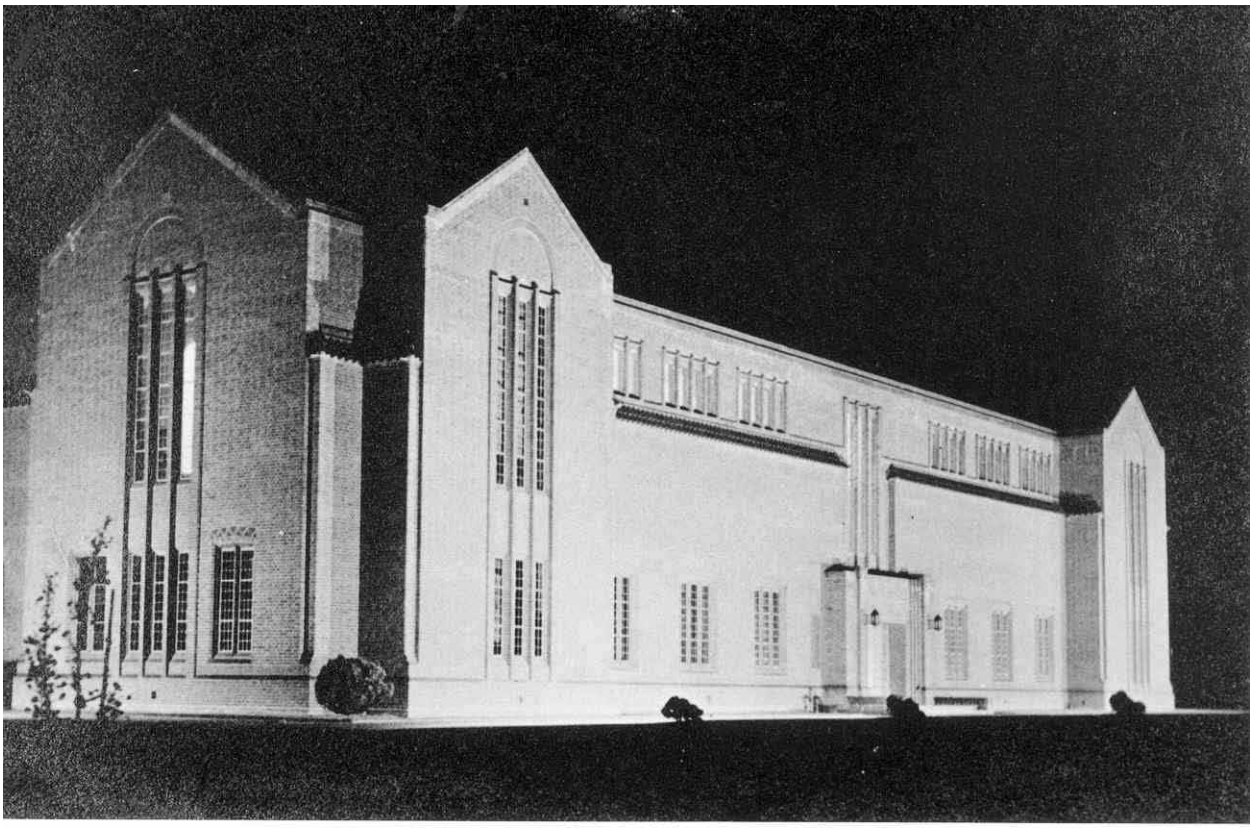

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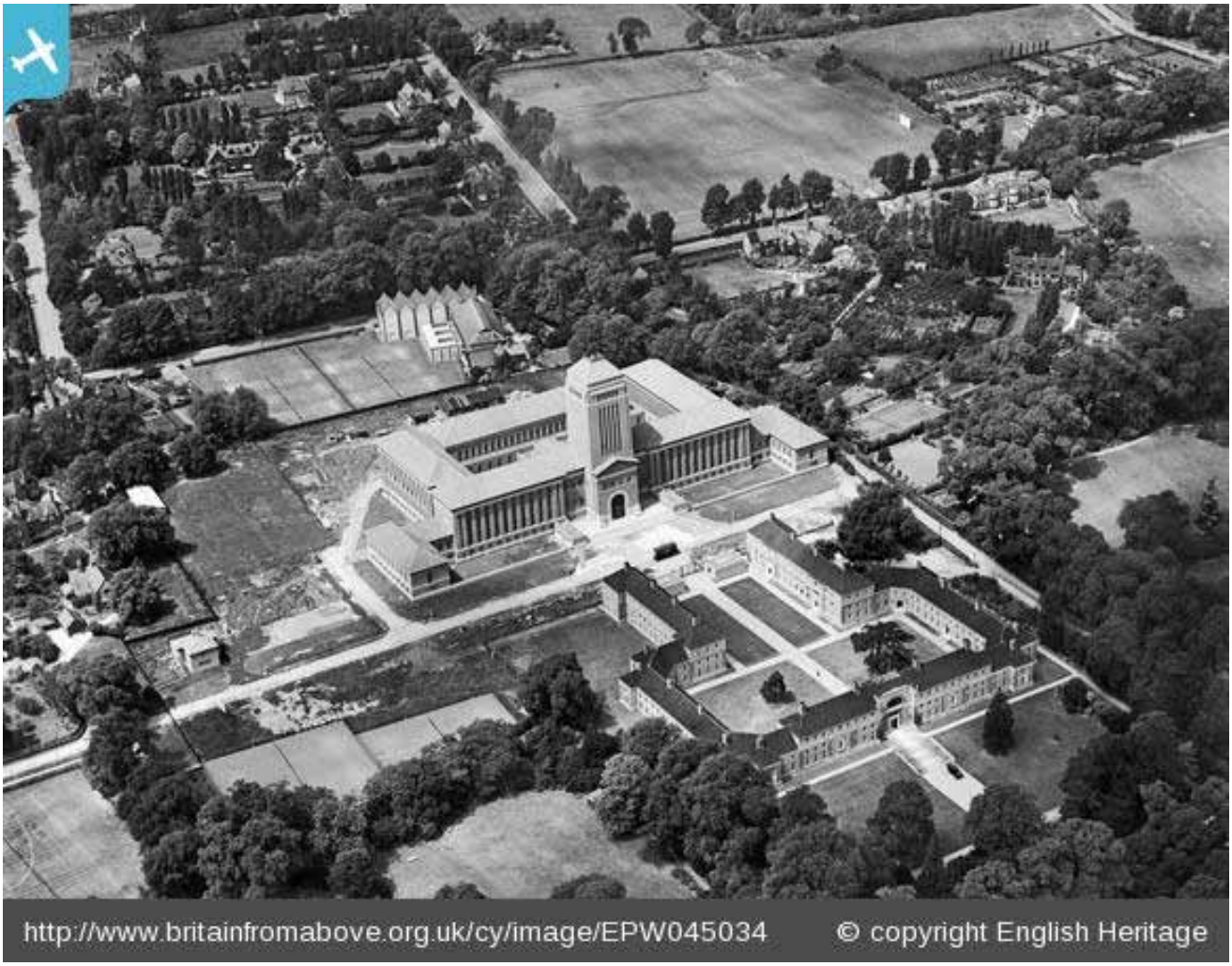

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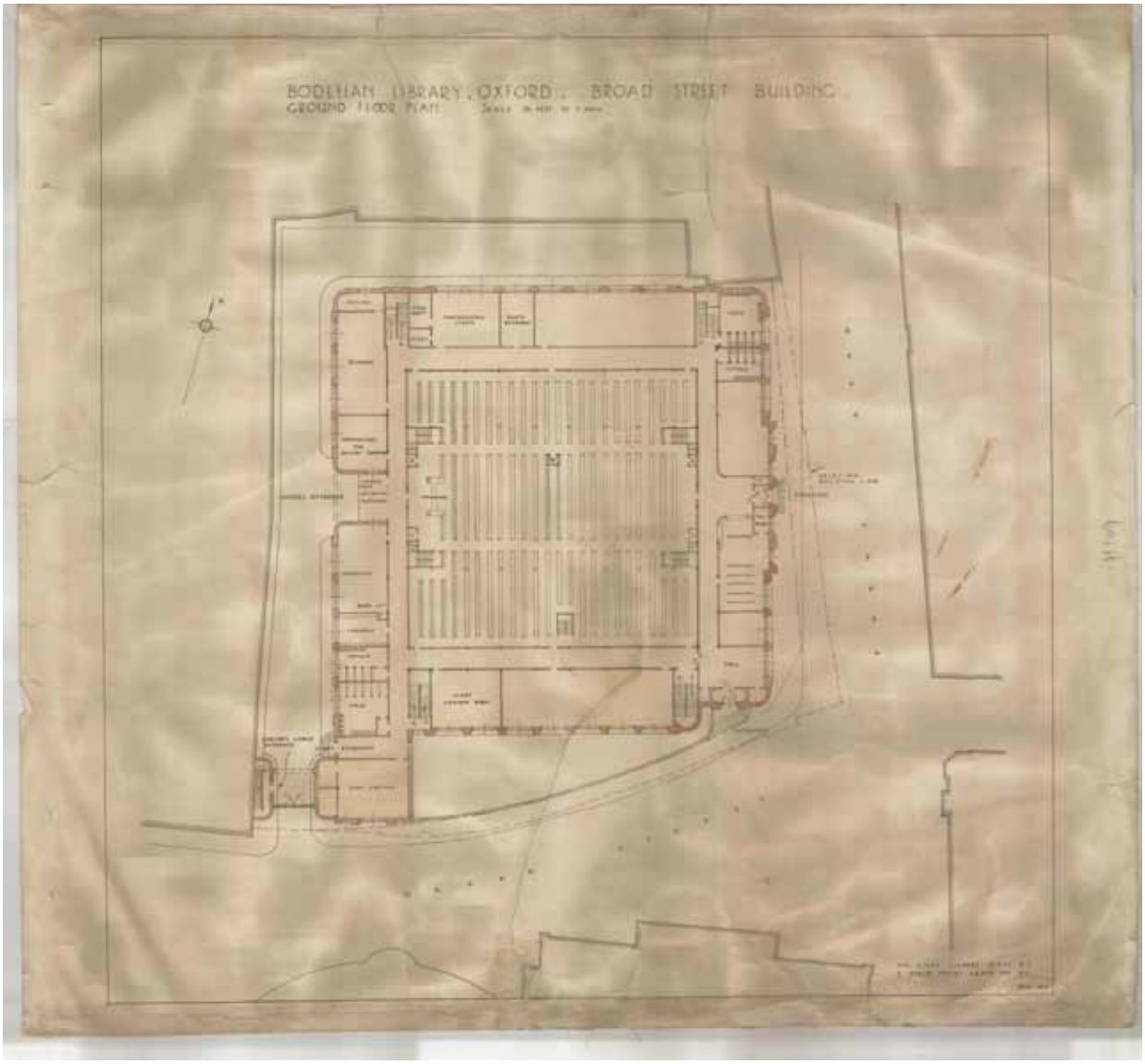

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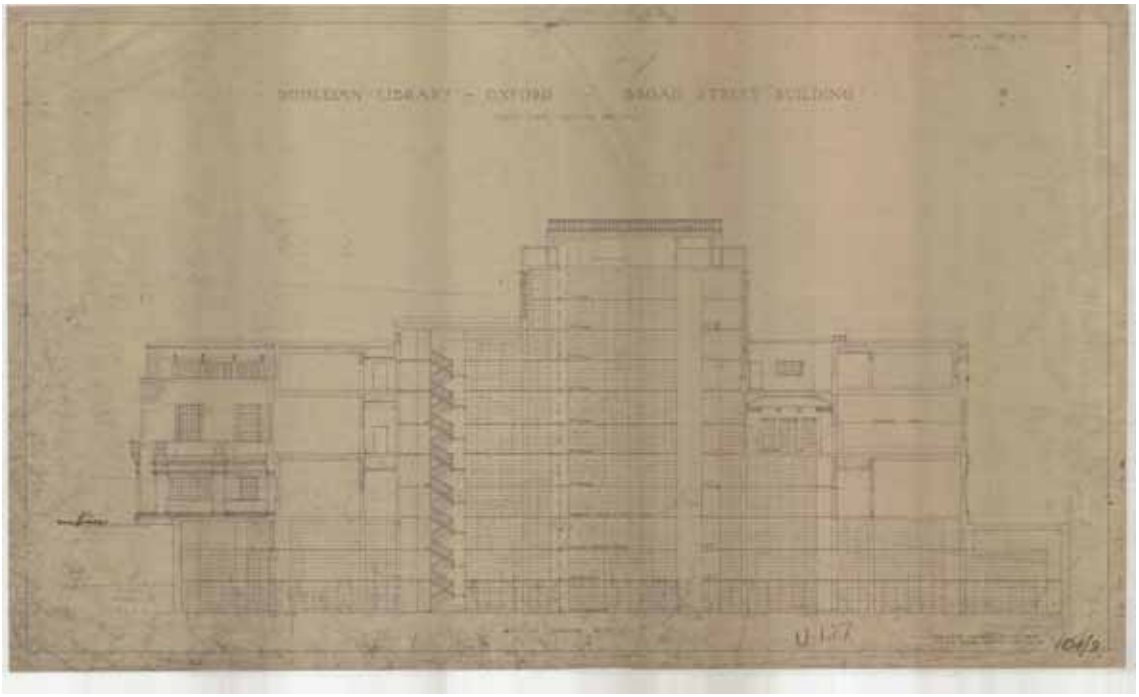

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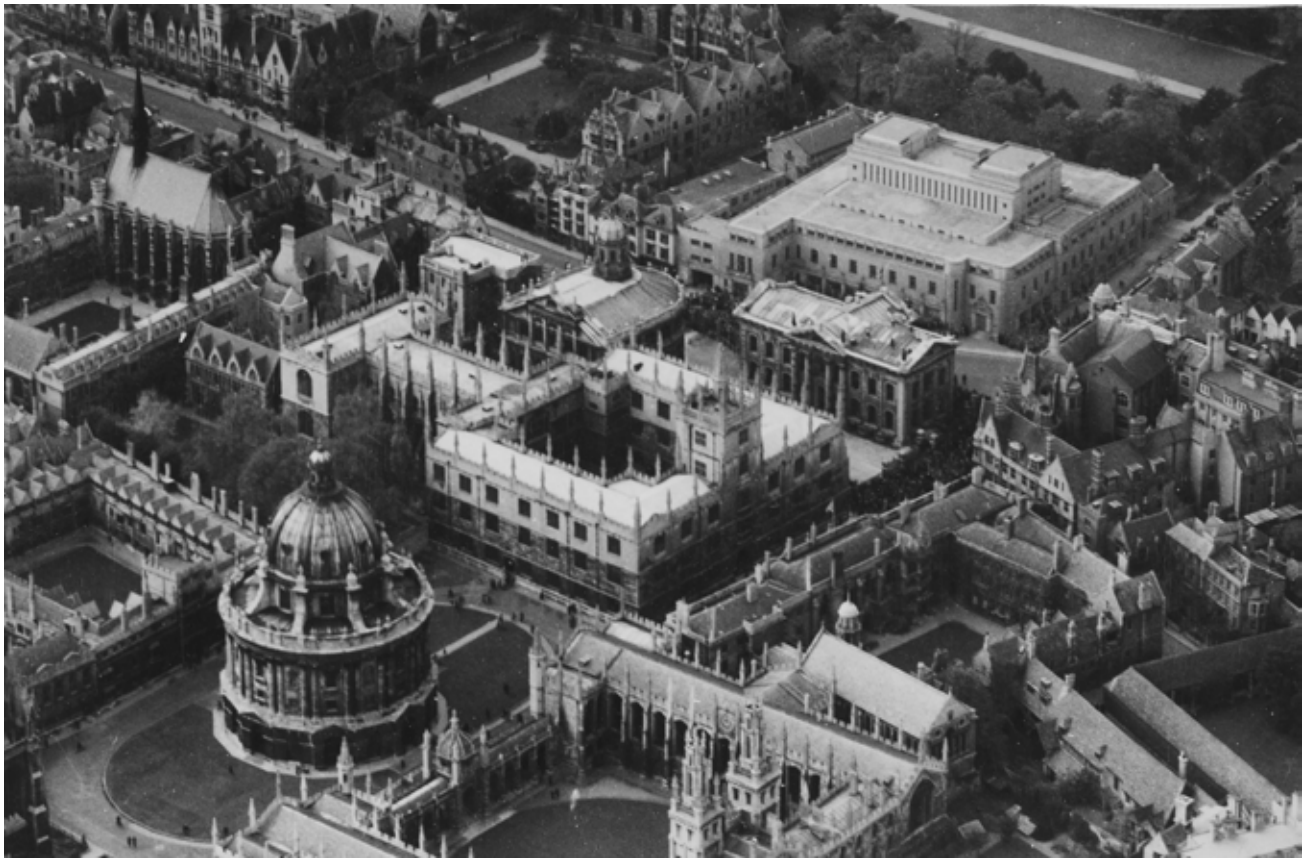

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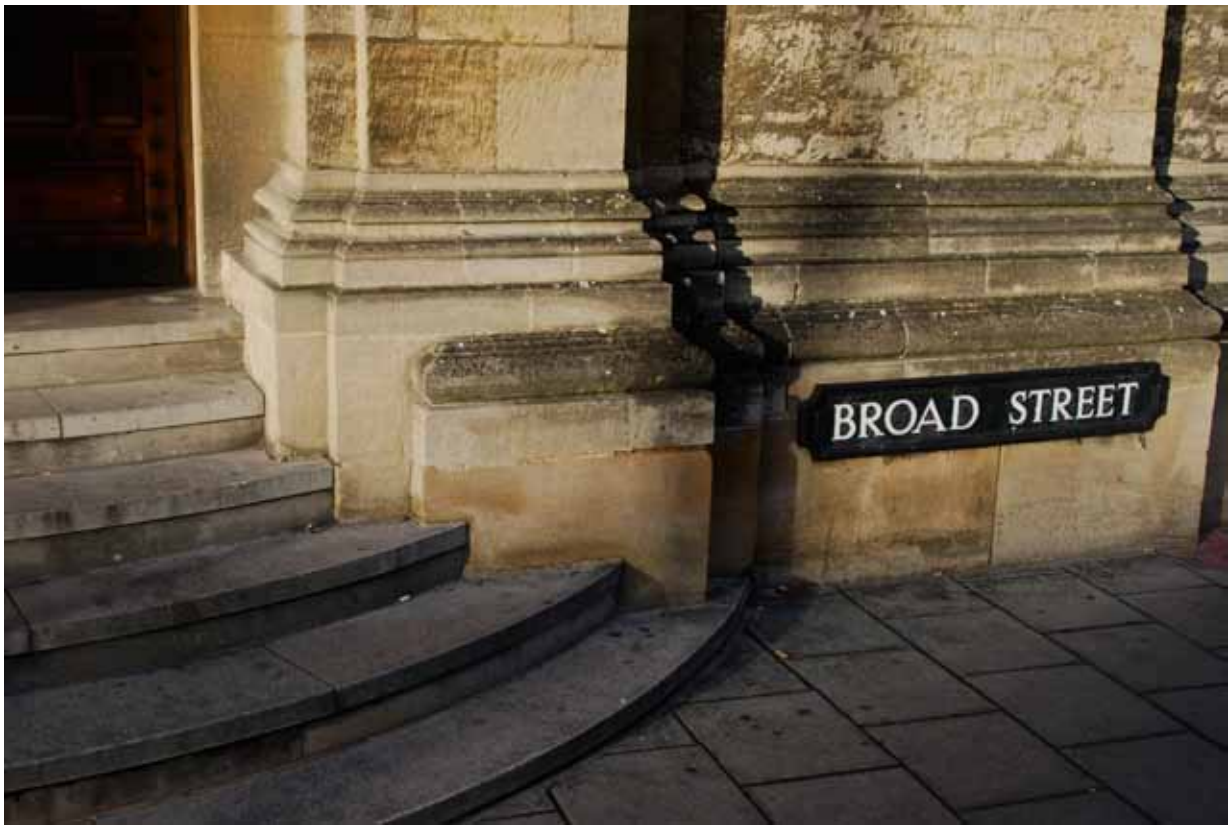

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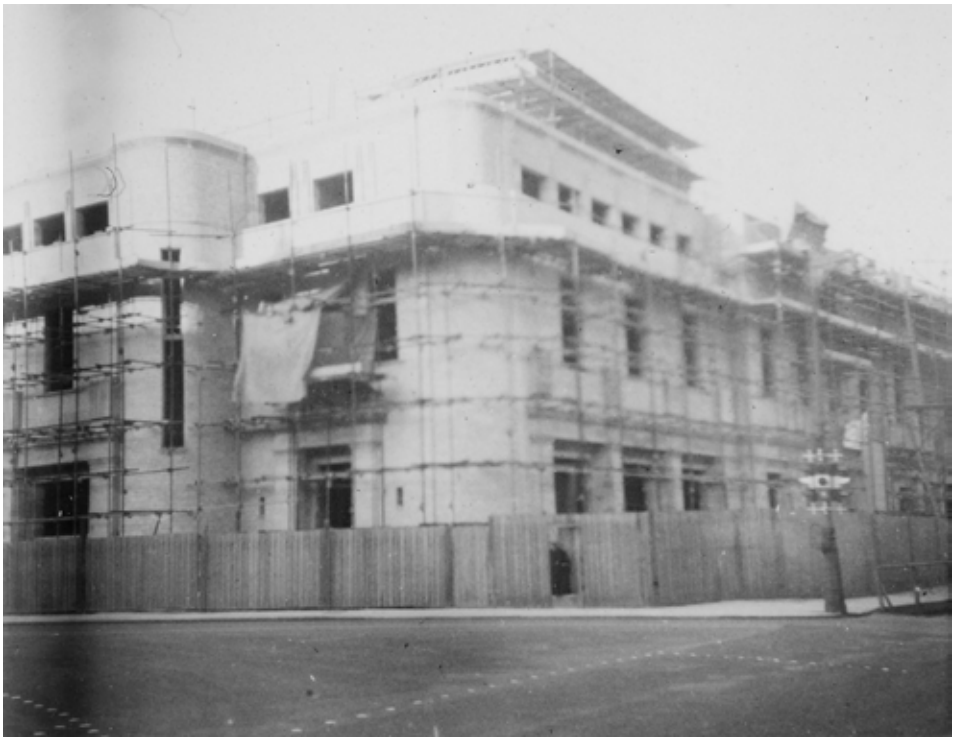

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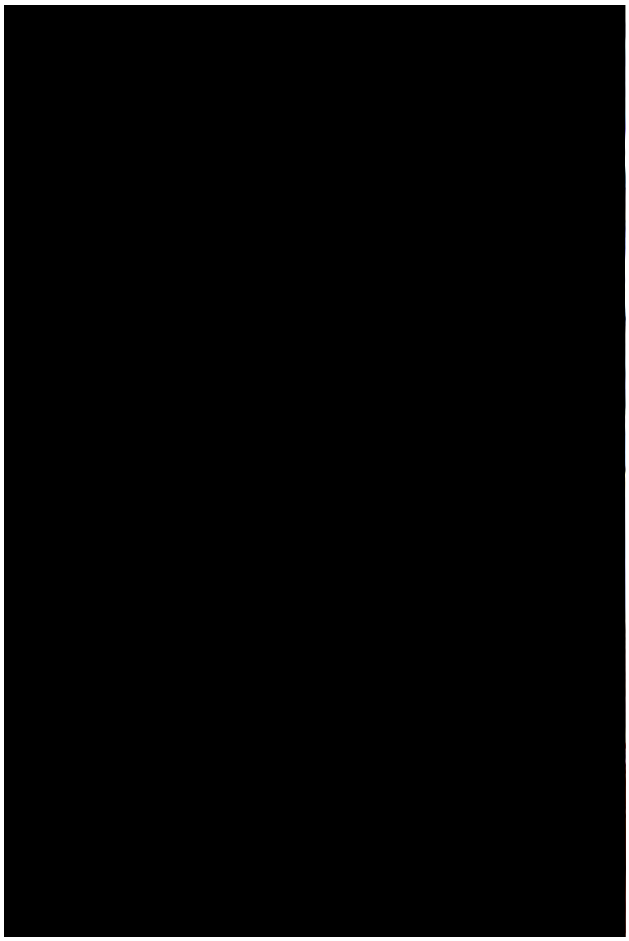

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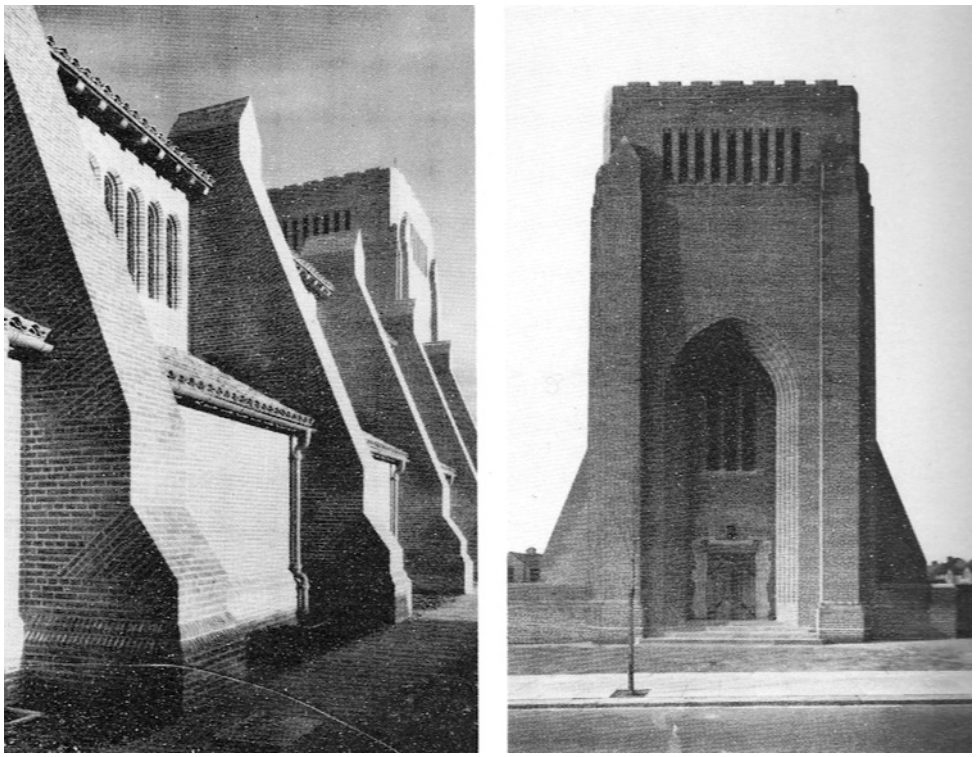

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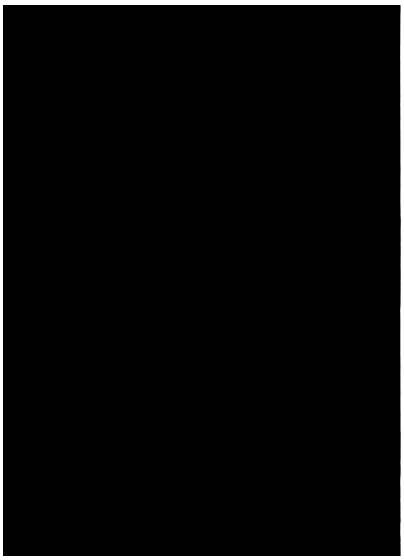

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Fig. 3.17 Downside Abbey (nave, 1925). Arundel and Brighton Latin Mass Society.

Fig. 3.18 St Mary's, Kenton Road, London (1936), by T Harold Gibbons. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.19 St Joseph's, Zabrze (now Poland, 1931), by Dominikus Böhm. Author, 2013.

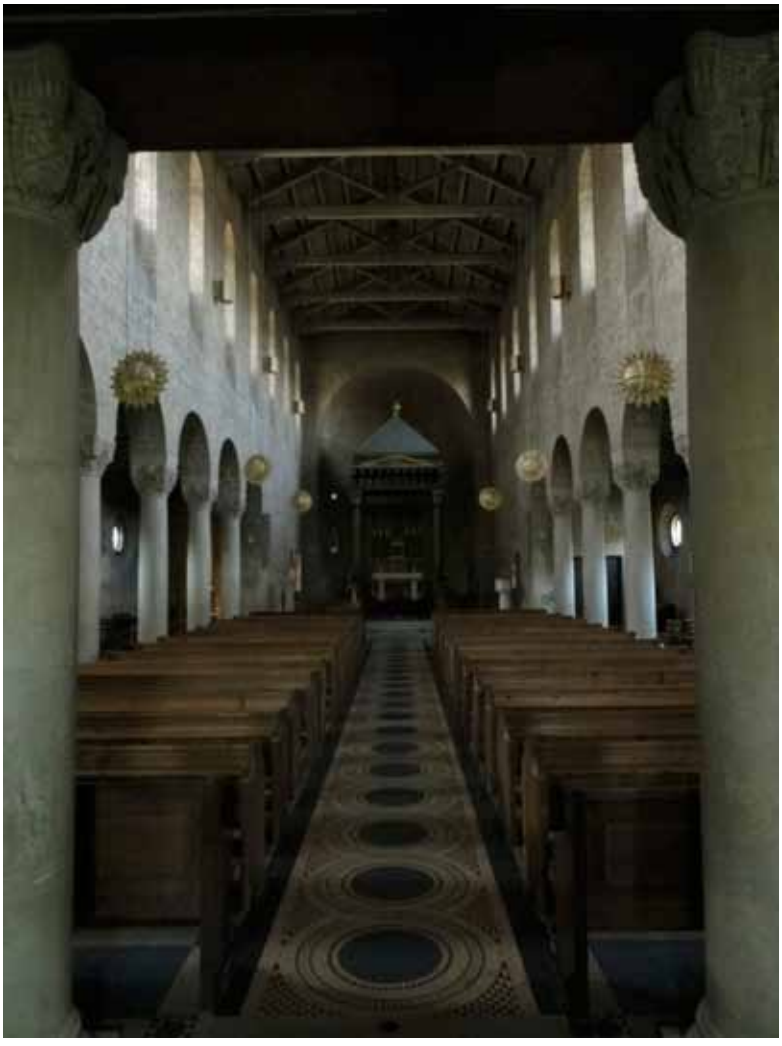


Fig. 3.20 St Alphege's, Bath (1925). Author, 2011.

Fig. 3.21 Our Lady, Northfleet (1913). Author, 2013.

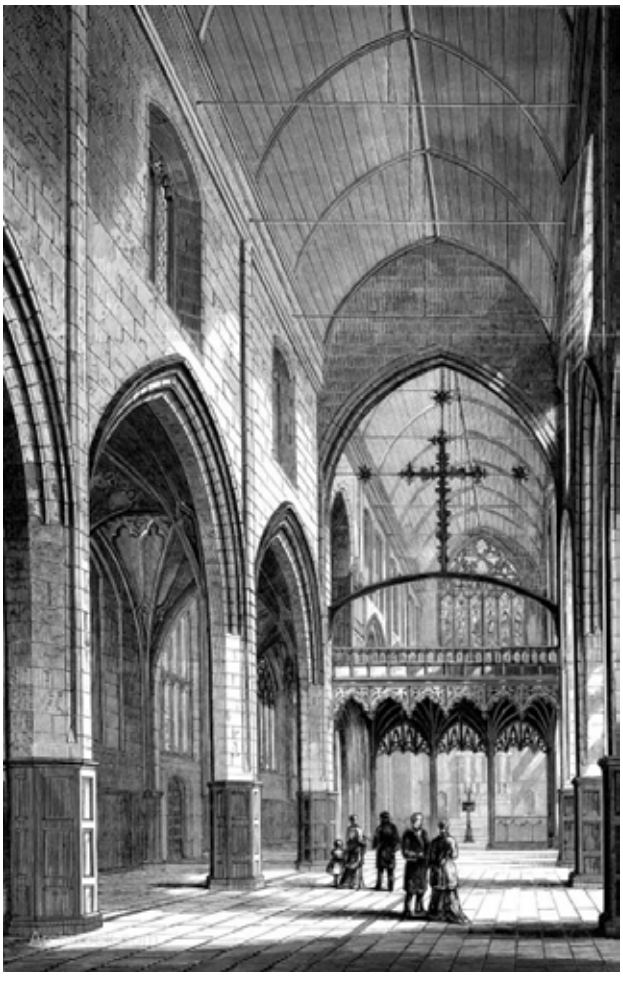


Fig. 3.22 St Agnes, Kennington (1877), by George Gilbert Scott Jr. Archiseek.

Fig. 3.23 Grosvenor Chapel, Westminster, restored by Ninian Comper in 1911. John Salmon.

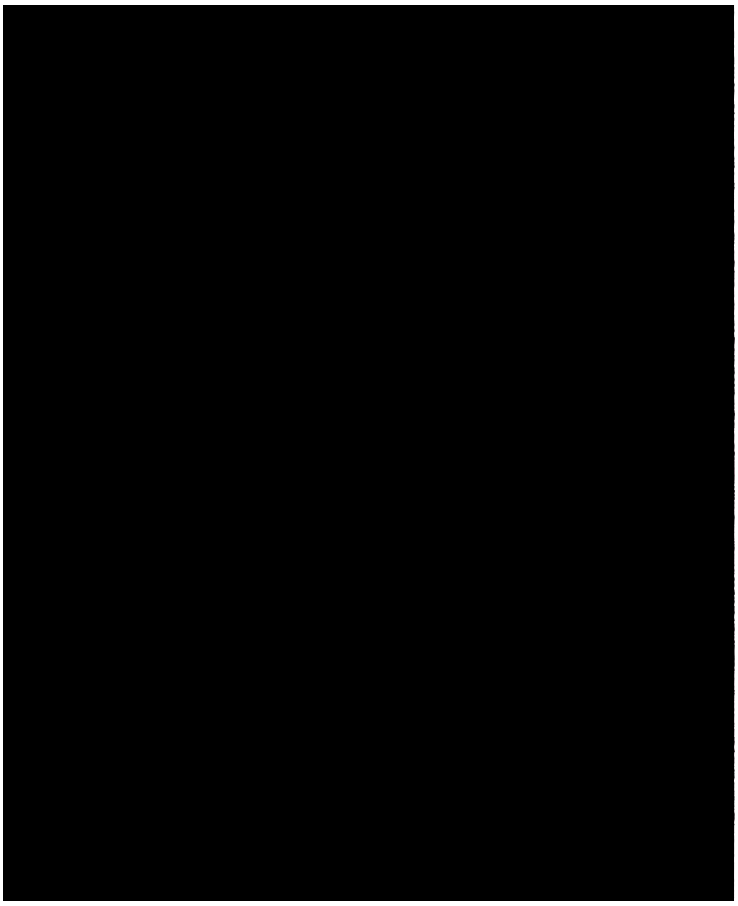


Fig. 3.24 Unexecuted design for St John's, Clerkenwell (1943), by Ninian Comper. *Survey of London*, Online.

Fig. 3.25 Wymondham Abbey, reredos by Ninian Comper. Richard Barton-Wood.

Fig. 3.26 St Mary, Wellingborough (1931), by Ninian Comper. Author, 2013.

Fig. 3.27 St Bartholomew, Brighton (sanctuary by Henry Wilson, 1900). Author, 2011.

Fig. 3.28 One of Wilson's doors at St John the Divine, New York (1936). Author, 2013.

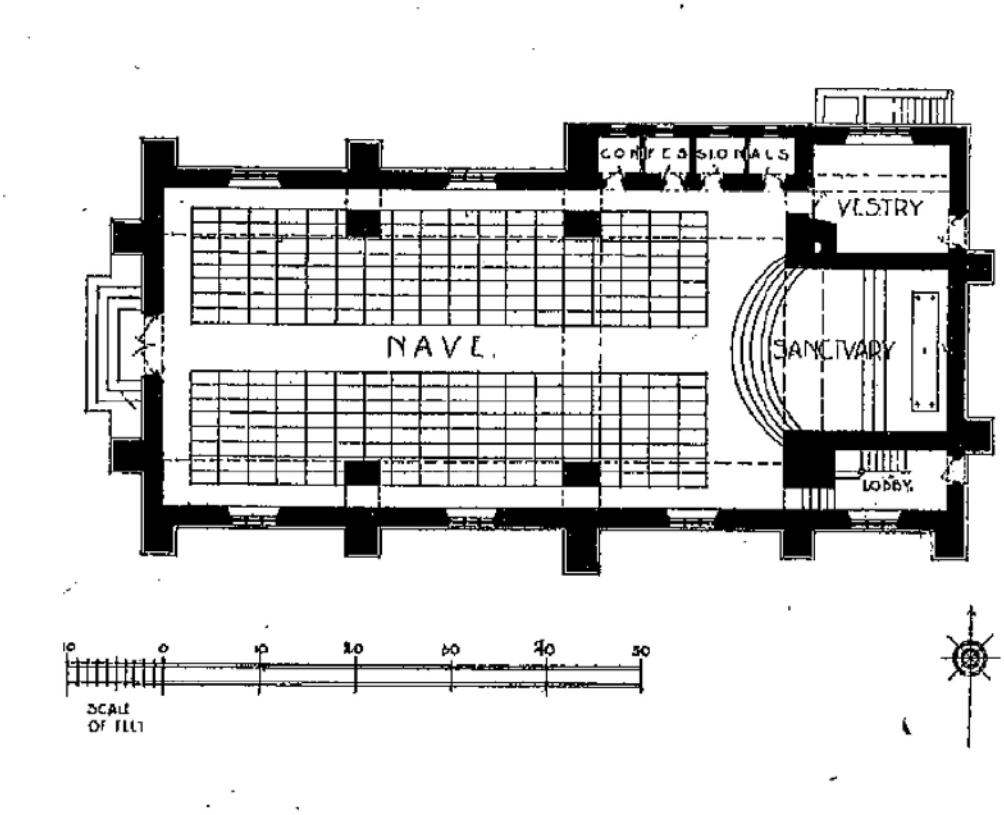


Fig. 3.29 Plan of the Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth (1905). *Architects' Journal,* 7 January 1925, p. 22.

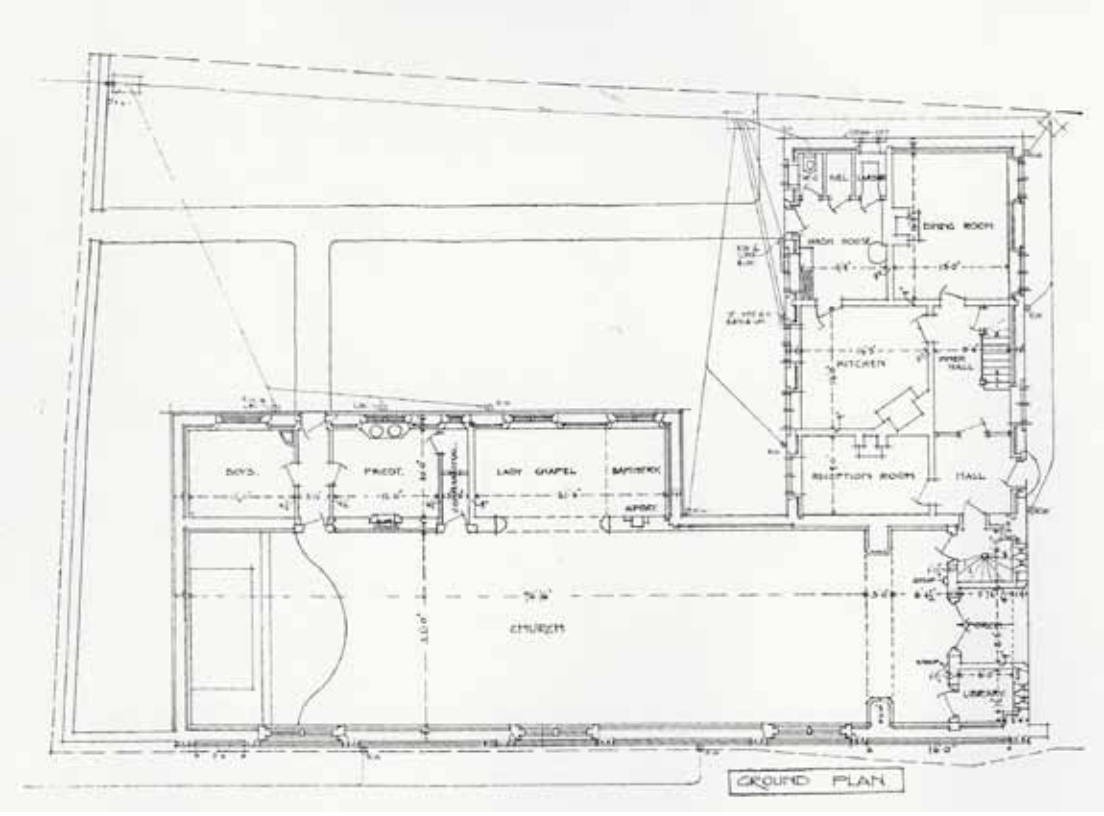


Fig. 3.30 Plan of St Maughold's, Ramsey (1909). *Architects' Journal,* 7 January 1925, p. 22.

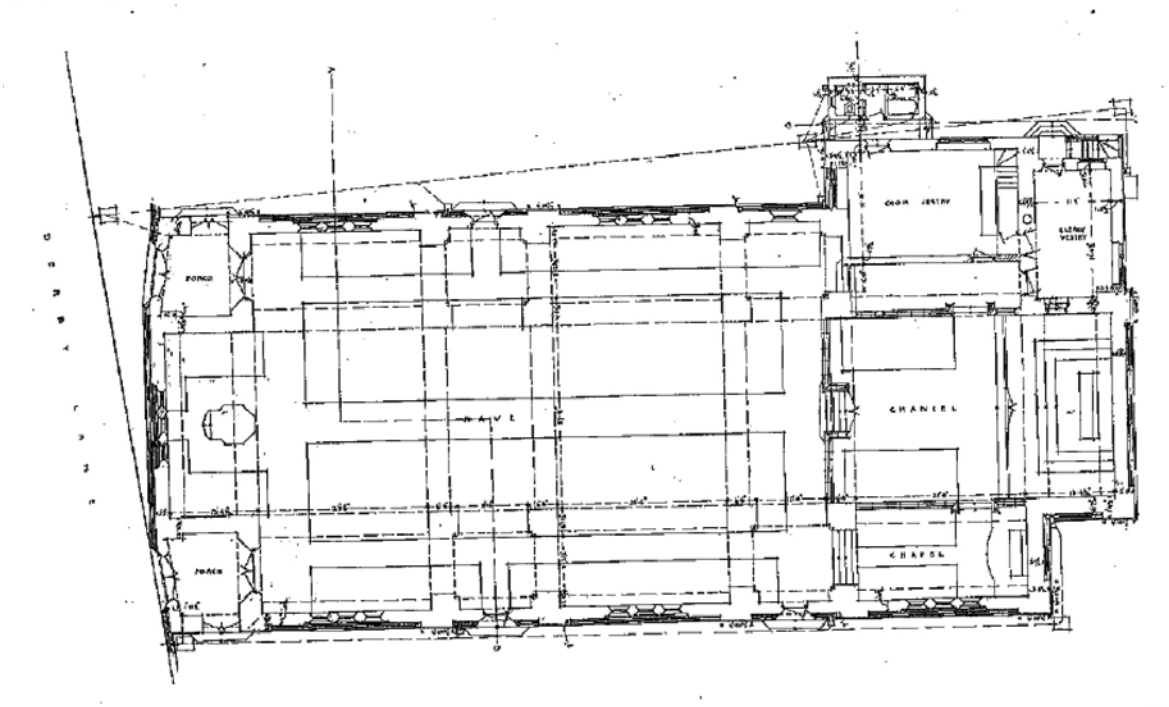


Fig. 3.31 Plan of St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool (1910). *Architects' Journal,* 7 January 1925, p. 20 .

Fig. 3.32 St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool (1910). Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.33 Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth (1905), photograph taken shortly after completion of the first phase. Foter.

Fig. 3.34 St Joseph's, Sheringham (1907). Norfolk Catholics, Online.

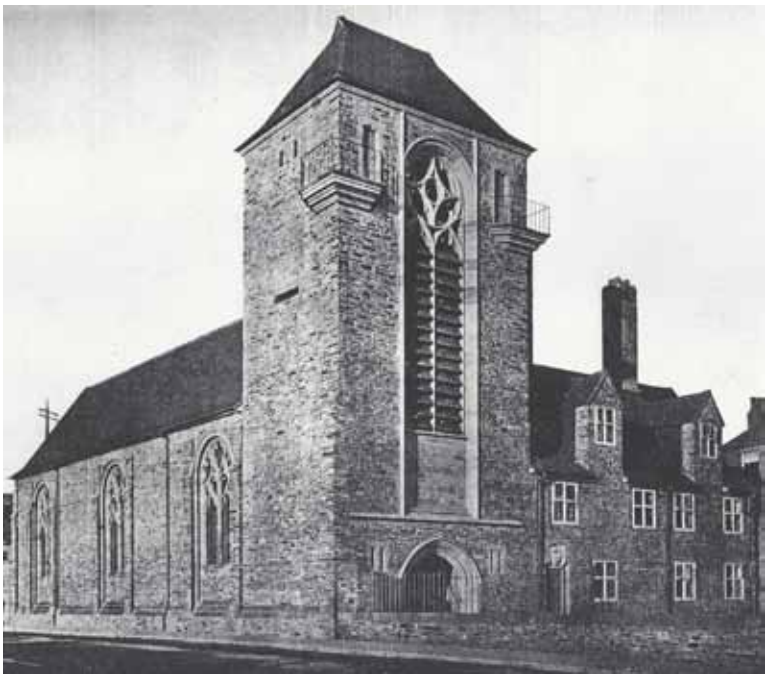


Fig. 3.35 St Maughold's, Ramsey (1909). *Architects' Journal,* 7 January 1925, p. 23.

Fig. 3.36 Elevation of Our Lady, Northfleet (1913). *RIBA Drawings Collection: Scott Family,* Fig. 105.

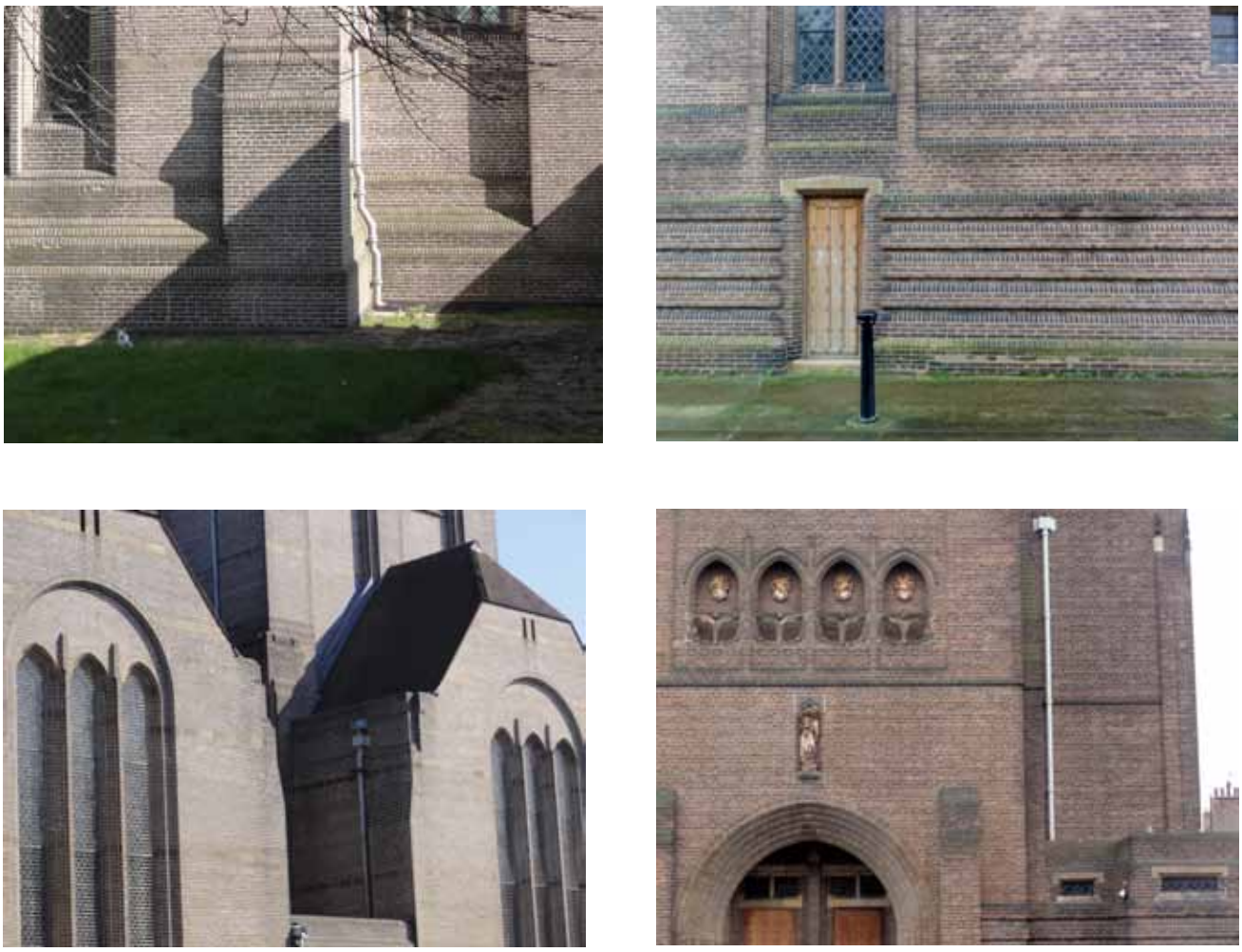


Fig. 3.37 Abstracted mouldings in brick. St Paul's, Derby Lane (1910) on left; Our Lady, Northfleet (1913) on right. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.38 Rendering of Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth (1905) by Giles Scott. *Builder's Journal and Architectural Record,* 9 May 1906, supplement.

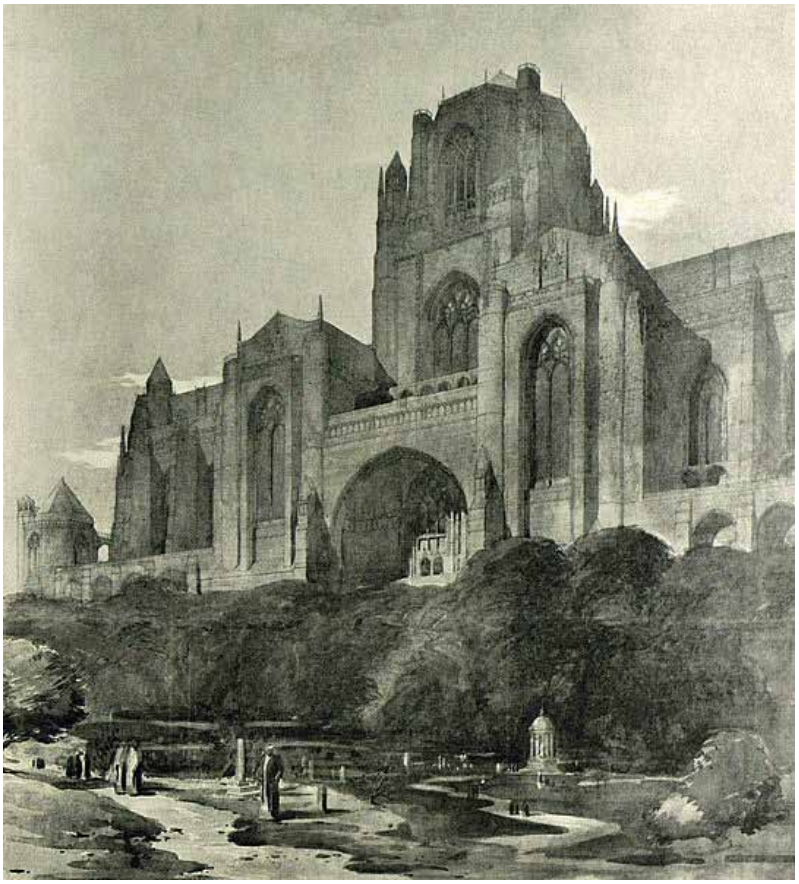


Fig. 3.39 Rendering of Liverpool Cathedral, c1911, by Giles Scott. *Architectural Review.*

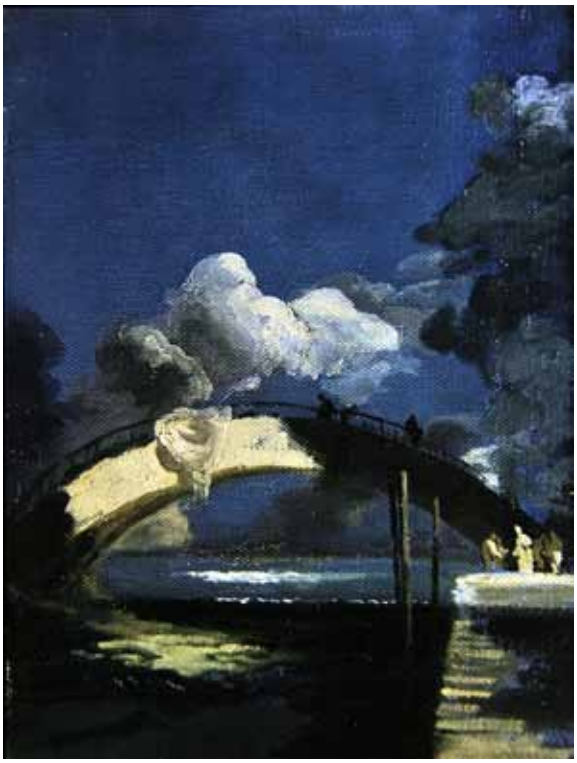


Fig. 3.40 James Pryde, *Venetian Bridge* (1912), oil on canvas. Bridgeman Education.

Fig. 3.41 Frank Brangwyn, *The Bridge, Barnard Castle* (1907), etching. Bridgeman Education.

Fig. 3.42 FL Griggs, *Maur's Farm* (1913), etching. Bridgeman Education.

Fig. 3.43 Interior Views of the Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth (1905). Author, 2013.

Fig. 3.44 St Maughold's, Ramsey (1909). Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.45 Partially executed design for altar and reredos, Church of the Annunciation, Bournemouth. Parish Archives.

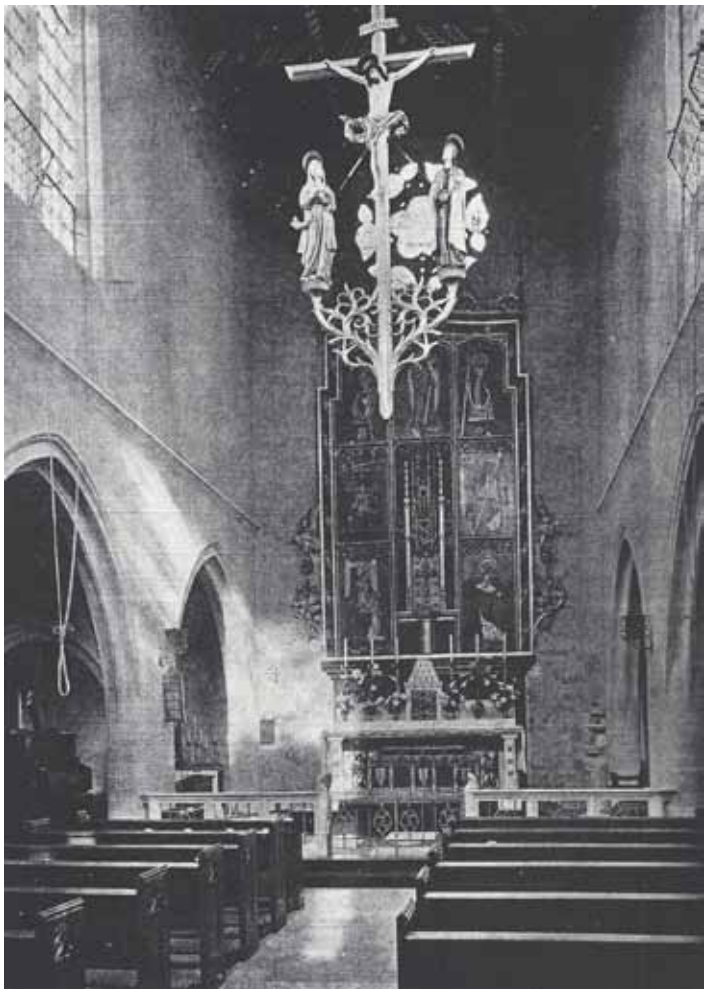


Fig. 3.46 St Joseph's, Sheringham (1907). *Architects' Journal,* 7 January 1925, p. 27.

Fig. 3.47 The setting of St Alban's, Golders Green. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.48 The setting of St Paul's, Derby Lane, Liverpool. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.49 Our Lady, Broadstairs (1931). Detail of Postcard, Public Domain.

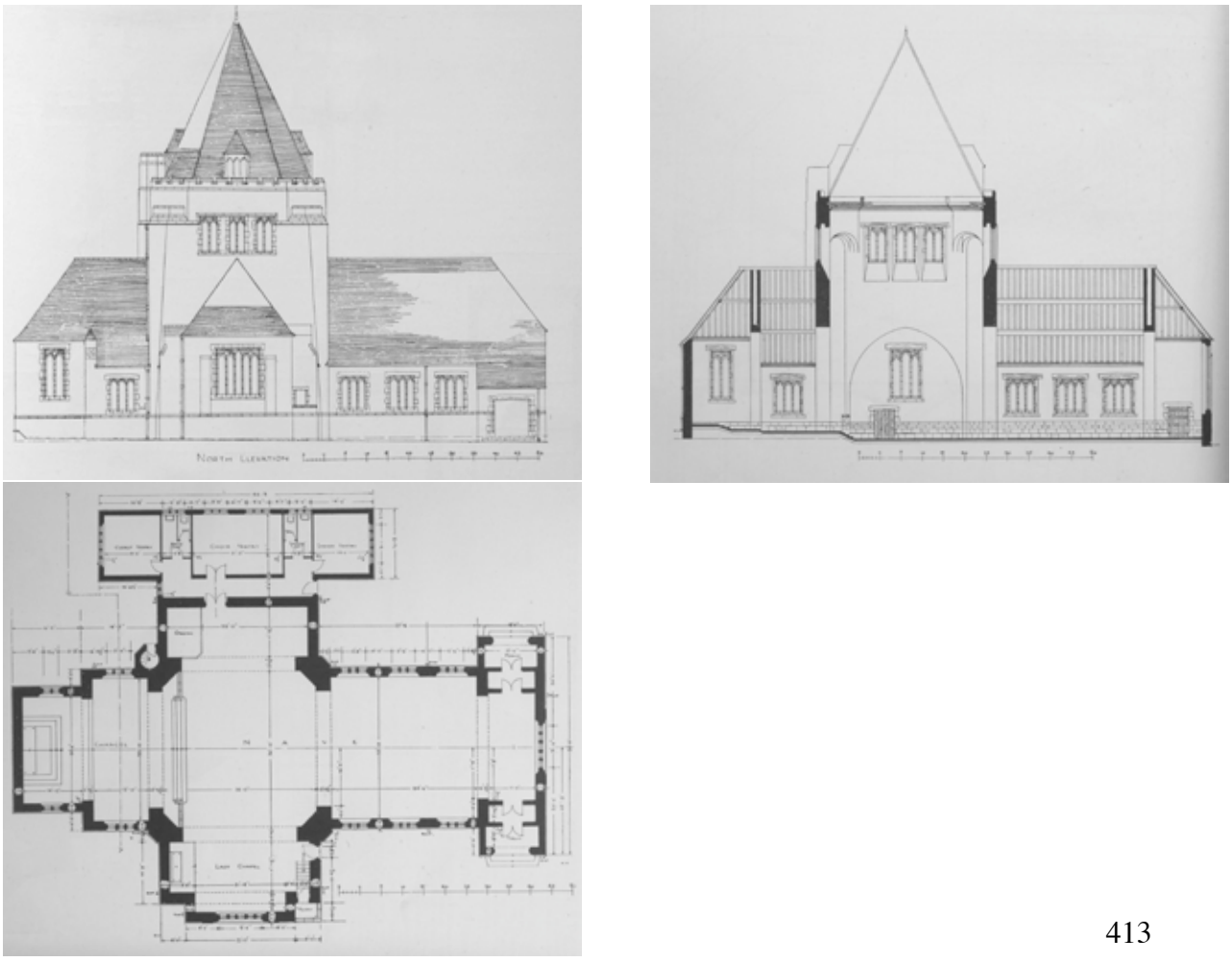


Fig. 3.50 Plan, Elevation, and Section of St Alban's, Golders Green. *AJ*, 12 April 1933, pp. 489 - 90.

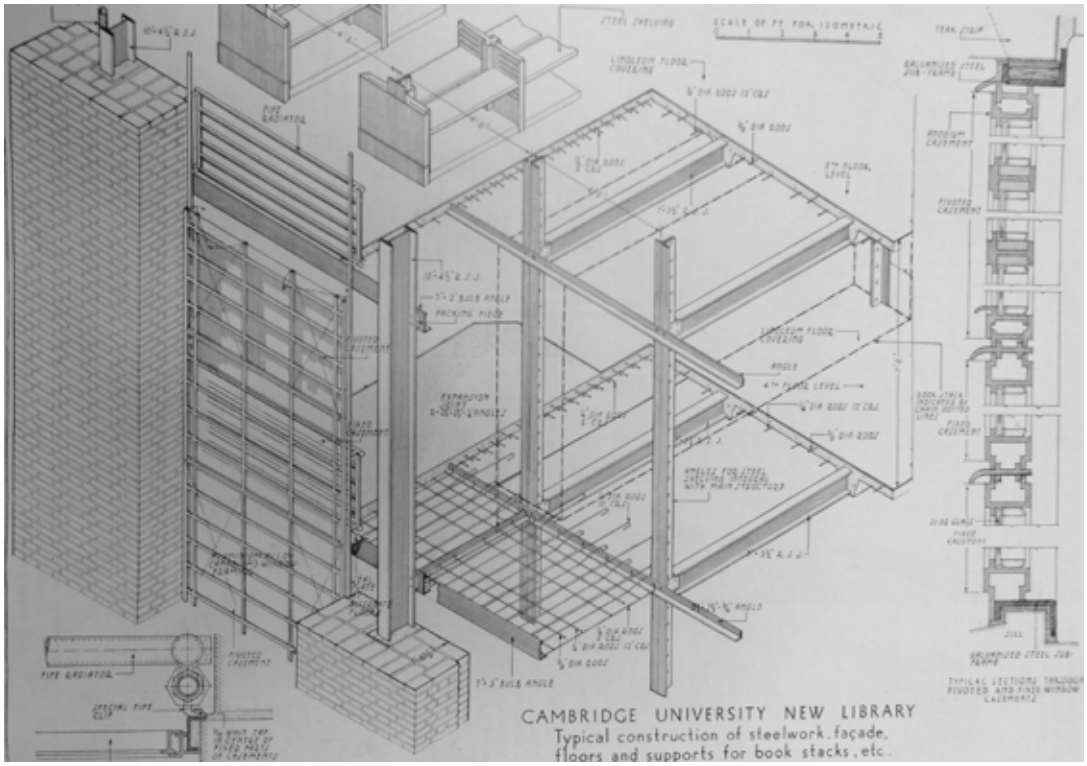


Fig. 3.51 Isometric drawing of Cambridge University Library structure. *Building,* October 1934, p. 383.

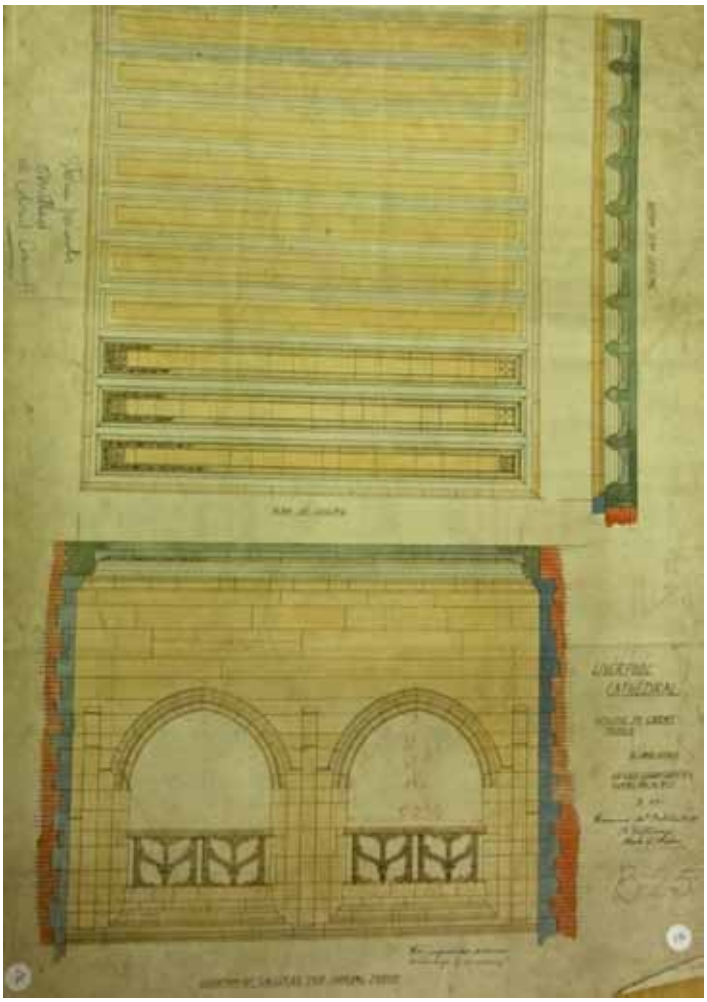


Fig. 3.52 Details of Porch, Liverpool Cathedral.
Liverpool Cathedral Archives, Drawing 376.

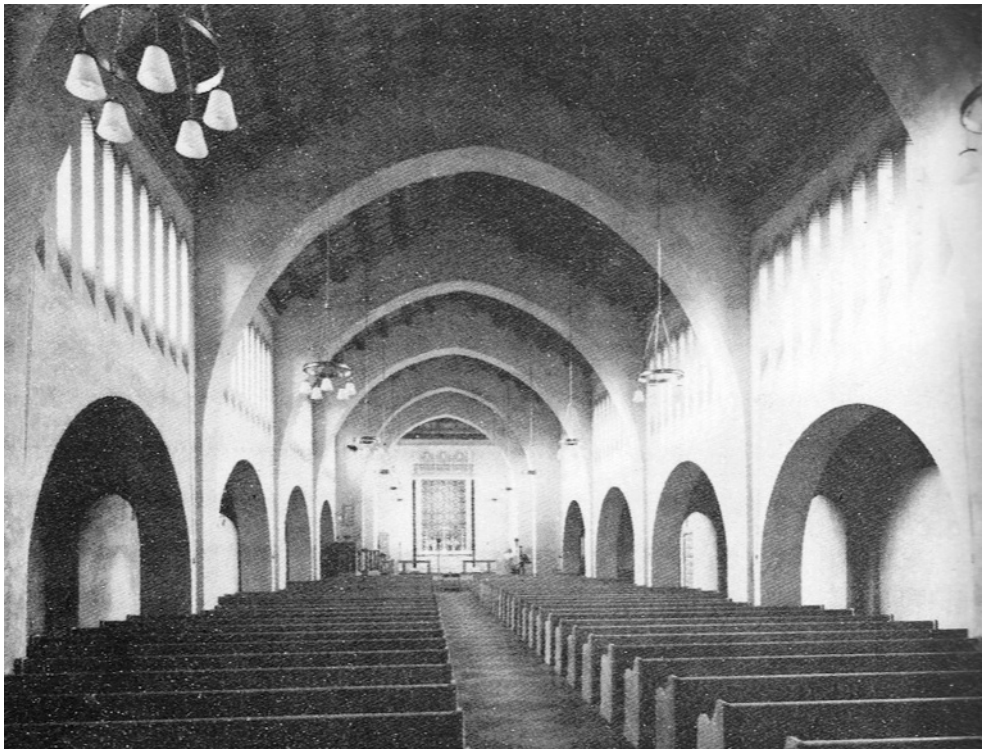


Fig. 3.53 St Andrew's, Luton (1931), photograph not long after completion. *AD Thirties*, p. 73.

Fig. 3.54 St Andrew's, Luton, sections. RIBA.

Fig. 3.55 Minor damage to north porch of Liverpool Cathedral reveals the relationship between the stone veneer and the structural brick masonry beneath. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.56 Crucifix on the east facade of St Maughold's, Ramsey, carved 1936. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.57 Statues at Liverpool Cathedral by Edward Carter Preston. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.58 Tomb of Cardinal Gasquet (1929), Downside Abbey. Ayla Lepine.

Fig. 3.59 Panel by Eric Gill (1938), Chapel of St George and the English Martyrs, Westminster Cathedral. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.60 Charterhouse Chapel (1927), shortly after completion. Charterhouse Archives.

Fig. 3.61 North facade, Charterhouse Chapel (1927). Author, 2012.

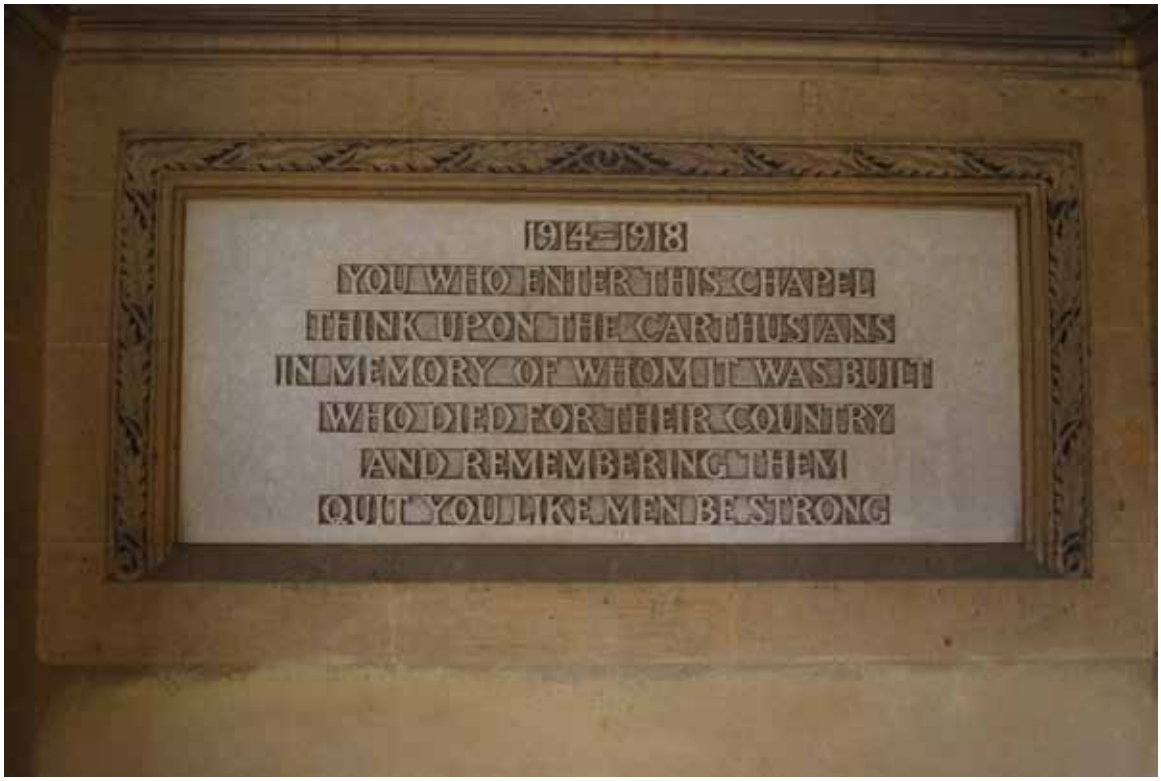


Fig. 3.62 Charterhouse Chapel (1927), an inscription in one of the porches. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.63 Interior of Charterhouse Chapel (1927), facing west. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.64 Memorial Roll, West Screen, Charterhouse Chapel (1927). Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.65 Reredos, Charterhouse Chapel (1927). Author, 2012.

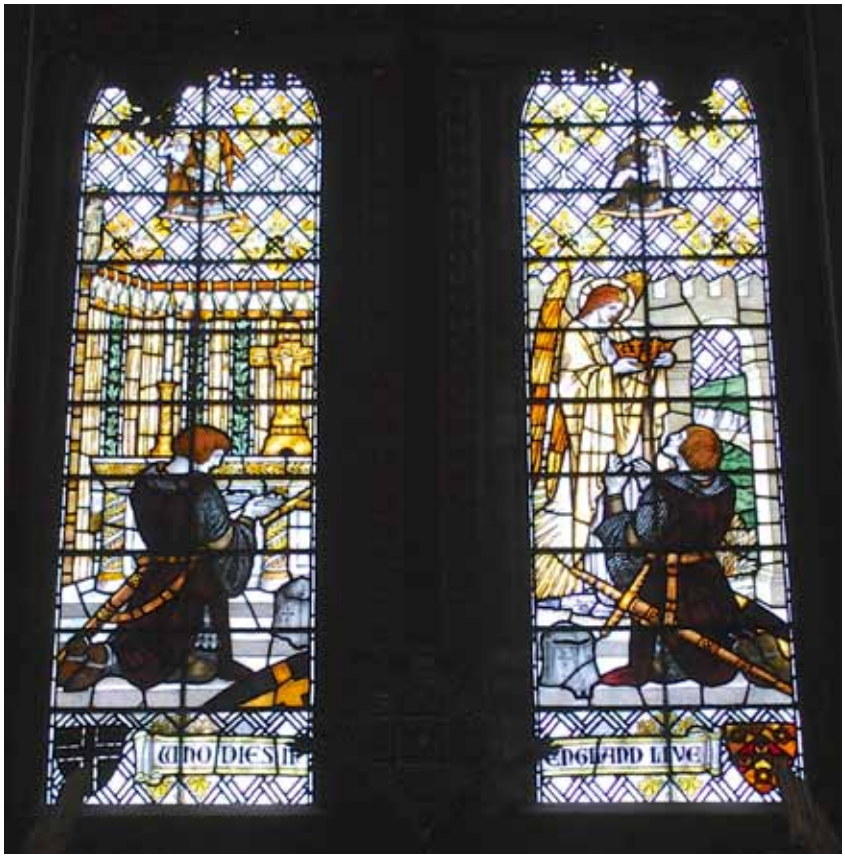


Fig. 3.66 East Window, Charterhouse Chapel (1927). Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.67 Interior of Charterhouse Chapel (1927), facing east. Author, 2012.

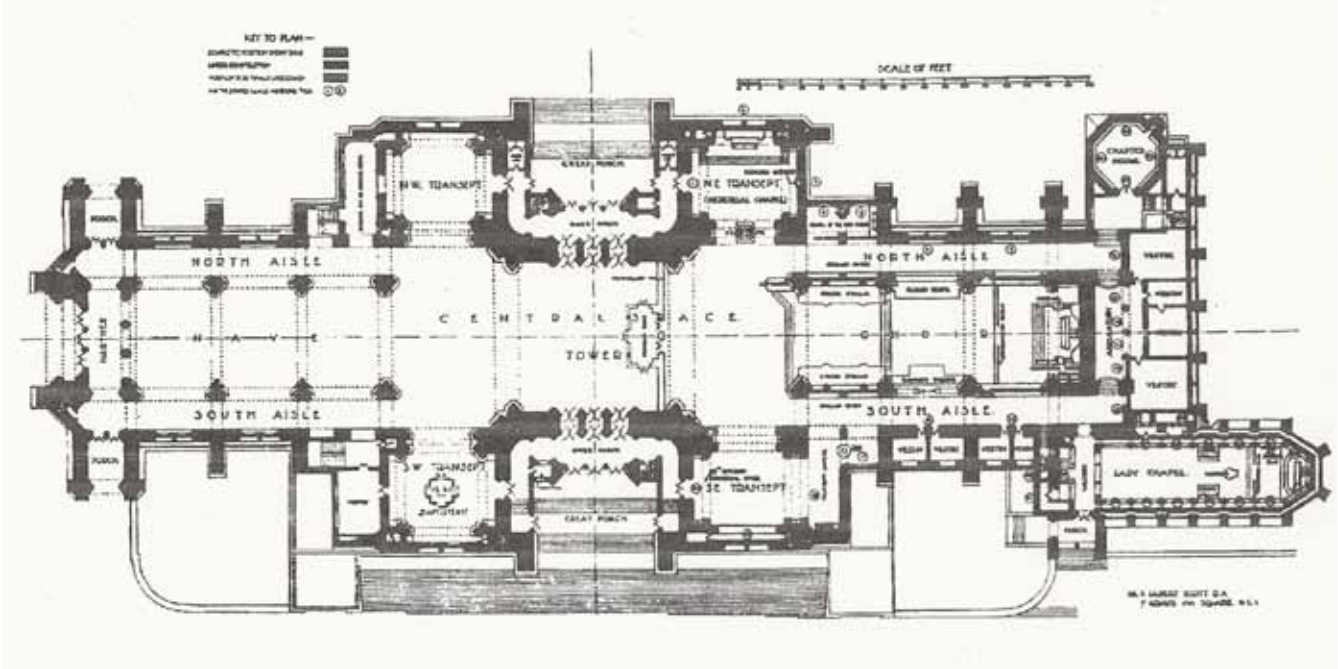


Fig. 3.68 Plan of Liverpool Cathedral as built. Author's Collection.

Fig. 3.69 London & North Eastern Railway Poster advertising travel to Liverpool Cathedral. Bridgeman Education.

Fig. 3.70 Woodcuts designed for service papers in the 1930s, by Edward Carter Preston. Liverpool Cathedral Archives.

Fig. 3.71 Westminster Cathedral (begun 1895), JF Bentley. Tony Hisgett.

Fig. 3.72 Liverpool Cathedral (begun 1903). Author, 2012

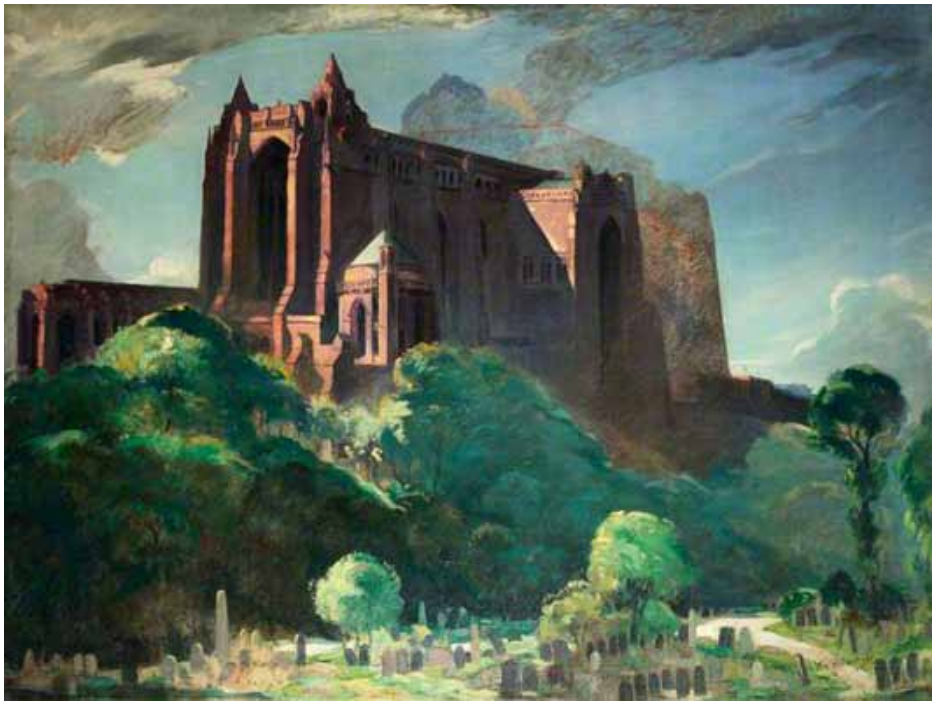


Fig. 3.73 Painting of Liverpool Cathedral circa 1930 by Eric H M Robertson. Your Paintings (BBC).

Fig. 3.74 St Anthony's, Preston (1954). St Anthony's Parish Archives.

Fig. 3.75 St Anthony's, Preston (1954). St Anthony's Parish Archives.

Fig. 3.76 North aisle of St Anthony's, Preston (1954). St Anthony's Parish Archives.

Fig. 3.77 St-Leonards-on-Sea, Hastings (1954). Wikimedia.

Fig. 3.78 St Joseph's, Upton (1953), by Adrian Gilbert Scott. St Joseph's Parish Archives.

Fig. 3.79 Elevation of SS Mary and Joseph, London (1951), by Adrian Gilbert Scott. *Survey of London*, Online.

Fig. 3.80 Detail of the clerestory, Our Lady, Kensington Church Street (1954). Author, 2011.

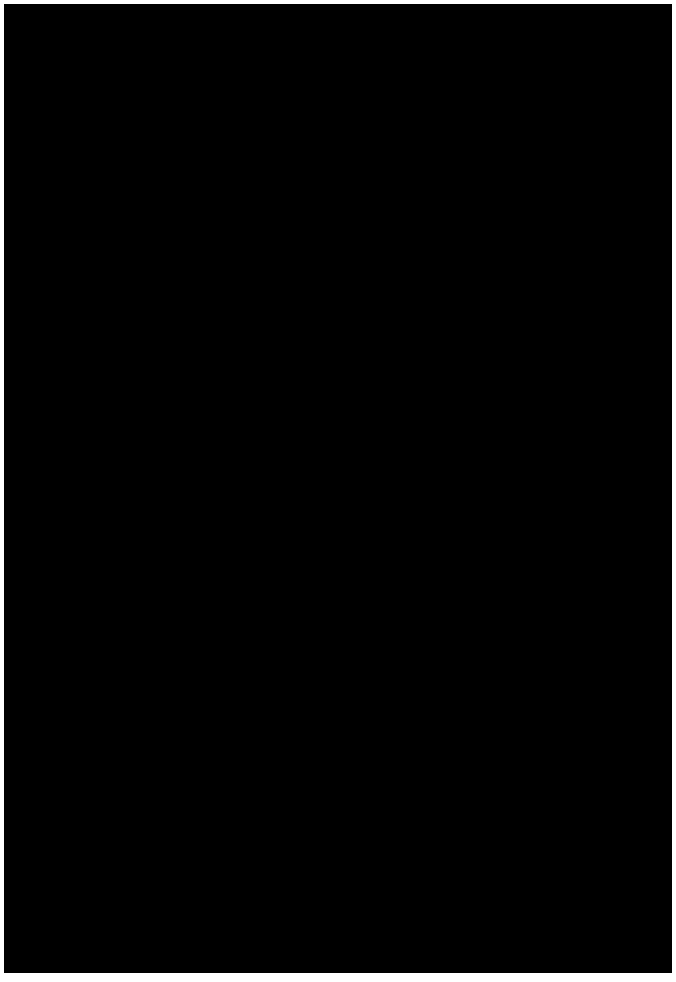


Fig. 3.81 Interior of the Church of Christ the King, Plymouth (1960). Parish Archives.

Fig. 3.82 Interior of Trinity College Chapel, Toronto (1953). Author, 2013.

Fig. 3.83 Gateway Arch, St Louis (initial design published 1948). National Parks Service, USA.

Fig. 3.84 Our Lady, Tilecross, Birmingham (1964), by Richard Gilbert Scott. Jimmy Guano.

Fig. 3.85 Art Building at Charterhouse School (c1975), by Richard Gilbert Scott. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.86 Detail of ornament on the tower of Liverpool Cathedral. Author, 2012.

Fig. 3.87 Rendering of the unexecuted west front of Liverpool Cathedral, c1944. Liverpool Cathedral Archives.

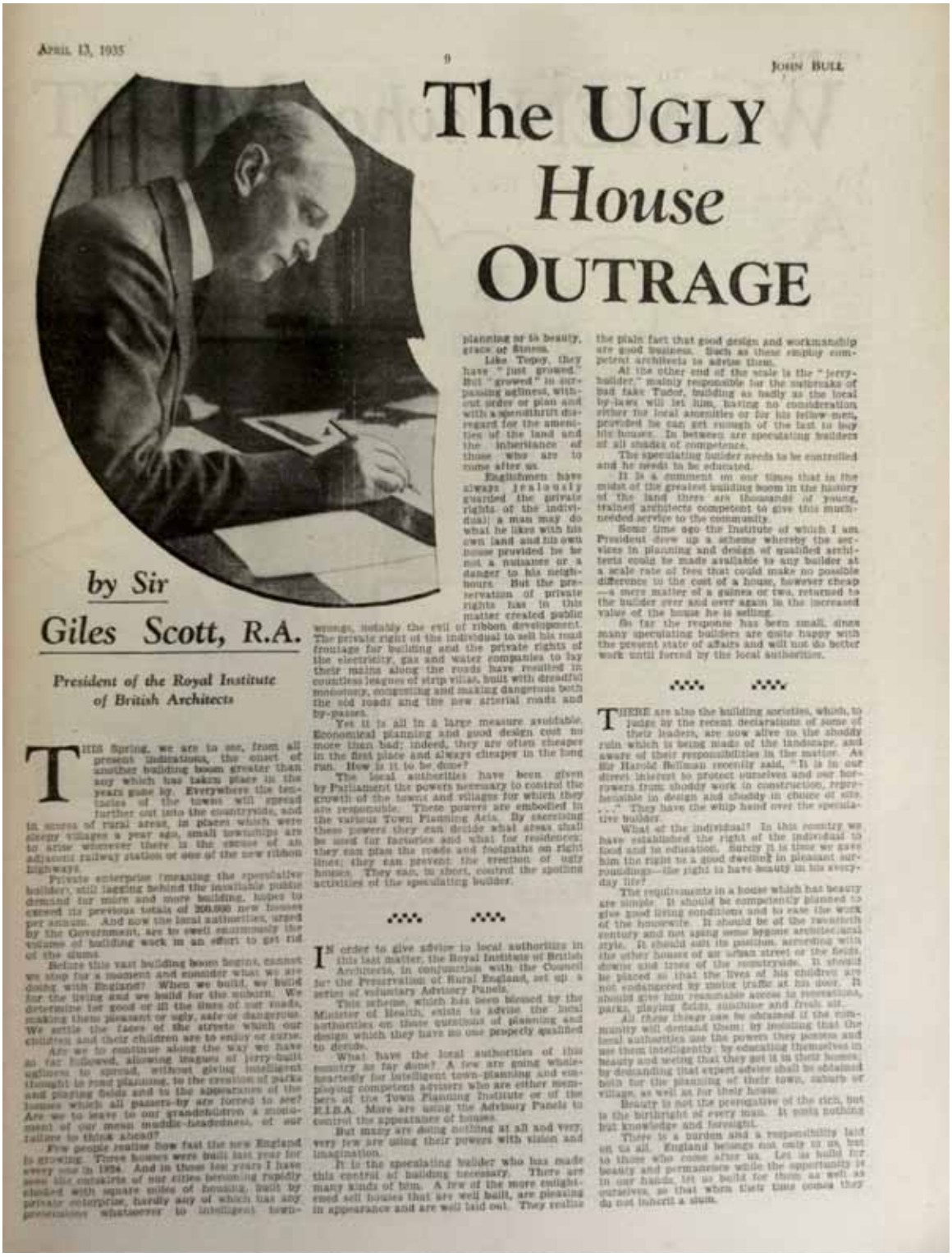
Fig. 3.88 North facade of Trinity College Chapel, Toronto (1953). Author, 2013.

Fig. 3.89 Interior of Trinity College Chapel, Toronto (1953), facing west. Author, 2013.

Fig. 3.90 St Philip's Cathedral, Atlanta (1960) by Francis Palmer Smith. American Guild of Organists, Atlanta Chapter.

Fig. 3.91 Firestone Library, Princeton University (1948), by O'Connor and Kilham. Princeton University.

Fig. 3.92 The monks' choir at Ampleforth Abbey (1931). Fr Lawrence Lew OP.



April 13, 1935 9 John Bull

The Ugly House Outrage

by Sir Giles Scott, R.A.

President of the Royal Institute of British Architects

THIS Spring, we are to see, from all present indications, the onset of another building boom greater than any which has taken place in the years gone by. Everywhere the tentacles of the towns will spread further out into the countryside, and in scores of rural areas, in places which were sleepy villages a year ago, small townships are to arise wherever there is the excuse of an adjacent railway station or one of the new ribbon highways.

Private enterprise (meaning the speculative builder), still lagging behind the insatiable public demand for more and more building, hopes to exceed its previous totals of 300,000 new houses per annum. And now the local authorities, urged by the Government, are to swell enormously the volume of building work in an effort to get rid of the slums.

Before this vast building boom begins, cannot we stop for a moment and consider what we are doing with England? When we build, we build for the living and we build for the unborn. We determine for good or ill the lines of our roads, making them pleasant or ugly, safe or dangerous. We settle the faces of the streets which our children and their children are to enjoy or suffer.

Are we to continue along the way we have so far followed, allowing images of jerry-built suburbs to spread, without giving intelligent thought to road planning, to the creation of parks and playing fields and to the appearance of the houses which all passers-by are forced to see? Are we to leave to our grandchildren a monument of our mean muddle-headedness, of our failure to think ahead?

Few people realise how fast the new England is growing. Three houses were built last year for every one in 1924. And in those few years I have seen the outskirts of our cities becoming rapidly studded with square miles of housing, built by private enterprise, hardly any of which has any pretensions whatsoever to intelligent town-planning or to beauty, grace or fitness.

Like Topsy, they have "just growed." But "growed" in surpassing ugliness, without order or plan and with a spendthrift disregard for the amenities of the land and the inheritance of those who are to come after us.

Englishmen have always jealously guarded the private rights of the individual: a man may do what he likes with his own land and his own house provided he is not a nuisance or a danger to his neighbours. But the preservation of private rights has in this matter created public wrongs, notably the evil of ribbon development. The private right of the individual to sell his road frontage for building and the private rights of the electricity, gas and water companies to lay their mains along the roads have resulted in countless leagues of strip villas, built with dreadful monotony, congesting and making dangerous both the old roads and the new arterial roads and by-passes.

Yet it is all in a large measure avoidable. Economical planning and good design cost no more than bad; indeed, they are often cheaper in the first place and always cheaper in the long run. How is it to be done?

The local authorities have been given by Parliament the powers necessary to control the growth of the towns and villages for which they are responsible. These powers are embodied in the various Town Planning Acts. By exercising these powers they can decide what areas shall be used for factories and what for residences; they can plan the roads and footpaths on right lines; they can prevent the erection of ugly houses. They can, in short, control the spotting activities of the speculating builder.

IN order to give advice to local authorities in this last matter, the Royal Institute of British Architects, in conjunction with the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, set up a series of voluntary Advisory Panels.

This scheme, which has been blessed by the Minister of Health, exists to advise the local authorities on these questions of planning and design which they have no one properly qualified to decide.

What have the local authorities of this country so far done? A few are going wholeheartedly for intelligent town-planning and employing competent advisers who are either members of the Town Planning Institute or of the R.I.B.A. More are using the Advisory Panels to control the appearance of houses.

But many are doing nothing at all and very, very few are using their powers with vision and imagination.

It is the speculating builder who has made this control of building necessary. There are many kinds of him. A few of the more enlightened sell houses that are well built, are pleasing in appearance and are well laid out. They realise the plain fact that good design and workmanship are good business. Such as these employ competent architects to advise them.

At the other end of the scale is the "jerry-builder," mainly responsible for the outbreaks of bad fake Tudor, building as badly as the local by-laws will let him, having no consideration, either for local amenities or for his fellow men, provided he can get enough of the last to buy his houses. In between are speculating builders of all shades of competence.

The speculating builder needs to be controlled and he needs to be educated.

It is a comment on our times that in the midst of the greatest building boom in the history of the land there are thousands of young, trained architects competent to give this much-needed service to the community.

Some time ago the Institute of which I am President drew up a scheme whereby the services in planning and design of qualified architects could be made available to any builder at a scale rate of fees that could make no possible difference to the cost of a house, however cheap—a mere matter of a guinea or two, returned to the builder over and over again in the increased value of the house he is selling.

So far the response has been small. Even many speculating builders are quite happy with the present state of affairs and will not do better work until forced by the local authorities.

THERE are also the building societies, which, to judge by the recent declarations of some of their leaders, are now alive to the shoddy ruin which is being made of the landscape, and aware of their responsibilities in the matter. As Sir Harold Bellman recently said, "It is in our direct interest to protect ourselves and our borrowers from shoddy work in construction, improvidence in design and shabby in choice of site. . . . They have the whip hand over the speculative builder."

What of the individual? In this country we have established the right of the individual to food and to education. Surely it is time we gave him the right to a good dwelling in pleasant surroundings—the right to have beauty in his everyday life?

The requirements in a house which has beauty are simple. It should be competently planned to give good living conditions and to ease the work of the housewife. It should be of the twentieth century and not aping some bygone architectural style. It should suit its position, according with the other houses of an urban street or the fields, downs and trees of the countryside. It should be placed so that the lives of his children are not endangered by motor traffic at his door. It should give him reasonable access to recreations, parks, playing fields, sunshine and fresh air.

All these things can be obtained if the community will demand them; by insisting that the local authorities use the powers they possess and use them intelligently; by educating themselves in beauty and seeing that they get it in their homes; by demanding that expert advice shall be obtained both for the planning of their town, suburb or village, as well as for their house.

Beauty is not the prerogative of the rich, but is the birthright of every man. It costs nothing but knowledge and foresight.

There is a burden and a responsibility laid on us all. England belongs not only to us, but to those who come after us. Let us build for beauty and permanence while the opportunity is in our hands, let us build for them as well as ourselves, so that when their time comes they do not inherit a slum.

Fig. 4.1 Scott in his role as popular planning polemicist. *John Bull,* 13 April 1935, p. 9.

Fig. 4.2 Bristol Electric Company Headquarters, Bristol (1939). Author, 2011.

Fig. 4.3 Carliol House, Newcastle and Tyne Electric Supply Company Headquarters, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (left, 1928), by Burnet, Tait, and Lorne. Author, 2012.

Fig. 4.4 Rendering of LCC Offices (1935), by LCC Architect's Department with Giles Gilbert Scott. *Survey of London,* Online.

Fig. 4.5 Phoenix Theatre (1930). Photograph shortly after opening. Public Domain.

Fig. 4.6 William Booth College, Denmark Hill, London (1928). Author, 2012.

Fig. 4.7 Details of the façades of City Gate House (1929). Author, 2012.

Fig. 4.8 Classical fantasies by Scott. *Giles Gilbert Scott, His Son's View,* p. 33.

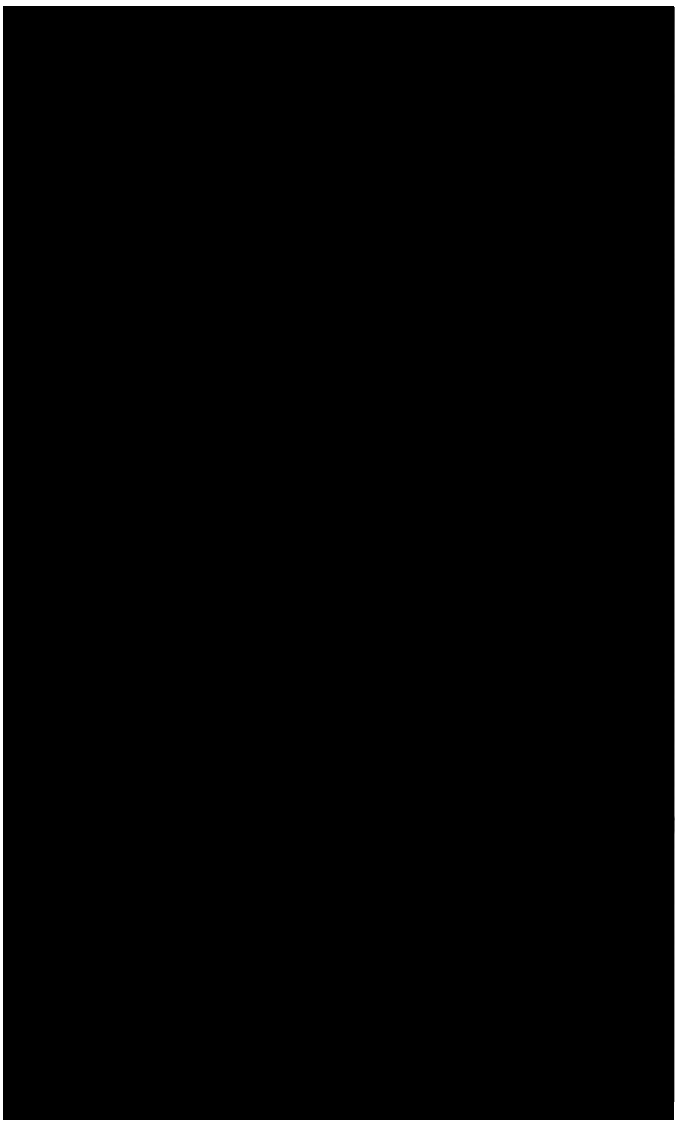


Fig. 4.9 Illustrations of Assyrian architecture. *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, p. 52.

Fig. 4.10 Kenwood House (1779), by Robert Adam. Author, 2011.

Fig. 4.11 Guinness Factory, Park Royal (1936). Administration Building in foreground. RIBA.

Fig. 4.12 Pastoral painting of the Guinness Factory Campus. Postcard.

Fig. 4.13 Interior of Guinness Factory Administration Building (1936); photograph taken shortly after completion. RIBA.

Fig. 4.14 Red telephone kiosks in front of St Pancras Station, London. K2 (1924) on right, K6 (1935) on left. Aaron Helfand.

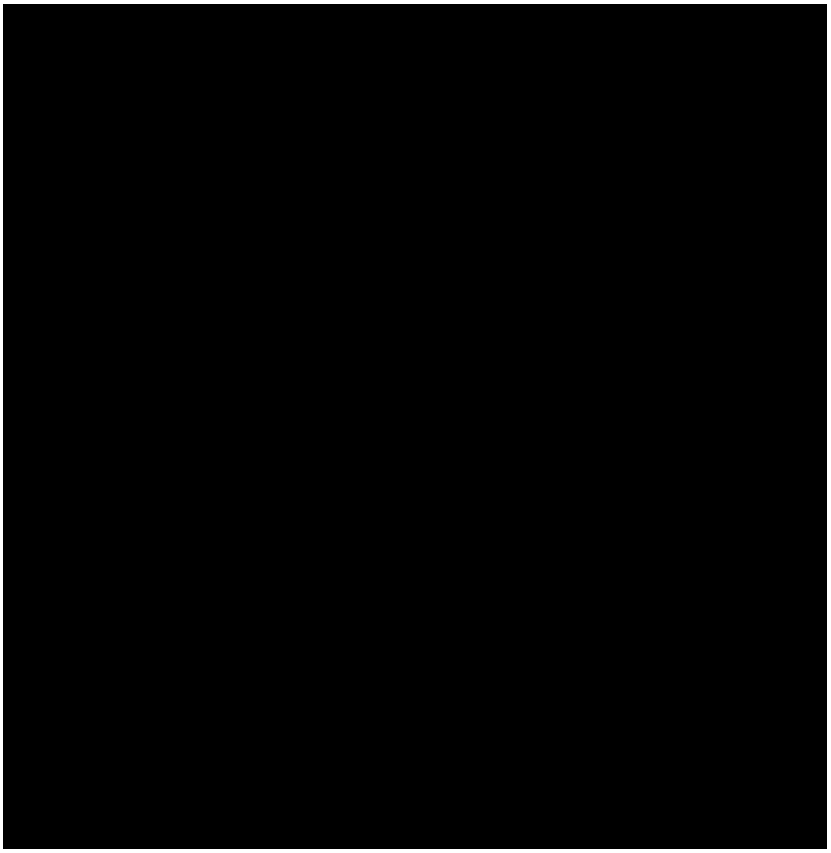


Fig. 4.15 The initial GPO telephone box design of 1924 (left); an alternative design proposed by the Birmingham Civic Society on right.*Telephone Boxes,* p. 40.

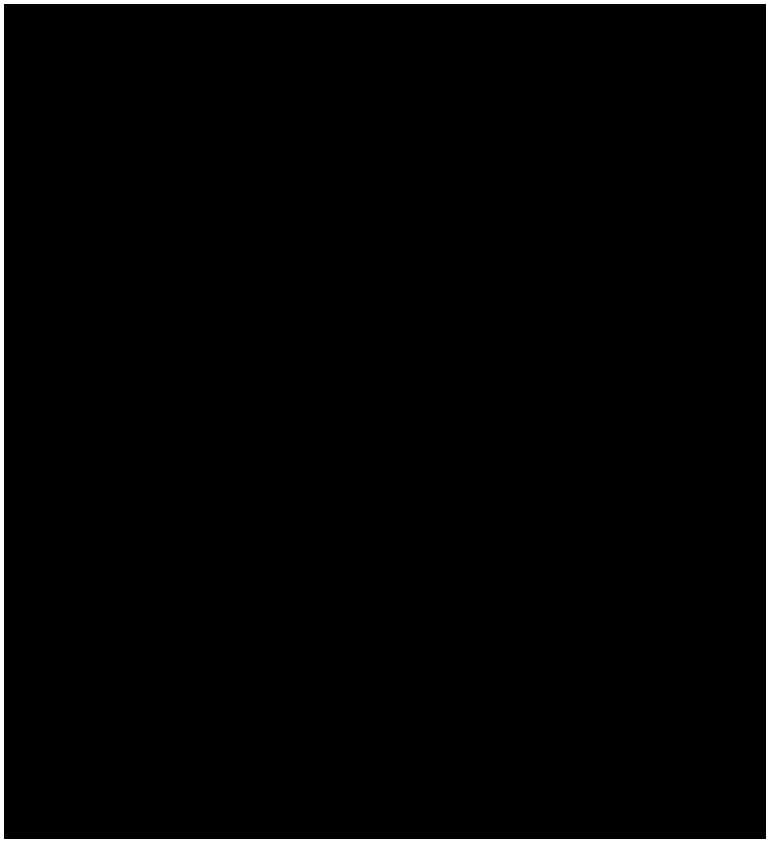


Fig. 4.15 Other entries from the 1924 RFAC telephone kiosk competition, by Robert Lorimer (left) and John Burnet (right), *Telephone Boxes,* p. 41.

Fig. 4.16 Battersea Power Station (1932). Author, 2012.

Fig. 4.17 Bankside Power Station (1958). Author, 2013.

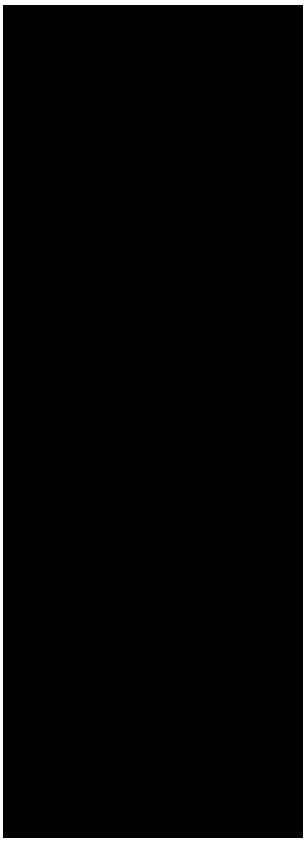


Fig. 4.18 Design for illuminated traffic sign, (c1930). RIBA.

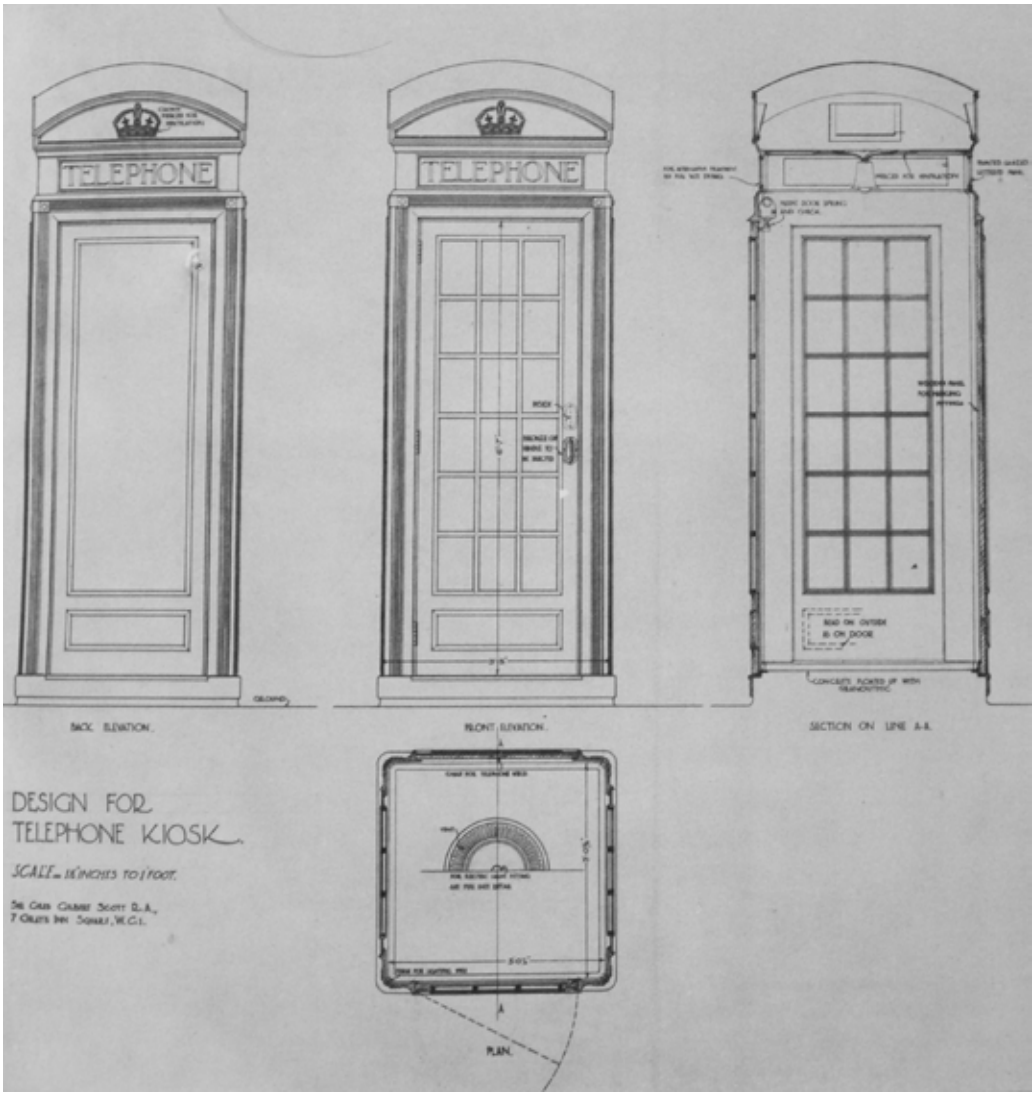


Fig. 4.19 Design for K2 Telephone Kiosk (1924). RIBA.

Fig. 4.20 Arnos Grove Tube Station (1932) by Charles Holden. London Transport Museum.

Fig. 4.21 George V Memorial, Old Palace Yard (1939). Author, 2013.

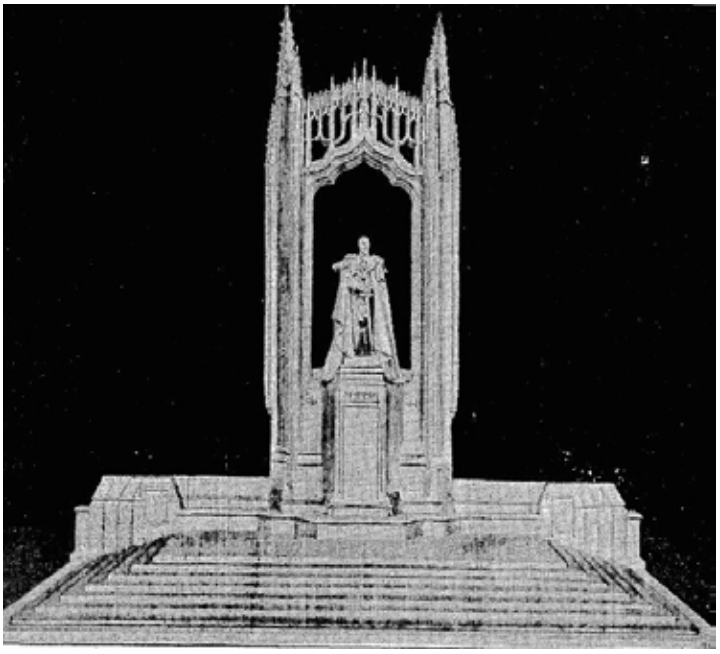


Fig. 4.22 Scott's initial design for the Memorial. *The Times,* 12 January 1939, p. 12.

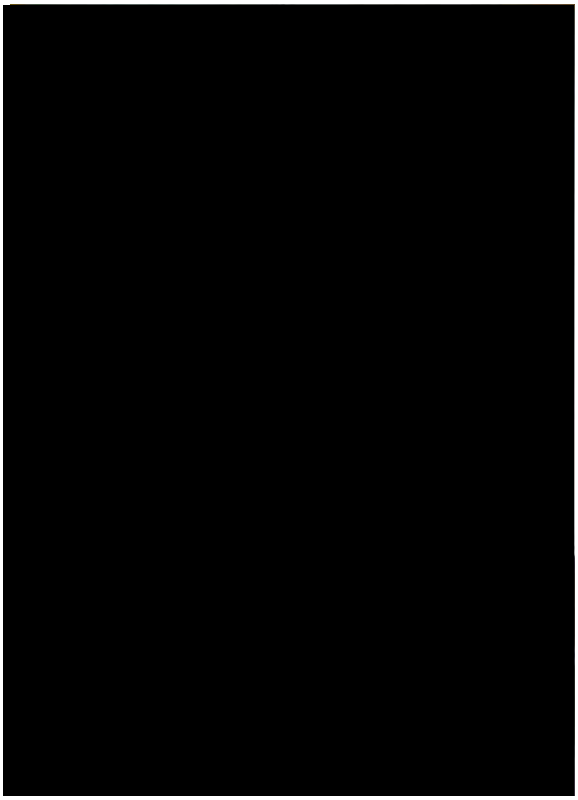


Fig. 4.23 George V Memorial, New Delhi (1938), by Edwin Lutyens. *Indian Summer.*

Fig. 4.24 Plan showing the London ring road as proposed in 1942. *London Replanned* p. 4.

Fig. 4.25 Proposal for redeveloping Covent Garden. *London Replanned* p. 11.

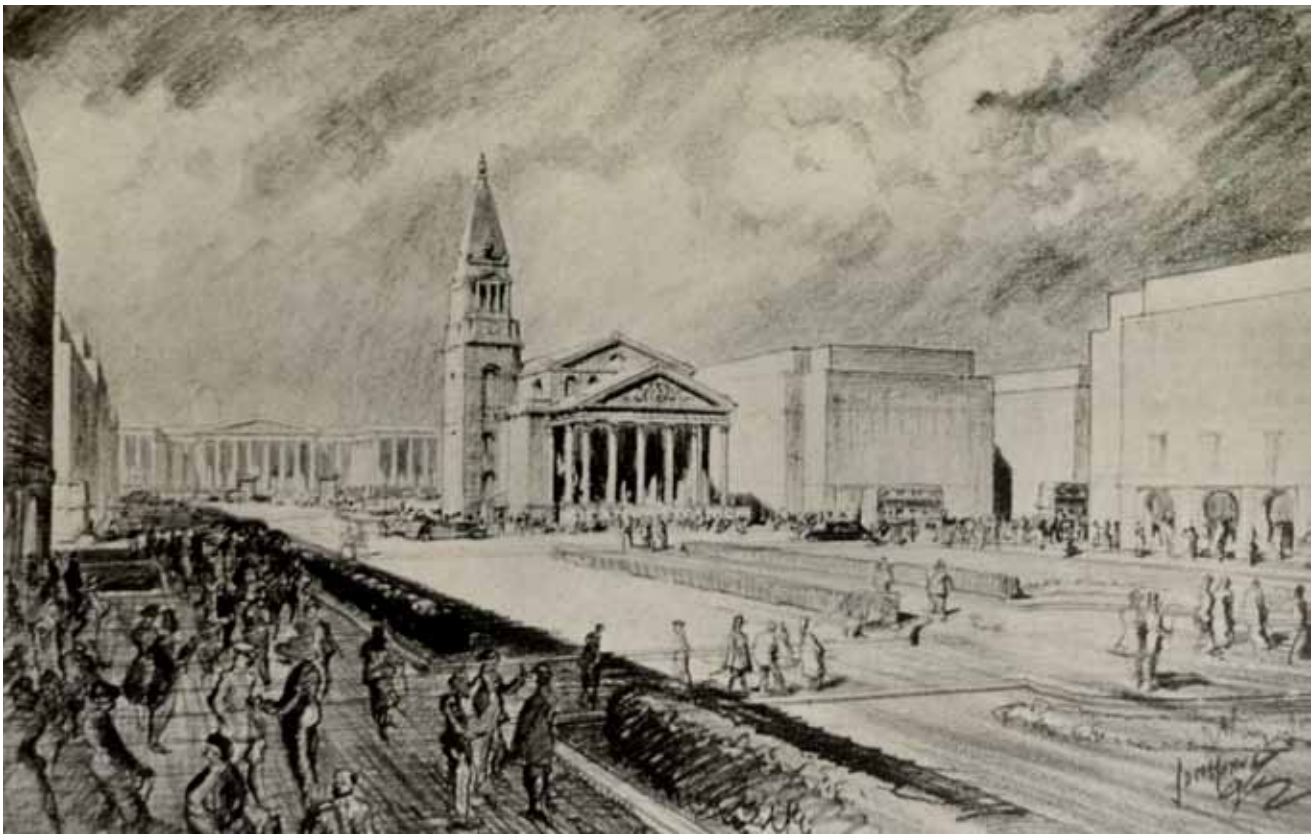


Fig. 4.26 Proposed new boulevard in Bloomsbury. *London Replanned* p. 11.

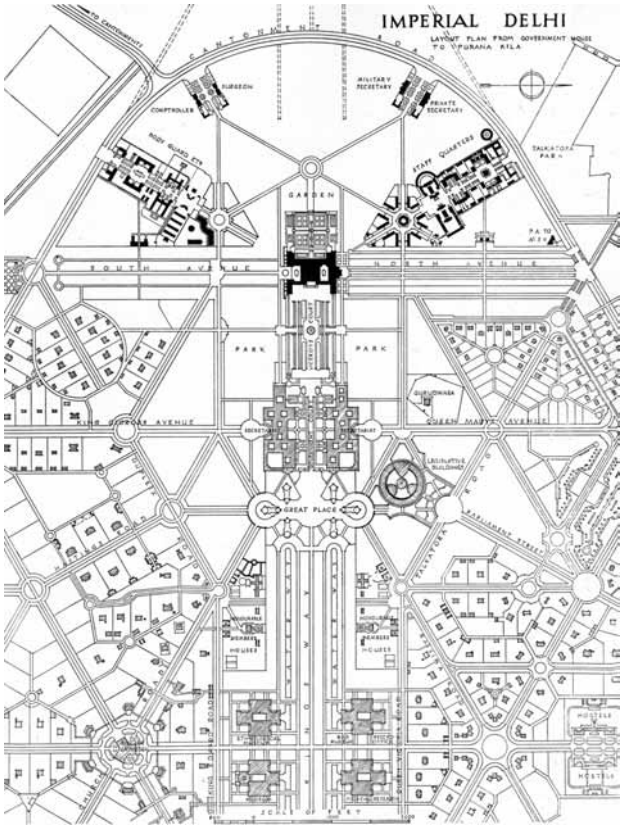


Fig. 4.27 Plan of New Delhi (1912-1931), by Edwin Lutyens. *Lutyens Memorial Volumes.*

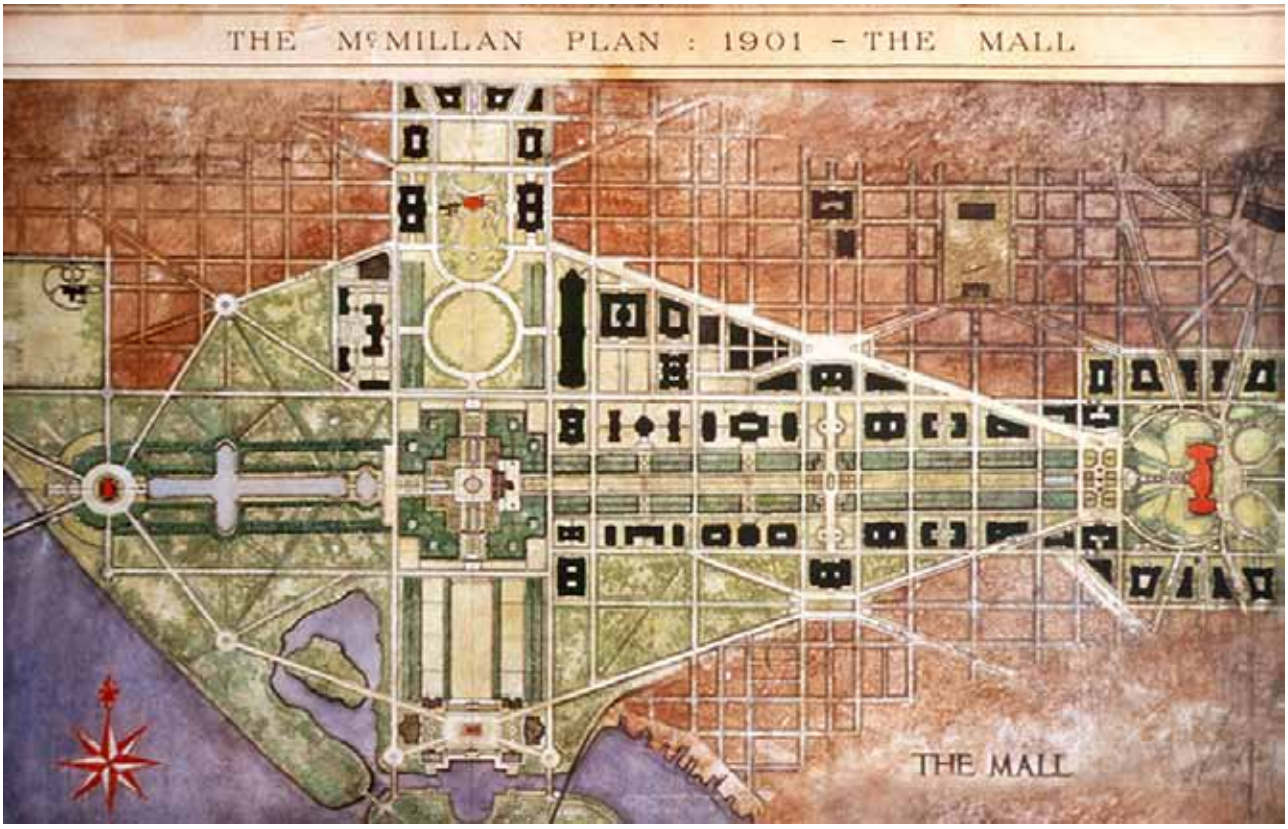


Fig. 4.28 The McMillan Plan of Washington, DC (1901) by the US Senate Park Commission. Wikimedia.

Fig. 4.29 Abercrombie Plan for London (1943). *County of London Plan*.

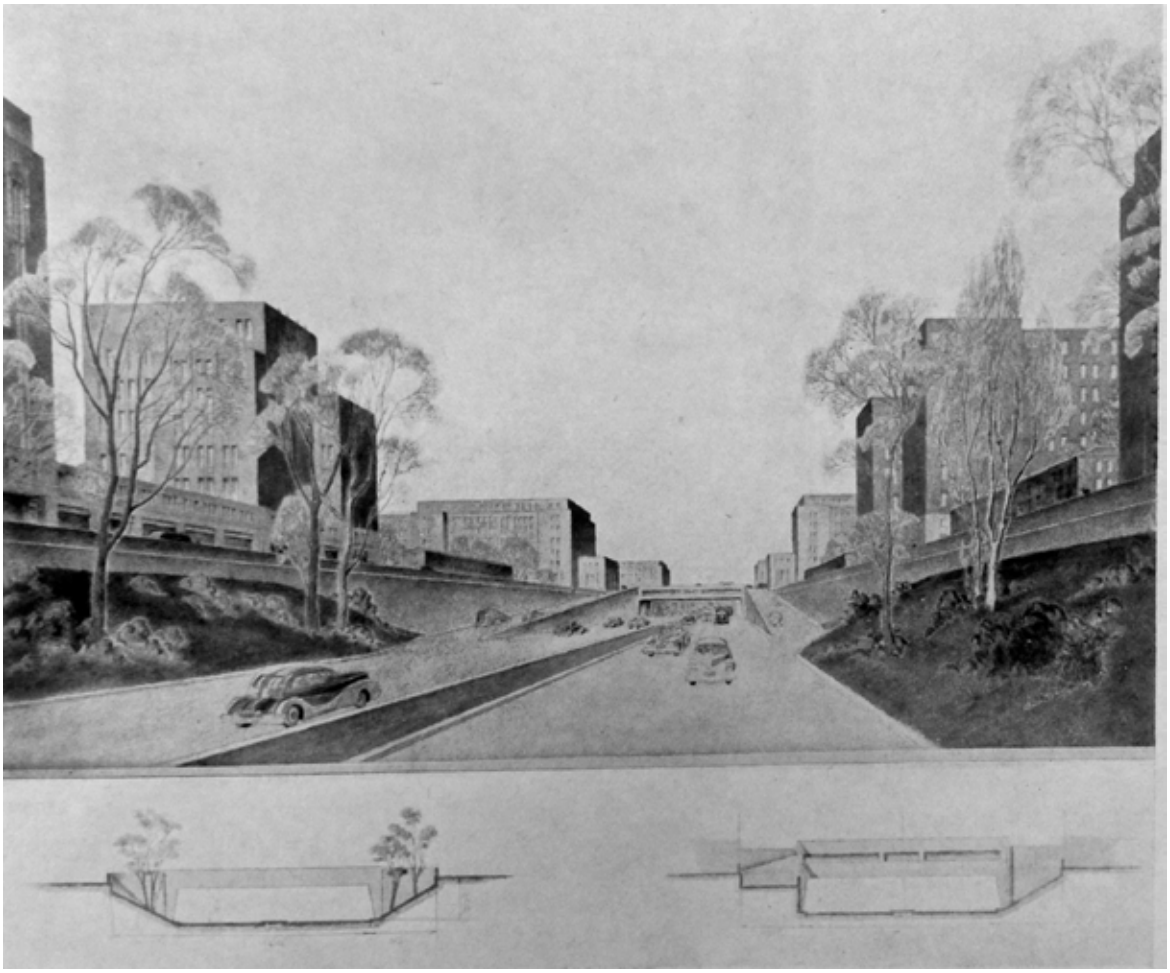


Fig. 4.30 Rendering of Scott's ring road proposal by A C Webb. *Road, Rail, and River in London*, p. 5.

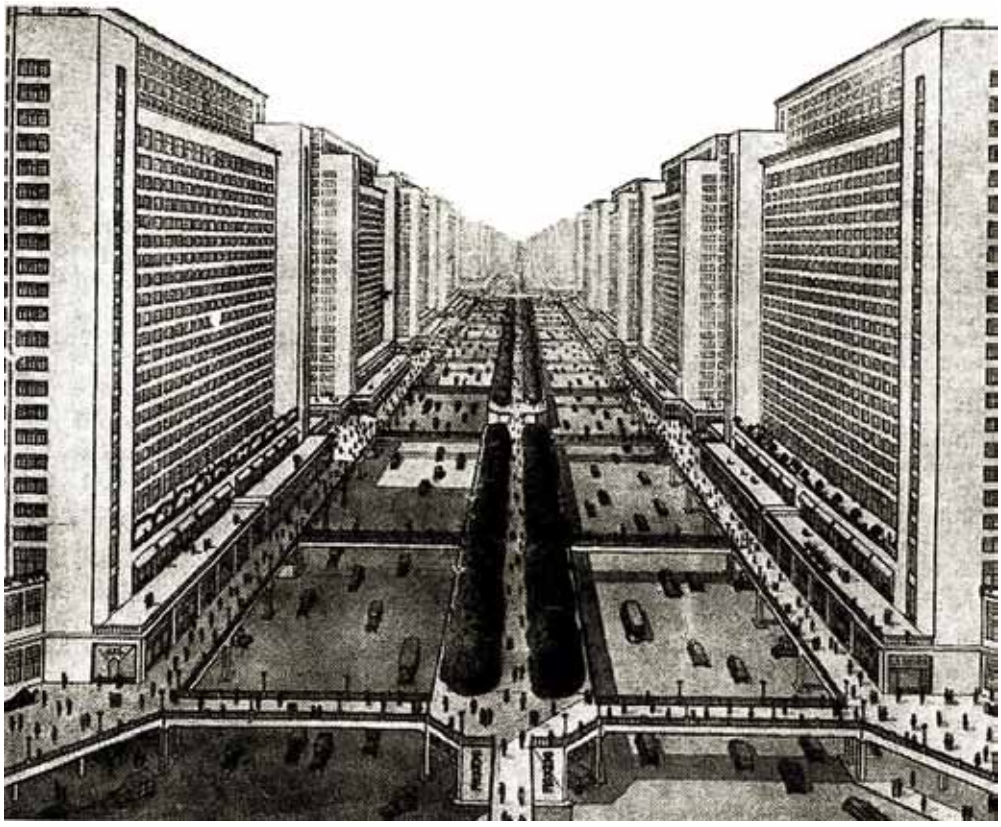
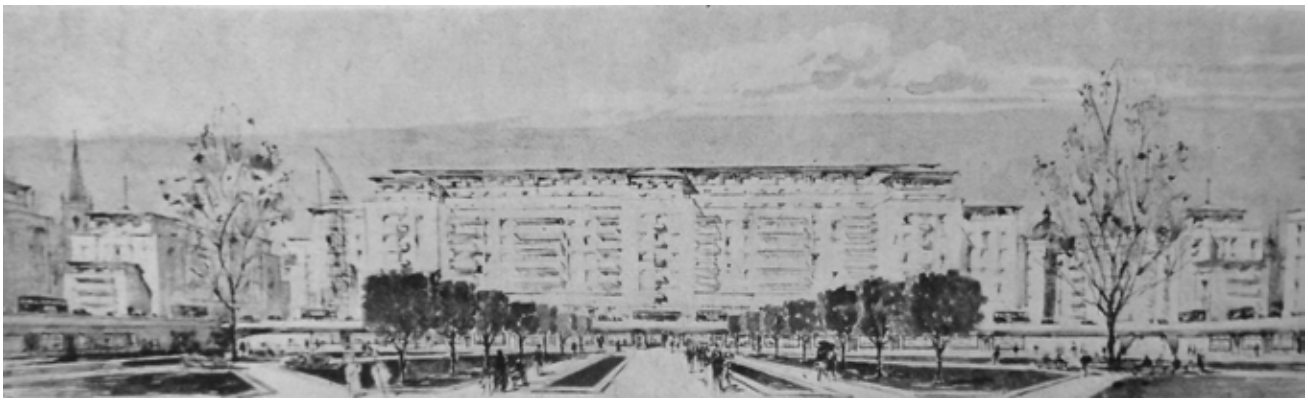


Fig. 4.31 Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse (1933). *Ville Radieuse.*



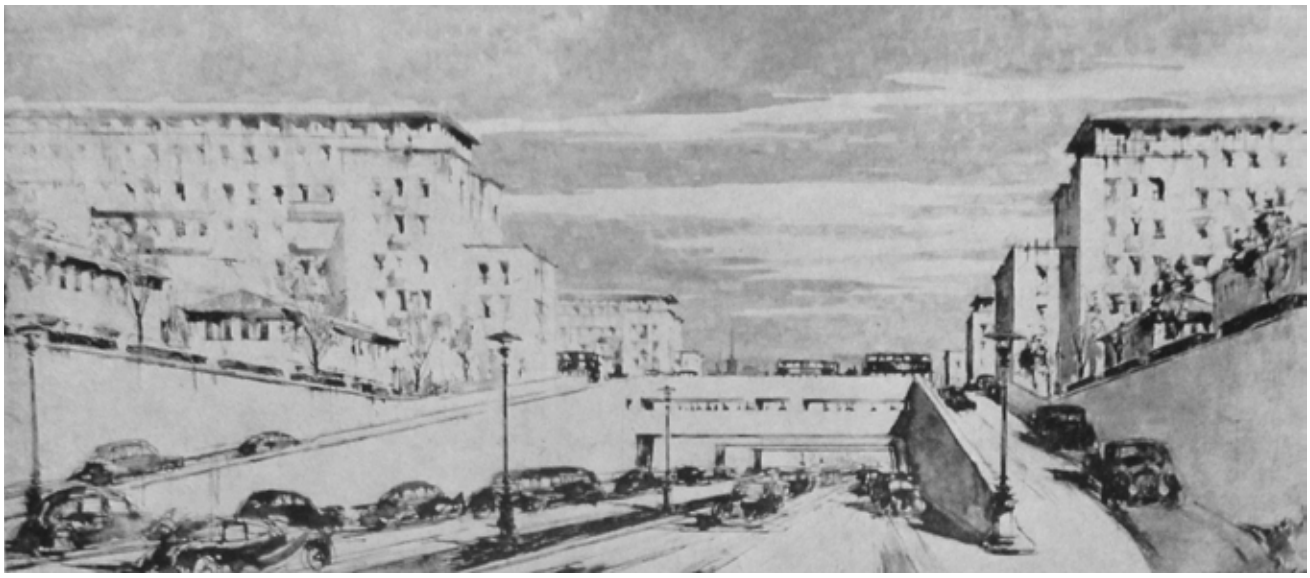


Fig. 4.32 Renderings showing a typical ring road roundabout; the lower image shows the separation of pedestrian and motor traffic crossing the ring road. *Road, Rail, and River in London*, pp. 6 & 16.

Fig. 4.33 Proposed Piccadilly Circus Roundabout *Road, Rail, and River in London*, p. 21.

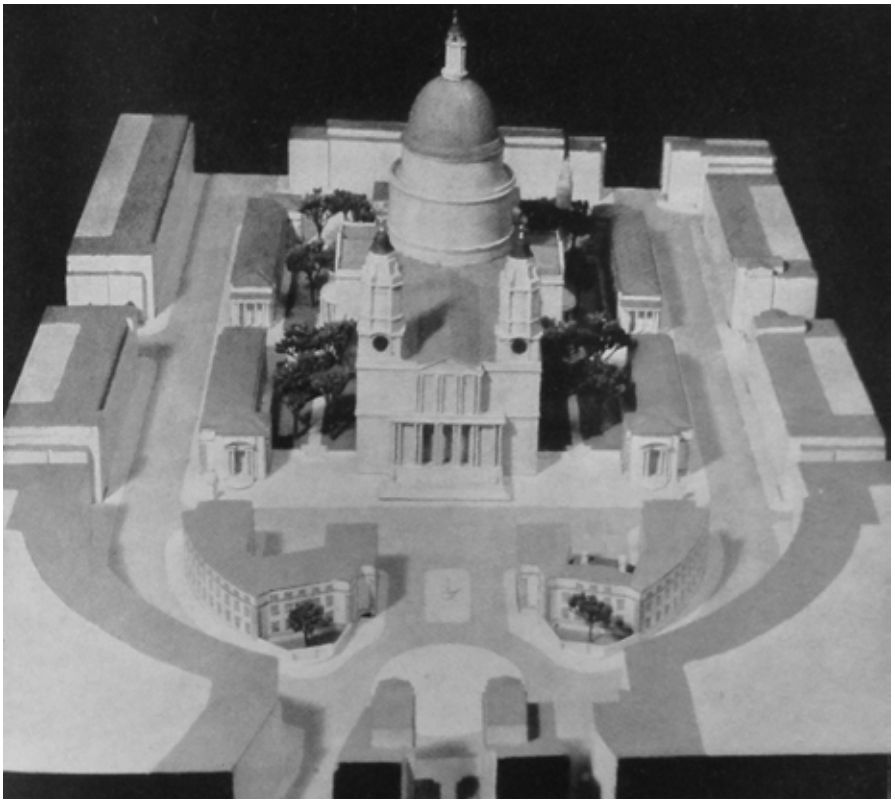


Fig. 4.34 Model of Scott's design for redeveloping the area around St Paul's Cathedral. *Road, Rail, and River in London*, p. 29.

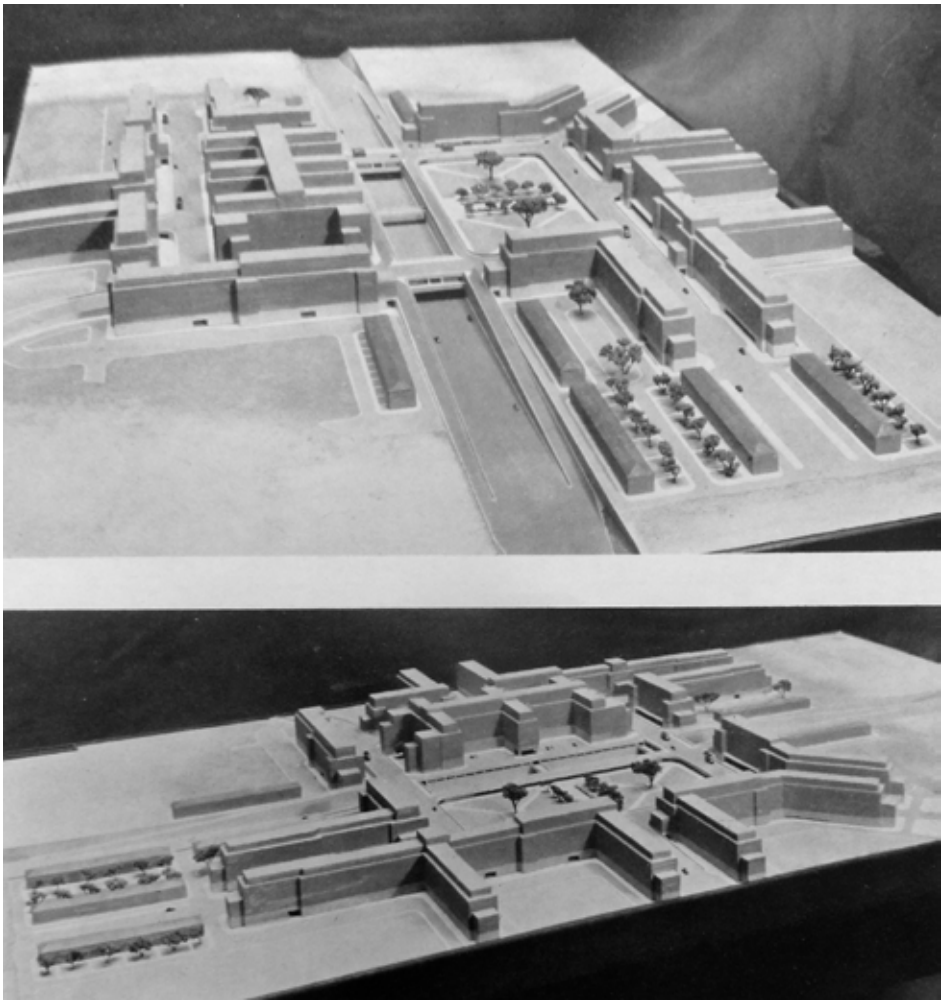


Fig. 4.35 Model of a typical ring-road roundabout. *Road, Rail, and River in London*, front cover.

Fig. 4.36 Cropthorne Court, Maida Vale (1928). Jamie Barras.

Fig. 4.37 Waterloo Bridge (1817), by John Rennie. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Fig. 4.38 Waterloo Bridge (1939). Author, 2012.

Fig. 4.39 Battersea Cross Stitch Kit. Make Industries. And L K Bennett window display, St Pancras Station. Author, 2013.

Fig. 4.40 Klingenberg Power Station, Berlin (1926), by Werner Issel. Eszter Polonyi.

Fig. 4.41 Wall at Klingenberg Power Station, Berlin (1926), by Werner Issel. Eszter Polonyi.

Fig. 4.42 A chimney of Battersea Power Station. Author, 2012.

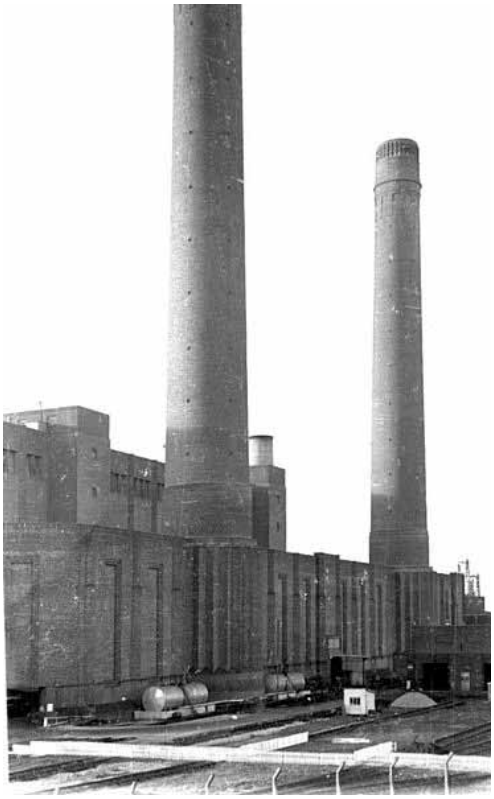


Fig. 4.43 Croydon B Power Station (1950), by Robert Atkinson. Pterre.

Fig. 4.44 Staythorpe Power Station (1950), by T Cecil Howitt. Painting by A R Thomson. Postcard.

Fig. 4.45 North Tees Power Station (1948). English Heritage.

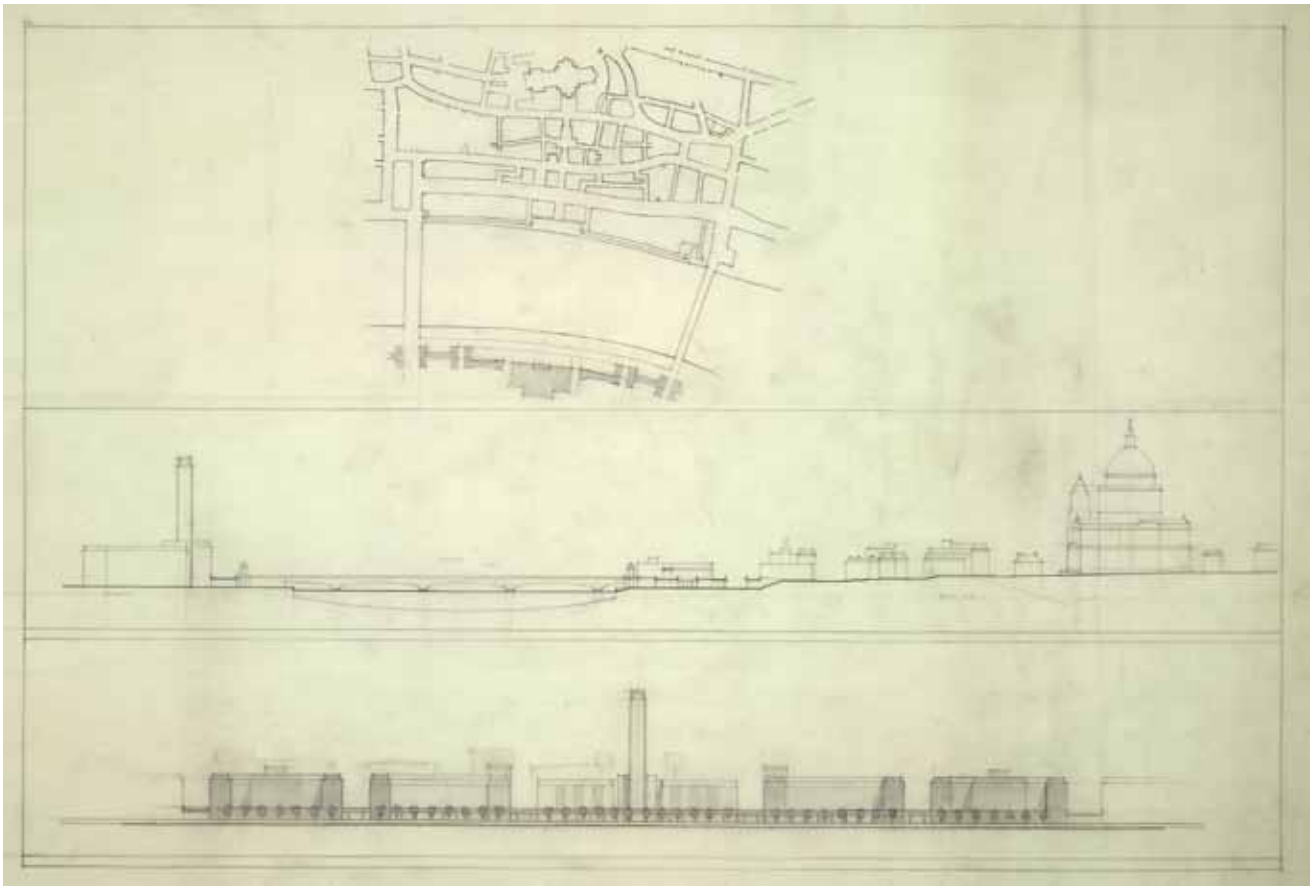


Fig. 4.46 Scheme for Bankside Power Station (c. 1948). RIBA.

Fig. 5.1 Liverpool Cathedral continues to rise over the bombed out city. Photograph circa 1941. Liverpool Cathedral Archives.

Fig. 5.2 Scott's London Guildhall roof (1953). Author, 2013.

Fig. 5.3 The House of Commons Chamber (1950). Parliament.

Fig. 5.4 Section of the House of Commons Chamber (1950). Parliament.

Fig. 5.5 Detail of the woodwork in the House of Commons Chamber (1950). RIBA.

Fig. 5.6 Detail of the curtain fabric for the House of Commons (1950). Author, 2013.

Fig. 5.7 Audio speaker in the back of a bench. Parliament.

Fig. 5.8 The Commons Lobby as rebuilt by Scott. Parliament.

Fig. 5.9 Bundeshaus, Bonn (1949). German Federal Archives.

Fig. 5.10 “Bodley” wallpaper designed by Cecil Beaton and John Betjeman (1951). Watts & Co.

Fig. 5.11 Student accommodation at Charterhouse School (1970s), by Richard Gilbert Scott. Author, 2012.

Fig. 5.12 Guildhall Gallery, London (1989), by Richard Gilbert Scott. Author, 2013.

Fig. 5.13 The ruins of Coventry Cathedral after the 1940 bombing. Imperial War Musem.

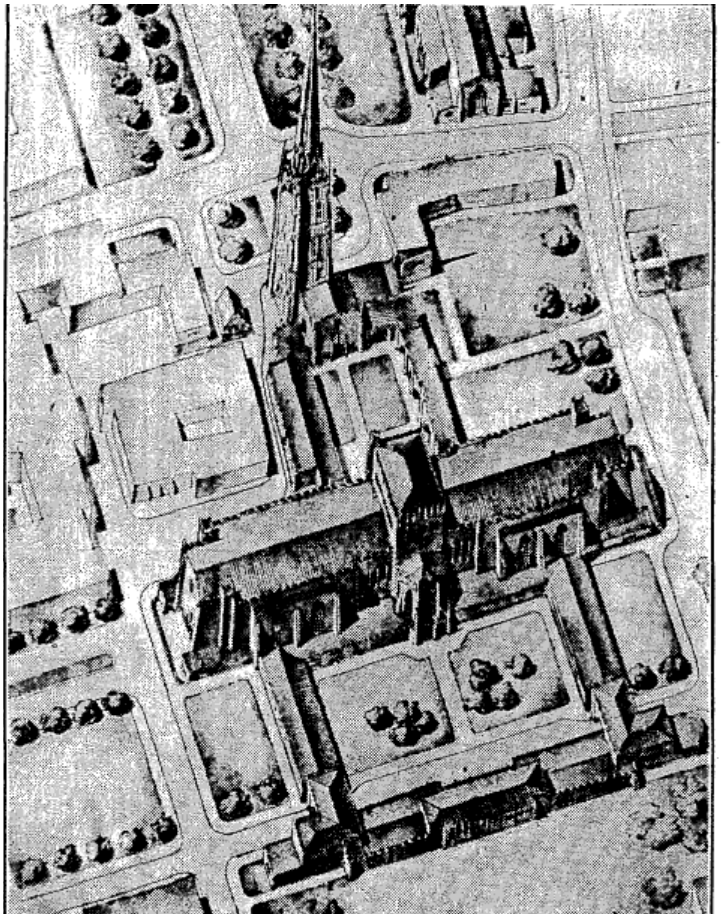


Fig. 5.14 Birdseye view of Scott's design for Coventry Cathedral. *The Times,* 9 Feb 1944.

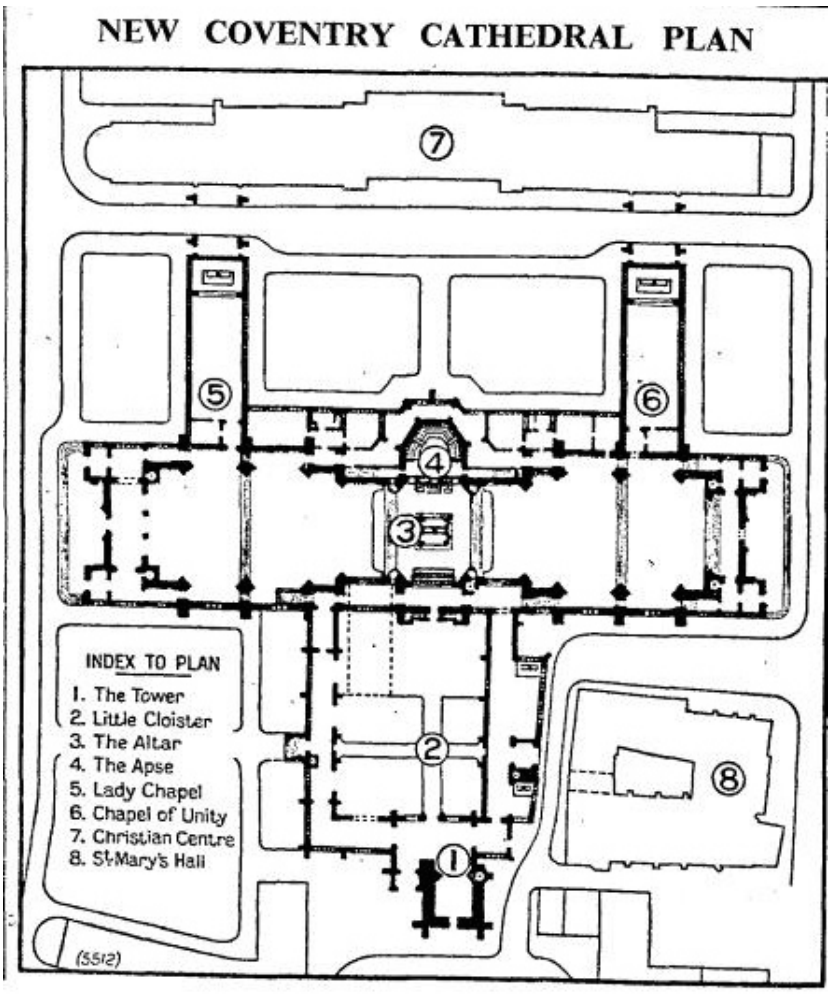


Fig. 5.15 Plan of Scott's design for Coventry Cathedral. *The Times,* 9 Feb 1944.

Fig. 5.16 Rendering of the exterior of Scott's final design for Coventry Cathedral. RIBA.

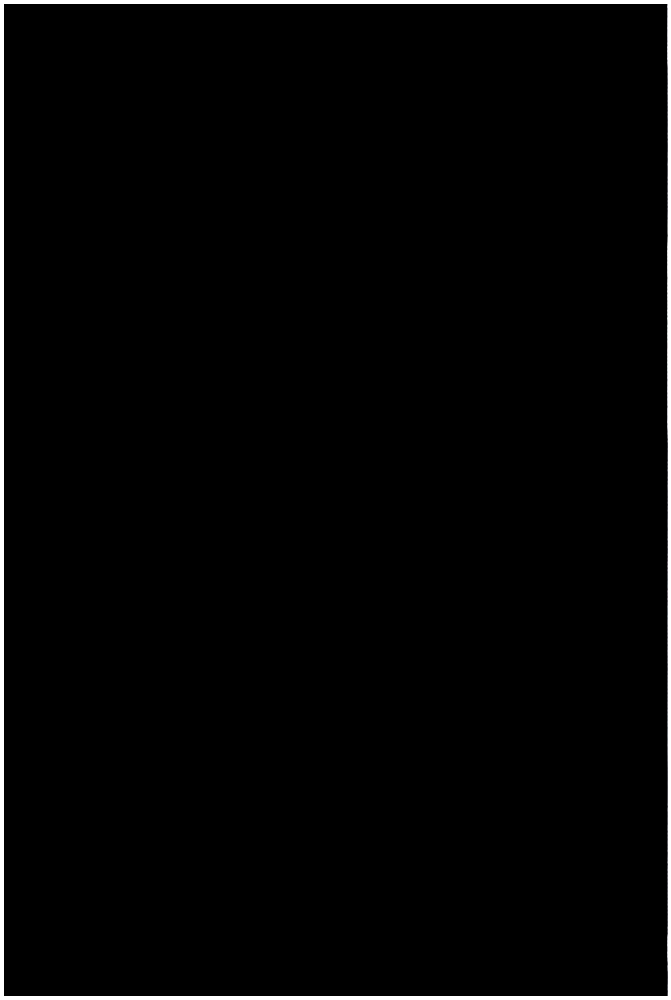


Fig. 5.17 Rendering by A C Webb of Scott's final design for theinterior of Coventry Cathedral. *Giles Gilbert Scott, His Son's View,* p. 77.

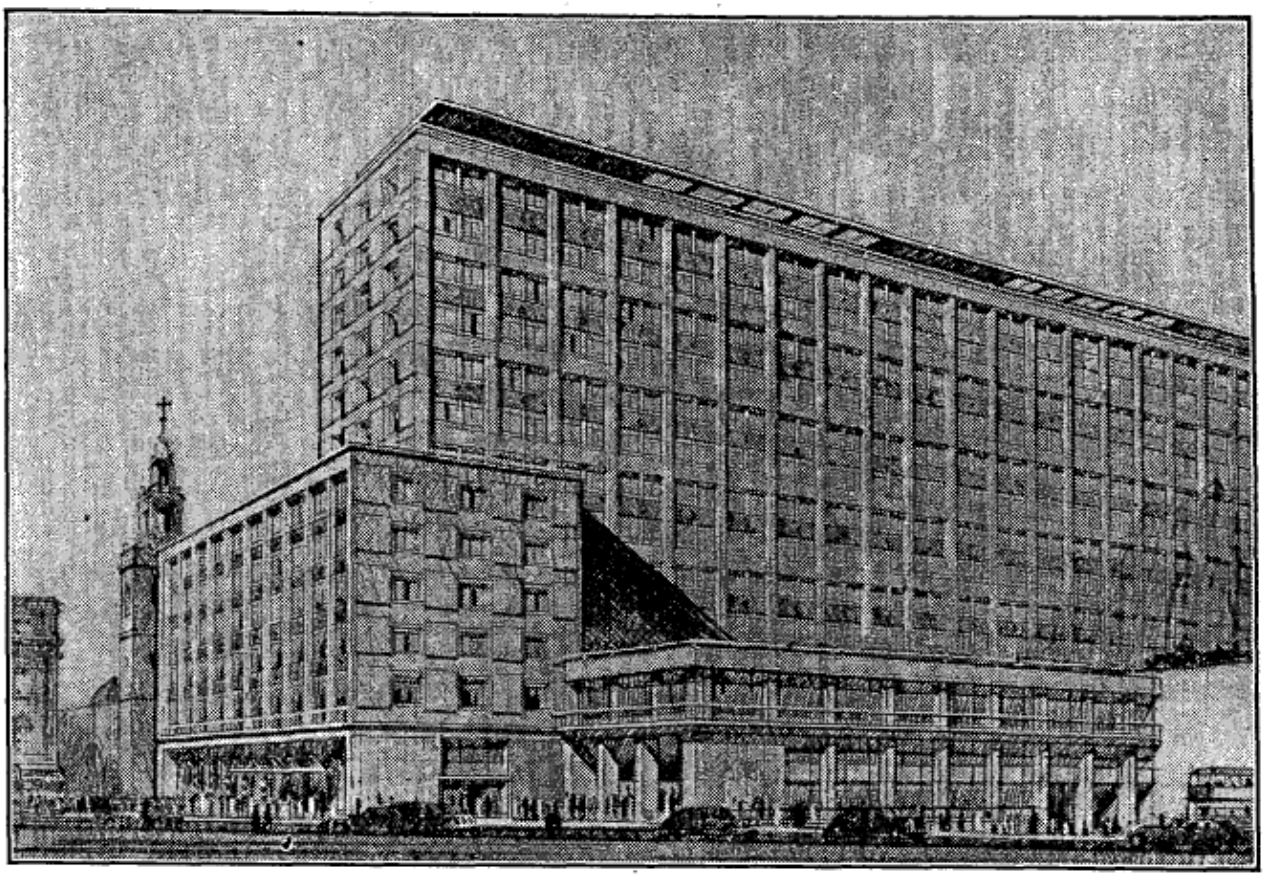


Fig. 5.18 Rendering of proposed office block near St Stephen's, Walbrook (1953), by Messrs Campbell-Jones and Son. *The Times,* 19 November 1953.

Fig. 5.19 Coventry Cathedral (1962), by Basil Spence. Author, 2011.

Fig. 5.20 Facade of Coventry Cathedral, with Epstein's *St Michael*. Author, 2011.

Fig. 5.21 The 'serrated' walls of Dominkus Böhm's Church of St John the Baptist, Neu-Ulm (1927). Andreas Praefcke.

Fig. 5.22 The British Embassy in Rome (1971), by Basil Spence. Basil Spence Archive.

Fig. 5.23 The 'Beehive' extension of the New Zealand Parliament (1979), by Basil Spence. Basil Spence Archive.

Conclusion

Fig. c.1 Church of Christ the King, Plymouth (1960). Parish Archives.

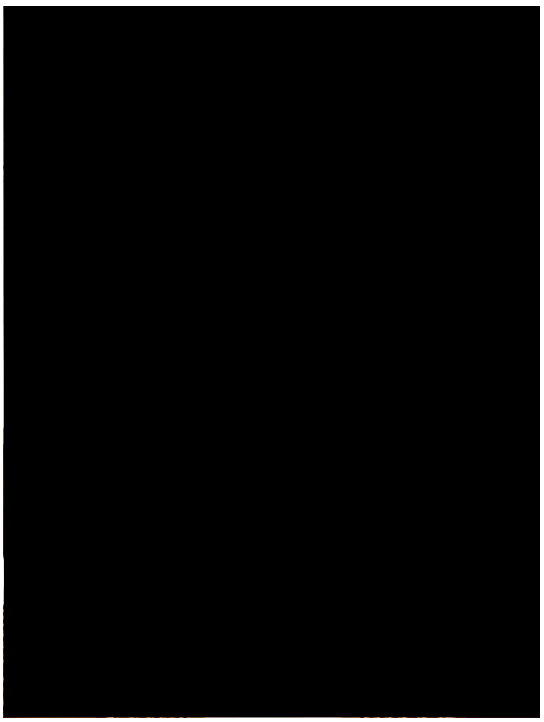


Fig. c.2 Church of Christ the King, Plymouth (1960). Parish Archives.

Fig. c.3 St Columba's Cathedral, Oban (1934). Author, 2011.

Fig. c.4 Detail of adzed door, St Columba's Cathedral, Oban (1934). Author, 2011.

Appendix of Select Projects*

Project Name	Location	Dates	Pevsner Reference
Liverpool Anglican Cathedral	Liverpool	1903 - 1974	*South Lancashire*, 1969, pp.187-190.
Annunciation (RC)	Bournemouth	1905 - 1906	*Hampshire,* 1967, p.121.
St Joseph (RC)	Sheringham	1909 - 1912	*Northeast Norfolk*, 1962, p.314
Our Lady & St Maughold (RC)	Ramsey, Isle of Man	1909 - 1912	
St Paul, Derby Lane (Ang)	Liverpool	1910 - 1916	*South Lancashire,* 1969, p.249
Our Lady (RC)	Northfleet	1913 - 1916	*North Kent & Weald,* 1976, p.438
Downside Abbey	Somerset	1917 - 1938	*North Somerset,* 1958, p.183
Beaumont College War Memorial	Old Windsor	1921 - 1922	*Berkshire,* 2010, p.419
War Memorial	Preston	1919 - 1926	*North Lancashire,* 2006, p.529
Memorial Court, Clare College	Cambridge	1922 - 1954	*Cambridgeshire,* 1970, p.61
Ampleforth Abbey	Yorkshire	1922 - 1960	*North Yorkshire*, 1966, p.62
Charterhouse Chapel	Godalming	1922 - 1927	*Surrey,* 1971, p.144
University Library	Cambridge	1923 - 1931	*Cambridgeshire,* 1970, p.215
Chester House	Paddington, London	1924 - 1926	*London 3*, 2002, p.688
St Alban's (Ang)	Golders Green	1924 - 1933	*London 4,* 2002, pp.133-134
St Alphege (RC)	Bath	1926 - 1954	*Bath*, 2003, p.291
William Booth Memorial	Southwark, London	1926 - 1928	*London 2*, 2002, p.620
St Michael (RC)	Ashford, Surrey	1927 - 1959	*Middlesex*, 1951, p.27
St Francis (Ang)	High Wycombe	1928 - 1929	*Buckinghamshire,* 1960, p.163
Cropthorne Court	Maida Vale, London	1928 - 1930	*London 3,* 2002, p.697
Longwall Quad, Magdalen College	Oxford	1928 - 1932	*Oxfordshire,* 1974, p.155

* Executed projects mentioned in the text. A definitive list of Scott's projects, organised by location, is available in the Scott Family catalogue of the RIBA Drawings Collection (Joanna Heseltine, ed, London:RIBA, 1981), and much of the information in this appendix is taken directly from that document.

Project Name	Location	Dates	Pevsner Reference
City Gate House	Finsbury, London	1929 - 1931	*London 1,* 2002, pp.563-564
Whitelands College	Putney, London	1928 - 1931	*London 2,* 2002, pp.682-683
Our Lady (RC)	Broadstairs	1929 - 1961	*Northeast & East Kent,* 1969, p.157
Battersea Power Station	Battersea, London	1930 - 1932	*London 2,* 2002, pp.672-673
Phoenix Theatre	Holborn, London	1930	*London 4,* 2002, p.317
St Andrew (Ang)	Luton	1931 - 1932	*Bedforshire & Hunts,* 1968, p.116
St Columba's Cathedral (RC)	Oban	1930 - 1951	*Argyll & Bute,* 2000, pp.407-408
Buildings for Lady Margaret Hall	Oxford	1931 - 1934	*Oxfordshire,* 1974, p.232
Waterloo Bridge	London	1932 - 1947	*London 2,* 2002, p.713
Guinness Factory	Park Royal, London	1933 - 1935	*London 3,* 2002, p.139
New Bodleian	Oxford	1934 - 1946	*Oxfordshire,* 1974, p.263
Electricity House	Bristol	1935 - 1951	*Bristol,* 2004, p.131
Society of Home Students	Oxford	1935 - 1951	*Oxfordshire,* 1974, p.237
LCC Offices	Lambeth, London	1935 - 1958	*London 2,* 2002, p.355
George V Memorial	Westminster, London	1936 - 1947	*London 6,* 2003, p.275
House of Commons	Westminster, London	1945 - 1951	*London I,* 1973, p.528
Bankside Power Station	Southwark, London	1947 - 1960	*London 2,* 2002, p.582
Trinity College Chapel	Toronto	1947 - 1957	
Guildhall Roof and Offices	City of London	1950 - 1957	*London 1,* 2002, pp.136, 298-305
Our Lady of Mt Carmel (RC)	Kensington, London	1954 - 1959	*London 3,* 2002, p.464
St Anthony (RC)	Preston	1954 - 1959	*North Lancashire,* 2006, pp.531-2
Christ the King (RC)	Plymouth	1959 - 1962	*Devon,* 2002, p.646

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Architectural Drawings and Photographs

London, UK:

London Metropolitan Archives:
Westminster House, Parliament Square: MCC/CL/L/CC/10/04; MCC/CL/GP/CER/13

Royal Institute of British Architects Archives and Drawings Collection:
George Gilbert Scott, Sr Sketchbooks: SKB 281/2-3; SKB 282/2-5; SKB 283/1-3
Giles Gilbert Scott Papers: ScGG/73; 77; 78; 79; 80; 82; 87; 89; 91; 93; 99; 102; 139; 254; 256; 257; 259; 261; 267; 268; 276; 279; 280; 282; 284
Giles Gilbert Scott Drawings: ScGG [6]; [19]; [20]; [26]; [30]; SCOTT RAN 7, 8, 9
Giles Gilbert Scott Sketchbooks: SKB/302-304

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