

## **Saint Paul's Cathedral**

### **A Brief Architectural History**

St. Paul's parish was the third congregation to erect an edifice in Syracuse. The Baptist Church came first, completed in 1824; the Presbyterian Church in 1826; and the first St. Paul's, dedicated in September 1827. The parish's first building stood where the present Sedgwick, Andrews and Kennedy building stands bounded by Warren, East Genesee and Washington Streets. This early wooden structure measured just 41 by 52 feet, was painted white and featured green shutters, rented box pews and a double-decker pulpit.

By 1841, the congregation had outgrown the tiny church, and so a stone church in the perpendicular Gothic style was constructed on a site bounded by Warren and East Fayette Streets where the present Merchants Bank stands. The second St. Paul's was built with native Onondaga limestone and measured 116 by 51 feet; a 110-foot tower featured battlements with finials, each with a lighting rod.

St. Paul's parish founded St. James's Church (forerunner of the Church of the Saviour) in 1848. By this time, the population of Syracuse was well beyond 10,000, with a need for a second Episcopal parish north of the Erie Canal. St. Paul's was enlarged in 1858 following plans by Horatio N. White, a prominent local architect.

In 1868, Dr. Frederick Dan Huntington of Emmanuel Church, Boston, accepted the call as the newly formed Diocese of Central New York's first bishop. Both Syracuse and the new diocese experienced phenomenal growth during the 1870's and 1880's. By 1880, Syracuse's population surpassed 65,000 and its commercial and industrial growth was the envy of the country. In 1884, the cornerstone was laid for the present St. Paul's; it

was designed by Henry Dudley of Brooklyn, N. Y. and was ready for use on December 13, 1885.

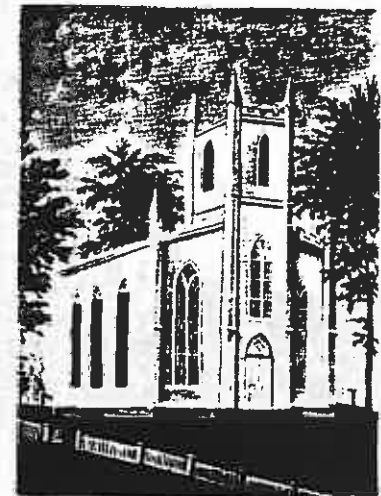
Dudley (1813-1894), was English born and, until 1854, a partner with Frank Wills, the architect for the New York Ecclesiological Society. Through his association with Wills and the Society, Dudley played a prominent role in the importation of English Gothic Revival styles. Although the New York Ecclesiological Society took the Cambridge Camden Society in England as its inspiration, they did not adhere strictly to its precepts which sought a return to pre-Reformation building styles. The Society concerned itself primarily with the practical problems of implementing good design in American churches, rather than with the complexities of ecclesiology.

The third St. Paul's has changed relatively little over the years. It was constructed of Onondaga limestone in Gothic Revival style. Its most remarkable feature is its spire which soars more than 200 feet and is surmounted by a seven foot cross. The interior is 96 by 64 feet and 59 feet at its highest point; there is seating for 900. The nave is separated from the side aisles by arches supported by pillars of polished Nova Scotia granite. The walls of yellow and pink bricks divided by string courses of decorative tiles represent a unique feature among American Victorian churches. Treatment such as this was usually reserved for exteriors such as can be seen on the White Memorial Building at Washington and Salina Streets.

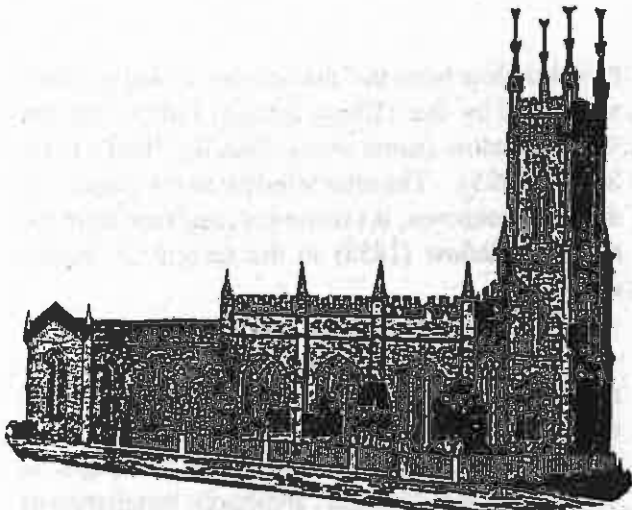
Many of the stained glass windows were made by Cox, Buckley and Co., London-New York, and were installed in 1885. Of note is the chancel window which features St. Paul preaching to the Athenians. Other windows of note include the

third window from the chancel (south aisle) which was made by the Tiffany Studios (1895) and the fourth window (south aisle) from the Henry Keck Studio (1925). The altar window in the chapel, its designer unknown, is a reconstructed remnant of the chancel window (1858) in the second St. Paul's church.

Major alterations in the interior, which once sported green carpeting and elaborate chancel wall stenciling, have included: complete remodeling of the chancel in 1919; remodeling of the chapel in 1938 (Morton E. Granger, architect); installation of the marble Peace Altar in the north aisle in 1950; a second remodeling of the chancel in 1955, by Irving and Casson of Boston, the walls being covered with 22-carat gold leaf; and the installation of the present Moeller organ in 1967. The Lockwood Memorial Parish House was erected in 1909 (Alfred T. Taylor, architect) and remodeled in 1929 and 1958. St. Paul's Cathedral is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1976).



St. Paul's First Church, 1827-1841



St. Paul's Second Church, 1842-1883



St. Paul's Third Church, 1884-Present

Compiled by J. Brad Benson, 1990, from these sources:

From Generation to Generation: A Story of One Hundred Years of St. Paul's Church, Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, 1924.  
History of St. Paul's Church, 1826-1961, W. Freeman Galpin, 1961.  
This is St. Paul's Stained Glass Windows, Lester G. Wells, 1965.  
The Great Gray Spire, John Philip Jones, 1985.

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