

## Goldie, George

by Caoimhín de Bhailís

Goldie, George (1828–81), architect, was born in York, England, on 8 June 1828, the son of a medical doctor, George Goldie, and his wife May Anne, the second daughter of Joseph Bonomi the younger, an architect and Egyptologist. His great-grandfather was the Italian architect Joseph Bonomi the elder. Goldie was a catholic; his father was very much involved in the affairs of the local catholic diocese and his brother was Monsignor Canon Goldie of York. There was a long history of papal support on both sides of the family. George was educated at a catholic seminary, Ushaw College, Durham, as was his son Edward and the architect Edward Pugin (qv). He was married to Stylite Madeline Rose de Kerbsabiec (1830–96), who was born in Nantes, France; they had five sons, Edward, an architect, Joseph, Allan, Charles, an artist (who exhibited a Breton scene at the RA exhibition of 1911) and Francis Xavier, a priest, and four daughters, Catherine, Mary Anne, Margaret and Helen.

Goldie trained as an architect (1845–50) with John Gray Weightman and Matthew Ellison Hadfield, becoming a partner from 1850. From 1860 to 1867 he had his own practice when he partnered Charles Edwin Child, and in 1880 his son Edward Goldie became a partner. He was very much involved in the Gothic revival style in English ecclesiastical architecture, and for seventeen years after 1859 was involved in the design, construction and improvement of many notable churches in Ireland. He was, however, at times unwilling or unable to compete with more renowned architects such as Edward Pugin and George Ashlin (qv). In 1867 he submitted designs for a new altar for the Roman catholic church of St Mary in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, but the commission went instead to Pugin and Ashlin. Invited, along with Pugin and Ashlin, to submit designs for the competition to design St Colman's cathedral in Queenstown (Cobh), Co. Cork, he refused to do so, suggesting that the conditions were not satisfactory. Goldie made major contributions to works designed by other architects. For St Mary's, Pope's Quay, Cork city, designed by Thomas Newenham Deane (qv) and Benjamin Woodward (qv), Goldie designed all the elements of the sanctuary (including the pulpit and the high altar). He completed St Vincent's church, also in Cork, begun by Sir John Benson (qv) in 1851, and also designed the stained glass of the eastern windows in the same church.

The church of St Mary and St John, Ballincollig, Co. Cork, was designed by Goldie in his typical style of choice, neo-Gothic; there is a dedication to him on one of the church's stained-glass windows. Another Goldie commission in Cork was the chapel in the South Presentation Convent; this small chapel follows Goldie's design programme of Gothic revival signatures very much in tune with the continental style and was built in 1865. For a time it was used by locals as well as convent residents. The altar was also designed by Goldie, and to its rear is a small-stained glass

window, similar to that in Ballincollig, calling on the parishioners and nuns to pray for him.

Goldie was particularly active in Sligo, most notably in designing the cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Built in 1875, the cathedral owes more to pre-Gothic, Romanesque influence than to Goldie's usual Gothic revival tendencies. Its tower extends to 200 ft (61 m) and adds to the imposing view of the exterior. Also in Sligo he designed the extensions to St Joseph's Ursuline Convent and added a new Italianate porch to the Mercy convent. His church of the Immaculate Conception at Ballymote, Co. Sligo, was his first in Ireland, begun in 1859. Work was initially delayed due to a builders' strike but it was eventually opened in 1864. The turret attached to the building is neither as high nor as slender as that of the Sligo cathedral lending the whole building a rather robust but blocked appearance in contrast to the elegance of the French-influenced cathedral.

The Redemptorist church of St Alphonsus in Limerick features another high altar designed by Goldie, which fits in with the Gothic thirteenth-century revival design of the overall architectural scheme. The altar was described as 'one of the most beautiful works of the kind ... in the empire' (Lenihan). The pulpit was also designed by Goldie. John Quin, a local merchant and supporter of the building of the church, also donated an organ, which was housed in a 'thoroughly medieval' case designed by Goldie (*Tablet*, 7 August 1869). In the 1870s Quin decided to donate a bell tower to the church and, although at first there was opposition to this, a public petition won support for its erection and once more Goldie was called upon to design the tower. The Dominican church of St Saviour, also in Limerick, had a large input from Goldie. Originally designed by James Pain (qv) and opened in 1816, St Saviour was renovated from 1861 under the architect John Wallace. Goldie designed the sanctuary area of the church, including the high altar, and was praised for his designs and drawings for new stained glass and sculpture. One commentator noted that 'many competent judges are of the opinion that amongst the many exquisite works produced by Mr Goldie in England and Britain the present holds, deservedly, a high place' (*Freeman's Journal*, 4 January 1866).

Other notable works by Goldie in Ireland include St Vincent's College, Castleknock, Dublin; St Peter's church, Phibsborough, Dublin; St Saviour's church, Waterford; and St Mary's church, Clonmel. Goldie died in Saint-Servan, Brittany, France, on 1 March 1881.

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*Dublin Builder*, 1 Feb. 1865; *Freeman's Journal*, 4 Jan. 1866; 8 Aug. 1867; 10 Nov. 1871; Maurice Lenihan, *Limerick: its history and antiquities* (1866); *Irish Builder*, 1 Nov. 1868; *Tablet*, 7 Aug. 1869; 1 Nov. 1919; F. Crowe, 'The bells of St Alphonsus', *Old Limerick Journal* (spring 1983); James Stevens Curl, *Dictionary*

*of architecture and landscape architecture* (2006); Irish Architectural Archive, Dictionary of Irish Architects 1720–1940, [www.dia.ie](http://www.dia.ie); will, death, census results, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk), [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) (internet material downloaded 2014)

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