

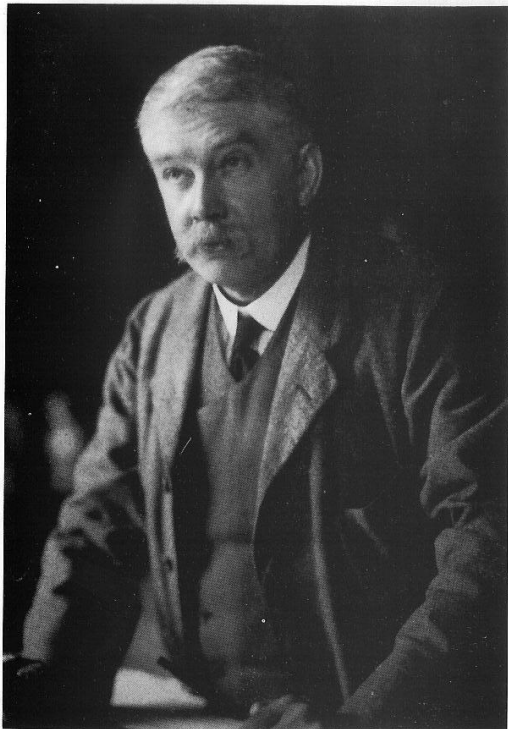
## Temple Moore comes to Christ Church

### *Who is Temple Moore?*

Temple Moore was one of the foremost church architects of the late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

He was born into a military background in Ireland in 1856. His father, a devout churchman, helped his son develop a natural talent for drawing and design. In 1872 Temple was sent as a pupil to Rev Richard Wilton, Rector of Londesborough in the East Riding. Working in the same area was the noted architect George Gilbert Scott with whom he was later taken on as an articulated pupil and who enlisted his help with many Yorkshire commissions.

As Scott's health deteriorated, Temple Moore's involvement in the practice grew and he developed his own personal architectural style which became known as "Late Gothic Revival". In 1867 he came under the patronage of the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Feversham at Duncombe Park and helped Scott design and build the tiny church of St Mary Magdalene in East Moors. His first major assignment was St Wilfrid's Church in Harrogate and he was soon to build one of the finest Wolds churches at Sledmore for Sir Tatton Sykes



In all Temple Moore was responsible for the design of over 40 churches from the smallest country church to a cathedral in Nairobi. Although he set up his own practise in London in 1878, he still possessed a great affinity for his adopted homeland of Yorkshire. Among the churches in our region where he had a major influence in the design were:

St Botolph's, Carlton-in-Cleveland (1896-7)

St Cuthbert's, Middlesbrough ( 1897-1901)

St Columba's, Middlesbrough (1897-8)

St Nicholas, Guisborough (1903-08)

St Augustine's, Kirkby-in-Cleveland (1905-06)

St Mary-the –Virgin, Nunthorpe (1914)

### ***How did he become involved at Great Ayton?***

Although Christ Church was built in 1876, it seems that the chancel was then of a very basic design (probably as a result of a shortage of funds). In 1902, the Vicar of the day, Revd Richard Whittington and his churchwardens Harold Dixon and Robert Watson clearly believed that Christ Church deserved a more ornate chancel and called upon the 'local' architect Temple Moore to come up with some designs. Writing from his office at 46 Well Walk, Hampstead on 4 January 1902, Temple Moore wrote:

*" Dear Mr Whittington,*

*I will send you a drawing for the liturgy desk. I have sent you this morning by Parcel post 4 drawings of the proposed fittings for your church, and I hope to let you have a detailed estimate for the same in about 10 days.*

*I think the church would be enormously improved by the suggestions I have made, though of course they need not all be carried out at one time. Besides the drawing of the screen, and the hangings and wood work at East End, I have sent a drawing for new oak stalls, with high panelled backs, the stalls on the south side would have backs with solid panels, but with similar tracery to those on the north side.*

*I would also like to put a low dado to the chancel walls on the north and south sides east of the stalls. There should also be a new Altar rail, which might be done in oak and brass. I have shown an extra step to the Altar, and a marble floor to the Chancel. With regard to the walls I would suggest simply distemperring these a nice warm ivory white, and staining the wood work of the roofs a dark brown finished to a dull surface. The seats in the nave could also have the varnish removed and stained down to dark oak and waxed. With regard to the Pulpit it would of course be best to have a new one, but if you must retain some portion of the present one, it could of course be cut down and remade to a reasonable size.*

*I am very strongly of the opinion that the altar should be lengthened to 8 feet, as this would add greatly to the dignity of the Chancel, it is shown this length on the drawings sent. With regard to the hangings behind the Altar I will send you some patterns of these. Have you any fancy for the prevailing tone of colours for these, would you prefer green or red.*

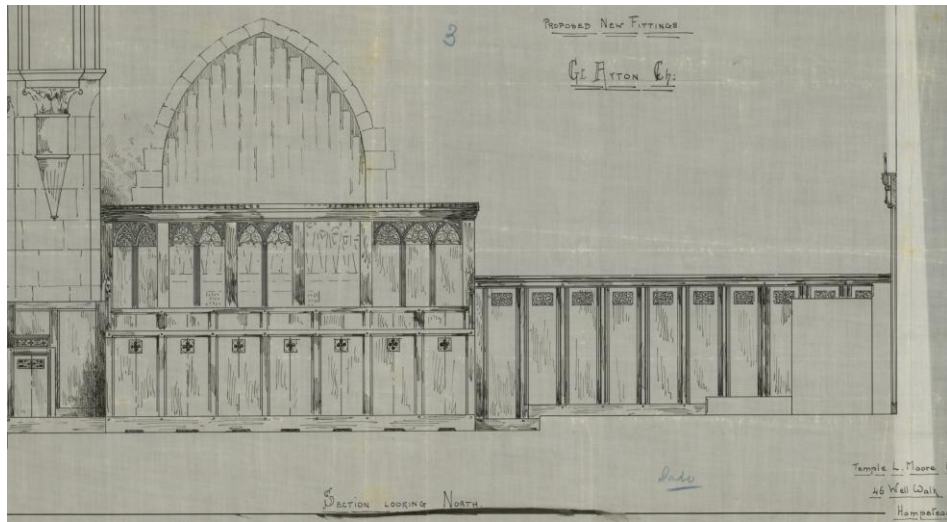
*I remain*

*Yours very truly*

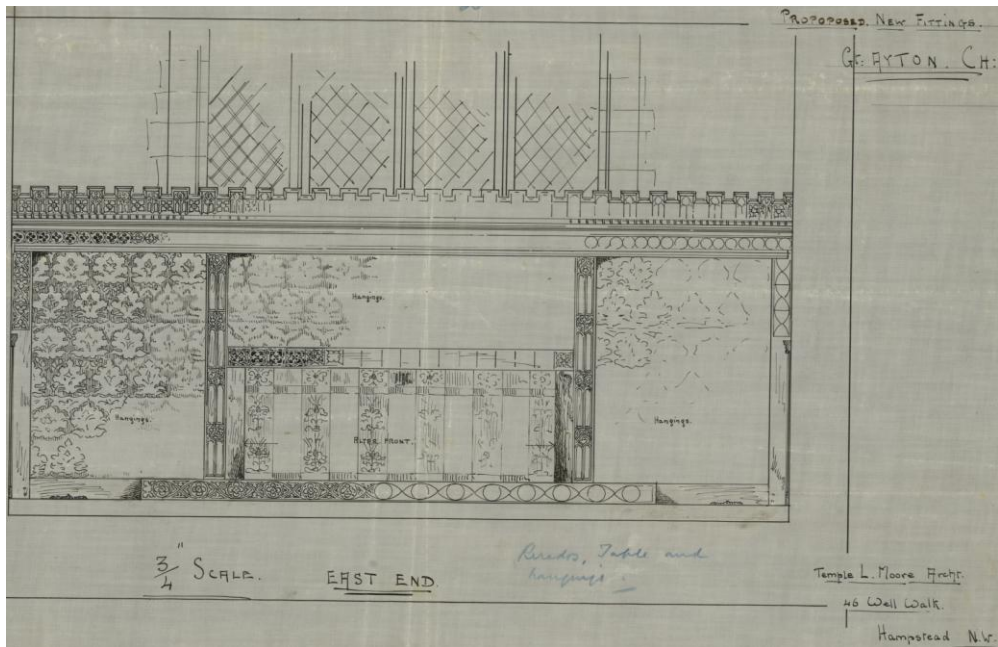
*Temple Moore*

*PS The marble floor might either be black and white or if you prefer red and white"*

After some further debate, a faculty was duly submitted to the Diocesan office in York on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1902, accompanied by some fine ink drawings (which are copied here by courtesy of the Borthwick Institute in York):



View looking north to choir stalls. organ loft and dado rail



View to altar and south wall

Interestingly, Moore also proposed an ornate screen to be installed at the chancel arch but the Revd Withington turned the idea down as the screen would obscure the congregation's view of the altar!

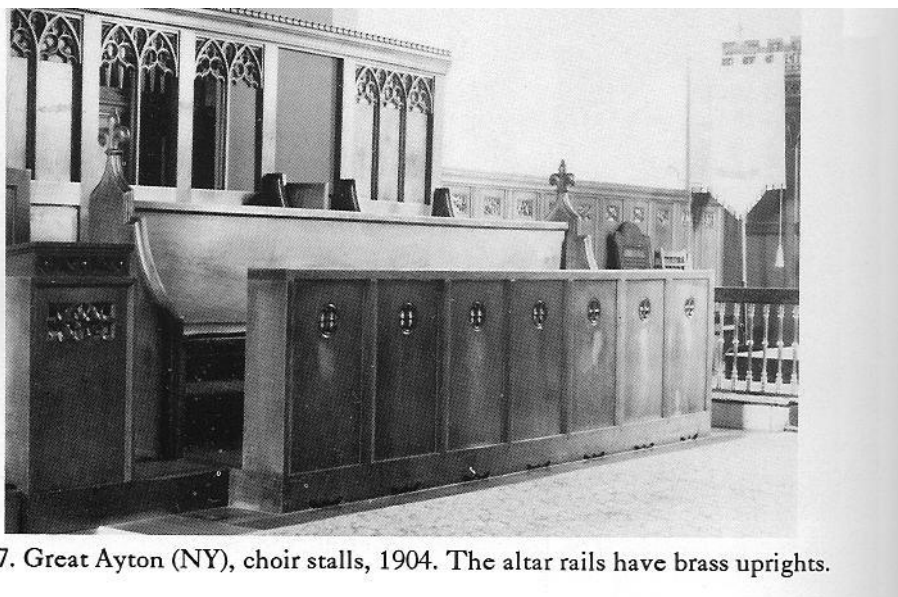
The finished version as recorded in **Geoffrey K Brandwood's** book "**Temple Moore – a Architect of the Late Gothic Revival**" (1997). The choir stalls shown in the picture are virtually unchanged to this day.

**1904 Great Ayton (NY), Christ Church.** Chancel refitted, £169. Faculty 1902

(FAC 1902B/5) (Ref account book A2 p22)

"Moore's altar rails are made of wood although, exceptionally, the uprights at Great Ayton are made of brass"

"Choir stalls are often extremely plain.....but elsewhere they are enlivened by minimal detailing such as a favourite motif of a small traceried circle or square pierced in the woodwork eg Great Ayton"



137. Great Ayton (NY), choir stalls, 1904. The altar rails have brass uprights.

## **Postscript:**

Revd Withington clearly became a great fan of Temple Moore , writing the following in the magazine of the parish of Great Ayton-in-Cleveland with Easby and Nunthorpe in July 1914:

*“ I am glad to be able to announce that Mr Temple Moore has been chosen as Architect for the New Church which is to be built at Nunthorpe.*

*He is one of the best Church Architects of the day.*

*Thirty years ago, strangely enough, he designed the Communion vessels for St Mary’s Church, Nunthorpe—and so these vessels will eventually find their home in the Church designed by him,*

*Mt Temple Moore has done a good deal of work in our area*

*He was Architect for Carlton Church and Swainby. Newton and Ingleby Greenhow Churches were restored under his directions, while the New Chancel of the Church of Kirkby-in-Cleveland, which is his work, has improved that building marvellously.*

*The decorations in our Chancel at Ayton are also his work—and we are sure of having from him a Church worthy of being used in the service of God”*