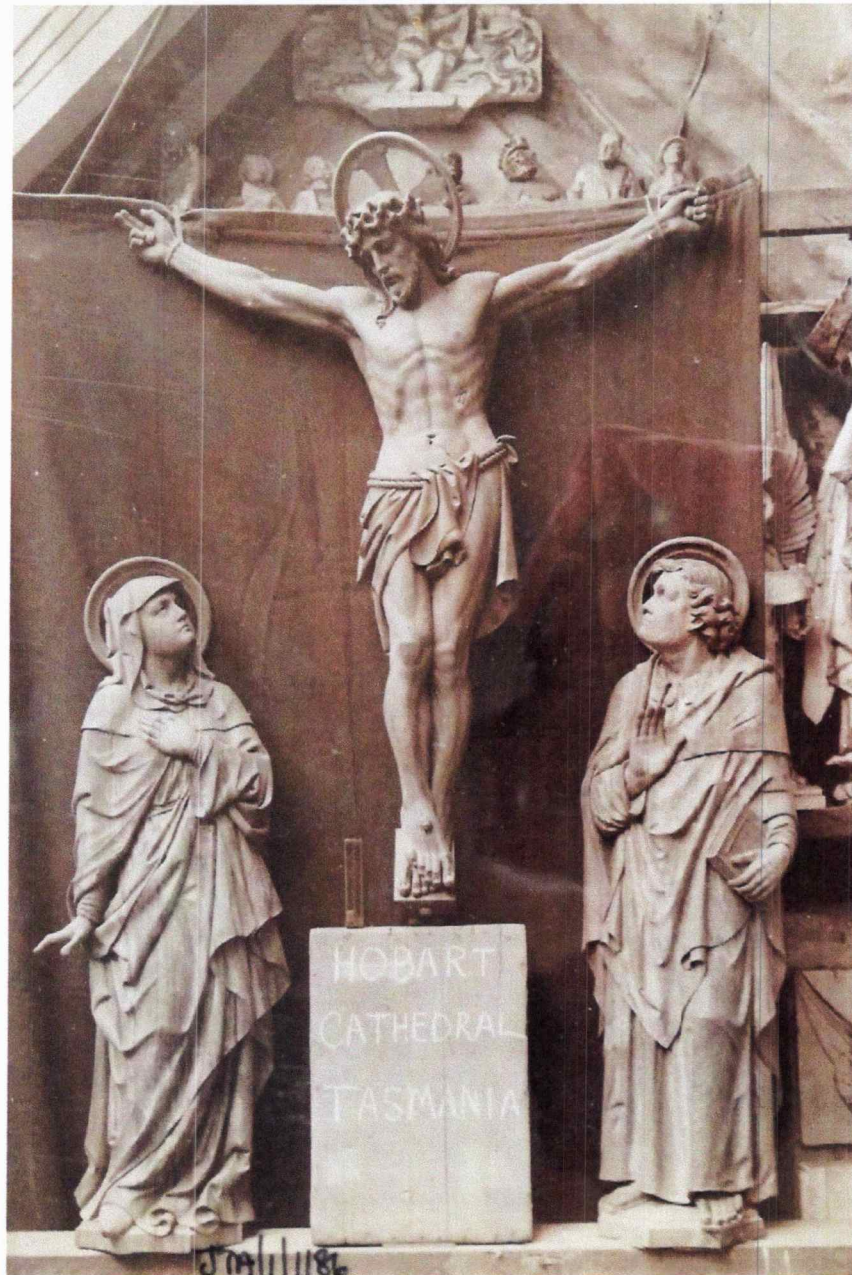


THE JOHN THOMPSON FILE

PART 90: A ROOD FOR St DAVID'S CATHEDRAL TASMANIA

We start our research with an entry in 'The John Thompson Archive – photographic section'. Image JTA/1/1186 description states 'Hobart Cathedral, Tasmania: crucifixion carved in wood with figures of St Mary and S?'.



This image shows the figures which will become part of the 'Rood' and was taken before it was totally assembled or stained. Note the plaster casts above the cloth backing; are these models for other orders awaiting production? We

have a second source of information regarding this cathedral and its furnishings i.e. there was an article in the Peterborough Advertiser dated 19th December 1924, which mentioned a screen and a folding stool.

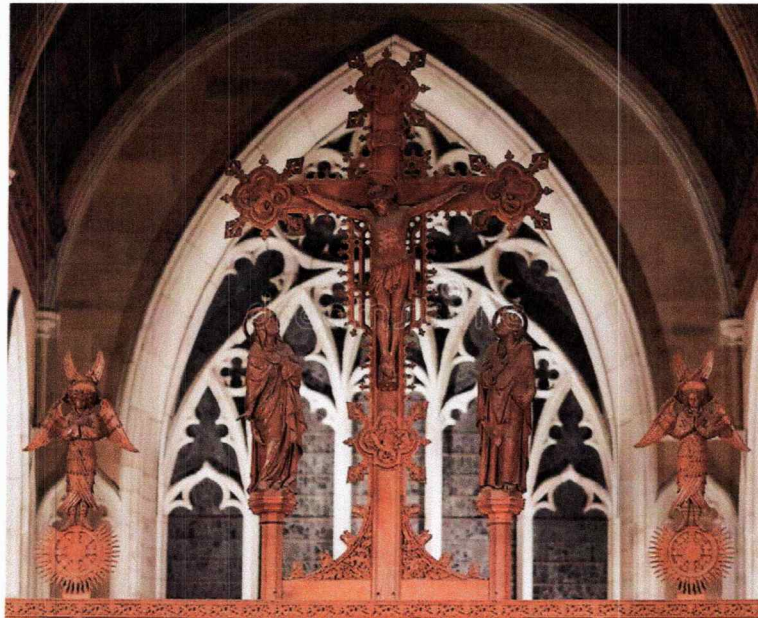


Image from dreamstime.com –Cathedral Hobart stock images

The building history of St David's Cathedral Hobart:

Wikipedia: 'the current cathedral was built between 1868 and 1936 in the Gothic Revival style to the design by the English architect George Frederick Bodley. On the pinnacles of each gable is a quatrefoil, repeated on the extremities of the large crucifix of the rood screen'. The cathedral seems to have been built in phases with parts being rebuilt due to structural problems.

Conclusion: images of c1910 of the interior show no rood screen.

Emcirclephoto.com tells us 'above is an elegant wood screen depicting the crucifixion. The cross was hand-carved in Oxfordshire England in 1916'. If this is true possibly the whole rood and screen were assembled in Thompson's workshops with only parts carved by them. Either the Rood plus the other furniture arrived in 1924 or there were two separate furniture deliveries.

Future Actions:

- 1) Get a copy of the Peterborough Advertiser article of 1924, and assess what exactly was provided and when.
- 2) Write to Hobart Cathedral and to see what they know.

HOBART CATHEDRAL ROOD SCREEN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I contacted St David's Cathedral by e-mail regarding my queries and received an initial response from Raelene Weissel (Cathedral Administrator): "The Rood Screen in St David's Cathedral (Hobart, Tasmania) was constructed by Franklins under David Hancox in Deddington". A small statement but this opened up a complete new strand of enquiry and a mystery.

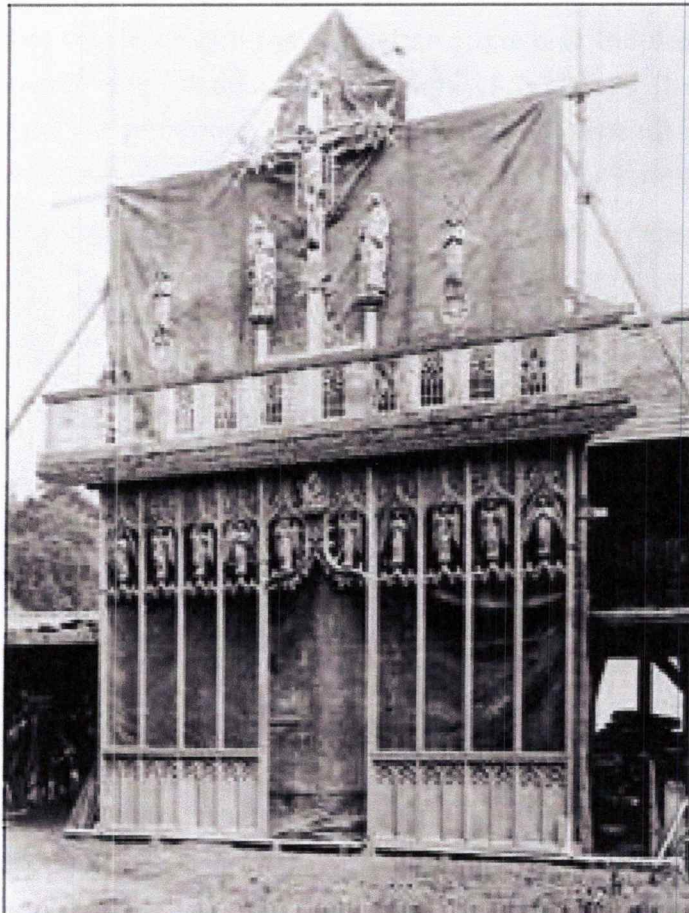


Image from the Oxfordshire Photographic Archive

The above image 'The Franklin chancel screen built for Hobart Cathedral, Tasmania, 1916' was taken from an article in the website 'Deddington History-Franklins-from Hempton to Hobart'. My other information source was <http://www.banburymuseum.org> PDF 'Volume 10 Number 07-Banbury Museum i.e. the magazine of the Banbury Historical Society for August 1987'. On their title page is the same image entitled 'Main section of the main Chancel Screen for Hobart Cathedral, Tasmania, photographed in Franklin's Yard c.1916 before shipment'. Other websites indicate the photograph was taken in Hobart but I consider them to be incorrect.

FRANKLINS OF DEDDINGTON (OXFORDSHIRE)

The Franklin story is very parallel to that of the Thompson family saga and I provide extracts from the information sources referred to above: At their height Franklin's workshops employed as many as 200 skilled masons and woodcarvers. They carried out high quality restoration work on churches and college buildings in London, Salisbury, Oxford and elsewhere. Abroad their contracts included the pulpit and chancel screen of Hobart Cathedral Tasmania. Their activity period was c.1850 to 1917. Between 1850 and 1860 much of their work was under the direction of G.E. Street and later under G.F. Brodley (1827-1907), T. Garner (1839-1906) and in the early 20th century Cecil Greenwood Hare (1875-1932, born in Stamford). In 1917 they were forced into bankruptcy 'it appears that Franklins received a large order for stretchers which they made approximately 6 inches short of the War Offices specification. Payment was refused and the official receiver was called in'.



Stretchers made using bespoke carved timber poles to the correct specification

The pulpit (designed by Brodley) was erected in 1903 and the canopy and panelling was added in 1904. Brodley was for a while superintendent architect of Peterborough Cathedral and employed James Thomas Irvine between 1897 and 1900 as the clerk of works. The rood Screen was designed by C. Hare and erected in 1916. He took over the practice from Brodley in 1906. Thompsons made and erected a number of war memorials designed by C. Hare in England including one at St Margaret's Church (Langrick) Boston. David Hancox was the Forman at Franklins who organised the workshop order. The mystery is that the histories tell us that the rood screen was provided in 1916 by Franklins but the Peterborough Advertiser article dated 19th December 1924 and Mr Welsh's notes indicate that it was supplied by Thompson's in 1924.

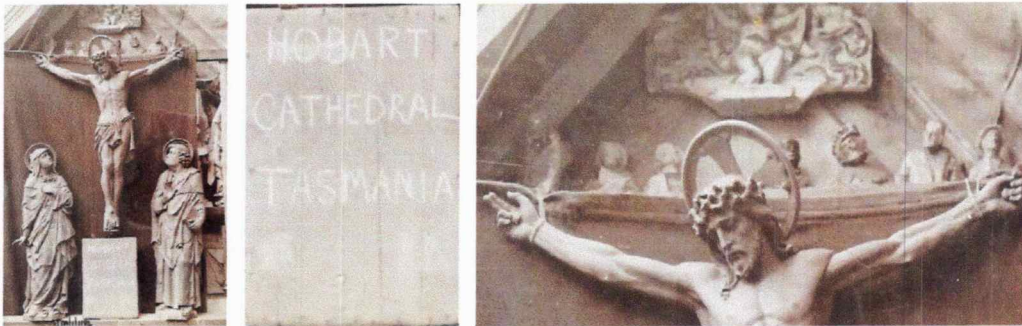
Resulting actions: get a copy of the 1924 article, await further mails from St David's and access the information to find out when the screen was erected.

THE JOHN THOMPSON FILE

UPDATE No 1: HOBART CATHEDRAL

REFERENCE - PART 90 (Volume 8): A ROOD FOR St DAVID'S CATHEDRAL, TASMANIA

Introduction: In part 90 I explored image JTA/1/1186 entitled 'Hobart Cathedral, Tasmania: crucifixion carved in wood with figures of St Mary and St S?' plus an, unseen, article in the Peterborough Advertiser dated 19th December 1924 entitled 'Made in Peterborough for Tasmanian Cathedral'.



Due to the current pandemic (Peterborough library archive is closed) and e-mail difficulties with archivist at Hobart Cathedral I have only received incomplete piecemeal information. In addition I have had some contact with historical societies in Deddington and found a reference in Mr Welsh's (Thompson's subcontract carver) note books regarding Hobart. I still await further information from Hobart Cathedrals archivist Mr Chis Edwards but need to update this study now even if a further update is needed later.

Chris's initial response in full (ref e-mail dated 12.05.2020): I can add some things further to your information on the rood screen. St David's was designed by George F. Brodley, the only church in Australia designed by him. It was due to connections of the Bishop of Tasmania, Brodley was his brother in law.

The Rood Screen was commissioned in 1916 by a wealthy Tasmanian lady in memory of her son. It was made in Franklin's workshop in Deddington but was not shipped out to Tasmania until 1919. David Hancox and several of the artisans came out with the screen to assemble it. Reportedly a great stir was

caused in Deddington at the time the screen was packed; as no one seemed to know where Tasmania was other than it was a long long way away.

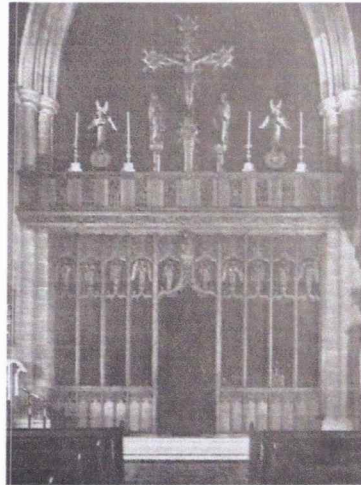
We hold in the archive a photo of the screen before it was shipped ([note: I assume this is the photograph now in the Oxfordshire archive I used in my initial research, see part 90](#)). This was donated by Ruth Quigley, great granddaughter of David Hancox. She was able to confirm an old rumour that a couple of the artisans did indeed settle in Tasmania not returning home.

Franklin's also made our pulpit which was designed by Brodley. The pulpit was erected in 1903, and the canopy and carved panelling in 1904'.

Chris also provided some images from their 1916 guide book.



Below is a slightly later image from a St David's Cathedral guide book of the rood and screen in position.



Below is a copy of the Peterborough Advertiser article of 19th December 1924.

Made at Peterborough for TASMANIAN Cathedral

THESE BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLES OF A SCREEN AND FOLD STOOL, elaborately carved in English oak, have just been completed by John Thompson and Sons, Ltd., of Peterborough, for the Cathedral at Hobart Town, Tasmania. They have been executed from the designs of Mr. Cecil G. Hare, the Architect to Peterborough Parish Church.

Note Cecil G. Hare is described as the Architect to Peterborough Parish church. Now that would be considered to be St John's Church on Cathedral Square but in 1924 it may have meant the Cathedral. I need to check other sources which refer to this to determine where he was in fact the architect.

The formerly unknown archive photograph used for the newspaper article.



Image JTA/1/1125 'Reading (litany) desk carved in wood'

Thompson's subcontractor Mr Welsh's note book of 1924 (ref entry 274) refers to a reredos (in the sum of £98.14s.1d) and a stool (in the sum of £29.8s.6d).

The following chronological list provides my current understanding of the ecclesiastical furniture of Hobart Cathedral and the related Thompson association:

1903 – The pulpit designed by Brodley was erected and I assume made by Franklins.

1904 – Canopy to pulpit and carved panelling were added.

1916 – Rood screen commissioned and designed (by C.G.Hare). Franklin's made the screen under the supervision of their workshop formen David Hancox.

1917 – Franklins forced into bankruptcy because of non-payment by the War Office for the provision of stretchers which did not meet their specification.

1917 to 19 – John Thompsons transported, stored and finished at least the rood figures and probably the screen. Image JTA/1/1186 shows the figures in 'the white' i.e. unstained or treated. This is a reasoned assumption which I need to further check into.

1919 – The rood and screen arrived in Tasmania accompanied by David Hancox and the artisans. The rood screen is erected and commissioned and most of the workmen return home. It is probable that John Thompson organised this and paid the ex-Franklins employees and was in turn paid by Hobart Cathedral. Did any of Thompson's own workmen or management also go to Tasmania with the screen?

1924 (December) – Thompson manufactured church furniture was completed including: a screen, a fald stool, and possibly a reredos. These were designed also by Mr Cecil G. Hare, the architect to Peterborough's Parish Church.

1925 – Furniture arrives at St David's Cathedral and is installed.

A sad postscript: David Hancox returned from Tasmania to Deddington. On a war memorial website which refers to the local church of St Peter and St Paul is shown a plaque to three brothers. A wooden memorial carved by their father David Hancox. ([Information and photograph from Robert Forsyth of the Banbury Historical Society](#)).

Walter David Wilcox: died on the 'first day of the Somme' and is buried at Beinvillers Military Cemetery which received the dead from the battle when moved there in 1922-24.

William Rufus Hancox: killed at the Somme and has no known grave, commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial, near Albert (reference: pier and Face 10A and 10D).

Albert Edward Hancox: buried at Godewaersvelde British Cemetery very close to the Belgium border. Started in 1917 when three casualty clearing stations were brought there.



Further actions:

- 1) Find out if Cecil G. Hare was the architect at Peterborough's St John's Church or the Cathedral or both.
- 2) Await further information from the archivist at St David's concerning if he agrees with me and see if he can provide any further documentation.
- 3) With reference to the 1919 delivery of the 'rood and screen', who sent it? Is there any documentation i.e. is Thompsons of Peterborough mentioned? Who paid the artisans?
- 4) What was the furniture delivered in 1924 and who fixed it, is there a delivery list or invoice? Was a reredos included?
- 5) Get a photograph of the fald stool and the 1924 screen.
- 6) To see if I get further information from the Deddington Historical groups in particular Ruth Quigley.