

Documentary material on Robert Ralston Cox (October 20, 1822-May 23, 1851)  
Compiled by Richard J. Mammana, 2004  
rjm45@columbia.edu

From *Catalogue of the Trustees, Officers, and Students of the University of Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: January, 1841, under heading “Undergraduates, 1840-41: Senior Sophisters:”

**R. Ralston Cox**, Philadelphia, Philadelphia.

---

From *The Church Review, and Ecclesiastical Register*, vol. 1: no. 3, October, 1848, p. 475.

GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. The examination of the students in this Institution commenced on Monday, June 26th, and was continued Tuesday and Wednesday—conducted by Professors Turner, Wilson, Moore, Ogilby and Haight, in their respective departments, in the presence of a Committee of the Board of Trustees, consisting of the Rev. Dr. Mead, of Connecticut, the Rev. Messrs, Atkinson of Maryland, Watson, of Connecticut, Williams of New Jersey, and Odenheimer, of Pennsylvania. The examination was thorough, and the students generally acquitted themselves creditably. The Commencement was celebrated on Friday. After Morning Prayer and an earnest and impressive Charge from Bishop DeLancey, the following gentlemen received the Diploma of the Seminary:

**R. Ralston Cox, A.M., Pennsylvania;** T. Stafford Drown, A.B., New York; Theodore A. Eaton, New York; James F. LeBaron, New York; Andrew Mackie, Jr., A.B., New Jersey; Josiah Phelps, Indiana; Sylvanus Reed, Western New York; Horace Hall Reid, A.M., New York; Robert C. Rogers, A.B. Connecticut; Rufus D. Stearns, A.B., Western New York.

---

From *The New-York Ecclesiologist*, published by the New-York Ecclesiological Society. May, 1850, volume 2: number 4, pp. 118-119:

The regular quarterly meeting of the New-York Ecclesiological Society was held at St. Paul's Sunday School Rooms, on the evening of Easter Monday; the President in their chair.

[...]

In addition to the regular meetings, your committee held a special meeting in the month of March, when a communication was received from Mr. R.R. Cox, asking advice respecting a plan for a Church in Wisconsin. A plan was submitted by the Architect, which, after some modification, was approved.

From *The New-York Ecclesiologist*, published by the New-York Ecclesiological Society. May, 1850, volume 2: number 4, p. 126:

S————— *Waukesha, Wn.*—The plans of this church, which is not yet erected, were submitted by the architect, Mr. Wills, at the request of our fellow member, R.R. Cox, through whom the order came, to the Society, for their approval; we wish this were a more common custom. The ground plan consists of a well-proportioned chancel, a nave, and two aisles, sixty feet by forty, an engaged tower at the west end of the north aisle, a southern porch and sacristy.

The style is late first pointed—the peculiarity of the plan consists in the clerestory and its supports, being of undisguised wooden construction, while the aisle, walls and gables are of stone.

The plan contains a chancel screen and no altar rail, sedilia, stalls and open seats.

The font is placed near the western entrance, and the organ on the floor, at the eastern termination of the south aisle.

We trust the plan may meet the views of those interested in the erection of the Church.

---

From *The New-York Ecclesiologist*, published by the New-York Ecclesiological Society. September, 1850, volume 2: number 6, pp. 176-177:

The regular Quarterly Meeting of the Society was held July 1st, in St. Paul's Sunday School Rooms, at a quarter past eight, p.m. The Rev. President in the Chair. [...]

Mr. **R.R. Cox**, in relation to articles imported for the use of Churches, called attention to the subject of Custom House Duties, stating that as articles of taste, not intended for sale, they might be admitted free of Duty.

Dr. Vinton also stated, that as articles “for the Instruction of the People” they had been received free of Duty.

Mr. R. R. Cox presented to the Society two specimens of Wisconsin Oak, for which on motion the thanks of the Society were returned.

On motion the Society then adjourned.

From *The New-York Ecclesiologist*, published by the New-York Ecclesiological Society. September, 1850, volume 2: number 6, pp. 177, 181:

#### Ecclesiological Late Cambridge Camden Society.

The Eleventh Anniversary Meeting of this Society was held on Thursday, May 16, 1850, in one of the School-rooms of Christ-Church, S. Pancras, in Albany Street, Regent's Park. [...]

[...]

The committee have heard with great pleasure of the completion of a church in which they have from the foundation taken the greatest interest, S. James the Less, near Philadelphia. An active member of the New-York Ecclesiological Society, and

correspondent of your committee, has likewise himself designed, under interesting circumstances, a wooden church, to be dedicated in honor of S. Sylvanus, at the Nashotah Lakes, among the Scandinavian emigrants who have submitted to the Church in Wisconsin. The design, scrupulously correct in point of arrangement, and which, especially in respect of its altar fittings, sent out from this country, is intended to be a model, has been recommended by the Bishop for adoption at Davenport, in Iowa, and at Fort Snelling, near the Falls of S. Anthony, on a branch of the Upper Mississippi, in the Minesota [sic] territory. We hear, too, with much satisfaction, that a correct ecclesiology is being widely adopted in the Far West, *e.g.*, at St. Matthias, Waukesha; S. John, Milwaukee; Fayetteville, Arkansas; and S. Ansgarius, Chicago. We are informed, also, of the creditable progress of S. Mark's, Philadelphia, and of a Pointed church, dedicated in honor of the Holy Trinity, at S. Francisco, California, by Mr. Wills, which, if not so satisfactory as might be wished, is still remarkable in many particulars

---

From *The Banner of the Cross*, volume 13:23, June 7, 1851, p. 181:

#### Death of Mr. Ralston Cox.

It has been our lot, of late, to make some sad records. The one we now add to the list is attended with circumstances of peculiar trial. In such a case as this, how blessed is the faith which directs our minds, amid surrounding gloom, to that wisdom and mercy overruling all events, in whose light the trusting heart is never left to utter darkness!

On the afternoon of the fourth Sunday after Easter, after uniting in the solemn worship of the Sanctuary, the hand which makes this record, grasped, in parting, the warm hand which now is cold in death. Mr. Cox, full of hope and spirits, left the next morning, with a large party, for Wisconsin. He was going to complete the beautiful sanctuary, which he has been erecting, at his own expense, in Delafield, and he bore with him some of the appropriate furniture which had had procured from abroad, to adorn this house of God. On Friday night he parted from his friends to retire, and soon after, that fearful cry "A man overboard!" was heard. As he was very near-sighted, it is presumed he missed his foothold on the narrow guard of the steamer. Though his voice was heard for some time, the darkness of the night, and it is to be feared the too slight search of those who little value human life, prevented a rescue. The name of the lost one was not known, until his vacant place in the morning revealed the sad truth to his sorrowing friends. And even then, strong hopes were entertained that he might have reached the shore, or that some other boat might have rescued him. These hopes were vain. The waters have only given back to his sorrowing friends the lifeless remains.

All who knew Ralston Cox will agree with us in the declaration, that a heart more true to high and noble principle never beat in a human breast. His integrity was of the strictest, we had almost said sternest character. His devotion for the Church he had proved by giving *himself* to her service, and then by freely offering his ample means to advance her interests. To a Missionary Church in this city he was a large and liberal benefactor, as well as to others. And his last days have been spent in the pious and blessed work of erecting, at his own cost, a "glorious sanctuary" in the far West. In *deed*

as well as in *word*, in his *life* as well as with his *lips*, he declared, “Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy House, and the place where thine honor dwelleth.”

While, therefore, we must unite our sorrow to that which other hearts more deeply feel, we are sure they can join with us in realizing the comfort and hope by which this great affliction is relieved. We may turn from the dark stream on which “the shadow of death” brooded, to that “river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.” Although our brother realized in his extremity that “vain is the help of man,” his was also that unfailing experience of God’s people, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” A happier voice now speaks to us, even from the devouring element—“The Lord is my shepherd—HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS.”

---

From *Recollections of Nashotah and Its Vicinity, Being Extracts from the Diary of One of the Alumni*, by the Rev. George P. Schetky, D.D. (unpublished MS)

Undated entry:

The Parochial School House

The corner-stone was laid in the fall of 1847, and on that occasion an address was delivered by the Rev. John Johnstone, M.D. Upon the Advent of the Rev. W. Markoe in 1850 it had been unoccupied for a long time and he was allowed the use of it as Rector of the Church of S. Chrysostom which was in course of erection by the liberality of his cousin **R. Ralston Cox**. He continued to occupy it that and the following year.

May 29[, 1851]. Ascension-Day

Warm, pleasant day Rev. Prof. Adams read morning service, preached & celebrated the Holy Communion. In company with Bro. Peake walked to Summit, & met Mr. Keeler, who informed us that a telegram had reached Milwaukie [sic] yesterday, announcing that Mr. **Robt. Ralston Cox** (cousin of Rev. Markoe) on the night of the 23rd, had fallen over board from a steamboat on the Ohio & was drowned. The intelligence has thrown a gloom over the whole community. His little Church at Delafield was to have been finished by the fall. This melancholy circumstance it is thought will prevent its early completion. He was a thorough churchman, and was a candidate for Holy Orders of the Dio. of Penna. His Bishop refused to ordain him, because he maintained that *schism was a sin*. He was a young man of amiable, lovely disposition, & a most devout Christian.

June 9[, 1851]. Monday in Whitsun-week. With S. Breck visited Captn. Gassmann & family & Mr. Baker at Gassman’s Mills, & returning, arrived at Nashotah, where I met Peter Brown Morrison & Charles O. Edmunds, who arrived to-day from Philadelphia. The members of the Institution met this evening and passed sundry resolutions, upon the death of **R. Ralston Cox**, to be presented to the Rev. Mr. Markoe & family. “Friend after

friend departs”. We have just heard of the death of the Rev. Geo. F. Richards, an alumnus of this Institution (class of 1850) and Assistant Minister of S. Peter’s Church, Ashtabula, Ohio. He had been ill for some time with consumption, and was engaged to be married to the daughter of “Old Father Hall”, of Ashtabula.<sup>1</sup> He was a fine young man,—one of our best students, and much beloved by all who knew him—(Bishop McIlvaine, in his address to the Convention of the Diocese of Ohio, paid a beautiful tribute to his character.

---

### Articles of Consecration of the Church of St. John Chrysostom

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Whereas the Rector, Churchwardens and Vestrymen of the Church of St. John Chrysostom in the Township of Delafield and State of Wisconsin, have, by an instrument this day presented to me, appropriated and devoted a house of public worship erected by the **R. Ralston Cox** in the said Town of Delafield to be a free church forever for the worship and service of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost according to the provisions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America in the ministry, doctrine, liturgy, rites and usages; and by a congregation in communion with said church and in union with the convention thereof in the Diocese of Wisconsin;

And Whereas the same Rector, Churchwardens and Vestrymen have by the same instrument, requested me to take their said house of worship under my spiritual jurisdiction as Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin and that of my successors in office, and to consecrate it by the name of St. John Chrysostom and thereby separate it from all unhallowed and common uses and solemnly dedicate it to the holy purposes above mentioned;

Now therefore know all men by these presents that I, Jackson Kemper, D.D., by Divine permission Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin acting under the protection of Almighty God, have on the 20th day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six taken the above mentioned house of worship under my spiritual jurisdiction as Bishop aforesaid and that of my successors in office; and in presence of divers of the clergy and a public congregation therein assembled, and according to the form prescribed by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, have consecrated it by the name of The Church of St. John Chrysostom. And I do hereby pronounce and declare that the said Church of St. John Chrysostom is consecrated accordingly and thereby separated from all unhallowed, worldly and commonly uses and dedicated as a free church forever to the worship and service of Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost for reading and preaching His holy word, for

---

<sup>1</sup> John Hall (November 5, 1788- January 12, 1869) Grandfather of Anglo-Catholic theologian Francis J. Hall. See *Life of the Rev. John Hall*, By his Grandson, the Rev. Francis J. Hall, D.D. unpublished MS in the library of the General Theological Seminary, New York. Accused by a visitor to his church of being a “Puseyite, and [i]nquiring what that meant, he procured the *Tracts for the Times*. When he next met his visitor he said to him, “You are mistaken. Dr. Pusey is a Hallite. I have held his principles throughout my ministry.”

celebrating His holy sacraments, for offering to His Glorious Majesty the sacrifice of prayer, praise and thanksgiving, for blessing His people in His name for the performance of all other holy offices agreeably to the terms of the covenant of Grace and Salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ and according to the provisions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America in its ministry, doctrines, liturgy, rites and usages.

In the testimony whereof I have hereunto affixed my seal and signature at Delafield, the day and year above written and in the twenty-first year of my consecration.

✠ JACKSON KEMPER

---

From *The Story of a College*, unpublished MS journal by James DeKoven, entry dated July 31st, 1862, Middletown, Connecticut:

Delafield Church.

How Delafield Church was built, and the fate of its founder<sup>2</sup>—how the first Rector joined the Church of Rome,<sup>3</sup> the varying fortunes and misfortunes of the founder's family, some other pen than mine must write, if ever it is written. Pleasantly and kindly, I remember them all (the founder I never saw) and pray God to bless them, what is wrong making better, and what is right making brighter and brighter until the Perfect Day.

From *The History of Waukesha County, Wisconsin*. Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880, p. 734:

There are two churches in Delafield. The Episcopal Church was built at a very early day, by J. **Ralston Cox**, [sic] of Philadelphia, and donated to the Parish of Saint John Chrysostom, Delafield. Dr. Adams, of Nashotah, is the present rector. It is a commodious structure and very handsomely finished in hard woods.

---

From William Cox Pope, *William Sitgreaves Cox: Annals of a Quiet Life*. No place: no publisher, 1906, pp 80-82:

*Charlotte Sitgreaves Pope to D. N. Pope*

---

<sup>2</sup> Robert Ralston Cox (October 20, 1822-May 23, 1851). General Seminary 1848.

<sup>3</sup> William Markoe (July 25, 1820-August 15, 1898). Deacon September 23, 1849; Priest March 17, 1850 (Kemper). Deposed September 6, 1855. An anonymous writer in the *American Church Quarterly Review* said of Markoe in 1852: "His fantastic tricks in ritualism led to the adoption of a Canon on Ritual Uniformity, in the diocese of Wisconsin, to which he belonged. He was young, ardent, impatient of results, and excessively fond of Mediaeval restorations. With increasing wisdom, he may return to the Church of his family and friends."

Burnet House, Cincinnati,  
26th May, 1851.

My dear Husband: We have been two days anxiously hoping and looking for the arrival of poor **Ralston**, who fell overboard on Friday night at ten o'clock, 21 miles below Wheeling. We left Pittsburg [sic] on Friday morning at eleven, after having spent a very pleasant day there. When we arrived at Wheeling, just before twilight, Ralston, John Camac, Johnnie Markoe, and myself walked over the magnificent suspension bridge on the Ohio river. After our return we all sat together, until nearly ten, when the gentlemen retired.

A few minutes after being in bed, we remarked that there was a great deal of noise overhead, and, feeling somewhat alarmed, we inquired of the chambermaid the cause. She answered very calmly that a man had fallen overboard, but added, "Pray keep quiet, ladies, for the captain does not like the chambermaid to tell, for fear of creating an excitement." About ten minutes afterward the boat moved off again, and, upon enquiring whether the man was found, she answered equally coolly, "No; it often happened." It never struck us that this shocking disregard of human life was to touch us so closely.

The following morning we did not understand why Ralston did not join us. The captain announced the breakfast; still poor Ralston tarried. We got uneasy. Aunt sent all over the boat for him. She went to his state room; his berth had not been slept in! Like a thunderbolt came the conviction that the man overboard was our dear friend Ralston. Since then we have waited and waited, but we can hear nothing of him. His poor sisters, how will they bear it! It is sad to think that, if we had but known that it was he, he might have been saved. Telegraphic dispatches have been sent to bury him, should his body be found; and I received one from Judge Hepburn offering his services, if he could do anything for us. It was so kind of him. They received me in the most gratifying manner, and invited me most pressingly to pay them a visit.

I had the pleasure of receiving good news from our dear children at Pittsburg, and everything promised to go smoothly; but we do not know what a day may bring forth, how much of sorrow and misery may be in our morrow.

I have watched in the arrivals from New Orleans for familiar faces, but I have seen none. We intend leaving tomorrow, and going to St. Louis, without stopping; from there we go to Sam Markoe's, at Jacksonville, Illinois. I have been in hopes that you would try and meet me, but it is so early in the season that I fear you will not be able to do so. If you can write to me soon, direct care of the Rev. Wm. Markoe, Nashotah Lakes, Delafield, Wisconsin. It is quite late, so I must say good night, and remain,

Ever Your Affectionate WIFE.

---

From "Old Philadelphia Families," by Frank Willing Leach, published in *The North American* newspaper, Philadelphia, Sunday, July 7, 1912:

James and Sarah (nee Ralston) Cox had issue four children, namely, Robert Ralston, Maria Dorsey, Sarah Clarkson and James Chester.

The elder of the two sons, **Robert Ralston Cox**, born October 20, 1822, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1841, and from the General Theological Seminary, New York, in 1848. Owing to his extreme High Church views, he was never ordained. He was one of the founders of the Ecclesiastical Association, [sic] and publisher of the *Ecclesiologist*. He died unmarried, May 23, 1851, having been drowned in the Ohio river.

The elder of his two sisters, Maria Dorsey Cox, born in June, 1824, married, July 3, 1849, her cousin, William Markoe, son of John Markoe, by his wife, Mehitable Cox. Mr. Markoe was born July 25, 1820. The death of Mrs. Markoe occurred August 15, 1898. They removed from Philadelphia many years ago, and settled at White Bear Lake, Minnesota. They had four sons, William Francis, Ralston Joshua, James Cox and Lorenzo Joseph. The youngest son, Lorenzo Joseph Markoe, still resides at White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

The other daughter of James and Sarah (née Ralston) Cox, Sarah Clarkson Cox, born March 31, 1826, is described as “a very fascinating, talented woman who renounced the world and entered a convent.” She is still living, at the Convent of the Visitation, Wilmington, Delaware.

---

From Everard M. Upjohn, *Richard Upjohn, Architect and Churchman*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939, p. 209, in a list of “minor works by Upjohn”:

DELAFIELD, WIS. St. John’s Church. Letter, March 11, 1859 (R.U. presented plans).

---

From Harris H. Holt, *The Story of the Church of St. John Chrysostom*. Delafield: no publisher, 1956, pp 3-6.

## Chapter I. Sources

The Church of St. John Chrysostom in Delafield was named in memory of a fourth-century bishop of Constantinople, who was greatly beloved by his people. He preached such eloquent and inspired sermons that he was given the name of Chrysostom, which in Greek means the “Golden Tongue.” He gave generously of his private means for the foundation of hospitals for the poor, and he rigorously reformed the habits of priests and monks and spoke out fearlessly against the custom of bowing before the statues of the empress. His courage brought disaster. His enemies procured his deposition and exile, and he died in his place of refuge on the slopes of the Taurus mountains in A.D. 407.

No church could have been more appropriately named. The rectors of St. John Chrysostom, down to this day, have been distinguished for their self-sacrificing devotion, their gifts of time or land or money, their willingness to serve for little or no compensation and their unusual skill in interpreting the Word of God.

The founder of this Church was **R. Ralston Cox** of Philadelphia, a young man who, himself, planned to become a clergyman. His uncle, Robert Cox, had built the church of St. James in Philadelphia. It is said that Ralston Cox either adapted his plans



from those of a parish church in Greensted, England or, more probably, from the plans of the church of St. James in Philadelphia.

Stark tragedy fell upon the founder ere his work was well begun. With his family, Mr. Cox was returning to Wisconsin from Pennsylvania by steamboat on the Ohio River. On the night of May 24, 1851 he apparently fell overboard in the darkness. No trace of his body was ever found. However, his sisters, Sarah C. Cox and Maria Cox Markoe with her husband, the Rev. William Markoe, carried on Ralston Cox's plans and established the church as a memorial to him.

The original site chosen for the Church was in the eastern part of the Nashotah House cemetery. Laborers had begun to dig the foundation when it was learned that Nashotah House, by the terms of its charter, could not give a deed to the property. In this dilemma Mr. Cox consulted Bishop Jackson Kemper. The Bishop advised him to confer with members of the Church living in Delafield. In October, 1850, Ralston Cox executed a bond to Andrew Proudfit, contracting to convey the south-eastern half of Section 18 to any parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church which should be incorporated in the town of Delafield. The certificate of incorporation was dated August 2nd, 1851. Other donors of land for the parish schoolhouse and parsonage were Sarah C. Cox, Beriah and Jennie Brown, and—later the Rev. James DeKoven, who had bought thirty acres to establish a college for the preparation of candidates seeking entrance to Nashotah Seminary. By 1860, therefore, the parish owned not only "Block M", the site of the church, but also "Block L" for the parish school house—now occupied by DeKoven and Welles Hall of St. John's, Military Academy—and "Block O" where the parsonage was built, and where St. John's chapel and Smythe Hall now stand. The frame building between the academy chapel and Smythe Hall is the original parsonage of the Church of St. John Chrysostom.

The solid oak timbers for the Church were from trees growing in a thick maple grove on the shores of Okauchee Lake. Such trees had few lateral branches. The lumber, therefore, was remarkably free from knots. All lumber was hand sawed and planed and kiln dried. It has been estimated that five times as much wood was burned in the kilns as was employed in the actual construction of the Church. All of this timber, originally brought to the Nashotah House site, was moved to Delafield by Andrew Proudfit and other donors of the Delafield land.

Visitors are impressed by several unusual features of the architecture of the Church. No plaster whatsoever was used in the building. As the Rev. William H. Stoy wrote, "The ideas for this Church are an early example of the 'Ecclesiastical Renaissance', following the Oxford Movement, and were very advanced for their time." The stone altar, with its foundation deep in the earth, was set before the building was erected. The stone font was placed opposite the original south entrance, signifying that a Christian first enters the Church by baptism.

Jacob Luther, the village blacksmith, forged the beautiful and elaborate hinges on the original doors. He was a true artist in iron. Many years later when the large western doors were placed, an effort was made at the Roycrofters at East Aurora, New York, to duplicate these hinges. The cost was found to be prohibitive. The vertical battens or weatherstrips on the exterior are fastened with hand-forged nails.

Miss Sarah Cox gave the stained glass windows, including the memorial window to her brother, Ralston. From England came the fine altar cloths and the priceless silver communion service—all still in use. The altar cross was given by friends of Dr. DeKoven

after his death in 1879. In 1950 the pulpit used by DeKoven was given by St. John Chrysostom Church to the DeKoven Shrine in Racine.

The Rev. William Markoe placed the sun dial on a cedar post on the south side of the Church. The dial, lacking its “fin”, still stands. Is it the original cedar post, over one hundred years old?

All of those concerned with the building of St. John Chrysostom retained a deep and lasting interest in the Church. The chief carpenter, Alden S. Kelly, became and remained a church member. The excellence of a man’s work both affects and reflects his character and life. Members of the Cox family long retained their interest. As recently as 1928—seventy-five years after Ralston Cox had drawn up his plans—some of his relatives sent gifts in his memory. A niece, Miss Hitty Cox, after her departure from Delafield, wrote back, “In respect to the Church we have made a miserable exchange indeed. This Church is very ugly. We miss the little Church very much, and I am afraid we shall never find another we like so well.”

## Chapter II. Beginnings.

William Markoe, a brother-in-law of Ralston Cox, had come to Nashotah House following his graduation from General Theological Seminary. He found that he preferred the work of a parish priest to the institutional life at Nashotah House. It was to satisfy that preference that Ralston Cox began the parish church at Delafield. In a letter still in existence, dated August 18, 1851, Mr. Markoe accepted a call to become rector of the parish. Building operations had been interrupted by the death of Ralston Cox, but services were held in the building before its completion. Mr. Markoe suffered from ill health. In 1852 he took his family to Philadelphia to escape the rigors of a Wisconsin winter. Recovering to some degree, he returned to his parish in 1853, as is shown by the fact that he held the funeral service for John Hill, the sexton. But, in 1854, continued ill health forced Mr. Markoe to resign. It is evident that his distress was of the mind as well as of the body. He had, perhaps, been more deeply influenced by Cardinal Newman and the “Ritualists” than he was aware. He left the Episcopal Church, and he and his family embraced the Roman Catholic faith. Sarah Cox became a nun in a Roman Catholic order. Upon Mr. Markoe’s return to wind up the affairs of the Cox estate, a delegation from the Delafield Vestry went to ask him whether he intended to turn over the church property to the Roman Church. He assured them that such was not his intention.

The parish was indebted to Mr. Markoe in three ways. Within two months after the arrival of James DeKoven at Nashotah House, William Markoe built for DeKoven a schoolhouse on the Church lot to the west of the Church, now the site of DeKoven Hall of St. John’s Military Academy. Then, soon after the arrival of John Sebastian Bach Hodges, a classmate of DeKoven, Markoe built the parsonage for Hodges, who was soon to be married. And—last and most important of all—through the efforts of Mr. Markoe and Miss Sarah Cox, the Church building was completed, and the last deed of the property was conveyed to the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry, free from all debt and incumbrances. The Church was then consecrated by Bishop Kemper on May 20th, 1856. A copy of the Articles of Consecration was made and framed by Nelson C. Hawks. Much faded, this document hangs now on the north wall of the chancel. Mr. Hawks was a Delafield youth. He attended Dr. DeKoven’s parish school for some time. His letter to his

sister, Fannie, in their later years give much tone and color to the story of the early days of the Church.

---

From Richard W.E. Perrin, "Richard Upjohn, Architect: Anglican Chapels in the Wilderness," in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vol. 42, Autumn, 1961, pp. 40-43

The settlement of Wisconsin occurred at a time when many changes were taking place in Europe, with widespread reaction being felt in the United States. These changes were not only of an economic and political nature, but also cultural and religious. Definitely interwoven with religious thought and life was nineteenth-century Romanticism. It was said that "The men of the Romantic Movement burnt what their teachers had worshipped, and worshipped what their teachers had burnt." The Romantic Movement was not a mere attempt to walk back into the Middle Ages, but, prompted by a dislike of the grey tones and stiff outlines of false classicism, it became a genuine craving for color and beauty as exemplified by traditions of the church. In England, following the so-called Oxford Movement, the Camden Society was founded in 1839, thereby initiating greater liturgical emphasis within the church of England and exerting strong influence upon architects to follow medieval precedent.

The architectural style thus developed was Gothic Revival, which reached a high point in America between 1830 and 1860. While often adapted to residential structures, the best examples of Gothic Revival were the churches of the period. But even here the style often simulated effects by any available means rather than building in accordance with Gothic as a structural system.

A most interesting and famous architect of the early American Gothic Revival was Richard Upjohn, the architect of Trinity Church in New York City. In 1857 Upjohn became the first president of the American Institute of Architects and has been called the most important figure in American architecture between Thomas Jefferson and H.H. Richardson. The best feature of Upjohn's work was the freedom of planning he achieved by using many separate Gothic elements, and the more rustic and modest the buildings were, the more successful they seemed to be. His board-and-batten churches carried Gothic Revival into an original phase.

During this period settlements and communities were being carved out of the Wisconsin wilderness. All of the settlers were by no means rough-and-ready frontiersmen, since many of them had left refined and culturally advanced surroundings both in this country and abroad to seek their fortunes in the new land. As settlements were established, parishes were often founded at the same time. Usually, no architects were available, and church groups desirous of building edifices as serviceable and churchly as their money could buy frequently turned to famous architects such as Richard Upjohn to help them with their building program. Upjohn's devotion to church architecture led him to work gratuitously for many small parishes. As this fact came to be known, the requests for plans increased in frequency, prompting Upjohn to prepare standard drawings for a small church and related buildings and to publish them under the title of *Upjohn's Rural Architecture*. In his preface, Upjohn says: "My purpose in publishing this book is simply to supply the want which is often felt, especially in the

newly settled parts of our country, of designs for cheap but still substantial buildings for the use of parishes, schools, etc. In the examples given I have kept in view the use of each building and endeavoured to give it the appropriate character; while at the same time care has been taken to make the drawings as plain and practical as possible.” He added that with these plans, specifications, and bills of material, any intelligent mechanic would be able to carry out the design.

Very closely following the plan for a small church as contained in Upjohn’s book is the Episcopal Church of St. John Chrysostom at Delafield. A leader in the founding of the congregation was **Ralston Cox**, who had come to Wisconsin from Philadelphia. Construction of the church edifice was apparently begun in 1851 and completed in 1853, with consecration taking place in 1856. Local tradition attributes the design of the church to **Ralston Cox** and affirms that he either adapted his plans from those of the parish church at Greenstead, England, or from the plans of the Church of St. James in Philadelphia. The Greenstead church is a surviving, although re-built, example of pre-Norman stave construction, and according to available descriptions of St. James in Philadelphia, consecrated in 1810, it could hardly have been the board-and-batten paradigm for St. John Chrysostom, since wooden construction was outlawed in Philadelphia long before 1810.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, *Upjohn’s Rural Architecture* was not published until 1852. It may, therefore, be supposed that the typical design, which eventually was offered as a standard by Upjohn, had been used on earlier occasions in response to requests from

individual congregations. At any rate the resemblance of St. **John**

**Chrysostom church** to the design contained in Upjohn’s book is too pronounced to be coincidence. The size and proportion of the nave, as well as chancel and sanctuary, are almost exactly the same as shown in the book. Even the location of the pulpit, organ, choir stalls, and bishop’s chair coincide. The triple lancet windows in the east wall of the chancel correspond exactly. The main difference between St John Chrysostom and Upjohn’s typical design is the omission of the tower at the Delafield church and the substitution of a south portal in the same location. Quite convincing, also, is the detail of the woodwork, sedilia, pulpit, and lectern, as well as the baptismal font—all as contained in Upjohn’s book. Enhancing the basic excellence of the design is the careful craftsmanship evident in this church. Choice oak timber was used for walls and roof trusses by Alden Kelly, the carpenter, and paneling and doors are of exceptionally fine quality. Handwrought hinges and latches, said to have been forged by the local blacksmith, Jacob Luther, attest to the skill and good taste of this man. The outside of the church is covered with vertical, wood planks 12 inches wide and covered with two by three-inch battens.

Except for a new vestibule at the west portal and the introduction of central heating, St. John Chrysostom church stands exactly as it was built over one hundred years ago. Architecturally and historically it is an important landmark, attesting the faith of its founders and the skill of its architect and builders.

---

<sup>4</sup> Sic! The Church of Saint James the Less was consecrated on Trinity Sunday, May 26, 1850, by the Right Reverend Alonzo Potter, Bishop of Pennsylvania.

---

From Phoebe Stanton, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856*. Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968, p. 161:

The secretary of the [New-York Ecclesiological] Society was **Robert Ralston Cox**, who was at that time associated with the General Theological Seminary. A few years later, when involved in missionary work in the Middle West, Cox was killed in a steamboat accident on the Ohio River. (His body was one of the first to be buried in the church yard of St. James the Less.)

From Phoebe Stanton, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856*. Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968, pp. 259, 268:

St. Stephen's [Millburn, New Jersey] and St. John Chrysostom's, Delafield, Wisconsin, built from 1851 to 1853 but consecrated in 1856, rank among the best surviving examples of the American parish church in wood. The history of St. John Chrysostom's, which has been somewhat mysterious, can now be clarified. **Robert Ralston Cox** of Philadelphia, a founder and officer of the New York [sic] Ecclesiological Society, was instrumental in the establishment of the church and arrangements for the building. Local tradition has associated the design of the church with Cox, who was said to have followed either Greenstead Church, England, or "St. James" in Philadelphia. In view of the connections between Cox and St. James the Less and the fact that he was close to Robert Ralston, the sources of St. John Chrysostom's are so obvious as scarcely to require elaboration. Cox either commissioned Upjohn to do the design, which seems unlikely since the Upjohn papers contain only one letter concerning it, or adapted a plan from Upjohn's *Rural Architecture*, keeping close to the Philadelphia building which had altered Upjohn's style. St. John Chrysostom's belongs to the St. James the Less parish church revival. Its size, the size of the nave in proportion to its chancel and sanctuary, the triplet window in the east, the placement of liturgical centers in the chancel, and the rood screen all follow the dictates of ecclesiology. The details of hinge designs, lectern, and finials on the pews are drawn from the *Instrumenta Ecclesiastica* prepared by William Butterfield for the Ecclesiological Society. But the bargeboards, the board-and-batten exterior, the slenderness of its parts, and the acute angle of the roofs belong to wood and to American sensibility. The pattern of the English medieval parish church had traveled far and been greatly modified in its passage, but its essentials had not been lost. St John Chrysostom's belongs to Gothic revival because it follows Gothic "principles."

---

From Paul W. Kayser, *A Brief History and Guide to the Church of Saint James the Less*. Philadelphia: Church of St. James the Less, 1994, p. 14.

The West Window was presented as a memorial to **Robert Ralston Cox**, the nephew of Robert Ralston. Following a visit to Philadelphia, Cox drowned in the Ohio

River on his way home to Wisconsin. He was building a church, St. John Chrysostom, in Delafield, Wisconsin. St. John Chrysostom, although of frame construction, appears to have been substantially influenced by St. James the Less; both are blessed with West Windows dedicated to Robert Ralston Cox.