

## The Churches of S. Leonard at St. Andrews

THE story of the two churches of S. Leonard at St Andrews is one of remarkable length and complexity. It begins with an ancient hospital or hospice maintained by the Culdees. In 1144 this hospital was transferred to the Augustinian Canons of the Cathedral Priory, then but recently established, and by 1248 it was called by the name of S. Leonard. S. Leonard is of course best known as the patron saint of prisoners, but hospices for pilgrims and other wayfarers were very commonly dedicated to him, as at Edinburgh and Dunfermline.

In origin, the first Church of S. Leonard was probably no more than the chapel of the hospital, but the lands with which the hospital was endowed came to form a distinct parish, and by at least 1413 the church had quite clearly assumed the status of a parish church. The duties of parish priest were performed by the master or chaplain of the hospital.

In 1512 the hospital was converted into a college originally known as "the College of Poor Clerks of the Church of S. Andrew," but before very long as "the College of S. Leonard." While the Archbishop of St. Andrews, Alexander Stewart, was associated with the foundation, the true founder was the Prior, John Hepburn, and the college seems to have been primarily designed to provide a training in arts and theology for novices of his house and order. This change involved considerable alterations in the fabric of the church and hospital but the college continued the parochial obligations of its predecessor by an arrangement that the senior of the two chaplains on the foundation should act as parish priest. To accommodate the parishioners and the members of the college the church was reconstructed and enlarged. The choir was used by the members of the college in the manner of other ecclesiastical corporations and was furnished with stalls returned against a *pulpitum* or choir screen set midway across the church. The nave was used for parish services.

This close association between the college and the parish persisted after the Reformation, for in 1578 the Principal of the college was authorized to act as parish minister. The whole area of the church was now made available for

parish purposes. The screen was removed, and the members of the college, although holding their separate daily prayers here on week-days, attended the parochial services on Sundays, probably occupying pews in the deep loft now constructed across the west end of the building.

Another result of the Reformation was that S. Leonard's College lost its monastic character and became an arts college of the University of St. Andrews very similar to S. Salvator's College. Theological teaching was concentrated in the third medieval college, S. Mary's. In the eighteenth century the University suffered a serious decline and in 1747 the two arts colleges were combined as the United College of S. Salvator and S. Leonard. In 1748 the seat of the United College was fixed in the buildings of S. Salvator's College and it became necessary to consider whether the S. Leonard's congregation should not also be brought to S. Salvator's where the stately collegiate church had stood derelict almost continuously since the Reformation. In 1761 the move took place and college and congregation continued to share S. Salvator's Church until 1904.

When the S. Leonard's buildings were abandoned the domestic quarters of the college were sold, but the church—with appropriate rights of access—was retained by the United College "in case it shall ever be repaired and again used as a church." The remoteness of this possibility in the minds of the college authorities is indicated by their treatment of the fabric, the bell-tower being demolished and the remainder of the building unroofed. In this general condition it remained until 1910. By this time the S. Leonard's congregation had left S. Salvator's Church for the new Church of S. Leonard in the west end of St Andrews. When the move was made it had been suggested that the old Church of S. Leonard—or "S. Leonard's Chapel," as it had come to be known in its ruinous state—should be restored for parochial purposes; but the building was found to be too small to accommodate the proportion of the parishioners then required by law; the ownership of the church was also in doubt, but when the new church had been built this point was settled in favour of the University Court which bought out the interest of the other heritors of the parish.

### The Restoration

The "restoration" scheme initiated by the University in 1910 envisaged the furnishing of the old church as a

memorial chapel "in which monuments to the memory of men and women who had rendered service to the University might be placed." The building was duly re-roofed and re-glazed, but the work then came to a standstill until 1948 when the whole question of the condition of "S. Leonard's Chapel" and its future use was raised in the University Court by the Chancellor's Assessor, Sir David Russell. Architectural advice was obtained from Mr Ian G. Lindsay, A.R.S.A., and by means of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust the fabric was put into a thoroughly sound condition. The internal furnishings were provided by Sir David Russell in memory of his younger son, Patrick, a former student of the University, who was killed on active service in the late War.

In view of the somewhat complicated history of the building the "restoration" of S. Leonard's Chapel presented an unusually difficult problem. As the restored building would be used primarily by the University, it was at first proposed to furnish it throughout as a college chapel, but the result would have been to provide a slightly smaller replica of the main University Chapel in S. Salvator's Church and would not have been a restoration in any proper sense. Consideration was then given to a restoration of the medieval plan with a central screen dividing the building into a collegiate choir suitable for smaller academic services, and a nave that might be used for occasional parish services or for religious meetings of one kind or another. This is the plan that has actually been adopted. Thus the nave is provided with a pulpit set in the centre of the south wall. The pulpit has a reading desk below and is surmounted by a sounding-board in the traditional manner. The seating for the congregation is in the form of chairs arranged so as to face the pulpit on three sides.

Across the middle of the building is a screen with a wide archway leading through from the nave to the choir. Over the screen is a loft for the organ and about 20 singers. On account of its central position this organ loft can be used in connection with services either in the nave or in the choir. As the nave is seated for about 100 and the choir for about 40, this means that the total seating for congregational services is about 120 and for choir services about 60. The choir is furnished with two rows of stalls set against the north and south walls and returned against the screen. The two chief stalls on either side of the entry are for the Principal and the officiating Chaplain. At the east end is the Com-

munion Table, backed by a carved reredos feature. The lighting of both nave and choir is by wax candles in brass wall sconces and two central chandeliers.

Certain other features of the restoration deserve mention. The internal walls have been plastered and limewashed throughout. This is not only a correct "restoration"—for the old plaster line was clearly visible round the windows—but has had the effect of making a very dark and somewhat dismal building remarkably light and cheerful. The roof has been painted blue in accordance with a practice very commonly observed in Scotland as in other parts of Europe down to at least the seventeenth century. Another touch of colour is introduced by the coats of arms painted on the east or choir side of the organ loft. The arms are those of S. Leonard's College and its two founders, Archbishop Stewart and Prior Hepburn, together with those of Sir David Russell and the late Principal Sir James Irvine.

In the detail of the furnishings a Gothic style has been deliberately avoided. S. Leonard's Chapel is essentially an early sixteenth century building and its windows, although mullioned, are of square-headed "perpendicular" type. Furthermore, the dominant feature of the choir is a series of very fine early Renaissance monuments. Thus the detail of the pulpit, the organ loft, and stalls, and the reredos feature reflects that of the monuments. The monuments themselves have been renovated and their inscriptions re-gilded. Further gilded inscriptions on the choir screen commemorate the Pilgrim Trust benefaction and the memorial gifts of Sir David Russell.

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The present parish church of S. Leonard owes its origin to two circumstances: firstly, that by the end of last century the University found that it required S. Salvador's entirely for its own use; and secondly, that, as already noted, the surviving portion of the old church of S. Leonard was insufficient in area to provide the legal minimum of sittings for the parochial population. A new church therefore became necessary, and a site was found in the western half of the parish where the city was just beginning to expand. The new site was approximately one mile from the old church, and not at all conveniently situated for the majority of the congregation who lived at the east end of

the town. Objections were also lodged that a church would detract from the amenity of the district (!), but these were over-ruled without difficulty and the work proceeded. Financially a compromise was reached. The heritors agreed to pay a fixed sum—approximately half the cost of the building—and the congregation agreed to relieve them of all further liability, provided they were allowed to choose the architect. This fortunate arrangement resulted in the present church, designed by Dr Macgregor Chalmers and dedicated by the Rev. Professor James Cooper on 28th July, 1904. The shape of the site required that the main axis of the building be north and south. As so often this architect selected Romanesque as the most suitable style, and with most satisfactory results. The building consists of a nave 74 feet long and 24 feet wide, with an aisle to the west 66 feet by 18 feet. At the south end of the aisle is a tower 63 feet high and 12 feet square. The tower is in three stages, the lowest of which houses the 3-manual Willis organ, and the topmost is the belfry with large arched openings on three sides. The tower is roofed with Caithness slates, and has crow-stepped gables at its northern and southern extremities, the roof being set within a low rampart.

The northern termination of both aisle and nave is apsidal, but while the larger apse is centrally situated, the smaller is set to the east side of the aisle. This was presumably to allow room for more pews, but it gives a rather lop-sided appearance to the lay-out of the aisle. This smaller apse is the baptistery, while the larger contains the Holy Table set well back, and two prayer-stalls. The nave is divided from the aisle by four stout pillars. The walls are ashlar which has retained its pale grey colour without alteration, although the same stone on the exterior has weathered to a much darker hue. The stone was from a local quarry, Nydie, Strathkinness. All the wood-work is Austrian oak. About eighteen pew-ends were decorated with low relief carving of Celtic designs, this work being carried out voluntarily by members of the congregation soon after the church was completed.

The Baptistery is quite small,—7 feet deep by 11 feet wide. It has one small window portraying the Blessed Virgin with the Holy Child in her arms. The octagonal font is of white marble resting on four clustered pillars separated by Gothic canopied niches. It seems clear that the design was influenced by its original proximity to Bishop Kennedy's tomb in S. Salvator's. In its present setting it is somewhat

incongruous, though serving as a reminder of the history of the congregation. There is also a small prayer-desk and a lectern. The presence of these is explained by the fact that at one time the evening service was held in the aisle, and the Senior Sunday School still meets there. The semi domes of the apses were originally white, but some years ago they were coloured a warm golden yellow gradually lightening from the base up.

On the west side of the aisle the first window, by Henry Holiday, has two scenes, our Lord as a boy in S. Joseph's workshop, and disputing with the doctors in the Temple. Unfortunately this glass is rather dark, and in consequence this corner of the church is ill-lit. Next comes a pair of windows by Herbert Hendrie, one depicting our Lord's Baptism and Temptation, the other the calling of S. Andrew and S. Philip. These consist of very rich jewel-like glass with a great wealth of detailed decoration around the main scenes. The remaining two windows on this side of the church are by Miss Chilton, who has done more windows in the building than any other artist. The first of these two is the War Memorial, 1939-45, and shows the Cleansing of the Temple in its lower half, and a healing scene above. In this, as in the Hendrie windows, the predominating colours are red and blue, but Miss Chilton employed larger pieces of glass. The last window here overlooks the choir and depicts S. Margaret of Scotland with the Castle Rock of Edinburgh and her chapel on its summit, together with the arms of Scotland and of S. Edward the Confessor.

Passing now to the south end of the nave we see the largest window, 13 feet by 3 feet, the majority of the others being six feet by two. This is not yet filled with stained glass, but Miss Chilton is now engaged on a design, already approved, of the Transfiguration. It is intended that this window be dedicated on the jubilee of the opening of the church next year.

There are six windows on the east side of the nave, three designed by the Stephen Adam Studio, Glasgow, and inserted shortly after the War of 1914-1918; and three later designed by Miss Chilton and Miss Kemp. At the south end is the War Memorial, 1914-1918, composed mainly of war scenes. Beyond it is the main entrance to the church, approached through a porch with an entrance-arch displaying dog-tooth ornamentation. The next two windows have each a central group, the remainder being filled with smaller scenes in which silvery-grey glass

predominates. In one we see our Lord and three of His Apostles richly clad in blue, red and brown, while surrounding them are shown the armour of the Christian warrior, the whole surmounted by a crucifixion; in the neighbouring window we see our Lord meeting with the Centurion, and smaller scenes tell the rest of the story of the healing of his servant. In the memorial to the Rev. R. W. Wallace, in whose ministry the church was built, we have two scenes,—the Breaking of the Alabaster Box, and the Raising of Lazarus. The last two windows in the nave deal with the events of Holy Week, with the Triumphal Entry as the main scene in the first, and the Crucifixion in the second. In the Emmaus story one of the disciples is pictured as a woman.

In the Sanctuary are three windows, two by Holiday showing our Lord as the True Vine, holding a chalice; and the other as the Bread of Life, holding a loaf. The third, by Miss Chilton, pictures S. Leonard liberating prisoners, and is notable for its large expanse of rich blue glass.

The Sanctuary is approached by two steps, beyond which are two prayer-desks; then another step intervenes before the Holy Table, which is again raised on a stone base. It is Norman in design but decorated also with Celtic motifs, as are the front panels of the septagonal pulpit standing immediately to the east of the chancel arch. A wrought-iron lectern designed by the architect formerly stood on the lower step of the Sanctuary entrance midway between the stalls. This both obscured the view of the Holy Table and was inconvenient in other ways. It has now been removed to the Baptistry, while the oak one which stood there has now been placed to the west of the apse, corresponding to the position of the pulpit on the other side. On the wall behind the Holy Table is a large brass cross.

The church was originally lit by gas from wrought-iron wall brackets. On the installation of electric light, however, these were abandoned in favour of circular central fittings, except in the Sanctuary where the gas fittings were adapted to take electric candles, later supplemented by lights concealed behind the chancel arch.

That the design as a whole is successful no one who knows the church can doubt. The construction is solid, the proportions excellent, the whole effect restful, worshipful, satisfying alike to the eye of the body and of the spirit. We who have entered into this heritage are not unmindful



*Block kindly lent by Sir David Russell*

*J. Fairweather*

S. LEONARD'S CHAPEL—INTERIOR LOOKING EASTWARDS, c. 1900



*Block kindly lent by Sir David Russell*

*G. M. Corie*

S. LEONARD'S CHAPEL,—INTERIOR LOOKING EASTWARDS, 1952



S. LEONARD'S CHURCH—NAVE AND SANCTUARY



S. LEONARD'S CHURCH—TOWER AND MAIN ENTRANCE

of those through whose wisdom, patience, perseverance and sacrifice was secured a building worthy of the long history of the parish and of the city in which it is situated.

W. L. COULTHARD.