

St Peter, Scarborough

Castle Road, Scarborough, East Yorkshire



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *II*

1.2 Conservation area: *Scarborough Conservation Area*

1.3 Architect: *George Goldie of Weightman, Hadfield & Goldie*

1.4 Date(s): *1856-8*

1.5 Date of visit: *9 October 2007*

1.6 Name of report author: *Nicholas Antram*

1.7 Name of parish priest and/or contact(s) made on site: *Very Rev John Loughlin*

1.8 Associated buildings: *Presbytery*

1.9 Bibliographic references:

Middlesbrough Diocesan Yearbook 2007

Carson, Robert: *The First 100 Years – A History of the Diocese of Middlesbrough 1878-1978*

Minskip, Dominic: *A History of St Peter's Mission, Scarborough (1783 to the present)* 1989

Pevsner, N. & Neave, D.: *The Buildings of England, Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, Penguin Books 1995

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

An excellent mid-Victorian town church by George Goldie, a York-born architect who worked widely in the diocese. St Peter's was identified by Eastlake as the first Gothic Revival church to have a windowless sanctuary. Well crafted and full of good detail (particularly in the sanctuary).

2.2 Historical background

In the late 18th century the small Catholic community in Scarborough heard Mass in a private house in Westgate. Brogden, a Scarborough historian, says a Catholic chapel was built in 1809. This was in Auborough Street, southwest of the present church. The Catholic population in the town seems to have grown from around 28 in 1798, to around 40 in 1811 and by 1832 to about 80. Father Walker came to Scarborough in 1835 and remained there for 38 years. In 1846 he invited A.W.N. Pugin to visit the town with a view to designing a church, a visit that never took place, and it was not until 3 October 1856 that the foundation stone of the new church was laid. Surviving correspondence between George Goldie and Father Walker reveals that the latter wanted a building in Norman style but was persuaded by Goldie to accept a 14th century Gothic style on aesthetic, technical and cost grounds. The church was opened in 1858 but completion of the interior was delayed until 1874, when the church was closed for a time for work to take place, followed by a re-opening ceremony on 22 July.

2.3 Setting

St Peter's is a town church in the older part of Scarborough close to the North Cliff. It stands on high ground, on the corner of Castle Road and Tollergate. The land drops away steeply to the south, the direction in which the church faces. The character of the area is dominated by terraced housing of the second half of the 19th century, development following the arrival of the railway in 1845. The church is built right up to Castle Road, with just a thin strip of land behind a high wall to Tollergate and with a car park forecourt to the east of the church with the presbytery set to the rear, its garden to the south of the church.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

The list description (below) is brief and inadequate.

The church faces south but references here are to liturgical compass points.

Charles Eastlake, the 19th century chronicler of the Gothic Revival, remarked that St Peter's was the first Gothic Revival church to have a windowless sanctuary. This is very probably because the church actually faces south (not east), where windows would blind the congregation with light. The church is large, with Geometric and Decorated tracery of some variety. Two pairs of two-light and then three-light windows to the aisles, and two-light clerestory windows. The entrance is on the south side of the two, a pair of entrances under a single pointed arch, the tympanum a window, the tracery with encircled quatrefoils with ballflowers on the cusps. The tower is of a single tall stage rising to the eaves of the nave and finished with a pyramid roof of temporary appearance. Impressive west window of five lights with Decorated tracery. West door to the aisle, the door with elaborate ironwork. The

north aisle has a lean-to projection of massive character, with tiny trefoil windows lighting the confessionals. The aisle is terminated by a canopied niche attached to a raised piece of wall. The fall of the land makes the east view all the more impressive, the lack of windows compensated for by buttresses with niches and an arched corbel table. In the forecourt a granite war memorial, a replacement of 1987.

The interior has nave arcades of double-chamfered arches on circular columns with moulded circular capitals. The main roof has collars and angle braces. Lean-to aisle roofs. The west view is dominated by the organ (by Foster & Andrews of Hull, rebuilt by Nicholson's) and gallery (1874). In the space below, a baptistery with circular stone font, formed in about 1960. Sanctuary arch supported on carved corbels with pairs of angels. The sanctuary is richly decorated with two tiers of blind arcading with Gothic tracery. Integral with this is the carved Caen stone altar with angels on raised walls at either end and a tall pinnacled Gothic canopy over the tabernacle. Carving by Earp of Lambeth. Carved stone and marble communion rails are part of the ensemble. In front of the main altar is a small late 20th century wooden altar with carved front, somewhat out of place stylistically. The upper level of the sanctuary has windows to the sides and the three sides of the apse with painted saints and crucifixion scene by Charles Goldie (George's brother). Beautiful painted timber Gothic vault supported on wall shafts. Side chapels (Lady Chapel to left, St Michael's chapel to right), separated from the sanctuary by arches with Gothic stone screens, each with elaborately carved altars. In the aisle near the Lady Chapel a painted and gilded picture of the Virgin and Child with symbols of the Passion within a Gothic frame supported by angels. Marble mural tablet, erected by friends of Father Walker, designed by George Goldie and sculpted by Earp. Victorian pine pews and a Gothic oak screen to the confessionals. Large painted canvas Stations of the Cross set in elaborate Gothic frames. Stained glass in most windows, of 1858, 1874 and 1898, much of it of good quality and by Hardman. *The Builder* (14 August 1858) mentions windows by Ward.

2.5 List description:

Building Name: ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST PETER

Parish: SCARBOROUGH

District: SCARBOROUGH

County: NORTH YORKSHIRE

Postcode: YO11 1HY

LBS Number: 444461

Grade: II

Date Listed: 08/06/1973

Date of Last Amendment: 08/06/1973

NGR: TA0441589034

Listing Text:

1. CASTLE ROAD

1605

(South Side)

Roman Catholic Church

of St Peter

TA 0489 2/214

II

2.

1858 by Goldie of Weightman, Hadfield and Goldie, large severe coursed stone rubble church, not orientated. 2 light window with Decorated and geometrical tracery. Buttressed aisles and clerestory. Windowless polygonal apse, the first church according to Eastlake to have this feature. Low square tower set at north end next to apse. Porch to side at north end with elaborate tracery above door. Large 5 light north window. Paintings in sanctuary by Goldie.

Listing NGR: TA0441589034