ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE, GOOD, BAD AND INDIFFERENT (1872):

The Church architecture is somewhat above the average. The English Churches at Wollongong and Jamberoo are appropriate, handsome edifices — especially the latter — the Memorial Church of the Resurrection. The former is larger, and more pretentious — handsome withal — and interesting from the beauty of its situation on a hilltop between Keira and the sea. The Gospel of Christ is preached at Jamberoo to an earnest people, in all its full simplicity; and the true idea of Christian worship observed — that of praising God in a becoming place, and manner. Trees have been planted by different friendly hands around the sacred edifice; windows, richly stained, been raised by mourning, hoping spirits; and the memory of the martyred Bishop of the Southern Isles will soon be hallowed by a similar emblem. The Episcopal Church at Kiama is of the ordinary type of the Establishment in most small Towns, both here and in the Old Country, with a little extra plainness, dullness, and deadness; but the building is being renovated. That at Dapto is better in many things, except size; and so is the one at Shellharbour — whose Incumbent stands alone amongst Colonial clergy; for his flock have provided him with two parsonages — one beneath the mountains at Jamberoo (where his principal charge is), and the other by the sea at Shellharbour; and in thus honouring him they have honoured themselves.

The Presbyterian Church at Kiama is really a beautiful building — no Church more so, of whatever denomination, in the whole of New South Wales. It is highly creditable to the zeal, taste, and judgment of its scholarly Pastor, and his enlightened people. The Meeting-houses at Wollongong and Shellharbour are on the improved Tabernacle plan; those at Jamberoo and Gerringong — as well as the English Church at the latter — are little better than wooden huts or barns — a mockery of Him whose Sanctuaries they pretend to be. The Wesleyan Chapels of the district are medium between the best and the worst of the Presbyterian; and the Zion of the Primitive Methodists, at Bulli, is very primitive indeed. Of the Roman Catholic Chapels, I can only recall to memory the large stone building at Wollongong, and the smaller ones at Kiama and Shellharbour.

(Judge A. McFarland, 'Illawarra and Manaro', 1872).

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