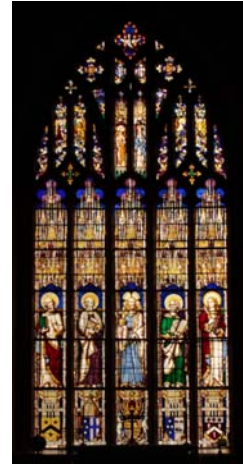


Christ Church, Longford, Tasmania

The five light stained glass chancel window

On 16 March 1839 Lieutenant Governor Sir John Franklin (1786–1847) laid the foundation stone of Christ Church of England at Longford, assisted by Archdeacon Palmer of Hobart Town. The Church was opened just over two and a half years later on the 6th of October 1844.

The historical centrepiece of the church is the magnificent five light chancel window donated by Charles Reid (c.1794–1857). The stained glass window was a collaborative effort being designed by the colonial architect William Archer (1820–1874) and executed by the famous stained glass artist William Wailes (1808-1881) in England at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1842. The window was reported to have cost 200 guineas in one historical newspaper article and 300 in another.



Before the window was even erected in the church, circa 1844, it was found to be damaged when it was unpacked. Three portions of the canopies were broken and one of the “*Supporters of Tasmania*”. A local artist by the name of ‘Nash’ who had established himself at Longford as a painter and glazier supposedly effected the repairs so well that “*the most critical observer cannot discover which of the canopies have been broken, or which supporter has been made in the colony, the kangaroo or emu*”.

Thirty four years later, in September 1876, it was reported that further damage had occurred to the window as a result of a severe storm that occurred some time earlier. The portion representing St. Matthew was then “*repaired by Mr. J. Owen, and fixed in place again.*”

In 1967 a complete restoration of the window was conducted by stained glass artist Jean (John) Orval and his sons at his Hamilton studio in Victoria. “*When completed Mr Orval guaranteed the window would last at least another century before again needing repairs*”. This would not be the case and after only 45 years the window was found to be in a perilous advanced state of deterioration and again requires a complete restoration. The work will be conducted by Tasmania’s own Heritage Stained Glass conservationist Gavin Merrington from South Hobart some time in 2013.

The shield in the bottom right corner of the window:

A shield appears at the bottom right corner of the right light that includes the name of William Archer as the designer, William Wailes as the maker, the location and date the window was made. The detail appears in four ribbon scrolls and is described as follows:

1. “Gulielmus Archer – Des”

“Gulielmus” is the French based Latin version of the name “William”. The letters immediately after are “DES” being the abbreviation for “Designed”.

2. “Gul: Wailes. Exec”

“Gul:” shortened for Gulielmus (William) with the letters “Exec” being the abbreviation for “Executed”.

3. “Newcastle AD”

Newcastle being the location the window was Executed (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) and the letters “AD”, the Latin abbreviation for “Anno Domini”, being “The Year of Our Lord”.

4. “MDCCCXLII”

“MDCCCXLII” in the last portion of the scroll indicates the year (1842) that the window was created. The bottom portion has some missing paint work and a missing piece of glass. The first Roman numeral looks like two letters “NI” but there is missing paint work as is actually one letter representing “M”, The “X” is drawn in an unusual fashion and looks like ¥. The same date in Roman numerals also appears clearly written to the left of the shield to confirm the date correctly as 1842.



[The Cornwall Chronicle, Launceston, TAS, Saturday 28th September 1839, page 1.](#)

“At Longford, the Church, erected some years since, had become much too small for the accommodation of the congregation, whilst at the same time, from some defect in the construction, it was not likely to stand long; the inhabitants, therefore, determined upon having an entirely new and handsome building, the foundation of which is now completed, the first stone having been laid by the Lieutenant Governor, upon the tour already referred to more than once.”

Lieutenant Governor Sir John Franklin 1786-1847, succeeded Sir George Arthur as Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen’s Land in January 1837.

[The Courier, Hobart, TAS, Tuesday 20th October 1840, page 3](#)

“At Longford, the Church is rising gradually, but not so rapidly as was at first expected, in consequence of the Committee having come to the determination to adopt, in lieu of brick, a facing of free-stone, which has to be carted for several miles”.

[The Courier, Hobart, TAS, Tuesday 1st October 1844, page 2.](#)

“His Lordship the Bishop of Tasmania will consecrate the new church at Longford on 3rd October. The principal attraction of this edifice is a large painted window, executed in England, and sent out at an expense of two hundred guineas. It is considered a superior work of art, and will doubtless draw many of the curious, for want of a better motive, to visit this place of worship [...]”

[Launceston Examiner, TAS, Wednesday 2nd October 1844, page 4.](#)

“LONGFORD CHURCH.- The new church at Longford will be opened by the bishop of Thursday next”.

[Launceston Examiner, TAS, Wednesday 9th October 1844, page 4.](#)

“[...] The consecration of Longford church was postponed in consequence of the state of the river [...]”

[Launceston Examiner, TAS, Saturday 12th October 1844, page 3.](#)

“COLONIAL ART.- When the glass of the chancel window of Longford church was unpacked, it was discovered that three of the fine canopies were broken, and one of the supporters of the arms of Tasmania. The glass, however, has been so well repaired, that the most critical observer cannot discover which of the canopies have been broken, or which supporter has been made in the colony, the kangaroo or emu. The artist’s name is Nash, who lately established himself at Longford, as painter and glazier. This window, which is the gift of Charles Reid, Esq., was painted by the famous Wailes, of Newcastle, and cost 300 guineas. It is perpendicular gothic, and considered a work of great merit. Mr. Kidd, of Launceston, constructed the carved oak chairs for Longford church, and they have justly received universal commendation”.



(Additional article on same page)

LONGFORD CHURCH.- The new church at Longford was opened for Divine service on Sunday, the 6th instant. Notwithstanding the floods the church was filled at an early hour. The service commenced by the Rev. R. R. Davies reading the bishop’s license to perform service in that building, to be called and known by the name of “Christ’s Church,” Longford.

[Launceston Examiner, TAS, Saturday 28th February 1874, page 4.](#)

LONGFORD

“[...] the church clock had an extraordinary fit of striking; it began about 25 minutes to six, and kept at it nearly a quarter of an hour. Many of the inhabitants turned out in alarm, thinking a fire was raging in the neighbourhood, others thought it was to announce the arrival of the Executioner and his staff, but it did not happen to be either. It appears Mr Allen, who was leaving by the train, wound it up rather hurriedly, when some of the works must have got a little deranged, hence this extraordinary occurrence.”

[Launceston Examiner, TAS, Saturday 23rd September 1876, page 5.](#)

“The portion of the stained glass window in Christ Church, representing St. Matthew, which was damaged some time ago, by one of the violent gales has been repaired by Mr. J. Owen, and fixed in place again.”

[From the Orvall web site – accessed 15th Aug 2012.](#)

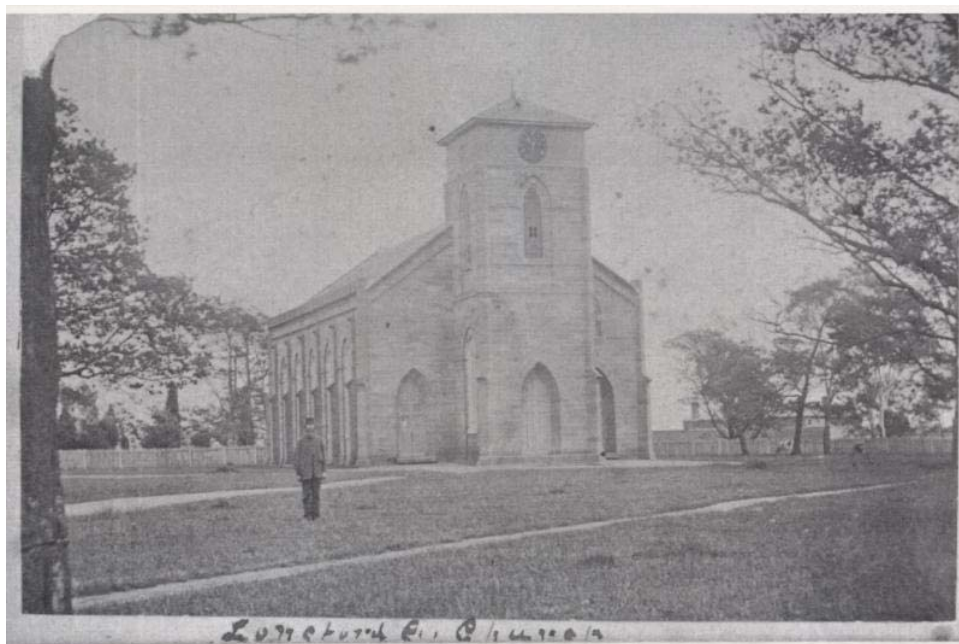
“In 1967, with the help of his sons, Mr Orval had the intricate task of restoring the treasured 125 year-old large stained glass altar window of Christ Church, Longford (Tas), transporting the window in pieces both to and from Hamilton. When completed Mr Orval guaranteed the window would last at least another century before again needing repairs”.



Historical Photos of Christ Church Longford.



(Christ Church Longford - Date Unknown)



(Christ Church Longford – date unknown)



Christ Church Harvest Festival - circa 1930



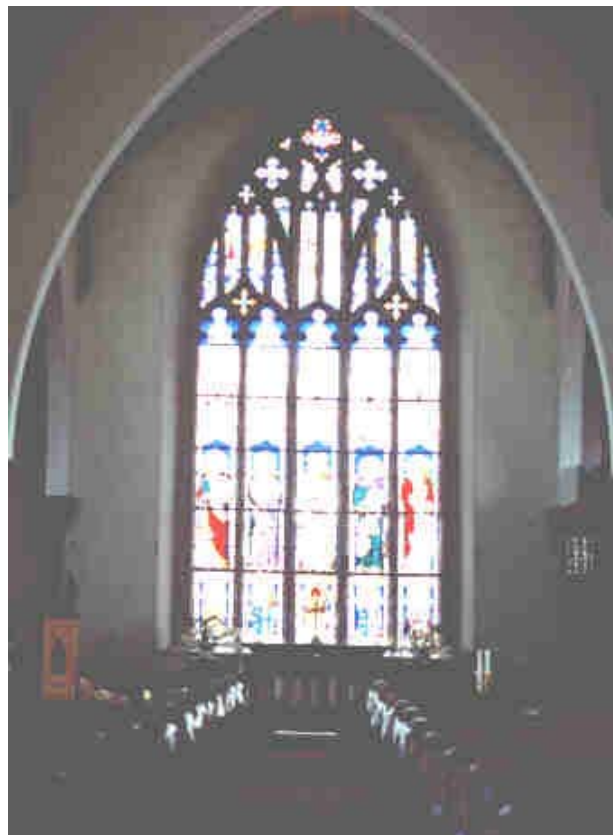
(Christ Church Longford – date unknown)



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Christ Church, Longford, Chancel window pre-1930.



Christ Church, Longford, Chancel window 1972.