

A High Sense of Calling: Joseph Connolly, A.W. Holmes, and their Buildings for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1885-1935

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Article abstract

Pendant cinquante ans Joseph Connolly (ca. 1840-1904) et Arthur W. Holmes (1863-1944) furent les architectes attirés des évêques de l'Église catholique de l'Ontario, en particulier de Toronto; ils ont dessiné pour eux, dans les styles traditionnels, églises, presbytères et collèges qu'exigeait l'urbanisation rapide d'une population en plein essor. Né et formé en Irlande, Connolly préféra les styles médiévaux, comme le gothique français de l'église Our Lady à Guelph (commencée en 1876) et de l'église St. Mary à Toronto (1885-1889). Il pouvait aussi cependant rendre des formes plus classiques, comme à l'église St. Paul, rue Power à Toronto (1887-1889), de style roman italien à l'extérieur, mais tout à fait classique et même académique à l'intérieur. La vogue du style classique, particulièrement du baroque, traduit en effet le conservatisme doctrinal des catholiques à cette époque et leur complète allégeance à l'égard de Rome. Arthur Holmes, architecte anglais formé par G.E. Street, puis disciple et successeur de Connolly, préféra comme ce dernier les styles médiévaux pour les églises de village et de banlieue, mais moins pour les églises urbaines; l'église St. Helen de Toronto (1908-1910) est en ce sens une exception. Après 1900, la popularité du classicisme académique et la demande pour de vastes bâtiments économiques amenèrent Holmes à dessiner plutôt ses églises urbaines à hauts murs cintrés, dans un ordre classique simple, derrière des façades baroques imposantes; les églises St. Ann et Holy Name (1914-1926), dans l'est de Toronto, en sont des exemples. Le presbytère de St. Ann, conçu en même temps que l'église, est caractéristique de la manière de Holmes pour ce type de résidence. Sa commande la plus importante pour l'archidiocèse de Toronto fut le séminaire St. Augustine à Scarborough (1910-1913), bâtiment sobre et massif à plan conventionnel, entourant une chapelle à large voûte en berceau et aux détails inspirés du baroque anglais. La préférence profonde de Holmes pour le gothique se manifestera à nouveau avec l'église Saint-François d'Assise (1914-1915), à l'extrémité ouest de Toronto, la chapelle Saint-Thomas d'Aquin de l'Université de Toronto (ca. 1927), et surtout sa charmante reproduction d'un modèle médiéval anglais pour la congrégation du Saint-Rosaire, rue St. Clair (1926-1927). Holmes termina sa carrière dans les années trente avec la collégiale gothique du St. Michael's College à Toronto, en interprétant une fois de plus des formes traditionnelles associées à l'architecture religieuse.

*A High Sense of Calling: Joseph Connolly, A.W. Holmes, and their Buildings for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1885-1935**

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It is common for large organizations to consistently patronize the same architectural firm, and for architects to operate quite specialized practices. A clear case is the work of Joseph Connolly (ca. 1840-1904) and his assistant and successor Arthur W. Holmes (1863-1944), who for nearly fifty years dominated church design in Toronto's Catholic Archdiocese.¹ Of the twenty-seven parishes in the City of Toronto and its immediate environs in 1925,² for example, twelve had churches, or major additions to them, designed by Connolly or Holmes or both.³ The Archbishop's residence, the seminary and office building of the diocese, the gate-lodges of both Catholic cemeteries in the city, the student chapel at the University of Toronto, at least nine parish rectories, and a number of parochial schools were designed by the firm, as were at least half a dozen town and village churches outside the city proper. Furthermore, Connolly and Holmes worked for two of the city's most prominent religious orders – the Sisters of St. Joseph (CSJ) and the Basilian Fathers (CSB) – designing convents and novitiates, an orphanage, hospital additions, and all but the original part of St. Michael's, the Catholic college associated with the University of Toronto. Other Catholic dioceses in Ontario were equally in their debt: Connolly had been a favourite of the Bishops of Kingston, Hamilton and London, and Holmes worked, as well, at Peterborough.⁴ But Toronto, the metropolis of the Province, was their centre of operations, and its churches present an ample cross-section of both architects' work.

The Toronto churches of Connolly and Holmes are a built record of the Church's progress through a period in which Catholics – at first, mostly Irish immigrants or their descendants and, later, members of other groups as well – established themselves as a significant force in a predominantly Protestant milieu. Often looked down upon and discriminated against before this period, Catholics could now demonstrate their growing numbers and improving social status by erecting large, highly visible churches,

schools, and other institutions. Connolly and Holmes met these programmatic and symbolic demands, designing buildings in keeping with the changing stylistic fashions of the period. They worked with extraordinary dedication – indeed, a sense of calling – creating designs that, if not radically novel, were serviceable, dignified and appropriate. Their buildings remain among the most prominent and the most loved in Catholic Toronto.

* This article culminates a two-year study of the buildings of the Toronto Archdiocese. For their continuing support of the project I am grateful to the Cardinal-Archbishop, His Eminence Gerald Emmett Carter; his Auxiliary, the Most Reverend Leonard J. Wall; the Vice-Chancellor, the Reverend Nicola DeAngelis, FIC; and the Archdiocesan Historian, the Reverend Edward J.R. Jackman, OP. Thanks are due, also, to two archdiocesan archivists, the late (and dear) Reverend James McGivern, SJ, and Sister Frieda Watson, CSJ, and to historians Stephen Otto, Lorne Ste-Croix, and Malcolm Thurlby.

1 The Archdiocese extends considerably beyond the city itself: it takes in what is today Metropolitan Toronto, Mississauga, York, Peel and Durham regions, Simcoe County and part of Dufferin. In the time of Connolly and Holmes, it also included the Niagara peninsula, which is now St. Catharines diocese.

2 Excluding ethnic and special-purpose parishes, which often occupied churches purchased from other denominations.

3 A list of all known designs by them, with supporting references, is to appear in the forthcoming *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1950*, Robert G. Hill editor. The twelve churches spoken of here are: Connolly's St. Mary's (1885-89), St. Paul's (1887-89), and St. Michael's Cathedral (additions and renovations, 1890-93); and Holmes' (or Post & Holmes') Holy Rosary (1892, demolished), Holy Family (1902), St. Patrick's (1903-08), St. Peter's (ca. 1907, demolished), St. Helen's (1907-10), St. Ann's (1912-14), St. Francis (1914-18), Holy Name (1914-26) and St. Anthony's (ca. 1921). Later, Holmes did the second Holy Rosary (1925-27), St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel (finished 1927), and the Shrine Church of the Little Flower (1933, demolished). A number of these are discussed *infra*.

4 In Kingston Archdiocese Connolly added a new façade, tower, and chapel to St. Mary's Cathedral (1887-92), and designed parish churches at Kemptville, Prescott, Ganano-

Joseph Connolly (ca. 1840-1904) was born in Limerick, Ireland, and trained as an architect by the prominent Dublin Gothic Revivalist, J.J. McCarthy (1817-82); he became, we are told, McCarthy's chief assistant.⁵ McCarthy's practice consisted, as Connolly's would, mainly of Catholic cathedrals, churches, and institutional buildings (Figs. 3 and 7) – a lucrative field, since Catholic emancipation and the economic

que, Portsmouth, Belleville, Tweed, and elsewhere: Lt. Col. L.J. Flynn, *Built on a Rock: The Story of the Roman Catholic Church in Kingston 1826-1976* (Kingston: Archdiocese of Kingston, 1976). In Hamilton Diocese Connolly remodelled St. Mary's (then) Cathedral and designed the city church of St. Patrick's (ca. 1875) and churches at Formosa and Guelph (1876). The latter, Church of Our Lady, is probably his most important Canadian building and is discussed by Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, *Hallowed Walls: Church Architecture of Upper Canada* (Toronto and Vancouver: Clark Irwin, 1975) [hereafter: MacRae & Adamson], pp. 167-69. On the Hamilton-area churches see also Ken Foyster, *Anniversary Reflections, 1856-1981: A History of the Hamilton Diocese* (Hamilton: Diocese of Hamilton, 1981), especially p. 179. For the Bishop of London Connolly designed his only Canadian cathedral, St. Peter's (ca. 1880), as well as a number of smaller churches. Holmes, in addition to his Toronto work and the buildings listed *infra*, n. 49, completed Connolly's work in Guelph (1907) and designed St. Joseph's Hospital (demolished), Immaculate Conception Church (corner-stone 1914), and the chapel of Mt. St. Joseph Convent (1933), all in Peterborough. For several of these references I am grateful to Malcolm Thurlby.

5 At present the chief sources on Connolly are the biographical entry by Lorne Ste-Croix in Melville Bailey (ed.), *Dictionary of Hamilton Biography* (Hamilton: D.H.B., 1981), pp. 51-53; and MacRae & Adamson, pp. 167-69. Connolly's obituaries appeared in the 15 December 1904 issues of the *Toronto Globe* (p. 10), *News* (p. 3), and *World* (p. 2); *The Canadian Architect & Builder* [hereafter: *CAB*], xvii (December 1904), p. 197; and *The Catholic Register* [Register], 22 December 1904, p. 8. Connolly's career is currently being studied, more widely than my article, by Malcolm Thurlby of York University, Toronto. On J.J. McCarthy see Jeanne Sheehy, *J.J. McCarthy and the Gothic Revival in Ireland* (Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, 1977) hereafter: Sheehy]; and Douglas Scott Richardson, *Gothic Revival Architecture in Ireland* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1983) [Richardson], II, ch. 7: 'Catholic and Protestant Ecclesiology'. I am grateful to Richardson for allowing me to consult the dissertation and reproduce Fig. 5 *infra*.

6 This is the tradition reported in MacRae & Adamson, p. 167.

7 The most important was for St. John the Evangelist Church, Arthur: I am grateful to Kent Rawson and Malcolm Thurlby for this information. Connolly is not mentioned in Toronto city directories before 1874, when the firm of James & Connolly [*sic*] appears. This firm name is used until 1877; afterwards Connolly practised alone.

8 On the ecumenical Langley see Ralph Greenhill *et al.*, *Ontario Towns* (Ottawa: Oberon, 1974), chapter 'Meeting Houses and Churches', unpaginated; and Mary Louise Mallory, 'Three Henry Langley Churches – Victorian Gothic Architecture and the Diversity of Sects in Ontario' (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1979). Langley added the spire, and likely the dormers, to St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto, ca. 1865-70, and designed St. Patrick's (now Our Lady of Mt. Carmel) Church, Toronto (1869), and Catholic churches at Whitby (ca. 1868), Pickering (1871), Stayner (ca. 1872), Newmarket (1873), and Orillia (ca. 1874).

recovery of Ireland after the famine allowed Catholic churches to be built in large numbers from the eighteen fifties to the seventies. McCarthy was a follower of Pugin and a knowledgeable and dedicated Ecclesiologist; in fact, as secretary to the (Catholic) Irish Ecclesiological Society, he had penned its 1849 *Address*. McCarthy was probably the freshest, most original designer of Catholic churches in Ireland that the High Victorian age produced: especially in his small churches, he equalled the standard of the best Anglican work in that period's vibrant brand of revived Gothic.

By the middle seventies, however, the vein of Catholic ecclesiastical architecture was largely mined out in Ireland. Connolly, after a study tour on the Continent and a brief spell of practice in his native Limerick, emigrated to Canada, well fitted to repeat here what McCarthy had done there.

Connolly is usually thought to have reached Ontario in the early sixties, on the presumption that an unexecuted design, made in 1863, for the Church of Our Lady, Guelph, was his.⁶ Solid evidence to that effect is lacking, however, since the design no longer exists. Moreover, the first sign of Connolly in Toronto is 1874, when he is known to have had several commissions.⁷ To this empirical evidence may be added the observation that Connolly's work in Canada seems to show familiarity with stylistic developments in Britain and Ireland in the fifties and sixties. In any event, he is not likely to have left Ireland while church-building was still active there. Thus, it may be safely concluded that Connolly arrived in Ontario about 1873.

It appears that he judged his timing well. Between Confederation and 1900, the urbanization of Ontario and the growth of Catholicism in stature and numbers meant that many new, substantial churches were required. The Bishops of the Province worked vigorously to open new parishes in cities and towns, and to replace older, usually wooden, churches with new and larger ones of brick or stone. These were almost always spired and detailed in the recent Gothic Revival fashion, a trend that had started in Anglicanism and spread to Roman Catholic design in short order. Though other able Ontario architects, notably Henry Langley (1836-1906),⁸ were available to meet the need, Connolly had unique qualifications. First, he was Irish Catholic and shared the aspirations of his countrymen and co-religionists. Second, his association with McCarthy would be to his credit with the dominantly Irish clergy of Ontario. Finally, his experience in McCarthy's office would have acquainted Connolly with the Catholic liturgical programme and the exigencies of building large projects on limited budgets.

In the mid-eighties Connolly was commissioned to design two large parish churches in Toronto, St. Mary's, west of downtown, and St. Paul's, on the east. Each designed to seat twelve hundred, these were the largest Catholic churches built in the city since St.

Michael's Cathedral of 1845-48,⁹ and they established an ambitious new scale and stylistic sophistication for Catholic city churches.

St. Mary's, built 1885-89 (Figs. 1 and 4), allowed Connolly to exploit his experience in the High Victorian Gothic.¹⁰ Though not so dramatically sited as his hill-top church at Guelph (Fig. 2), St. Mary's displays that picturesque sensitivity to place that marks High Victorian work. The site is Macdonell, now Portugal, Square, which interrupts Adelaide Street West. Connolly's spire, placed at the centre of the façade, terminates the vista along Adelaide from the east. Had not city traffic authorities, in their wisdom, decided to run the Adelaide Street traffic west to east, one could see St. Mary's through the windshield instead of the rear-view mirror: it is one of few terminal vistas in a city not noted for its grand effects.

The Canadian Architect & Builder commended Connolly's handling of this west front:

A notable feature of this church is the vestibule planning which gives gabled projections on each side of the tower to stop the aisle roofs and avoid the weak and unsatisfactory appearance given to the west end when the tower is flanked by these sloping lines.¹¹

The tower and spire are of eminently Victorian proportions – nearly three times as high as the façade is wide – and echo French Gothic height and detail.

For St. Mary's Connolly adopted the basilican plan standard in Catholic churches of the time: a nave with clerestory and side-aisles, a pair of stubby transepts, and an apsidal sanctuary (Fig. 4). Behind the apse is a sacristy and, in the angle of the apse and south transept, a handsome Early English winter-chapel. The original focus of the sanctuary, now removed, was a pinnacled Gothic altar on which mass was celebrated and the monstrance containing the host placed on view at benediction and exposition. Attention was drawn to this high altar by a ring of arches running round the apse wall at floor level and a corresponding semi-circle of Early French windows above, evoking at a provincial level the glories of a French Gothic *chevet*. French Early Gothic, too, are the foliated capitals of the nave arcade and the rose windows in the transepts and west front, though the low clerestory windows and the grouped lancets of the aisles and transepts (below the roses) have an Early English flavour. The timber ceiling and rich architectural colour of the interior are probably inspired by English Gothic, too, though customary in High Victorian work everywhere.

Connolly's design for St. Mary's and his other large churches (Fig. 2) stemmed from English and Irish precedents of the fifties and sixties, particularly in McCarthy's work. About 1860 McCarthy had designed St. Macartan's Cathedral at Monaghan (Fig. 3).¹² Though it was of stone and much larger than St. Mary's, Toronto, it may be compared to Connolly's church, since the usual architectural dis-



FIGURE 1. Joseph Connolly, St. Mary's Church, Toronto, 1885-9, spire 1904 by A.W. Holmes. General view as in 1914. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

tinctions between a parish church and a cathedral did not, for the most part, apply at this time in Ireland or England, nor, by extension, in Canada.¹³ McCarthy

9 The Cathedral is discussed in Eric Arthur, *Toronto: No Mean City*, 2nd edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) [hereafter: Arthur], pp. 86-90; and MacRae & Adamson, pp. 145-52.

10 On St. Mary's see the commemorative history, *The Jubilee Volume, 1892: The Archdiocese of Toronto and Archbishop Walsh with an Introduction by His Grace the Archbishop* (Toronto, 1892) [hereafter: *Jubilee Volume*], pp. 287 ff.; John Ross Robertson, *Landmarks of Toronto*, iv (Toronto, 1904) [Robertson], pp. 320-23; Arthur, p. 183; *CAB*, xviii (December 1905), p. 105 and illustrated supplement; and the parish history, *St. Mary's Hundred Birthdays* (Toronto, 1952), especially pp. 15-16. For this and other churches, sources that relate to the Archdiocese specifically may be consulted (by permission) in the Archdiocesan Archives.

11 xviii (December 1905), p. 181. In this article the cardinal directions are used in their liturgical, rather than actual, senses.

12 Begun 1861 and largely complete by 1868, though tower and spire date to 1883: *Builder*, xxvi (12 September 1868), p. 675; Sheehy, pp. 57-58; and Brian de Breffny and George Mott, *The Churches and Abbeys of Ireland* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976) [hereafter: De Breffny & Mott], pp. 167-68.

13 This has chiefly to do with the character of the urban parish church in the nineteenth century, which became effectively the 'cathedral' for preaching the Gospel to the working-classes: for Ireland see Richardson, ii, p. 482; for Victorian England, Stefan Muthesius, *The High Victorian Movement in Architecture* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 150-56.

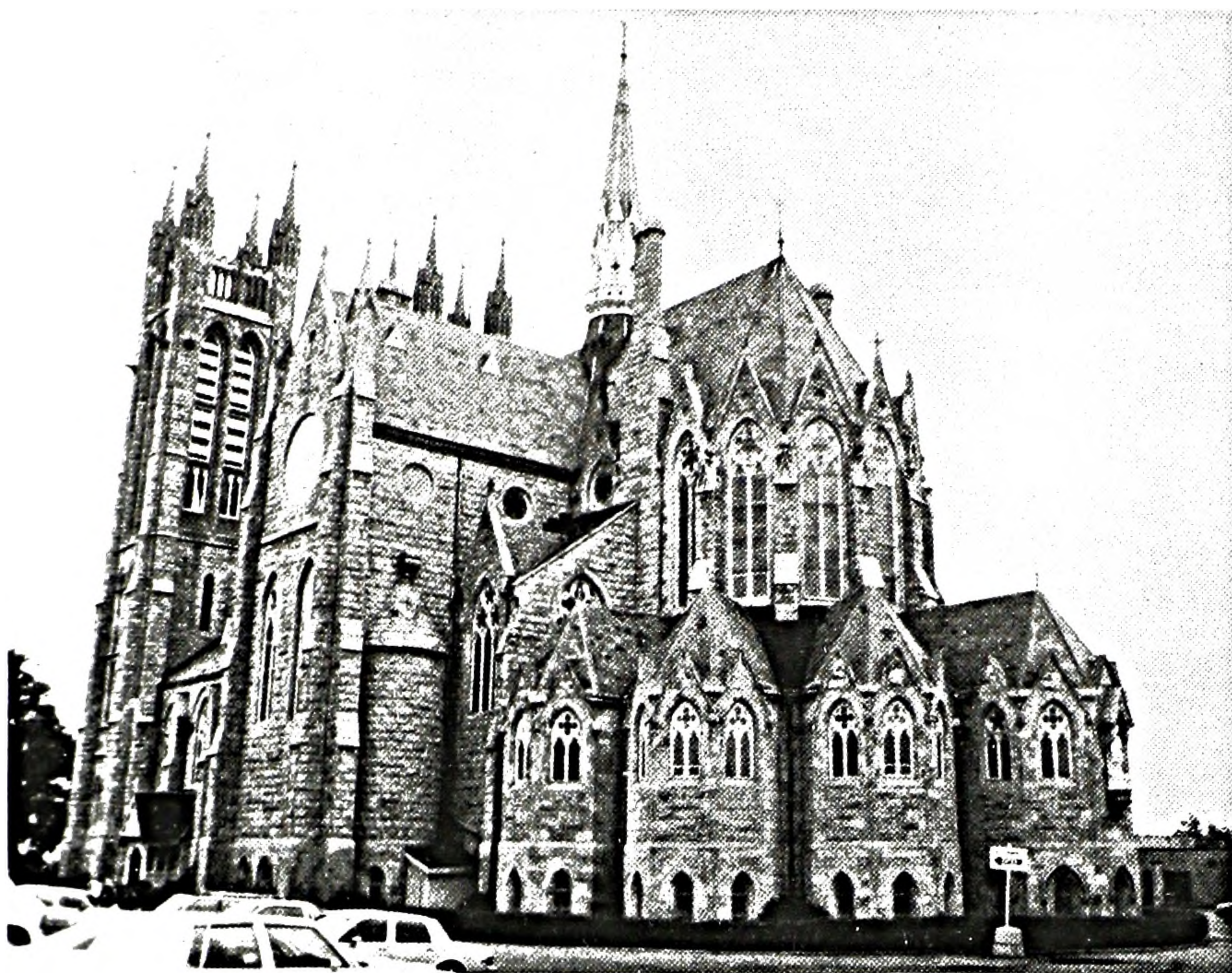


FIGURE 2. Joseph Connolly, Church of Our Lady, Guelph, Ontario, 1876-1926. Towers and interior by A.W. Holmes after 1900 (Photo: author).

sited his 'elaborate and imposing building, dramatically ... on a hill at the edge of town',¹⁴ giving it a symmetrical main front of three entry bays. Like St. Mary's, Toronto – and most large mid-century Catholic churches – St. Macartan's eschews the exterior expression of the division between the nave and the chancel by having a continuous roofline all the way from the narthex to the semi-octagonal apse. To this simple basic body McCarthy attached subsidiary limbs – aisles, transepts, sacristies, a 'chapter-house' and, of course, the high tower with its ring of turrets and octagonal *flèche*. Detailing is borrowed chiefly from the Early and High French Gothic; for example, the end wall of McCarthy's south transept (Fig. 3) is handled as a spacious, relaxed version of a French transept-end, such as those of Notre-Dame de Paris.

By employing French sources, McCarthy showed himself abreast of the times. Architects of the fifties and sixties, led by front-liners like Burges and Street, tended to look, for models of appropriate nobility, height and elaboration, toward the Continent, especially thirteenth-century France, rather than (as in

the forties) to English Gothic.¹⁵ This fashion governed the style of the most influential Roman Catholic building in North America, Renwick's St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York.¹⁶ Clearly Connolly shared the advanced francophile taste, since features of the style abound in his work, too. The Guelph church (Fig. 2), for example, is often compared to Cologne Cathedral, which, though on German soil, was heavily influenced by the French Gothic.¹⁷

While Connolly's St. Mary's, Toronto, resembles McCarthy's cathedral, important differences can be observed. First, as we have noted, Connolly placed his tower at the centre of the west front (Fig. 1). Second, his surfaces are detailed less elaborately – in fact, practically not at all apart from the main front. This distinction is even more marked inside (Fig. 4). Here, the closest parallels are not cathedrals nor even large town churches, but village or suburban churches by McCarthy and his contemporaries; for example, Pugin and Ashlin's St. Patrick's, Monkstown, County Dublin, of 1865 (Fig. 5).¹⁸ In this church the form and detail of the rib-vaulted sanctuary, the broad aisles, the wooden ceiling, the use of rich colour, and the shafts and capitals of the nave arcade (which, however, support a more formal clerestory than that of St. Mary's) find echoes in Connolly's Toronto church.

The simplicity of St. Mary's no doubt reflects both its provincial setting and financial constraints, for, although Toronto's Catholics wanted large and showy churches, they could not afford elaborate ornament. Nor did the local yellow – or 'white' – brick trimmed with sandstone of St. Mary's and so many other Toronto buildings suffer much detailing. For all its simplicity, however, the forceful massing and unparalleled site of St. Mary's make it one of the city's best-known landmarks.

¹⁴ Sheehy, p. 57.

¹⁵ Charles Lock Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (1872; reprinted Watkin's Glen: American Life Foundation, 1975), ch. xviii: 'The Study of French Gothic'; and J. Mordaunt Crook, *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 117-18 and *passim*.

¹⁶ See William H. Pierson, Jr, *American Buildings and Their Architects: Technology and the Picturesque, The Corporate and the Early Gothic Styles* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975) [hereafter: Pierson], ch. v: 'James Renwick, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the Continental Gothic Revival'.

¹⁷ MacRae & Adamson, p. 167.

¹⁸ Richardson, II, p. 500 and pl. 324-25. The Pugin here is Augustus Welby's son Edward (1834-75).

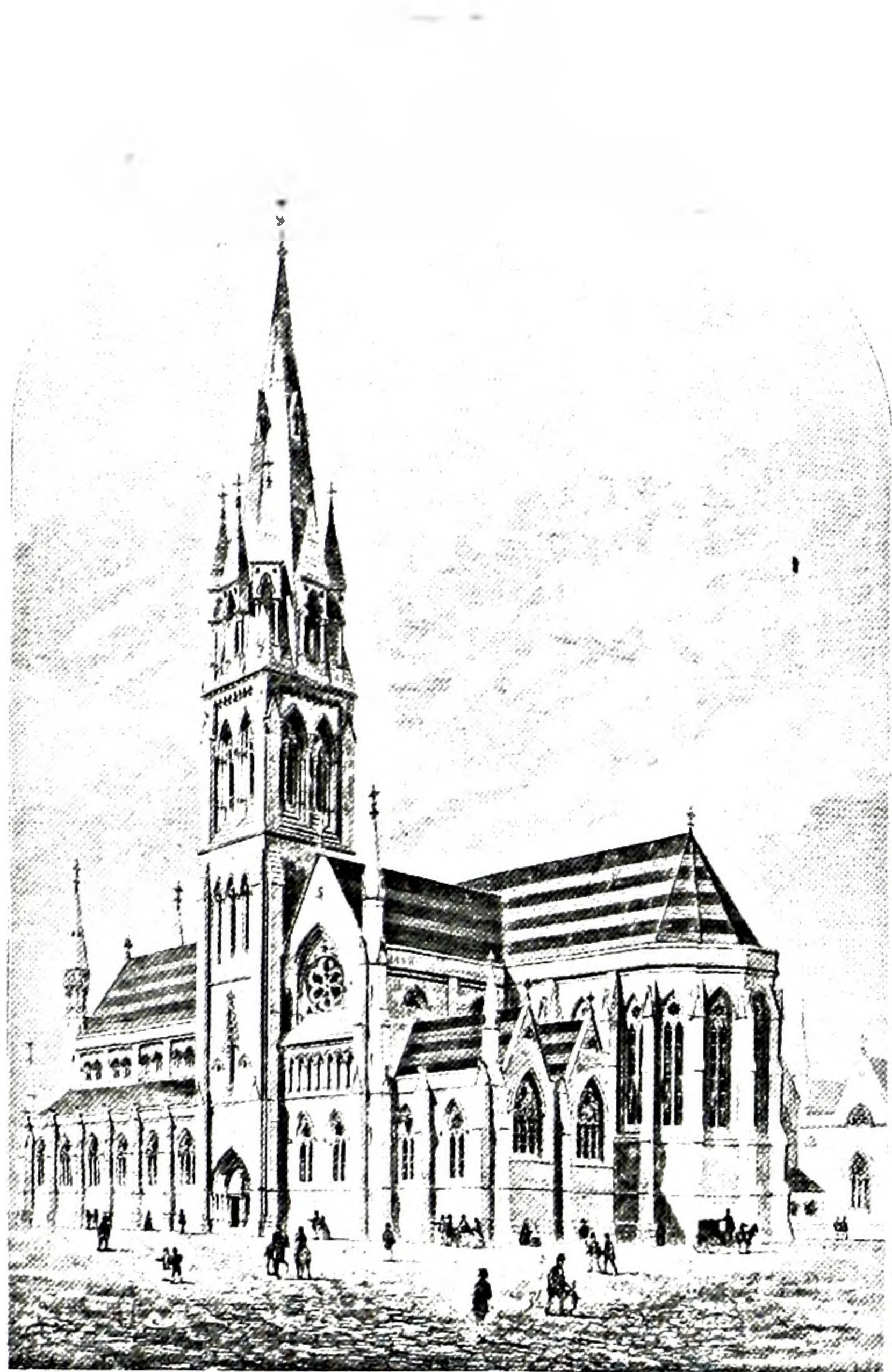


FIGURE 3. J.J. McCarthy, St. Macartan's Cathedral (R.C.), Monaghan, Ireland, 1861-83. Perspective after *Builder*, xxvi (12 September 1868), p. 677 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).



FIGURE 5. Pugin & Ashlin, St. Patrick's Church (R.C.), Monkstown, County Dublin, Ireland, 1865. Interior ca. 1970 (Photo: D.S. Richardson).



FIGURE 4. St. Mary's Church, Toronto. Interior looking west (Photo: author).

About 1887, the success of his design for St. Mary's assured, Connolly was commissioned to design a new church for St. Paul's, the oldest Roman Catholic parish in Toronto.¹⁹ Completed in 1889, Connolly's church stands at Queen and Power Streets in the old section of downtown (Figs. 6 and 9). It is one of Connolly's few classicizing church designs.²⁰ One senses his discomfort with the style: St. Paul's lacks the picturesque advantage of a spire, and the deficiency is almost – but not quite – made good by the chunky campanile at the street-corner (designed by Connolly but added by Holmes in 1905) and the church's piazza-like setback from Power Street.

A classicizing style was suggested, perhaps, by St. Paul's pastor, the extraordinary Right Reverend

19 The parish had been founded 1822. On the new church see *Jubilee Volume*, pp. 284-87; Robertson, iv, p. 315-20; Arthur, pp. 150-51; and Reverend E. Kelly, *The Story of St. Paul's Parish* (Toronto, 1922), pp. 127-28 and *passim*. See, too, the parish file in the Archdiocesan Archives.

20 Others are a design, now in the Archdiocesan Archives, of a belfry for the Greek Revival chapel of St. John the Baptist, Bond Street, Toronto (demolished), which, being signed 'James & Connolly', must date before 1878; and St. Joseph's Church, Chatham, designed a year before St. Paul's, with a strikingly similar interior. I am grateful to Malcolm Thurlby for information on this church.

Timothy O'Mahony.²¹ Bishop O'Mahony had spent substantial periods in Rome and had a particular fondness for the Eternal City. The plan of the church he had Connolly design is, of course, basilican – few Catholic churches of the time were not. But the façade, with its sandstone arcading, two-storey gabled centrepiece with lower flanks, and Italianate campanile, is also explicitly basilican. No particular Roman church is suggested, but it is possible that the Bishop wished to associate his own parish of St. Paul in Toronto with its Constantinian namesake, St. Paul's-Outside-the-Walls. This association is the more likely in that the restoration of the Roman basilica after its destruction by fire in 1823 was considered one of the early triumphs of the papacy of Pius IX.²²

An architectural allusion to Rome by a churchman as staunch as Bishop O'Mahony is in keeping with the spirit of Catholicism at this time.²³ The Church as a whole was in the grip of a pronounced Romaphilia from the mid-nineteenth century until well into our own. Seeing herself threatened from within and without by liberalism and, in particular, by the loss of

the Papal States to the pan-Italian Republic, the Church adopted a deeply defensive posture toward the modern world, a stance that was especially extreme under Pius IX (pope 1846-78). Much loved personally, Pio Nono shaped the modern papal mystique, and under his influence the doctrine of papal infallibility was defined by the first Vatican Council (1869-70).

One would expect this climate in theology and piety to find architectural expression in some form of Roman classicism, especially given the traditional association of Roman Catholicism with the Baroque and the growing popularity in the eighties of Beaux-Arts classicism. The Baroque tradition had, in fact, made it difficult for the Gothic Revival to penetrate the Catholic Church as quickly as it had Anglicanism: the Gothic had seemed, at first, too nationalistically British and too little Roman.²⁴ The conservative Ultramontane party in English Catholicism (those who looked 'beyond the mountains' to Rome) distrusted the Puginian tendencies in church architecture. Even the relatively liberal John Henry (later Cardinal) Newman had the chapel of his college in Dublin decorated in the Byzantine.²⁵ The London Oratory in Brompton Road, also associated with Newman and at the time it was opened, 1883, the largest Catholic church in England, was designed in the Roman Baroque, to honour the Oratorians' sixteenth-century founder, St. Philip Neri.²⁶ Thus, classicism – and especially the Baroque – had a distinguished pedigree in Roman Catholicism.

Even provincial Toronto was affected by the swing away from the Gothic Revival. Two or three years before St. Paul's was begun (but while O'Mahony was collecting money for his project) the small but handsome church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Sherbourne Street (Fig. 8), had been built to mark the silver jubilee of Archbishop Lynch's episcopacy in 1886.²⁷ Now, Lynch was fiercely loyal to Rome and at the first Vatican Council had spoken in favour of the proposed decree on infallibility.²⁸ The Roman Baroque style of Lourdes must surely have accorded with Lynch's own tastes, formed by many trips to Rome, of which he, like O'Mahony, was fond.²⁹ An association with the architecture of the Eternal City would, then, be in keeping with the wishes of a client like O'Mahony.

Connolly, in his design for St. Paul's exterior (Fig. 6), was not, however, alluding to the Rome of Bernini, but to a much earlier period of renaissance – the twelfth century. His arcaded façade topped by a gable, his plain, chunky campanile, the delicate pink-and-grey polychromy of the stone, the applied discs of coloured marbles (like *cosmati* work), and the huge unornamented bulk of the church behind the façade, all suggest the Italian Romanesque period.³⁰

The Italian Middle Ages had, in fact, been a mine of models for High Victorian architects. About 1865, while Connolly might still have been working for him, J.J. McCarthy had departed from his usual

21 Born in 1825 in Ireland, O'Mahony completed his priestly training in Rome. In 1869 he became the first bishop of Armidale, Australia, but had to return to Europe for health reasons. Archbishop Lynch of Toronto met him in Rome in 1879 and invited him to come to Canada as his auxiliary. Bishop O'Mahony was made pastor of St. Paul's and took it upon himself to replace the small brick church of 1823. On his career see the sources cited *supra*, n. 19.

22 Publio Parsi, *Le chiese romane* (Rome: Edizioni Liber, 1968), 1, pp. 97-98.

23 For a general sense of this period of Church history see, for example, Alec R. Vidler, *The Church in an Age of Revolution: 1789 to the Present Day*, 2nd revised edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), especially ch. 13 and 16.

24 Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Early Victorian Architecture in Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 1, p. 58. The same point is made in an American context by Pierson, pp. 207-10.

25 De Breffny & Mott, p. 160.

26 Roman Classicism was stipulated in the terms of the design competition: Bryan Little, *Catholic Churches Since 1623: A Study of Roman Catholic Churches in England and Wales from Penal Times to the Present Decade* (London: Robert Hale, 1966) [hereafter: Little], pp. 141-145.

27 The church, seating three hundred and with much the character of a private chapel, was built beside Lynch's home, 'St. John's Grove'. Its architect was Commander F.C. Law, R.N. See the *Jubilee Volume*, pp. 305-07, and Robertson, iv, pp. 328-33.

28 He was one of the few North American bishops to address the Council: H.C. McKeown, *The Life and Labors of Most Rev. John Joseph Lynch, D.D., Cong. Miss., First Archbishop of Toronto* (Montreal & Toronto, 1886), p. 128.

29 The *Jubilee Volume*, p. 305, alleges that the church, which Robertson calls the only one in Toronto with a dome, is modelled on S. Maria del Popolo, but he is surely wrong: that is a Quattrocento church. He likely means the pendant pair of small Baroque churches on the Piazza del Popolo, S. Maria in Montesanto and S. Maria dei Miracoli, which, by virtue of their size and the position of their towers, might well have been Law's models.

30 Cf. the remarks on the church in the *CAB* obituary of Connolly, cited *supra*, n. 5.

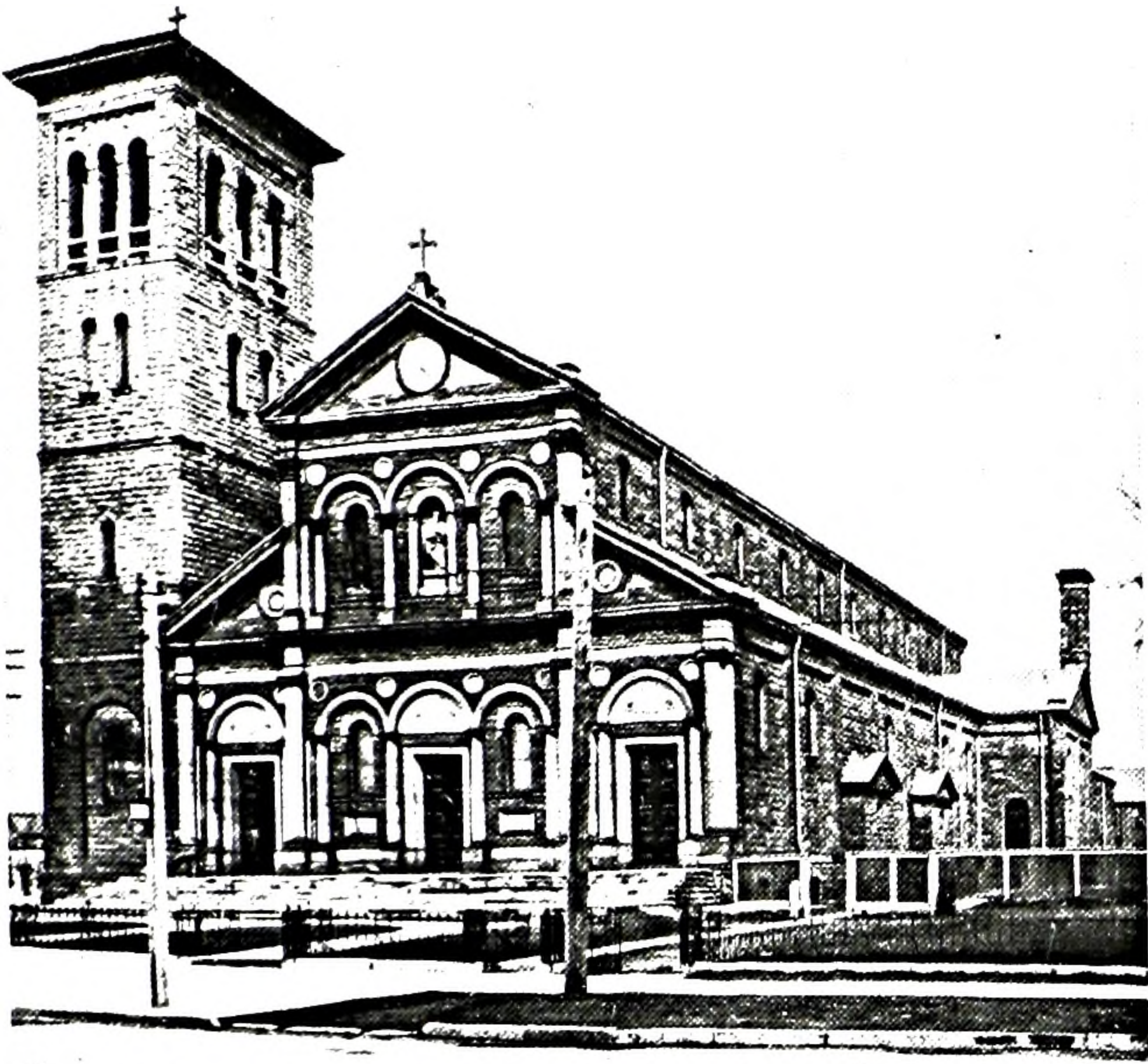


FIGURE 6. Joseph Connolly, St. Paul's Church, Toronto, 1887-9, campanile 1905. General view as in 1914. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

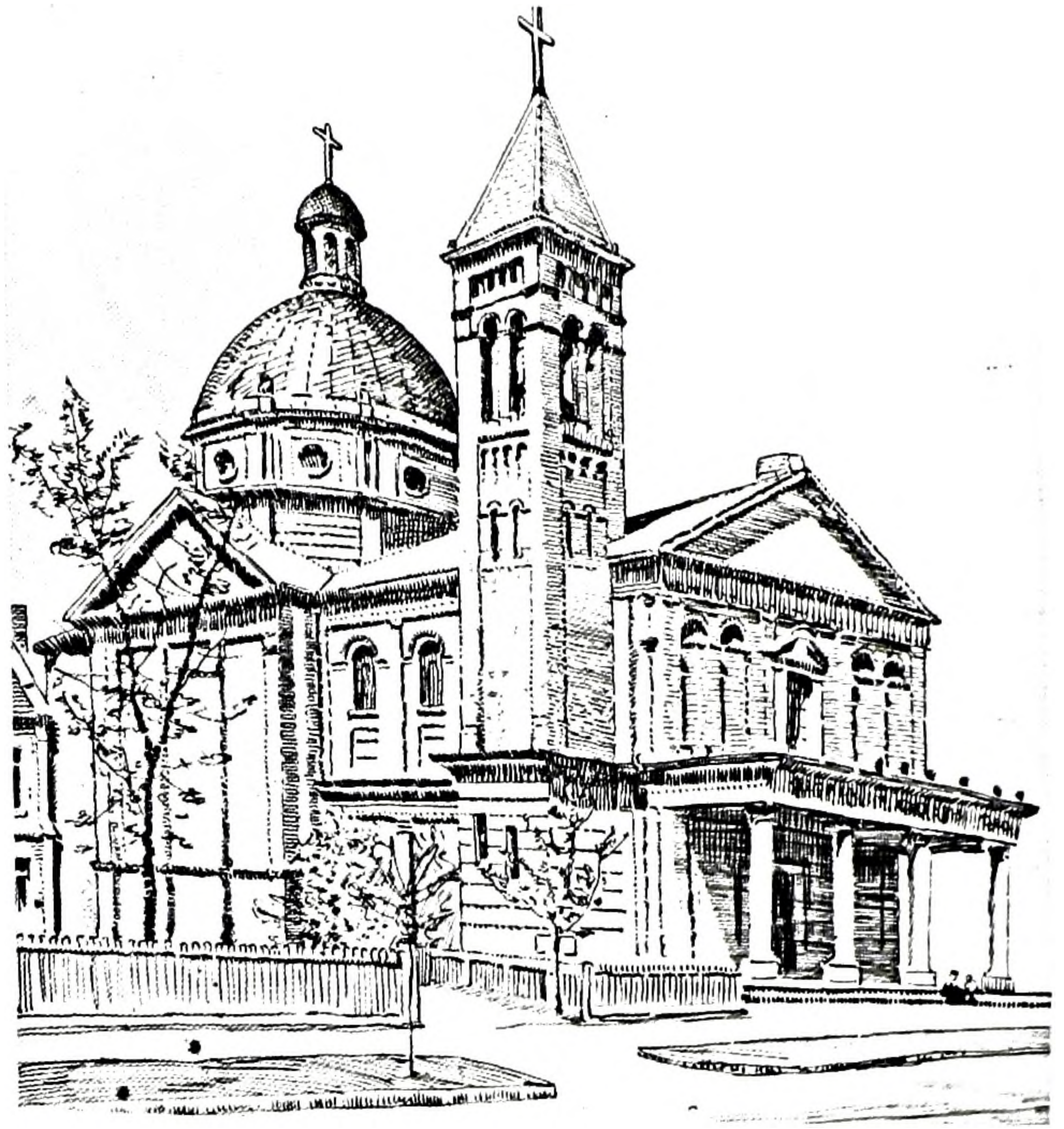


FIGURE 8. Commander F.C. Law, Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Toronto, 1884-6. After Robertson, iv, facing p. 330 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

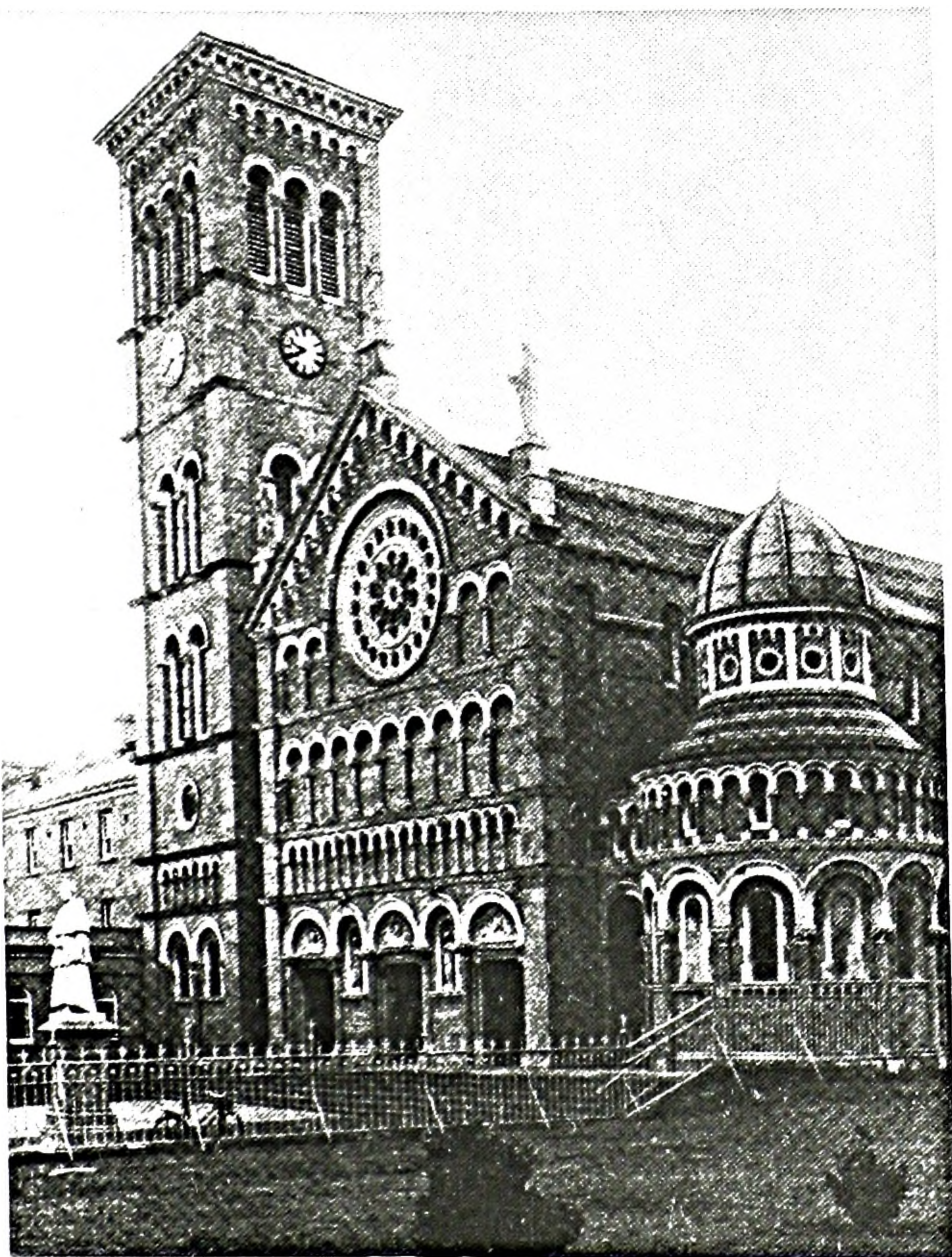


FIGURE 7. J.J. McCarthy, Cathedral of the Assumption (R.C.), Thurles, County Tipperary, Ireland, 1865-72. After de Breffny & Mott, p. 170 (Photo: author).

Northern Gothic mode to design a Lombardic Romanesque façade for the Cathedral of the Assumption, Thurles, County Tipperary (Fig. 7).³¹ It was a vast hall under a single roof, having a richly arcaded front recalling churches of Dugento Parma or Pavia,³² though the baptistery at the south-west corner was of Florentine origin. Connolly may have developed St. Paul's arcading and campanile from exposure to McCarthy's design, but more likely both architects turned to common sources – the books of John Ruskin and G.E. Street in praise of the architecture of North Italy.³³ Moreover, travel was part of the High Victorian architect's formation: we know that Connolly had spent time on the Continent (though we are not sure just where), and it is possible that he had first-hand acquaintance with his Romanesque prototypes.

If St. Paul's façade departs from Connolly's usual Gothic manner, the interior is as great a departure from the exterior (Fig. 9). Eric Arthur no doubt exaggerates by calling it 'quite the most beautiful church interior in Toronto'.³⁴ Still, it has a simple

31 De Breffny & Mott, pp. 168-70, and Sheehy, pp. 63 and 65.

32 For instance, Parma Cathedral or S. Michele, Pavia: illustrated in Kenneth John Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800 to 1200*, 3rd ed. revised (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), pl. 140a and b.

33 Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* (3 vols., 1851-53) and Street's *Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages* (1855).

34 Arthur, p. 181.



FIGURE 9. St. Paul's Church, Toronto. Interior looking east (Photo: author).

grandeur. The nave arcades, supported by unfluted columns with entasis, having Ionic capitals – the same order as the façade – move fluidly, without interruption, from end to end, screening even the transept-mouths and unifying the central space, while the cornice runs unbroken round the sanctuary. Space is articulated, however, by the ray rhythm, which is taken up in the shallow pendentive-domes of the aisles and in the painted ceiling depicting the missionary exploits of St. Paul.

Despite Connolly's non-academic background, the powerful simplicity of his design for St. Paul's interior was certainly rooted in contemporary Beaux-Arts classicism.³⁵ This architecture of bigness, cleanliness and whiteness was introduced to the city by the Bank of Montreal in its main Toronto branch at Front and Yonge Streets in 1885.³⁶ It became the virtually universal language of public – and not a little private – architecture throughout North America until the nineteen twenties.

The most considerable example of Beaux-Arts classicism applied to a Catholic church may be Emmanuel L. Masqueray's Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul, MN, of 1906-15 (Fig. 10).³⁷ Masqueray's colossal dome serves to balance and rival that of Cass

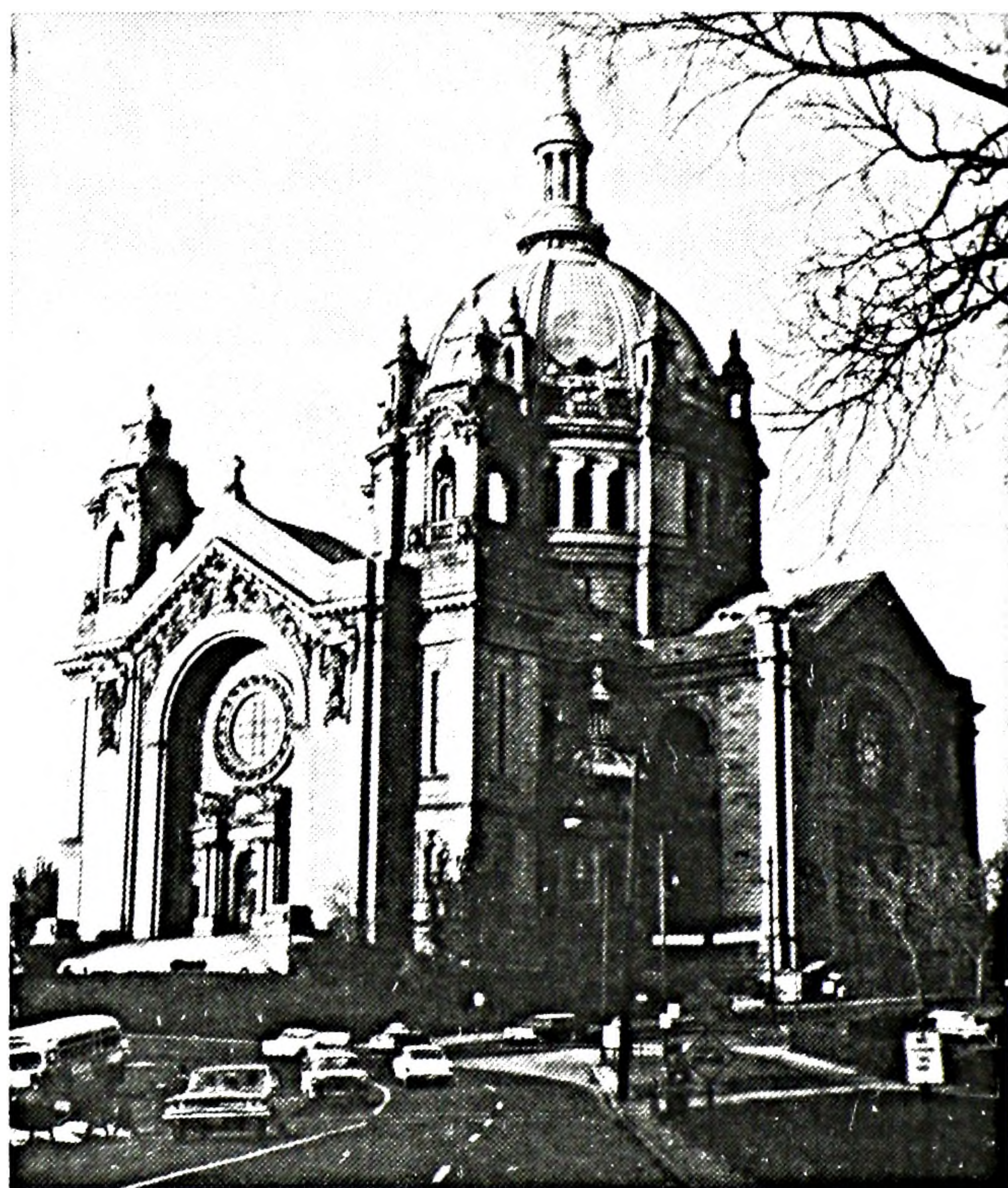


FIGURE 10. Emmanuel L. Masqueray, Cathedral of St. Paul (R.C.), St. Paul, Minnesota, 1906-15. After Koeper & Becker, *Historic St. Paul Buildings*, p. 103 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

35 On the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts, its approach to design, and its influence in France and America, see Arthur Drexler (ed.), *The Architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1977). The impact of the style more locally may be gauged from Douglas Richardson (ed.), *Beaux-Arts Toronto: Permanence & Change in Early 20th Century Architecture*, exhibition catalogue (City of Toronto/Toronto Historical Board, 1973).

36 Arthur, pp. 184-85.

37 See H.F. Koeper and Eugene D. Becker, *Historic St. Paul Buildings* (St. Paul, MN: City Planning Board, 1964), pp. 102-03. Masqueray was supervising architect of the St. Louis Exposition of 1904.

Gilbert's State Capitol, while alluding to the mother-church of Catholicism, St. Peter's. Though Connolly's Toronto church is dwarfed by the Midwestern cathedral, it is a handsome marriage of the Beaux-Arts classical fashion and the theologically-inspired revival of the Roman Baroque.

* * *

Connolly's obituary in the *Toronto World* reports that 'he was actively engaged in his business' right up to his death.³⁸ That is true in a sense: when he died, Connolly was supervising the addition of the spire to St. Mary's (Fig. 1). But, on the other hand, it is clear that his pace of work had slackened long before.³⁹ This may be connected with the appearance about 1890, as an architect in his own right, of Arthur William Holmes,⁴⁰ who had been Connolly's draughtsman from about 1886 to 1890.⁴¹

Born in 1863, Holmes had been brought up an Anglican in London, England, in what one surmises to be a respectable, middle-class home. The boy's talents in music and drawing were noticed early. While music remained an avocation (he played classical piano all his life), his drawing abilities won him a place in the busy and successful office of architect G.E. Street, who would then – say 1879 or 80 – have been bringing to a close his enormous, turbulent project of the New Law Courts.⁴² From Street, a 'High Tory and High Churchman' who specialized in ecclesiastical design and was an intransigent mediaevalist (though of the most eclectic sort), Holmes may well have gained his life-long conviction that the design of churches is a God-given vocation, and that the Gothic is uniquely spiritual.⁴³ Holmes could have been in Street's office for, at most, a year or two before the architect's untimely death, meaning that about five years of his life are not accounted for before his appearance in Toronto. Perhaps he remained in Street's office for a time (the Law Courts project was not quite complete when the architect died) or moved to another firm, and the change has gone unreported. It seems likely, too, especially if his family were people of means, that young Holmes had a European tour: we have already noted the importance of travel to the High Victorian architect, and Street, if anyone, would have encouraged it. Moreover, Holmes later sent his adopted son to Italy to complete his education – an unlikely thing to do had he not spent time in Europe himself. Finally, his own design-work is so consistently eclectic that it is hard to imagine he had not travelled.

In any event, Holmes was in Toronto by 1886. His obituaries suggest that the position in Connolly's office had been arranged in advance of his arrival in Canada; this being the case, we have to assume that the failure to mention a connection with Connolly in the 1886 directory was a clerical error. Whatever the case, it is clear that Holmes was working in Connolly's office through the busy late eighties, when the large Toronto commissions we have been discussing were being carried out, and when Bishop Cleary of Kingston was, it appears, building or re-building practically every church in his archdiocese.⁴⁴ Moreover, it was probably in this period that Holmes joined the Roman Catholic Church.

About 1891, however, Holmes left Connolly's office and, in summer of that year, formed a partnership with Albert Asa Post of Whitby, who had

been a student of Henry Langley.⁴⁵ Post had graduated from St. Michael's College, Toronto, directed by the Basilian Fathers, and about 1886 had been commissioned by them to design an extension to the nave and a new façade and tower for St. Basil's, the church associated with the college (Fig. 12).⁴⁶ This design makes it apparent that Post had absorbed Langley's adroit, eclectic treatment of the Gothic and that he would have much in common with Arthur Holmes.

The firm of Post & Holmes, which lasted until about 1896,⁴⁷ specialized in ecclesiastical and collegiate design. Among their works was a novitiate for candidates to the Basilian order, built on the St.

38 Cited *supra*, n. 5.

39 Between completing the renovations to St. Michael's Cathedral about 1893 and adding St. Mary's spire in 1904, Connolly is known to have had only two commissions: the convent-chapel of the St. Joseph Sisters at Clover Hill in 1894-95, and the south wing of the House of Providence, Power Street, 1895. After that there is nothing. Moreover, in the nineties Connolly resumed a pattern he had followed when he first arrived in Toronto, by moving his home and office almost yearly. Business may have been bad – thanks, as we shall see, to competition from Post & Holmes. Perhaps his personal life was in some disarray, though Connolly's reputation was impeccable. He cannot have been sick, for his death in 1904 was considered sudden. Maybe he was simply feeling his age: we do not know.

40 There is little published information on the modest and retiring Holmes. See the biography by George H. Dawson in *The Parishioner* [a magazine published by Holy Rosary parish, Toronto], iv (November 1966), pp. 119-20; and the obituary in the *Register*, 1 April 1944, p. 3. Shorter obituaries appeared in the *Toronto Daily Star* of 16 March 1944 and the *Globe & Mail* of 17 March, p. 5. For personal information about the architect I am grateful to his grandson, William Holmes of Oakville.

41 He first appears in the 1886 city directory, having no connection with Connolly and styled 'architect'. In 1887 he is Connolly's 'student' and, from 1888-90, his 'draughtsman'.

42 Cf. David B. Brownlee, 'To agree would be to commit an act of artistic suicide ... The Revision of the Design for the Law Courts', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, xlii (1983), pp. 168-88, containing full bibliography on the project. See, too, Arthur Edmund Street, *Memoir of George Edmund Street, R.A. 1824-1881* (1888; reprinted New York: Benjamin Blom, 1972).

43 Cf. the two principal obituaries cited *supra*, n. 40.

44 *Supra*, n. 4.

45 He is named among Langley's former students, in the CAB's obituary of Langley, xx (January 1907), p. 14. The formation of the Post & Holmes partnership, with offices in Whitby and Toronto, is noted in *Engineering Record, Building Record & Sanitary Engineer*, xxiv (8 August 1891), p. 150. I am indebted to Robert G. Hill for this reference.

46 See Robertson, iv, p. 326-28. St. Basil's had been part of William Hay's original design (1856) for the College: Arthur, pp. 116-17.

47 The firm appears in city directories from 1892 to 1896, but both it and the two men are absent in 1897 and 1898. According to the file on Post compiled by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and held in the Fine Arts section of the Metropolitan Toronto Central Library, he went to Buffalo in 1896 and remained there till ca. 1908. It is possible that Holmes went with him, but there is no mention of either architect in Reyner Banham *et al.*, *Buffalo Architecture: A Guide* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981).

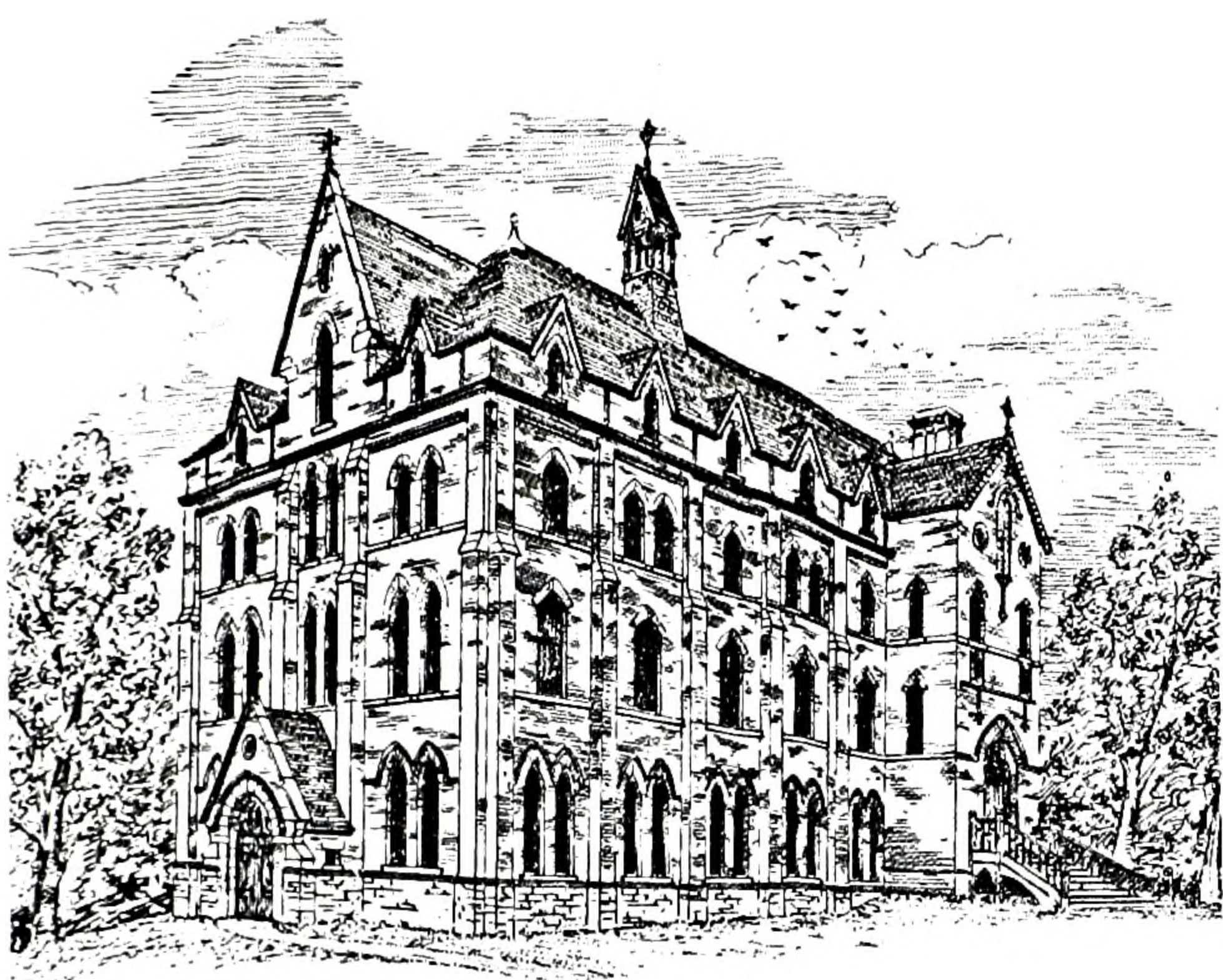


FIGURE 11. Post & Holmes, St. Basil's Novitiate, Toronto, 1892. After *CAB*, vi (February 1893), illustrated supplement (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).



FIGURE 13. Post & Holmes, St. Gregory's Church, Oshawa, 1894-5. After *CAB*, viii (February 1895), illustrated supplement (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

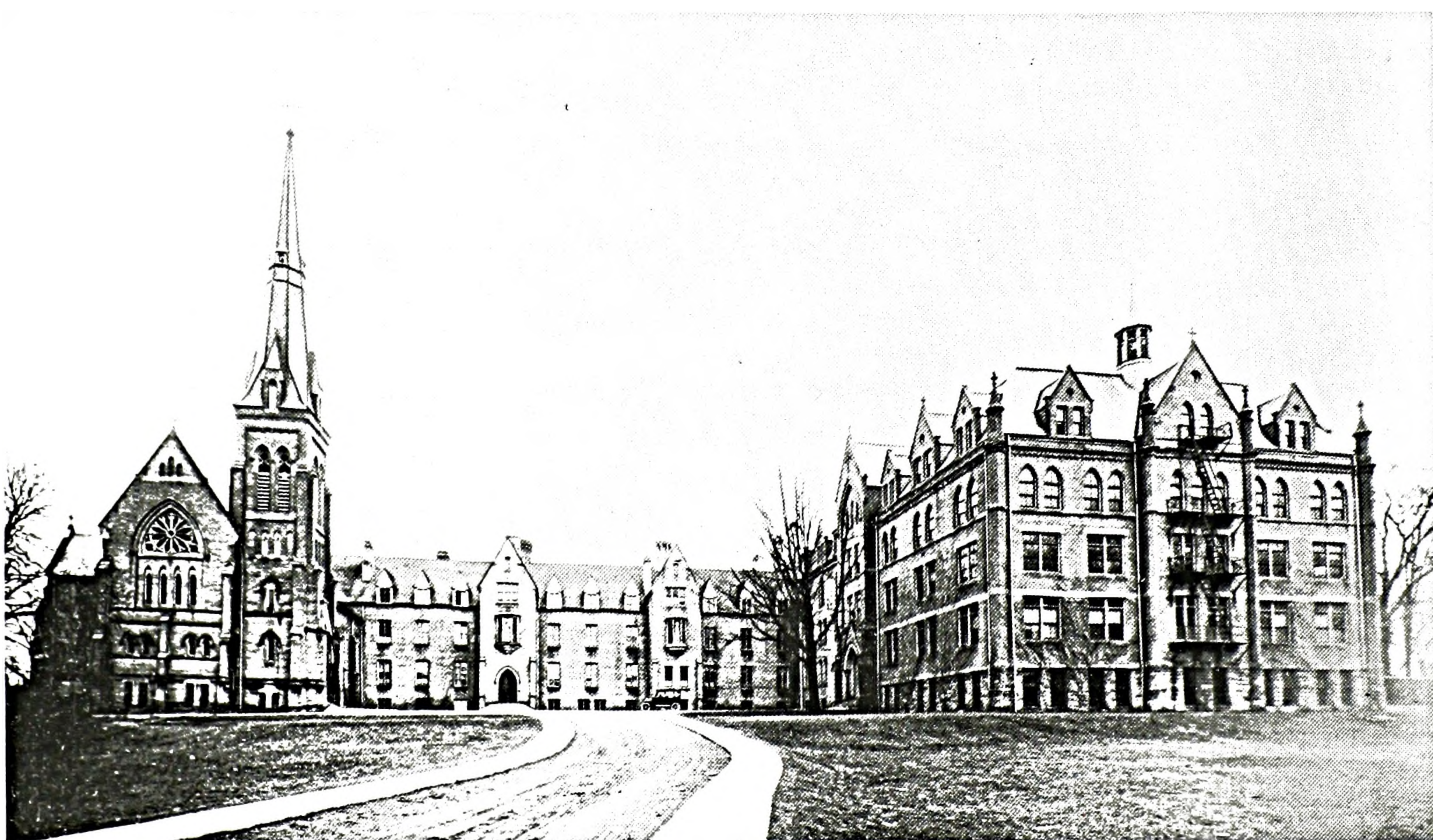


FIGURE 12. William Hay *et al.*, St. Michael's College and St. Basil's Church, Toronto, 1856, 1872, 1886, 1902-3 (east wing by A.W. Holmes, now demolished). General view as in 1914. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

Michael's College farm at the north edge of the city, facing St. Clair Avenue east of Bathurst Street (Fig. 11).⁴⁸ No doubt Post's contacts with the Basilians helped secure the commission, which introduced them to Holmes and initiated a warm, fifty-year collaboration between them. The novitiate incorporated a service-wing and quarters for the novices upstairs, with a chapel on the ground floor, lit by tall paired lancets and seating four hundred. Called 'Holy Rosary Chapel', it doubled as the parish church for surrounding 'Irishtown' and was the genesis of today's Holy Rosary Parish.

In 1902 the Basilians had Holmes design a further extension to St. Michael's College. The wing that he designed (on the right in Fig. 12 and now demolished) is reminiscent of the novitiate uptown: though larger and plainer, it had comparable chunky proportions and simplified Gothic detail.

During the eighteen nineties Post & Holmes designed several parish churches in the archdiocese outside Toronto.⁴⁹ Of these the most interesting is St. Gregory's, Oshawa (Fig. 13).⁵⁰ Built on rising ground north of downtown, the church is assertive in a High Victorian way, and its forms are arranged exactly as Connolly would have. However, the choice of the Romanesque, in fashion because of H.H. Richardson, allowed Holmes (or Post) to handle these forms more broadly, and to detail them less elaborately, than Connolly. St. Gregory's interior, which does not appear here but is similar to the one in Fig. 15, is also plainer than most of Connolly's. By using hammer-beam trusses the architect was able to dispense with nave arcades, giving all members of the congregation an unobstructed view of the sanctuary. Such sensitivity accords with the precepts of the 'Catholic Liturgical Movement', active world-wide in this period, which sought to encourage congregational participation in the liturgy.⁵¹ In churches built after 1885 one quite often finds nave arcades avoided by the use of hammer-beam ceilings or ceilings that are closed but have a hammer-beam profile: an example of the latter is the sanctuary of St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto.

In 1901 Holmes designed St. John's Church, Albion, a village in the Caledon Hills northwest of Toronto (Figs. 14 and 15).⁵² The church, though simple, has an especially commanding site atop a rather steep rise, making it visible from a considerable distance. Perhaps the pastor, Father Martin Whelan, who would again collaborate with Holmes in building St. Augustine's Seminary a decade later, chose him because he had recently designed the church at Wildfield eight miles away.⁵³ In nearby Caledon, the mother-church of Albion, Connolly in 1885 had designed St. Cornelius, a handsome exercise in the rural Early English Gothic.⁵⁴ The continuity with Connolly's work was not only historical but also architectural: the brick detail, rhythmic fenestration and interior wood-work are purest Connolly (Fig. 15), demonstrating the extent to which Holmes had internalized the older architect's manner.

Holmes continued to design small churches of this lingering High Victorian character until the First World War. Holy Family, Parkdale (1902), resembles the Albion church, though it has no tower, and the site – a flat corner-lot in a street-car suburb – is without village picturesqueness. The interior has been brutally renovated in recent years, but Holmes' sombre timber-work is, thankfully, intact. St. Patrick's, Schomberg, of 1915-16, is a more simplified, and therefore up-dated, version of exactly the same type.⁵⁵

Not all these designs are masterpieces: the budget would not allow. Even his biographer admits that 'in some instances, they barely escaped the mass mediocrity of the wayside shrine'.⁵⁶ Yet that hardly matters: because he was not straining for originality in each and every design, Holmes established a *type* – or, better, he *inherited a type* – that bore repeating because it was gracious and attractive in the first place. It could be 'done' at large scale (St. Gregory's) or small (St. John's), and still be effectively scaled and inflected to its surroundings, a respectful presence and an object of quiet pride.

As charming as Holmes' rural brick churches are, however, they were not really of their time: they did not need to acknowledge the new urban reality of Ontario entering the twentieth century, as his city churches did. The Holmes buildings, for example St. Patrick's (Figs. 16 and 17), were the first large parish churches built in Toronto since Connolly's St. Mary's and St. Paul's, and they were a response to dramatic

48 See *The Parishioner*, January and February 1964 (cf. *supra*, n. 40); Robertson, iv, 328, and *Catholic Weekly Review* for 30 April 1892: the latter is transcribed in R.J. Scollard, CSB (ed.), *Notes on the History of the Congregation of Priests of St. Basil* [hereafter: Scollard], xxvi, pp. 1-3. For this reference I am indebted to Father Scollard himself.

49 St. Mary Immaculate, Richmond Hill (1894, demolished), St. Patrick's, Wildfield (1894) and St. Gregory's, Oshawa (1894-95). Outside the Archdiocese they are also credited with St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Muskegon, MI (ca. 1891), St. Joseph's Church, St. Mary's, Ont. (ca. 1892), and St. Patrick's in Niagara Falls, Ont. (1895). As indicated *supra*, n. 3, supporting references will be supplied elsewhere.

50 CAB, viii (February 1895), illustrated supplement; and *Register*, 6 September 1894 and 4 July 1895. For these and the many other references herein to the *Register*, I am grateful to the Archdiocesan historian, Father Jackman, and to Brian O'Sullivan.

51 L.C. Sheppard, 'Catholic Liturgical Movement', *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), viii, pp. 900-05. See also Little, pp. 160-64.

52 Parish history by Albion Historical Committee and Rev. Edward Jackman, 1976, p. 12; and *Register*, 22 May 1902.

53 *Register* of 14 March 1895.

54 (Rev. Edward Jackman), *The History of the Parish of Orangeville* (Toronto: Archdiocese of Toronto: 1976), p. 14.

55 See the parish history by Father Jackman in the 1976 centennial booklet. The attribution to Holmes is my own, on visual grounds.

56 Holmes obituary in the *Register*, cited *supra*, n. 40.



FIGURE 14. A.W. Holmes, St. John's Church, Albion, Ontario, 1901-2. General view from the south-east (Photo: author).



FIGURE 15. St. John's Church, Albion. Interior looking west (Photo: author).

increases in the Catholic population of the city, owing largely to immigration.⁵⁷ No longer a provincial backwater, Toronto had become a booming commercial and industrial centre, with a working class which, if

⁵⁷ The 1881 Dominion census reported sixteen thousand Catholics in Toronto; this had grown to over forty-six thousand by 1911, and to nearly sixty-five thousand ten years later. In part this can be attributed to natural increase and the annexation of suburban districts not reported in the early census, but much owes to immigration from Catholic Europe. For these figures I am grateful to Hilmar Pabel and Father Jackman.

⁵⁸ See Philip J. Kennedy, 'Fergus Patrick McEvay and the Church in Ontario: a biography of the 4th archbishop of Toronto (1852-1911)', unpublished [hereafter: Kennedy].

⁵⁹ Kennedy, p. 68.

⁶⁰ At the head of Wellesley Place: the house, designed by Holmes in 1910, still stands, part of Wellesley Hospital. Plans are in the Archdiocesan Archives.

not teeming after the manner of Manchester or Brooklyn, was none the less substantial. Urban churches of the type built in England and Ireland fifty years earlier were now needed in numbers.

This new reality was seen most clearly by the energetic Fergus Patrick McEvay, who, though Archbishop for only three years (1908-11), set the Church of Toronto moving on a new course – a very John xxiii of the local diocese.⁵⁸ In those three years he 'initiated Churches for no less than ten newly-formed parishes in the Archdiocese',⁵⁹ and built new churches, or renovated older ones, in several existing parishes. Not satisfied with that, he also inaugurated St. Augustine's Seminary (Figs. 20 to 22), and had a new residence built for the Archbishop.⁶⁰ Though Holmes had worked for earlier archbishops, it was under McEvay, who kept him working steadily, that he really came into his own.



FIGURE 16. A.W. Holmes, St. Patrick's Church, Toronto, 1903-8. Main façade as in 1914. Archives of the Roman Catholic Church Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

To be sure, most of Holmes' city churches are more practical than beautiful: like their Victorian forebears in England and Ireland, they are essentially what Venturi would call vast 'decorated sheds', rendered in this or that historic style, and rendered well, yet designed chiefly to accommodate the largest number for the least cost. Still, Holmes did not sacrifice quality of design to economy, and Archbishop O'Brien was exaggerating only slightly when he said, upon consecrating Holy Name (Figs. 26 and 27), 'all the Holmes churches have vitality and movement, devotion and reverence'.⁶¹

The first of the series was new St. Patrick's, McCaul Street, designed about 1903 and dedicated in 1908 (Figs. 16 and 17).⁶² This Romanesque colossus was built to replace Langley's delicately spired Gothic church of 1870,⁶³ which was no longer adequate to meet the needs of the parish. Catholics living in much of the populous immigrant area called 'The Ward' – known to us from Lawren Harris' paintings – attended St. Patrick's. Moreover, the parish had become the centre of Canadian activities for the Redemptorist Fathers, who had taken it over in 1881. For them new St. Patrick's had to be an exemplar.

Holmes is supposed to have based the design on the twelfth-century church of San Clemente in Rome.⁶⁴ To be sure, the massive limestone exterior and cavernous interior – the Redemptorists' apostolate is preaching – are Romanesque in spirit, but specific similarities to San Clemente are hard to find.



FIGURE 17. St. Patrick's Church, Toronto. Interior looking north-east (Photo: author).

It is interesting, however, to find Holmes alluding to the same milieu of spiritual and cultural renaissance, Rome in the twelfth century, as Connolly had in St. Paul's. The reference was appropriate, given the need for massive simplicity, the contemporary popularity of Romanesque, and the associational value for twentieth-century Catholicism of that important earlier period.

St. Patrick's façade is disappointing (Fig. 16), being excessively plain and in sore want of the spires that, it appears, were intended (plans have long since vanished). Echoes of Connolly persist in the recessed central bay – especially in the triple-arched entry motif, the centre gable of which overlaps a tight row of lancet-windows (a round-arched remnant of a Gothic 'gallery of kings') – and in the rose windows of the transepts.

61 Quoted in Holmes' obituary in *The Parishioner*, cited *supra*, n. 40.

62 See the *Register* of 21 April, 7 and 14 July 1904; 14 September 1905; 21 February 1907; 8 October and 5 November 1908. See, too, the parish file in the Archdiocesan Archives: unless otherwise noted, it may be assumed that information on the churches comes from these files.

63 Which became Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, the first all-Italian parish in Toronto, and still stands: illustrated in MacRae & Adamson, p. 174.

64 *Register* (Toronto edition), 11 March 1961.

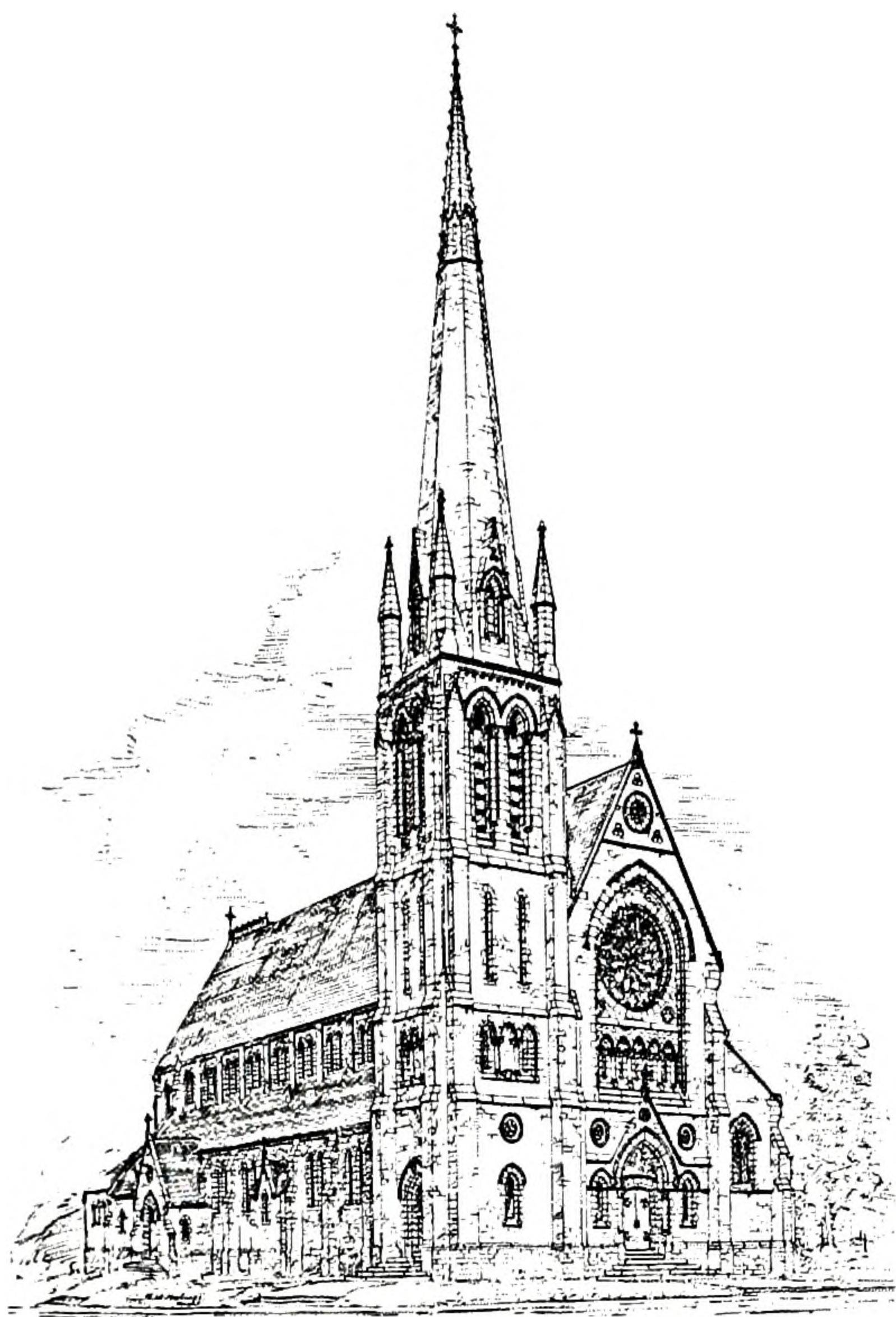


FIGURE 18. A.W. Holmes, St. Helen's Church, Toronto, 1908-10. Perspective drawing looking north, by Holmes. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

With St. Helen's, Brockton, designed about 1907, Holmes was on more familiar Gothic ground (Figs. 18 and 19). Not completed till 1910, the church is a late but thorough rendition of Connolly's High Victorian manner. It has the continuous roofline and picturesque massing we now expect, and differs from Connolly's St. Mary's (Fig. 1) chiefly in its red colouring, the corner-position of its tower, and the polygonal sacristies clustered around the apse. Holmes treated the west façade in an Early French manner, grouping an arcaded gallery of niches and a large rose with plate-tracery beneath a great single arch, above a triple entry-motif.

The interior, unusual for still having its original architectural colouring, illustrates the typical decorative system of a late Victorian Catholic church (Fig. 19). Grey granite columns with rather clumsily executed foliate capitals support pointed arches with



FIGURE 19. St. Helen's Church, Toronto. Interior looking north (Photo: author).

subtly polychromed soffits. White clerestory walls contrast strongly with dark timber pews, gallery and arched ceiling trusses. Between the trusses the ceiling is sheathed in patterned fabric, and the aisles, too, have open truss-work. Wall-paintings, both in the apse, above the altar (a Gothic fantasy of the 1930s), and in the nave, above the confessionals near the entry-end, treat sacramental themes. Unexciting in execution, these paintings are none the less a visible record of the piety and sacramental theology of the time: in one, a grey-bearded St. Peter sits in a confessional box, a stole around his neck, listening to a penitent pour out his sins! Painted plaster Stations of the Cross line the aisle-walls, while the Marian themes so important to Catholics of the period are treated in some of the stained-glass windows and in painted 'rosary' medallions along the clerestory walls. Bryan Little calls such decorative systems in English Catholic churches 'a riot of unhappy polychromy'.⁶⁵ While one is inclined to agree, still, St. Helen's has one of the last surviving examples of the type in Toronto: most have fallen victim to renovation-campaigns that, on the whole, one welcomes, yet in detail regrets.

Holmes was confronted with a different sort of problem in designing St. Augustine's Seminary (Figs. 20 to 22).⁶⁶ Here, the programme was part ecclesiastical, part collegiate, and part monastic. Founded by Archbishop McEvay to train clergy for English-speaking dioceses across Canada, St. Augustine's was only the third sizeable institution of its type in the country: the others, at Quebec and Montreal, were too early and too strongly French in character to serve as models. Likely, while planning St. Augustine's Holmes visited diocesan seminaries in the United States, but definite evidence is lacking.

65 Little, p. 133.

66 Primary sources on the building of the Seminary are in the Archdiocesan Archives: architectural plans, general correspondence, and papers of Rev. Martin Whelan related to the project (including several letters from Holmes). See, too, *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), pp. 484-87; *Toronto Saturday Night*, xxiv (29 October 1910), p. 3; *America*, II, n° 19 (19 February 1910), p. 494; and *Register*, 20 and 27 October 1919; 5 June and 21 August 1913. Kennedy's chapter, 'The Founding of St. Augustine's Seminary', is also helpful.

ST. AUGUSTINE SEMINARY, SCARBORO.
A. W. HOLMES, ARCHITECT.

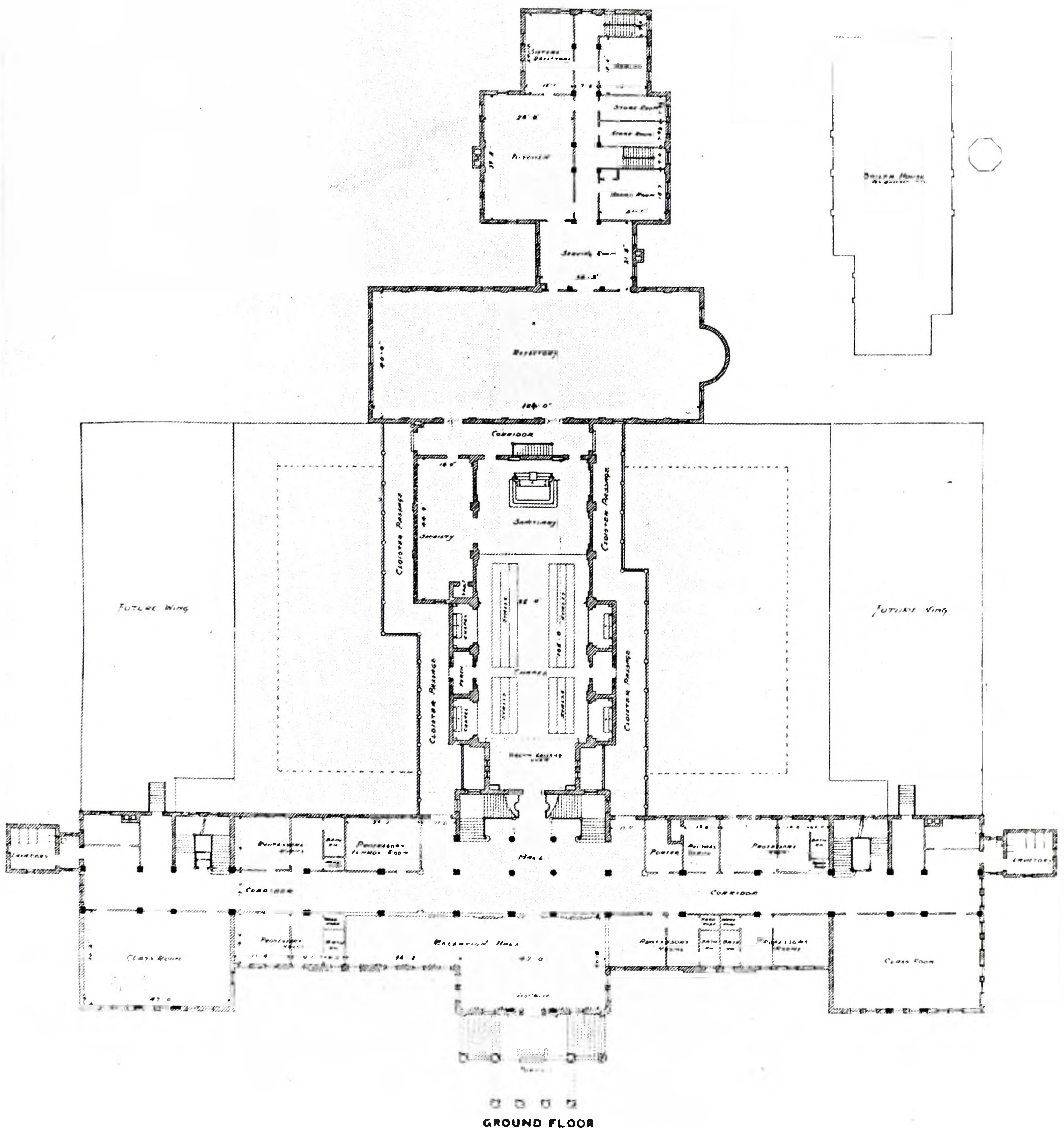


FIGURE 20. A.W. Holmes, St. Augustine's Seminary, Scarborough, 1910-13. Plan of ground-floor, after *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), p. 486 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

Whatever the architectural precedents, however, Holmes was not without a spiritual and psychological template. The tone of the institution was left in no doubt, for Archbishop McEvay and his contemporaries had strong convictions about the nature of seminary training:

The priest is a mediator ... a physician of souls ... and so the seminary where the priest is to be educated must form an alliance between the highest of human wisdom and the

deepest of divine piety. It must be the home of solitude and at the same time the centre of the sacred joys that no man knows save he who has gone through the sacred halls of the seminary – where there is joined together piety and learning and the most exacting severity of discipline. God help the country that should ever have a worldly priesthood.⁶⁷

67 From the sermon of Bishop Fallon of London, Ontario, delivered at Archbishop McEvay's funeral, 12 May 1911: quoted in Kennedy, p. 128.

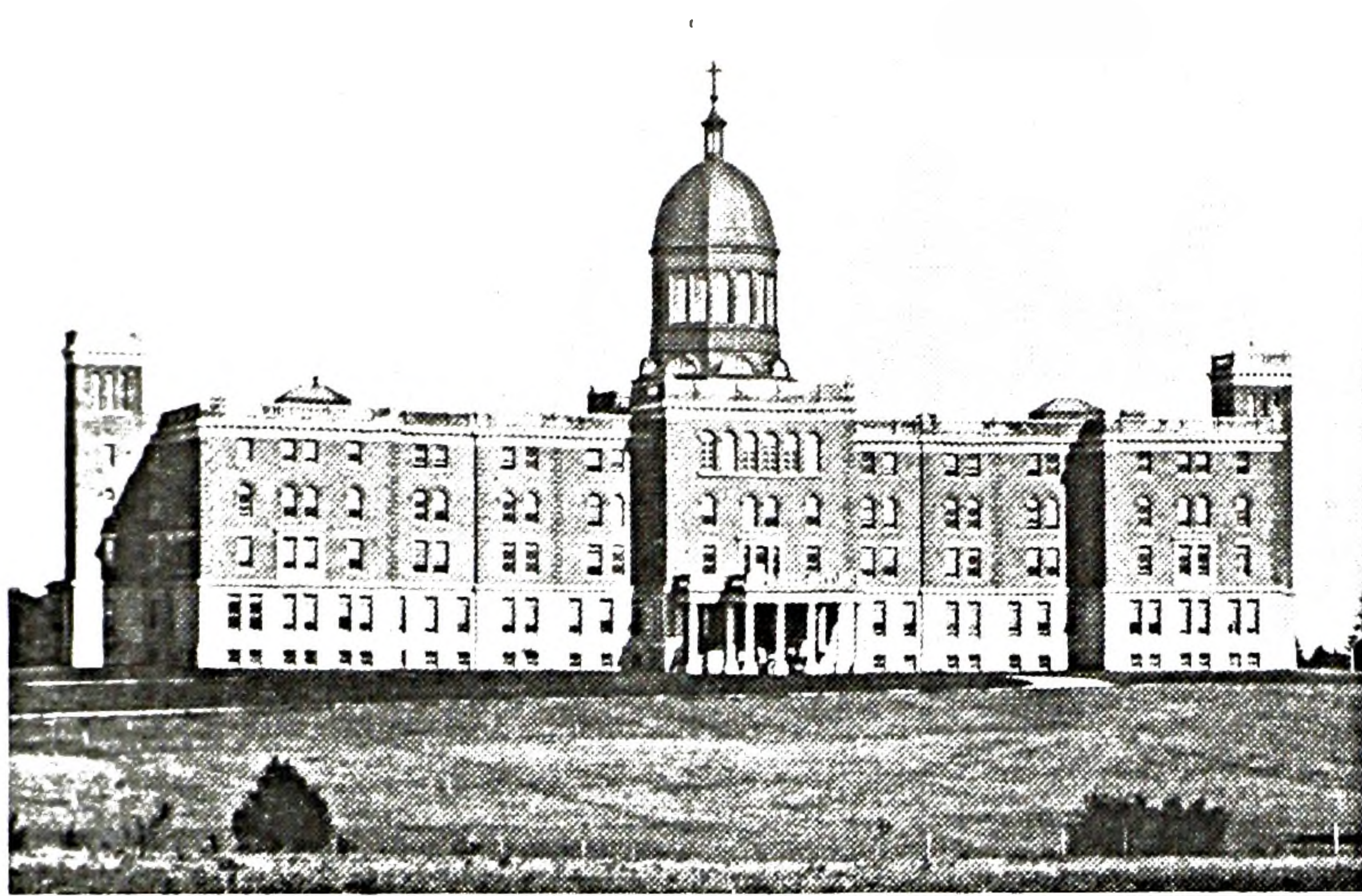


FIGURE 21. St. Augustine's Seminary. General view from the west, after *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), p. 486 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).



FIGURE 22. St. Augustine's Seminary. Chapel looking east, after *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), p. 484 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

Holmes was obviously not being asked for a lush, sensuous design, and the building that he produced was suitably austere (Fig. 21). Standing compactly above the Scarborough Bluffs overlooking Lake Ontario and crowned by a tall lantern of glass and green metal, St. Augustine's adopts a stance of splendid isolation. Wisely, Holmes chose a variant of the prevailing Beaux-Arts classicism – probably the only mode available that would have allowed the lucid organization of functions and spaces in an envelope of monumental enough mass. The composition is based loosely on English Baroque country-houses of Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor: the *parti* of Castle Howard and certain details of Seaton Deval come especially to mind.⁶⁸ Yet the dome also has Roman, and therefore specifically Catholic, overtones.

Architectural ornament is appropriately sparse. Besides the dome, the chief exterior features are a pair of plumbing-stacks at the ends of the building (masquerading as Italianate towers), the channeled stone facing of the ground storey, and a Doric portico over the main entry. Inside, even the formal areas are spartan.

Holmes' plan was a simple 'T' (Fig. 20), with reception areas, classrooms, professors' suites and student rooms ranged along a front wing in four storeys, and a high barrel-vaulted chapel stretching back from the centre (Fig. 22), with a wing beyond containing dining and service areas and a convent. The convent is

neatly interlocked with the chapel and service areas because, though the Sisters were cloistered and could not make direct contact with the priests and seminarians, they needed access to those areas for their work and prayer.

A pair of wings was to be added, as the need arose, behind the end pavilions of the main block, parallel to the convent/chapel wing. These were never built, however. Instead, a residential wing, called Kehoe, was added to the south end of the building in 1926; this also was designed by Holmes.

The essentially formal nature of the institution and its activities is underlined by the processional axis established at the main entry. The visitor or arriving student is led through a hierarchical series of spaces: a small vestibule (Doric), a larger reception-hall (Ionic), and a still larger and more impressive stair-hall at the crossing with the main corridor (Corinthian), off which the offices of the rector and prefect open. The climax is the chapel – the centre of the seminarian's life, the symbol of his goal of priesthood, and the *raison d'être* of the institution (Fig. 22). It is a high, unobstructed space with a coffered barrel-vault, based on Oxford college chapels or dining-halls of the Baroque period;⁶⁹ cross-vaulted side-chapels accommodate additional altars, once used for private masses.

The Seminary was Holmes' largest commission for the Archdiocese, and the one in which he made most conspicuous use of Beaux-Arts classicism. The result is a building of lucid and altogether rational organization and of impressive, though monolithic and brooding, mass – not unlike the Seminary programme of the day.

68 Cf. Kerry Downes, *English Baroque Architecture* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1966), pl. 215, 227 and 274.

69 For instance, the halls of Queen's and All Souls', illustrated in Downes, pl. 535 and 537.

FIGURE 23. A.W. Holmes, St. Ann's Church, Toronto, 1913-14. View from the north-west as in 1914. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (Photo: author).

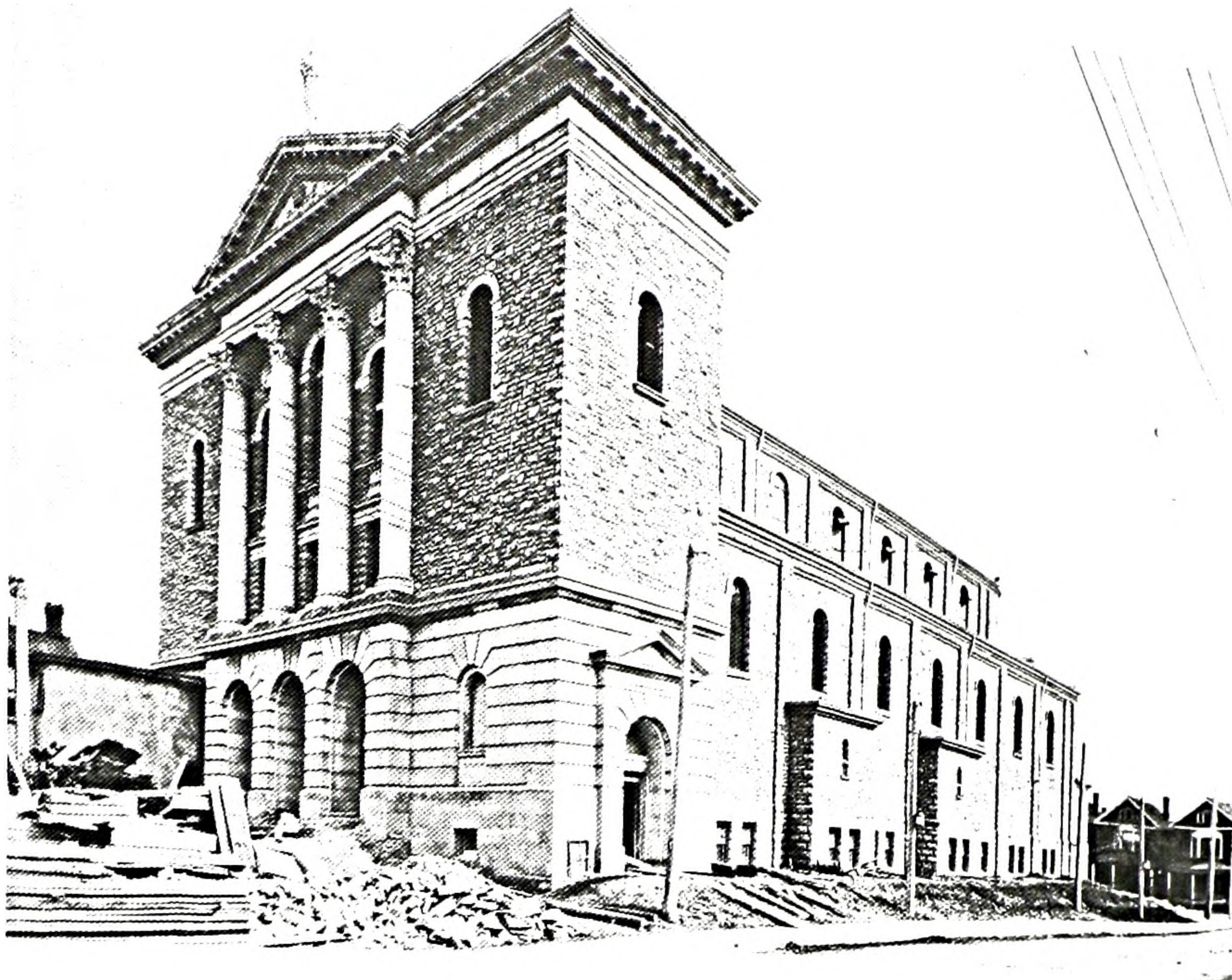
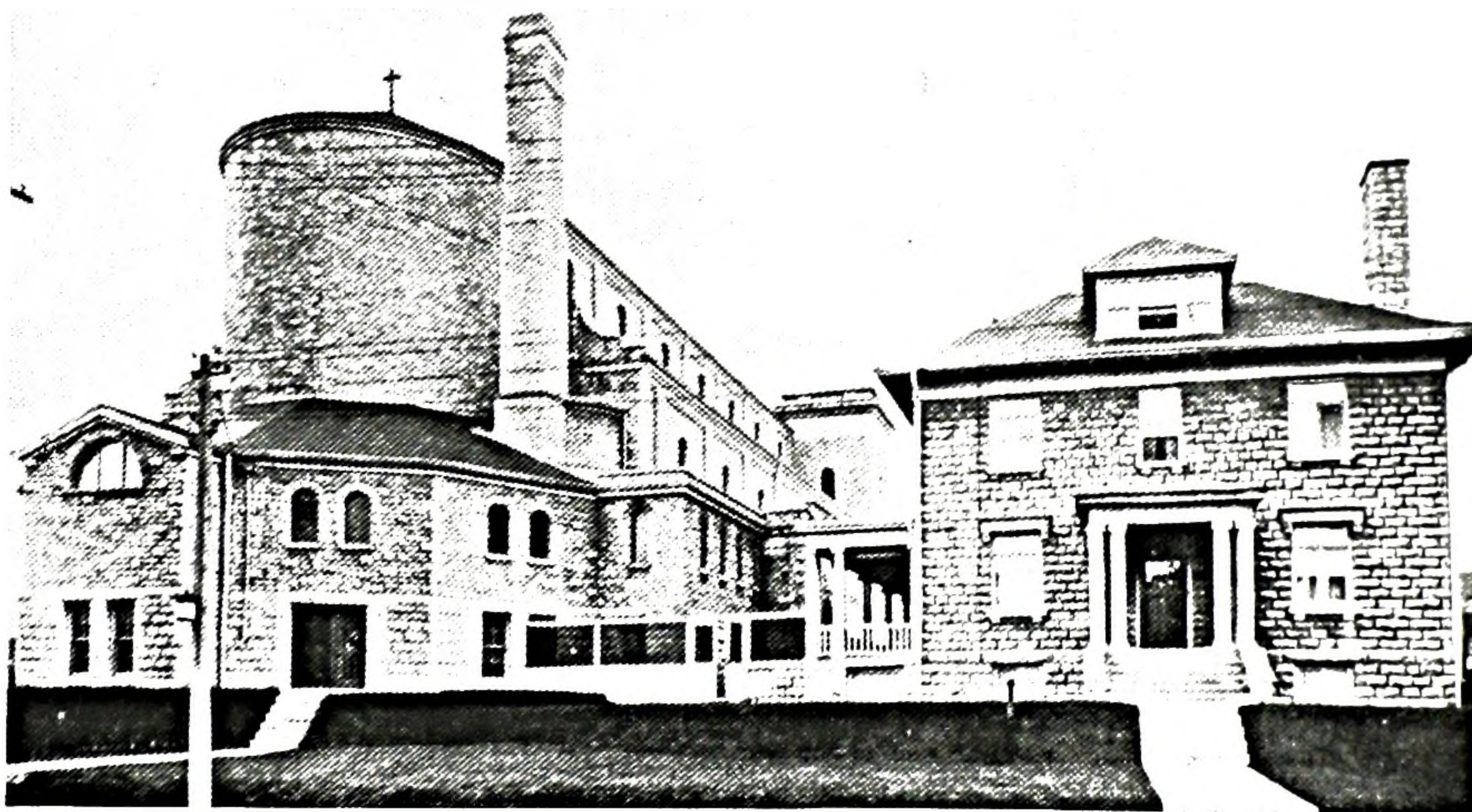


FIGURE 24. St. Ann's Church, Toronto. Exterior of church from the south, together with rectory (1913), after *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), p. 495 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).



During and after his work on St. Augustine's, Holmes designed three churches in the city in classical styles. One of these is St. Ann's, Gerrard Street East (Figs. 23 to 25), designed about 1912.⁷⁰ It demonstrates the same economy of treatment as St. Paul's and St. Patrick's. Inspired, we are told, by 'a Roman church of the sixteenth century',⁷¹ St. Ann's, with the twin belfries that were intended but never built, does recall certain churches of Vignola and della Porta.⁷² Yet the effect is achieved by the most economical means: the only ornamental elements, apart from the unexecuted belfries, are a rusticated base, high columned and gabled centrepiece, and cornice: the rest of the façade and the flanks and rear of the church were left forcefully plain (Fig. 24). The plainness enhances a quite severe image of Rome in the era of the Council of Trent – an appropriate association, perhaps, for the reign of the reactionary Pius X (1903-14).

St. Ann's interior is equally simple (Fig. 25), having no transepts and substituting a column-and-lintel system for the usual nave arcades. The Corinthian order and Cinquecento flavour of the main façade continue, though there are also recollections, in general feeling and details, of certain London churches by Wren.⁷³ The marble altar-piece, still *in situ*, was designed by Holmes as an integral element of the

70 Plans are in the Archdiocesan Archives. A contemporary description and photos appear in *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), pp. 495-98. See also *Register* of 13 July 1913 and 30 July 1914.

71 *Construction*, cf. *supra*, n. 70.

72 For instance, della Porta's façade for S. Anastasio dei Greci, based on Michelangelo's design for S. Lorenzo: Peter Murray, *Architecture of the Renaissance* (New York: Abrams, 1971), pl. 324.

73 See George H. Birch, *London Churches of the xvth and xvth Centuries* (London: Batsford, 1896), p. 132 and pl. xvii, xxxvi, and xlv.



FIGURE 25. St. Ann's Church, Toronto. Interior looking east, after *Construction*, VIII (December 1915), p. 497 (Photo: Metro Toronto Library Board).

programme and repeats in miniature elements of the main façade, such as the belfry, re-combining them as a triumphal gate surmounting the tabernacle. A twenty-three-foot statue of the Saint stationed in the centre of the church in front of the communion rail (long gone) was, perhaps, a less attractive element of the system.⁷⁴

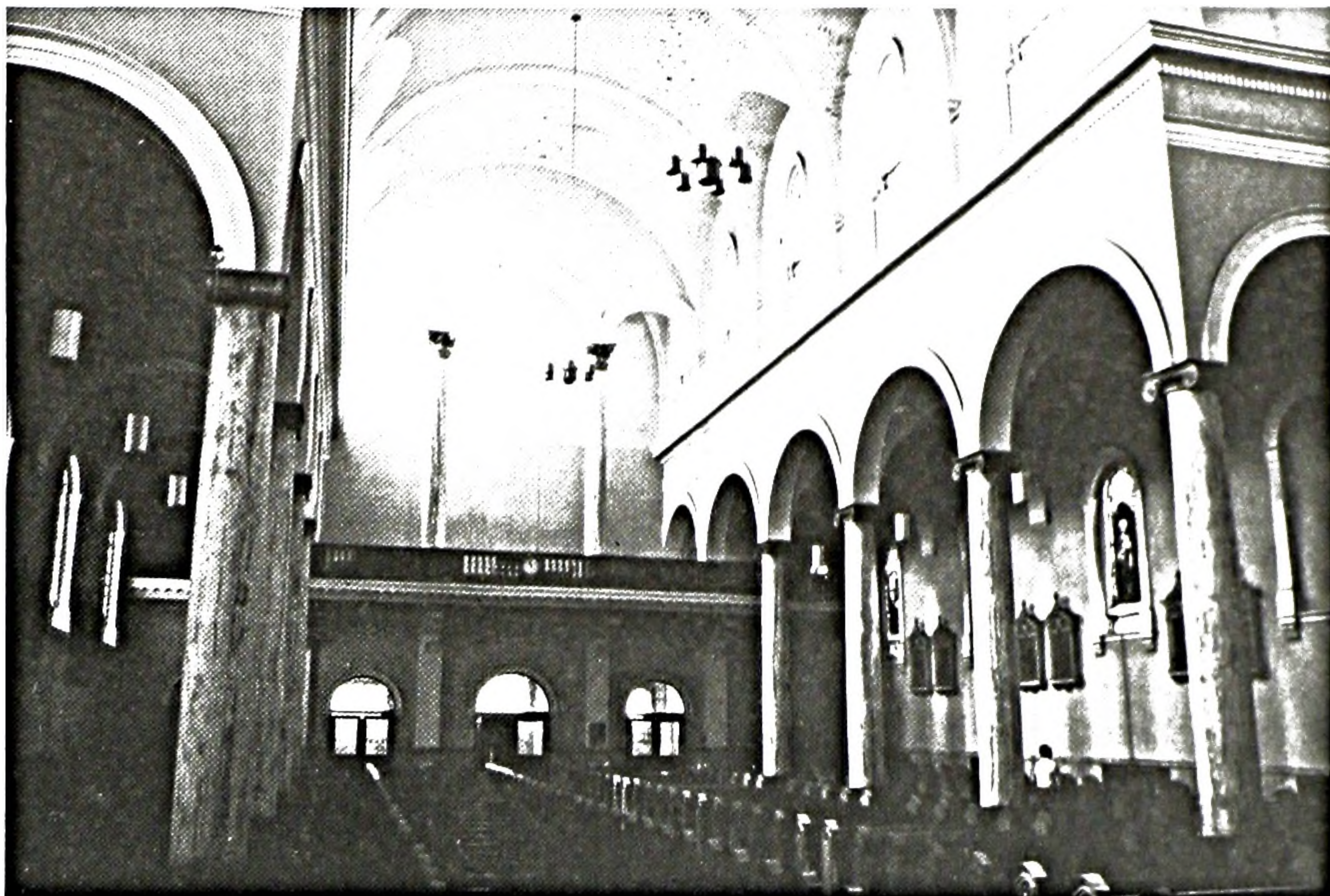
St. Ann's rectory, built at the same time as the church and connected to it by a passage-way, demonstrates another aspect of Holmes' design activity for the Church (Fig. 24). The house, though hardly lavish, was grand enough on the outside, and well enough appointed within, to suggest the status of the priest as *pater familias* of the local Catholic community. Since the rectory faces a side-street, the pastor and his assistants could expect a measure of privacy – an important concern for men living so close to their work – and the separation of public and private areas of the house, which also held the parish offices, insulated them further. The plan of the rectory reflects the clerical hierarchy of the time. The pastor occupied a suite of rooms across the front of the second floor, facing south, and his senior assistant's rooms were behind on the same floor. Minor curates or guests were assigned bedrooms in the attic and had to share a bath. The housekeeper, at the bottom of the 'pecking order' and always a woman, got a small room on the ground floor adjoining the pantries. Since the priests' social life was necessarily restricted, a recreation room was provided in the rectory basement, and a deep verandah ran along the house on the west side, largely away from prying eyes. Rectories like this – and Holmes designed several – have proven over the decades to be remarkably serviceable and attractive domestic architecture.

74 Specifications for this ungainly object may be found in the parish file in the Archdiocesan Archives.



FIGURE 26. A.W. Holmes, Holy Name Church, Toronto, basement 1914-15, upper church dedicated 1926. Main façade (Photo: M. Thurlby).

FIGURE 27. Holy Name Church, Toronto. Interior looking west (Photo: author).



The best-known of Holmes' classicizing churches is probably Holy Name, a landmark along Danforth Avenue in East Toronto (Figs. 26 and 27).⁷⁵ The church was designed about 1914 (the plans are undated), but only the basement was complete when the World War halted construction. The upper church was dedicated in March 1926.

The façade of Holy Name is a tall, narrow, compressed version of della Porta's for the Jesuit mother-church in Rome, Il Gesù. Thus, again, we find Holmes and his clients evoking the triumphal spirit and architecture of the Counter-Reformation. He carried off the sculpturally rich façade with aplomb, and the balustrade and open belfry that crown the composition were of his own devising (the Gesù façade terminates in a broad gable and cross).

The interior is as chaste as St. Ann's (Fig. 27), though it would have been more ornate before one of the worst renovation campaigns imaginable carried off the wall-paintings and disfigured Holmes' sanctuary in the 1970s. As in many churches by Connolly and Holmes, the choir-gallery that stretches across the rear of the church runs underneath the nave arcades, which continue to the rear wall. This creates an effect of interwoven space, enhanced here by the layering of an additional arcade against the rear wall, above the gallery. Moreover, the interruption of the nave arcades for the transepts and the opening up of the transepts to full height give unusual emphasis to the crossing, creating what is in effect a church of central plan.

Though the triumphalist mood of the Catholic Church under Pius x and the popularity of the Beaux-Arts manner combined to favour classicizing church designs between 1900 and World War One, the revived Gothic was never abandoned; nor, it

appears, did Holmes ever lose his affection for the style. In 1913 or 14, while St. Ann's and Holy Name were being planned or built, he designed the church of St. Francis of Assisi in the City's West End (Figs. 28 and 29).⁷⁶ Here, he chose a massive, simplified variant of Gothic unlike Connolly's delicate, spiky Northern type. He may have had Cistercian abbey architecture in mind – natural enough for an Englishman familiar, no doubt, with Fountains and Tintern.⁷⁷ With rather shallow pointed arches and groin vaults with heavy transverse ribs, the church has something of Cistercian massive plainness, though the short, stubby columns with undecorated cushion capitals of the nave arcades are Early English. Holmes adapted the mediaeval programme for modern use, however, by enlarging the windows and, of course, diminishing the thickness of the walls.

The mural Gothic of St. Francis, with its broad, flat surfaces and crisp, decorative lines, demonstrates Holmes' acquaintance with contemporary neo-Gothic work, such as that of the American architects Cram and Goodhue,⁷⁸ who sought continuity with the nineteenth-century Gothic Revival and the older mediaeval tradition without thereby sacrificing modernity. Their solution was a neo-Gothic of boldly

75 Plans are held by the City Buildings Department, with copies in the Archdiocesan Archives. See also *Register* of 16 September and 18 November 1915, 7 February 1924, 23 April 1925, and 18 March 1926.

76 Plans are in the Archdiocesan Archives. See also *Register*, 25 September 1913, 1 October 1914, and 11 November 1915.

77 Cf. M.-Anselme Dimier, *L'art cistercien, hors de France* (La Pierre-qui-Vire/Yonne: Zodiac, 1971); pl. 1 to 10 show Fountains Abbey.

78 See Richard Oliver, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue* (New York: Architectural History Foundation/Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983), especially ch. 3.



FIGURE 28. A.W. Holmes, St. Francis of Assisi Church, Toronto, 1914-15. Main façade (Photo: author).



FIGURE 29. St. Francis Church, Toronto. Interior of nave and north transept (Photo: author).

simplified masses, clean broad surfaces, and razor-sharp linearity. By the twenties this had become a sort of mediaevalizing counterpart to the Moderne.

79 See his obituary in *The Parishioner*, cited *supra*, n. 40. There is more information on Holy Rosary than on Holmes' other churches, thanks to the series of articles by George H. Dawson in the March, April and May, 1965, issues of *The Parishioner*. See also the *Register* of 9 July 1925, 27 April and 12 May 1927, and 29 January 1931. Two elevation drawings are kept at the parish, the only drawings by Holmes for the church that are presently available. It is understood at the time of writing, however, that other drawings may be in the collection of the University of Calgary.

The Perpendicular Gothic, because it had been the most decorative phase of the English development, enjoyed a considerable revival in the teens and twenties. Holmes, by now a man of sixty, kept abreast of this trend, too, which must have delighted his English heart. He is said to have considered Holy Rosary Church, which he designed in the Perpendicular for the Basilians about 1925, the masterpiece of his career (Figs. 30 to 32).⁷⁹ Certainly, it was among his principal projects in size and elaboration. Its dignified Englishness befitted a church in one of Toronto's most refined districts, where Catholics, if anywhere, had indeed 'arrived.'

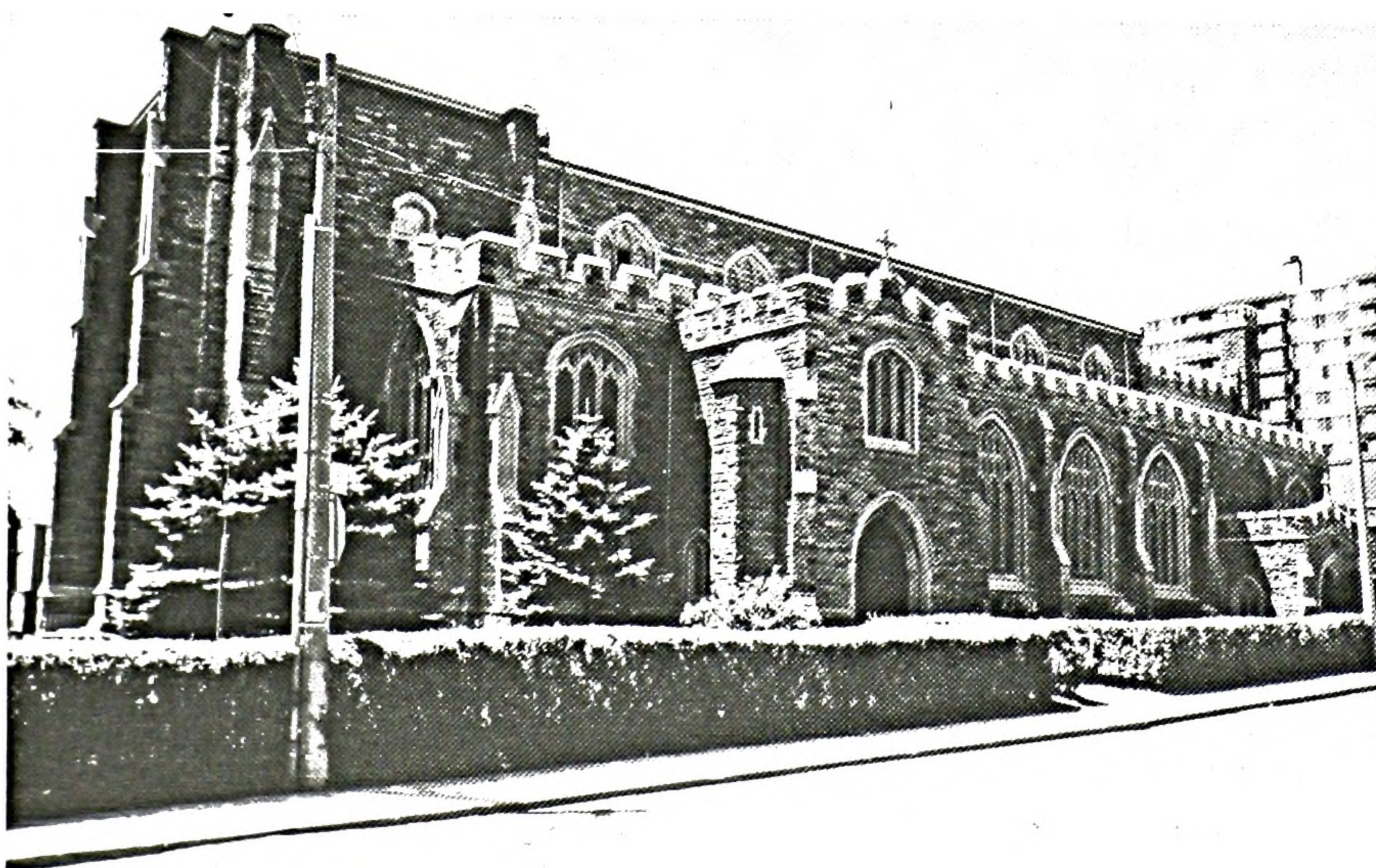


FIGURE 30. A.W. Holmes, Holy Rosary Church, Toronto, 1926-7. Exterior from the east (Photo: M. Thurlby).

At the pastor's suggestion Holmes based the design on the Late Gothic parish church of St. Mary the Virgin in St. Neot's, Huntingdonshire (Fig. 31), which he visited and measured.⁸⁰ For Holy Rosary Holmes altered the proportions and arrangements of his English prototype somewhat, moving the main entry from the side of the church to the centre of the west front, lengthening the nave by a bay and diminishing the liturgical limbs by omitting the choir – hardly necessary in a Toronto parish – and shortening the side-chapels. He planned to model the tower on that of St. Mary's, but – to the church's detriment – it was never added. In other respects, however, Holy Rosary faithfully mirrors its English model.

The interior is highly successful, even in detail. The mouldings are accurate copies of Late Gothic models, and the rood-beam is unusual in a Canadian Catholic church (Fig. 32). The deep choir gallery above the main entry is surmounted by a single large stained-glass window of Holmes' own design, a lingering reflection of his Arts & Crafts sympathies.⁸¹

St. Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic student chapel of the University of Toronto (Fig. 33), was designed about the same time as Holy Rosary and in a related mode; it was opened in March 1927. The style was not arrived at easily, however. After having 'several sets of sketches ... in a more or less modified Romanesque' rejected as not suited to the chapel's collegiate surroundings (a reference, presumably, to the Late Gothic of several prominent recent additions to the campus: Trinity and Knox Colleges, Hart House and the Soldiers' Tower), Holmes hit on a design in which 'the characteristics of fifteenth century English Gothic – the best period of ecclesiastical collegiate architecture – have been conscientiously followed'.⁸² It is true that the window tracery and certain of the cut-stone detail are Perpendicular Gothic, but the overall massing of the chapel, timber ceiling and eccentric bell-cote are Early English.



FIGURE 32. Holy Rosary Church, Toronto. Interior looking north-west (Photo: author).

80 The English church is mainly fifteenth century, though the tower dates to the turn of the sixteenth: Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Bedfordshire and the County of Huntingdon and Peterborough* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 188 and pl. 48; and John Betjeman (ed.), *Collins Guide to English Parish Churches* (London: Collins, 1958), p. 204. See, also, Holmes' letter to the pastor, Father M.J. Oliver, CSB, written from St. Neot's, 26 October 1925; General Archives of the Basilian Fathers, transcription in Scollard, LVIII, pp. 19-20. I am grateful to Father Scollard for this reference, and to the current pastor, Father Silvester, for information and photos of the English prototype.

81 Holmes extended this attitude to all the decorative arts: he himself designed much of the furniture in his home-office on St. Joseph Street.



FIGURE 31. Church of St. Mary, St. Neot's, Huntingdonshire, England, 15th century. After parish souvenir booklet (Photo: author).



FIGURE 33. A.W. Holmes, St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel, Toronto, dedicated 1927. Interior looking north (Photo: author).

Holmes adopted a one-aisled plan with a side entry-porch as 'most suitable to obtain pleasing proportions, taking into consideration the shape and size of the lot at our disposal'.⁸³ Despite a questionable re-arrangement of the interior in the 1960s that reversed the congregational and liturgical areas to create a central plan, the chapel still has the intimate, rustic air of an English village church.

Holmes' love-affair with the Gothic lasted into his seventies, when he undertook his last commissions, for St. Michael's College in the nineteen thirties (Fig. 34).⁸⁴ Though severely simple and sparsely detailed in the lean contemporary manner, these buildings illustrate Holmes' unwavering continuity of design. The general size and shape of the new buildings, and specific features like the raised pro-

jecting pavilions, dormer-windows, big-mawed entrance arch and small steeple of the 'Queen's Park buildings' (Fig. 34), echo those of 'Clover Hill', the original College building (1856), to which Holmes had made his 1902 addition (Fig. 12). Thus, buildings designed by Holmes at the beginning and end of his career engage in civilized dialogue with one another.

Holmes' work demonstrates more than internal continuity: it represents a link in a chain of architectural tradition stretching back to G.E. Street and the English High Victorian Gothic, and, through Connolly, to McCarthy of Dublin and even Pugin. Holmes was rooted in that tradition and because of it probably felt more at home designing in the styles of the Northern Middle Ages than in any other mode. Yet both he and Connolly, when called upon, could tackle the newer Beaux-Arts classical fashion with relish, giving it a Baroque flavour, and – at least in Holmes' case – a pronounced English twist. Such virtuosity was, of course, typical of better architects of their day. Seeking to work within a framework of architectural tradition, Connolly and Holmes adapted recognized modes of architectural discourse to the demands of modern programmes.

To be sure, their work, and that of Catholic church architects generally, has its monotonous moments. It can hardly be denied, for example, that St. Patrick's, McCaul Street (Figs. 16 and 17), is dull and heavy. St. Augustine's Seminary might not be a great deal better, but for the thrusting tower-dome that enlivens its main block (Fig. 21).

Yet responsibility for this uneven level of design should not be laid solely at the architect's doorstep. His mandate was to design large churches on limited budgets as attractively and impressively as possible. If impressiveness sometimes outweighed attractiveness, we should remember that Connolly and Holmes were designing for a generation of pastors who, though deservedly loved by their parishioners, were hardly cultural giants. Not just their aesthetic sense, but their theology and pastoral practice, appear hopelessly out-dated and intransigent by today's standards: not much given to experiment themselves, they were inclined to be intolerant of innovation in others.

On the other hand, the Church these pastors served in the Toronto of 1900 confronted immense problems: scanty financial resources, crowds of the faithful to lead, indoctrinate and encourage, the indifference and even, at times, hostility of other groups. It was, in short, a time no less difficult than our own. Within their limits both churchmen and architects did well. Many churches constructed in recent decades have not reached the standards set by Connolly and Holmes.

⁸² Holmes' words, quoted in a bulletin by Rev. Arthur Roberts, CSB, published by the Newman Centre, Toronto, 1982. I have been unable to trace the quote further, but risk using it here. The same bulletin contains the only surviving trace of Holmes' drawings – an elevation reproduced from the Newman Centre newspaper, *The Torch*, VIII (November 1926).

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ See *Contract Record*, XLII (19 December 1928), p. 42; and *Register*, 11 April and 30 May 1929, 9 May and 5 September 1935, and 10 September 1936: the broken dates suggest that the project may have been postponed by the Depression. For help in documenting these buildings I am, again, indebted to Father Scollard.



FIGURE 34. A.W. Holmes, 'Queen's Park Buildings', St. Michael's College, Toronto. Main front as in 1942. Archives of St. Michael's College, photo 1942-12 (Photo: author).

Such architects tend to be overlooked today. Inflamed with architectural modernism, we have branded work like theirs 'reactionary', 'dishonest', 'eclectic', or 'lacking in conviction'. Yet quite the opposite is true: Connolly, Holmes and others like them worked almost alone in specialized practice and with sincere dedication, believing they were serving God and their Church in the best way they could.

As the century draws to a close, it is dawning on us that we overlook tradition at our peril: the loss is ours if we refuse to acknowledge those who have gone before us – in this case, men who succeeded in creating handsome and articulate, if generally unspectacular, designs for buildings that generations have taken pride in and found moving.

RÉSUMÉ

Pendant cinquante ans Joseph Connolly (ca. 1840-1904) et Arthur W. Holmes (1863-1944) furent les architectes attitrés des évêques de l'Église catholique de l'Ontario, en particulier de Toronto; ils ont dessiné pour eux, dans les styles traditionnels, églises, presbytères et collèges qu'exigeait l'urbanisation rapide d'une population en plein essor. Né et formé en Irlande, Connolly préféra les styles médiévaux, comme le gothique français de l'église Our Lady à Guelph (commencée en 1876) et de l'église St. Mary à Toronto (1885-1889). Il pouvait aussi cependant rendre des formes plus classiques, comme à l'église St. Paul, rue Power à Toronto (1887-1889), de style roman italien à l'extérieur, mais tout à fait classique et même académique à l'intérieur. La vogue du style classique, particulièrement du baroque, traduit en effet le conservatisme doctrinal des catholiques à cette époque et leur complète allégeance à l'égard de Rome. Arthur Holmes, architecte anglais formé par G.E. Street, puis disciple et successeur de Connolly, préféra comme ce dernier les styles médiévaux pour les églises de village et de banlieue, mais moins pour les églises urbaines; l'église St. Helen de Toronto (1908-1910) est en ce sens une exception. Après

1900, la popularité du classicisme académique et la demande pour de vastes bâtiments économiques amenèrent Holmes à dessiner plutôt ses églises urbaines à hauts murs cintrés, dans un ordre classique simple, derrière des façades baroques imposantes; les églises St. Ann et Holy Name (1914-1926), dans l'est de Toronto, en sont des exemples. Le presbytère de St. Ann, conçu en même temps que l'église, est caractéristique de la manière de Holmes pour ce type de résidence. Sa commande la plus importante pour l'archidiocèse de Toronto fut le séminaire St. Augustine à Scarborough (1910-1913), bâtiment sobre et massif à plan conventionnel, entourant une chapelle à large voûte en berceau et aux détails inspirés du baroque anglais. La préférence profonde de Holmes pour le gothique se manifestera à nouveau avec l'église Saint-François d'Assise (1914-1915), à l'extrémité ouest de Toronto, la chapelle Saint-Thomas d'Aquin de l'Université de Toronto (ca. 1927), et surtout sa charmante reproduction d'un modèle médiéval anglais pour la congrégation du Saint-Rosaire, rue St. Clair (1926-1927). Holmes termina sa carrière dans les années trente avec la collégiale gothique du St. Michael's College à Toronto, en interprétant une fois de plus des formes traditionnelles associées à l'architecture religieuse.
