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# **A CATHOLIC ARCHITECT ABROAD: THE ARCHITECTURAL EXCURSIONS OF A.M. DUNN**

Michael Johnson

## **Introduction**

A leading architect of the Catholic Revival, Archibald Matthias Dunn (1832-1917) designed churches, colleges and schools throughout the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Working independently or with various partners, notably Edward Joseph Hansom (1842-1900), Dunn was principally responsible for rebuilding the infrastructure of Catholic worship and education in North-East England in the decades following emancipation. Throughout his career, Dunn's work was informed by first-hand study of architecture in Britain and abroad. From his first year in practice, Dunn was an indefatigable traveller, venturing across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, filling mind and sketchbook with inspiration for his own designs. In doing so, he followed in the footsteps of Catholic travellers who had taken the Grand Tour, a tradition which has been admirably examined in Anne French's *Art Treasures in the North: Northern Families on the Grand Tour* (2009).<sup>1</sup> While this cultural pilgrimage was primarily associated with the landed gentry of the eighteenth century, Dunn's travels demonstrate that the forces of industrialisation and colonial expansion opened the world to the professional middle classes in the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

This article examines Dunn's architectural excursions, aiming to place them within the wider context of travel and transculturation in Victorian visual culture. Reconstructing his journeys from surviving documentary sources, it seeks to illuminate the processes by which foreign forms came to influence architectural taste during the 'High Victorian' phase of the Gothic Revival. Analysing Dunn's major publication, *Notes and Sketches of an Architect* (1886), it uses contemporaneous reviews in the building press to determine how this illustrated record of three decades of international travel was received by the architectural establishment.

## **Travel and eclecticism in Victorian architecture**

The leading polemicist of the Gothic Revival was A.W.N. Pugin (1812-1852), a Catholic convert who advocated an archaeologically informed approach to church-design, based on rigorous study of medieval exemplars. Establishing himself as a formidable authority in the field of Anglican church-building, the Ecclesiological Society reinforced this emphasis on fidelity to medieval models and propounded the English parish churches of c.1280-1380 as archetypes for modern architects to emulate.

However, with the radical doctrines of evolution and historical materialism in the air, the concept of ‘development’ entered architectural discourse. The notion of suspending architecture in a fabled Golden Age began to fragment, and it was gradually recognised that such antiquarianism led to stagnation. Specific factors encouraged a comprehensive re-evaluation of Gothic theory.<sup>3</sup> Firstly, the expansion of the British Empire revealed the need to adapt Gothic architecture for subtropical climates in the colonies.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, improvements in transportation broadened the horizons of the Gothic Revival by exposing architects to foreign forms. The Ecclesiologist Benjamin Webb (1819-1885), published *Sketches of Continental Ecclesiology* in 1847, which drew upon his travels in Belgium, Germany and Italy. The greatest art critic of the time, John Ruskin (1819-1900) became captivated by the medieval architecture of northern Italy, resulting in his profoundly influential book *The Stones of Venice* (1851-3), in which he praised the textural and chromatic effects of Italian architecture in rhapsodic terms.

These publications established travel as an essential part of an architect’s professional development, as *Building News* affirmed in 1859:

It is the bounden duty of the architect who would really study his art, to avail himself of those facilities of visiting the greatest architectural monuments in Europe . . . It is no degradation to learn from others what we can not know ourselves.<sup>5</sup>

The invention of the steamboat and the development of a continental rail network from 1825 gave architects access to the major cities of Europe.<sup>6</sup> Architect and Ecclesiologist George Edmund Street (1824-1881) published important books on the Gothic architecture of Italy, Spain and Germany, all based on first-hand study. In particular, his *Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages: Notes of Tours in the North of Italy* (1855) translated Ruskin’s sermonistic prose into practical advice for architects to follow. During the ‘High Victorian’ phase of the Gothic Revival (c.1850-70), energetic architects such as Street and William Butterfield (1814-1900) developed an eclectic, polychrome style based primarily on the brick churches of northern Italy.<sup>7</sup> Overall, this new mode liberated Gothic architecture from antiquarian copyism and expressed Britain’s cosmopolitan architectural culture as the centre of a global empire.<sup>8</sup>

### **Dunn’s early travels**

Dunn established an architectural practice in Newcastle in 1854 and quickly became the leading Catholic architect in the region. Professional success enabled him to indulge his passion for travel from an early age. In 1869, he inherited £60,000 from his father, Matthias Dunn (1789-1869), which permitted more ambitious journeys.<sup>9</sup> In the same year that he entered practice, Dunn

visited the Flemish region of Belgium, sketching the Old Bourse at Antwerp (1531) and the Hôtel de ville at Ghent, notable for its 'shaped' gables [Fig. 1].<sup>10</sup> As secular buildings, these had little influence on his Catholic designs. However, they may have informed the gigantic Newcastle board schools designed by the firm in the 1880s and 90s. In common with board schools nationally, these were designed in the 'Queen Anne' style that synthesised classical, Renaissance and Flemish details.<sup>11</sup>

In 1857-9, Dunn designed St Joseph's Church in Gateshead. At the opening ceremony, the Bishop of Beverley gave an address which hinted at Dunn's excursions during the 1850s.<sup>12</sup> The Bishop stated that he had first met Dunn in Rome, where the architect had conducted him around prominent churches, highlighting salient details.<sup>13</sup> This indicates that the 27-year-old Dunn already recognised the value of studying continental models and, perhaps, that he was caught up in the Ruskinian craze for Italian Gothic.

Further evidence of Dunn's travel in this period is provided by a paper he read at the Northern Architectural Association in 1859, entitled 'Notes on Continental Architecture.'<sup>14</sup> Illustrated with sketches made during his early European tours, the paper traced the progress of Christian architecture from the catacombs to the early churches erected by Constantine in Byzantium and Rome, then surveyed the development of architecture through northern Italy, Lombardy, Germany, France and England. Addressing the 'picturesque and quaint appearance which is so much admired in continental cities', Dunn attributed this largely to the 'free and natural' treatment of the roofs, spires and turrets and emphasised the importance of making the roof an intrinsic portion of the design.<sup>15</sup>

### *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*

Over the next three decades, Dunn travelled widely during the spring and summer months, sketching notable antiquities. Evidence of these tours is provided by a book he produced in 1886, entitled *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*. Published in Newcastle by Andrew Reid, the volume was the 'result of many years' study in divers places.'<sup>16</sup> It features 100 plates of photolithographic reproductions of Dunn's sketches from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.<sup>17</sup> In the preface, written at Dunn's house Castle Hill, Wylam on 1 January 1886, the author wished it to be 'distinctly borne in mind' that the drawings are sketches only and 'have no pretensions to be "Finished Drawings"', neither were they intended for publication.'<sup>18</sup> Dunn also acknowledged that his friend and fellow architect Reginald Gruggen (born c.1858) prepared some of the sketches for reproduction by tracing them in ink. Intriguingly, Dunn made alterations to some of the subjects, which he justified in these terms:

Some of these Sketches, in which the subject is altogether unfinished or represents a building in ruins, I have supplemented by additions, which appeared to me desirable, or even necessary, to complete the original design. No doubt this is taking a liberty, and my excuse must be that, as before stated, the primary object of these Sketches was solely study and improvement; and I would remark that these additions occur only in sketches of the most recent dates, and I think, in these cases, a long professional experience may, in a certain sense, justify the proceeding.

Frustratingly, more than half of the sketches are undated. From the dated sketches, however, it is possible to trace many of Dunn's journeys. In May 1870, he returned to Belgium, passing through Coutrai on the 5<sup>th</sup> and sketching the chapel of St John the Baptist at Notre Dame, Bruges on the 7<sup>th</sup>. He reached Venice by 9 May, then ventured to Germany, studying the town hall in Cologne on the 13<sup>th</sup> and Heidelberg Castle on the 20<sup>th</sup>. By 31 May, he was in Chur, Switzerland, which yielded a sketch of the sacrament house of St Lucius. June was equally eventful, with visits to Milan on the 6<sup>th</sup>, the imperial capital of Vienna on the 10<sup>th</sup> and Lucerne, Switzerland on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Returning via France, he called at Amiens, sketching the Château Morgan on 22 June. This sample reveals the frenetic pace of his European tours and it is likely that he followed the same strategy as Street, racing from building to building during the day and travelling by rail at night.

In the Rhineland, Dunn studied Limburg Cathedral, a thirteenth-century church with Rhenish helm spires over its two western towers [Fig. 2], noting that 'the composition of gables is exceedingly good.'<sup>19</sup> German influence is evident in Dunn's design for St Dominic's Church, Newcastle (1869-73), which he described as:

An attempt to reproduce in England a style of architecture which is peculiar to the banks of the Rhine, and may be described as semi-Romanesque. There is an absence of tracery, mouldings, and elaborate ornamentation, and the effect produced by the massive construction and breadth of treatment is in perfect accord with the religious solemnity of the place.<sup>20</sup>

Dunn's original design for St Dominic's featured a tower with Rhenish helm spire exactly like those he had studied in Limburg [Fig. 3]. Sadly, this spire was never built, but a shorter tower was erected, resembling an Italian campanile.

Dunn's phrase 'semi-Romanesque' indicates his interest in the transitional period of the mid to late twelfth century, when the Gothic style was emerging from the Romanesque. St Dominic's embodies this transitional phase: the

colossal rose window and blind arcade across the façade recall the archaic power of Romanesque architecture, while the apse is similar to French examples Dunn was studying in this period, such as that of the powerfully austere abbey at Pontigny, which he sketched in 1872 [Fig. 4].<sup>21</sup>

The Grand Tour had focused on Europe, but the nature of tourism changed in the early nineteenth century, encompassing Greece, Egypt and the Middle and Far East.<sup>22</sup> In 1876, Dunn embarked on his most ambitious journey to date, ranging across North Africa and the Middle East. His book includes several studies from the medieval streets of Cairo, with picturesque ‘Haarem windows’, as Dunn called them. Specifically, these were *mashrabiyyas* or oriel windows enclosed by wooden lattice screens. He also illustrated ‘specimens of window corbelling from Cairo’, which he found to be ‘very ingenious & suggestive of gothic construction.’<sup>23</sup> Plate 7 shows a Mamluk tomb in Cairo, with the broached sides and dome typical of the form [Fig. 5]. Judging by the distinctive openings in the gables, this specific example appears to be the tomb of Amir Gani Bak al-Ashrafi (1427-32). Visiting temples along the Nile and at Luxor, Dunn made numerous studies of the columns.

Reaching Jerusalem in March, Dunn sketched the minaret of the Mosque of Omar, but modified the base of the structure by adding gigantic machicolations that were clearly derived from those of the Tower of David in Jerusalem [Fig. 6].<sup>24</sup> Venturing to Damascus, Dunn produced a sketch of the Minaret of Qait Bey, one of three towers surmounting the city’s great Umayyad mosque.<sup>25</sup> The book also includes a detailed representation of a doorway with a *muqarnas*, or stalactite vault, at the Khan As’ad Pasha, the largest *caravanserai* in Damascus. Another journey to North Africa followed in 1878. Passing through Tunisia and Morocco, Dunn produced studies of elaborate doorways with horseshoe arches in Tunis and Tangiers, noting that ‘The delicate ornamentation (in marble) of the door is very beautiful.’<sup>26</sup> Unsurprisingly, these studies had little influence on his own work, but Dunn’s journeys illustrate western culture’s growing Orientalist interest in the ‘exotic’ East.<sup>27</sup>

### **Italian Gothic and Renaissance architecture**

As we have seen, Italian Gothic was a major influence on British architecture from the 1850s to the 1870s, primarily due to the writings of Ruskin. Dunn had been visiting Italy since the 1850s and he made further trips during the 1870s. In common with Grand Tourists before him, his itinerary included Rome, Milan, Bologna, Florence and Naples, usually calling at Venice on the return journey. His knowledge of Italian Gothic architecture is apparent in his design for St George’s Church, Lemington (1868-9), on the western edge of Newcastle. Enlivening its industrial setting, this church is predominantly built of white brick, with bands of red and black brick inspired by Italian polychromy. Just

below the roofline is a Lombard band, or series of minute blind arches. San Zeno's Church in Verona, which features in *Notes and Sketches*, displays the same detail. The short belfry resembles the square-plan campaniles Dunn had sketched in Italy, such as that at San Zeno's, although these were built on a much grander scale. The apse is polygonal, inspired by Italian prototypes such as the basilica of San Giacomo Maggiore in Bologna, which Dunn sketched on 26 January 1876 [Fig. 7]. Although this drawing post-dates St George's Church, it is indicative of the Italian models Dunn had been studying since 1859. Curiously, the sketch grafts the tower of Bologna Cathedral onto San Giacomo's Church, producing a fanciful but impressive hybrid.

Italian influence is apparent at St Dominic's Church, Newcastle, where the nave is lined with polychrome brick in the manner of Italian Gothic models. Street had popularised this feature in his 1855 book and in his own churches.<sup>28</sup> In the secular field, Dunn's design for Neville Hall in Newcastle (1869-72) was very much in the Ruskinian vein, with its mosaic-like polychrome façades, stratified composition and delicate window colonettes recalling the Gothic *palazzi* of Venice. Dunn visited Venice in May 1870, while Neville Hall was under construction.<sup>29</sup> His sketches of balconies and supporting brackets in Venice and Milan anticipate the balcony he designed for the northern face of Neville Hall.

Another extensive tour of Italy followed in 1876, with visits to Bologna, Naples and Florence. At Santa Chiara in Naples, Dunn sketched the tomb of Robert the Wise on 1 May.<sup>30</sup> The monument, dating from 1343, consisted of a graceful Gothic canopy resting on slender piers replete with figures. This was the basis for an elaborate oak baldacchino that Dunn created to enshrine the high altar at Dunn and Hansom's church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs at Cambridge (1885-90). Placing the altar within a rendition of a sepulchral monument is a powerful metaphor for martyrdom, visibly expressing the church's dedication to the Catholic martyrs of the English Reformation.

Despite his affinity for the Gothic style, Dunn also spent considerable time sketching examples of Italian Renaissance architecture. On 6 June 1870, he produced a study of Bramante's charming church of Santa Maria presso San Satiro in Milan (1476-82). In Florence, he made studies of the Palazzo Vecchio and Palazzo Strozzi in May 1876. In 1884, he sketched the planar façade of the Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza (1542-4), designed by Giulio Romano (c.1499-1546) but altered by Andrea Palladio (1508-1580) [Fig. 8].<sup>31</sup> These sources did not influence his ecclesiastical design, conflicting as they did with the prevailing Gothic taste. However, they certainly informed Dunn and Hansom's design for St Bede's College in Manchester (1877-83), where they devised a Renaissance-style façade to unify a disparate group of buildings.<sup>32</sup> The college displays

heavy rustication on its porch, closely resembling that of the Palazzo Thiene, while the windows have triangular pediments typical of Renaissance *palazzi*.

### **French Gothic**

The Italian influence within High Victorian Gothic began to wane in the 1870s as architects became interested in the medieval architecture of France, which, by contrast, was robust in form and monochromatic. British architects admired the early Gothic of northern France, exemplified by the great cathedrals of Chartres and Laon, which retained a residual massiveness from the Romanesque. Charles Eastlake, in his *History of the Gothic Revival* (1872), used the term 'muscular' to describe the rugged austerity of these buildings. This quality lent itself to the expression of 'Muscular Christianity', a brand of vigorous and assertive religiosity adopted by the Church of England in this era. Street was much influenced by early French Gothic, as, to an even greater extent, was William Burges (1827-1881). French Gothic was also admired for its clear expression of structure, a quality which Michael J. Lewis has described as 'visible engineering.'<sup>33</sup> No doubt this appealed to Dunn, who was the son of an engineer. Indeed, Dunn delivered a presidential address to the Northern Architectural Association, entitled 'An ideal architect', which argued that such a figure must be 'an artist, a constructor, and an engineer.'<sup>34</sup>

*Notes and Sketches* contains more studies from France than from any other country. Dunn's interest in the transitional phase of Gothic architecture drew him to the cathedrals of north-western France, where the Gothic style emerged with 'youthful vigour' from the Romanesque.<sup>35</sup> He actively studied Romanesque buildings, sketching the ornate spire of Saint-Eusèbe's Church at Auxerre on 27 April 1872, which features a Lombard band similar to that at St George's, Lemington. In 1879, he sketched the two majestic towers of the Abbey of Saint-Étienne in Caen, which anticipate the Gothic style in their verticality.<sup>36</sup> In the same year, Dunn made a pilgrimage to the superb Gothic cathedral of Chartres, sketching the rose window of the north transept.

Dunn and Hansom's most Francophile church is Our Lady and the English Martyrs at Cambridge. Built at great expense by a former dancer of the Paris Opera, the building is a compendium of the French archetypes Dunn had studied. The north-east tower recalls those of Saint-Étienne's Abbey, Caen in its general form, while the four pinnacles at the base of the spire closely resemble examples Dunn had sketched at St Pierre's Church in Caen. The tower is braced with angle buttresses similar to those at Bayonne Cathedral, which Dunn had visited. Like Chartres, the Cambridge church features a transeptal rose window suspended above lancets.



French Gothic was generally admired for its combination of massive forms and delicate ornament. Dunn seems to have shared this view. Examining the transeptal chapels of Saint-Nazaire's Church at Carcassone in May 1879, he described them as 'a charming piece of work' and noted that 'The contrast between the massive pillars and the delicate work grafted on to them is most happy.'<sup>37</sup> Like many of his contemporaries, Dunn was also interested in the structural virtuosity of French Romanesque and Gothic architecture. On 2 February 1879, he sketched the interior of Saint-Hilaire's Church at Poitiers, which is remarkable for its dual aisles connected by double arches; together these act as internal buttresses to receive the thrust of the transverse arches of the nave [Fig. 9]. A similar solution occurs at the fourteenth-century cathedral of Albi in southern France, which Dunn studied in the same year. Greatly admired by Ecclesiologists in this period, Albi Cathedral is a semi-fortified brick building with buttresses placed on the inside of the walls, giving a sheer outer surface. A number of British architects became interested in this system of internal buttresses because it obviated the need for nave arcades and thus gave all members of the congregation a clear view of the altar. George Frederick Bodley (1827-1907), for example, explored the aesthetic and structural possibilities of internal buttresses at his church of St Augustine at Pendlebury (1870-74). Dunn called Albi Cathedral, 'A fine example of the semi-fortified church in the south of France. Grand in its simplicity & mass.'<sup>38</sup> His sketch of the east end captures the severity of its tall polygonal apse and the gargoyles projecting from each buttress, though he added pinnacles and Gothic ornament to enliven the roofline [Fig. 10].

French Gothic influenced both Anglican and Catholic church-building in this era, but in subtly different ways. While Anglican architects generally emulated its 'muscular' character, Catholic architects made emphatic use of specific French forms such as rose windows and polygonal apses. Evoking the unbroken Catholic tradition of France, this helped to distinguish their buildings from those of the Anglican Church. Dunn made several studies of churches with polygonal apses, such as the aforementioned Saint-Pierre at Chartres, which he visited in February 1879. This church features triforium windows in the chancel and may have been a source for the Cambridge church, which replicates this feature. Dunn also studied the fortified Church of the Jacobins at Toulouse, which, like Albi, is built of brick with a polygonal apse and radiating buttresses [Fig. 11]. These were likely influences on Dunn's own work: he favoured polygonal apses where the budget allowed and used them at St Cuthbert's Chapel, Ushaw College (1882-4), Our Lady and the English Martyrs at Cambridge, and St Joseph's Church, Hartlepool (1893-5).

Dunn's excursions in France made him familiar with the grand French cathedral plan, which frequently incorporated an ambulatory and series of chapels at the east end. The Church of the Jacobins in Toulouse, for example, features a number of small chapels clustered around an ambulatory, divided by a square chancel. Dunn sketched the church's interior in May 1879.<sup>39</sup> It was rare that he was able to work on a comparable scale, but echoes of the French cathedral plan occur in Dunn and Hansom's partially executed designs for the great abbey at Downside<sup>40</sup> and in an unsuccessful design for Westminster Catholic Cathedral that Dunn produced during his retirement.<sup>41</sup>

## **Spanish Gothic**

Few travellers had visited Spain on the Grand Tour, but one exception was the Catholic travel writer Henry Swinburne (1743-1803), who, with his wife Martha (1747-1809), visited Barcelona, Seville, Cordoba and Madrid in 1775-6. Swinburne produced the first major travel book on Spain by a British author, *Travels through Spain*, a text that popularised the country as a destination. Spanish architecture had comparatively little influence on the English Gothic Revival until the early twentieth century, but Dunn made several trips to Spain, beginning in 1874 when he visited Murcia, Toledo and Seville.<sup>42</sup> His sketches from this trip focus on brick-built church towers, reminding us of his admiration for such structures. In May 1879, Dunn sketched the impressive tower of Rodez Cathedral, but supplemented it with a 'suggested corona,'<sup>43</sup> which does in fact complete the design in a very satisfactory way [Fig. 12]. The following year, Dunn visited Burgos, Tarazona and Barcelona. Tarazona is represented by the magnificent dome of the cathedral, clustered with pinnacles.<sup>44</sup> In April, he sketched Sante Maria del Mar in Barcelona, which he considered, 'a beautiful model for a large church (town) of the cathedral type', notable for, 'the internal buttresses and unusual thickness of side walls formed into chapels.'<sup>45</sup> This is a further example of the internal buttressing system that influenced British architects such as Bodley.

## **English Architecture**

Alongside his interest in continental forms, Dunn was receptive to the indigenous traditions of England. His book includes numerous sketches of English cathedrals, priories and minsters. The first plate is a splendid rendition of the graceful lantern of St Nicholas' Cathedral in Newcastle.<sup>46</sup> The great churches of Chichester, Durham, Ely, Exeter, Gloucester, Lichfield, Salisbury, Southwell, Tewksbury, Tintern, Tynemouth, Wells and York are also featured. These tend to be represented by small sketches of details rather than grand views, but they demonstrate that Dunn was studying English medieval architecture as Pugin and the Ecclesiologists had recommended. It has long been supposed that the octagonal tower of Dunn, Hansom and Dunn's church of

St Michael at Elswick (1886-91) was derived from that of Ely Cathedral.<sup>47</sup> Dunn's book proves that he had studied this building directly, sketching the pinnacles above the east end.

Among several English secular antiquities, Dunn's book includes an 1872 sketch inside the quadrangle at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, where Dunn had studied before beginning his architectural training. In 1877, Dunn and Hansom won a commission to design a new south front and boys' chapel at Stonyhurst (1877-89). Like Pugin, Dunn generally favoured a contextual approach to design and it is not surprising that the Carolean-style south front, reputed to be the longest scholastic façade in England, complemented the design of the original recusant mansion.

## Reception

In publishing his book, Dunn offered it 'to the Profession, and to the educated world outside it taking an intelligent interest in Architecture.'<sup>48</sup> He clearly intended the book to be instructive for practising architects, noting that the sketches were 'freely interspersed with notes, details, sections of mouldings, etc., and, indeed, with anything which suggested itself as of advantage to an Architect, either as a reminiscence or as matter for study.'<sup>49</sup> Reviews in the building press indicate how the volume was received by the architectural profession. *The Builder* described it as a 'very pretty and interesting quarto volume of architectural sketches, some of them of rather out-of-the-way work.'<sup>50</sup> The journal questioned the fact that some of the drawings, originally in pencil, had been traced in ink for photolithography, and commented that 'this is not exactly the same thing as a facsimile of a sketch "finished on the spot"', as stated in the preface. However, the journal acknowledged that the book contained 'a good many freely-sketched bits which are suggestive to glance over.'<sup>51</sup>

According to *Building News*, 'All the drawings are freely treated, and at a glance seem possibly too much so, as well as somewhat fragmentary; but on a closer inspection the book will, we think, be found in no mean degree rich in useful notes of reference and useful "bits" of design.'<sup>52</sup> The journal noted that the draughtsmanship was reminiscent of Pugin's, especially in those sketches that 'represent the more florid specimens of Gothic buildings.'<sup>53</sup> Documenting three decades of travel on three continents, the book was an extensive repository of architectural details, making it an important reference work for Victorian architects. *Building News* noted that each subject was delineated from an architect's point of view, in technical rather than pictorial terms, and concluded that the sketches 'show admirably well the character of the materials which Mr Dunn is arranging for the benefit of his subscribers . . . Our readers will find Mr

Dunn's sketch book filled with equally interesting studies, and quite as representative of varied detail as those herewith published.'<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

Dunn retired from architectural practice in February 1893.<sup>55</sup> He and his wife Sara immediately embarked on an extensive tour of the Far East and North America, where they visited the key historic monuments and the latest architectural innovations. The fact that they continually sought out places of Catholic worship in each location testifies to their staunch faith. Their journey lies beyond the scope of this article, but it was documented in *The World's Highway; With Some First Impressions Whilst Journeying Along It* (1894), the first of several travel books written by Sara. In conclusion, Dunn was one of the cultivated Catholic travellers who explored the continent of Europe, following the tradition of the Grand Tour. Benefitting from new forms of transportation and the expansion of European empires into Africa and the Middle East, he was part of the generation of architects who embraced travel as an integral part of an architect's education. Travel provided diverse sources of inspiration for his own work. His extensive study in Italy and France coincided with the major influence these countries exerted on the English Gothic Revival from the 1850s to the 1880s, while his tours of Spain and the East illuminate the Romantic and Orientalist tastes that were emerging in these decades.

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<sup>1</sup> Among Britain's social elite, the Grand Tour was considered an essential part of a young man's education. Itineraries varied, but the majority of Grand Tourists travelled through France or the Netherlands to Switzerland, Austria and the German states. Once across the Alps, their ultimate goal was Italy, and Rome in particular. With the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars in the early nineteenth century, travel to Italy through France became dangerous, and Greece emerged as an alternative destination. Travelling in the second half of the nineteenth century, Dunn's excursions through Europe followed similar routes and encompassed many of the same destinations, though there is no evidence that he ever visited Greece. See French, A., 2009. *Art Treasures in the North: Northern families on the Grand Tour*. Norwich: Unicorn Press.

<sup>2</sup> Anne French's research reveals that a high proportion of northern Grand Tourists were Catholic. Many of the great recusant families of the eighteenth century 'were among the region's earliest and most determined tourists,' such as the Swinburnes of Capheaton Hall, the Riddells of Swinburne Castle and the Haggerstons of Haggerston Castle. British Catholics were more familiar with

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the continent than many of their Protestant counterparts, partly because of their shared religious faith and partly because many of them had been educated in France or Belgium, having been denied a Catholic education in England.

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, M.J., 2002. *The Gothic Revival*, London: Thames & Hudson, p. 106.

<sup>4</sup> In 1845, for example, Benjamin Webb, Secretary of the Ecclesiological Society, gave a lecture ‘On Pointed Architecture as adapted to tropical climates’, which was published in *Transactions of the Ecclesiological Society* (1845), pp. 199-218.

<sup>5</sup> *Building News*, 14 January 1859, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> As a result of these factors, travel ceased to be the preserve of a privileged minority and became more available to the middle classes.

<sup>7</sup> By the late 1840s, *The Ecclesiologist* was tentatively advocating the use of polychromy. In 1850-59, the Society built an outstanding example of this new mode, All Saints' Church, Margaret Street in London, to designs by Butterfield.

<sup>8</sup> For further discussion of Britain's imperial architecture see Crinson, M., 1996. *Empire Building, Orientalism & Victorian Architecture*, London and New York: Routledge, and Bremner, A., 2012. *Imperial Gothic*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

<sup>9</sup> This is equivalent to around £3.5 million today.

<sup>10</sup> Returning to Belgium in 1873, Dunn produced studies of an historic warehouse in Leuven and the Hôtel de ville at Damme on 3 May, a Brabantine Gothic building with stepped gables and bartizans.

<sup>11</sup> These included Westgate Hill Board School (1886-7), Todd's Nook Board School (1892-9, demolished) and Elswick Road Board School (1896, demolished). Specifically, these schools display brick construction and stepped or shaped gables derived from Flemish sources. It is likely that Dunn's son, Archibald Manuel Dunn (1863-1925), was the principal architect for these schemes.

<sup>12</sup> John Briggs (1788-1861) served as the first Bishop of Beverley from 1850 to 1860. He was a domestic prelate of the Pope and an assistant at the pontifical throne.

<sup>13</sup> *Gateshead Observer*, 9 July 1859.

<sup>14</sup> Dunn was one of 27 architects who founded the Northern Architectural Association in 1858. He was President of the Association in 1881 and 1896.

<sup>15</sup> *Builder*, 19 November 1859, p. 758. Dunn's subsequent publication, *Notes and Sketches of an Architect* (1886), includes numerous studies of towers from Bologna, Palermo and Verona in Italy, Seville and Murcia in Spain, and Auxerre in France. In his own work, Dunn designed many churches with elaborate towers, but these usually remained unbuilt due to budgetary limitations.

<sup>16</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, preface.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, plate 21. Curiously, although Dunn's renditions of the west end and transept are very accurate, his sketch of the towers incorporates details from St Lubentius' Church in Dietkirchen, Limburg an der Lahn, including a bridge between the two towers.

<sup>20</sup> *British Architect*, 8 October 1875, p. 200, from a text written by Dunn and supplied to a number of architectural journals and local newspapers.

<sup>21</sup> Dunn sketched the west end of Lanercost Priory, Cumbria in 1868, a year before he started work on St Dominic's (see plate 71). The priory's slightly rounded Gothic arch and blind arcade seem to have influenced his design for St Dominic's.

<sup>22</sup> Egypt became a destination for Grand Tourists following Napoleon's Egyptian campaign in 1798 and the publication of Dominique-Vivant Denon's *Voyage dans la Haute et dans la Basse Egypte* (1802). Algernon, Lord Prudhoe (1792-1865), a future Duke of Northumberland, was among the first British tourists to visit Egypt, as well as Nubia and the Levant, in 1826-9.

<sup>23</sup> A number of British architects theorised that specific forms of Islamic architecture, particularly the horseshoe arch, influenced the development of the Gothic style. For example, Sir Christopher Wren's posthumous *Parentelia* (1750) advanced the theory that the Gothic style derived from the 'Saracenic'. This idea persisted, though the Catholic traveller Henry Swinburne (1743-1803), after studying Burgos Cathedral, doubted this assumption.

<sup>24</sup> In this instance, 'Tower of David' refers not to the Herodian tower built in the fifth century C.E., but to a seventeenth-century minaret built on the opposite side of the citadel, which assumed this name in the nineteenth century.

<sup>25</sup> This minaret was built by the Mamluk sultan Qait Bey in 1488.

<sup>26</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, plate 9.

<sup>27</sup> The artist Frederick Lord Leighton (1830-1896) built an 'Arab Hall' in his house in London (1877-9). William Burges designed an 'Arab Room' at Cardiff Castle (1881), featuring a *muqarnas*. Such appropriation of Arabian culture was later criticised by post-colonial scholar Edward Said in his influential book *Orientalism* (1978).

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, Street's church of All Saints, Middlesbrough (1873-8).

<sup>29</sup> Neville Hall was built as the headquarters of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, of which Dunn's father was a founding member.

<sup>30</sup> The tomb was commissioned by Robert's successor, Queen Joanna I, from renowned Florentine sculptors Pacio and Giovanni Bertini. Radical renovations following new tastes and liturgical use, as well as military bombing in 1943, severely damaged the tomb and other fixtures of Santa Chiara.

<sup>31</sup> Curiously, this sketch reveals an apparent uncertainty in rendering Renaissance architecture, since the annotations state, 'Pilasters a shade too long' and that their supporting plinths are 'a little higher.' These inaccuracies in the

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drawing remind us that the Gothic style was Dunn's metier. See Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, plate 93.

<sup>32</sup> St Bede's College was founded in 1876 by the Bishop of Salford, Herbert Vaughan (1832-1903). The following year, Vaughan purchased the neighbouring buildings of Manchester Aquarium, which had recently closed, and incorporated them into the college. This obliged Dunn and Hansom to think in terms of façades, and they adopted the Florentine palazzo model, using a taut screen to unify the original buildings and the new accommodation.

<sup>33</sup> Lewis, M.J., 2002. *The Gothic Revival*, London: Thames & Hudson, p. 125.

<sup>34</sup> *Builder*, November 1896, p. 729.

<sup>35</sup> Lewis, M.J., 2002. *The Gothic Revival*, London: Thames & Hudson, p. 102.

<sup>36</sup> Caen was also notable for its fine building stone, which was prized by British architects. Dunn used Caen stone inside Neville Hall, Newcastle and for altars at Downside (c.1888), the Sacred Heart Church, Byermore (1875-6), the Boys' Chapel at Stonyhurst (1877-89), the Scruton Chapel at Bradford (1888) and an oratory at Ellingham Hall, Northumberland (1897-9).

<sup>37</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, plate 29.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, plate 32.

<sup>39</sup> Like Albi Cathedral, the Toulouse church features internal buttresses. Dunn declared it 'a most interesting and suggestive church; a curious example of a church buttressed in the nave.' *Ibid.*, plate 30.

<sup>40</sup> Dunn and Hansom's tenure as architects lasted from 1872 to c.1895, but subsequent contributions by Thomas Garner and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott have obscured or replaced much of their work. Dunn and Hansom drew up a master plan that included a great monastery and school buildings, arranged to form an open quadrangle. The church on the north side of the quadrangle consisted of nave, transepts, choir and sanctuary, with ten chapels arranged as a chevet around the apse. Dunn and Hansom went church-touring in Normandy in June 1879, seeking inspiration for their work at Downside. For more information, see Bellenger, A., 2011. *Downside Abbey: an architectural history*. London: Merrell.

<sup>41</sup> Dunn's design was submitted in the Westminster Cathedral competition but lost out to a neo-Byzantine design by J.F. Bentley (1839-1902). Dunn exhibited his design at the Royal Academy in 1906, after Bentley's death. His plan was published in *Building News*, 6 April 1906, p. 493.

<sup>42</sup> There was some scholarly interest in Spanish architecture, however. The Ecclesiologist John Mason Neale (1818-1866) was interested in the Catholic traditions of Portugal and Spain, visiting both countries in 1843 and 1853. Neale gave a detailed account of these tours in a series of articles published in *The Ecclesiologist*. He was particularly impressed by Burgos Cathedral, which Dunn visited in 1880. G.E. Street, ever seeking to expand his knowledge of Gothic architecture, made extensive tours of Spain in 1861-3 and published *Some Account of Gothic Architecture in Spain* in 1865. For a detailed study of the

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influence of Spanish architecture in Britain, see Basarrate, I., ‘The British discovery of Spanish Gothic architecture’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 19, December 2018.

<sup>43</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, plate 15. Dunn also sketched one of the screens around the antechapel, adding finials to replace those that had been lost over time.

<sup>44</sup> Dunn’s sketch added an extra series of pinnacles to the upper tier.

<sup>45</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, plate 25.

<sup>46</sup> Dunn had designed the reconstructed east window of this church in 1859, incorporating stained glass by William Wailes (1808-1881).

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, Faulkner, T.E., Beacock, P. & Jones, P., 2006. *Newcastle & Gateshead: architecture and heritage*, Liverpool: Bluecoat Press.

<sup>48</sup> Dunn, A.M. *Notes and Sketches of an Architect*, preface.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, preface.

<sup>50</sup> *Builder*, 18 September 1886, p. 411.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 411.

<sup>52</sup> *Building News*, vol. 50 or 52, 1886, pp. 195-6.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195-6.

<sup>54</sup> *Building News*, 23 October 1885, p. 646.

<sup>55</sup> *Building News*, 10 February 1893, p. 194.