

CHAPTER 27

Margaret Street

In 1742 the *Daily Advertiser* ran a notice inviting offers for a collection of shells 'fit either for the Cabinet, Grotto, Frame, or Flower Work' to be viewed at a house near Oxford Market at the east end of Margaret Street, 'a Pedestal in Shell-Work over the door'.¹ That may be the first public reference to Margaret Street. By then this street of four blocks, running east out of the south corner of Cavendish Square up to the edge of the Cavendish-Harley estate at Wells Street, was well on its way to completion. It had acquired its name by the time the original estate layout was published by John Prince back in 1719 (see Ill. ##/##). It commemorated the 2nd Earl of Oxford's four-year-old daughter Lady Margaret Harley, whose marriage to the 2nd Duke of Portland at the Oxford Chapel fifteen years later brought the property into the Cavendish-Bentinck family.

Had Prince's plan been followed, Margaret Street would have been shorter, terminating after just two blocks in a large square, 'Marybone Place', intended for a market on the axis of Great Portland Street. But the revised plan of the early 1720s, made or influenced by James Gibbs, reduced the size of what became Oxford Market, leaving Margaret Street free to run on eastwards to the estate border.

Development at either end of the street started in the 1720s, more firmly at the western end, beyond Bolsover and Edward Streets. It continued apace throughout the 1730s, so that by the time of the *Daily Advertiser* notice, head leases had been granted for the whole north side except for the future sites of All Saints Church and Audley House (Nos 9-12). Opposite, progress

east of Great Portland Street was less even, faltering after 1737. After two head leases were granted in 1743 (of Nos 69–71), the rest followed intermittently in the 1750s apart from No. 84 (the All Saints school site), leased as late as 1769.² The south side of Margaret Street in the vicinity of the pre-existing Marylebone Passage consequently became a ragbag of semi-industrial premises and yards.

Few of the takes offered in this leasing process amounted to more than three or four house-plots. Many of the original head lessees were familiar from elsewhere on the Cavendish–Harley estate, like John Devall (Nos 18, 21–22 and 62–64), George Mercer (Nos 13–17 and 46), William Wilton (Nos 19 and 20) and the ubiquitous Thomas Huddle (Nos 8–12 and 72–74). The biggest single taker was the joiner John Lane, who developed the sites of Nos 23–28 and 51–54 opposite in 1735–6. His ground included the street's most enduring pub, The Cock at the north-west corner with Great Portland Street, leased in 1735.³ The lack of remaining buildings predating the second half of the nineteenth century means that little can be said about Margaret Street's early appearance, but it was probably humdrum. The one exception to the ordinary run of houses was the Margaret Street Chapel, built around 1752 between Nos 8 and 9 as a dissenters' chapel and little above humdrum itself. The nineteenth-century saw this chapel and its surroundings transformed into London's leading Anglo-Catholic church.

Margaret Street was a mixed street. In its early years it attracted a few gentry, particularly along the north side west of Great Titchfield Street. One house here, John Devall's No. 18, was exceptionally wide, with an ample garden behind, and therefore appealed to grandees such as the 6th Earl of Denbigh in the 1760s, and the Earl of Euston (future 4th Duke of Grafton) in the 1790s and early 1800s.⁴ Further west, Nos 27–29 were also highly rated houses built by John Lane in the late 1730s. The staircase compartment of No. 28 was recorded by the Belcher & Joass assistant C. D. Carus-Wilson before the house was destroyed in 1908, and published in Mervyn Macartney's

Practical Exemplar of Architecture. It had an oak stair with triple balusters on each step and ornamental plasterwork on the walls and ceiling. The oakwork was partly reused in Macartney's country home, Kennet Orley, Woolhampton, Berkshire, but the plasterwork was 'entirely ruined in removal'. The next-door house, No. 29, was leased by Lane in 1738 to Lady Elizabeth Montagu.⁵

Early Margaret Street residents of note included the writer William Duncombe, who died at a house here in 1769; the architect John Soane, a lodger at No. 53 in 1781–3 and tenant of No. 50, 1783–6; Thomas Jervais, the pre-eminent stained-glass painter of his day, at No. 69, c.1773–83, before he moved to Windsor to work on St George's Chapel; and the military engineer General Hugh Debbieg, at No. 53 from the late 1790s till his death in 1810. Artists included George Carter, painter, at No. 31, c.1777–85; George Townly Stubbs, engraver, at No. 48, 1777; and Robert Fulton, portraitist and later inventor of the steamboat, at No. 67, 1791.⁶ The quotient of tradespeople was strong by the end of the eighteenth century, some doubtless already drawn by the magnet of Oxford Street's shops. Insurance records of the 1790–1840 period show dressmakers, staymakers, milliners and hairdressers in several Margaret Street houses. Other well-represented trades were coach-building and coach-painting.⁷

For a while the scruffy east end of the south side hosted some notable manufacturers. Jervais may have been the first, at No. 69. An estate survey of about 1805 shows a large open yard surrounded by 'Chiesley's Agricultural Implement Manufactory' (Robert Chislie & Co., according to the ratebooks); then, just further east, Henry Maudslay, 'mechanist', cheek by jowl with Schweppe & Company's mineral water warehouse on the later convent site (Ill. 27/1). Maudslay moved into Margaret Street from his first independent premises round the corner at 64 Wells Street in 1802, remaining till 1810. In these years this pioneer of the British machine-tool industry was employing up to 80 men and making his celebrated block-making machinery for

Portsmouth Dockyard in forges behind the frontage.⁸ For the Schweppes company this was their fourth London address. Jacob (sometimes called James) Schwegge from Geneva had originally opened a London branch for his carbonated water in 1792 at Drury Lane, then after one brief move took on 11 Margaret Street in 1795. The shift to larger premises across the road seems to have coincided with Schwegge's retirement in 1798–9 in favour of three Channel Islanders, H. W. & F. C. Lauzun and R. C. Brohier, who continued the business here under Schwegge's name until 1831, when it moved to 51 Berners Street. Changes in numbering at this haphazard end of the street make the addresses of these premises confusing. Maudslay is shown on the estate map as at No. 75, but that had altered to 78 before he left. Schweppes are advertised in 1804 as at No. 75, yet the estate map puts them at No. 76 and by 1818 they are at No. 79, a number which appears on surviving Schweppes bottles. The ratebooks give different numberings again but no change of premises seems to have been involved. Later, between 1838 and 1870, a back building occupied by the Irish sculptor Patrick MacDowell as his studio is variously numbered as 74A, 75 and 78.⁹

The planning and building of Regent Street between 1813 and 1823 broke the unity of Margaret Street and its relation to Cavendish Square, leaving a rump of houses at the west end beyond the new street, all on the south side (Nos 34–40). Several houses were demolished during the process, including No. 42, from about 1797 the home of the painters Charles Hayter and his son George.¹⁰ The street was left with gaps in the numbering as a result.

Property on the north side of Margaret Street east of Great Titchfield Street was damaged by a severe fire in 1825, which caused havoc in the middle of the block as far east as Wells Street. In 1844–5 the builder John Kelk, successor to William Newton, carpenter, who had premises at No. 12 on the north-east corner with Great Titchfield Street and yards behind, moved his base to South Street, Grosvenor Square, and redeveloped the Margaret Street

frontage, tucking in three extra houses west of Nos 9–11.¹¹ It was also Kelk, soon to gain fame as a public works contractor, who secured the contract for the more dramatic change a few doors eastwards, the replacement of the Margaret Chapel and its neighbours with All Saints in 1850–2.

By a short head the church was preceded by a synagogue further west, tucked away in 1848–9 on back land between Nos 48 and 50 on the south side, between Regent and Great Portland Streets. If more discreet, this project too was not without ambition. The client was the West London Synagogue of British Jews, an expanding liberal congregation hitherto housed in Burton Street, St Pancras. Their architect was David Mocatta, who with Samuel Grimsdell as builder created a square auditorium of Italian-classical elegance, flanked by arched galleries on three sides and topped by a lantern-light. Despite a modest budget the synagogue was decorously ornamented, with scagliola surfaces to the columns over cast-iron cores. The houses on either side were renovated and appropriated for the ministers. In 1859 the synagogue was redecorated and an organ installed, reportedly the first time such an instrument had been used for Jewish public worship in England. A detached gallery on imitation marble columns was also provided, for poorer members of the congregation. The architects were John Young & Son of Covent Garden, and the decorators Galli & Cotti of Mayfair. As the congregation continued to grow, after scarcely twenty years it moved to the grander West London Synagogue, Upper Berkeley Street (1869–70). The building itself disappeared in about 1908.¹²

Further rebuildings took place from the 1860s, notably at the east end, beside Margaret Street's two corners with Wells Street. On the south side the neighbouring parishes of St Andrew's and All Saints elected to build schools side by side and at practically the same time (1870) but in contrasting styles, St Andrew's at No. 86 (with 70 and 71 Wells Street) in pallid Tudor, All Saints at No. 84 in bold Butterfieldian Gothic. But most of the street soldiered on through the later Victorian years with its old building stock, now largely

broken up into 'prim, drab lodging houses' or shared between dressmakers. A few new houses were built, as at Nos 69–71 in 1877. There were also some professional offices; W. E. Nesfield was at No. 19 during the last years of his architectural practice (1876–80).¹³ Some houses went over to philanthropy. No. 26, an out-patient dispensary or infirmary for consumption and diseases of the chest from 1847, was to be rebuilt as the Margaret Street Hospital for Consumption in 1915. For a decade from 1857 No. 67 was the base of Dr Eldridge Spratt, who here started his one-man-band Institution for Diseases of the Heart, later after many moves and changes the National Heart Hospital. Between 1883 and 1909 Nos 72 and 74A housed the Sanitary Institute and the Parkes Museum of Hygiene, a recent foundation ejected from University College London because the college wanted the space. Here worthy afternoon visitors could learn about hygienic principles and nutritious foodstuffs.¹⁴ Nos 77–83 next east comprised the All Saints' convent and its various activities, as yet in old premises (page ###). From about 1859 the convent also controlled No. 74, where a small oratory had long been attached to the house, previously the home of the Margaret Chapel's incumbent, first Frederick Oakeley and then W. Upton Richards. In 1872 the stained-glass makers Clayton & Bell tucked in short-lived forges at the back of these premises.¹⁵

Margaret Street's transition to its present-day appearance and uses started only in the 1890s, gathering pace in the decade before the First World War and culminating in a series of inter-war open-plan warehouses for the garment trade. In the early phases the clothiers were not yet involved. One of the street's two best Edwardian buildings is No. 28 of 1907–8, by J. J. Joass (of Belcher & Joass), where a giant order and implied triumphal arch are imposed upon the upper storeys – somewhat too weighty a composition for the single enclosed plot (Ill. 27/3). The client here was Carl Krall of the Regent Street art metal workers Barkentin & Krall, who only wanted the back premises, 14 Little Portland Street, for workshops. The front was taken by the well-known religious booksellers, publishers and church furnishers A. R. Mowbray &

Company, Oxford-based originally but with a previous London outlet in Farringdon Street. Mowbrays continued at this address, expanding and making various changes to the premises from time to time, till their amalgamation with Hatchards in 2006.¹⁶ The bigger venture of these years was Audley House of 1906–7 at Nos 9–12, a set of bachelor chambers, otherwise service flats, replacing Kelk's houses next to All Saints. This was a speculation shared between Max Lindlar, long-serving director of Bechsteins the piano makers in Wigmore Street, and the builder W. S. Shepherd. Designed by Simpson & Ayrton, Audley House turns the Great Titchfield Street corner handsomely by virtue of two tiers of stone bay windows set against red-brick walling (Ill. 27/4).¹⁷

After 1914 the garment industry took over, fed by the appetite of the ravening Oxford Street department stores. At least one such store, Peter Robinson, already had a foothold in Margaret Street, having rebuilt Nos 5 and 6 and the old Newton & Kelk stables behind Nos 8–12 either side of All Saints in 1895–6, both used in the main as dormitories for the workforce.¹⁸ In 1910 the street hosted still just a scatter of costume makers, mantle manufacturers, lace merchants and the like interspersed between houses let off as apartments. But soon the fashion trades started to expel residents, infiltrate the worn-out houses and replace them with new buildings. As Prebendary Mackay of All Saints put it in 1926:

the wholesale blouse industry has migrated from the City and descended upon Margaret Street like a swarm of bees. Margaret Street is now to a blouse what Harley Street is to a specialist. For the moment, this has sent up the rental of premises in Margaret Street to a fabulous sum, and the street is choked from end to end by the cars of the opulent blouse makers.¹⁹

Even the newer blocks were not exempt. Audley House partly succumbed in 1936, when its lower service floors were converted to

stockrooms. Few firms occupied a single building, since the fashion trade was broken down into hundreds of small specialist concerns each occupying a floor or less. In 1933 there were 44 gown makers listed for Margaret Street, 14 mantle makers, 11 milliners and 11 manufacturers' agents alongside many smaller specialists, for instance four suppliers of ladies' sportswear, three of millinery decorations and three of pleating. After the Second World War the trade kept its grip on the street, with a few changes in nomenclature. As late as 1972 there were still 43 gown makers, but mantle makers had dropped to eight alongside ladies' coat makers. More firms now described themselves as exporters or importers. The number of lace merchants had fallen to one, though there were seven furriers.²⁰

The earlier of the new warehouses hid their open-plan interiors behind decorous façades, old-fashioned for their date, as in the run along the south side (Nos 71–74, 75–77, and 78–80), all built between 1915 and 1924 but looking a decade older. The stone-fronted, lightly Tudor Nos 75–77 (F. Taperell & Haase, architects, 1920) is the best of these buildings, maximizing window space without losing grace (Ill. 27/7). After the Howard de Walden freehold sales of the early 1920s, the garment-trade speculators and their architects seem to have been less constrained. A climax to the type is represented by several mid-1930s buildings in the block between Great Portland and Great Titchfield Streets, fronted in a debased, angular variety of Art Deco smacking almost of post-modernism: Nos 13–14 (Ill. 27/6), 60–62 and 64–65 are examples. The surveyors Waite & Waite had a hand in two of these projects. At the Cavendish Square end, No. 33 was rebuilt in 1934 for Boosey & Hawkes, the music publishers, as part of their rebuilding of 295 Regent Street, and occupied until 1959 as Copyright House by the Performing Rights Society, of which Leslie Boosey was chairman in 1929–54; it was again rebuilt in 2010–12 as part of Great Portland Estates' redevelopment of 289–295 Regent Street (BFLS and Doone Silver, architects) and is now the global headquarters of Savills estate agency.²¹ Generally speaking the rebuildings

since the Second World War have not been notable. Over the past forty years the clothing trades have gradually beaten a retreat, to the point where they and are now in a small minority in Margaret Street compared to the many media-related firms who have taken their buildings over.

Gazetteer of existing buildings ²²

NORTH SIDE

No. 1 (with 69 Wells Street). Edwin Bull, architect, 1865 ²³

Nos 3 and 4. Built c.1870

Nos 5–6. Rebuilt by Ernest A. Roome for Peter Robinsons, 1896

Nos 7 and 8. Part of All Saints, Margaret Street (see below)

Nos 9–12 (with 12 Great Titchfield Street, Audley House). Simpson & Ayrton, architects, W. S. Shepherd & Co., builders, 1906–7 ²⁴

Nos 13–14 (with 9–13 Great Titchfield Street). Waite & Waite, architects, Prestige & Co., builders, 1934

Nos 15–16. Lionel Barrett, architect, 1936

Nos 17–18. W. Henry White, architect, 1904. For some years the Bentinck Hotel

No. 19. Steel-framed speculation of 1933 for the Cavendish Mortgage Co. of Goswell Road; Perry & Perry, builders

No. 20. Robert Angell & Curtis, architects, Sabey & Son, builders, 1935; a speculation for Henry Holmes & Co. Ltd, of Mortimer Street, estate agents

For Nos 21–22 see 26–28 Great Portland Street (page ###)

No. 24. Fitzroy Robinson & Partners, architects, Holland & Hannen and Cubitts, builders, 1959–60

No. 25. Rebuilt 1892, A. A. Webber, builder

No. 26. Former Margaret Street Hospital for Consumption. F. M. Elgood, architect, J. W. Falkner & Sons, builder, 1914–15 ²⁵

No. 27. Augustus E. Hughes & Son, architects, for H. Tatton Sykes, 1903–4 ²⁶

No. 28. Belcher & Joass, architects, G. Godson & Sons, builders, for Carl Krall ²⁷

No. 33. BFLS and Doone Silver, architects, for Great Portland Estates, 2010–12

SOUTH SIDE

For Nos 34–36 see 11–14 John Prince's Street (page ##)

Nos 37–38. Rebuilt by Mark Manley, builder, for Holmes & Co., carriage builders, 1880 ²⁸

Nos 39–40. F. L. Pearson, architect, George R. Shaw, builder and part owner, 1890–2 (Ill. 27/2) ²⁹

Nos 47–50. Treadwell & Martin, architects, F. G. Minter, builder, 1908 ³⁰

Nos 52–53. F. M. Elgood, architect, J. W. Falkner & Sons, builders, 1909 ³¹

For Nos 54–55 see 23–25 Great Portland Street (page ###)

No. 57 (with 22–24 Great Portland Street, Highlight House). Ernest R. Barrow, architect, G. E. Wallis & Sons, builders, 1926–7, for Lewis & Burrows, chemists, who were based here from the 1880s till around 1970

Nos 58–59. Fitzroy Robinson & Partners, architects, Marshall Andrew & Co., builders, for Cranleigh Estates, 1960

Nos 60–62. Hendry & Schooling with Waite & Waite, architects, for Adolphe Rosenthal & Co., 1930

No. 63. Elgood & Hastie, architects, Sabey & Son, builders, for H. J. Ahern, 1925

Nos 64–65. H. Courtenay Constantine, architect, Trevor Stevens Ltd, builders, for trustees of H. J. Ahern, 1934–6

Nos 66–68 (with 5–7 Great Titchfield Street). Augustus E. Hughes & Son, architects, Hall Beddall & Co., builders, for executors of W. F. Thomas, 1936–7 ³²

Nos 69–71 (with 10A Great Titchfield Street). Hallam, Begbey & Associates, architects, for Titchfield Investments Ltd, 1972

Nos 72–74. Elgood & Hastie, architects, for Samuel Lithgow, 1923–4 ³³

Nos 75–77. F. Taperell & Haase, architects, Griggs & Son, builders, for Keith Prowse & Co., 1920 ³⁴

Nos 78–80 (Kenilworth House). F. M. Elgood, architect, Sabey & Son, builders, for Linda Meschini, 1915.

Nos 82–83 and 84 are the former All Saints Home and School, for which see below.

All Saints' Church

The brick church and lofty spire of All Saints, together with the twin clergy and parish buildings that front it towards Margaret Street, comprise a renowned monument to Victorian religion and architecture. Exuberant and compact, the group was built in 1850–2 by John Kelk to designs by William Butterfield, yet the interior of the church with its painted reredos by William Dyce was not completed and opened till 1859. The whole was sponsored as a model project by the Ecclesiological Society, chiefly through Alexander Beresford Hope, though only a modicum of the banking money that paid for it came from him. Butterfield continued to embellish and alter All Saints throughout his lifetime, and it is always regarded as his masterpiece. Among decorative changes to the interior since his death, the foremost were those made by Ninian Comper between 1909 and 1916. Recent restorations have reinforced Butterfield's original vision of strength, experimental colour and sublimity.

HISTORY

Margaret Street Chapel

The chapel which preceded All Saints, Margaret Street, started as a meeting house for extreme dissenters. It came into being on a tract of Portland land along the north side of Margaret Street leased long-term for development to Thomas Huddle from 1749.³⁵ It owed its existence to William Cudworth, a former follower of Whitefield and Wesley who had turned antinomian and enjoyed a widespread 'connexion' during the 1740s–50s in London and beyond. According to J. C. Whitebrook the purpose-built chapel dated from 1752 and was close to Cudworth's house. Certainly the ground where it stood, with a frontage of about 38ft and a depth of about 100ft, was leased by John Gordon, cabinetmaker, to Cudworth in 1754, and the 'conventicle' was functioning by 1757. Its destiny after Cudworth's death in 1763 is obscure. Whitebrook adds that the chapel was mortgaged to General Thomas Gage of Bunker Hill fame, was known as the Pentagon Chapel and had a sky-blue roof, but some of this, if true, may refer to later phases. The chapel was still partly in the ownership of the Cudworth family in 1806.³⁶

In 1776 David Williams, deist, friend of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Bentley and Josiah Wedgwood, and originator of the Literary Fund, hired the chapel, preaching or lecturing a controversial 'universalist liturgy' to a select congregation which included many of his radical friends. But he never had it to himself, and his venture fizzled out in 1780.³⁷

Independents still occupied the chapel in 1784, but soon after, perhaps in 1789, the Margaret (or Margaret Street) Chapel passed into Anglican hands, becoming a proprietary chapel served by successive preachers. A rendering depicts the front around this time, with small doors either side of a projecting frontispiece crowned by a pediment and square cupola (Ill. 27/8). In 1817 it became one of the Marylebone proprietary chapels whose freehold passed

from the Portland Estate to the Crown 'with a view to their consecration and permanent constitution'.³⁸

The chapel suffered damage from the Titchfield Street fire of 1825 which destroyed much of the block where it stood. Two years later the banker Henry Drummond bought the remainder of the lease.³⁹ At that moment of religious fluidity Drummond with others was urging the charismatic Edward Irving along the path that led to the founding of the Catholic Apostolic Church, and presumably hoped to use the chapel for the new sect. William Dodsworth, a young Anglican associate of Drummond and Irving, was accordingly appointed minister in 1829. But he soon broke with them and set the Margaret Street Chapel on its High Church path. Influenced by the celebrated *Tracts for the Times*, Dodsworth introduced communion as the main Sunday service at the chapel from about 1835.⁴⁰

In 1837 Dodsworth moved to the new Christ Church, Albany Street. After an interval Bishop Blomfield allowed an Oxford High Churchman, Frederick Oakeley, to be appointed to the chapel in 1839, perhaps at E. B. Pusey's prompting. Oakeley took a house at 74 Margaret Street opposite. He found the Margaret Chapel (as it was now usually called) 'a complete paragon of ugliness ... low, dark and stuffy ... choked with sheep pens under the name of pews' and 'begirt by a hideous gallery, filled on Sundays with uneasy schoolchildren'.⁴¹ To the chapel clerk's consternation Oakeley demolished the three-decker pulpit and created a modest sanctuary and altar modelled on those at Newman's Littlemore Church outside Oxford. The altar was covered with the usual crimson velvet, and the cross and candlesticks upon it were quite plain. Oakeley did however introduce stained-glass symbols into the windows flanking the altar. By later standards the services were simple, with a small choir in the gallery singing a 'brisk sort of Gregorian'. But they were controversial enough to land Oakeley in disputes with Blomfield. The chapel became the smart place to hear Oxford Movement preachers and doctrine in London, drawing in a congregation that included

the lawyer Edward Bellasis, the banker Henry Tritton, W. E. Gladstone, MP, Alexander Beresford Hope, and Harriet Byron, founder of the All Saints' Sisterhood.⁴²

In 1842 Oakeley contemplated rebuilding the chapel 'in a more catholic style', supported by Robert Williams, a partner in Williams, Deacon & Company's Bank.⁴³ For a time they had a bigger site in mind at the corner of Margaret and Great Titchfield Streets. Williams however backed out and Oakeley lost enthusiasm, perhaps because George Chandler, the rector of All Souls (the ecclesiastical parish which included the chapel) was at this juncture promoting another High Church place of worship at St Andrew's, Wells Street, on a site close by. Meanwhile Oakeley was being drawn towards Roman Catholic doctrines. A crisis ensued in 1845, when he was summoned before the Court of Arches and resigned his licence. These events precipitated him into the Roman church, leaving behind a congregation with about £2,000 in trust for rebuilding, and a curate content to remain in the Anglican fold. This was William Upton Richards, a scholar with a part-time post in the manuscripts department of the British Museum. A meeker personality than Oakeley, Richards was better suited to go along with the building project that now took shape under the forceful members of his congregation. Their protagonist was Beresford Hope, youngest son of the banker Thomas Hope of Duchess Street and an ecclesiologist of the obsessive genre just emerging.⁴⁴

As an interim measure Richards and Hope in 1846–7 restored and embellished the Margaret Chapel, using William Butterfield as their architect. Butterfield was already working for Hope at St Augustine's College, Canterbury, and fast becoming both his protégé and the favourite architect of the Ecclesiological Society. That propagandizing body had changed its name from the Cambridge Camden Society when it moved to London in 1846. The switch took place at a meeting in the schoolhouse of All Souls attended by Hope, Dodsworth, Richards and also the moderate Chandler, who was ready to endorse the Society's aims so long as the taint of Romanism clinging to the

Cambridge Camden ultras could be removed. That position Hope in principle accepted. 'Butterfield has really made a most religious place of it', he told Gladstone when the Margaret Chapel work was finished.⁴⁵ Bishop Blomfield was less content. He sent his chaplain to spy out the resulting arrangements, and ordered Richards to bring them into line with the prayer book rubric, in particular by removing flowers from the altar. Watercolours show the interior's final state after these measures in 1850, with a reredos over the altar (given by Hope), an embroidered frontal, flanking stalls, and improved surrounds for Oakeley's glass symbols (Ill. 27/9).⁴⁶

The building of All Saints

Plans for the new church became urgent because the lease, still in Drummond's hands, was due to expire in 1848, after which the Crown as freeholder could have closed and sold the chapel. So even before its restoration the promoters were pressing to buy the site. Lord Morpeth, First Commissioner at the Woods and Forests, took advice from Blomfield, who – surprisingly, considering the proximity of St Andrew's – took the view that 'such a Church, built in that neighbourhood, would be very beneficial'. He was doubtless influenced by a hint that the budget was likely to be at least £10,000 – high for a new church. The Crown therefore agreed to sell the chapel site for £1,350, about half of its surveyor Pennethorne's estimated valuation.⁴⁷

In February 1847 a first circular was issued, promising a church 'in the best English style of architecture ... in strict unison with the requirements of the Book of Common Prayer'. Its chief promoters were given as Hope and Sir Stephen Glynne (Gladstone's brother-in-law), luminaries of the Ecclesiological Society. One of the society's stated aims was to build a model church in one of the poorer parts of London. Hope had been developing his

own ideal image for town churches, one in which modern Gothic was to advance beyond mere imitation of 'Middle Pointed': they were to have 'a foreign character, lofty and apsidal, and domineer by their elevation over the haughty and Protestantized shopocracy of their respective towns'.⁴⁸ Not without sleight of hand, this model church for the poor now became the project for rebuilding the chapel where Hope and his friends worshipped, in a neighbourhood by no means gravely deprived. Conscious of the anomaly, Hope later claimed that the decision to allot the model church to Margaret Street was taken in deference to others.⁴⁹

Without a larger site than the chapel itself a striking church was infeasible. So in 1848 Hope negotiated to buy up the neighbouring three houses at Nos 7-9 Margaret Street. The sale took place that September, bringing the full cost of the property alone to £9,000. Some of this money came from Hope's mother, Lady Beresford, but some probably also from Henry Tritton of Portland Place, who replaced Glynne as Hope's main coadjutor. This retiring banker had been brought up as a Baptist but turned High Church in the 1830s. His payments towards All Saints were far to exceed Hope's, amounting to some £30,000.⁵⁰ The deal was concluded in the nick of time, for Charles Baring, Chandler's low-church successor at All Souls, now objected to the proposal because of the proximity of St Andrew's, Wells Street. Blomfield passed on this message and asked Hope to look for another site to avoid 'a contest injurious to the church'. By then things had gone too far, Blomfield reporting back to Baring that a change could only be made 'at a large pecuniary sacrifice', so the latter gave in.⁵¹

'Butterfield intends studying the site now that we have got it into our hands,' wrote Beresford Hope to Tritton in September 1848, 'so there is no longer need of circumspection'. Earlier, Hope had toyed with the idea of a competition for the model church, but the confirmation of Butterfield after his freshening-up of the Margaret Chapel can have been no surprise.⁵² Then aged 34 and at the top of his powers, he was to remain architect to All Saints and a

member of the congregation for his long lifetime. Butterfield's extraordinary design in *Backsteingotik* emerged from his interpretation of Hope's romantic ideas for a town church, tempered by the site restrictions, his robust practicality and the example of Pugin's brick churches. A blend of austerity and splendour with a farouche quality common to both personalities permeated the project from the start. It can still be keenly felt at All Saints, inside and out.

Hope, not an easy man, started out with full confidence in his architect, telling Tritton:

Butterfield said to me the other day ... what a pleasant thing it was to be building on a confined site and so be put to shifts, and have to do things which were not commonplace ... He is a man of genius and the difficulties of the Ch have put him on his mettle – and surely architects ought if really men of genius to be allowed the scope for their feelings.⁵³

Yet he was soon complaining about his architect ('stiff, dogmatic, and puritanical, and pushing one side of Catholicism into heresy'). By 1853 relations between the two had broken down, as Butterfield grew possessive and dogmatic about All Saints, aspects of whose design Hope was definite had started with himself:

I am certain that I am co-originator with him of the Church. He will, I fear, get more and more wild, and will not stop till he finds himself Butterfield against the world ... I have often imagined he might be tending to Irvingism.⁵⁴

The difficulties relished by Butterfield stemmed from the fact that even with the added properties the site for the model church and its intended twin clergy houses was tiny, 108ft by 98ft, and tightly enclosed. His solution was to

build to the boundaries all round, and create an access court in front. That meant relying on a clerestory for light, and suppressing an east window in favour of a future grand reredos. Once Hope's supporters had grudgingly agreed to that, Butterfield could complete his designs. A first project was submitted to the Metropolitan Buildings Office in March 1850; a few adjustments followed, notably a reduction in width of the north aisle. The Margaret Chapel closed that Easter; some of its fittings were transferred to Sheen, Staffordshire, where Hope was building a church on one of his estates, but the stained-glass symbols found their way to another Butterfield church, Alfington in Devon. The congregation moved temporarily to a large room in Great Titchfield Street. Pusey laid a foundation stone on All Saints' Day.⁵⁵

The contract for All Saints, signed on 1 September 1850, went to John Kelk, then a rising West End builder based in Margaret Street.⁵⁶ He was also the contractor for R. C. Carpenter's St Mary Magdalene, Munster Square, a church then under construction not far away, and, though quite different from All Saints, approved of by the ecclesiologists. The clerk of works was Robert Hare Norris of Henrietta Street, who with other workmen inscribed his name on the spire in 1852 (Joseph Norris, perhaps a relation, became Butterfield's builder of choice).⁵⁷ Despite the site constraints, which must have made building the 220ft spire exceedingly tricky, the construction of this radical and unique church went ahead smartly, so that the shell was finished by the end of 1852.

The church completed and opened

All Saints' Day 1852 had been the date aimed at for consecration but it came and went without fanfare. For six and a half further years the church stayed shut, while one of the two houses in front (No. 8 on the west) was leased out privately for five years by Kelk to an unconnected clergyman.⁵⁸ The reasons

were manifold. All the available money (mostly Tritton's) had been spent on the structure plus a measure of the permanent decoration. Hope was reluctant to open his model church until it had been completely embellished, with a worthy reredos in particular. In addition, the recent restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England (the 'Papal aggression') had made Anglo-Catholics nervous of riot, while Bishop Blomfield was monitoring the project to check that the arrangements did not overstep the liturgical mark, and objecting to the plan to exclude the laity from the chancel and mark it off with shut gates. A new appeal raised little money; both Tritton and Hope were reluctant to dig deeper into their pockets, Hope's own fortunes being otherwise committed at that time. Visitors and journalists were occasionally let into the church and a few interim public reactions were heard, mostly positive. Yet still there were no services. To continue them in the Great Titchfield Street room was intolerable, so a larger temporary church was built opposite at 77A Margaret Street, opened at Easter 1855.⁵⁹

At the heart of the delay lay differences over how to finish the interior. As early as 1849, independently of Butterfield, Hope had approached three artists sympathetic to the ecclesiologists to help adorn All Saints. He reserved William Dyce to design and paint the great reredos which was to make up for the lack of an east window, and another painter, J. C. Horsley, to fresco the nave. Hope also asked the Frenchman Henri G rente to make the stained glass for the largest window at the west end, possibly some others, and to execute other 'mural and roof decorations of a high artistic order'. The commission to G rente was supposed to be 'definitively arranged' and approved by Butterfield, but until the building was complete these invitations were bound to be loose.⁶⁰ At some point Horsley fell away, and after Henri G rente's sudden death the glass was transferred to his less talented brother Alfred. Meanwhile Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture* and Matthew Digby Wyatt's *Specimens of the Geometrical Mosaic of the Middle Ages* were published in 1849. Both books had an impact on Butterfield's thinking as to how colour

might best be deployed in the interior of All Saints. The effect was to shrink the role Hope had assigned for fresco. Ironically, Ruskin in the last volume of *The Stones of Venice* (1853) was to urge that Watts, Rossetti or Millais be brought in to fresco the church, probably in ignorance of Dyce's commission.⁶¹

In 1852, as the structure neared completion, Hope was commenting in detail on Dyce's sketch for the reredos. It departed from the overall frame first suggested by Butterfield by having only two rows of niches, with Christ in glory at the top on an open ground, not within three further niches as the architect preferred. As revised, this rich but restrictive alabaster framing, together with complementary side arches and sedilia on the north and south walls, was in place that December.⁶² Hope's ensuing spat with Butterfield in 1853 seems to have centred on further disagreements over the chancel. At ground level Butterfield thought it illogical to have a communion rail, since the laity were not to enter the choir, but had to submit to his patron, who had also decided to give Dyce independent responsibility for painting the chancel vault, with a promise of the chancel walls and maybe even the aisles beyond that. This contradicted the aesthetic of built-in colour which Butterfield now favoured. In addition, in April 1853 Alfred Gérente delivered and fixed the west window. The result, based on the east window at Wells Cathedral, archaic in style with cabbage-green tints, displeased almost everyone including Butterfield, who asked in vain to have it removed; he had championed the O'Connor brothers ('very bumptious' according to Hope), then at work on the clerestory windows.⁶³

These quarrels and setbacks were paralleled by disputes between Hope and Richards. As a result Hope lost heart or concentration. He wrote at length to the *Morning Chronicle* explaining why the church was still shut, but offered no prospect of finishing it.⁶⁴ Meanwhile Dyce painted just the Christ in Glory at the top of the reredos *in situ*. Cold-shouldered by the architect, who privately expressed himself unhappy with the colouring, and busy with frescoes at the Palace of Westminster, Dyce then stopped.⁶⁵

In 1856 Tritton jolted Hope back into action, pointing out that All Saints was 'a reproach to us and valueless to all ... Whatever your desires, I wish it to be distinctly understood that my opinion is in favour of turning it to account forthwith'.⁶⁶ After a flurry of activity another banker, Benjamin Lancaster, agreed to pay £4,000 towards finishing the church if Butterfield and Dyce would fix a definite date for consecration. Dyce then horrified everyone by saying he needed another two and a half years for the reredos. As his work was admired, his timetable had to be accepted, but thoughts of his frescoing the north aisle now receded. Under the peace deal brokered by Tritton, Butterfield came back on the job.⁶⁷ Some of the outstanding furnishings belong to this renewed campaign, including the baptistery and font, given by the 3rd Marquess of Sligo, and Butterfield's many-marbled pulpit. The craftsmen in this phase, as earlier, included carvers employed by George Myers for stone and alabaster features, and Thomas Potter for metalwork. As for the reredos, once Dyce finally settled to the work, the figures (painted off site on backings of lath and plaster) took him only nine months in 1858–9. The church could be consecrated at last in May 1859, after an estimated total expenditure of £70,000.⁶⁸

All Saints opened to much publicity in newspapers, church journals and the building press alike.⁶⁹ The Prince Consort, always interested in art novelties, was among early visitors. Most comment was complimentary, sometimes lavishly so. The church occasioned less shock than it might have done in 1852, when Continental styles of Gothic and robust internal colouring were novel. Many contrasted its great expense with its small capacity of only 600–700, while some alluded to its monkishness. The *Building News* imagined a passer-by supposing 'the tall, dark, gloomy, red and black-brick buildings ... to be the abode of deep-read black friars, who had settled in this out-of-the-way region to escape the observation of the purblind Protestants'.⁷⁰

The Dyce frescoes came in for much praise; comment on the Butterfield features varied (with some criticism of the clash between his alabaster

framing at the east end and the paintings), and there was antipathy to the Gérente west window. Cognoscenti could see that even after the long wait much had still to be completed. That applied in particular to the altar's backdrop, which was left in plain polished alabaster with a simple cross against the wall, 'skied' because Bishop Tait had warned Richards he would refuse to consecrate if the altar ornaments exceeded the rubric. Yet there were flowers on the super-altar, alternating with two emerald-green wax tapers.⁷¹ Insiders noted that Butterfield had not had his way everywhere. His friend and fellow architect G. E. Street (later a churchwarden at All Saints) wrote in to *The Builder* to make the point. After a famous comment, 'I cannot hesitate for an instant in allowing that this church is not only the most beautiful, but the most vigorous, thoughtful, and original of them all', Street absolved Butterfield from responsibility for the gilding of the groining ribs in the chancel and for the yellow tone added to the clerestory windows at the last moment to mitigate a cold blue light shed on Dyce's paintings. These features, he insisted, had been 'executed without the architect's control, and, I believe I may say, in opposition to his views'.⁷²

Beresford Hope had by then shifted his churchgoing to St Andrew's, Wells Street, and did not respond. But the *Saturday Review*, which he owned, carried a thoughtful piece balancing praise for All Saints with condemnation of its internal colouring as devoid of unity or delicacy. The poky windows of the dungeon-like clergy houses and the 'incredible coarseness' of their expressed iron girders also came under fire. 'Such Domestic Gothic as this', added the anonymous critic, 'is enough to justify any prejudice against the style for secular purposes'.⁷³

The church between 1859 and 1900

Under Richards, Anglo-Catholic worship at All Saints was restrained. As at St Andrew's the outstanding feature of the services was the music, at first austere and Gregorian in style before it was updated by the second organist, W. S. Hoyte. A choir school, intermittent since 1852, was firmly established in 1860 at 8 Margaret Street, across from the main clergy house at No. 7.⁷⁴ Richards had experimented in the temporary church with the 'divided choir', one side answering the other in psalms and responses. That came over into the new church where, to support antiphonal singing, the organ (by William Hill & Sons) was likewise divided into portions north and south of the chancel, giving rise to under-floor complexity.⁷⁵ The congregants too were famously divided and long remained so: men on one side, women on the other.⁷⁶ Because the seats (rush chairs with recesses for hats, not pews) were 'unappropriated' as a matter of policy, early congregations tended to be occasional in character. Once the gates opened for services, complained Richards, strangers 'rushed into the building as into the pit of a theatre, to the utter exclusion of those who have an equitable right to the seats'. He claimed in 1864 to be 'not personally acquainted with more than thirty members of his present congregation'. The parish allotted to All Saints was indeed tiny, stretching no further than Mortimer Street, Wells Street, Oxford Street and Great Portland Street.⁷⁷

During the 1860s Richards was more concerned with the sisterhood and school he founded on the other side of Margaret Street than with embellishing the church further. After his death in 1873 a committee was formed to commemorate him by completing the decoration of the blank north aisle walls with figurative panels, as had always been adumbrated. In 1859 there was still talk of Dyce directing this work, in a mixture of fresco and inlay. Butterfield had since taken possession of the scheme and reconceived it entirely in tilework; it was painted by Alexander Gibbs and executed by

Henry Poole & Sons in 1875–6. Similar tile paintings followed on in phases, under the west window in 1888, and on the tower wall of the nave in 1891. Meanwhile Butterfield was also able over the years to replace all the Géroente windows with others, mostly by the Gibbs firm, culminating in the ousting of the abominated west window in 1877. It was partly reinstated in St Luke's, Sheffield, and is now in Sheffield Cathedral.⁷⁸ At the east end Butterfield had two stabs at decorating the backdrop behind the altar and under the reredos. In the first phase, complete by 1867, the area directly over the altar was inlaid with alabaster and tile, leaving the flanking surfaces to be covered with chevron-motif curtains. Then in 1880 a new super-altar was added and the side surfaces were completed with smaller-scale patterning, once again in tile and alabaster.⁷⁹

In 1893 Francis H. Rivington, having sold his interest in the well-known publishers Rivington & Co., became a devoted churchwarden at All Saints. His term of office coincided with the first major restoration. It was overseen by Butterfield, who after 45 years remained umbilically attached to his most famous creation and monitored every change, to the clergy's trepidation. Rivington's surviving papers give a glimpse of the octogenarian architect at bay. Before the restoration started he was already at odds over minutiae with the vicar, W. A. Whitworth, and demanding a written apology. Butterfield gave his services free and flared up when a hint of payment was mentioned. He had pronounced views on liturgical and doctrinal as well as architectural matters, but did not always get his way. 'No, chairs are a weakness and favour crowding which does not promote devotion', he told Rivington; yet the old rush-seated chairs were replaced with new ones, not with pews as he would have preferred.⁸⁰

The restoration of 1895 was expedited after the west gable cross blew down in a gale that March, and Butterfield's trusted builder, Joseph Norris, gave a 'very bad' report on the church. The ever-practical architect was soon hunting for a nearby yard whence the building work could be organized, but

concluded that Norris could make do with the entrance court. To remedy the nuisance of falling slates from the spire he also produced a new fixing nail 'which I have painfully devised and which I doubt not will meet the case ... perfectly'. Sea-green Buttermere slates from Westmorland now replaced the original grey Delabole ones from Cornwall. Inside the church, besides general cleaning and repainting, some new tile and marblework was carried out by the Poole firm, changes were made to the organ, and electric light fittings replaced the gasoliers, always productive of filth. 'I lean upon your judgement much in the matter of this electricity', Butterfield first told Rivington. But he soon became interested in designing electroliers and came up with new coronas and pendants made under his vigilant supervision by Strode & Co. These and their counterparts at Sedding's Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, were then said to be the only such church electroliers purpose-designed by their architects; they lasted only until 1923. An important change from Butterfield's standpoint must have been the 'entirely new' treatment of the chancel roof, expunging any trace there of the dead Dyce. The chancel work was largely paid for by Butterfield himself. He can hardly have been pleased when hangings were installed around the altar in 1897-8, concealing his alabaster and tilework; perhaps he had by then at last withdrawn.⁸¹

All Saints since 1900

After a hiatus following Butterfield's death, J. T. Micklethwaite became architect to All Saints in 1905. Before he too died the following year he had time to design some new altar candlesticks and to point the church towards solving the problem that had bedevilled the interior since early days – the unstoppable deterioration of Dyce's frescoes. Like other mid-Victorian muralists, Dyce had not bargained for the effects of the London climate and of gas lighting. Decay rapidly set in. Attempts to remedy matters went back to

1864, just after his death. Edward Armitage, a keen muralist who contributed frescoes to Marylebone parish church had taken the lead, repainting the diaperwork background to the figures, while Dyce's friend C. W. Cope had also done some patching, all to small avail. A restorer now warned that unless the pictures were soon 'properly restored or replaced, they would within a measurable time, be entirely lost'. Micklethwaite next called in Sir William Richmond, who after minute examination concluded that restoration was impossible and that they should begin again. 'As an artist the "beginning again" seems to me to be the right course', relayed Micklethwaite.

That was the resolution eventually taken. But the authorities as yet prevaricated. Roger Fry suggested a particular restoration technique; and Rivington's cousin C. J. Holmes (of the *Burlington Magazine*) cautioned against employing Richmond ("restoration" with him means much what disestablishment means to ourselves!). In 1907 Micklethwaite's former partner, Somers Clarke, presided with their successor, Arthur Wallace, over a cleaning of the superficial dirt off the paintings and the east wall. Wallace used the opportunity to take a closer look at the frescoes and reported them to be in a 'very much worse condition than they appeared to me from below'.⁸²

While the modest Wallace was still carrying out repairs, in 1908 a new vicar, the austere but aesthetically acute H. F. B. Mackay, cut the Gordian knot by peremptorily appointing Ninian Comper to sort out the east wall. In a meticulous report Comper averred that 'everything should be retained which can be retained of the original design and of Dyce's work, and that no new design replacing it could have the same interest or be so completely in tune with the building'. His solution was to paint slightly lengthened replicas of the Dyce figures on mahogany panels and install them in front of the originals, which were preserved behind zinc plates, since the depth of the arcading allowed that. A diaper in raised gesso was to be added to the gilded background behind the figures, to avoid the 'staring flatness of gold' (as amended by Armitage), while the gilding to the alabaster framing of the

reredos was to be considerably elaborated. This scheme was carried out in 1909–10 by Comper's decorative coadjutor H. A. Bernard Smith and his expert painters, principally A. Henderson, along with a new design for the chancel vault which Comper asked to repaint at the same time. But he did not get his way with the Butterfield tilework decorations on the lower wall: these his report referred to as 'to me, the aberrations of a great, and a very great mind'. Rather than destroy them, Comper proposed to hide them behind a great opening triptych of wood and alabaster, which he admitted would be a 'very costly undertaking'. At this lower level he had to be content with lengthening and raising the high altar and installed fresh damask hangings left and right to conceal the tiled backdrop. A new sanctuary carpet was also installed in front of the altar.⁸³

In 1910–11 the organ was rebuilt by Harrison & Harrison. That preceded the creation by Comper of an altar at the end of the north aisle, as had been proposed by Micklethwaite, using William D. Gough of J. McCulloch's firm for the carved elements including a screen and tester, with Bernard Smith's painters again. In 1914–16 Comper was able to add figures in the blind arcades on the chancel side walls, paid for by Christina Rivington in memory of her parents; this involved cutting out some decoration by Butterfield to make room for the panels. An 'Angels Chapel', proposed as a war memorial in 1918–19, did not go ahead. It was to have occupied the site of the vestry and part of 6 Margaret Street east of the main clergy house, which came into the church's possession around this time. For a while Bishop Charles Gore lived at No. 6, following his resignation from the see of Oxford in 1919.⁸⁴

All Saints had always attracted high-class adherents to its congregation. Up to the death in 1892 of her son the Duke of Clarence, Princess Alexandra had been a frequent if unobtrusive worshipper, sometimes bringing the future Edward VII and family with her for evensong on Sundays.⁸⁵ But the church reached the acme of its reputation under

‘Prebendary Mackay’. His services were famous for the discipline of the clergy and choir; ‘there is a parade-ground smartness and a parade-ground precision, brought to such perfection as to be scarcely noticeable’, remarked one commentator. The congregation, divided still by gender, was socially varied and included many young people. Others were allergic to the church. ‘Its aesthetic perfection alarms them,’ continued the same source; ‘and having once listened to a Mass by Rachmaninoff or Cesar Franck, sung as the choir of All Saints’ know how to sing it, they have returned with a sigh of relief to the plainsong of some less ambitious church. Others have assured me that while they like to visit All Saints’ once in a while, they find that regular attendance is followed by a kind of spiritual indigestion, just as, in the physical world, the stomach is upset by a surfeit of rich fare’.⁸⁶

The inter-war years saw only minor decorative changes, mainly undertaken by Comper on an ad hoc basis. Latterly All Saints became shabby inside and out. Two regrettable alterations were the removal in 1926 of the elaborate oak and brass font canopy with accompanying lifting device, and of the high iron screen atop the wall facing the street as a result of the wartime demand for scrap. Modifications proposed for the baptistery in 1938 under Sir William Milner, baronet and architect, may not have taken place. Major structural repairs after the Second World War included the complete stripping of the roofs in 1957 and their recovering with aluminium sheeting under Trundle, Foulkes & Co., architects; the original slate and lead roofs were later restored in 1996–7 under John Phillips. Internally, a piecemeal restoration of the late 1950s by Laurence King & Partners with Campbell Smith & Co., involved much painting out of Butterfield decorative work, since reversed. In 1961 a rather weak screen was designed for the east end of the south aisle by the same architects; this was removed to St Peter le Poer, New Southgate, in 2007.⁸⁷

There was a close shave in 1962–4 when the vicar, Kenneth Ross, and one of the churchwardens fell in with a blind medical consultant and dabbler

in property development, J. Bradley Hoskisson, who proposed knocking down the clergy house and choir school in front of the church and replacing them with buildings by the up-and-coming architects Ahrends, Burton & Koralek. This was the era of the demolition of the Euston Arch; as the churchwarden, G. W. Quick Smith, put it to the vicar: 'the Doric arch is a good precedent for claiming that necessity must sometimes over-ride artistic considerations unless the latter are backed by hard cash!' Radical outline designs were made, but in due course John Betjeman and the GLC Historic Buildings Division were drawn in, and the scheme lapsed.⁸⁸

During the 1970s King's firm made internal changes. The steps and flooring in front of the north-aisle altar were rearranged in 1971, according to a scheme proposed by Ian Grant, while Peter Larkworthy restored and cleaned the chancel decorations in 1977–8. These efforts gave place to a far more thorough reassessment of the building, set out by Molyneux Kerr, architects, in a conservation plan of 2006. The subsequent scholarly restoration, carried out in stages under the aegis of Colin Kerr, has earned widespread praise.⁸⁹

DESCRIPTION

The houses

The original site for All Saints was about 100ft square. The church is prefaced by a court or cloister some 50ft by 40ft, separating two houses of equal height but different size and organization. They back on to the church, so that building encloses three sides of the court. To the east is No. 7, the main clergy house and now office, while to the west is the smaller No. 8, probably always intended as a choir school. At first both houses could be entered only from within the court, No. 7 from the east side, No. 8 from the south, where a tight

return wing contains the staircase. The houses were originally serviced together from a deep and extensive common basement, and have a connecting passage under the court. A low front wall also links them, broken by a slim, side-buttressed central gateway. An open arcade in iron and wood formerly surmounted this wall, adding to the court's sense of enclosure; it was removed during the Second World War. The whole frontage is screened by a punchy iron railing, currently painted bronze green.

The stylistic inspiration for the houses came from Bishop's House, Birmingham (1840–1, demolished). There, beside his brick cathedral, Pugin pioneered a sheer, angular and irregular brick secular architecture, reducing the Gothic features to near-elimination. At Margaret Street the houses and church are jammed together and the character of the walling is more outspoken. The overall impression is of clipped narrowness and height. Red brick, unfashionable in London for a century, dominates, perked up by insistent courses and diaper patterns in black. Windows are sashes, disposed according to need; they have the cranked tops affected by Butterfield and occasional relieving arches above filled in with further brick patterning. Only cills and gable copings are in stone. The street fronts are provocatively flat, without projecting mouldings apart from the bare buttresses at the corners with the court. Changes seem to have been made to the corner sector of No. 7 within Butterfield's lifetime; the street door here is not original. Inside, the houses were simply planned and equipped. An oratory was at first planned in No. 7 for the ground-floor room east of the stair, while a dining hall for both houses took up most of the ground floor of No. 8.⁹⁰ The houses' most notorious features are some small, open cast-iron girders carrying floor divisions, in which Butterfield eccentrically inserted Gothic motifs of a kind he shunned elsewhere in his secular buildings. Both houses retain good fireplaces. In the dining hall of No. 8, now a parish room, are some painted panels by T. M. Rooke after a sketch by Burne-Jones, from a memorial to Christina Rossetti rescued from Christ Church, Woburn Square.

Church exterior and tower

All Saints has only one fully visible front to the church, facing south. Even that is engaged by the houses at either end, so that all the visitor sees at ground level are a gabled but abruptly curtailed porch to the left, then two large aisle windows divided by a stout pinnacled buttress bearing a canopied relief of the Annunciation, conceived as a devotional centre of gravity for the paved court. The carving of this panel, complete in 1852, was perhaps by an employee of the Myers firm. Above are the closely spaced clerestory windows and the lead roof of the south aisle. To the right the short chancel rises higher than the nave, following occasional medieval precedent, while to the left looms the overwhelming proximity of the tower. The main facing materials are the same as for the houses, red and black brick, but with an admixture of sandstone in courses and for window mouldings and tracery. Whitby, Denby Dale and Caen are all given as provenances, but evidence in situ suggests that only English sources were used.

This panoply of colour and diapering covers also the less visible parts of the exterior, including the blank east end, whose gable contains seldom-seen arcading with a rose above, all in black-brick patterning. The chancel is indeed treated as a semi-independent entity, short, square and high, with triangular clerestory windows and crowning pinnacles (two on the north, three on the south) to proclaim its status. The west front, though equally hard to see, is less engaged. Here flat corner buttresses flank the large nave window, with a secondary window in the base of the tower for the baptistery: both are framed in brick rather than stone because of their enclosed position.

The tower rises sheer to 220ft before giving way to the exceptionally tall broach spire. Its memorable proportions depend on a square plan of only around 30ft per side against an overall height of ###ft. Plain corner buttresses with weatherings rise to the elongated belfry level, whose arched double-lights are set back within a frame. Red and black brick are again predominant,

adding to the aura of precision and authority. The splayed-foot broach, is of soaring elegance and refinement, its slating set off by recessed bands of leadwork. A tight row of canopied lucernes gives the spire a burst of energy just below the summit. The medieval brick churches of Lübeck are usually given as Butterfield's inspiration for the tower but the likeness is confined to contour, height and materials. Its actual style is English throughout.

Church interior

The immediate impression of foreign Gothic given by the interior of All Saints derives from the dazzling coloration of its surfaces. But here too the spatial and architectural framework of the church, worked out by Butterfield in 1849–50, is firmly English. The flat east end, the mouldings and clustered profile of the arcades, the chancel arch and the window tracery all conform to the late thirteenth-century styles favoured by the Ecclesiologists, while the steep proportions come from Pugin's town churches of the 1840s. For the chancel, vaulted unlike the open-roofed nave, early comparisons were made with the interior of San Francesco, Assisi, but English rib-vaults could equally have furnished the models. There appears indeed to have been some garbling or mystification of sources for the interior of All Saints. The rich, deeply undercut stiff-leaf capitals to the nave piers, for instance, have always been said to come from examples at Warmington, Northamptonshire, a church well known to the Ecclesiologists, but the originals there look quite different; Southwell Minster seems the obvious derivation.

The church's plan is famously concise, consisting of a three-bay nave about twice the width of the flanking aisles, and a two-bay chancel. The aisles with their lean-to open roofs, crisply trussed, follow the same pattern, but because the slightly wider south aisle is fenestrated and engaged with the tower it feels different from its blank-walled northern counterpart. The

transeptal spaces south and north of the choir are set off from the aisles by half-arches. Originally the organ was destined for the northern space only, but in the event both sides came to be engulfed by the instrument. On the north side there was also a back door to a small court, while on the south a door led through to a squareish vestry, which at first had no separate communication with No. 7 adjacent. This vestry retains its three-light window (facing south into a small yard), corner fireplace and briskly pitched roof.

The embedding of the tower in the west end of the south aisle imbues the whole nave with a bounding asymmetry, entailing an arcade of three bays on the north side but only two on the south. In consequence there are only three free-standing piers. These, the most obtrusive features of the nave at eye-level, consist of clustered shafts in polished Peterhead granite, so close-jointed as to appear monolithic; the granite drops down into the plinths, but the actual bases are of black Devonshire marble. The alabaster capitals, beautifully carved by the Myers firm, carry moulded-stone arches with the tightest of joints. The westernmost bay of the nave on the south side supports the tower. Here Butterfield has chosen to express the need for a solid wall by means of a blank arch following the form of the nave arcade; its top half is filled in, its lower half treated as a stone screen with lively arcading below and quatrefoil motifs above. Four of the six lower arches thus formed are left open, affording narrow passages between the nave and the tall baptistery space under the tower and contriving to make the latter less isolated and box-like. The arcading continues round as a feature along the west wall.

Above the nave arches a strongly defined cornice supports the clerestory, which takes the form of arcading fronted by brick and granite columns: triplets of windows over the arches alternate with wider blanks over the piers. The trusses for the elaborate open-timber roof tally in rhythm with the piers and high points of the main arcade. The casings for the lower levels of the trusses are given pointed-arch form and enriched with quatrefoil

piercings, as are the purlins and the wallplate. Above the collar, two tiers of arched openings fill in the upper interstices of the trusses.

The chancel is smaller in internal proportion to the nave, measuring some 45ft from the choir floor to the crown of the vault, as against almost 67ft from the nave floor to its apex. That difference accounts for the exceptionally high blank space over the chancel arch. Yet the chancel is taller externally than the nave, so that there is much empty space over its vault. Seven steps ascend from the nave level to the footpace of the altar, two at the chancel entrance and five east of the choir (the spacing of these has been changed). Butterfield makes the chancel arch express its prefatory function by springing and terminating it at levels well above those of the nave arcade and facing it in the 'higher' materials reserved for the chancel – alabaster with attached colonnettes of Italian marble. Derbyshire alabaster relieved by occasional marbles is indeed the unifying language of the whole east end from the dwarf screen to the framework and base of the reredos, but its coherence has been obscured by Comper's painting and gilding. The open screens north and south of the choir contain the finest tracery and ironwork in the church, beyond which the side walls of the sanctuary break into three levels of arcading. Slanting light to the chancel falls from four large windows in the flanks of the vaults, with French-style rose tracery inscribed within triangles. The facing materials of the vault itself are alabaster for the ribs and chalk blocks for the webs set in transverse courses of white and grey, but all that has been obscured by Comper's painting scheme. That history belongs to the church's decorative treatment, which is next addressed.

Decoration and colour

The array of colour and patterning visible in All Saints today dates from five main phases: the original finishes of 1852; the enhanced decoration of the later

1850s; Butterfield's alterations and additions between the 1870s and the 1890s; the attempts by Comper and others to soften the church's texture after 1909; and the campaigns of archaeological restoration, notably those undertaken by Colin Kerr since 2007.

When the carcass of the church was ready in 1852, the nave arcade and the alabaster work of the chancel including the frame and flanking of the reredos were all reported as complete and carved. Round 'the main arches of the nave, and elsewhere' it was said that 'coloured bricks are disposed'. The tiled pavement had yet to be laid, and few other fittings were present, though the choir stalls were in.⁹¹ The outlining of the nave and chancel arches in black, red, green and yellow bricks therefore belongs to this early phase. So may also the stylized arcading on the upper levels of the aisle and west end walls, akin to the external patterning on the east end.

To the finishing phase of the interior, 1856–9, belong the dwarf screen, the font, the pulpit, the Dyce reredos, the elaborate flooring, the painting of the open roofs, and probably also the flat-patterning to the nave and aisles, notably the Alpha, Omega and Cross decoration over the chancel arch, and the spandrels of the nave arcade. The nave remains recognizably the same today as when illustrated by the building press in summer 1859. Though early colour illustrations are lacking, the commentaries supply hints about the original hues, noting for instance chocolate and white for the roof timbers, with some blue chamfering.⁹²

In this phase Butterfield was doubtless loosely inspired by Ruskin's ideas about materials and colour, and the examples of geometrical mosaic published by Matthew Digby Wyatt. Yet there are few true correspondences in motifs or technique with either author; it seems more likely that the architect drew on his own researches while abroad, particularly a long trip to north Italy in 1854. The multi-coloured marble work of the font, pulpit and chancel screen is distinctly Italian in inspiration. That is clearest in the seven-panelled inlaid pulpit, where the range of marbles is the greatest (Derbyshire

grey, Derbyshire fossil, red Devon, Devonshire serpentine, Irish green, red Languedoc, Italian grey and white). Carving is restricted in all these features, though the font has angels at its corners. It must be imagined with its original pyramidal oak canopy, ornamented in gilt brass and suspended from an open gilt iron framework across the mouth of the baptistery arch.

The floor, on the other hand, owes much to English models, to Pugin's use of Minton tiles in churches like St Giles, Cheadle, and perhaps to the earliest of Gilbert Scott's 'cathedral' floors mixing native marbles and tiles, at Westminster and Ely. Exemplifying Butterfield's sense of hierarchy and progression, it is plainest in the aisles and simple enough in the nave, where the use of chairs allows a broad expanse of flooring to be seen. Here diagonal stone borders outline patterns of red and black tiles with sparing ornamental centres. In the baptistery more decorative tilework comes in, along with passages of Derbyshire fossil to back up the marbles of the font. The choir floor adopts a different colour scheme of red, white and green, and unusually the stalls are set on further raised panels of tile and Derbyshire fossil, not wooden platforms. From the chancel arch eastwards the steps are of marble, starting off as Derbyshire fossil and graduating to white marble in the sanctuary, where rosettes replace chevron patterns on the risers. The ornate sanctuary surfaces represent the natural climax of the floor.

The flat patterns of the nave and aisle walls, again Italian in inspiration, are notable for their abstraction apart from the symbols over the chancel arch. They are built up from ingenious combinations of tiling, stonework, and mastic inlay using Keene's cement. They may have been thought of as a cheap alternative to fresco, or even as temporary decoration; these large surfaces drew criticism from Benjamin Webb in *The Ecclesiologist* as 'abrupt, and disproportionate, and ungainly ... without flow or continuity'.⁹³

The most striking features of the later Butterfield campaigns are the large figurative tile panels in the north aisle, on the west wall and against the tower arch, dating from between 1876 and 1891. They are set above a dado of

plain tiles with which Butterfield resurfaced the base of the aisles and west end in 1876.⁹⁴ Together with the revised stained-glass scheme of the same years, the pictures belong to a phase in which Butterfield and the church authorities viewed iconography as an essential complement to the earlier patterning, and tried to make up for the failure of the early plan to fresco the church. The Ascension scene within the tower arch, for instance, had been conceived as a fresco long before it was executed in tile panels here in 1891. The panels have not been widely appreciated; J. D. Sedding, for instance, compared them to 'enlarged Marcus-Ward Christmas cards'. Other changes Butterfield made in these later years were largely confined to the chancel and have either been removed or obscured.⁹⁵

The east end as experienced today is essentially as recast by Comper, to whom are due the rescue and recreation of Dyce's reredos panels, the extra paintings on its flanks, the lengthened altar, and the curtains hiding Butterfield's east wall. The present painting on the vault is also Comper's. Dyce, to whom Beresford Hope had awarded its finishing in the 1850s (to Butterfield's chagrin), had decorated the surfaces with a scheme that reminded the *Saturday Review* of the vaults of Sant'Anastasia, Verona, outlining the alabaster ribs in gold, leaving the webs chalk-grey, but then cutting into them with floriated ornament in cement.⁹⁶ Butterfield partially undid this scheme in 1895. The campaigns by Comper and Bernard Smith from 1909 not only overpainted the whole vault in their English taste, but added paint and gilding to the alabaster framework of the reredos, side panels and sedilia, thereby lightening the whole east end. Butterfield's choir stalls and other remaining chancel features such as the sanctuary rail are inconspicuous from the nave, leaving attention fixed on an east wall of largely Edwardian appearance. It is notable that the Perpendicular-style reredos to the Lady Altar added by Comper in the north aisle in 1911 is likewise partly of stone and alabaster overpainted with gilding.

Fittings

The following list includes the principal fittings and glass, with dates and makers where known. The designer is Butterfield except where otherwise indicated.

Font. Octagonal basin of Derbyshire grey marble carried on marble shafts with top of Derbyshire fossil marble, all on base of red marble, *c.*1858, given by Marquess of Sligo. Originally surmounted by a pyramidal oak canopy richly ornamented in brass and suspended from an open gilt iron framework across the mouth of the baptistery arch

Pulpit. Seven-panelled on a splayed base, front supported on stubby granite columns, faced in patterning of many marbles, *c.*1858

Dwarf choir screen. Of alabaster separated by columns of Italian and Languedoc marble with Derbyshire fossil coping and Rouge Royal plinth. Gates of iron and brass

Screen to south chapel. Iron, by Molyneux Kerr Associates, *c.*2007

Lady Altar, north aisle. Reredos in gilt alabaster with figures of Virgin, saints and angels, designed by Comper, executed by W. D. Gough and H. A. Bernard Smith, 1911. Tester over

Choir stalls. Of oak in three rows, carved by R. H. Norris, 1852

Organ. Mostly by Harrison & Harrison, 1910; pipework design 2001–2

Screens behind choir stalls. Alabaster carved by Myers firm; ironwork grilles by Potter, 1852

Reredos. Paintings by H. A. Bernard Smith to designs by Comper, 1909, recreating Dyce's reredos of 1854–9. Lowest row: Nativity with six apostles. Middle Row: Crucifixion with six apostles. At the top: Christ in Glory, with saints. Latin doctors of the church on north wall, Greek doctors of the church on south wall, with boy and girl saints above, added by Comper and Bernard Smith, 1914–16

Hanging pyx. Designed by Comper, given by Duke of Newcastle, 1928

Altar table. Intarsia front, by Butterfield, *c.*1858, lengthened by Comper, 1911

Stained glass

Nave, west window. Tree of Jesse, by Alexander Gibbs, 1877, modifying the design of Alfred Gérente's window of 1853 (now in Sheffield Cathedral)

Nave, north aisle west window. By the O'Connors, 1862, replacing patterned glass by Gérente

Baptistery, west window. By the O'Connors, 1864. Originally at east end of north chancel aisle, moved here in 1998 to replace a Gérente window destroyed by bomb damage

South aisle windows. By Alexander Gibbs, c.1867–70, replacing windows of 1857–9 by Gérente

Nave clerestory. Grisaille, by the O'Connors, 1852–3

Chancel clerestory. Grisaille, by the O'Connors, 1852, modified 1859, restored 2009–10

Tile panels

Upton Richards memorial, north aisle. Adoration of the Shepherds and Magi, 1875–6. Cartoons by Alexander Gibbs, painting by I. A. Gibbs and Alexander Gravier from Butterfield sketch, installed by Henry Poole & Sons

Berdmores Compton memorial, under west window. Moses and the brazen serpent; Melchidizeck and Abraham; and Abraham's sacrifice. Executed by Bell & Beckham after sketches by Butterfield, 1888

Henry Wood memorial, north tower arch. Ascension, 1891. Probably executed by Bell & Beckham after sketches by Butterfield

All Saints Convent and School

The Anglican women's religious order of the Society of All Saints, informally the Sisters of the Poor, operated from the south side of Margaret Street, opposite All Saints Church, between 1856 and 20xx. Their former premises, now occupied by the Jesus Centre, include a chapel of 1860 by G. E. Street at the back and the convent building (Nos 82–83) at the front, rebuilt to Ernest Willmott's design in 1914.

The order was founded by Harriet Byron, who had been brought up as the daughter of a well-off Marylebone family in Nottingham Place. Drawn as a young woman to the services at the Margaret Chapel, she took instruction from the Rev. W. Upton Richards, the priest who presided over the transition from the chapel to All Saints. She also became a frequent visitor to the pioneer Anglican Sisterhood of the Holy Cross, started in 1845 in Park Village West. After training as a nurse and taking part in district visiting, Miss Byron in 1851 rented a house at 67 Mortimer Street, took vows, and for some months cared alone for 'three incurable invalids and two orphans' before being joined by a second postulant, Sarah Easton. In 1856 the new order, now nine in strength, became formalized, Harriet Byron was elected Mother Superior and the sisters moved to Margaret Street, leaving the Mortimer Street premises to be developed as St Elizabeth's Home.⁹⁷

The original Margaret Street community, known as All Saints Home, consisted of three houses, Nos 81, 82 and 83, adapted for the nuns' use by P. C. Hardwick. Most of the space was reserved for female orphans, aged women and the incurably sick but there was also a mortuary, 'attached to the Home, but apart from it', and a dispensary.⁹⁸ The early years were marked by hard work and austerity ('there was never any heat in the houses apart from a small fire in the living-room').⁹⁹ In 1862 the sisters took on the management of all the nursing at University College Hospital. By 1873 they had transferred the extended orphanage to No. 77A, were running an industrial school and

the home for old women in the main home as well as the St Elizabeth's Home in Mortimer Street, and had started a series of initiatives further afield.¹⁰⁰ The most enduring was a convalescent hospital in Eastbourne, opened in 1869. In time the order's reach became international.

The nuns may first have worshipped in the temporary church erected in 1855 behind 77 Margaret Street when All Saints was awaiting completion. This they took over once the church finally opened as a 'confraternity chapel' to be used by various groups under the sisters' guidance, along with No. 74, till then the Rev. Richards' house, where further orphans were installed. They soon acquired a new refectory and chapel of their own, built in 1860 to designs by G. E. Street, who had been a member of the All Saints congregation and had designed vestments for Richards since moving to London a few years previously.¹⁰¹ The building survives, largely concealed from public view. It occupies a site originally behind Nos 81–83, to which it was attached by a subsidiary wing and passage; it is now entered by a small door at the angle of Marylebone Passage. Externally it is a simple vessel of yellow brick with some red banding and a continuous clerestory along both sides.

Though small, the first-floor chapel was a significant work for Street and became a precedent for later urban convent chapels like the House of Bethany in Clerkenwell. Stilted timber arches to which later iron tie-bars have been added divide the interior into four bays (Ill. 27/26). The only other articulation is a stout, pierced wooden screen near the west or entrance end, defining the zone for visitors and the organ. Beyond it come the nuns' stalls, arranged in collegiate fashion and backed by a dado of colourful embossed tiles. The stalls are known to have been supplied by Rattee & Kett in 1866, which is also the likeliest date for the screen; but the tiles, probably procured from Frederick Garrard, may have been among changes known to have been made to the chapel in 1875. The most striking feature is the all-over frescoed east wall, depicting the Crucifixion with attendant saints. This was painted by

J. R. Clayton (of Clayton & Bell) in 1860–1, doubtless following the close instructions of Street, who hankered at this time for large wall paintings in the Fra Angelico manner.¹⁰² As completed, the east wall had a low dado of alabaster with quatrefoil panels, and a superaltar also of alabaster with a run of small Gothic arches. These were replaced in 1949 by a new altar backed with a large marble slab, designed by Romilly Craze. The clerestory has charming single figures of saints in stained glass, the earliest supplied by Clayton & Bell but later ones added at least up to the 1920s. Since the nuns left, the chapel has been partly stripped and the seating turned to face the screen, but the essentials of the interior remain.¹⁰³

After Upton Richards' death in 1873 the convent loosened its umbilical connection with All Saints Church. Among the nuns who joined that year was Maria Rossetti, sister of Dante Gabriel and Christina, who died of cancer only three years later.¹⁰⁴ After Harriet Byron also died in 1887, Margaret Street became less central to the order's activities, though practically the whole of Nos 74–83 were by then under conventual control. In 1901 the Society of All Saints moved its headquarters to London Colney, Hertfordshire, allowing a reduction in size of its metropolitan establishment, all held under various Howard de Walden leases. At this juncture the confraternity chapel at No. 77 was disposed of, becoming briefly a fencing school before it was pulled down.¹⁰⁵ In 1910 the orphanage too was transferred to London Colney and a new building designed there by the architect Ernest Willmott, a former assistant of Bodley & Garner, back in England after a spell working in South Africa. The Margaret Street activities could now be regrouped and reduced to the site of the present Nos 82–83, which were rebuilt to Willmott's designs in 1914 with Higgs & Hill as builders, combining a base for the remaining London nuns with a hostel for young women.¹⁰⁶ The building is an undemonstrative piece of late Arts-and-Crafts architecture, with a high stone plinth, red-brick upper storeys and transomed windows, a gabled front with a central bay, and a small Calvary marking the canted corner to Marylebone

Passage (Ill. 27/28). The link with the Street chapel block at the back is neatly managed.

All Saints as completed in 1859 had space enough at 7 and 8 Margaret Street to house its immediate clergy and choir school, but no wider school for the parish. That was remedied when Upton Richards leased the sites of two houses opposite the church and raised sufficient funds for a three-storey building by Butterfield, erected by C. N. Foster in 1870.¹⁰⁷ Coincidentally or otherwise, this new 'national school' was opened at almost the same time as that of St Andrew's, Wells Street, its eastern neighbour. Butterfield's school is in his own insistent London idiom of red brick with diapering, but offers some telling contrasts with his buildings across the road (Ill. 27/29). The repeated triple windows in deep reveals with attached columns and heavy heads in Bath stone, and the explicit use of tracery on the top floor, suggest that economy was not the consideration that might have been expected.

Butterfield's original plan allowed for the usual separate entrances for boys, who occupied the top floor, and the girls and infants on the main floors. The basement was reserved for adults, perhaps as a room for parish activities, and there was a generous and lower residential wing on the east side. Because of the small size of the parish, the over-provision of school places and the dwindling of the local population, the school was never well attended. Figures given in 1895 (148 boys, 143 girls and 177 infants) probably allude to the building's capacity, as in 1903 there were only 134 children attending, of whom 34 resided in the parish.¹⁰⁸ The national school closed in 1904, by which time parts of the building were already in use as overspill by the choir school at No. 8, or for extra staff from All Saints. So the building was adapted as a parish or church house, with the boys' school on top becoming the parish room. Here in 1937 was installed a vast painting made years earlier by Gerald Moira showing Prebendary Mackay and others at mass: this has since disappeared. A new lease having been secured in 1926, in due course the

building became the main base of the choir school. When that had to be given up in 1968, All Saints set up an Institute of Christian Studies in 1972 with the hope that profits from a restaurant there would help subsidise the church. In 1992 that too was abandoned and the building became an international Buddhist centre housing the Fo Guang Temple.¹⁰⁹