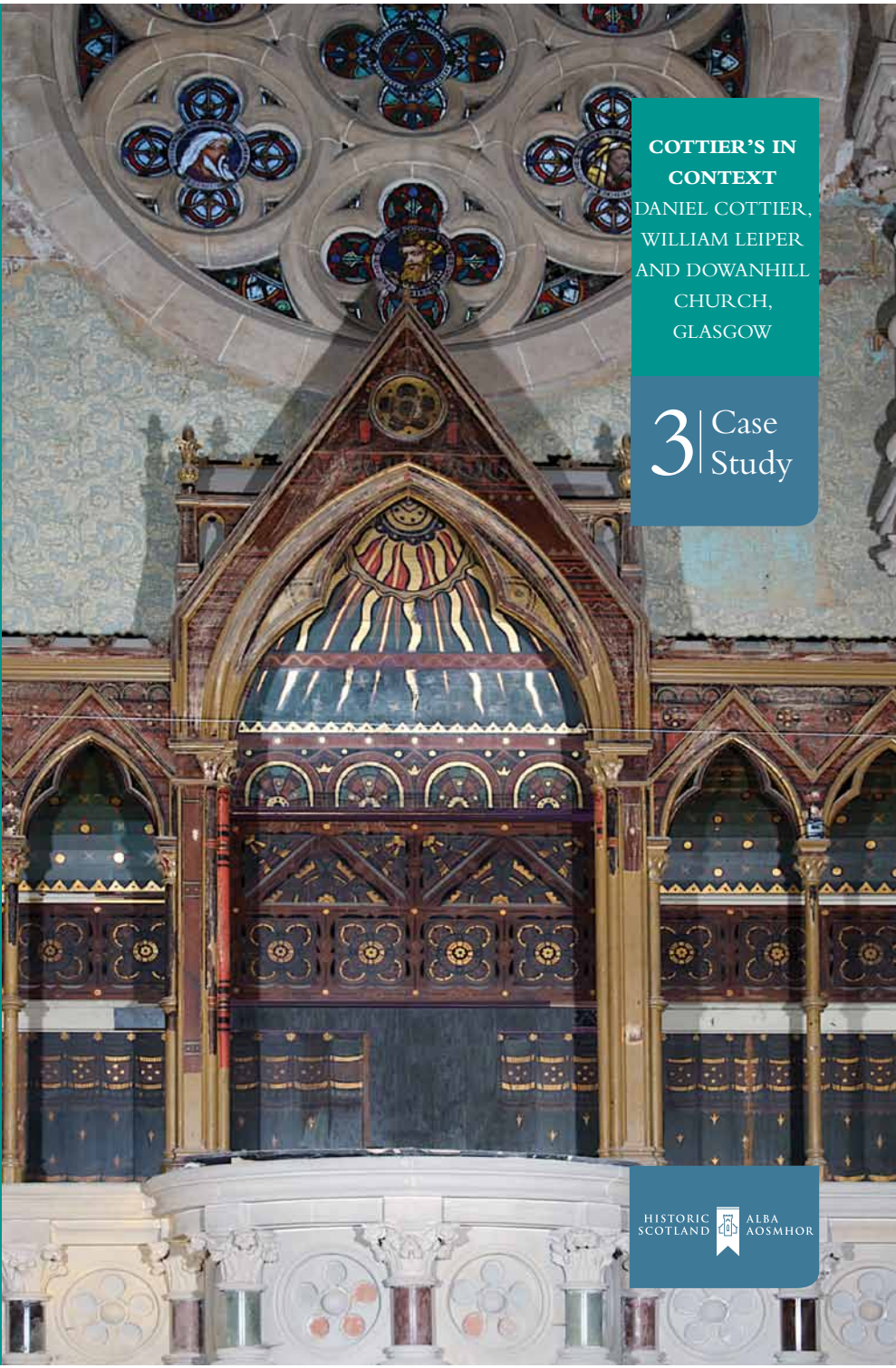




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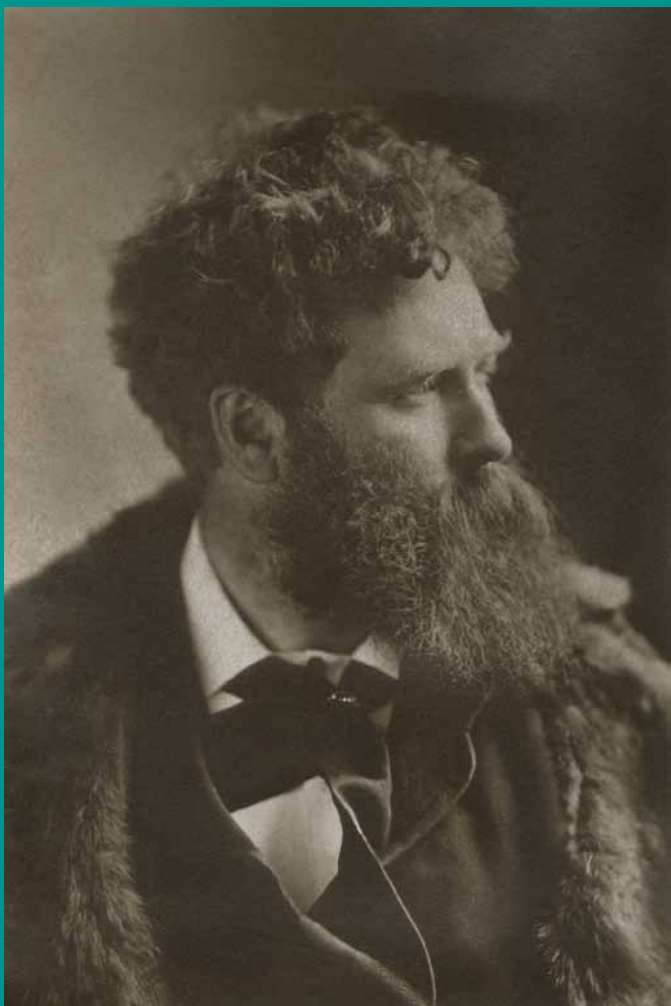
3 | Case Study
Cottier's in Context Daniel Cottier, William Leiper and Dowanhill Church, Glasgow
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COTTIER'S IN
CONTEXT
DANIEL COTTIER,
WILLIAM LEIPER
AND DOWANHILL
CHURCH,
GLASGOW

3 | Case
Study





Front Cover

View of Dowanhill Church from Hyndland Street. Courtesy of Historic Scotland
Miriam (detail), D Cottier, stained glass, 1867. Courtesy of Tom Donald

Inside Front Cover

Daniel Cottier, from a photograph by Thomas Anan given by Cottier to his assistant
Andrew Wells on the latter's departure for Australia to join Lyon, Cottier & Co. Courtesy of the
Mitchell Library, Glasgow City Council



Back Cover

Dowanhill Church Pulpit Canopy, original decoration by Daniel Cottier, 1865. Courtesy of
Historic Scotland.

Inside Back Cover

Dowanhill Church Pulpit Canopy, original decoration by Daniel Cottier, 1865, Courtesy of
Historic Scotland.

Plate I



Dowanhill Church from Hyndland Street, tinted postcard. Courtesy of Gordon R Urquhart.

INTRODUCTION

Cottier's is a well-known Glasgow landmark. It opened in April 1992 as a restaurant and bar in Glasgow's West End occupying two floors of an old church hall. The buildings had been designed as part of Dowanhill United Presbyterian Church (fig 1), 1865, by William Leiper (1839-1916) (fig 2) and in the 1990s their re-use as a bar

and restaurant was still considered a radical solution for an ecclesiastical building. By the time the bar and restaurant opened the great hammerbeam roof of the main church which stands alongside had also been repaired and the Church had begun its new life as a theatre.

Fig 1 Interior before 1906, Dowanhill Church, photograph from W Dickie, 1926, *History of Dowanhill Church 1823-1923*. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.



It is to be hoped that in future generations no Philistine will arise to propose any departure from Cottier's design which remains, and should remain a charming work of art and a monument to his genius. Rev Dickie, 1926.¹

Harbinger of International Aestheticism

Set close to the heart of Glasgow's West End, this former United Presbyterian Church, built 1865–7, encapsulates the architectural confidence, adventurous patronage and artistic experimentation that came together in 1860's Glasgow. The commission effectively launched the careers of both the young architect William Leiper (1839–1916), and Daniel Cottier (1838–91), designer of the painted interior decoration and stained glass. Although a youthful work, it is one of the few surviving and publicly accessible projects to demonstrate the stirrings of a new and distinctive design language that was to resonate in artistic centres around the world. Just as Scots had played an important role in the influential neo-classical style of the mid to late eighteenth-century, so Cottier, Leiper and a group of their close associates from Glasgow (including JJ Stevenson, J Moyr Smith, Bruce Talbert, JM Brydon) were central to the development of the international Aesthetic Movement in the 1870s and '80s. From Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, William Morris and Rhoda and Agnes Garrett, to Vincent Van Gogh, Tiffany and the Vanderbilts the two men's range of friends and associates ran the whole gamut of 'artistic' and literary society – not only in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, but also further afield in London, New York, Montreal, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Paris, and the Hague.

Little did they know it, but in their patronage of Cottier in particular, the Downhill congregation were one step ahead of the fashionable elites in both East Coast America, Canada and Australia. Within a few years of completing work at New York, Sydney and Melbourne, backed up by a European network of agents and contacts, Cottier was to have a huge impact on progressive tastes in the fine as well as decorative arts. In all these centres, apart from carrying out prestigious decorative schemes, he introduced the art-buying public to contemporary paintings of the Barbizon and Hague Schools, and supported young indigenous talent through employing artists like Matthew Maris and Albert Pinkham Ryder on decorative projects as well as exhibiting their latest work. By 1874 a leading New York magazine could write, "The great majority of people who are bent on being in the fashion and up to the times must be cared for, and the place for them is Cottier's."²

Wherever he went, Cottier attracted a following and connected with the most interesting artists, architects, designers, critics and collectors around. His various enterprises provided a magnet for a younger generation of talent, and a stepping-stone to other practices. In particular, Scottish designers seeking openings in London or abroad received a ready welcome. The long-

term side effects of working with noxious pigments and processes combined with the notoriously dank weather in the west of Scotland made emigration appealing. Both Andrew Wells and Charles Gow spent a convalescent spell working for Lyon and Cottier in Australia before returning to establish partnerships in Glasgow.

In all his activities Cottier traded on the sophisticated colour sense that he had demonstrated at Downhill and which was rooted in technical skills acquired during his Glasgow apprenticeship as a stained-glass artist and house-painter with Cairney & Son. He and Leiper shared an admiration for the great Alexander Thomson, and for their contemporaries in the practice of Campbell Douglas and Stevenson, an admiration which infused their Downhill collaboration, as did their direct experience of the progressive tendencies in London during the years around 1858–62; Leiper worked briefly with the architects JL Pearson and William White and moved in the fringes of the set around William Burges and EW Godwin, while Cottier attended FD Maurice's Working Men's College in Red Lion Square. Through his mentor there, the artist Ford Madox Brown, Cottier was exposed to Pre-Raphaelite art and, significantly, witnessed the inception of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co in 1861.

The Glasgow Legacy

Arguably Downhill Church is the most significant survivor of a number of projects in the 1860s that made a contribution to the development of the local skill base and stimulated the kind of adventurous patronage that paved the way for the emergence of Glasgow as an international centre for progressive design around 1900. It provided a model for a new kind of 'art' architecture involving a non-hierarchical collaboration between architect and decorative artist that embraced every aspect of the building, from the railings outside through to the collection plates within the interior. The aesthetic innovations evident at Downhill were rapidly translated into domestic commissions, and many of the decorators and stained glass artists (such as Andrew Wells, Charles Gow, Hugh McCulloch) who went on to employ or work with Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his associates had emerged from the Cottier stable. As in the interior of Downhill Church, self-consciously 'artistic' paint effects integrated with vibrant stained glass were to become hallmarks of the Glasgow Style. At the core of the Glasgow contribution to international tendencies around 1900 was the concept of the room as a work of art, and a poetic, Symbolist sensitivity that distinguished the Scottish work from products of the English Arts and Crafts Movement. The spirituality, emotional intensity and subtle colouration of painters like Corot, Matthew Maris and Albert Pinkham Ryder, whom Cottier directly promoted, enriched the visual vocabulary of designers like George Walton, the Macdonald sisters and George Logan. Unlike Cottier, Leiper remained based in Scotland, apart

from a brief interlude at the Académie Julian in Paris where he studied painting alongside Scottish friends like Arthur Melville, and continued his involvement with the Downhill Church, advising on subsequent additions and repairs in conjunction with Cottier's assistant, Andrew Wells, another figure who deserves to be better known. He also designed a further church for an affiliated congregation in Whiteinch (Victoria Park UP Church, now demolished), and developed the Early French Gothic style of Downhill in another UP Church at Camphill Queen's Park on the south side of the city. Although his practice came to focus on domestic work outside Glasgow, he made several other notable contributions to the cityscape, most importantly the Templeton's carpet factory by Glasgow Green in 1889 which translated the flat geometrical and coloured patterns of the earlier Downhill interior into a remarkable façade, this time a tour-de-force of Venetian rather than Early French Gothic (selected for the cover of the *Blue Guide to Victorian Architecture in Britain* (1987) as an iconic example of the period). Less obvious, but also significant, was Leiper's continued involvement in the world of fine and decorative arts, as an artist of note, a designer of art-lovers' houses and ship interiors, and a promoter of contemporary French and Scottish painting. He played a key role, for instance, in the commissioning and installing murals from the Glasgow Boys to adorn the Banqueting Hall of the Municipal Chambers in 1899–1902, and with John Honeyman was the first architect admitted to the ranks of the RSA, as an Associate in 1892 and a full Academician in 1896. Writing in his groundbreaking study of *The English House* in 1904, the German critic Herman Muthesius recognised Leiper as one of the leading architects in Scotland. The stylishly comfortable and modern houses he created in West-coast towns like Helensburgh and Kilmacolm (several of them decorated by Cottier & Co), were studied by the next generation of Glasgow architects, Mackintosh among them, not only for their assured blend of French and increasingly Scottish and vernacular sources, but also for their interior detailing.

A Unique Survival

Cottier has featured in a series of major exhibitions in America, Canada and Australia but in his native Glasgow has yet to be recognised as more than the name of a lively bar. HH Richardson's Trinity Church in Boston, which he decorated in 1878 in collaboration with John La Farge and Louis Comfort Tiffany, is promoted as a major landmark and tourist attraction within that city, whereas Cottier's three church interiors from the late 1860s in Glasgow have fared less well. As recently as 1997 the remarkable Townhead Parish Church (architect JJ Stevenson 1865–6) was demolished, and Cottier's decoration along with it. His masterful contribution to the Queen's Park UP Church (1867–9), one of Alexander Greek Thomson's most original and celebrated works, had already been destroyed during an air raid in May 1942. It was the Cottier decoration of this church that led Ford Madox Brown to describe his protégé as a colourist with 'a range of performance beyond that of any modern artist [...] I put this Thomson-Cottier church above everything I have seen in modern Europe'.³ Cottier's work on Downhill, which overlapped with both of these vanished schemes, is a unique survival in every sense.

Glasgow's Victorian architecture has been subject to serious scrutiny over the last few decades, most recently in connection with the work of Alexander 'Greek' Thomson, but there is no such reliable background of research on nineteenth-century design and the decorative arts in Scotland. Despite a number of important exhibition catalogues, articles and theses, the significance of Daniel Cottier in particular has been obscured by the formidable diversity and geographical spread of his activities. As one contemporary put it, 'The late Daniel Cottier was a man of original cast of mind, a man of large outlook, and many-sided in his interests and outlook [...] "he thought in Continents"'.⁴ Leiper too displayed a range of talents, not only as an architect but as a painter and photographer. The ongoing project to research, conserve and interpret Downhill Church is providing a major opportunity to raise general awareness of the Glasgow contribution to progressive design and architecture in a local, national and international context. Oral histories and research into business, church and estate records are also vividly illuminating the intersection of spiritual, working and domestic lives in the demographically varied community around Downhill.

¹ Dickie 1926, 118.

² Cook 1874, 500–1.

³ Brown 1893.

⁴ Wells 1902, 14.

Fig 24 Painted Curtains.



A 'Designs for Painted Curtains', EW Godwin, 1866-7, *Building News*.

B Illustration of Medieval Painted Curtain Design, E-E Viollet-le-Duc, 1870, *Les Peintres de Notre-Dame de Paris*.

C Painted Curtains on the Rear Panel of the Pulpit, Downhill Church, D Cottier, 1865. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust, photograph Jane Davies.

Painted Curtains. Similar themes reappear in Godwin's domestic scheme for the Great hall in Dromore Castle, Ireland, built for the Earl of Limerick, and in illustrations to the series of twelve articles written for the *Building News*, 1866-67, on the subject of painted decoration. (JK)

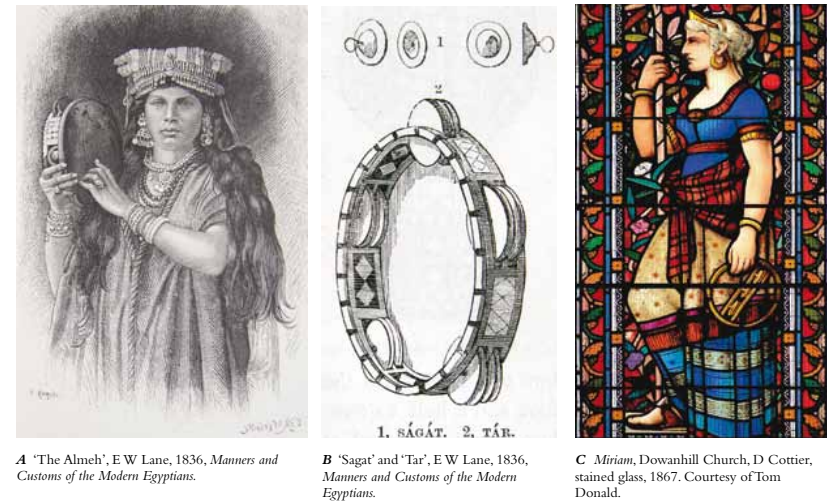
Figure 25 Masonic References.



A *Star of David*, Rose Window, Downhill Church, D Cottier, stained glass, 1866/7. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

B *Jonathan*, Rose Window, Downhill Church, Daniel Cottier, stained glass, 1866/67. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

Fig 26 Egyptian and Assyrian Influences.



A 'The Almeah', E W Lane, 1836, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*.

B 'Sagat' and 'Tar', E W Lane, 1836, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*.

C *Miriam*, Downhill Church, D Cottier, stained glass, 1867. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

In *The Grammar of Ornament* Owen Jones presented Ancient Egyptian and Assyrian ornament as a pure original style derived directly from nature (fig 27). Thomson talked in similar terms of the first creative use of man's aesthetic faculty, which he traced in his second Haldane lecture: having satisfied his need for shelter man begins to 'draw directly upon his aesthetic faculty. He begins with lines and spots, simple circles, intersected circles, stars, either single or in rows, straight lines, zigzag lines, wave lines and spiral lines, in every conceivable combination. He shows his sense of proportion in dividing spaces with noticeable degrees of relationship to each other, and probably colours the whole in harmonious contrasts'.³⁰ This reads like a description of Cottier's Downhill scheme.

Fig 27 Page illustrating Assyrian Ornament, O Jones, 1856, *The Grammar of Ornament*.



Following on from the widespread interest in archaeological excavations in Assyria and Egypt during the 1850s, there was a concern among fine artists to depict Biblical subjects with authentic detail. In addition, the Scottish artists David Wilkie and David Roberts had both travelled to the East in the 1840s. Of particular relevance are a group of drawings and paintings produced for an ambitious publishing project in London for an Illustrated Bible that was started by the Dalziel Brothers in 1863. Lord Leighton, Sir Edward Poynter and Simeon Solomon participated with Egyptian and Assyrian scenes, including images of Miriam with her tambourine and David playing his harp. Ford Madox Brown was commissioned to produce three of the images, including the drawing and painting 'The Coat of Many Colours', 1864-6. The handling of Jacob's head and the assistant's harp are comparable to details in Cottier's

glass (fig 28). When the drawing was exhibited in 1865 at the Piccadilly Gallery, Madox Brown explained in the accompanying catalogue how he had taken details of the costumes and accessories from Assyrian and Egyptian sources 'which, alone, it seems to me, should guide us in Biblical Subjects'.³¹ Cottier was working in Edinburgh by this time but he may have visited London in connection with the 1864 South Kensington Exhibition of Stained Glass to which he contributed a panel. In any case he would surely have followed the reviews of his former teacher's work whose subject matter reflected his own stylistic preoccupations in Glasgow.

Fig 28 Cottier and Ford Madox Brown.



A *Abraham*, Rose Window Downanhill Church, Daniel Cottier, stained glass, 1866/67. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

B 'Jacob', Detail from *The Coat of Many Colours*, FM Brown, oil on panel, 1866. Courtesy of the National Museums Liverpool.

C *David*, D Cottier, stained glass, 1867. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

D 'Attendant' Detail from *The Coat of Many Colours*, FM Brown, oil on panel, 1866. Courtesy of the National Museums Liverpool.

The uncorseted dress and bull-necked, thick-waisted form of Miriam (fig 26C) pointed to a new ideal of feminine beauty that was to become associated with mainstream Aesthetic taste in the 1870s. It was certainly in contrast to any conventional representations of ideal womanhood or wilting femininity, and to the pinched waists of contemporary fashions. Apart from the 'Grecian' fillet around her hair that dominated fashions in 1869, the 'Assyrian' fringe of Miriam's dress was to become a signifier of 'artistic' dress in the 1870s, and was viewed as a more rational alternative to the flounces and beribboned trimmings of more conventional dresses. Similarly the red-headed and blond beauties of the stained glass heads beneath the Galleries are redolent of the modern 'Aesthetic' looks popularised in Pre-Raphaelite painting of the time (fig 29).

Divine Harmonies

Song

The medium through which the liturgical, the spiritual and the architectural converged was music. Psalmody, the singing of a choir led by a Precentor, played an important part in traditional Presbyterian worship. As Rev Dickie remarked, 'every good Presbyterian regarded himself as an authority upon the music of the church'.³² The auditioning and election of the Precentor was in itself an important musical event in the community. At Downanhill a dialogue in sound was set up between the preaching of the Minister from the pulpit and the waves of music that spread through the congregation towards him from the Choir in the South Gallery. The Music Committee had appointed a 'Conductor of Praise' and a professional soprano whose combined salaries in 1867 came to £51 per annum. Cottier's windows in the Choir Gallery representing David with his lyre ('Praise ye the Lord') and Miriam with her tambourine ('Sing ye to the Lord'), provided a literal and figurative invocation to worship through song.

Instrumental Music

Despite an emphasis on song, the introduction of instrumental music was another matter altogether, and one hotly contested within the United Presbyterian Church. The congregation of Glasgow's Clarendon Church, opened in 1856, had attempted to press the issue by equipping themselves with an organ, but the Church Synod refused to sanction its use in public worship for the next sixteen years! At Downanhill, the Music Committee's request in 1867 to 'buy or rent a harmonium' for choir practices was the thin end of the wedge, and by 1875 the Committee announced that it had sufficient funds to purchase an organ.³³ When the Kirk Session put this contentious proposal to the Congregation, there were 209 in favour, but a substantial number remained opposed or at best neutral, raising the spectre of desertion which the Church could ill afford. After a further year of negotiations and enquiries, however, it was decided to accept a tender from the pre-eminent firm, H Willis & Son of London, to build an organ for £975 (considerably more than the combined cost of the original painted scheme and stained glass). Willis had also supplied an organ to the Townhead Church on which Cottier worked with JJ Stevenson, and thereafter also to Glasgow Cathedral. Leiper advised on the installation at Downanhill, and in 1876, a 'brilliant' organist was appointed followed by the addition of a second paid singer to support the choir.³⁴

On a more abstract level, the proportions and colouring of the church interior were orchestrated to reinforce the notion of divine musical harmonies. Cottier's ornamental designs set up rhythmic patterns, with the geometrical elements offset by the motion and curving grace of his 'wibble-wabble' pattern. Between them, Cottier and Leiper created a complete melody of colour and harmony of form that can be viewed as an early expression of the Aesthetic preoccupation with synaesthesia in the arts and the multi-sensory nature of

Fig 29 Female Representations.



A *Ruth*, Downanhill Church, D Cottier, stained glass, 1866/67. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

B *The Blue Bower*, DG Rossetti, oil on canvas, 1865. Courtesy of Barber Institute, Bridgeman Art Library.

C *Helen of Troy*, FA Sandys, oil on canvas, 1867. Courtesy of National Museums Liverpool.

D *Lydia*, Downanhill Church, D Cottier, stained glass, 1866/67. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

perception. Walter Pater's famous 1877 dictum that 'All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music' was to become a touchstone of Aesthetic art and design, expressed most famously, perhaps, in Whistler's series of paintings of 'Harmonies' 'Nocturnes' and 'Symphonies' of the 1870s.³⁵

Musical Colour

Colour was said to address the eye in the same way as music addressed the ear. A catalogue of the Library belonging to the Architectural Section of the Glasgow Philosophical Society drawn up in the mid-1860s, includes several key works on colour by George Field, Michel-Eugène Chevreul and DR Hay. The leading chemist, and natural philosopher George Field wanted to transform his knowledge into an 'aesthetical science' reconciling materialism and idealism. His theories drew an analogy between colour, line, sound, language and the structure of the universe. His views were reiterated in Owen Jones' *Grammar of Ornament* (1856), publications by Christopher Dresser, and summarised in books by Hay. In *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring*, for example, that appeared in seven editions from 1836-47, DR Hay explored the idea that related colours reverberated like harmonic tones in a chord (fig 30). His aim was to disseminate scientific ideas about harmony of colouring that were already familiar to some fine artists in a simple and popular form that could be used by designers and decorators. In composing a scheme Hay stressed the need to reflect the intended function and natural lighting of the interior, and advocated that the tone of any scheme should be set by the general colour of the furniture and woodwork, principles that Cottier followed at Downanhill (fig 31), much as Thomson had done in his schemes. At Downanhill the ground tones of the woodwork and walls were offset by the emotional intensity of the decorative elements in the coloured paintwork and glass. Within the overall harmony there were fluctuations between the joyous explosion of colour in the Choir Gallery, the celestial blue ground of the starry ceiling above, and the hotter fiery intensity emanating from the pulpit. At the

time of Thomson's death in 1875, Cottier still had on loan from his friend a book worth £16. In view of their collaboration on Queen's Park Church and Thomson's preoccupation with coloured decoration, it is tempting to speculate that this considerable sum represented a luscious chromo-lithographed publication like the first edition of Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament* (1856), the production of which virtually bankrupted the author. Hay, Field and Jones all stipulated that for an harmonious arrangement of colours all three primary colours needed to be present 'either in simple or mixed state', and that the distinctions of harmony depended on the dominance of one of these three. On this principle, Field and Hay worked out a system of 'chromatic equivalents' that enabled decorators to systematically balance combinations of primary, secondary and tertiary colours. The balance could be further tweaked by adjusting the tones shades and hues.

Sacred Geometry and Ideal Proportions

Alexander Thomson held mathematics to be the key to rational thought, and the search to create a system of ideal proportions was implicit in all his work, as several recent studies have convincingly demonstrated. For him, geometry was not only a stylistic exercise but almost an article of faith. Although he departed from the Greek models which Thomson viewed as the most ideal architecture of proportions, Leiper was coming from the same religious background and the analysis of recent measured drawings suggests that he too was committed to expressing a system of harmonic proportions in his design for Downanhill (see below, **Chapter 8, Downanhill Church And Numeric Proportion**).

In a Scottish context this resonated with earlier explorations of the consonance between art, proportions and music in the writings and practice of the Scottish decorator and aesthetician, DR Hay, most notably in his books *Proportion, or the Geometric Principle of Beauty Analysed*, *The Science of Beauty*, and his study relating to the Parthenon's geometry. It was a period of increased

Seaton Cottage, the Aberdeen Connection, and The Elms, Arbroath

The earliest documented interiors by Cottier were in Aberdeen, for the miller collector and art critic Dr James Forbes White with whom the gregarious designer had apparently struck up a friendship in the course of a train journey. Some time around 1862-3, Cottier added a drawing room and dining room to White's villa, Seaton Cottage, Bridge of Don (fig 33), not far from St Machar's Cathedral in Old Aberdeen where Cottier executed a window for White in 1864. He also added a drawing room to Bridgefield, Bridge of Don, for White's mother. At Seaton Cottage, in the recently revealed tertiary colour combinations and stylised ornament of the painted schemes, coordinated with stained glass and painted tiles, one gets a hint of what was to come at Dowanhill. The colours were unusual, and according to his daughter, White recalled thinking at first how terrible they were when he saw them going on, despite his pleasure at the end result.¹ The glass roundels, depicting Old Masters from Raphael to Rembrandt in the dining room, and literary women in the drawing room, reflected White's artistic and cultural preoccupations. Not only as a patron, but as a critic and collector he exerted a profound influence on Cottier and Leiper, not least in his passion for contemporary French and Dutch painting, and recent research by scholars in Aberdeen is bringing to light his impact on the wider course of Scottish painting and collecting.²

Cottier was to convert the knowledge he absorbed from White into collaborations with artists like Hugh Cameron and Matthew Maris, and perhaps more importantly into his lucrative business as an art dealer. Indeed it seems likely that Cottier channelled some of White's collection onto the international market when White was forced to sell in the late 1870s. Leiper appears to have had some family connection with Aberdeenshire, but was probably drawn into White's orbit through Cottier. It was possibly

at Seaton Cottage that Leiper first became friendly with Arthur Melville with whom he studied at the Académie Julian in Paris c.1878-9. Another prominent artist in White's circle was George Reid (later knighted and President of the Royal Scottish Academy) for whom Leiper designed a studio-house, 'St Luke's', and Cottier designed a window in St Machar's commemorating his brothers. Cottier furnished and decorated the interiors of several other houses for the Aberdeen elite, including 'Kepplestone' (fig 34), the house next door to Reid's, for the prominent granite merchant and collector, Alexander Macdonald, and 'Garthdee' (now part of the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture) for another merchant, John Moir Clark as well as the Elms, Arbroath for Provost Corsar (fig 35). Together these commissions, spanning the period immediately before and after Dowanhill, amounted to a revolution in domestic taste. As the Aberdeen lawyer Lachlan Mackinnon recalled, "The change-over to the "severe Cottier" style of house decoration took place in the 'seventies'.³

Colearn, Cairndhu and Cornhill

This trio of substantial houses in Scotland were in a similar style and all date from 1869-73. The first was the substantial Colearn house in Auchterarder, Perthshire, designed by Leiper in 1869. By the time Cottier came to furnish the interiors, he had been joined in his London partnership by old Glasgow friends Bruce Talbert and John McKean Brydon, and had Rhoda and Agnes Garrett as apprentices (see below). The geometric and eclectic Gothic of Dowanhill and Talbert's Gothic Forms (1867) was from this point on lightened and modified by the fashionable influence of Japan. The restrained outline of the furniture was enhanced by the incorporation of painted panels and tiles. In 1871 Leiper and Cottier & Co received a further high profile commission for a house in Helensburgh from John Ure, a grain miller who became Lord Provost of Glasgow, and whose son became Lord Strathclyde. With clients this influential their longer-

term success was assured. Leiper designed Cairndhu, an art lover's house with a large gallery decorated in the most advanced Aesthetic taste by Cottier and Andrew Wells (fig 36A). Ure was a musical enthusiast (he had an organ built into the hall), and kept the company of artists. A book of Glasgow Art Club sketches published in 1881 was dedicated to him, and by this time the interior of his new house had apparently "already formed the subject of paintings by Mr. Lockhart and other artists".⁴ The British Architect described the house as 'carried out

under [Leiper's] close supervision, down to almost every detail of the furnishing', and noted the elaborate and rich colouring of the interiors; "The decoration of the whole house is strong and picturesque in style".⁵ Work on the house continued till 1875-6 and cost much the same as the whole of Dowanhill Church, totalling about £8,000. As already mentioned, in 1873 Alexander Kay, one of the moving forces behind the Dowanhill Church, commissioned the Leiper-Cottier duo to build and decorate Cornhill, his house in Biggar.

Fig 33 Cottier and John Forbes White.



A Interior of Seaton Cottage, Bridge of Don, D Cottier, 1863-7. Courtesy of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collection.



B Interior of Seaton Cottage, now Glenseaton Cottage, Bridge of Don after restoration. Courtesy of Bill Church.

Fig 34 Interior of Kepplestone House, Aberdeen, Cottier & Company, 1875. Courtesy of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collection.



Figure 35 Painted Ceiling, The Elms, Arbroath, W Leiper, D Cottier, 1867-9. Ref SC7007613 courtesy of RCAHMS. Licensor www.rcahms.gov.uk



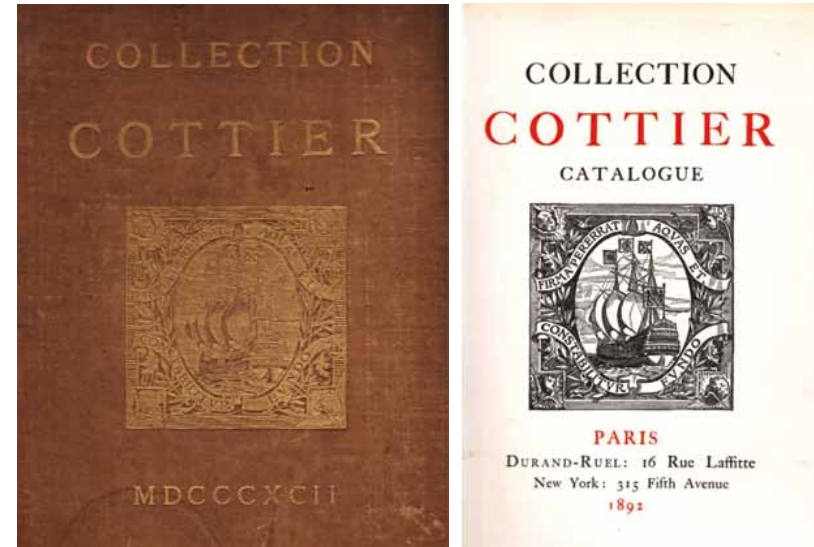
Plate XI Cottier & Co London, Ceramics.**A** Floral Charger, Cottier & Co London, ca. 1884. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.**B** Portrait Charger, Cottier & Co London, ca. 1884. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.

world, and for his numerous illustrated publications such as *Ornamental Interiors*, 1887. Throughout the 1880s in London he edited his own journal, *Decoration*, which featured the work of various Glasgow contemporaries like Thomson, Talbert and Andrew Wells.

Collectors and Collecting

The support of local dealers and individual collectors or patrons was vital to the establishment of a distinctive

'Glasgow style' of art and design. As both an independent art dealer and collector Cottier participated in the early expansion of the gallery-based art market in Glasgow, linking associates like the Glasgow dealer William Craibe Angus to an international network of dealers including EJ Van Wisselingh (the Hague and London), Duveen and Goupil (Paris), Inglis and Avery (New York). During frequent trips to the Continent he began dealing in contemporary Dutch and French painting (fig 39), and

Fig 40 *Collection Cottier Catalogue*, Durand-Ruel, auction catalogue with a memorial by WE Henley, 1892. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.

persuaded the dealer Van Wisselingh to become manager of the London gallery. Through this connection the Dutch artist Matthijs Maris came to live with Cottier in 1877, producing both paintings and stained glass for the firm's various outlets. Cottier introduced receptive audiences in Glasgow, New York, Montreal, Sydney and Melbourne to the paintings of contemporary French and Hague School artists, and maintained his Scottish connections through loaning considerable numbers of pictures to the international exhibitions held in Edinburgh in 1886 and in Glasgow in 1888. The major sale of his collection following his death in 1891 was held in London, New York and Paris (fig 40), and attracted Scottish collectors like WA Anderson, whose Park Circus house Leiper and Wells had recently remodelled, as well as those like the New York collector Henry Clay Frick, and Sir William Van Horne in Montreal.

The Glasgow dealer Alexander Reid has been the subject of an exhibition and several publications, but eleven years before he painted Reid's portrait in 1887, Van Gogh was visiting Cottier's showrooms in London. In 1883 he sent some drawings to his brother Theo noting:

I thought perhaps these drawings would be something for Cottier. I imagine they would look well placed in the panels of a large cabinet, over a mantelpiece, or in a wainscot – in short, framed in woodwork as they do in England, and elsewhere too. But you know how it is with Cottier, when there is a certain degree of style in a drawing he likes it well enough, but, alas, he generally pays little. Still, I believe he is

*one of those who would care for them; and besides, he could display the drawings favourably.*¹²

Similarly one of Reid's clients, William Burrell, now the best known of the Glasgow collectors, was only one of many individuals in the city interested in contemporary French and Dutch painting. Moreover Burrell did not buy Matthijs Maris' *Butterflies* until 1901, although Cottier had been employing Maris and selling his work since the 1870s (fig 41).

From New York, Cottier & Co also furnished the homes of art lovers in Montreal, then the economic capital of Canada. The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts was established in 1860, and the most significant Canadian collectors in the decades leading up to World War I, like Van Horne, were to be found in that city. As their names indicate – Ross, Angus, Lord Strathcona, Drummond – many of the others had Scottish connections, and socialised around the Presbyterian Church of St Andrews in Montreal. Writing in the *Studio* in 1907, Croal Thomson commented:

*It is not yet generally recognised, yet it is a fact which will have considerable weight in the art markets of the world in days to come that, after London, Paris and New York, Montreal is the most important artistic centre for art of the finest quality. For thirty years or more there have been growing in Montreal collections of pictures which can hold their own with the very best.*¹³

Plate XIV Lyon, Cottier & Co.

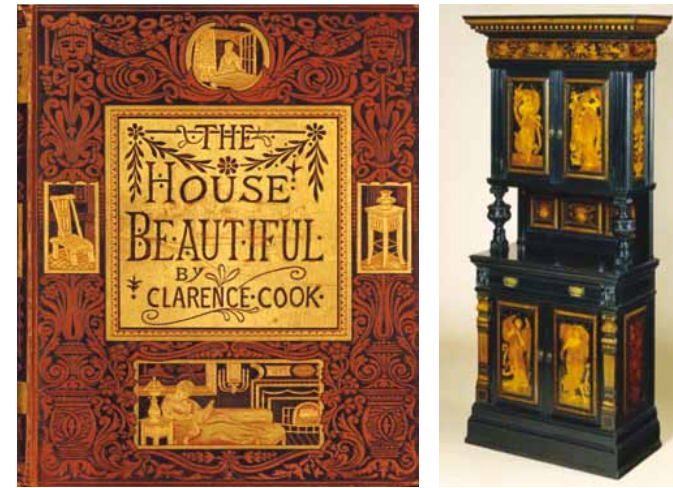


A Window from Joylen, Birchgrove, NSW, John Lamb Lyon, stained glass, ca. 1884. Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Photo: Sotha Bourn.



B Portrait Vase of Sir Joseph Banks. Lyon Cottier & Co, painted clayware, ca.1880. Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Photos: Sotha Bourn.

Fig 43 Cottier and *The House Beautiful*.



A Cover designed by D Cottier for C Cook, 1878, *The House Beautiful*. Photo J. Hammond.

B Cabinet by Cottier & Co decorated with figures of Amor, Mars, Fama and Fortuna, Greek masks, and urns, 1870-80. © National Museums of Scotland. Licensor www.scran.ac.uk

A decade on from Dowanhill we find Cottier travelling to Europe and North Africa with American friends, the painter Albert Pinkham Ryder and sculptor Olin Warner, whom he had taken under his wing in 1875 by exhibiting a *Salon des Refusés* in his New York

showrooms. Their arrival in Paris coincided with that of Leiper and Arthur Melville from Scotland, and possibly that of John Lamb Lyon from Australia indicating the internationalism of a network which can be traced back to Glasgow in the 1860s.

Plate XV American Painting.



A *Stag Drinking*, AP Ryder, oil on leather, ca. 1880. Courtesy collection Spanierman Gallery, LLC, New York.

B *Stag and Two Does*, AP Ryder, oil on leather, ca. 1880. Courtesy collection Spanierman Gallery, LLC, New York.

Caption - Cottier commissioned the American artist Albert Pinkham Ryder to decorate a number of designs made by his craftsmen. In all likelihood, these vignettes were done in the early 1880s for Cottier & Co. New York. In 1877 Ryder travelled to London for about a month with Cottier. That same year he was a founding member of the Society of American Artists, where he exhibited Barbizon-influenced landscapes. Ryder again went to England with Cottier in 1882, the two joined sculptor Olin Levy Warner in Paris, then toured Holland, Italy, Spain and Tangier. (DR) Collection: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, New York.

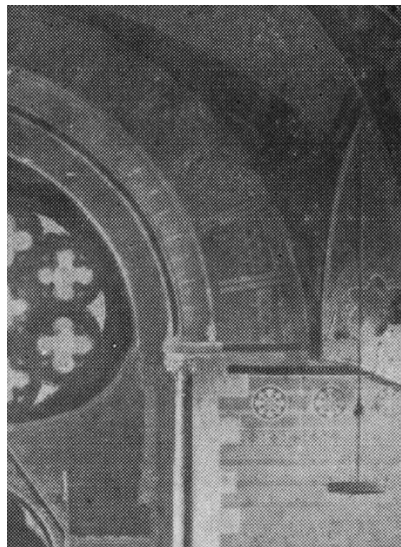
7 DOCUMENTING THE PAINTED DECORATION

Hilary Macartney and Alan Ferdinand

Plate XXVI



A Graphic Reconstruction of Decoration on the Upper Nave Wall, Ceiling Spandrels and Timber Tracery of Downhill Church, 2010. Courtesy of Groves-Raines Studio.



C Decorative Scheme, Downhill Church Nave, D Cottier, 1866, detail from a photograph taken before 1906 illustrated in W Dickie, 1926, *History of Downhill Church 1823-1923*. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.



B Decorative Scheme on the Nave Ceiling, Downhill Church, Daniel Cottier, 1866, detail from photograph taken in 1930s. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.



D Ceiling Decoration, Downhill Church, D Cottier, 1866. Courtesy of Groves-Raines Studio.

Introduction

Surprisingly, there is almost no reference to Cottier's painted decoration scheme in the surviving records of Downhill Church. The earliest documents relating to the building and decoration of the Church, including the brief to the architects and the Minutes of the Board of Managers for that period, make no mention of it. For example, the instructions to the architects involved in the competition for the building contract allowed only for 'Painting or Staining and Varnishing all wood and iron work' in the budget for the project.¹ Likewise, there is no mention of Cottier or a contract for painting in the schedule of quotes from the various trades considered at a joint meeting of the Managers, Trustees and Kirk Session of the Church on 18 April 1865.² It is possible that the decision to incorporate a scheme of painted decoration was taken only once the construction of the building was nearing completion. At the laying of a memorial stone on 7 August 1865, during the building of the Church, George Thomson, Preses (chairman) of the Board of Managers, gave a statement to the *Daily Mail*, in which he mentioned that the ceiling would be plastered to prevent draughts and to improve acoustics but declared that the Church would be 'grand in its simplicity and massiveness, dependent for its beauty not on costly ornament, but rather on the harmony of its lines and proportions'.³ However, his comments on the intended lack of ornament may have referred mainly to the architecture and to the exterior of the building.

The Original Decoration

The only document found so far which refers to the painted decoration by Daniel Cottier is a List of Mason's Extras relating to the costs of the Church, in which a payment of £397.10/- to Cottier for 'Painting' is recorded. This document is undated but probably dates from 1866-7, since the dates on the main documents relating to the measurement of masonry and joinery work date from the end of 1866.⁴ The painting was presumably completed, or mainly completed by the time the Church was opened

for worship on 11 November 1866, and both the painted decoration and the stained glass windows by Cottier were favourably mentioned in the *Glasgow Herald's* report on the opening of the Church. The report also suggested that the harmony achieved between architecture and decoration in the scheme (figs 67 and 68) was due to the cooperative relationship between Cottier and the architect, William Leiper:

*The whole church is painted throughout after the medieval manner, and, with the exception of Townhead Parish Church, is perhaps the only Presbyterian church in Scotland in which painted windows and mural decoration have been carried out as in the old times. The decorations and painted windows have been admirably executed by Mr Cottier, to whom praise is due for the manner in which he has carried out the views of the architect. The aim of the latter has been to build a Presbyterian church which might have some claim to be reckoned artistic.*⁵

The *Glasgow Herald's* reference to Townhead Parish Church is significant, since this was Cottier's first major commission for a scheme of painted decoration and some stained glass in Glasgow in 1865. There, he is likely to have worked closely with the architect JJ Stevenson, within whose practice William Leiper also worked. Some idea of the boldness of this now disappeared decorative scheme, and an impression of the impact of its groundbreaking nature in a Scottish Presbyterian Church can be gained from an account by James Mavor, a prominent figure in literary circles in Glasgow:

Fig 68 Interior of Downhill Church after 1906, glass lantern slide. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.

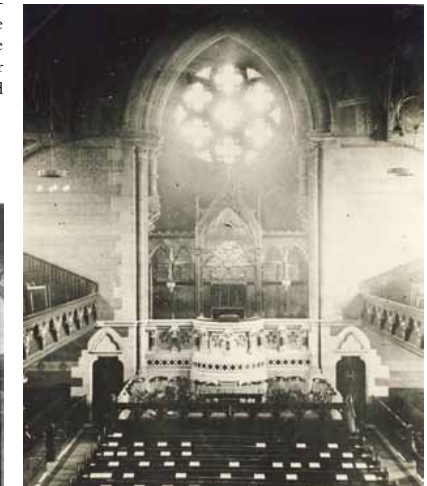


Fig 67 Interior, Downhill Church before 1906, photograph from W Dickie, 1926, *History of Downhill Church 1823-1923*. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.



Fig 73 Nave Tracery Roundel, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 74 Nave Roundel, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 75 Nave String Course Roundel, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.

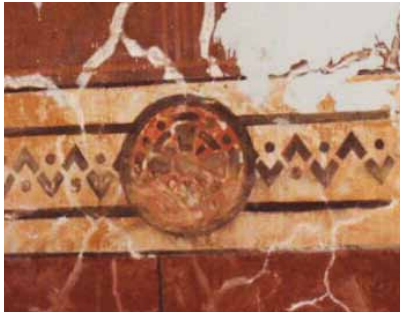


Fig 76 North East Nave Voussoir, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 77 Nave Voussoir Ornament, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 78 Decoration on Nave Clerestory Window Arch Spandrel, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 79 Sawtooth Motif on Nave Ceiling, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 80 Star Motif on Nave Ceiling, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



The hammerbeams, of yellow pine, were painted rich red with black bands and quatrefoils, with chamfers in red or green with black dots, and stop chamfers in red or green (fig 81). The hammerbeam edges were also ebonised. The inset designs on the wooden gallery fronts were picked out in gold, red and black. Wooden elements appear to have been finished with a coat of varnish, leaving the yellow pine to show through in unpainted areas. The cast-iron columns supporting the gallery were painted a deep

Prussian blue, with bands of red and gold leaf. The wooden pulpit canopy was painted with curtain motifs, quatrefoils, lunettes, tongues of flame, dots and stars in green, gold leaf, red and black, with a painted red and black tile pattern on its roof (figs 82-85). The relief cinquefoils on the honey-coloured stone pulpit were picked out in red. Below it, a frieze of quatrefoils was painted in red with black dots on the sides and black with red dots on the central, projecting pulpit bay (fig 86).

Fig 81 Nave Hammerbeam Arch Decoration, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 84 Pulpit Rear Panelling, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 82 Arcaded Pulpit Canopy, Dowanhill Church, W Leiper, D Cottier. Courtesy of Four Acres Charitable Trust.

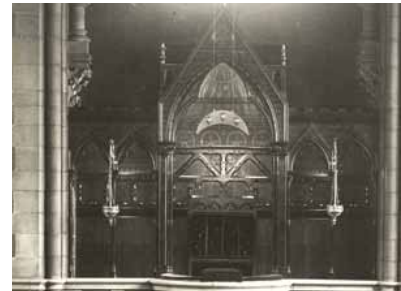


Fig 85 Pulpit Canopy Roof, Dowanhill Church. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Fig 83 Pulpit Hood Underside, Dowanhill Church, revealing the original decoration beneath subsequent layers of purple paint. Courtesy of Historic Scotland.



Introduction: Music and Harmony at Downhill Church

The central role of music within the Church as reflected in its decoration, including the David and Miriam windows (fig 106), and the concepts of colour harmony and harmonious proportion (fig 107) implicit in the painted decoration and the architecture are one of the themes of the present book (see also **Chapters 3** and **8** above). The significant place of music, not only in the formal services of worship in the Church, but also in the ancillary activities and entertainments organised by the Church committees is also clear from the records of Downhill UP Church, and the material presented by the Rev Dickie in his book on the Church. The details of the form of the music in the Church, and the maintenance of its high quality, were matters that were dealt with principally by the Church's Music Committee, although both the Kirk Session and the Board of Managers also discussed musical matters that were seen as having great relevance for the congregation and the Church as a whole, such as when the professional standards or moral character of the Precentor became an issue, as noted in **Chapter 5**.

Fig 106 The Choir Windows:



A David with Harp, Downhill Church, D Cottier 1867. Courtesy of Tom Donald.



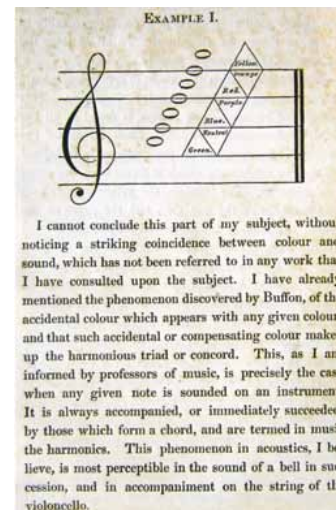
B Miriam with Tambourine, Downhill Church, D Cottier 1867. Courtesy of Tom Donald.

All of this provides background to one particularly significant musical matter involving the whole church, its managing bodies and its architect William Leiper. This concerned the commission of a church organ in 1875.

The Downhill Organ: Decisions and Debates

The developments in organ-building and the increasing popularity of installing organs in churches was a matter of great contention within the Presbyterian churches in Scotland in the second half of the nineteenth century. For some, the move represented dynamism and progress, and a rejection of old-fashioned and excessively puritanical practices. For others, the coming of the 'Kist-o'-Whistles' was a departure from the purity of the Presbyterian tradition of praising the Lord directly and solely through the instrument of the human voice. The arrival of the organ also led to a number of other repercussions in the form of the music used in worship. The way in which the musical score of psalm tunes was written began to change with the introduction of the organ and the score itself often had to be compressed or adapted to suit the organ keyboard, a change bitterly resented by the old precentors, who complained that some of the finest

Fig 107 'Example I', DR Hay, 1847, *The Laws of Harmonious Colouring*.



Remarks were also made by some of the builders as to the most suitable site for the instrument, on this subject also a letter was read from Mr Leiper, the Church Architect; after considering the matter fully the managers decided that it would be impracticable to build a recess behind the Church or to remove the pulpit forward and that in the circumstances the back of the gallery was the most eligible site.

The selection of the choir gallery as the most suitable site within the Church also meant that the stained glass windows depicting David and Miriam, which had originally been installed in the south façade in 1867, and whose musical subject matter had clearly been chosen to reflect the function of the gallery, would be obscured by the new organ. These were relocated to the east façade in 1899 (see **6. Documenting the Building**).

On 28 July 1875, the Board of Managers noted that the Organ Committee had received fuller estimates from some of the organ builders 'which were gone into at some length'.⁵ A further report is recorded in the Minutes of the Managers' meeting of 26 October 1875, where a Mr Miller, who appears to have been entrusted with much of the responsibility for obtaining prices, submitted a statement in the matter of the organ. Since the meeting of 28 July of that year, he had been in London. There, he had: 'waited upon two of the builders whose estimates had been entertained, from what he saw there, and from information acquired by careful enquiry elsewhere he formed the opinion that Messrs Willis were the likeliest parties to supply a really good instrument, their lowest quotation however was considerably above what had been previously named as a maximum price'.⁶

The interest generated by the quotation from the firm of Henry Willis, even though their lowest quote was well above the maximum the Downhill Organ Committee had resolved to commit to the project, needs to be understood in the light of the reputation which Willis enjoyed at this date. Henry Willis had first achieved fame as an organ builder of distinction at the time of the Great Exhibition in London of 1851. His firm, Henry Willis and Sons, went on to become the most famous in Britain. This rise to prominence took place over a period when organ manufacture in Britain was at a scale that outstripped that of the other leading organ-building countries of the Continent.⁷

Willis was born in London in 1821. Apprenticed to John Gray in 1835, he moved to Cheltenham in the early 1840s to join WE Evans, who specialised in reed harmoniums but also built organs. They produced a two-manual free-reed instrument, which was exhibited at Novello's in London. Willis's skill in voicing reed stops was due to this early experience. Willis then set up on his own at Gray's Inn Road, London, his first large job being to rebuild the Gloucester Cathedral organ in 1847. Willis visited

harmonies were thus sacrificed.¹ The process through which the momentous decision to commission an organ was taken by Downhill UP Church is documented in the records of the Church. The essential decision about installing an organ at all was the responsibility of the Kirk Session (see **Chapter 5**), and was taken in March 1875.² As the Rev Dickie explained in his book on the Church, the Kirk Session raised the issue with the congregation:

*Considering the thorniness of the subject, the Session resolved to 'gang warily'. It offered no opinion on the matter, but agreed to issue a circular to test the feeling of the congregation. The result was that 209 voted for the organ, 77 against, and 103 neutral.*³

According to Dickie, however, the matter was still very sensitive, and despite the resounding majority in favour, the Kirk Session allowed a period of several months to elapse before proceeding any further, in order to determine whether those in opposition would decide to leave the Church.

Once the Kirk Session agreed to give their sanction to proceed with the organ, the matter was remitted to the Board of Managers, who then formed a committee and set about the business of obtaining prices. On 28 June 1875, the Organ Committee reported on initial estimates received: 'Offers were submitted from several makers at prices varying from £675 to £1133 complete'.⁴ They also discussed the siting of the organ: