

THE WHITE CHURCH, FAIRHAVEN: AN ARTIST TRADER'S PROTESTANT BYZANTIUM¹

J. C. G. Binfield

The external completion of John Francis Bentley's Westminster Cathedral in 1903 expressed the Church of Rome's return to the mainstream of English Christianity. The Cathedral was 'the most important Catholic church in England', and more.² To Richard Norman Shaw, reacting as architect and High Anglican, it was 'Beyond all doubt the finest church that has been built for centuries. Superb in its scale and character, and full of the most devouring interest, it is impossible to overrate the magnificence of this design'.³ It is hard to overrate its impact. No sensitive passerby could remain unaffected. It was not the first Byzantine church to be built in Edwardian England and it was far from being the most correct, but it was the most influential, with an impact whose imaginative outworking was maintained for forty years. Protestant Nonconformists were among those influenced by this triumph of Roman Catholic Dissent. In 1934 the Presbyterian, A. L. Drummond, considering the Byzantine style's potential for congregational worship, remarked upon its 'great possibilities of restful serenity secured through light and shade, rich ornament standing out against a plain background; here, brick and plaster come into their own . . .'.⁴ Any survey of chapel architecture of the 1920s and 1930s will confirm that this was a feeling shared by many chapel committees, with variable results. It was a view, however, which had earlier met with criticism from otherwise sympathetic quarters. In 1911, picking up themes which he had first explored twenty-five years before, P. T. Forsyth, the

Congregational theologian, briefly considered Byzantium. He could not escape the paradox of a Christian system, that of the Eastern church, whose theological liberalism had ended in a spiritual desert in which religion was separated from experience by an abuse of theology which killed politics, morality and — ‘most delicate of all social products’ — art. The Byzantine style reflected this dismal paradox. The Trinity was the supreme product of the Eastern mind, and the dome atop the cube might seem to express the elements of the Trinity worked into the unity of God; but the dome atop the cube was also a study in

aesthetic incongruity and unresolved contrasts . . . They do not flow and melt into each other. They do not make up that organic, artistic unity which in Gothic moulds and controls the whole.⁵

All the same, Forsyth's fellow Dissenters were impressed. 1904 saw the start of a powerfully sited yet restrained exercise in London's ecclesiastical street scenery, in Sloane Terrace, within a stone's throw of Sedding's Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, of 1888–90 and on the site of a once fashionable Wesleyan chapel. This was for the Christian Scientists, that socially respectable sect on the fringes of Christianity, attractive to thoughtfully prosperous but uneasy Christians. Churches of Christ, Scientist, were honest reflections of Western religion, secularized, urbanized, yet refined, with more than a dash of the reference library about them. In 1903 Edgar Wood produced for them in Daisy Bank Road, Manchester, the most original of all twentieth-century Dissenting chapels. The Sloane Terrace church was more obviously ecclesiastical, a building to command attention, in style, site and size demonstrating the prosperity as well as the taste of Christian Scientists.⁶ Its style was Eastern, Jerusalem more than Byzantium perhaps, and its copper-roofed texture in Italian granite and Portland stone was more transatlantic than either, for Christian Science was a mutant from American Congregationalism. Much closer to the heart of orthodox English Dissent was the church at Woodford Green, opened in 1904 for a comfortably suburban union of Baptists, Congregationalists and Free Methodists. Here architect and clients set each other off to perfection. Woodford Green's

architect, Harrison Townsend, designed the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the Horniman Museum, and the Bishopsgate Institute; Woodford Green's minister, the Free Methodist Joseph Hocking, was a best-selling novelist, whose minister brother, Silas, was a yet better-selling novelist: a rare double. Woodford Green's congregation included J. M. Dent, the publisher, whose Everyman's Library was planned in 1904. And Woodford Green's style was red-blooded Byzantine, an essay in that use of brick, plaster, marble and sweeping curves which A. L. Drummond commended years later.

If the Sloane Terrace Christian Scientists and the Woodford Green United Frees might appear to be exceptions to prove a rule, the Fairhaven Congregationalists, up on the Ribble estuary between Lytham and St. Anne's, their church opened in 1912 with P. T. Forsyth among the preachers considered for the occasion, were the rule in all save appearances; and those were manifestly Byzantine. Pevsner sums this building up, in his grudging way:

only the Fairhaven Congregational Church, South Clifton Drive, of 1907-12, stands out, by size, by colour, by style, only not alas by quality. It is by *Briggs, Wolstenholme and Thornely*, all white faience slabs, and it is in a sort of Byzantine or South West French Romanesque, though the details are rather in the Edwardian Baroque. It needed some courage to put up such a building.⁷

It was a courage which bred pride among those who built it, and admiration among some who first observed it. A local minister described for a denominational journal how visitors travelling from Blackpool to Lytham by the 'electric car' would see

rising in front of them in the distance a white campanile, which flashed in the sun . . . In a very short time the whole building is before their eyes, its white domes and walls presenting an imposing, dignified example of Byzantine architecture . . . While it was building the voice of local criticism was very loud and not always kind; the Fairhaven people had done what is still an unpardonable sin in the eyes of many – something unusual. They had chosen neither brick nor stone, but a new preparation, a sort of glistening white tile-brick; they had departed from the Perpendicular Gothic, which is the style of the two finest churches in the district [indeed Gothic was the style of all eleven churches along Clifton Drive], and had reared a white sister – though a small one – to Westminster Roman Catholic Cathedral.⁸

What the Fairhaven people had done was to start with a hall, opened in May 1904, to hold 250, with reception room, vestries and caretaker's house. The main church followed eight years later, in the shape of an irregular octagon with transepts, forming a Greek Cross. It was to hold 500. The entrance, carefully placed at an important corner junction, was through an open octagonal vestibule, topped by a campanile, ninety feet high. There were two other octagonal vestibules, one for the church parlour (which again was octagonal, with a domed ceiling), and one for the church hall. These two vestibules were also topped by towers, fifty feet high this time. There were the usual vestries for choir, minister and deacons.

The church was thus capacious without being large. It was what modern estate agents call 'deceptively spacious'. The exterior, however, was quite another matter. An octagon with three towers capped by little domes was striking enough for a quiet seaside resort, but the material used was as heart-stopping as the journalists declared it to be: 'Ceramo' tiles from the Middleton Fireclay Works, Leeds. People long accustomed to glazed tiles on cinemas, co-operative stores, offices and public lavatories may still find their use surprising for a church which had no intention of doubling as a concert hall or winter garden. Defensively, the Fairhaven people stressed Ceramo's functional and decorative qualities:

Having a matt or vellum surface, it presents a marble-like suggestion; it is also more enduring than stone, and especially so near the sea where sand scour so quickly deteriorates a stone building . . . A church designed on the Byzantine style is particularly adapted to the material that is being used . . . It is anticipated that the church, with its marble-like face, its lofty and commanding campanile, its flanking towers and domes, will group into an object of arresting beauty, and so will appeal both to residents and visitors who throng the district.⁹

If the church's exterior has always aroused more surprise than admiration, its interior — acoustics apart — remains surprisingly successful. Within, Byzantium gives way to Central Hall Baroque, deprived of galleries and suitably reduced in scale. The Greek cross plan brings the congregation close to the preacher and choir, sharing in worship with them rather than reaching out to them. Small congregations need not look lost and late-comers can take in the situation at a glance. The raked

floor contributes to this. There is a sense of immediacy about the building. Two other things strike the observer. The first is the good sense and completeness of the fittings: the lights; the pews; the woodwork; the roomy pulpit with war-memorial panels of beaten brass set into the wood — winged Truth cradling a fallen warrior, humanity rising to a new level; the hopeful gifts from prosperous seat-holders; the vestibules with space for cloaks and heating pipes to dry the top coats of a wet congregation.¹⁰ The second is the church's lightness. It is a Protestant room, unmysterious, and this despite the stained glass in every window massed with a carefully contrived religious purpose. If the transition from Byzantium to Edwardian Baroque is strange, there is no incongruity in this marriage of Baroque and painted glass. The Fairhaven Edwardians provide a salutary reminder of the lightness of touch of which their age was capable, not least in its monumental moments.

At first, however, the White Church — as it was immediately known — shared a common Edwardian Free Church weakness when it came to disposing pulpit, table and choir seats, those inevitable objects of attention for worshippers when not at prayer. The problem of providing the right focal point for worship was seldom easily solved: how to express the Reformed symbolism of Word and Sacrament, pulpit and table, without stepping either towards Rome or Canterbury; how, indeed, to integrate this symbolism congregationally; how, too, to avoid worshipping choir and organ pipes. It was, for example, to be over fifty years before the problem was satisfactorily solved at Woodford Green, and an otherwise appreciative observer quickly pinpointed the weaknesses at Fairhaven. Here was, to be sure

a magnificent auditorium, [which] will, I think, be a most desirable place to preach in, but I must confess to noticing what, in my opinion, constitutes a real defect. The pulpit is at the side, so is the organ . . . and between them is an apse which surely lends itself to most artistic treatment. I do not admire the taste of the architect, or whosoever is responsible for putting there a raised platform for the Choir, which would be most suitable for a mission-room, but not for such a building as this, and a heating radiator in the rightful place of the Communion table does not appeal to me. I feel that this green wood erection is the one defect in an otherwise most inspiring building.¹¹

What, then, of the architect and his clients? The clients included one man of outstanding influence, the more remarkable in that he was neither the minister nor the richest member of the congregation.

Luke Slater Walmsley, of Deanley, was a retired Blackburn art dealer — he was seventy-one when the White Church was opened — whose career, had it been that of a grocer or draper, might appear to have followed the pattern of countless solid Nonconformist citizens.¹² As an art dealer, however, he affords a useful, perhaps unexpected, glimpse of the cultural dimension of chapel society in the industrial north west. He used the opportunities offered by that society without needing to go beyond it. His was the Congregational generation which, within two decades, produced Lord Leverhulme, Ebenezer Howard and T. H. Mawson, the landscape architect. Walmsley's father was a Blackburn grocer who had begun as a mill hand too short to reach his loom without a stool, and his own life from the 1860s to the turn of the century was passed in Blackburn, with the Chapel Street Congregational Church as its spiritual centre. Chapel Street was an imposing cause of the spired kind, rare among northern chapels in that its architect was that prolific Londoner, John Tarring.¹³ Walmsley taught in its Sunday School (he had a 'bright and vivid way of interpreting scriptural texts') and was secretary of its Band of Hope (the 'temperate and argumentative zeal' of his advocacy was felt to be 'far more difficult to answer than outright denunciation'). But it was his trade which made him a Blackburn figure.

Walmsley had been educated locally (as a boy he had known the young John Morley), bettering himself at English history and literature classes led by a local poet and getting a smattering of technical knowledge at the Mechanics' Institute. An apprenticeship to a carver and gilder, Hasler of Market Street Lane, introduced him to art and architecture and led to a period in London and Brighton. This was in the early 1860s. The evidence is tantalizingly imprecise:

employed by some of the principal firms, [he] was brought into association with the best and most artistic work . . . one of his engagements for a period being upon a commission at Buckingham Palace.¹⁴

At Brighton, by his own account, he was assailed by doubt and perplexity over the Old Testament; and at some stage, by

his son's account, he became sufficiently known to John Ruskin to be urged to help organize Ruskin's 'Sheffield Crafts venture'.¹⁵ Walmsley refused and passed his business career with every sign of prosperity in Blackburn, first from the front bedroom above his father's grocery shop, latterly in the Preston New Road, but for seven years or so in a Ruskinian dream, the house in Church Street where Abbot Paslew had lodged. Walmsley would recall how the windows of the room above the shop

were constructed in domestic Gothic, with stone mullions and transoms, odd panes proudly glowing in goblin-like squints from a huge bull's eye. To be sure the floor was a bit shaky and hollow, here and round there . . . My bedroom was behind, and upon a pane in the window was written a pretty couplet, evidently by a visitor with a finger diamond ring – date 1727, I think.

Walmsley promoted art classes; he was active in loan exhibitions at the art gallery; late in life he contributed 'Gossips about Old Blackburn' to the *Blackburn Weekly Telegraph*; and he joined in controversies on the reconstruction of the town centre or the regeneration of Blakey Moor. His concern for a Blackburn beautiful was clear cut: it was 'because of the influences which externals have on the purity of the mind'. His particular interest was an extension of this: he shared the Victorian fascination for historical pictures. It was this which led to a fruitful association with the artist Charles Cattermole. Walmsley became involved with Cattermole's commission from Henry Irving to design the costumes for *Macbeth*, and this resulted in Cattermole painting 'five historical pictures that were created entirely in the mind of Mr Walmsley'.¹⁶ It was a painstaking creation, for it took Walmsley twelve years to search out the necessary details for Cattermole's pictures.

With the turn of the century Walmsley retired to Deanley, Marine Drive, Fairhaven, a solid, detached brick villa whose exterior gave little away and whose chief feature was a large room on the ground floor which could serve as a private picture gallery on weekdays and a Congregational church on Sundays. Thus this 'happy example of Christian geniality' combined his twin passions.¹⁷

Fairhaven, like many of the better type of seaside resort, was grateful ground for Edwardian Free Churchmen. It was, as the

Congregational Year Book put it, 'a rising place of residence and health resort';¹⁸ or, as Luke Walmsley put it: a fair place by the sea . . . Quiet and reposeful it is to sit without throng by the lapping wavelets on a summer day'.¹⁹ Fairhaven connected Lytham with St. Anne's to form a quiet trinity, lacking Blackpool's brashness and Southport's sophistication. Lytham, pleasant and tree-lined, had been a place of resort since the late eighteenth century; St. Anne's only since the 1870s, thanks to the St. Anne's-on-the-Sea Land and Building Company. Fairhaven followed when Thomas Riley of Fleetwood negotiated with Thomas Fair, agent to the Clifton estates.²⁰ The Fairhaven Estate Company (1895) was the logical issue and by the turn of the century a scattering of cottages and large villas south of the railway marked the beginnings of this select development for Lancashire businessmen. Several of its promoters were from Rossendale, many commuted to Manchester on what was nicknamed 'the Club Train'. Fairhaven's associations were impeccable, almost apostolic, for the parish church was St. Paul's, and thanks to Thomas Riley its streets had names like Pollux Gate, Cyprus Avenue, Melita Place, Myra Road, Derbe Road. By 1905 the three resorts were well-churched: by reputable Lancashire architects in the case of the Anglicans, by standard practitioners in the case of the Congregationalists.²¹

There had been Congregationalism in the area since the 1850s, when the church at Lytham, 'Gothic, with a lean corner turret with spirelet', was opened.²² That at St. Anne's followed functionally twenty years after, with more opulent Gothic to come in the mid 1890s. Both causes were set on their way by wealthy Congregationalists from elsewhere in Lancashire.²³ That at Fairhaven was a more domestic affair, promoted by the now flourishing sister churches, dependent on newcomers from the rest of Lancashire but less reliant on subscriptions from the household names.

The idea appears to have originated at the Lytham Church's annual meeting in January 1899.²⁴ In the six years before a separate church was formed, an extension committee was constituted (in December 1901) and then reconstituted (in February 1902: 'From this date all was activity'), a site secured from the Clifton estate (which stipulated 'no building of a temporary nature'), a grand bazaar was contemplated and

services were begun. From April 1903, the Fairhaven Golf Club House having its drawbacks, these were held in Luke Walmsley's large room.²⁵ There was a congregation of forty-eight at the first; and a collection of thirty shillings. In August 1903 the foundation stone of the school hall was laid, and in May 1904 the hall was opened. In July the Sunday School was formed, and a duly constituted church followed in September. There were sixty-seven members, twenty-three of them transferred from the Lytham Church. Luke Walmsley was a founder member and deacon. Six years later it was decided to complete the building scheme. A building committee was once more formed, and an appeal mounted. The foundation stone was laid in May 1911; the opening took place in October 1912.

By then the church was well established. It was into its second full-time minister (he came in 1910, and stayed for fifteen years); there were 111 members and ninety-nine Sunday school children.²⁶ The membership was prosperous, its subscriptions never unbalanced by extremes, loyal and mobile — an alliance of youth and age. To Congregationalists were added Presbyterians and Free Methodists, most from Lancashire, none with denominationally known names:²⁷ Ramsbottom, Birtwistle, Crook, Cauthery, Wolstenholme, Kershaw, Briggs, Meadowcroft, Kenyon, from Blackburn, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Oldham, Ashton. Meadowcroft was an engineer, Woods and Jolly were cotton manufacturers, Haworth kept a wine shop. From the start a note of pronounced but comprehensive Congregationalism was struck:

To persons unattached to any of the local Churches we offer the hospitality for which Congregationalists are everywhere esteemed. A warm welcome is promised to any worshippers who will let us make them at home. Visitors will find an open door, free and unappropriated seats, and hearty Christian fellowship . . . Fairhaven Congregational Church is an Independent Free Church, that is, it is free from all external ecclesiastical control; under the Lord Jesus Christ it is a self governing society in all matters relating to its own worship and work. It invites and welcomes to its membership all disciples of Jesus Christ. It holds that beyond the simple or separate assembly, or 'Congregation of Faithful People', the only true and catholic unity consists in the recognition (without formal alliance with them) of all Christian Churches of every name as sections of the one Universal Church. We unchurch none who name the name of Jesus Christ in sincerity.²⁸

The building which expressed this was an early product of the evolving partnership of Briggs, Wolstenholme and Thornely of Blackburn and Liverpool. They emerged by competition. Four architects submitted five designs, calling themselves 'English Gothic', 'English Renaissance', 'Meteor', 'Lantern Tower' and 'Byzantium'. 'Byzantium' won, rather to the alarm of the Fairs.²⁹ Doubtless the choice, duly confirmed, 14 November 1902, was Luke Walmsley's. 'Byzantium' turned out to be Briggs and Wolstenholme, a successful Blackburn partnership, with each of its principals just turned forty, in joint practice since 1887. Theirs were reassuringly local names, given the Briggses and the Wolstenholmes in Fairhaven's congregation, although no family links have been traced. Certainly Luke Walmsley was on good terms with Frank Briggs,³⁰ and Harry Wolstenholme's services on the Blackburn Library, Museum and Art Gallery Committee and his collection of pictures and antiques suggest shared tastes.³¹ Since Wolstenholme was the partner in attendance at any necessary Fairhaven meeting, 'Byzantium' was probably his, but from 1906 Arnold Thornely, the youngest and eventually the best known of the three, was in the firm and he increasingly took on its design work.³² This may have some bearing on the dramatic change in building material and the important change in interior design which 'Byzantium' underwent between its inception in 1902 and its completion in 1912.

Briggs and Wolstenholme already had behind them municipal offices for Clitheroe and Great Harwood, both of 1900, the former 'in their jolly Loire style with Gothic touches', the latter 'with the heavy Gibbs surrounds revived in the late nineteenth century with so much gusto'; and they had designed a spired and Gothic Congregational church ('barren and rather coarse') at Kirkham in 1896-7.³³ Flexibility of style was not their problem. Thornely, who was a Unitarian,³⁴ had designed a spacious Presbyterian church at Blundellsands (1898-1905), but their joint specialism lay in public buildings: headquarters in Liverpool for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (1903-7) and for Elder, Dempster and Co.; the New Blue Coat School in Wavertree and work for the university (1913); municipal buildings for Wallasey (1914-20) and, later, Preston (1933-4); police courts (1912-21) and the King George's Hall (1913) for Blackburn; a technical college for Wigan, an institute

for St. Helens, King Edward VII College Lytham. Theirs was, in short, a Lancashire partnership which already promised to rival that of Paley and Austin a generation or so before. The choice of the Fairhaven Congregationalists reflected the standing of both parties.

A chapel building is a compromise between architect, minister, and building committee, sometimes with the unbalancing figure of a major benefactor, always with the church membership to make noises off. The bias of the compromise reflects the relative strengths of personality. Thus Fairhaven's White Church could not be entirely Walmsley's creation as professionally interpreted by Briggs, Wolstenholme and Thornely. The building scheme lasted for nearly a decade, during which the fellowship took root and developed its distinctive ways, both socially and spiritually. Thus the flourishing literary society has to be balanced with the endless fund-raising recitals, fruit banquets and bazaars; the occasional trough in enthusiasm has to be balanced with a change in pastorate; the selection of colour schemes, the choice of pews or chairs, the direction of the chapel's music, are to be placed against the wishes of individuals or the state of the building fund at any one time.

At first it had been intended to erect a functional building for £2,000, but the scheme soon outpaced such modesty and, as has been seen, by November 1902 the Byzantine style had been decided upon. Walmsley's was almost certainly the guiding hand here; his son has recalled how impressed his father had been when together they had visited Westminster's new cathedral. By 1909 it was anticipated that the cost of the total scheme would be £7,500. In the event it was nearer £12,500, of which £10,000 was promised by the time of the opening.³⁵

Fund raising was steady but not easy. There was an overdraft from the London, City and Midland Bank, and in 1912 interest-free loans were secured from the London-based English Congregational Chapel Building Society (£350, repayable in seven instalments) and the local Lancashire and Cheshire Chapel Building Society (£400, with a gift of £300); but their repayment was buffeted by the Great War.³⁶ The ladies responded valiantly, promising £1,000 but raising nearly £2,000.³⁷ The bulk of the giving came in the last few months,

with £692 10s. 5d. received at the opening services, some of it earmarked for the pulpit and organ.

Such giving was the mechanical aspect of an evolving church fellowship. As far as the outside world was concerned the fellowship's evolution was most strikingly reflected in a change of material. It was originally intended to build the church in red brick and terracotta. In September 1910, however, when the final stage was under way and negotiations with the architects were in full swing, the momentous decision was taken to use 'Carrara or other similar material at an extra cost of about £800'.³⁸ By April 1911, when the builders' estimates were accepted, a deputation had gone to Leeds to see how glazed tiles were manufactured. The result was that the Middleton Brick and Tile Company of Leeds were to provide 'Ceramo' tiles; Gerrard and Sons of Swinton, Manchester, were to be the builders.³⁹ That result delighted the trade. Here was

to the best of our belief the only church in the country faced with any variety of matt-glazed terra-cotta. The material used for the whole of the front, including four domes, is 'Ceramo', made and fixed by the Middleton Fire-Clay Works, of Leeds. It is of a creamy white tint, with an egg-shell glaze, which when seen *en masse*, has the appearance of white marble, the glaze applied under great atmospheric pressure forming an integral part of the block . . . Some 10,000 cubic feet of 'Ceramo' have been used on this church . . . The salt atmosphere of the Blackpool district is notoriously detrimental to stone, but seems powerless to affect 'Ceramo'. Amongst other contracts in the same facing material which the Middleton Fire-clay Works have at present in hand may be mentioned picture palaces at Harehills, Leeds, at Stratford, a cafe and shops at Central Beach, Blackpool: new houses and premises at Middlesbrough, etc.⁴⁰

These glazed ceramic blocks, easy to clean, weather resistant, ideal for polluted cities or sea-scoured coasts and monumentally light-hearted, were the latest thing. Doulton had led the way with its Carrara Ware, used at the Savoy Hotel by T. E. Collcutt.⁴¹ The Middleton Fire-clay Works were not far behind with their picture palaces, shops and Fairhaven's bold white church.⁴²

It is less easy to chart the major internal changes. The original design was for a vaulted, Byzantine-Romanesque interior of banded brick. At some stage, probably also in 1910 and perhaps reflecting the modifications to the exterior which was now less

squat and mosque-like, indeed less Byzantine, it was decided to switch inside to Baroque, with a segmented ceiling.

Was this Arnold Thornely's doing, with his penchant for the Baroque? And was another great Westminster building behind it, this time the Wesleyan Central Hall, built within a stone's throw of Abbey and Cathedral alike? In May 1905 Lanchester and Rickards's great Viennese Baroque palace had won the competition for Wesley's Centenary Memorial and in October 1913 the completed Hall was opened.⁴³ It was an inescapable statement. Unfortunately this change is not reflected in surviving minute books, whose concerns are more for the occasional furnishings most appropriate to the new community.

From the outset that community was dignified as well as friendly. The very first service at Deanley, though 'varied and hearty', contained sanctus, chant and vesper;⁴⁴ and although it was agreed at Walmsley's urging in 1907 to use Moody and Sankey hymns for the mid-week services, there was agonizing as to whether or not the Lord's Prayer should be chanted at the Sunday services.⁴⁵ Chants and sanctuses presupposed a choir; and by 1912 there was a choir of eleven sopranos, four contraltos, six tenors and six basses. The choirmaster received an honorarium of £20, but an attempt to introduce a paid tenor (with a fellow chorister bearing the cost) was scotched, as was the choirmaster's wish for a robed choir. A choir presupposed an organ, and this was secured in time for the opening for £348 from Ainscough of Preston. There were other matters. From 1910 the minister, William Robinson (stipend £250, increased to £260 'so as to avoid liability under the Workman's Compensation Act'; pulpit supplies were fixed at three guineas a Sunday, with four on special occasions), was sufficient of a driving force to push the building scheme to completion, and to secure a central pulpit, Nonconformist style.⁴⁶ One other thorny issue was the seating of the congregation. Was it to be pews or chairs? Chairs were cheaper and more flexible; pews were durable and seemly. In May 1912 eighty members attended a meeting devoted to the matter. Almost all were agreed that sittings should be open and free, and all were agreed that only the centre block should as yet be seated; and most, unswayed by the deacons, who were not of one mind, preferred pews or benches. All — pews, communion chairs and organ case — were to be of oak, green-stained.

The opening services were a great success. The weather was fine, the collections ample. Luke Walmsley handed a golden key to Mrs Crook, the treasurer's wife, and the Blackpool Glee and Madrigal Society rendered the *Elijah*. The preachers included a London pulpiteer, two college principals and Moffatt, the Bible translator from Mansfield College, Oxford:

The general reader knows him as the Captain of a fleet of pearl ships, each with a scarlet sail, which he has launched on the broad sea of Holy Scripture. Puritans know him for his 'Golden Book of John Owen'. Literary men know him for his Introduction to George Meredith.⁴⁷

The Nonconformist Conscience was there too, voiced by the M.P. for Ipswich (who was also minister of Whitefield's Tabernacle), Charles Silvester Horne. He saw the new church 'as an asset in the fight against materialism, which was the biggest fight they had got to wage in this world'.⁴⁸

There was one marked feature about the opening: members and guests entered the church where, to the singing of the anthem 'What are these', the windows were unveiled. Stained glass was no novelty for Congregationalists. William Butterfield's Highbury Chapel, Bristol, a spiritual seat of Wills Tobacco, had painted windows in the 1840s. John Tarring's Grafton Square, Clapham, had stained glass in the early 1850s. Neither was the glass always mediocre. Burne-Jones designs from Morris and Co. frequently accompanied a Willis organ in marking the coming of age of one of the grander causes, especially in the north. What set the White Church apart was the totality of its scheme. The church's exterior was merely a shell for the convenience of the fellowship gathered within for the glory and worship of God, designed to arrest the attention, but nothing more. Its interior was dignified but congregational, light, spacious, eschewing such tricks or mysteries as the exterior might suggest — with one exception. The light shone through windows whose avowed purpose was to proclaim the movement of faith. It was, of course, Luke Walmsley's idea:

a fair temple, meet for the impressive vista of stained glass within. The church is lighted by four windows of generous span, affording unusual opportunity, in dimension, for treatment of stately composition in stained glass . . . the whole is a reverent pageant, a crowning of Liberty and a holy offering of thanksgiving and praise.⁴⁹

It is not clear how Walmsley came by his idea. In the previous decade the Central Congregational Church, Boston, Mass., had executed a comprehensive and carefully integrated stained glass scheme 'whereby the Christian Faith might be presented as a whole and in a corporate way, in contrast to the individualism which still makes so many churches mere shells for incongruous private memorials.' But this was incorporated into an existing building.⁵⁰ At Fairhaven glass and building evolved together.

It would appear that Walmsley had the whole scheme in mind from the first. His careful antiquarianism for Charles Cattermole's historical paintings was ample preparation for the sanctified antiquarianism on which he now embarked. One of the earlier entries in the first Church Minute Book concerns Walmsley's explanation of his scheme to Church Meeting, and the most distinctive feature of the first permanent building to be erected on the site was the five large windows on the south wall of the Church hall, unveiled in April 1905, each filled with stained glass portraits of 'some worthy who has . . . given of his best, even of his life's blood, for the spread of the Gospel and the onward march of religious liberty'.⁵¹ That meant Wyclif, Savonarola, Luther, Tyndall, Barrow, John Robinson, Milton and Cromwell, George Fox and John Bunyan, Watts and Wesley, William Carey, John Williams of Erromanga and David Livingstone, and John Knox. The intention was that eventually these should be transferred to the main building. Each window was to be a gift from members of the church and congregation.⁵² They were designed by Charles Elliott, of London, and executed by Abbott and Co., of Lancaster; but the overall supervision came from Luke Walmsley. He worked closely with Elliott on design and composition, sometimes with Elliott coming up to Deanley and always with Elliott sending the full-sized cartoons first to Walmsley for his approval.⁵³ When the scheme was complete,⁵⁴ Walmsley interpreted his vision in a descriptive handbook.

The purpose of stained glass, he explained, was to instruct, to edify, to inspire, and to decorate, 'for wherever sunlight — daylight — and stained glass confront each other, there is a decorative effect'.⁵⁵ The purpose of Fairhaven's stained glass was to tell a story that would so 'appeal directly to a living work-a-day world, and be understood by the common people and evoke their sympathy and emotion' as to lead them to 'the

life in God'.⁵⁶ There were fifty-eight windows, to be followed in natural sequence, scripture and history encompassed in eternity:

As the visitor enters the Church and lifts his eyes to the solemn vista of colour, he will probably be first arrested by the window right opposite to him within the chancel, 'The Day of Pentecost' . . . It is hoped this glass may solemnise the mind and induce a fitting spirit for a profitable view.⁵⁷

The scripture windows were opposite Pentecost. They portrayed the life and ministry of Jesus, Calvary, Resurrection and Ascension: 'He who has eyes for symbolism will note that a stray lamb is grazing while a red poppy bends over its innocent head'.⁵⁸ History streamed to east and west. Here, on the lower parts, were the sixteen figures removed from the church hall, 'over the head of each . . . a winged cherub who brings the symbol of special call'.⁵⁹ In the large upper spaces were stirring events: Wyclif's trial, Luther at Worms, Latimer and Ridley at the stake, the Mayflower, the Ejection of 1662, and, for the special pride of Cromwellian Independents, a window wherein a 'Cromwellian Ironside personifies St. George, England's patron saint, who, "For England and Liberty", is spearing to death the Stuart dragon — "Absolutism" — The divine right to govern wrong'.⁶⁰ In sum, 'the spirit of the project is large, catholic, and comprehensive; it is designed to show forth the recovery of the pure truth of Jesus'.⁶¹ As to colour, 'charm . . . has been secured, and pure primaries used with judgement and taste. Historic truth has been the supreme consideration' and a 'restrained suggestiveness' the ruling motive.⁶²

Walmsley's account is an unusually revealing study of the cultural evolution of Victorian Nonconformity, prospering, articulate, Ruskin-bred, Browning-weaned, George MacDonald-flavoured,⁶³ applying to its surroundings the sanctified passions previously fulfilled in psalmody ('Our windows are not separate songs, but one great oratorio'):

In the Old Chapel of my childhood there was not one inch of flaming glory of colour to help me to make my angels. I could and did create ghosts in troops from an erratic gas light in the farthest dark corner under the gallery. For all, but especially for the children's sake ['Children we know live, move and have their being in their

imagination . . . ' Here spoke the sensitive teacher; and Fairhaven's windows have since inspired countless children's addresses] I plead that the sweet passion of art through the haunting beauty of stained glass, may have its place.⁶⁴

Walmsley could not conceive of art's sweet passion without liberty for its base and he had a lively sense of the positive virtues of tradition, 'impregnated by a living intelligence. By a manly sanity it is the function of living art to do this, as it is also to save nature and realism from the commonplace.'⁶⁵ Now, in retirement at Marine Drive, there was a Protestant mission to be fulfilled:

The Free Churches have never yet risen to the opportunity of their liberty. They do not realize its potential greatness. Especially is this seen in their neglect of appeal to the reverent imagination in the environment of their fabrics and worship. The Roman Church lives upon it . . . it is quite wrong to think that the Free Churches are cramped as to range for this appeal; indeed anti-sacerdotal by tradition, they, in an especial way, may avail themselves of it with absolute safety . . . A strong liberty will not fear to give a yard of stained glass to a sweet legend, or to an old medieval saint, if there be some deed or teaching of love to tell us.⁶⁶

Perhaps this was Edwardian optimism, a recall to the catholic values of Reformed Christianity, rounded, perhaps blurred, by a refusal to stand upon the old doctrinal awkwardness now that Reformed Christianity was on the verge of becoming national once more. Or so it might seem from Walmsley's description of the Calvary window:

This inclusive, this more spacious and heavenly, more pure and spiritual ideal of the Passion of the Cross is felt around us as an atmosphere, as the gentler voice of the Christian conscience, of its literature and pulpit: it breathes in a new hymnology, more sweet and gracious, on a more humane plane of truth, tenderness and love, less coarse and fleshly in symbol, more cultured and finely spiritual in appeal. It lives and moves in that subtle thing the spirit of the age and the national conscience, and it is being translated into legislation.⁶⁷

Few concepts of living may seem further removed from our own than that of the Edwardian seaside resort, especially when expressed in a fusion of stained glass, Winter Gardens, Byzantine and Baroque over debate as to whether the domes

should be white, yellow or gilded, and with T. H. Mawson, the landscape architect (and Hest Bank Congregationalist) who laid out the gardens of Lord Street, Southport, offering his services free. Yet the White Church may still seem to the sympathetic observer to have achieved through these discontinuities that artistic movement, even that unity, which P. T. Forsyth advocated, such that the historian can only regret that the proposal to secure Forsyth's services for the White Church's opening was not pursued and that there survives no Forsythian sermon to crown the occasion for our subsequent improvement.

A postscript is called for. This paper began with Westminster Cathedral, whose style had been arrived at most unwillingly by its architect, and determined only after he had been pointed towards St. Mark's Venice, Torcello and Ravenna.⁶⁸ For many of that generation the way had already long been paved by Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* and not least by its memorable description of Torcello. Indeed one of the best-known chapel competitions, that for building Union Chapel, Islington, had been won by the competitor who called himself 'Torcello'.⁶⁹

That was in the 1870s, the decade when the Byzantine style came to London.⁷⁰ Subsequent decades saw the emergence and consolidation of the Arts and Crafts movement, whose most notable shrines included Byzantine churches, not least Westminster Cathedral. The significance of the White Church lies not just in its aptness for a seaside Sunday purpose, nor solely in its bright opportunities, but also in the naturalness with which it fits into the general context. Such a building would have been inconceivable without the Ruskinian formation of one of its most credible members, or that formation's Art, and Crafts outworking. It is at once a sport and a full reflection of the culture of an age. That culture still reverberates. When Luke Walmsley's artist son died in 1985 his bequests included — in addition to £1,000 for the repair of the church windows — a Lake District property to the National Trust and Ruskin's bookcase and brass coal box to the Brantwood Trust.⁷¹ A year later a history of the White Church windows was reissued with a painting, on its cover, of the church looking across the Ribble estuary — not so much Fair Havens on the south coast of Crete as the Sea of Galilee.⁷² Thus is sanctified that useful speculative negotiation of the 1890s between Thomas Riley and Thomas Fair, which brought to this haven, among others, one Blackburn artist trader.

NOTES

- 1 In the preparation of this paper I have been much helped by Miss Ursula Bailes, Mr Lance Cattermole, Miss K. Drew, Miss Janet Gnosspelius, Dr E. D. Mackerness, the Revd and Mrs David Mason, Dr Michael Stratton and the late Mr B. Dean Walmsley.
- 2 R. Dixon and S. Muthesius, *Victorian Architecture* (1978), p. 225.
- 3 A. Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw* (1976), pp. 364–365.
- 4 A. L. Drummond, *The Church Architecture of Protestantism* (Edinburgh, 1934), p. 267.
- 5 P. T. Forsyth, *Christ on Parnassus: Lectures on Art, Ethics and Theology* (1911; 2nd imp., 1959), pp. 165–167.
- 6 Architect, Robert Chisholm; built 1904–8.
- 7 N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire, II: The Rural North* (1969), p. 175.
- 8 G. Stanley Russell, 'The New Church at Fairhaven', *Supplement to the British Congregationalist*, 17 Oct. 1912, p. 748.
- 9 *Congregational Year Book* [henceforth *CYB*] (1912), pp. 130–131.
- 10 The completeness is no longer quite what it was: the lights (electric since 1922) have been altered and some of the pews removed; some will regret the sale of the incongruous metal statuette of Andromeda, 'Gloire aux Vainqueurs', which was placed in the porch in 1934, in the guise of 'Recording Angel', or of the oil paintings hung in the hall in the same year: 'The Prodigal Son' and 'The Convincing of Thomas', by G. Mazzolini (1885). The paintings were the gift of one of Lytham's three mayors in the 1930s to be deacons of the White Church. Long stored in a church cellar they were sold in 1973 for £224. The pulpit was presented in 1921, with panels by Walter Marsden, M.C.: D. H. Mason, *Fair Domes of Fairhaven: A History of the White Church, Fairhaven, Lytham St Annes* (Blackpool, 1990), pp. 37–38, 77, 105.
- 11 Russell, *Sup. British Congregationalist*, 17 Oct. 1912. See also note 46.
- 12 The information for the following section about Luke Slater Walmsley (1841–1922) came from his son, the late B. Dean Walmsley; and *Blackburn Weekly Telegraph*, 29 Apr. 1922.
- 13 John Tarring (1806–75), 'the Gilbert Scott of the Dissenters', was the man who brought spires to Congregationalism. Architect of Memorial Hall, the Congregational headquarters in London (1872–5), he won the Chapel Street competition in 1872 and the church was opened 25 June 1874. Luke Walmsley's parents were members by 1842 and Walmsley was a church name from the late eighteenth century. The church's membership grew from 222 in 1866 to 485 in 1905: W. A. Abram, *A Century of Independency in Blackburn 1778–1878* (Blackburn, 1878), passim; *CYB* (1906), p. 313.
- 14 Which suggests work for the Crace firm.
- 15 Ruskin's Guild of St. George emerged from the letters later published as *Fors Clavigera*. In 1871 a fund was set up to establish the Guild; in 1874 Ruskin published the Guild's aims and in 1875 the Ruskin Museum for the Working Man was established at Walkley, Sheffield.
- 16 Charles Cattermole (d. 1900), who exhibited widely between 1858 and

- 1893, was a nephew of the better known painter of historical scenes, much admired by Ruskin, George Cattermole (1800–68, see *DNB*). Had the young Walmsley first met the Cattermoles, perhaps worked for them, in London in the early 1860s? George's 'Macbeth and the Two Villains' was widely reproduced. Henry Irving's great Macbeths were 1875 and 1888. Charles Cattermole's quintet of paintings were 'The Last Days of Whalley Abbey', 'The Palmy Days of Hoghton Tower' (better known as 'James I Knights the Loin of Beef'), 'The Battle of Preston and Walton', 'Old Blackburn', and 'An Old-fashioned Lancashire Holiday', (1878) – the last representing a Preston Guild. *Blackburn Weekly Telegraph*, 29 Apr. 1922.
- 17 He died in April 1922, of a heart attack after attending – and seconding the vote of thanks – a lecture on the Old Testament at the local Wesleyan Church. His friend, C. J. Cauthery, recalled that Walmsley's 'sound business instincts . . . united with thrift . . . enabled him as an artist trader to accumulate in the busy Lancashire town of Blackburn a modest competency which was often shaken to the anxiety point both before and during the vicissitudes of the war, and required much courage and sagacity to maintain': C. J. Cauthery in 'The Late Mr Luke Walmsley. An Appreciation', undated cutting, April 1922, belonging to the late B. Dean Walmsley; see also *Blackburn Weekly Telegraph*, 29 Apr. 1922.
- 18 *CYB* (1912), p. 130.
- 19 L. S. Walmsley, *Fairhaven Congregational Church, Lytham, Lancashire: The Story of the Stained Glass Windows: A Handbook* (St. Anne's-on-the-Sea, 1920), p. 13.
- 20 Thomas Fair (b. 1836), agent to the Clifton estates 1862–96, succeeding his father and succeeded by his son. The Fairs were Anglicans and Tories; Thomas Fair's second wife was a Pilkington, from the main Anglican branch of the Congregational glass manufacturing family: W. T. Pike, ed., *Lancashire at the Opening of the Twentieth Century: Contemporary Biographies* (Brighton, 1903), p. 168.
- 21 Poulton and Woodman of Reading for Lytham's Congregationalists (1861–2); Paley and Austin for St. Anne's Parish Church (1873) J. Medland Taylor for St. Paul's Fairhaven (1902–4); Pevsner, *Lancashire*, II, pp. 172–175. See below, n. 72, for the play on names (Thomas Fair's haven and the biblical Fair Havens).
- 22 Pevsner, *Lancashire*, II, p. 172.
- 23 B. Nightingale, *Lancashire Nonconformity*, Vol. I, *The Churches of Preston, North Lancashire, and Westmoreland* (nd. [c. 1891]), pp. 104–109, 160–163.
- 24 What follows is chiefly drawn from 'Some Account of the Beginnings of the Fairhaven Congregational Church' (MSS. c. 1932, with Fairhaven United Reformed Church). D. H. Mason's history (see note 10) expands this.
- 25 Mason, *Fair Domes of Fairhaven*, p. 11.
- 26 *CYB* (1912), pp. 247–248. The church at Lytham had 154 members and that at St Anne's had 192: *ibid.*
- 27 Though Henry Higson, J.P., of Lytham and Blackburn, chairman of the first Extension (Building) Committee was treasurer of the Lancashire Congregational Union.

- 28 *Fairhaven Congregational Church: Souvenir and Programme of the Opening, October 1912*, pp. 2, 3. Since 1905 each new member had received A. Goodrich, *Primer of Congregationalism* (1894) – suggestive testimony to the new cause’s liberal churchmanship; tactful, too, since in May 1904 Dr Goodrich, minister at Manchester’s Chorlton Road Congregational Church (730 members) had preached at the opening of the church hall.
- 29 Mason, *Fair Domes of Fairhaven*, 12–13.
- 30 Information from the late B. Dean Walmsley. For Frank Gatley Briggs (b. 1862), son of a Bollington cotton manufacturer, see W. T. Pike, ed., *Liverpool and Birkenhead in the Twentieth Century: Contemporary Biographies* (Brighton, 1911), p. 249.
- 31 For Harry Vernon Wolstenholme (1863–1936) see *Journal RIBA* (23 May 1936), p. 768.
- 32 For Sir Arnold Thornely (1870–1953) see A. Service, *Edwardian Architecture* (1977), pp. 154, 210; W. T. Pike, *Liverpool*, p. 273.
- 33 Pevsner, *Lancashire*, II, pp. 103, 132, 151.
- 34 I am indebted to Miss Janet Gnosspelius for this information.
- 35 By the time of its appeal brochure, local subscriptions exceeded £1,250 and £500 was either granted or loaned by the Lancashire and Cheshire Chapel Building Society: Fairhaven Congregational Church ‘Minute Book (Fairhaven Extension Committee and Deacons) 1903–8’; ‘Brochure of Appeal’; *Proposed New Congregational Church at Fairhaven* (undated, c. 1903–9); Fairhaven Congregational Church, *Souvenir and Programme of the Opening* (Oct. 1912), p. 4.
- 36 The English Chapel Building Society’s loan to a church normally covered by the Lancashire Society was unusual, and made subject to the church being complete and opened before the loan was advanced. English Congregational Building Society Minute Book, Vol. 7, pp. 236, 271, 334 (at United Reformed Church headquarters, 86 Tavistock Place, London); Fairhaven Congregational Church, *General Report for 1912*; Fairhaven Congregational Church, ‘Church Meeting Minutes 1904–1915’.
- 37 They promised £1,000 in 1910 when their Sale of Work raised £100, but their great bazaar in 1912 raised £1,555 18s. 0d. bringing their total to £1,916 14s. 7d. That April Bazaar had a flower theme – Narcissus, Apple Blossom, Daffodil, Primrose, Wallflower, Forget-me-not and Violet stalls, with Ice Cream, Photography and a Smoke Room: *General Report for 1912*.
- 38 ‘Church Meeting Minutes 1904–1915’, 28 September 1910; 12 Apr. 1911.
- 39 The Gerrards were prominent Primitive Methodists. The head of the firm, T. L. Gerrard (b. 1858), became Vice-President of Conference in 1922, was Treasurer of Hartley College, Manchester, from 1908 and was an alderman on Lancashire County Council. His son, Clement Gerrard (b. 1887), became a notable organist: *Who’s Who in Methodism* (1933), p. 316.
- 40 ‘Recent Brick and Terra-Cotta Buildings’, *The Brick Builder* (Dec. 1912), p. lxxiv. I am indebted to Dr Michael Stratton for this reference.
- 41 In 1903 and 1910, M. Stratton, ‘The Terracotta Revival’, *Victorian Society Annual* (1982–3), pp. 29–30.

- 42 The firm was strongly competitive, by the 1920s undercutting established rivals because it remained outside the Terracotta Association. I am indebted to Dr Stratton for this information.
- 43 J. V. Ellis, *Wesley's Centenary Memorial: The History of Westminster Central Hall London, England* (1982), pp. 10, 26. There were 132 competitors. The flair in the Lanchester and Rickards partnership was that of E. A. Rickards (1872–1920); but theirs was not the first domed-Baroque chapel to be proposed; before 1901 (Sir) John Simpson (1858–1933) had prepared plans for a Congregational Church in Brighton, Union Church, of truly imperial dimensions. It was never built: but Thornely (and his partners? and Walmsley?) read the trade press and competed with the best.
- 44 From undated cuttings in 'Minute Book (Fairhaven Extension Committee and Deacons) 1903–8'.
- 45 In Oct. 1906 it was decided to chant the Lord's Prayer for an experimental month. Three months later the worshippers at communion were asked to decide: they favoured the change: 'Church Meeting Minutes 1904–1915', 31 Oct. 1906, 30 Jan. 1907, 3 Feb. 1907, 31 July 1907.
- 46 Perhaps G. Stanley Russell's strictures (see above), written before the formal opening, helped his case. In 1907 it had been agreed that the pulpit should be at the corner of the platform apse, leaving the congregation to be faced by the communion table with the choir massed behind it; it was also urged that the pulpit (which until 1921 was an unsatisfactory preaching desk) should be movable. In fact from 1912 to 1965 the pulpit (replaced in 1921) was in the centre. Since 1965 it has been at the side, where Russell so disliked it in 1912.
- 47 For James Moffatt (1870–1944), Professor of Greek and New Testament at Mansfield College, Oxford, 1911–15, see *DNB*.
- 48 For C. S. Horne (1865–1914) see J. O. Baylen and N. J. Gossman *Biographical Dictionary of Modern British Radicals*, Vol. 3, 1870–1914, A–K (Hemel Hempstead, 1988), pp. 153–158.
- 49 L. S. Walmsley, *Fighters and Martyrs for the Freedom of Faith* (1912), pp. 13–14. This section is a reworking of C. Binfield, 'We Claim Our Part in the Great Inheritance: The Message of Four Congregational Buildings', *Protestant Evangelicalism: Britain Ireland Germany and America, c. 1750–c. 1950: Essays in Honour of W. R. Ward*, Studies in Church History, Subsidia 7 (Oxford, 1990), pp. 219–223.
- 50 A scheme of 1893 for Dr E. L. Clark in a church of 1867 by R. M. Upjohn in the thirteenth-century French Gothic style: A. L. Drummond, *Church Architecture*, p. 92.
- 51 *CYB* (1906), p. 185.
- 52 Luke and Harriet Walmsley gave Resurrection, Calvary and Ascension; there were windows in memory of a Briggs and of two Wolstenholmes; another window – 'The Carpenter's Son' – was given by the Rileys; C. H. Riley, a son of Thomas Riley, the promoter of Fairhaven, was a deacon from 1934 and Mayor of Lytham (the White Church's third) 1936–7.
- 53 B. Dean Walmsley to writer, 26 October 1977.
- 54 In fact the last window was installed in 1950, in memory of two stalwarts of the choir.

- 55 L. S. Walmsley, *Fairhaven Congregational Church, Lytham, Lancashire: The Story of the Stained Glass Windows: A Handbook* (St. Anne's-on-the-Sea, 1920), p. 7.
- 56 Walmsley, *Handbook*, p. 8.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 34.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 62 *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 22.
- 63 Not so far away indeed; a kinswoman of Arnold Thornely's married a nephew of George MacDonald (1824–1905).
- 64 Walmsley, *Handbook*, pp. 16, 22.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 19. Was this merely a softening of old sinews? Here is G. Stanley Russell's account of the same window: 'Mr Walmsley, who described his idea to me with his wonted enthusiasm, is of opinion that the physical agony of our Lord, the gory and often repulsive aspect thereof, has been made far too much of in our art, as it has in our theology, and he was anxious to present an aspect of the subject which shall convey the real spiritual message without that which is no real part of it, and which does not materially aid it. I most cordially agree . . . that the bleeding flesh of the Saviour is not at all necessary in order to convey the real message of spiritual sacrifice and victory, and that these conventional portraits of the Master in their abandonment to His physical agony too often miss the very much more vital fact of His spiritual victory' (Russell, *Sup. British Congregationalist*, 17 Oct. 1912).
- 68 For John Francis Bentley (1839–1920) see A. S. Gray, *Edwardian Architecture: A Biographical Dictionary* (1985), pp. 108–111.
- 69 The competition, announced in 1874 and decided in 1875, was won by James Cubitt (1836–1912). The competition, the building of Union, and the influence of Torcello, are discussed in C. Binfield, 'A Chapel and Its Architect: James Cubitt and Union Chapel, Islington, 1879–1899', Diana Wood, ed., *The Church and the Arts*, Studies in Church History, 28 (Oxford, 1992), pp. 417–448.
- 70 Among the first churches was J. Oldrid Scott's Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Moscow Road, Bayswater, designed 1874, built 1877–82: G. Stamp and C. Amery, *Victorian Buildings of London 1837–1887* (1980), pp. 128–129.
- 71 Bernard Dean Walmsley, who became a deacon at the White Church in 1923, and died 2 July 1985, also left cartoons of stained glass windows made by his wife and himself to Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn, and to Samesbury Hall, Blackburn.
- 72 Fair Havens was the Cretan port to which St. Paul struggled on his voyage to Italy (*Acts*, xxvii. 8), hence the Pauline references in Fairhaven's street names; it was also, of course, a gracious nod in the direction of the Fair family. The painting, which looks more like Galilee than Crete, by Jeanne E. Patterson, was for [A. E. Dawson], *The Story of the Stained Glass Windows in the Fairhaven United Reformed Church* (1986).