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Building a Local Church with Global Networks: James Goold in Colonial Victoria¹

Paola Colleoni

Abstract

James Goold was appointed first Roman Catholic Bishop of Melbourne at a time when the diocese – extending across the whole of nowadays State of Victoria – counted two churches, one only partially built, and a chapel. For almost forty years he busied himself in laying strong foundations for the establishment of the Catholic Church in Victoria, his legacy eventually including an infrastructure of almost one hundred ecclesiastical edifices, most prominently the nearly completed grand Cathedral of St Patrick's dominating East Melbourne. The Bishop formed an extraordinary partnership with William Wardell, the brilliant Catholic convert architect who designed St Patrick's and a dozen parish churches in city suburbs and rural townships large and small. A strong administrator, Goold shaped his diocese exploiting both global and regional networks, contributing significantly to the built environment of colonial Victoria.

Keywords

Colonial Architecture, Gothic Revival, Australia, James Goold, William Wardell

For almost 40 years James Goold (1812–1886) guided the destiny of the diocese of Melbourne, being appointed as first Roman Catholic Bishop in 1847 and elevated Archbishop in 1874 (Fig. 1). An Irishman educated in Italy, Goold had a passion for beauty: whenever he travelled he enjoyed visiting majestic churches, and he collected large illustrated volumes and Baroque paintings that, together with furnishings and vestments acquired from renowned workshops, were used to decorate the Gothic revival buildings he was creating in Victoria. The man that emerges from the several outputs of the Australian Research Council Discovery Project *A Baroque Archbishop in Colonial Australia: James Goold* (2017–2020) led by Jaynie Anderson, Shane Carmody and Max Vodola was a lover of arts

¹ I met Jaynie eight years ago when I was a junior research assistant moving my first steps in academia researching the library of Archbishop Goold. She has been guiding and advising me ever since. The contents of this article stem from research carried on under her brilliant mentorship at the University of Melbourne during my doctorate. Jaynie continues to encourage me to this day, and I am forever thankful for her friendship. Her passion for art, her curiosity, and dedication have been inspiring, and learning from her made me a better researcher. Her patience, her kindness, and her unfaltering support throughout the years have made me a better teacher and a better person. Thank you Jaynie.

and a shrewd politician.² The Australian Catholic mission was still in its infancy when Goold landed in Sydney in 1838, but, until his death, he played a pivotal role in establishing an institution counting a congregation exceeding half a million across the whole country. The present article draws upon the several essays published on Goold in previous years and highlights his ability in exploiting global and regional networks to shape his diocese as he pleased by looking at the Archbishop's most conspicuous legacy, the dozens of churches and the cathedral he commissioned, furnished, and decorated, in the almost 40 years of his tenure.

James Goold was appointed first Bishop of Melbourne after some ten years of missionary work. Educated within the Irish Augustinian order first in his hometown of Cork and then in Italy, Goold had volunteered for the Australian mission in 1837, serving the parish of Campbelltown for a decade.³ Initially intended as a suitable, temporary position that would allow him to fast-forward his career once back in Europe, Goold excelled at missionary work: He was an able administrator and an indefatigable clergyman, travelling more than 3,000 kilometres on horseback every year to visit the dispersed colonial settlements south-east of Sydney.⁴ Once his term expired, he decided to remain in Australia, and, a few years later, the Archbishop of Sydney, John Bede Polding included his name in the list of possible candidates for the new bishopric of Melbourne.⁵ On 6 August 1848, Goold was consecrated bishop in St Mary's Cathedral, the largest ecclesiastical structure in the whole of Australia at the time.

Designed by pioneer Catholic priest John Joseph Therry to include a tripartite nave, transepts, and polygonal chancel, St Mary's was a surprisingly squat Gothick structure, including two rows of pointed arch windows and octagonal buttresses.⁶ Inside, it had been meticulously decorated by Polding to include a gabled ceiling, an impressive water stoup, and a screen-like structure with elaborated Gothic detailing, a high altar including sacred scenes and saints in niches, a Spanish oak throne described as a 'a truly venerable monumental remain of the olden time', a number of paintings imported from Europe, and a Bevington organ for which the renowned Catholic architect Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin had provided the design for the case.⁷ The Archbishop orchestrated an elaborate

² *The Invention of Melbourne: A Baroque Archbishop and a Gothick Architect*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson, Shane Carmody and Max Vodola (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2019); and *The Architecture of Devotion: James Goold and his Legacies in Colonial Melbourne*, ed. by Jaynie Anderson, Shane Carmody and Max Vodola (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2021).

³ Max Vodola, 'Situating Goold: Pastor and Architectural Patron', in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 15-30.

⁴ 'Australasian Catholic Directory 1841' in *Australasian Catholic Directory: Containing the Ordo Divini Officii ... 1841-1899* (Sydney: Sydney Archdiocesan Archives, 2005), pp. 23-24.

⁵ Vodola, 19-21.

⁶ Joan Kerr and James Broadbent, *Gothick Taste in the Colony of New South Wales* (Sydney: David Ell Press, 1980), pp. 56-58 and 80-85.

⁷ W. H., 'St Mary's Cathedral', *New South Wales Magazine* vol. 1, no. 7, July 1843, p. 357, <<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-1389135662>>.

ceremony for Goold's consecration and, in years to come, his cultural and artistic patronage in Sydney would influence Goold's work in Melbourne.⁸

Two churches had been erected in the Port Phillip district prior to 1848, St Francis' in Melbourne (built 1841–45) and St Mary of the Angels in Geelong (nave built 1846–48).⁹ Both were realised by Samuel Jackson, a builder-turned-architect who established the first architectural practice in Melbourne, and were in the Gothick style, meaning that they included a number of decorative elements derived from Gothic architecture applied to the main fabric of the building without an understanding of medieval Gothic constructional rationality. Nonetheless, they denoted very different sensibilities. St Francis' was another creation of Therry, an Irishman with French ancestry who had no architectural training but for years dabbled in designing Catholic churches. The French imprint of his designs include his passion for pointed-arch windows, Latin-cross ground plans, and polygonal chancels, while his inability to properly combine these elements was due to the crudeness of the Irish structures he had encountered before moving to Australia. St Francis' was a squat cruciform structure including pointed arch windows and octagonal buttresses, so solidly built by architect Jackson that it remains in use today (Fig. 2).

Differently, St Mary's had a very narrow structure, with a high-pitched roof and slender lancets that conformed to the Gothick taste of Archbishop Polding.¹⁰ Eager to promote the English Benedictine rule at the Antipodes, Polding's architectural preference laid with unconventionally tall and narrow buildings that recalled the Benedictine monastic complex at Downside Abbey near Bath. For this purpose, before leaving for Australia, he had obtained a church design from architect Henry E. Goodridge, the man who had designed several of the early monastic buildings, including the chapel. Polding promoted the realisation of this design throughout early colonial Australia, including the still extant St Bernard's, Hartley, New South Wales; and St John's, Richmond, Tasmania.¹¹

Goold soon proved to have a good understanding of episcopal dignity. Despite growing up in Cork when Catholics were still considered second-class citizens – he was sixteen when the Roman Catholic Relief Act was approved in 1829 – Goold had moved to Italy to complete his education before volunteering for the Australian mission. Even if the Catholic Church was experiencing a period of crisis following the French Revolution and the Napoleonic invasions, the five years Goold had spent between Perugia, Viterbo, and Rome, where the Catholic Church still held both spiritual and temporal powers, were instrumental as they shaped his understanding of Church honour. Despite the geographical

⁸ Peter Cunich, 'Sound Taste and Love of the Fine Arts: Bishop Goold's Experience of Cultural Patronage in the Diocese of Sydney', in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 67–81.

⁹ The Port Phillip district was established as the Colony of Victoria in July 1851 right before the first gold findings.

¹⁰ Kerr and Broadbent, 86.

¹¹ St Mary's in Geelong was never completed and eventually demolished to make space for a much larger structure designed by Dowden and Ross.

remoteness from the cradle of Christianity, Goold upheld the same values in Melbourne, demanding to be treated with the respect afforded by his position and moving the first steps to erect a grand cathedral just a few weeks after arriving. When the Anglican Bishop of Melbourne, Charles Perry, formally protested the fact Goold was using the title 'Bishop of Melbourne', he disregarded the recommendation of dropping the title as the Church of England in the colonies did not enjoy the privileges they had in the British Isles.¹²

As a matter of fact, in colonial Australia religious pluralism was guaranteed by the Bourke Church Act of 1836, which aimed at promoting Christianity providing free land grants for the erection of churches and State Aid to cover expenses up to a maximum of £1,000 to different congregations, including Presbyterians and Catholics in addition to Anglicans. For the site of the new cathedral, the English colonial establishment initially intimated to Goold to submit his applications through Archbishop Polding, with whom they had a good relationship recognising him to be a well-educated and reliable Englishman. They actually requested the same for all formal matters as they saw Polding as Goold's ecclesiastical superior.¹³ In fact, they effectively tried to ignore Goold's jurisdiction over Catholic matters in Melbourne, but Goold pointed out that according to Canon Law in his own diocese he remained independent, and as he had defied Perry's intrusion in the use of his title, he successfully defended his autonomy, eventually establishing relations with colonial officials bypassing the Archbishop.

In few months, the new Bishop proved to be as well-educated as Polding, firm in his judgments, and able to eloquently defend his stances. Despite lingering prejudices against Irishmen, the English colonial establishment soon realised Goold would not be easily disregarded, nor ignored, as the leader of the Catholic population, which constituted almost one third of the total settlers in the Port Phillip district. From the mid 1830s, the Irish had taken advantage of various colonial schemes encouraging unmarried female domestic servants and rural workers to migrate.¹⁴ In later years, following the Great Famine in Ireland, settlers used the nomination system to help relatives to migrate, making the south-eastern coast of Australia more Irish and Catholic than other areas of the British Empire. Keenly aware of the years of prosecution endured in their motherland because of their faith, once settled, Irish Catholics donated generously to their Church.

Thanks to their support, Goold could soon start a new building to be dedicated to Saint Patrick in one of the city's most prominent areas, Eastern Hill. When Goold had arrived, Melbourne was little more than a colonial outpost, and the diocese extended over an area equalling that of nowadays State of Victoria (Fig. 3). He proved up to the

¹² Francis X. Martin, 'James Aloysius Goold, OSA, First Archbishop of Melbourne', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 93.252 (1988), 1-13.

¹³ Martin, 4-5.

¹⁴ Eric Richards, 'Greater Ireland and the Australian Immigrant: The Religious Dimension', in *Religion and Greater Ireland: Christianity and Irish Global Networks, 1750-1969*, ed. by Colin Barr and Hilary M. Carey (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), pp. 275-96.

challenge, demonstrating ambitious plans even before the discovery of gold in 1851 would exceedingly transform the colony's fortunes, giving him a financial availability unknown to other Antipodean Bishops. Determined to immediately leave an imprint on the urban fabric of Melbourne, Goold had left Sydney with a copy of a large church design by A.W.N. Pugin that had been obtained by Polding years before, but remained on paper because of lack of funding.¹⁵

A square structure with a tower at the west end that would command a view over the whole city, the Pugin design for St Patrick's was larger than any church attempted in Melbourne and distinguished by its Gothic forms (Fig. 4). As a matter of fact, the first church of the city, St James's Anglican Cathedral (built 1839–42), was built in the Classical idiom favoured by the Church of England in the 18th century, but Gothic was becoming increasingly fashionable both in London and in the colonies of the empire, so much so that just a few meters from St Patrick's the Anglicans had recently completed a church, St Peter's (built 1846–48), with prominent Gothic features.

A Catholic convert, from the mid 1830s Pugin spearheaded the Gothic revival movement in England promoting the recreation of ecclesiastical buildings true to medieval proportions. He saw architecture as deeply intertwined with morality and faith, and theorised that the revival of Gothic architecture rooted in English tradition would foster the resurgence of English Catholic identity.¹⁶ A widely successful architect and designer, as well as a theorist and illustrator, in his publications Pugin proposed a complete recovery of medieval Gothic, spanning from the design of imposing cathedrals archaeologically informed by ancient examples, to the minute detailing of tiles, furniture, metalworks, textiles and all of those items required for the celebration of Catholic Church liturgy.¹⁷

Pugin's contribution to the revival of Gothic was exceptional, however, he was not alone. Since the end of the 18th century, Gothic had been increasingly described as a truly English style and connected to patriotic feelings, leading to the diffusion of pattern-books and antiquarian publications by learned architectural societies, most prominently the Cambridge Camden Society (Ecclesiological Society from 1845). Furthermore, members the Oxford Movement saw in the Gothic style a mean to revive Anglican High Church liturgy, meaning that Gothic revival ecclesiastical architecture eventually came to

¹⁵ Paola Colleoni, 'A Gothic Vision: James Goold, William Wardell and the Building of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, 1850–97', *Architectural History*, 65 (2022), 227–60 (pp. 234–36), <<https://doi.org/10.1017/arh.2022.11>>.

¹⁶ Pugin's legacy has been widely studied. On his work in Australia see Brian Andrews, 'Pugin in Australia', in *Pugin: A Gothic Passion*, ed. by Paul Atterbury and Clive Wainwright (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 246–57; and Brian Andrews, *Creating a Gothic Paradise: Pugin at the Antipodes* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 2002).

¹⁷ *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival* ed. by Paul Atterbury (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

accompany British colonial expansion worldwide as a marker of Christianity.¹⁸ Among the chief promoters of Gothic architecture in Australia was the first Anglican Bishop, William Broughton (1768–1821). He was close to the Oxford Movement and understood the powerful associations with Britain inspired by the Gothic style, so much so that he had designed his own Gothic cathedral in 1837.¹⁹

This means that despite its professed Irishness, being dedicated to the Irish patron saint and built with the savings of Irish Catholics by an Irish bishop, the architecture of St Patrick's in Melbourne was close to the sensibility of the English establishment. Despite his advocacy for an English Catholic identity, Pugin's architecture resonated well also with members of other denominations who saw in Gothic revival style a remainder of their homeland.²⁰ Samuel Jackson, who was entrusted to build the church, slightly modified the design, but as he was originally from London, all of the elements he included, such as the crenelated parapet, conformed to English taste.

Despite being in the hands of the most experienced ecclesiastical architect in the area, Pugin's St Patrick's was never raised more than a few metres above the ground. The discovery of gold in July 1851 left the worksite deserted as men rushed to the goldfields, and even if works resumed two years later, the economic collapse of 1854 sent Jackson's practice out of business. The uncertainty of the times did not deter Goold though. On his way to Europe for his first *ad limina* visit he had stopped in several South American cities including Lima, where he was impressed by the cathedral 'a superb building, without the profuse ornaments which decorate the other churches. This church is a solemn and grand pile of Gothic architecture. The ceiling is plain but chaste, the High Altar stands under the great dome; it is exquisitely beautiful'.²¹ Built on a scale comparable to European cathedrals, with its rich interior decorations, the cathedral showcased to Goold the majesty that a colonial bishopric could achieve.

Once in Europe, he made extensive purchases even if the diocesan coffers hadn't yet been filled by the recently discovered golden riches. In Rome, Goold resided at the Irish Augustinian house of Santa Maria in Posterula and visited the Irish College only if necessary in order to avoid the powerful Irish network responding to Paul Cullen.²² His knowledge of Italian helped him to establish a large network beyond his Irish Augustinian confreres, and after presenting his relation on the state of the diocese in front of

¹⁸ Alex G. Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire, c. 1840–1870* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

¹⁹ Bremner, pp. 75–78 and 230–38.

²⁰ Brian Andrews, *Australian Gothic: The Gothic Revival in Australian Architecture from the 1840s to the 1950s* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2001), pp. 1–26.

²¹ *The Diary of James Alipius Goold, OSA: First Catholic Bishop and Archbishop of Melbourne, 1848–1886*, ed. by Brian Condon and Ian Waters (Melbourne: Diocesan Historical Commission, 2009), p. 27.

²² On Goold and Cullen see Colin Barr, 'A Baroque Bishop in Catholicism's Greater Ireland: the Global Context of Archbishop James Alipius Goold of Melbourne', in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 83–93.

Propaganda Fide, he connected with several art dealers, eventually exporting 145 paintings described as ‘sacred images’.²³ He then travelled to England, where he exploited his connections with the Benedictines, including William Ullathorne, Polding’s former vicar general and the man who had recruited him for the Australian mission back in 1837, now Bishop of Birmingham, and Thomas Heptonstall, Polding’s cousin and agent in England.

In Birmingham, Goold acquired items realised following Pugin’s designs in the Gothic revival style, including metalworks produced by Hardman & Co., and textiles from the workshop of Mrs Powell and Brown for a sum exceeding £400 (Fig. 5).²⁴ Thanks to the Benedictine network, Goold also established contacts with architect Charles Hansom, a Gothic revivalist faithful to Pugin’s precepts, who agreed to create plans for three or four churches and the episcopal palace for £100, and to provide Gothic revival altars, statues and fonts to furnish the churches.²⁵ Goold continued his purchases: in London he sought ‘the best organ that could be obtained’ from Bevington & Sons, and from the foundry of Murphy in Dublin he acquired a large peal of bell costing some £700.²⁶

Upon the Bishop’s return, the correspondent of the Catholic *Freeman’s Journal* could hardly contain his enthusiasm, reporting that ‘no matter the expenses’ a tower was to be built immediately to house the bells, and St Francis’s to be enlarged to properly fit the organ, way too grand to be erected in the current nave.²⁷ He informed the readers that the Bishop had acquired ornaments and furniture for thirteen churches – at a time when the whole diocese counted four, two of which barely raised above the foundations – and, a few months later, when the paintings ‘of the Italian school’ were delivered, he described them as ‘most gorgeous and of colossal proportions’.²⁸ All of these riches though needed to be housed in appropriate spaces. Given the fluctuating economy, the commission agreed upon with Charles Hansom was delayed for a few years, but working in partnership with his brother Joseph, Hansom eventually sent architectural plans to Melbourne, including one of a revised St Patrick’s to be built on the same foundations of the Pugin’s church on Eastern Hill.²⁹

²³ Jaynie Anderson, ‘Collecting for Conversion: Bishop Goold’s Passion for Late Baroque Painting’, in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 127-45.

²⁴ For comparison, consider that a parish priest in Australia received a yearly salary of c. £100. Birmingham City Council Archives MS175A/3/3/1/4, Hardman Metal Sales Ledger 1851–53, fol. 517; the original receipt from Mrs Powell’s workshop is at Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission Archives (MDHC), Goold’s Documents.

²⁵ By 1852, Pugin’s health had declined significantly and he died in September. MDHC, Bishop John Thomas Hynes OP Correspondence, letter from John Hynes [Goold’s uncle and agent] to James Goold, 28 October 1852.

²⁶ ‘Victoria – Catholic News’, *Freeman’s Journal*, 3 March 1853, p. 9, <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article114836593>> [accessed 21 April 2024].

²⁷ ‘Victoria – Catholic News’, *Freeman’s Journal*.

²⁸ ‘Ecclesiastical Intelligence – Catholic Church’, *Freeman’s Journal*, 6 August 1853, p. 2, <<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article114832201>> [accessed 21 April 2024].

²⁹ Brian Andrews, ‘The English Benedictine Connection: The Works of Charles Hansom in Australia’, *Fabrications*, 1 (1989), 33–55 (pp. 44–53), <<https://doi.org/10.1080/10331867.1989.10525044>>.

The Hansom brothers got rid of the Gothick details added by Jackson and proposed a clean design with a restrained use of decorated tracery in the windows. In 1856, Melbourne architectural firm of George and Schneider, two of the founding members of the Victorian Institute of Architects, were engaged to supervise the building construction. Still, it was another false beginning, as after two years of work only three bays of the south aisle had been completed. Labelling them as ungrateful and dishonest drunks, Goold dismissed them while *en route* to his second *ad limina* visit to Europe.³⁰ Fortunately enough, travelling in the opposite direction, a talented architect was relocating from London to Melbourne.

William Wardell (1823–1899) had converted to Catholicism in 1846 and worked on some 30 commissions for the English Catholic Church before bad health prompted him to emigrate. In the wake of the gold rush, Melbourne had developed into a large town where Irish Catholics constituted a significant proportion of the settler population. Wardell's personal connections probably also helped directing his choice: in previous years he had met with the English Benedictines Polding, Ullathorne and Robert Willson, the Bishop of Hobart, and he contacted both Ullathorne and Willson to obtain reference letters to present to Goold.³¹ As the Bishop was travelling, it was Goold's vicar, John Fitzpatrick, who initially established contact with the architect, but as soon as Wardell drafted a new plan, this was sent to Rome for the Bishop's review.

In the eternal city, Goold was defending his autocratic administration of the diocese from the attack of Irish diocesan priests connected to Paul Cullen that were trying to take over the Australian hierarchy, and he was expanding his acquaintances' network maintaining close contacts with prominent English Catholic figures including Cardinal Wiseman, Monsignor George Talbot, rector of the English college, and Thomas Grant, Bishop of Southwark.³² They all admired Wardell's drawings for St Patrick's, and Goold ruthlessly ordered to demolish what little had been built of the Hansom brothers' design so that Wardell's grand cathedral plan could start to take shape (Fig. 6).³³ Works at the site on Eastern Hill quickly resumed, this time until the completion of the building, which would be competently carried on by Wardell's associates John Bunn Denny, the clerk of works who had been working under Pugin at Alton Towers before Wardell's invitation to join him in Australia, and the brothers John and James Young, who had worked with Wardell in England before relocating to Victoria during the gold rush.

The new design was grandiose, larger than anything attempted in Australia at the time, almost double in size when compared to the Anglican Cathedral of St Andrew's that

³⁰ MDHC, Archbishop James Goold OSA Correspondence, letters from John Fitzpatrick to James Goold, 15 October 1858, and from James Goold to John Fitzpatrick, 25 November and 26 December 1858.

³¹ Sydney, State Library of New South Wales (SLNSW), MLMSS 3278 /1-2 William Wilkinson Wardell Family Papers, ca. 1848-1962, ff. 137-38, and 153-56.

³² Barr, pp. 88-90.

³³ MDHC, Archbishop James Goold OSA Correspondence, letter from James Goold to John Fitzpatrick, 31 March 1859.

was being built in Sydney. The plan included a tripartite nave and transepts, twin towers at the west end and a tower at the crossing, and a most distinguished chancel with chevet chapels in the French tradition of Chartres and Amiens (Figs. 7–8). As observed by Kerr and Broadbent, French Gothic was seen as an appropriate source for Catholic Gothic revival architecture as Irish congregations associated it with ancient Catholic religious authority.³⁴ The first Catholic church of Australia, St Mary's in Sydney, included French elements in his design, and as Wardell designed a building that would serve an Irish Bishop and a predominantly Irish congregation, he reworked a traditionally French ground-plan remaining mindful of the importance of associationism for settlers' architecture.

Notwithstanding his close contacts with English Catholic circles, Goold appreciated continental and Irish Gothic. This sensibility is manifest in St Patrick's, which differs significantly in planning from the two cathedrals Wardell designed for the English Benedictines in Australia, more traditionally English in design (Figs. 9–10). Yet, despite its French inspired ground plan, St Patrick's remains thoroughly English Decorated in detail and elevation, as there was no intention for the building to look too 'foreign' in the context of British Imperial architecture.³⁵ The result was stunning, and St Patrick's would be justly appreciated by colonial society at large.³⁶

The same approach would characterise the dozen parish churches Goold commissioned to Wardell in subsequent years. By re-elaborating Irish, French and English elements Wardell created beautiful parish churches solidly rooted in medieval tradition (Figs. 11–12).³⁷ In rural settlements and city suburbs alike, these were considered significant landmarks of architectural refinement. Goold's architectural patronage remained consistent throughout the years. As it was the bishop who submitted the applications for land grants and state funding for new churches, he effectively had the final say on the location and design of every church built in his extensive diocese. He dotted Victoria with almost one hundred ecclesiastical structures ranging in size from simple school-chapels to pretentious parish churches. Even if several of the largest churches remained only partially built and closed off by a temporary wall, they were built to such an impressive scale that their incompleteness did not detract from the attention and praise of the community.

Furthermore, for his cathedral and rural churches alike, the Bishop procured metalworks, furnishings and stained glass windows from renowned workshops, including the aforementioned Hardman & Co., the German Mayer's, London sculptors Farmer and Brindley, and local craftsmen among which gilders and glass artists William Montgomery, Ferguson & Urie, and the firm of Lyon, Cottier and Wells (Figs. 13–16). His gifts to parish

³⁴ Kerr and Broadbent, p. 56.

³⁵ The Gothic revival in Australia remained more conservative if compared High Victorian architecture in Britain. Colleoni, 'A Gothic Vision', pp. 253–54.

³⁶ 'The New Cathedral', *Age*, 23 December 1878, p. 3, <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/199351779>> [accessed 19 April 2024].

³⁷ Paola Colleoni, 'Solid Mass and Plain Exterior: The Ecclesiastical Architecture of William Wardell in Victoria', *Fabrications*, (2024), <<https://doi.org/10.1080/10331867.2024.2347016>>.

churches included paintings from his own collection, so that upon entering the buildings, the beholder would be struck by fittings and ornaments recalling the spirit of the Middle Ages in combination with Baroque canvases heightening the feeling of sacredness.

This means that despite acquiring several publications by Pugin, including *Contrasts* (second edition 1841) and *True Principles* (second edition 1853), Goold maintained a very practical approach in his patronage, and his taste was far from the Puginian aesthetics. Goold didn't seek to recreate the medieval society Pugin discussed in his publications, but appreciated that Gothic was a cost-effective style for the realisation of imposing buildings that were fashionable among Australian settlers.³⁸ Even if Pugin's designed metalwork made it to Melbourne, Goold's appreciation for Baroque paintings was clearly demonstrated since his first acquisitions, thus showing his indifference towards the creation of Pugin's total design ideal (Fig. 17).³⁹ When in 1868 he acquired two Neoclassical holy water fonts made of Carrara marble, he dictated they were to be placed in St Patrick's: 'Never mind about what Mr Wardell may say about style'.⁴⁰

Another aspect worth of consideration is that Goold expressed his appreciation for other architectural styles as well, and was especially fond of the Baroque churches of Rome. This fascination is reflected in the Bishop's library, which includes large illustrated volumes such as *Istoria della Sacrosanta Patriarcale Basilica Vaticana* (1867) by Filippo Maria Mignanti; *La Patriarcale Basilica Lateranense* (1832) illustrated by Agostino Valentini; and the two-volume set of Giacomo Fontana's *Raccolta delle Migliori Chiese di Roma e Suburbane* (1855) with planimetries of several Roman churches erected between the 17th and 18th centuries.⁴¹ The jewel of Goold's extensive library was an almost complete set of Piranesi's prints, which included suggestive views of Roman antiquities and ruins.⁴² While the library was certainly formed because of personal inclinations, several of the volumes had a clear didactic purpose, including pattern-books with measured drawings that could be used by

³⁸ There is barely a mention of Australian indigenous population within the several reports Goold wrote over the years. Aboriginal Australians were displaced and decimated in the process of colonisation, especially with the immigration boom kindled by the gold rush.

³⁹ The nave of St Patrick's was closed off by a temporary wall while works continued to erect the sanctuary. Archbishop Goold hung paintings from his collection in the cathedral including a *Crucifixion* after Guido Reni and a *Dead Christ* attributed to Francisco Meneses Osorio. Callum Reid, 'The Rich Treasures of Bishop Goold: Provenance, Exhibition and Reception,' in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 147-163. Unknown Artist (after Guido Reni), *Crucifixion* (19th century), oil on canvas, 294 x 194 cm, St Mary of the Angels Church, Geelong. Francisco Meneses Osorio (attributed to), *Dead Christ* (17th century), oil on canvas, 122 x 211.5 cm, St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne Archdiocese.

⁴⁰ Letter from James Goold to John Fitzpatrick, February 1868, quoted in John Rogan, *The Life and Times of a Cathedral 1858–1997* (Melbourne: MDHC Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, 1997), 16-17.

⁴¹ Goold's library was one of the most important private libraries of colonial Australia, encompassing 2 to 3 thousand books. Shane Carmody and others, 'Divining a Purpose: The Logic of Bishop Goold's Library', in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, pp. 261-75.

⁴² Shane Carmody, 'The Baroque Bishop: Piranesi in the Collection of J. A. Goold', in *The Piranesi Effect*, ed. by Kerriane Stone and Gerard Vaughan (Sydney: NewSouth publishing, 2015), pp. 220-36; Angelo Lo Conte, 'Piranesi, Guercino and Goold's Fascination for the Baroque', in *The Invention of Melbourne*, ed. by Anderson, Carmody and Vodola, 165-179.

builders such as William Pain's *British Palladio: or, the Builder's General Assistant* (1790); or Pugin's *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament* (second edition 1846).

Goold did not belong to neither the English Benedictine order that was initially entrusted the Australian missions, nor to the Hiberno-Roman network led by Paul Cullen that eventually took over. He ably avoided the controversies that marred the early years of the Australian Catholic Church, and, when needed, he successfully defended his management of the diocese in front of *Propaganda Fide* taking advantage of his knowledge of Italian language. In Rome, he kept Cullen at a distance and cultivated friendships with prominent English Catholics who advised the Pope on English matters. His rule in Melbourne remained close to Hiberno-Roman Catholic practices, but at the same time he did not alienate other sections of his congregation and maintained good relations with the English-born colonial establishment, contributing to cultural activities as well. His liberality in lending works of arts to colonial exhibitions was lauded even by the conservative newspaper *the Argus*, that remarked Bishop Goold 'must be congratulated on being the possessor of such a large number of really valuable works'.⁴³

Goold's ability to move within different networks is discernible in the architectural projects he realised. Victorian parish churches and, most prominently, St Patrick's Cathedral, with its refined interior decoration, were a great statement of the position Catholics could achieve in Australia. Dedicated to the Irish patron saint and including French elements reminiscent of an ancient Catholic religious tradition, the cathedral was meant to be the core of Catholic activities in the colony just like the churches that dotted city neighbourhoods and rural areas were the centre of the spiritual life of each parish. The Gothic revival style appealed to the collective imaginary of an evocative past, while massive stone walls spoke of immutability and permanence, features close to the sensibilities of settlers of different confessions, meaning that several of the projects initiated by the Bishop received both praise and financing also from people belonging to other denominations as well. Goold maintained a strict control over his diocese and exploited different networks to balance its needs. This, together with the ample means at his disposal, allowed him a remarkable liberty in pursuing his ambitions and shape the Catholic Church in colonial Victoria as he pleased.

⁴³ 'Art Treasures Exhibition', *Argus*, 5 April 1869, p. 5. <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/5818025>> [accessed 19 April 2024]

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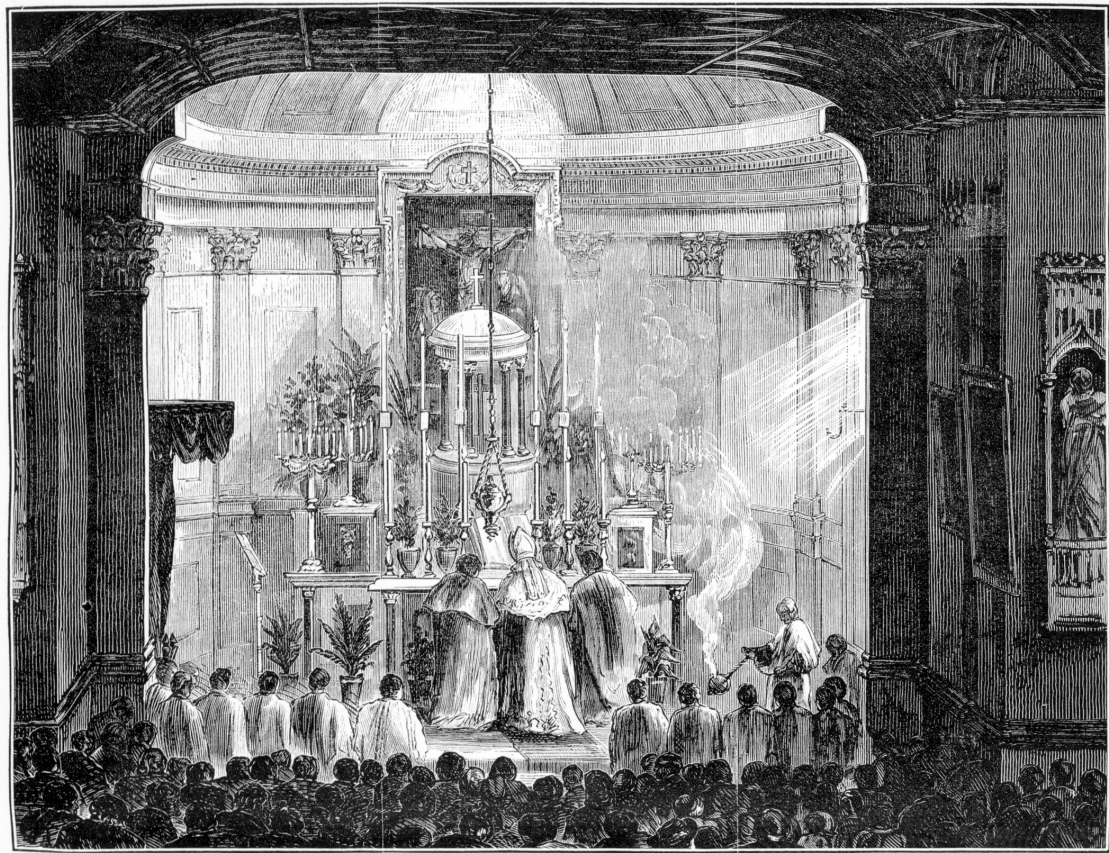
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Figure 1. Archibald McDonald, *Archbishop James Goold* (ca. 1870), albumen paper carte de visite. State Library Victoria.



CONSECRATION OF THE NEW ALTAR AND SANCTUARY, ST. FRANCIS CHURCH, MELBOURNE.

Figure 2. David and Syme & Co., *Consecration of the New Altar and Sanctuary, St Francis' Church, Melbourne [Vic.]* (1879), engraving published on in *the Illustrated Australian News*, 5 July 1879. State Library Victoria.



Figure 3. *Melbourne Then & Now* (1888), illustrated sheet. State Library Victoria.
The bottom picture shows St Patrick's Cathedral in the foreground, with the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church at its front-left side and St Peter's Anglican Church on the right.



Figure 4. S.T. Gill, Campbell and Fergusson, *St Patrick's Church, East Melbourne* (1854), lithograph, 45 x 62 cm. Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission archives, Melbourne Archdiocese.



Figure 5. Lucy Powell and Misses L. and W. Brown (after A.W.N. Pugin's design), *Cope*, (1853), silk. Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission archives, Melbourne Archdiocese.

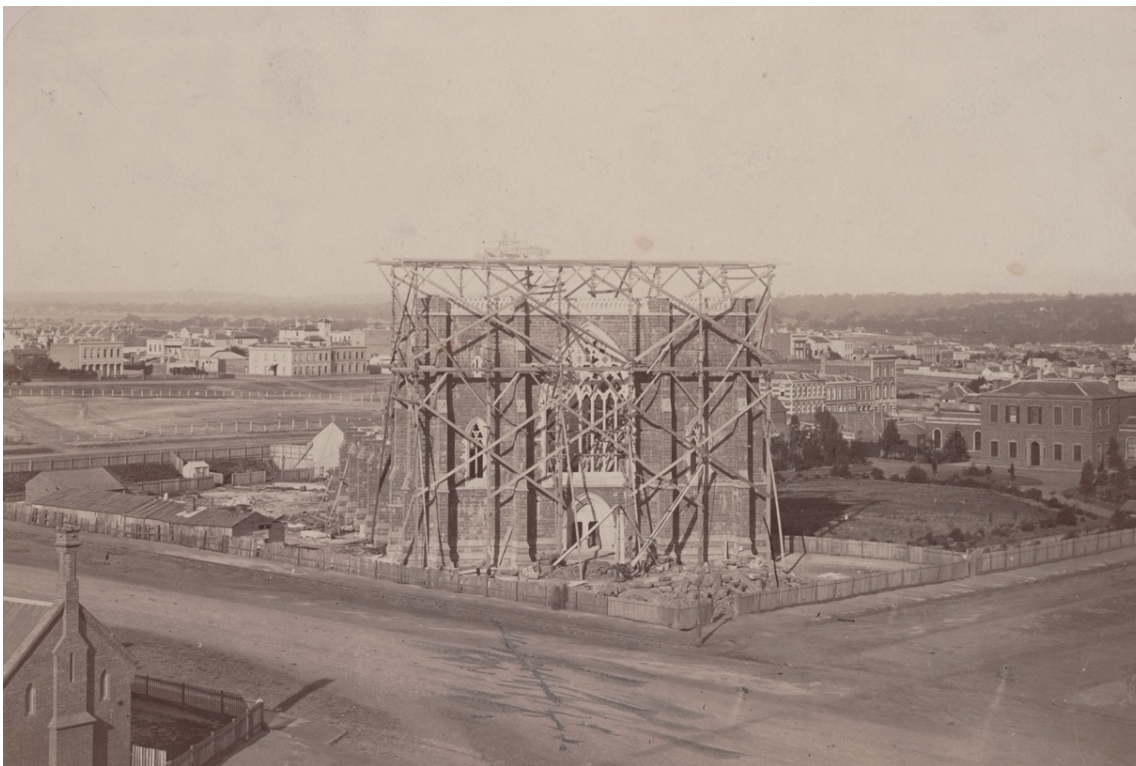


Figure 6. Charles Nettleton, *St Patrick's Cathedral Under Construction, Melbourne* (c. 1861), photograph, 27.3 x 37.4. State Library Victoria.



Figure 7. J.D. Ryland, *Interior of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne* (1876), ink on paper, 72 x 49 cm.
Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission archives, Melbourne Archdiocese.



Figure 8. A.C. Cooke, *Exterior of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, Now in Course of Erection* (1879). Paper glued to linen. Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission archives, Melbourne Archdiocese.



Figure 9. *St Mary's Cathedral, St Marys Road, Sydney*, photograph (1900). City of Sydney Archives. While at Melbourne cathedral the nave was erected first (see figure 6), both in Sydney and in Hobart works started from the English traditional East end of the building.

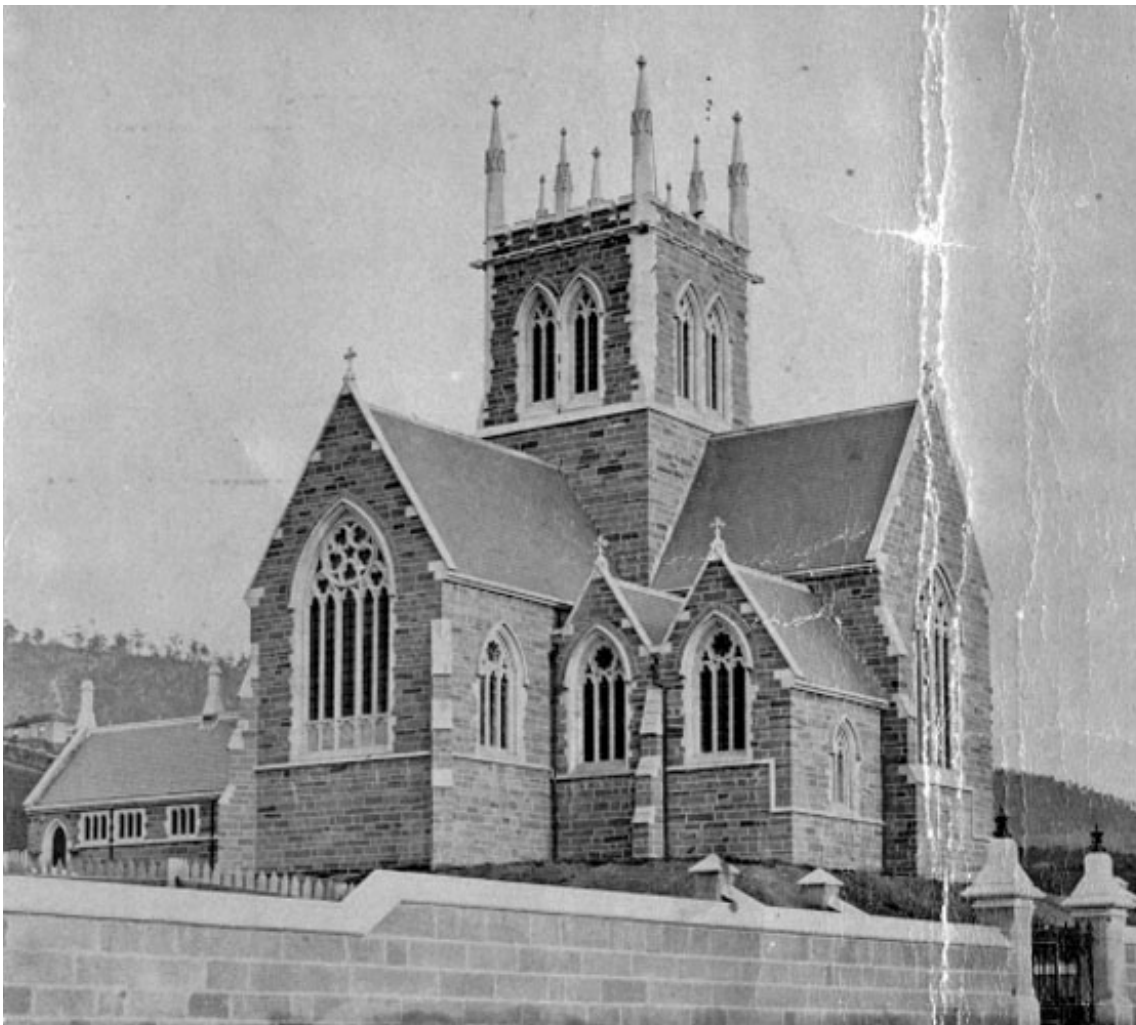


Figure 10. *St Mary's Cathedral, Harrington Street, Hobart* (1870), Photograph. Libraries Tasmania.
The partially built structure had to be demolished because of the poor supervision of local architect Henry Hunter. He went on to re-design the cathedral scaling down Wardell's original design.



Figure 11. E.H. Woolcock, *Warrnambool, Victoria* (c. 1925), Negative. Museums Victoria.
St Joseph's Catholic Church appears in the centre of the photograph, while the façade of St John's Presbyterian Church is distinguishable to the right.



Figure 12. *The New Church of St Ignatius, Richmond* (1894). Lithograph published on *the Advocate*, 10 March 1894. Melbourne, Archives of the Australian Province of the Society of Jesus.



Figure 13. Interior of St John's Church, Heidelberg. Photograph by Nick Varadaxis, 2014.
Note the stained glass provided by artist William Montgomery. The East end window displays (from left to right) the Annunciation, the Baptism of Christ, the Crucifixion, and the Ascension.



Figure 14. Interior of St Mary's Church, East St Kilda. Photograph by author, 2019. The main altar, designed by William Wardell, includes metalworks from the workshop of Hardman and Co. of Birmingham. The stained glass windows are from the Munich's workshop of Franz Mayer and represent, from left to right, Mary the Immaculate Conception, the Risen Christ, and St Joseph. The stencilling originally created by the firm of Lyon, Wells and Cottier has been replaced.



Figure 15. Interior of St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Photograph by author, 2019. The decorative programme was completed after Wardell's death by the firm of Reed, Smart and Tappin, who followed Wardell's indications. The High Altar designed by Wardell (now in the background) was commissioned to Farmer & Brindley in London. The marble crucifix that appears on the left pillar was created in the Roman workshop of Wilhelm Achtermann and purchased by Goold in 1869. The sanctuary was re-arranged following the Second Vatican Council.



Figure 16. The Lady Chapel in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Photograph by William Bullimore, 2009.

The altar designed by Wardell was commissioned to Jageurs & Son in Melbourne. The statue of the Lady comes from Farmer & Brindley, while the mosaics at each side of the niche were created by the Venice and Murano Glass Company in Italy. The walls were painted by ecclesiastical artist Charles Firth following the designs of Reed, Smart and Tappin, while the English firm of Maw's & Co. of supplied the mosaic tiles for the floor. The five stained glass windows were commissioned to Hardman and represent scenes from the life of the Virgin.



Figure 17. C.E. Winston, P.R. Campbell and A.C. Cooke, *Blessing of St Patrick's Bells* (1869), wood engraving, published in the *Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers*, 4 January 1869. Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission archives, Melbourne Archdiocese.

No photograph survives of the interior of St Patrick's during Goold's lifetime. This engraving gives an idea of the prominent position Goold's Baroque paintings occupied among the pointed arches of the cathedral.