Wildman, Charlotte. "The Cathedral That Never Was?." *Urban Redevelopment and Modernity in Liverpool and Manchester, 1918–39*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. 167–189. *Bloomsbury Collections*. Web. 26 Apr. 2023. <<http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781474257398.0016>>.

Downloaded from Bloomsbury Collections, www.bloomsburycollections.com, 26 April 2023, 11:23 UTC.

Copyright © Charlotte Wildman 2016. Released under a CC BY-NC-ND licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>). You may share this work for non-commercial purposes only, provided you give attribution to the copyright holder and the publisher, and provide a link to the Creative Commons licence.

The Cathedral That Never Was?

The Catholic Church in Liverpool also responded to urban redevelopment with ambition and innovation. As architectural expert Charles Reilly announced to readers of the *New York Times* in 1930, ‘Liverpool is starting to build a second and even greater cathedral. Her new project, indeed, calls for the greatest cathedral in the world next to St Peter’s at Rome.’¹ Designed by Edwin Lutyens, ‘arguably the greatest British architect of the twentieth century,’ the planned Catholic cathedral, named the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ, was intended to be second largest in the world and expected to cost £3 million.² The impact of the cathedral on the city and beyond was highly anticipated: ‘I see the cathedral then, like a rainbow across the skies radiating the true and the good,’ wrote one prominent member of Liverpool Archdiocese.³ For the Archdiocese and, in particular for the cathedral’s pioneer, Archbishop of Liverpool Richard Downey (1881–1953), it represented an opportunity to transform the way in which Catholicism was seen both in Britain and beyond. Catholic leaders embraced the opportunity presented by Liverpool’s wider programme of redevelopment and, using a grandiose building project of their own, sought to market Liverpool as a centre of Catholicism with international significance.

The cathedral project began in 1929 and in just one decade the Archdiocese’s energetic fundraising campaign raised nearly £1 million, one-third of the money needed. This total was no small achievement since there was no financial help from Rome or even from Catholic leaders in Westminster.⁴ The cathedral’s fortunes were short-lived, however, as the Second World War and its demands for labour and material halted progress, leaving only the crypt completed. Post-war inflation rates saw costs soar to nearly £30 million and the Archdiocese eventually abandoned Lutyens’ cathedral in 1954, and it remains known as ‘the very greatest building that was never built’⁵. In 1962, Sir Frederick Gibberd’s pioneering design replaced Lutyens’ cathedral, although it is roughly only half the size of Lutyens’ intended design.⁶ Despite the grandiosity of Lutyens’ and

Downey's planned cathedral, historians have neglected this rather unusual episode in the history of early-twentieth-century Britain. Although references to Lutyens' and Downey's Catholic cathedral project do exist, they tend to be limited to architectural historians' interest either in the cathedral's aesthetic form or as part of Lutyens' career and life more generally.⁷ As a case study, however, it reveals the ways in which religious leaders such as Downey responded to wider processes of modernity, embraced Liverpool's redevelopment and used the built environment to strengthen Catholic power and influence.

There are important similarities between the cathedral project and broader innovations in planning and urban design between the two world wars. As we saw in Chapter 1, Liverpool was at the forefront of trends in urban planning due to its international links and influences and through the energetic work of Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture. Like urban transformation more generally, the planned Catholic cathedral emerged within a wider international culture of cathedral-building and reflected the remarkable power, influence and ambition of Catholic leaders in a provincial city. Using the cathedral project as a case study, this chapter argues that its extensive fundraising campaign created a powerful Catholic image of the city, in which Catholics, both in Liverpool and beyond, were able to invest. The language and rhetoric of the cathedral campaign sought both to impose the power and authority of the Catholic Church and to nurture a strong sense of Catholic shared identity. As with the emerging civic and consumer culture we saw in earlier chapters, the Archdiocese aimed to foster a populist and demotic culture of Catholicism. The cathedral project therefore reveals the similarities between Catholic leaders and the investment in urban transformation made by local politicians and businessmen. By implication, a vision of an assertive and dynamic culture of Catholicism emerges, that was in no way marginalized from (and indeed embraced) broader cultural and social changes.

A tale of two cathedrals

Described by one inhabitant in the 1930s as 'the most Irish city in the world outside of Ireland,' it is perhaps unsurprising that of all British cities, the attempt to build the largest Catholic cathedral outside of Rome occurred in Liverpool.⁸ Liverpool was already famous for its large Catholic population following the influx of Irish immigrants in the decades after the famine of 1846–51.⁹

Nevertheless, Irish immigration to Liverpool nearly trebled over the interwar period, from 3,200 migrants in 1924 to 8,200 in 1936, as emigration to America became increasingly difficult.¹⁰ Liverpool Diocese (founded in 1850) was reorganized in response to increased Irish migration after the First World War. In 1924, the newly created Diocese of Lancaster took forty-six of Liverpool's parishes leaving Liverpool Archdiocese with an official population of 183,811, but this figure ignored Catholics living beyond the immediate city centre area.¹¹ One estimate counted 249,000 Catholics living in the 3- to 4-mile radius surrounding Liverpool Town Hall in 1925, whereas a separate survey suggested Liverpool was home to 400,000 Catholics in 1934.¹² Within a general population of around 750,000, therefore, Liverpool's Catholic community encompassed at least a third and possibly over a half of the city's overall population between the two world wars. Liverpool's other majority religion was Protestantism, and there were notable numbers of Presbyterians, Methodists, and a significant Jewish community.

The city's Catholic population loomed large in the concerns of local politicians and urban planners, not merely because of its size but also because of its geographical segregation. Scotland Road, a large area between the docks and the city centre, was home to 75,000 Catholics in 1924, which was then larger than the Dioceses of Cardiff, Shrewsbury, Portsmouth and Middlesbrough combined.¹³ Scotland Road had long been considered the 'black spot on the Mersey', but many Irish migrants chose to live there because of the support network offered.¹⁴ It is more accurate to understand the area as a micro-society, with an independent form of hierarchy and social stratification. As Pat O'Mara's *Autobiography of a Liverpool Irish Slummy* testifies, the lowest social groups lived in Scotland Road's 'Courts', narrow alleys home to twenty-five families with two shared toilets. The Courts were home to the poorest-paid labourers and underemployed: frequented by the 'cheaper elderly whores' and where 'screams often rent the air at night. ... Huge cats continually stalked the place, their eyes an eerie phosphorescence in the darkness.'¹⁵ If inhabitants of the Courts were the bottom of Scotland Road's micro-society, O'Mara shows that residence outside the Courts, regular work and a strong devotion to Catholicism, placed other families nearer the top.

Inhabitants of Scotland Road remained largely unaffected by Liverpool's interwar redevelopment and Catholics (usually employed in lower paid occupations such as dock work) were often unable to move to the new 1930s suburbs because of the high rental costs, although this was not always

lamented.¹⁶ The size, stability and cohesiveness of the Catholic community were not only crucial for the Archdiocese's ability to even conceive of such a large cathedral, but also helped to fuel the fantasy around the cathedral of Liverpool as a Catholic city. To the local state, the Catholic population loomed large and threatened rebellion, instability and violence. Sectarian divisions had always been strong in Liverpool and the year 1909 was particularly bloody. Tensions continued to shape local culture – Liverpool did not unveil a civic memorial to the fallen of the First World War until 1930 because of sectarian tensions and divisions over its form and design.¹⁷ The influence of religion on local politics in Liverpool is well documented and, for instance, one commentator in the 1920s, 'likened the monthly Labour meetings to "a lesson in apartheid", where members segregated themselves according to religion and politics'.¹⁸ Anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiments did seem to intensify in Britain more generally after 1918, particularly in light of economic decline. In 1931, the *Manchester Guardian* blamed Irish migrants for the burden they placed on the country. It argued that 'the national government and the civic authorities ought to take steps to find out the full charges upon the Exchequer and the local rates caused by our Irish invaders'.¹⁹ Irish migrants also found themselves to be the focus of blame for similar problems in Liverpool: in 1936, a survey suggested that 86 per cent of public assistance in Liverpool went to people of Irish extraction and the St Vincent de Paul society asked its Irish branches not to send any more job seekers to the city.²⁰ Conceived within such a culture of suspicion and scrutiny of Irish Catholics, the cathedral project's ambition and scope reflected Downey's desire to transform the negative reputation of Catholics in Britain and to counteract their marginalisation from official civic and political cultures.

Although ambitions for a Catholic cathedral first emerged in the 1850s, it gained real momentum only under the energetic and ambitious leadership of Doctor Richard Downey. Appointed Archbishop of Liverpool in 1928, aged forty-seven, Downey was then the youngest Roman Catholic Archbishop in the world, and became 'the most powerful figure in the English Church'.²¹ Downey preferred to work without the cooperation of England's other Catholic bishops and experienced particular tension with Bishop Bourne (Bishop of Westminster, 1903–35, Cardinal from 1911) and with Cardinal Griffin (who became Archbishop of Westminster in 1943). Reflecting their rivalry and his own arrogance, Downey famously reminded Cardinal Griffin, 'I rule the North'.²² The sheer scale and form of Lutyens' plan reflected Downey's grand agenda for Catholicism both in Liverpool and beyond. Downey never saw himself as the

leader of a parochial Catholic Church in the northern environs of England and never in any way felt or behaved as if he was further down the hierarchy than Cardinal Griffin. In fact, he seemed to see Northern England as the heart and power of Catholicism and above Westminster. Downey's aims and objectives through the cathedral project reflected his rather ambitious belief that Liverpool was an internationally important centre of Catholicism, second only to Rome.

The choice of Edwin Lutyens (1869–1944) as the architect of the Catholic cathedral was a deliberately audacious and noteworthy one. Lutyens built his career on English country houses, imperial architecture in New Delhi, the Whitehall Cenotaph and the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme at Thiepval.²³ Lutyens' mother was an Irish Catholic who converted to Anglicanism on marriage, making him acceptable to Downey and the Catholic Church. Lutyens possessed some sort of religious faith himself and confessed to his friend, long before he commissioned to build the cathedral, 'I am horribly religious, yet cannot speak it and this saves my work.'²⁴ Lutyens certainly developed a strong emotional investment in the project, requesting drawings of the cathedral around the room as he lay dying.²⁵ For Lutyens' son, the cathedral 'could and should have been built. It may well have been the final affirmation of his faith in the eternal thing that so transcends mere building.'²⁶ As the most prominent architect in the British Empire between the wars, Downey's commissioning of Lutyens reflected both Downey's ambition for the cathedral and his wider belief that Catholicism was not a marginal or foreign presence in Britain and that Liverpool was no parochial outpost. Downey's choice of Lutyens sent a clear message to the rest of the country and the world, and by choosing the most famous architect of the time, who had created some of the most iconic buildings and monuments of the period, he ensured the cathedral project achieved credibility and respect from contemporaries.

Alongside the choice of Lutyens as the architect, Downey was aware that the cathedral site could contribute to the gravitas he hoped the cathedral would have. Following the Poor Law revisions, Downey pounced on the opportunity to seize Liverpool Workhouse, which stood a hill overlooking the city centre. The purchase eventually completed following a period of difficult negotiations with both the council and the Ministry of Health and protests by Protestants.²⁷ Nevertheless, Liverpool Archdiocese obtained the 'finest site in the city' eventually and the council agreed to its sale by passing 'a majority which would have been unbelievable a few years ago.'²⁸ Their achievement in obtaining the site suggests Downey and Lutyens' shared vision and ambition for the city even

persuaded a reluctant Liverpool Corporation to cooperate with the project. Crucially, the land was above the city centre and in direct opposition to the Anglican cathedral. After consulting plans of Liverpool in 1929, Lutyens wrote to Downey to say, 'The Ordnance Survey Map of Liverpool gives your site as being some thirty feet higher than that of the Anglican Cathedral – which is good',²⁹ which Downey highlighted and annotated with a '!'. Catholic publicity material used the cathedral site to create a distant Catholic fantasy image of Liverpool and reveals how the old Workhouse site allowed the Archdiocese to re-imagine the city in dramatic ways. Typical images of the cathedral produced by the fundraising campaign emphasized that it would be larger than the city's Anglican cathedral (begun in 1910) and, by connotation, larger in status also. Furthermore, Lutyens' design tended to dominate the landscape in the images, dwarfing the city's famous buildings including the municipal buildings, Liver Building, Dock Offices and even St George's Hall. Such images give a strong indication that the cathedral intended to marginalize any other buildings in the city and dwarf the skyline, even from beyond the River Mersey.³⁰

Representations of the cathedral in publicity material reflected Lutyens' recognition that the Catholic cathedral needed to be visually impressive and larger in opposition to the Anglican cathedral. 'How ridiculous it would be to have two similar churches, as though Liverpool had brought two from a trayful', remarked Lutyens in 1929.³¹ Liverpool's Anglican cathedral is gothic in style and made from sandstone, whereas Lutyens' design used Irish granite (which may have been a way to gain support from Irish Catholics), was Byzantine in style and designed around Romanesque triumphal arches. Figure 6.1 depicts a scale model of the cathedral, currently on display at the Museum of Liverpool. It shows Lutyens' design was a strong visual contrast to the Anglican cathedral, which reflected the sense of religious difference that they wished to manifest through the cathedral. There are aesthetic similarities between Lutyens' cathedral design and his Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. Stamp writes, 'Something of the grandeur and originality of the (cathedral's) conception can be grasped when standing under the high vault of the Arch at Thiepval'.³² Like the monument at Thiepval, the cathedral was to be imposing and influenced by Roman triumphal style and made up of complex interconnections. Stamp's description of Thiepval could almost be of Lutyens' cathedral design: 'Arches are placed centrally in each block – except on the principal elevations to east and west where the lower, flanking blocks are extended outwards to create a buttressing effect. The Thiepval Memorial is not an arch but a tower of arches'.³³

Figure 6.1 Image of scale model of Liverpool Catholic Cathedral, designed by Edwin Lutyens, at Museum of Liverpool. Copyright, Mike Peel

Lutyens and Downey intended the cathedral to be the largest outside Rome, far larger than the Catholic cathedral finally built in Liverpool during the 1960s. Crucially, Liverpool Archdiocese wanted the cathedral to be larger and more imposing than the rival Anglican cathedral, designed by Giles Gilbert Scott. The Anglican cathedral is 104,275 square feet in area with a tower 331 feet in height.³⁴ Lutyens' cathedral was to be 216,500 square feet in area and over 500 feet in height and would have been closer in comparison to St Peter's in Rome, which is 227,000 square feet in area.³⁵ Lutyens' cathedral was to have the largest congregation space in the world with room for 10,000 worshippers, over double the area of the Anglican cathedral.³⁶ There were also plans for a façade surmounted by a figure of Christ that would be visible from sea and from the Scotland Road area.³⁷ Like Liverpool's urban planners more generally, American architectural trends and innovations influenced Downey's ambitions for the cathedral. In particular, he wanted the cathedral to mirror the impact of New York's skyline on those arriving into the city by boat. 'In years to come ships travelling from the West to England, will see as their first glimpse of that supposedly Protestant land the towering catholic cathedral of Christ the King', anticipated one publicity pamphlet for the cathedral.³⁸ David Gilbert and Claire Hancock's analysis of representations of the New York skyline highlights the importance of its visual impact in encouraging tourists to the city. They argue

‘the rituals of arrival in early-twentieth-century New York helped turn the immediate process of immigration itself into a tourist spectacle,’ as passengers sailed past the Statue of Liberty and then onto Ellis Island, a ‘working’ tourist attraction from its opening in 1894.³⁹ Downey wanted the cathedral to dominate the Liverpool skyline and, influenced by American trends, provide a striking religious image that dominated the built environment, particularly for those arriving into the city by ship, who would most likely be arriving from Ireland or from America.

Lutyens and Downey rejected the tradition of designing cathedrals in the gothic style, as the Anglican cathedral was, and wanted to promote Catholic difference visually. Downey explained to the readers of the *New York Times*:

‘We do not want something Gothic,’ said the Archbishop. ‘The time has gone by when the church should be content with a weak imitation of the medieval architecture. On the other hand, we want nothing “Epsteinish”. Our own age is worthy of interpretation now and there could be no finer place than a great seaport like Liverpool. ... Hitherto all cathedrals have been dedicated to saints. I hope this one will be dedicated to Christ himself with a great figure surmounted on the cathedral visible for many a mile out at sea.’⁴⁰

Lutyens therefore designed the cathedral in Byzantine style (associated with the pre-Reformation era), in keeping with the style that other Catholic cathedrals built in the early twentieth century. Again, like urban transformation more generally, this choice of architectural style reflected the influence of a wider culture of internationalism on the cathedral’s design, such as Westminster Cathedral (1895–1910); the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington DC (1920–59); and the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis (1907–28), all built in the Byzantine tradition. Lutyens and Downey’s decision to build the cathedral in Byzantine style also reflected the Catholic Church’s desire to use architecture to create a sense of longevity, survival, and perseverance and Liverpool’s Catholic cathedral intended to ‘give outward expression to the majesty of the Catholic religion.’⁴¹ Lutyens and Downey believed a Byzantine style of architecture created this image of permanence and power. Liverpool Archdiocese was also keen to ensure the new cathedral would overshadow the emerging commercial and municipal buildings. It was ‘in competition with adjacent “sky-scrapers” that the new cathedral at Liverpool has been designed on so vast a scale,’ claimed one publication in 1933.⁴² The cathedral’s aesthetic style and internationally influenced design was fundamental to Downey’s plans

to remarket Liverpool as an important focus of Catholicism and to boost the religion's profile and reputation within Britain.

Rebranding Catholicism

Downey's ambitions for Liverpool's cathedral project was illustrative of a broader period of confidence among the Catholic Church in England and America.⁴³ Such confidence was particularly apparent around the centenary celebrations of Catholic Emancipation in 1929, relating to the repeal of controversial legislation in 1829 that saw the removal of most of the restrictive legislation against Catholics and permitted them to gain seats in Parliament. Celebrations in London focused around a National Catholic Congress, which included open-air masses near Westminster Cathedral and a Procession of Youth, where 12,000 children marched in celebration.⁴⁴ Yet Liverpool saw the largest celebrations and 400,000 Catholics gathered in jubilation.⁴⁵ There, 'rich and poor, young and old, the educated and ill, stood shoulder to shoulder'.⁴⁶ These celebrations and the sense of confidence they fuelled within the church shaped the rhetoric of the cathedral campaign. Propaganda argued the cathedral project was indicative of 'a time when other religions are deploring their empty churches, Catholics are building for numbers with whose increase they can hardly keep pace'.⁴⁷

Such confidence encouraged Downey to attempt a broader remarketing of Catholicism. The preparations for the consecration ceremony for the cathedral site in 1933 reveal Downey's ambitions were to elevate its standing both within Britain and beyond. For example, in 1933 Downey wrote to the British Legation to the Holy See to discuss which Papal representative would attend the cathedral's consecration service and was reluctant towards the idea of an Irish Cardinal in order to distance the Catholic Church from Ireland.⁴⁸ Rather, like urban planners, civic politicians and businessmen, Downey looked to forge international links and requested the attendance of Cardinal Hayes of New York at the ceremony, arguing 'there are ... many links between Liverpool and New York'.⁴⁹ Downey's plans were by no means impossible since prominent Catholic, Lady Armstrong, wife of Harry Gloster Armstrong who, as we saw in Chapter 1, assisted civic politicians in making trade links in America, was very close to Cardinal Hayes due to her work with the Catholic Church in New York City.⁵⁰ These links, alongside the connections and energy of architectural expert Charles Reilly, might help to explain why the *New York Times* covered Downey's

cathedral project relatively heavily and positively. Its support was notable in comparison to the relative lack of coverage in the British national press and boosted the cathedral's fundraising campaign.⁵¹ The attempts of civic politicians to boost Liverpool's reputation and promote the city internationally therefore helped to improve the power and strength of the Catholic Church and advertised Liverpool's image as a Catholic city to a wider audience.

The idea of a shared Catholic community permeated the rhetorical approach of the cathedral's publicity campaign. Lutyens claimed to be 'resolved to turn this soil, once sacrificed to sorrow and despair, into one given up to praise, prayer and *great* thanksgiving – into a "*true* refuge," for the weary and the heavy-laden'.⁵² In the context of economic depression, this language served to support the Archdiocese's investment into the ambitious cathedral project. When the Papal Legate, Cardinal McRory, visited the site in 1933, he declared it was 'sanctified by the tears of the widow and the prayers and holy resignation of the poor'.⁵³ This concept of a communal sacrifice was echoed by Downey's sermon in 1937: 'The poor who dwelt here, were the forerunners, preparing the way for Christ's coming by their prayers, their mortifications, their sufferings, their conformality to the will of God'.⁵⁴ The language of sacrifice placed the cathedral within broader Catholic narratives of martyrdom and redemption. For instance, Downey claimed the cathedral would 'become a great centre of public prayer, praise and sacrifice'.⁵⁵ At the same time, this populist rhetoric used by the Archdiocese mirrored Liverpool Corporation's approach to their citizens and for Liverpool Archdiocese, this language of classlessness was an effective way of drawing support for the cathedral project. One publicity brochure for the cathedral claimed the Workhouse had been there in the years 1771–1928 and therefore had 'one hundred and fifty-seven years of history closely connected with the Catholic Church', as three-fifths of inmates were Catholic.⁵⁶ Such rhetoric promoted a form of Catholic ownership of Brownlow Hill and presented the cathedral as a reward for the Catholic population's devotion to the church, even in times of poverty. The use of a deliberately populist rhetoric was particularly important as Catholic leaders grew increasingly concerned about the threat of Communism and other forms of political extremism.

The language used in the funding campaign aimed to mobilize Catholic support at a time of potential upheaval and rebellion against the church. By implication, Liverpool Archdiocese presented the cathedral project as a spiritual campaign that relied on Liverpool's Catholics coming together, even in the

earlier days of the campaign. A pastoral letter written by Bishop Keating in 1922 argued,

No one has a right to stand out. Whether you recognise the need for a cathedral or not ... whether you belong to the Archdiocese by birth, or by adoption; whether you live in Liverpool, or the more remote parts of Lancashire ... whether you are wealthy or one of the labouring poor ... your co-operation is sought and expected.⁵⁷

Similarly, the *Liverpool Catholic Parishioner* declared: 'All classes of people are asked to help build the Metropolitan Cathedral of Liverpool.'⁵⁸ When Downey renewed the cathedral campaign, this rhetoric of a shared spiritual responsibility reappeared but became more important as the Catholic Church grew increasingly concerned about growing support for Communism in England. These fears were not unwarranted: the Communist Party of Great Britain attempted to attract Catholic membership from cities like Glasgow and Liverpool, as Catholics were often working class and many experienced unemployment.⁵⁹ In the Liverpool docks particularly, 'the Communists made amongst the despised and ill-treated dock labourers.'⁶⁰ Downey made the church's position on Communism very clear. An Advent Pastoral Letter of 1932, written by Downey and read in all churches in the Liverpool Archdiocese declared, 'Between Catholicism and Communism there can be no compromise. A Catholic cannot be a Communist; a Communist cannot be a Catholic.'⁶¹ Liverpool's cathedral project aimed to unite the Catholic community against the spread of Communism. Although it is difficult to assess how far the Archdiocese was successful in promoting unity, the cathedral project reveals how they sought to nurture a stronger sense of shared identity against the rise of such political extremism.

The need to foster a sense of unity against extremism was essential at a time of political, economic and social upheaval throughout Europe. Liverpool Archdiocese was criticized for its ambitious cathedral project at a time of high unemployment and poverty in the city. One letter to the *Evening Express* in April 1930s asked, in a poem, 'Why all the Fuss' at a time of economic depression:

One letter read, the sum to be spent
To the poor should be given, or perhaps lent,
And yet I've got a strange recollection
Of another cathedral in course of erection.
Would that money also do
To ease the poor, and needy too?⁶²

Such condemnation was threatening because the Archdiocese asked the poor of the city to donate money. Helen Forrester's autobiographical novel of life in 1930s Liverpool complained that, as 'city health officials looked in despair at horrifying infant mortality rates and at a general death rate nearly the highest in the country. ... The Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England continued to build themselves a cathedral apiece and solicited donations.'⁶³ The Archdiocese responded to criticism by presenting the cathedral as a possession of the poor, with the aim of uniting the poor behind the project. 'If we were to deduct from our Cathedral funds all the big donations which we have ever received, the bulk of the money would remain intact, made up of the offerings, I might say the blood-offerings, of the poor', claimed Downey in 1933.⁶⁴ This claim may not be an accurate estimation of the money donated, but Downey shows the Archdiocese consciously sought to unite the Catholic community and engage the poorest Catholics in the cathedral project. The Archdiocese again claimed: 'It is the poor, precisely, who *want* their cathedral, who are determined to have it; who would be shocked if you told them that they must abandon the idea of their Cathedral, and get themselves better rooms.'⁶⁵ Publicity material continued to claim the poor were the true cathedral builders, even going as far as claiming that 'most of the money which reaches the Cathedral is in copper!'⁶⁶ The building fund accounts do not reveal whether the poor did donate the most amount of money.⁶⁷ Yet the Archdiocese's desire for the poor to be seen as the *real* cathedral builders is important and highlights how they sought to use the cathedral project to strengthen Catholic collectivity.

The Vatican were confident that the cathedral would help protect Catholics against Communism. Downey travelled to Rome in 1931 and received the Vatican's formal approval for the cathedral, which Pope Pius XI described as 'a bulwark against Bolshevism.'⁶⁸ Publicity material presented the cathedral as benefiting the lives of the poor, both physically and spiritually. Lutyens' plan included a heated narthex, which was to be open day and night for anyone who needed the warmth, which Downey described as 'a spiritual sanctuary for the cold and destitute.'⁶⁹ At the same time, richer donors were rewarded spiritually and the Archdiocese established a reward system on a sliding scale, the lowest being those who gave £100 and were given the title 'Memorial Benefactors'.⁷⁰ Those who gave £1,000 earned the title 'Founders' and were rewarded with weekly Masses, and an annual individual Mass for every £1,000 donated. Nevertheless, although the reward system was hierarchical in nature and rewarded those who gave the most money, the scheme also reinforced traditional Catholic doctrines

regarding the equality of all men in God's eyes. This populist understanding of the Catholic community was emphasized through visual representations of the cathedral and the Catholic urban fantasy the propaganda fostered.

Catholic urban fantasies

Reilly, Liverpool's leading architectural expert of the interwar period, was confident that Lutyens' cathedral would 'change everything'. Reilly was sure the Cathedral would dominate the city, arguing 'we will all be humbler ... our ordinary buildings will be simpler ... for having in our midst this noble expression of the power and beauty of fine architecture.'⁷¹ While remaining unbuilt, Lutyens' cathedral design changed how Catholics perceived Liverpool. Catholic propaganda re-imagined the city to portray this particular form of urban fantasy and, for example, some images show Lutyens' cathedral superimposed to depict it towering over Liverpool's most famous civic and commercial architecture, such as the Pierhead buildings, which were symbolic of the city's power and prestige as a port.⁷² Such pictures served to promote the cathedral project and to attract money for the campaign but also contributed to helping Catholics envision the power and prestige of the church in Liverpool, despite the cathedral remaining incomplete.

Images that depicted the cathedral towering over Liverpool's best-known buildings were common propaganda techniques used by the Archdiocese in the cathedral project and aimed to impress Catholics and encourage donations to the building fund. Depicting the cathedral this way belittled the existing architecture in the city, as well as the powers (civic and commercial) that created them. In one image, the Archdiocese sought to justify the £3 million cost of the cathedral by showing it in comparison to HMS *Hood*, which cost the same amount. Downey's caption to an illustration of the building superimposed on *Hood* stated the Cathedral's 'colossal proportions simply dwarf this great battleship'.⁷³ Publicity material made several comparisons between the cathedral and HMS *Hood*, as it gave a vivid depiction of the scale of Lutyens' cathedral and laid claim to the Archdiocese's power and status. The choice of HMS *Hood* was significant as the ship became a national symbol in the post-First World War years, 'embodying the material reality of empire; for native populations her presence underlined both the power and the beneficence of the imperial overlord, while for British officials and "white" citizens of the empire she symbolized and made

real a remote and intangible homeland.⁷⁴ Liverpool Archdiocese's depiction of the cathedral dwarfing HMS *Hood* intended to show the church's power and status, but also sought to help contextualize the money being spent and showed potential donors that the £3 million cost was warranted and worthwhile as it would lead to a building which was even more impressive than the popular HMS *Hood*. This comparison also gave some indication of the impact Catholic leaders hoped the cathedral would have. What *Hood* was for the Empire, the Cathedral promised to be for the Catholic Church more generally and the representations of *Hood* and the cathedral reflected a wider attempt to encourage Catholics to see the cathedral's visual impact, while it remained unbuilt.

Downey was ambitious for the 1933 foundation stone ceremony, describing it in private correspondence as the 'greatest event in the ecclesiastical history of England since the Reformation'.⁷⁵ The cathedral project shaped perceptions of the city, even without being built and this was a key part of Downey's plans for the ceremony. Along with Downey, the ceremony included a Papal Legate, Lutyens, the Archbishops of Galway, Cardiff, Birmingham and Edinburgh (representing each of the four British countries), thirty-two bishops and six abbots, at considerable expense.⁷⁶ One commentator claimed there were 1,000 priests in attendance and 'every kind of dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church'.⁷⁷ Never one to be outshone, Downey would undoubtedly be pleased that the Liverpool celebrations drew over twice the number of clerics than did the consecration of the St Louis Catholic cathedral in 1926, which attracted five hundred cardinals, bishops and priests.⁷⁸ Downey also attempted to secure the presence of delegates from the British armed services in order to invest the occasion with gravitas and to try and avoid perceptions of provincial Catholic celebrations as parochial or marginalized from mainstream British culture. However, this objective was to prove difficult to achieve and the Office of the Admiralty refused Downey's invitation, explaining, 'I can trace no record of the Admiralty ever having been represented at a religious ceremony such as the present'.⁷⁹ Similarly, the Air Ministry and the War Office also refused invitations from Downey and both claimed that there was no precedent for their attendance. Indeed, it seems no representatives from the armed services attended any of the celebrations on the Cathedral site.⁸⁰ The British army appeared to resent the status given to the Pope following the Roman-Vatican settlement of 1929, as they did not wish to grant the pope or papal representatives the status of a chief of state.⁸¹ There were also widespread calls for the army to abolish church parades, although the Secretary of State appeased the situation in 1930 by declaring 'no man was ever made to

go to Church'.⁸² Downey may have been unfortunate to have made the request during a moment of debate about the relationship between the armed services and religious groups, or there may have been a more general reluctance within the armed services to establish a formal professional relationship with the Roman Catholic Church.⁸³

Despite such setbacks, Downey persisted with grandiose plans for the celebrations. Lutyens built a vast temporary altar intended to be the focus of the site for pilgrimages until the cathedral's completion and Downey argued the temporary altar 'will give us a concrete example of the genius of our architect and a foretaste of the beauty and magnificence of the cathedral-to-be'.⁸⁴ As Figure 6.2 illustrates, the plain altar was not dissimilar in style to Lutyens' Cenotaph in Whitehall.⁸⁵ The altar also helped to change the urban landscape through its great size and bright white colour, ensuring it was visible from some distance away. Downey explained the foundation stone celebration was to 'give satisfaction

Figure 6.2 Temporary altar during the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone, 1933.

Source: Stuart Bale Archive, National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, 1613–114.

to those thousands of our people who have so generously subscribed to the cathedral and who will not live to see its completion'.⁸⁶ The ceremony was clearly an attempt to invest the cathedral site with sacred meaning. Again, we can see the influence of other cathedrals around the world, especially the Sacré-Coeur in Paris (constructed 1874–1910), which attracted 115,000 pilgrims during the first year of the project alone.⁸⁷ Saint John's Cathedral in New York also witnessed numerous religious celebrations taking place on the unbuilt cathedral site, especially around the feast of St John, investing the area with spiritual meaning and maintaining motivation for the fundraising campaign.⁸⁸ These influences show Liverpool Catholic Cathedral emerged within a wider international culture of cathedral-building and drew on broader trends and innovations.

Just as the celebrations on the site of the Sacré-Coeur attracted devoted pilgrims who redefined a building site as a spiritual space, so did Liverpool's foundation stone celebrations of June 1933. On Friday 2 June 1933, a procession of children left St George's Hall (Liverpool's greatest civic building and main public transport terminus), walked through the city's shopping area and past the department stores, and along Mount Pleasant to the cathedral site. Although Downey could not secure the attendance of the British military, it seems he was determined to invest Liverpool's civic and commercial symbols with spiritual meaning and there are similarities with the impact of Manchester's Catholic processions, as we saw in Chapter 5. The celebrations included special masses and continued over the weekend, culminating in the laying of the foundation stone on the Sunday. Pathé captured the scene in a newsreel entitled *Solemn Blessing and Laying of the Foundation Stone of Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King to be the Second Largest in the World*. The footage of the service focuses on the great crowds of people who came into the city to see the celebrations. Although the cathedral site had seated accommodation for 30,000, an estimated 95,000 arrived.⁸⁹ Film footage shows people leaning out of windows to see the ceremony and cramming into every available space to get a view.⁹⁰ 'Every window, roof, and many of the chimney-stacks that I can see, are swarming with yet more (people)', described the event's radio commentator.⁹¹ One estimate suggested that half a million people came into Liverpool for the celebrations.⁹² The radio commentary explained the cathedral belonged to the ordinary Catholics of Liverpool

Dear poorer people of Liverpool, who are crowding the streets that you were (I know) decorating up to 3 o'clock this morning, but who can't get into this space – so large, yet far too narrow to hold anything like all of you – don't think you are all forgotten.⁹³

The ceremony drew large numbers of people into the city centre, which illustrates the way in which religion was a source of enjoyment and fulfilment for people in Liverpool in the 1930s. At the same time, it also suggests that many found some kind of connection with the cathedral project. After the 1933 foundation stone ceremony, numerous Catholic celebrations took place on the site, including a mass to celebrate the completion of the crypt in 1937. In 1937, 30,000 people came to watch the internment of Archbishop Whiteside (Bishop of Liverpool, 1894–1911) and on 4 November 1937, 100,000 people came to an outdoor mass on the cathedral site.⁹⁴ Following the example of the *Sacré-Coeur*, Downey actively encouraged people to visit Brownlow Hill for religious ceremonies, even though it still largely remained a building site.

The celebrations of 1933 also intensified sectarian tensions in Liverpool and Protestants interpreted the cathedral project as part of the Catholic Church's desire to take greater control both in Liverpool and beyond. Consequently, suspicion of Catholic power aroused 'Protestant warhorses' in the early 1930s.⁹⁵ The locally published *Protestant Times* regularly attacked what it perceived as the growing influence of the Catholic Church. In just one edition of the magazine in January 1935, there were several articles attacking the growth of the church's power. One article, 'Rome's Grip on the Press, Screen, Radio', claimed the pope spent over twenty million lire to build a radio station. A further report was titled "'Betrayed" Influence of Roman Church in High Positions of State, Menace to British Nation.'⁹⁶ Protestants claimed the cathedral was a further financial burden on the city caused by Irish Catholics, alongside slums and prisons. One cartoon suggested that for Protestants, the Catholic cathedral was one of many concerns about the church's financial exploitation of Liverpool. Captioned 'The Man with a Load of Mischief', it depicted a cartoon Irishman burdening the council with unemployment, Catholic schools and the planned cathedral. Next to the Irishman, the Liverpool Citizen asks, 'I wonder why the burden never grows lighter?'⁹⁷ Protestants portrayed the cathedral as opposing the investment of municipal leaders and men of commerce in Liverpool's redevelopment, representing Catholics as non-citizens because of their support for the cathedral.

Protestant groups certainly unleashed their warhorses during the weekend of the foundation stone ceremony. There were large demonstrations by Orangemen during the weekend of the ceremony, including a protest in Shiel Park in Liverpool that attracted an estimated crowd of 8,000. A speech made at the demonstration accused the planned cathedral of being 'a spectacular display made in an effort to recapture England for Romanism.'⁹⁸ A total of 20,000 Protestants attempted to disrupt the foundation stone ceremony, trying to hold up the cars taking priests

and representatives to the site. A local newspaper reported that protesters broke car windows and attempted to prevent traffic from getting through the city centre.⁹⁹ These attacks followed sporadic but not uncommon spates of religious violence in Liverpool during the early 1930s, including attacks on Downey.¹⁰⁰ Despite remaining unbuilt, therefore, the cathedral project seems to have intensified sectarian divisions in Liverpool. It cemented the city's reputation at home and abroad as a centre of religious tensions, with attacks by Orangemen on the cathedral on 15 July 1932 attracting notable press attention.¹⁰¹

‘Hands, hearts, souls across the sea’: Catholic shared identity

A stronger sense of Catholic collectivity emerged around the cathedral project but it was not restricted to Liverpool, particularly as the Archdiocese's propagandist efforts were global in their reach. A report written by the Archdiocese in 1953 shows that between 1928 and 1936 the great majority of funds came from Liverpool, after which the campaign took on a greater international perspective.¹⁰² One key approach by Downey was to use iconography to market Liverpool as an internationally important centre of Catholicism and so attempted to create an icon, ‘Our Lady of the Sea’. This title would permit the creation of statues and other ephemera inside the cathedral that depicted Mary, Mother of Jesus and the River Mersey, in the same way there are icons for Our Lady of Lourdes or Our Lady of Fatima. Rome refused permission since there were no known visitations by Mary to Liverpool. The Archdiocese received a rather curt response that reflected the audacity of their request: ‘If every small place or large city were to create their own Our Lady would that not detract from solid devotion to authenticated shrines?’¹⁰³

Undeterred by his defeat over the use of Mary, Downey instead attempted to present the cathedral as the ‘Cathedral of the North’ to bring together all the Catholics in Northern England. Such an approach was not unproblematic however and Downey's ambition riled (and likely threatened) other Catholic leaders, who perceived the cathedral project as a form of megalomania. In 1931 for example, the Bishop Henshaw of Salford wrote an angry letter to Downey, complaining he had not given permission for Catholics in Salford to have collection boxes for Liverpool Cathedral. Henshaw argued it was the ‘committing of trespass and infliction of damage ... [I] forbid you to collect either by means of boxes or any other way from the diocese of Salford.’¹⁰⁴ Correspondence between Downey's office and the *MEN* in 1936 also reveals tensions between Downey and

Henshaw. A journalist for the *MEN* agreed an article on the cathedral would be written and published in the newspaper, but would be presented as if it had been undertaken without Liverpool's knowledge or cooperation, 'So you (Downey) could always blame "one of those blank reporters" in case Salford raised an eyebrow.'¹⁰⁵ Since Salford Diocese faced pressing concerns relating to church and school building interwar, it seems Henshaw feared Lutyens' cathedral project distracted money away from his own causes. What is more, Downey and Henshaw's rivalry mirrored that between municipal leaders and businessmen in Liverpool and Manchester. It may be that the Catholic building projects contributed to a wider sense of civic pride, which, as we saw in earlier chapters, flourished interwar when competition between the two cities was especially intense. Tensions were not limited to the north-west of England, however, and Downey also received a negative response from the Archbishop of Cardiff, who told Downey he was preoccupied with building churches. He wrote that he was 'astonished that you should ask permission to beg in this Diocese. I do not possess a magnificent cathedral in my own Diocese,' and forbade Downey from fundraising in the diocese.¹⁰⁶ These responses suggest Downey's aggressive attempts to assert Catholic power alienated other Catholic leaders, who were also perhaps envious of his ambitious cathedral plan.

Despite these conflicts, Downey's fundraising rhetoric presented the cathedral as a way to unite all Catholics and did not limit his ambitions to the north of England. In some ways, especially due to the conflicts with other bishops, it was easier to fundraise outside of Britain. Downey's ambitions were global: 'Men of all nations will unite under one roof, in one common worship,' Downey wrote in 1933, 'It will lift the city to a higher plane than that of nationalism in religion ... it will echo the universal language of the church.'¹⁰⁷ Downey specifically aimed to use the cathedral to connect Catholics all around the world, claiming 'hands, hearts, souls across the sea ... the hearts of those who, dwelling across the seas, are linked to us by bonds of blood and kinship.'¹⁰⁸ In particular, the support from the *New York Times* was invaluable, which regularly hailed the cathedral as 'the great edifice' and proclaimed 'the great cathedral ... will be four times as big as Westminster cathedral and be surpassed in size only by St Peter's in Rome.'¹⁰⁹ The fundraising campaign was certainly successful in attracting support from all around the world and in 1936, the *Liverpool Post and Mercury* claimed that, with the exception of Russia, there had been donations to the cathedral fund from every country in the world, including Iraq, India and North Borneo.¹¹⁰

The reach of the fundraising campaign is perhaps less surprising once we understand its scale and innovation. The campaign effort focused on generating

support through public rallies from 1928 and this shifted to the ‘Golden Book’ campaign in the early 1930s, which raised £167,000 by 1953 by asking individuals to make subscriptions.¹¹¹ Yet the campaign was active in far more innovative ways and marked a new approach of the church towards consumer culture. Downey’s predecessor, Bishop Keating, for example, saw the cathedral as an opportunity to curb the spending and leisure habits of the Catholic community, as his declaration shows:

If a new Catholic Cathedral means that amongst Catholics there has been deliberately brought about less drinking and betting, less luxury and more self-denial, a football match foregone one week, a packet of cigarettes the next, a new jumper sacrificed without a feminine sigh ... then will the projected cathedral be well and nobly built.¹¹²

But Downey did not tell Catholics not to spend money on consumer goods. In contrast, he sought to provide ways for Catholics to enjoy these things in a way that benefited the cathedral project. One of the most ostentatious forms of Catholic acts of consumption was the production of ‘Cathedral Cigarettes’, which allowed Catholics the opportunity to fund the building of the cathedral as they smoked. Their advertisement declared, ‘At last ... Liverpool’s *own* Cigarette. **“Cathedrals.”** A fine Cigarette for the City of finest Cathedrals. Worthy of the City that builds for the future.’¹¹³ The cigarette company licensed the use of the cathedral from the Archdiocese, submitting a minimum of £250 a quarter to the cathedral fund.¹¹⁴ Decorated with a large image of the cathedral, the cigarettes offered a direct link with the cathedral project and were a way for Catholics to demonstrate their support for the project through the purchase of these cigarettes.

Smoking was not the only way in which the cathedral project shaped consumer culture in Liverpool. One company produced ‘Cathedral Tea’, promoted as ‘The tea with double the appeal. ... Every quarter sold adds to the Metropolitan Cathedral Appeal.’¹¹⁵ In July 1933, 5,000 pounds of Cathedral Tea was sold every week and sales were expected to double in volume over the following months.¹¹⁶ There was also the opportunity to subscribe to the ‘Golden Book’: ‘As builders of the Sanctuary and Blessed Sacrament Chapel your name and the names of your relatives or friends, living or dead, would be inscribed therein **FOR EVER.**’¹¹⁷ The Archdiocese also established a scheme that gave people a replica model of the cathedral in return for collection boxes. ‘Be a leader. ... Say with pride in years to come: “I helped to raise this, the second *largest* of all Cathedrals,”’ proclaimed the advert for collection boxes.¹¹⁸ These collection boxes alone

raised over £600 between 1 March and 30 June 1933.¹¹⁹ The range of products and spending opportunities allowed Catholics to demonstrate their Catholic identity through their purchases. Chapter 4 emphasized importance of women placed on particular acts of spending and in similar ways, Catholic items for consumption allowed Catholic to obtain alternative forms of fulfilment and status. Advertisements for these products appealed directly to Catholics through the *Liverpool Cathedral Record*, but were not placed in the mainstream press such as the *Liverpolitan* or the *Liverpool Echo* or the national press.

Catholic women seem to have reacted enthusiastically to the role of cathedral builders. From the mid-1930s, it was popular for women to bequest donations to the Cathedral fund on their death, and, in 1934, a Miss A. G. M. Standish left her entire jewellery to the fund, and she was not a rare case.¹²⁰ As the *Manchester Guardian* reported in 1930, just one year into the fundraising campaign, the amount of jewellery donated was impressive:

Diamond cuff-links and gold coins are among the articles being received in aid of the fund for building a Roman Catholic cathedral at Liverpool. Other gifts include watches, diamond rings, snuff-boxes, crucifixes, cigarette cases, silver spoons, and a golden chalice.¹²¹

The opportunity to become Cathedral builders was not limited to the wealthy. In 1935, the *Daily Mail* reported a woman from Scotland Road raised £200 by collecting and selling jam jars.¹²² There are no comparable references to money made raised by (lay) men for the Cathedral. Archived accounts also show that of the different chapels in the cathedral, most of the subscriptions were by women to chapels that reflected their identity. For example, the Union of Catholic Mothers subscribed £144 10s. to the Lady's Chapel.¹²³ Subscriptions were available for several of the chapels, including St Patrick's Chapel (very popular with Irish subscribers), Teacher's Chapel, Children's Chapel, St Joseph's Chapel and the Seamen's Chapel. The Lady's Chapel received the most donations and attracted £60,000 in donations by 1953, whereas St Joseph's Chapel received £4,600 and the Children's Chapel only £3,300.¹²⁴ Catholic women possessed a clear role within the Archdiocese's vision of religious modernity and their role as cathedral builders within the cathedral project was symbolic of this. There are parallels with Catholic women's citizenship – defined through their fundraising efforts for the cathedral – and wider female citizenship between the wars, in which women in organizations, such as the Women's Institute, raised money for good causes as a way to demonstrate their citizenship without challenging gender norms.¹²⁵ The energy and commitment shown by Catholic women does,

however, highlight their important role in Liverpool's civic life more generally and illuminates their wider contribution to the city's public culture.

Conclusion

The enthusiasm of Catholic women towards the cathedral reflected a wider culture of popular religiosity. It is perhaps not surprising the Catholic Church felt confident enough to embark on such an ambitious building project in the 1930s, as the immediate post-war years experienced a general revival in Christian religious belief in Britain and beyond.¹²⁶ Mass attendance records suggest a growth in popular Catholicism in interwar Liverpool: in 1908 the average Catholic in Liverpool attended mass ten times a year and during the period 1915–24, it had increased to twenty-five times a year.¹²⁷ The cathedral project seems to have both fuelled, and been fuelled by, this flourishing culture of Catholicism in Liverpool. In the early 1920s, for instance, there were sixty-four convents in Liverpool Archdiocese and eighty-two by 1940.¹²⁸ 'Dominic's Day', which was a time of pilgrimage for a popular saint, saw 2,500 people take to the city's streets in 1925 and 10,000 in 1939.¹²⁹ As a case study, therefore, the cathedral project not only reveals the vitality of urban Catholicism in interwar Liverpool but also demonstrates the ambition and dynamism of Catholic leaders, especially Downey. The cathedral project strengthened Catholic shared identity and collectivity but in a way that embraced the processes of modernity. 'Cathedral Cigarettes' may best encapsulate how the planned cathedral offered individuals a way to embrace their religious and their modern selves to create a form of modernity similar to that produced in Manchester's Whit processions as we saw in Chapter 5.

The fundraising campaign and the opportunity to purchase items such as Cathedral Cigarettes seems to have been successful and by 1939, the cathedral fund stood at £934,786.¹³⁰ Yet the Second World War took away the manpower needed for building the cathedral. With Lutyens' death in 1944 and Downey's following in 1953, the two leading personalities of the building project were lost. Money continued to trickle though to the campaign, usually from those who had bequeathed the cathedral fund in their wills or had taken out life insurance in its honour.¹³¹ As Liverpool received significant bomb damage, cathedral-building was certainly not a priority in the decade following 1945.¹³² Eventually, in 1954, an Architect's Report reviewed Lutyens' design and progress. The report concluded that Lutyens' design would actually have seated just 2,500

people and a large proportion of these would 'see nothing of the Celebrant or the ceremonies around the Altar owing to the great height of the Sanctuary above the Congregation seating floor'.¹³³ More critically, the cost of Lutyens' design soared due to post-war inflation rates: rather than the initial estimated cost of £3 million, by the 1950s, its estimated cost stood at £27,370,438.¹³⁴ The unmanageable cost forced the Archdiocese to abandon Lutyens' and Downey's dream cathedral and the money raised went towards a more modest design. Ironically, Gilbert Scott, brother of Giles Gilbert Scott (architect of the Anglican cathedral), took over the planning of the Cathedral in August 1957, but this too was abandoned and a new competition for a Cathedral design was launched in 1960. Liverpool finally got its Catholic cathedral in 1967 when Sir Frederick Gibberd's pioneering design was completed over one hundred years after plans were first raised.

Architectural historian David Watkins suggests that the planned cathedral 'would have been the greatest church in the world'.¹³⁵ John Summerson argues that despite remaining unbuilt, Lutyens' design 'is a landmark in the architectural history of its time'.¹³⁶ Although the cathedral was never completed, the propaganda nurtured a competing urban fantasy around Liverpool city centre, which emphasised Catholicism in the city, challenged the religion's marginalization in wider civic culture and boosted Liverpool's status as a provincial city. For example, during the formal opening of Gibberd's cathedral, the accompanying publicity pamphlet highlighted Downey's role in fuelling the project and proclaimed, 'He destroyed the legend that Catholics were undignified, unacceptable people'.¹³⁷ Lutyens' and Downey's cathedral was a symbol of the Catholic modernity Liverpool Archdiocese sought to promote. Although Lutyens' design is known as the 'the cathedral that never was', Liverpool's planned Catholic cathedral still had a profound impact on the city and its inhabitants, before the Second World War halted Downey and Lutyens' shared dream.¹³⁸