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# ‘DONE AFTER THE FANTASTIC ORDER’: JOHN NASH’S RESTORATION OF ST DAVID’S CATHEDRAL

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John Nash tends to be viewed as the grand old man of Regency architecture. His dignity radiates from the portrait commissioned for Jesus College, Oxford, which portrays the architect (one can reasonably assume) as he wanted to be remembered: rich, successful, and at the height of his fame.<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas Lawrence was credited with capturing the essence of a sitter’s personality, but his Nash is rather inscrutable. This was perhaps the point. There was the immensely successful Nash: the architect to the Prince Regent; the designer of Buckingham Palace, creator of Regent’s Street and Regent’s Park, the Brighton Pavilion, and a whole string of important country houses. But then there was the other less reputable, more racketsy Nash. Scandal was never very far away from Nash’s affairs, threatening to puncture his hard-won respectability. Early in his career there had been unfortunate building speculation, bankruptcy, and a strange divorce. Nash, with his personal and professional affairs in crisis, had left London in the mid 1780s and had tried to re-establish his career in west Wales. The commission to rebuild the west front of St David’s Cathedral came in the 1790s when he was reinventing himself personally and professionally. We can learn much about Nash’s character from his manoeuvring to obtain the commission, and from his relations with clerics and craftsmen. More fundamentally, the design and its presentation provide an unexpected insight into Nash’s own mysterious transformation from competent but conventional architect into an architectural innovator.

In 1785 Nash disappeared from the London scene and is next heard of in south-west Wales. A successful tender for rebuilding the roof of St Peter’s Church brought him to Carmarthen. The contract was relatively small, but Nash decided to stay and rebuild his career in Carmarthen, a county town and flourishing regional capital. Nash’s metropolitan career was over for the time being, but one needs to appreciate that by the later eighteenth century a successful architect need not be London based. Provincial architects were in demand designing the improvements and new public buildings required by modernizing Georgian towns. This is exactly how Nash rebuilt his career. During Nash’s Carmarthen period he designed a market hall, three prisons, an asylum, a poor house, and several bridges. Many of these commissions – especially the prisons – were rather prolonged building projects, but they demonstrated Nash’s competence. He was always keen to find a quick route to celebrity, and the restoration of St David’s would certainly bring him to the attention of a wider public, helping him along the path (which he so desperately wanted to tread) to fame and fortune.<sup>2</sup>

The restoration of the cathedral was initiated by the reforming Bishop Horsley (1788–93) following a ‘visit of curiosity’ to his new diocese in summer 1788. Horsley announced that he was ‘more struck than I can easily express’ by the ruined appearance of the cathedral, deploring the harm it must inflict on the Church’s reputation generally, but particularly to the



Fig. 1. St David's Cathedral before Nash's restoration.  
(RCAHMW photograph of original © Pembrokeshire County Library)

reputation of the Chapter, which had responsibility for its repair (Fig. 1). Horsley recommended the immediate survey of the cathedral. Chapter members were required not to depart from the general audit until they had agreed to repair the cathedral, demonstrating the strength of their resolve by naming in an Act of Chapter the architect with responsibility for the repair. Accordingly, on 24 July 1789 the Chapter empowered Canon William Holcombe to employ Mr John Nash of Carmarthen, architect, ‘to make a proper survey of the whole cathedral’, with a plan and estimate of repair.<sup>3</sup> Holcombe was the resident canon, who lived in some style (accused by some of living in expectation of the mitre) and had undertaken improvements to the cathedral environs by reinstating the medieval fish-pond and establishing fruit gardens near the Bishop's Palace.<sup>4</sup> Presumably Nash had come to Holcombe's notice when repairing St Peter's, Carmarthen, his first architectural commission in the town. However, Nash was not appointed architect in charge. Bishop Horsley insisted that the Chapter should employ an architect of established reputation

in church repairs whose name had ‘sufficient weight to satisfy the public’, presumably when appealing for subscriptions towards the repair. The Chapter ordered that Nash's survey should be examined by ‘Mr Wyatt’, who would make what alterations or additions he thought fit. Nash would have subordinate status as the ‘acting surveyor’ under Wyatt's ‘management and controul.’<sup>5</sup>

Who was this Mr Wyatt? He was of course James Wyatt, the eminent architect, retrospectively nicknamed ‘the Destroyer’ by his enemies, but at the time widely acknowledged as an experienced church repairer and improver in the Gothic style, who in an intensely busy period in the later eighteenth century, during Nash's Carmarthen decade 1787–1797, altered several major English cathedrals, as well as other ecclesiastical buildings. Wyatt was not afraid of radical solutions to structural problems, and when given the opportunity undertook ‘improvements’ beyond necessary repairs, even when this involved the destruction of significant medieval fabric.<sup>6</sup> Wyatt was slightly older than Nash and already immensely successful. Like Nash he was naturally gifted; unlike

Nash he was not particularly businesslike, and was reputed to have lost a fortune by neglecting his accounts. Wyatt was excessively busy, keeping clients at bay, reputedly more difficult of access than the Prime Minister. Nash by contrast was very businesslike, if not sometimes sharp, accumulating within a few years a fortune sufficient to run a London house and a country retreat that matched Wyatt’s establishment. Nash was also sociable, accessible and charming – indeed, dangerously so. We must remember Repton’s rueful verdict on Nash: ‘He had powers of fascination beyond any one I have met with’.<sup>7</sup>

Bishop Horsley envisaged a thorough repair of the Cathedral that would ‘restore to its original beauty and grandeur . . . one of the noblest monuments that our island has to boast.’ Some repairs were particularly pressing. For some years there had been concern about the settlement of the tower and west front. John Calvert, a Swansea architect, had proposed pulling down the upper parts of the west front ‘so low as the cathedral roof’ to ease the loading. This was vandalism, but the least expensive way of preventing further movement, as the architect pointed out in 1779. The Chapter procrastinated, reluctant either to spend money or mutilate the cathedral.<sup>8</sup> The dramatic fall of the west end of Hereford Cathedral on Easter Monday 1786 provided the spur to action at St David’s. A striking engraving of the ruined cathedral appeared in *The Gentleman’s Magazine*, with the wounding suggestion that the Hereford collapse had occurred because of capitular indolence.<sup>9</sup> The Hereford Chapter circulated a letter of appeal to raise subscription for repairs. By 1788 sufficient funds had accumulated for Wyatt to begin rebuilding the west end, though he did so according to an ‘improved’ design rather than reinstating the fallen front. Wyatt employed a clerk of works, Joseph Potter of Lichfield, who had immediate oversight of the works.<sup>10</sup> Presumably it was expected that the working relationship between surveyor and architect at St David’s would be much the same as at Hereford

between Potter and Wyatt, but few could have foreseen the effects of Nash’s persuasive personality.

Nash certainly surveyed St David’s Cathedral, and his ground plan survives.<sup>11</sup> It is the work of a competent surveyor who has drawn up what he has measured, the essential prerequisite for understanding a building thoroughly. If the Chapter’s original instructions had been followed, Nash’s survey and recommendations would in due course have been submitted to Wyatt for his opinion. This did not happen because a remarkable turn of events effectively put paid to Wyatt’s active involvement at St David’s. It seems extraordinary in retrospect, but in 1789 the Chapter put to one side the pressing matter of the cathedral’s stability and decided instead to commission a new chapter house. This project had not been mooted before Nash appeared on the scene, but Nash was adept at making people want new buildings. Nash obviously charmed the canons into accepting his proposals for a new chapter house befitting their status, even though the Chapter would have to borrow to pay for it.<sup>12</sup>

Nash’s new chapter house was a significant and prominently-sited building, but it can be viewed only in one contemporary print and in a few drawings (Fig. 5).<sup>13</sup> The exacting mid-nineteenth-century cathedral historians, Jones and Freeman, considered the building not only difficult but also ‘unprofitable’ to describe, ‘due to the taste of Mr Nash’, but a description must be attempted here.<sup>14</sup> Nash altered a run-down workshop and schoolroom on the south side of the cathedral graveyard, creating from this unpromising structure a gleaming Neo-gothic extravaganza. The chapter house was entered from the cathedral side by a Gothic porch, and principal and back stairs led to the main first-floor rooms (public audit room and private chapter room), set over ground-floor kitchen and cellar, and vaulted basement. Rough-casting covered the stone and brick-patched walls, and the plaster and stucco finish internally included vaulting (‘groins’) and mouldings. The principal rooms had Gothic doorways and were

lit by four large pointed windows on the south side; there was at least one gothic chimneypiece. The provision of garderobes was a pleasantly archaic convenience for the canons. The new chapter house was planned rather like a first-floor hall (reminiscent of the adjacent bishop's palace, of course) having as its focus the public audit room—a 'handsome large room forty-two feet long' with, at its east end, a turret-like Gothic superstructure, variously described as a cupola and steeple (by the workmen) and a 'fancied spire' (by a cathedral historian). Nash's eye-catcher was carefully considered and cost a relatively substantial sum. The 'turret' was actually a louver, such as adorned London livery halls or Oxford and Cambridge colleges, and it emphasized the collegiate nature of the chapter house.<sup>15</sup> The new building must have appealed to the Chapter's sense of importance, although visitors soon came to detest it, partly because of its mock-Gothic style but more because it brazenly interrupted the prospect of the cathedral and bishop's palace from the south.<sup>16</sup>

The total cost of the new chapter house was £645.12s.9d. This was extraordinarily inexpensive for a substantial building, but costs were kept low partly because Nash's own fees were exceptionally modest, amounting to less than £30. He charged the standard commission of 5% but only on costs up to the 1790 audit; work continued into 1791, but Nash did not claim his commission. The Chapter did not pay Nash for his design, and Nash charged only a token five guineas for visiting St Davids.<sup>17</sup> Architects generally profited from their attendance fees, but Nash must have made many unrecompensed journeys to St Davids. He certainly conscientiously examined and certified the tradesmen's accounts, sometimes adjusting bills when he detected mistakes or overcharging. He remonstrated with carpenter and plasterer for careless work on the Gothic windows and for poor mouldings.<sup>18</sup> One can almost hear the Chapter congratulating themselves on employing such a competent and commendably economical architect. But for Nash the labour

gratuitously expended on the chapter house was in the nature of a sprat thrown out to catch a bigger fish. The larger prize was the restoration of the cathedral itself, an enterprise that promised both celebrity and handsome fees.

The turning-point came in July 1790 when Nash spent three days attending the general audit. The chapter house was well under way and Nash's bill was approved. The Chapter then instructed Nash to proceed with the survey of the cathedral, making an estimate of the repairs required. Nash moved quickly. He immediately prepared to stabilize the cathedral. On 4th August the workmen employed on the chapter house were deployed to shore up the west end with large timber props.<sup>19</sup> Nash proceeded to prepare his own scheme for rebuilding the west front. After this Wyatt became marginal to the restoration. There were to be other occasions when Nash would supplant him, but (in this instance at least) the busy Wyatt does not seem to have harboured any ill will towards the pushy Nash.<sup>20</sup> Nash like any other self-respecting architect acquired a clerk, the self-effacing Mr George. Nash and his clerk made regular visits to St Davids. George's fees were half those of Nash's, who charged four guineas for his journeys. Nash had outmanoeuvred Wyatt but he could not yet command the exorbitant fees that Wyatt charged for his attendances.<sup>21</sup>

By February 1791 the proposals for rebuilding the west front were ready and advertised in the Hereford and Bristol newspapers. Sets of plans and specifications could be inspected at Bristol (at Mr Routh's, the printer), Brecon and St Davids (with Canons Davis and Holcombe), and Carmarthen (at Nash's house). Prospective contractors were informed that, since St Davids had an adjacent harbour, 'the undertaking will be eligible for workmen living in any seaport town.' Estimates were to be sent to the master of the fabric, Canon Davis of Brecon, by 1 April 1791.<sup>22</sup> Nash spent four days at Brecon settling the contracts. Tenders for the whole work were received from building contractors in Bath and London but

rejected.<sup>23</sup> Instead separate contracts were given to Joseph Mathias of Cartlett, Uzmaston, a Pembrokeshire carpenter who had worked on the chapter house (£750 for the carpentry with glass and ironwork), and an experienced mason, James Yates of Bromyard, Herefordshire (£799.2s.od. for the masons' work including freestone ornaments).<sup>24</sup> The contracts were agreed on the 3 April 1791, and Nash's specifications were clearly set out in numbered 'particulars' and drawings, which at Nash's insistence were signed by the contractors, stamped and witnessed.<sup>25</sup>

### RESTORATION

Drawings were very important to the whole enterprise. Nash set out his design in four drawings that showed the new west front in section and elevation, with details of the window, buttressing and foundations (Figs. 2 & 3). Nash's coloured longitudinal section shows the structural problem and his solution (Fig. 4). The Norman foundations of the cathedral were inadequate. The west front was leaning outwards under pressure from the Norman arcade and apparently moving at a rate of half an inch a year. Nash's specification states that the wall overhung its base by 12 inches from the level of the window sill; later Nash maintained that the true overhang, presumably from apex to ground, was a rather incredible 2 feet 11 inches.

It was a tricky problem, but Nash seems rather to have relished the engineering challenge it presented. He later told the Society of Antiquaries that the fabric was held together only by the mortar, and there was a very real possibility that when the west front was disturbed the whole arcade would fall like ninepins leading to the collapse of that part of the cathedral. The problem was severe, but Nash's solution was ingenious, and entailed minimal disturbance to the arcade and its ceiling. Nash proposed buttressing the west front and then

refacing it so that it appeared upright. It was first necessary to dig deep foundations along the length of the west front for new pressure-relieving arches and buttresses. Complex temporary shores held the arcade in place. Two stubby flying buttresses eventually encased permanent tarred oak shores, and two stone abutment arches, which transmitted the thrust from the arcade to piers built on the new foundations, resting ultimately on a framework of sleepers set over piles of Norway fir driven deep into the sub-soil. The unstable upper part of the west front was taken down stage by stage to the base of the lower windows. Meanwhile the lower part of the west front was cased in ashlar ten inches at the bottom diminishing to six inches, and the upper part of the west front was then rebuilt with a new great window.

Nash was particular about the detail of the masonry. He had a flair for handling large areas of stonework in a fluent way, as his prisons (then under construction) showed. It was no doubt a facility learnt in Sir Robert Taylor's office. Nash's specification distinguished between 'rough stone', 'the stone of the country', and freestone. Rough stone rubble was used for the hidden masonry work. There would be sufficient rough stone from the demolished west front as well as in 'old walls' near the cathedral. The stone of the country was used principally for casing the west front and for the buttresses and relieving arches. Nash explains that the country stone was reddish and about the hardness of Bath stone. He was evidently referring to stone from the long-established quarries at Caerfai or Nolton. Freestone was specified for the carved detail, which was quite lavish. Blocks of Portland Stone were to be shipped to St Davids and then dressed on site, so that the locality would benefit as much as possible from the money expended on the work. This philanthropic consideration was no doubt owed to Canon Holcombe.<sup>26</sup>

Nash and his clerk made twelve trips to St Davids between July 1791 and July 1792. As work progressed Nash became dissatisfied with the quality of the



Fig. 2. St David's Cathedral after Nash's restoration.  
(RCAHMW photograph of the original © Pembrokeshire County Library)



Fig. 3. John Nash's design proposal for the west front of St David's Cathedral.  
(RCAHMW photograph of the original © Pembrokeshire County Library)

masons’ work, complaining that, despite ‘frequent threats and remonstrances’, Yates persisted in departing from his contract. According to Nash, stones were indiscriminately used without attention to soundness or colour, securing cramps were missing, details of design were neglected, and a great deal of the freestone work was omitted. Yates complained about the hardship of his contract, and he certainly had a point, though Nash sternly advised him to execute his contract in a workmanlike manner so that he might not weaken his case for consideration.<sup>27</sup>

Canons Davies and Holcombe had been concerned from the start of works about the quality of the stone used and sought reassurance from Nash. In a signed and witnessed statement in July 1791, Nash formally recorded his opinion that the building stone was ‘more durable than the stone contracted to be used’.<sup>28</sup>

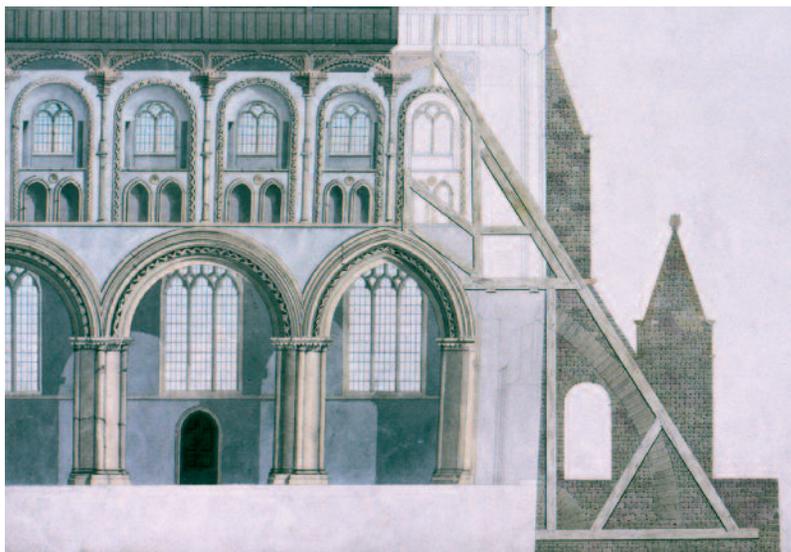
Extra work was certainly required beyond that specified in Yates’s contract: the ground in front of the cathedral had to be cleared before work could begin, considerable amounts of stone below the window level needed demolition, the buttresses required extra work, and the south-west mural stair had to be demolished and rebuilt. In 1792 Joseph Potter (Wyatt’s surveyor) was called in to survey the work, spending seven days at the cathedral, and Yates was given an additional contract for rebuilding the south-west tower.<sup>29</sup> At the 1793 audit Nash reported his continued misgivings about Yates’s work to the Chapter and Yates was not paid. Poor Yates! A falling stone injured his leg and he was unable to attend the following audit. Writing from his sick bed, Yates complained to the Chapter that ‘The St Davids Business hath Almost been the Ruin of me’, adding that he would rather have given away £200 than taken on the contract had he known the distress it would cause him. Yates’s additional claims on the Chapter were not allowed, though Nash appears not unsympathetic.<sup>30</sup> There were certainly problems with the stonework but they were cosmetic rather than structural and the west front was secure. By and large the work had been completed according

to the contracts, and more or less within the available budget, and the successful completion of works was due to Nash. One may contrast the efficient and safe operation at St David’s with the slow and vaguely-costed works at Hereford that proceeded with at least one fatal disaster.

#### NASH’S DESIGNS: ANTIQUARIES AND PERSPECTIVISTS

In some important respects, practical as well as aesthetic, Nash’s west front has to be considered in relation to Wyatt’s concurrent restoration of Hereford cathedral (began in 1788). At both cathedrals there were similar and interlinked design and engineering challenges, and tension between the reinstatement and improvement of the old work. At Hereford Wyatt did not replicate the old tiered Romanesque work, and made a new great pointed window the centre of his improved Gothic design for the west front. Similarly at St David’s Nash could not resist replacing the round-headed Romanesque lights with a large pointed window filled with tracery, some apparently reused from St Mary’s College chapel (Fig. 4).<sup>31</sup> Nash’s great window was a clever but eclectic exercise in perpendicular geometry and incorporated a traceried circle. This and the flanking circular windows of the aisles echoed the great wheel window in the adjacent Bishop’s Palace. The crenellations on the nave turrets were a typical picturesque Gothic flourish, also used by Wyatt at Hereford, but with precedent at St David’s. The front as a whole was unified by three-quarter round mouldings (‘cylinders’) at every external angle, a constant reference to the shafts of the great west doorway through which the Bishop entered the cathedral. Nash preserved but partly refaced the Bishop’s doorway and gave it a new tympanum embellished with mitre and crossed croziers.<sup>32</sup> The most novel parts of Nash’s design were the buttresses and associated works. The square piers were capped

Fig. 4. Longitudinal section of the nave showing Nash’s shores and buttresses. (RCAHMW photograph of the original © Pembrokeshire County Library)



with pinnaced octagonal shafts, having distinctive triangular ‘broaches’ at the junction between square and octagon. The design was surely suggested by the broached bell-turret of the Great Chapel in the Bishop’s Palace. Even Nash’s mid nineteenth-century critics conceded that the buttressing was satisfyingly robust, unlike much eighteenth-century Gothic work, and the effect of the new-buttressed front was considered quite painterly.<sup>33</sup>

By and large Nash’s work was restrained, apart from the flamboyant buttressing and the great west window, the latter probably an inescapable ‘improvement’. Nash, unlike Wyatt, seems to have known when to stop, though he was more constrained by limited funds. From the start of works at St David’s there was an attempt to preserve the greater part of the old fabric, avoiding gratuitous destruction, and to accommodate the concerns of antiquaries agitated by destructive Neo-Gothic improvements masquerading as necessary repairs. Jones and Freeman suggested that Nash’s plans ‘were submitted to the criticism of the Society of Antiquaries’.<sup>34</sup> There was a sense in which this was true, though not to the extent of influencing the final design. Immediately before the tenders for rebuilding the

west front were decided, in March 1791, Canon Holcombe was elected to the Society of Antiquaries. Among those who signed his testimonial were Shute Barrington, Bishop of Salisbury, an enthusiast for Wyatt’s proposed repairs and improvements at Salisbury Cathedral, and Richard Gough, Director of the Society, who became a violent critic of Wyatt’s work.<sup>35</sup> Holcombe exhibited to the Society several drawings of the cathedral and bishop’s palace, presumably Nash’s survey drawings and proposed design, and extracts were read from ‘An Address from the Chapter of St Davids to the Principality of Wales’, dated St David’s Day 1791. This set out the history of the ‘remarkable pile of building’ and its present decayed state, and solicited contributions for its repair.<sup>36</sup>

Canon Holcombe FSA had a particularly important role in raising money for the restoration of the cathedral and in shaping and supporting the scope of Nash’s proposals. Holcombe’s vision extended beyond the repair of the west front to the restoration of the whole cathedral, including the ruined parts, and the refounding of the College of St Mary. The vision was grand, but the available funds were limited. It was difficult to raise subscriptions

beyond the circle of local gentry, clergy, and benevolent visitors, and the St David’s appeal was inevitably overshadowed by successive subscriptions for Hereford Cathedral. Important patrons were sought, but a petition on parchment presented to George III and a Latin address to Jesus College, Oxford, came to nothing.<sup>37</sup> Nash, understanding the importance of visual presentation, suggested in 1792 that the Chapter should commission through him a set of drawings that would show potential subscribers the whole cathedral as existing and ‘in its intended improved state’. Canon Holcombe authorized the drawings, which were to be completed by the audit in July 1793. The finished drawings were to be at the Chapter’s service, but Nash was at liberty to show them to any person he thought proper. Nash was instructed at the 1793 audit to lay the drawings before the ‘Society of Antiquarians’ with a letter from the master of the fabric requesting the Society’s patronage in promoting the subscription for the cathedral’s repair.<sup>38</sup>

In July 1794 (against the approaching audit) Nash reported to the Chapter that the principal fellows of the Society of Antiquaries, as well as members of the nobility, had seen the drawings and intended convening a general meeting to view the drawings publicly. Nash sought permission to retain the drawings, as Canon Holcombe was ‘no longer available on account of his misfortunes’. By this time the generous and hospitable Canon Holcombe seems to have become exhausted and financially embarrassed, and may have suffered a breakdown.<sup>39</sup> It was not until March 1795 that Nash exhibited the drawings to the Society of Antiquaries. Nash told the Society that he had made (i.e. commissioned) the drawings while conducting the repairs to the cathedral. The drawings represented the cathedral before and after restoration and illustrated Nash’s proposals. It is interesting that Nash used the word ‘restored’. In the architectural vocabulary of the day, the more usual terms were ‘necessary repairs’ or ‘improvements’, the latter generally meaning

aesthetic changes. Nash claimed that he had left the cathedral in a ‘restored state’, and explained: ‘I did not think myself at liberty to change any part of the original forms but merely to reinstate them, and where the original forms could not be ascertained I have everywhere copied from other parts of the building coeval in date with the part wanting.’ This was not entirely true, of course, but Nash was placing himself on the side of the preservation angels rather than the improving vandals in the fraught but profitable matter of church restoration, which led to a major quarrel at the Society of Antiquaries in the following year when James Wyatt was proposed for election and blackballed.<sup>40</sup> Nash (as the minutes record) went on to inform the meeting ‘in the most liberal manner’ that the drawings were at the Society’s service for any purpose it might have in view, presumably offering to lend the drawings to the Society for engraving for its cathedrals series. Nash was thanked,<sup>41</sup> but the Society did not pursue the offer, partly because the cost of engraving was putting a financial strain on the Society, but also (one supposes) because the drawings, though impressive, were partly restoration proposals rather than the comprehensive architectural record that the Society had commissioned for several other cathedrals. Nevertheless, the Society was sufficiently impressed to commission copies of the detailed architectural drawings, paying Auguste Pugin £50 for the work in January 1798.<sup>42</sup> These drawings, variously signed A. C. Pugin and J. A. Repton, as well as J. Nash Archt., still survive in the solander cases of the Society of Antiquaries’ cathedrals series.<sup>43</sup>

#### NASH AND PUGIN

By 1798 there were two sets of drawings of St David’s Cathedral, and this has proved retrospectively confusing. The drawings commissioned by the Society of Antiquaries showed the unaltered cathedral only and derived from the original set

completed in 1793, showing the cathedral as existing and the proposed alterations. The Chapter owned these drawings but Nash managed to retain them, and they seem to have been rather important to him. Nash's bill sets out exactly how many drawings were commissioned and their cost: fourteen drawings were made costing five guineas each, making a total of £73.10s. There were additional expenses for Mr Foulon's and Mr Elsam's time and journeys to St Davids 'to take the measurements &c necessary to make the drawings', both at 5 guineas.<sup>44</sup> There are interesting names. The Marquis de Foulon was a fellow émigré artist known to Pugin, and his son, John Foulon, was later employed in Nash's office. Mr Elsam was Richard Elsam of London, an English artist and architect, who published designs for cottages ornés and latterly worked in Ireland.<sup>45</sup> The drawings were evidently based on measurements made on site by Nash, supplemented by work by Foulon and Elsam. However the finished drawings were prepared in London rather than in Nash's Carmarthen office. This is clear from Nash's account. When the drawings were ready a charge was made for a portfolio to hold them, and they were sent in a packing case from London to Carmarthen and then on to St Davids for viewing before returning to London, where they were available for inspection at No. 34 Duke Street, St James's.<sup>46</sup>

The original drawings are not signed, and the commission was a collaborative exercise coordinated by Nash. The major hand seems to have been Pugin's. Judging by the signed drawings in the Society of Antiquaries library, Pugin had responsibility for the perspective drawings; presumably Foulon and Elsam worked on the geometrical drawings later revised by Repton. Pugin's perspective drawings are large (approximately three feet by two feet) and very accomplished watercolours with an accurate recording of detail. Pugin has generally adopted a fairly low perspective making the Cathedral quite dramatic and showing the effects of light and shadow on the building. Beautifully drawn small figures

show the large scale of the cathedral. The fourteen drawings depicted a series of contrasts between the restored and unrestored west and south elevations of the cathedral. There was a narrative element in the sequence of the paintings that Nash followed when he showed them to the Society of Antiquaries. The first two perspective drawings were strongly picturesque in inspiration. One records the moment of surprise when the top of the cathedral tower is seen from the squalid square at St Davids; the second captures the *coup d'œil* when the panorama of the ancient city of St Davids is revealed before the visitor (Fig. 5). Figures play an important part in the animation of the perspective drawings, and the drawings of the cathedral before and after restoration have contrasting figures. The unrestored cathedral is practically deserted apart from two clerics and a bent figure who passes the cathedral without a glance. After restoration, groups are shown admiring the improved cathedral: a gentleman assists a lady over the cathedral green stile, a figure on horseback passes a resting figure gazing at the cathedral. Some of the figures deserve further attention. The figure wearing a wide-brimmed hat depicted sketching the cathedral is surely the artist himself, Auguste Charles Pugin (Fig. 6).

At some point during the restoration of the cathedral, probably in 1792, Nash had encountered A.C. Pugin, destined to become one of the best-known architectural illustrators and perspectivists of the day, but better known to posterity as 'the elder Pugin' and father of the more famous A.W.N. Pugin. The émigré Pugin entered the Royal Academy Schools in London in March 1792 aged 24. Pugin's biographer preserves the anecdote that Nash had advertised for a draughtsman with the proviso 'foreigner preferred'. Pugin was engaged, and employed 'making perspective views of gothic buildings then being built in Wales' – surely, principally St David's. Nash and Pugin were certainly kindred spirits who at the time were doing their best to reinvent themselves. As with so many aspects of Nash's early life, Pugin's background and



Fig. 5. North View of the Ancient City of St David by A C Pugin showing the restored cathedral and Nash's chapter-house. (RCAHMW photograph of the original © Pembrokeshire County Library)

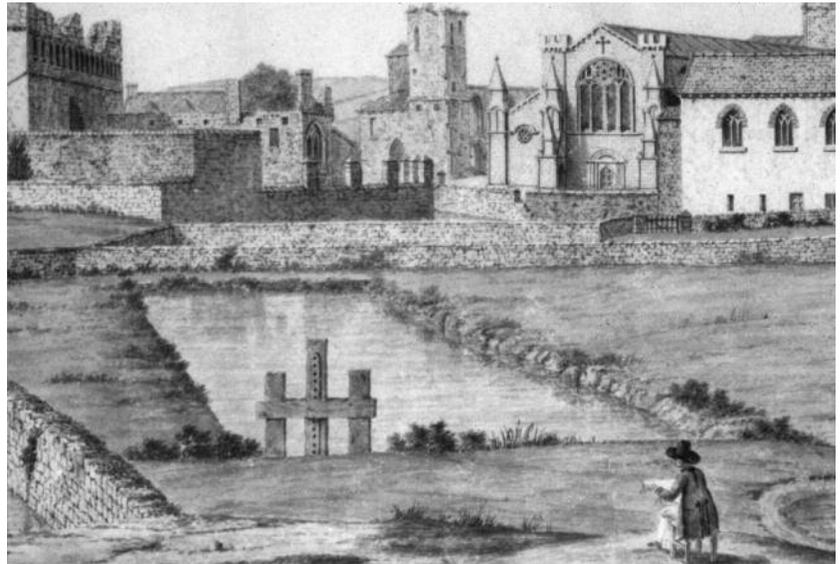
early career are shrouded in mystery. Pugin by his own account was a French Royalist of aristocratic family who fled the Revolution, arriving penniless in England after numerous adventures. We now know that Pugin like Nash came from an artisanal background, romanticised his early biography and did his best to reinvent himself.<sup>47</sup>

The meeting between Nash and Pugin probably occurred at a juncture that was critical for both of them. Pugin desperately needed employment, and he had the techniques required by Nash who was increasingly preoccupied with the pictorial qualities of buildings and their presentation. He frequently acknowledged his debt to Nash and held Nash up to his pupils as a model of perseverance.<sup>48</sup> The significance of Nash's involvement with the perspectivists of the day is worth exploring. Nash certainly worked with perspectivists when important commissions were at stake. This was not unusual, but Nash seems to have used perspectivists more systematically than other architects of the day, employing several highly competent artists. The drawings of St David's seemed to have been particularly significant for him because of their scale and complexity and unique presentational role. Later he commissioned several very professional drawings for proposed buildings in the mid-1790s. One must note the 'dazzling' perspective drawing of the

proposed Stafford county hall (1794) showing the domed and pedimented public building in the market square with numerous animated figures, some on horseback, drawn in the Rowlandson manner. This lavish drawing may well have induced a disturbing premonition of vast expenditure, and Nash's proposal was rejected. Then there are the mysterious drawings of Hafod. A working drawing in collaboration with Nash ('British school') was worked up into a dramatic painting by Turner who elaborated a backdrop of rugged but invented scenery. Again this design was not accepted, but another watercolour (attributed to Pugin's pupil, Frederick Nash) is a reworking of the design that was accepted, with Nash's innovative conservatory and octagon library given due prominence. After this came the purely picturesque, eye-catching cottages. Nash exhibited designs for 'Three Cottages and Three Entrances' at the Royal Academy in 1798, and several unsigned cottage designs (attributed to Pugin) survive at Attingham. These cottages with irregular forms and changes in texture, producing the interplay of light and shade, could only be successfully conveyed in a perspective drawing.<sup>49</sup>

Nash in this period was concerned with the visual presentation of his designs. Pugin was an exceptionally gifted architectural and topographical artist, and his skill and those of other perspectivists

Fig. 6. Detail of the North View showing an artist sketching; possibly a self-portrait by Auguste Pugin. (*RCAHMW photograph of the original* © Pembroke County Library)



helped Nash move away from thinking about buildings simply in terms of geometrical elevations to thinking about building design in terms of perspective. This was of course a major step towards thinking about buildings pictorially, especially in terms of their relation to landscape. Perspective became a standard technique for architects in the nineteenth century and it needs to be appreciated that its introduction was an innovation in British architecture.<sup>50</sup> The advantages of perspective were obvious once they had been pointed out by the topographical artists, who were sometimes openly contemptuous (as Turner was) of the geometrical elevations made by architects, especially their practice of adding false shadows and blackening window glass. Thomas Sandby, as professor of architecture, emphasized in his Royal Academy lectures in 1794 that the ‘perspective view is much more picturesque than a geometrical elevation, and will shew its parts to better advantage’.<sup>51</sup> There was however little point in drawing buildings in perspective if they were not designed to be seen in perspective. Nash realised this, and his realization – a kind of penny-dropping – is clearly expressed in his changing villa designs of the 1790s, which show the

transition from villas designed with a dominant main front to villas without a single, principal elevation designed to be viewed from different angles, in other words in perspective.<sup>52</sup>

#### EPILOGUE

In 1796 Nash was settling his affairs in Wales and preparing to return permanently to London. Summerson refers to Nash moving to sophistication beyond the local Welsh gentry.<sup>53</sup> This may have been true, but Summerson does not strike quite the right note. One gains the impression that many of Nash’s clients were actually glad to see the back of the unexpectedly expensive and litigious architect, among them the Chapter of St David’s. The restoration of the cathedral had proved expensive and funds were in short supply. The subscription for the restoration of the cathedral had raised a very respectable £1931.12s. but the total cost of works was £2015.15s.5d leaving a small deficiency. There were a few unpaid subscriptions; among those noted as ‘doubtful’ was the subscription of five guineas ostentatiously promised by John Nash, architect of Carmarthen,

when the appeal opened. Nash’s own bill came to a rather large £319.11s.2d., but with the additional cost of the drawings amounted to £412.17s.8d., about a fifth of the total cost. Nash presented his bill in 1793, but the Chapter deferred payment until the 1794 audit. Nash accepted £150 from the Bishop in part payment; the Chapter proffered £12.17s.8d. which included a deduction for Nash’s unpaid subscription. Nash eventually left for London with an IOU for the remaining £250 in the form of a penalty bond dated 1 Aug. 1794. While the principal sum remained unpaid the Chapter was to pay Nash £10 interest yearly; failure to pay the interest would entail a penalty of £500. There seems to have been an understanding that Nash would not press for immediate payment. However, in August 1797 Nash, writing from his new Piccadilly address, demanded payment, claiming that the notary public had left his letters unanswered, and threatening legal action, though declaring himself ‘reluctant to take any steps against the respectable body of the Chapter till I know how far they are the cause of my not being paid.’ A conciliatory £43.15s.8d. was hastily despatched to Nash and other sums followed, though the total amount Nash received is uncertain.<sup>54</sup> The Chapter accounts are strangely silent on the matter. Nash did not press for payment again and the matter began to fade. There were other priorities. Since 1794, with Nash’s payment deferred but the cathedral stabilised, the canons had set about enjoying their new chapter house. The annual audit was as much a social as a business occasion with the Pembrokehire gentry present, entertained by the canons who took turns to preside over a succession of dinners and suppers. Oak furniture was ordered from the dependable Joseph Mathias, the dining-room and kitchen supplied with plates and cutlery, sauce boats, tart pans, ‘pickle leaves’, ale and wine glasses, as well as glasses for jelly and syllabub. A harpsichord was purchased, and the cellar was stocked with modest quantities of port laid down for the entertainment.<sup>55</sup>

Twenty years later this agreeable routine was

rudely disturbed. Quite unexpectedly a demand arrived for the payment of Nash’s bond for £250. To say that this was a bolt out of the Menevian blue would be an understatement. There was a flurry of agitated and increasingly aggrieved correspondence. The bond was undoubtedly genuine, but it emerged that Nash had assigned it to a London builder whose executors were now pressing for payment. The Chapter for their part didn’t have the slightest doubt that Nash had been fully paid for the work. Nevertheless payments to Nash were not fully recorded in the chapter accounts, which were undoubtedly in a mess.

Archdeacon Payne found it incredible ‘that a man of Mr Nash’s then embarrassed circumstances should have suffered an unpaid bond together with an accumulated interest thereon for 19 years, to have remained unliquidated and even undemanded is to say the least of it, a most improbable circumstance.’ Payne thought it suspicious that Nash had urged his claim only after the death of Precentor Wallerton, who had signed the bond. Only one member of the original Chapter now remained, Mr Probyn, and he ‘never had the slightest doubt that Mr Nash was fully paid for his work.’ Nash for his part gave the most solemn assurances that the bond had never been paid, professing himself ‘very hurt that he should be thought capable of demanding payment twice.’ The Chapter declared they would resist the demand in a court of law, and the claimants retreated though they retained the uncanceled bond.

In retrospect it seems inexplicable that the Chapter would not have recorded the payments and cancelled the bond had they paid Nash fully. It is equally incomprehensible that Nash would not have pressed for payment had he not been paid. What had actually happened? The explanation seems to lie in Chancellor Probyn’s rather chaotic chapter accounts. These show that there was actually a surplus of £61.15s.7d. in 1796, but an endorsement by the notary public records: ‘I think it was agreed that this surplus sho[ul]d be paid to Mr Nash in part *on his*

*delivering up of the plans*.<sup>56</sup> This suggests an understanding that the Chapter would not fully pay Nash while he retained the drawings. Nash never returned the drawings and in time the matter faded from the Chapter’s concerns. Nash hung onto the drawings until the end, and they were sold with his other effects in 1835.<sup>57</sup>

The whole affair was extraordinary. The Chapter was highly resentful at the prospect of paying twice, and – to rub salt in the wound – paying twice for work that visitors and clerics alike found execrable. The normally benign canons were vituperative about Nash. Archdeacon Payne summed up the prevailing view: ‘It is indeed a misfortune to St David’s that it exhibits two sad specimens of Mr Nash’s want of judgement’ displaying not only ‘the exuberance of bad taste with which they both abound’ but also ‘the more serious maladies of bad materials and bad workmanship’.<sup>58</sup> The stonework had weathered unevenly, and by the 1820s the west front was said to be ‘shamefully decayed’.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, Nash’s design was not an aesthetic success, even in the short term. As early as 1802, less than a decade after the completion of the work, Colt Hoare deplored the loss of the old ‘Saxon’ work, and found the modern front ‘beneath criticism’: ‘such an heterogeneous mixture of Saxon, Gothic and castellated architecture I never before beheld.’ The design was unrelentingly criticised by Gothic purists as a stylistic muddle, wittily summed up by *The Gentleman’s Magazine* critic as a design done after the ‘Fantastic Order’. It was little consolation that only Wyatt’s work at Hereford was considered a worse example of ‘modern-antique’ work, reaching ‘a still lower depth’ of awfulness.<sup>60</sup> Given this implacable criticism, it is not surprising that George Gilbert Scott became determined to erase every visible trace of Nash’s work, although it is an irony that his reinstatement of the pre-Nash front entailed removing the remaining medieval detail.<sup>61</sup> Similarly the style and siting of Nash’s chapter house seems to have been universally deplored. After an alarming surveyor’s report in 1817,

the canons effectively abandoned their chapter house, leaving it unrepaired, and in 1827 the building was taken down and the site levelled. There may have been an element of grim satisfaction in taking down the chapter house during Nash’s lifetime. The Victorian reaction against picturesque Gothic was so thorough that nothing remains visible today of Nash’s work at St David’s, and indeed very little remains of Wyatt’s improvements to the English cathedrals. With Nash’s work gone it is difficult to respond to it, but it is fair to say that in the end St Davids made more of an impact on Nash than Nash did on the cathedral.

#### NOTES

- 1 Lawrence’s portrait still hangs in the hall at Jesus College, and graces Geoffrey Tyack’s admirable entry on ‘Nash, John (1752–1835)’ in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), with revisions to the on-line text. See also G. Tyack (ed.), *John Nash: Architect of the Picturesque* (Swindon, 2013), frontispiece.
- 2 See generally, Richard Suggett, *John Nash, Architect in Wales: John Nash, Pensaer yng Nghymru* (Aberystwyth, 1995). The documentation relating to the rebuilding of the west front was first discussed by the late I. Wyn Jones, ‘John Nash at St David’s, 1791’, *The Architectural Review* 112 (1953), pp. 63–5. The St David’s Chapter records are in the National Library of Wales: NLW, SD/Ch. Details of the income devoted to the cathedral fabric were entered in a bound volume endorsed ‘Usmaston tithes’. This has disappeared, but there are extracts in Archdeacon Payne’s ‘Collectanea Menevensia’, NLW, SD/Ch/B/28.
- 3 Bishop Horsley’s letter and ensuing Chapter Acts in SD/Ch/B/8, pp. 167–9. On Horsley, see generally F.C. Mather, *High Church Prophet: Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733–1806) and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church* (Oxford, 1992), esp. ch. 9.
- 4 On Canon Holcombe, see Richard Fenton, *A Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire* (London, 1811), pp. 103–7. SD/Ch/Acct/27 records some of Holcombe’s garden expenditure in 1789 on materials for ‘garden glasses’, a green house, hothouse, melon frame, ‘dipping mould’, and flower frames.

- 5 SD/Ch/B/8, p. 167.
- 6 See generally, Anthony Dale, *James Wyatt, Architect, 1746–1813* (Oxford, 1936); John M. Frew, 'Some Observations on James Wyatt's Gothic Style 1790–1797', *Journal Society of Architectural Historians* 41 (1982), pp. 144–9; John Martin Robinson, *James Wyatt, Architect to George III* (New Haven and London, 2012), pp. 224–231.
- 7 BL Add. MS 62112, f. 87.
- 8 SD/Ch/Let/7. Calvert's survey (for which he charged 6 guineas with 6 guineas travel) has been lost.
- 9 *The Gentleman's Magazine* 57 (1787), pp. 459 (plate), 578: 'The sketches of the ruins of Hereford cathedral . . . proclaim the more than barbarous indolence of the chapter'. Bishop Horsley pointedly observed that the St David's Chapter might have 'to answer for the negligence of their predecessors', SD/Ch/B/8, p. 167.
- 10 For Wyatt's restoration of Hereford Cathedral, see the chapters by Howard Tomlinson and David Whitehead in *Hereford Cathedral: A History*, ed. Gerald Aylmer & John Tiller (London, 2000), esp. pp. 137–5, 259–65.
- 11 Now in Haverfordwest Public Library (note 57 below).
- 12 Canon Holcombe's sense of the Chapter's dignity, and the Chapter's embarrassment at not being able to welcome the Bishop appropriately at his primary visitation in 1790, may have been important considerations. The Chapter borrowed £500 from Precentor Wollaston to pay for the new chapter house and repaid him by raising an annuity on Uzmaston tythes: SD/Ch/B/8, p. 179. The annuity of £48.18s. proved cumulatively costly and was paid until 1825, two years before the demolition of the building: SD/Ch/B/28, p. 452.
- 13 George W. Manby, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Saint David, South-Wales* (London, 1801), plate 2 facing p. 12. The chapter house is of course shown to great effect in the Nash-Pugin drawings.
- 14 W. Basil Jones & A. E. Freeman, *The History and Antiquities of Saint David's* (London, 1856), pp. 215–6. Details of the chapter house are drawn from the numbered but unlisted Chapter B[ills,] V[ouchers and] R[eceipts] = SD/Ch/BVR/ esp. nos 702 ('two tier of privys'), 629 (gothic chimneypiece); 696 (gothic heads for doors); bills summarized in 710. It is reasonable to suppose that Nash's design for the porch at Emlyn Cottage (1792), with its high traceried tympanum, is a version of the chapter house porch: Suggett, *John Nash, Architect*, Fig. 42.
- 15 Manby, *History and Antiquities of the Parish of Saint David*, p. 46. The louver ('cupola compleat') was made by Joseph Mathias and cost £30.17s.4½d., and was fixed to a separately priced 'frame for steeple': SD/Ch/BVR/629,738,789.
- 16 As early as 1801, it was said that the chapter house was 'much condemned by visitors': Manby, *History and Antiquities of the Parish of Saint David*, pp. 46–7. Fenton, *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*, p. 90, is severe, referring to the chapter house as 'a sad monument' of Canon Holcombe's 'total want of taste in architecture', with 'fantastic decorations' that hurt the eye and excited 'disgust'.
- 17 NLW, SD/Ch/Accts/25 & 30; SD/Ch/BVR/710. Nash's charge was £29.1s.10d.
- 18 Bills in SD/Ch/BVR/616 (board and lodging of carpenters considered excessive); 619 (overcharging by glazier); 650 (overcharging by smith); 657–8 (queries about materials); 702 (mouldings ill done); etc.
- 19 SD/Ch/BVR/661; SD/Ch/Accts/28. Seven labourers spent 18 man-days 'putting 2 large props against the end of the church' at a cost of 13s.8d.
- 20 In June 1792 Wyatt favoured Nash when reporting to the Herefordshire magistrates on the merits of competing designs for the new county gaol: David Whitehead, 'John Nash and Humphry Repton: An Encounter in Herefordshire 1785–98', *Trans. Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club* 47 (1992 [publ. 1994]), pp. 212, 222. Nash later supplanted the dilatory Wyatt at Corsham Court, but this time he was not forgiven: Summerson, *Life and Work of John Nash* (London, 1980), pp. 55–6.
- 21 SD/Ch/BVR/766. In addition to five guineas a day for attendance, Wyatt made an extra travelling charge, an eye-watering 2s.6d. per mile: Dale, *James Wyatt*, p. 57.
- 22 *Hereford Journal*, 16 Feb. 1791, cited by Whitehead, 'John Nash and Humphry Repton', p. 212.
- 23 NLW, SD/Ch/Misc/ 215 (estimate of £1705 from John Gabriel of Bath), SD/Ch/Misc/216 (estimate by Thomas Meadows, Sloane St., Marylebone, sum not specified).
- 24 NLW, SD/Ch/Misc/217. Yates's statuary work shows that he was competent to execute Nash's proposed freestone ornaments. Cf. Rupert Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors, 1660–1851* (London, [1964]), p. 451.

- 25 Signed plans and endorsements (numbered 1–4 [4 has endorsement only]) in Pembrokeshire Record Office, HDX/4/79/1–4; signed particulars ‘N<sup>o</sup> 5’, SD/Ch/Misc/214; contractors’ articles of agreement and bonds: SD/Ch/Misc/218–22; bill for drawing up the documents etc.: SD/Ch/Misc/223.
- 26 One wonders what these old walls were. Stone for the chapter house had been obtained by ‘taking down the Bone House wall’ in 1790: SD/Ch/Accts/26. Tracery and ashlar was robbed from the windows of St Mary’s College chapel for the west front, according to Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David’s*, p. 186.
- 27 SD/Ch/Misc/226.
- 28 Memorandum signed by Nash and witnessed by the notary public added to Yates’s articles of agreement, SD/Ch/Misc/217. It is interesting that the stone was not that contracted for, but it is unclear if this was ‘the stone of the country’ or the freestone or both. Fenton, *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*, p. 155, says that Nash certified in the (missing) chapter book the use of Nolton stone but it was either a poor vein or stone from Caerfai was used. The freestone used is unknown, but Dyfed Elis Gruffydd and Tim Palmer assure me that they have not identified any Portland stone at the cathedral. One suspects that Yates sought cheaper stone when he realised that his tender was too low. Nash’s memorandum suggests that he went along with Yates, hoping to finish the contract on time, but became increasing anxious about the quality of the masonry. Bath Stone was used to repair the bishop’s door in 1802, and was bought by a Capt. Whitlow: SD/Ch/BVR/1008.
- 29 SD/Ch/BVR/715 (Potter’s fees of £16.12s.11d.); BVR/717–8 (Yates allowed £60 since 25 May 1792 for pulling down and rebuilding a staircase tower).
- 30 SD/Ch/Let/26 & 26A (Yates to Chapter with Nash’s endorsement). Yates and Nash, despite their differences at St David’s, continued to work together in Herefordshire. Cf. Whitehead, ‘John Nash and Humphry Repton’, pp. 211 (Hereford gaol), 224 (Yates setting up a new chimney piece at Stoke Edith ‘at Mr Nash’s orders’). Archdeacon Payne suggested unkindly that Nash was pre-empting criticism of the stonework by blaming Yates for his own negligence: SD/Ch/B/28, p. 456.
- 31 Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David’s* p. 186.
- 32 The tympanum, presumably carved by Yates, still survives, now in the lapidarium: Wyn Evans, ‘St Davids Cathedral: The Forgotten Centuries’, *The Journal of Welsh Ecclesiastical History* 3 (1986), p. 92. Thomas Carte thought the design vulgar, dismissing it as a ‘true modern piece of sculpture’, *The Gentleman’s Magazine* 74 (1804), pp. 834.
- 33 The piers and buttresses were ‘by no means contemptible for the end of the century’, according to Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David’s*, p. 42. Nash also used broaches at the junction between square and octagon on the corner towers of Castle House, his innovative marine villa at Aberystwyth built for Uvedale Price: Suggett, *John Nash, Architect in Wales*, p. 69.
- 34 Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David’s*, pp. 175–6.
- 35 SAL Minute Books, entry 31 March 1791; John M. Frew, ‘Richard Gough, James Wyatt, and Late 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Preservation’, *Journal Society of Architectural Historians* 38 (1979), pp. 366–74.
- 36 SAL Minute Books, entry 31 March 1791. This address which accompanied the subscription appeal was ‘hastily drawn up and full of error’ according to Fenton, *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*, p. 106.
- 37 SD/Ch/B/8, p. 124; SD/Ch/B/28, p. 258, where Payne says both initiatives were unsuccessful.
- 38 Memorandum of agreement (from the lost accounts) cited by Payne, SD/Ch/B/28, p. 450; SD/Ch/B/8, p. 199.
- 39 SD/Ch/Let/25. Fenton, *Historical Tour*, p. 105, gives an intimate account of Holcombe’s misfortunes: ‘More frequent visits to London became necessary, his domestic affairs were neglected, fresh expences incurred, and his difficulties and distresses increased in proportion.’ The Chapter minutes show that Holcombe was represented by proxy at the general audits for 1794–96, but had died by 8 Oct. 1796 when another residentiary was admitted: SD/Ch/B/8, p. 227.
- 40 Joan Evans, *A History of the Society of Antiquaries* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 207–10.
- 41 SAL Minute Books, vol. 25, entry 5 March 1795; SAL 1795 Papers 5/8.
- 42 Evans, *History of the Society of Antiquaries*, p. 210, where it is suggested that these drawings were commissioned to avoid giving further employment to Carter.
- 43 SAL, Cathedrals Series, Sol. B, nos 19–25.
- 44 SD/Ch/Let/25.

- 45 For Elsam, see Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840* (New Haven and London, 2008), pp. 355–6. For Foulon, see Summerson, *Life and Work of John Nash*, p. 25.
- 46 SD/Ch/Let/25. Nash writing from 30 Duke St., St James's, London, 2 July 1794. The portfolio is referred to once as a 'book of drawings'. Summerson, *Life and Work of John Nash*, p. 25, suggested that Pugin worked independently in London, 'taking instructions from Nash on his periodic visits from Carmarthen.'
- 47 Rosemary Hill, 'A.C. Pugin', *Burlington Magazine* 128 (1996), pp. 11–19.
- 48 Benjamin Ferry, *Recollections of A.N. Welby Pugin and his Father Augustus Pugin* (1861), pp. 2–3, 11–12. Pugin fulsomely dedicated volume I of his *Specimens of Gothic Architecture* (1821) to Nash: 'Soon after my arrival in this country, I was very fortunately introduced to you, and prosecuted my architectural studies in your office, with much gratification and advantage to myself.'
- 49 John Summerson, *Life and Work of John Nash*, p. 17 & plate 4A (Stafford); 'A landscape with a proposed elevation of Hafod', Tate Collection, D36652 (Finberg number: CCCLXXX 4); Turner, 'Hafod', Lady Lever Art Gallery; Suggett, *John Nash, Architect in Wales*, fig. 43 & p. 121 (Hafod); Hill, 'A.C. Pugin', figs. 13–16 (Attingham cottages).
- 50 The point has been well made by Giles Worsley in his Introduction to the RIBA collection of *Architectural Drawings of the Regency Period, 1790–1837* (London, 1991).
- 51 Cited by Worsley, *Architectural Drawings of the Regency Period*, p. 23.
- 52 Suggett, *John Nash, Architect in Wales*, ch. 3, esp. figs. 19 & 22.
- 53 Summerson, *Life and Work of John Nash*, p. 13.
- 54 SD/Ch/Let/37. Letter written from 28 Dover Street, Piccadilly, 12 Aug. 1797.
- 55 SD/Ch/BVR/800 (12 chairs, 2 with arms); 793 (glass etc from Thomas Gibbs); 791–2 (dishes etc. from James Williams); SD/Ch/B/8/217 (harpsichord). The early C19th Chapter became more abstemious and curtailed the entertainment, limiting members to one dinner and one supper at the audits after 1817, SD/Ch/B/8, p. 426.
- 56 SD/Ch/Accts/58.
- 57 British Library, Misc. Sale Cat. P.R.2.B.42: *Catalogue of the Valuable Architectural and Miscellaneous Library, Prints and Drawings, of the Late John Nash* (1835), p. 35, lot 1034: 'Eleven original drawings . . . being five views of St David's Cathedral before the alterations by Mr Nash, and the plan, elevation, and sections, shewing the alterations carried into effect by him, in a portfolio.' Three of the original 14 drawings were evidently missing. The surviving 11 drawings eventually came to Cardiff Public Library, possibly with the Phillipps' Collection in 1896. They are perfunctorily listed in the Library's *Catalogue of Manuscripts, Books, Engravings, References, Etc., relating to St David . . . and the Cathedral Church of St David's* (Cardiff, 1927), p. 37. In 1983 they were transferred to Haverfordwest Public Library (accession nos. PR/1112–21). It is hoped in due course to publish all the surviving drawings with a commentary.
- 58 SD/Ch/B/28, p. 300.
- 59 SD/Ch/B/28, p. 300. It is probable that freestone of inconsistent quality had been used. *The Cambrian Directory* (Salisbury, 1800), p. 53, reporting the repairs by Mr Nash (believed to be 'an inhabitant of Worcester'), claimed that the [free]stone was 'of so soft a substance, that it even moulders with the touch of a finger' and hoped that it would become more solid and acquire a darker hue. By the mid-C19th Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David's*, p. 52, appreciated the 'weatherbeaten' stone as it generally harmonised with the rest of the cathedral, but found 'the ragged ashlar' less pleasing than the 'honest rubble'. The weathering of both ashlar work and carved freestone can be clearly seen in early photographs of the west front.
- 60 *The Journeys of Sir Richard Colt Hoare through Wales and England, 1793–1819*, ed. M. W. Thompson (Gloucester, 1983), p. 224. Colt Hoare conceded that 'Mr Nash, then a young man, [is] now much improved in his art as an architect'; An Architect [Thomas Carte], *The Gentleman's Magazine* LXXIV (1804), pp. 833–4; Jones & Freeman, *History and Antiquities of Saint David's*, p. 42. Nash's restored west front (an 'incongruous mass at the west end of that venerable fabric') is deliberately shrouded in shadow in Carter's engraving of the cathedral, Fenton, *Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire*, plate facing p. 71, and p. 155.
- 61 Some of Nash's work was refaced by Scott. Wynn Evans, 'St Davids Cathedral', pp. 87–8, notes the rediscovery of Nash's foundation stone.