

# A. Scott Carter's and Harold Stacey's Processional Cross for Trinity College, University of Toronto

By Callie Stacey

In 1953, Gerald Larkin (1885-1961), the Chairman of the Salada Tea Company, made a generous gift of \$300,000 to Trinity College, making possible the long-cherished hope of building a chapel. Trinity College was originally located on Queen Street West,

west of Bathurst, built in 1852 to designs by Toronto architect Kivas Tully. After Trinity College became federated with the University of Toronto in 1904, it moved to a new building on Hoskin Avenue, designed by the firm of Darling and Pearson. The new building incorporated some of the design features of the Queen St. site, but due to rising building costs the 1926 structure did not include a chapel.



Chapel interior, processional cross, lower left, above pews

When construction began later that year, Sir Giles G. Scott (1880-1960) and associate architects George and Moorhouse of Toronto were chosen for the design of the chapel. On the architects' team was the Toronto heraldic designer, A. Scott Carter, R.C.A., M.R.A.I.C., (1881-1968). Presumably it was he who suggested Toronto silversmith Harold Stacey (1911-1979) as the maker for the processional cross. They had previously worked together on a pectoral cross presented to Bishop George Luxton, 1949, and on the processional cross for St. Cyprian's Anglican Church, 1950. For the latter, Carter designed and painted the boss of a bishop's mitre. Later in 1958, they would collaborate on a Presence Lamp for St.

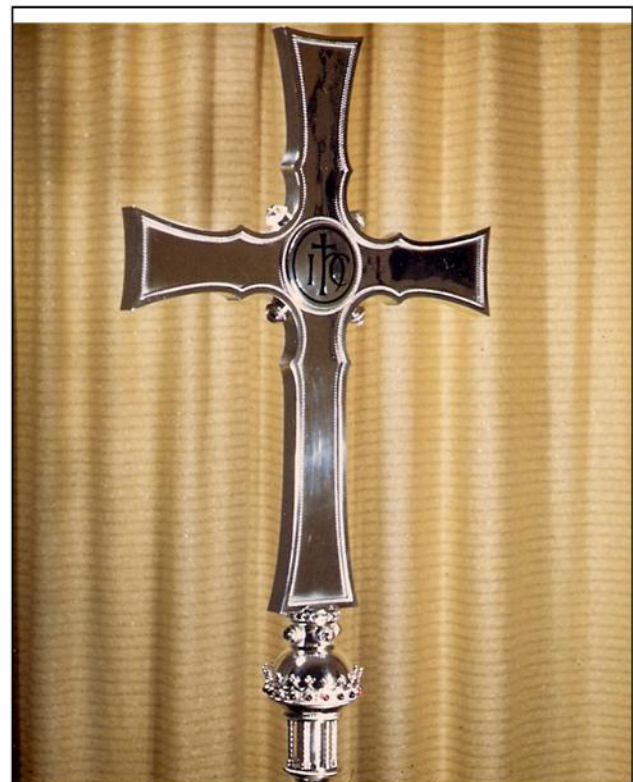
Thomas' Anglican Church. Stacey wrote to Carter in March of 1955: "After due consideration of the many aspects of your fine design for the silver processional cross..., I am prepared to quote a definite price...of \$2500.00. This figure is based on a conservative estimate of 1000 hours of work. It covers all materials, services and sales taxes, as well as a reasonable amount of engraved lettering. A suitable protective bag or hood will be supplied." Carter agreed to the terms and asked that the cross be complete by Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>. The work on this project was on time. On Oct. 2, he and Carter were

discussing the wording of the engraving on the cross. Carter asked that it "be put in an as inconspicuous place as possible...I would rather it was left off entirely than to have the awful lettering they usually put on such objects." The completed engraving reads: "A.S. Carter, invt. H. Stacey, fecit 1955." The Chapel was consecrated on Nov. 20, in the presence of the Governor-General, Vincent Massey and the Premier, Leslie Frost.

Stacey received highest praise for his work. Larkin wrote to Stacey on Nov. 15, 1955: "As Chairman of the Building Committee I want to tell you that I have seen the Processional Cross which you



Left: Original vellum boss painted by Carter,  
Below: Reverse boss



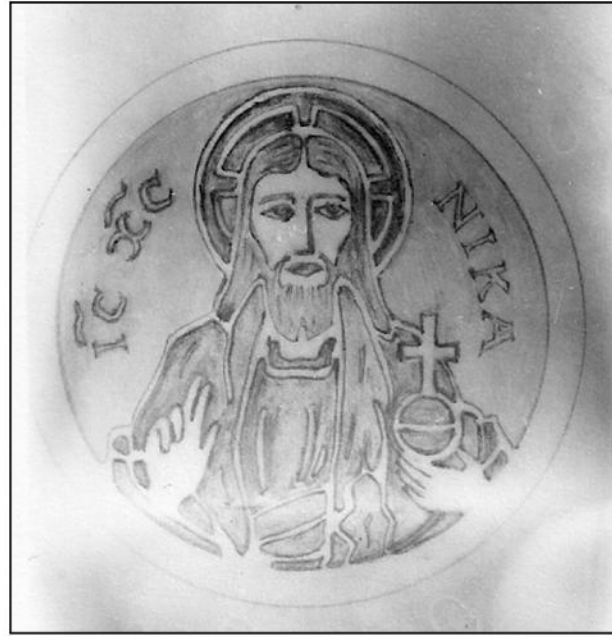
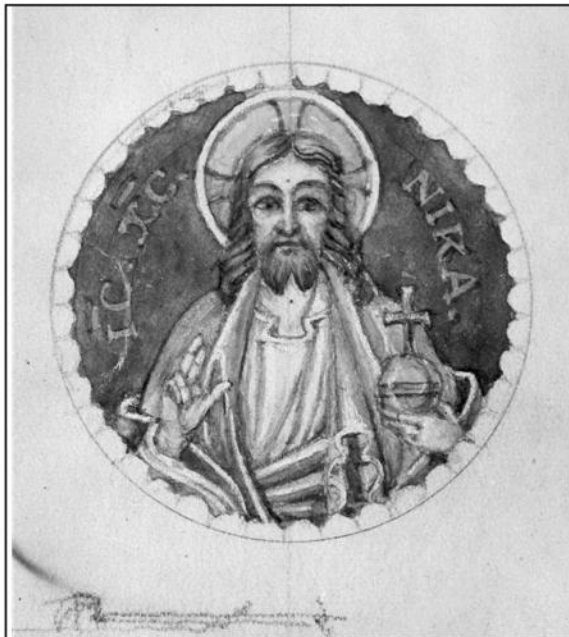
made from Mr. Scott Carter's design. It is very beautiful and something of which the College will always be proud."

The finished work is very tall, and made in 3 sections. The 2-part staff is of ebony, the sterling mounts and the cross itself are mounted with semi-precious gems. Carter designed and executed the decoration on the front of the central boss - a painting on vellum of Christ holding the orb. The reverse features a depiction of the Christogram IHC (- the first 3 letters of the Greek spelling of Jesus -iota, eta, sigma -), enameled in black lettering on sterling.

In 1958, discussions began regarding replacing the vellum boss. It seems that the glass covering the painting tended to reflect the light leaving a blind

spot at the junction of the arms. The British architect Scott suggested an artist for this but Larkin, in a letter to Stacey Nov. 1958, said "we would much prefer to have it be done by a Canadian." He agreed with Stacey that an enamel boss would solve this problem, and that it should not be designed delicately, but boldly, "rather in the manner of the Limoges Fourteenth Century Champlévé." He went on to write "I feel Scott Carter should be consulted, but...I cannot do this direct. Would you feel like writing to him saying that a donor would like to give an enameled boss that you think you could do it and would he cooperate with you on the design? (Or if you think it advisable, ask him if he would like to make the design.)"

Correspondence and visits began be-



Sketches for the enamel boss, left by Carter, and right by Stacey

tween the three parties covering ideas for the design for the enamel and its possible color choice. The projected cost was set at \$300. By February 1959, Stacey had his first suggestions ready and wrote to Carter: "Enclosed herewith is an interpretation of your design... You will see that each colour is laid into a separate cell, which has been cut or sunk into the metal. It follows then that each color detail...is surrounded by a narrow wall or partition of the original metal. The basic limitations of the champlevé technique would seem to indicate that the individual cells should not be so small as to be overpowered by the metal walls which separate the colour." He also explained that the enamel color choice available was limited and therefore an adjustment of Carter's design should be expected.

The finished design was again Christ seated with the orb, and the lettering is IC XC NIKA, meaning "Jesus Christ Conquers". The IC and XC, both surmounted by horizontal lines, are the first and last letters of the name Jesus Christ, in Greek. The horizontal lines indicate the abbreviation.

It was not until March of 1961 that the "little enamel project" was completed. Stacey wrote to Larkin that in the light of 27 letters and 16 visits, not to mention "design development, photographs,



Completed enamel boss

tracings, test firings...and enameling", furthermore pick-up of the cross, installing the enamel, and re-delivery, his original quote of \$300 was "little enough" at this point. Larkin was amenable to an additional 20% and asked him to submit a bill for \$360.00.

After re-installation, Stacey returned the original vellum painting to Carter and wrote to him: "Perhaps I am somewhat biased, but I do feel that the interpretation of your design, in the champlevé technique, is quite successful in that [the] spirit of the original painting has been preserved in the archaic simplicity

of the enamel medium. I trust that you will feel that the results do credit to your beautiful Cross." Carter agreed: "Your enamel looks very beautiful and you are to be congratulated upon a fine piece of work. I think it a great improvement as perhaps my painting was rather too delicate and your enamel is in better scale with the cross. "

Sadly, Gerald Larkin did not see the result of his sustained generosity, having died "at sea" the first week of April of that year.

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