

CHAPTER 1

Marylebone Parish Church

The parish church of Marylebone, erected to Thomas Hardwick's designs in 1813–17, with a chancel added by Thomas Harris in 1884–5, is one of the outer landmarks of the West End. Its commanding portico and tower facing Marylebone Road represent a Roman foil to the Greek-style church of St Pancras, raised soon afterwards a mile further east along the same main thoroughfare. They also act as a scenic vista-stopper to York Gate, the central entrance into Regent's Park.

Early schemes and the search for a site

The present church is the third dedicated to St Mary, from whom Marylebone (properly St Marylebone) derives its name. Its predecessors occupied a site a little to the south, abutting the west side of the High Street near the top of the old Marylebone village (page ###). The second church, opened in 1742, soon proved too small for the fast-growing parish, despite a clutch of new proprietary chapels. As early as 1770 Marylebone's perpetual curate John Harley, son of the 3rd Earl of Oxford and also Archdeacon of Hereford, set in train the process of securing a new church by asking the newly appointed Select Vestry to apply for an Act of Parliament for that purpose. So started a protracted saga, fully set out in F. H. W. Sheppard's *Local Government in St Marylebone*, centred upon finding a spacious and affordable site in a part of the parish agreeable to all interests.

To summarize, a first scheme to build on a site further down Marylebone High Street foundered on the cost of buying out an existing lessee. Henry Portman then offered land at what was to become Manchester Square, for which William Chambers made ambitious plans, but these too fell through. In 1775 the 3rd Duke of Portland countered with the offer of some empty land where Devonshire Place was shortly to be built, plus a substantial subsidy towards building costs. For some reason this initiative too fizzled out. After the death in 1788 of Archdeacon Harley (by then Bishop of Hereford) and during the long period of war that followed, the search's emphasis shifted towards the need for more burial ground. That was finally satisfied in 1806-7 by the purchase of land in St John's Wood, to which a new chapel was soon to be attached.¹

By now the need for a worthy church had become urgent. The population of the parish had risen to some 75,000, and ideas for developing the Crown lands of Marylebone Park were in the air. The existing church in the High Street was ever more cramped and outdated, and in an era of growing religious feeling the Georgian system of private proprietary chapels was beginning to be found reprehensible.

Fresh circumstances arose after the death in 1809 of the parish's patron, the 3rd Duke of Portland, who had first been too busy and latterly too ill to help the Vestry cut through the interests and complexities besetting their church-building initiatives. His son the 4th Duke proved more tractable. In February 1810 the Vestry therefore appointed a committee to look into sites for a church and two parochial chapels, the tally now thought needful to make up the lack of accommodation. Reporting that May, the committee set out several options, but clearly recommended building the new church where it now stands, on about an acre of vacant, Portland-owned land north of the existing church, between the High Street and Nottingham Place, and facing north towards the New Road. The site would be much enhanced, they added, by purchasing some additional ground occupied by buildings, particularly

towards the High Street, allowing a better approach from that side, likely to be the main one. A rough estimate of £60,000 was suggested for a church of brick with stone facings or dressings and a dome, tower or steeple, exclusive of the cost of the land.²

The main site thus recommended was confined and awkward in shape, a rough rectangle some 175ft by 150ft to the north, where the church would have to be built, with a narrower funnel to the south-east leading down to the High Street. Perhaps for that reason, the full Vestry by a narrow margin rejected the committee's advice in favour of a more open plot on Crown land on the north side of the New Road, thereby prolonging the wild-goose chase for a site by another four years. The recommended plot was thought suitable for one of the parochial chapels, and in June 1810 the Duke of Portland agreed to donate it for that purpose. That allowed the Vestry to investigate buying the extra land to enhance the approaches, as the committee had suggested. The Duke promised to sell these freeholds at a fair price, while John White, lessee of the critical plots facing the High Street, undertook to pass them on to the Vestry for the cost he had recently paid for them instead of rebuilding them with houses.

At this stage White also showed the committee a plan for a grand parish church to seat 1,600, commissioned earlier by the 3rd Duke from himself or his son (whether for this site or elsewhere is unclear), and a sketch for a chapel of lesser dimensions with houses for the minister and his assistant, tailored to the site. For the moment these were merely noted. A plan later published by White junior for a 'double church ... accommodating a large number of persons' was probably a different scheme altogether, intended for an island site on Crown land, much talked about as a possible location for the parish church during the years 1810-13. Equally ideal was an octagonal domed scheme dated 'about 1813' and drawn out by the young C. H. Smith of Portland Road.³

The next step was for the Vestry to apply for an Act of Parliament to build a parish church and 'two or more' chapels of ease, passed in 1811. The positioning of the church was still up in the air, but the site for the second of the two chapels was now also fixed. That was the St John's Wood burial ground, which had been in the Vestry's hands since 1807, so building there could start directly. As regards the New Road chapel, the formalities for conveying the main site and making the extra purchases of land followed in 1812. As well as the ground towards the High Street, these included a thin slice of Crown land facing the New Road, needed for the chapel front.⁴

Design, construction and aggrandizement, 1813–17

Adhering to long-standing practice in choosing a parishioner as architect, the Vestry selected Thomas Hardwick of Berners Street to design both chapels. The sixty-year old Hardwick, a former pupil and neighbour of Chambers, was a safe pair of hands. Having rebuilt the parish watch-house in 1803–4, he was used to the Vestry and its ways and had experience in designing and restoring classical churches. With the St John's Wood chapel well advanced, he was formally appointed to design the New Road chapel in April 1813, beating off the challenge of John White junior, whose plans were merely glanced at. To provide the 1,600 seats stipulated, Hardwick planned a chapel orientated north–south and measuring 110ft by 60ft internally, with an Ionic portico set back from the New Road by 80ft (later reduced to 50ft). Burial vaults were provided underneath, but there were to be no interments in the extra lands to the south-east, which took the form of an unconsecrated garden and carriage sweep, not a churchyard. The only exceptional features were the so-called 'advanced corps', projections at obtuse angles to the south-east and south-west, flanking a flat end with two windows behind the altar (Ill. 1.03). The south-east projection responded to the High Street approach-drive, and

contained a grand staircase whereby the Duke of Portland and other notables could mount to their private pews in the lower tier of two galleries. Its south-west counterpart was mainly for symmetry, but contained another gallery stair and vestries. These features apart, the chapel if thus completed would have looked like a larger version of the St John's Wood chapel, which likewise has an open Ionic portico and is built of brick plastered over in Roman cement with Portland stone dressings. The span of the trussed roof, about 63ft, was wide but not exceptional for its date (Ill. 1.05).⁵

Hardwick's design went out to tender in June 1813, adopting the procedures followed for St John's Wood. The lowest of five bidders, tendering just under £20,000, was Richard Wade, a carpenter-builder operating from Buckingham Place (now the north end of Cleveland Street). On 5 July a foundation stone was laid in the duke's absence by Dr Luke Heslop, Marylebone's septuagenarian and pluralist rector. Once articles of agreement containing a full specification had been signed, Wade proceeded efficiently and had covered in the structure by the end of the year. But by then the negotiations with the Crown and John Nash to build the parish church further east at the top of Portland Place (page ###) were foundering, and the idea of upgrading the New Road chapel, already blessed by ducal patronage, must have been widely bruited. A hint came in November, when the sculptor Charles Rossi was commissioned for 300 guineas to provide statues 'on the portico' - presumably meaning on the cupola (Ill. 1.07). Nevertheless not until June 1814 did the Vestry formally decide that Hardwick should aggrandize the chapel into a church. That entailed taking down much completed work, including the whole cupola and the end walls of the front towards the New Road.

This shift in status hardly affected the inside, where the accommodation and its arrangement in two tiers of galleries remained the same. Instead, extra money was lavished on external show. The sums involved were large. In October 1814 Hardwick estimated the completion of

the church according to the altered plans at £26,600, but that excluded such major items as the enlarged portico and making the garden. The final cost, put in 1817 at £62,411, was close to the 1810 committee's estimate; though there were some donations it was met mainly from annuities guaranteed by the parish rate rather than directly by a special church rate.

The main changes were the lengthening of the New Road front, so as to create extra projections at each end enclosing more spacious stone stairs; the substitution of a grand hexastyle Corinthian portico in front of this backdrop, in place of the smaller Ionic one first planned; the heightening and elaboration of the cupola (the substitution of a 'spire' was contemplated but rejected); and the enrichment of the body of the church all round, in the guise of extra Portland stonework to the window surrounds, a continuous balustrade and cornice, and giant Corinthian pilasters at the major angles. The sculptor Henry Westmacott was commissioned to model the capitals for the columns and pilasters. In the revised exterior's monumentality it is tempting to see the hand of Thomas Hardwick's son Philip, who quite often substituted for his father at progress meetings about the church. The Pantheon-like fullness of the portico and the hint of St Paul's Baroque in the balustrades and angle features foreshadow later works by the son but are absent from the father's more inhibited classicism (Ills 1.01, 1.02).

All these changes caused delays, so that a Vestry which had thought the chapel all but complete at the end of 1813 was vexed to find its new church far from ready at the start of 1816. Difficulties over stone supply for the portico had much to do with this; in March some of the blocks had arrived, others were 'in the river', others again still at Portland; it was finally completed that autumn. Meanwhile the garden had been railed in by George, Edward and Richard Wood of Tottenham Court Road, and laid out with gravel sweeps, grass verges and 'proper sized Trees of suitable variety' by Joseph Knight of King's Road, Chelsea. The consecration, first scheduled for 31 December, took place on 4 February 1817.

The interior

Except for a pretty plaster ceiling, the body of the church, fitted out by Wade, was Calvinistically austere. The gallery tiers were supported by minimal reeded and bronzed iron columns topped by tiny gilt capitals, and had boxy fronts from which sparse oil lamps hung. The pews on the ground floor rose to about five feet and were of deal, grained and varnished; they had doors except in the aisles, where the free seats were concentrated.

The liturgically east (actually south) end afforded a sharp contrast. In the only known early view of the interior, a high mahogany pulpit and reading desk, presumably designed by the Hardwicks, are shown festooned in drapery by the local upholsterer David George Williams, who commissioned the picture (Ill. 1.08). Behind, the dominant feature is the organ above the altar, ordered from William Gray of the New Road in 1814 and first played by Charles Wesley, elected church organist in 1816. A large space in the centre of the organ-case backed by a window was filled with the church's intended tour de force, a transparency by Benjamin West, PRA, directly over an oil painting by the same artist set within a long mahogany screen. To the sides, the canted angles left and right at gallery level accommodated the private pews of the noblest parishioners. Blatantly akin to theatre boxes, these are said to have been equipped with fashionable chairs and stoves, and offered a focus of attraction or distraction for the worshippers.

The origin of the two works of art over the altar goes back to June 1814, when the committee for enlarging the chapel into a church determined the unusual position for Gray's organ, and on Hardwick's earlier recommendation decided to fix stained glass in front of it. Subsequently the philanthropist Sir Thomas Bernard offered the Vestry one of three sacred paintings bought by the British Institution that year, but all were rejected as

too big. The 76-year-old West's name first appears in the Vestry minutes in April 1815, when Hardwick (his near neighbour) was asked to consult with him about the 'window'. West had gained a reputation for large-scale painted glass with some earlier work at St George's Chapel, Windsor, but the new commission followed on an attempted (ultimately fruitless) collaboration between Hardwick, West and another Newman Street artist, the glass-painter Joseph Backler, for a pictorial east window at St James's, Piccadilly, where Hardwick was the surveyor. West visited Marylebone in May 1816, and delivered the result early in 1817, just before the consecration.⁶

Depicting the Angels appearing to the Shepherds, it derived from one of West's Windsor compositions and featured one dominant angelic figure, some seven feet high. Probably painted in translucent materials on a backing of linen or oiled paper, it was fixed at some distance from the external window, behind an inner screen of ground glass supplied by Backler. The vestrymen, at first fulsome in their thanks to the eminent PRA, were taken aback to receive a bill for £800, for they had conceived that the work was to be a gift from a long-standing and grateful parishioner. West partly redeemed himself by undertaking to present the Vestry with a smaller oil painting of the Virgin and Child, to hang over the altar under the transparency. That was installed in 1818, and is the painting which after many vicissitudes, including a long exile in the old church, is now at the end of the liturgically north aisle. As to the transparency, it was never liked and its life was short. With West and Heslop both safely dead it was taken down in 1826, and eventually sold off for a paltry ten guineas, allegedly going to America, where it has never been traced.⁷

The completed church possessed undoubted pomp. But its cost provoked the ire of Marylebone's increasingly tenacious radicals, and was to be the subject of derision in the Commons by Sir Thomas Baring as late as 1828.⁸ It was also old-fashioned for its date, compared most obviously to St Pancras New Church, its chic Greek rival and contemporary further east

along the New Road. E. J. Carlos, critic of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, wrote two broadsides against it, likening the church's arrangement to a theatre which 'had been converted into a conventicle by the Countess of Huntingdon's followers' and West's transparency to compositions 'such as decorate the fronts of houses in a general illumination' – the principal angel, scoffed Carlos, combined 'the face of a child, with the thigh of a porter'. Though kinder towards the exterior, he found the tower measly, with Rossi's angels (of terracotta, like his caryatids at St Pancras Church) skied too high off the ground to be well seen by spectators.⁹

The removal of the transparency coincided with a set of alterations undertaken in 1825–6 for Heslop's successor as rector, Dr Hume Spry, who had transferred from All Souls, Langham Place. They included installing a font (now in the north aisle), destroying the egregious private pews in the angles, and reducing the organ case to an orthodox size and shape, so creating more seats for children in the upper sectors behind the altar. To light these seats two extra windows were added high up at the south (liturgically east) end. These works seem to have been entrusted to the Vestry's surveyor Edward Tilbury, not the decrepit Hardwick.¹⁰

Extension, 1883–5

For over a half-century few further changes were made, apart from a great bevy of wall memorials installed mostly in the 1820s–40s. The vaults were closed for burials in 1853 and subsequently bricked up, but the coffins were not then removed. Repairs and redecorations of 1851 and 1873 seem to have been minor. Arriving in December 1882, a new-broom rector, William Barker, teetotaller and High Churchman, found much to do. 'His first forward step is Organisation', reported the *Marylebone Mercury*. That meant starting a monthly magazine and laying plans to cleanse, reorder and redecorate the

church. As the charge of maintaining this and five other churches still fell on the Vestry, Barker had to move circumspectly. His strategy was to commission designs himself, invite parishioners to see them at his house in March 1883, and then form a committee to raise money and carry them through without soliciting funds from the Vestry.¹¹

The plans thus put forward emanated from Thomas Harris, a long-standing vestryman and at that moment briefly chairman of the Vestry. An architect of the second rank, Harris has never lived down a youthful pamphlet, *Victorian Architecture* (1860), championing a forceful Gothic and causing him to be labelled 'Victorian' Harris. Afterwards he built up a commercial and country-house practice in a range of styles. He also had a long record of working in the parish, going back to the Grotto Passage Ragged School (page ###). Harris devoted great care and effort to the extension and decoration of his parish church, stepping down from chairing the Vestry to avoid conflicts of interest, and producing two pamphlets relating to the job – first a booklet describing what had been done, and then an account of Marylebone Gardens, the latter in connection with a grand fund-raising bazaar held at the Portman Rooms in Baker Street, designed by Harris as a mock-up of the gardens, with stallholders in period costume. Also involved from early on was the history painter and muralist Edward Armitage, like Harris a resident of St John's Wood, who volunteered to paint subjects between the nave windows without charge.¹²

The scheme thus proposed was in outline the standard Victorian solution for reorganizing a classical urban church, by pushing out at the liturgical east end and reducing the galleries, so as to make distinct zones for the choir and sanctuary and create an axis of progression, countering the crosswise focus of the Georgian box. As much of the rented seating was in the galleries, Barker and Harris could not eliminate these altogether, choosing instead to remove the little-used upper tier along with all the accommodation behind the altar. Harris had limited space to extend, so he proposed just

throwing out an apse to hold the sanctuary and what was at first to have been a square-ended room to the south-west for a new vestry. All the other changes were contrived within the existing body of Hardwick's church. The whole was designed in a Renaissance style, deemed to harmonize with the original but with the decorative arts much in mind.

Looking for a second opinion, the Vestry consulted Arthur Blomfield, the foremost expert on extending such London churches. Blomfield warmly endorsed the proposals, which were indeed much in his idiom, arguing that they would enhance 'a finely proportioned interior, which has never yet been seen under fair conditions' and 'cannot be said at present to have any style at all'.¹³ But a vocal minority of the Vestry opposed the scheme, on the grounds that it actually reduced the number of seats, or from suspicion of Barker's churchmanship. To mollify the critics, Harris made amendments early in 1884. The main changes were to retain a fragment of the upper galleries at the west end; to revise the staircase arrangements in the angled projections; and to substitute a secondary apse for a square end to the vestry, so as to interfere less with the passage behind leading to St Marylebone School. To soothe Protestant sensibilities it was also agreed that the iconographic scheme for the sanctuary, which Harris had sketched out in detail (Ill. 1.09), would require further sanction.¹⁴

With subscriptions coming in well enough the work could now go ahead. Gladstone's wife Catherine, squired by her son Herbert Gladstone MP and bearing 'a very kind message' from the Prime Minister, laid the foundation stone on 8 August 1884. The structural extensions came first, undertaken by the builder Edward Conder, who used W. H. Lascelles' concrete blocks, stuccoed over, for the main apse. Only after that work was finished did the church close in October for the removal of the upper galleries, the reseating of the body of the church and the interior embellishments. The reopening took place on 31 January 1885, boosted by Harris's commemorative

booklet and a paean in the *Mercury*: 'a sombre, dull, unattractive interior has been transformed into a veritable temple of loveliness'.¹⁵

As recast, the tone of the nave was more integrated with the chancel than appears today. Beneath Jackson & Sons' new and deeper ceiling in *carton pierre* the colouring of the gallery fronts (enriched with conventional plaster swags) and columns (thickened up and given Ionic capitals) probably matched the handsome long benches in light Honduras mahogany on the nave floor below, made by the Lascelles firm. Missing today, and seemingly unrecorded, is Armitage's scheme of painted murals, which alternated with stained glass in the nave windows – no longer obscured by the upper galleries – to illustrate the Law and the Gospels. (At least one of the windows was given by the Total Abstinence Society.) All this fruity colour was later expunged.¹⁶

The essentials of Harris's choir and sanctuary survive. They are prefaced by a solid dado-height screen of basilican type, faced in veined marble and alabaster, as sketched by Harris in 1883 but with the built-in pulpit on the right rather than the left. W. H. Burke & Co. of Newman Street supplied the marbles throughout, mainly Rouge Royal and Comblachien (popularized by the Paris Opéra), as well as all the mosaic work, at its best in the pretty choir floor. The intricate brass lectern, by W. Richardson & Co. of Brownlow Street, originally occupied the centre of the choir but is now set to one side (Ill. 1.10). The mahogany choir stalls, made by John Walden of Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, culminate in angels on the front ends carved by John Daymond & Son (Ill. 1.11).¹⁷

Many of these craftsmen had probably worked for Harris elsewhere. That is certainly true of the local firm Campbell, Smith & Campbell (who fitted up the Marylebone Gardens bazaar); they carried out the sanctuary decorations in mosaic and paintwork, as well as the stained glass throughout. The sanctuary is set apart behind a marble arch flanked by double columns, with painted angels of judgement in the spandrels. In the scheme as revised

by Harris and once again vetted for the Vestry by Blomfield, the apsidal ceiling reveals Christ in Glory surrounded by prophets, saints and angels (Ill. 1.12). Lower down, the tier at eye-level features the Evangelists and other New Testament authors. The lost windows portrayed major episodes in the life of Christ, with the Crucifixion over the altar as their natural central climax within a separate aedicule, depicted in mosaic but now somewhat isolated. The bottom tier at dado level, lined in mosaic, is semi-figurative and embraces an alabaster aumbry and sedilia (Ill. 1.13). Outside the sanctuary arch, the array of giant pilasters is all Harris's work, though they are clearly related to Hardwick's external pilasters – the common source being St Paul's Cathedral. Likewise the open metalwork screens at high level, now gilded, can only be of the 1880s but might be taken as from the 1820s. Flanking these are empty organ cases; that on the liturgically south side represents the organ as rebuilt by Gray & Davison at this time, while its counterpart on the other side houses the remains of a Schulze organ brought here from Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road in 1957.¹⁸

As part of these changes, the former pulpit and reading desk were removed to the old church, soon to be joined by West's Virgin and Child.¹⁹ In the church thus renewed, Barker was able to develop a fine singing tradition which has lasted till this day. It was here, for instance, that Stainer's *Crucifixion* received its premiere in 1887 under his pupil and friend William Hodge, organist at St Marylebone.

Twentieth-century changes

In 1898 the church garden became municipal property under an Act dividing church and local government in Marylebone. The chronicle of the succeeding forty years is sparse. Even the extent of Second World War bomb damage is unclear. Official records reveal little structural injury, yet the fabric shows

traces of damage, and there is a tradition that the church was closed for some years, perhaps after a flying bomb fell at York Gate on 10 July 1944.²⁰ At some point all the stained glass was removed on the pretext of blast breakages, leaving only patterns in the margins.

In 1942 a newly installed rector, Hugh J. Matthews, hit on an original idea. The clandestine marriage of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett at the church in September 1846, familiar to poetry-lovers, had been popularized by Rudolf Besier's smash-hit play of 1930, *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, adapted as a film in 1934 (with the marriage episode partly filmed *in situ*). Matthews now planned a Browning chapel to recall the event and answer the church's need for a side space for small services. His architect, Michael Tapper, advised that this could not be done within the existing fabric without impairing its unity, and so in 1943 prepared designs and a perspective for a separate stone box attached to the east (liturgically north) side (Ill. 1.14).²¹

With the war over, Matthews could promote his scheme. That was done with some flourish in the centenary year, 1946, by means of a booklet on the parish's history centred on colour views of Tapper's Browning Memorial Chapel, and a letter to *The Times* signed by Lord Lytton, Lord Wavell, the poet laureate John Masefield and Matthews, who prepared for a fund-raising tour to the United States. But opposition then arose. Nonconformists pointed out that St Marylebone Church had been marginal to the Brownings and the Barretts, both families chapel-goers if anything. At that moment too, money spent on a new structure seemed frivolous when churches urgently needed repair, and the Browning Settlement in Walworth wanted funds for its mission among the poor. The criticisms damaged the project's prospects. Matthews and his allies failed to raise the money and finally abandoned it in 1948. Instead, Albert Richardson (of Richardson & Houfe, architects) prepared a scheme for converting the westernmost bay of the north aisle into a small chapel, which was furnished with memorabilia including Browning's table and chair. This space had an unhappy history, suffering thefts and a fire, and

has now been subsumed into a meeting room, called the Browning Room. Its best surviving feature is a memorial window by Harry Stammers, inserted in 1953.²²

With the demolition of the former parish church of 1742 in 1948–9, the most significant of its wall memorials were reinstalled in its successor, where they added to an already considerable accumulation of tablets. Glass chandeliers from the former Marylebone Council Chamber were installed in the nave in 1968. The last set of major changes took place under Christopher Hamel Cooke, rector from 1979. Hamel Cooke, who had studied the relations between religion and medicine as a hospital chaplain in Coventry, became a leading light in the Institute of Religion and Medicine founded in Wimpole Street in 1964. Hence arose his idea of converting the crypt into a centre for Christian healing and counselling. Once the coffins had gone off to Brookwood Cemetery in 1980, a complete reorganization of the crypt followed, with a hall in the centre, offices for the institute and other meeting spaces on one side, and facilities for a medical practice on the other. The Braithwaite Partnership, working with Welch & Lander, designed the scheme, which was carried out in 1986–7. A decade later, extensions were made beyond the original envelope of the crypt.²³

In the body of the church, Hamel Cooke fostered a link with the Royal Academy of Music across Marylebone Road as a way of procuring a new organ. The Gray & Davison organ of 1884 had never been deemed satisfactory, even after reconstruction in 1965. Sharing the project with the Royal Academy became a way of acquiring a more sophisticated instrument than the parish could have afforded. As the existing spaces either side of the choir could not accommodate the organ, it took the place of superfluous seating in the galleries at the liturgical west end. Made by Rieger Orgelbau of Schwarzach, Austria, with a case largely designed by Sean Lander of Welch & Lander, architects, it was installed in 1986–7 (Ill. 1.15).²⁴

At the time of writing (2015) there were plans for further extensions to the crypt, with a separate access on the east side from the church garden via a glass lift next to the Browning Room (Caroe Architecture, designers).

Present appearance

St Marylebone Church appears divided into different zones today, inside and out. Its public face towards Marylebone Road, with the formal approach from the north it acquired when Nash's York Gate was laid out soon after its completion, remains an imposing set-piece of townscape, though the howling Marylebone Road, as widened in the 1960s, affronts and erodes its splendid isolation. The west side looks on to a backwater, the south side (liturgically east) is jammed up against Thomas Little's school building of 1858 (page ###), but the east side in its picturesque garden context offers repose and dignity, with the contrast between grey Portland stonework and lighter, stuccoed walls striking an almost Iberian note. For all its spaciousness, the interior today is redolent of Anglican adaptation and compromise. There is a disparity of scale between the generosity of portico and tall gallery staircases, and the constraints of the vestibule, corridor, cramped vestries and subterranean warren. Within the nave, the removal of stained glass and the post-war lightening of tones have restored a sense of auditorial breadth, but at the expense of both the enclosure and definition offered by Hardwick's theatrical vessel, and the direction and richness imposed by Harris and still manifest in choir and sanctuary.

Select list of memorials

North stair and lobby:

Commodore Walter Bathurst (d. 1827). By E. Gaffin
3rd Earl Beauchamp (d. 1853)
Ann Lloyd (d. 1767)
3rd Duke of Portland and other Cavendish-Bentincks, after 1843
W. H. Cavendish-Bentinck, Marquis of Titchfield (d. 1824), and others
Henrietta Peach (d. 1838). By Joseph Browne, 1839
Lady Mary West (d. 1783)

South stair and lobby:

Giuseppe Baretta (d. 1789). By Thomas Banks
Charles Brietzcke (d. 1795), and son
Sir Edmund Dowce or Douce (d. 1644)
James Gibbs, architect (d. 1754). By Walter Lee
Robert Thomas Goodwin (d. 1836). By E. T. Physick
Robert John Grews Lawrence (d. 1838). By P. Brothers
Peter Oliver, MD (d. 1795)
John Purling (d. 1800)
Elizabeth Roberts (d. 1658)
Stephen Storace, composer (d. 1796). By Thomas Banks
Janette Tahourdin. By P. Rouw, 1801
Caroline Watson, engraver to the King (d. 1814)

North aisle:

Major Arthur Balfour (d. 1817). By William Pistell
Charlotte, Countess Beauchamp (d. 1846), and husband. By C. H. Smith
John Bebb (d. 1830). By Charles Thompson
Anna Maria Carrington (d. 1829). By A. J. Stothard
Isabella Mary Fairlie (d. 1830), and family. By R. W. Sievier
Ellen Mary Fletcher (d. 1835)
Sir William Fraser (d. 1828). By John Bacon, jun.
Gilbert Hall (d. 1820). By John Knapp.

Edmund Alexander Howard (d. 1827). By Charles Randall
Benjamin Howton (d. 1819)
Joseph Fernandez Madrid, envoy of Colombia (d. 1830)
Lady Clementine Malcolm (d. 1830)
Col. Hugh Henry Mitchell (d. 1817)
Robert Powney (d. 1817). By William Whitelaw
Lt.-Gen. William St Leger (d. 1818)
Richard Taylor (d. 1814)
John, Lord Teignmouth and his wife Charlotte (d. 1834). By Henry Hopper

South aisle:

Emma Catherine Bampfylde (d. 1825)
Elizabeth Gertrude Bayfield (d. 1832)
Louisa, Countess of Beverley (d. 1848)
Elizabeth Mary Booth (d. 1820). By Charles King
Benjamin Burton (d. 1834), and family. By D. W. Willson
John Cotton (d. 1828)
James Cruikshank (d. 1831), and daughter
Lt.-Col. Richard Fitzgerald (d. at Waterloo, 1815). By C. H. Smith
Edward Forset and family, 17th-century inscription to vault entrance
Solomon Franco (d. 1825), and family. By Henry Hopper
William Gordon Haven and Charles Mackinen Haven (d. 1824). By Samuel Manning
William and Martin Joachim, n.d. By William Behnes
John McCamon (d. 1818)
Lettice Patten (d. 1817). By George Lupton
Edward Ravenscroft (d. 1828)
Sir John Sewell (d. 1833)
Sir James Sibbald (d. 1819). By John Bacon, jun.
Rev. Charles Wesley, bronze relief by Nicholas Dumbleby, 2007
Lt. Com. John White (d. 1916)

North gallery:

Alexander Campbell and family, after 1831. By C. H. Smith
Fanny Elizabeth Carruthers (d. 1845)

Capt. Charles Elphinstone and sister (d. 1807)
Robert Fullerton (d. 1831), and wife
Augusta Elizabeth Kirkland (d. 1824), and others. By Richard Westmacott, RA
David Lyon (d. 1827). By John Knapp
Henry Moreton-Dyer (d. 1841). By C. H. Smith
Henrietta Rivett-Carnac. By E. Gaffin
Anna Maria Shank (d. 1835). By Henry Hopper
Jane, Lady Staunton (d. 1823). By Artaud, Wimpole Street
George Weguelin (d. 1858). By Henry Hopper
Col. Thomas Weguelin (d. 1828). By Henry Hopper

South gallery:

Henry Barre Beresford (d. 1837), and wife. By E. W. Physick
James Bishop (d. 1836), and wife Emily (d. 1837). By E. W. Physick
Edward Pelham Brenton (d. 1839)
David and Mary Carruthers (d. 1845). By Patent Works, Westminster
Alexander George Mackay (d. 1827)
Maria Mackenzie (d. 1821)
John Morris (d. 1840). By E. W. Physick
Sarah Morris (d. 1831)
Gen. Robert Morse (d. 1818). By Samuel Colecom, c.1824
Thomas Alexander Oakes (d. 1840). By E. W. Physick
Vice-Adm. Sir John Tremayne Rodd (d. 1838). By Henry Hopper
James Sutherland (d. 1828). By R. W. Radbury
Mary and Francis Swinney (d. 1826 and 1837)
Rev. George Augustus Thursby (d. 1836)

Behind organ:

Stephen Clearsbey (d. 1844)
Sir Robert Dallas (d. 1824)

Upper galleries:

Charles Celarius Fitzgerald (d. 1822)
Buxton Kenrick (d. 1832)